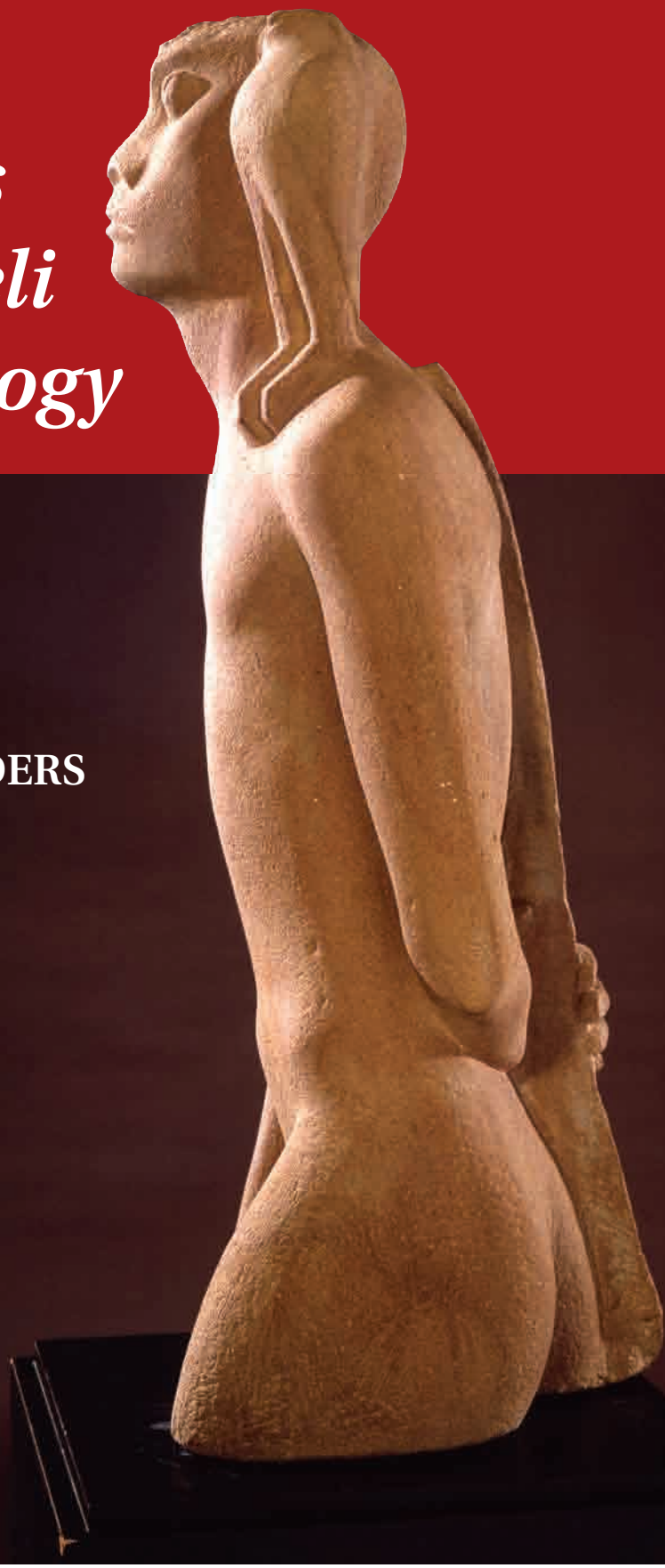
THE *Origins of Israeli Mythology*

NEITHER CANAANITES NOR CRUSADERS



DAVID OHANA

CAMBRIDGE

The Origins of Israeli Mythology

We claim that Zionism as a meta-narrative has been formed through contradiction to two alternative models: the Canaanite and crusader narratives. These narratives are the most daring and heretical assaults on Israeli-Jewish identity, which is umbilically connected to Zionism. The Israelis, according to the Canaanite narrative, are from this place and belong only here; according to the crusader narrative, they are from another place and belong there. On the one hand, the mythological construction of Zionism as a modern crusade describes Israel as a western colonial enterprise planted in the heart of the East and alien to the area, its logic, and its peoples, whose end must be degeneration and defeat. On the other hand, the nativist construction of Israel as neo-Canaanism, which defined the nation in purely geographical terms as an imagined native community, demands breaking away from the chain of historical continuity. Those are the two greatest anxieties that Zionism and Israel needed to encounter and answer forcefully. *The Origins of Israeli Mythology* seeks to examine the intellectual archaeology of Israeli mythology as it reveals itself through the Canaanite and crusader narratives.

Professor David Ohana studies modern European and Jewish history. His affiliations have included Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Sorbonne, Harvard University, and the University of California, Berkeley. He is a full professor of History at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel. Ohana earned his Ph.D. at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1989. He is the recipient of a Fulbright fellowship and has been a senior Fellow at the Jerusalem Van Leer Institute, where he founded and directed the Forum for Mediterranean Cultures. Since 2000, he has been a Fellow at the Ben-Gurion Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism. Ohana's research areas include the intellectual and cultural history of modern Europe, political philosophy, comparative study of national myths, Mediterranean studies, Zionist ideology, and Israeli identity. He has written and edited numerous books in Hebrew, English, and French. Among the books he has written are *The Last Israelis* (1998), *A Humanist in the Sun: Camus and the Mediterranean Inspiration* (2000), *The Promethean Passion: The Intellectual Origins of the Twentieth Century from Rousseau to Foucault* (2000), *The Rage of the Intellectuals: Political Radicalism and Social Criticism in Europe and Israel* (2005), *The Myth of Niobe* (2009), the trilogy *The Nihilist Order* (2009), and *Political Theologies in the Holy Land: Israeli Messianism and Its Critics* (2010).

The Origins of Israeli Mythology

Neither Canaanites nor Crusaders

DAVID OHANA
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Translated by
DAVID MAISEL

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107014091

First published in Hebrew as *Lo Kena'anim, lo Tsalbanim* in Jerusalem, 2008
First English edition 2012

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data
Ohana, David.
[Lo Kena'anim, lo Tsalbanim. English]
The origins of Israeli mythology : neither Canaanites nor crusaders / David Ohana ;
[translated by] David Maisel.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-107-01409-1 (hardback)
1. National characteristics, Israeli. 2. Jews–Israel–Identity. 3. Israel–Social life
and customs. I. Title.
DS113.3.O34713 2011
956.94–dc23 2011022028

ISBN 978-1-107-01409-1 Hardback

In memory of my parents Maxim and Annette who made this book possible.
For Roni, Tamar, Daniel, and Amir who make despair impossible.

Contents

Acknowledgments

I am deeply grateful to the following people: my late teachers at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem – Yehoshua Arieli, Jacob L. Talmon, Natan Rotenstreich, Shemuel Eisenstadt, Jacob Katz, and Yehoshua Prawer. I was inspired to undertake my academic work by Gershom Scholem, who, in his last lecture, which I was privileged to attend, called for new horizons of research to be opened up. I hope I found my way.

I wish to thank the editors of the Hebrew edition: Avi Sagi, Yedidia Stern, and Dror Yinon. My gratitude is also due to Anita Shapira, who was the director of the Yitzhak Rabin Center for Israel Studies, which gave me a fellowship to write this book.

My thanks are due to my colleagues Aviezer Ravitzky, Sasson Somekh, Steve Ascheim, Haviva Pedaya, Irad Malkin, Paul Mendes-Flohr, Yaakov Ariel, and Malachi Hacohen and to my friends Michael Feige, Moriel Ram, Ari Barell, Yiftah Gavish, Avi Katzman, and "Avraham" from Berkeley. I likewise owe a debt of gratitude to the writers Haim Guri, A. B. Yehoshua, Haim Beer, and the late Aharon Amir.

The book was written at the Jerusalem Van Leer Institute, the Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, and the University of California, Berkeley. At Berkeley, I met the wonderful colleagues and friends Martin Jay, Robert Alter, and Paul Hamburg.

Special thanks are due to my devoted translator David Maisel, who for the last quarter century has translated my books into English.

Lastly, I am deeply indebted to Lewis Bateman, my editor at Cambridge University Press, who directed the team, which included Anne Lovering Rounds and Bindu Vinod. After a long intellectual odyssey, this group finally brought the ship safely into port.

1

Introduction

NATIONALISM, IDEOLOGY, AND MYTHOLOGY

The two most daring and heretical assaults on Israeli-Jewish identity, which are umbilically connected to Zionism, are the Canaanite and the crusader narratives. On the one hand, the mythological construction of Zionism as a modern crusade described Israel as a western colonial enterprise planted in the heart of the East, alien to the area, its logic, and its peoples, whose end must be degeneration and defeat. On the other hand, the nativist construction of Israel as neo-Canaanism, which defined the nation in purely geographical terms as an imagined native community, demands breaking away from the chain of historical continuity. Those are the two greatest anxieties that Zionism and Israel needed to encounter and answer forcefully.

The Origins of Israeli Mythology seeks to examine the intellectual archaeology of Israeli mythology as it reveals itself through the double axis of place and time. Most scholars encounter Israeli complex identity through researching ideology (Zionism), settlement (the first waves of immigration), political movements, the cataclysm of the Holocaust, Israel's wars, the place of "others" such as ultra-orthodox or oriental Jews, or sites that have gained a mythical status, such as Tel Hai or Massada. The perspective adopted here provides a different genealogy of Israeli self-perception, a mapping of the deep anxieties, states of mind, and metaphors of Israelis with regard to their spatial and temporal identity. In other words, I will try to recover a phenomenology of the Israeli-Zionist identity discourse and to expose its mythological roots.

The chapters in this book describe constitutive stages in the development of Israeli mythology: the Promethean passion and the messianic drive; the mythology's main mutations: the crusader anxiety and the Canaanite rebellion; and a possible alternative identity for the future: the Mediterranean option. To some extent they are what the philosopher Max Black calls "conceptual archetypes"[1]: continually shifting states of Israeli consciousness that can be

[1] Max Black, *The Labyrinth of Language*, London 1970.

understood more clearly through historical investigation, conceptual analysis, and the study of analogies. To use the expression of the philosopher Stephen Pepper, the narrative traces "root metaphors" in the metamorphoses of Israeliness such as "Nimrod" or Kfar Etzion.[2] The great questions to be considered are how the metaphor is integrated into the public discourse, the political action, and the Israeli *habitus*; how a symbolization of historical events becomes a fixed metaphorical image, and if and how a mythologization of the symbol occurs. The answers to these questions can throw light on the root causes of present-day cultural phenomena and contemporary political manifestations in Israel.

In this study, there are five focal points that are both particular test cases and stages in the development of the communal Israeli experience. I begin with the birth of the "new Hebrew" in Europe at the turn of the nineteenth and of the twentieth century, expressed in Friedrich Nietzsche's (1844–1900) terms that were widespread in the culture of the Hebrew revival and through different Zionist ideologies. Nietzsche was the major thinker who made his mark on the Hebrew Prometheanism. From the turn of the twentieth century, his ideas, whether veiled or overt, resounded throughout the worlds of Jewish philosophy, political ideas, and cultural discourse in modern Hebrew literature and poetry.

The second case is dedicated to the Canaanite challenge, as expressed by the lengthy political and literary discourse starting in the 1930s with the poet Yonatan Ratosh (1908–1981), founder of the Young Hebrews movement. It will examine how intellectual critics warned against Canaanism, both in its left-wing and in its right-wing manifestations, claiming that it would eventually turn into a national ideology resembling a fascist variant of certain European national movements. The following chapter focuses on the rightist-religious variant of neo-Canaanites as exemplified in a unique historical episode: the return to Kfar Etzion, a religious settlement located near Jerusalem in the southern West Bank, established in 1927 and abandoned in the 1948 war. The return to Kfar Etzion by Jewish settlers after the 1967 War will be discussed as a microcosm of the right of return to the Greater Land of Israel. From there I consider the analogy drawn between Zionism and the crusaders in the Israeli discourse and the way in which it reflects fears of the vulnerability and temporary nature of the Zionist project. The Zionist-crusader analogy accentuates the dichotomy between the Levant and the colonialist West, which brings us to the concluding chapter. Finally, I examine Israel as a Mediterranean society-in-the-making. Through the debate on Israeli identity and the inspiring intellectual biography of Jacqueline Kahanoff (1917–1979), I will explore the Mediterranean option for Israel.

As should be apparent from the test cases, the subject of this work is not the Canaanite movement or the crusader history, but rather the construction of Israeli identity and the making of its national consciousness through historical

[2] Stephen Pepper, *Concept and Quality: A World Hypothesis*, La Salle 1967.

development and against alternative options. The myths discussed here constitute a dialogic structure through which the Israeli Jews have communicated with each other, generation after generation, beyond different cultural backgrounds, about their hopes, dreams, and fears. Paraphrasing Schelling's definition of mythology, these myths tackle the all-important questions at the heart of their "narrative philosophy": Where did the Israelis come from? Where are they going?[3]

The Zionist ideology was part of the modern enterprise. It represented the Promethean passion of western man, which meant being one's own master, rebelling against the fate decreed by one's history, being able to mold the future, to create a society independent of existing circumstances. At the heart of modernity – that is, behind the Promethean passion – there is the assumption that man is stronger than the place. The claim of Zionism as a modern movement was that the new Jew who had left Europe would conquer the place and would mold it to his measure. That was the reason why the crusader narrative and the Canaanite narrative were such great and fundamental threats to Zionism: Both claimed that place is stronger than man, and it can construct man contrary to his wishes. The crusader narrative claims that the place would expel would-be settlers, whereas the Canaanite narrative contends that the place would draw such people in. According to the crusader narrative, the Israelis did not come from this place; according the Canaanite, they could only have come from this place.

Zionism not only sought to change the Jew's relationship to place but also to change his relationship to time.[4] It boasted of restoring the Jew to history, and claimed that this was necessary in order that he would cease to relate to time in a deterministic way, passively waiting for the end of days. The task of the modern Jew was to approach time in an active manner. The traditional Messianic approach to time was exchanged for an active modern approach whose Messianism was Promethean and in which man, through his actions, achieved his own redemption in historical time. In contrast to this, the crusader and Canaanite narratives claimed the preeminence of time over man. The crusader narrative claimed that time would ultimately defeat the Israeli colonialist experiment, and the Canaanite narrative claimed that the mythological Canaanite time was more valid than the Jewish or Zionist time.

Underlying the Canaanite metaphor is the deterministic claim that the Hebrew national identity is native and owes nothing to human effort. It is not voluntary, modern, or western – that is to say, Promethean – but primitive and fundamentalistic. Thus, it undermines the Zionist pretension of effecting a transformation of the Jew: It holds that it is impossible that an

[3] Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, *Philosophie der Mythologie*, Stuttgart 1856.

[4] Eyal Hovers, "Time in Zionism: The Life and Afterlife of a Temporal Revolution," *Political Theory*, 26, 5 (October 1998), pp. 652–685; Robert Paine, "Jewish Ontologies of Time and Political Legitimation in Israel," in Henry J. Rutz, ed., *The Politics of Time*, Washington D.C. 1992, pp. 150–170.

extraterritorial religious consciousness can become a native national identity. Conversely, the crusader metaphor also makes the deterministic claim that the Zionist project is a hopeless cause. However much the Zionist, Hebrew, or Israeli seeks to strike roots in the place, he will inevitably be an alien implantation. Underlying both metaphors, which are in contradiction to one another, is the common basic assumption that the Zionist passion is doomed to failure from the start.

The paradox of Zionism laid in a new self-consciousness of many Jews in Europe at the time of the Enlightenment and emancipation that, being by nature free individuals, they were still enslaved. From the time that the modern Jew began to think for himself and have his own values, he asked himself why he was enslaved to the national norms of his neighbors and colleagues. The inequality between himself and his associates in Europe was made evident by the revolutionary universalistic assumptions of the Enlightenment and led to a positive and liberating thought. Universalism postulated the right of all peoples to self-determination, and thus the principle of equality encouraged a demand for national specificity. It was a reflexive consciousness deriving from the emancipation, and at the same time paradoxically strengthened by anti-Semitism, that gave birth to modern Jewish nationalism. Zionism thus became the Promethean passion of Jews in the modern era.

The uniqueness of the Zionist project lay in its ability to combine the creation of a new space with the molding of a new historical individual. The Promethean will to the self-construction of the new Jew required first of all the annulment of the dichotomy inherent in the slogan of the Jewish Enlightenment: "Be a Jew in your home and a man outside." Two basic assumptions, which follow from one another, were implicit in this slogan: The Jew lived in a space that was not his, and as a result he was alienated from himself. In other words, the modern Jew was inauthentic because he lived in a hostile enclave and in a certain sense he was homeless, or a pariah: Exile is not only a physical situation, but a state of mind.[5] Zionism therefore sought to be a movement of self-liberation: Liberation from the enslaving space would automatically free the alienated individual. Zionism was not only a transference of the Jews to a new space, the abandonment of a temporary place and a return to the territory of birth, but the aspiration to radically change the kind of man that grew up in the unnatural space that its thinkers and founders called exile. It was felt that it was necessary to construct a new historical subject, and this would not only come about through education or through political developments such as the French or Russian revolutions or similar national ideologies, but through transference from one geographical and mental space to another. Place is space in the memory:[6] Zionism consequently

[5] Anita Shapira, "What Happened to the 'Denial of the Exile'?" *Alpayim*, 25 (2003), pp. 9–54 [Hebrew].

[6] Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, New York 1980. Concerning the Israeli Place, see especially: Zali Gurevitch, *On Israeli and Jewish Place*, Tel Aviv 2007 [Hebrew]; Eyal

sought to exchange a house that it considered empty for an old-new home full of modern Jewish meaning.

It was the place that would bring about the transformation of identity: From being a subject, the Jew in his homeland would become his own ruler, he would create his authentic personality; the Jew would become a Hebrew, the child of exile would become a native. Geography would change history, and parallel with this conceptual transformation, a new philosophy of history would arise.[7] The Zionist philosophy of history that emerged presented a synthetic retrospective picture of Jewish history in which it was deemed necessary to return and to reconnect with the initial, sovereign, Hebrew, heroic stage. Hence the emphasis placed on a whole series of symbols and myths rooted in Zion, the place of birth, and on the creation of a new human model, positive, heroic and tied to the land; and hence the obliteration of the concepts and memories that came into being between the end of Jewish independence in 132 CE and the Zionist national rebirth in 1948. Zionism was thus for many people a territorialization of Judaism, but in a deeper sense than merely restoring the Jews to their natural place.[8] It reflected a radical historical philosophy that sought to change the Jew into an old-new Hebrew. The meaning of the rebirth for the more radical thinkers was a return to Hebraism and not to Judaism, to the physical space and not to God. The paradox was this: Only in the ancient historical space could the new man come into being; only a return to ancient roots would restore the Jew to modern history.

HOMO MYTHICUS

Ideology and mythology are two interrelated concepts. Ideology involves a framework of beliefs, ideas, and values that aim at achieving a political, social, or national goal. Mythology is a framework that combines separate myths into a single, unitary meta-narrative that tells the story of a people, religion, or nation. Mythology is the plastic, dramatic, narrative face of ideology. It complements ideology by supplying images, stories, and personalities that bring the abstract theoretical concepts to life.

Some scholars have seen mythos and ideology as two contrasting structures of thought. This distinction is basically incorrect: Myth and ideology are "neutral" concepts, and they can be loaded with various contents. It may be that the error of those who see myth as something irrational is due to the fact that myth generally utilizes the aesthetic dimension and is expressed in figurative, symbolic and visual terms. It should be remembered, however, that this is

Ben-Ari and Yoram Bilu, eds., *Grasping Land: Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience*, Albany 1997; Ariel Hirschfeld, *Local Notes*, Tel Aviv 2000. [Hebrew]; Barbara Mann, *A Place in History: Modernism, Tel Aviv and the Creation of Jewish Urban Space*, Stanford 2006; Suzan Slymowicz, *The Object of Memory: Arabs and Jews Narrate the Palestinian Village*, Philadelphia 1998.

[7] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge 1983.

[8] Boas Evron, *Jewish State or Israeli Nation?* Bloomington, 1995.

only the medium of myth, not its content, whether rational or irrational. Myth hints at the unity of man and his world, and its approach consequently links the subjective consciousness in a personal way with the mythical object.[9] In other words, if in the opinion of creators of myths or their followers, ideology is too abstract and theoretical, party-affiliated, or sectarian – and therefore alien – myth speaks in the language of human beings. In short, myth is more "human" than ideologies or utopias. This study regards myth as an immanent factor constructing modern life, and especially national movements such as Zionism.

The fabrication of a modern political mythology has inspired intellectuals, politicians, and leaders of national movements. It created a new terminology or political dictionary of modernism, based on such key concepts as the "new man," "political myth," "community of experience," and the "will to power." This new style signified a transition from the centrality of ideology to the centrality of myth.

European critical theoreticians recognized the importance and centrality of myth in the consciousness of modern man.[10] Some other prominent writers, philosophers, and cultural critics created a new political style of "anti-intellectual" intellectuals, giving myth precedence over reason.[11] Ideology, for them, was too abstract, general, and nonaffective to be instrumental in a political mobilization of the masses. According to this theory of social psychology, people are socialized not by means of ideology, but through a common experience of action: This is the pragmatic role of myth in society. Man as *homo mythicus* can create myths and can consume them. He constructs his world out of an array of images, an assortment of symbols, pictures of the past, visions of the future, and common dreams. *Homo mythicus* completely reorganizes the chaos of his private and public life and transforms its lack of significance into a meaningful structure.

Myths can simultaneously perform many functions. Not all of them are negative or merely justificatory rationalizations of a particular status quo. They may indeed provide legitimization for existing social and political practices, for a dominant elite, social group, or ideology. Myth may also be intended as a mobilizing agent to galvanize commitment or identification with a cause, as has often been the case all over the world in the past two centuries. Above all, most myths are, to some degree, narratives that seek to anchor the present in the past. Myths seen in this light, as a special kind of narrative, as

[9] Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, New Haven 1953–1957; idem, *An Essay on Man: An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture*, New Haven 1979, pp. 233–241; Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning*, New York 1979.

[10] Among them Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch, Ernst Cassirer, Albert Camus, and Hannah Arendt, see David Ohana, *Homo Mythicus*, Sussex 2009, pp. 95–134.

[11] Especially notable are Georges Sorel, Ludwig Klages, Ernst Jünger, and Oswald Spengler, see David Ohana, "The 'Anti-Intellectual' Intellectuals as Political Mythmakers," in *Homo Mythicus*, pp. 141–151.

symbolic statements or frames of reference that give meaning to the past, are not necessarily false or harmful examples of pseudo-history. The true significance of the myths more often lies in what they can tell us about the ways in which a particular nation or set of individuals seeks to organize its collective memory and to establish a distinctive identity.

The study of myths shows us that symbolization changes reality and reality changes with symbols. Symbolization is the perception of one thing by means of another: Language gives a name, myth gives a point of view, science creates laws, religion bestows significance, art creates form, and history organizes facts within a period of time. Every medium of this kind is a network of symbols that decodes an interpretive text of the world. Language codifies the world; mythical language explains the world in a different way from scientific language. The world as language, as symbol, as interpretation differs from man to man, but group images give common symbols of the world and construct collective myths.

These collective myths are based on a certain event among the events of the past that is chosen to serve the needs of the present. History is an impression of the past for the purpose of scientific knowledge, whereas myth is the creation of the past for the purpose of forming the present. The mythical event is taken as a precedent that recurs and reappears with the passage of time, and it forms it and gives it a shape. Behind the Zionist ideology and the idea of a Jewish democratic state in the Middle East, there is a deep-rooted mythology with tragic and heroic elements, telling the story of the people's return to its ancient land. The Promethean impulse typifies this national ideology that wished to resemble the European national movements, originated in the early nineteenth century. It wished to revitalize its ancient roots, reconstruct its sovereignty in a modern form, create a new type of man, and appeal to heroic and esthetic values.

Mythology is based on interpretations of the past, and the study of collective memory has proliferated in Israel in the last two decades. Scholars have paid attention to the commemoration of the Holocaust[12] and the fallen soldiers,[13] the national myths of Massada and Tel Hai,[14] the ethnic revival,[15]

[12] For Holocaust and memory, see for example: Eliezer Don-Yehiya "Memory and Political Culture: Israeli Society and the Holocaust," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, 9 (1993) pp. 139–162; James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*, New Haven and London 1995; Avner Ben-Amos, "Holocaust Day and Memorial Day in Israeli schools: Ceremonies, education and history," *Israel Studies*, 4, 1 (1999) pp. 258–284.

[13] Concerning fallen soldiers and memory, see for example Ilana Shamir, ed., *Gal-ed: Monuments for the Fallen in Israel Wars*, Tel Aviv 1989. [Hebrew]; Emmanuel Sivan, *The 1948 Generation: Myth, Profile and Memory*, Tel Aviv 1991. [Hebrew].

[14] Concerning Masada, see for example Nachman Ben-Yehuda, *The Masada Myth: Collective Memory and Mythmaking in Israel*, Madison 1995.

[15] Concerning ethnic revival, see especially Aziza Khazzoom, "The Great Chain of Orientalism: Jewish Identity, Stigma Management, and Ethnic Exclusion in Israel," *American Sociological Review*, 68 (2003), pp. 481–510.

the history and transformation of national rituals,[16] monuments,[17] the emergence of the "new historiography,"[18] and Israel's prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination in 1995.[19] Mythology is never an arbitrary collection of myths. Underlying religious, national, or ideological mythology there is a hidden order, a phenomenological unity that organizes different narratives into a meta-narrative with a comprehensive significance.

The Zionist ideology and the dominant Israeli ethos have one central mythology that is founded on the Promethean passion and contains a strong messianic element. In today's public and especially academic discourse, the concept of multculturalism and the existence of multiple narratives are regarded as the norm and as undermining the unitary concepts of the past. Regarding Zionism and Israel, there have been many different ideological streams that were negated in the past, either because of the ideology of the negation of the exile, or because of the hegemony of the mainstream Zionist ideology. Thus, for example, the ultra-orthodox Jews have always offered a stubborn alternative to Zionism. For them, however, the physical place is secondary to the metaphysical place, and therefore they do not challenge the collective ethos, but remain a secluded cult centered on sacred texts. The traditional *Mizrahim* (an immigrant community from the Arab countries), those represented by the political movement *Shas*, embody reactionary modernism, and through modern political, social, and pedagogical means try to bring about a conservative revolution by restoring the primacy of past oriental traditions. Therefore, like the Ashkenazi ultra-orthodox, they do not possess hegemonic pretensions. As for the religious Zionists, they are divided in this respect: the more moderate among them accept the basic Zionist premises; the radical ones want to enlarge the Zionist project to the Greater Land of Israel. As neo-Zionists, the dual threats of a shallow Crusader colonialism and Canaanite nativism apply to religious Zionists as well.

The Promethean passion is the "genetic code" that moves Zionism forward and structures its basic characteristics. There are criticisms of Zionism from the right and left, from religious and secular groups, but the Crusaders

[16] Concerning the history and transformation of national rituals, see especially Maoz Azaryahu, *State Cults: Celebrating Independence and Commemorating the Fallen in Israel, 1948–1956*, Sede Boker 1995. [Hebrew]; Don Handelman and Elihu Katz, "State Ceremonies of Israel: Remembrance Day and Independence Day," in Don Handelman, *Models and Mirrors: Towards an Anthropology of Public Events*, Cambridge 1990, pp. 191–233.

[17] Concerning monuments, see especially Ester Levinger, *Monuments for the Fallen in Israel*, Tel Aviv 1993. [Hebrew].

[18] Concerning new historiography, see especially Laurence J. Silberstein, *The Post-Zionism Debates: Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture*, New York 1999; Anita Shapira and Derek J. Penslar, eds., *Israeli Historical Revisionism: From Left and Right*, London 2003; Assaf Likhovski, "Post-post-Zionist Historiography," *Israel Studies*, 15, 2 (2010), pp. 1–23.

[19] Vered Vinitzki-Saroussi, "Commemorating a Difficult Past: Yitzhak Rabin's Memorials" *American Sociological Review*, 67 (2002), pp. 30–51; Yoram Peri, ed., *The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin*, Stanford 2000.

and Canaanites are the main mutations that relate to the core argument of Zionism and attack its basic logic. By their presence, they threaten to eliminate the entire Zionist body. From the point of view of mainstream Zionism, they appear as a decadent disease that, if not checked in time, will destroy the very fabric of the ideological project. New forms of integral nationalism and religious fundamentalism related to the sanctity of the Land of Israel began to change the contours of Israeli identity. The balance between the constituent elements of Israeli collective identity were further affected by the erosion of the dominant Zionist-socialist pioneering ethos in the early 1970s; by the crisis of confidence in the Labor leadership and in the military elites after the Yom Kippur War in 1973; the gradual rise in influence of Israel's underprivileged Mizrahim, who helped bring Likud, the political-right party, to power in 1977; by the growing settlements across the Green Line and violent confrontation with Palestinians in the occupied territories; and by the sharpening divisions between the religious and secular segments of Israeli society.[20] The decline in the internal national consensus and the increasingly harsh criticism and condemnation of Israel policies abroad were two of the most obvious symptoms of malaise in the 1970s and 1980s. Inevitably, they too began to change the contours of Israeli identity, the focus of its collective consciousness and memory, and the perception of Israel's role in the world. This was the context in which Zionist ideology itself came to be called into question from within and the older nation-building myths, which had already lost much of their mobilizing power, were challenged.

Alongside these stresses and strains, Israeli society was becoming increasingly westernized in the 1980s – more materialistic, individualist, and consumer-oriented. In this de-ideologized environment, there was far greater scope for a plurality of identities, for recognizing the validity of the private realm and the needs of the individual. A flourishing indigenous Hebrew-language culture and literary experimentation encouraged a new freedom in addressing time-honored ideals and deflating established myths. The era of grand ideological syntheses appeared to be over and increasingly called for "normalization." The Palestinian question could no longer be swept under the carpet and increasingly impinged on the Israeli collective psyche as a problem that directly affected the identity of the Israeli people and its state. Israel's international isolation and the successive traumas of the two Lebanon Wars, the two Intifadas, the unaccustomed Israeli passivity during the Gulf War, and Operation "Cast Lead" (2008) in Gaza provided important external stimuli for the fundamental debate about the means and ends, the goals and purpose of the Zionist project.

Of all the Israelis who are in a state of existential fear of the Iranian bomb, the writer Aharon Applefeld best perceived the heart of the problem: "Our

[20] For critical analysis of the Israeli Occupation, see: Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar, *Lords of the Land*, New York 2007; Amos Oz, *In the Land of Israel*, New York 1983.

fate in Europe pursues us here. I came from a world that declared war on the Jews, and the whole neighbourhood accepted this. And now the president of Iran comes and proclaims the extermination of the Jewish people. What is this if not the Jewish destiny?"[21] The next day, an Israeli journalist also bound up the Iranian threat with the precedent of the Holocaust in his article "The State Is in Danger of Extermination," and gave as one of the reasons for the lack of condemnation of this threat by the Western peoples "the image of Israel as a foreign Jewish implant."[22] Shimon Peres, before becoming Israel's president, had compared an Iranian nuclear bomb to a flying concentration camp. The Israeli general Yossi Peled, who himself was a refugee from the Holocaust, stated: "Since the beginning of the return to Zion about a hundred years ago, the Iranian nuclear threat is the greatest, most real, most existential threat there has been, raising the possibility that the state of Israel is a passing episode. It is a frightening, frightening threat to our existence."[23] About a week later, a supplement in the *Haaretz* newspaper put a question on these lines to the formers of public opinion: "What will you do if in two months time Ahmadinejad drops a nuclear bomb here?"[24] Thus, the first decade of the twenty-first century witnessed the emergence of the Israeli Crusader anxiety, this time in the image of humanity's deadliest weapon.

ZARATHUSTRA AND NIMROD IN ZION

To successfully explain the Zionist undertaking, one must stop seeing it exclusively in the context of Jewish internal development. Instead, we shall place it among the background of the intellectual, ideological, and cultural influences that existed in Europe, where it sprang up. Two interconnected figures, the biblical scholar Julius Wellhausen (1844–1918) and the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, made their mark on two prominent aspects of the early modern Jewish national movement: the Canaanite-Hebrew thesis and the making of the "new Hebrew." The romantic narrative whose roots went back to Johann Gottfried von Herder and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, which differentiated between territorial nationalism and exilic Judaism, between nature and culture, was not solely the legacy of Wellhausen, and it was shared by many people at the end of the nineteenth century.[25] The Wellhausen-Canaanite thesis that Judaism originated in a tribal people and a native community of Hebrew warriors and not in a community of priests and scholars played an important

[21] *Haaretz*, 2.9.2006. [Hebrew].
[22] Yair Sheleg, "A State under Extermination Danger," *Haaretz*, 3.9.2006. [Hebrew].
[23] Ari Shavit, "Prepare for an Islamic Tsunami," an interview with Yossi Peled, *Haaretz*, 20.10.2006 . [Hebrew].
[24] Naomi Darom, "What Will You Do If in Two Months' Time Ahmadinejad Drops a Nuclear Bomb Here?" *Haaretz*, 27.10.2006. [Hebrew].
[25] Lou H. Silberman, "Wellhausen and Judaism," *Semeia*, 25 (1982), pp. 75–82.

part in promoting the Hebrew orientation of the Jewish national movement in its beginnings.[26]

However, one must remember that most of the Jewish critics and the variant streams of modern Judaism reacted critically to the German Protestant Higher criticism of the Bible. Most conspicuous among them were the historians Heinrich Graetz and Yehezkel Kaufmann.[27] The Protestant Higher criticism rejected the structure of the five volumes of the Torah, their chronological development, revelation, and biblical cosmology. The historical alternative offered, based on Hegelian philosophy, became synonymous with radical heresy and drew admirers and ardent critics alike. Many Jewish intellectuals regarded the higher criticism of the Bible as a force that aimed to undermine the unique faith of the Jews. On the other hand, there were those who wholly embraced it, like Micha Josef Berdychevski (1865–1921) and "the Young Hebrews" movement. In between, there existed the more ambivalent approach of German orthodoxy and of "free" writers and thinkers like Peretz Smolenskin (1842–1885), Graetz, and Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786). The higher criticism's most important contribution was its division of Jewish history in the biblical land of Israel into two historical periods, those of the First and Second Temples, and its perception that Biblical Judaism was the product of a territorial nation.[28]

Friedrich Nietzsche crystallized his views on Judaism, Christianity, and the history of the people of Israel after reading the third edition of Julius Wellhausen's *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* [Prolegomena to the History of Israel] (1883), and many comments he wrote in his notebooks from 1884 to 1887 reveal his deep involvement with the work.[29] The Bible scholar and the philosopher were born in the same year, 1844, and *The Antichrist* was written ten years after the *Prologue*. Nietzsche, with his philosophical doctrine of the will to power and nihilism, adopted Wellhausen's basic thesis of an early biblical Israel that was a warlike indigenous society and a later degenerate priestly Judaism that gave birth to Christianity.

Nietzsche is regarded as one of the philosophers who has had the greatest influence, since the late nineteenth century, on European cultural and political discourse. This fact is borne out by recent research on the reception

[26] John L. Barton, "Wellhausen's Prolegomena to the History of Israel: Influence and Effects," in Daniel Smith-Christopher, ed., *Text and Experience: Toward a Cultural Exegesis of the Bible*; L. H. Silberman, "Wellhausen and Judaism," Sheffield 1995, pp. 316–329.

[27] Ronald E. Clements, "Heinrich Graetz as Biblical Historian and Religious Apologist," in John A. Emerton and Stefan C. Reif, eds., *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honor of E. I. J. Rosenthal*, Cambridge 1982, pp. 35–59; Nahum Sarna, "From Wellhausen to Kaufmann," *Midstream*, 7 (1961), pp. 64–74.

[28] Yaacov Shavit and Mordechai Eran, *The Hebrew Bible Reborn: From Holy Scripture to the Book of Books: A History of Biblical Cultures and the Battles over the Bible in Modern Judaism*, Berlin 2007, pp. 85–155.

[29] I would like to thank Dr. Rudiger Schmidt-Grepaly, director of Nietzsche's Archive in Weimar, who kindly allowed me to examine Nietzsche's personal notebooks in the Goethe-Schiller Archive.

of Nietzsche by diverse national cultures and political ideologies.[30] There is clearly something special about Nietzsche that enabled his thought to exert such an impact on divergent political streams, on artists, educators, political leaders, and philosophers – whether religious or atheist, left or right wing, individualists or collectivists.

In the dynamics of ideological development, the influence that philosophers exert on movements can take diverse forms. There are, for example, philosophers who have deliberately sought to proselytize their ideas by publishing books and manifestos, fostering disciples, or establishing journals. A good illustration of this type of thinker was Karl Marx, who was active on three different planes – philosophical, ideological, and political. Nietzsche belongs to a very different category. He worked solely on the philosophical plane and was not involved in politics as such. Nietzsche's radical style had a greater impact on his readers than did his ideology, although certain revolutionary elements in his philosophy were adopted and even served to intensify specific attitudes among his audience. He made no conscious effort to disseminate his theories, but was nevertheless adopted by disparate ideological camps.

The case of Nietzsche and modern Hebrew culture is particularly fascinating because he has often been seen as one of the key philosophical sources for National Socialist ideology. Concepts he coined, such as "the blond beast," "the Superman," or "slave morality," have been taken out of context and misused for political ends. This is one more reason why the significance of Nietzsche in Hebrew culture before and after the Second World War needs to be placed in historical context.[31] The meaning of Nietzschean ideas like the Superman or the Will to Power can be altered in translation, depending on the strategies adopted in a particular cultural discourse and social framework.

The question of Nietzsche's influence on modern Jewish culture and nationalism needs to be distinguished from his attitude toward Judaism and the Jews, although the connection between these issues is not entirely coincidental. Nietzsche's admiration for the Hebrew Bible and the strength of character of the Jewish people is well known, whereas his distaste for priestly Judaism stemmed from the fact that it was the basis for Christianity, which he despised.[32] His comments on Judaism and on the Jews are scattered throughout

[30] Genvieve Bianquis, *Nietzsche en France*, Paris 1929; Guy de Pourtalès, *Nietzsche en Italie*, Paris 1929; Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal, ed., *Nietzsche in Russia*, New Jersey 1986; Steven E. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890–1990*, Berkeley 1992; Patrick Bridgewater, *Nietzsche in Anglosaxony: A Study of Nietzsche's Impact on English and American Literature*, Leicester 1972; Gonzalo Solejano, *Nietzsche en Espana*, Madrid 1967; David S. Trachter, *Nietzsche in England 1890–1914*, Toronto 1970; Jacob Golomb, *Nietzsche and Zion*, Ithaca 2004.

[31] Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, Princeton 1950. For Nietzsche and the political, see especially Daniel W. Conway, *Nietzsche's Dangerous Game*, Cambridge 1997; Mark Warren, *Nietzsche and Political Thought*, Cambridge, MA 1988; Tracy Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration*, Berkeley 1988.

[32] Concerning the question of Nietzsche and the Jews, see especially Special Issue "Nietzsche and the Jews," eds., David B Allison, Babbette Babich, and Debra Bergoffen, *New Nietzsche*

his writings. In *The Will to Power*, for example, he comments on "The Jewish instinct of the 'Chosen': … they claim all the virtues for themselves without further ado, and count the rest of the world their opposites; a profound sign of vulgar soul."[33] Although Nietzsche's relationship to Judaism and the Jews has been much observed and remarked upon, his admiring attitude still surprises. This radical thinker denied or refuted almost every historical concept that came his way in his conceptual genealogy. He demonstrated the provisional nature and hence the deceptiveness of common ideas, conventional values, and accepted truths. Yet somehow Jewish history drove him to make an exception.

The main figures in early Zionism – whether left or right wing, secular or religious, pioneers of the Second and Third *Aliya* or ideologues of the Jewish underground *Lehi* and the "Canaanite" movement – came under Nietzsche's influence before 1948. After the establishment of the Israeli state, however, the "new Hebrew" became the "Sabra" (the ideal type of the indigenous Israeli), and the passionate drive to build a "new man" made way for a more personal outlook. Nietzscheanism did not altogether disappear.

By examining some of the chief stages in the gradual acceptance of Nietzsche in modern Hebrew culture, we can also discover some major conflicts and ongoing problems that have existed in modern Jewish nationalism since its inception. These turning points and tensions fueled the construction of the myth of the "Jewish Hebrew" that was refined in the crucible of Nietzschean discourse.[34] Can there be a common phenomenological denominator between the "new Hebrew" – the heroic Nietzschean model of the turn of the century in Europe – and the conquest of the Hebrew place, its domestication, and the wish to lord over it and its inhabitants? Can that succeed to such a degree that it would be possible to self-define by merely identifying with the Canaanite homeland? One can speak of "the Nietzschean ethic and the Canaanite spirit," which reveals a fascinating correlation between the Nietzschean thesis of the new man and the Canaanite concept of a spatial nationalism.

The new Hebrew traveled a long and winding road from the Nietzschean Zarathustra to the Canaanite "Nimrod," and assumed a real body when the artist Yitzhak Danziger (1916–1977) created his sculpture in the year 1939. Nimrod, the mythical god of the hunt, has become an artistic icon, a symbol of nativist identity, and a founding myth in Israeli culture.[35] No work

Studies, 7, 3–4 (Fall 2007); Duffy F. Michael and Willard Mittleman, "Nietzsche's Attitude Towards the Jews," *Journal of History of Ideas*, XLIX, 1 (1988), pp. 301–317; Arnold M. Eisen, "Nietzsche and the Jews Reconsidered," *Jewish Social Studies*, 48 (1986) pp. 1–14; Yirmiyahu Yovel, *Dark Riddle: Hegel, Nietzsche and the Jews*, Cambridge 1998.

[33] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmannn, New York 1967, section 197.

[34] David Ohana, "Zarathustra in Jerusalem: Nietzsche and the New Hebrews," *Israel Affairs*, I, 3 (1995), pp. 38–60.

[35] Tamar Manor-Friedman, *Danziger's Sculpture As a Source of Inspiration*, Israel Museum, Jerusalem 1996. [Hebrew].

has been the object of so much and such varied commentary as Danziger's "Nimrod," considered by many to be the most important and significant work in the history of Israeli art. This sculpture, which on its appearance was held to embody the native personality and to be an inspiring model for the "imagined community" of the "new Hebrews" in search of a special identity, in the present generation has been seen as a representation of the post-Zionist vision, which turns the Hebrew pioneer into the wandering Jew. According to this view, the ethos of heroism and nativity is exchanged for a promotion of vagrancy as the authentic identity of the Jew and Israeli.[36]

The two great challenges to Israeliness, the Canaanite narrative and the crusader narrative, played a central role in Danziger's life and work. On the basis of these two perspectives – the Canaanite ideal, which began with the "Young Hebrew" movement of the 1940s and 1950s, and the mythical concept of Zionism as a modern form of the crusades and of Israel as a colonialist outpost alien to the area – he sought to forge a native Hebrew identity detached from historical continuity. For us, there are two salient points in Danziger's biography: At the start of his career he created the sculpture "Nimrod," and at the end of his life he initiated and helped create the memorial to the fallen soldiers of the Egoz unit near Kalaat Nimrud (Nimrod's Fortress).[37] Danziger dealt with the Canaanite and crusader metaphors first by creating an "archaeological object" like "Nimrod," and later by constructing a sacred space of heroic secular Israelism near a crusader-Muslim archaeological site on the Golan Heights.

A genealogical search for the footprints left by Danziger in Israeli culture, which begins with the presentation of "Nimrod" to the public and follows through to The Hill of Memory near the archaeological site of Kalaat Nimrud, illustrates the development of the character of the Israeli nation. Through the route taken by Danziger, from "Nimrod" to Kalaat Nimrud, we can map the metamorphoses of the Israeli identity from the "Canaanite discourse" to the "crusader discourse." In the words of the Israeli industrialist Steff Wertheimer, "Danziger sought to unravel the mystery of our identity and our place here. Who are we? Israelis? Jews? Israeli Jews, natives or some kind of crusaders?"[38]

Indeed, the modern Hebrew nationalism was a self-creating collective consciousness, and thus its forms of expression – the Palmach (the fighting force of the Yishuv), "Nimrod," folk-dancing – are to be considered works of art

[36] Sarit Shapira, *Routes of Wandering – Nomadism, Voyages and Transitions in Contemporary Israeli Art*, Israel Museum Catalogue, Jerusalem 1992. [Hebrew].

[37] Yitzhak Danziger, "Foreword: The Commemoration of the Fallen of the Egoz Unit," *Commemorative Booklet*, introduction by Haim Adar (No date or place is given). [Hebrew]. Danziger's text was republished in Mordechai Omer, *Itzhak Danziger*, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, The Open Museum, Industrial Park, Tefen 1996, p. 43. [Hebrew].

[38] Steff Wertheimer, "Itzhak Rabin, The Turkish ambition and Danziger's 'Nimrod,'" *Globes*, 25.10.1996. [Hebrew].

in all respects.[39] The new Hebrew man shaping his identity did not receive his world from an inherited culture or from history; rather, he identified with the modern world he was creating and, within it, saw himself as authentic. In so doing, he divested the modern myth of Hebrew nationhood of its ideological and historical clothing. It was not the ideology of the left or right, Zionist principles, or Jewish values that were the formative factors in the Hebrew national culture, but collective experiential creations like the new man, the Hebrew language, settlement, archaeology, trips to natural and historical sites, the kibbutz, and the underground. Ideology gave way to a Hebrew creativity that came into being together with the nation.[40] "Jewish values" and "Zionist content" were neglected in favor of Hebrew manifestations that gave form to the new man in his new homeland.[41]

What was special about the new mythology created by the "Nimrods," the new Hebrews in Eretz-Israel? The Zionist ideologists represented Jewish history until their time in terms of exile and liberation: that is, a tale of misery and of the footsteps of redemption. Against this, the new Hebrews sought to create a new land and a new culture in their image – something out of nothing. This mythical creation, a new nationhood and a modern Hebrew culture, was in all respects an aesthetic creation. The national renewal was bound up with a myth special of its kind, a myth *ex nihilo* with a dual task: to criticize the past and to replace it with an alternate reality.[42] This myth did not seek, as utopias did, to depict in a vacuum some ideal future society, but on the contrary, to provide inspiration and mold group experiences – of creativity, settlement, travel warfare, and so on. The group experience was not intended for everyone, but was the property of a chosen circle such as the Palmach, the kibbutz, and the Stern Group, which would serve as a model for society as a whole: a Nimrodic order, symbolizing heroism, a sense of mission, and self-sacrifice.

In "Nimrod" there is the internal contradiction between the Canaanite idea and the carrier of the idea or its symbol (which is drawn from the Bible): The Canaanite representation of Nimrod's character, form, and occupation signifies an anti-Jewish rebellion via a daring leap backward to a mythical idol-worshipping culture. In taking such a step, the continuity of Jewish history is denied. This conscious mythologization of the Canaanite aesthetic sought

[39] On different approaches to the developments of Nationalities: Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History*, Hanover, New Hampshire 2003; John Armstrong, *Nations Before Nationalism*, Chapel Hill 1982; Ernst Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, New York 1983; Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1870: Program, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge 1999; Gideon Shimoni, *The Zionist Ideology*, New England, Hanover 1995. [Hebrew].

[40] Ariel Hirschfeld, "Nimrod – The Sand Youth," *Haaretz*, 11.5.1997. [Hebrew].

[41] Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Society (Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft)*, trans. and ed. Charles P. Loomis, East Lansing 1957; David Ohana, "Fascism as a Political Community of Experience: Following Walter Benjamin's political Phenomenology," *Democratic Culture*, 9 (2005), pp. 7–49. [Hebrew].

[42] Ohana, *Homo Mythicus, vol. 2 of The Nihilist Order*, Brighton 2009.

to cut open a space for itself in the ongoing textual thread of Jewish history. Moreover, not only is "Nimrod" not a text – Jewish creativity's characteristic form of representation – but it is a sculpture. It stands in a place, a Canaanite place, and it undercuts abstract, undifferentiated faith by suggesting instead the idea of spatial identity – replacing "The Place" (Hamakom, God in Jewish tradition) with a physical, literal place.

The Canaanite-Hebrew option also has an ever-continuous presence in the Israeli self-awareness. Since the early 1940s, when the activities of the "Committee for the Formation of Hebrew Youth" began and the manifesto "Letter to Hebrew Youth" was published, the secular-radical option has formed part of the range of possibilities of the Israeli discourse. Canaanism was the boldest cultural challenge – at least in literary and intellectual circles – to Zionism, Judaism, and Israelism in its known form. Yonatan Ratosh offered a total alternative that would sever Israelism from Judaism and adopt only the elements of geographical affiliation.[43] The place – the Semitic space – would replace "The Place," the Jewish God; there would be a "Hebraization" of the peoples of the area who were "lacking nationality" and a complete severance from exilic Jewish history. Did Canaanism attempt to Israelize that French national model that defines itself as a synthesis of territory and language?

The starting point of "Hebrew" nationalism was the connection between the national culture and the place in which it developed. The Canaanite idea identified with "territorial history": It is the place that forms the group of people living there. If the "homeland of the nation" was the "territory of the culture," the territorial experience was of greater importance than the experience of immigrants.[44] Thus, for the Canaanites, the Hebrew identity was primarily a spatial one: "Identify with a certain plot of land, and with that alone." Time is identified with place: For the Canaanites (who identify as a nation), the history of the Hebrews is confined to their country. For the Jews (who identify as a community), because they see people and land as two different things, the history of the people is not identified with the history of the land.

THE CANAANITE MYTH

The Israeli orthodox cultural critic Baruch Kurzweil (1907–1972) was the first Israeli critic to understand that one should not identify the Canaanite idea with Ratosh's group only. His first attack on the Canaanite ideology was not aimed at Ratosh and his group, but rather, in January 1948, at the Israeli journalist Uri Avneri's intellectual circle, "The Young Eretz-Yisrael," and their provocative journal, *Bamaavak*. The Canaanites held that it is the

[43] Yehoshua Porath, *The Life of Uriel Shelah (Yonathan Ratosh)*, Tel Aviv 1989. [Hebrew]; James S. Diamond, *Homeland or Holy Land? The Canaanite Critique of Israel*, Bloomington 1986; Ya'acov Shavit, *The New Hebrew Nation: A Study in Israeli Heresy and Fantasy*, London 1987.

[44] Shavit, *From Hebrew To Canaanite*, Jerusalem 1984. [Hebrew].

nativistic and linguistic factors that govern the national consciousness. They were not ideologically marginal but had considerable sociological potential, and in April 1949 the philosopher Samuel Hugo Bergman declared that the Canaanites expressed "clearly and unhesitatingly what others feel and experience timidly and halfheartedly."[45]

What in fact was the Canaanite idea? Its main element was a nativist Israeli nationhood, a geopolitical conception in which it was a plot of land that defined the national identity of a country's inhabitants. It was not the collective memory, the cultural heritage, ethnics, or biology that created a nation; rather, the physical space and the language obliterated differences and formed a national melting pot. It was the space that gave national significance: For example, Arabs and crusaders were assimilated into the Sidonian space, and that is how Lebanese nationhood came into being. This view was of course in contradiction to the classical Arab or Muslim creed (which found expression in the Phoenician group in Lebanon), because it explained the Sidonian civilization as a geopolitical product of the crusader and Arab conquests. Among the Arabs, however, there were similar views, such as the Pharaonic conception in Egypt and the Syrian nationalism of Anton Sa'ada.[46] Here, nativism in the Arab territorial nationalism overcame the invaders, and they assimilated along its lines.

Unlike this nativist variety, classical Zionism was a historical nationalism. Canaanism subverted Zionism by seeing the present and not the past as the decisive time factor, making "nowness" the guiding principle of identity.[47] The significance of nativism as a metaphor is that it is not only a matter of being born in a place, but it is an identity gained through a cultural construct that turns the immigrant into a native. The imagined Canaanite community is defined in the terms of Benedict Anderson's formulation: collective time – the present – a territory, and a common language. Many people call for the foreign workers or non-Jews living in Israel to be not only citizens of the state of Israel, but full partners in the Hebrew nation. The journalist Yaron London has praised Israel for "granting citizenship to useful immigrants," explaining that "love of a country is not conveyed through a heritage but through a creative culture, and Israel is a most effective producer of culture."[48]

There have been many and varied expressions of the Canaanite idea (which is not necessarily identical with Yonatan Ratosh's "Canaanite group") in the

[45] Samuel Hugo Bergman, "On the Formation of the Nation's Character in Our State," *Ha-Poel Ha-Tzair*, vols. 26–27, 10.4.1949. [Hebrew].

[46] Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798–1939*, Oxford 1962, pp. 319–323; Elias Khoury and Ahmad Beydoun, "La Méditerranée libanaise," in Thiery Fabre and Robert Ilbert, *Les représentations de la Méditerranée*, Paris 2000; Edward Al-Kharrat and Mohamad Afifi, "La Mediterranee egyptienne," in idem, *Les représentations de la Méditerranée*.

[47] Hannan Hever, "An Imagined Native Community: 'Canaanite Literature' in Israeli Culture," *Israeli Sociology*, 2, 1 (1999), p. 148. [Hebrew].

[48] Yaron London, "Toto Tamuz and the Law of Return," *Yediot Aharonot*, 9.7.2007. [Hebrew].

Israeli public sphere. The sociological and demographic changes that have taken place in Israel and the Jewish Diaspora have lowered the tone of the debate on the Canaanite option. The shrinking of the Jewish people in the Diaspora, the impressive demographic growth of the Israelis and especially of the "Sabras," the immigration to Israel of more than one million former citizens of the Soviet Union (a large part of whom are not of Jewish origin), the globalization that has brought in its wake a large number of foreign workers, some of whom have children that were born in Israel: These and many more things suggest that the Canaanite idea is no longer the property of a closed sect, and is likely to be realized not as a deliberate plan and not as the fulfillment of a utopian vision, but through the force of events without any ideological intention.

Secular intellectuals in Israel have always been attracted by the Canaanite idea. They wished to eliminate the contradictions and tensions inherent in the process of the secularization of the Jewish identity within the national framework. In the "Canaanite hour," as the poet Haim Guri called the Hebrew window of opportunity that his generation found in Eretz Israel (Palestine), many young people in the Yishuv (Jewish community) were enraptured by the possibility of acquiring a native identity free of remnants of the past, of the burden of history, and of the imposition of the remains of exilic Judaism: a new identity that embodied self-construction and local autonomy. In describing the encounter with the Canaanite proposition as a "conversion" and a "true religious experience," Guri recognized the nativistic idea as an existential or even religious awakening.[49] It was a kind of revelation, the possibility of acquiring a new identity on the lines of the Freudian "Oedipus complex," a sort of rebellion against the parents who came from *there*, from the inauthentic place, from exile.

The radical innovation of Ratosh and his group was their total rebellion against Judaism as a religious, cultural, and ethnic entity and its replacement by a nativistic and linguistic experience. Ahad Ha-am understood its revolutionary potential when he saw the native-born "Hebrews" as Canaanites on his famous visit to Palestine: "Here you are bringing up ancient Jews. You want to obliterate two thousand years of exile and go back to the culture of ancient Canaan." Here, he observed a subconscious Canaanism that the native born had felt in seeking to overcome what was missing by reverting to an ancient, primordial identity. The term "Hebraism" was the war cry of the Hebrew pioneers of the early twentieth century, a flag by which they wished to demarcate the watershed between themselves, the native-born Hebrew speakers with their Hebrew homeland, and the Jews in foreign countries who spoke a thousand languages. Hebraism was the nativistic consciousness that saw the motherland as the source of identity; and Canaanism was an ideological outlook that came out of it and transcended it by setting itself in opposition to the Jewish religion, history, and Diaspora.[50]

[49] Haim Gouri, "The Canaanite Hour," *Maariv*, 26.12.1975. [Hebrew].

[50] Yonatan Ratosh, "Birth of the Nation," *Reshit Ha-Yamin, Ptihot Ivriot*, Tel Aviv 1982, p. 38. [Hebrew].

The founders of Zionism did not accept the Canaanite claim, which of course was formulated much later, but its territorial logic was understood by all. They saw the Hebrew "nation" as umbilically connected to the Jewish community. Zionism sought to link Jewish history in all its metamorphoses to the place where it all began: The Israelite place was the "metaphorical womb" of Jewish history. Hence the belief that exile was the absence, the negation of Jewish autonomy, an autonomy that could only exist in Eretz Israel.[51] Exile was seen as a sickness and the native Hebrew identity as the cure. The novelist A. B. Yehoshua sees Zionism as "the name of the cure for a certain kind of Jewish sickness called exile," with its various victims – religious, liberals, socialists, nationalists, bourgeois, and anarchists.[52] In his opinion, exile was not imposed on the Jewish people but was rather a stance, a position they had chosen to escape the basic conflict of Jewish identity: that between Jewish nationhood and the Jewish religion.

Some, however, have seen the exile in a positive light. In their opinion, the shift from fidelity to the place itself to that of the memory of the place after Bar Kochba's defeat was necessary to make the loss of the land surmountable.[53] Retaining the memory of the place helped the Pharisaic rabbis overcome that loss. Not everyone has seen the exile as a punishment, and for some major Jewish thinkers its most important function was to supplant space with something better – text. Hermann Cohen saw Jewish history as a progress from the national condition to the exilic condition.[54] Heinrich Heine called the Torah the Jews' "portable homeland." Franz Rosenzweig, who saw the native soil as a "fetter" and the Jew as "a travelling, wandering eminence," thought that "a place where the nation loves its native soil more than it loves its life is always in danger."[55] Hannah Arendt pointed out the special value of the Jew as a "pariah,"[56] and Bernard Lazare called him a "wanderer by choice."[57] Edmond Jabès preferred the text as a homeland,[58] and, where George Steiner was concerned, the Jewish intellectual always lived out of his suitcases and spread avant-garde, universalistic ideas.[59] A Hebrew land-based nationalism

[51] Avi Sagi, *The Jewish-Israeli Voyage – Culture and Identity*, Jerusalem 2006, p. 235. [Hebrew].

[52] Ruvik Rosenthal, ed., *The Heart of the Matter – Redefining Social and National Issues*, Jerusalem 2005, p. 59. [Hebrew].

[53] Harry Berger, "The Lie of the Land: The Text Beyond Canaan," *Representations*, 25 (1989); William David Davies, *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine*, Berkeley 1974; Regina M. Schwartz, "Nations and Nationalism: Adultery in the House of David," *Critical Inquiry*, 19, 1 (Autumn 1992).

[54] Eva Jospe, ed., *Reason and Hope: Selections from the Jewish Writings of Hermann Cohen*, Cincinnati 1971.

[55] Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, tran. Yehoshua Amir, Jerusalem 1970, p. 324. [Hebrew].

[56] Hanna Arendt, *The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in the Modern Age*, New York 1978.

[57] Bernand Lazare, *Job's Dungheap*, New York 1949.

[58] David Ohana, *Israel and its Mediterranean Identity*, New York 2011.

[59] George Steiner, "The Wandering Jew," *Ptahim*, 1 (1969), pp. 17–23; idem, "The Exile Jew," *Haaretz*, 7.11.1999. [Hebrew].

is the ruin of Judaism, an idea that the brothers Daniel and Jonathan Boyarin expressed as follows: "The exile, not monotheism, is the major contribution of Judaism to the world."[60]

As against these ideas, major Israeli intellectuals began to develop an anti-exilic ideology very close to the Canaanite outlook. The historian Yigael Elam distinguishes between Jewish nationhood, which only exists in Israel, and the Jewish religion, describing historical Judaism as a faith-nation that can only exist in exile. The nation-state of Israel is in the final analysis always the community of the Jewish religion.[61] The playwright Yehoshua Sobol continues this line of thought and warns of "the Jewish reaction that raises its head and threatens to engulf the Hebrew identity and the Hebrew spirit that made possible the creation of the Yishuv and its transformation from a state-in-the-making to a state like any other."[62] The philosopher Yosef Agassi also thinks that "if Israel is a nation-state, its theocratic clothing must be removed"; and like Hillel Kook, he proposes separating the Jewish religion from the Israeli nation, making Israel into a liberal, democratic, western nation-state.[63] Without any Ratosh-like noises, Canaanite tom-toms, or mythological aesthetics of Baal and Ashteroth, the call for a Hebrew state is being heard once again, and this time not from the fringes of the cultural establishment, but at the very front door of contemporary Israel, which is defined in terms of territory and language alone.

It is hardly surprising that these Canaanite ideas were distasteful even to a Sabra like Haim Gouri, who was unable to differentiate between Ratosh the marvelous poet of *Huppa shehora* (Black Canopy) and Ratosh the ideologist. Canaanism disturbed him by denying the duality of his identity and undermining the principle of the return to Zion:

> [T]here was great charm in this challenge, but I knew that the denial of all connection or affinity between the Jew and the Hebrew, whom you represented as his opposite with an uncompromising hostility, nullifies any possible explanation for our being here, and also destroys lofty cultural values that we saw as our assets.... We hoped for a Hebrew, Land-of-Israel permutation, not the cutting of a Gordian knot. Making Zionism an enemy of the Hebrew renaissance makes Hebraism into a shallow spiritual salon, something meta-historical, a false romanticism in the name of the distant past.[64]

In today's far more itemized world, as the Israeli identity evolves from the "Hebrew," the "pioneer," and the "Sabra" of the past and the Hebrew image

[60] Daniel and Yonatan Boyarin, "No Homeland to Israel: On the Place of the Jews," *Theory and Criticism*, 5 (1994), p. 100. [Hebrew].

[61] Igal Elam, *End of Judaism: Religion-Nation*, Tel Aviv 2000, p. 253. [Hebrew].

[62] Yehoshua Sobol, "Not a People of Masters," *Haaretz*, 11.5.2005. [Hebrew].

[63] Yosef Agasi, *Between Religion and Nation – Towards Israeli National Identity*, Tel Aviv 1984, p. 165; Yosef Agasi, Yehudit Buber Agasi, and Moshe Berant, *Who is Israeli*, Tel Aviv 1991. [Hebrew].

[64] Haim Gouri, "A Call to the Hebrews," *Davar*, 12.8.1983. [Hebrew].

is put through ever-increasing divisions and differentiations, who can guarantee us that the Canaanite option will have completely disappeared? Perhaps its ultimate conclusion – separation between Israeli citizenship and the Jewish religion – is becoming so relevant that a complete split between the homeland (the Hebrew or Israeli) and the people (the assimilated Jew) will finally succeed. Perhaps this process will take place not as a deliberate act and not in the hope of realizing a utopian vision, but simply through the force of reality, without any ideological factor.[65]

Is post-Zionism a secular, leftist neo-Canaanism? Post-Zionism as a guiding principle – going over from history to geography – is a nativistic conception that turns its back on the continuity of the history of the people, part of whom have returned to realize its nationhood in its land, and only recognizes those who reside here and now.[66] Underlying the post-Zionist ideology is the assumption that a local society exists based on a civil rather than national definition: The state belongs to its citizens, not to history. Because Zionism completed its task in founding the state, one should remove its protective covering – that is, cancel the Law of Return – effect a de-Zionization of Israel, and from that moment see the resulting secular democratic state as a "state of all its citizens." According to the nativist conception of the new identity, which places at its heart the geographical factor and not the Jewish legacy, the Israelis are formalistically defined as a collection of citizens living under a single roof; it is the *place* that defines the Israelis. Some would say that the true significance of post-Zionism is thus the severing of the umbilical cord between the Israeli homeland and the Jewish people and culture, between the landscape of the country and its history, and between the language and its sources. In the words of one of its critics, "Post-Zionism means the denial of all hidden threads binding together separate phenomena, of a special connection between the people of Israel today and yesterday whether in the country or in the Diaspora, between the Israeli culture and its sources or between the Hebrew language and its history."[67]

[65] Ohana, "The Meaning of Jewish-Israeli Identity," in Eliezer Ben-Refael, Yosef Gorny, and Ya'acov Ro'i, eds., *Contemporary Jewries – Convergence and Divergence*, Boston 2003, pp. 65–78.

[66] Concerning the post-Zionist discourse see especialy Adriana Kemp, David Newman, Uri Ram, and Oren Yiftachel, eds., *Israelis in Conflict: Hegemonies, Identities and Challenges*, Brighton 2004; Ephraim Nimni, ed., *The Challenge of Post-Zionism: Alternatives to Fundamentalist Politics in Israel*, London 2003; Tom Segev, *Elvis in Jerusalem: Post-Zionism and the Americanization of Israel*, New York 2003; Hagit Boger, "Post-Zionism Discourse and the Israeli National Consensus: What Has Changed?" *Response*, 66 (1996), pp. 28–44; Herbert Kelman, "Israel in Transition from Zionism to Post-Zionism," *Annals of the American Academy*, 555 (1998), pp. 46–61; Deborah Wheeler, "Does Post-Zionism Have a Future?" in Laura Zitttrain Eisenberg, *Traditions and Transitions in Israel Studies – Books on Israel* 4, New York 2003, pp. 159–180; Laurence Silberstein, *Postzionism: A Reader*, New Brunswick, NJ, 2008.

[67] Yosef Dan, "On Post-Zionism, Oral Hebrew, and Futile Messianism," *Haaretz*, 25.3.1995. [Hebrew].

In February 2011 the Oscar for best short documentary went to "Strangers No More," a film showing how the Bialik-Rogozin School in south Tel Aviv educates and integrates the children of parents from forty-eight different countries. Commenting on this, the editorial board of *Haaretz* was very pleased with the image of Israel this spotlight showed to the world: "The film documents a sort of secular, civic Israeli melting pot, in which children of various races and origins speak fluent Hebrew and see themselves as Israelis through and through." The editorial goes on to say, "[the film] teaches us about the power of Israeliness, about Hebrew language and culture." The moral, *Haaretz* concludes: "[T]herein lies the difference between a Jewish ghetto and a Hebrew state."

This enthusiasm for a civil definition of Israeli identity stands in sharp contrast with the religious right. Is Gush Emunim – the settler movement that grew in the 1970s – a religious, right-wing neo-Canaanism? In the Messianic model of the national-religious movement (which arose in 1975 to preserve the supposedly biblical boundaries of Greater Israel), whose creed was the trinity of Torah, land, and people, the earthly locality is given first priority. If post-Zionism makes one's connection with the land his sole identity card, Gush Emunim also raises place to a sanctified level. For those religious settlers, settlement is awarded the status of myth, and return to the land (especially Judea and Samaria) is enshrined as a supreme principle. In its settlement-political activities, Gush Emunim sought to restore the true model of the Greater Land of Israel. The frontiers of political compromise were replaced by the frontiers of the Promise. This movement, which blended political theology with the ethos of settlement, was based on the precedence of the ancient Jews over the country's Arab inhabitants.[68]

At the outset of the second decade of the twenty-first century, important thinkers, public figures, politicians in the Israeli right wing, and some supporters of Greater Israel argue in favor of granting full citizenship to all the Palestinians in the West Bank and annexing it to Israel. The former defense and foreign affairs minister Moshe Arens said that he wants to break the "great taboo" of Israeli policy making by granting Israeli citizenship to the Palestinians in the West Bank. "We are already a binational state," he said, "and also a multicultural and multi-sector state." Knesset Chairman

[68] Concerning Gush Emunim, see especially Michael Feige, *Settling in the Hearts: Jewish Fundamentalism in the Occupied Territories*, Detroit 2008; Janet Aviad, "The Messianism of Gush Emunim," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, 7 (1991), pp. 197–213; David Newman and Tamar Hermann, "A Comparative Study of Gush Emunim and Peace Now," *Middle-Eastern Studies*, 28 (1992), pp. 509–530; Ian Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord: Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel*, New York 1991; Ehud Sprinzak "Gush Emunim: The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism," *Jerusalem Quarterly*, 21 (1981), pp. 28–47; David Weisburd and Vered Vinitzky, "Vigilantism as Rational Social Control: The Case of the Gush Emunim Settlers," in Myron Aronoff, ed., *Cross Current in Israeli Culture and Politics*, New Brunswick 1984, pp. 69–88; David L. Weisburd and Elin Waring, "Settlement Motivations in Gush Emunim Movement: Comparing Bonds of Altruism and Self-Interest," in *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, London 1985, pp.183–199.

Reuven Rivlin said, "It's preferable for the Palestinians to become citizens of the state than for us to divide the country." Uri Elitzur, former chairman of the Yesha (Council of Settlements) and Benjamin Netanyahu's bureau chief in his first term as prime minister, set out a plan according to which the Palestinians will be issued "a blue ID card [like Israelis], yellow license plates [like Israelis], National Insurance and the right to vote for the Knesset." The philosopher Yosef Ben-Shlomo declared his preference (in the event of future variance) for the (Greater) Land, over the state, of Israel. Emily Amrousi, a former spokesperson for the Yesha Council, wishes for "one land in which the children of settlers and the children of Palestinians will be bused to school together." She sums up this notion of binational statehood in Greater Israel by saying, "let's talk first of all about one land, one piece of soil. We are not Canaanites." Indeed?

The Six-Day War (1967) once again brought about a fusion of the transcendental Messianism and the Promethean Messianism: Theology was once again joined to politics. The outstanding example was the story of the return to Kfar Etzion. In the more than sixty years that the state of Israel has existed, the politics of memory has not known any achievement more impressive than that of a small group of skullcap wearers, the sons of Kfar Etzion. The orphans and widows of the 240 fighters who fell at Kfar Etzion in the 1948 war had an extraordinarily developed consciousness of memory and sense of national mission. They consistently practiced a politics of memory for nineteen years, in the period from 1948 to 1967, and in this way linked the Zionist-Israeli memory of 1948 with the Jewish-Messianic memory of 1967. For the majority of Israelis, the commemorative activities of the sons of Gush Etzion created a common Israeli past that became a central element enjoying a wide consensus in the general national consciousness.[69]

MESSIANIC CANAANISM

The myth of the fall of Kfar Etzion in 1948 exemplifies the view of Ernest Renan that defeat and mourning have greater importance for the national memory than victories, because they produce a feeling of indebtedness and give rise to cooperation.[70] Until 1967, the memories connected with Gush Etzion were secular and "Israeli" in character: "the Thirty-Five" who were killed in the attempt to reach Gush Etzion, Haim Guri's poem "Here Our Bodies Lie," the Convoy of the Ten and the Nebi Daniel Convoy, "The Lone Tree," the Day of Remembrance for the fallen of the Israel Defense Forces (which was also the day of the fall of Gush Etzion), and heroic figures like Danny Mass, Tuvia Kushnir, and others. The return of the sons to their parents' settlements after the Six-Day War gave added meaning to the two components of the memory

[69] Ohana, "Kfar Etzion: The Community of Memory and the Myth of Return," *Israel Studies*, 7, 2 (Summer 2002), pp.145–174.

[70] Ernest Renan, *Qu'est que c'est qu'une nation?* Paris 1882.

of Gush Etzion: time and place. The time – 1967 – became a "rectification" of 1948, whereas the place – Kfar Etzion – became a symbol of the Israeli-Jewish right of return. The Kfar Etzion Community of Memory exploited 1948 in a conscious political fashion for the benefit of 1967, the state of Israel for the benefit of the Land of Israel. The uses of memory made Kfar Etzion a microcosm of the Land of Israel, Jewish history, and the Zionist revolution. The exile from this "small" place and the return to it exemplified in the most concrete manner the exile from and return to the "large" place and time.

The narrative of the settlement of Kfar Etzion was deflected from the "secular time" of the War of Independence and the state of Israel to the "Messianic time" of Gush Emunim ("the birth of the Messiah in our region")[71] and the biblical place, the birthplace of the nation. I shall examine the political factors that favored this change of ethos, and I shall also examine the intergenerational relationship that linked the past catastrophe with the future resurrection. Lastly, I shall follow the stages in the development of the politics of memory of the sons of Kfar Etzion by studying episodes in their parents' settlement and defense of the place; the construction of the Community of Memory previous to 1967; the sanctification of the space of the "Lone Tree" and the nurturing of the "myth of return"; and the drawing of political analogies with the Akkedah (the sacrifice of Isaac), the Maccabies, Massada, the Holocaust, and the battle of Tel Hai as a form of political myth making or way of fusing historical time and mythical time. I shall end with an examination of the various aspects of the Kfar Etzion politics of memory.

Hanan Porat, one of the children of Kfar Etzion and one of the founders of Gush Emunim, links the immemorial memory of the Jewish people to the Israeli memory of Kfar Etzion. Porat and his friends have also succeeded in implanting the Etzion Bloc into the Israeli national consciousness as a crossroads between time and space, between the historical-mythical time of the Jewish people and the sacred space of the Hebron Hills and Gush Etzion. Porat wrote: "What we, the children of Kfar Etzion, a small handful of friends weaving dreams, felt for nineteen years, ever since our home was destroyed, about a single piece of land 'on the way to Efrat – that is Bethlehem' can be multiplied by ten … by a hundred … by a thousand … by a million, and you will have the yearning of the whole people for the whole land from the time its exalted House in Jerusalem was destroyed a thousand nine hundred years ago."[72]

It is therefore hardly surprising if, emphasizing the historiographical-national motif derived from King David's Messianism that may be traced via the Lurian Cabbala to the political Messianism of Gush Emunim, one of the sons of Kfar Etzion saw an affinity between the Messianic myth and the sacred space: "Many legends connect the birth of the Messiah with our

[71] Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, ed., *Gush Etzion – Fifty Years of Struggle and Creativity*, Alon Shvut 1978, p. 13. [Hebrew].

[72] Hanan Porat, *In Search of Anat*, Beit-El 1988, p. 11. [Hebrew].

generation. These legends express a spiritual attraction to the hills and a direct link between the future of the people and this region of the land."[73] Thus, Gush Etzion links together the beginnings of the nation and the utopian future, because the meaning of "renew our days as of old" is that the end resembles the beginning.

In the sanctification of the place called Kfar Etzion, religious-Messianic principles were linked to the secular-Canaanite principles, but the sources of this Canaanite Messianism and the cultural roots of these Canaanite leanings were already to be found in the culture of the Hebrew revival at the turn of the twentieth century. Is Canaanism the Israeli version of an exilic Jewish phenomenon as was claimed by Baruch Kurzweil, the logical outcome of intellectual and aesthetic tendencies that had already existed in Hebrew culture for one hundred years? Already in the works of Micha Yosef Berdichevsky, Zalman Shneur, and Shaul Tchernikovsky one finds a rejection of the exilic Jewish past and an affirmation of the archaic and mythical pre-Israelite and Canaanite foundations. In Kurzweil's opinion, however, this theoretical and aesthetic notion in the literature of the Hebrew revival became a daily reality in the life of the native Israelis in their land. He viewed the Canaanite movement as a radical final stage in the process of secularization that in practice brought the orientations of Jewish literature and thought in the modern era to a paradoxical conclusion.[74] The argument of this book has the same starting point as Kurzweil's but is essentially different: In the final analysis, I claim, Canaanism came to pass through a dialectic process via religion.

At the beginning of the period of *mamlachtiut*, three essays appeared by orthodox intellectuals concerning the danger of mixing the theological and the political. The three articles were published in successive years. They were Akibah Ernst Simon's "Are We Still Jews?" (1951),[75] Baruch Kurzweil's "The Nature and Origins of the 'Young Hebrew' ("Canaanite") Movement" (1952), and Isaiah Leibowitz's "After Kibia" (1953).[76] In all three articles, the religious thinkers warned against the bearhug in which the new Israeli nationalism held the sacred tongue; they warned of the radical effects of the Israeli national secularism that extended even to Canaanism, and thus expressed the fear of a rise of a "territorial" or "Canaanite" Messianism.

Following the Six-Day War, the three thinkers returned to the conclusions they had reached in the early days of the state and once again assailed what they saw as the disastrous connection between the "present-day Messianism" and the old-new Canaanism, between the Messianic "anticipation of the end" and

[73] Ben Ya'akov, *Gush Etzion*.

[74] Moshe Goultschin, *Baruch Kurzweil as a Cultural Commentator*, Dissertation Submitted to the Senate of Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan 2003.

[75] Akibah Ernst Simon, *Are We Still Jews? Essays*, Tel Aviv 1982, pp. 9–46. [Hebrew].

[76] Yeshayahu Leibowitz, "After Kibiyeh," in *Judaism, Human Values, and The Jewish State*, trans., Eliezer Goldman et al., Cambridge MA. 1992, pp.185–191; Ohana, "Yeshayahu Leibowitz- The Radical Intellectual and the Critic of the 'Canaanite Messianism,'" in Aviezer Ravitzky, ed., Leibowitz –*Conservatism and Radicalism*, Tel Aviv 2007, pp. 155–177. [Hebrew].

the sanctification of the state and of the land. Their earlier fear of a Canaanite statism, of a neutralization of Jewish life in the age of secular Jewish nationalism, gained a paradoxical fulfillment after the realization of the right of return to Judea and Samaria by the phylactery-wearing "Nimrods," who saw the land as more important than the people or the Torah. The outcome of this was the birth of the post-Canaanite "hilltop youth," members of the second generation of founding settlers.[77]

The concept of "place" is identified in Judaism with God, but it also has many and conflicting meanings in Jewish history, in the Zionist ideology, and in the Israeli identity. It expresses a vision and an ideal, and also a physical reality that is the product of the vicissitudes of time. Inevitably, it is different from the aspirations of dreams. Zionism produced one place, the national place, but the wanderings of history produced a variety of places in the heart and an abundance of places on the ground. The Israeli place produced Israeliness and was also its product; sites are spheres of memory and of forgetfulness, spaces of vision, and also spaces of contention.

Although collective memory is a highly developed field, the all-important question of the "place" in the contemporary Israeli ethos has yet to be addressed. Scholars of collective memory examine how representations of the past are produced, consumed, and serve as a locus of political struggles. The field is inherently multidisciplinarian; Jeffrey Olick and Joyce Robbins called it a "nonparadigmatic, transdisciplinary, centerless enterprise."[78] As the past is represented in a multiplicity of social and cultural locations, contributions to the field have been made by historians, sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and literary scholars, among others.

Research of collective memory has received much attention in the last few decades for various reasons. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of ethnic strife brought about a renewed urgency in the study of nationalism, and with it the national myths that legitimate their emergence and actions. The growth of the politics of identity, focusing on past grievances and traumas, has also contributed to the interest in the field. In general, the culture of amnesia, attributed to the modern and postmodern era, has given rise to a quest for authenticity, and research follows this urge.[79] Another reason that can be supplied for the popularity of the field is the translation into English and growing interest in the writings of Maurice Halbwachs (1980), the founding father of the field, who stressed the social nature of memory, be it historical or autobiographical. Following his insights, the basic research question of the scholars interested in collective memory was in assessing the relative

[77] Shlomo Kaniel, "The 'Hill Settlers – Are They a Biblical Sabra?" in Asher Cohen, ed., *The Religious Zionism: An Era of Changes – Studies in Memory of Zvulun Hammer*, Jerusalem 2004, pp. 533–558. [Hebrew].

[78] Jeffrey Olick and Joyce Robbins, "Social Memory Studies: From Collective Memory to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24 (1998), pp. 105–140.

[79] Andre Huyssen, *Twilight Memories*, New York and London 1995.

importance of present interests in the conceptualization and representation of the past. The past is understood to be, at least partially, constructed along the interests of memory entrepreneurs and agents, and molded so as to be acceptable to the ideological and moral climate of the day.

THE CRUSADER MYTH

If the Canaanite paradox was a protest against the continuity of "Jewish time," the Zionist-crusader analogy was a protest against the "Jewish space." Is there any truth in the claim of the poet and translator Aharon Amir, one of the founders of the "Canaanite group," in a forecast made one year after the founding of the state, that the final outcome of Jewish theocracy would be the establishment of a "crusader kingdom of Israel"?[80] Everyone knows how the crusaders in Palestine ended. The crusader narrative describes invaders coming from Europe in the belief that the land was promised to them, but who eventually yielded to the logic of the place and returned, defeated, to their countries of origin. The rooted, authentic presence of the Arabs and the bellicose counterculture of Islam, the desert, and the Orient defeated the foreign intruders, resulting in the reconquest of the land. All that remained were lifeless relics: empty castles with Latin names, the transplantation of a cultural and mental place that was not in its place. From the Zionist point of view, the crusader narrative is the most negative myth that can be imagined: It raises the possibility of annihilation. Whereas the Zionist founding myths like Massada and Tel Hai were placed in time and space like monuments, ceremonies, or pilgrimages, the crusader myth has no physical or ritualistic quality.[81] The crusader narrative was a founding myth that represented a "meta-trauma," the existential fear of the possibility of an end of the Zionist national enterprise.[82] It is present-absent, and it is this quality precisely that intensifies the mythical dimension of anxiety and dread described by the scholars of myths Claude Lévi-Strauss and Leszek Kolakovski in their study of existential threats and confrontation with contradictions that have no solution.[83] If we were to subject the Zionist genome to a decoding, would we discover the crusader myth represented there, as its fear of self-destruction?

There are three conclusions to be drawn from the definition of Zionism as a return to the place: The place is *ours*; the place is *only* ours; *other* places

[80] Yehoshua Bentov (Aharon Amir), "The Crusader Kingdom of Israel?" in *The Canaanite Group – Literature and Ideology*, Collection ed. by Nurit Graetz and Rahel Weisbrod, The Open University, Tel Aviv 1986, p. 28. [Hebrew].

[81] Ohana, "The Crusader-Zionist Analogy in the Israeli Discourse," *Iyunim Bitkumat Israel*, 11(2001), pp. 486–526. [Hebrew].

[82] Michael Feige, "The Meta-Trauma of The Israeli-Crusader Myth," *A Lecture in the Annual Conference of the Israeli Association for Sociology and Anthropology*, 2006. [Hebrew].

[83] Claude *Levi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology*, trans. Claire Jacobson and Brook Grundfest Schoeff, New York 1963; Leszek Kolakowski, *The Presence of Myth*, trans. Adam Czerniawski, Chicago 1989.

are not ours – or only this place, and not others, is ours. These are based on historical claims, native experience, religious faith, or a national outlook (and to these can be added the classic Zionist claim that the other places, where the Jews live in the Diaspora, are not ours). The crusader myth counters these assertions by aiming three arrows at the heart of Zionism: Namely, do the Israelis *really* belong to the place? Do not the Israelis belong somewhere else, for example, Europe? Do the others (the Palestinian natives) perhaps belong to the place more than the Israelis? The crusader myth subverts the Promethean passion of Zionism. It contradicts those who claim that a change in the Jewish historical individual would come to pass in the new space. That hope, it asserts, was unfounded, and the three-dimensional transformation that Zionism sought to effect with regard to land, people, and individual had no real chance of succeeding – the Jewish people were never meant to create a country or a nation, settle in a national territory, or play an active role in history. Their foreignness to the place, their religious heritage, their racial composition, their cosmopolitan propensity to dispersion, and their dependence on external foreign powers are not compatible with the Promethean desire of the modern Jews to reestablish their national entity in their ancient homeland. In questioning the modern western linearity, the crusader myth undermines the basis of the Zionist identity and brings to the surface all that is repressed. What is repressed is both the "old" Jew, who lived in a cyclical world in expectation of a Messiah, and the East, the space in which Zionism operated and from which many of its citizens came. Critical thought in our time conceptualizes these two forms of alienation, exile, and the Arab East as representing one and the same alienation.[84]

The crusader anxiety is an extreme expression of the orientalist ideas of Edward Said, and it also reflects the present sense of a cultural war between East and West as conceived by Samuel Huntingdon.[85] From the end of the nineteenth century, with the description of western Zionism as a colonialist project, to the beginning of the twenty-first, with the Iranian nuclear threat and Bin Laden's attack on the "crusader-Jewish alliance," the myth opposed an invading West to an imaginary East. The colonialist-crusader image depicts the primitive, threatening, dangerous, and exotic Levant once again taking the Holy Land out of the linear history represented by Europe. This binary approach does not permit the hybridity allowed by postcolonialist ideas or the Mediterranean option that proposes a dialogue between East and West. The ideological violence and the uncompromising power struggle inherent in the Zionist-crusader analogy inhibits the possibility of cultural dialogue, intermingling in the space, or political rapprochement in the future.

[84] Yehuda Shenhav, *The Arab Jews, A Postcolonial Reading of Nationalism, Religion, and Ethnicity*, Stanford 2006.

[85] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York 1978; Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York 1997; Ivan D. Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar, eds., *Orientalism and the Jews*, Hanover and London 2005.

What are the reasons for the crusader anxiety of the Israelis? The anxiety exists on several levels, the highest being that of security: the fear of the actual physical destruction of the state of Israel, a fear that was present in Israel's wars with its Arab neighbors and is aroused by the present nuclear threat from Iran. The declared Arab threat of politicide (the destruction of the state), and on occasion of genocide, inevitably arouses an existential fear and an anxiety for the future. One should not of course minimize the importance of the memory of the Holocaust in nurturing and strengthening this existential fear, although this fear also exists independently. It is planted deep within the national consciousness via the Bible in an immanent uncertainty about belonging to the place, as well as in the two historical precedents in which the fear was concretized in an actual national destruction.

