

## A RELIGION LIKE ALL OTHER RELIGIONS

### A. Introduction

The self-image of a man depends upon the mirror into which he looks. As a minority figure, the Jew is traditionally surrounded by two mirrors; one, the outer mirror of his majority environment, the other, the inner mirror of his own people. The freer a society the more crucial is his choice of the dominant mirror for the purpose of self-definition and self-valuation.

During the Middle Ages both mirrors reflected a common image of the Jew as a supernatural being. No matter how distorted the outer mirror, its refraction coincided with the self-image of the Jew as a person of cosmic significance. Elected or rejected, the "root of the olive tree" could not be ignored. In Paris, Barcelona and Tortosa, his role in sacred history had to be reckoned with, the claims of his holy books had to be examined as the primary sources for the promise of Messiah and the assertions of revelation. Stumbling block or path-finder, in any event, the metaphysical grandeur of the Jew as God's instrument was assured. The inner mirror was whole, the theological image clear.

With the emancipation, the rise of the State and the decline of the Church, both traditional mirrors were shattered. The wholeness of the image became fragmented into diverse sectors - national, religious, racial. This was true for the Gentile as for the Jewish world. In the case of the Jew, the face of the Anti-Christ was secularized into a

Fagin type, Judas transfigured into the "landlord squatting on the window-sill."

Closer to our own era, the outer mirror ceased reflecting any sharp, distinctive character of the Jew. It was as if the silver of the pre-modern age had been peeled away leaving a translucent glass. The Jew had become imageless. More frightening, the <sup>view from the</sup> inner mirror became like ~~unto~~ the external one. Neither saint nor sinner, the Jew neither loved nor hated himself. ~~Rather,~~ <sup>He simply</sup> ~~He~~ accepted himself as an undifferentiated being. ~~(The outer mirror cast its reflection upon the smaller, inner one, overwhelming it completely.)~~ "We were in their sight as grasshoppers, and so were we in our own sight" (Numbers 13:33). The danger of assimilation <sup>was</sup> marked by the vanishing inner mirror, which <sup>had once been</sup> ~~once was~~ the major and ~~most~~ authentic one, and a growing <sup>dependence</sup> ~~reliance~~ upon the external mirror.

B. The New Jewish Theologians

<sup>The task of regaining</sup>  
A ~~to regain~~ the status of world relevance, <sup>it had been</sup> ~~as~~ reflected in the pre-modern world, emerged as the concern of some of the serious members of the post-emancipation Jewish community. <sup>a</sup> ~~The~~ vacuum <sup>of ideology and activity developing</sup> ~~remained~~ ever since the establishment of the State of Israel, <sup>abetted by</sup> ~~and~~ the dying memory of the Hitlerian epoch, <sup>has</sup> offered a unique opportunity to a new type of American Jewish theologian. The latter, aided by a variety of sociological conditions in America, were united in their judgment that secular efforts, social and political ideology or humanistic reconstruction of religion are incapable of recapturing the central role the Jew <sup>once</sup> ~~over~~ played. Neither Zionism nor Reform nor Secular Jewishness could return to us the glory

In our own day,

of our pre-emancipation past. <sup>Though</sup> Varied in emphasis, the younger Jewish theologians agreed that only the reformulated claim to the Jew's supernatural vocation as God's chosen witness to an unredeemed world would enable him to re-enter the arena of world history from which he allowed himself to be exiled. *They reflect*

One of the most articulate spokesmen of this mode of theologizing is Arthur A. Cohen whom Will Herberg, an older kindred spirit, regards as a herald of the post-liberal, post-Zionist world. <sup>1</sup> Bolder than many of his peers, Cohen's perception of the Jew's status in the world and the need to conceive it anew is representative of the new work of younger Jewish theologians. *They reflect, in theological terms, the changing self-image of the fourth generation Jew in America.*

