The Jewish Publication Society of America

REPORT OF NINETY-SECOND YEAR

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(Elected June 1, 1980)

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REPORT OF THE 92ND JPS ANNUAL MEETING

The 92nd annual meeting of the Jewish Publication Society of America was held on June 1, 1980, at the Fairmont Hotel in Philadelphia, with Edward B. Shils, president of the Society, presiding.

Bernard G. Segal, chairman, presented the report of the Nominating Committee. Eleven new trustees were elected to the Board of Trustees for three-year terms: Robert P. Abrams, Philadelphia, president of Williams, Brown & Earle, Inc., and chairman of the Philadelphia March of Dimes; Burton Caine, Philadelphia, professor, Temple University Law School, and chairman, Lawyers Committee, Soviet Jewry Council of Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Philadelphia; Libby G. Fishman, Philadelphia, senior vice-president and general counsel, Girard Bank, and chairperson, American Affairs Council; Lawrence E. Irell, Los Angeles, attorney and president, Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles; Jay I. Kislak, Miami, president, J. I. Kislak, Inc., and general chairman, UJA, Miami; Theodore R. Mann, Philadelphia, immediate past chairman, Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; Joseph L. Mendelson, Washington, attorney and member of the executive committee of the Jewish Theological Seminary; David Reichert, Cincinnati, attorney and president, Rockdale Temple; Daniel Segal, Philadelphia, assistant professor of law, University of Pennsylvania Law School, and chairman, Commission on Campus Projects of the Jewish Campus Activities Board; Ruth Septee, Philadelphia, vice-chairman, FJA Task Force on the Jewish
Family, and past president, Museum of American Jewish History; Norma L. Shapiro, Philadelphia, U.S. district judge and member, University of Pennsylvania Law School Board of Overseers.

The following trustees were reelected for an additional three-year term: Norma F. Furst, Philadelphia; Max M. Kampelman, Washington; Marlene F. Lachman, Philadelphia; Norman Oler, Philadelphia; Julius Rosenwald 2nd, Philadelphia; Jonas Salk, La Jolla; Irving S. Shapiro, Wilmington.

Edward B. Shils was reelected president of the Society. Also reelected to office were: Robert P. Abrams, Irwin T. Holtzman, and Max M. Kampelman, vice-presidents; Norma F. Furst, secretary. Muriel M. Berman was elected vice-president, and Robert P. Frankel was elected treasurer. Bernard I. Levinson was reelected executive vice-president, and Maier Deshell was reelected editor.

Jerome J. Shestack proposed an amendment to the bylaws that the membership may elect as life trustees three persons who have given exemplary service to the Society. This motion was adopted, and Bernard G. Segal was elected the first life trustee. Chairman of Schnader, Harrison, Segal & Lewis, life trustee of the University of Pennsylvania, and life trustee of the Federation of Jewish Agencies of Greater Philadelphia, Mr. Segal has long been recognized as a leader of the Jewish community. He is a past vice-president of JPS, a member of its Executive Committee, and chairman of its Nominating Committee.

Following the reports of the president, treasurer, and Nominating Committee, Professor Yosef H. Yerushalmi, chairman of the Publication Committee, described the deliberations of that body. Maier Deshell, editor, introduced Dr. Judah Goldin, professor of post-biblical Hebrew at the University of Pennsylvania, who addressed the Society on "The Sleuth of Slobodka and the Cortez of Kabbalah: On Harry A. Wolfson and Gershom G. Scholem."

_From the Annual Report of JPS President Edward B. Shils_

Fifty years ago, on March 30, 1930, at the 42nd Annual Meeting of the Society, the speaker, Dr. Frank I. Schechter, a member of the Board and the Publication Committee, pointed out that the functions of JPS are threefold: (1) The obvious duty of contributing toward the education of its subscribers and readers; (2) the conservation of Jewish cultural and spiritual resources, not only in America, but abroad; and (3) the preservation of the self-respect and independence of the Jewish scholar and man of letters. The
obligation still remains upon the JPS not merely to make possible the publication of worthwhile material offered to it, but aggressively to seek out, to foster, to cherish talent and promise wherever these may be found or even suspected. The JPS looks to you and to all American Israel for your enthusiastic and concrete support and encouragement in its efforts to preserve and perpetuate that which is finest and most eternal in Jewish learning and literature. He noted, "I am here in a dual capacity—as a member of the Publication Committee and as a Trustee. These two functions are often somewhat difficult to reconcile. As Trustees, it is, at any rate, our traditional duty to conserve our funds with as niggardly an outlay as possible. As members of the Publication Committee it is our privilege to recommend to the Trustees a generous and perhaps even reckless expenditure in the cause of Jewish Literature."

