

TE'UDA

THE CHAIM ROSENBERG SCHOOL OF JEWISH STUDIES RESEARCH SERIES

X

STUDIES IN JUDAICA

Edited by

MORDECHAI A. FRIEDMAN

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY
RAMOT PUBLISHING, 1996

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
THE CHAIM ROSENBERG SCHOOL OF JEWISH STUDIES
RESEARCH SERIES

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(June 2, 1907 – October 5, 1987)

Moshe Dorf was born in Poland and emigrated to Belgium at an early age. Together with his brother, he founded a diamond processing enterprise.

The personality of Moshe Dorf reflects the embodiment of initiative and action which received their concrete expression in the industrial enterprise that he established and continued to cultivate throughout his life. Concurrently, he possessed an intense spiritual wealth as well as an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and wisdom from the rich sources of the Jewish heritage. He was an active participant in various study groups and conferences devoted to Jewish Studies, especially in the field of biblical research, and an avid member of the Israeli Society for Biblical Research as well as of the World Jewish Society for the Study of Bible.

Moshe Dorf will be remembered by friends and relations for his congeniality and amiability, his unstinted devotion to his family, and his munificent philanthropy to numerous cultural and charitable institutions in the State of Israel.

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Printed in Israel, 1996

Table of Contents

Moshe Anbar		
	"Inasmuch as You Know Where We Should Camp in the Wilderness and Can be Our Guide" (Nu. 10:31)	1
Eliezer Rubinstein ז"ל		
	Seeing Through the Power of Seeing (A Study of the Complement of the Verb ראה)	9
Moshe Assis		
	A Difficult Passage in Yerushalmi Sheqalim	19
Leib Moscovitz		
	"Quoted <i>Sugyot</i> " in the Yerushalmi	31
Gad B. Sarfatti		
	משמעות דורשין איכא בנייהו	45
Avinoam Cohen		
	The Development of the 'Loss' Element in the Talmudic Sugya זה נהנה וזה לא חסר	55
Moshe Gil		
	Some Aspects of the History of the Jews in Iraq during the Tenth Century	81
Robert Brody		
	Geniza Fragments of the Responsa of Rav Natronai Gaon	155
David Henshke		
	On the History of קידושא רבא	185

Joel Kraemer	
The Influence of Islamic Law on Maimonides: The Case of the Five Qualifications	225
Mordechai A. Friedman	
"A Controversy for the Sake of Heaven": Studies in the Liturgical Polemics of Abraham Maimonides and His Contemporaries	245
Itzhak Grinfeld	
On the History of the Jews of Aden and Yemen in Eritrea during the First Quarter of the Twentieth Century	299
Ruth Shenfeld	
Reality and Myth in the Ballads Dealing with the Holocaust Period	323
Yoram Jacobson	
The Rectification of the Heart: Studies in the Psychic Teachings of R. Shneur Zalman of Liadi	359

**"INASMUCH AS YOU KNOW WHERE WE SHOULD CAMP
IN THE WILDERNESS AND CAN BE OUR GUIDE"
(NU. 10:31)**

by Moshe Anbar

This article compares two episodes, one from the Bible and the other from Mari, concerning the need to ask for the help of desert dwellers before crossing the wilderness.

In the Bible (Nu. 10:29–32), Moses addressed Hobab the son of Reuel the Midianite with the request to lead the Israelites through the desert: "You can be our guide". Similarly, in Mari (ARMT 1.85 + A.1195), in the year 1780/1779 B.C.E., Samsi-Addu advised his son Yasmaḥ-Addu, to ask the Urapûm, a nomadic tribe of desert dwellers to advise them in choosing the best way to cross the desert: "Since there are Urapûm who know these roads (the upper road, the middle road and the lower road), send those men who are familiar with them, so that they may thoroughly check the existence of water alongside these roads. In which road is there drinking water for the army at your side?"

