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Rebel for a Cause

A Study of Trude Weiss-Rosmarin

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for Ordination

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DIGEST

Trude Weiss-Rosmarin (1908-1989) was a controversial Jewish scholar, journalist, and lecturer with interests ranging over the whole spectrum of American Jewish life. Her major overall focus was quality Jewish survival, which she believed largely depended on all Jews receiving a thorough Jewish education.

Her ideas, particularly about Jewish education and Zionism, were largely shaped by her experiences as a child and adolescent in Germany, where she was active in the Zionist youth movement and studied at Franz Rosenzweig's Lehrhaus. She acquired her higher education at several German universities, where her major field was Assyriology, but she also studied philosophy and education.

She came to the United States in 1931 to marry Aaron Rosmarin. Unable to find an academic position, she wrote for a variety of Jewish periodicals. She and her husband established an adult education institute called the School of the Jewish Woman in 1933; out of the School, which closed in 1939, came a newsletter that soon developed into the Jewish Spectator, which - along with lecturing - became TWR's major source of income and vehicle for expressing her ideas.

After background chapters on her youth in Germany and early years in the United States, this thesis examines the evolution of TWR's ideas about Jewish survival, Jewish-Christian relations, women, and Israel over the course of her career.

Introduction

Trude Weiss was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany in 1908. She studied at several German universities, earning her doctorate at the University of Wuerzburg in 1931. She came to New York that summer to marry Aaron Rosmarin, a Russian-born American citizen whom she had met while he was in Berlin studying Arabic. They had a son, Moshe, in 1944, and were divorced around 1950. Trude Weiss-Rosmarin married her second husband, Nissim Sevan, an Israeli artist, around 1954. They moved to Santa Monica, California, in 1977, and she died there after a year-long battle with cancer on June 26, 1989.

TWR was an extremely private person - to the extent that some of her close friends did not know she had remarried - so little is known of her personal life. Much information, however, is available about her career. She was a very prolific writer and speaker on many subjects, and in her writings can be found much information and insight on her activities and concerns.

During her youth in Frankfurt, TWR developed a great love for Judaism, and it became the focus of her life and career. Since, having been born female in the early part of this century, she was unable to be a rabbi, her "pulpits" were the lecture platform and the pages of the Jewish Spectator. She often wrote that Judaism is a religion of words. Similarly, she was a woman of words. Words - written and spoken - were the medium through which she learned, taught, and exercised her influence on American Judaism.

If the focus of her life was Judaism, then the focus of her Judaism was Jewish survival - the survival of the Jewish people, and the survival of Judaism itself. The latter, she believed, could only be secured through universal Jewish education, which in turn would lead to Jewish pride and commitment to the Jewish future. Hence she spent much time and effort campaigning for the infusion of Jewish educational and cultural content into every sphere of Jewish life, and criticizing those who refused to see it as a priority.

Many of her other interests can be subsumed under her overriding concern for quality Jewish survival. She tried to prevent Jews from leaving Judaism through conversion, by explaining the essential differences between Judaism and Christianity and by discouraging interfaith activities that she felt blurred the differences and thus assisted missionary efforts. She argued for changes in halacha, particularly in the area of women's rights, that she believed would preserve Judaism's traditional integrity while making it more responsive to contemporary human needs. She strongly supported Israel - both as a physical homeland and refuge for Jews and as an important resource for the continuing development of Judaism.

I have concentrated in this thesis on the evolution of TWR's thought and activity in these four areas - Jewish survival, Jewish-Christian relations, women in Jewish law and life, and Israel. In the expanded scope of a rabbinical thesis, I have attempted to extend the ground covered by

Rosalind Chaiken in the senior thesis she wrote at the University of Cincinnati in 1983. Like hers, my work is based primarily on editorials and articles in the Jewish Spectator; TWR's papers in the American Jewish Archives, which consist of correspondence dating from 1931-1984, scrapbooks of newspaper clippings, and various articles and brochures by or about her; and her books. I have also tried to place TWR's career within the context of her early experience and of events and trends in the larger Jewish community, and to evaluate her influence on American Jewish life.

The sources mentioned above also contain a wealth of material on TWR's many other interests and ideas, including the necessity for accountability of Jewish fund-raising organizations, her theory that the defenders of Masada did not commit suicide, kashrut in Jewish institutions, and the integral relationship of Judaism and liberalism. There is still much to be written about Trude Weiss-Rosmarin. It is my hope that this modest contribution will spark interest in her on the part of Jews who are perhaps unfamiliar with her name but likewise animated by love for Judaism and the Jewish people, and who can be inspired by her example to continue her work.

Chapter I
Formative Years in Germany

The most important years of TWR's youth coincided with the Weimar period, which was a time of great opportunity for Jews in Germany; though she did not always realize it, these opportunities played an important role in shaping her development and, consequently, her later life as well. During her childhood and adolescence she was involved in the German Zionist youth movement and developed the love of Hebrew and Jewish study - and the fierce independence - that would be so central to the rest of her life. As a young adult, studying at various universities, she acquired the formal advanced education in Jewish philosophy, Bible and Semitics, and pedagogy that gave her the foundation on which she built the School of the Jewish Woman and her reputation as a writer and scholar.

Trude Weiss was born on June 7, 1908, in Frankfurt am Main, which was noted for the active Jewish intellectual and cultural life both of its mainstream Jewish community and of the Orthodox Austrittsgemeinde, founded by Samson Raphael Hirsch. Her parents, Jacob and Celestine (Mulling) Weiss, were descendants of four or five generations of German Jews, and they considered themselves to be "real Germans." Her father, a wine merchant, fought in World War I. She described her parents as "'religiously' but not 'culturally' Jewish."(1) The family observed kashrut and Shabbat at home and attended services regularly at "what you would call here

a Conservative synagogue."(2) They had not had much Jewish education, though her father could read Hebrew and had had a Bar Mitzvah. Trude attended public schools, though her sister, Hildegard, six years her junior, studied at the Philanthropin, a Jewish day school. Public schools in Germany had sessions on Saturday, but as a Sabbath observer Trude was exempted from writing. She experienced little or no antisemitism while growing up, and had close Gentile friends at school. Religious education took place during release-time from school; for the Jewish children, it was taught by a Reform rabbi. Young Trude Weiss was "horribly bored" by these release-time lessons and, in her earliest years, "untouched" by the synagogue.

The event that marked the beginning of a radical and lasting change in her attitudes toward Judaism and Jewish education took place in 1917, shortly before her ninth birthday, when she attended a meeting of Blau-Weiss, the German Zionist youth group, at the home of a friend. As she described it later,

> ...I came into Blau-Weiss the way people today are coming into the cults. There was an afternoon meeting at the home of one of my friends, who invited me to join and come - they used to talk about 'spearing' new members - and I came, and there was hora dancing which I'd never seen before, and singing of Zionist songs, boys and girls together.(3)

She was indeed "speared" by the "different type of spirit"(4) she found in Blau-Weiss, and "[f]or the next six year [sic] Blau-Weiss was the axis of my being."(5) This "different type of spirit" consisted of "a world warm with feeling"(6) - of

Yiddish stories, Hebrew and Yiddish songs, hikes and hora dancing, tales of life in Palestine, and association with Ostjuden - that was attractive both intrinsically and because it represented a rebellion against her parents' reluctance to stand out from their non-Jewish neighbors and their disdain for Jewish nationalism and for Eastern European Jews. An equally attractive element of involvement in Blau-Weiss was the discovery of a like-minded group of young Jews who were also eager to abandon their parents' bourgeois, ethnocentric German form of Judaism and create a community bound by a common - and somewhat exotic - cause.

Through Blau-Weiss, the enthusiastic, highly impressionable young girl was also brought into contact with cultural heroes, who, by their very accessibility, served as models of the best kind of Jewish scholarship and leadership. She recalled with obvious pleasure that her Blau-Weiss group, on weekend hikes, would often drop in on Martin Buber at his home in Heppenheim, where "[w]e were always received as welcome guests, and our distinguished host, always spent with us some time in interesting conversation."(7) She recounted with equal relish that the group had once persuaded Bialik and Agnon to watch them sleigh-riding on a hill near Homburg, which "was holy ground for us" because they had studied both writers' works in Hebrew class.(8)

Trude's involvement in Blau-Weiss also led to a lifelong love affair with Hebrew, to renewed interest in and sensitivity to the synagogue, and to a lasting devotion to

Jewish study. Each of these interests was fostered by an influential, charismatic figure. These people - Yosef Yoel Rivlin, Rabbi Nehemiah Nobel, and Franz Rosenzweig - became her personal heroes: their influence motivated her to achieve, and they also served as role models when, as an adult, she became a teacher and public figure.

A year or two after joining Blau-Weiss, Trude began attending the Hebraeische Sprachschule, a school set up by Yosef Yoel Rivlin - without the sponsorship or endorsement of the organized Jewish community - in order to support himself while he was in Frankfurt to earn a PhD in Arabic language and Islamic literature.(9) Her parents refused to pay for her Hebrew lessons, so Trude saved her pocket money - by walking to school and not buying ice cream - so that she could pay for the classes herself. She described Rivlin as "the rare teacher, deserving of the appellation TEACHER."(10) He made his students fall in love with Hebrew, "[t]hen he used this love for making us labor hard to study Hebrew as it should be studied."(11) In order to enable the students to read Hebrew literature on their own with a dictionary, he taught them how to analyze words and reduce them to their three-letter roots. He

> made searching for roots...a fascinating adventure - so fascinating that, in my second year at the Hebraeische Sprachschule, I decided to study Tenach in its entirety, from Bereishit . . . to Divrey Hayamim Bet . . . ."(12)

Using a dictionary and writing every new word in a notebook, she spent every free moment on the project, and completed it in about three years. Though this extracurricular Bible

study was completely voluntary, she felt inspired to do it by Rivlin's personality, which she later described as "the first lesson" he taught.(13) It also seems likely that she was aiming to impress her teacher, as she admitted to "romanticizing" him somewhat,(14) and, partially as a result of her independent study, she was successively skipped until she landed in the advanced course.(15) Nevertheless, the fact that she not only embarked on the project but completed it illustrates both her remarkable academic ability, determination, and persistence, and Rivlin's tremendous influence on her.

During the same years that she was studying Hebrew with Rivlin, Trude was spending time at the Eastern European Jews' synagogue, a place "forbidden" to "self-respecting German Jews." She "just loved to hear the Polish Jews talk," and by listening to them, she learned Yiddish.(16) Not only did this allow her to understand her beloved Yiddish stories in the original and interact more easily with the Eastern Jews; she also earned a good portion of her living during her early years in the United States by writing for the then-flourishing Yiddish press.

Somewhat paradoxically, the dynamic, exciting Jewish spirit she found in Blau-Weiss also enabled Trude to be drawn back to her parents' establishment German synagogue. Her renewed enthusiasm was fed by the charismatic personality of Rabbi Nehemiah Nobel, the spiritual leader of that synagogue, the Synagogue am Boerneplatz, until his death in 1922. She

was too young fully to understand the content of his lecture-sermons, which often lasted over an hour, but she was strongly influenced by "the Jewish ardor and human warmth which were the very essence of Rabbi Nobel's personality."(17) The "Jewish authenticity and greatness" that emanated from Rabbi Nobel, and the very fact that she did not understand his discourses, were "among the incentives that made me a bookworm at a time when my classmates engaged in those after-school activities that youngsters enjoy."(18)

Trude's avid reading was also eclectic. In addition to the Judaica and Hebraica that she was inspired to read by Blau-Weiss, Rabbi Nobel, and Mar Rivlin, she enjoyed philosophy, and was proficient in it. At the age of eleven she was reading Plato, as well as Kant, having already "worked through" the "easier" German philosophers.(19) These combined interests led her to the Freies Juedisches Lehrhaus, founded by Franz Rosenweig, where she began attending classes at the age of 13 or 14.

Rosenzweig had founded the Lehrhaus in 1920 in order "...to make Jewish knowledge the possession of the average Jew." He felt that the best teachers combined knowledge of their subject matter with pedagogic talent and a charismatic personality, the latter two qualities being the more important. He didn't mind if the teachers were one lesson ahead of the students, as long as they had the ability to inspire.(20) This philosophy created a strong spirit at the Lehrhaus, the essence of which "was an urgency to share with

others the importance and beauties of Judaism which the young teachers had discovered for themselves."(21) Trude was infected by this spirit and strove to create it in all of her educational endeavors throughout her life, whether they were actual face-to-face encounters, articles, or books. She was also strongly influenced and inspired by Rosenzweig himself, even though he was suffering from a severely debilitating illness during most of the time she knew him. She was a regular participant in the minyan that began meeting in his apartment in 1922 when he became too paralyzed to go out. She was deeply moved by the spirit of "simchah shel mitzvah" that pervaded the group and illuminated Rosenzweig's face, even though "[h]e was completely helpless and dependent to the extent where his wife every so often had to dab at his mouth to remove the saliva which he could not swallow."(22) She felt that he "spoke" to her and the others present though bereft of physical speech, and she "always came away from the Rosenzweig minyan with a feeling of exhilaration...uplifted by the miracle of what the human will for purpose-and-meaning can achieve."(23)

Despite the fact that she was able to derive so much benefit from her experiences at the Sprachschule, the Lehrhaus, and Rosenzweig's home, there was a painful aspect that lingered in her memory. She was five or six years younger than Rivlin's other advanced Hebrew students, and at least that much younger than the other students at the Lehrhaus. Due to this difference in age, which she found to

be "the insurmountable barrier separating a fourteen-year-old from nineteen-year-olds,"(24) she was not socially accepted by her classmates - and even intellectual acceptance took some time.(25) She especially recalled that "when 'everybody' went to the Konditorei after class or a lecture, my classmates told me to go home - where I usually was scolded for being late for my bedtime."(26) This made such an impression on her that when she passed that Konditorei during a trip to Frankfurt in 1964, she "relived again that pain of so many years ago - of belonging and not belonging..."(27) due to the age difference between her and her classmates.

This issue of "belonging and not belonging" went beyond not being invited to the Konditorei after class; it was a common thread throughout Trude's youth. In speaking about her early life, she consistently used the word "we" and denied that she was exceptional, as though she preferred to think that she was typical of her generation of Frankfurt Jews. On the other hand, she related with obvious pride such accomplishments as reading the entire Bible in Hebrew on her own and being skipped to the highest class at the Sprachschule, which seem to be anything but typical. She clearly possessed remarkable intellect and drive, but seems to have been ambivalent about standing out from her peers because of them, possibly due to the social stigma sometimes attached to a gifted child or teenager. By the time she reached adulthood, however, she had left the ambivalence behind; she remained independent, in a position to use her

talents to the fullest, for the rest of her life.