In order to explain the nature of the connection between the Jewish people and its land, one must realize that Eretz Israel was seen as a land of choice and an objective, but not as a land of birth. According to the Bible, God makes clear to Abraham the arbitrariness of the connection between the people and the land that by chance they meet on their way. In the Jewish tradition, the land belongs to God and is given to the people only on a provisional basis, and for that reason it can also be taken away. Existence there is essentially fragile and arbitrary. There is always some pea of unrest under the mattress, something to disturb the happy coming together of the "small place" of reality with the "large place" of imagination and hope.[86] This tension between the concrete and the utopian explains why the Jewish soul throughout history harbored in its depths the crusader anxiety. The anxiety existed long before the crusaders entered history, and it continues to exist long after their disappearance. Parallel with this, one must remember that for most of history the Jewish people did not have direct knowledge of a physical homeland. The history of Jewish nationalism was abnormal, and the years of exile distorted the self-confident relationship between the people and its homeland, between the citizens and their state, and between the subjects and their historical origins.

PLACE AND EXILE

The consciousness of exile among many believing Jews in the physical exile (the "non-place") took the form of a testimony to the destruction of the Temple and the land, and this fueled the disparity between the longing to return to the Holy Land and the fear of realizing that utopia. A metaphysical fear of the holy place and a religious awe of the sacred existed side by side with the attraction to the Land of Israel. Avi Ravitsky, historian of Jewish thought, pointed out that Eretz Israel fascinated and attracted its sons, especially those exiled from it, but it also aroused in them an awe and dread of its metaphysical demands to such a degree that the exiles recoiled before the

[86] Zali Gurevitch and Gideon Aran, "The Land of Israel: Myths and Phenomenon," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, X (1994), p.195, 210.

extreme holiness of the land; it sometimes became a taboo, something forbidden to touch. Redemption in place was not possible without redemption in time: Eretz Israel, the ultimate place, was out of reach until the ultimate time, the days of the Messiah. To this alternation between enchantment and fear, attraction and repulsion, was added the demonic factor of the destruction of the Temple, "which laid upon the destroyed Temple Mount and the deserted land of Israel a threatening shadow of desolation."[87] Zionism's return to the designated place required the tension to be broken, the fear to be dispelled, and the new Jew to be anchored once again in his Hebrew homeland.

According to Mircea Eliade, the holiness ascribed to a place bestows meaning on man and his world.[88] The sanctity of the space transforms the chaos of life into something with order and organization, into an anchoring point that holds back the chaos, so that the concrete place becomes transcendental, a place beyond place.[89] One moves from an insignificant place devoid of meaning and a time without purpose to a time-and-place existence of profound consequence. The national movements of the modern age, and Zionism among them, secularized that language that had conceptualized metaphysical sanctity into modern terms, endowing the secular place with mythical significance.[90] This mythologization of the secular place was one of the chief instruments in the construction of national communities.[91] Places in Israel were sanctified both by secular Zionism and by religious tradition. The sanctification of the secular place by the Jewish community in Eretz Israel was the basis for the later claim by the settlers of Gush Emunim that they were not content only with the biblical level of sanctity, but were the continuation of the secular Zionist utopia. It is not surprising that the members of Kfar Etzion were fond of the analogy of Tel Hai, a secular place sanctified by both the Zionist left and right.[92]

The form of the Zionist claim to legitimacy, which gives Zionism the right to the country, simultaneously arouses the crusader anxiety. Zionism had an extensive timeframe linked to the *longue durée* days of the Bible, whereas the Palestinians, who related to the more recent past, had a shorter timeframe (although there have been Palestinian attempts, as yet unsuccessful, to link up to a Canaanite-mythological past).[93] The semiotics of the place when the

[87] Aviezer Ravitzky, ed., Preface, *The Land of Israel in Modern Era – Jewish Thought*, Jerusalem 2004, p. 3. [Hebrew].

[88] Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols*, Paris 1952, pp. 33–72; Benjamin Zeev Kedar and Raphael Jehuda Zwi Werblowski, eds., *Sacred Space: Shrine, City, Land*, London 1998.

[89] Boaz Neumann, *Land and Desire in Early Zionism*, Tel Aviv 2009. [Hebrew].

[90] Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Memory and the Making of National Tradition*, Chicago 1995.

[91] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London 1991.

[92] "In Those Days and at That Time – Conversations With the Old-Timers of the Gush on the Events of 1948," *Gushpanka*, 88 (February 1988). [Hebrew].

[93] Yehoshua Porath, "Hebrew Canaanism and Arabic Canaanism"; Ifrach Zilberman, "Palestinian Canaanism," in Danny Jacoby, ed., *One Land, Two Peoples – Selected Issues*

Jews arrived was Palestinian, Arab, and oriental. Evidence of their lack of ownership was everywhere apparent; the national symbols of the return to the land were taken straight from the enemy dwelling in the land, and that same enemy readopted these symbols in its own national struggle.[94] Is it surprising if the fear of banishment and of the cyclical nature of history has been a continual and disturbing, if hidden, presence in Israeli history? The elimination of the "crusader," that is, the revival of the "true" nature of the country, is a two-sided concept. Firstly, it is military and external: The Arabs will expel the Israelis if they do not become Canaanites, if they are not sufficiently connected to the place. But an Israeli insistence on the connection to the place immediately gives rise to the charge of a crusader-like invasion. The Canaanism of the Israelis prevents them from becoming crusaders inasmuch as their rooting in the place provides a guarantee of territorial security, strength, and endless patience. This is perhaps also the reason for the obsessive activism of the Israelis, making perceptible to themselves what Slavoj Zizek described as a concretization of the concrete.[95]

The threat is also an inner one. The anxiety can appear as a fear of spiritual annihilation, of a dissolution within the space in the form of Levantinization. The Israelis are liable to become "Arabs," to be conquered from within. This is the same anxiety as that aroused by the Muslim influx into Europe, as though the former natives of the colonies now turned to their colonialist enslavers of yesterday and said, "Then you were in our place, now we are in your place!" There is consequently a fear of an orientalization of the Jews, a fear of a symbolic destruction that in certain respects is worse than physical expulsion. As they see it, their recoiling from a dissolution into the East and an amalgamation in the space is more valid than the Zionist logic of overcoming the place. For example, the tomb of the Jewish Sepharadic saint Baba Sali, located in the south of Israel, is now given the function, which he had in life, of serving as an intermediary between the mass of believers and God; and there are many other such cases in peripheral Israel.[96] The fear of the conquest of the center by the periphery is comparable to the greater fear of the conquest of Israel by its enemies in the Arab space. The discourse concerning the fear of the East is not a new one. Its roots go back to the beginnings of Zionism, where there was an ambivalence of an attraction to the East and a repulsion toward it, a dual face of the "new Hebrew" who looked toward an imagined East, but whose gaze was always turned toward the West as a source of cultural identity. The discourse concerning the East continues today among the postcolonialist scholars who condemn the hegemonic culture in Israel as modern western nationalism

in the History of The Yishuv and The State of Israel, Jerusalem 1999, pp. 83–93; 96–103. [Hebrew].

94 Ahmad H. Sa'di, "Catastrophe, Memory and Identity: Al-Nakbah as a Component of Palestinian Identity," *Israel Studies*, 7, 2 (Summer 2002), pp. 175–198. [Hebrew].

95 Slavoj Zizek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*, London 2003.

96 Yoram Bilu and Eyal Ben-Ari, "Modernity and Charisma in Contemporary Israel: The Case of Baba Sali and Baba Baruch," in Ohana and Robert Wistrich, eds., *The Shaping of Israeli Identity: Myth, Memory and Trauma*, London 1995, pp. 224–237.

and as a colonial ethnic project repressing both the East and the Orientals, as well as what remains of Palestine.[97]

Whereas Israelis translate the crusader anxiety into literary metaphors such as A. B. Yehoshua's arson of a Jewish National fund forest, the return of the swamps in Meir Shalev's novel, or the howling of the jackals of Amos Oz, Palestinians do not feel themselves to be merely potential victims; rather, they see themselves as actual victims of the Israeli "crusaders," and as paying the price for the progress of Zionism by the burial of what went before. They ask themselves if the strata covered over by the process of destruction and creation still exist and can facilitate their redemption. Are there orchards still blossoming beneath the car parks? Many post-Zionists see the Israeli place in terms of the redemption envisaged by Walter Benjamin, and they allot themselves the task of telling the tale of the defeated and the losers, brushing history against the grain and sticking pins in the Zionist-crusader narrative, which they describe in a reversed form: The historical crusaders were defeated and disappeared; the metaphorical crusaders – the Zionists – were victorious, and the Palestinians of today are swept under the carpet of history. The names of their villages are restyled in Hebrew, the olive trees uprooted, and the bulldozer builds on the ruins of their homes in the first Hebrew city elegant white houses for children born of the sea.[98] Although most Israelis see themselves as neither Canaanites nor crusaders ordinarily, when looking at themselves in the territories occupied since the war of 1967, they see both Canaanites and crusaders.

An examination of some of the main features of the crusader discourse among the Israelis reveals a fascinating episode in the intellectual history of the state of Israel, and constitutes a scrutiny of the Israeli narrative in its deepest sense. In the "crusader prism" we have opted to study, major cross-currents of Israeli thought are reflected. Although the crusader-Zionist analogy has not been central to the Israeli discourse, the many treatments the subject has been given show that the historical parallel that Arab circles have made between the mediaeval Christians in the Holy Land and the modern Jews in Israel has not been lost on Israeli intellectuals.[99] Even when not dealing directly with the local conflict, the Israelis among themselves have discussed the crusader equation with an acute sense of their own "foreignness" in the area: In this perspective, the "other" becomes "us." The Israeli participants in the crusader's discourse engaged in a veiled dialogue in which the analogy was not the subject of a historical debate or of a factual investigation of the truth.

[97] Colin Shindler, *A History of Modern Israel*, Cambridge 2008, pp. 91–97; Hannan Hever, Yehouda Shenhav, Pnina Motzafi-Haller, eds., *Mizrahim in Israel: A Critical Observation into Israel's Ethnicity*, Jerusalem 2002.

[98] Meron Benvenisti, *Sacred Landscape: The Buried History of the Holy Land since 1948*, trans. Maxine Kaufman-Lacusta, California 2000.

[99] Ohana, "Are the Israelis the New Crusaders? The Radical Religious Symbolism of the Zionist-Crusader Takes on New Significance," *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture*, 13, 3 (2006) pp. 36–43.

What was involved here was the origins, no less than the future, of the Jewish state at the heart of the Arab-Muslim East. Did the analogy itself become a kind of mobilizing symbol? How did each side select principles, images, and perceptions corresponding to its political viewpoint and general outlook?

A historical episode in the history of Palestine unconnected with the Jewish history of the Land of Israel became a fascinating episode in the elucidation of the Israelis' identity and self-image. It is as if a picture of some historical subject had been painted, and those that looked at it asked themselves if they saw themselves within it. The Arabs answered positively; the Israelis for the most part answered negatively. The analogy served this time as a pretext for posing the question, "Who are we?" in its contrary, negative form: "Who are we not?" The question "Are we crusaders?" preceded the question "Are we colonialists?" and this was without specifically identifying the Zionism of settler movements with a colonialist element. In other words, the Zionist-crusader analogy reflected an indirect debate, at times a veiled anxiety, in which the sensitive colonialist question was broached without being called by its name. Thus, an interpretation of the Zionist enterprise as a colonialist project was hinted at until the advent of the post-Zionists, who renewed the open discussion of the question.

In view of the fascinating, lively "crusader discourse" in historiography, literature, and art, and in political life and essays, the crusader parallel runs like a thread through the Israeli discourse at all levels. This preoccupation has come to the fore especially in three periods: around the time of the 1948 war, before the 1967 war, and around the time of the Al-Aqsa intifada. The apprehensions of the Israelis embodied in this parallel are a consequence both of external factors like the Arab threat internalized as a future that resembles the past, and of internal factors like the political controversy between right and left or the post-Zionist questioning that has renewed the colonialist-crusader discourse about the beginnings of Zionism. More than the crusaders have been the object of a historical comparison, the subject now serves as a litmus test to clarify attitudes toward Zionism. Those who sympathize with the Zionist point of view totally reject the Zionist-crusader analogy, whereas the post-Zionists make the analogy. They have a "Christian" theory of original sin with regard to the Zionist movement and the state of Israel, reaching the conclusion that the sole solution to the problem is the negation of the state of Israel in its present form as a Jewish democratic state and its replacement by a "state of all its citizens."

THE MEDITERRANEAN MOMENT

Israel can be defined as a Mediterranean society in the making. The Mediterranean Sea links together three continents, three religions, and thousands of years of civilization and has thus been a channel of mutual influences and cultural exchanges. These processes have formed the destiny of large Jewish communities. The historian Joshua Prawer drew attention to

an interesting fact: "It should be pointed out that, without any causal relationship, the period of the closure of the Mediterranean was – in relationships, in the exchange of ideas and in trade – the period of the greatness of Judaism."[100] According to the historian Shlomo Dov Goitein, the Jews lived along the coasts of the Mediterranean, and were an open, mobile people that were not closed up in their own world; but in the countries where they lived, they inherited the culture of Greece and Rome and adapted it to the culture of Islam. In his monumental five-volume work, *A Mediterranean Society*, Goitein described a Jewish society of the Middle Ages that lived within the framework of Mediterranean geography and culture.[101]

For many years, the Mediterranean identity was a neglected option in Israel. The Jewish Israelis had a suspicious and hostile attitude to the sea (there was no sea in the towns of Eastern Europe or Iraq), perhaps because it was associated with wandering, or perhaps because the Israelis had an ethos of conquering the land. The historian Irad Malkin observes that whereas the Israelites came out of the desert and settled in the land as in the biblical myth of the exodus from Egypt, in modern times the Jews came to the country via the Mediterranean and settled mainly along the coasts. This change had demographic significance and political and ideological consequences. Until the 1940s, the existence of the Jews along the coast did not result in territorial ambitions of annexing parts of the biblical heartland. After the conquest of the West Bank in the Six-Day War, on the part of those on the political right, there was a strengthening of the consciousness of settling the hills and the inner parts of the country, but the normative "coastal existence" remained as it was and became even stronger. One expects the Mediterranean idea to be important in the future, perhaps without any need to resurrect the past and reinvent it, through the sheer force of reality and through social and cultural circumstances. Israel, after all, is much closer in its way of life to Greece, Italy, and Spain than to countries like Holland, Germany, or Poland. Open-air cafés, a bustling nightlife, articles of food like baguettes, croissants, and Tunisian sandwiches, many "taverna" programs on the Israeli television channels, economic and touristic links with the Mediterranean countries, and the acceptance in literary circles of Mediterranean images – all these are the first signs of a Mediterranean culture. In the opinion of many, the Mediterranean option is not a call for ethnic isolation or a return to roots, but a striving for a common cultural platform that would smooth out separate tensions and identities. The Mediterranean ethos is too ancient, important, and central to be yet another reason for ethnic seclusion, for advancing sectional interests, folkloric tendencies, or sentimental yearnings.

The "new Hebrew" faced two directions: He looked to the East but he also had his back to it. Zionism was characterized from its earliest days

[100] Joshua Prawer, "Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Mediterranean Area," *Pe'amim*, 45 (Autumn 1990), p. 5.

[101] Shlomo Dov Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 5 vol., Berkeley 1967–1988.

by its ambivalent attitude to the East. The positive attitude to the East was first expressed by figures such as Moses Lieb Lilienblum, Mordechai Zeev Feierberg, Itamar Ben-Avi, Nahum Sokolov, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, and David Ben-Gurion. Lilienblum saw the European Jews as aliens: "We are alien to our own race. We are Semites among the Aryans, sons of Shem among the sons of Japhet, a Palestinian tribe from Asia in European lands." Feierberg declared to the Jews in his famous essay *Whither?*: "And you, my brethren, as you now go eastwards, you must always remember that you are orientals by birth." Itamar Ben-Avi declared "We are Asiatics," Sokolov wanted to create "a great Palestinian culture,"[102] and Ben-Gurion said in 1925 that "the meaning of Zionism is that we are once again becoming an Oriental people."

The negative attitude was expressed in an *a priori* rejection of the eastern option. Herzl declared in *The Jewish State*, "For Europe we can be part of the defensive wall against Asia; we can be outposts of culture against barbarism."[103] The historian Joseph Klausner saw his culture as a superior one, as he said in his article "Fear" (1905): "All our hope that we shall one day possess the land of our ancestors is not based on the sword, nor on the fist, but on the collective advantage we have over the Arabs and Turks."[104] Was such an attitude of some of the thinkers of Zionism in its early stages an outstanding example of the orientalist thesis put forward by Edward Said? Were certain varieties of Zionist perception of the East an example of a paternalistic relationship of the West to the East, or, more precisely, to the area of the eastern Mediterranean? Here we have something much more complex than the out-and-out European orientalism, because the East was seen not only as the site of the ancient history of the Jewish people, but also as the supreme object of the people's return to itself according to its vision; but to the same degree that the East was seen as the cure for the national distress of the Jewish people and the insignia of its national identity, it represented the "other"; it was external to the Zionist Jew and was perceived as "there," whether as a strange or even alien entity or as an object of insatiable longings. The growing attraction of the East for the nineteenth-century European romantics may be ascribed to a longing for ancient and authentic roots, as well as to a common feeling among the intelligentsia that the West was in decline. It was this attraction that impelled Jews of Zionist inclination to see the East not only as the cradle of their national identity or as a place of refuge, but also as a source of values, strength, and moral renewal for their people.

"Crusaders" and "Mediterraneans" are two geopolitical metaphors that have been used to describe Israel's identity and its place in the region. The first, the crusader metaphor, indicates the alien character of a western colonialism in the East. Israel's adversaries and certain elements within it both employ this metaphor, which signifies an imminent confrontation between

[102] Amnon Rubinstein, *From Herzl to Rabin, 100 Years of Zionism*, Tel Aviv 1997, p. 74 [Hebrew].
[103] Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*, trans. Shmuel Perlman, Jerusalem 1943, p. 34.
[104] Joseph Klauzner, "Fear", *Hashiloah* (1907), pp. 574–576 [in Hebrew].

East and West. For modern Arab nationalism, the Zionist-crusader analogy was a political myth that enlisted the forefathers for the benefit of the heirs: The historical episode became an inspiring model for the descendants, who were thus incited to expel the "Jewish infidels" from Palestine in the twentieth century. In contrast, the other term "Mediterraneans" indicates a meeting of cultures, a dialogue, and cross-fertilization between East and West. The personification of this Mediterranean option is the writer and essayist Jacqueline Kahanoff (1917–1979), who already in the 1950s was promoting many of the ideas that have now become current in the Israeli discourse.[105]

The ideology that characterized the first years of Israeli independence was that of the so-called melting-pot – a policy that set out to create a unified Israeli identity and culture among all the Jews immigrating to Israel. It aimed to fashion the Zionist ethos, with its native secular outlook and modern western orientation, into an Israeli identity with clearly defined borders. In contrast to this, the Mediterranean option offered a more wide-ranging Israeli identity, one with cultural mobility, a connection with tradition, multiple voices, and sustained intellectual and linguistic interchange. The early appearance of Kahanoff's polyphonic voice was in contradiction to the "Nimrodian" Israeli culture – Eurocentric, secular, socialist, and masculine – in the country's first two decades. Her novels, essays, and short stories were liminal in that they disregarded borders, blurred polarities such as East/West or hegemonic/"other," and possessed a hybrid quality of reciprocity, stratification, variety, and lack of dogmatism; they played down the "oppositional" undercurrents.

By those who view her as the representative of Mediterranean culture, Jacqueline Kahanoff is regarded as one of the primary intellectual sources of the Mediterranean idea in Israel. The opponents of the Mediterranean option claim that its advocates are attempting to evade the issue of Israel's proximity to the Arab states and the Palestinians, and are taking refuge in the idea of a pleasant neighborly relationship with the Europeans – an escape, say the critics, that has no basis in reality. For them it is an evasion of the basic problems of Israel and its neighbors/adversaries. Those who reject this criticism, for their part, claim that the Mediterranean option is a real cultural and political possibility and can therefore serve as a basis for a dialogue with Israel's neighbors, an option therefore offering a new and fresh perspective that is not dependent on the basic assumption of two contending sides. The validity of this option is contingent on the idea that there is a closeness and a rich fabric of geocultural affinities among the peoples living in the Mediterranean Basin – affinities with a vital political significance that can facilitate the creation of a broad dialogue and regional channels of communication, and which can to some degree moderate the Israeli-Arab dispute. This dispute is often said to be insoluble, and it is possible that such a negative verdict may be due,

[105] Jacqueline Kahanoff, *Between Two Worlds*, ed. David Ohana, Jerusalem 2005 [Hebrew]; Ohana, "The Mediternean Option: An Introduction to the Thought of Jacqueline Kahanoff," *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 18, 1 (June 2006), pp. 239–265.

among other things, to a disregard of the general Mediterranean context and of the things that are common to the heritage of all the peoples of the region; such disregard emphasizes instead only the different geographical interests these peoples have. Unlike the limiting old-new Middle Eastern option, a geopolitical term initiated in British and French colonial thought, this new option does not regard the Mediterranean as a "theatre of confrontation," an area of conflict between Jews and Arabs. Furthermore, this option is by no means confined to the external relationships between the peoples.[106]

The Mediterranean option permits a different view of the Israelis' evolving identity.[107] Parallel with the Canaanite thesis and the crusader thesis, I shall trace the vicissitudes of the Mediterranean discourse in the historical and cultural spheres. What place, if any, has it had among the possibilities open to the Israeli identity? Which geocultural group in the Israeli identity does it belong to: the Middle Eastern, the Mediterranean, the European, the global village? Our discourse about the Mediterranean option takes into account Israel's position in the wider area, the formative self-awareness of Israelis about their time and place, and the possibility of imagining a Mediterranean Israel in response to both the Canaanite challenge on one hand and the crusader anxiety on the other.

[106] Homi K, Bhabha, "The Other Question: Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism," in Russel Ferguson et al., eds., *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*, Cambridge, MA 1990; Ohana, "Israel Towards a Mediterranean Identity," *Munich Contributions to European Unification*, *Special Issue: Integration and Identity*: *Challenges to Europe and Israel*, 4 (1999), pp. 81–101.

[107] Alexandra Nocke: "Israel and The Emergence of Mediterranean Identity: Expressions of Locality in Music and Literature," *Israel Studies*, II, 1 (Spring 2006), pp. 143–173.

2

The Promethean Hebrew

THE HEBREW NIETZSCHEANS

Promethean ardor, which propels all of modernity, found expression among European Jews as a desire to take control of their history and form it according to their own designs. The Zionist project grew out of the *Haskalah*, the Jewish Enlightenment movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which was Jewish History's first modern ideology. Zionism, as a modern national movement, sought to produce autonomous individuals who were not dependent on the favor of landowners and sultans, authentic people with a distinctive identity. One must differentiate between modernity and Enlightenment, the former being man's attempt to construct himself as a creative subject, and the latter an adaptation of modern life to universal values. Correspondingly, Jews have always had their consciousness divided between the reality they knew and the ideals they imagined. In the minds of Jewish revolutionaries this caused a tension between the historically factual exiled Jewish people, and the politically desirable – Zionism. As the Jewish Promethean passion, Zionism represented a modern secular attempt to recreate the Jewish collective identity.

The torchbearers of the Promethean revolution were the Hebrew Nietzscheans. These were Eastern European Jewish intellectuals at the *fin-de-siècle*, who fused the interpretations of Nietzsche and Wellhausen together with a Jewish National vision. They refused to surrender to either historical or economic determinism and did not yield to the presumptions of modern anti-Semitism: Returning to Zion was for them a return to history, geography, and sociology. The return to history was a revolt against the passivity of exilic "Jewish time" and a resumption of their responsibility to dictate their own history. The return to geography was a revolt against the foreign place of exile and a homecoming to the simultaneously old and new space of the Mediterranean. The return to sociology meant a change in the old socioeconomic structure. More than anyone else, Friedrich Nietzsche was the philosopher who personified this rebellion and its need for a "new man."

The first Hebrew essay on Nietzsche, "Nietzsche: An Introduction to the Theory of the Superman," was written by David Neumark, a rabbi and philosopher, in 1894, and published in *From East to West*. Neumark was a decade younger than the Zionist theorist Ahad Ha-am with whom he had close ties.[1] He was among the first to join Herzl, and he participated in the First Zionist Congress.[2] In Berlin, Berdichevsky introduced Reuven Breinin to the group known as the Tzeírim (the young ones). He described Yehoshua Tahon as the Hebrew Hippolyte Taine, Mordechai Ehrenpreis as the Hebrew Georg Brandes, and David Neumark as the Hebrew Kant.[3] They were joined by Mordechai Zeev Braude and Zvi Melter. This was a group of students who read Nietzsche enthusiastically and consequently wished to create a revolution in Hebrew literature through the Europeanization of Jewish culture. Breinin declared that the works of "Schopenhauer and Nietzsche are soul-confessions, histories of their spiritual lives,"[4] and he claimed that Neumark "sought out the inner nucleus of things, their vital and succinct point."[5] Neumark sought to fashion what he called the "new Hebrew" in the image of the Nietzschean "Superman." Reuben Brainin's comment is relevant in this respect: "The future generation shall not be small and weak, beaten and sickly as is this dwarfish generation, rather shall a strong and mighty generation arise, a generation of giants, a generation which shall inculcate new physical strengths and new mental capacities which we never imagined, a generation of the 'superman'."[6] Neumark was the first to render *Übermensch* ("Superman") into the Hebrew, *adam elyon* (higher man). In this regard, it is interesting to note that the Kabbalistic book, the *Zohar*, refers to a concept of *adam ilaha*, which is virtually the same term.[7]

Neumark aptly described the Jewish people in the period of the "national resurrection" of Jewish identity at the turn of the century as a "dwarfish generation" that wanted the new Hebrews to rescue the "old Jews" from the deep crisis they experienced in the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth. In the same issue of *East and West* in which the first article on Nietzsche appeared, Berdichevsky first bore witness to the influence of the German thinker: "This new spirit seeks to create new concepts for man and make him a self-reliant being."[8] These "new concepts"

[1] Steven J. Zipperstein, *Elusive Prophet: Ahad Ha-Am and the Origins of Zionism*, Berkeley 1993.

[2] Shmuel Simcha Cohen, "Rabbi David Neumark," *Hadoar*, 20–21 (1936), p. 332. [Hebrew].

[3] Reuven Breinin, "David Neumark – Outlines to His Spiritual Profile," *Ha-Toren* (June 1925), p. 75. [Hebrew].

[4] Breinin, "Reflections of a Biographer," in David Frischman, ed., *Sifrut – Maasef La-Sifrut Ha-Yaffa U-Bikoret*, 1 (1909), p.23. [Hebrew].

[5] Breinin, "David Neumark," p. 78.

[6] David Neumark, "An Introduction to the Theory of the Superman," *From East to West*, 1 (1894), p. 122. [Hebrew].

[7] Yehuda Liebes, "Chapters in the Dictionary of the Book of the Zohar," Dissertation submitted to the Hebrew University, Jerusalem (1977), pp. 59, 71–73. [Hebrew].

[8] Micha J. Berdichevsky, "To Be or Not Be," *From East to West*, 1 (1894), p. 102. [Hebrew].

captivated hundreds of young Jews who abandoned the world of the yeshivas in Eastern and Central Europe and molded a new cultural and national identity. The call for the Europeanization of Jewish culture sought to fuse a European style with Jewish values.

The "European" (not the "German") Nietzsche held an attraction for the Jewish youths, who rebelled against traditional Judaism, against the oppressiveness of exilic history, against the passive mentality of the Jews and their preference for "books" over "life." The Jewish people was depicted in the Hebrew literature of the time as an old and decrepit man opposed by defiant, rebellious youths. It is not surprising that Nietzsche's criticism of the decadence, the sickness, the agedness of Europe and his call for a change of values, for a will-to-power and a renewal of vitality, entranced the young Jews, and many of them began to identify with "Hebraism" rather than "Judaism." The literary scholar Avner Holtzman explains that the term "Hebraism" took on "the meaning of a new kind of Judaism, indigenous and vital, full of power and bravery, young and fresh, nurtured by the Jewish pre-exilic past, alien to the world of Torah and Halakha, and committed to the Hebrew language and the national revival."[9] The historian and the scholar of the Hebrew literature Joseph Klausner (1874–1958), who is well known from his books on the messianic idea, the history of the second temple, as well as Jesus, was a multifaceted character.[10] He greatly influenced the revisionist circles and inspired the Zionist right. Sometimes Klausner used the pen name "Hebrew man." For him, a "new Hebrew" was a person faithful to the Hebrew language and his Hebrew motherland: "Judaism for them is nothing but the Hebrew language and the land of Israel."[11] At the same time, one should remember that the Hebrew national revival took various forms, and Zionism was only one of them.

Nietzschean concepts, as we have remarked, coined a lexicon that served a wide spectrum of ideologies. The question arises, then, as to how Nietzsche was read by disparate thinkers representing the main currents in Jewish nationalism and how they used him for their philosophical and political objectives. Which Nietzschean principles (the Will to power, the "Superman," the transvaluation of values, the slave-and-master morality, or the revolt against history) did they choose to emphasize and which to ignore? What was there about the Nietzschean texts that invited so many diverse readings and exerted such influence on wide circles in modern Jewish nationalism? Part of the attraction no doubt lay in his poetical and aphoristic style that can be appreciated by almost all readers. Moreover, Nietzscheanism was radical in both style and content, its metaphorical and symbolic form of expression inviting a multiplicity of interpretations. The distinct aspects of his "philosophy of life" (*Lebensphilosophie*) – voluntarism, will, vitality, and

[9] Avner Holtzman, "Old Jews, New Hebrews," *Haaretz*, 27.3.2002. [Hebrew].
[10] Simcha Kling, *Joseph Klausner*, New York 1970
[11] Ibid.

myth – enabled thinkers who wished to break new ground or to blaze a new path to radicalize their positions.

NIETZSCHE'S RECEPTION IN HEBREW CULTURE

The themes that marked the rebellion of the "Young Hebrews" led by Berdichevsky and Ehrenpreis were adopted by the Hebrew poets Saul Tchernichovsky (1875–1943) and Zalman Schneur (1886–1959) and creatively reworked in their poetry. They, too, put "life" before "literature." Their poems include many Nietzschean elements, particularly from his early period when Nietzsche took the Greek myths and the Dionysian paeans to vitality as the antithesis to the paralyzing historical culture of nineteenth-century Europe. Ahad Ha-am published only two of Tchenichovsky's poems in *Ha-shiloah*; however, when Klausner took over the helm in 1903, Tchernichovsky began to regularly contribute poems imbued with the spirit of vitalism. His main goal was to find in Judaism parallels for the Greek heroes ("Songs of the Exiles," "Facing the Sea"), such as Bar-Kochba.[12] "Facing Apollo's Statue" (1899) is the most Nietzschean of his poems; in this respect, the motif "they bound him in the straps of phylacteries" recalls the stabbing of the bleeding Torah scroll by Berdichevsky's hero in his unpublished novel *The Leave Taker*.

Tchernichovsky does not merely suggest "a new function for poetry, but also has a recommendation for a new model of man," as the literary critic Yehudit Barel puts it.[13] Kurzweil, who grapples with the dilemma of the "New Hebrew," stranded with his Judaism but devoid of a living God, argues that "Nietzsche's anti-Christian effect is now injected by Tchernichovsky into the enlightenment polemics of the Russian-Jewish writer, and great poet Yehuda Leib Gordon."[14] In this context, it is worth quoting Klausner, who felt that such Jewish enlightenment figurers as Lilienblum, Mendele, and Gordon sought to create a new synthesis between religion and life. But it was a life of intellect and knowledge in keeping with European bourgeois rationalism and liberalism. By contrast, the war against Jewish tradition in the work of Tchernichovsky, Berdichevsky, and Schneur was the war of the *mythos* against the *logos* – spirit and knowledge oppose life, and the demand for life implies renewal through mythical and mystical powers.

Zalman Schneur, who, in his poem "On the Banks of the Seine," wrote that "God is dead, but man has not yet been resurrected," might be considered the greatest Nietzschean among the Hebrew renaissance poets. As in the case of Berdichevsky and Techernichovsky, one also finds pagan rituals in Schneur's work ("Hidden Tablets") and the longing for beauty, in contrast

[12] Saul Tchernichovsky, *Selected Poems*, New York 1944.

[13] Yehudit Barel, "'About the New Life' – Visions and Melodies – the First Coping of Saul Tchernichovsky with the Poetic Norms of Contemporary Hebrew Poetry," in Boas Arpali, ed., *Saul Tchernichovsky – Researches and Documents*, Jerusalem 1994, pp. 171–198. [Hebrew].

[14] Baruch Kurzweil, *Bialik and Tchernichovsky: Researches in Their Poetry*, Tel Aviv 1972, pp. 211–350. [Hebrew].

to the culture of the priests and prophets: "What are you doing here, Creator of Beauty? You will never light a spark in the hearts of these shopkeepers." Schneur's poem "I Understand" is interesting in its approach to accepting the concept of the "Superman" in his poetry. "The fog cleared for me, and the ape rose up into a man."[15] In 1920, Yosef Chaim Brenner criticized Schneur's "heroic" interpretation of Nietzsche, "as that of a militant journalist, who saw Nietzsche's rear but not his face."[16] Does Schneur also see the "Superman" as a still unfulfilled promise? Regarding the attempts of Schneur and Tchernichovsky to rewrite Jewish history, the literary critic Menachem Brinker comments: "There can be no doubt that it was solely Nietzsche's influence that radicalized the conflict between past and present to the point of rejecting the past in the name of the needs of the present. In turn, this rejection led to a rejection of the collective tradition in the name of the cultural and instinctive needs of the modern Jewish individual."[17]

In Europe, the appearance of Nietzsche's books was a powerful source of inspiration at a time when the universities were dominated by a positivism that left no room for intuition, emotion, or imagination. Nietzsche came as a breath of fresh air into an atmosphere dominated by pessimism, passivity, and a sense of inertia. His calls for "transvaluation" seeped through into visions of a new order. It is hardly surprising that his opponents saw him as a demonic figure, the agent of the devil, a pioneer of immorality and a symptom of degeneration, all of which was asserted in Max Nordau's book *Degeneration* (1892), which was translated into Russian a year after it appeared.[18]

Nietzschean concepts provided an intellectual framework for psychological and aesthetic speculations current at the time. The duality of his Dionysian and the Apollonian characterizations in *The Birth of Tragedy* promoted opposition to positivism and utilitarianism. The Dionysian served as a symbol for religious, psychological, and aesthetic urges, becoming a window for the innermost needs of soul and spirit. Symbolists equated the spirit of music with Dionysus, unaware of the fact that Nietzsche had abandoned his admiration of Wagner. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* also attracted the symbolists because of its poetic language, aphoristic style, and philosophical tone. The symbolists saw the book as a battle cry for individualism, scorning the masses and rejecting socialization. They saw the artist as the "Superman" – apolitical and asocial, opposing materialism, intellect, positivism, and optimism. For the symbolists, the artist's duty was solely to his own feeling and vision.

The desire to create a new humanity was particularly evident in the German avant-garde. Artists blurred traditional distinctions between left and right,

[15] Zalman Shneur, *Works*, I-II, Tel Aviv 1960. [Hebrew].

[16] Yosef Chaim Brenner, *Works*, IV, Tel Aviv 1986, p. 1646. [Hebrew].

[17] Menachem Brinker, "Nietzsche's Influence on Hebrew Writers of the Russian Empire," in *Nietzsche and Soviet Culture, Adversary and Allay*, ed., Bernice Glatzer-Rosenthal, Cambridge 1994, pp. 393–413.

[18] Steven E. Aschheim, "Max Nordau, Friedrich Nietzsche and Degeneration," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 28, 4 (1993), pp. 643–658.

rational and mystical, truth and lies, good and evil; each artist painted his visions in a different political color. Why were artists attracted to Nietzsche? Like them, he saw the world as an artistic creation. "It is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified."[19] The expressionist movement, which was founded in Dresden in 1905, drew its name from a concept that appears in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Elsewhere, the "Superman" is described as a bridge cast over a ravine. In a letter, Schmidt-Rotluff tells his fellow expressionist painter, Nolde: "To draw together all the revolutionary and vibrant elements; this is what we mean by the word bridge." For the avant-garde, Nietzsche symbolized the new antihistorical radicalism. As the expressionist manifesto put it: "We, the youth who bear the future, want to create for ourselves physical and spiritual freedom in place of the values of the old establishment generation."[20] Although David Frishman (1859–1922) – writer and critic, aesthete, and translator – supported some of the ideals of the Hebrew revival movement, he rejected the Zionist movement, claiming that the Zionist idea was unworthy of realization. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* was published in Hebrew for the first time in Frishman's translation during the years 1909 to 1911, first in *Reshafim* and then separately in the collection of Frishman's works. Frishman saw Nietzsche's work as a late biblical book – a "Third Testament" after the Old and New Testaments. His understanding was not far removed from that of Nietzsche himself, though the Nietzschean Zarathustra was aimed as a rebellion against Judeo-Christian ethics in order to declare the birth of a new civilization. In Frishman's translation, the dissonant book became overly harmonic and classical. Aesthetes such as Frishman, who sought to create the "new Hebrew" by placing him in opposition to the "Old Jew," took as their inspiration Hebrew history as expressed in the Bible, rather than the Diaspora period.[21]

The first poem by poet, playwright, and translator Ya'kov Cohen (1881–1960) was published in Frishman's journal, *Ha-dor*, in 1901. Cohen proposed to create the "new Hebrew" and sought to illustrate this idea in the collection of that name, which he edited in Warsaw in 1912. "The 'New Hebrew' will be the new human.... The appearance of the New Hebrew will surely be splendid as he walks upright on his forefathers' land, the fresh, pure skies of the God of Renewal above his head; proud and tall he will walk, like the ancient Hebrew."[22] Brenner would later criticize Ya'akov Cohen's Nietzschean pretensions in seeking to create the "New man," writing, "Who is this "New Hebrew?" ... Are they really fighting heroes? Is it really in distorted lines from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* – we the few, we the geniuses, is this our force as we march to the future – can a war really be fought with such

[19] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, New York 1966, Note 24, Section 5.

[20] Peter H. Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, Berkeley 1974, p. 95.

[21] Revital Amiran Sappir, "Self Salvation in the Jewish National Revival," Dissertation submitted to the Hebrew University, Jerusalem 2005. [Hebrew].

[22] Ya'akov Cohen, ed., *Ha-Ivri Ha-Hadash* (The New Hebrew), Warsaw 1912. [Hebrew].

miserable weapons? … Can the Hebrew revolution really be generated under such slogans – to destroy the Diaspora and all that comes from it?" Cohen's approach in his article "The Hebrew Revolution" (1912) supports modern Jewish nationalism as a renaissance, as the basis of all revival, its symbol and model, together with a return to the historical sources.

On the other hand, the organic nationalist perceptions of Johann Gottfried Herder had little impact on Zionism except for A. D. Gordon and Martin Buber. The Herderian vision did not appeal to Herzl because his worldview was liberal rather than organicist. In both concept and style, he and his followers were far removed from revolutionary or violent radicalism.[23] Herzl mentions Nietzsche only once in his writings, on June 28, 1895. Leo Frankel asked him, "so you are a disciple of Nietzsche?" and Herzl replied, "not at all. Nietzsche is a madman. But one can only govern aristocratically."[24] However, Max Nordau does certainly refer to Nietzsche in his book *Degeneration*, published in Berlin in 1892. He continued the line of Herzl: "[Nietzsche] is obviously insane from birth, and his books bear on every page the imprint of insanity."[25] More surprising is the fact that Chaim Weizmann expressed his admiration for Nietzsche and warmly recommended his work in a letter to his future wife.[26] Ernst Mueller, in the official world organ of the Zionist movement, and Gustav Witkovsky, in a German-Jewish Zionist journal, both referred to Nietzsche in clarifying fundamental issues in Zionism.[27]

One of the most serious attempts in modern Hebrew literature to deal with Nietzschean problems was made by Yosef Chaim Brenner (1881–1921).[28] His heroes observe the meaninglessness of existence and their reflections are full of Nietzschean quotes and themes. In *Mi-saviv La-nekuda* (Around the Point), Abramson prefers insanity to suicide; Feuerman in *Ba-horef* (In Winter) expresses the choice as "Lose your mind or kill yourself; therefore choose death." Yehezkel Hefetz asks in *Shachol Ve-Kishalon* (Bereavement and Failure): "Will he eventually find enough inner strength to uproot all this miserable hell within through redeeming nothingness?" Two literary characters can be found in Brenner's stories who have a profound relationship to

[23] Bruce Elkin Ellerin, "Nietzsche among the Zionists," Dissertation submitted to Cornell University 1990; idem, "Nietzsche et les Zionistes; tableau d'une réception," in Dominique Bourel and Jacques Le Rider, eds., *De Sils-Maria à Jérusalem: Nietzsche et le Judaisme: Les Intellectuels Juifs et Nietzsche*, Paris 1991, pp.111–119.

[24] Raphael Patai, ed., *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, trans. Harry Zohn, vol. 1, New York 1960, p. 191.

[25] Max Nordau, *Entartung*, Berlin 1986. See also George L. Mosse, "Max Nordau, Liberalism and the New Jew," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 27 (1992), pp. 561–581.

[26] Leonard Stein, ed., *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, Letters vol. I, London 1968, pp. 85, 95, 123, 298, 323, 341–341, 348, 365.

[27] Ernst Müller, "Gedanken über Nietzsche und sein Verhältnis zu den Juden," *Die Welt*, 5 (October 1990), pp.4–5; Gustav Witkowsky, "Nietzsche's Stellung zum Zionismus," *Jüdische Rundschau*, 2 (May 1913), pp. 178–179.

[28] Menachem Brinker, "The Nietzschenean Theme in Brenner's Stories," *Narrative Art and Social Thought in Y. H. Brenner's Work*, Tel Aviv 1990, pp. 139–149. [Hebrew].

Nietzsche: Lapidot in *Mi-kan U-mikan* (From Here and There) is an artistic representation of A. D. Gordon and the ideal of labor Zionism that purifies; Uriel Davidovsky in *Mi-saviv La-nekuda* (Around the Point) is a portrait of Sander Baum, Brenner's friend. Baum, Brenner, Hillel Zeitlin, and Uri Nisan Gnessin were the main core of the Nietzsche Circle in Homel at the turn of the century. Their common antireligious inspiration came from the god-slaying philosopher, whom Gnessin eulogized as follows: "The great fighter, who fought his generation, returned his soul to God."[29] The history of this circle is an enlightening example of how each shade of opinion in the group drew its ideological justification from a Nietzschean theme.[30]

Nietzsche's influence was evident in the criticism and self-criticism of the Jewish writers and cultural critics in Eastern and Central Europe, both in the atheistic-critical sphere and in the religious sphere. Many of those who thought and wrote after the pogroms of 1881 were self-taught, eclectic, and unsystematic – "reproducing intellectuals," to use the expression of the sociologist Edward Shields. They read Nietzsche in Russian or German in the intellectual climate of Russia at the turn of the century. To understand the spiritual background, one needs to recall that from the 1860s onward, the Russian intelligentsia had been characterized by extreme atheism. Comments such as "if God exists, then man is a slave" or "the yearning for destruction is also the creative yearning" anticipated similar remarks by Nietzsche. From Pushkin and Lermontov to Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, the main issue in Russian literature was the meaning and purpose of life. Harbingers of Nietzsche can also be found in Dostoevsky's characters Kirilov and Raskolnikov. Yet it is Konstantin Leontiev (1831–1891) who is considered the quintessential "Russian Nietzsche," because of his aesthetic and elitist approach, his scorn for democracy, and his amoral attitudes.[31]

Alongside the Russian variant of Nietzschean atheism, there also developed in *fin-de-siècle* Russia a "new religious consciousness." Dmitri S. Merezhovsky adopted an apocalyptic interpretation of Christianity that included a Third Covenant or Third Coming. Influenced by the Nietzschean critique of traditional Christianity, Merezhovsky yearned for a new form of the religion that would encourage cultural and aesthetic creativity, individualism, and self-expression. Lev Shestov, a leading figure in the religious renaissance, was attracted for his part by Nietzsche's "critique of intellect." In his essay "The Good in the Teaching of Count Tolstoy and Nietzsche" (1900), he attacked philosophical idealism and rationalism.[32] Critical of Tolstoy and his moralism, Shestov claimed that tragedy, evil, and suffering are inevitable. In his book *Dostoevsky and Nietzsche: The Philosophy of Tragedy* (1903), he argued that

[29] Uri Nisan Gnessin, "After Nietzsche," *Ha-Tzfira* (August 1900). [Hebrew]; idem, "The Beginning of Last Things," *Ha-Meorer*, (August–September 1907), pp. 312–353. [Hebrew].

[30] Avi Sagi, *To Be a Jew: Brenner, An Existentialist Jew*, Tel Aviv 2007. [Hebrew].

[31] Rosenthal, ed., *Nietzsche and Soviet Culture*, p. 14.

[32] Lev Shestov, "The Good in the Teachings of Count Tolstoy and Nietzsche," *Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and Nietzsche*, trans. Bernard Martin, Athens, Ohio 1969, pp. 11–140.

both thinkers had engaged in a similar attack on rationalism. In later essays, he claimed that there are no eternal truths, that good and evil are always present in humanity, and that the role of philosophy is not to reach a compromise but to stimulate a struggle for the impossible.

Jewish cultural critics wrote and philosophized against the backdrop of this general intellectual atmosphere in turn-of-the-century Eastern Europe, particularly Russia. Hillel Zeitlin (1877–1942) was profoundly influenced by Shestov's thought. Following his reading, Zeitlin wrote: "If I was asked who is the reader successor of Friedrich Nietzsche, I would unhesitatingly answer: L. Shestov."[33] Zeitlin, a Yiddish publicist with a tendency to mysticism derived from his Hasidic upbringing, moved to Homel and was sent by the town as a delegate to the Fifth Zionist Congress in 1901. His preference for the people of Israel over the Land of Israel led him to support the Uganda Plan, and four years later he published a comprehensive monograph on Nietzsche in *Ha-zman*. His work is not just another attempt to inform the Hebrew reader of Nietzsche's theories (as Neumark had already done), but rather a conscious expression of attraction to his personality that seemed to him that of a great man who had undergone an "inner holy experience." In 1919, Zeitlin published a further essay entitled "Superman or Supergod" in which he sought to repent his youthful follies by painting Nietzsche's ideas in a religious and mystical light, remarking, "One should progress from the 'Superman' to the 'Supergod.'"[34] In this context, the attraction of religious thinkers and students of Jewish theology to Nietzsche is fascinating. The interest of David Neumark, Hillel Zeitlin, Franz Rosenzweig, Emmanuel Levinas, Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Hacohen Kook, Martin Buber, Gershom Scholem, and even the marginal case of Arieh Leib Weisfish, a rabbi of the ultraorthodox Jerusalem neighborhood Mea-Shearim, reflects the affinity between religious existential discourse and the father of modern secular existentialism.

Hasidism and the *Kabbalah* were two modern attempts to revitalize Judaism by renewing it through myth. Martin Buber and Gershom Scholem are each related to one of these historic phenomena, granting a central status to myth in their research. The revolutionary nature of their approach is reflected mainly in their critique of the assumption that saw Judaism as an essentially antimystical religion, resolved, as Gershom Scholem put it, to eliminate myth. Both scholars broke with tradition by perceiving myth as an innovative factor in traditional Judaism. Nietzsche exerted a significant influence in shaping the approach of Buber and Scholem to myth, rehabilitating it as a vital and creative element in all societies. It is instructive to read Scholem's comments regarding Nietzsche's influence on Buber: "Alongside his analysis of mysticism as a social factor in Judaism, Buber developed a no less keen interest in

[33] Hillel Zeitlin, "Lev Shestov," *Ha-Meorer*, 2, 10 (1907), pp. 175–180. [Hebrew].

[34] Zeitlin, "Friedrich Nietzsche, His Life, Poetry and Philosophy," *Ha-Zman*, vols. 1–10 (1905) [Hebrew]; idem, "Adam Elion, El Elion (Bikoret Ha-adam", 1919), *Al Gvul Shnei Olamot* (On the Borders of Two Worlds), Tel Aviv 1997, pp. 49–68. [Hebrew].

its mythical foundations which related to a change in appreciating the vital nature of myth. This change of assessment, common to many of Buber's generation, was the result of Nietzsche's influence."[35] It is possible that Gershom Scholem may here be revealing something about himself. In his youth diaries Scholem wished to be a "Zarathustra for the Jews," and on June 23, 1914, he wrote to a friend: "Sometimes I start to think that Friedrich Nietzsche is the only one in modern times who has said anything substantial about ethics."[36] Scholem, too, assigned Nietzsche a central role in reevaluating myth. In this context, it should be noted that Scholem, together with the historians of religion Mircea Eliade and Henry Corban, participated in the "Eranos Circle," which, inspired by the depth psychologist Carl Gustav Jung, stressed the centrality of myth in understanding religious and cultural phenomena.[37]

Nietzsche's well-known declaration about the "Death of God" does not contradict the religious dimension of his thought. *Zarathustra* itself is written in a biblical vein. Nietzsche, who sought to create "new tablets of the law," placed Dionysus in opposition to Jesus, at the same time enthroning the "Superman." The theologian Hans Galwitz, who combined Protestantism with Nietzscheanism, even asserted that the combative values of Nietzsche were the very heart of authentic Christianity. Gallwitz entitled his essay "Friedrich Nietzsche as an Educator for Christianity." Albert Kalthoff (1850–1906) was an even more fervent advocate of the absorption of Nietzsche into the Protestant Church. Primitive Christianity and Nietzsche shared, he believed, the common radical urge of seeking to change all values.

In 1895, the young Martin Buber, like many of his generation, was no less excited by Nietzsche's writings, even translating into Polish the first section of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.[38] Buber wrote: "This book did not influence me as a gift might but as an invasion which robbed me of my liberty and it was a long time before I could free myself from it." Indeed, the importance of Nietzsche for Buber extends through his life, evidenced by his essay on "Nietzsche's Theory of Man" [*Gilyonot*, 1937] and the chapter "Feuerbach and Nietzsche" in his Hebrew book, *The Faces of Man*.[39] Again, as with many of his generation, Buber's enthusiasm for the First World War was due in part to his attraction for Nietzsche's *Lebensphliosophie*. It should be remembered that

[35] Gershon Scholem, *Explications and Implications: Writings on Jewish Heritage and Renaissance*, vol. 2, Tel Aviv 1989, p. 383. [Hebrew]; Anthony David Skinner, "A Zarathustra for the Jews: Winter 1913–January 1916," in *Lamentations of Youth: The Dairies of Gershom Scholem 1913–1919*, ed. and trans. Anthony David Skinner, Cambridge, MA 2007, pp. 7–22.

[36] Scholem, Ibid, p. 253.

[37] Steven M. Wasserstrom, *Religion After Religion: Gershom Scholem, Mircea Eliade, and Henry Corbin at Eranos*, New Jersey 1999.

[38] Paul Schlipp and Maurice Friedman, eds., *The Philosophy of Martin Buber*, III, La Salle 1967, p. 12.

[39] Jean Wahl, "Buber and the Philosophies of Existence," in Schlipp and Friedman eds., *The Philosophy of Martin Buber*, pp. 475–510; Paul Mendes-Flohr, "Zarathustra's Apostle: Martin Buber and the Jewish Renaissance," in Jacob Golomb, ed., *Nietzsche and Jewish Culture*, London 1997, pp. 233–243.

together with Goethe's *Faust* and the New Testament, *Zarathustra* became one of the most popular works in Germany during the war. In 1917, 40,000 copies of the book were sold. Ironically, *Zarathustra* took its place on the battlefield alongside the Bible, and thus the author of *The Anti-Christ* found himself once more side by side with the Holy Scriptures.

Buber, Scholem, and Shmuel Hugo Bergman were all members of the pacifist Palestinian Jewish organization *Brit Shalom*, which advocated a binational state. Bergman wrote a number of articles on Aaron David Gordon that show Nietzschean influences, the first of which was entitled "A. D. Gordon's Polemic with Nietzsche."[40] Gordon, the labor Zionist ideologue of the second *Aliya*, joined in the debate about Nietzsche that was taking place in Hebrew culture at the beginning of the twentieth century. In a letter to Brenner, he had ironically declared himself a member of the nation that invented the morality of slaves. In his article "Assessing Ourselves," Gordon attacked Ahad Ha-am for neglecting to draw the logical conclusions from his debate with Berdichevsky. "Ahad Ha-am failed to finish what he had started; he moved over to the 'morality of Judaism' and ended up with 'Torah from Zion.'" A. D. Gordon condemned those Hebrew writers who, "hypnotized by Europe," wished to become like the others: "Berdichevsky comes along and confounds not Nietzsche's position – far from it – but fathers his own. Instead of studying the way of Nietzsche the individual, instead of discovering new horizons, depth and light, he simply accepts Nietzsche's theory, like all those who accept a theory from anyone who would give them one and with all his soul he becomes no more than an interpretation of Nietzsche's ego."[41]

A. D. Gordon believed that Nietzsche had above all set a personal example and had cast a new light on higher morality. To the extent that Gordon was influenced by the psychology and philosophy of the unconscious laid out by Jung and Henri Bergson, as well as by *Kabbalistic* or transcendental phenomena, he spoke as a mystic and not as psychologist. Gordon developed a new ethics that represented a transition from the Nietzschean "Superman" to the Gordonian version of the "Holy Man." In his concept of the "religion of labor," Gordon linked the creative man with this creation, and in his concept of the "man-nation" (a social extension of the notion of the "superholy man") he linked the creative Jewish man with his human destiny.[42] Gordon expanded his interpretation of the Nietzschean "Superman" into a Zionist social framework with a national and universal goal. Gordon had fled from the decadence of European bourgeois culture at the age of forty-seven to begin a new and creative life in the Land of Israel. He argued that the purely intellectual consciousness was sovereign only over an artificial culture, and that

[40] Shmuel Hugo Bergmann, "A. D. Gordon's Debate with Nietzsche," *Ha-po'el Ha-Tzair*, vol. 40, (1947), pp. 5–6. [Hebrew].

[41] Aharon David Gordon, "The Appreciation of Ourselves," *The Writings of A.D. Gordon*, III, Tel Aviv 1927, pp. 38–39. [Hebrew].

[42] Eliezer Schweid, *New Gordonian Essays: Globalization, Post-Modernization and the Jewish People*, Tel Aviv 2005. [Hebrew].

the old standards of bourgeois morality that Nietzsche was so eager to destroy had become bankrupt. Henceforth, man would be judged by a new standard: expansion or contraction. The "vital consciousness" is aware of the fact that man or society, especially in crisis, longs for the solution of *authenticity* – the desire to return to one's own people, the wish to be at home with oneself. Gordon and Brenner both attempted to realize this conception, in a practical way, through pioneering activity in the Land of Israel.

Pioneers of the Second *Aliya*, in responding to Nietzsche, were mindful of the precarious nature of their own existence. Unlike the "young Hebrews" in *fin-de-siècle* Europe, A. D. Gordon felt, for example, that existence could not be based solely on "smashing the old Man," because this was just a slogan and an escape from authenticity. Nietzsche would remain an important thinker for some Zionist socialists coping with the crisis of values in society, with the proper balance between individualism and collectivism within the kibbutz, and with the need for a theory of will. Nietzsche was studied intensively by members of the leftist movements *Ha-shomer Ha-tzair* and *Gedud Ha-avoda* (Labor Battalion). There was also a "Nietzsche Circle" that functioned within the literary societies of the kibbutzim even in the 1970s.[43]

Significant Nietzschean themes can equally be found in Revisionist Zionism, including in the writings of its leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky, the nationalist poet Uri Zvi Greenberg, and the right-wing ideologue Israel Eldad. Nietzsche's name crops up frequently in their discussions. In his autobiography, Jabotinsky noted the enormous influence exerted by European culture on himself and the "Hebrew Circle" in which he participated as a youth, and where "we used to debate Nietzsche and moral questions – not the future of Judaism."[44] In 1899, Jabotinsky confessed his admiration for Maxim Gorky – "an echo of Nietzsche's theory in Russian garb" – a theory that brought "glory to men of will and action and scorn for those enslaved by the sterile reflex which stunts any act of daring." Jabotinsky recounted how a group of friends, gathered at a summer resort, had to choose ten books to be saved from a fire. One of the group said: "I confess that among the ten books to be saved from the fire there must be one written by a harbinger of the strong personality.... Therefore we should prefer Gorky." The selection of the books served as the pretext for a discussion of forceful personalities. "We all indulge in dreams of a strong, dominant personality; we are all longing for its arrival on the stage of history ... so that each individual can, on the new soil, develop into a bold personality."[45] Needless to say, Nietzsche's name was raised in the debate and accompanied the discussion of the strong personality.

Extensive evidence can be found in Jabotinsky's writings of his deep affinity with Nietzsche's innovative philosophy. In his article "On America," he

[43] Eve Beirch, "Education as the Gay Science or the Influence of Nietzsche on 'Ha-Shomer Ha-Tza'ir's Education," *Iyunim Ba-Chinuch* 5, 2 (2003), pp. 5–16. [Hebrew].

[44] Ze'ev Jabotinsky, *Works*, I, *Autobiography*, Jerusalem 1947, p. 22. [Hebrew].

[45] Ibid, viii, p. 33.

poses the question: "Who in our youth was the teacher and prophet of all the troublemakers, who carries the blame (or the credit) for all the fires now burning down the fences of our world?" He immediately answers his own question. "His name was Nietzsche. He emerged from the narrow straits not in terms of conscience and experience, but in the domain of morality, duty, good and evil."[46] Elsewhere, Jabotinsky writes: "A long line of great thinkers and intellectuals paved the path away from the attitude that everything is 'alright' [Jabotinsky uses the English term] to the approach which now prevails, of wondering, experimenting, changing. This line includes such giants as Nietzsche, Ibsen and Bergson."[47] There are just a few of the instances where Jabotinsky's respect for Nietzsche is evident; the writings of the father of Revisionist Zionism include such obviously Nietzschean themes as the tension between power and morality, the centrality of ceremony and drama, the aesthetic experience of might, and the desire for a new man.

Another Nietzschean was Uri Zvi Greenberg, the great Hebrew poet, who immigrated to Palestine in 1924. Two years later, at the age of thirty, he published his book *Ha-gavrut Ha-olah* (The Rising Masculinity). In contrast to *Great Fear and Moon* and his early Yiddish poetry, in which he rejected his Judaism, *The Rising Masculinity* is a collection of existential poems praising Jewish values and symbols. "While there I turned my back on my earlocked Jewish brothers.... Here, from a distance, during the days of Hebrew purification on the land of this race and amidst the divinity of Jerusalem, here, by God, I shall not turn my back on my earlocked brothers." Uri Zvi Greenberg despised Christian Europe and hated the Latin script. "What if I saw Nietzsche's vision of the Superman in these letters?"[48] His poetry is saturated with the Nietzschean *Lebenphilosophie*, although unlike Berdichevsky and the "Young Hebrews," who sought to Europeanize Jewish culture, in the case of Greenberg the central thrust is directed *against* European culture. Elsewhere, in his poem "Shir Ha-Ugavar" (Song of the Organist") Greenberg's yearning rises above mountains and lights, seeking to turn in Nietzschean fashion the Jew into the most elevated of beings.

Nietzsche's name even became involved in the controversy that engulfed the Jewish community in Palestine following the murder of Lord Moyne, British minister of state in the Middle East, who was assassinated by *Lehi* activists on November 6, 1944. Five days later, at a meeting of the inner cabinet of the Zionist Executive, Eliyahu Golomb (1893–1945), chief Labor man and leader of the Jewish defense forces in Palestine, linked the assassination to the admiration felt by *Lehi* for the Nietzschean concept of the "Superman."[49] It will be noted that the Nazi Holocaust was at that time going on in all its horror. He

[46] Ibid, p. 189.
[47] Jabotinsky, "That Max Nordau", *Writings*, 17 (1947–1959), p. 232. [Hebrew].
[48] Uri Zvi Greenberg, *Ha-gavrut Ha-ola (The Rising Strengh)*, Tel Aviv 1926. [Hebrew].
[49] Eliyahu Golomb, Proceedings of the Restricted Zionist Executive, November 19, 1944, Central Zionist Archives, s25/1804. [Hebrew].

said, "Nazism and fascism – I still remember an article which appeared in praise of the Nazis saying that there was only one thing wrong with them, and that was that they were anti-Semites. In the journal *The Last Front* I saw something similar, not in connection with the Nazis but with a philosopher on whom the Nazis depend – the Stern group have become Nietzscheans.... They say, there is no such thing as the masses; the masses are a herd. There have to be 'supermen' who are able to impose their authority on this herd."

The fate of the Hebrew Nietzscheneans in Hebrew culture had some parallels to that of Nietzsche in European thought – both became a public myth in the collective memory. This makes it easier to understand how Nietzsche and the Hebrew Nietzscheneans could have been adopted by diverse ideological camps who sought to create the "Superman" or the "new Hebrew" in their own image. The efficacy of Nietzsche was due mainly to his style, his radicalism: That is probably the key to his enormous influence on Hebrew writers, thinkers, and artists. In this sense, Nietzsche was an inveterate modern, because modernism is "more a search for style than any particular style."[50] Most of the Hebrew Nietzscheneans eventually abandoned Nietzsche, just as one discards a ladder that is no longer needed. The literary critic, Fishel Lahover, relates that Berdichevsky was grateful to him for cleansing him of his "original sin with Nietzsche."

A chronological and thematic examination of the influence exerted by Nietzsche, one of the major philosophers of modern times, on the emergence of Zionism may hold important lessons for grasping the pattern of its ideological development. In the history of the reception of Nietzsche in modern Hebrew culture, one may concentrate on fundamental debates: tradition versus innovation, particularism versus universalism, individualism versus collectivism and the "new Hebrew" versus the Jew. Such tensions accompanied modern Jewish nationalism from the outset and fuelled the development of myths which were often refined in the crucible of Nietzschean categories.

I now focus on three case studies of Hebrew Nietzscheans who exemplified the fascination of the Nietzschean motif from the end of the nineteenth century to the end of the twentieth. We will find a historical and thematic line of thought that placed the realization of the "new Hebrew" in the Canaanite space.

BERDICHEVSKY: FROM THE LAST JEW TO THE FIRST HEBREW

Nietzsche's prominence as the philosopher of nihilism and of the Will to Power did not go unnoticed in the Hebrew cultural revival that was taking place in Europe at the turn of the century. This culture had evolved through the European form of Jewish national particularism. Like its European

[50] Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, eds., *Modernism 1890–1930*, Harmondsworth 1976, p. 26.

counterparts, Jewish national ideology drew on romantic tradition, attempting to restore the distant national past in order to legitimize a separate group identity. The emerging nationalism sought to justify itself through history. Ahad Ha-am was the most outstanding exponent of this historicist trend, which emphasized that past generations had served to pave the road toward national redemption and progress. Another dimension of western cultural influence on Ahad Ha-am's Zionist thought was the humanistic nationalism of the mid-nineteenth century, which endeavored to integrate a sense of national destiny with the longing for universality. This romantic vision of a national brotherhood, each with its own unique mission, was shared by the nationalists Giuseppe Mazzini and Adam Mickiewicz. To Mazzini's "Third Rome," with its Messianic echoes, and Mickiewicz's vision of Poland as "the Christ of Nations," Ahad Ha-am added a higher sense of ethics as the universal destiny of Jewish nationalism.

Ahad Ha-am believed there was a direct line that led from the sages of Yavneh, nearly two thousand years earlier, to the modern Judaic concept of Israel's role among the nations. In his article "Good Advice," he developed the concept of "Jewish Nietzscheanism," which, as Berdichevsky claims, was not revolutionary but rather another strata in Jewish evolution: "If, therefore, we agree that the purpose is the Superman, we must then also agree that an integral part of this purpose is the Supreme People: that there exists in the world one people that is enabled by spiritual characteristics to be more ethically developed than other peoples."[51] Ahad Ha-am sought to create a synthesis between the concept of the Superman and the moral singularity of the Jewish people, distinguishing between the "human" and the "Aryan" aspects of Nietzschean philosophy. The human aspect, which could be accepted, should call, as he put it, for "the ascendancy of a human type among the chosen of the species to be above the general level." The Aryan aspect, which he rejected, was the belief in physical might and beauty. Possibly Ahad Ha-am's Nietzschean language was used here as a polemic weapon. What is certain is that he did not share Nietzsche's radical individualism and that he was skeptical about the Zionist vision of a "new man." His approach was one in which individuals exist for the nation rather for themselves, something far removed from Nietzsche or the "new Hebrew Nietzscheans."

Berdichevsky, like some other intellectuals, artists, and critics at the turn of the century, represented another trend, closer to Nietzsche's existential philosophy. Berdichevsky had discovered Nietzsche for the first time during his studies in Berlin in 1893. In a letter to Shkapniuk written in the same year, Berdichevsky wrote: "This summer, I read much written by Friedrich Nietzsche, the man is creating such commotion throughout Europe. Perhaps you could obtain his book, *Beyond Good and Evil*, which has made a stronger impression on me than any other book I have read – He is now in a

[51] Ahad Ha-am, "Le-She'elat Ha-Yom," ("The Question of the Day"), *Ha-Shiloah*, vol. IV, p.101. [Hebrew].

lunatic asylum."[52] During the next two years, which he spent in Switzerland, Berdichevsky saw himself as a pure Nietzschean, defining this concept according to the criteria of power and individualism. In a letter to a friend, he wrote: "As I believe you are aware, I am a Nietzschean … and know only might, power, power!"[53] During the years 1897 to 1899, he began to change his priorities, placing a greater emphasis on the historical Jewish collectivity rather than on the individual who sanctifies his liberty. Berdichevsky did not, however, completely abandon his German master: Witness the fact that when, in 1897, he translated *Sefer Hahasidim*, he gave it the title *The Wanderer and His Shadow (Der Wanderer und sein Schatten*, 1880) – the very same title as the second part of Nietzsche's *Human, All Too Human*. Toward the end of his life, when he gathered together all his work, Berdichevsky was careful to remove the Nietzschean quotes and themes. In 1905 he wrote in his diary: "Nietzsche's theories were not the starting point of my ideas, except insofar as I distance myself from tradition and pointed out the damage which traditional morality causes a nation *per se*; it was as though, on the path to transvaluation, I met him along the way."[54]

Like many of his contemporaries, Berdichevsky was exposed to the late-nineteenth-century European intellectual revolution that sought to reveal and unravel the experiences of modern human consciousness. Gustave Le Bon's psychology of the masses, George Sorel's sociology of myth, Henri Bergson's philosophy of time, the rediscovery of Gambatista Vico's theory of *ricorso* (renewal), and renewed interest in Edward von Hartman's view of the unconscious were all part of this intellectual revolution. With its new sociological, psychological, and aesthetic concepts, this upheaval exercised an important influence on the emergence of radical national consciousness in the first decade of the twentieth century. Friedrich Nietzsche's antihistorical revolt stood in the vanguard of this revolution. Historicism, romanticism, and liberal ideas of progress had emphasized throughout the nineteenth century a view of man determined by historical development. Nietzsche sought to introduce an original anthropological approach according to which the new man as an expression of existential nihilism is the product of eternal recurrence.[55]

Ahad Ha-am and Berdichevsky represent two opposing traditions (Hegelian and Nietzschean) with respect to the concept of time in the historical culture of the nineteenth century. Ahad Ha-am followed Hegel in arguing that if time is infinitely open, then perpetual improvement is a viable concept; thus, the idea of progress is based on the assumption of improvement from the lowest point toward the highest. Berdichevsky, like Nietzsche, negated this value-based imposition on history, which he saw as being beyond good and evil. In

[52] Berdichevsky, Letter to Y. Shkapaniuk, 1893, *Nechzarim*, A/24. [Hebrew].

[53] Avner Holtzman, *Towards the Tear in Heart: Micha Josef Berdyczewsky – The Formative Years (1886–1902)*, Jerusalem 1995, p. 58. [Hebrew].

[54] Berdichevsky, *Diary's Chapters*, trans. Rachel Ben-Gurion, Tel Aviv 1975. [Hebrew].

[55] David Ohana, *The Dawn of Political Nihilism*, vol. 1 of *The Nihilist Order*, Brighton 2009, pp. 13–53.

his view, the idea of progress was a variation of the attempt to imbue a process with inner meaning; if the main point about the Will to Power is to overcome and to intensify, then the important thing is not completing the historical process, but engaging in it. Life understood as the Will to Power is the real and central need, or as Berdichevsky puts it, "a powerful life, a courageous life."[56] Enlightenment and education are not goals in their own right, but subject to the authority of life itself.

The new Hebrew, following the European new man, offers an unmediated view of the modern world as an *aesthetic* experience that should be affirmed. Because reality is dynamic, the human being must not rest on his laurels. He must identify with the rhythm of the world, which is the Will to Power, with himself as subject. This radical existentialism adopted by Berdichevsky, in the footsteps of Nietzsche, contained a new form of individualist ethics that emphasized the relation of man to himself rather than to his fellow man.[57]

Berdichevsky's voluntarist, revolutionary conception of the past was critical of the approach taken by the "science of Judaism" as represented by the German Jewish historians Leopold Zunz and Zachariah Frankel. He respected, however, Abraham Geiger, "who with all his great and tempestuous spirit would have desired to renew Israel in the present, rather than making do with its life in the past as did Zunz and his faction." Within his dynamic conception of the present, Berdichevsky, following Nietzsche, abandoned the guiding hand of historicism, romanticism, enlightenment, and progress. Instead, he preferred the dimension of the actual present, the existential experience as such, over historical understanding.

During his stay in Weimar, Berdichevsky visited Nietzsche's home several times. In this twilight period of the father of the Will to Power, Nietzsche's sister forbade visitors to come to their home. In a letter from 1898 to Yosef Melnik, Berdichevsky writes, "There, at the periphery, live Nietzsche and his sister. The guilt of this great man will always be with me." His son, Emanuel Ben-Gurion, writes in his memoirs, *Reshut Ha-yahid* (The Private Domain):

> During the years when he was writing the novel, Micha Yosef Berdichevsky spent several months in Weimar (the autumn and winter of 1898), where he visited, among other places, the Nietzsche archives which were being established by the philosopher's sister, Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche. (Nietzsche, who had been insane for eight years, was still alive, and visitors to the house where his possessions were displayed on the first floor could hear the sick man pacing restlessly in his room on the floor above.) The year after Berdichevsky's death, my mother and I visited Weimar and viewed the archives. The old woman remembered her meeting with Berdichevsky twenty-five years earlier and recalled a particular scene from a novel, *The Leave Taker*, which he had told her about. The hero of the novel, or his friend, negates the Torah scroll, which he sees as the curse of his people, and stabs it with a knife, and blood

[56] Berdichevsky, "Changes," *Arachin (Values)*, Warsaw 1900, p.59. [Hebrew].
[57] Berdichevsky, "For Others," *Ba-derech (On the Way)*, I, 1922, p.25. [Hebrew].

> spurts from the parchment. I cannot cast any light on this – the manuscript has disappeared, or perhaps been destroyed.[58]

Out of this kind of existential experience, the new man emerged: He is *not* motivated by rational assumptions and abandons accepted ethical distinctions of good and evil. The rebel against history identifies with a world that is the fruit of his own labor, and he thereby becomes authentic rather than decadent. Indeed, one of the main characteristics of the new man is the quest for *authenticity* – a search that was common to philosophers at the turn of the century. Authenticity was a response to the alienation that existed between the individual and his world. Berdichevsky bemoans the fact that "there is nothing that unites us in all the corners of our souls, in our characteristics. There is no total or perfect unity."[59] Turn-of-the-century modernism cultivated the personal style of the new man, basing itself on the Nietzschean theory of perspectivism, which argued that there are no facts, only interpretations.

Berdichevsky continued in the steps of Nietzsche when he wrote "There is no single currency, no single class and no single horizon. We do not face two paths, but hundreds of paths; not one way of living, but hundreds of ways."[60] Berdichevsky, however, also misunderstood Nietzsche when he wrote in a naturalistic language, "Return to Nature, return to your Mother, to all that is alive and note that precisely as you drew nearest to Nature, to the sanctuary, you are as tall and broad as they are."[61] Nietzsche did not in fact advocate the destruction of culture and a return to a natural or primitive state. Rather he sought to eliminate the dichotomy between intellect and life. Intellect must become nature and nature must be shaped by the new man. Transvaluation is one of the merits of the new man. In 1882, Nietzsche wrote to Loui Andreas Salome: "First, man must liberate himself from chains and lastly he must also liberate himself from this liberation." Berdichevsky's "new Hebrew" is also marked by transvaluation and self-legislation: "A man gives himself commandments and treads his own path."[62]

In common with the Nietzschean critics of culture at the turn of the century, who sought to transform Zarathustra into a political militant, Berdichevsky faced the problem of translating an esoteric philosophy into sociological language. How could a link be forged between the individual and a revolutionary movement? This is the classic problem of intellectuals who wished to shape a new man – in the final analysis, they coalesced with militant avant-garde groups and with elite movements that remained aloof from the masses. Berdichevsky's "new Hebrew" eventually joined those who, like him, fomented revolution. "Days of change are coming for the nation and the

[58] Emmanuel Ben-Gurion, *Reshut Ha-yahid (Private Sphere)*, Tel Aviv 1980, p.197. [Hebrew].
[59] Berdichevsky, "Al Ha-achdut" ("On Unity"), *Al Em Ha-derech (In the Middle of the Road)*, Warsaw 1902, p. 67. [Hebrew].
[60] Berdichevsky, *On the Way*, I, p. 64. [Hebrew].
[61] Berdichevsky, "Al Ha-teva" ("On Nature"), *In the Middle of the Road*, p. 14 [Hebrew].
[62] Berdichevsky, *On the Way*, I., p. 69. [Hebrew].

individual when they shall weary from carrying their arid burden and gather strength with which to shake the foundations of their heritage and create new values, according to which a man shall feel himself to be a new creation with a new soul; man must wake from his slumber and abrogate those things which he was hitherto careful to maintain."[63]

The tradition of heroism in nineteenth-century European culture, celebrated by Thomas Carlyle, prepared the hero to represent a new type of human nurtured by national movements at the beginning of the twentieth century.[64] Berdichevsky saw the individual as a partner in this movement for renewal, realizing the fundamental principle of nationalism and symbolizing the new society to be established on the ruins of the old. At the turn of the century, many intellectuals and artists had already turned their backs on conservative nationalism, which relied on the tradition of generations, privilege, and rank. They constructed instead a *revolutionary* nationalism based on the present, on action, and on the primacy of the individual. Similarly, Berdichevsky developed a secular existentialism that entailed a new perception of nationalism, emphasizing the individual rather than the community, the present rather than the past, and aesthetics rather than ethics.

In his dissertation, "On the Relationship between Ethics and Aesthetics," written when he was thirty, Berdichevsky notes: "We have become accustomed to thinking of action in the context of ethics, whereas in the context of aesthetics we think only in terms of observation or passive action."[65] The old ethical norm of "substance" and "content" makes way for a new aesthetic principle of "manner" and "form." In this sense, Berdichevsky adapted the Nietzschean existentialist concept of the Will to Power for his own purposes. *Macht* (power) became *Kraft* (force). Thus Berdichevsky joined a long line of culture critics who, at the turn of the century, used Nietzsche freely, drawing on him for their own nationalist purposes. Berdichevsky writes, "There comes a time for an individual and for a people, to live by the sword, by power and by the fist, by the vitality of being. This is the time of existence, of life – life itself. The sword is not a concept divorced from life or separate from it; it is the incarnation of life in its vitality and essence."[66]

The new man is alienated from historical culture and does not see himself as part of it. In Berdichevsky's words: "The living man takes precedence over the heritage of his forefathers."[67] If progress that is the outcome of the rationalist ideals falls, then myth rises. Myth, the fruit of existentialist perception, regulates the correct relationship between man and his world, between ethics

[63] Ibid., p. 25. [Hebrew].
[64] George Mosse, "Fascism and the Intellectuals," *Germans and Jews*, London 1971, pp. 114–170.
[65] Berdichevsky, *On the Connection Between Ethics and Aesthetics*, Tel Aviv 1986, p.78. [Hebrew].
[66] Berdichevsky, "Janus Face," *On the Way*, II, p.55. [Hebrew].
[67] Berdichevsky, *On the Way*, II, p.196. [Hebrew].

and aesthetics, between the transient and the eternal. The new discourse has moved from the intellectual and historicist dimensions to that of the mythical and the aesthetic. Myth is preferred to paralyzing history, because it encapsulates the unity of modern man and his world in an aesthetic and existential experience. This modernism was the result of early-twentieth-century thought that made a revolutionary use of myth.[68] The "new Hebrew" builds his modern world not through belief in progress (a kind of Jewish "evolutionism"), but rather through a new myth. Berdichevsky sought to renew myth, to revolt against Ahad Ha-am's historicism, in order to achieve a revitalization of Jewish history. This explains why Berdichevsky devotes so much space in his work to Jewish mysticism – the *Kabbala* and *Hasidism* – as original syntheses of myth and Judaism. Ahad Ha-am, by contrast, represented the traditional conception defined by Gershom Scholem as "the general trend of classic Jewish tradition: the trend towards the destruction of the myth as the central spiritual force."[69]

As the anthropologist Yonina Talmon pointed out, mythical time is essentially different from historical time.[70] Shmuel Verses demonstrated this very well when he distinguished between psychological and chronological time in Berdichevsky's writings. To these distinctions, I would add that there is a dialectical connection between mythic time and historic time, and that each "time" designs the other in its own image. Time in myth tends to legitimize and preserve, whereas historical time tends to innovate in keeping with current changes, although, in order to do so, it necessitates the rewriting of time mythically. In many cultures, whether they include historiography or not, one may discern the events of the past, whether these are relevant to the present or not. As far as the living are concerned, there is no value in preserving tales of events that have no significance for the present in the collective consciousness. It is the myths that are important, not history. To quote Nietzsche: "Without myths, history loses its natural and healthy creative force. Only when the cultural horizon is comprised of myths does the process of cultural creation reach internal consolidation."[71]

In the case of Berdichevsky, the mythological-synchronic past and the historical-diachronic past merge dialectically. The mythological past that Berdichevsky reveals, as a critic of culture, is intended to empower modern history – the period of the Hebrew renaissance – through the heroic myths of the past: "The people's heroes from past ages and their deeds, will serve as a symbol and a source of power for the generation to come, wherever they go and whatever they may have to overcome. The main thing is not

[68] Ohana, "Georges Sorel and the Rise of the Political Myth," *History of European Ideas*, XIII, 4 (1991), pp. 733–746.

[69] Gershom Scholem, "Kabbalah and Myth," in *Elements of the Kabbalah and its Symbolism*, Jerusalem 1980, pp.86–87. [Hebrew].

[70] Yonina Garber-Talmon, "The Concept of Time in Primitive Myths," *Iyyun* II, 4 (1951), pp. 201–214. [Hebrew].

[71] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, section 23.

simply to know one's origin, but to use this origin as the driving force in social and national life."[72] This is not the unity of continuity, but rather the unity of rebellion.

Berdichevsky not only turned to the world of folk tales, of *Hasidism* and the *Kabbala*, but he was also attracted to the ancient Hebrews. In view of his secularism, his rebellion against Jewish history, and his yearning for ancient myths, Berdichevsky could be seen as the father of the Canaanite movement ("Young Hebrews"). Indeed, as the Hebrew literary critic Baruch Kurzweil pointed out, the Canaanite movement was nothing more than the logical and consistent conclusion of spiritual and aesthetic yearnings that have been present in Hebrew literature for one hundred years. Kurzweil, however, scorned the paradoxical attempt to blend modernity and myth, writing of the Canaanites: "Those who fight a bitter war against Judaism, in its entirety, in the name of modern progressive thought place themselves in a strange situation when they attempt to prove their realistic and practical sensibilities by mythological argumentation."[73]

Berdichevsky and the Young Hebrews were the targets of attack long before Kurzweil appeared on the scene. One of the main protagonists was the critic Michael Rabinovitz, who published an article entitled "Judaism and the Superman" in Ahad Ha-am's journal, *Ha-shiloah*, in 1912. Rabinovitz wrote: "Nietzsche's theory, which captivates many hearts with its innovation, has reached our circles in recent years through our young writers who make frequent and impassioned use of Nietzsche's questionable innovations in order to make a new voice heard within the Jewish people. In so doing, they adopt a 'total transvaluation' in our historical life."[74]

The Hebrew Nietzschean, threatening a total transvaluation to the point of the nihilization of Jewish themes, was the target of many counterattacks. The waves of controversy did not abate, and the attacks were soon taken up by writers and public figures as well as cultural critics.[75] On the other hand, there were also critics who did not regard Berdichevsky as the Hebrew Nietzsche. Brenner refused to see him as "Nietzsche's student" merely because he used the term "transvaluation" – "a comparison which is like a broken vessel."[76] Similarly, Ya'akov Rabinowitz wondered: "Was he really a disciple of Nietzsche? What does this tent-dweller have to do with the 'blond beast'? He learned from Nietzsche to negate, but he did not accept Nietzsche's positive views." Rabinovitz clarified in his essay "Wellhausen's Theory" the affinity between the Wellhausenian thesis and the Hebrew national revival,

[72] Berdichevsky, "Consequence," *On the Way*, III, p. 20. [Hebrew].

[73] Baruch Kurzweil, "The Nature and Origins of the 'Young Hebrews' (Canaanites)," *Our New Literature – Continuity or Revolution?* Tel Aviv 1971, p. 287. [Hebrew].

[74] Michael Rabinovitz, "Judaism and the Superman," *Ha-Shiloah*, IX, 1912. [Hebrew].

[75] For example: A. D. Gordon, Arieh Samiatizky, Moshe Glickson, Yechiel Halperin, and critics like Baruch Kurzweil, Abraham Sha'anan, Moshe Giora, and Aliza Klausner-Eshkol.

[76] Yosef Chaim Brenner, "Berdichevsky: A Few Words on His Literary Personality," *Ha-po'el Ha-tza'ir*, vol. IV (1913), pp. 1–9.

which connects "between the new Hebrew and his ancient epoch."[77] Many literary critics rejected the comparison between Berdichevsky and Nietzsche, but it is difficult to deny that Berdichevsky's double-edged message of anti-historical radicalism and the new Hebrew were the main axis of the Young Hebrew's revolt.

NATIONAL EXISTENTIALISM

The Nietzschean Canaanism of Israel Eldad was expressed in the following insight concerning the future: "There is a certain wisdom to the idea of distinguishing between 'Hebrews' and 'Jews,' and the time will undoubtedly come at last when it will be interpreted correctly."[78] The radical existentialism of Berdichevsky, echoing that of Nietzsche, had an effect on the Hebrew existentialism of nationalist circles in the culture of the Jewish revival in Eastern Europe, and on the political culture of Eretz Israel and the state of Israel. A fascinating example for this national existentialism is the radical intellectual, Israel (Scheib) Eldad (1910–1996). As Eldad's proposal to write his dissertation on Nietzsche was not accepted, he completed his doctorate on "The Voluntarism of Eduard von Hartmann, based on Schopenhauer" at the University of Vienna.[79] When World War II broke out, Scheib escaped from Warsaw together with Menachem Begin, who became Israel's prime minister in 1977.[80] After *Lehi* (the Hebrew underground against the British before the founding of the state of Israel) founder Avraham Stern was killed by the British, Eldad became one of a triumvirate of *Lehi* commanders. When the war of 1948 ended, Eldad began to publish a revolutionary journal, *Sulam* (Ladder), and was known as the doyen of Israeli nationalists. Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, who was afraid Eldad would imbue the students with his *Lehi* ideology, intervened and had him dismissed. Eldad turned to literary work, and in 1988, he was awarded Israel's Bialik Prize for his contributions to Israeli thought and especially for his translation of the works of Nietzsche.

The seven volumes translated to Hebrew in the 1960s and 1970s established Eldad as a major Israeli scholar of Nietzsche. Not only was Eldad a brilliant translator, he was also an innovative commentator.[81] His instructive reading of Nietzsche made a decisive contribution to the propagation of Nietzschean discourse in Israel. Eldad was considered a radical intellectual of the Israeli right and had a Messianic vision of the future of Israel. His outlook was influenced deeply by the Nietzschean *Lebensphilosophie*.

[77] Yaakov Rabinovitz, "Wellhausen's theory," *Hedim*, 6,2 (1928).

[78] Israel Eldad, "The Diligent," *Maaser Rishon*, Tel Aviv 1949, p. 147. [Hebrew].

[79] Israel Scheib, "Der Voluntarismus Eduard von Hartmanns in der Abhängigkeit von Schopenhauer," Dissertation submitted to Universität Wien 1933.

