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Critical Sociology and the End of Ideology in Israel

THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS ARTICLE is not to assess the historical accuracy of the claims of either Zionist or post-Zionist scholars. As will be argued, for anyone other than an historian, that need not be an issue of major significance. This is, rather, an exercise in the sociology of knowledge, and is an attempt to explore the sources of the emergence of critical sociology and post-Zionism among social scientists in Israel.

One of the fascinating aspects of the phenomenon is the vehement acrimony which it has engendered in debates between "establishment" and "critical" sociologists. This is, *prima facie*, surprising, since it is in the very nature of sociology to be critical. Sociology is, after all, a social *science*, which means that it turns to *empirical evidence*, rather than mythologies, to understand the nature of a particular society. It is well-known that there is often a great difference between what a society would like us to think and believe about itself and the way it *really* is. By means of critical thinking, it is the goal of sociology, according to Peter Berger, to pierce through the facades that each society sets up about itself. Berger calls this "the debunking tendency of sociology."[1] To put it another way, sociology seeks to be like the child who points out the true nature of the emperor's clothes. "It ain't necessarily so," as one of the lead songs from *Porgy and Bess* emphasized. Things are not necessarily what they appear to be, and it is the goal of sociology, through "critical thinking," to see them as they really are.

That kind of "critical thinking," however, clearly does have the potential to infuriate, precisely because it challenges cherished notions. As Wirth averred,

> The distinctive character of social science discourse is to be sought in the fact that every assertion, no matter how objective it may be, has ramifications extending beyond the limits of science itself. Since every assertion of a "fact" about the social world touches the interests of some individual or group, one

cannot even call attention to the existence of certain "facts" without courting the objections of those whose very *raison d'être* in society rests upon a divergent interpretation of the "factual" situation.[2]

Nevertheless, there is no inherent connection between critical social science and the personal beliefs and values of the social scientist. Thus, Eliezer Don-Yehiya—no post-Zionist, to be sure—can be viewed as a "critical" social scientist, in that he analyzes the use of symbols for political ends. In one of his essays, for example, he analyzes the ways in which the Jewish festival of Hanukkah and the myth of the Maccabees has been variously interpreted and perhaps even exploited by Labor, Revisionists, Canaanites, Haredim, Socialist-Zionists, religious Zionists, and Gush Emunim.[3] Likewise, he and Charles Liebman have written a major work on Israeli "civil religion" that provides numerous manifestations of the exploitation of traditional Jewish religious symbols and concepts for political ends.[4]

Even more explicitly within the boundaries of what is contemporarily perceived as "critical theory" is Yael Zerubavel's analysis of three major Israeli nation-building myths of the battle for Tel-Hai, the Bar-Kokhba revolt, and the fall of Masada. She is somewhat critical of the way Maurice Halbwachs defines the notion of "collective memory," and she modifies it as a constant negotiation "between available historical records and current social and political agendas. And in the process of referring back to these records, it shifts its interpretation, selectively emphasizing, suppressing, and elaborating different aspects of that record."[5] Be that as it may, and despite those myths being so central to the nation-building ethos, there is nothing either inherently Zionist or post-Zionist in her analysis.

The caustic tone of the debate between the "establishment" and the "critical" sociologists is much more a consequence of the meta-sociological ideologies of the respective participants than any actual analytical and methodological issues. Although there might well be room for debate on some substantive issues, without the ideologies to which the participants adhere the debate would have been more of a sober scholarly disagreement, of little interest within the discipline and of virtually no interest outside of it. It is highly doubtful that, had it remained a scholarly disagreement, it would have achieved such extensive notice by the mass media.

When it comes to the meta-sociological, ideological arena, there appear to be three categories of ideological issues involved. The first is that of anti-Zionism, and entails a hostile rejection of the entire Zionist enterprise and idea on the grounds essentially the same as those leveled against Israel in the United Nations for many years; namely, that Israel was begotten in

sin and that Zionism is racism. Such condemnations by Israelis is not a new phenomenon. During the 1970s, they were frequently heard from such radical ideologues as Uri Davis and Arie Bober of Matzpen, among others.[6]

Among the contemporary critical social scientists, there are a number whose critiques are strikingly similar to the anti-Zionists, although they themselves do not explicitly espouse anti-Zionism. A number of those in the group which defines Zionism as "colonialism" are some who came to that position via sociology rather than politics. They were likely influenced by assertions and theories of "post-modernism" and "critical theory," among whose theoretical pioneers are Michel Foucault[7] and Jurgen Habermas.[8] The philosophical and ideological perspectives upon which the theories of both Foucault and Habermas are based emphasize freedom from domination and oppression in all of their forms. Likewise, their thought and, even more so, the work of Craig Calhoun[9] develop the argument of the essential modernity of the notion of nation. There are grounds for questioning whether Judaism fits within Calhoun's argument, but that is another matter altogether.[10]

Be that as it may, an intellectual perception of historical memory and the fabrication of continuity do not, *ipso facto*, lead to an anti-nationalist stance. As Calhoun points out, the nineteenth-century French philologist and scholar of Biblical criticism, Ernst Renan, was well-aware that nationalism entails forgetting the brutal events and processes which, if not forgotten, "would fester like sores and bring disunity"; i.e., the violence that made the nation-state possible. "Unity is always effected by means of brutality."[11] Nevertheless, Renan remained a French nationalist.

