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MILITARY SERVICE IN ISRAEL: NO LONGER A COHESIVE FORCE?

Stuart A. Cohen

SINCE the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the Israel Defence Force (IDF) has exhibited characteristics conventionally associated with a 'people's army'. Its composition has both reflected and reinforced that image, justifying the depiction of Israel as a 'nation in arms'.[1] The country's complement of professional military personnel has always been outnumbered by conscripts (female and male, liable for national service at age 18) and reservists, principally males, who may be called for additional terms of about one month's duty per annum until the ages of 45 to 51 (depending on their duties).

Israel's original decision to institute a system of universal conscription has conventionally been attributed to two complementary incentives.[2] One, operational, reflects the need for as large a force as possible in view of the massive size of the total armies of the country's potential foes. The second incentive has been that conscription would act as a social device, which would help to forge a sense of national identity by welding the disparate elements of Jews from various countries and cultures resident in Israel. The most vigorous, and influential, advocate of the latter rationale for military conscription was David Ben-Gurion (1886–1973), Israel's first prime minister and minister of defence: he held both positions in 1948–1953 and 1955–1963. From the very outset, Ben-Gurion intended Israel's armed forces to become instruments of a cohesive Jewish citizenry and to be the focus of a patriotic population. He therefore insisted (often against the advice of senior generals), that the IDF be structured along the lines of a 'people's army', consisting primarily of citizen-soldiers rather than professional troops. He maintained that only thus could it fulfil its duty to Jewish-Israeli society as a whole. He informed a group of newly-inducted officers as early as 1949:[3]

> While the first mission of the IDF . . . is the security of the State, that is not its only task. The Army must also serve as a pioneering educational force for Israeli youth, both native-born and immigrants. The IDF must educate a pioneering generation, healthy in body and spirit, brave and faithful, which

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> will heal tribal and Diaspora divisions and implement the historic missions of the State of Israel through a process of self-fulfilment, by building the homeland and making its deserts bloom.

Ben-Gurion's passionate conviction and vision exerted a profound influence on the subsequent status of military service in Israel. Under his aegis, enlistment in the IDF did indeed constitute the principal *rite de passage* whereby Jewish citizens, male and female, attained full membership of the Israeli polity. Moreover, military service, at both conscript and reservist levels, came to be regarded as the most important component in the whole national 'experience'.[4] The IDF was conventionally, and for the most part justifiably, considered to be the nation's principal equalizer — as one of the very few institutions capable of moderating (albeit not entirely obfuscating) the massive ethnic and socio-economic divides which otherwise threatened to tear Israel apart.[5]

This article questions whether this still applies in the late 1990s. It starts with a survey of the shifts now effecting a change of significant proportions in Israeli civil-military relations in their entirety. I then go on to examine three specific areas in which Israel's system of military service, once considered to be a major unifying factor for the nation, now appears instead to be accentuating some societal divides and even creating serious rifts.

Introduction

Israeli society has multiple idiosyncrasies, but it is not unique in this respect. Rather, as several observers (including senior military sources) have been regularly pointing out for almost a decade, the country shows increasing signs of becoming more fully integrated into Western culture, with all which this implies in terms of life-styles, value-systems, and patterns of public behaviour.[6]

One of the most significant changes resulting from that trend can be seen most markedly in recent attitudes towards matters of military relevance, and particularly towards conscription. Throughout the western world, and now also in Israel, armed forces have lost much of their prestige, let alone glory.[7] Defence budgets are being cut and paradigm shifts are also taking place in the ambience which, ever since Machiavelli, had facilitated the projection of military service as an agency for enhancing citizenship. Not very long ago, Israeli Jews were renowned for their almost totemistic veneration of the IDF, and for the dedication with which most of the citizens served as both conscripts and reservists. But the situation has now altered: the former IDF Chief of Staff (Major-General Amnon Lipkin-Shahak) has freely admitted that in many respects relations between Jewish citizens and their national army are almost in a state of crisis.[8] Although the armed forces continue to head the list of national bodies in which the public expresses most trust, the

position of the military at the top of that particular league-table no longer seems as assured as it once was. Gone, it seems, are the days when the possession of a distinguished service record automatically bestowed social celebrity and when the IDF as a whole enjoyed virtually instinctive domestic prestige. Instead, military personnel (past and present) are being divested of their quasi-mythological aura. Moreover, the critical scrutiny of military conduct, once the exclusive preserve of an inner coterie of cognoscenti, has now entered the public domain: the civil courts, the media, and ad hoc associations of families of military personnel seem to vie with each other in commenting adversely on specific aspects of military conduct and management.[9]

Where available, statistics relating to recruitment tell a similar, and even more informative, tale. Although motivation to military service, particularly as measured by readiness of 18-year-old conscripts to enlist in combat units, remains unusually high in Israel, in recent years the graphs have shown a disturbing tendency to fluctuate, usually downwards. That is especially so among some secular and middle-class segments of the Jewish population.[10] Lipkin-Shahak has stated that 'droves' of conscripts now resist enlistment in combat units while the situation is still more serious in reserve formations, where (he has reported) applications for exemption from service are assuming 'epidemic' proportions.[11]

Analysts still debate the precise causes for such phenomena. All agree, however, that they cannot be considered in isolation from several wider contexts — the most salient of which is perhaps the marked erosion in the almost universal consensus on national security affairs which was once characteristic of Israeli public life.[12] At a time when domestic opinion on fundamental issues of security relevance is so sharply divided between Right and Left, the IDF has been unable to sustain its image as the embodiment of a supra-party and universally respected 'general will'. Instead, it has itself been drawn into a maelstrom of political debate, and hence become a target of censure from both sides.[13]

What makes the IDF particularly sensitive to that situation is the fact that it can no longer bask in the glory it earned after its triumphal victory in the Six Day War of 1967. This 'fall from grace' can in part be attributed to its own extended record of subsequent operational errors and miscalculations — most noticeably, during the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the Lebanon Campaign in 1982–85, and the *intifada* (Palestinian uprising) of 1987–93. There have been several other factors: since the mid-1980s, Israeli society has altogether become more critical of many of the values, symbols, and institutions whose status was once considered unassailable; and the armed forces have not remained immune to that trend. Indeed, they have been particularly affected by the shifts which have taken place in public attitudes about the efficacy of uses of military force. Even before the Oslo (1993) and Aravah (1994) agreements

generated expectations of a material 'peace dividend', observers had begun to note a growing sense of war-weariness amongst many sectors of Israeli society, as well as a declining tolerance to continue to shoulder the financial and physical costs of protracted conflict. If survey data are to be believed, such trends have of late become still more marked.[14]

In many Western nations, the dominant response to similar clusters of pressures has been a massive programme of military institutional reform.[15] Especially since the end of the Cold War, armed forces have been drastically reduced in size and the entire military establishment has been overhauled. Most significantly, conscription has been abandoned in most countries — including France where compulsory military service had been an important *rite de passage*. It has been argued that post-modern military establisments no longer need to stimulate patriotic fervour, as had been necessary for the ranks of mass armies in an earlier age. Instead, they can shift to an 'occupational' format, which relies upon a small number of highly proficient — and highly paid — technical experts to perform missions previously entrusted to a more numerous, but far less skilled, body of servicemen.

Ever since the mid-1980s, successive Israeli Chiefs of Staff have likewise proclaimed an intention to construct a 'smaller and smarter' IDF. To that end, they have also launched various initiatives designed to bolster the professional component of the country's entire military complement.[16] However, and in contrast to their colleagues elsewhere, they have stopped short of abolishing the symbolic threshold of conscription. Indeed, they frequently reaffirm their commitment to that principle, and repeatedly express their intention to retain compulsory national military service. The current Chief of Staff refuses even to entertain suggestions that the IDF officially promote a form of selective service, let alone the transition to an all-volunteer and professional force. Similarly, the Manpower Branch now seeks to close some of the loopholes which in the past tended to facilitate draft-dodging or the grant of draft exemptions. 'Shirkers', to use the conventional military jargon, who only a few years ago were often able to gain fairly easy exemption on psychological grounds, are now virtually press-ganged into service. In April 1997 the IDF even instituted a new draft category (listed, for bureaucratic reasons, as 'profile [number] 30'), intended to encompass recruits previously excused from service because they were incapable of handling weapons.[17]

Bureaucratic inertia apart, the retention of conscription is usually justified on demographic and financial grounds. Indeed, whenever proposals to reform the IDF's traditional recruiting policies have been raised (as was the case even whilst that system was still in its infancy)[18] two questions have tended to monopolize attention:[19] 1) does Israel's geo-political situation permit the IDF to forego its monopolistic call on all Israeli's available human resources and thereby risk reducing military numbers below the required level? and 2) given the size of the national

debt, can Israel's economy sustain the financial burden which would arise if the present system of (for the most part unpaid) conscription were replaced by a fully salaried complement? The wider social implications of retaining compulsory national service are rarely openly discussed. It is generally taken for granted that universal conscription benefits Israeli Jewish society today as it did during the Ben-Gurion era — and for similar reasons. Now, as then, Israel must absorb a massive wave of new immigration and it is argued that the experience of national service could bridge the many ideological, ethnic, and cultural chasms which might otherwise threaten domestic unity.

Much of the available evidence undoubtedly substantiates the latter view. The IDF continues to make a significant corporate contribution to social integration in Israel, not least by maintaining an impressive range of formal supplementary educational programmes,[20] which enable newcomers to the country to acquire Hebrew language skills and give conscripts from under-privileged areas a chance to attain basic standards of literacy. Probably even more effective, and certainly more extensive, are the other ways in which military service lowers social barriers: it exposes conscripts and regular personnel from wholly different backgrounds to a common experience under equal conditions. More specifically, it also enables troops from comparatively disadvantaged or marginal communities to acquire and demonstrate skills to which they might otherwise not have attained access. Hence, it is with justifiable pride that the IDF periodically publicizes such progress. In December 1997, for instance, the Military Spokesman announced that one Druze serviceman had been promoted to the rank of brigadier-general (with responsibility for co-ordinating IDF relations with the Palestinian Authority), and that a new immigrant — and a woman to boot — had successfully completed the course which trains flight controllers for the Air Force.[21]

Without in any way denying the social advantages which Israel derives from the retention of conscription, in this paper I intend nevertheless to indicate its social costs: I shall argue that under present conditions, universal conscription does not fully justify its reputation as a factor for national cohesion. Rather, and as will be demonstrated below, national military service can be a disruptive force. First, the present system adds a layer of stratification to Israeli society by creating a distinction between those citizens who do perform military service, and those who do not. Second, it accentuates gender discrimination; and third, it further threatens to reinforce, and perhaps even to deepen, what is known as the 'religious-secular divide' amongst the country's Jewish citizens.

I. Servers versus non-servers

As Baruch Kimmerling long ago pointed out,[22] even in their original form, the boundaries of military service in Israel had created two distinct

tiers of citizenship. Most blatantly, the result was a deliberate emphasis on the secondary status of the country's Arab citizens — the vast majority of whom, for very obvious reasons, were exempted from military service. Sarah Helman, one of Kimmerling's students, has argued that by thus defining the boundaries of 'inclusivity' and 'exclusivity', conscription created a 'stratified structure of citizenship', markedly at variance with the 'melting pot' image which Ben-Gurion had been so keen to promote.[23] The novelty in the present situation is that precisely the same mechanism is operating — with ever increasing force — *within* the Jewish community. Mainly, this is because, contrary to traditional myth and even to legislative norms, conscription and reserve duty are now far from constituting universal and equal obligations. Instead, military service has assumed an almost selective form, affecting different Jewish citizens in different ways and to very diverse extents.

For one thing, increasing numbers of Jewish citizens are now 'non-servers' in the sense that they perform no military service whatsoever. In many cases, this is because they expressly seek to avoid conscription for reasons of either conscience or convenience. I classify this segment as 'volitional' non-servers. Particularly prominent among this group are *haredim*, ultra-Orthodox Jews, a not altogether homogeneous group estimated to comprise some eight to nine per cent of the total Jewish population.[24] Ever since 1977, especially, there has been an exponential growth in the numbers of *haredi* young men who request (and are granted) lawful deferments from military duty on the grounds that 'the study of the Torah [Jewish Law] is their profession'. Published IDF statistics report that 28,550 male deferments were granted in 1996 — a growth of 16 per cent since the previous year. This figure represents 7.4 per cent of the entire potential male draft cohort, compared to 6.4 per cent in 1995, when the total number of Israeli youngsters of service age was somewhat smaller. Even more marked is the reported growth in the proportion of religious females now exercising their legal right to claim exemption, on the grounds that military service might conflict with their Orthodox life-styles. Of all potential female conscripts, 32 per cent claimed exemption in 1996 — two-thirds of them on religious grounds.[25]

A parallel phenomenon of 'volitional' non-service, entirely different in origin, is becoming increasingly apparent in some secular Israeli circles. This seems to be the consequence of a major cultural shift in attitudes towards military service, not only on the part of the potential recruits themselves (conscripts and reservists) but also — indeed perhaps more so — on the part of their families and friends. The citizen-soldier, particularly if also a member of a kibbutz, once constituted a primary Israeli role-model;[26] but this is no longer the case. Rather, the social stigma which was in earlier years attached to non-service is being displaced by mild disdain for those who do carry out their legal military obligations.[27] On both the right and the left of the political spectrum,

there is also a degree of tolerance much greater than was once thought possible for young citizens who plead 'conscientious objection'.[28] Admittedly, it is difficult to specify the degree to which such movements of opinion might be contributing to the ups and downs in 'motivation to service'. What remains evident, nevertheless, is the extent to which — for whatever reason — this form of non-service is increasingly tolerated.

Moreover, volitional non-service is now dwarfed by the growing prominence of what might be termed 'non-volitional' non-service: the large numbers of citizens who do not serve out their full terms as either conscripts or reservists, not because they seek to dodge military service but because they are simply not called upon by the IDF to do so. The principal reasons for this situation are organizational, and attributable to the differentials which military-institutional needs impose. By its nature, the distribution of military duty can never be entirely egalitarian: some categories of troops, conscripts and reservists, will always be singled out to perform more onerous (and more dangerous) tasks as well as to spend longer periods in service. The effects of that circumstance seem to be becoming especially apparent in the IDF today.[29] Notwithstanding nominal adherence to the principle of equal obligations, commanders have been unable to impose uniformity across the board, especially where the duration and conditions of service are concerned.

Necessarily, talented and proficient troops are in especially heavy demand; they are therefore summoned to pre-conscription courses (known as *kadatzim* or *taratzim*) before formal enlistment, and will moreover be required later to do lengthier stints of reserve duty. In contrast, those who fulfill non-combat support and administrative functions (many of which are in any case carried out from comparatively comfortable bases in the rear which operate only for five days a week) are more likely to be deemed redundant, especially at a time when the size of the annual intake of conscript cohorts is growing as a result of both natural increase and recent immigration. Indeed, it is now calculated that as many as 20 per cent of all male conscripts and 80 per cent of their female counterparts are given early discharges, mainly because their services are simply not required. In the case of reservists, the discrepancies are even greater. A study carried out by Knesset Member Raanan Cohen revealed that in 1995, only 30 per cent of all male Jews eligible for annual reserve duty were called upon to do so; and of that number, about 50 per cent served for only ten days or less. Moreover, only just over a tenth of those summoned (2.3 per cent of the nominal complement) served for 33 days or more.[30]

The results of this combination of circumstances are no less significant than are its precise causes. Extrapolating from present trends, the head of the IDF Manpower Branch estimates that by the year 2010 (at the latest) fully 50 per cent of the Israeli population will experience no military service whatsoever. On the other hand, it seems that those who

do serve will increasingly be rewarded in cash form. Indeed, this is already so in the case of combat conscripts who, since June 1996, have received double the pocket-money paid to other troops and of reservists called for exceptionally longer terms of annual duty.[31] Both developments constitute acknowledgements of the essential inequalities of military duty. They also signify a fundamental change in attitude towards military service, especially in the reserves, which is losing its traditional status as the most commonly shared of all national Israeli experiences. What was once an essentially altruistic affirmation of citizenship seems to be set to be transformed into an essentially economic transaction.

The social impact of these developments will be further compounded if non-service, whether volitional or not, were to remain concentrated in specific sectors of the population. Apart from Arab citizens, *haredim*, and some secular Jews, there are large numbers of new immigrants who are exempted from duty because they arrive in Israel when past the age of 29.[32] Even were it possible — as is now often proposed — to enlist such groups in some alternative form of compulsory civilian service (perhaps on the lines of the German model of the Zivildienst[33]), the social distinctions created by differential service will not be eradicated. Indeed, they might even be aggravated: for as long as the IDF continues to be granted the right of first refusal on most available manpower, citizens excused from military service will continue to feel that they are in some ways inferior to those who have been called upon to wear uniform.

II. Gender

The IDF is the only military force which subjects females as well as males to compulsory conscription; but the degree of gender equality which this situation might be thought to promote in Israel has always been more apparent than real. Even the image of the Israeli fighting woman during the War of Independence (1948–49), it now transpires, is largely a myth. Since then, female troops in the IDF have certainly always been treated differently from males.[34] By law, all servicewomen are explicitly barred from combat roles; they are liable for terms of conscript service which are shorter than those for men; and very few females are summoned to reserve duty. This combination of factors has created a distinct gender bias within the Force, much of which is circular and self-fulfilling in nature. Because women are excluded from combat, which is obviously the most important military function, they have often been restricted to the performance of mundane clerical functions, and thus made to feel distinctly second-class members of what necessarily remains a male-oriented and male-dominated institution.

Admittedly, the IDF has in recent years taken several significant steps towards redressing some of the most glaring anomalies.[35] Female conscripts now have a growing range of duties, and many battle-related

technical and support units are almost entirely dependent on their services as radar monitors, air-traffic controllers, and operators of computerized communications systems. Widespread gender integration similarly prevails in field postings, where females constitute a significant proportion of tank instructors — a posting which demands graduation from a course for tanks commanders — and of medical orderlies and staff officers. Their assignment to front-line roles in other combat units — such as the 'Border Guard' [*mishmar ha-gevul*] — has also become more marked. Moreover, a particularly symbolic threshold was crossed in November 1995, when in a much publicized landmark decision Israel's Supreme Court upheld a female conscript's claim to be granted entry to the course for training Air Force pilots.

Nevertheless, as the researches of both Iris Jerby and Dafna Izraeli conclusively demonstrate,[36] masculinity (and hence gender inequality) continues to remain one of the IDF's most abiding characteristics. One expression of that bias is to be found in the comparative ease with which, as noted above, females are lawfully entitled to claim exemptions from conscript service on religious grounds. Another can be seen in the continued maintenance, albeit in a much altered form, of a distinctive Womens' Corps (*Chen*), which virtually enshrines gender segregation. But still more salient, certainly in statistical terms, is what Dafna Izraeli terms the socially-constructed gendered practices of assignment. This is reinforced by the virtual absence of women from the reserve segment. The National Security Law of 1988 does formally impose reserve duty on females until the age of 34, but grants blanket exemptions to married women and expectant mothers. That leads to the argument that females, since they are unlikely to perform reserve duty, might give the IDF a far shorter return on investments in training. Only the most talented of girl conscripts are accepted in the units for which their educational attainments and psychometric ratings qualify them. A large proportion continue to be assigned to basic clerical functions, where the IDF in any case suffers from over-employment.[37]

The consequences of this situation reverberate throughout the life-span of the servicewoman's career. Exclusion from combat assignments, for instance, necessarily restricts the range of posts to which females might be directed. Equally significantly, it also constitutes a barrier to advancement to the most senior of command postings, for which extensive combat experience is considered a *sine qua non*. That is why females continue to be markedly under-represented in IDF command postings and why none has ever risen above the rank of brigadier-general. Indeed, the Commanding Officer of the Manpower Branch revealed that in April 1995, only seven women held the rank of lieutenant-colonel and above — less than two per cent of the total number in that grade.[38] According to Izraeli, women constitute only 19 per cent of officers from first lieutenant to brigadier, while they account

for fully two thirds of the complement of second lieutenants — the highest rank assigned to conscripts.[39] Interviewed for this paper, staff in the IDF Spokesman's Unit further revealed that, on average, female officers have to wait longer than their male equivalents for promotion: at the rank of colonel, the discrepancy amounted to 13.4 months.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to assess how much Israel's military might be losing (or, in one view, gaining[40]) by retaining its male-dominated posture. What is evident is that the IDF, by still adhering to a formal policy of universal conscription, in fact accentuates gender divisions as much as it reduces them — if not more. In this context, Iris Jerby observes that, as presently implemented, Israel's system of military service imposes a double price on the country's females: not only does it restrict their military employment to tasks which do not always allow them to realize their full potential, but it also impedes their chances of advancement in subsequent civilian careers. She detects a singularly Israeli version of the 'Mathew effect' (whereby differentials in the career advancement potential of certain groups and individuals increase as they progress through life).[41] Dafna Izraeli makes much the same point:[42]

> The relationship between the military and women's status in Israeli society is circular. A feedback loop dynamic leads from women's marginalization in the military to women's disadvantage in civilian life and back again. First, the gendered processes by which women and men are incorporated into the military intensify the perceived differences between them and marginalize women. Second, the differential treatment of men and women in the military and women's marginalization produce differential opportunities for mobility both within the military and in civilian life that privilege men. Third, the advantages men derive from military service are converted into advantages in civilian life. Military elites slip into roles in civilian elites where they contribute to the reproduction of gender inequality and to the perpetuation of gendered processes within the military.

III. Religious-secular relations

Religious-secular relations were for many years an area in which the influence of the IDF as a unifying force seemed to be especially marked. Samuel Rolbant, in his pioneering study of the Israeli soldier, published in the wake of the 1967 Six Day War, stated:[43]

> [The IDF] has helped to break all barriers between men who lived all their lives in vastly different cultural milieus. [sic] Boys from religious families could mix freely with anti-religious boys from secularist left-wing kibbutzim, learning to give and take, to disagree while respecting the other's right to his own view, to refrain from excesses of behavior and find a deeper unity of purpose.

Other analysts also saw no reason to ascribe to religious troops a particular military profile, since they appeared to constitute a fully

integrated component of the IDF's overall complement. Under such circumstances, there appeared little need to investigate their attitudes about military service, or to suspect that the distinctiveness of those attitudes might generate tensions of a wider nature.[44]

This is no longer the case. Admittedly, the IDF continues to supply one of the very few national arenas (some university campuses are another) in which religious and secular youngsters meet for extended periods in close proximity. However, discrepancies between religious and secular troops, once considered almost irrelevant, now generate increasing anxiety. This is particularly so in view of what appears to be the greater prominence in several combat units of servicemen drawn from the 'national-religious' community.[45] Whereas, as noted above, 'motivation to service' in such formations has declined amongst the secular segment of the population, the opposite is the case within the national-religious community. Indeed, it is estimated that in many such units, national-religious servicemen now make up some 30 per cent of the complement, a figure roughly double their proportion in the population at large.[46] In this context, two developments arouse particular concern; one is essentially, and somewhat narrowly, political while the other is more generally cultural. Each deserves to be treated separately.

Political concern focuses on the possibility that troops drawn from the national-religious segment of Israel's Jewish population might be especially opposed to carrying out orders to implement future Israeli withdrawals from 'the territories' captured in 1967. Indeed, ever since the first Oslo agreement of September 1993 they have been explicitly counselled to do so by a barrage of supposedly authoritative rabbinical pronouncements, many of which proclaim the transfer of Jewish sovereignty over any portion of the Holy Land to the Palestine Authority to be a direct violation of Divine Law.[47] There exists serious alarm that some troops might obey such directives. It has also been suggested that the suspicion that so large a body of troops — and, increasingly, their officers[48] — might subordinate their professional military duty to their religious and ideological preferences could confuse the chain of command and thereby spread dissension throughout the Force as a whole.[49]

It must be emphasized that, so far, those fears have not materialized. Admittedly, in the immediate wake of the first Oslo agreement, several national-religious reservists did indicate that they were prepared to refuse summonses to duty. Others went much further: one young man assassinated Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin in Tel-Aviv in November 1995; earlier (in February 1994), another had murdered a number of Palestinians at prayer in Hebron. In January 1997, also in Hebron, a national-religious conscript opened fire with murderous intent on a crowd of Arab civilians. But for all their merited notoriety, these were nevertheless isolated outrages: in no case did they signal an outbreak of

large-scale dissension on the part of national-religious troops, and there does not seem to be any serious threat that such an outbreak might be imminent. It must be borne in mind that there is an almost automatic tendency of all military personnel (including national-religious troops) when on active service to obey the orders of their immediate military superiors rather than the instructions of any external authority. Another equally important factor encouraging restraint has been the sheer good sense hitherto displayed by IDF commanders, who seem to have carefully avoided employing units with a large representation of national-religious personnel on avowedly 'withdrawal' operations.

But if the narrowly-defined political dimension of Israel's religious-secular divide has thus hitherto not been noticeably affected by service in the IDF, the same cannot be said of what might be termed the *cultural* dimension. National-religious and secular troops have always come to the IDF with different educational cargos, and (increasingly) with different life-styles and value systems.[50] The novelty of the contemporary situation, and one frequently ignored, lies in the extent to which they might also follow distinctive military careers. In fact, there exists increasing evidence to suggest that the common experience of conscript duty now does much less than was once the case to bridge the gaps between the two communities: indeed, it might even widen them.

Perhaps the most significant sign of that development is the preference of many national-religious troops for what might be termed a form of 'segregated' service: they have shown a growing tendency to bunch together whilst on duty and thus to form a distinctive segment of the overall IDF complement. It is not difficult to understand why this might be so: doubtless, most recruits would naturally prefer to serve with persons of their own kind; and that urge is always likely to have been especially strong amongst national-religious servicemen, principally because of their particular need for a communal atmosphere conducive to their observance of Orthodox Jewish practice.[51] But what in the past was little more than a vague aspiration on the part of scattered individuals has now achieved the status of a virtual imperative for a sizeable body of personnel.

To a large extent, that shift reflects the increasing influence wielded by the particularly intense web of educational and para-educational frameworks from which a large proportion of national-religious conscript cohorts now come.[52] Quite apart from an influential and popular youth movement (B'nei Akivah), this network extends to a country-wide system of gender-segregated and residential national-religious high schools (*yeshivot tichoni'ot* for boys, *ulpanot* for girls); a dozen pre-conscription religious academies (*mechinot kedam tzevai'ot*) whose prototype was established adjacent to the West Bank settlement of Eli in 1984 with the express purpose of providing young men with whatever spiritual and physical 'fortification' their forthcoming enlistment in the IDF might

require; and some 28 *hesder* (lit. 'arrangement') academies, whose pupils intersperse their periods of military service with advanced religious studies.[53]

Since the vast majority of these frameworks project enlistment in the IDF to be a religious imperative as well as a civic duty, they undoubtedly exert a beneficial effect on national-religious recruitment behaviour.[54] Also noteworthy, however, is the obverse side of that coin: the cocoon-like existence in which many national-religious youngsters were brought up until their conscription increases their own sense of distinctiveness; and this becomes particularly marked when they are conscripted and for the first time come into close and continuous contact with contemporaries who grew up in a very different atmosphere. Indeed, many experience what can only be described as a cultural shock.

One testimony to that circumstance, especially notable because of the audience to which it was addressed, is provided by a cautionary article which two new conscripts published in the bulletin of the national-religious youth movement, B'nei Akivah. 'The IDF', they warned younger members to be aware, 'is not at all a religious institution'. Only in part is that because conditions in the unit mess do not always meet Orthodox dietary standards, especially in isolated front-line postings which are too small to billet a military chaplain. Far more significant are the challenges posed by other aspects of the secular milieu:[55]

> Quite apart from experiencing the shock to which every conscript is submitted on entering the military framework, the religious soldier in addition is estranged and struck dumb by the comportment of his secular comrades. Even their everyday speech contains phrases and terms which his own mouth, used to prayer, is unable to utter and which his ears, attuned to words of wisdom, refuse to absorb.

Many national-religious troops respond to that situation by expressing a growing preference to serve — as groups — in homogeneous formations. That tendency is particularly marked amongst *hesder* personnel, many of whom are indeed conscripted en bloc and remain together in distinct company formations for much of their subsequent military careers. Similar patterns can be found elsewhere. A large proportion of national-religious female recruits, for instance, serve in the Education Corps — and more specifically in the 'Branch for Torah Culture' which, not unexpectedly, is monopolized by graduates of the national-religious educational system. Likewise, significant numbers of the graduates of *mekhinot* gravitate towards the IDF's elite *sayarot* (reconnaissance units), where they now constitute a distinct category. A parallel tendency towards 'bunching' can be observed in several of the other combat formations within which the larger percentage of national-religious conscripts has become particularly marked. Indeed, it has to a large extent been (unwittingly) facilitated by the reforms which the IDF Manpower Branch in 1995 instituted in the overall draft system, with the

express purpose of giving potential conscripts a greater say in the determination of their ultimate locus of service.[56] By permitting, indeed, encouraging, recruits to express their own unit preferences (within certain limits) the new system has also made it easier for many of them to co-ordinate their selections, and thus increase the likelihood that they will serve together in specific units.

As a result, there is now in some areas of military life a 'critical mass' of national-religious troops. Always distinctive by virtue of both their life-styles and their dress — particularly, the knitted skullcap (*kippah*) in the case of men and the choice of skirts rather than trousers in the case of women — that group is now also distinctive because of its increasing assertiveness. This is evident at many of the major stages in military life: whereas all secular troops at their induction into service, respond to their commanding officer's recitation of the Israeli soldier's oath by announcing 'I swear' (in Hebrew: *ani nishbah*), religious troops, mindful of the third of the Ten Commandments, do not swear but state their willingness to 'declare' (and hence proclaim, in Hebrew, *ani matzhir*). Moreover, with the growth of the number of religious conscripts in some units, officers have found it convenient to hold separate 'culture days' for the two disparate categories of servicemen. On other occasions, the troops themselves have cordially agreed to celebrate their graduation from various courses by arranging for separate parties.