[80] Ada Amichal Yevin, *Sambatyon: Biography of Dr. Israel Eldad*, Beit El 1994, p. 82 [Hebrew].

[81] David Ohana, "From Right to Left: Israel Eldad and Nietzsche's Reception in Israel," *Nietzsche-Studien*, 38 (2009), pp. 363–388.

In the article "Schopenhauer and Judaism" (1937), one may see the first expressions of Eldad's Nietzschean outlook: "Nietzsche … is full of praise for Judaism because of the strong sense of life that is in it; … Nietzsche affirms life despite its purposelessness and suffering."[82] In the same year, Eldad's article "Berdichevsky the Rebel" exposed the Hebrew-Nietzschean principles that reached their full development in the idea of national existentialism: "Berdichevsky took his manifesto for the revolt of the Hebrew people from the school of the German scholar, Nietzsche."[83] Two thousand years of exile upset the balance between will and reason in the Jewish people and emasculated Hebrew vitality. "We must shake off the burden of the past, of exile, of sadness. Burn the rotten old before the entry of the new." Some thirty years later, Eldad dealt with the "Hebrew revolt" once again. In linking Nietzsche and Berdichevsky, Eldad wished in his article "Micah Joseph Berdichevsky, Between Egypt and Canaan" (1971) to show how harmful Ahad Ha-am's historiosophy had been to Jewish life and how beneficial Berdichevsky's historiosophy was to Hebrew life. Berdichevsky, according to Eldad, put the Jews before Judaism, the concrete before the abstract, existence before essence. Eldad sided with the national existentialism of the Berdichevsky school of thought: "Not universality … but the idea of the specific, belief in [God's] national character, in the rebuilding of the city of His majesty, Jerusalem."[84] Eldad adopted Nietzschean motifs from Berdichevsky to support his national-existential outlook, and like him pointed to the currents of opposition that always existed next to mainstream Judaism: Opposite the "true" prophets, one had the "false prophets"; opposite the Pharisees one had the Sadducees; and there were the Kairites, the "false" Messiahs, and Spinoza. For Eldad, Berdichevsky symbolized this "opposing current" in Judaism. It was not only a matter of demonstrating the many-sidedness of Judaism, but also of supporting the rebellious and belligerent parties: "For, behold, war is the mother of all that lives, as we learn from Heraclitus … and life is war."[85] In Eldad's opinion, *Yavne* (which symbolizes the priority of spiritual Judaism over national considerations at the time of the revolt against Rome), was not representative of Judaism's Will to Power: The national morality was expressed in the fighting Jerusalem.

Eldads's Nietzschean starting point was a nationalism not derived from *ressentiment* (introverted and repressed sense of animosity) or from a consciousness of others, but was based on "the positive and very physical foundation of the national entity." Berdichevsky's revolutionary proposition was to turn the last Jews into the "first Hebrews." In Eldad's opinion, this phrase "became the progenitor of the new Hebrew ideology, or, to give it its more

[82] Eldad, "Schopenhauer and Judaism," *Metzuda*, 2, 3 (May 1937), p. 33 [Hebrew].
[83] Eldad, "Berdichevsky the Rebel," Ibid., 31. [Hebrew].
[84] Eldad, "Micha Yoseph Berdichevsky, Between Egypt and Canaan," *Kivunim*, 9 (1980), p. 40. [Hebrew].
[85] Ibid, p. 42.

extreme title, the 'Canaanite ideology' in Israel." The origins of the anti-Zionist Hebrew "Canaanism" of the Canaanite poet Yonatan Ratosh and of the Jewish-Hebrew Messianic nationalism of *Lehi* were the same, but their ramifications were different. The Hebrew ideology of Avraham Stern (1907–1942), the leader of *Lehi*, was Zionist-Messianic, not Canaanite.[86] In 1941, relations between Ratosh and Stern were broken off, but after Stern's murder by the British during the period of the British mandate in Palestine, Ratosh saw him as a tragic hero sacrificed for the revival of the Hebrew kingdom. *Lehi* used the Hebrew discourse a great deal and spoke of "Hebrew lordship," "the Hebrew people," and the "Hebrew freedom movement."

Baruch Kurzweil saw how Nietzsche's influence infused these "Hebrew" tendencies. It represented an attempt to revive a "Hebrew Hellenism." The original Hebrews were seen as "the generation which conquered Canaan in a whirlwind," in the words of the Hebrew poet Saul Tchernikovsky. Julius Wellhausen, as I mentioned earlier, had a direct influence on Nietzsche's thinking and admired the ancient biblical Judaism for its natural, spontaneous, belligerent, and "barbaric" character; he considered the growing dominance of the priesthood a sign of degeneration.[87] Romantic primitivism, which rejected abstract Judaism and admired the ancient Israelites (distinguishing between Jews and Hebrews), attracted many: It began with Tchernikovsky, included the scholar of the ancient Orient Adolph Gourevitch Horon (1907–1972) – who decisively influenced Ratosh's Canaanite ideology – and ended with Eldad and a wide circle of *Lehi*. Berdichevsky, who called for a transformation "from abstract Jews to Hebrew Jews," wrote in response to the Jewish thinkers Moritz Lazarus and David Neumark (his fellow student in Berlin): "They have both forgotten that the early Hebrews preceded the advent of Judaism and had a different path from that of Judaism."[88] The romantic-primitive dichotomy between nature and civilization was adopted by Eldad and was common to all the Hebrew Nietzscheans, and first of all to the Canaanites.

Eldad took a further step toward Berdichevsky's Canaanite interpretation, seeing it as having a religious basis. The Nietzschean *amor fati*, which hints at the "existential formula" as Eldad described it, throws light on certain passages in a diary written by Berdichevsky: "Judaism is my fate which I carry with me, but despite this I am free to act." This is where the paths of the "Hebraism" of Eldad and Ratosh separate. Unlike Ratosh, who called for a Hebrew revolution that would sever the umbilical connection between Judaism and Hebraism, Eldad respected the Jewish religion, which had preserved the Jewish culture, and he therefore called on everyone in Israel to honor the Jewish religion even if they were not observant.

Eldad's new Hebrew sought to achieve a seemingly impossible fusion between Nietzscheanism and Hebrew nationalism. In the days of the *Lehi*

[86] Yaacov Shavit, *The New Hebrew Nation*, pp. 23, 31–32, 53–57.
[87] Friedemann Philipp Boschwitz, *Julius Wellhausen*, Jerusalem 1982. [Hebrew].
[88] Berdichevsky, "Zionists", in: *Essays*, Tel Aviv 1960, p. 51. [Hebrew].

underground, Eldad called on Hebrew youth to rise "to the heights of Zarathustra, that clear and bracing air – not only for aesthetic enjoyment but in order to learn – the concept of the free man."[89] In his opinion, the Hebrew exemplar of Nietzschean individualism was Berdichevsky, "in whose heart the motive-forces of Judaism ran deep. This Nietzschean was both very old and very new, very late and very early." The original ideology of *Lehi* was crystallized by Avraham (Ya'ir) Stern in the manifesto of the Jewish renaissance, *Principles of Rebirth*, but Eldad took it upon himself to give them a broad interpretation. Despite the difficult atmosphere, with the closing of the gates of Palestine to Jewish immigrants and the victories of Rommel, Stern sought to impart an optimistic tone to the *Lehi* manifesto, which had eighteen points and aimed, in his words, "at rearing a generation of fighters who would be true to the idea of the revival of the kingdom of Israel."[90]

Eldad and the national radicals intended the *Principles of Rebirth* – steeped in Nietzschean concepts as well as those of Berdichevsky and the ultranationalist poet Uri Zvi Greenberg – to be a turning point in the history of the Hebrew people, who had been corrupted by the influence of the *Haskalah* (the Jewish Enlightenment), cosmopolitanism, liberalism, and socialism. Eldad sought to transpose Berdichevsky's revolt from the literature of rebirth at the turn of the century to the Hebrew national struggle in the mid-twentieth century. Eldad wished to revive the image of the ancient Hebrew. The will to existence is the motivation behind the right to the Land of Israel. From the war against the British conquerors of Palestine there would arise a new and strengthened Hebrew race whose aim would be the revival of the kingdom. It is the organized will of the return to Zion that underlies the conquest of the homeland.

There was a Nietzschean ring to Eldad's words "The idea of the lordship of man-the-creator is a Hebraic idea."[91] A year later, in his article "The Nietzsche Polemic: Between Degeneracy and Madness" (1950), Eldad wrote that what attracted the Hebrew youth to Nietzsche was not his positive attitude to the life-affirming spirit of Israel or his aesthetics beyond good and evil. Rather, "The secret of this attachment to Nietzsche lies in the enormous fascination of innumerable Jewish youths with life, with manifestations of power. These latent forces were aroused in contact with the sun-rays of Zarathustra."[92]

Both Nietzsche's translators – Eldad in Hebrew and Walter Kaufmann in English – found in him an admiration for the Will to Power of historical Judaism, both biblical and exilic. But Eldad also made the original and surprising claim that Nietzsche's admiration for the Old Testament was a product

[89] Eldad, "Content and Envelope in Nietzsche's Teaching," *Lochamei Herut Israel – Ktavim*, 1, Tel Aviv 1959, pp. 785–8. [Hebrew].
[90] Yevin, *Sambatyon*, p. 82.
[91] Eldad, "Jacob's Ladder," *Sulam*, 1 (1949), pp. 4–5. [Hebrew].
[92] Eldad, "The Nietzsche Polemic: Between Degeneracy and Madness," on the fiftieth anniversary of his death, *Sulam*, 2 (1950), p. 7. [Hebrew].

of this classical philologist's admiration for the culture of ancient Greece.[93] He quoted section 72 of *Daybreak*, where Nietzsche wrote, "The Jews, a people which clung to life … like the Greeks and even more than the Greeks."[94] Even the Greeks could learn from the heroic image of the Hebrew patriarchs.

THE ISRAELI PEOPLE

On Zayith, an inhabitant of the settlement Maaleh Edomim in the occupied territories, who comes from a religious background and who is on the staff of *Nekuda*, the organ of the settlers in Judea and Samaria, concocted a Nietzschean-Canaanite confection in his book *The Israelite People – The Lost Culture* (1991).[95] In the book there were both elements of the political theology of the Greater Land of Israel and of neo-Canaanite elements envisaging a "state of all its citizens." Zayith's mythical historiography advanced the cause of the nation of the ancient Israelites that was obliterated by the Jewish civilization. He argued that the reconstruction of the image of the heroic past of the ancient Israelites was necessary to national renewal at the present day: "[R]enew our days as of old," as it were. A rebirth of the present Israeli people could not take place among a normal people on a normal plot of land. A precondition for it taking place would be the revitalization of the nation through the creation of a new Hebrew people in the large area that opened up after 1967. The renewal of the Hebrew nation would come about with the annexation of the sociological groups outside the Jewish community who are now in the territory of the Greater Land of Israel. Zayith's demand for the "Hebraization" of the Arab inhabitants and the annexation of Judea and Samaria is not based on economic or demographic considerations. In his schemes, the neo-Canaanite approach to the nation that derived from the Nietzschean Hebrew radicalism of more than a century ago reaches its climax: Zayith merely gives it a right-wing political coloring. According to him, the Hebrew Prometheanism will be re-created if geography and mythology derive their inspiration from the magnificent past of the Israelite nation.

Benny Zayith was born in Jerusalem in 1959 and grew up in a national-religious framework: He attended a religious high school, and then, after his military service, he became a member of the religious *moshav* (cooperative settlement) Ramat Magshimim in the Golan Heights, which were conquered by Israel in 1967. As an autodidact, he developed doubts about his identity when engaging in biblical research, "and this," he said, "destroyed my faith in the reliability of the Bible."[96] When he studied mathematics and computer

[93] Eldad, "Nietzsche and the Old Testament," in James C. O'Flaherty, Timothy. F. Sellner, and Robert M. Helm, eds., *Studies in Nietzsche and the Judeo-Christian Tradition*, Chapel Hill 1985, pp. 47–48.

[94] Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, trans. Reginald J. Hollingdale, Cambridge 1997, section 72.

[95] On Zayith, *The Israeli People: The Lost Culture*, Maale Edomim 1991. [Hebrew].

[96] Yair Sheleg, "Zayith's Interpretation," *Kol Ha'ir*, 18.10.1991. [Hebrew].

science at university, he removed his skullcap and chose the pen name "On," which symbolized Nietzschean power.

In his biblical researches, which he conducted for seven years, he arrived at a typology that distinguished between an "Israelite" culture that existed up to the destruction of the First Temple and a "Jewish" culture beginning with the period of the exile. This cultural dichotomy corresponded to two different types of men: the "Israelites," who were "living and highly active people, building and destroying, fighting and loving, creating great movements and events," and the "Jews," identified with the rabbinic period, and who represented a "pale world, a miserable world of little men … as if man were a *golem* (robot) devoid of any spirit of life."[97] The first group embodied vitalistic Nietzschean qualities such as a Will to Power, an aspiration to life, inherent freedom, and self-construction, whereas the second group expressed a will to decadence, an acceptance of subjection, and a resignation to death. He later learned that the distinction he made between the Israelites and the Jews was shared by Nietzsche and Wellhausen. Nietzsche's inspiration was evident in every page of the book.

The Nietzschean concepts of "ancient beginnings," "new peoples," and an "earthquake" were in keeping with Zayith's search for a new national myth, and, as is usual with mythical thought, he re-created the past in order to form the present – he sought his foundations in the distant past and drew his inspiration from the starting point. Zayith's selective biblical researches were not so much a scientific investigation of the history of the Jewish people as a subversive attempt to gain an understanding of the present identity crisis of Israelism by seeking a suitable model in the ancient Israelites. "The reconstruction of the historical truth is a matter of immediate practical interest," wrote the sociologist of myth Georges Sorel, who himself was a creator of twentieth-century political mythology.[98] Zayith turned to the past to find answers to the questions that preoccupied him in his own time. How can one renew the vitality and force of the Israeli nation? Where can one find a theoretical and historical justification for the possession of the entire Land of Israel by the people of Israel, apart from the usual arguments of the religious right? In other words, Zayith proposed a historiographical narrative that combined neo-Canaanite religious and national elements with neo-Canaanite secular and civil elements.

Until then, the starting point of the Canaanite position had been completely secular. With Zayith, whose background was religious and whose chief occupation had been practical settlement, the Canaanite option provided a scheme of action for settlers that combined religious faith with a right-wing outlook. Zayith is an additional, special link in the chain of the mythical historiography of the secular intellectual current influenced by nineteenth-century Bible criticism, and which disapproved of the replacement of the ancient Israelites

[97] Zayith, *The Israeli People*, p. 27.
[98] Ohana, *Homo Mythicus*, p. 3–94.

by rabbinic Judaism. In the 1930s this radical criticism was taken up by the political right and was seized on by Revisionist Zionism, which stressed the secular, heroic, and aesthetic aspects of the Hebrew revival movement and consequently painted a mytho-historical picture of the past. Zionism based itself on the affinity between the history of the Jewish people and the geography of the Land of Israel, and Canaanism wanted to obliterate this affinity between history and geography and to ignore the exilic period; it saw itself as a purely territorial nationalism. The Canaanites even demanded the imposition of Hebrew nationhood on all the peoples of the region, the "subjugation" of the Muslim space in the whole Fertile Crescent. Zayith, however, was content with the "Hebraisation" of the Land of Israel alone, which meant the absorption of alien ethnic elements into the Israeli nation.

Zayith's thinking was influenced by an early work of Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872). Nietzsche preferred Greek mythology to classical philosophy and wished to find in it inspiration for his own time. It was not a longing for ancient Greece or a search for scientific truth that inspired his historico-mythical essay: Nietzsche wanted to understand his decadent period by seeking evidence in Greece that would serve as a foundation for a cultural myth as a solution for his age.[99] Inspired by the German philosopher, his young Israeli disciple likewise did not carry out a biblical investigation in accordance with scientific criteria, but mobilized the biblical narrative for the purpose of creating a political myth for our time.

Nietzsche's historiographical-mythical ideal was a "depiction that was an artistic truth, not a historical truth."[100] A reconstruction of the historical past, according to him, requires "great artistic skill, an overview of the facts." In similar words, Zayith described the mythical picture he painted of the past: "Every living description uses the 'facts' as raw material … the picture painted in our minds is not a picture of the reality as it is but a rough interpretation by our minds of signs they receive from the outside."[101] In this respect, *The Israelite People – The Lost Culture* adopts the Nietzschean model as Wellhausen interpreted it: a kind of idealization and romanticization of the ancient Israelite people. From the time of Moses, who formed the character of the Israelites as an anarchistic society, a society without a government, without a transcendental God, and without a formal legal system, to the time of David, the Israelites, according to Zayith, created a utopia unequaled in the history of mankind.

Zayith's picture of the heroic and aesthetic past of the Israelites in the Bible was derived from the insights of Nietzsche, "the greatest of heretics," who based his thinking on the Dionysian forces he found in the ancient Greeks

[99] Ohana, "The Role of Myth in History: Nietzsche and Sorel," *Religion, Ideology and Nationalism in Europe and America*, Jerusalem 1986, pp. 119–140.

[100] Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," trans. R. J. Hollingdale, in *Untimely Meditations*, Cambridge 1983, section 6.

[101] Zayith, *The Israeli People*, p. 364.

and likewise in the ancient Israelites.[102] His attention was caught by a scene in *The Birth of Tragedy* that described the feelings of a servant of the Greek god Dionysus during a procession. The man who is freed from "deceptive" rationalism expresses himself in song and dance that circumvent reason, and thus he joins his liberated brethren. He is now a member of a privileged community, "and he feels himself to be a god.... The man is no longer an artist: he becomes a work of art."[103]

Devoid of metaphysical overtones, Zayith adopted and internalized Nietzsche's revolutionary concept, the Superman, who gave birth to himself in a creative act. This was the essence of the intellectual revolution that Nietzsche carried out in the second half of the nineteenth century in proclaiming the change from ethics to aesthetics in western philosophy. The crown of the Nietzschean revolution was the birth of a new man among the ashes of God. Like his spiritual progenitor, Zayith sought to create a new man, but this new Hebrew man, whose source was in ancient Israelite mythology, could only realize himself and find his modern sphere of activity with the establishment of the Israeli nation in the ancient Hebrew space.

In "the release of the Dionysian principle in man and his resuscitation," as Zayith expressed it, man, the creation of God, feels just like his maker.[104] Zayith thought that the Dionysian experience resembled the Jewish experience. Dionysius gave joy to the ancient Greeks and filled them with strength and the feeling that they had superior powers, that "they were able to rise to a divine level of creativity."[105] The believer loses his own being and in this way unites with the god. Zayith finds a parallel between the Dionysian rites and the Jewish faith. The bull, the symbol of Dionysius, also represents the Jewish people; the desire for a direct contact between man and Dionysius is the same as the Israelites' approach to Jehovah; their expressions in poetry, music, and wild dance are similar; the prophets of Dionysius are a copy of the prophetic bands in Israel; the Dionysian processions are parallel to the Jewish celebrants with their palm branches. The description in the Book of Samuel of the ascent of the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem in which "David danced with all his might before the Lord" is a biblical example of a similar ecstatic experience. These signs and indications show, according to Zayith, that Dionysius was the Greek version of the ancient Israelite God, and earlier writers, according to him, already believed in a common source for Jehovah and Dionysius, despite the differences between them. It is therefore not surprising that the translators of Nietzsche, Israel Eldad into Hebrew and Walter Kauffman into English, found in David's wild dance a confirmation of Nietzsche's insight concerning the "Greek" vitality of the ancient Hebrew people.[106]

[102] Ibid, p. 27

[103] Ibid, p. 367. Zayith quotes Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*, section 1.

[104] Ibid, p. 367.

[105] Ibid, p. 368. Zayith quotes Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*, Tel Aviv 1982 [Hebrew].

[106] Israel Eldad translated to Hebrew the book of Walter Kaufmannn, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*. In the preface Eldad wrote that when he asked Kaufmann how is it

Zayith saw Nietzsche as the main source of enlightenment for an understanding of the secret of the vitality of the Israelites. At the beginning of the first part of his book, he gave a quotation from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* concerning prevailing will.[107] Zayith directed his readers to a passage in *Beyond Good and Evil*, a hymn of praise to the elevated style of the people of the Bible: "In the Jewish 'Old Testament,' the book of divine justice, there are men, things and speeches of so grand a style that Greek and Indian literature have nothing to set beside it. One stands in reverence and trembling before these remnants of what man once was."[108] Like Israel Eldad before him, Zayith was enthusiastic about the fact that Nietzsche, in *The Genealogy of Morals*, found in the Bible special people that constituted a nation: "All honour to the Bible! I find in it great people, a landscape of heroism and something precious and very rare on earth.... I find a nation."[109] In a reference to *The Antichrist*, Zayith showed that Nietzsche revealed the decline in the history of Israel, for which the priests, "godless scoundrels," were responsible.[110]

Zayith's Nietzschean conclusion was that the study of history is a pragmatic means to an intensification of life. The study of history in a broad perspective shows that the historical greatness that once existed must surely be possible again. Next in importance to Nietzsche, in his opinion, was "the second witness, Julius Wellhausen, a German scholar, the greatest investigator of the history of Israel," who for better or worse had a profound influence on Bible scholarship for more than one hundred years. This is how Zayith wrote about Wellhausen, who made the distinction between the ancient Israelite ethos and its questionable Jewish successor: "Nothing is more noticeable in the history of the ancient Israelites than the extraordinary vigour of their instincts and productions. Those who act always act in accordance with the necessity of their nature, men of God no less than murderers and adulterers. Figures like this can only develop in a free atmosphere. Judaism, which developed the law of Moses, did not leave any field of activity to personality."[111]

Wellhausen, so highly regarded by Zayith, was criticized by him for not identifying the turning point in which Jewish civilization replaced the Israelite culture. The Spenglerian distinction between autonomous "culture" and alienated "civilization" lies at the heart of Zayith's analysis. Wellhausen's claim as interpreted by Zayith led him to the conclusion that the "Jewish stratum" of the Bible was created in a period after the First Temple. Zayith thought that

possible "Dionysus in Jerusalem"? ("Wie ist Dionysos in Jerushalaim möglich?"), the philosopher replied: "David dances in front of the ark of the covenant."

[107] Zayith, *The Israeli People*, p. 13.

[108] Ibid, p. 28. Zayith quotes Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. W. Kaufmann, New York 1966, section 52.

[109] Ibid, p. 28. Zayith quotes Nietzsche's *The Genealogy of Morals*, trans. W. Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, New York 1968, third essay, section 22.

[110] Ibid, p. 28. Zayith quotes Nietzsche's *Antichrist*, trans. W. Kaufmann in *The Portable Nietzsche*, New York 1954, section 26.

[111] Ibid, pp. 28–29. Zayith refers to Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*, p. 417.

Wellhausen postdated the end of the ancient Israeli culture by about 350 years, an error that led to a series of distortions in the reading of the Bible.

The time of the ancient Israelite people was described by Zayith as a noble era and as a period of continual growth. At first, as a band of wanderers, the people were weak and unable to conquer the land of Canaan, but after some 250 years the Israelite people became the greatest power in the Fertile Crescent. It was Moses who made the covenant between the tribes, created a new people with a culture of their own, coined the name "Israel," and reinvented the name of its God: Jehovah. In that society, there was a constant direct connection with its God, who was an immanent force for every individual. This supra-moral society had no need of an external authority, and its strength derived from an anarchistic harmony, self-awareness, and heroic ethos. And who was it that destroyed this culture? Whereas Nietzsche saw Socrates as the fomenter of the intellectual revolution that overthrew the heroic Homeric culture, Zayith saw Solomon, "the wisest of men," as the destroyer of the ancient Hebrew culture. The Jewish counterrevolution carried out by Solomon repressed the true philosophy of life; it distorted the concept of integration with the neighboring peoples; it upset the Dionysian-Apollonian equilibrium exemplified in David; it replaced a healthy, harmonious society with a system of laws, administration, and taxes; it set up the Temple in place of the tabernacle; and it created a small religious sect of submissive believers in place of the proud, free, and authentic Israelites.

Moses displayed a revolutionary capacity to create a people, a force that would conquer a large country, and gave the Hebrew tribes a new culture, at the heart of which was a type of man who was strong, healthy, and free. It was a culture without idols, without a monarchy, without temples, and without a priesthood – a degree of freedom unprecedented in human history. Zayith describes a religious utopia without laws and an authority that obeyed only Jehovah. The Israelite culture was a rebellion against Egyptian culture that was based on life after death. Moses' revolution was crystallized in a national entity, and like every cultural revolution it required a new codification. The name "Israel" appears to have been given by Moses; the bull was the symbol of the early Israelite people. The wild bull, the greatest creature in the Canaanite space, symbolized this people on whom no external rule could be imposed, that could not tolerate the yoke of authority, and that could not be domesticated or tamed. On the cover of *The Israelite People* appeared the letter aleph in its archaic form, "bull's horns" as Zayith called it, the yellow symbol of the "Canaanite group." He placed it on a red and blue background, the three colors of the movement representing Yonatan Ratosh's ideology. Like all proper revolutions, the Israelite revolution created its own calendar, containing only seven months.[112]

The invasion of Canaan was planned and executed as a national mission. Egypt was abandoned because it was considered unsuitable for the

[112] Ibid, pp. 117–123.

implementation of the Israelite vision. The Canaanite space, which includes modern Israel, Sinai, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon was chosen as the "land of heart's desire." After two and a half centuries of Egyptian rule that was now in process of disintegration, the Israelites came to the conclusion that they were no longer faced with a united force and that local elements would desert and join them. In fact, large groups – families, towns, and tribes – were integrated into the tribal organizations of the Israelite alliance, which was based on a national approach favorable to mixture and integration. The idea of exterminating the peoples of Canaan was abandoned and replaced by the idea of adapting the Canaanites to the Israelites. The concepts of adaptation and fusion helped Zayith to crystallize his Canaanite outlook, which distinguished between the Israelite nation and the Jewish people:

> With the "Jewish people" the religious factor is the supreme consideration, for the "Jewish people" is not a nation but a religious sect and community, ready to forfeit its existence on the sole condition that it does not abandon its religious observance. But the Israelite people was not a religious sect but a nation, and for a nation the religious consideration is secondary to the political consideration. For a nation, religion is a means and not an end.[113]

Zayith considered the ancient Israelite alliance, as the basis of a unified power, to be a national model for our own time. It constituted a demographic model for extending the nation of Israel to the large Canaanite space, because "a culture that wants to ensure its existence cannot depend on a segregated tribal unit. A living culture increases this existential openness by providing opportunities for foreign elements, and even formerly hostile elements, to join it and participate in building and being built in it."[114] Unlike the closed-up Jewish community that became desiccated, ancient Israelite culture was extraordinarily open, from Moses who married a Midianite to David, the great-grandson of Ruth the Moabite. An Israeli culture of this kind, if it existed, would be characterized by the Hebraization and absorption of foreigners from the whole of the Canaanite space.

The period of decadence of the Israelite people began with the kingdom of Solomon. Moses was a revolutionary who gave birth to the Israelite people, and Solomon was the father of the counterrevolution. "Moses and Solomon were two revolutionary personalities whose teachings succeeded in guiding a whole people into new revolutionary paths, two creators of new religions and new gods by whom religion was used as a means to social and national ends."[115] Yet a chasm lay between them and between the value systems they represented. Zayith described Solomon's motives in Nietzschean terms of *ressentiment*, bearing a grudge. Solomon, seeing that he could not equal the revolutionary achievements of Moses, which caused humanity to progress, or the military and political achievements of his father, David, decided to poison the Israelite

[113] Ibid, p. 222.
[114] Ibid, p. 223.
[115] Ibid, p. 361.

culture. He revolutionized the old Israelite ethos, which he replaced with foreign elements from the house of Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.

The Israelite culture until Solomon was set up as an ever-expanding alliance that attached local peoples to the Israelite tribes. From the time of Solomon onward, this culture was unable to absorb a foreign kingdom or tribe within the Israelite tribal system because an integral nationalism was beginning to emerge. The conditions of reception into the Israelite people, which was seen as being like the membership of a family, prevented elements not born within the national family from joining. Solomon's policy took the Israelite people backward. Zayith's conclusions, relevant both then and now, were as follows:

> When a society renounces the aim of expansion, when it no longer wishes to disseminate its culture, when it is content to protect what exists and considers it sufficient to preserve its cultural particularity, it initiates a process of retreat. Any people that directs and confines itself to defence alone condemns itself to extinction through extermination or assimilation.[116]

Solomon's counterrevolution necessitated a change of symbols. The Israelite tabernacle that embodied the immanent godhead in the heart of each Israelite was replaced by a Jewish temple that symbolized the transcendence of a distant God. Solomon's Temple expressed the Jewish-idolatrous anti-Israelite idea that one has to obey an external God outside man. Solomon wanted to take Jehovah out of the Israelites, to harm their autonomy, to convince them that they were a submissive community of slaves and not a free and independent people. He emphasized their sins in order to perpetuate a feeling of guilt and placed them under an absolute authority so that they would obey God's commands unquestioningly.[117]

The biblical literature connected with Solomon was rewritten in accordance with the dictates of the counterrevolution. The psalms expressed a sense of the wretchedness of man and his spiritual abasement in the face of the new transcendental power. The moral preaching and demand for obedience to the precepts of morality were intended to produce an obedient type subservient to Solomon's moral laws. Wisdom was represented as the opposite of heroism and as a replacement for it. Ecclesiastes, the most anti-Nietzschean book in the Bible, was a manifesto of despair that denied any taste to human life: It was nihilism devoid of any Will to Power: "I hated life.... I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun." Ecclesiastes lost his vitality and spontaneity despite his wisdom and because of it. He so much envied the vital Israelite type and so much wanted to make his readers hate life that he tried to convince them that life was tasteless, and it was better not to be born. The Jewish "sages," who hated life, brought this nihilistic spirit into the scriptures. Israelite society, which absorbed the Jewish morality, was stricken with madness and disintegrated. The living lion became a dead dog.[118]

[116] Ibid, p. 311.
[117] Ibid, pp. 313–317.
[118] Ibid, pp. 324–338.

The Solomonic religion slew the Israelite culture and replaced it. Zayith, in a Nietzschean spirit, lamented the "era in which living people disappeared and became dead people and increasingly resembled human shadows."[119] In place of the Israelites, who represented "the highest human type," Rabbinic Judaism arose, which got itself "the name of a segregated and fearful religious community, the name of a people like tame hedgehogs … a people of bookworms subjected to ridiculous laws … men like scarecrows who saw reality through a thousand veils of mouldy books of laws and casuistry."[120] That "book," which had arisen to replace "life" was a symbol for the course of Israelism. The time has come, said Zayith, for a new Hebrew culture to arise.

In his article "The Israelite Solution," published in *Nekuda* in 1991, Zayith's views concerning the ancient Israelites were applied to the Israel of today.[121] According to the organic concepts of the school of Spengler, there is growth and decay in the history of peoples just as there in plants and animals. Zayith supported this theory with evidence from as far away as America and Australia, which also passed through the stages of crystallization and decay, to affirm the neo-Canaanite doctrine of a renewal of the Israelite nation: "In the last hundred years a new national entity has arisen in our country: let us call this entity 'The Israelite people.'"[122] Although, according to Zayith, the Jews created the "Israelite" nation, it is not identical with the Jewish citizens of Israel. The Druze and Bedouin are included in the national entity whereas some ultra-Orthodox Jews feel themselves not to be part of it. The Jews of the world who do not participate in defense do not belong to the new Hebrew nation. As long as the existence of the "Israelite nationality" is not internalized, the process is still in its early stages.

Zayith said it was precisely the settlers in Judea and Samaria who were the first to decide to bring to the country the "Christianized" Ethiopian Jews. Kiryat Arba, despite its religious character, was the first Jewish settlement to open its doors to non-Jewish local inhabitants, who helped with security matters. The settlers in Judea and Samaria who cleared the way for their reception into the Israelite nation played the part of an avant-garde. Hebraization, according to Zayith, must be applied to the whole of the Land of Israel. Only thus, he said, can there be "a significant change in the bitter struggle that has taken place amongst us since 1967 between those who wish to abandon Judea and Samaria and those who wish to strike root there."[123] Zayith proposes broadening the compass of the Israelite people on three conditions: loyalty to the state and acceptance of the national Israelite identity, acceptance of the Hebrew language, and military or other national service.

The "Israelite solution" seeks to circumvent the problem of the territories conquered in the Six-Day War through a new definition of the nation. The

[119] Ibid, p. 354.
[120] Ibid, p. 366.
[121] Zayith, "The Israeli Solution," *Nekuda*, 152 (September 1991), pp. 48–50.
[122] Ibid, p. 48.
[123] Ibid, p. 50.

process whereby Israel absorbs the territories with their Palestinian inhabitants is already in full swing, so why not exploit it as a means of renewing the days of the great Israelite people? In that way, there will be no opposition between the Land of Israel and the state of Israel. In that single space there would be only a single people, the Hebrew one, without any expulsion (in Zayith's lexicon, "Hebrew" and "Israelite" are synonymous). Thus, there will be a "state of all its citizens" in the entire Land of Israel.

3

The Canaanite Challenge

AND THE CANAANITE DISCOURSE WAS THEN IN THE LAND

The tree that was planted in Canaan Land has branched into various ideologies and sprouted a diversity of commentaries. It would seem that all the possibilities of the Canaanite option have been exhausted in the discourse on Israeli identity: genuine Canaanism, native or acquired; metaphorical Canaanism; Zionist, post-Zionist, religious, and Palestinian Canaanism; Canaanism with a fascist-militarist-imperialist, or a civilian, flavor; universalist Canaanism; Canaanism of the right and left; utopian Canaanism and biblical Canaanism; Canaanism with an affinity to the *Lehi* and Canaanism in the spirit of Ben-Gurion; Canaanism as a serious spatial-nationalist idea or as merely a generation's trend; Canaanism as an idea whose intellectual roots are in Europe and one whose footprints are to be found in the sands and shores of Canaan; Canaanism as an idea based on place and dependent on time – time past, present, or future, *longue durée* or short-term time; Canaanism as the "Semitic space" idea or the Greater Land of Israel or the borders of the Green Line; Canaanism as a matter of ancient history and as a cultural construction; Canaanism as an ideology or an aesthetic, an opposition to the Jewish "other" or the self-awareness of the native-born, as the immigrant's excessive repudiation of the country ("exile") from which he came, or the local inhabitant's normal sense of identity and, at last, as the Canaanite Messianism that sanctifies geography to the point of a territorialist fundamentalism.

The idea that there was a single language in the "Semitic space," the Canaanite tongue, already had intellectual roots before Yonatan Ratosh founded the Canaanite group in Palestine at the beginning of the 1940s, and one can name some of the forerunners: Nachum Slouschz in his series of articles *Origins of the Hebrew* (1920); Ittamar Ben-Avi, who was "like a Canaanite," in his book *Canaan Our Land, 5000 Years of Israel in Its Land* (1932) [1]; Aharon Reuveni, the brother of Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, the second

[1] Itamar Ben-Avi, *Canaan Our Land; 5000 Years of Israel in Its Land*, Jerusalem 1932. [Hebrew].

president of Israel, in his book *Shem, Ham and Japhet* (1932)[2]; and Israel Belkind, in his study, *The Arabs in Palestine – Where Are the Ten Tribes?* (1928).[3] Belkind saw the imposition of Hebrews on the Palestinian Arabs as an essential precondition for the establishment of the Hebrew nation and for the realization of Zionism. Of course it was in particular Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "the reviver of the Hebrew tongue on the Hebrew soil," who insisted that the revival of the language was integral to the revival of the nation: "We will resurrect the nation, and its language will be resurrected too!"[4]

Already in Europe at the turn of the twentieth century, the poet and translator Yaakov Klatzkin foretold that if the Zionist project of settling Palestine succeeded, the people would split into a territorial nation on the one hand and an extraterritorial religious community on the other.[5] In the Canaanite pantheon the name of the member of the Nili espionage group Absalom Feinberg is also inscribed; in a letter to his bride he wrote, "Don't be a Jewess, be a Hebrew!" and he wrote his address as "Jaffa, Land of the Hebrews."[6] In the history of the Yishuv (the Jewish community in Palestine), the figures of Ben-Gurion and Ben-Zvi, who in their researches tried to locate the descendants of the Hebrews, stand out. More than anyone else, however, the writer and literary historian Haim Hazaz, with his story *Ha-drasha* (The Sermon) (1942), is known as a precursor of the Canaanite idea, and it is not surprising that the perceptive Israeli literary scholar Dan Laor declared, "a clear line runs from Hazaz's work *Ha-drasha*, which is a powerful expression of the anti-exilic sentiments that exist in Zionist thought, to the ideology of the 'Young Hebrews' who call for the creation of a separate non-Jewish Hebrew nation on the soil of Palestine."[7]

Baruch Kurzweil, the Orthodox historian of Hebrew literature and cultural critic, seized on *Ha-drasha* as a treasure trove encapsulating "the conceptual principles of the whole of Hazaz's writings" that "can serve the Young Hebrews as the source of all their ideas on Judaism."[8] But Kurzweil was not able to disregard the challenging dialectical aspect of the story, a sort of "negative credo," unlike the position of the Canaanites, who totally rejected Judaism. The "rejection of the exile" existed in various degrees from the founding fathers of Zionism to the generation of the sons in the Yishuv, but the "rejection of Judaism" had no place in the critical dialogue. Kurzweil

[2] Aharon Reuveni, *Shem, Ham and Japhet*, Tel Aviv 1932. [Hebrew].
[3] Israel Belkind, *The Arabs in Palestine – Where Are the Ten Tribes?* Tel Aviv 1928. [Hebrew].
[4] Aharon Amir, "Undress Shulamit – The Hebrew Renaissance: Option or Destiny?" *Nativ, 3* (2000), pp. 50–51. [Hebrew]; cf. also Eliezer Ben Yehuda, *Hamagid*, 35–37 (1881). [Hebrew].
[5] Ya'akov Klatzkin, "The Galut Cannot Survive," *Essays*, introduction by Yosef Shechter, Tel Aviv 1965, pp. 19–31. [Hebrew].
[6] Amir, "The Hebrew Renaissance," p. 50.
[7] Dan Laor, "From 'Hadrasha' to Epistle to the Hebrew Youth," *Alpayim*, 21 (2001), p. 185. [Hebrew].
[8] Baruch Kurzweil, "The Nature and Origins of the 'Young Hebrews' (Canaanites)," *Our New Literature – Continuity or Revolution?* Tel Aviv 1971, p. 287. [Hebrew].

claimed that "the rejection of Judaism as a spiritual phenomenon whose time had passed, and the necessity of seeing the national revival as something new and even opposed to Judaism are principles of the Berdichevsky school of thought." The barbs he directed at the literature of the national revival were ideological and relevant, but it should be pointed out that the promoters of the revival saw it not as a contradiction to Judaism, but an opportunity to give it a new, existential, and modern interpretation. At the same time, he revealed the Canaanite idea, whose early reverberations had been felt in the radical criticisms of Micha Yosef Berdichevsky, Shaul Tchernikovsky, and Yosef Chaim Brenner, as having a real potential in the new secular culture.[9]

Kurzweil located the conceptual roots of the Canaanite idea in the culture of the secular awakening in Eastern and Central Europe at the turn of the twentieth century. His conservative outlook, which some described as deterministic, and the uncompromising polarity he set between religion and secularism prevented him from seeing the possibility that a dialectical Canaanism from his religious camp would arise and strike roots, and in the mid-twentieth century would cast secular Canaanism in the shade. In the words of the historian Anita Shapira, Kurzweil "denied the growth-potential of a new species of religious Canaanism which today is very actual among the settler communities."[10] The historian of education Rahel Alboim-Dror, known for her work on utopias, is of the opinion that Canaanism exposed the basic problems of Zionism, whose imprint can also be found in the national-religious movements, from the religious youth movement Bnei Akiva to Gush Emunim, the national-religious movement for settlement in the occupied territories.[11]

A different view of the sources of Canaanism was expressed by the historian Yaakov Shavit. In his opinion, Canaanism developed an image of the past in which there was a supposed affinity to an ancient spatial civilization. This was based on an interpretation of the history of the ancient people of Israel, the main features of which were a national-territorial consciousness and an indigenous national experience. The Canaanite idea broke away from its radical Zionist ideological origins and became a radical anti-Zionist ideology. In Ratosh's teachings, one may glimpse the post-Zionist idea: "There are even some who see him as the pioneer of the non-national vision of 'a state of all its citizens,' which he would have considered a nightmare."[12] Whether an image of the past or a non-national vision, the sources of the movement, according to Shavit, are to be found in maximalist Revisionism and in people of the right such as Uri Zvi Greenberg and Abba Ahimeir, rather than figures of the left.[13]

[9] Laor, "Kurzweil and the Canaanites: Between Insight and Struggle," *Keshet – After 40 Years* (1998), pp. 32–45. [Hebrew].

[10] Shapira, "What Happened to the 'Denial of the Exile'?" p. 22. [Hebrew].

[11] Danny Jacoby, ed., *One Land, Two Peoples*, Jerusalem 1999, p. 104. [Hebrew].

[12] Ya'acov Shavit, "With Vision, Fire and Sword," *Haaretz – Cultural and Literary Supplement*, special issue on the tenth anniversary of the death of the poet Yonatan Ratosh, 6.4.2001. [Hebrew].

[13] Shavit, *The New Hebrew Nation – A Study in Israeli Heresy and Fantasy*, London 1987.

Unlike him, however, the historian Israel Kolat finds the intellectual roots of Canaanism on the left, and in left-wing figures such as Boaz Evron, Haim Gouri, and even Ben-Gurion and Moshe Dayan. In his opinion, Shavit's interpretation, which puts Canaanism on the right, falsifies its image and significance.[14]

The meeting in Paris of Horon and Ratosh in 1938, which signified the birth of the Canaanite group, resembles in its significance the meeting of Edya Horon with Hillel Kook (aka Peter Bergson) and Shemuel Merlin, which introduced Canaanism to the heads of the Irgun Delegation in the United States, also known as the Bergson Group. It was Horon who convinced the Hebrew Committee for the Liberation of the Nation, of which Kook and Merlin were members, to emphasize the designation "Hebrew" in its title and to differentiate it from the description "Jewish." In the pamphlet called "The Time Has Come!" that the members of the committee wrote after the Holocaust, it was stated that the foundation of their outlook and the basis of the recognition of historical truth was the fact that "the Hebrew nation is today an existing political entity."[15] In contrast to Ratosh's harsh statements on the Jews who perished in the Holocaust, the Hebrew revisionists in America declared that "the molten fire through which European Jewry passed" on the one hand, and "the courageousness, dedication and creative abilities which were revealed by our Yishuv" on the other, had formed the two parts of the nation into "a nation like all the nations, into the Hebrew nation in its own national territory." They asked for a political distinction to be made between the "Hebrew nation" and the "people of Israel" or "Jewish people." They opposed the partition scheme, supported a Hebrew state on both sides of the Jordan, and asked for a separation of religion and state. After the Yom Kippur War in 1973, they changed the designation "Hebrew nation" into the "modern Israeli nation" and supported the creation of a neighboring Palestinian state. Uri Avneri took the same path from Canaanite-Hebrew imperialism to a national compromise.

The Canaanite genealogy on the Israeli right from Horon and Ratosh to Kook and Merlin continued with the Hebraic ideas of Shemuel Tamir and his faction, Lamerhav. Tamir, who was not a member of the Hebrew Committee for the Liberation of the Nation, befriended Merlin at the end of 1950 and founded the Lamerhav faction in rebellion against Menahem Begin and the leadership of the Herut party. They urged a separation of religion and state, the nationalization of the Jewish National Fund, the dismantling of the Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization, and the building up of Israel as a "Hebrew Mediterranean power" that would form a federation with its Arab neighbors and make alliances with the ethnic minorities in the Middle

[14] Israel Kolat, "The Permutations of Hebrew Canaanism," in Jacoby, *One Land, Two Peoples*, pp. 93–95. [Hebrew].

[15] Hillel Kook, Shemuel Merlin and others, *The Time Has Come! – A Clarification of the Principles and a Political Declaration by the Hebrew Committee of National Liberation*, Washington, Hanukkah, 1944. [Hebrew].

East. With the Kastner affair, the Hebraic paths of Uri Avneri and Shemuel Tamir crossed. Avneri, who advocated the nativistic ideology of the "Semitic space," depicted Tamir in the journal *Ha-Olam ha-zeh*, which he edited, as the ideal type of the Sabra, who blended into the space and opposed servile Judaism. The Kastner case was a golden opportunity to draw a contrast between the Sabra returning to his mythical-Canaanite roots and the mentality of people from "over there." The biographies of heroes in the weekly journal were one-dimensional constructions of the secular Hebrew Sabra versus the exile-Judenrat-Jewish Agency. According to that paper, "the archetype of the *stadtlan* (intermediary) was Mordechai the Jew. He never thought of rebelling; he relied on mediation. Mordechai the Jew was the complete opposite of Judah Maccabee, the man who arose, rebelled, fought and liberated."

Canaanism is a phenomenon distinct from both the left and right. In the tensions it revealed in the collective identity, in the contradiction it pointed out between nationalism and religion, and in the solutions it proposed, it served as a touchstone for the central dilemmas of Zionism. Boaz Evron identified the Canaanite idea as a radical and challenging extension of the Zionist movement, but also a contradiction of it; an expression of the consciousness of the native-born generation and their direct affinity with the homeland as against the acquired consciousness of the homeland of people like A. D. Gordon and David Ben-Gurion; an extension of Bible criticism on the one hand and a paradoxical involvement in Jewish Messianic activities on the other. The Canaanites' assumption that the annexation of a non-Jewish population in the territories conquered in the Six-Day War would cause Israel to lose its Jewish character made them support the colonizing enterprise of the Greater Land of Israel and created a neo-Canaanite synthesis of religion and the right: "The settlements of the religious Gush Emunim (Bloc of the Faithful) are a dialectical step towards the Hebrew 'Land of the East' that is above all ethnic, religious and community-related divisions and unites the entire population within the framework of a single nation, the Hebrew nation."[16]

The Canaanite challenge also exposed the secular and the ultra-Orthodox to the option of a "state of all its citizens." In a draft Aharon Amir presented of the ideal state, he accepted the rightist neo-Canaanite principle of a Greater Land of Israel that has "an institutional-political structure that embraces the entire West Bank of the Jordan"[17] and that annexes and Hebraicizes all the Palestinians within it, but he also accepted the secular leftist neo-Canaanite principle of the equality of all citizens: "I think it important that everyone will be a citizen and all will be considered sons of the land."[18] Margalit Shenar, the daughter of E. G. Horon, who joined Amir in founding another neo-Canaanite group, also believes there is no contradiction between occupation and liberalism: "The result must finally be a state of all its citizens.... We need the

[16] Evron, *A National Reckoning*, pp. 351–373.
[17] Amir, "The Second Republic," *Haaretz*, 19.10.2006. [Hebrew].
[18] Vered Kellner, "How Lovely Were the Nights!" *Kol Ha-Ir*, 12.10.2001. [Hebrew].

territories in order to realise a liberal ideology." At the opposite pole, the ultra-Orthodox Member of Knesset Meir Porush thinks that most Israelis consider the Canaanites a strange group, but admits that one must recognize that their basic outlook has echoes: "[A]nd recently," he said, "we have witnessed the beginnings of a revival of the 'Canaanites' in a 2004 edition."[19] As an example, he gave Shulamit Aloni, the high-priestess of human rights in Israel who proposed that one's nationality should be defined as "Israeli" and not "Jewish." "It seems that the intention of today's 'Canaanites' is quite clear. They want to be a people like all others.... In their opinion, Israel should be 'a state of all its citizens' which gives all citizens equal rights, and not a Jewish state." That is how radically different ideological directions develop out of one idea.

The idea of a "state of all its citizens" is the jewel in the crown of post-Zionism. Post-Zionism, as a basic conception with many ramifications, sees the paradoxical formula of a "Jewish and democratic state" to be a contradiction that needs to be exposed, and holds that there has to be a separation not only of religion and state but also of state and nationality. Although the Zionist, Jewish-Israeli state is described by the conventional formula "nation-state," Uri Ram points out that this is only one possibility, and not a recommended one, of characterizing the mutual relationship of state and nation. There can also be a state that creates a nation, a state without a nation, a multinational state, or a nation without a state. Ram, who knows how the Canaanites and Uri Avneri have anticipated and contributed to the post-Zionist discourse, finds that the difference between them is that "a few Canaanites or Hebrews gave 'Hebraism' a national or even nationalistic interpretation, and the post-Zionists gave 'Israelism' a post-national and civil interpretation."[20] Avneri, like Horon and Ratosh, started out in the Revisionist movement and gave a personal touch to Canaanite concepts like belligerent activism, territorial expansion, the myth of a glorious past, the glorification of youth, and spreading beyond "the two banks of the River Jordan." He rejected the term "Middle East," which originated in Europe, as well as the term *aretz ever* (the Land of Ever), which was of Canaanite origin. Inspired by the German word *Raum*, he adopted the term "Semitic space." Unlike Ratosh, he did not expect the Arabs to become Hebrews, but called for a recognition of their separate nationality and believed in sharing that space. The parallel between the Zionists and the crusaders led him to the conclusion that "only participation in the space, not territorial expansion, can save the Hebrews from the fate of the crusaders."[21] The researcher Nitza Harel thinks that Avneri proposed the model of an open Israel, "today called 'a state of all its citizens,'" which combines the liberalism of human rights with Hebrew national romanticism.[22]

[19] Meir Porush, "Canaanites, 2004 Model," *Haaretz*, 20.1.2004. [Hebrew].
[20] Uri Ram, *Time of the "Post": Nationalism and the Politics of Knowledge in Israel*, Tel Aviv 2006, p. 162. [Hebrew].
[21] Nitza Harel, *"Without Fear and Prejudice": Uri Avnery and Ha'olam Ha'ze*, Jerusalem 2006, p. 33. [Hebrew].
[22] Ibid., pp. 21–36.

The Canaanites did not go in vain to America in search of an ideal model of a "state of all its citizens." The founding in the New World of a society of immigrants who became natives of a country without a history, who cut the umbilical cord binding them to their ancestors, who defined their nationality in terms of a common citizenship, who separated religion from state and spoke a common language – all this lay behind the Canaanites' attraction to the American experience, and, as Dan Laor has said, explains the centrality of America in the Canaanite imagination.[23] Already, in envisaging a Canaanite utopia in his *Masa ha-petiha* (Opening Speech), Ratosh drew on the American precedent, which was based, in his opinion, on a new indigenous national identity that negated one's previous identity. Some five years later, Amir published *Shirat eretz ha-ivrim* (Song of the Land of the Hebrews) (1949), inspired by Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, on the birth of a new people in a new land. The Canaanite group showed its awareness of the American experience by the translation by Ratosh and Amir of many classic works of American literature and poetry, by the promotion and publication of essays and articles on subjects relating to American culture in the journals *Aleph* and *Keshet*, and by devoting a special issue of *Keshet* to America (1971). In his introduction to that issue, Amir spoke of

> the idea of the essential parallel between the historical experience of the new American nation and the process of the formation or crystallisation of the nation in that country.... The formation of the American nation can be regarded as ... an archetypical example and an archetypical model of the process of the growth of new nations, or even ones that are undergoing a renewal, from the beginning of the modern age.[24]

Three years later, Amir expressed his "American" ideal as follows: He said that he wished to "transform Israel into a society that is open – completely open – and that attracts immigration not specifically from Jewish sources."[25] Otherwise, he said, the Israelis will experience what would have been liable to happen to the Americans had they decided to accept only Anglo-Saxons and Protestants. However, the historian Yehoshua Arieli, a specialist in American history, saw things quite differently and maintained that the American experience was the antithesis of the Israeli experience. Arieli asked: What was it that united America, and what did it mean to be American? The state of Israel, in his opinion, is almost the archetype of organic, religious, and historical affiliation, unlike America, which is the archetype of the universal approach. In Puritan America and in the young republic, the Americans developed many allegories and metaphors identifying themselves with Israel and the Bible and felt themselves to be a kind of new Israel. The Americans, unlike the Canaanites, refused to cut themselves off from the Jewish heritage. In their

[23] Laor, "American Literature and Israeli Culture: The Case of the Canaanites," *Israel Studies*, 5, 1 (Spring 2000), pp. 287–300.
[24] Amir, "The Shock of Proximity," *Keshet*, 4 (1971), pp. 6–7. [Hebrew].
[25] Amir, in the symposium "Seeking Roots," *Keshet*, 62 (1974), p. 29. [Hebrew].

Puritan tradition, there were many motifs derived from the Bible, such as the exodus from slavery to freedom, the giving of the Law, and the chosen people. Jefferson proposed that the American seal should display the pillar of fire of the people of Israel. This motif of the exodus from Egypt as a sacred analogy to the exodus from corrupt Europe to the land of liberty symbolized the consciousness of a new beginning.[26]

In addition to the parallel with the United States, there are some who see an analogy with the Palestinians. The Palestinian Canaanite idea already had its starting point in the 1920s, and from then onward it never ceased to be present, in various degrees, in their historical consciousness and their national struggle. Paradoxically, whenever it was a matter of political compromise with the Israelis, the Palestinians started to delve into their historical roots. The historian of the Middle East Yifrah Silverman claims that a comparison between the Canaanite founding myth developed by Ratosh and the Canaanites and that developed by the Palestinians shows that both are reflections in a mirror. Ratosh saw the Palestinians as descendants of the ancient Hebrews who came to the Fertile Crescent and from there penetrated the Arabian Peninsula, and the Palestinians think that the Canaanites originated in the Arabian Peninsula and from there spread to the desert and the Fertile Crescent. In Ratosh's opinion, the Canaanite tongue was a proto-Hebrew, and the Palestinians see it as a proto-Arabic language. The Israeli Canaanite founding myth expands the Hebrew identity into that of the whole of ancient Ever, whereas the Palestinian myth is one of contraction that limits their mythical-historical claims solely to their own society. That is the secret of its power, and perhaps also the explanation of the acceptability and popularity of the myth among the Palestinians. For them, the source of their nationalism is the territory, and the Arabic language, despite its importance, is secondary.[27]

The Israeli-Palestinian Druze poet Samih al-Qasim contributed to the glorification of the Palestinian Canaanite founding myth with his essay "The Jerusalem Covenant," published on the eve of the Al-Aqsa intifada.[28] The year was 1400 BCE, and out of the recesses of time burst forth an ancient Arab voice, the voice of the Jebusite king Zedek, king of the city of Jerusalem that was then called "Ayel Baal," who turned to the Palestinians and Arabs of today to tell them about the history of Jerusalem. In the battle between the Jewish army and the Jebusite-Canaanite-Arab army, Joshua Bin Nun threatened to set fire to Jerusalem, which had been founded by the king of Salem four hundred years earlier. Despite an initial success in pushing back the invaders, the city was finally conquered by David the Hebrew. From that time onward, the

[26] Ohana, "Yehoshua Arieli and the Responsibility of the Historian," *The Rage of the Intellectuals: Political Radicalism and Social Criticism in Europe and Israel*, Tel Aviv 2005, pp. 109–128. [Hebrew].

[27] Ifrach Zilberman, *The Canaanite Founding Myth of the Palestinian Society*, Jerusalem 1993. [Hebrew]; Yehoshua Porath, "Hebrew Canaanism and Arabic Canaanism," in Jacoby, *One Land, Two Peoples*, pp. 83–92. [Hebrew].

[28] Samich El-Kassem, "The Jerusalem Covenant," *Kul El-Arab*, 14.5.1999.

chronicles of Jerusalem were filled with foreign kings who invaded it again and again. The crusader invaders who hid behind the cross and its symbols at first defeated the Muslims, and Jews besieged in the city, "but later a brave commander appeared upon the stage of history. His name was Salah ad-Din al-Ayyubi, and in the battle of Hittin in 1187 he gave the invaders their just deserts." In modern history as well, the role of the invaders from Europe was not neglected. Napoleon slaughtered repeatedly, and General Allenby "was scornful of the hero of Hittin when he stood before his tomb in Damascus, and did not feel in the depths of his heart any fear of the sword of revenge. But his despicable tongue will be cut off. And the Muslim Arabs will say: the Roman shall not enter the Temple." From the beginning of Zionism, there have never ceased to be "generations of mass-corruption, piercing barbed wire and heroes bearing from head to foot the torments of the revolt of the year 1937, the catastrophe of 1948, the dreams of the blessed revolt of the year 1960, the sorrow of the defeat of 1967 and the groans of the Palestinian fighters." Would it be correct to see the poet-ideologist Samih al-Qasim, who persists in relating in his writings and in person to the Canaanite and crusader myths, as the Palestinian counterpart of the poet-ideologist Ratosh?

Here the Canaanite challenge has become a weapon in the hands of promoters of identity who fight against the creation of the collective Israeli portrait. There are some who have seen the challenge as a central feature in the spectrum of ideas put forward by Zionism, an attractive alternative possibility for the founding of a Hebrew culture.[29] There are some who have pointed to it as a scalpel exposing basic problems like the mutual relationship of Israeli sovereignty and the Jewish Diaspora, the continuity of the history of the people of Israel, the way this people integrates into the area, and the problem of finding its place in the region.[30] There are some who depict it as a Uganda-like mutation of the "Jewish State," whose imagined Canaanite identity is based on a "mystical view of the soil."[31] There are some for whom the Canaanite idea is one of the three myths contending for the soul of the Israeli, together with the Jewish myth and the Zionist myth.[32] There are some who warn that "Ratosh's pan-Hebraism was latent with a not inconsiderable degree of nihilism. The Hebrew vision implies the self-destruction of the small Jewish community for the sake of an imperialist merger.... Moreover, beyond the epic of the Hebrew conquest there is nothing except annihilation."[33] There are some who are not alarmed by the Canaanite idea, which they view as a secular attempt to justify Zionism. Even so, they reject the theological basis of Zionism as exilic.

[29] Elboim-Dror, Ibid, p. 103.

[30] Kolat, Ibid, pp. 93–96, 110.

[31] Ella Belfer, *A Split Identity: The Conflict Between the Sacred and the Secular in the Jewish World*, Ramat-Gan 2004, pp. 103–106. [Hebrew].

[32] Ishai Cordoba, "Not a Jew From Yavne but a Hebrew From Samaria!" *Haaretz Literary Supplement*, 27.9.2000. [Hebrew].

[33] Sasson Sofer, "Canaanite and Semites," *The Beginnings of Political Thought in Israel*, Tel Aviv 2001, p. 381. [Hebrew].

The Canaanites interpreted normalization as a return to ancient roots, to that which preceded the oral law, and thus were ready to accept the Palestinian Arabs beneath the cover of the new identity.[34] Concerning this, there are some who are surprised that the founders of the Labor movement preferred the religious myths of the chosen people and the land chosen by God to the alternative Canaanite myth without the metaphysical connotations. It would seem to be correct to describe the presence of the Canaanite idea in the Israeli discourse "as an inseparable part of the continual and continuing cultural war over the nature of Israeli society."[35]

YONATAN RATOSH: A PROPHET IN HIS OWN COUNTRY

The assertive figure of Yonatan Ratosh, founder of the "Young Hebrews" movement, which emanated ideological decisiveness and had an avant-garde image, is surrounded by a body of ancient texts and archaic-modern poetry imbued with a philosophy of history with a single, exclusive utopian direction.[36] Avraham Shlonsky, literary editor of the newspaper *Haaretz*, who coined the term "Canaanites" in condemnation of the group of "Young Hebrews," received poems by Ratosh signed with the pen name A. L. Haran. Did not the proliferation of names and pseudonyms – Uriel Halperin was Yonatan Ratosh, A. L. Haran, Uriel Shelah, A. Paran, and Mar Sasson – indicate a constant identity deficiency that gave rise to a tendency to despise the traditions handed down from the forefathers, a sort of Freudian patricide, in the absence of which it was difficult to create a "new" identity and a "new" culture connected with a continuous historical memory?

In Ratosh's later personal testimony in the introduction to the book *Reshit ha-yamim* (The Beginning of Days) (1982), written not long before his death, he guided his readers candidly, stage by stage, through the vicissitudes of his identity. At first he was preoccupied with two sides of the trinity that made up mandatory Palestine: the British and the Arabs. The Jewish problem did not concern him in his youth: He thought it would not be long before the people of Mea Shearim, the "black Jews" as he called them, would disappear. He was quite certain that their grandchildren would be like himself. But neither the ultra-Orthodox nor the Canaanites vanished: Both of them remained as rival twins.

Ratosh recalled the years of his youth, after he finished high school:

> One Sabbath morning I was sitting with two boys my age on a bench on Allenby Street smoking. A Jewish fellow came over to us, I don't remember if he was from the ultra-Orthodox or simply a traditionalist, and he reminded us about [the prohibition of] smoking on the Sabbath. My friends extinguished their cigarettes. I refused saying, "But I am not a Jew." The man

[34] Amitzur Ilan, in Jacoby, *One Land, Two Peoples*, pp. 104–107.
[35] Laor, "Kurzweil and the Canaanites," Ibid, p. 44.
[36] Porath, *The Life of Uriel Shelah (Yonatan Ratosh)*, Tel Aviv 1989. [Hebrew].

> didn't know what to make of what I said. Perhaps it was unclear even to me. I only know that I wasn't at all religious.[37]

He was as yet only dimly aware of the revolutionary distinction between "Jews" and "Hebrews," and his awakening to it often took place in an unconscious way. Ratosh went to France in his early twenties: "And again, the question arose: Who am I? Who are we? At home, in our country, I was not concerned with the question of identity." He had lived in the first Hebrew city, the *moshavot* (smallholders' cooperative settlements) were Hebrew, and his school was *Ha-gymnasia ha-ivrit* (The Hebrew High School). He understood that to be called a "Hebrew" in French was akin to someone introducing himself as a "Sanskrit," the term for the ancient Indian sacred language. If he had introduced himself that way in the United States, they would immediately have asked him if he was an Orthodox, Reform, or Conservative Hebrew, for in America "Hebrew" was a respectful term for a Jew, just as in France the term "*Israélite*" served that purpose. Ratosh makes us share in the crystallization of his self-awareness, in the ever-increasing polarization that took place between the landscape of his "Hebrew" homeland and the distant, alien world of Jewish concepts, history, and family:

> As for me, it was clear to me that there was a significant difference between myself and Trotsky and his Jewish friends in the Bolshevik Politburo in Russia, and between Walter Rathenau, the Jewish foreign minister of Germany and the Jews Léon Blum and Georges Mendel, the left-wing and right-wing politicians in France, and between the British Jew Lord Reading and the American Jews Bernard Baruch and Henry Morgenthau, not to speak of all those who spoke different foreign languages, who were assimilated to their countries, their languages and their hierarchies; and, needless to say, all the peddlers and artisans who spoke Yiddish and the black-coated ones with their communities and rabbis.[38]

In their wish to get rid of the Jews, Ratosh continued, the anti-Semites in Europe would shout at them, "Go to Palestine!" That was a good enough reason for him to identify himself as a "Palestinian," the accepted European term for his country, which was simply a translation. In the ordinary usage of people in Europe, in the language of the Zionists of Russia and Germany, people like him were "Palestinians." This was at most a local description, like *Halili* (someone from Hebron) or *Nablusi* (someone from Nablus). Ratosh was drawn into the traditional Jewish snare of creating an association between the identities of Hebrews, Jews, and Israel (i.e., people of Israel); in his own words, "I did not have the capacity, I did not have the tools, to stand up to the Jewish brainwashing." He rejected Judaism as a religion and as an emotional identification with a community dispersed throughout the world, but, like all

[37] Yonatan Ratosh, *The First Days: Hebrew Overtures*, Tel Aviv 1982, p. 9 cited in James S. Diamond, *Homeland or Holy land: The "Canaanite" Critic of Israel*, Indianapolis 1986, p. 27.

[38] Ibid.

members of his generation, he could not entirely liberate himself from the biblical tales and the Zionism he grew up with. He was unable as yet to discern the essential difference between the Hebrew era, known anachronistically, in his opinion, as the "First Temple period," and the Jewish era, called the "Second Temple period." He came to believe that Jewish historiography tried to blur the differences between the two periods – between a people living in its homeland and "a scattered and divided people," a community defined by its founders. This historiography was in his eyes a form of ideological propaganda that sought to create an identity between two different things.

Until 1937, the year when Ratosh was dismissed from the editorship of the Revisionist journal *Ha-Yarden*, his views were eminently Zionist, although his natural feelings were ill-adapted to a systematic theoretical doctrine. In a series of articles, "We Want to Rule," he demanded the departure of the British mandate, which was not in accordance with the Revisionist Ten-Year Plan, and which prevented the emergence of the leadership of a "colonizing" regime for the encouragement of Jewish settlement in Palestine until there was a Hebrew majority in the country.[39] If a Jewish state were declared immediately, he thought, it would automatically achieve a Jewish majority, as there already existed a national society with a distinct cultural character. Despite his linguistic distinction between the "Palestinian Hebrew" and the "Jew" who lived abroad, he claimed that every Jew in the Diaspora could, through a declaration, be made a citizen of the Land of Israel.

Nineteen thirty-eight, the year of his journey to Paris, was a turning point in his life, a dividing of the waters in which he was transformed from a "Hebrew" into a "Canaanite." At the beginning of the year he still wrote essays from the point of view of a Jewish national historian, essays that he intended to publish in the future under the title *The Jerusalem Government – Essays on the History of the Hebrews*. In the first essay, "Over the Jordan," he explained how history could be a mobilizing myth. In his essay "Introduction to Hebrew History," he said he preferred writing national history, that is to say, "Hebrew" history, to writing universal history, because the history of the past is a history of nations. Hebrew history is the history of the people of Israel as a nation, whereas Jewish history is a history of the people of Israel without a geography.[40]

It was clear to Ratosh before he met the historian of the ancient East, Edya Horon, that Judaism was not really accepted by the people and kings before the Babylonian exile, and the "idol-worshippers" were his ancestors not only on the other side of the Euphrates but in Canaan as well. He was quite convinced that Hebrew tribes dwelt in the land long before any date that could be ascertained, but all this did not subvert the very core of Judaism: the identity of the Hebrews with Judaism, the belief that the Jews came out of Egypt,

[39] Shavit, *From Majority to a State: The Revisionist Movement – The Plan for a Colonisatory Regime and Social Ideas 1925–1935*, Tel Aviv 1978, pp. 137–151. [Hebrew].

[40] Shavit, *The New Hebrew Nation*, pp. 25–36.

that the Hebrews were their elite, and that those who returned from exile in Babylon and Persia, and in particular Ezra and Nehemiah, were religious and ethnic extremists like the ultra-Orthodox sects. After meeting Horon, however, his attitude changed. He now believed that the classical Hebrew period of the judges and kings revealed the mendacious tendencies of Jewish historiography: He regarded the exodus from Egypt as a Jewish legend, and Israel no longer appeared to be a small and harassed state, a football between the two major powers on the Nile and the Euphrates. On the contrary, Israel was the cornerstone of the Land of Ever, of which Israelite and Sidonian Canaan was the heart. The removal of the "Zionist brainwashing exposed the body of religious and ethnic interpretation by Jewish tradition," and when Ratosh came to write his collections *The Walker in Darkness* (1965) and *Sword Poems* (1969), he abandoned Jewish symbols and concepts and began to praise war:

> And every loyal heart and true
> Will mark his brow with blood
> With blood mark his right hand
> And with heart's blood say Amen
> And consecrated for day of battle
> And consecrated in blood and soul
> In communion with all his brethren
> Brother to brother will show forth
> Brother to brother will speak out
> A pact of brethren each will vow.[41]

Essentially, Ratosh acquired most of his new outlook from Horon, who continued in his book *Eretz ha-Kedem* (The Land of Kedem) to develop the view that tied history to geography.[42] Israel, said Horon, is not a Jewish state, but a stage in the national revival of Canaan, the land of Ever, the common home of the Hebrew-speaking peoples before Judaism was born. There was no truth, in his opinion, in the claims of the Arabs or the Zionists. There is no Arab nation, for the simple reason that it is dispersed in its different diasporas and is not amenable to crystallization into a single nation. Hence, there is no Palestinian people either. The Arab world (or the so-called Arab world) has only a linguistic significance, and it exists only in the sense that "Latin Europe" existed in the Middle Ages. The only true Arabs are the Bedouin. Pan-Arabism is thus a nationalism without a nation. The Hebraization of the Arabs would make them equal citizens of a secular and democratic state. The Hebrew movement supports a secular state, and its aim is really the transformation of the whole "Land of the Euphrates." Because modern national societies consider community and religion to be of minor importance, there must be a total separation of religion and state. The regime in Israel is undemocratic because of the "Jewish

[41] Ratosh, *The Walker in Darkness – Poems*, Tel Aviv 1965. [Hebrew]; idem, *Sword Poems*, Tel Aviv 1969. [Hebrew].

[42] Adyah Gurevitch Horon, *East and West: A History of Canaan and the Land of the Hebrews*, Tel Aviv 2000. [Hebrew].

Zionist consciousness" it tries to impose on the inhabitants of the land, a consciousness connected with its concept of the nation. The conclusion is that Jewish history cannot be represented as the history of the Hebrew nation. A distinction must be made between Jewish literature written in Hebrew and authentic Hebrew literature, both ancient and contemporary.

Horon's views were well received by the heads of Beitar (the Revisionist Youth Organization), and he was asked to write *Toldot ha-umma ha-ivrit* (The History of the Hebrew Nation). Discoveries of a connection between the Phoenician settlements in North Africa and the people of Israel added a Mediterranean seafaring dimension to the history of the Jews. Jabotinsky understood the potential of what Yaakov Shavit called "the image of the historical past of the people of Israel" presented by Horon.[43] The people of Israel, as a conglomeration of peoples, created Israel as a separate entity in the time of the United Kingdom. In the time of the kings, the Jebusites, the Hittites, and the Phoenicians were swallowed up in Judah and Israel, and thus the first Hebrew emerged as a man of the Mediterranean. This discovery was very important: Jabotinsky wished to distinguish Hebraism from Arabism, but when he read Horon's *Canaan and the Arabs* in 1939, he expressed his disappointment to Horon: "This is my advice as an author: don't give way to a tendency to demean Israel in order to glorify the Arabs, or demean monotheism in order to affirm idolatry."[44] What attracted Ratosh to Horon – a non-Jewish Hebrew authenticity with Canaanite roots – was precisely what distanced Jabotinsky from him. Ratosh, for his part, was disappointed in the revisionists who drew closer to the national-religious, and this "Zionist" alliance completely distanced the Canaanites from the national right and finally made possible the transition from "Hebraism" to "Canaanism."

After his dramatic and fruitful meeting with Horon, Ratosh returned to Palestine and began to organize an intellectual group as the basis for a political movement. At the same time, Haim Hazaz's *The Sermon* was published in a supplement of *Haaretz*. It was a heretical piece, the main point of which was that "the land of Israel is already not Judaism,"[45] and Baruch Kurzweil correctly concluded that Yudke's words in Hazaz's story were "the source of all their [i.e., the Canaanites'] ideas on Judaism."[46] The Canaanite founding manifesto, "Epistle to Hebrew Youth," which was published in 1943 by the Committee for the Consolidation of Hebrew Youth, was expanded about a year later into the "Opening Speech" intended for the first sitting of The Meeting of the Committee with Representatives of the Cells. This "written declaration" was addressed to the young people, the people of tomorrow, bearers of the Hebrew revolution, in a terse and declamatory language, in the

[43] Shavit, *The New Hebrew Nation*, pp. 73–103.
[44] Ari Jabotinsky, *My Father, Ze'ev Jabotinsky*, Tel Aviv 1981, p. 134–135. [Hebrew].
[45] Shavit, *The New Hebrew Nation*, p. 58.
[46] Kurzweil, "The Nature and Origins of the 'Young Hebrews' (Canaanites)," *Our New Literature – Continuity or Revolution?* p. 60.

spirit of the European manifestos of that period. The call to detach Hebraism from Judaism, and, more than that, the call to detach oneself from the Jews – the year was 1943! – reached its climax here:

> The Committee for the Formation of Hebrew Youth summons you to reflect on the depth of the chasm and alienation that separates you, the Hebrew youth, from all those Jews in the Diaspora.... The Committee for the Formation of Hebrew Youth turns to you because you are the strength of tomorrow in this land.... The Committee for the Formation of Hebrew Youth is not afraid for you because of the scorn and admonishment that will be poured out upon you ... but ... is in fear ... that you will become accustomed to the manners of the Jewish Diaspora, lest your heart go astray after its outlook and criteria ... lest you learn its ways and ... forget who you are, a part of a normal nation, a part of the ascendant Hebrew nation.... And we do not promise you pleasure, neither personal nor social. We promise all who follow us the full misunderstanding of the public at large.... We promise the full force of the clash with Zionism, from its deepest roots to ... its fullest power and corruption, and we promise the fullness of the blind, avaricious and vicious hatred from all the various bureaucracies – to the bitter end.... But we know the power of the illumination of Hebrew consciousness. This consciousness, when it will come upon you, will totally purify [you] of the vestiges of your reprehensible education.... The tie that binds the generations of Judaism cannot be loosened; it can only be severed. And you, child of the native land, can cut it.[47]

The Hebrew youth, he said, was not "one that escaped from the sword," "a persecuted Jew"; he did not represent "a mixed multitude of refugees" or a "pilgrim," but "a normal people," "a healthy youth, at home in its country" that "despises the manifestations of Jewish senility." Ratosh was contemptuous of scattered Jewry, its great men and activists, its sages and leaders, its rabbis and scholars, its martyrs and Messiahs, its Zionists and ghetto fighters. He did not find anything to admire in the wretched so-called glorious Second Temple period, in the heroes, rebels, kings, zealots, or those who sacrificed their lives at Massada. They were merely proof that no personal heroism or goodwill can help the Jews in dispersion; every rebellion is foredoomed to failure and every revival to degeneration. The imbroglio of the centuries of Judaism cannot be disentangled: It can only be severed. A new world awaits the new Hebrew! This new world is the primeval world, a Hebrew golden age against the fog of dispersion, which stands between the homeland and the people's past. The removal of the "Jewish" cobwebs would clear the way to the vision of a great Hebrew future, and hidden forces stifled by Judaism and Zionism would rise up.

In *Masa hapetihah* (The Opening Discourse), a year later, Ratosh's anti-Jewish venom reached new heights. A year before the end of the Second World

[47] Ratosh, "Epistle to the Hebrew Youth," *The First Days*, Tel Aviv 1982, pp. 32–37. [Hebrew].

War, when the facts of the Holocaust had been revealed and were known in Palestine as everywhere else, Ratosh called Judaism "the inebriation of the Jewish poison." Of Judaism, he said that "this enemy will devour us voraciously … and if we do not root it out, we are lost. This country cannot be both Hebrew and Jewish, for if we do not trample underfoot that whole sick culture of the immigrants and pilgrims, that leprosy will infect us all." Moreover, "the poison that destroys all that is good in them [the Jews] is the very poison from which we have arisen to disinfect ourselves, and we protect our souls from it, for no one knows its power as we do." In place of the "Jewish poison," Ratosh proposed:

> There is no Hebrew other than the child of the land of Ever, the land of the Hebrews – no one else. And whoever is not a native of this land, the land of the Hebrews, cannot become a Hebrew, is not a Hebrew, and never was. And whoever comes from the Jewish dispersion, its times and its places, is, from the beginning to the end of days, a Jew, not a Hebrew, and he can be nothing but a Jew – good or bad, proud or lowly, but still a Jew. And a Jew and a Hebrew can never be the same. Whoever is a Hebrew cannot be a Jew, and whoever is a Jew cannot be a Hebrew. [48]

Ratosh now unfurled the blue and purple flag: "Many bodies and factions have sprung up in the Yishuv, but none of them has produced a new flag." He already answered his future critics: "Whoever is imbued with the Jewish poison … will be afraid to raise a flag.… That rag and that pole belong to the foolish, vain beliefs of the *goyim* and their world. Many people need a flag. Wise and intelligent Jews know that one does not raise and does not lower that coloured rag and pole." The flag was turned against both the right and left, which in his opinion were lying to themselves when they spoke of a new Hebrew: "Hashomer Hatzair," who spoke of a new Hebrew type, really meant their version of the Jewish type: The "Fighters for the Freedom of Israel" (*Lehi*), who were careful to write Hebrew on their pamphlets, also meant the Jew; and even Ben-Gurion, who made flowery speeches on Hebrew language and on Hebrew independence, hoped for a Jewish state. The Canaanite radical nationalism was beyond the ideological camps of both the left and right.

In the article "The Land of the Euphrates," which he wrote after the Six-Day War, Ratosh summed up his views concerning Hebraism.[49] In this country, as in other lands of immigration, a new nation arose at the turn of the twentieth century. It came into being within the geographical and linguistic framework of the classical Hebrew nation before Judaism was created. At the same time, a process of national resurrection occurred, as had happened several times to the ancient nation as it renewed itself. The Israeli territory is a natural and inseparable part of the Land of the Euphrates, which is the classical Hebrew land that extends from the Egyptian border to the Tigris. In

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ratosh, *The Opening Discourse: In Executive Session with the Agents of the Cells [First Meeting]*, Tel Aviv 1944, pp. 149–203. [Hebrew].

an interview given in 1981, Ratosh again asserted that the Hebrews are the pioneers and nucleus of the resurrection of the Land of the Euphrates on a secular, national basis, not on the basis of a religious community. This resurrection is based on the classical Hebrew roots common to all the inhabitants of the land before Judaism came into existence.[50]

As Kurzweil said, "The Young Hebrews were not the first to put their faith in a revival of myth." The taste for myth was very prevalent in Europe in the 1930s and was a fashionable field of research in France with the researches of Georges Dumézil and Claude Lévi-Strauss.[51] Yonatan Ratosh was exposed to this mental atmosphere during his stay in Paris in the 1930s. He felt that his meeting in Paris with Horon was a "liberating shock" and the moment of birth of the anti-Zionist, secular, and radical "Canaanite" outlook. Horon opened his eyes. He smashed the religious, community-centered Jewish spectacles through which "ancient Jewish history and existence" appeared to be "a sort of divine exception in the history of mankind. It was no longer a nation of priests, a Messiah under the orders of God, sent to fulfill a divine mission outside its country."[52] The scholars' discovery of myth together with the uncovering of archaeological finds from the ancient East encouraged the perception that the Canaanites who lived in Ugarit shared the same culture as the Israelites, a culture expressed in a common mythological literature.

Ratosh saw the revival of Hebrew-Canaanite myth as a conceptual symbol and an aesthetic and political tool for the creation of the new Hebrew culture. The Hebrew myths were intended to form part of the national culture, just as the Greek myths formed part of European culture. Leading researchers of Hebrew culture have attached great importance to Ratosh's use of myth. For the literary scholar Dan Miron, it is a world of images and metaphors expressing a personal point of view;[53] the historian Yaakov Shavit sees it as a multipurpose construction, a rich world that expresses the experiences and consciousness of the modern Hebrew man;[54] the literary scholar Nurit Graetz finds a correlation between the poetic structure and the choice of the myth of Tammuz and Ratosh's national ideology;[55] the scholar of the Kabala Yehuda Libes sees Ratosh as the creator of a new religious myth, and he was therefore in his opinion more religious than many when he spoke of the resurrection of a god.[56] Whatever the case, the myth of ancient Hebraism deviated in its

[50] Ratosh, "Euphrates Land," *From Victory to Collapse*: An *Alef* Anthology, Tel Aviv 1976, pp. 37–38. [Hebrew].

[51] Marcel Mauss, *Compete rendu de G. Dumezil, Le Festin d'immortalite, L'Année sociologique*, n.s 1 (1925) ; David Pace, *Claude Levi-Strauss: The Bearer of Ashes*, London 1983.

[52] Ratosh, *The First Days*, p. 14.

[53] Dan Miron, "Yonatan Ratosh as a Literary Hero," *Haaretz*, 9.4.1990, 15.4.1990.

[54] Shavit, *The New Hebrew Nation*, pp. 131–159. [Hebrew].

[55] Nurit Graetz, "The Myth of Tammuz, Modernism, Nationalism and Canaanism in the Poetry of Ratosh," in idem, ed., *The Canaanite Group: Literature and Ideology*, Tel Aviv 1987, pp. 112–126. [Hebrew].

[56] Yehuda Liebes, "The Tikkun of the Godhead: the Zohar and Yonatan Ratosh," *Alpayim*, 7 (1993), pp. 26–28. [Hebrew].

radicalism from the crystallizing Israeli consciousness that always moved on the axis of Judaism and Zionism.[57]

However, the Canaanite myth was not confined only to the Hebrew culture. Ratosh's national vision was wholly secular, but politically he was very much to the right. Canaanism was not satisfied with the Hebraization of the Jewish homeland, but rather demanded the Hebraization of the entire Middle East. Finally, after 1967, the religious-Zionist settlers adopted Ratosh's Canaanite order of priorities, which placed the land before anything else. In this connection, it is interesting to note that Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, head of the Merkav Ha-Zav Yeshiva, was the first person to offer a financial contribution to Aharon Amir in his attempt to re-create the Canaanite group after the Six-Day War. The cunning of history joined the Young Hebrews to the hills of Judea and Samaria, and the Canaanite was then in the Greater Land of Israel! A prediction was made at an early stage by three Orthodox intellectuals, the most eminent sons of religious Zionism, and also by Gershom Scholem, that Hebraism would conquer Judaism. They correctly saw that the Canaanite challenge was the dialectical opposite of the challenge of religion. After the Six-Day War, Canaanism came in by the back door, and the blue and purple flag was wrapped in a prayer shawl.

GERSHOM SCHOLEM: NEITHER CANAANISM, NOR MESSIANISM

A discussion of Gush Emunim (Bloc of the Faithful) as a unique case of the Canaanization of Sabbetaianism requires one to go to the starting point of Gershom Scholem's views on Zionism. In a conversation with the writer Ehud Ben Ezer, Scholem distinguished two trends that from the beginning preserved the special quality of Zionism: the trend of persistence and continuity and the trend to rebellion. Zionism was preserved by the interplay of these two principles. The question was: "Is Zionism a movement that seeks a continuation of what has been the Jewish tradition throughout the generations, or had it come to introduce a change into the historic phenomenon called Judaism?"[58] One branch saw Zionism as the fulfillment of traditional Judaism, whereas the activist branch favored rebellion and spiritual renewal: "They said, we are sick to death of the exilic mentality, but they were not Canaanites. They said, change, but not a new beginning." The centrifugal trend favored adaptation and assimilation, and the centripetal trend favored internal Jewish strengthening: "Here in Israel we may enumerate all the Canaanite manifestations as part of the centrifugal trend." As against this, the other trend wanted Jewish renewal in Israel. Zionism, in his opinion, cultivated the essence of the Jewish people because it did not support one trend

[57] "Twenty Years after the Death of the Poet Yonatan Ratosh, Founder of the 'Young Hebrews Movement,'" special issue of the *Haaretz Cultural and Literary Supplement*, 6.4.2001. [Hebrew].

[58] Ehud Ben Ezer, ed., *Unease in Zion*, Foreword by Robert Alter, New York 1974, p. 273.

exclusively. A dialectical process requires the dynamic of two principles, a conflict of continuity and rebellion.

The trouble with the Canaanite movement, thought Scholem, was that it sought to annul the dialectical tension that nourished Judaism, Zionism, and Israelism. He claimed that there was no contradiction between continuity and rebellion, but simply this fruitful tension: "We obviously all seek continuation, except for the Canaanites." This dialectic, according to Scholem, and also according to his friend Walter Benjamin, not only applied to the future, but also to the past. There were utopian elements in Judaism that looked back to the past: elevated, hidden things that had not yet been rediscovered. The subversive history of the Judaism of these two scholars sought to undermine the supremacy of the rabbinical version and present a different version, a history of others. Benjamin wanted to reconstruct utopian elements in the past, to pass over the successful and celebrate the oppressed, and Scholem wished to revive the memory of individuals and movements in Judaism that had incurred disapproval.[59] With their refreshing treatment of history, Benjamin and Scholem went against accepted opinion and bestowed legitimacy on the subversive episodes in Judaism.

Canaanism, according to Scholem, could not be considered a utopian element in the Jewish historical development: "In my opinion, cutting the living tie with the heritage of the generations is educational murder. I admit it. I am downright anti-Canaanite."[60] Even from its own point of view, Canaanism clearly did not regard itself as part of the Jewish dialectic. Its representatives denied the continuity of history: "They want to 'leap' over the exile," he said, as if there were some kind of internal bridge to biblical times; but the leap to the Bible was fictitious, as the reality in the Bible was one that no longer existed. Like Kurzweil, Scholem saw that "This Canaanism has deep roots with Berdichevsky: a process of centrifugality is taking place among us: young fellows' dreams of cutting their ties with the entire past and of national existence without a tradition – cutting ties with recent past." In Scholem's opinion, Ben-Gurion was one of the main people responsible for the Canaanite outlook:

> Ben-Gurion encouraged the Canaanites because he skipped directly to the Bible and rejected all exile. But he leapt into the moral Bible, while they turned to the pagan Bible. Ben-Gurion has today forgotten the fact that he alienated himself. He thought than that we were returning to a Biblical historical continuity. But such a continuity exists only in books, and not in history. The continuity of the Biblical period existed within a religious reality and within an historical reality. Ben-Gurion encouraged movements towards cutting off their ties with Judaism here in Israel. But it is impossible to strike roots right into the Bible.[61]

[59] Susan A. Handelman, *Fragments of Redemption: Jewish Thought and Literary Theory in Benjamin, Scholem, and Levinas*, Bloomington 1971.