At the same time that Trude was the youngest student at the Lehrhaus, she was becoming more and more active in Blau-Weiss, and once again standing out from her age group. She became the leader of chapters whose members were several years older than she, and at fourteen she was teaching history to eighteen-year-olds and occasionally leading excursions of as long as a week.(28) The ultimate expression of her involvement and commitment, however, was running away from home at the age of fifteen to a cooperative farm near Berlin, where she planned to prepare for aliyah to Palestine. After a full day's work cleaning stables and milking cows, she taught Hebrew to the other halutzim in the evenings. It was winter, the work was hard, the conditions were unhygienic, and Trude soon contracted pneumonia.

Her mother came to pick her up, and she was ill for six weeks. By the time she was ready to go back to school after recuperating for another six weeks - having decided that she might not survive another stint on the farm, and cows didn't really appeal to her anyway - she was already a year behind her class. If her parents were already opposed to her being a Zionist, learning Hebrew, and associating with the Ostjuden, one can only imagine how they felt about her running away from home to be a halutzah. Hence, they refused to pay for the tutor Trude requested so that she could prepare for her matriculation exams privately, preferring that she face the consequences of her actions by returning to school a year

behind.

Instead of acquiescing to her parents' wishes, Trude accepted a position as the founder, director, and only teacher of a Hebraeische Sprachschule in Duisburg, about an hour away from Frankfurt. In addition to teaching Hebrew and running the school, she gave lectures; from these activities, she earned enough money to pay two tutors, and she passed the exams a year ahead of her class. Even in this she insisted that she was not so exceptional, that "in those days, at the age of 15 or 16, we were already responsible people, capable of doing things"(29) Nevertheless, the year she spent on the training farm and then in Duisburg surely did much to increase her independence and self-confidence, as well as improving her teaching and public speaking ability, all of which were helpful in launching her later career. This episode also helps to explain why she did not make aliyah: "having failed in hachsharah, I was left out when everybody in my circle went to Palestine..."(30)

Instead of making aliyah, Trude pursued an eclectic higher education. Her major field of interest was Assyriology, particularly Semitic languages such as Arabic, Syriac, Assyrian-Babylonian (Akkadian), and Ethiopic, but she also studied Talmud and other Judaica, philosophy, and pedagogy.(31) She started out in Breslau, where she studied Talmud with Isaac Heinemann as an "extraneous student" at the Jewish Theological Seminary while studying Assyriology at the University of Breslau.(32) Later she studied at the

Universities of Berlin and Leipzig, and she received her PhD from the University of Wuerzburg in the spring of 1931,(33) after having written her dissertation, Aribi und Arabien in den Babylonisch-Assyrischen Quellen, under the direction of Professor Maximilian Streck.(34) Sometime during this period, she also acquired a teaching certificate from the Teachers' Seminary in Cologne, condensing a four-year course of study into two months.(35) It was also during the period of her university studies that she met and decided to marry Aaron Rosmarin, a Russian-born American rabbi who had come to Germany to study Arabic. Thus, having acquired the interests and methods that would serve her throughout her life, she equipped herself for the career she was to begin in the United States.

Chapter II
Emergence Into the Public Sphere (1931-1939)

Trude Weiss-Rosmarin's evolution into a public figure in American Jewish life began almost by accident. When she arrived from Germany in 1931 with her newly-earned doctorate, her intention was to become a university professor and pursue research in ancient cuneiform texts. It was in large part due to the failure of her efforts to find an academic position that she began writing for numerous Jewish periodicals and popularizing her ideas about the need for Jewish education, which led to the founding of the School of the Jewish Woman and later of the Jewish Spectator. These activities, in turn, helped to launch her as a lecturer. By 1939 her multifaceted career was well established and she was widely known as an educator, speaker, and author.

Trude Weiss and Aaron Rosmarin were married in September, 1931, shortly after Trude's arrival in New York.(1) One would have thought that she would have no trouble obtaining an immigrant visa since she was coming to marry an American citizen, but a piece of somewhat indirect evidence to the contrary exists in an article written for the Jewish Western Bulletin in 1936 by a Rabbi J. L. Zlotnik, in which he referred to her having walked into his office in Montreal "several years ago" complaining that she was having "trouble convincing the American Consul that she would not become a public charge in the blessed United States."(2) The National Origin Act had gone into effect two years before,

placing stringent quotas on immigration from all countries except the Americas; academics could get non-quota visas, but only if they were "bona fide teachers of higher education" who could show that they would not become a "public charge."(3) As we will see, TWR possessed abundant resourcefulness that kept her far from being a public charge, but she was unable to find a position at a university. She inquired at Yale, Johns Hopkins, the University of Pennsylvania, and Dropsie College - among others - but was unsuccessful. The Depression was certainly a factor; with thousands of American PhD's unemployed, it was even more difficult for new immigrants to find positions. In addition, there were few departments of Oriental or Judaic Studies in those days and, according to Cyrus Adler, those that existed may have been reluctant to hire a woman.(4) She was also only twenty-three years old when she arrived in America, and in photographs from that time she looked her age, if not younger.

Whatever the decisive reasons were for her failure to secure an academic position, she was compelled by it to change her career plans. Her transition from a would-be professor to an incisive commentator on the Jewish scene is chronicled in a series of letters from a Dr. Samuel I. Feigin that covers her first year and a half in the United States. A letter of October 13, 1931 indicates that she was interested in copying cuneiform texts from clay tablets. He advised her that this was not very profitable; when she got a permanent

position at a college, she would be able to spend time copying texts, but in the meantime she should concentrate on writing articles or books that would appeal to a wider audience. Succeeding letters (of January 3 and February 15, 1932) indicate that she had begun writing for various periodicals in both the U.S. and Germany. A letter of May 20, 1932 indicates that she was making her living by writing - on literary, artistic, popular, and academic subjects. In a letter of March 14, 1933, Feigin consoled her for not yet having found an academic position, but by that point her new career - in speaking as well as in writing - had taken off.(5) She was writing in English, which she had studied in Germany but mastered in the United States, as well as in Yiddish, German, Hebrew, and even French; and she was lecturing in English before learned societies and other organizations.(6) Her wide interests in all aspects of Jewish life were manifesting themselves in her articles, and her intellect and drive were evident in the speed with which she mastered English, the number of languages in which she wrote, the number and scope of periodicals that published her work (to be discussed below), and the fact that despite her lack of success in obtaining an academic position she was quickly accepted as a member of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis and the American Oriental Society, before whom she had lectured.(7)

The respect in which she was held by her colleagues in the Semitics field is also demonstrated by the fact that only

a few months after her arrival, her dissertation was published in the Journal of the Society of Oriental Research.(8) Her interest in maintaining her connections to the scholarly study of the Bible and Semitic languages - which remained one of her great loves throughout her life - is demonstrated by her membership in the above organizations, as well as in the National Association of Biblical Instructors, which she served as Vice-President in 1939. She also contributed to these groups' journals and other scholarly publications for several years. Even after she assumed sole editorship of the Jewish Spectator and her time was almost exclusively occupied by lecturing and writing on a more popular level for Jewish audiences, she continued high-level text and language study on her own and maintained an interest in the scholarly happenings in Semitics.(9)

TWR's love for the Bible and Jewish study also greatly influenced her popular writings, in this period and throughout her career. In the 1930s she frequently wrote for popular Jewish periodicals on the recent archaeological discoveries that shed light on the Bible and, she believed, helped to prove the factuality of many of its stories, such as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the collapse of the walls of Jericho. At this time she also began expressing her deeply-held conviction, no doubt influenced by her Lehrhaus experience, that it was absolutely necessary - and should be the Jewish community's highest priority - for every Jew to get a thorough Jewish education. She also wrote on

antisemitism and the increasing Nazi restrictions and atrocities against Jews, but with an emphasis on the Jewish revival in Germany that came about as a result, stressing - as she would throughout her career - that antisemitism can never be eliminated, but that "a strong and integrated Judaism, based upon the equipping of our youth with Jewish knowledge"(10) is the best defense against its harmful effects. Some of the other subjects that she wrote on in the '30s and that would continue to interest her through the years were Jewish philosophy, the differences between Judaism and Christianity and why Jews cannot accept Jesus, and Jewish books.

Somewhat surprisingly, considering the differences between German and Eastern European Jews that still existed before World War II - though not at all surprisingly, considering TWR's fascination with Ostjuden while still in Germany - much of the popular writing through which TWR made her living was for the Yiddish press. She had a regular literary column in a family-oriented Yiddish weekly called the Jewish American and wrote regular articles and reviews in the monthly Zukunft. Though she did not write regularly for the dailies, she was on good terms with many people who did, and her books and the School of the Jewish Woman's activities received a good deal of publicity from the Day, the Jewish Morning Journal, and even to some extent from the Forward, whose primitive linguistic style and non-religious orientation were probably not to her liking.(11) She also

wrote articles for English, Hebrew, and German periodicals, and by 1938 she had some articles syndicated in the Anglo-Jewish press, under her own name and under the pseudonyms Allan G. Field and Alexander Levin.(12)

In the fall of 1933 TWR, with the help of her husband, turned her constant exhortation to Jewish education into action by establishing an adult education institute called "The School of the Jewish Woman." It is impossible to know exactly what caused TWR to launch the school when she did. According to an article she wrote a few years later(13), there was a general surge of interest in adult education in the early '30s; perhaps she felt that in this atmosphere there would also be a market for adult education on specifically Jewish subjects. At any rate, she must have had a great deal of confidence in her ability - and in the ability of the subject matter itself - to attract people to the kind of serious Jewish study she thought most of the Jewish public sorely needed. The School was modeled - in reaching out to people who may have been alienated from Jewish learning and tradition, and in trying to arouse its students to active participation and wrestling with texts - on Rosenzweig's Lehrhaus; but unlike the Lehrhaus it was aimed specifically at women "because as in Frankfurt..., girls did not get enough Jewish education."(14) TWR also believed that it was very important for mothers to be Jewishly educated so that they would serve as an example for their children's Jewish education, and for Jewish women in

general to "concentrate their powers upon... Judaism"(15) as a more fulfilling way of occupying themselves than the constant round of teas and bridge parties in which many of the more affluent among them engaged.

Hadassah, which was and is known for its educational programs, originally agreed to sponsor the School. However, when TWR showed Hadassah's leaders her proposed list of courses, they "objected to [her] emphasis on Jewish studies with a serious approach and to scheduling them in the evening - instead of in the morning."(16) Hadassah also wanted to be actively involved in running the school, including having some of its members teach, a condition to which TWR, who later became well known for her independence, would not agree(17); so TWR and Hadassah decided that they could not work together, and the School became independent. TWR recalled that the School "sort of broke even" because the students paid very moderate registration and tuition fees and the teachers were paid very little.(18) There were also regular appeals for people to become "members" of the School, and students were encouraged to recruit members among their friends and relatives. Financial problems, however, were among the reasons that the School closed after six years.(19) TWR was the Director of the School and taught at least one course each term. Aaron Rosmarin was the Registrar and taught intermittently.

The curriculum outline printed in TWR's pamphlet about the School, Jewish Women and Jewish Culture, clearly reflects

her ideas about priorities in Jewish education, which in turn were influenced by her experiences at the Sprachschule and the Lehrhaus. "The first and most important place in the curriculum..." was occupied by Hebrew, as TWR felt that it was important to be able to study the Bible, Mishnah, and other classic Jewish texts in the original. The second place was given to Jewish history, because "a thorough knowledge of Jewish history is the best remedy against indifference towards the Jewish community and the surest way to build up Jewish pride and self respect in the young." Other subjects listed in the outline were Bible (in English except for students at the highest Hebrew levels), Talmud (for advanced students), Customs and Ceremonies (designed as "the best answer to the many question marks that are usually put with regards to the many and apparently perplexing Jewish laws"), Liturgy (designed to "stimulate attendance at Synagogue by teaching the meaning and the history of the prayers"), and Philosophy (described as having "...always been a helpmate and a beneficial and well-accepted corrective to Jewish religion"). It appears that this outline represented TWR's ideal basic curriculum, while the actual course offerings listed in the brochures for the various terms reflect the interests and abilities of the faculty and the School's resources.(20) I believe it is fair to say that this curriculum outline was also TWR's vision of the basic fund of Jewish knowledge that, ideally, should be possessed by every Jew.

The courses common to every term for which I was able to consult the course offerings were several levels of Hebrew, at least a one-term survey of Jewish history, Customs and Ceremonies, and at least one course in English on some aspect of the Bible. Courses in Yiddish, Problems of Modern Jewish Life, a survey of Jewish Philosophy, and Contributions of Jewish Writers to American Literature were each offered for several terms. Courses that were offered at least once include Hebrew Dramatics, Jews in Many Lands, Survey of Jewish Prayers, and Notable Jewish Books. At the beginning of the school's existence there was a large group of teachers, each of whom taught one course; but after several years the faculty stabilized at about six, not including TWR. The only other woman on the faculty was a Miss Pearl Shapiro, listed as a Hebrew teacher. Most of the men had the title Rabbi or Dr., though at least one, Morris Skop, was a rabbinical student; some time after he had stopped teaching at the School, an article by him appeared in the Jewish Spectator, entitled "My First Year in the Ministry." It is difficult to know how TWR recruited teachers. Undoubtedly, people were looking for jobs during the Depression, and even a small extra salary helped somewhat. I also suspect that the force of TWR's personality, along with assurances she may have given potential teachers that they would be making an essential contribution to the Jewish future, may have helped to persuade some. In addition, some rabbis and scholars may have been excited by the idea of participating in such a

pioneering venture, where they were encouraged and expected to teach on a high level.

Classes met at Temple Anshe Chesed, on the upper west side of Manhattan, for most of the time that the School existed. TWR recalled later that Anshe Chesed was "very nice to us," charging only a small rent for use of the classrooms.(21) Courses were primarily offered in the evenings, though some years there were also morning and/or afternoon classes. Beginning with the seventh term (Fall, 1936), classes were open to men one evening a week, "[u]pon the request of a large number of men."(22) The School had an Academic Advisory Board, which included such prestigious - and Jewishly diverse - figures as Albert Einstein (the honorary chairman), Samson Benderly, Bernard Revel, Shalom Spiegel, and Stephen S. Wise.(23) The Board's function was purely honorary; it was formed because the School "needed to have nice stationery." TWR recalled that it was easy to persuade Einstein to be the honorary chairman, because he "joined everything Jewish."(24)

It is not clear how many people studied at the School all together, but by December, 1933, there were already over 400 students, a number of which TWR was very proud. They included a wide range of ages - "from...girls to ... grandmothers" - and social classes - from "working-girls who earn $10.00 a week and must support themselves by this money" to "women who come to the school in limousines with chauffeurs" - and they were apparently so enthusiastic about

their studies that even in a heavy rainstorm, no students were absent.(25) This enthusiasm is as difficult to explain as other aspects of the school's success. Perhaps it was the thrill of opportunities that had not previously been available to women. Perhaps it was the good publicity: notices of the opening of each term appeared in the Yiddish, Anglo-Jewish, and general press, and well-advertised gala assemblies with prominent speakers were held on certain occasions, such as the "tenth [term] jubilee assembly" in March, 1938, which featured Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins. Perhaps it was the low tuition. In any case, as with recruiting teachers, the force of TWR's personality very likely was a major factor.

