THE RACIAL MYTHS OF ZIONISM

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Even though the Zionists do not accept a religious definition of the Jew, it should be pointed out that their anti-religious stance is neither necessary nor essential. The Zionists do not hesitate to make full use of mystic elements and to take full advantage of any religious sanction they can get. They form many government coalitions with the "religious" parties, and make many concessions to some of the formalities of orthodoxy. Their main target has been, and still is, the assimilated Jew, be he religious or non-religious. A religious definition of the Jew, placed within a "nationalist" context, is perfectly acceptable.

The 'Danger' of Assimilation

The assimilationist outlook views the Jew as a complex personality, belonging to whatever country he may be living in, contributing to whatever cultural tradition he may have evolved from, yet simultaneously interacting with his specific religious and cultural heritage. But Zionist theoreticians denounce assimilation and characterize it as a form of alienation from a hypothetically true and pure Jewish identity. Their writings are replete with references to assimilation as a poisonous and destructive force. Arthur Ruppin, a Zionist theoretician who was also in charge of a Zionist settlement in Palestine, described absorption as an "imminent danger"1 threatening Jewish life. Klatzkin could characterize assimilation as a disease "infecting" the Jewish communities and "disfiguring" and "impoverishing" them,2 and Chaim Weizmann had nothing but unqualified contempt and deep "hatred" for assimilated Jews,3 even talking of the "assimilationist taint."4

In keeping with this anti-assimilationist Zionist outlook, the joint meeting of the Israeli Cabinet and the Zionist Executive, held on March15, 1964, referred, in its official communiqué to "the danger of assimilation" as a major problem facing the Jewish people in the Diaspora. This fear of political freedom and assimilation as a "threat" to Jewish survival, even more detrimental to the Jews than "persecution, inquisition, pogroms and mass murder," was the theme of the 26th Zionist World Congress in 1965,5 (a theme earlier harped on by Dr Goldmann in his speech to the World Jewish Congress Executive in 1958: "Our emancipation may become identical with our disappearance").6 Rabbi

Moritz Guedemann of Theodor Herzl's home town Vienna pondered the question of assimilation and the Zionist attack mounted against it in the name of "race and nationhood"7 and pure Jewishness. He then asked a moot question, in a pamphlet on Jewish nationalism: who is indeed more assimilated, the nationalist Jew who ignores the Sabbath and dietary laws, mistaking Judaism for the folk dances and ways of eastern European ghettos, or the believing and practicing Jew who takes himself to be a full citizen of his country?8 It is a question to be put not only to Zionists, but also to "ethnic Jews" who, preferring the easy to the good life, follow the lure of consumerism,

dissociating themselves from any over subtle religious beliefs, and practice folk rituals devoid of any moral content.

As expected, the Zionist attack on assimilation in the name of a higher, autonomous Jewish nationalism is not always met with universal jubilation among the vast majority of the Jewish people in the Diaspora. In the hope of pacifying an indignant or embarrassed Diaspora, Zionist spokesmen at times make conciliatory statements which assure the Diaspora Jews of their autonomy. Such a statement was made by Ben Gurion on August 23, 1950, when he said that the state of Israel "represents and speaks only on behalf of its own citizens." He then drew a sharp distinction between "the people of (the state of) Israel," and the Jewish communities abroad. In no way, said Ben Gurion, did the Zionist state presume to represent or speak in the name of the Jews.9 In its lead editorial of May 10, 1964, the Jerusalem Post asserted "the right of every Jew ... to have as much or as little contact with Zionism and Israel as he personally pleases."10 Such statements are duly quoted at the appropriate moment, but the more persistent underlying premise in Zionist thought and practice is one of universal pan-Jewish peoplehood. Ben Gurion's use of the phrase "the people of Israel" in reference to the Jewish citizens of Israel only, is neither representative of the Zionist use of that term nor of the meaning usually attached to it.

Zionism, always dissatisfied with a belief in complexities, ever intolerant of dialectics, advocated the concept of the abstract, quintessential Jew, or, to use Klatzkin's comic term, "the unhyphenated Jew"11 who has a unique, separate, national identity. What constitutes this pure Jewishness of this peoplehood? What is the basis of this "new definition of Jewish identity," the new "secular definition?"12 In attempting to answer this question a curious fact emerges: the anti-assimilationist Zionists wanted to reconstitute "the Jewish character and situation"13 in such a way that they become a people like any other.

Instead of assimilation, what is suggested is dissolution, a complete merging into the world at large, a trend quite consistent with their levelling godless pantheism.

The way to achieve that goal is to "normalize" the Jew,14 deriving the norms not from the Jewish tradition but rather from the beautiful world of the gentiles the Zionists at times claim to hate so much. Nathan Birnbaum sarcastically notes in his moving essay "In Bondage to Our Fellow Jews," that Zionists try "to remold" the Jews "on the European model, 'to make men of us'... and to drag (our children) away from our holy teachings, from our Judaism ... to 'their' teachings, to their world of license."15 Describing Zionist vocational training, a speaker at a Histadrut convention referred to it as being "the self-preparation of the Jewish worker to become a gentile.... The Jewish village girl shall live like a gentile country lass.."16

To prove that this program for reform, this vision splendid, is not untenable, the Zionists tried to develop a theory of a national Jewish identity, separate from all others, yet not any different from them. The Jew, who is at the heart of the Zionist program, is at times biologically determined, at others the determination is cultural or even religious, but at all

times he is determined by the one or two exclusively "Jewish elements" in his existence, which turn him into an immutable element or essence, existing above all gentile time and place and therefore, like all gentiles, he needs to be "ingathered" in his own Jewish Homeland, on his own soil.

