

WHY ARE THERE SO FEW JEWISH STATEMENTS ON CHRISTIANITY OR JEWISH–CHRISTIAN RELATIONS?

Danny Burkeman*

Introduction

In 1947, at the Second Conference of the International Council of Christians and Jews, the Christian participants published a document known as ‘The Ten Points of Seelisberg’. This document was addressed to the churches, as a result of having ‘recently witnessed an outburst of antisemitism, which has led to the persecution, and extermination of millions of Jews’ (ICCJ 1947). This can be considered the first Christian statement on Judaism prompted by the Holocaust, and as such one of the triggers in the development of Jewish–Christian relations that has taken place since that tragedy. As David Fox Sandmel has noted, ‘The Shoah...has provided a moral imperative for Jews and Christians to move beyond traditional antagonisms’ (Frymer-Kensky, Novak, Ochs, Sandmel and Signer 2000: 367). Since the Holocaust, there has been increased dialogue between Jews and Christians, as well as increased scholarship in the field, and many statements relating to it.

Implicit within the title of this article lies an assumption that during this period there could or should have been more Jewish statements on Christianity or Jewish–Christian relations. By visiting the Jewish–Christian Relations website,¹ which includes many of the statements issued in the field, it is evident that Christian statements are in the overwhelming majority compared to very few Jewish statements. The page of statements on the site includes nineteen Roman Catholic statements, eighteen ecumenical statements and twenty-four Protestant statements alongside just seven Jewish statements. The disparity in the number of statements that have been issued raises the question: why have there been so many Christian statements, but so few Jewish statements?

To discover why there has been this inequality, it is necessary to analyse a number of factors that may help to explain the relatively small number of Jewish statements. It is important to consider the similarities in what has been said in the many Christian statements, and whether there can be equivalent Jewish statements following a similar structure and composition. Furthermore,

* Danny Burkeman is an informal Jewish educator working at the UJIA Makor Centre for Informal Jewish Education. He is also currently studying for an MA in Jewish–Christian Relations at the Centre for Jewish–Christian Relations in Cambridge. This article was originally written as an MA essay in January 2003.

considering the Jewish statements and the responses to them, it may be possible to explain why there have been so few statements in the field of Jewish–Christian relations. Finally, it is important to consider what could or should be said in such statements, for the idea of issuing statements may be admirable, but it is important that there is relevant material to include in them.

David Novak, the co-author of ‘Dabru Emet: A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity’,² offers an initial suggestion why there are more Christian statements than Jewish statements at the moment: ‘Because of the long history of Christian power over Jews, the new Jewish–Christian dialogue had to be initiated by Christians’ (Frymer-Kensky *et al.* 2000: 368). The dialogue process, according to Novak, had to begin with Christians, and this idea may help to explain why there are more Christian statements, and by considering the content of the Christian statements it is possible to demonstrate the validity of this theory.

Christian Statements About Judaism

The Catholic documents that have been issued relating to the Jews began with ‘Nostra Aetate’ in 1965, a declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions. This document, issued by the ecumenical council Vatican II, stated that the Catholic Church ‘decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone’ (Fisher 1999: 20) and that ‘the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures’ (*ibid.*). Since this document there have been further documents issued centrally from the Vatican, and many other documents issued by the various national Catholic bishops’ conferences.

The general trend in Catholic documents can be seen from those issued by the Vatican following ‘Nostra Aetate’. In the 1974 ‘Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate’, the rejection of antisemitism was fully articulated (see Fisher 1999: 21–23). In 1985 the Catholic Church formulated the idea that the Jew ‘remains a chosen people’ (*ibid.*, 47). In this document, ‘Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church’, the idea of Jesus the Jew was also explored, with New Testament anti-Judaism placed in its historical context. The role of Christian anti-Judaism in the Holocaust was considered in the 1998 document, ‘We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah’. It stated: ‘We deeply regret the errors and failures of those sons and daughters of the Church’ (*ibid.*, 69).

In the Protestant world, there have also been many statements about the Jews from both international bodies and specific national groups tackling sim-

ilar issues to the Catholic Church. The report from the 1988 Lambeth Conference states that 'Judaism is still a living religion, to be respected in its own right' (Lambeth Conference 1988), with the conviction that Judaism is not 'a living fossil, simply superseded by Christianity' (ibid.). The deicide charge against the Jews is challenged, with blame placed on the political interests of the Romans occupying Jerusalem in the first century, and only on 'those Jews who collaborated with them' (ibid.). Alongside this is a consideration of the 'discrimination and persecution of the Jews' (ibid.), which provided the soil for Nazism to grow in.

