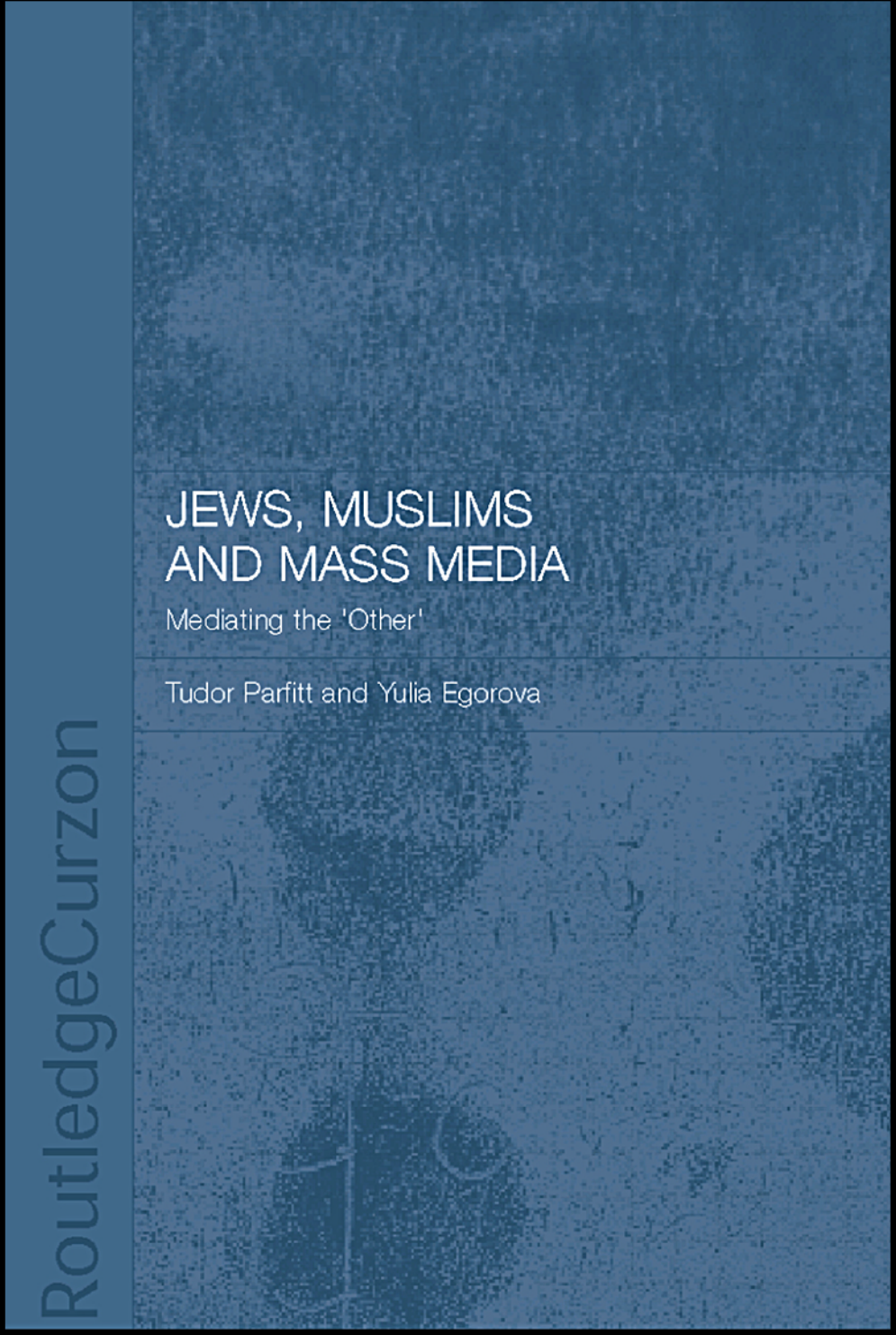

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JEWS, MUSLIMS AND MASS MEDIA

This book looks at the ways in which Jews, Muslims and the conflict between them has been covered in the modern media. Both Jews and Muslims generally receive a 'bad press'. This book will try to reveal why. The media have clearly played a proactive role in the Middle East conflict, the coverage of which is obscured by the contrasting images of Jew and Muslim in Western thought.

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My first thanks must go to the family of the late *Beryl Stone* whose generosity made possible the symposium where many of these papers were first presented. My second thanks go to the *Maimonides Foundation of London*, which co-hosted the symposium. The *Maimonides Foundation* is a registered charity, which fosters understanding and promotes and facilitates dialogue, interaction and co-operation between Jews and peoples of different faiths with particular emphasis on Muslim–Jewish relations. I am particularly indebted to the hard work put in before the symposium by *Douglas Krikler* the then executive director of the Foundation.

Tudor Parfitt

INTRODUCTION

Tudor Parfitt

Contemporary European and Western perceptions of Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Muslims (and to a certain extent the attitudes of societies in which these ethnicities are completely or partially unknown)[1] are deeply rooted in much older representations which in turn are embedded in our collective Western *imaginaire*. This is in large part because for hundreds of years the Jews and Moors together constituted perhaps the overriding 'other' against which Europeans defined themselves. The medieval construct of us: them was essentially a European: Semite construction although the word 'Semite' was not yet in use. For although Jews and Muslims or Moors were no doubt quite discrete entities, none the less, in Western thought and writing there has frequently been a discernible linkage between them and there are ways in which in modern mediatic coverage of these broad groupings these oppositions and linkages persist.

In mediaeval Europe 'Moorishness' like 'Jewishness' was the essence of 'otherness'. Hamlet's impassioned denunciation of his uncle reaches its peak with a pun which culminates in the term of abuse: Moor. Moors were literally beyond the law: when in the reign of Henry VIII a 'Turk' was set on in the streets of London and the assailants charged the case was thrown out of court as Christians could not be prosecuted for an offence against infidels. No Jew was likely to be set upon in London streets at the time, however, as the entire Jewish community had been expelled from England in 1290 and the same was to happen in most other European countries: in Spain both Jews and Moors were expelled within a few years of each other. The etymology of the word 'gypsy' (*gitane*, *gitano*) is derived from 'Egypt', a reminder that even the other immanent European internal 'other' – the gypsy – takes on the colouring, uses one of the very names of the Moor. The Arabic language, like Hebrew (in France 'c'est de l'hébreu pour moi' signifies an incomprehensible language) was for Europeans the epitome of the

unknown tongue.[2] As Emanuela Trevisan-Semi points out, in the Veneto which had a long history of symbiosis with Muslims to this day *parlar turco* means to speak gobbledeygook and *cose turche* implies strange things which can scarcely be imagined.

The linkage of Jew, Moor and Heathen, already made in the *Book of Common Prayer* (1548) and the Collects for Good Friday was a frequent feature of English writing. In Fielding's *History of Joseph Andrews* (1742) one character after an adventure in an alehouse complained that he had almost begun to suspect 'that he was sojourning in a country inhabited by Jews and Turks'. There are no Jews or Turks in the novel so the term must represent an abstraction of foreignness. In *Tristram Shandy* Sterne noted in a couplet:

> A devil 'tis – and mischief such doth work
> As never yet did Pagan, Jew or Turk.

The creation of a European identity was to a substantial degree in opposition to these 'others'. Identity is as much a question of exclusion as inclusion and it was on the boundaries of these collectivities that a European sense of self was forged. The immediate boundary between European Christian and Jew or Moor was endlessly duplicated throughout the world as Europe confronted the hitherto unknown parts of the world and Jews and Moors were used symbolically as a way of representing unknown peoples of all sorts.[3] The history of Western perceptions of Muslims, Jews and Arabs is a long and complex one which has emerged from millennia of religious prejudice and military confrontation and the way in which current Western media images and perceptions of Jews and Muslims are used and misused inevitably draws heavily on this history. Traditional European dislike of Jews and Muslims has had lethal consequences culminating in the destruction of European Jewry and continuing anti-Semitism which shows no sign of abating, on the one hand, and the widespread Islamophobia to be found throughout Europe today on the other.[4] It is surely significant that in the wake of the attack on the United States of 11 September 2001 two important discourses have emerged: one puts the blame on Islam as a whole – the other pins responsibility on the Jews.[5]

The media coverage of the Middle East has been intense for most of the last fifty years and the current Western image of Muslims and Arabs as well as of Jews and Israelis has been very much affected by that coverage. The sense of Islam as an innately hostile, negative and militant entity has been reflected in Western perceptions and in Western coverage for some decades. In some ways it can be seen as reaching back

to a pre-colonial European fear of the Arabs massing at the very gates of Christendom. Antonio Marquina and Vicente Garrido Rebolledo, members of a research group working on the possibilities of dialogue between the European Union and the countries of the Southern shore of the Mediterranean have stressed the importance of the study of mutual perceptions of the Islamic World and the West. They observe that the media have contributed to the formation of the negative image of Islam by using such expressions as 'violent Islam', 'Islamic bombs', 'Islamic terrorism', etc. References to 'the confrontation of cultural identities', 'the clash of civilisations', and 'the ideological conflict' have not contributed much to the wider non-Muslim public's understanding of Islam, either.[6]

In a 1976 article in *Harper's* by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. we read

> Arabs are not like Philadelphians, nor are they like Frenchmen, nor even Israelis. . . . Arabs are religious fanatics devoted to a non-Western warrior religion. Their bequests to us include the words *assassin* and *jihad* . . . whatever the cause the Arab draws his blade with gusto, and when he is finished butchering he is always that much closer to Allah.[7]

As far as American television is concerned as Jack Shaheen observed:

> the Arab is depicted as pimp, cheat and backstabber, whether lurking among the shadows in the bazaars of Cairo or sitting in a tent in the middle of the desert surrounded by oil wells. . . . television helps to perpetuate the myth that there are no heroic Arabs only heroic Exoduses.[8]

As a result partly of this kind of reporting in the United States (which is not to say that there is no other kind of reporting) between 1947 and 1979 US opinion polls consistently had Americans favouring Israelis over Arabs – usually by a massive margin: at the height of the Six Day War according to a Gallup poll 56 per cent of Americans favoured Israel over 4 per cent who favoured the Arabs.[9] During the Lebanese War somewhat more sympathy was shown the Arabs in the Unites States and in more recent times less.[10]

Over the same period the image of Jews in the Western press continues to be complicated by old anti-Semitic stereotypes and frequently the coverage of Israel both in conflict and at peace is obfuscated by these images. In many Soviet media outlets, as Timm's chapter shows, the presentation of Israel's role in the Middle East

conflict concentrated on Israel's alleged use of terror, torture and cruelty and anti-Semitic comparisons were systematically made with Nazi methods.[11] Somewhat more subtle comparisons between Israel's occupation or wars and Nazi atrocities pepper Western reporting. The use in the Western media of terms associated with the Holocaust is very frequent and may be viewed as a fairly lethal rhetorical device which has the effect of transforming the former victims of the Nazis into a reincarnation of their persecutors. Recently reporting of Nobel Prize laureate Jose Saramago's comparison of the situation in Ramallah to Auschwitz fed into this discourse.

In the Arab and Muslim press throughout the Middle East and South Asia anti-Semitic depictions of Jews and Israelis occur regularly along with motifs such as the charge of deicide, the blood libel accusation, and the denial of or justification of the Holocaust. Comparisons between Nazis and Israelis are commonplace:[12] the broadcast by Egyptian television that called the IDF's activities in the Occupied Territories a 'Final Solution' is but one example.

Recent years have witnessed the publication of a significant number of academic books discussing the relationship between mass media and interrelated issues of multiculturalism, ethnicity and religion. *Unthinking Eurocentrism*,[13] linked the study of mass media with discussions of 'race', Third World nationalism and of colonial and post-colonial discourse on the 'other'. Teun van Dijk in a number of works has explored the interaction between mass media, racism and intolerance towards religious and ethnic minorities.[14] Stuart Hall has examined the way in which mass media whether deliberately or unconsciously reproduce the ideologies of racism and intolerance.[15]

One of the unusual features of this book is that it is not only Western perceptions which are dealt with. We are equally interested in the 'other's' perception of the 'other'. Thus images drawn from Indian, Middle Eastern and Turkish mediatic contexts form an important part of this volume. We have made an attempt here to link theories of mass media and theories of interfaith and intercultural studies and to make a step in the direction of a further understanding of the functions of media discourse about foreign cultures in general and minority religious and ethnic communities in a number of quite different contexts.

This book covers a variety of topics relating to the portrayal of the communities in question: the representation of Jews and Muslims as minority communities, perceptions of the 'world of Islam' in Western countries and of Europe and the West in Asia and Africa, the image of the State of Israel in the media in different parts of the world and the

image of the Arabs in Israeli TV and press.[16] In addition we deal with representations of Muslims and Jews as well as of Israelis and Arabs. If there is some overlap here so there is in the nature of the Middle East conflict and the way it is represented: if it is essentially a conflict about land and security it is also a continuation in many respects of a Jewish–Muslim symbiosis, antagonism and dialogue which stretch back over the centuries.

The chapters of this collection demonstrate a variety of methodological approaches towards the study of ethnic and religious representations in the mass media drawing on discursive, semiotic, sociological, anthropological and feminist concepts of representation. This book also discusses a number of general theoretical issues which have been raised in the study of media. Probably the central issue is that of the relationship between the mass media and the general public's perceptions of the 'other'. To what extent do the media reflect our views and to what extent do they form them? What factors predicate what is published in newspapers and shown on TV? Stuart Hall suggests that 'what defines how the media function is the result of a set of complex, often contradictory, social relations; not the personal inclinations of its members'.[17] Teun van Dijk has argued that the role of the media is crucial in the formation and development of ethnic perceptions and that

> whatever the immediate effects of specific media messages may be on specific readers in specific circumstances, the *overall* influence of media, particularly the news media, on the structures and contents of social cognitions of groups is considerable.[18]

Shohat and Stam have observed that 'sensitivity around stereotypes and distortions largely arises ... from the powerlessness of historically marginalized groups to control their representations'.[19] Hence any study of media discourse requires both a comprehensive analysis of the institutions that produce mass media and of the audiences that they are aimed at.[20]

The broad aim of the present volume is to examine the ways in which Jews, Muslims, Arabs and Israelis are presented in a range of modern media from newspapers to film to the internet. The book arose out of a conference generously funded by the Stone family which took place in Taba in Egypt in February 2000 before the awful deterioration which characterises the Arab–Israel conflict at the time of writing. Some of the chapters then are marked by an optimism which is perhaps no longer

tenable. However, it is good to be reminded of a time when tempered optimism was the order of the day. Three of the chapters were written by scholars at the School of Oriental and African Studies (Eistrakh, Krutikov and Schindler) well after the conference and not all of the conference papers could be used for various (but not for political) reasons. As in previous Beryl Stone symposia the organisers were anxious to encourage some younger scholars.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part examines the representation of mainly Jews and Muslims in general or as minority communities. Thus, Ami Ayalon focuses on the tension between the Egyptian and Syrian press in Cairo, which reflected the friction between Egyptians and the Syrian minority. Ayalon describes this tension as 'a contention between two "others"', which was asymetric in the sense that the Syrians were not numerous and belonged to the Christian minority, but none the less had better chances in competing for public posts. They were also widely represented in the press industry and included a high percentage of newspaper readers. In this respect the author raises the question of the assessment of the role of the press in the formation of the mutual perceptions of the two communities.

The chapter by Shmuelevitz examines the portrayal of Zionism and Jewish/Muslim relations in the Zionist Jewish weekly *Hamevasser* published in Istanbul towards the end of the Ottoman period. It is important to take into consideration the 'definition of the ethnic situation' as given by knowledgeable members of minority communities,[21] and thus minority communities' own organs are indispensable when one attempts to consider the relations between majorities and minorities. This periodical advocated the idea of Jewish revival in the Ottoman Empire and the strengthening of ties between its Jewish subjects and their co-religionists abroad. It is demonstrated that *Hamevasser* is a valuable source for the study of the Jewish community of the Ottoman empire.

Arus Yumul's chapter is devoted to the representation of the 'other' through advertisements. The author examines the ways in which advertisements 'produce' and 'reproduce' racism. Yumul considers how African-American and Hispanic women are portrayed in Western advertisements and shows that they become subject to both racism and sexism. She also focuses on the representation of 'other' men, for instance, the Jews in Turkish commercials, who are often shown as unreliable outsiders. It is demonstrated in the chapter that racism revealed in contemporary advertisements and commercials tends to employ old stereotypes.

Emanuela Trevisan Semi's chapter is devoted to Jewish and Muslim themes in the Italian media connected with the Northern League, an Italian political party which demonstrates a hostile attitude towards immigrants. Party propaganda appears to be full of anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic rhetoric. It is demonstrated in the chapter, very significantly, that there are parallels between anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim rhetoric. Thus Muslim immigrants from the Balkans are described in terms which are similar and often identical to those used to attack the Jews.

Ali Granmayer's chapter focuses on the discussion of minority issues in the press of post-1979 Iran. The US-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) put Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei at the top of its annual 'Enemies of the Press' list in May 2001, and he was the runner-up the previous year. On the other hand the Iranian publisher Shahla Lahiji was awarded the 2001 PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award in April 2001 as she faced a three-and-a-half year prison sentence for acting against national security and another six months for detailing the grave dangers incurred by Iranian writers. The imprisoned Iranian editor Mashallah Shamsolvaezin received the International Press Freedom Award from the CPJ. There are perhaps as many as twenty Iranian journalists in prison now, and about 50 Iranian publications were closed in the second half of 2000 and the first few months of 2001. Granmayer's chapter shows that minorities are more often than not obliged to express their gratitude and satisfaction with the policy of Iran in return for their relative freedom to practise their religion. Cases of minorities choosing to publicise their discontent in the Irani media are rare.

Roy Armes concentrates on representation of immigration to Europe in North African cinema. The chapter examines the ways Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian films depict both the expectations and illusions of those who aspire to move to Europe and the concrete encounters of the Arab immigrants with Europeans. In both cases they offer an interesting insight into the idea of emigration.

Another chapter dealing with representation of a minority group in cinema is the one by Rachel Dwyer. It focuses on the image of the Muslim in the Hindi film. The author suggests that though in the Indian film industry Muslims equal Hindus at all levels, in Indian films they are more often than not portrayed as different from the religious majority of the country. The chapter concentrates on the representation of the Muslim woman in films about courtesans which comprise some of the most popular films in Indian cinema. It is suggested that these films may reflect a nostalgia for a lost world of Islamic India and sorrow at the present status of Muslims in India. At the same time, they may

also reinforce their marginality by locating Islamic culture in the past and in a kind of woman who does not belong to respectable society.

The topic of Indian marginality is dealt with also in the chapter by Yulia Egorova on the image of the Jews in the press of independent India. It is suggested that the press is a vital source for the study of Indian perceptions of the Jews. The number of articles on Jewish topics published in the mainstream Indian newspapers indicates that the Indian public have shown considerable interest in the Jews and Judaism. All these materials express positive attitude towards the Jews and denounce anti-Semitism. Publications devoted to 'Indian-Jewish' relations often contain implications about the Indians themselves and open the way for a wider discussion of Indian self-identity.

The second Part of the book looks at the representation of the State of Israel in various countries and at the image of the Arab world in Israeli mass media. Ofra Bengio in her chapter looks at the image of Israel, Jews and Zionism in the Iraqi media. The pre-war Iraqi press was characterised by strong monolithic anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic rhetoric. In the chapter the denunciations of Israel are considered in the wider context of constructing images of enemies in the Iraqi media. It is suggested that anti-Israeli propaganda is used in order to divert the pressure of public opinion from the regime to an external enemy on whom it lays the blame for all Iraqi predicaments and to secure the support of other Arab states.

The chapters by Angelika Timm, Gennady Estraikh and the Krutikovs focus on the Eastern European media. Timm considers the image of the Jews and the State of Israel in the press of the (former) Eastern bloc. It is demonstrated that the press of these countries reflected the state of their relations with Israel – always following the 'party-line' in their portrayal of the Jewish State and Zionism. Though anti-Semitism was officially banned in these countries, it can be found in their anti-Israeli propaganda. It was only after 1985, which marked the beginning of the era of the 'new thinking', *perestroika* and *glastnost*, that relations between Israel and the Eastern European states improved and their respective media started showing the Jewish State in a more favourable light.

Gennady Estraikh concentrates in his chapter on the way Palestinian Arabs were depicted in the Moscow Yiddish monthly *Sovetish heymland* established in 1961. In the 1960s Israel was a marginal topic both for this Yiddish periodical and for the whole of Soviet journalism. The period beginning in the late 1960s witnessed its anti-Zionist radicalisation which was triggered by the Six Day War. Estraikh argues that *Sovetish heymland* mirrored the rest of the Soviet press in its

representation of the Palestinian Arab issue and Arab–Israeli conflict in general: it denounced Israeli policy and constructed a one-dimensional image of the Palestinian Arabs by portraying them as backward helpless victims, and thus did not contribute much to the creation of its readers' solidarity with the Palestinians.

Mikhail and Anna Krutikov focus in their chapter on the representation of the Arabs and Arab–Israeli conflict in various Russian web-sites devoted to Jewish or Israel-related topics. It appears that the majority of these sites reflect the views of the right-wing of the Israeli political establishment and tend to portray the Arabs as enemies. Those who contribute to them find similarities between Israel and Russia and some of them even support the ideologies of Eurasianism. These sites often also publish materials on Russian settlers in Israel. Their attitude towards the Arabs as reflected in these web-sites appears to be two-fold. They refer to them as enemies but at the same time express admiration for their readiness to sacrifice everything for their cause.

The chapter by Colin Shindler examines the materials on the Arab–Israeli conflict presented in the broadly left-wing British daily newspaper the *Guardian*. The chapter argues that these articles are characterised by ignorance of Israel, Zionism and Jewish history. Shindler considers the representation of the Middle East conflict in the *Guardian* in the broader context of the relationship between the Jewish community of Britain and the Left in that country. It is suggested that the newspaper has reflected the ideological confusion of the British Left with respect to the categorisation of the Jews.

The following three chapters are devoted to the representations of the Arabs in the Israeli mass media. Tamar Liebes examines the impact of live broadcasts of political ceremonies and the reporting of the aftermath of terrorist attacks on Israeli public opinion. Anat First demonstrates in her chapter how the image of the Arabs is constructed in Israeli TV news and the changes that have been occurring in the representation of the Arabs since the first *Intifada*. Michael Keren's chapter compares approaches to peacemaking by the Israeli press during the Camp David summit of September 1978, the Madrid conference of November 1991 and the Sheperdstown talks of December 1999–January 2000.

6xcBy way of conclusion – somewhat ominous – to this part and to the book as a whole, Marcelo Dascal's chapter discusses the rhetoric of the media representation of conflicts and the roles of the media in conflicts. Dascal argues that the use of violence and the use of arguments are 'communicative acts', structured by metaphorical and metonymic relations. The former make argument analogous to war, while the latter conceptualise it as continuous with it. Dascal suggests

that this conceptual grid plays an important role in conflict management and demonstrates how 'talking' and 'fighting' either reinforce each other or reduce each other's influence. However, one may perhaps overcome the conflictual situation by replacing this conceptual grid with another one which would consist of more 'benign' metaphors and metonymies.

Notes

1 See e.g. Zhou Xun *Chinese Perceptions of the 'Jews' and Judaism: A History of the Youtai*, London, 2001; D. Goodman and Miyazawa, *Jews in the Japanese Mind*, New York,1995. In this volume see particularly the chapter by Yulia Egorova.

2 When Columbus arrived in the New World on his fourth voyage he observed that the people of the islands each had a different language and that they 'do not understand one another any more than we understand the Arabs. S. Greenblatt, *Marvellous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*, Chicago, 1991, p. 92.

3 See T. Parfitt, *The Lost Tribes of Israel: The History of a Myth*, London, 2002, passim.

4 See e.g. *Addressing the Challenge of Islamophobia*, London, 2001 (prepared by the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia) and *Islamophobia: a Challenge*, London, 1997 (prepared by the Runneymede Trust).

5 A widespread myth maintains that Jews working in the World Trade Centre had been warned to stay away from work on the fateful day, another argues that the Mossad was responsible for the attacks. These two myths are found even in the Indian discourse. For instance, *The Times of India* reported a meeting between representatives of the American consulate in Mumbai and members of the local Muslim community, who wanted to voice their views on the post-September 11 situation in the world. The head of the Muslim delegation urged that the hypothesis that it was Israel that was behind the attacks on the WTC should not be discarded. 'US Diplomats Meet Muslim Leader' in *The Times of India*, 17 October 2001, online edition.

6 A. Marquina, V.G. Rebolledo, 'The Dialogue between the European Union and the Islamic World' in *Interreligious Dialogues: Christians, Jews, Muslims*, Annals of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, v. 24, no. 10, Austria, 2000, pp. 166–8.

7 W.G. Oxtoby 'Western Perceptions of Islam and the Arabs' in M.C. Hudson and R.G. Wolfe, eds., *The American Media and the Arabs* ed., Washington D.C., 1980 p. 9.

8 See J. Shaheen 'The Ugly Arabs: US TV Image' in *The Middle East*, (London) May, 1978.

9 M.W. Suleiman 'American Public Support of Middle Eastern Countries: 1939–1979' in *The American Media and the Arabs*, op. cit. p. 18.

10 M.C. McDavid 'Media Myths of the Middle East: the US Press on the War in Lebanon' in E. Ghareebm, ed., *Split Vision: The Portrayal of Arabs in the American Media*, Washington D.C., 1983, pp. 299ff.

11 B.A. Hazan *Soviet Propaganda: A Case Study of the Middle East Conflict*, Jerusalem, 1976, pp. 144ff.
12 See e.g. *Al-Ahram*, 17 April 2002.
13 E. Shohat, R. Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism, Multiculturalism and the Media*, London and New York, 1997.
14 See, for instance, T. Van Dijk, *Elite Discourse and Racism*, Newbury Park, London, New Delhi, 1993; *Racism and the Press*, London, 1991.
15 S. Hall, 'The Spectacle of the 'Other' in S. Hall, ed., *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 223–91.
16 Previous works examining different aspects of these concerns are: T. Liebes *Reporting the Arab–Israeli Conflict: How Hegemony Works*, London, 1997; G. Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, Cambridge, 1997; D. Shinar, *Palestinian Voices: Communication and Nation Building on the West Bank*, London, 1987.
17 Quoted in M. Alvarado, J.O. Thompson, eds., *The Media Reader*, London, 1990, p. 7.
18 T.A. van Dijk, op. cit., p. 242.
19 E. Shohat, R. Stam, op. cit., p. 184.
20 E. Shohat, R. Stam, op. cit., p. 18.
21 P. Essed, *Understanding Everyday Racism: An Interdisciplinary Theory*, Newbury Park, 1991.

Part I

JEWS AND MUSLIMS
Portraying communities

1

CHRISTIAN 'INTRUDERS', MUSLIM 'BIGOTS'

The Egyptian–Syrian press controversy in late nineteenth-century Cairo

Ami Ayalon

Were we to take a time machine, travel with it a hundred years back and land it in the heart of Cairo, we would have found ourselves in a very dynamic environment. We would have readily sensed the rapid transformation of the physical landscape and the country's opening up to foreign ideas. The passionate voices raised in the struggle for national liberation and the public debate on cultural orientation would have been just as evident. If even greater attention were paid we would detect, among the sounds, the angry tone of a bitter controversy among parties to the public discussion, a rather acrimonious and often shrill encounter between Muslim Egyptians and Christian Syrian immigrants. In this battle of words, Egyptians branded the Syrians as 'ungrateful intruders', 'traitors', even 'enemies of Islam'; the Syrians, a small minority on the defensive, retorted by labeling their foes 'religious bigots'. The battle was open, clamorous, blatant. The battleground was the fairly new arena of the press.

Syrian migration to Egypt was hardly a new phenomenon. But as a mass movement involving many thousands it assumed sizeable proportions only in the last third of the nineteenth century. Political causes, some of them tragic, economic constraints, cultural repression, all combined to drive residents of the Syrian Ottoman province – especially Christians who inhabited its Lebanese parts – away from their homeland.[1] They went considerable distances: to France, North and South America, West Africa and to Egypt. According to one sensible assessment, some 21,000 of them moved to Egypt during the three decades prior to 1910. Together with their compatriots who had settled

there in earlier times, they now formed a community of about 34,000.[2] Here they encountered a much friendlier atmosphere, both before the British occupation of 1882 – thanks to the government's Westernization endeavor – and even more so under British rule. On the whole, these immigrants acclimatized rather comfortably. They found employment in state administration, worked in the free professions and opened businesses in Cairo and Alexandria.[3] On the eve of the occupation they seemed to have assimilated in another way as well: educated Syrians were prominent in the popular movement that emerged to combat the threatening Western onslaught and fight for political liberalization, thereby identifying themselves with the interests of their new homeland. But it was not too long before a rift opened between the host society and the newcomers. More precisely – and it should be borne in mind as the background to our discussion – the breach, and the controversy which ensued, involved only a small segment of both communities. It was a small group of recent Syrian immigrés who provoked the rage of the Egyptians, and a similarly small number of Egyptians who engaged in the open, and mostly verbal, encounter with the newcomers. Yet, as we shall see, the contention had an impact on far broader circles than those actively taking part in it. Several factors underlay the Egyptian–Syrian tension. While both groups spoke the same language (differences of dialect and accent were of marginal import), the Syrians differed from their hosts in certain significant ways. For one thing, they were nearly all Christian; only a handful of Muslim Syrians were driven by their country's many afflictions to emigrate, fewer still of them arrived in Egypt, a country with a remarkable Muslim homogeneity.[4] For another, the Syrians were generally more educated than the Egyptians, many of them knew European languages, and a relatively high proportion among them were professionals. And – we may note, at the risk of generalization – the Syrians were more resourceful, ambitious and creative than Egyptians, due to their life-long experience in survival as a minority and their exposure to contacts with Europe. Such qualifications created opportunities that were bound to give rise to problems between themselves and the Egyptians, in the sphere of employment. The state administration, both before and during the British occupation, clearly preferred the Syrians. This was conspicuously so under Cromer (1883–1907), for whom the Syrians, along with the Armenians, were 'the intellectual cream of the Near East'.[5] Syrians thus came to make up a significant segment of the bureaucracy: by 1905, 30 percent of all senior government posts were held by Syrians (who formed about one-third of one percent of the population) and Armenians, as against 28 percent by Egyptians.[6] Syrians were also prominent in trade, business

and, as we shall see, journalism. In all of these fields, they stood in the way of the burgeoning Egyptian intelligentsia in the late nineteenth century.

An equally important cause of friction was the affinity, real or suspected, between the Syrians and Europe. Many Syrians had ties with France, as graduates of French schools or through business partnerships; some had French citizenship. Others, in smaller numbers, had similar connections with the British. In a late-nineteenth-century Ottoman province, such association with Western powers gave the Christians a privileged position that could not but be resented by the Egyptians, especially with their national struggle underway. The problem was more acute with those recognized as British protégés, who stood to gain from the British occupation of Egypt. Some did indeed believe that the British presence was good for Egypt, and the bolder spirits among them ventured to air this view, thereby bringing upon themselves and the Syrian community the wrath of the Egyptians. Suspicion for the patently different newcomers, economic competition, and national emotions, thus combined to produce tensions that would evolve into open Syrian-Egyptian conflict during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth.

Egyptian irritation with the Syrians was already voiced in the early 1880s. With nationalistic emotions and political tension rising, immigrant Christians were sometimes suspected of identifying with the British enemy. As early as 1880, the prominent Syrian-Lebanese journalist Salim Taqla was labeled as 'one of the alien intruders' (*min al-dukhala' al-ajnabiyyin*) – a term of abuse that would become common at a later phase.[7] Several years after the beginning of the occupation, antagonism resurfaced. The conflict showed itself in areas other than the press. There was open competition over employment, which led a group of disgruntled Egyptian state employees to organize themselves in a 'Patriotic Society' (*al-jam'iyya al-wataniyya*), in the early 1890s, seeking to oust Syrians from their administrative posts.[8] There was also an attempt to legislate against Syrians entering into state bureaucracy, which was foiled by the British; and later the employment of the gifted Syrian Jurji Zaydan by the University of Cairo was curtailed, due to his Syrian-Christian origin.[9] But the main battlefield was the press.

Newspapers represented a new institution in Egypt. Ignoring some dreary state bulletins that had been irregularly published previously, the press as a private enterprise had its real debut around the mid-1870s. From that point on it evolved with impressive dynamism. Between 1880 and 1908, no less than 627 newspapers and journals appeared in Cairo and Alexandria – the two most important centers of press activity in Egypt.[10] The popular circulation of these papers, assessed at some

24,000 at the outset of the period, grew to around 100,000 at its end.[11] Syrian immigrants played a key role in these developments. Experienced and skillful, they established about 15 percent of all newspapers in Egypt between 1873 and 1907, by one count – a ratio 50-fold bigger than their share in the population.[12] Their contribution to quality was no less significant. Syrians dominated the field of popular cultural periodicals, owning almost all of the important publications, and publishing two of the four-or-five leading daily newspapers in pre-World War I Egypt: *al-Ahram* ('The Pyramids') and *al-Muqattam* (literally 'The Broken' – the name of a range of hills east of Cairo). The former was pro-French, the latter pro-British.

It was *al-Muqattam* that triggered the controversy. Founded in early 1889 by two Anglophile Greek-Orthodox emigrés from Beirut, with British support, *al-Muqattam* immediately became a leading conveyor of news and views.[13] A first-rate journal from the start, it voiced an unequivocally pro-British position. Its editor, Faris Nimr – one of the two founders – had received a British education and had married the daughter of a former British consul in Alexandria. He firmly believed in the benefits of British rule for the country he had chosen for his new homeland and, as we shall see, gave ample expression to this conviction in his paper. To many Egyptians, the state of affairs in which their country's two leading dailies were owned by Christian newcomers with European backing, one of them strongly supporting the occupation, was no more acceptable than the occupation itself. At the initiative of a group of local intellectuals, a new daily newspaper was established several months after the foundation of *al-Muqattam*, entitled *al-Mu'ayyad* ('The Victorious' or 'Empowered', implying God's guardianship). It soon became the prime exponent of popular Egyptian sentiments, which were then crystallizing into an anti-British protest movement. Its editor, Shaykh 'Ali Yusuf, was no less eloquent or passionate than the editor of *al-Muqattam*. The clash between them became the axis of this Syrian-Egyptian dispute, which before long expanded to issues way beyond attitudes to the British.

More writers and activists joined the fray on both sides of the front, setting up their own newspapers or joining existing ones. 'Abdallah Nadim, the spirited orator of nationalist sentiments prior to the occupation, returned to Egypt and resumed lashing out at the British and their supporters in his biweekly journal *al-Ustādh* (The Mentor), which became one of the sharpest detractors of *al-Muqattam*. A certain Yusuf Fathi adopted the same line in his *al-Miqyās* (The Scale), blatantly assaulting *al-Muqattam* and the Christians as a whole. So did other papers, such as *al-Falah* (Salvation) and *al-Ittihad al-Misri* (Egyptian

Union) in its early years.[14] A prominent voice was that of Mustafa Kamil, the vigorous young leader of Egyptian nationalism. Kamil first wrote in *al-Mu'ayyad*, but in 1900 he founded his own daily *al-Liwa'* (The Banner), quickly assuming the lead in the offensive on Syrian 'intruders'. The dominant voices in this campaign were mostly those of Muslim public figures who were motivated by nationalist sentiment; but there were also some Christians, who joined the battle for personal or opportunistic reasons.[15] On the opposite side, quite a few writers trod the line of *al-Muqattam*, nearly all of them Christian. Notable among them were the Syrians Iskandar Shahin of *al-Ra'y al-'Amm* (Public Opinion), Salim Sarkis of *al-Mushīr* (The Counselor) and, from the early 1890s on, Rufa'il Mishaqa of *al-Ittihad al-Misri*. Non-Syrian Christians, such as the Copt Mikha'il 'Abd al-Sayyid of *al-Watan* (Homeland) and the Armenian-Egyptian Aliksan Sarrafiyan, owner of *al-Zaman* (Time), also took this line.[16] They did so either out of genuine belief in the benefits of occupation or out of anxiety about the anti-Christian tone of the nationalist press.

