

and honor, but whom we no longer fear and from whom we no longer demand (italics added).³³

Clearly, Cohen did not see God as having a concrete role in history. He thus rejected the idea that God was ultimately responsible for the Holocaust. Instead, he relegated God's active role in history to the future, a theological strategy not unlike that of the German theologian Jürgen Moltmann. It is, however, subject to much the same criticism: *by denying God's role in contemporary history and by relegating His decisive activity to the future, Cohen, like Fackenheim in his earlier period, consigned God's activity to a domain wholly inaccessible to empirical confirmation and hence subject to every conceivable flight of fancy.* One can say almost anything about God's future activity because there are no hard facts against which such claims can be measured. Although powerfully evocative, one wonders what actual content can legitimately be assigned to words such as "the hope of our future."

Nevertheless, Cohen did not see God's presence in history as limited to the indefinite future. Cohen described the divine life as "a filament within the historical but never the filament that we can identify and ignite according to our requirements."³⁴ Cohen held that man has the power to "obscure, eclipse, burn out the divine filament," but it is not in God's power to limit human freedom. Insofar as God takes an active role in human affairs, it is as Teacher *par excellence*. The speech of God offers humanity a teaching with which to limit the destructive and capricious elements in human freedom. According to Cohen, that teaching is to be found in the *Halakhah*, the corpus of rabbinic law. Moreover, beyond the role of Teacher, God exercises no direct interference with human freedom.

There is, of course, a very powerful reason why Cohen refrained from seeing God as playing a greater part in history than that of "divine filament." Had Cohen done so, he would have been confronted with all of the difficulties that flow from seeing God as the ultimate Author of the Holocaust. Nevertheless, one can ask whether the problem of God and the Holocaust has been solved by limiting God's role to that of "divine filament" and Teacher of essentially free agents. *By such a limitation, Cohen may have portrayed God as functionally irrelevant.* A human being prepared to accept the consequences of his or her actions will have no reason to take God-as-filament into account. As long as such a person is prepared to accept the costs as well as the benefits of his or her deeds, there will be no reason to be concerned with a God who places no restraint on human freedom.

Cohen thus stressed the impotence of God before human freedom, a position not unlike that of the Orthodox Jewish thinker Eliezer Berkovits.³⁵ According to Berkovits, God created free men, not automata. This has had the paradoxical consequence that "while He [God] shows forbearance with the wicked, He must turn a deaf ear to the anguished cries of the violated."³⁶ Both Cohen and Berkovits insist that the Holocaust was not the work of a punishing God but of men who obscenely used their freedom for mass destruction.

The election of Israel is another traditional doctrine Cohen sought to defend. Cohen argued: "The death camps ended forever one argument of history—whether the Jews are a chosen people. They are chosen, unmistakably, extremely, utterly."³⁷

Cohen's defense of Israel's chosenness is less than persuasive. One must ask whether he has confused being targeted for annihilation by men with being chosen by God. Unless one sees the Holocaust as either divine punishment or some sort of vicarious sacrifice, as does Maybaum, it is more likely to raise doubts about rather than serve as proof of Israel's election. In and of itself the Holocaust simply reveals the obvious fact that Europe's Jews were successfully targeted for annihilation. The fate of the victims demonstrates, if any demonstration be needed, that in times of acute stress Jews are in danger of becoming the target *par excellence* of the nations of the world. This is hardly identical with being chosen by God.

Like Fackenheim, Cohen recognized that the Holocaust has resulted in a Jewish return to history, by which he means a return to a situation in which, at least in the State of Israel, Jews are dependent upon themselves rather than host peoples for their survival. As noted, Fackenheim regards the return as the beginning of a Jewish *Tikkun*. Cohen's assessment was less positive. He opined that the return to history may prove "more threatening even than genocide has been, for in no way is the Jew allowed any longer . . . to repeat his exile amid the nations, to disperse himself in order to survive."³⁸ In a similar vein Cohen commented that immersion in a history without transcendent meaning may lead to a modern form of paganism: "History without a capstone, time without eternity, the present moment without the inbreeding of the *eschaton* leaves us, as Jews, with little more than the chthonic vitalities of our blood as shield and buckler."³⁹

The Greek word *chthonos* means "earth." Cohen thus concluded that absent faith in some version of the God of History the Jewish return to history is likely to be a return to a modernized version of a very ancient earth paganism. I had come to a similar conclusion two decades earlier,

although there is far more evidence today of the revival of traditional Judaism and apocalyptic messianism than of earth paganism in contemporary Israel.