The World Council of Churches (WCC), an international fellowship of Christian churches, has also issued statements that have considered the position of Jews in Christian teaching. In the report from its first conference, in Amsterdam in 1948, the WCC acknowledged its failure to 'manifest Christian love towards our Jewish neighbours' (Brockway 1988: 6) and to fight against antisemitism. The 1961 New Delhi Conference issued a resolution on antisemitism, which rejected the deicide charge against the Jews, laying guilt upon 'our corporate humanity and not to one race or community' (ibid., 12).

The similarities between the Roman Catholic, Protestant and ecumenical statements are evident, and a number of insights about Christian statements emerge. David Fox Sandmel's claim that the Holocaust has been the imperative for better Jewish-Christian relations can be seen by the role it has in virtually all of the Christian statements. In many of the documents the Holocaust is explicitly discussed, with consideration of the role of Christian anti-Judaism in the rise of Nazism; and, even in those documents where it is not explicitly named, it is clearly evident in the background, influencing the statement and its contents. The fact that the Holocaust took place in the heart of Christian Europe has meant that the different Christian denominations have felt the need to respond to it in a variety of ways. There has been a feeling 'in the churches about guilt for the Shoah' (Brockway 1988: 127) and statements have been one way of responding. This need for reflection is very different for Jews, who, as the primary victims of the Holocaust, emerged with their greatest imperative being to survive. The place of the Holocaust in the issuing of statements necessarily means that Christian statements would need to be articulated before Jews responded.

Related to this, in the statements, is the reassessment of the 'teaching of contempt'³ within Christianity, and the way in which Christianity has historically viewed Judaism. From the beginning Christianity developed 'theological judgements on us [the Jews] as people and our religion, and these judgements were totally unfavourable' (Sandmel 1967: 26). These judgements, attacking Judaism, form a significant part of the New Testament and the writings of the Church Fathers, and have, therefore, contributed to the persecution of Jews at

the hands of Christians in the past. The reconsideration of much of the Church's anti-Jewish polemic has been central to the Christian statements, and to a more positive relationship with Judaism. 'Such [anti-Jewish] interpretations of the New Testament have been totally and definitively rejected' (Fisher 1999: 63). The Holocaust was a crucial trigger for this Christian selfreflection. According to Fritz Rothschild, 'For Judaism, however, Christianity, with its claim to be the "true" Israel, has figured as a marginal theological problem at best, which could be explained away or ignored' (Rothschild 1996: 1). The need for equivalent Jewish statements, reflecting on what the Scriptures have to say about Christianity are, therefore, not necessary in the same way.

By considering these two factors in the Christian statements, it is clear that there is not an equivalent incentive or subject matter for Jewish statements on Christianity. Thirdly, it is interesting to note the large number of Christian organizations that have been involved in the issuing of such statements. On both the national and international levels, the various denominations possess the infrastructure for issuing statements for their members. In the Jewish world there is no similar infrastructure for issuing statements, and this is surely a contributing factor to the relatively small number that have been issued. One of the initial Jewish voices in favour of a Jewish statement, Samuel Sandmel, noted this obstacle to a possible statement: 'we Jews have almost uniformly abstained from corporate pronouncements of a religious character. Moreover, there does not exist among us any counterpart of the Vatican Council, nor any single encompassing organization of all of us Jews' (Sandmel 1967: 13–14).

These three factors help to begin the process of explaining why there have been so many more Christian statements. However, they are only a first step; it is also necessary to consider the statements that have been made by Jews to discover further why they have been limited in number.

Jewish Statements About Christianity

Of the Jewish statements listed on the Jewish–Christian Relations website, three are responses to Roman Catholic statements, two to the Pope's 'Universal Prayer: Confession of Sins and Asking for Forgiveness', in March 2000 and one, an extensive response, to the document 'We Remember', in March 1998. Of the remaining four, three do not fall neatly into the category of Jewish statements on Christianity. Two are excerpts, one from Maimonides' *Law of Kings* written in the twelfth century, and one from 'Emet ve-Emunah',⁴ a document issued by the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism; the third is the American Reform Movement's 'Statement of Principles', included not as a statement about Christianity, but because most Jews involved in dialogue

are Reform. The most recent Jewish statement, 'Dabru Emet: A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity', issued in September 2000, stands apart from the other Jewish statements. The motivation for 'Dabru Emet' is not just to express thanks for a specific Christian document or to discuss non-Jewish religions in general, in the context of a wider document: instead the authors believe, 'it is time for Jews to reflect on what Judaism may now say about Christianity' (Frymer-Kensky *et al.* 2000: xvii).

