

With Podhoretz's retirement in 1995, his long-time associate Neal Kozodoy took over the reins of the publication. His main task has been to lead the magazine into the post-Cold War era following the collapse of the Soviet Union. He has continued to emphasize, however, many of the magazine's older themes, such as criticism of left-wing influences on the campus, in the media, and in American politics. In the period following 9/11, *Commentary* became one of the most forceful defenders of the Bush Doctrine calling for the use by the nation, with or without international support, of the preemptive strike in the battle against international terrorism, a move that was implemented by the administration in Iraq.

A new generation of younger, neo-conservative intellectuals and writers emerged, including Charles Krauthammer, William Kristol, and Robert Kagan and government officials Paul Wolfowitz and Eliot Abrams, whom historian John Ehrman has characterized as "*Commentary's Children*," who continued to promote many of the ideas brought forward by *Commentary*.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: M. Friedman, "*Commentary*" in *American Life* (2005).

[Murray Friedman (2nd ed.)]

COMMUNISM, the international revolutionary Marxist movement that evolved under Lenin's leadership from the Bolshevik faction (created in 1903 in the Russian Social Democratic Party) to become the ruling party of Russia after the October Revolution in 1917 and created the Communist International (Comintern) in 1919. The Communist movement and ideology played an important part in Jewish life, particularly in the 1920s, 1930s, and during and after World War II. Violent polemics raged between Jewish Communists and Zionists in all countries until the disenchantment with the anti-Jewish policies of Stalin in his last years and, after his death, with the antisemitic quality of the treatment of Jews and Jewish life in the U.S.S.R., as well as the increasingly violent anti-Israel stand of Moscow in the Arab-Israel conflict.

Individual Jews played an important role in the early stages of Bolshevism and the Soviet regime. These Jews were mostly confirmed assimilationists who adopted their party's concept of the total disappearance of Jewish identity under advanced capitalism and socialism. They thus opposed the existence of separate Jewish workers' movements, particularly the Bund and Socialist Zionism. The great attraction of communism among Russian, and later also Western, Jewry emerged only with the establishment of the Soviet regime in Russia. The mere fact that during the civil war in Russia following the October 1917 Revolution the counterrevolutionary forces were violently antisemitic, shedding Jewish blood in pogroms on an unprecedented scale, drove the bulk of Russian Jewish youth into the ranks of the Bolshevik regime. During Lenin's rule, the NEP ("new economic policy"), and the years preceding Stalin's personal dictatorship and the great purges of the 1930s, a dichotomy of Jewish life evolved in the Soviet Union and was greatly attractive to both assimilationist and secular

Yiddish-oriented Jews outside Russia. On the one hand, Russian Jews enjoyed the opportunities of immense geographical and social mobility, leaving behind the townlets of the Pale of Settlement and occupying many responsible positions in all branches of the party and state machinery at the central and local seats of power. On the other, a secular educational and cultural network in Yiddish and an economic and administrative framework of Jewish life, including agricultural settlement and Jewish local and regional "Soviets," were officially established and fostered, culminating in the mid-1930s in the creation of the Jewish Autonomous Region in the Far East (*Birobidzhan). Many Jews the world over therefore regarded the Soviet concept of the solution to the "Jewish question" as an intrinsic positive approach with the main options open for various Jewish trends – assimilation or preservation of Jewish (secular) identity and even Jewish territorialism and embryonic Jewish statehood.

During this period the position of world Jewry markedly deteriorated because of the severe economic and political crises in Palestine and the growing trend of oppressive antisemitism in the rest of Eastern Europe, Nazi and fascist influence in Central and Western Europe, and the economic crisis in the United States. Communism and support of the Soviet Union thus seemed to many Jews to be the only alternative, and Communist trends became widespread in virtually all Jewish communities. In some countries Jews became the leading element in the legal and illegal Communist parties and in some cases were even instructed by the Communist International to change their Jewish-sounding names and pose as non-Jews, in order not to confirm right-wing propaganda that presented Communism as an alien, Jewish conspiracy (e.g., the Polish slogan against "*Żydo-Komuna*" and the Nazi reiteration against "Jewish Bolshevism," etc.). Initially, the Stalin-Trotsky controversy did not affect the attraction of Communism to Jews, though a number of intellectual Jewish Communists tended more toward Trotsky's consistent internationalism than to Stalin's concept of building "Socialism in one country" and subjecting the interests of the international working class to the changing tactical interests of the Soviet Union. The facts about the gradual liquidation of the Yiddish cultural and educational network and the stifling of the Birobidzhan experiment in the late 1930s did not immediately reach the Jewish public outside the Soviet Union. In addition, only a minority of Jewish Communists condemned the Comintern-directed policy at the end of the 1930s that branded any form of non-Communist Socialism as "social fascism" and the main enemy of the revolution, while simultaneously seeking cooperation with German Nazism. Even the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of August 1939 was a shock to only a minority of Jewish Communists (except confirmed oppositionists, mainly of the Trotskyite "Fourth International"). When World War II broke out in 1939, most Jewish Communists defended the Soviet anti-Western-flavored neutrality. But from June 1941, when Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union and the Communists in occupied Europe excelled in anti-Nazi resis-

tance, and particularly after the war, when the Soviet Union actively supported the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, Jewish Communists the world over achieved the highest degree of inner contentment and intellectual harmony in the whole history of the Communist movement.

The relatively abrupt disenchantment began in the late 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s, when Soviet policy toward the State of Israel gradually reversed from support to hostility and the anti-**Cosmopolitan* campaign, the **Slansky Trials* in Czechoslovakia, and the **Doctors' Plot* in Moscow revealed the antisemitic character of the Soviet regime in Stalin's last years. The disclosures, in 1956–57, of the brutal liquidation of all Jewish institutions and the judicial murder of most Yiddish writers and artists in the “black years” (1948–53), the growing Soviet-Arab cooperation against Israel, and the anti-Jewish policy of the Khrushchev and post-Khrushchev period, which culminated in the violent “anti-Zionist” and anti-Israel campaign after the **Six-Day War* and the Leningrad Trial of 1970, rendered Jewish disenchantment with Soviet-style Communism almost complete. The **New Left* groups that emerged in the later 1960s and enjoyed heavy support from Jewish youth, particularly in the U.S., France, and Germany, were not Soviet-oriented.