If cultural differences and professional competition were fuel for the Syrian-Egyptian quarrel, *al-Muqattam*'s supercilious pro-British stance was the spark that ignited the flame. Faris Nimr preached his message with much talent and profound conviction. Not only did he believe that Egypt stood to gain from the occupation; he was also convinced that 'the lowliest (British) sergeant is higher than the most exalted Egyptian'.[17] From its very first issue, his paper commended the reforms introduced by the British in every sphere and the auspicious stability their rule brought to the country, calling upon Egyptians to appreciate these improvements. 'The British are partners of [our] government, whether by advising it on foreign affairs and foreign relations or by working to perfect [the country's] irrigation, organize its army, and improve public order', he stated.[18] He haughtily brushed aside the demand for restoring Egypt's independence:

> What is the independence they lament and the freedom they bewail? In what ancestral era had they enjoyed independence and freedom? ... What harm does it cause them if a single power, rather than seventeen foreign powers [as before], have sway over them?[19]

Other Syrian papers echoed the message. The British, Iskandar Shahin argued, had 'conquered this land on behalf of Europe, at the wish of the state that had suzerainty over it [the Ottomans], and with the consent

of [the country's] own prince [the Khedive]. That they remain here in order to supervise the Egyptian government and improve it is for the good of its people'.[20] Another Syrian paper, *al-Ittihad al-Misri*, similarly noted that 'the British devote considerable efforts saving Egypt from anarchy and bloodshed'.[21]

In times of national struggle, such words would have been irritating even in the mouths of old-time Egyptians. How much more so was this when such views were aired by recent newcomers, and still more yet by Christian protégés of foreign powers. The message voiced by Nimr and his followers provoked out and out rage. The attacks in the Egyptian press were, first and foremost, against *al-Muqattam* and its editor, 'the philosopher of mischief' (*faylasuf al-sharr*) in the words of *al-Mu'ayyad*.[22] The editor of *al-Muqattam*, 'Ali Yusuf charged, 'cares neither about [British] evacuation nor about their occupation; he is merely concerned with accumulating wealth by any possible means'; to that end he seeks 'the perpetuation of hatred between the Egyptians and the English'.[23] 'Abdallah Nadim's *al-Ustādh* was more blatant in his assault on 'that stupid newspaper' and its 'ill-fated' (*manahis*) and 'treacherous' (*kha'inin*) editors, whose 'evil intentions and despicable endeavor were aimed at sowing discord among Egyptians and Syrians'. All they were after, Nadim argued, was short-term material gains. Hence they would not desist from 'eating their bread dipped in the blood of their kinsfolk and brothers'. The Egyptians, who were 'sick and tired of listening to the talk of those strangers and being deceived by their paper', would therefore continue to expose the evil designs of those 'hirelings' (*ujara'*).[24] Sometime later, Mustafa Kamil similarly attacked *al-Muqattam* – 'the Khawarij newspaper' which 'distinguished itself with lies and impudence' – and its editors 'who preach permanent occupation'.[25] Such harsh criticism by popular leaders inspired others, and attacks on the Syrians supporting the occupation were echoed in many publications of the time.[26]

But the attacks on the Syrians were not confined to criticism of *al-Muqattam* and its associates. Betraying a concealed hostility, it was expanded to include all of the Syrian immigrants, inadvertently or deliberately. The line between the few pro-occupation Syrians and the rest of their community was often blurred. The pejorative *dukhala'*, occasionally applied to Syrian emigres during the stormy days preceding the occupation, now became a standard term of abuse. It was an emotionally charged term, applicable to any culpable foreigner, but popularly it came to be identified first and foremost with the Syrians. As Philipp puts it 'For the peasant the obvious "intruder" was the Greek money-lender in the village. For the urban artisan it could be the Italian

craftsman. The Egyptian government employee perceived of the Armenian, English, or Syrian official as the "intruder", while in journalism the threatening "intruder" clearly was the educated Syrian'.[27] '*Dukhala'*' was ambiguous and pliant, conveying a notion at once specific and generic. When 'Abdallah Nadim launched his impassioned offensive on 'intruders' – which extended over 28 pages of his biweekly *al-Ustādh*, in 1893[28] – he spoke of nameless 'Syrian journalists' but also, more broadly, of 'those Syrians', depicting them as 'traitors' and 'enemies'. 'We have become accustomed to hearing false rumors from the *dukhala'*, and we have witnessed their attempts to install European rulers in every country seeking to defend its patriotic identity', he charged on another occasion.[29]

It was Mustafa Kamil, the gifted exponent of nascent nationalist sentiment, who made the most extensive use of this vague term in assailing the Syrians. At pains to settle the delicate dilemma between the Egyptian and Islamic facets of the community he sought to mould,[30] Kamil often found it useful to blur the identity of the community's enemies. The loose term 'intruders' seemed a convenient weapon against such deliberately ill-defined adversaries. He sensed, and fully appreciated, the mighty potential of popular xenophobia, especially the animosity of the professional middle class for Syrian competitors. An eloquent speaker and writer, Kamil made repeated use of the '*dukhala'*' theme in its murkiest form. 'There are two occupations in the country, by the English and by the *dukhala'*', he stated. 'By fighting the former [we will] combat and enfeeble the latter'.[31] In a fiery speech in Alexandria, in March 1896, Kamil charged:

> Warning the nation against the intruders and their activities is the duty of every Egyptian of honorable feelings and loyalty to his country. Noble and respectable Egyptians are well familiar with the band of *dukhala'*; we all know them and can identify them at sight. Oh noble compatriots! Thwart the efforts of this evil party and defeat its members. The intruder (*dakhil*) is [our] mortal enemy and real adversary. We must fight him with pen and word, so that the nation can recognize him, reject him and avoid him completely.[32]

Widely reported in the national press, this speech stirred a storm among the Christian newcomers. A group of alarmed Syrians chose the Islamic-nationalist daily *al-Mua'yyad* to address an emotional message to the public, expressing the gratitude of the emigré community to Egyptian society and dissociating themselves from the 'few who have strayed

away as far as the arrow's flight from the bow'.[33] The Christian Syrian-owned daily *al-Ahram* criticized Kamil for implying condemnation of the entire community and likewise distanced itself from the few Syrians who deserved censure.[34] These, and other similar responses, attested to the offensive potential in Kamil's equivocal messages. Reacting to these rejoinders, Kamil explained his intention by differentiating between two kinds of Syrian emigrés, commendable and condemnable. But then he ended on an equally ambiguous note: 'If you wonder who is the intruder to whom I referred in my speech, look for the one who was hurt by my words on the *dukhala'*; he is the intended *dakhil*'.[35]

Kamil continued to play with this pliant theme. He accused the Syrians of the opportunistic exploitation of Egypt, of an unprincipled quest for material things, of idolizing the occupation, of a conduct that undermined Egyptian interests.[36] Seeking to take advantage of another popular sentiment capable of evoking passionate response, he brought up another accusation: the Syrians, he stated explicitly, disparaged Islam and its believers:

> Egyptians hear *dukhala'* calling: . . . 'Emulate our example and follow in our footsteps – we, who revile Islam and pronounce the vanity of its foundations. And reject those who hope to elevate Islam and dream of restoring its greatness and might'.[37]

Messages of this last dangerous kind and, more broadly, the vociferous criticism leveled at Syrian 'intruders' in general, engendered profound anxiety among Christian emigrés. They responded in different ways. Many, perhaps most of them, who were on the whole rather grateful to Egypt for the opportunity it offered them, remained silent and refused to take part in the controversy, feeling that reticence was safest. Others, when the heat mounted, tried to distance themselves publicly from the small group of their former-compatriots whose conduct was reprehensible, as we have seen. But there were also those who were bolder, or felt more secure, who met assault with counterassault and fought back.

The most frequent accusation Syrians leveled at their Egyptian critics was fanaticism – *ta'assub*. In this context the term denoted ethnic and religious intolerance, even bigotry. 'Abdallah Nadim was thus charged with incitement against non-Muslims. He himself believed that it was accusations by 'certain intruders' that led to the closure of his journal and to his exile, again, in 1893.[38] 'Ali Yusuf's *al-Mu'ayyad* was similarly referred to as *jaridat al-ta'assub*;[39] while Mustafa Kamil and his followers were decried as 'the party of blind fanaticism' (*hizb al-ta'assub al-a'ma*).[40] Sometimes the charge was more blatant, referring explicitly

to religious zealotry. Thus *al-Muqattam* blamed his rival *al-Mu'ayyad*, along with the latter's ideological ally *al-Miqyas*, for engaging in religious incitement and even calling for the massacre of Christians.[41] Another publication, *al-Mushir* – an Arabic-English weekly owned by the Greek-Orthodox emigré Salim Sarkis – attacked 'the fanatic editor of the Muslim newspaper Moayad', for his '*ta'assub* against Christians' and for 'calling in his paper for a religious holy war (*jihād dīni*) in order to expel the British'.[42] Those who ventured to respond to Egyptian assaults sometimes resorted to a harsh, even offensive language that attested to profound animosity. 'Ali Yusuf was thus labeled as *kalb al-Mu'ayyad* or *himar al-Mu'ayyad* ('the dog – or jackass – of *al-Mu'ayyad*'), by a journalist who derided his 'abysmal ignorance' and 'his writing, full of grammatical errors'.[43] Another depicted him in a cartoon as having donkey's ears and branded him 'the donkey-teacher (*al-himar al-mu'allim*)'.[44] In *al-Muqattam* such attacks were a matter of course in reference to Yusuf, Kamil, and their other colleagues.

Beyond personal abuse and political exchanges, such attacks and counterattacks reflected a genuine problem between Egyptians and Syrians. The emotional rift separating them had economic and professional causes, but also cultural and religious ones. It was a contention between two 'others' which, as so often, was asymmetric. The Syrians were few in number and a religious minority, a serious handicap where religion largely determined social status. On the other hand, they were better equipped to compete for public posts. Having chosen to come to Egypt rather than go elsewhere, they usually tended to see the common denominators binding them with the host society – language, cultural values, loyalty to the Ottoman state – and hoped for an uneventful assimilation. But their educational and professional edge, and provocation by a few overbearing members of their community, combined to arouse the wrath of Egyptians, who therefore tended to focus not on common traits but rather on the differences between them: religious affiliation, communal habits, and, above all, the gap in the depth of commitment to the country's good as defined by Egyptian leaders. In times of mounting patriotism and a passionate debate of orientation and identity, these differences became all the more accentuated. A few outspoken writers ignited the controversy. Its ramifications – mutual suspicion, alienation, hostility – were felt by many, most acutely on the Syrian side.

To what extent, we ought to ask, did the exchanges of accusations among a limited number of participants on both sides affect the mutual perceptions of the two communities involved? And how can we assess the role of the press – the main arena of the conflict – in shaping the relations between them? Before trying to offer an evaluation, a brief

note on the public role of the Egyptian press at the time is in order. The question of newspaper reading and circulation in the Middle East is notoriously complex. Circulation data are speculative at best; more often they are nonexistent. The best one can hope for is, therefore, to gather as many educated guesses as possible, balance them and offer another educated assessment. But evaluating the number of copies sold would only take us a part of the way. The picture is further complicated by the manner in which newspapers have been consumed in Arab societies. Poverty, illiteracy, and customary modes of oral communication had given ground to the vocal circulation of newspapers, with one person reading and an indefinite number of listeners sharing the news and messages, in public places or at home. Such norms, which had been in practice almost everywhere in the region for many decades, make the appraisal of the public impact of the press a highly hazardous task.[45]

With this in mind, we may cautiously consider some general observations. One sensible assessment, carefully balancing a host of available data, suggests that the overall circulation of newspapers in Egypt on the eve of British conquest reached 24,000.[46] From that point onward the consumption of newspapers rose steadily, reaching some 40,000 by the end of the century[47] and apparently as many as 100,000 before the First World War.[48] By then, leading papers such as *al-Muqattam*, *al-Mu'ayyad* and *al-Liwa'* were selling between 5,000 and 10,000 copies daily.[49] Assuming that each sold copy reached several, or many, people through oral transmission, these figures should be multiplied several- or many-fold. The number of those exposed to messages of the press may thus have reached 2–3 percent of the country's population of 8 million around 1880, and perhaps 8–10 percent of its 12 million by the outbreak of the First World War. If true, this means that 90 percent of all Egyptians, or more, remained beyond the circle of press consumers and hence were not informed by it on the Syrian-Egyptian controversy. But – and this is the essential point for us here – it also shows that there was a large mass, which may have reached between half-a-million and a million people around the turn of the century, who served as an audience to this debate in the press.

Such figures, whatever their worth, again form only a part of the picture. There was a gap between the two communities, the Syrian and the Egyptian, in terms of their relative exposure to newspapers. Highly literate, overwhelmingly urban[50] and extensively represented in the press industry, the Syrians consumed newspapers at a rate markedly higher than that obtaining in the country at large. That the dispute with the host society was a cardinal, even existential, issue for the Syrians must have increased their concern with the printed battle even more. Quite likely,

most Syrians felt the heat of verbal assaults upon them in one way or another, were aware of developments in the press battle and were influenced by its contents. As for the Egyptians, a smaller share of them was exposed to the press, while the great majority was seemingly uninterested in the Syrian controversy. Still, there was a sizeable Egyptian public, many hundreds of thousands, who by the turn of the century had become regular consumers of newspapers, through direct reading or otherwise. They made up a politically aware constituency that was attentive to the messages of its political and intellectual leadership. They listened to, and identified with, the spokesmen of the national struggle, who articulated for them the battle's objectives and pointed out its enemies. That the offensive against 'intruders' recurred and reverberated in so many of their public statements showed that the theme touched a responsive chord among the audience. The urban middle class – a sector rapidly growing in both size and importance – who so often saw themselves as victims of unfair Syrian competition, were particularly prone to accept portrayal of these Syrians as vicious and treacherous.

But again, weighing the role of the press among the various factors shaping public perceptions and views is an ever-elusive undertaking. We may assume, but not prove, that newspapers played a central role in verbalizing both Egyptian rage and Syrian apprehension, translating them into active conflict. They were apparently important in perpetuating the mutual images, or stereotypes, that came to be a part of this rivalry: the Syrians as ungrateful guests, exploiters, allies of the occupiers, Egyptians as a xenophobic lot led by religious bigots. The exchanges in the press exacerbated existing economic and cultural tensions and turned them into open political antagonism. This, no doubt, increased the Syrian sense of alienation and frustrated their hopes of full integration into Egyptian society.

After the First World War, as Egypt entered a new phase in its national struggle, the sense of Syrian foreignness became even more accentuated. As if to concede defeat in the press battle, Syrians now abandoned the field of Arab journalism, leaving it to Egyptians (but retaining their leading role in the French-language press). Later on they would acknowledge ultimate defeat in their quest for assimilation in the country of the Nile. Emigrating, again, in large numbers after the Second World War,[51] they left behind the country that had regarded them as 'intruders'.

Notes

1 According to Charles Issawi, 'Economic Development and Liberalism in Lebanon' in *Middle East Journal*, Summer 1964, p. 283, between 1860 and

1915 fully a quarter of Lebanon's population, the great majority of them Christians, left the country.

2 T. Philipp, *The Syrians in Egypt 1725–1975*, Stuttgart, 1985, pp. 85–6, 98. The 1907 census identified 33,947 of the country's population as 'Ottoman Syrians'.

3 Ibid., pp. 78–85.

4 T. Philipp (*The Syrians*, pp. 83, 85–6) estimates that of the Syrians who had moved to Egypt until 1910, 10,000 were Greek-Catholic, 6,000 Maronite and 5,000 Greek-Orthodox.

5 Earl of Cromer (Sir Evelyn Baring), *Modern Egypt*, New York, 1908, vol. 2, p. 220. 'The Syrian was a godsend to the British administrator', Cromer noted; 'from a moral, social or intellectual point of view the Syrian stands on a distinctly high level. He is rarely corrupt . . . He can do more than copy the European'. Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, pp. 216, 218.

6 Philipp, *The Syrians*, p. 100, quoting a report by Lord Milner. The rest of the posts were occupied by British officials.

7 Ibid., pp. 103–5.

8 J. Landau, *Parliaments and Parties in Egypt*, New York, 1954, pp. 106–7.

9 For the initiative by Prime Minister Riyad Pasha to prevent or limit the employment of Syrians in the administration, see S. 'Aziz, *Al-sihafa al-Misriyya wa-mawqafuha min al-ihtilal al-Inklizi*, Cairo, 1968, p. 108. For the Jurji Zaydan affair, see T. Philipp, *Gurgi Zaydan, His Life and Thought*, Beirut, 1979, pp. 30–1, 66–7, 200–14.

10 This figure is based on data in P. di Tarrazi, *Ta'rikh al-sihafa al-'Arabiyya*, vol. 4, Beirut, 1933, pp. 4–10, 106–10, 162–90, 214–24.

11 The issue of press circulation in Egypt will be discussed below.

12 Philipp, *The Syrians*, pp. 91–2, 96–100. Philipp also calculated that from 1800 to 1914, Syrians founded about 20 percent of all the papers published in Egypt. See also A. Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History*, New York, 1995, pp. 42–6, 52ff.

13 For an extensive study of this paper and its history, see T. Abu 'Arja, *Al-Muqattam, jaridat al-ihtilal al-Baritani fi Misr*, Cairo, 1997.

14 I. 'Abduh, *Tatawwur al-sihafa al-Misriyya 1798–1981*, 4th Ed., Cairo, 1982, pp. 154–5; 'Aziz, *Al-sihafa al-Misriyya al-Muqattam*, pp. 98–9; Abu 'Arja, *Al-Muqattam*, pp. 41–4.

15 Among these were Salim Hamawi, owner of *al-Falah* (P. di Tarrazi, *Ta'rikh al-sihafa al-'Arabiyya*, vol. 3, pp. 25–6); and Niqula Shihada, owner of *al-Ra'id al-Misri* ('Egyptian Leader'), due to an old money dispute with the owners of *al-Muqattam* (M. 'Ali, *Mudhakkirat*, Damascus, 1948–9, vol. 1, p. 55).

16 'Aziz, *Al-sihafa al-Misriyya*, p. 105.

17 Quoted in Phillip, *The Syrians*, pp. 109–10.

18 *Al-Muqattam*, 1 August 1889, p. 1.

19 *Al-Muqattam*, 17 April 1890, p. 1.

20 *Al-Ra'y al-'Amm*, 22 January 1897, p. 18.

21 *Al-Ittihad al-Misri*, 1 May 1890, quoted in 'Aziz, *Al-sihafa al-Misriyya*, p. 109.

22 *Al-Mu'ayyad*, quoted in *al-Hilal*, January 1929, p. 306.

23 *Al-Mu'ayyad*, 4, 26 October 1893, quoted in Abu 'Arja, *Al-Muqattam*, p. 56

24 *Al-Ustadh*, 23 May 1893, pp. 921–48; 'Abd al-Fatah Nadim, *Sulafat al-Nadim fi muntakhabat al-sayyid 'Abdallah al-Nadim*, Cairo, 1901, vol. 2, pp. 81–3.
25 'A. Kamil, *Mustafa Kamil fi 34 rabi'an*, Cairo, 1908, vol. 3, p. 20; vol. 4, p. 140.
26 For examples see Abu 'Arja, *Al-Muqattam*, pp. 39–46; S. 'Aziz, *Al-sihafa al-Misriyya*, pp. 98–100.
27 Philipp, *The Syrians*, p. 108.
28 See note 24 above.
29 'Abd al-Fatah Nadim, *Sulafat al-Nadim*, vol. 2, p. 75.
30 'Rabitat al-din wa-rabitat al-watan', in *al-Liwa'*, 15 Ramadan 1317 (17 March 1900), reproduced in Kamil, *Mustafa Kamil*, vol. 9, pp. 249–55.
31 Kamil, *Mustafa Kamil*, vol. 5, pp. 183–6.
32 Ibid., vol. 4, p. 145. The entire speech is reproduced on pp. 132–50.
33 Ibid., vol. 4, pp. 169–72.
34 *Al-Ahram*, 6 March 1896, p. 1.
35 See Kamil, *Mustafa Kamil*, vol. 4, pp. 175–7.
36 E.g. Kamil, *Mustafa Kamil*, vol. 5, pp. 183–6; Abu 'Arja, *Al-Muqattam*, pp. 41–2; 'Abd al-Latif Hamza, *Adab al-maqal al-sahafiyya fi Misr*, Cairo, 1995, vol. 5, pp. 518–19.
37 Quoted in Hamza, ibid., p. 518.
38 *Al-Ustadh*, 23 May 1893, p. 933; 'Abd al-Fatah Nadim, *Sulafat al-Nadim*, vol. 2, p. 75; 'Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi'i, *Al-thawra al-'Urabiyya wal-ihtilal al-Injlizi*, Cairo, 1983, p. 464.
39 *Al-Ra'y al-'Amm*, 25 May 1897, p. 142.
40 *Al-Muqattam*, 9 November 1896, p. 1.
41 *Al-Muqattam*, 28 September 1895, quoted in 'Abduh, *Tatawwur al-sihafa*, pp. 154–5. The charge attracted the attention of foreign consuls, some of whom moved to intervene; see S. Salih, *Al-shaykh 'Ali Yusuf wa-jaridat al-mu'ayyad*, Cairo, 1990, pp. 81–2.
42 *Al-Mushir*, 15 August 1895, front page.
43 *Al-Ra'y al-'Amm*, 27 February 1897, pp. 59–60.
44 *Al-Mushir*, 15 August 1895, front page. Similarly the front pages of the issues of 10 July 1895 and 8 August 1895.
45 A. Ayalon, 'Political Journalism and Its Audience in Egypt, 1875–1914' in *Culture and History*, no. 16, 1997, pp. 100–21.
46 J. Cole, *Colonialism and Revolution in the Middle East: Social and Cultural Origins of Egypt's 'Urabi's Movement*, Princeton, 1993, pp. 123–4. The figure is for 1881.
47 *Al-Hilal*, October 1897, p. 131, estimated the number of journal subscribers at the time at 'over 20,000'. If we add street sales of daily newspapers – a common method of distribution by then – we may assume the number was perhaps twice as high. See also Ayalon, 'Political Journalism' in *Culture and History*, no. 16, 1997, pp. 109–10.
48 *Al-Hilal*, May 1910, p. 489.
49 Nissim Malul, 'Ha-'itonut ha-'Aravit', *Ha-Shiloah*, vol. 31, 1914, pp. 371, 447–8; *al-Hilal*, May 1910, p. 498; Ayalon, 'Political Journalism' in *Culture and History*, no. 16, 1997, pp. 110–11.
50 Philipp, *The Syrians*, p. 87.
51 Ibid., chapter 6.

2

ZIONISM, JEWS AND MUSLIMS IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AS REFLECTED IN THE WEEKLY *HAMEVASSER*

Aryeh Shmuelevitz

This chapter examines the relationship between Jews, Muslims and Christians in the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the twentieth century as reflected in the weekly *Hamevasser* (Herald),[1] a Zionist organ published in Hebrew in Istanbul between 1910 and 1911 and distributed throughout the empire and in Bulgaria, Greece, Tunisia and Morocco.[2] *Hamevasser* appeared during a critical period in the history of the Ottoman Empire – the final stage of the consolidation of nationalist ideologies throughout parts of the Balkans and parts of the Near East and of Turkish national doctrine in particular.[3] The weekly aimed at promoting the concept of the Jewish national-cultural revival among the Jews of the Ottoman Empire and at reinforcing their links with Jewish communities abroad. Written and published by a small group of Zionist journalists headed by the editor S. Hochberg, *Hamevasser* viewed itself as spokesman of the Hebrew national revival in the Jewish communities of the Levant and as a vital bridge between them and Western Jewry. It vigorously advocated the establishment of a branch of the Zionist movement in the Ottoman Empire and the settlement of Jewish immigrants in Palestine. This position concurred with the Young Turks' ideology favouring autonomous national-cultural entities for the various non-Muslim communities within the framework of the empire. However, when this Ottomanist ideology gave way toward the end of 1911 to a Turkish nationalist ideology focused on a strong centralist regime and the abolition of the trend toward autonomous entities, which coincided with growing opposition to Zionism by influential segments of the Jewish community in the empire, the weekly was forced to cease publication.

Side by side with advocating Zionism, *Hamevasser* devoted considerable space to enhancing friendly relations between Jews, Muslims and Christians, with special emphasis on the traditionally close links between the Jews in the empire and the Ottoman authorities, and between the Jews and their Muslim neighbours. In addition to Jewish communal events, the journal covered a wide range of political, socioeconomic and cultural developments in the empire. The approach was generally from a Zionist point of view, i.e., the impact of political developments on Zionist aspirations in Palestine, or it reflected the goal of reinforcing close relations with the Ottoman authorities and with Muslim neighbours. In addition, *Hamevasser* extolled liberal reforms editorially and criticised reactionary attempts to abolish the constitutional regime established in 1908.

The weekly maintained a consistently aggressive stance in two areas: combating anti-Zionist attitudes displayed by Jewish individuals and organisations as well as by Ottomans, and combating anti-Semitic manifestations in Ottoman political and governmental circles which generally went hand in hand with anti-Zionism and were often influenced by anti-Zionist propaganda emanating from Jewish organisations and newspapers. *Hamevasser* attacked anti-Zionist Jewish elements, such as conservative-religious groups, for disseminating anti-Zionists materials to Ottoman politicians invoking fears of large-scale Jewish settlement in Palestine that would lead to the establishment of an independent Jewish state there. The weekly branded such anti-Zionist Jewish propagandists as traitors. It ran translations or articles and speeches by Muslims (both Turks and Arabs), Christians (Greeks and Armenians) and the European media (e.g., an official German government journal, issued in Istanbul) supporting Zionist settlement in Palestine and pointing out its economic contribution to the empire. Such favourable opinion on the part of Ottoman political figures and partially on the part of the press shored up *Hamevasser*'s optimism that the Ottomans would welcome the Zionist movement's policy of establishing Jewish settlements in Palestine because of their contribution to advancing the economy of the empire, with no fear that the establishment of a separate political entity was in the offing.[4]

Anti-Semitism, the other main concern of the journal, manifested itself in the Ottoman political arena in June 1911 when the Zionist movement and the Jews generally were subject to attacks in the Ottoman parliament and media with anti-Semitic connotations. Zionism was portrayed as being in the service of German imperialism. Jews were accused of using their economic resources to control financial institutions in Europe and in the Ottoman Empire. Specifically, Jews

were charged with having 'bought' the Committee of Union and Progress, the ruling political party in the empire. Control of the party, according to these accusations, was now in the hands of the *Dönme* (the descendants of the followers of *Shabbetai Zvi*) and the Freemasons.

Hamevasser devoted considerable attention to this development, expressing concern for the future of the approximately half a million Jews living in the empire. Nevertheless, the editorial message was essentially optimistic, reflecting the expectation that the Muslims would value the capability of the Jews to contribute to the prosperity of the empire and to the development of its international trade. Moreover, the journal emphasised that historically the Ottomans had always shown great tolerance toward the Jews; had opened the gates of the empire to Jews expelled from various European countries, including Spain; and had helped them resettle in the empire. The Jews, it was pointed out, had always been the most loyal subjects in the past and would continue to be so under the Ottoman Turks in the future. 'This is an objective historical imperative which will overcome all other individual tendencies', it stressed.[5]

Other topics covered by *Hamevasser* related to its emphasis on promoting better understanding and closer relations between the Jewish community and the Muslim authorities and population in the empire. The weekly praised the liberal reforms introduced under the Young Turks, especially those which put an end to discrimination against non-Muslim subjects and legislated both equal rights and equal obligations for all. In this context, the journal welcomed the deposition in 1909 of the sultan, Ikinci Abdülhamid; the restoration of the constitutional regime (banned also in 1909) which guaranteed equality between all subjects; and the introduction of a new conscription law which for the first time applied to all young men, including Jews and Christians. The recruitment of non-Muslim soldiers, the weekly noted, helped raise the standard of the Ottoman army.

Military service by Jewish young men was viewed editorially as an important contribution to improving relations between the Jewish community and the Ottomans. The suppression by the army of a Druze rebellion in the Khawran region of southern Syria in 1910–11, an operation in which 80 Jewish soldiers took part and over 50 were wounded, was covered in depth by *Hamevasser*. The journal extolled the participation of Jewish soldiers, for the campaign, it wrote, constituted an important contribution to the enforcement of reform and progress in the empire. The rebellion, it argued, stemmed not from nationalist motives but from opposition to the Ottoman reforms in the region.[6]

This editorial support for the suppression of the rebellion dovetailed with sharp criticism of the European media for using every opportunity to attack the Ottoman Empire and its authorities. Whenever an uprising occurred in the empire, the weekly claimed, the European media immediately seized upon it to criticise the Ottomans, while uprisings in such European colonies as Algeria or India were generally ignored in the European media. Regrettably, the weekly noted, the European Jewish press followed this example and published what *Hamevasser* considered to be misleading information on events in the Ottoman Empire. The European media, it argued, erroneously viewed rebellions in the Ottoman Empire as nationalist uprisings, while in reality they were reactionary outbursts aimed at preserving traditional life-styles. *Hamevasser* called upon the European Jewish media to support Ottoman efforts to introduce reform in the empire, stressing that such a progressive policy was also in the interest of Ottoman Jews. Clearly, the consistent support by the journal for Ottoman policy aimed at attaining reciprocal Ottoman support for Jewish settlement in Palestine.[7]

One way to win such support, the weekly believed, was by motivating the Jewish community, Zionists in particular, to get to know their neighbours better and to become more fully integrated into Ottoman life. In an effort to educate its readers about Islam, the weekly published a serialised translation of a popular Turkish book, on the relationship between Judaism and Islam through forty questions presumably posed to the Prophet Muhammad by a delegation of Jews from Yemen and Mecca, and his responses.[8]

A related topic promoted by the journal was the study of the official languages of the empire. It advocated a curriculum in Jewish schools featuring the study of Hebrew as the first language and Turkish as the second language in the Turkish cities and towns, with Arabic as the second language in the Arab-speaking provinces. The norm in the Jewish community then was to encourage the study of foreign languages; Turkish or Arabic were acquired informally, on the street. The study of European languages was also recommended, but only as third and additional languages. The rationale, according to *Hamevasser*, was that Hebrew was the Jewish national language, the language of tradition; Turkish the official language of the homeland, the army and the bureaucracy, and the spoken language in the northwestern part of the empire; and Arabic the language spoken in the southeastern part of the empire, and the vehicle for business. French, it recommended, should be the third language studied because it was the most international means of communication, followed by English and

German because they represented two other world cultures. However, the best way to communicate with fellow countrymen was through the formal study of Turkish and Arabic.[9]

Yet another contribution to better understanding and closer relations between Jews and their neighbours, in *Hamevasser's* view, was a broad knowledge of both modern and traditional Ottoman culture. For this purpose the weekly commissioned a young Jewish scholar educated in modern Ottoman schools and at the University of Istanbul, Isaac Nofekh, to write a series of articles on prominent Ottoman poets and writers. One such literary personality was Abdülhak Hamid Bey, considered the leading Turkish poet then and credited with ending the traditional Arabic poetic structure on Turkish poetry and introducing more indigenous formats. Hamid was also regarded as a leading playwright, noted for historical tragedies and dramas of the pre-Islamic period. Other writers of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries covered in Nofekh's series included Namik Kemal, Mahmut Ekren, Tevfik Fikret and Khalid Ziya. Nofekh aimed to persuade *Hamevasser*'s readership to take an interest in Turkish literature, arguing that it was of no lower quality than European literature and that Turkish writers enjoyed complete freedom of expression, especially following the deposition of Sultan Abdülhamid. He also wrote a series of articles on Ottoman-Turkish folklore in order to familiarise Jewish readers with Ottoman-Turkish humour, proverbs, popular literature and such forms of folk theatre as the *karagöz* (shadow theatre). Another series of articles published by Nofekh in *Hamevasser* focused on higher education in the Ottoman Empire with details and guidance regarding study options for Jewish youngsters, including those from the new settlements in Palestine.[10]

The issue of citizenship was another area addressed by *Hamevasser*. The journal attempted to convince the Jewish community in the empire, and especially the newcomers – the settlers in Palestine, to adopt Ottoman citizenship and give up the widespread practice of retaining foreign citizenship based on the Capitulations privileges. Taking this important step, the weekly argued, would raise the status of the Jews in the empire, improve relations with the Turks and the Ottoman authorities, and grant Jews constitutional rights, including the ability to buy land, build houses and become equal citizens with the rest of the population of the empire. It would, in short, enhance the integration of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire.[11]

As to the relations between the Jews and the Christians in the Ottoman Empire, *Hamevasser* was facing a very complicated situation; Greek and Armenian members of parliament generally supported the

Zionist movement when debates concerning the establishment of Jewish settlements in Palestine were held. On the other hand the leaders of the Greek and Armenian communities, and especially the religious leaders, refused to cooperate with the Jewish leaders in their negotiations with the Ottoman authorities. They rejected Jewish requests to join them in their discussions with the authorities regarding certain paragraphs of the new Education Law and the new Conscription Law, legislated in 1911. Furthermore, we should note the traditional enmity between the Jews and the Armenians as a result of fierce competition in the financial and commercial fields, and as a result, too, of the long list of Armenian blood libels against the Jews.

Nevertheless, *Hamevasser* advocated certain cooperation between the Dhimmi communities, but opposed a Christian-Jewish front *vis à vis* the Ottoman authorities and the Ottomans at large. However, the weekly severely criticised the Greeks, for their refusal to cooperate with the Jews.[12]

Clearly, the publisher-editors of *Hamevasser* regarded the improvement of relations between the Jews in the Ottoman Empire and their Muslim neighbours and the authorities as a vital imperative, marshalling various arguments to convince the Ottoman Jews, and especially the Palestinian Jews, of this need. The Ottoman Jewish community, in this view, could act as a valuable bridge between the Zionist movement in Europe and the Zionist settlers in Palestine and the Ottomans because the Jews of the Ottoman Empire were a product of both Western and Near Eastern culture.[13] Specifically, the weekly aimed at convincing this community to join, or at least support, the Zionist movement and serve as a counterweight to Jewish anti-Zionist elements active in Ottoman politics. However, the weekly was obliged to stop publishing and there is no obvious way to measure whether it had been successful in this effort.

Notes

1 For further background on *Hamevasser*, see A. Shmuelevitz, 'Two Hebrew-Language Weeklies in Turkey: An Appeal to Revive the Concept of a National Culture', in *Türkiyede Yabanci Dilde Basin*, Istanbul, 1985, pp. 111–25.

2 *Hamevasser*, vol. 1, no. 39, p. 584.

3 The following works were consulted regarding events and persons of the period: F. Ahmad, *The Young Turks: The Committee of Union and Progress in Turkish Politics*, 1908–1914, Oxford, 1969; B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, London, 1968; E.E. Ramsaur, *The Young Turks: Prelude to the Revolution of 1908*, Princeton, 1957.

4 *Hamevasser*, vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 43–5, no. 7, pp. 100–2; vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 17–18, nos. 7–8, p. 76, no. 9, pp. 97, 100–2, no. 11, pp. 122–3, no. 13–14, pp. 146–8, no. 15, pp. 169–70, no. 17, pp. 202–4, no. 18, pp. 205–7, 216, no. 19–20, pp. 221–2.
5 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 17, pp. 193–4, no. 19–20, pp. 217–18, 221–2.
6 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, no. 52, p. 748; vol. 2, no. 3, p. 36.
7 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 5, pp. 53–5.
8 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 35–6, pp. 424–7, no. 40, pp. 478–9.
9 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 9, pp. 98–9, no. 27, pp. 328–9.
10 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 15, pp. 172–4, no. 16, pp. 184–5, no. 19–20, pp. 227–8, no. 21, pp. 260–1, no. 22, pp. 275–6, no. 23, pp. 288–9, no. 24, pp. 301–2, no. 25–6, pp. 318–19, no. 27, pp. 333–4, no. 28–9, pp. 349–50.
11 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 25–6, p. 309.
12 A. Shmuelevitz, 'Relations between Jews and Christians in the Ottoman Empire: The Armenian Case' in *XI Türk Tarih Kongresi*, Ankara, 1994, pp. 2029–33; *Hamevasser*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 15–17, no. 3, pp. 27–8, no. 4, pp. 38–41, no. 5, pp. 54–5, nos. 7–8, pp. 93–5.
13 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 1–2, no. 2, pp. 14–15.