Corporate Identity: A Racial Definition

The view of a biologically or racially determined Jewish identity was first advocated by Moses Hess, who, predicting that the race struggle was going to be the "primal one," subscribed zealously to the celebrated Semitic-Aryan racial dichotomy which was destined to serve as one of the main dichotomies of later theoreticians of European racialism.17 Herzl, for a while at least, flirted with the idea of a corporate racial identity freely using terms and phrases such as "Jewish race" or the "uplifting of the Jewish race." Even though the term was then, as now, ambiguous, acquiring at times a biological, at others a cultural content, we know from his answer to an anxious Nordau about the anthropological fitness of the Jews to be a nation, that what Herzl had in mind was a biological determinism.18 On his first visit to a synagogue in Paris, what attracted Herzl's attention was the racial "likeness" he claims to have noticed between the Viennese and Parisian Jews, "bold misshapen noses; furtive and cunning eyes."19

It appears that the ranks of the Zionists were buzzing with "scientists" interested in proving that the Jews were a distinct race, so that they could claim to be just like the gentiles. Klatzkin reported that some Zionists wanted to argue for "the impossibility of complete assimilation" on the basis of a "theory of race."20 Karl Kautsky refers to one such Zionist thinker, Zollschan, who, while objecting to some of the ideas contained in Chamberlain's classic on race, The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century, nevertheless firmly subscribed to the central thesis of the book: that humanity is moving from a "politically conditioned racelessness to a sharper and sharper definition of race." Zollschan, like others, tried to prove that the Jews constitute a pure race, to make the Zionist world ghetto "the necessary goal for all Jews."21

It seems that Zollschan, who is relatively unknown now, was an authority on the subject of the "Jewish race", for he is approvingly quoted several times by Ruppin, in his The Jews of Today, the most systematic Zionist effort at evolving a racial definition of Jewishness. The Jews, Ruppin argues, "have assimilated to a small extent certain foreign ethnical elements, though in the mass, as contrasted with the Central European nations, they represent a well characterized race."22 The racial purity achieved instinctively throughout history should be perpetuated consciously now. Ruppin asserts that a "highly cultivated race deteriorates rapidly when its members mate with a less cultivated race, and the Jew naturally finds his equal and match most easily within the Jewish people."23 He frowns on the whole process of "assimilation which begins in denationalization and ends in intermarriage" — the enemy of all racist thinkers.24 Through "intermarriage, the race character is lost," and the descendants of such a marriage, are not the "most gifted."

Since intermarriage is "detrimental to the preservation of the high qualities of the races, it follows that it is necessary to try to prevent it to preserve Jewish separation."25

Defense not only of Jewish racial purity but also of Jewish racial superiority runs through Rapping's study as it does through the writing of many Zionists. Morris Cohen noticed that the Zionists fundamentally accept the racial ideology of the anti-Semite, but draw different conclusions: "Instead of the Teutons, it is the Jew that is the purer or superior race."26 Ruppin is true to type, for on the basis of this alleged purity and superiority, he builds his ideological Jewish separatism. He argues that races "less numerous and infinitely less gifted than the Jews have a right to a separate national existence, so why not the superior Jews." He also quotes with obvious satisfaction Joseph Kohler, another racialist theoretician, who declared that the Jews are "one of the most gifted races mankind has produced." Ruppin accounts for the superiority on Darwinian grounds: "The Jews have not only preserved their great natural racial gifts, but through a long process of selection these gifts have become strengthened."27

Many Zionist theoreticians and functionaries, who did not consciously advance the racial definition, assumed it as a matter of fact in their statements. Norman Bentwitch, in an interview in 1909, claimed that a Jew could not be a full Englishman "born of English parents and descended from ancestors who have mingled their blood with other Englishmen for generations."28 Judge Louis Brandeis defined Jewishness, in a 1915 speech, "as a matter of blood." This fact, he said, was accepted by the non-Jews who persecute those of the Jewish faith, and Jews themselves who take pride "when those of Jewish blood exhibit moral or intellectual superiority, genius, or special talent, even if they have abjured the faith like Spinoza, Marx, Disraeli, or Hume."29 Nahum Sokolow "frequently referred to his people as a race," and, like the theoreticians of racialism, believed that there were no pure races; however, of those that existed, "the Jews were the purest."30

Dr. Eder, the acting chairman of the Zionist commission, argued in 1921 against the "equality in the partnership between Jews and Arabs," and called for "a Jewish predominance as soon as the numbers of that race are sufficiently increased."31 In a 1920 speech at Heidelberg University, Nahum Goldmann asserted the eternal racial separateness of the Jews. According to his view, "the Jews are divided into two categories, those who admit that they belong to a race distinguished by a history thousands of years old and those who don't;" he characterized the latter group as open to the charge of dishonesty.32

Lord Balfour, a gentile Zionist, thought in racialist terms of the Jew. Perhaps it is not entirely without significance to recall that one of the earlier drafts of the Balfour Declaration talked of a "national home for the Jewish race,"33 a phrase which, given the racialist outlook of the time, carried an unmistakable biological content and designation.

An Ethnic Definition

All these Zionist efforts notwithstanding, the argument for a racialist corporate identity had to be dropped. Theories of race and racial superiority and inferiority have always had a dubious validity and little scientific sanction. "By the 1930s, the intellectual climate had swung clearly away from racism and racism had lost its apparent scientific respectability."3* Even though we still hear statements about the "Jewish race" among Zionists and racists, such statements were far more frequent before the 30s.

Simcha King observed that "having lived through the era when the word 'race' has become identified with cruelty and barbarism, most people shy away from using the word.

