

*RELIGION
IDEOLOGY
AND NATIONALISM*

IN EUROPE AND AMERICA

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AND NATIONALISM***

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**Essays Presented in Honor
of Yehoshua Arieli**



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Foreword

Yehoshua Arieli has always thrived on the parry and thrust of vital intellectual interchange. He is most acute and at home in the formulation and analysis of complex problems, in the give and take of passionate and ongoing discussion. It is in this spirit that the editors of this *Festschrift* seek to honor Yehoshua Arieli on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. The essays in this volume are intended to serve as springboards for continued exchanges. Two dozen historians from three continents have provided contributions which, we hope, will act as a stimulus towards the kind of deliberation and discussion in which Professor Arieli delights.

Settling upon a central topic for this *Festschrift* was rendered exceedingly difficult precisely because of the broad range and scope of Professor Arieli's learning and his immersion in diverse fields of interest. Restricting this volume to a single, narrow monographic theme would not have reflected the interests and personality of the man to whom it is dedicated. We have, therefore, concentrated upon exploration of the larger questions and issues which, over the years, have especially concerned Yehoshua Arieli. On the broadest level these concern the interrelations between ideas and their social framework. More specifically the complex connections obtaining between religion, nationalism and ideology are treated here in a variety of perspectives and contexts. Given this complexity the editors have preferred to arrange the book in geographical rather than thematic terms: issues and problems are thus considered within the continental spheres of Europe and America. We have, in addition, included another area of vital concern to Yehoshua Arieli: the Jewish dimension. Of intrinsic interest this aspect also intersects in critical ways with the European and American dimensions dealt with here.

These categories, we believe, reflect the richness and uniqueness of Yehoshua Arieli's intellectual world. His major work, *Individualism and Nationalism in American Ideology* (1964), has become a standard in the fields of both nationalism and American history of ideas. The European experience has likewise always been central to Yehoshua Arieli's teaching and research, complementing and enriching his contributions to American history. Who can fail to be struck by an erudition equally at home with Pico, Goethe, Heine, Burckhardt, Jefferson, Tom Paine, Mendelsohn, Scholem and Ben Gurion? This unique humanist combination of three worlds – the European, the American and Jewish–Israeli – is an enviable rarity in an age of narrow specialization. Our admiration for this *homo universalis* is the motive behind the present volume.

It was impossible to approach or include all of Arieli's friends and colleagues to participate in this *Festschrift*. For those who, for various reasons, did not

Foreword

contribute in this volume, the next *Arieli Festschrift*, celebrating his eightieth birthday, is open!

The editorial board wishes to thank all the contributors to this volume, Doron Narkis who was in charge of style and copy editing, and Steven Aschheim and Avihu Zakai for helping out with planning and proofs. We also wish to express our gratitude to the Historical Society of Israel and the Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, and especially its director, Zvi Yekutiel, for making the production and publication of this volume possible.

M.Z.

Yehoshua Arieli as a Teacher and Scholar

Michael Heyd

The most remarkable thing about Professor Arieli as a teacher and scholar is the range of his historical interests and the scope of his knowledge. There is hardly a period in European and American history which is *terra incognita* for him. Rare are the lectures or symposia in which Arieli, if not lecturing himself, does not raise a pertinent question, or does not make a significant comment. In the history department at the Hebrew University he has taught an extraordinary range of courses not only in American history but in Modern European history and in the methodology and philosophy of history. The present volume, in its collection of essays, is but a modest reflection of the extent of Arieli's historical interests.

Yet, as far as European history is concerned, the period on which Arieli has focused his attention, primarily as a teacher but also as a scholar, is the Early Modern, the period from the Renaissance and Reformation to the Enlightenment. For many years he gave the introductory lecture on the Renaissance and Reformation, as well as advanced seminars in that period. His exciting lectures drew many students to specialize further in this field. In fact, he began teaching Early Modern European history in the late 1950s, just as this field began to emerge as a period of its own in universities in the West. Since then, this period has become one of the foci of historical scholarship. Some of the major breakthroughs in historical research and methodology have taken place in the study of Early Modern Europe – the use of quantitative methods in social, economic and demographic history, the application of anthropological concepts in the interpretation of popular culture, or the history of childhood and the family.