From this perspective, there is nothing inherently anti-Zionist nor even post-Zionist in the works of Baruch Kimmerling and Gershon Shafir. Shafir, for example, attempts a balanced assessment:

> In this century, the potentially tragic consequences of the severance of Jews from a territory of their own was only too clearly revealed, justifying a desire for political normalcy by standards of the modern world order. Hence, reviewing the history of Israel's creation . . . does not present us, even with the wisdom of hindsight, with a realistic alternative course to the pursuit of nationhood and sovereignty. Nor does there seem to have been much leeway for carrying out this project differently, given the inauspicious conditions under which, and narrow time frame within which, Jewish immigrant-settlers labored. Nonetheless, . . . we should also recognize that the epic of Zionism, in addition to the necessary and the heroic, was not devoid of a tragic dimen-

sion: the creation of Israel through encroachment on and, subsequently, displacement of the majority of the Arab residents of Palestine.[12]

By contrast, Ze'ev Sternhell, Yagil Levy and Yoav Peled are critical of state and the very notion of Zionism because what they view as its exclusiveness, domination and oppression. According to Levy and Peled, ". . . the sources of the crisis are . . . rooted . . . in the very foundations of the Israeli social order."[13] Ze'ev Sternhell is even more blunt and confrontational. He condemns the leadership of Socialist Zionism, and especially David Ben-Gurion, for abandoning egalitarianism and social justice at the expense of establishing a particularistic state.[14]

A second category of critical sociology in Israel is part of a broader trend within the discipline of sociology as a whole, and which emerged in the United States during the 1960s. What Irving Louis Horowitz called the "new sociology," strongly influenced by C. Wright Mills, was aimed at "grand theory" and at replacing the "'feudal structure' of graduate education" which encourages "empiricism."[15] The "new sociology" was also aimed at "an examination of large-scale problems" and "a projection of solutions possible, whether they happen to coincide with public policy or not."[16]

Much of contemporary Israeli sociology reflects these directions. Years ago, there was a clear reaction against what was viewed as the "feudal structure" that pervaded Israel's senior university, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in general, as well as its sociology department, in particular.[17] Thus, many of the works by contemporary Israeli sociologists and, indeed, many of those in Ram's edited volume,[18] as well as many others, give no indication of being post-Zionist. They can be more accurately be described as post-Eisenstadt; that is, they reject "grand theory" and are reacting against what they, correctly or not, view as the Eisenstadt hegemony that until recently reigned over Israeli sociology. Although Uri Ram is a self-proclaimed post-Zionist[19] and concludes his recent critical analysis of Israeli sociology with a plea for a post-Zionist sociology, there is no evidence that the vast majority of those whom he analyzes are post-Zionists. The provocative, confrontational styles of some of their critiques do not necessarily render them post-Zionist. They are probably more reflective of a wider pattern within sociology which Horowitz sees as a manifestation of the "decomposition of sociology."[20]

Indeed, the actual number of post-Zionist sociologists is, apparently, very small, and their influence within the Israeli sphere appears to be very limited. For example, only a small fraction of papers delivered at the 1995

annual meetings of the Israeli Sociological Society could be categorized of that perspective. It is true that an even smaller number were explicitly Zionist, and that perhaps more of the presenters hold post-Zionist positions that were not expressed simply because they were not germane to the subject of their presentations. That is deserving of further empirical research. Thus, although there was a session at the Society's 1996 annual meetings devoted to "Zionism and Post-Zionism," that was probably as much for the society's public relations as for any indication of substance. Even so, it was only one session among approximately two dozen. There was another devoted to "Nation-Building or What?: Historical Sociology," which was a panel discussion of Sternhell's provocative critique of the Mapai-Labor establishment. Critiques of a particular establishment need not be viewed as critiques of Zionism *per se*. But he, Ram, and at least some of the others who are highly critical of Socialist Zionism and Labor, do proclaim themselves post-Zionists because of what they view as Labor Zionism's exploitation of the Arabs. Ram is probably the most explicit in insisting that the "true" post-Zionist ideology must recognize the injustices of dispossession, expulsion, and suppression of the Palestinians committed by the Zionist movement in *Eretz Israel*,[21] and elsewhere he avers that "the time is now ripe for the formulation of a post-Zionist sociological agenda that would be congruous with the consolidation of a democratic Israeli society. Rather than national integration, the focus of such an agenda should be the issue of membership in a modern democratic society." Citing Habermas, he concludes that, "Civil society—the space of emancipated individual and collective life-worlds—should be sustained by the state and by the market and served by them, and not vice versa."[22] For Sternhell's goal is that Israel should be "a pluralistic society, open, tolerant, in which the freedom of the individual is the highest priority."[23]