In isolation, none of these instances is particularly significant (especially since the practices themselves are not universal). However, their symbolic importance can hardly be overrated. Together, as some observers have also remarked to the press, they signify the extent to which the disparate life-styles, which in any case tend to set the religious and the secular communities apart, are also beginning to find expression within the IDF.[57] If this situation persists, as may be likely, the existing gap between the two communities must be expected to widen still further when the servicemen return to civilian life.

Conclusion

As recently as the late 1980s, informed observers could still justifiably define military service as *the* central feature of the Israeli 'experience', and hence as the most compelling of the homogenizing forces binding the nation's (Jewish) citizens. A review of the growing discrepancies to which military service itself presently gives rise, it has here been argued, casts considerable doubt on the continued relevance of such claims. In several significant respects, service in fact creates several social distinctions. And even where that it not the case, it accentuates others. The search for mechanisms which might help to remedy those strains is likely to occupy Israel's public attention for some time to come.

NOTES

[1] On the origin of the term: Amos Perlmutter, *The Military and Politics in Modern Times*, New Haven, Connecticut, 1977, pp. 251–52. For its meaning within the specific Israeli context: Baruch Kimmerling, 'Patterns of militarism in Israel', *European Archives of Sociology*, vol. XXXIV, 1993, pp. 196–223 and Uri Ben Eliezer. 'A nation in arms: State, nation and militarism in Israel's first years', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 37, 1995, pp. 264–85.

[2] Edward Luttwak and Dan Horowitz, *The Israeli Army*, New York, 1975, pp. 85–98, 424–26. See also Avner Yaniv, *Politics and Strategy in Israel* (Hebrew) Tel-Aviv: Sifriyat Poalim, 1994, pp. 42–43.

[3] David Ben-Gurion, *Uniqueness and Mission* (Hebrew); Tel-Aviv: Am-Oved, 1971, p. 81. In general: Yoav Gelber, 'Ben-Gurion and the Creation of the IDF', *Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 50, 1990, pp. 83–85.

[4] See, for instance, E. O. Schild, 'On the Meaning of Military Service in Israel', in M. Curtis and M. Chertoff, eds, *Israel: Social Structure and Change*, New Brunswick, N.J., 1977, pp. 419–32; Dan Horowitz, 'The IDF: A Civilianized Military in a Partially Militarized Society' in Roman Kolkowicz and Andrezj Korbonski, eds, *Soldiers, Peasants and Bureaucrats*, London, 1982, pp. 77–106; Rebecca L. Schiff, 'Israel as an 'uncivil state', *Security Studies*, vol. 1, 1992, pp. 636–58; Ofra Meissels, 'Military Service as a Central Component of the Israeli experience', *Sekirah Hodshit* (Hebrew monthly for IDF officers), January 1993, pp. 3–19.

[5] The extent to which the IDF has and has not bridged the gap between Israel's Ashkenazi and Sephardi communities is a matter of lively research. See, for instance, Aharon Bizman, Yehudah Amir, and Paul Malkin, 'Effect of the commander's ethnic origin on ethnic attitudes of Israeli soldiers', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, vol. 22, 1992, pp. 583–97. In somewhat more detail, Yossi Araz, Yossi Shavit, and Dorit Tzor, 'Are there ethnic inequalities in promotion prospects in the IDF?' (Hebrew), *Megamot*, vol. 35, 1993, pp. 23–37. Compare: Aviad Bar-Hayyim, 'Patterns of Ethnic Integration Amongst Senior IDF Officers' (Hebrew), *Megamot*, vol. 30, 1987, pp. 276–86.

[6] For an early perceptive statement by a Commanding Officer of the Manpower Branch of the IDF, see: General Ran Goren, 'Value Changes in Israeli Society and in the IDF' (Hebrew), *Ma'archot* (IDF journal), no. 319, 1990, pp. 2–7. In general: Sam Lehman-Wilzig, *WILDFIRE. Grass-Roots Revolt in Israel in the Post-Socialist Era*, Albany, N.Y., 1992.

[7] Christopher Dandeker, 'New times for the military: some sociological remarks on the changing role and structure of the armed forces of the advanced societies', *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 45, 1994, pp. 637–54. See also: Charles Moskos and James Burk, 'The Postmodern Military', in J. Burk, ed., *The Military in New Times: Adapting Armed Forces to a Turbulent World*, Boulder, Colorado, 1994, pp. 141–62.

[8] See, for instance, Lipkin-Shahak's eulogy on the first anniversary of Yitzchak Rabin's assassination, reported in *Ha-aretz* (Hebrew daily), 28 October 1996.

[9] These trends are summarized in Reuven Gal and Stuart A. Cohen, 'Israel: Still Waiting in the Wings', in Charles Moskos, ed., *Post-Modern Militaries* (forthcoming).

[10] The precise level of 'motivation' has proved difficult to ascertain. For summaries of available data see: Ya'akov Ezrachi and Reuven Gal, *General Perceptions and Attitudes of High-School Students Regarding the Peace Process, Security and Social Issues* (Hebrew), 2 vols, The Carmel Institute for Social Studies, Zikhron Ya'akov, 1995 and IDF press releases as reported in *Ha-aretz* 6 February 1996, 1 August 1997, and 21 January 1998.

[11] Lipkin-Shahak in *Ha-aretz*, 29 March 1995, 6 February 1996 and 9 September 1996.

[12] This is a central theme in Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *Trouble in Utopia: The Overburdened Polity of Israel*, Albany, N.Y., 1989 and E. Sprinzak and L. Diamond, eds, *Israeli Democracy Under Stress*, Boulder, Colorado, 1993, especially pp. 255–59. See also Ze'ev Schiff, 'Has the IDF been Removed from the National Consensus?' (Hebrew), *Elazar Papers*, vol. 18, The Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel-Aviv, 1996, pp. 26–33.

[13] See Gad Barzilai, *War, Internal Conflict and Political Order: A Jewish Democracy in the Middle East*, Albany, N.Y., 1996.

[14] Asher Arian, *Security Threatened: Surveying Israeli Opinion on Peace and War*, Cambridge, 1995, especially pp. 91–127 and Gad Barzilai and Efraim Inbar, 'The Use of Force: Israeli Public Opinion on Military Options', *Armed Forces & Society*, vol. 25, 1996, pp. 66–67.

[15] For what follows, see Charles Moskos, 'Armed Forces in a Warless Society', *Forum International*, vol. 13, 1992, pp. 1–130.

[16] Stuart A. Cohen, 'The Peace Process and its Impact on the Development of a "Smaller and Smarter" IDF', *Israel Affairs*, vol. 1, 1995, pp. 1–21; and Stuart A. Cohen, 'The IDF: From a "People's Army" to a "Professional Military" ', *Armed Forces & Society*, vol. 21, 1995, pp. 237–54.

[17] Eitan Rabin in *Ha-aretz*, 29 April 1997. See also General Gideon Sheffer in interview to *Ba-Machaneh* (Hebrew weekly for IDF troops), 11 July 1997: 'In the past, we granted releases too easily. In the future it will be much more difficult to obtain them.'

[18] For very early instances of the debate see Yitzchak Greenberg, 'The Defense Budget in Ben-Gurion's Policy in National Security, 1949–1952', *Studies in Zionism*, vol. 12, 1991, pp. 43–53, and Ben-Gurion's own memorandum on 'Army and State', dated 18 October 1953, reprinted in *Ma'archot*, nos 279–80, May 1981, pp. 2–11.

[19] Emanuel Wald, *The Gordian Knot: Myths and Dilemmas of Israeli National Security* (Hebrew) Yediot Aharonot, Tel-Aviv, 1992, pp. 166–71 and Shemuel Gordon, *The Bow of Paris: Technology, Doctrine and Israel's Security* (Hebrew) Sifriyat Poalim, Tel-Aviv, 1997, especially pp. 294–303.

[20] See the articles in Daniella Ashkenazy, ed., *The Military in the Service of Society and Democracy: The Challenge of the Dual-Role Military*, Westport, 1994. This supplements two older works: Thomas Bowden, *Army in The Service of the State*, Tel-Aviv, 1976, and Maurice Roumani, *From Immigrant to Citizen. The Contribution of the Army to National Integration in Israel*, The Hague, 1979.

[21] See *Ha-aretz*, 24 and 25 December 1997 respectively.

[22] Baruch Kimmerling, 'Determination of the Boundaries and Frameworks of Conscription: Two Dimensions of Civil-Military Relations in Israel', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, vol. 14, 1979, pp. 22–40.

[23] Sarah Helman, 'Conscientious Objection to Military Service as an Attempt to Redefine the Contents of Citizenship' (Hebrew), unpublished Ph.D. thesis, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1993.

[24] Menachem Friedman, *The Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) Society — Sources, Trends and Processes* (Hebrew), The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 1991, pp. 18–19.

[25] These figures are derived, respectively, from report by Colonel Avi Zamir, Head of Draft Board, cited in *Ha-aretz*, 15 December 1997; and IDF spokesman reported in *Yediot Aharonot* (Tel-Aviv Hebrew daily), 28 November 1996. On the origins of the various 'arrangements' permitting this form of non-service, see Menachem Friedman, 'This is the chronology of the *status quo*: religion and state in Israel', in Vera Pilovsky, ed., *The Shift from Yishuv to State, 1947–1949: Continuity and Change* (Hebrew), Haifa U.P. 1990, pp. 62–64.

[26] Reuven Gal, *A Portrait of the Israeli Soldier*, Westport, CT., 1986, pp. 147–48.

[27] For early indications, see M. Ashlag, 'The Span of the Stigma', *Ha-Ir* (Hebrew Tel-Aviv weekly), 18 November 1992, pp. 50–54.

[28] On this phenomenon see Ruth Linn, *Conscience and War: The Israeli Soldier as a Moral Critic*, Albany, N.Y., 1996.

[29] Stuart A. Cohen, 'Towards a New Profile of the (new) Israeli Soldier', *Israel Affairs*, vol. 3 (1997), p. 77–114.

[30] Ariele Hoffman, 'Out of every eleven reservists, only nine perform duty', *Yediot Aharanot*, 17 October 1997.

[31] On the latter, see the law passed in the *Knesset* on 22 December 1997 (reported in *Ha-aretz* the following day). Also indicative of the new trend is the payment, since June 1997, of a bonus of 1,000 new shekels (equivalent to about 150 pounds sterling) per month to every professional IDF soldier on service in southern Lebanon.

[32] Cohen, op. cit. in Note 29 above, pp. 93–95.

[33] A suggestion occasionally proposed by senior military and political sources. See, for instance, interview with General Gideon Sheffer, Commanding Officer of the Manpower Branch of the IDF, *Ba-Machaneh*, 13 September 1996, p. 5.

[34] Anne R. Bloom, 'Women in the Defense Forces' in Barbara Swirski and Marilyn P. Safir, eds, *Calling the Equality Bluff: Women in Israel*, New York, 1991, pp. 128–38.

[35] Cohen, Note 29 above, pp. 92–93; and interview with the newly-appointed head of the Women's Corps, Brigadier-General Orit Adeto, *Yediot Aharonot*, 18 August 1997.

[36] Iris Jerby, *The Double Price: Women's Status and Military Service in Israel* (Hebrew), Ramot, Tel-Aviv, 1996, and Dafna N. Izraeli, 'Gendering Military service in the Israel Defense Force', *Israel Social Science Research*, vol. 12, no. 1, 1997, pp. 129–63.

[37] On redundancy in the female sector see interview with Brigadier-General Yisrael Einhoren in *Yedi'ot Aharonot*, 25 January 1996.

[38] *Ha-aretz*, 6 April 1995.

[39] Izraeli, op. cit. in note 36 above, table 2, p. 152.

[40] See interview with the distinguished military historian, Professor Martin van Crevald, in *Ha-aretz*, 18 December 1997.

[41] Jerby, op. cit. in note 36 above, p. 103.
[42] Izraeli, op. cit. in note 36 above, p. 162.
[43] Samuel Rolbant, *The Israeli Soldier: Profile of an Army*, New York, 1970, p. 154.
[44] Hence, the complete absence of any distinctive discussion of specifically 'religious' troops in Gal, op. cit. in Note 26 above.
[45] On this community and its beliefs, see Charles S. Liebman, 'The Jewish Religion and Contemporary Jewish Nationalism', in Emanuel Sivan and Menachem Friedman, eds, *Religious Radicalism and Politics in the Middle East*, Albany, N.Y., 1990, pp. 77–95.
[46] See Stuart A. Cohen *The Scroll or the Sword? Dilemmas of Religion and Military Service in Israel*, London, 1997, especially pp. 78–85.
[47] On the background, ibid., chap. 1.
[48] The rise in the number and proportion of junior and middle-rank officers in the IDF who wear a knitted skullcap (*kippah serugah*; the most obvious outward sign of national-religious affiliation) has been noted by several observers. See, for instance, Lili Galilee, 'The Goal after the Conquest of the Elite Units', *Ha-aretz*, 21 August 1996.
[49] See, for instance, interviews with Dr Reuven Gal and Professor Asa Kasher in 'The Army of the Lord', *Ha-aretz*, 23 January 1997.
[50] The widening gulf between religious and secular youth is one of the principal findings of the survey conducted by Ezrachi and Gal, op. cit. in note 10 above.
[51] In this context, it is worth noting a recent suggestion that — were *haredim* to be drafted — they would also demand to serve in their own 'segregated' units. See interview with *Knesset* member Shlomo Benizri, of the *haredi* SHAS party, in *Ha-aretz*, 15 December 1997.
[52] Mordechai Bar-Lev, 'Changes in the religious identity of national-religious youth: The contribution of psychological, sociological and educational factors to the process of identity formation', *Studies in Education* (Hebrew), vol. 1, 1997, pp. 220–21.
[53] Stuart A. Cohen, 'The *Hesder Yeshivot* in Israel: A Church-State Military Arrangement', *Journal of Church and State*, vol. 35, 1993, pp. 113–30.
[54] See remarks of a senior officer reported in *Bita'on Cheil ha-Avir* (Hebrew: Israel Air Force journal), January 1998, p. 3, and interview with Mosheh Hagar (principal of the *Mekhinah* at Yatir), in *Zera'im* (Hebrew journal of the national-religious youth movement, B'nei Akivah), 1996–97, issue no. 1, September 1996, p. 3.
[55] Ya'akov Levi and Aaron Furstein, 'It is Not Easy to be a Religious Soldier', *Zera'im*, 1994–95, issue no. 8, August 1995, pp. 8–9.
[56] On the new system see *Ba-Machaneh*, 11 May 1994 and interview with General Yoram Yair (outgoing Commanding Officer of the Manpower Branch of IDF), ibid., 6 September 1995.
[57] Dror Grinblum (director of a youth centre in Ma'aleh Yosef) stated in the 'Opinion' column of *Ha-aretz*, 13 April 1997: 'The flower of religious youth is not sent to the elite units in order to affiliate with their secular comrades, to get to know their life-styles and to build with them a common life. National-religious youth come to these units despite secular youth. They do not aim to attain a state of mutual awareness.

Religious and secular young men are brothers in arms, and share an exhilarating and once-in-a-lifetime experience, which allows them to express their best qualities. They will sacrifice their lives for each other. But when they go on leave, they go separate ways into entirely different worlds. And when they complete their military service, the tie is broken. The cocoon-like religious world does not want any contact with the secular world.'

PATTERNS OF CRISIS AMONG ISRAELI RESERVE SOLDIERS

Ruth Linn

Introduction

CIVILIANS in Israel who are called every year for military reserve duty — when they must leave their homes and their gainful occupations — apparently do so willingly only if they are confident that they are needed for the security of their country. They are aware that they have a moral obligation to defend their democratic state and they believe that the Israel Defence Force (IDF) has a moral code (sometimes labelled 'purity of arms') and that they must maintain their life-long connection with their comrades in their particular unit.

However, since the 1982–1985 war in Lebanon, and even more so in the Intifada (the Palestinian Arab uprising from 1987 to 1994), the formerly-willing reservist has sometimes undergone a serious motivational crisis. In this paper, I discuss the manner in which this crisis has manifested itself. I started this analysis with the concepts set out by Hirschman in 1970, in *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*[1] but later found that the terms he uses to describe the degree of commitment to an organization had to be amended to 'withdrawal', 'protest', and 'dissent' when considering the situation of the Israeli reservists. I use 'withdrawal' to describe apathy, indifference, and alienation as a form of response to pressure.

The security of the State of Israel is maintained largely by civilians in uniform. Compulsory military service starts at the age of 18 for male Jewish citizens and Druze; on completion of a three-year period, the men can be called for reserve duty of one month every year. In earlier days, that was until the age of 55, but it was reduced to the age of 50 in 1992 and 48 in 1997. If there is a national emergency, the frequency, length, and danger of reserve duty increase. In the course of his life, until his total release, the average male citizen will have been on reserve duty for a total of at least two years — a calculation based on one annual month of reserve duty over a period of 24 years. But it must be borne in mind that the period may be greatly increased: the Yom Kippur war of 1973

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required some reservists to serve for up to six months while during the Lebanon war some men were ordered to be on reserve duty for two to three months, and later that applied also to the period of the Intifada.

Until recently, the reservists appeared to be very willing to respond to the call of reserve duty.[2] During conscription from the age of 18 (for three years for males but only 20 months for Jewish females) the conscripts are paid a token salary equivalent to about $100 a month; until 1994 thay had no special financial rewards on completion of their period of service. As for reservists, they are paid only the basic salary which they earn in civilian life.

The Israeli male citizen may decide at the end of his service, at the age of 21, to choose the army as a profession; as a career soldier he will have a reasonable salary and financial bonuses. After a minimum of ten years 'the IDF career officer's pay grade is one of the highest in Israel'.[3] The bonus includes free higher education, free medical care, and a sum of money on discharge. An important further advantage is that a career soldier will not have to suffer the difficulties of the reservist annually liable to leave his home and his regular employment and then readjust to civilian life. The timing of the annual service may occur at most inconvenient periods, in many cases: a student would be called back for a month during his college term, or during his annual vacation, or during the period when he must sit for his college examinations; a lawyer may miss a lucrative case; a medical doctor must stop the treatment of his patients; and a farmer must go before harvesting his crop. Admittedly, the reservist may appeal against his summons to a special committee, Valtam (an acronym for The Committee for Co-ordination of Release from the Reserve Service). As for the reservist's wife and children, who are very affected by his annual absence, it is surprising that no detailed longitudinal study of their situation has been published, to the best of my knowledge.[4]

A probable incentive for reservists to comply with the order to return to annual duty is their life-long association with the comrades in their units. The reserve units gradually become like extended families because most reservists spend their period of annual service in the same unit, with the same comrades, and often with the same commanders: 'Only the wars change'.[5] Indeed, a reservist will very often do all he can for his annual tour of duty to reunite him with comrades whom he can trust in an emergency and whose company he knows he will enjoy, rather than be posted to a unit whose members he does not know. Another important incentive for the reservist is his belief in the sound moral principles of the IDF and his awareness of the threat to the country from hostile neighbouring lands. Gal commented in 1986:[6]

> The sense of no choice has not only been a motivational source for the Israeli soldier; it has also been the moral justification for all of Israel's wars. It was this sense of being forced by the enemy to defend himself, rather than any

hatred for the enemy, that characterized the Israeli soldier's motivation throughout all times.

In times of war, the unique system of the reserves (*Miluim* in Hebrew) makes the IDF the largest army in the world in proportion to its population: about two thirds of the combat units are reserve forces, which are also an integral part of overall Israeli society. For many decades, it was a widely-accepted norm that as long as there was national consensus on defence issues, the reservist would unhesitatingly make his military contribution regardless of his political affiliation.[7]

The performance of army service has been an entrance ticket to Israeli general society, a sort of *rite de passage*, and consequently a qualification for the job market and in particular for a role in political life. For example, the moral worth of cabinet ministers and of members of the Knesset is often judged on the basis of their army service. Levy commented in an article in 1990 that the image of the Israeli Jew, especially a male Israeli, is still firmly linked to a compliance with military demands and to enduring the horrors of war with flying colours, 'with the supposed willingness to sacrifice — seemingly without fear — the most precious essentials of life, health and sanity . . . the military is the natural business of men'.[8] The IDF draws its strength from the close bond between civilian and army life — but that bond also renders the IDF vulnerable. Unlike reservists and career army personnel, there are two sections of the Israeli population who have no military obligations. The first consists of some 800,000 Arab citizens of the country: they are not conscripted because they are considered a security risk. The Israeli Jew, after his three-year period of conscription, can embark on life as a student or can seek gainful employment, while his Arab counterpart may have already obtained his bachelor's degree after a three-year course of studies. Moreover, many discharged soldiers need to spend one year on pre-university courses in order to bring them up to date with formal university education and will begin life as undergraduates at the age of 22. A soldier who has been trained to be an officer must serve for an additional full year and will return to civilian life after four years. A second group consists of Jewish men who are exempt from military service because they are ultra-orthodox students in a religious academy, a yeshiva. That exemption was obtained in the first year of the establishment of the State of Israel.[9] It is important to note here that the IDF consists largely of secular Jews who, nevertheless, must follow the general tenets of Jewish observance: for example, they are served only kasher meals, and on the Sabbath do not have any military training and do not travel — factors which enable most generally-observant Jews to carry out their military duties without religious qualms.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel (1948), to the present day (1997), there have been 400 documented cases of conscientious objectors

whereas there were hundreds of thousands of ultra-orthodox citizens who were exempted from national service (about 30,000 in 1997). When these Jews and the Arabs citizens are put together, Oren noted in 1992, 'a sizeable minority, about one fifth of the population (and growing, as these are the most fertile of groups in Israel) is found to be outside the mainstream of military service. A conscientious objector belonging to the secular Jewish majority would thus find ample grounds to feel discriminated against'.[10] Traditionally, once in uniform, the Israeli citizen was willing to work harder than in civilian life in order to perform his assigned duties while the annual shorter period enabled the reservist to remain a free-thinking civilian who could objectively and critically confront the moral issues facing the IDF. Reservists have been credited with bringing into the army a spirit of informal discipline, as well as moral values obtaining in their civilian milieu — and so are ready to protest against any injustice which they encounter in the IDF.[11]

In spite of the heavy burden incurred by the annual recall, cases of resistance to such summons have been rare.[12] As long as there was a national consensus that Israel was facing a situation when it had to be prepared for a war of self-defence, where there was no alternative to armed conflict, 'no-choice wars', Israeli soldiers willingly responded to the call of duty, in the knowledge that they were surrounded by hostile and actively militant nations on the country's borders.[13] But when called upon to risk their lives for aims which they believed to be questionable and the legitimacy of which they could not accept easily, or when they were assigned to military missions which they did not believe to be morally defensible, strong reservations emerged. Since the establishment of the State in 1948, until the 1982–1985 war in Lebanon, there had been only a few, sporadic instances of individual soldiers who openly criticized the army or who deliberately disobeyed military orders. That war proved to be a dramatic turning point[14] and it was followed by the seven years of the Intifada (1987–1994), an open rebellion of the Palestinians in the territories. In each period there were about 170 reservists who refused to serve in specific areas[15] but were willing to be assigned elsewhere during their reserve service. That was a 'new tune within Israeli society', as a newspaper was quick to note in March 1983.[16] The media generally condemned the selective conscientious objectors as leftists, delinquents, and law-breakers who were undermining democracy.[17] Even objective critical social researchers were constrained by the prevailing atmosphere which was so hostile to those who refused to serve and none apparently engaged in any studies of conscientious objectors while the conflicts were raging.[18]

This paper is especially concerned with the differing moral positions adopted by the resisting reservists, and considers whether Hirschman's model of response to pressure in an organization could be useful in the analysis. He distinguishes three types of responses: 'loyalty' when an

individual decides to remain silent for the sake of the success of the organization's enterprise, even though worried by serious doubts; 'voice', deciding to speak out in open criticism; and 'exit': leaving the organization. He comments that exit means that, for example, a customer will leave a company because of dissatisfaction with its product while in 'voice' the individual decides to attempt to change the situation rather than give up and walk away from it and Hirschman strongly supports this as being a political action *par excellence.*[19] In the event, I decided that these responses could not satisfactorily be used in the Israeli context under study. One frequent response to pressure is withdrawal: apathy, indifference, or alienation which Hirschman does not identify in his model. Furthermore, the term 'protest' is more suitable than 'voice' in the Israeli case. Dissent is more suitable than 'exit' for the refusal to participate in a course of action considered ethically wrong and reprehensible, after protests had failed. This can be manifested as a position of selective conscientious objection, or even leaving the country.[20]

As for loyalty, that was most clearly apparent until the war in Lebanon. In times of danger to the existence of the State of Israel, airports in the Diaspora saw a surge of Israelis living abroad who spontaneously wished to return immediately to fight for their country. However, this has not been the case during the war in Lebanon or during the Intifada. The troubled reservists who eventually found the pressure intolerable started at first by 'withdrawal', then could not remain apathetic or superficially compliant and were moved to protest publicly; and finally some of them progressed to the stage where they declared that they would formally refuse to serve as reservists in a situation which they found morally repellent.

Walzer's book dealing with obligations was very helpful for an understanding of the reservists' moral dilemmas. According to Walzer, commitment to principles is also commitment to other people.[21] When a reservist refuses to serve in a specific military mission, he knows that he will be deemed to be saving his own skin at the expense of increased danger to those who have agreed to serve[22] but he may decide that sometimes to be a selective conscientious objector is 'the only resort of the principled and lonely man'.[23] Withdrawal is of course by definition silent and private. But in the next stage, that of 'protest', there are two variations: protesting against the physical burden and against the moral burden, which the reservist finds unacceptable. Dissent also has two stages: 'gray': a covert position of resistance and 'white': an overt resistance combined with a public exit from the organization.

In this paper, these responses are analysed through the use of multiple sources of evidence.[24] The data were 1) studies on refusing reservists during the war in Lebanon and the Intifada;[25] 2) studies on objecting reservists who nevertheless decided to serve;[26] 3) published press items

including letters from reservists and interviews with those who openly expressed their objections to being recalled to serve and 4) items in the Israeli press dealing with the positions of reservists as well as personal statements.

Analysis

I. Withdrawal

The hardship of the reserve service is one of the central topics in the Israeli rite of *Kiturim* (Hebrew slang for complaining). Most reservists choose only to complain rather than to take active steps to change their position personally or to set out to advocate a reappraisal of the country's IDF powers.[27] This state of withdrawal among reservists has been described by an Israeli psychiatrist as follows:[28]

> In Israel, you always find yourself before, during, or after a war. Thus, in 1985 we were 'after the war in Lebanon'. In 1990 we were 'during the uprising in the occupied territories' and perhaps 'before the war with Iraq'. No one can predict if and when the characteristic Israeli situation will change . . . a young, healthy and more or less sane male recruit is expected to retain a uniform for 37 years . . . He may emigrate from Israel . . . or he may be manipulated for decades by the military machine, for more as well as for less justified security needs of the country . . . I am a 45-year-old Israeli. 27 years have passed since I was drafted, or drifted, into the army and completed compulsory service. I have passed through several wars and served in the reserves — nothing impressive by Israeli standards. I have ten more years of military duty to serve. Time will pass, I shall, or shall not, manage.

The term 'gray refusal' (*sarvanut afora*) is used in the Israeli military idiom to describe the stratagem of evading annual reserve duty when summoned to do so: for instance, faking physical illness, or by attempting bribery. It has been said that the IDF connived at accepting doubtful medical grounds for releasing reservists from duty during the Intifada rather than prosecuting resisters who did not wish to take a public stand and risk public opprobrium and a prison sentence.[29] However, there have been 'gray' refusers who decided to speak out. On 15 September 1989, an Israeli daily newspaper quoted a reservist as stating that although his refusal was gray, it was also public and adding: 'it could be said that I am being evasive and just looking after myself . . . but in a society which throws so many burdens on you, that is a legitimate action to take'.[30]

Another 'gray' refuser, a sergeant in an armoured unit, has been quoted as stating:[31]

> I am frustrated because . . . we do not know what we are fighting for . . . Fighting in order to defeat them — I agree. If we are fighting in order to give them a state — I agree. Fighting for nothing — I don't agree with. It started in the Lebanon war . . . I don't want to die for Shamir or the generals . . . I am not going to sacrifice myself for any of it . . . Therefore I lowered my

> medical profile . . . but I don't feel good about it because I let down my friends who remained there . . . I am not fully at peace with my decision but I live with it.

Here it must be noted that a day before the reserve service, 'commander days' are arranged when soldiers with sudden personal problems can present their case. Since the Intifada, there has been some increase in these pleas for release, prompting some commanders when summoning reservists for annual duty to advise them in writing not to seek release, hinting at their subsequent guilt feelings if they did obtain release on false grounds — or in some cases stating bluntly: 'there will be no release'.[32]

Since the war in Lebanon, but even more so since the Intifada, researchers have commented on the great strain imposed on Israeli military personnel[33] who must at all times, in any military conflict, show toughness and resilience — a demand on the troops and on their households and their extended families which results in an almost intolerable burden emotionally not unlike the conditions of chronic post-traumatic stress disorder. It is worth noting that since the war in Lebanon, army generals have publicly discussed the question of whether soldiers should be allowed to cry.[34]

II. Protest:

A. Protesting against the physical burden of the reserve service

In a detailed letter to the Ministry of Defence in January 1993, one hundred reservists complained about the heavy burden placed on them and their comrades while others were exempted from carrying any part of the load. If the load had been light, it would not have mattered so much; but when the load is exceedingly heavy, then the person carrying it alone will collapse — and the mission also will therefore collapse.[35] That letter then added: 'So long as Israel is in a state of peace, the burden of the reservists is not great. It weighs only about one kilo and even if that weight is not equally distributed among the troops, it will not worry anyone too much. However, when the State of Israel is in the position of engaging in a "small war" as in Lebanon or during the Intifada, more reserve units are required to serve in order to carry out the present security duties'.[36]

Some years earlier, in April 1988, another Israeli daily newspaper published a protest by a reservist about being 'exposed to unlimited army service until the age of 55 and having to become a 'career' officer without the benefits of the real career officer.[37] During the Intifada, also in April 1988, an adult education teacher wrote to the same newspaper to state that some of his students had had to miss three months of studies because they were called twice in one year for reserve duty and were thus gravely handicapped in completing their course of study.[38] That same month,

another daily published a letter from an anguished reservist who was torn between his patriotism and his frustration as a reservist:[39]

> I wanted to learn to be a technical engineer . . . but I feared that this might not be simple to achieve. This is my seventh service in the territories . . . and I am a married man with two children . . . I would become a refuser if it would not hurt my family and prejudice my studies. I would become a refuser not only because of the wrongdoing in the territories but also because the reserve service is ruining my life: my studies have been so prolonged because of the reserves; twice already my tour of duty has fallen at exam time. It is true that sometimes you get a day off in order to sit for your exams, but who has a head for studying for exams between tear gas and stones?

