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RELIGIOUS ZIONISTS IN JERUSALEM

Daniel J. Elazar

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Two Ignored Groups in Jerusalem

In this age of polarization, when information is conveyed on television through nine-second sound bytes and is organized to be simple and sharp rather than nuanced and accurate, it is not surprising that the picture of Jerusalem broadcast to all those who do not personally know the city is one of extreme tensions among its population, which is divided into three population groups, each of which is portrayed in its most extreme manifestation. Thus, Jerusalem is regularly described as divided into *haredim* (fervently Orthodox Jews), *hilonim* (secular Jews), and Arabs, all three presumably at each other's throats or not far from it. This picture of Jerusalem is broadcast far and wide throughout the world, so much so that visitors to the city are constantly surprised by its generally peaceful character and how much quieter it is than cities in presumably safer places on the globe.

There are many reasons for the distorted view, not the least of which is that only extreme acts are news. Hence, impressions are formed even when

unintended. But another major reason is the total ignoring of the two moderate Jewish groupings in the city: the *datim*, or Religious Zionists (also referred to as modern Orthodox or "national religious"), and the *masortiim* (traditional),* those who maintain many of the traditions of Jewish religion but because they are not Orthodox in their observance are lumped with the secular population. In fact, the Religious Zionists are also included as *hilonim* in this shorthand manner of reporting, despite the fact that their patterns of observance and their justification for those patterns are far closer to those of the fervently Orthodox.

Several recent studies by the Guttman Institute and the Avihai Foundation, the Florsheimer Institute, the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, and others reveal that the Jewish population of Jerusalem is

* Not to be confused with the Masorti Movement, the name of the Conservative Movement in Judaism.

Daniel J. Elazar, Editor and Publisher; Zvi R. Marom, Associate Editor; Mark Ami-El, Managing Editor. 13 Tel-Hait., Jerusalem, Israel; Tel. 02-5619281, Fax. 02-5619112, Internet: elazar@vms.huji.ac.il. In U.S.A.: 1616 Walnut St., Suite 507, Philadelphia, PA 19103; Tel. (215) 204-1459, Fax. (215) 204-7784. © Copyright. All rights reserved. ISSN: 0334-4096.

The Jerusalem Letter is a periodic report intended to objectively clarify and analyze issues of Jewish and Israeli public policy.

divided into four more or less equal groups — in Hebrew, *haredim*, *datiim* (meaning Religious Zionists), *masortiim* (traditional), and *hilonim* — not just into *haredim* and *hilonim*.¹ The sharpest conflicts are between the first and the last. The two groups in the middle are bridging groups with ties and interests in both directions.

Indeed, one of the major differences between the two Orthodox groups is that the fervently Orthodox emphasize sharp separation from the other populations to preserve their way of life, while the Religious Zionists see themselves as full participants in the larger Israeli society, as of course do those defined as "traditional."

A New JCPA Study

The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs recently completed a study directed toward identifying the *dati* or Religious Zionist population in the city to determine how many there are, their percentage of the city's Jewish community and overall population, where they live, their degree of separation from or linkage with other groups and for what purposes, their attitudes to common religious issues, and their voting behavior.² Since no statistics are assembled or kept about Religious Zionists as a group per se, the study had to rely upon the various indicators that do exist, primarily enrollment statistics in the state religious schools, adjusted by size of family in the various communities; the location of those schools and synagogues in Jerusalem; and voting statistics from the last general elections. In addition, we drew on the other studies that exist, most particularly on the recent survey conducted by Shlomo Hasson and Amiram Gonen of the Florsheimer Institute which surveys Jerusalem's Jewish population as divided into the four categories mentioned above.

Our study was limited to the population within the Jerusalem municipal limits. In recent years Jerusalem has undergone suburbanization outside of those limits. For Jews, this has primarily meant settling in satellite cities such as Maale Adumim to the east, Efrat to the south, Betar Elit to the southwest, and Mevasseret Zion to the west, plus many smaller "rurban" villages adjacent to them. The matter of suburbanization, however, is not so simple. Because of the small scale of Israel and limited driving distances, in many respects the Jewish settlements in the hill country of Judea and Samaria are also suburbs of Jerusalem. Certainly, many of their residents work in the city. So, too, many Jerusalemites looking for less expensive housing and

more "green" amenities have moved to the west beyond Mevasseret Zion, either to what were formerly rural villages (*moshavim*) that have become suburbanized in recent years, or to small cities such as Beit Shemesh and Modiin, the former originally established in the 1950s as a development town to house new immigrants, and the latter as an upscale satellite city, founded in the 1980s to serve both the Tel Aviv and Jerusalem areas. Most of those places have absorbed a certain share of Jerusalem's Religious Zionist population. However, because of the limited data available about those smaller places, they were excluded from the study except in certain general terms.