Despite their small numbers, however, they are a very visible and influential group. The very fact that they have a political agenda[24] provides them with the impetus to "go public," to air their ideas in the most public and challenging ways. It is, therefore, fashionable to use the term post-Zionism in popular discussions, and ideas related to it are debated in the Israeli mass media on a regular basis.[25] Most of the proponents of post-Zionism are prolific writers whose works appear not only in scholarly, but popular in intellectual media as well, and not only in Israel—where such works appear especially in the intellectually prominent daily, *Ha'Aretz* and in the relatively recent journal, *Teoria uBikoret* (*Theory and Criticism*)—but also around the Western world. As Derek Penslar indicates with respect to the popularity of the "new historians," "Their generally critical evaluation of

Israeli behavior strikes a sympathetic chord in the hearts of many readers abroad."[26] And, as will be suggested, they are representative of a growing sector of Israeli society, the majority of whom, at least for now, do not explicitly identify themselves as post-Zionist. The actual number of post-Zionist social scientists is, thus, merely the "tip of the iceberg," along lines similar to that of Ehud Sprinzak's analysis of the significance of Gush Emunim.[27]

A third, related, category of post-Zionist ideology is that which is not specifically focused on Israel's relations with the Arabs, Palestinians and others, but involves some basic questions about Jews, Jewish nationalism, and Judaism. The roots can be traced to the origins of modern Zionism, which was created as a movement of and for the Jewish people. For the dominant Socialist Zionists, it was, as David Sidorsky has argued, a secular attempt to replace the previous universalist-particular synthesis which was inherent in Judaism. Socialism was the universalistic aspect; Zionism was the particularistic one.[28] It was the attempt to replace the traditional religious synthesis with a secular one which was the major source of the dominant rejection of modern Zionism by the Orthodox rabbinical elite in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was not the nationalism, *per se*, that they reacted to. On the contrary, and in contrast to critical theorist such as Calhoun, those rabbis would have been the first to assert the national component of being Jewish. The notion that Judaism is a religion with no national component is a modern one, most characteristic of "Classical" Reform Judaism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The traditional self-definition, and the one accepted by almost all students of Judaism and Jews, is that there is a "strong historical and cultural link between Jewish religion and Jewish nationalism."[29]

With the establishment of Israel as a state, its governments attempted to synthesize the particularistic and universalistic elements into the political and social structure as peacefully and agreeably as was feasible. Such harmony is, however, rare, and there has been no shortage of confrontations between particularists and universalists in Israel. Indeed, the contemporary religious-secular struggle is largely a manifestation of that very confrontation. Baruch Kimmerling takes the problem further and argues that it is part of a basic struggle between two different and largely opposing definitions of the Israeli collective identity, the "primordial" *Eretz Israel* and the "civil" State of Israel. The question with which Israel continues to struggle is,

Is Israel indeed "a nation like all other nations" (toward which some sectors of Zionism strived)? Or are Israelis "the Chosen People" (and if so, what is the

operative significance of such identity—ethnocentricity or universality)? The struggle between these "two spirits"—the spirit of Israel and the spirit of *Eretz Israel*—has in no way been resolved; the pendulum continues to vacillate between them. Apparently, as one spirit becomes more salient, it stimulates reaction to counterbalance the situation.[30]

Liebman and Don-Yehiya indicate a somewhat similar situation when they suggest that, "Israel is a visionary-democratic type society, and the nature of its vision makes the dilemma of reconciling traditional culture and contemporary political needs a two-dimensional one."[31]

It is interesting to note that, whereas the second category of post-Zionism emanates within the context of a leftist critique, the third is somewhat similar to the 1940s platform of Yonatan Ratosh and the Canaanites, many of whose followers supported Lehi and other parts of the political right, and which still has a small group of followers of the political right.[32] A basic difference between these post-Zionists and those like Ram is that, for Ram and his colleagues, the crux of problem is Israel's relations with its Arab citizens and neighbors, whereas, for the third category, the problem is in the very conception of the modern Jew. This is precisely the issue that the Canaanites attempted to resolve, and it is spelled out directly in the very title of the English language edition of Boas Evron's book, *Jewish State or Israeli Nation?*

Until 1977, however, the underlying Socialist Zionist synthesis seemed to hold. On the governmental level as well, as Shlomo Avineri suggested, although the religious and secular may have despised each other and wished that they could govern alone, each realized that the other was necessary for the achievement of a governing coalition, and that became the "logic" behind the otherwise nonsensical political picture in Israel. Avineri believes that same illogical logic holds today.[33] However, it now appears that the entire socio-political situation in Israel changed with the fall of Labor in 1977—this event spelled the end of the secular synthesis.

