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SUMMARIES

THEORY OF NATURAL EQUALITY OF EARLY MAN ACCORDING TO ASHKENAZI ḤASIDIM

by Y. BAER

The author considers a passage from *Ḥokhmat ha-Nefesh* (Lwow 1876, fol. 24d), by R. Eleazar b. Yehuda ha-Rokeaḥ of Worms, which deals with the ancient natural status of human society. This is a passage on which the author previously made a brief comment in this journal (*Zion*, III, 21f.), in which he stated that the passage in question is based on Roman and Christian Stoic philosophy. The author now analyzes R. Eleazar's views, and in order to arrive at an understanding of his teaching he surveys the development of Roman and Christian Stoic social philosophy with respect to the natural equality of early man by quoting excerpts from the books of Seneca, Lactantius and Augustinus, and from the letters of Pope Gregory VII. The author tries to prove from these excerpts that Eleazar based the content of the passage in question on Latin Sources, and to fix its proper place within the general theological-social system of Ashkenazic Ḥasidism of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It is difficult to determine whether Eleazar based his ideas on some unknown contemporary Latin work or whether he himself compiled the pertinent ideas from early Christian literature. A similar literary problem engaged the author in his article, "Two chapters of the Theory of Providence in *Sefer Ḥasidim*", which appears in the volume published in honour of the 70th birthday of Gershom Scholem ("Studies in Mysticism and Religion", Hebrew Section, pp. 47-62).

The theory of ancient natural equality expounded in *Ḥokhmat ha-Nefesh* is that human beings were originally created with the intention that they would all be equal (*pires*), no man lording over his fellow, everyone tilling the soil, and everyone getting enough from such labour to meet his needs. Working the land is thus a *mitzva* and a blessing. Everyone receives his share of the land, and the concentration of land in the hands of a few must be prevented. This theory was apparently appropriate to the realities of the life of the Ashkenazic Ḥasidim.

Another socio-historical system is expressed in section 1171 of *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Wistinetzki). The author of that passage assumes that people first lived in forests, without having to defend themselves from the wild beasts, who were subservient to man. But after man was cursed because of his sin, it was decreed (Gen. 3:18) that he would have to grow thorns and thistles, in order to circumscribe his land with fences, so that beasts would not enter, and it was decreed (Gen. 3:19), "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

This view is based on the philosophy of classical Latin writers; cf. Vergilius, Georg. I, 125-149; *Seneca, Epistulae morales*, ep. 90. But Eleazar supplemented his sources and added the remark that, in fact, the curse mentioned in Genesis applied in his time only to farmers, while "kings and princes do not eat in the sweat of their face". In this addendum the Jewish *ḥasid* gives expression to social and humane feelings which are peculiar to him, and the like of which we do not find in the writings of his Christian contemporaries.

The chapter of *Sefer Ḥasidim* discussed here was quoted verbatim by writers who lived only a short time later, who attribute it to R. Judah he-Ḥasid, the leading teacher of the Ḥasidic movement of Ashkenaz.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE ALMOHADIC RULERS TOWARDS THE JEWS

by D. CORCOS-ABULAFIA

The author reviews the literature — both primary and secondary — on the subject in detail, particularly the work of Solomon Munk, which is predominant here.

Munk and his followers are criticized for relying mainly on eastern Arabic sources rather than looking to Maghreb sources when dealing with Maghreb events. The author notes that present-day historians have found the eastern sources largely unreliable with respect to the Arabic West. He tries to prove this by a detailed analysis of a passage from the Damascan scholar, aḏ-Ḍahabi, on which Munk based much of his argument. He discredits aḏ-Ḍahabi's evidence by showing that this passage relies on information purportedly given by an informant who, it transpires, was dead eighteen years when the conversation in question is supposed to have taken place. The author also finds that aḏ-Ḍahabi tended to overemphasize anti-Jewish polemics — which in their main elements had become traditional in Islam by the time the Almohadic movement made its appearance — and regarded them as the mainspring of the attitude of the new rulers towards the Jews.

The author describes the important position of the Jews in Maghreb economic life, particularly in the framework of the brisk trade with western Christian cities, which the Almohadic rulers did much to strengthen by treaties and concessions, as is shown in detail. Particular stress is laid in this evidence on the remarks of Maimonides about Jews coming to the *fondouks* of Christians in the Maghreb and sometimes even cooking and eating their *kosher* food there.

The following conclusions emerge from a review of western Arabic sources and their confrontation with the situation in the Maghreb as described above, with reliable eastern Arabic traditions, and with Jewish sources:

(a) There was a general atmosphere of terror in the Al-Murabat cities conquered by the Almohades. It was because of this fear that Jews embraced Islam and not because of any consistent or declared policy of forced conversion by the Almohades. The first Almohadic rulers continued to hold the traditional Moslem attitude with respect to non-Moslems.

(b) A change for the worse took place only in 1165, when the leader of the Jewish community of Fes, R. Judah ha-Cohen ibn Sussan, was cruelly executed. This marked the beginning of a short period during which a policy of forced mass-conversions was in effect. It was at this time that the family of Maimonides fled to the east. The evidence of R. Joseph ibn 'Aknin about the humiliation of the forced converts to Islam should be ascribed to this period.

(c) With the death of the persecuting ruler, the situation of the Jews began to improve. In 1232, professing Jews are found in Marakesh, and some time later they gradually make their appearance in other cities of northern Africa.