Before considering 'Dabru Emet' in more detail, an interesting fact about the practice of issuing interfaith statements is revealed by considering the two responses to the Pope's 'Universal Prayer'. The two statements do not call for a Jewish statement in response to the Christian declarations; instead, in both cases they call for greater dialogue. The Rabbinic Committee for Interreligious Dialogue states: 'We believe that now is the time for dialogue' (RCID 2000), while the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Rabbinical Assembly 'call upon our rabbinic constituents to engage in intensified dialogue and fellowship with our Roman Catholic neighbors' (CCAR 2000). While this may not at first appear significant, I would suggest that these calls show that while Jewish organizations may embrace dialogue with Christians, the idea of making statements about Christianity is not a Jewish concept, and therefore not mentioned.

'Dabru Emet' was first published on 11 October 2000, in two American newspapers. The motivation for the statement was articulated in the introduction to the document, in which the authors observed that 'Christianity has changed dramatically' (Frymer-Kensky *et al.* 2000: xvii), with a large number of official Christian 'public statements of their remorse about Christian mistreatment of Jews and Judaism' (*ibid.*). For the authors 'these changes merit a thoughtful Jewish response' (*ibid.*): 'Dabru Emet' seeks to be such a response by articulating 'eight brief statements about how Jews and Christians may relate to one another' (*ibid.*).

After the introduction, the statement comprises eight paragraphs, which try to explain the relationship between Jews and Christians. The first four consider God, the Bible, the land of Israel and the moral principles of the Torah. The attempt here is to begin by showing the similarities between Jews and Christians, who 'worship the same God' (*ibid.*), and 'seek authority from the same book' (*ibid.*: xviii). These statements offer an initial insight into what Jews and Christians share. There then follows the paragraph tackling the Holocaust, which begins 'Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon' (*ibid.*: xix). As with most statements on Jewish-Christian relations, the shadow of the Holocaust reaches over the document, and the authors of 'Dabru Emet', like the authors of many Christian statements, seek to show that Christian anti-Judaism contributed to the rise of Nazism, but not in an inevitable progression.

The final three statements approach Jewish–Christian relations from a different angle, stating in the sixth paragraph that despite the similarities already mentioned, ‘The humanly irreconcilable difference between Jews and Christians will not be settled until God redeems the entire world as promised in Scripture’ (ibid.). The authors then seek to allay the perceived fear that people in the Jewish community will resist Jewish–Christian relations as it will lead to assimilation: they counter that this ‘new relationship between Jews and Christians will not weaken Jewish practice’ (ibid.). Finally, the statement concludes with a call for Jews and Christians to work together, in the pursuit of justice and peace, quoting Isaiah 2:2–3 about the end of days.

Issues Relating to ‘Dabru Emet’

By considering a number of issues relating to ‘Dabru Emet’ it is possible to discover further reasons why there are so few Jewish statements on Christianity and Jewish–Christian relations.

Four scholars wrote the statement, as part of the National Jewish Scholars Project at the Institute for Christian and Jewish Studies (ICJS) in Baltimore. They are very clear in the introduction to the statement that they are ‘Speaking only for ourselves’ (Frymer-Kensky *et al.* 2000: xvii). There is an immediate question of what authority this statement has. The Christian statements about Judaism and Christian–Jewish relations have tended to emanate from official Church bodies, and have been addressed to their members. ‘Dabru Emet’ does not fit into this model; an official institution within the Jewish community did not issue the statement, instead it ‘came from a group of academics ... employed outside the Jewish community’ (Sandmel 2002: 97).