SEEING THROUGH THE POWER OF SEEING (A Study of the Complement of the Verb ראה)

by Eliezer Rubinstein ל"ר

This article deals with certain occurrences of the verb ראה in the Bible which evince two complements – a noun and a sentence, e.g., "And the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair" (Gen. 6:4). In the syntactical analysis of this passage, "the daughters of men" could be construed as a preparatory element and the passage would therefore imply: "And the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair". According to this explanation, the verb ראה is taken to mean "to grasp", "to understand" whose complement is the ensuing sentence.

However, according to an alternate analytic method developed by the author, the verb ראה is shown to contain two complements: (1) a noun, which interprets ראה according to its simple meaning: "to see" (2) a sentence, wherein the connotation of ראה is "to understand". Accordingly, the approximated meaning of this passage would read: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men and they then saw (= understood) that they were fair." In this passage, ראה, which bears the unique meaning of הבין (= to understand), actually derives from the simple meaning of ראה (= to see).

While, as stated above, it is possible to analyze the above-mentioned passage according to two different schemes, there are, nevertheless, some passages which can be subjected to the second scheme of analysis only, e.g., "And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face sent forth beams" (Ex. 34: 30).

The approximated meaning of this passage would thus read: And Aaron *et al* saw Moses, and the power of this "seeing" caused a certain action to be evident before them ("behold"). In a sentence of this type,

the sentence opening with הנה (behold) is an abstract locative sentence in which this word serves as a predicate (= behold the skin of his face sent forth beams = that the fact [that the skin of his face sent forth beams] is evident before us).

A DIFFICULT PASSAGE IN YERUSHALMI SHEQALIM

by Moshe Assis

The Mishna states: "Whom did they distraint [for not paying their sheqel]? – Levites and Israelites, proselytes and emancipated slaves; but not women or slaves or minors" (Sheqalim 1:3). The Yerushalmi comments on this Mishna as follows: "[They to not distraint indeed], but they do demand payment. What you say holds true only when he [i.e. the minor] has grown two pubic hairs, but not when he has not grown two pubic hairs, [then they do not even demand payment]." The Yerushalmi adds further: "As to distraintment, they do not distraint until he has grown two pubic hairs."

This last statement evidently contradicts the previous dictum of the Yerushalmi, viz. that no distraint whatsoever is to be exercised against a minor.

Numerous interpretations and some emendations have been suggested by commentators in order to solve this contradiction, but all of these proposals have been found difficult.

The author of the present article suggests that this difficult statement does not refer to the clause of the Mishna quoted above, but rather to the subsequent paragraph: "A minor on whose behalf his father has begun to pay the sheqel, may not discontinue it." Referring to this

statement, the Talmud determines that a demand to pay the sheqel on behalf of his minor son would be addressed to the father, but he (= the father) could not be distrained until the son had grown two pubic hairs.

Indeed, this interpretation is corroborated by the early commentary to Tractate Sheqalim attributed to the disciple of R. Samuel b. R. Shneur of Evreux.

"QUOTED *SUGYOT*" IN THE YERUSHALMI

by Leib Moscovitz

The Talmud Yerushalmi, like its Babylonian counterpart, occasionally alludes to, and even cites verbatim, entire *sugyot*, which were (apparently) initially formulated in other contexts. Such "quoted *sugyot*" were adduced in their entirety, without adaptation to the new frameworks in which they presently appear, by the "frame *sugyot*", even if only part of the nested *sugya* was necessary for purposes of the pericope which quoted it. This procedure was apparently adopted in order to clarify the meaning of the relevant parts of the quoted *sugya* by citing them in context, or perhaps for literary reasons, as the redactors of the Yerushalmi sought to augment and enlarge the work by transferring entire pericopae wherever applicable. This use of "quoted *sugyot*" thus reflects one of the basic redactional techniques of the Yerushalmi – the citation of "discussion units" in their original, hylic form, without adaptation or other intervention on the part of the redactors.