3

MEDIATING THE 'OTHER' THROUGH ADVERTISEMENTS

Arus Yumul

> Like a virus that has mutated, racism has evolved into different forms that are more difficult not only to recognize but also to combat.
>
> (Dovidio and Gaertner)

Advertisements and stereotypes

> The relentless stream of people grinning and pouting and dancing and slinking and munching and exhorting out at us from radios, billboards, magazines, and TV screens aren't just selling toothpastes – they are selling identities.
>
> (Carol Nathanson-Moog)

Images in commercials furnish us with key pieces in the complex jigsaw puzzle we employ to decipher not only who we are but also who we are not. Identity, however, is as much about exclusion as it is about inclusion and the determining factor for defining identity, therefore becomes the social boundary with respect to other collectivities.[1] The apparatuses of discourse play a critical role not only in fostering our sense of collective identity, but also in establishing who are to be included and who are to be excluded from the very definition of the collectivity by elucidating the content of the collective identity, or at least by verifying its socio-cultural validity. They play a significant role in the production and reproduction or 'schematic categories in terms of which a society represents itself': this is realised, for example, by defining groups perceived to be different, alien or threatening, by furnishing labelling terms which consolidate ideas of groups, and by 'assigning different

semantic roles to the members of different groups, thus discriminating among them'.[2] It is a matter of the relative power of various groups to define collective identity and their abilities to mobilise these definitions through their control of the channels of communication.[3]

My task in this chapter is to elucidate the ways in which advertisements mediate the 'other' through creating certain stereotypical images. One of the most influential sources of stereotypical images is advertisements which, by supplying large numbers of audiences with images – both real and fantasy – of people, offer representatives of racial and ethnic groups that mould many people's attitudes and beliefs towards 'others' in society. In passing let me note that images are generally artificial constructs; they are created through selective perception and imagination. What is perceived frequently depends more upon the sensitivities and needs of the subject than upon the characteristics of the object.[4] As such they may be manipulated and even fabricated. Yet despite their apparent inaccuracy, stereotypes remain a common part of our everyday thinking. They 'serve not only as cognitive shortcuts for perceiving others, but as ideological and symbolic ground for behaviour'.[5] Stereotypes are a key aspect of racism. And racism comes in many forms. Its subtle and covert forms, which are not even registered as racism, are as effective as its blatant and overt forms, in producing a racist consciousness among the masses. If this is the case we should turn our attention to the everyday, less visible forms of racism; the collection of ideological habits, those practices and beliefs by which racism is constantly reproduced. This reproduction process 'preformulates' the popular, everyday racism[6] which provides a breeding ground on which its blatant and extreme forms can thrive. Michael Billig, who adopts a similar approach to the study of nationalism, states that in established nations there is a continual flagging or 'reminding' of nationhood; however, this reminding is so familiar and continual that it is not consciously registered as 'reminding'.[7] In daily life racism, just like nationalism, is constantly flagged in the apparatuses of discourse through routine symbols and habits of language. According to Van Dijk, those groups who define 'the moderate mainstream' – the leading elites in polities, the media, scholarship, education and other domains – by their privileged access to various forms of public discourse play a crucial role in the daily reproduction of racism. Although he accepts that the nature of relations between elite and non-elite groups is dialectical, he contends that 'popular racism can be effectively reproduced through society only when it is at least partly endorsed by the elites'.[8] Their rhetoric 'creates a climate in which the language and practices of racism become first tolerable, then acceptable, and finally normal.[9]

The 'other' women

White women are for marrying;
Mulatto women are for fornicating with;
Black women are for service.
(Nineteenth-century Brazilian aphorism)

In this chapter I shall attempt to look at the myriad ways in which advertisements communicate racism via their racialised expression, discursive articulation, and visual representation, and in the process, produce and reproduce a racist consciousness among the masses. Let me start with the representation of African-American and Hispanic women in American advertisements. Although rendered invisible for a long time from the theories of nationalism and ethnicity, it has recently been acknowledged that women play significant roles in the biological, cultural and symbolic reproduction of collectivities.[10] They are frequently required to bear the 'burden of representation', for it is women that are constructed as the symbolic carriers of the identity and honour of the collectivity.[11] In many cultures it is the figure of a woman that symbolises the spirit of the collectivity and in the popular imagination it is women who are often associated with the collectivity itself.[12] In an attempt to make them the 'sign' of the authentic nation, they are symbolised in a homogenised form.[13] Although they act as 'border markers' of collectivities, they constitute the 'invisible border': they are neither outside nor inside.[14] As a homogenised fantasy they represent the stranger 'because they are different *from* men, strangers to them'.[15] Women of colour, on the other hand 'are the double foreigner, the double stranger. Their absence is twice effected, the presence twice negated. They are held up to the fantasmatic and found doubly wanting'.[16] They carry the double stigma of racism and sexism.

The stereotypical portrayal of African-American and Hispanic women in the above-quoted nineteenth-century Brazilian aphorism which categorises women according to their use-value, still persists in contemporary advertisements, albeit in more subtle forms. Although present day racism is not simply the continuation of old stereotypes, it nevertheless draws on and modifies the reservoir of the old racist imagery.[17] That is, contemporary racism employs 'a pre-formed vocabulary, adopting and adapting an already available language – a repertoire of racist images and stereotypes that are drawn on selectively as occasion demands.[18] Racism has been incorporated into the advertisements in the form of images, which reaffirm old stereotypes.

For white America Aunt Jemima, – reminiscent of a stereotypical slave 'Mammy' – symbolised the image of nurturing, self-sacrificing, loyal, obedient black women happy to serve her white masters, whereas Chiquita embodied the stereotypical fun-loving Hispanic spitfire.

Aunt Jemima, a character created by American advertisers in the 1890s, in time turned into a commercial icon. Although Mammy's legend was created as an answer to the critics of slavery, and with her lack of sexuality, as a rebuttal of Northern accusations of sexual relationships with black women, as a 'counterbalance to the octoroon mistress', her reality became an ambivalent, often haunting record 'of the complexities of guilt and love white Americans felt'.[19] Mammy was represented as an idealised servant, always clean, ready to serve with a crisp smile, never bitter in spite of her inferior status, wise and intuitively knowledgeable, and distinctively southern in her accent, she 'epitomized servility with exceptionally natural cheerfulness'.[20] In line with this representation the Mammy figures were first used in products of food.

It was in Aunt Jemima that Mammy found her most lively visual embodiment as a stereotype. She, like other Mammy figures, was an image as pre-packaged as the goods – food and cleaning products, kitchen and household equipment – she had advertised. In her first visual representations she was portrayed as a fat woman with a big round grinning face, wide mouth, oversized thick red lips, big bulging eyes and a very dark skin. She also wore a kerchief on her head. As racism not only defines beauty but also ugliness, she was represented with exaggerated facial and bodily features in direct opposition to the assumed physical beauty of the white woman with her 'elegant symmetry of form'.[21] With respect to the image of Aunt Jemima – and the images of black women – there is continuity and change. Although she continues to exist as a commercial character for food products, Aunt Jemima has been modernised – made slimmer and lighter – with the aim of presenting her, in the words of the Quaker Oats company that owns the Aunt Jemima brand, 'in a more contemporary light, while preserving the important attributes of warmth, quality and good taste, heritage and reliability'.[22] Mammy in the twentieth century took the form of a real human being. She became established in films, TV series, in literature in the role of a cook or a maid, usually as a self-denying, wise, stern but at the same time sentimental person providing comfort and security especially to the whites around her.

All such and similar representations imprinting Mammy's image in popular consciousness in the role of a cook or servant implicitly justify the inferior status of blacks in society. They recycle the image of black

women's 'proper' place in white societies. Black women are reduced to servants, housekeepers, housewives, that is, to the symbol of hearth and home. This image of black Mammy is still in circulation. A recent advertisement of the Italian clothing multinational Benetton, for example, consisted of a white woman and a black woman nursing a white baby, accompanied by the company logo 'United Colours of Benetton'. Although the advertisement does not communicate 'any message about buying brightly coloured knitwear' it activates and reaffirms those subconscious stereotypes about the real place of blacks in white society.[23] But this is not all there is to it. Stereotyping according to Bhabha involved the ambivalence of 'projection and introjection metaphoric and metonymic strategies, displacement, over-determination, guilt, aggresivity'.[24] The white gaze has viewed the blacks in an ambivalent fashion. The photograph is reminiscent of the ambivalence and complexities of love and guilt that whites feel towards the blacks. The comfort, protection and care that Mammy provided for whites had become an 'object of nostalgia, lightly tinged with guilt'.[25] As is the case in the advertisement it was Mammy who fed and raised white children: 'Up to the age of ten we saw as much, perhaps more, of the mammy than of the mother . . . The mammy first taught us to lisp and to walk', wrote the southerner Lewis Blair in 1889.[26] The fact that they had been 'nursed at black breasts', was used by defenders of slavery, who argued that they could not be cruel to blacks after having been nursed by them.[27] In the process of the reconstruction of the reality of the past, which has involved the distortions, self-deception and denials that constitute many white versions of 'history',[28] Mammy became part of American popular culture. She was idealised by defenders of slavery, as a proof of the humanity of the system. The very terms 'Mammy' or 'Aunt' referred to the closeness, love and trust the black servants were accorded. In passing it should be noted that women called 'Mammy' or 'Aunt' have been stripped of their individual identities. Considering that one's name is 'the simplest, most literal, and most obvious symbol of identity',[29] and that it is the name that establishes the fact of one's existence, the black women have even been deprived of the right to be, since 'to be without a name is almost not to be'.[30]

Another instance of ambivalence in the photograph has to do with the sexualisation of the body of the black woman. Although Mammy, with her lack of sexuality, was a response to the charges of sexual relations with black women, there had been a long tradition of fascination with black women. The breasts of the black woman in the Benetton advert 'play on all the archetypes of black female sexuality'[31] reaffirming the age-long subconscious stereotype of blacks as objects of erotic desire.

Advertisements commodify difference as a resource for pleasure both in sexist and racist ways. The ubiquitous Chiquita stickers placed on bananas embody the stereotypical, fun-loving Hispanic. The image of Miss Chiquita is of a voluptuous, sexy woman. She wears a red dress – that emphasises her sexuality by delineating her breasts and outlining her figure – a fruit-laden hat along with heavy make up and high-heeled shoes. The Chiquita image perpetuates the long-established imagery of Hispanic female sexuality that involved assumptions of higher levels of sensuality and superior sexual knowledge. In Miss Chiquita's figure the Hispanic woman is fetishised and reduced to her body. As such she cultivates an image of exoticism and an unrefined sexuality. With her beguiling seductiveness she arouses the sexual desires of white males. For the latter to experience sex with women of different ethnic and racial backgrounds has been 'a way to encounter the "other" as well as to make themselves over, to leave behind white "innocence" and enter the world of "experience"'.[32] The sexually available female 'other' – the object of white male fantasy – with her hypersexuality and lasciviousness is constructed in direct opposition to the assumed sexual purity of the white female.

Just as 'our' women are constructed as the symbolic bearers of our nation's values and identity, 'their' women, pushed beyond the boundaries of national identity, are perceived as the embodiment of everything that our nation does not represent. 'Their' bodies carrying the insignia of the foreigner, signalled through such external markers as physical features, dress and so on, elicit the psychic borders distinguishing 'insiders' from 'outsiders', 'us' from 'them'.

The 'other' men

> A country where the money circulating in the market
> The science and technology guiding the arts all belong to the Turks. . .
>
> Where the shipyards, factories, the ship and the train are
> Owned by the Turks
> O Turk's son, there lies your fatherland.
>
> (Ziya Gökalp)

Nationalism assigns different roles to males and females. Whereas in nationalist discourse women are relegated to the role of mothers, carriers of the cultural traditions and symbolic bearers of the values and identity of the collectivity, men are portrayed as soldiers, martyrs and

heroes. As is the case with female stereotyping, in male stereotyping too, it is 'our' men who are endowed with such virtues as courage, independence, willpower, responsibility; 'their' men, on the other hand, lack these 'masculine' qualities. This line of thought has been best exemplified in the recent Turkish tyre factory, Petlas, television commercial based on a real-life episode. During the Dardanelles War when the vehicles carrying guns and ammunition to the front ran out of tyres, the commander of the regiment sent one of his soldiers to Istanbul, ordering him to find the tyres at any cost: 'Mehmet Muzaffer you have to bring those tyres in some way or other. The fate of the war depends on them'. Muzaffer found the tyres in a shop owned by a Jew who would only relinquish the tyres for cash down payment. The country is at war and money is tight. Determined to get the tyres by fair play or foul, Muzaffer resorts to forgery. Working throughout the night, he prepares an Ottoman banknote which is almost identical to the real note, with one important exception: whereas real banknotes included a clause stating that the value would be paid in gold in Dersaadet (Istanbul), this one stated that it would be paid with the blood of the martyrs in the Dardanelles. Next morning, at the break of dawn, Muzaffer goes to the Jewish trader and purchases the tyres with the false note. The Jewish trader realises that he has been deceived only when he reads the statement concerning the method of payment and after Muzaffer has left with the tyres. The State later pays for the merchandise. The audience learns from the narrator, an old man, who had accompanied Mehmet Muzaffer to Istanbul during the episode, who recounts the story to Petlas workers that Muzaffer had died in another battle. After referring to the importance of the 'national' production of tyres (by Petlas) the narrator utters the following words: 'Mehmet Muzaffer is proud of you my sons'.

The message the advertisement conveys is clear: if industrial production and economic activities are left to 'outsiders', then at crucial moments the country will be left without the necessary supplies. As such, it mobilises fears and anxieties not only about national security, but also about 'outsiders', 'enemies in our midst' a conception that triggers an intense 'boundary-drawing bustle, which in turn generates a thick fall-out of antagonism and hatred to those found or suspected guilty of double-loyalty and sitting astride the barricade'.[33] The commercial, by depicting the Jews, who have been living amidst Muslims for centuries, as outsiders is both certifying the socio-cultural validity of the definition of the Turkish nation present in the popular mind, and reinforcing it, which despite official definitions to the contrary, has been associated with being Muslim. Non-Muslims have

been perceived as 'outsiders', 'guests' or 'fifth-columnists'; as falling outside the boundaries of the nation. Their concentration in trade and industry – the outcome of historical circumstances – has been re-interpreted as an important defect on their part. They have popularly been seen as exploiters of the wealth of the country at the expense of the Muslims, without showing any signs of gratitude. Their presence in the economic sphere has been seen as damaging and dangerous to the welfare of the nation. Although based on a historical event, the Petlas advertisement by depicting the Jews as controlling the trade in the country while Muslims are heroically defending the fatherland, resorts to a representation of the Jews, having no reference to the chain of events which led to this situation. The population of the Ottoman Empire was divided into categories of Muslims and non-Muslims. In accordance with Islamic Law, non-Muslims professing monotheistic religions based on revelation were accorded the protection and tolerance of the state, on the condition that they acknowledge unequivocally the primacy of Islam and the supremacy of Muslims. Besides paying an additional tax, there were certain restrictions imposed on them, the chief one being their exclusion from governmental service and the privilege of bearing arms. This state of affairs led to an ethnic division of labour, where Muslims dominated the government and non-Muslims the economy, especially trade. What remains obscure in the advertisement is the fact that in the Ottoman Empire the key basis of power as well as status was service to the state: 'the wielders of political power, not the merchants, were the first citizens of the realm'.[34]

That the merchant is a Jew amplifies the significance of stereotypical representation. The universal stereotype of the Jew as the eternal stranger is reaffirmed by the commercial. As a member of a supra-national people hated for their cosmopolitan internationalism, the Jewish merchant cannot be expected to display any sense of patriotism towards the fatherland. Although in the advertisement one encounters no explicit reference to the identity of the merchant, his Jewishness is inscribed on his body. His body shape, size, facial structure, nose and so on, that is, his physicality, to use Eisenstein's term, is reminiscent of figures used to depict Jews in caricatures. He fits the ubiquitous profiteering Jewish merchant stereotype. As such it points to the immutability of the otherness of the Jew. Although he utters just a few words, his accent discloses his identity. His physicality depicts the polar opposite of the strong-built, tall and handsome Mehmet Muzaffer. His dress makes it clear that he is living a prosperous life, in sharp contrast with the poverty of the 'authentic' members of the nation. Such representations, in a way, justify the discriminatory practices of the

Turkish authorities, like the Capital Levy Tax (1942), which was professedly designed to tax war profiteers but in practice was imposed on non-Muslims. That tax was instrumental in transferring the control of the market from the non-Muslim groups to the Muslims. Whereas before the imposition of the tax the non-Muslims were still represented in the commercial classes, by the time that tax was abolished the 'major Greek, Armenian and Jewish merchant figures were shaken and dislocated'.[35] In fact similar representations of the Jews were widespread in the Turkish media in the period leading to the imposition of the tax.[36] Stereotypical representation is a powerful tool not only for boundary-drawing and maintenance, but also for activating and ideologically justifying the mechanisms of social closure. By providing the moral justification for officially sustained inequalities it serves to maintain and augment the existing hierarchy between social groups.

Inscribing difference on the body of the 'other'

> The way in which the other presents himself,
> exceeding the idea of the other in me,
> we here name face.
>
> (Emmanuel Levinas)

In all the above-cited examples the body of the 'other' is depicted as a body on which a subordinate position is inscribed, its physicality is given signification by imprinting its difference. Thus the body, 'the one thing that all human beings have in common' becomes a symbolic site for circumscribing difference, a means for 'constructing and seeing hatreds',[37] a process whereby 'images of bodies are imagined to be real'.[38] The last example of advertisements where hatred is written on the body comes again from Turkey. The television advertisement for Audi cars shows the body of a man – whose face is not seen – carrying a rosary, wearing white socks and an eye-catching golden medallion on his uncovered hairy chest, with the slogan 'the accessories that you can never find at Audi'. The accessories are used as signifiers of the inner qualities and attributes of a group of people who came to be designated as 'black Turks' in Turkey in order to demarcate them from 'white' or 'Euro' Turks.

The concept of 'white' or 'Euro-Turk' has come into existence in the last decade. Individuals designated as such are those who have gone through the events which Norbert Elias terms the 'civilizing process'.[39] As Shilling notes, Elias's study of European civilising is conducive to the

development of a theory of 'civilised bodies'.[40] In Western societies a distinction is regularly made between 'civilised' and 'grotesque' bodies.[41] The uncivilised or grotesque body is not restrained by codes of conduct, gives instant expression to emotions, and satisfies its drives and desires without constraint or respect for the well-being of others. The civilised body, on the other hand, is constructed as a socialised, rationalised and individualised body.[42] Whereas the socialisation of the body transforms it into a location for and manifestation of codes of comportment, its rationalisation puts its spontaneous and emotional impulses under self-control mechanisms.[43] Its individualisation, on the other hand, leads human beings to perceive themselves as separate from others, and their bodies as a container for the self, with an affective wall constructed between themselves and their bodies. Today the distinction made between 'white' and 'black Turks' refers to the distinction between those who have gone through the civilising process and those who have not. Urban, educated upper- and middle-class individuals who have adopted Western lifestyles and manners primarily represent 'white Turkishness'. In terms of achievement the 'white Turk' physical characteristics play an important role. In this context, attractiveness, youth, fair complexion and proper body decorations – especially not wearing of a moustache – gain importance. Such physical features are associated with refinement and elegance. On the other hand, dark complexion suggestive of eastern origins and consequently of provinciality and unrestrained drives is associated with bestiality. In order to be included in the 'white Turk' category the possession of what Pierre Bourdieu[44] refers to as cultural capital (various kinds of legitimate knowledge) and symbolic capital (stemming from one's honour and prestige) is not by itself adequate. Since the dominant groups in society have managed to define their bodies and body techniques, including body decoration, as superior and valuable, one also needs to possess the appropriate 'physical capital'.

In its visual representations in the popular culture the bodies of the 'black Turks' have been constructed in line with Bakhtin's grotesque body.[45] That the face of the man remains unseen in the commercial and its 'lower stratum', to use Bakhtin's term, is emphasised, means that the body in question is intriguing against the codes of discipline and rationality – the products of his 'head', thus subverting the hierarchical Cartesian mind/body duality. Moreover he is stripped of his individuality and reduced to his body, which is perceived as a specimen of a 'category' instead of a unique person. By removing the face, 'the only game that can never be attained by image hunters',[46] the body loses its uniqueness.

In response to accusations of discrimination and racism, the director of the advertising agency defended the advertisement on the grounds

that it appealed to the sentiments of the 'civilised' sections of Turkish society towards the 'uncivilised' black Turks.[47] The particular construction of civilised bodies has to do with the nature of the Turkish modernisation/Westernisation project which, by constructing certain privileged binary oppositions between the modern and the traditional, between the urban and the rural, between the 'civilised' and the 'uncivilised' tried to reject and suppress any traces of the Orient. Ironically 'the very nature of Westernization meant Orientalization'[48] for the West had constructed its identity in its opposition to the Orient. That is, the 'other' in opposition to whom identity is constructed had to be created from within the very nation that the Kemalist project of Westernisation attempted to modernise/civilise. Thus to be Western 'involved more than the rejection of the Oriental, the rejection of the impossibility of being the other'; it entailed the (re)production of the Oriental subject.[49]

Bodies as instruments of a racism without race

> The human body is common to us.
> (Mary Douglas)

Visual discourse, like other forms of discourse, produces meaning largely through representation. And representation especially when dealing with difference 'engages feelings, attitudes and emotions' and 'mobilizes fears and anxieties in the viewer' at deep levels.[50] It gives overt or covert messages about race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality. Bodies have been assigned a significant place in this representation process. Otherness and difference have been marked on them. The visibility of the body and its differences have supplied 'the incontrovertible evidence' for the naturalisation of difference; the body becomes the discursive site via which a great deal of the 'racialized knowledge was produced and circulated'.[51] Bodies have been turned into symbolic sites for breeding divisive and alienating attitudes, a dichotomous vision of 'us' and 'them'. Although new racism is based on a discourse of cultural distinctiveness rather than biological characteristics, bodies are still used for demarcating difference, they have been transformed into tools for what Taguieff terms 'differentialist racism',[52] a racism, where notions of biological superiority are replaced by notions of difference, incompatibility of traditions and life styles and the harmfulness of the mixing of cultures. It is significant that the body, which is common to the whole of humanity, is transformed into an ideological construct, a realm of conflict and opposition.

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FROM JUDEOPHOBIA TO ISLAMOPHOBIA IN THE ITALIAN MEDIA, WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE NORTHERN LEAGUE PARTY MEDIA

Emanuela Trevisan Semi

The Northern League (Lega Nord) is a political party that was created in Northern Italy about ten years ago and has since then grown rapidly, bringing together people from very different political backgrounds, from the extreme right to the extreme left, and uniting them under the common ideal synthesised in three key words: 'freedom', 'autonomy', and 'federalism'.[1]

The party's electoral support mainly comes from Northern Italy, especially the north-eastern areas, where their results are much more significant than at a national level. In the last European elections (1999), the Northern League obtained 10.7 per cent of votes, but the League does not consider European elections of much importance. In the 1996 national elections the Northern League obtained 32.8 per cent of votes in the Veneto Region. Results of a survey carried out in January 2000, and published in a local newspaper (*Il Gazzettino*, 17 January 2000), indicated that if European elections were held today, the Northern League would receive 15 per cent of votes, which would nevertheless be an increase on six months earlier.

The Internet site of the Northern League is of considerable interest for the present study.[2] The site[3] opens with the words 'Man or microbe? Man not microbe, one vote more, one immigrant less'. The slogan 'Man or microbe' had already been used during the 1998 referendum

promoted by the Northern League against immigrants and against the 'excessive power of the Jewish American bankers that want to govern the world'.[4] The use of the term 'microbe' to refer to men – in this case immigrants – recalls the infamous Nazi campaigns and the theorisation of the Jews as elements infecting society.

The Northern League has invested much in the press (newspapers, pamphlets, posters), membership symbols (T-shirts, stickers), radio and television (broadcasting 24 hours a day on a channel called 'Padania Libera') and, since 1997, it has owned a daily newspaper called *La Padania*. The language used in these forums with regard to Jews and Muslim immigrants seems to revive that of the notorious *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and the Fascist and racist language of the press in the later period of Mussolini's rule in the 1930s and 1940s. The recent subtitle added to the paper (*Mitteleuropean North*) stresses the concept of Northern mythologies.

In this chapter I intend to analyse the representation of Muslim immigration in the media linked to the Northern League at the end of the twentieth century and at the beginning of the twenty-first century and to compare it with anti-Semitic rhetoric.

The mass media are flooded with alarmist news items about the invasion of foreigners (i.e. immigrants) seeking work in Italy, the landing of illegal immigrants along the Italian coasts and the criminal activities that are attributed to ethnic groups and immigrants even before a trial is held. They also report episodes of anti-Semitism and intolerance, especially among football supporters in the stadiums. A local daily,[5] for example, published two articles on the same page reporting episodes of anti-Semitic behaviour in stadiums under the title 'Racism: stadiums under special surveillance', and in the second article, the arrival of illegal immigrants entitled 'In Puglia the landings of illegal immigrants start up again'. The side-by-side publication of the two articles facilitated an alarmist reading of both events, which had as their subjects 'foreign' elements, be they Jews or illegal immigrants, both of whom required, as the headline implied, special surveillance.

Over the last ten years there has been a crescendo of anti-Semitic and racist episodes that have involved Italian football supporters. It reached such a point that Maccabi, the football team of the Roman Jewish community, which had always taken part in the provincial tournaments, was forced to stop playing in 1999 because of the tension generated by the particularly intolerant and aggressive atmosphere. A spokesman for the community explained in an interview reported in the national press: 'Our opponents use racial insults to unnerve us. When one of us is

pushed too far and responds with his fists, we find ourselves with one less player on the field'.[6]

November 1999 was a month in which Nazi banners '(Auschwitz is your Homeland' and 'The ovens are your houses') and Celtic crosses appeared during football and basketball matches held in Rome, followed a few days later by the explosion of bombs outside the Museum of the Resistance and a cinema where a film on the Nazi leader Eichmann was showing. Responsibility for the attacks was later claimed by an entity calling itself the 'Anti-Zionist Movement'. Anti-Zionism often conceals anti-Semitism as an attempt to get round the law that bans anti-Semitic activities. These episodes were given enormous coverage in the mass media and the spotlight was turned on certain obscure figures who thus came to public attention in the press and on television.

Terms that were once used to describe typically Jewish situations, such as 'diaspora', have now been brought out again and used as metaphors to describe the conditions of other migrant populations. The semantic of the term has now been widened in Italy to refer to 'Islamic diaspora', 'Maghreb diaspora' and so on. The diaspora viewed as a construct of transnationality, hybridity and impurity is compared with a State mythicised as pure and homogeneous. The concept of diaspora is perceived as a threat to the movements and political parties that appeal to nationalism and localism, such as the Northern League. Indeed the concept of diaspora gives their region sacred and mythical colourings.

On the one hand the revival of terms loaded with history and stigma has given new life to prejudices and theories that had previously been repressed and never properly analysed. On the other, it is precisely the return of an openly racist discourse that has led to the revival of terms that rekindle past phobias. The situation created by the war in the Balkans after the collapse of Yugoslavia contributed to inciting fears of co-habitation of different 'ethnic groups', a term that together with 'race' is dear to the Northern League. It must be made clear that in the Italian context, after the use made of it by Italian racism in the Fascist period, the term 'race' is not politically correct when used to refer to human groups, unlike the use made in English. More neutral terms like 'ethnic group' or 'culture' are preferred.

The language of the Northern League describing the immigrants is characterised by words referring to the natural, vegetable and animal worlds. Frequent use is made of terms like 'uprooting', 'roots', 'natural language' (referring to local dialect); people are referred to as 'rooted' or 'rootless', the latter term indicating a source of danger. Expressions such as 'wild beast', 'pack', 'to tear to pieces' are also used regularly with reference to Muslims.

And it is the concept of uprooting that groups together the Jews, historically an uprooted people, and the Muslims, today's uprooted people. The themes linked to transnational networks that characterise this phenomenon and that distinguished the Jewish diasporic condition in the past refer back to other echoes, references and attitudes.

Muslims – the Northern League refers to Muslims when it speaks of immigrants – have become the favourite target of the League's press campaign and rarely a day passes when they are not stigmatised as microbes and *parasites,* terms already well known in anti-Semitic rhetoric. The League's campaigns seem to have the aim of creating a climate of fear of contagion and infection, in other words of fear of the cultural mixtures that could arise from such contacts. The references also refer to physical contagion, recalling Nazi propaganda against the Jews. In a pamphlet dedicated to Islam[7] (*Quaderni padani)* Islam is defined as one of the three 'plagues' of humanity (along with Rome and Communism).

In the *La Padania* daily newspaper,[8] an article entitled 'The idea of living off others' in which reference was made to cartoons (defined as being 'not too far from reality') that portray 'hordes of Arabs demanding houses, acceptance, health services, mosques, and all sorts of other privileges, all paid for by us', labelled the Arabs as 'parasites' like Southern Italians, the other target of Northern League propaganda. In the League ideology, different cultures are considered incompatible, especially the Christian and Islamic worlds, which are seen as being in complete opposition. The theme of the impossibility of assimilating the Muslim is highly reminiscent of what could be read in the European press before the Second World War regarding the unassimilability of the Jews. Intercultural exchange is abhorred as it generates syncretism and half-castes. The Northern League press declared a victory when it managed to have a course in Arab language and culture cancelled in a small town in Lombardy and have it replaced with a course of Lombard language and culture ('with special emphasis on Milanese and Brescian dialects').[9]

Let us take a closer look at the League's attitude to Jews and Muslims and how these two groups are treated in the media.

The theme of globalisation of markets, a leitmotiv in recent years in the mass media, has for the Northern League become the modern version of world dominion by wealthy Jewish-American forces. In an interview, Umberto Bossi, the founder of the League and its undisputed leader, replied to the question 'Who has interests in transforming our society into a multiracial society?' with the statement: 'The American

bankers and freemasons aim at taking over the world economy. To do this they have to transform the societies of all countries into multiracial societies so that there is less resistance to the colonial enslavement to the American motherland'. Elsewhere he defined freemasonry as 'the tool of the Jewish-American plutocracy'.[10]

Issues linked to dietary regulations, mutilation, polygamy and the differences between the sexes are exaggerated and used as the basis for press campaigns in which journalists attempt to provoke public indignation. One particular campaign is a significant example of this. In a certain school a Muslim boy who recently arrived in Italy was given a (male) remedial teacher as he simply did not appear to understand the (female) teacher's instructions. For days *La Padania* published articles – even on the front page – in which the case was presented as evident proof of the subaltern role given to women by Islam. It is worth noting that other national newspapers did not even mention the case. The League's construction was that the little boy was a 'pupil of Allah' and as a loyal follower of the Muslim religion could not obey a woman, considered an inferior. The articles attempted to show the impossibility of any projects for integration and the incompatibility of the different cultural worlds. Headlines such as 'Allah despises women teachers' (2 December 1999) or 'The schoolmistress and the pupil of Allah' (2 December 1999) or 'Women teachers "discriminated against" but everyone is silent in the name of Allah' (3 December 1999) were as significant as statements such as 'so much for racial integration' or 'when customs and traditions are local then they can be contravened, but when we are dealing with an immigrant, then anything goes'. The purpose was on the one hand to disparage and abase what is today Italy's second-largest religion with the unscrupulous and mocking use of the name of God and, on the other, to appeal to allegedly accepted values, such as that of equality of the sexes, and to prove the threat they would be under if Islam were to triumph.

The 'Islamophobic' themes are dealt with differently in the newspaper, on the radio and in official documents, parts of which are published on-line on the Internet. The newspaper has a larger number of readers and conveys a fairly coarse and rough message in strident tones, while on the radio party members interact to stir up support and sustain the positions held by the League, representing a cross-section of the feelings of the League's supporters. The official documents show a slightly more 'presentable' version, and seem to wish to attract political supporters.

In the pamphlet dedicated to Islam mentioned above elements may be perceived that give the impression of a veritable twentieth century

'crusade' against the Muslims living in Italy. The Po Valley is depicted in holy terms: 'The people of the Po Valley are invincible only if they have with them the symbols of the sacredness of the land'. Those symbols are the Cross of Saint George of Jerusalem defined as 'the sacred symbol that guided them in a thousand battles against the Saracens and bullies of every kind'.[11] Muslim history is revisited in the light of the clash between the people of the Po Valley. It is held up as a spectre of collective memory in a context like that of the Veneto where 'the Turk' is still mentioned in proverbs and local dialects. In fact, expressions such as 'Mamma li Turchi!' (Every man for himself) and 'parlar turco' (an incomprehensible way of speaking) or 'cose turche' (unimaginable things) are still common today. The battle of Poitiers is recalled as the first place of conflict and encounter between 'Muslims and the people of the Po Valley', as are the wars fought by the Serenissima Republic of Venice against the Turks and Saracens. Mention is made of armies from the Po Valley that seem to have been overlooked in textbooks. The use of history in a mythical reconstruction is richly exemplified. Terms still able to transmit ancient fears like 'Turk' and 'Saracen' are revived to define the new protagonists of the history of the twenty-first century, burdened with the stigma and phobias belonging to other centuries and other regions.

We have seen the use, on the one hand, of a biological kind of language and, on the other, of terms that have remained in the popular memory with a threatening overtone and that in any case represent extreme 'otherness'. This language not only favours the representation of the Muslim immigrant as a non-man who may be compared to the animal species, but also points to him as the past enemy, the Turks and Saracens, who have returned to threaten the Northern Italian regions.

As early as 1990, Manconi, an Italian historian, described the League as 'a political entrepreneur of racism' and claimed that the 'very recent formation of the League (. . .) and the absence of systematic ideological references' would make it particularly receptive to 'strong emotional messages such as ethnocentrism and xenophobia'.[12] He added that the psychological and cultural predisposition of the followers of the League to populist ideas and agitation linked to their traditional values might well be transferred from ethnic emphasis to that of racial intolerance. This view, which was at first criticised because it was not considered to be sufficiently supported,[13] may today be considered positively farsighted. This is particularly true when we observe how the League's position is being taken up by extreme right-wing Fascist and skinhead movements. In a recent (17 January 2000) meeting of these groups held in Treviso, a city in the Veneto region which had become a symbol

of intolerance when the Northern League mayor had all the benches removed from the public gardens so as to prevent immigrants from sitting on them, there was an example of this sort of rhetoric. Among the objectives of the racist demonstration in Treviso, which aimed at creating 'the new Fascist movement', was that of the 'fight against the immigrants' occupation of the region', the battle cry of the Northern League, shouted out in anti-immigrant slogans typical of the League.

This situation in Italy may be compared to the one which historically characterised the Jewish conditions. Here we have the re-creation of the complex of phenomena called diasporic, with the attendant phobias we know so well. The existence of a solid transnational network, the memory and attachment to the place of origin, a difficult reception in the host country and the observance of rules that are in part different to those of the host country, in other words certain elements typical of the diasporic phenomenon, and therefore common to various human groups, seem to favour a racist trend, especially in a context like that of Northern Italy which is traditionally agricultural and Catholic, unused to exchanges and contacts. The way in which certain media treat the phenomenon, leading to the diffusion of the same message at different levels, permits a more rapid spread and a multiplication of stereotypes and phobias.