Writing in 1959, Cohen is resentful of the Jew's being ignored by the Church which "no longer looks upon the Jew with astonishment and lack of comprehension. The Jew is no longer as he was until the waning of the counter-revolution, a species of devil, a partner of heresy and iniquity".<sup>2</sup> ~~XXXXXX~~ In proper context, Cohen will be understood as asking for no trouble from the Church. He <sup>is</sup> here express<sup>ing</sup> his annoyance with the condescension of the Church towards the Jew who is treated not as a mysterious instrument of salvation but merely as a convertible object. Elsewhere, he places the blame for the Church's inattention to the Jew upon Jewish leadership. By shrivelling the ~~the~~ conception of the Jew <sup>into</sup> a secular being and neglecting his authentic status as

-4-

a supernatural ~~being~~<sup>being</sup>, Jewish leaders turned religion into an instrument for survival. With religion ~~made~~<sup>made</sup> into a "gelatinous preservative" of Jewish life, ~~it~~<sup>They</sup> shied away from the dialogic confrontation with the Christianity of the West. Cohen's sensitivity to what he alleges is Jewish secular provincialism and self-estrangement from sacred history is reminiscent of Claude Montefiore's attitude. Montefiore, a late nineteenth century thinker of Reformed Jewry in England, argued that "if Judaism does not come to terms with the Gospels, it must almost be a creed in a corner, of little importance and with no expansive power."<sup>3</sup> Achad Ha'am characterized Montefiore's mood, and it applies equally to the younger Jewish theologians, as the "sorrow of meaningless isolation". For Cohen, theological universalism stands against the irrelevance of ethnic parochialism. He thus singles out Will Herberg as the Jewish theologian who "gives us something which most American Jewish theology has lacked: a conviction of its relevance to all human history, rather than to the special needs and preoccupations of the Jew".<sup>4</sup>

For close to two centuries now, Cohen argues, we have looked into the mirror of European secular society and learned to see ourselves accordingly as a secular, "natural" community. This mirror mimicry has betrayed our supernatural vocation. In Israel, ~~it~~<sup>it</sup> has turned us into a nation like all other nations and in the diaspora into an ethnic group like all other ethnic groups. But our authentic appositeness, Cohen contends, is to the Christian community. The super-

natural Jew and Christian recognize the complementary character of our spiritual vocations. Once conceived of as a metahistorical community, Jews may again enter as ~~medians~~<sup>mediaries</sup> between Christian and Islamic culture, may again engage in the dialogue and as co-equals. Indeed, a (super) natural kinship exists among the theologically oriented. Supernaturalists, no matter <sup>what</sup> the religion they defend, speak a common ~~language~~<sup>language</sup> "respecting those few indispensable, crucial principles which are the realia of faith"<sup>5</sup> The secularist is a stranger to this world, whereas the religionist knows, understands and tolerates his religious other. Thus, the supernatural Jew, theologically sophisticated, "would not be so impatient with the apparent immobility and dispassion of the Church" as is the merely natural Jew.<sup>6</sup>

### C. JUDAISM without Jewishness

"Jewishness", a <sup>rather</sup> vague ~~enough~~ term referring to a host of non-theological attitudes, practices and ideologies, <sup>appears</sup> ~~rises~~ as the stumbling block in the way of our Jewish theologians. "Jewishness", which appears to be the generic term the theologians use to cover such heresies as humanism, liberalism, naturalism, secularism, ethnicism - stands in the way of rehabilitating Judaism in theological terms. It also proves a <sup>source of</sup> constant embarrassment ~~in~~ Christian-Jewish encounters.

The theologians ~~know~~ nowhere define what they mean by Jewishness. But it seems to agree with the description which the sociologist Nathan Glazer offers in his book on

American Judaism. There he refers to Jewishness as "the common element in a variety of activities - religious, political, cultural, intellectual, philanthropic".<sup>7</sup> He contrasts "Jewishness" with "Judaism", and sometimes "Jewish" with "Judaist". Jewishness is illustrated by such activities and attitudes as maybe found in Zionism, Yiddishism, the political liberalism of the Jews, Jewish mores and cultural patterns - generally the a-theological manifestations of the Jewish community.