משמעות דורשין איכא בינייהו

by Gad B. Sarfatti

The expression **משמעות דורשין איכא בינייהו**, wherein amoraim examine a dispute between tannaim, appears ten times in the Babylonian Talmud. According to this scheme, one of the amoraim claims that there is a substantial, halakhic difference between the tannaim, while his opponent argues: **משמעות דורשין איכא בינייהו**, viz. they agree on the halakha, but deduce it from different words of Scripture or from variant interpretations of the same passage. In the Yerushalmi, the expression appears three (four) times in an abridged form: **משמעות דורשין ביניהון**, **משמעות ביניהון**. The present writer suggests that the shorter form of the phrase appearing in the Yerushalmi (**משמעות ביניהון**), is the original one; the word **משמעות** should be properly understood herein as a noun in the singular bearing the connotation of "meaning". This conclusion is contra the accepted opinion that it represents the plural form of **משמע**, whilst **משמעות** = "meaning" supposedly makes its initial appearance in medieval Hebrew.

Thus, **משמעות ביניהון** signifies that the difference between the tannaim is strictly limited to the meaning of the word (or the words) as such, and does not bear any halakhic implications. The expanded form of the phrase, **משמעות דורשין ביניהון/איכא בינייהו**, might imply that the difference between the tannaim is whether they ascribe importance to the meaning of the words or not. **משמעות דורשין** would thus be similar to such expressions as: **דרשנין דיו, דרשנין סמוכין, דרשנין טעמא דקרא** etc.

The phrase examined above may thus be taken as the talmudic equivalent of the modern expression "a semantic question" or "a question of semantics", signifying that two disputing parts actually mean the same, but express themselves in different wording.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'LOSS' ELEMENT IN THE TALMUDIC SUGYA זה נהנה וזה לא חסר

by Avinoam Cohen

Two different definitions – supposedly relating to the same question – play an important role in the *sugya* of TB B.Q. 20a–21a. The first definition, which is of amoraic origin, is casual and concrete: הדר בחצר חבירו שלא מדעתו (=he who occupies the premises of his neighbor without the consent of the owner). The second definition, which is stamaitic (anonymous) and abstract, is not found elsewhere in the Talmud or in geonic literature: זה נהנה וזה לא חסר (= the defendant derives a benefit while the plaintiff sustains no loss).

The basic assumption of both definitions, is that the owner does not suffer any loss (חסרון). However, whereas in the former definition, this concept is not even mentioned, in the latter it has become one of its two exclusive components (הנאה). The author traces the transition from the earlier to the later definition, and elaborates upon its causes.

During the course of analyzing the talmudic discussion, the author also provides evidence for a significant development in the legal connotation of the חסרון element, as well as the interdependence of חסרון with the parallel element of הנאה.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN IRAQ DURING THE TENTH CENTURY

by Moshe Gil

This article deals with several facets of the history of Babylonian Jewry under Muslim rule during the tenth century based on several interesting sources, both Jewish and Arabic, which have survived from this period.

The first matter discussed concerns the so-called Jewish "bankers", who were active at the time: the families of Yūsuf (Joseph) b. Pinḥas and his son-in-law, Neṭīrā, and of Hārūn (Aaron) b. ʿImrān (ʿAmram), and their families. In Arabic sources they are described as the so-called *jahābādha* (singular: *jahbadh*) of the Abbasid establishment. In order to obtain a better understanding of their involvement in the financial and the political matters of the state, the author presents a survey of the main rulers and their major assistants, the viziers. The Arabic sources are mainly interested in the methods used by these financiers in providing the caliphs and the viziers with the funds needed for the maintenance of the army and for the various expenditures of the state. The Jewish sources, especially the story of Neṭīrā, deal with the involvement of the Jewish bankers in Jewish communal life and the part they played in the leadership conflicts between the Babylonian geonim themselves on the one hand, and between the geonim and the exilarchs, on the other hand. The struggle led by one of the members of the Abū-l-Baḡhl family – people of the echelon of higher state employees – against the Jewish financier Neṭīrā is an interesting episode containing a peculiar antisemitic background. This incident involves a wonderful dream and a change of heart on the part of the caliph, much in the vein of the Purim story.