Moreover, anthropology has shown that the term cannot be correctly applied to the Jews."3

However, he pointed out that "it was very common to refer to the Jews as a race in pre-Hitler days and many believed that being a Jew was a matter of birth and physical relationship."36

Moreover, a tight racialist definition is simply too mythical and therefore readily challenged by reality. The Nazis, after evolving their "scientific" hierarchy of races, found themselves forming an alliance with the Asiatic Japanese, and therefore the Japanese were reappointed as "honorary Aryans," destroying the very biological determinism underlying the Nazi outlook. The South African apartheid regime has inherited the practice and Japanese businessmen are considered white. In other words, the mad biological determinism of the racialist outlook is always moderated by reality and the very complexity it tries to ignore or flatten.

Zionist determinism, being no different, found it impossible to continue to perpetuate a biological definition and the racialist typology of a Gobineau, Chamberlain, Zollschan and Ruppin, because biological apologetics proved too simple, especially in view of the fact that the Zionists had something the Nazis did not, a widely dispersed Diaspora, multiracial and mutli-cultural. The racial definition would have alienated the Diaspora which is clearly not genetically homogeneous; any one purely and strictly genetic definition would have had to exclude the majority. Herzl, the Austrian, already had his difficulties with one of the Zionist leaders. Israel Zangwill was a Jew who was of "the long-nosed Negroid type, with very wooly deep-black hair." Herzl said with good humor that so much as a glance at Zangwill or at himself would demolish the racialist argument.37 Thus rather than seek the determination of history, the Zionists sought another definition of a corporate identity, one derived from ethnicity rather than heredity. But even though the relatively complex formula of culture or ethnicity replaces the simplistic biological formula, the determinism is very much there, hardly moderated at all. The Jew is seen as eternally determined by a unique historical and cultural structure to which the Jew is reducible and outside which he has no healthy existence and over which he has no control. This is not peculiar. Many racialists see that culture itself is an expression of the Weltanschauung of a nation whose character is biologically determined. Race, nation and culture overlap to such a degree that Sokolow's biographer

recommended that "when one reads the passages where Sokolow uses the word 'race,' one notices that he frequently uses it in the sense of nationality, in the sense of being born a member of a group with a great heritage."38

The biological determinism of culture and the correlation of nation and race in Zionist literature are such that any reader will not fail to see that the categories of "nation" or "culture" in a religious or ethnic sense, overlap with the category of race in the genetic sense. Moses Hess, as noted earlier, viewed world history as the arena for two world historic races, then he added that "the final aim of history is harmonious cooperation of all nations"39 that is, races. Ruppin also correlates the racial and cultural asserting that "a nation's racial and cultural values are its justification for a separate existence,"40 and he talks of the Jew, a racial category according to his definition, as "a high type of human culture."41

The same correlation is implied by Rabbi Joachim Prinz when he called for the replacement of integration by "an acknowledgement of the Jewish nation and Jewish race."42 Barnet litvinoff described the Zionist view of brotherhood as founded "on a strictly nationalist or racial basis," for it "meant brotherhood with Jew, not with Arab."43

Unlike the French view of nationalism which grew out of the Enlightenment and considered all men equal, Zionism grew out of German idealism and romanticism with its emphasis on the "Volk" and its organic ties with the Fatherland. Dr. Hans Kohn points out that Zionism defined Jewish identity, borrowing organicist, determinist terms such as "blood, destiny and organic folk community" from nationalist German thought to describe the Zionist definition of Jewish nationhood. He says that some of his Zionist friends believed that "a man of Jewish ancestry and cultural heritage could never become or be a true German, Italian, Frenchman, or Dutchman. He is bound to remain alien everywhere except in his own 'ancestral' soil." Kohn finds this concept of nationhood, based on "biological determinism," counter to the spirit of the Enlightenment.44

The same point is made by Dr. Arendt in her celebrated essay "Zionism Reconsidered." Speaking of the "crazy isolationism" of the Zionists, she traces it back to an "uncritical acceptance of German-inspired nationalism." Summarizing the underlying premise, she finds it to be based on a belief in the nation as "an eternal organic body, the product of inevitable growth or inherent qualities." This view explains "peoples not in terms of political organization but in terms of biological superhuman personalities."45

When reading Zionist literature we perhaps ought to decode the phrase "Jewish people" into "Jewish race," or at least to remember that the terms "people" or "nation," given the organicist orientation of Zionist thought, imply a reductive determinism, almost biological. This Zionist-Germanic concept of the Jewish nation underlies many of the statements of Zionist spokesmen such as Ambassador Herzog, who pointed out that the Zionist ideal was based "on the unique and unbroken connection, extending for some 4,000 years, between the People of the Book and the Land of the Bible,"46 a Germanic organicism of the purest and most elongated kind.

This denial of the concrete complexity and variety of the Jews, this assertion of permanence and fixity, are manifested in a variety of terms and concepts. The very use of the term "Israel" implies this idea of unbroken continuity and incessant self-duplication. Some refer to the Zionist state as the Third Commonwealth (Bayit shlishi), one link in a series that began with David, temporarily disappearing with the Roman conquest of Jerusalem, only to be revived in 1948 A.D. To restore faithfully that general museum atmosphere the Zionists pride themselves on, the Parliament is called a Knesset and the Israeli lira will be called shekel. Many Zionist historians and political scientists refer to the society of the Zionist settler-colonialists before 1948 as the new Yishuv to confuse it with the old religious Yishuv and to assert the unbroken settlement in Zion. To give an illusion of continuity some Israeli military commentators seriously compare David and Solomon's cavalry with the tanks of the Israeli army.

