Special Articles
The Jews in Western Europe Today

by Arnold Mandel

The emancipation of the Jews in Europe marked the beginning of an illustrious period of Jewish achievements in all fields of human endeavor. This chapter in Jewish history came to a tragic close with the beginning of the Nazi era and the subsequent massacre of six million Jews, the destruction of their communities and the sequestration of their possessions.

In 1939 Europe's Jewish population numbered 9.5 million, or 58 percent of the world total. Today, some four million Jews, or 30 percent of the total, are scattered in many communities. Of these, the largest part live in the countries behind the iron curtain.

In Western Europe their number had been reduced from 1.3 million in 1939, to an estimated 330,000 shortly after the cessation of hostilities. Survivors were in constant flux, with migration westward and repatriation occurring daily. The return of some West European Jews to their former or new homes and the influx of displaced persons from Eastern Europe raised their number to some 1.2 million today.

The pitiful remnants in the formerly Nazi-occupied countries found themselves deprived of their age-old institutions and of the culture that had been built up throughout centuries. The intellectual elite and the communal leaders were gone. Strenuous efforts were made to rebuild institutions, but the situation in most countries does not augur the return of a vigorous Jewish community life. The Nazi holocaust had brought to an end what Salo Baron calls "the golden age of Ashkenazi Jews" in Europe.

Present Status of the Communities

France

If an entity like a West European Jewish community really existed, its present center would be France. Since, however, there actually is no West European Jewry having common traits, but only some Jews in
Western Europe and some distinctly different Judaisms, the French community does not constitute a center, or it is a center without a periphery.

With some 520,000 Jews, France stands fourth in world Jewish population, immediately after Israel. The state of Judaism in the country is, on the whole, substantially better than it was before the Second World War when its spiritual content was quite superficial, and the intellectual level of its organizational structure extremely low. Yet, the present stirring is not a sign of vigorous recovery which might be expected to go on to new accomplishments. It is rather a new phase in a process which has been a constant feature of French Jewish life: a sudden and unpredictable change, always engendered by a propitious accident, like a last chance given at the very last moment.

At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, French Jewry seemed doomed to extinction. Then it was replaced—rather than reinforced or consolidated—by successive waves of Jewish migration from Eastern Europe. With the means available, these immigrants, who originally came for political and later for economic reasons, created a new Jewish community, one based on memories of the East European shmetl. By the twenties, the Russian and Rumanian Jews, who had come to France between 1900 and 1914, were already largely assimilated and alienated from Judaism. (The war of 1914-18, with its aura of union sacrée, embracing numerous foreign Jewish volunteers, was a very strong force for accelerated assimilation.) Then came the massive wave of Jewish immigration from Poland. The same process repeated itself, a new contingent of Jews replaced those who had dropped out of the community, only to be themselves diluted. In this respect, the period between 1936 and 1939 was the nadir. Immigration became a transit of frightened and pursued refugees. The German Jews, who then arrived in Paris, were generally badly received, and there was little likelihood that they would revitalize French Jewish life.

After the Second World War, particularly between 1950 and 1962, came the Jews from North Africa. The Moroccan and Tunisian Jews were the first to arrive, and they are still coming in; then followed, at one massive stroke, almost all the Jews of Algeria, at the instant when that country became independent. The conspicuous presence of the North African Jews in France and their numerical predominance (200,000) almost entirely changed the social composition of French Jewry, as well as its geographic distribution. Regions such as the Vendée, Brittany, and Normandy in the West, which had had no Jews since the
Middle Ages, again became centers of Jewish life. So did other areas, such as the Southwest, which had formerly been Sephardi centers, but in which the indigenous Jewish populations had almost entirely vanished. Until quite recently, the Ashkenazi ritual, practiced by the Jews of Alsatian birth or descent, who were to be found in all Jewish centers and constituted the active, influential core of French Jewry, and by the overwhelming majority of immigrants (with the exception of a trickle from the Balkans and the Levant), had been dominant in French Judaism. Today it is Sephardism in its specific North African forms that prevails everywhere. The Alsatian and other communities, which for generations had not seen a Mediterranean Jew even at a distance, now have Sephardi synagogues and North African rabbis.

The entry of a large sector of North African Jews into French Jewish life has its desirable as well as undesirable aspects. On the negative side, for instance, it has been accompanied by a perceptible drop in the community's cultural level. Compared to the Jewish learning of East European Jewish immigrants, even the humblest of them, the confused rudiments which the new arrivals bring with them are insignificant. And because the broad masses of Jews in France now have much less knowledge and a substantially lower intellectual receptivity, the danger of assimilation at the bottom, having a common denominator of inferior quality, is greater than ever before. Nevertheless, North African Jewry does not lack its intellectuals or scholars. Chief among them is Léon Askenazi, the philosopher, Talmudist, and cabbalist, who heads the seminary of Jewish studies at Orsay in the southern suburb of Paris. His students, only a few dozen of the intellectual elite, help make the institute a phenomenon in Europe (AJYB, 1964 [Vol. 65], pp. 214, 215; 1965 [Vol. 66], p. 311). But among the North Africans, the gulf between the "bearers of culture" and the majority is much greater than, for example, among the Jews of Eastern Europe, and often the intellectuals are entirely cut off from their popular "base."

The fact that the North Africans do not share the Western Jew's modern experience also separates them from other sectors of the community. If the Algerian Jews, who are gallicized and completely integrated into French culture, did not even approach intellectual participation in the great developments of modern Jewish history—Zionism as a complex ideology; the labor and revolutionary movements; Liberal and neo-Orthodox Judaism; modern Jewish philosophic movements—this was all the more true of the Moroccan and Tunisian Jews.
On the positive side is a great emotional receptivity among these masses, a spontaneous and sensitive pride in their Jewishness which dispenses with all justification and the need for expression or for an intense inner life. To a world of profoundly blasé individuals who have lost the capacity of wonder, these humble people among the North African Jews bring an enthusiasm of which Western Jewry has long been deprived. When one visits their quarters one often has the feeling of returning to a sort of first day of creation, so great and lively are their spirit of enterprise and their truly youthful energy. Indeed, they would be ideally suited to become the disciples of a new form of hasidism.

The general improvement in the basic attitudes of French Jewry finds no expression or reflection in its institutional life. There, we find either ancient and outmoded structures or various types of administrative set-ups using the latest office equipment and procedures. Yet, on the periphery of this somewhat bureaucratic element, there is evidence of a new Jewish stirring in France. This stirring is perceptible also in the new French Jewish literature—which tends to assess and, indeed, extol the Jewish aspects of the human adventure—as well as in various initiatives and researches spontaneously undertaken. Though often of minor import, these projects are always begun for their potential to help enrich Jewish life, if for no other reason.

But this nascent impulse is already threatened. There is birth and there is death, and it does not follow that the contemplation of the one must keep us from seeing the other. While there are different manifestations of Jewish vitality in the literary, artistic, and scientific spheres, and in religion itself, there also proceeds, with an inexorable automatism and on a massive scale, an assimilation without name or face, anonymous and blind; a meshing of gears. A good number of the new North African immigrants are undergoing automatic assimilation that is terribly rapid, definitive, and irreversible because it is brought about by their proletarianization. At the same time, there is a minority of young university-trained intellectuals with a Talmudic and even cabbalistic education, who have the potentiality to bring about Jewish spiritual and religious renaissance. One may foresee a kind of selection that will set apart a minority capable of carrying on and transmitting Judaism, from a majority which will disappear, insofar as their Jewishness is concerned, more rapidly than did the earlier strata of indigenous French Jews and East European immigrants, simply because everything moves more rapidly today than
in the first half of the “century of speed.” The process is already under way and is accelerating.

The fervor and the intensity of Jewishness among the North African newcomers have not yet found appropriate expression. They have no possibility of continuing the tradition of the old Judaism of the Maghreb, which—especially in Algeria—had already been in an advanced state of decay before the great exodus. At the same time, the Jews from the Maghreb cannot be expected to adhere to the patterns of French Judaism with its weaknesses and unattractiveness. Pending the crystallization of this situation, the vigorous among the young North African Jews are flocking to Orthodox Judaism as well as to Zionist youth groups of the extreme left, particularly Ha-shomer Ha-tza'ir.

One can therefore speak of a movement in France today which has not yet defined itself, a state of receptivity making the French Jewish community a sort of new Jewish missionary territory. But the circumstances are somewhat reminiscent of Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*; the missionaries are not yet at hand. Political developments, unless they involve Israel, seem to have little effect on the thinking and attitudes of the French Jews. They feel a certain hesitation and a sense of discomfort in the face of the anti-Americanism of de Gaulle's policy and of the extreme left. Allowing for differences in the two situations, the significance for Jews of systematic anti-Americanism can be akin to that of systematic anti-Israelism, since both place them in opposition to a great Jewish center of gravity.

During the June 1967 Middle East crisis, there was in France among Jews of all shades of opinion, including those far removed from Judaism, extraordinary unanimity of disquiet and solicitude and favoritism for Israel. The intensity of this reaction was quite unexpected. It surprised and, at times, also shocked the French non-Jews.

**Belgium**

In its organizational structure, as well as in its approach to the fact and problems of Judaism, the more than 40,000 Belgian Jews have always tended to follow the French example, as indicated by the similarity of the Jewish consistories in Brussels and in Paris. But the destruction of about half of the indigenous Belgian Jewish population and the gradual influx of East and West European displaced persons to fill the void changed the situation, and little similarity exists at present. Above all, the difference is determined by the diversity of Belgian culture which is
shaped by the influences of both the French- and Belgian-speaking sections of the population.

But this diversity also acts as a deterrent to assimilation, particularly among Jews of humble faith, and is partly responsible for the survival of Yiddish among the Jews.

On the whole, the Jews of Antwerp (13,000) are neither culturally nor linguistically gallicized, although French is spoken in most bourgeois circles. They are personified in the familiar and picturesque diamond worker of the Pelikanstraat, the city's Jewish quarter, who is quite close to hasidism and speaks Yiddish at home. Since Antwerp's diamond industry is entirely Jewish, he even conducts his business in that language; yet he is not a Yiddishist, for he manifests a total indifference toward Yiddish literature. In his contacts with his non-Jewish neighbors, he speaks Flemish.

The Brussels community consisting of more than half of Belgium's Jews (24,000) is as different as can be from that of Antwerp. Assimilation, especially in the form of intermarriage, is very strong in the capital—above all among the students. Here can also be found a concentration of some North African Jews who crossed the French frontier, and brought Sephardi Judaism into Belgium. In Antwerp, on the other hand, Orthodoxy and piety are dominant and exert a certain moral pressure that no one can easily escape without putting himself beyond the pale of Jewish society. And in Antwerp this means putting himself beyond the pale of society as a whole, and creating economic difficulties for himself. The smaller Jewish communities, such as Liège and Charleroi, lead a rather vegetative life and are rarely heard from.

Aside from Zionism and pro-Israelism, which occupy a very prominent place, especially in Brussels, major Jewish activities center on antisemitism and its dangers. One turns in different directions to recite the "anti-anti-semite" prayer of exorcism—toward Munich, Moscow, and across the ocean, toward Buenos Aires. Occasion for alarm about the situation within Belgium is not rare, for its powerful and virulent Flemish nationalist movement spreads an atmosphere of "classical" Catholic clericalism of the extreme right which is impregnated with xenophobia and antisemitism.

**Luxembourg**

In matters Jewish, the little Grand Duchy of Luxembourg is partly dependent on Belgium and partly on neighboring French Lorraine. There
are no more than a thousand Jews in this country, which is under the moral and political dominance of Catholic clericalism.

The Netherlands

The Jewish community of the Netherlands was more cruelly tried by the Hitlerite massacres than any other in Western Europe and today it is only a shadow of what it was before the war. But that shadow reproduces faithfully enough, both in form and essence, what it once had been. The traditional structure of institutional Judaism with its strict division into neatly delineated sectors of Orthodoxy, Conservatism, and Liberalism, are maintained. The accent is placed, almost exclusively, on religious life. Even the relative estrangement between the Ashkenazim and the very old Portuguese community has largely remained what it was in the days when the Jewish community of Holland was happy and prosperous. Only the tradition of Sephardi endogamy—the refusal on principle of the Portuguese to enter what they considered a mésalliance with members of the Ashkenazi community—has fallen into disuse.

In sharp contrast to the situation in the past, when they were the avant-garde elements in literary movements, Dutch Jews today have scant involvement in the great political and literary movements. There was, for example, no Jewish participation in the recent upheaval of Dutch youth, with its tumultuous long-haired protagonists known as Provos, the self-styled "Provocateurs."