There was also the case of Ron Shamir, an outstanding second-year electrical engineer student at Tel-Aviv University. Two months after the start of the Intifada, he was called for a month of reserve service, which coincided with the period of his examination in the second semester. He was a reserve major who was a company commander in an armoured division. He was reported in an Israeli newspaper a year later, in December 1988, as stating that of course he was aware that he could have applied for special permission for a delay in his tour of duty but, he added:[40]

> I am a company commander and I have 60 soldiers under my command. They all come to me with problems and ask to be released. How can I refuse their requests on the one hand and release myself on the other? That would not be moral. This was not simply a routine reserve tour. It came during the hardest part of the Intifada. This is not a period of war in which each person fully sacrifices himself, but a period which is associated with difficult inner emotional dilemmas. I cannot see myself sending my soldiers on a month of reserve service while I am sitting at home.

Ron Shamir therefore obeyed the call for reserve service, but took a day off to sit for his examinations and believed it was miraculous that he was successful. However, during the following semester he was again called for reserve duty and again his term of service coincided with the date of his examinations, and again he had to take a day off from the army to sit for the examinations, but this time he failed and had to abandon his studies temporarily and to forfeit his tuition fees. When he complained to the army authorities, he was told that he ought to have applied to Valtam for a delay and/or for a shorter period of service. But that did not pacify him and he commented:[41]

> There is no equal share of the burden. Only two or three per cent of the population perform this amount of reserve duty. I do not ask anybody to honour me for doing it, but I think that they should reflect on the matter. The easy thing would be to leave the service at the front line and become a driver in the rear. Then I would be able to apply to Valtam without any feelings of guilt. I feel as if I am in a catch-22 situation. Everybody says: 'Apply to

> Valtam'. I did not apply and consequently I am thrown out of my course of studies.

He expressed his resentment further:[42]

> I wanted to ask the Dean if he had ever done reserve duty. He gave me the impression that he did not know what I was talking about. I wonder what percentage of students do reserve service . . . the only source of encouragement which I had was from fellow reservists of my rank who were stuck in the same mire.

Another Intifada reservist also commented on the unequal burden of military service, stating that he believed that there were about 240 men eligible for reserve duty in his place of work, but that only 15 had been called back again and again.[43] And yet another reservist noted that in the history of the State of Israel 'not all of the Israeli nation has taken an equal share of the extraordinary burden of national security . . .' and he asked 'Why doesn't the State Comptroller examine how many people are not part of the effort that many believe to be the backbone of the building of our nation?'[44]

A similar point was made by a reservist writing to a newspaper: 'Reserve service implies a burden, often a heavy one and sometimes very heavy . . . I suggest that you do not casually refer to it as "The Nation's Army" . . . Sometimes it is not so'.[45] When a career officer scolded a reservist for not being on the alert while serving in Gaza, the reply was: 'How many years can you keep your hand on the rifle? 10 years? 15 years? The hand is tired'.[46]

The career army commanders asked the reserve commanders again and again to call up their own soldiers for annual service and then the reserve commanders added a personal note to their official draft order advising their soldiers that they were to consider the very heavy load of reserve duty as being 'VOLUNTARY'.[47] Some annual reservists complained that they were being gradually transformed into 'CAREER reservists'[48] — since they were summoned for reserve duty more often than once a year. The situation gave rise to two developments. Reservists stressed the injustice in the uneven distribution of the burden of annual duty while the career commanders who mobilized them, as well as civilian institutions, commented about the low degree of motivation to serve and added that there was need to develop an educational curriculum which would condemn refusal to serve in the IDF. In April 1993, a daily newspaper reported that reservists had been required to build homes for career officers;[49] and in May 1996 the same newspaper stated that reservists had been given the task of cooking food for a lavish party for members of the Air Force, including pilots.[50] Nevertheless, the division of behavioural science of the IDF issued a statement published in *Haaretz* asserting: 'There is motivation to serve in the IDF'.[51] But it is important to state here that such a conclusion was, and still is, debatable

because most studies on such motivation are conducted in high schools or among young conscripts; and it seems unwarranted to infer from the motivation of a teenager who wants to wear a uniform, to hold a gun, and to engage in hazardous military activities that such an attitude is also to be found among the (repeatedly oppressed) reservists. An example of this lack of insight is seen in the decision of the Ministry of Defence, during the Intifada to ensure that high school pupils were taught that they must not refuse to serve — although at that time there had not been even one known comprehensive study about resisting reservists.[52]

In March 1996, a daily paper reported that a lieutenant-colonel, who had served in the Gaza Strip, had written a letter of indignant protest to the Prime Minister about 300 Technion students who were reservists and who had been called up when they should have been sitting for their examinations: their university teachers could not be bothered to spend extra time in order to prepare other examination papers for the reservists to take after serving their annual tour. He had added: 'This group of officers who do reserve duty belong to the tiny fragment of Israeli society who really serve in spite of everything. And look, in spite of the heavy burden of service, a group of professors stand against them and spit in their face . . . the reservists have become the BLACK SLAVES of Israeli society'.[53]

The State Comptroller published a report for 1996 warning the public that there was 'a growing tendency to create an unequal share of burden in the reserve service among fighting units' and adding that there was growing difficulty in finding reservists willing to go on active missions — with the result that in some extreme cases only one-fifth of the required number of men were available.[54] It is not surprising that when very unhappy reservists were asked to state in a survey what it was which really bothered them, most of them replied: 'The reserve service itself'.[55] By December 1997, some ten years after the Intifada, the physical burden of the reservists did not seem to be part of the national consciousness.[56] Indeed, that burden of the reservists is hardly given any prominence in the public discourse regarding the army: their moral dilemmas and their protests during the Intifada appear to have been totally forgotten.[57]

It was only on 23 December 1997 that the Knesset's defence and foreign committee approved a proposal that reserve service must be no longer than 36 days a year and that by the age of 48 there would be release from military duties. Moreover, the emergency order — Order no. 8 which had allowed the IDF to recall reserves for an unlimited period of service — was abrogated.[58]

Some reservists have taken to writing short stories on the basis of their experience in the Intifada. In September 1997, *Ma'ariv* published a tale in which a reservist is called up again and again but notices that the numbers of those serving in his unit are dwindling and eventually he overhears his comrades avoiding duty by lying to their commanders,

inventing various excuses. Their real reason for doing so was that they simply had had enough and more than enough (*nishbar lahem*). And at last for the first time he decided that he too had had enough; he believed that if the public knew the extent of avoidance of duty even in his elite unit, there would be a clamour for a national inquiry.[59]

B. Protest against the moral burden of the service

Since the Intifada was considered to have been 'neither a guerrilla war nor a terror campaign' but just a little war,[60] what was primarily required was policing work, for which the average Israeli reservist was not trained. The immediate response was that some mature reservists from all walks of life organized themselves into groups of volunteers who would assume an extra load of duty in order to fight the Intifada; but they were later asked by the IDF to stop their activities because of the danger of politicizing the army. However, those men who were ordered during the Intifada to carry out mainly police duties[61] continued to find themselves without any moral or legal guidelines or support, when they had to use their fighting skills and equipment against violent women and children who were using not firearms but 'cold' weapons (such as building blocks, axes, knives, and petrol bombs). The authorities at first considered the demonstrations of the Intifada to be sporadic riots: they failed to realize the depth and magnitude of the uprising.[62]

The first two months of the Intifada were later dubbed 'the two black months'.[63] Yitzhak Rabin, who was then Minister of Defence, ordered that stone-throwers should be beaten rather than have live bullets fired at them and he assured the troops that he would personally accept responsibility for that policy,[64] which he hoped would 'look better morally'.[65] Whereas it was not clear how one should 'fight' women and children, it was even more complicated to follow the written commands to disperse a demonstration, by taking the following steps: using tear gas; firing rubber bullets; firing plastic bullets — less harmful than live ammunition but also less accurate at a range exceeding 15 metres — and firing only at the legs; and finally using live ammunition if rioters seemed to be older than 16 years of age and were more than 70 metres away, and only if they had refused to disperse after having been given a warning to do so. These regulations for policing the demonstrations of the Intifada were in accordance with the ideal moral code of the IDF known as 'purity of arms' — that is, making an attempt to use military power in a careful and fair way.[66] But the reservists had difficulty in obeying the instructions. Many of them had doubts about the morality of using live ammunition against the rioters, even in life-threatening situations, but that attitude changed after the eve of the Jewish New Year in September 1990, when a 30-year-old reservist was burned alive by Arab rioters following a car accident in the Gaza Strip. The frustration of reservists at having to

maintain a humanitarian stand in the face of the provocative tactics of Intifada rioters was exploited by Arab activists — as was made evident in an interview with one of them who had been reported in March 1988 as saying:[67]

> Our role is to have your army stay in the area all the time . . . There are now tens of thousands of soldiers in the territories . . . So you will need the reserves. And reserves means an economic collapse of the civilian market, horror stories and an accumulation of bitterness. Time is on our side.

As the Intifada continued, the orders given to reservists became increasingly difficult to implement. In December 1990, a reservist who had served in the Gaza Strip was reported in a daily newspaper as stating:[68]

> The mission as detailed to the soldiers is not to overpower the Intifada but to LOWER THE VOLUME OF VIOLENCE. How do you lower the volume of violence? . . . The pockets of the commanders are bursting with the pile of orders in them . . . To all these must be added the dozens of verbal regulations and orders cancelling the written orders. New troops who come to the territories go through hours of instruction until the mind refuses to absorb any more.

The reaction to the stress of the moral burden was to express resentment against the army command in particular,[69] whereas the physical burden of repeated orders to return for reserve duty was generally believed to reflect the unfairness of the structure of Israeli society, which did not ensure that the burden should be more evenly distributed. The exasperated and resentful reservist as a result moved closer to a position of Dissent — when he could leave his intolerable situation and decide on non-involvement in a course of action which he found morally reprehensible. This was especially the case when sets of contradictory instructions increased. In December 1990, for example, a daily newspaper published a letter from 32 reservists who had been on duty in Gaza. They stated that they had killed no rioters and had not broken any bones and asked what the commanders who sent them to Gaza wanted them to do, 'apart from being a moving target for the Intifada forces'.[70]

Reservists found it sometimes traumatic to serve as prison guards, after terrorists had been incarcerated, and the most frequent reasons for openly refusing to serve was in such situations.[71] Indeed, the stress was so great that some reservists required medical treatment for nervous breakdowns during such tours of duty.[72] There were reservists who, before deciding to opt entirely out of reserve duty, showed their unease by simply declaring that they were fearful — which was sometimes seen as a form of cowardice by the Israeli public and was therefore condemned. But when there were detailed interviews with such men, it became apparent that they were not simply frightened of the danger of fighting the Intifada but that they were also greatly concerned about the moral

validity of the task. A paratrooper who had been a dedicated soldier and had served in the reserve service for six months after the Yom Kippur war and later more than two months every year for three years during the war in Lebanon declared: 'I am a paratrooper. It is a very scary job. I always fear the jump from the airplane . . . but here, in the Lebanon war, I could not find the strength to overcome my fears. I think I just did not want to'.[73] After the war in Lebanon there was a growing tendency among soldiers and reservists to complain publicly about their sense of alienation and about the lack of understanding and sympathy for their plight.

In January 1989 a reserve paratrooper stationed in the territories complained to the Prime Minister during a televised visit to Nablus that he could not know what a reservist like him endured, since the regular army commanders themselves did not know.[74] That paratrooper was later rebuked for his outburst by the Chief of Central Command (although he himself was a known critic of the Lebanon war). A month later, in February 1989, the *Jerusalem Post* had published a letter from a reservist who stated:[75]

> One of the saddest experiences for someone returning from a stint of army service in the territories is to see how many friends and relatives simply don't want to hear what you saw or did there. At first you see the blank look in the eyes, you understand that your story isn't sinking in, and you think that maybe there's something wrong with the way you're telling it. It takes a while to realize that the blank look appeared the moment you began your story. It is not from lack of sympathy or understanding on the listener's part; it is simply an obstinate refusal to know — a generalized refusal that is possibly the worst casualty the Intifada has inflicted on this country.

Those who were seriously concerned and disturbed by the demands of reserve duty could gain inspiration and support — directly or indirectly — from two major movements:

1. *Yesh Gvul* (literally 'there is a limit' or 'there is a border' — a clever pun on the word *Gvul*) was established in 1981 and became active during the war in Lebanon when it advocated refusal by reservists to serve in the territories. That was the most vocal movement regarding refusal.
2. *Peace Now* was founded before the visit of President Sadat to Israel. During the war in Lebanon, it supported fighting reservists who advocated withdrawal from Lebanon and later, those who advocated negotiations with the P.L.O. during the Intifada. However, these reservists condemned refusal to serve but urged the troops to preserve their moral principles while on army duty.

Though not directly related to reservists, it is important to note that since the war in Lebanon, Israeli society saw, for the first time, parents (mainly mothers) publicly acting on behalf of soldiers. Thus, for example, there was a group calling itself 'Mothers Against Silence' who urged withdrawal

from Lebanon during that war, while 'Parents Against Erosion' (with a play on the words *shkhika*, meaning erosion, and *shtika*, meaning silence) was a movement established by fathers and mothers of new conscripts drafted after the age of 18 years; they stated that they were concerned 'about the damage caused to the IDF as a result of its dealing with oppression rather than defence'.[76] Though these parents were concerned about the young recruits, their criticism was important as it became clear to the public that it was not only male reservists who had moral reservations about IDF policies. Mothers have recently been very active in their peace movements.[77] After a collision of two military aircraft in April 1997 on their way to Lebanon when 73 combat soldiers were killed, some women reacted by coming together and calling themselves 'Four Mothers' (after the four biblical Jewish matriarchs, Sara, Leah, Rachel, and Rebecca). They criticized the position of Sara who did not protest when Abraham proceeded to sacrifice Isaac in obedience to God. Even though in Israel mothers do not have the same military importance as men, since they are not combatants in times of war, they argued that they have the right to criticize the military engagement in Lebanon (where their husbands had already served as reservists before their sons became eligible to go there). The war in Lebanon had cost the lives of many soldiers — in vain according to them. They demanded that the policy of posting their sons and the sons of other mothers to the security zone in Lebanon be reconsidered,[78] and they stressed that their sons were dedicated soldiers and that they had not encouraged them to resist service or to refuse to serve in specified circumstances.

It is here relevant to note that the IDF took care during the first months of the Intifada, with few exceptions, not to send reservists to confront the rioters, 'fearing refusal'[79] and that this policy about reservists was implemented for the following ten years by not posting them on service to Hebron, where activism by Arabs and by settlers is particularly intense.[80] Moreover, reservists are rarely posted to the security zone in Lebanon.[81]

III. Dissent

A. 'White' refusal

Throughout the three-year war in Lebanon (1982–1985) and the seven years of the Intifada (1987–1994), about 170 reservists refused to serve in specific areas when their unit was ordered to do so. At first, most of them were willing to comply with orders for general military service but requested permission to be posted within the Green Line (the borders before the victory of the Six-Day War of 1967). But that request was not granted. The men then refused to respond to their annual call-up and were charged with offending against military discipline: Israel has no

legislation providing for conscientious objection in military matters. They were tried by court-martial and were sentended to periods of from 14 to 35 days in a military prison — some of the reservists more than once, when they refused again to serve in the same circumstances.

Such a decision to make a public stand and deliberately refuse to serve combined with the acceptance of being tried by court-martial has been labelled 'white' refusal (in Hebrew, *seruv lavan*). Surveys have shown that the average reservist in such cases is an experienced soldier who had fought in earlier combats, was over thirty years of age, was a college graduate, and had children.[82] As noted above, 'gray' refusal refers to avoidance tactics: cases of reservists who are unwilling to serve in some circumstances and who contrive to obtain exemptions. In January 1992, it was estimated by both the authorities and the 'white' refusers that there were some ten 'gray' refusers for each 'white' refuser.[83] The IDF then gradually adopted an unofficial policy toward those who were suspected of being 'troublemakers' — reservists who were ordered to serve in areas which could not be described as being morally controversial.[84] A study of selective conscientious objectors (that is, when a reservist does not refuse *any* military duty, but only military service in some specific circumstance) suggests that avoidance of service is a situation more serious than the authorities are willing to admit: gray and white refusal are not distinctly different forms of protest, but lie along the same continuum.[85] The reasons given by reservists for white refusals ranged from unwillingness to serve in military prisons, or in the occupied territories (to guard Jewish settlements there), or to have contact with Palestinian Arabs. The most extreme challenge to the legitimacy of the IDF presence in the territories was refusal to serve because of reluctance to wear the IDF uniform when there on duty because under these circumstances the uniform symbolized occupation.[86] That public dissent on the part of reservists was considered by the authorities to be 'insignificant compared with 1.5 million days of reserve duty in the territories'.[87]

Many refusers claimed that it was only after their protests were not acknowledged or were ignored by Israeli society when they had made a conventional personal or collective form of protest, that they finally decided to make a personal stand and manifest their dissent'.[88] They did not stand in judgement against those who objected to serve but did not become refusers[89] but they themselves had decided to take individual positions of white refusal — since the ability to act alone is necessary in the case of personal disobedience.[90] Such a reservist was setting out on a lonely path because he was alienated from general society, from his career army commanders, and even from fellow-reservists who, as one Intifada refuser commented, 'fail even to see that refusal is a possible course of action'.[91]

Although selective refusal became a recognized form of moral stand during the Intifada, it was not a stand which escaped social and public

condemnation. As for military authorities, a retired general who had served in the Lebanon war commented that white refusers were 'traitors who should stay in prison . . . nobody has the right to decide where he wants to serve . . . That is the beginning of anarchy . . . [They] should be stripped of all rights as citizens'.[92]

It is not clear why most Israelis are reluctant to decide on the extreme stand of open resistance but some researchers tend to ascribe it to a profound inculcation of a strong sense of collective responsibility.[93] In January 1993, a daily newspaper printed a letter from reservists who had seen two of their comrades shot while serving in the Gaza Strip and who bitterly resented what they considered to have been an unnecessary posting there; but they concluded their letter by saying 'If called again to serve in Gaza, we will not refuse'.[94]

B. External and internal rejection of IDF service

Since Israel gives any Jew on arrival immediate citizenship and since it depends heavily on the commitment of its citizens to defend the country, those Israelis who have decided to leave in order to settle in another country are treated with some contempt and are called *Yordim* (those who go down, who descend, in contrast to those who make *Aliya*, who come up to settle in Israel). Emigration is often seen as an extension of refusal to serve and is therefore usually condemned.[95] It is worth noting that studies have shown that the numbers who stated that they wished to emigrate increased during the Intifada from 18 to 25 per cent, although official sources naturally tended to minimize that correlation. But in an interview in March 1990, the army's chief of personnel was quoted in the IDF magazine as stating that duty during the Intifada leads the soldiers to experience burn-out 'and causes them to emigrate'.[96] Emigration was a quiet way of refusing to continue to serve; 36 per cent of the Intifada refusers viewed emigration as a linear extension of their moral decision to refuse to continue to serve.[97]

While external dissent means leaving the country, suicide may be said to be a form of internalized dissent. That was the most extreme form of dissent which those carrying out research among reservists during the Intifada considered evident.[98] There has been an increase in the number of Israeli soldiers who deliberately decided to kill themselves (and succeeded in doing so) since the war in Lebanon and since the Intifada; but as far as I know, no study has been published on a possible link between these suicides and the degree of resilience or despair felt by troops engaged in these distasteful conflicts from which they believed they could disengage themselves only by death.[99] About 30 men commit suicide in the IDF every year and an average of about eight of these are reservists. During the Intifada, some reservists saw the increased rate of suicide by their comrades as a manifestation of a moral impasse which

the men could not overcome.[100] In one case, a reservist was accused of mistreating an Arab who was arrested when there was a serious riot during the Intifada; after an investigation the reservist committed suicide and left a letter for his brother, who was about to be conscripted into the IDF. This letter was published in August 1989 in a daily newspaper and included the following passage: 'I hope you will be a good soldier and do well in your service. I believe that part of your assignment in the territories will be to suppress a troublesome population of one kind or another. Unfortunately, the one who is hurt is the one who is forced by the system to do what he is not permitted to do.'[101]

Conclusion

As I stated earlier in this article, I decided that Hirschman's model of modes of response to an organizational pressure[102] was not fully applicable to the situation of Israeli reservists who showed various degrees of selective resistance during the war in Lebanon and later during the Intifada. I have found that selective refusal to serve was a form of what he termed 'exit' rather than of what he termed 'voice' (protesting openly). The subject has been studied by various reasearchers on disobedience.[103] On the other hand, the Israeli situation resembles that which Hirschman's model describes as 'exit': for a member of an organization, one way of showing disaffection is to opt out, to leave — but it is an option which is neither easy nor attractive to choose in Israel. However, in the case of the resisting reservist, it is not the institution (the IDF) which is capable of exacting a high price for the act of leaving it openly, but the reservist's own moral determination. The reservist is willing to show loyalty (self-sacrifice) for a clear moral imperative; but when he has very grave doubts about the validity of the burden he has been ordered to carry, the dedicated life-long civilian in uniform — that is, the reservist — may be unable to find moral justification for agreeing to serve in a specific morally-controversial situation. But his decision to dissent openly is not easy to bear. Of course the easiest way out would be withdrawal, or 'gray' refusal — employing a strategy of avoidance of service rather than of open confrontation with the IDF. Although a reservist may publicly disagree with an IDF course of action — such as the war in Lebanon or the way of fighting the Intifada — he will not easily make a more momentous decision and openly imply that he is not fully committed to his Israeli identity since that identity is inextricably linked with the centrality of army service.

However, since the war in Lebanon and since the Intifada, some Israeli reservists have dared to challenge the deep-seated and almost automatic willingness on the part of troops to serve unconditionally in situations of armed conflict or of physical danger from Arab activists. Such a stand, which the resisting reservists justify on the ground of moral principles,

requires further objective study. In that context, it is important to note that by the time of the Intifada such reactions as protest, dissent, and emigrating from Israel, were no longer so shocking to the Israeli public — which nevertheless continued to condemnm open defiance and extreme decisions as most reprehensible. The reservists who did resist so forcefully and openly, however, were not totally at ease with their stand. They had had no wish to develop an isolated sense of moral identity and to dissociate themselves from Israeli society.[104] On the contrary, it is because such a reservist feels intensely loyal to his country and is convinced that the IDF now expects him to deviate from the moral stand in which he was nurtured, that he feels it is duty to denounce the wrongs perpetuated in the name of serving soldiers and to speak out in public condemnation. 'Now criticism follows from connection'.[105]

NOTES

[1] Alfred Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, Cambridge, MA., 1970.

[2] R. Gal, *A Portrait of the Israeli Soldier*, Westport, CT., 1986, and *The Seventh War: The effect of the Intifada on Israeli Society* (Hebrew), Kibbutz Meuhad, Tel Aviv, 1990.

[3] Gal, op. cit., 1990.

[4] S. Swirsky and P. M. Safir, eds, *Calling the Equality Bluff*, New York, 1991.

[5] Gal, 1986, op. cit. in note 2 above, p. 40.

[6] Ibid., p. 147.

[7] Ibid.

[8] A. Levy, 'Yes, Lady, Your Blood is Redder than Mine: Israeli Men as Victims', *Israel Journal of Psychiatry and Relational Sciences*, vol. 27, no. 4, 1990, pp. 247–50.

[9] M. Blatt, U. Davis, and P. Klinbaum, *Dissent and Ideology in Israel: Resistance to the Draft (1948–1973)*, London, 1975.

[10] A. Oren, 'Privates and Generals: The Subjectivity of Objection', paper presented at the International Seminar on Conscientious Objection, 18–20 November 1992, The Israel Institute of Military Studies, Caesaria.

[11] E. Sprinzak, 'Extreme Politics in Israel', *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, vol 5, 1977, pp. 33–47; and Sprinzak, *Every Man Whatever in His Own Eyes* (Hebrew), Sifriat Poalim, Tel Aviv, 1986.

[12] See Blatt *et al.*, op. cit. in note 9 above and see also L. Shelef, *The Voice of Honour: Civil Disobedience and Civil Loyalty* (Hebrew), Ramot Publishing, Tel Aviv, 1989.

[13] Gal, 1986, op. cit. in note 2 above; and D. Hardan, ed., *The Moral and Existential Dilemmas of the Israeli Soldier* (Hebrew), World Zionist Organization, Jerusalem, 1985.

[14] Ruth Linn, *Not Shooting and Not Crying: Psychological Inquiry into Moral Disobedience*, Westport, CT., 1989 and Linn, *Conscience at War: The Israeli Soldier as a Moral Critic*, Albany, NY., 1996. See also R. Linn and C. Gilligan, 'One action, two moral orientations: The tension between justice and care voices in Israeli selective conscientious objectors', *New Ideas in Psychology*, vol. 8, no. 2, 1990, pp. 189–203.

[15] S. Mischel and R. Aharoni, *Speaking Stones: The Words Behind the Palestinian Intifada* (Hebrew), Kibbutz Meuhad, Tel Aviv, 1989; R. L. Schiff, 'Israel as an "Uncivil" State: A Reconsideration of Civil–Military Relations', *Security Studies*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1992, pp. 636–58; Z. Schiff and E. Yaari, *Israel's Lebanon War* (translated and edited by Ina Friedman), New York, 1984; Schiff and Yaari, *Intifada* (Hebrew), Schocken, 1990; and A. Shalev, *The Intifada: Causes and Effects* (Hebrew), Papyrus, Tel Aviv, 1990.

[16] *Ha'ir*, 11 March 1983.

[17] Linn, 1989 and 1996, op. cit. in note 14 above.

[18] E. Ben-Ari, 'Masks and Soldiering: The Israeli Army and the Palestinian Uprising', *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 4, no. 4, 1989, pp. 372–89; U. Ben Eliezer, 'The Nation in Arms and War: Israel in its First Years', *Zmanim* (Hebrew), vol. 13, 1994, pp. 50–65; C. Ben Noon, *Civil Disobedience* (Hebrew), Yaar, Tel Aviv, 1992; C. Gans, *Philosophical Anarchism and Political Disobedience*, Cambridge, 1992; E. Inbar, 'Israel's Small War: The Military Response to the Intifada', *Armed Forces and Society*, vol. 18, no. 1, 1991, pp. 29–50; S. Helman, 'Militarism and the Construction of Community', *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, vol. 25, no. 2, 1997, pp. 305–32; by B. Kimmerling, 'Militarism in Israeli Society: Theory and Criticism' and *An Israeli Forum* (Hebrew), vol. 4, 1993, pp. 123–40; and E. Lumski-Feder, 'The Personal Meaning of the War Experience: Life Stories of Israeli Men', *Megamot* (Hebrew), vol. 38, no. 1, 1996, pp. 48–73.

[19] Hirschman, op. cit. in note 1 above.

[20] Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action*, New York, 1897.

[21] M. Walzer, *Obligations: Essays on Disobedience*, Cambridge, MA, 1970.

[22] M. Walzer, *The Company of Critics: Social Criticism and Political Commitment in the Twentieth Century*, New York, 1988.

[23] M. Walzer, 'Civil Disobedience and Resistance', *Dissent*, 1968, pp. 13–15.

[24] R. K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, Beverly Hills, CA., 1984.

[25] Linn, 1889 and 1996, op. cit. in note 14 above.

[26] A. M. Pines, 'The Intifada and Israeli Burn-out' in R. Gal, ed., *The Seventh War: The Effect of the Intifada on Israeli Society* (Hebrew), Kibbutz Meuhad, Tel Aviv, 1990.

[27] T. Katriel, *Communal Webs: Communication and Culture in Contemporary Israel*, New York, 1991: T. Katriel and P. Nesher, 'Gibush: The Rhetoric of Cohesion in Israeli School Culture', *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 30, no. 2, 1986, pp. 216–32.

[28] Levy, op. cit. in note 8 above, pp. 247–48.

[29] During the Intifada, on 1 January 1992, it was revealed that a general had exempted reservists from service after they had made a generous donation to his unit and that he was court-martialled. The daily, *Ma'ariv*, stated on 19 December 1993 that an increasing number of reservists chose to 'get out of the Intifada through the room of the psychiatrist . . . many would have been happy to transfer to another duty, but the IDF prefers that the problem of refusal to serve in the territories be hidden behind the back of the fraudulent release for mental reasons'. *Yediot Aharonot* on 19 April 1996

quoted the head of the Behavioural Research Unit of the IDF as saying: 'There is a lot of gray refusal [but] . . . the prisons are not filled with reservists who are not willing to serve . . . Reservists find various ways not to perform a particular tour of duty'.

[30] *Yediot Aharonot*, 15 September 1989.

[31] R. Rosen and I. Hamerman, *Soldiers in the Land of Ishmael: Stories and Documents* (Hebrew), Am Oved, Tel Aviv, 1990, p. 200.

[32] *Yediot*, 15 September 1989.

[33] M. Student, *In the Shadow of War: Memories of a Soldier and Therapist*, Philadelphia, 1991.

[34] *Ma'ariv*, 22 June 1997.

[35] *Hadashot*, 20 January 1993.

[36] Ibid.

[37] *Ha-aretz*, 26 April 1988.