Michael Signer, one of the authors of the statement, has looked to other models from Jewish history into which the statement fits. He uses the examples of the Rabbinical synods of the Middle Ages, which issued decrees for the Jewish community, of the responsa literature written by rabbis and of the Va’ad Arba Arazot (Council of Four Lands) in Poland and Lithuania during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (see Signer 2001). While these are valid historical examples, there are no modern equivalents within the Jewish community, and the authors of ‘Dabru Emet’ do not fit neatly into any of the three categories. Stanislaw Krajewski has written: ‘There is no single organization that can speak on behalf of all Jews, or of all religious Jews, or even of all Jews belonging to one of the major currents of Judaism’ (Krajewski 2000). The fact that ‘Dabru Emet’ had to come from a voice outside the ‘official’ Jewish community serves to demonstrate the difficulty for Jewish statements in general,

with the question of who would make them a crucial factor in the absence of more Jewish statements about Christianity.

The inclusion of the seventh statement in 'Dabru Emet' also serves to illustrate a further fear within the Jewish community about improved Jewish-Christian relations. The authors of 'Dabru Emet' state: 'An improved relationship will not accelerate the cultural and religious assimilation that Jews rightly fear' (Frymer-Kensky *et al.* 2000: xix). The fact that the authors felt the need to articulate a response to the concern about assimilation shows that for many within the Jewish community the fear of this potential effect of Jewish-Christian relations is very real. David Novak writes that for some Jews the old question 'of survival, both physical and cultural' (Novak 1989: 4) still dominates their thinking. The determination for Jewish survival and continuity accompanied by a fear of increased assimilation means that many in the Jewish community are very wary of any potential threats to Jewish identity; closer relations with Christianity are perceived as one of these threats. This concern within the Jewish community is another reason for the absence of more Jewish statements on Christianity, and one which 'Dabru Emet' therefore had to address.

The response to 'Dabru Emet' from within the Jewish community also illustrates that even if an organization could be found to issue a Jewish statement about Christianity, the content of the statement would be hotly debated, and agreement would be hard to find. While 'Dabru Emet' has been signed by several hundred people, and many have greeted the document enthusiastically (Rabbi Irving Greenberg called it 'the most positive affirmation of Christianity ever made by a committed Jewish group' (Greenberg 2000)), there are also many within the Jewish community who have expressed opposition to many of the points within the document. A sample of some of the critical voices serves to illustrate the difficulty in finding unity on these issues.

The most debated statement in 'Dabru Emet' has been the comments on the relationship between Christianity and Nazism. Rabbi A. James Rudin of the American Jewish Committee in New York refused to sign it because he believed the 'statement fails to adequately and accurately address the critical issue of Christianity and the Holocaust' (Rudin 2000). He believes the comments that Christians would have been the next victims of Nazism are 'misleading at best, and dangerous at worst' (*ibid.*); he has not been alone in questioning the historical accuracy of the statement on Nazism (see Levenson 2001: 33). However, criticism of the document has not been restricted to the historical arguments within 'Dabru Emet', and there have also been challenges to the document on theological grounds. Christopher Leighton, director of the Institute for Christian and Jewish Studies, has questioned whether it can be said that Jews and Christians worship the same God, when for many Jews, the idea of the Trinity does not make sense within the context of monotheism (see

Barnett 2000). Jon Levenson has gone further, criticizing each of the eight statements in the document. His argument is dominated by the belief that the authors reduce 'what is not common to mere differences of opinion' (Levenson 2001: 35) and go to the extreme of trying 'to make the two communities look as alike as two peas in a single religious pod' (ibid., 37).

The division within the Jewish community on what can be said about Christianity is not new. In his book *Jewish Perspectives on Christianity*, Fritz Rothschild includes texts from five key Jewish thinkers (Leo Baeck, Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig, Will Herberg and Abraham J. Heschel) about Christianity. The book reveals that each developed a different position on Christianity, as Rothschild himself states to the readers, 'they ought to remember that there is hardly such a thing as *the* standpoint of Judaism from which *the* views of a fixed entity called "Christianity" can be approached' (Rothschild 1996: 13). Even by looking just at the works of the great Jewish thinker Maimonides, it is possible to see how hard a clear Jewish view of Christianity is to articulate. At certain times he includes Christianity within his definition of idolatry (see Novak 1989: 57–61), while at other times he looks more favourably upon Christianity (and Islam), 'asserting that what is derivative *from* Judaism is also potential *for* Judaism's full earthly culmination in the reign of the Messiah-King' (ibid., 61). Maimonides is therefore viewed as both a positive and negative Jewish voice on Christianity, with plenty of scope for different interpretations.