[Binyamin Eliav]

Bolshevik Theory (1903–1917)

The Bolshevik attitude to basic questions concerning the Jews was formulated in as early as 1903, with the emergence of the Bolshevik faction during the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party in Brussels and London. The Bolshevik faction (which in 1912–13 became the Bolshevik Party) contained a number of Jews who were active mainly in the field of organization and propaganda (rather than in theory and ideology, as was the case with the Jewish Mensheviks). They included such people as Maxim **Litvinov* (Wallach), M. Liadov (Mandelstam), Grigori Shklovsky, A. Soltz, S. Gusev (Drabkin), Grigori **Zinoviev* (Radomyslsky), Lev **Kamenev* (Rosenfeld), Rozaliya **Zemliachka* (Zalkind), Helena Rozmirovich, Yemeli **Yaroslavsky* (Gubelman), Serafima Gopner, G. Sokolnikov, I. Piatnitsky, Jacob **Sverdlov*, M. Vladimirov, P. Zalutsky, A. Lozovsky, Y. Yaklovlev (Epstein), Lazar **Kaganovich*, D. Shvartsman, and Simon **Dimanstein*. Their number grew rapidly between the Russian revolutions of February and October 1917, when various groups and individuals joined the Bolsheviks; prominent among the new adherents were **Trotsky*, M. Uritsky, M. Volodarsky, J. Steklov, Adolf Joffe, David Riazanov (Goldendach), Yuri **Larin*, and Karl **Radek* (Sobelsohn). Most of the Jews active in Bolshevik ranks before 1917 were assimilationist intellectuals. Few Jewish workers in Russia belonged to the Bolsheviks, and propaganda material designed to recruit Jewish members was restricted to a single Yiddish pamphlet, a short report on the Third (Bolshevik) Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party (April–May 1905), which contained a special introduction by Lenin addressed “To the Jewish Workers.”

It was, indeed, Lenin, the ideological, political, and organizational leader of Bolshevism, who also determined the party's policy toward the Jews. In the period 1900–06, Lenin expressed himself on three Jewish topics: antisemitism, Jewish nationalism versus assimilation, and the relationship between the Bund and the Social Democratic Party. From its very beginnings, Russian Marxism under the leadership of Plekhanov had rejected both the anti-Jewish tendencies in Russian populism and the evasive attitude of the Second International toward the struggle against antisemitism (Brussels Congress, 1891). On the subject of antisemitism, Lenin's attitude was at all times consistent; not only did he take a definitive stand against it, but, unlike Plekhanov, he was free of any personal prejudice against Jews and would never indulge in any anti-Jewish remarks, in public or in private. This held true in spite of the many bitter arguments he had with Jewish opponents in the revolutionary movement. Although generally relying on Marx on questions of fundamental importance, Lenin did not resort to Marx's famous essay “On the Jewish Question” when dealing with Jewish affairs, because of its anti-Jewish implications. He rejected outright any suggestion that the Bolsheviks should ignore anti-Jewish policy and propaganda in czarist Russia, let alone make use of its popular appeal. Lenin regarded the czarist anti-Jewish hate campaign as a diversionary maneuver, an integral part of the demagogic campaign against “the aliens” conducted by henchmen of the czarist regime. He believed that the Jewish worker suffered no less than the Russian under capitalism and the czarist government (*Iskra*, No. 1, December 1900). Later (1905) he went even further, pointing out that Jewish workers suffered from a special form of discrimination by being deprived of even elementary civil rights. Antisemitism was designed to serve the social interests of the ruling classes, although there were also workers who had been incited. As antisemitism was clearly against the interests of the revolution, the fight against it was an integral part of the struggle against czarism and had to be conducted with “proletarian solidarity and a scientific ideology.” Lenin regarded the pogroms of 1905–06 as part of the campaign against the revolution and called for the creation of a militia and for armed self-defense as the only means of combating the rioters. He also waged a special press campaign against the pogrom in Bialystok. Nevertheless, Lenin lacked a proper appreciation of the intensity of the Russian antisemitic tradition, the complexity of the factors underlying it, and the special role that it played in the political and social life of the country.

The Bolshevik attitude toward the collective identity of the Jews and their future was theoretically part of their general views on the national question. Lenin did not consider nationalism a constructive and stable social factor. His approach to it was conditional and pragmatic, subordinate to the interests of the class struggle. At the beginning of 1903 he voiced the opinion that the Social Democratic Party was not required to provide positive solutions to national problems, such as the granting of independence, federation, or autonomy, except in

a few special cases, and that it should confine itself to combating discrimination and russification of the non-Russian nationalities. The vague formula contained in the platform of the Social Democratic Party on the “right of nations to self-determination” was regarded as a mere slogan, designed to facilitate the organizational and political consolidation of the workers in the common fight against czarism and capitalism, irrespective of their national origin. Furthermore, this “right to self-determination” applied to nationalities having a territorial basis and did not refer to the Jews.

Lenin knew little of the history, culture, and life of the Jews. His view on the Jewish problem was of a casual nature and was not derived from any study or analysis of his own; this was one of the reasons for the shifts in his attitude within a single year. In February 1903 (in the article “Does the Jewish Proletariat Need an Independent Political Party?”) he spoke of a Jewish “national culture,” a view predicated upon the recognition of the Jews as a national entity, and said that it could not be foretold whether or not the Jews of Russia would assimilate. But in as early as October of that year (in the article “The Position of the Bund in the Party”) he voiced categorical opposition to the view that the Jews are a nation and expressed the conviction that their assimilation is a desirable and necessary development. He based himself on a truncated quotation from the writings of Karl Kautsky, the Marxist theoretician, accepting the view that the Jews lack the two characteristics of a nationality: a common territory and a common language (presuming that Yiddish was not a language). The decisive motive behind Lenin’s view, however, was the overriding role of the party in his conception of the political struggle and his determination to base the party on absolute organizational centralism. The Bund’s demand for a federative structure of the party, in which the Bund would be “the sole representative” of the Jewish proletariat, was regarded by Lenin as counter to his revolutionary strategy. Even so, he did not regard this difference with the Bund as closed to compromise. In 1905–06, when the emphasis in the internal struggle raging in the Russian Social Democratic Party passed from matters of organization to tactical questions and the Bund’s stand on certain important points proved to be close to that of the Bolsheviks, Lenin did not hesitate to do everything possible to facilitate the return of the Jewish organization to the party fold (the Bund left the Social Democratic Party in 1903). That the Bund had put even greater stress upon its demand for Jewish cultural autonomy at its sixth convention proved to be no deterrent.

Several leading members of a short-lived non-Leninist group of Bolsheviks, which came into existence in 1908, developed their own approach to Jewish questions. Thus, A. Lunacharsky, in dealing with religion, found that the Bible, and particularly the Prophets, contained revolutionary elements and that there was a link between the Old Testament and the new “Religion of Labor,” the latter being, in his opinion, an essential part of socialism. The existence of the Jewish people and the contribution it had made to humanity were of vital im-

portance (*Religiya i Sotsiyalizm*, pt. 1, 1908). Maxim *Gorky, in his condemnation of antisemitism, did not confine himself to its economic, social, and legal aspects, and his struggle against it was not motivated by mere utilitarian political considerations. His positive remarks on Zionism, first made in 1902, were reprinted in 1906, at a time when he had already joined the ranks of the Bolsheviks. He acknowledged the contribution of Jewish ethics and regarded “the creative power of the Jewish people” as a force that would be of help in establishing “the Law of Socialism” among mankind. These individual stands on the Jews taken by Lunacharsky and Gorky had a direct bearing on the attitude they were to adopt on Jewish questions, especially on Jewish culture, at a later stage, when the Bolsheviks had already come to power in Russia.