Italy

The visitor to Italy is astonished at the relative vitality of its small Jewish community (35,000). By and large, the Jews of that country, and especially the indigenous population, have certainly been among the culturally most completely assimilated. Their notable participation in the risorgimento made them, in a sense, a constituent and founding element of modern Italian history. Assimilation in Italy seems to have made great strides toward the eradication of Jewish particularism, as witness also the historical fact that Mussolini's fascism—as long as it was able to pass for an Italian political movement—had a strong attraction for a section of the Italian Jewish bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, contrary to the usual inference to be drawn from this sort of calculation, the Italian Jewish community, the oldest in the diaspora, does not seem to have taken the final steps which would have meant its total dejudaization.

The crucial period of World War II was the painful occasion of a new awakening of Jewish consciousness among the Italian Jews, many of
whom died in Hitler's extermination camps. The Italian Jew again realized that he shared a destiny with other Jews. The tales of so profoundly Italian a Jewish writer as Giorgio Basani tell of this awakening of consciousness in a minor key of infinite melancholy. At the present time assimilation in Italy, without ever having retreated, would seem to have come to a halt. It became crystallized at a point short of that fatal limit beyond which the Jewish personality is dissolved and annihilated.

In the northern part of the country, the ancient and traditional Jewish communities of Turin, Genoa, Venice, Florence, and Leghorn continue to preserve their Judaism, a Judaism essentially religious but also leaning toward Israel and generally adhering to Zionism. The Milan Jewish community, with 9,000 members, is an example of modern reconstruction in terms of the wealth of its activities. This kehillah is particularly notable for its high level of Jewish education. The majority of the city's Jewish school children go to Jewish schools, a situation without parallel in Western Europe, with the possible exception of Antwerp whose Jewish population is largely hasidic.

The community of Rome, the largest in Italy with 13,000 members, was cruelly put to the test by Nazi atrocities and murders, bearing most heavily on its poor in the old ghetto. This community, too, has been reorganized during the years since the war and also accomplished much in the field of Jewish education. Zionism and attachment to Israel are the important elements in the life of these Jews, even though some of the poorer Jews, who had emigrated to Israel, could not adapt themselves to living conditions and returned to Italy. The Jewish press is remarkable for its stability. *Israel*, a good, substantial weekly, is published in Rome, and *La Rassegna mensile di Israel*, an excellent monthly review on a high intellectual level, currently appears in Milan.

Despite their limited sphere, the institutions and structure of the Italian community seem more real than those in the rest of Western Europe. However, since Italian Jews have remained true to the ancient pattern of the autonomous kehillot, each community varies in keeping with its individual situation and climate. And while one can testify to a certain progress in the communities of the North and of Rome, one can also observe the slow extinction of historic Jewish centers in other parts of the country. In Milan, elegant and animated throngs crowd into Jewish meetings and lectures; the great publishers of that enterprising city put out numerous Jewish works in Italian translations. In Naples, a few timeless phantoms stagger into the synagogue.
When major floods ravaged Florence in late autumn of 1966, causing great damage to its beautiful synagogue, the Jews of Italy showed a profound feeling of solidarity in concrete ways. They helped salvage and restore the damaged scrolls of the Law and gave generously for the repair of the synagogue building.

Italian Zionism, though not very important as an organization, is more effective and more earnest than, for instance, that of France. There is, and always has been, a genuine Italian aliyah, not merely an aliyah of transients coming from Italy.

Switzerland

In June 1966 the Jews of Switzerland celebrated the hundredth anniversary of their achievement of equal rights. It was an occasion for both solemn ceremonies, in which high-ranking officials took part, and for evaluating the situation of Swiss Jews. At the moment, their situation is basically an uneasy one.

The Jewish community in the country, and especially in German Switzerland, is essentially a satellite disoriented by the loss of its center. In cultural and religious matters, the Jews of Zurich and Lucerne, Basle and Saint-Gall, were all dependent on the Jewish community of Germany, which usually also supplied their rabbis. With the disappearance of the Jewish communities in Germany, the Swiss Jews found themselves in a state of confusion and perplexity. Their providential salvation during the war, their preservation from the evils that befell their immediate neighbors, also left them with a certain sensitivity in their relations with less fortunate Jews. The leaders of the Swiss community are aware of this psychological fact and seek to overcome it.

Switzerland has fewer than 20,000 Jews, a comparatively small number when considered in relation to the country's natural rate of population growth. Since the Swiss Jewish community suffered no losses through Nazi persecution or through emigration to Israel or elsewhere, its numerical weakness must be ascribed to the complete assimilation of many of its members, a process that undoubtedly began long ago and is still continuing. The new awakening of Jewish consciousness in a tumultuous Europe is having some effect on the Swiss oasis. An effort is being made by the Swiss Jews to bring about some revival of religious Judaism and, with it, a relative slowing down of assimilation.

The loss of the German Jewish community as its supply base, moved Swiss Jewry to find a new center. Indications are that the Geneva com-
munity and the French-speaking Swiss Jews are about to take the leadership from Zurich and the other German-speaking centers. For some time now, the influence of institutions like the Montreux yeshivah and men like Grand Rabbi Alexander Safran of Geneva has been growing. The new and decisive Sephardi content of French Judaism is also having some effect in Latin Switzerland.

Foreigners form a relatively large sector of the community—and in Switzerland this designation is not meaningless. Since citizenship is not easily obtained, most of these people have been permanent residents of the country for many years. In contrast to the situation in the Jewish communities of Alsace and Lorraine in Eastern France, where for years there has been a total fusion of the indigenous Jews and the immigrants from Eastern Europe, the Swiss community is still formally divided into the old outdated categories of Ostjuden (East European Jews) and Westjuden (West European Jews). They even conduct their religious life separately. The religious communities of the East European Jews in German Switzerland, who call themselves Agudat Ahim, continue to preserve their foreign character, though they were established before World War I. This segregation explains the persistence, in both French and German Switzerland, of a cultural Yiddishism, which groups such as the Yiddisher Kultur Verein in Geneva and Peretz Vereine in the German cities seek to preserve.

There has always been a certain uneasiness regarding the situation of the Swiss Jews, one that is difficult to put into words. Their formal emancipation is still short of full realization in the country where the dominant Protestant sector continues to display an unquestionable distrust of minority or exotic elements. Catholics living among Protestant majorities are also subject to certain restrictions, such as the prohibition of the Jesuit order and a great reluctance to grant authorization for the establishment of convents or monasteries. In general, to use the terminology of the antisemites of German Switzerland, the Jews are resented as wesensfremd—essentially foreign to the traditions and way of life of the indigenous population. This is especially so in the countryside and in small rural centers where provincialism is strongly entrenched. Numerous facts attest to this attitude and atmosphere as, for example, the complete absence of Jews, even those of old Swiss stock, from Swiss political life and their very negligible representation in the German, Italian, and French literature of the country.

Although the Swiss prohibition of shehita—a prohibition which the
extreme antisemitic group in the Polish parliament once unsuccessfully tried to pass into law—is officially motivated by the stand of the Society for the Protection of Animals, it probably would not be in force today but for the presence of something that, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, has been called antisemitism.

**Germany and Austria**

The phenomenon of the return of Jews to the German Federal Republic and to Austria is too special, too filled with psychological complexities, to be fitted neatly into the picture of the reconstruction of the Jewish communities of Western Europe. Although both countries are technically part of Central Europe, the German Jew has for so long been the *Westjude*, the prototype of the Western Jew, that it is impossible to omit him, even in his extreme metamorphosis, from an account of the Jews of Western Europe.

In broad terms, the Jews in West Germany (30,000) can be divided into three categories, each with a distinct attitude toward the country. The first are the well advanced in years, who have returned from Israel or from one of the other countries where German Jews found refuge from Nazi persecution, mainly to die in Germany, as pious old Jews of a past era went to Palestine because they wished to be buried there. These are ultra-assimilated and thoroughly German. Living outside of Germany and threatened by Germany from afar, they nevertheless continued to feel part of it and were never able to come to terms with their exile. Many of them can be found in the model homes for the aged of the reestablished communities of West Germany. These men and women, though they are hardly ever aware of it, are the living expression of the terrible tragedy of ultra-assimilation when, in a given situation, the fires of an apocalypse make it stand out sharply. This sector of the “new” Jewish population of West Germany presents no practical problem, for it is a dying generation, without successors or spiritual heirs.

The second category embraces many Jews in the prime of life, including a good number of *yordim* (returnees) from Israel, for whom economic considerations take precedence over all else. They returned to Germany because they had property to recover and indemnities to secure. Even if they are Jews of pure German stock—which is not always the case, for many are Jews of East European origin who happened to be living in Germany at a particular time—they always are Jews in Germany and not Jews of Germany. They have no definite plans, even
for the immediate future. Many of them look upon their stay in the
country as temporary; and since temporary residence is frequently syn-
onymous with "temporary" profitability, the stay often tends to be pro-
longed by circumstance. Of course, these Jews have no positive attitude
toward the new Germany. Often enough, they have even remained rela-
tively Germanophobe. Zionism, or at least a proclaimed and publicized
pro-Israelism, is the essence of the Jewish atmosphere in which they live.
The children of the returnees, born and partly raised in Israel, often
continue to speak Hebrew; but this obviously does not interfere with
their rapid Germanization or re-Germanization in school.

A third category of the Jews are the completely uprooted, often former
concentration camp inmates, for whom a moral code has ceased to exist.
They live from day to day and try to wring the maximum benefit from
what remains of the power of intimidation that former victims of Nazism
still have in Germany today. They are the adventurers of a prolonged
epilogue, the seekers after gold in a strange and unspeakable Alaska in
the heart of Europe.

For several years now, the leaders of the Jewish communal organiza-
tions, who are very much concerned with the menace of a resurgent anti-
semitism, have been insisting that the Jews of Germany, whatever their
situation, must no longer consider themselves automatically entitled to
privileges. To claim privileges, they argue, is to sanction inequality of
rights and to accept, in principle, discrimination.

Taken as a whole, the Jews of the German Federal Republic again
constitute primarily an Interessengemeinschaft, a community of interests.
As a result, the percentage of those belonging to the major Jewish or-
ganizations is extremely high, exceeding that in any other West Euro-
pean country. The reestablishment of Jewish communal, religious, and
cultural life has been carried out with the proverbial Germanic thorough-
ness. In practice, the small number of Jews in the Federal Republic have
at their disposal almost everything a living Jewish community needs.
There are now a sufficient number of rebuilt synagogues and even rabbis
who, as in former times, give spiritual guidance not only to the urban
community but to all Jews in the country. And where French Jewry,
520,000 strong, does not have a single publishing house exclusively for
Jewish works, there are several such enterprises in West Germany.

Yet one sometimes feels that these edifices are built on sand, that they
have not penetrated to any depth or really become an integral part of
the new German landscape, and that the Jews, themselves, only super-
ficially live the Judaism which they have reestablished. Of the two ele-
ments that have an impact upon others, the past and the future, the one
is too dreadfully dark and the other most definitely nonexistent, or negli-
gible, for German Jews.

The situation of the minuscule new Jewish community of Austria
(9,500 registered Jews) almost completely duplicates that in Germany.
The major difference is that very few Austrian Jews have returned. The
reestablished Vienna community consists almost entirely of new immi-
grants from Eastern Europe or Israel; the latter, too, are of East Euro-
pean origin. The average age of the Jewish population of Vienna is quite
high; about 65 per cent are over 50 years old, and only some three per
cent are children below the age of 10.

Scandinavia

The very traditional structures and the very bourgeois composition of
the Jewish communities in the three Scandinavian countries reflect a re-
latively prosperous continuity leaving no room for new developments.
Despite the tragedy which befell the Danish community, the Scandinavian
Jews, who are largely of German stock, have resumed their communal
life under the banner of restoration. The solidarity of most Scandinavian
Christians with the Jews, even foreign Jews, during the time of trial has
been favorable to assimilation and has eliminated any feeling of uncer-
tainty on the part of Jews toward their non-Jewish neighbors. In this
respect the situation of the Jewish community is very similar to that of
the Netherland Jews, although these have much darker memories.

