

NUMBER

E
1

Jerusalem, December 2000

POSITION PAPER

**RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR
JEWS IN ISRAEL:
*A KULTURKAMPF?***

Professor Aviezer Ravitzky



המכון הישראלי לדמוקרטיה
THE ISRAEL DEMOCRACY INSTITUTE
An Israel-Diaspora Enterprise

The Israel Democracy Institute is an independent, non-partisan think tank dedicated to strengthening democracy in Israel. It serves the Knesset and its committees, government offices, public institutions, local government, and political parties by undertaking research and making recommendations for reform and change.

In addition, the Israel Democracy Institute undertakes comparative studies of legislative, structural and electoral systems of other democratic regimes. The IDI also aims to enrich public discourse and encourage innovative thinking by initiating discussion of topics on the country's political, social and economic agenda, with the participation of legislators, policymakers and academics.

The IDI makes its findings available through the publication of position papers and books in the Democracy Library Series.

Editor in Chief: Uri Dromi

English Editor: Sari Sapir

Translators: Joshua Brown and Sari Sapir

Graphic Design: Dina Sher-Rahat

Printed in Jerusalem by the Old City Press

© 2000 by the Israel Democracy Institute

All rights reserved

Professor Aviezer Ravitzky is a Senior Fellow at the Israel Democracy Institute and Professor of Jewish Philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

This paper was first published in Hebrew by the Israel Democracy Institute in July 1997. A previous English version appeared in *Creating the Jewish Future*, Michael Brown and Bernard Lightman, editors (Walnut Creek, London and New Delhi: Altamira Press, 1998).



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Contradictory Predictions	6
Flight from Tension	9
Normalization	12
The Status Quo	15
The Crucible	19
Conclusion	23



INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Israeli society has been increasingly riven by tensions concerning religion and state, the sacred and the profane, rabbinical rulings and individual liberty, and particularism and universalism. According to widely held public opinion, these tensions reflect an inevitable trend toward cultural fragmentation and erosion of the nation's collective identity. This trend, it is said, threatens to sunder the classic Zionist synthesis and the consequent Israeli ethos that sprang from it. This view has recently been expressed most eloquently in a number of publications, all of which speak of the post-modern (and post-Zionist) disintegration of the values and the underlying consensus that comprise the foundations of Israeli society.

In this position paper, I shall suggest a different way of looking at these very same developments and attempt to show that the current confrontation between religious and secular Israelis does not necessarily represent a process of alienation and disintegration. Rather, it can be seen as an expression of social maturation and cultural diversity.

To begin with, the political and social status quo that has governed relations between the secular and religious communities, I shall argue, was the product of a mistaken assumption – held by both sides – that its rival was ultimately destined to wither away. The current confrontation, to the contrary, expresses the development of a new recognition on the part of each group that its rival represents an enduring and vital phenomenon, which will grow and even flourish.

Secondly, this struggle reflects dissatisfaction with the dominant, monolithic model of the “authentic” Israeli, as heretofore portrayed. This challenge enables previously marginalized groups (*Sephardim*, the religious, Revisionists) to move towards center stage within Israeli society.

Thirdly, many of the tensions concerning the religion/state issue stem from the fact that Zionism's historical foes – the Ultra-Orthodox on



one side and the Reform on the other – have been integrated into the fold. They, too, are bitterly engaged in the debate over the character of the Zionist state and what laws it should legislate concerning its Jewish identity. As a result, the State of Israel no longer reflects the victory of a particular (nationalist) Jewish outlook, but has become a broad and definitive forum for the struggle over the future of Jews and Judaism.

I do not deny that amidst all the rumblings there lurks a real danger of disintegration. Quite the opposite: my intention is to present the roots of this social conflict in all their severity. Nevertheless, it is my belief that these developments are creating new focal points for collective identity and provide an existential “home” to formerly neglected groups. They contain within them the potential seeds of a multi-faceted society, which will more accurately represent the complexities of contemporary Jewish experience.

CONTRADICTORY PREDICTIONS

In 1949, about a year after the State of Israel was established, Arthur Koestler published *Promise and Fulfillment: Palestine 1917-1949*. In it, Koestler analyzed the historical developments that had led to the creation of the state, depicted the Israeli experience and way of life, and attempted to predict the future of the new society taking shape in the Jewish State. While conceding that it was difficult to foresee the direction of the new Hebrew civilization at such an early juncture, he believed that one thing was fairly clear: within a generation or two Israel will have become an essentially ‘un-Jewish’ country.¹ Already in 1949, Koestler thought that youths born in Israel were a breed apart from their cousins in the Diaspora, and with each generation this



difference was bound to increase. In due time, Koestler was convinced, a Hebrew identity and culture would emerge that would be altogether foreign to the Jewish experience.²

Thirty years earlier, the well-known American sociologist Thorstein Veblen had posited the opposite prediction regarding the likely destiny of the hypothetical Jewish community that the Zionists proposed to establish in Palestine. In the event that the Zionists somehow managed to realize their hopes of returning the Jews to their ancient homeland, Veblen contended that the ingathered people would withdraw into themselves and concentrate exclusively on their own particularistic heritage – on “studies of a Talmudic nature.” Exposure to modern European culture would cease, and the special circumstances that had enabled the leading lights among the Jewish nation to turn outwards and to make seminal contributions to Western science and culture would no longer exist.³

Both these opposing scenarios were predicted for our generation, the Jews now living in the State of Israel. In Koestler’s opinion, we were not supposed to be Jews at all, while Veblen believed that we would be “too Jewish” – Jews untouched by world culture. According to Koestler, only the present and the future would be of interest to us, whereas Veblen presumed we would be totally preoccupied with the past.

Which of the two, if either, got it right? How we answer that question depends on which Israeli social circle, cultural group, or ideological camp we examine. Many Israelis at one end of the social spectrum seem to be bent on fulfilling Koestler’s prophecy of total alienation from historical Jewish consciousness. This refers not merely to the absence of religious belief or ritual observance in their lives, but to the very essence of their cultural identity and collective memory. At the other end of the spectrum, a large segment of the population is trying with all its might to fulfill Veblen’s counter-prophecy. These people aim to effect a complete break with everything external, Western, universal, modern – a list that includes Zionism as the modern, nationalist revolution of the Jewish People.⁴



Let me illustrate the point with an anecdote. A few years ago, around Passover, the daily newspaper *Yedioth Ahronoth* carried an interesting interview with a *matzah* baker from Tel Aviv. In the interview, the man maintained that he and his fellow bakers noted a consistent two percent drop in sales every year. His explanation for this trend is revealing: non-observant young couples who no longer kept their parents' practice of eating *matzah* during Passover – something their families had done not so much out of religious obligation as from an expression of cultural and national identity – accounted, he thought, for half the decline. The other half of the drop was caused by young religious couples who had grown up in households where regular *matzah* had been deemed acceptable, but who now insisted on consuming hand-made, *matzah shmurah* throughout the holiday. Thus, he concluded, the poor bakers were getting pinched on one side and squeezed on the other.