Another episode related to the history of these families is the conflict between the exilarch Mar ʿUqba and the Yeshiva of Pumbedita, which was accompanied by an internal conflict in that yeshiva. The details of these conflicts are related in the Epistle of Rav Sherira Gaon and in *akhbār baghdād* a contemporary chronicle. There are, however, serious discrepancies between the two sources. Following the lead of Jacob Mann, the author attempts a thorough analysis of the sources, and concludes that the conflict involving the Yeshiva of Pumbedita belongs to the period of Rav Judah b. Samuel Gaon and not to the time of Rav Kohen Šedek, as stated by Nathan ha-Gaon Bavli, the narrator of *akhbār baghdād*.

Another major conflict during that century, the controversy between Palestine and Babylon dealing with the calendar is also dealt with. The author stresses the activities and personalities of the Babylonian party in detail and pays special attention to the letters of Rav Seʿadya Gaon preserved in the Cairo Geniza. He also relates to the question of the final elaboration of the Jewish calendrical system: was it the product of the seventh century, or of much earlier times? Continuing with Rav Seʿadya Gaon, the author describes the struggles that he had with some of his contemporaries, especially the exilarch, David b. Zakkai. Another conflict involved Aaron ha-Kohen b. Joseph, known as Khalaaf ibn Sarjāda, who later became head of the Yeshiva of Pumbedita.

The internal conflicts in Pumbedita are further discussed. The controversy between Ibn Sarjāda and Rav Kohen Šedeq seems to be the most violent of these. Another bitter controversy led to a real split in the yeshiva, between the faction of Rav Neḥemiah Gaon and that of Rav Sherira b. Ḥananya, who was to succeed as the head of the Yeshiva of Pumbedita.

It should be noted that contemporary letters preserved in the Cairo Geniza serve as the main source for these discussions. In addition to providing important details of the various conflicts, they also contain remarkable insights into various aspects of

Babylonian Jewry under Muslim rule, especially concerning the communal life of the Jews in Babylonia.

**GENIZA FRAGMENTS OF THE RESPONSA OF RAV
NATRONAI GAON**

by Robert Brody

Various sources indicate that the geonim of Babylonia, for reasons related to the difficulties of long-distance communication during that period, customarily wrote their responsa in sizeable batches (*quntresim*), each of which would have ordinarily included responsa dealing with several unrelated subjects. However, in most of the larger collections of geonic responsa these original groupings have been broken up and their contents redistributed according to their relevant subject matter. On the other hand, the original groupings have most often been preserved in Geniza fragments.

The purpose of this article is to identify a number of Geniza fragments, previously unpublished, or only partly published, which contain responsa which one may reasonably attribute to Rav Natronai b. Hilai, doyen of the academy of Sura in the middle of the 9th century, and one of the most prolific respondents of the geonic period. Three such manuscripts have been identified: (1) An Oxford fragment comprising two pages, of which one was published piecemeal by B.M. Lewin. (2) A single large folio preserved in the New Series of the Taylor-Schechter Collection, Cambridge University Library. (3) Several folios of a manuscript belonging to the same collection, some of which are preserved in

the Old Series and which were published by L. Ginzberg, while others, preserved in the New Series, are herein identified for the first time. A fourth manuscript, in the collection of Westminster College, is also discussed, but the author concludes that there are insufficient grounds for attributing its contents to Rav Natronai.

Two appendices are devoted to the preliminary publication of the Cambridge fragments which the author has identified as containing responsa of Rav Natronai.

