

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

In the past thirty-five years the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* has come to occupy a rarefied space in the world of Jewish learning. Authoritative, comprehensive, serious yet accessible, it graced the library shelves of scholars and rabbis, of the learned and the studious, and even of the would-be studious, consulted by the curious and the inquisitive, an important starting point for a journey of learning.

It also was that rare work in Jewish life and learning that covered controversy and yet was not controversial. It could not be identified with one school of thought, with one religious, political, or social perspective. Written by Zionists who believed ardently in Jewish peoplehood and the centrality of the land of Israel and the nascent State of Israel for the Jewish future, it also respected the many forms that Jewish life had taken. It performed its task admirably, sharing with the reader what was known and knowable in 1972, the year when it was first published. For a time through Year Books and Decennial volumes, it sought to update its readers on more recent learning, trends, and issues, and for the first time in 1997 it migrated to an electronic version with a wonderful search engine that freed the reader from taking volumes off the shelf and moving from the index to yet another volume.

So we understood as we embarked upon the task of updating the masterful work that much could be lost. We were also confident of what could be gained.

Why a new edition?

The answer is quite simple. Knowledge is dynamic, not static. Much has changed in the last thirty-five years.

Israel of 2006 is quite different from Israel of 1972, when Golda Meir was prime minister. Israel has faced two wars – the war of 1973 (Yom Kippur War) and the war in Lebanon – two Intifadas, the Camp David Accords, the withdrawal from Sinai, the Oslo Accords, the Disengagement, the rise of militant radical Islam, and so much more. Israel has become the home of almost half the world's Jewish population, absorbing Jews from the former Soviet Union, from Ethiopia, Argentina, France, and elsewhere. Soon a majority of the world's Jews will live in Israel, which has become a regional military superpower and a developed country in an increasingly globalized world. Israeli culture has been transformed and its institutions have evolved. Quite simply, the Israel described in 1972 is unrecognizable today.

The Soviet Union is no longer. Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia have become independent countries; so too have the Ukraine and many of the former Soviet Republics. Jewish life has been transformed by these changes. The Iron Curtain has fallen and thus the Jews of Poland and Hungary, of the Czech Republic and Slovakia live under different conditions; and their world – the possibilities of their world – has changed. East and West Germany have been reunited and the German Jewish community – which once lived with a fascinating past that had been eclipsed by its catastrophic recent history but had no discernible future – is now growing rapidly as it has become home to many Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

In the United States, Las Vegas and Phoenix are growing most rapidly as Jewish communities as tens of thousands of Jews have moved to these Sun Belt cities and built not only new homes but also new institutions and new environments. Southern Florida has become the third most populated area of Jewish settlement. In the rural South, where Jews had lived for a century or more, synagogues have become museums, thus marking the end of many small communities, while the Jewish population of Atlanta and Jewish life in Atlanta, Dallas, and Houston have expanded dramatically. Once Jewish Day Schools were the province of Orthodox Jews living in major cities. They can now be found wherever there is a significant Jewish population and they serve the entire spectrum of those interested in Jewish learning. In light of such developments, each entry on the fifty states had to be updated; so too the entries on each of the cities in which almost all of American Jews reside.

Religiously, American Jewry has evolved dramatically. Orthodoxy is no longer in danger of extinction but confident and self-sustaining. It is no longer characterized by loss but by gains, and modern Orthodoxy, which once appeared dominant, has been sliding to the right. Chabad has developed as a global presence to be encountered wherever Jews live, wherever Jews travel. It has endured the passing of the Rebbe, centralized charismatic leadership has been replaced by management and by the charisma and dedication of many individual leaders. It has endured a messianic crisis. Liberal forms of Judaism have become more diverse, more creative and more diffuse. New institutions for the training of rabbis have evolved and the neat tripartite division of Jews – Orthodox, Conservative and Reform – has become far more fascinating as multiple forms of Jewish identity and Jewish engagement have become available. Reconstructionist Judaism has created its own institutions; even the anti-institutional world of Renewal Judaism is creating institutions of its own with its own journals, its own publishing house and its own rabbinical and cantorial schools. Non-denominational rabbinical seminaries are flourishing. Rural Jews gather for conferences; Jewish life is alive and flourishing in cyberspace as well as real space, even as a more individualized and less institutionalized Jewish identity takes root.

