

JEWISH CRIME

"Of all the areas of Jewish enterprise," notes Gerald Krafetz, "none has been so overlooked as the field of crime. And it isn't because of a lack of Jewish criminality. For an introspective people, this oversight is significant. It is as if Jewish crime did not exist, an unsavory skeleton is best left in the family closet ... The sociopathology of Jews is not an acceptable notion since it runs counter to both religious precepts and preconceived ideas that Jews have of themselves." [KREFETZ, p. 112] "Jews were ... involved in many of the most visible and spectacular frauds of the post-Civil War period," notes Benjamin Ginsberg, "as well as in economic dislocations and financial manipulations that characterize the era." [GINSBERG, p. 75] In one much publicized scandal for instance, the Jewish governor of South Carolina, Franklin Moses, oversaw the issue and selling of \$6 million in fraudulent state securities, as well as funneling hundreds of thousands of dollars in public funds into his own pocket. [GINSBERG, p. 75]

In a broader financial sphere, very visibly at the top of the socio-economic pyramid, Jewish businessman Joseph Seligman's nefarious activities in the late 1800s helped to create the infamous "Black Friday" stock market crash. Benjamin Ginsberg notes that the crash

"ruined thousands of investors, implicated President Grant, and led to a Congressional investigation of [Jay] Gould and Seligman ... Similarly, in the early 1890s, Jacob Schiff collaborated with E. H. Harriman in the latter's attempts to wrest control of the Northern Pacific Railroad from J. P. Morgan and James Hill ... When the price of the Northern Pacific Stock collapsed, the entire market crashed in the notorious 'Black Thursday' panic that led to a nationwide economic depression."
[GINZBURG, p. 73]

In 1885 the French-based project to build the Panama Canal collapsed, resulting in financial scandal that led, in part, to Seligman again. "Both the United States Congress and the French Parliament had inquiries," says Ginsberg, "In both countries major Jewish financiers were implicated: Baron Jacques de Reinach in Paris and Joseph Seligman in the United States. Many shareholders lost everything, but Seligman lost nothing. In contemporary parlance, the Seligmans engaged in influence peddling, insider trading, and corporate asset stripping and looting -- all at the expense of credulous investors." [GINZBURG, p. 74] The French end of the Panama Canal scandals, notes Albert Lindemann, "involved large amounts of French capital and threatened national prestige -- and Jewish agents were deeply involved. The intermediaries between the Panama company and parliament were almost exclusively Jews with German names and backgrounds, some of whom tried to blackmail one another."
[LINDEMANN, p. 87]

The Jewish component of (Gentile) Huey Long's corrupt political machine in early 20th century Louisiana included Leon Weiss, an architect, who "was implicated in the financial scandals surrounding the administration and served prison time." [KIRKUS, 10-1-97] Herbert Stempel was willing participant in the 1950s television quiz show scandals until a Gentile, Charles Van Doren, usurped him in deceit. Jewish TV producer Lew Cowan, denying guilt, was one of the most prominent executives who lost his job in the wake of the scandals. Even at the heart of the World Zionist Organization, after founder Theodore Herzl's death, his wife Julie ("an extravagant and unstable woman") "threatened the Zionist leaders with scandals and lawsuits if they didn't meet her extravagant financial needs." [STERNBERGER, I., 8-15, 1995]

At the other end of the socio-economic world, "the scant attention [popular author Irving Howe] paid to Jewish crime in World of Our Fathers, his magisterial study of the [Manhattan Jewish] Lower East side," notes Charles Silberman, "is a good example of the amnesia American Jews show about this part of their history." [SILBERMAN, p. 128] In researching the level of Jewish crime during the early decades of this century in the Lower East Side, Albert Fried notes that "I discovered that an enormously complex, richly endowed culture of vice and criminality, made up mainly of young people, thrived on the Lower East Side, that most outsiders regarded it as Tammany's bastion of power [Tammany Hall, the corrupt New York city government of the era] that the Jews themselves eventually came to look upon it as an insufferable burden of shame and embarrassment." [FRIED, p. xiv] Such embarrassment included Jewish "fagins" (bands of pickpockets), thieves, pimps, prostitutes, opium dealers, gamblers, brothel-owners, racketeers, murderers, robbers, and others of virtually any persuasion. Arson for building insurance and horse-poisoning in extortion rackets were "two offenses associated almost exclusively with Jews." [JOSELIT, p. 36] "In the area of only one square mile [in the Jewish Lower East Side]," notes Jenna Weissman Joselit, "authorities estimated there were approximately two hundred disorderly [prostitution] houses, three hundred and thirty-six gang 'hang-outs,' and over two hundred pool halls-cum-betting establishments; dance halls, a rendezvous of pimps and procurers, were found every two and one-half blocks." [JOSELIT, p. 24]

Abe "the General" Greenthal, "was one of America's premier pickpockets ... Abe's home and base of operation was in New York City, but his gang traveled all over the United States picking pockets." Michael Kurtz (born in 1850) "was one of America's most celebrated burglars." Joseph 'Yoski Nigger' Toblinsky "led a gang that specialized in stealing and poisoning horses." Benjamin (Dopey) Fein "was the first gangster to make labor racketeering a full-time and profitable business. He institutionalized the practice of furnishing gangs of hoodlums to unions in their wars against employers." [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 88, 91, 94, 95]

"In 1908," notes the *Jerusalem Post*, "Jews were 25 percent of the four million residents in New York City but 50% of the prison population." [HENRY, M., 10-4-01] That same year, the police commissioner of New York City, Theodore A. Bingham, publicly noted that half of all the criminals in his city were Jewish. "Jewish leaders," notes Robert Rockaway, "worried that Jewish gangsters provided ammunition for Jew-haters. Consequently, they steadfastly refused to acknowledge the problem in public." [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 51] As stories of Jewish crime in New York City became increasingly publicized

in the mainstream mass media, initially the "Yiddish press challenged the veracity of the evidence," [GOREN, p. 141] but "beginning in 1909 and reaching a climax in 1912," says Arthur Goren, "widely publicized disclosures of vice and crime among Jews created dismay and then alarm in Jewish circles. Protests of innocence were now impossible." [GOREN, p. 135]

The murder of a well-known Jewish gambler, Herman Rosenthal, was particularly horrifying for the Jewish community in that it opened up a Pandora's Box of trials and testimonies profoundly unflattering to local Jewry. Goren notes that

"The appalling fact was that the underworld segment which the trials and the indefatigable press had so thoroughly laid bare consisted almost entirely of Jewish gangsters and gamblers. No longer could Jewish apologists find comfort in viewing the phenomena as a rare deviation from the norm. In the accounts, the criminals appeared as commonplace East Side figures. Sons of hard-working parents, most had been exposed as children to religious training and had led average family lives. Even considering the hired gangsters apart, one could point to exceptional and touching instances of family loyalty, pride in one's ethnic group, and knowledge of an affection for Jewish religious tradition." [GOREN, p. 154]