Ben Gurion is a prime example of this trend. In Rebirth and Destiny, he tried to understand the Middle Eastern realities of his time by referring them to what he considers similar events in the past. Consequently with a straight face he could talk of the modern Arabs as Assyrians and Babylonian Iraqis, Phoenician Lebanese and Pharaonic Egyptians. Given his Zionist historical continuity, he once told a newspaperman to challenge Nasser to speak in his native tongue — the language of the ancient Egyptians, as if one of the leading figures of Arab nationalism were not an Arab at all. His perception of reality and history in terms of his impossible Zionist continuity or repetitiveness sometimes provides comic relief. The Zionist leader talks of the "third return to Zion," i.e. Zionist settlement in Palestine, as distinct from the first two, not in terms of level of morality or depth of vision, but rather in terms of its geographical characteristic: the third common-wealth happily overlooks both the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean, a view of Zion that undoubtedly will leave the Redeemer, when he comes, at a loss. Ben Gurion then goes on to indicate that the third aliyah or ascent to Zion was by sea from the West, unlike the other two returns which were by land, Given the fact that the new Zion is surrounded by hostile Arab states (a detail which is not part of the divine scenario), this leaves the sea as the only way of communication between the third Zion and the Diaspora. And lo and behold! It is all prophesied in Isaiah's splendid verses: "that made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemer to pass over,"47 an exegesis that would shock the Creator Himself.

Nor is this firm commitment to the unbroken continuity confined to ideologues like Ben Gurion, but includes the academic circles. During the 1967 victories of the Israeli army, an Israeli professor of history at the Hebrew University, commenting on the outcome of the war, said that the Israeli soldiers saw the Red Sea for the first time again after 4,000 years of absence since that celebrated time when they had had to cross it with "General" Moses, (therefore General Dayan was referred to as Moshe II). Once an Israeli professor of International Law, in a debate at the Peace Academy in New York, in earnest compared the return of a Jew to Palestine to the return of an American to his homeland, the latter returning after a two or three year residence abroad, the former, the professor said, returning after a two or three thousand year trip. He was serious. What are two or three thousand years, after all, for a wolfish Hegelian mind that can gobble up millennia with extraordinary matter of fatness!

Good Hegelians as they are, the Zionists think in terms of hypothetical abstract beginnings of a unique Jewish history and they postulate the equally abstract happy endings of that history. Max Nordau summarized this Zionist Hegelianism when he suggested that "Palestine and Syria be restored to their original owners,"48 with total disregard for the intervening two millennia of Diaspora existence and unfolding history in Palestine. What makes history shrink to these miniature proportions is the fixed cultural identity of the Jew.

The ethnic argument, like the racialist one, claims not only ethnic purity, but also ethnic superiority. Herzl boasted of "the human material we possess in our people! They divine what one would have to hammer into other people's heads."49 Ruppin, in all humility, claims that other nations may have other points of superiority, but, he hastens to add, "in respect of intellectual gifts, the Jews can be scarcely surpassed by any nation."50 Ambassador Herzog served the United Nations a list of Jewish thinkers excelling in many fields, implying that their Jewishness, not their concrete cultural surroundings, was the prime factor and the determining cause.51

A Religio-National Definition

The usual Zionist definitions and assumptions concerning the hypothetical Jewish identity are taken from the "normal" world of the gentile. However, there is also a religious Zionist version which accepts a strict, though formal and literal definition of the Jew. Like all such religious Zionist definitions, it is deeply religio-national, with the first element rhetorically emphasized.

The Zionist establishment does not find it at all difficult to co¬operate with accommodating religious Zionist parties52 because their view of "the Jews," in its fundamentals, is not any different from the Zionist outlook; the Jew is determined exclusively by his Jewish tradition. They all agree on, and operate in terms of, the "Jewish people," alien and unique and sacred, with the source of the sacred-ness differing from one group to the other - divine for the religious and self begotten for the nonreligious. This difference within identity accounts for the agreement between the chief general and the chief rabbi of Israel. When the godless Dayan said that if one has the Torah and the people of the Torah, one should also have the land of the Torah, the theocratic Rabbi Nissim sent him a cable congratulating him on his deep understanding of the Torah. In the midst of this exegesis and congratulations, what they forgot is the fact that a religion divorced from a moral commitment and disrespectful of the existence of others, is dangerous religiosity which bestows not only legitimacy but also sanctity on one's prejudices.

The overlapping of the religio-national definition of Jewishness with the ethnic racialist definitions is quite manifest in Golda Meir's appeal to a Jew, who proved to be of Tartar descent, to "make a great sacrifice for the state and convert to Judaism," thereby reconciling the two apparently contradictory definitions.53

Double or Multiple Loyalties?

But whether a Jew by race, or cultural historical heritage, or national religion, or even a combination of all these criteria, this Zionist construct of a "pure Jew," unrelated to the historical tradition of the gentiles or their "soil," is the crux of Zionism. The Zionist controversy surrounding the rationale of the claimed purity is quite marginal in comparison. When Levi Eshkol advocates a "corporate Jewish life" that aims at strengthening itself and "Israel",54 he does not dwell for long on the source of this presumed unitary existence, Out of this concept of pure Jewishness branch out a number of Zionist/anti-Semitic concepts and themes such as Jewish power, Jewish block, Jewish vote, Jewish genius, and Jewish interests. But implied in Eshkol's argument throughout is the premise that the pure and exclusive Jewish state is the cardinal Zionist political channel for the fulfillment of pure Jewishness.