ON THE HISTORY OF קידושא רבא

by David Henshke

This article deals with the history of the customary Sabbath-morning blessing over wine which is referred to in TB as קידושא רבא (Pes. 106a). An analysis of the relevant sources reveals that there is no source for this "qiddush" in tannaitic literature nor any definite allusion to it prior to the second generation of Babylonian amoraim. This conclusion is bolstered both by a study of the redactional methods of the Mekhilta and through a detailed analysis of a *sugya* in TB which opens new vistas towards an understanding of the talmudic reasoning of the Babylonian geonim.

THE INFLUENCE OF ISLAMIC LAW ON MAIMONIDES: THE CASE OF THE FIVE QUALIFICATIONS

by Joel Kraemer

Islamic law classifies all human actions according to five categories which are entitled *al-ahkām al-khamsa*.

1. Duty or obligation (*fard*, *wājib*).
2. Meritorious, commendable, or praiseworthy (*mandūb*, *mustahabb*).
3. Neutral or indifferent (*mubāh*).
4. Disapproved or reprehensible (*makrūh*).
5. Forbidden (*ḥarām*).

It is thus apparent that Islamic jurisprudence oversteps strictly legal categories of obligation and prohibition, and actually incorporates a classification of actions based on ethical or religious behavior.

On the other hand, according to Western jurisprudence, human actions are defined by strict legal obligations which are correlated to the rights of others, which may not be violated. In the case of ethical obligations, such as gratitude towards a benefactor, non-performance is unpunishable, and the categories of moral and religiously upright acts are not legally postulated.

Joseph Schacht, in the wake of S. Van den Bergh, has claimed that the Islamic five-fold classification derived from a Stoic source, but this theory is shown to be unfounded. On the other hand, the author of the present article examines the notion that Jewish law may have served as a possible source of influence for the Islamic system. However, from the outset it should be stressed that similar categories in Jewish law (e.g. *meshubbaḥ* and *megunneh*) do not properly belong to a halakhic scheme and are really not technical legal terms as in the Islamic system.

The present article focuses upon Maimonides' use of the Islamic categories of *al-aḥkām al-khamsa*, particularly in those cases wherein he applied all five categories. Suffice it to say that there are many instances which attest to the usage of one or two categories, especially *mandūb/mustaḥabb* (= *meshubbaḥ*) and *makrūh* (= *megunneh*).

A prime example of this phenomenon is evinced by the *Mishna Commentary* of Maimonides to Avot 1:16, wherein he employed all five qualifications. Fascinating use of *al-aḥkām al-khamsa* is also found in the *Mishna Commentary* to Sanhedrin 7:4.

The apparent reason for the adoption of Islamic legal terms in these and other texts is that the binary halakhic division between "permissible" and "forbidden" proved insufficient. The introduction of the Islamic hierarchy enabled Maimonides to take a position which, in effect, differed from that of the talmudic sages or of contemporary religious scholars. In the first source cited above, he ruled that the recitation of Arabic strophic poems at weddings and other celebrations – ordinarily regarded as forbidden – was reprehensible but nevertheless permitted, while in the *Commentary to Sanhedrin*, certain sexual practices, tolerated by the Talmud, were branded reprehensible.

Maimonides also appealed to the five categories in his *Responsa*, and indeed, in one instance (*Responsa*, ed. J. Blau, No. 218, p. 384ff.; *Epistles*, ed. Y. Shilat, 2, p. 620), even expressed wonder at respectable scholars learned in the Law who fail to distinguish between the levels of prohibition, and make no distinction between something forbidden and something merely reprehensible.

It is thus evident that by the time of Maimonides, the five categories had been naturalized within Jewish jurisprudence. This claim is bolstered by the supposition that, otherwise, the great Jewish savant would not have expressed his amazement at the ignorance of these categories on the part of certain scholars.

Whether they contributed to the Islamic scheme or not, the existence of inchoate, unsystematized legal concepts (e.g. *meshubbaḥ* and *megunneh*) in Hebrew law, undoubtedly facilitated the use of *al-aḥkām al-khamsa* within the framework of the Jewish legal system. It is thus quite possible that this phenomenon attests to mutual borrowing, reciprocity and interplay between Islamic and Jewish law, which resemble each other in many respects.