This civilizational character of Judaism proves bothersome to this brand of theologians. For one thing, it introduces an alien element in the theological conversations between Christian and Jew. The Christian can readily comprehend Judaism as a religion on his terms, i.e. a faith, creed and set of rituals. Christian theologians will recognize as part of their working vocabulary such concepts as election, Messiah, sin and redemption, salvation and eschatology. But "Jewishness" has no analogous place in his universe of discourse. It is not easy for the Christian to comprehend the attitudinal expressions of Jewishness which entail a loyalty to a people which transcend questions as to the creedal or ritual conduct of its members. The Jewish concern for the well-being of Jews who ~~are~~<sup>may</sup> not even <sup>be</sup> believing Jews is a mark of Jewishness which the Christian theologian is more apt to relegate to the secular domain. If Judaism is a religion, what do such secular activities have to do with it? Is Zionism a religious credo? The Christian theo-

logian who sees Judaism through categories borrowed from his own tradition can find correlation between Buber or Herberg and Kierkegaard and Niebuhr; what is he to make of Zhitlovsky or Ach'd H<sub>2</sub>am or Mordecai M. Kaplan? These present no easy analogue in Christian theology.

"Jewishness" is <sup>however</sup> more troublesome than being an obstacle to Christian understanding of Judaism. The mixed broth of "Jewishness" spoils the theological triple melting pot in far more practical ways. The recent agitation over the separation of Church and State is a case in point. Here, <sup>a number of</sup> the young Jewish theologians sought a reversal of the traditional American-Jewish espousal of the separation principle and largely, though not only, because the traditional position is proving to be most embarrassing ~~before~~ before the Christian community. Jakob Petuchowski, a young theologian who teaches in <sup>the</sup> Reformed seminary argues: "The Jews and the Secularists, the Jews and the Agnostics, the Jews and the Atheists - this is the kind of image which the American Jew projects of himself."<sup>8</sup> The argument appeals for representative association with respectable members of the establishment. We belong on the side of the religionists and must not align ourselves "with the rampant <sup>t</sup> forces of atheism and secularism".<sup>9</sup> Another Rabbi maintains that since we Jews do live in a Christian world, we must accept our destiny as exiles and the will of the Christian majority which favors prayers in public schools. Non-sectarian Bible reading, he hopes, may even prove a unifying rather than a divisive element within the school populace; furthermore, since when does classical

Judaism regard separation as a Biblical sanctum.<sup>10</sup>

The Jewish theologians will struggle against Sunday Blue laws to protect Sabbatarian rights and oppose Humane Slaughter legislation in defense of Kashruth - for these are "religious" issues and are so regarded by their Christian confreres. But it is another thing to oppose prayer in the public school or the insertion of God's name in the pledge of allegiance or Federal aid to parochial education. The latter issues associate us with agnostics and secularists and the Christian is puzzled and annoyed by the aid rendered the non-religious by the Jewish religionist.

"Jewishness" generally disrupts the tranquil flow of ecumenical conversation. The Suez action of Israel, Soblen's flight to Israel, the kidnapping of Eichmann, crop up as Jewish issues, but what have they to do with the Judaist and why should he be implicated in these affairs. Swept under the carpet of Jewish secularism, they are less prone to raise a dust in the eyes of our Christian <sup>issues</sup> ~~dialogists~~ <sup>encounters</sup>. ~~The~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~these~~ <sup>of</sup> theologizing Judaism facilitates the disassociation of these <sup>irritating</sup> ~~troubling~~ Jewish concerns from the <sup>essence</sup> ~~theological~~ ~~interests~~ of Judaism.

For a growing number of the younger Jewish theologians, Zionism is turning into the bete noir of Judaism, the very <sup>exemplification</sup> ~~completion~~ of secular Jewishness. Cohen lists "the national resotation of Zion, the political ~~xxx~~ rejuvenation of Israel, the punishing of the persecutors of the Jews, the miraculous return of all Jews to the Holy Land" as instances of ethnic mythology, part of the whole array of