A Statistical Perspective and Methodological Problem

The statistics are revealing. According to the Israel Census, Jerusalem is divided into 70.5 percent Jewish and 29.5 percent non-Jewish, mostly Arab. The Jewish population is further divided into 28.5 percent *haredi* and the remainder (71.5 percent) simply defined as *hiloni* (secular). Our research attempted to determine how many of the latter are really Religious Zionists, a very different category in character and interest, and to begin to get a sense of their role in the city.

Since Religious Zionists are not statistically separated from the *hilonim* and do not live in separate neighborhoods, like the *haredim*, there are no easy indicators through which to identify them. True, some vote for the National Religious Party, but at most no more than half of them do so.³ The others scatter their votes among the many other parties that compete in Israel's elections. Perhaps their primary identifying characteristic from a statistical perspective is that they send their children to state religious schools rather than regular state schools (nearly 40 percent of Jewish children attend state religious kindergartens), but they also have larger families on the average than nonreligious Jews, so that the raw school enrollment figures have to be weighted through a proper formula to gain the information sought. Our study was based on the best estimates and analyses possible under the circumstances and should be read from that perspective.

In the absence of formal statistical breakdowns, we could not provide a scientific profile of their economic activities or other occupations. Only extensive sociological surveying and ethnological interviewing could provide that information. But we do have some sense of the economic and cultural impact of the Religious Zionists on the community through sociological and anthropological sampling.

The study attempts to calculate the number and percentage of Religious Zionists within the Jerusalem city limits in order to provide a more nuanced understanding of the city's population. This is a first step toward in some way measuring the impact of Religious Zionists on Jerusalem. The report itself, although it does little directly to deal with the latter question, is quite suggestive. The total religious vote countrywide in the 1996 elections was 20.1 percent. In Jerusalem it was 37.2 percent (up from 28.3 percent in 1992) and divided as follows: Yahadut HaTorah (Agudat Yisrael)—14.4 (13.1 in '92), Mafdal (National Religious Party)—11.6 (6.6), Shas (Sephardic Torah Guardians)—10.1 (8.6), and Telem Emunah—1.1. As the study reveals, only two neighborhoods in the city, Beit Hakerem and Givah Tzarfatit (French Hill), recorded a vote for the religious parties of less than 10 percent in the last state elections.

Absolutely, the NRP was a leading vote-getter in Kiryat Moshe and Yefei Nof, Yemin Moshe, Talbieh,⁴ and Bayit Vegan. Perhaps ironically, it was also in many of those neighborhoods that the proportion of NRP votes to the religious population was lowest. What is clear is that Religious Zionism cannot be equated with voting for the National Religious Party these days, if it ever could be.

Religious Zionists in the Wealthiest Neighborhoods

Even more revealing for our purposes is where the Religious Zionists are concentrated residentially, which is in the city's wealthiest neighborhoods. Following the groupings used by the Israeli Census, we see Talbieh, Yemin Moshe, Moshava Germanit (German Colony), Old Katamon, and Baka with 14,748 (61.7 percent of the neighborhood total); Rehavia and Kiryat Shmuel with 5,488 (53.8 percent); Beit Hakerem, Kiryat Moshe, and Yefei Nof with 6,163 (39.3 percent); and Ramot with 6,780 (17.3 percent). This indicates that not only are many Religious Zionists among the wealthier elements in the city's population, but that they represent a very large percentage of the city's wealthier elements.

