

# The Case for Morality Religious Higher Education as Academia

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## Abstract

Higher Education is Globalization and Integration-but is it? Stern Warning: This article is highly "Politically Incorrect" and proud of it. An oft-spoken historian's rule is that the Hebrew Bible did not and could not have contributed anything significant to the rise of modern ideas and institutions. Quite the opposite, it is claimed by some to have been a hindrance. The 'faith' is drawn from Marx, that religion is the opiate of the masses-and who wants to be 'masses'?! It is always more chic to be 'liberal' and 'secular' and 'anti-religion'. And, if one can 'get away' with it, to be anti-religion while proudly declaring a state of utter ignorance about the subject. We probably all know of a certain biologist who makes a point of searing anti-religion statements while expressing pride in total ignorance of the subject.

This article is not about religion. It is about Higher Education and the similarities between two types of it, as well as certain debts academia owes to Judaic Higher Education.

Judaism has a very long history. Jewish Higher Education has a history nearly as long. Rabbi Akiva is known to have had an "academy" consisting of some 24,000 students, in the town of Bnei Brak, around the year 130 CE. What did they study? How did they study and learn? More importantly for this discussion: What were the pedagogy techniques? How 'academic' was it, in the sense of what we are familiar with today? And what can modern academics learn from this? Why is that last question of significance? Because those same and similar techniques are still used in Judaic Religious Higher Education today, with great success!

**Keywords:** Higher education; Globalization; Integration; Judaism; Antisemitism

## Introduction

"We are living in an age of catastrophic thinking. Our social and cultural discourse on any number of subjects-the environment, public health, technology-is defined by a vocabulary and worldview that can only be described as apocalyptic." [1] Or, as David Goldman says in "First things last": "An apocalyptic mentality (national bankruptcy, demographic decline) promotes policies less as opportunities for renewal than as bitter necessities that follow from this or that collapse." [2] Examples of apocalyptic mentality are legion; surrounding us so ubiquitously that we no longer perceive them.

Why is this important and what does this have to do with Higher Education, and certainly with morality? Can Religious, and particularly Judaic, Religious Higher Education matter to the 'next catastrophe'?

Catastrophic thinking is subliminal, transcendent pessimism, as prime societal paradigm. Apocalypticism is the ultimate downer, implemented as civilizational mores. In other words, Western civilization is entrenched in a process of paranoiac suicide, as governing concept<sup>1</sup>. Kant's "Kingdom of Ends" is ending itself.

Immanuel Kant, the 'enlightenment' philosopher who viewed being nice to dogs of greater value than treatment of human beings-as diametrically opposed to "Serious Black, 'If you want to know what a man's like, take a look at how he treats his inferiors, not his equals' [Rowling]. The former negates morality while the latter embraces it. Ultimately, the ethicism of Greco-Roman-Euro philosophy has proven itself to epitomize an utter lack of ethics-whether demonstrated by the Holocaust, World Wars, War of the Roses, Crusades or Dark Ages; whether confirmed by Opus Dei, Jesuits or Klu Klux Klan-Western Civilization prefers halcyon inebriant revelry to 20-year child rearing responsibility: Nihilism Uber Alles, nihilism for all; equal opportunity nothing. We mustn't ever forget that in Europe's deepest moral turpitude, Fascist Japan offered to save three million European Jews, not democratic America, who, in fact, viewed such as anathema and refused entry to the few on the Saint Lewis, fully knowing it was sending them to certain death.

To endure, Western Man needs to reassess morality, ethics and withal, education- "education", I say, not instruction; for fact-digestion has become anaerobic. 'Publish-or-perish' no longer smells sweet.

Let us not misunderstand; Christendom is not the 'only one' with this problem. "In the whole bureaucracy there was no more stubbornly reactionary group than that which controlled the Ministry of

<sup>1</sup> The term "Western civilisation" is an over simplification. The concept, as used here, encompasses more than Huntington's categorisation; which separates Slavic and other parts of humanity that are here included. As used, the idea should be understood to include all civilisation parts that are under 'heavy western (i.e., Christian) cultural influence'. Scruton describes in "Islam and the West: Lines of Demarcation" [Azure, Winter 5769/2009; pp. 33

Education ...” [3] The difference is that East Asia is doing something about it. [4] They have begun a process to address the issue.

## Terms

The term “Religious Higher Education” refers here to Judaic Religious Higher Education. While other religions may or may not possess organized higher education criteria, this discussion’s scope does not permit, nor necessitate, other forms’ inclusion.

Judaic education and higher education is an inseparable part of religious observance. Judaism’s essential philosophical insight, beyond even definitive deity uniqueness, is universal education egalitarianism. More, in Judaism, education, study, learning, expanding ones’ mind to encompass new concepts and realities, are forms of worship as well the highest form of observance-one only takes to the next world that which one has prepared in this world [5]; preparation is entirely study-based.

“Nowhere in paganism does the concept of hope suggest a general enhancement of all human existence.” [6, Mittleman quoting Hermann Cohen, pp. 51] Even in Christianity, hope is only held out to those that adhere to their God, while all others are void; denied all hope, are in fact, punished for having hope.

## Basic education

**Before “Higher education” a brief discussion of basic education:** It is well known that the “most Jewish” of all statements of faith is the Shema Yisrael (Kriat Shema-the word “Kriah”<sup>2</sup> has double meaning, the imperative of read and an announcement), declared twice daily by every observant Jew. Within the Shema Yisrael, in the second paragraph, is the Mitzvah: “Teach this to your sons, speak them in the morning and the evening and while walking and when lying down and upon awakening” [7]<sup>3</sup>.