of Jewish "atavisms and sentimentalities".<sup>11</sup> Herberg was one of the earliest to bemoan the tragedy of Jewish normalization which Zionism and the State introduces, robbing the Jew of his transcendent *raison d'etre*. The Herberg-Cohen theological stance, like neo-orthodoxy of the previous century, opposes such normalization of the Jew's supernatural vocation as Zionism assays because it "runs counter to the divine purpose in the creation and election of Israel".<sup>12</sup> A tendency to mute the Zionist commitment to land and people using a theological appeal to the Jew's destiny *as* God's witness suffering alienation and sacred abnormality *has become fashionable* ~~mounting~~ in the statements of the theologians and "religionists".<sup>13</sup> For the latter the State of Israel and its emergence is a secular phenomenon as it is for most Christian theologians. ~~The~~ Catholic theologians such as Hans Urs Balthasar and Gregory Baum are equally incapable of seeing the founding of the State of Israel as a religiously meaningful event. "The fact that the Temple was destroyed is relevant insofar as it is a genuine eschatological symbol, but once the centre, the sanctuary, has ceased to exist, the land can no longer have any biblical significance."<sup>14</sup> The Protestant World Council of Churches at Evanston in 1954 similarly felt the need to reaffirm the theological irrelevance of Zionism and the State of Israel.<sup>15</sup>

Cohen, more vigorously than his theological *associates* ~~peers~~, warns that the satisfaction of the Jewish people's conventional needs and normal wants *is* but a ~~happy~~ *and is* compromise with his historical condition ultimately destructive of

A

the "theological category" of history. ~~The mediocrity of Jewishness is found in~~ Such things as the duties of charity and philanthropy ~~which~~ are but masks of nationalist self-expression. His interest is not in the survival of the natural Jew and his dogmas of Judaism. <sup>and his Jewishness but in the existence of the supernatural Jew</sup> Historical catastrophe must not be reduced to natural explanation or overcome by activist programming. Suffering is to be elevated to its proper metaphysical teleology. Israel's impotence is its strength. The Jew's task is to suffer, and it is central to sacred history. "What the sin of Adam was to everyman, the Exile of the Holy Spirit, the Exile of the Community of Israel, the Exile of the faithful remnant of Zion, is to the Jew".<sup>17</sup>

Holding to this role <sup>as</sup> of God's suffering servant, the Jew will not attempt to convert history by acting in it. Rather his special destiny is to criticize the idolatrous ideologies which <sup>seek to</sup> force redemption. Israel is not to be found in social or political movements. Its "aristocratic mission" is to stand apart from such collective efforts, knowing full well the self-defeating ambiguities of human ideology, ~~and to~~ <sup>Cohen</sup> ~~their arrogance.~~ <sup>he</sup> conceives of the Jew as a spectator-critic of the world awaiting the fulness of time and the end of history. The supernatural Jew is a "Messianic being" who will not support man's temporizing solutions. The Jew is in a race to outlast history until the ultimate decision in his favor arrives from above.

Franz Rosenzweig's influence is unmistakable. <sup>Deen</sup> Herberg and Cohen's strategy of non-involvement ~~is~~ an adaptation of the German-Jewish theologian's view of Judaism as ~~e~~ternal

life and Christianity as eternal way. <sup>Rosenzweig's irenic</sup> ~~His irenic~~ (SC) formula accepts the Cathedral image of the immortal Synagogue, blindfolded with broken-staff in hand, renouncing the work of this world; and the militant church, with sword in hand, proselytizing the heathen world. The Jew is rid of both churchly and secular sweatiness (A) Bent but unsoiled, ~~be~~ The Jew judges the world, transcending its contaminating environment and cultivating a separateness from ~~the world~~ <sup>it.</sup> 18

#### D. Theological Parity

Persecuted and desecularized, according to theological design, we would appear before the world in the apparel more familiar to Christianity. Christianity shares with us "the mystery of our presence" and ironically conserves the very dogma of our supernatural vocation which our Jewish thinkers <sup>h</sup>ave sacrificed for this-worldly fact and security. 19

If now, as a meta-historical community, we may convince the Christian to properly examine his holy texts, he would see that our unbelief in Christ is desired and confirmed by God, our unbelief being an essential element in His plan. 2-0

And if the Church is convinced that the Jewish community it deals with is <sup>a</sup> supernatural mystery, it may not ~~treat~~ <sup>treat</sup> us with its condescending solicitude. We Jews are not one of the unconverted pagan nations and should be accorded the dignity proper to a correlate supernatural community. Our rejection of Jesus as Christ is a mystery and a scandal in the same way that Christian faith in Christ is a mystery and a scandal. 21