Unfortunately, the dilemma of the 1930s is still with us.

While only seven books were published in 1929, I am pleased to report that in 1979 we published 18 books. We distributed over 160,000 books to our members, to the general public through the trade, to libraries, and to schools (many of our books are used in the classroom in Hebrew schools, high schools, college courses, and graduate and rabbinical schools, while others are used in adult education). The JPS books play an important role in the Jewish community and have a critical place in Jewish education.

Our children's program was launched with the publication of *Birthday in Kishinev* and *The Secret of the Sabbath Fish* last year, and three new books were completed early in 1980: *Honi and His Magic Circle*, *Nicanor's Gate*, and *A Family Passover*. These books have been warmly received in the press; we are particularly gratified that the *Horn Book* and *Library Journal* gave a fine review to *The Secret of the Sabbath Fish*.

JPS books are receiving wide acclaim. The New York *Times*, *Commentary*, the Los Angeles *Times*, *Library Journal*, and *Kirkus Reviews* lauded Norman Stillman's *The Jews of Arab Lands*.

The St. Louis *Post Dispatch* and *Present Tense* have favorably reviewed *The Jews of Argentina* by Robert Weisbrot.


We are receiving comments of approbation from a number of journals on *Strangers Within the Gate City*, by Steven Hertzberg. *Mid-America* called it "a major contribution to the history of Jews in the U.S. and to the study of ethnicity in American history."
At the 35th Philadelphia Book Show, JPS received two awards for design—one was in the Juvenile category for *The Secret of the Sabbath Fish*, by Ben Aronin, and the other was in the Trade category for *The Jews of Arab Lands*, by Norman A. Stillman.

We recently learned that JPS was honored in an unusual way by the late Solomon Zeitlin, who asked that the words “Author of *The Rise and Fall of the Judaean State*” be inscribed on his tombstone. Dr. Zeitlin wrote many books, but it appears that his greatest personal claim to fame is the publication of the three volumes of *The Rise and Fall of the Judaean State*, which JPS was privileged to print.

It is particularly gratifying to report that Todd Endelman, the author of *The Jews of Georgian England*, has received a National Jewish Book Award for Jewish History. The *Jewish Chronicle* in London and the *Jerusalem Post* have both given extensive coverage to this work.

Finally, it is a privilege to advise you that the *Times Literary Supplement* of London, in its first issue following a long strike, devoted almost a full-page review by Gershom Scholem to our book, *Wolfson of Harvard*. The *Jerusalem Post* reprinted this review. Our speaker, Judah Goldin, will be discussing this topic shortly.

During the past year, our Community Trust Program has distributed some 1500 books to Hillel and college libraries throughout the country.

I am particularly pleased to announce a gift to the Society by Trustee Edward Elson of Atlanta, in memory of his father Harry Elson, a former Trustee. Under the terms of this gift, we will send JPS books to college and school libraries.

It is with regret that I note the passing of Rabbi Bertram Kom of Philadelphia, author and a member of our Publication Committee.

Our membership at year's end was 15,167, an increase over 1978, and it is heartening to see the growth of our Campus Program. As I see more college students reading our books, my optimism in the future of the Society and in the continued vitality of our cultural heritage is heightened.

John Milton defined a good book as “the precious life-blood of a master-spirit treasured up for a life beyond life.” With your help, it is a privilege for me to guard and transmit such a legacy to people of all ages in many countries throughout the world.

**JPS Treasurer’s Report for 1979**

In 1979 the revenues from sales of books and membership were $871,455, as compared to $889,716 in 1978, while expenses of $1,172,355 were down
from the $1,237,443 figure of the previous year. Income from donations and investments was $175,809, a slight drop from the previous year. Thus, expenses exceeded income by $125,091, an improvement over the $164,319 figure of 1978.

During this period we published 18 books, and the spiraling inflationary costs of printing, binding, and paper have contributed to our deficit. We expect to recover this amount when the books are sold.