How is this understood? The Shulhan Aruch, the definitive compendium of written and oral law, in Paragraph 49, states specifically that one is not permitted to quote from written law unless read from written text (unless the specific verses are well known to everyone listening). This means that all teaching, and hence all learning, must take place from written text, making literacy a required prerequisite for the entire people. Berman said: “This paved the way not only for the uniquely literate culture of Judaism, but also for a new political agenda that promotes equality as a lofty ideal” [8] insufficient eloquence! Universal literacy is a revolutionary idea of such enormity, that Western civilization has still not comprehended it, though it pretends to copy parts. This aspect of universal literacy, required by LAW, was the more revolutionary act at Sinai, more so than any other aspect of handing down written Torah. Even more so, this law also established, in parallel to its enactment, a societal structure upon which it is incumbent to implement this – that is, the Tribe of Levy, who were the educators for nearly two millennia. This is the basis for all Judaic Religious Education, and of course, all Higher Education.

## What Religious Higher Education actually IS

Higher education is an optional, final learning stage, generally provided by universities, colleges, academies, seminaries and/or institutes of technology. There are also vocational and other specialized

institutions and etcetera (the latter not germane to this discussion). In many instances, this is considered to be tertiary education, following secondary.

Article 13 of the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966 declares “higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education”. The basic right definition does not define higher education categories, nor provide for a specific assemblage to limit the definition of what constitutes higher education.

In Western society, religious higher education frequently occurs in institutions known as seminaries. In the United States, reputable seminaries seek accreditation; for rabbinical (i.e., Judaic) seminaries, accreditation is given via the Association of Advanced Rabbinical and Talmudic Studies-recognized by the US Department of Education. The Israel Ministry of Education is not associated with religious high education for historical reasons, though there are and have been (on-going but unsuccessful) efforts to examine this issue and change the status quo.

Thus, Religious Higher Education is tertiary education, provided within and by an institution of Higher Education (e.g., a seminary) which is exclusively or primarily devoted to education of religious and religion-oriented items and subjects. There is an inherent problem with this definition. What happens if secular persons provide Higher Education “of religious and religion-oriented subjects,” within a framework which is by definition no-religious, or anti-religious? Does this qualify?

The answer must be strongly negative, because of a basic implementation flaw. Religious Higher Education contains a paradigm, a set of constructs and values. Both constructs and values are fundamental to the system of study, both stull and brace are needed or the way collapses. Breaking the system does not make a different system and creates nothing new; just a broken system. Can a person with no knowledge of the Philosophy of Science effectively teach science? Probably, one may answer in the affirmative, but that teaching will be flawed and can proceed only until a certain level-transmitting basic facts might work, but quality scientific research (new knowledge acquisition) will not be possible. Scientific study is a system; if you break the system it fails. Religious Education is a system, if you break the system it fails. However, breaking the system in a study of morals and ethics has a much higher societal price than other systems-ask six million who can no longer answer.

## Artificiality of separation-a Political and Historical perspective

Christendom has defined itself (at least) since the Council of Nicaea (The Nicene Creed) by racial and philosophical rejection of Israel. As Professor Francisco Gil-White describes it:

“Without Hitler everything would have been the same. ... This model identifies a social system, directed by the power elites who manage enormous sociological and political forces operating in a stable manner. ... for 2500 years, enormous mass killings of Jews have repeated themselves throughout the centuries in the West [9].

<sup>2</sup> The difference of the final “t” is as part of an expression, “read of...”

<sup>3</sup> The book’s name, the word, actually means “Statements” but is mistranslated by Christians as “Deuteronomy”

As he explains, peoples change, move and evolve. Calendars change. Political systems change. Economies rise and fall. Empires rise and fall. Aristocracies (i.e., 'power elites') rise, fall and evolve. The only item, in all that time, throughout all Western history, that remains constant, is antisemitism. It never changes-indeed, we see its physical attributes today are again rapidly rising; actively encouraged by the same 'power elites', e.g., Brussels aristocracy/bureaucracy.

**Even when Western man sincerely 'describes morality' it fails. Berman says:** "Perhaps the most famous example of such an initiative from modern times<sup>4</sup> is the American Homestead Act of 1862. With the Great Plains open to mass settlement, nearly any person over 21 years of age could acquire, at virtually no cost, a tract of 160 acres that would become his after five years of residence and farming."

The United States is the only empire in the history of mankind to have been consciously defined and founded upon morality and moral principles-not 'just' western man, but in all of humanity. This is an enormous achievement which should not be in any way belittled. Yet, this statement is horrible sophistry, for of course the 'cost' was mass genocide of the previous possessors of the land for "of course" they were not Christians and as such, had no rights, not even survival, and one could, and even ought, vilipend them with impunity. And this is America-the best of the lot!

The philosopher Yoram Hazony, formerly of the Shalem Center Institute (and now College), publishes a series of "Jerusalem Letters"; he still publishes them in his new post as President of the Herzl Institute<sup>5</sup>.