As time passed and the School became more established, it began to expand its activities both in and beyond the classroom. By November, 1935, there were two social/cultural organizations sponsored by the School: the Young Folks League (later renamed the "Jewish Youth Club") for teenagers, both male and female, and the B'noth Torah League, billed as "the Women's Organization of the School." Both met regularly, and the latter also engaged in fundraising activities to benefit the School.(26) By April, 1936, the School had received a charter from the University of the State of New York, allowing it to grant "Alertness Credit" (comparable to continuing education units) to public school teachers, and had begun offering Hebrew Teacher and Sunday School Teacher diplomas for students who completed certain requirements.

The most ambitious and long-lasting special project launched by the School, however, was a four-page newsletter entitled News from the School of the Jewish Woman that first came out in November-December, 1935 and by its third issue, had developed into the Jewish Spectator. The School closed in 1939, but the Jewish Spectator continued, and became - especially after her assumption of the sole editorship in 1943 - TWR's primary vehicle for promulgating her ideas about Jewish education and most other aspects of Jewish life.

It seems clear from the introduction to the first issue of the News..., combined with the magazine's development in its first year, that the publication of a major Jewish literary journal had been a goal of the Rosmarins from the outset, and that there was a master plan, though it was probably adapted somewhat over time, for the implementation of this vision. "Onward," the lead article of the November-December, 1935 News..., reads in part:

> Just as the School has grown from humble beginnings to become one of the best known and largest institutions of Jewish adult education, so we hope that our News Letter will eventually develop into a regular magazine of high literary standing.(27)

The rest of the article indicates that for the time being, the News... would remain a bimonthly newletter containing a schedule of activities, reports of unusual incidents in classes, notices of significant events in the lives of students, and so on. However, after one more issue of the News... - which had doubled in size to eight pages - the newsletter became a monthly magazine called the Jewish

Spectator. The first issue(28) was sixteen pages long, and the magazine continued to grow with every issue until September, 1936, when it had stabilized at forty-eight pages. The contents of the magazine also grew rapidly, until by the end of the first year the Jewish Spectator was the high-quality Jewish literary, educational, and current affairs magazine envisioned by its editors.(29)

The Jewish Spectator had several regular features, some intended primarily to increase its popularity - such as an advice column and a page of jokes - and others designed to improve Jewish literacy and awareness. Each issue contained a "condensed novel," one or two serialized novels, two or three short stories (some of which were translations from Hebrew or Yiddish) original and/or translated poetry, a round-up of current Jewish news from around the world, groups of quotations from the Talmud and other ancient and medieval Jewish literature, two or more articles, including a piece on each Jewish holiday as it occurred, book reviews, correspondence from readers (mostly endorsements of the magazine in the early years), and one to six editorials and opinion pieces. In addition, each issue through September, 1936, contained a "School of the Jewish Woman Page," a condensed form of the original newsletter. Beginning in February, 1939, a children's section called "the Juniors' Library" was offered.(30) The Jewish Spectator was - and continued to be - unique among American Jewish periodicals in that it was not connected with an organization or religious

movement, and in the fact that it was intended to be educational without being scholarly or "highbrow."

TWR authored several series of articles under her own name, including "It Happened to the Jews," a dramatized survey of Jewish history, and "Jewish Women Through the Ages." She also contributed individual articles at intervals - some of which also appeared in other publications - on such subjects as "The Growing Movement of Jewish Adult Education," "Our Neighbors, the Arabs" (an area in which she was ahead of her time), "The Best Loved Book of All" (an ode to the Bible), "Explaining the German Jew," "Taking Stock of the Anglo-Jewish Press," and "Differences Between Judaism and Christianity." Under the pseudonym "Allan G. Field," she wrote a regular opinion column called "Topic of the Month," which dealt with such diverse subjects as the fundraising affairs of Jewish women's organizations that cost more to put on than they raised; the hypocrisy of Jewish leaders who praised an honoree at a tribute dinner while maligning him behind his back; and the insufficiency of being a "Jew at heart." Under the name "Miriam Isaacs" she wrote fiction and occasional, rather conservative articles on "women's issues," such as "Should Married Women Hold Jobs?". As "Alexander Levin," she wrote articles on Jewish historical trivia, such as "Six Jewish Doctoresses in the Middle Ages."

The editorials also covered a wide variety of themes, though the majority were concerned with four broad areas: the Nazi dictatorship and its persecution of Jews and detrimental

effects on Germany's society and economy, the refugee problem, and antisemitism the world over; Palestine, including the Arab riots, the proposed British partition plan of 1937, and the White Papers; the necessity for Jewish content in rabbis' sermons, organizational programs, and people's bookshelves; and tributes to famous Jews - including Louis Brandeis, Sigmund Freud, and Felix Warburg - on their deaths, retirements, and significant birthdays. Some of the editorials were remarkably prescient, particularly one in the January, 1937 issue which predicted that Germany would have to start a war because the Nazi dictatorship and its persecution of Jews had so ruined the country's economy. Although the editorials were unsigned, the opinions expressed in them were generally consonant with TWR's views as expressed in her other writings.

As the Jewish Spectator grew, developed, and expanded its circulation and advertising contracts, it became less associated with the School. As noted above, the "School of the Jewish Woman Page" did not appear after September, 1936. Around the same time, the Jewish Spectator began launching its own special projects, including a speakers' bureau and a "Readers' Guidance" service that recommended books of Jewish interest to individuals and organizations. Later it offered the "Jewish Book Club," through which Jewish Spectator subscribers could buy Jewish books at a significant discount. As of March, 1938, the Jewish Spectator had moved to an office downtown and was no longer published by the School.

In addition to the growth of the Jewish Spectator, TWR's career advanced in two other major areas in the years 1936-1939: as a lecturer and as an author. An advertisement on page two of the October, 1936 issue of the Jewish Spectator announced that she was accepting "lecture engagements for the 1936-1937 Season" and that "Jewish Centers, Women's Organizations and Cultural Groups" were "invited to apply for topics and terms to The Jewish Spectator. . . ." A full-page ad which appeared for the first time in the May, 1938 issue (page 47) proclaimed that TWR had begun lecturing under the auspices of the Foreign Affairs Forum on a number of topics, including "The Jew and Some Modern 'Isms', "Judaism as a Religion of Reason," "Why Jews Cannot Accept Jesus," and "What Next in Europe?" She was billed as ". . . A scintillating personality who will hold every audience spellbound" and recommended as appropriate for "forum lectures, institutes, women's organizations, functions calling for a 'memorable speaker'." It appears that she was well established as a lecturer by this point: her entry in the 1938-39 edition of Who's Who in American Jewry described her as "an educator and lecturer."(31) She continued to spend a large portion of her time lecturing - throughout this country and in several others - during the entire course of her career, and continued to be described by many of her listeners in glowing terms such as the above. She also became noted, as time went on, for causing controversy, and for many audiences this was part of her attraction.

TWR became known as an author for the first time early in 1936 with the publication by the Bloch publishing Company of her first book, Religion of Reason: Hermann Cohen's System of Religious Philosophy. It was an attempt

> to present Hermann Cohen's religious-philosophical views in a well-rounded whole, in order to thus introduce his philosophy of religion, which is practically identical with his philosophy of Judaism, to those who have no access to his writings.(32)

She also hoped that the book would generate enough interest in Hermann Cohen that someone would undertake to translate his religious-philosophical writings into English.

Religion of Reason received a fair amount of publicity, from pre-publication notices in November/December, 1935, to reviews that appeared as late as Fall, 1938. It was reviewed primarily in Jewish and scholarly (religious/theological studies) periodicals in the United States, Canada, England, Germany, and Belgium, with two reviews appearing in Christian journals.(33) Most of the reviews were positive, but even the few negative ones praised her comprehensive bibliography of secondary sources about Cohen and his philosophy. The final chapter of the book dealt with how Cohen reconciled Judaism with his extreme German patriotism, and many of the reviews (not surprisingly) quoted TWR's conclusion that "Fate has indeed been kind to Cohen that he did not live to see the cruel refutation of his political theories in Hitleristic Germany."(34)

TWR's other book of this period, which stemmed from her scholarly interest in the Bible, was The Hebrew Moses: An

Answer to Sigmund Freud, published by the Jewish Book Club in September, 1939. In it she attacked the "unscientific methods" Freud used in reaching the conclusions that he had published in Moses and Monotheism earlier in 1939 - namely, that Moses was an Egyptian, that the monotheistic religion he gave the Hebrews was actually Aton-worship, and that the Hebrews murdered him in the desert because his religion was too strict. She chastised him for "evolv[ing] hypotheses whose presuppositions and foundations he cannot test and must take for granted"(35) because he was unfamiliar with the languages, archaeological discoveries, and historical background necessary for serious Biblical scholarship.

The Hebrew Moses was very well publicized, and - undoubtedly because of Freud's popularity - received much wider coverage in the press, both general and Jewish, than did Religion of Reason. A pre-publication press release was circulated in August, and was picked up by the Jewish press nation- and world-wide (including Scotland, Bombay, and Shanghai), as well as by such general newspapers as the New York Times and the New York World Telegram. The few actual reviews of the book praised the sharpness of TWR's analysis, but several criticized her for expecting Freud to be a Biblical scholar, since he did not actually claim that his theory was true but only suggested that it might be psychologically plausible, and for entering his domain by psychoanalyzing his motives in writing Moses and Monotheism.

Despite the lack of a unanimously positive reception,

The Hebrew Moses served to further establish TWR's reputation as a scholar and author. As noted above, she had already made a name for herself as an educator and lecturer. Thus, by the end of the 1930s, she had emerged as a public figure in several areas of endeavor and was ready to move into the 1940s with a firm foundation on which to expand her work. In the following chapters we will explore the evolution of TWR's thought from 1940 to 1988, as reflected in her books and articles, on a few of her many subjects of interest: Jewish survival, Jewish-Christian relations, women, and Israel.

Chapter III
Jewish Survival

TWR's major overall focus - and passion - throughout her career was Jewish survival, though the term does not appear until the early 1940's. Though her range of interests was very wide, most of them can be subsumed under this one overriding concern. While she generally resisted labelling, she described herself on more than one occasion as a "Jewish survivalist." It has become fashionable in recent years to say that the term "Jewish survival" is inadequate; are we surviving for a purpose, or are we merely remaining alive? TWR addressed this question by stressing the greatness of the Jewish heritage and the necessity not only of physical survival, but of intellectual and cultural survival - the survival of Judaism and the Jewish spirit as well as of the Jewish people.

Toward this end, one of her most persistent campaigns was for Jewish education, which she felt was the single most important guarantor of Jewish survival. She enthusiastically supported the establishment of Jewish day schools, and recommended them as the best - really the only - source of a thorough Jewish education. She made many efforts to see that Jewish books were an integral and honored part of all Jewish homes, including publishing a series of reasonably priced books, distributing books at a discount through the Jewish Spectator, urging synagogues to sell books in their gift shops and on prominently-displayed racks in their lobbies,

and even taking some of her own antique Hebrew books along on lecture tours to show to audiences. She applauded and encouraged efforts to establish Judaic Studies programs on college campuses. And perhaps most importantly, she herself never stopped studying and teaching at every possible opportunity - most notably on the lecture platform and through the pages of the Jewish Spectator.

In addition to her writings on the topic of Jewish survival itself and on Jewish education, this chapter will explore TWR's responses to the Holocaust as they relate to her ideas about Jewish survival.

Jewish Survival

TWR acquired a basic confidence in the eternity of the Jewish people from her studies of Jewish history. Throughout the millennia of Israel's existence, beginning with Pharaoh, tyrants had tried to destroy the Jews, either out of fear that they were "too many and too mighty for us" (Ex. 1:9) or because "their laws are different from those of every other people . . ." (Esther 3:8). Some of them did manage to kill many Jews or to make certain places judenrein for a long period of time, but the Jewish people continued to endure. Thus she wrote in 1941, even as the Jews of Europe were being systematically rounded up and murdered:

> Two thousand years of persecution and martyrdom - two thousand years of valor and heroism, spiritual deepening and intellectual ascendancy! Two thousand years of heartrending despair - two thousand years of undying belief and hope! This is the history of the Eternal People.
>
> And today? Today is no different from yesterday.... The Eternal People will not die!

> Zionism and the new Hebrew culture, the powerful renascence of the Jewish creative genius, the inspiration of Eretz Israel, and the great promise of the latent possibilities and still dormant force of American Jewry - the Jewry of today and tomorrow, strengthen our faith in the Divine promise of Israel's eternity. Fear ye not, neither be afraid!(1)

Though she possessed this basic confidence, and wanted to instill it in others, she also believed strongly that contemporary Jews could not rest on their laurels and rely on God to ensure Jewish continuity; they had to do everything in their power to see to it that Judaism and the Jewish people endured. An important example from the Holocaust years of the type of action she felt was required is contained in an article entitled "A Thousand Years Are But As Yesterday," in which she compared the "wiping out of the great institutions of Jewish learning in Poland" to the persecutions in Babylonia in the tenth century that led to the transfer of the center of Jewish learning and culture to Spain, and called for "a modern Hasdai Ibn Shaprut" to finance the relocation of Polish scholars and yeshivot to the United States and fund other "projects of Jewish scholarship which can be achieved only today - and which must be performed today so that tomorrow may still find us as Jews."(2) This article also demonstrates the tremendous importance TWR placed on Jewish scholarship as the sine qua non for Jewish survival and is one of the first statements of the later oft-repeated belief that, after the virtual destruction of much of European Jewry, American Jewry was largely responsible for ensuring Jewish survival. She was in step with the times by

beginning to use the term "Jewish survival" at this point, because it was in the early 1940s, as American Jews became aware of Hitler's murder of large numbers of their brothers and sisters, that the term - and the concept - became popular.

In her book Jewish Survival, published in 1949, she discussed the ideas mentioned above, as well as placing a great deal of emphasis on what she saw as the "Jewish genius" for ethics and morality in human relationships, the "Jewish Mission" to share Judaism's "religious-ethical insights"(3) with the world, the necessity for a harmonious, balanced relationship between Israel and the Diaspora, and the Jewish family. These ideas were certainly not new: the "Jewish genius" and "Jewish mission" were introduced by the German Reformers, though TWR added a more traditionalist twist to the idea of the Jewish mission by saying that it could only be fulfilled in the Jewish homeland; other Zionists were also working on the Israel-Diaspora balance; and the Jewish family is an eternal theme; but her innovation was in relating them all to the central concern for Jewish survival. She continued to write about this complex of ideas throughout her career. For each one, she both recognized achievements and called for improvement in the way the Jewish community was handling it, depending on what she saw as the need of the time. For example, on the occasion of the American Jewish Tercentenary in 1954, many other writers hailed a great revival in American Judaism, but TWR dismissed the progress that was

being made as superficial, mostly involving the building of large synagogues and Jewish Community Centers in the suburbs. However, in 1976, when others were lamenting the state of American Jewry, she saw great progress in substantive areas such as more and higher-level Jewish day schools and more support for them, the growth of college-level Judaic studies programs and Jewish campus activities, and increased interest in Israel manifest in more American Jews visiting the Jewish State.