[60] Ben Ezer, *Unease in Zion*, p. 277.

[61] Ibid, p. 278.

Indeed, Ben-Gurion placed the emphasis in his refurbished biblical commentary on the land rather than religion, the mother country rather than Judaism, the homeland rather than the "wanderings" of exile. Ben-Gurion compared the achievements of the Israel Defense Forces to the conquest of the land by Joshua; archaeology, in his opinion, had replaced the Talmud; he preferred Bedichevsky to Ahad Ha-am; and the "rejection of the exile" was the bridge that connected the biblical Hebrew to the new Hebrew.[62] Although Scholem saw a difference between Ben-Gurion's "moral" Bible and the "idolatrous Bible" of the Canaanites, he felt that cutting off the connection with the legacy of the generations was educational murder, and he consequently described himself as a violent anti-Canaanite. Although he did not consider atheism to be taboo and thought it even quite legitimate, he believed that the secular Canaanite interpretation of the history of the Jews did not have a solid foundation. He said that if the Canaanites had triumphed, all they would have done would be to create a small sect, not a new Hebrew nation. Their victory would have canceled out the dialectical relationship of Israel and the Diaspora and led to a total polarization with the Jews as well as a dissolution into the Semitic space. Scholem's views on the Canaanites – "this 'new people,' this sect of Jews"[63] – recall Christianity, which cut itself off from Judaism, more than Sabbataianism, which Scholem claimed was a legitimate dialectical link in the chain of Jewish history because it hastened the modernization of Judaism. The state of Israel forms part of the historical continuum, unlike the Canaanites, who wanted to create a new national identity based on a leap back to the ancient history of Israel.

Scholem wished to expose the fictitious nature of the basic Canaanite conceptions. Their idea of a "new Hebrew nation" that would arise in the "land of the Euphrates," as if a people could cut itself off from its roots, was unrealistic. The Canaanites, in negating the "essence" that united the Jewish people, would "bring the whole Yishuv to assimilation, destruction or emigration." Their conceptions concerning the past and future were basically untenable:

> They, the Canaanites, would bring the entire Jewish settlement to total assimilation, to oblivion or to emigration. The Canaanites have fictitious concepts as regards the past, the period of the Bible, and the future, too. The fact that we have not been carried away in the tempests of history happens to be a result of anti-Canaanitism. *I am not interested in a State of Canaan.* It is an empty game of fictions, a sectarian game of a small irresponsible and unserious group. And all of this arises from their unwillingness to admit that Judaism can be a living, growing, developing body. If it is impossible to the People of Israel to exist in the Land of Israel as a body possessing historical vitality, responsible for itself – then what did we come here for? Why do I have to live in a country with a Canaanite government, when the only thing

[62] Ohana, *Political Theologies in the Holy Land: Israeli Messianism and its Critics*, London 2009, pp. 17–53.

[63] Ben Ezer, *Unease in Zion*, pp. 288–289.

> we have in common is that we have both learned Hebrew? The fact of speaking Hebrew is not in itself a redeeming fact.[64]

To the idea that underlying the Canaanite outlook there was a desire to bring about a secular and democratic revolution in the whole "land of the Euphrates" among all the Arabs, Scholem replied by drawing an analogy with Trotsky's effrontery in carrying out a secular revolution among an alien people, the Russians. He had previously had a similar dispute with the Jewish Marxists: "We have had our fill of the theory that we must be oil on the wheels of the revolution – that is not what we came to this country for! Not in order to be *that kind* of revolutionaries. And I am telling you – the Canaanite outlook will fail here just as the Jewish Communists failed in Russia."[65] Scholem also rejected another analogy, that with the United States,[66] for there was no comparison between the conditions of settlement in the two places: "What are the Canaanites to do if the Arabs are not Indians? Perhaps only a few thousand of the Arabs will be able to join the Canaanite scheme of creating a new Levantine nation."[67]

Scholem attacked the idea from two directions: To the assertion that Yeshayahu Leibowitz would describe his views on Judaism and secular nationhood as essentially Canaanite, he answered that, unlike Leibowitz, who saw Judaism as something circumscribed, Judaism to him was a living and dynamic phenomenon. To another assertion, that the Canaanites thought he had a particularly Jewish outlook, he replied: "I am in the middle of a process, or of a path. I believe that if something is alive, it is in the middle. What has brought me here is no different from what brought other Zionist Jews here. Anyone who denies that like the Canaanites – then there is no reason why his sect should withstand the tempest of history and the Arab world."[68] An exclusive emphasis on the Canaanite polarity misses the point somewhat, but an overemphasis on the Messianic polarity reveals a lack of understanding of the principle of continuity in history. Scholem tried, together with his warning about the challenge of Canaanism, to warn against the practice of Messianism in the historical reality.

On two occasions, Scholem dwelt on this price of Messianism. In his introduction to his monumental work *Sabbatai Sevi* (1957), he wrote: "Jewish historiography has generally chosen to ignore the fact that the Jewish people have paid a very high price for the messianic idea."[69] In 1972, in his essay "The Messianic Idea in Judaism," Scholem continued to speak of the price of Messianism: "[W]hat I have in mind is the price demanded by Messianism,

[64] Ibid, p. 289.
[65] Ibid, p. 290.
[66] Laor, "American Literature and Israeli Culture."
[67] Ben Ezer, *Unease in Zion*, pp. 290
[68] Ibid, p. 291.
[69] Scholem, *Sabbati Sevi – The Mystical Messiah 1626–1676*. Revised English edition, trans. Zvi R. Werblowsky, New Jersey 1973, p. xii.

the price which the Jewish people has to pay out of its own substance for this idea which it handed over to the world.... For the Messianic idea is not only consolation and hope. Every attempt to realize it tears open the chasms that lead each of its manifestations *ad absurdum*."[70]

Scholem considered "the beginning of redemption" – a phrase coined by Rabbi Abraham Kook – to be a "dangerous formula." Rabbi Kook understood the secularity of the Jews in Eretz Israel as part of the process of setting up a modern nation. In a lecture to the intellectual circle at Kibbutz Oranim in 1975, Scholem said about Rabbi Kook: "He created a confusion of concepts by authorizing a mixture of the ideal of building a society and state with contemporary Messianism."[71] However, Scholem was frightened of the nationalization of concepts: "Ben-Gurion used the term 'Messianism' no less than the people of the religious camp, who perhaps really believed in 'the beginning of redemption."[72] In Scholem's opinion, Ben-Gurion's Messianism was directed toward the state of Israel, whereas the Messianism of Gush Emunim focused on the Land of Israel. He saw Gush Emunim as a modern version of the Sabbetaian movement as follows: "Like the Sabbetaians, their Messianic programme can only lead to disaster.... Today, the consequences of such Messianism are also political, and that is the great danger."[73]

According to Scholem, Gush Emunim overturned the historical basis of Zionism by combining the mythical with the historical and the metaphysical with the concrete. To the question of whether Messianism was still a Zionist enterprise, Scholem answered: "Today we have the Gush Emunim, which is definitely a Messianic group. They use biblical verses for political purposes."[74] Scholem expressed his fears of "the extremists in Gush Emunim," who "use religious sanctions in order to justify their activities in the territories."[75]

There is half a century between Rabbi Kook and the actions of Gush Emunim, but what they have in common is the mixture of one thing (religion) with another thing of a different kind (nationalism). The Messianic yearning became a practical Messianism when the secularity of the Land of Israel was

[70] Scholem, "The Messianic Idea in Judaism," *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality*, New York 1995, pp. 35–36. Scholem repeated these words in his concluding remarks at a study conference on the subject of "The Messianic idea in Jewish Thought," held in honor of his birthday at the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities on December 4–5, 1977. See Scholem, "Messianism – A Never Ending Quest," *On the Possibility of Jewish Mysticism in Our Time and Other Essays*, Philadelphia 1997, pp. 102–113.

[71] Avraham Shapira, "Introduction: Heritage as a Source to Renaissance – the Spiritual Identity of Gershom Scholem," in Scholem, *Explications and Implications – Writings on Jewish Heritage and Renaissance*, Tel Aviv 1982, ii, p. 15. [Hebrew].

[72] "Ze'ev Galili Interviews Gersom Scholem: Messianism, Zionism and Anarchy in the Language," in Scholem, *Continuity and Rebellion*, Tel Aviv 1994, pp. 56–64. [Hebrew].

[73] David Biale, "The Threat of Messianism: An Interview with Gershom Scholem," *The New York Review of Books*, 14.8.1980.

[74] Biale, "The Threat of Messianism."

[75] Irving Howe Interviews Gershom Scholem: "The Only Thing in My Life I Have Never Doubted Is the Existence of God," *Present Tense*, VIII, 1 (Autumn 1980), pp. 53–57.

sanctified. The Messianic form of Canaanite yearning is the concretization of an idea, the process by which the Ten Commandments are translated into the sphere of action, so that a metaphorical Messianism becomes an actual Messianism. Scholem's fears concerned the Sabbataian dynamic as revealed in three syntheses of Land-of-Israel Zionism: the pioneer-Messianic synthesis of Rabbi Kook, the state-Messianic synthesis of Ben-Gurion, and the Canaanite-Messianic synthesis of Gush Emunim. One had a Canaanite Messianism the moment the Messianic yearning of the prayers became a sanctification of the land or of the state, the moment when the symbol became a reality and the idea became a fetish.

ARE THE ISRAELIS ALREADY CANAANITES?

Three years after the foundation of the Israeli state, some of the outstanding Israeli intellectuals of that period, including Joseph Klausner, Natan Rotenststreich, and Isaiah Leibowitz, met to discuss the question Ernst Simon had raised a few months earlier: "Are We Still Jews?" In the lecture Simon had said: "Very, very many of the young people who have grown up in this country feel themselves to be solely Hebrews, Israelis, even if they do not define themselves as 'Canaanites.' Their national sentiment is very strong, and an Arab who has been born in the country is closer to them than a Jew who has come to the country from nearby or than a Jew who lives in New York."[76] More than sixty years ago, Simon clearly recognized the radical option available to Israeli Jews at the time when some of them were forging themselves a state: the Canaanite option that favors geography over history and an enlarged identity over cultural or religious continuity.

Simon developed a typology of two religious states of mind: the Catholic, which sanctifies the profane as well as the sacred, and the Protestant, which differentiates the sacred from the profane.[77] Simon felt that "Catholic" Judaism is liable to lead to a frozen orthodoxy, to withdrawal, to factionalism, and to ultra-Orthodox mentality. "Protestant" Judaism, on the other hand, is liable to lead to a negation of the sacred; in place of God one gets the homeland, and in place of a future-oriented transcendental Messianism one gets a Canaanite Messianism that stresses the concrete, the here and now. Protestant Judaism encourages secularity, denies transcendentality, and sanctions Canaanism. Catholic Judaism is liable to lead to ultra-orthodoxy, to the alienation of religion, and to the ascription of Messianism to the state.

In Rabbi Kook, Simon saw a mixture of "concrete Messianism," as he called it, and an original approach to the relationship between the sacred and the profane. Through the dialectic of the people of Israel and the Land of Israel, the concrete Messianism was shown to be present in the Yishuv, and the secular pioneers in the Land of Israel were "*tzaddikim* despite themselves."

[76] "Debate between Authors: Are We still Jews?" *Aleph* (January 1952); *Haaretz*, 6.12.1951.
[77] Simon, *Are We Still Jews? Essays*, pp. 9–46.

Rabbi Kook did not believe that the pioneers' good deed of redeeming the land could come about through a sin. Simon's conclusion: "The tragic outcome of this Messianic-religious-actual doctrine is manifest in its new secular metamorphosis: the generation of the birth of the State of Israel is crowned as 'the days of the Messiah.' There is a great danger in this political-actual Messianism."[78] Simon criticized those who were so convinced that the founding of the state was the manifestation of Him who "records the generations" and "orders the cycles of time" that it was seen as the approach of the "days of the Messiah," where the distinction between sacred and profane no longer exists. In his opinion, the vitality of historical Judaism was shown by its rejection of every contemporary call for redemption, whether from Christianity, Islam, Shabbetai Zevi, Communism, or Canaanite Messianism.

Like Simon, the question never ceased to preoccupy Baruch Kurzweil: Are we still Jews or are we already Canaanites? Would the universal Messianism of historical Judaism become a "Canaanite Messianism" of modern Jewish nationalism? Kurzweil had already examined these Canaanite tendencies of modern Jewish nationalism and their cultural roots at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He showed that, from the ideological point of view, the "Young Hebrews" of the Yonatan Ratosh variety were an Israeli version of an exilic Jewish manifestation – a logical conclusion of intellectual and aesthetic tendencies that had existed in Hebrew literature for one hundred years.[79] In the writings of Berdichevsky, Shneur, and Tchernikovsky, one can already see a rejection of the Jewish exilic past and an affirmation of archaic and mystical pre-Israelite and Canaanite elements; but in Kurzweil's opinion this theoretical aesthetic trend in the literature of the Hebrew revival had now become the daily reality of the Israeli children in their own country. The Canaanite movement was a radical and conclusive stage in the process of secularization and in practice brought the tendencies in modern Jewish nationalism to a paradoxical outcome.

The problem that troubled Kurzweil was the change that had taken place in modern times from "abstract Jews" to "Hebrew Jews," a development that went from Berdichevsky to romantic Zionism and Hebrew culture.[80] In this "godless theology," myth had a place of decisive importance: "Intellectual play with myth without religious faith, and, no less important, the mobilization of myth for political ends, are especially negative phenomena because they remove the restraints of rational criticism and throw the gates of the irrational wide open."[81] The mixing of the theological and the secular reached its climax in the transformation of the Messianic idea into a political reality: "Israel knows this … and yet it hitches Messianic-apocalyptic horses onto the

[78] Yehoyada Amir, *Bridges: Akibah Ernst Simon and the "Hope of the Lines*," Jerusalem 1996, p. 42. [Hebrew.]
[79] Kurzweil, "The Nature and Origins of the 'Young Hebrews' (Canaanites)."
[80] Kurzweil, *Our New Literature – Continuity or Revolution*, Tel Aviv 1971, pp. 270–300. [Hebrew].
[81] Kurzweil, *Struggling for the Principles of Judaism*, Jerusalem 1969. [Hebrew].

wagon of State. The religious-Messianic dream is its credentials for its appearance on the stage of history! Like it or not, the religious-Messianic eschatology is the metaphysical basis of the State, and this eschatology is given a secular interpretation. The State declares its very existence, its living immanence, to be the presence and realization of transcendentality."[82]

The Six-Day War placed the overlapping of the sacred and the profane, the theological and the political, and the Messianic and the territorial in a fascinating perspective. One could say that the ironic, scathing comments made by Kurzweil in 1970 are a good exposition of his critique of "territorial Messianism":

> The year 1967 placed practical Zionism, which could only be a political-*mamlachti* Zionism, at its most fateful crossroads. The conquest of the entire country in the Six-Day War was a most powerful and dangerous challenge, a kind of touchstone of the truth and authenticity of the historiosophical interpretation that Zionism gave to Judaism. The national-secular redemption was complete. The territorial Messianism had achieved its aims. The heavenly Messianism had come down to earth. It was almost a proof of the complete legitimacy of Zionism's claim to be continuation and the living and life-giving actualization of Judaism. The ancient myths at the heart of Judaism – and in the form of their rational reworking as well – had become a historical actuality. The soldiers who captured the Wall were truly like dreamers. Breaking into the Old City and conquering it were extra-temporal manifestations. The "now" was also the past; the past was identical with the future. A synoptic vision united them all. Divine historicity, which is meta-historical, and normal, secular historicity, the product of time, seemed to melt into one another and become as one, and there were consequently many who spoke of a religious revival. There was clearly a blurring of distinctions.... The distinction between sacred and profane was obliterated. From now on, everything was sacred or could be sacred.
>
> Zionism and its daughter, the State of Israel, which had reached the Wall through military conquest as the realization of the earthly Messianism, could never forsake the Wall and abandon the conquered areas of the Land of Israel without estranging itself from its historiosophical understanding of Judaism. Practical Zionism was caught in the web of its achievements. Abandoning them would be to admit its failure as the representative and agent of the historical continuity of Judaism.... It could not be that the gallop of the Messianic apocalypse could be held up in order to permit the passengers to get out and look at the spectacular scenery of the Day of the Lord.... The blowing of the ram's horn by all the Chief Rabbis next to the Wall will not change anything and from now on it will simply be a magical rite. Similarly, there cannot be a beginning of redemption at a time when full redemption is achieved and abandoned.[83] Kurzweil claimed that in 1967 religious Zionism faced its

[82] Kurzweil, "On the Usefulness and the Danger of the Science of Judaism," cited in Ohana, *Messianism and Mamlachtiut: Ben-Gurion and the Intellectuals, between Political Vision and Political Theology*, Sede Boker 2003, p. 373. [Hebrew].

[83] Kurzweil, "Israel and the Diaspora," *Struggling for the Principles of Judaism*, p. 273. [Hebrew].

> moment of truth. The conquest of the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) was its greatest challenge because then, in his opinion, a philosophy of history came into existence that saw the state of Israel as the fulfillment and essence of Judaism. The national-secular redemption reached its culmination with the conquest of parts of the homeland: Thus Messianism on the one hand and Canaanism on the other came together in what Kurzweil called "territorial Messianism," whose origins were influenced by the pretension of the new Hebrew to give birth to himself and to base his claims on the territorial place and not on the metaphysical Place (i.e., God).

Isaiah Leibowitz, like Simon and Kurzweil, saw that in the process of making nationhood a supreme value, "Rabbi Kook had a heavy responsibility, because he raised Jewish nationhood to the level of something sacred."[84] Leibowitz summarized Rabbi Kook's political theology as follows: "What happens to the people of Israel today reflects processes taking place in the sacred sphere and not in human history." According to Leibowitz, the theologization of the political and the politicization of the theological gave birth to Gush Emunim, which was "nationalism in a wrapping of religious sanctity supplied by Rabbi Kook." The source of inspiration for Gush Emunim was in fact Rabbi Kook, in whom the universal element and the national element were united: "The physical upbuilding of the nation and the manifestation of its spirit are one and the same, and all of it is part of the upbuilding of the world."[85]

In the deterministic Messianism of Gush Emunim, which combined the religious and the political Messianism, there was a radicalization, represented by the shift from Rabbi Kook's "historical necessity" to the activization and anticipation-of-the-end of his son, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook. This radicalization marked a change from the cosmic-universal dimension of Messianism to the particular national-Israeli dimension. Where the nationalistic and Canaanitic Gush Emunim version of Messianism was concerned, Leibowitz saw that "when it becomes clear that the state has no splendor, eternity or glory, everything will explode. This is exactly what happened to the disciples of Shabbetai Zevi, who suddenly had nothing left. The people of Gush Emunim likewise have no knowledge of plain Judaism without the Messianic gleam."[86] Leibowitz's comparison of Gush Emunim to Sabbetaianism and Christianity was not simply an extreme way of expressing himself, but was rather an attempt to expose, once again, the radical significance, as he saw it, of this national-religious movement that explained the sanctity of the land in Messianic terms: "As soon as the Messianic idea began to have practical consequences, it almost destroyed the Jewish people. It gave birth to Christianity and Sabbetaianism, and – in our days – to Gush Emunim."[87]

[84] Michael Shashar, *Why are People Afraid of Yeshayahu Leibowitz*, Jerusalem 1995, p. 48. [Hebrew].
[85] Ibid, p. 29.
[86] Ohana, "El sionismo de Yeshayahu Leibowitz," *Kivunim – Revista De Sionismo Y Judaismo* (1997), pp. 37–52.
[87] Shashar, *Why are People Afraid of Yeshayahu Leibowitz*, p. 128.

What was new and original in Leibowitz's criticism is the claim – made by a Zionist, not a post-Zionist – that the occupation was destroying Zionism. That was a radical charge, and he also made it against religious Zionism, which he felt had largely become a neo-Canaanite ideology through its sanctification of the trees, stones, and graves of Judea and Samaria. Leibowitz's fear of Canaanism was shown in the concern he expressed in 1968 that "the state will no longer be a Jewish State but a Canaanite State."[88] Four years later, in his review of a book by Eliezer Livne, Leibowitz declared that for young people, "the main idea is that 'Israeliness' is the antithesis of 'Judaism,' which is alien to it." He added:

> If the outstanding literary expression of anti-Jewish Zionism was Hazaz's "Sermon," the "Canaanite" movement was a caricatural expression of it. The adherents of that school of thought even described themselves as anti-Jewish because of Zionism's declared connection with the Jewish people and its history. Although a doctrinal, belligerent Canaanism has been confined to a small minority and is regarded as a marginal phenomenon, this current has in fact left its imprint on the society and culture of the state created by Zionism, and expresses the unconscious and sometimes conscious feelings of many sections of the public, and especially of the youth and intellectuals.[89]

The attempt to ascribe sanctity to the Greater Land of Israel, according Leibowitz, was idolatry, a mythological interpretation that tried to turn a philosophy of history into an ideology.[90] Leibowitz wished to expose the philosophy of history of Gush Emunim as a Messianic ideology that sought to turn politics into myth and myth into a reality. His great fear was that the Messianic myth of the Greater Land of Israel would become a genetic mutation of Zionism. He exposes the process of Canaanization as paradoxically resulting from the domination of the Land of Israel by the Jewish Torah. This surprising dialectical development to which Leibowitz drew attention represented a penetration of the Canaanite ideology to a central position in the state of Israel. This was not due to the pressure of the secular Canaanite movement on the center, but precisely to the annexation of the historical homeland by religious Zionism: "The people has replaced God, the land has replaced the Torah and nationalism has replaced faith."[91]

Leibowitz believed that the period between the War of Independence and the Six-Day War was the most "normal" period in the history of Israel, and therefore perhaps the most Zionist: Others did not rule over the Israelis, and the Israelis did not rule over others. Until his death, Leibowitz waged an all-out

[88] Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values and the Jewish State*, trans. Eliezer Goldman, et al., Cambridge, MA 1992, p. 156.

[89] Leibowitz, *Judaism, Jewish People and the State of Israel*, Jerusalem 1976, pp. 287–288. [Hebrew].

[90] Avishai Margalit & Moshe Halbertal, *Idolatry*, Cambridge, MA 1992.

[91] Ohana, "Every Government is Evil: Interview with Leibowitz," *Maariv*, 22.1.1993. [Hebrew].

war against the mythologization of the Greater Land of Israel and called for a return to the Zionist rationale as he saw it: A free people cannot be an occupying people. Zionism, in his opinion, had been conquered from within and had lost its humanistic character. The Leibowitzian philosophy aiming at clarifying concepts and distinguishing between sacred and secular fused with his political thinking, which called for a withdrawal from the occupied territories. His main conclusions were thus: "The claim that the idea of the Greater Land of Israel is the essence of Zionism is a total lie; this is because it is nationalism dressed up as holiness."[92] Underlying Leibowitz's thinking, there was a fear of two things: a political theology such as one finds in Carl Schmitt and a political mythology such as Ernst Cassirer warned about.[93] The theology and the mythology were liable to become Janus-faced: The transcendental face looked toward the Shechina, and the idolatrous face looked toward the tangible. The concretization of the land became Canaanism, and the concretization of the state could lead to fascism.

The combination of what Simon, Kurzweil, and Leibowitz called a "concrete Messianism" and the old-new Canaanism was in their opinion disastrous. They feared a Messianic "anticipation of the end," a fetishization of the state, and a neutralization of Jewish life in the era of secular Jewish nationalism. Through this separation of spheres, they sought to make the secular world rational so that it would be open to investigation and criticism. As followers of the neo-Kantian tradition, they wanted a Judaism free from the restrictions of matter and materiality. This was the Protestant conception of a religion free from myths: If we cleanse the land from the fetishes of symbolism, we shall be left with practical questions alone. The land ceases to be the ancestral heritage, a relic of Canaanism combined with a kind of fetishistic Judaism.

[92] Ohana, "Yeshayahu Leibowitz: The Radical Intellectual and the Critic of 'the Canaanite Messianism,'" in Aviezer Ravitzky, ed., *Yeshayahu Leibowitz: Between Conservatism and Radicalism – Reflections on His Philosophy*, Jerusalem 2007, pp. 155–177. [Hebrew].

[93] Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, vol. 2, trans. R. Manheim, New Haven 1954; Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. G. Schwab, Cambridge, MA 1996.

4

The Nativist Theology

SETTLEMENT AND WAR

The "Nimrods" of the 1940s were the personification of Canaanism rebelling against Judaism. The settler-Nimrods of the end of the 1960s paradoxically exemplified the Canaanite cult of sanctification of the place, but this time wearing skullcaps and prayer-shawls. The establishment, defense, and fall of the four settlements of Gush Etzion (the Etzion Bloc) in 1948 was one of the major episodes of the state of Israel in the making, and played a significant role in the formation of the collective memory of the Israelis. In the period between the War of Independence and the Six-Day War, the Community of Memory of the sons of Kfar Etzion nurtured the myth of Gush Etzion, of which, according to one of the women concerned, "the prevailing tone was one of remembering the past and hoping for its restoration."[1] According to Haim Guri, the "politics of memory" of the sons of Kfar Etzion centered on the "myth of return."[2]

The Community of Memory adopted forms and abandoned them in accordance with changing interests and circumstances, and with a free play between the different dimensions of memory.[3] Thus, the borders of the Community of Memory expanded or contracted; the community became open or closed, active or passive. Its members selected from the past the elements that suited them and integrated them into their outlook and preoccupations in the

[1] Yonah Berman, "The Children of Kfar Etzion," in Me'ir Hovav, ed., *El Keshet Ha-Brit Jerusalem*, 1972, p. 90. [Hebrew].

[2] Zvi Tzameret, "'Hine mutalot gufotenu' (Here Our Bodies Lie) – A Conversation With Haim Gouri," *Idan*, 7. *Special issue: Gush Etzion From Its Beginnings to 1948* (1986), pp. 209–212. [Hebrew].

[3] On Communities of Memory in Israel, see for example Michael Feige, "The Jewish Settlement in Hebron as a Case of Collective Memory," *Yahadut Zemanenu* (Contemporary Jewry) 10 (1996), pp. 73–111. [Hebrew]; Liav Sadei, "Moshav Ein Habsor as a Community of Memory and as a Place of Memory for Settlement in Sinai", M. A. thesis submitted to the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev 2000. [Hebrew]; see also A. P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, Manchester 1985.

present; and conversely, the images of the past shaped the present consciousness of the community.[4] My aim is to reveal this dialectic between the setting up of the Kfar Etzion Community of Memory and the politics of memory of Gush Emunim.

The founding of Kfar Etzion in 1943 was the third link in the chain of settlement in the Hebron Hills. It was preceded by two short-lived attempts: Migdal Eder was set up in 1927 by the Zikhron David company and was destroyed in the disturbances of 1929.[5] El Ha-Har was founded in 1935 and lasted only one year; it bore the name Kfar Etzion, a translation of the name of its founder, Zvi Holzmann (*Holz* meaning tree).[6] In 1943 the founding group Kevutzat Avraham settled there. It was named after the former Chief Rabbi of Palestine, Yitzhak Hacohen Kook, because the members came from the Benei Akiva movement in Poland, and they were joined by members of the Hashomer Hadati from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Germany. The group waited seven years in Kfar Pines and constituted the founding nucleus of the first of the settlements of the Hakibbutz Hadati Bloc.

On arriving in Kfar Etzion, the settlers dug out cisterns, built terraces for agriculture, made plantations, and raised livestock. They set up the Neve Ovadiah rest and convalescent home (named after the leader of the Hashomer Hadati in Poland), which served as a center of religious culture where writers and scholars like Shai Agnon and Rabbi Binyamin stayed for long periods. Many people would visit the Jewish settlement in the Hebron Hills, which had become quite well known. At the end of 1947, the number of adults there had reached 163, and the number of children was 50. Together with new settlers – immigrants from South Africa, the "Teheran Children," and Holocaust survivors – Kfar Etzion was a successful combination of vision, settlement, and local patriotism. The senior members of the community, who came from the Jewish *shtetls* of Central and Eastern Europe, were distinguished by the special Jewish content and cultural vitality that belongs to a religious kibbutz.[7]

The desire to secure the Jewish outpost in the Hebron Hills and fears for the safety of an isolated settlement in the heart of an Arab area led to the establishment of three other settlements that now constituted Gush Etzion (the Etzion Bloc):[8] Massuot Yitzhak, named after the Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Herzog, was established in 1941 by a Benei Akiva nucleus of Holocaust survivors;

[4] For further information on this subject, see E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge 1984; P. Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations*, 26 (1989), 7–25; B. Schwartz, "The Social Context of Commemoration: A Study in Collective Memory," *Social Forces*, 61 (1982), pp. 374–402.

[5] Yohanan Ben Yaakov, "Migdal Eder," *Idan*, 7 (1986), pp. 23–40. [Hebrew] .

[6] Ze'ev Aner, "Holzmann, the Man Who Gave His Name to Gush Etzion," *Idan*, 7 (1986), pp. 53–62. [Hebrew] .

[7] Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, ed., *Gush Etzion – Fifty Years of Struggle and Creativity*, pp. 11–99. [Hebrew]; *Zvi Ilan, New Findings in Research on Kfar Etzion*, Kfar Etzion Field School, 1984, p. 14. [Hebrew].

[8] Raffi Ilan, "The Settlements of Hakibbutz Hadati in Gush Etzion 1943–1948," *Idan*, 7 (1986), 89–110. [Hebrew].

Ein Tsurim was set up in 1946 by the members of a native-born Benei Akiva nucleus and settlers from Biria in Upper Galilee; and Revadim was established by members of Hashomer Hatza'ir-Kibbutz Artzi in 1947.[9] The settlement strategy of Hakibbutz Hadati was the concentration of a bloc of settlements for cultural and agricultural reasons.[10] In October 1947 Gush Etzion numbered 450 souls and comprised 20,000 *dunams*. However, regional development and the impetus to settle was stopped by the War of Independence.

Immediately after the United Nations declaration of the establishment of a Jewish State on November 29, 1947, the Arabs began to attack Gush Etzion (the Etzion Bloc).[11] The partition decision took thirty settlements out of the borders of the Jewish State, including the settlements of the Bloc. Key events in the War of Independence are linked with Gush Etzion: The Convoy of the Ten, in which ten travelers were killed on January 5, 1947, in an attack on a convoy carrying supplies from Jerusalem to Gush Etzion;[12] the evacuation of the children of Kfar Etzion, which also took place on January 5, 1947, under the pressure of the siege of Gush Etzion; the Thirty-Five, the defeat of the "hill platoon" under the command of Danny Mass, which was on its way to help the besieged Gush Etzion (this was one of the most heroic and tragic episodes of the war, and among the fallen were some of the Palmach's best commanders and fighters);[13] and the Nebi Daniel Convoy, a reinforcement bringing fighters and supplies, which was attacked on March 27, 1948, near the site of Nebi Daniel, next to Gush Etzion. Thirteen fighters were killed.[14] These major episodes of the war in Gush Etzion became constitutive symbols in the Israeli collective memory.

The last battle in Gush Etzion took place on May 12 and 13, 1948. The Arab Legion, assisted by the villagers of the area, attacked the settlements of the Bloc, and their superiority in arms and men decided the battle. The Etzion Bloc was divided into two: Kfar Etzion and Massuot Yitzhak in the south, and Ein Tsurim and Revadim in the north. The wounded were transported at night from Kfar Etzion to Massuot Yitzhak. Divided into two groups that had no communication or mutual assistance, and having no ammunition, the

[9] Uri Pinkerfeld, "Strata of Gush Etzion," *Idan*, 7 (1986), pp. 111–122. [Hebrew].

[10] Yehoshua Tversky, *Work and Faith – Religious Settlement in the Land of Israel*, Tel Aviv 1972. [Hebrew].

[11] Dov Knohl, *Siege in the Hills of Hebron*, New York 1958.

[12] Uri Milstein, "The Beginning of the War on the Roads in 1948," *Ma'arachot*, p. 281 (November 1981), pp. 43–47. [Hebrew].

[13] The people of Kfar Etzion also acquired the legacy of the Thirty-Five through joint publications with the IDF and the Ministry of Education. See Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, ed., *The Story of the Thirty-Five – The Legacy of Gush Etzion*, Headquarters of the Chief Education Officer Kfar Etzion, 1990. [Hebrew]; *In Search of the Thirty-Five,* College of the Legacy of the Hebron Hills – Field School, in collaboration with the Torah Department in the Ministry of Education and Culture, Kfar Etzion 1971. [Hebrew]; Motti Zeira, "Early Stages in the Creation of the Myth of the 'Lamed Heh,'" *Yahadut Zemanenu* (Contemporary Jewry) 10 (1996) pp. 41–72. [Hebrew].

[14] "The Nebi Daniel Convoy," *The Hagana in Jerusalem: Friends' Testimonies and Memories*, II, 1947–1948 Jerusalem 1975, pp. 103–112. [Hebrew].

fighters entered the decisive second day without their commander, who had been killed. When the Arab armor broke into Kfar Etzion the next day, a last message was sent out to Jerusalem – "The Queen has fallen" – which became the tragic symbol of the fall of the Bloc. The Arab villagers massacred the captured Israeli fighters, and 127 of them fell on that day; only four remained alive. Two hundred and forty fighters and settlers fell in the battles of Gush Etzion.[15] Only in November 1950 were the slain of Gush Etzion brought to a common grave on Mount Herzl. More than 50,000 Jerusalemites accompanied the funeral convoy. The Knesset eventually decreed the day of the fall of Kfar Etzion as the Day of Remembrance for all the slain of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). On the day after the fall of Gush Etzion, May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion declared the founding of the State of Israel, and later wrote a hymn of praise to the epic of Gush Etzion:

> I do not know of a more glorious, tragic and heroic episode in the whole of the heroic war of the Hagana and of the Israel Defence Forces than the episode of Gush Etzion. Cut off for months from the centres of the Yishuv, almost without hope of winning or of holding on, the defenders of the Bloc – the people of the settlements and the members of the Hagana from outside, most of them from Jerusalem – stood their ground with a desperate, forceful heroism, knowing that they were not only defending the four settlements of the Etzion Bloc, but the glory of Israel and the heart of its sanctity, our eternal city Jerusalem.
>
> The people of Jerusalem owe a debt of thanks … first of all to those who fell at Kfar Etzion. Their sacrifice saved Jerusalem more than the entire war effort.
>
> The episode of Gush Etzion is a great and awe-inspiring saga and the glory of the war of the Jews.… Among the splendid heroism of our fighters from all corners of the land, the tremendous heroism of the defenders of Gush Etzion shines forth with a special light, and all those who took part in that glorious episode are assured of a part in the world-to-come and in the eternity of the people of Israel.[16]

THE COMMUNITY OF MEMORY

In May 1948 sixty-two children, most of the mothers, the sick, and the aged of Kfar Etzion were taken to the Ratisbonne Monastery and Beit Hakerem in

[15] Motti Golani, "The Headquarters of the Jerusalem and Gush Etzion District in 1948," *Idan*, 7 (1986), pp. 181–192. [Hebrew]; see also in this journal the articles of Mordechai Na'or and Uriel Ofek and the testimonies of Yigal Allon and Israel Galili. Ze'ev Vilnai, *The Campaign for the Liberation of Israel*, Jerusalem 1953, pp. 53–60. [Hebrew]; *The Last Battle For Kfar Etzion*, Hakibbutz Hadati and the Association of the Groups of Hapo'el Hamizrahi, Tel Aviv 1949. [Hebrew]; Sha'ul Raz, *The Holy Mountain – The War and Defeat of Kfar Etzion*, Tel Aviv 1951. [Hebrew].

[16] David Ben-Gurion, "Gathering of Released Prisoners," *Habima*, Tel Aviv, 29.3.49. The Archive of the Institute of the Ben-Gurion Heritage. [Hebrew].

Jerusalem. It was the first time in the War of Independence that mothers and children had been evacuated from besieged settlements. The French monks in the monastery accommodated the refugees in a wing placed at the disposal of the Jewish community, but because of the crowded conditions, some of the children were taken for a time to the Wizo Children's Home and the home of the writer Rabbi Binyamin. In Ratisbonne, things were organized on the lines of a kibbutz: There were common children's houses and public dining halls and services. In addition to having to experience the difficult situation in Jerusalem, the children of Kfar Etzion suffered from feelings of fear and uncertainty concerning the fate of their fathers. The dozens of women did not learn of the fate of their husbands until two weeks after the state was declared: They had become widows and their children were orphans. Yona Berman, one of the children from Kfar Etzion, remembers the time at Ratisbonne as "a period of great fear, of getting up suddenly during nights of bombardment and leaping rapidly over dark, wide steps on the way to the big, long, dark shelter."[17] In Ratisbonne, the generation of the children of 1948 saw the light of day. They included some that had never known their fathers – the youngest group among the children of Kfar Etzion.

In June 1948, with the first lull in the fighting when the road to Jerusalem was opened, the mothers and children were moved to Petah Tikva, where they lived in the Netzah Israel school in difficult conditions until the school year began. After two months there, the group from Kfar Etzion, comprising 135 souls, was allotted six abandoned buildings in Gebalyia, a pleasant neighborhood between Jaffa and Bat Yam favored by government officials.[18] It is ironic that the Arab population that had been uprooted from this neighborhood made its way to the Gaza Strip, where they became refugees in the camp of Jebaliya. Giva't Aliya – the former Gebalyia – was also organized in all respects like a kibbutz. Most of the women there were widows and there were seventy children. There was a difference of ten years between the oldest and the youngest, and so there was a break in the memories of childhood: The children born in 1944 could clearly remember Kfar Etzion and were able to miss it, whereas the younger ones who had lost their fathers had to rely on hearsay concerning the place and their lost parents. Esther Nofar, a clinical psychologist and one of the children of Kfar Etzion relates:

> There is no doubt that we are drawn again and again to the place of our childhood where we experienced a great disaster before we had the strength to bear it …
>
> We were born orphans.… We fell into a situation in which we had to grieve over something that wasn't ours. The many children who left the village as babies or had been born after the departure did not remember anything.

[17] Yonah Berman, ibid.

[18] Haim Bresheeth, "Gebalyia as a Symbol: Three Perspectives," *Theory and Criticism – An Israeli Forum*, 16 (Spring 2000), pp. 233–238. [Hebrew].

> For someone who can't remember, the difficulty on an unconscious level is enormous. You sit next to a black hole and don't know what to fill it with.[19]

The fall of Kfar Etzion and the condition of being without a father shaped the childhood of the group from Kfar Etzion at Giv'at Aliya.[20] The years of childhood in the new place were marked by an exceptional restlessness and tension on the part of the adults, the result of the disaster that had hit everyone. Those who were born orphans had to rely on the memories of others to understand what they had lost. In contrast with the silence on the matter that prevailed within the buildings, in the great courtyard they consciously sought out the past. The group of children played a therapeutic role in the reconstruction of the lost experience. The children were sometimes given the names of their fathers. The few men in the establishment took upon themselves the yoke of collective fatherhood. For instance, on one floor there was one man, Shlomo Heimovitz, and eight widows lived next to him. Nahum Ben-Sira managed the Children's Society (*hevrat yeladim*). In the great courtyard at Giv'at Aliya, the children built the "Rock Hill" and the "Yellow Hill" and reenacted dramatized situations at Kfar Etzion. When the older children went to the Takhemoni School in Bat Yam, they were considered an already-formed and elitist group: Ten Etzion children out of about thirty were all dressed identically and sang different words to familiar songs. Yona Berman relates: "We were characterised by a strong feeling of unity, of being connected to one another, and we therefore felt we were one body, that we were able to overturn any order."[21]

With regard to the living conditions at Giv'at Aliya, many testimonies support the view expressed by Yohanan Ben Yaakov, one of the Kfar Etzion children: "The families lived in terrible conditions. There are some who try to prettify it, but altogether it was a difficult business."[22] The burden was heaviest on the mothers:

> The mothers fell into a pressure-cooker. They had lived through a tragic experience and were not able to get away from it. They had no help at that time from psychologists and each one was shut up in her own sorrow. They were paralyzed and did not speak about what they were going through. My mother was married for five months when she had to leave my father. They were hardly together at all.

[19] Esther Nofar, "A Sea of Yearnings," *Amudim* (May 1997), pp. 238–241. [Hebrew].

[20] Evidence of the difficult childhood people had at Giva't Aliya is to be found in the video film produced by Me'ir Ben Sira in the summer of 2001. It was on the occasion of the party for the eightieth birthday of his father, Nahum Ben Sira, who was in charge of the Children's Society. This was also one of the reunions of the people of Kfar Etzion who had lived at Giva't Aliya.

Natan Shnor also describes the difficult atmosphere: "Gebalyia was a kind of closed hothouse in which everything stewed in its own juice: thirty widows from Kfar Etzion who openly or secretly looked with disapproval at any man from the Gush who had survived." *The Journal of Kibbutz Be'erot Yitzhak* (April 1987) 10, p. 1513. [Hebrew].

[21] Yonah Berman, ibid, p. 90.

[22] David Ohana, interview with Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, October 2000. [Hebrew].

> The fact that they were together prevented the mothers from giving vent to their sorrow. They were unable to express their feelings, as they feared criticism. The society at Giv'at Aliya had an abnormal structure which held in tensions. One also had the pressures and guilt-feelings to which the families which had remained whole were subjected. Couples feared becoming pregnant.[23]

The kibbutz-like arrangement at Giv'at Aliya lasted for four years. After the prisoners came back from Jordan, some of the people from Giv'at Aliya joined a new kibbutz, Nir Etzion, which had been founded on the Carmel. David Ben-David, one of the founders of that kibbutz and the former mukhtar of Kfar Etzion, related: "I felt that it was forbidden to us, from the historical point of view, to allow a Jewish settlement, and especially Kfar Etzion, to be wiped off the map. I felt that it was our duty to create a nest for the children of the fathers who had perished, a place in which they would be brought up in accordance with their parents' ideals."[24]

Nir Etzion was intended to commemorate Kfar Etzion, and it was therefore founded in the Mount Carmel region, which recalled the landscape of the Hebron Hills. In 1952 seven widows left with their children for Kevutzat Yavne, which opened its gates to the survivors of Kfar Etzion. A number of families later went to live in the Yad Eliahu quarter in Tel Aviv. In Giv'at Aliya the communal society broke up and its remaining members went to live independently.

In order to preserve the connection with the Children's Society that had come into being after the fall of Kfar Etzion, two organizations were set up: The Organization of the Survivors of Gush Etzion, which was devoted to providing social assistance to widows, and The Organization of the Sons of Gush Etzion, the purpose of which was to immortalize the memory of the slain of the Bloc and to help in the education of their children. This organization began to publish books and pamphlets about people from the Gush; they kept the subject alive through conferences, radio programs, and journalism, and organized commemorative exhibitions and public assemblies, some of them in the presence of Rabbi Zvi Moshe Nerya and Rabbi Shlomo Goren. The memory of Gush Etzion had an important place in the training programs of Benei Akiva and the other youth movements.[25] In 1952 there appeared the first book on the Etzion Bloc, *Siege In the Hills of Hebron* by Dov Knohl, one of the fighters of Gush Etzion. In the introduction to the English edition, which appeared in 1958, Abba Eban spoke of the place of the saga of Gush Etzion in the collective memory of the young Israel:

> The memory of these events is vivid in the mind of a grateful nation; and it will certainly be held in reverence wherever the saga of Israel's rebirth is told.

[23] Esther Nofar, "A Sea of Yearnings."

[24] David Ben David, *A Bridge over a Chasm*. Nir Etzion 1996, p. 265. [Hebrew].

[25] Ya'akov Even-Hen, ed. *Leaves of Etzion, Collection for Youth and Students of the History of Gush Etzion and its War,* Organization of the Sons of Gush Etzion and the Benei Akiva Organization in the Land of Israel. Or Etzion Yeshiva (1978). [Hebrew].

> There are many such episodes of siege in the long history of a people to whom the gift of life has never been freely accorded. No monument of words is an adequate memorial to such as these.[26]

In contrast to Eban's Zionist-Israeli form of commemoration, Hanan Porat understood the task of commemoration to mean a political imperative to prepare the way for a return to Gush Etzion:

> An enormous effort was made by the parents to gather together every scrap of information and memories concerning Gush Etzion and to nurture the desire to remember among the children (through the distribution of picture-albums, and the collection and documentation of diaries, etc., from the Bloc). All this was incised deep within the hearts of the inhabitants of Kfar Etzion and fostered pride and a sense of belonging to a group. The power of memory nurtured by the parents and survivors of Gush Etzion was the spiritual focus from which later came the realization of the return home.[27]

One of the activities of the "Organization of the Sons of Gush Etzion" was arranging summer camps for the children of Kfar Etzion scattered throughout Israel. There "the young people developed the sense of connection which was special to them. This feeling of a deep spiritual connection between them based on memory of the past together with the desire of going forward into a common future is what made them take part in the gatherings and summer-camps." For years, the summer camps "preserved the relationship between the children and gave this relationship an educational value-content which revolved around Etzion."[28] For instance, in the first summer camp, which took place at "Yemin Orde" near Nir Etzion, the camp was given the image of Kfar Etzion, and various sites were called "Giv'at Hasla'im" (Rock Hill), "Emek Haberakha" (The Valley of Blessing), and so on. The organizers of the summer camps were Naftali Greenspan and Nahum Ben-Sira, and they took place at the settlements of Kibbutz Hadati at Kfar Pines, the Shafir Regional Centre, Kfar Haro'eh, and Giva't Washington.

The socializing in the summer camps took the form of yearly meetings that took place every summer, in which "Etzioni" names were given to groups and areas within the camp. The participants were bequeathed a common memory through stories and programs on Kfar Etzion. One of those taking part, Yehoshua Altman, wrote in the first issue of *Nativ Etzion*, the organ of the survivors of Kfar Etzion, "Everyone must make every effort to have a greater

[26] Abba Eban, Introduction, in Dov Knohl, *Siege in the Hills of Hebron*, pp. 11–12. In the first Hebrew edition of the book, Yigal Allon, commander of the Palmach, wrote that the continuation of the war in Gush Etzion was prevented due to mistaken political considerations. Ben-Gurion disliked this, and in the second edition of the book it was written "due to certain political and strategic considerations."

[27] Hanan Porat, "Memory – The Secret of Redemption," *Gushpanka – Journal of the Gush Etzion Settlements* (May 1987), p. 5, p. 14. [Hebrew].

[28] Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, *Gush Etzion*, p. 311.

connection with his fellow, each member with some other member, through more inclusive encounters, whether in summer-camps, excursions and journeys, or whether in serious, ideological encounters."[29] The sense of belonging to an extended family still existed among the graduates of the summer camps: "The children felt the need for these family-like relations as a compensation for families which were incomplete. There was a feeling of brotherly closeness among the children, for we grew up together and there was a sense of connection with a common cause, the memory of which was dear to all of us."[30] Memory was a central feature in the social organization of the survivors of Kfar Etzion, and according to Maurice Halbwachs it helped to create a collective identity.[31] In the summer camps there were some who imagined returning to build it again;

> We, the children of Etzion, are building a camp here.
> Joy prevails here … and before us is the goal …
> to maintain the tradition of our fathers
> and not to permit the glowing ember to become extinguished,
> to remain united
> and to plan for the future …[32]

In the course of time, ideas were put forward for bringing the Etzion people together by founding a common settlement or by settling in one of the existing kibbutzim. Unlike in the cases of Massuot Yitzhak, Ein Tsurim, and Revadim, in which most of the members who had survived were those who refounded the settlements, the breakup of the social framework of Giv'at Aliya that had held the children together for some four years prevented the existence of a common nucleus owing to the lack of a common location and differences of age.[33] The kibbutz framework "was part of an ideal image of the past which they (the young people D.O.) pictured in their imaginations, and to which they aspired in the future."[34] Accordingly, they dreamed of setting up a nucleus within the framework of the army. In 1960 there was a gathering of the former children in the home of the Porat family in Kfar Pines, and after that there were two gatherings in the home of the Tilman family in Beit Yannai. Later on, the surviving parents from Kfar Etzion also participated in the gatherings, and the young people came "to hear the memories of the members of the Kfar Etzion of those days, who drew attention to various elements of their existence there.… For the first time, the younger generation heard about these things from the older people, at great length. The younger generation responded to these gatherings enthusiastically."[35] "It was not long before this tireless effort

[29] Yehoshu'a Altman, *Netiv Etzion* (January 1959) No. 1. [Hebrew] .
[30] Yonah Berman, ibid.
[31] Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, Chicago and New York 1992.
[32] Yonah Berman, ibid, p. 92.
[33] Hanan Porat, "Memory – The Secret of Redemption."
[34] Yonah Berman, ibid, 95.
[35] Idem, 94.

bore fruit and proved to be an important element in the fourth rebuilding of Gush Etzion."[36]

The maintenance of the intergenerational relationships and the preservation of the living memories strengthened the correlation between the former destruction of Kfar Etzion and its resurrection in the future. However, for the preservers of the memory, the realization of this "restorative utopia" – to use an expression coined by Gershom Scholem in a different context – required a return to the former site as an essential precondition. Hanan Porat formulated this idea clearly:

"It is quite obvious that the idea of founding a common settlement cannot unite the survivors unless a miracle takes place and they return to the actual soil of the Bloc. Only this place can bridge the differences and unite them all."[37]

In their army service, most of the descendants of Kfar Etzion served in units of Nahal (Pioneering Combatant Youth). It was a suitable framework for them in view of the socializing that began when they lived in the same place and that was strengthened in their pre-army groups and in the army. The Neta'im Darom nucleus, a group of young people born in 1944, served in Nahal and set up kibbutzim. Those born in 1947–1948 also collectively joined Nahal groups, although they were divided over a debate about whether they should all join Nir Etzion, which wanted to receive them. The Six-Day War suddenly changed the form of life of many of the Kfar Etzion people, and through the politics of memory, they once again linked together the individual and the collective, the biographical and the historical.[38]

THE "MYTH OF RETURN," SACRED SPACE, AND THE "LONE TREE"

When asked whether the resettlement of Gush Etzion after the Six-Day War was the flowering hoped for by the poet Haim Guri's words, "We'll go back, we'll meet again, we'll return like red flowers," which conclude his famous poem *Here Our Bodies Lie*, Guri replied:

> The end of the poem came to me, I think, from the legend I knew in childhood about the flower called "Blood of the Maccabees." In our childhood, they repeatedly told us that the "Blood of the Maccabees" blooms in the place where the Maccabees' blood was shed.
>
> I did not visualise the red flowers as the renewed settlements in the Bloc, but the myth of the return is part of me. Gush Etzion never seemed to me to belong to strangers; I always dreamed of going back there. When we

[36] Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, *Gush Etzion*, p. 318.

[37] Hanan Porat, "Memory – The Secret of Redemption."

[38] For late testimonies on the Community of Memory of the Sons of Kfar Etzion, see Tzvia Granot, "The Children of Memory Returned to Gush Etzion," *Maariv*, 5.9. 1980. [Hebrew].

> returned to Gush Etzion, I went there at once. I identified completely with the return.[39]

Guri saw the nineteen "lean" years between the War of Independence and the Six-Day War as an "intermission," the place left behind was "the captured land," and the return to Gush Etzion in 1967 was a fulfillment of the "myth of return":

> People now speak of "the myth of return," but for me and my friends in the Palmach this was part of us. I was twenty-five years old when the land was finally partitioned. During a whole period of my life I had grown up with my friends in a single country, and thus the wholeness of the land was a basic experience in our education. With regard to Gush Etzion, we always felt that it was "captured land," and we were sure that it was only an intermission and could not continue in this way.[40]

The great success of the return to Gush Etzion after the Six-Day War and the Israeli consensus concerning this resettlement resulted from a conjuncture of the Zionist-Israeli memory (Haim Guri) and the Jewish-Messianic memory of Gush Emunim, the national-religious movement that inscribed on its platform a political theology of settlement throughout the Greater Land of Israel.[41]

Many historians and social scientists have investigated the phenomenon of "sacralization," which can be due to a number of factors: a perception of natural data (e.g., holy trees or mountains), an association with primeval or historical events, proximity to the life of holy persons, the presence of holy objects, or the more diffuse sense of the sacredness of a given territory.[42] The sacredness of a designated area, whether land or a tree, is legitimated by myths appealing to history or ideology.

The founding members of Kfar Etzion and their sons experienced, articulated, and organized its sense of the sacred in relation to both time and space. The sacralization of the Gush Etzion area and the "lone tree," as well as the fact that they were considered sacred by Kfar Etzion members, is a significant cultural and political phenomenon. The case of Kfar Etzion relates to the social and political construction of sacred space.

The geographical space of the Etzion Bloc – between Hebron and Jerusalem – is considered the cradle of the Jewish people, and it is viewed in Jewish historiography and the collective memory as the setting of the history of the ancient Hebrews in the Land of Israel. The fathers of the people – Abraham, Isaac, and David – journeyed back and forth between Jerusalem and Hebron, giving rise in the process to the constitutive experiences of the Hebrew nation. Abraham and Isaac went to the Akkedah (the sacrifice of Isaac) on Mount

[39] Zvi Tzameret, "A Conversation With Haim Gouri," p. 211.
[40] Ibid, pp. 210–211.
[41] Gideon Aran, "The Beginnings of the Road From Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* (1986), pp. 116–143.
[42] Kedar and Werblowsky, eds., *Sacred Space – Shrine, City, Land*.

Moriah in Jerusalem; Abraham received God's promise concerning the land of Israel by the oak of Mamre; and Rachel's Tomb is on the way to Bethlehem.

After the conquest of the land by Joshua, the entire area was included in the portion of Judah, the leading tribe of Israel. In the days of the judges and the early monarchy, large numbers of the Israelites settled in the hill regions.

In Bethlehem, David, later anointed king by Samuel, was born, and in his flight from Saul he hid among these mountains. From Hebron the newly anointed king of Israel went forth to conquer Jerusalem, which was to become his capital city; and there his son Solomon built the Temple, the spiritual center of the Israelites. The Maccabees fought several major battles against the Hellenistic Syrian armies in this area. Bar Kochba's war was followed by the ravaging and destruction of many Judean towns. In the Talmudic era there were still Jewish villages in this region. Because of the sanctity ascribed by Christians to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Hebron, a large number of monks settled there and forbade any Jews to take up residence in the surrounding district. However, there is historical evidence of Jewish community life in Hebron in the seventh and eleventh centuries. Jewish settlement in the city of the Patriarchs was interrupted following its conquest by the crusaders and was resumed only after the victories of Saladin. In the sixteenth century, Hebron was developed as a Cabbalistic center.[43]

Every account by the sons of Kfar Etzion of their place in history lays stress on a (sometimes broken) historical continuity of Jewish settlement in the Hebron Hills. The cessation of settlement during the War of Independence was thus an open wound. On every Day of Remembrance for Israel's fallen, the sons of Kfar Etzion would go up to Mount Herzl in Jerusalem to take part in the commemorative ceremony for the 240 slain of the Etzion Bloc. These ceremonies were a ritual of perpetuation, which according to the scholar Ilana Shamir is a long, drawn-out process involving planned encounters between the living and the dead.[44] After the ceremony, the families made their way to the Bar Giora region or to Ramat Rahel to look at the "lone tree," an oak that was the only visible landmark of the Kfar Etzion of the past. Nili Gomeh summarized several epochs in the history of Kfar Etzion in terms of the tree. Thus, as a young child she did not join the adults who walked as far as the tree. She writes, "On the day we left … the lorries stopped by the tree.… From there we went on our way – a way which lasted nineteen years.… To us, the children of Kfar Etzion and to our mothers, the tree was a symbol – a symbol of hope, a symbol of faith, a symbol of the certainty that the day would come that we would return to the place."[45] The reunions would end near to Kibbutz Netiv Halamed-He: "From there we saw the tree. There we repeated

[43] Dov Knohl, *Siege in the Hills of Hebron*.

[44] Ilana Shamir, *Perpetuation and Memory – The Way of Israeli Society in Creating Memorial Landscapes*, Tel Aviv 1996. [Hebrew].

[45] Nili Gomeh, "Ve-lo yenatshu od me-admatam" (And They Shall No Longer Be Taken from Their Land), *Amudim*, 438 (May 1988), p. 311. [Hebrew].

our oath: 'We'll come back to you, Kfar Etzion.' … The tree was a personal symbol for each one of us, a symbol of the link with the cradle of our childhood, a symbol of the obligation to return and build our homes." The feeling that "You can see the tree standing there but you can't go there" was common to many of the Kfar Etzion people:

> There were some who stood in silence during those hours of contemplation, and they were overcome with a feeling of anger that the Arabs had subjugated us, and in their hearts there was a prayer for revenge and requital, a prayer mingled with the dim hope, almost dreamlike, that He who sits above would restore them their stolen land.[46]

There are many other such emotional descriptions of the longing to return:

> There they stood with their eyes fixed on the tree which was there alone, with a silent longing in their hearts: When shall we replant what has been plucked up by the roots?[47]

One of the typical legends relating to this oak tree is the story by Eliezer Sternberg (Bashan), "The Legend of the Tree." The fall of Kfar Etzion was described in this story in biblical language and in apocalyptic terms:

> When the house where we lived was laid waste and we were exiled from our land, the ministering angels said: Land of Israel, take in your fruits! For whom are you bringing forth your fruits? For these strangers who have overcome us? The trees immediately dropped tears, and the tears fell and were mingled with its soil, and it became a waste, and was not sown and did not bring forth.[48]

This cosmological description brings together nature, destiny, and the Jewish people. The catastrophe influences nature, which is not indifferent to the conflict between the Jews and gentiles, and it is mobilized in favor of the Jewish position. The return of the non-Jews is conditional on prohibiting the Arabs from eating the fruit of the trees. The metaphysical and the physical, the cosmological and the human are intermingled. Moreover, the cosmos is Jewish: With the fall of Kfar Etzion, nature went into mourning and ceased to function. Even the trees are humanized, for "the trees immediately dropped tears." On the path of Kfar Etzion are all the stations of the national history, from the destruction of the Temple to the second return to Zion, seen through the prism of "the blood-troth between those going up to Zion and the oak-tree." The rebuilding of the ruins and their resurrection in the smaller myth (about the oak tree and Kfar Etzion) is a microcosm of the realization of the larger myth (about the people of Israel and the Land of Israel).

[46] Yonah Berman, op. cit, p. 99. [Hebrew].

[47] Hana Amit, "The Lone Tree At Gush Etzion," *Sa'lit – Monthly of The Society for the Protection of Nature*, 5 (1973), p. 15. [Hebrew].

[48] Eliezer Sternberg, "The Legend of the Tree," *Hatzofeh For Children* (March 1956), p. 7. [Hebrew].

This dual process of the humanization of trees and the naturalization of humans recurs in Ge'ula Kedem's story, "My Tree." In the shade of the tree, a child of Bar-Mitzva age relates his story on his birthday. He has dreamed for many years of the day he will return to the village his parents built and that has been destroyed by the enemy. An evening breeze descends: "I wrap myself up under the tree, caress its trunk and forcefully draw myself close to it. Tears of joy clutch at my throat, and my lips whisper, 'We have come back to you! You are the hero, the strong one, who stands firm despite the destruction around you!'"[49] The humanization and heroization of the tree are parallel with the naturalization of the child, who is called Ilan (Hebrew for tree), and who pleads with the tree: "Stand firm until we come back to you!" The tree is more than a symbol of longing and nostalgia. A great deal depends on the tree standing firm. In the story, the tree remains alive, and it is a living, breathing entity, almost human.

The centrality of the oak tree in the self-image of the sons of Kfar Etzion transcends its function as a mere symbol. In the heated debate that took place in February 1948 among the members of Kfar Etzion concerning the proposal of the Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency to evacuate the married men, one of those taking part considered the connection with the oak tree and the "sacred soil" more important than preserving the collective link between the survivors:

> This discussion endangers every tree we have planted, every house we have built here. Every stone here is dear to us, and this soil, in whose defence some of the finest of our haverim fell, is sacred to all of us. The question of the dispersal of the group is of secondary importance compared to this tragedy. The refrain, "I love my home," has not been heard in this discussion. And yet all of us love every rock and stone, every tree and every clod of earth in this place.[50]

One finds the mystification of the tree in Nitza Shamaia's story, "The Oak Tree" (1982). Oded, whose father had fallen in the defense of Gush Etzion, was drawn to the tree as by a magic wand. In a youth-movement excursion to Jerusalem, the boy "began to have a strange feeling, as if something was drawing him in a certain direction."[51] Physiological changes took place in him as he drew near to the tree. Something awesome and greater than himself drew him, "as if, without wanting it, he wandered around until he reached the place where the ancient oak-tree in Jordanian territory stood opposite

[49] Ge'ula Kedem, "My Tree," *Davar For Children*, 20/40 (February 1977), p. 616. [Hebrew]. The presence of the tree in the "political biography" of Gush Etzion also appears in the fears concerning Palestinian autonomy there: "The tree continues to grow old as it always has.... It's like our story. They tried to uproot us also, but when you are sure of your path, your surroundings also gain this assurance from you." See "Clouds of Autonomy in the Skies of Gush Etzion," *Hatzofeh*, 16.5.1992, p. 10. [Hebrew].

[50] Dov Knohl, "Gush Etzion Be-Milhamto" (Gush Etzion and its War), p. 232. [Hebrew].

[51] Nitza Shemaia, "The Oak-Tree," *Hatzofeh*, May 1988 . [Hebrew].

him. When he was given leave from the army after the Six-Day War, he "went out to the oak-tree with might and trembling." When his mother came to visit him from overseas and the two of them went to Jerusalem, "he did not really sense where he was going, but after a certain time the tree appeared on the horizon."

> "Do you know, Oded?" she asked suddenly, "That's the oak-tree, *our* oak-tree, the oak-tree of Gush Etzion. Your father met his death next to that tree."
>
> … He suddenly understood everything. He understood the connection, the emotion which had always overcome him. He understood why, each time, his legs had drawn him to that place. It seemed he was linked to the tree through his roots, through his soul, through his parents and through his birth.[52]

One of the acts of sanctification of the area took place on Jerusalem Day, 1983, near the oak tree, on the occasion of the ceremony of the unveiling of the monument commemorating the settlements and those who fell in their defense in the War of Independence.[53] The Minister of Defense, Moshe Arens, revealed in his speech that an important chapter in his life was connected to the oak tree, which represented a sense of longing when he was a member of Movo'ot Betar: "They proposed to us many places for settlement, but we chose to settle in a place as close as possible to Gush Etzion, the only place from which we could see the tree."[54] The commemoration was not a neutral act, but clearly had a mobilizing political significance that was expressed in Arens's declaration about "Israeli and Jewish rule in Judea and Samaria in thirty years' time."

The commemoration of the fallen and the sanctification of the space of the oak tree took place at the times and places when men and sanctification coincided.[55] The sanctification and politicization of the space consequently also related to time.[56] It was not by chance that the memorial ceremony for the slain of the War of Independence was fixed for Jerusalem Day. Jerusalem Day has assumed a place of central importance in the consciousness of the settlers, as it marks the moment of appearance of the true, complete Zionism, the return to the Land of Israel after the Six-Day War. The success of the settlers of Kfar Etzion in "settling in the hearts" of many Israelis is due, among other things, to the policy of symbolization, which created a direct *Leitmotif* between the War of Independence and Jerusalem Day.

[52] Ibid.

[53] On the struggles and debates concerning the area of the oak tree, see file 24/7, the Archives for the History of Gush Etzion. See especially Don Handelman, *Models and Mirrors: Towards an Anthropology of Public Events*, Cambridge 1990.

[54] *Yediot Aharonot*, 12.5.1983. [Hebrew].

[55] Haviva Pedaya, "The Divinity as Place and Time and the Holy Place in Jewish Mysticism" in Kedar and Werblowsky, eds., *Sacred Space*, pp. 11–84.

[56] For examples, see Maoz Azaryahu, "Renaming the Past: Changes in 'City Text' in Germany and Austria, 1945–1947," *History and Memory*, 2 (winter 1990), pp. 32–51.

The oak tree is the "metaphorical womb," as it were, from which the identity of the old/new nation was born.[57] This concept was expressed in the gathering of the Avraham-Kfar Etzion group, which opened with the reading of sections of the "Scroll of Planting," in which the place of the tree as the symbol of "the resurrection of the people rooted in its land" and "the symbol of our path and our resurrection"[58] is emphasized. The sacred space of the oak tree is an autonomous entity that casts its sanctity and inspiration over those around it: "In the discourse of the tree, if we listened, in the rustling of its branches, if we knew how to interpret it, there extends before us a wonderful existence full of splendour and sanctity." The tree is also sanctified by the ritual of a triple pilgrimage: "Three times, recently, Jews have gone up to the lone tree."[59] The process of sanctification of the tree reaches its climax in making the symbol of longing for the place into an object of veneration in itself, a place one goes on pilgrimage not once but three times! The tree is seen as a center resembling an altar or temple, on the four sides of which settlements have sprung up: "Four collective settlements have been set up around the tree." It is a site requiring an offering.

In the terminology of Walter Benjamin, the tree is an "aura" – a unique and autonomous creation before it reproduces itself – which constitutes the center of a ritual worship.[60] The oak tree as an aura is like the chief actor in a play who casts light on the secondary actors, or, in the words of one of those making an offering: "It has been vouchsafed to us that the tree is no longer lonely but is embellished with points of light and heat, points of Jewish settlement all round it." In an inscription close to the tree, it is written: "This ancient oak-tree stood in the centre of the four settlements of Gush Etzion." The settlements are as though peripheral to the tree. Haim Be'er remarked on this Canaanite quality of the settlement at Kfar Etzion, and spoke of "the intense ritual worship" surrounding the tree in his classic article, "Gush Emunim – 'Canaanites' Who Wear Phylacteries":

> Following the Six-Day War, when they came back here, it seemed that the tree would sink – like the love-letters of a girl-friend who married you – into the mountain peace of the surroundings. But the tree became the centre of a fervent cult. Experts were brought in and poured cement into its trunk, lest heaven forbid it should be broken in some storm. The buildings of the regional school built near to the place were made lower than is usual so that they should not, heaven forbid, block the view of the tree even for someone standing on the summit of Mount Ora in the Jerusalem Corridor (would

[57] Michael Feige, *Settling in the Hearts*, pp. 170–180.

[58] "Megilat Ha-Neti'a (The Scroll of Planting) – Kfar Etzion, 1944," in Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, ed., *The History of Gush Etzion*, Kfar Etzion Field School 1999, p. 8. [Hebrew].

[59] "Official Gathering at the Lone Tree," file 24/7, Archives for the History of Gush Etzion. [Hebrew].

[60] Ohana, "Walter Benjamin – L'automobile, c'est la guerre," in *The Promethean Passion: The Intellectual Origins of the 20th Century from Rousseau to Foucault*, Jerusalem 2000, pp. 223–239. [Hebrew].

> they have acted with such sensitivity if it was people who were involved?) They printed its green silhouette on every sheet of writing-paper, envelope, pamphlet or book which came out of the place. And when they came to choose the name of a settlement – a name which would express their longings for the place for nineteen years – they chose such a Canaanite name (Elon Moreh, D.O.), belonging so much to the primeval country where the choicest sentiments were always projected onto trees and stones.[61]

The oak tree is a magnet and a centre of gravity not only in the dimension of space but also in the dimension of time. Twenty years after the return to Kfar Etzion, there was a poetry contest that was won by Rahel Levmor's poem, "The Oak-Tree."[62] In the four stanzas of the poem, the history of the people of Israel was presented in four significant moments of time – the sacrifice of Isaac, the heroism of the Maccabees, the Bar-Kochba revolt, and the fall of Kfar Etzion. The Jewish mythologization – which reached its climax in the oak tree – was redoubled in the refrain in which only one of the lines was changed in accordance with the relevant verse. In the first stanza, the conclusion drawn from the myth of the sacrifice is that the oak-tree is "surrounded by our children"; in the second stanza, the conclusion drawn from the myth of the Maccabees is that the oak tree is "surrounded by our vision"; in the third stanza, the conclusion drawn from the myth of Bar-Kochba is that it is "surrounded by our settlements"; and in the fourth stanza, the myth of Kfar Etzion reaches the climax of the poetization of the sanctity of the oak tree and its stability throughout the vicissitudes of time:

> It is no longer alone,
> the oak-tree;
> It is surrounded by our trees,
> the trees of Gush Etzion.

HISTORICAL ANALOGY AS A CONSTRUCTION OF MYTH

A historical analogy made for social or political purposes is a form of myth construction.[63] A past event or historical figure used for the purposes of the present or to serve an immediate political interest is a mobilizing symbol, whether it is the actions of the fathers that serve as examples for the sons or whether the past serves as a warning.

There is a dialectical relationship between historical analogy as myth and the historical present, in which each of them shapes the other in its own image: The myth bestows significance on the present, but at the same time it is molded retroactively according to the needs of the present. In other words,

[61] Haim Be'er, "Gush Emunim – 'Canaanites' Who Wear Phylacteries," *Davar*, 15.10.1982. [Hebrew].

[62] Rahel Levmor, "On the Oak-tree," *Gushpanka*, 8 (1987), p. 2 . [Hebrew].

[63] David Ohana, "The Cross, the Crescent and the Star of David: The Zionist-Crusader Analogy in the Israeli Discourse," *Iyyunim Bitkumat Israel*, 11 (2002), p. 40. [Hebrew].

myth constitutes events in the past selected to serve the purposes of the present.[64] The mythical event is seen as a precedent that recurs repeatedly over the course of time, and to which it gives a shape.[65] The people of Kfar Etzion also mobilized events in Jewish history and episodes in the national martyrology, ranging from the Akkedah to the Maccabees and Massada, and from these to the Holocaust and Tel Hai.

The story of the Akkedah (the sacrifice of Isaac) is the main myth used by the Kfar Etzion Community of Memory to describe the fall of Gush Etzion. The myth of the Akkedah is so central that in the Hebrew edition of *Siege In the Hills of Hebron*, five different Jewish sources on the Akkedah are given as the introductory quotations to the book. We have here a special phenomenon of the religious nationalizing the biblical ethos (a test of monotheistic belief) and mobilizing it for political purposes:

> The flames of Etzion's Akkedah burning bright with terror lit up the resurrection of the State.... The rise of the State of Israel was lit up by the torch of the burning Gush Etzion![66]

The sacrifice of Isaac was transformed into the sacrifice of Etzion; the nationalization of a biblical myth that is usually applied to those fallen in battle is metamorphosed into the sacrifice of a place, which is held to be greater than the fallen. In contrast to modern Hebrew poetry on the Akkedah, in which there is a process of replacing the God who orders the Akkedah with some other significance, with Israeli nationhood, what is special about the "Etzion Akkedah" is the combination of the faith outlook and the national myth.[67] This combination is effected through a theodicy (a vindication of Providence), but this time we have an activation of the acceptance of a divine decree through a mobilization of the national significance in the form of the founding of the state of Israel. An example of this is to be found in a funeral oration by Rabbi Zvi Nerya: "A whole community was sacrificed on its altar. On the threshold of the State and on behalf of it were they slain."[68]

On the fiftieth national Day of Remembrance, The Chief Rabbi Israel Lau once again linked the Gush Etzion episode with the Akkedah and the Holocaust. The decree of Jewish fate was mingled with the national rebirth; determinism, death, and the Akkedah existed side by side with the resurrection of the Jewish state. Here we have an outstanding example of what George Mosse called "political liturgy." The ritual of the commemoration of the dead, suggested Mosse, was at the center of the myth of the war experience and provided it with symbols – in this case the myth of the Akkedah – which cast a

[64] Robert Wistrich and David Ohana, The *Shaping of Israeli Identity – Myth, Memory and Trauma*, London, 1995, pp. vii–xiii.
[65] Ohana, *Homo Mythicus*.
[66] Yohanan Ben-Ya'akov, *Gush Etzion*, p. 298.
[67] Ruth Kartun-Blum, *Chant d'Israël – Anthologie de la Poésie Hébraïque*, Paris 1984.
[68] Zvi Moshe Nerya, in *History of Gush Etzion*, p. 26. [Hebrew].

new light on the memory of the war. The nationalization of the myth of the war experience "succeeded in preserving the flame from extinction."[69] A relevant description appears in the diary of a member of Kfar Etzion who related how the "defenders-*haverim*" felt on the night between the two last days of the battle: "… that their fate was sealed, they stood before an Akkedah.… We heard the voice of Shalom Karmiel chanting part of the prayer.… 'And Thou shalt behold the sacrifice of Isaac, when Abraham, our father/ sacrificed his son on the altar.' … A tremor passed through my body and a prayer came from the depths of my heart: 'Not that, O God! Only not that! Let not this battleground be our altar!'"[70]

"In the generation of 1948," wrote Emmanuel Sivan, " the point at which the concept of personal fate joined the history of the community was the concept of the Akkedah, which recurs constantly in the commemorative literature."[71] But what was special about the "Etzion Akkedah" was that the true collective Akkedah was not that of the parents sacrificing their sons on the altar of building the National Home, but that of the parents sacrificing themselves and acknowledging this in the deepest and most tragic way.[72]

There are many examples of the analogy drawn between the fighters of Kfar Etzion and the story of the Akkedah. The chapter heading "The Akkedah for Jerusalem," which appears in the high school textbook *Gush Etzion – Bar Mitzvah of the Renewal of the Settlement*, relates to a question put to the pupils in this chapter: Should Gush Etzion have been endangered in order to protect Jerusalem?[73] Similarly, the third, concluding section of the book *Siege in the Hills of Hebron* is called "The Sacrifice." Many elegies were written on the Thirty-Five who came to the assistance of Gush Etzion, and one of these was B. Mordechai's "The Sacrifice." Enda Amir, for her part, saw a resemblance between the Thirty-Five and the Patriarchs buried in the Machpelah Cave:

> Thirty-five came to the Akkedah
> but they were not accompanied by the entreaties of father and mother.
> Lovely and alone, they fell in the battle for your foothills.[74]

Uriel Ofek, who quoted these poetic examples in an article, ended it thus: "Concerning its chronicles, full of glory, and concerning its builders and defenders, who saw the Akkedah each day, yet at the same time hoped for

[69] George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*, Oxford 1990, chap. 5.
[70] Dov Knohl, *Gush Etzion and its War*, p. 442 . [Hebrew].
[71] Emmanuel Sivan, *The 1948 Generation: Myth, Profile and Memory*, p. 201.
[72] Maoz Azaryahu, *State Cults: Celebrating Independence and Commemorating the Fallen in Israel 1948–1956*, Sede Boker 1995, p. 124, note 24. [Hebrew].
[73] David Shemesh, ed., *Gush Etzion: "Bar Mitzva" of the Renewal of the Settlement*, Ministry of Education and Culture, Kfar Etzion School 1981, p. 39. [Hebrew].
[74] Enda Pinkerfeld-Amir, "Eshel Avraham," *Lamed-He*, Jerusalem 1950. [Hebrew].

redemption."[75] Yohanan Ben-Ya'akov likewise compared the final battle to the Akkedah, ending on a tragic note:

> "Lay not your hands upon the boy!" – the father of our nation heard this releasing cry on Mount Moriah, after his tortuous journey, full of trials and tribulations, to the Akkedah. Long months, anguished, fearful in glory, passed for the defenders of Gush Etzion on these very same hills. But they did not hear the releasing, liberating cry.[76]

A literal parallel between the biblical Akkedah and the Gush Etzion episode is made in the book *Gush Etzion – Fifty Years of Struggle and Creativity*, the official anthology of the Kfar Etzion Community of Memory. In both of them one sees self-sacrifice, and the sacrifice is the climax of the drama toward which they go with open eyes; Abraham and Isaac and the people of Gush Etzion make the same journey to Jerusalem, culminating in their Akkedah; in the Akkedah of Isaac, one heard the cry of release, but in the "Etzion Akkedah," the final battle became a real Akkedah; the biblical heroes sanctified Mount Moriah by their Akkedah, but the defenders of Gush Etzion themselves went to the stake on that mountain.[77]

Under the heading, "In Those Days and At That Time," the Benei Akiva journal *Zera'im* drew a parallel between the heroism of the Hasmoneans and that of the fighters of Gush Etzion: "Like Elazar in his day, so the fighters of Etzion in our time drew the legions of the enemy and fell at their hands for the sake of Jerusalem."[78] The myth, as an ever-recurring precedent, caused the battle for Gush Etzion to be described as "the exact repetition of Elazar's actions in the same place and in the same conditions." One reads in an exercise of a joint textbook of the Ministry of Education and the Gush Etzion Regional Council: "The self-sacrifice on behalf of Jerusalem is parallel with the action of Elazar the Maccabee when he killed the elephant at the battle of Beit Zechariah, at the heart of the Etzion Bloc, in the struggle for the defence of Jerusalem."[79] The recommended reading for the pupils is two sources: the *Book of Maccabees*, part 1, and the organ of Benei Akiva.

In the parallel between the fall of Massada and the fall of Kfar Etzion, two points are stressed: The two groups of besieged Jews were the last to remain against the forces of an enemy several times more numerous than themselves, and the final battle had a tragic end. The parallel was made by Mosh, the commander of Gush Etzion, who in the last days of the Bloc was forced by the general atmosphere of fear to explain the gravity of the situation to the commanders of the units: "'Under these circumstances, the next battle might well be the last.' He expressed his view that it must be a 'Massada' … imbued with the consciousness that by fighting to the last we shall help to save

[75] Uriel Ofek, "Gush Etzion As Seen in its Literature," *Idan* 7 (1986), p. 208. [Hebrew].
[76] Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, *Gush Etzion*, p. 273. [Hebrew] .
[77] Dov Knohl, *Gush Etzion and its War*, p. 442. [Hebrew].
[78] "In Those Days and at That Time," *Zera'im, The Journal of Benei Akiva* (1976). [Hebrew].
[79] *Gush Etzion: "Bar Mitzva" of the Renewal of the Settlement*, p. 42.

Jerusalem."[80] Likewise, we read that in the accounts of the final battle written in captivity in Jordan, "the testimonies of the surviving members were recorded, and they were collated to form a description of the last great battle – the 'Massada' battle."[81]

We should note that the analogy chosen for the final battle was the battle of Massada and not, for instance, the Warsaw Ghetto revolt.[82] The model preferred by the Kfar Etzion Community of Memory was Second Temple Israel rather than the exile, and the focus of identification was a national revolt in the Land of Israel and not a Jewish rebellion among the gentiles. Parallels with the Holocaust were only made in a negative way: for instance, in a description of the passive Jews "in the death-waggons on their way to Auschwitz," or in the statement that "rivers of the blood of our persecuted brethren were shed there like water."[83] Gush Etzion was said to be the answer to this catastrophe, "a fitting response to the Holocaust which has overtaken our people." In the Kfar Etzion "Scroll of Planting," the dichotomy was represented as follows: "There" destruction, uprooting, and death, and "here" "a new gateway to our redemption" and "a firm hold on the soil of the motherland." The relationship between the Holocaust of the European Jews and the revival of Etzion is well illustrated by one of the headings in the school textbook mentioned earlier: "From Akkedah to Life, From the Ashes of the Holocaust to the Hebron Hills." It was in this spirit that in a discussion held in the *Kvutzat Abraham* (the Abraham Group), one of the participants claimed, "I hear the death-waggons rumbling on their way to Auschwitz," from which he concluded that "for the survivors' sake and for the nation's sake we will have to go up to the Hebron Hills."[84]

The positive examples in the historical analogies drawn by the members of the Kfar Etzion Community of Memory concerned the motherland and the history of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel, but not the history of the Jewish people as such. A prominent feature in these positive analogies is the episode of Tel Hai. At the beginning of the school textbook *Gush Etzion – Bar Mitzvah of the Renewal of the Settlement*, the director of the Youth Section at the Ministry of Education extolled Tel Hai and Kfar Etzion as positive myths for youth to identify with:

> The historical process of pioneering settlement has created figures and events which have turned into myths on which generations have been reared in the land of Israel. The episode of Tel Hai and the personality of Joseph Trumpeldor are outstanding examples of this.

[80] Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, *Gush Etzion*, p. 271.
[81] Ibid, p. 300.
[82] Muli Brog, "From the Heights of Massada To the Heart of the Ghetto: Myth as History," in David Ohana and Robert Wistrich, eds., *Myth and Memory*, pp. 203–230. [Hebrew].
[83] "The Scroll of Planting," *History of Gush Etzion*, p. 8. [Hebrew].
[84] "From Akkedah to Life: From the Ashes of the Holocaust to the Hebron Hills," *Gush Etzion: "Bar Mitzva" of the Renewal of the Settlement*, 21. [Hebrew].

> The heroic episode of the settlement of Gush Etzion can serve as a focus of national education in our generation. We believe that a wise educational initiative which presents the people of Gush Etzion in their generations as a model with which to identify has a good chance of finding a positive echo amongst the young.[85]

At the end of February 1948, a discussion took place at Kfar Etzion on the proposal of the Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency to evacuate the married men. The intention of the national institutions was to transform Gush Etzion from a place of settlement into a military area. It was one of the most heated discussions in the history of Gush Etzion, and it lasted for three days. A similar members' meeting that took place in Tel Hai in 1920 was continually recalled. One of the participants, Shlomo R., made a parallel between Tel Hai and Kfar Etzion: "Some of the haverim consider our situation as resembling that of Trumpeldor and his comrades at Tel Hai. People argued at the time that Tel Hai was not worth holding, but history proved them wrong. The defence of Tel Hai saved the Galilee for our State-to-be."[86] In a later testimony, the "mukhtar" of Kfar Etzion, David Ben-David, returned to this parallel: "I did not see Kfar Etzion only as a settlement, but I saw it within the framework of the people of Israel as a whole. I knew that without Trumpeldor at Tel Hai we would not have the Galilee Panhandle."[87] Of all the historical analogies – the Akkedah, the Maccabees, Massada, and the Holocaust – the people of Kfar Etzion saw the group at Tel Hai as the one most suited to their self-image, the one most worthy of emulation: "The Tel Hai episode was a torch of light and strength for the revival of the people in its land. Trumpeldor and his friends were a symbol and example."[88]

THE POLITICS OF MEMORY

The Kfar Etzion Community of Memory is not all of a piece: One finds in it two different orientations. The first orientation, whose chief representative is Hanan Porat, combines political theology with territorial fundamentalism; the second orientation, identified with figures such as Rabbi Yehuda Amital, the head of the "Har Etzion" yeshiva in Alon Shvut, and Yohanan Ben Yaakov, editor of the book *Gush Etzion – Fifty Years of Struggle and Creativity*, distinguishes between the special status of the settlement in Gush Etzion, which enjoys a wide consensus, and the Messianic enterprise of settlement in Judea and Samaria. Outside the Community of Memory there is also a point of view,

[85] Avraham Oded Cohen, "Foreword," *Gush Etzion: "Bar Mitzva" of the Renewal of the Settlement*, 5. [Hebrew].

[86] Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, *Gush Etzion*, pp. 206–207. [Hebrew].

[87] "In Those Days and at That Time – Conversations With the Old-Timers of the Gush On the Events of 1948," *Gushpanka*, 88 (February 1988). [Hebrew].

[88] *Gush Etzion: "Bar Mitzva" of the Renewal of the Settlement*, p.135. [Hebrew]; Yael Zerubavel, "Between History and Legend: The Metamorphoses of Tel Hai In the Popular Memory," in Ohana and Wistrich, *Myth and Memory*, pp. 189–202. [Hebrew].

represented by the writer Haim Be'er, that sees Gush Etzion and the settlement phenomenon in general as a right-wing religious Canaanism.