After the 1905 revolution, when there were nationalist stirrings in Russia, Lenin came to appreciate the importance of the national question and its possible use in the struggle against the czarist regime. In addition to the slogan of “the right of nations to self-determination, including separation,” he also recognized the need to make concrete and positive proposals on the solution of national questions, based mainly on the concept of territorial autonomy. Lenin was ready to advocate the creation of autonomous districts based on a homogeneous national (i.e., ethnic and linguistic) composition, even on a minute scale. Such districts, he assumed, would seek to establish contacts of various kinds with members of the same nationality in other parts of Russia, or even in other parts of the world (“Critical Notes on the National Question,” 1913). The pogroms and the *Beilis blood libel led Lenin to conclude that “in recent years the persecution of Jews has reached unprecedented proportions” and that “no other nation in Russia suffers as much oppression and persecution as does the Jewish nationality.”

In a bill on equal rights for nationalities that Lenin drafted for presentation to the Duma by the Bolshevik faction (1914), special emphasis was put on the lack of rights suffered by the Jews. He was not, however, consistent in the terms he employed with reference to the Jews; he frequently spoke of the Jewish “nationality” or “nation” (as for example in the above-mentioned bill) and nearly always in the context of the national question in Russia. In general, he held that “the process of national assimilation as furthered by capitalism is to be regarded as a great historical advance” and that “the proletariat also welcomes the assimilation of nations,” except “when this is based on force or on special privileges.” “Each nation consists of two nations,” and there are “two national cultures” in each national culture, including that of the Jews. He acknowledged the presence of “universal progressive qualities” in Jewish culture, such as that of “internationalism” and “the capacity to absorb the stream of contemporary progressive ideas” (the latter quality manifesting itself in the high percentage of Jews found in democratic and proletarian movements). In view of his general attitude on the Jewish question, the “progressive qualities” that he perceived in Jewish culture were of the kind that implied the impending assimilation of

that culture to “international culture.” He did, however, admit that equality of national rights included the right to demand “the hiring of special teachers, at government expense, to teach the Jewish language, Jewish history, etc.” The debate on Jewish nationalism, linked with the question of “national cultural autonomy” as demanded by the Bund, increasingly became a part of the internal party struggle. Lenin held fast to the idea that national cultural autonomy would result in weakening the workers’ movement by dividing it according to the nationality of its members.

Similar views were also expressed by Stalin. In an essay published in 1913 under the title “The National Question and Social Democracy” (later known under the title “Marxism and the National Question”), which had Lenin’s approval and was devoted in large part to the Jews, Stalin gave a dogmatic definition of the concept of nationhood: “A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up, manifested in a common culture.” If even a single one of these characteristics is missing, there is no “nation.” On the basis of this definition, Stalin contended that the Jewish communities living in the various countries did not constitute one nation. Although every one of them might be described as possessing a common “national character,” they were to be regarded as “tribes” or “ethnic entities.” When the Pale of Settlement was abolished, the Jews of Russia would assimilate. There was no farming class among them and they existed only as a minority in various areas where the majority population belonged to a different nation. They are therefore to be classified as “national minorities,” serving the nations among which they live as industrialists, merchants, and professionals, and were bound to assimilate into these nations. It followed that the Bund’s program of “national autonomy” referred to a “nation whose future is denied and whose existence has still to be proven.”

Stalin, of course, also opposed Zionism. Unlike Lenin, he did not even have any modest positive proposals to make on the solution of national and cultural problems concerning the Jews. In accordance with the Bolshevik approach, he did, however, agree that the Marxist stand on national questions was not absolute, but rather “dialectic,” and depended on the specific circumstances of time and place. Another prominent Bolshevik, S. Shaumian, who generally opposed any positive suggestions about the national question, did in fact concede (in 1914) that under certain conditions it might be possible to accept “national cultural autonomy.” Only one leading Bolshevik, Helena Rozmirovich, is known to have favored such a solution at this stage in the history of the Bolshevik Party.

Soviet Practice (1917–1939)

After the October Revolution, the Jewish problem in Russia ceased to be a theoretical issue in interparty strife, and the Bolshevik government and party had to assume responsibility for the specific problems affecting the existence and development of the Jewish community. During the Revolution Jews played

a prominent part in the party organs. The Politburo elected on Oct. 23, 1917, had four Jews among its seven members. The Military Revolutionary Committee, appointed to prepare the coup, was headed by Trotsky and had two Jews among its five members. In the early years of the Soviet regime, Jews were in many leading positions in the government and party machinery, although, as a rule, their number did not exceed the percentage of Jews in the urban population. (The number of Jewish members of the All-Russian Communist Party was 5.2% in 1922, 4.33% in 1927, and 3.8% in 1930; the corresponding figures in the Ukraine and Belorussia in 1927 were 12.1% and 23%, respectively.) The legal emancipation of the Jews, which had already been proclaimed in the February Revolution, seemed in Soviet practice to be implemented to an extent unprecedented in any other country. Their unrestricted admission to the universities and to all categories of employment served both the interests of the Soviet regime and the needs and aspirations of the Jews. The centrifugal nationalist tendencies among the peoples of the western border republics, which endangered Soviet centralism, inspired the regime to utilize compact, Jewish masses in these areas as a counterweight, which would swing the balance in the centralist regime’s favor. The cultural russification of the Jews played a significant role in this respect. In 1922, as much as two-thirds of the Jewish membership of the Communist Party in the Ukraine was Russian-speaking. The Soviet regime also derived a propaganda benefit from the legal and political equality of Soviet Jews, in contrast to the neighboring states, such as Poland and Romania, which followed an antisemitic policy in practice and sometimes also in law. In both these countries a large Jewish population was concentrated in the border regions (Western Belorussia, Western Ukraine, and Bessarabia) that the Soviet Union considered as being only temporarily detached from its territory.

Antisemitism was branded as being counterrevolutionary in nature, and persons participating in pogroms or instigating them were outlawed (by a special decree issued by the Council of Commissars in July 1918, signed and personally amended by Lenin to sharpen its tone). A statement against antisemitism made by Lenin in March 1919 was one of the rare occasions on which his voice was put on a phonograph record, to be used in a mass campaign against the counterrevolutionary incitement against the Jews. The regime made every effort to denounce the pogroms and punish the persons taking part in them, even when they were Red Army personnel. When the civil war came to an end, a law was passed against “incitement to hatred and hostility of a national or religious nature,” which, in effect, also applied to antisemitism, including the use of the pejorative epithet *Zhid*.