Regardless of whether or not the baker's statistics stand up to rigorous analysis, they provide an insight into the cultural forces at work in Israel today. Interestingly enough, this dynamic has placed professors of Judaic studies at Israeli universities in the same boat as the *matzah* bakers, at least until recently. For more than a decade, student interest in subjects such as Bible, Talmud, Jewish philosophy, Jewish history and Hebrew literature was on the wane. While the trend seems to have shifted as of late, it did reflect a process analogous to that perceived by the *matzah* baker.⁵ Twenty or thirty years ago, a sizable number of secular students sought to learn about the history of their nation, its creativity and philosophy. The next generation of secular students, however, appeared much less interested in classical Jewish sources and texts. (Occasionally it even seemed that a kind of fear had arisen among this group lest classical Jewish sources be employed to deny them their cultural and political freedom.) At the other end of the spectrum, many religious youths who had previously sought to study classical Jewish texts in an academic setting now turned away from the university and devoted themselves exclusively to *yeshiva* studies. Whichever way you looked, fewer students were to be found.



This polarization, to be sure, is not new, having accompanied the Israeli experience from the outset. The difference today is that this polarization, which once existed at the margins of society, now threatens to burst inward, overtake the center and even determine the social and political agenda. Lately, it even seems that arrangements and agreements that worked well for many years are no longer effective or acceptable by either group.

Should this surprise us? I don't think so. But prior to analyzing the processes that brought about this phenomenon, I would like to call attention to the internal tensions that characterize the Israeli experience, or, I should say, the inherent duality at the core of the Zionist idea and enterprise. In my view, the polarization under consideration in this paper reflects, to a great extent, the unwillingness of large segments of the Israeli population to continue to put up with this existential tension. I would argue that they are striving, both covertly and overtly, to reach a final verdict on the long-standing conflict between past and present, between normality and uniqueness, between living in the homeland and living in the Holy Land.

FLIGHT FROM TENSION

Zionism incorporated features characteristic of both revolutionary and renaissance and restoration movements. In both aspects of its character, the revolutionary and the renaissance, Zionism displayed radical traits.

Zionism set out to effect sweeping reforms for the Jewish People and for humankind, more far-reaching and comprehensive than those attempted by other modern revolutions.⁶ Consider, for example, the French Revolution, or even the Bolshevik Revolution. To whom did the insurrectionists appeal, and what changes did they endeavor to

bring about? In both cases, they addressed the citizens of existing nations, who spoke established languages and lived within distinct territorial and cultural boundaries. As revolutionaries, they sought to transform certain aspects of society, such as political or economic systems. These changes were undeniably significant, and sometimes even bore redemptive claims, but in each case they were undertaken within the boundaries of an existing territorial and historical framework and did not extend to every imaginable sphere of existence. In the case of the Zionist movement, however, it was necessary to generate an all-encompassing, nearly total revolution in national and human experience. The sons and daughters of the Jewish People had to be transported from their countries of residence, learn a new language, adopt new modes of life and take on new professions. Zionism had to wage its battle on all fronts: the social, the cultural, the political, the legal, and the economic. In addition, the movement operated within a historical context that offered little, if any, continuity. In the political arena, for example, not only did the Zionists, like other revolutionaries, have to reform a political system and eject a foreign power, they also had to create a new political entity from scratch after nineteen hundred years without Jewish sovereignty.

In addition to seeking an almost total transformation of the conditions of Jewish life, the main Zionist groups advocated a radical departure from traditional religious practice and belief.⁷ And yet, Zionism was simultaneously a renaissance movement that aspired to restore a bygone existence. Whereas other modern revolutions forged a future-oriented myth and a forward-looking ethos with symbols suggestive of a better tomorrow, Zionism drew its symbols primarily from the past. While not entirely free of utopian visions, the main building blocks of Zionism's radical myths and ethos were materials that had been preserved in the historical and collective memory of the Jewish People: ancient landscapes, old proverbs, kings, heroes, and prophets. Like Janus, the movement faced forward in quest of radical revolution while simultaneously looking backwards at the ancient memories and images of the Jewish past.



Admittedly, Zionism was similar in this regard to other nationalist movements that employed historical memory and traditional symbols to build national awareness and collective consciousness. Even the use of religious symbols is not unique to Zionism: it can be found in the Polish, Irish, and Czech national movements and, for that matter, in most related movements in Europe.⁸ But just as the revolutionary elements of the Zionist movement go beyond those of other revolutions, its retrospective aspect – renaissance and restoration – is more intense and more demanding.

Unlike other revival movements, Zionism is the product of a nation whose ethnic and religious identities were for countless generations fused into a single whole. The Jewish religion is particular to one nation alone, and in the present era (in contrast with the messianic age), this religion does not pursue a universal constituency but focuses its messages and meanings on a specific nation, its “Chosen People.” Yet, throughout its history, the Jewish People has seldom operated within anything other than a religious context. Its memories have, for the most part, been filtered through the prism of classical Jewish texts. Its collective national identity and its religious identity were essentially interchangeable. (“Your people are my people, your God is my God”;⁹ “I am a Hebrew, and I revere God, the Lord in Heaven.”¹⁰) Its laws, culture, language, politics and social norms were rooted in a joint religious and ethnic heritage.¹¹ Given this history, it is clear that any attempt to resurrect symbols from the nation’s past will necessarily revive certain religious claims. It is the nature of religious consciousness to see the past not only as the source of history and existence, but as a source of obligation. It is a wellspring from which, in addition to memories, beliefs and commandments flow.

Consider the dualistic nature of Israel as homeland and as the Holy Land. Whereas “birthplace” and “home” evoke a sense of intimacy, comfort, and naturalness, providing protection and shelter to its offspring, “Holy” conjures up feelings of reverence and transcendence, awe and fear. The homeland is a distinctly national category; the Holy Land a distinctly religious one. Home is an existential concept, whereas



holiness is a metaphysical and normative concept. Throughout Jewish history, notwithstanding the internal tension inherent in this coupling, the two have always gone hand in hand.¹² When Zionism reawakened the desire for a concrete homeland, it also roused from slumber the yearning for the Holy Land. It is the latter that has now risen and is staking its claim.

