

Hasidism: the diamond industry in Antwerp, favorable U.S. immigration laws, democracy, and freedom from anti-Semitism. It sounds good – until one scratches the surface. Those same sociopolitical variables “permitted a flight from religiosity” among other sectors of world Jewry. Why, in the same democratic Jew-friendly American context, do some Jews become fervent Hasidim, others become militant atheists, and yet others settle for bland ethnic dabbling, just enough low-keyed assimilated *yiddishkeit* so that son Jason or daughter Tiffany can get through their *bar-* or *bat-mitzvah* in a synagogue they’re unlikely to revisit.

In “The Rebirth of Hasidism” Gutwirth has given us a statistically and descriptively rich overview of the Hasidic world. The book is a major contribution. Hopefully he will give us a sequel that probes the deeper causal forces that lead some Jews to embrace, and others to reject, the rebbes and their Hasidim.

Gerald F. Murray

**Handelman, Don, and Galina Lindquist (eds.):** Ritual in Its Own Right. Exploring the Dynamics of Transformation. New York: Berghahn Books, 2005. 232 pp. ISBN 1-84545-051-5. Price: £ 15.00

Naturally, the interpretation of ritual follows ways of interpreting religion. The main question concerns the possibility of an approach, which does not reduce ritual to social, cultural, psychological, etc. phenomena. “Ritual in Its Own Right,” as a title, is a promising thesis, which argues for the originality of the ritual phenomenon. The authors of this collective work intend to understand ritual by analyzing its core structure. It involves to some extent the employing of the phenomenological method consisting of the separation of the studied event from its social context (bracketing), analyzing it (using different methods, also empathy), and putting it back to its context with larger knowledge about it. The contributing authors follow this procedure to varying degrees.

The first essay written by Bruce Kapferer, “Ritual Dynamics and Virtual Practice. Beyond Representation and Meaning,” focuses on the inner dynamics of ritual. The main function of ritual is not to represent something but to create, generate, and produce some effects. According to the author, although the representational, meaning-driven, symbolic perspective is still important, a shift needs to be made to viewing “ritual as a dynamic for the production of meaning” (50). Following the ideas of S. Langer, V. Turner, and G. Deleuze, the author treats ritual as virtuality, “a dynamic process in and of itself with no essential representational symbolic relation to external realities” (46). The virtuality of ritual is dynamic and allows rituals to take shape in all kinds of the potentiality of human experience. In that construction the participants can detach themselves from the constraints of everyday life and create something new, at least imaginatively. The second characteristic of ritual’s virtuality is its capacity to enter the concrete dynamics of life and to regulate life-processes. “By means of the

virtuality of ritual, ritualists engage with positioning and structuring processes that are otherwise impossible to address in the tempo and dynamics of ordinary lived processes as these are lived at the surface” (48). Ritual performance can be imagined as a field of forces in whose virtual space human realities are recreated and the participants are reoriented and reinforced in their everyday capacities.

The second essay, “Otherwise than Meaning. On the Generosity of Ritual” by Don Seeman, adds a further theoretical consideration. The essay is an anthropological reflection about suffering, referring to thoughts of E. Levinas and C. Geertz. Suffering is both present in the consciousness of the sufferer and yet resistant to consciousness as such. Producing meaning of suffering does not answer the question of the efficacy of ritual. The practice of the healer tries also to alleviate some real pain. Pain invokes alterity, an experience of otherness. The suffering person feels different to himself. The ritual creates the possibility to present suffering in a meaningful way, enabling its justification and endurance. It brings rather an opportunity than a readiness to respond.

After these two theoretical contributions follow seven, more aspectual, essays. In “The Red and the Black. A Practical Experiment for Thinking about Ritual” M. Housemen presents his experience with ritual showing that the efficacy of ritual depends neither on the substantial symbolism of ritual, nor on its pragmatic consequences, nor on its performative qualities, but on the enactment of the special relationships its performance implies. He argues that the “successful ritual performance seems to rely less upon a convergence of the participants’ dispositions and motivations than upon the systemic coordination of their overt actions in accordance with these outward relational patterns” (91). In “Partial Discontinuity. The Mark of Ritual” A. Iteanu raises the question of how ritual can be distinguished from other activities. He states that in some societies every activity is a ritual to a certain extent. Taking two examples from Melanesia, the Maori *hau* and the exchange by Orokava, he shows the partial discontinuity that transforms horizontal equivalence in relationships among persons into vertical relationships between spirits and humans. “Religious Weeping as Ritual in the Medieval West” by P. Nagy considers the intimacy of ritual, analyzing a particular form of an inner self-transformative process, medieval religious weeping, which was a visible, bodily sign of sanctity, but functioned as a ritual outside of any social control. She argues that such a transformation process depended on the way medieval people perceived their relation to God, on the conception of the place of man in the world, and on historical conditions including specific relations of institutions and persons. “Enjoying an Emerging Alternative World. Ritual in Its Own Ludic Right” by A. Droogers analyzes the initiation ritual for boys among the Wagenia (Congo). The author shows the emergence of ludic behavior in the practice of the rite has a positive effect generating an alternative,