A theological bargain has been struck. And Herberg, following Rosenzweig, is willing to accept a double election wherein Christianity is assigned the divine role of Israel's apostle to the nations while Israel looks inward to its own.<sup>22</sup> Twin supernatural communities, <sup>freely</sup> arriving at an amicable pact, ~~which would~~ order the jurisdictional proprieties of each and assign respective spheres of influence. A Jewish historian of religion, Prof. <sup>for</sup> Hans Schoeps, argues in ~~the same key~~ <sup>This vein.</sup> He would urge Jews to recognize "the divine origin of Christianity and its revelation as the way of salvation <sup>(for)</sup> ~~for~~ the Gentile world outside of Israel." But, he bargains, since we Jews are prepared to acknowledge the witness granted exclusively to the Church to be true, "so the church may also acknowledge our awareness of God and His covenant with us as true, as the truth which has been granted exclusively to us".<sup>23</sup> Christ for the Christian, Torah for the Jew - two exclusive double truths are to be granted, and Israel therefore is not to be proselytized. It ~~often~~ <sup>as if</sup> appears that ~~that~~ this Judeo-Christian non-intervention pact is prepared to hand the rest of the world over to Christian missionary activity. The projected partnership <sup>seems To</sup> ~~would either~~ deny exclusive truth to Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, <sup>Certainly</sup> ~~or~~ if it would grant it to them, ~~it~~ would greatly restrict the area for conversion.

Aside from the arrogant disregard of the other religions of the world which this proposed transaction of reciprocity entails, this theological dream evidences an incredible naivete as to the nature of the claims to exclusive truths and chosenness. Certainly the history of the Church ~~out~~ <sup>ought</sup> to

convince the double-truth advocates that supernatural chosenness of doctrine is an omnivorous beast in no way prepared to share the prey. As the New Testament makes clear "...that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with His son Jesus Christ."<sup>24</sup>

The price of fellowship is conversion, not separate but equal rites. The new Jewish theologians ought not to expect exemption from Christian conversionary efforts for the Jew because "neither is the salvation in any other: for there is ~~max~~ none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."<sup>25</sup> From the traditional Christian point of view any accommodation of exclusive chosenness such as our Jewish ecumeniasts propose opens the door to the winds of relativism. The midrashic commentator of Genesis 1:5 shrewdly observed that two monarchs cannot share the same crown. The idolatrous claims of exclusive chosenness, whether Christian or Jewish, is ultimately conversionist and when pressed reflect a hostility towards religious pluralism.

If one but penetrates the outer layer, even of Christian liberalism, one comes up against the hard core of conversionist religious truth. Even for a modern theologian as ~~e~~ cosmopolite as the late Paul Tillich, Christianity alone possesses "the" theology while other religions are but stages preparing the way for "the acceptance of the Christian message by the adherents of non-Christian religions". For Tillich, this is "the missionary principle that the New Being in ~~Jesus~~ Jesus as Christ is the answer to the questions asked implicitly

and explicitly by the religions of mankind". Tillich goes farther than most to free himself from the charge of institutional parochialism but in the end for him, too, it is Christ above Christianity which is the normative event and judge of all religious truths. True, the Church is not the Church without Christ, but "the Christ is not the Christ without the Church".<sup>26</sup> Another theological sophisticate, Nels Ferre, similarly clings to a Christian universalism not open to the sort of religious pluralism <sup>which is</sup> ~~at~~ <sup>the</sup> with "live and <sup>for</sup> ~~love~~ or even live and help-live philosophy", <sup>This</sup> ~~which~~ he characterizes as liberal Judaism's version of universalism. Christian universalism insists upon all men identifying in a "common life with diversity in response to a common God within common basic need, which is more foundational than are the consequent religions". Once again, however, it is "the life of Jesus," which is "the judge and the fulfiller of all religions".<sup>27</sup> Christ above Christianity, Christian universalism above universalism can only traffic with the contending claims to chosenness in the preliminary stages of the ecumenical dialogue.