For Hanan Porat, Kfar Etzion is "a miniature example, from which we learn not about itself but about the generality" of settlement in the Land of Israel.[89] This "small place" evokes the "large place" – Israel; the narrative of Kfar Etzion necessarily embodies the Jewish-Zionist-Israeli meta-narrative and embraces three Messianic principles: the return to Zion, the ingathering of the exiles, and *athalta di-ge'ula* (the beginning of redemption). Michael Feige sees in the story of uprooting and return "a metonymy of the process of redemption. It both symbolises it and constitutes part of it."[90] For this school of thought, Gush Etzion was not just a place to which people returned after exile: Porat sees the settlement between Hebron and Jerusalem as leading up to the final Messianic station: "Through it the song may yet be heard of the great act whereby the Lord of all worlds will bring us on the path ascending to the House of God: the whole people of Israel for the whole land of Israel, and at its heart our Jerusalem – the Temple of the King and royal city."[91]

In the "deterministic messianism" of Gush Emunim, there was a radicalization that was expressed in the change from the "historical necessity" associated with Rabbi Abraham Kook to the activation of history and anticipation of the end associated with his son, Zvi Yehuda Kook, and with his political acolyte, Hanan Porat. This radicalization also marks a shift from the universal, metaphysical-cosmic aspect of Messianism to its national-Israeli aspect, and then to the particularistic-territorial aspect of Gush Etzion:[92]

"I have no doubt that Gush Etzion must become the spearhead of the struggle for the Greater Land of Israel and embody all its special qualities."[93]

The Chief Rabbi of Israel, Israel Lau, also sees the people of Gush Etzion as "the pillar of fire going before the camp."[94] He too, like Hanan Porat, weaves a metaphysic of Gush Etzion as a key point in Jewish history in its progress toward redemption. In the ceremony on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem on the occasion of the fiftieth day of remembrance for the fallen of Gush Etzion, which he came to from a ceremony at Auschwitz, the rabbi concocted a confection of memory that contained all the elements of the Community of Memory of Kfar Etzion: the return of the sons to Gush Etzion, as ordained by memory; the intergenerational memory passing from fathers to sons; the self-image as

[89] Hanan Porat, *In Search of My Brother*, Beit-El 1989. [Hebrew]; "Lighthouse of Torah and Labour: A Few Questions For Hanan Porat," *Gushpanka*, 43 (1992), p. 15. [Hebrew].

[90] Michael Feige, op. cit., pp. 144–169.

[91] Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, *Gush Etzion*, p 40. [Hebrew].

[92] Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism: The Bloc of the Faithful in Israel (Gush Emunim), in Marty and Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalism Observed*, pp. 265–344; Aviezer Ravitsky, *Messianism, Zionism and Jewish Religious Radicalism*, Chicago 1996, chap, 3.

[93] "Lighthouse of Torah and Labour."

[94] From my notes on the speech of Rabbi Israel Lau on the fiftieth Day of Remembrance for the fallen of Gush Etzion on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem, 1998.

a sacrifice and an eternal consciousness of sacrifice; Gush Etzion as a sanctification of the Day of Remembrance and of the memory of the Jewish people as a whole; the idea that only the existence of the cemetery assures the existence of the state; and the inescapable connection between the Holocaust and Gush Etzion. The slain of Gush Etzion are like a crucified Messiah whose sacrifice is *tehila di-ge'ula* (the beginning of redemption).

Porat's messianic ideology, in which Gush Etzion is a major milestone, derives from his philosophy of history. The linking of the Zionist history of the Yishuv, the state of Israel, and the Land of Israel with Jewish history led him to Messianic conclusions. The climax of the Messianic vision, in his opinion, is setting up the Temple in Jerusalem, "over whose walls the saints of Gush Etzion are appointed." The Zionist-Israeli image of Gush Etzion was exchanged for a Messianic vision in which "we in Gush Etzion will all enter the streets of the Holy City." Moreover, looking back, Porat claimed that "the sons of Kfar Etzion had the mission of acting as trailblazers, for without them it is doubtful if Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria would have continued."[95]

Yaakov Talmon interpreted Gush Emunim's Messianic "anticipation of the end" as an obsession with visualizing the end of history within history itself.[96] Uriel Tal also examined the phenomenon of mysticism being carried into reality. He claimed that those who hold the concept of political Messianism believe that they see with their own eyes the beginning of redemption, in the course of which the Messianism will be realized. This supposition reduces symbols to the level of reality. In other words, a stone or a piece of land is no longer a symbol of something sacred, but they themselves become sacred.[97]

The ideological "anticipation of the end" and "myth of return" inspired Porat to become one of the leaders of those who demanded the reconstruction of Kfar Etzion at all costs after the Six-Day War.[98] The debate over how that return took place still has political and ideological consequences today. Haggai Segal, a journalist and settler and a member of the "Jewish underground" wrote in his book, *Dear Brothers*, that the representatives of Kfar Etzion empowered Porat to decide how far it was necessary to go to take over the area in an unauthorized manner.[99] It is not hard to deduce that Segal's ideological outlook, which authorizes the use of force against the government and violence toward Arabs, finds legitimation in his version of events concerning Kfar Etzion. Against this, Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, one of the children of

[95] Hanan Porat, *In Search of Anat*, pp. 9–17. [Hebrew].

[96] Ohana, "J. L. Talmon and the Dialectics of the Secular Messianism," in Jacob L. Talmon, *The Riddle of the Present and the Cunning of History*, ed., Ohana, Jerusalem 2000, pp. I–XXXVI. [Hebrew].

[97] Uriel Tal, "Totalitarian Democratic Hermeneutics and Politics in Modern Jewish Religious Nationalism," in *Totalitarian Democracy and After*, Jerusalem 1984, pp. 137–157. [Hebrew].

[98] Hanan Porat, "The Return Home," *Gushpanka*, 10 (May 1992), pp. 10, 41. [Hebrew].

[99] Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers*, Jerusalem 1987, p. 19–20. [Hebrew].

Kfar Etzion and the secretary general of the Benei Akiva movement, claims that the people of Kfar Etzion never empowered anyone to decide on going up to settle without the authorization of the government.

It is interesting to note that it was precisely the left, the people of Kibbutz Hame'uhad, that is, Yitzhak Tabenkin, Yigal Allon, and Israel Galili, who preserved the memory of Gush Etzion. One cannot overlook the fact that the settlement issue was dear to the heart of Levi Eshkol, the prime minister, who took the decision to allow the sons of Kfar Etzion to return to their settlement after the Six-Day War.[100] Even Natan Alterman called in the summer of 1967 for the Jewish settlement in Gush Etzion to be renewed in order to prove to King Hussein that the IDF does not occupy "a foreign territory stolen from its legitimate owners."[101]

Ben Ya'akov's moderate approach exemplifies the historical position of Hakibbutz Hadati (the Religious Kibbutz Movement), which did not show too much enthusiasm for the resettlement of Kfar Etzion in 1967, whereas on the other hand the fact that Hanan Porat lived in Kfar Etzion was one of the main reasons why the founding meeting of Gush Emunim took place at Kfar Etzion on January 30, 1974.[102] These differences of opinion represent the disagreements in the Kfar Etzion Community of Memory concerning its special characteristics, and hence the debate concerning the kind of "politics of memory" they were to adopt. Many of them, who distance themselves from Gush Emunim and base their special identity on the heroic memory of 1948, place the emphasis on the closing of a historical circle and not on an adoption of the political theology of the Greater Land of Israel:

> Our parents, the members of Kfar Etzion (may the lord avenge their blood!), fell on the altar of the renewal of the State in defending Jerusalem, the holy city and capital of Israel. They fought under the command of the national leadership and fulfilled their duty to the nation.... It is therefore right and proper that the government of Israel should honour their memory and decide – as a national decision – on rebuilding their home which was destroyed, out of respect for their heroism and self-sacrifice.... This claim is unique to Kfar Etzion. [103]

In the period of uncertainty and public debate concerning the future of the territories, Porat came out against those settlers in Gush Etzion "who think of the Gush in terms of 'I saved my life.' Let them have no doubt about it," he said. "Our fate is the same as that of the whole of Judea and Samaria. We have the capacity to contribute to the common struggle precisely because of

[100] Arye Naor, *Greater Israel: Theology and Policy*, Haifa 2001, pp. 118, 278, 351. [Hebrew].
[101] Natan Alterman, *Hahut Hameshulash* (The Triangular Thread), Tel Aviv 1971, pp. 67–68. [Hebrew].
[102] Gershon Shafat, *Gush Emunim: The Story behind the Scenes*, Beit-El 1995, pp. 27–34. [Hebrew].
[103] Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, "Shavu Banim Legvulam" (The Sons Have Returned to their Place), *Gushpanka* (September 1998), p. 12. [Hebrew].

the honour we enjoy."[104] Adi Mintz, in his article "Gushei Etzion" (1996), wondered why, for the shapers of policy and the formers of public opinion, the heritage of the battles of 1948 is more "historical" and important than the two thousand years' living connection of the people of Israel with the Mahpelah Cave and Rachel's Tomb.[105] Vered No'am also criticized the artificial distinction between the "real Zionist areas" and the "areas of political settlement." In her opinion, an absurd example of this distinction was the declaration by Rabin and his government concerning the acceptability of Gush Etzion according to the security criteria that had been decided on, which was contradicted by the fact that Gush Etzion was surrounded by two Arab towns and dozens of Arab villages.[106] Earlier, there was a heated debate among the inhabitants of Gush Etzion about the future of the settlements, the future of the territories, and the correlation between them. Some of the titles of the articles reflecting this debate speak for themselves: "The Attempt to Distinguish between Gush Emunim and the Settlements of Judea and Samaria as a Whole Is Artificial"; "It Is Forbidden To Gamble With the Entire Kitty"; "Kfar Etzion Also Arose after a Confrontation with the Government"; "When Were You Last in Alon Moreh?"; "Gush Etzion Is a Beginning"; "A Policy of 'It's All Mine' Will Lead to the Loss of Everything"; and so on.[107]

Vered No'am put her finger on the point of all politics of memory, and especially the one that distinguishes between the Israeli memory of Kfar Etzion and the Jewish memory of Hebron. Which facts are to be adopted, which are to be ignored, and which are to be stressed and built on?

> Hebron too carries a historical load. As in the story of Gush Etzion, here too one can speak of exile and return. The massacre and expulsion of the Hebron Jews took place only twenty years before the uprooting of the settlements of the Gush in 1948. Why did not a myth also grow up around Hebron, which is so near both historically and geographically? Why did its destruction and renewal become blurred in our consciousness? The answer to this question is simple, but in equal measure hard to accept and uncomplimentary.... The Jews massacred in Hebron belonged to a repressed stratum. This stratum is Jewish: the one that wears a black coat, the one murdered in pogroms and which does not fight back. The Jews of the "Old Yishuv" in Hebron are stored away in the drawers of our souls under the title *galut* (exile). They have no entry, despite their time and place, into the temple of the "grand saga." ...
>
> This stratum of the group identity was obscured and trampled underfoot by the two generations previous to Yitzhak Rabin. Rabin's contemporaries, those who realized the dream, the creators of the selective mythology of the War of Independence, followed in the footsteps of their fathers. The Hebron massacre ... was much farther away from the frontiers of our inner

[104] "Lighthouse of Torah and Labour," *Gushpanka*, p. 15.
[105] Adi Mintz, "Gushei Etzion (Etzion Blocs)," *Nekuda*, 199 (October 1996), p. 30. [Hebrew].
[106] Vered No'am, "Hedim (Echoes)," *Nekuda*, 162 (September 1992), p. 54. [Hebrew].
[107] *Nekuda*, 1 (1979) pp. 11–12. [Hebrew]; *Nekuda*, 3 (1980), pp. 12–13 . [Hebrew].

identification.[108] Rabbi Yehuda Amital makes a distinction between different parts of Judea and Samaria; he, together with Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein, serves as head of the Alon Shvut yeshiva – a unique case in religious Judaism of two rabbis serving as heads of a single yeshiva. According to Rabbi Amital's moderate approach, there are three basic values in Judaism: the people of Israel, the Torah of Israel, and the Land of Israel.[109] This is their order of importance, and any attempt to change the priorities and make the Land of Israel the supreme value is in his opinion a deviation and a distortion. He claims that *Halakha* (religious law) does not forbid withdrawal from any area in the Land of Israel, especially areas with a large non-Jewish population. Amital supports territorial compromise, and, for instance, advocates the removal of Jewish settlements in return for the removal of Arab refugee-camps, a kind of population exchange – a Jewish settlement in exchange for Dahaishe. But any agreement of this kind must in his view ensure that concentrations of Jews such as Gush Etzion will remain within the territory of the Jewish state. Likewise, Natan Shnor, one of the founders of Gush Etzion in 1943, who lost his son in the battle of Ammunition Hill in the Six-Day War, does not share Porat's point of view: "I never felt that the fact that I was once in the Gush can or should decide the political order. I also never thought it was necessary to rule the entire country and set up a binational state there."[110]

Haim Be'er, like Rabbi Amital, thinks that Gush Emunim switched the order of priorities of religious Zionism and "of the trinity on which they were reared – the Torah of Israel, the people of Israel and the land of Israel – they gave the first place to the land. In their eyes it became the all-important factor in the world in which they lived.... For them, the land, like myths for natives, is the expression of a more authentic, elevated and important reality."[111] In the process of Canaanization, the Religious-Zionist youth, which "all of a sudden became heretical, turned to a Genesis-like, almost pre-biblical existence, to the myth of the land of Israel, of the conquest of Canaan in a whirlwind." Like Baruch Kurzweil,[112] who claimed that the Canaanites of the 1950s put their trust in the myth of the land, Be'er thinks that the neo-Canaanite settlers "are effecting a process of barbarization within an ancient culture." An example of this is the change from the religious kibbutz movement, which gave its kibbutzim universal names, to the names of rabbis to Gush Emunim, which gave its settlements Canaanite names like Kiryat Arba, Alon Moreh, Kedumim, and Karnei Shomron. Kibbutz Alon Shvut is in his opinion one more proof of the process of Canaanization that has taken place in Kfar Etzion.

[108] Vered No'am, "Hedim."

[109] Rabbi Amital, "If the Benefit of the People of Israel Requires It, There Is No Halakhic Impediment to Withdrawal," *Gushpanka*, 10 (February 1988), pp. 4–5. [Hebrew].

[110] "Perhaps Age Gives Him a Further Point of View," interview with Natan Shnor, *The Journal of Kibbutz Be'erot Yitzhak*, 2019 (April 1997), p .16. [Hebrew].

[111] Haim Be'er, ibid.

[112] Baruch Kurtzweil, "The Nature and Origins of the 'Young Hebrews' Movement ('Canaanites')," *Our New Literature – Continuation or Revolution?* Tel Aviv 1971, pp. 270–300. [Hebrew].

The politics of memory of Kfar Etzion is intrinsically connected with the alienation of the memory of the surrounding Arabs. In a newspaper report on Beit Iskaria, at the heart of Gush Etzion, the Arab inhabitants of the village described the situation as "peace among the settlers." Beit Iskaria was given this name by the Arabs because they believed that the tomb of the prophet Zechariah was to be found there (one of the houses in Beit Iskaria even marks the presumed site of his grave). The Jews who hold this belief think that the prophet Zechariah is buried in a different place. The journalist concludes his account by saying, "The two sides not only disagree about the present, but also about the distant past."[113]

The request of the people of the Kfar Etzion Field School to change the name Hirbet Sakaria to the Hebrew name Hurvat Beit Zecharia was accepted by the government naming committee. Aryeh Rotenberg of the Field School complained that almost all the names of the streams, springs, and hills in the Gush are in the Arabic language: "On the one hand, there is something piquant in the special oriental sound of the Arabic names, but, on the other hand, these names are foreign. And because we have decided that this is our home, it is preferable that the features of the landscape should have our names, in the Hebrew language."[114] Hebrew names that were approved were Nahal Ha-Etz (Abu Nofel), Nahal Tzofit (Abu Rish), Mitzpeh Oz (Umm-e-Tala), and many others.

The agents of memory are the means to the construction of the Community of Memory. Until 1967, the agents of memory of the sons of Kfar Etzion preserved the "myth of return" of the Community of Memory through memoirs, books and pamphlets, commemorative ceremonies for the fallen, visits to sites from where one could see the "lone tree," summer camps for the children, reunions, and pre-army groups. But in their return to the place of their parents after the Six-Day War, the new settlers exchanged the "Israeli" return to Kfar Etzion for a symbolic return to the Land of Israel. As one of the women settlers said: "The exile from the soil of the Gush and the return to it became symbols of exile and redemption in general."[115]

Accordingly, the sons of Kfar Etzion developed new agents of memory suited to the changing aims of the Community of Memory: They created a Tent of Remembrance, an audiovisual spectacle, and a memorial garden;[116] they consecrated the area around the oak tree; they staged the play "Fire from the Hills" and performed it in various settlements;[117] they founded

[113] Yehuda Litani, "Hakotz Be-Elyat Gush Etzion" (The Fly in the Ointment of Gush Etzion), *Haaretz*, 21.10.1980. [Hebrew].

[114] "Hebrew Names For the Features of the Landscape of Gush Etzion," *Gushpanka*, 15 (February 1989). [Hebrew].

[115] Vered No'am, ibid. [Hebrew].

[116] "Audiovisual Spectacle In the Tent of Remembrance In Kfar Etzion," *Gushpanka*, 13 (July 1988), pp. 14–15. [Hebrew].

[117] Rivka Manovitz, *Fire from the Hills – A Play*, from the manuscript of Ya'akov Even-Hen, Ministry of Education and Culture – Torah Section, Jerusalem 1989. [Hebrew].

the Field School, most of whose activities were devoted to a study of the geographical and historical environment and to managing the heritage of Gush Etzion;[118] they set up the "Archive of the History of Gush Etzion," impressive in its scope and in its careful work of documentation; they began archaeological excavations, and according to one of the archaeologists, a member of Kfar Etzion, "its new settlers discovered traces of their early forefathers right next to their home."[119] The idea even came up of creating a Museum of the History of the Jewish People in the area,[120] and they disseminated textbooks for schools, whose aim, according to the Youth Section of the Ministry of Education, was "to instill into the youth a connection with the soil of the motherland and bring them to identify with the settlement enterprise and the building of the land."[121] This aim had been achieved through "the heroic episode of the settlement in Gush Etzion which can serve as a focus of national education in our generation." There can be little doubt that the enthusiastic activity of the new industry of memory in Kfar Etzion can only be compared with the enthusiastic activity of the settlement enterprise itself.

For the members of the Kfar Etzion of today and the Community of Memory of the sons of Kfar Etzion, the place is *the* origin and thus is of greater significance than the people who live there. The place is the reality that creates consciousness: To paraphrase Claude Lévi-Strauss, it is not the settlers who produce the myths, but the myths think themselves into existence through the settlers.[122] Thus, Eliakim Ha-Etzni said in connection with Hebron: "Hebron is part of our genetic code. At the moment when our genetic needle pointed to Hebron, I received an electric shock."[123] With regard to Kfar Etzion, one of those who returned to the place said: "The news of the liberation of Gush Etzion struck like lightning, like a spring pressed down and suddenly released.... Like a mighty stream of light it burst forth upon my life, which was flooded with a light of significance."[124] With the "genetic code," the "lightning," and the "released spring," territorial fundamentalism preceded the personal decision of the settlers. The place is a mythological conception preceding history and the human beings who enact it. In this spirit, Hanan Porat quoted a poem by Uri Zvi Greenberg as a confirmation of his feeling that "The Messiah's trumpets are sounding/ Life is going far/ This did not happen on its own!"[125]

[118] Ya'ir Sheleg. *Desert Wind – The Story of Yehoshua Cohen*, Tel Aviv 1998, pp. 84–219. [Hebrew].
[119] David Amit, "After 1800 Years," *Nekuda*, 18 (October 1990) p. 144. [Hebrew].
[120] "Am Olam – Programme For Setting up a Museum of the History of the People of Israel in the Hills of Efrat," *Gushpanka*, 5 (April 1989), p. 16. [Hebrew].
[121] *Gush Etzion: "Bar Mitzva" of the Renewal of the Settlement*, 5. [Hebrew].
[122] Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth," *Structural Anthropology*, p. 216.
[123] Eliakim Ha-Etzni, "The Genetic Code," *Nekuda*, 10 (1984), p. 69. [Hebrew].
[124] Hanan Porat, "Memory – the Secret of Redemption," p. 14.
[125] Hanan Porat, *In Search of Anat*, pp. 15–16.

The play "Fire from the Hills," telling the story of Gush Etzion, begins on the day of the founding of the new settlement Alon Shvut in 1967. Yohanan, one of the returning sons, declaims: "And we are like an oak-tree thrusting its roots into the soil, so that even if it is cut down, it will spring up once more." The journalist covering the founding ceremony asks: "And do you live all the time with a historical consciousness?" Ora, who was four years old at the time of the evacuation answers: "Perhaps.... We didn't look for this; history looked for us."[126]

[126] Rivka Manovitz, *Fire from the Hills*, p. 1.

5

The Crusader Anxiety

THE CRUSADER-ZIONIST ANALOGY

Although the Israelis have held Judea and Samaria since 1967 and have had partnership in the nuclear club for many years, the crusader anxiety has not abated, even if it is not very self-aware. This anxiety represents a hidden traumatic fear that the Zionist project and the Israeli place might end in destruction. Unlike other negative and threatening myths, the crusader myth is not marked by days of remembrance or pilgrimage sites. It is not based on any direct historical memory, and except in intellectual and literary circles, it does not figure in the public discourse with sufficient intensiveness to become popular and widespread. Yet this cannot detract from the crusader anxiety that exists in Israel behind the scenes. It is present in the historical consciousness, because the all-too temporary nature of the First Temple and the Second Temple are historically factual. It also exists in the political consciousness of many Israelis who identify the Iranian nuclear bomb as an existential threat to the "Zionist crusaders." In many ways, it even overshadows the horror of the Holocaust, for the Israeli place, feared to be temporary and dangerous, was established as a healing response to the European place, the previous great geohistorical arena of many Jews that turned into a valley of slaughter. Is the crusader threat destined to be one of those profound myths that serve as precedents and tragically recur? Does the crusader myth suggest that what once was will always be again, only this time as a testimony to the failure of Zionism to solve the Jewish problem?

The crusader narrative also has a magnetism that still survives. It has been a mythical Rashomon, in which each group has created its own narrative. The historians made it into a Christian narrative with a beginning, middle, and end and shifted the narrative to the Muslim Orient, or, as the crusader kingdom historian Joshua Prawer called it, a tale of "Europe overseas."[1] For the

[1] See books by Joshua Prawer, including *The Crusaders' Kingdom: European Colonialism in the Middle Ages*, New York 1972; *The World of the Crusaders*, New York 1973; *The History*

religious, it was a parable and symbol of the power of believers, whether it was Christians leaving their territorial base in order to defend a spiritual homeland, or whether it was Muslims whose unity of heart and sword defeated the Christian infidels after two hundred years. For modern Arab nationalism, it was a political myth that enlisted the forefathers for the benefit of the heirs, and here the historical episode became an inspiring model for the descendants who were encouraged to expel the Jewish infidels from Palestine in the twentieth century. For poets and writers, it was an inexhaustible source of romantic inspiration; for Israeli patriots, it was a historical lesson that demonstrated that the healing must precede the blow; for post-Zionists, it was a historical example of mediaeval colonialism and a foreshadowing of modern national colonialism; and for fundamentalists, it was a pretext for attacking the globalization, modernity, and secularism of the beginning of the twenty-first century. Each one has had his own crusader myth.

We will look at four groups of writers in Israeli society who have dealt with the crusader narrative: historians, statesmen (and politicians), writers, and publicists. Each group has related to the historical parallel in accordance with its own concepts and in its own symbolism and language. Their joint scrutiny has cast light on major aspects of the Israelis' self-perception, and has thrown into relief certain elements of their collective identity as it has developed in the second half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first; that is, for the first sixty years of the state of Israel.

The historiography of the confrontation between the East and West has a history of its own. The Muslim revolt against mediaeval colonialism has been used in modern times in support of the rebellion of the Arab peoples against European colonialism, but the European colonialists also used historiography for political purposes. The French imagined the campaigns of Charles X and Napoleon to be French crusades, the Germans made Frederick II Barbarossa into a national hero at the time of the unification of Germany, the Belgians adopted Godfrey de Bouillon, whose birthplace was not Belgium in the Middle Ages, but became so in the nineteenth century. After the Great Exhibition of 1851, the British transferred the statue of Richard the Lionheart to a new site near the Palace of Westminster, where it has stood to the present day. In nineteenth-century Europe, the pan-European narrative of the crusades began to split up into rival national narratives: Each people produced on its own soil its own crusader narrative. Each nation chose to tailor its history to the territory in which it now resided.

The crusades did not have any centrality in Arab historiography or the Arab consciousness until the twentieth century, but rather were viewed as part of a history of clashes and conquests from ancient times until the modern period.

of the Jews in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, Oxford 1988; *The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem* (1099–1291), Jerusalem 1947. [Hebrew]. For a complete bibliography of Prawer's writings, cf. *In Memory of Joshua Prawer: Tributes on the Thirtieth Anniversary of His Death*, Israeli National Academy of Science, Jerusalem 1992, pp 27–37. [Hebrew].

In the introduction to the first book in Arabic on the subject, *The Cautionary Tale of the Crusader Wars* (1899), the Egyptian historian Said Ali el-Hariri observed that the aggressiveness of the European rulers toward the Ottoman rulers "bears an amazing resemblance to the actions of the crusaders in the past."[2] Close to the time of the War of Independence, a book called *The New Crusader-Phenomenon in Palestine* (1948) was published in Damascus, comparing the Christian colonialism of the Middle Ages with the Anglo-French and Zionist colonialism. The conclusion was that "we shall cleanse Palestine of the star of David just as we cleansed it of the crusades."[3] The Arab anticolonialism was represented as a war of Muslims against crusaders; the expellers of the crusaders such as Saladin, Beybars, and Nureddin, who were actually Turks and Kurds, were regarded as Islamic heroes; the religious aspect of the conflict was played down and the national aspect was emphasized; a moral duality, generally structured on belligerent myths, was created between barbaric crusaders and chivalrous Muslims; and the mythological construction was made of a Zionist "crusader" invasion, an ideological construction in which the past was used for the purposes of the present. Zionism was depicted as a religious movement nationally oppressive of the local population and economically exploitative toward them. This foreign regime, alien to the locality, was said to have no culture of its own and to lack all national authenticity; and thus, this vanguard of the degenerate western civilization would collapse as soon as a united front was presented against it.

Before the outbreak of the Six-Day War in 1967, the president of Egypt, Abdul Nasser, was compared to the legendary leader Saladin, who in the distant past had defeated the foreign invaders.[4] The weekly journal *El-Howdat* informed its readers that "since Salah ed-Din el-Iobi (Saladin), the Arabs have not had a leader like Abdul Nasser."[5] Saladin was viewed as a mobilizing symbol of the liberation of Jerusalem, "of Muslim unity, religious sacrifice, selfless struggle and the victory of faith."[6] A brigade of the Palestinian Liberation Organization's (PLO) Army For the Liberation of Jerusalem was called Hattin (the battleground where the crusaders were defeated); section 15 of the Hamas charter praised Saladin as a model; the 1973 War was described as the first Arab victory since Saladin; the civil war in Lebanon was called the "tenth crusade," in which the Maronites were compared to the Franks; the First Lebanon War (1982) was said to be the "twelfth crusade," in which Beirut did duty as the feudal fief of the crusader Iblin dynasty; and in the Gulf War (1991), Saddam Hussein proclaimed: "Salah ed-Din el-Iobi now

[2] Said Ali el-Hariri, *El-Ahbar el-Sniyeh Pi el-Harub el-Tzliviyeh* (The Cautionary Tale of the Crusader Wars), Cairo 1899, p. 6, quoted by Emmanuel Sivan, "History As a Witness for the Defence," *Arab Political Myths*, Tel Aviv 1988, p.18 [Hebrew].

[3] Vadia Talhok, *Al-Tslivia al-Jedira Pi Falestin* (The New Crusaders in Palestine), Damascus 1948.

[4] *Al-Huriah*, 31.5.1967.

[5] *Al-Hawdat*, 31.5.1967.

[6] Uriah Shavit, "Who Really Was Saladin?" *Haaretz*, 19.1.2001. [Hebrew].

loudly cries Allah Akbar (God is Great)!"[7] From the day PLO leader Yasser Arafat returned from the Camp David talks in the summer of the year 2000, the Palestinian media never stopped praising him by comparing him to the legendary commander. From the beginning of the Al-Aqsa intifada (2000), Arafat continually declared in his speeches, "We shall return to Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa, entered by Salah ed-Din el-Iobi."

Emmanuel Sivan discerned three main schools of thought in the treatment of the crusader phenomenon in Arab historiography. The first school of thought, previous to the Second World War, was concerned with the religious confrontation of Islam and Christianity and the Christian crusader threat to retake the territories that Islam conquered in its early days; the second school of thought, after the Second World War, saw the crusades as the beginning of European imperialism; and the third saw the crusades as an important phase in the ongoing confrontation between East and West in the Middle East from the fifth century BCE onward.[8]

The myth of Saladin has long been present in Arab history.[9] Originally directed against European colonialism and western civilization, in the last sixty years this mobilizing symbol has been utilized for the Arab-Israel conflict and has been mainly directed against the "Zionist entity."[10] It is not surprising if in the Israeli-crusader discourse an effort has been made on the Israeli side to confront the mass of images and parallels associated with the crusader myth.[11] It is interesting to note that there has been no such confrontation with the Zionist-crusader analogy on the Arab side, and the debate on the validity of the historical comparison has not taken place there. The Israeli discourse on the crusader phenomenon has been kept within the Israeli context and remains an internal debate dealing mainly with questions that have no connection with the Arab neighbors: the relationship between religion and the state, the lessons to be drawn from the settlements, the self-image of a foreign entity in the East, and the revision of the "tearful" approach to Jewish history in the exile that focused on the disturbances of 1096.

FROM THE CRUSADES TO THE SWASTIKA

Jewish and Israeli historiography has to this day shown little interest in the slaughter and massacre of Jews by the crusaders in the cities of Palestine, but on the other hand has shown much interest in the massacres of Jews in mediaeval Germany. This raises a number of questions. Is there behind this

[7] Offra Benjo, *Saddam's Iraq*, Tel Aviv 1996. [Hebrew].
[8] Sivan, *op. cit.*, pp.20–25.
[9] Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes*, trans. Jon Rothschild, London 1984.
[10] Meron Benvenisti, "Crusaders and Zionists," an article presented to the interdisciplinary seminar "Myth and History," which took place at the Jerusalem Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem 1989. [Hebrew].
[11] Uri Avneri, "On the Crusaders and Zionists," letter to the literary supplement of *Haaretz*, 11.8.1999. [Hebrew].

dual tendency a veiled "Zionist" intention to stress the dangers of the exile for the Jewish people? Are the persecutions of 1096 seen in the Israeli discourse as foreshadowing the Holocaust of European Jewry in the twentieth century? Is a distinction made between these two points in time (the twelfth and the twentieth centuries) that emphasizes the refuge provided for the Jews in Israel? Robert Hazan, in his book *The First Crusade and the Jews, 1096*, claimed that if the events of 1096 did not receive the attention of the nation whereas Massada became a symbol of Jewish national revolt, it was perhaps because "Massada represents true heroism in the homeland, while the saints of the Rhineland, despite the fact that they are the embodiment of the myth of the strong, committed Jew, remain an exilic phenomenon."[12]

Whatever the case, martyrdom remains the chief impression left by the disturbances of 1096: the massacre of the Jewish communities of Germany by the crusaders on their way to Palestine, and especially the slaughter of the communities of Speyer, Worms, Mainz, Cologne, Trier, and Metz. The Jewish martyrology was nourished for centuries by the image of Jewish murder victims and suicides, and the religious fervor that motivated the perpetrators of the massacres left its mark on the Jewish consciousness of the relationship between the Jews and Christians. In the historiographical discourse on the disturbances of 1096, one may discern three phases. In the first phase, the great Jewish historians of the nineteenth century and of the beginning of the twentieth, such as Zwi Graetz and Shimon Dubnow, stressed the negative influence on the Jews of Christian monastic mysticism, resulting in a readiness to commit suicide for fear of forced apostasy.[13] According to Moshe Gidman, this primitive influence postponed the emergence of the Jewish *Haskalah* (Enlightenment) in Germany because fears, delusions, superstitions, and the preoccupation of Ashkenazi devotion with hidden mysteries took the place of the rationalistic and healthy ways of thinking among the Jews of Spain.[14] Graetz added that despite the tragic results of the disturbances of 1096, the crusades also had some positive consequences for the history of the West.

The new Jewish historiography of the twentieth century discovered new sources that complemented the former findings and saw 1096 as a crossroads in mediaeval Jewish history. One should remember that these historians witnessed the emergence of the Yishuv, the Holocaust, and the founding of the state of Israel. Shalom Baron, the first critic of the "tearful" approach to Jewish history, identified 1096 as a turning point in Jewish-Christian relations.[15] Like the earlier historiography, the new historians saw the Jewish martyrdom of the

[12] Robert Hazan, *The First Crusade and the Jews*, Jerusalem 2000. [Hebrew].

[13] Zvi Graetz, *History of the Jews*, vol. 4, Warsaw 1906, pp. 105–125; Shimon Dubnow, *History of the Eternal People*, vol. 4, Tel Aviv 1958, pp. 155–195.

[14] Moshe Gidman, *Torah and Life in the Middle Ages in France and Germany*, Tel Aviv 1968. [Hebrew].

[15] Shalom Baron, *Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Ramat Gan 1973, pp. 67–78. [Hebrew].

Middle Ages as "a conscious rejection of Christian cultural norms at the same time as an unconscious adoption of them."[16] These studies revealed the influence of the Christian environment on the extreme tendency to self-sacrifice of the Jews of Germany in 1096, yet at the same time they "extolled the special quality of their self-sacrificing martyrdom."[17]

There has lately arisen a postmodernist school of thought concerning the massacres of 1096, close in spirit to the title of David Myers's book, *Re-inventing the Jewish Past*.[18] Many studies have been published demonstrating the closeness of the symbols, myths, and traditions of the Jews and Christians at that period. For example, there are the studies of Israel Yuval, which link martyrdom to the appearance of the blood libel in twelfth-century Christian Europe.[19] Ivan (Israel) Marcus claims that the Christian devotion to the concept of bearing the cross and the Jewish devotion to the idea of death for the sanctification of God are two aspects of the same phenomenon.[20] He sees a resemblance between three historical manifestations: the crusaders' belief that they knew the will of God, which required them to kill Jews on the way to the Holy Land; the Jews' belief in self-immolation based on the conviction that they knew the divine will, which required them to kill themselves and each other like the priests of the Temple; and the belief of *hassidei Ashkenaz* that they could uncover the secrets of the Creator. From all this he draws the conclusion that the disturbances of 1096 were a turning point in Christian Europe, and the collective memory concerning them was chiefly preserved through the historical consciousness of the Jews of the Rhineland.

Against the background of the disturbances of 1929, Shemuel Ussishkin, a publicist and the son of Menahem Ussishkin, wrote the first book in Hebrew on the crusades, titled *The West in the East: The History of the Crusades in Palestine* (1931). The author, who was not a historian, explained his motivation in writing it as a desire to draw lessons from "those days" that would be relevant for "the present time." What did the Christian knights of eight hundred years before have to do with the pioneers in Palestine? He answered: "If I nevertheless sat down and carried out my intention of surveying the history of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem, I did so because I did not see the events of those days only as an ancient historical episode unconnected with the

[16] Jeremy Cohen, "From History to Historiography: The Study of the Persecutions and Constructions of Their Meaning" in Yom Tov Assis, Michael Toch, Jeremy Cohen, Ora Limor, and Aharon Kedar, eds., *Facing the Cross: The Persecutions of 1096 in History and Historiography*, Jerusalem 2000, p. 20. [Hebrew].

[17] Ibid, p. 22.

[18] David Myers, *Reinventing the Jewish Past: European Jewish Intellectuals and the Zionist Return to History*, New York 1995.

[19] Israel Yuval, "Vengeance and the Curse, Blood and Libel: From the Acts of the Righteous to the Blood Libel," *Zion*, 58 (1994), pp. 33–90 [Hebrew].

[20] Ivan (Israel) Marcus, "From 'Deus Vult' to the Will of the Creator: Extremist Religious Ideologies and Historical Reality in the Year 1096 and Hasidei Ashkenaz," in Yom Tov Assis and others, eds., *Facing the Cross*, pp. 22–100. [Hebrew].

questions we face in our lives."[21] The Kingdom of Jerusalem, in his opinion, was not only one of the most fascinating episodes in the history of Christian Europe and in Jewish history, but it also had an additional, special point of interest: It had previously been usual to examine the crusader kingdom from the point of view of the disturbances of 1096, but Ussishkin turned his searchlight for the first time on the Zionist-crusader analogy. The book was not a rebuke or an apology, but a lesson concerning a test case in which the past could serve the needs of the present by providing an interesting example of a western culture dwelling at the heart of the East:

> There can be nothing more dangerous than a historical analogy if it is overstated. The danger is to draw conclusions concerning the events of the day through a comparison with the past on the sole basis of an external resemblance, without taking into account all the differences in times and conditions. At the same time, one should not rule out the possibility of learning about an existing situation through a study of similar situations. For that reason, the history of the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem has a special interest for the Zionists, although the Latins of the Middle Ages who came to the country to set up a Christian state were Christians, not Jews by religion, and Aryans, not Semites by race. They lived in a different period and used totally different means from those utilized by the Zionists in our time, but the problem with which they were confronted was almost identical with that facing the children of Israel seeking to return to their land today.
>
> The main question faced by the crusaders was how to set up in the midst of the oriental Muslim states a Christian centre which would be different from its neighbours in religion, origin, language and culture – one which sprang from the West and was nurtured by it. The same question confronts the Zionists: how can one set up in the midst of the Muslim states a Jewish centre which would be different from the neighbouring states in religion, culture, origin and language – one which was created by external forces coming from the West? The Zionists, however, are different from the crusaders.[22]

The analogy made by the Muslims between the Christian past and the Jewish present was generally understood by them to signify that the Arabs had to learn from their heroic past to unite their ranks behind a historic leader who would expel the infidels. Ussishkin, however, does not see this as the main point. His interest in the analogy is different: He seeks to discover how to prevent the collapse of a western civilization that has planted itself in the East. Where race and origins are concerned – he points out – the Jews are not part of the western world, as their roots are in the East and they are culturally and religiously close to the Muslims. However, it cannot be denied that the majority of Zionists and immigrants are westerners and not orientals, and the

[21] Shemuel Ussishkin, *The West in the East: The History of the Crusaders in Palestine*, Tel Aviv 1931, p. 3. [Hebrew]. My gratitude to Professor Israel Bartal who kindly drew my attention to Ussishkin's book.

[22] Ibid, p. 4.

matter of their integration into the East raises questions similar to those that arose in the time of the crusaders in Palestine.

Ussishkin perceived the weak point of western Zionism to be the imposition on the East of an "alien culture" and a "foreign centre." When we study the history of the crusaders in the East, he said, "we are confronted with questions and dangers relevant to our situation today, and it sometimes seems to us that we are reading contemporary history with fictional names and characters in fancy-dress."[23] These lines recall and reiterate Karl Marx's famous diagnosis of the failed French revolutions of 1848, which were stillborn because they borrowed the costumes of their parent revolutionaries of 1789 "in order to present their new world-historical vision in this fancy-dress, this time-honoured disguise, and in this borrowed language."[24] Ussishkin came to the conclusion that "the crusades failed and nothing at all remains of the crusader kingdoms. But this fact only increases the necessity of studying their history in order to examine the reasons for the failure and in order to learn how to avoid the mistakes which had so many fateful consequences."[25]

One of the consequences of the crusades was the massacres of 1096. The Holocaust of European Jewry in the twentieth century took their place as the most horrible example of a systematic and murderous persecution of the Jews since that time. Berl Katznelson, the intellectual leader of the Labor movement in Palestine, more than any other leader in the Yishuv, immediately understood the depth of the tragedy. He already knew in 1940 that the starting point of any Zionist discussion had to be the destruction of European Jewry.[26] In that same year, under the title "With Our Backs to the Wall," he drew an analogy between the crusades and the actions of the Nazis:

> The Nazis have for some time had designs on Palestine. Like the crusades, the thrust of the Nazis is towards the East. They have no need of the mysticism of the Holy Sepulchre. They have another mysticism: oil, the Suez Canal, air-routes, an open path to hundreds of millions of cheap slaves from the "lower races" who can serve the master race. And thus we have been placed and we too are placed – we, the youngest of the tribes of Israel and the beginning of its resurrection – on the front line. This is not a metaphor or a figure of speech: it really is the front line.[27]

The Nazi-crusader analogy was not just a once-only occurrence on the part of Katznelson. About twelve years later, in 1952, the Israeli essayist Moshe Fogel sought a revision of the Jewish attitude to the crusades, because in his opinion

[23] Ibid, p. 5.
[24] Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth of Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works*.
[25] Ussishkin, *The West in the East*, p. 5. [Hebrew].
[26] Anita Shapira, *Berl: Biography*, 2, Tel Aviv 1980, p. 606. [Hebrew].
[27] Berl Katznelson, "With Our Backs to the Wall," *Works of B. Katznelson*, 9, Tel Aviv 1948, p. 121. [Hebrew].

they were not the reason for the slaughter of the Jews, but merely the pretext. "The German murderers in the eleventh century like their Nazi descendants in the twentieth merely used the crusades as the Nazis used the Bolshevik menace as a convenient excuse to exterminate the Jews whom they hated."[28] In his opinion, there was no intrinsic connection between the crusades and the slaughter of the Jews, and the crusades could have happened without the slaughter of the Jews, just as the slaughter of the Jews could have happened without the crusades. The Jews were victims in the ideological war between Christianity and Islam in the eleventh century, just as they were victims of the ideological war between fascism and Communism in the twentieth century. The state of Israel was founded precisely in order to avoid this fate, to which a national minority is prone.

The crusades, according to Fogel, were a major link in a chain – the long historical duel between the East and West.[29] The expressions "East" and "West," he maintained, should not be understood only in terms of geography and religion, but of material and spiritual culture, ideals of civilization. The Jews played an important part in this confrontation, and swung like a pendulum between East and West. In the Graeco-Persian War ,the Jews were in the eastern camp, but the West won and it seemed that Hellenism would conquer the world. The revolt of the Maccabees against Hellenism was a continuation of the battle of Marathon, but this time the East was victorious. Still, there was a reaction in the West when the kingdom of Byzantium became so "orientalized" that during the crusades there was very little cultural difference between Christian Constantinople and Muslim Damascus and Baghdad. Western Europe freed itself from any eastern influence, and in the crusader period there was a cultural abyss between Rome and Paris on the one hand and Constantinople on the other. The crusades were the reaction of the West and a continuation of the battle of Marathon in the guise of a Christian-Catholic offensive against the Muslim East. One phase in this duel between civilizations is the confrontation between the West under the leadership of the United States and the East under the leadership of Russia. Fogel concluded:

> With the establishment of the State of Israel the story of the crusades opens up new perspectives of immeasurable importance for us. Our position in the Middle East is similar in many ways to that of the crusaders, and accordingly some manifestations of the Crusader kingdom can serve us as a historical precedent. This precedent is of very great significance in the political sphere.[30]

[28] Moshe Fogel, "We and the Crusaders," *Haaretz*, 31.10.1952. [Hebrew].

[29] Joshua Prawer, "The Confrontation of East and West in the Crusader Period," in Joseph Geiger ed., *Lectures in Memory of the Late Moshe Strosta*, Jerusalem 1994, pp. 23–38. [Hebrew].

[30] Fogel, "We and the Crusaders," cf. also idem, "The Crusaders in Their Strength and Weakness," *Keshet*, 1 (Autumn 1958), pp. 154–163. [Hebrew].

EUROPE OVERSEAS

In 1949, a year after the founding of the state of Israel, the biblical scholar Menahem Haran enumerated three factors that worked to the disadvantage of the crusader state and that were also relevant in the case of Israel. The crusader state was thrust outward toward the sea by a unified and powerful Muslim Arab East. The crusaders were excessively concentrated in towns, abandoned most areas of the state to the local Muslims, and were overlords and conquerors. There was little emigration from Europe and crusader settlement in the country was sparse. What was the relevance of all this for the state of Israel? With regard to the rise of Arab power, this is not in the hands of the Israelis. They can only make sure they have a sufficiently large territorial rear. With regard to the ethnic character of settlement, in the three generations preceding the founding of the state the Israelis succeeded in this undertaking. With regard to the amount of immigration and the number of settlers in the country, Haran concluded: "All the evidence is in our favour. Our development will inevitably give us a different fate."[31] Haran, in effect, fired the opening shot of the crusader discourse soon after the War of Independence. For the first time, a man of academic stature took a stand and initiated an open debate without any fear of the historical parallel.

One year later, in 1950, the writer and poet Aharon Amir, writing from an entirely different ideological viewpoint, warned the young Jewish state against pursuing a "Crusader" policy. In his article "The Crusader Kingdom of Israel," which appeared under the pseudonym "Yehoshua Bentov" in the journal *Aleph*, the organ of the "Young Hebrews" (known to their adversaries as "Canaanites"), Amir cautioned against a policy aiming at the total separateness of Israel, which would mean a Jewish theocracy preoccupied with building up its strength against its neighbors, and which would be perpetually dependent on external factors like world Jewry and foreign powers:

> A policy of this kind is definitely a "Crusader" policy. It increasingly places the State of Israel in the situation of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem in the Middle Ages, a military-theocratic kingdom. It perhaps provides a vision, real or false, for the communities overseas on which it depends economically and from which it receives human reinforcements and moral and political assistance, but has nothing to give and no vision for the peoples of the region, and there is no common factor between itself and the populations surrounding it.[32]

Amir considered that although the idea of comparing the fate of the crusaders with that of the Israelis was not a popular one, this comparison represented

[31] Menahem Haran, "The Crusader Kingdom and the State of Israel," *Be-terem* (June 1949), pp. 55–59. [Hebrew].

[32] Yehoshua Bentov (Aharon Amir), "The Crusader Kingdom of Israel?" in *The Canaanite Group – Literature and Ideology* (collection edited by Nurit Graetz and Rahel Weisbrod), The Open University, Tel Aviv 1986, p. 28. [Hebrew].

the most serious element in the ideological thinking of the Arabs. Thus, he believed that "a 'Crusader' State of Israel, a Zionist State of Israel, would not retain its strength for any length of time. Any unexpected gust of wind, any sudden change in the balance of world forces would portend disaster. The seal of perdition would be on its brow."

It should be remembered that the "Crusader syndrome," representing an importation of western culture to the East, stood in contradiction to the Canaanite ideology to which Amir subscribed, and this opposition of West to East was discordant with its nativistic ideal of Hebrew nationhood in the Mesopotamian region. It is ironic that this did not prevent the Canaanites from fostering the Phoenician myth and seeking to prove by means of it that the Jews were an eastern export to the West. In the words of Dan Laor, "The Canaanites expected the new nation of Israeli natives (whom they preferred to call "Hebrews") to become the vanguard, the melting-pot of all the ethnic groups in the west Semitic world, creating a massive, homogenous Middle-Eastern nation similar to that of the ancient Hebrews who had been the dominant national, cultural and political force in the region in biblical times." Whatever the case, Amir's outlook reflected a "Hebraic" policy, severed from the Jewish umbilical cord and liberated from alien ideologies, which gave the Jewish immigrant no preference to the non-Jewish resident of the land, and which opened the gates of Hebrew society to anyone who desired it. It will not be difficult for the reader to detect here the first sprouting of the idea of a "state of all its citizens," a state based on geography rather than history – an idea that is basically Canaanite. More than fifty years later, Aharon Amir's call to his compatriots to choose the Canaanite option of Israeli identity had still not ceased to be heard; it was coupled with the threat that, unless they did so, the Israelis were doomed to end like the crusaders. The poet Amir Or concluded his article, "A Single Identity for All the Inhabitants of the Land," with the following words: "As the years pass, the religious basis of our identity increasingly brings to mind the Crusader Kingdom and also its end."[33]

In 1953, in a critical review of the monumental *History of the Crusades* by the Scottish historian Steven Runciman, the editor of the *Haaretz* newspaper, Gershom Schocken, claimed that the Israelis were demonstrating an increasing interest in the history of the Land of Israel as distinct from an interest in the history of the Jewish people such as was found in exile, for example, in Graetz's history. The very fact of exile, he said, meant that the history of the Jewish people was something different from the history of the Land of Israel. For nearly two thousand years, various powers had ruled over the land and had been influenced by the geographical circumstances and political situation. When the Israelis began to function once more as an independent political factor within the objective conditions of the country, it was natural that they wanted to know how other political elements in different periods had attempted to deal with the problems the land presents to all those who wish

[33] Amir Or, "One Right For the Sons of the Land," *Haaretz*, 22.11.2000 [Hebrew].

to rule it. Schocken came to the conclusion that "those who wish to draw a parallel between the fate of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the situation in the State of Israel in our time must take into account that the episode of the rise of Saladin … does not give one the impression that an inevitable historical development took place here." [34]

A year before the Sinai Campaign of 1956, the Israeli journalist Uri Avneri interviewed the English historian Arnold Toynbee. The interview appeared under the title "Don't Repeat the Mistakes of the Philistines and the Crusaders."[35] Toynbee, who in the tenth volume of his *Study of History* had diagnosed Zionism as a modern colonialism, in 1955 turned to the Israelis and addressed them as follows: "Reliance on the rifle and the bayonet will never give you the assurance that your country belongs to you. Only a deep soul-identification with the country, its past and future, will bring you this certainty. You have to understand that everything connected with your country, even if it does not relate to the Jews, is connected with you directly. You have to learn the history of the country and even that of the crusaders, for example, for it belongs to you."

Steven Runciman repeated this advice in his answer to Avneri when he asked him whether he had ever thought about a similarity between the crusaders and the Zionists. "Not only have I thought about it," he said, "but I wanted to add a subtitle: 'A Practical Guide for Zionists on How Not to Do It.' But my Jewish friends advised me against it." When Runciman and Avneri met, they constantly found Zionist parallels to crusader figures and events. Avneri wrote:

> For instance, the position of the oriental Christians in the crusader kingdom as compared with the position of the oriental Jews in the Zionist State (very similar). Who is the Israeli counterpart of the Arab-eating adventurer Richard the Lion-heart? (We thought of Moshe Dayan; today one would think of Ariel Sharon), and so on without end. I was fascinated by the hypothetical question which preoccupied Runciman. Did the crusaders have any real chance of making peace with the Arab world and "becoming part of the region," as Raymond, the ruler of Tripoli proposed, or was the thing doomed to failure from the start because of the nature of the Crusader (or, with all due allowances, Zionist) ideology?[36]

The Israelis' curiosity about the crusaders resulted from their growing interest in the history of the land as distinct from that of the people.[37] The Zionist

[34] Gershom Schocken, "History of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem," *Haaretz*, 30.3.1953. [Hebrew]; Also, see especially Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 3 Vols., Cambridge 1951–1954.

[35] Uri Avneri, "Don't Repeat the Mistakes of the Philistines and the Crusaders," *Ha-Olam Ha-Zeh*, 31.3.1955 [Hebrew]; Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, 2, New York 1965, pp. 210–213.

[36] Uri Avneri, "On the Crusaders and the Zionists, Letter to the Literary Supplement," *Haaretz*, 11.8.1999. [Hebrew].

[37] Benjamin Ze'ev Kedar, ed., *The Crusaders and Their Kingdom: Studies in the History of Palestine 1099–1292*, Jerusalem 1987, p. 7 [Hebrew]. Kedar also discusses the Zionist-crusader

educational network, which emphasized the periods of national existence in the days of the First and Second Temples, had neglected whole periods in which there was no marked Jewish presence in the Land of Israel. A people without a land implied a land without a people, and a land that was not settled was obviously a land without a history. For a long time, the whole period from Bar Kochba until the beginning of Zionist settlement was neglected. The history of the country, as opposed to the history of the Jews within it, was of interest to few. In the second decade after the founding of the state, a new attitude developed toward the Christian and Muslim periods in the history of the country. The question of sovereignty had now been settled, and so the inhibitions concerning the non-Jewish past of the country diminished.

The archaeological profession, which was very popular, also bestowed legitimacy on the investigation of non-Jewish periods. This was the background against which Michael Avi Yona's studies of Palestine in the Roman and Byzantine periods, Yitzhak ben Zvi's studies of Ottoman Palestine, and Joshua Prawer's studies of crusader Palestine were written.

Joshua Prawer, an outstanding Israeli historian of the crusader kingdom in Palestine, scrutinized in his work a fascinating two-hundred-year-long chapter in the history of the Christian West and the Muslim East, a period in which the Europeans set up a "Europe overseas" in Palestine. Some people have seen this as a link in the chain of the ancient traditional hostility between the East and West, between Persia and Greece, between Hannibal and Rome – a chapter eventually known as the "Orient problem" in European history. Prawer focused on "a description of the vivid life of the crusaders, whose ideal was not one of harmony or integration but of continual confrontation on the battlefield, as in the spheres of religion and culture."[38] The European victory implanted a western society, alien in its culture, religion, and customs, in a world whose material and cultural achievements were greater than those of the European conquerors. A confrontation between East and West was inevitable.

analogy: idem, "Il motivo della crociata nel pensiero politico Israeliano," *Verso Gerusalemme. Il convegno internazionale nel IX centenario della I crociata (1099–1999)*, A cura di F. Cardini, M. Belloli, B. Vetere, Mario Congedo, eds., Galatina 1999, pp. 135–150.

[38] Joshua Prawer, *The World of the Crusaders*, Jerusalem 1984, p. 8 [Hebrew]. Prawer revealed that he came to the subject of the crusaders by chance. In an interview he gave in October 1989, a few months before his death, he said: "My two teachers Richard Koebner and Yitzhak Baar suggested I should write my MA thesis 'and after that, we'll see.' I presented my thesis on the subject of 'The City of Tyre in the Crusader Period.' This was not the period in which I was interested. I was actually interested in the life of Jesus, but I had nobody to guide me. (After that), I began to write my doctoral dissertation after a conversation with my teacher Koebner.... This was the period just before the Second World War, and Koebner said to me, 'Look, you stay here. You have a general education. Let's find a subject which can bridge Europe and Palestine.' ... The subject, then, was something urban, something crusader. My teacher Baar claimed that my thesis was far more important than the dissertation, and today I think he was right." See "Professor Joshua Prawer on His Childhood and on the Beginning of His University Career," Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Igeret, 7, Letter (May 1990). [Hebrew].

Only rarely did Prawer relate specifically to the Zionist-crusader analogy, and even on these rare occasions he only did so when he had to answer questions in interviews. An exception was his article "The Fall of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem," which appeared in the political journal *La-Merhav* in 1954. In this article, the reasons were given for the decline and fall of the Crusader Kingdom, but no historical parallel was made between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the twentieth century. However, in his summarizing introduction, Prawer expressed his feelings as a historian about historical analogies:

> Someone described history as the living memory of humanity, and humanity behaves exactly like a living person, and in periods of crisis, in times of changes and innovation, it turns to the past, either with longing, in search of consolation, or else in search of guidance and consolation. But in this turning to the past there is also another motive: the very human tendency to look for an analogy. Sometimes this can help people to become accustomed to unfamiliar and novel circumstances, but more often it is merely the search for an analogy for its own sake. The French writer Collette observes in one place that people who arrive in the desert for the first time describe it as a sea of sand even if they have never been to the sea, and people who see the sea for the first time describe it as a desert of water even if they have never been to a desert.[39]

Prawer spoke of the great interest in the history of the crusader kingdom shown in the Middle East after the state of Israel arose. The Arab newspapers suddenly loved to talk about Saladin, Beybars, and King Al-Sharif, and the Hebrew and European-language press also displayed much curiosity about the subject. He concluded: On the one hand, it was the sign of a search for historical consolation after a defeat, and on the other it was an expression of fear and a warning after the intoxication engendered by the founding of the state. He continued:

> Friend and foe alike seem to be taken with the idea that the conditions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries can be transposed into the twentieth century, but this supposition is clearly far from the truth. We are not saying this in order to deny the validity of the analogy. It is still worthy of respect, but not without some qualifications. There is no doubt that the State of Israel confronts problems faced by the crusader kingdom, but no conclusions should be drawn from this unless side by side with the points of similarity one places the differences resulting from the changes and vicissitudes the area passed through for a period of six hundred years and which changed its context and character. But when these comparisons are made, they are usually visualised within the framework of present-day political and military situations, to which parallels are drawn, and they are treated as if they are self-evident and explain everything.[40]

[39] Joshua Prawer, "The Fall of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem," *La-Merhav: Political Weekly*, I, 3 (1954), pp. 60–61 [Hebrew]. Ibid, booklet 4, pp. 84–85.

[40] Prawer, Ibid.

Shortly before the Six-Day War, the weekly French-language Tunisian journal *Jeune Afrique* published Prawer's views on the character of the Crusader Kingdom in Palestine, although these views were by no means identical with the Arab point of view. The reason given for their publication was that Prawer's book was about to appear in a French edition. The journal allowed the view to be expressed that the crusader kingdom was totally different in character from the state of Israel in our time, a view that was in contradiction to the prevailing opinion among the Arab intelligentsia that the factors that led to the fall of the crusader kingdom would eventually destroy the state of Israel, to which it was supposed to be parallel. In its account of Prawer's opinions, *Jeune Afrique* refrained drawing the parallel between the crusaders and the Israelis, but this question is implicit in the text of the book. To take one example: "The crusaders never created a people: they remained French (for the most part), English, Swabian, etc. Their kingdom merely expressed the religious unity of Christian Europe."[41] That is to say, the "fusion of exiles" characteristic of the state of Israel did not take place and there was no social unity on a national basis. To give another example:

> Their [the crusaders'] system of settlement failed. They were never anything but a very small minority in the Holy Land (125,000 at the most, as against 500,000 Muslims), and this small minority never succeeded in striking roots in the villages. The crusaders … were of necessity a population of city-dwellers crowded together behind the walls of fortified cities or castles. Most of the cities were on the coast in order to facilitate communication with Europe. All the villages were Muslim.… In Palestine, three quarters of the population were concentrated in three cities: Tyre, Acre and Jerusalem. There they tried to live like Europeans, without any attempt at acclimatization or adaptation.

From this point of view there was also a marked difference between the crusader kingdom and Israel.

Like most Israelis in the period before the Six-Day War, Prawer was worried by the security problems of Israel within its narrow borders. At various academic conferences at which he lectured, he hinted at present-day security matters while speaking about the history of the crusader kingdom. In March 1963 he gave a lecture on "Crusader Policies Concerning the Dead Sea and Sinai" for the Society for the Study of the Land of Israel and Its Antiquities and the Absalom Institute. Prawer claimed that there were three stages in the "security policies" of the crusader state. In the first stage, the kingdom sought to preserve its security by extending its control as far as the natural borders of the country – that is to say, as far as the deserts. In the second stage, when the crusaders became aware that a large Egyptian army could be brought across the desert, they tried to control the deserts themselves. In the third stage, the kingdom sought to conquer Egypt on the assumption that without crusader

[41] "Israel and the Crusaders," *Haaretz*, 7.10.1966. [Hebrew]. The article in *Haaretz* summarized the review in *Jeune Afrique*.

rule in Egypt there would be no security in crusader Palestine either. At a gathering that took place in October 1966 Prawer lectured on "Galilee and Its Defence in the Crusader Period," and his conclusion was that one of the crusaders' weaknesses was that they failed to accept the idea of spatial defense.

> The crusaders understood that the water frontier of the Jordan River was not a secure border, and they sought to extend their kingdom to the border of the desert beyond Hauran. They built stone fortresses and settled in them, but they did not control the hostile population which was five times larger than that of the crusaders. Despite their drastic situation, the crusaders rejected the proposal of Thoros, the Christian king of Armenia, to send to Palestine thirty thousand Christians who would settle as farmers, and were not willing to accept this "spatial defence."[42]

This was the reason for the failure of the Crusader Principality of the Galilee: It was not possible to control the country from stone fortresses without the support of a well-disposed peasantry.

About two months after the 1967 War, Prawer touched on the central point in the Jews' attachment to their land: "Throughout the period of exile of the people of Israel, no other people succeeded in striking roots in the land and making it its country." Prawer repeatedly emphasized the special connection of the people of Israel to its land, in contrast to the crusaders: "In the thirteenth century the country lay desolate, and the crusaders, despite their immense effort for two hundred years to hold onto it, failed, as the Muslims and Mongols also failed."[43]

In March 1973, about half a year before the Yom Kippur War, in the symposium "Conquerors and Conquered – the Crusader State as a Colonialist State," held in honor of the appearance of the English edition of his book *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Prawer said that the crusader state was a society based on a legitimate claim to ownership of the land. At this gathering, the historian Meron Benvenisti pointed out that the analogy between the crusader state and the state of Israel was an invention of the Arab historians, and only the Israeli historians, who knew the land and Israeli society, could set the record straight. The historian Shlomo Avineri claimed that the true parallel to the crusader society was not to be found in the Middle East but in South Africa, whose apartheid regime was also based on ideological-biblical principles, drawing an analogy between the blacks and the Canaanites in the Bible. The only parallel one could make between the Israelis and the crusaders concerns the image of the Israelis in the eyes of the Arabs. The Arabs relate to the Israelis with a feeling of military inferiority that was characteristic of the relationship of the Muslim armies to the crusaders, but with a hint of cultural superiority as the representatives of the great and ancient Muslim civilization. The sociologist Moshe Lissac asserted that unlike modern colonialist movements, the crusaders did

[42] Ibid.

[43] Joshua Prawer, "Many Peoples Have Ruled Jerusalem but Only We Have Struck Roots There," symposium under the direction of Geula Cohen, *Maariv*, 4.8.1967. [Hebrew].

not have a metropolis. The right-wing intellectual Israel Eldad observed that although the crusaders could claim a hereditary title to the country, they had no sense of returning to a homeland. In the two hundred years they existed in the country, the word "homeland" appeared in their writings only once.

In a television program in July 1987 to mark the eighth-hundredth anniversary of the battle of Hattin, at which the fall of the crusader kingdom of Jerusalem began, an Arab child from a school in Nablus appeared who said that he had no doubt whatsoever that the Israelis would end like the crusaders; he declared that "the Jews are the new imperialists." In this program, Aharon Amir expressed the opinion that "if the ghetto-principle will rule our lives" in the state of Israel, a crusader-like end is not only a possibility but a virtual certainty. Yet because Israel is part of the modern world and its way of life is predominantly secular, it will necessarily influence the populations not of Jewish extraction and will draw them into its sphere. Emmanuel Sivan, for his part, denied the validity of historical theories, saw little truth in the analogies, and warned that one should not be led astray by the myth of the battle of Hattin, which the Arab peoples had taken hold of in their struggle against the western powers. At the request of the interviewer Yaakov Ahimeir, Prawer commented on the different attachment of the crusaders and the Israelis to the land:

> I find my roots here, and not in some *shtetl* in eastern Europe … The crusaders could not have made such a claim. Our roots are here, in this country.… We speak of returning to the land of our forefathers. This is a concept that doesn't apply to western Christianity.… We are part of the East, for two thousand years we have been returning to the land of Israel; the Bible is a product of the land of Israel, and from that point of view to speak of us as being foreign to the place is of course ridiculous.[44]

Although in his books and articles Prawer deliberately refrained from making any comparison between the crusader phenomenon and the Zionist enterprise, Benjamin Zeev Kedar, who was his pupil, ascribed to him an approach that hinted at such an analogy. In a book in memory of Prawer, he wrote: "I imagine that a hidden confrontation with this analogy to no small degree dictated the kind of interests he had: in the demographic structure of the kingdom, in the distribution of the Frankish settlements, in the scope of their agricultural settlement, in the degree to which European support was indispensable. In his books and articles he did not specifically state the conclusions to be drawn from this confrontation, but the reader disturbed by the analogy cannot miss them."[45] As an example he cited Prawer's approach to the subject of European Christian immigration:

> This was the state's main problem and the chief reason for its fall. The crusaders ruled the land but they did not really have a hold on it. They performed

[44] Quoted in Kedar, "Joshua Prawer, His Personality and Work," in *Memory of Joshua Prawer*, p. 20 [Hebrew].

[45] Ibid, p. 19.

> the commandment of immigration to the land of Israel with their bodies but they did not perform the commandment of settling it. They were capable of setting up mighty camps, of displaying might in war and conquest, but they did not succeed, although they tried, in creating a sediment of Frankish population attached to the land in the literal sense, a stratum of agricultural settlers in control of the land and its produce.[46]

In his article "Lessons the Crusaders Can Teach Us," which appeared on the occasion of the publication of Prawer's book in English, Kedar recalled some words of criticism in the journal *History*, expressing agreement with them: "The points of similarity and, even more, the points of difference between the crusader kingdom of the Middle Ages and the modern State of Israel are always implicit in the background although the writer hardly ever refers to them specifically."[47] The reader accustomed to the publicistic exploitation of the crusaders in the Israeli-Arab dispute will be surprised to hear that in Prawer's view the crusaders saw themselves as legitimate heirs to the land, that they came to expel the Muslims living there by conquest. Kedar also found a hint of actuality in Prawer's words on the Muslim *fellahin* who, under crusader rule, had a feeling of humiliation at being conquered by unbelievers: "The exploiter was a foreigner, the enemy of their religion, the slayer of the believers. Thus, a chasm was created which could not be bridged, which could never have been eliminated by a more friendly attitude on the part of the crusaders." For the Israeli reader, the most interesting feature in Prawer's work is the reasons he gave for the fall of the crusader kingdom. The failure of the crusaders runs like a thread through Prawer's work and disturbed him throughout his historiographical activity. In his youth he laid emphasis on the crusaders' lack of agricultural settlement in Palestine and their demographic problem, whereas later on he stressed the links of the crusaders in Palestine to their lands of origin in Europe.

In the absence of direct European overlordship, financial and democratic assistance to the colony overseas had to depend on the feeling of pan-Christian solidarity toward it in Catholic Europe. In Prawer's opinion, the partial orientalization of the crusaders in the country did not bring them closer to the Muslims but merely distanced them from their kinsmen and coreligionists in Europe. The estrangement and withdrawal brought them "to a situation very common in the world of modern colonialism: they grew distant from the mother country but did not get through to the natives." The crusaders failed because they were finally unable to build a stable colonialist civilization like the Boers in South Africa or the French in Quebec.

The historical geographer Ronnie Ellenbaum, who was a student of Prawer's pupil Kedar, does not feel any of that commitment to Zionism like some of his teachers at the Hebrew University. He does not seek to demonstrate how different the Zionists were from the crusaders. Therefore he does not have

[46] Joshua Prawer, *History of the Crusader Kingdom in Palestine*, 2, p. 385. [Hebrew].
[47] Quoted in Kedar, "Crusader Lessons," *Haaretz*, 22.12.1972. [Hebrew].

to claim that the crusaders did not settle on the land in Palestine, which is often posited to suggest the distinct reason for the crusaders' downfall – he doesn't look to them for help with estimating the Zionist state's chances of survival. Here we have two different basic historiographical approaches to the crusader enterprise with consequences for the Zionist undertaking: the segregative approach of the Prawer school of thought and the integrative approach of Ellenbaum.

Unlike Meron Benvenisti – who like most of those involved with the subject thinks that the aim of the masses of pilgrims in the first crusade was not to acquire property or to set up a state, but was rather to liberate the Church of the Holy Sepulchre from the unbelievers – Ellenbaum claims that religious ideals were not the primary concern of the European settlers in Palestine. The Frankish emigration to the Levant was motivated by the same reasons people of the eleventh and twelfth centuries sought a place to live in Europe: People chose to settle in the East as others chose to settle in Spain. The normality of this settlement was expressed in their desire to acquire a property for their family, to build a house, and to live – and not only to die – on behalf of religious ideals. The war with Islam was not always their primary concern, both because there were relatively quiet periods and because of the difficulties of daily life. The historical failure of the stage of Frankish settlement is what gave rise to the historical image of the entire period, and that is what has left us with the mythical "crusader" image of the Frankish settlement.[48]

A revision of the crusader myth is evident in the distinction that has recently been made between the concept Frankish settlement, which stresses the settling aspect of the crusades, and the more familiar "crusader settlement," which stresses their warlike aspect. The Frankish settlement in the East was connected with the crusades in a historical and causal way, inasmuch as the crusaders conquered the land and created the territorial space in which the new settlements were established. However, the fact that the conquest and the settlement were parallel and influenced one another does not necessarily make them identical. The differences between the stage of the conquest of the land and the stage of settlement are similar to those between the stages in the creation of border settlements. In the first ("crusader") stage, the "pioneers" determine the frontier and conquer the area, wresting it from those considered to be enemies of their culture. The enemy is not always human; it can also be physical, and the conquest does not necessarily have a violent character. In the second stage (the "Frankish" settlement), the region gradually fills up with "settlers" and "immigrants" whose motivation is personal, utilitarian, or economic.

The differences between the crusader stage and the Frankish stage of settlement, between the pioneer-conquerors who fix the borders of the region and the later settlers, are blurred in the common memory in a way that turns

[48] Ronnie Ellenblum, *Frankish Rural Settlement in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Cambridge 1998.

the first group (the crusaders) into a myth. The formation of the myth is expressed in a series of symbols: The conquerors of the frontier are often given collective titles reflecting its character: "pioneers," "drainers of the swamps," "crusaders," "conquistadores," "conquerors of the West," and so on; and from among these are chosen the figures who together constitute the mythical pantheon. The myth develops principles in accordance with its needs and consequently stresses certain qualities in the character of these figures. The differences between the initial conquerors of the region and the later settlers are not necessarily real differences, but can be merely differences of image and appearance. The Franks had major achievements in the sphere of agriculture and settlement. The immigrants who settled in the Kingdom of Jerusalem set up a developed network of settlements similar to those in Europe. It included fortresses, monasteries, small castles, farms, unfortified villages, and so on. The Franks brought to the country a developed system of village administration, which they further developed. They built new roads and improved the existing ones, marked out fields and distributed them, created an advanced system of tithe-collection, developed agriculture, set up mills and built bridges, and grew crops previously unknown in the country, which they brought from Europe.

The picture presented by previous scholars, who claimed that the Franks were cut off from labor in the fields and from the inhabitants of the land, emerges as ill founded according to the written and archaeological evidence. Ellenblum counted more than two hundred Frankish sites in the list of settlements he examined in the course of his researches. In the short period of time the Frankish settlers lived in the East, they succeeded in setting up a functioning, developed system of agriculture and network of villages. Samaria and western Galilee were studied in particular, but the picture was similar throughout the kingdom. The main findings were as follows: The network of settlements in the area north of Jerusalem was more intensive and was also founded earlier than that in the Acre region. The difference was due to the greater density of the distribution of the Christian villages that already existed in the Jerusalem area, and to the fact that Jerusalem was the capital of the kingdom. The number and the distribution of the villages was similar to that of the Christian settlements in the Byzantine period. The Franks settled in all areas where there was a Christian community. Their settlement strategy throughout the Levant was the conquest of countries and geographical regions where there was a large Christian population.

Earlier scholars claimed that in the crusader East there had developed a mixed society, which they called the "Franco-Syrian society." According to them, the Franks were influenced by the oriental way of life and the local customs, and gave the local inhabitants law, order, and physical protection. These scholars' idealization of the relationships between the Franks and the local inhabitants played into the hands of later scholars like Raymond C. Smail and Prawer, who questioned their reliability. They had no reason to believe that there were amicable relations between the Franks and Muslims, and they

developed an opposing model that offered another extreme picture: one of social, political, and geographical segregation.

Ellenblum's great achievement lies in putting forward a view that synthesizes the earlier thesis of historians like Gaston Dodu, Emmanuel Rey, Louis Madelin, Reneé Grousset, and Dmitri Hayek with the opposing thesis developed by Smail, Prawer, and others.[49] Contrary to the veiled Zionist position of the monumental work of Prawer, which contrasted the segregation of the crusaders in Palestine with the rootedness of the Israelis in their land, Ellenblum's "post-Zionist" approach is a post-ideological stand that examines the crusaders' relationship to the soil, the area, and agriculture in a way unconnected with the threatening implications of the Zionist-crusader analogy that hovers over academic study.

THE CRUSADERS BETWEEN LEFT AND RIGHT

The Zionist-crusader analogy made by Arab scholars and writers and internalized by Israeli politicians has gripped many people. It has given rise to an Arab academic literature concerning the mediaeval historical precedent and has made Israeli public figures eager to draw the opposite conclusions. The intention of the Arab side was to expose Zionism as a colonialist movement that would end like most colonialist movements, whereas the Jewish side was drawn into historiosophical debate ostensibly concerned with historical legitimacy. The Zionist-crusader analogy has uncovered a contemporary political discourse that has been shifted to the Middle Ages.

Three months after the founding of the State, Ben-Gurion related indirectly to the analogy when he wrote in his diary, "[Yitzhak] Grinbaum explained the principles of Zionism and argued with Gamal [El-Husseini, the deputy of the Mufti] who said that the Arabs will fight against the Zionists as they fought against the crusaders."[50] In 1950 Ben-Gurion attempted to refute the crusader myth propagated by the Arabs that the defeat of the modern infidels was sure to come, even if delayed:

> Although our connection to the Land of Israel preceded the Arab conquest, the Arabs see us as foreigners. We are few and they are many. The natural state of affairs is that majorities seek to rule over minorities, and the Arabs do not want to forget the painful history of the past year. From every Arab radio – in Ramallah, Damascus, Baghdad and the other Arab centres – the announcers proclaim a war of revenge against Israel. The mystics recall the

[49] Gaston Dodu, Le royaume latin de Jérusalem (lecture given on November 20, 1913, at the Université Nouvelle in Brussels), Paris 1914; Emmanuel Rey, *Essai sur la domination française en Syrie durant le moyen âge*, Paris 1866; Louis Madelin, "La Syrie franque," *Revue des deux mondes, sixth series* 38 (1916), pp. 314–358; René Grousset, *Histoire des croisades et du royaume franc de Jérusalem*, 3 Vols., Paris 1934–1936; Dimitri Hayek, *Le droit franc en Syrie pendant les croisades: institutions judiciaires*, Paris 1925; Raymond C. Smail, *The Crusaders in Syria and the Holy Land*, London 1973.

[50] Ben-Gurion's diaries, 19.8.1948. [Hebrew].

> opposition of the Arab and Muslim world to the crusaders in this country, hope for a similar outcome to that of the Frankish regime in the thirteenth century, and say: this year we did not succeed in defeating Israel, but we shall do so in another ten or fifty years. We know, however, that this comparison with the crusaders has no validity. The Christian adventurers of the Middle Ages had no real connection with this country and were not even connected among themselves, and their rule in this country was artificial from the start, whereas we have been rooted in this country for thousands of years and our return to it is a necessity and even a source of abundant blessing to the entire Middle East. But Arab nationalism sees the historical reality in its own way, and it is not our perception that will guide its actions, but theirs. We will be risking our lives if we do not see now and in the future that the danger of war hangs over our heads.

After the Sinai Campaign (1956), Ben-Gurion wrote that he had visited "Jezirat Paro" – that is, the Coral Island – "where there are the well-known remains of the crusader fortress."[51] On the appearance of the first volume of *The History of the Crusader Kingdom in Palestine*, Ben-Gurion was quick to read it; he invited Prawer to his home, who gave him the second volume.[52] In May 1965, Ben-Gurion gave a lecture to the members of Bnei Brit in which he expressed the view that the state of Israel was unique because of the way its revival had come about. The state of Israel did not, in his opinion, arise because of the withdrawal of a foreign power – as the Roman Empire or the crusader kingdom had withdrawn – but sprang up as a result of the return to Zion, a unique phenomenon in world history.[53] About three months later, Ben-Gurion was visited by Professor Ben-Ami, a sociologist from New York City College, who was an expert on the crusader period and who found, according to the Israeli leader, "a similarity between the crusaders and Israel, and also differences. The crusaders were at one and the same time monks and soldiers and founded border settlements."[54] In Ben-Gurion's opinion, the best work on the period was that of Steven Runciman, "who is now writing a book on the crusaders from the sociological-historical point of view, and it also has a chapter on Israel."

About two years before the Six-Day War, a symposium was held on the initiative of the student journal of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, *Pi Ha-Aton*, on the subject "Is the State of Israel the Modern Crusader-State?"[55] The moderator of the symposium opened the debate by saying that, like the crusaders, the state of Israel depends on a strong army; just like them, the Jews are unable to integrate among the peoples of the region; just as then, the existence of the state encourages a process of unification in the Arab world; just as then, its economy depends on money sent by the Jews

[51] Ibid, 17.11.1957.
[52] Ibid, 16.1.1964.
[53] Ibid, 23.5.1965.
[54] Ibid, 24.8.1965.
[55] *Pi Ha-Aton*, 13.1.1965. [Hebrew].

of the world from abroad. Then the moderator issued an apology: "It is not us that raised this question: we have merely done our best to answer it." Most of those present at the symposium rejected the analogy completely and attempted to explain why.

The liberal Member of Knesset Yizhar Harari shrank from the comparison of the Israelis to the crusaders and even saw the comparative historical investigation of the matter as a sign of sickness. It is dangerous to draw conclusions from events in the past, he said, although of course they cannot be disregarded. The crusaders believed that their enterprise would purify them in the eyes of God; there was no conception of nationhood in the movement or of return to a homeland; rather, it was a temporary campaign to liberate the Holy Places. They were members of an army of conquest who held onto their conquests by force of arms, without any settlements in the rear or airlinks such as one has today. The crusader warriors had somewhere to return to: They never regarded Palestine as their country. By contrast, the Zionists were and are a combination of family, settlement, and ownership. The Jewish people had no place else under the sun in which to live in freedom.

According to the Labor Party member Eliezer Livne, both Zionism and the crusades tried to set up a very different civilization here from the one that existed in the country before they came; neither movement was a national movement, for Zionism was also an attempt to perpetuate the Jewish civilization by returning to its source; both movements took control of a limited area and created a majority there; both of them relied on the support of world forces – Christianity on the one hand and Judaism on the other; both of them led to a strengthening of the movement for Muslim unity. However, the differences are in Israelis' favor: The crusader kingdom of Jerusalem did not succeed in uniting the local eastern Christians and the immigrating western Christians; it did not succeed in creating a majority in the villages, and agriculture remained Muslim; it did not succeed in uniting the feudal landowners, the knights, the great chivalric orders in the country, and the European merchants; Israel, on the other hand, is a democratic state united by a common interest. The crusader state did not succeed in bringing about a continuation of immigration from the West (in Israel a great deal also depends on whether Jews from the western world will come). The Israelis have the advantage over the crusaders of living in the technological era, and thus the importance of land borders is less than in the days of the crusader conquest. Israel can become a financial, cultural, and economic center for the Jewish people regardless of its borders. About two years later Livne changed his views and became a member of the Movement for a Greater Israel.

In this symposium, the crusader-Zionist analogy was scrutinized from both the leftist and the religious points of view. The Communist Moshe Sneh enumerated five characteristic features of the crusader phenomenon. Christian ideals, in whose name the crusades were conducted, were, he believed, an ideological cover for colonialist conquests. In theory the crusades were directed toward the Holy Land, but in practice they represented a general expansion

toward the East. The division of the Muslim East permitted the victory of the crusaders, whereas the union of Egypt and Syria brought about their fall. The crusader kingdom is considered a passing historical episode because it failed to integrate among the peoples of the area and was an alien extension of Western Europe on the eastern shores of the Middle East; the Jews were united with the Muslims in a common front against the conquering crusaders. The dominant approach of Israeli policy, according to Sneh, stressed the points of similarity with the crusader state rather than cultivating the differences. Israel's connection with the western powers and its integration into the common market were an outcome of Ben-Gurion's basic premise that "Israel is a European State." The Sinai Campaign, the refusal to negotiate the right of return of the refugees, the military administration, and so on caused the Arabs to see Israel as an alien conqueror and not as a neighboring people, which gave rise to the harmful comparison with the crusaders. Cutting ties with the imperialist West and integration among the peoples of the area would prove, however, that the Israelis are different from the crusaders.

The main problem of the crusader state, according to the then Member of Knesset Moshe Una of the National Religious Party, was that it never created a "people." The European rulers were always only a thin stratum of the population as a whole, and as masters of the country they remained dependent on a native population who were alien to them. They did not stand on their own feet economically, demographically, or politically. Is there any room for a comparison? The answer is in the affirmative: What is called for is internal national consolidation and a nondependence on unassimilable internal elements. The conclusion to be drawn is that one has to have internal unity and prevent mixed marriages, "which infect the body of the nation with diseases of disintegration."

The revisionist lawyer Shemuel Tamir added that the analogy between the crusaders and the Zionists has a surprising extra dimension: the neighboring Philistine kingdom in the Land of Israel along the shores of the Mediterranean. Tamir indicated a number of points in common between the Philistines and crusaders of the past and Israel of today: having a European population as against one that is native born; fortifying oneself in the coastal regions as against the indigenous inhabitants who were in the mountains; enjoying the advantages of modern civilization as against numerical superiority and local roots; having a disconnection with the continental rear and a dependence on a financial rear overseas as against linkage to the natural subsistence areas of the region; having an economically oppressive military superiority as against the capacity to withstand a protracted continental siege; and trusting that things will work out in the course of time. Tamir concluded that the decision of whether or not Israel will be a new Philistia or a Jewish crusader state depends on "the soul-quality of the nation," on its capacity to free itself from a closed-in atmosphere of provincialism and Levantinism.

Aaron Yadlin, the deputy minister of education at that time, approached the subject from an original angle. The question, in his opinion, is by what

miracle the crusader state managed to exist at all, and not why it fell. It was built on shaky foundations from the beginning, and it was only extricated from its frequent wars by new crusades launched by the European leaders, whereas Israel, which since its inception has only known armed struggle, is able to hold its ground without the help of external crusades. The crusader kingdom was founded as a colony of Christian Europe, and throughout its existence remained as such on foreign soil. Apart from the remains of fortresses, it did not leave any cultural imprint, but was merely an episode in the history of Palestine. The idea of the crusades, which originated on foreign soil outside Palestine, was nurtured by a Christian intellectual climate that did not require a national-territorial consolidation. The state of Israel, on the other hand, is far from being a passing episode in the history of the country: It draws on the historical past of the people of Israel in its land. Because the state of Israel is not the colony of an external national-ethnic entity, there is an identity between the people and its land. The state of Israel is the inheritance of a historical people returning to its homeland, whereas the crusader state was the product of the search for feudal domains of a nobility that, though cut off from its native soil in Europe, nevertheless remained European. In Yadlin's view, the crusader state did not create a people with a connection to the country; it did not create a homeland, but was in fact the outpost of conquerors who constituted a privileged class; and although it defended itself along lengthy borders, it did not develop a historical consciousness or a national existence. He compared the crusader state to a tree that did not strike roots in the soil and was then uprooted and taken away. Even the sense of the holiness of the land did not become the basis of a nation with a special crusader character. Its dependence on outside forces – the Pope, the Italian communities, and the chivalric orders – was detrimental to it and harmed its vitality. The crusaders were a permanent minority; their conquests had a colonialist character and were not a settlement enterprise like the Jewish settlement in Israel. They remained a class of warriors and not of workers, and the relationship between the conquerors and the conquered was quite bad. Israel does not depend on Arab agriculture as the crusaders did, an essential difference that assures the Israelis a different fate from theirs.

Some relevant political conclusions came from an unexpected direction. The leftist Member of Knesset Ya'akov Riftin could not find any real basis for the crusader-Zionist analogy, for despite the crusader slogan calling for "the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre," he believed that the true purpose of the enterprise was the conquest of the entire Middle East, Constantinople, Syria, and North Africa. As against this, the Jewish people had no historical propensity to expansion except within the context of the Land of Israel. The crusaders came as masters to subdue the land and had no thought of its cultivation. As against this, the Jewish national revival sought to create a working people in the country. The crusader period can be seen as one of the many historical meeting points of the Jews and Arabs. They were united in their hostility to a common enemy, for the crusaders harmed both the Arabs and

the Jewish communities in Palestine. The conclusion to be drawn today is that both people are engaged in a struggle against the modern crusaders: the forces of imperialism.

The symposium at *Pi Ha-Aton* exemplified the Israeli political consensus with regard to the crusader episode and its implications for the Israeli-Arab dispute. About two years after it appeared in print, the Six-Day War broke out. For some of the participants in the debate, the war shuffled the political cards and forced them to change their ideas; for others it confirmed their original points of view.

In his book *David's Sling* (1970), in the chapter "The Similar Is Also Dissimilar," Shimon Peres maintained that the Arabs look for historical precedents to justify their positions and that their propaganda therefore relies a great deal on the precedent of the crusades. "If the debate was purely historiographical," he wrote, "perhaps the best thing would be to leave it to the historians, but the need to advance these claims is a political need."[56] These historical analogies, thinks Peres, raise two questions. First, is there really no possibility of a small state having an existence not limited in time in face of the opposition of a power physically stronger and greater in numbers? Second, can a small country faced with a constant military threat from a larger country avoid becoming a military state? The basic assumption underlying his analysis is that every situation is unique and every people different from their neighbor, and despite the occasional similarity between one situation and another, the difference is greater than the similarity.