"Jewish criminals," wrote Moses Rischin, "regularly made newspaper headlines. The appearance of an ungovernable youth after the turn of the century was undeniable and excited apprehension." [FRIED, p. xvi] In April 1911, for instance, 400 Jewish shopkeepers flooded a criminal court building to complain and testify before a grand jury about robberies and gangs in their neighborhoods. [FRIED, p. 26] In 1909 alone, 3,000 Jewish "youngsters" appeared before an area juvenile court. [FRIED, p. 41] Gangster Monk Eastman alone "bossed a Jewish street gang that could field as many as 1,200 men on short notice." [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 97] While many criminals were rooted in poverty, some prominent Jewish gangsters -- like Arnold Rothstein and Big Jack Zelig -- came from comfortable backgrounds. [FRIED, p. 40] The king of Jewish crime in the era, Arthur Rothstein, "was a rich man's son." [COHEN, R., p. 46] Monk Eastman's father "was solidly middle class, a restaurant owner." [COHEN, R., p. 45] Israeli scholar Robert Rockaway discounts the usual apologetics for Jewish gangsters, saying:

"More likely, these men selected careers in crime because they wanted money, power, recognition and status; and they wanted it fast. Crime offered them a quick way to realize their dreams." [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 52]

"It was the Jews, by and large," says Norman Cantor, "not the Italians, who created what was later called the Mafia. In the 1920s the Italians began to replace the Jews in the New York organized crime industry, but as late as 1940 if you wanted a spectacular hit you were looking for a representative of the Lepke Buchalter Gang, also known as Murder Inc. Jews were also prominent in the gambling trade and

developed Las Vegas in the 1940s. It was a Jewish gambler who fixed the 1919 baseball World Series -- what became known as the Black Sox scandal." [CANTOR, p. 389] The perpetrator of the scandal was Arnold Rothstein, notes Charles Silberman, "the inventor of organized crime." [SILBERMAN, p. 128]

"It was with some astonishment," notes Jewish critic Marvin Kitman,

"that I discovered what an integral part of American Jewish life crime was. Our forefathers made names for themselves, such as they are, as gangsters, murderers, musclemen, hit men, acid throwers, arm breakers, bombers and all the other professions open to nice Jewish boys. Prostitution, vice, alcohol, gambling, racketeering, extortion, and all the other things that fill the newspaper today and that I gladly have been attributing as character flaws in other groups of founding fathers: Those were our things ... I was shocked at how deep our roots are in all the sinks of depravity and corruption ... The Jews were the first ones to realize the link between organized crime and organized politics. They led the way in corrupting the police and city hall. They first realized the value of gang/syndicate cartels in business to reduce the killing of each other. They were monopolists of the highest order ... We wrote the book, so to speak, on crime, but it's all forgotten." [KITMAN, p. 9]

"Some disgruntled Jewish immigrants," says Jonathan Sarna, "chose crime as their vehicle of upward mobility. Through robbery and fencing operations, they created a parasitic counter-industry that lived off the garment trade, skimming its profits for personal benefit. Others made their living by exploiting Jewish religious practices (the standard history of the kosher-meat industry in New York is aptly entitled Fraud, Corruption, and Holiness)." [SARNA, Jewish, p. 53]

Kosher meat is food that is prepared according to traditional Orthodox religious standards; it presumably entails extra time and energy to prepare which escalates prices to be higher than non-kosher food. An investigation in New York City sponsored by a Jewish community organization in 1915 discovered that 60% of the meat sold as kosher was fraudulent: most rabbis who supervised kosher sanctions were under slaughterhouse employ and abandoned strict religious adherence. [GOREN, p. 79] Among 6,000 New York area butchers who allegedly only sold kosher meat to fellow Jews, there were "few who did not, at some point, deal in unkosher meat." [GASTWIRT, p. 113] The Jewish slaughterhouse system was also involved in price-fixing, extortion, racketeering, fist fights in the synagogue, and even murder. "The intense rivalry and competition in the kosher poultry business," notes Harold Gastwirt, "made it prey to racketeering and violence." [GASTWIRT, p. 46]

Jewish gangsters were also violently active in support of Jewish unions or employers, depending upon who paid them. "Some of the so-called Jewish unions," remarked a veteran of Jewish labor activities, "... fell early in their careers upon evil days: underworld characters, gangsters, got a foothold in the

organization ... Unfortunately, the element engaged to help would refuse to clear out when their services were no longer wanted." [GOREN, p. 304] Rita Simon notes another of the political dimensions of underworld [and New York City governmental] corruption:

"In exchange for police protection of his gang, [gang leader] Monk [Easton] employed 'repeaters' (repeat voters) at the polls in favor of Tammany Hall, the local Democratic machine." [SIMON, p. 139]

Jewish crime was widespread in a number of the largest urban areas of America, some of it eventually "syndicated" throughout the country, at times even in cooperation with the Italian mafia. In Chicago the Westside Jewish underworld ward was known as the "Bloody Twentieth." A 1906 description of the area claimed that "murderers, robbers, and thieves of the worst kind are born, reared, and grow to maturity in numbers that far exceed the record of any similar district on the face of the globe." [FRIED, p. 90] (Even Al Capone's accountant, who later rose to further notoriety, was Jewish, Jake "Greasy Thumb" Guzik.) [LACEY, p. 18] In Cleveland, the Jewish community had its "noisome and brutal Woodland section"; in Detroit it was the eastside, most prominently ruled by the Purple Gang; in Boston it was the Chelsea quarter; Newark had its "fierce third ward"; and in Philadelphia Jewish crime, featuring boss Harry Stromberg, was largely located in the southeast area. These cities, with New York, says Albert Fried, "held the worst, that is the most criminalized, of the Jewish neighborhoods in America." [FRIED, p. 90] In London, England, notes Daniel Levy, "the Jews were involved in assorted criminal activities. They committed petty thievery, forgery, and illegal distilling of booze. Some sailed to eastern Europe and convinced young girls that jobs and bachelors awaited them in England, only to ship them off to Indian or Argentinean white slave markets." [LEVY, D, p. 20] Earlier forms of blackmail by non-Jewish British gangs were "developed by Jewish gangs (formed after the great immigration of the 1880s) into extortion from legitimate shopkeepers. Much as Jewish gangsters liked to portray themselves as honourable knights defending their co-religionists against anti-Semitic thugs, they were just as likely to live as predators upon their fellow Jews. A gang of extortionists known as the 'Bessarabians' were headed by a professional boxer who called himself Max Moses in private life and 'Kid McCoy' in the ring." [FIDO, M., 2000, p. 17]

Poland? In the early twentieth century, future Israeli prime minister David Ben-Gurion was jailed in Warsaw, Poland, for suspected radical political activism. "That was the first time," he said later,

"that I ever came into contact with the dregs of society. I was shaken to the core at the language and behavior. I never had the slightest notion that such people ever existed ... The thing that shook me most was that these criminals were Jews." [Daniel Kurzon suggests that these included members of a rival Jewish political group which Ben-Gurion considered "more dangerous criminals" than the "brothel keepers." [KURZMAN, D., 1983, p. 67]

Prominent Jews in Chicago's criminal underworld included Louis 'Diamond Louie' Cowan, Hymie 'the Loud Mouth' Levine, Sam 'Sammy the Greener' Jacobson, Maxie Eisen, Murray 'the Camel' Humphreys, and (non-Jewish) Al Capone's money man, Jake Guzik. [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 43] In 1924, "Chicago Jewish leader" S. M. Melamed warned about the "great number of Jews in the underworld." [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 49]

"Bootlegging in Boston," notes Robert Rockaway,

"was controlled by Charles 'King' Solomon ... He headed one of the largest liquor, vice, and narcotics smuggling syndicates in New England ... In the 1920s, Solomon ran the Boston underworld." [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 34]