As we move into the decade of the 1980s and the 93rd anniversary of the Jewish Publication Society, we want to assure you that our investment funds are conservatively invested, enabling us to look forward to a sound financial future in which we will continue to publish relevant, scholarly, meaningful books of Judaica.

**JPS Publications**

In 1979 JPS published the following new volumes:

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<th>Title and Author</th>
<th>Printed</th>
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<tr>
<td>WHOSE LITTLE BOY ARE YOU?</td>
<td>4,000</td>
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<td>by Hanoch Bartov</td>
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<td>LEGENDS OF GALILEE, JORDAN AND SINAI</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<td>by Zev Vilnay</td>
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<td>BIRTHDAY IN KISHINEV</td>
<td>4,000</td>
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<td>by Fannie Steinberg</td>
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<td>THE SECRET OF THE SABBATH FISH</td>
<td>10,000</td>
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<td>by Ben Aronin</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESSAYS ON HUMAN RIGHTS: Contemporary Issues and Jewish Perspectives</td>
<td>4,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edited by David Sidorsky with Sidney Liskofsky and Jerome J. Sheslock</td>
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<td>THE JEWS OF ARGENTINA: From the Inquisition to Peron</td>
<td>3,000</td>
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<td>by Robert Weisbrot</td>
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<td>VOICES OF A PEOPLE: The Story of Yiddish Folksong</td>
<td>3,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>by Ruth Rubin (Paperback reprint)</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE JEWS OF MOSLEM SPAIN, Volume II</td>
<td>4,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>by Eliyahu Ashtor</td>
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<td>THE JEWS OF GEORGIAN ENGLAND 1714-1830: Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society</td>
<td>3,000</td>
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<td>by Todd M. Endelman</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE JEWISH-CHRISTIAN DEBATE IN THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES: A Critical Edition of the Nizzahon Vetus</td>
<td>3,000</td>
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<td>Introduction, Translation, Commentary by David Berger</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE JEWS OF ARAB LANDS: A History and Source Book</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>by Norman A. Stillman</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, Volume 79</td>
<td>3,000</td>
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<td>Edited by Morris Fine and Milton Himmelfarb</td>
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David Singer, Associate Editor
(Co-published with the American Jewish Committee)

THE BEST OF SHOLOM ALEICHEM
Edited by Irving Howe and Ruth Wisse
(Co-published with New Republic Books) 2,000

SMOKE OVER GOLAN
by Uriel Ofek
(Co-published with Harper & Row) 2,000

NEW YORK JEWS AND THE QUEST FOR COMMUNITY:
The Kehillah Experiment, 1908–1922
by Arthur A. Goren
(Co-published with Columbia University Press) 1,500

PROPHETS WITHOUT HONOUR: A Background to Freud, Kafka,
Einstein and Their World
by Frederic V. Grunfeld
(Co-published with Holt, Rinehart & Winston) 2,000

SUMMONED TO JERUSALEM: The Life of Henrietta Szold
by Joan Dash
(Co-published with Harper & Row) 2,000

HOW WE LIVED: A Documentary History of the Immigrant Jews in America, 1880–1930
by Irving Howe and Kenneth Libo
(Co-published with Richard Marek) 2,000

1979 Reprints

During 1979 JPS reprinted the following books:

THE PASSOVER ANTHOLOGY edited by Philip Goodman (2,000); THE HOLY SCRIPTURES (28,000); THE JEWISH CATALOG compiled and edited by Richard Siegel, Michael and Sharon Strassfeld (15,000); MEKILTA DE-RABBI ISHMAEL translated by Jacob Z. Lauterbach (2,000); SABBATH: THE DAY OF DELIGHT edited by Abraham E. Millgram (1,500); THE MAN WHO LOVED LAUGHTER by Louis Falstein (1,500); LEGENDS OF THE JEWS-Volumes III, IV, V, VI by Louis Ginzberg (1,500); THE YOM KIPPUR ANTHOLOGY edited by Philip Goodman (2,000); THE FIVE MEGILLOTH AND THE BOOK OF JONAH (3,000); NOTES ON THE NEW TRANSLATION OF THE TORAH edited by Harry Orlinsky (1,500); PATHWAYS THROUGH THE BIBLE by Mortimer J. Cohen (5,000); HAYM SALOMON by Shirley Milgrim (2,000); THE TORAH (10,000).