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## Jews and the Left

I could never understand what Judaism had to do with Marxism, and why questioning the latter was tantamount to being disloyal to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Ralph de Toledano [1996, 50] discussing his experiences with Eastern European Jewish intellectuals)

Socialism, for many immigrant Jews, was not merely politics or an idea, it was an encompassing culture, a style of perceiving and judging through which to structure their lives. (Irving Howe 1982, 9)

The association between Jews and the political left has been widely noticed and commented on beginning in the nineteenth century. “Whatever their situation . . . in almost every country about which we have information, a segment of the Jewish community played a very vital role in movements designed to undermine the existing order” (Rothman & Lichter 1982, 110).

On the surface at least, Jewish involvement in radical political activity may seem surprising. Marxism, at least as envisaged by Marx, is the very antithesis of Judaism. Marxism is an exemplar of a universalist ideology in which ethnic and nationalist barriers within the society and indeed between societies are eventually removed in the interests of social harmony and a sense of communal interest. Moreover, Marx himself, though born of two ethnically Jewish parents, has been viewed by many as an anti-Semite.<sup>1</sup> His critique of Judaism (*On the Jewish Question* [Marx 1843/1975]) conceptualized Judaism as fundamentally concerned with egoistic money seeking; it had achieved world domination by making both man and nature into salable objects. Marx viewed Judaism as an abstract principle of human greed that would end in the communist society of the future. However, Marx argued against the idea that Jews must give up their Jewishness to be German citizens, and he envisioned that Judaism, freed from the principle of greed, would continue to exist in the transformed society after the revolution (Katz 1986, 113).

Whatever Marx's views on the subject, a critical question in the following is whether acceptance of radical, universalist ideologies and participation in radical, universalist movements are compatible with Jewish identification. Does the adoption of such an ideology essentially remove one from the Jewish community and its traditional commitment to separatism and Jewish nationhood? Or, to rephrase this question in terms of my perspective, could the advocacy of radical, universalist ideologies and actions be compatible with continued participation in Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy?

Notice that this question is different from the question of whether Jews as a group can be adequately characterized as advocating radical political solutions for gentile societies. There is no implication that Judaism constitutes a unified movement or that all segments of the Jewish community have the same beliefs or attitudes toward the gentile community (see Ch. 1). Jews may constitute a predominant or necessary element in radical political movements and Jewish identification may be highly compatible with or even facilitate involvement in radical political movements without most Jews being involved in these movements and even if Jews are a numerical minority within the movement.

#### **RADICALISM AND JEWISH IDENTIFICATION**

The hypothesis that Jewish radicalism is compatible with Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy implies that radical Jews continue to identify as Jews. There is little doubt that the vast majority of the Jews who advocated leftist causes beginning in the late nineteenth century were strongly self-identified as Jews and saw no conflict between Judaism and radicalism (Marcus 1983, 280ff; Levin 1977, 65, 1988, I, 4–5; Mishkinsky 1968, 290, 291; Rothman & Lichter 1982, 92–93; Sorin 1985, *passim*). Indeed, the largest Jewish radical movements in both Russia and Poland were the Jewish Bunds which had an exclusively Jewish membership and a very clear program of pursuing specifically Jewish interests. The proletarianism of the Polish Bund was really part of an attempt to preserve their national identity as Jews (Marcus 1983, 282). Fraternity with the non-Jewish working class was intended to facilitate their specifically Jewish aims, and a similar statement can be made for the Russian Jewish Bund (Liebman 1979, 111ff). Since the Bunds comprised by far the majority of the Jewish radical movement in these areas, the vast majority of Jews participating in radical movements in this period were strongly identified as Jews.

Moreover, many Jewish members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union appear to have been intent on establishing a form of secular Judaism rather than ending Jewish group continuity. The postrevolutionary Soviet government and the Jewish socialist movements struggled over the issue of the preservation of national identity (Levin 1988; Pinkus 1988). Despite an official ideology in which nationalism and ethnic separatism were viewed as reactionary, the Soviet government was forced to come to grips with the reality of very strong ethnic and national identifications within the Soviet

Union. As a result, a Jewish Section of the Communist Party (*Evseksiya*) was created. This section “fought hard against the Zionist-Socialist Parties, against democratic Jewish communities, against the Jewish faith and against Hebrew culture. It had, however, succeeded in shaping a secular life pattern based on Yiddish as the recognized national language of the Jewish nationality; in fighting for Jewish national survival in the 1920s; and in working in the 1930s to slow down the assimilatory process of the Sovietization of Jewish language and culture” (Pinkus 1988, 62).<sup>2</sup>

The result of these efforts was the development of a state-sponsored separatist Yiddish subculture, including Yiddish schools and even Yiddish soviets. This separatist culture was very aggressively sponsored by the *Evseksiya*. Reluctant Jewish parents were forced “by terror” to send their children to these culturally separatist schools rather than schools where the children would not have to relearn their subjects in the Russian language in order to pass entrance examinations (Gitelman 1991, 12). The themes of the prominent and officially honored Soviet Jewish writers in the 1930s also bespeak the importance of ethnic identity: “The thrust of their prose, poetry and drama boiled down to one idea—the limitations on their rights under tsarism and the flowering of once-oppressed Jews under the sun of the Lenin-Stalin constitution” (Vaksberg 1994, 115).

Further, beginning in 1942 and extending into the post-war period, the government-sponsored Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee (JAC) served to promote Jewish cultural and political interests (including an attempt to establish a Jewish republic in the Crimea) until it was dissolved by the government amid charges of Jewish nationalism, resistance to assimilation, and Zionist sympathies in 1948 (Kostyrchenko 1995, 30ff; Vaksberg 1994, 112ff). The leaders of the JAC strongly identified as Jews. The following comments of JAC leader Itsik Fefer on his attitudes during the war indicate a powerful sense of Jewish peoplehood extending backward in historical time:

I spoke that I love my people. But who doesn't love one's own people? . . . My interests in regard to the Crimea and Birobidzhan [an area of the Soviet Union designated for Jewish settlement] had been dictated by this. It seemed to me that only Stalin could rectify that historical injustice which had been created by the Roman emperors. It seemed to me that only the Soviet government could rectify this injustice, by creating a Jewish nation. (In Kostyrchenko 1995, 39)

Despite their complete lack of identification with Judaism as a religion and despite their battles against some of the more salient signs of Jewish group separatism, membership in the Soviet Communist Party by these Jewish activists was not incompatible with developing mechanisms designed to ensure Jewish group continuity as a secular entity. In the event, apart from the offspring of interethnic marriages, very few Jews lost their Jewish identity during the entire Soviet era (Gitelman 1991, 5),<sup>3</sup> and the post-World War II years saw a powerful strengthening of Jewish culture and Zionism in the Soviet Union. Beginning with the dissolution of the JAC, the Soviet govern-

ment initiated a campaign of repression against all manifestations of Jewish nationalism and Jewish culture, including closing Jewish theaters and museums and disbanding Jewish writers unions.

The issue of the Jewish identification of Bolsheviks who were Jews by birth is complex. Pipes (1993, 102–104) asserts that Bolsheviks of Jewish background in the czarist period did not identify as Jews, although they were perceived by gentiles as acting on behalf of Jewish interests and were subjected to anti-Semitism. For example, Leon Trotsky, the second most important Bolshevik behind Lenin, took great pains to avoid the appearance that he had any Jewish identity or that he had any interest in Jewish issues at all.<sup>4</sup>

It is difficult to believe that these radicals were wholly without a Jewish identity, given that they were regarded as Jews by others and were the target of anti-Semites. In general, anti-Semitism increases Jewish identification (*SAID*, 178–181). However, it is possible that in these cases Jewish identity was largely externally imposed. For example, the conflict in the 1920s between Stalin and the Left Opposition, led by Trotsky, Grigory Zinoviev, Lev Kamenev, and Grigory Solkolnikov (all of whom were ethnic Jews), had strong overtones of a Jewish-gentile group conflict: “The obvious ‘alienness’ allegedly uniting an entire bloc of candidates was a glaring circumstance” (Vaksberg 1994, 19; see also Ginsberg 1993, 53; Lindemann 1997, 452; Pinkus 1988, 85–86; Rapoport 1990, 38; Rothman & Lichter 1982, 94). For all of the participants, the Jewish or gentile backgrounds of their adversaries was highly salient, and indeed Sidney Hook (1949, 464) notes that non-Jewish Stalinists used anti-Semitic arguments against the Trotskyists. Vaksberg quotes Vyacheslav Molotov (Minister of Foreign Affairs and the second most prominent Soviet leader) as saying that Stalin passed over Kamenev because he wanted a non-Jew to head the government. Moreover, the internationalism of the Jewish bloc compared to the nationalism implicit in the Stalinist position (Lindemann 1997, 450) is more congruent with Jewish interests and certainly reflects a common theme of Jewish attitudes in post-Enlightenment societies generally. Throughout this period into the 1930s “for the Kremlin and the Lubyanka [the Russian secret police] it was not religion but blood that determined Jewishness” (Vaksberg 1994, 64). Indeed, the secret police used ethnic outsiders (e.g., Jews in the traditionally anti-Semitic Ukraine) as agents because they would have less sympathy with the natives (Lindemann 1997, 443)—a policy that makes excellent evolutionary sense.

Jewish ethnic background was thus important not only to gentiles but was subjectively important to Jews as well. When the secret police wanted to investigate a Jewish agent, they recruited a “pure Jewish maiden” to develop an intimate relationship with him—implicitly assuming that the operation would work better if the relationship was intraethnic (Vaksberg 1994, 44n). Similarly, there has been a pronounced tendency for leftist Jews to idolize other Jews such as Trotsky and Rosa Luxemburg rather than leftist gentiles, as in Poland (Schatz 1991, 62, 89), even though some scholars have serious doubts about the Jewish identifications of these two revolutionaries. Indeed,

Hook (1949, 465) finds a perception among leftists that there was an ethnic basis for the attraction of Jewish intellectuals to Trotsky. In the words of one, “It is not by accident that three quarters of the Trotskyist leaders are Jews.”

There is, then, considerable evidence that Jewish Bolsheviks generally retained at least a residual Jewish identity. In some cases this Jewish identity may indeed have been “reactive” (i.e., resulting from others’ perceptions). For example, Rosa Luxemburg may have had a reactive Jewish identity, since she was perceived as a Jew despite the fact that she “was the most critical of her own people, descending at times to merciless abuse of other Jews” (Shepherd 1993, 118). Nevertheless, Luxemburg’s only important sexual relationship was with a Jew, and she continued to maintain ties to her family. Lindemann (1997, 178) comments that the conflict between Luxemburg’s revolutionary left and the social-democratic reformists in Germany had overtones of German-Jewish ethnic conflict, given the large percentage and high visibility of Jews among the former. By World War I “Luxemburg’s dwindling friendships within the party had become more exclusively Jewish, whereas her contempt for the (mostly non-Jewish) leaders of the party became more open and vitriolic. Her references to the leadership were often laced with characteristically Jewish phrases: The leaders of the Party were ‘shabbesgoyim of the bourgeoisie.’ For many right-wing Germans, Luxemburg became the most detested of all revolutionaries, the personification of the destructive Jewish alien” (p. 402). Given these findings, the possibilities that Luxemburg was in fact a crypto-Jew or that she was engaged in self-deception regarding her Jewish identity—the latter a common enough occurrence among Jewish radicals (see below)—seem to be at least as likely as supposing that she did not identify as a Jew at all.

In terms of social identity theory, anti-Semitism would make it difficult to adopt the identity of the surrounding culture. Traditional Jewish separatist practices combined with economic competition tend to result in anti-Semitism, but anti-Semitism in turn makes Jewish assimilation more difficult because it becomes more difficult for Jews to accept a non-Jewish identity. Thus in the interwar period in Poland Jewish cultural assimilation increased substantially; by 1939 one half of Jewish high school students called Polish their native language. However, the continuation of traditional Jewish culture among a substantial proportion of Jews and its correlative anti-Semitism resulted in a barrier for Jews in adopting a Polish identification (Schatz 1991, 34–35).

From the standpoint of gentiles, however, anti-Semitic reactions to individuals like Luxemburg and other outwardly assimilating Jews may be viewed as resulting from an attempt to prevent deception by erring on the side of exaggerating the extent to which people who are ethnically Jews identify as Jews and are consciously attempting to advance specifically Jewish interests (see *SAID*, pp. 11–15). Such perceptions of secular Jews and Jews who converted to Christianity have been a common feature of anti-Semitism in the post-Enlightenment world, and indeed, such Jews often maintained informal social and business networks that resulted in marriages with other baptized

Jews and Jewish families who had not changed their surface religion (see *SAID*, Chs. 5, 6).<sup>5</sup>

I suggest that it is not possible to conclusively establish the Jewish identification or lack of it of ethnically Jewish Bolsheviks prior to the Revolution and in the postrevolutionary period when ethnic Jews had a great deal of power in the Soviet Union. Several factors favor our supposing that Jewish identification occurred in a substantial percentage of ethnic Jews: (1) People were classified as Jews depending on their ethnic background at least partly because of residual anti-Semitism; this would tend to impose a Jewish identity on these individuals and make it difficult to assume an exclusive identity as a member of a larger, more inclusive political group. (2) Many Jewish Bolsheviks, such as those in *Evsektsiya* and the JAC, aggressively sought to establish a secular Jewish subculture. (3) Very few Jews on the left envisioned a postrevolutionary society without a continuation of Judaism as a group; indeed, the predominant ideology among Jewish leftists was that postrevolutionary society would end anti-Semitism because it would end class conflict and the peculiar Jewish occupational profile. (4) The behavior of American communists shows that Jewish identity and the primacy of Jewish interests over communist interests were commonplace among individuals who were ethnically Jewish communists (see below). (5) The existence of Jewish *crypsis* in other times and places combined with the possibility that self-deception, identificatory flexibility, and identificatory ambivalence are important components of Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy (see *SAID*, Ch. 8).

This last possibility is particularly interesting and will be elaborated below. The best evidence that individuals have really ceased to have a Jewish identity is if they choose a political option that they perceive as clearly not in the interests of Jews as a group. In the absence of a clearly perceived conflict with Jewish interests, it remains possible that different political choices among ethnic Jews are only differences in tactics for how best to achieve Jewish interests. In the case of the Jewish members of the American Communist Party (CPUSA) reviewed below, the best evidence that ethnically Jewish members continued to have a Jewish identity is that in general their support for the CPUSA waxed and waned depending on whether Soviet policies were perceived as violating specific Jewish interests, such as support for Israel or opposition to Nazi Germany.

Jewish identification is a complex area where surface declarations may be deceptive. Indeed, Jews may not consciously know how strongly they identify with Judaism. Silberman (1985, 184), for example, notes that around the time of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, many Jews could identify with the statement of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel that "*I had not known how Jewish I was*" (in Silberman 1985, 184; emphasis in text). Silberman comments: "This was the response, not of some newcomer to Judaism or casual devotee but of the man whom many, myself included, consider the greatest Jewish spiritual leader of our time." Many others made the same surprising discovery about themselves: Arthur Hertzberg (1979, 210) wrote, "The immediate reaction of American

Jewry to the crisis was far more intense and widespread than anyone could have foreseen. Many Jews would never have believed that grave danger to Israel could dominate their thoughts and emotions to the exclusion of everything else.”

Consider the case of Polina Zhemchuzhina, the wife of Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov (Premier of the USSR during the 1930s) and a prominent revolutionary who joined the Communist Party in 1918. (Among other accomplishments, she was a member of the Party Central Committee.) When Golda Meir visited the Soviet Union in 1948, Zhemchuzhina repeatedly uttered the phrase “Ich bin a Yiddishe tochter” (I am a daughter of the Jewish people) when Meir asked how she spoke Yiddish so well (Rubenstein 1996, 262). “She parted from the [Israeli delegation] with tears in her eyes, saying ‘I wish all will go well for you there and then it will be good for all the Jews’ ” (Rubenstein 1996, 262). Vaksberg (1994, 192) describes her as “an iron Stalinist, but her fanaticism did not keep her from being a “good Jewish daughter.”

Consider also the case of Ilya Ehrenburg, the prominent Soviet journalist and anti-fascist propagandist for the Soviet Union whose life is described in a book whose title, *Tangled Loyalties* (Rubenstein 1996), illustrates the complexities of Jewish identity in the Soviet Union. Ehrenburg was a loyal Stalinist, supporting the Soviet line on Zionism and refusing to condemn Soviet anti-Jewish actions (Rubenstein 1996). Nevertheless, Ehrenburg held Zionist views, maintained Jewish associational patterns, believed in the uniqueness of the Jewish people, and was deeply concerned about anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. Ehrenburg was an organizing member of the JAC, which advocated Jewish cultural revival and greater contact with Jews abroad. A writer friend described him as “first of all a Jew. . . . Ehrenburg had rejected his origins with all his being, disguised himself in the West, smoking Dutch tobacco and making his travel plans at Cook’s. . . . But he did not erase the Jew” (p. 204). “Ehrenburg never denied his Jewish origins and near the end of his life often repeated the defiant conviction that he would consider himself a Jew ‘as long as there was a single anti-Semite left on earth’ ” (Rubenstein 1996, 13). In a famous article, he cited a statement that “blood exists in two forms; the blood that flows inside the veins and the blood that flows out of the veins. . . . Why do I say, ‘We Jews?’ Because of blood” (p. 259). Indeed, his intense loyalty to Stalin’s regime and his silence about Soviet brutalities involving the murder of millions of its citizens during the 1930s may have been motivated largely by his view that the Soviet Union was a bulwark against fascism (pp. 143–145). “No transgression angered him more than anti-Semitism” (p. 313).