This dualistic intertwining of nationhood and religion expresses itself in any number of ways: in the relationship between modern Hebrew and the Holy Tongue,¹³ between Herzl's State of the Jews and the classic visions of redemption, and even in the contrast between Tel Aviv with its lifestyle and Jerusalem with its symbols.¹⁴ It is no wonder, then, that a number of Israelis – on both sides of the issue – seek to escape this immanent strain; they demand a hard and fast resolution and are no longer prepared to continue living with the cultural duality. Paradoxically, the more extreme elements on both sides of this question seem to have reached a kind of unstated understanding. The ultra-orthodox and the ultra-secularist despise the conflict and are striving towards a decisive and unequivocal resolution of the debate between past and present, each fearful in its own way of the ongoing clash between life in the homeland and life in the Holy Land.¹⁵

NORMALIZATION

The tension described above is not just a conflict between the sacred and the profane or between the religious and the national spheres. It is woven into the very fabric of modern Zionism and built into the national revolution itself. One of the most central themes of Zionist rhetoric was the “normalization” of the Jewish People.¹⁶ To wit: a normal people should reside in its own land, speak its own language, control its own destiny, be free of political subservience and establish for itself a healthy



social order. Thus preached all the nationalist movements. But what kind of a process did the Jewish People have to go through in order to attain such normality? A singular, “abnormal” process, apparently without precedent in world history.

An example from historical research will serve to illustrate my point. In 1911, the great historian and linguist, Theodor Noeldeke, published a survey of ancient Semitic languages in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. The article dealt with languages such as Akkadian, Canaanite, and Phoenician, and next to them was an examination of the Hebrew language and its history from Biblical times onward. As the modern Zionist movement was just then gathering steam, the author saw fit to comment on the call of contemporary Zionists to revive the Hebrew language as the everyday spoken tongue of the Jewish People. “The dream,” wrote Noeldeke, “of some Zionists that Hebrew – a would-be Hebrew,¹⁷ that is to say – will again become a living, popular language in Palestine, has still less prospect of realization than their vision of a restored Jewish empire in the Holy Land.”¹⁸ An objective scholar with no particular bias, Noeldeke deemed the attempt to revive Hebrew and to establish a political entity in Palestine farfetched, even fantastic. The historical record, of course, has proven him wrong. Is it fair, however, to accuse him of error or poor judgment? One could argue that scholars have no business making predictions of this sort. If, however, they decide to go ahead and speculate anyway, they must do their best to evaluate possibilities rationally and to anticipate developments on the basis of precedents and historical analogies. Noeldeke could find no precedent for the rebirth of a sacred tongue as an everyday spoken language or for the mass migration of people to an ancient homeland after an absence of many centuries. What else could he do, but declare it a dream?

Since Noeldeke’s time, many studies of the revival of spoken Hebrew have been published.¹⁹ To this day, nothing completely analogous to this phenomenon has been found. Modern Greek, for example, boasts many similarities to its ancestor, yet a speaker of the current language must struggle to read ancient texts. The modern Hebrew speaker,



however, moves smoothly through the Bible. Similarly, recent attempts to revive the use of Gaelic in Ireland have had only modest success, and the language is used today mostly in poetry.²⁰

To reiterate, Zionists saw the return to the homeland and the rebirth of the Hebrew language as steps towards national normality, a goal that was accorded a certain moral stature. Normality was itself conceived of as a norm. To achieve normality, however, it was necessary to undergo a completely unprecedented historical process, unique in human history. What was considered routine, proper, and “normal” for other nations (a national territory and a spoken language) demanded the expenditure of incredible energy and the playing out of a singular historical drama for the Jews.²¹ Normalization of the nation was, as it were, an anomaly in and of itself.²²

Today, centrifugal social forces seek to resolve Zionism’s dichotomies once and for all: old or new, sacred or profane, particularistic or universal, normal or singular.²³ Zionism accorded new life to the Jewish public domain, but movements and individuals seek to mold this domain in different and conflicting ways. Substantive ideological conflict, dormant for many years, now threatens to penetrate into the public consciousness and infiltrate the public domain. There seems, for instance, to be a growing likelihood of collision between state (secular) courts and rabbinical courts, and between military commands and rabbinical rulings. To be sure, the potential for such conflicts is not new. In Herzl’s Zionist vision of a new state, rabbinical influence extends no farther than the door of the synagogue, while in Rabbi Kook’s Zionist vision, rabbis legislating from the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem make judgements for the Jewish People. When Kook established the Jerusalem Chief Rabbinate in 1921, he intended it as the first, preparatory phase of this messianic project.²⁴ In practice, the conflict has so far been deferred and, as far as possible, neutralized. But now individuals are attempting to bring the matter of state law versus Torah law to a head and to bring all of the latent conflicts out into the open. In the past, the exponents of religious Zionism were particularly eager to find ways to mitigate such potential conflicts, determined as they



were to live and thrive in both worlds. Lately, however, religious Zionism has bred leaders who would sharpen the horns of the dilemma and brandish them prominently before their students.

THE STATUS QUO

In light of all this, must we conclude that Israeli society is doomed to experience a *Kulturkampf*, and that the Zionist synthesis is marching ineluctably toward its undoing?²⁵ Before answering that question, let us rephrase it in more sober terms. Let us ask why the arrangements that seemed to work well enough in years past are no longer sufficient, and why they are now repudiated by various factions within the Israeli public.

It is a matter of common knowledge that just after the establishment of the State of Israel, the secular and religious communities engineered a compromise that is known as the “status quo.”²⁶ More than just a political agreement, this was a kind of unwritten social charter designed to enable the two sides to live side-by-side whatever their theological and ideological disagreements. And despite, or perhaps because of, its internal inconsistencies, the arrangement worked well for a time. For example: according to the agreement, public buses were not to run on the Sabbath (except in “red [proletarian] Haifa”), but travel was permitted in private cars and taxis. While difficult to justify either on halakhic grounds or according to secular liberal doctrine, each side could claim in this arrangement a partial victory, and no one came away from the table feeling alienated and defeated. If anything, the (partial) disappointment and (partial) satisfaction that resulted from the deal were what guaranteed its (partial) success. Another example: the Israeli Declaration of Independence concludes with the following sentence: “Out of trust in the Rock of Israel, [in Hebrew: *Tzur Yisrael*]



we sign our names.” Who or what is the “Rock of Israel?” Is it the God of Israel? Is it the genius of the Jewish People? The disagreements regarding the phrasing of the Declaration drove its writers to settle for this intentionally ambiguous term, which each individual and camp was free to interpret. At the time, one of Israel’s leading thinkers derided this ambiguity and deemed it hypocrisy. In my opinion, however, that very ambiguity is what gives the document its advantage: it provides a point of identification for people of different factions and denominations. Similarly what is the “trust” described in the Declaration? In the religious tradition, it connotes a belief in God and suggests a passive nod towards the “Redeemer of Israel.”²⁷ In modern Hebrew, however, “trust” (the Hebrew word is *bitakhon*, which also means security) refers principally to physical and military power. Again the double meaning has proved most fruitful, enabling people of different opinions to identify with the text.