With the breakdown of the synthesis, it was to be expected that, for those for whom it has no intrinsically Jewish meaning, Zionism would become another form of colonialism. Secular Zionism strove, in the main, to be "a state like any other," and for many secularists, "any other" seems to mean any other liberal democracy of the American type. What they frequently overlook is the fact that there are, as Michael Walzer suggests, other types of liberal democracies.

He distinguishes between two types of liberalism. One "is committed in the strongest possible way to individual rights and, almost as a deduction

from this, to a rigorously neutral state, that is, a state without cultural or religious projects or, indeed, any sort of collective goals beyond the personal freedom and the physical security, welfare, and safety of its citizens." Walzer sees the United States and Canada as examples of liberalism of this type.

By contrast, the second type of liberalism "allows for a state committed to the survival and flourishing of a particular nation, culture, or religion, or of a (limited) set of nations, cultures, and religions—so long as the basic rights of citizens who have different commitments or no such commitments at all are protected."[34] Norway, France, and the Netherlands, he suggests, are examples of the second type of liberalism.

> Their governments take an interest in the cultural survival of the majority nation; they don't claim to be neutral with reference to the language, history, literature, calendar or even the minor mores of the majority . . . they vindicate their liberalism by tolerating and respecting ethnic and religious differences and allowing all minorities an equal freedom to organize their members, express their cultural values. and reproduce their way of life in civil society and the family.[35]

In a more extensive analysis, Walzer maintains that "there are many conceivable arrangements between dominance and detribalization and between dominance and separation—and there are moral and political grounds for choosing different arrangements in different circumstances."[36] And, in response to a critic's allegations about the Israeli form of liberal democracy, he replies, "There are . . . internal discriminations—as when we choose what language to privilege, what history and civics to teach in the public schools, what holidays to celebrate. In every nation-state in the world, choices like these turn national minorities into the wrong kind of people."[37]

Kimmerling's critique of the contemporary socio-political condition focuses explicitly on the issues of religion and nationalism. It is not only much more extensive and penetrating; it is also much more difficult to categorize, because Kimmerling does not fit neatly into one ideological position. In contrast to Ram, who asserts that only a recognition of the Israel-Palestinian conflict will enable a new era, and despite his concurrence on the issue of Israel's need to recognize the Israel-Palestinian conflict, he nevertheless asserts that the domestic issue of religion in Israel is even more onerous and enigmatic than the Israel-Palestinian issue.[38] Kimmerling avers that the real issue is not that of separation of religion and state in Israel, but

the very separation between Judaism as a religion and Judaism as a nationality. Although there initially seem to be similarities between this aspect of his critique and that of Evron and Hupper,[39] Kimmerling differs in that he advocates a "civil Judaism" in Israel along the lines of "civil religion" in the United States, in which all religions are treated equally and there is no religious coercion.

This is obviously not the place for an extensive analysis of that thorny issue. However, it should be pointed out that America's civil religion derives from the very fact that the United States is a Protestant country.[40] Ironically, although Kimmerling is one of those who emphasizes the religious as well as national components of Judaism, as was indicated previously, he overlooks a fundamental difference between Protestantism and Judaism: Protestantism is a Western religion emphasizing faith, whereas Judaism is an ethnic religion, or the religious subculture of an ethnoreligious group. Given the character of American society discussed by Walzer, as well as its civil religious character indicated by Kimmerling, a "civil Judaism" was able to emerge there.[41] It is, however, highly doubtful how long such a civil Judaism can actually survive in the United States[42] and it is, *a fortiori*, difficult to conceive of its being institutionalized within Israel.

Kimmerling's critique, however, is not limited to the religion issue. He and Shafir, among others, take the matter even further and argue that the social scientist must reject the vocabulary Jews have used for centuries and adopt what they believe to be more objective, universalistic terminology. Otherwise, their very terms are ideologically tainted and, as a consequence, so are all their analyses. Kimmerling, for example, chides historians who use the term "*Eretz Israel*" when writing about that place at times when there were no Jews there.[43] Such usage, he argues, grants the Jews an eternal title over the territory, regardless of who populated or governed it, even in a situation when the "legitimate ownership" of the land was "under dispute."[44]

However, there is no question about the fact that, throughout the centuries, that was the way Jews the world over referred to it. It was "*Eretz Israel*" [the Land of Israel], "*Eretz Hakodesh*" [the Holy Land], or, simply, "*Zion*." In whatever Jewish language Jews communicated, be it Hebrew, Ladino, Yiddish, Yiddish Deutsch, or any of the other of the myriad Jewish languages,[45] that was how they referred to it. Is there not, therefore, something dubious and unsatisfactory about a critique that finds it more appropriate to refer to that land in specifically non-Jewish terms than in the way Jews have referred to it for some 2,000 years or more? Just as many Jewish

scholars use the term "Christian Bible" rather than "New Testament," and "Common Era" rather than "*Anno Domini*," because they do not subscribe to the Christian designations, so do many identify the land with the traditional Jewish designation, *Eretz Israel*; and just as the scholarship of a Christian using the term "New Testament" or "*Anno Domini*" would not be thereby, *ipso facto*, tainted, neither should the scholarship of Jewish scholars when they use terms that conform with Jewish culture.