**In the 'Letter' of 15 January 2010, entitled "Goodbye Spinoza", he states:** "It is difficult today to remember that Judaism was once considered one of the most impressive systems of thought and ways of living available to mankind. In the Greek and Roman world, interest in Judaism-both positive and negative-was intense. In the wake of the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, Judaism won thousands of converts in Alexandria, Damascus, Antioch, Athens and Rome, and its laws and thought were imbibed by many others who did not formally convert. Indeed, so great was the popular interest in Judaism that in the first century, the Stoic philosopher Seneca, an advisor to the Emperor Nero, wrote that "The customs of this accursed race have gained such influence that they are now received throughout the world. The vanquished have given laws to their victors."<sup>6</sup> [10].

**Hazony goes on to discuss the thoughts of Spinoza who claimed that:** "...everything worth knowing about the 'true life' or 'sublime ideas' can be known by every individual by means of 'the natural light of reason'". Thus, in the 18th century there began a process of 'eliminationism' concerning Jewish thought and philosophy, which has become an enduring feature of academia and persists to this day. Hazony says: "French philosophies and German professors leaped on this universal theory of Jewish irrelevance with gusto, embellishing it and making it the cornerstone of a historical understanding that was openly eliminationist with respect to the role of the Jews in the history. More than a century before the Nazis reached for the physical annihilation of the Jews, post-Christian European philosophers and scholars sought the spiritual annihilation of the Jews by eliminating the memory of the Jewish part in the discourse that had created the West."

Today, this has now become a cornerstone of antisemitism. The 'Enlightenment' became fulcrum and direct bridge for the darkest chapter in all Western society history. "To the Nationalists, the Holocaust was not an unexpected event and Nationalist leaders like Jabotinsky had warned that it was coming. To the Universalists, it was an inexplicable event that challenged the entire progressive understanding of history as a march toward enlightenment." [11]. Since Jews were hated, elimination of their thought led inevitably to elimination of their being. The 'light' in enlightenment was (and is) a direct path to the dark-the darkest in the history of humanity.

This is in spite of what many highly regarded intellectuals thought. For instance, John Adams, second president of the United States, said: "*I will insist the Hebrews have [contributed] more to civilize men than any other nation. If I was an atheist and believed in blind eternal fate, I should still believe that fate had ordained the Jews to be the most essential instrument for civilizing the nations... They are the most glorious nation that ever inhabited this Earth. The Romans and their empire were but a bubble in comparison to the Jews.*" And John F. Kennedy said: "*Israel was not created in order to disappear- Israel will endure and flourish. It is the child of hope and the home of the brave. It can neither be broken by adversity nor demoralized by success. It carries the shield of democracy and it honors the sword of freedom.*" Call them (historical) parenthesis. Yet these acknowledgements served no rationale for academia.

Arnold Toynbee, the noted British anti-Semite and Nazi sympathizer, famously characterized Jewish civilization as "fossilized" and Zionism as "demonic" [12]. Use of such terminology is itself demonic. The ONLY definition of Untermenchen is anyone who uses such terms to describe others. We saw that in 2,500 years of European history; we saw that in Rwanda, we saw that in Sudan-we see that again and again, and still fail to see what we see.

While some may perceive a resurgence of sorts in esteem (or deference) for Hebrew literature and thought (at least, Hazony seems to think so) this is exceedingly limited in scope and has not penetrated to where it really counts for generations - into schools of education, to educate the future educators of the coming generations.

What we KNOW to be fact is that moral mores based upon air, based upon mans' imaginings, are inadequate; they always have been and they continue to be. They always fail. Morality needs to rise above the fallibility of man's imaginings.

Communist China killed some 78 million persons, Soviet Russia killed some 62 million persons, Nazi Germany killed some 60 million persons<sup>7</sup>-yet they based upon Marx, Kant, Nietzsche, Wagner and even the New Testament. It is not the writers' morals that were tested. Human beings, as beings, were tested; "To murder 6 million people, the Nazis showed us, you don't even need fanatics". [13] Humans cannot depend upon man-given mores for morals. No being can rise above self from below; there must be an outside force to do the heavy lifting.

Kant's "human autonomy" [14] is a certain road to Nazism. 'Autonomy' is aggressive arrogance. It is not a road to morals; it is supercilious and self-serving a road to avoid moral conflict.

<sup>4</sup> [MBM - he discusses land equality]

<sup>5</sup> <http://jerusalemletters.com/launch-of-the-herzl-institute-machon-herzl/>

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Louis H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* (Princeton: Princeton, 1993), p. 491, n. 40

<sup>7</sup> Nearly 200 million persons were killed in conflicts post World War II, mostly in internal conflicts

## Philosophy of Trust

David Goldman is an economist by training, a member of the Think Tank Middle East Forum and a long-time journalist and analyst for Asia Times. He said, "Positive demographics are a result of societies that are forward-looking and self-confident. A lack of desire for children is typically a symptom of civilizational decline [15]. This phenomenon is not limited to any single geographic. In this second decade of the 21st Century, we see it in Europe, we see it in almost every Muslim country and we see it throughout the industrialized countries of the world-except for Israel, the only industrialized country with positive demographics and a rising birth-rate (one should add, a rising Jewish birth-rate, with a constantly falling Muslim birth-rate). "The best predictor of the number of children in industrial societies is religious observance," Goldman avers. [15]

"Civilizations fail when they become despondent, when they lose confidence in their history and their future, when their citizens cease to feel pride in and draw inspiration from their culture. Somehow, for thousands of years, Jews and Chinese kept their confidence in their civilization and preserved it through war and foreign conquest. Surely that helps explain their present success. The confidence to redouble one's efforts in the face of adversity, even malevolence, cannot be explained by simple stubbornness. The grit required to excel even when the game is rigged against you is not only a cultural trait, but the trait of a culture, that is, a personal characteristic that draws on a culture's self-confidence [16].