An extremely important development is the politicization, in recent years, of the religious and secular divide, followed by the evolution of the Religious Right and the Secular Left, thus increasing the divide between the two principal rifts that cleave contemporary Israel: the question of peace (and territorial compromise) and issues of religion and state. Of the many and varied events and developments that have contributed to the heightening of tensions, there are three basic factors that have had an especially important influence on the Israeli consciousness.

First, it has been about half-a-century since the status quo agreement was reached. During that period, Israeli reality has undergone great changes. Consequently, it is almost impossible today for any segment of society to find its own social and ideological stamp in the status quo agreement. An example will serve to illustrate the current situation. Today’s secular Jew will claim (and will be supported by most religious Zionists) that when *yeshiva* students were granted exemption from military service, the exemption applied to somewhere between 400 and 900 young men. Today it extends to tens of thousands, and the number is growing year by year. Who in the late forties could have



imagined that the day would come when a vast majority of a significant segment of society would exempt itself from military service? Though the initial terms of the agreement continue to be honored, its spirit and intentions have been wholly distorted, or so the secular Jew claims. A person belonging to the Orthodox community, on the other hand, might raise a counterargument. When it was agreed to permit private transportation on the Sabbath, how many Israelis had access to a private car? Not many. It was their right, therefore, to assume that the public domain would be nearly free of open violation of the Sabbath. Who could have anticipated that the day would come when private cars would become the standard means of transportation? From this angle too, a wide discrepancy has developed between the original agreement and its contemporary implications. As is the nature of things, each side pays less attention to what it has gained, inclining to harp on what it has lost over time. It follows, therefore, that each side feels that its rival has usurped control of the public domain.

Second, I would claim that the original political and social agreement was based on a mistaken assumption common to both sides. Each assumed, for reasons of its own, that the rival camp represented an ephemeral historical phenomenon. Secular, religious, and ultra-Orthodox all adhered to the belief that the “other” was fated to decline in strength and numbers, and eventually to disappear. Ben-Gurion and his secular disciples, Rabbi Kook and his Zionist students, the Lubavitcher Rebbe and his followers all harbored the identical belief. And while they may not have thought their forecasts would be realized in the immediate future, all were sufficiently confident in the conviction that any agreement was bound to be temporary, that it assumed the status of a tactical compromise rather than a fundamental reconciliation.

From the viewpoint of secular leaders, it was inconceivable that the future held any promise for what they considered to be the antiquated world of Orthodoxy. Secularists believed that the sons and daughters of that world – observant Jews, *yeshiva* boys, *Hasidim* or *Mitnagdim* – were all fated to be overwhelmed by the normalization process transforming the nation. In the Diaspora, such people had served as



cultural guardians. But no longer. Their children and grandchildren would conform to the profile of the new Jew then being molded in the national homeland. And until that day, why not compromise with these anachronistic representatives of a fading epoch and even show them a degree of nostalgic empathy? The Orthodox, however, far from imagining themselves on the brink of extinction, believed that it was the secular Jews who were doomed to disappear. In fact, to the ultra-Orthodox, the term “secular Jew” was an oxymoron. Some would assimilate, and some would return to God and their faith, but as a group, they were not self-sustaining. The religious Zionists from the school of Rabbi Kook subscribed, in their own way, to a similar assumption.²⁸ True, they said, the secular Zionists declare that they are staging a revolt against their parents and grandparents and are abandoning the messianic faith. But what are they in fact doing? They have returned from the Exile to the Holy Land, have adopted the holy tongue and have abandoned the option of assimilation in favor of the Congregation of Israel. One would expect, therefore, that once the secularists had accomplished their political and mundane goals, they would seek an even more profound return of a spiritual and religious nature. And who could withhold affection and goodwill from these potential returnees, who were already taking an active part in the process that would ultimately lead to the redemption of Israel?

To my understanding, the very same sort of logic was responsible for the failure to create a constitution for the State of Israel. A constitution is meant to be durable. It is liable to perpetuate prevailing conceptions and entrench the established balance of power. Thus, each side preferred to hold out, waiting for more favorable conditions that would enable it to formulate a constitution in tune with its own heart and mind. Until then, the status quo and a provisional social truce would do.

But all these “optimistic” expectations have so far failed to materialize. The “Other” refuses to disappear or to redefine its religious or secular identity. It even insists on representing itself as an enduring and vital phenomenon that will continue to reproduce and flourish. No longer



indeed, is it possible to imagine a future free of the “Other,” who seems as likely as one’s own group to go on existing in Israel, to be fruitful and multiply. This realization is a major factor in the escalation of tensions. If it was easy in the past to display tolerance and solidarity towards those who, one imagined, would soon be trading their colors for our own, today we are being asked to tolerate individuals and groups who seem determined and even likely to preserve their own identities. This demands a level of acknowledgement and acceptance not previously required.²⁹

Diaspora Jews are exempt from these requirements. An Ultra-Orthodox Jew living in Williamsburg is not likely to encounter a Reform Jew from Manhattan in the synagogue or in a “Temple” or even at a community center. And if the ultra-Orthodox Jew runs into a Reform Jew on the street or in the subway, it will be a chance meeting between two Americans, not between two Jews. Nationalist Zionism, however, assembled all these Jews within a stone’s throw of each other. It created a forum, a common public space for all of them. However, as long as each seemed to the other to be a shadowy anachronism or an ephemeral historical accident, the two did not meet head-on. Today, it would seem, that meeting is finally taking place – with rancor and anger, perhaps, but it is taking place.