Kimmerling and a number of his colleagues also object to the use of the term *aliyah* instead of "immigration." because *aliyah* connotes a prized uniqueness to Israel and the immigration thereto. In fact, both *Eretz Israel* and *aliyah* have been viewed as sacred and lofty in historical Jewish tradition.[46] Although many who went on *aliyah* did so without any conscious ideological motivation—they may have gone to escape persecution and had no where else to go—it is still a fact that the movement which encouraged immigration was strongly inspired by the powerful ideological impetus to which the act of *aliyah*, in general. responded. To refer to immigration to Israel as *aliyah*, therefore, is not necessarily espousing a personal ideological position. The social scientist who adopts the term is adopting what Max Weber called *verstehen*; that is, understanding the subjective meanings and intentions of actors in social interaction.[47] Of course, what actually occurs may be very different from what the actors intended, but one must nevertheless understand those subjective meanings and intentions. For example, although that was clearly not Calvin's intention, and Weber was not a Calvinist, he did show the "elective affinity" between Calvin's doctrine of predestination and the rise of modern capitalism because of the way that doctrine was understood by the actors involved.[48]

Is it an oxymoron to speak of Zionist social scientists, as some of the critics imply? Eric Hobsbawm agrees that Zionists can be good historians if they leave their "convictions behind when entering the library or the study."[49] This is essentially the position taken by Robert Merton in the long-standing debate within the social sciences as to the relative advantages of the insider and the outsider. The basic question is this: Who is better qualified to study a particular group, the insider—someone from within that group—or the outsider? Those advocating the "outsider doctrine" argue that only outsiders, who are not blinded by group loyalties, are able to truly understand that group. The "insider doctrine," in contrast, avers that only insiders, having lived within the group and become sensitized to all of its experiences and meanings, can truly understand its nature. Although the debate may never be resolved to everyone's satisfaction, Robert Merton points out that both Georg Simmel and Max Weber clearly rejected the

extreme insider doctrine in their assertion that "one need not be Caesar in order to understand Caesar."[50] Merton himself argues for recognition and appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective, while at the same time striving for a theoretical and technical competence which transcends both. The ideal, he suggests, is for the insider to study his subject as an outsider.[51]

It is also ironic that the very critics who decry the use of such ideological-laden terminology as *Eretz Israel* and *aliyah*, are the very ones who insist on the use of a term which is at least equally ideological-charged—"namely, colonialism"—in their depiction of the Zionist settlement patterns. If one adopts Weber's methodology and views the act from the perspective of the actor, there are no grounds to label the settlement of the various *aliyot*, waves of immigration, as colonialist. Regardless of subsequent developments and consequences, there is no evidence that it was their intention to dispossess, expel, and suppress the population that was on the land. Their actions can, therefore, be empirically designated as colonization, as Aaronsohn has argued.[52] The term "colonialist," however, is a normative one and one which is not justified in terms of their intentions.

Finally, Kimmerling, Shafir, and Ram find fault with the those whom they consider Zionist ideological social scientists, including historiographers, because those social scientists view the history of the Jews as distinct, unique and exceptional. Ram cites the highly critical review of Ian Lustick,[53] and faults S. N. Eisenstadt for locating Israeli society within the framework of "Jewish civilization" and suggesting "that the events taking place in contemporary Israel can be understood as one manifestation of the tension that runs throughout Jewish history, the tension between universalism and particularism."[54] But since Kimmerling does admit that there are certain unique characteristics and patterns in the history of the Jews, it seems rather reasonable to explain certain characteristics of Israeli society in terms of those historical patterns. Of course, if everything was explained exclusively in terms of Jewish uniqueness there would be a basis for criticism, but Eisenstadt himself does adopt a comparative perspective, as the subtitle of his book indicates. And, in his Introduction, he specifically states that, "Throughout our analysis . . . we ask ourselves to what extent some of the crucial aspects of Jewish experience in each of these cases is similar to that of comparable groups . . ."[55] There may be grounds upon which to fault his analysis as well as his style, but particularism is not one of them. Rather, there seems to be a distinct need among some of the post-Zionists and critical social scientists to detach Israel from Jewish history and from the Jewish people elsewhere.

