

PREFACE

With issue number 13, *Immanuel* has recovered its cruising speed. On this occasion, I would like to acknowledge and warmly welcome the new assistant editor of *Immanuel*, Rabbi Jonathan Chipman, whose competence and devotion to the task have greatly assisted in this recovery. Rabbi Chipman, who has lived in Israel for eight years, has a master's degree in Judaic Studies from Brandeis University and completed his rabbinical training in Israel at Yeshivat Har Etzion in Alon Shevut. His special areas of expertise are Jewish Thought and *halakha*, and he has worked for several years both as a teacher and as a translator.

The issues for 1982 are already well under way. Perhaps this is an appropriate opportunity to take stock of our position and show how this number coincides with our original intent.

The Christians of different denominations who are joined in the Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Israel would like to share, with all those throughout the world who are concerned with biblical studies and the tradition and history of Judaism, the benefits that have come to them as a result of living in Jerusalem amidst the Jewish people who are gathered in the Land of the Bible.

This is, to be sure, a question of transmitting the fruit of the reflections and discoveries made in this country by specialists in different disciplines. The five sections in which the contents of our review are organised cover the whole field. The harvest is abundant, for the work has been undertaken in this country with enthusiasm and by numerous scholars. In each number we attempt to offer a selection from this abundant crop. But our concern is not only to transmit the contents of thought or the results of research, but also to communicate the spirit and the approach with which this research is undertaken, a spirit which is rightly dependent upon the original bond between the Jewish people and its land, its Book, its history and its tradition. We would like the articles and reviews that we publish to witness to a double purpose: to share with those who do not read Hebrew some examples of the rich material published in this country in the Hebrew language, and at the same time to introduce the particular approach represented in works published in Israel.

In this respect, one could group the different articles published in *Immanuel* according to the three dimensions which spring from the three components of Jewish identity; the Book, the people and the land. Thus, an examination of the contents of number 13 will show that the different contributions are organised around three axes: the land and the people of Israel; the Book and the Jewish tradition; the Book and the land.

The article of Joshua Schwartz on "Sinai in Jewish Thought and Tradition", like that of Ze'ev Safrai on "Administrative Structure of Judea in the Roman and Byzantine Period," bring out the link between the land of the Bible and the history of the Jewish people. The two reviews of Joseph Tabory on Talmudic literature and that of Yaira Amit on *The Book of Chronicles*, like the contribution of Z.M. Rabinovitz on "The Midrashic Works of the Jews of the Yemen," show the link between the Book and the people who have untiringly read and commented upon it.

Besides, another benefit of the experience made in this country by the Christians who live here is surely the new outlook brought to bear on the controversies and polemics of the past. However bitter or cruel have been the insults, they paradoxically witness at the same time to a proximity, not only of hostility but also of meeting and exchange. Such is the meaning that emerges, on the one hand, from the review of the books of Profs. Ettinger and Katz on anti-semitism, and on the other hand from the two contributions by Moshe Idel on Kabbalistic period. Finally, the three articles which make up the fifth section, that of Michael Rosenak on the Jewish vision of the world, of Pinhas Peli on Martin Buber and of A. Wohlman on I. Leibovitz show the permanence and reality in Israel of the untiring questioning by the Jewish people of its identity.

Marcel Jacques Dubois O.P.

Taḥat Kanfey ha-Shekhina

תחת כנפי השכינה

As this issue of *Immanuel* was going to press, the entire Jerusalem community was mourning the death of Professor Gershom Scholem. We cannot but pay tribute to the memory of this outstanding scholar, who created and laid the foundations for what has become one of the major disciplines within Judaic studies — the critical study of Jewish mysticism in all of its manifestations.

We also take this opportunity to pay tribute to an outstanding Christian scholar, Dr. James Parkes, who passed away in the latter half of 1981. He was one of the key figures in the renewed Christian interest in and understanding of Judaism and Jewish-Christian relations.

We shall publish memorial articles, discussing the contributions of these two great men, one Jew and one Christian, in the next issue of *Immanuel*.

May their memory be a blessing.