**"A CONTROVERSY FOR THE SAKE OF HEAVEN": STUDIES IN
THE LITURGICAL POLEMICS OF ABRAHAM MAIMONIDES
AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES**

by Mordechai A. Friedman

In early thirteenth century Egypt, the polemics engendered by the liturgical reforms of R. Abraham Maimonides led to a serious rupture in the fragile structure of mutual tolerance between the members of the Palestinian and Babylonian congregations, who, for all intents and purposes, adhered to two distinct synagogal traditions. Geniza documents and the writings of Maimuni reveal that tensions ran high within the community and, as a result, desperate appeals for assistance were addressed both to Jewish savants and courtiers and to the Muslim authorities. Five sections from a book-length study of this affair are presented herein.

1. Opening remarks. The orientation of the liturgical practices innovated by Abraham Maimonides may be characterized both as orthodox and reform. On the one hand, by repudiating singular

time-hallowed traditions, especially those of the Palestinian synagogue of Fustat, he corrected ostensible deviations from the compulsory liturgy. Conversely, he proposed radical innovations which were most similar to Muslim (Sufi) practice, e.g., sitting in the synagogue in a kneeling position, the alignment of the congregation in straight rows and the performance of numerous prostrations during the prayer service. To promote acceptance of his innovations, Maimuni made liberal use of Islamic legal categories and redefined certain "desirable" (*mandūb*) activities as "obligatory" (*wājib*).

2. The liturgical practice of the Palestinian synagogue of Fustat is described in a manifesto issued in 1211, whereby members of the congregation bound themselves to uphold their time-honored traditions and reject any attempt to modify them. Leaders of the party which endeavored to conserve the Palestinian ritual belonged to the family of the Sons of the Sixth, members of the hierarchy of the Academy of Eretz-Israel. Their opponents were newcomers to Egyptian Jewry: Abraham Maimonides was the son of an immigrant from Andalusia; his sometime allies, R. Joseph b. Jacob Rosh ha-Seder, a native of Iraq, and R. Yeḥiel b. Elyaqim, a recent immigrant, apparently from Byzantine.

3. The illusive Arabic style in a passage from Abraham Maimonides' magnum opus, *Kifāyat al-Ābidīn*, published a hundred years ago, obscured his unequivocal boast that he had abolished the heterodox practices of the Palestinian synagogue of Fustat and instituted a uniform liturgy for both the Palestinian and Babylonian congregations.

4. In this section, various ensuing stages of the polemic, which witnessed the intermingling of religious practices and community politics, from the death of Moses Maimonides till the mid 1230's, are reviewed.

5. Maimuni's demand that in the synagogue the congregation sit in straight rows facing Jerusalem (the *qibla*) is examined as an

example of how the disputants debated halakhic issues and offered conflicting interpretations of the sources (in this case, especially Tos. Megilla 3:21).

**ON THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF ADEN AND YEMEN IN
ERITREA DURING THE FIRST QUARTER
OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

by Itzhak Grinfeld

The Italians took possession of Eritrea at the end of the 19th century and Jewish settlement followed soon after. Most of the Jewish immigrants came from Southern Arabia, while some arrived from Ottoman Turkey. The Jewish population of Eritrea was never considerable. Most of the Jews lived in Asmara, some in Massawa, while a number of others chose to settle in a number of outlying settlements.

Only two population censuses, which were conducted in 1905 and 1913, according to different criteria, are extant. These censuses were limited to one segment of the population: Italians and their equals (*assimilati*).

The 1905 census records only 20 Jews, while the 1913 one lists 71 Jews. In 1923, 150 Jews signed a petition to an Italian Deputy Minister. All the Jews were of Sephardic extraction.