A powerful residual Jewish identity in a prominent Bolshevik can also be seen in the following comment on the reaction of ethnic Jews to the emergence of Israel:

It seemed that all Jews, regardless of age, profession, or social status, felt responsible for the distant little state that had become a symbol of national revival. Even the Soviet Jews who had seemed irrevocably assimilated were now under the spell of the Middle Eastern miracle. Yekaterina Davidovna (Golda Gorbman) was a fanatic Bolshevik and internationalist and wife of Marshal Kliment Voroshilov, and in her youth she had been excommunicated as an unbeliever; but now she struck her relatives dumb by saying, “Now at last we have our motherland, too.” (Kostyrchenko 1995, 102)

The point is that the Jewish identity of even a highly assimilated Jew, and even one who has subjectively rejected a Jewish identity, may surface at times of crisis to the group or when Jewish identification conflicts with any other identity that a Jew might have, including identification as a political radical. As expected on the basis of social identity theory, Elazar (1980) notes that in times of perceived threat to Judaism, there is a great increase in group identification among even “very marginal” Jews, as during the Yom Kippur War. As a result, assertions regarding Jewish identification that fail to take account of perceived threats to Judaism may seriously underestimate the extent of Jewish commitment. Surface declarations of a lack of Jewish identity may be highly misleading.<sup>6</sup> And as we shall see, there is good evidence for widespread self-deception about Jewish identity among Jewish radicals.

Moreover, there is good evidence that both in the czarist period and in the postrevolutionary period, Jewish Bolsheviks perceived their activities as entirely congruent with Jewish interests. The revolution ended the officially anti-Semitic czarist government and although popular anti-Semitism continued in the postrevolutionary period, the government officially outlawed anti-Semitism. Jews were highly overrepresented in positions of economic and political power as well as cultural influence at least into the 1940s. It was also a government that aggressively attempted to destroy all vestiges of Christianity as a socially unifying force within the Soviet Union while at the same time it established a secular Jewish subculture so that Judaism would not lose its group continuity or its unifying mechanisms such as the Yiddish language.

It is doubtful, therefore, that Soviet Jewish Bolsheviks ever had to choose between a Jewish identity and a Bolshevik identity, at least in the prerevolutionary period and into the 1930s. Given this congruence of what one might term “identificatory self-interest,” it is quite possible that individual Jewish Bolsheviks would deny or ignore their Jewish identities—perhaps aided by mechanisms of self-deception—while they nevertheless may well have retained a Jewish identity that would have surfaced only if a clear conflict between Jewish interests and communist policies occurred.

### **Communism and Jewish Identification in Poland**

Schatz’s (1991) work on the group of Jewish communists who came to power in Poland after World War II (termed by Schatz “the generation”) is important because it sheds light on the identificatory processes of an entire generation of communist Jews in Eastern Europe. Unlike the situation in the



Soviet Union where the predominantly Jewish faction led by Trotsky was defeated, it is possible to trace the activities and identifications of a Jewish communist elite who actually obtained political power and held it for a significant period.

The great majority of this group were socialized in very traditional Jewish families

whose inner life, customs and folklore, religious traditions, leisure time, contacts between generations, and ways of socializing were, despite variations, essentially permeated by traditional Jewish values and norms of conduct. . . . The core of cultural heritage was handed down to them through formal religious education and practice, through holiday celebrations, tales, and songs, through the stories told by parents and grandparents, through listening to discussions among their elders. . . . The result was a deep core of their identity, values, norms, and attitudes with which they entered the rebellious period of their youth and adulthood. *This core was to be transformed in the processes of acculturation, secularization, and radicalization sometimes even to the point of explicit denial. However, it was through this deep layer that all later perceptions were filtered.* (Schatz 1991, 37–38; my emphasis)

Note the implication that self-deceptive processes were at work here: Members of the generation denied the effects of a pervasive socialization experience that colored all of their subsequent perceptions, so that in a very real sense, they did not know how Jewish they were. Most of these individuals spoke Yiddish in their daily lives and had only a poor command of Polish even after joining the party (p. 54). They socialized entirely with other Jews whom they met in the Jewish world of work, neighborhood, and Jewish social and political organizations. After they became communists, they dated and married among themselves and their social gatherings were conducted in Yiddish (p. 116). As is the case for all of the Jewish intellectual and political movements discussed in this volume, their mentors and principle influences were other ethnic Jews, including especially Luxemburg and Trotsky (pp. 62, 89), and when they recalled personal heroes, they were mostly Jews whose exploits achieved semi-mythical proportions (p. 112).

Jews who joined the communist movement did not first reject their ethnic identity, and there were many who “cherished Jewish culture . . . [and] dreamed of a society in which Jews would be equal as Jews” (p. 48). Indeed, it was common for individuals to combine a strong Jewish identity with Marxism as well as various combinations of Zionism and Bundism. Moreover, the attraction of Polish Jews to communism was greatly facilitated by their knowledge that Jews had attained high-level positions of power and influence in the Soviet Union and that the Soviet government had established a system of Jewish education and culture (p. 60). In both the Soviet Union and Poland, communism was seen as opposing anti-Semitism. In marked contrast, during the 1930s the Polish government developed policies in which Jews were excluded from public-sector employment, quotas were placed on Jewish representation in universities and the professions, and government-organized

boycotts of Jewish businesses and artisans were staged (Hagen 1996). Clearly, Jews perceived communism as good for Jews: It was a movement that did not threaten Jewish group continuity, and it held the promise of power and influence for Jews and the end of state-sponsored anti-Semitism.

At one end of the spectrum of Jewish identification were communists who began their career in the Bund or in Zionist organizations, spoke Yiddish, and worked entirely within a Jewish milieu. Jewish and communist identities were completely sincere, without ambivalence or perceived conflict between these two sources of identity. At the other end of the spectrum of Jewish identification, some Jewish communists may have intended to establish a de-ethnicized state without Jewish group continuity, although the evidence for this is less than compelling. In the prewar period even the most “de-ethnicized” Jews only outwardly assimilated by dressing like gentiles, taking gentile-sounding names (suggesting deception), and learning their languages. They attempted to recruit gentiles into the movement but did not assimilate or attempt to assimilate into Polish culture; they retained traditional Jewish “disdainful and supercilious attitudes” toward what, as Marxists, they viewed as a “retarded” Polish peasant culture (p. 119). Even the most highly assimilated Jewish communists working in urban areas with non-Jews were upset by the Soviet-German nonaggression pact but were relieved when the German-Soviet war finally broke out (p. 121)—a clear indication that Jewish personal identity remained quite close to the surface. The Communist Party of Poland (KPP) also retained a sense of promoting specifically Jewish interests rather than blind allegiance to the Soviet Union. Indeed, Schatz (p. 102) suggests that Stalin dissolved the KPP in 1938 because of the presence of Trotskyists within the KPP and because the Soviet leadership expected the KPP to be opposed to the alliance with Nazi Germany.

In *SAID* (Ch. 8) it was noted that identificatory ambivalence has been a consistent feature of Judaism since the Enlightenment. It is interesting that Polish Jewish activists showed a great deal of identificatory ambivalence stemming ultimately from the contradiction between “the belief in some kind of Jewish collective existence and, at the same time, a rejection of such an ethnic communion, as it was thought incompatible with class divisions and harmful to the general political struggle; striving to maintain a specific kind of Jewish culture and, at the same time, a view of this as a mere ethnic form of the communist message, instrumental in incorporating Jews into the Polish Socialist community; and maintaining separate Jewish institutions while at the same time desiring to eliminate Jewish separateness as such” (p. 234). It will be apparent in the following that the Jews, including Jewish communists at the highest levels of the government, continued as a cohesive, identifiable group. However, although they themselves appear not to have noticed the Jewish collective nature of their experience (p. 240), it was observable to others—a clear example of self-deception also evident in the case of American Jewish leftists, as noted below.

These Jewish communists were also engaged in elaborate rationalizations and self-deceptions related to the role of the communist movement in Poland, so that one cannot take the lack of evidence for overt Jewish ethnic identity as strong evidence of a lack of a Jewish identity. “Cognitive and emotional anomalies—unfree, mutilated, and distorted thoughts and emotions—became the price for retaining their beliefs unchanged. . . . Adjusting their experiences to their beliefs was achieved through mechanisms of interpreting, suppressing, justifying, or explaining away” (p. 191). “As much as they were able to skillfully apply their critical thinking to penetrative analyses of the sociopolitical system they rejected, as much were they blocked when it came to applying the same rules of critical analysis to the system they regarded as the future of all mankind” (p. 192).

This combination of self-deceptive rationalization as well as considerable evidence of a Jewish identity can be seen in the comments of Jacob Berman, one of the most prominent leaders of the postwar era. (All three communist leaders who dominated Poland between 1948 and 1956, Berman, Boleslaw Bierut, and Hilary Minc, were Jews.) Regarding the purges and murders of thousands of communists, including many Jews, in the Soviet Union in the 1930s, Berman states:

I tried as best I could to explain what was happening; to clarify the background, the situations full of conflict and internal contradictions in which Stalin had probably found himself and which forced him to act as he did; and to exaggerate the mistakes of the opposition, which assumed grotesque proportions in the subsequent charges against them and were further blown up by Soviet propaganda. You had to have a great deal of endurance and dedication to the cause then in order to accept what was happening despite all the distortions, injuries and torments. (In Toranska 1987, 207)

As to his Jewish identity, Berman responded as follows when asked about his plans after the war:

I didn't have any particular plans. But I was aware of the fact that as a Jew I either shouldn't or wouldn't be able to fill any of the highest posts. Besides, I didn't mind not being in the front ranks: not because I'm particularly humble by nature, but because it's not at all the case that you have to project yourself into a position of prominence in order to wield real power. The important thing to me was to exert my influence, leave my stamp on the complicated government formation, which was being created, but without projecting myself. Naturally, this required a certain agility. (In Toranska 1987, 237)

Clearly Berman identifies himself as a Jew and is well aware that others perceive him as a Jew and that therefore he must deceptively lower his public profile. Berman also notes that he was under suspicion as a Jew during the Soviet anti-“Cosmopolite” campaign beginning in the late 1940s. His brother, an activist in the Central Committee of Polish Jews (the organization for establishing a secular Jewish culture in communist Poland), emigrated to Israel in 1950 to avoid the consequences of the Soviet-inspired anti-Semitic

policies in Poland. Berman comments that he did not follow his brother to Israel even though his brother strongly urged him to do so: "I was, of course, interested in what was going on in Israel, especially since I was quite familiar with the people there" (in Toranska 1987, 322). Obviously, Berman's brother viewed Berman not as a non-Jew but, rather, as a Jew who should emigrate to Israel because of incipient anti-Semitism. The close ties of family and friendship between a very high official in the Polish communist government and an activist in the organization promoting Jewish secular culture in Poland also strongly suggest that there was no perceived incompatibility with identifications as a Jew and as a communist even among the most assimilated Polish communists of the period.

While Jewish members saw the KPP as beneficial to Jewish interests, the party was perceived by gentile Poles even before the war as "pro-Soviet, anti-patriotic, and ethnically 'not truly Polish'" (Schatz 1991, 82). This perception of lack of patriotism was the main source of popular hostility to the KPP (Schatz 1991, 91).

On the one hand, for much of its existence the KPP had been at war not only with the Polish State, but with its entire body politic, including the legal opposition parties of the Left. On the other hand, in the eyes of the great majority of Poles, the KPP was a foreign, subversive agency of Moscow, bent on the destruction of Poland's hard-won independence and the incorporation of Poland into the Soviet Union. Labeled a "Soviet agency" or the "Jew-Commune," it was viewed as a dangerous and fundamentally un-Polish conspiracy dedicated to undermining national sovereignty and restoring, in a new guise, Russian domination. (Coutouvidis & Reynolds 1986, 115)

The KPP backed the Soviet Union in the Polish-Soviet war of 1919–1920 and in the Soviet invasion of 1939. It also accepted the 1939 border with the USSR and was relatively unconcerned with the Soviet massacre of Polish prisoners of war during World War II, whereas the Polish government in exile in London held nationalist views of these matters. The Soviet army and its Polish allies "led by cold-blooded political calculation, military necessities, or both" allowed the uprising of the Home Army, faithful to the noncommunist Polish government-in-exile, to be defeated by the Germans resulting in 200,000 dead, thus wiping out "the cream of the anti- and noncommunist activist elite" (Schatz 1991, 188). The Soviets also arrested surviving non-communist resistance leaders immediately after the war.

Moreover, as was the case with the CPUSA, actual Jewish leadership and involvement in Polish Communism was much greater than surface appearances; ethnic Poles were recruited and promoted to high positions in order to lessen the perception that the KPP was a Jewish movement (Schatz 1991, 97). This attempt to deceptively lower the Jewish profile of the communist movement was also apparent in the ZPP. (The ZPP refers to the Union of Polish Patriots—an Orwellian-named communist front organization created by the Soviet Union to occupy Poland after the war.) Apart from members of the generation whose political loyalties could be counted on and who formed the

leadership core of the group, Jews were often discouraged from joining the movement out of fear that the movement would appear too Jewish. However, Jews who could physically pass as Poles were allowed to join and were encouraged to state they were ethnic Poles and to change their names to Polish-sounding names. “Not everyone was approached [to engage in deception], and some were spared such proposals because nothing could be done with them: they just looked too Jewish” (Schatz 1991, 185).

When this group came to power after the war, they advanced Soviet political, economic, and cultural interests in Poland while aggressively pursuing specifically Jewish interests, including the destruction of the nationalist political opposition whose openly expressed anti-Semitism derived at least partly from the fact that Jews were perceived as favoring Soviet domination.<sup>7</sup> The purge of Wladyslaw Gomulka’s group shortly after the war resulted in the promotion of Jews and the complete banning of anti-Semitism. Moreover, the general opposition between the Jewish-dominated Polish communist government supported by the Soviets and the nationalist, anti-Semitic underground helped forge the allegiance of the great majority of the Jewish population to the communist government while the great majority of non-Jewish Poles favored the anti-Soviet parties (Schatz 1991, 204–205). The result was widespread anti-Semitism: By the summer of 1947, approximately 1,500 Jews had been killed in incidents at 155 localities. In the words of Cardinal Hlond in 1946 commenting on an incident in which 41 Jews were killed, the pogrom was “due to the Jews who today occupy leading positions in Poland’s government and endeavor to introduce a governmental structure that the majority of the Poles do not wish to have” (in Schatz 1991, 107).

The Jewish-dominated communist government actively sought to revive and perpetuate Jewish life in Poland (Schatz 1991, 208) so that, as in the case of the Soviet Union, there was no expectation that Judaism would wither away under a communist regime. Jewish activists had an “ethnopolitical vision” in which Jewish secular culture would continue in Poland with the cooperation and approval of the government (Schatz 1991, 230). Thus while the government campaigned actively against the political and cultural power of the Catholic Church, collective Jewish life flourished in the postwar period. Yiddish and Hebrew language schools and publications were established, as well as a great variety of cultural and social welfare organizations for Jews. A substantial percentage of the Jewish population was employed in Jewish economic cooperatives.

Moreover, the Jewish-dominated government regarded the Jewish population, many of whom had not previously been communists, as “a reservoir that could be trusted and enlisted in its efforts to rebuild the country. Although not old, ‘tested’ comrades, they were not rooted in the social networks of the anti-communist society, they were outsiders with regard to its historically shaped traditions, without connections to the Catholic Church, and hated by those who hated the regime.<sup>8</sup> Thus they could be depended on and used to fill the required positions” (Schatz 1991, 212–213).

Jewish ethnic background was particularly important in recruiting for the internal security service: The generation of Jewish communists realized that their power derived entirely from the Soviet Union and that they would have to resort to coercion in order to control a fundamentally hostile noncommunist society (p. 262). The core members of the security service came from the Jewish communists who had been communists before the establishment of the Polish communist government, but these were joined by other Jews sympathetic to the government and alienated from the wider society. This in turn reinforced the popular image of Jews as servants of foreign interests and enemies of ethnic Poles (Schatz 1991, 225).

Jewish members of the internal security force often appear to have been motivated by personal rage and a desire for revenge related to their Jewish identity:

Their families had been murdered and the anti-Communist underground was, in their perception, a continuation of essentially the same anti-Semitic and anti-Communist tradition. They hated those who had collaborated with the Nazis and those who opposed the new order with almost the same intensity and knew that as Communists, or as both Communists and Jews, they were hated at least in the same way. In their eyes, the enemy was essentially the same. The old evil deeds had to be punished and new ones prevented and a merciless struggle was necessary before a better world could be built. (Schatz 1991, 226)

As in the case of post-World War II Hungary (see below), Poland became polarized between a predominantly Jewish ruling and administrative class supported by the rest of the Jewish population and by Soviet military power, arrayed against the great majority of the native gentile population. The situation was exactly analogous to the many instances in traditional societies where Jews formed a middle layer between an alien ruling elite, in this case the Soviets, and the gentile native population (see *PTSDA*, Ch. 5). However, this intermediary role made the former outsiders into an elite group in Poland, and the former champions of social justice went to great lengths to protect their own personal prerogatives, including a great deal of rationalization and self-deception (p. 261). Indeed, when a defector's accounts of the elite's lavish lifestyle (e.g., Boleslaw Bierut had four villas and the use of five others [Toranska 1987, 28]), their corruption, as well as their role as Soviet agents became known in 1954, there were shock waves throughout the lower levels of the party (p. 266). Clearly, the sense of moral superiority and the altruistic motivations of this group were entirely in their own self-deceptions.

