Editor's Introduction

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Our new issue of *Contemporary Jewry* offers a rich array of articles that range over a wide array of fields, from Jewish studies in China to a consideration of how religious sages are remembered and viewed, an analysis of poor Jews in America, a study of Pittsburgh Jewry, and factors in Jewish internal migration in the United States. As such, it offers something to almost every kind of reader, educated laypeople curious about these issues as well as scholars interested in contemporary Jewry.

Our lead article by Lihong Song, associate director of the Diane and Guilford Glazer Institute of Judaic Studies at Nanjing University, offers a fascinating and insightful analysis of what happens when Jewish Studies develops a land which is neither Christian nor Muslim and where Judaism and the animus against it never developed substantial roots. Here, where Chinese students not only explore Jewish Studies under the guidance of Song and Xin Xu, the Center's head, and where a significant number of graduate students spend at least a year at an Israeli university, we discover how this unique context in which Jewish studies is emerging has a bearing upon Chinese practitioners and how Chinese Jewish Studies differs from that produced in other quarters of the world. Song's nuanced account and examination suggests that Jewish Studies is by no means only of interest to Jews and that there is fertile soil elsewhere for the consideration of Jewry.

Yohai Hakak's consideration of the relationship between enclave culture and the accounts of sages within the haredi world offers a new way of considering such narrative accounts as an expression of the ongoing culture war and contest between haredi Jews and all others. Tracing the changing nature of portraying sages, Hakak shows us how even what might appear to be a continuation of a well worn tradition of rabbinic hagiography has become re-configured as a modern means for a

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particular group of Orthodox Jews asserting authority and re-defining reality to meet their needs. The new hagiographic writing not only offers moral role models but serves vividly to define the boundaries of the enclave and the permissible.

Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz, in a return to these pages, situates the study of the Jewish poor within a broader sociological framework by utilizing general sources on poverty among Americans to identify and test a range of predictors of low income among American Jews. Using data from the National Jewish Population Survey 2000–2001, he finds six major predictors of low income: age, education, employment status, family-household type and its interaction with gender, citizenship status and Jewish denomination. His work argues that no single one of these is sufficient, but argues that several of them work in common to serve as useful predictors of poverty—an analysis that leads him to discuss the communal consequences of Jewish poverty and make certain policy recommendations as an addendum to his analysis.

Uzi Rebhun and Sidney Goldstein complete the issue with their wide-ranging analysis of Jewish internal migration in the U.S. in the period between the last two National Jewish Population Surveys—the closing years of the 20th century. Their starting point is that geography is far more than location. They examine the selective nature of that migration and what it tells us about changes in the character of America's Jews. To be sure, they remind us that migrants are not like all people; educational and economic elements as well as a perception of the limitations in one's place of origin are important factors in determining who will move. Migration is, as they put it, is 'positive' for people with high qualifications who respond to perceived incentives at new destinations. Moreover as the ability to learn more about the new location in advance grows, moving becomes easier. But all these factors become far more complex in their interaction, as this paper demonstrates.

Eloise Kaizar, Stephen Fienberg, Howard Seltman and Sharon Stern offer a view of the Pittsburgh Jewry to answer the question of what constitutes a Jewish community. This of course is a core question in America where Jews are part of a voluntary community rather than part of a Jewish nation-state or members of an imposed community such as they were in Europe's ghettos, *kehillahs*, or the *mellahs* of Morocco. The answer they come up with is that in America—or at any rate in Pittsburgh—Jewish activities help define those in the community. The question that this raises of course is whether such activities in childhood—trips to Israel, summer camping, youth group activities and varieties of Jewish education—have any impact on activities in adulthood that also define Jewish belonging. The answer is complex and not always easy to measure, and readers will have to judge if the case of Pittsburgh, as analyzed here, provides any clues.

In the last years, the quality of our submissions has continued to improve, and we are interested in moving from strength to strength, hoping that more scholars and thinkers on Contemporary Jewry will choose to submit their work for our consideration. The submission process is now handled completely and efficiently online, and with the journal published both in an online and hard copy edition, the turnaround time from submission to publication is much faster. Our managing editor, Yoel Finkelman, has helped this immeasurably. Moreover, we anticipate that with this change, the work that appears in *Contemporary Jewry* will have a growing

impact on the field. We also hope that our readership will not be limited only to academics but to a wide spectrum of readers whose intelligence and interest moves them to the pages of our journal. Please be sure all those whom you know have an interest in Contemporary Jewry are subscribers and readers of the journal.

And now on to the articles....