The main activity of the Jews in Eritrea was in the economic sphere. Most engaged in wholesale and retail trade while others found their livelihood as goldsmiths and watchmakers. The Arabian Jews immigrated to Eritrea mainly due to persecutions, but there were, nevertheless, some who arrived in order to engage in commerce.

In contrast to the colonial legal-judicial ordinance of 1908, the ordinance of 1902, made a distinction between Italians and their equals, on the one hand, and native colonial subjects and their equals, on the other hand. Alongside those Jews who maintained Italian citizenship, or that of other European states, the Eritrean Jewish community included a formidable group of immigrants from Arabia, who were devoid of citizenship. This inferior status, led to abuse on the part of the local non-Jewish population.

The living quarters of Jews lacking foreign citizenship were restricted to blocks inhabited by natives or to mixed blocks. In most cases, they were not judged by Italian judges but rather by local market-place leaders, who were most unqualified for the task. According to the Jews, these leaders persecuted them.

The equalization of the Jews with the natives also resulted in the enforcement of a prohibition of alcoholic beverages against them.

In 1911, the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs was informed of embitterment amongst the Jewish population.

There was only one synagogue in Asmara. Some children attended the school of the Catholic mission, while others were educated at home. A committee of the Jewish Community in Asmara was active in 1913.

Eritrea also absorbed other foreigners, mostly Greeks. The mob promoted hatred of the Jews. It utilized the advantage of foreign citizenship in its economic activities while simultaneously inciting against the Jews.

The change effected by the ordinance of 1908 greatly limited the legal-judicial rights of a large segment of the Jewish population.

The situation encouraged *inter alia* blood libels and other heinous plots against the Jews. In 1904, a blood libel was perpetrated by the Greeks in Asmara, and it was only through the serious intervention of Governor Martini that it was foiled. A similar accusation was made in 1913. In 1922, during the festival

of Passover, Jews were attacked, and the following year witnessed the assault on a number of Jewish women.

REALITY AND MYTH IN THE BALLADS DEALING WITH THE HOLOCAUST PERIOD

by Ruth Shenfeld

The era of the Holocaust engendered numerous folkloristic tales, and it may thus be entitled a "mythopoeic" period. In many of these stories, actual events were linked to legendary motifs and some of them have been adapted into literary ballads. The heroes of the ballads are real persons; in some instances they are ordinary men, and in others, secular or religious leaders of the Jewish community. All of them have been transformed into mythical figures by the poets.

The core of each ballad is an extraordinary deed performed by the hero during the course of an extremely difficult situation, mainly the moment of his execution by the Nazis. The hero reveals supreme courage and chooses how he is to die, turning into a symbol of active or passive resistance, of human dignity and of religious sacrifice in the performance of the supreme act of faith. Many of the ballads are based on traditional motifs and ancient legends concerning Jewish heroes, saints and sages. Examples of such ballads are: "The Ballad on the Death of Ber Redlich" by Meir Bassoq and "Rabbi Mendel, the Brother of the Rabbi of Gur" by Sh. Shalom.

Another type of popular ballad dealing with the Holocaust is the "newspaper ballad", which can be considered a modification of the broadside ballad. The poet did not aim to inform the public of

the event, which had already been publicized in the press, but rather to interpret it, mostly in an historiosophic and eschatological context.

A very prominent motif in these ballads is the cosmic and metaphysical vengeance of the dead, who are depicted as arising from their graves in order to demand justice. All these poems raise the problem of theodicy. Examples of this type include: "The Shoe" by Baruch Rotman, "A Story of Ten Jews" and "Ninety Three" by Abraham Broides, "The White Gloves" by Anda Amir, "The Ballad on Gravestones and Murderers" by Meir Bassoq and "The Last Grace" by Natan Alterman. Anda Amir utilized romantic conventions in order to depict an extremely anti-romantic and incongruous situation, whereas the ballad by M. Bassoq is steeped in an elegiac mood. Natan Alterman, the great master of "the newspaper ballad", took advantage of this literary genre in order to reflect upon the problems and the milieu of his times. The well-known motif of "the living dead" is a common feature of his artistic and popular ballads, including "The Last Grace."