Notes

1 S. Allievi, *Le parole della Lega*, Milan, 1992.
2 R. Escobar, 'La Battaglia della Lega' in *Il Mulino*, 3, 1999, pp. 661–70.
3 *www.leganord.org* (accessed 15 February 2000).
4 L. Mincer, 'Bossi, la Lega e il nuovo-vecchio antisemitismo' in *Ha-Kehillah*, 24/3, 1999, p. 8.
5 *Il Gazzettino*, 28 November 1999, p. 5.
6 *Corriere della Sera*, 28 November 1999, p. 5.
7 *Quaderni padarni*, vv. 22–3, March–June 1999.
8 *La Padania*, 4 December 1999.
9 *La Padania*, 18 January 2000.
10 L. Mincer, 'Bossi, la Lega e il nuovo-vecchio antisemitismo' in *Ha-Kehillah*, 24/3, 1999.
11 *Quaderni padarni*, vv. 22–3, March–June 1999, p. 4.
12 L. Balbo, L. Manconi, *I razzismi possibili*, Milan, 1990, p. 86.
13 S. Allievi, *Le parole della Lega*, pp. 65–6.

5

MINORITIES AND PRESS IN POST-REVOLUTION IRAN

Ali Granmayer

In the late sixteenth century, Iran's first national government in the Islamic era was formed by the Safavids who also introduced Shi'ism as Iran's official religion. With the establishment of the Constitutional State in the early twentieth century, the cohabitation of Muslims, Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians continued. Between these two critical dates, religious confrontation was rare and tolerance was prevalent. While acceptance of Islam was technically obligatory for state employees, minorities were not totally excluded from state affairs. For instance, in the seventeenth century, Shah Abbas appointed Armenians as two of his chief merchants[1] and in the eighteenth century, an Armenian Bishop was among the nobility who elected Nader Shah as king. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, three Armenians were among the first Iranian ambassadors to Europe.[2]

The first Iranian Constitution and its Supplement, written in 1906–7, recognised the three minority religions and allocated three seats in the newly formed 'Majiles-e Shoura-ye Melli' (National Consultative Assembly) to the representatives of Christian Armenians, Jews and Zoroastrians. Later on, one extra seat was allocated to the Armenians and another to Christian Assyrians. Moreover, in the 1960s, a seat was allocated to a minority representative in the upper house (Senate) which rotated between Zoroastrians, Christians and Jews.[3]

Following the Islamic Revolution of 1979, the new Constitution of Iran recognised Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Judaism as 'divine religions' and allocated the same previous five seats to the representatives of the said minorities in the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami).[4]

Since the beginning of the second decade of the Islamic regime, the successors of the late Ayatollah Khomeini have embarked upon a new

approach to the minority question. This new approach was designed to enhance the regime's prestige both nationally and internationally. The policy-makers intended to display a liberal attitude towards national unity, satisfy the intellectuals who traditionally sympathised with minorities and impress the outside world by their treatment of non-Muslims. The international congresses of Zoroastrians in 1996 and Assyrians in 1998 in Tehran, and the inauguration of both by state leaders, in addition to the media coverage of these events were impressive. Even more surprising were the sympathetic statements made by the leaders of the Islamic Republic on these occasions. At a meeting with the attendants of the Zoroastrian Congress in August 1996, the supreme leader of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Khamenei, said:

> Iranians are honoured that their country is the birthplace of Zoroastrianism. Islam has recognised Zoroastrians like other followers of the divine religions, and Iranians consider all Zoroastrians of the world as their compatriots. I call Zoroastrians in Iran and abroad, and all Iranians from the divine confessions to co-operate for the reconstruction of our sacred land.[5]

Likewise, President Rafsanjani told the Congress of Zoroastrians that Islam shared the famous Zoroastrian principle of 'talk clean; think clean; act clean' (goftar-e nik; pendar-e nik; kerdar-e nik); and the Speaker of the Majles said, 'At this congress, Iran has embraced its children from all over the world'.[6] The world congress of Assyrians, held in October 1998 in Tehran, was inaugurated by President Mohammad Khatami.[7] Similar utterances have been made by President Khatami with respect to the Armenians.[8]

It must of course be acknowledged that Iran is a religious state. Most traditional Islamic laws are in force and certain types of discrimination are the established norm. The first point in this context is the supposed superiority of and priority given to Muslim citizens in many aspects of life and the legal inequality of non-Muslims in a variety of respects. There is official recognition of only three minority religions – Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism – in Iranian law.

Reports in the print-media on minority issues are mostly about the minorities' holy places in Iran, their traditions, freedom of worship and their religious ceremonies. The local leaders of minority religions have been chosen in large part to show their gratitude as well as to refute foreign accusations about the mistreatment of minorities in Iran. There

are in Iran 176 churches, 21 synagogues and 36 Zoroastrian temples.[9] The religious leaders seldom complain.

Tehran's Armenian Archbishop, Ardak Manoukian, told an Iranian weekly, in June 1998:

> We are Iranians and we enjoy equal social rights with Muslims. Our rights are protected by the constitutional law. We also follow our own laws in terms of marriage, divorce, inheritance, etc. In Tehran alone we have seven churches. We have twenty-five schools in the capital with ten thousand students. Our students study in national universities when they graduate from high school. Our language and religion are taught in our schools in addition to government programmes. We have a good number of cultural and sports complexes in different parts of Iran. We have an Armenian daily newspaper called *Alik* which is based in Tehran. We have two representatives in the Islamic Consultative Assembly. Armenians work in different governmental departments and private companies. We have some Armenian professors teaching in national universities.[10]

When asked to comment on the 'sporadic accusations by the West' to the effect that Iran had abused the rights of its religious minorities, the Archbishop said:

> The existing facts do not correspond with the accusations. On behalf of the Armenian community, I reject charges of executions, torture and discrimination against religious minorities in Iran. We enjoy greater freedom than religious minorities in many other countries.[11]

The leader of Iran's Catholic Chaldeans, Rafael Bidavid, told a Tehran daily in 1996 that the Western media and the human rights organisations were misinformed about the situation of Iranian minorities. He suggested that Christians were more respected in Islamic Iran than in the West.[12]

To enhance Iran's image in the context of human rights, foreign spiritual leaders have been invited to visit Iran. Among distinguished visitors in recent years one could note the leading priest of the East Assyrian Church, Patriarch Mardankhai the Fourth, and the *Catholicos* of the East Orthodox Armenians (Cilicia) Aram the First. Both spiritual leaders were invited by the Iranian government, and expressed their satisfaction with the situation of their followers in Iran.[13]

The Zoroastrians enjoy a special status in Iran. They represent an ancient Iranian religion and most of their feasts such as Nowrouz, Mehrgan and Sadeh are celebrated by all Iranians as national holidays. The *Magopatan Mago* (*Moobed-e Moobedan*) or the High Priest of Iran's Zoroastrians has stressed this affinity and has even spoken positively about the conversion of Iranians to Islam. 'Iranians converted to Islam because they found the messages of Islam and Zoroaster were alike'.[14] *Moobed-e Moobedan* Rostam Shahmirzadi said on another occasion: 'We Zoroastrians have nowhere but Iran; we are part of the Iranian nation as was our prophet'.[15] The Zoroastrians' deputy in the Majles, Parviz Ravani, says: 'Iran's Zoroastrians live under the protection of the Islamic government and enjoy security and tranquillity'.[16]

The condition of Iran's Jewish minority has been an international focal point since the Islamic Revolution. This statement of Manouchehr Eliasi, the deputy of Iranian Jews in Majles, in 1996, was of special interest. He said:

> The problem of anti-Semitism does not exist in Iran; thirty-five thousand Iranian Jews are living in peace here; we have a Jewish association, a youth club, a hospital, home for the aged and several schools and kindergarten for Jewish children.[17]

Eliasi's statement was in fact a response to the statement of a member of the *Knesset* on the ill treatment of Jews in Iran. In this connection, Eliasi said: 'They want to cause anxiety in Jewish communities through this misrepresentation of our living conditions'.[18] Furthermore, Eliasi wrote a letter to President Rafsanjani to assure him of the loyalty of the Jewish community and to emphasise that Iranian Jews were eager to make a contribution to Iran's reconstruction projects.[19]

The head of the Jewish Association of Tehran, Haroun Yashayaei, also joined this propaganda campaign. 'The hardship which a minority suffers in many countries is an isolation imposed by the majority; such a situation does not exist in Iran. Nothing has isolated the Jews in Iranian society. What is available in Iran is for all Iranians', Yashayaei said.[20] This leader of Tehran's Jewish community told a Tehran daily that his people had a historical and spiritual interest in their Iranian homeland. He pointed to a 2700 year old Jewish settlement in Iran, mausoleums of Esther and Mordkhai in Hamadan, mausoleums of the Prophet Daniel in Shoush. Yashayaei noted that the Jewish Association, since its recognition by the first Constitutional government, had been registered for a hundred years, that 23 synagogues were functioning across Iran, that a Jewish hospital in Tehran was rendering service to Jewish and

non-Jewish people, that Jewish schools and cultural institutions were part of Iran's cultural life, and that the pioneer editor of foreign language dictionaries in Iran was a Jewish scholar, Suleiman Haim. Yashayaei went on:

> We, the Iranian Jews, contributed twelve martyrs in the Iran-Iraq war; we speak Farsi everywhere in the world, even in Israel; we are working to keep contact with the Iranian Jewish communities, including the 20,000 Iranian Jews who live in Los Angeles (USA), and we wish to establish a link with all Iranian Jews around the world.[21]

The Tehran daily, *Salam*, which published this interview, added its own foreword:

> Among the three great religions of the world, Judaism is the oldest. Following the conquest of Babylon, the Iranian king, Cyrus, freed the Jews and let them return to their homeland. However, the Jews were not interested in settlement but wished to trade. As such, they established themselves around the world and extended their influence beyond their territory. The Jews are followers of the Prophet Moses who liberated the Hebrews from an unbearable social situation and left an unforgettable legacy in the history of all liberation movements.[22]

This interview and foreword were published in a series of articles on Judaism in Iran in *Salam*, whose editor is a cleric, judge and politician, Hojatoleslam Mousavi-Khoiniha, once the prosecutor-general of the Islamic Republic.

In return for their recognition and relative freedoms the official minorities have little choice but to clearly express their loyalty to the Islamic regime. They have to emphasise the superiority of the majority religion and abide by Islamic rules and express their support for the government's political propaganda no matter that such expressions may be unrealistic or irrelevant.

Prior to the Islamists' takeover, there was a view, even among clerics, that the Islamic code of dress was not compulsory for non-Muslims. However, since the introduction of the requirement that the entire female body be covered, Jewish and Zoroastrian clerics of Iran issued supporting statements, and told the press that such dress for women was also compulsory in their religions.

When international human rights organisations criticise the imposition of Islamic rules on non-Muslim minorities, it is the minorities themselves who speak in defence of them. A report by Human Rights Watch in 1997 said that Iran's religious minorities were suffering from discrimination through the imposition of Islamic law. Tehran's major right-wing daily, *Kayhan*, quoted an Armenian woman who claimed that Iranian Christians had voluntarily adopted Islamic dress. 'We Christians of the East have different values: we respect a spiritual and healthy society'.[23] This statement emphasising Iranian Christian's preference for an Islamic code of dress to Western liberal values received wide coverage by the Iranian press.[24]

Another sensitive issue for the minorities is any comparison of their current status and privileges with the situation before 1979. The reality is that under the old regime, followers of minority religions reached the highest echelons in political, cultural and military spheres. Non-Muslims became deputy Prime Ministers, chancellors of universities and lieutenant-generals. But this is never mentioned. On the contrary, the minority representatives are urged to talk about what they have, rather than what they had. The head of the Jewish Association in Tehran told a Tehran daily in 1996 that the Jews were leading a better social, cultural and religious life than they did before the Islamic Revolution.[25] One might ask of course why, if the situation is getting better for the Iranian minorities, have more than half the minority population of Iran emigrated since the revolution. The religious leaders of minority confessions are well aware of the sensitivity of relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. Answering the questions of a Tehran daily about the possibility of marriage between a Christian and a Muslim, the Archbishop of the Armenians said: 'This is impossible; if they want to marry, one of them shall convert and we do not accept conversion in our religion'. The reporter asked: 'Isn't love of any importance?' and the Archbishop repeated: 'Our church does not accept conversion, so the Christian would have to convert to Islam'.[26]

Another proof of the minorities' loyalty is their demonstration of support for the government on political issues. At a Zoroastrian gathering, participants denounced the verdict of a Berlin court which implicated Iranian officials in the case of the 'Mikonos' murder, and at the commemoration of the Armenian victims of the massacre of 1915, the US sanctions against Iran and the military agreement between Turkey and Israel were roundly condemned.[27]

Following the presidential election in May 1997, the new administration supported the campaign of the Iranian press for freedom of expression. Under the new circumstances the leaders of minority

confessions also broke their silence on discrimination between Muslims and non-Muslims in Iran. They no longer give their support to state policies. When questioned by a newspaper about the situation of Armenian Christians in Iran, the Armenian Archbishop replied: 'It is relatively satisfactory'.[28]

However, the social situation of the religious minorities in Iran's Islamic system is not 'satisfactory' and statutory discrimination against minorities remains in force. The leaders of minorities are unable or unwilling to protest against such discrimination. They have realised that any protest against Islamic rule will backfire and may lead to further limitations of minority rights.

In one of the very rare cases of public complaint a delegate of the Christians, Shamshun Maqsoudpour, talked about 'discrimination' to a reformist newspaper, *Neshat*. His complaints were categorised as follows:

> *Employment*
> Since 1979 one of the conditions for being employed in government organisations has been 'professing the Islamic faith'. However, we have succeeded in persuading the government to change the term 'Islamic' to 'divine'. Yet, most government departments refuse to employ non-Muslims. It is now up to the personal decision of government officials, sometimes at junior levels, to authorise the recruitment of followers of minority confessions.
>
> *Education*
> Protection of the Assyrian language and culture is part of our obligation. However, the Ministry of Education has imposed a new restriction on Christian schools, which bans teaching in languages other than Persian. Our teachers are not allowed to teach even religious texts in the Assyrian language. We tried to persuade the education authorities to allow us a degree of freedom particularly in religious courses, but to no avail. Consequently, we have been forced to put on language, literature and religious classes in our church, which is only allowed to function during the weekends and holidays.
>
> *Penal Code*
> A more serious case of discrimination is *Diyeh* or blood money which applied to the religious minorities. According to Iran's new penal code – *Ghesas* – or punishment by the law of retaliation – non-Muslims are not equal citizens. We approached

> the Minister of Justice for the law to be revoked and he promised to refer the case to legal experts for reconsideration. Nothing was done. We appealed to the head of the Judiciary and he agreed to change the term from *Diyeh* to Compensation. He promised to send an instruction to the courts to use the new term but he didn't.[29]

The Assyrian delegate added: 'How can we survive under these discriminatory circumstances? Twenty thousand Assyrians and Chaldeans have left Iran in recent years. Yet, forty thousand have stayed in Tehran and other cities. Our social deprivation is significant. We have been approached by human rights campaigners to record our complaints for the attention of international organisations. However, we wish to solve our problems at home and not to invite meddling outsiders.[30] Likewise, the Armenian Archbishop expressed his criticism about *Diyeh* and the problems which this issue had caused to religious minorities. 'This should not apply to us all', he said.[31]

It is worthy of note that many Muslims including Iran's independent lawyers share the criticism about the discriminatory nature of this penal code. One of them, Mrs Shirin Ebadi, who was interviewed in the Tehran daily *Khordad* in June 1998, referred to many cases of contradiction between Iran's penal code and the principles of human rights. Mrs Ebadi said: 'The punishment for an illegal sexual relationship between two unmarried Muslims is flogging; however, if the male party were non-Muslim, the punishment becomes execution; and in the case of a homicide, the murderer is not punished if the victim is non-Muslim'. She observed that laws such as these which came into force with the Islamic regime, were incompatible with Iran's international obligations. Ebadi commented that protest against such injustice was within the jurisdiction of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.[32]

Since May 1997, Iranian society has been divided between two opposite ideological factions. Those who contributed to the victory of President Khatami, mainly young people and reformist journalists, have launched a cultural campaign for social liberties and human rights. Those who opposed the reforms and an open society, have pursued a policy of defiance and sabotage. Among the defiant elements are a few conservative newspapers who do not miss any opportunity to criticise the new government's liberal policies. It was not unexpected that the religious minorities fell victim to this factional conflict.

Following a religious gathering of Jewish Iranians in 1998, a rightist paper sought an excuse to blame this minority confession for undermining Islam. A Tehran daily, *Jomhouri Eslami*, wrote on 19 November

1998 that a thousand Jewish pilgrims from Tehran, Shiraz and Kerman had gathered at the grave of their holy man 'Hara-our Shergah' in Yazd 'without obtaining permission from the authorities', and served wine at that commemoration ceremony. The paper added that Yazd was a Muslim religious city and that the tiny Jewish community in the city should not be authorised to hold such celebrations.[33] A week later, the paper published the explanation of Mr Eliasi, the Jewish member of parliament, who stressed the right of Jews, like the followers of Islam and other monotheist confessions, to undertake pilgrimage to their holy places. 'The gathering of Jews at their sacred place was a religious ritual which your paper reported in a quite inappropriate way', Eliasi observed.[34] A reformist journalist, Ahmad Zeidabadi, used the issue to condemn 'provocative journalism' by the rightist press. Writing for the reformist daily *Hamshahri*, he observed:

> Some newspapers have used a commemoration ceremony of our Jewish compatriots to publish provocative reports without considering the consequences of their actions. What they did was harmful to the state's security and interests. The instigation of Muslims against the Jewish minority is contradictory to Islamic instructions and the Iranian Constitution. Such disputes are exactly what our enemies wish to cause in our country. We appeal to the authorities to lodge a petition against such journals with the Press Court.[35]

Between January and March 1999, eleven members of the Jewish community in Shiraz and two from Isfahan were arrested by the Intelligence Department and charged with espionage. However, it was in early June that the matter was exposed by the international media. Consequently, the Department of Intelligence of the Fars province issued its first announcement of the affair.[36] Since the story broke, there have been different comments about its origins and dimensions. Whether it was a true allegation, an outcome of conflict inside the Jewish community as *Ha'aretz* reported in July 1999, or the result of a power struggle in the Iranian hierarchy as the *Times* of London suggested, we do not know. In general the Iranian press took a balanced stance over the issue. They published external accusations against Iran for the violation of minority rights and the response of Iranian authorities that the accusation was directed against the individuals and not the Jewish community. The Iranian press also reported an international campaign which had been launched in defence of the detainees from Moscow to Washington.

There is no doubt that the government of President Khatami was under pressure from foreign governments to intercede on behalf of the Jewish prisoners. On the other hand a powerful faction inside the hierarchy warned him against submission to foreign pressure. With the arrest of the thirteen Jews, President Khatami launched his own campaign at home to convince Iranian religious minorities that their security, prestige and honour were assured. Here are a few excerpts from his statements, published by the Iranian press over the past few months:

> June 1999: Religious minorities shall enjoy freedom in Iran, and the state is committed to protect the rights of every follower of minority confessions.[37]
>
> September 1999: Islamic civilisation owes its development to Muslims and non-Muslims since non-Muslims played a key role in the formation of Islamic civilisation. This country belongs to all its citizens, and we are proud of our Islamic Constitution which recognises the rights of all Iranian citizens and respects the religious minorities. The West, where Fascism and Nazism took shape, shall not try to teach us about co-existence.[38]
>
> November 1999 (in Isfahan where some of the thirteen suspects were arrested): Peaceful co-existence of Muslims and followers of other confessions is one of the outstanding characteristics of this province. For centuries Muslims have led a peaceful life alongside their Armenian countrymen; Zoroastrians and Jews have also experienced security and calm in this society. In the course of history, Muslims, Christians, Zoroastrians and Jews worked together for the sake of their city and their county.[39]
>
> January 2000 (in Bandar Abbas – Southern Iran): To believe in people is the key to every government's success. We believe that every Iranian citizen, regardless of his or her religion or faith, shall be treated equally in the Islamic Republic and shall enjoy full rights and privileges as an Iranian.[40]

Conclusion

In post-revolution Iran, the press passed through three phases. During the first one and a half years, they enjoyed a degree of freedom. Then, clerical rule put an end to cultural liberties and an order was issued to

'break the poisonous pens', to bring the freedom of the press to an end. Cultural stagnation continued until 1997, when a new phase began with a limited freedom of the press. In the first phase, there were many instances where non-Muslims like Muslim, and occasionally, followers of a non-recognised faith, could publish their arguments in the press. In the second phase, discussing discrimination became taboo and a violation of so-called Islamic revolutionary law. In this period, only the 'thanksgivings' of religious minorities for the 'generosity of the Islamic Republic' were covered by the media. In the current phase, where the press has dared to cross the 'red line', minority issues have had a better chance of being addressed. In January 2000, a progressive journalist wrote in a Tehran daily *Fat'h* that Iran would not manage to re-integrate with the world unless discrimination against non-Muslims was removed.[41] Earlier, a distinguished lawyer had commented, ironically, that countries like Iran should either make their religion-based laws conform with the United Nations Charter on Human Rights, or withdraw from the United Nations, to avoid continuous remonstrations.[42]

Throughout 2000–1 the position of hard-liners strengthened and with the assistance of the Judiciary, they moved to crush the reformist movement in Iran. Among the newspapers which had addressed the problem of minorities and were mentioned in this study: *Salam*, *Khordad*, *Soh-e Emrouz* were banned and many journalists including the ex-Minister of the Interior Abdollah Nouri (Editor of *Khordad* and *Fat'h*) were imprisoned. Ahmad Zeidabadi, whose courageous article in defence of minorities was cited in this paper, was also imprisoned. Zeidabadi had to resort to a hunger strike when his call for the improvement of prison conditions was ignored. Shirin Ebadi, the champion of human rights in Iran, who stood for the rights of minorities and against injustice in the Islamic Penal Law, was suspended from practising as a lawyer for five years, after a short imprisonment. The thirteen Iranian Jews who had been accused of 'spying for Mossad', were put on trial after 'confessions' in a television show. However, they later told their lawyer that the confessions had been extracted under duress.[43] The defence lawyers were advised by the Revolutionary Court to confirm the convictions for the sake of security interests, and when the lawyers refused, the defendants were forced to dismiss them. Finally, the show trial of the thirteen Jews (three of whom were religious teachers, one English-language professor, one salesman and a few shopkeepers) was held in the southern city of Shiraz: the verdict was known in advance. Out of the thirteen defendants, three received between 4 and 13 years imprisonment. And three were acquitted.

During the course of the trial, a leading hard-liner and Secretary of the Guardians Council, Ayatollah Ahmad Jennati, condemned the international community for sympathising with the defendants and stressed that the 'Jews are by nature enemies of Muslims'.[44] The Ayatollah's version was in contradiction to the previous statements of President Khatami about Iran's religious minorities.

Notes

1 N. Falsafi, *History of Shah Abbas I*, vol. 4, Tehran, 1974, pp. 70, 176.
2 Nazar Aqa Yamin-us-Saltaneh; Nariman Khan Qava – us Saltaneh; Avane Khan Mosa'ed-us-Saltaneh.
3 Senators Rostam Giv (Zoroastrian); Flix Aqayan (Armenian); Morad Aryeh (Jewish).
4 *The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, articles 13, 14, 19, 26, 46 and 67.
5 *Hamshahri*, 25 August 1996.
6 *Hamshahri*, 12 September 1996.
7 *Abrar*, 4 October 1998.
8 *Salam*, 12 September 1998.
9 *Ettela'at*, 26 April 1995.
10 *Tehran Times*, 24 June 1998.
11 Ibid.
12 *Ettela'at*, 13 October 1996.
13 *Ettela'at*, 12 December 1995 and 11 January 1996.
14 *Hamshahri*, 21 June 1996.
15 *Salam*, 30 December 1995.
16 *Iran*, 26 June 1996.
17 *Ettela'at*, 22 August 1996.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 *Salam,* 22 October 1996; *Hamshahri*, 21 June 1996.
21 *Salam*, 24 October 1996.
22 *Salam*, 22 October 1995.
23 *Kayhan*, 8 October 1997.
24 *Kayhan Havai*, 15 October 1997.
25 *Tehran Times*, 26 July 1996.
26 *Iran*, 31 December 1998.
27 *Ettela'at*, 22 and 25 April 1995; 26 April 1996.
28 *Kayhan Havai*, 24 June 1998.
29 *Neshat*, 4 February 1999.
30 Ibid.
31 *Kayhan Havai*, 24 June 1998.
32 *Khordad*, 14 April 1999.
33 *Jomhouri Eslami*, 19 November 1998.
34 *Jomhouri Eslami*, 26 November 1998.
35 *Hamshahri*, 15 December 1998.
36 *Ettela'at*, 11 June 1999; *International Herald Tribune*, 11 June 1999.

37 *Sobh-e Emrouz*, 15 June 1999.
38 *Tehran Times*, 29 September 1999.
39 *Ettela'at*, 17 November 1999.
40 *Ettela'at*, 20 January 2000.
41 *Fat'h*, 7 January 2000.
42 S. Ebadi, *History and Documentation of Human Rights in Iran*, Tehran, 1994, p. 14.
43 AFP, 13 June 2000.
44 *Reuter*, 7 April 2000.

6

IMAG(IN)ING EUROPE

The theme of emigration in North African cinema

Roy Armes

A current concern within film studies is with representations of self and 'other', specifically with displaced minorities, with exile and diaspora, with the search for transnational identities, with the exploration of emigration, in a word: with cultural hybridity. This chapter looks at the manner in which emigration – the encounter of Arabs with Europe as the 'other' – has been dealt with by Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian feature film directors.

The facts about emigration – as far as the Maghreb is concerned – are well known. The number of emigrants – mostly to France, but also to the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany – has risen steadily from around 6,000 in 1912 to 132,000 during the First World War, to over 300,000 after the Second World War, and an estimated 1,800,000 in France alone today.

Over this period the nature of the migrants has continually shifted. Initially the migrants were single men employed in heavy industry and mining around Marseilles, Paris and in the North. Subsequently, in the postwar period family groups – mostly lodged in shanty towns (bidonvilles) like those around Nanterre – came to predominate.

More recently there has been an increasing number of educated young people seeking abroad the opportunities denied them at home in the Maghreb (80 per cent of those moving to Canada, for example, have higher education qualifications).[1] In addition to those with valid visas, there are, of course, innumerable illegal migrants.

When we look at the depiction of this phenomenon in cinema, we need to distinguish between depictions of the lived experience of the immigrant and those of the dreams, aspirations and illusions, perhaps, of the emigrant.

European-based film makers

On the one hand there is the work of those film makers of North African origin or born in Europe of Maghreb parents who operate broadly within the cultural and production context of the immigrant in Europe. In the 1970s, though, the films were seen by critics as part of a 'cinema of emigration', the study of people seen as uprooted from their national contexts. The focus was on the work, in France and to a lesser extent Belgium, of North African-born film makers treating social or political issues relevant to an immigrant community such as the Algerian film maker Ali Akika, working with Anne-Marie Autissier. Virtually all these 1970s works were first-hand accounts of the problems and pressures of life as an immigrant, and they were generally considered by critics in relation to the work of contemporary socially committed French film makers, such as Michel Drach and Yves Boisset, whose films contained – from an outside perspective – images of Maghreb immigrants living in France. Questions of nationality, like those concerning the film makers' place of birth and residence, were generally considered secondary to the social message.

More recently, by contrast, since the 1980s at least, the perspective has changed. We now have films of a new generation of young film makers, who were either born in France or reached France as children and have grown up there. There is a new focus – from within – on an immigrant community. Mehdi Charet, born in 1952 in Algeria and living in France since the age of ten, though still an Algerian citizen, directed *Tea at Archimedes' Harem / Le thé au harem d'Archimède* (1985). Abdelkrim Bahloul, born in 1950 in Algeria and an Algerian citizen who went to France in his teens, has made *Mint Tea / Le thé à la menthe* (1984), *The Hamlet Sisters / Les Soeurs Hamlet* (1996), and *The Night of Destiny / La nuit du destin* (1997). Rachid Bouchareb, born in 1953 in France and a French citizen, after a number of films about issues not directly related to immigrant issues returned to the subject of the immigrant community with *My Family's Honour / L'honneur de ma famille* (1997). Amor Hakkar, born in 1958 in Algeria and brought up in Besançon, is the director of *Bad Weather for a Crook / Sale temps pour un voyou* (1992). Malek Chibane made *Hexagon / Hexagone* (1993) and *Sweet France / Douce France* (1997). Karim Dridi, born in 1961 in Tunis, one of the few Paris-based directors of Tunisian origin, has made several films on immigrant subjects, especially *Bye Bye* (1995).

The works produced by this group of film makers are of considerable interest in their own right as film narratives: they are much more than

mere social studies. The continuing strength of this new cinema is exemplified in the late 1990s by two acclaimed documentaries made by women film makers. The first is *Immigrants' Memories / Mémoires d'immigrés* (1997), made by Yamina Benguigui, born in Paris but of Algerian descent. The second is *In My Father's House / Dans la maison de mon père*, made by Fatima Jebli Ouazzani, who was born in Morocco in 1959 but has lived in the Netherlands since 1970. The latter film, though made by someone unknown in Morocco and without contact with Moroccan film production structures, won the grand prix at the Fifth Moroccan National Film Festival in Casablanca in 1998, in competition with the whole Moroccan feature film output of the previous three years. Equally remarkable is *Living in Paradise / Vivre au paradis* (1998), a fictional study of life in the shantytowns of Nanterre at the beginning of the 1960s. The first fictional feature, shot in Tunisia by Bourlem Guerdjou by a director of Algerian descent born in Asnières (Paris) in 1965, beat all the Maghreb opposition to win the top prize at the Carthage Film Festival in 1998. This was the first time the prize had been won by a European-born director.

These films serve as examples of the extremely fruitful cultural interaction of France and the Maghreb, and the work of this group offers a real insight into the issues raised by lives shaped by immigration. These films reflect the position outlined in an interview by the Algerian-born, French-language novelist Leïla Sebbar:

> My writings are marked by Algeria – Algeria and the Maghreb in exile in France – and by France, through the contact between the Maghreb and Europe. East and West. I would not have recreated a world of interaction, of love and violence, in my novels had I stayed in Algeria – that Algeria of monolithic thought, of the single and controlled body. Algeria without the Other would not have inspired me.[2]

Maghreb-based film makers

The perspective is very different if we look at the group of film makers who have created an indigenous North African film culture – 128 film makers responsible for 266 feature films at the end of 1999 – who are making films for local audiences and for whom the 'other' is Europe. They have much in common. Indeed they form, to a remarkable extent, a homogeneous group. Firstly, they are almost all men. Only seven women have directed a feature film in the Maghreb – the Tunisians Selma Baccar, Neija Ben Mabrouk, Moufida Tlatli and Keltoum

Bournaz, the Moroccans Farida Bourquia and Farida Benlyazid, and the Algerian Hafsa Zinai Koudil (the latter working in Super 16) – while the Algerian novelist Assia Djebbar has made two feature-length reflective pieces for RTA, the Algerian television service, which have received festival showings.

Secondly, they comprise in essence a single generation. If we consider the 119 film makers (out of 128) whose dates of birth are available, the spread of dates seems at first sight wide – from 1927 to 1969. But with just three exceptions – the veteran Algerain Mustapha Badie (b. 1928) and the Moroccans Ahmed Mesnaoui (b. 1926) and Mohamed Osfour (b. 1927) – all the film makers of the Maghreb were born since 1940. If we contract the timescale slightly, 78 per cent (86 film makers out of 119) were born in the 1940s and 1950s. Indeed, 55 per cent (66 directors in all) were born in the 1940s. The dearth of younger film makers is even more striking than the paucity of women directors. At the end of the 1990s only three film makers born in the last forty years had made a feature film in North Africa: the Algerian Malik Lakhdar Hamina (b. 1962), son of the leading Algerian film maker, Mohamed Lakhdar Hamina; the Tunisian Mohamed Zran (b. 1959, working in Super 16 blown up to 35mm); and the Moroccan newcomer Nabyl Ayouch (b. 1969).

Many of the newcomers of the 1980s, and even the 1990s, are much the same age as those whose feature film careers began twenty of thirty year earlier and it is reasonable to see the bulk of this group as forming a single generation of film makers. In Tunisia, for example, Ferid Boughedir (b. 1944), whose first co-directed feature was released in 1970, is virtually the same age as Ridha Behi (b. 1947) whose career began in 1977, Mahmoud Ben Mahmoud (b. 1947) who began in 1982, Nouris Bouzid (b. 1945) whose first feature dates from 1986 and even Kaltoum Bornaz (b. 1947) whose feature debut occurred as recently as 1997. In Morocco, the pioneer Souheil Ben Barka (b. 1942) whose striking first feature appeared in 1972, is the same generation as Jillali Ferhati (b. 1948) whose first work dates from 1977, Mohamed Aboulwakar (b. 1946), who began in 1984, Farida Ben Lyazid (b. 1948), who directed her first feature in 1988, Nour Eddine Gounajjar (b. 1946) whose initial 16mm feature was first shown in 1991 and Abdelhay Laraki (b. 1949), who received funding for his first (still unreleased) feature in 1999. In Algeria, Mohamed Bouamari (b. 1942), whose first feature began the cycle of agrarian films in 1972, belongs in age terms alongside Merzak Allouache (b. 1944), who began in 1976, Brahim Tsaki (b. 1946), who put together his first feature in 1981, the film editor Rachid Benallal (b. 1946), who made his directing debut in

1993 and the documentary film maker Azzedine Meddour (b. 1947), whose first fictional feature film dates from 1997.

A third unifying feature, alongside male identity and age, is the fact that members of this group of film makers are largely university educated and most have spent three years or more studying in Europe. Some have studied subjects other than film: Jillali Ferhati and Ridha Behi both studied literature and sociology, Abdou Achouba studied political science, Ferid Boughedir literature, Izza Genini languages, Daoud Aoulad Syad physical sciences, and Mohamed Rachid Benhadj architecture. Among those studying drama were Djafar Damardji (in Berlin), Farida Bourquia (in Moscow), and Nabyl Lahlou and Fadhel Jaïbi (in Paris). There are, of course, some self-taught film makers, Omar Khlifi and Ahmed Rachedi among the veterans, Naceur Khemir and Moncef Dhouib among the newcomers. But almost half of all North African film makers have formal professional film making qualifications acquired in Europe.

The most favoured educational location is naturally Paris and IDHEC (the Institut des Hautes Etudes Cinématographiques), where no less than 22 film makers studied. Half-a-dozen more studied at other Paris film schools. Naceur Ktari and Sadoq Ben Aicha studied at both IDHEC and the Centro sperimentale di cinematografia in Rome, which was also attended by Souheil Ben Barka and the producer Ahmed Attia. Another favoured film school is INSAS (the Institut National des Arts du Spectacle et Techniques de Diffusion) in Brussels, which has trained many Arab film makers, including seven Maghreb film makers. There are also seven graduates from VGIK, the Moscow film school, and five from the Polish film school at Lodz. But the net is in fact spread wide: Rachid Ferchiou studied in Berlin, Abdelaziz Tolbi in Cologne, Amar Laskri in Belgrade, Ali Labidi in Romania, Mohamed Lakhdar Hamina and Abdelhafid Bouassida at FAMU in Prague. The only directors whose training occurred outside Europe are Mohamed Abazzi, Ahmed Yachfine and Naguib Ktiri Idrissa, who studied in Los Angeles, at UCLA, and Malek Lakhdar Hamina, who studied drama at St Michael's University, Burlington, in the USA.