#### E. E. Theological Assimilation

The first sounds of theological orthodoxy ~~with their~~ ~~serious consequences for the Jewish community~~ <sup>and it has stern consequences for The Jewish community.</sup> are being heard from the newer theologians. <sup>1</sup> (The **Triadic** heresies of humanism, liberalism and naturalism having been identified, it is reasonable to expect that those who hold to these heresies should be <sup>somehow</sup> removed from the true community of believers. Jacob Petuchowski bewails the latitudinarian ideological

spread of his Reform rabbinic organization where sadly "  
"there is no provision for the exclusion of members on mere  
ideological grounds".<sup>28</sup> And while for pragmatic reasons  
he would allow this sprawling pluralism to remain status quo  
ante within the rabbinic<sup>professional</sup> organization, he calls for a new rabbinic associat<sup>ion</sup>  
~~of~~ with firm theological and credal credentials serving  
as criteria for admission.

Arthur Cohen earlier<sup>had already</sup> called for a community of faithful  
who subscribe to the "fundamental principles ~~which~~<sup>which</sup> are 'dogmas'".<sup>29</sup>  
~~The~~<sup>He sees The</sup> supernatural Jewish community ~~has been~~<sup>being</sup> undercut by secular,  
Reform, Conservati~~ve~~ and Orthodox Jews who have surrendered  
faith and dogma to needs and facts.

Eugene Borowitz, another young Jewish theologian, would  
save the "faithful seed" of the synagogue by so clarifying  
the faith through systematic theology as to make the "Jewish"  
Jews uncomfortable enough to leave. Those Jews, Borowitz  
charges, who are "loyal to the Jewish community", who merely  
"like Jews, the Jewish approach to life or the Jewish style  
of being different" are to be allowed to retain the name Jew.  
But because they are not theological Jews, they cannot be  
called "good" or "real" Jews and must consequently not be  
allowed to speak for the Jewish community. These Jewish  
loyalists should not only be made to feel free to leave the  
Jewish people whom they discover to be wed to God, but  
"perhaps they should be encouraged" to do so.<sup>30</sup> And nothing  
will encourage them more surely than the militant renaissance  
of Jewish theology and its credal formulations.

## Insert A

1. II It must be recognized however that the new theologians actually intend for Judaism to be the dialectical antagonist of Christianity. The substance of the conflict they perceive to be theology alone. Seeing Jewish history from the heights of theological dialectic, they envision Judaism as involved in a great debate with ~~modern~~ modern theology from the tenth to the fourteenth century and with Christian theology from the Middle Ages to the present.

Bemoaning the Jews' adaptation to the secular environment, these new theologians seek the uniqueness of Judaism in dogmas formulated contra Christianity. With courage they deny what Christianity affirms and affirm what it denies. ~~Theology~~ ~~the~~ <sup>German</sup> classical Reform theology ~~is~~ ~~perceived~~ ~~as~~ ~~being~~ ~~perceived~~ similarly perceived, a large part of the Jewish reaction to <sup>reside in</sup> ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~ countering Christian pagan paganism. ~~is~~ And, as in both cases, ~~permitted~~ ~~as~~ ~~theological~~ ~~assimilation~~ ~~to~~ Christian thought-patterns ~~is~~ ~~permitted~~ ~~results~~ from such theologizing of Judaism and from the resolution to do battle on the adversary's terms.



*Ironically, it is this very theological position whose separatist policy would splinter the Jewish community which has attacked secular Judaism as divisive. Secular Judaism with its multiplication of judaisms is said to divide whereas Jewish theology with the ~~mortar~~ mortar of revelation and law is cast in the role of the unifier of the Jewish people.*

~~Ironically, the Jewish theologians, attack secular Jewish ideologies as the culprits cultivating divisiveness within the Jewish community through their multiplication of Judaisms; whereas Jewish theology, with the mortar of revelation and law, is cast in the role of the unifier of the Jewish people.~~

The theological Judaist, stripped of Jewishness and the responsiveness to the Jewish people, draws up his agenda of concern from the theological world of his Christian confreres. Sin and Salvation, Redemption and Eschatology become the major interest of their writings. This is to be expected.