Arieli is cognizant of these developments and has increasingly incorporated them in his lectures. At the same time, he has developed an approach of his own to the Early Modern Period, both in his teaching and in his research. It may not be accidental that Arieli tends to speak about the *beginning* of the modern period, rather than the early modern period. For him, the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are an integral part of the modern period, and it is there that the origins of modern society are to be sought. Consequently, he always stresses the historical continuities in the modern period, from around

1500 onwards. In this respect Arieli has been principally interested in the heritage of the Early Modern period as it was transmitted to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

First among the movements of the Early Modern Period which has shaped the modern world was the Renaissance, of course, to which Arieli has always given much attention, stressing mainly its "secular" potential and this-worldly orientation. While not ignoring its Christian and mystical aspects, Arieli is mostly interested in the links between the Renaissance and eighteenth century Enlightenment, between fifteenth century *studia humanitatis* and nineteenth-century humanistic studies, between Renaissance conceptions of man and modern individualism. It is not surprising, therefore, that Burkhardt's classical book, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* occupies a central place in the conception of the Renaissance which Arieli has transmitted to his students, though he does not accept Burkhardt uncritically by any means.

Professor Arieli has focused most of his scholarly attention, however, on the contribution of the Reformation to modern society and culture, and on the historical continuities in Protestant societies, particularly in the New World. Yet, unlike the liberal historians of the nineteenth century, he does not see Luther and the Reformation in exclusively modern terms. Indeed, he has explicitly criticized the anachronistic flaws in this liberal historiography which depicted Luther as primarily a rebel and fighter for the liberty of Christian man. Arieli has repeatedly stressed the conservative and medieval elements in Luther's thought, especially his view of an external Church which is coterminous with society. Yet, at the same time, Protestantism had within it the seeds of more modern developments. Following the work of Troeltsch, Tawney, Woodhouse and other historians, Arieli has focused on processes of transformation in Protestant societies of the modern period. In the course of these processes, the modern elements in Protestantism – the critique of tradition, the stress on the individual and the thrust of "disenchanted" the world – became predominant. The Protestant heritage has consequently become a crucial factor in the formation of modern European and American cultures. Such a transformation has taken place in England and Holland during the seventeenth century, in the Scottish Enlightenment, and in the development of eighteenth-century German Pietism. Yet Arieli has devoted most of his research, of course, to the transformation of Protestantism and its role in the development of the American colonies, and later – the American nation.

Arieli's interpretation of Protestantism is also influenced, I believe, by a certain "existential" approach. He has always stressed the experiential elements in Luther's original message, and this is what attracts him to the Radical sects of the Reformation too. Indeed, like some other historians, Arieli sees in the *Radical* Reformation – more than in the Magisterial Reformation – the harbinger of modern pluralistic society. Seeing religion primarily as a matter of personal experience, he has sought the roots of this view in the Early

Yehoshua Arieli as a Teacher

Modern Period. In this existential approach, Arieli clearly belongs to the generation of historians working in the post-World War II era, historians who recognize the importance of religious experience in human history.

The generation of his pupils may not subscribe to all aspects of his historical approach. Some of us may be more sceptical about the grand contours of the historical processes which Arieli attempts to draw. Yet all of us are deeply indebted to him, not only for the broad historical perspective which he constantly offers us, but for the keen interest he has taken and continues to take in each of his students. As teacher and interlocutor, Yehoshua Arieli always manages to arouse interest and to spur further inquiries. His own uncompromising commitment to historical investigation and his readiness to constantly think afresh about any intellectual issue sets a model for all his younger colleagues and students. Even harder to emulate is the vast scope of his historical knowledge, and the warm personal engagement with which the intellectual acitivity of Yehoshua Arieli is always suffused. We wish him and ourselves many more years of vivid and stimulating dialogue with students, colleagues and friends.

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