THE CRUCIBLE

The recent reevaluation of the status quo is related to a third change that has transpired in Israeli reality and consciousness. Marginal social groups (*Sephardim* [Oriental Jews], the religious, Revisionists) and certain philosophical streams (ultra-Orthodoxy and Reform) that were once opposed to political Zionism have become involved with and incorporated into the Zionist mainstream. More and more, the Jewish



State is becoming the arena in which the debate about contemporary Jewish identity is being played out; less and less is it the expression of the triumph of a single outlook and a unitary identity.

In the Israel of 1948, it was possible to point to a dominant model of the “authentic” Israeli. It was easy to identify who was a participant in the collective Israeli experience and who digressed from it; who was central and who was marginal. “The struggle over an Israeli identity, as synthetic a concept as that might be, was the search for a norm, a foothold and a point of departure for a society that had lost its European and Jewish identity,” Gershon Shaked wrote in 1983. He continued:

“There is room for a religious Israeli, a **Sephardi** Israeli, and an **Ashkenazi** Israeli [emphasis in original], and a “Western” Israeli can co-exist with a “Jewish” Israeli. So long as they have a common identity, there is nothing as important as pluralism in a society as rich in human resources as our own; on condition that there is a nexus, a common foothold, a mutual point of departure ... I will continue to speak out in defense of this Israeli nexus, which seems to have gone missing: we must go back and seek it out. There is such a thing as a commonplace Israeli experience.... Without Israeliness it is difficult to be an Israeli.”³⁰

Therein lies the rub. The nexus that was supposed to bind all Israelis together was forged according to the mold of one elite Israeli group,³¹ while other groups – *Sephardim*, the religious, Revisionists – were measured according to their compatibility with this model.³² Only later did these groups arise and gravitate towards center stage, first by challenging the dominant ethos and its monolithic ideal and then by penetrating to the heart of popular culture and government. There is no doubt that this challenge to the hegemony of the once prototypical “new Jew” is exacting a toll.³³ It has unleashed confrontations and conflicts that threaten the Israeli equilibrium. But if the cost sometimes appears to be great, the challenge can also lead to social liberation and cultural pluralism. It affords an existential home to communities of “Others,” creating room for them within society rather than on its margins.



Moreover, this inclusionary process has not bypassed streams of Judaism that were initially inimical to the Zionist movement but which have over time become integrated into its historic undertaking. Even factions that formerly chose to place themselves at the periphery or even totally outside of the national enterprise have joined the undertaking (at least de facto). To illustrate, consider the debate on “Who is a Jew?” spawned by the Law of Return. Who are the principal adversaries in the debate, a debate so contentious it has already brought down more than one Israeli government? On one side stand the ultra-Orthodox, led by the late Lubavitcher Rebbe, and on the other, the leaders of the Reform religious movement. That this should be the case is no wonder. The argument, after all, concerns the question of how one becomes a member of the Jewish People; that is, who possesses the authority to convert non-Jews to Judaism? (More to the point, the question is “Who is a rabbi?”) This, of course, is an issue that inflames first and foremost the leaders of competing streams of North American Judaism, all of whom attach the utmost importance to the question of who is recognized as a religious authority by the State of Israel, its citizens, institutions, and laws.³⁴

And who were the most uncompromising religious opponents of Zionism in its early days? None other than the leaders of ultra-Orthodox and Reform Judaism! The former angrily opposed Zionism, seeing it as a rebellious, secular movement with anti-messianic intentions. The Reform also greeted the movement with indignation, viewing it as reactionary and nationalist, denying the universal mission of the Jewish People. Rabbi Shalom Duber Schneerson of Lubavitch, for example, was an implacable early foe of Zionism.³⁵ He could never have imagined that the day would come when his movement would attach major significance to the laws of the Zionist State – to that state’s recognition of rabbis and conversions. He would assuredly have been up in arms at the notion. “What connection is there between the Zionist revolution and me?” he would have asked. The leaders of the early Reform movement would have been no less shocked had they known that today Reform rabbis would be engaged in a bitter struggle for



recognition by the Jewish State of their religious authority, in order for Reform conversions, marriages, and divorces to be considered legitimate within Israel.

Moreover, this struggle has now turned into a battle over the very image of the Jewish State. These two movements, which once fought against the formation of a Jewish State, are today angrily debating the question of the character of that same state and how it should determine questions of Jewish identity and religious authority. Is this evidence of the failure or the success of Zionism? As if a decisive verdict had been rendered in the debate concerning the future of the Jewish People, Israel's founding fathers were disposed to see their creation as a manifestation of the triumph of one (their own) Jewish outlook. Yet, the Israel of today has become the arena for the continuation of that very struggle. The State has gradually come to include the various sects and factions that are now fighting over it from within. Again, there is no denying that this inclusivity exacts a toll. And the price may, in fact, be deemed too steep by those whose concept of Zionism is the revival of Jewish nationalism or the "normalization" of Israelis. The price is not too steep, however, for those who see the movement as a means of revitalizing the Jewish People.

As it turns out, most of the internal tensions that have churned within Judaism for generations have been carried over to the State of Israel and are reflected in the society being formed here. Zionism did not create the fragmentation. On the contrary, from a historiosophical, dialectical point of view, it is possible to depict Zionism as a logical outcome of this polemic. The Jewish People was able, until relatively recently, to exist as a nation even without territory and in the absence of a solid political base. The *Shulhan Arukh* (the most widely accepted code of Jewish law) and the prayer book served as the cement holding the Jewish People together. In recent generations, however, halakhic principles and religious faith have become a source of contention. In this context, it is possible to interpret the Zionist act as an heroic gesture, an almost desperate measure to re-establish a common denominator along a solid, historical and political axis; to establish



once again a national and existential center despite theological rifts and ideological divides. If we adopt this point of view, it seems that the attempt of the founders to shape the culture and identity of this new society according to a single, overriding image contained built-in contradictions. It was destined to alienate various segments of the community. In actuality, it was precisely those political and social compromises that were indistinct and created “gray areas” that most suited the internal logic of the Zionist revival and the complexities of contemporary Jewish experience.³⁶

Unlike the situation in the Diaspora in the modern era, along with the re-establishment of a Jewish public forum in the Land of Israel came a platform for confrontation and sometimes for the determination of issues. Outside of Israel, there are almost limitless opportunities for Jewish individualism and pluralism. Every family and community can pitch its own tent. As it is possible to avoid contact, so is it possible to avoid collision. There is no need for public showdowns or for legal or political verdicts. Not so in Israel, where these occur daily. And as it is impossible to avoid confrontation, it is necessary to agree on rules for dialogue and decision-making, although not necessarily on belief and lifestyle. We must nurture one language but not necessarily a single vocabulary. It is enough to encourage empathy and solidarity on the existential level (“a covenant of fate”), and not necessarily on the ideological and theological one (“a covenant of faith”).³⁷