Spain

Very recently, Franco Spain’s new policy of greater religious tolerance
has been reflected in an upsurge in activities of the two principal Jewish
communities, in Madrid and Barcelona, both quite small. Until very re-
cently the 7,000 Jews of Spain practiced their religion semi-clandestinely.
In 1966, however, Jewish leaders came forward and openly conducted
religious services as well as certain Zionist activity—the latter at a time
when Spain still had not recognized Israel, although some non-Jewish
voices advocated recognition. At present the Council of Jewish commu-
nities of Spain puts out a small mimeographed bulletin called Ha-kesher
(Heb., “Bridge”). Its articles report what appears to be a lively enough,
but limited, Jewish life in the Spanish capital.

Although official Spain is carrying on a flirtation with historic Seph-
ardism, regarding it almost as a “blood relation” and as an important
world hispanic element, the tiny Jewish community is not entirely
Sephardi. The core communities of Madrid and Barcelona have among
their members some former German refugees, as well as a very hispan-
icized sector of Jews from such border areas as Tangiers, former Spanish
Morocco, and Gibraltar.

POINT AND COUNTERPOINT

Contrasts in New Consciousness

The Jewish communities of Western Europe still live under the impact
of two major historic events, the emancipation and the counter-emanci-
pation. The first, in a sense, shaped not only Jewish society, but the
whole of modern Jewish character, since the beginning of the nineteenth
century, and thereby, in a way, the essence of being a Jew in modern
times. The other, seeking the total annihilation of the Jew, revived the
ingrained insecurity of the Jewish people and aroused contrasting reac-
tions: In some it led to bewildered flight from Judaism, in others to Jewish
introversion; in some to exaltation of Judaism, in others to a horror of it;
in some to resigned or heroic acceptance of a difficult and even tragic
destiny, in others to bitter rejection of the Jewish condition, which, for
some, ended in conversion to Christianity and, for others, in adherence
to a neo-Zionism, which was regarded as an effective means of dejudai-
zation.

In recent years, the Jewish literature in France has reflected these
attitudes, born of perplexity or exasperation. The extreme poles are
represented by Jews of the younger generation, Jean François Steiner
and Albert Memmi, the first just under 30 years of age and the second
just past 40 (AJYB, 1963 [Vol. 64], p. 373; and p. 316). For Steiner,
there is no other alternative but a return to an integral diaspora Juda-
ism, with its uncompromising morality running counter to the existing
currents of Western Christian civilization. In his book Treblinka, he
exalts only authentically Jewish resistance which aspired to nothing but
bearing eternal witness—a classic “gesture” of the sanctification of His
name—and systematically disparages all those Jewish forces which he
believes to have had their origin in the emulation or adoption by Jews
of Gentile values, such as spectacular “heroism.” Carrying this analysis
further, he takes a negative attitude toward the Warsaw Ghetto revolt,
whose “Zionist” style he considers essentially non-Jewish. For Memmi,
the situation of the Jews is impossible and unlivable, and one must therefore escape it, whatever the cost. And since all attempts at assimilation are doomed to failure, he argues, the evils of Jewish life can be overcome only by a complete integration with Israel, which means, or should mean, the end of Judaism.

But these expressions of the newly awakened consciousness are also shaped by the impact of emancipation and counter-emancipation, which, however, tend to become more distant and obscure. For the very young generation of Jews, who have not personally experienced the tragedy of their people in Hitler’s Europe and do not feel its effect, its meaning is no longer the same. For this same generation, the emancipation of the Jews, with all it represents in dearly acquired prestige after a past of oppression and denial of rights, cannot evoke the same wonder as for older generations. They no longer feel themselves in any sense the beneficiaries of a measure of justice and a state of grace, which for their predecessors had almost the force of a religious revelation. Auschwitz, Treblinka, and the Warsaw Ghetto are no longer part of the real world; they are nothing more than places mentioned in their history lessons. The absence of philosophical or theological criteria within Judaism for interpreting the meaning and significance of these terrible episodes makes itself seriously felt.

Eight years ago André Schwarz-Bart's *The Last of the Just* had enormous repercussions. Then, the awakened Jewish consciousness was still directly confronted by Jewish suffering. The situation is no longer the same. One still speaks and writes about the tragic period of the Jews of Europe with much feeling. But most people—and this includes the thinkers and historians—respond to it all as if they looked upon the memorable “days of our death” as nothing more than an accident of history, requiring no change in the body of ideas and concepts which, until then, had influenced the evolution of modern Judaism. This attitude is one of the most critical factors in the “restoration” of the Jews in Europe. It is manifested in the increasing loss of interest among the Jewish youth of France in commemoration ceremonies marking the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, and other demonstrations of this type. These now traditional ceremonies, with their implication of common ties and fundamental truths, are always arranged by Jews of the older generation, whose special brand of traditionalism is not likely to be passed on.

The masses of Jewish youth today are imbued with a psychological and moral outlook that makes for what can be called a sort of evapora-
tion—instant assimilation, without a central movement and without flight. In its extreme form it produces ghettos without Jews. Even in Belgium, the Netherlands, and West Germany, where until very recently Jewish feeling was focused on the era of massacres and deportations, the theme tends to exhaust itself. An examination of the various bulletins of organized Jewish youth of the West German communities bear this out, for they point to the need and desire for a change. It is very understandable that the house of Anne Frank in Amsterdam creates an entirely different image for the 18-year-old girl, even if she is Jewish, than for a 38-year-old woman, who could have been in Anne’s place.

The “Sickness of Youth” and Jewish Youth

Of course, Jewish youth does not escape the climate and the psychoses of the new “sickness of youth,” the nihilist opposition to everything, as embodied in the contemporary European beatnik. The element of global alienation with its loss of confidence in all contemporary values of society, even the allegedly revolutionary ones, is shared by young Jews. It is not shared by all, but rather to a degree approximating the *numerus clausus* which, in times past, was applied against Jewish students at Central European universities. One cannot therefore speak of a particular Jewish aspect within the pattern of the general revolt. Thus, if the beatnik sets himself against society, its institutions, politicians, and moralists, the Jewish beatnik simply attacks the same kind of scapegoats without looking for their particular Jewish counterparts. The impression therefore is that organized and positive Judaism and Jewish society are not important enough to warrant opposition.

Circumstantial Morality

In Judaism, as in other phenomena, judgments are usually a reflection of typical contemporary attitudes, which may be described as circumstantial morality. This means, roughly, that judgments are determined less and less by general principles of moral conduct, and more and more by the possibility of applying a particular morality under given conditions. Then the possibility, itself, becomes the measure of what is or is not moral, somewhat like the “philosophy” emanating from the material on sexual morality in the Kinsey report. No laws, only facts govern judgments, and every judgment must therefore be pragmatic.

The application of this morality to Judaism tends to affirm and to deny Jewish reality at one and the same time. An integrated, organic Jewish
life seems impossible because modern technology, the hedonistic consumer society, the general homogenization of the mode of living, the rise of such new "natural" communities as the business community, by their very existence undermine the ancient and traditional communities. Assimilation, on the other hand, is regarded as just as impossible since antisemitism, or at least a certain form of it, is fundamental to the Christian society of the West. Therefore, in a sense, this morality, as Sartre formulated it in *Reflections on the Jewish Question*, demands that one be a Jew by rejecting the content of Judaism—an attitude shared by some. The approach to Judaism of many young Jews in France today, and of students in particular, is rooted in Sartre's concept.

**New Aspects of Intermarriage**

Mixed marriage is becoming widespread in all European Jewish communities, no matter what their character. Although French Jewish life bears little resemblance to that in Scandinavia, intermarriages are a conspicuous feature of both. And intermarriage is found in all Jewish groups, not merely among the "assimilated." It is also common among Zionists and among Jews who basically consider themselves traditionalists. The Orthodox, a tiny minority and sharply set apart, are the sole exception. It should be noted that Orthodox Jews usually do not marry outside their immediate circle; they practice a much more restricted endogamy than is generally found among Jews. Ideological objections to intermarriage are gradually disappearing in the other sectors of Jewry. Arguments against it are often vitiating by the contradictory behavior of their advocates. The eclectic nature of present-day Judaism, in definition as well as in practice, no longer permits strong arguments against the temptation of intermarriage. It stands to reason that the purely religious argument, when used by people who themselves are not truly religious, is rejected as false. The more frequently advanced argument that there is in a mixed marriage sufficient incompatibility of customs and character to interfere with conjugal and family harmony, is not confirmed by daily experience; far from it. An added drawback of this reasoning is that it smacks of a sort of racism, and it is often rejected precisely for this reason. The rather sentimental broad argument that a Jew must not break faith with the Jewish collectivity by contracting a mixed marriage—in short, the specter of "treason"—also loses validity because it is no longer necessary for the Jewish partner, who has not already broken with Judaism before contemplating intermarriage, to do so now. The high
rate of intermarriage has created a state of implicit tolerance for it in diverse European Jewish circles, and Jews who marry non-Jews no longer find themselves excluded from a given Jewish group, even a strictly religious one like the synagogue. To a degree, this tolerance extends also to the Orthodox, although, of course, they do not permit Jewish partners in mixed marriages to join their community (difficulties arise even where the non-Jewish partners convert to Judaism). They do, however, consider them equal to other non-Orthodox Jews, with whom they cooperate on inter-organizational and other levels.

Partners in mixed marriages are to be found in religious communities other than the Liberal synagogue which plays only a minor role in Western Europe. (It is nonexistent and even inconceivable in Italy, very weak in Switzerland, relatively weak in France, and has some standing only in the Netherlands.) This is particularly so in France where large numbers of intermarried North African Jews observe kashrut. They do not really feel that a marriage to a European non-Jew is a mixed marriage in the conventional sense. For them the "outsider," the "goy," is the Moslem, the Arab, and not the Christian, the Frenchman. One of Lyons Grand Rabbi Jean Kling's parishioners was a very pious young Algerian Jew who daily visited the office of the synagogue. When Rabbi Kling learned that this pillar of the faith was about to marry a Christian, he reproached him: "You, with a goy!" "She is not a goy," the man replied. "She's French!"

Some of the Zionist and pro-Israeli activists, as well as leaders and staff members of Jewish organizations, are intermarried. There probably is not a single Jewish family in France, with the exception of recent arrivals from Tunisia and Morocco, which has no non-Jewish members. (Among the Algerian Jews, numerous intermarriages between Jews and Christians—very rarely between Jews and Moslems—took place even before the exodus; their proportion was especially high in Algiers.) The Orthodox, too, have their share of intermarriages through their less Orthodox or non-Orthodox relatives, and "the relatives of our relatives are our relatives."

Within West European Jewry as a whole there has been an important change in attitude toward intermarriage. Since such marriages have become general and are therefore accepted, they no longer have their former significance nor necessarily the same consequences, as in the past. Although intermarriage certainly is a result of assimilation, it does not necessarily lead to more radical assimilation. The act of intermarrying,
as such, no longer constitutes a break with Judaism. One very rarely finds Jews who decide to marry outside their faith, without first having chosen a marriage partner, simply because they wish to separate themselves from the Jewish community and to dissolve or dilute their ethnic character. The respective marriage partners—and even their respective “ethnic groups”—no longer take account of such contingencies. In the past, there often was pressure from the family of the non-Jewish husband or wife for the complete dejudaization of the Jewish spouse. This is no longer true, partly because of growing religious indifference, partly because there has been a revaluation of Judaism on the part of Christians, and, finally, because one now has not merely the legal, but also the moral right to be or to remain a Jew.

In the very conservative circles of the great Jewish families in France, it is permissible for the son, but not for the daughter, to marry a non-Jew. It is important, then, that the line perpetuates itself in a Jewish name, that it does not disappear.

The unequal distribution of the sexes among Jews made intermarriage unavoidable in some European countries, even if the wish to remain endogamous had been very strong—which was not the case. This situation prevailed in the Scandinavian countries, in the German Federal Republic, and especially in Spain, and to some extent also in Switzerland and Italy.

In France members of the North African Jewish proletariat, the factory workers, find it difficult to marry Jewish women also for social and economic reasons. A young Jewish girl, even one of poor Moroccan or Tunisian parents, will not voluntarily marry a low-paid factory worker with no possibility for advancement.

**MAJOR ASPECTS OF JEWISH CULTURE**

**Yiddishism**

Yiddishism, which regards the Yiddish language and literature as major components of Jewish culture and rejects the existence of a Jewish culture in which Yiddish plays no part, is closely linked with old Jewish folk movements, such as the Bund, which can no longer maintain itself in Western Europe. The Jews of Europe have so completely adopted the languages of their host countries that they soon became their mother tongues. The fact that most of these languages are quite adequate for expressing and communicating Jewish thought and for creat-
ing a Jewish literature, appears to be a thorough refutation of the fundamental postulates of Yiddishism.