The theoretical approach to the Jewish question adopted by prerevolutionary Bolshevism was found to be unsuited to the new situation. The denial of the collective right of the Jews to nationhood, the forecast of the desirable and unavoidable assimilation, and the negation of a Jewish “national culture” and the use of Yiddish as a national Jewish language no longer formed a part of Soviet dogma. Although not all of these

formulas were officially abolished or reinterpreted, the entire propaganda network was based on a variety of views that were often the very opposite of Lenin's and Stalin's utterances in pre-revolutionary days. The list of nationalities, i.e., ethnic groups, in the Soviet Union included the Jews among the "national minorities" that had no defined territory of their own and that the czarist regime had sought to destroy by any means, not excluding the instigation of pogroms. It followed that the assurance of their right to "free national development" by the "very nature" of the Soviet regime was not enough and that it behooved the party to help "the toiling masses of these ethnic groups" utilize in full "their inherent right to free development" (Tenth Congress of the All-Russian Communist Party, 1921, speech by Stalin, Resolutions). Shortly after the Revolution Jewish affairs were officially included in the jurisdiction of the Commissariat for Nationalities; in addition, Jewish councils ("soviets") were appointed on a local, subdistrict, and district level. This trend found its clearest expression during the early stages of the Birobidzhan experiment (1928–34), when the head of the Soviet state, Mikhail Kalinin, declared that "the Jewish people were facing a great task – that of preserving their nationhood." Thus the prerevolutionary forecast of assimilation as the solution to the Jewish problem, even under advanced capitalism, was now replaced by a national and territorial solution under the new conditions created by the "dictatorship of the proletariat." Disregarding Stalin's findings in 1913 that there were no links between the Jewish communities living in various countries, the Soviet leaders now clearly took into account the influence of the Jews on the Revolution, not only in Russia itself but in other countries as well. Lenin also stressed the significance of abolishing completely the anti-Jewish discrimination practiced by the former regime (see Dimanstein, *Lenin on the Jewish Problem in Russia*, 1924), and this may well have been one of the motives for the project of establishing the nucleus of a Jewish republic (Kalinin at the second national conference of OZET). Although the party did not abandon its theoretical opposition to granting "national cultural autonomy" to ethnic groups lacking a territorial basis, the Jews were in fact permitted to develop a "national culture" of their own (in Yiddish) under the slogan of "a culture that was socialist in content and national in form." Assimilationism ceased to be an obligatory ideal for the foreseeable future. Stalin declared that "Lenin had good reason for saying that national differences will remain for a long time, even after the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat on an international scale" (Collected Works, vol. 13, p. 7). The belief that Yiddish secular culture in the Soviet Union had a bright future became widespread the world over and attracted to the Soviet Union such non-Communist Jewish authors as David *Bergelson, Leib *Kvitko, David *Hofstein, Moshe *Kulbak, Peretz *Markish, Der *Nister, Max *Erik, Meir *Wiener, and Nakhum *Shtif during the 1920s. Jewish culture in the Soviet Union in this period recorded significant achievements in literature, linguistics, literary history, and some branches of historiography and demography.

This development of Yiddish culture and Jewish autonomy was partly influenced by the considerable influx of former members of Jewish workers' parties (the Bund, the "Far-eynikte," *Po'alei Zion, etc.) into the ranks of the Communist Party, especially in the years 1918–21. Many of them tried at first to form Jewish Communist units, as, e.g., the "Kombund" or the "Komfarband," but had soon to conform to the centralist territorial organization of the party and disband all Jewish formations inside the Communist Party. They also had to abjure demonstratively their previous "nationalistic" errors and adopt the official ideology. Nevertheless, these former members of Jewish parties placed their stamp upon the party activities directed toward the Jews, especially through the *Yevsektsiya (which was shunned by the old Jewish Bolsheviks, except Dimanstein). They attempted to continue the tradition of the prerevolutionary Jewish labor parties, basing their activities on various slogans and programs that conformed to the general party policy toward the Jews, such as "productivization," the development of Yiddish culture, Soviet-Jewish territorialism, etc.

At an earlier stage, the Kombund had even had hopes of establishing Jewish organs that would enjoy a large measure of autonomy, based upon the existence of densely settled Jewish masses with a common language and a common way of life. Such endeavors were abandoned as early as 1920, when the Yevsektsiya became a simple propaganda organ of the party with the task of attracting the unorganized Jewish proletariat to the new regime. In accordance with the official line, which demanded that the Russian majority combat its own "chauvinism" and the minority nationalities overcome the "bourgeois nationalism" in their own sphere, the Yevsektsiya found its *raison d'être* by struggling against the "Jewish class enemy," i.e., Jewish religion, Zionism, and the use of Hebrew, and against any link with traditional Jewish culture. The last vestiges of technically legal Jewish labor groups outside the ruling party, as, e.g., the Communist Jewish Labor Party-Po'alei Zion and the legal *He-Halutz, were officially closed down in 1928. The former was candidly told by the GPU (secret police): "You are disbanded, for we no longer have any need for your party." Two years later, in 1930, the Yevsektsiya itself was dissolved. The end of the Yevsektsiya, however, did not mean an immediate cessation of Yiddish cultural activities. Only in the second half of the 1930s did official policy toward the Jews undergo what was at first a gradual change and later developed into a radical departure from previous policy evolving into forced assimilation.

In the early 1930s, popular antisemitism in the Soviet Union seemed to be on the decline. This trend was used to justify omission of the subject in literature or the press. It was claimed that the "victory of Socialism" made any resurgence of antisemitism impossible. Later, during the Stalinist purges in the late 1930s, most Jewish cultural institutions, including all Yiddish schools, were closed down, and in the course of the far-reaching changes in government and party personnel, a tendency of restricting the number of Jewish cadres made

itself felt. The geographic and social changes that had taken place among the Jews, their absorption into the economy of the country, and their growing assimilation to the Russian language and culture provided additional reasons for the gradual abandonment of developing Jewish culture and Jewish institutions and for a return to the original concept of total Jewish assimilation. This time, however, the authorities would force it upon the Jews (though they seemed to disregard the fact that the obligatory registration of the Jewish "nationality" on internal documents, particularly after the reintroduction of the old "passport system" in 1932, made total assimilation even formally impossible). The conscious disregard of any manifestation of popular antisemitism inside the Soviet Union now assumed a different meaning.

Only in the short period of Stalin's anti-Nazi stance from 1934, in the "Popular Front" era, did official Soviet opposition to antisemitism again assume international significance. While Nazi propaganda identified Jews with "Bolsheviks," the Soviet government stressed its opposition to antisemitism "anywhere in the world," expressed "fraternal feelings to the Jewish people" in recognition of its contribution to international socialism, and mentioned Karl Marx's Jewish origin (an item dropped from the 1952 edition of the Soviet Encyclopedia) and the part played by the Jews in building up the Soviet Union (Molotov, 1936). At this time also, a statement made by Stalin in 1931 to a correspondent of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that "antisemitism, as an extreme form of racial chauvinism, is the most dangerous vestige of cannibalism" was even made public in the Soviet Union itself. But in the period of Soviet-German rapprochement (1939–41), the Nazi persecution and murder of Jews in the occupied territories of Europe was hardly mentioned in the Soviet press. Even after the outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union (June 22, 1941), the authorities made no efforts to combat manifestations of popular antisemitism on Soviet territory, which were a frequent occurrence both in the rear and among the partisan units.