CONCLUSION

In this position paper, I have written about groups, factions, and camps that live in the same society but on opposite sides of the fence. This does not, of course, provide a comprehensive picture of the complex structure of Israeli society, but only of the potential combatants in a



Kulturkampf. Many studies on the topic have shown that there is great diversity of opinion in Israeli society and a gradual continuum of religious identification from one end of the spectrum to the other. The surveys thus considerably mitigate the picture of rampant extremism. Is it possible to conclude from this, as did researchers at the Guttman Institute for Social Research in a 1994 study, that “there is no basis for the rhetoric that maintains that Israeli society is polarized between religious and secular Jews”? Their comprehensive and well-documented study concludes that “there is a continuum running from those who are extremely observant of the *mitzvot* (commandments) to those who do not observe them at all, not a sharp divide between an observant minority and a secular majority.”³⁸

The study’s findings are indisputably valid. I beg to differ, however, with the optimistic interpretation given them. Are polarization and alienation, after all, only the products of a society that is sharply divided into two warring camps? Is it not possible for there to be a social and cultural divide despite the existence of a continuum encompassing people and groups of intermediate persuasions? For example, look at the Indian subcontinent. If an Indian were to go only a few hundred kilometers from his home, he would discern a difference in dialect. As he went further, he would soon be hearing unfamiliar words. Finally, he would find the language totally incomprehensible, despite the fact that from village to village, the differences in speech had been gradual and were linguistically related.

In other words, social polarization does not depend only on quantum leaps between camps; it is also gauged by the distance between the two extremes and the depth of the rift between them – assuming that each extreme represents groups that are significant from a cultural viewpoint. All the more so if it turns out that it is actually at the extremes where the leadership, the educated elite, the moral compasses and the ideological fervency (of opposite persuasions) that move the populace are to be found.

This is the situation prevailing in Israeli society. Let us take a look at the sociological data. About one-quarter of the population claims to



observe the Sabbath strictly³⁹ and (in the case of men) to put on phylacteries every day; more than three-quarters attest to fasting on Yom Kippur.⁴⁰ Quite surprisingly, 56 percent of Israeli Jews report that they “believe with all their hearts” that the Torah was given to the Jewish People at Sinai; 15 percent “do not believe at all” and the rest are “unsure” about the matter. According to these figures, there would appear to be a religious orthodoxy on one side and a secular “orthodoxy” on the other, each of which claims a relatively equal following (20-25 percent of the population). The rest (i.e., the majority) of the population are somewhere in the middle, expressing different degrees of affinity to, and distance from, the traditions and religious faith.

It is my impression, however, that these two “orthodoxies,” and not the intermediate group, are responsible for the most and best part of Israel’s cultural creativity – be it literary, artistic, philosophical, theological or polemical. On the one hand, the volume of rabbinical literature being produced today exceeds that of any period in the history of the Jewish People. High-level secular Hebrew literature is flourishing to a no less impressive degree. (In recent years the field has produced four realistic candidates for the Nobel Prize in literature.) The existential and religious plane should thus be differentiated from the intellectual and creative plane. In the former, from the viewpoint of down-to-earth human experience, there are important common meeting-points that could serve to bridge the gap between the two camps. Here, without a doubt, the intermediate groups can play an important role. However they are ineffectual when it comes to mediating the divide on the cultural and intellectual plane, to say nothing of the political divide. To bridge that gap, members of the elites of both “orthodoxies” would have to internalize the duality and come to terms with the “otherness” of their fellow-Jews and fellow-Israelis, accepting the fact of a common destiny.⁴¹ In this position paper, I have attempted to trace some of the processes that could enable such a development.



NOTES

1. Arthur Koestler, *Promise and Fulfillment: Palestine 1917-49* (London: Macmillan, 1949), pp. 330-31.
2. See also: Georges Friedmann, *The End of the Jewish People?* (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1968), pp. 26-37, 251-99; Akiva Ernst Simon, *Ha-im Od Yehudim Anachnu?* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Sifriat Ha-Po'alim, 1983), pp. 46-49; S.Z. Sheragai, *Besugiot Hador* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Mosad Ha-Rav Kook, 1970), p. 110.
3. Thorstein Veblen, "The Intellectual Pre-Eminence of Jews in Modern Europe," in *Essays in Our Changing Order*, ed. Leon Ardzrooni (New York: M. Kelley, 1934), pp. 219-31; R. Ginge, ed., *American Social Thought* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1964), pp. 219-39.
4. Aviezer Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).
5. Interest in classical Jewish texts seems to have been recently rekindled among certain segments of the secular Israeli society, an interest distinct from any return to religion. In fact, in many cases this intellectual involvement seems to stem from a feeling that the classical legacy should not be forfeited to the religious.
6. S.N. Eisenstadt, *Jewish Civilization* (New York: SUNY, 1992), pp. 141-52.
7. David Vital, *The Origins of Zionism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975); idem, *Zionism: The Formative Years* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982).
8. Hedva Ben-Israel, "The Role of Religion in Nationalism: Some Comparative Remarks on Irish Nationalism and on Zionism," in *Religion, Ideology and Nationalism in Europe and America*, ed. Hedva Ben-Israel et al. (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Centre, 1986), pp. 331-39; idem, "Nationalism in Historical Perspective," *Journal of International Affairs* 45 (1992) p. 79; idem, "From Ethnicity to Nationalism," *Contention* 55 (1996): pp. 54-56.