Ben Gurion emphatically stated that "only in a sovereign Israel is there the full opportunity for molding the life of the Jewish people according to its own needs and values, faithful to its own character and spirit, to its heritage of the past and its visions of the future."55 If pure Jewishness is bewildering and impossible when applied to a human being, it veers toward the comic when applied to inanimate objects. Ben Gurion talks of "the Jewish book, the Jewish laboratory and scientific research... the Jewish field, the Jewish road, the Jewish factory, the Jewish mine, and (naturally) the Jewish army."56 Barnett Litvinoff described the settlers as living "on Jewish bread, raised on Jewish soil that was (naturally) protected by a Jewish rifle."57

The concept of the pure Jew underlies the Zionist schematic division of the world into Jew and gentile. This division, common to Judaism and other monotheistic religions, is sharpened by the Zionists, then given a nonreligious content. The Israeli/Zionist tries tenaciously to maintain an unalloyed purity in the state. Two non-Jewish Norwegian sportsmen, who were invited to participate in the Maccabiah (a kind of Zionist Olympiad) were prevented from participating after the American delegation claimed that the Maccabiah was a strictly Jewish event, for pure Jews only (gentiles need not apply).58 In November, 1975, as the U.N. was debating the Zionism/racism resolution, Jim Baatright, the American basketball professional, had to convert to Judaism, not for the sake of the state, but for the sake of sports. Baatright was so cooperative that he discovered he had a Jewish grandmother back in the Bronx, a discovery that speeded up the process of conversion at the hands of one of Israel's chief rabbis.59 The same polarity underlies Israeli tinkering with the International Women's Year symbol. The symbol was censored because it incorporates a cross, which happens to be the scientifically accepted symbol for the female sex. A new crossless sign was designed to be used in connection with local events, one incorporating the Star of David. This is not religious fanaticism, but rather a form of deep chauvinism, or rather, a religious chauvinism.

The concept of the pure "Jewish national," the term now used in Israel to refer to Israeli citizens of the Jewish faith, implies a presumed loyalty on the part of Jews everywhere to

their true Jewish homeland. This was undoubtedly Weizmann's belief, who, his close friend Grossman tells us, believed that every Jew was a potential Zionist and that those Jews "whose (Jewish) patriotism was qualified by any other national loyalty were to be pitied or despised,"60 as mere traitors of their one and only homeland and God.

Klatzkin, the most radical of all Zionists, harping on the theme of Jewish national consciousness, warned the German people quite a few years before the publication of Mein Kampf that the boundaries of Germany could not in any way restrict the movement or loyalty of the Jewish people because Jewish unity is something that transcends national boundaries: "A loyal Jew can never be other than a Jewish patriot." Then, in language that anticipated Nazi propaganda, he said, "Not the slightest feeling of belonging can be found in the Jewish consciousness."61

Ben Gurion draws a chilling image of the purely Jewish lawyer in exile, "in Jewish duty bound to oppose the state and its ordinances." But in Israel this lawyer should "implant instincts of reverence and esteem for the state."62 The Jewish lawyer, then, owes allegiance only to the Jewish state. As for the Jew who has the misfortune to live in the world of the gentiles, he will be influenced by gentile culture, even though he has "no roots" in it, and therefore he experiences "a constant duality in his life if he wants to preserve his purity."63

In the 1920s in Germany, Dr. Nahum Goldmann struck the Klatzkin theme of Jewish loyalty to the Jews' homeland. However, in New York City, on January 9, 1959, he moderated his statement, undoubtedly in the face of the resentment of the happily assimilated American Jews. He exhorted American Jews (and those of other countries) to gather courage and declare openly that they entertained a double loyalty. After dividing loyalty evenly between the country in which the Jews lived and the Jewish homeland, Goldmann went on to counsel them not to "succumb to patriotic talk that they owe alliance only to the country in which they live."64

Kallen presents a fantastic system of classification of Jews. Jews are not good or bad, nor ordinary, nor are they American, Arab or French or any such recognizable category. Rather they "may be distinguished as Undispersed and Ungathered, Dispersed and Ungathered, Undispersed and Ingathered, Dispersed and Ingathered, Dispersed, Un dispersed and Ungatherable,"65 a frightfully allegorical catalogue. The Zionist definition of a corporate Jewish identity, be it racial, ethnic or religious, is a simple formula based on a simple determination; it is an encrustation corresponding to no concrete reality. All of us as individuals have multiple identities and, as a result, conflicting loyalties. The problems Jewish Americans encounter in secular society, based on the separation between church and state, are not radically different from those faced by a believing Christian who wants his children to believe in Christian values (or, for that matter, a believing Jew in the Jewish state). But the Zionist simplistic definition rejects the complexity of the assimilated Jew and sees it as a "duality" that would be better liquidated, (in the radical or Israeli/Zionist version), or mechanically maintained (in the schizophrenic Diaspora Zionist version, which implies the simultaneous centrality of Israel and the permanence of the Diaspora). If the monism or duality are replaced by

complex dialectics, then the image which emerges would be that of the assimilated Diaspora Jew, for in a rich assimilationist context, there are not one or two loyalties, there are multiple loyalties which each individual, be he Jew or gentile, organizes according to his individual existentialist situation and moral commitment. In the context of a corporate national personality, we have the suffocating monism of one loyalty advocated by the Ben Gurions, or the schizophrenics, or the double loyalties of the Goldmanns (and anti-Semites)!

The Arabs are not so presumptuous as to engage in a definition of what constitutes Jewish identity, prescribing and proscribing, if such a matter were a completely subjective one, or if it lay completely outside their national interests. But this is not the case, and therefore the Arabs have to discuss this one Zionist definition of Jewish identity which encroaches on our lives and impinges on our destiny. Other definitions, however, are not part of our political consciousness or concern, and they remain a matter of purely intellectual or cultural interest. If a Jewish American decides to deepen his relationship with his religious tradition, rediscovers, revives, develops or abandons it, it is entirely his own choice; politics, at least Middle East politics, is not relevant to that level of analysis. But when the definition of Jewish identity nibbles at or engulfs Palestine, then it is a different matter. A good example of an issue relevant to Jewish American life but completely irrelevant to the Middle East, is the controversy raging around the hyphenation of the term of reference to "the Jew." The radical Zionist position is a complete rejection of the hyphen because Zionism considers "all the Jews of the world" as "one 'folk' in spite of their diverse political allegiances."66 Klatzkin bluntly said, "We are not hyphenated Jews; we are Jews with no provisions, qualification or reservation. We are simply aliens,"67 a position remarkably similar to the Nazi attitude which forced Jewish organizations in Germany to change their names so that "they spoke for 'Jews in Germany' rather than 'German Jews'!"68