We can talk therefore of a coherent group of film makers, who share many of the same experiences: a childhood under colonialism, followed – in their teens – by the heady excitement of independence. They mostly studied abroad in the 1960s, a time of excitement in student politics and a golden age of film making, with the emergence not just of the French New Wave, but also of Antonioni and Fellini, Jancsó and Pasolini, and many more. To succeed in their studies they had to cope with tuition in a foreign language, whether or not they were studying

academic subjects of film making. All lived for at least three years away from North Africa, and several lived for much longer – up to ten years in some cases – in Paris, Brussels, Moscow, or some other major European city. Some are now permanently resident in France or Belgium. When they were very young, commercial cinema was an entertainment largely reserved for the French colonisers, though they may well have been first introduced to the classics of French cinema through screenings arranged in schools by the French authorities. By the time they became film makers themselves, North African screens were colonised by the same mixture of films found everywhere in Africa: cheap American, French and Italian films, supplemented by Hindi melodramas and Hong Kong karate films.

Professional structures stressing their Arab and African identity as film makers came into being in the 1960s and 1970s – the African Film Makers' Association (FEPACI) and the festivals at Tunis (Journeés Cinématographiques de Carthage) and Ouagadougou (FESPACO). From the 1970s they could take support too from certain developments in Egyptian cinema brought about by Youssef Chahine and some of his younger followers. But the fact remains: no film by a Maghreb director has ever been given a commercial release in Egypt. On the other hand, the North Africans could hardly fail to be influenced by the European cinema they absorbed in their formative years, and those who studied in Paris could hardly fail to be affected by the cultural importance accorded to cinema by the French. The European art film market was a serious influence on their approach to their work.

Europe as 'other'

So what is the image of Europe that emerges from the films of this group of film makers? How has this group treated the theme of emigration in their fictional work? The first thing of note is the paucity of direct representations of emigrant life. The dazzling exception is the Tunisian Naceur Ktari's masterly *The Ambassadors / Les ambassadeurs* (1975) which takes on board the problems and challenges of solidarity against racism and is a forceful and committed study of the lives of emigrant workers in France. The ironic title derives from the words of the politician who addresses the workers as they leave for Europe and in no way reflects their actual status there. The film's strong narrative line traces the group's shift from individual concerns to real friendship and, after two racist killings, the move to political action. But here too Ktari refuses rhetorical notions, avoiding clichés such as the unity of the workers of the world. Apart from this award-winning feature, North

African film makers have offered little direct insight into the lives of North African workers in France. There is the amiable but slight comedy by another Tunisian, Lotfi Essid, *What Are We Doing This Sunday / Que fait-il ce dimanche?* (1983), which traces the adventures of a Tunisian and an Algerian who spend the weekend looking – with little success – for female company. Much more significant is the Algerian Ahmed Rachedi's *Ali in Wonderland / Ali au pays des mirages* (1979) in which the protagonist shares a tiny apartment with two friends and very strict rules: no women, no animals, no visits, no heating, no kitchen smells and no Arab music. He is a crane operator, and from his lofty perch he works out his own philosophy: 'Open your eyes and look at them, but don't go so far as to judge them. Your view is superficial. They've looked at us too, without trying to understand us. And that's how the gulf between us has come about. Look, but don't rush to judge them'. When Ali does attempt to intervene – to try to save a man he has seen suffer a heart-attack – he is treated as the outsider responsible – the killer – by the man's white neighbours.

Otherwise, Europe is depicted as an unattainable 'other'. The Moroccan Ahmed el-Maânouni's first feature, *The Days, The Days / O Les jours* (1978), was based on three months' research and shot with a crew from INSAS, the Belgian film school where he had studied. At the centre of the film is the young peasant who wishes to achieve his independence and sees only one way of doing this: emigration to Europe. The director uses the real words and gestures of the peasants to animate his script. Drawing on the real problems and conflicts of rural life which he discovered, the film emerges as a close, perceptive and realistic look at everyday life in a Moroccan village, depicted without any trace of folklore or exoticism, but within which Europe is ultimately no more than a dream. *The Big Trip / Le grand voyage* (1981), the first film of another Moroccan director, Mohamed Abderraham Tazi, also offers precise insights into contemporary Moroccan society. It utilises the classic motif of the journey, in this case a trip by a lorry-driver who drives from the South to Casablanca. Everywhere along the way he is cheated and robbed. He decides to emigrate, but realises too late – when already at sea – that he is about to be cheated again and will not see land again. In Tazi's third feature, *In Search of My Wife's Husband / A la recherche du mari de ma femme* (1993), one of the rare Maghreb comedies which enjoyed great popularity in Morocco, the polygamous husband is last seen trying desperately to reach Belgium as an illegal immigrant. Most poignantly of all among Moroccan film narratives, the two main protagonists in Jillali Ferhati's *Make-Believe Horses / Chevaux de fortune* (1995) die attempting the narrow crossing from Tangier in a

seaside pedal boat. The film focuses on an ill-matched group of individuals who meet up in Tangier, all nursing hopeless dreams of going to Europe: Mohamed to see a horse race, Ali to have an operation to restore his sight, Fatima to rejoin her mother. Mohamed enters a fantasy world, pretending to his wife that he is already in Paris and stealing to pay for his visa. Ferhati creates a suffocating world, reminiscent in some ways of French 1930s poetic realism: the enigmatic blind man, rain-swept, darkened streets, characters whose dreams are blocked, escape which is in sight, but always just beyond reach. The ending, inevitably, is death.

Two Tunisian films offer perceptive insights into the notion of emigration. Perhaps the most pessimistic view of exile is to be found in Taieb Louhichi's *Shadow of the Earth / L'ombre de la terre* (1982), the tale of an isolated rural family community – patriarchal father with his sons and nephews and their families – whose life is slowly torn apart by natural forces and the impact of the modern world. As natural disasters increase pressure on the group, the young men leave for exile or are conscripted. Life continues, with incongruous intrusions from the modern world – identity cards, conscription, a battery-operated television set – as well as the regular exploitative visit of the carpet merchant. The film is an elegy for the passing of a traditional way of life, but the emigration of the young is seen to offer no solution: the film ends with the frozen image of the coffin in which the body of a young man who has chosen emigration is returned to his family. The most sophisticated and universally relevant parable about emigration, exile, borders, rules and bureaucracy is Mahmoud Ben Mahmoud's *Crossings / Traversées* (1982), where two passengers are trapped on a cross-channel ferry: the film is set on 31 December 1980 and plots the parallel fates of two refugees, a working class Polish dissident and an Arab middle-class intellectual, both trapped on the same ferry. Because both lack the necessary passport documents – a new year begins at midnight – neither the British nor the Belgian authorities will allow them ashore. Separated by language, class and culture, they are unable to take a common stand and each goes his separate way, the Pole towards the suicidal killing of a policeman, the Arab towards an inner world, strengthened by a casual sexual encounter. A settled life in Europe is never a possibility in this Kafkaesque tale.

What does this lead us to conclude? Principally, I think, it backs up an observation by Winifred Woodhall about 'the need to differentiate among various groups of cultural others living in exile', i.e. to distinguish between emigré intellectuals, writers and film makers and the peasants and industrial workers driven by purely economic circumstances to undergo a forced emigration.[3] Both groups may have

to cope with the pressures of integration and assimilation on the one hand, and of loss of identity (childhood, family, landscape) on the other, but this does not make them a single entity. The mass of North African film makers, who have personally achieved the combination of successful residence and study abroad and reintegration into Maghreb society and the structures of (state-dominated) indigenous film production, have shown themselves unable to offer a positive image of the European Other which is so important to so many North African citizens. It is clear that the social differences among those who experience temporary or permanent exile are as important in the cultural sphere as in many others. The 'other' is a social, as well as national, religious or racial, product.

Notes

1 B. Stora, A. Ellyas, *Les 100 Portes du Maghreb*, Paris, 1999, pp. 153–5.
2 L. Sebbar, 'The Richness of Diversity: Extracts from an Interview with James Gaasch' in E. Sellin, H. Abdel-Jaoud, eds., *North Africa: Literary Crossroads*, Madison, 1998, p. 237.
3 W. Woodhall, 'Exile' in F. Lionnet, R. Scharfman, eds., *Post/Colonial Conditions: Exiles, Migrations and Nomadisms*, New Haven, London, 1993, p. 7.

Filmography

Ali in Wonderland / Ali au pays des mirages / Ali fi bilad al-sarab (1979)
dir: Ahmed Rachedi. *sc*: Rachid Boudjedra. *ph*: Rachid Merabtine. *mus*: Idir. *sd*: Dahmane Sidi Boumediene. *ed*: Abdelhamid Djellouli.
players: Djelloul Beghoura, Saïd Hilmi, Ahmed Senoussi, Donato Bastos, Mustapha Kateb, Larbi Zekkal, Mustapha Halo.
prod: ONCIC. 35mm, colour, 118 minutes.

Crossings / Traverseés / 'Ubur (1982)
dir: Mahmoud Ben Mahmoud. *sc*: Mahmoud Ben Mahmoud and Phillipe Lejuste. *dial*: Fadhel Jaziri. *ph*: Gilberto Azevedo. *des*: Maryse Houyoux *mus*: Francaso Accolla. *sd*: Faouzi Thabet and Hechemi Joulek. Ed: Moufida Tlatli and Arbi Ben Ali.
players: Fadhel Jaziri, Julian Negulesco, Eva Darlan, Vincent Gras, Christian Maillet, Colette Emmanuel.
prod: SATPEC (Tunis) – Marisa Films (Belgium). 35mm, colour, 90 minutes.

In search of My Wife's Husband / A la recherche du mari de ma femme / Bathan 'an azwj imra'atî (1993)
dir: Mohamed Abderrahman Tazi. *sc*: Farida Ben Lyazid. *ph*: Federico Ribes. *des*: Abdelkrim Akellah and Naïma Bouanani. *mus*: Abdelwahab Doukkali. *sd*: Christian Baldos. *ed*: Kahena Attia.
players: Bachir Skirej, Mouna Fettou, Naïma Lemcherki, Amina Rachid.

prod: ATA (Arts et Techniques Audio-visuels) Productions (Morocco). 35mm, colour, 88 minutes.

Make-believe Horses / Chevaux de fortune / Kuius al-has (1995)

Direction and Script: Jillali Ferhati. *Photo*: Gilbert Azevedo. *Music*: Ali and Hassan Souissi. *Sound*: Faouzi Thabet. *Editing*: Hélène Muller.

Players: Nezha Rahil, Jillali Ferhati, Hamid Zoughi, Brigitte Rouan, Jean-Louis Richard, Driss Karimi, Larbi Yacoubi, Hicham Ibrahimi.

Production: Heracles Productions. 35mm, colour, 83 minutes.

The Ambassadors / Les ambassadeurs / Al-sufara (1975)

dir and sc: Naceur Ktari. *adapt and dial*: Lise Bouizidi, Christine Jancovici, Ahmed Kassem Gérard Mauger and Naceur Ktari. *ph*: Jean-Jacques Rochut. *des*: Denis Martin-Sisteron. *mus*: Hamadi Ben Othman. *sd*: Antoine Bonfanti, Hachmi Joulak and Auguste Galli. *ed*: François Ceppi, Arbi Ben Ali and Lise Bouizidi.

players: Sid Ali Kouiret, Taher Kebaïli, Mohamed Hamman, Dynn Yaad, Denise Peron, Jacques Rispal, Marcel Cuvelier.

prod: SATPEC – COCITU (Tunisia) – General Organisation El Kayala (Libya) – Unité Trois – Les Films du Nidal (Paris). 35mm, colour, 102 minutes.

The Big Trip / Le grand voyage / Abir sabîl (1981)

dir: Mohamed Abderranhman Tazi. *sc*: Nour Eddine Sail. *ph*: Mohamed Abderrahman Tazi. *des*: Larbi Yacoubi and Mustapha Mounir. *mus*: Omar Sayed. *ed*: Allah Sayed.

players: Ali Hassan, Nadia Atbib, Abdallah Serouali, Jillali Ferhati.

prod: Nour Eddine Sail (Morocco). 35mm, colour, 87 minutes.

The Days, The Days ! / O les jours ! / Al-aiyâm al-aiyâm (1978)

dir and sc: Ahmed al-Maânouni. *ph*: Ahmed al-Maânouni. *mus*: Nass el Giwane. *sd*: Ricardo Castro. *ed*: Martine Chicot.

players: Non-proffesionals.

prod: Rabii Films – CMM (Morocco). 35mm, colour, 90 minutes.

The Shadow of the Earth / L'ombre de la terre / Dhil al-ard (1982)

dir and sc: Taïeb Louhichi. *ph*: Ramon Suarez. *des*: Naceur Khemir. *mus*: Egisto Macchi. *sd*: Fawzi Thabet. *ed*: Moufida Tlatli.

players: Despina Tomazani, Abdellatif Hamrouni, Hélène Catzaras, Mouna Noureddine, Abdelkader Mokdad, Rached Khamis.

prod: SATPEC – Tanit (Tunis) – Les Films Molière (Paris) – ZDF (German Federal Republic) – NCO (Holland). 35mm, colour, 90 minutes.

What Are We Doing This Sunday? / Que fait-il ce dimanche? / Al sabt fât? (1983)

dir: Lotfi Essid. *sc*: Lotfi Essid and Raouf Chaïbi. *ph*: Acacio de Almeida. *mus*: Mohamed Abdelwahab, Ray Charles and Prokoviev. *sd*: P Escofier. *ed*: Phillipe Gosselet and Moufida Tlatli.

players: Noureddine Kaboui, Hama Mohamed Hmaza, Mahmoud Ben Yacoub, Noël Leiris, Brigitte Ariel, Lotfi Essid, Philippe Lanquois, Mohamed Ben Smaîl, Dominique Govon.

prod: Vendredi Film – SATPEC. 16mm, colour, 90 minutes.

7

REPRESENTING THE MUSLIM

The 'courtesan film' in Indian popular cinema[1]

Rachel Dwyer

I am often asked if I teach 'Hindu' cinema or speak 'Hindu' or 'Indian'. It is easy to be scornful of the misuse of these terms, but it is more interesting to examine their historical connections. All these words are historically connected, being derived from Persian and later Greek and Roman names[2] for the land beyond the river known as Sindhu (simply 'river') in Sanskrit and Indus in English, which names include the British India. Modern Indian languages use Persian variants with the Hind- stems: Hindu – a person from India; Hindi, the language of India; Hind or Hindustan, the country of India. This is not an essay on comparative philology but I wish to show here how the meaning of these words has been manipulated by forms of nationalism, in particular Hindutva, to conflate the idea of Hindu – a person following certain beliefs and practices – with Indian, meaning a citizen of the Republic of India, excluding non-Hindus from this citizenship.

Indian nationalism, as it developed through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, imagined the nation, in Anderson's famous term, in many ways. Nationalism is, as Chatterjee has said,[3] a discourse derivative from the thought of the European Enlightenment. Nehru and the Congress Party imagined India as a secular nation, but this was only one among several competing forms of nationalism in India, notably linguistic and religious nationalisms. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan was created by partitioning India, largely due to religious nationalism (a homeland for India's Muslims), and subsequently linguistic nationalism, by the adoption of Urdu as its official language. India's linguistic nationalisms have seen the formation of new federal states in the years since independence, although Hindi has achieved a

measure of success as the national language, while religious nationalism, in particular Hindutva, or Hindu nationalism has become dominant, leading to the formation of a BJP (Indian People's Party) government in 1997.

This is not a chapter on Indian politics either, so I draw my conclusions rapidly. Hindu nationalists argue for a non-secular, Hindu state of India, drawing on several major sources of authenticating the Hindu nation. One is the western Orientalist discourse (in Saidean and non-Saidean senses[4]) of the antiquity of Hindu civilisation; the other is defined by Islam, the creation of Pakistan and by the Partition of India. For my purposes, the former discourse is important for arguing that Islam is a 'foreign' religion, brought by 'invaders', who forcibly converted the native 'Hindu' population; the second significantly makes the Muslim the problem of Hindu nationalism, given her/his supposed connections with the hostile state of Pakistan – whether with wars in Kashmir or over cricket matches – and the repercussions of the idea of a Muslim homeland in South Asia. I examine this view of the Indian Muslim as Other and not an authentic Indian citizen, by looking at India's 'other' national cinema, the so-called 'Hindi' film.

The 'Hindi' film

The cinema is one of India's most vibrant cultural products and a major industry: now nearly 100 years old, the Indian cinematic industry makes more films than anywhere else in the world. At its peak it made an estimated 800 a year, that is, a quarter of the total number made. India's 13,000 cinema halls have a daily audience of around 15 million in India[5] and many of these films are hugely popular overseas, in Europe and North America, not only among the South Asian diaspora, but loved by much of the rest of the world. Its status is that of a global form of culture which is unusual in that it is neither American nor made in English.[6] India has not one, but several cinemas which can be distinguished in terms of film making (methods of production and distribution), the film text (technical and stylistic features, language) and by the film's reception (by the audience and by critics). These categories are not entirely discrete, but may be placed on a continuum, with clusters of defining features forming at certain points.[7] The commercial cinemas by and large can be said to show striking features such as the lack of genre distinction; the absence of realism; and the operation of a melodramatic mode; the centrality of song and dance or spectacle which has a complicated relationship with dialogue and plot; and the need to understand the star system. My chapter focuses

exclusively on the national (also known as popular or commercial) cinema produced in Mumbai (Bombay).

The 'Urdu' film?

Hindi and Urdu have very different scripts (Hindi being Devanagari; Urdu Perso-Arabic) and diverge considerably at higher registers, where Hindi draws on Sanskrit and Urdu on Persian and Arabic. However, the 'Hindi film' is made in a colloquial form of Hindi which is largely identical to colloquial Urdu, and given the general visual absence of writing in the film (the title is given in Roman, Devanagari and Perso-Arabic with subsequent titles in Roman and occasionally Hindi), it can be disputed whether the film is in Hindi or in Urdu. For complex political reasons, largely to do with Hindi's status as the national language of India and Urdu's as that of Pakistan, and the increasing association of Urdu with India's minority Muslim population, the films are regarded as being made in Hindi.

The song lyrics, however, are largely composed in the Urdu poetic tradition, although usually written in a simplified Urdu. One of Urdu literature's major literary genres, the *ghazal*, has become popular in many north Indian languages.[8] It is a much-loved literary form, used by most of the great Urdu poets, although many critics of Urdu literature disdain it.[9] The *ghazal* is derived from a Persian literary form, consisting of simple, rhymed couplets mostly using stock imagery of passionate but unrequited love, full of misery and woe. An extreme example of this is Ghalib's[10] address 'To a dead mistress':[11]

> *Dard se mere hai tujh ko bekarari hay hay.*
> At last you are affected by my pain ...

The *ghazal* often draws on Sufi influences, allowing it to be read as both profane and divine: the '*ashiq* ('the lover', can be the poet and/or a mystic), the *ma'ashooq* ('the beloved' can be human or God), concealed behind the veil. Love often overthrows the bounds of religion, the poet claiming that love has made him an unbeliever. The imagery is that of Persian poetry: the formal garden, the tulip and the rose, and the nightingale (*bulbul*), quite distinct from the imagery of traditional Hindu classical (Sanskrit) and devotional (*bhakti*) poetry with which it is sometimes, erroneously, compared. A striking feature of the *ghazal* is that the love portrayed is illicit desire, which is always unrequited, the beloved being cruel and unkind to the lover. The gender of the beloved is often unclear. Other forbidden pleasures form key elements

of the *ghazal*, namely the celebration of the delights of wine and intoxication:

> *Yeh masael-e-tasavuf, yeh tara byan, Ghalib!*
> *Tujhe ham vali samajhte, jo na bada xvar hota.*[12]
> This problem of philosophy and your explanation, Ghalib!
> We would have thought you a mystic, if you didn't drink so much!

The *ghazal* is a performative genre, usually recited in the poetry gathering (*mushaira*), whether in *tarannum* (semi-melodic chanting), or sung, in *qawwali* or semiclassical style. The performed *ghazal* was an aristocratic genre which became popular in Lucknow in the late 1700s as declining court and feudal landowners (*zamindars*) were replaced by new landlords (*taluqdars*) who favoured light classical forms over traditional classical music. It was sung in a wide range of styles by courtesans, who were trained singers and dancers. Even when they began to give public performances, as concert halls and other venues opened and traditional patronage declined in the twentieth century, the *ghazal* remained an exclusive genre.

Umrao Jan Ada,[13] an Urdu novel by Mirza Mohammad Hadi 'Ruswa', published in 1899, presents the story of Umrao Jan, a courtesan of Lucknow and Kanpur, as supposedly true. It is set at the last moment of Lucknow's glory: the 1857 uprisings occur in the novel when Umrao Jan is at the height of her power. The novel's popularity remains strong, although many know the story of Umrao Jan via the eponymous film of 1981.[14] A striking feature of the novel is that it employs many non-novelistic devices, querying its fictionality by purporting to belong to other genres, namely autobiography and history. The novel also deploys the *ghazal* at frequent intervals, in a variety of functions – as chapter headings, and throughout the text whether quoting recitations or performances of the courtesans, or to sum up the essence of remarks, observations and events in the prose narrative. This use of the *ghazal* is seen in other forms of Urdu writing, such as in the famous letters of Ghalib, where verses in Urdu or Persian, by Ghalib himself or by others, intersperse his prose.

The use of the *ghazal* in a kind of counterpoint to prose, is ideally suited to the popular film, where it serves similar functions, as it highlights or summarises the diegesis of the film's narrative. In the film this is heightened further by the fact that the *ghazals* are in Urdu, whereas the surrounding dialogues are in a more colloquial Hindi. The use of music removes the *ghazal* even further from the spoken word of

the film, and with its themes of loss, nostalgia and sadness, remains one of the work's great pleasures.

Given these elements, it is not surprising that the *ghazal* was taken up by film composers from the earliest days of cinema, while connoisseurs deplored the popularised style and hybrid music of the cinematic *ghazal*. It fell out of favour in film by the end of the 1950s and seemed to be a dying genre, until it was reborn on the audiocassette, whose cheap technology introduced it to a mass market. The first wave of *ghazal* superstars emerged – the Pakistanis, Mehdi Hasan and Ghulam Ali – who sang in a new semiclassical, gentle and sweet style, accompanied by the harmonium, and tabla. They were followed in the 1980s by a new generation of popular singers (Anup Jalota, Pankaj Udhas, Jagjit and Chitra Singh, Roop Kumar and Sonali Rathod – all non-Muslims), using an even more simplified style, a kind of easy listening that was soothing and sweet but had a classy air. The language was simplified and made more colloquial in order for it to be comprehensible to an audience which knew only Hindi. Cassette and CD sleeves often glossed the Persian and Urdu words with English. This form of the *ghazal* became very popular, its soothing, gentle, poetry appealing mostly to the middle classes and urban elites.[15] One of the reasons for its success is undoubtedly its refined, easy-listening effect but the poetry itself remains important as a major medium for sad, romantic love songs which have been largely squeezed out of cinema by upbeat dance numbers.

This *ghazal* is important because it provides one of the few public areas left for Urdu literature in modern India, its aural nature transcending the script for those who can understand but not read the language. Its influence on the Hindi film lyric is immense, with the whole lyrical language of love being derived from the *ghazal*.

The 'Islamicate' film

It is not only the use of language and the *ghazal* that suggests Muslim connections with the Hindi film. The film industry is known for being one of the few arenas of public life where Muslims work as equals to Hindus at all levels, from spot boys to singers, producers and actors. It is surprising then that in the many movies where Muslim characters appear, they are always shown as being 'other', distinguished by their costume and behaviour, required to *perform* their difference from the Hindu norm. Mukul Kesavan uses the term 'Islamicate',[16] which

> would refer not directly to the religion, Islam, itself, but to the social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam

> and the Muslims, both among Muslims themselves and even when found among non-Muslims.[17]

Indian cinema underwent radical changes in the 1970s, associated with the breakdown of a political consensus that led to the Emergency and the weakening of the Congress Party.[18] It is striking that this is the first time we see ordinary or subaltern Muslims depicted in cinema. Many film directors and producers talk of including a Muslim character to please the Muslim audience, hence many of these characters represent virtuous and righteous Muslims, who interact closely with their Hindu neighbours. They can be found in films about national integration, notably Manmohan Desai's *Amar, Akbar, Anthony*, 1977, which shows three Hindu brothers, separated at independence, brought up as Hindu, Muslim and Christian. The depiction of the three brothers is striking in its upholding of stereotypes: the serious Hindu represents the state as a policeman; the Christian is a loveable rogue; while the Muslim performs a form of Sufi music, *qawwali*, albeit in a highly camp style.

It is only very recently that Bombay films have contained overtly political representations. A good example is *Sarfarosh/The willing martyr*,[19] set in Bombay's Muslim underworld, with its Pakistani connections (and where one of the villains is a *ghazal* singer); another is *Border*,[20] where the action takes place during the 1965 war with Pakistan. South Indian cinema has produced films which have attracted great controversy in their depiction of Muslims such as those of Mani Ratnam, made originally in Tamil, but enjoying huge success when dubbed into Hindi, which dealt with the Indo-Pakistan dispute over Kashmir (*Roja/Rose*, 1992) and with an inter-religious marriage set against the backdrop of the 1992/3 Bombay riots in which around a thousand Muslims were killed (*Bombay*, 1993).[21] The recent *Hey! Ram!*[22] while ultimately carrying a Gandhian message and showing scenes of Hindu barbarity, albeit often retaliatory, gives more emphasis to graphically violent scenes which depict Muslim atrocities, inspired by Jinnah, while portraying the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (National Voluntary Service) as largely sympathetic even though Gandhi's assassins came from its ranks.

A wider survey of such representations lies beyond the scope of this chapter, so I turn instead to specific genres of Hindi cinema which deal almost exclusively with Muslims.[23] These include the '*Karishma/miracle*' or Muslim mythological film; the Muslim social film – set in the contemporary present, but peopled exclusively by noble (*ashraf*) Muslims, whose whole lives are an elaborate *adab* (etiquette or

behaviour) of Muslimness; the historical film, most of which deal with popular history of the Mughals;[24] and the courtesan film, which foregrounds the figure of the courtesan as the film's heroine. I concentrate here on the last and most popular of these genres, which informs us of the 'othering' not only of the Muslim but of the Muslim woman in particular.[25]

The courtesan film

The courtesan appears throughout Indian cultural texts,[26] so it is not surprising that courtesans feature in many films, mostly in minor roles.[27] However, some of the most popular films in Indian cinema may be classed as 'courtesan films', in that their heroines are courtesans, while the usual gender imbalance of the films is reversed in that the heroes have minor roles. In films that have the courtesan in minor roles she is often Hindu but in the major roles she is always a Muslim. The two great films in which the main heroine is a courtesan are set in nineteenth century Avadhi Lucknow and Kanpur (*Umrao Jaan*[28]) and Delhi/the Panjabi princely state of Patiala in the early years of the twentieth century (*Pakeezah/The Pure one*[29]). Lucknow and Delhi were once two of the great centres of courtly Muslim culture.

The courtesan, whose trade flourished in India until the early twentieth century, was something like a geisha or hetaira. The most accomplished courtesans were said to be from Lucknow, the capital of Avadh. This city became north India's major cultural centre after the decline of Delhi and was renowned for the quality of its Urdu language and literature. It was annexed by the British in 1856 and was one of the major centres of struggle in the 1857 uprisings. Although landowners from Avadh maintained a courtly culture in Lucknow at least until independence, it never achieved the sophistication of its earlier days, which are still remembered with great nostalgia by its elite. The world of the courtesan also declined during the British period, as other spheres of public culture emerged. The final blow was dealt after independence as the loss of wealthy patrons came about with the abolition of *zamindars* ('landowners'), and salons were banned.[30]

Oldenburg's study of courtesans (*tawa'if*) in Lucknow,[31] drawing on interviews with retired courtesans, shows very close similarities to Umrao Jan's story narrated by Ruswa.[32] Courtesans were either born into the trade or sold into it as young girls by their parents or others. Umrao Jan was born in Faizabad, kidnapped as a young girl by her father's enemy and sold to a courtesan in Lucknow. They lived in households (*kotha*) run by a chief courtesan (*choudhrayan*), who had

acquired wealth and fame through her beauty, her music and dancing talents, which she used to set up her own house where she would recruit and train younger courtesans. The courtesan had to learn music, Persian and Urdu poetry, Arabic grammar, and to dance the *mujra*, a non-erotic dance where she pays her respects to the assembly. The best houses kept skilled male musicians and such householders were important patrons of music. The sons of the gentry were sent to the *kothas* to learn etiquette and Urdu poetry, and presumably the art of lovemaking. Other women lived in the establishment, including the regular prostitutes (*randi*), who is often euphemistically called a courtesan. Although the profession of the courtesan has disappeared, she has remained an important figure in literature and later in film throughout the last century.[33]

The courtesan has also been a popular figure in film, where her attractions give rise to a variety of pleasures in the audience. She is portrayed as a victim of men's lust and as an object of the viewer's pity, but also delights the audience in being the object of the male gaze as she dances for his entertainment. The combination of a beautiful actress, and the opportunity for music and dance to be incorporated into the narrative are important, but viewers also enjoy the spectacle of the body, the elaboration of scenery and in particular of clothing, tied to a certain nostalgia arising from the decline and disappearance of courtesan culture.

The courtesan in the film makes her living by her sexual charms, and so is presented as an object of desire to the men in the *mehfil* ('gathering') and to the cinema audience. This usually culminates in the *mujra*, where the filmmaker emphasises the details of lyrics, music, costume and *mise-en-scène*. The role of the courtesan in films has been given only to the most beautiful actresses, such as Meena Kumari as the eponymous *Pakeezah*, while the most glamorous actress of her generation, Rekha, has had numerous courtesan roles including that of Umrao Jaan. Although the courtesan displays her sexual allure at all times in the film, she is usually presented as averse to her trade, to which she has been driven by the injustices of society, calling her body a *zinda lash* ('living corpse'). An accomplished singer and dancer, she also writes *ghazals* in which she expresses her desire for love and marriage, which she knows will be denied her because of her profession. Yet one of her attractions is that she is the woman who is the opposite of the wife, like the beloved of the *ghazal*, she is unattainable, remote and perfect. Her sexuality is not associated with reproduction, nor is she expected to offer any nurture unlike the Hindu heroine – rather she is the essence of female eroticism. (Oldenburg argues that most courtesans, like many

prostitutes, practised lesbianism (*chapat bazi*), considering heterosexuality to be work, not pleasure.)

In Hindi cinema, the courtesan is pure (*Pakeezah*) and part of this is that she never appears in any way immodestly dressed. In fact one of the pleasures of the courtesan film lies in its elaborate use of clothing and make up. While Stella Bruzzi has discussed the meaning of clothes in Western cinema,[34] the semiotics of costume in Indian cinema has been little explored although it is an important source of symbols and signifiers of codes concerning status or class, Westernisation and the symbolic use of colour.[35] Clothing in cinema is clearly a source of spectacle, sometimes taken to extremes in song sequences where the heroine, and sometimes the hero, has numerous costume changes to present a heady excess of consumption. As Bruzzi has argued, clothing is an important component of eroticism. This is foregrounded in the courtesan film, where the heroine's clothes heighten sexuality by their opulence and rich colours and textures, and their elaboration presents an exaggerated exhibition of gender difference. The veil is used to effect in the film to hide and conceal, in a display of eroticism rather than modesty, seen in the first song in *Pakeezah* (*Inhen logon ne* 'Those people') where the courtesan sings how men have taken her veil or her modesty. The courtesan is the woman who is constantly available for the male gaze, yet she remains concealed within her *kotha*, away from the eyes of wider society.

The courtesan film also fetishises the woman's body, usually the feet, which is one of the few uncovered parts of her body, although they are decorated with colour and jewellery. This is very clear in *Pakeezah*, where the lover leaves a note tucked into Pakeezah's toes on the train: *Aap ke paon bahut haseen hain. Inhen zameen par mat utariyega, maile ho jaayenge!* ('Your feet are very beautiful. Do not let them touch the ground, they will get dirty!') and her dance at her lover's wedding where she lacerates her feet on broken glass to leave symbolically resonant bloody marks on the white sheet of her performance.[36] The only other parts of her body which are usually visible are her hands, hennaed, manicured and bejewelled; and her mask-like face, again elaborately painted and jewelled, her hair tied back, and covered with a veil and more jewels.

The courtesan is a totally romantic figure: a beautiful but tragic woman, who pours out her grief for the love she is denied in tears, poetry and dance. Yet although denied marriage and respectability, she is also a source of power. The courtesans in the film live in splendid buildings, which are decorated exquisitely. As Veena Oldenburg has pointed out, the courtesan achieved her material and social liberation by

reversing constraints on women's chastity and economic rights, succeeding through her combination of talent and education. The courtesans set up their own society within the *kothas*, where they inverted many of society's rituals such as celebrating the birth of a girl like the birth of a boy in mainstream Indian culture. Perhaps women enjoy the pleasures of the courtesan film as they find a figure of masochistic identification, a woman who cannot find the love she wants, yet knowing that a woman's sexual attractions can provide her with power. Men may also enjoy the voyeuristic pleasures of looking at a beautiful sexually accomplished, woman yet whose status as victim allows for male fantasies of 'saving' her – mostly from other men.

The beauty of the actresses in the courtesan film was not the only reason for their popularity. They were also women who had strong star personas, as the most beautiful, most tragic stars who themselves were never lucky in love.[37] Their offscreen lives were read onto the image of the courtesan in the film, as can be seen most clearly in the taking up of these stars as camp and gay icons, notably in the case of Meena Kumari (1932–1972).[38]

This *filmi* view of the courtesan is very different from that presented in the book. Instead of the exquisite Rekha portraying an innocent Umrao Jaan, who falls in love with one of her clients while her story is told as a failed love story; in the novel Umrao admits she was rather plain and never fell in love although she had a number of significant affairs in addition to her regular clients. Rather than pining for an impossible love affair, she loves her work, her poetry and the pleasure, luxury and respect that this brought her. Aware of the pleasure of nostalgia, the last chapter in the book is the account of Umrao's reading of Ruswa's story of her life, where she sums it up herself in a clear, insightful manner. She was a prostitute, no beauty, but a woman of intelligence and skill:

> It was my profession to dance and sing and steal men's hearts. I was happy or unhappy depending on whether I was more or less successful than others in my profession. I was not as pretty as the others, but because of my talent for music and mastery of poetry, I was one of the best.[39]

Representing the Muslim

The courtesan film, although hardly made today, remains one of the most popular film genres, in particular the two great films mentioned above. It is loved by Muslim and Hindu film audiences alike and I wish to explore these pleasures in some more detail.

One of the greatest pleasures of the courtesan film is undoubtedly nostalgia, largely for a lost Islamic world. Memory and nostalgia, pain and loss, are themes of the *ghazal* (see above), with an added historical dimension emerging with modern ideas about linear history. This is seen clearly in Ghalib's mourning after 1857 in his exile from Delhi whose great culture is now faded:

> The rose's scent, the tulip's colour,
> fill the world
> While I lie pinned beneath the heavy
> rock of care.
> The spring has come, but what have
> I to greet it with?
> Helpless, I close my door, that none may
> enter there.[40]

This pain is taken to greater extremes in the Shi'ite mourning for the death of Imam Husain, commemorated every year in the month of Muharram. Lucknow is one of the great centres of Indian Shi'ism, famed for its Muharram processions, with its great imambaras house *taziyas* (replicas of the tomb of Husain). During this time specific Shi'ite genres are performed, notably the *marsiya* ('elegy') on the martyrdom of Imam Husain, whose best poets, Mir Anis and Mirza Dabir were from Lucknow, and *soz* (lit. 'grief') songs or dirges about the death of Husain, for which Umrao Jan says she was famous in Lucknow.

Lucknow's rise to fame as a centre for Urdu language and culture was also predicated on a loss, following Nadir Shah's sack of Delhi in 1739 when many nobles abandoned Delhi, moving to Lucknow. Lucknow itself was reduced in status when the British annexed Oudh (Avadh) in 1856, a subtle reading of which is presented in Satyajit Ray's 1977 film *Shatranj ke khiladi/The chessplayers*. The British inflicted further losses on the Muslim elite, banning them from living in Delhi after the 1857 uprisings, for which they were held largely responsible.[41] The British had already in 1835 'replaced' Persian as the language of administration, with English and the new forms of modern literature which they taught in their institutions weakening the hold of Persian, and to some extent, Urdu as *the* elite language of literature.