But even smaller cities, like Minneapolis and adjacent St. Paul, had serious problems with Jewish crime. In November 1927 the Minneapolis Saturday Press ran an article that enflamed local public opinion, quoting the remarks of a non-Jewish gangster:

"90% of the crimes committed against society in this city are committed by Jew gangsters ... It is Jew, Jew, Jew, as long as one cares to comb over the records. I am launching no attack against the Jewish people as a RACE. I am merely calling attention to a FACT." [FRIED, p. 113]

Originally from Sioux Falls, Iowa, prominent Jewish gangsters in Minneapolis included "Kid" Cann (Isador Blumenfeld), Yiddie Bloom, and the Berman brothers (Davie and Chickie). [LACEY, p. 66] Cann is believed to have been responsible for the murder of Walter Ligget, publisher of Midwest America, for a series of articles the paper printed about the Minneapolis criminal underworld. Ligget was gunned down in front of his family while Christmas shopping. "Much of [Minneapolis'] illicit business," notes Robert Rockaway,

"was managed by Isadore 'Kid Cann' ... Blumenfeld and his all-Jewish syndicate ... In 1942, the FBI identified Kid Cann as 'the overlord of the Minneapolis, Minnesota underworld.'" [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 48]

Cleveland mob leaders included Moe Dalitz, Morris Kleinman, Sam Tucker, and Lou Rothkopf. After prohibition, "the Cleveland mob joined with Lansky and his confederates ... and formed the core of the most sophisticated national crime syndicate in America." [BLOCK, A., p. 165] Shondor Birns (Szandor Birnstein) was another prominent Cleveland mobster, lasting in the criminal underworld for decades til 1975, when he was assassinated by a car bomb. In early years, he was part of the Maxie Diamond (also Jewish) gang. Among Birns' crime partners was Mervin Gold who "was accused of defrauding banks and the Small Business Administration by using stolen Canadian bonds as collateral for loans. He fled to Israel," but eventually returned. Birns, noted by the Cleveland Plain Dealer for his reputation as a "charming killer," was suspected of Gold's eventual murder. [MCGUANGLE, F., 7-11-99, p. 5H]

Reading, Pennsylvania? As non-Jewish mobster Patsy Lepera recounted in his autobiography:

"Reading at that time, in the thirties and forties, was run by the Minkers -- Abe and his brother Izzy. They had a nephew named Alex Fudeman who fronted for them ... Even though my father was connected right to Sicily, he had to do what the Jews wanted done in Reading, because that was their town. They eliminated the Italians. At one time it was a two-mob town ... One thing I learn as I go through life is if you come up against a Jew or an Italian, you check him out. You don't do nothing against him -- you check him out careful. Jews don't belong to the [Italian] mob, but they're connected strong. An awful lot of Jews are connected strong." [LEPERA, P., 1974, p. 7-8]

Missouri? Charlie Birger (born Sachna Itzik Berger), prominent bootlegger, was hung in 1928 for the murder of the mayor of West City, Missouri. He is believed to have been "responsible directly or indirectly for the murders of at least a dozen people, many of whom had been his loyal followers." One of the killed who was not a follower was a local Ku Klux Klan leader. [DE NEAL, G., 1998, p. xviii]

To what lengths Jewish fraud and crime could go might be measured in the chutzpah of Bernie Barton (originally Blaustein) who even set up a fake church with a junkie as preacher as a "front for fencing stolen goods." [DEUTSCH, G., p. 7]

A number of modern respectable Jewish fortunes were founded on links to the underworld in the Prohibition era. Most noteworthy, the Seagram's alcohol fortune (the Canadian Bronfman family) grew to power by getting their alcohol into criminal hands who smuggled it into the United States. Bronfman, who bristled when anyone called him a bootlegger, had a distribution deal for his booze with Jewish mobster Meyer Lansky. [BIRMINGHAM, p. 159] Detroit's largely Jewish Purple Gang was also extremely active in running illegal booze from Windsor across the river border. The Purple Gang's activities also included "gambling, prostitution, extortion, loan sharking, and rackets of every kind." [FRIED, p. 102] So much smuggling was going on between Canada and the United States across Lake Erie that it was known as "the Jewish Lake." [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 37] During prohibition too, "[Federal] officials labeled sacramental wine [for religious purposes] one of the chief sources of illegal liquor in the nation," notes Jenna Weissman Joselit, "Furthermore, calling the record level of usage a 'national scandal,' they saw the problem as largely a Jewish one." [JOSELIT]

Here's what Israeli scholar Robert Rockaway says about Detroit's Purple Gang, and Jewish gangs generally:

"During Prohibition (1920-1933), Jewish gangsters became major operatives in the American underworld and played prominent roles in the creation of organized crime in the United States. At the time, Jewish gangs dominated illicit

activiites in a number of America's largest cities, including Cleveland, Detroit, Minneapolis, Newark, New York, and Philadelphia. The gang dealt in bootlegging, gambling, extortion, drugs, and murder, and developed a reputation for being more ruthless than Al Capone's mob in Chicago. The Purple's decade-long reign of terror ended when most of the gang's members either went to prison or were murdered by rivals ... During the Prohibition era (1919-1933) 50 percent of the country's leading bootleggers were Jews, and Jewish criminals financed and directed much of the nation's narcotics traffic ... While Jews predominated in their quarter [in Purple Gang-era Detroit], other immigrants and ethnic groups lived there as well. One former resident of the old neighborhood joked that it was of the old neighborhood joked that i was easy to distinguish the Jewish dwelling from those occupied by non-Jews. 'The non-Jews grew flowers in front of their houses,' he said. 'The Jews grew dirt.'" [ROCKAWAY, R., 2001, p. 113-]

Elsewhere, "bootlegging in Prohibition-era Philadelphia was directed by Max 'Boo Boo' Huff ... Huff's successor as Philadelphia's dominant Jewish mobster was Harry Stromberg, alias Nig Rosen ... He also led what was called the '69th Street Gang' that dealt in prostitution, extortion and labor racketeering. His influence extended as far as Washington, Baltimore, and Atlantic City ... When Stromberg left Philadelphia, he was superceded by his driver and bodyguard, Willie Weisberg, a long-time member of the city's Jewish underworld." [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 32, 34]

Another modern Jewish fortune similarly constructed is that of the Annenbergs, which was founded upon Moses Annenberg's horse racing news monopoly that he arranged with the criminal underworld. "That Annenberg and the Prohibition and gambling mobs had interests in common is indisputable," says Albert Fried, "An information monopoly, nominally independent, gave the mobs the wherewithal to police the complex, sprawling kingdom of the Book [i.e., gambling and bookies]; it was an instrument of their sovereignty. In return Annenberg was allowed to reap inordinate profits and become one of the richest men in the land, the founder of one of its singular dynasties." [FRIED, p. 118]

Another of the most prominent Jewish American family fortunes, the "fabulously rich Pritzker family from Chicago," had links, however indirectly, to organized crime even in more recent history. They were involved, as "clients of the [Bruce] Kanter firm," who ran a variety of shady Caribbean companies. Kanter, who "had direct ties to organized crime," [BLOCK, A., p. 162] served on the Hyatt hotel company's Board of Directors (Hyatt is one of many companies owned by the Pritzkers). [BLOCK, A., p. 191] Also, notes Allen Block,

"A little digging into their background produced troubling questions. It was discovered that the source of some Pritzker money comes from the racket-ridden Teamsters Pension Fund ... Investigators probing the Pritzker empire were intrigued by its connection to the Pension Fund. This was especially so when it discovered that both [mob-linked] Jimmy Hoffa and Allen Dorfman personally worked on Pritzker loans."