Some "ethnic Jews" prefer to use the hyphen, because although they feel they are full Americans, they still claim that they have a Jewish national past which binds them together and sets them apart from other ethnic minorities. Therefore, they are not Jewish Americans but rather Jewish-Americans — an analogy with Irish-American and Arab-American. Some Jews, like George Bagrash, the research director of the American Council of Judaism, object, indicating that the said process of hyphenation is erroneous since Judaism is neither "a national culture nor a system of racial values." Hyphenation, Bagrash maintains, misrepresents the religious identity of Americans of the Jewish faith, and if an ethnic determinant be required, they should be called Italo-, Greek-, Afro-, or Irish-Americans, after ascertaining their national or racial origins.69

Nobody in the Arab world is inquisitive enough to have raised the issue in any political platform. Many Arabs cannot even begin to understand the subject of the controversy concerning hyphenation, there being no parallel in their historical experience; those who grasp it might consider it of intellectual interest, yet it will remain of very little political relevance to them as Arabs.

But when a definition of the self, be it religious or ethnic, be it based on Judaism or Jewishness, spills over into a political program which encroaches on the land and rights of others, then those others inevitably become involved and begin to engage in the process of definition because it touches on their destinies and lifestyles. For example, Aryan mythology was the exclusive domain of the anthropologist until it began to serve as a base of Nazi ideology; it then ceased to be a matter of pure academic interest or mere self-identification and became the subject of international political controversy. When Shinto was used as a means for the rationalization of Japanese militarism, the whole world reacted and a religious sect in Japan was the subject of wide discussion by people whose interest was primarily political. There is no controversy in the Arab world concerning what constitutes American-ness or Britishness, except perhaps among specialists who have no particular political interests. But there is a political interest in the definition of the limits of Jewishness and an attempt to distinguish between Judaism and Zionism, and between Jewishness and Zionism because of the Zionist invasion of Palestine.

The Negation of the Diaspora

Zionist activism and militancy on behalf of Jewry is undoubtedly motivated by a strong and probably sincere belief in the nationalist ideology of pure Jewishness. However, the "nationalist," apparently positive, assertions imply by definition negative aspersions on the not so nationalist Diaspora. On a deep and latent level, one discovers that Zionist ideology is predicated on the belief in the worthlessness of the Diaspora. One can even argue that just as the conquest of the national Eretz implies that the cultural life of the Palestinians is not worth retaining, the conquest of the communities implies that the cultural life of Diaspora Jewry is also not worth keeping. The nationalist Zionist affirmation means the negation of the Diaspora.70

Ben Gurion described galut (exile) as mere dependence — a "rootless alien people" depending on others.71 Klatzkin saw it as nothing more than "deterioration and degeneration" and "eternal impotence,"72 an abnormal and unnatural people. The abnormality, according to Zionist ideology, is most evident in the occupational abnormality of the Jews, heavy concentration in trade and the professions and little or no presence in the ranks of the peasantry of the proletariat. Zionist education, to put an end to this state of affairs, tries to inculcate the negative aspects of Diaspora existence, denying its achievements, presenting Jewish contributions on "foreign soil" as a mere betrayal of the pure Jewish spirit.73 Levi Eshkol, in his official foreword to the 1965 Israel Government Year Book, talks of Diaspora creativeness as drawing "sustenance from alien soil and to that soil gives back its fruit."74 The presumed abnormality is always underscored and the Zionist happy ending becomes inevitable with a Zionist Israel as a growing, normal center and the Diaspora as a dying abnormal margin.

This negative description of the Diaspora is the essence of the Zionist outlook, for if the life of Jewry in the Diaspora was presumed to be any better, having its normal quota of

human suffering and joy, if it were a normal historical experience, why then the Zionist state? Why Zionism at all? One can perhaps outline the Zionist strategy concerning world Jewry and the Jewish question as operating in terms of two possible alternatives with no middle ground: settlement and Jewish survival in the Jewish homeland or total assimilation and eventual disappearance for those who remain in exile. Both alternatives lead to the liquidation of the Diaspora.75

The cornerstone of the Zionist program, according to Ben Gurion, is a "radical break" with Diaspora dependence, "making an end of it."76

The "godless" Jewish communities willingly remaining in exile; these traitors to the divine Zionist state will merely serve as a bridge for the Zionists to cross over victoriously to the Promised Land. Diaspora Jewry from now on will serve as "a source of supply" for the national renaissance and any Zionist effort at delaying the total dismantling of the Diaspora edifice for a short while longer is simply a matter of expedience, giving the Zionists "the time to salvage some bricks" for the new national structure.77 This approach defined the Zionist strategy vis-à-vis the Nazis; rather than organize the Jewish communities in Nazi-dominated Europe to join the resistance, the communities were seen as "a natural reservoir from which immigrants could be drawn to strengthen the key position of the Jewish community in Palestine."78 In itself the Diaspora does not deserve to survive. "The transitional existence," Klatzkin says in no uncertain terms, "is of significance, precisely because it is transitional."79

Gordon, whose writings are largely a torrent of mystical epithets and nebulous nostalgic images referring to something vaguely infinite, draws a picture of a Jewish Palestine acting as the mother country of world Jewry "with the Jewish communities in the Diaspora as its colonies,"8' a curiously mixed metaphor of a colonizing exploitative mother. Interestingly enough, a half century later, an American "Bundist," CM Spiegel, found the metaphor of conquest and colonialism quite appropriate to describe Israel's "neo-colonial hold on world Jewry, drawing from it the material — dollars - to fuel her machinery."81 Spiegel's metaphor, though apparently similar to Gordon's, is far more precise because there are no illusions about the motherhood of the extortionists.

