This book is a slightly edited version of my doctoral dissertation, submitted to Oxford University in November 1991. I am grateful to the F.C.A.R. (Québec) and the S.S.H.R.C.C (Canada), as well as to the Lady Davis Fellowship in Israel for doctoral fellowships that made research for this study possible. I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Martin Goodman, for his consistent support and faith in my work. Thanks also to Professor Guy Stroumsa for his encouragement and positive feedback during my stay in Israel. Sharon Helfer helped prepare the manuscript for publication, and my sister, Wanda, was, as always, a useful resource on editorial matters.

Many thanks to all the members of my family and close friends for their love and support through the difficult years in which my thesis came into being. I am grateful to Avriel Butovsky (ע"ר), who inspired my original interest in this area of research. I am thankful to my father, who rescued me from innumerable practical and intellectual snags, and whose enthusiasm for my work was a constant source of inspiration. My husband, Steven, was my mainstay over the years this work was written, and my daughter Alba came along at the end.

This book is dedicated to the memory of my mother, Alba Romer Taylor, whose spirit continues to inspire me in my life and work.