The two great courtesan films, *Pakeezah* and *Umrao Jaan*, were made by figures who mourned this passing. Kamal Amrohi, who directed the former, was known in the film industry as the great master of Persian and Urdu language which he used to advantage mostly in

historical films such as *Pukar/The* cry.[42] Javed Akhtar, perhaps the only Urdu poet who can be said to have been 'popular' at the beginning of this millennium, has argued that Amrohi's script for *Mughal-e-Azam/ The Great Mughal* should be taught in schools as one of the great works of modern Urdu prose.[43] The film *Umrao Jaan* was made in 1981 by Muzaffar Ali, himself a member of one of the princely families of Lucknow, producing a film of great beauty and sadness, without the happy ending usually required of the Hindi film.

The imagery of the *ghazal* is found in both films, which in addition to this feeling of loss deploy the spectacle of the beauty of the courtesan, her costumes and the interior scenery. The camera plays on surfaces of her surroundings and on her, herself, presenting a totally saturated, excessive and elaborate image of formal and constructed beauty. This is seen in Persian carpets, crystal candelabra, courtyards with fountains, pools, 'Islamic arches' and elaborate 'Muslim' clothes. This is supplemented by the use of word and gesture as the dialogues are written in a particularly flowery form of Urdu, reminding the listener/viewer that Urdu has a glorious history as the language of poetry and indeed of a great high culture and of formal manners (*adab*), whose rules and performance give delight in their elaboration. It is also the language of love in modern India, largely through the association of the *ghazal* with the love lyric of the Hindi film.[44]

The films also present music and dance in a light classical style which is rarely seen today but which is still accessible to an untrained audience. Music is an arena where Muslims and Hindus have both performed together, many of the exponents of 'Hindu' lyrics being Muslims such as the most famous singers of the courtly style *dhrupad*, the Dagar brothers. This is seen clearly in Umrao Jaan's training in the film, where her first song is replete with imagery of Krishna's pastoral idyll.

These Islamicate films give pleasure to Muslims and Hindus but I suggest they are very different pleasures. Clearly a possible reading – perhaps that experienced by many Muslims – suggested by the above is one of nostalgia for the loss of a glorious past, which could be interpreted as being destroyed by the advent of modernity and westernisation. This could be augmented by sorrow at the present low status of Muslims in India, perhaps also by mourning for the genre of the *ghazal*, itself nostalgic with its tales of unrequited love and depictions of beauty, which is being reduced to the *filmi ghazal* and the audiotape rather than the rich poetry of the *mushaira*. There may also be sadness at the loss of the pleasures shown in many elements of performance, which, since they are unacceptable to orthodox Islam that

rejects alcohol, illicit sex and performance of dance and music, are no longer available to those who wish to remain within the Muslim community of India.

I should like to suggest another more sinister reading that underlies the pleasure of these films. In these films, Islamic culture is located in a woman who lives outside respectable society. However exotic and desirable, this woman makes her living as a prostitute and represents a socially unacceptable sexual but non-reproductive femininity like the beloved of the *ghazal*. This behaviour marginalises her, positioning her outside the domain of the modern female citizen by creating a powerful image of a decadent femininity, very different from the active sexuality of the Hindu woman within the bounds of marriage and the family, explored by the Hindi film. This marginality is enforced by these films which locate Muslims in the past, albeit a glamorous and exotic past, meaning that their presence in the modern world is anachronistic, for they are archaic, outmoded and non-modern, even if they are exotic and beguiling. This reading is not exclusive but may underly other possible readings of this film. However strong its presence, I argue that this pleasure is alarming in that this dominant form of Indian public culture continues to position the Muslim as 'other', making it unclear how the Muslim can be a citizen of secular India, let alone of a Hindutva-ised state.

Notes

1 I wish to thank Faisal Devji and Michael Dwyer for their comments on this chapter.

2 Savarkar, one of the major ideologues of Hindu nationalism, argued that even the name Hindu was a result of Muslim conquests. See V.D. Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?* New Delhi, 1989.

3 P. Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* London, 1986.

4 After the publication of Said's *Orientalism* (E. Said, *Orientalism*, London, 1978) the term acquired a pejorative meaning. Formerly the word 'Orientalist' was used to mean anyone who studied the Orient.

5 'Mass Media in India', 1992, pp. 157, 198. Information from A. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism*, Delhi, 1988, p. 1.

6 See R. Dwyer, 'Chapter 6: romantic films' in her *Yash Chopra*. London: British Film Institute/Berkeley: University of California Press/New Delhi: Roli Books, 2002.

7 R. Dwyer, *All You Want is Money, All You Need Is Love: Sex and Romance in Modern India*, London, 2000, chapter 3.

8 M. Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature*, Delhi, 1995; D. Matthews, C. Shackle and S. Husain, *Urdu Literature*, London, 1985.

9 Muhammad Sadiq, in his widely read history of Urdu literature, is deeply ambivalent about the form (M. Sadiq, op. cit.), which Pritchett attributes to the influence of the new poetics created by Azad and Hali in the nineteenth century (F. Pritchett, *Nets of Awareness: Urdu Poetry and Its Critics*, Berkeley, 1994).
10 Mirza Asadullah Beg Khan (1797–1869); Ghalib 'Victorious' is a pen name.
11 D. Matthews, *An Anthology of Urdu Verse in English. Original Poems in Devanagari Script*, Delhi, 1997, pp. 34–5.
12 Ghalib from A. Ahmad, ed., *Ghazals of Ghalib*, New York, 1971, p. 33.
13 The novel is usually *Umrao Jan Ada* while the film is *Umrao Jaan*.
14 See below.
15 This recent history of the *ghazal* as a song lyric has been traced by Peter Manuel. See P. Manuel, 'The Popularization and Transformation of the Light-classical Urdu Ghazal-song' in A. Appadurai, F.J. Korom, M.A. Mills, eds., *Gender, Genre and Power in South Asian Expressive Traditions*, Philadelphia, 1991, pp. 347–61.
16 Kesavan has taken this term from Marshall Hodgson's *Venture of Islam*. See M. Keshavan, 'Urdu, Awadh and the Tawaif: The Islamicate Roots of Hindi Cinema' in Z. Hasan, ed., *Forging Identities: Genders, Communities and the State*, New Delhi, 1994, pp. 244–57.
17 Ibid., p. 246.
18 See M. Prasad, *Ideology of the Hindi Film: A Historical Construction*, Delhi, 1998.
19 John Matthews Matthan, 1998.
20 J.P. Dutta, 1997.
21 On the controversy surrounding these films see R. Bharucha, 'On the Border of Fascism: Manufacture of Consent in *Roja*' in *Economic and Political Weekly*, 29 (23), 4 June 1994, pp. 1390–5; T. Niranjana, 'Integrating Whose Nation? Tourists and Terrorists in "Roja"' in *Economic and Political Weekly*, 29 (3), 15 January, 1994, pp. 79–82; R. Vasudevan, 'Other Voices: Roja Against the Grain' in *Seminar*, 423, 1994, pp. 43–7; R. Vasudevan, 'Bombay and Its Public' in *Journal of Arts and Ideas*, 29, 1995, pp. 45–65.
22 Kamal Haasan, 2000.
23 Several art films also deal with issues of Muslimness but in a different form of cinema, in a politically informed manner. These include *Garam Hawa/ Scorching Wind*, M.S. Sathyu, 1973; *Salim langde pe mat ro/Don't cry for Salim the Lame*, 1989; *Mammo*, Shyam Benegal, 1996; *Sardari Begum*, Shyam Benegal, 1997.
24 The most famous of these is K. Asif's *Mughal-e-Azam/The Great Mughal*, 1960, which tells the story of Anarkali, the dancing girl buried alive by the Great Mughal, Akbar, for loving his son Prince Salim. This film also belongs to the courtesan genre, genre distinction in Hindi films being very loosely defined.
25 See M. Keshavan, 'Urdu, Awadh and the Tawaif: The Islamicate Roots of Hindi Cinema' in Hasan, ed., op. cit.
26 See Dwyer, op. cit., p. 194 f.
27 Such as *Devdas*, Bimal Roy, 1955 and *Sahib, bibi aur ghulam/King, Queen and Knave*, Abrar Alvi, 1961. See S. Chakravarty, *National Identity in Indian Popular Cinema*, 1947–1987, Austin, 1993, pp. 261–305 for a longer discussion of the history of the courtesan film.

28 Muzaffar Ali, 1981.
29 Kamal Amrohi, 1971.
30 V.T. Oldenburg, *The Making of Colonial Lucknow 1856–1877*, Delhi, 1989.
31 Muslims formed the majority population of most north Indian cities before independence, which is one of the reasons many of the courtesans were Muslims.
32 M.M. Ruswa, *Umrao Jan Ada*, London, 1996.
33 See Dwyer, op. cit.
34 S. Bruzzi, *Undressing Cinema: Clothing and Identity in the Movies*, London, 1997.
35 See R. Dwyer, 'Bombay ishtyle.' In S. Bruzzi and P. Gibson (eds) *Fashion cultures: theories, explorations and analysis*. London, pp. 178–190, 2000 and R. Dwyer and D. Patel, 'Chapter 2: Film style: settings and costume' in *Cinema India: the visual culture of Hindi film*. London, 2002.
36 See also P. Uberoi, 'Dharma and Desire, Freedom and Destiny: Rescripting the Man–Woman Relationship in Popular Hindu Cinema' in M. Thapar, ed., *Embodiment: Essays on Gender and Identity*, Delhi, 1997, pp. 145–71 on podoerotics.
37 See Dwyer, op. cit. on the importance of the star in Hindi films.
38 See Dwyer, op. cit.
39 M.M. Ruswa, op. cit., p. 189.
40 R. Russell and K. Islam, *Ghalib: Life and Letters*, Delhi, 1994, p. 163.
41 Ghalib wrote an account of this time in his *Dastanbu* and in his extensive correspondence. See Russell and Islam, op. cit.
42 Sohrab Modi, 1939.
43 Interview with Nasreen Kabir, *Movie Mahel*, Hyphen Films.
44 Dwyer, op. cit., chapters 2 and 5.

8

JEWISH THEMES IN THE PRESS OF INDEPENDENT INDIA

Yulia Egorova

The population of India consists of a vast number of religious, ethnic and linguistic groups. Hindus constitute the religious majority, while religious minorities are represented mainly by Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Jews. Languages spoken on the subcontinent belong not only to various groups but even families. The Indian sub-continent is the home to a multitude of ethnicities. One of the questions closely related to the discourse on Indian multi-culturalism is that of the notion of the 'self' and of the 'other' in the Indian context.

A number of studies devoted to this subject have been published recently. For example, the question of the 'other' has been explored in respect to the formation of the Hindu and Muslim communities of India and the history of Indian-European encounters. It has been shown that the arrival of the Muslims in India contributed to the discourse about the 'other' in the subcontinent. The Muslim presence may be seen to have played an important role in the formation of the notion of the Hindu community, which was very diverse, but could be identified as a group of people belonging to one tradition, which differed greatly from that of the Muslims. The British period in the history of India appears to have led to further diversification of the discourse of the 'other'. In the colonial epoch the Indians became acquainted not only with the British culture *per se*, but also with a variety of notions that the British had brought with them. Apart from that, it was only in modern times that the Indians started travelling and thus introduced themselves to the cultures and peoples about whom they had previously had only a limited knowledge if any.[1]

We needed this brief and informal presentation of the complex issue of Indian notions of alterity in order to try to situate the discourse about Jews in a broader Indian context. What was specific about the otherness of the Jews with respect to India? What kind of 'other' did the Jews represent for Indians? In considering this question it may be helpful to turn to the typology of otherness offered by Tzvetan Todorov. He divided the category of the 'other' into three broad groups: the 'other' in oneself, the 'other' who is 'interior' to society (like 'women for men, the rich for the poor, the mad for the 'normal') or 'exterior' to it. This latter type of 'other', whom Todorov also describes as 'remote', represents 'another society which will be near or far away, depending on the case: beings whom everything links to me on the cultural, moral, historical plane; or else unknown quantities, outsiders whose language and customs I do not understand'.[2] Jews are present on the subcontinent and their community, though tiny, forms a part of the Indian population. However, due to the paucity of Jews in India only a limited numbers of Indians have ever had a chance to get acquainted with them in India itself. But throughout India's encounter with the 'West' its population was introduced to more sources of knowledge about the Jews and Judaism. I would suggest that in Todorov's terms Jews could be described as both an 'interior other', the 'other' who was part and parcel of Indian society and an 'exterior', or 'remote other' who belonged to a different environment and who were often known via a 'secondary source' (e.g., the Bible brought by Christian missionaries, European fiction, etc.) and not as a result of direct contact.

First, a few words to set the historical background. The history of Indian-Jewish encounters dates back at least to the Middle Ages, as the earliest evidence on the oldest Jewish community of the subcontinent, the community of the Jews of Malabar (Western coast of South India), is from around the eleventh century. The first detailed accounts of Indian-Jewish encounters were recorded as early as the seventeenth century when the Jews from Amsterdam established contact with this Jewish community. Among other things the Amsterdam Jews left descriptions of the relations between the Jews of Malabar and the local rulers. The British period in the history of India witnessed the formation of an Indian perceptions of the Jews on a larger scale when in the course of Indian-British interaction other sources of knowledge about the Jews and Judaism opened up for the Indians. The first half of the twentieth century was marked also by the emergence of Jewish topics in the socio-political discourse of India, as some Jewish groups participated in the national liberation movement on the subcontinent.[3]

The emergence of independent India and the establishment of the State of Israel, which occurred almost simultaneously, contributed to the creation of such themes in the field of Indian-Jewish relations as the Indian responses to the Holocaust, the attitude of the members of different Indian political, religious and social groups towards the Jewish State and the Middle East conflict, and the problem of the emigration of Indian Jews to Israel. In this chapter I would like to focus on some of these and other issues relating to the study of the Indian discourse on the Jews as reflected in the Indian press.

The Indian press represents an important source for the study of the Indian perceptions of the Jews. T.A. van Dijk has argued referring to the white population of the USA and Europe that in those cases where the members of the majority group have few everyday contacts with minority groups and immigrants, 'the mass media have virtually no competition in their communicative role regarding ethnic affairs' and that 'for specific types of social and political events, including those in the field of ethnic relations, the news media are the main source of information and beliefs used to form the interpretation framework for such events'.[4] This is also true in respect to the Indian public and their knowledge of the Jews. It has been noted above that not many Indians have a chance to communicate with Jews directly and for the majority of them the press is a significant source of information about Indian Jewry. With regard to the Jewish topics in general, we cannot deny that the Indian reader may have access to a variety of sources of knowledge about them; however, for some sorts of happenings relating to the Jews the press remains the most important, if not the sole source of information. Thus, the role of the press in the formation of the Indian cognition of the Jews is difficult to overestimate.

What can we learn about the Indian view of the Jews by examining the Indian press? Let us consider the representations of the Jews offered in the newspapers in question from the point of view of Todorov's typology of relations to the 'other'. Todorov suggests three levels at which the problematics of alterity could be located: the level of a value judgement (axeological level – 'the other is good or bad'), the level of rapprochement or distancing (praxeological level – I identify myself with the 'other', I identify the 'other' with myself, or I am indifferent to this other), and the level of knowledge (epistemic level – I am aware or ignorant of the 'other', with an unlimited number of 'states of knowledge' of the 'other').[5] If we applied Todorov's typology to the representations of the Jews in the Indian press we see that on the level of value judgements the Jews were viewed positively. It will be shown that Indian journalists denounced anti-Semitism and asserted that in

India Jews never suffered from it. On the second, or praxeological level, the Indian press tended to seek commonalities between Jews and Indians. It is important also to examine Jewish themes in the Indian press to assess the Indians' relation to the Jews on the third, or epistemic level. It will show whether the Indian public was interested in Jewish history, religion and culture and how well they were acquainted with these topics. It will also help to determine the main issues in the Indian discussion of the Jews.

What was the relationship between the depiction of the Jews in the press and in general Indian discourse? To answer this question with any precision would involve considering a variety of sources. This chapter is confined to the study of Jewish topics in the Indian press. However an attempt will be made to assess press depictions in relation to the representations of the Jews in the sources of the later British period, such as the press of that time and the publications of the leading Indian intellectuals. It will be seen that the press of independent India continues the discussion of some of the Jewish-related topics raised in the first half of the twentieth century. Among them are such themes as the place of the Jewish communities in Indian society and the comparison between the destinies of the Jewish and Indian people.

First, a few words about the Indian newspapers that we concentrate on. Generally all Indian newspapers may be classified into three groups:

1 metropolitan newspapers published in English in the main cities of India;
2 major newspapers in the vernacular languages often published in several centres of one linguistic region;
3 smaller newspapers in English and regional languages which provide news for their area.

It should be noted that this division is rather conventional. The newspapers included in the third group vary from influential ones published in the capitals of Indian states to some very modest local periodicals.[6] This chapter focuses on the major metropolitan and regional newspapers published in English, such as *The Statesman* (New Delhi), *The Times of India* (New Delhi), *The Hindu* (Madras), *The Indian Express* (New Delhi), *The Amrita Bazar Patrika* (Calcutta), *The Tribune* (Chandigarh), etc. They enjoy countrywide popularity and provide news for all reading Indians irrespective of their linguistic affiliation.

The materials on Jewish themes that appeared in the Indian press in the period under discussion can be broadly divided into the following sections: articles on Indian Jewry, on Jewish communities in other

countries, on the history and culture of the Jewish people in general and on Israel.

The Indian Jewish population is represented by three main communities: the Jews of Cochin, the Bene–Israel and the Baghdadi Jews. The Cochin Jewish community appears to be the oldest and the best known both to the Indians and to the outside world. Most of its members lived in the town of Cochin located on the Malabar coast of South India. The Bene–Israel represent one of the Jewish communities whose early history is obscure. The earliest sources to offer a more or less detailed account of the Bene–Israel are the writings of Christian missionaries and Jewish travellers who visited the community in the nineteenth century. Originally, the Bene–Israel lived in the villages of the Konkan coast of Western India, where their traditional occupation was oil-pressing. By the second half of the nineteenth century many of them moved to Bombay and some small towns of the Konkan coast and worked there as artisans. In the later British period a significant number of the Bene–Israel took jobs in the British administration. These assignments brought them to different parts of the subcontinent.[7] Recent research has shown that the Bene–Israel have always been part and parcel of the Indian environment, had a fixed place in the local hierarchy of the Konkan coast and some of them even participated in the national liberation movement in the later British period.[8]

The Baghdadi Jewish community was formed in India at the end of the eighteenth century. The name of the community does not reflect the origin of all its members adequately, as it consisted not only of migrants from Baghdad but also of those Jews who had moved to India from different parts of the Middle East. The Baghdadi Jews maintained close links with the British and desired to be associated with the European stratum of colonial society.[9] In the second half of the twentieth century all three communities started diminishing numerically, as their members began to emigrate to Israel, America, Great Britain and other countries of Europe. At the end of 1996 there were about five thousand Jews in India. Most of them were the Bene–Israel who have always represented the largest Jewish community of the subcontinent.[10]

Interestingly enough, the majority of articles on Indian Jewry in the main Indian newspapers are devoted to the Cochin Jewish community. One of the aspects of the life of Cochin Jews that each article on their community dwells upon is their relations with the local rulers, who for centuries patronized the Jews. According to the legend of origin of the Jews of Cochin, their ancestors had arrived in Malabar in 70 CE after the destruction of the Second Temple.[11] The earliest source that is

supposedly related to the history of this community is the famous copper plates given to the Jews when they were originally settled in Cranganore, another town of Malabar. The tradition of Cochin Jews states that the plates were a charter for an independent Jewish principality and were granted in 379 CE, though modern scholars date them from the eleventh century.[12] When different events caused the Jewish community to leave Cranganore, it migrated to Cochin. There the Jews also enjoyed the support of the local maharaja, who granted them a plot of land for the construction of a synagogue close to his palace. Hindu rulers made various gifts to the Jewish community.[13]

Indian journalists writing about the Jews of Cochin highlight their good relations with the local rulers and with their non-Jewish neighbours and tend to use it as an example of Indian tolerance towards religious minorities. According to *The Hindustan Times*,

> The Jews were received with open arms by the enlightened people and rulers of Kerala right from inception. Through the centuries they could pursue their economic activities without any kind of interference and they thoroughly enjoyed their religious freedom.[14]

This is how the historical Jew Town of Cochin was described in *The Hindu*: 'One of the oldest lanes in Mattancherry is the Jew Town Road – once a place where Jews lived together. But no, it was not a ghetto. While the Jewish diaspora languished for centuries under oppressive conditions in Europe, Jews here were equal citizens, prominent in trade and public life'.[15]

The topic of Cochin Jewry appears also in the discussion of the socio-religious life of independent India. In 1968 the community was visited by the prime-minister Indira Gandhi, who participated in the celebrations of the quarter-centenary anniversary of one of the historical Cochin synagogues.[16] On this occasion several leading Indian newspapers published articles which stressed that the Jewish community of India had never experienced any persecution. For instance, it was observed in *The Indian Express* that the existence of this synagogue was 'a tribute to the secularism professed and practised by independent India'.[17]

The essays on the Jews of Cochin offered in the Indian press describe also their specific cultural features – synagogues, particulars of clothes, religious articles, etc. Some materials on the Cochin Jews offer information about Jewish religious practices in general, and thus introduce the readers not only to Cochin Jewry but to the world Jewish

religious culture in general. Their emigration to Israel is viewed as a matter for regret. This is how *The Hindustan Times*'s journalist commented on it:

> The complete disappearance of the Jews will mark the end of a chapter in the annals of Cochin's history. Though the numerical strength of the community ... has never been a force to reckon with ... they have left their imprint on the fabric of Kerala's society and culture. The evolution of their history is an inseparable feature of the state's history.[18]

Articles on the Bene–Israel community describe both their life in India and in Israel. Writing about the Bene–Israel remaining in India Indian journalists stress that representatives of this community can be found in many fields of skilled labour and professions that require higher education. They speak of the presence of the Bene–Israel in the Indian academic world, journalism, art, administration, etc. and note that of all Jewish communities of independent India, the role of the Bene–Israel in the social and cultural life of the country is most marked.[19]

One of the main issues relating to the destiny of the Bene–Israel in Israel that articles on this community often concentrate on is the problem of identity that they had to face in the State of Israel. In the 1960s the Bene–Israel had to lead a painful struggle to be recognised in Israel as full Jews and to be allowed by the Rabbinate to marry members of other Jewish groups.[20] As observed in *The Hindustan Times Sunday Magazine*, the Bene–Israel continued 'to maintain their identity in Israel, often speaking Marathi among themselves'. As a result, the religious authorities of Israel 'averred that they were of impure religious ancestry'.[21] The episode of the 1960s repeated itself relatively recently. In 1997 the chief Rabbi of the town of Petah Tikvah raised doubts about the Jewishness of the Bene–Israel and ordered his employees not to validate new marriages for them. This case was reflected in the *Hindu*.[22]

Occasional articles are devoted to the Baghdadi Jews. They dwell mainly upon the history of this community on the subcontinent. For instance, E.D. Ezra in his lengthy essay published in *The Sunday Statesman* in 1990 describes in detail the life of the 'Baghdadis' of Calcutta in the British period.[23] The community that has attracted the attention of the Indian press relatively recently is that of the 'Children of Menasseh', a tribal group known as the Shinlung, whose members are scattered in the Indian states of Mizoram, Manipur, Assam and the plain regions of Burma. Their ancestors converted from indigenous

religion to Christianity at the turn of the century under the influence of Christian missionaries and in the middle of the twentieth century claimed affiliation with the Lost Tribes of Israel.[24]

As noted above, articles on the Jews of Cochin represent the majority of the materials on Indian Jewry. This chapter as we have seen examines the major newspapers of India and research based on the regional press may have produced different results. For instance, we might have seen that the Bombay newspapers publish more material on the Bene–Israel and Baghdadis residing in that city. However, the newspapers which have countrywide circulation and influence single out the Cochinis. Though the Bene–Israel were much more numerous than the Jews of Cochin and participated in the socio-political life of India more actively than their co-religionists from Malabar, it appears that it is the latter that were known to their fellow Indians as 'typical' Jews. The Bene–Israel at the same time seem to have been perceived in India as 'non-genuine' Jews, as they were too deeply incorporated in Indian society.

The articles that provide information about Jewish history in general sometimes draw parallels between the destiny of the Jews and that of the Indians. In 1972 the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta published an article criticising the expressions of anti-Semitism in Great Britain. The author of the article sympathises with the Jews and observes that the Bengalis would also sometimes become 'victims of collective libel' and prejudice from the side of the British.[25] It is noteworthy that the topic of comparison between the fates of the Jewish and the Indian peoples emerged in the Indian nationalist discourse in the later British period. Some Indian nationalists spoke of the Jews as of an oppressed people and expressed their solidarity with them. Gandhi in one of his early works draws an analogy between the destinies of Jews and Indians: 'The wonder of all wonders seems to be that the Indians, like the favoured nation of the Bible are irrepressible in spite of centuries of oppression and bondage'.[26] Elsewhere he compared the fate of the Jews of Europe to that of the untouchables of India.[27] In 1921 the *Bengalee* of Calcutta and the *Bombay Chronicle*, an organ of Indian nationalists in Western India, attacked an anti-Semitic pamphlet written by one H.M. Fraser, who made negative remarks about Lord Reading, the then viceroy of India, on the ground that he was a Jew. *The Bengalee* devoted an article to this issue, in which Fraser was accused of being an anti-Semite and a racist and was compared both to General Dyer, the initiator of the 1919 massacre of the Indian gathering in Amritsar, and to the anti-Semites of the Middle Ages who persecuted Jews, thus suggesting that his anti-Jewish and anti-Indian feelings were of common origin.[28]

The Indian press highlights also the destiny of various Jewish communities abroad. Such materials usually provide information about the particulars of their social and cultural life and examine the relations between the Jews and their neighbours from other ethnic and religious groups. Indian journalists sympathised with those Jews who had become subject to discrimination in their countries and criticized the governments that persecute their Jews. The press of India followed the development of the struggle of Soviet Jews for their right to emigrate to Israel attentively and exposed various expressions of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. Numerous articles introduced the readers to the particulars of the social life and cultural activities of Soviet Jews, described the difficulties that this community had to face trying to preserve its ethnic culture in the Soviet Union and examined the roots of anti-Semitism in Russia.[29] The Indian press also wrote about the plight of the Jews in the Middle East after the establishment of the State of Israel, when several Arab governments adopted the policy of persecution of their Jews or even expelled them in retaliation for the dispersion of the Palestinians.[30] Thus in the 1970s the *Hindu* published a number of articles on the condition of the Jewish communities in various countries of the Middle East. The authors of these articles observed that the Jews were forced to leave their home countries due to the xenophobia of their governments.[31]

The image of the State of Israel in the press of independent India might well provide the topic for a separate piece of research and is closely related to the history of ties between Israel and India.[32] However, the image of the Jewish State has some bearing on our topic as well. India recognised Israel in 1950, but established diplomatic relations with the Jewish State only in 1992. The four decades in between these two events were characterised by considerable tension in Indo-Israeli relations.[33] Though official Delhi always criticised Israeli policy in the Middle East, Indian public opinion seems to have been divided on the issue, and this was reflected in the Indian press.[34] Interestingly, even those who denounced Israel in Indian newspapers observed with regret that as a result of the difficulties in Indo-Israeli relations the Indians were deprived of the opportunity to get acquainted with Jewish culture. *The Tribune*'s correspondent argued that the negative attitude towards Israeli policy should not undermine the interest of Indians in Jewish history:

> It is one thing to deplore what Israel has been doing to the Palestinians over the years; quite another to refuse or to fail to understand the Jews and their heritage. While our Government

> has been indulging in the former luxury, it has been systematically depriving us, the people, of the opportunity to understand Jewish psychology and heritage.[35]

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Israel in January 1992 the number of articles on Indian Jewry has increased, even though the Indian Jewish population is diminishing. It is noteworthy that such articles often accompany material which describes major events in the relations between the two countries, and contain analysis of the contacts between India and the Jewish State and the assessment of their development. But quite apart from that, recent years have witnessed an increase in the number of articles in Indian newspapers on Jewish history, religion and culture in general. The authors who advocate the idea of a further strengthening of Indo-Israeli ties sometimes find it necessary to mention that there has never been any persecution of the Jews in India.[36] Some of the recent essays that introduce Indian readers to the State of Israel draw parallels between Jewish and Indian traditions. Thus according to *The Tribune*, which published an article on Israel in its 'Travel' section,

> Like in India, the Jewish family is closely knit. The education of children is given the topmost importance. A great stress is also laid on honouring one's parents and showing deference to the old.[37]

A topic which has recently assumed some importance in the pages of Indian newspapers is the Holocaust. Tilak Raj Sareen has observed that this subject has not yet attracted the attention of Indian historians.[38] In the 1930s–1940s Indian leaders denounced Nazism and expressed sympathy with European Jews. Some Indian newspapers of the time published articles in support of Jewish refugees seeking refuge from Nazi persecutions in India. Jawaharlal Nehru advocated the idea of engaging Jewish specialists from Europe in Indian industry.[39] However it remains unclear to what extent the Indian public during the Second World War was aware of fascist atrocities and realised the immensity of the disaster befalling the Jews. This opens the way for wider discussions not only of Indian responses to the Holocaust, but also of the way the Holocaust and the political situation in Europe during the Second World War were perceived in Asian countries.

In the Indian press articles on the Holocaust started appearing mainly during the last decade. Considerable attention has been paid to the books and films on this subject.[40] In a review published in

The Hindu of the first Indian screening of Robert Benigni's recent Holocaust film 'Life is Beautiful', it was observed that for Indian viewers the Holocaust in Europe was 'a distant happening', but the audiences reacted to the film with empathy.[41]

Conclusion

We can conclude the following from the study of the major newspapers of independent India. First, it appears that the reading public of India have shown interest in the Jews and Judaism, as articles on them have been published in the most influential newspapers with countrywide circulation and cover a wide range of topics: Indian Jewry, the Jewish communities of other countries, Jewish history, religion and culture in general, etc. It is also noteworthy on the epistemic level that many topics which have been discussed in the press of independent India reach back to earlier periods in Indian history.

Second, all these articles express a positive attitude towards the Jews. Materials on Indian Jewry stress the good relations between local Jews and their neighbours who belonged to other religious groups. The authors of the articles on foreign Jews sympathised with those of them who were discriminated against in their countries and denounced the anti-Jewish policy of the authorities of those states. Many articles on Jewish topics that appeared in the press of independent India stated that it was one of the countries where the Jews had never been persecuted. The question of the attitude of Indian public opinion towards the Jews requires further research which should be based on a variety of sources. However, the survey of the Indian press shows that even if there were any expressions of anti-Semitism in independent India, they did not penetrate its central newspapers.

Third, on the praxeological level of Todorov's typology the Indian press is also most interesting. Articles on Indian Jews often deal with the question of their incorporation into Indian society thus testing their 'Jewishness'. Articles devoted to other Jewish communities of the world sometimes draw parallels between Jews and Indians. The parameters of such a comparison vary. In some cases, the destiny of the Jews is compared to that of the Indians, in other cases, similarities between the Hindu and the Jewish religious cultures are found. Thus, in terms of rapprochement or distancing in relation to the Jews, the Indian press occupies a specific position. On the one hand it gives examples of comparisons between the Jews and Indians where Jews are identified with the Indians (the 'other' with the 'self') rather than other way

round. On the other hand, articles on Indian Jewry speak of an 'independent' Jewish identity. They question the Jewishness of the Bene–Israel on the grounds that they are too deeply entrenched in the Indian milieu. Apart from that, articles which dwell upon 'Indian-Jewish' relations often contain implications about the Indians themselves. For instance, journalists writing about Indian Jewry assert the tolerance of Indian culture. Those who compare the Jews with Indians argue that the former are as 'friendly', 'peace-loving', 'tolerant', 'family-oriented', as the latter. These materials seem to be aimed at conveying messages not only about the Jews but also about Indians and are used for the construction of the Indian self-image.

Notes

1 For some studies of the notions of the 'other' and race in the Indian context see, for instance, R. Thapar, 'The Image of the Barbarian' in *Comparative Studies in Society and History (CSSH)*, v. 13, 1971; J.L. Mehta, *India and the West, The Problem of Understanding*, Chico (California), 1985; W. Halbfass, *India and Europe, An Essay in Understanding*, Albany, 1988; A. Parasher, *Mlecchas in Early India, A Study in Attitudes Towards Outsiders up to AD 600*, New Delhi, 1991; C. Talbot, 'Inscribing the Other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu-Muslim Identities in Pre-Colonial India' in *CSSH*, v. 37, 1995; P. Robb, ed., *The Concept of Race in South Asia*, Delhi, 1995; B. Chattopadhyaya, *Representing the Other? Sanskrit Sources and the Muslims (Eighth to Fourteenth Century)*, New Delhi, 1998.

2 T. Todorov, *The Conquest of America. The Question of the Other*, New York, 1992 (first published in French in 1982), p. 3.

3 For a detailed discussion of the Jewish communities of India in some of the recent research works view: T.A. Timberg, ed., *Jews in India*, New Delhi, 1986; S.B. Isenberg, *India's Bene Israel*, Bombay, 1988; J.B. Segal, *A History of the Jews of Cochin*, London, 1993; J.G. Roland, *The Jewish Communities of India, Identity in a Colonial Era*, 2nd edn., New Brunswick and London, 1998.

4 T.A. van Dijk, *Elite Discourse and Racism*, Newbury Park, London, New Delhi, 1993, pp. 242–3.

5 Todorov, op. cit., p. 185.

6 S.N. Singh, *Your Slip is Showing, Indian Press Today*, New Delhi, 1992, pp. ix–xi.

7 H.S. Kehimkar, *The History of the Bene–Israel of India*, Tel Aviv, 1937; Isenberg, op. cit.

8 Roland, op. cit., pp. 2–4, 96–109.

9 E.N. Musleah, *On the Banks of the Ganga – the Sojourn of Jews in Calcutta*, North Quincy, (Massachusetts); 1975, T.A. Timberg, 'Baghdadi Jews in Indian Port Cities' in T.A. Timberg, ed., op. cit., pp. 273–81.

10 Roland, op. cit., p. 267.

11 B.C. Johnson, 'The Emperor's Welcome: Reconsideration of Origin Themes in Cochin Jewish Folklore' in T.A. Timberg, ed., op. cit., p. 162.

