

Vie juive traditionnelle. Ethnologie d'une communauté hassidique. Jacques Gutwirth. Ouvrage publié avec le concours du C.N.R.S. Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, Collection Grands Documents No 32. 1970. 491 pp., ill., maps.

The author provides us with a minute study of one Antwerp based hassidic community. Since little work has been previously devoted to studying such groups the book is a welcome addition to our knowledge of traditional Jewish life, past and present.

The hassidic movement originated in the XVIIIth century in Eastern Europe and is characterized by the cult of the hereditary chiefs (*rebbes*) heading each religious community. After the end of World War II, most of the survivors of this denomination migrated for socio-economic reasons to Western Europe, America and Israel where they were faced with the problem of retaining their identity and their way of living. The book studies a group of "Belzer Hassidim", as they are known. Belz is a Polish town which was the spiritual centre of this community whose members were found throughout Poland and Hungary. After the war the survivors of this group, like other Hassidim, migrated to New-York, Montréal, Jerusalem and Antwerp. In Antwerp they recreated all the conditions which could enable them to practice their faith with minimal interference from the outside world. The hassidic faith is, in fact, a mode of living which, when adhered to, is in contradiction with many aspects of what we regard as necessary to make a living. This accounts for the choice of the migrants' new professions. They are almost all employed in some branches of the diamond trade which allows them to keep up with an exacting religious calendar, thoroughly analysed here with its historical roots. The Hassidim live within their own secular and ritual time and this would conflict with occupations not carried out near their *chtibel*, the cult and meditation room, where members are expected to spend a great deal of time.

All profane and mundane affairs external to the community are to be avoided: newspaper reading, radio listening, television watching are, in theory, banned and since the teaching of non religious subjects is to be scorned the male children are to be sent to the community private school where secular matters are kept to a minimum. The girls are given more practical education for several interesting reasons that are well explained.

To show visibly their distinctiveness the members stick to a rigid bodily appearance and vestimentary code. There are variations to the ideal type, some kind of accommodation to the here and now, for the community is willy nilly integrated in Belgian society but outside personal contacts with the gentiles nevertheless come to a minimum, people of other Jewish denominations less committed than the Hassidim to the sacred books being the mediators between the Hassidim and society at large.

Despite all these restrictions the members travel a great deal usually by plane, to see relatives abroad, to raise contributions for their social works and to make the pilgrimage to the grave of their last spiritual chief who died

in Jerusalem after his flight from Poland. This pattern of travel, as the author shows, is the continuation of an old tradition dating back to the Middle Ages where the faithful were used to visit relatives as well as their spiritual chief. Only the distances covered by the journeys have changes but, as we are told, the Hassidim never leave their own world. They leave their community to travel to a similar one where pre-war former friends, now scattered, are met. The cohesion of the community is further enhanced by a religious school established in the fifties in Jerusalem where children of the dispersed groups are sent to further their religious studies.

In contrast to jet travel abroad there is little or no travelling at home except when necessary for professional reasons. Car ownership is frowned upon; since everyone lives near the religious centre, itself situated near the headquarters of the diamond trade, the possession of a car is seen as a superfluity which could only lead to dissipation.

The spatial, economic, religious and social aspects of this hassidic group, all analysed in depth in the book, would form a closed system but for economic reasons this "genetic code of tradition and Jewishness" as the author qualifies it, only endures through the subtle interplay between hypertraditionalists and hypotraditionalists, both groups closely depending upon one another to give an approximation — a very close one as the book shows — to the ideal model.

This work, densely packed with significant details, could be recommended to anyone interested in anthropology but those to whom it will become a reference book are scholars interested in Jewish studies, religious studies, urban anthropology and minority groups.

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Adoption in Eastern Oceania, ASAO Monograph No. 1. Vern Carroll (editor). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1970. ii-422 pp. \$10.00.

This monograph, the first published under the auspices of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania (ASAO) consists of a series of data oriented articles on the phenomenon of adoption in Eastern (Hawaiian, Society, Tahitian, Tuomotuan) and Western (Nukuoro, Kapingamarangi, Banaban, Gilbertese, Ponape, Romonum) Polynesia with additional contributions on Rotuma and the Northern New Hebrides, an Introduction defining the concept of adoption and an Epilogue on the psychological and jural aspects of parenthood regarded in a transactional frame.

Vern Carroll, in his Introduction sets the theme of the volume by answering his question, "What does 'adoption' mean?" Beginning with a working definition of adoption as "any customary and optional procedure for taking as one's own a child of other parents, Carroll then contrasts adoption in Oceania with adoption in the United States and in doing so he notes several differences: (1) "Whereas American adoption is often a transaction involving