Overall, 35.9 percent of the Religious Zionist population resides in economically solid neighborhoods, as compared to 11.4 percent of the city's total Jewish population. Some 15.1 percent reside in the city's poor neighborhoods, as compared to 26.4 percent of Jerusalem's total Jewish population. The city's new neighborhoods (post-1967) contain 25.5 percent of the Religious Zionist public as compared to 32.4 percent of the total Jewish population. In total, 70 percent of the Religious

Zionist population is concentrated in the city's solid, economically substantial neighborhoods. This is all the more significant considering that Jerusalem is one of the two poorest cities in Israel, along with Bnei Brak, because of the large number of *haredim* in both including a high proportion of males who are not gainfully employed (the latest estimate is 60 percent) but study in *yeshivot* on a full-time basis and whose families are supported through their wives who work and the relatively meager stipends available to them. Thus, overall, the religious community is divided into the poorest and the wealthiest sectors of Jerusalem's population, with the Religious Zionists forming the latter. Moreover, the national religious population is increasing in those neighborhoods that have good housing and are close to the city center because of the attractions of the Jewish religious sites in the Old City, which they must have within walking distance if they are to enjoy those attractions on Sabbaths and holidays. In other words, if you are a Religious Zionist and can afford it, you will probably choose to live nearer the center than not.

According to the Florsheimer survey, almost a third of all of the city's *datiim* live in the city center (30.6 percent), the largest percentage of the four groups in that area and nearly double the percentage of *hilonim* or *masortiim*. Indeed, all measures show the proverbial division between the north of the city as *haredi* and the center and south everything else, but this holds true for the division between *haredim* and Religious Zionists as well, with two-thirds of the *haredim* living in the northern neighborhoods and over two-thirds of the *datiim* living in the central and southern ones.

Residency, Education, and Household Size

It seems that between 70 and 75 percent of the Jewish population of Jerusalem, or somewhat over 50 percent of the total population, identify with Jewish religious tradition in some significant way, as their own self-definition suggests. Indeed, many, if not most, of the *masortiim* are probably of Sephardic background so that, where the *masorti* category is dominant, it is not unfair to assume, based on countrywide studies, that most are periodic synagogue attenders and maintain home Sabbath and holiday observances with regularity.

According to the Tatzpit survey, more than three-quarters (78.1 percent) of all Jewish Jerusalemites have lived in the city more than eleven years. The *datiim* are slightly below average at 76.4 percent, while *masortiim* have the highest percentage of veteran residents at 83.3 percent, probably reflecting the fact

Table I
Population Breakdown of Jerusalem

Non-Jews (Arabs)	Jews		
29.5%	70.5%		
	Secular & Traditional	Religious Zionists	Haredim
	38.7%	12.3%	20.2%
(100% of Jews)	(54%)	(17.5%)	(28.5%)
[Tatzpit survey]	[53.5%] (Traditional 29.5; Secular 25.0)	[19.6%]	[25.6%]

Note: Numbers may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

that more of them are descended from families who have lived in the Land of Israel for generations or who came to Jerusalem in the 1950s.

Curiously enough, *haredim* have a higher percentage of apartment owners — 80.3 percent — above the city average of 77.5 percent, while the *datiim* have 75.6 percent or the lowest.

With regard to the level of education, 59.9 percent of the total Jewish population have 13 or more years of study, and *datiim* have almost exactly that percentage (59.8 percent). The *haredim* have the highest — 65.6 percent — reflecting the many years their men spend in *yeshivot*, while the *hilonim* have 64.1 percent and the *masortiim* only 43 percent, a reflection of the lower socioeconomic status of so many of them.

Automobile ownership, which is high for the city's Jews as a whole, is highest for *hilonim* (85.1 percent). The *masortiim* are second with 74.5 percent, the *datiim* third with 65.4 percent, again just slightly below the city average, while the *haredim* have only 29.9 percent.

According to the Florsheimer survey, the average Jewish household in Jerusalem includes 4.3 people, 3.5 among *hilonim*, 4.0 among *masortiim*, 4.5 among *datiim*, and 6.1 among *haredim*.

Table I shows the four divisions both as percentages of Jewish population in Jerusalem and as percentages of the city's entire population, according to our best

calculations. These figures are quite comparable to those in the survey conducted by the Tatzpit Institute for Hasson and Gonen in October 1996.⁵

Attitudes Toward Religion in the Public Square

Given the location of their residences, it may fairly be said that the two middle groups — Religious Zionists as well as traditionalists — prefer to live in a city with a more secular than *haredi* atmosphere, although they have little trouble living with a *haredi* minority in close proximity and agreeing with the *haredim* in matters of maintenance of Jerusalem's public space according to the general canons of Jewish observance. This is somewhat more true for the Religious Zionists than for the traditionalists, but those who see themselves as traditional also want Jerusalem's public spaces to be "Jewish" in a religious sense.