An exceptional phenomenon during the war was the establishment of the Jewish *Anti-Fascist Committee in Moscow (created to solicit support for the Soviet war effort among Western Jewry), whose existence reinforced feelings of solidarity between Soviet and world Jewry. Another exception was the change in Soviet policy toward Jewish endeavors in Palestine; there were signs of it already in 1945 and it culminated in 1947, when it strongly supported the establishment of a Jewish state. Andrei Gromyko's statement at the UN Special Assembly (May 1947) even stressed the historic connection between the Jewish people and Palestine.

Stalin's own infection with antisemitism, however (as witnessed by his daughter, Svetlana Aliluyeva, in her books *Twenty Letters to a Friend* and *Only One Year*), tallied with his new policy of encouraging Russian nationalism, which had traditionally been anti-Jewish. This trend came into the open in the "black years" (1948–53) with the campaign against "Cosmopolitans," the murder of Solomon *Mikhoels and other

Jewish intellectuals, and the destruction of the last Jewish cultural institutions. The pro-Jewish turn in Soviet policy on Palestine did not have any effect upon the internal anti-Jewish campaign. From the end of 1948 the latter was relentlessly pursued and spread to other Communist countries as well, notably to Czechoslovakia. It reached its climax in the Slánský Trials in Prague and the Doctors' Plot in Moscow.

After Stalin's death (1953) the enforced cultural assimilation of Soviet Jews, as well as their individual discrimination in the universities and certain professions, continued. Events such as the singling out of Jews for "economic trials" and the publication of antisemitic literature in the 1960s, as, e.g., *Judaism Without Embellishment* by Trofim Kichko (1963), reconfirmed the anti-Jewish line of Stalin's last years in a somewhat attenuated and disguised form. The necessity to disguise this line, especially under pressure of world opinion, including Communist and pro-Soviet circles (see below), elicited some minor concessions, such as the publication of a Yiddish journal (*Sovetish Heymland), a few Yiddish books, and a temporary lull in the propaganda against the Jewish religion (at the end of the 1950s).

A worsening of the situation resulted from the Soviet Union's complete reversal of its policy toward Israel that began in the 1950s with the supply of large consignments of modern arms to the Arab states and continued to be manifest in the sinister role played by the Soviet Union in the sequence of events leading to the Six-Day War and the arrival of Soviet military personnel in Egypt. Soviet antisemitism presented itself from then on as "anti-Zionism."

The World Communist Movement

The Comintern, established in Moscow in the year 1919 and officially dissolved in 1943, had to deal with Jewish problems throughout the period of its existence. In theory, the Comintern recognized neither a "world Jewish people" nor the existence of a world Jewish problem; it conceded that such a problem may exist in certain countries, in which case it remained the responsibility of the local section of the Comintern. Antisemitism was officially regarded by the Comintern as a counterrevolutionary phenomenon, emanating from the dissolution of the petite bourgeoisie and providing a breeding ground for fascism. Its principal danger was that it diverted the attention of the proletariat from the class struggle, and it would disappear as a matter of course as soon as socialism triumphed over fascism and capitalism. There was hardly any mention of antisemitism at the Comintern congresses, the plenary sessions of its Executive Committee, and in its press.

From the very beginning, however, the Comintern was forced to deal with the issue of its relations with the Jewish workers' movement, which was itself a kind of miniature international. The Po'alei Zion had its World Union, and the Bund, although lacking a world organization of its own, wielded great influence among Jewish workers' organizations in Europe and America. The Jewish workers' movement in prerevolutionary Russia had also exerted ideological influence upon Jew-

ish workers in other countries, and even upon Jewish groups that did not belong to the working class. Moreover, the Jewish workers' movement had intricate ties with general workers' organizations and with the international workers' movement, and it had in its ranks many experienced revolutionaries. But the rigid principles of organizational structure made any organized Jewish participation in the Comintern impossible. Efforts made by Communist-oriented groups of the Bund (the Kombund) to join the Comintern as an organization ended in failure, as did similar attempts made by the Polish Bund. The left wing of Po'alei Zion, which, unlike the Bund, had not been involved in the prerevolutionary struggle between Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, made even more determined efforts to be accepted by the Comintern; but in 1920, after prolonged negotiations, the Comintern rejected a proposal to create a Jewish section within the Comintern that would consist of all Communist bodies active among the Jewish proletariat (the Yevsektsiya, Kombund, and the Communist Po'alei Zion). Another proposal, made after the second congress of the Comintern, which provided for the World Union of Po'alei Zion to be accepted as a member of the Comintern while its branches would be permitted to form Jewish sections of the respective Communist parties and would retain a degree of autonomy in matters affecting the specific needs of the Jewish masses, was also rejected. The Comintern was ready to concede the creation of Jewish sections of local Communist parties, but was not prepared to accept the continued existence of a Jewish world union. In 1921 the executive council of the Comintern announced the formation of a bureau of Jewish affairs to direct Comintern propaganda among Jewish workers all over the world; however, nothing further was ever heard about the realization of this plan.

Another major Jewish issue confronting the Comintern was that of its attitude toward Zionism and the Jewish settlement in Palestine. The second congress of the Comintern (1920) denounced Zionism, which "by its claim to a Jewish state in Palestine, where Jewish workers form only a small minority, actually delivers the Arab workers to Britain for exploitation." The executive committee (August 1921) further elaborated upon this denunciation of Zionism by branding the idea of concentrating the Jewish masses in Palestine as "utopist and reformist," an idea "that leads directly to counterrevolutionary results, aiming as it does at settlement in Palestine, which eventually will only serve to strengthen British imperialism there." Throughout its existence, the Comintern adhered to this stand, instructing its Palestine section, as well as all Jewish Communists in other countries, accordingly. In the mid-1920s, however, the Communist Trade Union International (the "Profintern") made an unsuccessful attempt to establish ties with the Left Po'alei Zion in Palestine.

Though the Comintern did not arrive at an official definition of Jewish group identity, its general approach was expressed in the early 1930s in a widely distributed book written by a Jew, Otto Heller, *Der Untergang des Judentums* (1931). Its thesis was that West European Jewry was doomed to disappear

as a result of its emancipation, the decline of religion, mixed marriages, and assimilation, and the loss of the special social functions that it had previously fulfilled in European society. A similar process was taking place in the western hemisphere countries to which many Jews had emigrated. In Eastern Europe, on the other hand, the Jews had retained certain national characteristics, and their ultimate fate was still in the balance. In the Soviet Union, they were recognized as a nationality; whether they would utilize the opportunity offered them by the Socialist regime to preserve their national existence and even advance from the status of nationality to that of a nation, with its own territory, was completely dependent on their desire to do so. Even in the Soviet Union, however, at least partial assimilation was an irresistible trend.