[38] Ibid.

[39] *Hadashot*, 20 January 1993.

[40] *Hadashot*, 25 December 1988.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] *Ha-aretz*, 18 June 1989.

[44] *Yediot*, 14 June 1990.

[45] Ibid., 16 June 1991.

[46] Ibid., 12 December 1990.

[47] Ibid., 25 June 1990.

[48] *Ma'ariv*, 9 April 1990.

[49] *Yediot*, 2 April 1993.

[50] Ibid., 10 May 1996.

[51] *Ha-aretz*, 20 July 1995.

[52] *Ma'ariv*, 17 November 1996. See also O. Mayeseless and I. Hai, 'Leaving Home Transition in Israel: Changes in Parents-Adolescents Relationships and Adaptation to Military Service' in forthcoming issue of *International Journal of Behavioral Development* and an earlier article by Mayeseless, 'Attitudes Toward Military Service among Israeli Youth' in D. Ashkenazy, ed., *The Military Service of Society and Democracy*, Westport, CT., 1993, pp. 32–35.

[53] *Yediot*, 24 March 1996.

[54] Ibid., 1 May 1996.

[55] *Ma'ariv*, 10 September 1996.

[56] *Ha-aretz*, 8 December 1997.

[57] *Pesek Zman*, 14 December 1997.

[58] *Ma'ariv*, 24 December 1997.

[59] Ibid., 28 September 1997.

[60] Inbar, op. cit. in note 18 above.

[61] M. Benvenisti, *Fatal Embrace*, Maxwell-Macmillan-Deter, Tel Aviv, 1992.

[62] *Ha-aretz*, 29 November 1990.

[63] *Ma'ariv*, 10 November 1989.

[64] *Yediot*, 29 January 1988.

[65] *Ma'ariv*, 10 November 1989.

[66] D. Hardan, ed., *Moral and Existential Dilemmas of the Israeli Soldier* (Hebrew), World Zionist Organization, Jerusalem, 1985.

[67] *Ḥadashot*, 4 March 1988.
[68] *Ha-aretz*, 12 December 1990.
[69] M. Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, New York, 1977.
[70] *Yediot*, 7 December 1990.
[71] Linn, 1989 and 1996, op. cit. in note 14 above.
[72] *Ḥadashot*, 17 January 1992.
[73] Linn, 1996, op. cit. in note 14 above.
[74] *Yediot*, 18 April 1989.
[75] *Jerusalem Post*, 21 February 1989.
[76] Linn, 1996, op. cit. in note 14 above.
[77] Y. Azmon and D. Izraeli, *Women in Israel*, New Brunswick, 1993 and Y. Azmon, 'War, Mothers, and Girls with Braids: Involvement of Mothers' Peace Movements in the National Discourse in Israel', *Israel Social Science Research*, vol. 12, no. 1, 1997, pp. 109–28.
[78] *Jerusalem Post*, 6 June 1997.
[79] *Davar*, 28 January 1988.
[80] *Yediot*, 2 July 1997.
[81] This fact was acknowledged by Reserve General Amram Mizna and Member of Knesset Yossi Beilin at a conference organized by the Four Mothers Group at Haifa University on 10 March 1998.
[82] Linn, 1989 and 1996, op. cit. in note 14 above.
[83] *Ḥadashot*, 1 January 1992.
[84] Ibid., 17 March 1989.
[85] Linn, 1996, op. cit. in note 14 above.
[86] Ibid.
[87] *Ha-aretz*, 8 January 1993.
[88] Linn, 1996, op. cit. in note 14 above.
[89] Ruth Linn, 'Conscience at War and the Assessment of Credibility: Theoretical and Practical Questions', *Politics and the Individual*, vol. 4, no. 2, 1994, pp. 47–61.
[90] E. Fromm, *On Disobedience — and Other Essays*, New York, 1981.
[91] Linn, 1989, op. cit. in note 14 above.
[92] *Ha-aretz*, 19 May 1989.
[93] Katriel and Nesher, 1986 and Katriel, 1988, op. cit. in note 27 above.
[94] *Yediot*, 1 January 1993.
[95] W. Freedman, 'Israel: The New Diaspora' in E. Levine, ed., *Diaspora* (Hebrew), Steimasky, Tel Aviv, 1986; Ruth Linn and N. Brakan-Ascher, 'Permanent Impermanence: Israeli Expatriates in Non-Event Transition', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 38, no. 1, June 1996, pp. 5–16; M. A. Meyer, *Jewish Identity in the Modern World*, Seattle and London, 1990; M. Shokeid, *Children of Circumstances: Israeli Emigrants in New York*, Ithaca and London, 1988; and Z. Sobel, *My Grants from the Promised Land*, New Brunswick, 1986.
[96] *Bamachane*, 26 March 1990.
[97] Linn, 1996, op. cit. in note 14 above.
[98] Ibid.
[99] G. H. Elder, 'War Mobilization and the Life Course: A Cohort of World War II Veterans', *Sociological Forum*, vol. 2, 1987, pp. 449–72; G. H. Elder and E. Clipp, 'Combat Experience, Comradeship and Psychological Health'

in Z. Harel and B. Kahana, eds, *Human Adaptations to Extreme Stress: From the Holocaust to Vietnam*, New York, 1988; G. H. Elder and E. Clipp, 'Combat Experience and Emotional Health: Impairment and Resilience in Later Life', *Journal of Personality*, June 1989, pp. 311–41; G. H. Elder, C. Gimbel, and R. Ivie, 'Turning Points in Life: The Case of Military Service and War', *Military Psychology*, vol. 3, no. 4, 1991, pp. 215–33; Gal, 1986, op. cit. in note 2 above; S. Noy, C. Nardi, and Z. Solomon, 'Battle and Military Unit Characteristics and Prevalence of Psychiatric Casualties' in N. Milgram, ed., *Stress and Coping in Times of War: Generalizations from Israeli Experience*, New York, 1986.

[100] *Hadashot*, 5 May 1990.

[101] Ibid., 20 August 1989.

[102] Hirschman, op. cit. in note 1 above.

[103] Ben Noon, op. cit. in note 18 above; Shelef, op. cit. in note 12 above; and Z. Sprinzak, 1986, op. cit. in note 11 above.

[104] Stuart A. Cohen, 'Towards a New Portrait of a (new) Israeli Soldier', *Israel Affairs*, vol. 3, 1997, pp. 77–117; Walzer, 1988, op. cit. in note 22 above; and G. R. Wark and L. D. Krebs, 'Sources of Variation in Moral Judgement: Toward a Model of Real Life Morality', *Journal of Adult Development*, vol. 4, no. 3, 1997, pp. 163–78.

[105] Walzer, 1988, op. cit. in note 22 above, p. 23.

STILL SEPARATED FROM THE MAINSTREAM: A HASSIDIC COMMUNITY REVISITED

William Shaffir

WITH some notable exceptions[1], practitioners of fieldwork do not usually return to the research setting to examine whether it has changed or if their analysis has stood the test of time. Several explanations can be offered to account for this situation. For some investigators, the direction of new research endeavours is determined by theoretical interests; if the particular setting is secondary to the theoretical category within which it is situated, and the researcher is not interested in the setting *per se*, he will not be drawn to return to it. For others, the more disagreeable aspects of fieldwork are too demanding. For instance, they have to find a very great deal of time for the research and to renew contact with people who are increasingly different from them, so that after they leave a setting they later display little interest in ever returning. A third consideration focuses less on the investigator's interest than on the people studied. The latter, for a variety of reasons, have come to be unhappy about the intrusion of the researcher and discourage him or her from returning. They may have read what was written about them, or heard about the results of the study, and conclude that it would not be in their best interest to welcome another visit from the fieldworker.

In a perceptive discussion on the advantages of maintaining contact with subjects who have been stigmatized as deviants, Miller and Humphreys assert that little in the sociological literature argues '. . . for purposeful continuation of interaction with respondents after termination of the formal interview stage'.[2] However, in their view, three such advantages are immediately apparent: first, triangulation, or the search for ancillary data to corroborate statements from interviews, is enhanced; second, a longitudinal dimension is added to the research, which in some cases is useful for research economy; and third, new or previously neglected areas of research could be discovered.[3] Shaffir and Stebbins have noted: '. . . field research projects tend to raise more questions than they answer, driving some investigators back to the original setting to do

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more work or simply to see what changes have taken place over the intervening years'.[4]

Hassidic Jews are set apart by their distinctive dress and unique customs and traditions and they have voluntarily segregated themselves in order to maintain a chosen way of life, well away from the mainstream. They have organized bounded communities and have achieved high degrees of institutional completeness to accommodate their religious and socio-economic needs.[5] In contrast to ethnic communities which have gradually become assimilated into the mainstream, the Hassidim have kept at bay secularizing influences and far from diminishing, are actually increasing in numbers and flourishing in communities along lines which were hardly anticipated a few decades ago.[6]

The hallmark of the Hassidim's social organization is their deliberate isolation from their secular surroundings — which has sometimes been interpreted by others as an assumption of superiority and has occasionally soured relations between them and their neighbours. However, it is probably because of their chosen life-style that Hassidim have attracted their share of publicity which — while perhaps temporarily unsettling — has not detracted from their ability to shield themselves from the surrounding society's assimilative influences. On the contrary: recognizing themselves to be the focus of attention, they have been drawn together and, in the process, have been strengthened in their commitment to their religious way of living.[7]

In this paper, I discuss several changes which characterize a Hassidic group about whom I first wrote in the June 1987 issue of this Journal: the Tasher.[8] They live in a community which they established in the 1960s in Boisbriand, Quebec, some 25 kilometres north of Montreal. I have maintained contact with them over the years and here I focus specifically on several demographic and institutional changes as well as on the Tasher's use of the media to enhance their own agenda. I conclude by speculating on future challenges that this community is likely to face in the years ahead.

Demographic Shifts and Institutional Additions

In a 1994 article[9] about the Tasher Hassidim in a popular magazine, the author states that they are 'cloistered in their self-imposed ghetto in Boisbrand, lead a life of strict devotion totally dedicated to carrying out the will of *Ha-Shem* on Earth and to raising children to do the same'. This is entirely consistent with the picture I drew of them in my 1987 article.[10] At first glance, the community's physical lay-out is not uncommon: bungalows, rows of attached duplexes, and a few buildings for the institutional needs of the residents. But also at first glance, the appearance of the inhabitants is striking: the men are bearded, have side-curls, and wear long black coats and occasionally fur-trimmed hats, while the women wear high-necked, loose-fitting dresses, with kerchiefs or

traditional wigs covering their hair. Conspicuously, the dress of the youngsters, and even of the very young children, mirrors that of adults and while one can see large numbers of children in the streets, there is a total absence of recreational or sports equipment such as skate boards, roller blades, hockey sticks, or baseball gloves and bats. In fact, for reasons of modesty, the charismatic leader of the Tasher, their Rebbe, even outlawed bicycles and scooters have served as a substitute. One is struck by the remarkable abundance of baby prams and strollers along the side walks and on front lawns. Pointing to the community's most populated street, a Tasher recently inquired of me: 'Do you know of another street in all of Canada which has as many children as ours?' Another Hassid commented that the average household has six to seven children and that since the parents are young, many more children can be expected: some couples have a child every year.

The Tasher community is dedicated to living uncontaminated by contact with modern society, but a visitor returning after several years will note some changes. One of the most obvious is that although the actual acreage has hardly changed, there are now numbers of newly-built bungalows and large multi-household houses. A new sign at the entrance to the Tasher enclave is printed in Yiddish, French, and English and states: 'Drive Carefully. Children at Play. Violators will be prosecuted'. Several new structures have been erected since 1987 to cater to the population growth: from 115 households then, to 180 in 1996. A girls' school, Bays Tzirl,[11] which was under construction in 1987, has long been completed and it has a spacious auditorium which serves as a centre for wedding celebrations. The school's enrolment, drawn exclusively from the community's pupils, stands at close to 400, a significant increase from the 160 total in 1987. The classes extend from kindergarten until Grade 12, by which time the girls are expected to become engaged and married.

At the end of the main road extending through the enclave, opposite the yeshiva, stands a new imposing two-storey structure. It was completed in 1993 and named Talmud Torah Bays Yehuda D'Tash[12] and serves as the elementary school for boys. It has an enrolment of approximately 260 boys ranging in age from three until 13 years. The student population there has also increased, from 160 in 1987. A new school was under construction in 1996; it will be reserved for boys aged 13 to 16 years; there are about 140 pupils in that age group, 70 of them from Tash while the remainder have come from Hassidic homes in New York and reside in a dormitory attached to the yeshiva. In addition, approximately 200 males between the ages of 16 and 19 study in the yeshiva, the majority of whom are from Tash. Apart from a French-language specialist, all the teachers in the schools for boys and for girls are Tasher Hassidim. The names of the Talmud Torah's two main financial benefactors are displayed prominently in large letters on the face of the building.

Several other structures have been erected since 1987. The administrative offices, originally centred in the yeshiva and then for several years in a converted house, now have a new building which was completed in 1992. There are 12 offices and a modern boardroom, for meetings with political and other dignitaries, has elegant mahogany furniture. The front entrance to this building leads to a counter behind which sits a male Hassid who deals with incoming telephone calls. During one of my recent visits to Tash, shortly after the assassination of the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, a computer print-out spelling 'Shalom Chaver', in English letters, was displayed above the counter. These were the last words of President Clinton's eulogy to Rabin and I was surprised to see them in a community which opposes the establishment of the modern State of Israel. When I inquired about that sign, a Tasher employee replied with a twinkle in his eyes: 'I don't know how it got there'.

Two further buildings were added recently. One was completed in 1992; it is single-storeyed and serves as a home for the elderly, subdivided into 12 apartments. It is situated next to the administrative offices. The other building is a synagogue; it was completed in 1995 and includes four large rooms, three of which are used for daily prayers while the other is reserved exclusively for study.

The occupational breakdown for males has changed as the community has grown over the years. The majority of the men are still engaged in religious-oriented types of work (as teachers, ritual slaughterers, and kashrut supervisors) and in religious study in the *kollel* (advanced Talmudic academy) for which they receive a financial subsidy. But there are now more small-scale, independent concerns while some individuals have started businesses which they operate from their homes; these include stores selling hardware or sewing necessities, and a shop for altering clothes. Others sell supplies for photography, vitamins, toys, shoes, dry goods, books, jewelry, and computer hardware and software. According to a reliable source, about 10 per cent of the men work outside the community: an electrician, a real estate agent, and employees in two business concerns owned by Tasher Hassidim. As the community has grown, more men have been given administrative positions; there are several bookkeepers and other personnel who are paid salaries. An administrator explained to me that just as Canada derives income from the sale of its resources and the production of goods, so does Tash derive income from its unique speciality: the study of Torah for which it receives charitable private donations that help to provide salaries for the services of Tasher men.[13]

There have been no changes of any particular significance in the area of secular education; these Hassidim remain steadfastly committed to the view that secular education threatens their traditional values. I noted in 1987: '. . . secular classes are closely supervised to ensure that the pupils will not see any conflict with the contents of their religious studies'.[14]

Recent advances in computer technology have enabled them to assemble more readily specialized texts to suit their particular needs. A Tasher told me:

> We have a French department and an English department. We make our own books. So one of the girls is working on a computer and typing books . . . Instead of buying books and putting black markers all over them [to censor some passages], we buy one original book and retype the story. Occasionally we change a name, we change the sex from a boy and a girl to two boys or vice versa.

He added that the result was very pleasing: the work occupies a girl while the children are given decent books to read, without torn or defaced pages. Another advantage is that a girl who has graduated from school is given employment, a subject to which I shall return in this paper.

The community's high degree of self-sufficiency has been maintained. The variety store is stocked with produce, canned goods, and household articles and recently expanded with more kasher products imported from New York. The Tasher's paramedic team, established some years ago, remains fully prepared for emergencies and in 1996 included some ten men who had acquired several levels of training. A new up-dated defibrillator is a very recent addition (the first one was purchased in 1968), and the ambulance, already present for several years, contains state-of-the-art medical equipment. The Tasher select with care, now as in the past, the medical and dental care provided outside the community. Where convenient, they use local services, such as garages and dry cleaners; they are aware that it is in their own interests to support the local economy, in order to foster good relations with the surrounding Francophone population.

If, as a collectivity, the Tasher have gained in political astuteness over the years — and they are indeed perceived by several in the mainstream Jewish community to have done so —, they give the credit to one particular individual, a French Canadian Catholic who has sharpened their awareness in the art of politics. He has developed a fascination for the Tasher and has committed much of his spare time for their benefit. Politics are his hobby and he has established contacts with politicians at various levels of government; he has not only lubricated relations between the Tasher and local politicians but has also helped them to gain access to senior provincial and federal figures. He extols the virtues of the Tasher Rebbe and values his blessings, declaring: 'The Grand Rabbi is a very holy man. He has given blessings for me and my family'.

Over the past decade, the citizens of Montreal and of Quebec have become increasingly familiar with the Tasher through articles and reports in the French and English media. To a large extent, this exposure has been self-selected and based upon a calculation of the potential benefits to the community. For instance, when a teacher at a local school contacted the Tasher for permission to visit them with his students (who

would engage in an exchange with their peers), the request was refused. Such an encounter could give rise to many problems: not only would the group have male and female pupils but the Tasher reasoned also that the two sides had too little in common. On the other hand, they have responded favourably in many cases to reporters who asked to write about the community.

The Tasher Rebbe continues to be at the very centre of the community. He was born in 1923 and appears to be in fine physical health. A conversation with any Tasher about the community, its growth, and its future plans inevitably turns to accounts about the Rebbe's miraculous powers and incredible insights. His followers speak enthusiastically about the visitors who come from various parts of the world to consult him on various matters. One of them told me, 'A guy sits down with the Rebbe with a list of 20 business decisions. Rebbe, should we open an office in this city? Should we close this shopping mall? Should I hire this guy? Yes? No? You wouldn't believe it!'

The Tasher pride themselves on the success with which they have preserved their distinctive life-style. To an outsider, the community is portrayed in idyllic terms as individuals and households who maintain a way of life steeped in Hassidic traditions. One Tasher pointed to the new buildings and asked, 'What can be better than here?' He then added: 'It's safe, it's not polluted, and most of all, the children are not exposed to bad things that you cannot help but see in the streets of the city'. However, the community's rapid growth has presented serious challenges for the years ahead.

The Tasher and the Media: The Bikers and the Referendum

On 30 October 1995, the electorate in the Province of Quebec voted in a referendum to determine the future status of Quebec. A vote in favour of sovereignty for Quebec would mandate the provincial government to begin negotiations with the federal government to lead to Quebec's independence; a 'No' vote would maintain the province's status quo within Canada. Up to three months before the referendum, it appeared from public opinion polls that the 'no' side would emerge victorious. Politicians and other public figures were increasingly concerned that dire economic consequences would follow the secession of Quebec from Canada.

As the Quebec government's campaign appeared to be almost stagnating, a dramatic change in momentum was achieved several weeks before the referendum, when Lucien Bouchard, the leader of the Bloc Québécois (a federalist party though confined within Quebec and deeply committed to Quebec sovereignty) replaced Jacquet Parizeau, Quebec's Premier, as the Chairman of the sovereignty team. Bouchard was a

passionate speaker and a charismatic figure; his public appeal transformed the fortunes of his party almost overnight.[15] Opinion polls now indicated that the gap between the sides was quickly narrowing and only days before the referendum, that the outcome was too close to predict.[16]

During the course of the debate, politicians toured the province, appealing especially to those whose ethnic background was neither English nor French. For the Jews of Montreal, the anxiety of the previous months now turned to real alarm since it appeared that the secessionists would score a narrow victory. They feared the expected economic and political uncertainty, coupled with the possibility of increased antisemitism under the guise of Quebec nationalism. It is within this context of heightened political, economic, and social uncertainty that the Tasher Hassidim were catapulted on to centre stage in the unfolding political drama. By then, the inhabitants of Quebec Province had learned about the quaint community of ultra-observant Jews: several Tasher had rushed to the rescue of casualties of a bloody turf war between rival gangs. On 13 September 1995, a bomb ripped through a biker's bar north of Montreal, injuring ten men and apparently signalling the resumption of a fierce war between rival motorcycle clubs.[17] The bomb was said by the police to have been placed under the outdoor terrace of a bar in suburban Boisbriand, not far from the Tasher enclave. Since the previous autumn, 21 persons had been killed in the conflict between the Hell's Angels and Rock Machine gangs over control of drug sales in the streets of downtown Montreal. The blast detroyed the terrace and blew glass, furniture, and bar equipment on to the streets and rocked buildings for miles around. An Associated Press bulletin of that day, 13 September, stated: 'Several members of a nearby orthodox Jewish community helped ambulance attendants tend to the burly, tattooed wounded men'.[18]

On the following day, both the French and the English newspapers described the Hassidim's assistance more vividly. The daily *La Presse* commented that the Hassidic Jews from Boisbriand were probably the only Quebecers able to consider Hell's Angels as sweet and gentle;[19] it reported that Tasher paramedics provided first aid to the nine bikers who had been injured in the explosion which had occurred a few streets away from the Tasher community. One of the Hassidim was quoted as saying, 'We were the first to arrive on the scene. We got there only four minutes after the alert was sounded'.[20] *La Presse* gave some background data about the Tasher: they numbered about 1500 'with a birth rate of two babies a week' and they had organized their own paramedical system, including an ambulance; a Tasher administrator was quoted as saying that this was not the first time that such first-aid assistance had been given to outsiders: two weeks earlier, as the ambulance was returning from Montreal, it had stopped to help four persons injured in a car accident on Autoroute 15.[21]

The English-language daily, *The Gazette*, gave many of the details and added: 'If one good thing came out of the bombing, it was that it drew

the predominantly French-speaking, Roman Catholic community close to the 4,000 Hasidic Jews who have settled there'.[22] Moreover, *La Presse* noted the irony of Orthodox Jews, uncompromising in their faith, rushing to the assistance of persons involved in drug trafficking and murder.[23] That aspect had not entirely escaped the Tasher: one of them remarked, 'At first, we didn't know that they were bikers. Even then, we were there as paramedics, not judge and police. The objective of our spirituality is to help others, all others . . .'.[24] The man added an observation which reflected these Hassidim's enormous distance from the social world of bikers: 'I am not naive, but I'd like to believe that our help in such dramatic circumstances might lead some of these men to see better ways to live their lives'.[25]

The report in *La Presse* had some potential overtones relating to the sovereignty debate. It claimed that although the Tasher isolated themselves, they could be contrasted with other Hassidic groups by their openness to the modern world: '. . . these orthodox Jews are not afraid to take non-orthodox positions sometimes; during the commissions on the future of Quebec a few months ago, they took a position in favour of the sovereignty of Quebec'.[26] That presumed 'openness' was hardly evident when I told a Tasher that his community's heroics were featured on the front page of *Allo Police*, a French-language weekly tabloid.[27] Along a side-view of one of the Hassidic paramedics, there were three additional stories with accompanying photographs: one about a stripper, another about a triple X-rated film on sex, and a third about a prostitute. 'What's *Allo Police*?' he asked, and when I added that the paramedic was featured along with a hooker on the front page, he inquired, 'What's a hooker?'.

The degree of the Tasher's openness to the outside world is carefully limited through a series of meticulously-engineered social boundaries. However, a few months earlier, on 15 February 1995, a Tasher appeared before the provincial government's roving commission on sovereignty and, with the approval of his Rebbe, he unequivocally endorsed the sovereigntist cause.[28] At a time when ethnic minorities were for the most part steadfastly opposed to that cause, the Tasher's position was newsworthy. His remarks were punctuated by bursts of applause and attracted considerable attention. That set the stage later for a visit to the Tasher community by the Premier of Quebec, some two weeks before the referendum date.

The Tasher argued that religious teachings, especially the Torah portion *Bekhukotei*, which admonishes Jews to follow Torah laws even at the risk of severe punishment, provided the basis for the decision to endorse sovereignty. He said that the last plague identified in the tractate is that the people will be exiled from their homeland and added:

> We see that the worst punishment that mankind can suffer is . . . not having a homeland. A person who does not have his homeland is a person who suffers extremely . . . and it prevents people from having freedom and true happiness.

These words clearly were welcome to the sovereigntists in the audience, who had already been pleased when the speaker had moments earlier apologized in his halting French for having to speak in English, which he identified as 'a foreign language' that Quebecers spoke not as a matter of policy, but of historical accident. He ordered his presentation around three central questions: 1) 'should we create a sovereign Quebec?'; 2) 'can we separate?'; and 3) 'as a minority, how do we feel about a sovereign Quebec?' He said: 'I think it is important . . . to support a movement of a sovereign Quebec which would bring comfort and comfortableness [sic] in the lives of people that live in Quebec'. The audience had been instructed not to applaud during the presentation, but some could not refrain from doing so when the Hassid added: 'I believe that our neighbor nations should be the first ones instead of discouraging the idea of creating a sovereign Quebec, they should be the first ones to help us do so . . .'. The use of this 'us' was an unmistakable evidence that the Tasher were in alliance with nationalist aspirations. The incongruity of this political stance must have been obvious both to the audience and to the public-at-large: a spokesman for the Tasher Hassidim — who were ultra-religious Jews isolated from the mainstream — was endorsing a position which was anathema to the overwhelming majority of Jews in Quebec.

When dealing with the second question, the Tasher representative focused on the economic implications of separation. He conceded that sovereignty would entail economic hardships and that 'building an independent country will require hard work' but stressed the benefits of 'freedom' and 'happiness' which accompany independence and added, 'this surely is worthwhile the extra work that it requires'.

The Tasher spokesman did not believe that minorities in the province had reason to fear that sovereignty would prejudice their position (as, indeed, the mainstream Jewish leaders in the province did fear) and stated that Quebecers, by virtue of their minority status within Canada, would necessarily be sensitive to the concerns of minorities. He mentioned that the Tasher Rebbe took such a stand in 1976, when the minorities were anxious after the Parti Québécois first assumed power and said: 'At that time, our religious leaders, including the Grand Rabbi, instructed us that there's nothing wrong in living in Quebec and we started to re-invest and build up Quebec rather than move away'. The Tasher would adopt the same position now: 'It is now our responsibility . . . to help develop a strong and prosperous Quebec for all'. The Tasher relied upon the wisdom of their leaders in all important matters: 'Our leaders told us not to run away but to invest in Quebec and we have a very fantastic relationship with the government and the people since then'. He concluded with a message aimed at Anglophones: 'I believe that everybody understands that most Quebecers feel at home and secure in their position and that they'll be a lot more tolerant and understanding

of the needs of other languages and they should not get concerned over that'. Applause followed once more and the Tasher spokesman later told me, 'I walked out of there like a hero'.

The Tasher's presentation greatly angered many in mainstream Jewry but the Hassidim believed it was prudent to follow the will of the majority and when I enquired 'And what if the majority were opposed, would you also be opposed?', he replied, 'Of course we would. We do what the majority wants'. In the end, however, the Tasher did not vote uniformly. Sensitive to the wishes of federal politicians, whose good will was also to be cultivated, their vote was split. One Tasher told me, 'So in other words, we did no harm, we did no good' but then he quickly added: 'For the sake of the locals, we tried to give the perception that it's a 'Yes' vote.

On 12 October 1995, Quebec's Premier Jacques Parizeau was greeted by the Tasher Hassidim when he attended a synagogue inauguration. The visit was important for its symbolic significance since the referendum was only some two weeks away; it was in the interest of the Parti Québécois to demonstrate that its position could be embraced by minorities and the Tasher could serve as an excellent vehicle to promote this objective. He addressed the Hassidim first in French, then in English:

> I'm very happy to have seen your community develop and prosper over the last few years . . . You are showing that one can be attached to tradition, to religion, and to a way of life, to a set of values and, at the same time, prosper, develop economically, financially, and that one objective is in no way a hindrance to the other. From that point of view, you are an example to a number of other communities.[29]

Referring to the referendum, he stated: 'We shall decide all together . . . no matter where we come from originally . . . our future'.[30] A Tasher administrator thanked the Premier in French and summarized his remarks in Yiddish. In September 1995, the Quebec government had announced that it supported the initiative for a diamond centre to be located in Boisbriand.

On 2 April 1994, a brief news item in the *Financial Times*, a Canadian paper, was headlined 'Diamonds Could be Hasidim's Best Friends' and part of the text stated: 'A tiny group of ultra-orthodox Hasidic Jews living in rural Quebec is hoping to turn their little community into a diamond-cutting centre'.[31] Another report[32] stated that Boisbriand, the municipality surrounding Tash, was seeking a major diamond-cutting role. Quebec's vice-premier announced at a news conference on 5 September: 'Boisbriand was chosen because that town's Grand Rabbi Forencz Lowy is a world-renowned religious leader . . . and will contribute to Quebec's prestige';[33] he added that he expected Quebec to become the hub of the diamond industry in Canada, and that would also attract tourists. A Tasher administrator was quoted as saying: 'It is a privilege for us to be in a position to contribute to the Quebec economy'. By the time the Premier arrived to visit the Tash in September 1995, the stage had been

set: those Hassidim had endorsed the government's plans for independence and the government had committed financial support for the diamond centre.

Perspectives for the Future

Social scientists have been perplexed by the success which Hassidic communities have shown in resisting and countering the surrounding assimilative influences. Some have pointed to the strains and stresses which affected that life-style and threatened it. Kranzler, for instance, writing in 1961, believed that the external symbols of Hassidic traditions — including the men's long jackets, their fur-trimmed hats, and side-curls — would not endure, adding: 'Only a small minority will cling to the extreme pattern of their parents'.[34] Poll commented in his 1962 study of the Williamsburg Hassidim: 'As more members of the community move into a greater variety of occupations and as the types of occupations increase, there may be more extensive involvements in external systems of social relationships';[35] occupational mobility would enhance the possibilities for members to assimilate and lose their identity as Hassidic Jews. Rubin's 1972 study of the Satmar cited several strains affecting the community, including economic pressures and rapid natural increase of the population, which would pose a threat to forms of interpersonal relationships underlying this Hassidic group.[36] In the case of the Tasher, there is the challenge posed by a steadily-increasing birth rate, coupled with the necessity to provide gainful employment for the residents. While the leaders of the Tasher are not obliged to secure such employment in any formal or legal sense, it is clearly in the community's best economic and social interests to ensure that its members are gainfully employed.