[BLOCK, A., p. 192]

In 1997, major publishers afforded two legendary Jewish conmen of international (dis)repute respective biographies. Adam Worth started out re-joining and re-deserting various Civil War regiments (both Union and Confederate) for enlistment bonuses and later expanded his exploits into forgery, larceny, robbery, burglary, and other criminal mainstays. In England, Sir Robert Anderson, head of Criminal Investigations at Scotland Yard, observed in 1907 that "Adam Worth was the Napoleon of crime. None other could hold a candle to him." The Pinkerton security agency noted that "in the death of Adam Worth there probably departed the most inventive and daring criminal in modern times ... Among all the men Pinkertons have known in a life time, this man was the most remarkable criminal of them all." [MCINTYRE, p. 287] Novelist Sir Arthur Conan Doyle used Worth as his model for Professor Moriarty, Sherlock Holmes' arch-nemesis. An important associate in Worth's earlier years was "Mother" Mandelbaum, described in her era as "the great crime promoter of modern times," the "most successful fence in the history of New York" and the woman who "first put crime in America on a syndicated basis." Starting in 1862, over the next two decades she was reputed to have "handled between \$5,000,000 and \$10,000,000 worth of stolen property." [MCINTYRE, B., 1997, p. 29, 30]

A few years later another real-life rogue (and Jewish) notable, Morris Cohen (the subject of the second biography), rose from a life as a western Canadian circus barker and pickpocket to an adventurous life as an arms dealer, bodyguard, and general to Chinese leader Sun Yat-Sen. [LEVY, D.] Later he served under Chiang Kai-Shek. He also functioned as a liaison for Zionist influences to Chinese leadership. [UROFSKY, M., 1978, p. 99]

A similar Jewish con-man was Elias Abraham Rosenberg, a "rascal" who arrived in Hawaii in 1887. There, he

"ingratiated himself with King David Kalakaua by his chanting and so-called occult powers. He soon became the King's soothsayer and astrologer, acquiring such power over the monarch that the Hawaiian press bitterly denounced him as a 'Holy Moses.' Rosenberg taught the King some Hebrew and was persuaded to appoint him appraiser of customs. He was given quarters in the Iolani Palace, where he practiced magic, read the stars, and chanted Bible stories in Hebrew." [KOPPMAN/POSTAL, 1978, p. 229-230]

In 1998, Jewish fraudster Trebitsch Lincoln was also afforded a biography. Lincoln, noted a reviewer, was "the king of dupers" and "a thwarted megalomaniac who was also a champion con man." Born in Hungary in 1879, he immigrated to England and converted to Christianity. He became a member of Parliament, and later tried to become a British, and then a German, spy. He turned up as a supporter of the right-wing Kapp Putsch in Berlin in 1920, became an abbot of a Buddhist temple in Shanghai, fleeced his devotees, welcomed invading Japanese, became a Nazi apologist/propagandist and on and on in the life of a human chameleon. [BERRY, N., 5-8-98, p. 28]

In 1999, the (London) Daily Mail highlighted the Kray twins, Ronnie and Reggie, "of Jewish and Romany stock." Both were imprisoned in the 1960s. Only Reggie survives, "the best-known gangster in Britain ... By 1963, through their networks of thugs and thieves, Ronnie and Reggie were lording it over London's underworld and became figures in London society."

Decades after the likes of Worth and Cohen, famous Jewish underworld figures like Bugsy Siegel and Meyer Lansky made the American scene. Siegel was instrumental in creating the legalized crime-laden playground of Las Vegas, starting things off at the **Flamingo** Hotel. Joseph Sacher headed the nearby **Sands** Hotel; Sacher "was second only to Lansky in the [crime] Syndicate. Years ... [later] he fled the U.S. and went into exile in Israel." [KELLEY, K., p. 219] Allen Friedman notes another early Jewish criminal influence in Sin City: "The real potential of Las Vegas was not understood until Moe Sedway arrival in 1941." [FRIEDMAN, A., p. 82]

Meyer Lansky eventually "retired" from a successful life of crime with some \$150-300 million after corrupt escapades that included Florida's "Gold Coast," the Bahamas, and a gambling resort in pre-Castro Cuba. "At the height of his notoriety," says Robert Lacey, "Meyer Lansky was reckoned to be, and was targeted by the U.S. Justice Department as, the biggest gangster in the United States -- a dangerous lawbreaker of extraordinary power. He was identified as the Mafia's banker, the boss of the National Crime Syndicate, the head of the Combination -- the Chairman of the Board." [LACEY, R., p. 10-11]

Las Vegas has long been a hotbed of underworld influence and a worldwide attraction for gambling and prostitution. The Italian Mafia has also, from the conception of Las Vegas as a leisure Mecca, held great sway in the city, but its most famous underworld personages have always been Jewish mobsters Bugsy Siegel and Meyer Lansky. The great scope of Jewish contribution to the creation, and dubious ethics, of Las Vegas may be measured by the words of professor Allen Balboni. Here he discusses the development of the desert city as a gambling resort area:

"Most of the [Las Vegas] hotel builders were Jewish Americans. Jay Sarno and Nate Jacobson were associated with **Caesar's Palace** [Sarno later created **Circus Circus**]; Moe Dalitz, Morris Kleinman, and Sam Tucker with the **Desert Inn** (and, along with Jake Factor, with the **Stardust** after [Italian-American Tony] Cornero's death); Sidney Wyman, Al Gottesman, and Jake Gottleib with the early years of the **Dunes**; Gus Greenbaum, Moe Sedway, and Charlie Resnick with managing the **Flamingo** after Bugsy Siegel's death; Ben Goffstein, Willie Alderman, and David Berman with the booking and running of the **Riviera**; Milton Prell with the establishment of the **Sahara** and then with the transformation of the Tally-Ho into the **Aladdin**; Hyman Abrams, Carl Cohen, and Jack Entratter with the ownership and operation of the **Sands**; and Ben Jaffe, Phil Kastel, and Jell Houssels (of Anglo-Saxon background) with the construction and operation of the **Tropicana** ... A few Italian-Americans hold minor ownership shares in casinos."

[BALBONI, p. 27]

Jewish singer Eddie Fisher recalls a Las Vegas offer he had at the peak of his career that he now regrets turning down:

"When I was working at the Desert Inn I met with a man named Billy Weinberger, who told me, 'We're building a new hotel and we want to give you fifty percent of it.' In return I would perform there permanently and would use my influence to attract other major stars. That sounded interesting. 'What's it going to be called?' I asked. 'Caesar's Palace.'"