Although attempts were made to place a Polish face on what was in reality a Jewish-dominated government, such attempts were limited by the lack of trustworthy Poles able to fill positions in the Communist Party, government administration, the military and the internal security forces. Jews who had severed formal ties with the Jewish community, or who had changed their names to Polish-sounding names, or who could pass as Poles because of their physical appearance or lack of a Jewish accent were favored in promotions (p.

214). Whatever the subjective personal identities of the individuals recruited into these government positions, the recruiters were clearly acting on the perceived ethnic background of the individual as a cue to dependability, and the result was that the situation resembled the many instances in traditional societies where Jews and crypto-Jews developed economic and political networks of coreligionists: “Besides a group of influential politicians, too small to be called a category, there were the soldiers; the apparatchiks and the administrators; the intellectuals and ideologists; the policemen; the diplomats; and finally, the activists in the Jewish sector. There also existed the mass of common people—clerks, craftsmen, and workers—whose common denominator with the others was a shared ideological vision, a past history, and the essentially similar mode of ethnic aspiration” (p. 226).

It is revealing that when Jewish economic and political domination gradually decreased in the mid- to late-1950s, many of these individuals began working in the Jewish economic cooperatives, and Jews purged from the internal security service were aided by Jewish organizations funded ultimately by American Jews. There can be little doubt of their continuing Jewish identity and the continuation of Jewish economic and cultural separatism. Indeed, after the collapse of the communist regime in Poland, “numerous Jews, some of them children and grandchildren of former communists, came ‘out of the closet’ ” (*Anti-Semitism Worldwide 1994*, 115), openly adopting a Jewish identity and reinforcing the idea that many Jewish communists were in fact crypto-Jews.

When the anti-Zionist–anti-Semitic movement in the Soviet Union filtered down to Poland following the Soviet policy change toward Israel in the late 1940s, there was another crisis of identity resulting from the belief that anti-Semitism and communism were incompatible. One response was to engage in “ethnic self-abnegation” by making statements denying the existence of a Jewish identity; another advised Jews to adopt a low profile. Because of the very strong identification with the system among Jews, the general tendency was to rationalize even their own persecution during the period when Jews were gradually being purged from important positions: “Even when the methods grew surprisingly painful and harsh, when the goal of forcing one to admit uncommitted crimes and to frame others became clear, and when the perception of being unjustly treated by methods that contradicted communist ethos came forth, the basic ideological convictions stayed untouched. Thus the holy madness triumphed, even in the prison cells” (p. 260). In the end, an important ingredient in the anti-Jewish campaign of the 1960s was the assertion that the communist Jews of the generation opposed the Soviet Union’s Mideast policy favoring the Arabs.

As with Jewish groups throughout the ages (see *PTSDA*, Ch. 3), the anti-Jewish purges did not result in their abandoning their group commitment even when it resulted in unjust persecutions. Instead, it resulted in increased commitment, “unswerving ideological discipline, and obedience to the point of self-deception. . . . They regarded the party as the collective personification of

the progressive forces of history and, regarding themselves as its servants, expressed a specific kind of teleological-deductive dogmatism, revolutionary haughtiness, and moral ambiguity” (pp. 260–261). Indeed, there is some indication that group cohesiveness increased as the fortunes of the generation declined (p. 301). As their position was gradually eroded by a nascent anti-Semitic Polish nationalism, they became ever more conscious of their “groupness.” After their final defeat they quickly lost any Polish identity they might have had and quickly assumed overtly Jewish identities, especially in Israel, the destination of most Polish Jews. They came to see their former anti-Zionism as a mistake and became now strong supporters of Israel (p. 314).

In conclusion, Schatz’s treatment shows that the generation of Jewish communists and their ethnically Jewish supporters must be considered as an historic Jewish group. The evidence indicates that this group pursued specifically Jewish interests, including especially their interest in securing Jewish group continuity in Poland while at the same time attempting to destroy institutions like the Catholic Church and other manifestations of Polish nationalism that promoted social cohesion among Poles. The communist government also combated anti-Semitism, and it promoted Jewish economic and political interests. While the extent of subjective Jewish identity among this group undoubtedly varied, the evidence indicates submerged and self-deceptive levels of Jewish identity even among the most assimilated of them. The entire episode illustrates the complexity of Jewish identification, and it exemplifies the importance of self-deception and rationalization as central aspects of Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy (see *SAID*, Chs. 7, 8). There was massive self-deception and rationalization regarding the role of the Jewish-dominated government and its Jewish supporters in eliminating gentile nationalist elites, of its role in opposing Polish national culture and the Catholic Church while building up a secular Jewish culture, of its role as the agent of Soviet domination of Poland, and of its own economic success while administering an economy that harnessed the economy of Poland to meet Soviet interests and demanded hardship and sacrifices from the rest of the people.

### **Radicalism and Jewish Identification in the United States and England**

From the origins of the movement in the late nineteenth century, a strong sense of Jewish identification also characterized American Jewish radicals (e.g., the Union of Hebrew Trades and the Jewish Socialist Federation; see Levin 1977; Liebman 1979). In Sorin’s (1985) study of Jewish radicals who immigrated to the United States early in the twentieth century, only 7 percent were hostile to any form of Jewish separatism. Over 70 percent “were imbued with positive Jewish consciousness. The great majority were significantly caught up in a web of overlapping institutions, affiliations, and Jewish social formations” (p. 119). Moreover, “at the very most” 26 of 95 radicals were in Sorin’s “hostile, ambivalent, or assimilationist” categories, but “in some if not



all of the cases, these were persons struggling, often creatively, to synthesize new identities” (p. 115). A major theme of this chapter is that a great many avowedly “de-racinated” Jewish radicals had self-deceptive images of their lack of Jewish identification.

The following comment about a very prominent American Jewish radical, Emma Goldman, illustrates the general trend:

The pages of the magazine *Mother Earth* that Emma Goldman edited from 1906 to 1917 are filled with Yiddish stories, tales from the Talmud, and translations of Morris Rosenfeld’s poetry. Moreover, her commitment to anarchism did not divert her from speaking and writing, openly and frequently, about the *particular* burdens Jews faced in a world in which antisemitism was a living enemy. Apparently, Emma Goldman’s faith in anarchism, with its emphasis on *universalism*, did not result from and was not dependent on a casting off of Jewish identity. (Sorin 1985, 8; italics in text)

Twentieth-century American Jewish radicalism was a specifically Jewish subculture, or “contraculture” to use Arthur Liebman’s (1979, 37) term. The American Jewish left never removed itself from the wider Jewish community, and, indeed, membership of Jews in the movement fluctuated depending on whether these movements clashed with specifically Jewish interests.<sup>9</sup>

Fundamentally, the Jewish Old Left, including the unions, the leftist press, and the leftist fraternal orders (which were often associated with a synagogue [Liebman 1979, 284]), were part of the wider Jewish community, and when the Jewish working class declined, specifically Jewish concerns and identity gained increasing prominence as the importance of radical political beliefs declined. This tendency for Jewish members of leftist organizations to concern themselves with specifically Jewish affairs increased after 1930 primarily because of recurring gaps between specific Jewish interests and universalist leftist causes at that time. This phenomenon occurred within the entire spectrum of leftist organizations, including organizations such as the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, whose membership also included gentiles (Liebman 1979, 267ff).

Jewish separatism in leftist movements was facilitated by a very traditional aspect of Jewish separatism—the use of an ingroup language. Yiddish eventually became highly valued for its unifying effect on the Jewish labor movement and its ability to cement ties to the wider Jewish community (Levin 1977, 210; Liebman 1979, 259–260). “The *landsmanshaften* [Jewish social clubs], the Yiddish press and theatre, East Side socialist cafés, literary societies and *fereyns*, which were so much a part of Jewish socialist culture, created an unmistakable Jewish milieu, which the shop, union, or Socialist party could not possibly duplicate. Even the class enemy—the Jewish employer—spoke Yiddish” (Levin 1977, 210).

Indeed, the socialist educational program of the Workman’s Circle (the largest Jewish labor fraternal order in the early twentieth century) failed at first (prior to 1916) because of the absence of Yiddish and Jewish content: “Even radical Jewish parents wanted their children to learn Yiddish and know

something about their people” (Liebman 1979, 292). These schools succeeded when they began including a Jewish curriculum with a stress on Jewish peoplehood. They persisted through the 1940s as Jewish schools with a socialist ideology which stressed the idea that a concern for social justice was the key to Jewish survival in the modern world. Clearly, socialism and liberal politics had become a form of secular Judaism. The organization had been transformed over its history “from a radical labor fraternal order with Jewish members into a Jewish fraternal order with liberal sentiments and a socialist heritage” (Liebman 1979, 295).

Similarly, the communist-oriented Jewish subculture, including organizations such as the International Workers Order (IWO), included Yiddish-speaking sections. One such section, the Jewish Peoples Fraternal Order (JPFO), was an affiliate of the American Jewish Congress (AJCongress) and was listed as a subversive organization by the U.S. Attorney General. The JPFO had 50,000 members and was the financial and organizational “bulwark” of the CPUSA after World War II; it also provided critical funding for the *Daily Worker* and the *Morning Freiheit* (Svonkin 1997, 166). Consistent with the present emphasis on the compatibility of communism-radicalism and Jewish identity, it funded children’s educational programs that promulgated a strong relationship between Jewish identity and radical concerns. The IWO Yiddish schools and summer camps, which continued into the 1960s, stressed Jewish culture and even reinterpreted Marxism not as a theory of class struggle but as a theory of struggle for Jewish freedom from oppression. Although the AJCongress eventually severed its ties with the JPFO during the cold war period and stated that communism was a threat, it was “at best a reluctant and unenthusiastic participant” (Svonkin 1997, 132) in the Jewish effort to develop a public image of anti-communism—a position reflecting the sympathies of many among its predominantly second- and third-generation Eastern European immigrant membership.

David Horowitz (1997, 42) describes the world of his parents who had joined a “shul” run by the CPUSA in which Jewish holidays were given a political interpretation. Psychologically these people might as well have been in eighteenth-century Poland:

What my parents had done in joining the Communist Party and moving to Sunnyside was to return to the ghetto. There was the same shared private language, the same hermetically sealed universe, the same dual posturing revealing one face to the outer world and another to the tribe. More importantly, there was the same conviction of being marked for persecution and specially ordained, the sense of moral superiority toward the stronger and more numerous *goyim* outside. And there was the same fear of expulsion for heretical thoughts, which was the fear that riveted the chosen to the faith.

A strong sense of Jewish peoplehood was also characteristic of the leftist Yiddish press. Thus a letter writer to the radical *Jewish Daily Forward* complained that his nonreligious parents were upset because he wanted to marry a non-Jew. “He wrote to the *Forward* on the presumption that he would find

sympathy, only to discover that the socialist and freethinking editors of the paper insisted . . . that it was imperative that he marry a Jew and that he continue to identify with the Jewish community. . . . [T]hose who read the *Forward* knew that the commitment of Jews to remain Jewish was beyond question and discussion” (Hertzberg 1989, 211–212). The *Forward* had the largest circulation of any Jewish periodical in the world into the 1930s and maintained close ties to the Socialist Party.

Werner Cohn (1958, 621) describes the general milieu of the immigrant Jewish community from 1886 to 1920 as “one big radical debating society”:

By 1886 the Jewish community in New York had become conspicuous for its support of the third-party (United Labor) candidacy of Henry George, the theoretician of the Single Tax. From then on Jewish districts in New York and elsewhere were famous for their radical voting habits. The Lower East Side repeatedly picked as its congressman Meyer London, the only New York Socialist ever to be elected to Congress. And many Socialists went to the State Assembly in Albany from Jewish districts. In the 1917 mayoralty campaign in New York City, the Socialist and anti-war candidacy of Morris Hillquit was supported by the most authoritative voices of the Jewish Lower East Side: The United Hebrew Trades, the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union, and most importantly, the very popular Yiddish *Daily Forward*. This was the period in which extreme radicals—like Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman—were giants in the Jewish community, and when almost all the Jewish giants—among them Abraham Cahan, Morris Hillquit, and the young Morris R. Cohen—were radicals. Even Samuel Gompers, when speaking before Jewish audiences, felt it necessary to use radical phrases.

In addition, *The Freiheit*, which was an unofficial organ of the Communist Party from the 1920s to the 1950s, “stood at the center of Yiddish proletarian institutions and subculture . . . [which offered] identity, meaning, friendship, and understanding” (Liebman 1979, 349–350). The newspaper lost considerable support in the Jewish community in 1929 when it took the Communist Party position in opposition to Zionism, and by the 1950s it essentially had to choose between satisfying its Jewish soul or its status as a communist organ. Choosing the former, by the late 1960s it was justifying not returning the Israeli-occupied territories in opposition to the line of the CPUSA.

The relationship of Jews and the CPUSA is particularly interesting because the party often adopted anti-Jewish positions, especially because of its close association with the Soviet Union. Beginning in the late 1920s Jews played a very prominent role in the CPUSA (Klehr 1978, 37ff). Merely citing percentages of Jewish leaders does not adequately indicate the extent of Jewish influence, however, because it fails to take account of the personal characteristics of Jewish radicals as a talented, educated and ambitious group (see pp. 5, 95–96), but also because efforts were made to recruit gentiles as “window dressing” to conceal the extent of Jewish dominance (Klehr 1978, 40; Rothman & Lichter 1982, 99). Lyons (1982, 81) quotes a gentile Communist who said that many working-class gentiles felt that they were recruited in order to

“diversify the Party’s ethnic composition.” The informant recounts his experience as a gentile representative at a communist-sponsored youth conference:

It became increasingly apparent to most participants that virtually all of the speakers were Jewish New Yorkers. Speakers with thick New York accents would identify themselves as “the delegate from the Lower East Side” or “the comrade from Brownsville.” Finally the national leadership called a recess to discuss what was becoming an embarrassment. How could a supposedly national student organization be so totally dominated by New York Jews? Finally, they resolved to intervene and remedy the situation by asking the New York caucus to give “out-of-towners” a chance to speak. The convention was held in Wisconsin.

Klehr (1978, 40) estimates that from 1921 to 1961, Jews constituted 33.5 percent of the Central Committee members, and the representation of Jews was often above 40 percent (Klehr 1978, 46). Jews were the only native-born ethnic group from which the party was able to recruit. Glazer (1969, 129) states that at least half of the CPUSA membership of around 50,000 were Jews into the 1950s and that the rate of turnover was very high; thus perhaps ten times that number of individuals were involved in the party and there were “an equal or larger number who were Socialists of one kind or another.” Writing of the 1920s, Buhle (1980, 89) notes that “most of those favorable to the party and the *Freiheit* simply did not join—no more than a few thousand out of a following of a hundred times that large.”

Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, who were convicted of spying for the Soviet Union, exemplify the powerful sense of Jewish identification among many Jews on the left. Svonkin (1997, 158) shows that they viewed themselves as Jewish martyrs. Like many other Jewish leftists, they perceived a strong link between Judaism and their communist sympathies. Their prison correspondence, in the words of one reviewer, was filled with a “continual display of Judaism and Jewishness,” including the comment that “in a couple of days, the Passover celebration of our people’s search for freedom will be here. This cultural heritage has an added meaning for us, who are imprisoned away from each other and our loved ones by the modern Pharaohs” (pp. 158–159). (Embarrassed by the self-perceptions of the Rosenbergs as Jewish martyrs, the Anti-Defamation League [ADL] interpreted Julius Rosenberg’s professions of Jewishness as an attempt to obtain “every possible shred of advantage from the faith that he had repudiated” [Svonkin 1997, 159]—another example of the many revisionist attempts, some recounted in this chapter, to render incompatible Jewish identification and political radicalism and thus completely obscure an important chapter of Jewish history.)

As in the case of the Soviet Union in the early years, the CPUSA had separate sections for different ethnic groups, including a Yiddish-speaking Jewish Federation.<sup>10</sup> When these were abolished in 1925 in the interests of developing a party that would appeal to native Americans (who tended to have a low level of ethnic consciousness), there was a mass exodus of Jews from the

party, and many of those who remained continued to participate in an unofficial Yiddish subculture within the party.

In the following years Jewish support for the CPUSA rose and fell depending on party support for specific Jewish issues. During the 1930s the CPUSA changed its position and took great pains to appeal to specific Jewish interests, including a primary focus against anti-Semitism, supporting Zionism and eventually Israel, and advocating the importance of maintaining Jewish cultural traditions. As in Poland during this period, “The American radical movement glorified the development of Jewish life in the Soviet Union. . . . The Soviet Union was living proof that under socialism the Jewish question could be solved” (Kann 1981, 152–153). Communism was thus perceived as “good for Jews.” Despite temporary problems caused by the Soviet-German nonaggression pact of 1939, the result was an end to the CPUSA’s isolation from the Jewish community during World War II and the immediate postwar years.

Interestingly, the Jews who remained within the party during the period of the nonaggression pact faced a difficult conflict between divided loyalties, indicating that Jewish identity was still important to these individuals. The nonaggression pact provoked a great deal of rationalization on the part of Jewish CPUSA members, often involving an attempt to interpret the Soviet Union’s actions as actually benefiting Jewish interests—clearly an indication that these individuals had not given up their Jewish identities.<sup>11</sup> Others continued to be members but silently opposed the party’s line because of their Jewish loyalties. Of great concern for all of these individuals was that the nonaggression pact was destroying their relationship with the wider Jewish community.

