nocentric religion which abandons the changes which characterized the very essence of the Reform enterprise?

Since we do, indeed, live in a free society, Reform Judaism in the 21st century will be what its adherents wish it to be. A real choice should be made. If it is not, the current drift from Reform's very essence will simply drive away those who maintain their belief that Reform Judaism was something new, a break with the past, a vision of God and man extracting the genuine uniqueness and essence of the Jewish tradition, a vision of God and man drawn from the hopes and dreams of the prophets. Perhaps what will emerge is an effort to re-reform Reform Judaism so that this earlier vision will not die.

Only time will tell us whether classical Reform Judaism, committed to one universal God and rejecting ethnocentrisin and separation for Judaism's mission as a light to the nations, will survive into the 21st century. If it does not, men and women of all faiths who believe in a God large enough to encompass all of mankind with a vision of a moral and purposeful world will be the losers. •

GERMANY, DENMARK AND THE HOLOCAUST

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

and industry. He had invited the Sephardic Jews at the suggestion of his Jewish mintmaster, Albertus Denis. It was the beginning of cordial relations between the Jews and the Danes. It was also the beginning of a long history of Danish officials welcoming Jewish capital into Denmark. This tendency never soured into the anti-Semitic association between big capitalists and Jews that flourished later in Germany.

In a decree of August 1, 1641, Christian IV permitted the Jews a synagogue and the right to various religious rituals. "Throughout the reign of Christian IV a spirit of liberalism and understanding towards the Jews began to prevail," notes Ib Nathan Bamberger in *The Viking Jews: A History Of the Jews in Denmark.*

Jews In Copenhagen

Under the reign of Frederick III, Sephardic Jews were permitted to settle throughout the land, while the poorer Ashkenazic Jews were kept out. Gradually Jews began to settle in Copenhagen and by 1694 there were 12 Jewish families living there. While the Jews in Germany had been forced into the occupations of money lending and pawnbroking, the Jews in Denmark engaged in the desirable occupation of trading.

The 19th century was a period of economic and social progress for Jews in both Germany and Denmark. But only Germany was plagued by periodic setbacks for the Jews. Germany was characterized by a suspicion of emancipation, not only for Jews, but in general terms. Denmark, on the other hand, moved steadily toward liberalization.

In Germany, the great enlightened thinker Wilhelm von Humboldt urged the government in vain to end discriminatory attitudes toward Jews: "It is not that the State ought to teach respect for the Jews. What it ought to do is to eradicate the inhumane and prejudiced mentality that judges a human being not by his specific qualities but by his descent and religion, and treats him not as an individual but as a member of a race with which he is considered to share certain characteristics of necessity. This the state can only do by saying loud and clear that it no longer recognizes any difference between Jews and Christians."

The German rulers, however, seemed impervious to declarations of universal principles of freedom and pluralism. But when Napoleon crushed the Prussians at Jena on October 14, 1806 the Holy Roman Empire came to an end and emancipation of certain groups was forced upon the German occupied territories. This short-lived emancipation came at enormous cost, for the Napoleonic defeat of Germany engendered a pathological hatred of all movements toward civil rights. The Jews were emancipated in the German occupied territories, but these rights were rescinded after the defeat of Napoleon.

Germans Define Themselves

Out of this emerged a very negative concept of what it meant to be German. What was a German? Someone who was not French or English, the despised proponents of parliamentary democracy. The Germans defined themselves in contrast to the French. The liberal ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity were French ideas. They were ideas associated with Jews, who had so long pushed for emancipation. Therefore, these ideas, along with the Jews, had to be rejected as unGerman. It was an easy step to the next conclusion. To be German was to be not Jewish. The Jews were no longer ostracized solely because of their religion. They were now considered a nation, a nation within the German nation. As a foreign element, they had to be uprooted.

After the German states had rescinded the Jewish rights given in 1813, there were violent pogroms against the Jews. The most violent of these was the hep hep movement that occurred in Wurzburg in 1819 where the people vented their fury on Jewish businesses. The special brand of German nationalism came into its own here, as the Jews for the first time were branded as the foreigner, the internal enemy, Historian Lucy Dawidowicz writes: "German nationalism arose out of the ashes of defeat in the Napoleonic wars, fragmented, without nationhood, without political definition, lacking military power and economic vitality, the Germans searched for a shared identity that would restore their self esteem...They turned inward for self-definition, in search of psychic and metaphysical values, qualities of feeling and spirit. And they turned backward—to a remote past of glory and mastery, to a past deep in the womb of historic time, where they had once been secure....From 1789 to 1815 the quarter century between the French Revolution and the Congress of Vienna, the ethos of modern Germany took shape. The doctrines of the revolution were anathema to the princely, priestly and knightly rulers of the German states and principalities."

Out of all of this emerged the German concept of nationhood, the answer to the question, What does it mean to be a German."

Jewish Persecution

The failure of the German states to accord their citizens civil rights had further negative ramifications for the Jews. As in the middle ages they were persecuted as a balm for the oppressed in a perpetually disappointed society. The failed revolution of 1848 created a great deal of frustration within the feebly striving German middle class. In December 1848, the German parliament at Frankfurt adopted a declaration of "fundamental rights of the German people." According to Article V, "The enjoyment of civil and political rights is neither dependent nor restricted by religious creed." Thus the Jews were beneficiaries of rights granted to all.