Another of her concerns for assuring Jewish survival, related to her interest in the Jewish family, was the importance of having children to assure sheer numerical survival. Revealingly, her book Jewish Survival is dedicated to her son, Moshe, and she once agreed to help cover for a columnist on maternity leave, saying that as a "Jewish survivalist theorist," she could not but agree to "pinch-hit with a column for a lady PRACTICING Jewish survivalist who is taking time out to have her FIFTH child."(4) She also repeatedly praised the "Orthodox explosion" as a tremendous source of "Jewish survival strength" - even though she did not agree with their fundamentalism - since they were both dedicated to Torah study and averse to birth control, which resulted in large families.

Education

As noted above, TWR felt that Jewish education was the most important factor in assuring Jewish survival. She believed that a thorough Jewish education would insure

children against becoming "Jewishly destitute" and would help them to understand antisemitism but not see it as the sum total of Jewish existence, since they would be well-versed in the Bible, the Talmud, Jewish history, and all that is positive about Judaism. She believed that a thorough Jewish education could only be acquired by attending a Jewish day school, and she took pains, in many Jewish Spectator articles and in a pamphlet that she wrote for Torah Umesorah in 1949, to convince parents that Jewish parochial schools were not un-American, since other religious groups, notably Catholics, sent their children to parochial schools in large numbers, and that the secular education provided in Jewish day schools was as good as or better than that which could be obtained in the public schools. While she appreciated and applauded all efforts to establish and support day schools, she praised Torah Umesorah as "the American Jewish organization which has contributed most to the advancement of Jewish knowledge and to raising the quality of Jewish education,"(5) since it was the first organization dedicated to this work, and she frequently used the numbers, attendance, and public support of Jewish day schools as a barometer of how Judaism was faring in America.

Next to Jewish day schools, TWR's most persistent project was encouraging Jews to own and read Jewish books. In the 1940s and '50s she often lamented the neglected state of the Jewish book in America and ridiculed the necessity of "Jewish Book Week" (later expanded to "Jewish Book Month"),

saying that every week of the year should be a Jewish book week. She wrote several articles detailing the Jewish people's historic love affair with books and encouraging contemporary Jews to continue that tradition. She also took practical steps to make Jewish books as attractive and accessible to the average Jew as possible. The most direct of these were the Jewish Book Club, founded in the late 1930s, which offered books to Jewish Spectator readers at a discount, and its offshoot, the Jewish People's Library, established in 1940, which provided small, easily-digestible books at the small, easily-digestible price of $.50. The Club, and especially the Jewish People's Library, went beyond what the Jewish Publication Society was offering at that time in terms of making well-bound, attractive books available at very low prices. However, it is possible that the demise of the Jewish People's Library in 1942 was due in part to JPS' introduction at that time of substantial discounts on some of its remaindered books.

TWR also campaigned for adult Jewish education in various ways. Most directly, she viewed her lectures as educational opportunities and tried to challenge her audiences to ask thoughtful questions and to engage in further study. She promoted the idea of scholar-in-residence weekends, and was herself featured at many such programs. She also encouraged the use of the Jewish Spectator as a teaching tool: she urged synagogues and organizations to set up regular discussion groups based on it, and was thrilled when

hundreds did; and she regularly solicited gift subscriptions that would enable her to place the magazine in public and university libraries. One of her more unusual efforts was the proposal, first propounded in 1951 and repeated several times thereafter, to try to get "three-day-a-year Jews" recommitted to Judaism through special High Holy Day services which would consist of ten minutes of prayer at the beginning, ten minutes of prayer at the end, and two to three hours of lecture and discussion in the middle, on such themes as "What Jews Believe About God," "What Makes Us Jews?", and "How to Be a Jew Every Day of the Year."(6) She referred to these as "Return to Judaism Services," and expressed a desire to see them held in ballrooms and auditoriums all around the country. A few rabbis held modified versions of these services in their congregations but - not surprisingly - they did not become widespread. As mentioned above, she also campaigned for Judaic Studies programs at colleges and universities, and urged individual students and faculty members to work for such programs on their campuses.

The Holocaust

TWR's responses to the Holocaust, both while it was taking place and afterward, shed additional light on her attitudes about the Jewish people and Jewish survival.

As soon as the Nazis came to power, TWR began publicizing their atrocities against Jews. She also urged an economic boycott of Germany, and the opening of the United States and Palestine to more refugees. When the War began,

she urged the American Jewish community to forego luxuries, such as new coats and evenings at the theater, and to send the money to the suffering European Jews to try to relieve their extreme poverty, and to try to smuggle them to freedom. At the same time, as noted above, she recognized that the Jewish cultural centers, first in Germany and Poland and then in other parts of Europe, were being destroyed and therefore needed to be transplanted to the United States so that Jewish learning and culture would continue.

When the news came of the mass murders, she began immediately to defend the victims against charges of cowardice, insisting that it was "an innate disgust of violence and of countering evil incarnate with the same weapon" that "made, and still makes, embattled Jews submit without resistance of force to bands of bestial slaughterers."(7) At the same time, she praised the Warsaw Ghetto fighters for their resistance and affirmed that "the Jewish people does not die - it is the Eternal People! We shall be here to remember the heroes and martyrs of Warsaw long after every trace of nazism shall have been erased and forgotten."(8)

After the Holocaust, as documents were uncovered and events became clearer, she began to stress Jewish heroism more, and martyrdom less. To the physical heroism of the fighters in Warsaw and other ghettoes and in some of the camps, she added the spiritual heroism of the Jewish community leaders who kept Jewish educational, cultural,

religious, and self-help institutions going in the ghettoes and even in the camps, and of the scholars and ordinary people who wrote and hid journals and other documents so the world would know what they went through. She also saw the survivors as heroes, as it "took heroism to survive under the Nazis."(9)

In remembering the Holocaust and trying to make some sense of it, if such were possible, she preferred the first-person chronicles of survivors (and of some who did not survive) to Holocaust theologies, which she described as "sick" and as a type of revisionism, since they "justify the Pope's silence and the silence and abstention from action of all those whose words and deeds could have saved millions of Jews from death in the gas chambers."(10) She blamed humans, not God, for the murder of the six million.

She warned against over-prolonging our mourning for the Holocaust victims, but she did think it was important for them to be remembered, and she suggested that all Jews in all synagogues should recite the Mourners' Kaddish together in memory of them, since we do not know when individuals' Yahrzeits are, but we do know that Jews were murdered every day.

Chapter IV
Jewish-Christian Relations

TWR began speaking out on the subject of Jewish-Christian relations early in her career, continued writing and lecturing on it throughout her life, and was involved in the publication of three books dealing with it, more than she wrote or edited on any other subject. Within the general area of Jewish-Christian relations, she was primarily concerned with "saving" Jews for Judaism and with maintaining a hospitable environment for Jews and Judaism. Hence she expended a great deal of effort on explicating the differences between Judaism and Christianity, exposing Christian missionary efforts and what she saw as Jewish encouragement of them, and teaching Jews to "know how to answer" missionaries. She also wrote a great deal about the Christian bases of antisemitism and tried to dissuade Jews from participating in interfaith activities that she felt to be counter-productive.

This chapter will examine each area of TWR's concern and activity with regard to Jewish-Christian relations in a roughly chronological fashion.

"Judaism and Christianity: The Differences"

TWR's first major work in the area of Jewish-Christian relations was a book by this title, first published in 1943 after having appeared as a series of articles in the Jewish Spectator. The principle underlying the writing of the book, as well as many of her articles and lectures in this field,

was concisely stated in an article published in the Jewish Spectator in 1947:

> Jewish survival is contingent upon Jewish distinctiveness. A minority, submerged in a majority that outnumbers it hopelessly, can retain its identity only when it strengthens its characteristic possessions, the things that set it apart from the rest. Judaism has survived because its confessors were ever alert to its differences from Christianity.(1)

In the early 1940's, sparked by the rise of Fascism and Nazism and the fact that "fascist fellow-travelers and anti-Semites" in the United States "had appropriated 'Christian' as an identifying mark,"(2) two movements arose that led TWR to fear a widespread Jewish-Christian syncretism that would, according to the principle stated above, obliterate Judaism. In the general community, particularly among scholars and liberal Christian theologians, there was a tendency to use the term "Judeo-Christian" as a catchword for opposition to fascism and antisemitism by affirming "a shared religious basis for western values."(3) In the Jewish community, undoubtedly influenced by this trend as well as by a desire to fit into American society during the war years, when there was still a fair amount of anti-Jewish discrimination here, there was considerable sentiment for a greater appreciation of Jesus by Jews and for seeing the two religions as very similar. TWR was disturbed by statements to this effect by Jewish leaders, particularly by those of the scholarly stature of Julian Morgenstern, who said, in an address inaugurating the 1942-43 academic year at the Hebrew Union College, that "'the two religions (Judaism and Christianity)

. . . are truly, basically one'", and "that 'we may truthfully call Judeo-Christianity the religion of tomorrow's better world.'"(4) She believed that "'good will' between Jews and Christians should not and must not be synonymous with raising all bars and obliterating or denying the differences that separate the two faiths,"(5) a feeling she insisted was shared by mainstream Christian theologians, who also took pains to enumerate the essential differences between the two religions. She wrote Judaism and Christianity: The Differences, which she intended to be read primarily by Jews, in order "to promote real 'good will,'" which she felt could

> only grow from knowledge, knowledge that is informed by the religious conviction that human beings, in despite that they are different and behave and believe differently, are yet all brothers through their common humanity.(6)

In positing this acceptance of differences as the ideal type of "good will", she felt that she was in the best Jewish tradition, since "[t]his type of 'good will' has been advocated by the Jewish Prophets, Sages and Teachers through the ages . . . ."(7)

The book consists of eight chapters, six comparing the Jewish and Christian approaches to various religious concepts, one on the two religions' evaluations of Judaism's "role and destiny" (p.99), and one on Jesus' place in Christianity and Jews' proper attitude toward him. The arguments in each chapter rely to a large extent on generalization and presentation of positions as monolithic,

dismissing dissenting positions with a line or two.(8) Her basic conclusions are: Judaism is purely monotheistic, while Christianity is not; much of Christian belief relies on miracles, while Jewish belief, by and large, is completely consonant with the laws of nature and reason; Judaism believes that people are free to make their own ethical choices and have the power to attain forgiveness for their sins directly from God, while Christianity teaches that all mortals bear the burden of original sin, which can only be lifted - as can the guilt of the sins they themselves commit - by accepting that Jesus died to atone for the sins of all of humankind; Judaism regards the body as a creation of God, and therefore good, while Christianity sees physical things as inherently evil; Judaism considers observance of the Law as the essence of the religious life, while Christianity regards pure faith as a higher form of religiosity; Judaism believes that the covenant between God and Israel is eternally valid, while Christianity believes that "the 'New Testament' is the 'fulfilment' of the 'Old Testament'" (p. 125) and that the Church superseded the Jews as God's chosen people; and that Judaism has no room for Jesus, even as a "rabbi" or "prophet," while Christianity reveres him as the Messiah and the Son of God.(9)

Judaism and Christianity: The Differences was reviewed widely in the Jewish press and noted in a few non-Jewish publications, both when it was originally published and when a second edition was issued in 1946. Most of the reviews said

it was an important book that would help to counteract the tendency to minimize the differences, and that it should be read by all Jews. Karl Chworowsky, who wrote three reviews of the book - two in The Humanist (one in 1944 and one in 1946) and one in The Protestant (July-August, 1944) - recommended it to Christians as well, and called her descriptions of Christian doctrines "soberly objective." An anonymous reviewer in Jewish Social Studies said that the book would probably "receive much less attention than it deserves," but felt that it would be even better if there were "a companion volume describing the common aspects of the two religions and . . . both books [were] written jointly by a Jew and a Christian."(10) Though the reviewer agreed that there are major theological differences between Judaism and Christianity which have to be respected, he(?) thought she should have dealt more "with ethical principles and conduct," in which "Christianity and Judaism are one."(11) Edgar Bernstein wrote in the South African Zionist Record that "[h]ere and there the scholar retreats behind the devotee; particularly so when Dr. Rosmarin discusses Jesus."(12) An anonymous writer in the Jewish Review referred to the book as a "tract" and to TWR as "a representative of an Orthodox trend [in Judaism], who is averse to any latitudinarian interpretation" and who therefore would make "the differences [between Judaism and Christianity] appear permanently irreconcilable."(13)

Judaism and Christianity: The Differences was reprinted

many times, and TWR continued to promote it in the Jewish Spectator through the 1980's. She also continued, sporadically, to receive comments on it from friends and acquaintances. Most of these were admiring comments on its quality and usefulness from Jews, but there are among TWR's papers two letters containing critical comments from Catholic priests. Fr. Stephane Valiquette wrote on March 13, 1948 that he had read an article in the Canadian Jewish Chronicle summarizing the main points of the book. He concluded from the article that she did not understand Christianity properly, and he felt that the book might bring harm to both Jewish and Catholic readers. In 1970 Fr. John Morley, a former student of TWR's at New York University, wrote that the book is not "a fair picture of Christianity, especially as it exists today,"(14) and enclosed a long list of what he felt to be her inaccurate portrayals of elements of Christian belief. As for TWR's own perception of the book, it seems that it changed over time (or perhaps it had a double significance for her even when it was written): in 1978 she described it as an "anti-shemad book."(15)

Though TWR certainly did not stop believing that Judaism and Christianity are fundamentally and essentially different, only a few of her later writings deal specifically with the differences. In 1961 she wrote that Christianity's otherworldly orientation "compounds even as it has caused the world crisis" (the nuclear threat), while "the Jewish affirmation of this life and its optimistic hopes for the

this-worldly felicity of mankind"(16) are the only possible solution. In 1962, commenting on a visit by Karl Barth to the United Nations, she again compared Christianity's otherworldly orientation with Judaism's focus on trying to achieve perfection in this world, and concluded that "Christianity's despair of man as capable of achieving real peace is a corollary of the Christian doctrine of Original Sin," and without it "there would be no need for the Christian Savior and thus no rationale for Christianity."(17) In 1981 she wrote that

> "[t]he essential conflict between Judaism and Christianity" is that Christianity is the "religion of the Messiah" and that Judaism does not accept the Messiah this religion proclaims by its name.(18)

In 1984 she wrote that an important reason for Christianity's popularity is its giving God concrete expression in the person of Jesus, "which makes God visible and thus responds to a profound psychological human need - a need Judaism considers impossible of fulfillment."(19)

Missionizing and Apostates

Another major area of TWR's Jewish-Christian relations work was in regard to missionizing. She stressed that trying to win converts is an integral part of the Christian religion, and warned that Christians who engaged in interfaith activities (referred to as "good will" in the 1940s and '50s) often did so with the underlying motive of proselytizing. She endeavored, through Judaism and Christianity: The Differences, through Isaac of Troki's Hizzuk Emunah - a translation of which she arranged to have

published in the United States - and through numerous articles, to arm Jews with the knowledge they needed to respond effectively to missionaries. She tried to show that apostates left Judaism because of insufficient Jewish education and background, and she tried to expose the activities of certain Jews that she felt had the effect - though usually unintended - of encouraging or even aiding Christian missionary efforts.