During the 1930s, until June 1941, the Communist parties everywhere, including Palestine, adhered strictly to the Soviet line – from its anti-Nazi stand during the Popular Front period to its denunciation of the Western powers and their "imperialist" war against Nazi Germany during the Soviet-German rapprochement (1939–41). The mental strain involved in Soviet-Nazi friendship and cooperation, particularly for Jewish Communists, vanished with the German attack on the Soviet Union and the latter's anti-Nazi alliance with the Western democracies.

IN POLAND. Communism among the Jews in Poland was of particular importance. During the early 1930s in the area inhabited by ethnic Poles (i.e., excluding the areas populated by Ukrainians and Belorussians), Jews accounted for 22 to 26% of the membership of the Communist Party. In the Comintern, the Polish Communist Party occupied a special place, being the oldest member party and providing a large share of its functionaries. Its special role was also related to Poland's geographical situation between the Soviet Union and Germany – the latter at that time being the major strategic objective of the Comintern's activities.

The Polish Communist Party (KPP) was founded at the end of 1918 by the merger of the Social Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL) and the Polish Socialist Party (PPS)-Left. Each of the two components had its own tradition of dealing with Jewish affairs. There was a large number of Jews in the leadership of the SDKPiL (among them Rosa *Luxemburg), but the party advocated full assimilation for Jews and even failed to take a strong stand against antisemitism. This attitude did not change during the first few years of the Polish republic; in spite of pogroms, antisemitic campaigns, and a special resolution adopted by it, the party remained rather indifferent to antisemitism, so much so that Comintern leaders, such as Radek and Zinoviev, found it necessary to draw the KPP's attention to this state of affairs. At its second congress (1923), 30% of the delegates were Jews, but of these, two-thirds described themselves as "Poles of Jewish descent." In the period 1919–22, groups (such as Kombund) and individuals who had previously belonged to Jewish workers' parties joined the KPP and took up important posts in it; some of

them left their imprint upon the party's activities among the Jews. They included former Po'alei Zion members, such as S. Amsterdam-Henrikowsky, Gershon Dua-Bogen, S. Zakhariash, and A. Lewartowsky; ex-members of the "Fareynikte," such as Jacob Gordin and P. Bokshorn (later also Gutman-Zelikowicz); and from the Bund, A. Minc and A. Plug. Eventually the struggle against antisemitism came to play an important role in the activities of the КРР. It did not follow the *SDKPIŁ* tradition, and called even for national rights for the Jewish minority, equal opportunities for cultural development, equal rights for Yiddish in the administration and the courts, and the establishment of secular Yiddish-language schools. The party's activities among the Jews were in the hands of special "sections," "bureaus," or "groups," the autonomy of which remained a controversial issue throughout their existence. The staff of these Jewish "sections" participated in the incessant internal struggle that marked the КРР; when the party line so demanded, these Jewish functionaries fought bitterly against the Bund, the Zionist movement, and He-Halutz. A considerable number of Yiddish periodicals, ostensibly non-Communist, were in reality published by the illegal КРР, and for a while, during the 1930s, even a daily (*Der Fraynd*). A large group of Jewish writers and cultural personalities was affiliated with the КРР or linked with its periodicals. In the period 1935–37, the party made strenuous efforts to induce various political groups (among them its political rivals) to join in a common struggle against fascism and antisemitism.

[Moshe Mishkinsky]

IN THE UNITED STATES. In the United States, the Bolshevik Revolution led to factional disputes within the two main left-wing parties in existence in 1917, the Socialist Party and the Socialist Labor Party, which had significant Jewish memberships, and also within the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Some of the more moderate Jewish socialist and labor leaders, such as A. Lessin, A. *Cahan, J.B. *Salutzky, B.Z. *Hoffman-Zivion, and H. Rogoff, temporarily sided with the Bolsheviks after the October Revolution, in part because the alternative to Bolshevism was the violently antisemitic "white" counterrevolution, but soon adopted a firm anti-Communist stand. Other Jewish socialists threw their lot in permanently with the Communists. As a result of the first split in the Jewish Socialist Federation, a Jewish Federation of the Communist Party was founded under the leadership of A. Bittelman (October 1919). In 1921 the Jewish Socialist Federation seceded from the Socialist Party and a Jewish federation of the Communist-sponsored "Workers' Party" came into being (1922). In the same year a Yiddish Communist newspaper, **Freiheit*, made its appearance, edited by M. *Olgin and S. Epstein, two former members of the Bund. Certain socialist leaders who were steeped in Jewish culture, such as M. *Vinchevsky and K. *Marmor, also lent their support to Communism, largely because of their belief in the prospects of a national Yiddish culture developing in the Soviet Union. There was also considerable Communist influence in trade unions with large

Jewish memberships. Many of the Yiddish schools founded by the *Workmen's Circle were transferred to Communist sponsorship, and in 1929 Jewish Communists founded the International Workers' Order. It is estimated that in the 1920s as much as 15% of the American Communist Party's membership was Jewish, and the percentage of Jews among the Party leadership was undoubtedly higher. Unemployed or economically marginal Jews, especially in such professions as teaching and social work, and in the fur industry and some sectors of the garment trade, were powerfully attracted by Communist ideals and the widely propagandized achievements of Soviet Russia. Jewish membership fell off slightly as a result of Communist support of the Palestinian Arabs against Jews in the riots of 1929. During the Depression, Communist influence was again on the rise and could claim many sympathizers and "fellow travelers" among the American Jewish academic youth and intelligentsia. A further rise came in the mid-1930s, when the Nazis came to power in Germany and the Soviet Union adopted the Popular Front policy. It was at this time that the Yiddisher Kultur Farband (YIKUF) was founded by Communists in the United States. In the late 1930s the Moscow trials and the acceptance by the American Communist Party of the Soviet-Nazi rapprochement (1939–41) resulted again in a sharp drop in Communist influence among American Jews, which was only partly reversed by the events of World War II. Postwar revelations of Stalinist atrocities and systematic Soviet antisemitism permanently put an end to Communism as a serious force in American Jewish life. Fears that the trial and execution of the Communists Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for espionage would tempt the anti-Communist right in the United States to adopt a platform of antisemitism proved unfounded. The list of Jews who played a prominent role in the leadership and factional infighting of the American Communist Party from its inception is a long one and includes such figures as Israel *Amter, Max *Bedacht, Benjamin *Gitlow, Jay *Lovestone, Jacob *Stachel, William Weinstone, and Alexander Trachtenberg. Many American Jewish authors and intellectuals, some of whom later publicly recanted, were active in editing Communist publications and spreading party propaganda in the 1920s, 1930s, and even later, among them Michael *Gold, Howard *Fast, and Bertram *Wolfe.