Cohen was unwilling to rest content with a Jewish people enmeshed in the powers of earth. Having failed to find a "beyond" for the individual Jew, he refused to abandon hope in the immortality of the Jewish people as a sacred collectivity. In the light of this hope, he saw the State of Israel as a far less significant response to the Holocaust than do the other Holocaust theologians. According to Cohen, a Jewish state is no exception to the rule that political states are part of the incessant rhythm of history's rise and fall. Hence, the eternity of the Jewish people cannot take a political form. Cohen wrote that he stands outside the wall of the Jewish state as well as any other state. Nevertheless, he does not stand outside of the Jewish people, which, he asserted, constitutes "the eternal speaking of revelation to the Jew of history." In view of the twentieth-century experience of the Jews, Cohen understood his position to be problematic, for if the Holocaust has a single overriding lesson, it is that there is no limit to the obscenities a determined and powerful aggressor can freely visit upon stateless, powerless victims. In the aftermath of the Holocaust, the survivors could no longer trust their safety to anyone save themselves. They risked their lives to create a Jewish state in the full knowledge that it might be destroyed by its enemies. If the state survived, they would enjoy a measure of normal human dignity; if it perished, they would at least die honorably defending themselves rather than as pathetically impotent victims of some future extremist assault.

Cohen's critics have found much to praise in *The Tremendum*. They have, however, tended to find his attempt at a constructive Holocaust theology the weakest part of the book. Nevertheless, if Cohen failed to offer a credible post-Holocaust theology, his failure probably tells us more about the inevitable difficulties confronting Jewish theology after Auschwitz than about any lack of ability or brilliance on his part. Put simply, it may be impossible to affirm the traditional Jewish God without also affirming ideas every post-Holocaust Jewish thinker, save Maybaum, has rejected, namely, that the Holocaust was either divine punishment or some kind of mass sacrificial offering for the sake of messianic redemption. Cohen himself apparently recognized the limitations inherent in any attempt to write Jewish theology after the Holocaust. He writes: "I have promised only to cross the abyss. I have not promised to explain it. I would not dare."⁴⁰ Yet, if Cohen has failed to offer a credible post-Holocaust theology, his failure can, with justice, be described as tragic rather than personal. Let us recall that tragedy is not so much the story

of human error or folly as it is the inexorable unfolding of a destiny wholly resistant to human intention. When Oedipus learned that he was destined to kill his father and marry his mother, he did everything he could to evade that destiny. Nevertheless, every evasive measure only brought him closer to the fated denouement. For the best and certainly the most understandable of motives, Cohen may simply have attempted the impossible.

The Survival of Faith in the Traditional God

Does that mean that the ancient and hallowed faith in the biblical God of covenant and election has no future among religious Jews? On the contrary, it is probably the one theological option most likely to have a future. Whatever doubts secularized Jews may currently entertain, that belief has been the hallowed, authoritative faith of the community of Israel from time immemorial until the modern period. It has given the Jewish people the supremely important gifts of meaning and hope. Instead of viewing their experiences as a series of unfortunate and essentially meaningless happenings, biblical-rabbinic faith has enabled the Jewish people to see their history as a meaningful expression of their relations with God. Moreover, no matter how desperate their situation became, their faith enabled them to hope that, sooner or later, "Those who sow in tears will reap in joy." The old biblical-rabbinic view that God is the ultimate Actor in history and that the Jewish people are bound to him by an eternal covenant remains the most coherent, logically consistent way of understanding Jewish experience and history which is acceptable to the Jewish people. In my own theological writings I have pointed out the bitter, yet inescapable, consequences of affirming that faith after Auschwitz. Nevertheless, no credible theological alternative has emerged which does not deny the very foundations of normative Judaism.

I have also become convinced that most religious Jews will eventually affirm faith in the God of covenant and election, even if such an affirmation entails regarding Auschwitz as divine punishment. Faith in covenant and election appear to be indispensable to the Jewish religious mainstream. One does not have to be a Jew to be a monotheist. What distinguishes Judaism is the faith that God has chosen the Jewish people to serve and obey Him by fulfilling his commandments as revealed in Scripture and authoritatively interpreted by the rabbis. Only a Judaism that is firmly rooted in the divine revelation at Sinai can defend the community from anomy. The liberal compromises that have flourished since the Enlightenment detach Jewish life and practice from all intellectual and

theological moorings. In the long run, the liberal compromises offer little more than institutionalized alienation in which functional legitimations, supported by nostalgia and the guilt the living feel toward the dead, act as surrogates for lost theological legitimations.