There were several examples of this latter type of behavior in the 1940's. First, and most importantly because their influence was widespread, Sholem Asch and Franz Werfel, both famous Jewish writers, wrote novels glorifying Christianity, though neither actually converted. Asch's The Nazarene and The Apostle portrayed Jesus and Paul, respectively, as having lived and died as loyal, pious Jews. Werfel's Song of Bernadette glorified Catholicism as the best path to salvation.(20) All three of these books received a great deal of attention from Jews. TWR reported in 1944 that "The Song of Bernadette was made into a movie, and Kol Yisroel is rushing to see it."(21) Another such internal threat, she believed, came from Louis Finkelstein, then president of the Jewish Theological Seminary, who invited many Christian theologians to speak at the Seminary. She felt that these guests were using the Seminary platform to proselytize, though in a subtle manner. As an example she described a speech given at a convocation there by John A. Mackay, president of Princeton Theological Seminary, in which

he used "honeyed words [denunciation of antisemitism, praise of Jewish achievements] in order to win the hearts of his listeners," at which point "he concluded his lecture with a glorification of Jesus, whom he described as 'the choicest son of Abraham,' and an appeal to the Jews to accept and acknowledge this 'choicest son' of their people. . . ."(22) She was incensed at Finkelstein's behavior in this vein, which continued over a period of several years, and she urged the graduates and financial supporters of the Jewish Theological Seminary to bring pressure to bear on him to either change his ways or resign.

While she did not castigate other rabbis and Jewish leaders quite as strongly for engaging in "good will" activities with Christians, she did warn repeatedly, in the '40s, '50s, and early '60s, that many Christian clergy and groups engaged in interfaith activities or projects with Jews with the ulterior motive of winning converts. She was particularly infuriated by those who did so covertly or through the deceptive use of Jewish symbols and terminology, as was the style of Msgr. John Oesterreicher, a born Jew who had converted to Catholicism. She believed - and preached - in those years that the Jewish community should deal with its pressing internal concerns, rather than spending time on interfaith efforts that were misguided, pointless, and could bear no fruit as long as one side was out to convert the other. In the late '60s and '70s, her focus changed: she began to stress that anyone who was a convinced Christian (or

Jew) could not but try to convince others of the correctness of his or her beliefs. Therefore, Jews needed information about Judaism, particularly the Bible, and more particularly the ways Christians misconstrued the Hebrew Bible in trying to show that it predicted the coming of Jesus, in order to be able to answer the missionaries. For example, her response to "Key '73" was not to try to keep missionaries away from Jews, but to urge the publication of large numbers of tracts that Jews could use to counter their "witness."

Her response to "Jews for Jesus" was similar but not identical. In general, she felt that missionaries were not usually very successful among Jews in terms of numbers. In the case of "Jews for Jesus," she seemed to think there was more of a numerical threat, as well as more urgency to "save" each individual Jew from apostasy. She urged Hillel foundations and other groups that worked with Jewish college students, the main targets of the "Jesus people" movements, to begin combating their efforts with the distribution of hundreds of thousands of copies of Judaism and Christianity: The Differences or Faith Strengthened.

On the other side of her argument that religious conviction leads to attempts to convert others, she encouraged Jews to welcome proselytes, citing many quotes from classical Jewish sources about Ruth and other righteous and welcomed converts, and exhorting modern-day Jews to "fulfill the task apportioned to Abram."(23)

"Gentilitis"

In a similar category with her denunciations of Louis Finkelstein's interfaith activities at the Seminary are TWR's criticisms over the years (mostly in the 1940s and '50s) of what she perceived as American Jews' excessive eagerness for the approval of Gentiles, often (though not always) manifest in a preference for "prominent Gentiles" as speakers at important events sponsored by Jewish organizations. She coined the term "gentilitis" in 1958, and defined it as "the pathological addiction of Jews, stemming from feelings of Jewish inferiority, to bestow honors which rightly belong to Jews, upon prominent Gentiles."(24) However, she began exposing instances of "gentilitis" as early as 1943.

The first "case" involved a commission established by the Synagogue Council of America in 1935 to examine Jewish religious school textbooks for negative statements about non-Jews and Christianity. When the commission published its report in 1943, she wrote a stinging critique of its finding that there were sixty-six objectionable passages in the 500 textbooks they studied, of its alleged secrecy in making a list of those passages difficult to obtain, but mostly of the commission's very existence. She wrote that the commission

> is deluded into believing that the "good will" of Christians must be purchased at the cost of our pleading guilty to the same crimes their Churches have perpetrated upon us through the centuries of unending persecution.(25)

She called their findings "artificial evidence of a non-existent guilt"(26) and, referring to a strong implication in

the report that the commission was formed "as a result of textbook revisions by Protestants and Catholics,"(27) she likened their work to a bald man's insistence on having a shampoo and haircut. She further criticized the commission for recommending that a chapter on Jesus be included in Jewish textbooks, saying that Jewish textbooks should tell about Jewish heroes, such as Saadia, Rashi, and Joseph Caro.

This searching for evidence of "a non-existent guilt" was but one of the "goodwill aberrations" that TWR felt reflected deepseated feelings of Jewish inferiority brought on by ignorance of Judaism and by living in a de facto Christian country. She believed that, due to the Christian saturation of the United States, "the average American Jew thinks in Christian rather than in Jewish terms"(28) and evaluates him/herself and Judaism by Christian standards, so that Jews and Judaism come out wanting, with the result that a major Jewish preoccupation is "What will the Gentiles say?" and the only way to bestow true prestige on a Jewish organization or gathering is through the presence or endorsement of Gentiles. In her view, these feelings of inferiority led to the textbook commission noted above, to the American Jewish Committee's (a major offender in the area of "gentilitis") publication of a series of pamphlets presenting "a Judaism for Christian consumers - tailored to fit all and, therefore, none. . . ," (29) to Yeshiva University appointing non-Jews to its board, to a synagogue inviting a Christian minister to speak at the dedication of

its religious school wing, and other such "aberrations" - which especially irritated her because these considerations and honors were not reciprocated by Christians. By 1958, she came to believe that "the average Jew" opposed such "gentilitis"-induced behavior(30), and in 1964 she stated - citing her warm receptions by Christian lecture audiences and close relationships with many Christians as an example - that Christians actually preferred Jews who stressed the differences between Judaism and Christianity and were not out to impress the Christians.(31)

The abovementioned statement from 1964 was one of her few comments about "gentilitis" after the 1950s, probably because, largely influenced by the achievements of the State of Israel, American Jews began to feel more Jewish pride and less of a need to impress and honor Gentiles. However, "gentilitis" was not completely dead: in 1972, TWR criticized the Israeli publishers of the Encyclopaedia Judaica for having "presented a set - some publicity releases had it that it was the first set - to Pope Paul VI 'in consideration of the new atmosphere between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people'," (32) despite the fact that "the Vatican has not taken political-diplomatic cognizance of the State of Israel and Pope Paul has been articulate in opposing Israel's 'annexation' of Jerusalem."(33)

Christian Roots of Antisemitism

Another major concern of TWR's that led to caution about - and sometimes against - interfaith activities was the fact

that there were several elements intrinsic to Christianity that could and often did lead to antisemitism - especially the passages in the New Testament that accuse the Jews of having crucified Jesus and persecuted his apostles and the belief that the Church, the "new Israel of God," superseded the Jewish people, the "Israel of the flesh," and made Judaism obsolete. In the 1940s and '50s she counseled against participation in "good will" activities because of these elements of Christianity (also because of the element of proselytism, discussed above), saying that without a complete overhaul of the New Testament and Christian belief, which of course was not to be expected, Christians and Jews could not communicate in a meaningful way or reach any kind of understanding. In the 1960s, '70s, and '80s she continued to stress that theological dialogue between Christians and Jews is impossible, but she urged dialogue and cooperation on social issues.

TWR's original but oft-repeated (with variations) statement on the intrinsic antisemitism of Christianity is contained in an article entitled "Where Good Will Ends" in the March 1941 issue of the Jewish Spectator. In it she quoted passages from each of the four Gospels that portray the Jews as having insisted that Jesus be crucified even when Pilate wanted to spare him, and said that despite the best efforts of the "Good Will Movement" and progressive Christian theologians and New Testament scholars, "faithful Christians will associate the word 'Jew' with 'Christ killer' and 'enemy

of Christianity'" as "long as the New Testament will be taught in Christian schools and read from the pulpit."(34) She criticized Jews who supported the "good will" movement because she believed that in so doing, they were admitting intolerance, of which TWR believed Jews have never been guilty. Rather, she saw achieving "good will" as purely a Christian task, which would involve Christians finding ways

> to solve the problems created by those parts of the New Testament which, as all serious Christian scholars and theologians know, defame the Jews and accuse them innocently of crimes they never committed.(35)

It was not the place of Jews to suggest how to solve these problems, but she did call on her fellow Jews to join her in "pointing out . . . the real issue of the 'good will' problem," rather than continuing what she saw as their "servile and embarrassed yessing of whatever Christians suggest and undertake to further 'good will.'"(36) Instead of this current behavior, she recommended a more reserved attitude toward "good will" efforts, including refraining from pulpit exchanges between rabbis and ministers, which she felt invariably failed to address the real issue and thus impeded rather than advanced the cause of "good will."

The antisemite Father Coughlin somehow came across this article and published it in his newspaper, Social Justice, as "proof" that "Christianity is under assault in America."(37) Somewhat surprisingly, there was no documentation in TWR's papers of other controversies arising from this article or from the many others similar to it that she wrote in the

1940s and '50s. However, it is safe to say - since she predicted it herself in "Where 'Good Will' Ends"(38) that her pronouncements about the futility and even harm of "good will" activities were controversial, both within the Jewish community and among Christians.

In keeping with her conviction that it was the New Testament itself that needed to be changed in order to foster "good will," TWR thought that Christian textbook-revision campaigns, though praiseworthy in their intentions, would have little chance of truly eliminating biases "as long as the anti-Jewish passages remain (and how could it be otherwise?) an integral part of the Christian Bible."(39) She was encouraged, however, by the writings of a few Christian theologians who urged radical reinterpretation of objectionable New Testament passages, saying that they and others like them "inspire us with the hope that eventually Christianity will find a way of reconciling the demands of fairness with its reverence for the New Testament."(40) Her concern about the inefficacy of textbook revision efforts continued into the 1960s, even after her attitude about the possibility of Jewish-Christian dialogue had moderated somewhat.

In the mid-1940s she began to go beyond the passages in the New Testament accusing the Jews of deicide into what she perceived as the real roots of antisemitism and the "Christian-Jewish problem." She wrote in 1944 - and again in 1985! - that although the deicide charge has certainly

contributed to antisemitism, Jew-hatred really results from "the malignant and incurable dislike of the majority of the like for the minority of the unlike."(41) In 1945 she wrote that

> the crux of the Christian-Jewish problem [is] the rage, impotent, as it were, of Christianity at the stubborn Jews who by their mere existence present the most potent refutation of the Christian claims.(42)

Because of this rage, which usually remained at a subconscious and unstated level, she believed that educating Christians about Judaism would not prevent their making negative statements about it, since the motivation for such statements is not ignorance about Judaism, but the fact that "Christianity . . . stakes its claim on having superseded Judaism."(43)

Beginning in 1962, both of the elements discussed above - the deicide charge and the belief that Christianity superseded Judaism - came to the fore as TWR discussed the Second Vatican Council's deliberations toward a statement on the Jews. She held throughout the meetings of the Council that the Catholic Church could not and would not repudiate the deicide charge or the goal of converting the whole world to Catholicism, and she denounced Jewish efforts to influence the declaration on the Jews as inappropriate as well as worthless. Even after a text was adopted, she argued that nothing fundamental had changed in Catholic belief, as the basic dogma of original sin made complete abrogation of the deicide charge impossible. Referring to Augustin Cardinal Bea's book, The Church and the Jewish People, the

authoritative commentary on the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on Judaism, she said that the phrase in the declaration, "The Jews should not be represented as rejected by God" was interpreted to mean that Jews still had the opportunity to accept Jesus and the Gospels, thereby wiping out their taint of original sin and share of the guilt for Jesus' death.(44)

Following Vatican II, TWR pursued two new directions relating to the inherent anti-Jewish biases in Christian dogma and their influence on interfaith dialogue. First, beginning late in 1967 and consistently thereafter, she stressed that though attempts at theological dialogue are necessarily unproductive, there is need for dialogue "and, what is more important, cooperation in the tasks incumbent on all men [sic] 'to perfect the world.'"(45) She especially encouraged "religious Christians and Jews" to work together on providing equal socioeconomic opportunities for all citizens, undoing the effects of racial discrimination, and protesting "the unholy U.S. war in Vietnam."(46) The other direction, which she began to explore in 1968, was the realm of mythology and the distinction between the historical Jesus, about whom scholars admitted little or nothing was known, and the ahistorical Jesus of the kerygma, portrayed in the gospels and worshipped as the Christ. The idea of the Jews' collective guilt for Jesus' death, she argued, is in the realm of myth or "holy absurdity" (as in the maxim "I believe because it is absurd"); the paradox, which has led to

the perpetuation of the deicide charge against the Jews, is that believing non-scholarly Christians consider the Gospels historical, even though they are not.(47) She continued this line of reasoning in the introduction to her anthology Jewish Expressions on Jesus, published in 1977, explaining that she felt the book was necessary because most Christians accept the Gospels, which are really mythology, as historical truth.

In her insistence throughout her career that because of the essential differences between their religions, Christians and Jews could not engage in meaningful or productive theological dialogue, TWR placed herself outside of the popular "good will" movement in the 1940s and '50s, and somewhat outside of the interfaith dialogue movement that began in the '60s. She consistently tried to provide a corrective to what she perceived as certain Jews' excessive zeal to blend in with the Christian majority. However, she recognized that Jews and Christians needed to live together in mutual harmony and respect, and she did not hesitate to point out areas in which they could cooperate without compromising the beliefs of either group.