However, since Yiddish literature is still regarded as a very important aspect of recent Jewish life, interest in Yiddish has not diminished. Today non-Jews, especially in literary circles, know more about it than ever before. The somewhat paradoxical result is that, while Yiddish is losing ground among Jews, it is gaining in the non-Jewish world among those who are interested in creativity, folklore, and exotic literature. It should be added that West European interest in Yiddish culture is related to the growing interest of the intellectual world in Judaism. The relative popularity of hasidism outside the limits of the Jewish world, for example, led to a study of the language and idiom of its leaders and their disciples.

Compared to the interest of European intellectuals in the mother tongue of the East European Jews, the current in the other direction—the interest in and receptivity to contemporary Western thought by Jews who still speak and write Yiddish—is unfortunately very slight. In such Yiddishist circles or clubs as exist in Paris, Brussels, or Zurich, there is almost no understanding of contemporary thought. There is only a walled-off world without any opening to new horizons, a situation which is all the more deplorable since Yiddishism developed out of the definite desire for a modern Jewish instrument capable of absorbing European humanism. This is the meaning of the famous *weltliche Yiddishkeit*, the secular and cultural Judaism which was to replace religion as the unifying element. But the European and universal values on which Yiddishism relied—as propounded by Emile Zola and Romain Rolland, Knut Hamsun, and others—no longer meet the needs and aspirations of the new generations. There is not even the faintest trace of such modern movements as surrealism and existentialism in what today passes for Yiddish literature. Neither are there movements or stylistic developments within that literature; it remains a product of the romantic realism of the Peretz era.

There are still some Yiddish writers and literary activity in Western Europe, particularly in Paris, which, before the war, was a relatively important center of Yiddish literature. Yet, the Yiddish literary review *Kiyum* ("Existence") which had been purely intellectual in tone and traditionally published significant Yiddish literature, was recently forced to cut its size, popularize its content, and reduce the frequency of its publication.
Mendel Mann, the Parisian Yiddish novelist and author of a series of novels dealing with the Russian campaigns in World War II, is always translated into French and enjoys some success with the non-Jewish public. His style combines realism with broad canvases à la Tolstoi.

Except for the continuing efforts, particularly in France and Belgium, of the Bundist groups to make Yiddish literature attractive to Jewish youth, hardly anything is done along this line. The numerous supplementary Yiddish-language courses, formerly available to students in French and Belgian secular schools, have almost entirely ceased to exist. In France, the Jewish Communists, who once vigorously cultivated Yiddishism in competition with the Bund, have now abandoned this activity and preach linguistic assimilation. Yet, for the first time, Yiddish is being taught at an institution of higher learning, the Paris School of Oriental Languages. One can also view on French television scenes from Sholem Aleichem's stories in Yiddish.

In France, Belgium, and in West Germany (there is a Yiddish periodical, the *Neue jüdische Zeitung*, in Munich), Yiddish newspapers are losing their readers. Some of them try to bolster circulation by carrying some French or German, as the case may be.

**Sephardism**

Sephardism has always existed among the French Jews. It has left an important mark on Italian Jewry, as well, although the community is neither Sephardi nor Ashkenazi in origin, but autonomous.

The old French Sephardism, with its "Portuguese" sector in Southwest France (Bordeaux and Bayonne are its traditional centers), has long since lost its significance in French Jewish life. During the period between the two world wars, it was replaced by the Sephardism of immigrants from Salonika, other parts of the Balkans, and Turkey, who tended to concentrate in Marseilles and Paris. At that time, they constituted about 15 per cent of the French Jewish population. Their Sephardism was limited to the synagogue ritual; attempts to develop Ladino (Judaeo-Spanish) culture or to encourage an interest in its folklore failed. The Salonican Jews in France and in other countries of emigration were particularly hard hit by Nazi deportations. Although, on the whole, they showed a particularly strong tendency to assimilation, some notables of Sephardi origin, such as Edgar Abravanel, are among the leaders of the French Jewish community.

The new North African immigrants, who are called Sephardim, are
very different from the European and Turkish Sephardim. Actually, the Jewish masses of North Africa are largely of Berber descent and were Sephardized by the Spanish immigrants who came to North Africa during the sixteenth century. Thus North African Sephardism is of a special type, more properly Maghrebian than Spanish Jewish. Ladino, the language of the Balkan and Near Eastern Jews, is unknown to the North African Jews; their natural idiom, insofar as it has not become French, is Judaeo-Arabic. And while the Judaeo-Spanish culture and folklore, based on the great European culture of the Iberian peninsula, had been easy enough to communicate and transmit, the same is not true of North African “Sephardism,” with its deep roots in ancient Arab culture. When, under the influence of French rule, the North African Jews in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia abandoned Arab culture, they lost also a large part of the specifically Jewish patrimony which was indivisible from it. As a result, North African Jews, even the traditionalist ones, no longer know Judaeo-Arabic literature and poetic folklore. They retained primarily what is related to religious life and ritual, especially the specifically North African “hazanouth” and, with it, a whole tradition of musical folklore, with which many are quite familiar and to which North African Jewish scholars have devoted their studies. The newcomers from North Africa, therefore, cannot be considered as the custodians of a living Sephardi cultural patrimony. Neither in France nor in other European countries to which they came, and where they reintroduced a certain primarily liturgical Sephardism, has their presence brought a revival of Sephardi culture. Such a revival is nothing but a claim of Spain’s tourist propaganda. It is also the subject of very limited research and of monographs by scholars in the field of hispanic studies.

As for the Portuguese Jewish community of Amsterdam, it is completely Dutch in language as well as in temperament and behavior. Only its ritual contains some vestiges of Portuguese idiom.

Jewish Studies

Western Europe was once the major center of Jewish learning, especially biblical exegesis and Bible criticism. Germany had its impressive store of Wissenschaft des Judentums, while France had its Revue des Études juives and its learned men; Darmstetter, Munk, and Reinach made a major contribution to this field of knowledge. The pursuit of nineteenth century-steeped “science of Judaism” continues under the auspices of universities and research institutes. France still has some
distinguished specialists in this field: the historian Bernard Blumenkrantz in the rich medieval history of the Jews in France and the scholar George Vajda in the history and interpretation of classical Jewish philosophy.

On the whole, however, Jewish scholarship now has a quite different orientation, representing divergent approaches. There is a new type of apologetics which more or less accepts the Bible and the Talmud as real and probative, and while not excluding Bible criticism, does not make it central to the study of Judaism. Though much of the work of André Neher, professor of Judaic studies at the University of Strasbourg, is on this level, it is sufficiently impressive to attract disciples. There is also a veritable flood of young investigators in the expanding field of Jewish sociology, which does not confine itself to Jewish demography but frequently extends to the psychological and religious spheres. A Jewish sociology of religion, modeled on Christian sociology of religion, is in the developing stage.

The State of Israel is very much a factor in all these studies. In France, scientific research is being conducted on attitudinal changes toward Israel. The quite new and not yet fully crystallized French Jewish literature is also being examined for sociological data. A few years ago, for example, the non-Jewish author Pierre Aubery wrote an important doctoral thesis on the contemporary Jewish environment, as found in French Jewish literature.

**In Summary**

It is difficult to speak of the Jews of Western Europe in our time as an entity and in terms of characteristics common to all. Differences among them are, in fact, very great, and these are psychological as well as environmental. If certain aspects of an emerging Jewish spirituality can be found almost everywhere in Europe (as they can be found almost anywhere in the world) these too, depend in large measure on the intellectual, moral, and social environment, and are therefore dissimilar.

Broadly speaking, one can perhaps divide the Jews into two categories. Some West European Jewish communities can be described as having freedom of initiative and permitting neither the spiritual content of their Judaism nor its orientation to be determined by others. Of course, the criteria and prevailing practices of the outside world exert an influence; but they are not recognized as having the force of directives. Indeed, they may even produce a reaction and a countercurrent. The existing freedom of initiative is relatively favorable to the development of new
forces and new ideas, but it can also be dangerous because it has neither a framework nor boundaries. Present-day French Jewry, on its higher intellectual levels, falls within this group. Other Jewish communities must remain within prescribed limits of a conservatism that is not only religious, but social and, in its extreme form, also political, because this role has been assigned to them by the society in which they live and of which they are an organic part. Such communities are, in a sense, under surveillance even though this may not be apparent. They cannot permit themselves excesses and can embark on a daring course only with difficulty. To some degree, this applies to the Italian Jews and even to the Jews in the Netherlands.

One negative characteristic, common to all West European Jewish communities, is the almost complete disappearance of the "classic" Western Jew who had a strong inclination toward a symbiosis of the great currents of Western humanism and those elements in Jewish tradition which conform to or converge with them.

The various Jewish "folkisms," not merely the Yiddish "folkism," are also disappearing. Folklore and folk idiom are in decline, along with the provincialism of which they are a part. The distinct Judaeo-Alsatian dialect of the Alsatian Jews is now on the verge of extinction, as are the dialects of their analogues in the Netherlands and Provence.

Another very important general trend, mentioned earlier, is the growing remoteness and disappearance of the two great landmarks of modern Jewry—the emancipation and the Hitler era. The young Jew in Paris, Brussels, and Rome no longer regards himself as a child of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the achievement of legal equality by his forebears. Nor can he long continue to find in the apocalypse of Auschwitz the sole basis and justification for his Jewish consciousness. And since no one has as yet adequately dealt with this aspect of Judaism, he will not know how to transmit it some day to his own son, as countless generations of fathers had passed to their sons the history of the slavery and suffering of the children of Israel in Egypt, which ended with the redemption of the Exodus and Sinai.

The problem of assimilation has changed its face and form. Being for or against it no longer has meaning. No one is really "for" it, except certain backward elements in non-Jewish circles of the old Left, such as the old-style radicals and Freemasons in France. The Jews who are assimilated or on the way to assimilation are not "assimilators" or "assimilationists," but rather unwitting objects of an assimilation that is
nonspecific, “innocent,” and fatal. It takes place as part of a general process of homogenization, and is related to the depersonalization of groups other than Jews, e.g., the West European working classes who are ceasing to be “working-class” and are becoming increasingly embarrassed at the still formally accepted idea of “class consciousness” as the basis of a so-called internationalism. This process affects also intellectuals among whom there is a growing tendency to leave the domain of “mind” for the technical world, who cease to be thinkers in order to become “organization men.” In view of this irreversible evolution, the problem of preserving the continuity of West European Judaism and of bringing about its eventual renascence presents an alternative. Shall we adapt the values of Judaism to this development, go beyond it here and there insofar as the general leveling process will permit, and introduce, so to speak, some Hebraisms into the Esperanto or basic English of the new Babel? Or shall we return, with all the risks and perils involved—and doing without the participation of the majority—to the old Jewish countercurrent with its long history and its antihistoric essence and meaning? This will mean rejecting not merely “assimilation,” but the world itself insofar as its deeds and postures, its thoughts and visions, its truths and errors, are conditioned by time.

West European Jewry lacks intellectual and spiritual guidance, the spokesmen and, even more, the moral and sociopolitical leadership essential for making an unambiguous choice between these alternatives, or even to begin moving toward one of them. Essentially, the communities are still provincial in spirit, and it is in the nature of provincialism to impose strict checks on the ways of the capital. This then explains the formal persistence in the communities of the so-called elective affinity between Judaism and an outdated and sometimes confused liberalism, the preservation of a tacit and absurd “Holy Alliance” between the sons of Jacob and the spiritual heirs of Voltaire and Edouard Herriot. It explains also the persistent identification of the Jewish leaders in West Germany with the literary glories of the Weimar Republic, and their great faith in Carl von Ossietzki, the leader of the German peace movement after the First World War. Even in Paris, where people think much more freely, one still asserts one’s Judaism by talking about the theater of Berthold Brecht.

A new and major psychological manifestation that is doubtless shared by Jews throughout the world and cuts across all Jewish communities in Western Europe, is the substitution, as a bond uniting all Jews, of a sentiment for Israel and anything affecting the state, for religious feel-
ing, which actually continues to live in the hearts of only a small number of Jews. As a matter of fact, the sentiment for Israel can be regarded as religious, for its content and expression are of a truly religious character.

The old religious sentiment shared by the Jews was not always an expression of the same degree of faith and fervor, but at times contained elements of criticism and scepticism, and even of indifference, disillusion, and bitterness. In the same way, the current pro- or para-Israelism of the Jews, though including all nuances from enthusiastic and unconditional approval to deprecating irony, always fulfills the function of moral unification. The rare Jews who are outspoken and categorical in their opposition to Israel play the same roles of foils and sacred monsters, as did the *apikorsim* of long ago in the integral religious community or those described by tradition and in rabbinic literature as *kofer ba-'ikkar*, the negators of the Principle.