According to Peres, the crusades and the Zionist movement both originated in Europe, were ideologically motivated, and moved across the sea from the West to the Holy Land while contending with superior forces. But the differences were of course greater than the similarities, and the twelfth century is not the twentieth. The crusades were more religious than political, and the crusaders did not seek a permanent sovereignty but came for a limited purpose – to protect the Holy Places. They did not come to settle the land, nor did they seek a homeland for a homeless people. The Zionist movement, on the other hand, was political, although it drew from religious cultural sources. The movement was intended to rescue an entire people by gathering it together and resettling it on the soil of its ancestral homeland. The return to Israel was not a purely religious act, but a living experience and a national necessity. The crusaders started out as an army that came to conquer a relatively populated country; the Zionists did not begin as a movement of military conquest, but as a movement of settlers who came to a relatively desolate country. It was the settlers who needed protection and not the other way around; the ploughshare preceded the sword both in theory and practice. The settler movement sought to create a new form of life, and in this respect Zionism was not only a movement of national liberation, but also a movement of social redemption. The crusaders apparently did not number more than fifty thousand men, whereas

[56] Shimon Peres, *David's Sling*, Jerusalem 1970, p. 206 [Hebrew].

the Jews in the Land of Israel had long ago passed the number of two and a half million, from which there was no returning. The crusades were directed from European centers, whereas the immigrants to Israel struck roots in the country; they were not sent by Europe, but abandoned it. Zionism is not a crusade but the return of a people to its source, to its homeland, to its destiny. Another difference is that today technology and up-to-date weapons play a decisive role, permitting a new balance of forces. Hinting at nuclear war, Peres warns of "destructive consequences for everyone … for the world is coming ever closer to the point where every war is total insanity for all sides."[57] Peres ends with the conclusion that all comparisons with other periods are attempts to escape reality.

Lova Eliav, former secretary of the Labor Party, in the chapter "The Crusader Complex" in his book *Glory in the Land of the Living* (1970), offers the reader a "crusader theory" popular among the Arabs. According to this, the Christians sought to conquer the Holy Land, to destroy the Islamic holy places in the country, and to expel its Arab inhabitants.[58] They recruited fighters and raised money in Europe and exploited the weakness of the Arab world and the political upheavals of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They had a decisive superiority in weaponry and modern equipment. They surprised the Arabs in their arrival from the north and from the sea and made their base in the coastal area. Once victorious, they set up the crusader kingdom of Jerusalem, built fortresses, spread out, and conquered. They did the bidding of the imperial powers of that time – Genoa, Venice, and others – which sought footholds, markets, and natural resources in the East. The Arabs tried several times to attack them, but without success. After some two hundred years, however, the crusaders grew decadent. They quarreled among themselves, became soft and decadent, and the Arabs did all the hard work. The crusaders remained an alien implantation in the country. The Arabs had a great commander who fused them into a fighting force and a single people. The leader learned the weaknesses of the crusaders, used methods of warfare more modern than theirs, defeated them, and put an end to the crusader episode. In the script of this Arab crusader theory, the Zionists figured in the same way. They sought to conquer the Holy Land, to destroy the Islamic holy places in the country, and expel its Arab inhabitants. They recruited fighters and raised money in Europe and throughout the Jewish world, and exploited the weakness of the Arabs in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They surprised the Arabs, set up their base in the coastal area, conquered Jerusalem, humiliated the Arabs, established the Zionist state, built fortifications, and spread north, south, and east. They did the bidding of the imperial powers, and the wealthy Jewish world assisted them with money, arms, and volunteers. After some years, the Zionists too will grow decadent. They will quarrel among

[57] Ibid, p. 209.

[58] Arieh (Lova) Eliav, "The Crusader Complex," *Eretz Ha-Zvi*, Tel Aviv 1972, pp. 133–137. [Hebrew].

themselves. The Arabs among them will do all the hard work in agriculture and construction, and the Jews will become soft and spoiled. They were and will remain an alien implantation in the country. The Arabs will have a leader and commander who can unite them, use more modern methods of warfare than the enemy, and put an end to the Zionist episode.

Eliav sees the crusader theory as a psychological refuge that the Arabs escape to because of the harsh and painful reality of the past, the present, and also the future. In his opinion, this theory corresponds to a fatalistic outlook, reflects helplessness, and derives from irrational feelings. If there is anything to be learned from history, it is that it does not repeat itself. The comparison between the Jews returning to their ancient homeland and the Christian knights of feudal Europe is superficial and displays a lack of understanding of the motives for the return to Zion. The Jews of Israel have nowhere to go back to: They will fight for their state. Here they will live and here they will die. The parallel between the religious wars of the crusades and the struggle of the two modern national movements is invalid by its very nature. The time factor also invalidates the comparison: In place of the weapons used in the decisive battle of the Horns of Hattin, laser beams and radioactive rays will be used in the future. If the Arabs ever succeed, with the help of a technological power or powers, in bringing Israel to the point of destruction, they too will be destroyed. After a modern Horns of Hattin, there would be no victors or vanquished.

Peres's and Eliav's hints of a nuclear battle of Hattin in the future – a battle different in its scale, nature, and significance from the historical battle of Hattin – raise the question of whether the image of the defeat of the crusaders in Galilee is etched in the Jewish consciousness as an apocalyptic confrontation comparable with the siege of Massada or the trauma of the Holocaust. If this is the case, what has been its contribution to the molding of Israeli nuclear strategic thinking? It would seem that the place of the legend of the battle of Hattin in the Israeli collective consciousness is completely marginal. If there is a crucial event that has molded the outlook of those with the power of decision concerning the Israeli nuclear option, there is no doubt that that event is the Holocaust of the European Jews and not the defeat of the crusaders.[59]

Immediately after the end of the Six-Day War, Yigael Allon presented the government with the proposal known as the Allon Plan. In its initial form, it included the establishment of a small Palestinian state linked to Israel by a security agreement. For that reason, he was opposed to ceding to the Kingdom of Jordan the area intended for the future Palestinian state. At a meeting of the Kibbutz Hame'uhad central committee, he expressed himself as follows: "In my opinion, the return of parts of the West Bank to Jordan … is dangerous.… Who amongst us can guarantee that there will not be a militant regime in Amman with strong international support which in an international situation inconvenient for Israel would annul the demilitarization of the

[59] Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, New York 1998.

West Bank and make it into a forward position of the next Saladin facing the Mediterranean shore?"[60]

In 1968, professors J. L. Talmon, Yehushua Arieli, Ben-Zion Dinur, and others met at the home of Joshua Prawer. Allon lectured on his plan, and this was followed by a discussion. Arieli warned that every Jewish settlement established in the conquered territories would be paid for in blood. Dinur declared that the plan gave him disturbing thoughts concerning the crusader state. Until now he had not dared to connect the Zionist enterprise and the achievements of the Jewish State with the fate of the crusader kingdom in Palestine, but now he was convinced that plans of this kind and a decision to take the path of settlement would be a critical danger for the existence of the state as had happened with its Christian precedent.[61]

Rabbi Yoel Bin-Nun, a leading moderate spokesman for Jewish settlement in the territories, rejects the idea that settlers in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip see themselves as "sacred emissaries" who have gone out to realize a national-religious ideal from a strong and solid political base that serves them as a supportive rear, as well as the idea that they are modern crusader colonialists. "Yesha (Judea and Samaria)," he said, is not "Israel overseas.' ... The crusaders were *imitators* of the people of Israel, which explains their success and also the partial nature of that success." Rabbi Menahem Froman, also a settler, also thinks that the Zionists do not need to fear any resemblance to the crusader model, although he believes there is some truth to the comparison when it comes to a feeling of foreignness. To the Israelis' sense of foreignness in the area, he proposes an original solution: "Returning to the land of Israel means returning to the forefathers. Returning to the land is returning to the *fellah*, to the Arab." [62]

About three months after the Six-Day War, on the seventieth anniversary of the First Zionist Congress, the victorious chief of staff, Yitzhak Rabin, was invited to give a speech at the assembly at Basle, in the hall where the historic congress had taken place. Toward the end of his speech Rabin compared the State of Israel to the crusader kingdom:

> Our enemies, and especially Colonel Nasser, the ruler of Egypt, have often attempted to compare the State of Israel to the state of the crusaders. I do not intend to refute this inappropriate parallel. At the same time, it would be wrong to disregard some points of similarity which nevertheless exist. The crusader state was destroyed when it lost contact with its large rear,

[60] Zvi Shiloah, *The Guilt of Jerusalem*, Tel Aviv 1989, p. 302 [Hebrew].

[61] Interview with Yehoshua Arieli, May 1988. On whether one will reach a turning point in the conflict, Yaakov Talmon wrote: "The proof that there will be a turning point can be learnt on the Arab side from the case of the crusaders. True, the Arabs needed two hundred years in order to destroy the crusader kingdom, but did the Jews not need two thousand years to return to the Holy Land?" See Talmon, *The Riddle of the Present and the Cunning of History*, ed., Ohana, pp. 190–191. [Hebrew].

[62] Rabbi Menahem Froman and Rabbi Yoel bin Nun, quoted in Yoram Melzer, "Concerning the Crusaders," *Eretz Aheret*, sheet 2 (December–January 2000–2001), p. 58. [Hebrew].

> European Christendom, and when the crusader state lost its sense of mission with regard to the main idea in whose name it was sent to the Middle East by Christian Europe.[63]

Rabin thought that between world Jewry and the state of Israel there must be a relationship of mutual enrichment and inspiration. As long as the connection was renewed and adjusted to changing circumstances, Israel would flourish. A reduction of immigration would thus be the greatest danger for Israel, a danger not heeded by the crusader state, which degenerated for lack of new blood.

A year after the war, in his book *The War of the Seventh Day*, Uri Avneri expressed fascination with the crusader-Zionist analogy, because in his opinion "it is very interesting to compare Israel with the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem, both because of points of similarity and because of features which are not similar at all."[64] The crusaders, he thought, had their own Herzl in the figure of Pope Urban, and their First Zionist Congress was the Council of Clermont, 802 years before the historic gathering at Basle. An echo of the call at Clermont, "This is God's will," may be heard in the call "Sons of Jacob, let us go forth,"[65] the slogan of the First Aliyah. Yet there was a significant difference in the aims of the two movements. The crusaders came to Palestine to liberate the Holy Land, and their settlement was only a consequence of that, whereas Zionism was essentially a movement of settlement. The Zionists thought at first that Palestine was empty, whereas the crusaders went there because it was not empty. The differences, however, did not give different results. Both movements had to fight, to settle, and to retain their conquests. Avneri, for his part, also claimed that both the crusaders and Zionists came from the West. Although the Zionists imagined that they were following in the footsteps of the conquerors of Canaan or those returning from Babylon, they actually, in his opinion, resembled the Philistines and the crusaders who did not speak the language of the country; they differed from the inhabitants in their culture and appearance, and first gained a foothold in the coastal plain before penetrating the mountain region that is the heart of the Land of Israel. Just as the Zionists saw themselves as the vanguard of the Jewish people, so the crusaders regarded themselves as the envoys of Christianity. In both states there was a problem of ethnic hierarchy in which the ruling class came from Europe; in both states there was a dependence on wealth from overseas. The kibbutzim were a unique Zionist creation resembling the great military orders of the crusades. The Knights Templar or the Knights Hospitaller would set up fortresses deep within Arab areas in the same way as the kibbutzim, some of which were built on the ruins of crusader fortresses. Did not King Baldwin

[63] Yitzhak Rabin, "A State Searching For Its People," *Be-Tfutzot Ha-Gola*, 3 (Autumn 1968), pp. 30–32. [Hebrew].

[64] Uri Avneri, "Crusaders and Zionists," *The War of the Seventh Day*, Tel Aviv 1968, p. 63 [Hebrew].

[65] The original slogan was "House of Jacob, let us go forth."

I resemble Ben-Gurion? Was not the series of crusader outposts opposite the Ashkelon Corridor almost identical with the series of Israeli outposts facing the Gaza Strip?

More than thirty years later, in 1995, when he returned to the analogy, Avneri issued a manifesto calling for the united Jerusalem to be made into the capital of two states, Israel and Palestine. In it, he described Jerusalem as a mosaic of the cultures of all the peoples who had been in the country, including the crusaders. He said: "On that day I met Emil Habibi by chance and I suggested that he should be the first to sign. He said, 'I will sign if you cross out the crusaders. I am not prepared to say a good word for those murderers of the people.' I crossed out the crusaders. Eight hundred and fifty Israeli intellectuals and peace activists signed the corrected version. Habibi asked that on his tombstone should appear the words 'I remained in Haifa.' Haifa fell to the murderous crusaders after a desperate defence in which the Arabs and Jews stood together."[66] The post-Zionist analyses of Uri Avneri paved the way for the post-Zionist ideologists of the 1990s.

The crusader-Zionist analogy comes back to us today from another, surprising direction. The former claims of the enlisted Arab historiography have returned and appear as *bon ton* in the post-Zionist historiography, and this is the point at which the new historians link up with the post-Zionist ideology. The beginnings of Zionism and Jewish settlement in Palestine in the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth are seen by them as a modern national colonialism. The idea of Zionism as an extension of world colonialism is summarized in a motto coined by Professor Baruch Kimmerling to describe the post-Zionist avant-garde: "We are a nation of immigrant settlers who came together … to dispossess another people."[67] An answer to this claim was given by Ran Aaronsohn, who made a distinction between "colonization" and "colonialism." According to him, colonization is primarily a geographical phenomenon, signifying emigration to a new country and the setting up of a network of immigrant settlements, whereas colonialism is the political and economic phenomenon of a state taking control of an area and its inhabitants beyond its borders and exploiting them for the benefit of the conquerors. Aaronsohn came to the conclusion that "the Jewish settlement in Palestine in its inception cannot be described as a colonialist enterprise. From some points of view one may see in it a similarity with enterprises of colonization in the world, and it is to be placed in that category."[68]

The historian Ilan Pappe, in comparing the Europeans' attempts at settlement in Palestine in the Ottoman period with Zionism, uses an approach known as "realistic symbolism," whereby one does not attempt to give an

[66] Avneri, "On the Crusaders and the Zionists".

[67] Baruch Kimmerling, "Merchants of Fear," *Haaretz*, 24.6.1994. [Hebrew].

[68] Ran Aaronsohn, "Settlers in Eretz-Israel – A Colonial Enterprise?" in Pinchas Ginossar and Avi Bareli, eds., *Zionism: A Contemporary Controversy – Research Trends and Ideological Approaches*, Jerusalem 1996, p. 351. [Hebrew].

objective explanation of phenomena but deciphers them by means of the symbolism they contain. The same strategy has been followed by some of the "new historians," who liken Zionism to a modern crusade, thus revealing their post-Zionist or anti-Zionist ideological orientation. Pappe himself made a remarkable contribution to this climate of thought with his article "Zionism As Colonialism," which contained the expression "quiet crusade," borrowed from the settler Hermann Hutte, in order to describe the beginnings of Zionist settlement in Palestine. It is truly ironic that Pappe concludes his article with a plea to scholars to be careful to use a neutral "terminology." [69]

A hint of the connection between the cross (original sin) and the crusades ("the crusader-Zionist colonialism") can be found in the claim of the post-Zionist ideologists that the Zionist original sin was not a concrete sin that could be atoned for or corrected. One of their best-known theories is that the end of the Zionist enterprise was already implicit in its beginnings. The Zionist state embodies a metaphysical sin, and its fate is sealed like that of the crucified one. Liberation from this metaphysical sin can only be obtained through an act of self-immolation: the negation of the sinning Zionist entity and its transformation in accordance with the post-Zionist vision into a secular democratic state (a "state of all its citizens").

FORESTS IN FLAME

Of all the Israelis in a state of existential fear of the Iranian bomb, Aharon Applefeld best perceived the heart of the problem: "Our fate in Europe pursues us here. I come from a world where war had been declared on the Jews, and everyone had accepted it. And now the president of Iran comes and proclaims the extermination of the Jewish people. What is this if not the Jewish destiny?" The next day, an Israeli journalist also tied the Iranian threat to the precedent of the Holocaust in his article "The State is in Danger of Extermination," and gave as one of the reasons for the lack of condemnation of this threat by the western peoples "the image of Israel as a foreign Jewish implant." The general of reserves, Yossi Peled, who himself was a refugee from the Holocaust, stated, "Since the beginning of the 'Return to Zion' about a hundred years ago, the Iranian nuclear threat is the greatest, most real, most existential threat there has been, raising the possibility that the State of Israel is a passing episode. It is a frightening, frightening threat to our existence." About a week later, a supplement in the *Haaretz* newspaper put a question on these lines to the formers of public opinion: "What will you do if in two months' time Ahmadinejad drops a nuclear bomb here?"

The origin of the fear of the crusaders is to be found on the soil of Europe. The historian Shimon Dubnow revealed that the persecutions of 1091 were a

[69] Ilan Pappe, "Zionism As Colonialism – a Comparative Look at Adulterated Colonialism in Asia and Africa," in Yehiam Weitz., ed., *Between Vision and Revision: A Hundred Years of Historiography and Zionism*, Jerusalem 1997, pp. 345–366. [Hebrew].

major source of the fear that the Jews felt in exile. The tragic end of the story is that Dubnow himself was murdered by the Nazis in 1941. At the height of the Holocaust, Saul Tchernikovsky published his *Vermisa Ballads* – "The Rabbi's Daughter and Mother," "The Rabbi's Beautiful Daughter," and "The Rabbi's Daughter and the Wolf" – in which the crusaders were depicted as cruelly massacring the Jews like the Nazis of their time. In these ballads, the poet continued to deal with the subjects he treated in "The Slaughtered of Taormina," which was a reaction to the rise of the Nazis. The literary scholar Haya Shaham pointed out that Y. L. Baruch's ballad "Birkat Hamazon" (Grace after Meals), written in memory of Dubnow, equated the crusader persecutors with the Nazi murderers. In *Rehovot Ha-nahar* (Paths of the River) (1951), and especially in the poem "Lament for the Whole House of Israel," Uri Zvi Greenberg also saw a direct affinity between the persecutions of 1091, the expulsion from Spain, and the Holocaust. In the collective memory, Tchernikovsky's poem "Baruch of Magenza" (1902) is undoubtedly the most impressive poetic expression of the crusader pogrom. The ballad is the confession of a Jewish father who in his madness killed his two daughters, set fire to a monastery, and looked happily at the burning town, the scene of his revenge.

Works of fiction, in the original and in translation, have also shown the crusaders in the light of the Christian persecutions of the Jews in the Middle Ages. The popular book by the German-Jewish educator Eugen Rispet, *The Jews in the Crusades in England under Richard the Lionheart* (1861), which was translated into Hebrew as *Gibborei Metzudat York* (The Heroes of York Castle), described the heroism and martyrdom of the Jews of York, England, when besieged by the crusaders. *Zichronot Le-beit David* (Memoirs of the House of David) (1897) by Avraham Shalom Friedberg, an adaptation of the historical story "The Golden Crescent" in Herrman Rekkendorf's *Geheimnisse der Juden* (Mysteries of the Jews) (1857), depicted Jewish-Muslim brotherhood in the face of the Christian conquest of Jerusalem. In both these works, the murderous hatred of the Jews in exile takes the form of the Christians who set out to liberate the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

However, in Palestine at the beginning of the twentieth century, the traditional Jewish view of the victim changed. An example of this is *Be-ein shoresh* (Without Roots) (1914), a book by a member of the Second *Aliyah*, Jacob Rabinowitz, which depicted a complex relationship by means of a Jewish crusader, Johannes Mezilgo, who was brought up as a Christian in Europe, joined the crusaders, and discovered his "true" identity only in Jerusalem. The writer's changed perspective and sometimes sympathetic attitude to the crusaders enabled him to portray the Jews in Palestine at the time of the crusades from a critical, secular point of view as analogous to the Jewish "Old Yishuv" of his own time. For the first time in the history of the Jewish literature on the crusades, someone turned his attention from the persecutions of 1091 to the pioneers in Palestine.

Prominent molders of Israeli culture, and especially the writers of the "generation of the founding of the state" – such as A. B. Yehoshua, Amos Oz,

and Dalia Rabikovitz[70] – wrote major and significant works dealing directly or in a veiled manner with the Zionist-crusader analogy. The poet Yitzhak Shalev in *Parashat Gavriel Tirosh* (The Gavriel Tirosh Affair), the novelist Dan Zalka in *Be-Derech le Haleb* (On the Way to Aleppo), and the novelist Yuval Shimoni in *Ma'of Ha-Yonah* (The Flight of the Dove) all dealt with the subject of the crusaders. A. B. Yehoshua's story "Facing the Forests" first appeared in 1963 in the journal *Keshet*.[71] The text, in its plain sense, concerns a tired student close to the age of thirty, "rootless and without a regular income," who is in the first stages of writing a doctoral dissertation on the crusades. He works for his living as a forest guard, warning of approaching fires. The other major character is an Arab whose tongue was cut out in war, who watches over the forests of the Jewish National Fund that were planted on the ruins of his village and prepares to set fire to them. The hidden meaning of the text is of course that it is a radical allegory of the Israeli-Arab dispute, to which the crusader episode forms a background.

Is the subject of the student's dissertation – the crusaders – an incidental choice on Yehoshua's part? The novelist Ehud ben Ezer thinks that in the story "the moral-ideological position adopted reaches the point of an existential nightmare fraught with disintegration and suicidal tendencies … viewing us as a 'foreign' European element, an alien growth." The crusader metaphor hints of course at this foreign quality: the Israeli who watches over the forests of the Jewish people, who surveys the house of Israel. A close look at the student's approach to the subject of the crusaders he is researching reveals a shallow avoidance, a sort of flight from the matter he is supposed to be occupied with at this stage of his life: "The texts are in English, the quotations all in Latin. Strange phrases from alien worlds. He worries a little. His subject – 'The Crusades.' From the human, that is to say, the ecclesiastical aspect. He has not gone into particulars yet. 'Crusades,' he whispers softly to himself and feels joy rising in him at the word, the sound. He feels certain that there was some dark issue buried within the subject and that it will startle him, startle other issues in him."[72]

The following day is spent on pictures. The next morning he reads the prefaces that come his way. "At noon his mind is distracted from the books by an imaginary flame flashing among the trees." And take good note of this: He is distracted from the subject of the crusaders by his fear of a forest fire. The past and the present interpenetrate one another. It was the first hint of a connection between the crusades, which represent that which is dark and alien, and the fire that the Arab was to create in the forest like a desperate complaint and battle cry against the alien Israelis who had taken control of his land. The next day the father of the student comes for a week's visit. The relationship

[70] In this chapter I will only briefly analyze the works of Yehoshua, Oz, and Rabikovitz.

[71] Abraham B. Yehoshua, "Facing the Forests," *Previous to the Winter of 1974 – Mivhar*, Tel Aviv 1975, pp. 122–192. [Hebrew].

[72] Ibid, p. 100.

between the father and son was superficial, evidence of a break between the generations. "He fails to understand why the son won't deal with the Jews, the Jewish aspect of the crusades. For isn't mass-suicide a wonderful and terrible thing? The son gives him a kindly grin, a noncommittal reply, and falls silent." After parting from his father, the student muses, "He himself wouldn't have a son." Meanwhile, the crusader text is difficult, the words distant. He does not succeed in getting through to them. A band of young Israelis who had made a bonfire the day before makes its way through the forest. "Joys of youth. There is something of abandon about them from afar, like a procession of crusaders." At the end of the summer, his aging girlfriend comes to visit him and teases him: "Well, what has he come up with? A fresh crusade perhaps?" Instead of a text, he pores over a map of the region. The words become symbols, pictures, signs; they are no longer words – the avoidance of an unmediated look at the text, the subtext, the context, which is clear and visible to the eye.

A relationship that was a nonrelationship developes between the student-watchman and the mute Arab. The student "tells him about the fervour, about the cruelty, about Jews committing suicide, about the children's crusade.... The Arab listens with mounting tension and is filled with hate.... He wishes to say that this was his house, and there used to be a village here as well, and that they have simply hidden it all, buried it in the big forest." The story ends with a great forest fire. The encroaching end hints at what finally happens. "The Arab is setting the forest on fire at its four corners, then takes a fire-brand and rushes through the trees like an evil spirit, setting fire to the rest.... The Arab speaks to him out of the fire, wishes to say everything, everything at once. Will he understand?"[73] The student abandons his cases of research material and saves the Arab's home. The forest goes up in flames and as does the watchtower. "Utter destruction.... The commemorative plaques alone have survived ... Louis Schwartz of Chicago. The King of Burundi and his people." The fire also spreads to his room: The books are burned to cinders. The old official responsible for the forests asks angrily to hear the whole story. "But there is no story, is there? There just isn't anything to tell. All there is, is: suddenly the fire sprang up." After a long investigation, suspicion falls on the Arab. The investigators were only waiting for this: They had suspected him for a long time.

On the face of it, Yitzhak Shalev's book, *Parshat Gavriel Tirosh* (The Gabriel Tirosh Affair), is a clearly Zionist narrative that need not fear any resemblance to the crusaders.[74] The history teacher Gabriel Tirosh, who has fought against the British and Arabs and who is certain of the justice of his cause, brings the crusaders to the notice of his pupils as a negative proof that the fate of the Israelis will not be that of the Christian invaders. The literary critic David Sohnstein,[75] however, suggests a different and surprising reading

[73] Ibid, p. 118.
[74] Yitzhak Shalev, *The Gabriel Tirosh Affair*, Tel Aviv 1964. [Hebrew].
[75] David Sohnstein, "Don't Come Back One Day," *Haaretz*, 4.8.2006. [Hebrew].

of the novel, particularly with regard to "the figure of Gabriel, especially as the circumstances of his disappearance are not known." Is the vanished hero now to be regarded as a personification of the state of Israel? In the words of Shalev himself in the novel, "I have gone ahead of reality and my friend with the vague feeling that the man Gabriel Tirosh is a portent of disaster." Sohnstein concludes that perhaps the author's way of writing "causes us, the readers, to make an imaginary attempt to prevent the inevitable foreseen disaster." The disharmony between our love for the esteemed teacher and our knowledge of his death reflects "a personal disharmony which is an echo of the historical disharmony between the Jewish character of the State of Israel and the Zionist reality in its present form." This interpretation is of course in opposition to Shalev's nationalistic outlook expressed in his poem "Crusaders" (1975)[76]:

I saw Godfrey de Bouillon
And Robert of Flanders
And Robert of Normandy,
Tancred, and Raymond de Saint Gilles
And all the men-in-arms.
Said Raymond to Tancred the fearless,
"It looks like we burned the whole community
In a single synagogue,
And all that escaped the fire
Were slaughtered.
And now, see,
Their flag is on the fortress
And ours has been lowered."
And Robert of Flanders, to Godfrey he said:
"What remains, brother,
Of all thy kingdom?
Only a castle laid waste,
Ruined apses,
Blue-eyed babes
In an Arab village
And blond hair, here and there."

There is an intrinsic connection between *Ad Mavet* (Unto Death), perhaps Amos Oz's best story, which appeared three years after the Six-Day War, and "Facing the Forests."[77] A historical novella, it concerns the journey of some Christian crusaders to Palestine led by the nobleman Gerôme de Touron and his faithful servant Claude the crooked-shouldered. On the first, Jewish level, the novella reveals the roots of the extermination of the Jews in the twentieth century in the persecution of the Jews in the crusades, which perhaps is an allegory of the Holocaust. Oz lays bare underground, mythical currents of Jewish-Christian relations and skillfully depicts the "crucifixion" of the Jews

[76] Yitzhak Shalev, "Crusaders," *Golden Drunkenness – Poems*, Tel Aviv 1975, pp. 43–44.
[77] Amos Oz, *Unto Death*, Tel Aviv 1971. [Hebrew].

by the Gentiles. The cruelty of the crusaders toward the "other" in Europe, the Jews, turns inward and becomes self-hatred.

Unlike Oz, who deals with crusader fear in the religious-Christian and political-Arab dimension, Dan Zalka moves the discourse in his book, *Ba-derech Le-haleb* (On the Road to Aleppo), to a cultural meeting of East and West through the tale of a Frankish crusader and a Persian poet by the Dead Sea in the time of the crusades.[78] The poet, who is a prisoner, is ordered to write a poem as a condition for his release. The failure of the first poem he offers brings him to a regime of hard labor and exile in Libya, but his successful second poem is inscribed on the wall of a church. Unlike the poet Yehuda Amichai in "The Travels of Benjamin the Last of Tudela," where the crusader heroes are treated as clowns, Zalka may have anticipated Samuel Huntingdon's clash of civilizations.

On the second, Israeli level, Oz, like Yehoshua before him, perhaps wonders if the Israelis after the Six-Day War, as modern crusaders, underwent a self-conversion and now displayed cruelty, self-destructiveness, and decadence. Were the Israelis now the sacrificers as opposed to the mediaeval Jews who were the sacrificed? The expressionistic novella excels in bold contrasts and switches of roles. These literary features create a conflict between the narrator, who identifies with the murderous heroes and their travails, and the Israeli reader to whom the story is addressed, who naturally identifies with the Jewish victims.

In her poem, *The Horns of Hattin*, Dalia Rabikovitz poetically reconstructed the crusaders' voyage to the Holy Land over the sea. Here is the first verse:

> With morning, strange ships were espied in the sea,
> prow and stern of primeval allure.
> In the eleventh century the crusader companies sailed forth,
> kings and a mixed throng.
> Arks of gold and booty rolled into the ports,
> ships of gold,
> expanses of gold
> ignited by the sun with wondrous fires,
> a forest ablaze.
> With the flashing of the sun and the heaving of the waves
> their hearts were drawn to Byzantium.
> How cruel and simple the crusaders were!
> They plundered all … [79]

After Saladin's victory at the battle of Hattin (1187), the third crusade set out in two directions: one over the sea, under the leadership of the kings of France and England, and the other overland, under the leadership of the Holy Roman Emperor. Rabikovitz's poem describes the sea voyage, and thus the crusade is

[78] Dan Zalka, "On the Road to Aleppo," *Eleven Stories*, Tel Aviv 2004. [Hebrew].
[79] Dalia Rabikovitz, *All the Poems So Far*, Tel Aviv 1995, pp. 133–134. [Hebrew].

associated with the voyage of Jason and the Argonauts to capture the golden fleece, which is compared to the Kingdom of Jerusalem. In the myth of the Odyssey, there were special ships similar to the ships of the Vikings, who were venturesome like the crusaders. The crusader sea robbers are depicted as the bearers of apollonian wisdom. Christian compassion, however, in whose name they came to preach, turned into violence and gave way to madness and simpleminded cruelty. The Christians soon surrendered to the Muslims under Saladin, "who passed sentence on them at the Horns of Hattin." He restored the world to the scales of righteousness: Finally righteousness triumphed, as is suggested by the name (Salah ed-Din – Saladin – resembles the Hebrew for "imposing justice"). In the poem, Rabikovitz effects a switching of roles: contrary to Jewish tradition, which warns that mercy to the cruel is liable to lead to cruelty to the merciful, the poetess shows sympathy for the crusaders far from their homes, exposed to dangers and bereft of glory. Despite the interpretations that have seen "The Horns of Hittin" as an aestheticisation of heroism, the poem ends with the defeat of the crusaders, who left behind "villagers … blue-eyed descendants." In Shalev's poem as well, they leave behind "blue-eyed babes in an Arab village," but the Israeli poet is a lone voice among the many writers of the "State generation," who even before the conquest of the territories in 1967 hinted at the Zionists' original sin.

After the 1973 War, when the Sabras' self-image was impaired, crusader-based works for children began to be published. We have seen that reversed roles between Jews and crusaders, double identities, and hybrid heroes had made an appearance in the works of Friedberg and Rabinowitz before the writers of the "State generation." Empathy with the crusader persecutors of the Jews and analogies between these and Israeli soldiers are nothing unusual. In *Ha-masa Ha-mufla Be-minheret Ha-zman* (Wonderful Journey in the Time-Tunnel) by Oded Betzer, four Israeli children find themselves in the time of the crusades, fight with the Christians against their Arab enemies, and after that return to the Israeli present.[80] Arthur Wechsler, in his book *Yedidei Melech Yerushala'im* (Friends of the King of Jerusalem) (1976), takes an Israeli youth through the time-tunnel to the Middle Ages and makes him a friend of Baldwin, the first crusader king of Jerusalem.[81] Here emphasis is laid on the closeness of upstanding Israelis to their crusader counterparts and their estrangement from religious Jews. The common denominator between Seligman, Betzer, and Wechsler is their changed view of the Zionist-crusader analogy. The crusaders are no longer depicted as rampageous persecutors of the Jews but embody bravery, self-confidence, and determination, qualities that the Israelis – Sabras who experienced the trauma of the Yom Kippur War – had difficulty internalizing.

In the last two decades, the crusades have not been subject to any special literary treatment. In the book *Shnei Na'arim Be-memlechet Ha-tzalvanim*

[80] Oded Betzer, *Wonderful Journey in the Time-Tunnel*, Tel Aviv 1975. [Hebrew].
[81] Arthur Wechsler, *Friends of the King of Jerusalem*, Ramat Gan 1976. [Hebrew].

(Two Youths in the Crusader Kingdom) (1985), Dorit Orgad described the adventures and friendship of Jewish and crusader boys.[82] Gad Shimron, in his book *Ha-satan Be-eretz Ha-kodesh* (Satan in the Holy Land) (1988), follows the doings of Rino Mastion in the Holy Land during the second crusade.[83] In these literary representations, one does not find any special purpose or general statement concerning the Israeli ethos, and perhaps their different conclusions show more than anything else that in this period of the fragmentation of Israeliness there is no single Israeli narrative of the history of the crusades in the Land of Israel.

PAST CONTINUOUS

In the discourse on Israelis dealing with the Zionist-crusader analogy, Zionist conclusions with regard to settlement are prominent. Ami Livne of Ein Harod and the dovish "Ein Vered" circle, in his article "Zionism, the Crusades, Settlement," finds a negative moral in the crusades: "The abandonment of settlement and agriculture with their Zionist implications and importance for security and the change to a crusader lifestyle is a phenomenon with whose end we are familiar."[84] In his call to the Israelis to avoid the fate of the crusaders who did not become rooted in the soil and did not adapt to the region, he declared: "We have to stop this process of crusaderization!" Brigadier-in-Reserves Uri Saguy expresses a similar opinion: "To the Arabs, we are temporary settlers on the hilltops and in the towns of the coastal plain like the crusaders, while they are the eternal owners of the land."[85] His conclusion is that one has to have a real foothold in the soil, not so much as a metaphor for Zionist settlement, but rather in the sense of making a profound connection, as in planting an olive-tree, the very symbol of rootedness. A newspaper piece by Yehuda Ariel, titled "The Lesson of the Crusaders: The Souring of Settlement," reaches the following conclusion: "One cannot protect a state with battlements of stone but only with human battlements and human hearts."[86] At the same time, popular naturalist Azariah Allon, in his article "The Long Shadow of Saladin," expresses the belief that "the Jews did not take hold of the land as a conquering and ruling class but as settlers, in all areas and in all spheres of occupation.... [I]f however, as some believe, we would become an 'elect people' in this country, with the Arabs there only to serve as hewers of our wood and drawers of our water, in that case we can expect the same fate as the crusaders, and no IDF in the world can ever help us."[87]

[82] Dorit Orgad, *Two Youths in the Crusader Kingdom*, Ramat Gan 1985. [Hebrew].
[83] Gad Shimron, *Satan in the Holy Land*, Jerusalem 1988. [Hebrew].
[84] Ami Livni, "Zionism, Crusaders, Settlement," *Ha-Sadeh*, 68, 1 (1988), p. 22. [Hebrew].
[85] Uri Saguy, *Lights in the Mist*, Tel Aviv 1998, p. 31. [Hebrew].
[86] Yehuda Ariel, "The Lesson of the Crusaders: The Souring of Settlement," *Haaretz*, 10.4.1977. [Hebrew].
[87] Azariah Allon, *The Other Image of Saladin, Kisharon le-Eretz-Israel*, Tel Aviv 1979, p. 3. [Hebrew].

Quite often, people do not refer explicitly to the comparison with the crusaders, and it can only be discerned if one reads between the lines. In the three examples we are about to give, there is a particular approach to the subject, or even an avoidance of it, although they involve figures with a known political identity. In their book, *Jerusalem – A Challenge*, Israel Eldad and his son Arye relate the story of the crusaders in Jerusalem. It is surprising that it should be Israel Eldad, the strongly right-wing intellectual, who is in the habit of drawing many comparisons from the history of Israel and the chronicles of the nations, in this case does not refer to the analogy and refrains from embellishing the historical narrative with relevant conclusions, significant interpretations, or political messages.[88] *Heroes of Israel*, a book by Haim Herzog, formerly the president of Israel, has much praise for the Jews slaughtered in 1096. It is no accident that Herzog chose to present the Jewish martyrdom in the Middle Ages in a chapter bearing the title "Heroes of the Spirit."[89] Israel Bar, Ben-Gurion's adviser in the Ministry of Defense, sees Western Europe as a separate political and strategic unit, and chooses to call the chapter dealing with this subject "The Crusader Kingdom of Gaullist Europe."[90] The chapter makes no mention of the analogy between the crusaders and the Zionists.

The comparison with the crusaders has often been used to support political positions in public controversies. The crusades have served the purposes of both hawks seeking defense lines with strategic depth and of doves demanding territorial compromise and peace treaties. Yossi Raanan, in his article "The IDF and the Crusaders," reported that during his reserve duty in the Gaza Strip he could not help thinking of the similarity between the convoys of settlers with their military escorts and the convoys of the crusaders: "It was very difficult for me to shake off the rather depressing feeling that the IDF in the Strip at the present day resembles the crusader army which once ruled in the land of Israel. This phenomenon is one of the most striking illustrations of the crusader-like character of the government in the Strip."[91] The Oslo Accords (1993) attempted to end the Israeli occupation of the territories in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. Following those events, Mordechai Nisan, in an article called "Saladin and the War against the Crusaders: History, Myth and Symbols," surveyed the religious, strategic, and Jewish aspects of the episode and concluded: "If the Arabs of today will follow in the footsteps of Saladin, Israel will find itself in a very real existential danger. But if Israel avoids the mistakes of the crusader kingdom, the return to Zion and its political manifestation will prove to be a correct historical move and will last forever."[92]

[88] Israel Eldad and Arieh Eldad, *Jerusalem – A Challenge*, Jerusalem 1978, pp. 138–155. [Hebrew].

[89] Haim Herzog, *Heroes of Israel: Profile of Jewish Courage*, Jerusalem 1991.

[90] Israel Bar, *Israel's Security: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, Tel Aviv, 1966, p. 337. [Hebrew].

[91] Yossi Ra'anan, "The IDF and the Crusaders," *Haaretz*, 2.10.1990. [Hebrew].

[92] Mordechai Nisan, "Saladin and the War against the Crusaders: History, Myth and Symbolism," *Tlallei Orot*, 5 (1994), p. 236. [Hebrew].

Speaking of the sixth crusade, Arieh Winshal related that the Egyptian ruler at the time delivered up Jerusalem and most of western Palestine to the crusaders in a peace treaty.

The relations of religion and state in Israel today also get involved with the crusaders. "Religion, Army, State: The Lesson of the Crusaders," a newspaper piece by the archaeologist Meir Ben-Dov tries, nine hundred years after the crusades, to draw a moral concerning dual loyalty to religion and the state. He says that at the end of the eleventh century the crusaders enlisted monks as soldiers for their conquests in the Middle East and gave them a special status among the knights of the orders.[93] They were both warriors and men of religion, and their dual loyalty finally proved to be dangerous. At the moment of testing, the crusaders discovered that the soldiers were first of all obedient to the commands of the church. In his short essay "The Modern Crusaders," the poet Erez Biton also expresses fear of the power of religion, but in this case it is the Christian religion. In the building of the campus of the Mormon University in Jerusalem he sees an invasion "of Christian identity … a crusader invasion under a mask of cultural progress."[94]

The "crusader discourse" is not so esoteric a matter that academic works on the crusader period can refrain from drawing analogies. In his criticism of Prawer's book, which emphasized crusader colonialism, Kedar observed that traditional apologists of Zionism would not derive any comfort from it.[95] Those who claim that the Zionist enterprise is a colonialist one always receive the answer that there is no metropolitan state behind the Zionist enterprise, and therefore colonialism does not apply to Zionism. Yet Prawer describes as colonialist a society that was similarly not dependent on a metropolitan state and that preserved full political independence throughout its existence. Zvi Ilan, also reviewing this book, confesses that "after gaining release from inhibitions and fears, I find points of similarity between the history of the crusaders in this country and what is happening to the Jewish society in it. One can and must learn from the history of the crusaders, and especially how not to do things and what not to do."[96] The historian Benjamin Arbel, in his appraisal of Prawer's *World of the Crusaders*, points out that the "real or imagined similarity between the crusader experience and the Zionist movement of settlement in Eretz-Israel" is one of the reasons why the history of the crusaders is a historical chapter that arouses special interest in the cultural life of Israel.[97] Reviewing Sivan's book, *Arab Political Myths*, Joseph Drori describes the Arab belief that "the defeat of Europe in the Middle Ages on the soil of Islam portends the failure of Europe and its satellites (Israel) at the

[93] Meir Ben-Dov, "Religion, Army, State: A Lesson From the Crusaders," *Maariv*, 6.12.1995. [Hebrew].
[94] Erez Biton, "The Modern Crusaders," *Maariv*, 12.1.1986. [Hebrew].
[95] Kedar, "Crusader Lessons."
[96] Zvi Ilan, "The Crusaders and the Lessons They Teach," *Davar*, 9.8.1985. [Hebrew].
[97] Benjamin Arbel, "Europe in the Levant," *Al-Hamishmar*, 25.1.1985. [Hebrew].

present day, even if it is delayed."[98] Even when it is a matter of an important critical article like that of Shlomo Neeman's, which does not deal with analogies at all, the editor uses the heading "Wondering about the Meaning of the Crusader Period."[99]

It is hard not to notice the continued presence of the crusaders in Israel. Their fortresses are visually prominent, and they attract tourists and are the object of excursions. In the many articles on the subject that Meir Ben-Dov wrote for the daily newspapers, there are recommendations for trips and reports on archaeological discoveries together with political and social comments.[100] In 1990, recommending a trip to "a crusader fortress and the Syrian outposts," Ben-Dov described the Christian-Muslim agreement in the thirteenth century, the result of compromise and concessions by both sides, who understood that a bad peace was better than decades of successful war. The history of Jerusalem shows in his opinion that anyone who tried to drive another party out of the city lost it. Two years later he wrote about Sultan Beybars' thirteenth-century bridges used by traffic in Israel until the beginning of the twentieth century. A year later, Ben-Dov reported on wonderful relics of crusader culture crumbling on private lands at the heart of many Arab villages in the north of the country, and advocated cooperating with the owners and making them into archaeological assets that could be of economic benefit to them. In 1994 he gave further evidence of the dual loyalties of the members of the military orders, the Muslims, and the Christians in Palestine, which proved to be such a calamity for the kingdom. About a year later he reported on a fascinating attempt in the crusader period at joint Muslim-Christian rule on the Golan Heights.

One of the most popular sites among Israeli excursionists in Galilee is the fortress of Yehiam. In the Israeli consciousness, this place is connected with both the crusaders and the War of Independence. The founders of Kibbutz Yehiam first settled in the cellars of the crusader Jiddin fortress, which formed part of the string of fortifications that guarded the approach to Acre, the crusader capital after the fall of Jerusalem. Before and During the War of Independence, the fortress served as a place of refuge for the settlement, which was under siege from the surrounding Arab villages. Today the crusader castle is also popular among tourists because of the "crusader" brunch restaurant there, which, we learn, is famous for its *Kabbalot Shabbat* (Receptions of the Sabbath), which take place every Friday evening at half past five in all weathers.

The crusader tourist sites have frequently served as a pretext for political attacks and as a symbolic platform for nationalist confrontation. During the

[98] Yosef Drori, "Myths, and Daring to Criticize Them," *Haaretz*, 9.8.1988. [Hebrew].

[99] Shlomo Neeman, "An Examination of the Significance of the Crusader Period," *Haaretz*, 14.5.1976.

[100] Meir Ben-Dov's articles were published in *Haaretz*: "From Trumpeldor to the Canaanites," 10.10.1990; "The Historical Lesson of Jerusalem," 18.5.1990; "Gishrei Ha-Namer," 17.5.1992; "The Abandoned Kingdom of Jerusalem," 23.5.1993; "The First Week," 17.4.1994; "Green Desert," 31.1.1995.

struggle over Kibbutz Merhavia, Shukri el-Asli published in the newspapers an open letter to the supposed commander of the Ottoman army in Syria in which he described the essence of Zionism; he signed it "Saladin." The meaning was that the founding of Merhavia harmed the monument to Saladin.[101] The journalist Yoram Mizrahi described the site – comparatively neglected from the touristic point of view – of the Horns of Hattin, as if people wanted to forget it![102] Christian tourists, he said, come to the place because of Jesus's Sermon on the Mount and not because of Saladin's historic victory. A path descends through the site of Nabi Shueib to the village of Hattin, which was abandoned in the War of Independence. In the 1970s, the sculptor Yigal Tumarkin asked the Vatican for permission to put up a sculpture at the Horns of Hattin in commemoration of the battle, but received no reply. The Germans also rebuffed him. Already in 1968, Tumarkin had produced his "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Astronaut" and his "Portrait of the Artist as a Crusader," in which the artist wore a mantle with a cross as the symbol of the Teutonic Order. He got the crusader "bug" when he was in the navy and was close to the crusader castle of Atlit. His interest in the complex figure of Frederick II brought him to Sicily and resulted in his print "Homage to Frederick the Second of the House of Hohenstaufen" (1979). In the chapter "Crusaders and Zionists" in his book *The Land of Israel – Tumarkin*, the artist related that he aroused controversy "because of what I said about the crusaders and the comparison with the State of Israel.... In certain Israeli circles, to mention this matter is like talking about a rope in the house of a hanged man." Among his works, the crusader series stands out. It includes sculptures, paintings, reliefs, prints, and drawings: "The Horns of Hattin," "Unto Death – to Amos Oz," "The Kingdom of Jerusalem," "Ma'iliya – Cross of the Land," and so on. Tumarkin has said, "There are fears on the part of Jews and Christians alike – a fear of analogies. Some wanted to make films. I wanted to make a documentary film, but that didn't go." Instead of the sculpture at the Horns of Hattin and the film, Tumarkin made his "crusader sculptures" at Ramle, Acre, and Belvoir Fortress.

At the inauguration ceremony for Tumarkin's sculptures in the National Park at Kokhav Ha-Yarden in 1994, a year after the Oslo Accords, Yossi Sarid, at that time Minister for the Environment, contrasted crusader imperialism with the rootedness of the Jews:

> This juxtaposition of the crusader castle and the sculpture garden is a juxtaposition of contrasts, for the crusaders were like foam on water, for they were a power-struck imperialistic manifestation which never had any chance from the beginning, whereas our hold on this land is one which in no way resembles foam on water, and it grows stronger and stronger.... And when there will be peace here and they will come from far and wide to see the crusader

[101] Eliezer Beeri, *The Beginnings of the Israel-Arab Conflict*, 1882–1911, Tel Aviv 1985, p. 158. [Hebrew].

[102] Yoram Ha-Mizrahi, "The Last Battle," *Haaretz*, 14.7.1989. [Hebrew].

> fortress and Tumarkin's sculpture garden, this place where we live will be bound up with the roots of culture, of history, of the collective memory. [103]

On the evening of the Muslim Feast of the Sacrifice, many cassettes of songs of the first intifada made in Jerusalem were sold in the Israeli-Palestinian village Beni Shoueib. "O infidels, your hour has come!" one heard on one of the cassettes, which praised "the spirit of Islam, the cry Allah Akhbar! The victorious one on his horse, the sword of Saladin." In the intifada, some of the Arab and Palestinian writers and artists once again sought refuge in myths of a glorious Muslim past. For more than a generation the Arabs and Palestinians have turned toward myths of the distant path as symbols to express their political desires in the present. An example of this is the Israeli-Arab poet Mahmoud Dasuki's poem "Flights of Birds," representing the crusaders and Byzantines as a passing phenomenon: "The Byzantines return to al-Sham (Damascus) and they all sleep/ and the people lives in false imaginings/ and continues to hum unceasingly . . . / peace on Jerusalem . . . / and Jerusalem calls . . . the walls of Jerusalem call . . . / Do you hear? Alas, hero of Islam, / the Arabs sleep . . . / the Arabs sleep . . . "[104]

In August 1997 a delegation of Arab Members of Knesset arrived in Al-Sham (Damascus) from Israel. As guests of the Syrian president, they visited the cemetery of Muslim holy men at the Mosque of Umawi outside Damascus as well as the grave of Saladin. What was the meaning of the visit? It may be that the answer to this question may be found in the words spoken by the poet Samieh el-Kassem in the cemetery: "This people which produced so great a number of saints will prevail over all its enemies."[105]

The Arab physician Ziad Asali surveyed the works of the Israeli historians dealing with the crusader phenomenon. In his essay "Zionist Studies of the Crusader Movement" (1992), he points out their relatively impressive representation in the international academic community: About 10 percent of the Organization for Crusader Studies are Israeli scholars, and among eighty-two studies of the crusaders published in 1980, fourteen were written by Israelis.[106] Asali placed the studies of the Israelis ("Zionists") in four categories: works dealing with the situation of the Jews in the crusades, works dealing with the situation of the Arabs and Muslims in the crusades, works dealing with the structure of the crusader state and society, and works dealing with the crusader ideology and its relationship with Europe and the church. In each category, the historical findings and their relevance to the Zionist-crusader parallel are mentioned. For instance, when quoting Prawer's observation that

[103] Igael Tumarkin, *Belvoir Tumarkin Sculpture Garden*, Beit She'an 1996, p. 6. [Hebrew]; idem, *From the Soil to the Art of the Soil*, Tel Aviv 1998. [Hebrew].

[104] Ami Elad-Buskila, "The Praises of the Holy City: The Myth of Jerusalem in Modern Arab Literature," in Ohana and Wistrich, eds., *Myth and Memory*, pp. 248–268.

[105] *Haaretz*, 10.8.1997. [Hebrew].

[106] Ziad J. Asali, "Zionist Studies of the Crusader Movement," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 14 (1992), pp. 45–59.

"there was no lack of soil, but there was a lack of people,"[107] Asali concluded that the Israelis had internalized this lesson and made every effort to encourage Jewish immigration to Palestine, exploiting the repression experienced by the Jews in Europe, their religious obligations, and national aspirations, and encouraging violence against the Jews in Arab countries in the hope of spurring their emigration to Israel. On most points he found much similarity between the crusaders and the Zionists, but he acknowledged one difference: the Israelis' intellectual and scientific achievements. Their fostering of academic and educational institutions is intended, in his opinion, to fulfill two purposes: to build up a national identity based on Zionism, and to contribute to the development of industry, agriculture, commerce, health, and other sectors based on a modern technology. Thus, the Israelis were able to build an arms industry and create a military establishment, in marked contrast to the crusaders' limited military capabilities: "Israel's capacity to produce sophisticated weapons, including atomic bombs, is an obvious reality when we remember the fall of Acre in 1291."[108]

Asali concludes that "Zionism is the heir – albeit illegitimate – of the crusader movement."[109] According to Asali, it was born out of the depths of the crusader residue in western societies, as it combined dreams of reconquest of the Holy Land with a traditional antipathy toward orientals along with a solution of the Jewish problem in the West. The Jews effected a transposition, having been victims in the first crusade and aggressors in the modern one. Asali's article, which is primarily a matter-of-fact survey of Israeli work in the field, ends as follows: "The Israelis have studied the crusader state in order to learn from its experience, avoid its mistakes and escape its fate."[110] Another Arab intellectual, the Franco-Lebanese writer Amin Maaluf, in his book *The Crusades through Arab Eyes*, avoided drawing a parallel between the crusader past and the Arab-Zionist dispute. Maaluf saw the crusader invasion as mainly an episode in the confrontation between East and West, and stressed the sensitivity that has to be shown toward the Arabs in depicting the past in view of their sense of persecution and present-day threats from the West.[111]

Crusader-era expert and Israeli essayist Meron Benvenisti, in a Zionist-slanted memo to the Israeli Foreign Ministry called "Crusaders and Zionists," wrote: "Despite the academic weakness and bias of Arab historiographical scholarship with regard to the crusaders, the analogy has also found support outside the Arab world.... In wide circles, people have begun to relate seriously to the crusader-Zionist comparison, and the analogy has taken root to such a degree that Israeli and Jewish scholars have also been gripped by it."[112]

[107] Joshua Prawer, *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, London 1972, p. 373.
[108] Asali, "Zionist Studies of the Crusader Movement," p. 55.
[109] Ibid, p. 57.
[110] Ibid, p. 58.
[111] Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes*, p. 265.
[112] Meron Benvenisti, "Crusaders and Zionists"; idem, *Sacred Landscape: The Buried History of the Holy Land Since 1948*, trans. Maxine Kaufman-Lacusta, Berkeley 2000, pp. 299–303.

Years later, Benvenisti expressed a further opinion on the matter. In his article "Longings for the Crusaders," he suggested that the emphasis on the short crusader period rather than the long period of Arab rule in Israel was intended to strengthen the Zionist claim that the history of the country was a long period of alien rule in which foreign rulers stole it from the Jews until the latter returned to the land and established Jewish sovereignty there.[113] Stressing the crusader period was a convenient way of blurring the fact that for 1,400 years an Arab-Muslim community lived there. The crusader epoch, which divides the Arab period into two, does not contradict the Zionist narrative. It is neutral in the Zionist-Palestinian dispute, for there is no fear that the Christians will exploit their contribution to the landscape to organize a new crusade for the liberation of the Holy Land. On the other hand, the Arab identity of important sites does interfere with the Zionist narrative. The reconstruction of Kockhav Ha-Yarden and Caesarea are in Benvenisti's opinion examples of the expunging of a whole Arab civilization from the landscape, leaving crusader remains that do not disturb a convenient historical narrative. On both these sites, the Arab structures were cleared away, and it was the crusader structures that were restored and became tourist sites. Likewise, in Beit Atab near Ness Harim, Kfar Lamm near the moshav Habonim, in Kfar Kakon, in Tsuba, and in Kala'at Jiddin (the fortress of Yehiam), there was a historical revision of monumental sites with the intention of obliterating the connection with the Arabs.

The archaeologist Adrian Boas replied to Benvenisti's charges. In his opinion, there has not been any international conspiracy of scholars to overlook the Muslim past.[114] The preservation of mediaeval structures does not depend on their crusader or Arab identity. For example, the fortress of Belvoir is preserved as opposed to the Arab village of Kaukab el-Haw, but the crusader past is not specially cultivated in the museums or in the archaeological circles of the universities in this country. In the Tower of David Museum there is a small permanent crusader display set up on Prawer's initiative, and there was a crusader exhibition in 1977 in the Rockefeller Museum. It seems that the words of the archaeologist Adrian Boaz are like a voice crying in the wilderness: "A more realistic approach to the Crusader period might free us from the temptation to see it as a parallel to the Zionist settlement of the land of Israel, as Jews and Arabs have both done for their own reasons. Such comparisons do not help us to understand either the crusades or the Zionist movement."

In 1999 an exhibition was staged in the Israel Museum called "Knights of the Holy Land: The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem,"[115] commemorating the nine-hundredth anniversary of the founding of that kingdom. The task of

[113] Meron Benvenisti, "Longings For the Crusades," *Haaretz*, 24.6.1999. [Hebrew].

[114] Adrian Boas, "From the 15th of July 1099 to August 1291," *Haaretz*, August 1999 [Hebrew].

[115] Sylvia Rosenberg, ed., *Knights of the Holy Land: The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Israel Museum Catalogue 423), Jerusalem 1999. [Hebrew].

holding the exhibition presented the organizers with some obvious difficulties. How in Israel can one perpetuate the memory of those who massacred the Jews both overseas and in this country, and at the same time not hurt the feelings of the Christian pilgrims who came here to celebrate the millennium? Finally, the arrangers of the exhibition avoided a critical discussion of the crusader phenomenon and, in cooperation with the Youth Wing, left the museum space to the visiting children, who dressed up as knights and enjoyed the crusader chess-sets, decorated shields, banners, and maps.

Even the criticism of an academic work dealing with the Frankish settlement in the country can lead to a lively debate on the significance of the analogy today.[116] It would seem that when discussing the crusader phenomenon the academicians repeatedly forget the rules of scholarly discipline. Professor Haim Gerber, for example, declares that the "new historians" who find "points of resemblance between the Zionist enterprise and the acts of the crusaders" seek "to uproot the foundations on which the State of Israel rests, to question its legitimacy and in effect to contribute to its overthrow." He points to the common view that both Zionism and the people from the West regarded the inhabitants of the land as barbarians without nationality or culture.[117] Uri Avneri, answering Gerber, relates that, as early as the 1950s, "I was stunned by the similarity between the crusades and the Zionist enterprise."[118] Professor Ya'akov Amir expressed amazement at what Avneri had written:

> By what jiggery-pokery does Avneri describe a supposed similarity between the crusades and Zionism? Those who see a resemblance between the two are generally anti-Zionists who think that the fate of the Zionist movement will be like that of the crusaders.... The comparison of Moshe Dayan or Arik Sharon to the crusader leaders is absolute nonsense. It is worth recalling the crusader knight who slaughtered three thousand Muslims, including women and many children, in three days because he did not want to take hostages. The source of this comparison is also anti-Zionism.[119]

The peace talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians and the possibility of evacuating the settlements in Judea and Samaria made Israel Harel, one of the settler leaders, write in his article "Unlike the Crusaders": "Baath secular circles and other Islamic groups have foretold for some time that our fate will be similar to that of the crusaders. Judging by the strength and fortitude we have demonstrated in recent years, our spirit and behaviour, the comparison is unfair to the crusaders. They at least succeeded in persevering

[116] David Ohana, "The Crusader Myth," *Haaretz Literary Supplement*, 7.7.1999. [Hebrew] (review of the book by Ronnie Ellenblum, *Frankish Rural Settlement in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Cambridge 1998).

[117] Haim Gerber, "The Guardians of the Walls," *Haaretz Literary Supplement*, 28.7. 1999. [Hebrew].

[118] Uri Avneri, "On the Crusaders and the Zionists," *Haaretz Literary Supplement*, 10.8.1999. [Hebrew].

[119] Ya'akov Amir, "Crusaders and Zionists," *Haaretz Literary Supplement*, 1.9.1999. [Hebrew].

in the intolerably difficult conditions of deprivation, isolation and insecurity of the Middle Ages for some two hundred years."[120] Is this what philosopher Yeshayahu Leibowitz meant when he foretold that the first "descenders" from the country (the Hebrew term "Yordim" usually means "emigrants," but here it is employed in a slightly derogatory, metaphorical sense) would be the settlers in the territories? Is Harel suggesting that the descent from the settlers' Messianic vision of redemption to the nadir of defeatism is something so disastrous that the Israelis may be compared to the crusaders?

Close to the time of the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa intifada in the autumn of 2000, and even more so while it was taking place, the Israeli and Palestinian relationship to the crusaders once more became a topic for discussion. Following the events, law professor and former Member of Knesset Amnon Rubinstein wrote: "Anyone who has seen or heard the statements of the exposed 'masked men' which have come out of the mouths of some of the Israeli Arabs, including Members of Knesset, about 'effacing the green line' … has also heard the statements between the lines and between the sentences: i.e., the revival of the old-new hope that it will be possible to obliterate Israel as the crusader kingdom was obliterated, since no national body can exist which is not Muslim-Arab."[121] In an article entitled "Neither Saladin nor Samson," the journalist Dan Margalit used a Jewish martyrological image in order to lambaste "Arafat, who in recent days has proposed the sacrifice of Ishmael. He makes a burnt-offering of Palestinian children … but even if the Palestinians now decide to refrain from making peace with Israel, assuming that its fate will be like that of the crusaders, and that even in situations of despair it will not be headed by a kind of new Samson who will choose to 'die with the Philistines,' Arafat will still have to ask himself if all this will be worthwhile simply in order that the granddaughter of his great-granddaughter will see a new Saladin on the political stage."[122] On two occasions in the autumn and winter of 2001, the analogy was the main subject of the Israeli television program "Globus" on the government channel.

Binyamin Netanyahu's vision of a "cold peace" raised the specter of the crusader myth, this time from an unexpected quarter. Commenting under the heading "In the Crusader State," the journalist Guy Behor wrote:

> Netanyahu's idea of a "cold peace" means that Israel deliberately isolates itself from its surroundings and becomes a Crusader fortress surrounded by ramparts, and those within it care only about one thing: defending the walls.… Throughout the years, Israel has fought against being represented as a foreign implantation and has sought to normalize its relations with its neighbors, until the term "normalization" (in Arabic, *tatvia*) became a dirty word among its opponents. And now, lo and behold, according to Netanyahu's vision Israel is about to turn of its own free will into an isolated Crusader fortress and in

[120] Israel Harel, "Unlike the Crusaders," *Haaretz*, 30.12.1999. [Hebrew].
[121] Amnon Rubinstein, "The Power of Democracy," *Haaretz*, 18.10.2000. [Hebrew].
[122] Dan Margalit, "Neither Saladin nor Samson," *Haaretz*, 10.10.2000. [Hebrew].

> this way demonstrates its alien character, without any attempt to integrate or receive true legitimation in the area![123] On the other side, from the day Arafat returned from the Camp David discussions of 2000, the Arab media did not stop praising him as a modern Saladin, and from that time the Zionist-crusader analogy did not cease to be on the Palestinian agenda.

At the beginning of the disturbances, Amos Oz wrote for the *New York Times*, putting his finger on the salient point: The choice was between myths on the one hand and historical reconciliation on the other. Oz describes Arafat's return from the failed Camp David summit as follows:

> The whole Gaza Strip is covered with flags and slogans proclaiming the Palestinian Saladin. Welcome home, Saladin of our era! is written on the walls.
>
> In silence, astounded, I watch, and I can't help reminding myself that the original Saladin promised the Arab people that he would not make pacts with the infidels: he would massacre them and throw them in the ocean. I see Mr. Arafat dressed in his grey-green combat uniform. It's an Arafat clothed like Che Guevara and treated like Saladin: my heart breaks.... The Palestinians must choose if they want a new Saladin, or to really work for peace.[124]

On the same subject, Oz later turned to the Palestinians in the name of the Israeli peace camp:

> The supporters of peace in Israel will make an effective contribution to peace if we – we precisely – say to our Palestinian counterparts: the demand for an agreement to implement the right of return to Israel accompanied by a "Saladin" atmosphere, sending the Israelis to drink the sea – all this increases suspicion and fear exactly at the critical moment when there is an urgent need for an emotional breakthrough of the kind effected by Sadat. The question to be addressed to our Palestinian counterparts is: is it Arafat the Nobel prizewinner or Arafat as Saladin?[125]

At a meeting of Israeli intellectuals and Palestinians in July 2001, Oz once again located the point of inception of the Al-Aqsa intifada: the welcome that Arafat received on his return from America where he had demanded the right of return. He was received with the greeting, "Welcome home, Saladin!"[126]

The colonialist discourse is not a new one. The analogy, however, has been disproved by the facts. The Zionist settlement of Palestine took place without military or political assistance from foreign states and so does not resemble any colonialist movement. Zionism was not a religious movement, but a national movement that saw the return to Zion as the modern expression of a people that wished to forge its collective destiny through a return to its historical sources. The Israelis created a rejuvenated homeland and established

[123] Guy Behor, "In the Crusader State," *Yediot Aharonot*, 13.12. 2000. [Hebrew].
[124] Amos Oz, "The Specter of Saladin," *The New York Times*, 28.7.2000.
[125] Amos Oz, "Palestine Must Choose," *Yediot Aharonot*, 3.8.2000. [Hebrew].
[126] *Haaretz*, 10.7.2001. [Hebrew].

an identity between a large part of the people and their soil; they developed settlement, science, and technology, achieved a clear national identity with a culture, language, and creativity of its own, and succeeded in maintaining a democratic existence (within the "Green Line") under the most trying condition there can be for a democracy – a protracted military conflict. Most important of all, the Israelis never felt strangers in their country. They did not apologize for their national existence, but saw it as the historical realization of a universal right supported by international recognition – not as an original sin.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the Zionist-crusader analogy is still part of the new world picture. The destruction of the Twin Towers in New York is a historic landmark in the struggle between globalization and fundamentalism, and has conjured up the specter of a crusade as symbolizing the demonization of the "other," which in the name of a holy God provides the authorization for his annihilation. The former president of the United States George W. Bush declared that one had to wage a crusade against the fundamentalists, and Osama Bin Laden called for a jihad against the "crusader-Jewish alliance," in this way binding up the motivations for world terror with the crusader guilt of the state of Israel.

Three days after the terrorist action in New York, on September 14, 2001, the northern branch of the Islamic Organization in Israel had its yearly conference in the Arab-Israeli city Umm el-Fahm. The organizers of the "Al-Aqsa Is in Danger" assembly held on that occasion placed behind the speakers' platform a placard twenty by thirty meters in size on which one saw Saladin approaching Al-Aqsa with his troops, and over the mosque was written, "We are coming back, Al-Aqsa!" The tens of thousands of people attending the meeting were given copies of the sermon delivered by the preacher at Al-Aqsa, Manhe E-Din Ibn Sachi, on October 9, 1187, the first Friday on which Saladin prayed in the mosque after its liberation from the crusaders. At the end of the sermon it was written: "Ibn Sachi gave this sermon of liberation. Who will give the next sermon of liberation?"

Does the Al-Aqsa intifada represent a turning point in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that changes it from a national conflict to a national-religious conflict? The climax of the new radical religious symbolism is reached in the Zionist-crusader analogy, which is rapidly becoming a myth and a counter-myth among the Israelis and Palestinians. The ways in which the crusader narrative is presented embody the opposing intentions of the rival sides. The Arab side has nurtured a myth in which a historical analogy has been bound up with political attitudes and religious sermonizing, whereas most of the spokespeople for the Israeli side have sought to divest this politico-religious myth of its content by using a dry secular terminology, although many of them have nurtured a counter-myth that gave rise to an enlisted political narrative. This was well expressed by the philosopher Emil Fackenheim, who at the height of the Al-Aqsa intifada voiced the opinion of most Israelis; that is: "The crusaders came to Jerusalem but we returned to it. They abandoned it, but we came

in order to stay. And while they left behind them ruins in the sand, we came in order to build it anew."[127]

The crusader dynamic appears to Israelis variously. They see it traced from the terrorist attacks on buses to the Iranian atom bomb scare; from the territories conquered in the Six-Day War to Israel's alien presence in the region; from 1967 to 1948; from the "small conquest" to the "great expulsion." Some maintain that in order to deactivate Iran's nuclear threat, it is necessary to neutralize the nucleus of the conflict, the Palestinian problem. The crusader perspective is evidence of the changing viewpoint on the whole conflict and of the range of fears it engenders. It is perceived as a local quarrel with the first "colonialists"; a dispute between a small, newly founded state and an alliance of neighbors that have risen against it; an Israeli Goliath opposed to the occupied Palestinians – a Goliath who in turn is a potential victim because of the threat to his existence. Has the metaphor not rebelled against its maker? Has it not been transformed in the cauldron of time to a mythic golem, dominating its maker and controlling his fears, his thoughts, and his actions?

[127] Emil Fackenheim, "With or without God's Help," *Haaretz*, 27.12.2000. [Hebrew].

6

The Mediterranean Option

CONFRONTATION OR DIALOGUE?

Zionism was born in Europe, and paradoxically the main choices of identity and cultural options for Israeli society – socialism, liberalism, secularism, Messianism, Canaanism, "Crusaderism" – originated not in the Holy Land, but in Europe. Mediterraneanism as a cultural idea is also a theoretical option for Israeli identity. The Mediterranean idea has been effectively promoted in a number of Mediterranean countries as a program of collective ethos, suggesting directions of action, formulations of policy, and cultural activities. The Mediterranean option is a possible bridge between Israel and its Arab neighbors, and between Israel and Europe.

The tensions between north and south in the Mediterranean – the Persian War, the Peloponnesian War, the Macedonian Wars, and the Punic Wars – were succeeded by the struggle between East and West, between Hellenists and Romans. This epoch was ended by creating "mare nostrum," the first political and cultural union embracing the entire coast of the Mediterranean Sea by the Romans. The Muslim conquest shattered this unity. From the eighth to the eighteenth century, the sea was split in two, its northern (Christian) shore against its southern (Muslim) shore. Historical watersheds such as the crusades, the Ottoman conquest in the East and the Spanish Reconquista in the West, the campaigns of Napoleon, modern colonial settlement, and the World Wars in the twentieth century – all were tense encounters pitting nations, cultures, and religions against one another.[1]

It was believed that the place of the Jews was in the Mediterranean region. Only when a discourse began claiming that there was an affinity between the people and the land, only in the land of the forefathers, in the East, would the desired change in the image of the Jew come about. The myth of the "new Jew" came into being only when the idea of a separate Jewish nationality was

[1] Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, Paris 1949.

accepted and realized in Israel. The realization of Zionism in Israel linked ideology to geography, history to a spatial identity. It is paradoxical that from the 1880s onward, one of the models for the creation of the new Jew was the Arab. The Arab was seen by some of the Zionists as an exemplar of belongingness, of an existential and natural connection with the land. The East was not only a place of refuge from the Jewish exile in Europe, but also a source of vitality and a place where the individual and national personality could be renewed.[2]

Was the original Zionist approach to the East an instance of western orientalism as formulated by Edward Said, that is, the typical paternalistic way in which the West relates to the eastern region of the Mediterranean?[3] If so, it was a far more complex approach than that of classic European orientalism, because the East is conceived not only as the locus of the ancient history of the Jewish people, but also as the supreme aim of the people's envisaged return to itself. The East was the source and the cure to the national plight of the Jewish people, integral to its national identity; but to an equal extent it also represented "the other," something fundamentally exterior to the Zionist Jew and identified as "there" – both as an alien, even antagonistic, entity and as the object of an unquenchable aspiration. The increasing lure of the East in the eyes of the nineteenth-century European romantics and the prevailing sense among the intelligentsia that the West was in a state of decline, coupled with a yearning for primordial "true" and "sound" foundations, prompted Jews with Zionist inclinations to see in the East not only the cradle of their national identity or the possibility of a safe haven, but also a source of values, strength, and moral regeneration for their people.

Until the 1930s, Zionists saw in the East an object of longing and desire, a source of power and an opportunity for redemption. At the same time, however, they started out from a position of western superiority and an attitude of fear and suspicion, which also made them see the East as a threat. In the wake of the 1929 Arab riots, a rift was created between Jews and Arabs and a period of Jewish separatism began, during which all signs of orientalism were suppressed. Since then, the East has been perceived as a political reality, a place of "otherness," a sort of absence or gap, rather than as an object of identification emanating positive values. Thus, the perception of the East has been tainted by the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The East was and remains foreign to many Israelis – whether to those who wanted to touch it, become a part of it, and internalize it, or (all the more so) to those who wanted nothing to do with it. The oriental tradition was never adopted by the Zionist settlers in Palestine, but was simply a spice in the new national-popular recipe. The pioneering society remained essentially Eurocentric and regarded itself as an extension of European culture, not a

[2] Yigal Zalmona and Tamar Manor-Fridman, *To the East? To the East: Orientalism in the Arts in Israel*, Jerusalem 1998, pp. 9–15.

[3] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York 1978.

product of Mediterranean culture, and certainly not of Arab culture. In practice, this represented the abandonment of eastern culture in favor of western values and modernity.[4]

THE MEDITERRANEAN STATE OF MIND

The Mediterranean Sea links together three continents, three religions, and thousands of years of civilization and has thus been a channel of mutual influences and cultural exchanges. These processes have formed the destiny of large Jewish communities. The historian Joshua Prawer drew attention to an interesting fact: "It should be pointed out that, without any causal relationship, the period of the closure of the Mediterranean was – in relationships, in the exchange of ideas and in trade – the period of the greatness of Judaism."[5] According to the historian Shlomo Dov Goitein, the Jews lived along the coasts of the Mediterranean and were an open, mobile people; they were not closed up in their own world but, in the countries where they lived, inherited the culture of Greece and Rome and adapted it to the culture of Islam. In his monumental five-volume work, *A Mediterranean Society*, Goitein described a Jewish society of the Middle Ages that lived within the framework of Mediterranean geography and culture.[6]

Goitein, as the first Hebrew University lecturer in Islamic studies, focused in his pioneering work on early Arab literature and society, and only later in his life did he begin to concern himself with the medieval Jewish communities. His original project was to investigate the trade with the Indian Ocean, but his academic starting point was the investigation of the Cairo *genizah*: "In the summer of 1958 I abandoned India and turned towards the Mediterranean."[7] In the documents of the *genizah* he examined, there was no special term for the "Mediterranean Sea," and the Arabs generally called it "the Sea of the Romans," "The Sea," or "The Salt Sea." Unlike Henri Pirenne, who saw a division in the Mediterranean, Goitein revealed an extensive Mediterranean trade between Christians and Muslims from the eleventh to the thirteenth century. In his opinion, the division in the Mediterranean took place with the spread of the tribes from Central Asia and the Caucasus to the Islamic countries. After the Mamelukes and the crusades, the Europeans regarded the Mediterranean as a hostile area. Goitein's geographical sociology, which deciphered the documents of the *genizah*, portrayed the Jews of the Middle Ages as a Mediterranean people that developed its sources, disseminated its wisdom, and was prominent in trade and the liberal professions in the countries

[4] David Ohana, "Israel Towards a Mediterranean Identity," *Munich Contributions to European Unification*, 4 (1999), pp. 81–99.

[5] Joshua Prawer, "Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Mediterranean Sea," *Peamim*, 45 (Autumn 1990), pp. 5–11. [Hebrew].

[6] Shlomo Dov Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 5 vols. Berkeley 1967–1988.

[7] Jacob Lestner, "Introduction," in Shlomo Dov Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, Tel Aviv 2005, p. 23.

of the basin. His research depicted a Jewish society that was premodern in all respects: day-to-day life, commerce, law, and way of thinking. It was an exemplary model for the study by Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (2000), which, in the same way as Goitein, added to the netlike Braudelian structure of the macro and micro-networks of areas and sub-areas.[8] The precise reconstruction of the area of the Mediterranean between Tunisia and Egypt was revealed as a total history of the mentality of the medieval Jews and a historical sociology of the worldwide, countrywide, and communal organization of the Jews, with a description of synagogues and prayers, the system of education, the legal system, the development of the nuclear family, and the women's world. The status of the Jews was perceived as a central axis in the Middle Ages between the Mashrek and the Mahgreb (the eastern and western areas of North Africa). Goitein himself became aware of Fernand Braudel's book only at the end of his researches: "I immediately regretted I had not done so earlier."

Braudel was preceded by a year by Nahum Slouschz (1871–1966), a writer and a philologist of the oriental languages, in his 1948 study *The Book of the Sea: The Conquest of the Seas – An Aspect of the History of Civilization*. It impossible not to notice the similar disposition, the Mediterranean compass, and the creative imagination common to Slouschz and Braudel. Slouschz wrote:

> The life-force in the land of life overcomes everything: the farmer who has nothing in Southern Italy, the penniless fisherman in the Isles of Greece, the ploughman in Provence and the peasant living on vegetables in the Balearic Islands have never changed their social form. They have remained steeped in light, full of charm and devoted to an ancient joie de vivre.[9]

With the same expansiveness, Braudel poeticized:

> In this book, ships sail, the waves repeat their melody, the vines descend from the Cinque Terre to the Genoa Riviera. In this book, olives are harvested in Provence and Greece, the fishermen draw their nets from the silent lagoon of Venice or the canals of Djerba, and the carpenters still build ships similar to those of yesterday.... And at the sight of all this, we are outside time.[10]

In Slouschz's work, the connection of the new Jew to the Mediterranean is very important, and as David Remez (1886–1951), an Israeli political leader and writer, says in his introduction to *The Book of the Sea*, "Our world was planted on the shores of the Mediterranean, the great sun of world culture."

[8] Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea – A Study of Mediterranean History*, Oxford 2001.

[9] Nahum Slouschz, (1948): *Book of the Sea: The Conquest of the Sea*, Tel Aviv 1948, p. 28. [Hebrew]; see also Aliza Meyuhas Ginio, "The Mediterraean World Discussed by Nahum Slouschz (1871–1966) in His Work the Book of the Sea (1948)," *The Third Mersin in History* Colloquium, 16–17 (October 2008), pp. 1–10.

[10] Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée, l'espace et l'histoire*, Paris 1977, 7.

According to Slouschz, the attractiveness of the Mediterranean still derives from the biblical sources: "Zevulun will live long on the shore," "Asher with his havens," and "Dan will live on ships." This way of thinking draws inspiration from the past: "The actions of our forefathers were a sign for their descendants when the first ones wished from the beginning to restore the seas of our land to their original splendour as international conduits fusing the expanses of the east with the farthest regions of the west." According to Slouschz, the young Hebrew Yishuv (the Jewish community in Palestine prior to the state of Israel) had the same task as the ancient Israelite society, and one therefore had to "renew the youth of our land as one of the strengths of the sea, commanding its ways and linking together countries and islands against the background of trade and the kinship of peoples." One had to vanquish hearts before one conquered the seas, and hence a Mediterranean consciousness and education through a sea-based approach to Israel, as opposed to the conditions of exile, were essential to the crystallization of the Hebrew consciousness: "The sea, a substance of much water in itself, as against the evil waters of exile that distance those who are near." As a result of this ideology of the Jewish people as a Mediterranean one, Slouschz developed a historiography and a philosophy of history that emphasized his knowledge of the past of the Jewish people on the sea, and stressed the way of life and activities of the Jewish communities in the Mediterranean Basin. He characterized the Mediterranean Jew as follows: "A Mediterranean person of this kind is first of all a social person, one link in a great chain of similar people, who does not represent life outside the community in which he was born and in which he was raised." Unlike the people of the north "who walk in darkness," the "heroes of the bright horizon of the Mediterranean," like Samson and David, Alexander and Socrates, Hannibal and Napoleon, were first and foremost natives of their cities, part of their environment, and felt comfortable in nature or in the public space.

David Ben-Gurion, the founder of the Israeli state, at the ninth Zionist Congress in 1935 called for the Mediterranean character of the state-in-the-making to be developed.

> The Mediterranean is the bridge between Eretz-Israel and Europe, and we must have a strong part in this. The Mediterranean does not have to be the frontier of our land but its continuation and extension, and our link with the great Jewish centers of the Diaspora and the cultural centers in Europe and America. We are returning to the east, but bringing to this country the light of western culture, and with all our efforts to be absorbed in our country in the east and have friendly relations with our neighbors in the east, we shall preserve our connection with the centers of culture in the west.[11]

Ben-Gurion persisted in his Mediterranean orientation, and even adopted the Canaanite narrative concerning the Hebrews as pioneers of "Mediterraneanness," preceding the Greeks and Romans: "The fathers of

[11] David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, Meir Avizohar, ed., Tel Aviv 1972, p. 402.[Hebrew].

seafaring, prime instrument of economic progress and the spread of culture for three millennia now, were Semitic tribes, speaking Canaanitish Hebrew and dwelling of old on the shores of Palestine in Tyre and in Sidon and their off-shoots. Canaanite became a synonym for merchant and the word kina a synonym for wares."[12]

Ben-Gurion outlined a maritime historiography of the people of Israel, quoted the Book of Ezekiel on the wealth and maritime power of Tyre, and described the commercial relationships of the tribes of Zebulun and Asher with the people of Tyre. He said that the inhabitants of Israel and Judah did not learn seafaring from the people of Sidon, because those living on the shore, the Canaanites to the north and the Philistines to the south, blocked their path. Throughout the period of the First Temple there was no Jewish harbor on the shores of the Mediterranean. There were no sailors in Judah and Israel until Solomon needed his friend Hiram, the king of Tyre, and afterward there were a few maritime ventures in the time of Jehoshephat, who built ships at Etzion Gaber. Only in the days of the Hasmoneans did the Judeans succeed in reaching the shore and conquering Jaffa, the first Judean port and the only one on the Mediterranean in the late Second Temple period. The nautical history of the Land of Israel brought Ben-Gurion to the conclusion that in ancient times, in the Middle Ages, and in our own time, most of the wars in world history were decided by the maritime powers.

The Jewish people were not a nautical people in the periods of the First Temple and the Second Temple. The Land of Israel was situated on two seas, the Mediterranean to the west and the Red Sea to the south, but it never had the use of the two seas. Only with the founding of the state of Israel, said Ben-Gurion, was the biblical promise – "I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the Sea of the Philistines" (Exodus 23:31) – fulfilled for the first time. The state of Israel is the only one of the Mediterranean countries to have an outlet on both the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian Ocean without needing the Suez Canal (this was said, of course, before the opening of the canal to Israeli shipping). "This settlement on the shores of both seas is the thing that is unique to the third return to Zion." On the return from Babylon, the Jews returned from the east and on land, but in the present return to Zion, the *aliyah* is from the west, via the sea. This connection with the sea has a political, military, and economic importance. Without the sea, Israel would be a "city under siege"; without sea power, strong land and air forces would not be effective. The sea is a convenient and cheap means of transporting foodstuffs and raw materials. The understanding and foresight of Ben-Gurion were indeed far reaching: "The sea contains unlimited possibilities of settlement, and this is not a paradox. The sea is not a desert of water, as many people think." Ben-Gurion combined a maritime philosophy with a Promethean vision: [13]

[12] David Ben-Gurion, "The Navy, Israel and the Sea," *Rebirth and Destiny of Israel*, Mordekhai Norock, ed., New York 1954, p. 8, p. 16–17.

[13] Ibid.

> The sea covers the part of the surface; it has no frontiers, it is free. It is not divided among the State and the peoples that are on land, there are no partitions between the oceans, no barriers or confining bounds. A people with a territorial base and port may sail the world over and sound every sea, it may put a girdle about the globe. Land severs the nations, the sea unites them and brings them close, it advances the unity of mankind, opening new horizons and spaces invisible to us that stand on shore.
>
> Our forefathers, who had never sailed its length as their kin-folk of Sidon did, called the Mediterranean the Great Sea, but it is just a land-girt lake with a narrow exit to the Atlantic. On the broad bosom of ocean man sees the elemental immensity of nature, for the mightiest man-made vessel imaginable is no more than a minute speck of sand in an illimitable expanse of water. He also learns his own greatness and the tremendous strength that is in him to control natural forces and rule the vast deep. The man who bridges gigantic oceans in a frail craft of his own making proves that quality transcends quantity, that the human spirit is superior to nature's measureless wealth of matter in the raw.

Ben-Gurion once again mobilized science, not to understand the laws of the universe, but to control nature and to harness it in the service of humanity. Not only did he not consider the Mediterranean a "lake" whose importance had to be diminished or that did not need to be recognized at all, but he said that "just as we have come here to make the desert bloom, so we have come here to conquer the expanses of the sea."

The Canaanites, more than any other ideological faction, had the idea that in their past the Hebrews were Mediterranean in character and activities. Already in 1915, Itamar Ben-Avi (1888–1943), an Israeli journalist and Zionist activist, in his article "Our Future is Also on the Sea," described the "glorious maritime past" of the Hebrews; he claimed that only "if the Jews will again be people of the sea, only if many of our new tribes again become Canaanite Zebuluns, will there be a complete resolution of our hopes."[14] The Canaanites were also influenced by Jeremiah Halperin (1901–1962), Jabotinsky's adjutant in the defense of Jerusalem, responsible for the nautical section of Betar, captain of the ship "Sarah A"(Aaronsohn), and the formulator of a Hebrew nautical ideology as against the socialist ideology that sanctified the soil.[15] He regretted the fact that, among all the Mediterranean peoples, all of whom were sailors and owners of ships, Israel was absent. This was not because the Hebrew fleet was of a lower standard in the history of early ships than that of the other Mediterranean peoples, but because exilic Judaism (with some exceptions) did not provide the possibility of participating in the nautical profession, which was considered an aristocratic profession in the

[14] Itamar Ben Avi, "Our Future is Also on the Sea," in *Yehuda Hayamit*, Tel Aviv 1930. [Hebrew]

[15] Aharon Amir, "Horon in the Land of the Hebrews," in Adyah Gurevitch Horon, *East and West: A History of Canaan and the Land of the Hebrews*, Tel Aviv 2000. [Hebrew].

countries bordering the sea.[16] Halperin referred to the book of Raphael Patai (1910–1996, a Jewish ethnographer and anthropologist), *The Children of Noah: Jewish Seafaring in Ancient Times* (1938), in which it was claimed that the development of ships and seamanship is a criterion of cultural development[17]; it declared, "the Hebrew people wrote one of the most glorious pages in the history of the seamanship of the Mediterranean peoples." Moreover, the Jews, who had fourth place among the coastal peoples before the Second World War and were known for their talent in trade, their initiative, and their capacity for international organization, would know how to exploit this geographical advantage in order once again to take their proper place. The idea of the resurrection of Hebrew seamanship is connected here with the Mediterranean character of the Hebrew state.