[FISHER, E., 1999, p. 292]

Bernie Rothkopf also owned the **MGM Hotel**. Allen Glick was, between 1974-79, "the mob's front man at the **Stardust, Fremont, Hacienda, and Marina** hotels." [MORRISON, J.A., p. 1A] "In July, 1979 Allen Glick was stripped of his Nevada gambling license and fined over \$500,000 for a variety of improprieties." Glick sold his interests in casinos to Allan Sachs, who was, with a partner, "figureheads for the Chicago mob responsible for providing skim monies" from Las Vegas gambling operations. [MOLDEA, 1989, p. 336] Jerome Mack, past president of the **Dunes** and **Riviera**, was a former national chairman of the Israel Bonds Campaign. Jewish entrepreneur Hank Greenspon owned the Las Vegas Sun newspaper and a local TV station. [See his efforts for Israel in the mass media section]

In more recently years, Arthur Goldberg is the CEO of **Park Place Entertainment**, a conglomeration of 29 hotel-casinos [JENKINS, P., 5-30-99] worldwide (**Caesar's Palace, Bally's**, etc.) that is twice the size of its nearest competitor. Its **Stardust** division is the world's largest hotel company. Elsewhere, Sheldon Adelson, chairman of the **Sands**, is also the owner of **Venetian**, a new Las Vegas complex built in 1999 at a cost of \$1.6 billion. Adelson is "one of richest men in America," in 1998 worth about \$600 million. [STOLL, I., 1-7-00, p. 1] Adelson, noted the Las Vegas Review-Journal, "is one of the country's largest donors to Jewish groups and he has influence in the national Jewish community." [RALSTON] Adelson, notes the (Jewish) Forward, "has paid for 75 congressmen to visit Israel with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee [the pro-Israel lobbying organization]." [STOLL, I., p. 1] As Joe Gelman noted in 1999, "A number of these sin-palace operators are Jewish and strong supporters of Israel." [GELMAN, p. 15B]

The chairman of the **Mirage**, Steve Wynn, is also Jewish. (The funds for Wynn's first casino, the **Golden Nugget**, was in large part raised by convicted Jewish financier Michael Milken). [JOHNSTON, D., p. 74] The Las Vegas mayor, Oscar Goodman, elected in 1999, is the former president of Temple Beth Shalom. He also has a reputation as a "mob lawyer," defending, among others, Jewish mobster Meyer Lansky and Frank Rosenthal. Rosenthal, notes the Las Vegas Review-Journal, "is credited by some with founding the modern day Las Vegas sports book but was repeatedly denied a gambling license because of association with organized crime members." [ZAPLER, p. 1A]

All of this, in more recent years, has its mirror image in Atlantic City and, increasingly, other American gambling Meccas. Kenny Shapiro, for instance, was "the Atlantic investment banker for [Italian American

mafioso] Nicky Scarfo, the vicious killer who ruled the Philadelphia Mafia, the most murderous mob family in America." [JOHNSTON, D., 1992, p. 82]

Another influential Jewish gambling mogul today is Sol Kerzner, founder and principal owner of **Sun City** (also known as "Sin City"), a resort playground created in 1979 in a poverty-stricken area of apartheid South Africa. Kerzner's modern empire has expanded with extravagant casinos in Atlantic City, New Jersey, the Bahamas, Mauritius, France, and a Native American site in Connecticut. An alleged bribery scheme involving the Jewish mayor of Capetown, David Bloomberg, in 1986 held up -- for a while -- his United States investments.

"Sun City," notes reporter Jay Clarke, "started out as a 'Sin City,' a place where South Africans could let their hair down because it was located then in the so-called 'independent homeland' of Bophuthatswana. Gambling, show-girl revenues, and prostitution were the lures." [CLARKE, p. TR1] "If ever there was an appropriate setting for corruption it is Sun City," noted the (London) Guardian, "situated as it is in one of nine homelands which represent the cornerstones of that most corrupt of social systems, apartheid." [BERESFORD, p. 18] One of the Israelis who made millions off the immoral socio-political system surrounding **Sun City** is Shabtai Kalmanovitch; he worked as an "economic advisor" to Bophuthatswana's dictator. [BERESFORD, p. 18])

In recent years Sun City has attempted to diversify by creating a family-oriented "Lost City" adventure park adjoining the casino. "The patent reason why the Lost City has been designed as a family playground and entertainment centre," says the (London) Guardian,

"is that it entices the public into gaming. The corridors leading to the main casino even feature children's versions of slot machines -- game machines -- which could with some justification be described as nursery slopes inculcating the joys (or otherwise) of adult addiction to the one-armed bandits packing the main 'treasure hall.'" [BERESFORD, p. 18]

Many Jewish (and other) mob figures were also involved in the gambling industry in Cuba until the communist revolution destroyed their operations. "After the loss of Cuba and the clampdown on the Mafia by the Kennedy Justice Department," notes Dan Moldea, "Meyer Lansky and the organized crime syndicate had targeted the Bahamas as its new off-shore gambling and narcotics empire." [MOLDEA, 1989, p. 128]

In the casino/resort/hotel world of the Bahamas, and its criminal underworld, Jews have also been prominent. Among those who find a place in Alan Block's book about organized crime on these islands are

- Louis Arthur Chesler who "served as [mobster] Lansky's point man ... Among Chesler's criminal specialties was the handling of stolen securities." [p. 34-35]

- Morris Mac Schwabel, a Manhattan attorney, formerly convicted of securities fraud. [p. 36]
- Joseph Jacob Frankel, who in the early 1960s "teamed up with Charles 'Ruby' Stein and [Italian mafioso] Nicholas 'Jiggs' Farlano who were major organized crime figures." [p. 89]
- Arthur Millgram, president of **Automated Ticket Systems** (it had contracts with the New York lottery system), who was murdered in 1977. [p. 91]
- Joel Mallin, a lawyer who had "ties to the mob." [p. 91]
- Irving Kahn, partner with "mob attorney Morris Shenker." [p. 95]
- C. Gerald Goldsmith, who "was the Board Chairman of the [Nassau] Port Authority, DEVCO, and several related firms. This put him in the middle of one of the largest political payoff scams in the Bahamas. ... One of his duties was the illegal siphoning of company funds into the hidden bank accounts for political payoffs." [p. 95, 98]
- Ben Novack, owner of Miami's Fountainbleau hotel, who was an "associate of prominent gangsters Lansky, Coppola, and others including Max Eder, a loanshark and suspected labor racketeer with a history of gambling, robbery, narcotics, and homicide arrests." [p. 115]
- "Cleveland racketeers Morris Kleinman and Moe Dalitz." [p. 116]
- Burt Kanter, a lawyer who had "direct ties to organized crime. [p. 162] He was a senior member of the law firm Kanter, (Milton) Levenfeld, (Charles) Lippitz and (Roger) Baskes.
- Allen Dorfman, who was "murdered in 1985 to prevent him from talking about mob investments ... [He] was in the same league as Glick, Shenker, and Malnik." [p. 164]

Even among many of the most vicious Jewish thugs, worldwide collectivist Jewish loyalty usually finds expression. "During Israel's war of independence," says Gerald Krefetz, "[Meyer Lansky] killed an arms exporter who was selling to Arab countries. Lansky has contributed substantial funds from his gambling fortunes to Jewish causes, particularly to the United Jewish Appeal." [KREFETZ, p. 116] "A Jew should lead a normal life and a proud life," Lansky once remarked, "... I've been ready at any time in my life to defend myself against insults to Jews or to me as a Jew." [SARNA, Jewish, p. 55] In Russia, in warring leading to the Communist revolution, "real life gangster [Jewish] Misha Yaponchik ... helped to defend Odessa's Jews from the Whites [loyal to the Tsar] but was afterwards killed by the [Communist] Reds." [SICHER, p. 172] In England, Jewish criminal Jacob Comacho (aka Jack Spot) started "to establish the reputation for violence that would cause his rise. He called himself the "King of Aldgate." "When Oswald Mosley's Fascists started to infest the East End [of London] chanting, 'We gotta get rid of the Yids,' Spot became a local hero, taking a lead-weighted chair leg to inflict a savage beating on one of Mosely's roughnecks at the battle of Cable Street. Spot's exultant recollection of the incident from his placid law-abiding retirement in the '80s was still capable of startling a young journalist by the revelation of relished brutality ... He liked to think of himself as the strong man who could be sent for by any Jewish businessman in trouble anywhere, from Glasgow to London. He would then bash the businessmen's enemies, and in return help himself to clothing, food and drink, and spare cash as he needed it. Rabbis recommended him to their congregations, as Spot tells it." [FIDO, M., 2000, p. 32-33]

"During Prohibition," notes Israeli scholar Robert Rockaway, "fifty per cent of the leading bootleggers were Jewish, and Jewish criminals financed and directed much of the nation's narcotics traffic ... At the

same time, a number of these mobsters, quietly and without publicity, defended and assisted the Jewish community. Despite their aversion to 'these black sheep of Israel,' many ordinary Jews appreciated the gangster's protection, whereas communal leaders accepted and sometimes solicited their aid."