There is a categorically different type of post-Zionist analysis which has emerged in Israel, and it is different from the previously-discussed critical post-Zionism in that it is empirical rather than normative. That is to say, it is not a clamor for the rejection of Zionism or even for a new type of Zionism. Rather, it is an empirical assessment of the nature of contemporary Israeli society and culture. Several years ago, for example, when a group of social scientists met to deliberate the condition of Israeli society, several of the speakers referred to Israel as a "post-Zionist" society,[56] but their assessment did not appear to be intended as a normative or ideological statement. The accuracy of their assessment might be challenged by those still committed to Zionism, some of whom would surely be tempted to respond in the same vein as did one 1960s activist to those who proclaimed "the end of ideology": "When they proclaim the end of [Zionist-CIW] ideology, it's like the old man proclaiming the end of sex. Because he doesn't feel it anymore, he thinks it's disappeared."[57]

Nevertheless, empirically, those who perceive a decline in Zionist ideology in Israel do appear to be correct. For example, there have recently been many calls for major revision, if not elimination of, the Law of Return. Also, *aliyah*, or immigration to Israel (since even that term is now deemed ideologically tainted by some "post-Zionists," as will be discussed below), especially from the West, is neither expected nor encouraged (indeed, some Western *olim* [immigrants], report being perceived as strange because of their *aliyah*—and to them, it was *aliyah* in its full meaning). To some extent, the decline in Zionism is part of typical development processes, including the bureaucratization of the government apparatus. In addition, the images that the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization have projected within Israel—including, among others, misappropriation of funds by top management, financial mismanagement, and pervasive political in-fighting—have severely tarnished and diminished the stature of Zionism as a positive and meaningful ideology within Israel.

There are, in addition to the specific domestic sources of the decline of ideology, more universal sources as well. In the broadest terms, there is a rather common inverse relationship between socio-economic status and ideological intensity. In addition, and related to that, there has emerged, in the second half of the twentieth century, as Roger Inglehart analyzes it, a major "culture shift" in modern societies. His extensive cross-national analysis of post-World War II patterns in advanced industrial societies indicates a shift from "materialist" to "post-materialist" values; that is, "from giving top priority to physical sustenance and safety toward heavier emphasis on belonging, self-expression, and the quality of life."[58] Inglehart

documents the decline among the "post-materialists" in traditional group affiliations, such as ethnic and religious groups, and a much greater focus on individual concerns, such as autonomy and self-fulfillment. It should be pointed out that this does not mean that post-materialists are more selfish or egotistical than materialists; those are normative terms. It does, however, mean that post-modernists are less bound by group affiliations. Indeed, that should not be so surprising, since one of the basic distinguishing features of modernity, as compared to traditional society, is the greater emphasis on the individual. Much as those committed to a Zionist ideology might bemoan it, there appears to be every reason to suspect (especially if there is a visibly-meaningful peace process) that the decline in Zionist ideology will only increase.

This does not, however, mean that the objectives of the post-Zionists will inevitably be realized. On the contrary, the available evidence suggests that, as social scientists, they are largely out of touch with the attitudes and beliefs of the overwhelming majority of the Israeli Jewish population. That population clearly does not perceive the state's founders as expropriators or sinners. In statistical terms, hardly any Israeli Jews wish to detach themselves from world Jewry, and few agree that nationality should be separated from religion. On the contrary, as the data from the Guttman Institute survey indicate, only a third (33 percent) think that public life in Israel should be less religious,[59] and 96 percent feel a connectedness with fellow Jews around the world.[60] It is also important to note that, at least in the United States, it is the more religio-ethnically traditional who have the strongest ties to Israel,[61] and they are likely to also have some impact on the direction Israel takes in this matter.

To return to the central focus of this article, several concluding assessments may be made with respect to the post-Zionist critique in its various manifestations. On the one hand, post-Zionism can be credited with de-bunking mythologies; that is, with forcing the acknowledgment of myths as just that—myths. For too long and for too many, a number of the Zionist myths have been used within the context of an unjustified triumphalist ideological framework, which is, ultimately, much more damaging than beneficial to Israel and Zionism. That said, however, it is also obvious that the historical issues pale in significance relative to the paramount issues of Zionism today; namely, the very fundamental questions of the *Jewish* nature of the Jewish state and the Jewish future. Many, if not all, of the post-Zionists have as their objective the transformation of Israel into a secular democracy in the ideal-type American model. They imply that there are but

two alternatives; the American model or a theocracy. What they ignore is at least one other direction. As Michael Walzer indicated, there is a European model of liberal democracy which not only takes cognizance of, but seeks to buttress, a particular nationalism. Many of the critics fault Israel according to but one standard—the American one—but that is not the only, or even the ideal, one; it is merely that which works in the United States. Contrary to the implications, if not explicit assertions, of post-Zionism, Zionism and modern liberal democracy are not mutually exclusive. One of the challenges facing Israel is the degree to which it can indeed become "a light unto to the nations" by truly synthesizing the two.