These examples all serve to demonstrate the challenges which the authors of 'Dabru Emet' faced in trying to formulate a Jewish statement on Christians and Christianity. The absence of a single institutional voice within the Jewish community, the fear of assimilation and the lack of an agreed Jewish position vis-à-vis Christianity, show the difficulty of making Jewish statements about Christianity, and serve to illustrate why there have been so few.

Recently, in the British Jewish community, there has been a further example of the difficulty of formulating an accepted Jewish position on other religions. The Chief Rabbi of the Orthodox United Synagogue, Jonathan Sacks, published his latest book, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*, as a Jewish voice on globalization and a response to it. It was not intended as a specific Jewish statement about other religions, but within it, as the title suggests, there is a great deal of discussion of how religions relate to each other, and about the dignity of difference. One of his central ideas is 'that the one God, creator of diversity, commands us to honour his creation by respecting diversity' (Sacks 2002a: 200). He believes that the great religious traditions have the response to today's challenges, stating that 'The God of Israel is larger than the faith of Israel' (ibid., 60). His book seeks to demonstrate that the monotheistic faiths all possess part of the truth, with the idea at the centre 'that God is greater than religion; that He is only partially comprehended by any faith' (ibid., 65).

While Jonathan Sacks is respected as both a rabbi and an academic, his book was greeted with hostility from many Orthodox and conservative⁵ Rabbis. Through the pages of the *Jewish Chronicle* in articles and letters a running debate was held over the merits of what the Chief Rabbi had claimed in the book, and whether his views were true for Judaism. Among his critics, Rabbi Jonathan Guttentag wrote that the idea that other religions have their truths 'is something very radical ... But it does not sound like Judaism' (Guttentag 2002: 32). The British Orthodox Jewish community was unprepared for its leader to make what it perceived as radical statements about other religions. Ultimately the Chief Rabbi was forced to issue a press release on 25 October 2002, which attempted to clarify his position, and guaranteed that in future editions of the book he would elaborate his positions to avoid misinterpretation (see Sacks 2002b).

The controversy surrounding *The Dignity of Difference* serves as further proof of how difficult it would be for the British Orthodox Jewish community to issue a statement on Christianity. Even the opinions of the Chief Rabbi on other religions were challenged from within the community. Having witnessed the debate surrounding the book, it is questionable whether any Orthodox Jewish statement is possible, because it seems that the rabbis would be unable to agree on what it should include.

Could There Be Further Jewish Statements About Christianity?

While all of the factors discussed help to explain why there are so few Jewish statements about Christianity and Jewish–Christian relations, it is important to consider whether more statements could be made, and what they could include. Stanislaw Krajewski wrote in response to 'Dabru Emet': 'Is anything more possible? One mustn't expect much more' (Krajewski 2000). However, I would argue that more is possible.

Irving Greenberg, agreeing with the earlier quotation from David Novak, writes: 'In the Jewish–Christian dialogue, the articulation of the new Christian respect for Judaism necessarily came first' (Greenberg 2000). Since 'The Ten Points of Seelisberg' was issued in 1947, Christian organizations have issued many statements which have responded to the history of Christian anti-Judaism and looked to develop a future where the two religions may exist side by side, with the removal of prejudice. Rabbi Paul Golomb has compared the relationship of Jews and Christians to one of two neighbours where one has mistreated the other, and now apologized. The question he raises is, after receiving the apology, 'what do you say, and when do you say it?' (Golomb 2000). For the authors of 'Dabru Emet', the time had come for the Jewish neighbour to say 'thank you'

and articulate a full response to the apology. For others in the Jewish community it may require more time for the wounds of the past to heal and for them to issue their full acceptance of the apology; whether this full acceptance would come in the form of a statement remains to be seen. This helps further explain why at present there are not more Jewish statements on Christianity, with my feeling being that in the future more statements can be issued.