9. Ruth 1:16. The biblical text is not necessarily used here in its original connotation.
10. Jonah 2:9.
11. Thus, there is a basis to the portrayal of Judaism as an integral civilization which transcends the national or religious sphere in itself. Such a description was put forth, with differing orientations, by Rabbi Kook, Mordecai Kaplan, and Arnold Toynbee. See Yehezkeel Dror, "Bignut Hanormaliut" [Hebrew], *Kivunim* 12 (1995) p. 9.
12. See Aviezer Ravitzky, "Eretz Hemda va-Harada" [Hebrew], in *The Land of Israel in Modern Jewish Thought*, ed. Aviezer Ravitzky (Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1998).
13. Gershon Scholem, *Od Davar* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1988), pp. 59-60.
14. Zali Gurevitch and Gideon Anand, "Al Hamaqom: Anthropologiya Yisre'elit" [Hebrew], *Alpayim* 4 (1991): pp. 41-45; idem, "Never in Place: Eliade and Judaic Sacred Place," *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions* 87 (1994): pp. 4-14.
15. The religious side of this equation is discussed at length in my *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism* (see note 4 above). For the secular side, see A. B. Yehoshua, *Bizchut Hanormaliut* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv: Schocken, 1980); Gershom Weiler, *Theokratia Yehudit* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1977); Yosef Agassi, *Bein Dat Uleom: Likrat Zehut Leumit Yisre'elit* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1984); Prat (Avigdor Levontin), *Boker VaErev* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Sheshar, 1991).
16. See however, Shmuel Almog, *Leumiut, Tziyonut, Antishemiyut* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Ha-Histadrut Ha-Tzionit, 1992), pp. 126-36; Arik Carmon, *Mamlachtiyut Yehudit* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Me'uhad, 1994), pp. 44-50.



17. It is worth noting that Eric Hobsbawm has recently claimed that modern Hebrew is nothing but a Zionist invention, bearing little resemblance to the original! This coheres with his generic claim that nationalism is a fictive creation. See E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); cf. idem, ed. *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); see also, Hedva Ben-Israel, "He'arot al Hatziyonut" [Hebrew], *Kivunim* 10 (1977): p. 5.
18. Theodor Noeldeke, "Semitic Languages," in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (New York: Britannica, 1911), vol. 24, pp. 617-30.
19. Ze-ev Ben Chaim, *Bemilhamta shel Lashon* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: The Israeli Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1992); Shlomo Morag, "Ha'ivrit Hahadasha Behitgabshuta" [Hebrew], *Cathedra* 56 (1970), pp. 70-92; Mordechai Mishori, "Tehiyat Halashon – Ha-Omnam Nes?" [Hebrew], *Leshonenu La-am: Kovetz Shnat Halashon* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: The Academy for the Hebrew Language, 1990); Moshe Bar-Asher, "Some Observations on the Revival of Hebrew," in *European Regional Development Conference of Jewish Civilization Studies* (Jerusalem: International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization, 1992), pp. 2-30; Haim Blanc, "The Israeli Koine as an Emergent National Standard," in *Language Problems of Developing Nations*, ed. J. A. Fishman (New York: J. Wiley, 1968), p. 237; S. H. Herman, "Explorations in the Social Problems of Language Choice," in *Readings in the Social Problems of Languages*, ed. Joshua A. Fishman (The Hague, Paris: Mouton, 1968), pp. 492-511.
20. On the failure of governments, including the Irish Republic, to reestablish national languages, see Punya Sloka Ray, "Language Standardization," in Fishman, ed., *Social Problems of Languages*, p. 763.



21. Binyamin Harshav, "Tehiyata shel Eretz Yisrael Vehamahapechah Hayehudit Hamodernit" [Hebrew], in *Nekudat Tatzpit: Tarbut Vehevrah Be'ereit Yisrael*, ed. Nurit Gretz (Tel Aviv: The Open University, 1993), pp. 31-37; idem, "Masa el Tehiyat Halashon Ha'ivrit" [Hebrew], *Alpayim* 2 (1990), pp. 32-39.
22. A considerable number of Zionists portrayed this anomaly as a continuation of Jewish singularity throughout history. In the words of David Ben-Gurion: "Our very historical existence, nearly 4,000 years old, all of Jewish history up to and including the creation of the State of Israel, is, essentially, a singular occurrence for which it is difficult to find the like in all of human history." *The World Congress of Jewish Youth 1958* (Jerusalem: W.Z.O., 1959), p. 187. See Ze-ev Tzahor, "Ben-Gurion Kime'atsev Mithos" [Hebrew], in *Mithos Vezikaron*, ed. David Ohana and R. S. Wistrich (Jerusalem: Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Me'uhad, 1997), p. 139.
23. Elsewhere I have dealt extensively with the tensions between the historical and messianic outlooks and between the search for partial and final solutions (see note 4 above).
24. Rabbi Kook's successor as chief rabbi, Rabbi Y. I. Halevi Herzog, was vexed by the question of two hypothetical systems of justice in the future Jewish State and corresponded on the subject with the head of pre-Holocaust Europe's Council of Learned Scholars (Rabbi H. O. Grodzinski). See Y. I. Halevi Herzog, *Tehuqa LeYisra'el al pi HaTorah* [Hebrew], ed. Ithamar Warhaftig (Jerusalem: Mosad Ha-Rav Kook, 1982), p. 25; idem, "Din Hamelech" [Hebrew], *Talpiyot* 7 (1948), pp. 18-24; Aviezer Ravitzky, *Al Da-at Hamaqom* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Keter, 1991), pp. 108-11, 124-25; idem, *History and Faith: Studies in Jewish Philosophy* (Amsterdam: J.C. Greben 1996), pp. 50-58, 69-72.
25. Eliezer Shweid, *Hatziyonut she-aharei Hatziyonut* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Ha-Histadrut Ha-Tziyonit, 1996), pp. 100-109; Erik Cohen, "Yisrael Kehebra Post Tziyonit" [Hebrew], in Ohana and Wistrich, *Mithos Vezikaron*, pp. 156-66.



26. Menachem Friedman, "The Chronicle of the Status-Quo: Religion and State in Israel," in *Transition from 'Yishuv to State, 1947-48: Continuity and Change*, ed. Varda Pilowsky (Haifa: Mosad Herzl le-Kheqer Ha-Zionut, 1990), pp. 47-80.
27. Moshe Greenberg, *Studies in the Bible and Jewish Thought* (New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1995), pp. 63-74.
28. Rabbi Kook developed a complex historiosophy with respect to the place for secular Zionism. I deal with this theory at length in my book cited above (see note 4 above), pp. 86-110. Here I will address only one aspect of his theory, which was very popular among his students. See also, Eliezer Schweid, *Hayahadut Vehatarbut Hahilonit* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Me'uhad, 1981), pp. 110-42; Binyamin Ish Shalom, "Sovlanut Bemishnat Harav Kook Veshorasheiha Ha-Iyuniyim" [Hebrew], *Daat* 20 (1988), pp. 151-68.
29. Sometimes tolerance entails de facto acceptance and at other times de jure recognition. For examples of mutual recognition from a secular perspective, see David Grossman, "Ani Tzarich Etchem, Atem Tezerichim Oti" [Hebrew], *Yedioth Aharonoth*, 23.11.95. For the religious perspective, see Uriel Simon, "Shutafut Hilonit Datit Bivniat Medina Yehudit Demokratit" [Hebrew], *Alpayim* 13 (1997), pp. 154-66.
30. Gershon Shaked, *Ein Maqom Aher* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Me'uhad, 1983), p. 29.
31. Yonatan Shapira, *Ilit Lelo Mamshichim* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Sifriat Ha-Po'alim, 1984); Dan Horovitz and Moshe Lissak, *Miyishuv Lemedina* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1987); Anita Shapira, "Dor Ba-aretz" [Hebrew], *Alpayim* 2 (1990), pp. 179-203; Zvi Tzameret, *Yemei Kur Hahituch* [Hebrew] (Beer Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, 1993), pp. 56-63.
32. Amnon Raz-Karkotzkin, "Galut Betoach Ribonut" [Hebrew], *Theoria Uulikoret* 5 (1994), pp. 125-30.