In the past, traditional Judaism enabled most Jews to cope with their very difficult life situation as strangers in the Christian and Moslem worlds. However, the world's largest Jewish community, the American Jewish community, is diminishing in numbers as a result of an historically unprecedented intermarriage rate. One can ask whether large-scale intermarriage may be a delayed demographic response to the Holocaust on the part of those who no longer believe, as Jews once did, that Judaism is worth dying for. If this is the case, it is very likely that outside of Israel the Jewish religious mainstream will eventually consist primarily of a relatively small remnant who continue to affirm faith in the God of history and the election of Israel. Without traditional faith, there may simply be no reason for Jews to remain eternal strangers in a predominantly Christian world.⁴¹

Moreover, most Christian religious authorities expect Jews either to affirm faith in the biblical God of covenant and election or to accept Christ as their Savior. From an evangelical perspective, the Jews are the chosen people to whom God sent His Son as humanity's Redeemer. In the Christian view, the Jews have, of course, failed to recognize the true nature of Jesus Christ. Hence, God's election passed from the Israel "according to the flesh" to the Israel "according to the spirit," which consists of all those who have recognized Christ's true nature. Nevertheless, believing Christians have no doubt that, sooner or later, at least a "saving remnant" of Israel will finally see the light.⁴² Like Judaism, Christianity cannot abandon the doctrines of covenant and election.

Moreover, Christian influence on Jews and Judaism is far greater than is often recognized, especially in the United States. By virtue of the fact that both Christians and Jews regard the Bible as of divine inspiration, Christians give Jews a context of plausibility for their most deeply held beliefs. If Jews lived in a culture in which the majority accorded the Bible no greater respect than the Greek myths, Jews might still hold fast to their beliefs, but they would receive no cognitive reinforcement. Even the fact that Jews and Christians disagree about the true nature of Jesus reinforces the context of plausibility, for the disagreement is about the true meaning of the Book both regard as divinely inspired.

The profound influence of American Christianity on American Judaism, even Orthodox Judaism, ought not to be underestimated. The world's largest Jewish community lives in and is ultimately dependent

for its security and the security of the State of Israel on the world's largest Christian community. The State of Israel's strongest American Christian supporters are Fundamentalists, especially Protestant premillennial dispensationalists, who believe in the inerrancy of Scriptural revelation and who also believe that the return of the Children of Israel to the Promised Land is an indispensable element in God's plan for humanity's salvation in Christ. As conservative Christian influence continues to grow within the United States, it will encourage Jews to affirm a faith rooted in biblical revelation.

Thus, both external and internal influences foster a renewed Jewish affirmation of covenant and election. Even those Jews whose reasons for remaining in the Synagogue are primarily ethnic rather than religious are likely to convince themselves that the principal beliefs of the Jewish mainstream are true. To do otherwise would be to create too great a dissonance between belief and practice. If the survival of the Jews as a group outside of Israel is perceived to depend upon religious affiliation and some measure of Jewish religious practice, which in turn are thought to be legitimated by faith in the God of covenant and election, even those whose basic commitment is ethnic are likely to find some way to affirm *the only system of religious belief that legitimates Jewish survival*. The alternative is to abandon Jewish identification altogether. That alternative is actually being taken by the unprecedented number of young Jews who marry non-Jews and whose children or grandchildren are raised as Christians. While this is not the context in which to discuss the widespread phenomenon of intermarriage among contemporary Jews, that phenomenon must be seen as a powerful response to the Holocaust on the part of those Jews who have asked themselves Fackenheim's question concerning the morality of exposing distant descendants to anti-Semitic indignities by bringing children up as Jews. Those Jews who believe that in preserving Judaism they are fulfilling God's will have no difficulty in exposing their descendants to the potential hazards of a future catastrophe. Those who have lost that faith have no reason for so exposing their descendants. Religious belief and practice will remain in tension as long as the traditional legitimations of Jewish religious practice cannot be affirmed. Traditionally, the entire body of Jewish religious practice was founded upon the belief in God's revelations to Moses, the patriarchs, and prophets. As long as this fundamental belief is not affirmed, there will be a painful dissonance between Jewish religious practice and belief. As the horror of the Holocaust recedes in time, religious Jews, although greatly diminished in number, may once again find themselves reducing the dissonance by declaring with the traditional Prayer Book that "because of our

sins all this has come upon us." That time has not yet come, but it may very well be on its way.

Of necessity, those Jews will reject the interpretation of Divinity I have set forth in these pages. That is to be expected. It is by no means certain that Judaism can survive without faith in the God of Israel as traditionally understood. I can only hope that those who affirm the traditional interpretation of God are motivated by honest belief rather than the conviction that, true or false, such a credo must be given verbal assent for the sake of Jewish survival, often hoping that their children will be able to believe what they cannot. A proud and glorious tradition deserves more than a self-deceiving exercise in bad faith.