The subheading here says "trust". Trust in what? Trust in the idea of a future for society. Goldman's "forward-looking" is about more than optimism, it is civilisational sustainability. Facts speak to its success and to Goldman's perceptiveness.

## Academia in the service of civilisation

Mores of morality are a basic aspect of any civilisation-academia projects a primary role in forming and, in turn, in passing on, these mores generation-to-generation.

In the latter half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century the breakdown of European morality became implemented via the practice of Eugenics<sup>8</sup>-Eugenics is considered an international crime against humanity both by the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, as well as The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which also proclaims "*the prohibition of eugenic practices, in particular those aiming at selection of persons*".

This pseudo-science had its basis in academia. Eminent academicians, such as Konrad Lorenz (a Nazi Party member and strong enthusiast), John Maynard Keynes, Linus Pauling and many others were strong supporters of so-called 'racial hygiene' and other abominations.

The root of this travesty of everything that could have been developed for the good of humanity lies [sic] in a 'radical religious' view of the Theories begun by Charles Darwin (Francis Galton<sup>9</sup>, the originator of Eugenics, was Darwin's half-cousin and one of his leading interpreters). Eugenics was an academic discipline in many universities, particularly in Europe and continued to be practiced in some countries even into the 1970's.

The philosophy of extreme secularism has failed. Extreme secularism is as silly as eugenics is evil-essentially, extreme secularism states that only the secular can be listened to. Secularism, as long as it was moderate, could function somewhat, albeit when carefully couched in a society that was, in turn, firmly anchored to a deep social-cultural-mores value system<sup>10</sup>. When no value system is any longer perceivable, society begins civilisational collapse with descent via either hedonism or violence. Identity based primarily upon negative-what I am 'not'-is inherently weak and, when challenged, as young people tend to do, it breaks down and the result is emptiness and a search for meaning.

We see this in Christendom and we see this in secular, pan-Arab nationalism. In the West, this social-cultural-mores value system was known as Judaic-Christian values. Judaic values cannot be 'divorced' from the bible, and anyone who thinks they can, has no knowledge, as well as, no understanding of what Judaic values are-see the discussion below "Jewish Studies" Departments without Judaism.

## The inevitable collision of neither singularity nor 'sofalarity'

Professor Tim Wu, in a dual paper in the New Yorker [17] used the neologism 'sofalarity' to connote a difference from technology singularity as predicted by Kurzweil and others. The technology singularity is supposedly when mankind will begin to be 'chased' beyond its innate cognitive abilities by super-abilities of technology. Oft described as, "a hypothetical moment in time when artificial intelligence will have progressed to the point of a greater-than-human intelligence." This point is called by those prognosticators as the technological singularity, beyond which mankind is not and can never be the same again. The concept is based upon unconstrained religious belief in Darwinism where everything is supposed to be based upon 'survival of the fittest'.

Wu's paper, on the other hand, predicts, "Our will-to-comfort, combined with our technological powers, creates a stark possibility. If we're not careful, our technological evolution will take us toward not a singularity but a sofalarity. That's a future defined not by an evolution toward superintelligence but by the absence of discomforts" [17]. This comfort, is represented by him by horribly obese persons vegetating on a sofa; hence that neologism.

However, both concepts are a gross misfit from inception. Civilized human behavior patterns are not similar to either cave dwellers nor to animals. Reproductive choices have nothing whatever to do with fit, fitness, fittest or anything of the kind. Homo sapiens are most

<sup>8</sup> "Eugenics is the belief and practice of improving the genetic quality of the human population. It is a social philosophy advocating the improvement of human genetic traits through the promotion of higher reproduction of people with desired traits (positive eugenics), and reduced reproduction of people with less-desired or undesired traits (negative eugenics)." Wikipedia; 7 February 2014

<sup>9</sup> His book was, "Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development."

<sup>10</sup> It is indeed ironic and perhaps paradoxical that a religion is the driving force for secularism; but radical secularism is a natural outgrowth of Christianity with the addition of Kantian and etcetera types of philosophies. One must not forget that Hitler and the vast majority of senior Nazis considered themselves devout Catholics, and indeed, have never been repudiated by the Catholic Church or its hierarchy.

decidedly NOT an animal species like any other. There are two basic differences, conscious mate-selection choice (whether by individuals or community) and communication.

In Every industrial country and in most other countries as well, anywhere on the globe, reproductive patterns today trend towards demographic decline, at a rate unprecedented by any time in history. As Ettinger clearly and continuously documents [18], Israel is the only First-World country with consistently positive demographic trends; and they are rising constantly. The utter and complete failure of radical secularism is becoming more poignant. Basically, radical secularism is killing itself by demographic suicide.

### Demographic collapse is about more than 'just' female fertility

Generally, people tend to perceive the simple and simplistic. It is so much easier in an era of total communications to hear a 'sound byte' than to actually be forced to think and evaluate data. Demography is equated with female fertility. This is not 'incorrect' it is simplistic. In Britain, a 'three-percent-population' ethnography produces thirty percent of total British birth defects. In the United States (reported by the Population Reference Bureau) birth rates in some groupings have fallen by fifty percent in the past twenty years.