As has been seen, a far more established framework exists within Christianity for issuing statements; however, this is not to say that Judaism cannot find voices with which to speak. There exists across the Jewish community a variety of official institutions who could potentially make non-binding statements; I would argue that the rabbinic assemblies are the most significant. Some examples are the Assembly of Rabbis and Rabbinic Conference, representing respectively Reform and Liberal rabbis in Britain, the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), representing Reform rabbis in America, and the Rabbinical Assembly (RA), representing Conservative rabbis in America. While their pronouncements may not have any official authority within Jewish tradition, they are able to issue statements. As has been noted, the CCAR and RA together issued a statement in response to the Pope's 'Universal Prayer' in March 2000. These and other similar bodies have issued statements and declarations in the past about Jewish beliefs and practices: it would, therefore, only be a small step to issue a statement about Christianity and Jewish-Christian relations. As Rabbi Paul Golomb states, 'The Jewish community is hardly equipped to speak with one voice' (Golomb 2000), but through these bodies several statements could be made for the different streams within Judaism.

The question then arises of what could be included in a Jewish statement about Christianity and Jewish-Christian relations. As has been established, this statement would, by necessity, be different to the Christian statements that have been issued both in character and in content. I believe the authors of 'Dabru Emet' were correct in stating that the 'changes [in Christianity] merit a thoughtful Jewish response' (Frymer-Kensky *et al.* 2000: xvii). The first comment should, therefore, be thanks for the progress Christianity has made since the Holocaust in removing the 'teaching of contempt' and the spectre of anti-Judaism.

The question which then naturally follows is how Judaism views Christianity, and within this I do not suggest a definitive answer (as the above survey has shown, no unanimous answer is possible). However, a number of different elements could be included in the formulation of the position for each individual rabbinic body. First, there exists within Judaism the concept of the Noachide Laws, which lay down laws for non-Jews; as David Novak said in 1989 (prior to co-authoring 'Dabru Emet'): 'Any Jewish treatment of relations

with non-Jews must turn to the rabbinic doctrine of the Seven Noahide Laws' (Novak 1989: 24). Added to this should be a consideration of the shared heritage of Jews and Christians, recognizing the Jewish origins of Jesus and many of the disciples, developing, if it can be agreed upon, into a specific statement of a Jewish view of Christianity relating to one of the Jewish thinkers who have offered models in the past (Maimonides, Leo Baeck, Martin Buber, etc.). Finally, as there is in 'Dabru Emet', there could be included a vision of the future, with a call to Jews and Christians to work towards justice and peace, in line with the visions of the Prophets of Israel.

Conclusion

It is important to note that while I believe more Jewish statements on Christianity are possible, the medium of issuing statements for advancing Jewish-Christian dialogue is one that remains foreign to Judaism. In 1967 Samuel Sandmel called for a Jewish statement on Christianity; he believed that the Christian statements issued deserved a response. He called for the statement despite repeatedly in his book clarifying that statements were a Christian concept not a Jewish one (see Sandmel 1967: 13–14). This is one of the reasons that the question of why there are not more Jewish statements on Christianity may persist into the future, because institutionally there are always likely to be more Christian statements, not just because there are more Christians, but because it is a Christian model of expressing beliefs and opinions, and there are a number of Christian bodies, which are perceived as being representative, able to issue such statements.

The consideration of why there are not more Jewish statements about Christianity reveals a number of interesting facts relating to Jewish-Christian relations. The need for Christians to take the lead in the development of the new relationship emerges from the nature of the Christian statements and the Jewish responses towards them. It demonstrates that Jews, in light of the Holocaust and a history of suffering persecution, require evidence in order to begin to embrace the newly developing Jewish-Christian relationship. It is also clear that for Jews to issue statements about Christianity would not only be difficult due to the lack of an infrastructure, but also due to the difficulty in obtaining unanimity about what can be said. With these considerations it becomes clear that the question of why there are so few Jewish statements is useful for revealing certain elements about Jewish-Christian relations, but not as a comparison between Christian and Jewish commitment to them.

In the future more Jewish statements about Christianity are possible, but more statements should not necessarily be expected; time will tell if Jewish

organizations embrace the methodology of releasing statements as a way of advancing Jewish–Christian relations. What is more likely is that Jewish organizations will continue to call for increased dialogue, and it is through this dialogue and personal contacts that Jews will help advance the new Jewish–Christian relationship. There has been much progress in this field since the Holocaust – one needs to remember that the tragedy took place less than sixty years ago; the wealth of statements issued since then are but one way of witnessing the development of the new relationship.

Notes

1. The website is maintained by the International Council of Christians and Jews; its address is <<http://www.jcrelations.net>>, accessed January 2003.
2. *Dabru emet* is Hebrew for ‘speak the truth’, used by the Prophet Zechariah in 16:8.
3. A term developed by Jules Isaac to refer to the anti-Judaism within Christian Scripture.
4. This is an official statement of belief for Conservative Judaism in the U.S.A.
5. Conservative with a small c, not Conservative referring to the stream within Judaism.