This like-mindedness exists everywhere. It shows itself at the inauguration of a community center in Bordeaux, where the mayor speaks beneath a large tricolor flag flanked by small Israeli flags; at the meeting of a group of half-Jews in Hamburg, where the subject heading the agenda is the number of Israeli students attending the city's university; in the almost depopulated ancient ghetto of Amsterdam, where the only Jewish butcher shop is decorated with the Israeli colors; in the tourist agency of the little Norman port city of Dieppe, where the manager, who happens to be a Jew, displays in the window a disproportionate number of views of Israeli landmarks.

In France, Belgium, and Italy, the Jewish Communists flirt with Israel, and sometimes go there. Since the Israeli Communist party (the Jewish one) has become patriotic, pro-Israelism has been growing among the Jewish Communists of the West and sometimes finds open expression.

Automatic and massive assimilation! Spontaneous and unanimous pro-Israelism! Jewish consciousness and the search for it, often fragmented, sometimes spectral! Points and counterpoints. In spite of it all and without forcing things too much, the final words of Simon Dubnow may still be cited: “Jewish history continues.” * But a slightly different quotation from another ending may also be appropriate. Before the curtain falls on the protagonists of the continuous interplay of horrors and torments in Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit*, one of the characters announces from the top of the stage, “It continues!”

The Purposes of the Jewish Community Center Movement: An Appraisal of Their Operation

by Carl Urbont

There is much data in the literature of social institutions to show how complicated is the search for a definition of purpose. This search assumes major importance for Jewish institutions facing ever greater challenges because of the complex changes within the Jewish community of contemporary America.

The majority of American Jews are now native-born, and masses of them are college educated. They have access to almost every sphere of American society, are free to enjoy a life of dignity and, in consequence, feel free to choose to retain or to give up their group identity. Thus, paradoxically, it is free society, the very thing Jews everywhere have labored to achieve, that is now challenging their group survival. The ensuing problem facing the Jewish community underlines the need for a reexamination of the vitality of its institutions. Among these the Jewish community center movement holds a strategic position.

The forerunners of the Jewish community center were the first Young Men's Hebrew Associations, established during the second half of the nineteenth century as a counter influence to the Christian missionary work of the Young Men's Christian Association. The movement grew rapidly as it attracted increasing numbers of Jews who had come to the United States from all parts of Europe to escape persecution. They were of very diverse background, Orthodox and Reform, Sephardi and Ashkenazi, traditional and "worldly."

By the beginning of the 20th century, the Y's, settlements, and Jewish neighborhood centers concentrated on the "Americanization" of the newcomers, and tried to protect them, through social action programs, from many injustices suffered by immigrants during the industrial expansion of this country. In a certain sense, these agencies also met the newcomers'
group urge to survive as Jews in their new environment. In New York and Philadelphia, courses were offered in vocational training of unskilled Jews, as well as in the arts, literature, English, and foreign languages. Formal Jewish education programs for young children and adults were also provided.

The trend toward a national organization of Y's was initiated in 1913, and the newly established Council of Young Men's Hebrew and Kindred Associations gave impetus everywhere to the spread of the centers.

During World War I, the Y's, with the aid of the Jewish Welfare Board which came into being in 1917, extended services to Jews in the United States armed forces. The JWB then mobilized Jewish communities throughout the country to develop effective cooperative social and hospitality programs for soldiers and sailors in local Y's. This cooperation was a strong unifying influence and aroused widespread interest in the Jewish community for the continuation of such joint efforts on a permanent basis after the war. In 1921 JWB and the Council of Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Associations merged and the new agency, the National Jewish Welfare Board (JWB), set about strengthening the then existing Y's. Under the impact of the depression of the 1930's, they began to refer to themselves as Jewish community centers. They sought to reach into many new areas of community service to meet new needs.

When the enormous dimensions of the tragedy the Jews suffered at the hands of the Nazis became known, a deep sense of responsibility for the perpetuation of Jewish life was felt by large sections of the American Jewish community. The Jewish community centers, too, considered it their primary function "to serve as a reservoir of Jewish life and influence in the community, and more particularly to help bring our youth nearer to Jewish life in sentiment, thought, and action." In recent years, however, certain spokesmen of the movement have sensed a complacency within the community which has weakened the Jewish orientation of the centers. The movement has grown rapidly, serving today more than 700,000 members in some 300 centers throughout the country, with an aggregate annual budget of approximately $32,500,000 in 1965. Its great potential—the size of its membership and representation in most communities throughout America—make the undeniable absence of a clear direction of purpose in its work disquieting to many of its leaders.

---

movement, especially one within a minority group, that does not shape its own program through its own sense of purpose is bound to drift, and may eventually become engulfed by the values, interests, and events of the majority culture.

This study was undertaken to determine the stated Jewish and general purposes of the center movement today, and to examine the relative expenditure of energies and resources for their implementation in the centers. An attempt was also made to determine the underlying causes for some of the movement's problems, as reflected in the findings, and to touch upon possible remedial action.

**BASIC AIMS FOR CENTER MOVEMENT**

The following assumptions were established in the study, against which Jewish community center purposes could be tested:

1. It is a Jewish institution;
2. The public, which supports it, considers it primarily an institution of Jewish identification, as well as an instrument for Jewish group survival;
3. Its purposes should therefore promote group cohesiveness among Jews;
4. The character of its present purposes should set it apart as a unique institution in a free society.

These, in broad outline, are also based on the recommendations made by Oscar Janowsky in his famous "Statement of Principles" which attempted to develop some ground rules for the Jewish community centers, the Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Associations, and other kindred agencies seeking affiliation with JWB.

Its specific guidelines stressed the necessity for injecting Jewish spiritual values into all programs, including recreation, and for stressing individual as well as group needs. Janowsky also saw the center as a means for furthering the democratic way of life, and as an instrument for integration of the individual Jew and the Jewish group into the total American community, without loss of their identity as Jews.

He thus saw the centers serving in the dual role of guardians of Jewish group loyalties and of protagonists of the free society that tends to weaken these very loyalties. The community's growing need for Jew-

---

ish group identification made it all the more necessary to establish whether, after a lapse of almost 20 years, such purposes were still to be found among the centers’ stated aims and, more significantly, among the aims actively implemented today.

Janowsky’s major contribution was that his report aroused a preoccupation with the purposes of the center movement.

Over the years, numerous pronouncements have been made about purpose, which were doubtless motivated by the malaise of thoughtful center leaders over problems caused by various changes in the Jewish community: shifts of large segments of the Jewish population to suburban areas and the ensuing disintegration of old ethnocentric Jewish neighborhoods; the reported increase in the incidence of intermarriage among Jews, and the loss of numerous professional center workers to other fields. Expressions of doubt as to whether the “working aims” of the centers were sufficiently focused to cope with these problems became more frequent. Statements on what ought to be the purposes had to be related to the actual state of affairs in the center.

The present study provided no easy answers. But though its limitations are possibly not very much different from those of the Janowsky report of 1948, it has shed some light on the current relationship between center avowals of aims and implementations. In doing so, it has raised and sharpened the edges of many issues which should disturb complacency if, indeed, such complacency exists, about the certainty of a future of the movement as a significant factor in American Jewish life.

**METHODOLOGY**

The Jewish community centers have exercised wide latitude in the use of such terms as purposes, objectives, aims, methods, goals, principles—a difficulty that had been largely overcome by initial definitions of the terms “purpose” and “aim.” Purpose was defined as a philosophical system of ideas which serves as a guide for the behavior of those functioning within the organization. Aims were identified as the component unit parts of a purpose, motivating the organization’s leadership to strive toward specifically desired goals.

With these definitions as a basis, the study, concluded in 1964, was conducted in the following phases:

1. An inventory of the current stated aims was compiled from responses to an open-ended questionnaire to executive directors, request-
ing institutional documents containing statements of purpose. This first questionnaire was mailed to 151 representative centers in large, intermediate, and small communities. From the 55 responses and documents received, 66 discrete aims were culled, refined, the frequency with which they were mentioned was noted, and they were then incorporated into an inventory. Brevity of the inventory required the combination of certain like aims: i.e., "knowledge of Jewish history" and "languages," were recorded as Jewish knowledge; "spirituality," "spiritual welfare," and "religion," as Judaism; "athletics" and "sports," as physical growth.

2. These 66 aims were then listed in a second questionnaire and mailed to the executive directors of the original 151 centers. The directors were requested to scale the degree of implementation of the aims in their own center by encircling any one of the following values for each: 1) high degree of implementation; 2) moderate; 3) low; 4) not implemented at all. In a concluding question the participants were also asked to add any aim that might have been inadvertently omitted from the list, and to suggest one or two ideal priority aims that should be operating in their individual center. Responses to the second questionnaire were received from 108 executive directors. (See Appendix A.)

3. A hierarchy, or ranking, of the operating aims in the entire country was developed from the responses to the second questionnaire, starting at the high of rank one, and descending to the lowest rank of 52. The list was arranged in a manner arbitrarily defining the upper half of ranked aims as receiving strong-to-moderate implementation in the country as a whole, and the lower half as getting little or no implementation. The midpoint was rank 24. The analysis that followed was based upon this ranking order. (See Appendix B, Column 1.)

GENERAL AIMS vs. JEWISH AIMS

Before the ranking procedure, the numerical "votes" received from 108 centers reflected a general belief on the part of executive directors that their agencies strongly implemented their stated aims, with high expenditure of staff energy and agency resources. The numerical responses also suggested the existence of an idealistic belief in the practicability of the center movement's aims. However, the grouping of the aims and their ranking according to the strength of their implementation showed some significant revelations, such as the higher ranking value of a general, rather than a Jewish orientation (Appendix B).
General Aims

RECREATION

The most significant finding in the study was that the overwhelming majority of directors (89) voted the aim “to provide recreation for its members” as commanding the greatest degree of staff energies and resources. A close correlation existed between the evaluation of this aim in the country as a whole and in communities of all sizes, although it was ranked first in intermediate and small communities and second in the large communities, including Metropolitan New York. A further analysis revealed that this recreation aim, grouped with two others relating to the use of leisure and “opportunities for deriving fun,” averaged the highest ranking of all groupings of aims, both general and Jewish.

There was, however, contradiction between the high degree of implementation of recreational aims and the executive directors’ written responses to the concluding question of the second questionnaire. This question, it will be remembered, was designed to invite a narrative value judgment regarding the one or two most important aims in each center. A tabulation of responses to this question (Appendix C) rated these aims in the following order: “Development of the personality,” and “personality development of the Jew” were the two of highest priority in all the respondent centers. “Recreation” was ranked here as fifth in order of priority.

There may have been procedural as well as conceptual reasons for this difference in treatment of the recreational aims by the same respondents. Approximately 30 per cent of the executives did not answer the concluding question at all, and those who did respond seemed not to put their best effort forward. It appeared as though many of them scanned at random the list of aims in the questionnaire, in order to find and record “one or two most important aims.” Since the eye tended to rest on page two of the questionnaire, where the concluding one was found, only seven aims, or 26 per cent of those listed on page two, were “forgotten.” On page one, 20, or 50 per cent of those listed, were “forgotten.” One may further speculate that the treatment of the recreational aim in the last question was implicitly a reflection of the subjective feelings of the executives about recreation in the center. While they originally “voted” that this group of aims was the most highly implemented, they seemed to agree that recreational purposes should not have priority
value. They appeared to reveal a subjective devaluation of the recre-ational aims because they preferred to remember personality development ideals as "most important."

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

In the responses to the concluding question general personality development was ranked higher than the Jewish aspect of this development, and this tended to confirm the assumptions of such a spokesman for the movement as Sanford Solender, that center objectives focus more upon the "total personality" than upon any sectarian aspect of it.

If in the ranking of all 66 aims of the questionnaire recreation had any "competitor" at all, it was the aim related to the "value and dignity of the individual," which emerged at second place in the hierarchy. In the order of 52 ranks into which all the aims were classified, the difference between ranks 1 and 2 was as indistinguishable as two runs due to a single lucky hit at a baseball game. The executives did not agree on which of the two aims was to be ranked first. In the large communities, "the value and dignity of the individual" took precedence over "recreation," 77 respondents ranking it as highly implemented, and 29 as moderately implemented.