[ROCKAWAY, p. 215] Jewish mobster Mickey Cohen, for instance, was particularly active in raising money for the Jewish terrorist group IRGUN in its attacks against the British (and Arabs) in Palestine. [BIRMINGHAM, p. 281] "Just how aware, in 1947," says Stephen Birmingham, "American Jews were aware of the role of organized crime in the fight for an independent Israel is unclear. Probably most were not aware. Those who were, numbed by reports of the Holocaust that were at last appearing in the American media, preferred to look the other way or to take the attitude that the end justifies the means." [BIRMINGHAM, p. 284]

The Jewish criminal underworld was also helpful to Israel in getting weapons to Israel in its early years. Yehuda Arazi, an arms purchaser for the Haganah organization, even made contacts with the Jewish-based Murder, Inc. gang, looking for help. "In my business," said Arazis, "We can't be too fussy who we do business with. Sometimes they're not nice people." [ROCKAWAY, p. 230] Other underworld contacts arranged for Israeli agents to conceal arms smuggling out of New York City. Jewish criminals even had links to the President of Panama who allowed illegal Israeli arms shipments to sail under the Panama flag. [ROCKAWAY, p. 231] In 1947 gangster Mickey Cohen helped fund-raising efforts for the terrorist Irgun gang fighting the British in Palestine. Jewish criminals pooled about \$120,000 for the Irgun cause." [ROCKAWAY, p. 232-233] Jewish gangsters like Allie Tennebaum, says Rich Cohen, "did live to see the emergence of a strong Israel, and they must have seen it as something to rejoice over, proof that not everything the gangsters believed in was wrong." [KAUFMAN, G., p. 2]

Susan Berman, daughter of gangster David Berman, wrote that her father was, as Jonathan Sarna sardonically notes, "a Jewish role model." He was "extremely proud of being Jewish," notes Ms. Berman, " ... He felt that for a Jewish child to be properly brought up, there must be a synagogue, a rabbi, and a cantor in evidence." [SARNA, JEWISH, p. 55] Another Jewish author, Rich Cohen, romanticizes gangster murder as some kind of affirmative act of redemption, delighting in Jewish violence so strongly that he can write:

"When [Abe] Reles took a mark [murdered someone], he was not just ending a life: he was expressing the essential freedom of the Jew in America." [KAUFMAN, p. 2]

"America," wrote another Jewish author, Albert Fried, about Jewish gangsters, "is embracing Bugsy Siegel's vision; his martyrdom [he was murdered by other mobsters] was not in vain." [SARNA, JEWISH, p. 55] "Bombast of this sort," complains Jonathan Sarna in a review of Fried's volume, "is obviously meant, in part, to pander to a potential Jewish audience, trying to fashion for it folk heroes of the same 'gentleman-bandit' type as non-Jews enjoy. Jewish criminals are thus portrayed as being proud of their heritage, big givers to charity, and strong supporters of the state of Israel." [SARNA, JEWISH, p. 55]

Is this an artificial portrayal that Jewish gangsters were integral to, and respected by, many in Jewish neighborhoods, and loyal to the burgeoning state of Israel? After the assassination of gangster Big Jack Zelig in 1912, during his New York City funeral procession "the streets of all around Broome Street were jammed," said Jewish detective Abe Schoenfeld, "A choir consisting of twelve singers conducted by Cantor Goldberg of Newark, New Jersey, sang their Jewish hymns as the procession proceeded down Delaney Street to the bridge. There was an unbroken line of people covering the sidewalk watching the funeral. Only the funeral of Rabbi Joseph (a revered spiritual leader) surpassed this --the funeral of Jack Zelig." [ROCKAWAY, p. 217]

In Chicago, the death of criminal Samuel "Nails" Morton attracted "five thousand Jewish mourners, including rabbis [who] accompanied Morton's hearse to the cemetery. Local reporters wanted to know why so many Jews would attend the funeral of a notorious gangster." [ROCKAWAY, p. 218] The reason, argues Robert Rockaway, is an old one: Jewish unity against non-Jewish enemies.

Between both the Jewish criminal underworld and respectable Jewry, there were especially strong feelings of solidarity against anti-Jewish right-wing political movements. In the 1930s, for example, prominent gangster Meyer Lansky was solicited by a New York City judge and former Congressman, Nathan Perlman, and New York's most famous rabbi, Stephen Wise, to arrange violent attacks against pro-German groups in America. [ROCKAWAY, p. 220, COHEN, R., p. 190]] As late as 1992 the Synagogue of the Suburban Torah in Livingston, New Jersey, sponsored a tribute occasion in honor of a Jewish gangster, Max "Puddy" Hinkes, who had decades earlier organized violent Jewish mobster attacks upon pro-Nazi sympathizers in the area. [ROCKAWAY, p. 223] In Minneapolis, "gambling czar" David Berman led Jewish underworld assaults upon pro-Nazi conferences in the 1930s [ROCKAWAY, p. 224]; likewise, Mickey Cohen instigated similar violence in Los Angeles. [ROCKAWAY, p. 227] For some Jews, Cohen's claim that he single-handedly beat up two Nazi-types locked in a jail cell with him is welcome legend. [COHEN, R., 1999, p. 191] Even Jack Ruby, assassin of JFK assassin Lee Harvey Oswald,

"with several friends, frequently attempted to disrupt rallies of the German-American Bund. One acquaintance reported that Ruby was responsible for 'cracking a few heads' of Bund members. Apparently he joined in this activity for ethnic rather than political reasons. The young men in the group were not organized adherents of any particular political creed, but were pool hall and tavern companions from Ruby's Jewish neighborhood who gathered on the spur of the moment to present opposition when they learned that pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic Bund movement was planning a meeting." [WARREN COMMISSION, 1964, p. 696]

"From Arthur Rothstein and Meyer Lansky to their modern day successors in the Americas, Israel or the Soviet Union," says Joel Kotkin, "Jewish criminals have succeeded in everything from murder for hire to smuggling. Yet, even in crime, both emphasis and cultural preference lay with the successful use of *sechel* (smarts) rather than brute force." [KOTKIN]