INSERT  
A

For as Eugene ~~Rx~~ Borowitz acknowledges, the call for a Jewish theology "inevitably means using concepts and standards derived in a Christian context for Christian purposes".<sup>31</sup> Yet, he argues, there is no danger in such borrowing for we have ~~an~~ impressive <sup>precedents</sup> ~~precedence~~ to call upon. Did not Jewish theologians in the past employ Platonic and Aristotelian concepts and categories in their effort to organize, defend and articulate Judaism to their contemporaries. Correct, but it must be borne in mind that the new Jewish theologians are borrowing their categories from Christian theology, not from secular philosophies. Borrowing the methodology and conceptualization from philosophies which have no creedal religion to defend is quite different from ~~a~~ <sup>being</sup> ~~dependence~~ upon principles of Christian significance and Christian theological structures meant explicitly to defend and justify a particular religious faith. The distinction between dependence on philosophical and theological categories is analogous

to that which the Israeli Supreme Court drew in the Brother Daniel case: accepting an atheist Jew as a Jew is not at all in the same order as accepting a Christian Jew as a Jew. For the Jewish theologian, the committment of Christian categories to the experience and belief of Christianity makes borrowing from the former a more risky affair than his ~~adaptation~~ aptation of secular philosophies.

The very bifurcation of religious from secular, supernatural from natural, Judaism from Jewishness is itself illustrative of the assimilative dangers of borrowing from the Christian weltanschauung. While still in its embryonic stages, the new Jewish theology manifests the marks of contemporary Protestant thinking. Three such tendencies characterize ~~the~~ <sup>The</sup> direction, in which *The new Theology is moving:*

A. An exaggerated emphasis upon the individual's personal encounters, experiences and quest for salvation with less and less reference to the life of the community and the institutions requisite for its stability and continuity. The existentialist stress upon subjectivity and spontaneity at the expense of communal identification and responsibility is countenanced <sup>by the Jewish theologian</sup> with the expectation that it will eventually lead the individual to join the community of believers. But so great is the emphasis upon individual believing and so neglected the significance of belonging that no path is designed to direct him from arbitrary listening and individual selecting to the responsible, collective hearing with and through the living community.

Even as community-conscious a theologian as Eugene

Borowitz confuses the concreteness of individual experience with the concreteness of collective experience, and ~~thus~~ allows himself the easy transition from individual particularity to Jewish particularity. Thus he can contend that "the fear of losing the particularity of Jewish experience is groundless" in the case of borrowing from religious existentialism, "for under the influence of existentialism, contemporary theology (Christian as well as Jewish) has made its very starting point the particular and concrete existence, in which alone all universals are to be seen and find their meaning; this, indeed, is one of the things that distinguishes it most sharply from the rationalist line of 19th century Jewish thought which was to some extent guilty of sacrificing the idea of Jewish peoplehood to the dream of a "universal" Judaism."<sup>32</sup> Borowitz <sup>here falls prey to</sup> ~~commits~~ the ~~fatal~~ fallacy of composition; for the concreteness and particularity of existentialism refers to the specificity of individual experience, not to the experience of a particular group. "Jewish experience" requires a particular people. Thus, existentialism is truly congenial with a theology, such as Protestantism, in which the goal is individual communion with God; it is nowhere so compatible with a Jewish theology whose route to communion is through community. One would have expected that the younger theologians so concerned with the individual Jew's return to faith would be more suspect of individualist solutions after contemplating the career of Martin Buber himself. For here we have the phenomenon of a man <sup>who, as</sup> Ernst Simon has written, ~~who~~ "is removed from organized

religion as no other Jew has ever been removed from it, who did not deny it, but believed in God, immersed himself in the Bible and Chassidism, and strongly disassociated himself from other faiths and with even greater firmness from Pauline Christianity". If Simon's judgement is true of one so rare as Buber, how much more difficult will it be for the ordinary Jew to join his people and its faith having been exposed to ~~such~~ a peopleless existentialist theology. To ~~stress~~ <sup>base</sup> the starting point of Jewish return ~~upon the~~ <sup>on</sup> individual belief without Jewish belonging, as Petuchowski ~~does as well,~~ <sup>Proposes</sup> is to follow the way of Kierkegaard's "single one".<sup>33</sup>

Individual commitment may lead anywhere, to any tradition, and to expect it will ~~not~~ conduct one safely to Jewish tradition and the Jewish community is unwarranted historically and pedagogically. The ~~peremptory dismissal~~ <sup>submergence</sup> of the ~~existentialism of a people~~ <sup>concreteness of The Jewish people and its existential concerns</sup> under the rubric of ethnicism jeopardizes the Jewishness of theology as well as the responsibility to peoplehood.