Halperin based himself in his assertions on the researches of "the young scholar in Paris who called himself 'El Raid.'" One can learn about this pen name of the researcher of the ancient East Adia Horon (1907–1972), the intellectual father of the Canaanite movement, from an article by Zeev Jabotinsky (1880–1940), the leader of the Zionist Revisionist movement. The article "Israel and Carthage," was based on a series of articles that Horon published in the revisionist Russian-language journal *Rassviet* in Paris under the pseudonym "El Raid" (in Arabic, the Observer). Jabotinsky claimed that the Phoenicians were kith and kin of the Hebrew people and extended their culture as far as Carthage. Hannibal was one of the great Hebrew heroes, and the *lingua franca* of the Mediterranean Basin was Hebrew. Jabotinsky also saw Carthage as a kind of inscription on a potsherd: that is, one piece of evidence among many of the Semitic origin of the Mediterranean idea. At the Betar Congress in Danzig in 1931, Jabotinsky gave his blessing to Adia Horon, who founded the "Alliance of Youth of the Sea – *Zur Rodei Gal* (the Association of the Rulers of the Waves, known as *Rodei Gal*), a movement to prepare the youth of Betar for a life of seamanship. A nucleus of the movement was founded in Tunis next to the ruins of Carthage, a sailing ship was acquired, a nautical periodical, *Le Cran*, was published, and there was even a fantastic plan to overrun the islands of the Straits of Tiran as a first stage for the conquest of the whole of Palestine.[18] The Canaanite source of the Hebrew attraction to the Mediterranean Sea is to be found in the writings of Adia Horon, and it continues until today in the writings of the poet Aharon Amir (1923–2008), one of the Canaanite leaders. Amir stated in his article "The Sea, the Last Sea," which appeared in 1996 for the inauguration of the "Forum for Mediterranean Cultures," that the Mediterranean ("the Philistine Sea," "the Last Sea") is an organic part of the infrastructure of the Hebrew culture and its

[16] Yirmiyahu Halperin, "Hebrew Seamanship from the time of the Bible to the Twentieth Century," in Mordekhai Newman, ed., *Israel and the Sea*, Jerusalem 1970, p. 84. [Hebrew].

[17] Raphael Patai, *Jewish Seafaring in Ancient Times: A Contribution to the History of Palestinian Culture*, Tel Aviv 1938. [Hebrew].

[18] Yirmiyahu Halperin, *The Revival of Hebrew Seamanship*, Tel Aviv 1965. [Hebrew].

worldview.[19] The bearers and revivers of the Hebrew cultural heritage should not in his opinion feel themselves to be guests in the ancient sea, but should be full partners and equal citizens in the Mediterranean Basin. In one place, Amir points out three potential dangers in the Mediterranean option: an idealization and sentimentalization of the Mediterranean, which is "one of the seas most steeped in blood in the history of mankind"[20]; a dependency on the history, true in itself, of the Jewish Diaspora in the Mediterranean Basin; and a community-based ideology of the type of "oriental heritage," which can interfere with a comprehensive national view of Israel as a Mediterranean nation.

The poet Erez Biton, editor of *Apirion – Mediterranean Journal* and founder of "The International Mediterranean Centre in Israel," also sees an affinity between the Canaanite group and the Mediterranean ideology: "The Canaanite teaching of Jonathan Ratosh also sought, in the final analysis, to give an eastern dimension to Israeli existence, and it too received a death-blow with the founding of the state, precisely because of that oriental basis. Therefore, strangely enough, we, the oriental Jews, can find a common denominator with the Canaanite teachings in the common attempt to give a special content to our reality here."[21] Adaptation to a comprehensive Mediterranean entity would in his opinion give the Israelis an authentic force of existence, and "would rescue us from the comparison with the crusaders, who were here for only a short time." A semantic distinction between "Mediterranean," "Middle Eastern," and "Oriental" is made in various contexts, and Biton chooses to make a tactical use of the first formula: "It seems to me that the difference between 'Mediterraneanism' and 'orientalism' is only a semantic difference, and especially in the case of my use of the formula Mediterraneanism, because this formula can be easily accepted in the very polarised society in which we live."

The poet Natan Yonatan (1923–1904) makes the same choice for the same reasons: "Why do I sometimes prefer to use the concept 'Mediterranean culture,' or similar concepts? I cannot support this with any argument or any scientific justification, but I want to bring it about that the people who will listen to me or who will think about the things I say about culture will try to think about culture in concrete, realistic terms.... In my opinion, to say 'Mediterranean culture' is a good way of speaking about our culture, our literature."[22] The cultural critic Gabriel Moked stresses another aspect: "In my opinion, we must distinguish between the Mediterranean cultural world and the Middle Eastern cultural world.... The Middle Eastern Muslim culture is to a great degree very fanatical and far from any true symbiosis with the West. As against this, the Mediterranean culture is basically pluralistic,

[19] Aharon Amir, "The Sea, the Last Sea," *Maariv*, 9.4. 1996 [Hebrew].
[20] Aharon Amir, "Israel in the Mediterranean Space," A Lecture Given at Beit Hasofer, *Apirion*, 4–5 (1986), p. 26.[Hebrew].
[21] Erez Biton, "Editorial," *Apirion*, 2 (1983/4), p.11.[Hebrew].
[22] Natan Yonatan: "A Mediterranean Culture," *Apirion*, 4, (1983), p. 8.[Hebrew].

impregnated with the various influences of 'Mare Nostrum.' It is partly European and partly Levantine.... Mediterraneanness means among other things openness and refinement, cultural variety and possibilities of dialogue between different religions and cultures that are not homogeneous."[23] The Israeli-Palestinian poet Mohammed Ghanayem points out the dialectical aspect of the Mediterranean option: "One must speak about a cultural synthesis that cannot turn into a cultural invasion, even if the result is a cultural operation that brings together worlds that are different and even opposite to each other. In this respect, Israel can provide a good example of a broad spread of civilizations if it relates on an equal basis to the cultures of the minorities within it, Arabs and Jews, Ashkenasis and Sephardis, all of whom can make up a new Israeli cultural identity that can save the region from an expected cultural desolation."[24]

It is an interesting fact that many of the Israeli poets, writers, and artists wrote and produced in Israel as if they had never heard the sound of waves lapping the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, as if the people of the mountains and desert had overcome the people of the sea and the shore. But a few poets nevertheless stand out, and first among them Saul Tchernikovsky (1875–1943), who wrote about the wanderings of the Hebrew poet and his longing to reach the Mediterranean: "I wandered from sea to sea all the days of my life/ and it was my desire to reach the southern sea/ and my way was fenced around with mountains ..."[25] Uri Zvi Greenberg (1896–1981) cursed the fate that decreed that he should be born in Christian Europe, and in 1929 chose the Mediterranean, his poetic mentor, as the landscape of his chosen motherland: "And I learn the teaching of the rhythm of the water:/ I have chosen you among the teachers, O Mediterranean, as my teacher of poetry!/ The salt of your waters is the salt of my blood and my tears./ Forgive, for I was wrongly not born on your shores."[26] The poet Harold Schimmel came from beyond the sea, beyond the Atlantic Ocean, and in a short poem he listed his Mediterranean heroes: "Abra(ha)m/ Or-phe-us/ Jesus/ A-ppo-lon-ius."[27] Ayin (Omer) Hillel (1926–1990), one of the leaders of the new Hebrew poetry before the founding of the state and after it, sang a hymn of praise, "The Voice of Many Waters," to a pagan melody in the manner of Tchernikovsky and Schneur: "I stand and wonder at the sea/ and my body stirs like the expanse of the sea/ the sea, the idolatrous sea/ mighty as rebellion/ like a mass of men

[23] Gabriel Moked,"Israel in the Mediterranean Space," A Lecture Given at Beit Hasofer, *Apirion*, 4–5 (1985/6), p. 27.[Hebrew].

[24] Muhamad Ghanayem, "Israel in the Mediterranean Space," A Lecture Given at Beit Hasofer, *Apirion*, 4–5 (1985/6), p. 29. [Hebrew].

[25] David Ohana, "The Mediterranean Option in Israel: An Introduction to the Thought of Jacqueline Kahanoff," *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 21, 2 (2006), 239–263.

[26] Uri Zvi Greenberg, "As My Homeland Is," *In the Midst of the World and in the Midst of the Poems*, Tel Aviv 1979. [Hebrew].

[27] Harold Schimmel, "Additional addresses," *Sefer Midrash Tadsha*, Tel Aviv 1993, p. 36. [Hebrew].

exultant in strife and battle,/ and its roar is hot and blue and overwhelming/ as a nightmare is overwhelming./ The mighty sea abundant in power." The most Mediterranean Israeli poet is undoubtedly Israel Pinkas, who describes his wanderings on the seashore, and concludes, in his poem "Mediterranean Song": "In our ancient sea/ there is nothing new/ Only the wind changes."[28] Pinkas experiences the Mediterranean in Braudelian stretches of "extended time," ignoring the ravages of time and the tragedies of history. The Florentine merchant who wanted to sell red-tinted glass in the year 1401 still does the same today. This freezing of time gives a sense of stability. The Tel Aviv poets Natan Zach, Moshe Dor, and Moshe Ben Shaul also have their private moments facing the Mediterranean,[29] and only Meir Wieseltier, in his poem "Depths of a Bottle" (1976), declares that the heavy weight of ideology and history in the Mediterranean area are like compresses defiling the blood of the individual.[30]

Wieseltier was nevertheless sympathetic to the first Hebrew city situated on the seashore. The sociologist Maoz Azaryahu, in his book *Tel Aviv: Mythography of a City* (2005), titled the Mediterranean chapter "The Most Beautiful Place in Tel Aviv: The Seashore." However, Meir Dizengoff, the first mayor, reacted as follows to reservations about his plan to create an industrial area on the shore of the city: "Jews have no interest in sea-bathing. Industry is more important."[31] As against this, the novelist and poet Shalom Asch (1880–1957) expressed enthusiasm for the seashore: "Every Jew, and I among them, ask two things of God: a place in paradise in the next world and a place on the seashore in Tel Aviv in this one." The opposite attitudes of Dizengoff and Asch represent the whole spectrum of ideas about the relationship of the city and its institutions to its Mediterranean location. The sentiments expressed by Asch correspond to the geography of collective redemption in which the Tel Aviv shore represented the new liberated Jewish existence. It was precisely because the shore was free of elements of national renewal and building the land that it revealed in the most extraordinary way the normality of the life lived by the Jews, which in the final analysis was the purpose of the Zionist vision. Dizengoff's remark anticipated (and perhaps was a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy of) the repeated criticism, formulated by the critic Hedda Boshes, that "the streets of Tel Aviv run away from the sea as if they were frightened of it and of the dangers that lurk there."[32] Azaryahu quoted from a story in a children's book published on the eighteenth anniversary of the foundation of

[28] Yisrael Pinkas, "Mediterranean Song," *In Our Ancient Sea*, Raananah 1999. [Hebrew].

[29] Nathan Zach, "On the Shores of the Seas," *Different Songs*, Tel Aviv 1974. [Hebrew]; Moshe Dor, "Three Weekday Poems," *Nettle and Metal*, Ramt Gan 1965. [Hebrew]; Moshe Ben Shaul, "Opposite the Openings to the Sea," *Songs 1960–1965*, Jerusalem 1965–6. [Hebrew].

[30] Meir Wieseltier, "Sealed in a Bottle," *Something Optimistic, the Making of Poems*, Tel Aviv 1976. [Hebrew].

[31] Maoz Azaryahu, *Tel Aviv – The Real City*, Sede Boker 2005, pp. 273, 305. [Hebrew].

[32] Hedda Boshes: "Improvised City," *Haaretz*, 24.11.1978. [Hebrew].

Tel Aviv. In the story it was asked, "Why was the first Hebrew city built with its back to the sea?" The reason given was that the founders and builders of the city were frightened of the monsters living in the sea. In fact, the architects of the city failed to pay enough attention to the sea. The main roads run parallel to the sea and do not give onto it; the big hotels obstruct the sea view. Because of the lack of a planning tradition, the planners of the city "ignored the sea, [and that fact] showed that the position of the city on the shores of the Mediterranean had a far-reaching influence on the character of Tel Aviv."[33] Despite the criticism, however, the sea played a decisive role in the mental and cultural geography of Tel Aviv, and an expression of this is the reference to the sea and the seaboard in the iconography of the city. The Zionist outlook that saw Tel Aviv as a haven for the Jews is reflected in the symbol of the city, in the center of which stands a lighthouse. The promenade and the shore as boundaries separating while also joining the city and the sea personify the sea and the city as complementary opposites.[34]

Only recently did Israeli literature open a window on the Mediterranean. A. B. Yehoshua is rightly considered the Mediterranean Israeli author *par excellence*, but the path to the Mediterranean of Amos Oz, who initially did not wish to go there, is also interesting. The young Oz, who was of the school of thought of Micha Yosef Berdichevsky, believed that vital creative powers were crucial for literature, not the local form, which was seen as sentimental and provincial. Later, Oz depicted the Israeli society-in-formation as one with characteristic Mediterranean qualities: warm of heart and temperament, hedonistic, life-loving, and emotional. Israel will continue to develop as a Mediterranean society, he concluded, for better or worse, if its conflict with its neighbors is resolved. He saw Ashdod as the national Mediterranean profile coming into being before his eyes. He looked at the town of Ashdod with resignation, with the sadness of a householder whose dream has evaporated like the dreams of those socialist world reformers, the fathers of the kibbutz.[35] He surprisingly broke forth in 1998 in his book *The Same Sea*, not with a romantic beginning or fanfare, but by describing a sea, olives, and cheese. This poetic novel takes place by the Mediterranean – not in Jerusalem and not in Hulda (Oz's kibbutz), but in Bat Yam and Tel Aviv (and also in Tibet). It is not surprising that critics compared *The Same Sea* to Natan Alterman's *Summer Festival*, which also took place in a Mediterranean city, Jaffa. Among his contemporary Israeli characters, bereft of dreams and living an everyday existence, there are figures who reflect the sea, and there is even a "Mediterranean philosophy." As if all this were not enough, Oz's Mediterranean "repentance" is expressed in a play in the form of a poem-chapter, "Exile and Kingdom,"

[33] Azaryahu, *Tel Aviv – The Real City*, p. 273, 305. [Hebrew].

[34] Michael Feige, "The City which is not White," *Journal of Israeli History – Politics, Society, Culture*, 27, 1 (March 2008), pp. 87–9.3 [Hebrew].

[35] Amos Oz, "A Romance Expert," *Haaretz*, 13.7.1990. [Hebrew]; idem, "And Even if by the Skin of Your Teeth," *Apirion*, 6 (1986–7). [Hebrew].

which suggests a closeness, admirable if late, to Albert Camus, the lyrical prosaist of the Mediterranean.

"With its back to the sea" – that is how the art critic Gideon Ofrat describes the relationship of Israeli art to the sea in general and the Mediterranean in particular. Joseph Zaritsky (1891–1985), the formative modernist painter who is the target of post-Zionist catapults, "stood with his back to the sea and painted the distant hills of Ramat-Gan … and behind him, right below him, was the sea. To go there, yes. To paint it, no!"[36] It was the same with the painter from Jerusalem Arieh Aroch (1908–1974) or Zvi Meirovitch (1911–1974), the painter from Haifa who looked more at the plants of the Carmel Range than at the sea at the foot of the mountains. It is true there was Nahum Guttman (1898–1980), but in general the sea was absent from Israeli painting; a visitor who happened to stop over in Israel would find it hard to believe he is in a country bordering the Mediterranean. There are dark and mysterious surrealist depictions, but not the sea light and not maritime landscapes. The contemporary painters do with Israeli painting what the big hotels in Tel Aviv have done: They block out the sea. Why do they ignore it? "From our very roots, it may be that the Jewish genes, which never liked the sea, recoiled from it … also, the generation of the founding-fathers of Israeli culture was a generation that had lived in little Jewish shtetls far from the seashore … a ghetto-experience too closed in for the Jewish artist coming to the country to adapt to the open sea." One is bound to admit, began Ofrat in his analysis of the historian of Israeli literature Hanan Hever, that Zionist self-realization required land but not sea! However, if the Israeli painters today do not paint the sea, they also ignore the valleys, the mountains, the streets, and the buildings. The door of the studio is locked against the outside world. "Israeli art remains relatively cut off, but it is perhaps the beginning of a long process of Mediterranean colourisation."

Unlike the Israeli writers, poets, and painters who hesitated on the shore uncertain of their identity, the musicians were the first to leap into the Mediterranean. Perhaps the reason is to be found in the sensitive, direct medium, the ear open to the sound of a ceaseless melody. In her article "Israel and the Emergence of the Mediterranean Identity: Expressions of Locality in Music and Literature" (2006), the cultural researcher Alexandra Nocke suggested that the new Mediterranean identity could be a solution to the identity crisis of the Israelis, who had exhausted all the old ideological models that no longer corresponded to the needs, problems, and requirements of Israeli society.[37] Mediterraneanness, as a nonexclusive point of view, is in fact a real and attractive possibility for many elements in the population. The Mediterranean discourse, which was random and fragmentary until the end

[36] Gideon Ofrat, "With the Back to the Sea," *Within a Local Context*, Tel Aviv 2004, p.37. [Hebrew].

[37] Alexandra Nocke, "Israel and the Emergence of Mediterranean Identity: Expressions of Locality in Music and Literature," *Israel Studies*, 11, 1 (2006), pp. 143–173.

of the 1980s, gained impetus in the 1990 and found an echo in cultural practices and in daily life. Because of the geographical proximity of Israel to countries like Greece and Turkey, music was instrumental in bringing together the musical affinities of different ethnic communities, creating a Levantine-global combination, to use the expression of the musician Kobi Oz, who saw Mediterranean music as a synthesis of Tunisia and MTV: that is to say, of the local and universal. Thus, Mediterranean music was a highly effective agent of cultural cohesion. Until the 1980s, the idea did not correspond to the situation: From the 1990s onward, theory and practice have gone together. The fall of the Soviet bloc and the end of the confrontation between East and West, the shift of Europe toward the Mediterranean Basin, and the rise of multiculturalism encouraged regional connections and fostered a multicultural dialogue in Israel. The academic discourse and that in the media gained added validity with the fusion of the ethos with the different affected groups.[38]

For many years, the Mediterranean identity was a neglected option in Israel. The Jewish Israelis had a suspicious and hostile attitude toward the sea (there was no sea in the towns of Eastern Europe or Iraq) perhaps because it was associated with wandering, or perhaps because the Israelis had an ethos of conquering the land. The historian Irad Malkin has an interesting explanation for this. His theory is that whereas the Israelites came out of the desert and settled in the land as in the biblical myth of the exodus from Egypt, in modern times the Jews came to the country via the Mediterranean and settled mainly along the coasts. This change had a demographic significance and political and ideological consequences. Until the 1940s, the existence of the Jews along the coast did not result in territorial ambitions of annexing parts of the biblical heartland. After the conquest of the West Bank in the Six-Day War, there was a strengthening of the consciousness of settling the hills and the inner parts of the country on the part of those on the political right, but the normative "coastal existence" remained as it was and became even stronger. Malkin expects the Mediterranean idea to be important in the future, perhaps without any need to resurrect the past and reinvent it, through the sheer force of reality, through social and cultural circumstances. Israel, after all, is much closer in its way of life to Greece, Italy, and Spain than to countries like Holland, Germany or Poland. Open-air cafés, a bustling nightlife, articles of food like baguettes, croissants, and Tunisian sandwiches, many "taverna" programs on the Israeli television channels, economic and touristic links with the Mediterranean countries, and the acceptance in literary circles of Mediterranean images – all these are the first signs of a Mediterranean culture. In the opinion of many, the Mediterranean option is not a call for ethnic isolation or a return to roots, but a striving for a common cultural platform that would smooth out separate tensions and identities. The Mediterranean ethos is too ancient, important, and central to be yet another reason for ethnic

[38] Irad Malkin, "Israel: Zionism, Religion and Democracy," *Rive – Review of Mediterranean Politics and Culture*, 3 (1997), pp. 29–33.

seclusion, for advancing sectional interests, folkloric tendencies, or sentimental yearnings. Malkin concludes:

> Ever since it was founded, the State of Israel has been faced with the question: should it be European or oriental? Should one create here a "Vienna on the banks of the Yarkon" or should one create a new "Levant," or even choose "Canaanism" and partnership in a "Semitic space"? Today more than ever, there is a need to encourage a cultural process and to clarify Israel's place in the Mediterranean context.
>
> Precisely because it has no strong national ideology, the Mediterranean offers Israel a richly textured cultural orientation, drawing on the extensive Mediterranean and other connections of the people of Israel in the past together with the challenging Mediterranean and international reality of our own day. Moreover, the Mediterranean provides Israel, which is a multicultural society grappling with the ideological consequences of the melting pot, a multicultural model nourished by cross-fertilisation. The Mediterranean is not only a geographical or historical area but also a metaphorical entity with frontiers and a variety of cultures and identities, which came into being through an incessant discourse among them. All these have helped to preserve its unique character. The perpetual interaction between them has created a culture that is basically multicultural.[39]

According to the critic Yoram Bronowski (1948–2001), a reinterpretation of Israel's place in the area is required:

> I am convinced, like many others, that the dream to which Israeli society should be directed, to which it can direct itself, is the most ancient of humanity's dreams – the Mediterranean dream. A sort of Mediterranean Scroll of Independence with Mediterranean inflections rings all the time in my ears: "On the shores of the Mediterranean, the Jewish people arises, etc." I think of the connections and ancient contexts – Phoenicia, Crete, Greece, all maritime countries – and those that came after them. And I dream of Israel as one of the centres of neo-Mediterraneanism, just as it was a centre and one of the sources of the ancient Mediterraneanism.[40]

There has been a notable tendency on the part of many Israelis to develop a strategic policy of supporting a regional culture that permits a dialogue between the peoples of different countries and between the different peoples in the Mediterranean Basin, especially at its eastern end. Many people in Israeli society, following the Oslo Accord of 1993, have begun to call for a strengthening of the peace process in the Middle East between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). These agreements were the first formal mutual recognition between Israelis and Palestinians, regarded as a move toward a resolution of the conflict. The Oslo process was curtailed by the assassination of Israel's prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, and the

[39] Irad Malkin, "General Introduction: The Mediterranean Series," in Shlomo Dov Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, Tel Aviv 2005, pp. 11–19. [Hebrew].

[40] Yoram Bronowski, "In a Mediterranean Context," *Haaretz*, 6.11. 1987. [Hebrew].

eruption of the Palestinian Al-Aqsa intifada in 2000. However, it still remains the first political recognition between the two peoples. A considerable number of Israelis believe that the process initiated in Oslo can be fulfilled through an expansion of the cultural links between the states of the Mediterranean Basin and through a removal of the barriers between peoples.

The Mediterranean option is put forward not only as a cultural proposition, but as strategic geopolitical aspiration in its own right. Have the intensification of the Israeli occupation and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism made Mediterraneanism redundant?

An early proponent of the Mediterranean Basin as the proper sphere for Israel to relate to was Abba Eban (1915–2002), the first Israeli minister of foreign affairs. Already in 1952 he discerned two distinct advantages in the Mediterranean option: the chance of breaking Israel's political and cultural isolation (for in the Muslim and Arab Middle East, Israel was the exception), and the exploitation of the commercial and cultural connections that Israel had with most of the countries of the Mediterranean Basin:

> If the State of Israel seeks to find its own way within the area as a whole, if it wants to find itself a world that would be more fitting for the expression of its political relationships and cultural affinities, I think the concept "Mediterranean" would be the most suitable: Israel, not as a Middle Eastern country but as a Mediterranean country. The Mediterranean is the only channel of intercourse between Israel and the rest of the world. All Israel's trade and connections pass through that sea. If this is true as a geographical fact, it is all the more true from a historical and cultural point of view.[41]

The first sign of a partnership between Europe and the Mediterranean countries could be seen in the Barcelona Conference held on November 27, 1995, which was attended, apart from the fifteen countries of the European Union, by twelve countries of the Mediterranean Basin, including Israel. From 1989 onward, with the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a considerable acceleration of the process, for at that time the European Union began to direct its efforts southward toward the countries of the Maghreb and the Mediterranean in accordance with models whose success had already been proved in Eastern Europe. Toward the end of 1994, an explicit policy began to be formed of encouraging links between Europe and the Mediterranean countries. The "Barcelona process" had three main objectives: a political and security partnership that would create an area of peace, democracy, and human rights; an economic partnership that would create an area of free trade; and a cultural and social partnership that would develop a civil society and encourage relations between the countries of the European Union and the Mediterranean partners, as well as between the countries of the Union themselves. The main obstacle to a partnership between Europe and the Mediterranean countries was the conflict in the Middle East. The peace

[41] Abba Eban, "Israel in the Mediterranean Narrative," *Molad*, 49, 4–5 (1952), p. 7. [Hebrew].

process in the Middle East in the 1990s permitted the implementation of the first steps of a new Mediterranean policy, including the invitation of Israel to regional forums, a large majority of whose participants were from Arab countries. Although the Al-Aqsa intifada and the Second Lebanese War slowed down many of these developments, Israel, like the European Union, still has a strong interest in promoting political and economic stability in the area and stopping fundamentalism.[42] Many people think the Mediterranean option would contribute to this. The stirrings up of a "Spring of the Nations" that have begun all over the Arab world in early 2011 have not yet shown what direction they will take. These events may result in an Islamic-fundamentalist future for the states involved, or they may be resolved in more liberal-democratic ways. If they take the latter course, prospects are bright for a peaceful coexistence between the peoples and nations – not only their governments – of the Mediterranean Basin, including Israel.

JACQUELINE KAHANOFF: THE FIRST LADY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Up until the past few years, the Mediterranean option had almost disappeared from the debate surrounding Israelism. Hebrew literary historiographies, which are widely considered to be exercises in canonization, defined the boundaries of a virtual "republic of letters," a formulation that contributed greatly to the shaping of Israeli society. The writers, poets, and essayists within this virtual territory were given their due of attention, and those who were excluded from it were regarded as "Others." The voice of many of these "Others" – such as Arabs and Israeli Jews of oriental descent – was not heard directly but only via the citizens of the said "republic."[43] The citizens spoke, and the "Others" were heard. The Mediterraneans, however, were not even recognized as "Others," but were instead emarginated from the discourse altogether.[44] Any dominant or hegemonic culture invariably generates some form of "Other" as a necessary contrast or opposition by which it defines itself. It also results in a disappearance or an absence. A classic example of this historiographical absence is the author and essayist Jacqueline Kahanoff and the Mediterranean option.[45]

[42] Eran Lerman, *The Mediterranean Idea: Envisioning a Brighter Future for All the Peoples of the Mediterranean*, Tel Aviv 2007.

[43] The Israeli literary canon was largely determined by the historiography of two of the most influential scholars of modern Israeli literature: Gershon Shaked and Dan Miron. Arabs as well as Israeli Jews from oriental and Mediterranean countries were not made a part of this canon.

[44] See Homi K. Bhabha, "The Other Question: Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism," in *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*, eds., Russell Ferguson et al., Cambridge, MA, 1990, pp. 71–88.

[45] Many of the most prominent of Kahanoff's ideas can be found in the collection of her works, *Beyn shney olamot* (Between Two Worlds), ed. David Ohana, Jerusalem 2005. [Hebrew]. All translations from Hebrew are mine.

Kahanoff's writings in many ways revolved around Nietzsche's poignant question, which was also Albert Camus' point of departure: "Where can I feel at home?" Modern man is cast out of the world: Conscious of his frailty, he is homeless in his universe. This modern feeling is quite different from the outlook of the ancient Greeks or of Christian theology, where man was anchored in the Greek cosmos or the Christian *civitas dei* (city of God). The reversal of this situation causes mankind, the "lord of creation" in the Graeco-Christian world, to find himself in the position of being "not at home" or "being outside," as Heidegger expressed it. Martin Buber described the alienated individual as one living "in the world as in an open field under the vault of heaven, and sometimes unable to find even four pegs to set up his tent."[46] Kahanoff's biographical distress did not remain unresolved, but found a solution in the Mediterranean option she proposed to an Israeli society still in the process of formation.

Kahanoff appears to have played an active role in the debate on Israel's Mediterranean identity. As a precursor or as an intellectual personage, she may still become a yardstick for understanding the different forms of identity in Israel's culture-in-the-making, of questions of East and West and the intermediate areas, and of the place of Israel in the Mediterranean geocultural space. Kahanoff's identification with Israel's Mediterranean image is so self-evident that she has been called "the harbinger of the Mediterranean spirit," "the First Lady of the Mediterranean," and "the representative of the Mediterranean idea."[47]

The revival of interest in the person and writings of Kahanoff began in the 1990s with articles and essays that came out of a symposium at the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem dedicated to the writer and her works. This interest took place simultaneously with a peace-oriented discourse concerning Israel's Mediterranean option. Kahanoff's writings did not emerge out of a void, but rather came out of a larger cultural and biographical context. Until the age of twenty-four, she had lived in the British colonial society in Egypt. In her own words: "It can be said with some certainty that the Egyptian-born Jews of my generation felt deeply ambivalent about belonging or not belonging."[48] She was born as Jacqueline Shochat in Cairo in 1917. Her father descended from a well-established family of Iraqi merchants and her mother was of Tunisian origin. Jacqueline grew up in an upper-class Jewish community whose cosmopolitan makeup permitted studies in French, writing in English, and conversations in Arabic. Her life in this society of multiple identities gave her the vision

[46] Martin Buber, *Pnei Aadam*, Jerusalem 1966, p. 14. [Hebrew].

[47] Yair Sheleg. "Nesihat halevant" (The Levant Princess), *Kol Ha'Ir*, March 15, 1996. [Hebrew]; Nurit Barezki, "Ha giveret ha rishona shel ha yamtichoniut" (The First Lady of Mediterraneanism), *Maariv*, 15.3. 1996. [Hebrew]; Yoram Bronowski, "Ha levantinim" (The Levantines), *Haaretz*, 5.4. 1996. [Hebrew].

[48] Jacqueline Kahanoff, "Edmond Jabès oh Sefer Hasheelot" (Edmond Jabès or *Livre de questions*), *Davar*, 30.4.1965. [Hebrew]; republished in *Beyn shney olamot* (Between Two Worlds), p. 33.

of a homeland without boundaries in which the individual was, as David Hollinger says in a different context, "simultaneously a member of several different communities."[49]

Kahanoff grew up with people like herself, amidst a medley of religions, peoples, and cultures "in an Egypt with a British High Commissioner and a Turkish aristocracy and a Jewish bourgeoisie and Italian merchants and Sudanese servants and Greek intellectuals and French culture and Egyptian nationality."[50] As she wrote in her short autobiographical essay "A Train of Waves," by the time of her first visit to Palestine in 1937, she felt a stranger to the indigenous society and the inward-looking Jewish community: "The arrogance of the guides and of most of the people who showed us their kibbutzim, their inability to suppose that their achievements would speak for themselves, the superior tone they always adopted when making comparisons with other peoples – all this made us laugh, but was also irritating."[51] Silvie, her companion on the journey (who is referred to in this essay only by her first name), added that the Hebrew children had a distorted view of things and narrow horizons: "They all said exactly the same things. It was so boring!"[52] This first encounter was a preparatory negative experience for the young Kahanoff, who already in her youth in Egypt loathed parochial nationalism.[53]

At the age of twenty-four she emigrated to the United States and began to study journalism and literature at Columbia University in New York. Her stay in the Columbia milieu of immigrants, exiles, and intellectuals gave birth to a first novel, *Jacob's Ladder*,[54] and short autobiographical novellas that won her prizes, including one given by *The Atlantic Monthly*.[55] In her travels in the New World, it is clear that she felt alien to the homogeneity brought about by American capitalism and her stories intended to introduce some color into the one-dimensional landscape.

In the first story she wrote outside Egypt, "Cairo Wedding,"[56] she crossed all the boundaries between the generations, between classes, between the sexes, and between western and eastern traditions. After her later immigration to Israel, Kahanoff offered as an answer to the "provinciality" and "ethnic nationalism" she had already encountered in her earlier visit to Palestine the

[49] David Hollinger, *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism*, New York 1996, p. 86.

[50] Kahanoff, "Shoval Galim" (A Train of Waves), in *Me-Mizrach Shemesh* (From East the Sun), ed., Aharon Amir, Tel Aviv 1978, p. 150. [Hebrew].

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] For a useful elaboration of Kahanoff's background in Egypt, see Alcalay Ammiel, *After Jews and Arabs: Remaking Levantine Culture*, Minneapolis, IN 1993, pp. 71–72.

[54] The novel won the Houghton Mifflin Fellowship Award.

[55] Jacqueline Shohet, "Such is Rachel," *The Atlantic Monthly* (October 1946), pp. 113–116. The story won second place in the 'Atlantic First' competition.

[56] Shohet, "Cairo Wedding," *Tomorrow* (July 1945), pp. 19–23. Also in Jacqueline Kahanoff, *Mongrels or Marvels: The Levantine Writings of Jacqueline Shohet Kahanoff*, eds., Deborah Anne Starr and Sasson Somekh, Stanford 2011.

formulation of a Levantine model. This model was a symbiosis of cultures or a "Levantine cosmopolitanism."[57] In 1946 she returned to Egypt, but three years later she traveled with her sister to Paris. In 1954 she immigrated to Israel, spent two years in an immigrant absorption center in Beersheva, and then went to live in Bat Yam, where Israeli intellectuals often gathered in the living room of her home. Her essays were published in various journals in Israel, especially in *Keshet* under the editorship of Aharon Amir, who also translated her English writings into Hebrew and edited the only collection of essays published in her lifetime, *Me-Mizrach Shemesh* (From East the Sun). She passed away in 1979, a year after the collection was published. Other collections of her essays have since been published: in Hebrew, *Between Two Worlds* (2005), and in English, *Mongrels or Marvels: The Levantine Writings of Jacqueline Shohet Kahanoff* (2011).

Thirty years after her first visit to Palestine, in the series "Writers Interview Themselves," Kahanoff gave her own understanding of the expression "Levantine": "I think Israelis of European origin give the term 'Levantine' the demeaning significance it is given in Europe. Agents of the colonial powers tended to idealize the hapless native and deny the value of the Levantine … but there is no reason why we in Israel should *ipso facto* accept this European assessment of the Levantine any more than we accept its assessment of the Jew." In her view, Israelis had an "added value" because of the multicultural experience they had accumulated: "We have returned to our roots here in the Levant after we have gained – and at what a price! – an abundance of experience throughout the whole world: historical, political, scientific, social experience. And we have adapted to the modern world without losing our specific identity. We have activated something latent on the strength of the Levantine experience."[58]

Ten years after writing this and two years before her death, Kahanoff, reviewing Fausta Cialente's book, *The Levantines*, described the heroine of the book, Daniela, as "an illegitimate child of mixed Greek-Jewish-Italian origins, who described herself as *senza luogo* which, translated literally, means 'placeless.'" According to Kahanoff, this lack of national identification – while simultaneously belonging to many places – left its mark on the members of the minorities in the Mediterranean region. The stages of her life and the cultural sources from which she drew, enriched Kahanoff's identity and writings, and gave her a refreshing, critical perspective, full of vitality, on Israeli society in its initial decades.

It is interesting to consider the degree to which Kahanoff's early views on Mediterranean culture – one which she saw as a "cross-influence" and "cross-mutation" of East and West that formed a "dynamic unity" – resemble those

[57] See Debora Ann Starr, "Levantine Ambivalences: Egyptian Jewish Identities in Contemporary Literature," Dissertation submitted to University of Michigan, 2000.

[58] Kahanoff, "Mimitzrayim le kahn" (From Egypt to Here), *Maariv*, 4.10.1967. [Hebrew].

of the historian Joshua Prawer. In his article, "Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Mediterranean Basin," Prawer described Mediterranean culture as a symbiosis of the cultures formed on the shores of the Mediterranean:

> Mediterranean culture is a synthesis or confection of religions and cultures that were formed on the shores of the sea or close to them, and that influenced each other until there was a kind of symbiosis, a cohabitation, a sometimes uncomfortable but always productive symbiosis of these cultures.[59]

Kahanoff described Israel's Mediterranean option in similar symbiotic terms:

> Israel's situation is unique, because this process of cross-influence and cross-mutation takes place in the same country, which is Levantine with regard to its geographical position between East and West, and because of the mixture of its population. For that reason, it can fuse the two main elements in its composition into a dynamic and productive unity, like the outstanding Levantine cultures of the past – Byzantium and Islam – which were also a fusion of inhabitants and cultures, as western Europe also was in its formative period.[60]

JUDAISM, FEMINISM, CULTURE

In the Mediterranean option that Kahanoff offered Israeli society, Judaism had a special place. In her review of *Quatre lectures talmudiques* by the French-Jewish thinker Emmanuel Lévinas many years before he became well-known in Israel, Kahanoff observed that "many Jews live, culturally speaking, in a sort of cultural no-man's land in Israel and outside." These Israelis/Jews were part of western culture, and at the same time they were not religious:

> Neither the Orthodox culture, nor the narrow Zionist culture disseminated by our institutions, nor that of the native Sabras, which is too introverted – none of these provide a real answer to the modern Jew's sense of loss, to his feeling of alarm at being cut off.[61]

Lévinas addressed himself to this question, thought Kahanoff, first of all because he knew this sense of loss. In his opinion, a knowledge of the continuity of the Jewish cultural tradition can in itself open up a channel of communication between traditional Israel and modern Israel, between Jewish culture and the culture of the West.[62] Kahanoff's review was structured as a dialogue with an Israeli Air Force pilot, a Sabra (meaning a native Israeli) to whom Jewish culture was alien. In their discussion of Lévinas's opening essay, "The

[59] Joshua Prawer, "Yehudim, Notzrim ve Muslemim sviv hayam hatichon" (Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Mediterranean Area), *Pe'amim*, 45 (1990), pp. 5–10. [Hebrew].

[60] Kahanoff, "Shachor al gabey lavan" (Black on White), *Me-Mizrach Shemesh* (From East the Sun), p. 53. [Hebrew].

[61] Kahanoff, "Ha Talmud keh etgar hai" (The Talmud as a Living Challenge), *Haaretz*, 13.9.1968. [Hebrew]. Republished in *Beyn shney olamot* (Between Two Worlds), pp. 140–145.

[62] Emmanuel Lévinas, *Quatres Lectures Talmudiques*, Paris 1968.

Promised Land or the Permitted Land," whose subject was the tractate *Sotah*, Kahanoff and the pilot discovered that although the essay was written in 1966, its subject – the debate over Greater Israel – was still relevant.

Kahanoff's conclusion on reading Lévinas's essay was an acknowledgment of the importance of human "engagement" and an understanding that absolute moral purity in any political action involves a certain violence. She commented on Lévinas's view that the Bible and the Talmud are not merely a collection of myths, but have a core of universal significance. In Kahanoff's opinion, the greatness of Lévinas is shown by his capacity to make the Talmud relevant at the present day, by the excellence of his modern presentation of Talmudic wisdom and by the parallels he drew between this wisdom and contemporary problems. He claimed that fidelity to a Jewish culture closed to dialogue and to contrast had condemned the Jews of the ghetto to physical extermination, just as assimilation into the host culture and complete identification with it had condemned them to spiritual annihilation. Only an independent Jewish political and cultural existence, Lévinas averred, would permit the birth of what he called a "post-Christian Judaism."

Zionism, according to Lévinas in Kahanoff's interpretation, makes possible the simultaneous existence of "the Jew" (belief in revelation) and "the Greek" (rational understanding). Consequently, the task of the universities in Israel is to give a new presentation of Jewish wisdom in the sphere of polemics and thus serve as a modern intellectual center. The drama of our existence, said Kahanoff, is not taking place now in the context of the western Christian world ("post-Christian Judaism"), but in the context of the eastern Muslim world – "post-Islamic Judaism," as she called it. In her opinion, many Jews, including Lévinas, failed to reckon with the fact that the rebirth of Israel had shaken the Islamic world to its foundations. She therefore thought that new means had to be created to challenge the Islamic world and to create a connection with it through an open debate on its tradition. The dispute between the Israelis/Jews and their neighbors had generally been conducted in terms of western national and ideological concepts that were unsuitable to the mentality of the Arabs/Muslims. Kahanoff suggested that a solution to the present confrontation might be found if the Israelis brought the discussion back to the conceptual framework of the region.

An example of a conceptual-spatial framework of this kind is provided by her essay "On Jacob." There Kahanoff dealt with the Israeli-Arab dispute at the end of the Six-Day War through the medium of the Bible and the interrelationship of myth and history: "Again, like many, many Jews in Israel, I often turned to the Bible during these days of June and afterwards.... This prayer or belief was almost the same as absolute faith in the I.D.F."[63] The Bible invaded history, the past was fused with the present, prayer and military might intermingled. "We found a way to go from the bygone historical time to the temporality of myth. After this victory, which was quite extraordinary, myth

[63] Kahanoff, "Al Yaakov" (On Jacob), in *Me-Mizrach Shemesh*, p.194.

again superseded history."[64] Following the distinction formulated by Yonina Gerber-Talmon between "historical time" and "mythical time," Kahanoff felt that history was repeating itself and that the historical events taking place in the present resembled the biblical mythical models. Although historical events are unique and unrepeatable, mythical patterns recur through an inner law.[65] Kahanoff turned to the Bible to find an allegorical answer to the worrying questions concerning the territories that had now been conquered, and to the question of Israel's changing identity and its Jewish origins. She turned to the biblical figure of Jacob:

> To look for new answers, or perhaps to ask new questions in a period in which myth once again overflowed into historical, finite, limited time. It was impossible not to think of Jacob, who struggled with his brother Esau as we struggle with our brethren/enemies over the same rights to the same land.[66]

Jacob personifies the dilemma of the choice between force and morality, a dilemma that according to Kahanoff lies at the heart of the collective identity of the Jewish people returning to their land. She examined the approaches of the Christian religion and the Islamic religion to the story of Jacob. Whereas in the Christian tradition there is some theological legitimization of Jacob's deception, the Muslims/Arabs borrowed the Christian figure of Jacob the deceiver and applied it to modern Israel. To the dual claim of the Arabs and Israelis that the Israelis are alien to the region, Kahanoff replied: "If we see ourselves as wholly European here, others will see us, and do indeed see us, as wholly alien, and in that case the common heritage we struggle over is in fact denied."[67]

The mythical rivalry of Jacob and Esau has in our days become a political-historical dispute. In the mythical story, the brothers are twins born to the same mother, and the choice is between the brotherhood of these two rival brothers and the possibility that one of them will do to his brother what Cain did to Abel. As was her custom, Kahanoff added an original feminist perspective: Although Rebecca loved both her sons, she knew that their characters were different: "And so perhaps the time came when, after the men had had their say, the mothers rose to speak, so that the sons would know that they were brothers to each other, contending, rival brothers, but within the limits set by nature and culture."[68]

Kahanoff examined the interrelationship of biblical myth and the political history of the state of Israel from the Six-Day War in 1967 to Anwar Sadat's visit to Israel in 1978. In her essay "My Brother Ishmael," she saw the historic decision of the Egyptian leader as an act of more than political significance, one

[64] Ibid, 195.
[65] See Yonina Garber-Talmon, "Hazman ba mitos ha primitivi" (The Concept of Time in Primitive Myths), *Iyyun*, 2, 4 (1951), pp. 201–14. [Hebrew].
[66] Kahanoff, "Al Yaakov" (On Jacob), p. 197.
[67] Ibid, p. 207.
[68] Ibid, p. 208.

that touched on mythological themes: the struggle of Isaac and Ishmael over the claim to the title of "son of Abraham." An ancient Semitic myth common to Jews and Arabs about a father ready to sacrifice his own flesh and blood to his God now divides the Arabs and Israelis. Kahanoff interpreted Sadat's message on his arrival in Jerusalem as a revolutionary proposal for a mutual recognition between the sons of Isaac and Ishmael. The sons would live side by side, and each would recognize his brother's legitimacy and birthright. Here she once again indicated that the sources of the political dispute in the region are to be found in the Semitic identity; they have as much to do with theology as with politics. The Mediterranean geopolitical space is ensnared in the patriarchal tradition of the single, exclusive heritage of Abraham's legal son.

According to Kahanoff, the appearance of Zionism confronted the Muslims with the question of the right of Abraham's son to claim and reconquer his inheritance. This sentiment was complicated by the fact that the Islamic countries gave refuge to the Jews from the time of the Inquisition and up to World War II. The rebirth of Abraham's estranged son and his return as a refugee from the concentration camps was seen as a challenge to the Islamic belief that Ishmael was the sole heir. Although the Muslim national opposition is modern, its roots are ancient and steeped in mythology and in the theology of rivalry. Both national movements, the Jewish and the Arab, came into being at roughly the same time. One was supported by Europe, and the other rose up against European colonialist rule. The ancient myth of Ishmael and Isaac emerged once again in the age of nationalism.

Ishmael was seen by the Palestinian Arabs as representing the exclusive heir to the country – Ishmael dispossessed of his rights. It is fascinating to see to what degree symbolism taken from the Patriarchs contributed, according to Kahanoff, to the present-day rejection of the "Other" – the other son. For Kahanoff, Sadat was the first Muslim Arab leader to recognize the right of "Isaac" to exist in Israel, after years of denial. This position differed radically from that of Arab nationalism and of Islam. The Israelis were now no longer seen as foreign invaders, but as one of the legitimate sons. It was not by chance that Sadat chose to come to Israel on the festival of Id-el-Adha, commemorating Abraham's readiness to sacrifice Isaac; however, this time the father proposed *himself* as the sacrifice in order to save the lives of his sons. In this, Sadat specifically countered the patriarchal tradition that only one son can be heir. The Egyptian leader thus made a radical break with this patriarchal tradition in asserting that all the sons were rightful heirs, and by way of compensation, Kahanoff added that "the daughters and mothers also had a legitimate claim."[69] One should remember that Sadat came from the patriarchal Muslim societies, and his revolutionary breakthrough in the political arena stands out even more in light of the prevailing conservatism.

Kahanoff's "post-Islamic Judaism" is also reflected in her feminist approach and her openness to eastern cultures. These three elements bear witness to a

[69] Kahanoff, "Akhi Ishmael" (My Brother Ishmael), *Aat* (1978), p. 27 (in Hebrew).

self-confidence that permits openness, curiosity, and dialogue – the Levantine model, which does not efface itself before the hegemonic or the "Other." The source of her understanding of the cultural context of the Jewish position, the feminist position, or the oriental position is her refusal to accept the radical stance of "Let justice be done though the heavens fall!"

According to the Israeli author Ronit Matalon, for whom Kahanoff served as a model, the feminine identity in Levantine society was "the working tool by means of which Kahanoff examined a world of concepts, political attitudes and sentiments."[70] Kahanoff, who in her youth experienced the life of the Egyptian-Jewish "aristocracy," was already then contemptuous of the leisure culture of the moneyed classes that decreed an inferior, physical, and functional role for women in a society managed by men. The life of women was circumscribed by "marriage, childbirth, infidelity and perhaps divorce."[71] Despite her criticism of the "inner colonialism" responsible for the European attitude dominant in Israeli society in its dealings with the immigrants from the Islamic countries, in Israel Kahanoff identified "the one country in which there has taken place, in less than twenty years, an enormous permutation in the status of oriental women, when they are Jewish." Already in monarchical Egypt in the 1920s and 1930s, Kahanoff had adopted this feminist position, which found intellectual expression in her late essays.

In her article, "The Tragedy of Women in the East," the religious and political leadership of Egypt was revealed as fostering a regime of slavery and oppression of women. Operations on little girls to prevent sexual enjoyment, the public consummation of marriage, the encouragement of polygamy, the widespread use of hashish among men, and so on – all this bore witness to the patriarchal nature of Egyptian society, which was deeply entrenched in Islam.[72] Kahanoff drew attention to the status of women as objects of pleasure and machines for bearing children, criticized the conditioning that condemned women to a life of constant fear, and described the heavy price they had to pay with regard to their family and society.

Kahanoff herself admitted that she had "very often used the writing of a book review as a pretext for writing about the position of women in that society."[73] Examples of this can be found on two separate occasions when Kahanoff enthusiastically praised two Frenchwomen famous for their feminist activities. In her review of Françoise Sagan's *Aimez-vous Brahms?* the heroine Paula is described as "a vibrant figure, a modern woman, free, not dependent."[74] The inner pattern of the book is seen as a wavering between

[70] Ronit Matalon, "Tza'ar kilayon ha optziot" (The Pain of Lost Options), *Haaretz*, 4.3.1994. [Hebrew].

[71] Kahanoff, "Eropa merahok" (Europe from Afar), in *Me-Mizrach Shemesh* (From East the Sun), p. 27. [Hebrew].

[72] Kahanoff, "Hatragedia shel haisha bamizrah" (The Tragedy of Woman in the East), *Maariv*, 30.7. 1965. [Hebrew].

[73] Kahanoff, "Mimitzrayim le kahn" (From Egypt to Here), *Maariv*, 4.11.1967.

[74] Kahanoff, "Ha'im at ohevet eht Sagahn?" (Do you like Sagan?), *Maariv*, 23.10.1956. [Hebrew].

two factors: protection of norms created by selfish men, and "the whisper and echo of the liberation of woman." Her article "The Great Couple in French Literature" was unique by virtue of her treatment of the writings of Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir on a basis of equality. The two of them "entered into the contemporary battlefield with courage and generosity of spirit, and at the same time preserved their image as human beings."[75] They raised their voices on behalf of those in need of freedom, justice, and compassion, values from which the modern world keeps its distance – these are outmoded ideas in comparison with ideology, technology, and efficiency. De Beauvoir's "road to liberty" was for Kahanoff the path of a woman fighting for her freedom in a patriarchal world.

Did Kahanoff herself practice what she preached to other women? One of her friends thinks that "all her life she entered into one framework in order to escape from another. Her tragedy was that she lived in the prefeminist generation, a generation in which economic dependence on men solved what can be solved today by a checkbook."[76] Matalon sees Kahanoff as a new type of individual, an inhabitant of the world at large who does not live in continual disapproval of the human landscape and environment. In these respects, "Kahanoff was first and foremost a writer, and only afterwards a feminist publicist."[77] Dolly Benhabib was more grudging in her account of Kahanoff's feminism, which she felt to be selective, and was critical of the following observation by Kahanoff, written after a visit to the occupied territories: "I once observed that it was a hopeful sign that women's skirts had got shorter in East Jerusalem, so that it is now difficult to distinguish one girl from another by her style of dress."[78] Benhabib saw the shortened skirts as a sign of a cultural change among oppressed Arab women similar to the one that once took place among Israeli oriental women during the process of "internal colonialism" in Israel.[79] They had exploited the chance of modernity that Israeli society offered them. According to Benhabib, Kahanoff's blindness to the situation of the Arab women laboring under the dual burden of military occupation and internal colonialism reveals the limits of the vision of the Israeli national collective, although Kahanoff did show sensitivity toward women immigrants and the new immigrants from the Islamic countries who were "headless," or in other words no longer had the Jewish Levantine leadership. Kahanoff was a great believer in modernity. In her opinion, it would liberate both the oriental

[75] Kahanoff, "Hazug ha gadol shel hasifrut ha tzarfatit" (The Great Couple in French Literature), *Maariv*, 17.3.1967. [Hebrew]. Republished in *Beyn shney olamot* (Between Two Worlds), p. 232.

[76] Matalon, "Telusha mi ha-mizrah" (Detached from the East), *Haaretz*, 1.8.1986. [Hebrew].

[77] Matalon, "Tza'ar kilayon ha optziot."

[78] Kahanoff, "Im shiva lamizrah" (Upon Return to the East), in *Me-Mizrach Shemesh* (From East the Sun), p. 74. [Hebrew].

[79] Dolly Benhabib, "Hatzaiyot ha nashim hitkatzru" (Skirts Are Shorter Now: Comments on Levantine Female Identity in the Writings of Jacqueline Kahanoff), *Theory and Criticism: An Israeli Forum*, 5 (1994) pp. 159–64. [Hebrew].

women in Israel and the Palestinian women in the occupied territories, "the objects of colonization," as Benhabib called them.

Although Kahanoff's education and formal culture were European, the environment in which she was born was not, and the first sounds she remembered were those of the muezzin.[80] The classical music in the concert halls did not move her like the sound of the muezzin at sunset. Her ears were always attuned to oriental music, and a long time had to pass before she could get a feeling for western music and appreciate it. It was hard for her to grasp the complex western musical structures, but the endless variations of oriental music, "which drive most western people crazy," gave her a sense of elevation. In her article, "Oriental Music in Israel," Kahanoff threw some light on her cultural and musical roots in the Levant, and related that in her first years in Israel she used to travel to the Mimouna festival in order to listen to the old people playing the oud. She knew that thousands of people living in Israel felt the same way as she did and were more receptive to the East than to the West.

Oriental music in Israel – prophesied Kahanoff in 1977 – "is likely to prevent the blocking and obstruction of the channels of communication which bind together elements in the population common to us and our neighbours and even our enemies. The language of music at least does not divide as do words, politics, and ideology."[81] Almost thirty years before the process took on flesh and blood in Israeli society, she understood that oriental music in Israel, which "developed in a sort of ghetto," "is being renewed on various paths far from the high road of the official culture." True to her Levantine outlook, Kahanoff approved of a meeting of cultures, for "it is a fact that these cultures intermingle, and it is almost impossible to preserve a tradition in its purity, especially when people of different cultural regions meet and mix."[82]

KAHANOFF, CAMUS, AND THE MEDITERRANEAN OPTION IN ISRAEL

The public discussion of the Mediterranean identity of Israeli society began in 1995 with the founding of the "Forum for Mediterranean Cultures" at the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem. In the heat of this discussion, parallels were made between Jacqueline Kahanoff and Albert Camus. In his article "False Mediterranean Harbour," the essayist Meron Benvenisti compared Kahanoff – to whom the opening evening of the forum was devoted – with Camus, and quoted from Kahanoff's works and from "the nice but worthless

[80] Kahanoff, "Muzika mizrahit be yisrael" (Oriental Music in Israel), *Moznaim*, 37, 3–4 (1973), pp. 217–221. [Hebrew]. Republished in *Beyn shney olamot* (Between Two Worlds), pp. 175–183.

[81] Ibid, pp. 176–177.

[82] Ibid, p.220.

writings of the young *pied noir* on Mediterraneanness."[83] Benvenisti saw the Mediterranean option as an escape from the Middle East.

Benvenisti said that Camus and Kahanoff made us see the essential point: The promotion of a "Mediterranean culture" is an escape from the true option, which the mature Camus advocated and fought for, and whose failure broke his heart. This true option was the possibility that the various communities in Algeria could coexist and establish cultural links between them, the hope that cross-fertilization, intimate coexistence, and a sense of belonging to the common homeland would prove stronger than militant tribalism and seclusion in national ghettos. The conclusion Benvenisti drew from this analogy was clear: despair of the possibility of coexistence and of escape to a purely cultural form of cross-fertilization. On a deep level, he acknowledged that those who, in the deterministic philosophy of Carl Schmitt's school, postulated an eternal confrontation between "friend" and "foe" were correct. Benvenisti claimed that under the pretext of "reverting to the original, regional basis," an attempt had been made by intellectuals, writers, and artists to fabricate a cultural approach that was detached, unrealistic, and cut off from the local life and culture – an attempt, in short, to see value in Levantinism. In his opinion, the choice of Kahanoff by the academic director of "The Forum for Mediterranean Culture" was no accident:

> A forgotten Egyptian-Jewish writer, Jacqueline Kahanoff, is being touted as a model personage "who was ahead of her time." The atmosphere of Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*, which celebrated the life of a "cosmopolitan community" that moved in its own circles among a sea of children with which it had no social or cultural connection, and whose whole identity was borrowed, has become a source of inspiration for the new Israeli cultural identity.[84]

The literary critic Nissim Calderon saw points of similarity between Kahanoff's Mediterranean approach and that of Camus. Both, he says, see a real possibility of a multiplicity of cultures, and for that reason the Israelis would do well to return to Kahanoff and Camus, as these two authors give an exact account of cultural pluralism.[85] Camus belonged to a minority group in Algeria, just as Kahanoff belonged to a minority group in Egypt. The Jews in Egypt lived in different conditions from those of the million French nationals in Algeria, but at the same time a critical distance was common to both Kahanoff and Camus. Kahanoff called this distance "Levantine" and Camus called it "Mediterranean." In his article "A Trip in the Mediterranean," Calderon explained that in the places where Kahanoff and Camus lived, movement was

[83] Meron Benvenisti, "Namal yam tichoni kozev" (False Mediterranean Harbour), *Haaretz*, 21.3.1996. [Hebrew].

[84] Ibid.

[85] Nissim Calderon, "Tiyul ba yam hatichon" (A Trip in the Mediterranean), *Haaretz*, 17.5.1996. [Hebrew].

a necessity. Immigrants traveled from place to place in the Mediterranean, intellectuals excelled in "trading facts." Thus, Kahanoff's and Camus' method was distinguished by a cultural pluralism, not a relativism in which all is permitted. Neither of them made an idealization of the place they came from: They experienced in person the contradictions that the Mediterranean region contains. Who but them is able to personify the idea of cultural pluralism?

An Israeli poet and translator that saw a connection between Kahanoff and Camus was Aharon Amir. His journal *Keshet* was her main outlet, although she also published in the literary sections of newspapers and monthlies in Israel and the United States. In his introduction to the book *Me-Mizrach Shemesh* (From East the Sun), the first collection of her essays, Amir wrote:

> Jacqueline Kahanoff, essayist, writer, and critic, was in the cultural landscape of our country the outstanding representative of the "generation of the Levantines" at its best, that colourful cosmopolitan stratum of the Mediterranean intelligentsia which perhaps began more than two and a half millennia ago – in Canaan, over the sea, and in Greece, over the sea – and which we are perhaps returning to in our time. This stratum is one of which pluralism is the heart and soul, for which openness and tolerance are the elixir of life, for whom bridging and compromise, assimilation and fertilization are perhaps a mission, a decree of fate or an existential command.[86]

It was the readers of *Keshet* that began to develop the myth of Kahanoff, whose personal, expressive writing was a great novelty. Amir saw in it something oriental and ultrarefined, expressed in a western intellectual idiom better than that of the "westerners" who came out of the European *shtetl*. Together with that, she possessed sensitivity, cultural broadmindedness, and human tenderness. She had a yearning to identify with the Israeli experience and at the same time kept her oriental identity card. After more than three decades, when Kahanoff had become an inalienable asset of Israeli culture, Amir pointed out that "her pent-up but intense aspiration to a cultural, human, social roof over her head in this country"[87] had finally been realized. In addition to Kahanoff, Amir also translated Camus. In the mid-1950s, Amir helped to set up the "Tsohar" publishing house. By this means he sought to change the literary order of priorities in the country, to diminish the influence of the Anglo-Saxon world on Israeli culture, and to bring the reader closer to the Mediterranean Basin.

Amir saw the Mediterranean as the arena of conflicts, hostility, and armadas, but also as a sea of pleasantness. He seized on Camus as someone who perceived the fanaticism that existed in the Mediterranean countries, but also

[86] Aharon Amir, Introduction, *Me-Mizrach Shemesh* (From East the Sun), pp.7–8. [Hebrew].

[87] Aharon Amir, "Havtacha im shachar ha maftzia al ha nilus" (The Promise of Dawn Rising on the Nile), *Haaretz*, 5.4.1996. [Hebrew].

Amir wrote a poem entitled "Two Sisters" about Jacqueline Kahanoff and her sister, published April 1979, a week after Jacqueline passed away. See also Josett Damad, "Remembering Jacqueline," a lecture given at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, March 17, 1996.

sought the "sense of proportion" of ancient Greece and tried to find a balance between religious differences, ethnic tensions, and national confrontations.[88] According to the Israeli author Sami Michael, Camus was the product of the Mediterranean as a sea of escape: of the despairing, of poor Frenchmen who emigrated to Algeria in the nineteenth century in order to find redemption. "The Mediterranean region produced Moses, Mohammed, and Jesus, who failed to make peace in their area. It is a sea of wars and conquests more than a sea of peace and trade."[89] The Israeli author Dan Tsalka is more ambiguous than Sami Michael. He sees the Mediterranean as a sort of snare. On the one hand, it is the classical sea, the mare nostrum of the Romans, the sea of wandering and return home; and on the other hand, fascism and other such evils sprang up on its shores. Camus, thinks Tsalka, had an intellectual tendency to create heroes, philosophical figures who could express his longings and desires – that is to say, a kind of humanism that had a certain and poetic force associated with the Mediterranean.[90]

A cultural critic who made great efforts to bring the Mediterranean aspects of Kahanoff and Camus to the notice of the Hebrew reader was the essayist, translator, and journalist Yoram Bronowski. Bronowski always presented the "Mediterranean option" as a suitable one for the Israelis. *Me-Mizrach Shemesh* (the collection of Kahanoff's essays) represented for him "an idea of culture" that Kahanoff called "Levantinism."[91] The use of this provocative epithet was meant to contradict the usual associations of this term in the westernizing Israeli culture, which were the opposite of culture, a lack of authenticity, and even something caricatural. Levantinism was a mishmash of cultures that came into being in the eastern Mediterranean over hundreds of years when elements of European culture came together with scraps of Arab, Turkish, Jewish, Greek, and Egyptian culture.

In her cultural identity card, the series of essays called "Generation of the Levantines," Kahanoff wrote: "I am a typical Levantine in the sense that I appreciate equally what I inherited from my oriental origins and what is now mine of western culture. I find in this cross-fertilization, called in Israel 'Levantinisation,' an enrichment and not a depletion."[92] Kahanoff represented the Levantine culture as having the right to a full, authentic, and independent existence, although one that was not without problems.

[88] See David Ohana, "Camus: A Window to the Mediterranean or The Myth of Prometheus," in *Albert Camus: parcours méditerranéens*, a special issue of *Perspectives*, 5 (1998), eds., Fernande Bartfeld and David Ohana, pp. 21–29.

[89] Sami Michael, as recorded at the concluding symposium of the international conference, "Albert Camus: Parcours Méditerranéen," held at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, November 12, 1997.

[90] Dan Tsalka, as recorded at the international conference, "Albert Camus: Parcours Méditerranéen."

[91] Yoram Bronowski, "Autobiographia shel tarbut" (Autobiography of Culture), *Haaretz*, 17.2.1978. [Hebrew].

[92] Kahanoff, "Shachor al gabey lavan" (Black on White), p. 48. See also Ammiel Alcalay, *After Jews and Arabs*, pp.71–72.

Levantinism, said Bronowski echoing Kahanoff, is a culture in the process of being born; it is a cultural configuration that will come into being after a prolonged encounter between Europe and the East. This cultural encounter takes place over a long period, but only in the postcolonial era does it begin to constitute a truly new culture. A true culture is always heterogeneous in its beginnings, made up of contradictory and even opposing elements, and it is not surprising if the members of the initial generations have difficult problems of identity.

Years after Bronowski wrote this piece on Kahanoff, he read Camus' *Le Premier Homme*; he wrote that the book "was apparently intended to be a lament for the death of a culture, and perhaps also for the death of a certain option – the Mediterranean option." Bronowski believed that the readers of Camus in Israel would see an analogy between the Algerian problem and the question of the territories in Israel: "In the public debate in Israel, the memory of the Algerian War of Independence has been brought up again and again in recent years, together with the episode of France severing ties with its old colony. Many suggested to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that he should take France's President, Charles De Gaulle as his model. When one compares an exodus from the occupied territories with France's departure from Algeria, and becomes better acquainted with the attitude of the French to the events of thirty years ago, it is difficult not to be drawn into vexing thoughts."[93]

The Israeli author A. B. Yehoshua connected Kahanoff's Levantinism with Israel's evolving Mediterranean identity:

> Within the crystallizing Israeli identity she opened a window for us to peer at worlds unknown to us: not oriental folklore but the intellectual Levant. Kahanoff gave depth and force to the scorned concept "Levantine" and was also sober and critical in her attitude towards it. We felt closed in and besieged, and she transmitted openness, aroused hope that after peace there will be someone to talk to.[94]

The Israeli author Haim Be'er was of a similar opinion:

> She set a surprising new dish on the small Israeli table. She did not preach, but she gave you to understand that Ashkenazi pride was based on error, that the Levantine option is much better than what we have to offer. She presented a world whose beauty lay in its complexity – French, English, Mediterranean, Judaism, oriental aristocracy. In her personality and in her writings, she proposed connections we were not aware of, a possible model for life in the region. Not one of self-effacement and servility and not one of pride. Only afterwards did we read Cavafy, Durrell, etc.[95]

[93] Bronowski, "Kina al optzia avuda" (Lament over a Lost Option), *Haaretz*, 27.5.1994. [Hebrew].

[94] As quoted in Nurit Barezki, "Ha giveret ha rishona shel ha yamtichoniut" (The First Lady of the Mediterranean).

[95] Ibid.

THE LITERATURE OF SOCIAL MUTATION

In her essay "The Literature of Social Mutation," Kahanoff gave a name to a particular trend in mid-twentieth-century literature:

> In recent decades, a great deal of literature has been produced by writers who found themselves at the crossroads of many cultures, of various civilizations and countries, and who cannot be placed in any "national" category. These writers are the product of a long period of colonialism, and the books they write represent a transition from or mutation of the traditional culture of their predecessors to a new culture whose crystallization is aided by their works. This literature represents a shift towards a new culture in the process of formation, a culture which would not have existed without the prolonged though ambivalent connection with the western world, for these writers do not write in their mother-tongues but in one of the western languages – generally English or French – which they used during their period of studies. Some of them have been politically involved in revolutions or national struggles, but not all of them. Decolonization did not necessarily bring them to a complete identification with the national ideologies of their countries which had just been liberated.
>
> These writers often have divided souls, torn between the various forces which moulded them, and writing often serves them as a means of fusing these elements into a more significant whole, and of creating order both in the subjective inner reality and in the objective outer reality. They often give expression to a new internationalism which suddenly reveals new connections between existing cultures, just as chemical compounds have their own qualities that are completely different from the qualities of the elements composing them.[96]

The literature of social mutation, said Kahanoff, represents a cultural and social trend to which insufficient attention has been paid; it is not limited to the Levantine phenomenon but is a worldwide tendency. The writing of these hybrids is characterized by a "search for identity" and a refusal to accept an alien definition of themselves. In their personalities and writings, its creators blend the different elements that formed them and allow no element to be relinquished. Kahanoff welcomed these "cultural hybrids" and "the challenges of the new combinations," without whose vitality and surprising mutations culture, she thought, might freeze up. The writers of the "literature of social mutation" did not submit to what Kahanoff called the "hegemony" of the western model, despite its great influence, but rather produced multicultural and multinational compounds.

The Jewish Franco-Tunisian writer Albert Memmi is a good example of the "literature of social mutation."[97] Kahanoff, like Camus and Sartre, spotted the inherent contradictions in Memmi's writings and concluded, like them,

[96] Kahanoff, "Sifrut shel mutatzia khevratit" (The Literature of Social Mutation).

[97] Kahanoff, "Dereh niftelet le yisrael" (A Winding Path to Israel), *Maariv*, 18.11.1966. [Hebrew]. Republished in *Beyn shney olamot* (Between Two Worlds), pp. 136–139.

that he was torn between the conflicting forces that shaped his personality and refused to relinquish any of his attachments. Where does he belong? To the Jewish people? To France? To North Africa? Kahanoff considered the questions Memmi raised in his book, *Portrait d'un juif* ,concerning Jewish existence both in North Africa, his place of birth, and in his new place of residence, France. Memmi, said Kahanoff, saw many "shadowy figures" among the Jews, and he claimed that in comparison with other subjugated peoples, their dispersion had made them the most persecuted people in history.

Kahanoff, like Camus, identified in Memmi the torn identity that colonialism had created in him, many years before the diagnoses of Homi K. Bhabha. She also reflected on Memmi's investigation of Jewish identity in his *La Libération du Juif*. Lost in bewilderment, sunk in disappointment and despair, Memmi considered his attitude to the church, to the Left, to the Muslim countries that had recently been liberated, to mixed marriages, and to Jewish hesitancy with regard to assimilation. The only way out of the maze, said Memmi, is an independent national entity where one's consciousness would not be dependent on others. Kahanoff quotes Memmi in a conversation with Jewish students who asked his advice on what to do:

> I am glad that I belong to the generation that has understood where our liberation can come from. Our task is to complete that liberation. Israel – that's your business! That is the only real way out for us, our only trump card, our last chance in history. Anything else is a diversion.[98]

The significance of this appeal, thought Kahanoff, lay in the fact that it was addressed to people like herself, born in North Africa and drawn toward French culture – people who thought they could assimilate among the citizens of France without losing their Jewish identity. Despite the optimism to be found in *La Libération du juif*, Kahanoff saw the book as personally tragic. Despite the career he had made in France, Memmi's children, who came from a "mixed marriage," asked him: "Daddy, what are you? An Arab? A Frenchman? A Jew?"[99] Kahanoff said that, set against this background, he had "the courage of a cornered animal."[100]

He showed courage in his refusal to renounce anything – not France, on account of what it had given Jews like him who had come from the Tunisian ghetto. He showed courage in his persistence in shattering Jewish illusions about improving the attitudes of the church, and in destroying the illusions of Jews who wished to make their situation more tolerable. After discussing the question of Memmi's identity and that of people like him, Kahanoff moved on to a broader subject: the possibility that Jewish writers, who typify the "literature of social mutation," might write works of Jewish-universal significance. There can be no doubt, she said, that the Bible is a great work, but a long time had

[98] Ibid.
[99] See also Albert Camus, "Préface," in *La statue de sel*, by Albert Memmi, Paris 1966.
[100] Kahanoff, "Dereh niftelet le yisrael" (A Winding Path to Israel), p 137.

passed since the Jews had produced a significant work in the Jewish cultural context, for the works of Kafka, Freud, Marx, and Einstein are not specifically Jewish works. Here Kahanoff came to a surprisingly Zionist conclusion: "A whole and vital culture can only spring up from the connection between the people and its soil."[101] Equally surprising was her declaration that if French literature has been released from its obligation to "Frenchness," "the same will happen in due course to our culture in Israel."[102] Can this Israeli-French analogy be said to be Canaanite? The Canaanites looked to France as the model of a local national identity that was a fusion of homeland and language and nothing more. Kahanoff also drew an analogy with Greece: The Hebrew sacred literature is to the Land of Israel what Greek mythology and the Christian sacred writings are to western culture: a source of symbolism and poetic inspiration.

Kahanoff rejected Memmi's claim that the inner tensions arising from his problems with his Jewishness prevented him from doing what he wanted to do most of all – to write novels. In her words of criticism, one may clearly discern an idea she had already expressed in her article "The Literature of Social Mutation." Even though her starting point was Memmi, her conclusions were universal:

> But the time is coming when we as adults will have to come to terms with the full scale of our personal tragedy instead of trying to run away from it. From this sublimation many works of art have come into being, whose virtue is that they are honest towards all the people involved in the drama.... This book [that will be written] can be truer than Memmi's last book, *La libération du juif*, because it will contain less mutual recrimination and more generosity of heart. It can be part of the great current of good Jewish literature being written today, parallel with the Hebrew literature being written in Israel. An acceptance of the impossible situation man is condemned to and which he has chosen has not only given birth to good literature but it also effects a sublimation of the raw material of feelings to the point where it is given a form.[103]

Many see Memmi's first novel, *La statue de sel*, as his best book, and, as Kahanoff wrote, "his most exciting and convincing."[104] In the years of Nazi occupation, when the Tunisian Jews were rescued at the last moment from being sent to the death camps, Memmi, together with other Jews, was taken to a work camp. The chapter "The Camp" in *La statue de sel* describes the time of imprisonment in the camp and the escape from it. This book, in Kahanoff's opinion, movingly describes the conflict experienced by a Jewish child in the ghetto of Tunis who learns French at school and is torn between the three dimensions of his inner world: the Jewish, the Arab, and the French. As a Jew he identifies with Israel although he does not emigrate there; as an Arab

[101] Ibid., p. 138.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid., p. 139.
[104] Ibid.

he sympathizes with the North African liberation movement, although he is critical of the Arab hatred of foreigners; and finally, the fascination of French culture tips the scales.[105]

BRIDGES OVER THE MEDITERRANEAN

Kahanoff belongs to the intellectual current of writers, thinkers, and cultural critics who are characterized by the Mediterranean idea. The purveyors of this idea I wish to call "Mediterranean Humanism" did not refer to themselves as an aesthetic or intellectual "school." These authors, including Albert Camus, Albert Memmi, Tahar Ben-Jelloun, Jorge Semprún, Najib Mahfouz, and Edmond Jabès, were opposed to all kinds of racism, violence, colonialism, and political radicalism. They fought for antiracism stemming from their tolerance of the "Other" and their acceptance of the foreign and the different. Theirs was a multicultural outlook that affirms dialogue as a form of human activity. Kahanoff, like these other writers, rebelled against the western tradition that wanted to create a new man; instead they emphasized the concrete problems of the Mediterranean societies. Thus, they are characterized by what Camus called "a sense of measure." It should be pointed out that "Mediterranean Humanism" was not a branch or species of European Enlightenment. Its characteristics as a whole differentiate it from its older northern counterpart.[106]

Kahanoff considered the place of the Mediterranean writers in the literature of their countries of origin and in the literature of the countries that received them. In Albert Memmi and his like, she saw a group that cast light on a phenomenon that existed in France of the postcolonial era at a time when many immigrants from her former colonies settled there. Were they just a passing generation? Memmi and his kind represented a cultural turning point with discernable consequences for the national cultures, whose characters they altered. Kahanoff's analyses were a brilliant forecast of the situation in our time. At a time when groups of exiles and foreign workers have emigrated and settled in Europe (and, one may add, Israel), one sees that they have not been completely assimilated into their new countries, but various "mixed" cultures have come into being that have consequently influenced the cultures of the host countries. Among the younger foreigners and economic migrants the need soon arose to express their experiences and the identity crisis they were passing through. The importance of the liminal writers and the literature of mutation, Kahanoff foretold, would increase, not diminish. These hybridizations of peoples and cultures (in the era of globalization, one should add today) reflect a new relationship between the former native and yesterday's

[105] See David Ohana, Claude Sitbon, and David Mendelson, eds., *Lire Albert Memmi: Déracinement, Exil, Identité*, Paris-Geneva-Brussels 2002.

[106] See Ohana, "Mediterranean Humanism," *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 18, 1 (2003), pp. 59–75.

conqueror, to use Kahanoff's expression. Israeli-Palestinian writers writing in Hebrew like Anton Shamas and Sayed Kashua are good examples of this liminal literature.[107]

THE TEXT AS MY COUNTRY

Jacqueline Kahanoff and Edmond Jabès, who were born in Egypt and imbibed the Levantine culture, shared the same landscape. Kahanoff asked why the Jews who lived in cosmopolitan Egyptian cities produced so little literature. Both among the Turco-Egyptian aristocracy and among the minorities in Egypt, many European languages were current. English was the language of the occupying power, French was the language of culture, Greek was in common use, and Italian was used by the members of the important Italian Jewish community, who sent their children to Italian schools, and many of whom belonged to liberal professions and had been invited to contribute to the modernization of Egypt. In the Jewish families, mixed marriages with non-Jews abounded. Kahanoff well observed that "this complexity gave the minority culture its piquancy, diversity, and subtlety. However, no common ethnic or linguistic base was strong enough to bring the many minority groups to some form of unification."[108] In a confession of surprising candor, she explained why the Egyptian-Jewish immigrants did not produce much literature:

> Why did we have an attitude at once so touchy and denigrating towards ourselves? I think we considered ourselves too inferior – or, as we say in Israel, too "Levantine" – to dare express ourselves in writing. Gide and Malraux were our standard, but it didn't occur to us that the point was not to emulate them, but to tell our own story in our own words.[109]

The man who told his own story was Jabès, whom Kahanoff regarded as the best Jewish-Egyptian writer. Kahanoff remembered Jabès ("Adi") as "a handsome young man, dreamy and delightful, with a faraway look in his eyes. He began by publishing a book of poetry called *Je bâtis ma demeure*. There was a time when he believed it was possible to build a home. All that remained of all this were these shattered illusions in the poet's memory."[110]

There is surrealism and Kabala in Jabès' *Livre de questions*, in the dialogues and sayings of imaginary rabbis who observe the distress of the Jewish people. Although Kahanoff considered the book "a challenging and extraordinary achievement,"[111] she felt it depicted a barren world, a world of utter loneliness without any of the vitality that had enabled the Jews to survive. Writing for Jabès – an act that, in his opinion, reflected the divine creation

[107] See Ami Elad-Bouskila, *Modern Palestinian Literature*, London 1999.
[108] Kahanoff, "Tarbut be hithavut" (A Culture Being Formed), *Davar*, 16.4.1973. [Hebrew]. Republished in *Beyn shney olamot* (Between Two Worlds), p. 120.
[109] Ibid, p. 123.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid, p. 124.

in human creativity – was a desperate investigation of the world and of man, who lives there lost and alienated.[112] The story Jabès tells in *Livre de questions* of the love of Yokel and Sarah, who lost their sanity and then lost their lives, haunted the author's imagination. He looked in vain for letters obliterated by the wind in the shifting sands of the Egyptian desert. Everything leads to nothingness, and the human cry of desperation echoes in the void and remains without an answer.

Kahanoff thought that through Jabès' fluent French he had crossed all the intersections he had come upon as a Jew. "Did he not find this world again when he went into exile?" she asked, referring to Egypt. "Was not this world dormant within him without his knowing?"[113] In the outskirts of Paris he described desert landscapes, sand dunes, the shade of palm trees. The need to identify the Jew with the East, from where he had been uprooted, was shown, said Kahanoff, in the Mediterranean names of the rabbis in his book. It was no accident that the travels of Yokel and Sarah were across the Mediterranean world: Corfu, Cairo, Marseilles, and so on. Kahanoff said that reading Jabès revealed to her the code that linked the Mediterranean world with the Jewish:

> I see again with my spiritual sight these names, these landscapes, these streets, these faces peering and appearing out of *Le livre des questions*. I know the place of the rupture, where the pages of our lives were torn out, and I know that there are many wounds that will never be healed. This Jewish world was written and inscribed within us but not known, like a page that is turned without being read.[114]

The rupture and wounds she described caused Kahanoff to reflect on her Jewish existence:

> Ought we not to question ourselves about the meaning or lack of meaning of our Jewish existence: we who resided in Egypt but did very little and did not speak the language properly? Did we not see it as strange or even scandalous to celebrate the exodus from Egypt when we had come back to it after being swept up into huge wanderings far away from the Promised Land? Ought we not to ask ourselves the meaning of the insoluble equation of Jewish existence, because of which we are here but also there, in every other place and nowhere at all?[115]

Kahanoff objected to the romanticization of the exile to be found in Jabès: "I had a strong desire to shut the door on the closed world of this sterile and arid book, to escape from this cruel exile closed in upon itself." In Paris, when she asked him how he came to think of the imaginary rabbis, Jabès told her: "I feel that they were always with me, but they only spoke when I learnt

[112] See, especially Edmond Jabès, *From The Book to the Book: An Edmond Jabès Reader*, Hanover and London 1991.

[113] Kahanoff, "Edmond Jabès oh Sefer Hasheelot" (Edmond Jabès or Livre de questions), *Davar*, 30.4.1965. [Hebrew]. Republished in *Beyn shney olamot* (Between Two Worlds), p. 132.

[114] Ibid, p. 132.

[115] Ibid, p. 133.

what exile is."[116] She rejected the "nihilistic conclusions" represented by Jabès' song of praise for the exile, and pitied Sarah for the following lines taken from her diary: "I set against life the/ hollow truth,/ waterless shores."[117] In reaction to these shores of death, Kahanoff rhapsodized: "I know of other shores, alive with the freshness of our waters, which are not stagnant beneath the well of memory, but waters of our ambitions, seas, rivers, which sparkle with thousands upon thousands of new and turbulent questions."[118]

In *Le livre des questions* Kahanoff discerned a hidden path that in a short while would bring its author to Israel, where he would sit by the well with his brothers. She hoped that the erring pilgrim would ultimately find his home there: "Our basic principle is to fulfill the Jewish soul by fusing it with the sensuous, strong and tender reality of Eretz-Israel."[119] These thoughts occurred to her when she was interviewing Jabès' wife, Arlette, for the Institute of Contemporary Jewry. Kahanoff, Jabès, and his wife visited Jaffa, "which sometimes slightly resembles Alexandria. The same sort of churches were built at the same time by Italian architects. We heard Greek music.... Jabès said: Here in Israel there is a place called Yabetz, which we came from, according to the tradition. The name Jabès is a corruption of Yabetz."[120] Perhaps, thought Kahanoff, one of Jabès' ancestors had studied Kabala in that place, and it was his voice that spoke through the imaginary rabbis in *Le livre des questions*.

A RHETORIC OF DIALOGUE

In her essay "My Brother the Rebel," Kahanoff related how two North African anticolonialist revolutionaries had visited her family in Cairo. They were Habib Bourghiba and Ahmed Ben-Bella. Habib Bourghiba, who later became the first president of Tunisia, was a guest of her cousin Julian; and Ahmed Ben-Bella, eventually one of the leaders of the Algerian underground and the first president of independent Algeria, lived for a few years in her room in her parents' home.[121] Kahanoff revealed the special relationship between these historic figures and her family with unconcealed envy and a certain pride. Only after her mother had immigrated to Israel did she dare to tell her daughter about their close friends, the North African patriots, students from friendly countries "who fill the space a little created by the silence of the children we left behind." Kahanoff was intrigued by the thought of a stranger who lived in "my room ... as if it were his."[122]

The way Bourghiba and Ben-Bella are described reveals Kahanoff as an essayist of dialogue, not a rhetorician of "Otherness." We see in this article

[116] Kahanoff, "Tarbut be hithavut" (A Culture Being Formed), p. 125.
[117] Kahanoff, "Edmond Jabès oh Sefer Hasheelot" (Edmond Jabès or Livre de questions), p. 134.
[118] Ibid, p. 134.
[119] Ibid, p. 135.
[120] Kahanoff, "Tarbut be hithavut" (A Culture Being Formed), p. 127.
[121] Kahanoff, "Akhi hamored" (My Brother the Rebel), in *Me-Mizrach Shemesh* (From East the Sun), pp. 35–46 [Hebrew].
[122] Ibid, p. 35.

a culture of openness, dialogue, and positive symbiosis, not of hegemony. A negative symbiosis takes place when the dominant party needs an "Other," not in order to be enriched, but to be confirmed. The process resembles the Hegelian dialectic of master and slave, in which each person defines himself in terms of the other. This model is not productive but schematic: The "Other" is an objectification of your fears, your insecurity, your lack of identity. When this is the case, how can you hold a discussion with someone else, enter into intellectual negotiations with him, trade cultural merchandise with him? Because the attitude of the "Other" has been predetermined, there can be no dealing with him: He is fixed, unchanging. As a stereotype he even defines *you* in a one-dimensional way, like a kind of caricature.

Kahanoff provided a different option, a model of *positive* symbiosis and dialogue. She had sufficient self-confidence to open herself up to that "Other." She did not assume a hegemonic identity that defines itself through a demonic "Other," an entity that, even when attractive, remains dark and demonic. Kahanoff proposed a different, radical structure: radical, that is, not in the exegetically erroneous sense of extreme, but representing a wish to get to the root (Latin: *radix*) of things, or, as the great Hebrew poet Haim Nachman Bialik put it, "opposites join at the root."[123] Kahanoff's Mediterranean option is radical because its structure necessitates the renunciation of something very basic in the dominant identity. The model proposed by Kahanoff is Jewish, feminist, and Mediterranean, a model based on mutual sympathy, mutual inspiration, and egalitarian attitudes. In such an outlook there is no need consciously and in an exaggerated manner to set up barricades against the outside world and foreign cultural influences. There is no necessity to imagine an "Other," and one can efface boundaries and be liminally in several different worlds at once.[124]

Perhaps Kahanoff was thinking of herself when she concluded her article "The Literature of Social Mutation" as follows:

> The writers I have mentioned here look beyond one kind of world to another, and reflect much more than isolated individual cases. They express new and complex cultural forms that are at one and the same time marginal with regard to the national literatures and important as international statements because they fuse wide geographical and cultural areas in new and unexpected combinations. They represent an aspect of contemporary literature and culture which is worth following closely, and whose existence we are only just beginning to be aware of now.[125]

[123] As quoted in David Ohana, *Hayisraelim haakhronim* (The Last Israelis), Tel Aviv 1998. [Hebrew], p. 1.

[124] See David Ohana, "Kahanoff ve hasifrut haliminalit" (Otherness, Absence and Canonization in Discourse of Literary Historiography: The Case of Jacqueline Kahanoff), in *Times of Change: Jewish Literature in the Modern Era – Essays in Honor of Dan Miron*, Sede Boker 2008, pp. 235–257.

[125] Kahanoff, "Sifrut shel mutatzia khevratit" (The Literature of Social Mutation), *Haaretz*, 8.12.1972. [Hebrew]. Republished in *Beyn shney olamot* (Between Two Worlds), pp. 113–114.