THE EMIGRATION FROM SPAIN TO ERETZ YISRAEL AFTER THE DISORDERS OF 1391

by B. DINUR

The author discusses the mass immigration to Eretz Yisrael from Spain after the disorders of 1391 — its dimensions, causes, and aims, as well as the opposition it aroused.

The main source of our knowledge about this movement is a letter sent by the heads of the Saragossa community to the leaders of the Castile communities, urging the latter to stop the mass immigration to Eretz Yisrael. The reasons given were that the journey involved serious danger to the emigrants and their children both in Spain and while at sea, as well as to Spanish Jewry as a whole, since the emigration was provoking the anger of the Gentiles. The letter is found in the collection of letters in MS. in the Montefiore Library, no. 488 (p. 13); the MS. is from the 16th century. The author thinks that it was written after the 'pogroms' of 1391, when large numbers of Marranos from the cities and villages of Castile tried to leave Spain, return openly to Judaism and migrate to Eretz Yisrael. In the author's opinion, this movement is connected with the Messianic ideology, in vogue at that period, which held that migration to Eretz Yisrael is a condition for redemption and a means for bringing it about. The author brings evidence which throws light on the date of the letter, the circumstances under which it was written, and the migration to Eretz Yisrael. This consists of contemporary literature (Responsa, poems and lamentations), some of it in MS., which he publishes in the article, and also of the polemic of the leaders of the Saragossa communities in the same letter, in which they argue, contrary to the view of the emigrants, that migration to Eretz Yisrael is supposed to follow redemption, not precede it.

THE RACIAL MOTIF IN RENAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS JUDAISM AND THE JEWS

by S. ALMOG

The author regards Renan's views on this subject as the "missing link" that made possible the fusion of racialism and antisemitism in modern anti-Jewish thought and writings.

He surveys Renan's creative career and the various influences brought to bear on the development of his thought about the Jews and Judaism.

Through a review the basic elements of Renan's conception of history — one that was largely eclectic — the author shows the inherent inconsistencies of Renan's historical views.

As to the Jewish problem, the various influences on and developments in Renan's thought culminated in the following formulation: a) So long as the Jewish identity was borne by a purely Semitic group its contributions and ideas were on the whole inferior and harmful; b) But in the course of history the Jewish identity devolved on a group that is racially mixed (this is intended by Renan as a compliment) — the modern Jews; c) Their social and spiritual activity is for the most part superior and beneficial, insofar as it is not influenced by the legacy of the "Semitic Jews"; d) By means of this two-fold Jewish creativity, Renan's ideas on this subject unconsciously helped to establish racialist basis for Jewhatred — a social phenomenon which he constantly fought on the conscious plane.

ZIONIST ENDEAVOURS TO INFLUENCE THE ARAB PRESS IN PALESTINE, 1908-1914

by Y. RO'I

The year 1908 saw, on the one hand, the opening in Jaffa of the Palestine Office, the first official representative of the Zionist Organisation in Palestine, and, on the other,

the Young Turk revolution which evoked new outbursts and manifestations of nationalist feeling on the part of the various minorities in the Ottoman Empire. One of the concomitants of this revolution was the freedom of the press. Many of the numerous Arab newspapers and periodicals which appeared in the years 1908–14 (in Cairo, Damascus, Beirut, Palestine, etc.), while chary of being unduly critical of the Turks and the central government in Constantinople, allowed themselves with increasing frequency to give vent to their frustrated ambitions and general dissatisfaction at the expense of the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine (There had previously been examples of “anti-Semitism” in Arab writings, but these had not for the most part adopted an Arab nationalist flavour nor were they regular occurrences).

The attacks on the Yishuv included most of the charges that were to be made in later years: of Jewish wealth and international influence and — on another level — of seclusiveness, chauvinism and the desire to dispossess and expel the Arabs of Palestine and to establish a maximal Jewish state, side by side with the demand that Jewish immigration and the purchase of land by Jews be prohibited.

The Palestine Office and certain circles in the Yishuv tried to curb these manifestations of hostility and to mitigate their influence. At the same time, most Zionists, including the Zionist leadership, and the majority of the Yishuv did not draw the requisite conclusions from Arab hostility in which the intention of completely annihilating the Yishuv was inherent. Zionist Near East policy was explicitly orientated to Constantinople and the Turkish government there, taking little or no account of the Arab population living in Palestine.

Even those Zionists who preached the need for the integration of the Yishuv in the East and who strove to prove to the Arabs that the Jews were returning to their native environment, failed to evolve a realist or constructive attitude towards the Arabs upon which any policy likely to succeed could be based.

As for the Palestine Office and the Yishuv, they appreciated the need for normal neighbourly relations with the Arabs of Palestine and with this end in view tried to curb anti-Jewish incitement and to create a positive and friendly atmosphere regarding the Yishuv among the Arabs and in the Arab press. These efforts, however, were for the most part futile — as was so much Zionist activity in this period —, for the relevant institutions lacked both the financial means and the leadership and personnel necessary for such a campaign.

IN THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF ISRAEL

The Thirteenth Annual Convention

The Annual Convention took place in Jerusalem in cooperation with the Association of History Teachers in Israel on December 31, 1967 and January 1, 1968 and was devoted to the subject: “Awareness of the Past in the Consciousness of the Nations and of the Jewish People”. The following lectures were delivered:

Prof. B. Dinur — General Introduction.

Prof. I. Baer — Society and Religion During the Second Temple Period as Reflected in the Mishna.

Prof. B. Mazar — Hebrew Genealogy in the Historiography of the Period of the Monarchy.

Prof. A. Malamat — Dynastic Tables of the Kings of Early Babylonia and Genealogical Tables in the Bible.