The institution of the *kollel* where married men receive a financial subsidy to pursue religious studies provides only a partial solution to this problem. However, this option does not suit all males, especially those who are not inclined to intensive and advanced religious learning. It is precisely for this reason that the proposed diamond centre is seen as a vital source of employment to meet long-term needs. The training for such work would be supervised by Hassidic Jews while the accompanying time constraints could be accommodated within the demands of their religious life-style, including Sabbath observance, religious holy days, and daily prayer services.

Whereas males are expected to pursue religious studies for a prolonged period, a similar expectation does not obtain for females. A problem which the Tasher must eventually face will be how to occupy girls gainfully from the time they graduate from school until they marry and expect a child. So far, these young women have become teachers in the school for girls or worked as office employees in the Tash administrative

offices. A Tasher told me, 'Right now, we have 12 girls which isn't a problem to find jobs for them' but he added that within a few years 25 girls could be expected to graduate annually and that would pose a problem: 'We won't have vacancies for 25, so we'll have a surplus of 12 or 13 which we're worrying about'. The girls' school thus experiences a constant turnover of teachers who become employed following completion of Grade 12 at 17 or 18 years of age, but who later depart to raise a family which, for the majority, occurs after the first year of marriage at age 18 or 19.

Population increase has required not only provision for employment opportunities but has presented the Tasher with a more critically immediate challenge: securing space for additional residential construction. Though settled on land which exceeds 130 acres, the community is situated in a predominantly rural area which is designated mainly for agricultural use. Therefore, plans for further housing construction must include a re-zoning approval from the municipality. The Tasher have been granted such approval in the past and, in the process, have established a network of political contacts within the municipality. A new plot of land is currently under development which has already resulted in the addition of two streets. Further expansion plans will therefore necessitate friendly relations with the immediate neighbours of the Tasher. The pragmatics underlying this situation provide a context for a better appreciation of the Tasher's position on Quebec nationalism.

I stated in my 1987 article that the community's comparative isolation enables it to shield its members from exposure to undesirable temptations. This continues to be the case. There appear to be no greater tendencies towards an infusion of secularizing influences which are perceived as threatening to the traditional values of the Tasher. Radios are still banned in the home, but they are permissible in cars. The Tasher are aware of the difficulties of preserving their life-style. One of them told me, 'We're not miracle men. And children with bad upbringing we can have as well. Thanks to God, we have so many years of knowledge of what's going on the streets that we have an advantage'. Then he added sadly, 'But we'll catch up'; he did not think that the Tasher would always be able to avoid the problems of dysfunctional families, but concluded: 'At the moment, we're very advantaged that we're in a healthy environment'. He then reflected that although flagrant violations would be comparatively easy to detect, there was the danger of the penetration of more subtle external influences; he gave as an example *tzeneeus* (modesty in dress), requiring a long hemline:

> The hemline of dresses is going up. The style used to be maxi and girls didn't have any problems with long dresses . . . Now that the stores don't have, it's harder to find a long dress and mother is not a tailor. It's still long enough that we require but shorter than a year ago . . . We're human.

Conclusion

This article has outlined some directions along which the Tasher community has expanded since I reported on it in 1987. I believe that, where possible and appropriate, it is in the interests of social scientists to return to research settings to evaluate how they have changed, and whether the earlier analysis has withstood the test of time. In the conclusion of that 1987 article, I noted two features of the community's organization which would have long-range consequences: 1) its high birth rate would require additional housing and necessitate closer ties with government bodies and with mainstream Jewry for financial support and resources; and 2) the community's isolation would continue to shield it against the intrusions of external influences. I now believe that my predictions were close to the mark. The Tasher have been singularly successful in preserving their boundaries against external secular forces; and although ties with mainstream Jewry have not materialized, good relations with provincial government officials and local municipal politicians have intensified.

I was first introduced to the Tasher in 1969, when I served briefly as a secretary in their yeshiva. In evaluating my relationship with them over the years, I believe that I currently occupy the status of 'privileged outsider'.[37] I must quickly add, however, that this status reflects our mutual interests: the Tasher both require and demand distance between themselves and those who, like me, pursue a different life-style; but I have been unprepared to alter my life-style to resemble more closely their commitment to ultra-Orthodox Judaism and thereby, perhaps, gain a deeper acceptance. I have realized that in the final analysis it is the Tasher who will confer any significant change in my status. I have gained a little more sensitivity about the Hassidim's expectations for themselves and have become more familiar to numbers of Tasher who now appreciate that my knowledge of their community's life-style is more than perfunctory. We now move more speedily beyond perfunctory exchanges typically accorded to outsiders visiting for the first time. There were numerous occasions when I was taken into the community's confidence, which I attribute to my long-time standing among the Tasher.

I am now increasingly comfortable among the Tasher during my visits, but my access to the community is certainly not unlimited. There is one particular Hassid who serves as the chief gatekeeper and he usually supervises my introduction to people and places. Though I feel that I can discuss almost any topic with him, and though he usually allows me access to files and documents which I have requested to see, we both maintain our reserve during our encounters. I have come to realize that I cannot expect anything more. We have learned to enjoy one another's company and I respect that, above all, he must remain sensitive to the

community's requirements when evaluating my requests for privileges. This occurred very recently when I asked to meet teachers from the girls' school to discuss the curriculum. I had assumed that this would be arranged easily and was somewhat taken aback when he told me that '. . . it would be against religious views, in general, to expose any woman to any man' and my request was therefore refused. On the other hand, he readily agreed to arrange for me to meet male teachers. We exchange greetings before religious festivals and on occasion he might even ask for my advice. The benefits from our relationship are reciprocal. While the barrier between us has thinned, it has not, nor will it, disappear completely. Whereas previously I would have seen this as a reflection of inadequate field-research skills, I am now inclined to believe that successful field research requires the respecting of boundaries between the researcher and the researched which, while potentially limiting the scope of the fieldwork, need not detract from it and is, moreover, unavoidable.

When I asked a Tasher official in 1996 how the community might be organized in about 15 years, he replied firmly, 'Same as today except bigger'; major shifts in the present life-style were not expected and the Tasher would remain cloistered. A visitor to the community around the year 2010 would see these Hassidic Jews adhering tenaciously to their observance of Jewish laws and to their customs. But the Tasher would also embrace some of the benefits of technology which would help to maintain their chosen life-style. 'We're going to have the best cellular telephones around', a Tasher told me with a smile, but he meant it seriously.

I continue to visit the Tasher for both personal interest and scholarship. Indeed, these two objectives have become almost seamlessly joined. Sometimes the community appears as a picturesque reminder of yesteryear caught in a time warp; but this is a gross misperception of the Tasher who are, in several respects, very much part of the modern world. Finally, I have realized, at times grudgingly, that sound scholarship need not exclude personal interest and pleasure, and that the most satisfying research results when these are combined.

Acknowledgements

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NOTES

[1] Robert Stebbins has written about 'concatenated research' which refers '. . . to a research process and the resulting set of field studies that are linked together, as it were in a chain leading to cumulative grounded, or inductively

generated theory'. See Robert Stebbins, 'Concatenated exploration: notes on a neglected type of longitudinal research', *Quality & Quantity* vol. xxvi, 1992, pp. 435–42. The topic of returning to the field is probably addressed more fully by anthropologists given the nature of their research in far-away places. However, it is a worthy topic for sociologists to consider.

[2] See Brian Miller and Laud Humphreys, 'Keeping in Touch: Maintaining Contact with Stigmatized Subjects', in William B. Shaffir, Robert A. Stebbins, and Allan Turowetz, eds., *Fieldwork Experience*, New York, . 980, pp. 212–23.

[3] Ibi.

[4] Will m B. Shaffir and Robert Stebbins, eds, *Experiencing Fieldwork: An Inside View of Qualitative Research*, Newbury Park, CA, 1991, p. 146.

[5] See Raymond Breton, 'Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Communities and the Personal Relations of Immigrants', *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. LXX, no. 2, September 1964, pp. 193–205.

[6] Though the numbers of Hassidim in the respective communities can only be estimated, there is a consensus that the general population of Hassidim is dramatically increasing. For an interesting discussion of numbers and size, see Janet S. Belcove-Shalin, ed., *New World Hassidim: Ethnographic Studies Of Hasidic Jews In America*, Albany, NY., 1995; Robert Eisenberg, *Boychiks In The Hood: Travels in the Hasidic Underground*, New York, 1995, pp. 3–7; Sam Heilman, *Defenders of the Faith: Inside Ultra-Orthodox Jewry*, New York, 1992; and Jerome Mintz, *Hasidic People*, Cambridge, Ma., 1992.

[7] The Hassidim have also been the subject of considerable controversy as not all portrayals of them and their lifestyle have been positive. Belcove-Shalin (op. cit. in note 6 above), itemizes some of the scandals which have involved the Hassidim. However, such publicity and the ensuing controversy while, perhaps, temporarily unsettling, have not detracted from the Hassidim's abilities to shield themselves from the assimilative influences of the larger society. On the contrary: recognizing themselves to be the focus of attention, they have been drawn together and, in the process, have been strengthened in their commitment to their religious culture. As social scientists have recognized, a social collectivity is bound together not only by basic values and ideas to which its members adhere, but also by the manner in which internal organization and outside forces impinge on one another. Along this line, see, for example, L. S. Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict*, New York, 1956; Y. Glickman, 'Anti-Semitism and Jewish Social Cohesion in Canada', R. M. Bienvenue and J. Goldstein, eds, *Ethnicity and Ethnic Relations in Canada: A Book of Readings*, Toronto, 1985, pp. 263–84.

[8] See 'Separation From the Mainstream in Canada: The Hassidic Community of Tash', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. XXIX, no. 1, June 1987, pp. 19–35.

[9] Gil Kezwer, 'Shalom, Bonjour', *Canadian Geographic*, July/August 1994.

[10] Shaffir, op. cit. in note 8 above.

[11] Named after the Tasher Rebbe's mother.

[12] Named after the father of the wife of the Tasher Rebbe.

[13] Family income derived from employment is supplemented by a relatively generous family allowance programme instituted by the Government of Quebec several years ago, in an attempt to offset a declining birth rate. At

the moment, the government offers a bonus of $500.00 for the first child, $1,000.00 for the second, and $8,000.00 for the third and subsequent children. The latter is paid over a period of five years in quarterly instalments of $400.00 each.

[14] William Shaffir, op. cit. in note 8 above, p. 31.

[15] A front-page article in *The Gazette* on 29 October was headlined 'How Bouchard shocked the experts', and included the following in bold print: 'The Bloc Québécois leader shifted the referendum campaign from a numbers game to the emotional issue of francophone pride'.

[16] In fact, opinion poll results indicated that the Yes side might be headed towards victory. Two days before the referendum sovereigntists continued to hold the lead but the outcome was impossible to predict because of a large Undecided vote. For example, according to a Leger & Leger opinion poll published on 28 October, the results were: 47% Yes; 41% No; and 12% Undecided. Quebec newspapers regularly published the results of different opinion polls that were commissioned by newspapers and television networks, all of which showed that the Yes side was in the lead but that the final outcome would be determined by the significantly large Undecided or Other voter category. On 28 October, 100,000 people from across Canada rallied in downtown Montreal in support of Canadian unity. In the end, the referendum result was No, 50.57% and Yes, 49.43%.

[17] See, for example, *La Presse*, 13 September 1995, p. 3; *The Gazette*, 14 September 1995, front page; and *Le Journal de Montreal*, 13 September 1995, front page.

[18] 'Ten Injured In Biker Bar Blast', *The Associated Press*, 13 September 1995.

[19] *La Presse*, op. cit. in Note 17 above.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] *The Gazette*, op. cit. in note 17 above.

[23] *La Presse*, op. cit. in note 17 above.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] *Allo Police*, 24 September 1995, front page.

[28] The sovereignty commission's hearings were public and were mandated officially to study and discuss the Quebec government's draft bill on sovereignty.

[29] From a taped recording of the Premier's speech.

[30] Ibid.

[31] *Financial Times*, 2 April 1994, front page.

[32] *Nord Info*, 24 September 1995, front page.

[33] *The Gazette*, 5 September 1995, p. C7.

[34] George Kranzler, *Williamsburg: A Jewish Community in Transition*, New York, 1961, p. 240.

[35] Solomon Poll, *The Hasidic Community of Williamsburg*, New York, 1962, p. 253.

[36] Israel Rubin, *Satmar: An Island In The City*, Chicago, 1972.

[37] Personal experiences in the field, hearsay of others' experiences, and an ever-growing literature on field research lead me to conclude that the

researcher, by virtue of his or her research status, is always an outsider. See R. Wax, *Doing Fieldwork: Warnings and Advice*, Chicago, 1971, p. 43. Morris Freilich cautions against the common desire among anthropologists to go native: see his *Marginal Natives*, New York, 1970.

COLONEL A. E. W. GOLDSMID: 'EVERYTHING BRITISH WITH OLD JEWISH TOUCHES BREAKING THROUGH'

Edna Bradlow

'I AM Daniel Deronda'. With these words, Colonel Albert Edward Williamson Goldsmid began to tell the story of his life to an emotional Theodor Herzl at their first meeting in Cardiff, Wales, on 25 November 1895. The two men had been brought together by Israel Zangwill, the London-born author and early spokesman for Herzl's Zionist ideal. Herzl commented in a diary entry that Goldsmid was 'everything British with old Jewish touches breaking through'.

Years later, Goldsmid's daughter (Baroness Swaythling) dismissed her father's claim as having 'no real foundation in fact'. She took his words too literally. The analogies between the English colonel, baptized scion of a wealthy and influential Anglo-Jewish family, and the hero of George Eliot's eponymous novel published in 1876, suggest that Goldsmid's statement was a metaphor for his own experiences, a comparison rather than an identification.[1]

Daniel Deronda was probably the best-known contribution to the extensive corpus of literature referent to the Jews and their religion, which began to emerge in the 1860s and increased substantially in the 1880s, as concern over the absorption of thousands of Eastern European Jewish immigrants started to influence the opinion-makers of English society. To make such absorption consistent with the tolerance and rationality which characterized nineteenth-century English reformism, required the emancipation of Jews from their civil and political disabilities, while simultaneously recognizing a specific identity based on the practice of their traditional culture, and particularly their religion.

This was the concept of 'separateness with communication' postulated by Deronda's grandfather; or put another way, anglicization accompanied by a religious conservatism that precluded assimilation. By the 1890s

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leading Jewish emancipationists believed this consummation had been achieved. They did not therefore think in terms of an ongoing Jewish 'problem'; and consequently rejected the separatism implicit in the pre-Herzl Zionism being postulated by Jews in Eastern Europe such as Leon Pinsker, and by prominent English Protestants including Sir Alfred Milner, C. P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*, Joseph Chamberlain, and Alfred Austin (the Poet Laureate).[2] In the course of several visits to England between 1895 and 1902, Herzl received great encouragement from these Christian sympathizers, in contrast to the coolness shown by the Anglo-Jewish elite on whom he had naturally pinned his hopes, particularly of financial aid. A notable exception was Colonel Goldsmid, variously described as 'eccentric', 'romantic', and by Herzl himself as 'extraordinary'.

Goldsmid was born in India in October 1846, in what the *South African Jewish Chronicle* described as 'soldierly surroundings' — the official British quarters at Poona (in the modern state of Maharashtra) where his father was Chief Secretary to the Governor of Bombay. Educated privately and later at the Sandhurst Military Academy, he was commissioned in June 1866 in the Royal Munster Fusiliers, in which regiment — and elsewhere in the army — he steadily advanced, reaching the rank of full colonel in April 1894. Superficially this was the career of an archetypal upper-class Victorian male. A cheerful man of 'medium height, small black moustache, anglicized Jewish face with kind intelligent dark eyes', whose recreations were riding, hunting, golf and (somewhat more improbably) acting, he apparently fitted the stereotype admirably — but in its externals only.

For soon after receiving his first commission at the age of 21, he discovered his Jewish origins. His mother was the granddaughter and his father the great-nephew of the financier Benjamin Goldsmid, a practising Jew, who had committed suicide in 1808, after which his widow and children converted to Christianity.[3] To his mother's displeasure, he was converted to Judaism in his 24th year.[4] It is impossible to establish the exact personal motivation (within the sympathetic general ambience) for what he described as his return to his 'ancestral stock'. But Goldsmid later emphasized that the step was a deliberate one, taken out of sincere conviction after a careful study of the Scriptures.[5]

His adherence to Judaism remained consistent to the end of his life. Dr Oscar Marmorek, who shared quarters with him in the Sinai desert a year before he died, recalled that he always carried with him his *tallit* and *tefillin* (prayer shawl and phylacteries) so that, were he to die suddenly among strangers, he would be recognized as an orthodox Jew, and buried with 'customary rites'. In a codicil to his will, added while on service in the South African War, he directed that Rachel and Carmel (his daughters by his wife, the former Ida Stewart Hendriks, a convert from Christianity of similar Jewish origins) be brought up as orthodox Jews.

This included the study of Hebrew, whose revival as a spoken language he strongly supported, as constituting a unifying force among Jews.[6]

Amos Elon has compared Goldsmid to General Charles Gordon. Both were military men whose charitable acts among the poor were the practical implementation of their moral principles. Certainly there was in Goldsmid's conversion an element of mysticism (specifically in his perception of orthodox Judaism as a factor in 'a great historical movement that would bring together not only the Jews, but all the world to worship the one God').[7] He was not, however, as Gordon was, an unworldly hermit-like fatalist, obsessed with ultimate truths to be sought in holy texts or with the relationship between sin and salvation. Nor was his conduct impractical and ill-judged as Gordon's was in both Basutoland and the Sudan. On the contrary, it was Goldsmid's administrative ability which most impressed his associates in diverse situations.[8]

Goldsmid's own comparison with the gentler Daniel Deronda is easier to understand, despite the temperamental differences between them. Like Deronda's mother, his too had not wanted him to experience 'the pelting contempt that pursues Jewish separateness'. Like Deronda, Goldsmid threw himself assiduously into his return to Judaism, regarding it as his duty to identify himself as far as possible with his 'hereditary people'. However, the redemptionist ideal which Goldsmid and Deronda shared was more consistent in the latter's case. George Eliot puts in his mouth these words: 'The Idea that I am possessed with, is that of restoring a political existence to my people, making them a nation again, giving them a national centre such as the English have . . .'.[9]

Goldsmid's commitment to this idea was ambivalent. In the pre-Herzl Zionist period the pioneering *Hibbat Zion* (Love of Zion) movement had originated in Eastern Europe as a result of the 1881 pogroms following the assassination of Tsar Alexander II. Subsequently a number of similar, scattered organizations were established in Western Europe, including England. *Hibbat Zion*'s vaguely conceptualized initial goal was the gradual establishment of sufficient agricultural settlements in Palestine eventually to constitute 'The Return' to Eretz Israel, and the latter's recognition by the major powers. The realities of the situation particularly in Russia soon forced the movement to concentrate on the first, limited objective, eschewing the political intention. Even then it was only through the instrumentality of Baron Edmond de Rothschild's financial aid that *Hibbat*'s earliest settlements in Palestine were able to survive.

In England, an umbrella organization, *Chovevei Zion* (Lovers of Zion) was formed in May 1890, supported by members of the Anglo-Jewish elite, such as Sir Samuel Montagu and Lord Nathaniel Meyer Rothschild, and combining the disparate societies which subscribed to a gradual non-political colonization policy. As one of the founders, Goldsmid brought his military qualities and expertise to bear on *Chovevei*'s organization including its incorporation of a written constitution. In 1893 he became

its 'chief', succeeding his kinsman Elim d'Avigdor Goldsmid, the engineer and writer. Despite the elitist character of its leadership, initially *Chovevei Zion* enjoyed substantial — but never overwhelming — support among the growing numbers of immigrants settling in London's East End.[10]

As Russian persecution and economic hardship cumulatively intensified throughout the 1880s–1890s, Goldsmid, like most of the Anglo-Jewish leaders, focused on the need for greater philanthropic efforts to accelerate the pace of emigration and resettlement, though not necessarily in Palestine. Thus in 1892–93 he temporarily interrupted his service as Deputy Assistant Adjutant General at Army Headquarters to administer the agricultural colonies for Jewish immigrants then being established in the Argentine by the German philanthropist, Baron Maurice de Hirsch, through his foundation, the Jewish Colonization Association.[11] Though de Hirsch's philanthropic project lacked *Chovevei Zion's* redemptionist aspiration, Goldsmid threw himself into the task with his characteristic energy and organizational skills, rescuing the Argentinian settlements from collapse. But by the time he resumed his military career he had come to regard Palestine as the only possible location for Jewish settlement, not least because of the 'powerful lever of sentiment' it provided, linking modern Jews to their ancient home. Thus in September 1895, even before the meeting in Cardiff (where Goldsmid was in command of the South Wales Regimental district), Herzl referred to him in his diary as 'an enthusiastic Zionist . . . [who] had wanted to charter ships to conquer Palestine'.[12]

At their November meeting Goldsmid received Herzl's exposition (in German) of a Jewish state in Palestine with the words 'that is the idea of my life'. Like many others he obviously found Herzl dynamic and the first impression of his programme attractive. But his difficulty in understanding German, which Herzl noted, obviously compounded an underlying ambivalence. For given his *Chovevei* affiliations he should, on principle, have preferred the practicalities of philanthropic colonization to the utopianism implicit in the slogan 'We are a people — *one* people', entitled to a legally recognized homeland: a conviction which was the essence of Herzl's Zionism and which he was to publicize more widely in *Der Judenstaat* early in the following year. In late 1895 however, there was still mutual admiration. Herzl felt 'like a brother' to Goldsmid and was 'charmed' by his wife and daughters, who had received him 'like an old acquaintance'; while even in February 1896, after the publication of *Der Judenstaat*, Goldsmid was writing to Herzl of his support for 'the national Idea' with Palestine as its sole focus.[13]

In England, Herzl's first *public* announcement of his vision was on 26 November 1895, during a poorly-attended banquet at the Maccabaean Club of which Goldsmid was a founder, and which represented the 'acknowledged secular professional and intellectual elite of Anglo-Jewry'.[14] The following year, Herzl addressed a second meeting

of the club, but though he personally made a good impression, the communal leadership rejected his concept of a Jewish state under Turkish suzerainty as both politically inexpedient and financially impracticable. The elite also distanced itself from the mass enthusiasm among the newly-arrived immigrants, who were increasingly — even to Herzl's own dismay — perceiving him as the 'new Moses'.

Conversely, it was apparent that *Chovevei Zion* would never be a major player in Anglo-Jewish politics primarily because of the movement's lack of an explicit programme — a defect exacerbated by personal animosities and the leadership's alienation from a large section of its constituency. Thus the publication of *Der Judenstaat* was an additional blow to an already declining sodality. Though Herzl importuned him, in a letter dated 4 April 1897, to attend the first Zionist Congress in Basle, Goldsmid (together with Montagu and Rothschild) declined to do so, going so far as to urge Herzl to call off the Congress.[15] This was essentially an attempt to avoid a split in the ranks of *Chovevei* over Herzl's political agenda; while Goldsmid's reverse tactic in March 1898 at the Clerkenwell Conference, to consider *Chovevei*'s affiliation to the Zionist movement, was equally abortive. Thus the formal establishment in January 1899 of the English Zionist Federation and its growing popularity signalled the ultimate winding up of *Chovevei Zion* by Goldsmid in 1902.[16]

Throughout 1896–99, Herzl's diary records Goldsmid's wavering attitude towards political Zionism while retaining his admiration for its creator. His apparent capriciousness reflected a more complex approach than would appear at first glance to a problem of major proportions. In the 1890s antisemitism was prevalent across the board in Europe, in a number of variations which threatened Jews in differing degrees. Consequently even the gradualist philanthropy (in Herzl's phrase, 'infiltration') of the Jewish colonization movement in which Goldsmid immersed himself, seemed to the old Anglo-Jewish leadership in general, to provide a more expeditious corrective to the effects of the rabid antisemitism of Eastern and Central Europe than the radical nationalist theorizing of *Der Judenstaat.*

The continued determination to absorb and Westernize Jewish immigrants was Anglo-Jewry's response to the anti-alienism which emerged in Britain during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Acculturation co-existed comfortably with philanthropic colonization's gradualism; it wholly contradicted the nationalist separatism implicit in the slogan 'We are a people — *one* people'. Goldsmid's founding in 1895, as the Maccabaean Club's president, of the Jewish Lads' Brigade (modelled on the Church Lads' Brigade) represented the institutionalization of a conservative moral imperative: to ameliorate the lives of young immigrants by improving their health, while instilling in them such virtues as self-discipline, cleanliness, orderliness, and honour — all affirmations of Victorian England's emphasis on 'respectability' and

'social responsibility', which would produce members who were 'patriotic Britons but uncompromisingly Jews'.[17]

In 1899, Goldsmid's Jewish interests were superseded by those of his army career. Until then characterized by the exercise of high administrative office in Britain, his life entered a physically more challenging phase. At the end of 1899, soon after the outbreak of the South African War, when he was Chief Staff officer at Aldershot, Lt-General T. Kelly-Kenny, commander of the 6th Division, personally selected him as Assistant Adjutant-General to accompany the division to South Africa. Lord Roberts, the new Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in South Africa and Kitchener, his Chief of Staff, were on the same ship which arrived in Cape Town on 10 January 1900. Thus the 6th Division participated in Roberts's new strategy which involved advancing up the railway on the western borders of the two Boer republics, to the Modder River, thereafter striking eastwards to either of their two capitals. In the implementation of this plan, the Boer general Cronje was pinned down at the Battle of Paardeberg in February 1900, one of the most controversial and fiercely-fought engagements of the war. The 6th Division experienced some of the hardest fighting, Goldsmid himself having 'a horse shot under him. He led the Welsh Regiment across the [Modder] river to complete the cordon round General Cronje's forces'.[18]

With the British entry into Pretoria in June 1900, the war began its guerilla phase. The subsequent farm-burning policy, establishment of internment camps, and spate of atrocity stories referring particularly to the treatment of women and children, increased tension among the Cape Dutch, with an accompanying disquiet in the military. A mass meeting organized by the Afrikaner Bond at Worcester, Cape on 6 December 1900, attracted a huge crowd of resentful participants from all over the colony. Canadian and Australian detachments under Goldsmid's command were deployed on the hills around the town to forestall possible violence, without showing too visible a presence. A contemporary news report indicates that he handled the situation firmly but prudently.[19]

By January 1901, martial law had been proclaimed in all parts of the Cape (excluding the ports and 'native' territories on the Eastern border). This was a response to persistent disaffection among a number of the Cape Dutch, who were either providing the invading Boer commandos with non-military assistance, or revealing a strong potential for rebellion. This latter was particularly feared in the areas adjacent to the former republics, such as the vast Orange River, Griquatown and Herbert districts, of which Goldsmid was appointed commander with functions, under martial law, incorporating those of a civil magistrate. He had therefore served in a variety of capacities before he returned to England via the Argentine in March 1902. Like many officers who had gone to South Africa he was 'unemployed' — until 6 October 1903, when under

existing army regulations he was finally retired, having reached the age limit (57) for a serving colonel.[20]

Thus in 1902 he was at a loose end when the issue of Jewish colonization surfaced again under a new formula which he could support. The Fourth Zionist Congress held in London in 1900 had revealed a considerable dissension in the body politic of British Jewry. The leaders of the Board of Deputies, for example, feared that Herzl's mass colonization plans for poor immigrants would be a perpetuation of ghetto conditions, liable to attract hostile attention, and consequently conducive to antisemitism — in sum, a threat to emancipationist aims. By June 1902, when Herzl came to London and testified before the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration on the condition of Eastern European Jewry, this opposition (notably Lord Rothschild's) taken in conjunction with the failure of negotiations with the Turkish Government, forced him to modify his tactics and temporarily abandon his concentration on a homeland in Palestine. This accommodation brought him Rothschild's support; and similarly Goldsmid was at last able to give Herzl his undivided loyalty.[21]

When Herzl met Joseph Chamberlain, the Secretary of State, in October 1902, he suggested Cyprus, the Sinai, or the El Arîsh area on the Sinai's Mediterranean coast as sites for a possible Jewish homeland. (El Arîsh had been mooted by the German Zionist, Davis Trietsch, after the Fifth Congress as having Biblical associations with the Children of Israel. In contemporary terms its only advantage seems to have been that the Sinai was an unpopulated desert, not part of Egypt proper, which might constitute a way station to the ultimate goal of Palestine.) Chamberlain had no idea where El Arîsh was, and had to consult a map to locate it; nor, according to Herzl, did he appreciate the value of the area. But he was prepared to consider the establishment there of a Jewish colony if the Foreign Office (under whose aegis the area fell), and Lord Cromer, the British consul-general in Egypt, were agreeable.[22]

In mid-December 1902, the British Foreign Office informed Herzl, then in Vienna, that Cromer would not oppose a Jewish-administered settlement in Sinai, providing an investigatory commission reported favourably on the feasibility of the proposed site. Herzl's diary entry for 22 December 1902 notes the names of potential members. Keen to involve the British Government in Zionist activities — while himself maintaining control (as was his wont) — by January 1903 he was in London, organizing the commission and seeking Rothschild's help in financing the project.

Ultimately the commission, comprising both Jews and Christians, included Leopold Kessler, South African engineer and pioneer Zionist as leader; Jennings Bramley, a surveyor with expert knowledge of the Sinai; Dr Hillel Joffe, specialist in malaria and member of Edmond de Rothschild's Palestine staff; G. H. Stephens, an irrigation expert; the

agronomist and Palestine pioneer Dr Selig Soskin; Dr O. Marmorek, an architect whose role was to investigate potential urban development; Professor Emile Laurent, a Belgian agricultural expert; and A. E. W. Goldsmid, the efficient administrator-cum-romantic, bringing with him 'good maps' from the War Office, to act as quartermaster and liaise with the British Government.