In any case, she was referring to a literature that moved between borders, that embodied immanent tensions both in the lives of the writers themselves and in the subjects they wrote about. Kahanoff, as we have said, was of Tunisian and Iraqi extraction, grew up in a Jewish community in a cosmopolitan British society in Egypt, went to a French high school, and conversed with governesses in English and with servants in Arabic. In the formative years of her life, she lived both in the national society of France and the pluralistic immigrant culture of the United States, as well as in Israel in its early days as a cultural-political hegemony. These cultural changes could have destroyed the identity and creativity of many writers, but in Kahanoff's case they served as an abundant source of vitality and interiorization of many national, class, and cultural perspectives. Her ideas move between the frontiers of the universal (the cosmopolitan) and the Levantine, the Levantine and the Israeli, the Israeli and the Jewish, the Jewish and the Muslim.[126]

This liminality characterizing Kahanoff was not only expressed in the wanderings of her life and her spiritual divagations, but also in her deep affinity with cultures that lay outside Israel's hegemonic discourse in those years. Kahanoff was perhaps more than anything else, in almost all respects "both outside and inside," a Jewish intellectual who was an "outsider as insider," to use the expression of the historian George Mosse.[127] At the same time, Kahanoff always sought a place that would be a home, a place where her polyphonic identity would find rest, where East and West would have a fruitful meeting. The biographical and spiritual stages on the path to her identity did not cause a tear in her personality, but gave rise to a Mediterranean outlook combining various places in a kind of multi-locational culture. Kahanoff reached the conclusion that this Mediterranean outlook only stood a chance if one was planted in the firm soil of one's own place.

Kahanoff, herald of the Mediterranean idea, found a more capacious vantage point from which to view the field of confrontation, and instead of the oppositional discord heard a broad, rich, and polyphonic symphony of geopolitical and cultural voices. Her grasp of Israel, together with her biographical and creative journey along the threshold, allowed Kahanoff to set off a fresh cultural possibility, neither Canaanite nor crusader, much more far-sighted than those offered in her time or in ours.

[126] David Ohana, "Jacqueline Kahanoff: mevaseret hatarbut hayam tichonit beyisrael" (Jacqueline Kahanoff: Pioneer of Mediterranean Culture in Israel), *Iyyunim Bitkumat Israel*, 13 (2003), pp. 29–55 [Hebrew].

[127] George L. Mosse, *Confronting History: A Memoir*, Madison WI 2000.

7

Epilogue

Looking Out to Sea

One of the twelfth-century crusader settlers in Jerusalem, who came from Chartres in France, described with an artistic touch some of the tensions and conflicts involved with forming a new society in the Levant and the resulting confrontation between East and West:

> Hear and consider how in our days God has brought the West to the East. For we who were westerners have become easterners. Someone who was a Roman or a Frank is now a Galilean or an Eretz-Israeli [Palestinian]. A man from Rheims or Chartres is now an inhabitant of Tyre or Antioch. We have already forgotten our places of birth; many of us are no longer know them or no longer care to speak of them.... There are some here who have taken wives not only from their own people but also from the women of Syria and Armenia, and even of the Circassians who have received the grace of baptism. In some cases their father-in-law is with them together with their bride or bridegroom, and in some cases their stepson or stepfather is with them. And there are grandchildren and great-grandchildren.... A variety of languages have been exchanged for a single one which is known to both races, and faith unites people whose forebears were foreign to one another.... Foreigners have become natives here, and travelers have become like inhabitants. Every day our parents and relatives join us, leaving behind, not without hesitation, what was theirs.... Behold, a great miracle has taken place here, a miracle that will astound all the world. Has such a thing ever been heard before? [1]

Is this then the realized utopia of East and West come together, formed into a new dialectic being, an earthly city comprising settlers and natives from two civilizations into a spatial-cultural entity, a local family? Whatever the case, this is an extraordinary description that illustrates the point that the crusades have generally been viewed as a confrontation between East and West to such an extent that it also became a confrontation between the western Christians and eastern Christians. There was once a rumor that the eastern Christians had

[1] Heinrich, Hagenmeyer, ed., *Fulcheri Carnotensis Historia Hierosolymitana*, lib III, c 37, Heidelberg 1095–1127, pp. 748–49.

invited Saladin to conquer Jerusalem.[2] If such was the case with regard to the eastern Christians, how much greater was the tension between the European West and the Islamic East.[3] The image of the medieval Christians in the Levant struck those in the oriental sphere as foreign and hostile. This image has survived until the modern period: Just as in the Middle Ages "the West in the East" took the form of the crusaders, in the nineteenth century "the East in the West" took the form of the Ottomans. In the twenty-first century, Osama Bin Laden inherited the image, calling for a jihad against the "crusader-Jewish alliance," and he passed on the debt of the crusaders to the "western" state of Israel in the Middle East for the benefit of world terrorism.

However, Israelis can promote a geopolitical and cultural dialogue that will involve the eastern and the southern shores of the Mediterranean, not only as a negation of the Zionist-crusader analogy, but first and foremost as a positive self-definition. The quarrel between the Palestinians and Israelis today has contributed to a situation where the Mediterranean region is engulfed in conflicts national, political, ethnic, and religious, which cause destabilization not only in the area, but even in Europe and beyond. Against this backdrop, the Mediterranean option can play a key cultural and political role in restabilizing this tense environment and creating a new geostrategic alignment in the world.

The idea of the Mediterranean as a cultural-political entity that holds together a multiplicity of ethnic, religious-cultural, and economic units predates late-twentieth-century proposals and programs of the type issuing from Brussels, Barcelona, Malta, or Paris. Earlier ideas of the Mediterranean were informed by realities of trade, conquest, migration, and subtler geographical affinities that were conducive to a regional unity, although never to uniformity or to political unification. Whether or not this collective regional identity was disturbed (as is argued in Henri Pirenne's famous thesis) by the Muslim conquest is an important historiographical issue for investigation. However, whether as the result of this conquest, of early modern imperialism, or of other social forces – both prior to and following the Enlightenment in Europe – it is clear that the older idea of the Mediterranean gave way to a more parochial, nationalist mare nostrum conception.

Yet despite these historical confrontations, the Mediterranean includes both the Levant and the West, and this synthesis has given birth to Europe, its culture, and its universalist legacy. The Mediterranean did not give rise to a hegemonic, all-inclusive culture with a single, homogenous character. It created a variety of historical models of cultural meetings and exchanges of intellectual goods, such as the Italian Renaissance and Christian-Muslim-Jewish Andalusia. In the words of the French historian Fernand Braudel: "To sail in

[2] Ibid, p. 29.

[3] Joshua Prawer, *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem – European Colonialism in the Middle Ages*, London 1972; idem, *Crusader Institutions*, Oxford 1980; idem, *The History of the Jews in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Oxford 1988.

the Mediterranean is to discover the Greek world in Lebanon, prehistory in Sardinia, the cities of Greece in Sicily, the Arab presence in Spain and Turkish Islam in Yugoslavia."[4] The Mediterranean, although not representing a homogenous cultural unity, has historically been a space with an intense mixture of eastern and western cultures. The historian Shlomo Dov Goitein described the Jewish presence on the Mediterranean as a public marketplace that brought together various Jewish communities, allowing north and south, east and west to network and circulate.[5]

Yet one should remember that this Mediterranean history is not merely a nostalgic indulgence, but also a model to inspire Mediterranean politics. It has three facets: creating a new agenda that will confront the most threatening dangers currently at hand; revealing and examining the common heritage of the peoples of the region; and inventing new channels of communication based on their reciprocal influences and interactions.

The time has come to examine and evaluate the Mediterranean option for Israel, an Israeli geopolitical and cultural policy for peace in the Middle East. The Mediterranean cultural discourse seeks to detach the region from conflict and to fashion a broader cultural framework in which Israelis and their Arab neighbors are not alone with each other, but work together in a broader context and partnership. In other words, it is an attempt to create a dialogue that has a different perspective and focus. Such a broad outlook, with its strategic orientation, has been missing from the scholarly literature on the Mediterranean Basin. The contribution of this book, I hope, is to take the emerging Mediterranean identity of the Israelis – a pluralistic, heterogenic, mixed society situated between East and West – as a point of departure. What lessons can be learned from examining its characteristics? Can this Mediterranean model be projected onto the entire region to develop strategies for evolving a unified but polycentric Mediterranean civil society?

The idea that Israel is a Mediterranean society in the making has been encouraged by three historical processes. The first process was the frequent fluctuations in the peace process between Israel and its neighbors in the last two decades and the state of confrontation culminating in the current conflict with the Palestinians. This state of unrest raises questions concerning the dynamics of Israeli collective identity and what may be called the "Israeli spatial identity." Many Israelis have thus started to think in terms of "Mediterraneanism" rather than in terms of "Middle Eastern" culture. Such thinking was assisted by Israeli accessibility to the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea – that is, Turkey and the Maghreb in the 1990s.

The second process was the transition of Israeli society from a mobilized and ideological society to a civil, sectorial society, one that is in constant search for its own identity while it tries to maintain an internal dialogue among its various sociological components, and, in addition, an external dialogue with

[4] Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée, l'Espace et l'Histoire*, Paris 1985, p. 1.
[5] Shlomo Dov Goitiein, *A Mediteranean Society*, 5 vols., Berkeley 1967–1988.

other people and cultures in the Mediterranean geopolitical region. The ideology of the "new man" gave way to the old/new idea of a non-ideological Mediterranean melting pot blending together immigrants from East and West, from Christian and Muslim countries. Zionism sprang up against the background of the rise of nationalism, the spread of secularism, and the dominance of Eurocentricity. One of the chief cultural ambitions of the Zionist movement was to create a new man. However, this ideological myth, when finally fulfilled, was applied to a nation that was made up of people of flesh and blood, people who, for more than sixty years now, have constituted a society on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Their new identity is not ideologically based; it is constructed out of geography and culture.

The third process was the revolutionary opportunity for dialogue in the Oslo Accords (1993), the Barcelona Process (1995), and Nicolas Sarkozy's Union of the Mediterranean (2008). The Oslo Accords were in principle based on two parallel channels: the immediate bilateral channel, which focused on resolving the disputes of the past and ending the war between Israel and its Arab neighbors, and the multilateral channel. The latter provided a basis for (and strengthened) the bilateral channel by creating a safety net together with other actors and by developing common interest and coping with common problems such as water supply, economic growth, disarmament, and environmental issues.

The Mediterranean option offers a dialogue, not a confrontation. It proposes a voyage, a slow and reflective cultural journey rather than a civil war in which, as in all wars, there must be only losers. It is a journey from the shores of Israeli identities to their mental and intellectual sources, the landscape of mare nostrum. It is a journey with, not a flight from, the Israelis' immediate neighbors, the Arabs and the Palestinians. It is a journey to the space where everything was born: western and eastern civilization, monotheism and Hellenism, the polis and the Renaissance, the Old and the New Testaments. The Mediterranean identity for Israeli society represents a philosophical challenge, the oldest of historical dreams, the youngest of political hopes.

Bibliography

Agasi, Yosef, *Between Religion and Nation – Towards Israeli National Identity*, Tel Aviv 1984. [Hebrew].

Agasi, Yosef, Yehudit Buber Agasi and Moshe Berant, *Who is Israeli*, Tel Aviv 1991. [Hebrew].

Ahlsdorf, Michael, *Nietzsches Juden: die Philosphische Vereinnahmung des Alttestamentlichen Judentums und die Einfluss von Julius Wellhausen in Nietzsches Spätwerk*, Berlin 1991.

Alcalay, Ammiel, *After Jews and Arabs: Remaking Levantine Culture*, Minneapolis, Ind. 1993.

Allison, David B., Babbette Babich, and Debra Bergoffen, eds., *New Nietzsche Studies*, 7, 3–4 (Fall 2007).

Allon, Azariah, "The Other Image of Saladin," *Kisharon le-Eretz-Israel*, Tel Aviv 1979, pp. 28–32. [Hebrew].

Alterman, Natan, *The Triple Thread*, Tel Aviv 1971. [Hebrew].

Altman, Yehoshua, *Netiv Etzion* (January 1959) No. 1. [Hebrew].

"Am Olam – Programme For Setting up a Museum of the History of the People of Israel in the Hills of Efrat," *Gushpanka*, 5 (April 1989), p. 16. [Hebrew].

Amir, Aharon, "The Shock of Proximity," *Keshet*, 4 (1971), pp. 6–7. [Hebrew].

in the symposium "Seeking Roots," *Keshet*, 62 (1974), p. 29 [Hebrew].

"Two Sisters," *Haaretz*, April 1979. [Hebrew].

(Bentov, Yehoshua), "The Crusader Kingdom of Israel?" in *The Canaanite Group – Literature and Ideology*, Collection ed. by Nurit Graetz and Rahel Weisbrod, Tel Aviv 1986, pp. 25–29. [Hebrew].

"Israel in the Mediterranean Space," A Lecture Given at Beit Hasofer, *Apirion*, 4–5 (1986). [Hebrew].

" The Promise of Dawn Rising on the Nile," *Haaretz*, 5.4.1996. [Hebrew].

"The Sea, the Last Sea," *Maariv*, 9.4.1996. [Hebrew].

"Horon in the Land of the Hebrews," in Adyah Gurevitch Horon, *East and West: A History of Canaan and the Land of the Hebrews*, Tel Aviv 2000. [Hebrew].

"Undress Shulamit – The Hebrew Renaissance: Option or Destiny?" *Nativ*, 3 (2000), pp. 46–54. [Hebrew].

"The Second Republic," *Haaretz*, 19.10.2006. [Hebrew].

Amir, Ya'akov, "Crusaders and Zionists," *Haaretz* Literary Supplement, 1.9.1999. [Hebrew].

Amir, Yehoyada, *Bridges: Akibah Ernst Simon and the "Hope of the Lines,"* Jerusalem 1996. [Hebrew].
Amiran Sappir, Revital, "Self Salvation in the Jewish National Revival," Dissertation Submitted to the Hebrew University, Jerusalem 2005. [Hebrew].
Amit, David, "After 1800 Years," *Nekuda* (October 1990), pp. 16–19. [Hebrew].
Amit, Hana, "The Lone Tree At Gush Etzion," *Sa'lit – Monthly of The Society for the Protection of Nature*, 5 (1973). [Hebrew].
Amital, Yehuda (Rabbi), "If the Benefit of the People of Israel Requires It, There Is No Halakhic Impediment to Withdrawal," *Gushpanka*, 10 (February 1988), pp. 4–5. [Hebrew].
Ammiel, Alcalay, *After Jews and Arabs: Remaking Levantine Culture*, Minneapolis, Ind. 1993.
Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London 1991.
Aner, Ze'ev, "Holzmann, the Man Who Gave His Name to Gush Etzion," *Idan*, 7 (1986), pp. 53–62. [Hebrew].
Aran, Gideon, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism: The Bloc of the Faithful in Israel (Gush Emunim)," in Marty and Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalism Observed*, pp. 265–344.
"The Beginnings of the Road from Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* (1986), pp. 116–143.
Arbel, Benjamin, "Europe in the Levant," *Al-Hamishmar*, 25.1.1985. [Hebrew].
Arendt, Hanna, *The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in the Modern Age*, New York 1978.
Ariel, Yehuda, "The Lesson of the Crusaders: the Souring of Settlement," *Haaretz*, 10.4.1977. [Hebrew].
Armstrong, John, *Nations before Nationalism*, Chapel Hill 1982.
Asali, Ziad J., "Zionist Studies of the Crusader Movement," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 14 (1992), pp. 45–59.
Aschheim, Steven E., "Max Nordau, Friedrich Nietzsche and Degeneration," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 28, 4 (1993), pp. 643–658.
The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890–1990, Berkeley 1992.
"Audiovisual Spectacle in the Tent of Remembrance in Kfar Etzion," *Gushpanka*, 13, (July 1988), pp. 14–15. [Hebrew].
Aviad, Janet, "The Messianism of Gush Emunim," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, 7 (1991), pp. 197–213.
Avneri, Uri, "Don't Repeat the Mistakes of the Philistines and the Crusaders," *Ha-Olam Ha-Zeh*, 31.3.1955 [Hebrew].
"Crusaders and Zionists," *The War of the Seventh Day*, Tel Aviv 1968. [Hebrew].
"On the Crusaders and the Zionists, Letter to the Literary Supplement," *Haaretz*, 11.8.1999. [Hebrew].
Azaryahu, Maoz, "Renaming the Past: Changes in 'City Text' in Germany and Austria, 1945–1947," *History and Memory*, 2 (winter 1990), pp. 32–51.
State Cults – Celebrating Independence and Commemorating the Fallen in Israel 1948–1956, Sede Boker 1995. [Hebrew].
Tel Aviv – the Real City, Sede Boqer 2005. [Hebrew].
Bar, Israel, *Israel's Security: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, Tel Aviv 1966. [Hebrew].

Barel, Yehudit, "'About the New Life' – Visions and Melodies – the First Coping of Saul Tchernichovsky with the Poetic Norms of Contemporary Hebrew Poetry," in Boas Arpali, ed., *Saul Tchernichovsky – Researches and Documents*, Jerusalem 1994, pp. 171–198. [Hebrew].

Barezki, Nurit, "The First Lady of Mediterraneanism," *Maariv*, 15.3.1996. [Hebrew].

Baron, Shalom, *Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Ramat Gan 1973. [Hebrew].

Barton, John L., "Wellhausen's Prolegomena to the History of Israel: Influence and Effects," in D. Smith-Christopher, ed., *Text and Experience: Toward a Cultural Exegesis of the Bible*, Sheffield 1995, pp. 316–329.

Be'er, Haim, "Gush Emunim – 'Canaanites' Who Wear Phylacteries," *Davar*, 15.10.1982. [Hebrew].

Beeri, Eliezer, *The Beginnings of the Israel-Arab Conflict, 1882–1911*, Tel Aviv 1985. [Hebrew].

Behor, Guy, "In the Crusader State," *Yediot Aharonot*, 13.12.2000. [Hebrew].

Beirch, Eve, "Education as the Gay Science or the Influence of Nietzsche on Ha-Shomer Ha-Tza'ir's Education," *Iyunim Ba-Chinuch*, 5, 2 (2003), pp. 5–16. [Hebrew].

Belfer, Ella, *A Split Identity: The Conflict between the Sacred and the Secular in the Jewish World*, Ramat Gan 2004. [Hebrew].

Belkind, Israel, *The Arabs in Palestine – Where Are the Ten Tribes?* Tel Aviv 1928. [Hebrew].

Ben-Amos, Avner, "Holocaust Day and Memorial Day in Israeli Schools: Ceremonies, Education and History" *Israel Studies*, 4, 1 (1999), pp. 258–284.

Ben-Ari, Eyal and Yoram Bilu, eds., *Grasping Land: Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience*, Albany 1997.

Ben Avi, Itamar, "Our Future is Also on the Sea," in *Yehuda Hayamit*, Tel Aviv 1930. [Hebrew].

Canaan Our Land; 5000 Years of Israel in Its Land, Jerusalem 1932. [Hebrew].

Ben David, David, *A Bridge Over A Chasm*, Nir Etzion 1996. [Hebrew].

Ben Dov, Meir, "From Trumpeldor to the Canaanites," *Haaretz*, 10.10.1990. [Hebrew].

"The Historical Lesson of Jerusalem," *Haaretz*, 18.5.1990. [Hebrew].

"The Tiger's Bridges," *Haaretz*, 17.5.1992. [Hebrew].

"The Abandoned Kingdom of Jerusalem," *Haaretz*, 23.5.1993. [Hebrew].

"The First Week," *Haaretz*, 17.4.1994. [Hebrew].

"Green Desert," *Haaretz*, 31.1.1995. [Hebrew].

"Religion, Army, State: A Lesson from the Crusaders," *Maariv*, 6.12.1995. [Hebrew].

Ben Ezer, Ehud, ed., *Unease in Zion*, Foreword by Robert Alter, New York 1974.

Ben-Gurion, David, "Gathering of Released Prisoners, ("Habima," Tel Aviv), 29.3.1949. The Archive of the Institute of the Ben-Gurion Heritage. [Hebrew].

"The Navy, Israel and the Sea," in *Rebirth and Destiny of Israel*, ed. Mordekhai Norock, New York 1954.

Memoirs, Meir Avizohar, ed., Tel Aviv 1972. [Hebrew].

Ben Gurion, Emmanuel, *Private Sphere*, Tel Aviv 1980. [Hebrew].

Ben Shaul, Moshe, "Opposite the Openings to the Sea," *Songs 1960–1965*, Jerusalem 1965–1966. [Hebrew].

Ben Ya'akov, Yohanan, ed., *Gush Etzion – Fifty Years of Struggle and Creativity*, Alon Shvut 1978. [Hebrew].

"The Sons Have Returned to their Place," *Gushpanka* (September 1998). [Hebrew].

"Migdal Eder," *Idan*, 7 (1986), pp. 23–40. [Hebrew].

ed., *The Story of the Thirty-Five – The Legacy of Gush Etzion, Headquarters of the Chief Education Officer*, Kfar Etzion 1990. [Hebrew].

Ben Yehuda, Nachman, *The Masada Myth: Collective Memory and Mythmaking in Israel*, Madison 1995.

Benhabib, Dolly, "Skirts Are Shorter Now: Comments on Levantine Female Identity in the Writings of Jacqueline Kahanoff," *Theory and Criticism: An Israeli Forum*, 5 (1994) pp. 159–164. [Hebrew].

Benjo, Offra, *Saddam's Iraq*, Tel Aviv 1996. [Hebrew].

Benvenisti, Meron, "Crusaders and Zionists," an article presented to the interdisciplinary seminar "Myth and History," which took place at the Jerusalem Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem 1989. [Hebrew].

Intimate Enemies: Jews and Arabs in a Shared Land, Berkeley 1995

"False Mediterranean Harbour," *Haaretz*, 21.3.1996 (Hebrew).

"Longings For the Crusades," *Haaretz*, 24.6.1999 [Hebrew].

Sacred Landscape: The Buried History of the Holy Land Since 1948, trans. Maxine Kaufman-Lacusta, California 2000.

Berdichevsky, Micha Josef, "To Be or to Not to Be," *From East to West*, 1 (1894), pp. 93–104. [Hebrew].

Values, Warsaw 1900. [Hebrew].

At the Crossroads, Warsaw 1902. [Hebrew].

On the Way, 1922. [Hebrew].

Essays, Tel Aviv 1960. [Hebrew].

Diary's Chapters, trans. Rachel Ben-Gurion, Tel Aviv 1975. [Hebrew].

On the Connection Between Ethics and Aesthetics, Tel Aviv 1986. [Hebrew].

Berger, Harry, "The Lie of the Land: The Text Beyond Canaan," *Representations*, 25 (1989).

Bergmann, Shmuel Hugo, "A.D. Gordon's Debate with Nietzsche," *Ha-po'el Ha-Tzair*, 40 (1947), pp. 5–6. [Hebrew].

"On the Formation of the Nation's Character in Our State," *Ha-Poel Ha-Tzair*, 26–27, 4.10.1949. [Hebrew].

Berman, Yonah,"The Children of Kfar Etzion," in Me'ir Hovav, ed., *El Keshet Ha-Brit*, Jerusalem 1972, pp 90–99. [Hebrew].

Betzer, Oded, *Wonderful Journey in the Time-Tunnel*, Tel Aviv 1975. [Hebrew].

Bhabha, Homi K., "The Other Question: Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism," in *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*, ed., Russell Ferguson Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minhha, and Cornel West, Cambridge, MA 1990, pp. 71–88.

Biale, David, "The Threat of Messianism: An Interview with Gershom Scholem," *The New York Review of Books*, 14.8.1980.

Bianquis, Genvieve, *Nietzsche en France*, Paris 1929.

Bilu, Yoram, and Eyal Ben-Ari, "Modernity and Charisma in Contemporary Israel: The Case of Baba Sali and Baba Baruch," in Robert Wistrich and David Ohana, eds., *The Shaping of Israeli Identity: Myth, Memory and Trauma*, London 1995, pp. 224–237.

Biton, Erez, "Editorial," *Apirion*, 2 (1983/4), p.11. [Hebrew].
"The Modern Crusaders," *Maariv*, 12.1.1986. [Hebrew].
Black, Max, *The Labyrinth of Language*, London 1970.
Boas, Adrian, "From the 15th of July 1099 to August 1291," *Haaretz*, August 1999. [Hebrew].
Boger, Hagit, "Post-Zionism Discourse and the Israeli National Consensus: What Has Changed?" *Response*, 66 (1996), pp. 28–44.
Boschwitz, Friedemann Philipp, *Julius Wellhausen*, Jerusalem 1982. [Hebrew].
Boshes, Hedda, "Improvised City," *Haaretz*, 24.11.1978. [Hebrew].
Boyarin, Daniel and Yonatan Boyarin, "No Homeland to Israel: On the Place of the Jews," *Theory and Criticism*, 5 (1994), pp. 79–104. [Hebrew].
Bradbury, Malcolm and James McFarlane, eds., *Modernism 1890–1930*, Harmondsworth 1976.
Braudel, Fernand, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, Paris 1949.
Breinin, Reuven, "Reflections of a Biographer," in David Frischman, ed., *Sifrut – Maasef*, 1 (1909). [Hebrew].
"David Neumark – Outlines to His Spiritual Profile," *Ha-Toren* (June 1925), pp. 74–87. [Hebrew].
Brenner, Yosef Chaim, "Berdichevski: A Few Words on His Literary Personality," *Ha-po'el Ha-tza'ir* IV (1913), pp. 12–14. [Hebrew].
Works, IV, Tel Aviv 1986. [Hebrew].
Bresheeth, Haim, "Gebalyia as a Symbol: Three Perspectives," *Theory and Criticism – An Israeli Forum*, 16 (Spring 2000), pp. 233–238. [Hebrew].
Bridgewater, Patrick, *Nietzsche in Anglosaxony: A Study of Nietzsche's Impact on English and American Literature*, Leicester 1972.
Brinker, Menachem, "The Nietzschenean Theme in Brenner's Stories," *Narrative Art and Social Thought in Y. H. Brenner's Work*, Tel Aviv 1990, pp. 139–149. [Hebrew].
"Nietzsche's Influence on Hebrew Writers of the Russian Empire," in Jacob Golomb, ed., *Nietzsche and Soviet Culture, Adversary and Allay*, ed., Bernice Glatzer-Rosenthal, Cambridge 1994, pp. 393–413.
"Nietzsche and Hebrew Writers: An Attempt at a Synoptic View," in *Nietzsche and Hebrew Culture*, Jerusalem 2002, pp. 131–161. [Hebrew].
Brog, Muli, "From the Heights of Massada to the Heart of the Ghetto: Myth as History," in David Ohana and Robert Wistrich, eds., *Myth and Memory*, pp. 203–230. [Hebrew].
Bronowski, Yoram, "Autobiography of Culture," *Haaretz*, 17.2.1978. [Hebrew].
"In a Mediterranean Context," *Haaretz*, 6.11.1987. [Hebrew].
"Lament Over a Lost Option," *Haaretz*, 27.5.1994. [Hebrew].
"The Levantines," *Haaretz*, 5.4.1996. [Hebrew].
Buber, Martin, *Pnei Adam*, Jerusalem 1966. [Hebrew].
Calderon, Nissim, " A Trip in the Mediterranean," *Haaretz*, 17..5. 1996. [Hebrew].
Camus, Albert, "Préface," in *La statue de sel*, by Albert Memmi, Paris 1966.
Cassirer, Ernst, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, vol. 2, trans. R. Manheim, New Haven 1954.
An Essay on Man: An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture, New Haven 1979.
Clements, Ronald E., "Heinrich Graetz as Biblical Historian and Religious Apologist," in John Adney Emerton and Stefan C. Reif, eds., *Interpreting the*

Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honor of Erwin Isak Jacob Rosenthal, Cambridge 1982, pp. 35–59

"Clouds of Autonomy in the Skies of Gush Etzion," *Hatzofeh*, 16.5.1992. [Hebrew].

Cohen, Anthony Paul, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, Manchester 1985.

Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb*, New York 1998.

Cohen, Avraham Oded, "Foreword," *Gush Etzion – "Bar Mitzva" of the Renewal of the Settlement*, Jerusalem 1981, p. 21. [Hebrew].

Cohen, Jeremy, "From History to Historiography; the Study of the Persecutions and Constructions of Their Meaning," in Yom Tov Assis, Michael Toch, Jeremy Cohen, Ora Limor, and Aharon Kedar, eds., *Facing the Cross: The Persecutions of 1096 in History and Historiography*, Jerusalem 2000, pp. 16–32. [Hebrew].

Cohen, Shmuel Simcha, "Rabbi David Neumark," *Hadoar*, 20–21 (1936), p. 332. [Hebrew].

Cohen, Ya'akov, ed., "The New Hebrew," Warsaw 1912. [Hebrew].

Conway, Daniel W., *Nietzsche's Dangerous Game*, Cambridge 1997.

Cordoba, Ishai, "Not a Jew from Yavne but a Hebrew From Samaria!" *Haaretz Literary Supplement*, 27.9.2000. [Hebrew].

Damad, Josett, "Remembering Jacqueline," (Lecture given at The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute), March 17, 1996.

Dan, Yosef, "On Post-Zionism, Oral Hebrew, and Futile Messianism," *Haaretz*, 25.3.1995. [Hebrew].

Danziger, Yitzhak, "Foreword: The Commemoration of the Fallen of the Egoz Unit," *Commemorative Booklet*, introduction by Haim Adar (No date or place is given). [Hebrew]. Republished in Mordechai Omer, *Itzhak Danziger*, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, The Open Museum, Industrial Park, Tefen 1996. [Hebrew].

Darom, Naomi, "What Will You Do If in Two Months' Time Ahmadinejad Drops a Nuclear Bomb Here?" *Haaretz*, 10.27.2006 . [Hebrew].

Davies, William David, *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine*, Berkeley 1974.

"Debate Between Authors: Are We still Jews?" *Aleph* (January 1952); *Haaretz*, 6.12.1951. [Hebrew].

Diamond, James S., *Baruch Kurzweil and Modern Hebrew Literature*, Chico, California 1983.

Homeland or Holy Land? The Canaanite Critique of Israel, Bloomington 1986.

Dodu, Gaston, Le royaume latin de Jérusalem (lecture given on November 20, 1913, at the Université Nouvelle in Brussels), Paris 1914.

Don-Yehiya, Eliezer, "Memory and Political Culture: Israeli Society and the Holocaust," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, 9 (1993), pp. 139–162.

Dor, Moshe, "Three Weekday Poems," *Nettle and Metal*, Ramt Gan 1965. [Hebrew].

Drori, Yosef, "Myths, and Daring to Criticize Them," *Haaretz*, 9.8.1988. [Hebrew].

Dubnow, Shimon, *History of the Eternal People*, vol. 4, Tel Aviv 1958. [Hebrew].

Eban, Abba, "Israel in the Mediterranean Narrative," *Molad*, 49, 4–5 (1952), pp. 3–7. [Hebrew].

Eisen, Arnold M., "Nietzsche and the Jews Reconsidered," *Jewish Social Studies*, 48 (1986) pp. 1–14.

Elad-Bouskila, Ami, "The Praises of the Holy City: The Myth of Jerusalem in Modern Arab Literature," in Ohana and Wistrich, eds., *Myth and Memory*, pp. 248–268.
Modern Palestinian Literature, London 1999.
Elam, Igal, *End of Judaism: Religion-Nation*, Tel Aviv 2000. [Hebrew].
Eldad, Israel, "Berdichevsky the Rebel," *Metzuda*, 2, 3 (May 1937). [Hebrew].
"Schopenhauer and Judaism," *Metzuda*, 2, 3 (May 1937), pp. 31–33 [Hebrew].
"Jacob's Ladder," *Sulam*, 1 (1949), pp. 4–5. [Hebrew].
"The Diligent," *Maaser Rishon*, Tel Aviv 1949, p. 147. [Hebrew].
"The Nietzsche Polemic: Between Degeneracy and Madness," on the fiftieth anniversary of his death, *Sulam*, 2, 7 (1950). [Hebrew].
"Content and Envelope in Nietzsche's Teaching," *Lochamei Herut Israel – Ktavim*, 1, Tel Aviv 1959, pp. 785–788. [Hebrew].
and Arieh Eldad, *Jerusalem – A Challenge*, Jerusalem 1978. [Hebrew].
"Micha Yoseph Berdichevsky, Between Egypt and Canaan," *Kivunim*, 9 (1980), pp. 37–59. [Hebrew].
"Nietzsche and the *Old Testament*," in James C. O'Flaherty, Timothy. F. Sellner, and Robert M. Helm, eds., *Studies in Nietzsche and the Judeo-Christian Tradition*, Chapel Hill 1985, pp. 47–68.
El-Hariri, Said Ali, *The Cautionary Tale of the Crusader Wars*, Cairo 1899.
Eliade, Mircea, *Images and Symbols*, Paris 1952.
Eliav, Arieh (Lova), "The Crusader Complex," *Land of the Hart*, Tel Aviv 1972, pp. 133–137. [Hebrew].
El-Kassem, Samich, "The Jerusalem Covenant," *Kul El-Arab*, 14.5.1999.
Ellenblum, Ronnie, *Frankish Rural Settlement in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Cambridge 1998.
Crusader Castles and Modern Histories, Cambridge 2007.
Ellerin, Bruce Elkin, "Nietzsche among the Zionist," Dissertation Submitted to Cornell University 1990.
"Nietzsche et les Zionistes; tableau d'une réception," in Dominique Bourel and Jacques Le Rider, eds., *De Sils-Maria à Jérusalem: Nietzsche et le Judaisme: Les Intellectuels Juifs et Nietzsche*, Paris 1991, pp.111–119.
Even Hen, Ya'akov, ed., *Leaves of Etzion, Collection for Youth and Students of the History of Gush Etzion and Its War*, Organization of the Sons of Gush Etzion and the Benei Akiva Organization in the Land of Israel, Or Etzion Yeshiva, 1978. [Hebrew].
Evron, Boas, *Jewish State or Israeli Nation?* Bloomington 1995.
Ehud Ben Ezer, ed., *Unease in Zion*, Foreword by Robert Alter, New York 1974.
Fabre, Thiery and Robert Ilbert, *Les représentations de la Méditerranée*, Paris 2000.
Fackenheim, Emil, "With or Without God's Help," *Haaretz*, 27.12.2000. [Hebrew].
Feige, Michael, "The Jewish Settlement in Hebron as a Case of Collective Memory," *Yahadut Zemanenu* (Contemporary Jewry), 10 (1996), pp. 73–111. [Hebrew].
"The City which is not White," *Journal of Israeli History – Politics, Society, Culture*, 27, 1 (March 2008), pp. 87–93 [Hebrew]
Settling in the Hearts: Jewish Fundamentalism in the Occupied Territories, Detroit 2008.
Fogel, Moshe, "We and the Crusaders," *Haaretz*, 31.10.1952. [Hebrew].
"The Crusaders in Their Strength and Weakness," *Keshet*, 1 (Autumn 1958), pp. 154–163. [Hebrew].

Garber-Talmon, Yonina, "The Concept of Time in Primitive Myths," *Iyyun*, 2, 4 (1951), pp. 201–214. [Hebrew].
Gellner, Ernst, *Nations and Nationalism*, New York 1983.
Gerber, Haim, "The Guardians of the Walls," *Haaretz Literary Supplement*, 28.7.1999. [Hebrew].
Ghanayem, Muhamad, "Israel in the Mediterranean Space," A Lecture Given at Beit Hasofer, *Apirion*, 4–5 (1985/6), p. 29. [Hebrew].
Gidman, Moshe, *Torah and Life in the Middle Ages in France and Germany*, Tel Aviv 1968. [Hebrew].
Gnessin, Uri Nisan, "After Nietzsche," *Ha-Tzfira* (August 1900). [Hebrew].
"The Beginning of Last Things," *Ha-Meorer*, (August-September 1907), pp. 312–353. [Hebrew].
Goitein, Shlomo Dov, *A Mediterranean Society*, 5 vol., Berkeley 1967–1988.
Golani, Motti, "The Headquarters of the Jerusalem and Gush Etzion District in 1948," *Idan*, 7 (1986), pp. 181–192. [Hebrew].
Golomb, Eliyahu, Proceedings of the Restricted Zionist Executive, November 19, 1944, Central Zionist Archive, S/25/1804. [Hebrew].
Golomb, Jacob, ed., *Nietzsche, Zionism and Hebrew Culture*, Jerusalem 2002. [Hebrew].
Nietzsche and Zion, Ithaca 2004.
Gomeh, Nili, "And They Shall No Longer Be Taken from Their Land," *Amudim*, 438 (May 1988), p. 311. [Hebrew].
Gordon, Aharon David, "The Appreciation of Ourselves," *The Writings of A. D. Gordon*, III, Tel Aviv 1927, pp. 38–39. [Hebrew].
Goultschin, Moshe, *Baruch Kurzweil as a Commentator on Culture*, Ramat-Gan 2009.
Gouri, Haim, "The Canaanite Hour," *Maariv*, 26.12.1975. [Hebrew].
"A Call to the Hebrews," *Davar*, 12.8.1983. [Hebrew].
Graetz, Nurit, "The Myth of Tammuz – Modernism, Nationalism and Canaanism in the Poetry of Ratosh," in idem, ed., *The Canaanite Group: Literature and Ideology*, Tel Aviv 1987, pp. 112–126.
Graetz, Zvi, *History of the Jews*, vol. 4, Warsaw 1906.
Granot, Tzvia, "The Children of Memory Returned to Gush Etzion," *Maariv*, 5.9.1980. [Hebrew].
Greenberg, Uri Zvi, *The Rising Strength*, Tel Aviv 1926 . [Hebrew].
"As My Homeland Is," in *In the Midst of the World and in the Midst of the Poems*, Tel Aviv 1979. [Hebrew].
Grousset, René, *Histoire des croisades et du royaume franc de Jérusalem*, 3 Vols., Paris 1934–1936.
Gurevitch, Zali and Gideon Aran, "The Land of Israel: Myths and Phenomenon," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, X (1994), pp.195–210.
Ha-am, Ahad, "The Question of the Day," *Ha-Shiloah*, IV, 1898. [Hebrew].
Ha-Etzni, Eliakim, "The Genetic Code," *Nekuda*, 10 (1984), p. 10. [Hebrew].
Hagenmeyer, Heinrich, ed., *Fulcheri Carnotensis Historia Hierosolymitana*, lib III, c 37, Heidelberg 1095–1127, pp.748–749.
Halbwachs, Maurice, *The Collective Memory*, Chicago and New York 1980.
Halperin, Yirmiyahu, *The Revival of Hebrew Seamanship*, Tel Aviv 1965. [Hebrew].
"Hebrew Seamanship from the Time of the Bible to the Twentieth Century," in Mordekhai Newman, ed., *Israel and the Sea*, Jerusalem 1970. [Hebrew].

Hamilton, Edith, *Mythology*, Tel Aviv 1982. [Hebrew].
Ha-Mizrahi, Yoram, "The Last Battle," *Haaretz*, 14.7.1989. [Hebrew].
Handelman, Don, *Models and Mirrors: Towards an Anthropology of Public Events*, Cambridge 1990.
Handelman, Susan A., *Fragments of Redemption: Jewish Thought and Literary Theory in Benjamin, Scholem and Levinas*, Bloomington 1971.
Haran, Menahem, "The Crusader Kingdom and the State of Israel," *Be-terem* (June 1949), pp. 55–59. [Hebrew].
Harel, Israel, "Unlike the Crusaders," *Haaretz*, 30.12.1999. [Hebrew].
Harel, Nitza, *"Without Fear and Prejudice": Uri Avnery and Ha'olam Ha'ze*, Jerusalem 2006. [Hebrew].
Hayek, Dimitri, *Le droit franc en Syrie pendant les croisades: institutions judiciaires*, Paris 1925.
Hazan, Robert, *The First Crusade and the Jews*, Jerusalem 2000. [Hebrew].
"Hebrew Names For the Features of the Landscape of Gush Etzion," *Gushpanka*, 15 (February 1989). [Hebrew].
Herzl, Theodor, *The Jewish State*, trans. Shmuel Perlman, Jerusalem 1943.
Herzog, Haim, *Heroes of Israel: Profile of Jewish Courage*, Jerusalem 1991.
Hever, Hannan, "An Imagined Native Community: 'Canaanite Literature' in Israeli Culture," *Israeli Sociology*, 2, 1 (1999), pp. 147–166. [Hebrew].
Hirschfeld, Ariel, "Nimrod the Sand Youth," *Haaretz*, 5.11.1997. [Hebrew].
Hobsbawm, Eric and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge 1983.
Hobsbawm, Eric, *Nations and Nationalism since 1870: Program, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge 1999.
Hollinger, David, *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism*, New York 1996.
Holtzman, Avner, *Towards the Tear in the Heart: Micha Josef Berdyczewsky – The Formative Years (1886–1902)*, Jerusalem 1995. [Hebrew].
"Old Jews, New Hebrews," *Haaretz*, 27.3.2002. [Hebrew].
Horden, Peregrine and Nicholas Purcell: *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*, Oxford 2000.
Horon, Adyah Gurevitch, *East and West: A History of Canaan and the Land of the Hebrews*, Tel Aviv 2000. [Hebrew].
Hourani, Albert, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798–1939*, Oxford 1962.
Hovers, Eyal, "Time in Zionism: The Life and Afterlife of a Temporal Revolution," *Political Theory*, 26, 5 (Oct. 1998), pp. 652–685.
Huntington, Samuel, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York 1997.
Huyssen, Andre, *Twilight Memories*, New York and London 1995.
Ilan, Raffi, "The Settlements of Hakibbutz Hadati in Gush Etzion 1943–1948," *Idan*, 7 (1986), pp. 89–110. [Hebrew].
Ilan, Zvi, *New Findings in Research on Kfar Etzion*, Kfar Etzion Field School 1984. [Hebrew].
"The Crusaders and the Lessons They Teach," *Davar*, 9.8.1985. [Hebrew].
"In Search of the Thirty-Five," College of the Legacy of the Hebron Hills – Field School, in collaboration with the Torah Department in the Ministry of Education and Culture, Kfar Etzion 1971. [Hebrew].
"In Those Days and at That Time – Conversations With the Old-Timers of the Gush on the Events of 1948," *Gushpanka*, 88 (February 10, 1988). [Hebrew].

"In Those Days and at That Time," *Zera'im*, The Journal of Benei Akiva, 3 (1976). [Hebrew].
Irving Howe Interviews Gershom Scholem: "The Only Thing in My Life I Have Never Doubted is the Existence of God," *Present Tense*, VIII, 1 (Autumn 1980), pp. 53–57.
Jabès, Edmond, *From The Book to the Book: An Edmond Jabès Reader*, Hanover and London 1991.
Jabotinsky, Ari, *My Father, Ze'ev Jabotinsky*, Tel Aviv 1981. [Hebrew].
Jabotinsky, Ze'ev, *Works*, I, *Autobiography*, Jerusalem 1947. [Hebrew].
Jacoby, Danny, ed., *One Land, Two Peoples*, Jerusalem 1999. [Hebrew].
Jospe Eva, ed., *Reason and Hope: Selections from the Jewish Writings of Hermann Cohen*, Cincinnati 1971.
Kahanoff, Jacqueline (Shohet), "Cairo Wedding," *Tomorrow* (July 1945), pp. 19–23.
"Such is Rachel," *The Atlantic Monthly* (October 1946).
"Do you like Sagan?" *Maariv*, 23.10.1956. [Hebrew].
"The Tragedy of Woman in the East," *Maariv*, 30.7.1965. [Hebrew].
"From Egypt to Here," *Maariv*, 4.10.1967. [Hebrew].
Me-Mizrach Shemesh (From East the Sun), ed. Aharon Amir, Tel Aviv 1978. [Hebrew].
"My Brother Ishmael," *Aat* (1978), pp. 24–27. [Hebrew].
Between Two Worlds, ed., David Ohana, Jerusalem 2005 [Hebrew].
Mongrels or Marvels: The Levantine Writings of Jacqueline Shohet Kahanoff, eds., Deborah A. Starr and Sasson Somekh, Stanford 2011.
Kalmar, Ivan D. and Derek J. Penslar, eds., *Orientalism and the Jews*, Hanover and London 2005.
Kaniel, Shlomo, "The 'Hill Settlers' – Is There a Biblical Sabra?" in Asher Cohen, ed., *The Religious Zionism: An Era of Changes – Studies in Memory of Zvulun Hammer*, Jerusalem 2004, pp. 533–558. [Hebrew].
Kartun-Blum, Ruth, *Chant d'Israël – Anthologie de la Poésie Hébraïque*, Paris 1984.
Katznelson, Berl, "With Our Backs to the Wall," *Writings of B. Katznelson*, 9, Tel Aviv 1948. [Hebrew].
Kaufmann, Walter, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, New Jersey 1950.
Kedar, Benjamin Ze'ev, ed., *The Crusaders and Their Kingdom: Studies in the History of Palestine 1099–1292*, Jerusalem 1987. [Hebrew].
"Il motivo della crociata nel pensiero politico Israeliano," *Verso Gerusalemme*, Il convegno internazionale nel IX centenario della I crociata (1099–1999), eds., F. Cardini, M. Belloli, B. Vetere, Mario Congedo Lecce 1999, pp. 135–150.
"Crusaders Lessons," *Haaretz*, 22.12.1972. [Hebrew].
"Joshua Prawer, His Personality and Work," *In Memory of Joshua Prawer*, The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities 1992 [Hebrew].
and Raphael Jehuda Zwi Werblowski, eds., *Sacred Space: Shrine, City, Land*, London 1998.
Kedem, Ge'ula, "My Tree," *Davar For Children*, 20/40 (February 1977), p. 616. [Hebrew].
Kellner, Vered, "How Lovely Were the Nights!" *Kol Ha-Ir*, 12.10.2001. [Hebrew].
Kelman, Herbert, "Israel in Transition from Zionism to Post-Zionism," *Annals of the American Academy*, 555 (1998), pp. 46–61.

Kemp, Adriana, David Newman, Uri Ram and Oren Yiftachel, eds., *Israelis in Conflict: Hegemonies, Identities and Challenges*, Brighton 2004.
Kimmerling, Baruch, "Merchants of Fear," *Haaretz*, 24.6.1994. [Hebrew].
Klatzkin, Ya'akov, "The Galut Cannot Survive," *Essays*, introduction by Yosef Shechter, Tel Aviv 1965, pp. 19–31. [Hebrew].
Klausner, Joseph, "Fear," *Hashiloah* (1907), pp. 574–576. [Hebrew].
Kling, Simcha, *Joseph Klausner*, New York 1970.
Knohl, Dov, *Gush Etzion and its War*, Jerusalem 1952. [Hebrew].
Siege in the Hills of Hebron, New York 1958.
Kolakowski, Leszek, *The Presence of Myth*, trans. Adam Czerniawski, Chicago 1989.
Kolat, Israel, "The Permutations of Hebrew Canaanism," in Jacoby, *One Land, Two Peoples*, pp. 93–95. [Hebrew].
Kook, Hillel, Shemuel Merlin and others, *The Time Has Come! – A Clarification of the Principles and a Political Declaration by the Hebrew Committee of National Liberation*, Washington 1944. [Hebrew].
Kurzweil, Baruch, *Struggling for the Principles of Judaism*, Jerusalem 1969. [Hebrew].
"The Nature and Origins of the 'Young Hebrews' (Canaanites)," *Our New Literature – Continuity or Revolution?* Tel Aviv 1971, pp. 270–300. [Hebrew].
"On the Usefulness and the Danger of the Science of Judaism," in *Bialik and Tchernichovsky: Researches in Their Poetry*, Tel Aviv 1972, pp. 211–350. [Hebrew].
Laor, Dan, "Kurzweil and the Canaanites: Between Insight and Struggle," *Keshet – After 40 Years* (1998), pp. 32–45. [Hebrew].
"American Literature and Israeli Culture: The Case of the Canaanites," *Israel Studies*, 5, 1 (Spring 2000), pp. 287–300.
"From 'Hadrasha' to Epistle to the Hebrew Youth," *Alpayim*, 21 (2001), pp. 171–186. [Hebrew].
Lazare, Bernand, *Job's Dungheap*, New York 1949.
Leibowitz, Yeshayahu, *Judaism, Jewish People and the State of Israel*, Jerusalem 1976. [Hebrew].
Judaism, Human Values and the Jewish State, trans. Eliezer Goldman, et al., Cambridge, MA 1992.
Lerman, Eran, *The Mediterranean Idea: Envisioning a Brighter Future for All the Peoples of the Mediterranean*, Tel Aviv 2007.
Lestner, Jacob, "Introduction," in Shlomo Dov Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, Hebrew trans. Aya Breuer, Tel Aviv 2005. [Hebrew]
Lévinas, Emmanuel, *Quatres Lectures Talmudiques*, Paris 1968.
Levinger, Ester, *Monuments for the Fallen in Israel*, Tel Aviv 1993. [Hebrew].
Lévi-Strauss, Claude, "The Structural Study of Myth," *Structural Anthropology*, trans. Claire Jacobson and Brook Grundfest Schoeff, New York 1963, pp. 50–66.
Myth and Meaning, New York 1979.
Levmor, Rahel, "On the Oak-tree," *Gushpanka*, 8 (1987), p. 2. [Hebrew].
Liebes, Yehuda, "Chapters in the Dictionary of the Book of the Zohar," Dissertation Submitted to the Hebrew University, Jerusalem 1977. [Hebrew].
"The Tikkun of the Godhead: The Zohar and Yonatan Ratosh," *Alpayim*, 7 (1993), pp. 8–26. [Hebrew].

Litani, Yehuda, "The Fly in the Ointment of Gush Etzion," *Haaretz*, 21.10.1980. [Hebrew].
Livni, Ami, "Zionism, Crusaders, Settlement," *Ha-Sadeh*, 68, 1 (1988), p. 22. [Hebrew].
London, Yaron, "Toto Tamuz and the Law of Return," *Yediot Aharonot*, 7.9.2007. [Hebrew].
Lustick, Ian, *For the Land and the Lord: Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel*, New York 1991.
Maalouf, Amin, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes*, trans. Jon Rothschild, London 1984.
Madelin, Louis, "La Syrie franque," *Revue des deux mondes*, sixth series, 38 (1916), pp. 314–358.
Malkin, Irad, "Israel: Zionism, Religion, and Democracy," *Rive – Review of Mediterranean Politics and Culture*, 3 (1997), pp. 29–33.
"General Introduction: The Mediterranean Series," in Shlomo Dov Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, Tel Aviv 2005, pp. 11–19. [Hebrew].
Manor-Friedman, Tamar, *Danziger's Sculpture as a Source of Inspiration*, Israel Museum, Jerusalem 1996. [Hebrew].
Manovitz, Rivka, *Fire from the Hills – A Play*, from the manuscript of Ya'akov Even-Hen, Ministry of Education and Culture – Torah Section, Jerusalem 1989. [Hebrew].
Marcus, Ivan (Israel), "From 'Deus Vult' to the Will of the Creator: Extremist Religious Ideologies and Historical Reality in the Year 1096 and Hasidei Ashkenaz," in Yom Tov Assis and others, eds., *Facing the Cross*, pp. 92–100 [Hebrew].
Margalit, Avishai and Moshe Halbertal, *Idolatry*, Cambridge, MA 1992.
Margalit, Dan, "Neither Saladin Nor Samson," *Haaretz*, 10.10.2000. [Hebrew].
Marx, Karl, "The Eighteenth of Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," New York 1963.
Matalon, Ronit, "Detached from the East," *Haaretz*, 1.8.1986. [Hebrew].
"The Pain of Lost Options," *Haaretz*, 4.3.1994. [Hebrew].
Mauss, Marcel, *Compete rendu de G. Dumézil, Le Festin d'immortalite, L'Année sociologique*, 1 (1925).
Melzer, Yoram, "Concerning the Crusaders," *Eretz Aheret*, 2 (December-January 2000–2001), pp. 52–59. [Hebrew].
Mendes-Flohr, Paul, "Zarathustra's Apostle: Martin Buber and the Jewish Renaissance," in Jacob Golomb, ed., *Nietzsche and Jewish Culture*, London 1997, pp. 233–243.
Meyuhas Ginio, Aliza, "The Mediterranean World Discussed by Nahum Slouschz (1871–1966) in His Work *The Book of The Sea* (1948)," The Third Mersin in History Colloquium, Mersin 2009, pp. 1–10.
Michael F. Duffy, and Willard Mittleman, "Nietzsche's Attitude towards the Jews," *Journal of History of Ideas*, XLIX, 1 (1988), pp. 301–317.
Michael, Sami, as recorded at the concluding symposium of the international conference, "Albert Camus: Parcours Méditerranéen," held at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, November 12, 1997.
Milstein, Uri, "The Beginning of the War on the Roads in 1948," *Ma'arachot*, 281 (November 1981), pp. 43–47. [Hebrew].
Mintz, Adi, "Etzion Blocs," *Nekuda*, 199 (October 1996), pp. 28–31. [Hebrew].
Miron, Dan, "Yonatan Ratosh as a Literary Hero," *Haaretz*, 9.4.1990, 15.4.1990. [Hebrew]

Moked, Gabriel, "Israel in the Mediterranean Space," A Lecture Given at Beit Hasofer, *Apirion*, 4–5 (1985/6), p. 27.[Hebrew].
Mosse, George L., "Fascism and the Intellectuals," *Germans and Jews*, London 1971, pp. 144–171.
Soldiers – Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars, Oxford 1990.
"Max Nordau, Liberalism and the New Jew," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 27 (1992), pp. 561–581.
Confronting History: A Memoir, Madison, Wis. 2000.
Müller, Ernst, "Gedanken über Nietzsche und sein Verhältnis zu den Juden," *Die Welt*, 5 (October 1990), pp.4–5.
Myers, David, *Reinventing the Jewish Past, European Jewish Intellectuals and the Zionist Return to History*, New York 1995.
Naor, Arye, *Greater Israel: Theology and Policy*, Haifa 2001. [Hebrew].
Neeman, Shlomo, "An Examination of the Significance of the Crusader Period," *Haaretz*, 14.5.1976.
Neumann, Boaz, *Land and Desire in Early Zionism*, Brandeis 2011. [Hebrew].
Neumark, David, "An Introduction to the Theory of the Superman," *From East to West*, 1 (1894), pp. 115–124. [Hebrew].
Newman, David and Tamar Hermann, "A Comparative Study of Gush Emunim and Peace Now," *Middle-Eastren Studies*, 28 (1992), pp. 509–530.
Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Antichrist*, trans. Walter Kaufmann in *The Portable Nietzsche*, New York 1954.
Beyond Good and Evil, trans. Walter Kaufmann, New York 1966.
The Birth of Tragedy, trans. Walter Kaufmann, New York 1966.
The Will to Power, trans. Walter Kaufmannn, New York 1967.
The Genealogy of Morals, trans. Walter Kaufmann and Reginald John Hollingdale, New York 1968.
"On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," trans. Reginald John Hollingdale, in *Untimely Meditations*, Cambridge 1983.
Daybreak, trans. Reginald J. Hollingdale, Cambridge 1997.
Nimni, Ephraim, ed., *The Challenge of Post-Zionism: Alternatives to Fundamentalist Politics in Israel*, London 2003.
Nisan, Mordechai, "Saladin and the War against the Crusaders: History, Myth and Symbolism," *Tlallei Orot*, 5 (1994), pp. 229–236. [Hebrew].
No'am, Vered, "Echoes," *Nekuda*, 162 (September 1992), pp. 54–55. [Hebrew].
Nocke, Alexandra, "Israel and the Emergence of Mediterranean Identity: Expressions of Locality in Music and Literature," *Israel Studies*, 11, 1 (Spring 2006), pp. 143–173.
The Place of the Mediterranean in Modern Israeli Identity, Leiden 2009.
Nofar, Esther, "A Sea of Yearnings," *Amudim* (May 1997), pp. 238–241. [Hebrew].
Nora, Pierre, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations*, 26 (1989), pp. 7–25.
Nordau, Max, *Entartung*, Berlin 1986.
Ofek, Uriel, "Gush Etzion As Seen In Its Literature," *Idan*, 7 (1986). [Hebrew].
"Official Gathering at the Lone Tree," file 24/7, Archives for the History of Gush Etzion. [Hebrew].
Ofrat, Gideon, "With the Back to the Sea," *Within a Local Context*, Tel Aviv 2004. [Hebrew].
Ohana, David, "The Role of Myth in History: Nietzsche and Sorel," *Religion, Ideology and Nationalism in Europe and America*, Jerusalem 1986, pp. 119–140.

"Georges Sorel and the Rise of the Political Myth," *History of European Ideas*, XIII, 4 (1991), pp. 733–746.
"Every Government is Evil: Interview with Leibowitz," *Maariv*, 22.1.1993. [Hebrew].
"Zarathustra in Jerusalem: Nietzsche and the New Hebrews" *Israel Affairs*, 1, 3 (1995). pp. 38–60.
"El sionismo de Yeshayahu Leibowitz," *Kivunim – Revista De Sionismo Y Judaismo* (1997), pp. 37–52.
"Camus: A Window to the Mediterranean or The Myth of Prometheus" in Albert Camus: "parcours méditerranéens," a special issue of *Perspectives*, 5 (1998), eds., Fernande Bartfeld and David Ohana, pp. 21–29.
The Last Israelis, Tel Aviv 1998 (Hebrew).
"The Crusader Myth," *Haaretz Literary Supplement*, 7.7.1999. [Hebrew].
"Israel Towards a Mediterranean Identity," *Munich Contributions to European Unification, Special Issue: Integration and Identity: Challenges to Europe and Israel*, 4 (1999), pp. 81–101.
"Walter Benjamin – L'automobile, c'est la guerre," in *The Promethean Passion: The Intellectual Origins of the 20th Century from Rousseau to Foucault*, Jerusalem 2000, pp. 223–239. [Hebrew].
"J. L. Talmon and the Dialectics of the Secular Messianism," in Jacob L. Talmon, *The Riddle of the Present and the Cunning of History*, ed., Ohana, Jerusalem 2000, pp. I–XXXVI. [Hebrew].
Sitbon, Claude, and David Mendelson, eds., *Lire Albert Memmi: Déracinement, Exil, Identité*, Paris-Geneva-Brussels 2002.
"The Cross, the Crescent and the Star of David: The Zionist-Crusader Analogy in the Israeli Discourse," *Iyyunim Bitkumat Israel*, 11 (2002), pp. 486–526. [Hebrew].
"Kfar-Etzion: The Community of Memory and the Myth of Return," *Israel Studies*, 7, 2 (Summer 2002), pp.145–174.
"The Meaning of Jewish-Israeli Identity," in Eliezer Ben-Refael, Yosef Gorny and Ya'acov Ro'i, eds., *Contemporary Jewries, Convergence and Divergence*, Boston 2003, pp. 65–78.
"Jacqueline Kahanoff: Pioneer of Mediterranean Culture in Israel," *Iyyunim Bitkumat Israel*, 13 (2003), pp. 29–55 [Hebrew].
"Mediterranean Humanism," *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 18, 1 (2003), pp. 59–75.
Messianism and Mamlachtiut – Ben-Gurion and the Intellectuals – Between Political Vision and Political Theology, Sede-Boker 2003. [Hebrew]
"Yehoshua Arieli and the Responsibility of the Historian," *The Rage of the Intellectuals: Political Radicalism and Social Criticism in Europe and Israel*, Tel Aviv 2005, pp. 109–128. [Hebrew].
"Fascism as a Political Community of Experience: Following Walter Benjamin's Political Phenomenology," *Democratic Culture*, 9 (2005), pp. 7–49. [Hebrew].
"The Mediterranean Option: An Introduction to the Thought of Jacqueline Kahanoff," *Medietrranean Historical Review*, 18, 1 (June 2006), pp. 239–265.
"Are the Israelis the New Crusaders? The Radical Religious Symbolism of the Zionist-Crusader Takes on New Significance," *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture*, 13, 3 (2006) pp. 36–43.

"Yeshayahu Leibowitz: The Radical Intellectual and the Critic of the 'Canaanite Messianity,'" in Aviezer Ravitzky, ed., *Yeshayahu Leibowitz: Between Conservatism and Radicalism – Refl ections on His Philosophy*, Tel Aviv 2007, pp. 155–177. [Hebrew].
"Otherness, Absence and Canonization in Discourse of Literary Historiography: The Case of Jacqueline Kahanoff," in *Times of Change: Jewish Literature in the Modern Era – Essays in Honor of Dan Miron*, Sede Boker 2008, pp. 235–257. [Hebrew].
"The 'Anti-Intellectual' Intellectuals as Political Mythmakers," in Ze'ev Sternhell, ed., *The Intellectual Revolt Against Democracy 1870–1945*, The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem 1996, pp. 87–104.
"From Right to Left: Israel Eldad and Nietzsche's Reception in Israel," *Nietzsche-Studien*, 38 (2009), pp. 363–388.
The Dawn of Political Nihilism, vol. 1 of *The Nihilist Order*, Brighton 2009.
Homo Mythicus, vol. 2 of *The Nihilist Order*, Brighton 2009.
The Futurist Syndrome, vol. 3 of *The Nihilist Order*, Brighton 2010.
Political Theologies in the Holy Land: Israeli Messianism and its Critics, London 2009.
Israel and its Mediterranean Identity, New York 2011.
Modernism and Zionism, New York 2012.
Olick, Jeffrey, and Joyce Robbins, "Social Memory Studies: From Collective Memory to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24 (1998), pp. 105–140.
Or, Amir, "One Right for the Sons of the Land," *Haaretz*, 22.11.2000 [Hebrew].
Orgad, Dorit, *Two Youths in the Crusader Kingdom*, Ramat Gan 1985. [Hebrew].
Oz, Amos, *Unto Death*, Tel Aviv 1971. [Hebrew].
In the Land of Israel, New York 1983.
"And Even if by the Skin of Your Teeth," *Apirion*, 6 (1986–1987). [Hebrew].
"A Romance Expert," *Haaretz*, 13.7.1990 [Hebrew].
"The Specter of Saladin," *The New York Times*, 28.7.2000.
"Palestine Must Choose," *Yediot Aharonot*, 3.8.2000. [Hebrew].
Pace, David, *Claude Levi-Strauss: The Bearer of Ashes*, London 1983.
Paine, Robert, "Jewish Ontologies of Time and Political Legitimation in Israel," in Henry J. Rutz ed., *The Politics of Time*, Washington D.C. 1992, pp. 150–170.
Pappe, Ilan, "Zionism As Colonialism – A Comparative Look at Adulterated Colonialism in Asia and Africa," in Yehiam Weitz, ed., *Between Vision and Revision: A Hundred Years of Historiography and Zionism*, Jerusalem 1997, pp. 345–366. [Hebrew].
Patai, Raphael, *Jewish Seafaring in Ancient Times: A Contribution to the History of Palestinian Culture*, Tel Aviv 1938. [Hebrew].
ed., *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, trans. Harry Zohn, vol. 1, New York 1960.
Pedaya, Haviva, "The Divinity as Place and Time and the Holy Place in Jewish Mysticism," in Kedar and Werblowsky, eds., *Sacred Space*, pp. 11–84.
Pepper, Stephen, *Concept and Quality: A World Hypothesis*, La Salle 1967.
Peres, Shimon, *David's Sling*, Jerusalem 1970. [Hebrew].
"Perhaps Age Gives Him a Further Point of View," interview with Natan Shnor, *The Journal of Kibbutz Be'erot Yitzhak* 2019 (April 1997), p. 16. [Hebrew].
"State of Israel – A Modern Crusader State?" *Pi Ha-Aton*, 13.1.1965 [Hebrew].

Pinkas, Yisrael, "Mediterranean Song," in *Our Ancient Sea*, Raananah 1999. [Hebrew].
Pinkerfeld, Uri, "Strata of Gush Etzion," *Idan*, 7 (1986), pp. 111–122. [Hebrew].
Pinkerfeld-Amir, Enda, "Eshel Avraham," *Lamed-He*, Jerusalem 1950. [Hebrew].
Porat, Hanan, "Memory – the Secret of Redemption," *Gushpanka – Journal of the Gush Etzion Settlements*, 5 (May 1987), p. 14. [Hebrew].
In Search of Anat, Beit-El 1988. [Hebrew].
In Search of My Brother, Beit-El 1989. [Hebrew].
"Lighthouse of Torah and Labour: Few Questions to Hanan Porat," *Gushpanka*, 43 (1992), pp. 15–43. [Hebrew].
"The Return Home," *Gushpanka*, 10 (May 1992), p. 41. [Hebrew].
Porath, Yehoshua, "Hebrew Canaanism and Arabic Canaanism," in Jacoby, *One Land, Two Peoples*, pp. 83–92. [Hebrew].
The Life of Uriel Shelah (Yonathan Ratosh), Tel Aviv 1989. [Hebrew].
Porush, Meir, "Canaanites, 2004 Model," *Haaretz*, 20.1.2004. [Hebrew].
Pourtalès, Guy de Comte, *Nietzsche en Italie*, Paris 1929.
Prawer, Joshua, *The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099–1291)*, Jerusalem 1947. [Hebrew].
"The Fall of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem," *La-Merhav: Political Weekly*, 1, 3 (1954), pp. 60–61; Ibid, 4 (1945) pp. 84–85. [Hebrew].
"Many Peoples Have Ruled Jerusalem but Only We Have Struck Roots There," symposium under the direction of Geula Cohen, *Maariv*, 4.8.1967. [Hebrew].
The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem – European Colonialism in the Middle Ages, London 1972.
Crusader Institutions, Oxford 1980.
The World of the Crusaders, Jerusalem 1984. [Hebrew].
The History of the Jews in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, Oxford 1988.
"Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Mediterranean Sea," *Pe'amim*, 45 (Autumn 1990), pp. 5–11 [Hebrew].
"The Confrontation of East and West in the Crusader Period, " in Joseph Geiger, ed., *Lectures in Memory of the Late Moshe Strosta*, Jerusalem 1994, pp. 23–38. [Hebrew].
Ra'anan, Yossi, "The IDF and the Crusaders," *Haaretz*, 2.10.1990. [Hebrew].
Rabikovitz, Dalia, *All the Poems So Far*, Tel Aviv 1995. [Hebrew].
Rabin, Yitzhak, "A State Searching For Its People," *Be-Tfutzot Ha-Gola*, 3 (Autumn 1968), pp. 30–32. [Hebrew]
Rabinovitz, Michael, "Judaism and the Superman," *Ha-shiloah*, IX (1912), pp. 376–383. [Hebrew].
Rabinovitz, Yaakov, "Wellhausen's theory," *Hedim*, 6, 2 (1928). [Hebrew]
Ram, Uri, *Time of the "Post": Nationalism and the Politics of Knowledge in Israel*, Tel Aviv 2006. [Hebrew].
Ratosh, Yonatan, *The Opening Discourse: In Executive Session with the Agents of the Cells [First Meeting]*, Tel Aviv 1944. [Hebrew].
The Walker in Darkness – Poems, Tel Aviv 1965. [Hebrew].
Sword Poems, Tel Aviv 1969. [Hebrew].
From Victory to Collapse: An Alef Anthology, Tel Aviv 1976. [Hebrew].
The First Days: Hebrew Overtures, Tel Aviv 1982. [Hebrew].
Ravitsky, Aviezer, *Messianism, Zionism and Jewish Religious Radicalism*, Chicago 1996.

ed., Preface, *The Land of Israel in Modern Era Jewish Thought*, Jerusalem 2004. [Hebrew].
Raz, Sha'ul, *The Holy Mountain: The War and Defeat of Kfar Etzion*, Tel Aviv 1951. [Hebrew].
Renan, Ernest, *Qu'est que c'est qu'une nation?* Paris 1882.
Reuveni, Aharon, *Shem, Ham and Japhet*, Tel Aviv 1932. [Hebrew].
Rey, Emmanuel, *Essai sur la domination française en Syrie durant le moyen âge*, Paris 1866.
Rosenberg, Sylvia, ed., *Knights of the Holy Land: The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Israel Museum Catalogue, Jerusalem 1999. [Hebrew].
Rosenthal, Bernice Glatzer ed., *Nietzsche in Russia*, New Jersey 1986.
ed., *Nietzsche and Soviet Culture*, New York 1994.
Rosenthal, Ruvik, ed., *The heart of the Matter, Redefining Social and National Issues*, Jerusalem 2005. [Hebrew].
Rosenzweig, Franz, *Star of Redemption*, trans., Yehoshua Amir, Jerusalem 1970. [Hebrew].
Rubinstein, Amnon, *From Herzl to Rabin, 100 Years of Zionism*, Tel Aviv 1997.
"The Power of Democracy," *Haaretz*, 18.10.2000. [Hebrew].
Runciman, Steven, *A History of the Crusades*, 3 Vols., Cambridge 1951–1954.
Sadei, Liav, "Moshav Ein Habsor as a Community of Memory and as a Place of Memory for Settlement in Sinai," M.A. thesis submitted to the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev 2000. [Hebrew].
Sa'di, Ahmad H., "Catastrophe, Memory and Identity: Al-Nakbah as a Component of Palestinian Identity," *Israel Studies*, 7, 2 (Summer 2002), pp. 175–198. [Hebrew].
Sagi, Avi, *The Jewish-Israeli Voyage, Culture and Identity*, Jerusalem 2006. [Hebrew].
To Be a Jew: Brenner, An Existentialist Jew, Tel Aviv 2007. [Hebrew].
Saguy, Uri, *Lights in the Mist*, Tel Aviv 1998. [Hebrew].
Said, Edward, *Orientalism*, New York 1978.
Sarna, Nahum, "From Wellhausen to Kaufmann," *Midstream*, 7 (1961), pp. 64–74.
Scheib, Israel, "Der Voluntarismus Eduard von Hartmanns in der Abhängigkeit von Schopenhauer," Dissertation submitted to Universität Wien 1933.
Schelling, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph, *Philosophie der Mythologie*, Stuttgart 1856.
Schimmel, Harold, *Sefer Midrash Tadsha*, Tel Aviv 1993. [Hebrew].
Schlipp, Paul and Maurice Friedman, eds., *The Philosophy of Martin Buber*, III, La Salle 1967.
Schmitt, Carl, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George Schwab, Cambridge, MA 1996.
Schocken, Gershom, "History of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem," *Haaretz*, 30.3.1953. [Hebrew].
Scholem, Gershom, *Sabbati Sevi – The Mystical Messiah 1626–1676*. Revised English edition, trans. Zvi R. Werblowsky, New Jersey 1973.
"Kabbalah and Myth," in *Elements of the Kabbalah and its Symbolism*, Jerusalem 1980, pp.86–112. [Hebrew].
Explications and Implications: Writings on Jewish Heritage and Renaissance, vol. 2, Tel Aviv 1989. [Hebrew].
The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality, New York 1995.

Schwartz, Barry, "The Social Context of Commemoration: A Study in Collective Memory," *Social Forces*, 61 (1982), pp. 374–402.
Schwartz, Regina M., "Nations and Nationalism: Adultery in the House of David," *Critical Inquiry*, 19, 1 (Autumn 1992).
Schweid, Eliezer, *New Gordonian Essays: Globalization, Post-Modernization and the Jewish People*, Tel Aviv 2005. [Hebrew].
Segal, Haggai, *Dear Brothers*, Jerusalem 1987. [Hebrew].
Segev, Tom, *Elvis in Jerusalem: Post-Zionism and the Americanization of Israel*, New York 2003.
Selz, Peter H., *German Expressionist Painting*, Berkeley 1974.
Shafat, Gershon, *Gush Emunim: The Story Behind the Scenes*, Beit-El 1995. [Hebrew].
Shalev, Yitzhak, *The Gabriel Tirosh Affair*, Tel Aviv 1964. [Hebrew].
"Crusaders," *Golden Drunkenness – Poems*, Tel Aviv 1975, pp. 43–44. [Hebrew]
Shamir, Ilana, ed., *Gal-ed: Monuments for the Fallen in Israel's Wars*, Tel Aviv 1989. [Hebrew].
Perpetuation and Memory: The Way of Israeli Society in Creating Memorial Landscapes, Tel Aviv 1996. [Hebrew].
Shapira, Anita, *Berl: Biography*, 2, Tel Aviv 1980. [Hebrew].
"What Happened to the 'Denial of the Exile'?" *Alpayim*, 25 (2003), pp.9–54. [Hebrew].
Shapira, Avraham, "Introduction: Heritage as a Source to Renaissance – The Spiritual Identity of Gershom Scholem," in Scholem, *Explications and Implications: Writings on Jewish Heritage and Renaissance*, Tel Aviv 1982.
Shapira, Sarit, *Routes of Wandering – Nomadism, Voyages and Transitions in Contemporary Israeli Art*, Israel Museum Catalogue, Jerusalem 1992. [Hebrew].
Shashar, Michael, *Why Are People Afraid of Yeshayahu Leibowitz*, Jerusalem 1995. [Hebrew].
Shavit, Ari, "Prepare for an Islamic Tsunami," an interview with Yossi Peled, *Haaretz*, 10.20.2006. [Hebrew].
Shavit, Uriah, "Who Really Was Saladin?" *Haaretz*, 19.1.2001. [Hebrew].
Shavit, Ya'acov, *From Majority to a State: The Revisionist Movement – The Plan for a Colonisatory Regime and Social Ideas 1925–1935*, Tel Aviv 1978. [Hebrew].
The New Hebrew Nation: A Study in Israeli Heresy and Fantasy, London 1987.
"With Vision, Fire and Sword," *Haaretz – Cultural and Literary Supplement*, special issue on the tenth anniversary of the death of the poet Yonatan Ratosh, 6.4. 2001. [Hebrew].
and Mordechai Eran, *The Hebrew Bible Reborn: From Holy Scripture to the Book of Books, A History of Biblical Cultures and the Battles over the Bible in Modern Judaism*, Berlin 2007.
Sheleg, Yair, "Zayith's Interpretation," *Kol Ha'ir*, 18.10.1991. [Hebrew].
"The Levant Princess, *Kol Ha'Ir*, 15.3.1996. [Hebrew].
Desert Wind: The Story of Yehoshua Cohen, Tel Aviv 1998. [Hebrew].
"A State under Extermination Danger," *Haaretz*, 9.3.2006. [Hebrew]
Shemaia, Nitza, "The Oak-Tree," *Hatzofeh*, May 1988. [Hebrew].
Shemesh, David, ed., *Gush Etzion: "Bar Mitzva" of the Renewal of the Settlement*, Ministry of Education and Culture, Kfar Etzion School 1981. [Hebrew].
Shenhav, Yehuda and Pnina Motzafi-Haller, eds., *Mizrahim in Israel: A Critical Observation into Israel's Ethnicity*, Jerusalem 2002.

The Arab Jews, A Postcolonial Reading of Nationalism, Religion, and Ethnicity, Stanford 2006.
Shestov, Lev, "The Good in the Teachings of Count Tolstoy and Nietzsche," *Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and Nietzsche*, trans. Bernard Martin, Athens, Ohio 1969, pp. 11–140.
Shiloah, Zvi, *The Guilt of Jerusalem*, Tel Aviv 1989. [Hebrew].
Shimoni, Gideon, *The Zionist Ideology*, New England, Hanover 1995.
Shimron, Gad, *Satan in the Holy Land*, Jerusalem 1988. [Hebrew].
Shindler, Colin, *A History of Modern Israel*, Cambridge 2008.
Shneur, Zalman, *Works*, I-II, Tel Aviv 1960. [Hebrew].
Silberman, Lou H., "Wellhausen and Judaism," *Semeia*, 25 (1982), pp. 75–82.
Silberstein, Laurence J., *Post-Zionism Debates: Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture*, New York 1999.
Simon, Akibah Ernst, *Are We Still Jews? Essays*, Tel Aviv 1982. [Hebrew].
Sivan, Emmanuel, *Arab Political Myths*, Tel Aviv 1988. [Hebrew].
The 1948 Generation: Myth, Profile and Memory, Tel Aviv 1991. [Hebrew].
Skinner, Anthony David, "A Zarathustra for the Jews: Winter 1913–January 1916," in *Lamentations of Youth: The Dairies of Gershom Scholem 1913–1919*, ed. and trans. Anthony David Skinner, Cambridge MA 2007, pp. 7–22.
Slouschz, Nahum, *Book of the Sea: The Conquest of the Sea*, Tel Aviv 1948. [Hebrew].
Smail, Raymond C., *The Crusaders in Syria and the Holy Land*, London 1973.
Smith, Anthony D, *The Nation in History*, Hanover 2003.
Sobol, Yehoshua, "Not a People of Masters," *Haaretz*, 11.5.2005. [Hebrew].
Sofer, Sasson, *The Beginnings of Political Thought in Israel*, Tel Aviv 2001. [Hebrew].
Sohnstein, David, "Don't Come Back One Day," *Haaretz*, 4.8.2006. [Hebrew].
Solejano, Gonzalo, *Nietzsche en Espana*, Madrid 1967.
Sprinzak, Ehud, "Gush Emunim: The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism," *Jerusalem Quarterly*, 21 (1981), pp. 28–47.
Starr, Debora Ann, "Levantine Ambivalences: Egyptian Jewish Identities in Contemporary Literature," Dissertation submitted to the University of Michigan 2000.
Stein, Leonard, ed., *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, Letters vol. I, London 1968.
Steiner, George, "The Wandering Jew," *Ptahim*, 1 (1969), pp. 17–23.
"The Exile Jew," *Haaretz*, 7.11.1999. [Hebrew].
Sternberg, Eliezer "The Legend of the Tree," *Hatzofeh For Children* (March 1956), p. 7. [Hebrew].
Strong, Tracy, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration*, Berkeley 1988.
Tal, Uriel, "Totalitarian Democratic Hermeneutics and Politics in Modern Jewish Religious Nationalism," in *Totalitarian Democracy and After*, Jerusalem 1984, pp. 137–157.
Talhok, Vadia, *Al-Tslivia al-Jedira Pi Falestin*, Damascus 1948.
Talmon, Yaakov, *The Riddle of the Present and the Cunning of History*, ed., David Ohana, Jerusleam 2000. [Hebrew].
Tchernichovsky, Saul, *Selected Poems*, New York 1944.
"The Nebi Daniel Convoy," The Hagana in Jerusalem: Friends' Testimonies and Memories," Jerusalem 1975, pp. 103–112. [Hebrew].

"The Scroll of Planting – Kfar Etzion," in Yohanan Ben Ya'akov, ed., *The History of Gush Etzion*, Kfar Etzion 1999, p. 8. [Hebrew].
Trachter, David S., *Nietzsche in England 1890–1914*, Toronto 1970.
Tönnies, Ferdinand, *Community and Society (Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft)*, trans. and ed. by Charles P. Loomis, East Lansing 1957.
Toynbee, Arnold J., *A Study of History*, vol. 2, New York 1965.
Tsalka, Dan, *On the Road to Aleppo: A Book of Stories*, Ra'anana 1999. [Hebrew]
Tumarkin, Igael, *Belvoir Tumarkin Sculpture Garden*, Beit She'an 1996. [Hebrew].
From the Soil to the Art of the Soil, Tel Aviv 1998. [Hebrew].
Tversky, Yehoshua, *Work and Faith: Religious Settlement in the Land of Israel*, Tel Aviv 1972. [Hebrew].
"Twenty Years after the Death of the Poet Yonatan Ratosh, Founder of the 'Young Hebrews
Movement,'" special issue of the *Haaretz – Cultural and Literary Supplement*, 6.4.2001. [Hebrew].
Tzameret, Zvi, "Here Our Bodies Lie" – A Conversation With Haim Gouri," *Idan, 7, Special Issue: Gush Etzion from its Beginnings to 1948* (1986), pp. 209–212. [Hebrew].
Ussishkin, Shemuel, *The West in the East: The History of the Crusaders in Palestine*, Tel Aviv 1931. [Hebrew].
Vilnai, Ze'ev, *The Campaign for the Liberation of Israel*, Jerusalem 1953. [Hebrew].
Vinitzki-Saroussi, Vered, "Commemorating a Difficult Past: Yitzhak Rabin's Memorials," *American Sociological Review*, 67 (2002), pp. 30–51.
Wahl, Jean, "Buber and the Philosophies of Existence," in Schlipp and Friedman, eds., *The Philosophy of Martin Buber*, pp. 475–510.
Warren, Mark, *Nietzsche and Political Thought*, Cambridge, MA 1988.
Wasserstrom, Steven M., *Religion after Religion: Gershom Scholem, Mircea Eliade, and Henry Corbin at Eranos*, New Jersey 1999.
Wechsler, Arthur, *Friends of the King of Jerusalem*, Ramat Gan 1976. [Hebrew].
Weisburd, David L., and Elin Waring, "Settlement Motivations in Gush Emunim Movement: Comparing Bonds of Altruism and Self-Interest," in *The Impact of Gush Emunim*, London 1985, pp.183–199.
and Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, "Vigilantism as Rational Social Control: The Case of the Gush Emunim Settlers," in Myron Aronoff, ed., *Cross Current in Israeli Culture and Politics*, New Brunswick 1984, pp. 69–88.
Wellhausen, Julius, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*, Berlin 1883; English Translation *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, with a Reprint of the Article "Israel" from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Edinburgh 1885.
Wertheimer, Steff, "Itzhak Rabin, The Turkish ambition and Danziger's 'Nimrod,'" *Globes*, 10.25.1996. [Hebrew].
Wheeler, Deborah, "Does Post-Zionism has a Future?" in Laura Zitttrain Eisenberg, *Traditions and Transitions in Israel Studies – Books on Israel*, 4, New York 2003, pp. 159–180.
Wieselteir, Meir, "Sealed in a Bottle," *Something Optimistic, the Making of Poems*, Tel Aviv 1976. [Hebrew].
Wistrich, Robert and David Ohana, *The Shaping of Israeli Identity: Myth, Memory and Trauma*, London 1995.
Witkowsky, Gustav, "Nietzsche's Stellung zum Zionismus," *Jüdische Rundschau*, 2 (May 1913), pp. 178–179.

Yehoshua, Abraham B., "Facing the Forests," in *Previous to the Winter of 1974 – Mivhar*, Tel Aviv 1975, pp. 122–192. [Hebrew].
Yevin, Ada Amichal, *Sambatyon: Biography of Dr. Israel Eldad*, Beit El 1994. [Hebrew].
Yonatan, Natan, "A Mediterranean Culture," *Apirion*, 4 (1983), p. 8. [Hebrew].
Young, James, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*, New Haven and London 1995.
Yovel, Yirmiyahu, *Dark Riddle: Hegel, Nietzsche and the Jews*, Cambridge 1998.
Yuval, Israel, "Vengeance and the Curse, Blood and Libel: From the Acts of the Righteous to the Blood Libel," *Zion*,58 (1994), pp. 33–90. [Hebrew].
Zach, Nathan, "On the Shores of the Seas," in *Different Songs*, Tel Aviv 1974. [Hebrew].
Zalmona, Yigal and Tamar Manor-Fridman, *To the East? To the East: Orientalism in the Arts in Israel*, Jerusalem 1998. [Hebrew].
Zayith, On, "The Israeli Solution," *Nekuda*, 152 (September 1991), pp. 48–50.
The Israeli People: The Lost Culture, Maale Edomim 1991. [Hebrew].
Ze'ev Galili, Interviews Gershom Scholem: "Messianism, Zionism and Anarchy in the Language," in Scholem, *Continuity and Rebellion*, Tel Aviv 1994, pp. 56–64. [Hebrew].
Zeira, Motti, "Early Stages In the Creation of the Myth of the 'Lamed Heh,'" *Yahadut Zemanenu* (Contemporary Jewry), 10 (1996), pp. 41–72. [Hebrew].
Zeitlin, Hillel, "Friedrich Nietzsche, His Life, Poetry and Philosophy," *Ha-Zman*, vols. 1–10 (1905). [Hebrew].
"Adam Elion, El Elion (Bikoret Ha-adam, 1919)," *On the Border of Two Worlds*, Tel Aviv 1997, pp. 49–69. [Hebrew].
"Lev Shestov," *Ha-Meorer*, 2, 10 (1907), pp. 175–180. [Hebrew].
Zertal, Idith and Akiva Eldar, *Lords of the Land*, New York 2007.
Zerubavel, Yael, "Between History and Legend: The Metamorphoses of Tel Hai in the Popular Memory," in Ohana and Wistrich, *Myth and Memory*, pp. 189–202. [Hebrew].
Recovered Roots: Memory and the Making of National Tradition, Chicago 1995.
Zilberman, Ifrach, "Palestinian Canaanim," in Danny Jacoby, ed., *One Land, Two Peoples*, pp. 83–103. [Hebrew].
The Canaanite Founding Myth of the Palestinian Society, Jerusalem 1993. [Hebrew].
Zipperstein, Steven J., *Elusive Prophet: Ahad Ha-Am and the Origins of Zionism*, Berkeley 1993.
Zizek, Slavoj, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*, London 2003.

Name Index

Subject Index