After World War II

Although the newly established Communist regimes of Eastern Europe after World War II followed the Soviet line on the Jewish question and the policy toward Israel, there existed some fundamental differences. Most of them permitted the Jews to establish countrywide frameworks for religious and cultural activities, primarily in Yiddish (see *Poland, *Romania, *Hungary, *Czechoslovakia, and *Bulgaria). But, as a rule, the recognition of the Jews as a national minority was not based upon their obligatory individual registration as members of the Jewish "nationality" on identity documents (as in the Soviet Union), and Jews were able to describe themselves either as Jews or as belonging to the respective majority

people; in theory, at least, they had the option of national assimilation. Jewish cultural institutions, whose Soviet counterparts had been liquidated in Stalin's time, continued to function, as, e.g., Yiddish theaters (in Poland and Romania), the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, and a similar institute in Budapest. At one period or other, most of these countries permitted large numbers of Jews to migrate to Israel, in spite of the different Soviet policy in this respect.

Communist parties outside the Soviet bloc, including their Jewish sections and Jewish press, reflected the policy of the Soviet Union toward the Jews. In the last years of Stalin's rule, when every trace of Jewish culture and Jewish institutions had been obliterated in the Soviet Union, they tried to obscure the truth of the situation and even defended the Soviet Union against attacks by Jewish leaders and organizations against the anti-Jewish policy of 1952–53. A radical change occurred after the 20th congress of the Soviet Communist Party in February 1956, when Stalin's crimes were for the first time revealed in the Soviet Union, although the anti-Jewish element in these crimes continued to be ignored and suppressed. The first shock came with the publication (in the New York Jewish *Forward*) of news of the judicial murder of 26 outstanding Soviet Jewish writers and poets on Aug. 12, 1952. A great stir was caused in the entire Jewish world by an editorial that appeared in the Warsaw Communist newspaper, *Folkshtime*, in April 1956 headlined "Our Sorrow and Our Comfort." The article contained a detailed report of the process by which Jewish culture in the Soviet Union, its bearers, and institutions, had been liquidated, a process that had commenced in the 1930s and had reached its tragic culmination in the last years of Stalin's life. The article expressed the hope that this process would be reversed and Jewish culture and cultural institutions would enter a period of revival.

A storm of indignation swept the Communist movement in the West, especially among Jewish Communists. In Canada, the veteran Communist leader J.B. Salsberg published a series of articles in the Communist press that contained a report on the meetings of a delegation of the Canadian Communist Party, headed by him, with Khrushchev in Moscow in 1957 at which the Soviet leader's antisemitic inclinations had been clearly indicated. Salsberg seceded from the Communist Party, and many Jews and non-Jews followed his example. In Britain, another veteran Jewish Communist, Hyman *Levy, published a pamphlet entitled *Jews and the National Question* (1958), in which he denounced Soviet policy toward the Jews after an extensive visit to the Soviet Union and talks with Soviet leaders. He was promptly expelled from the party. In the United States, Howard Fast left the Communist Party under similar circumstances, stressing the Jewish aspect of his decision in *The Naked God* (1957); so did several members of the editorial staff of the *Daily Worker* (which thereupon turned into a weekly). In Latin America, sizable groups of Jews left the party and embarked upon the publication of their own organs (called, e.g., *Mir Viln Lebn*, "We Want to Live") expressing their opposition to Soviet policy

of forced assimilation of Jews and destruction of Jewish culture and institutions; eventually, most of them joined Zionist Socialist parties. In non-Jewish Communist publications, such as *L'Unità* in Italy, and theoretical Communist journals in Britain, Australia, and other countries, the Soviet Union also received severe criticism of its discriminatory policy toward the Jews. In 1963, when Kichko's antisemitic book was published in Kiev, almost the entire Communist press in the West joined in a sharp protest, and the central committee of the Soviet Communist Party found itself obliged to disassociate itself publicly from the book.

Far-reaching changes also took place after the Six-Day War (1967), when the Soviet Union launched a worldwide campaign against "international Zionism" marked by violently antisemitic overtones. The Communist Party in Israel (see below) split into a pro-Israel and pro-Arab faction (Maki and Rakah, respectively); a similar split, which in most cases did not, however, extend to organizational separation but confined itself to differences of political attitude, also occurred in several Communist parties elsewhere. In New York, the *Morning Freiheit* adopted a stand akin to that of Maki (which considered that in the Six-Day War Israel defended its freedom and existence), while *The Daily World* followed the anti-Israel line. In France, *L'Humanité* took a sharp anti-Israel stand, and reasserted the old Communist call to the Jews to assimilate to their host nations (editorial published on March 26, 1970), while the *Naye Prese*, the Communist Yiddish daily in Paris, was much more moderate in its attitude toward Israel and continued to affirm the Jewish right to an independent national culture. The "Jewish crisis" in the international Communist camp was further exacerbated by the events that took place in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and even more by the stringent antisemitic policy in Poland from March 1968, which was accompanied by what amounted to the expulsion of veteran Jewish Communists from the country. Adherence to the Communist Party and the affirmation of a positive Judaism of any kind had become mutually exclusive. With the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe in the early 1990s, Jewish affiliation virtually ended, as only diehards remained associated with the small political groupings that clung to the old ideology under altered names.

[Moshe Mishkinsky]

IN EREZ ISRAEL. A Communist group first appeared in Palestine during 1919, within the extreme left Mifleget Po'alim Sozialistim (MPS), "Socialist Workers' Party," but it soon disintegrated. Under the British Mandate the Communist Party was outlawed. In 1921 the Palestine Communist Party was organized illegally, by a combination of extreme left splinter groups, and affiliated with the Comintern in 1924. Its entire history was a series of internal splits and secessions, as well as conflicts with Zionism and the British authorities. Its course was always clouded by alternating Jewish-Arab cooperation and friction within the Party.

From 1924 onward, on Comintern orders, efforts were

made to “Arabize” the Party, the argument being that the country would always remain Arab, since Zionism was at best utopian, and at worst a servant to British imperialism. Jewish leaders were ousted, but attempts made to recruit Arabs proved largely unsuccessful; the richer Arabs were averse to Communism, while others, if at all politically minded, favored Arab nationalism. Although sympathy with the Russian October Revolution was widespread in the Palestine labor movement, during the 1920s only a splinter group of the *Gedud ha-Avodah broke with Zionism and eventually migrated to the Soviet Union. From 1936 to 1939 the Party openly supported the Arab revolt, including the anti-Jewish terrorism. Still, in 1939 the Party was quite isolated from the Arabs, while its support of the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement jolted the remaining Jewish members. From 1939 it operated in separate Jewish and Arab groups.