At the time of the creation of Israel in 1948, part of the CPUSA’s appeal to Jews was due to its support for Israel at a time when Truman was waffling on the issue. In 1946 the CPUSA even adopted a resolution advocating the continuation of the Jewish people as an ethnic entity within socialist societies. Arthur Liebman describes CPUSA members during the period as being elated because of the congruity of their Jewish interests and membership in the party. Feelings of commonality with the wider Jewish community were expressed, and there was an enhanced feeling of Jewishness resulting from interactions with other Jews within the CPUSA: During the postwar period “Communist Jews were expected and encouraged to be Jews, to relate to Jews, and to think of the Jewish people and the Jewish culture in a positive light. At the same time, non-Communist Jews, with some notable exceptions [in the non-communist Jewish left] . . . accepted their Jewish credentials and agreed to work with them in an all-Jewish context” (Liebman 1979, 514). As has happened so often in Jewish history, this upsurge in Jewish self-identity was facilitated by the persecution of Jews, in this case the Holocaust.

This period of easy compatibility of Jewish interests with CPUSA interests evaporated after 1948, especially because of the altered Soviet position on Israel and revelations of state-sponsored anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union

and Eastern Europe. Many Jews abandoned the CPUSA as a result. Once again, those who remained in the CPUSA tended to rationalize Soviet anti-Semitism in a way that allowed them to maintain their Jewish identification. Some viewed the persecutions as an aberration and the result of individual pathology rather than the fault of the communist system itself. Or the West was blamed as being indirectly responsible. Moreover, the reasons for remaining in the CPUSA appear to have typically involved a desire to remain in the self-contained Yiddish communist subculture. Liebman (1979, 522) describes an individual who finally resigned when the evidence on Soviet anti-Semitism became overwhelming: "In 1958, after more than 25 years with the Communist party, this leader resigned and developed a strong Jewish identity which encompassed a fierce loyalty to Israel." Alternatively, Jewish CPUSA members simply failed to adopt the Soviet party line, as occurred on the issue of support for Israel during the 1967 and 1973 wars. Eventually, there was virtually a complete severing of Jews from the CPUSA.

Lyons's (1982, 180) description of a Jewish-Communist club in Philadelphia reveals the ambivalence and self-deception that occurred when Jewish interests clashed with communist sympathies:

The club . . . faced rising tension over Jewishness, especially as it related to Israel. In the mid-sixties conflict erupted over the club's decision to criticize Soviet treatment of Jews. Some orthodox pro-Soviet club members resigned; others disagreed but stayed. Meanwhile the club continued to change, becoming less Marxist and more Zionist. During the 1967 Middle East War, "we got dogmatic, for one week," as Ben Green, a club leader, puts it. They allowed no discussion on the merits of supporting Israel, but simply raised funds to show their full support. Nevertheless, several members insist that the club is not Zionist and engages in "critical support" of Israel.

As in the case of Poland, there is every reason to suppose that American Jewish Communists regarded the USSR as generally satisfying Jewish interests at least until well into the post-World War II era. Beginning in the 1920s the CPUSA was financially supported by the Soviet Union, adhered closely to its positions, and engaged in a successful espionage effort against the United States on behalf of the Soviet Union, including stealing atomic secrets (Klehr, Haynes & Firsov 1995).<sup>12</sup> In the 1930s Jews "constituted a substantial majority of known members of the Soviet underground in the United States" and almost half of the individuals prosecuted under the Smith Act of 1947 (Rothman & Lichter 1982, 100).

Although all party functionaries may not have known the details of the special relationship with the Soviet Union, 'special work' [i.e., espionage] was part and parcel of the Communist mission in the United States, and this was well known and discussed openly in the CPUSA's Political Bureau. . . . [I]t was these ordinary Communists whose lives demonstrate that some rank-and-file members were willing to serve the USSR by spying on their own country. There but for the grace of not being asked went other American Communists. The CPUSA showered hosannas on the USSR as the promised land. In Communist propaganda the survival of the Soviet Union as the one

bright, shining star of humankind was a constant refrain, as in the 1934 American Communist poem that described the Soviet Union as “a heaven . . . brought to earth in Russia.” (Klehr et al. 1995, 324)

Klehr et al. (1995, 325) suggest that the CPUSA had important effects on U.S. history. Without excusing the excesses of the anti-communist movement, they note that “the peculiar and particular edge to American anticommunism cannot be severed from the CPUSA’s allegiance to the Soviet Union; the belief that American communists were disloyal is what made the communist issue so powerful and at times poisonous.”

Communists lied to and deceived the New Dealers with whom they were allied. Those liberals who believed the denials then denounced as mudslingers those anti-Communists who complained of concealed Communist activity. Furious at denials of what they knew to be true, anti-Communists then suspected that those who denied the Communist presence were themselves dishonest. The Communists’ duplicity poisoned normal political relationships and contributed to the harshness of the anti-Communist reaction of the late 1940s and 1950s. (Klehr et al. 1995, 106)

The liberal defense of communism during the Cold War era also raises issues related to this volume. Nicholas von Hoffman (1996) notes the role of the liberal defenders of communism during this period, such as the editors of *The New Republic* and Harvard historian Richard Hofstadter (1965) who attributed the contemporary concern with communist infiltration of the U.S. government to the “paranoid style of American politics.” (Rothman and Lichter [1982, 105] include *The New Republic* as among a group of liberal and radical publications with a large presence of Jewish writers and editors.) The official liberal version was that American Communists were *sui generis* and unconnected to the Soviet Union, so there was no domestic communist threat. The liberals had seized the intellectual and moral high ground during this period. Supporters of McCarthy were viewed as intellectual and cultural primitives: “In the ongoing *kulturkampf* dividing the society, the elites of Hollywood, Cambridge and liberal thank-tankery had little sympathy for bow-legged men with their American Legion caps and their fat wives, their yapping about Yalta and the Katyn Forest. Catholic and kitsch, looking out of their picture windows at their flock of pink plastic flamingos, the lower middles and their foreign policy anguish were too *infra dig* to be taken seriously” (von Hoffman 1996, C2).

However, besides poisoning the atmosphere of domestic politics, communist espionage had effects on foreign policy as well:

It is difficult to overstate the importance of Soviet atomic espionage in shaping the history of the Cold War. World War II had ended with Americans confident that the atomic bomb gave them a monopoly on the ultimate weapon, a monopoly expected to last ten to twenty years. The Soviet explosion of a nuclear bomb in 1949 destroyed this sense of physical security. America had fought in two world wars without suffering

serious civilian deaths or destruction. Now it faced an enemy led by a ruthless dictator who could wipe out any American city with a single bomb.

Had the American nuclear monopoly lasted longer, Stalin might have refused to allow North Korean Communists to launch the Korean War, or the Chinese Communists might have hesitated to intervene in the war. Had the American nuclear monopoly lasted until Stalin's death, the restraint on Soviet aggressiveness might have alleviated the most dangerous years of the Cold War. (Klehr et al. 1995, 106)

The Jewish “contraculture” continued to sustain a radical, specifically Jewish subculture into the 1950s—long after the great majority of Jews were no longer in the working class (Liebman 1979, 206, 289ff). The fundamentally Jewish institutions and families that constituted the Old Left then fed into the New Left (Liebman 1979, 536ff). The original impetus of the 1960s student protest movement “almost necessarily began with the scions of the relatively well-to-do, liberal-to-left, disproportionately Jewish intelligentsia—the largest pool of those ideologically disposed to sympathize with radical student action in the population” (Lipset 1971, 83; see also Glazer 1969). Flacks (1967, 64) found that 45 percent of students involved in a protest at the University of Chicago were Jewish, but his original sample was “‘adjusted’ to obtain better balance” (Rothman & Lichter 1982, 82). Jews constituted 80 percent of the students signing a petition to end ROTC at Harvard and 30–50 percent of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)—the central organization of student radicals. Adelson (1972) found that 90 percent of his sample of radical students at the University of Michigan were Jewish, and it would appear that a similar rate of participation is likely to have occurred at other schools, such as Wisconsin and Minnesota.<sup>13</sup> Braungart (1979) found that 43 percent of the SDS membership in his sample of ten universities had at least one Jewish parent and an additional 20 percent had no religious affiliation. The latter are most likely to be predominantly Jewish: Rothman and Lichter (1982, 82) found that the “overwhelming majority” of the radical students who claimed that their parents were atheists had Jewish backgrounds.

Jews also tended to be the most publicized leaders of campus protests (Sachar 1992, 804). Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, and Rennie Davis achieved national fame as members of the “Chicago Seven” group convicted of crossing state lines with intent to incite a riot at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. Cuddihy (1974, 193ff) notes the overtly ethnic subplot of the trial, particularly the infighting between defendant Abbie Hoffman and Judge Julius Hoffman, the former representing the children of the Eastern European immigrant generation that tended toward political radicalism, and the latter representing the older, more assimilated German-Jewish establishment. During the trial Abbie Hoffman ridiculed Judge Hoffman in Yiddish as “Shande fur de Goyim” (disgrace for the gentiles)—translated by Abbie Hoffman as “Front man for the WASP power elite.” Clearly Hoffman and Rubin (who spent time on a Kibbutz in Israel) had strong Jewish identifications and antipathy to the white Protestant establishment. Cuddihy (1974, 191–192) also credits the origins of the Yippie movement to the activities of the underground journalist



Paul Krassner (publisher of *The Realist*, a “daring, scatological, curiously apolitical” journal of “irreverent satire and impolite reportage”) and the countercultural sensibility of comedian Lenny Bruce.

As a group, radical students came from relatively well-to-do families, whereas conservative students tended to come from less affluent families (Gottfried 1993, 53).<sup>14</sup> The movement was therefore initiated and led by an elite, but it was not aimed at advancing the interests of the unionized lower middle class. Indeed, the New Left regarded the working class as “fat, contented, and conservative, and their trade unions reflected them” (Glazer 1969, 123).

Moreover, although mild forms of Jewish anti-Semitism and rebellion against parental hypocrisy did occur among Jewish New Left radicals, the predominant pattern was a continuity with parental ideology (Flacks 1967; Glazer 1969, 12; Lipset 1988, 393; Rothman & Lichter 1982, 82). (Similarly, during the Weimar period the Frankfurt School radicals rejected their parents’ commercial values but did not personally reject their family. Indeed, their families tended to provide moral and financial support for them in their radical political activities [Cuddihy 1974, 154].) Many of these “red diaper babies” came from “families which around the breakfast table, day after day, in Scarsdale, Newton, Great Neck, and Beverly Hills have discussed what an awful, corrupt, immoral, undemocratic, racist society the United States is. Many Jewish parents live in the lily-white suburbs, go to Miami Beach in the winter, belong to expensive country clubs, arrange Bar Mitzvahs costing thousands of dollars—all the while espousing a left-liberal ideology” (Lipset 1988, 393). As indicated above, Glazer (1969) estimates that approximately 1 million Jews were members of the CPUSA or were socialists prior to 1950. The result was that among Jews there was “a substantial reservoir of present-day parents for whose children to be radical is not something shocking and strange but may well be seen as a means of fulfilling the best drives of their parents” (Glazer 1969, 129).

Moreover, the “American Jewish establishment never really distanced itself from these young Jews” (Hertzberg 1989, 369). Indeed, establishment Jewish organizations, including the AJCongress, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (a lay Reform group), and the Synagogue Council of America (Winston 1978), were prominent early opponents of the war in Vietnam. The anti-war attitudes of official Jewish organizations may have resulted in some anti-Semitism. President Lyndon Johnson was reported to be “disturbed by the lack of support for the Vietnam war in the American Jewish community at a time when he is taking new steps to aid Israel” (in Winston 1978, 198), and the ADL took steps to deal with an anti-Jewish backlash they expected to occur as a result of Jews tending to be hawks on military matters related to Israel and doves on military matters related to Vietnam (Winston 1978).

As with the Old Left, many of the Jewish New Left strongly identified as Jews (Liebman 1979, 536ff). Chanukah services were held and the “Hatikvah” (the Israeli national anthem) was sung during an important sit-in at Berkeley

(Rothman & Lichter 1982, 81). The New Left lost Jewish members when it advocated positions incompatible with specific Jewish interests (especially regarding Israel) and attracted members when its positions coincided with these interests (Liebman 1979, 527ff). Leaders often spent time at Kibbutzim in Israel, and there is some indication that New Leftists consciously attempted to minimize the more overt signs of Jewish identity and to minimize discussion of issues on which Jewish and non-Jewish New Leftists would disagree, particularly Israel. Eventually the incompatibility of Jewish interests and the New Left resulted in most Jews abandoning the New Left, with many going to Israel to join kibbutzim, becoming involved in more traditional Jewish religious observances, or becoming involved in leftist organizations with a specifically Jewish identity. After the 1967 Six-Day War, the most important issue for the Jewish New Left was Israel, but the movement also worked on behalf of Soviet Jews and demanded Jewish studies programs at universities (Shapiro 1992, 225). As SDS activist, Jay Rosenberg, wrote, "From this point on I shall join no movement that does not accept and support my people's struggle. If I must choose between the Jewish cause and a 'progressive' anti-Israel SDS, I shall choose the Jewish cause. If barricades are erected, I will fight as a Jew" (in Sachar 1992, 808).

Jews were also a critical component of the public acceptance of the New Left. Jews were overrepresented among radicals and their supporters in the media, the university, and the wider intellectual community, and Jewish leftist social scientists were instrumental in conducting research that portrayed student radicalism in a positive light (Rothman & Lichter 1982, 104). However, in their recent review of the literature on the New Left, Rothman and Lichter (1996, ix, xiii) note a continuing tendency to ignore the role of Jews in the movement and that when the Jewish role is mentioned, it is attributed to Jewish idealism or other positively valued traits. Cuddihy (1974, 194n) notes that the media almost completely ignored the Jewish infighting that occurred during the Chicago Seven trial. He also describes several evaluations of the trial written by Jews in the media (*New York Times*, *New York Post*, *Village Voice*) that excused the behavior of the defendants and praised their radical Jewish lawyer, William Kunstler.

Finally, a similar ebb and flow of Jewish attraction to communism depending on its convergence with specifically Jewish interests occurred also in England. During the 1930s the Communist Party appealed to Jews partly because it was the only political movement that was stridently anti-fascist. There was no conflict at all between a strong Jewish ethnic identity and being a member of the Communist Party: "Communist sympathy among Jews of that generation had about it some of the qualities of a group identification, a means, perhaps, of ethnic self-assertion" (Alderman 1992, 317–318). In the post-World War II period, virtually all the successful communist political candidates represented Jewish wards. However, Jewish support for communism declined with the revelation of Stalin's anti-Semitism, and many Jews

left the Communist Party after the Middle East crisis of 1967 when the USSR broke off diplomatic relations with Israel (Alderman 1983, 162).

The conclusion must be that Jewish identity was generally perceived to be highly compatible with radical politics. When radical politics came in conflict with specific Jewish interests, Jews eventually ceased being radical, although there were often instances of ambivalence and rationalization.

### **SOCIAL IDENTITY PROCESSES, PERCEIVED JEWISH GROUP INTERESTS, AND JEWISH RADICALISM**

One view of Jewish radicalism emphasizes the moral basis of Judaism. This is yet another example of the attempt to portray Judaism as a universalist, morally superior movement—the “light of the nations” theme that has repeatedly emerged as an aspect of Jewish self-identity since antiquity and especially since the Enlightenment (*SAID*, Ch. 7). Thus Fuchs (1956, 190–191) suggests that the Jewish involvement in liberal causes stems from the unique moral nature of Judaism in inculcating charity towards the poor and needy. Involvement in these causes is viewed as simply an extension of traditional Jewish religious practices. Similarly, Hertzberg (1985, 22) writes of “the echo of a unique moral sensibility, a willingness to act in disregard of economic interest when the cause seems just.”

As indicated in *PTSDA* (Chs. 5, 6), there is every indication that traditional Jewish concern for the poor and needy was confined within Jewish groups, and in fact Jews have often served oppressive ruling elites in traditional societies and in post–World War II Eastern Europe.<sup>15</sup> Ginsberg (1993, 140) describes these putative humanistic motivations as “a bit fanciful,” and notes that in different contexts (notably in the postrevolutionary Soviet Union) Jews have organized “ruthless agencies of coercion and terror,” including especially a very prominent involvement in the Soviet secret police from the postrevolutionary period into the 1930s (see also Baron 1975, 170; Lincoln 1989; Rapoport 1990, 30–31). Similarly, we have seen that Jews were very prominent in the domestic security forces in Poland (see Schatz 1991, 223–228) and Hungary (Rothman & Lichter 1982, 89).

Pipes (1993, 112) theorizes that although it is “undeniable” that Jews were overrepresented in the Bolshevik party and the early Soviet government as well as communist revolutionary activities in Hungary, Germany, and Austria in the period from 1918 to 1923, Jews were also overrepresented in a variety of other areas, including business, art, literature, and science. As a result, Pipes argues that their disproportionate representation in communist political movements should not be an issue. Pipes couples this argument with the assertion that Jewish Bolsheviks did not identify as Jews—an issue that, as we have seen, is questionable at best.

However, even assuming that these ethnically Jewish communists did not identify as Jews, such an argument fails to explain why such “de-ethnicized” Jews (as well as Jewish businessmen, artists, writers and scientists) should

have typically been overrepresented in leftist movements and underrepresented in nationalist, populist, and other types of rightist political movements:<sup>16</sup> Even if nationalist movements are anti-Semitic, as has often been the case, anti-Semitism should be irrelevant if these individuals are indeed completely deethnicized as Pipes proposes. Jewish prominence in occupations requiring high intelligence is no argument for understanding their very prominent role in communist and other leftist movements and their relative underrepresentation in nationalist movements.