At the same time, both middle groups are prepared for greater openness on Sabbaths and festivals in predominantly secular neighborhoods. The truth is, however, that, with a handful of exceptions, there are no truly secular neighborhoods in Jerusalem. Every neighborhood in the city has some combination of all four groups. The *haredim* are the most exclusive in their residence patterns as in other ways, but there are minorities of Religious Zionists and even traditionalists in *haredi*-dominated neighborhoods as well. In non-

haredi neighborhoods the three other groups dominate. When the traditional and Religious Zionist groups are taken together with the *haredim*, all three in some combination outnumber the secular Jews in every section of the city.

Where the two middle groups are willing to compromise with *halakhic* standards is in permitting private vehicles on streets in their neighborhoods on the Sabbath and festivals. Actually, even a quarter of the traditional group do not drive on those days and another 10 percent respect *haredi* sensibilities when they do drive. Of course, none of the Religious Zionists drive on days prohibited by Jewish law. This openness, in essence, distinguishes the three groups from the *haredim*.

Thus, 78.2 percent of the Religious Zionists believe it is possible for *haredim* and non-*haredim* to live in the same neighborhood, as compared to 73.4 percent of the *masortiim* and only 48.6 percent of the *hilonim*. It is interesting that 81.3 percent of the *haredim* also see that as a possibility, according to the Florsheimer survey.

Some 76.8 percent of the *masortiim* interviewed would prefer a non-*haredi* city, while only 44.3 percent of the *datiim* indicate that as a preference and another 25.8 percent indicate that it makes no difference. Indeed, 72.6 percent of the *masortiim* and 58.3 percent of the *datiim* claim that they would move to another neighborhood or leave the city if their neighborhood was to change its present complexion.

Where the two middle groups are unwilling to compromise is in permitting business or entertainment establishments to operate on the Sabbath and festivals in their neighborhoods. While they may be willing to accept other neighborhoods open to such activities on those days, they prefer such activities out of sight and reject them as a potentially disturbing presence where they live. On that issue they can be seen as allied with the *haredim*, thus giving the city a majority favoring the maintenance of Jewish public space in a traditional sense in most of the city.

This leads to a curious misperception on the part of the *hilonim* which is consistently reflected in reporting about the city, namely, 70.5 percent of the *hilonim* think that they live in an area dominated by *hilonim*. The *masortiim* and *datiim* are almost invisible to them. By the same token, the *hilonim* perceive a drastic decline in their numbers in their neighborhoods over the next decade and an almost statistically impossible

increase in the number of *haredim*.

Slightly less than half of the Religious Zionists are in favor of closing Bar-Ilan Street for all of the Sabbath, as compared to approximately 93 percent of the *haredim*, some 25 percent of the *masortiim*, and only 5 percent of the *hilonim*. Thirty-eight percent of the *masortiim*, on the other hand, only slightly less than the 39.5 percent of the *datiim*, are willing to close Bar-Ilan Street during the hours of religious services in the area. About 6 percent of the *haredim* are willing to accept that compromise and only 18 percent of the *hilonim*.

When it comes to public transportation on the Sabbath, while 83.3 percent of *hilonim* are in favor, only 46.2 percent of *masortiim*, 32 percent of *datiim*, and 29.1 percent of *haredim* are, or less than a majority in the last three groups. Similarly, with regard to the opening of restaurants and places of entertainment in "secular neighborhoods," whereas 91 percent of *hilonim* are in favor, only 56.5 percent of *masortiim* are, a percentage that drops to 25 percent among *datiim* and less than 6 percent among *haredim*. On the other hand, two-thirds of *masortiim* are willing to allow them to open in the city center, as distinct from less than 29 percent of *datiim* and the same less than 6 percent of *haredim*. Moreover, the other evidence available shows that there are differences of up to 10 percent in *masortiim* support for opening such facilities on the Sabbath if their neighborhood is likely to be affected, that turn majorities for opening in specific neighborhoods to minorities when they, themselves, are directly impacted. On the other hand, overwhelming majorities of the three other groups would be disturbed if a *haredi* were to be elected mayor of the city. But whereas 52 percent of *hilonim* say they would leave the city if that were to happen, only 15 percent of *masortiim* and 2 percent of *datiim* would consider such a drastic step.