For those of us who lived through the terrible years, whether in safety or as victims, the *Shoah* conditions the way we encounter all things sacred and profane. Nothing in our experience is untouched by that absolutely decisive event. Because of the *Shoah*, some of us enter the synagogue to partake of our sacred times and seasons with those to whom we are bound in shared memory, pain, fate, and hope; yet, once inside, we are struck dumb by words we can no longer honestly utter. All that we can offer is our reverent and attentive silence before the Divine.

CHAPTER 10

The Rebirth of Israel in Contemporary Jewish Theology

The meaning of God in human experience is a variable that is inevitably altered by radical changes in that experience. Scientific arguments for or against the existence of God are far less significant than the life situation out of which such affirmations or denials flow. The possibilities of renewal which the Zionist movement has made available to the Jewish people are evident in the life and culture of both Israel and the Diaspora. Less evident but no less real is the influence Zionism is destined to have on the religion and theology of the Jewish people as well. It is not likely that the Jewish life situation could change so decisively without a concomitant change in Jewish religious sentiment. We see the negative side of the change in the rejection of traditional Jewish forms by most Israelis; the full significance of the positive side has yet to come to expression.

One of the most important but least noticed aspects of Zionism is the extent to which it represents a Jewish expression of the twentieth century's urge to return to primal origins. This is evident in many cultural endeavors of our times. In philosophy, Martin Heidegger has characterized his thought as an attempt to get behind more than two thousand years of European philosophy's estrangement from "being." In psychoanalysis there are similar trends. The concept of genitality as a key to the mature functioning of an adult personality casts a negative evaluation on all of the roles, status attainments, and cultural substitutions that people so frequently use as self-measures. The simple functioning of human sexuality—an act little affected by either cultural or historical variation—achieves an importance possessed by no aspect of "civilized" strivings.

and election in the first edition of *After Auschwitz* and subsequent writings was the most radical theological step I could have taken as a Jewish thinker.

Over the years, however, I have reflected upon the obvious fact that wise and learned men and women in both Judaism and Christianity have believed in and found profound meaning in the idea of a covenant between God and His people. I had too much respect for these men and women to dismiss their faith. I therefore attempted to find meaning in it. As I had once found meaning in religious ritual by inquiring into its social or psychological function, I began to find meaning in the idea of covenant and election by attempting to understand its function in the life of the religious community.

Initially, I stressed the idea of covenant and election as psychic compensation for political impotence. This is especially evident in *The Religious Imagination* (1968). At present, I believe that the idea did serve that function but that there was far more to the story. My current views are spelled out in chapter 7. It should be noted that I have not rejected my earlier theological and sociological views. I have, however, added to and considerably modified them.

1. The idea of a community of moral obligation is based upon Helen Fein's concept of a "universe of moral obligation." See Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide: National Responses and Jewish Victimization during the Holocaust* (New York: Free Press, 1979), p. 4.
2. See George Mendenhall, *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (Pittsburgh: Biblical Colloquium, 1955). "Covenant," in G. A. Buttrick, ed., *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), vol. 1; Dennis J. McCarthy, S.J., *Old Testament Covenant* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1972); "Covenant," *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 5, pp. 1012-22.
3. See George Mendenhall, *The Tenth Generation: The Origins of the Biblical Tradition* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), pp. 19ff.
4. Mendenhall, "Covenant Forms in Israelite Tradition," pp. 29ff.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 35ff.
6. Mendenhall, *The Tenth Generation*, p. 30.
7. The relationship between Israel's fidelity to her obligations under the covenant and her fate are spelled out in many places in Scripture. See, for example, Leviticus 26:3-45; Amos 4:6-11; Jeremiah 44:1-4.
8. See Richard L. Rubenstein, *The Religious Imagination* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968), pp. 127ff.
9. This point is implied in the discussion of the secularization process in Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), pp. 106ff.
10. "Science as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 139.
11. See Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953), pp. 151-53.
12. See Bernard Wyszocki, Jr., "Christian Missions Convert Few in Japan," in *Asian Wall Street Journal*, July 16, 1986.
13. See Robert N. Bellah, *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), pp. 87-112.
14. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, trans. Rex Warner (Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin Books, 1980), p. 408.
15. There is debate concerning the degree to which the inhabitants of Ca-

naanite cities were actually put to death. There were, apparently, some instances in which the injunction was put into practice in defense of Israel's religious-cultural world. See Johannes Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture* (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1940), vol. 3, pp. 24-25.

16. Robert K. Massie, *Peter the Great: His Life and World* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1988), p. 743.

17. H. G. Nichols, ed., *Washington Dispatches, 1941-1945: Weekly Political Reports from the British Embassy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 558. Most of the dispatches were written by Sir Isaiah Berlin.

