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Emes Ve-Emunah

A Forum for Orthodox Jewish thought on Halacha, Hashkafa, and sociological issues of our time.

About Me

NAME: HARRY MARYLES **LOCATION:** CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Much of who I am is based on the philosophy of my primary mentor, Rabbi Aaron Soloveichik from whom I received my rabbinic ordination. It is also based on a search for spiritual truth from various sources that I have studied. Primarily it is a reflection of my understanding of two great philosophic works, "Halakhic Man" and "Lonely Man of Faith" by the pre-eminent Jewish philosopher and theologian, Rabbi Dr. Joseph B. Soloveitchik. Of great significance to me is Dr. Norman Lamm's conceptualization and models of Torah U'Mada. Another individual who helped shape my thinking was Dr. Eliezer Berkovits who introduced me to the world of philosophic thought. My early religious education was most influenced by two pioneers of American Elementary Torah Chinuch, Rabbis Shmuel Kaufman and Yaakov Levi. The Yeshivos I attended were Yeshivas Telshe for early high school and more significantly, the Hebrew Theological College where for a period of ten years my Rebbeim included such great Rabbinic figures as Rabbi Yaakov Perlow, Rabbi Mordechai Rogov, and of course Rabbi Aaron Soloveichik.

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FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2009

Faces of Israel

I have just had the opportunity to see a wonderful documentary by producer/director Amy Beth Oppenheimer called *Faces of Israel*. This low budget film is an educational tour de force of views by the wide spectrum of Jews spanning virtually all segments of Israeli society.

Among the issues addressed are those that are frequently covered here and include: the Israeli Chief Rabbinate, marriage, single sex unions, conversions, heterodox movements in Israel, and the inter-action between secular and religious Jews - among many others.

Those interviewed were all members of Israel society. They included Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yona Metzger, A female Mesorati (Conservative) rabbi, a Reform rabbi, a Sephardi rabbi, and various Israeli citizens of different stripes: Charedi, Daati, secular, and homosexual.

It also included lengthy interviews of the leaders of Itim – an American led organization and Tzohar, and Israeli one. These two organizations were created to deal with people unhappy with the Israeli Rabbinate – mostly in matters of marriage.

There was a lot of discussion of the Israeli Rabbinate, and the disagreements between it and Itim and Tzohar. All seemed to agree that the Israeli rabbinate was lacking in matters of interpersonal relationships. They act in a far too functionary an impersonal, cold way. Some of the members of the Rabbinate interviewed seemed to concede this fact. This caused a great many people to be disaffected with the rabbinate. Which seems to be why Itim and Tzohar were created.

I found it fascinating to hear their views although I was not really surprised by what they said. It corroborated many things I have said here. For example the secular couple said that they thought buses and private cars should be permitted to operate on Shabbos in cities that had sizable secular populations - but that secular Jews should respect religious sensitivities and not go into religious neighborhoods.

There was no animosity or hatred by them against Charedim at all. There was an attitude of respect - and a belief in their right to be religious and live in religious environments – as long as their lives would not be unduly inconvenienced. So if a street in a Charedi neighborhood was closed for Shabbos, that was fine with them. But if an entire city was closed to traffic, that would be unfair. Almost all of them expressed the desire to keep the character of the State Jewish.

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Joseph: >some are religious figures whose integrity, commitment, and sincerity exceeds that of some of our s...

Rocco Lampone: some are religious figures whose integrity, commitment, and sincerity exceeds that of some of our so...

Joseph: If he was a decent man, and I believe he isn't, the first speech upon arrival would not have been a...

Boruch: "According to the סידור דרך התי..."

pierre: There don't seem to be non-Jewish Israelis interviewed. Did they make a film about views of A NATIO...

dr. bill: Yes I've heard that too although I've never read up extensively on it. However, aren't they just...

bewhiskered: He has as one of his goals to have reconciliation with the Jewish people. I think we ought to step b...

David Brand: "Artscroll's tragedy, and ours, is their failure in raising the intellectual level of their audienc...

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Should civil marriage be sanctioned in Israel? Should the Israeli Conservative and Reform Rabbinate be permitted 'a say' in life-cycle events? What about Halachic conversion or marriages performed by a Conservative rabbi? A Reform rabbi? Is there really a need for three separate Orthodox rabbinic organizations: the Israeli Rabbinate, Tzohar and Itim? How should homosexuals be treated? Same sex marriage?

All these questions are asked and discussed at length in this fine documentary. If one really wants a picture of what is on the minds of Israeli Jews this is your film. It is well worth the price of admission.

I am told it has the endorsement of many religious figures including leaders of Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform movements. I can certainly understand why. Kudos to director Oppenehimer on her first major project.

posted by Harry Maryles | 9:17 AM [Comments \(10\)](#) | [Trackback \(0\)](#) 

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