playful reality. It is especially true at times when the normal reality undergoes some crisis or tensions that are not served by the common practices. According to Droogers the study of the ludic aspect of ritual can help to understand the way by which ritual acts in its own right. In "Bringing the Soul Back to the Self. Soul Retrieval in Neo-Shamanism" G. Lindquist studies healing rituals affirming that somatization of transformations in consciousness is an integral part of these rituals. To understand the neo-shamanistic practice she has recourse to the theory of soul loss and soul retrieval. During the ritual, the shaman searches for the lost part, trying to persuade it to rejoin the self of the patient. The force of the shaman's conscious intentionality is directed to this part of the patient's self that remains passive in order to bring it the strength to act. In "Treating the Sick with a Morality Play. The Kardecist-Spiritist Disobsession in Brazil" S. M. Greenfield analyzes a healing ritual from a Spiritist tradition. During the course of the ritual, the participants enter a hypnotic state, internalize beliefs about the powers of spirits, and undergo changes on a somatic level which contribute to their cure. The author uses universal properties of human biology and physiology to argue that suggestion and light trance states may activate bodily systems at the cellular level making Kardecist ritual effective. The last essay "The Tacit Logic of Ritual Embodiments. Rappaport and Polanyi between Thick and Thin" by R. E. Innis represents a philosophical contribution of the volume. The author presents the major work of Roy Rappaport "Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity" through a perspective derived from Michael Polanyi's theory of tacit knowing. He argues that the "primary purpose of the ritual is to generate in the participant primarily perceptual and affective wholes by eliciting the integration of sets of subsidiarily attended from words, gestures, actions, images, and spaces or places into a focus that is the existential meaning of the religious experience" (206).

The multiplicity of case studies not only represents a variety of ritual forms, but also testifies for their complexity. Diverse approaches are applied to interpret rituals. Most of the attempts to treat the ritual in its own right converge on a transcendental reality, virtual or linked to otherness. In this way the discussion joins the fundamental questions of religion. But in their analysis the authors neither attach explicitly the ritual to the religious system nor stress excessively its social environment. This deliberated procedure renders the book original and inspiring. No doubt, it constitutes an important contribution to the study of ritual.

Jacek Jan Pawlik

**Hannerz, Ulf:** *Soulside. Inquiries into Ghetto Culture and Community.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004. 246 pp. ISBN 0-226-31576-2. Price: \$ 16.00

"Soulside," originally published in 1969, provides "one anthropologist's view" of what the author called "Winston Street" in Washington, D.C. The street no

longer exists as it was; people continued to move in and out of the neighborhood altering networks and recurrent personal encounters. But the problems Hannerz described still exist in ghetto areas in the United States: female household dominance; uneducated children having children; a ghetto-related male role that includes expression of toughness, sexual activity, and alcoholism (now other drugs are present); low educational achievement; conflict-ridden relationships between the sexes; social life beyond the domestic group; fluid household composition; fear of trouble; suspiciousness toward other persons' motives; interest in religion, specific foods, and music; and a hostile view of much of white America. The term "soul" refers to black people's essence as shaped by their experience and expressed in their everyday life. "Ghetto" encompasses slum and a "community" of ghetto dwellers.

In chapter 1, Hannerz provides the general context and characteristics of the residents on Winston Street, especially how they see themselves. Chapter 2 describes the life style types that Hannerz calls mainstreamers, swingers (not couples switching sex partners as the term is used today), street families, and street corner men. "Walking My Walk and Talking My Talk" (chapter 3) delineates how life styles influence each other besides influences that can lead an individual to assume a particular life style. Chapter 4 explores ghetto sex roles. In Chapter 5, Hannerz discusses the ways in which street corner men create a definition of manliness. Chapter 6 examines male sex role socialization in matrifocal families. "Things in Common" (chapter 7) such as institutions, bootlegging, the numbers game, black religion, the soul concept, and ghetto radio stations point to factors that contribute to community integration. Chapter 8, "Waiting for the Burning to Begin," offers insight into how ghetto dwellers consider their discontent with their relations to the outside world, react to the prospects of turmoil, and view the insurrection when it finally comes. Chapter 9 is a theoretical discussion of the controversy over the concept of a "culture of poverty" and other explanations for ghetto life. An appendix describes how Hannerz conducted his fieldwork.

What is the cause of the ghetto syndrome? The controversial aspect of the culture of poverty concept is the emphasis on culture as modes of behavior learned within the community. The implication is that the poor have only themselves to blame for their condition, which in turn has implications for social policy. Hannerz also talks about the notion of cultural deprivation and structural constraints, namely, opportunities taken for granted by the majority that have been blocked to the poor, and therefore their behavior is often a realistic adaptation.

Hannerz suggests that a reason for lack of response to opportunities is that when people deviate from the culture they share with their group, they lose the group support. People may have to choose between the peer group and greater opportunities. This reason turns out to be a critical factor for young people as early as elementary school (see Hanna, Disruptive School