18. This cartoon is reproduced in John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), p. 185.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 29, 36-37, 52-57, 70-73, 81-83, 90-92, 184-85, 196-97, 232-33, 247-49.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

21. Jared Taylor, *Shadows of the Rising Sun: A Critical View of the Japanese Miracle* (New York: William Morrow, 1983), p. 91.

22. Isaiah Ben-Dasan, *The Japanese and the Jews*, trans. Richard L. Gage (Tokyo: Weatherill, 1985), pp. 134ff.

23. See Taylor, *Shadows of the Rising Sun*, pp. 28-39.

24. See, for example, Anton Shammas, "A Stone's Throw," *New York Review of Books*, March 31, 1988.

25. For a reliable account of the Yamanu affair and its relationship to Israel's nuclear arsenal, see Louis Tosiaco, *Triple Cross: Israel, the Atomic Bomb, and the Man Who Spilled the Secrets* (Secaucus, N.J.: Carol Publishing Group, 1990).

Chapter 8 Covenant and Divinity: The Holocaust and the Problematics of Religious Faith, Part 1

Chapters 8 and 9 constitute a record of my ongoing dialogue with my theological contemporaries in Judaism. A number of earlier essays form the basis of these chapters. One of the earliest is "The Radical Monotheism of Emil Fackenheim," *Soundings*, Summer 1974. At the time, both Fackenheim and I were more inclined to stress our differences than our common vocation. The differences are still there, but, on my part and I have reason to believe on his, there has been growing respect and appreciation.

Mutual respect and appreciation also characterized my dialogue with the late Arthur Cohen. In the first edition of *After Auschwitz*, I discussed his *The Natural and the Supernatural Jew* (1962) in a chapter entitled "The 'Supernatural' Jew." *The Natural and the Supernatural Jew* was the first major theological work by an American Jewish thinker of my generation. It is difficult to think of two books so fundamentally different in perspective than *The Natural and the Supernatural Jew* and the first edition of *After Auschwitz*, in which I was very critical of Cohen's initial theological effort. As Cohen himself acknowledges in *The Tremendum* (1981), he was completely silent concerning the Holocaust in his earlier work. In *The Tremendum* he finally turned to the problem of Holocaust theology. I responded in "Naming the Unnameable: Thinking the Unthinkable: A Review

Essay on Arthur Cohen's *The Tremendum*," *Journal of Reform Judaism* 31 (Spring 1984). That essay forms the basis of the discussion of Cohen in chapter 9.

When John K. Roth and I decided to write *Approaches to Auschwitz* (1987), we agreed that I would do the section on Jewish theological responses to the Holocaust in chapter 10, "The Silence of God: Philosophical and Religious Reflection on the Holocaust." That material, revised and updated, forms the basis of chapters 8 and 9 of the current volume.

1. Isaiah 45:7 is thought to be such a rejection: "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."

2. G. W. F. Hegel, "Introduction: Reason in History," in *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, ed. Johannes Hoffmeister, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 43.

3. Theodore Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Seabury Press, 1973), pp. 361–62.

4. James H. Markham, "Over Philosophy's Temple, Shadow of a Swastika," *New York Times*, February 4, 1988.

5. Heidegger's letter to Marcuse, dated January 28, 1948, is found in the Marcuse archives in Frankfurt. See Thomas Sheehan, "Heidegger and the Nazis," *New York Review of Books*, June 16, 1988, p. 42.

6. Richard L. Rubenstein, *The Age of Tringe* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), p. 132.

7. The phrase is from Irving Greenberg, "Cloud of Smoke, Pillar of Fire: Judaism, Christianity, and Modernity after the Holocaust," in *Auschwitz: Beginning of a New Era?* ed. Eva Fleischner (New York: Ktav, 1977), pp. 9–13.

8. Elchonon Wassermann, *Ma'amar Ikusot Denshicho Vema'amar Al Ha'emuna* (Treatise on the Footsteps of the Messiah and on Faith) (New York, 1939, in Yiddish), cited by Gershon Greenberg, "Orthodox Theological Responses to Kristallnacht: Chayyim Ozer Grodzensky ('Achi'ezer') and Elchonon Wassermann," paper presented at the Eighteenth Annual Scholars Conference on the Church Struggle and the Holocaust, Washington, D.C., 1988. I am indebted to Professor Greenberg for having made this paper available to me, as well as several others dealing with Orthodox responses to the Holocaust.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

10. Efraim Oshry, *Churban Lilia* (New York, 1951, in Yiddish), pp. 48–50, cited and translated by Gershon Greenberg, "Orthodox Theological Responses to Kristallnacht."

11. Joseph Isaac Schneersohn, "Redemption Now," *Netzach Yisrael* III (1948) 6–7 (Hebrew), cited by Gershon Greenberg, "Reflections upon the Holocaust within American Orthodoxy, 1945–1948," unpublished paper, 1988.