It is curious that Kotkin concedes a Jewish criminal tradition but accepts another mythology about modern Jewry - that Jews were/are smart, but never violent. One of the many Jewish mobsters recruited to help Israel was Bugsy Siegel. "Siegel," says Robert Rockaway, "remained enthusiastic about violence. Even after he became a major crime boss, he wanted to do the killing himself rather than simply arrange matters. This may explain his willingness to help Israel once he learned that Jews were willing to kill to achieve their state." [ROCKAWAY, p. 231] Other exceptionally prominent Jewish murderers in America's criminal underworld included Louis "Lepke" Buchalter, head of Murder, Inc., and "one of the most vicious gangsters in the annals of American crime ... Between sixty and eighty men died on Lepke's orders. They were burned in gasoline, buried in quicklime, shot, stabbed with ice picks, or garroted." [ROCKAWAY, 1993, p. 17] Lewis "Pretty" Amberg "was one of New York's best known killers, having 'rubbed out' from eighteen to a hundred men, no one knew for sure." [ROCKAWAY, 1993, p. 22] Charley Workman "was said to have killed twenty men ... he was so expert at assassination." [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 193] Harry "Pittsburg Phil" Strauss was "perhaps the most famous professional killer in American gangster history ... [He] killed over 100 (some say over 400) men from the late 1920s to 1940s, making him the most prolific killer in New York." [ROCKAWAY, R., 1993, p. 149]

"Detroit police," adds Robert Rockaway, "credit the [the all-Jewish Detroit] Purple Gang with over 500 killings, more than the Capone mob. This caused Herbert Ausbury, a historian of American crime, to call the gang 'the most efficiently organized gang of killers in the United States.'" [ROCKAWAY, R., 2001, p. 113-]

Rich Cohen, who wrote a book about Jewish crime, noted his own family's reaction to what he discovered in his research:

"They really had no idea just how bad [Jewish criminals] were. I didn't really know how violent they were, or how many people they killed or how many times they were arrested. You come to see them as people. Even within that world, some of them were worse than others. With some, it was just the situation. And some of them were just killers." [KERNICKY, p. 1E]

Cohen also noted that some of New York's Jewish gangsters gathered at his grandmother's restaurant:

"When I told [my grandmother] of my interest in writing about the restaurant and also about the gangsters and their table in back, her face clouded over, 'They'll kill you,' she said, 'These men, they're not like you. They'll kill a boy like you.'

When I pointed out that these men --Reles, Strauss, Goldstein, Maione, Abbandando -- were long dead, she shook her head and said, 'They'll kill you.'" [COHEN, R., 1999, p. 35]

Yet, adds Cohen, "When [Abe] Reles and the boys were hanging out at my grandparents' diner and the cops came by, my great-grandmother would hide their guns in the onions. She hated gangsters, but she hated people she thought hated Jews more." The endemic anti-Semites Cohen refers to here are generic policemen. [COHEN, R., p. 156]

Jewish author Gloria Deutsch also notes today's Jewish blinders to their inglorious turn-of-the-century American past:

"We were always conditioned to believe Jews didn't do these things, but here is Sandy Sadowsky [author of My Life in the Jewish Mafia] with her hair-raising stories of gangland murders, prostitution, rackets, strong-arm men -- the shtarkers who exacted revenge and protected their bosses -- and one wonders if believing in the myth of Jewish crimelessness (other than a spot of fraud here and there) wasn't anything more than a huge collective ostrich act." [DEUTSCH, p. 7]

Jewish violent criminality *today* also goes against the popular myths of an absolute non-violence in the Jewish community. "The concept of Jewish convicts serving serious jail time," noted the Los Angeles Times in 1995, "runs counter to a popular stereotype that Jewish felons tend to be nonviolent types who serve their sentences in minimum security cells ... Jews outside of prison often find this [fact of Jewish murderers] hard to deal with." "The people who know about it are kind of amazed," Howard Cohn, a part-time rabbi at the Pennsylvania State Corrections Institute told the Times. "They can't believe there are really Jews in a prison like this." [BEALE, p. A5]

In the most sensational genre, New York serial killer David Berkowitz ("Son of Sam") was Jewish (he was adopted by a Jewish family as an infant), as was Joel Rifkind [EFTIMIADES, p. 75] of Long Island, who into the early 1990s strangled to death at least 17 women, mostly New York prostitutes. "He went, picked up a prostitute, had sex with her, killed her, and dumped her." [EFTIMIADES, p. 90-91] In the 1920s, one of America's most sensational crimes, splashed all over the country's newspapers, was that of the Leopold and Loeb boys: "A pair of wealthy young members of Chicago's Jewish bourgeoisie in the early 20s, they kidnapped a young man, Bobby Franks, and murdered him as a kind of Nietzschean experiment; after their arrest, it was revealed that they had a sexual relationship too." [BARBOUR, D., 1998] At the time, it was popularized as "the crime of the century." [ABRAHAMSEN, D., 1983, p. 41] Amy Fisher, who received a great deal of press in New York tabloids as the "Long Island Lolita," was jailed in 1992 for shooting the wife of her lover. [PORTER, B., 5-11-99, p. A6]

Even in an Orthodox religious community, in 1990, the Jewish Week ran an article about today's New York Satmar Chasidic community, "notorious for its violent actions against other Jewish groups [which] has imploded into a war against itself. Pitting supporters of the deceased Satmar Rabbi against supporters of his successor ... In the Brooklyn area of Williamsburg, home to more than 30,000 Satmars, four cars belonging to one faction were set on fire last week, while as many as 500 Satmars watched and

cheered. Three Satmars, in one of the burning cars, needed to be rescued by police, who were also trying to control the Satmar onlookers." [MARK, J, [Satmar](#)]

Satmar violence against others has increasingly spread against non-Jewish neighbors. "Recent years," wrote Jonathan Mark in 1990, "have seen an explosion of tension between all chasidim and their Black and Hispanic neighbors. Most recently, Hispanic groups have complained that the Satmars act like they have the right of eminent domain over Brooklyn's Williamsburg neighborhood, where many Satmars reside. They have charged that chasidic men have sexually harassed non-Jewish women, that chasidic security patrols are actually racially motivated vigilantes." [MARK, SATMAR, p. 4]

In the more overtly political context (and not Orthodox), in an entire book about assassinations (limited only to those deemed "political") carried out by Jews in Palestine/Israel from 1882 to 1988, Israeli scholar Nachum Ben David itemizes 91 cases of "assassination events" committed by Jews. (An assassination is defined by this author in his title as "a rhetorical device for justice"). Most murder victims were other Jews who were considered "traitors/collaborators/squealers/informers." [BEN DAVID, p. 418] "We are *not* dealing with a lone fanatic killer [in these cases]," stresses Ben David, "but with a premeditated planned act, committed by a group or by a representative of a group." [BEN YEHUDA, p. xxi]

Aside from a possible volume about Jewish gangster murders, no doubt a similar volume could be created about Jewish assassinations under the auspices of Russian communism. Just before, and after, the creation of the Soviet state, assassinations by Jews, in one form or another, sometimes as secret police agents, are many. Mark Zborowsky, for instance, (a later immigrant to America where he became a university professor), in league with fellow Jews Naum Eitingon and Grigory Rabinovich, was instrumental in the operation to murder Trotsky's son, Lev Sedov. [VAKSBERG, p. 96] Arkady Vaksberg notes another case of Jews murdering Jews:

"The murder of two Jews whom Stalin hated [Efraim Sklyansky and Isiah Khurgin] had been organized by two other Jews, Kanner and Yagoda. Let us add that Kanner's assistant, Bombin, and Mekhil's assistants, Makhovev and Yuzhak, were all Jewish."
[VAKSBERG, p. 28]