In Christendom, female fertility (birth rates) have fallen to unprecedented lows, that lead inevitably to total demographic collapse within such a short time that a decade will likely mean an irreversible end to Western Civilisation. (The Czech Republic is the only exception.) Some countries, like Russia (world's highest suicide rate), Hungary (the lowest average birth weight) and Ukraine literally perceive disappearance-particularly when coupling birth rates with declining life expectancy, inebriation (a list of the ten countries with highest alcohol use shows all of them in Europe), drug use<sup>11</sup> and emigration. Generally, Europe is in panic mode. There is no way their economies can support tens of percent senior citizens; no economy can.

**As Goldman documents in [19]:** "In America, fewer than half of adults available to work with a high school education or less actually are working. That is, only 58% of the non-institutional adult civilian population with only a high school degree is counted in the labor force. For adults with less than a high school diploma, the labor participation rate falls to just 44%. Deduct the unemployed, and the result is that less than half of Americans without college are at work. That's why 60 million Americans are on food stamps, and why a third of all American households have at least one member receiving means-tested government subsidies. Meanwhile employers report shortages of skilled labor in numerous fields. It is hard to find skilled machine operators, who require the equivalent of a couple of years of college math to master the computer controls on industrial equipment, for example. Spain's unemployment rate remains at 26%. Spanish workers are now willing to take jobs at 700 euros (US\$957) a month making clothing to compete with Chinese imports. That's roughly what better-qualified Chinese workers earn with overtime. The low end of the

European labor market, that is, already has converged with the high end of the Chinese labor market."

The quantities of statistics of decline are enormous and clearly beyond the scope of one article. In a conversation with a leading professional Social Worker from Netherlands<sup>12</sup>. I was told that in addition to a gross lack of youth, among the paucity that does exist, about one third are inebriated, or close to that, most of the time. These youths are 'unlikely' to be productive in industry or maternity, the datum is not gender-sensitive. See [19] for a cultural basis of this phenomenon.

### Humanity is connected to faith

The Pew Forum conducted a world-wide survey of religious beliefs in 2012 and published the results 18 December 2012 [see 20]. "Worldwide, more than eight-in-ten people identify with a religious group. A comprehensive demographic study of more than 230 countries and territories conducted by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life estimates that there are 5.8 billion religiously affiliated adults and children around the globe, representing 84% of the 2010 world population of 6.9 billion."

There are some persons, and even well-known persons, and even persons with recognizable intellectual accomplishments (such as that afore mentioned biologist), that try very hard to deny this basic fact. They attempt to claim that as they do not believe, no one ought to, and if those others do believe, that makes those others inferior. This claim is not just spurious and not just horribly impolite, it is aggressive arrogance, and completely unfounded.

As the above quotation shows, the reality of humanity is a religious belief, and even more than that, a declared religious affiliation-which is, of course, much stronger than mere belief. This article is not the forum to discuss how these beliefs diversify by religions and etcetera. Nor are relative sizes generally of interest here. Suffice to say that this is clearly not a geographic, gender or age distribution. Young people are just as religiously devoted as are older people. In addition, the above number discusses religious affiliation. There are also many non-affiliated believers: "...many of the religiously unaffiliated do hold religious or spiritual beliefs. For example, various surveys have found that belief in God or a higher power is shared by 7% of unaffiliated Chinese adults, 30% of unaffiliated French adults and 68% of unaffiliated U.S. adults" [20].

Thus, it is clear that the natural state of humanity is belief, not rabid secularism; secularists that make a great effort to proselytize for their 'belief system' are acting as religious fanatics. Menachem Begin, our former Prime Minister, famously said of Israel, "*Our religion is un-national and our nation is uni-religious.*" No other religion can state this; no other nation can state this.

### Judaic Higher Education techniques

We are speaking of Religious Higher Education, and within that, of Judaic Religious Higher Education. What is it? How does it differ from

<sup>11</sup> Christendom's enemies have long recognised the immense double value of drug use, both as a source of fabulously quantities of funds and as a weapon of surreptitious warfare, to weaken society. The primary supplier of opiates is the Shia Crescent. The primary supplier of cocaine is Latin America, via Hezbollah (part of the Shia Crescent). The primary supply of amphetamines seems still to be in flux, with Hezbollah a main player. What is fascinating is that cost to them; some analysts have estimated as much as ten percent of the Iranian population (perhaps, less that of Baluchistan) addicted to opiates.

<sup>12</sup> Smit, Peter; 14 January 2012, 1930; at my home

other modes of education? Can the differences be useful and learned from, and perhaps applied, to Western Higher Education?

Basically, western-tradition education is based upon a model of one-to-many; a teacher with prior approved knowledge spreads that knowledge via directly instructing a group of students-a lecture. There are, of course, variations on this, such as lab courses and other forms of participatory instruction, but the model remains identical, while aspects of certain teaching characteristics may adapt and/or transform per perceived needs. Finally, the instruction mode is evaluated via a test or examination, of some kind.

**Judaic Religious Higher Education has three conceptual-basis principles:** All learning is a team effort. Groups of students-thus everyone is called a student-together discuss an issue of law, interpretation or understanding, and attempt to reach common understanding. There may be someone who is more dominant, more senior, but when together to learn, all are equal. No one instructs and no opinions are imposed. Traditionally, the most senior person speaks last, lest less senior is discomfited. Rabbi Akiva's academy, with its 24,000 students is mentioned above, but we describe it as "12,000 pairs". In Pirkei Avot [5], the first chapter describes pairs. The most common learning team size is a pair.