American Jews live in a world with few barriers, with no glass ceilings. Their Jewishness is not regarded as a handicap but a privilege; highly individualized for many, celebrated or even ignored, it takes a variety of forms and expresses itself in many creative endeavors. The editors of this new edition of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* are acutely conscious of these changes, both in the choice of individual entries and in the description of various Jewish communities. But along with this extraordinarily positive picture, American Jewry is in the decline numerically; simply put, American Jews are not reproducing, and the rate of intermarriage exceeds even the most alarming predictions of a generation ago. Survivalists are deeply concerned about survival, about the viability of the American Jewish community, in part because of the freedom it enjoys. And with freedom comes the easy freedom not to identify as a Jew, for one is not forced to identify as a Jew. One can embrace any number of other identities, professional and personal, without betrayal.

Yet there is a cross fertilization between Israel and the United States. American Jewish scholars spend sabbatical years in Israel, many have studied in Israel as part of their undergraduate and graduate training, and Israeli scholars spend significant time in the Diaspora. They read each other's work; they publish in each other's journals. Scholarly works initiated in Israel are published in English and American scholarship is read in Israel and often translated into Hebrew.

Thirty-five years ago the women's movement was just beginning and all rabbis were men. Feminist Studies as a discipline was but in its infancy and women were not considered by many an integral part of the Jewish community or the Jewish experience. Much has changed, and this new edition represents a deliberate attempt to include women and the experience of women within its pages; the inclusion was not for inclusion's sake but because we cannot understand Jews or the Jewish experience without understanding the role of Jewish women. Permit a simple example. An earlier entry on "Mikveh" considered Jewish religious teaching on the mikveh and its halakhic requirements. A woman's perspective was not included, which we now understand was a serious omission, one not repeated in this volume.

A new generation has arisen and, with each new generation, new scholarly questions are asked, new methodologies are employed. Thus, even though the giants of the last generation played an important role in editing the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, extraordinary scholars such as Professors Gershom Scholem, Salo Baron, Menachem Stern, H.L. Ginzburg, and Cecil Roth among others, the fields they developed and in some cases pioneered have moved beyond them; their findings have been built upon, their methodologies refined, enhanced, expanded, and disputed, and the result transforms our understanding even of the fields they illuminated so masterfully a generation ago. We have endeavored to preserve much of their original writing, to add what must be added, to refine where refinement was in order and to change what must be changed with the passage of time. Thus, even while the masterful work of Gershom Scholem has been preserved in its entirety, the intellectual discussion he initiated has gone well beyond his work and his students and their students have begun to ask different questions and reach different conclusions, as is reflected in the second edition addendum to his classic Kabbalah entry. The presentation of the historicity of the Talmud (see below) takes cognizance of the important work of Jacob Neusner and David Weiss Halivni and others as well as Saul Lieberman and Efraim Urbach.

The generation that created the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* was primarily trained in Germany in the great institutions and the extraordinary culture of the Weimar Republic or at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, perhaps the greatest German university outside of Germany. Alas, that generation has passed. Many of the scholars who wrote for this edition were trained in the United States and, even if trained in Israel, were influenced by the dominance of American culture and American scholarship. Native-born Israel-trained scholars have written with brilliant competence. Historians dominated the first edition; in this new work, the approach of scholars even in the field of Judaic Studies is far more multi-disciplinary.

Entries written for the first edition had to be written differently for the second edition for their fields had evolved in the ensuing decades. Special treatment is accorded to the subject of Jewish Law (*Mishpat Ivri*) under the direction of Justice Menachem Elon, where it is now possible to examine the principles of Jewish religious law (*halakhah*) as they are reflected in the courts of a sovereign Jewish state. Elon, who had pioneered this field, has expanded his treatment of Jewish law as it has grown in the recent past, confronted new questions and grappled with issues unknown thirty-five years ago.