In early February 1903 the commission with its accompanying caravan of servants and camels crossed the Suez Canal and headed north for El Arîsh. Towards the end of March it drew up a preliminary collective report accompanied by the opinions of individual members. The report claimed that the Sinai area could in future be made viable for large-scale European settlement, depending primarily on the availability of water (which Stephens believed could be pumped from the Nile). Kessler and Goldsmid brought the report to Herzl, then in Cairo; on 25 March, the previous day, he had been received by Cromer. The Consul-General obviously patronized Herzl who found him 'the most unpleasant Englishman' he had ever faced. The feeling may have been mutual, for Cromer's much longer meeting with Goldsmid two days later clearly revealed his preference for discussions with a fellow Englishman of his own class. Consequently Herzl left Cairo, appointing Goldsmid as his 'representative with full power of action'.

The experts debated the crucial irrigation issue for several weeks. Then early in May Goldsmid cabled Herzl: 'Lord Cromer recommends abandonment' and in a subsequent letter he detailed Cromer's grounds for this decision. Stephens' estimate of the irrigation requirements was deemed grossly inadequate by Sir William Garstin, Cromer's chief adviser on irrigation; and the cost of pumping sufficient water under the Suez Canal would be 'prohibitive'. More importantly in view of the imperial considerations which were, for Cromer, paramount, the work would disrupt shipping in the Canal for several weeks.[23]

In his diary Herzl reflected that Goldsmid had acted 'more than was proper, his own boss'. But in the main he believed that Cromer's decision had been politically motivated, based on his disinclination further to complicate already complex circumstances in Egypt. The Marquess of Zetland's authorized biography of Lord Cromer, and John Marlowe's later study of his proconsulship, based on both official and personal papers, however, make no mention of the negotiations. Certainly Cromer believed that adherence to 'a non-assimilative religion' such as Judaism was a basic social problem for any imperial authority. But it is more likely that the Sinai settlement was an obscure side issue, at a time when he was preoccupied with the possibility of a negotiated Anglo-French settlement on outstanding colonial matters, including Egypt.[24]

In the last few months before his death in Paris on 27 March 1904, Goldsmid resolved to occupy himself exclusively with Zionist work. He had attended the Sixth Zionist Congress in August 1903 where Herzl

personally introduced him to the delegates, and the El Arîsh and Uganda schemes were discussed. In September he spent a few days at Balmoral with King Edward VII, who decorated him with the Royal Victorian Order in 'recognition of philanthropic work on behalf of his co-religionists'. During Goldsmid's stay 'His Majesty enquired about the Zionist movement, and showed a sympathetic interest in the question affecting the Jewish people'. Herzl's suggestion that Goldsmid enlist the King's support for a combination of the El Arîsh and Uganda schemes reflects his misunderstanding of the British constitutional system; but Stuart Cohen's view that some members of the English Zionist Federation hoped to extract propaganda value from the meeting seems credible.[25] Though neither of his parents was born Jewish, Goldsmid was connected, as noted above, with one of the famous families which comprised, in Cesarani's phrase, the 'oligarchy and plutocracy' of the Anglo-Jewish community.[26] Completely anglicized during the varying lengths of time they had been settled in Britain, their lifestyle replicated that of the English *haute bourgeoisie* which had assimilated them. In the city they were among the leading financiers and bankers. In the country they engaged in the pursuits (hunting, riding, flyfishing) which were associated with the possession of great estates, making of them respected gentlemen, indistinguishable from others of the same class. Except in one important respect: the practice of their ancient religious beliefs and traditions.

Goldsmid's return as a young man to his family's original faith served to reinforce the emancipationist conviction that to be a Jew was not a matter of race but of religion. As an orthodox Jew, Goldsmid was not precluded from being entertained by the king. Nor, more importantly, were his conversion or his involvement in Jewish communal affairs, disadvantages in his army career — a reflection of social tolerance in marked contrast to the situation in France, where the Dreyfus trial was proceeding contemporaneously with Goldsmid's achievement of his full colonelcy, the highest British military rank accorded at the time to a conforming Jew. When Goldsmid accompanied Herzl to negotiate with Cromer, the latter regarded him foremost as his coequal, an English gentleman.

In the early 1890s the emancipationist objective — to produce a commonalty whose Jewish religious beliefs could co-exist with Western behaviour and values in their British homeland — was extended to incorporate the thousands of Eastern European Jews arriving in England. Like others of his class, such as Frederic Mocatta and Samuel Montagu, Goldsmid played an important mediating role in this process, including his establishment of the Jewish Lads' Brigade, with its emphasis on the anglicization of immigrant children through the inculcation of accepted liberal values. Yet his pre-eminence in *Chovevei Zion* signified acceptance of some form of Jewish separatism, forced upon him by events concerning Jews elsewhere.

The attempt to strike a balance between these two imperatives — assimilation and particularism — partly accounts for his vacillations towards Herzl's Zionism. Elon describes him as a kind of 'eccentric romantic (a very common breed in Victorian England)'; in other words a dilettante. But Goldsmid, and others who perceived themselves as 'practical' Zionists, in fact believed that a solution to the problem of the individual Jew's vulnerability must precede a grand design for Jewry as a whole. Herzl and Goldsmid continued to regard each other with a personal admiration which transcended the former's disparagement of, and the latter's adherence to, non-Herzlian Zionism. Herzl had noted in his diary at their first meeting: 'With Goldsmid I suddenly found myself in a different world'. The world, that is, of the self-assured anglicized Anglo-Jewish elite with its inherent inconsistencies which Goldsmid, the first Jew in those circles to take Herzl's vision seriously, made a sincere if unsuccessful effort to resolve. Thus while one can agree with Nahum Sokolow, the Zionist writer, that he was 'a man of conspicuous ability' (and his army experience confirms this: Kelly-Kenny, for example, would hardly have picked him for the 6th Division job had he not been an efficient administrator); and while he certainly put 'a great deal of intelligence, enthusiasm and disinterestedness into the [Zionist] movement', he can hardly be described as the 'embodiment of re-awakened national Judaism'.[27]

If Herzl, somewhat emotionally, perceived him initially as a fellow visionary, he came to accept that in his belief in 'The Return' (if not fully-realized statehood) Goldsmid also was a 'zealous Zionist . . . a great fighter'. Above all, Herzl realized that Goldsmid's strength lay in his easy access to the British ruling establishment and in his superb organizational skills — attributes which would be invaluable to the embryonic Zionist movement. Consequently, he envisaged Goldsmid 'as occupying high office in the Jewish state when it was established'.[28] That moment did not come in either of their lifetimes. But in any event, the El Arîsh project (which Goldsmid was prepared to support) was still a long way from the independent nation which was Herzl's ultimate goal.

If his Jewish nationalism was incomplete, Goldsmid's religious commitment was profound and unwavering. Like Daniel Deronda he was glad that he was a Jew with a 'true Jewish heart'. Thus there is something sublime and transcendent in his confession of faith on those last two hazardous occasions, in South Africa and the Sinai, when he requested that his children be brought up as orthodox Jews and that he be buried by Jewish rites.

NOTES

[1] Raphael Patai, ed., *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl translated by Harry Zohn* (New York, 1960); *Theodor Herzl. Excerpts from his Diaries* (New York, 1941), pp. 21, 40 ff; George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*, (2 vols., London, Everyman

Library, 1964); G. S. Haight, *George Eliot. A Biography*, Oxford, 1968, pp. 469 ff. The model for both Daniel Deronda and Mordeca/Ezra was Emanuel Deutsch, a friend of George Eliot's whose vision of a Jewish national home reached its apogee when at the 'Wailing Wall' in Jerusalem he stood among 'his own people'.

[2] Israel Finestein, *Jewish Society in Victorian England*, London, 1993, pp. 158 ff; Norman Bentwich, 'Christian support for [sic] National Home' in *The Jewish Chronicle Special Supplement. Tercentenary of the Resettlement of the Jews in the British Isles 1656–1956* (27.1.1956); Amos Elon, *Herzl*, London, 1975, p. 206; Eugene Black *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1880–1920*, Oxford, 1988; David Cesarani, 'The Transformation of Communal Authority in Anglo-Jewry 1914–1940', in David Cesarani, ed., *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry*, Oxford, 1990; and V. D. Lipman, *A History of the Jews in Britain since 1858*, New York, 1990.

[3] David Vital, *The Origins of Zionism*, Oxford, 1975, p. 227 claims that his Jewish origins emerged on his father's death, but the *Dictionary of National Biography Vol. XXII* dates the death of his father, Henry Edward Goldsmid, as 1855; Patai, op. cit. in note 1 above, p. 281; Chaim Bermant, *The Cousinhood*, London, 1971, pp. 17 ff, 242 ff; *South African Jewish Chronicle (SAJC)*, vol. III; nos 17, 22, 22.4.1904, 'Death of Col. Goldsmid. Special Memoir'; *Encyclopedia Judaica, (EJ)* vol. VII; cols 733–4; *Who Was Who, 1897–1916* (London, A. and C. Black, 1920); Lipman, op. cit. in note 2 above, pp. 121, 249; Norman Bentwich *My 77 years. An account of my life and times 1883–1960*, Philadelphia, 1962, pp. 10 ff.

[4] According to the *SAJC*, vol. III, no. 17, 22.4.1904, Dr Asher Asher (whom Black, *Social Politics*, p. 18 describes as the 'great civil servant of the [orthodox] United Synagogue') 'received [him] into the Abrahamic Covenant' at Aldershot; *SAJC*, vol. III, no. 28, 8.7.1904 however, states that the Rabbi of Bombay performed the ceremony at Poona. His conversion preceded the publication of *Daniel Deronda* by some eight years.

[5] *SAJC*, vol. III, no. 28, 8.7.1904, editorial. Compare *Daniel Deronda*, p. 477, 'for months events have been preparing me to be glad I am a Jew'; Bermant, op. cit. in note 3 above, p. 242; Haight, op. cit. in note 1 above, p. 488.

[6] *SAJC*, vol. III, no. 18, 29.4.1904, quoting Dr Marmorek, co-founder of the Zionist weekly, *Die Welt*; *SAJC*, vol. III, no. 25, 17.6.1904; *EJ*, vol. VII, col. 737.

[7] *SAJC*, vol. III, no. 17, 22.4.1904, his speech at the consecration of the Cardiff Synagogue, 13 May 1897; compare *Daniel Deronda*, pp. 498–99.

[8] Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians*, London, 1918; Richard Garrett, *General Gordon*, London, 1974; P. Compton, *The Last Days of General Gordon*, London, 1974; Herzl, *Complete Diaries, passim*; Elon, op. cit. in note 2 above, p. 172; Edna Bradlow, *The Cape Government's Rule of Basutoland* (Archives Yearbook for South African History, vol. II, 1968).

[9] *Daniel Deronda*, pp. 477, 606.

[10] Simon Schama, *Two Rothschilds and the Land of Israel*, London, Collins, 1978, pp. 13, 88, 90; Howard M. Sacher, *A History of Israel from the Rise of Zionism to Our Time*, New York, 1976; Stuart A. Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews. The Communal Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1895–1920*, Princeton, 1982,

passim; Vital, op. cit. in note 3 above, pp. 120, 183, 213, 227; Goldsmid gave the English *Chovevei Zion* a 'Masonic or Boy Scout stamp'; Bermant, op. cit. in note 3 above, pp. 240 ff; *EJ*, vol. VIII, col. 463; *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Judaica*, Jerusalem, 1974, p. 257; Black, op. cit. in note 2 above; I. Cohen, 'Zionism before Herzl', and Harry Sachar, 'Zionism in Anglo-Jewry' in *Jewish Chronicle Special Supplement*, 1956.

[11] Finestein, op. cit. in note 2 above, p. 172. Arnold White, the strident opponent of Jewish immigration, had in the early 1890s negotiated with the Tsarist Government to send Jews to Argentina; Josef Fraenkel, 'Colonel Albert E. W. Goldsmid and Theordor Herzl', in *Herzl Year Book*, I, Theodor Herzl Foundation, 1958, pp. 145–53.

[12] Fraenkel, op. cit. in Note 11 above, p. 148: he visited Palestine in 1883 with Laurence Oliphant, a Christian supporter of colonization in Palestine; Cohen, op. cit., in note 10 above, pp. 7 ff, 34 ff; Vital, op. cit., in note 3 above, pp. 120, 181; Herzl, *Excerpts*, p. 19, 20.9.1895; *EJ*, vol. VII, col. 737; Martin Gilbert, *Exile and Return. The Emergence of Jewish Statehood*, London, 1978.

[13] Patai, op. cit. in note 1 above, p. 281; Herzl, *Excerpts*, p. 21, their meeting on 25.11.1895, when Goldsmid produced the *Chovevei Zion* flag, and Herzl 'unfurled my white flag with the seven stars'; Vital, op. cit. in note 3 above, pp. 260 ff; Elon, op. cit. in note 2 above, pp. 173–88; Alexander Bein, *Theodor Herzl. A Biography* (M. Samuel translation), Philadelphia, 1945, pp. 157 ff; Ludwig Lewisohn, ed. *Theodor Herzl. A Portrait for This Age*, (1st edition) USA, World Publishing Co., 1955, p. 58.

[14] Black, op. cit. in note 2 above, p. 155; S. Cohen, op. cit. in note 10 above, pp. 29–30. Goldsmid himself was not present at this banquet nor at the 1896 one.

[15] Herzl, *Excerpts*, pp. 40 ff; Vital, op. cit. in note 3 above, pp. 334 ff; Bein, op. cit. in note 13 above, pp. 202, ff; S. Cohen, op. cit. in note 10 above, pp. 17, 44–46.

[16] S. Cohen, op. cit. in note 10 above, pp. 41 ff; Sachar, op. cit. in note 10 above, p. 39; Bein, op. cit. in note 13 above, pp. 157, 202 ff; Elon, op. cit. in note 2 above, pp. 207, 228; Cohen, 'Zionism', pp. 41 ff; Frankel, op. cit. in note 11 above, pp. 149, ff.

[17] Black, op. cit. note 2 above, pp. 141–43; Finestein, op. cit. in note 2 above, p. 177. Goldsmid was the 'Brigade Commandant'; the case of the Jewish religious mission as against nationalist separatism is closely argued in O. J. Simon, 'The return of the Jews to Palestine', *The Nineteenth Century*, vol. XLIV, July–December 1898.

[18] *The Times History of the War in South Africa*, vol. III, London, 1905; *SAJC*, vol. III, no. 17, 22.4.1904; *Who Was Who 1897–1916*; *The Times*, 29.3.1904.

[19] Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, Johannesburg, Scripta Africana Series (Facsimile of 1900 edition); T. R. H. Davenport, *The Afrikaner Bond. The History of a South African Political Party 1880–1911*, Cape Town, 1966, pp. 226 ff; *SAJC*, 22.4.1904; *The Cape Times*, 6 and 7 December 1900.

[20] *The Times History of the War*, vol. V, (London, 1907); *SAJC*, vol. I, no. 4, 21.3.1902, vol. I, no. 10, 20.6.1902, vol. I, no. 11, 4.7.1902, vol. II, no. 42, 30.10.1903, 22.4.1904. His last active post in South Africa was 'Asst-Inspector-General on the Western lines of communication'.

[21] Patai, op. cit. in note 1 above, pp. 1386 ff; Herzl, *Excerpts*, pp. 102 ff; Sachar, op. cit. in note 10 above, pp. 50 ff; Elon, op. cit. in note 2 above, ch. 17; Cohen, 'Zionism'; Bein, op. cit. in note 13 above, pp. 384 , 424 ff; Fraenkel, op. cit. in note 11 above, p. 152.

[22] Elon, op. cit. in note 2 above, p. 363. Chamberlain arranged for Herzl to meet Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary, joking with him that he must give an assurance he did not plan a Jameson Raid into Palestine from El Arîsh; Patai, op. cit. in note 1 above, p. 1466.

[23] Fraenkel, op. cit. in note 11 above, p. 152, Herzl valued Goldsmid 'as a diplomat, [rather than a soldier] who could act in negotiations with British officials both calmly and wisely'; Elon, op. cit. in note 2 above, pp. 366 ff; Bein, op. cit. in note 13 above, pp. 428 ff. Bein's dates for the cable and letter are 11 and 13 May respectively; Elon's for the cable, 7 May. Patai, op. cit. in note 1 above, pp. 1426–86, *passim*, he received Goldsmid's telegram reporting Cromer's doubts, on 8 May while a later telegram noting the Egyptian Government's refusal was dated 11 May.

[24] Marquess of Zetland, *Lord Cromer. Being the authorised Life of Evelyn Baring*, (London, 1932), pp. 171–72, 313; John Marlow, *Cromer in Egypt*, London, 1970; Patai, op. cit. in note 1 above, p. 1488.

[25] Fraenkel, op. cit. in note 11 above, pp. 152–53; S. Cohen, op. cit. in note 10 above, p. 53; *SAJC*, 22.4.1904; Elon, op. cit. in note 2 above, p. 392; *SAJC*, vol. II, 4.12.1903; Patai, op. cit. in note 1 above, p. 1565. Other Jews who had received the Royal Victorian Order were the Sassoon brothers and Leopold de Rothschild.

[26] Cesarani, op. cit. in note 2 above.

[27] Nahum Sokolow, *Hibbath Zion (The Love of Zion)*, Jerusalem, 1934, p. 257.

[28] *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. VII, col. 737.

IMMIGRATION AND ANGLICIZATION: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AS AN ISSUE IN THE SWANSEA HEBREW CONGREGATION, 1894–1910

Leonard Mars

LLOYD GARTNER noted in 1960 that the Jewish immigrants who came to Britain in the late nineteenth century were prepared to accept the anglicization of their children but only if their Eastern European Jewish identity was maintained. 'Immigrant Jewry did not greatly care who made Englishmen of their children, but they jealously guarded their right to make Jews of their children in their own way'.[1]

In this paper, I seek to show how this problem (which existed in different parts of the United Kingdom where there were Eastern-European immigrant communities) was tackled in a small provincial Jewish settlement in Swansea. Of course, there are differences between a Welsh town, where only a small number of Jews have settled, and large cities with a Jewish immigrant settlement of thousands. However, a single, local case-study can illustrate the national scene, not least because nation-wide Jewish institutions helped small communities to resolve their main difficulties in the process of anglicization.

The numbers of Eastern European Jewish immigrants increased very rapidly in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In Swansea as elsewhere in Britain, there were Jews who constituted a veteran, anglicized, acculturated elite and who controlled the established synagogues — in Swansea, the Goat Street synagogue which belonged to the Swansea Hebrew Congregation (SHC). The newcomers subscribed to the funds of the SHC but had no say in its management[2] because they were not 'privilieged members', as the rules of the SHC stipulated. The rapid growth of the Jewish population of the town presented serious problems for the management committee of the synagogue: pressures on teaching personnel, on classroom space, and enforcing some discipline — while the children had to adapt to new styles of teaching Hebrew. For the

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immigrant parents, the issue was not limited to the practicalities of accepting new learning methods for their children or of resolving the immediate difficulties of classroom space or learning a new language, English. They were profoundly concerned with the very foundations of their cultural and religious life-styles and religious traditions and that led inevitably to an immediate political conflict with the established veteran leaders of the SHC in the years preceding the First World War.

The Management of Religious Education

There was a serious clash between the privileged members of the SHC, who exercised control over education via the management committee, and the immigrant parents of the children; the majority of the newcomers were poor but they paid subscriptions to the SHC and bitterly resented their lack of authority in the realm of religious education since they considered that they were being subjected by their co-religionists to taxation without representation.[3]

Jewish education in Britain was developed in the middle of the nineteenth century largely through the efforts of the Chief Rabbi, Dr Nathan Adler, who was appointed in 1845. Though born in Germany, he was a convinced Anglophile, and established Jews' College in order to train students for the Anglo-Jewish ministry. The *Jewish Chronicle* reported the ceremony of the inauguration of Jews' College and commented in an editorial':[4]

> The future ministers of Anglo-Jewish congregations will be men of thorough English feelings and views, as conversant with the classics of their own language as with those of the sacred tongue, as acquainted with modern science as versed in ancient lore; men in whom the flow of the burning thought will not be impeded by heaviness of tongue, and whose ardour of enthusiasm will break forth and rouse and kindle with Shakespearean vigour and Miltonian sweetness.

The leaders of Anglo-Jewry thus sought ministers who would be proficient in the secular, scientific field, familiar with English and Hebrew literature, and who spoke English without any trace of a foreign accent. They were to be English gentlemen and scholars who would enjoy the respect of the non-Jewish world into which newly-emancipated British Jews were entering. Whilst immigrants did wish to be accepted in their new country, they also sought to retain their *yiddishkeit,* which was both religious and ethnic. In short, for the English middle-class Jew, Jewish identity was mainly a matter of religious faith while for the immigrant, Jewishness was an identity based on ethnicity as well as on religion. Therein lay the conflict between the veterans and the newcomers.

The immigrants considered the religious education of their children from a point of view which was quite different from that expressed by the then Chief Rabbi when he founded Jews' College. Lloyd Gartner's pioneering study of the immigrant London Jews between 1870 and 1914

contains data and interpretations which also applied to the situation in Swansea at the time. By 1895, scores of immigrants had settled in that town and they were willing to subscribe a minimal sum to the SHC; but they were prepared to pay a greater amount in order to ensure that their children would be taught Hebrew and the tenets of Judaism in the old traditional style which had prevailed in Eastern Europe. There was a revealing exchange of letters between Mr S. Lyons, President of the SHC, and Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler, to whom the immigrants had appealed to protest about their inability to pay the high membership fees of the SHC. The Minutes Book for 1895 of the SHC records that Mr Lyons wrote to the Chief Rabbi in a letter dated 11 December 1895:

> Your experience of this class is I am sure greater than mine and as you are aware they all plead poverty, they certainly cannot be in the low circumstances they would make you believe when I tell you that some of them pay from 1s to 2s 6d per week for Hebrew education and will not avail themselves of the Hebrew school (which is free) provided by the congregation.[5]

We do not know who taught the children of the newcomers in Swansea a century ago, but it is most likely that classes were held in private homes with a teacher who used the traditional Eastern-European style: with boys and girls segregated and with Yiddish as the language of instruction; the classes were held in a *heder* and the teacher was a *melamed*, to give the terms used at the time.[6] In the classes of the Goat Street synagogue, the language of instruction was English.

But in 1899, the appointment of the Reverend Simon Fyne as Minister and Teacher to the SHC caused many of the immigrants to reconsider their position: they were willing to entrust him with the religious education of their children and to pay the minimal subscription fee required by the congregation. A letter dated 10 October 1899, addressed to the President of the SHC stated: '. . . Mr Fyne will be the teacher of our children because as we were told the manner in which Mr Fyne learns the children we don't wish any better'.[7] Mr Fyne's credentials satisfied the expectations of both the privileged members of the SHC (since he was a certificated teacher of Jews' College) and those of the immigrants since he had been born in Kovno, was a Yiddish speaker, and a dedicated Zionist. (He had been one of the first members of the English Zionist Federation.[8])

The privileged members of the SHC were determined to control religious education; in a motion to the Annual General Meeting of 1897, Mr I. Seline (who was a veteran privileged member) stated 'that if no rule to the contrary the Committee of Management act as School Committee'.[9] Mr Seline, however, was a former Warden of the SHC and knew very well that there was no such rule in the SHC Rule Book; it seems therefore that he was either responding to, or pre-empting, a challenge to the management committee's control of education.

Nevertheless, the issue emerged again two years later, in 1899 while in 1903, at a meeting of both privileged and non-privileged members of the SHC, it was resolved unanimously:[10]

> to form a school Committee to prepare the hours, number of pupils to be taught by each teacher and the subjects and that such committee has full power to manage the school in all details even to the extent of levying a school fee upon parents should same be necessary.

The new school committee of ten men was dominated by privileged members and included the President and the Treasurer of the SHC; the apparent compromise of appointing one or two ordinary subscribers did not alter the situation: the privileged members still held sway. But seven years later, in 1910, a more serious challenge to the Management Committee was mounted: a 'requisition' initiated by Mr S. Rubinstein asked for the establishment of a Swansea Hebrew Educational Board (SHEB); it was signed by 29 members (15 privileged and 14 non-privileged). Mr Rubinstein's scheme was set out in nine clauses aiming to remove the provision and financing of children's religious education from the control of the Administrative Committee of the SHC and to vest it in the authority of the proposed new board (the SHEB). The first four clauses dealt with the structure of the Board: it was to consist of 12 men, three designated as managers and nine as councillors. The Head Teacher was always the Minister of the congregation and he would be a councillor while the remaining 11 members of the Board were to be elected from a list of 18 candidates, 12 to be nominated by privileged members and six by non-privileged members. Membership of the board was to be ratified by a special meeting of all members of the congregation.

Although the privileged members could nominate twice as many candidates as the non-privileged members, the electorate would be dominated by the non-privileged who, provided they voted as a bloc, could safely elect six of their own candidates. Mr Rubinstein and his supporters were in fact asking the privileged members to agree to power sharing. What is not clear from the proposals is who would have the casting vote in the event of an equal split.

The privileged members may have been concerned by the political thrust of the proposed new Board but they were more seriously worried by the clauses (five to eight) which dealt with the financing of the SHEB. These clauses called for:

1) a grant of £240 per annum to be made by the Swansea Hebrew Congregation to the SHEB, a sum equivalent to the cost of providing education in the previous year, in 1909; 2) one third of the subscription fee of every new member who joined the congregation after the establishment of the Board; 3) the payment of all educational expenses, including salaries; 4) the appointment of the Minister of the SHC as Head Teacher only if he was believed to be suitable for that position; and

finally 5) the right of the Board to raise funds to employ extra teaching personnel without any direct assistance from the Swansea Hebrew Congregation. Clause 8 stipulated that if there would be an increased demand for teachers then such additional staff were to be paid from an extra levy specifically for educational purposes: it was believed that parents would willingly give extra funds provided they were clearly earmarked for education and not for the SHC's general purposes.

But the President of the SHC objected to these financial proposals and he put forward an amendment to the effect that clauses 5 to 8 be struck out and substituted by the following: '. . . that the Congregation give the services of their minister as Head teacher of the classes free of charge'.[11] This amendment was put to the vote and defeated by 13 to eight, whereupon the motion in favour of the original scheme was carried by 20 votes to five. However, there was now the problem of implementation; the SHC did not wish to recognize the new Board and was moreover unwilling to make the necessary financial arrangements to fund it. At a special General Meeting convened three months later, the new secretary of the Board, Mr Rubinstein, the originator of the scheme, complained about the President's attitude to the new body (the SHEB) and read out the correspondence which had passed between the President and the Board. The President defended his refusal to recognize the Board: he would do so only with the formal approval of the congregation and only on condition that a new agreement be made with the Reverend Sandheim, the Minister of the SHC. He declared that unless these conditions were met, he would be in contravention of the Trust Deed[12] and of the Rules of the Congregation.

This June 1910 meeting seems to have been a long and acrimonious one and there was finally a formal motion to the effect that a committee be formed to confer with the SHEB and to report back to a special General Meeting. But the motion was defeated by 19 votes to 12 and the Minutes concluded with the following statement: 'the meeting having already lasted 3 hours and having reached a high pitch of excitement many of the members left and the President closed the meeting'.[13]

This was seen as tantamount to a repudiation of the Swansea Hebrew Education Board and the SHEB instructed a solicitor to negotiate with the President. As a result, the following three amendments were made to the original scheme:

> 1) that the Minister of the Congregation, who is head teacher of the Hebrew Classes shall be dismissed only by a General Meeting of privileged members called by the President. Should the President receive a requisition from the said Board [SHEB] for a meeting, such meeting shall be convened within 14 days of requisition.
> 2) Out of the funds voted by the Congregation to the Board the first expenditure should always be the salary of the head teacher if he is also Minister, for whose salary the Congregation is responsible.

3) Should the amount granted the Board be at any time withdrawn or reduced by the Congregation three months notice be given to the managers.

In effect, the SHC and its President were yielding some ground over education to the new Board, while by retaining control over the position of the Minister of the Congregation, they could continue to dominate communal and educational matters. Moreover, the third amendment seems to have authorized the SHC to limit its financial obligations to the Board. The SHEB must have ceased to function some time in 1911: a committee meeting of the SHC, held on 22 October 1911, referred to the 'late Education Board'. That same meeting decided to recruit another teacher but to extend for a further month the services of the teacher recruited by the Board and to notify him that he could apply for the new post. The meeting also recorded that there were 77 enrolled pupils, well down on the 1902 figure of 107. This reduction in enrolment can be attributed to two linked events: the opening of the immigrants' synagogue (the *Bes Hadmidrash*) in 1906 and the dismissal of the Rev. Fyne in the same year. The impact of the establishment of the *Bes HaMidrash* may be gauged from the photographs of two of its Hebrew classes taken in 1909, which depict 42 children.[14] Rev. Fyne was dismissed after a series of arguments with the lay leadership of the SHC and also with the Chief Rabbi, Dr Hermann Adler.[15]

The majority of pupils in the congregation's religious school were the children of immigrants; but control over the Hebrew classes was exercised by the synagogue committee to which only privileged members could be elected. The committee of management also acted as the school committee, in accordance with the Rule Book of the SHC. On 24 September 1899, Mr A. Sheppard challenged that rule by putting forward a motion that a school committee must consist entirely of persons who had children attending the congregation's school and that the rule which gave the management committee control over education must be rescinded. But in the absence of a seconder, the motion lapsed. Political and administrative control over education thus remained in the hands of the privileged members, who continued to retain their position because many immigrants had seceded from the Swansea Hebrew Congregation and had established a Bes Hamidrash with its own Talmud Torah. However, other newcomers chose to remain with the Goat Street synagogue and managed eventually to gain a degree of participation in educational affairs, although the Rule Book of 1892 did not give them the right to vote and *a fortiori* to stand for synagogue office.