Anti-Semitism was a morass out of which German society did not seem able to escape. Every step toward emancipation of the Jews seemed to engender an anti-Semitic reaction creating an environment more anti-Jewish than had prevailed before the suggested reform.

When the revolution was defeated in 1849 the German states, in rapid succession, rescinded the granted rights. Not only the Jews were oppressed by the state governments' oppressive rule. But now the medieval tendency, which became characteristic for the German national psyche, came to the fore again. Instead of banding together and demanding civil rights, other elements of the middle class vented their frustration on the Jews.

Friedrich Hecker, a revolutionary leader in south Germany, attempted in 1846 to explain this psychological phenomenon: "In states where no true liberty reigns, where we feel crushed every day by the burden of the police state, it makes a man feel good to see someone he may despise and bully and mistreat, thereby gaining some slight relief from the daily oppression and stifling atmosphere of the police state. It is because of the lack of freedom in our states, because of the pressure and bitterness that we did not want to emancipate the Jews. By bullying the Jews, we fancied ourselves more free and higher up.

Withdrawal Of Rights

In Germany every step forward that the Jews took was characterized by anti-Semitic reaction borne of anger over any social or economic rise by the Jews. The fall of Napoleon and the victory of the Holy Alliance led everywhere, to the withdrawal of equal rights that the Jews had been accorded.

But there was an even more reactionary reason for this backtracking. The fall of Napoleon gave rise to a new conservatism in Germany which rejected the ideals of equality of the French Revolution and looked backwards toward the past in search of a Christian-Teutonic spiritual and cultural renewal.

Poets and philosophers provided ideas for what it meant to be truly German. Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814), the father of German nationalism, has also been called the father of modern German anti-Semitism. He praised "Germanness" and criticized the Jews. In 1793 he fought Jewish emancipation, characterizing the Jews as a state within a state that would undermine the German nation.

Friedrich Lugwig Jahn (1778-1852) developed the particular concept of German nationalism associated with the word Volk. This signifies not simply a people united by common traditions but the union of a group of people with a transcendental essence, never specified, sometimes called nature, cosmos, mythos.

Volk Concept

In the Volk concept of German nationality, the Germans drew up a definition of themselves that was per se negative. It was based on who they were not. To be a German was to be not a Jew. Because this form of nationalism originated from the inferior sense of defeat, it could not be inclusive. It was narrow and xenophobic.

The Germans upheld throughout the 19th century the habit of blaming the Jews for everything that went awry in their society. When, in 1873, the stock market crashed, the deep economic depression that followed stimulated a spate of anti-Semitic writings which blames the crash on a Jewish conspiracy. In 1879 Heinrich Treitschke, a respected professor of history at the University of Berlin, attacked the Jews as "unser Ungluck" (our misfortune), a line that was to recur during the Nazi period. During the Second Reich (1870-1918) anti-Semitism increased and in 1892 the Conservative Party adopted an anti-Semitic plank in its platform, a harbinger of what was to come.

The obsession with the concept of Jews as aliens within the German nation, as internal enemies, continued to beset the German mind. Historian Jonah Goidhagen describes an underlying German cultural model of the Jew which consisted of three notions: "that the Jew was different from the German, that he was a binary opposite of the German, and that he was not just benignly different but malevolent and corrosive. Whether conceived of as a religion, nation, political group, or race, the Jew was always a Fremdkorper, an alien body within Germany. The centrality and power of this conception of Jews was such that anti-Semites came to see everything that was awry in society, from social organization, to political movements, to economic problems as being linked to, if not derived from, the Jews...These, it must be emphasized, were not merely the views of prominent anti-Semitic polemicists, but also the views that were dominant throughout German society."

Evolution In Denmark

What did Denmark look like at the same time?

Denmark was not always a bastion of liberal democracy. After the thirty years war and a war with Sweden which cost Denmark its wealthiest territories, Denmark was in a state of economic, military and political chaos. In 1660 the king seized control over the country and imposed an absolute monarchy which was to last until 1848. Long after most monarchs in Western Europe had their power curbed by parliaments, the Danish king ruled under the Regal Law (Kongeloven) which forbade any amendments. Liberty in Denmark was extremely curtailed at that time as to even suggest a change in the Regal Law was considered treason.

The monarchy looked favorably upon the immigration of wealthy Jews because the king needed capital to shore up his country. The religious ban that existed on forbidden religious denominations, Calvinists, Roman Catholics, and Jews,was dropped and the oldest Jewish settlement was established in the new fortress town of Fredericia. By 1780 Jews were permitted to join guilds in Copenhagen, and in 1798 Jews were given permission to study at the university and other schools of higher learning.

Napoleon's lunge for power affected Denmark, but in a different manner from Germany. Denmark held to a strict policy of neutrality while Napoleon conquered most of Europe. But when Denmark joined Russia in a coalition of neutrality in 1800, England responded angrily. In 1807 England bombarded Copenhagen and captured Denmark's fleet. The monarchy was forced into an alliance with the French which ended in national bankruptcy in 1814. The monarchy was aware of the