In 1904, the Russian Minister of Interior, Vlacheslav Plehve, also fell to a Jewish assassin. [LINDEMANN, A., 1997, p. 296] In 1906, in the Russian town of Grodno, "Jewish partisans assassinated the Russian district commander of police." In 1908, the chief of police from another town, Bialystok, came to Grodno. This time, "the Jew who tried to shoot him died in prison." [LACEY, p. 18] In September of 1911 another Jewish assassin, Dmitry Bogrov, shot and killed Pyotr Stolypin, a prominent Russian official, at the Kiev Opera Theatre. [SINGER, N, p. 2] Another Jewish would-be killer, Fanya Kaplan, also shot V. I. Lenin through the neck in a failed assassination attempt in early communist Russia, saying that he had "betrayed the Revolution." [LEVYTSKY, p. 29] On the same day, "the *Cheka* leader Uritsky was shot to

death in August 1918 by a distinguished Jewish poet and army officer named Kannegiesser who 'was revolted by the fact that so many of the Bolsheviks were Jewish.'" [WEYL, N., 1968, p. 198]

In 1926, another Jewish assassin, Shalom Schwartzbard, murdered Ukrainian nationalist Symon Petlura, in Paris. (Petlura was in exile from his homeland; he formerly led the Ukrainian army against Bolshevik attack). As noted earlier, a Jewish woman was also a member of the team that assassinated Tsar Alexander II. And, as noted before also, those who directed (and participated in) the murder of the royal family during the Russian Revolution were also largely Jewish. Even in Argentina, "on May Day 1909, during a workers' demonstration in Buenos Aires, a Jewish anarchist murdered a local police chief," thereby igniting anti-Jewish rioting. [SACHAR, H., 1985, p. 281]

Elsewhere, during the rise of Nazi fascism in Germany, notes Franklin Ford, "paradoxically, during their movement's first years in power, Nazis were the victims, not the perpetrators of two sensational murders of German's residing in foreign parts." [FORD] In 1936 a Nazi official in Switzerland, Wilhelm Gustloff, was assassinated by a Jewish student, David Frankfurter. In 1938 Ernst von Rath, a German embassy official in Paris was killed by Herschel Grynszpan. The Nazis used this act as an excuse to respond with intensified savagery to the German Jewish population. Years earlier, in 1918, long before the Nazis came to power, a Russian Jew, Yakov Blumkin, assassinated the German ambassador to Moscow, Count Mirbach. [SUDOPLATOV, p. 189] Kurt Eisner, the Jewish prime minister of Bavaria, was also assassinated in 1918 by Count Arco Valley, "a young man who felt stigmatized by the fact that his mother was Jewish." [GRUNFELD, F., 1996, p. 123]

As Leon Schapiro notes about late 19th century Russia and the formation of a communist base there:

"When Jews thronged into the party after 1881 the number of Jewish terrorists was very high. There were important Jewish terrorists, like Gershuni, for example, in the socialist revolutionary party which evolved during the present century as the heir of the 'People's Will' ... In more recent times one could cite the extensive Jewish participation in the savageries of the Red Terror of the *Cheka* [the secret police] -- or even events in Palestine." [SCHAPIRO, L., 1961, p. 152]

In America, in 1892 famous Jewish anarchist Emma Goldman and two comrades decided to assassinate millionaire Henry Clay Frick. "In desperation [Goldman] tried whoreing [sic] (unsuccessfully) on 14th Street [in New York] to raise the money for a gun, and [Alexander] Berkman went to Pittsburgh to pull the trigger." [SHULMAN, A., 1970, p. 10] The assassination attempt by Berkman was carried out, but Frick survived his wound.

Also in America, in 1974 Samuel Byck, another Jewish would-be assassin, embarked on a sensationally bizarre suicidal scheme to kill President Richard Nixon. He murdered a security guard at the Baltimore/Washington airport, stormed into a jet and demanded to the pilots that it take off and follow

his orders. His plan was to crash the plane into the White House. Technically unable to accommodate him, Byck murdered the two pilots before he was, in turn, shot and killed by authorities. [CLARKE, J., p. 128-142]

More famous, of course, in Texas, was Jack Ruby (born Jacob Rubinstein), the (Jewish) murderer of Lee Harvey Oswald, the man who is believed to have killed John F. Kennedy. Ruby had interests in six Dallas-area strip-tease clubs. As Gerald Posner notes:

"Ruby often resorted to violence with his employees, and lost the tip of his left index fingers when one bit it off during a scuffle. He beat one of his musicians with brass knuckles, cracked another's head with a blackjack, knocked another's teeth out, and put the club's handyman in the hospital with a severe beating. To avoid paying the club's cigarette girl \$50 in back wages, he threatened to throw her down the stairs until she relented her claim ... He was not above attacking people from behind, kicking men in the groin or face once he had them to the floor, or even striking women ... He was often malicious, forcing beaten victims to crawl out of the club on hands and knees." [POSNER, p. 357]

Ruby's killing of Oswald erased his looming testimony, as well as any other person's or organization's involvement in the most famous political assassination in American history. "In Dallas, Texas," noted Jewish scholar Barnet Litvinoff, "a man born with the name Rubinstein who subsequently eliminated its Jewish-sounding suffix took it upon himself to avenge the martyrdom of a President. He gave his Jewishness as one of the reasons for doing so." [LITVINOFF, B., p. 18] At Ruby's trial, Patrick Dean (the police sergeant in charge of security where Oswald was killed) testified that shortly after the shooting he talked to Ruby about what he had just done. One of the reasons Ruby killed Oswald, the killer told him, was "because he wanted the world to know that Jews do have guts." [BELLI, p. 167] When Kennedy was shot, Ruby was in the advertising offices of the Dallas Morning News, troubled by a full page advertisement in that morning's newspaper. As Gerald Posner notes,

"The entire page was a black-bordered advertisement, headed in large block letters, 'Welcome Mister Kennedy,' and the text accused the President of being a Communist tool. It was signed by 'The American Fact-Finding Committee, Bernard Weissman, Chairman. Ruby was very disturbed that the News should have run such a demeaning advertisement and was dismayed that it was signed by someone with a Jewish name." [POSNER, 1993, p. 371]

Ruby mingled with a variety of underworld figures, and was involved in gun smuggling to Cuba, facts that has fueled in later years a variety of conspiracy theories about who really killed Kennedy. And for what reason. Jim Marris notes that

"The smuggling of arms to Cuba was overseen by Norman 'Roughhouse' Rothman, a burly associate of Miami's mob boss Santos Trafficante who managed Trafficante's Sans Souci in Havana. At the same time Rothman reportedly was splitting Havana slot machines with [Cuban dictator] Batista's brother-in-law." [MARRIS, p. 391]

In his 1989 investigation of the Kennedy assassination, Marris also devotes an entire chapter entitled, "Did Ruby and Oswald Know Each Other?," itemizing the testimony of those who claimed that the two were not strangers to each other. [MARRIS, p. 402-414]

"There were many signs that Ruby wasn't just a harmless scoundrel," noted Newsweek in 1993, "and the investigation into his background was remarkably -- almost willfully -- shallow. FBI agents interviewed hundreds of his acquaintances, but they barely followed up on obvious leads about his underworld friends and his trips to Cuba." [BECK, p. 94]

While Ruby was locked in prison and sentenced to death for the murder of Oswald, the London Guardian notes that Ruby

"was raving by the end -- there was no bigger conspiracy theorist than Jack Ruby. He became convinced America had begun a pogrom against the Jews because of what he, or Oswald, or both of them, had done."
[BYGRAVE]