Notes

1. Peter L. Berger, *Invitation to Sociology: A Humanistic Perspective* (Garden City, NY, 1963) 38*ff*.

2. Louis Wirth, "Preface," in Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (London, 1936) xvii.

3. Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Hanukkah and the Myth of the Maccabees in Ideology and in Society," in Shlomo Deshen, Charles S. Liebman and Moshe Shokeid (eds), *Israeli Judaism: The Sociology of Religion in Israel* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1995) 303–21.

4. Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel* (Berkeley, CA, 1983).

5. Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago, IL, 1995) 5.

6. Uri Davis, *Israel, Utopia Incorporated : A Study of Class, State, and Corporate Kin Control* (London, 1977); Uri Davis and Norton Mezvinsky (eds), *Documents from Israel, 1967–1973: Readings for a Critique of Zionism* (London, 1975); Arie Bober, *The Other Israel: The Radical Case against Zionism* (Garden City, NY, 1972).

7. Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow (New York, 1984).

8. Jurgen Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society* (Boston, MA, 1970), and *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston, MA, 1975).

9. Craig Calhoun, *Critical Social Theory: Culture, History, and the Challenge of Difference* (Oxford and Cambridge, 1995).

10. Lawrence Silberstein has written a good analysis of the relationship between post-Zionism and postmodernism. See Lawrence J. Silberstein, "New Historians and Critical Sociologists Between Post-Zionism and Postmodernism." in *Teoria uBikoret* [*Theory and Criticism*] 8 (Summer 1996) 105–21 [Hebrew]. A more extensive English version is forthcoming. I thank him for sharing these with me.

11. Quoted in Craig Calhoun, *Critical Social Theory*, 235.

12. Gershon Shafir, *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914* (Cambridge, 1989) xii.

13. Yagil Levy and Yoav Peled, "The Break that Wasn't: Israeli Sociology from the Perspective of the Six-Day War." *Theory and Criticism* 3 (Winter 1993) 126 [Hebrew].

14. Ze'ev Sternhell, *Nation Building or a New Society?: The Zionist Labor Movement, 1904–1940* (Tel-Aviv, 1995) [Hebrew].

15. Irving Louis Horowitz, "An Introduction to the New Sociology," in Irving Louis Horowitz (ed), *The New Sociology: Essays in Social Science and Social Theory in Honor of C. Wright Mills* (New York, 1964) 5.

16. *Ibid.*, 23.

17. During the 1950s and 1960s, it was alledged that faculty at the Hebrew University acted monopolistically and attempted to block the establishment of other universities in Israel. Even after other universities were established, they were allegedly disparaged. Not only Bar-Ilan University, which was referred to with the double-*entendre*, "*ha'universita be'Ramat Gan*" ["the university in Ramat-Gan" and "the university on the level of a kindergarten"], but Tel-Aviv University as well was demeaned as an inferior institution.

18. Ram (ed), *Israeli Society: Critical Perspectives* (Tel-Aviv, 1993) [Hebrew].

19. Ram, "Post-Zionist Ideology," *Ha'Aretz*, 8 April 1994, B9 [Hebrew].

20. Irving Louis Horowitz, *The Decomposition of Sociology* (New York, 1993).

21. Ram, "Post-Zionist Ideology."

22. Ram, *The Changing Agenda of Israeli Sociology: Theory, Ideology, and Identity* (Albany, NY, 1995) 206–7.

23. Ze'ev Sternhell, "The Zionism of Tomorrow," *Ha'Aretz*, 15 September 1995, B1 [Hebrew].

24. Ram, "Post-Zionist Ideology."

25. Rochelle Furstenberg, *Post-Zionism: A New Era or the End of Israel as a Jewish State?* (Ramat-Gan and New York, 1997).

26. Jonathan Derek Penslar, "Innovation and Revisionism in Israeli Historiography." *History and Memory*, 7(1) (Spring/Summer 1995) 131.

27. Ehud Sprinzak, "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism," in David Newman (ed), *The Impact of Gush Emunim: Politics and Settlement in the West Bank* (London, 1985) 27–45.

28. Although Sidorsky has not developed his thesis in print, he has discussed it on several occasions, most recently at a session of the Continuing Seminar on Zionist Thought, New York, October 1996.

29. Yonathan Shapiro, "The Historical Origins of Israeli Democracy," in Ehud Sprinzak and Larry Diamond (eds), *Israeli Democracy Under Stress* (Boulder, CO, 1993) 66.

30. Baruch Kimmerling, "Between the Primordial and the Civil Definitions of the Collective Identity: *Eretz Israel* or the State of Israel?" in Erik Cohen, Moshe

Lissak and Uri Almagor (eds), *Comparative Social Dynamics: Essays in Honor of S. N. Eisenstadt* (Boulder, CO, 1985) 277.