Social identity theory provides a quite different perspective on Jewish radicalism. It stresses that perceived Jewish group interests are fundamental to Jewish political behavior, and that these perceived group interests are importantly influenced by social identity processes. If indeed radical politics resulted in a strong sense of identification with a Jewish ingroup, then Jewish involvement in these movements would be associated with very negative and exaggerated conceptions of the wider gentile society, and particularly the most powerful elements of that society, as an outgroup. In conformity with this expectation, Liebman (1979, 26) uses the term “contraculture” to describe the American Jewish left because “conflict with or antagonism toward society is a central feature of this subculture and . . . many of its values and cultural patterns are contradictions of those existing in the surrounding society.” For example, the New Left was fundamentally involved in radical social criticism in which all elements that contributed to the cohesive social fabric of mid-century America were regarded as oppressive and in need of radical alteration.

The emphasis here on social identity processes is compatible with Jewish radicalism serving particular perceived Jewish group interests. Anti-Semitism and Jewish economic interests were undoubtedly important motivating factors for Jewish leftism in czarist Russia. Jewish leaders in Western societies, many of whom were wealthy capitalists, proudly acknowledged Jewish overrepresentation in the Russian revolutionary movement; they also provided financial and political support for these movements by, for example, attempting to influence U.S. foreign policy (Szajkowski 1967). Representative of this attitude is financier Jacob Schiff’s statement that “the claim that among the ranks of those who in Russia are seeking to undermine governmental authority there are a considerable number of Jews may perhaps be true. In fact, it would be rather surprising if some of those so terribly afflicted by persecution and exceptional laws should not at last have turned against their merciless oppressors” (in Szajkowski 1967, 10).

Indeed, at the risk of oversimplification, one might note that anti-Semitism and economic adversity combined with the Jewish demographic explosion in Eastern Europe were of critical importance for producing the sheer numbers of disaffected Jewish radicals and therefore the ultimate influence of Jewish radicalism in Europe and its spillover into the United States. Jewish populations in Eastern Europe had the highest rate of natural increase of any European population in the nineteenth century, with a natural increase of 120,000 per year in the 1880s and an overall increase within the Russian Empire from

1 to 6 million in the course of the nineteenth century (Alderman 1992, 112; Frankel 1981, 103; Lindemann 1991, 28–29, 133–135). Despite the emigration of close to 2 million Jews to the United States and elsewhere, many Eastern European Jews were impoverished at least in part because of czarist anti-Jewish policies that prevented Jewish upward mobility.

As a result, a great many Jews were attracted to radical political solutions that would transform the economic and political basis of society and would also be consistent with the continuity of Judaism. Within Russian Jewish communities, the acceptance of radical political ideology often coexisted with messianic forms of Zionism as well as intense commitment to Jewish nationalism and religious and cultural separatism, and many individuals held various and often rapidly changing combinations of these ideas (see Frankel 1981).

Religious fanaticism and messianic expectations have been a typical Jewish response to anti-Semitic persecutions throughout history (e.g., Scholem 1971; *PTSDA*, Ch. 3). Indeed, one might propose that messianic forms of political radicalism may be viewed as secular forms of this Jewish response to persecution, different from traditional forms only in that they also promise a utopian future for gentiles as well. The overall picture is reminiscent of the situation in the late Ottoman Empire, where by the mid-eighteenth century until the intervention of the European powers in the twentieth century there was “an unmistakable picture of grinding poverty, ignorance, and insecurity” (Lewis 1984, 164) in the context of high levels of anti-Semitism that effectively prevented Jewish upward mobility. These phenomena were accompanied by the prevalence of mysticism and a high-fertility, low-investment parenting style among Jews. In the long run the community became too poor to provide for the education of most children, with the result that most were illiterate and pursued occupations requiring only limited intelligence and training.

However, when presented with opportunities for upward social mobility, the strategy quickly changes to a low-fertility, high-investment reproductive strategy. In nineteenth-century Germany, for example, the Jews were the first group to enter the demographic transition and take advantage of opportunities for upward social mobility by having fewer children (e.g., Goldstein 1981; Knode 1974). At the same time, poor Jews in Eastern Europe with no hope of upward mobility married earlier than their Western European counterparts, who delayed marriage in order to be financially better prepared (Efron 1994, 77). And the resurgence of Ottoman Jews in the nineteenth century resulting from patronage and protection from Western European Jews brought with it a flowering of a highly literate culture, including secular schools based on Western models (see Shaw 1991, 143ff, 175–176). Similarly, when the oppressed Eastern European Jews emigrated to the United States, they developed a high-investment, low-fertility culture that took advantage of opportunities for upward mobility. The suggestion is that the overall pattern of the Jewish response to lack of opportunity for upward mobility and anti-Semitism is to facultatively adopt a low-investment, high-fertility style of reproduction

combined at the ideological level with various forms of messianism, including, in the modern era, radical political ideology.

Ultimately this population explosion in the context of poverty and politically imposed restrictions on Jews was responsible for the generally destabilizing effects of Jewish radicalism on Russia up to the revolution. These conditions also had spill-over effects in Germany, where the negative attitudes toward the immigrant *Ostjuden* contributed to the anti-Semitism of the period (Aschheim 1982). In the United States, the point of this chapter is that a high level of inertia characterized the radical political beliefs held by a great many Jewish immigrants and their descendants in the sense that radical political beliefs persisted even in the absence of oppressive economic and political conditions. In Sorin's (1985, 46) study of immigrant Jewish radical activists in America, over half had been involved in radical politics in Europe before emigrating, and for those immigrating after 1900, the percentage rose to 69 percent. Glazer (1961, 21) notes that the biographies of almost all radical leaders show that they first came in contact with radical political ideas in Europe. The persistence of these beliefs influenced the general political sensibility of the Jewish community and had a destabilizing effect on American society, ranging from the paranoia of the McCarthy era to the triumph of the 1960s countercultural revolution.

The immigration of Eastern European Jews into England after 1880 had a similarly transformative effect on the political attitudes of British Jewry in the direction of socialism, trade-unionism, and Zionism, often combined with religious orthodoxy and devotion to a highly separatist traditional lifestyle (Alderman 1983, 47ff). "Far more significant than the handful of publicity-seeking Jewish socialists, both in Russia and England, who organized ham-sandwich picnics on the fast of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, were the mass of working-class Jews who experienced no inner conflict when they repaired to the synagogue for religious services three times each day, and then used the same premises to discuss socialist principles and organize industrial stoppages" (Alderman 1983, 54).<sup>17</sup> As in the United States, the immigrant Eastern European Jews demographically swamped the previously existing Jewish community, and the older community reacted to this influx with considerable trepidation because of the possibility of increased anti-Semitism. And as in the United States, attempts were made by the established Jewish community to misrepresent the prevalence of radical political ideas among the immigrants (Alderman 1983, 60; *SAID*, Ch. 8).

Nevertheless, economic interests are not the whole story. While the origin of widespread political radicalism among Jews can be characterized as a typical Jewish response to the political and economic adversity of late-nineteenth-century Eastern Europe, radical political ideology became dissociated from the usual demographic variables not long after arrival in the United States, and it is this phenomenon that requires another type of explanation. For the most part, American Jews had far less reason than other ethnic groups to wish for an overthrow of capitalism because they tended to be relatively

economically privileged. Surveys from the 1960s and 1970s indicated that middle-class Jews were more radical than working-class Jews—a pattern opposite to that of non-Jewish radical students (Rothman & Lichter 1982, 117, 219;<sup>18</sup> Levey 1996, 375<sup>19</sup>). Lower percentages of Jews than members of other religions believed that supporting a Democratic candidate would further their economic interests, but Jews nevertheless tended overwhelmingly to vote Democratic (Liebman 1973, 136–137).

The gap between economic interests and political ideology dates at least from the 1920s (Liebman 1979, 290ff). Indeed, for the entire period from 1921 to 1961, Jews on the Central Committee of the CPUSA were much more likely to have middle-class, professional backgrounds and tended to have more education than their gentile colleagues (Klehr 1978, 42ff). They were also much more likely to have joined prior to the economic difficulties of the Great Depression. Further, as indicated above, New Left radical students came disproportionately from highly educated and affluent families (see also Liebman 1973, 210).

Even successful Jewish capitalists have tended to adopt political beliefs to the left of the beliefs of their gentile counterparts. For example, German-Jewish capitalists in the nineteenth century “tended to take up positions distinctly to the ‘left’ of their Gentile peers and thus to place themselves in isolation from them” (Mosse 1989, 225). Although as a group they tended to be to the right of the Jewish population as a whole, a few even supported the Social Democratic Party and its socialist program. Among the plausible reasons for this state of affairs suggested by Mosse is that anti-Semitism tended to be associated with the German Right. Consistent with social identity theory, Jewish capitalists did not identify with groups that perceived them negatively and identified with groups that opposed an outgroup perceived as hostile. Social identity processes and their influence on perception of ethnic (group) interests rather than economic self-interest appears to be paramount here.

The association between Jews and liberal political attitudes is therefore independent of the usual demographic associations. In a passage that shows that Jewish cultural and ethnic estrangement supersedes economic interests in explaining Jewish political behavior, Silberman (1985, 347–348) comments on the attraction of Jews to “the Democratic party . . . with its traditional hospitality to non-WASP ethnic groups. . . . A distinguished economist who strongly disagreed with [presidential candidate Walter] Mondale’s economic policies voted for him nonetheless. ‘I watched the conventions on television,’ he explained, ‘and the Republicans did not look like my kind of people.’ That same reaction led many Jews to vote for Carter in 1980 despite their dislike of him; ‘I’d rather live in a country governed by the faces I saw at the Democratic convention than by those I saw at the Republican convention,’ a well-known author told me.”

The suggestion is that in general Jewish political motivation is influenced by non-economic issues related to perceived Jewish group interests, the latter

influenced by social identity processes. Similarly in the politically charged area of cultural attitudes, Silberman (1985, 350) notes “American Jews are committed to cultural tolerance because of their belief—one firmly rooted in history—that Jews are safe only in a society acceptant of a wide range of attitudes and behaviors, as well as a diversity of religious and ethnic groups. It is this belief, for example, not approval of homosexuality, that leads an overwhelming majority of American Jews to endorse ‘gay rights’ and to take a liberal stance on most other so-called ‘social’ issues.” A perceived Jewish group interest in cultural pluralism transcends negative personal attitudes regarding the behavior in question.

Silberman’s comment that Jewish attitudes are “firmly rooted in history” is particularly relevant: A consistent tendency has been for Jews to be persecuted as a minority group within a culturally or ethnically homogeneous society. A discussion of the political, religious, and cultural pluralism as a very rational motivation for American Jews will be highlighted in Chapter 7, which discusses Jewish involvement in shaping U.S. immigration policy. The point here is that the perceived Jewish group interest in developing a pluralistic society is of far more importance than mere economic self-interest in determining Jewish political behavior. Similarly Earl Raab (1996, 44) explains Jewish political behavior in terms of security issues related in part to a long memory of the Republican Party as linked to Christian fundamentalism and its history of being “resolutely nativist and anti-immigrant.” The pattern of supporting the Democratic Party is therefore an aspect of ethnic conflict between Jews and sectors of the European-derived Caucasian population in the United States, not economic issues. Indeed, economic issues appear to have no relevance at all, since support for the Democratic Party among Jews does not differ by social status (Raab 1996, 45).

Nevertheless, there is evidence that recent Jewish voting behavior increasingly separates the traditional economic left-liberalism from issues related to cultural pluralism, immigration, and church-state separation. Recent polls and data on Jewish voting patterns indicate that Jews continue to view the right wing of the Republican Party as “a threat to American cosmopolitanism” because it is perceived as advocating a homogeneous Christian culture and is opposed to immigration (Beinart 1997, 25). However, Jewish voters were more supportive of conservative fiscal policies and less supportive of government attempts to redistribute wealth than either African Americans or other white Americans. Recent Jewish political behavior is thus self-interested both economically and in its opposition to the ethnic interests of white Americans to develop an ethnically and culturally homogeneous society.

In addition to the pursuit of specific group interests, however, social identity processes appear to make an independent contribution to explaining Jewish political behavior. Social identity processes appear to be necessary for explaining why the Jewish labor movement was far more radical than the rest of the American labor movement. In a passage that indicates Jewish radicals’ profound sense of Jewish identity and separatism as well as complete antipa-



thy to the entire gentile social order, Levin (1977, 213) notes that “their socialist ideas . . . created a gulf between themselves and other American workers who were not interested in radical changes in the social order. Although Jewish trade unions joined the AFL, they never felt ideologically at home there, for the AFL did not seek a radical transformation of society, nor was it internationalist in outlook.” We have also noted that the New Left completely abandoned the aims and interests of the lower middle working class once that group had essentially achieved its social aims with the success of the trade union movement.

Again, there is the strong suggestion that social criticism and feelings of cultural estrangement among Jews have deep psychological roots that reach far beyond particular economic or political interests. As indicated in Chapter 1, one critical psychological component appears to involve a very deep antipathy to the entire gentile-dominated social order, which is viewed as anti-Semitic—the desire for “malignant vengeance” that Disraeli asserted made many Jews “odious and so hostile to mankind.” Recall Lipset’s (1988, 393) description of the many Jewish “families which around the breakfast table, day after day, in Scarsdale, Newton, Great Neck, and Beverly Hills have discussed what an awful, corrupt, immoral, undemocratic, racist society the United States is.” These families clearly perceive themselves as separate from the wider culture of the United States; they also view conservative forces as attempting to maintain this malignant culture. As in the case of traditional Judaism vis-à-vis gentile society, the traditional culture of the United States—and particularly the political basis of cultural conservatism that has historically been associated with anti-Semitism—is perceived as a manifestation of a negatively evaluated outgroup.

This antipathy toward gentile-dominated society was often accompanied by a powerful desire to avenge the evils of the old social order. For many Jewish New Leftists “the revolution promises to avenge the sufferings and to right the wrongs which have, for so long, been inflicted on Jews with the permission or encouragement, or even at the command of, the authorities in prerevolutionary societies” (Cohen 1980, 208). Interviews with New Left Jewish radicals revealed that many had destructive fantasies in which the revolution would result in “humiliation, dispossession, imprisonment or execution of the oppressors” (Cohen 1980, 208) combined with the belief in their own omnipotence and their ability to create a nonoppressive social order—findings that are reminiscent of the motivating role of revenge for anti-Semitism among the Jewish-dominated security forces in communist Poland discussed above. These findings are also entirely consistent with my experience among Jewish New Left activists at the University of Wisconsin in the 1960s (see note 13).

The social identity perspective predicts that generalized negative attributions of the outgroup would be accompanied by positive attributions regarding the Jewish ingroup. Both Jewish communists in Poland and Jewish New Left radicals had a powerful feeling of cultural superiority that was continuous with traditional Jewish conceptions of the superiority of their ingroup (Cohen

1980, 212; Schatz 1991, 119). Jewish self-conceptualizations of their activity in developing an adversarial culture in the United States tended to emphasize either the Jew as the historical victim of gentile anti-Semitism or the Jew as moral hero, but “in both cases the portrait is the obverse of that of the anti-Semite. Jews lack warts. Their motives are pure, their idealism genuine” (Rothman & Lichter 1982, 112). Studies of Jewish radicals by Jewish social scientists have tended to gratuitously attribute Jewish radicalism to a “free choice of a gifted minority” (Rothman & Lichter 1982, 118) when economic explanations failed—yet another example where Jewish group status appears to affect social science research in a manner that serves Jewish group interests.

Moreover, a universalist utopian ideology such as Marxism is an ideal vehicle for serving Jewish attempts to develop a positive self-identity while still retaining their positive identity as Jews and their negative evaluation of gentile power structures. First, the utopian nature of radical ideology in contrast to existing gentile-dominated social systems (which are inevitably less than perfect) facilitates development of a positive identity for the ingroup. Radical ideology thus facilitates positive group identity and a sense of moral rectitude because of its advocacy of universalist ethical principles. Psychologists have found that a sense of moral rectitude is an important component of self-esteem (e.g., Harter 1983), and self-esteem has been proposed as a motivating factor in social identity processes (*SAID*, Ch. 1).

As was also true of psychoanalysis, leftist political movements developed redemptive-messianic overtones highly conducive to ingroup pride and loyalty. Members of the Russian Jewish Bund and their progeny in the United States had intense personal pride and a powerful sense that they were “part of a moral and political vanguard for great historical change. They had a mission that inspired them and people who believed in them” (Liebman 1979, 133).

This sense of ingroup pride and messianic fervor is undoubtedly a critical ingredient of Judaism in all historical eras. As Schatz (1991, 105) notes in his description of the underground Jewish communist revolutionaries in Poland during the interwar period, “The movement was . . . part of a worldwide, international struggle for nothing less than the fundamental change of the very foundations of human society. The joint effect of this situation was a specific sense of revolutionary loneliness and mission, an intense cohesion, a feeling of brotherhood, and a readiness for personal sacrifice on the altar of struggle.” What distinguished Jewish communists from other communists was not only their desire for a postrevolutionary world without anti-Semitism, but also their “distinct [emotional] intensity with roots in messianic longings” (Schatz 1991, 140). As one respondent said, “I believed in Stalin and in the party as my father believed in the Messiah” (in Schatz 1991, 140).

Reflecting traditional Jewish social structure, these Jewish radical groups were hierarchical and highly authoritarian, and they developed their own private language (Schatz 1991, 109–112). As in traditional Judaism, continuing study and self-education were viewed as very important features of the movement: “To study was a point of honor and an obligation” (p. 117). The

discussions replicated the traditional methods of Torah study: memorization of long passages of text combined with analysis and interpretation carried out in an atmosphere of intense intellectual competition quite analogous to the traditional *pilpul*. In the words of a novice to these discussions, “We behaved like *yeshiva bukhers* [students] and they [the more experienced intellectual mentors] like rabbis” (p. 139).