12. Joseph H. Hertz, ed., *The Authorized Daily Prayer Book* (New York, 1948), pp. 820–21. See also Richard L. Rubenstein, *The Religious Imagination* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968), pp. 127–30.

13. For an overview of this development, see Ian Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord: Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1986); see also Michael Berenbaum, *After Tragedy and Triumph: Modern Jewish Thought and the American Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 134–55.

14. I have dealt with the elements of continuity and singularity of the Holocaust as a state-sponsored program of population elimination in *The Age of Tringe*.

15. Martin Luther, "On the Jews and Their Lies," trans. Martin Bertram, in *Luther's Works*, ed. Franklin T. Sherman and Helmut T. Lehman (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), vol. 47, p. 139.

16. In a well-known tradition, Yohanan is depicted as having seen a famine-stricken Jewish girl on the road to Emmaus after the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. Out of desperation for something to eat, the girl extracted undigested barleycorn from the excrement dropped by an Arab's horse. Yohanan commented to his disciples on what he had seen, citing Deuteronomy 28:47–48: "Because you did not serve the Lord your God when you had plenty, therefore you shall serve your enemy in hunger and thirst. Because you did not serve the Lord . . . by reason of the abundance of all things, therefore you shall serve your enemy in want of all things." "Mekhilla Bahodesh," in Jacob Z. Lauterbach, ed. and trans., *Mekhilla de Rabbi Ishmael* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1948), vol. 2, pp. 193–94.

17. To this day the classical rabbinic response to the Fall of Jerusalem determines the character of the traditional liturgy. For example, the Musaf service for the Holy Days and Festivals includes the following prayer: "Thou has chosen us from among all peoples; thou hast loved us and taken pleasure in us, and hast exalted us above all tongues; thou has allowed us by thy commandments, and brought us near unto thy service, O our King, and thou has called us by thy great and holy Name . . . But on account of our sins we were exiled from our land and removed far from our country" (italics added). Hertz, *Daily Prayer Book*, pp. 820–21. See also Rubenstein, *Religious Imagination*, pp. 127–30.

18. Ignaz Maybaum, *The Face of God after Auschwitz* (Amsterdam: Polak and Van Gennep, 1965); Richard L. Rubenstein, *After Auschwitz: Radical Theology and Contemporary Judaism*, (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966).

19. Maybaum, *Face of God*, p. 36.

20. It should be noted that not all Jews or Christians regard the displacement of sacrificial forms of worship as progress. To this day, Orthodox Jews pray for the restoration of the Jerusalem Temple and its biblically ordained sacrifices. Roman Catholics participate in sacrificial worship whenever the Mass is celebrated, and all Christians regard Jesus as the supreme sacrifice. Maybaum's conception of religious "progress" thus appeared to be dependent upon an unexamined affirmation of the values of nineteenth-century Reform Judaism, which are by no means universally accepted in the late twentieth century. See Rubenstein, *After Auschwitz*, 1st ed., pp. 93–112, where the idea that prayer is a higher mode of religious life than sacrifice is rejected.

21. In Christianity Adam's sin is sometimes regarded as a *felix culpa*, a fortunate fall. "O *felix culpa, quae halem ac tantum meruit habere Redemptorem!*" (O happy fault, that merited such a redeemer), *The English Latin Sacramentary* (Roman Missal) (New York: Benziger, 1966), p. 124. I am indebted to Professor Maureen Tilley of Florida State University for this citation.

22. Maybaum, *Face of God*, p. 67.

23. For an overview of Polish Jewry in the between-the-wars period, see Celia Heller, *On the Edge of Destruction: Jews of Poland between the Two World Wars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

24. Maybaum, *Face of God*, p. 63. I am indebted to Steven Katz, *Post-Holocaust Dialogues* (New York: New York University Press, 1983), p. 162, for this citation.