Certain dramatic changes have occurred within the most classical of fields of studies. As our Bible editor notes:

“Modern critical Bible study as it arose in the 19th century was often couched in terminology affirming that the Old Testament was inferior to the New Testament and that Judaism had been superseded by Christianity. Some notable Christian biblicists were also antisemites. As a result *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, ‘the scientific study of Judaism,’ neglected the critical study of the Bible. At Reform Judaism’s Hebrew Union College and Conservative Judaism’s Jewish Theological Seminary it took years before critical study of the Bible was fully embraced. Similarly, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem opened with a chair in biblical exegesis rather than Bible proper. To some extent the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* retained this gingerly approach to Bible so that in contrast to most subject areas, apologetic writing was not always discouraged. By the 1990s the American and Israeli Jewish communities had reached a level of self-confidence and maturity that permitted even Orthodox scholars to participate fully in the critical study of the Hebrew Bible. In addition, the 20th century witnessed renewed interest in the great Bible commentators of medieval times. Largely neglected in early modern critical Bible scholarship, these commentaries, which anticipated modern ‘discoveries’ are regularly studied by contemporary Biblicists, Jewish and Christian.” Critical literary studies of the Bible not only dissect the Bible by pointing to the sources of its composition, but consider it as an integrated whole which must be read as one work.

The editors of our Talmud division note that the past thirty years have seen a number of developments in talmudic studies, which required the significant revision of many of the first edition entries dealing with talmudic and midrashic literature. First of all, since the 1970s, we have been witness to a dramatic increase in the study of talmudic literature, not just within the rapidly expanding world of academic Judaic studies, but even more so among the public at large. Many new editions and translations in nearly all branches of talmudic and midrashic literature have been published, often accompanied by reliable and user-friendly commentaries. These in turn have opened up the study of the Mishnah, the Talmud, and other related texts to a wide audience of interested non-professional students. Many of the core entries in the previous edition of the *Encyclopaedia* were written with a pronounced bias toward the agenda of professional scholarship, and it has been one of our concerns both to widen this agenda and to provide the necessary foundation in order to make entries accessible to the public at large (see, for example, Mishnah and Talmud, Bab-

ylonian). At the same time two developments in academic scholarship have also had an impact on editorial policy. First of all, the application of modern critical historical methodology to the field of Aggadah and rabbinic biography has brought about no less than a revolution in the attitude toward talmudic and midrashic traditions concerning the lives and deeds of the rabbis (see Aggadah). This profound development has led to the revision of well over a hundred entries describing the lives of greater and lesser rabbinic figures (e.g. Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, Beruryah, Imma Shalom, Johanan ben Zakkai, Meir, Elisha ben Avuyah, Johanan ben Nappaha, etc.), while numerous traditional biographies of lesser rabbinic figures who have yet to be critically reexamined have been reproduced intact. Secondly, the increasing sophistication of critical and historical tools for the analysis of talmudic literature as a whole has brought about an equally profound revolution in our understanding of the internal historical development of this literature, and specifically of the relationships between parallel traditions found in the different finished talmudic works (see, for example, Tosefta; Talmud, Babylonian – The Bavli and the Extant Tannaitic Works, The Bavli and the Yerushalmi). The description and dating of the various talmudic compositions – Mishnah, Tosefta, the halakhic and aggadic Midrashim, the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmudim – included in the earlier edition of the *Encyclopaedia* could not, of course, have taken these new developments into account. As a result, all of the entries dealing with this literature were reviewed, and in many cases (e.g. the Midrashei Halakhah) thoroughly revised.

Judaic Studies in the United States was limited thirty-five years ago. The Association of Jewish Studies had just been founded; its members knew each other. Positions were few. Membership has since then increased a hundredfold, and interest in Jewish Studies is wide throughout the Diaspora, as it has come to be seen as an essential component of Western civilization, though not just of Western civilization. American-trained Judaic Studies academics are on the faculty of every Israeli university, often holding distinguished chairs, so the cross fertilization of Israeli and American scholarship is a daily fact of life in both countries.