Teaching

A major duty of the salaried clergy of the SHC was teaching the children of members and non-members; the minister and the reader were occasionally assisted by an auxiliary teacher. The teaching staff varied

between one and three and the number of pupils in 1894–1910 ranged between 60 and 107. Since the minister, who was the headmaster of the Hebrew classes, was an employee of the SHC, he was subordinated to the Wardens of the synagogue. The committee of the SHC required a monthly report from the head teacher on the attendance and progress of the pupils and that report was endorsed by the President of the SHC and forwarded to the Reverend A. Green in London, who was an officer of the Chief Rabbi and whose approval provided an annual subsidy of £30 to supplement the minister's salary.

The President's signature on the report was usually only a formality; but occasionally he might resist to give his approval. On one occasion, for example, the Minutes of the SHC recorded that the committee had noted 'that the President be authorized to sign Rev. Fyne's Report as follows "In the absence of an independent examiner. I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of Rev. Fyne's report" '.[16]

On another occasion, the Reverend Fyne unilaterally expelled a pupil and reported the expulsion *ex post facto* in his monthly report. The committee's response was to instruct the President of the SHC to interview the father of the boy and then to readmit the pupil to the Hebrew classes and to reprimand the Reverend Fyne who was to be instructed that he had henceforth to consult the committee about the proposed expulsion of any boy. The school committee had furthermore the authority to prescribe the hours of attendance as well as the syllabus and style of teaching; but their directions were not always followed.

In December 1901, the hours of instruction for the three top classes were stipulated as follows:

> 3rd standard . . . Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
> 4th standard . . . Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays
> 5th standard . . . Wednesday and Saturday nights and that on Tuesday evenings Rev. Fyne devote half the time to the examination of standard 1 and 2 which are taught by S. Solomon.

S. Solomon was the beadle of the Goat Street synagogue. Scrutiny of the work of the classes by the school committee was increased in November 1903, when it resolved to convene at an earlier time on every third meeting 'in order to afford the members an opportunity of observing the method of instruction and progress of children'.

A year later, on 18 December 1904, the school committee reported that it had resolved to meet for the purpose of examining a few children from each standard, such children to be picked at random'.[17]

According to the report of the School Committee of 9 March 1902, the standardization of textbooks had been recommended by the Reverend Fyne; but either this was not done or if it had been, the practice lapsed after a short time. The traditional Eastern European mode of religious teaching had been by oral discourse; and Fyne, although he was

born in Kovno, was a graduate of Jews' College and may have favoured the use of more modern teaching methods. But many immigrant parents were suspicious of modern trends or were not prepared to buy new textbooks in spite of the fact that the school committee had decreed on 21 December 1902 that in addition to Abraham's Manual, Friedlander's Text Book should be utilized.[18]

Examining

Members of the School Committee carried out examinations but in addition paid examiners were recruited to provide external tests of the competence of the pupils. The Annual General Meeting of 1902 unanimously accepted the proposal of the School Committee 'that the services of a competent Examiner be engaged to examine the school children at a cost not exceeding eight guineas including prizes, arrangements to be left in the hands of the committee'.[19]

A Dr Fuchs offered his services as Examiner but his appointment was deferred. The following year, in 1903, Mr L. G. Bowman (B.A., B.Sc.) accepted the position at a fee of three guineas and duly submitted his report — as a result of which the Reverend Fyne was 'Requested to adopt Mr Bowman's suggestions as far as possible';[20] but the Minutes do not specify the nature of these suggestions.

In 1905, members of the School Committee conducted the examinations[21] and unanimously agreed

> that the children, in their reading and translation were fair but greatly deficient in general knowledge of Jewish History and Religion and this Committee are still of the opinion that better results could be obtained by carrying out their previous recommendation to teach the children from Abrahams' Manual than, as at present, orally.

When the Swansea Hebrew Congregation celebrated its golden jubilee in 1909, the Chief Rabbi attended the celebrations and took the opportunity to examine the schoolchildren. He submitted a critical Report:[22]

> I examined the classes on Monday May 17, 5669, 1909. I am glad to say the result of the examination of the 4th and 5th standards under the tuition of Mr Sandheim [Fyne's successor] was quite satisfactory, the children showed by their sephers [exercise books] that they had been carefully taught. Their answers were bright and intelligent.
>
> I regret I cannot speak in equally eulogistic terms of the pupils instructed by Mr Sinofski, the assistant teacher. The system of *ivrith b'ivrith* [Hebrew by the direct method] may work well in classes where much time can be devoted to the subject but fails entirely in such classes where the time for the study of Hebrew is limited. I found the pupils unable to translate and understand the simplest prayer. They were also deficient in the knowledge of our Festivals and the Ten commandments.

> I therefore recommend that the classes under Mr Sinofski be taught on the same lines as Mr Sandheim. It is also highly desirable that arrangements should be made which would enable Mr Sandheim to have some supervision of Mr Sinofski's classes. It would be greatly to the advantage of the pupils if an additional teacher could be secured.

Thus it seems that the progress of the pupils at the Hebrew classes was dutifully and systematically monitored but the recommendations of the various examiners often were not implemented either through inertia or because of inadequate financial resources. The Swansea congregation was grappling with problems which were experienced by the whole of Anglo-Jewry during that period. The SHC had appealed to national Jewish institutions in the country, such as the Office of the Chief Rabbi; it had also appealed specifically to the Provincial Ministers' Fund which received quarterly reports on its Hebrew classes. On 4 November 1906, the Secretary of that Fund (the Reverend A. A. Green) is reported in the SHC Minutes to have conferred with the members of the Management and School Committee regarding the appointment of the Minister and Teacher. The SHC also asked the headmaster of the Jewish Day School in London to give advice about suitable textbooks. On the other hand, since the Swansea Congregation was a well-established Jewish community, it could offer the services of its own ministers as external examiners to small congregations such as that of Merthyr in 1902, and Abertillery in 1903.

At the beginning of this paper, I acknowledged the value of Lloyd Gartner's pioneering study and agreed with one of his conclusions; but I now dissent from another of his opinions. Gartner argued that in the provinces the control of the Chief Rabbinate over religious matters was weaker than it was in London, but the data on Swansea do not bear this out.[23] Admittedly, when the immigrants in Swansea formed their own *hebra*, the *Bes HaMidrash*, they gained autonomy from the Chief Rabbinate, but that did not mean that the local native and immigrant rabbis had a 'more autonomous position' as Gartner states.[24] In Swansea, the Chief Rabbi was in alliance with the lay leaders of the community in opposition to the minister as the frequent correspondence between local presidents and the Chief Rabbi reveals. As a result of this alliance, the Chief Rabbi's position in Swansea was as strong as it was in London. The case of other small provincial Jewish communities requires further research in this field.

Joseph Buckman has criticized Gartner's interpretation of the main trends of the anglicization of Jewish immigrants at the turn of the century but Buckman's insistence on analysing in terms of social class the conflict between immigrants and veterans and between different categories of immigrants causes him to neglect other types of conflict, particularly those which were cultural in essence. In Swansea, there was indeed conflict (as well as co-operation) between immigrant Jews and the veteran

settled community who were embourgeoisés; but according to the available data, the conflict was not fundamentally economic and class-based. It must be noted in this context that the Swansea immigrants were not engaged in employer–employee relationships as was the case in the Leeds clothing industry.[25] The newcomers in Swansea were self-employed, mainly in shopkeeping, tailoring, and glazing and had been helped by earlier immigrants who advanced credit to them. Moreover, the Swansea data contradict Buckman's statement that the local clergy supported the communal elite against the immigrants.[26] The Reverend Fyne in fact was usually in alliance with the immigrants against the elite who were supported by the Chief Rabbi.

Acknowledgement

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NOTES

[1] Lloyd Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870–1914*, London, 1973 (first published in 1960), p. 231.

[2] Ursula R.Q. Henriques, *The Jews of South Wales*, Cardiff, 1993, ch. 4.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Albert M. Hyamson, *Jews' College, London, 1855–1955*, London, 1955, pp. 24–25.

[5] SHC Minutes December 1895.

[6] See David Englander 'Education and Jewish Identity, 1900' in David Englander (ed.), *A Documentary History of Jewish Immigrants in Britain 1840–1920*, Leicester, 1994. pp. 218–22.

[7] SHC Minutes October 1899.

[8] Leonard Mars 'The Ministry of the Reverend Simon Fyne in Swansea: 1899–1906' in *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. L, nos 1–2, 1988/92.

[9] SHC Minutes November 1897.

[10] SHC Minutes January 1903.

[11] SHC Minutes June 1910.

[12] I have not been able to trace this Trust Deed and have no idea of its contents.

[13] SHC Minutes June 1910.

[14] Leonard Mars, 'Conflict and Cooperation Between Veteran and Immigrant Jews in Swansea 1895–1915', in Peter Gee and John Fulton, eds, *Religion and Power, Decline and Growth*, London, 1991; p. 126 shows one of these photographs.

[15] See Mars, op. cit. in note 8 above, for details of his career in Swansea and elsewhere.

[16] SHC Minutes March 1902.
[17] Ibid., 1904.
[18] L. B. Abrahams was Headmaster of the Jewish Free School in London. Michael Friedlander (Friedlaender) was the Principal of Jews' College from 1865 to 1907.
[19] SHC Minutes November 1902.
[20] Ibid., October 1903.
[21] Ibid., May 1905.
[22] Ibid., May 1909.
[23] Gartner op. cit. in note 1 above, p. 214.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Joseph Buckman *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, Manchester, 1983.
[26] Ibid., p. 163.

JEWISH LEGAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Israel Finestein

(Review Article)

DANIEL H. FRANK , ed., *Commandment and Community: New Essays in Jewish Legal and Political Philosophy*, XIV + 285 pp., SUNY (State University of New York Press), Albany, N.Y., 1995.

DANIEL Frank has brought together a stimulating collection of twelve scholarly studies on Jewish legal and political philosophy. These papers deal in one way or another with three central questions: *1*) Is there a Jewish philosophy as distinct from philosophers who are Jews?; *2*) May one properly speak of the philosophy of *halakha* (the corpus of Jewish law) as one may refer, for example, to a philosophy of history?; and *3*) Is there an ethic independent of the *halakha*, a Jewish ethic?

The halakhist deems the corpus of Jewish law to be a *given* set of laws. In so far as these laws have been interpreted, the principles of that interpretation are themselves viewed as springing from the same source as the original divinely-inspired laws. What room is there then for the halakhist to be a philosopher? When one speaks of a philosophy of history, that philosophy is in the mind of the historian and may be revealed in his historiography — whereas a so-called Jewish philosophy of justice may amount to no more than (although in effect, that may be a great deal) a deep knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the given laws.

The contention between the two opening articles sets the scene. The first is by Lenn Goodman and is entitled 'Towards a Jewish Philosophy of Justice'. For him, such a philosophy is based upon the inherent deserts of human beings. He acknowledges the metaphysical dimension of his case, finding in biblical precepts and in biblical ideas and language the inspiration and support for the substance and principles of Jewish law. He rejects the notion that 'Jewish ideas must be uniquely Jewish to be authentically or interestingly Jewish' but believes that one should allow the sources 'to inform one's understanding' and 'one's understanding to

inform one's reading of the sources'. He adds that those sources make 'unique and distinctive contributions to the articulation of an ongoing conversation about justice that has continued for some three millenia among thinkers, jurists, lawmakers, and statesmen sensitive to that ideal' (p. 4). It follows that Professor Goodman repudiates — *pace* Hobbes, Locke, and others — the idea that the claims of justice arise from convention or social contract. He is concerned not with the sanctions of authority but with its 'legitimacy'. The test of legitimacy is moral, and it is from the sources — the Bible and the rabbinic tradition — that morality and the consciousness of the need for morality spring. Belief in divine creation and in its goodness establishes a categorical imperative of its own on the long route to perfection. It is an imperative of duties and the recognition of rights and he discerns along that route a Jewish philosophy of justice.

The second contribution to the present volume, entitled 'Is a Jewish Practical Philosophy Possible?', is by Dr Oliver Leaman. He asks whether one can analyse a religious text philosophically and notes that 'there are undoubtedly philosophical ideals implicit and explicit, in Jewish religious texts'. But there is an open-endedness in interpretation: 'the relationship which believers as a whole have with a tradition is not fixed forever; it is a continuing dialogue and one is never quite sure where or how it is going to end. To relate a tradition to a philosophical theory in more than a casual manner is viable only if we have a theory which possesses rules capable of transforming the language of the tradition into philosophical language'. He warns us that 'we should be very careful about what we accept as a Jewish practical philosophy' (pp. 67–68).

The third article is by the editor, who writes about 'The Practicality of Maimonides' Guide'. He says of the famous *Guide to the Perplexed* that it attempts 'in its own way to take one who desires to lead the good life but is perplexed as to what that entails, to the point where the desire is fulfilled and the student can see clearly how the life he is currently living is philosophically defensible, while being traditionally kosher' (p. 78). Professor Frank seems to support Professor Goodman's views as to the compatibility between accepting the authority of the sources as a directive, and philosophical speculation about the wisdom of doing so. On the basis of these first articles, Dr Leaman seems to regard the attempt at compatibility as endangering the tradition and so divesting the sources of their attributed power, while for Professor Goodman the argument as to compatibility might reinforce the appeal and the inspiration of the texts.

Professor Aryeh Botwinick is the author of the fourth article, 'The Underdetermination of Meaning by the Talmudic Text'. He closely examines some specific rabbinic disputations in the Talmud and stresses what he considers to be their 'interpretive openendedness'. What is the meaning of the biblical texts? The diversity of answers and of the

consequent contentions over what flows from the meanings, have been the stuff of successive generations of Talmudic scholars — and the debates continue. However, this has not meant the absence of impact on philosophy or practical philosophy. If philosophy is the search for reality and for an understanding of being, it will concern itself with general causes and the general principles of ideas, and with human perceptions and their implications. The philosopher will thus not fight shy of the study of what Montesquieu called *L'Esprit des Lois*. It is the combination of the texts and actions which may prove to be the terms of the practical philosophy which is found when the system is under the philosopher's intellectual microscope.

It would have been apt to have included in this volume a chapter on the effect of the Hebrew Bible on the principles and practices of the common law in England. From Edward Coke, the jurist who confronted the early Stuart monarchy in the seventeenth century, to Sir William Blackstone (the first Vinerian Professor of English Law at the University of Oxford) 150 years later, as well as others before and since that long span of time, there have been debates about the supremacy of the law. Of special interest has been the supremacy of the law over the Head of State and his ministers, as well as the topics of judicial independence, the development of forms of representative government, and the growth of 'due process of law'. It can be argued that these considerations have been among the principles and practices derived ultimately from biblical sources and from the manner of their application in history.

Three further articles are concerned with 1) the attitude towards democracy in medieval Jewish philosophy, by Abraham Melamed; 2) Abravanel and the Jewish Republican Ethos, by Reuven Kimelman; and 3) Spinoza's challenge to the 'doctrine of election', by David Novak. These perceptive contributions illustrate the variety of methods and proposals for bringing to bear upon the social order the legacy of law and equity bequeathed by the Hebraic sources. Professor Novak notes Spinoza's inversion of the doctrine of election, which he states to have been achieved 'by an explicit reading of the doctrine's biblical sources'. Spinoza sees 'chosenness' as a metaphor for the unique polity of the Jews, as distinct from the belief that there was 'a divinely intended cosmic purpose'. He was convinced that the perpetuation of the cultural-religious ceremonies which occurred after the loss of statehood was separation for the sake of separation. He accused the Jews of profaning what was originally sacred (p. 232).

Elliott Dorff (Professor of Philosophy at UCLA — the University of California at Los Angeles) served in 1993 on Mrs Hillary Clinton's (short-lived) task force on health care. While so engaged he continued to follow his practice of employing sources which were within 'the Jewish tradition' while carrying out his civic duty in a public role. He points out that although the Fathers of the Republic 'had good reason to fear the

entanglement of religion in national matters', Jewish tradition 'can be read to provide for the pluralism that one must adopt to participate openly in American public debate' (pp. 104 ff.).

The concluding articles in this volume provide a stimulating and at times sharp debate between Dr Noham Zohar of Bar-Ilan University and Rabbi David Bleich who holds the chair of Jewish Law and Ethics at New York's Yeshiva University. The chief issue which passionately concerns them is whether the halakhist can recognize and adopt an ethic which is outside, and independent of, the *halakha*. Or is the *halakha* to be deemed all-sufficient? The question is to some extent irrelevant since the canons of interpretation of the law are sufficiently wide, and the diversity of authoritative interpreters sufficiently numerous, to enable a diligent and scholarly halakhist to extract an equitable remedy or to find a moral principle *within* the *halakha* while following the letter of the law.

However, this possibility of delving deeply into the sources with the expectation of being able to relieve the law of its initial amoral appearance, does not of itself settle the dispute. The halakhist and critic may indeed reach the same practical conclusion, albeit by different routes. But has the halakhist not in fact been driven, by what his critic and questioner regards as moral norms, to step outside the *halakha*? Dr Zohar attributes to Rabbi Bleich the resort to moral reason under the pious guise of appealing to divine sanction; but the Rabbi refutes this accusation, stating that he heeds the divine instruction, since his resort springs from within the purposes and principles of the given law. The debate between these two disputants had its origin in Rabbi Bleich's article published in *Tradition* in 1983 (vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 3–41); it was entitled 'Preemptive War in Jewish Law' and was prompted by the war waged by Israel in the Lebanon. That article has not been reprinted in the volume under present review, but it is clearly the target of Dr Zohar's paper, tellingly entitled 'A Critique of Bleich's Oracular Halacha'. Bleich delivers a 'Reply' to that critique and Zohar responds with a spirited rejoinder. Their exchanges become acerbic, even personal. Sadly, readers not familiar with the *Tradition* article will be unable to appreciate fully the scope of Rabbi Bleich's argument.

Dr Zohar's approach is clearly affected by his strong adverse reaction to the conflict between 'moral norms' and what he sees as the amoral directions said to have been communicated to the ancient Hebrews on some occasions — such as the wholesale punishments to be meted out to specific peoples in specific circumstances. He claims that Rabbi Bleich views the *halakha* as a special medium for discerning the divine will. He comments: 'If the halakhic tradition is to be viewed as a source of inspiration for political thought in contemporary Israel, it must be guided by the classical eschewal of heavenly voices in favor of reasoned deliberation' (p. 254). In his rejoinder, the learned Rabbi lists a series of errors which he attributes to Dr Zohar's perception of the *halakha* and of

the halakhic process (pp. 259–66). He particularly objects to the picture of himself as holding an 'oracular' view of the *halakha*.

In turn, Dr Zohar highlights what for him constitutes the key divergence between the conflicting views of these two Orthodox protagonists. He points out: 'The basic premise of Rabbinic Judaism is that the divine language is not an unyielding given, but requires interpretation and elaboration — [Thus] a command that, according to the plain meaning, appears immoral or even just unreasonable is to be (re)interpreted or qualified to become consistent with the rest of Torah' (pp. 269 ff.). He is uneasy at the process of arriving at 'morality-proof norms' by way of special dialectics in a self-contained *halakha*, which he terms 'oracular halacha'.

The logic of Rabbi Bleich's position seems to be that divine sanction takes account, and should be seen as taking account, of the needs of self-defence; the wisdom, in given situations, of preemption; the right response to provocation; the morality of punishment; the value of deterrence; and the duty of setting an example. He is convinced that patient, scholarly, and reverent study of the relevant sources is capable of providing guidance for rightful conduct in specific circumstances.

The contestants do not resolve their differences. There are times when the *ratio decidendi* (the principle on which a judicial decision is made) is of special importance. Dr. Zohar asks: 'Must halachic teachings be minimally consistent with basic moral norms or are they rather to be completely divorced from morality?' (p. 245). He accuses Rabbi Bleich of 'deep ambiguity' with regard to ethical imperatives, and argues that such ambivalence need not follow from traditional halakhic thinking. The whole debate becomes of major practical importance with the re-establishment of Jewish statehood. He exhorts: 'We must continue to carry on the enterprise of building a worthy moral universe from the rich and instructive resources of the halachic tradition . . .' (p. 254). Had Dr. Zohar used the language of English lawyers, he might have said that the categories of equity (or in his argument, 'morality') are not closed in the application of the law (or, in his argument, the *halakha*). Both scholars, each in his own way, are committed to the search of what in biblical language might be called righteous conduct, and the routes towards its discovery.

Commandment and Community is of more than historical and academic interest. One of the reasons for the contemporary widespread and wide-ranging study of the nature and evolution of Jewish law is the context within which Israel's laws operate. The relationship between the application of the laws of the State of Israel on the one hand, and on the other hand, old-established Jewish law (sometimes termed rabbinic law) is of special concern not only to the judges of Israel (in both the civil and the religious courts), but also to Jews outside Israel who wish to be guided by the principles of Jewish law in certain specific circumstances and seek guidance from decisions and examples in Israel.

One of the early amendments under the first Likud government (elected in 1977) was the enactment by the Knesset of the provision that the civil judges of Israel, in the absence of clear precedents on points of law, should consider Jewish sources — including the Talmud and the commentaries — for guidance. That enactment did not imply that until then, the judges had refrained from doing so, nor did it mean that thereafter they refrained from considering, when they deemed it might be helpful, precedents from legal systems outside Israel, notably in English law.

Likud's purpose in sponsoring the enactment was to reflect and advance a heightened national self-consciousness at a time when there was (as there continues to be) in influential quarters a strong desire to maintain and enhance the visible and distinctive Jewishness of the State. The legal system was seen to have a crucial role. But divisions run deep, especially on laws affecting personal status.

While this book does not deal directly with such current highly sensitive issues, the papers therein illustrate the diversities of approach to the interpretation of Torah-based law and to the past and present applicability of respective interpretations. This endows the volume with an inescapable topicality.

BOOK REVIEWS

KEVIN AVRUCH and WALTER P. ZENNER, eds., *Critical Essays on Israeli Society, Religion, and Government,* Books on Israel, Volume IV, vi + 229 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, 1997, $17.95 (paperback).

The purpose of the series of Books on Israel, produced under the aegis of the Association of Israel Studies, is to review recent published work on Israel. This fourth volume consists of eleven such review essays arranged in four sections: The Arab-Israeli Conflict; Society and Government; Religion; and Literature and Culture. Most of the reviewers, including the two editors, are based in American universities and all are specialists in Israeli studies.

The essays are wide-ranging and not time-specific yet inevitably writings can be affected by the conditions of the time. In their brief but useful Introduction the editors note the contrast between 1994, when the third volume in the series went to press — when the peace process in the Middle East 'seemed to be dead in the water' — and 'today' with the establishment of a PLO-led authority in Gaza and Jericho and other developments, including for example a treaty between Israel and Jordan. This leads them to argue that there has been a transformation from a concentration on studying the obstinacy on both sides to examining specific problems, such as the subject of the first essay, on water supplies and their management. The tone of the essay is characteristic of all of them, a fairly dispassionate discussion of the main arguments put forward in the publications under review (in this case whether the water problem in the area will lead to co-operation to solve it or to conflict). The second essay is by the only non-Jew among the contributors, Mohammed Abu-Nimmer, who examines the dilemmas on both sides of the peace process.

The second section, on Society and Government, includes two essays which are different from much of the writing on Israeli politics: they deal with local rather than with national affairs. Efraim Ben-Zadok discusses neighbourhood renewal with particular reference to the role of Sephardi protest organizations; Project Renewal affected a good proportion of the Israeli population. He notes the change, in the Sephardi areas discussed, away from labour to support for Likud. Ben-Zadok aims to place his discussion within more general ideas and concepts. Thus he notes how Eisenstadt's sociological ideas were so dominant in characterizing Israeli society as uniform and based on value consensus whereas experience indicates the opposite. The other essay is on planning and politics in

Jerusalem, and the author — in an examination of literature on the city — laments the shortage of ethnographic studies. The third essay is on the Israeli court system, noting the many sources of law in Israel as well as the evolution of, especially, the Supreme Court.

The three essays in the section on religion deal with minority groups, two on Sephardim and one on Orthodox women (one women's group being of poor, illiterate Ashkenazim and the other of Sephardim, mainly Kurdish). Zvi M. Zohar writes on Sephardi religious thought as exemplified by the writings of Rabbi Haim David Halevi. The underlying theme is the emergence in recent years of Shas as a major political force but he also makes the point that there is a solid intellectual basis in Sephardi religiosity which normally is regarded as 'folk-religion, superstition, or quaint traditionality'. A different approach is found in an essay on the Jews from Aleppo who settled in Israel. Their rabbis were certainly very conservative but the community has been ready to assimilate into general Israeli society and their leaders are not interested in separatism.

The editors point out, in their brief introduction to the fourth part, Literature and Culture, that its essays are the most critical in the book. Perhaps the best example is the essay by Pnina Lahav, 'Israeli Military Leadership During the Yom Kippur War: Reflections on the Art of Reflection', She reviews autobiographies of three men, in leading army positions in 1973, who were severely criticised for their role in 'the Mishap', as it came to be called, in particular the lack of preparedness. Apart from any other qualities it is a useful discussion of the pitfalls to be encountered in using autobiographies as historical sources. Such arguments are familiar but here they are deployed remarkably incisively.

Nancy E. Berg, in her examination of the literature of the transit camps — the first stages in the settlement of immigrants in Israel — covers a longer period of time. The three novels start with one published in 1964 and she also discusses earlier and other works. Inevitably the novels reflect the times in which they were written and are realistic in their portrayal of the hardness of life in such conditions. The third essay in the arts section is on films. These too have changed over time with criticism even of the army coming to the fore.

A collection of review essays by eleven different authors is not likely to possess common themes. The subjects under review and the numerous publications being reviewed required different approaches. Yet there is a similarity between them: the general approach is dispassionate and there is a tendency where possible to use some sort of theoretical analysis. Despite the optimism of the editors in their view of the peace process, in some of the essays there is a sense of critical change. This is clearly an important work, a most useful way of keeping in touch with major written developments in Israel.

HAROLD POLLINS

KATYA GIBEL AZOULAY, *Black, Jewish and Interracial. It's Not the Color of Your Skin, but the Race of Your Kin, and Other Myths of Identity*, xii + 219pp.,Duke University Press, Durham and London, £43.95 (£15.95, paperback).

The author had a Jewish mother and a Jamaican father and in this book she explores the meaning of personal identity. She uses her own experience, which has included a lengthy period in Israel — her three teenage children have Israeli names — as well as those of eight other Black and Jewish individuals. Her aim is to test, in the particular context of the United States, the notion that people of interracial parentage necessarily face problems of identity crisis: to which group do they belong?

It is not just a question of religion, whether those children are brought up in one faith or another, since many of the parents involved may not be committed to religion. But it is a matter of colour also, and in that connection she does not hesitate to extend her examples to encompass, for example, the problems faced by Ethopian Jews in Israel.

This is indeed a wide-ranging work and covers very much more than just a report of her fieldwork in interviewing a small sample as well as the immediate literature on the subject. She has an extensive introductory section — the Prelude and the first two chapters — which are mainly theoretical and analytical and in which she examines, inter alia, the nature of identity, the meaning of otherness, and multiculturalism, evoking evidence from both Jewish and Black history as well as the ideas of numerous writers on the various topics she considers. Indeed, a general criticism of the book is that it is overloaded with such references, which interrupt her argument and, it would seem, lead her into various bypaths. Some severe editing would have given her work a sharper edge and eased the reader's task. For example, it would also have been helpful from time to time for the narrative and analysis to halt and for a brief statement of the main thoughts so far expressed. A summary of the main arguments, at the end of the chapters and of the book itself, would have been of immense assistance.

She refers to sundry studies of mixed (religious) marriages where both partners are white and broadly disputes their findings, or at least indicates that they are not relevant where the partners are of different colour. She quotes Erich Rosenthal's 1963 report — 'Jewish Marriage in the U.S.' — to the effect that most of the couples raised their children as non-Jews; the proportion was even higher where the wife was Jewish. She contends that in the different 1990s 'people of "mixed backgrounds" are more self-assertive and resistant to devaluing identity categories', and this leads her to hypothesize that 'Jewish children who are socially defined in America as Black and defined as Jewish according to the Halakah(sic) are more likely to refer to their Jewish heritage than are "white" children of a Jewish intermarriage'. One of her arguments is that there is an affinity between

Jews and Blacks because of a shared history of oppression and legal discrimination. Analogies are drawn between slavery and the Holocaust.

As befits an academic work, she touches upon the problem of someone (herself) from 'inside' the Black/Jewish group undertaking the research: the usual questions of subjectivity. And there is properly much on the use of language. Yet rightly she insists that her topic is positioned within American society (the nearest equivalent being South Africa, especially during apartheid). The history and conditions of the Blacks in the United States makes Black/Jewish parentage a special case even though there may be some similarities elsewhere. Nevertheless, her views as to the nature of identity may have applications to other societies which have not experienced America's circumstances.

HARLOLD POLLINS

JESSIE DANIELS, *White Lies. Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality in White Supremacist Discourse*, xvi + 171 pp., Routledge, New York and London, 1997, £12.99 (paperback).

The core of this monograph is a detailed examination of the contents of some 369 issues of six publications of what the author calls 'White supremacist' organizations. In a brief Appendix she explains why she rejected quantitative content analysis and opted instead for qualitative ethnographic description. She also comments on the ethical problems of a person, herself, studying what she regards as odious material and wondering how *verstehen*, which implies some empathy with the object of the research, is appropriate since it is an approach which feminists — herself included — have embraced.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5, contain the results of the ethnography. The titles of the chapters give an indication of their scope as well as the language of the publications she has studied: 'Visions of Masculinity, Glimpses of Femininity: White Men and White Women'; "Rapists", "Welfare Queens", and Vanessa Williams: Black Men and Black Women'; ' "ZOG", Bankers, and "Bull Dyke" Feminists: Jewish Men and Jewish Women'. For the uninitiated, Vanessa Williams was the first African American to win the Miss America beauty contest, much to the disgust of the white supremacist. 'ZOG' stands for 'Zionist Occupied Government'.