The Zionist negation of the Diaspora was also a negation of Judaism and Jewry, because both have no concrete existence outside "exile." Almost all Jewish religious books and literature — from the Babylonian Talmud, that "portable homeland," to the Shulhan Arukh, to the Zohar, to Yiddish literature, to Philip Roth's novels and other Jewish-American novels — were produced by "exiled" Jews in the Diaspora. In that sense, the Zionist perception runs counter to the Jewish religious experience. It is also at variance with the Jewish historical experience itself. The Zionists could not understand or cope with the transcendence of the religion or the complexity of the historical experience.

Zionist Anti-Semitism

Zionism grew out of and was undoubtedly conditioned by one aspect of the historical experience of Jewry in the Diaspora: anti-Semitism. In a real sense it should trace its genealogy back not to the positive assertions of the religious Jewish tradition, nor to the complexity of the Jewish historical experience, but rather to the negative aspersions of anti-Semitism. Herzl wrote that he and Nordau agreed that only anti-Semitism "had made Jews of us," and he specifically traced his recognition of Judaism or Jewishness (they overlap in Zionist literature) to the days when he read Duehring's anti-Semitic classic. The link between his sense of his own presumed Jewish identity and anti-Semitism is so deep and organic that in the first entry of the Diaries, written for posterity, he recorded that "anti-Semitism has grown and continues to grow - and so do I."82

Any reader of Zionist literature will not fail to notice that anti-Semitism is at the very center of the Zionist outlook of reality and at the heart of the Zionist view of history. Herzl's The Jewish State is premised on the simple view that wherever Jews live they are "persecuted in greater or lesser measure." There is a whole "sorry catalogue of Jewish hardships" which includes murder in Romania and exclusion from clubs in France (still a major grievance among Zionists in the United States). But regardless of time and place, "the fact of the matter is, everything tends to one and the same conclusion" — anti-Semitism -a breathtaking abridgement of history.83 Weizmann felt that an assimilated Jew was an intellectual coward, unequipped with "a philosophy of history or of anti-Semitism"84 in the manner of the nationalist Jews who largely focus on pogroms and rapes. If the Zionists do otherwise, they lose the legitimacy based on their highly partisan and critical view of the experience of Jewry.

The Zionists attribute to anti-Semitism certain inevitability, eternity and centrality in the Jewish experience. Pinsker speaks of the hatred of the Jew as a "hereditary psychic aberration," a kind of "incurable... disease transmitted for two thousand years."85 The comparison of anti-Semitism to organic phenomena is dramatically illustrated by one episode in the lifelong friendship between Weizmann and Grossman. When the Zionist leader asked Grossman whether or not he was an anti-Semite, the latter unhesitatingly replied, "Of course." Grossman's reply demonstrated to Weizmann his sincerity and honesty, for anti-Semitism, according to Weizmann, was "a bacillus which every gentile carries with him."86

The determinism of the bacillus metaphor betrays the narrow and infantile reductionism of the Zionist view of life. It dehumanizes the gentile, reducing him to the level of a racist assassin, actual or potential. It denies the efforts of all those gentiles who fought for the political and civil rights of the Jews and other minorities. But above all, it negates the great ages of Jewish creativity in the Diaspora. Zionism, however, cannot operate but in terms of abstractions: if the Jew is abstracted into a permanent victim or a permanent parasite, the gentile is equally abstracted into a permanent wolf.

If anti-Semitism has such permanence and persistence, if it is elevated to the status of an organic aspect of gentile human nature, then it necessarily follows that it is the most natural of phenomena. Pinsker and Herzl not only assumed the impossibility of assimilation, they also assumed the naturalness of anti-Semitism — "the inseparable

companion" of Judaism throughout history, Pinsker said.87 This assumption becomes a belief in its reasonableness, a belief which in point of fact makes the Jew responsible for anti-Semitic attacks. As a parallel to Weizmann's baccilus metaphor, one can refer to Nordau's equally pseudoscientific deterministic metaphor characterizing the Jews. The Jews, the Zionist leader said, are like a certain kind of microbe which is "perfectly harmless so long as they live in the open air, but become the cause of frightful disease when deprived of oxygen." Then this "scientific" racist goes on to warn governments and nations that the Jews might become just such a "source of danger."8

Klatzkin needed no metaphors. He bluntly declared that he could perfectly understand the legitimacy of anti-Semitism as "essentially a defense of the integrity of the nation in whose throat the Jews (another nation) are stuck," and therefore he candidly asked the Jews to admit the "rightfulness of anti-Semitism." In its denial is implied a denial of Jewish nationalism.89

Herzl, the gentle liberal, shared the same outlook, dissociating anti-Semitism from "the old religious intolerance," and characterizing it as "a movement among civilized nations (sic) whereby they try to exorcise a ghost from out of their own past." He also conceded that the Jewish state meant a victory for the anti-Semites, but this does not seem to bother him: "They will have turned out to be right because they are right." (Emphasis in the original) This theme of the Tightness of anti-Semitism is a cardinal one in the Jewish State. Herzl poses the question of all anti-Zionists: will not Zionism provide weapons for the anti-Semites? His answer is rather ambiguous but suggestive: "How so? Because I admit the truth? Because I do not maintain that there are none but excellent men among us." The anti-Semites, by expelling the Jews, were simply liberating themselves, ridding themselves of Jewish dominance. "They could not have let themselves be subjugated by us in the army, in government, in all of commerce. Many Jews objected to Zionism as anti-Semitic and even a friend of Herzl's, jokingly of course, told him that he would become "an honorary anti-Semite." But apparently the joke impressed Herzl so much that he took good care to record it in his diary.90

A famous anti-Semite of Herzl's days, who reviewed The Jewish State, heaved a sigh of relief that finally anti-Semitism had been correctly, and probably scientifically, understood by the Jews, and that the anti-Semites were perceived not as maniacs or fanatics but as "citizens who exercise the right of self-defense."91 As if reciprocating, Nordau expressed his deep gratification "to see that honest anti-Semites applaud our proposed (nationalist) solution for the Jewish question."92 From now on they would no longer have to defend themselves against the Jews but would simply play a positive role in transferring them, as Eichmann and other Nazi war criminals said.