31. Charles S. Liebman, and Eliezer Don-Yehiya. "The Dilemma of Reconciling Traditional Culture and Political Needs: Civil Religion in Israel," in Myron J. Aronoff (ed), *Religion and Politics* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1984) 51.

32. Boas Evron, *Jewish State or Israeli Nation?* (Bloomington, IN, 1995).

33. I have not succeeded in finding Avineri's thesis in publication, and I am relying on my own interpretation of an address on the subject which I heard him give in Jerusalem several years ago.

34. Michael Walzer, "Comment," in Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, edited by Amy Gutman (Princeton, NJ, 1984) 99.

35. *Ibid.*, 100; also see Ezra Kopelowitz, "Equality, Multiculturalism and the Dilemmas of Civility in Israel." *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society,* 9(3) (Spring 1996) 373–400.

36. Michael Walzer, "The New Tribalism: Notes on a Difficult Problem." *Dissent,* 39(2) (Spring 1992) 166.

37. Michael Walzer, "Reply." *Dissent,* 39(4) (Fall 1992) 524.

38. Baruch Kimmerling, "A Public Religious Act." *Ha'Aretz*, 29 December 1995, B1 [Hebrew].

39. Uri Hupper, *Back to the Ghetto: Zionism in Retreat* (Buffalo, NY, 1988).

40. Robert N. Bellah, *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in a Time of Trial* (New York, 1975).

41. Jonathan S. Woocher, *Sacred Survival: The Civil Religion of American Jews* (Bloomington, IN, 1986).

42. Charles S. Liebman," The Quality of American Jewish Life: A Grim Outlook," in Steven Bayme (ed), *Facing the Future: Essays on Contemporary Jewish Life* (Hoboken, NJ, 1989); Chaim I. Waxman, "Religious and Ethnic Patterns of American Jewish Baby Boomers," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion,* 33(1) (March 1994) 74–80.

43. Baruch Kimmerling, "Academic History Caught in the Cross-Fire: The Case of Israeli-Jewish Historiography." *History and Memory,* 7(1) (Spring/Summer 1995) 48–9. He surely means that there were very few Jews in the land, since there does not seem to have been a time during the past 2,000 years when there were no Jews there.

44. *Ibid.*, 48.

45. Joshua A. Fishman (ed), *Readings in the Sociology of Jewish Languages* (Leiden, 1985).

46. Eliezer Schweid, *The Land of Israel: National Home or Land of Destiny* (Rutherford, 1985); Chaim I. Waxman, *American Aliya: Portrait of an Innovative Migration Movement* (Detroit, MI, 1989).

47. Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, VI, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (New York, 1968) 8–9.

48. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, tr. Talcott Parsons (New York, 1930).

49. Quoted in Baruch Kimmerling, "Academic History Caught in the Cross-Fire," 47.

50. Robert K. Merton, "The Perspectives of Insiders and Outsiders," in Robert K. Merton (ed), *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations* (Chicago, 1973) 123.

51. *Ibid*., 129 *ff*.

52. Ran Aaronsohn, "Settlement in Eretz Israel—A Colonialist Enterprise?: 'Critical' Scholarship and Historical Geography." *Israel Studies,* 1(2) (Fall 1996) 214–29.

53. Ian S. Lustick," The Voice of a Sociologist; The Task of an Historian; The Limits of a Paradigm," in Ian S. Lustick (ed), *Books on Israel* 1 (Albany, NY, 1988) 9–16.

54. Ram, *The Changing Agenda of Israeli Sociology*, 67.

55. S. N. Eisenstadt, *Jewish Civilization: The Jewish Historical Experience in a Comparative Perspective* (Albany, NY, 1992) 3.

56. Marcia Kretzmer, "Academics Bemoan Policy-Makers' Lack of Creativity in 'Post-Zionist' Israel," *The Jerusalem Post*, 24 December 1989, 2.

57. Quoted in Steven Kelman, "The Feud Among the Radicals," in Chaim I. Waxman (ed), *The End of Ideology Debate* (New York, 1968) 372.

58. Ronald Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society* (Princeton, NJ, 1990) 66.

59. Shlomit Levy, Hanna Levinsohn and Elihu Katz, *Beliefs, Observances and Social Interaction among Israeli Jews: Highlights from The Guttman Institute Report* (Jerusalem, 1993) 17.

60. *Ibid*., 24; see also, Charles S. Liebman and Elihu Katz, *The Jewishness of Israelis: Responses to the Guttman Report* (Albany, NY, 1997).

61. Chaim I. Waxman, "Weakening Ties: The Changing Relationship of American Jewish Baby Boomers and Israel," in Allon Gal (ed), *Envisioning Israel: The Changing Ideals and Images of North American Jewry* (Jerusalem and Detroit, MI, 1996) 374–96.