As expected on the basis of social identity theory, there was also a high level of ingroup-outgroup thinking characterized by a lofty sense of moral rectitude among the ingroup combined with an implacable hostility and rejection of the outgroup. In the period after World War II, for example, the Polish-Jewish communists viewed the new economic plan “in truly mystical terms. [It was] a scientifically conceived, infallible scheme that would totally restructure societal relations and prepare the country for socialism” (Schatz 1991, 249). The economic difficulties that befell the population merely resulted in transferring their hopes to the future, while at the same time they developed “an uncompromising attitude toward those who might not be willing to accept the hardships of the present and a merciless hostility toward those perceived as the enemy. Thus the burning will to produce general harmony and happiness was married to distrust and suspiciousness regarding its objects and a hatred toward its actual, potential, or imagined opponents” (p. 250).

Clearly, to be a communist revolutionary was to develop an intense commitment to a cohesive authoritarian group that valued intellectual accomplishments and exhibited intense hatred against enemies and outgroups while having very positive feelings toward an ingroup viewed as morally and intellectually superior. These groups operated as embattled minorities that viewed the surrounding society as hostile and threatening. Being a member of such a group required a great deal of personal sacrifice and even altruism. All these attributes can be found as defining features of more traditional Jewish groups.

Further evidence of the importance of social identity processes may be found in Charles Liebman’s (1973, 153ff) suggestion that leftist universalist ideology allows Jews to subvert traditional social categorizations in which Jews are viewed in negative terms. The adoption of such ideologies by Jews is an attempt to overcome Jewish feelings of alienation “from the roots and the traditions of [gentile] society” (p. 153). “The Jew continues his search for an ethic or ethos which is not only universal or capable of universality, but which provides a cutting edge against the older traditions of the society, a search whose intensity is compounded and reinforced by the Gentile’s treatment of the Jew” (Liebman 1973, 157). Such attempts at subverting negative social categorizations imposed by an outgroup are a central aspect of social identity theory (Hogg & Abrams 1988; see *SAID*, Ch. 1).

The universalist ideology thus functions as a secular form of Judaism. Sectarian forms of Judaism are rejected as “a survival strategy” (Liebman 1973, 157) because of their tendency to produce anti-Semitism, their lack of intellectual appeal in the post-Enlightenment world, and their ineffectiveness in

appealing to gentiles and thereby altering the gentile social world in a manner that furthers Jewish group interests. Indeed, while the universalist ideology is formally congruent with Enlightenment ideals, the retention of traditional Jewish separatism and patterns of association among those espousing the ideology suggest an element of deception or self-deception:

Jews prefer to get together with other Jews to promote ostensibly non-Jewish enterprises (which assist Jewish acceptance), and then to pretend the whole matter has nothing to do with being Jewish. But this type of activity is most prevalent among Jews who are the most estranged from their own traditions and hence most concerned with finding a value that supports Jewish acceptance without overtly destroying Jewish group ties. (Liebman 1973, 159)

The universalist ideology therefore allows Jews to escape their alienation or estrangement from gentile society while nevertheless allowing for the retention of a strong Jewish identity. Institutions that promote group ties among gentiles (such as nationalism and traditional gentile religious associations) are actively opposed and subverted, while the structural integrity of Jewish separatism is maintained. A consistent thread of radical theorizing since Marx has been a fear that nationalism could serve as a social cement that would result in a compromise between the social classes and result in a highly unified social order based on hierarchical but harmonious relationships between existing social classes. This is only this type of highly cohesive gentile social organization that is fundamentally at odds with Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy (see Chs. 5, 7, 8). Both the Old Left and the New Left, as noted, actively attempted to subvert the cohesiveness of gentile social structure, including especially the *modus vivendi* achieved between business and labor by the 1960s. And we have seen that the Jewish-dominated Polish communist government campaigned actively against Polish nationalism, and they campaigned against the political and cultural power of the Catholic Church, the main force of social cohesion in traditional Polish society.

Finally, as emphasized by Rothman and Lichter (1982, 119), Marxism is particularly attractive as the basis for an ideology that subverts the negative social categorizations of the gentile outgroup because within such an ideology the Jewish-gentile categorization becomes less salient while Jewish group cohesion and separatism may nevertheless persist: "By adopting variants of Marxist ideology, Jews deny the reality of cultural or religious differences between Jews and Christians. These differences become 'epiphenomenal,' compared to the more fundamental opposition of workers and capitalists. Thus Jews and non-Jews are really brothers under the skin. Even when not adopting a Marxist position, many Jews have tended toward radical environmentalist positions which serve a similar function" (p. 119).<sup>20</sup>

Such a strategy makes excellent sense from the standpoint of social identity theory: A consistent finding in research on intergroup contact is that making the social categories that define groups less salient would lessen intergroup differentiation and would facilitate positive social interactions between mem-

bers from different groups (Brewer & Miller 1984; Doise & Sinclair 1973; Miller, Brewer & Edwards 1985). At the extreme, acceptance of a universalist ideology by gentiles would result in gentiles not perceiving Jews as in a different social category at all, while nonetheless Jews would be able to maintain a strong personal identity as Jews.

These features of Jewish radicalism together constitute a very compelling analysis of the role of social identity processes in this phenomenon. The last mechanism is particularly interesting as an analysis of both the tendency for Jewish political overrepresentation in radical causes and the Jewish tendency to adopt radical environmentalist ideologies noted as a common characteristic of Jewish social scientists in Chapter 2. The analysis implies that the Jews involved in these intellectual movements are engaged in a subtle process of deception of gentiles (and, perhaps, self-deception), and that these movements essentially function as a form of crypto-Judaism.

In the language of social identity theory, an ideology is created in which the social categorization of Jew-gentile is minimized in importance, and there are no negative attributions regarding Jewish group membership. The importance of ethnic group membership is minimized as a social category, and, because of its lack of importance, ethnic self-interest among gentiles is analyzed as fundamentally misguided because it does not recognize the priority of class conflict between gentiles. Jews can remain Jews because being a Jew is no longer important. At the same time, traditional institutions of social cohesiveness within gentile society are subverted and gentile society itself is viewed as permeated by conflicts of interest between social classes rather than by commonalities of interest and feelings of social solidarity among different social classes.

Rothman and Lichter (p. 119ff) support their argument by noting that the adoption of universalist ideologies is a common technique among minority groups in a wide range of cultures around the world. Despite the veneer of universalism, these movements are most definitely not assimilationist, and in fact Rothman and Lichter view assimilation, defined as complete absorption and loss of minority group identity, as an alternative to the adoption of universalist political movements. Universalist ideologies may be smoke screens that actually facilitate the continued existence of group strategies while promoting the denial of their importance by ingroup and outgroup members alike. Judaism as a cohesive, ethnically based group strategy is able to continue to exist but in a cryptic or semi-cryptic state.

Corroborating this perspective, Levin (1977, 105) states, "Marx's analysis [of Judaism as a caste] gave socialist thinkers an easy way out—to ignore or minimize the Jewish problem." In Poland, the Jewish-dominated Communist Party decried worker and peasant participation in anti-Semitic pogroms during the 1930s because such individuals were not acting on behalf of their class interests (Schatz 1991, 99), an interpretation in which ethnic conflicts result from capitalism and will end after the communist revolution. One reason little anti-Semitism existed within the Social Democratic movement in late-

nineteenth-century Germany was that Marxist theory explained all social phenomena; Social Democrats “did not need anti-Semitism, another all-embracing theory, to explain the events of their lives” (Dawidowicz 1975, 42). The Social Democrats (and Marx) never analyzed Judaism as a nation or as an ethnic group but as a religious and economic community (Pulzer 1964, 269).

In theory, therefore, anti-Semitism and other ethnic conflicts would disappear with the advent of a socialist society. It is possible that such an interpretation actually served to lower anti-Semitism in some cases. Levy (1975, 190) suggests that anti-Semitism was minimized among the gentile working-class constituency of the German Social Democrats by the activities of party leaders and socialist theoreticians who framed the political and economic problems of this group in terms of class conflict rather than Jewish-gentile conflict and actively opposed any cooperation with anti-Semitic parties.

Trotsky and other Jews in the Russian Socialist Democratic Labor Party considered themselves as representing the Jewish proletariat within the wider socialist movement (see note 4), but they were opposed to the separatist, nationalist program of the Russian Jewish Bund. Arthur Liebman (1979, 122–123) suggests that these assimilationist socialists consciously conceptualized a postrevolutionary society in which Judaism would exist, but with a lessened social salience: “For them, the ultimate solution of the Jewish problem would be an internationalist socialist society that paid no heed to distinctions between Jews and non-Jews. To hasten the establishment of such a society, it became necessary, in the view of these assimilationist socialists, for Jews to consider ethnic and religious distinctions between them and non-Jews as irrelevant.”

Similarly, after the revolution, “Having abandoned their own origins and identity, yet not finding, or sharing, or being fully admitted to Russian life (except in the world of the party), the Jewish Bolsheviks found their ideological home in revolutionary universalism. They dreamt of a classless and stateless society supported by Marxist faith and doctrine that transcended the particularities and burdens of Jewish existence” (Levin 1988, 49). These individuals, along with many highly nationalist ex-Bundists, ended up administering programs related to Jewish national life in the Soviet Union. Apparently, although they rejected the radical Jewish separatism of either the Bundists or the Zionists, they envisioned the continuity of secular Jewish national life in the Soviet Union (e.g., Levin 1988, 52).

This belief in the invisibility of Judaism in a socialist society can also be found among American Jewish radicals. American Jewish socialists of the 1890s, for example, envisioned a society in which race played no part (Rogoff 1930, 115), apparently a proposal in which Jews and non-Jews would remain in their separate spheres in a class-based workers movement. In the event, even this level of assimilation was not attained; these organizers worked in a completely Jewish milieu and retained strong ties with the Jewish community. “Their actions continued to be at variance with their ideology. The more deeply they moved into the field of organizing Jewish workers, the more loudly they insisted on their socialist universalism” (Liebman 1979, 256–257).

The gap between rhetoric and reality strongly suggests the importance of deception and self-deception in these phenomena. Indeed, these socialist labor organizers never abandoned their universalistic rhetoric, but actively resisted incorporating their unions into the wider American labor movement even after the decline of Yiddish among their members left them without any excuses for failing to do so. Within the unions they engaged in ethnic politics aimed at keeping their own ethnic group in power (Liebman 1979, 270ff), actions obviously at odds with socialist rhetoric. In the end, the attachment of many of these individuals to socialism declined and was replaced by a strong sense of Jewish ethnicity and peoplehood (Liebman 1979, 270).

The result was that the veneer of universalism covered up a continued separatism of radical Jewish intellectuals and political organizers:

[Gentile intellectuals] really are not totally accepted into even the secularist humanist liberal company of their quondam Jewish friends. Jews continue to insist in indirect and often inexplicable ways on their own uniqueness. Jewish universalism in relations between Jews and non-Jews has an empty ring. . . . Still, we have the anomaly of Jewish secularists and atheists writing their own prayer books. We find Jewish political reformers breaking with their local parties which stress an ethnic style of politics, and ostensibly pressing for universal political goals—while organizing their own political clubs which are so Jewish in style and manner that non-Jews often feel unwelcome. (Liebman 1973, 158)

Universalism may thus be viewed as a mechanism for Jewish continuity via crypsis or semi-crypsis. The Jewish radical is invisible to the gentile as a Jew and thereby avoids anti-Semitism while at the same time covertly retains his or her Jewish identity. Lyons (1982, 73) finds that “most Jewish Communists wear their Jewishness very casually but experience it deeply. It is not a religious or even an institutional Jewishness for most; nevertheless, it is rooted in a subculture of identity, style, language, and social network. . . . In fact, this second-generation Jewishness was antiethnic and yet the height of ethnicity. The emperor believed that he was clothed in transethnic, American garb, but Gentiles saw the nuances and details of his naked ethnicity.”

These remarks indicate an element of crypsis—a self-deceptive disjunction between private and public personas—“a dual posturing revealing one face to the outer world and another to the tribe” (Horowitz 1997, 42). But this pose has a cost. As Albert Memmi (1966, 236), notes, “The Jew-of-the-Left must pay for this protection by his modesty and anonymity, his apparent lack of concern for all that relates to his own people. . . . Like the poor man who enters a middle-class family, they demand that he at least have the good taste to make himself invisible.” Because of the nature of their own ideology, Jews on the left were forced to deemphasize specifically Jewish issues, such as the Holocaust and Israel, despite their strong identification as Jews (Wisse 1987). It is precisely this feature of the Jewish leftist intellectual movements that are most repellent to ethnically committed Jews (see, e.g., Wisse 1987).

Ethnic identification was often unconscious, suggesting self-deception. Lyons (1982, 74) finds that among his sample of Jewish American communists,

evidence of the importance of ethnicity in general and Jewishness in particular permeates the available record. Many Communists, for example, state that they could never have married a spouse who was not a leftist. When Jews were asked if they could have married Gentiles, many hesitated, surprised by the question, and found it difficult to answer. Upon reflection, many concluded that they had always taken marriage to someone Jewish for granted. The alternative was never really considered, particularly among Jewish men.

Moreover, there were conscious attempts at deception directed at making Jewish involvement in radical political movements invisible by placing an American face on what was in reality largely a Jewish movement (Liebman 1979, 527ff). Both the Socialist Party and the CPUSA took pains to have gentiles prominently displayed as leaders, and the CPUSA actively encouraged Jewish members to take gentile-sounding names. (This phenomenon also occurred in Poland [see above] and the Soviet Union [see p. 97].) Despite representing over half the membership in both the Socialist Party and the CPUSA during some periods, neither party ever had Jews as presidential candidates and no Jew held the top position in the CPUSA after 1929. Gentiles were brought from long distances and given highly visible staff positions in Jewish-dominated socialist organizations in New York. Jewish domination of these organizations not uncommonly led gentiles to leave when they realized their role as window dressing in a fundamentally Jewish organization.

Liebman (1979, 561) notes that New Left radicals often took pains to ignore Jewish issues entirely. The New Left deemphasized ethnicity and religion in its ideology while emphasizing social categories and political issues such as the Vietnam War and discrimination against blacks which were very divisive for white gentiles but for which Jewish identity was irrelevant; moreover, these issues did not threaten Jewish middle-class interests, especially Zionism. Jewish identity, though salient to the participants, was publicly submerged. And as noted above, when the New Left began adopting positions incompatible with Jewish interests, Jews tended to sever their ties with the movement.

In a remarkable illustration of the perceived invisibility of the group dynamics of Jewish involvement in radical political movements, Liebman (1979, 167) describes 1960s student activists as completely unaware that their actions could lead to anti-Semitism because Jews were overrepresented among the activists. (Liebman shows that in fact other Jews were concerned that their actions would lead to anti-Semitism.) From their own perspective, they were successfully engaging in crypsis: They supposed that their Jewishness was completely invisible to the outside world while at the same time it retained a great deal of subjective salience to themselves. At a theoretical level, this is a classic case of self-deception, considered in *SAID* (Ch. 8) as an essential feature of Jewish religious ideology and reactions to anti-Semitism.



In the event, the deception appears to have generally failed, if not for the New Left, at least for the Old Left. There was a general lack of rapport between Jewish radical intellectuals and non-Jewish intellectuals within Old Left radical organizations (C. Liebman 1973, 158–159). Some gentile intellectuals found the movement attractive *because* of its Jewish dominance, but for the most part the essentially Jewish milieu was a barrier (Liebman 1979, 530ff). The Jewish commitment of these radicals, their desire to remain within a Jewish milieu, and their negative attitudes toward Christian gentile culture prevented them from being effective recruiters among the gentile working class. As David Horowitz's communist father wrote while on a trip through Colorado in the 1930s, "I have feelings . . . that I'm in a foreign land. And it strikes me that unless we learn the people of this country so thoroughly so that we won't feel that way, we won't get anywhere. I'm afraid that most of us aren't really 'patriotic,' I mean at bottom deeply fond of the country and people." Similarly, former communist Sidney Hook (1987, 188) noted, "it was as if they had no roots in, or knowledge of, the American society they wanted to transform." A similar situation occurred in Poland, where the efforts of even the most "de-ethnicized" Jewish communists were inhibited by the traditional Jewish attitudes of superiority toward and estrangement from traditional Polish culture (Schatz 1991, 119).

And once in the party, many non-Jews were repelled by its highly intellectual atmosphere and dropped out. As expected on the basis of social identity theory on the hypothesis that radicalism was fundamentally a form of secular Judaism, there are indications of an anti-gentile atmosphere within these organizations: "There was also present among Jewish intellectuals and leftists a mixture of hostility and superiority toward Gentiles" (Liebman 1979, 534). There was also an ethnic divide between Jewish and black Communist Party workers resulting at least partly from "a missionary and patronizing attitude" of the Jewish organizers (Lyons 1982, 80).

Encounters between Blacks and Jews always seemed to involve Jews reaching out and "helping" Blacks, "teaching" them, "guiding" them. Many Black intellectuals ended their flirtation with the Communist Party bitter not only at the communists but at Jews they felt had treated them condescendingly. "How can the average public school Negro be expected to understand the exigencies of the capitalist system as it applies to both Jew and Gentile in America . . . since both groups act strangely like Hitlerian Aryans . . . when it comes to colored folks?" asked Langston Hughes, bitter after a feud with Jewish communists. (Kaufman 1997, 110)

This sense of condescending superiority of Jewish radicals in the civil rights movement has been identified as a source of the current upsurge of anti-Semitism among African Americans.