The naturalness of anti-Semitism is predicated on a perception of the Jews' unnaturalness or abnormality, a basic premise of Zionism which has already been dealt with briefly. The Zionists, to establish the abnormality of the Diaspora, based their critique of the Jewish character "on a rationale of charges"93 taken over from the literature of anti-Zionism in the Western world. Zionist literature is indeed replete with discussion of the ways and means to "productivize" the Jews in order to make them less parasitical,

marginal or dependent. The Jew who emerges in Zionist literature is a usurer, a sick personality, living like "dogs and ants," accumulating money, following the values of the market place. The Zionist assumption is that Diaspora Jewry is leading an abnormal life and that Zionism will restore them to normalcy.

Brenner probably expressed himself in relatively extreme terms when he urged the Jews "to recognize and admit" their "meanness since the beginning of history to the present day," and then went on counseling them to negate all of that and make a fresh start, a pushbutton abstract revival.94 His very extremeness puts in sharp focus an important aspect of the Zionist perception of the Jews. Sometimes the Zionist critique spills over into direct anti-Semitic caricature, for Klatzkin talked of a "rootless and restless" people, "living a false and perverted existence,95 and the Jews, in Pinscher's words, are "everywhere a guest," "nowhere at home," moving like ghosts from one country to another, an alien body; they are half-dead, struck with the sickness of wandering.96

Yehezkel Kaufmann, in an article entitled "The Ruin of the Soul," culled his own collection from Zionist literature — Frishman: "Jewish life is a 'dog's life' that evokes disgust"; Berdishevski: "Not a nation, not a people, not human"; Brenner: "Gypsies, filthy dogs, inhuman, wounded dogs"; A. D. Gordon: "Parasites, people fundamentally useless"; Schawadron: "Slaves, helots, the basest uncleanliness, worms, filth, rootless parasites."97

In Davar, the Histadrut newspaper, a headline referred to the "regeneration of a parastic people."98 This is a theme at the very heart of the Zionist conception, recurrent in the works of the liberal Herzl as well as in the unliberal Brenner. If the latter spoke in rather extreme terms, Herzl too, used certain language and drew certain stereotypes which, if used by a gentile, would undoubtedly be characterized as racist. What could be more racist than Herzl's negotiating with a colonialist power, trading on world Jewish loyalty in exchange for colonial sponsorship. The words of the Zionist Chaim Kaplan reek of the worst variety of anti-Semitism: "Every nation in its time of misfortune has conspirators who do their work in secret. In our case an entire nation has been raised on conspiracy. With others the conspiracy is political; with us it is religious and national."99 Kaplan has obviously taken over an anti-Semitic stereotype and applied it to himself and Jews at large. The identification with the oppressor and his view is a familiar phenomenon in the history of man and oppression.

Thus the Zionists considered anti-Semitism a natural ally and positive force in their nationalist struggle to liberate the Diaspora Jewry from their captivity. Rather than combat anti-Semitism, Herzl declared that "the anti-Semites will be our most dependable friends, the anti-Semitic countries our allies." From the very beginning he perceived the parallelism between Zionism and anti-Semitism and saw the potential for cooperation. In an 1895 blueprint for his future Zionist activities, the second step concerned publicity. He notes that it would "cost nothing, for the anti-Semites will rejoice," and will presumably give the Zionist idea free publicity. In another diary entry, he enumerated the elements of world public opinion he could mobilize in the fight against the imprisonment of the Jews, and he included the anti-Semites.100 This hope for anti-Semitic militancy on behalf of

Jews could not be expected unless there were an acceptance of a common anti-Semitic/Zionist frame of reference and common interests.

The theme of a common Zionist/anti-Semitic outlook and dynamics is reiterated by later spokesmen, in 1925, Klatzkin proposed that "instead of establishing societies for defense against the anti-Semites, who want to reduce our rights, we should establish societies for defense against our friends who desire to defend our rights."101 Nahum Goldman, in his heady radical Zionist days, lamented the thought of the disappearance of anti-Semitism because even though it might benefit the Jewish communities politically and materially, it would have "a very negative effect on our eternal life."102

Again this abnormal sentiment is no aberration but a theme inherent in Zionist ideology and practice and harped on repeatedly and relentlessly. If the Zionist founding fathers were the first to propound it, their descendents in Israel still perpetuate it with the same vigor. In The End of the Jewish People? the Jewish French sociologist Georges Friedman noticed that the Ashkenazim of Israel reacted negatively (and sometimes aggressively) to any news indicating that Jews were leading a normal life in any country of the Diaspora without being worried or harassed by anti-Semitism. However, they showed a positive reaction on hearing "any piece of news indicating anti-Semitism anywhere in the world."103

Anti-Semitism was so "positive" from the point of view of the Zionist settler Yavneli that he believed it more or less "divinely ordained,"104 unconsciously echoing Herzl who claimed that "anti-Semitism ... probably contains the divine will to Good because it forces us to close ranks."105 In an exchange in the Hebrew press in Palestine between Yavneli and Kaufmann, the former described him¬self as "an anti-Semitic Zionist," adding, "how could any Zionist avoid a similar position?"106 Kaufmann himself concurs. Zionist nega¬tion goes beyond Judaism and Jewry to reach to the "Jewish" remnants in the Zionist soil, becoming a form of a negation of the Self, the ulti¬mate form of alienation and surrender to the oppressor.

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