33. Amnon Rubinstein, *MeHertzel ad Gush Emunim Uvahazara* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Schocken, 1980), pp. 77-79.
34. David Landau, *Parashat 'Mihu Yehudi'* [Hebrew] (Ramat Gan: Havaad Hayehudi Ha-amerikai, 1996); Moshe Samet, *Mihu Yehudi?* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Chemdat, 1986).
35. Rabbi Schneerson predicted certain defeat for the nationalist, Zionist initiative: "Their presumptuous goal of gathering [the exiles] together on their own will never come to pass." See also, Shalom Duber Schneerson, *Igrot Kodesh* [Hebrew] (New York: Ozar Ha-Chasidim, 1982), p. 110; Aviezer Ravitzky, "The Contemporary Lubavitch Hasidic Movement: Between Conservatism and Messianism," in *Accounting for Fundamentalism*, ed. M.E. Marti and R.S. Appleby (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p.34.
36. Dafna Barak-Erez, ed., *Medina Yehudit Vedemokratit* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1996).
37. Rabbi J. B. Soleveitchik, "Kol Dodi Dofek" [Hebrew], in *Ish Ha'emuna* (Jerusalem: Mosad Ha-Rav Kook, 1971), pp. 86-99; idem, *Hamesh Derashot* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Tal Orot, 1974), pp. 94-95. See also, Michael Rosenak, "Haadam, Hayehudi Vehamedina" [Hebrew], in *Sefer Yovel, Lichvod Rabi Josef Dov Halevi Soloveitchik*, ed. Shaul Yisraeli, Nahum Lamm, and Yitzhak Raphael (Jerusalem: Mosad Ha-Rav Kook, 1984), pp. 163-69.
38. Shlomit Levi, Chana Levinson, and Elihu Katz, *Emunot, Shemirat Mitzvot, Veyahasim Hevratiyim Bekerev Hayehudim Beyisrael* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Guttman Institute for Social Research, 1994), p. 1.
39. This seems trustworthy, as only 16% of the population, fewer than the Orthodox component, claimed to observe the laws of *nidah* and *tevilah*.



40. This statistic was later supported in surveys conducted in 1995 and 1996.
41. This article has dealt exclusively with the cultural tensions present within Jewish society. The co-existence in Israel of Jews and non-Jews raises a different question, and requires recognition of a duality and otherness of a different nature.



Position Papers (*in Hebrew*)
of the Israel Democracy Institute

- ***Reform in Public Broadcasting***
by Yaron Ezrahi, Omri Ben-Shachar and Rachel Lael. 35pp
- ***Output-Driven Management and Budgeting Principles in the Public Sector***
by David Nachmias and Alona Nuri. 53pp
- ***The General Security Services Bill: A Comparative Study***
by Ariel Zimmerman, supervised by Mordechai Kremnitzer. 45pp
- ***Religious and Secular Jews in Israel: A Kulturkampf?***
by Aviezer Ravitzky. 28pp
- ***Structural Reform in Israel's Public Sector***
by David Nachmias, Merle Danon-Kremzin and Alon Yironi. 57pp
- ***Accountability: The Attorney General***
by David Nachmias and Gad Barzilai. 56pp
- ***Incitement, not Sedition***
by Mordechai Kremnitzer and Khalid Ghanayim. 93pp
- ***Accountability: The Bank of Israel***
by David Nachmias and Gad Barzilai. 46pp
- ***The Integration of Peripheral Groups into Society and Politics in the Peace Era: The Ultra-Orthodox in Israel***
by Gad Barzilai and Michael Keren. 45pp
- ***Accountability: The Comptroller General***
by David Nachmias and Gad Barzilai. 68pp
- ***Freedom of Occupation: When Should the Government Regulate Entry into Professions?***
by Mordechai Kremnitzer, Omri Ben-Shachar and Shachar Goldman. 61pp
- ***The 1996 Primaries: Political Conclusions***
by Gideon Rahat and Neta Sher-Hadar. 33pp



- ***The Jewish-Arab Rift in Israel: Characteristics and Challenges***
by Issam Abu-Ria and Ruth Gavison. 74pp
- ***The First Hundred Days: Suggestions for Reform***
by an IDI team headed by David Nachmias. 68pp
- ***The Proposed Reform of the Court System***
by Shachar Goldman, supervised by Ruth Gavison and Mordechai Kremnitzer. 106pp
- ***The (Emergency) Defense Regulations, 1945***
by Michal Tzur, supervised by Mordechai Kremnitzer. 108pp
- ***The Economic Arrangements Bill: Between Economics and Politics***
by David Nachmias and Eran Klein. 102pp
- ***Rabbinical Rulings on Policy Questions***
by Yedidia Stern. 44pp
- ***The State Rabbinate: Appointment, Tasks and Freedom of Expression***
by Yossi David and Eyal Yinon. 91pp
- ***Referendum: Myth and Reality***
by Dana Blander and Gideon Rahat. 92pp
- ***The Socio-economic Rift in Israel***
by Iris Gerby and Gal Levi, supervised by Ruth Gavison. 116pp
- ***The State, Law and Halakha: Part One Public Leadership as Halakhic Authority***
by Yedidia Stern. 70pp
- ***Government Transitions***
by Asher Arian, David Nachmias and Doron Navot. 110pp
- ***Affirmative Action in Israel***
by Hilly Moodrik Even-khen, supervised by Mordechai Kremnitzer and David Nachmias. 94pp

***These position papers may be purchased from the
Israel Democracy Institute***

P.O. Box 4482, Jerusalem 91046, Tel: (972) 2-530-0888; Fax: (972) 2-530-0870.

They may also be ordered online at our website: www.idi.org.il