Bibliography

- Barnett, V. (2000). Provocative reconciliation: reflections on the new Jewish statement on Christianity. <<http://www.jcrelations.net/en/displayItem.php?id=924>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- Brockway, A. R. (1988). *The Theology of the Churches and the Jewish People*. Geneva: WCC Publications
- Eisner, J. (2000). New dialogue between Jews, Christians. <<http://www.icjs.org/what/njsp/inquirerarticle.html>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- Fisher, E. J. (1999). *Catholic Jewish Relations: Documents from the Holy See*. London: The Incorporated Catholic Truth Society
- Frymer-Kensky, T., Novak, D., Ochs, P., Sandmel, D. F. and Signer, M. A. (eds.) (2000). *Christianity in Jewish Terms*. Colorado: Westview Press
- Golomb, P. (2000). Talking to Christians. <<http://www.icjs.org/what/njsp/talking.html>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- Greenberg, I. (2000). Judaism meets Christianity for the first time – again. <http://www.jcrelations.net/en/displayItem.php?id=935>, accessed 5 January 2003
- Guttentag, J. (2002, 4 October). The whole truth and nothing but the truth. *Jewish Chronicle*, 32
- Krajewski, S. (2000). Respect Christians as Christians (rabbis and Jewish theologians on Christianity). <<http://www.icjs.org/what/njsp/krajewski.html>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- Levenson, J. D. (2001). How not to conduct Jewish-Christian dialogue. *Commentary*, 112, no. 5, 31–37

- Novak, D. (1989). *Jewish-Christian Dialogue: A Jewish Justification*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Pawlikowski, J. T. (1980). *What Are They Saying About Christian-Jewish Relations?* New York: Paulist Press
- Rosen, D. (2001). Dabru Emet: its significance for the Jewish-Christian dialogue. <<http://www.icjs.org/what/njsp/rosen.html>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- Rothschild, F. A. (1996). General introduction. In *Jewish Perspectives on Christianity*, ed. F. A. Rothschild, pp. 1–17. New York: Continuum Publishing Company
- Rudin, A. J. (2000). “Dabru Emet” – a Jewish dissent. <<http://www.jcrelations.net/en/displayItem.php?id=957>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- Sacks, J. (2002a). *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*. London: Continuum
- Sacks, J. (2002b). Press release: 25 October 2002 – The Dignity of Difference. <http://www.chief Rabbi.org/press_releases/2002/10/dignity2.htm>, accessed 5 January 2003
- Sandmel, D. F. (2002). Dabru Emet and the future direction of Jewish-Christian relations. In *Jews and Christians in Conversation: Crossing Cultures and Generations*, ed. E. Kessler, J. Pawlikowski and J. Banki, pp. 93–102. Cambridge: Orchard Academic
- Sandmel, S. (1967). *We Jews and You Christians: an Inquiry into Attitudes*. New York: J.B. Lippincott
- Signer, M. A. (2001). Some reflections on Dabru Emet. <<http://www.jcrelations.net/en/displayItem.php?id=781>>, accessed 5 January 2003

Statements

- Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) (1999). Statement of principles for Reform Judaism. Pittsburgh. <<http://www.jcrelations.net/en/displayItem.php?id=1473>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) and the Rabbinical Assembly (RA) (2000). Statement. <<http://www.jcrelations.net/en/displayItem.php?id=1015>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCIJ) (1947). The ten points of Seelisberg. <<http://www.jcrelations.net/en/displayItem.php?id=983>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) (1998). Response to Vatican document “We remember: a reflection on the Shoah”. <<http://www.jcrelations.net/en/displayItem.php?id=1016>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- Lambeth Conference (1988). Jews, Christians and Muslims: the way of dialogue. <<http://www.jcrelations.net/en/displayItem.php?id=1006>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- Rabbinic Committee for Interreligious Dialogue (RCID) (2000). News release. <<http://www.jcrelations.net/en/displayItem.php?id=1017>>, accessed 5 January 2003
- The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) (1988). Emet ve-emunah. <<http://www.jcrelations.net/en/displayItem.php?id=1019>>, accessed 5 January 2003

Copyright of European Judaism is the property of Berghahn Books and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.