One of the toughest aspects for westerners to comprehend is the idea of absolute humility in the learning forum. Everyone must listen to everyone-really listen! Everyone's opinion is important, all learn from all-including, and frequently particularly, the more senior. He became more senior by being a 'better listener' (not age).

Each learning experience is totally new; based upon a synthesis of the ideas of the entire group-just as man-and-woman creates a new life via a synthesis of themselves; though the new life itself is no longer a synthesis but a new creation. So also, religious education is based upon a synthesis of all of the ideas of all the participants, thrown onto the table, and examined and re-examined by all, until a new understanding is born to all that is agree upon by all.

Angel says: "Rambam criticized a literalist, fundamentalist approach to the words of Hazal. Since the sages were wise and reasonable, their words obviously were filled with wisdom and rationality." [21] Rambam-Rabbi Moshe Ben Maimon (Maimonides)-was one of the leading sages. "According to Rambam, those who insist on the literal truth of all the statements of Hazal are not only doing a disservice to our sages, but are corrupting our religion" [21]. This is a highly significant concept. It means that merely reading and accepting is insufficient By Definition; which in turn means that significant learning alone is nearly impossible. This concept in turn, acts as a catalyst on all three of the above principles. IBM famously said THINK. Torah study makes this a basic factor of daily life.

One of the aspects of this is that learners learn to think independently and 'out-of-the-box' from the very basics of the learning experience. The idea is that one learns with someone, rather than from someone. Hence, the learning experience itself is part of the learning.

### Sepher Hazohar as an example of ancient-modern literature

**Caveat:** In this discussion, I describe Sepher Hazohar and discuss its ramifications in light of modern scholarship. In no way, do I belittle or

dismiss, in any way, the religious, mystical or philosophical aspects of Sepher Hazohar, nor should this be inferred. I do, however, put these aspects aside for purpose of this discussion as non-germane to this article.

Firstly, a brief explanation, what is Sepher Hazohar. Physically, the book consists of some 2,800 pages, with about one and a half million words; a very large book. The word "Sepher" means book. The word Hazohar is sometimes translated as "the Splendour" which is meaningless<sup>13</sup>. A more logical description of the word Hazohar might be aurora – something that 'shines' of itself and provides light. The book itself is actually intended to provide practical knowledge how to properly define oneself and act both for humanity's greater good and to be closer to G-d. This juxtaposition is itself an innovation.

The ensuing discussion is focused upon how it is constructed and how it probably was written. The actual content is only focused upon where that concerns those aspects.

Sepher Hazohar is written primarily in Aramaic, with a great deal of Hebrew. The Aramaic is an idiolect which differs in some aspects from that of Talmud Aramaic, but that is not to be wondered about. The Talmud was written in Mesopotamia, several centuries after Sepher Hazohar (three-to-five centuries later).

Time and space differences easily explain idiolect differentiation. Additionally, Sepher Hazohar was written, from the very beginning, to be kept secret and was in fact, successfully kept from prying eyes (unauthorized) for over a millennium. (Psalm 90 describes one day of G-d as one thousand human years-Sepher Hazohar was kept secret for 'one day'.)

### Provenance

Our tradition holds that Sepher Hazohar was written by Rabbi Shimon Bar Yohai<sup>14</sup>, approximately in the year 150 CE. There exists an academic theory that Sepher Hazohar was written and/or compiled and/or redacted in Spain, in the thirteenth century, by Rabbi Moshe de León, whom we call the revealer of the Zohar. I contend that this 'theory' is purely politically-motivated and devoid of real basis.

Careful reading of Sepher Hazohar reveals the authorship. The writers constantly display both an extraordinary degree of love for the land of Israel and deep knowledge and familiarity with it. They describe various places with terms that one 'feels' they are stroking and petting. They describe distances between places and routes taken to get from one-to-another. The things described could not have been perceived anywhere, other than in the land itself (as opposed to a description from racial-memory, from thousands of kilometers away-e.g., Guadalajara, Castile, Iberia). Under the harsh heel of the Arabian conqueror, many of these places and routes had ceased to exist before the thirteenth century. All trees had been burnt. Towns were desolate ruins. The fauna had dispersed or utterly killed. The flora was unreservedly crushed. The places, the flowers, the trees, the living creatures, the smells and sounds, had not existed for hundreds of years.

In addition, other works by Rabbi Moshe De Leon are well known-e.g., Sepher Ramon and Sepher Sheqel Hakodesh. His style is known. There are no textual or content similarities between these two books and Sepher Hazohar. Nor is it 'likely' that had he wished to compile

<sup>13</sup> The prefix "ha" means the (article)

<sup>14</sup> The name "Ben Yohai" and "Bar Yohai" are used through history interchangeably, the former is Hebrew and the latter is Aramaic, and both mean "son of Yohai." As well, in Sepher Hazohar they are used interchangeably throughout.

such a work, that he would have gone to the ridiculous trouble to invent a new language (idiolect) for the task.

It is inconceivable that it could have been composed from there (Iberia/Andalusia) and not from here, in Israel. It is inconceivable that it could have been written in the thirteenth century, as opposed to that earlier time, when all of these things existed and flourished, while in the latter, none of them did.