It was interesting to note that the more general the language used in phrasing each of the ten personality development aims, the higher their ranking tended to be. Thus, the five higher ranking aims were broad generalizations, such as "value and dignity of the individual"; "opportunities for growth"; "interests of participants"; "further personality development," and "self-expression." The remaining aims, more specific in definition, were placed lower in the hierarchy: "to encourage creativity"; "improve character"; "improve social skills"; "improve physical capabilities," and "promote mental and intellectual growth."

The inference is that the respondents seemed to be less sure about the degree of implementation of aims with more specific meaning than of those phrased more rhetorically, even where these appeared to have the same intent. This suggests a permissive, informal attitude toward program in the centers, as well as a vagueness about objectives. It would be fair to postulate that the center movement's goals would be more concrete if the value attached to implemented aims moved from higher

---

for the specific, to lower for rhetorical generalizations. On the other hand, one can also understand the tendency of the center field to establish the broadest operational policies, thus permitting the inclusion of a wide variety of program preferences.

It should also be mentioned that a negative correlation was found between the averaged judgments of the executive directors respecting all 66 aims, and the frequency with which they were mentioned in the examined center literature. For example, the ten personality aims had high ranks in the judgment of the executives, but they received relatively infrequent attention in the literature. In other words, high frequency of mention in center documents is not to be misconstrued as high priority in practice, nor does low frequency in the literature imply low implementation.

**Jewish Identification**

The center movement's high implementation of aims having to do with intergroup and intragroup relations, in combination with those dealing with Jewish personality development, underscores the center's apparent high and continuing degree of sensitivity about accommodating Jews to the American scene. This is equivalent to a throwback to an earlier period in the history of the Jewish community center movement (1880 to 1920), when the YMHA's had geared themselves to the "Americanization" and adjustment needs of the immigrant. Its emphasis today may be due to the continued influence of earlier decades. Since "Americanization" needs are now academic, there may be an implicit recognition of the desirability of stressing the acculturation process. The higher ranking of intergroup rather than intragroup relations aims indicates a deeper concern about accommodating to the outgroup and to the general culture. What was the intent of the aims dealing with Jewish internal relations?

The intragroup category included specialized Jewish welfare aims whose intent is to meet particular needs of the Jewish community, for the implicit survival of the Jewish group. This category of aims averaged from high to moderate implementation in the movement, and included: "to provide leadership for, and identification with, the Jewish community" (ranks 5 and 6); "to promote the members' self-acceptance as Jews" (rank 9); "to minister to the welfare and social needs of the members" (rank 10); "to provide opportunities for their participation in the Jewish community."
community” (rank 15); “to develop understanding among the various subcultures of the Jewish community” (rank 24), and “to contribute to the stability of the Jewish family” (rank 20). These objectives suggest the center’s desire to condition the individual to identify with the Jewish community. Presumably, if it succeeds along this line, it may then try to work with him toward meeting the welfare needs of the Jewish group. But can the center successfully instill Jewish attitudes and a sense of Jewish identification, considering its latent tendencies toward acculturation, as revealed in this study? Within and outside the center, many Jews today are alienated, lacking Jewish sentiments, knowledge, a sense of tradition, or Jewish aspirations.

Aims Getting Little or No Implementation

In a figurative sense, the aims which fell below rank 24 were considered to be in the lower half of the ranking column. These were understood in terms of a descent to levels of decreasing effectiveness. In the same sense, all aims below rank 40 were assumed to be in the “lowest of the low” category, reflecting relatively no implementation.

Considerable disparity was found to exist between the stated and operating aims. For example, although the formal literature of the agencies attached great importance to aims related to the “democratic ethos of America,” they were “demoted” to the lower half of the ranking column wherein the weakness of their implementation was shown. It is likely that the vote of the executives on these aims is a reflection of the fact that Jews today feel quite secure in America and that, therefore, the respondents found it unnecessary to profess their center’s dedication to democratic ideals in responding to a questionnaire that was internal to the Jewish group. It seemed to be taken for granted. The formal documents of the centers, on the other hand, stressed such goals as “community betterment” and “democracy,” probably because of a concern about the institutional image in the eyes of the outgroup. Another possibility is that such stated aims may have been retained by a conservative institutional leadership that was generally disinclined to change formal documents deriving from a time, at the turn of the century, when “Americanization” programs had been rife in Jewish social agencies.

Almost all the general aims in the lower half of the ranking hierarchy were related to social action, among which were such processes as “community betterment,” “enhancement of American culture,” “strengthening the democratic process,” and “improving world social conditions.”
The latter aim fell all the way to the bottom of the "lowest of the low" category. In spite of all that had been said for years by leaders in the field about the important role of the center in social action or public affairs, such aims proved impotent.

"To help its participants relax from tensions" was classified as a recreation-oriented aim in the study, but its rank contrasted strongly with the other three aims mentioned earlier in the recreation group ("recreation," "leisure," "fun"). It was ranked 27, falling into the category of poorly implemented aims. One may conclude that tensions require a therapy approach, and such techniques of social work are not employed to a significant degree in the center movement today.

JEWISH TRADITION

It is surprising to find evidence of interest in Jewish tradition in the Jewish community center movement, where the name of God has rarely been mentioned in agency pronouncements. While some tradition-oriented aims were getting moderate implementation, others emerged weakly—a manifestation of inherent inconsistencies.

Aims ranked by the respondents as getting moderate implementation in the upper half included "identification with Jewish ideals"; "appreciation of Jewish values," and "preservation of the Jewish heritage." The traditional aims grouped in the lower half, getting poor implementation were: "appreciation of the Jewish tradition" (rank 25); "develop an appreciation for Jewish ethics" (rank 28); "encourage practices in accordance with Jewish morality" (rank 29); "promote a Jewish way of life" (rank 30); "stimulate Jewish thought and ideas" (rank 36).

The quality of language employed for the tradition aims in the higher ranks seems to express a passive tolerance and respect for the Jewish values transmitted from generation to generation. However, the phrasing of the tradition aims in the lower half, characterized by the use of active pragmatic verbs, seems to manifest an intention to perpetuate these values. As the eye scans down the ranks of the "activist" aims, the language phrasing them gathers word-power progressively, from appreciate to develop, to encourage, to promote, to stimulate. However, in reality, the ranking order of these aims actually operates in inverse proportion to their semantic strength; the stronger the language, the weaker the rank. While these aims reflect the center movement's literal respect for Jewish law, culture, customs, and social and religious institutions, their

ranking reveals little purposeful activity to perpetuate them. Indeed, if this were otherwise, averaged opinion throughout the country would not have permitted the aim "to impart Jewish knowledge," which is a strategic way of perpetuating tradition, to slip down to the low implementation rank of 37.

The evaluation of some of these aims showed further inconsistencies in the movement. While, for example, "identification with Jewish ideals" (rank 16) seemed to be operating strongly, by contrast, such related aims as "to promote a Jewish way of life" (rank 30); "to promote identification with world Jewish community" (rank 44); "to teach principles of Judaism to center participants" (rank 45), and "to promote closer ties with the State of Israel" (rank 47), were among the lowest ranked. One may speculate that perhaps the center workers are "practice" oriented and are vague about how to make tradition a significant part of the lives of their agency memberships.

It is evident from the weak implementation of "activist" aims related to tradition that the teaching of prophetic Judaism, an important part of the Jewish tradition, cannot be conceived as a center purpose; nor is the propagation of the message in the daily Shema', which three times daily enjoins the believing Jew to "... teach them [the traditions of the Torah] diligently unto thy children, and ... speak of them when thou sittest in thy house, when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

The findings do suggest that there is more consciousness of Jewish tradition in centers serving large communities than in those in small communities. For the country as a whole, it may be generalized that there is neither a marked tendency to reject Jewish tradition nor an active program to propagate it.

Certain groups of aims, related to intragroup relations and to community betterment, found themselves at the very bottom of the hierarchy (with averaged ranks of 41 and 45 respectively) and, according to the criteria employed in this study, are evidently not being implemented. Among the particular aims in these groups were further inconsistencies. The center may be a "common meeting ground" (rank 24) for Jews of different ideologies, for example, but that does not mean that "unity" (rank 30) is being fostered among the various Jewish subcultures. While the use of the center as a common meeting ground fosters the creation of a hospitable climate of receptivity for members of all denominations, orientations, beliefs, and non-beliefs, the movement's composite pro-
gram, as seen in this study, reflects little effort in developing unity among the subcultures around some common rallying point or cause.

INGROUP MARRIAGE

In view of the Jewish community's deep anxieties over the growing rate of intermarriage the failure of the center movement to implement the aim "to provide opportunities for ingroup marriage" is surprising. Its rank (43) seems to indicate that the movement provides for a long list of welfare needs of the Jewish group, but not for the one directly related to its biological and cultural survival. The existing disparity becomes even more perplexing in the light of the high-to-moderate implementation (rank 19) of such a related aim as the "social needs of the Jewish community." One might draw the inference that the center field prefers to assume no ideological position with regard to ingroup marriage, and to operate, as do many Jewish agencies, on the neutralist assumption that the biological or cultural survival of the Jews as a group is possible as long as they are left alone in a free society.

This assumption, which follows the thinking of such founders of the contemporary Jewish community as Isaac Mayer Wise and Solomon Schechter, is seriously questioned by Marshall Sklare, who states:

... having finally established themselves in such a society, Jews are now coming to realize that their survival is threatened—not by Gentile hostility, but by Jewish indifference. This is what finally makes intermarriage so bitter a dilemma to confront. ... In short, it casts into doubt American Jewry's dual ideal of full participation in the society and the preservation of Jewish identity. And once the rate of intermarriage is seen to be growing, the contradiction in the basic strategy of American Jewish adjustment is nakedly exposed.6

Whether or not the Jewish community center movement can or wishes to do something about this problem today, is not clear. An examination of the attitudes of the movement's power structure and memberships on the subject of ingroup marriage would shed more light on this question.

THE JEWISH PEOPLE

It was confusing to find the aim "to promote identification with the world Jewish community" at the bottom of the lower half, with a rank of 44, while the related aim "to promote a sense of identification with the Jewish People," by contrast, showed strong implementation, with a rank of 13. Although both aims apparently have the same intent, the center

movement probably views the latter as being in consonance with an important social-work objective—identification with people, with Jewish people in this instance. The concept of "the Jewish People," as espoused by Mordecai Kaplan,\(^7\) views peoplehood, or Jewish spiritual nationalism, as being essentially a state of mind, an act of consciousness, which is indispensable for the continued "identity of the Jewish people." Kaplan's definition is cited here only to contrast it with the center movement's apparent disinclination to commit itself on an internationally constituted community of the Jewish People and its probable desire to confine its interest to Jewish people in America. This inference is reinforced by the center movement's implied tepid attitude toward the World Federation of Jewish Community Centers and YM and YWHA's, founded by JWB to promote a cooperative and inspirational tie between the American movement and Jewish centers, and youth groups in many countries abroad.

**The State of Israel**

The center field's attitude toward "closer ties with the State of Israel," an aim which found itself among the least implemented (ranked 47, sixth from the lowest), does not reflect the positive attitude of most American Jews toward Israel. Marshall Sklare and Benjamin Ringer, in their study of Baltimore, Md., residents in 1948, found that virtually all had endorsed the establishment and United States recognition of Israel.\(^8\) In 1952 Sklare and Vosk also interviewed 200 Jewish families in Riverton, and their findings supported the earlier study.\(^9\)

In searching for an explanation of the center movement's obvious lack of interest in promoting some sort of relationship with Israel one might consider the possibility whether a special institutional factor operating within the movement may not make this aim so inoperative.

**Institutional Aims**

Among the aims ranked in the lower half of the scale were three in the category "Ends Related to the Existence of a Jewish Community


Center Movement,” which the respondents doubtless associated with the Janowsky Survey. These were: “to promote institutional identification with the Jewish community center movement” (rank 34); “to uphold Janowsky’s ‘Statement of Principles’” (rank 37), and “to achieve primacy of Jewish content in the program” (rank 38). Although many other aims listed in the questionnaire had also been mentioned by Janowsky, these three evidently triggered direct associations with his report. In effect, they almost consistently triggered a negative reaction on the part of the respondents. It may, therefore, be assumed that the Janowsky “Principles,” as such, receive little, if any, implementation in the center movement today. Their formal adoption by agencies most likely signifies little more than a desire on the part of center boards to conform, at least outwardly, to JWB’s institutional expectations. It is possible that a more vigorous and sustained espousal of the Janowsky “Statement of Principles” by JWB and the National Association of Jewish Center Workers would have moved the centers to give these concepts more adequate implementation.

**IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Despite the admitted limitations of the study and the inherent ambiguity and lack of philosophical precision of the stated purposes, certain conclusions can be drawn from the data. Chief among them are the contradictions inherent in the center movement’s avowed purposes, as opposed to its “working” purposes.

**The Center as a Movement**

To begin with, the movement’s lack of emphasis on many center-related aims gives rise to the basic question whether the centers are concerned to any appreciable degree with the propagation of the movement, as such. If the operational budgets of the centers were dependent upon a central national source, their ideology and attitudes would probably come under closer country-wide scrutiny, and this would ensure some degree of institutional direction. But allocations for operating expenses come from local fund-raising resources. And while fund-raising leaders often exercise some indirect, subtle control over the local center, they evidently are not sufficiently center movement oriented to guide the im-

---

10 Janowsky, op. cit.
plementation of the broader principles that should govern community center work.

What Makes for Jewishness?

The acculturation process in American society, which increasingly numbs the sense of group cohesion of many Jews, tends to intensify their alienation from any Jewish institution seeking to hold them, unless that institution succeeds in evolving more positive values and successful techniques. It has been inferred that the center movement accommodates more to acculturation by emphasizing the easily attainable objectives of recreation, leisure, fun, and personality development, and less to purposes dealing with the survival of the Jews as a group. It has also been inferred that its quest for Jewish group identity may be losing ground, as is its role as a cohesive force within its own ranks and within the Jewish community.

On the surface, the primacy of implemented recreation and leisure aims seems to correlate closely with Solender's view that the center "po-sits its program on the great values to be derived from the constructive use of what we term people's leisure." But the center field is not strongly committed to Solender's further view of "the use of a portion of this free time for positive purposes related to the Jew and his group." 11

The aims have a vague, nonideological base, and are geared to satisfying interests and needs related to pleasure-seeking and "deriving fun from center activities." The activity itself, rather than the institution, becomes the focus of the individual member's attention. The past and the future of the center and the Jewish community are overshadowed by the here and now, with minimal obligation or commitment to ideology or long-range institutional purposes.

Rabbi Kaplan criticized this very tendency in the Jewish community some 20 years ago:

American Jewish life seethes with activity. Federations, welfare funds, community chests, United Jewish Appeals, hospitals, orphan asylums, homes for the aged, fraternal orders, public relations agencies, . . . make quite a clatter. What permanent significance, if any, do they have? Are all these efforts with their vast expenditure of energy part of the advance or of the retreat of our inner forces? 12

This criticism is obviously directed to most agencies serving the Jewish community, and, as such, applies also to the center field. While center emphasis on recreation may be a reflection of the fact that Jews feel at home in the general culture of America, it cannot be considered a reflection of the Jewish "inner forces" of which Kaplan speaks.

**Vagueness of Purposes**

The ambiguous, uncritical use of language in expressing aims also is a failing that is not confined to the center alone. As a matter of fact, one suspects that the center has borrowed its language from the constitutions or publications of kindred organizations. Alfred Jospe points to this very difficulty in his essays on Hillel activities on the college campus:

> There is no dearth of definitions of Hillel's purposes. If you ask students, as we have frequently done, what they conceive Hillel's main purpose to be, you get an enormous variety of answers, thoughtful or crude, perceptive or superficial, some phrased beautifully and some put in a way to take you flinch.\(^\text{13}\)

The universality of the problem is underlined by the fact that the San Francisco branch of the YMCA in a self study\(^\text{14}\) referred to manifold difficulties in defining its purpose. Even the President's Commission on National Goals abundantly documented in a report its struggle in defining goals for the American people in the 1960's.\(^\text{15}\)

**Neutrality**

The center movement is also hampered in achieving clarity of purpose because, aside from difficulties in formulation, its basic purposes are, or have become, unclear.

Although the center has been exposed over the years to a profusion of ideologies in the Jewish community, it has not specifically accepted and championed any. Nor has it developed an ideology uniquely its own. As Benjamin Halpern\(^\text{16}\) cautioned not so long ago at the Lakewood Con-

---


ference, the center movement needs "a clear articulation of the specific form of Judaism" with which it can "identify itself, which it can defend as its own cause."

Neutral Position of Center Movement

The data of the study indicate that the center's failure to adopt a positive program of its own stems from its inclination to reject any ideology having a seemingly polarized end, survivalist or assimilationist. The movement's weak implementation of Jewish aims was established; but its rejection of assimilationist aims was just as strong. The reaction to an aim that inadvertently won notoriety as a result of a typographical error in the second questionnaire may serve as illustration. It read "To facilitate the adjustment of Jews to American society with (should have read without) loss of their Jewish identity." In this form, it clearly advocated assimilation. The vast majority of respondent executive directors ranked it very low. In rare instances, only where the respondents took the trouble to change the wording to read "without loss," was it rated as highly or moderately implemented. The centers were less severe, but also negative, in ranking "integration of the Jew into American society" as well as most other intergroup and intercultural aims. While it has been the policy of the movement to welcome non-Jews as members, it would almost appear as though integration, intergroup, and intercultural aims were looked upon as steps toward assimilation and, as such, were overtly rejected as inactive.

Center executives in the smaller communities were more sensitive about relations with the non-Jewish community than were those in Metropolitan New York and other large urban areas. It may be, therefore, that the smaller the community, the greater is its concern about good relations with the non-Jewish community; the larger the concentration of Jews, the greater their sense of security about their image among non-Jews.

The center movement's apparent assumption that Jewish survival is possible by following a dual course of full participation in the majority culture and the simultaneous preservation of Jewish identity is entirely in keeping with its neutralist position. The study suggested, however, that the dual strategy, as presently implemented, is not working to the advantage of the Jewish community. The study also established that the preponderance and diversity of the stated Jewish aims do not necessarily mean that they are more actively implemented than its general aims. It
does suggest, however, a larger variety of concerns for the survival of the Jewish group in America.

The general trend in the country toward the growing dependence of the family on all types of communal agencies for services which formerly were in its own province,\(^\text{17}\) seems to indicate that the Jewish family, too, is growing increasingly dependent upon Jewish community agencies, including the center. As the American Jewish family becomes increasingly alienated from its past, it becomes more dependent upon agencies like the center to give it a rational basis for identification with the Jewish group and culture. But Jewish knowledge and Jewish experiences are basic to the development of this sense of identification. If the center field is not offering these today, will it be willing or able to do so tomorrow?

The growing forces for the integration of other minorities in America may also impose increasing pressures on the center movement to place greater stress on intergroup relations. In this event, the center will be particularly vulnerable because it lacks a strong ideological base to preserve its identity as a Jewish institution.

**Centrality of Individual and Accommodation**

It is consistent with the stated purposes of the center field that most of its major aims were found to be focused upon the individual who is served primarily in groups. This is based on the assumption by the ideologists of the movement that the center group work experience will bring about the kind of changes in the personality and values of the individual that will increase his emotional identification with the Jewish community.\(^\text{18}\) This remains to be proved. A further assumption is that the goals of the individual member or of the group are consistent with the goals of the center and with the needs of both the general and Jewish community. This assumption must be subjected to the test of further study. Center ideology was interpreted by Bertram H. Gold at the Lakewood Conference as follows:

Most of us saw the Center’s “ideology” not as a simple catch word, but as arising out of the total context of what we stand for and what we believe in; the things we do and the ways in which we do them. Seen in this way, our ideology stems from the dedication to the quest for Jewish identification and justification.


It is related to the way in which we help the individual to struggle to find a definition of Judaism that is satisfactory to him.\textsuperscript{19}

The question arises whether the major responsibility for finding a definition of purposes rests on the institution or on the individual. If the individual is primarily responsible, the institution is relieved of the obligation of presenting an ideology, and anything the individual accepts for himself is presumably acceptable to the center.

\textbf{Leadership Development}

According to the findings, the Jewish community center field has been expending major efforts to develop leadership for the Jewish community, a task of utmost importance for its future. Who are the leaders now being developed, and what are their goals? Are they lay leaders of center boards whose talents, once recognized in local communities, are sought by Jewish federations and national Jewish agencies? Are they staff members of centers, who are receiving on-the-job professional training and experience; or social-work students on supervised field work assignments in centers; or outstanding members of center groups, accepting leadership responsibility for the first time? Is the primary objective of such a program to provide lay and professional leadership only for centers, or also for the rabbinate, for Jewish education, and for the various national Jewish agencies and their fund-raising bodies? In this context, a review of the center training program for lay and professional people seems indicated. Once "trained," what is the nature of their commitment to the Jewish community? How does their leadership compare with that found in other Jewish institutions?

\textbf{Professionalization and Center Values}

With the professionalization of agency staffs, the movement's perception of its purposes undoubtedly underwent many subtle changes, for it entrusted its value system to workers whose training and philosophy are not necessarily rooted in the Jewish community, nor necessarily in keeping with center intentions. Since World War II, these workers have recognized social group work,\textsuperscript{20} with its emphasis on the individual, the group,

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Future Directions of American Jewish Life and Their Implications for Jewish Community Centers, Proceedings of Conference at Lakewood, New Jersey, January 6 to January 9, 1963, op. cit., p. 161.}

\textsuperscript{20} It should be made clear that the term "group work" was not included among the aims of the Jewish community center in this study, because it suggested a method rather than a goal. For similar reasons, "adult education," "physical education," and "Jewish education" were also omitted.
and the process of personality development, as their core discipline. As a result one may surmise that they generally have a stronger loyalty to broader social-work aims, as espoused by their national professional organizations, than they do to center purposes.

As Harleigh B. Trecker described it,

Group workers believe that the person is more important than the activity. Group workers believe in the dignity and worth of every human personality. Group workers believe in the infinite capacity of people to grow and change. They recognize that growth comes from within and that growth opportunities must be provided so that these capacities for growth can be realized. Group workers believe, furthermore, that people have the capacity to make wise judgments and when people are given an opportunity to accept responsibility they tend to behave in a responsible manner.\(^{21}\)

The evolution and implementation of basic center objectives have been left to the chance that somehow the workers' orientation and center objectives would converge at a point in time, or at least follow a parallel course. But the data show that there is little likelihood of an adjustment of differences between the avowed purposes of the agencies and the perceptions of their executive directors. There is reason to speculate that this has been equally true of boards of directors.

The center movement has apparently borrowed heavily from American social work philosophy, especially in the use of noncontroversial generalizations, which tend to demonstrate that agency purposes are in keeping with the objectives of American democracy. But, at the same time, purposes that have been deemed unique to the center movement appear to be growing vaguer, and there is no indication that a drastic change is imminent. An apparent loss of direction has resulted, causing a sense of malaise on the part of numerous center leaders. Herman Stein\(^{22}\) feels that "inherent strains will continue" (and, he hopefully adds, so will "efforts to resolve" them). The center movement, through a unique and particularistic program for the education of its workers, may be able to assure them the Jewish knowledge and active commitment to Jewish ideals, in addition to social-work training, with which they may fulfill expectations. It should be remembered, however, that the implementation of center purposes, as examined in this study, was based upon the perceptions of the executive directors. They do not com-

---


pletely represent the agency’s collective will or consensus. Purposes may be strongly influenced by such variables as the recipients of center services, the power structure of the board, turnover in staffs, sources of support, the surrounding community, and the prevailing culture, or any combination of these factors. The study of the attitudes of each of these in relation to the program and purposes of centers would add to our knowledge.

**Social Action**

Despite the fact that social workers have regarded social action as a deeply rooted responsibility of their profession, the low ranking of social action aims indicates feeble, almost nonexistent, activity of this character. Failure in this sphere may, in part, be ascribed to the fact that the center has come to be associated primarily with recreation. For where people play in their leisure hours, they do not seem to respond to the challenge of causes or social issues requiring the investment of time, energy, commitment, and devotion. And, as an agency dedicated to the democratic process, the center can rarely undertake social action that will be representative of its membership because consensus is difficult to achieve among the varied groups it serves. At best, a consensus is difficult to achieve because of the diverse viewpoints on any one issue among the different groups, subgroups, and individuals within any one center. There are, however, other reasons why social action aims were found to be fairly inoperative. There seems to be doubt in the movement as to which social action is appropriate to the center, what form such action should take, and how to go about it. In addition, there appears to be a general disinclination on the part of the administration, both lay and professional, to permit the center to become embroiled in public controversy. A final aggravating factor probably is the tendency of boards of directors, largely drawn from affluent sectors of society, to maintain a conservative outlook on crucial questions of a social and political nature.

