

APPROBATIONS

***Encyclopaedia Judaica Year Book, 1983–1985*, edited by Geoffrey Wigoder.
Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing House, 1985. 459 pp.: Illus., Index.**

Reviewed by:
Mark Friedman
Englewood, NJ

Introduction

The publication of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* in 1972 was a landmark event in modern Jewish scholarship, representing the culmination of a project that had begun half a century earlier in Germany. The *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (henceforth *EJ*) brought together the efforts of the best Judaic scholars of Israel and the Diaspora.

EJ Year Books have appeared, somewhat less frequently than annually, to keep users of the basic *Encyclopaedia* up-to-date. The *Year Book* under review follows the format of previous volumes, and contains an Illustrated Diary of Events, covering the years 1982–84; an interesting mix of feature articles; and a section of new articles and updates which serves as a continuation to the main body of the *EJ*. Reference matter is discussed at the end of this review.

Feature Articles

There are four feature articles on the war in Lebanon. Uri Algom, formerly the chief historian of the Israeli army, covers the military aspect of the war. His article uses a bewildering series of abbreviations for military units—Y,A,D,M,H,G—which are never explained, nor even identified on the two maps that accompany the article. Algom's article ends rather abruptly on September 1, 1982, before the Israel Defense Forces' final advances in Beirut after the assassination of Lebanese President Bashir Gemayel. Three years of the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon are overlooked in a volume of which the chronological coverage purports to reach the end of 1984.

A solid article on the "Regional and International Implications" of the war by Daniel Dishon is followed by a disappointing one on the war in "The Western Media" by Yoel Cohen. The geographic coverage of the latter article is skewed towards the United States. One can only wonder at the work-

ing definition of "Western Media" that was employed by the author, for of the seven illustrations that accompany the article, one is an official poster from Czechoslovakia, another is an unidentified cartoon from the Arab press, and two are cartoons from the Soviet press dating from the second half of 1984. Nevertheless, the article serves to remind us that in a protracted conflict, the press is an important battlefield.

Geographic coverage is much better in Arden Goldman's article on "The Response of World Jewry." The critical factor of timing is not sufficiently highlighted, as world Jewry's response varied after the first days of the invasion, the siege of Beirut, Sabra and Shatilla, and the report of the Commission of Inquiry. This article, like Algom's, concludes with the decision to appoint a Commission of Inquiry in September 1982.

On the issue of fundraising, which Goldman calls "the most consistent reflection of Diaspora support for Israel," in contrast to 1967 and 1973 when there were significant jumps in the amount of funds raised for Israel, a survey of North American and European Jewish leaders showed that 28% reported an increase in contributions, 25% a decrease, and 35% no significant change. For the first time since the establishment of the State of Israel, significant numbers of Jews and some mainstream Jewish organizations raised funds to assist non-Israeli victims of the conflict.

A functional article on "Jewish Genealogy" by Sara Schafier is followed by a survey of modern Jewish education in the Diaspora by Barry Chazan. He points out that Israel's involvement and investment in Diaspora Jewish education will be one of the key questions for the future. Unfortunately, the article does not address the world of traditional Jewish education.

There is a very interesting series on "The Making of American Rabbis," with articles by Rabbi Zevulun Charlop on the Ortho-

dox Rabbinate; Reuven Hammer on the Conservative; Alfred Gottschalk on the Reform; and Rebecca Alpert on Reconstructionist rabbis. The articles highlight the fundamental differences between yeshivot and seminaries.

Rabbi Charlop's article, which deals only with Yeshiva University, unfortunately neglects the wide spectrum of yeshivot in the Orthodox world that are ordaining a high proportion of America's new Rabbis.

There are feature articles on topics as diverse as "The Heritage of Oriental Jewry in Israeli Education and Culture" by Nissim Yosha, and "Twenty Years of Genizah Research" by Geoffrey Kahn. Joseph Dan has a brilliant article on "Jewish Studies after Gershon Scholem." *Year Book* editor Geoffrey Wigoder contributed an insightful article on "Some Contemporary Christian Perceptions of Judaism and the Jews," to which are appended the most important recent Christian documents on the subject. In the only feature article which reflects neither recent events nor contemporary issues, Shalom Bar-Asher examines aspects of Jewish communal history in Morocco from 1492–1960.