25. See ch. 10, "The Rebirth of Israel in Contemporary Jewish Theology."
26. Maybaum, *Face of God*, p. 67.
27. *Ibid.*
28. See Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1966), pp. 23-26.
29. This thesis is set forth in Richard L. Rubenstein, *The Cunning of History* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), and Richard L. Rubenstein and John K. Roth, *Approaches to Auschwitz: The Holocaust and Its Legacy* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987).
30. See ch. 1, "The Dean and the Chosen People."
31. "Ein Wort zur Judenfrage, der Reichsbruderrat der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland," April 8, 1949, in *Der Ungeduldige Bunt: Neue Bewegung von Juden und Christlicher*, ed. Dietrich Goldschmidt and Hans-Joachim Kraus (Stuttgart: Gemeinde Kreuz-Verlag, 1962), pp. 251-54.
32. See ch. 10, "The Rebirth of Israel in Contemporary Jewish Theology."
33. Rubenstein, *Religious Imagination*.
34. "The State of Jewish Belief: A Symposium," *Commentary*, August 1966, reprinted in *After Auschwitz*, 1st ed., p. 153.
35. Rubenstein, *After Auschwitz*, 1st ed., pp. 151-52.
36. On the Armenian genocide as cultural and psychic inheritance, see Michael Arlen, *Passage to Ararat* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975).
37. See ch. 16, "God after the Death of God."
38. Among the typical prayers of this genre, we find:
 Sound the great shofar for our freedom; raise the ensign to gather our exiles, and gather us from the four corners of the earth. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who gatherest the dispersed of thy people.
 And to Jerusalem, thy city, return in mercy, and dwell therein as thou has spoken; rebuild it soon in our days as an everlasting building, and speedily set up therein the throne of David. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who rebuildest Jerusalem.
 (Hertz, *Daily Prayer Book*, pp. 146-47).

Chapter 9 Covenant and Divinity: The Holocaust and the Problematics of Religious Faith, Part 2

1. Emil L. Fackenheim, *Encounters between Judaism and Modern Philosophy* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 21.
2. Emil L. Fackenheim, *Christian Century*, May 6, 1970.
3. Fackenheim, *To Mend the World: Foundations of Future Jewish Thought* (New York: Schocken Books, 1982), p. 13.
4. Irving Greenberg, "Cloud of Smoke, Pillar of Fire: Judaism, Christianity, and Modernity after the Holocaust," in *Auschwitz: Beginning of a New Era?* ed. Eva Fleischner (New York: KTAV, 1977), pp. 9-11. See Fackenheim, *To Mend the World*, p. 11.
5. See ch. 8, "Covenant and Divinity, Part 1."
6. Emil Fackenheim, "Can There Be Judaism without Revelation?" in *Quest for Past and Future: Essays in Jewish Theology* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1968), pp. 80-81, reprinted from *Commentary*, December 1951.

7. Fackenheim, *God's Presence in History* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), p. 11.
8. In traditional Judaism the number of commandments given by God to Israel in Scripture is said to be 613.
9. Fackenheim, "Transcendence in Contemporary Culture: Philosophical Reflections and a Jewish Theology," in *Transcendence*, ed. Herbert W. Richardson and Donald R. Cutler (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p. 150.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Fackenheim, *The Jewish Return to History: Reflections in the Age of Auschwitz and the New Jerusalem* (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), p. 31.
12. Fackenheim, *To Mend the World*, p. 10.
13. George M. Kren and Leon Rappoport, *The Holocaust and the Crisis of Human Behavior* (New York: Holmes and Meir, 1980), p. 13.
14. This view is elaborated in Peter J. Haas, *Morality after Auschwitz: The Radical Challenge of the Nazi Ethic* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988). On the aid given to the perpetrators after the war, see Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness* (New York: Vintage, 1983), pp. 276-328.
15. Fackenheim, *To Mend the World*, p. 13.
16. Terence Des Pres, *The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life in the Death Camps* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 51-72. See ch. 3, "Religion and the Origins of the Death Camps," n. 50.
17. Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, trans. Stuart Woolf (New York: Collier Books, 1976), p. 82.
18. G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of the Mind*, trans. J. B. Baillie (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1949), p. 676.
19. See Richard L. Rubenstein and John K. Roth, *Approaches to Auschwitz: The Holocaust and Its Legacy* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1986), p. 324. See also Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).
20. Fackenheim, *To Mend the World*, p. 248.
21. Pelagia Lewinska, *Twenty Months at Auschwitz* (New York: Lyle Stuart, 1986), pp. 141ff., 150.
22. Fackenheim, *To Mend the World*, p. 250.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 304.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Arthur A. Cohen, *The Natural and the Supernatural Jew* (New York: Pantheon, 1962).
26. Arthur A. Cohen, *The Tremendum* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), p. 34.
27. Rubenstein, "The Supernatural Jew," *After Auschwitz*, 1st ed., pp. 177-90.
28. Cohen, *Tremendum*, p. 36.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
31. *Ibid.*
32. See Rubenstein, *The Cunning of History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975); Rubenstein, *The Age of Tragedy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983); Rubenstein and Roth, *Approaches to Auschwitz*. See also in this volume, ch. 3, "Religion and the Origins of the Death Camps," and ch. 5, "The Unmastered Trauma."