Since our best estimates are that slightly more than 70 percent of the city's Jewish population are either *haredi*, Religious Zionists, or traditional, and that the secular constitute just under 30 percent of the city's Jewish population, we might conclude that it is more surprising that matters in the city are portrayed the way they are rather than that traditional Jewish practices have so much influence. It is a tribute to the power of the false perception that Jerusalem has — or ever has had — a secular majority.

Not only that, but if we were to generalize, it might be possible to suggest that the public intellectual life

of the city is dominated by secular and national religious Jews, while the economic life of the city is dominated by national religious and traditional Jews. The political life of the city increasingly is divided among all four groups with the Religious Zionists the weakest group.

Patterns of Migration

Between 1985 and 1996, Jerusalem lost 30,000 residents as a result of negative migration, 27,000 of them since 1990, mainly young, working-age families with children. This seemingly substantial out-migration has made the headlines as an out-migration of secular Jews unable to cope with or frightened of the growing *haredi* presence in the city. An analysis of the emigrants' destinations shows that more than a third of that total have moved to Jerusalem's close suburbs — Maale Adumim, Mevasseret Zion, Givat Zeev, Efrat, Betar Elit, and Beit Shemesh. Of those, Betar Elit is essentially entirely *haredi* and Efrat almost entirely Religious Zionist. The other three are distinctly mixed. Between 20 and 25 percent have moved to metropolitan Tel Aviv, either to the city of Tel Aviv itself or to Bnei Brak, another overwhelmingly religious city with a *haredi* majority. The remaining 40-50 percent have moved elsewhere, no doubt many to towns and villages in the administered territories.

Those who moved to the suburbs remain very much involved in the economic and cultural life of the city and rely upon Jerusalem for most services. Studies show that those who moved to metropolitan Tel Aviv or other locales generally are in search of more diversified employment opportunities and/or more affordable housing. Overall, for economic reasons, even intra-city mobility is movement outward, with most of the movement stemming from neighborhoods with old, crowded, or substandard housing, or inexpensive "starter" housing, to nicer, modestly priced neighborhoods that offer better housing quality, with the religious population heavily represented in those movements, measured by both the declining and growing neighborhoods.

Moreover, the studies reveal that Religious Zionists and traditional Jews are less likely to leave the city, while the secular and *haredi* Jews are far more likely to do so; the secular either for affordable housing or because of their dissatisfaction with the direction in which they perceive the city is moving, while the *haredim* leave in search of affordable housing. Since the *haredim* have a birthrate higher than that of any of

the four groups by far, their out-migration is not even noticeable. The actual figures suggest, however, that they are not about to become a majority in the city for a long time, if ever. On the other hand, since the birthrate among secular Jews is substantially lower than any of the other groups, their out-migration coupled with their low birthrate continues to reduce their share of the city's population.

Religion, Democracy, and Economic Survival

The consequences of this should be clear. Democracy alone would dictate that a Jerusalem more religiously traditional than other parts of the country is not only likely but is more than fair. Indeed, we are reaching the point where concessions to the secular Jews are exactly that — concessions — and that the conventional view that a *haredi* minority, even if a growing one, is imposing itself on the city is simply false.

Moreover, another piece of conventional wisdom, namely that the secular exodus from the city will lead to an economic catastrophe for Jerusalem, also seems to be false. There is every reason to believe that, ironically, a substantial portion of the secular population, while gainfully employed, are supported by public funds as much as the *haredim*. The former are as public employees, in government, the university or other not-for-profit institutions. True, from a social perspective they spend their time productively, but from an economic perspective there is no difference since they rely upon public contributions or assessments just as the *haredim* do to survive, in their case in the form of taxes more than in the form of donations. It is the two middle groups who are more likely to be economically productive and who provide the city with its locally generated resources, and they are least likely to leave the city.