At the same time, an excuse can be made for those that insist upon a different authorship. In this day of instant gratification and constant communication, the idea of a secret held for 1,150 years is quite difficult to conceive. Yet, nonetheless, that is what is real if one really does read the text objectively (not politically). It was indeed written around the year 150 CE, it was indeed written by a group of students of Rabbi Akiva, led by Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yohai, it was indeed written in Israel and it was indeed kept secret from the destroyers (of both types, Esau and Ishmael).

### Technique

Sepher Hazohar was written by a group of 'advanced' students (see Judaic Higher Education techniques) led by Rabbi Shimon Bar Yohai, and seconded by his son Rabbi Elazar. The group was composed of a 'core group' that appears quite frequently throughout the book and by an 'outer group' of persons that appear infrequently. A discussion of the names and their affiliations are not germane to this article.

We tend to say in academia that one of the criteria for judging quality of research is that it be 'well referenced'. If so, then Sepher Hazohar is perhaps one of the most 'well referenced' research works ever written, anywhere. There are many thousands of references.

Essentially, what the people did was to learn by heart the entire twenty-four books of biblical knowledge (not sequentially, as we tend to do) and cross-reference concepts, verses and ideas from one to another, showing overall continuity and linkage between books. They show that there exists throughout no 'coincidence'<sup>15</sup>. "Book" here refers to the internal divisions of the bible—from the five-books of the Pentateuch through all the Prophets, Psalms and the various 'Megillot'. There is particular emphasis on Song of Songs, Rut (Ruth) and Eicha (Lamentations). An incredible number of quotations are from Psalms, showing its importance in understanding Mosaic teaching.

The extensive, and exact, use of the very same techniques described about, in writing Sepher Hazohar, represent additional evidence of the antiquity of these techniques. Were they 'written', 'devised' or 'developed' by Rabbi Akiva for his academy? I do not know, but tradition ascribes them as older, though I failed to find evidence that would indicate a period from before the Tannaim (latter Second Temple period).

### The price paid by Academia for the artificial separation

It would never occur to a physicist that he was so smart as to simply ignore Newton. It would never occur to any mathematician that he was so smart that he could ignore all existing mathematical knowledge, from thousands of years, and that he had some 'right' to come up with

his own. It would never occur to any student of Philosophy to exert Greco-Roman thinking as a method of explaining Confucianism, Buddhism or Shinto. It would never occur to any scientist, of any ilk, that all sages that came before could be set aside and that their own arrogance could be set free. Yet, that is exactly what occurs within so-called Departments of Jewish Studies, throughout Western Academia for the past two centuries. Real knowledge is ignored and everyone has a 'right' to interpret any source in a 'new' way, merely to suit a political agenda.

### "Jewish Studies" Departments without Judaism

Judaism is a discipline with some three and a half millennia of experience. Western academic Jewish Studies Departments are based upon the notion that 'Jewish Studies' can be pursued devoid of Judaism. It is an anti-discipline. Mazor<sup>16</sup> wrote in his 2000-published book, "Pain, Pining Pine Trees" [22,20].

"The Mishnah is associated primarily with Rabbi Abba Arikha, though it had been the offspring of numerous scholars called Tannaim (teachers). It contains three major tracks of discussion: Midrash, interpretations of Torah's laws; Halakhah, legislative decisions and verdicts; and Aggadah, fables and legends. The Aggadah is the most accessible section of the Mishnah. It helps the reader understand complex discussions of law that are illustrated by appealing fables. The first tractate, Massekhet Avot (Patriarchs or Forefather's tractate) is entirely dedicated to stories and legends."<sup>17</sup>

Obviously, to deconstruct this book in its entirety is beyond the scope of an article. While the book is truly exemplary in everything external (e.g., the title is wonderful!) everything internal is horrible. None of the afore-quote is at all correct; it is all wrong, factually, basically wrong. And this has nothing to do with traditions or surmise.

The Mishna (he uses non-standard transliterations of words from Hebrew throughout) was compiled and redacted by Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi. Rabbi Abba Arikha, more commonly known as Rav, is someone else, altogether. The statement is totally and simply incorrect.

Mishna is a massive compendium of quotations from scholars called Tannaim about law. The content of the Mishna is directly related to law. There are exactly zero fables, stories or anything else. It is strictly related to the practical, daily aspects of law.

There is no relationship between Mishna and Midrash. They are two, totally separate, literary works, written by different persons, at different times. There are no Agadot in the Mishna; again, exactly zero. Agadot exist of course, but once again, they are totally separate literary works, with no relationship to the Mishna.

Avot is not the first tractate. It is the thirty-ninth tractate, out of a total of sixty-two. Avot contains exactly zero stories; exactly zero legends. Avot is a compendium of aphorisms, with potency resembling law, relating to morality and proper ways of acting between persons.

He goes on. The continuation of the chapter discusses, or rather purports to discuss, Hebrew literature through the ages. Unfortunately, the level of discussion continues in the same vein (and same level of vanity-pun fully intended). Entire classes of literature are not

<sup>15</sup> "Coincidence" in Hebrew is *Kerry*, as discussed in the end portion of Leviticus, and is the worst possible concept and sin in biblical parlance.

<sup>16</sup> Reading from the back of the book: "Professor Yair Mazor is the Director of the UWM Center for Jewish Studies and Head of the Hebrew Studies Program and the Certificate Program in Jewish Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

<sup>17</sup> Emphases in the original –MBM

mentioned. Many things mentioned are either taken out of context or entirely 'new' meanings given them. The professor of Hebrew literature displays an embarrassing lack of familiarity with fundamental Hebrew literature the book is 'pretty' but less than worthless; it is harmful.