THE RECTIFICATION OF THE HEART: STUDIES IN THE PSYCHIC TEACHINGS OF R. SHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI

by Yoram Jacobson

In this article, the author attempts an examination of the intimate relation between the psychic experience and the service of God in the teachings of Habad Hassidism. He clarifies and analyzes the processes which take place in the heavenly soul, which are designed to penetrate into the sealed heart of a human being and thus effect a crucial metamorphosis of elevation and holiness in the bestial soul.

The depths of the divine soul, which actualizes "the world of rectification" in human experience, are actually organized in a formation of balance and restraint and contain the holy spark: "the part of the Godhead" which resides in the intellect of the soul; this is the source for the enduring belief of a Jew as well as for his absolute readiness to sanctify the Holy Name. In his homilies, R. Shneur Zalman of Liadi portrays this spark as "the essence of the soul", which in contradistinction to its powers and illuminations (חכמה, בינה, דעת, and virtues) does not undergo any metamorphosis. In this respect, the spark is grasped as the superior desire of the soul, which is beyond any comprehensive reason or inclination, devoid of any consideration of loss and gain, and signifies the nullification of the perception and the consciousness of the individual and his absolute devotion to the Creator. The awakening aroused by this spark is actually the awakening of the hidden love in the human heart. His description of the spark as "the interiority of the heart" expresses his relationship to the emotional effects in the human being (virtues). This gives full expression to the dialectic principle of Habad Hassidism, viz. the more elevated the root, its concrete revelation is on a lower plane: by virtue of the fact that the heart is apparently lower than that of the intellect, the elevated yearning of the soul to return to its divine source is necessarily revealed within its confines. Intellectual reflection is considered far too narrow to contain this yearning. As a firm and stable divine element, the interiority of the heart resides way beyond the free will of a human being; it is actually the basis for any crucial existential change that a person could execute within himself. The religious duty of man is to organize an expedition into his heart, to discover the spark and remove it from the external captivity of the heart and eventually awaken it by the sublime love of God. In this manner, man will be completely holy in his relationship to God and the activities of his soul directed towards this aim, which may be described as a harmonic union between a

person's intellect and his heart. As long as the contact between these components remains lax, the powers of impurity are able to surround the virtues of the heart, to cling to them and to divert them. Only when a person removes the shell that surrounds his heart will he cease to become immersed within the framework of his own personal existence and become exalted to serve exclusively as a utensil of the Divine.

One conducts the expedition into his heart as a cognizant process initiated by the appearance of the thunderbolt of wisdom, which is actually a signal deriving from the divine inner-consciousness of the individual, the first breakthrough of the unconscious into the conscious. At this stage, there is something of a positive pragmatic paradisposition whose realization is in human voluntary action which characterizes the second stage of the development of human consciousness, the stage of understanding (בינה). With this act of self-volition, a person implements the rule of the brain over the heart, viz. he will discover the principle of self-restraint and equilibrium in the various ethical traits as well, meaning that they will not be incited by uncontrolled corporeal desires. "Understanding" expresses the intensity of one's overcoming his personal antidivine lusts (it would probably be better to formulate: against perverting his divine will as an anti-divine will) as well as his efforts to illuminate the heavenly will in the interiority of the heart (דעת). Only through this introversion will the virtues of the heart be revealed in their actuality: the intensive love for God alone, the love of the spark within the human heart. A person's spiritual labors express an effort to unite with himself, to return the unity of the intellect and the virtues to their former status and to incorporate the bestial soul as well. The deep significance of "the service of the heart" is the liberation of its virtues from the grasps of the surrounding impurity. "The service of the heart" is actually the rectification of the heart itself in the expedition designed to reveal its hidden interiority.

תקצירים באנגלית