The research into Israel's emerging political culture conducted by the Jerusalem Center over the past twenty years shows a gradual coalescing of the several political subcultures within Israel. Once scattered almost randomly within each city around the country, they have been coalescing into regional patterns, of which there are three major ones: the coastal area along the entire country from the northern to the southern borders; the mountain ridge running half the length of the country from the Lebanese border into the northern Negev; and a southern region encompassing the Negev and the interior area just to the north of it. The first is increasingly individualistic in its political culture; the second

combines the traditional political culture of the Arabs, a traditionalistic political culture for the more conservative segments of the Jewish population, and a moralistic political culture for the others. In the south, the combination is traditionalistic-individualistic.

Religiously, this translates into a coastal plain that is least religious, both publicly and privately, where religious behavior and observance have been heavily relegated to the voluntary sphere; a mountainous interior area in which both the public character of religion — Jewish and Muslim — is maintained, strongly backed by the cultural predilections and behavior of the overwhelming majority of the population; while in the south, the public dimensions of religious life are maintained mostly out of inertia rather than renewed commitment. Under these circumstances, Jerusalem, the major concentration of Jewish population in the mountains, is characteristic of its entire region.

Thus, identification of Religious Zionists and the other middle group in the city, the traditional Jews, enables us to reevaluate the conventional wisdom about the future of Jerusalem — what it is likely to be and what it should be. Fortunately, the expectations of the majority in the city are not that different from the expectations of a majority of Jews in the rest of the world, whatever their personal patterns of religiosity, who see Jerusalem not only as the capital of the State of Israel and of the Jewish people, but as the center of Judaism as well, and expect from its residents a certain level of behavior that is higher than the Jewish behavioral standard of the world's Jews taken as a whole.

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Daniel J. Elazar is President of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

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Notes

1. S. Levy, H. Levinsohn, and E. Katz, *Belief, Observances and Social Interaction Among Israeli Jews* (Jerusalem: Louis Guttman Institute of Applied Social Research, 1993); Shlomo Hasson and Amiram Gonen, *The Cultural Tension Among Jews in Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Florsheimer Institute for Policy Studies, 1997); Municipality of Jerusalem and Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, *Statistical Abstract of Jerusalem 1994/95*, Maya Hoshen and Na'ama Shahar, eds. (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 1996).

2. *Religious Zionists in Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 1998).

3. Interestingly, the National Religious Party vote in Jerusalem rose from 6.6 percent in 1992 to 11.6 percent in 1996. The 1996 elections were the first in which it was possible to cast a vote for prime minister from one party and Knesset members from another party, which may have encouraged the higher vote for NRP.

4. Not surprisingly, the vote for the left-wing Meretz party was also high in Talbich, perhaps because many local residents are connected with the university community which has traditionally voted strongly for Meretz.

5. The Tatzpit survey interviewed 702 households by telephone, a sample drawn from the total Jewish population of Jerusalem. Needless to say, we must consider the normal margin of error in such telephone surveys of that size, plus the special problem of the *haredim*, many of whom refuse to respond to surveys and whom because of their poverty often do not have telephones and so are underrepresented. The Tatzpit survey was able to identify all four categories of Jews according to the interviewee's self-definition. It found an even higher percentage of Religious Zionists than our study did, finding that the Jewish population of the city is divided almost equally among the four groups.

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**Covenant and Constitutionalism:
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The Covenant Tradition in Politics, Volume III

Daniel J. Elazar

With the Protestant Reformation and its idea of the federated commonwealth, the covenant tradition in European politics reached its highest point. Then, less than a century later, that idea was transformed into the idea of civil society organized around a political compact and governed by a written constitution consented to by the people it served. This transformation marked the transition from premodern to modern covenantalism. The transition took place in two tracks. The better known was the philosophic track championed by Hobbes, Spinoza, and Locke, which set down the theory and principles of modern democratic and republican civil society. The other, theological track, pioneered by European settlers from various Reformed Protestant backgrounds, developed actual republics framed by written constitutions. Together, they led to the establishment of the United States of America in the eighteenth century.

Covenant and Constitutionalism, the third of four volumes in the series of volumes exploring the covenantal tradition in Western politics, traces the trends and the developing relationships of constitutionalism and covenant that ultimately led to the transformation of the latter into the former. It explores these first steps and the subsequent paths that emerged out of the constitutionalized covenantal tradition in Europe such as federalism, communitarianism, and the cooperative movement, and how these covenantal ideas and expressions were both supported by and challenged by liberal democracy and individualism as they unfolded in the latter part of the modern epoch and immediately thereafter.

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