As stated, Jewish Studies Departments are political, not scholarly. There is no need to actually read a work of literature to discuss criticism of it because that subsumes devotion to making derogatory and misleading statements about Judaism. This is what these departments teach their students. Not 'biblical criticism', but how to discuss 'Jewish' without Judaism. It does not work; it is a broken system. It only produces the opposite of scholarship.

### Academic bible criticism

#### What principle is behind so-called 'academic bible criticism'?

**Solomon Schechter said:** "The Bible is our sole *raison d'être*, and it is just this which the Higher anti-Semitism is seeking to destroy, denying all our claims for the past, and leaving us without hope for the future. Can any section among us afford to concede to this professorial and imperial anti-Semitism and confess ... we have lived on false pretenses and were the worst shams in the world?" [quoted in 18]

**Rosenberg then continues, and states:** "Many German critics were not disinterested academics, seeking a purely historical reconstruction of Jewish history and its central text. On the contrary, the biblical scholarship of Hoffmann and Schechter's day was shot through with anti-Semitic conceptions of Jews and Judaism. Ancient Israelites were often portrayed as illiterate, legalistic, and backward, in pointed contrast to enlightened Christians. The "Old Testament" was viewed as a necessary but outmoded precursor to Christianity at best, and as a primitive artifact to be scorned and discarded at worst. As Schechter observed, by denigrating the Jewish past, such scholarship served to justify the denigration of Jews in the present. (Tellingly, scholars have found affinities between this scholarship and later Nazi biblical exegesis.)" [23].

None of this has changed. So-called 'modern academic biblical criticism' is devoted to denigration, not learning. The question remains, "The West" has failed, Judaism continues to thrive, despite all efforts of Christendom; despite pogroms and Holocaust. To paraphrase Ronald Reagan, we won, they lost.

The time has come to ask what is learned from success, rather than focusing solely upon pseudo-competition, focus on looking forward. Note 'West'-China and Korea are doing so; they are making great efforts to learn from the winners, rather than from the losers.

Goldman states: "the future of Judaism is to be found in the yeshivas, and not in the Jewish Studies departments of universities." [2] We see the clarification; they have nothing to say, contribute nothing.

Ultimately, what is pathetic is not an individual; this is the general level of scholarship resulting from removing Religious Higher Education from the academy<sup>18</sup>. In the "Kingdom of Ends" exerting Greek Philosophy upon a diametrically opposed world-view ends in squashing the subject until flatulence is all that remains. Greek political rationalism disappeared during the half-dozen generations after Aristotle. It stayed gone.

### Conclusions

Christianity is destroying itself for nothing. The Holocaust succeeded beyond the wildest dreams of its perpetrators. European Jewry is no more. True, there are still some Jews in Europe, but they are no longer sufficient quantity to matter nor does an independent Jewish-European subculture exist; nor trust in Christendom to recreate what was so vaingloriously destroyed, with malice aforethought. Yet withal, antisemitism is rampant throughout Europe. The 'point' of this article is a plea for the survival of western civilisation; a plaintive (perhaps last) cry to say that its demise is not necessary.

While neither I, nor my brethren, have any reason to wish any 'good' upon Christendom, it is not in our nature to wish bad upon it. Christendom, Europe, the West can be saved. It is not 'just' a question of demographics, though a culture of hope is a prerequisite.

Aragorn said: "A day may come when the courage of Men fails, when we forsake our friends and break all bonds of fellowship, but it is not this day. An hour of wolves and shattered shields when the Age of Men comes crashing down, but it is not this day! This day we fight [24].

Men of the West, this day you need to decide to fight, for your final battle is at hand. Antelucan indeed can our times be, if the decision is made, consciously made, for it to be so. Survival of the West is in the final quarter of the eleventh hour. Let this be clear, a decade from now, it will be too late-one decade and the last chance, your last chance, will be gone. You are being given the chance to finally grow up, to grow beyond your pettiness and hatred, to tell forefather Esau, for the final time, that 'active' hatred for Jacob may have been 'permissible' when children, but you are no longer children. Antisemitism exists, and will not pass; put it aside. Learn to ignore it for your own sakes.

To have hope, Children of the West must decide to embrace their true heritage and begin the process of integration of true Judaic Studies in the moral fabric of every facet of society. Anything less, and Aragorn is lost, the West is lost. Decide now, or relent of the ability to make such a decision-forever more.

Today, every civilised human being recognizes that treating people differently by race or genetics is irrational<sup>19</sup>. Not 'just' irrational, but socially and economically counterproductive, repugnant and stupid. And not just those, but immature, and this is the major point.

Christendom, I now address you directly. The time has come for you to simply accept that your antisemitism is a form of sociological immaturity; a sort of retardedness that cannot be fixed. You need to grow out of enslavement to it, to rise above this malady, to recognize that it is simply there. Then, despite this issue, to accept Judaic morality, implemented via academic Religious Higher Education and decide to survive. "The door is shut; you cannot pass!" There will not be another chance to make that decision.

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<sup>18</sup> In my forthcoming book "The Opposite of Time" I document many additional examples of this false scholarship.

<sup>19</sup> Despite that the continued irrational aberration called antisemitism remains unexplained.



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