Further splits occurred over the Soviet Union’s support of a Jewish state in 1948, when some of the Arab members of the party were against the Soviet Union’s vote for partition. After the establishment of the State of Israel, the Party reunited under the name of “Maki” (Miflagah Komunistit Yisre’elit – “Israel Communist Party”). It operated legally, but, as an anti-Zionist party in a Zionist state, its influence was negligible. Its following among Jews rose in the 1950s, when mass immigration caused economic hardship and when a leftist splinter group of *Mapam, led by Moshe *Sneh, joined Maki; but it dwindled again with the prosperity of the 1960s. Although the party always looked for support among Israel’s Arabs, it intensified its appeals to the Arabs in this period. In each election to the Knesset, Maki received greater support, proportionally, from Arabs than from Jews, e.g., in 1961 about half of Maki’s 42,111 votes came from Israel Arabs, who then constituted only a ninth of the population. Some of the Arabs voted Communist in response to Soviet support of Arab nationalism, while, for precisely the same reason, many Jews refrained from supporting the Party. Tensions on this point were the main cause of the rift in Maki, generally on Jewish-Arab lines, which occurred in the summer of 1965. The Arab-led faction formed the New Communist List (Reshimah Komunistit Hadashah, or Rakah), with a more extreme anti-government attitude and complete obedience to Moscow.

At first the Soviet Union tended to endorse Maki and Rakah, but after the 1967 Six-Day War it recognized Rakah only. After the split Maki took a line increasingly independent of Moscow in all matters pertaining to Israel-Arab relations, reflecting the fundamental Jewish nationalism of its membership. This became more pronounced after the Six-Day War, when Maki openly criticized Moscow’s anti-Israel attitude and largely endorsed Israel government acts and policy. At its conference in 1968 Maki adopted a program which included not only pro-Israel plans but also, for the first time, a recognition that every Jew, even in a Socialist country, should be allowed to choose among assimilation, Jewish cultural life, or migration to Israel. Some Communist parties abroad, mainly in the West, but also that of Romania, continued to maintain “frater-

nal” relations with Maki, in spite of Moscow’s denunciations of Maki’s “chauvinism.”

Although membership statistics were not publicized, the party would appear to have had close to 5,000 members in the 1950s and about 3,000 in the early 1960s. In 1961, according to the report of Maki’s congress, 74.3% were Jews and 25.7% Arabs; 83.8% had joined after 1948 and 27% after 1957, an indication of the rapid turnover among the rank and file. The leadership, which had changed often in pre-state days, remained fairly constant from 1948 until the 1965 rift. In the late 1960s the Jewish leaders of Maki were Shemuel Mikunis and Moshe *Sneh, while Meir Wilner and the Arabs Tawfiq Toubi and Emil Habibi headed Rakah. All five were Knesset members at one time or another.

The party always stressed continuous, often strident, propaganda. Many joined the v (Victory) League after June 1941, and later, the various friendship societies with the Soviet Union, several of which were front organizations. The Party’s written propaganda increased before elections, and it maintained a continuous flow of newspapers and periodicals in Hebrew (*Kol ha-Am* (“Voice of the People”), Arabic, French, Polish, Romanian, Hungarian, Bulgarian, and Yiddish. After the 1965 split, both Communist parties continued publishing in Hebrew and Arabic, with Maki publishing in other languages, to reach new Jewish immigrants. After winning just one seat in the 1969 Knesset elections, Maki was transformed into Moked under Meir *Pa’il in the early 1970s and effectively vanished from the political map. Rakah changed its name to Hadash (Hazit Demokratit le-Shalom u-le-Shivyon, “Democratic Front for Peace and Equality”) before the 1977 Knesset elections, joined now by Jewish leftists, and was able to maintain a Knesset faction of 3–5 members into the 21st century as a nationalist Arab party, despite the disintegration of the Communist Bloc.

[Jacob M. Landau]

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COMMUNITY, the designation of Jewish social units, used for the Hebrew terms *edah*, *kehillah*, and *kahal*. Ideally the community denoted the “Holy Community” (*Kehillah Kedoshah*), the nucleus of Jewish local cohesion and leadership in towns and smaller settlements. Particularly after the loss of independence, as the Jews became predominantly town dwellers, the community became more developed and central to Jewish society and history. From the Middle Ages on the community was a “Jewish city,” parallel to and within the Christian and Muslim ones.

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Introduction

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ANTIQUITY

While the central and centralistic institutions of *kingship, *patriarchs, *prophets, *Temple, *tribe, and academies predominated – each in its time and its own way – there is only occasional mention of local leadership among the Jews. However, in *Shechem it was apparently the *Ba'alei Shekhem* who ruled the town, determining its enemies and friends (Judg. 9, passim). King *Ahab had to turn to “the elders and nobles,

which are of his town, who sit with Naboth” (1 Kings 21:8) and they passed judgment on Naboth (*ibid.* 11–13). It would seem that this local leadership, which combined preeminence in the town with noble family descent, was a central element in the life of the exiles in *Babylon. For more on community structure in the Bible see *Congregation (Assembly). The Book of *Judith tells of local self-government in the town of Bethulia in the days of Persian influence. The town was led by three men (*ibid.* 26) who had judicial power and the right to lead the defense of the city.

Later, under the Ptolemaic and Seleucid rule and influence, Hellenistic institutions began to shape local social life. In the Second Temple period the *Sanhedrin had the function of municipal council of the holy city, Jerusalem, as well as its more central functions in national life. From its foundation *Tiberias was a city with a decisive Jewish majority, structured and organized on the model of the Greek *polis*, with a city council and popular assemblies which sometimes met in the synagogue. At the head of the executive branch stood the archon and supervision of economic life was in the hands of the *agoranomos*. In the Hellenistic-Roman Diaspora the element of *autonomy granted by the non-Jewish sovereigns became a basic constitutive element in the life of the Jewish community, remaining central to it throughout centuries of Jewish history. In *Alexandria, Egypt, there existed a large Jewish community, which did not however embrace all the Jews living within the city; the synagogue became a center of communal leadership and at the same time a focal point for the emergence of a separate synagogue-community, existing alongside similar synagogue-communities within the same city.

By Ptolemaic times the Jews in Alexandria were already organized as a *politeuma* (πολίτευμα), one of a number of such administrative (non-Jewish) units in the city. At the head of the Alexandria community at first were the elders. In the beginning of Roman rule, the leadership of the Alexandria community was in the hands of an ethnarch; later, in the days of Augustus, the main leadership passed to the council of elders (*gerousia*), which had scores of members. The Berenice (*Benghazi) community in Cyrenaica had nine archons at the head of its *politeuma*. The Rome community seems to have been divided up, and organized in and around the synagogues. In Rome, as in other communities of the empire, there were titles like *pater synagogae*, *archisynagogus*, even *mater* or *pateressa synagogae*, and to a great degree such titles had become formal, hereditary, and empty. An imperial order to the *Cologne community of 321 is addressed “to the priests [*hieriei*], to the heads of the synagogues [*archisynagogi*], to the fathers of synagogues [*patres synagogarum*],” thus showing that even in a distant community a wide variety of titles, some of a priestly nature, existed side by side.

Synagogue inscriptions and tombstones attest the importance attached to synagogue-community leadership. Up to the fifth century the patriarchs supervised and instructed this network of communities in the Roman Empire through sages (*apostoloi*). The epistles of *Paul are in a sense evidence