There are plenty of quotations as well as reproductions of drawings from the publications, some not very legible, possibly reflecting the poor printing of the originals. Despite her obvious distaste for the material she is discussing her tone is remarkably dispassionate when she describes it.

Most people will never see this material so I suppose it is useful to have it examined and portrayed. However, anyone familiar with the history of various forms of bigotry — and there have been a number of studies —

will not be surprised here. Only the details have changed — thus the old blood libel, that Jews killed Christian children to make matzo for the passover, here comes out as Jewish doctors perform abortions and thus kill Christian children. What is new perhaps is the documentation of hatred of feminists and homosexuals.

But what the author is saying is that these white supremacist notions (since Jews are in these publications counted as non-white) are not to be written off as the rantings of an extremist, lunatic fringe; she quotes a figure of 40,000 as the membership but such numbers fluctuate greatly, of course. She insists that what is being said resonates with society generally: it is all about white domination. 'The domination portrayed here is not disconnected from broader society. This discourse utilizes extreme images that both create racism and reflect core, mainstream values of the United States'. She contends that while there were important challenges in the 1960s and 1970s to '"whiteness . . . "white masculinity" and the normative constraints implicit in a white, male, heterosexual center' so that it became unacceptable to make 'explicitly racial claims', the latter have not been eliminated but rather 'subordinated' (p. 134).

Yet her statement that 'this discourse shares much in common with mainstream political discourse and popular culture representations', and others like it in her introductory and concluding chapters, is not supported sufficiently by the kind of evidence she deploys from the extremist literature. She tells us of examples, such as the use of the term 'welfare queens' to describe poor women living on state benefits: a rhetorical device which conjures the most virulently racist images of Black women imaginable'. But otherwise we tend to get assertions concerning the nature of American society rather than concrete evidence about it. That is a pity since the book does have something to say — even if the evidence the author provides leaves a nasty taste.

HAROLD POLLINS

CLIVE A. JONES, *Soviet Jewish Aliyah, 1989–1992: Impact and Implications for Israel and the Middle East*, xi + 244 pp., Frank Cass, London, 1996 £30.00.

Books based upon authors' doctoral theses are rather like buildings opened for use before the scaffolding has been removed. While this is true of Dr Jones's book, it is to be hoped that readers will not be put off — since what he has to tell us is, as his sub-title suggests, important for the understanding of the current fast-moving scene in Israel and of

that country's relations with its neighbours. The story also casts light on the attitudes and policies of the two external powers most closely involved, the United States and what was the Soviet Union.

The main subject of the book — the movement of Jews from Russia between 1989 and 1992 to Israel — has, as Dr Jones shows, to be sharply distinguished in its composition and ethos from the emigration which had preceded it after Soviet restrictions were partially eased in 1970 as a factor in the *détente* between the two super-powers. For two or three years there was a migration largely fired by a Jewish sense of identity if not imbued with the full Zionist ideology, including that of the very religious Jews from Georgia. After 1973, while Jews could still find ways of emigrating, the greater freedom they were given to choose their route enabled numbers to go not to Israel but to other lands of the Diaspora, notably the United States.

The much larger movement between 1979 and 1982 — which followed upon a different assessment of the relation of the Jewish question to the Soviet Union's international standing and economic aspirations, the product of the Gorbachev reforms — was affected by the clamp-down by the United States itself on immigration, so that although some who were disillusioned by what they found awaiting them in Israel have contrived to emigrate again, the new Aliya has resulted in a permanent addition to Israel's population of some hundreds of thousands. But the impact has not been merely a demographic one. What has impelled most of the new immigrants to leave Russia was not any ideological commitment: most of them stood far from traditional Judasim and were profoundly secular in their general attitudes — while some, according to Jewish law, were not Jews at all. They came to Israel partly because of the antisemitic trends of some aspects of the new wave of nationalism in Russia and in several former Soviet republics and partly because of the hope — common to nearly all emigrant movements throughout the ages — of material betterment.

In view of the size of the movement, the Israeli authorities clearly did what they could to ease the transition, but a permanent solution to the problem of incorporating into Israeli society the mass of newcomers was not easily attained. In background and expectations they were at the opposite ends of the scale from Ethiopian Jews, who were simultaneously presenting the Israeli authorities with a problem of assimilation. The Russians were highly educated and professionally qualified and they found it hard to accept the deprivations of life in the settlement towns, or to be content with manual or small-scale commercial occupations. A country with five million citizens requires only so many string quartets. Furthermore in engineering and above all medicine, the training they had received in the Soviet Union was not up to the very high standard that Israel has achieved. Nor were they wholly to fulfil Prime Minister Shamir's vision of them as the new pioneers who would settle in Judea

and Samaria as earlier immigrants had settled in Mandatory Palestine or in Israel within its pre-1967 boundaries.

Two results followed. The first was that the new arrivals remained highly conscious of their Russian affiliations, preserving a cultural sphere through the Russian language not open to other Israelis. The other result was that rather than accepting as given the existing political structures, they sought direct political expression for their grievances. And so in the election of 1992, the 'Russian vote' swung towards the Labour Alignment and helped Rabin to become Prime Minister. That, of course, was not the end of the story. Four years later, the 'Russians' (now more effectively organised) swung again, so that at the time of writing (December 1996), their most prominent political leader, Nathan Scharansky, finds himself in a right-wing cabinet led by the Likud. How this change came about might merit a future study by Dr Jones, who is clearly well qualified to undertake it.

Meanwhile, the present book makes it easier to grasp the paradox of the Netanyahu government which may produce a new situation before this review sees the light of day. For the 'Russian' component of the coalition (a component which, as noted above, is highly secularist) must find it hard to sit alongside the religious parties determined more than ever to remake the Jewish State in their image. And again, what of the 'peace process'? The Russians are not affected for the most part by the ideology of Eretz Israel which fuels the opposition to finding a true *modus vivendi* with the Palestinian inhabitants, but they are singularly ill-fitted to enter into the minds of either the Palestinians or other Arab interlocutors. They find Oriental Jews hard enough to take.

Israel has since its inception been a country in a state of siege; it is now a country deeply divided by major differences over the proper vision of its future. The deference commanded by the earlier generations of pioneers from the Jewish Pale of Settlement and their descendants has vanished; we have a jigsaw with no map to tell us how it is to be put together but Dr Jones has given us useful insights into one of the main pieces on the board.

MAX BELOFF

YAEL YISHAI, *Between the Flag and the Banner: Women in Israeli Politics*, xiii + 292 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, 1997, n.p.

The blurb on the back cover of this volume states: 'This book presents a broad perspective on the political life of Israeli women, both Jewish and non-Jewish'. However, the passages dealing with non-Jewish women are very brief and it is surprising that there is no comparison made with Egypt, where Muslin and Christian women have been active feminists

since before the Second World War. It is also surprising that, although there are many references to the peace agreements between the Israeli government and the Palestinian leaders, the well-known Palestinian woman, Mrs Ashrawi, who took an active part in the negotiations and appeared frequently on television screens, speaking in excellent English for the Palestinian cause, is not mentioned: indeed, her name does not appear in the index.

Although the book was published in 1997, it deals mainly with the situation until 1994; the author states on page 2: 'As we approach the mid-1990s . . .'.

Yael Yishai maintains that Israeli Jewish women have been indoctrinated that in the national interest they must above all have a nurturing role as efficient homemakers and caring wives and mothers, since the stability of family life is essential for the survival of Israel. Women must be loyal to the national flag and such loyalty must take precedence over the banner of feminism: hence the title of the book. Feminism is a comparatively recent development in Israel and even those brave women who have advocated more rights for women, have acted with great restraint in their speeches. However, it must be borne in mind that Israeli women did not have to fight to secure the right to vote or for wives to retain full rights over their own property — as was the case for English women until the early decades of the twentieth century.

Feminists in Western countries cannot be accused of neglecting their patriotic duty by devoting more energy to their selfish ends instead of caring for their fathers, husbands, and sons who regularly risk their lives as soldiers to defend their country and their families. Israeli women, however, can and do go out to work and they contribute to the household's income apart from fulfilling their housekeeping duties. In what the author quaintly calls 'Israel's birth certificate', the Declaration of Independence, it is specified that the State of Israel 'will maintain equal social and political rights for all citizens, irrespective of religion, race or sex' (p. 19). But she wisely comments that reality is different from formal declarations. Since it is unquestionably agreed that the security of the State is of paramount importance and since women by law may not serve in battle units or in any war zone during armed conflicts, it is only the men who go to war and who also risk their lives in fighting Arab rioters and terrorist infiltrators. Female soldiers have only a supportive role in Israel's Defence Force: most of them are secretaries, clerks, nurses, telephonists, and army social workers.

It is enlightening to learn from the author that in at least one respect, public opinion polls are remarkably unrealiable. In a 1993 national survey, nearly half the female respondents stated that they favoured a Women's Party but that 'endorsement remained on paper only and was not manifest in the ballot. Rather, activity within existing political parties, leashed to the flag and directed by the symbol it carries, appeared a more

appropriate channel for womens's political behavior' (p. 45). It is not surprising that a right-wing party, such as the Likud, has fewer female members than do the Labour Party or the small left-wing parties. As for the ultra-Orthodox, Yael Yishai quotes the comment that 'it is hard to expect that an Orthodox Jew, who prays every morning "Blessed be he that did not make me a woman" would support the election of women to the Knesset' (p. 54).

Yael Yishai tells us that at the 1988 elections for the twelfth Knesset, only seven women were elected — a record low female representation, although when the Frist Knesset was convened in 1949 there had been 11 women among the 120 total membership; however, in 1992 the situation improved: 11 women were returned. The Israeli civil service also reflects a similar disparity in its higher echelons and the author states that she finds it 'staggering' that 'at the top administative level there are only two women compared with 155 men' (p. 48). It might be that this is so because fewer women than men have achieved a sufficiently high university education to qualify them for the most senior civil service posts; but when the situation in Israeli univerisities is considered, a study published in 1993 has stated that three-quarters of female university teachers were in the lower positions of lecturer and senior lecturer and that only five per cent of full professors were women. Yael Yishai believes that two of the factors inhibiting the advancement of Israeli women also in the economic sphere (only nine per cent of managers in industry are women, for example) are the absence of affirmative action legislation and the reluctance of career women to delay childbearing — as is the tendency of such women in Western countries.

Even in the local councils of Jewish cities, women hold very few seats. At the first local elections held in 1959, only 4.2 per cent of the seats were gained by women and the situation deteriorated further so that in 1965 the proportion was 3.2 per cent. However, there was a steady but modest improvement over the next three decades so that in 1993 the percentage had risen to 10.9. As for mayors, we are told that the picture 'is even darker. During the state's existence only six women have served as heads of local councils, none of them in a city with a population over 10,000. . . . Among women mayors was a Christian Arab' but on the whole, 'women's representation in the Arab sector is nil. For the country as a whole, including non-Jewish local authorities, the proportion of women representatives is only 7.3 per cent' (pp. 39–40).

In the trade unions also, women are greatly under-represented in leadership positions. However, one surprising finding in the data collected on Israeli women's political activities was that Jewish women from an Asian-African parentage (more generally labelled in Israeli publications as 'of Oriental origin', thus lumping together highly-educated female immigrants from Egypt with those from the Yemen or Ethopia) 'appear to be more involved in politics than their affluent

counterparts. These findings are confirmed when the educational criterion is applied. .... college-educated women engage more frequently in political discussions; their sense of efficacy, and their partisan affiliation, however, are lower than those of women of lower socioeconomic status' (p. 110).

It is fifty years since the establishment of the State of Israel and at long last, social scientists and others in the country have had to accept that the melting-pot theory of naive Israeli sociologists of the 1950s and 1960s — — and even, in some cases, as recently as the 1980s — has proved glaringly wrong as well as ill-founded. The main argument was that the army would be the unifying factor for young persons; but several generations of Israelis have served their full term as conscripts in the Israel Defence Force, and by the 1990s, social differentiation on the basis of ethnic origin is still marked. Yael Yishai states bluntly (p. 110): 'National efforts at turning Israel into an egalitarian society have been either insufficient or ineffective. The ingredients tossed into the "melting pot" have simply failed to blend. The educational disparity is most conspicuous among second-generation Sephardi women . . . who lag far behind women of European descent in their attainments'.

JUDITH FREEDMAN

CHRONICLE

The Community Research Unit of the Board of Deputies of British Jews published in July 1997 a Report of Community Statistics for 1996. The Unit estimated that there were 3013 Jewish births in Great Britain in 1995. 'Births numbered approximately 3400 per annum thoughout the 1980s and a marked reduction was first noted between 1991 and 1992. This appears to have begun a trend . . . . until 1995 when the numbers rose to the 1992 level. . . . To put these figures in context it should be recorded that nationally the regular decrease in births noted since 1990 has continued and Jewish fall-off outside the most orthodox sectors probably echoes this general pattern.'

The total number of synagogue marriages recorded in 1996 was 947, an increase of 81 over the previous year. 'This is an increase of 9 per cent from one year to the next, and reverses the steady year to year decline noted since 1990.'

The number of completed *gittin* (religious divorces) in 1996 was 272, a rise of 42 (18 per cent) on the 1995 total. It is stressed 'that these figures do *not* indicate the *levels of divorce* in the community, nor do annual variations necessarily indicate recent breakdown of marriage since some applications for *get* may take years to process'.

There were 4167 burials and cremations under Jewish religious auspices in 1996, a fall by two per cent from the 1995 total of 4233. 'There is no variation in the inter-synagogal balance either for 1996 or for the period 1991–95.'

Since the late 1980s, both births and deaths began to decrease while the total number of marriages in synagogues has declined steadily for the last several years.

*

This same Community Research Unit published in 1997 *British Synagogue Membership in 1996* by Marlena Schmool and Frances Cohen. There are six synagogue groups in the United Kingdom: 1) Liberal: congregations of the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues (ULPS). 2) Mainstream Orthodox: the London-based United Synagogue and the Federation of Synagogues 'together with those regional synagogues which recognize the authority of the Chief Rabbi and a small number of London and regional independent Ashkenazi orthodox congregations'. 3) Masorti (Conservative) congregations; they are mainly in Greater London and their theological position is between Orthodox and Reform. 4) Reform 'includes constituents of the umbrella-organisation Reform Synagogues of Great Britain (RSGB) and the independent Westminster synagogue'. 5) Sephardi synagogues are those of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation, the longest settled section of British Jewry, found in London and Manchester'. Finally, 6) the Union of Orthodox consist of 'those congregations which expect strict adherence to *halacha* from all their members. They are mostly under the umbrella of the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, established in 1926'.

In 1996, there were 365 congregations in the United Kingdom with a membership of 93,684. The large majority were in England; Scotland had 10 synagogues, Wales had five, Northern Ireland had one synagogue only — and so did Jersey and the Isle of Man. Greater London had slightly more than half the total number of synagogues: (193) while the rest of the South East had a further 50. Greater Manchester had 41 congregations.

The 365 total of synagogues in 1996 represents in increase of nine since 1990. 'Notwithstanding the increased number of synagogues, the total household membership in Greater London fell by 10 per cent, maintaining the rate of decline of the period 1983–90. Between 1983 and 1996 the household membership of Greater London decreased by 16 per cent. This fall was accompanied by a continuing rise in membership in the rest of South-East England.'

*

The *Annual Report* for 1996 of the Board of Deputies of British Jews includes an overview of the activities of the Board by its Director General. He states:

'One of the most significant aspects of the Board's efforts in 1996 involved support and help for victims of the Holocaust and their families to recover the substantial assets stolen by the Nazis and deposited in Swiss banks.'

The Board has been active in developing links with other communities in the United Kingdom. A Board delegation was the guest of the Sikh community 'in an open evening to forge Jewish-Sikh understanding, and a new Indian-Jewish Association was created that will cement the relationship between the two largest minority communities in Britain. . . . Members of the Working Group on Group Relations also met leaders of the Anti-Racist Alliance to discuss relations with the Muslim community'.

Another section of the *Annual Report* is entitled 'Defence and Group Relations' (pp. 14–17). It includes a reproduction of an 'example of race hatred material on the Internet'; 'Stormfront' states that it is 'a resource for those courageous men and women fighting to preserve their White Western culture, ideals and freedom of speech and association' on its 'White Nationlist Resource Page'. Another reproduction (on p. 15) is of a leaflet calling on Muslims to support AL-JIHAD 'against the terrorist State of Israel in Palestine. . . . We pledge to continue to support AL-JIHAD for the liberation of Muslim land from occupation by the enemy (ISRAEL)'. The leaflet asks Muslims to demonstrate outside the Israeli Embassy on a particular day in September 1996 and states that the demonstration is organised by Al-Muhajiroun; it gives a postal box number as well as telephone and fax numbers in London.

*

The Institute for Jewish Policy Research (formerly, the Institute of Jewish Affairs) publishers reports regularly. Its May 1997 'policy paper' is entitled 'The Jewish voluntary sector in the United Kingdom: its role and its future', by Margaret Harris. There is a Foreword by Barry A. Kosmin, who is Director of Research of the Institute. Professor Kosmin notes that when the Jews returned to Cromwellian England in the middle of the seventeenth century, they 'had to promise that they would not become public charges and that they would also

take responsibility for their poor. . . . From the perspective of the Jews, taking care of their own did not require making a pledge to the authorities. This is what they expected, what their tradition demanded and what they understood to be in their best interests as well.'

There have been many developments since the seventeenth century, but Anglo Jewry continues to be aware of its responsibilities for those members of the community who require special services and assistance. Margaret Harris states that the Jewish voluntary sector includes social welfare agencies; membership associations and clubs; self-help and mutual-aid groups; synagogues; fund-raising charities; grant-making trusts; educational institutions; housing associations; pressure groups; 'ad hoc' consultative or event-organizing groups; and umbrella, intermediary and representative bodies. She adds that many organizations 'fall into more than one of these categories' (p. 2).

The author considers various aspects of the general voluntary sector in the United Kingdom and points out that the Jewish voluntary sector 'is unlikely to be immune from the challenges which are facing the general UK sector' (p. 7). There are special challenges for Anglo-Jewry, 'challenges which are different from, or perhaps more intense, than those experienced by the broader UK voluntary sector' and the author states that these include securing financial and human resources; meeting rising expectations; developing cohesiveness; maintaining a 'Jewish' character; and maintaining links with the wider voluntary sector and the wider society (p. 8).

Anglo-Jewry has a large proportion of elderly persons: 25 per cent, compared with 17 per cent in the general population. This means that 'an increasing gap could appear between the available resources of volunteer time and money and the incidence of need and demand. These points apply . . . also to other voluntary organizations including self-help and advocacy groups . . . as well as to synagogues which are essentially self-funding mutual-benefit associations'. The point is then made that legacies will diminish in number and size as people live longer and may exhaust their life savings and capital before their death.

When it comes to maintaining a 'Jewish' character, it appears 'that increasing proportions of those who work for pay in the Jewish voluntary sector, especially in social care, are not themselves Jewish or have little understanding about Jewish values and customs'. The question is then posed whether the only Jewish element in Jewish welfare agencies is the fact that the majority of their clients regard themselves as Jewish (p. 9).

*

A June 1997 report of the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) is entitled 'The social attitudes of unmarried young Jews in contemporary Britain'; it is by Jacqueline Goldberg and Barry A. Kosmin. The research is based on a subsample of 193 unmarried respondents, aged between 22 and 39 years, taken from the comprehensive JPR Survey of the Social and Political Attitudes of British Jews. The June 1997 report's main findings are that young unmarried Jews are 'a very diverse group, socio-economically, politically, attitudinally and in religious outlook. This is true of both men and women. More than half the sample (55 per cent) had an undergraduate degree and 80 per cent were in gainful occupations. Only six per cent were strictly orthodox, nine per cent were Progressive, 24 per cent were traditional, 27 per cent were 'just Jewish', and the

largest single group (34 per cent) stated that they were non-practising, secular Jews. As far as general attitudes were concerned, there was general agreement that more tax revenue should be allocated to the National Health Service and to education; the vast majority watched national and international television news, 'indicating a high level of interest in current affairs', while the choice of a daily newspaper 'was well distributed across the spectrum of broadsheets. The general distaste for the tabloids reflects the educational and social profile of the sample'.

As for Jewish identity, 86 per cent of the sample had received some form of formal Jewish education; and the majority of the respondents 'agreed that it was important that the Jews survive as a people and that an unbreakable bond unites Jews all over the world' (p. 1). However, involvement in Jewish home life and a loyalty to the Jewish heritage was more important for women than it was for men. Three-quarters of the sample (76 per cent) had visited Israel in the previous ten years, but a significantly larger number of the female respondents had done so.

When the attitiudes to marriage and to interpersonal relationships were examined, 68 per cent had been at one time in a relationship with a non-Jewish partner and more than half of the sample thought that rabbis 'should be more helpful in welcoming non-Jewish partners into the community'. About one third of the sample approved of intermarriage in theory, but 40 per cent disapproved of it.

The authors are aware that the 193 respondents to the questionnaire 'should not be taken to be fully representative of the unmarried young Jewish population in Britain as a whole' but they are of the opinion that their findings 'constitute the only survey data concerning this group of individuals currently available. Furthermore the sample was found to have internal consistency, and the statistical findings and relationships are therefore very reliable' (p. 5).

*

In November 1997, the Institute for Jewish Policy Research published a report by Barry Kosmin, Antony Lerman, and Jacqueline Goldberg entitled 'The attachment of British Jews to Israel'. The findings are based on a postal survey in 1995 of a sample of 2,194 Jews. A strong attachment to Israel was expressed by 43 per cent of the sample; 38 per cent had only a moderate attachment; 16 per cent had no special attachment; and the remaining three per cent had negative feelings towards Israel. Just over half the respondents (54 per cent) said that they felt 'equally British and Jewish'; 26 per cent felt 'more Jewish than British'; 18 per cent said that they felt 'more British than Jewish'; and the remaining two per cent were unsure.

The percentage of those stating that they were more Jewish 'was highest among the youngest respondents and decreased with age' and there is 'a significant relationship between feeling strongly attached to Israel and self-identification as primarily Jewish'. Two-thirds of the respondents (66 per cent) had visited Israel at least once in the previous ten years (with many having gone several times during that period); 22 per cent had never visited Israel, and the remaining 12 per cent had not been there since 1985. 'Almost 7 out of 10 (69 per cent) British Jews said they have close friends or family in Israel, a sign of increased social connections as compared with earlier surveys' (p. 1). As for the

age factor, those over 50 years felt significantly more attached to Israel than was the case with the respondents under 50 years old.

*

The August 1997 issue of *Les Cahiers de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle* (AIU) states that the *Alliance* has some fifty educational establishments and affiliated schools in Belgium, Canada, France, Iran, Israel, Morocco and Spain. The school in Belgium is in Brussels; in Canada the schools are in Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa; in France, in Paris and Nice; in Iran, there is one school in Teheran; in Israel, there are seven affiliated establishments which are in Jerusalem, Mikveh Israel, Haifa and Tel-Aviv; in Morocco, three schools and a kindergarten are in Casablanca; and in Spain the schools are in Madrid and Barcelona.

*

The Spring 1997 issue of *Tel Aviv Univeristy News* states that the University 'has acquired an impressive 20,000 volume Chinese Book Collection . . . — the largest of its kind in Israel' which makes Tel Aviv University the leading centre for sinological studies in the country. There are about 10,000 volumes in Chinese and another 10,000 in Western languages 'including audio-visual and multi-media materials for teaching Chinese'. The collection 'is not limited to traditional China. It includes major works of modern Chinese fiction and history, as well as encyclopedias, concordances, . . . and other reference works. The collection subscribes to some 30 scientific journals as well as to several Chinese daily newspapers . . .'. The inaugural ceremony for the Collection was attended by the Ambassador of China to Israel and by the cultural attache to the Embassy.

*

This same issue of *Tel Aviv University News* states that 30 new immigrants from the former communist bloc have been awarded Zucker scholarships at the University. The Wolf Foundation, which was established more than 20 years ago, has awarded grants to outstanding students and researchers at all higher institutions of education in Israel; about 3,800 students have benefited so far. The latest recipients at Tel Aviv University totaled 39: 25 were for undergraduates, nine for graduate fellowships, and five were for doctoral research.

Antisemitism continued to manifest a downward trend of violence since 1995: this was the finding of a research project compiled by Tel Aviv University and published jointly with the Anti-Defamation League and the World Jewish Congress. 'This reduction is partly attributed to the increasingly stringent enforcement of anti-racist and anti-terrorist laws, and to greater education about and increased attention to racism and hate crimes by governmental and non-governmental organizations' (p. 27). But these trends are threatened by recent electoral gains in Europe of ultra right-wing parties.

*

The Sociological Institute for Community Studies of Bar-Ilan University published in November 1996, in its series of *Sociological Papers, Antisemitism and the Young Elite in Hungary* by Andras Kovacs. The author is a senior university

researcher in Budapest; he reports that in December 1992 personal interviews were carried out with 1,000 college and university students. 'The composition of the respondents represented the entirety of the students of the Hungarian higher education according to gender and age as well as according to character and location of the institution of higher learning (p. 4)'. The respondents, whom the author defines as 'the prospective Hungarian elite', tended to over-estimate the number of Jews living in Hungary but to greatly under-estimate the number of Hungarian Jews who were murdered during the Holocaust. Another finding was that 43 per cent had no antisemitic feelings, 26 per cent had antisemitic prejudices 'of various strengths', and the rest 'share common negative stereotypes about Jews' (p. 15).

Volume VI, 1997, of *Studia Judaica* is a publication of the Institute for Hebrew and Jewish History in the Department of History and Philosophy of Babes-Bolyai University in Romania. It contains the contributions of several participants in an International Conference on the Enlightement (*Haskalah*) and its impact on Jewish Life in Romania, held at Cluj-Nopaca in October 1996. All the contents of the volume are in the English language. Several of the papers are on various aspects of the influence of Moses Mendelssohn during the Enlightenment; one paper is on 'Hebrew Maskilim Writers in Romania, 1850–1900'; another is on the 'Jewish Press, Haskalah and Zionism'; and another is entitled 'Projects for the Modernization of the Jewish Schooling System in Transylvania in 19th Century' [*sic*]. There is also a paper on Hungarian Jews: 'Hebrew Literature in Hungary in the Epoch of the Haskalah'.

Under the heading of 'Archival Documents' there is a note on 'The First Census of the Jews in Carei Borough (1727)' (pp. 205–07).

Volume v of *Studia Judaica*, 1996, printed the contributions of participants at an International Conference on 'The Past of the Transylvanian Jewry', held in Cluj-Napoca in October 1995. The papers included the following titles: 'The Jewish Reform Movement in Transylvania and Banat'; 'The Determinants of Jewish Identity in Inter-War Transylvania'; 'The Status of the Jews of Transylvania at the End of the 18th Century'; 'The Jewish Population of Satmar around 1848'; and 'From Ideology to Practice: The Zionist Movement in Transylvania'.

At the end of the volume, the Director of the Institute for Hebrew and Jewish History states that the teaching programme of the Institute for the academic year 1995–96 included 'Hebrew language courses for beginner and advanced, General Jewish History, History of the Jews of Romania, Jewish Culture and Civilization, History of Jewish Thought and History of Jewish Art'.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Books listed here may be reviewed later)

Aronsfeld, C. C., *Wanderer From My Birth*, xi + 324 pp., Janus Publishing Company, London, 1997, (paperback, £9.99).

Chirot, Daniel and Anthony Reid, eds., *Essential Outsiders. Chinese and Jews in the Modern Transformation of Southeast Asia and Central Europe*, vii + 335 pp., University of Washington Press, Seattle and London, 1997, n.p.

Cimet, Adina, *Ashkenazi Jews in Mexico*, xii + 231 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, 1997, n.p.

Gampel, Benjamin R., ed., *Crisis and Creativity in the Sephardic World, 1391–1648*, xvi + 413 pp., Columbia University Press, New York, 1997, n.p.

Homolka, Walter, Walter Jacob and Esther Seidel, eds., *Not By Birth Alone. Conversion to Judaism*, xiv + 206 pp., Cassell, London and Washington, 1997, £14.99 or $24.95 (hardback, £45 or $69.95).

Leveson, Marcia, *People of the Book. Images of the Jew in South African English Fiction 1880–1992*, xii + 277 pp., Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1996, n.p.

Lewin-Epstein, Noah, Yaacov Roi'i, and Paul Ritterband, eds., *Russian Jews on Three Continents: Migration and Resettlement*, xi + 557 pp., Frank Cass, London, 1997, £37.50 (paperback, £18.50).

Liebman, Charles S. and Elihu Katz, *The Jewishness of Israelis: Responses to the Guttman Report*, xix + 188 pp., State University of New York Press, Albany, 1997, $19.95 (paperback).

Meyer, Michael A., ed., *German Jewish History in Modern Times. Volume* I: *Tradition and Enlightenment 1600–1780*, xv + 435 pp., Columbia University Press, New York, 1996, $50.00.

Neusner, Jacob and Bruce Chilton, *The Intellectual Foundations of Christian and Jewish Discourse*, xvi + 184 pp., Routledge, London and New York, 1997, n.p.

Peskowitz, Miriam and Laura Levitt, eds., *Judaism Since Gender*, xii + 229 pp., Routledge, New York and London, 1997, £14.99 (hardback, £45.00).

Rayner, John D., *An Understanding of Judaism*, xix + 234 pp., Berghahn Books, Providence, R. I. and Oxford, 1997, £13.50 (hardback, £35.00).

Robertson Ritchie and Edward Timms, eds., *Theodor Herzl and the Origins of Zionism*, xiii + 209 pp., Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1997, £39.50.

Shavit, David, *Hunger for the Printed Word. Books and Libraries in the Jewish Ghettos of Nazi-Occupied Europe*, xi + 178 pp., McFarland and Co., Jefferson, North Carolina, and London, 1997, distributed in the UK by Shelwing Ltd., 4 Pleydell Gardens, Folkstone, Kent, £33.75.

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