B. ~~A traditional~~ <sup>Signs of</sup> anti-intellectualism, derisive of autonomous reason and embracing paradox ~~has~~ <sup>have</sup> replaced the traditional respect for reason and common sense. Much of the new Jewish theology ~~is~~ <sup>'s</sup> horror over the hubris (~~is~~) of human reason flows from the mainstream of Protestant theology. Will Herberg goes so far as to link Judaism with Christian anti-rationalism. "The meeting of the divine with the earthly, the incursion of the eternal into time, the encounter of the infinite God with the finiteness of man in the theophany at Sinai seems to me just as irreconcilable with reason, just as paradoxical, just as 'absurd' as the Incarnation".

Consequently, Herberg concludes, "Judaism is in a position no different from Christianity".<sup>34</sup> This cheerful gleichshaltung is arrived at despite the dominant body of rabbinic and theological interpretations which so persistently sought to overcome the irrational by explaining miracles, angels and revelation in rational and natural terms.

Emil Fackenheim, like many of the colleagues writing Jewish theology today, turns to the leap of faith for the "sole possible answer to the question posed by existence today"; and furthermore confidently holds the leap to be adequate not alone for satisfying universal questions but as required for the assertions of "the actuality of a particular faith".<sup>35</sup>

1. Herberg must be credited as one of the pioneer prophets of the new Jewish theology. See his "From Marxism to Judaism", Commentary, January 1947, and his discussion in "Theological Problems of the Hour", Rabbinical Assembly Proceedings 1949.
2. "The Natural and Supernatural Jew: Two Views of the Church" in American Catholics (Sheed and Ward), N. Y. 1959. pg. 142
3. Hans J. Schoeps, Professor of Religion and Scriptural History at Erlangen University is similarly distressed over the absence of attention paid to Judaism. For while the religious disputations of the Middle Ages did not develop into any kind of true dialogue they "did engage the attention of the world opinion of their time. Where has that public gone today?" Judaism Spring, 1957.
4. "The Natural and the Supernatural Jew" Pg. 277
5. Ibid. pg. 280
6. ~~xxxxxxx~~ "The Natural and the Supernatural Jew" p. 134
7. American Judaism - NATHAN GURZEL NATHAN FLAHER  
UNIV. of Chicago Press, 1957; pg. 91
8. As quoted in the Intermountain Jewish News, Oct. 26, 1962 from an article in the Jewish Spectator.
9. Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovitz as quoted in the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Bulletin of Oct. 30, 1962
10. Rabbi Herbert Weiner "The Case for the Timorous Jew " Midstream 1962
11. Ibid. pg. 278

pg 6

7.



28. "The Limits of Liberal Judaism" Judaism Spring 1965
29. The Natural and Supernatural Jew, p.280
30. "The Jewish Need for Theology" Commentary, August 1962
31. Ibid. ~~p. 141~~
32. Ibid. ~~p. 140~~
33. Ever Since Sinai - Petuchowski. pgs. 112-114
34. Discussion on "Theological Problems of the Hour" Rabbinical Assembly Proceedings 1949. See also Samuel S. Cohn's "The Existentialist Trend in Theology" C.C.A.R. Yearbook, 1953
  
- 35.
36. Petuchowski Ever Since Sinai p. 72
37. Ibid p. 69
38. Ibid pgs. 70-71
39. Emil Fackenheim "The Dilemma of Liberal Judaism" Commentary Oct. 1960  
Petuchowski similarly accepts the evolution of the Torah's laws and Commandments, adopts an untraditional interpretation of its Mosaic authorship, but is content with asserting "The fact of Revelation".
40. Petuchowski ibid p. 83