33. Cohen, *Tremendum*, p. 97.
34. *Ibid.*, pp. 97–98.
35. See Eliezer Berkovits, *Faith after the Holocaust* (New York: Klav, 1973); *Crisis and Faith* (New York: Sanhedrin Press, 1976); *With God in Hell* (New York: Sanhedrin Press, 1979).
36. Berkovits, *Faith after the Holocaust*, p. 107. I am indebted to Steven Katz, *Post-Holocaust Dialogues* (New York: New York University Press, 1983), p. 271, for this citation.
37. Cohen, *Tremendum*, p. 11.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
39. *Ibid.*
40. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
41. See Rubenstein, "Naming the Unnameable: Thinking the Unthinkable (A Review Essay on Arthur Cohen's *The Tremendum*)," *Journal of Reform Judaism*, Spring 1984, pp. 43–54.
42. For the New Testament source of these ideas, see Romans 9–11.

Chapter 10 The Rebirth of Israel in Contemporary Jewish Theology

The most significant events in twentieth-century Jewish history have been the European catastrophe and the rebirth of Israel. Both events have decisive significance for contemporary Jewish theology. In the first edition of *After Auschwitz*, I argued that the Holocaust marks the death of the God of History and that the founding of the State of Israel marks the rebirth of the long-forgotten Earth divinities within Jewish experience.

My ideas concerning the rebirth of Israel and the Earth divinities were originally expressed in this essay, first published in a slightly different form in the *Reconstructionist*, April 29, 1960, long before the Six-Day War of 1967, the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the Palestinian Intifada, and Iraqi missile attacks on Israel. Today I am considerably less enthusiastic about the messianic aspects of both Zionism and the rebirth of Israel, although messianic Zionism has become a stronger force by far in contemporary Israel than when this essay was written. When I wrote the essay, I saw Israel's rebirth as *atlasia de ge'ulah*, "the beginning of redemption." I no longer so regard it. I now see existence itself as coterminous with exile and the grave as the real locus of "redemption." What I retain of this paper's perspectives is a fundamental conviction that an insightful mystical paganism, using the forms of traditional Jewish religion, is the most meaningful religious option for Jews after Auschwitz and the rebirth of Israel. For further indications of how my current opinions differ from those expressed in this essay, see the notes to this chapter.

1. See G. W. F. Hegel, "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate," in *Early Theological Writings*, trans. T. M. Knox and Richard Kroner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 182–205.
2. I no longer hold that "we are prisoners of the past only as long as we permit ourselves to be" or that the "chain of sin and punishment" was self-

imposed. On the contrary, I believe that we are all, willy-nilly, heirs of the past and its conflicts. I further believe that by blaming itself for its troubles, the Jewish people used its spiritual resources in a harsh but ultimately constructive way to cope with a tragic and imperiled existence. Only by blaming itself could it finally muster the necessary resources to extricate itself from the Second Egypt, the continent of Europe, and create a new life for itself in Israel.

3. Clearly, I was mistaken but by no means alone in prematurely proclaiming the "end of history." Israel's existence has hardly been "posthistorical" since 1960, when this essay was first written.

4. This would, of course, be true if Israel were to attain "the goal of Jewish history." That prospect now seems a long way off.

5. Today, I believe that, insular as Israel's survival is based on high-technology weapons perpetually made obsolescent by advances in software, solid-state physics, and mathematics, faith in the transcendent God of History—the God who rules the universe through His own immaterial software—is likely to be affirmed by those who focus on the technological imperatives of Israel's survival, insofar as emphasis is placed on settlement of the *whole* land of Israel, the old earth divinities are likely to reassert their power. See chap. 11, "War, Zionism, and Sacred Space."

6. Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1948), pp. 112ff.

7. G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 27.

8. The distinction between "existing beings" and "Being Itself" rests upon Martin Heidegger's distinction between *Seienden* and *Sein*. See Martin Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 65.

9. The words "bourgeois existence" in the first edition of *After Auschwitz* have been replaced by "membership in a middleman minority."

10. These observations were offered before the Six-Day War. There was in reality no break with middle-class aspirations and values. According to Howard M. Sachar, "By the 1970s and 1980s, the dream of Israeli families for their children tended to mirror that of Diaspora families, for white-collar business and professional careers." Sachar, *A History of Israel: From the Aftermath of the Yom Kippur War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), vol. 2, p. 226. Moreover, Israel began to use Palestinians in large numbers as a low-pay working class in factories, the construction industry, and service industries. Their employment was not unlike the use of *Gastarbeiter*, "guest workers," by Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

11. See Paul Tillich, *The Courage to Be* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), pp. 182–85.

12. The words "nannimate and dead" in the first edition of *After Auschwitz* have been replaced by "devoid of the divine."

13. The words "as it does" in the first edition of *After Auschwitz* have been replaced by "as it will."

14. The words "has finished" in the first edition of *After Auschwitz* have been replaced by "are in the process of completing."