**Future of Center Movement**

In the light of the composite picture of the operating and non-operating purposes of the contemporary Jewish community center movement which emerged from the study, one may ask those concerned with its mission where they wish to go from here. Perhaps they are content with the *status quo*, with neutrality, with the center’s seemingly compromised
objectives that have displaced the earlier goals of Jewish identification. The operating purposes today indicate a more generalized level of operation in the form of recreation and personality development for Jews. The leadership may, on the other hand, come to realize that the vitality of the movement depends on its retreat from neutrality; that its service to the Jewish community depends on a more definitive Jewish program.

It is hoped that the findings presented here will spur the center movement to a reexamination of its goals. The author recognizes that the purposes of social institutions operate in subtle ways, often affected by latent forces of which even their leaders may not be aware, and that it is generally difficult to predict how their stated purposes will operate. It is therefore all the more important for a thriving movement periodically to evaluate its position and to highlight its future course. The center movement's leadership and its following will have to venture out of their safe moorings, and examine their will, or lack of it, to survive as part of the Jewish group. If they wish to survive, the question remains under what conditions they wish to do so.

Whatever the decision, the Jewish community center movement will inevitably face changes. Do those associated with it wish to control the changes? An institution seeking definition, understanding, and control of its situation cannot be satisfied with the kind of neutrality about which Thoreau once mused:

Well, we are safe and strong, for now we sit
Beside a hearth where no dim shadows flit,
Where nothing cheers nor saddens, but a fire
Warms feet and hands—nor does to more aspire:
By whose compact utilitarian heap
The present may sit down and go to sleep.23

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Using the scale on the right, please encircle the appropriate number showing the degree to which, in your judgment, each listed aim is actually implemented in your agency.

(Definition of the word "implementation": the extent of effort, energy and resources expended by your staff in attempting to achieve each aim.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Aim of the Jewish Community Center Is:</th>
<th>Degree of Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. To help its participants relax from tensions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To uphold the JWB &quot;Statement of Principles&quot; by Oscar I. Janowsky</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To foster the arts of the general community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To develop an appreciation of the Jewish tradition</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To develop an appreciation of Jewish ethics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. To promote a Jewish way of life</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. To promote the welfare of the general community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. To help in education of the general community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. To encourage Jewish culture</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. To preserve the heritage of America</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. To encourage acceptance of differences among individuals and groups</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. To teach the principles of Judaism to Center participants</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. To advance integration of the Jew into American society</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. To provide recreation for its members</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. To stimulate identification with Jewish ideals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. To encourage social action for improvement of social conditions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. To help promote the democratic process in America</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. To encourage involvement in local general civic affairs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. To promote opportunities for Jewish group survival</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. To encourage membership's identification with the Jewish community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. To preserve the heritage of the Jewish group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. To develop the social skills of its participants</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. To stimulate Jewish thoughts and ideas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. To promote the mental and intellectual growth of its participants</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Aim of the Jewish Community Center Is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Degree of Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. To serve as the meeting place of local general organizations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. To encourage creativity of the individual</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. To facilitate the personality development of the Jew</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. To help improve world social conditions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. To promote a sense of identification with the Jewish People</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. To promote the stability of the Jewish family</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. To promote the proper exercise of American citizenship</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. To assist in the improvement of the character of the individual</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. To promote closer ties with the State of Israel</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. To provide opportunities for growth of individual personality</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. To encourage self-expression of the individual</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. To encourage intercultural relations between Jews and other groups</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. To promote the purposeful use of one's leisure time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. To impart Jewish knowledge to its participants</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. To promote the health of the general community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. To promote the welfare of the Jewish community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. To meet the social needs of the Jewish community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. To provide opportunities for participation in the Jewish community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. To meet the interests of the participants</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. To promote identification with the world Jewish community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. To help improve social conditions in the general community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. To develop unity among the sub-cultures of the Jewish community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. To stress the value and dignity of the individual</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. To encourage self-development of the Jewish personality</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. To foster appreciation of the Jewish group and its culture</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The questionnaire was circulated with the item reading as misprinted here. It should have read "without loss."
### The Aim of the Jewish Community Center Is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Degree of Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50. To facilitate the adjustment of Jews to American Society with loss of their Jewish identity*</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. To help the individual accept himself as a Jew</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. To develop leadership for the Jewish community</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. To encourage inter-group relations between Jews and other racial and cultural groups</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. To promote an institutional identification with the Jewish Community Center movement</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. To provide its participants with opportunities for deriving fun</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. To encourage an appreciation of Jewish values</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. To encourage practices in accordance with Jewish morality</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. To develop the physical capacities of the individual</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. To promote self-fulfillment of the individual and satisfaction with his being a Jew</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. To further the development of the personality of the individual</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. To achieve the primacy of Jewish content in the program</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. To encourage contributions of the Jewish group to American culture</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. To raise the cultural level of the general community</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. To develop a common meeting ground for Jewish sub-cultures</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65. To serve as a meeting place for local Jewish organizations</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66. To provide opportunities for in-group marriage</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Concluding Question:

If you had to choose one or two aims representing the most important current purpose(s) of your agency, write the one or two you would choose in the order of their priority.
APPENDIX B

Average ranking of aims from high to low based upon judgment of executive directors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Large N.Y. Cities</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Small</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>To provide recreation for its members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#47</td>
<td>To stress the value and dignity of the individual</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#34</td>
<td>To provide opportunities for growth of individual's personality</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#43</td>
<td>To meet the interests of the participants</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#60</td>
<td>To further development of personality of individual</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#52</td>
<td>To develop leadership for the Jewish community</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>To encourage identification with the Jewish community</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#35</td>
<td>To encourage self-expression of the individual</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#37</td>
<td>To promote the purposeful use of one's leisure time</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#51</td>
<td>To help the individual accept himself as a Jew</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#26</td>
<td>To encourage creativity of the individual</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#55</td>
<td>To provide its participants opportunities for deriving fun</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#32</td>
<td>To assist in improvement of character of individual</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#27</td>
<td>To facilitate personality development of the Jew</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#29</td>
<td>To promote sense of identification with the Jewish People</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>To encourage acceptance of difference among individuals and groups</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>To develop the social skills of its participants</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Ranks of Aims in Communities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>N.Y.</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Small</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#42</td>
<td>To provide opportunities for participation in the Jewish community</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>To stimulate identification with Jewish ideals</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#58</td>
<td>To develop the physical capacities of the individual</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#59</td>
<td>To promote self-fulfillment of the individual Jew and satisfaction with his being a Jew</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#40</td>
<td>To promote the welfare of the Jewish community</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#49</td>
<td>To foster appreciation of Jewish group and its culture</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#41</td>
<td>To meet the social needs of the Jewish community</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#30</td>
<td>To promote the stability of the Jewish family</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>To promote mental and intellectual growth of participants</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>To encourage Jewish culture</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#48</td>
<td>To encourage self-development of the Jewish personality</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#56</td>
<td>To encourage an appreciation of Jewish values</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>To promote opportunity for Jewish group survival</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>To preserve the heritage of the Jewish group</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#25</td>
<td>To serve as the meeting place for local Jewish organizations</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#64</td>
<td>To develop common meeting ground for Jewish sub-cultures</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>To develop an appreciation of the Jewish tradition</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>To help promote the democratic process in America</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Ranks of Aims in Communities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Large N.Y. Cities</th>
<th>Intermediate N.Y. Cities</th>
<th>Small</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># 1</td>
<td>To help its participants relax from tensions</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 5</td>
<td>To develop an appreciation of Jewish ethics</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 57</td>
<td>To encourage practices in accordance with Jewish morality</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 6</td>
<td>To promote a Jewish way of life</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 46</td>
<td>To develop unity among sub-cultures of Jewish community</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 7</td>
<td>To promote welfare of the general community</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 10</td>
<td>To preserve the heritage of America</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 25</td>
<td>To serve as the meeting place of local general organizations</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 54</td>
<td>To promote an institutional identification with the Jewish Community Center movement</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 13</td>
<td>To advance the integration of the Jew into American society</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 31</td>
<td>To promote the proper exercise of American citizenship</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 23</td>
<td>To stimulate Jewish thoughts and ideas</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 2</td>
<td>To uphold the JWB &quot;Statement of Principles&quot; by Oscar I. Janowsky</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 38</td>
<td>To impart Jewish knowledge to its participants</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 61</td>
<td>To achieve the primacy of Jewish content in the program</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 62</td>
<td>To encourage contributions of the Jewish group to American culture</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Ranks of Aims in Communities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Large N.Y. Cities</th>
<th>Intermediate N.Y. Cities</th>
<th>Small</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
# 3              | To foster the arts of the general community                      | 40  | 20                | 17                       | 30    | 25   | 31   |
#63              | To raise the cultural level of the general community              | 41  | 30                | 12                       | 36    | 29   | 22   |
#36              | To encourage intercultural relations between Jews and other groups| 41  | 23                | 21                       | 35    | 32   | 19   |
#53              | To encourage inter-group relations between Jews and other racial and cultural groups | 42  | 29                | 20                       | 39    | 30   | 23   |
#66              | To provide opportunities for in-group marriage                    | 43  | 16                | 22                       | 31    | 36   | 29   |
#18              | To encourage involvement in local general civic affairs            | 43  | 27                | 19                       | 38    | 35   | 22   |
#44              | To promote identification with the world Jewish community         | 44  | 24                | 21                       | 37    | 38   | 21   |
#12              | To teach the principles of Judaism to Center participants          | 45  | 23                | 20                       | 34    | 33   | 32   |
#50              | To facilitate the adjustment of Jews to American society with loss of their Jewish identity | 46  | 20                | 23                       | 36    | 38   | 23   |
#33              | To promote closer ties with the State of Israel                   | 47  | 26                | 17                       | 36    | 37   | 25   |
# 8              | To help in the education of the general community                 | 48  | 32                | 19                       | 40    | 34   | 25   |
#16              | To encourage social action for improvement of social conditions    | 49  | 28                | 16                       | 36    | 39   | 30   |
#45              | To help improve social conditions in the general community         | 50  | 34                | 18                       | 41    | 38   | 33   |
#39              | To promote the health of the general community                    | 51  | 31                | 23                       | 42    | 40   | 33   |
#28              | To help improve world social conditions                            | 52  | 33                | 25                       | 43    | 52   | 34   |
APPENDIX C

Frequency and ranking of choices of all executive directors in response to concluding question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Mentioned Aim</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#60 To further development of the personality of individual</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#27 To facilitate personality development of the Jew</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20 To encourage membership’s identification with the Jewish community</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#46 To develop unity among sub-cultures of the Jewish community</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14 To provide recreation for its members</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#51 To help individual accept himself as a Jew</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19 To promote opportunities for Jewish group survival</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21 To preserve the heritage of the Jewish group</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#41 To meet social needs of the Jewish community</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#52 To develop leadership for the Jewish community</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#56 To encourage appreciation of Jewish values</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6 To promote a Jewish way of life</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#37 To promote a purposeful use of one’s leisure time</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#38 To impart Jewish knowledge to its participants</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#58 To develop physical capacities of the individual</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#59 To promote self-fulfillment of the individual Jew and satisfaction with his being a Jew</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#29 To promote a sense of identification with the Jewish People</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#42 To provide opportunities for participation in the Jewish community</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#47 To stress the value and dignity of the individual</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 To uphold the JWB “Statement of Principles” of Oscar I. Janowsky</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#43 To meet the interests of the participants</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#49 To foster appreciation of the Jewish group and its culture</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#53 To encourage inter-group relations between Jews and other racial and cultural groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#62 To encourage contributions of the Jewish group to American culture</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#64 To develop common meeting ground for Jewish subcultures</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#66 To provide opportunities for in-group marriage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1 To help its participants relax from tensions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9 To encourage Jewish culture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11 To accept differences among individuals and groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Number in Questionnaire

| #12  | To teach the principles of Judaism to Center participants | 1 | 13 |
| #15  | To stimulate identification with Jewish ideals          | 1 | 13 |
| #16  | To encourage social action for improvement of social conditions | 1 | 13 |
| #18  | To encourage involvement in local general civic affairs | 1 | 13 |
| #23  | To stimulate Jewish thoughts and ideas                  | 1 | 13 |
| #31  | To promote proper exercise of American citizenship      | 1 | 13 |
| #41  | To meet social needs of the Jewish community            | 1 | 13 |
| #61  | To achieve the primacy of Jewish content in the program | 1 | 13 |
| #65  | To serve as a meeting place of local Jewish organizations | 1 | 13 |