My own field of Holocaust Studies was but in its infancy thirty-five years ago. The scholars were mostly survivors or refugees writing of their experience. Many archives were closed, records were unavailable, many survivor memoirs had not yet been written and one could convene a meeting of the significant figures in the field in a conference room large enough for a dozen people. Holocaust Studies as a field could be confined to several paragraphs, a few major works, and an occasional conference. There was no major museum and no Holocaust educational resource centers, no sense of a “Holocaust industry.” With the passage of time came the insights of time. There was a more personal intensity to the scholarly battles of the first generation, as many had lived through the events. The works of Bruno Bettelheim, who wrote of the infantilization of the victim; of Hannah Arendt, who condemned Jewish leadership in the Holocaust; and of Raul Hilberg, whose magisterial work minimized the role of Jewish resistance, severely stung. In response, other Jewish scholars fought back angrily, defensively, as if the pride of the living seemingly could be

enhanced by a positive depiction of the conduct of the dead. In the past thirty-five years, records were declassified, documents from the former Soviet Union and elsewhere became available as so many archives were opened. Documents and copies of originals could be read in Washington, New York, and Jerusalem and not just Warsaw, Budapest, or Berlin. We have broadened our perspective and sought to come to terms with the dynamics of a growing field of study. And the contributions to this new edition reflect how much more is now known about an event that was in the immediate past thirty-five years ago.

From time to time, as we worked with the vastness of this material, colleagues and friends – especially our children – would ask what place an encyclopedia holds in the world of the web, where access to information is instantaneous and the web so vast. We have endeavored to preserve the sense of authority of the original edition – its reliability. We were mindful of the fact that this work would be consulted for years and years; thus, it is intended to be more than a snapshot of what is known at this time; its insights are meant to withstand the passage of time. Still, in a generation or two, when scholars and students want to know what was known in the first decade of the 21st century, who were the Jews, what they thought, how they lived, they will be able to do no better than to consult this work and to understand its ramifications.

The *Encyclopaedia Judaica* grapples with Jews and Judaism, how Jews live, how they perceive themselves, how they encounter the world and shape the world they encounter. From medicine to mysticism, from resurgent Ḥasidism to renewal Judaism, from economics to science, from politics to art, music, theater, and cinema, even cartoons and comedy, sports and entertainment, we have endeavored to be comprehensive and creative.

Keter Publishing House and Macmillan Library Reference (an imprint of Thomson Gale), the publisher and distributor, respectively, of the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, initiated this project. Under the watchful eye of Peter Tomkins, Keter turned to the Jerusalem Publishing House, which has long been known for initiating encyclopedias in many languages all over the world, to organize the project. Frank Menchaca initiated this project for Macmillan, H el ene Potter was assigned to bring it to life. When Menchaca went on to even higher levels of management, H el ene Potter capably filled the vacuum.

The scope of a second edition of the *Encyclopaedia* was far too large to be covered by minor revisions and cosmetic updates – too much had changed, too much more had become known. In sum, as the project evolved, half of the original entries had to be changed; more than 2,650 were added.

Over time, it also became clear that an American editor would have to be added to the core staff, to work with Jerusalem-based editor-in-chief Fred Skolnik. Shlomo (Yosh) Gafni, president of the Jerusalem Publishing House (JPH), and his managing editor Rachel Gilon, were a source of guidance and wisdom, with the assistance of Leonardo Szichman, who executed the huge data control. JPH undertook the difficult task of coordinating this project with enormous energy, skill, and dedication. Fred Skolnik was indefatigable and so wonderfully skilled. Associated with the Ju-

daica for 35 years, he was both its champion and the driving force in its enlargement and transformation.

The writers of the *Encyclopaedia* are many. They write with passion and confidence of the fields they know, of the persons, the ideas and the issues they describe. Many could write – and have written – volumes on their subjects. Here they were asked to be concise and precise, to write in a manner that reflected what is known, to avoid polemics, to be scrupulously fair. We have endeavored not only to furnish important details but also to present them in an interesting manner, knowing that, unlike the stuff of journalism, which will not be read tomorrow, this work will be read by many on many tomorrows. It has to endure the test of time.

This edition is a unique partnership. Initiated by Israelis, it brought together Israelis and Americans and scholars from many different countries and many spheres of learning. It took cognizance of the centrality of Israel in the contemporary Jewish world but also of the enduring life, creative vitality, and intensity of the Jewish experience in the Diaspora. It was mindful of the many forms that Jewish life has taken and the diverse ways in which Jews have contributed to their people and the world.

It has been built on a strong foundation; time and again the editors have come to appreciate how comprehensive and authoritative was the work of their predecessors. We have endeavored to take the work of our predecessors forward in the ongoing quest for knowledge and understanding of the Jewish experience.

Michael Berenbaum
Executive Editor