Yehuda Bauer's article on "Contemporary Antisemitism: Basic Facts and Trends" is too brief to do justice to the subject. It begins with a geographic survey of neo-Nazis and then adds a paragraph on terrorism. The article continues with a section on Holocaust "reversionism" and then jumps to a paragraph on Latin America.

A semantic problem arises in Yohanan Manor's article on "Contemporary Anti-Zionism." Should the term 'anti-Zionism' be used to cover all opposition to Zionism, from the various competing Jewish ideologies before and after 1948 to the current politically motivated attacks on Israel and the Jewish people which use Zionism as a subterfuge? Manor does a fine job of analyz-

ing the delegitimation, dehumanization, and demonization of the Jewish people by anti-Zionists.

Supplements to the Encyclopaedia

The *Year Book* contains 219 pages of new articles and updates to the basic *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. There are three-page articles on Canada and England, and six-page articles on Russia and the United States. The article on the State of Israel, however, stretches over 101 pages. Does this imbalance reflect the realities of Jewish life today, or merely the Israel-centered orientation of the *Encyclopaedia*?

A welcome bonus to the *Year Book* is the poster conceived by Abba Kovner on "The Sea of the Halacha." Originally prepared for Beth Hattutsoth, the poster combines a colorful "Map of the Jewish Oral Law" with a guide to the concepts, persons, and places mentioned on the map. All the entries refer to articles in the *EJ*, making this an excellent instructional tool for school and home. (Two minor criticisms: the poster continues the unfortunate *EJ* tradition of referring to the leading figure of American Orthodoxy as Rabbi J.D. Soloveitchik, and translates the order of the Mishnah commonly known as *Kodashim* or Sacrifices as "Things.") A glossary of terms is another useful feature of the *Year Book*.

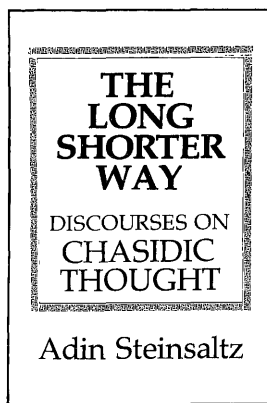
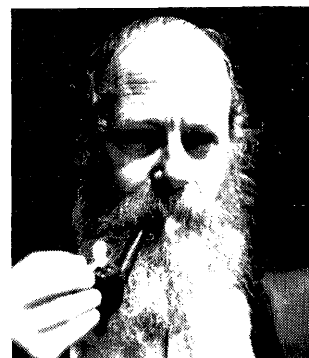
The index includes references to the basic *EJ*, but unfortunately, the feature articles in the *Year Book* are not covered. A cumulative subject index to feature articles in all *EJ Year Books* would also be helpful. In this way, Barry Chazan's survey on "Jewish Education Towards the End of the 20th Century" in the 1983-1985 *Year Book* would be linked to Alvin Schiff's article on "Jewish Day Schools in the United States," which appeared in the 1974 *Year Book*. There are relatively few errors in the *Year Book*, thus the omission of an errata list is a minor lacuna.

Conclusion

As the authoritative work for all but a few specialists in Jewish Studies, the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* must be held up to the highest standards for review. The 1983-1985 *Year Book* stands fully within the tradition of the original *Encyclopaedia* and, despite its few faults, is an indispensable volume for every Jewish library and home.

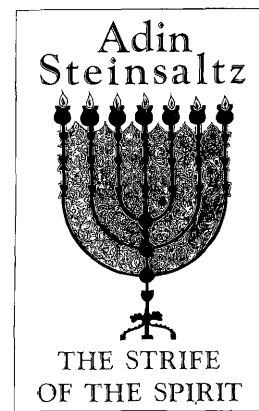
Mark Friedman, formerly Director of the Institute for Public Affairs of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, is a historian and writer residing in Englewood, New Jersey.

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