Chapter V
"Women in Jewish Law and Life"

TWR was perhaps best known as a champion of the legal rights of Jewish women, especially in the area of divorce. She began advocating the transfer of the power to issue a get from the husband to the Rabbinic Court in 1954, and continued to press for this change, which she described as a "fence" around the law akin to Hillel's prosbul, throughout her career. However, her work on women in Judaism encompassed much more than just this issue. She began advocating - and providing - Jewish education for women in the early 1930's with the founding of the School of the Jewish Woman, and two of the six books comprising her "Jewish People's Library" in the early 1940's were specifically aimed at increasing Jewish women's Jewish education, as well as their desire for it. But these efforts were primarily geared toward making Jewish women better mothers, since TWR felt that the major responsibility for transmitting Jewish knowledge, values, and pride to the next generation rested with the mother. In addition, though TWR believed that women were capable of success in every profession - including the rabbinate - and should actually be encouraged to enter certain fields, such as Jewish education and group work, she insisted, to the end of her life, that "most women find full satisfaction in being homemakers and mothers - and later grandmothers."(1) Inspired by the women's movement, she came to believe that writers should use gender-inclusive language in talking about human

beings, but she felt that the "radical feminists" were going too far by trying to "feminize" God, and besides, using feminine God-language would not improve women's position in society anyway. Though these areas are interrelated, this chapter will attempt to deal with each separately, and in roughly chronological order.

Education

One of the first projects that TWR launched after the School of the Jewish Woman closed in 1939 was the Jewish People's Library (see chapter III). A total of seven books was published in the series, and two of them, Jewish Women Through The Ages (1940) and What Every Jewish Woman Should Know (1941), were aimed directly and almost exclusively at women.

Jewish Women Through The Ages, the first volume in the series, provided an overview of some of the areas in which women have made contributions to Jewish life and culture, from the Bible to 1940, and contained very brief biographical notes on some important Jewish women, as well as slightly longer portraits of two, Donna Gracia and Glueckel of Hameln. TWR hoped that the book would "inspire the Jewish women of this generation with pride in the Jewish past and with courage and confidence for the Jewish future."(2) It was reviewed fairly widely in the Jewish press when it was first published, as well as later, with other books in the series, especially What Every Jewish Woman Should Know. It was praised for refuting the assumption that Jewish women were

"kept in the background, . . . suppressed, kept in ignorance, forced into the seclusion of the kitchen"(3) and criticized for being "a trifle too brief and kaleidoscopic,"(4) for ignoring "most of the outstanding Jewish women of modern times,"(5) and for "never admit[ting]" the "legal inferiority of the Jewish woman."(6)

What Every Jewish Woman Should Know was a manual designed to guide the "intelligent Jewish woman" in running a Jewish home. In addition to suggestions for home observances for Shabbat and holidays and guidelines on keeping kosher and observing the special women's mitzvot, it urged women to buy and read Jewish books, infuse dinner conversation with Jewish content, make sure their children got a good Jewish education, and become active in the synagogue and Jewish women's organizations. Interestingly, this book was presented as having been written "by Miriam Isaacs, in collaboration with Trude Weiss Rosmarin." In fact, "Miriam Isaacs," as noted in Chapter II, was one of TWR's pseudonyms.(7) One can only speculate on why TWR did not want to take full credit for this book, as it does seem to represent the views she held at that time about Jewish women's place in Judaism and in society: women were to be primarily homemakers, but intelligent ones, and they should also be involved in the Jewish community in a meaningful way. Perhaps she did not want people to think that she personally was involved in domestic pursuits or knew so many recipes.

This book also received its share of reviews in the

Jewish press, often in combination with other books in the "Jewish People's Library." Most of the reviewers recommended it, especially for Orthodox women or those interested in the traditional perspective. The topic that caused the most controversy among reviewers was tohorat hamishpachah. Theodore N. Lewis, who had criticized her for ignoring Jewish women's legal inequality in Jewish Women Through The Ages, took her to task for placing so much significance on mikveh, and felt that by doing so she "ma[d]e [her]self foolish and . . . jeopardize[d] the value of usefulness of the entire book."(8) The Young Israel Viewpoint, on the other hand, praised the section on family purity as being "[p]articularly frank yet delicately diplomatic."(9)

Women's Position in Society and in Judaism

As we have seen, in her two books directed at women, TWR endorsed the conventional role, also promoted by Judaism, of women as mothers and homemakers. When she began writing on women in the Jewish Spectator on a regular basis, in the 1950's, she continued to hold this view. In her first major article on women, "Jewish Women in a Man's World," which appeared in the May 1950 Jewish Spectator, she wrote that "the preponderant majority of women . . . have no other ambition except to get a husband, a home and raise a family. They want to look attractive and have nice things - but that's all."(10) She believed that "women can fill all the positions held by men,"(11) but insisted that most did not want to. She observed that

> There are few happy career women - and happiness among modern "emancipated" women generally is not very profuse either. Some women, at a terrific cost to themselves and at the price of great unhappiness, manage to be human beings like men. But women are feminine human beings. . . .(12)

Though she maintained throughout her career that most women were content to be housewives and mothers, her views on this subject did undergo some evolution. In the mid-1950s she began advocating giving women equal opportunities to be synagogue board members and officers and a "revision of the male-orientation of American Jewish education"(13) that would allow for female principals and Bureau of Jewish Education executives as well as teachers. She continued this campaign in the 1960s and '70s, expanding it to include a call to utilize women as group workers, and by the mid-'70s she was welcoming women rabbis, though primarily for non-pulpit work. In a major article in 1970, entitled "The Unfreedom of Jewish Women," she stated that

> all women should be free to choose the work they want to do and they should have equal opportunities in employment and remuneration. But to denigrate housewifery and motherhood as "oppression" is not a service to Women's Liberation!(14)

This was in consonance with her conviction that "equality is not identity," and that women should be liberated as women, meaning that "women's work" should not be eliminated, but given the respect it deserves.

A particularly fascinating aspect of TWR's writings on women's place in society and the dignity of "housewifery and motherhood" is her ambivalence about being a woman and about her own career and family choices. She was a "modern

emancipated woman" in every sense: she hyphenated her and her husband's names when she married the first time, and did not take her second husband's name at all; she had only one child, and deferred childbearing altogether until the age of thirty-six, when her career was well established; and, far from being a housewife, she did not even stay home when her son was a newborn.(15) Yet in 1960 she wrote that "if given the choice, I would want to be a man," because women "are the sex favored neither by Mother Nature nor by society,"(16) and in 1983 she said in an interview that "whatever one has contributed, a child is the best contribution."(17)

An outgrowth of the idea that men and women have different functions is her view that there is no point in removing masculine God-language from liturgy. She pointed out that many important concepts in Judaism are feminine (Torah, Shabbat, Shechina, and so on) and felt that "referring to God as 'She' and substituting 'Eve' for 'Adam' in the creation story will not <u>really</u> liberate women."(18) However, influenced by the women's movement, she came to believe that inclusive language should be used when referring to human beings. In the secular sphere, she advised substituting "personnel" for "manpower," "children" for "sons," and so on. In religious life, she wanted women to be included in the <u>zimun</u> for <u>Birkat Hamazon</u> and the names of the matriarchs included in prayers that mentioned the patriarchs.

Women in Jewish Law

Beginning in the mid-1950's, TWR's main concern was the

inequality of Jewish women under halacha, particularly in the area of divorce and halitza. Despite the denial of Elliot Gertel, a longtime friend and admirer of TWR's, that this concern began when Aaron Rosmarin initially refused to give her a get(19), I believe that this was the catalyst for her involvement in the issue. This is attested to by the fact that she was criticized for ignoring women's inequality under Jewish law in Jewish Women Through the Ages (see note 6), and in 1946 a correspondent, William Zukerman, took her to task for not writing about "the tragedy of the Jewish Agunas."(20)

Whatever prompted her concern, beginning in 1954 and continuing throughout her career, she repeatedly and outspokenly advocated the transfer of the authority to issue a get from the husband to the Rabbinic Court. She believed that this was the only real solution, within halacha, for the problem of agunot caused by disappearance, non-cooperation of the husband, and refusal of the deceased husband's brother to grant halitza to a childless widow. Her main justification for this radical-sounding remedy was the time-honored Jewish legal principle that someone with a personal interest in a case (nogea badavar) could not even testify in such a case, much less act as a judge for it. Therefore, it was only right to take away the judicial power of the husband (or brother-in-law in a halitza case), a nogea badavar by any criteria, and transfer it to an impartial court. As a precedent for changing the law to make it more tolerable, she cited Hillel's prosbul. She rejected the Conservative movement's

clause inserted in the ketuba stipulating "that either of the spouses has the right to compel, by lawful measures, the other spouse to submit to Rabbinical jurisdiction in case of a divorce"(21) as ineffective against "the type of husband who will refuse his wife a get,"(22) and she referred to the suggestion of Rabbi Soloveitchik that states pass civil laws providing that civil divorces could not be finalized until a get had been granted as a "Declaration of Impotence."(23) Needless to say, TWR's proposal has not been implemented and probably never will be.

She also fought against women's disqualification as witnesses in religious courts and at the immersions of women converts, since these were cases in which women were in the best position to give accurate testimony. In this area, as in the area of divorce and halitza, TWR's aim was not to abrogate or demean halacha, but to point out to Jewish religious leaders how the honor of the Torah could be increased by changing the law so that it would be more sensitive to human needs. Unfortunately, Orthodox authorities paid no attention to her proposals, but she did come to be regarded by large numbers of laypeople as something of an expert on Jewish women in halacha.

Chapter VI
Israel

Beginning at the age of nine with her introduction to Blau-Weiss, TWR had a deep, life-long commitment first to the Zionist idea and then to the State of Israel. Through her Zionist education and experience, beginning with Blau-Weiss, she came to believe, with Herzl, that "the return of the Jews to national normalcy on their own soil" was "the only real and proven solution for antisemitism"(1) as well as the ideal condition for encouraging Jewish cultural creativity through a "spiritual center" like that envisioned by Ahad Ha'am. After the spring of 1948, she came to think that the establishment of the Jewish State was the best thing that had happened in modern times for ensuring Jewish survival. Beginning in 1949, she visited Israel at least once a year, usually for extended periods of time, and she encouraged other American Jews to travel to Israel as often as they could. However, because she refused to toe the Zionist "party line" - indeed, beginning in October, 1948, she proclaimed that "[w]ith the establishment of the Jewish State, Party Zionism . . . has become obsolete"(2) - and, after the Yom Kippur War, began advocating statehood for the Palestinians, she was "reviled as an enemy of the Jewish people"(3) and of Israel. The story of the evolution of her ideas on Zionism and Israel is a fascinating one.

Until November, 1947, TWR was a "maximal Zionist," pressing the Jewish claim to all of Palestine. Before,

during, and after World War II she demanded that Great Britain open the doors of Palestine to Jewish immigration, and she opposed Partition ever since it was recommended by the Peel Commission report in 1937. In 1946 she wrote that "[e]very stone and every grain of Eretz Israel's dust is sacred to us; nay, it is part of us - and we shall defend it with our last breath" and that "[s]eriously to consider partition in these days of Jewish unertainty and travail is little short of treachery."(4) In November, 1947, on the eve of the UN vote on partition, she agreed with the sentiments in Abba Hillel Silver's declaration "that the Jewish Agency accepts the partition plan 'in sadness and most reluctantly'"(5) because of the tremendous territorial sacrifice involved, a sacrifice "comparable in magnitude only to the sacrifice of six million Jewish lives - one third of our people . . . ."(6) After much painful, introspective deliberation, she decided that "the sacrifice of territorial loss [would] be worth the prize of political statehood"(7) only if diaspora Jewry would give its utmost support in enabling the Jewish state to bring in and absorb the DP's and other needy and/or oppressed Jews of Europe, North Africa, and other parts of the world, and if the diaspora and the Yishuv would work together to make the Jewish state the spiritual center of world Jewry.

In the months immediately before the end of the Mandate TWR expressed extreme anger and frustration at the British, who were supporting the Arabs against the Jews, and at the

United Nations, which failed to implement the partition plan fully by not compelling the British to evacuate a port so that the Jewish Agency could implement its immigration program or to allow in a five-member UN commission designed to ease the transition to Jewish and Arab statehood. She also became increasingly pessimistic about the Yishuv's ability to fight and win the inevitable war brought about by the "conspiracy" between the British and the Arabs, so much so that in April and May of 1948 she actually counseled against fighting, asking ". . . WHAT IS THE PROFIT OF HEROISM WHEN IT ENDS IN DEATH?"(8) Despite her personal misgivings, however, she urged support for the majority position - fighting for statehood - through donations of money and blood. After the declaration of the State of Israel she published Israel's Declaration of Independence and continued to urge support for the new state, but she still did not seem convinced. By September, 1948, however, she "plead[ed] guilty of having been 'fearful and faint-hearted'" and declared that "the miracle of Israel has purged us from this fear and faint-heartedness of our Galut mentality."(9) In the next several months she continued to marvel at Israel's miraculous accomplishments of what seemed impossible, and by Israel's first birthday she saw it as being "firmly established, strong, indomitable and valiantly poised for future challenges and trials."(10)

One of her major interests vis-a-vis the State of Israel, which actually began even before the establishment of

the state, was the relationship of its residents, the Yishuv, to Diaspora Jewry, the Golah. She described herself, a la Ahad Ha'am, as a "natural Galut negator," but she recognized that the majority of Jewry (she estimated at least 80%) would continue to live in the Diaspora, so it was necessary to work out terms for a meaningful relationship. In the first of a series of articles entitled "Periphery and Center: We and the Jewish State," published in the first three months of 1948, she first reviewed the relationship of Diaspora Jewry to the Yishuv in the pre-second-exile period, and then laid out a suggested program for shaping the modern Yishuv-Golah relationship. She noted that the relationship was a successful one in Hellenistic times, with Diaspora Jews being "ardent Parthian or Hellenist patriots and model citizens of their countries. Yet, at the same time, they regarded themseves as extensions or 'colonies,' as it were, of the Yishuv."(11) She stressed that the relationship involved no problem of "dual loyalties," and that it need not in modern times either. Just as in Second Temple times Diaspora Jews accepted material and moral obligations to the Yishuv, in the form of taxes to support religious institutions in Eretz Yisrael and submission to the religious authority of the rabbis and teachers of the Yishuv, respectively, so she recommended the institution of "a definite system of taxation in the diaspora so as to see the Yishuv through the difficult period of expansion ahead"(12) and called for the creation of "new means of identification with the Yishuv, which will

imbue our generation with the feeling of oneness with the Land and the City [of Jerusalem]."(13) She also called for the revival of the custom of making pilgrimages to the Land of Israel, especially for young people, whose summer vacation from school would allow them to spend six weeks in the Land. One of her proposals that later was eagerly taken up by nearly every Jewish organization was for "some enterprising Jews [to] enter the 'vacation business' and take young boys and girls for summer trips to Eretz Israel."(14) In the second article she called for a renewal of the lively cultural give-and-take between Yishuv and Golah that obtained in the Hellenistic period and later. In the final article of the series, entitled "'Religion' in the Jewish State," she somewhat idealistically prescribed that the government of the Jewish State "must be guided by 'Judaism' in its organic wholeness,"(15) without religious coercion or interference in the private lives of citizens.