## CONCLUSION

It is of some interest to attempt to understand the ultimate fate of Judaism in situations where society became organized according to a politically radical universalist ideology. In the Soviet Union, individual Jews “played an important and sometimes decisive part in the leadership of the three main socialist parties,” including the Bolsheviks (Pinkus 1988, 42; see also Rothman & Lichter 1982; Shapiro 1961). Jews “dominated” Lenin’s first Politburo (Rapoport 1990, 30). (Lenin himself had a Jewish maternal grandfather [Volkogonov 1995] and is reported to have said that “an intelligent Russian is almost always a Jew or someone with Jewish blood in his veins” [in Pipes 1990, 352].) Jews made up a greater percentage of other Russian revolutionary parties than they did the Bolsheviks (Lindemann 1997, 425ff). Indeed, there is some evidence for a Jewish-gentile schism between the Bolsheviks and the more internationally minded Mensheviks, whose ranks included a much larger percentage of Jews. (Recall also the internationalism of the Jewish Bolsheviks; see above.) Nevertheless, Jews were prominently represented as leaders of the Bolsheviks and within the Bolshevik movement “citing the absolute numbers of Jews, or their percentage of the whole, fails to recognize certain key if intangible factors: the assertiveness and often dazzling verbal skills of Jewish Bolsheviks, their energy, and their strength of conviction” (p. 429). Jewish Bolsheviks were also more highly educated than non-Jewish Bolsheviks and more likely to be polylingual. (As noted in Chapter 1, American Jewish radicals were highly intelligent, hard working, dedicated and upwardly mobile—traits that undoubtedly contributed to the success of their organizations.) Four of the top seven leaders were ethnic Jews (not counting Lenin, who, as Lindemann notes, was one-fourth Jewish and therefore Jewish enough to have come under suspicion in Nazi Germany; Lenin was widely regarded as a Jew), as were approximately one-third of the top fifty.

Moreover, Lindemann points out that several of the top gentiles in the Bolshevik movement, including Lenin, might be termed “jewified non-Jews”—“a term, freed of its ugly connotations, [that] might be used to underline an often overlooked point: Even in Russia there were some non-Jews, whether Bolsheviks or not, who respected Jews, praised them abundantly, imitated them, cared about their welfare, and established intimate friendships or romantic liaisons with them” (p. 433). For example, Lenin “openly and repeatedly praised the role of the Jews in the revolutionary movement; he was one of the most adamant and consistent in the party in his denunciations of pogroms and anti-Semitism more generally. After the revolution, he backed away from his earlier resistance to Jewish nationalism, accepting that under Soviet rule Jewish nationality might be legitimate. On his death bed, Lenin spoke fondly of the Jewish Menshevik Julius Martov, for whom he had always retained a special personal affection in spite of their fierce ideological differences.”

Citing Paul Johnson’s (1988) important work, Lindemann notes Trotsky’s “paramount” role in planning and leading the Bolshevik uprising and his role as a “brilliant military leader” in establishing the Red Army as a military force

(p. 448). Moreover, many of Trotsky's personality traits are stereotypically Jewish:

If one accepts that anti-Semitism was most potently driven by anxiety and fear, as distinguished from contempt, then the extent to which Trotsky became a source of preoccupation with anti-Semites is significant. Here, too, Johnson's words are suggestive: He writes of Trotsky's "demonic power"—the same term, revealingly, used repeatedly by others in referring to Zinoviev's oratory or Uritsky's ruthlessness.<sup>21</sup> Trotsky's boundless self-confidence, his notorious arrogance, and sense of superiority were other traits often associated with Jews. Fantasies there were about Trotsky and other Bolsheviks, but there were also realities around which the fantasies grew. (p. 448)

Vaksberg (1994) has a particularly interesting presentation. He notes, for example, that in a photomontage of the Bolshevik leaders taken in 1920, 22 of the 61 leaders were Jews, "and the picture did not include Kaganovich, Pyatnitsky, Goloshchekin, and many others who were part of the ruling circle, and whose presence on that album page would have raised the percentage of Jews even higher" (p. 20). In addition to the very large overrepresentation of Jews at these levels, there were "a plethora of Jewish wives" among the non-Jewish leaders (p. 49), which must have heightened the Jewish atmosphere of the top levels of the government, given that everyone, especially Stalin, appears to have been quite conscious of ethnicity. (Stalin himself went to great lengths to discourage the marriage of his daughter to a Jew and disapproved of other Jewish-gentile marriages [Vaksberg 1994, 139].) For their part, anti-Semites accused Jews of having "*implanted those of their own category as wives and husbands for influential figures and officials*" (in Kostyrchenko 1995, 272; italics in text). This point fits well with Lindemann's description of gentile Bolsheviks as "jewified non-Jews."

Among gentile Russians there was a widespread perception that "whereas everybody else had lost from the Revolution, the Jews, and they alone, had benefited from it" (Pipes 1993, 101), as indicated, for example, by official Soviet government efforts against anti-Semitism. As in the case of post-World War II Poland, Jews were considered trustworthy supporters of the regime because of the very great change in their status brought about by the revolution (Vaksberg 1994, 60). As a result, the immediate postrevolutionary period was characterized by intense anti-Semitism, including the numerous pogroms carried out by the White Army. However, Stalin "decided to destroy the 'myth' of the decisive role of the Jews in the planning, organization, and realization of the revolution" and to emphasize the role of Russians (Vaksberg 1994, 82). Just as do contemporary Jewish apologists, Stalin had an interest in deemphasizing the role of Jews in the revolution, but for different reasons.

Jews were highly overrepresented among the political and cultural elite in the Soviet Union throughout the 1920s (Ginsberg 1993, 53; Horowitz 1993, 83; Pipes 1993, 112) and, indeed, into the 1950s era of the purges of Jews from the economic and cultural elite (Kostyrchenko 1995).<sup>22</sup> I interpret

Vaksberg's (1994) thesis regarding Stalin as implying that Stalin was an anti-Semite from very early on, but that because of the powerful presence of Jews at the top reaches of the government and other areas of Soviet society as well as the need to appeal to Western governments, his efforts to remove Jews from top levels of government developed only slowly, and he was forced to engage in considerable deception. Thus Stalin mixed his measures against Jews with overt expressions of philo-Semitism and often included a few non-Jews to mask the anti-Jewish intent. For example, just prior to a series of trials in which 11 of the 16 defendants were Jewish, there was a widely publicized trial of two non-Jews on charges of anti-Semitism (p. 77). In the trials of the Jews, no mention was made of Jewish ethnic background and, with one exception, the defendants were referred to only by their (non-Jewish sounding) party pseudonyms rather than their Jewish names. Stalin continued to give honors and awards to Jewish artists during the 1930s even while he was removing the top Jewish political leaders and replacing them with gentiles (see also Rubenstein 1996, 272).

The campaign to remove Jews from administrative positions in the cultural establishment began as early as 1942, again accompanied by prizes and awards to prominent Jewish scientists and artists to deflect charges of anti-Semitism. Full-blown state-sponsored anti-Semitism emerged in the post-World War II era, complete with quotas on Jewish admission to universities that were harsher than in czarist times. However, it was not merely Stalin's personal anti-Semitism that was involved; rather, anti-Semitism was motivated by very traditional concerns about Jews relating to economic and cultural domination and loyalty. Kostyrchenko (1995) shows that ethnic Russians seeking to dislodge Jews from dominant positions among the Soviet elite were an important source of pressure on Stalin. Purges of disproportionately Jewish elites were made in the areas of journalism, the arts, academic departments of history, pedagogy, philosophy, economics, medicine and psychiatry, and scientific research institutes in all areas of the natural sciences. There were also widespread purges of Jews at the top levels of management and engineering throughout the economy. Jewish intellectuals were characterized as "rootless cosmopolitans" who lacked sympathy with Russian national culture, and they were regarded as disloyal because of their open enthusiasm for Israel and their close ties to American Jews.

Jews were also highly overrepresented as leaders among the other communist governments in Eastern Europe as well as in communist revolutionary movements in Germany and Austria from 1918 to 1923. In the short-lived communist government in Hungary in 1919, 95 percent of the leading figures of Bela Kun's government were Jews (Pipes 1993, 112). This government energetically liquidated predominantly gentile counterrevolutionaries and the ensuing struggle led by Admiral Horthy eventuated in the execution of most of the Jewish leadership of the communist government—a struggle with clear anti-Semitic overtones. Moreover, Jewish agents in the service of the Soviet Union featured prominently in Western communist parties: "Even within the

various and often violently contending factions of the nascent communist parties of the West, 'foreign Jews, taking orders from Moscow' became a hot issue. It remained mostly taboo in socialist ranks to refer openly to Moscow's agents as Jewish, but the implication was often that such foreign Jews were destroying western socialism" (Lindemann 1997, 435–436).

Jews thus achieved leading positions in these societies in the early stages, but in the long run, anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union and other Eastern European communist societies became a well-known phenomenon and an important political cause among American Jews (Sachar 1992; Woocher 1986). As we have seen, Stalin gradually diminished the power of Jews in the Soviet Union, and anti-Semitism was an important factor in the decline of Jews in leadership positions in Eastern European communist governments.

The cases of Hungary and Poland are particularly interesting. Given the role of Jewish communists in postwar Poland, it is not surprising that an anti-Semitic movement developed and eventually toppled the generation from power (see Schatz 1991, 264ff). After Nikita Khrushchev's de-Stalinization speech of 1956 the party split into a Jewish and anti-Jewish section, with the anti-Jewish section complaining of too many Jews in top positions. In the words of a leader of the anti-Jewish faction, the preponderance of Jews "makes people hate Jews and mistrust the party. The Jews estrange people from the party and from the Soviet Union; national feelings have been offended, and it is the duty of the party to adjust to the demands so that Poles, not Jews, hold the top positions in Poland" (in Schatz 1991, 268). Khrushchev himself supported a new policy with his remark that "you have already too many Abramoviches" (in Schatz 1991, 272). Even this first stage in the anti-Jewish purges was accompanied by anti-Semitic incidents among the public at large, as well as demands that Jewish communists who had changed their names to lower their profile in the party reveal themselves. As a result of these changes over half of Polish Jews responded by emigrating to Israel between 1956 and 1959.

Anti-Semitism increased dramatically toward the end of the 1960s. Jews were gradually downgraded in status and Jewish communists were blamed for Poland's misfortunes. The *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* circulated widely among party activists, students, and army personnel. The security force, which had been dominated by Jews and directed toward suppressing Polish nationalism, was now dominated by Poles who viewed Jews "as a group in need of close and constant surveillance" (p. 290). Jews were removed from important positions in the government, the military, and the media. Elaborate files were maintained on Jews, including the crypto-Jews who had changed their names and adopted non-Jewish external identities. As the Jews had done earlier, the anti-Jewish group developed networks that promoted their own people throughout the government and the media. Jews now became dissidents and defectors where before they had dominated the state forces of Orthodoxy.

The "earthquake" finally erupted in 1968 with an anti-Semitic campaign consequent to outpourings of joy among Jews over Israel's victory in the Six-

Day War. Israel's victory occurred despite Soviet bloc support of the Arabs, and President Gomulka condemned the Jewish "fifth column" in the country. Extensive purges of Jews swept the country and secular Jewish life (e.g., Yiddish magazines and Jewish schools and day camps) was essentially dissolved. This hatred toward Jews clearly resulted from the role Jews played in postwar Poland. As one intellectual described it, Poland's problems resulted essentially from ethnic conflict between Poles and Jews in which the Jews were supported by the Russians. The problems were due to "the arrival in our country . . . of certain politicians dressed in officer's uniforms, who later presumed that only they—the Zambrowskis, the Radkiewiczzes, the Bermans—had the right to leadership, a monopoly over deciding what was right for the Polish nation." The solution would come when the "abnormal ethnic composition" of society was corrected (in Schatz 1991, 306, 307). The remaining Jews "both as a collective and as individuals . . . were singled out, slandered, ostracized, degraded, threatened, and intimidated with breathtaking intensity and . . . malignance" (p. 308). Most left Poland for Israel, and all were forced to renounce their Polish citizenship. They left behind only a few thousand mostly aged Jews.

The case of Hungary is entirely analogous to Poland both in the origins of the triumph of communist Jews and in their eventual defeat by an anti-Semitic movement. Despite evidence that Stalin was an anti-Semite, he installed Jewish communists as leaders of his effort to dominate Hungary after World War II. The government was "completely dominated" by Jews (Rothman and Lichter 1982, 89), a common perception among the Hungarian people (see Irving 1981, 47ff). "The wags of Budapest explained the presence of a lone gentile in the party leadership on the grounds that a 'goy' was needed to turn on the lights on Saturday" (Rothman & Lichter 1982, 89). The Hungarian Communist Party, with the backing of the Red Army, tortured, imprisoned, and executed opposition political leaders and other dissidents and effectively harnessed Hungary's economy in the service of the Soviet Union. They thus created a situation similar to that in Poland: Jews were installed by their Russian masters as the ideal middle stratum between an exploitative alien ruling elite and a subject native population. Jews were seen as having engineered the communist revolution and as having benefited most from the revolution. Jews constituted nearly all of the party's elite, held the top positions in the security police, and dominated managerial positions throughout the economy. Not only were Jewish Communist Party functionaries and economic managers economically dominant, they also appear to have had fairly unrestricted access to gentile females working under them—partly as a result of the poverty to which the vast majority of the population had descended, and partly because of specific government policies designed to undermine traditional sexual mores by, for example, paying women to have illegitimate children (see Irving 1981, 111). The domination of the Hungarian communist Jewish bureaucracy thus appears to have had overtones of sexual

and reproductive domination of gentiles in which Jewish males were able to have disproportionate sexual access to gentile females.

As an indication of the gulf between ruler and ruled in Hungary, a student commented: "Take Hungary: Who was the enemy? For Rákosi [the Jewish leader of the Hungarian Communist Party] and his gang the enemy was us, the Hungarian people. They believed that Hungarians were innately fascist. This was the attitude of the Jewish communists, the Moscow group. They had nothing but contempt for the people" (in Irving 1981, 146). The comment illustrates a theme of the loyalty issue discussed in *SAID* (Ch. 2): Jewish disloyalty to the people among whom they have lived is often exacerbated by anti-Semitism, which itself is linked to the other common sources of anti-Semitism. Moreover, ethnicity continued to be a prominent factor in the post-revolutionary period despite its theoretical unimportance. When Jewish functionaries wanted to penalize a farmer who failed to meet his quota, gypsies were sent to strip the farmer's property because other townspeople would not cooperate in the destruction of one of their own (Irving 1981, 132). Here the party functionaries were taking advantage of the same principle Stalin and other alien rulers have recognized when they used Jews as an exploitative stratum between themselves and a subject native population: Foreign ethnics are relatively willing to exploit other groups. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Hungarian uprising of 1956 included elements of a traditional anti-Semitic pogrom, as indicated by anti-Jewish attitudes among the refugees of the period. In this regard, the uprising was not unlike many anti-Semitic pogroms that occurred in traditional societies when the power of the alien ruling elite who supported the Jews diminished (see *SAID*, Ch. 2; *PTSDA*, Ch. 5).

As with all experiments in living, leftist universalist ideology and political structure may not achieve the results desired by their Jewish proponents.<sup>23</sup> On the basis of the data presented here, the eventual failure of political radicalism to guarantee Jewish interests has been a prime factor in Jews' abandoning radical movements or attempting to combine radicalism with an overt Jewish identity and commitment to Jewish interests. In the long run, it would appear that ideologies of universalism in the presence of continued group cohesion and identity may not be an effective mechanism for combating anti-Semitism.

In retrospect, Jewish advocacy of highly collectivist social structure represented by socialism and communism has been a poor strategy for Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy. Judaism and bureaucratic, statist socialism are not obviously incompatible, and we have seen that Jews were able to develop a predominant political and cultural position in socialist societies, as they have in more individualistic societies. However, the highly authoritarian, collectivist structure of these societies also results in the highly efficient institutionalization of anti-Semitism in the event that Jewish predominance within the society, despite a great deal of crisis, comes to be viewed negatively.

Moreover, the tendency for such societies to develop a political monoculture implies that Judaism can survive only by engaging in semi-crisis. As

Horowitz (1993, 86) notes, “Jewish life is diminished when the creative opposition of the sacred and the secular, or the church and the state, are seen as having to yield to a higher set of political values. Jews suffer, their numbers decline, and immigration becomes a survival solution when the state demands integration into a national mainstream, a religious universal defined by a state religion or a near-state religion.” In the long run, radical individualism among gentiles and the fragmentation of gentile culture offer a superior environment for Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy, and this is indeed an important direction of current Jewish intellectual and political activity (see Chs. 5–7).

In this regard it is interesting that many neoconservative Jewish intellectuals in the contemporary United States have rejected corporate, statist ideologies as a direct consequence of the recognition that these ideologies have resulted in corporate, state-sponsored anti-Semitism. Indeed, the beginnings of the neoconservative movement can be traced to the Moscow Trials of the 1930s in which many of the old Jewish Bolsheviks, including Trotsky, were convicted of treason. The result was the development of the New York Intellectuals as an anti-Stalinist leftist movement, parts of which gradually evolved into neoconservatism (see Ch. 6). The neoconservative movement has been fervently anti-communist and has opposed ethnic quotas and affirmative action policies in the United States—policies that would clearly preclude free competition between Jews and gentiles. Part of the attraction neoconservatism held for Jewish intellectuals was its compatibility with support for Israel at a time when Third World countries supported by most American leftists were strongly anti-Zionist (Rothman & Lichter 1982, 105). Many neoconservative intellectuals had previously been ardent leftists, and the split between these previous allies resulted in an intense internecine feud.