12 N. Katz, 'The Judaisms of Kaifeng and Cochin: Parallel and Divergent Styles of Religious Acculturation' in *Numen*, v. 42, 1995, p. 123.
13 Ibid., pp. 124–5.
14 G. Ravindran Nair, 'When Kerala Welcomed Jews with Open Arms' in *The Hindustan Times*, 14 February 1987, p. 17.
15 S. Wariar, 'The Vanishing Jews of Kochi' in *The Hindu*, 31 March 1991.
16 B.E. Eliyahu, *The Synagogues in India*, Kiryat Motzkin (Israel), 1978, p. 78.
17 P. Nair, 'Glorious Era in History of Jews in India' in *The Indian Express Magazine*, 29 December 1968, p. 5.
18 L. Mohan, 'The Cochin Jews: A Vanishing Community' in *The Hindustan Times*, 30 November 1980, p. 9.
19 S.L. Menezes, 'Children of Israel' in *The Hindustan Times Sunday Magazine*, 2 March 1986, p. 8.
20 For an excellent study of the Bene–Israel in Israel see S. Weil, *Bene–Israel Indian Jews in Lod, Israel: A Study in the Persistence of Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity*, Doctoral dissertation, University of Sussex, England, 1977.
21 S.L. Menezes, op. cit., 2 March 1986, p. 8.
22 'Indian Jews Face Identity Crisis in Israel' in *The Hindu*, 20 November 1997.
23 E.D. Ezra, 'The Jews of Calcutta: From Wealth to Extinction' in *The Sunday Statesman*, 15 July 1990, p. 3.
24 For a recent study of this group see S. Weil, 'Double Conversion Among the "Children of Menasseh"' in G. Pfeffer, D.K. Behera, eds., *Contemporary Society: Tribal Studies*, v. 1, New Delhi, 1997, pp. 84–102. See also T. Parfitt, *The Lost Tribes of Israel*, T. Parfitt, E. Trevisan Semi, *Judaising Movements*, 2002, London: Curzon Press.
25 S.K. Ghosh, 'Oxford Dictionary and the Jew' in *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5 May 1972, p. 6.
26 Quoted in M. Chatterjee, *Gandhi and His Jewish Friends*, Basingstoke, 1992, p. 29.
27 M. Gandhi, 'Discussion with a Roman Catholic Priest' in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, v. 64, Publications Division, Government of India, 1976, p. 421.
28 *The Bengalee*, 10 April 1921, Roland, op. cit., pp. 92–3.
29 The number of articles on the Soviet Jewry in the Indian newspapers is large. Of special notice should be the articles offered in *The Statesman* (New Delhi) in the 1970s.
30 N. Lucas, *The Modern History of Israel*, London, 1974, p. 363.
31 'Jews in Islamic Lands' in *The Hindu*, 17 January 1972, p. 6; 'A Life of Uncertainty and Loneliness' in *The Hindu*, 5 January 1975, p. 16.
32 In this respect it should be noted that the Indian press was independent of the government practically throughout its history (see Singh, op. cit., p. ix) and thus a study of the discussion of the conflict in the Middle East in the Indian press would enable us to examine the position on this issue not only of official Delhi, but also of the opposition.
33 For a detailed discussion on Indo-Israeli relations see P.R. Kumaraswamy, 'India and Israel: Prelude to Normalization' in *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, v. 19, no. 2 (Winter 1995), pp. 53–74.
34 For instance, a prominent Indian political commentator I. Malhotra observed in June 1967 that Indira Gandhi's anti-Israeli policy became

subject to criticism country-wide. See I. Malhotra, 'Lesson in Self-Help From West Asia War' in *The Statesman*, 9 June 1967, p. 6.

35 'Understanding the Jews' in *The Tribune*, 21 January 1971, p. 4.

36 P. Gill, 'Israel Keen On Dairy Tie-Up With Punjab' in *The Tribune*, 4 December 1998.

37 A. Sarwal, 'They Want Peace, But Are Ready for War' in *The Tribune* (Sunday Reading), 13 September 1998.

38 T.R. Sareen, 'Indian Response to the Holocaust' in A. Bhatti, J.H. Voigt, eds., *Jewish Exile in India, 1933–1945*, New Delhi, 1999, p. 62.

39 For a detailed discussion of British-Indian policies towards European emigrants of Jewish origin and Indian responses to Jewish emigration see articles by Joachim Oesterheld, Majid Hayat Siddiqi, Tilak Raj Sareen and Shalva Weil in A. Bhatti, J.H. Voigt, eds., op. cit.

40 See a series of Ashok Chopra's articles on literature about the war and the Holocaust in the 'Sunday Reading' section of *The Tribune*, 11, 18, 25 October 1998.

41 'Humour Amidst the Holocaust' in *The Hindu*, 9 April 1999, p. 25.

Part II

MASS MEDIA AND THE CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST

9

IN THE EYES OF THE BEHOLDER

Israel, Jews and Zionism in the Iraqi media

Ofra Bengio

On 18 January 1998 Iraq celebrated 'Science Day' (*yawm al-yilm*), in commemoration of the launching of the Iraqi missiles against Israel in January 1991. In a portentous editorial entitled 'Our missiles opened for us the door of the beginnings, theirs cut for them the tombs of the end', *al-Jumhuriyya's* editor, Salah al-Mukhtar, depicted the act as a turning point in Arab history. For, as he explained, although Iraq had lost hundreds of missiles at the hands of the UN inspectors ever since, it at the same time created '22 million new missiles [i.e. the Iraqi population], as every Iraqi who believes in his leader and the Arab nation and carries holy rancor (*hiqd muqaddas*) toward America and Zionism is a more effective missile than the ones launched seven years earlier'.[1] This reflected the tone of the official stance toward Israel: rejection of Israel's right to exist, rejection of the Arab–Israeli peace process and the identification of Israel with all Iraq's mishaps. The Iraqi media which represents an omnipotent propaganda machine, were entrusted with the task of nurturing hatred toward Israel, Zionism and Jews.

In order to better understand this officially sanctioned hatred for Israel and the Jews, one should put it in the general context of the role of the Iraqi media in a regime such as the *Ba'th* and the place of the 'other', any 'other', in its world view. The questions that will be addressed therefore, are the following: to what extent is the Israeli case unique? What end does the constant hammering on the Israeli theme

serve? What is the connection between rhetoric and politics? And under what circumstances could there be a chance to change the stance toward the 'other' in general and Israel in particular?

The Iraqi media played the role of the *Ba'th* regime's watchdog, thus contributing significantly to its survival and longevity. This role was all the more impressive in view of the crises and trials and tribulations that have befallen the country and that might have undermined any other regime. Acknowledging their role, particularly in wartime, President Saddam Husayn likened it to that of a military corps and depicted the entire information machine as the 'information corps' (*faylaq al-a'lam*). Indeed, they have fulfilled fourfold functions: blurring or distorting reality and 'imbuing' it with rosy colors as much as possible; shielding the regime, especially Saddam Husayn, from any internal or external criticism; mobilizing the masses behind the regime and its ever changing goals; and finally, demonizing the 'other', whoever they may be.[2] The media have, thus, turned themselves into a coercive tool for controlling the minds of the people, becoming no less effective than other security apparatuses which have controlled their daily life. Why and how did the Iraqi media embrace this role?

Historically speaking there was never a free press in Iraq, not to speak of the electronic media. Yet a quick comparison between the *Ba'th* period, which started in the late 1960s, with earlier ones, would show that under the *Ba'th*, they became much more controlled, monolithic, mobilized and almost completely stripped of any critical approach. The 'war for the media' was decided in the first two weeks of the *Ba'th's* advent to power on 17 July 1968. In these two weeks there developed a struggle for power between the two partners of the coup: the *Ba'th* headed by Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr and the military, headed by 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Nayif. This struggle reflected itself in the media too. At the time there were only two major newspapers, *al-Jumhuriyya*, which was controlled by the *Ba'th* and *al-Thawra* controlled by the military. When the military attempted to get hold of *al-Jumhuriyya* as well, it was closed down by Bakr's group,[3] to be reopened only after 31 July when the struggle for power was decided in the *Ba'th's* favor. The lesson from this episode was to be crucial for both the *Ba'th* and the media. The media would by no means be permitted to serve as a platform for airing opposing views or criticism of the *Ba'th*. Saddam Husayn who was already in the limelight, understood best of all the power of the media and moved quickly to control them, modeling them on the worst totalitarian examples of Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union.

Husayn's tried method for buying the loyalty of journalists and media people was to turn the media into a platform for social and political

mobility for those who toed the line as well as the distribution of largesse especially to those at the top. To quote just a few examples: Tariq 'Aziz, who had been in the *Ba'th's* early days editor of *al-Thawra*, became a leading member of the regime; Sa'd Qasim Hammudi, who started out as editor of *al-Jumhuriyya*, Latif Nusayyif al-Jasim, director-general of the radio and television, and Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf also director of the radio and television, all became at one time or another ministers in the *Ba'th* government. The other way was to appoint to the media political figures who were believed to be loyal and could, thus, be counted upon for propagating the *Ba'th* line. The most striking example was Saddam Husayn's elder son, 'Udayy, who in the 1990s became the omnipotent boss of the media, assuming the role of doyen of the Journalist's Union, running a radio station, several newspapers (one of which *al-Zawra'*, was published via the Internet) and all but controlling the rest of the media.[4]

The other side of the coin was punishment for journalists who did not toe the line. Thus, for example in 1992, and probably at 'Udayy's instance the Journalist's Union decided to dismiss all members 'who had sold their soul and conscience' to the enemies of Iraq.[5] In 1999, 'Udayy reportedly engineered the dismissal of 1,000 writers from the General Union of Writers, for not praising the president.[6] The net result of all this was that the regime could manipulate the media at will, turning it into a most efficient propaganda machine, one of the most important tasks of which was to tarnish the image of the 'other'.

Not all the journalists, though, toed the regime's line all the time. One of those who traveled in the opposite direction was Sa'd al-Bazzaz, who until his dismissal in 1992, held the post of director general of the radio and television and then editor-in- chief of the *al-Jumhuriyya* newspaper. In 1992 Bazzaz published in Amman a book about the Gulf War,[7] which though, on the whole, reflecting the *Ba'th* point of view, did not lack some criticism. Thus, for example, he attributed the origins of the war to what he termed 'the complex of creating an enemy' (*'uqdat sina'at al 'aduww*) from which both the USA and Iraq suffered. The USA, he maintained, needed a new enemy to substitute for the crumbling Soviet Union, while Iraq needed one to substitute for Iran, following the eight-year war with Tehran.[8] It is in this general context 'of creating enemies' that one should place the *Ba'th* stance towards Israel. But rather than speak of a 'complex', one should speak of a media machine geared to nurturing such 'enemies', or 'negative others'.

The nurturing of 'the negative other' became a constant feature of the *Ba'th*, although this 'other' changed from one period to another. Sometimes it was a domestic one, be it the Kurds or the Shi'is,[9] at other

times it was an outside one, Iran, Kuwait, the USA or the West in general. Since the authorities sealed Iraq to non-Iraqi media, the picture which the public received of the 'other' was one-dimensional and black and white. Little wonder then, that the *Ba'th* regarded the satellite channels (that could bypass the Iraqi media) to be no less dangerous than a 'fifth column', for they interfered in the internal affairs of countries, 'poisoning the air' there with talks about 'objectivity', 'freedom of expression' and 'democracy'.[10] President Saddam Husayn himself warned of 'the influence of the hostile media' on people, describing it as 'even more profound than bombs and missiles'.[11]

The *Ba'th* regime 'inaugurated' its advent to power with the hanging in January 1968 of 9 Jews whom it accused of spying for Israel. Not leaving anything to the imagination, the bodies were displayed in Baghdad's Tahrir (liberation) Square, where 150,000 to 500,000 Iraqis were brought to watch and celebrate. As Radio Baghdad had it: 'Only moments after the hanging of the first body Tahrir Square was crowded with thousands of citizens overwhelmed with joy'. Announcing the hanging, Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf Director General of radio and television, lauded the move, saying:

> the struggling masses who saw today for the first time the hanging corpses of the spies – this great revolutionary action – will frankly face their historic duties without shirking but with the understanding that a new era of fierce opposition to imperialism and imperialist agents – reactionary and Zionist spies – has begun with this immortal dawn in our people's immortal life'.[12]

This move which was unprecedented in Iraq and the rest of the Arab world, was to set the tone for the Iraqi stance towards the Jews and Israel for the next thirty years. In fact, the media continued to portray the executions as an avant garde action.[13] Israel thus held a place of honour among all the 'others', in that it remained for more than thirty years a fixed object for attack, vilification and demonization by the Iraqi media.

Several factors accounted for this phenomenon. Unlike its predecessors, the *Ba'th* felt ideologically committed to the liberation of Palestine, this being one of its central tenets. And while it did shed other principles of its dogma, such as socialism, it remained loyal, at least vocally, to this. Thus, *Ba'th* Iraq remained one of the last bastions of the anti-Arab–Israeli peace process. The fact that the same regime remained in power for such a long period made the complete dismantling of all

ideological tenets even more difficult. Similarly, the subjugation of the media to the totalitarian *Ba'th* regime ensured total adherence to this line.

What were the images and stereotypes propagated by the media? From where did they draw their inspiration? And what practical political purposes did they serve? As it was depicted in the Iraqi media, Israel is the symbol of evil, past, present and future. Accordingly it has been the main enemy of Iraq and the entire Arab nation. The conflict with Israel was not like any other – it was much deeper and more comprehensive. It was a clash between two civilizations that cannot coexist. Israel was termed an 'historical error' which posed a severe threat to Arab civilization.[14] The clash with it was therefore existential, or, as one paper put it, a question of 'to be or not to be'.[15]

The denial of Israel's legitimacy or its right to exist found its expression in various forms in the press. One was the use of quotation marks around the word Israel, which was implemented shortly after the *Ba'th's* advent to power.[16] Israel was called, 'a deviant entity' (*kiyan shadhdh*), an 'implant entity' (*kiyan mazru'*) or the 'monstrous Israeli entity' (*kiyan Isra'ili maskh*).[17] Although the term 'entity' is apparently a neutral one, in Arabic as in English, connoting status or existence, when it is used as a modifier for Israel it conveys the pejorative connotation of something illegitimate or short-lived. When, the word 'state' (*dawla*) is used for Israel, it is given a pejorative connotation, such as 'the state of war' (*dawlat harb*); 'gangster state' or 'rapist state' (*dawla ghāsiba*). The propagation of fear and hatred toward Israel entailed the use of other expressions or terms such as 'monstrous state', 'cancerous growth', 'dragon', 'poisonous snake', 'Zionist virus', and the most popular of all 'octopus'.

The delegitimization of Israel went hand in hand with the delegitimization of Zionism – the Jewish national movement. Zionism was equated with the Arabs' most deadly enemy – 'imperialism'. In fact there was a symbiosis between the two as it was expressed in a new term forged for it 'zio-imperialism' (*Sahyu-imbiryalliyya*). According to the Iraqi media there developed a deep interdependence between the two. It was imperialism which had conceived the creation of 'an artificial Zionist state' back in the nineteenth century in the region. This state was to serve as a bridgehead or a 'forward guard post' for promoting imperialist interests in the Arab lands, such as dominating the Arab region and keeping it backward and divided while at the same time exploiting its riches and its strategic position. For its part, Zionism which was itself an imperialist movement, and depended for its very existence on imperialism, sought to foster an entity in Palestine which

would serve imperialism's aims in the region.[18] Furthermore, the Iraqi media blamed 'International Zionism' for concocting a series of plots against Iraq and the entire Arab nation, including igniting the Iraqi-Iranian war and imposing sanctions on Iraq following Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait.[19]

The hanging of the Jews in the early days of the *Ba'th* set the stage for anti-Semitic and anti-Jewish propaganda which grew with Iraq's hardships in the wars and the post-Kuwait invasion sanctions. The media lent itself enthusiastically to the task. Thus, shortly after the end of the Gulf War, *al-Jumhuriyya* found it appropriate to publish the 'contents' of 'the Protocols of the Elders of Zion' (a well-known forgery written by the Czarist secret police). Others followed suit. One spoke of the 'Torah', 'Talmud' and the 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion''s directives to kill foreigners (*ajanib*), especially Arabs and Muslims because they were not considered human beings but animals.[20] Another discussed the connection between this 'document' and the old British imperialist designs and the new American scheme for a 'New World Order'.[21] A much older 'collusion', so the Iraqi media maintained, was between the Jews and the Persians which went back to the Babylonian era and was reactivated in modern times especially during the Iraqi-Iranian war. And while the Zionist-Imperialist alliance was based on common interests, that between the Jews and Persians, it was argued, was based on shared hatred of the Arabs in general, and Iraq in particular.[22] Sometimes Jews acted 'single-handedly'. Thus Israel was accused of having planned to invade Kuwait since 1974, with an eye to turning Arab oil into 'Jewish oil'.[23] Another facet of anti-Jewish propaganda was the depiction of the Holocaust as a 'Zionist fiction'.[24]

While anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic propaganda was mostly propagated in verbal form, there were other means, more popular and easier to grasp for the common people, namely cartoons, caricatures and posters. The villain in the story has invariably been the Jew with his symbol, 'the star of David', figuring in endless numbers of caricatures. The Jew became a 'companion of evil' for all of Iraq's and the Arab world's enemies, be they Iran, Kuwait, the USA or any other. To give just a few examples: caricatures published on the eve of the invasion of Kuwait showed the USA helping Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to burn the Middle East. In another, the Jew figured as a crocodile swallowing British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, while a third showed the three symbols of evil, the USA, Britain and the little Jew walking hand-in-hand in the dark. As against these, the most ominous involved three figures: a Palestinian holding a stone over his head, the Iraqi, a nuclear

weapon over his head, and in the middle a Jewish soldier with an inscription over his head – 'binary chemical weapons'. Reference to the chemical weapon was made in another caricature which showed an 'Iraqi-made pesticide' killing a Jewish insect.[25] Others had to do with Jews and the Palestinians. One of these showed a Palestinian demanding his rights from the American secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, who ignores him altogether, and fondles instead a *Sturmer*-like Jew.[26] Another showed an Israeli soldier sawing off the hands and feet of a Palestinian woman while the Arabs were turning their back to the scene.[27]

Posters were another means for propagating the *Ba'th* message. Two examples will suffice to give the general tone. One showed three 'snakes' – Iran, Syria and Israel – colluding against Iraq.[28] In another one, Saddam Husayn figured standing near a tank while his hand saluted Salah-al-Din al-Ayyubi who had reconquered Jerusalem from the Crusaders in the year 1187. The inscription underneath the picture read: 'The liberation of Palestine is a mission from Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi to the victorious, by the help of God (*al-muntasir bi-allah*), Saddam Husayn'.[29]

The media's main source of inspiration was President Husayn himself who dictated the radical anti-Israeli line, which, with one or two exceptions, was followed consistently throughout his political career. The main points which he repeated in different variations and on various occasions were that Israel had no right to exist; that Palestine should be liberated by force, with Iraq playing a leading role; that the peace process with Israel was an act of treason against the Arab nation and that since peace was struck between governments and not peoples its chances of survival were slim.

Even before he became president, Husayn played a key role in ostracizing Sadat's Egypt because of its peace with Israel. Simultaneously he publicized his views that Israel was the 'enemy of the Arab nation', 'that it was not a nation with a humanitarian mission' and 'that its prosperity should be impeded'.[30] Speaking just a few months after his advent to power on the possibility of a nuclear war he stated: 'we must also be determined to create all the requisites for triumph over the enemy in order to restore our holy land in Palestine'.[31] The Israeli attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor in June 1981 came as a great surprise to him yet he recuperated quickly, promising to turn the lessons of the attack into programmes for enhancing Iraqi greatness.

In the meantime, political expediency made him somewhat tone down his anti-Israeli rhetoric. Preparing the ground for the resumption of relations with the USA (cut in 1967), Husayn stated that 'Israelis',

(but not the State of Israel) were entitled 'to conditions of security' (*wadʿ min al-aman*).[32] But such tactical moderation remained a rare phenomenon. Indeed, no sooner had relations with the US resumed, then he went back to his earlier stance, adding anti-Semitic undertones. Thus on one occasion of reversals in the war with Iran, he declared: 'our main enemy is the Arab nation's enemy – Zionism'.[33] As time went by his anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist rhetoric escalated, the most famous cases being his threat to burn half of Israel[34] and his call for *Jihad* against it, on the very eve of the occupation of Kuwait. Husayn ever since declared his stance against the peace process and repeated, year in year out, his call for the liberation of Palestine. One of these was in the July 1999 speech in which he declared that Palestine was Arab 'and Zionism must leave it'.[35]

His son 'Udayy, the doyen of Iraqi journalists, cited above, began early on to take the lead in anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic rhetoric. Thus, he published in his paper *Babil* a series of twelve articles in which he challenged Israel's right to exist, finding 'support' for his ideas in the *Qur'an* itself. For Arabs, he maintained, this was a question of life and death: 'In order for us Arabs to survive, the Jews must die and if the Jews live, the Arabs will die'.[36] Later he was quoted as saying that Saddam Husayn was preparing one generation of Iraqis after another for the task of burning Israel, as throwing it into the sea would not suffice 'because the Jews that can swim may survive'.[37] Explaining on another occasion the reason for awarding his newspaper the name *Babil*, he said: 'Babil represents the inferiority complex of the Jews, because it was built on their dead bodies'.[38] 'Udayy's strong anti-Semitic tendencies were also evidenced by the fact that newspapers owned by him abounded with anti-Semitic articles and caricatures, even more so than the old 'official' ones, such as *al-Thawra* or *al-Jumhuriyya*.[39]

Having discussed the main trends in the Iraqi media, we should set them once again in a more general context. It will be remembered that anti-Israeli rhetoric has until quite recently characterized the media in most of the Arab countries. The Iraqi media, however, excelled at being consistently and unequivocally hard-line. And while in certain countries such as Egypt, Jordan and Morocco the stance was not monolithic (with the official line being more moderate than that of the opposition), in Iraq, where officially-sanctioned opposition did not exist, the stance on Israel has been more or less monolithic. Similarly, while in many Arab countries anti-Israeli rhetoric has been attenuated significantly by the peace process, in Iraq, which regarded itself as the last bastion against the process, no such development took place. Moreover, there was an accumulation of factors which contributed to the escalation. It is

outside the scope of this study to analyze Iraq's role in the Arab–Israeli conflict and its 'bilateral relations' with Israel, but one should mention briefly the following points:[40] First, mutual hostility between Iraq and Israel deepened significantly under the *Ba'th* because of the latter's harsh treatment of the Jews, Baghdad's participation in the 1973 Yom Kippur war and the launching of missiles against Israel in 1991; second, Israel's support for the Kurds against the *Ba'th* (until 1975), its bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981, and the covert arm sales to Iran in the mid-1980s, in the course of the Iraqi-Iranian war.

Nevertheless, it must be said that in the course of this long period, the dark picture was 'coloured' by occasional reports of 'contacts' between Iraqi and Israeli officials abroad, but these reports were either ignored or vehemently denied by the Iraqi media. Nor was there any echo in these media of more moderate statements of Iraqi officials abroad. Indeed, the media was mobilized for one major task: using Israel, Jews and Zionism as a propaganda tool for various domestic and foreign purposes.

These included letting off steam and diverting public pressure away from the regime to an outside enemy; mobilizing domestic, Arab and Islamic support for the Iraqi cause by portraying Israel as the greatest danger to them all as well as by demonstrating 'ideological purity' on the Palestinian issue; putting the responsibility for Iraq's predicament on an outside element and justifying the regime's blunders; and finally using Israel as a tactical diversion for the regime's strategies. Thus, for example both on the eve of the Iraqi-Iranian war and the eve of the occupation of Kuwait, Saddam Husayn and the media escalated their anti-Israeli propaganda. On the other hand, when Iraq was bogged down in the eight year war with Iran and in the 'sanctions' war' with the allies, it put all the blame for Iraq's misfortunes on Israel. In short, Israel, Jews and Zionism became the most popular scapegoat for all of Iraq's mishaps.

Speaking on Iraqi experimentation with democratization in 1989, 'Udayy Husayn harshly attacked those journalists who at the time 'had jumped on democracy like scorpions'.[41] Indeed, democracy and free expression, haunted the *Ba'th* ever since its advent to power, and it did its best to smother them. Postwar pressures, however, did move the regime to initiate some opening up of the system in 1989 and 1992, although these experiments were short-lived. Nevertheless, they indicated that despite years of strict control, those in the media preserved some vitality and the natural instincts of genuine journalists, and that if only allowed some freedom of expression they would be likely to reassume their role in society. Thus, some of them took up the

challenge and began criticizing and questioning various phenomena of public life. One of them even justified the call for democratization by quoting the Talmudic saying (though not mentioning the source itself): 'If I am not for myself, who will be for me, and if I am only for myself, who am I, and if not now, then when?'.[42]

Clearly in Iraq democracy and free expression are a *sine qua non* for a change of stance toward the 'other' in general and Israel in particular. Elsewhere in the Arab world, Arab intellectuals have already reached the conclusion that democracy and peace with the 'other' – the Israeli – were closely related. Accordingly, they initiated a courageous debate about the need to encourage this 'democratic peace'.[43]

Until the second Gulf war the political system in Iraq, and with it the media and the intellectuals, remained as far removed from democratization and the peace process as ever. In current circumstances, it seems that two developments may usher the way for change: that the Iraqi media revolt against their fixed role and start speaking their mind or that a future regime itself would allow a more pluralistic, liberalized and democratized system.

Notes

1 *Al-Jumhuriyya*, 18 January 1998. Mukhtar's propagandist talents would elevate him later in that year to a diplomatic post abroad.
2 See E. Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, London, 1946, pp. 277–85.
3 *Al-Hayat*, 24 July 1968.
4 See for example *al-Zawra'* (online version), 9 December 1999. Others included *Babil*, *Sawt al-Talaba*, *al-Iqtisadi*, *Alwan*, etc.
5 *Alif-Ba'*, 6 May 1992.
6 *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 15 October 1999 (DR).
7 Sa'd al-Bazzaz, *Harb Talid Ukhra*, Amman, 1992.
8 Ibid., pp. 153–57.
9 The Shi'i writer Hasan al-'Alawi, who had fled the country in 1981, later published a book describing the treatment of 'the other' – the Shi'is – in Iraq. Hasan al-'Alawi, *Al-Shi'a wa-al Dawla al-Qawmiyya fi al-'Iraq*, 1914–1990.
10 *Al-'Iraq*, 7 September 1999.
11 Iraqi Television, 16 June – SWB, 18 June 1999.
12 R. Baghdad, 27 January – SWB, 29 January 1969. For the number of participants see K. Makiya, *Republic of Fear*, Berkeley, 1998, p. 52.
13 *Al-Siyasiyya*, 14 September 1999.
14 *Alif-Ba'*, 22 May 1996; *Al-Thawra*, 18 October 1996.
15 *Al-Thawra*, 21 May 1987.
16 See for example, *Al-Thawra*, 4 February 1969.
17 E.g., *Al-Thawra*, 5 January 1969, 1 November 1978, 17 October 1990; *Al-Jumhuriyya*, 18 October 1978.
18 E.g., *Al-Jumhuriyya*, 14 May 1970; *Al-Thawra*, 17 April 1973; *Al-Thawra*

al-'Arabiyya, 1 March 1983, pp. 51–2; *Al-Qadisiyya*, 13 June 1990.
19 *Al-Qadisiyya*, 5 June 1996.
20 *Al-'Iraq*, 5 January 1999.
21 *Al-Jumhuriyya*, 18 November 1991; *Al-Qadisiyya*, 5 February 1992; *Babil*, 30 May 1992.
22 *Al-Jumhuriyya*, 18 May 1983, 12 November 1987.
23 *Alif-Ba'*, 17 January 1996.
24 *Alif-Ba'*, 14 June 1995.
25 *Al-Qadisiyya*, 10 April 1990.
26 *Al-Thawra*, 30 September 1998.
27 *Al-Ittihad*, 16 February 1999.
28 S. al-Khalil, *The Monument: Art, Vulgarity and Responsibility in Iraq*, London, 1991, p. 13.
29 *Al-'Iraq*, 1 October 1999.
30 R. Baghdad, 30 January – DR, 31 January 1979.
31 Iraqi News Agency (INA), 25 October – SWB, 27 October 1979.
32 *Qadisiyyat Saddam*, 7 January 1983. This line fits in with the PLO line, prevalent at the time, that Oriental Jews could remain in Palestine.
33 *Al-Thawra*, 11 February 1986.
34 *Al-Thawra*, 3 April 1990.
35 *Al-Jumhuriyya*, 18 July 1999.
36 *Babil*, 12, 18, 20, 26, 27 April 1993.
37 Voice of Iraqi People, 3 June – DR, 5 June 1995.
38 *Babil*, 31 March 1998 (DR).
39 See e.g., *Al-Musawwar al-'Arabi*, 20, 27 February 1999; *al-Ittihad*, 16 February 1999; *Babil*, 3, 28, 30 January, 1, 8, 11, 20, 23 February 1999.
40 For a discussion, see O. Bengio, 'Crossing the Rubicon: Iraq and the Arab–Israeli Peace Process', *MERIA*, vol. 2, March 1998, pp. 36–46.
41 *Babil*, 21 January 1992.
42 *Al-'Iraq*, 6 March 1989.
43 See for example the Egyptian Amin al-Mahdi, *Azmat al-Dimuqratiyya wal-Salam*, Cairo 1999; and the Kuwaiti of Palestinian origin, Shafiq Nadhim al-Ghabra, *Isra'il wal-'Arab: min Sira' al-Qadaya ila Salam al-Masalih*, Beirut, 1997.

10

THE IMAGE OF JEWS AND THE STATE OF ISRAEL IN EASTERN BLOC MEDIA

Angelika Timm

The Soviet press repeatedly portrayed Israel as a 'base of American imperialism' or a 'dangerous bridgehead of imperialism in the Middle East';[1] Zionism was described as an ideology 'based on the dogma of racial exclusiveness' advocating 'the expulsion of all non-Jews from the 'Promised Land'.[2] These stereotypes appeared not only in Soviet media but also in newspapers and journals of other Eastern bloc countries. Did the anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist positions change over more than four decades? What was the ideological and political background for shaping official attitudes toward the Jews and the Jewish state? Was there any difference between the Soviet Union and the other so-called socialist states?

General aspects

When analyzing the image of Jews and the state of Israel in Eastern bloc media, one cannot ignore the fact that press, television and radio in these countries more or less reflected official policy. Therefore several ideological and political factors should be taken into consideration.

The approach of the ruling communist parties to anti-Semitism, Zionism and Israel was based on the Marxist-Leninist approach to the so-called 'Jewish question'. According to this ideological doctrine, communists regarded anti-Semitism and the persecution of Jews as an economic and political problem of feudal and capitalist societies that was effectively resolved in socialist society. It was expected that the assimilation process which had started after the French revolution in Europe and was stopped by the Holocaust would continue. Ignoring

Jewish history and tradition, Jews were characterized only as a religious group. This implied condemnation of racist Nazi ideology as well as the rejection of Zionist aspirations. Anti-Semitic and racist propaganda was officially forbidden, but old anti-Semitic stereotypes remained alive and were sometimes even strengthened.

Decades before the establishment of the State of Israel, Marxism and Zionism fought for the soul of European Jewry. While communists emphasized class identity and class struggle aimed at the socialist revolution, Jewish nationalism favored national identity and propagated the idea of Jewish emigration to Palestine. The ideological struggle was not over after the Second World War but continued. Soviet analysts consistently opposed Zionism as a bourgeois nationalist ideology which was contrary to the interests of the Jewish working class.[3] In East European countries, Zionism became a code word for imperialism and racism. The multifaceted political scene in the Zionist movement was overlooked.

Beside the ideological aspects, some political, strategic-military and economic aspects played an important role. After the Second World War, the Middle East became of critical importance in the context of East–West rivalry and in Moscow's global role. Having emerged as a superpower, the Soviet Union sought not only to weaken the power of the West but also to lay the groundwork for an extension of its influence in the region. The Cold War thus influenced to a great extent the attitudes of the Soviet Union and the other East bloc countries towards Israel and other Middle East states.

Soviet economic interests in the area were linked to oil and energy needs as well as to the export of weapons and other industrial goods. Beside economic interests, there was always the political aspect. As the largest producer of oil in the world and the world's second largest exporter of oil, the Soviet Union had an interest in influencing the oil prices and the flow of oil to the West. In addition to that, the Soviets used economic and military aid to establish a client system in the Third World. Israel for its part was never considered an important economic partner; on the contrary, there was fear that trade with Israel could endanger trade relations with the Arabs and other Third World countries. It was not until the 1980s that East European countries showed any interest in getting access to Western technology with the help of Israel.

Last but not least, the domestic policy of the Eastern bloc states should be taken into consideration. In an effort to prove legitimacy, the ruling communist parties tried to convince the citizens of their countries that it was necessary to fight the 'imperialist enemy' all over

the world. Israel which identifies itself as part of the Western camp and cooperated with the United States, West European countries and South Africa, was considered 'an instrument of imperialism's economic and political penetration of the developing countries of Africa and Asia'.[4] While the Warsaw Pact condemned the global policy of imperialism, its members declared solidarity with the struggle of the oppressed nations – with the Vietnamese people, the Arab national movement and, especially, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The ideological offensive was based on the general principle of 'the joint struggle' of all progressive forces 'against imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism and Zionism'.[5]

The above mentioned ideological and political components determining the Middle East policy of East European countries and their attitudes towards Israel and the Jews were relevant for all of these countries. The communist leaders of Bulgaria, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary supported the foreign policy of the Soviet Union believing and/or announcing that in so doing they acted in their national interest and in the interest of their peoples. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) dominated decision making in the Warsaw Pact and it was not until the 1980s that the governments of the above mentioned states attained some political latitude and were able to modify their foreign policy.

Despite these points in common, there existed some important differences resulting, first of all, from the specific domestic situation in the East European countries. The Jewish communities in the Soviet Union, Poland, Rumania and Hungary were the target of official anti-Semitic policies as well as of Zionist and Israeli efforts to bring about their emigration to Israel. In this context, Israel became an integral component of domestic politics. Especially in the 1950s, but not only during these years, Jews were portrayed as dissidents, anti-government activists and potential allies of the West. Zionist activities were strongly forbidden. At the same time, anti-Zionist statements issued by Jewish citizens of East European countries were used for justifying official positions.

As far as the GDR (East Germany) was concerned, it was mostly the German factor which shaped attitudes towards Israel and the Jews. East German politicians declared the GDR an antifascist state that 'had broken once and for all with all hostile and inhumane traditions of chauvinism, racial and national hatred and anti-Semitism'.[6] Racist and anti-Semitic propaganda were officially forbidden. At the same time, the GDR government denied the guilt of all Germans for the Holocaust and refused to enter into negotiations on Jewish material claims,

declaring that the reparations were defined by the Allies to compensate for damages perpetrated by Nazi Germany, and that the East German government derived its responsibility from the Potsdam Agreement. Compensation to be paid by the East German government to individuals living in Western countries or to the Israeli government was rejected on the grounds that it would strengthen 'imperialism' and, moreover, could only be done at the cost of reparations to Moscow.

Another factor was the relationship between the two German states. In its efforts to break through the West German Hallstein doctrine[7] and to be recognized as an independent and sovereign state, the GDR searched for and found desired support in some Arab countries. It sided with the Arabs in the Middle East conflict and attacked Israel as a 'spearhead of imperialism' in the region. With the visit of Head of State, Walter Ulbricht, in 1965 and the establishment of diplomatic relations with Iraq, Sudan, Syria, South Yemen, and Egypt in 1969, the first steps were taken toward worldwide recognition of the GDR. By 1989 the East German state maintained full diplomatic relations with 13 Arab countries and the PLO, but it never established diplomatic relations with Israel.