She continued to write about the relationship between Israel and the Diaspora after the establishment of the State. In another rather idealistic article, in 1949, she called for "an Anglo-Jewish magazine . . . which would reflect the entire Israeli scene, in the form of an interpretive digest," for an effective mechanism for distributing Israeli Hebrew books abroad, and for the organization of

> a commission composed of Israeli and Diaspora thinkers and ideologists, charged with the task of blue-printing, engineering, and directing the stream of cultural life and ideological thought in Israel as well as the Diaspora. . . . [It]should be solely concerned with the blue-print of the Jewish House of Tomorrow, which can

endure only if its new upper stories are reared on the old and solid foundation of heritage and tradition.(16)

She also made her personal contribution to a substantive relationship by spending periods of several weeks to a few months in Israel every year recharging her batteries and talking with Israelis about their lives, their problems and their dreams. She criticized the American Jewish establishment's idea of building a "two-way bridge" between Israel and the Diaspora, saying it was not possible or, really, desirable, since the traffic on the bridge as envisioned by the organizations was superficial, mostly in the form of songs, dances, and drama groups.

Though early in Israel's existence she felt it was not Diaspora Jews' place to criticize Israeli policies, by 1967 she felt that it was not only a right but an obligation to speak out if one felt that Israel was engineering its own ruin. After the Six-Day War, instead of joining the general euphoria engendered by Israel's fast and decisive victory, she soberly considered the steps that Israel would need to take in order to "win the peace," which she felt was infinitely more important than its having won the war. In September, 1967, she wrote an article, later made into a pamphlet, entitled "Toward Jewish-Muslim Dialogue," in which she posited that "Israel is hated by the Arab nations not because there is an irreconcilable clash of interests between Arab and Jewish national aspirations but because Israel is allied with the West"(17) and recommended a reorientation of Israel toward its Middle Eastern neighbors and Jewish-Muslim

dialogue as potentially fruitful paths toward peace.

In 1970 she further departed from the views of the Zionist establishment by recommending a binational Israeli-Palestinian state modeled on Switzerland's canton system and on the plan proposed by B'rit Shalom in the '20's and Ihud in the early '40's under the leadership of Judah Magnes, Martin Buber, Arthur Ruppin, and several other prominent thinkers. She proposed this plan - and as time passed and she realized the Palestinians would not accept such a solution advocated full independence for a Palestinian state - not because it was her ideal for Israel, but because she considered an acceptable solution of the "Palestinian problem" to be an essential condition for Israel's survival. She continued to support independence for the Palestinians through the '70s and '80s, taking each of Israel's military involvements -the Yom Kippur War, the invasion of Lebanon, and the intifada - as opportunities to press for a settlement that would lead to lasting peace.

Conclusion: Personality and Influence

Having chronicled TWR's early life and several important aspects of her career, we turn, finally, to an evaluation of her impact on the American Jewish community. In doing so, we will look at various factors that affected the amount of influence she was able to exert - including her personality, style, religious affiliation, and the circulation of the Jewish Spectator - and try to determine how these factors changed over time. We will also examine her own and others' perceptions of her influence at various points. As noted in the introduction, personal information about TWR is not plentiful, but there is a fair amount of correspondence among her papers - as well as scattered references in articles - that sheds light on these areas.

The first thing I "knew" about TWR, before I really knew anything about her, was that she was controversial. I have heard others describe her as a "pain in the neck." Her public persona - at least since the mid-1960s - was indeed rather aggressive, and she was persistent in exposing situations that she felt needed to be changed and espousing often unpopular positions. Her reputation as an iconoclast had both positive and negative consequences for her ability to influence people and institutions. On the one hand, establishment institutions such as the United Jewish Appeal that were frequent targets of her criticism may have seen her as a crank and not taken her seriously. On the other hand, many of her readers and members of her lecture audiences saw

her as possessing rare courage and were inspired by her either to work for changes she recommended - such as demanding accountability from the Jewish Agency or establishing more Jewish day schools - or to pursue their own radical visions for the ideal Jewish community. There were people who considered themselves her disciples, such as student activist Robert Goldman, who referred to himself as "one of your hassidim" and thanked her "for having born [sic] the burden of protest for so very long before we were old, and, I hope, wise enough to join you."(1) She also received an enthusiastic response at the organizing Conference for a New Jewish Agenda in 1980, a gathering of hundreds of people who had come together to do the work she had carried on for decades.

Her public reputation of the last twenty-five years, however, does not tell the whole story of her personality. From her early years in the United States through the 1950s she was known primarily as a scholar (albeit as a "woman scholar") and praised for her brilliance. In fact, she began taking controversial stands very early in her career - on issues such as giving women a greater role in Jewish organizations and the value of day schools - and she never dropped her scholarly interests, but the balance between them, as reflected in the scope and content of her writings and in her correspondents' perceptions of her, changed over time. There was also a private side to her personality, a small glimpse of which is provided in a letter from Sol

Liptzin written in 1976:

> . . . [we have become aware] in recent years . . . of your gentle disposition and soft heart, which you have so often overlaid with a combativeness, probably forced upon you in earlier decades as an ambitious, talented woman in a predominantly man's world.(2)

Though her "gentle disposition and soft heart" were not much in evidence in her public life, she did manifest a deep love for the Jewish people that was recognized and appreciated by at least some of those around her(3) and may well have inspired many of her friends and admirers to emulate her in expressing their devotion to their people in an active and critical way.

Her style - exemplified by her fearlessness to say what she thought needed to be said and her insistence on independence from any organizational framework so she would have complete freedom of expression - also had both positive and negative effects on her ability to exert influence on American Judaism. She swam upstream much of her life - calling for Jewish day schools in the 1930s and '40s when people saw them as un-American, criticizing the "un-Jewishness" of Jewish Community Centers in the '40's and '50's when they were extremely popular - and some of her ideas were rather quixotic, such as her proposals to hold "return to Jewishness" services in auditoriums and hotel ballrooms (see chapter III) and to establish a joint Israel-diaspora commission to engineer the Jewish future (see chapter VI). However, as she recounted in her introduction to the 50th anniversary issue of the Jewish Spectator, many of

her ideas that were "anathema to the Jewish community"(4) when they were first expressed - such as her long and deeply held view that "The Jewish Day School is the solution to the failure of Jewish education"(5) - later became mainstream positions. It would be foolish to give her full credit for these transformations, but the fact that she spoke out consistently and unhesitatingly must have been a catalyst for some people to begin rethinking their positions.

She cherished the independence that allowed her to speak and write freely, but the lack of an organizational connection may have narrowed her circle of direct influence and limited her ability to carry out her ideas. Over the years, several people suggested either that she join the board of a major Jewish organization or merge the Jewish Spectator with another magazine. As M. Bernard Resnikoff, an American Jewish Committee staff person, wrote to her,

> you have no power base, no constituency and no one to whom you are accountable. In other words, your virtue (as an independent thinker) is simultaneously your liability (the lack of any institutional commitment to follow up your prescriptions.)(6)

He then suggested, naturally, that she join a "board, a commission, or a task force" of a Jewish agency so as to have "an institutionalized vehicle through which your perceptions could find expression in a programmatic way."(7) However, she rejected all such suggestions, preferring her absolute freedom of expression to the possibly negligible benefits to be derived from an organizational affiliation.

Her lack of affiliation with a religious movement -

beyond synagogue membership - had the very positive effect of allowing her to be respected by and maintain close professional and personal relationships with rabbis and laypeople across the entire Jewish spectrum and to develop an eclectic and wholistic view of Judaism. She was invited to lecture at all types of synagogues (as well as at secular Jewish institutions) and her readers came from all of the Jewish movements, from Lubavitch to humanist. Her personal practice was quite traditional for many years, and she was widely perceived as Orthodox until the early 1950's, when she began advocating changes in halacha. Even then she continued to have great respect for Jewish law and tradition, insisting that changes needed to be made to increase the honor of the Torah. As discussed in chapter III, she also admired certain features of the Orthodox community and lifestyle, such as the emphasis on study and tendency toward large families. It was this ability to appreciate features of other people's religious choices that enabled her to continue to get along with her son Moshe even after he became an ultra-Orthodox Rosh Yeshiva. By 1970 she was widely regarded as a Conservative Jew, though her only congregational affiliations of which I am aware were, strangely enough, Congregation Habonim in New York - a German Reform synagogue - and Sephardic Temple Tifereth Israel in Los Angeles, which she may have joined because of her Sephardic second husband.

The final factor to consider in evaluating TWR's influence is her exposure to the Jewish community through

lectures and subscriptions to the Jewish Spectator. As indicated above, she lectured very widely, and thus was able to reach thousands of Jews directly, both in this country and abroad. Some listeners undoubtedly sat politely without paying attention, but others were deeply affected by what she said and subscribed to - or perhaps even wrote for - the Jewish Spectator. It was through the Jewish Spectator that TWR maintained long-term contact with people who appreciated her ideas, and she tried hard to circulate it as widely as possible so as to extend the reach of what she felt was a valuable educational tool. Her paid circulation was never very high, but free copies and reprints of individual articles expanded its distribution. Despite her efforts to the contrary, the core of her readership was an intellectual elite, but she also reached the "masses" at various times through regular columns in such papers as the Jewish Post and Opinion and the B'nai B'rith Messenger.

If we combine all of the factors discussed above, the assessment that emerges is that TWR did exercise a fair amount of influence on the American Jewish community, particularly among intellectuals and radicals. She made an impact through her scholarship, her presence, and her courage. Reading her work was an inspiration to me, and I am confident that, though she is no longer among the living, she will, through her writings, continue to exert an influence on future generations that will help to ensure the substantive Jewish survival for which she worked so hard during her life.

NOTES

Chapter I

1. Estelle Gilson, "Trude's a Holy Terror: Scholar, Critic, Rebel, Gadfly," Present Tense, Winter 1978, p. 34.

2. Tape-recorded interview of Trude Weiss-Rosmarin by Rosalind Chaiken and Abraham Peck, October 17 1983, Cincinnati, Ohio. Tape is on file at American Jewish Archives.

3. "Marie Syrkin and Trude Weiss-Rosmarin: a Moment Interview," Moment, September 1983, p. 38.

4. 10/17/83 interview.

5. Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, "Frankfurt am Main," Jewish Spectator (hereafter, "JS"), Fall 1976, p. 3.

6. Ibid. It was in this article, on p. 5, that TWR referred to herself and her compatriots in Blau-Weiss, the Hebraeische Sprachschule, and the Freies Juedisches Lehrhaus as "rebels with and for a cause," the phrase from which the title of this thesis is taken.

7. TWR, "Jewish Youth and Radicalism," JS, August 1937, pp. 24, 43.

8. TWR, "Frankfurt am Main," p. 5.

9. 10/17/83 interview. Yosef Yoel Rivlin (1890-1971) was born in Jerusalem. He taught there in his twenties and was a protagonist of spoken Hebrew. After having lived in Damascus for several years, where he was originally taken as a prisoner by the Turks during World War I, he went to Frankfurt, where he earned his doctorate in 1927. Back in Palestine, he taught at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Hebrew University and was very active in the central organization of Hebrew teachers. See Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 14, cols. 201-202, and Encyclopedia Ivrit, Vol. 30, cols. 999-1000. Interestingly, though TWR recalled in several places that she began studying with Rivlin at the age of 10 or 11, both encyclopedia articles place the beginning of his stay in Frankfurt in 1922, when TWR was 13-14 years old.

10. TWR, "Frankfurt am Main," p. 4.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. 10/17/83 interview.

14. Ibid.

15. TWR, "Frankfurt am Main," p. 4.

16. Gilson, "Trude's a Holy Terror," p. 35.

17. TWR, "Also Noted: Jewish Lecturers," JS, May 1970, p. 32.

18. Ibid.

19. Janet Samuels, "Dr. Trude Rosmarin" (Yiddish), Jewish American, February 2, 1934, p. 2, Trude Weiss-Rosmarin Papers, American Jewish Archives, Box 7. This article was translated for me by Ida Cohen Selavan.

20. 10/17/83 interview.

21. Gilson, "Trude's a Holy Terror," p. 35.

22. TWR, "Frankfurt am Main," p. 4.

23. Ibid., p. 5.

24. Ibid., p. 4.

25. Samuels, "Dr. Trude Rosmarin," Jewish American, February 2, 1934, p. 2.

26. TWR, "Frankfurt am Main," p. 4.

27. Ibid.

28. Samuels, "Dr. Trude Rosmarin," Jewish American, February 2, 1934, p. 2; 10/17/83 interview.

29. "Marie Syrkin and Trude Weiss-Rosmarin," p. 40. The bulk of the story of TWR's training farm/Duisburg period comes from this article and the 10/17/83 interview with A. Peck and R. Chaiken.

30. Ibid.

31. Samuels, "Dr. Trude Rosmarin," Jewish American, February 2, 1934, p. 2.

32. Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, letter to the editor, Moment, October, 1983, p. 6.

33. John Simons, ed., Who's Who in American Jewry (New York, 1938), 893.

34. TWR, "Aribi und Arabien in den Babylonisch-Assyrischen

Quellen," Journal of the Society of Oriental Research, Vol. XVI, Nos. 1-2 (January-April 1932): 1-37.

35. Samuels, "Dr. Trude Rosmarin," Jewish American, February 2, 1934, p. 2.

Chapter II

1. Simons, Who's Who in American Jewry, 893.

2. J. L. Zlotnik, untitled article in Jewish Western Bulletin (Vancouver), n.d., TWR Papers, AJA, Box 7. A longer excerpt from this article is quoted in Rosalind Chaiken, "Trude Weiss-Rosmarin: Protagonist of American Jewish Survival" (Senior thesis, University of Cincinnati, 1983), 12.

3. Laura Fermi, Illustrious Immigrants (Chicago and London, 1968), 26.

4. Cyrus Adler to TWR, October 8 1931, TWR Papers, AJA, Box 1.

5. Samuel I. Feigin to TWR, October 13 1931-March 14 1933, TWR Papers, AJA, Box 2.

6. Janet Samuels, "Dr. Trude Rosmarin," Jewish American, February 2, 1934, p. 2. Page one was completely occupied by a photograph of TWR. She was very youthful and serious looking, with dark, wavy hair in a "bobbed" style, and what was described many years later by an Israeli interviewer as a "Jewish face."