Similarly, there was a trend towards a libertarian and individualist perspective by Converso intellectuals consequent to corporate, state-sponsored anti-Semitism during the period of the Inquisition. Castro (1971, 327ff) emphasizes the libertarian, anarchist, individualistic, and anti-corporate strand of Converso thought, and attributes it to the fact that the Conversos were being oppressed by an anti-libertarian, corporate state. These intellectuals, oppressed by the purity of blood laws and the Inquisition itself, argued that “God did not distinguish between one Christian and another” (Castro 1971, 333).

When an experiment in ideology and political structure fails, another experiment is launched. Since the Enlightenment, Judaism has not been a unified, monolithic movement. Judaism is a series of experiments in living, and since the Enlightenment there have been a variety of Jewish experiments in living. There has clearly been a great deal of disagreement among Jews as how best to attain their interests during this period, and certainly the interests of Jewish radicals conflicted at times with the interests of wealthy Jews (often their Jewish employers [Levin 1977, 210]). The voluntary nature of Jewish association since the Enlightenment has resulted in relative fractionation of Judaism, with individual Jews drawn to different “experiments in Jewish living.” In this sense, Jewish radicalism must be viewed as one of several



solutions to the problem of developing a viable Judaism in the post-Enlightenment period, along with Zionism, neo-Orthodoxy, Conservative Judaism, Reform Judaism, neoconservatism, and Judaism as a civil religion. In the following chapter we shall see that psychoanalysis has played a similar role among a large number of Jewish intellectuals.

## NOTES

1. The issue of Marx's Jewishness has been a continuing controversy (see Carlebach 1978, 310ff). Marx associated with both practicing Jews and individuals of Jewish ancestry throughout his life. Moreover, he was considered by others as Jewish and was continually reminded of his Jewishness by his opponents (see also Meyer 1989, 36). As indicated below, such externally imposed Jewish identity may have been common among Jewish radicals and surely implies that Marx remained conscious of being Jewish. Like many other Jewish intellectuals reviewed here, Marx had an antipathy toward gentile society. Sammons (1979, 263) describes the basis of the mutual attraction between Heinrich Heine and Karl Marx by noting that "they were not reformers, but haters, and this was very likely their most fundamental bond with one another." Deception may also be involved: Carlebach (1978, 357) suggests that Marx may have viewed his Jewishness as a liability, and Otto Rühle (1929, 377) suggests that Marx (like Freud; see Ch. 4) went to elaborate lengths to deny his Jewishness in order to prevent criticism of his writings. Many writers have emphasized Marx's Jewishness and professed to find Jewish elements (e.g., messianism, social justice) in his writing. A theme of anti-Semitic writing (most notably, perhaps, in Hitler's writings) has been to propose that Marx had a specifically Jewish agenda in advocating a world society dominated by Jews in which gentile nationalism, gentile ethnic consciousness, and traditional gentile elites would be eliminated (see review in Carlebach 1978, 318ff).

2. Similarly, Levin (1988, 280) notes that some Evseksiya activists clearly envisaged themselves as promoting Jewish nationalism compatible with existence within the Soviet Union. "It can even be argued that the Evseksiya prolonged Jewish activity and certain levels of Jewish consciousness by their very efforts to wrench a new concept of a badly battered and traumatized Jewry . . . though at incalculable cost."

3. A secret survey published in 1981 (*New York Times*, Feb. 20) on data from 1977 indicated that 78 percent of Soviet Jews said they would have "an aversion to a close relative marrying a non-Jew," and 85 percent "wanted their children or grandchildren to learn Yiddish or Hebrew." Other results indicate a continuing strong desire for Jewish culture in the Soviet Union: 86 percent of Jews wanted their children to go to Jewish schools, and 82 percent advocated establishing a Russian language periodical on Jewish subjects.

4. It should also be noted that in 1903 Trotsky declared at a conference of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (the major unifying organization for socialism in Russia at the time, including the Bolsheviks), that he and other Jewish representatives "regard ourselves as representatives of the Jewish proletariat" (in Frankel 1981, 242). This suggests that either he had altered his personal identity or that his later behavior was motivated by concerns to avoid anti-Semitism. Trotsky was also part of the ethnic nexus of psychoanalysis and Bolshevism in the Soviet Union. Trotsky was an ardent enthusiast of psychoanalysis, and, as indicated in Chapter 4, psychoanalysis must be

considered a Jewish ethnic intellectual movement. The apex of the association between Marxism and psychoanalysis came in the 1920s in the Soviet Union, where all the top psychoanalysts were Bolsheviks, Trotsky supporters, and among the most powerful political figures in the country (see Chamberlain 1995). In work that is considered by Jewish organizations to be anti-Semitic (see note 22), Igor Shafarevich (1989) notes that Trotsky had a Jewish deputy and that Jewish writers have tended to idolize him. He cites a biography of Trotsky as saying: "From every indication, the rationalistic approach to the Jewish question that the Marxism he professed demanded of him in no way expressed his genuine feelings. It even seems that he was in his own way 'obsessed' with that question; he wrote about it almost more than did any other revolutionary." Shafarevich also describes several other examples of Jewish Communists and leftists who had very pronounced tendencies toward Jewish nationalism. For example, Charles Rappoport, later a leader of the French Communist Party, is quoted as declaring that "The Jewish people [are] the bearer of all the great ideas of unity and human community in history. . . . The disappearance of the Jewish people would signify the death of humankind, the final transformation of man into a wild beast" (p. 34).

5. Similar comments continue as a theme of writing about Jews in the contemporary United States. Joseph Sobran (1995, 5) describes Jews who

maintain their borders furtively and deal disingenuously with gentiles. Raymond Chandler once observed of them that they want to be Jews among themselves but resent being seen as Jews by gentiles. They want to pursue their own distinct interests while pretending that they have no such interests, using the charge of "anti-Semitism" as sword and shield. As Chandler put it, they are like a man who refuses to give his real name and address but insists on being invited to all the best parties. Unfortunately, it's this [type of Jew] who wields most of the power and skews the rules for gentiles.

6. Consider the following comment on Heinrich Heine, who was baptized but remained strongly identified as a Jew: "Whenever Jews were threatened—whether in Hamburg during the Hep-Hep riots or in Damascus at the time of the ritual murder accusation—Heine at once felt solidarity with his people" (Prawer 1983, 762).

7. The cultural changes included the suppression of science to political interests and the canonization of the works of Lysenko and Pavlov. Whereas Pavlov's scientific work remains interesting, an evolutionist, of course, is struck by the elevation of Lysenkoism to the status of dogma. Lysenkoism is a politically inspired Lamarckianism useful to communism because of the implication that people could be biologically changed by changing the environment. As indicated in Chapter 2 (see note 1), Jewish intellectuals were strongly attracted to Lamarckianism because of its political usefulness.

8. The "tested" comrades constituted an underground Jewish communist group in prewar Poland. When they came to power following the war, they allied themselves with other Jews who had not been communists prior to the war.

9. Similarly in England, the short-lived Hebrew Socialist Union was established in London in 1876 as a specifically Jewish association. Alderman (1992, 171) comments that this society "threw into sharp relief the problem that was to face all succeeding Jewish socialist organs and all subsequent Jewish trade unions: whether their task was simply to act as a channel through which Jewish workers would enter the English working-class movements—the Anglicization of the Anglo-Jewish proletariat—or whether there was a specifically Jewish (and Anglo-Jewish) form of labour organiza-

tion and of socialist philosophy that demanded a separate and autonomous articulation.” Eventually a Yiddish-speaking Jewish trade union movement was established, and in cases where Jews joined previously existing unions, they formed specifically Jewish sub-groups within the unions.

10. The following discussion is based on Liebman (1979, 492ff).

11. A good example is Joe Rapoport, an American Jewish radical, whose autobiography (Kann 1981) shows the tendency for American Jewish radicals to perceive the Soviet Union almost exclusively in terms of whether it was good for Jews. Rapoport had a very strong Jewish identity and supported the Soviet Union because on balance he believed it was good for Jews. On his trip to the Ukraine in the early 1930s he emphasizes the Jewish enthusiasm for the regime but not the forced starvation of the Ukrainian peasants. Later he had a great deal of ambivalence and regret about supporting Soviet actions that were not in the Jewish interest. Similarly, Jews in the Hollywood Communist Party of screenwriters had strong Jewish identifications and were, privately at least, far more concerned about anti-Semitism than class warfare issues (Gabler 1988, 338).

12. The American businessman Armand Hammer had very close ties with the Soviet Union and served as a courier bringing money from the USSR for the support of communist espionage in the United States. Hammer is illustrative of the complexities of the Jewish identifications of communists and communist sympathizers. For most of his life he denied his Jewish background, but when near death he returned to Judaism and scheduled an elaborate Bar Mitzvah (Epstein 1996). Were his surface denials of his Jewish heritage to be taken at face value at the time they were made? (Hammer also portrayed himself as a Unitarian in dealing with Muslims.) Or was Hammer a crypto-Jew his entire life until openly embracing Judaism at the end?

13. As a personal note from when I was a graduate student in philosophy at the University of Wisconsin in the 1960s, the overrepresentation of Jews in the New Left, especially during the early stages of protest to the Vietnam War, was rather obvious to everyone, so much so that during a “Teach-in” on the war held during the 1960s, I was recruited to give a talk in which I was to explain how an ex-Catholic from a small town in Wisconsin had come to be converted to the cause. The geographical (East Coast) and family origins (Jewish) of the vast majority of the movement were apparently a source of concern. The practice of having gentile spokespersons for movements dominated by Jews is noted in several sections of this volume and is also a common tactic against anti-Semitism (*SAID*, Ch. 6). Rothman and Lichter (1982, 81) quote another observer of the New Left scene at the University of Wisconsin as follows: “I am struck by the lack of Wisconsin born people and the massive preponderance of New York Jews. The situation at the University of Minnesota is similar.” His correspondent replied: “As you perceived, the Madison left is built on New York Jews.”

My personal experience at Wisconsin during the 1960s was that the student protest movement was originated and dominated by Jews and that a great many of them were “red diaper babies” whose parents had been radicals. The intellectual atmosphere of the movement closely resembled the atmosphere in the Polish Communist movement described by Schatz (1991, 117)—intensely verbal *pilpul*-like discussions in which one’s reputation as a leftist was related to one’s ability in Marxist intellectual analysis and familiarity with Marxist scholarship, both of which required a great deal of study. There was also a great deal of hostility to Western cultural institutions as politically and sexually oppressive combined with an ever-present sense of danger and imminent

destruction by the forces of repression—an ingroup bunker mentality that I now believe is a fundamental characteristic of Jewish social forms. There was an attitude of moral and intellectual superiority and even contempt toward traditional American culture, particularly rural America and most particularly the South—attitudes that are hallmarks of several of the intellectual movements reviewed here (e.g., the attitudes of Polish-Jewish communists toward traditional Polish culture; see also Chs. 5 and 6). There was also a strong desire for bloody, apocalyptic revenge against the entire social structure viewed as having victimized not only Jews but non-elite gentiles as well.

These students had very positive attitudes toward Judaism as well as negative attitudes toward Christianity, but perhaps surprisingly, the most salient contrast between Judaism and Christianity in their minds was in attitudes toward sexuality. In line with the very large Freudian influence of the period, the general tendency was to contrast a putative sexual permissiveness of Judaism with the sexual repression and prudery of Christianity, and this contrast was then linked with psychoanalytic analyses that attributed various forms of psychopathology and even capitalism, racism, and other forms of political oppression to Christian sexual attitudes. (See Chs. 4 and 5 for a discussion of the wider context of this type of analysis.) The powerful Jewish identification of these anti-Vietnam War radicals was clearly highlighted by their intense concern and eventual euphoria surrounding Israel's Six-Day War of 1967.

It is also noteworthy that at Wisconsin the student movement idolized certain Jewish professors, particularly the charismatic social historian Harvey Goldberg, whose lectures presenting his Marxist view of European social history enthralled a very large following in the largest lecture hall on campus, as well as other Jewish leftists, including especially Leon Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, and Herbert Marcuse. (The tendency for Jewish intellectual movements to become centered around highly charismatic Jewish figures is apparent in this chapter and is summarized as a general phenomenon in Chapter 6.) They adopted an attitude of condescension toward another well-known historian, George Mosse. Mosse's Jewishness was quite salient to them, but he was viewed as insufficiently radical.

14. Paul Gottfried (1996, 9–10), a Jewish conservative, has this to say about his graduate student days at Yale in the 1960s: "All my Jewish colleagues in graduate school, noisy anti-anti-Communists, opposed American capitalist imperialism, but then became enthusiastic warmongers during the Arab-Israeli War in 1967. One Jewish Marxist acquaintance went into a rage that the Israelis did not demand the entire Mideast at the end of that war. Another, though a feminist, lamented that the Israeli soldiers did not rape more Arab women. It would be no exaggeration to say that my graduate school days resounded with Jewish hysterics at an institution where Wasps seemed to count only for decoration."

15. See also Arthur Liebman's (1979, 5–11), Charles Liebman's (1973, 140), and Rothman and Lichter's (1982, 112) critiques of Fuchs.

16. American neoconservatism is a specifically Jewish conservative political movement but is not relevant to Pipes's argument as it applies to the Bolsheviks because its proponents have an overt Jewish identity and the movement is directed at achieving perceived Jewish interests, for example, with regard to Israel, affirmative action and immigration policy.

17. Religious orthodoxy was also compatible with attraction to anarchism: Alderman (1983, 64) quotes a contemporary writer to the effect that "the anarchists had achieved such popularity that they became almost respectable. A sympathizer could lay

on his *tefillin* (phylacteries) on the morning of an Anarchist-sponsored strike, bless Rucker [a gentile anarchist leader], and still go off to evening service as an orthodox Jew.”

18. In Rothman and Lichter’s (1982, 217) study, radicalism among American Jews was inversely related to religious orthodoxy. Moreover, there was a major gap between the fairly homogeneous set of mean radicalism scores of students from homes affiliated with a Jewish religious denomination (Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform) compared to the higher radicalism scores of those from homes without Jewish religious affiliation. These results again suggest that radicalism functioned as a form of secular Judaism among this latter group.

19. Levey (1996), in his review of the literature on the attraction of American Jews to liberalism, rejects Medding’s (1977) theory that Jewish political behavior is a function of perceived “Jewish micro-political interests.” I was not persuaded by Levey’s argument. For example, Levey argues that the threat of anti-Semitism cannot explain the percentage of Jews that vote Democratic because the percentage of Jews who viewed the Republican Party as anti-Semitic was much lower than the percentage who voted for the Democratic Party, and some Jews voted Democrat even though they perceived anti-Semitism within the Democratic Party. However, perceived anti-Semitism may be only one reason why Jews vote against the Republicans. As stressed here, another perceived Jewish interest is to promote cultural and ethnic pluralism, and, as indicated from the quotes from Silberman (1985) presented on p. 84, the Democratic Party is much more associated with pluralism in the minds of Jews (and, I suppose, everyone else) than the Republican Party. Moreover, it seems difficult to deny that Jewish neoconservatives are pursuing their perception of specifically Jewish political interests, particularly support for Israel and the promotion of cultural and ethnic pluralism, within the Republican Party. Given this, it seems odd at best to suppose that Jewish Democrats are not similarly pursuing their perceived ethnic interests within the Democratic Party.

20. Similarly, as indicated in Chapters 4 and 5, both psychoanalysis and the ideology of the Frankfurt School downplay the importance of ethnic and cultural differences, engage in radical criticism of gentile culture, and simultaneously allow for the continuity of Jewish identification. Rothman and Isenberg (1974a, 75) note that the theme of combining hostility to gentile culture with accepting a universalist culture can be seen in Philip Roth’s *Portnoy’s Complaint*. “Portnoy considers himself something of a radical and despises his parents for their parochial Jewishness and their hatred of Christians. He supposedly identifies with the poor and the downtrodden, but his tirade to his analyst makes it clear that this identification is based partly on his own feelings of inferiority and partly on his desire to ‘screw’ the ‘goyim’.”

21. Known for his skill as an orator and his brutality toward counterrevolutionaries, Lev Zinoviev was a close associate of Lenin and a holder of a number of highly visible posts in the Soviet government. Moisei Solomonovich Uritsky was the notoriously brutal Cheka chief for Petrograd.

22. Jewish overrepresentation in the Bolshevik revolution has been a potent source of anti-Semitism ever since the revolution and was prominent in Nazi writing about Jews (e.g., *Mein Kampf*). In the aftermath of the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union there has been a polemical controversy regarding the extent and importance of the role of Jews in establishing and maintaining the revolution, often with strong overtones of anti-Semitism. In his 1982 book *Russophobia*, Igor Shafarevich, a mathe-

matician and member of the prestigious U.S. National Academy of Sciences (NAS), argued that Jews were hostile to Russian culture and bore responsibility for the Russian Revolution (see *Science* 257, 1992, 743; *The Scientist* 6(19), 1992, 1). The NAS asked Shafarevich to resign his position in the academy, but he refused. See also Norman Podhoretz's (1985) comments on Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's latent anti-Semitism.

23. Similarly, Himmelstrand (1967) notes that the Ibo in Nigeria were the strongest supporters of a nationalist government constituting all tribes. However, when they were disproportionately successful in this new, nontribal form of social organization, there was a violent backlash against them, and they then attempted to abandon the national government in favor of establishing their own tribal homeland.