7. Ibid.

8. "Aribi und Arabien in den Bablonisch-Assyrischen Quellen," Journal of the Society of Oriental Research, Vol. XVI, nos. 1-2 (January-April 1932): 1-37.

9. In the preface to Jerusalem, a 51-page book she wrote at the request of the Philosophical Library in 1950, she stated that "archaeology is one of my major interests" - is, rather than was, even though at that point she had not been involved in a professional way with Near Eastern studies for many years.

10. TWR, "Anti-Semitism: Its Causes and Cure," Canadian Jewish Chronicle (Montreal), November 25 1932, p. 6.

11. Judd Teller, Strangers and Natives (New York, 1968), 35. The same author, in an article entitled "Jewry on the Hudson" in the October 21, 1943 Chicago Sentinel, mentioned among other "new West Side residents" an Orthodox rabbi named Chaim Heller, whom one would

"generally find...in the company of the editorial Mr. and Mrs. of the Jewish Spectator, Rabbi Aaron and Dr. Trude Rosmarin." The article went on to say that TWR and Rabbi Heller often engaged in discussions on the Talmud. From this paragraph, and a few other brief mentions in letters and articles, it appears that TWR associated in those days with Orthodox intellectuals, many of whom were Eastern European immigrants.

12. These pseudonyms, along with "Miriam Isaacs," were created for use in the Jewish Spectator. In the interview with R. Chaiken and A. Peck on October 17 1983, TWR said that she "had to fill the magazine," and "didn't want to write only under my own name." These three are the only pseudonyms she revealed in the interview, though I suspect that there may have been others, including "David B. Feinberg," the compiler of monthly "Test Your IQ" quizzes that were later collected in the Jewish Quiz Book, published by the Jewish People's Library.

13. TWR, "The Aims and Methods of Jewish Adult Education," Journal of Bible and Religion, Vol. V, Part II (April-June 1937): 69-74.

14. TWR to Rosalind Chaiken, July 1 1983. Appended to Chaiken, "Trude Weiss-Rosmarin: Protagonist of American Jewish Survival," 49.

15. Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, Jewish Women and Jewish Culture (New York, n.d.), 4.

16. TWR to Rosalind Chaiken, July 1 1983.

17. Interview of TWR by R. Chaiken and A. Peck, 10/17/83.

18. Ibid.

19. In that interview, TWR cited "war-related difficulties," including inflation, the difficulty of getting teachers because much of the faculty had been rabbis and they were now serving as chaplains, and the fact that many of the women who had been students became otherwise occupied, as other reasons for the closing of the school. In her joint interview with Marie Syrkin in the September 1983 Moment, however, she expressed satisfaction that her school "did well for about as long as the Lehrhaus had done well [from 1920-1926]" (p. 39).

20. The brochures for the following terms are on file in the American Jewish Archives: 2nd (February-June, 1934); 7th (September, 1936-January, 1937); 10th (February-June, 1938); and 11th (September, 1938-January, 1939). In addition, the course offerings for the 8th (February-June, 1937) and 9th (September, 1937-January, 1938) terms are

listed in the Jewish Spectator.

21. Interview of TWR by R. Chaiken and A. Peck, 10/17/83. It is interesting to note that after many years of decline, Anshe Chesed has again, in recent years, become a center for innovative Jewish activities; several different minyanim meet there each Shabbat, and its program director is Michael Strassfeld, co-editor of the Jewish Catalogs.

22. School of the Jewish Woman (brochure), New York, 1936.

23. School of the Jewish Woman (brochure), New York, 1934. There were a few changes on the Academic Advisory Board over the years, but most of the members remained constant.

24. Interview of TWR by R. Chaiken and A. Peck, 10/17/83.

25. "Jewish Women and Jewish Culture," The Jewish Forum (December, 1933).

26. "Young Folks League" and "B'noth Torah League," News from the School of the Jewish Woman, November-December 1935, p. 3.

27. "Onward," News from the School of the Jewish Woman, November-December 1935, p. 1.

28. The numbering system from News... was continued, so it was actually Vol. 1, No. 4.

29. Aaron Rosmarin was listed as Editor beginning in July, 1936, with TWR listed as Associate Editor as of February 1939; but it is clear that the magazine was a joint venture from the beginning. Most of the editorials were unsigned, but many of them reflect TWR's views as expressed in signed articles of that time and in her later writings. TWR took over as sole editor in September, 1943.

30. This is a description of the Jewish Spectator in its first several years of existence. In the early 1940s the extraneous features disappeared, the size of the pages was enlarged and the number of pages - and the amount of advertising - reduced. When TWR took over sole editorship, of course, she wrote all of the editorials. Over the years she used pseudonyms less and less, dropping them completely in the mid-1960s.

31. Simons, Who's Who in American Jewry, 893.

32. TWR, Religion of Reason: Hermann Cohen's System of Religious Philosophy (New York, 1936), v.

33. All book reviews mentioned or quoted in this and later chapters are from TWR's scrapbooks, which are part of her

papers in the American Jewish Archives.

34. TWR, Religion of Reason, 176.

35. TWR, The Hebrew Moses: An Answer to Sigmund Freud (New York, 1939), 7.

Chapter III

1. Epilogue of TWR's book, Highlights of Jewish History (Jewish Book Club, 1941), quoted in Philip Slomovitz, "A Real Literary Achievement," Detroit Jewish Chronicle, January 2, 1942.

2. TWR, "A Thousand Years Are But As Yesterday," JS, February 1940, pp. 12 and 14.

3. TWR, Jewish Survival (New York, 1949), 23.

4. TWR, "Women's Viewpoint: There is Definitely More Than One Way to Jewish Survival," National Jewish Post, April 14, 1950.

5. TWR, "Browsing," JS, Fall 1984, p. 8.

6. TWR, "The 'Three Days' Season'," JS, September 1951, p. 5.

7. TWR, "The End of the Warsaw Ghetto," JS, June 1943, pp. 4 and 5.

8. Ibid., p. 5.

9. TWR, "Oddments," JS, Fall 1981, p. 7.

10. TWR, "Contra Theologizing the Holocaust," JS, Winter 1977, p. 8.

Chapter IV

1. Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, "The End of the Road," JS, February 1947, p. 4.

2. Mark Silk, "Notes on the Judeo-Christian Tradition in America," American Quarterly, Spring 1984, p. 66.

3. Ibid., p. 67.

4. TWR, Judaism and Christianity: The Differences (New York, 1943), 9-10.

5. Ibid., 7.

6. Ibid., 14.

7. Ibid.

8. For example, in Chapter V, "Attitudes to Asceticism," she states (p. 67) that "[t]his wholesome attitude to the body and the ready acceptance of the 'animal instincts' - rendered impossible the development of any type of asceticism within Judaism." Then she quotes several sources (mostly Maimonides and Yehudah Halevi) to prove this healthy attitude, then dismisses exceptions to it by saying (p. 69) that "[d]espite these injunctions against asceticism, there arose minor and sporadic ascetic movements within Judaism. If invariably they were nipped in the bud, it was because the people adhered to the common sense teachings of their Rabbis who taught that the prohibitions of the Torah must not be augmented arbitrarily."

9. Abba Hillel Silver's book Where Judaism Differed, published by Macmillan in 1956, made some of the same points, especially about free ethical choice vs. orginal sin and appreciation of the physical world vs. asceticism, but his focus was to show Judaism's distinctiveness vis-a-vis all other religions, and his tone was more philosophical and less polemical than TWR's.

10. Jewish Social Studies, September 14, 1945, p. 285.

11. Ibid.

12. Edgar Bernstein, "Towards Better Understanding: Three Studies of the Relations Between Judaism and Christianity," South African Zionist Record, July 1944, p. 17.

13. Jewish Review, January 1944, p. 314.

14. Rev. John F. Morley to TWR, August 6 1970, TWR Papers, AJA, Box 4.

15. TWR to Daniel Thursz, September 5 1978, TWR Papers, AJA, Box 5.

16. TWR, "Christianity, Judaism and the World Crisis," JS, October 1961, p. 4.

17. TWR, "Dr. Barth and the UN," JS, June 1962, p. 6.

18. TWR, "'Religion of the Messiah,'" JS, Winter 1981, p. 4.

19. TWR, "God - Questions Without Answers," JS, Summer 1984, p. 6.

20. Allan G. Field, "Embezzled Heaven: The Strange Case of

Franz Werfel," JS, December 1940, p. 11.

21. Chicago Jewish Forum, Summer 1944, TWR Papers, AJA, Box 6.

22. TWR, "Missionaries in a Rabbinical Seminary," JS, December 1941, p. 4.

23. TWR, "Conviction and Conversion," JS, October 1959, p. 5.

24. TWR, "'Gentilitis,'" JS, January 1958, p. 7.

25. TWR, "What Price Interfaith Good Will?" Jewish Outlook, April 1943, p. 11.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. TWR, "This Great Christian Fascination," JS, February 1946, p. 7.

29. TWR, "Judaism for Christian Consumers," Congress Weekly, April 27 1953, p. 5.

30. TWR, "Gentilitis," p. 8.

31. TWR, "Cover Pages," JS, January 1964, p. 2.

32. TWR, "Also Noted: Gentilitis," JS, May 1972, p. 31.

33. Ibid.

34. TWR, "Where 'Good Will' Ends," JS, March 1941, p. 7.

35. Ibid., p. 8.

36. Ibid., p. 9.

37. "Jewish Writer Says: New Testament 'Lies' Must Be Repudiated," Social Justice, April 13, 1942, p. 5.

38. "I anticipate severe criticism of the views expressed in this article by Jews who will argue that, because of our exposed and vulnerable position, we must not challenge Christianity, although justice is on our side." TWR, "Where 'Good Will' Ends," p. 9.

39. TWR, "Revision of Textbooks is Not Enough," JS, March 1943, p. 6.

40. Ibid.

41. TWR, "Jews Can't Fight Antisemitism," JS, October 1944,

p. 5. Also "Bitburg, Bach, and Deicide," Summer 1985, p. 5, where the wording is: "Basically, . . . Jew-hatred is the strong dislike of the majority for the minority in their midst...."

42. TWR, "Sisyphean Labors," JS, January 1945, p. 10.

43. TWR, "Educated Jew-Haters," JS, June 1961, p. 3.

44. TWR, "The Cardinal's Commentary," JS, March 1967, p. 3.

45. TWR, "When 'Dialogue' Died," JS, November 1967, p. 4.

46. Ibid.

47. TWR, "The Christian Mythology and 'Deicide,'" JS, November 1968, pp. 6-7.

Chapter V

1. TWR, "Sigmund Freud's 'Infamous Exasperated Question'," JS, Fall 1988, p. 7.

2. TWR, Jewish Women Through The Ages (New York, 1940), unnumbered "Author's Note" page.

3. "Woman's Share in Making of History of Jewish People," Jewish Chronicle (Detroit), May 31, 1940.

4. Abraham Shinedling, "A Useful Book," American Hebrew, August 9, 1940.

5. Bernard Postal, "Chat O'Book," Southern Israelite (Atlanta), July 19, 1940.

6. Theodore N. Lewis, "Book Nook," Jewish Press (Omaha), May 10, 1940, p. 8. This criticism was also voiced in the May-June, 1941 Hadassah Newsletter by Muriel K. Hollander, who wrote that "...the repeated asseveration of the 'equality' of Jewish Womanhood will hardly be taken seriously (in view, for instance, of our utterly anachronistic divorce laws) by any woman informed on the subject." These two statements are more than a little ironic in light of TWR's future outspokenness on "the unfreedom of Jewish women."

7. Interview of TWR by R. Chaiken and A. Peck, 10/17/83.

8. Theodore N. Lewis, "Book Nook," Jewish Press (Omaha), May 9, 1941.

9. Young Israel Viewpoint, May 1941.

10. TWR, "Jewish Women in a Man's World," JS, May 1950, pp.

7-8.

11. Ibid., p. 11.

12. Ibid., p. 12.

13. TWR, "Womanpower for Jewish Education," JS, December 1956, p. 6.

14. TWR, "The Unfreedom of Jewish Women," JS, October 1970, p. 3.

15. TWR, "Women's Viewpoint: There is Definitely More Than One Way to Jewish Survival," National Jewish Post, April 14, 1950. She also stated in this article that the only change she made in her lifestyle while she was pregnant was to cancel a season of lectures - and not because of potential physical discomfort, but so as not to "expose myself to the scrutiny of an audience in my 'heir conscious' get up."

16. TWR, "Cover Pages," JS, December 1960, p. 32.

17. "Marie Syrkin and Trude Weiss-Rosmarin: A Moment Interview," Moment, September 1983, p. 39.

18. TWR, "Is God 'She'? And So What?" Commonweal, July 1971.

19. Elliot Gertel, "My Friend, Trude Weiss-Rosmarin," JS, Fall 1989, p. 13.

20. William Zukerman to TWR, 3/17/46, Weiss-Rosmarin Papers, AJA, Box 6.

21. TWR, "Much Ado About Nothing," JS, November 1954, p. 3.

22. Ibid.

23. TWR, "Declaration of Impotence," JS, December 1954, p. 7.

Chapter VI

1. TWR, "Jews Can't Fight Antisemitism," JS, October 1944, p. 5.

2. TWR, "Party Zionism is Obsolete," JS, October 1948, p. 4.

3. TWR, "Political Sanity," JS, Summer 1980, p. 10.

4. TWR, "From Dan to Ber Sheba," Jewish Life, December 1946, pp. 1-2.

5. TWR, "On the Threshold of the Jewish State," JS, November 1947, p. 4.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., p. 6.

8. TWR, "Needed: A New Zionist Orientation," May 1948, p. 4.

9. TWR, "'The Miracle of Israel'," JS, September 1948, p. 4.

10. TWR, "First Anniversary," JS, May 1949, p. 4.

11. TWR, "Periphery and Center: We and the Jewish State," JS, January 1948, p. 9.

12. Ibid., p. 10.

13. Ibid., p. 29.

14. Ibid.

15. TWR, "'Religion' in the Jewish State," JS, March 1948, p. 10

16. TWR, "Israel and the Diaspora," JS, October 1949, p. 10.

17. TWR, Toward Jewish-Muslim Dialogue (New York, 1967), 3.

Conclusion

1. Robert Goldman to TWR, May 4 1970, TWR Papers, Box 2.

2. Sol Liptzin to TWR, July 13 1976, TWR Papers, Box 3.

3. For example, Lawrence Marwick wrote to her on June 27 1967: "It is my feeling that it is generally known that your devotion to Ahavat Yisrael is shelo al menat legabel peras . . . ." TWR Papers, Box 4.

4. TWR, "In Retrospect," JS, Winter 1985/Spring 1986, p. 5.

5. Ibid.

6. M. Bernard Resnikoff to TWR, 7/2/75, TWR Papers, Box 4.

7. Ibid.

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