Although the above mentioned internal and external components determining the relations between East European countries and Israel did not basically change until 1990, the actual relationship to Israel did undergo some changes. There appear to be four main periods:

Support for Israel and neutrality in the Middle East conflict (1948 – 1956)

During the early years, the East European countries did have political, economic, and cultural relations with Israel. The Soviet Union recognized the Jewish state immediately after its foundation; weapons were airlifted from Czechoslovakia to Israel during the War of Independence in 1948/49. The Soviet press supported the establishment of the state of Israel in May 1948 and attacked the Western powers, especially, Britain, for trying to prevent a just solution of the Palestine question. *Pravda* published on 18 May 1948 the Soviet telegram which extended official recognition to the Israeli state and its provisional government. It said:

> The Soviet Government believes that the creation by the Jewish people of its sovereign state will serve the cause of strengthening peace and security in Palestine and the Middle East and expresses confidence that friendly relations between the USSR and the State of Israel will develop successfully.[8]

The other communist parties in Eastern Europe followed the political line of the Soviet Union. *Neues Deutschland*, the mouthpiece of the SED in East Germany, wrote for instance: 'The Jewish population has the sympathy and active assistance of all progressive forces. In particular the democratic forces in Germany are compelled to show their sympathy and readiness to help'.[9] During the War of Independence the same newspaper wrote:

> The young State of Israel provides us with proof that a people with its own forces can build a life in social justice. The alliance formed during the period of Hitlerian barbarity between the victims of political and racial persecution has to prove itself anew in the defence of the young Jewish state against the fire-raisers of war.[10]

In January 1949 the East German weekly 'Weltbühne' even praised the Israeli army which had been able to throw back the invaders – Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.[11]

But the honeymoon between the East European countries and Israel did not last very long. The overwhelming reception Golda Meir, first Israeli envoy to the USSR, was given by 20,000 Soviet Jews upon her arrival in Moscow on 11 September 1948 aroused Stalin's concern. The dictator foresaw internal conflicts and perceived the danger of growing Jewish aspirations for national independence and emigration. A few weeks later, *Pravda* published an article, written by the Jewish writer Ilya Ehrenburg, explaining that Israel was a capitalist state and could have no attraction for anybody living in the USSR:

> The working people in Israel enjoy the sympathy not only of the Soviet Jews but of all Soviet people. [...] But the citizen of a socialist country cannot find anything attractive in the fate of a people weighted down by the yoke of capitalist exploitation. [...] I think that the working people of the State of Israel, who are far removed from the mysticism of the Zionists, [...] are now looking to the North, to the Soviet Union.[12]

During the last years of Stalin's dictatorship show-trials with an openly anti-Semitic character were organized in East European countries. The media reporting of the Slansky trial in Prague in 1952 and the Doctors' Plot in Moscow in 1953 became openly anti-Semitic and anti-Israeli. *Rudé Pravo*, the official organ of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, opened an offensive against Zionism and Israel: 'The

diplomats of the bourgeois State of Israel have become spies on the payroll of American imperialists and have organized a diversion in the Czechoslovak Republic on behalf of their American employers, causing Czechoslovakia serious harm'.[13]

In East Germany, leading politicians used the anti-Zionist campaign in order to justify their positions regarding the compensation issue. It was not by chance that the first article in the SED newspaper *Neues Deutschland* responding to the Luxembourg Agreement on Reparations, signed by Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany in September 1952, was published only in November – three days after parts of the indictment in the Slansky trial were printed. The article under the headline 'Reparations – For Whom?' spoke of 'a deal between West German and Israeli big capitalists'.[14] In February 1953, the SED monthly, *Einheit*, published an article approved by the SED Central Committee called 'The lessons of the trial against the Slansky conspiracy'. It was said, among other things that 'the Zionist movement has nothing in common with the aims of humanity and true love of mankind. It is dominated, directed and commanded by US imperialism, it serves exclusively its interests and the interests of Jewish capitalists'.[15]

After the death of the Soviet dictator in March 1953, the relations between the East European countries and Israel normalized to some extent. It was not until the mid-1950s that the Soviet Union clearly took the side of the Arab countries and condemned Israel as an 'aggressor state'.

Between the Suez campaign and the Six Day War (1957–1967)

The Soviet Union and the other East European countries, without East Germany, maintained diplomatic relations with Israel until the Six Day War in June 1967, but relations cooled significantly after the Suez Campaign in 1956. During the first days of the war the media attacked, first of all, the imperialist powers, Great Britain and France, for misusing Israel for their purposes. But it was not long before Israel became the main target of propaganda attacks. The Jewish State was characterized as an aggressive-imperialist nation; Soviet support for the establishment of Israel in 1947/48 and for its admission to the United Nations in 1949 was no longer mentioned. *Izvestia* wrote on 29 November 1956:

> From the very first days of its appearance on the international stage, the State of Israel has threatened its neighbours,

> followed an unfriendly policy toward them, and socialists of the Ben Gurion type act out slogans of extreme, aggressive Zionism, placing themselves fully at the disposal of imperialist forces and serving them in all possible ways. The rulers of Israel have become the gendarmes of the colonial powers in the Arab East'.[16]

The same day the newspaper published a resolution of protest 'against the Anglo-French-Israeli aggression against Egypt' signed by 25 rabbis and heads of Jewish communities in the Soviet Union.[17]

During the 1960s, the Soviet Union supported national-democratic regimes in Egypt, Syria and Iraq and it attacked the United States and Israel for their 'imperialist policy in the region'. During that period the East Germans searching for diplomatic recognition in the Third World and especially among the Arab countries published stronger anti-Israeli views than most of the other East European countries. When the Chairman of the GDR State Council, Walter Ulbricht, visited the United Arab Republic (UAR) at the invitation of President Gamal Abdul Nasser from 24 February to 2 March 1965, their joint communiqué condemned 'the aggressive imperialist plans that led to the establishment of Israel as a spearhead of imperialism directed against the rights of the Arab nations and their struggle for liberation and progress'.[18] International protests, including criticism by the Communist Party of Israel, were ignored.

The escalation of the Middle East conflict in the mid-1960s was accompanied by articles in the Soviet press which were characterized by a more and more aggressive anti-Israeli orientation. *Pravda* wrote on 20 July 1966: 'Israel's provocations are directed against tranquility and peace in the Middle East and against the Arab national liberation movement'.[19]

A few weeks before the Six Day War in 1967, the Soviet press published several articles about Israeli preparations for war,[20] continued Israeli troop concentrations on the Syrian border[21] and Israel's threats to Egypt.[22] On May 25 *Pravda* published a photo showing 'Israeli armed forces preparing for war against the Arab countries'.[23]

Period of confrontation (1967 – 1985)

After the Six Day War, all Eastern European countries with the exception of Romania broke off diplomatic relations with Israel. They condemned 'the imperialist aggression of Israel' and accused 'the United States and West Germany of being accomplices of the aggressor'.[24]

Several newspapers did not hesitate to compare Israeli policies with the policies of Nazi Germany. *Komsomolskaja Pravda* wrote, for instance 'The notorious principle of 'extension of *Lebensraum*' lay at the basis of the aggressive acts of Hitlerite Germany against the European states. The same principle has been elevated to the status of state policy by Israel'.[25] Political cartoons published in Soviet newspapers portrayed Israelis in an anti-Semitic manner; the repeatedly quoted linkage between Israel and 'World Jewry' stressed anti-Semitic stereotypes.

After 1967 Soviet policy was characterized by a clear pro-Arab and anti-Israeli point of view concerning the Middle East conflict and by political support for the Arab countries and especially for the Palestinians. After the Middle East War of October 1973, the Eastern bloc granted the PLO not only political but also military support; the PLO was recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and PLO offices were opened in the capitals of socialist countries.

As far as Poland and Czechoslovakia are concerned one must underline the direct linkage between foreign and domestic politics which found its expression in 1967 and 1968. In the mid-1960s anti-Semitic tendencies in Poland were strengthened; the interior minister established a special 'Jewish department' in order to hold 'suspicious, antipatriotic' elements under control; there was an explosion of anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist articles. Party rallies demanded that Jews identify themselves and confess their collaboration with 'Zionist provocateurs'.[26] There was no direct linkage between the anti-Israeli policy of the government and anti-Jewish measures, but after the termination of diplomatic relations with Israel in 1967 attacks against Zionists and other 'antipatriotic elements' reached a new peak. Between 1969 and 1970 about 17,000 Jews left Poland and went to Western Europe, the United States or Israel.

When Alexander Dubček in the spring of 1968 declared his intention to transform the socialist society of Czechoslovakia into 'communism with a human face', quite a number of Jews supported him hoping for serious political changes. The victims of the anti-Semitic trials of 1952/53 were rehabilitated and plans were revived for the millennium celebration of Prague Jewry. But after the invasion of the Warsaw Pact in August 1968, a new anti-Zionist campaign started. The media wrote about a conspiracy between Czechoslovakian dissidents, the United States, Jewish organizations and Israel. Articles published in the Czech press on Zionist attempts to change the political order in Czechoslovakia also appeared in the East German *Neues Deutschland*. Similarly, one

could read on 25 August 1968 that 'Zionist forces had taken over the leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party'.[27]

At the end of the 1960s and during the 1970s, a fierce anti-Zionist campaign was waged in all East European countries. At their meeting in Moscow in 1969 the representatives of more than 70 communist and workers' parties condemned 'racism and national discrimination, Zionism and anti-Semitism' as means used by the reactionary capitalist forces to disorientate the working masses.[28] The international campaign could not hide the fact that domestic issues were more important than foreign affairs considerations. The campaign was 'made in the Soviet Union' because of an explosion of Jewish applications for emigration to Israel.[29] On 13 January 1970 *Pravda* published eleven letters written by Soviet Jews who declared that they were loyal Soviet citizens and did not want Israel to involve itself in their affairs.[30] Two months later a press conference was held on Middle East issues where V.E. Dymshitz, a Jewish member of the Soviet parliament, attacked Zionism as 'the ideology of the big Jewish bourgeoisie'.[31] The same day – 4 March 1970 – about 50 Jews signed an anti-Zionist resolution.[32]

Essays on 'the ideology, organization and practice of Zionism' were published in Moscow and distributed in all socialist capitals, characterizing Zionism as follows:

> Modern Zionism is a ramified system of organizations and the ideology and practical politics of the wealthy Jewish bourgeoisie which has closely allied itself with monopoly circles in the USA and other imperialist countries. The main content of Zionism is bellicose chauvinism and anti-communism.[33]

The 'Israeli ruling circles' were characterized as 'junior partners' of international Zionist organizations, like the World Zionist Organization and the World Jewish Congress.[34] At the same time, the Soviet media stressed the equality enjoyed (in various fields) by the Jews in the USSR.[35]

In 1975, the East European countries condemned Zionism as a form of racism at the United Nations plenary meeting. Their representatives strongly supported the UN resolution on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, approved on 10 November 1975. This resolution implicitly identified Zionism with racism and racist persecution. The Soviet News Agency TASS justified the UN resolution as 'a legitimate and just condemnation of the aggressive Zionist doctrine'; this statement was also distributed as a guideline for propaganda in the other socialist countries.[36] During the following weeks and months

dozens of articles were printed condemning 'aggressive and chauvinist Zionism' as 'a racist doctrine'.[37]

The 'New Thinking' of Gorbachev (1985–1989)

It was only after 1985 that some East European countries made some timid overtures toward normalizing relations with Israel. It was the 'new thinking' of Gorbachev in the years 1985–89 that brought some changes in the field of foreign policy. It gave the Soviet allies more latitude and promoted a clear recognition of political realities. Among other things this meant realizing that Israel could no longer be ignored as an important political, military, and economic factor in the Middle East. Moreover, it was evident by now that the severance of political relations with Israel by the socialist camp in 1967 and the boycott of the Jewish state had not promoted peace in the Middle East but had hindered it.

The Soviet Union declared the Middle East a zone of its vital interests, but recognized at the same time the legitimate economic, political and cultural interests of other countries including the United States of America. East European countries were interested in renewing their diplomatic relations with Israel hoping to improve their relations – especially their trade relations – with Western Europe and the USA. Gorbachev used the visit of Syrian president Hafiz al-Asad in April 1987 to declare that 'the absence of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Israel cannot be considered normal'.[38] The first Soviet consular delegation arrived in Tel Aviv in July 1987.

As far as the Soviet press was concerned, a mass of articles was published on the above mentioned subjects – covering anti-Israeli and pro-Israeli statements. The official press – *Pravda* and *Izvestia* – was eager to draw a more moderate picture than during the previous decades. Reporting the *Intifada*, (the Palestinian uprising), comparisons between Israeli and Nazi tactics were either more subdued or absent – in contrast to the Middle East wars of 1967 and 1982. Attention was given to different political forces in Israel; not only peace activists but also different opinions in Likud and Labour were mentioned.[39] For the first time, the newspapers referred to the security issue as 'vital' for Israel. *Pravda* wrote on 25 April 1987 of the 'right of the state of Israel to live in peace and security'.[40]

The policies of *Glasnost* and *Perestroika* were also linked to the lifting of restrictions on Jewish emigration. Encouragement was given for the revival of Jewish religious and secular institutions; Jewish national and cultural associations were established. At the same time, a wave of

anti-Semitism arose; anti-Semitic organizations were established and Jews were forced to leave the Soviet Union.

It was clear that there had been a change of official policy in the Gorbachev era when the media reported not only signs of normalization between Israel and the Soviet Union, Hungary and Poland, but also covered the visit of leaders of Zionist organizations to the capitals of these countries. Edgar M. Bronfman, the President of the World Jewish Congress was welcomed by leading politicians in Moscow, Budapest, Warsaw, and East Berlin. When he visited East Germany in October 1988, he openly advocated the building of 'bridges [...] between the GDR and the people and government of the Israeli state'. At a press conference in East Berlin, he said he 'had been given the impression that a certain renewal in the relations between the two countries is seriously being considered'.[41] The public took some notice of these statements, but no doubt realized that East Germany, in contrast to some other East European countries, made only minor efforts to improve its relations with Israel.

Conclusion

In the East European media for many decades Israel received attention far exceeding its newsworthiness, size or influence. The coverage of no other country came close to it. The Israeli state was accorded this special attention because it became, in a symbolic sense, an integral component of Soviet domestic politics. The second reason for one-sided anti-Israeli media reports and publications was linked with the Cold War and Soviet ambitions in the Middle East. Israel became an integral part of the Western world in the early 1950s and cooperated with the United States and Western Europe while some Arab countries showed interest in cooperation with the Eastern bloc. For decades, the press made Zionism and Israel symbols of 'imperialism', 'aggression' and 'racism'. The picture drawn was one-sided and caused people to equate Jews with Zionists and Israelis.

It was only the 'new thinking' of Gorbachev in the years 1985–1989 that brought about some changes in the fields of Soviet domestic and foreign politics and influenced the image of the Jews and Israel in all East European countries. It was, more or less, a pragmatic policy, aimed at *détente* with the West and access to American trade and technology. Still, it opened the gates of the Soviet Union for Jewish emigration and lead to the re-establishment of diplomatic relations. The process of rapprochement influenced the media and allowed it to draw a more differentiated picture of Israel and the Zionist movement.

Notes

1 See *Voprosi Ekonomiki*, no. 4, 1951, p. 94; *Novoje Vremja*, no. 27, 1 July 1967, published in Russian, English, German, French, Spanish, Polish, and Czech, always quoted according to the German volume, p. 4.
2 L. Dadiani, 'Zionism: Ideology and Practice of Racial Discrimination' in *Zionism: Past and Present*, Moscow, 1976, p. 6.
3 G. Nikitina, *The State of Israel: A Historical, Economic and Political Study*, Moscow, 1973, p. 309.
4 Y. Ivanov, *Caution: Zionism*, Moscow, 1970, p. 112.
5 The phrase of the necessary 'joint struggle' of all progressive forces 'against imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, and Zionism' could be found in several communiqués signed by East German and Arab or Palestinian official representatives from the late 1960s up to the 1970s. Cf. Angelika and Wolfgang Bator, eds., *Die DDR und die arabischen Staaten* (*The GDR and the Arab States: Documents 1956–1982*), Berlin (GDR), 1984, pp. 142, 146–7, 153, 155, 157, 161, 168, 170–1, 193, 197, 220, 228, 232, 234, 252, 263, 266, 268, 290.
6 'Message of greeting by Erich Honecker to the Association of Jewish Communities in the GDR', *Beware lest the nightmare recur. A documentary account published by the Association of Jewish Communities in the GDR*, Berlin (GDR) 1988, p. 47.
7 Walter Hallstein, State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, had declared in 1955 that his country would break off diplomatic ties with any country establishing relations with the GDR.
8 *Pravda*, 18 May 1948; see I. Strizhov, 'The Soviet Position on the Establishment of the State of Israel' in Y. Ro'i, ed., *Jews and Jewish Life in Russia and the Soviet Union*, London, 1995, p. 313. See also *Novoje Vremja*, no. 22, 1948, p. 11 and no. 24, 1948, p. 1f.
9 *Neues Deutschland*, 24 February 1948.
10 *Neues Deutschland*, 29 June 1948.
11 K. E. von Schnitzler, 'Und wieder: "Die Juden sind schuld . . "' (And again: 'The Jews are guilty. . .') in *Weltbühne*, 1949, p. 87f.
12 *Pravda*, 21 September 1948.
13 Quoted by *The Jerusalem Post*, 24 November 1952.
14 *Neues Deutschland*, 25 November 1952.
15 'Lehren aus dem Prozess gegen das Verschwörertum Slansky' ('Lessons from the trial against the conspiracy center of Slansky') in *Einheit*, v. 8, no. 2, February 1953, p. 205.
16 *Izvestia*, 29 November 1956.
17 Ibid.
18 'Joint communiqué on GDR State Council Chairman Walter Ulbricht's visit to the UAR. 24 February–2 March 1965' in *Bator*, p 98.
19 *Pravda*, 20 July 1966.
20 *Pravda*, 15 May 1967, 16 May 1967, 23 May 1967.
21 *Pravda*, 24 May 1967, *Izvestia*, 21 May 1967.
22 See *Izvestia*, 25 May 1967.
23 *Pravda*, 27 May 1967.

24 Statement of the GDR Council of Ministers on Israeli aggression against the Arab countries. 7 June 1967 in *Bator*, p 111.
25 E. Evseev, 'Lakei na pobeguschkach' ('Lackeys at Beck and Call'), *Komsomolskaja Pravda*, 4 October 1967, p. 3. See also *Novoje Vremja*, no. 26, 1967, p. 4.
26 H. M. Sachar, *The Course of Modern Jewish History*, New York, 1990, p. 601.
27 *The Use of Antisemitism against Czechoslovakia*, London, 1968, p. 11.
28 *Internationale Beratung der Kommunistischen und Arbeiterparteien Moskau 1969* (*International meeting of the Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow 1969*), Prague, 1969, p. 41.
29 From January 1968 to mid-1973 not less than 62,000 Soviet Jews arrived in Israel. See H. M. Sachar, op. cit., p. 626.
30 *Pravda*, 13 January 1970.
31 *Pravda*, 5 March 1970.
32 Ibid.; see also A. J. Klinghoffer, *Israel and the Soviet Union: Alienation or Reconciliation?* Boulder and London, 1985, p. 91.
33 Y. Ivanov, op. cit., p. 6.
34 Ibid., p. 7.
35 Jonathan Frankel mentioned that in 1970 alone almost 200 articles were published in the Soviet Union attacking Zionism, while another 115 took as their theme the equality enjoyed by the Jews in the USSR. Jonathan Frankel, 'The Soviet Regime and Anti-Zionism' in E. Mendelsohn, ed., *Essential Papers on Jews and the Left*, New York and London, 1997, p. 466.
36 See *Neues Deutschland*, 14 November 1975.
37 Cf. *Gegen Rassismus, Apartheid und Kolonialismus. Dokumente der DDR 1949–1977* (*Against racism, apartheid, and colonialism: GDR documents 1949–1977*), Berlin 1978, p. 351, *Berliner Zeitung*, 20 November 1975, *Neues Deutschland*, 14 November 1975, *Deutsche Lehrerzeitung*, no. 49, 1975, p. 4.
38 *Pravda*, 25 April 1987. See M. A. Goodman and C. McGiffert Ekedahl, 'Gorbachev's "New Directions" in the Middle East' in *MEJ*, Autumn 1988, vol. 42, no. 4, p. 576.
39 *Novoje Vremja*, no. 14, 1989, p. 16f.
40 *Pravda*, 25 April 1987.
41 *Neues Deutschland*, 19 October 1988.

11

THE PORTRAYAL OF PALESTINIAN ARABS IN THE MOSCOW YIDDISH MONTHLY *SOVETISH HEYMLAND*

Gennady Estraikh

The Moscow Yiddish literary journal *Sovetish heymland* (Soviet Homeland) was created in 1961 on the ruins of Soviet Yiddish culture which had been completely silenced and many of its prominent exponents exterminated during the Stalinist repression of the late 1940s and early 1950s. The journal, moulded as an organ of the Soviet Writers' Union, was launched to fulfil two main functions: (1) to silence those vociferous foreign activists, most notably Jewish communists, who were lobbying for Jewish cultural revival in the Soviet Union of the post-Stalinist era, and (2) to disseminate Soviet propaganda, particularly among Yiddish-speaking leftwingers, whose organizations still enjoyed some influence in Western countries, such as the United States, Canada, France, Israel, and Argentina. Thus, the journal immediately occupied the – hitherto neglected – Soviet Yiddish sector of the Cold War front, and its editor, the poet Aron Vergelis, soon became a seasoned Cold War Warrior.[1]

Originally the journal had a circulation of 25,000 copies.[2] Never in the history of the Yiddish press had a literary periodical enjoyed such a circulation. In effect, it was much more than a literary monthly (until 1965 bi-monthly). It included stories and poems but also essays on history, criticism, linguistics, art, folklore, anthropology, archival publications, bibliography and current events. Vergelis and his editorial staff were preoccupied with topics such as space exploration, the development of the virgin land in Kazakhstan, or Fidel Castro's revolution. Characteristically, international events were mirrored in poems rather than in articles, especially as many Yiddish poets knew very well how to rhyme Castro with Lenin.

Israel, let alone the Palestinian Arabs, remained a marginal topic in Soviet journalism of the early 1960s.[3] And for this Soviet Yiddish journal Israel was a particularly delicate topic. As early as 1929 when 64 Jews were murdered in Hebron, the Yiddish communist press had seen its first serious test with respect to the Palestinian Arab question. The New York communist daily *Morgn-frayhayt*, for instance, first condemned the massacre. However, a few days later the paper followed the directive of the Comintern – whose objective was to 'Arabize' the (predominantly Jewish) Palestinian Communist Party – and instead hailed the Arabs as 'fighters for national liberation'. As a result, the paper lost a number of its leading contributors and, in general, antagonized many of its supporters.[4] In the 1960s, too, in the Jewish communist world there was little agreement about the Middle East. For instance, Paul (Pesakh) Novick, editor of the *Morgn-frayhayt*, saw Israel as a product of the successful struggle against British colonialism. He proclaimed his allegiance to Israel (to *an important* rather than *the central* Jewish community) and condemned Gamal Abdel Nasser's anti-Israeli rhetoric.[5] Novick and his circle's position essentially mirrored the Soviet position of the late 1940s, before the establishment and in the yearly years of the State of Israel, rather than the Soviet Union's later escalating friendship with the Arab world.

The problem was that the Yiddish communist organizations in the West, such as the *Morgn-frayhayt*, regarded themselves as the midwives of *Sovetish heymland* and remained the main agencies for recruiting the few thousand foreign readers of the Moscow journal. Vergelis for the time being wisely avoided any political discussions concerning Israel and the Arab world. Nor did Israelis or Arabs appear in the literary works published in the journal. The handful of its Soviet contributors who once lived in Palestine were careful to avoid this topic which was fraught with difficulties. Therefore, the only alternative was to use a literary import.

In 1963 a significant part of the fourth number of the journal was dedicated to 'Works of the Progressive Writers of Israel'. The bulk of the selection had been translated into Yiddish by Pesakh Binetski, a former Polish left-winger who survived the Second World War in the Soviet Union and later – using repatriation to Poland as a means – settled in Israel. Among the seven 'progressive writers', Hanna Ibrahim, with her story 'Smugglers', represented Israeli Arab literature. The story described how an innocent Arab woman and her old father were killed on the Israeli-Jordanian border because they were suspected of being spies. At the same time, the writer underlined the idea that Jews and Arabs could live peacefully if only their leaders did not create an

atmosphere of mutual distrust and hatred. Jewish-Arab friendship in left-wing Israeli circles was exemplified by the poem 'To My Friends – the Arabs', written by Akhiem Noyf. Binetski, too, had written poems about the Arabs, about the lot of all disadvantaged Israeli citizens. Two such poems, called 'Ibrahim', had been translated into Russian and published in the journal *Aziia i Afrika segodnia* (Asia and Africa Today), issue 10, 1963. The *Sovetish heymland*, however, published his 'generally progressive' poems.

In issue 4, 1963, the journal finally published its own Arab-related production – the poem 'An Arab in Moscow', written by Ziama Telesin and dedicated to Tawfiq Toubi, a member of the Knesset and a leading member of the Israeli Communist Party. Telesin's poem is a typical example of lyrics written to order. It is obvious that the poet knew very little about Arabs in general and his hero in particular. Therefore he employed a few cliches of the popular imagination: 'a white kerchief (*keffiyeh*)' and a 'black woven hoop' on the Arab's head, and the 'Muslim awe' which the communist guest felt when he approached Lenin's Mausoleum. Of course, the poet did not forget that 'his brother' was a 'dark-skinned Semite' and that they both boasted the same origins. But the most striking stereotype emerges in the following quatrain:

er heybt zikh barg-aruf tsum altn kreml ...
un s'hot zikh oysgedukht mir af a rege,
az kh'ze im zitsn af a hoykhn keml,
vos vigt zikh af di zamdn funem negev.

He is going uphill to the old Kremlin ...
And suddenly it seems to me for an instant
That I'm seeing him sitting on a tall camel
Swaying on the sands of the Negev.

In the early 1960s, Soviet media presented Israel as a vanguard state of imperialism and colonialism, as a country where its toilers, led by the communists, struggled for their rights and some of them even re-emigrated to the Soviet Union. A separate problem represented Israeli tourists coming to the Soviet Union; they were usually portrayed as bearers of beguiling information.[6] Much attention was also paid to the problems of the water-supply in the Middle East. Soviet journalists pictured Israel as an essentially *Jewish* racist country where the Arab minority played the role of the indigenous population, like Indians in America, Aborigines in Australia, or – a rather frequently used analogy –

the Black population in South Africa. The Kishinev-based Russian daily *Sovetskaia Moldaviia* (Soviet Moldova) had on its staff a regular reader of the Paris Yiddish communist paper *Naye prese* (New Press). In one article reprinted from *Naye Prese* called 'A Victim of Fanaticism and Nationalism' (16 May 1964), *Sovetskaia Moldaviia* reported the tragedy of Dina Dali, an Israeli girl, killed by her relatives who could not forgive her a love affair with an Arab.

The *Sovetish heymland*, however, followed the division of labour in the Soviet media of those days and did not take part in the anti-Israeli campaign of the 1960s. Significantly, the *Sovetish heymland* never sent its journalists or writers to Israel. Soviet journalists generally visited Israel very seldom. But even when they did go to Israel and then wrote about it, Arabs appeared rarely, if at all, in their travel accounts. For instance, in 1964 the highbrow weekly *Literaturnaia gazeta* (Literary Newspaper), the central organ of the Soviet Writers' Union, published in its two issues, on 27 February and 7 March, an article 'A Trip to Israel: A Journey in the Year 5724' by one V. Komissarzhevskii. The author went to Israel as a member of the Soviet delegation, dispatched to a congress of the (communist) Friendship Movement 'Israel–USSR'. Such delegations usually either did not include any Jewish members at all or had only one, token Jew. A non- or minimal-Jewish composition of Soviet delegations to Israel guaranteed their 'objectivity', and avoided any danger of defection, while underlining the fact that they represented all the Soviet peoples and came to Israel as friends of all her peoples. (Incidentally, Jewish students were usually not allowed to study Hebrew at Soviet universities.) For all that, Komissarzhevskii mentions only the names of Jewish intellectuals they met in Israel: Berblum, Klausner, Saltzman ... The Arab Israel figures in the form of 'shapely Arab women with jugs on their heads', which is an old stereotype of Arab women,[7] and 'speeches of our Jewish and Arab friends'.

In 1966 a Jewish journalist eventually visited Israel. His name was Shloma Rabinovitsh, and he worked for the Agency Press Novosti. An experienced Yiddish and Russian journalist, he specialized in providing Jewish-related material for pro-Soviet foreign media, particularly for such Yiddish communist newspapers as the New York *Morgn-frayhayt* and the Warsaw *Folks-shtime*. He was also a contributor to the *Sovetish heymland*. Rabinovitsh came to Israel together with the Moscow football team Spartak which played a couple of friendly matches with an Israeli team. To my knowledge, it was the only visit of a Soviet Jewish professional journalist to Israel during the whole pre-*perestroika* period. (The first group of journalists representing Soviet Jewish periodicals was allowed to go to Israel only as late as January 1990.[8]) The *Sovetish*

heymland (issue 6, 1966) published Rabinovitsh's travel log 'Moscow–Tel Aviv'. Characteristically, his (patronizing) depiction of the country left the reader with the impression that the writer had not met any Arabs at all. No doubt, such a disregard for the Arab population had nothing to do with the writer's sense of observation. Rabinovitsh certainly knew what was what politically and his 'blindness' clearly illuminates that in the pre-Six-Day-War period Palestinian Arabs were not an issue for the Agency Press Novosti – one of the main Soviet providers of information. It is also hardly a coincidence that the 1965 collection of Russian translations of Israeli writers' stories, published by the Moscow Publishing House Progress, confined itself to works by Jewish (Hebrew and Yiddish) authors.[9] Moreover, in Vergelis's introduction the word 'Palestinian' is reserved for the pre-State of Israel period.

The Six-Day-War and its aftermath dramatically changed the position of *Sovetish heymland*, and the whole Soviet literary establishment with respect to Israel. The Cold War's Jewish sector which had remained relatively quiet until now livened up. Still, the anti-Zionist radicalization of the journal did not happen overnight. In any case between 1967 and 1969 the journal was not involved in any sharp political confrontations. Instead it concentrated on other campaigns, such as the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution (1967), Sholem Aleichem's 110th anniversary (1969), and Lenin's 100th anniversary (1970). Apparently, Vergelis and his supervisors needed some time to understand what was going on in what remained of Western Jewish communist circles which had been thrown into confusion by the Six Day War, the anti-Semitic campaign in Poland and the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. The radical change in the position of *Sovetish heymland* occurred only in 1970.

In March 1970 Moscow launched an unprecedented anti-Zionist campaign. On 4 March of that year Vergelis appeared among an assorted group of Soviet Jewish personalities in a resounding press conference devoted to the situation in the Middle East. In issue 6, 1970, the journal published materials of a meeting in Haifa between Jewish and Arab intellectuals, including the writers Samih al-Qassim and Mahmoud Darwish. In issue 8, 1970, the journal reported the second meeting. In issue 9, 1970, fifty-nine Soviet Yiddish writers appealed to their colleagues around the world to help establish peace between the Arab countries and Israel. Significantly, Vergelis always wished to stress that his journal castigated the policy of the Israeli government as opposed to the people and culture of Israel. Also, he never printed openly anti-Semitic caricatures of hook-nosed 'Israeli aggressors' which inundated the Soviet press.[10]

Many Soviet literary periodicals took part in the anti-Zionist campaign. For example, *Novyi mir* (New World), the elite Russian literary journal in its January 1971 issue published an article by the Israeli journalist Hans Lebrecht which drew a parallel between Israel and the Third Reich. A similar parallel drawn in the June 1978 issue of *Sovetish heymland* provoked indignation even among the editors of the Paris *Naye prese*, which was normally loyal to the Moscow journal.[11] Some *Sovetish heymland* contributors, most notably Lionel Dadiani and Grigorii Bondarevskii, made a living as writers of prosy, quasi-academic articles, unmasking the Zionists' wrongdoings. Arabs, however, appeared in such anti-Zionist writings as extras, playing the role of a backward, disorganized population which could not properly defend itself against a small but modern Israel. Paradoxically, Jews represented arguably the most attentive readers of anti-Zionist publications. Reading 'between the lines', they sifted out information about Jewish history and the situation in Israel.

Hardly any sensible information about the Palestinian Arabs can be found in the travelogue written by the Russian writer and Second World War hero Vladimir Karpov, who visited Israel as the head of a Soviet delegation.[12] As always, the delegation met a few communist activists, such as Tawfiq Zayyad, a Central Committee member and the mayor of Nazareth, and the second-in-command Israeli communist, Tawfiq Toubi, the former 'Arab friend' of Ziama Telesin (the latter, incidentally, emigrated to Israel in 1971 and took an active part in anti-Soviet campaigns). More information about Palestinian Arabs appears in the reports written after two other similar visits: the journalist Igor Beliaev and the historian Andrei Beliaev published a detailed travel account in the three autumn issues of 1986, whereas the well-known Russian writer Sergei Baruzdin condensed his report into a short essay, published in issues 9, 1987. (In issue 8, 1970, Baruzdin, then a correspondent of the central Soviet daily *Pravda* appeared in *Sovetish heymland* with an article on Egypt.) The Beliaevs, for instance, took notice of the peculiar semi-urbanization of Israeli Arab villages, which was caused by the forced concentration of the Arab population. Baruzdin described his meeting with two Arab writers, who 'came illegally from the occupied territories'. Both reports mention various cases of mistreatment of Arabs.

In May 1982 *Sovetish heymland* published a selection of works by Palestinian writers: a story by Rashad Abu Shawir, poems by Fadwa Tukan, Samih al-Qassim, Tawfiq Zayyad, Rashid Hussein, Muin Bsisu, Mahmud Darwish and Salim Jubran, as well as a few articles and essays.

These group of authors represented the circle of the most important Palestinian literary periodical *al-Jadid* which was published by the Communist Party of Israel.[13] The centerpiece of the selection was Abu Shawir's story 'Lament on the Beloved's Breast', translated into Yiddish by the master stylist Iekhil Shraibman. Of course, Shraibman did not know any Arabic; he used the Russian text, published in issue 1, 1981, of the Moscow journal *Inostrannaia literatura* (Foreign Literature), the most prestigious outlet for literary translations.

It is interesting to compare the two publications of Abu Shawir's story. The *Inostrannaia literatura* introduces the writer (born in 1942), the Russia translator and the story proper to its reader, explaining the setting in which the action took place. The *Sovetish heymland*, on the other hand, did not bother with such information. Its introduction to the Palestinians' works consisted of a page with two appropriate quotes from Leonid Brezhnev's speeches and an editorial note, stating:

> The editors have invited contemporary Palestinian Arab literature to the pages of *Sovetish heymland*, thereby endeavouring to express a feeling of international solidarity with the heroic fighters for the legitimate rights of the fraternal Arab people of Palestine. We hope that our readers in the Soviet Union and other countries, including the State of Israel, will appreciate that Soviet Jewish writers have translated into Yiddish the works of embattled Palestinian writers.

The editorial also underlined that the Jewish writers saw their work 'as a contribution to [the Palestinian Arabs'] just struggle that is in the interests of all the peoples of the world'. In all, this sounds more like an act of solidarity than a literary exercise.

In any case, for the *Sovetish heymland* reader Abu Shawir's story became the only portrayal of Palestinian life in the whole three-decade-long history of the journal. Interestingly, the story chosen for the *Sovetish heymland* – and previously for the *Inostrannaia literatura* – was a publication which concentrated on inter-Arab relations and which mentioned the Zionists only a few times. The story is set in 1972 and 1973 in Damascus and Beirut with some flashbacks to the 'Black September' of 1970 in Jordan when King Hussein's army began a full-scale war against Palestinian military groups. The action of the story ends in May 1973 when the Lebanese Christian militia stormed the Palestinian camps of Sabra and Shatila.

Shawir's characters are young intellectuals who combine their literary activities with fighting against Jordanian and Lebanese soldiers.

They also despise the Palestinian establishment for pursuing selfish financial and career interests, often at the expense of ordinary people. One of the characters even argued that some of the Palestinians were no better than the Zionists. The protagonist, Ziad, is also a playwright. He nurses the idea of writing a historical play about the Tribe of Judah. Forty years of wandering in the desert has hardened the tribe. Ultimately, after losing their chief, Moses, the tribe – now lead by Joshua – besieged Jericho, a Philistine town, whose king, Goliath, was disliked by the people of the town. The Philistines lost the battle because they were divided and had no proper leaders. Their popular, charismatic leader is a poet; he and his beloved Rahab (canonically known as a prostitute who assisted Joshua to conquer Jericho) try to organize a resistance movement among the surviving citizens of Jerichoe and other Philistines.

No doubt, many of Shawir's allusions found a receptive ear among *Sovetish heymland* readers. First, unity as the key to success was always an important component of the Soviet outlook. Lack of unity, for example, explained why Franco's fascists won the Spanish civil war. It was also conventional for a poet to be a popular leader. What the general Yiddish reader certainly could not understand was Shawir's allusion to the Palestinian mythology about their origin from the Philistines. Also, only readers with a good knowledge of the Bible would have understood the apocryphal elements of the play, such as the heroizing of Rahab.

Shawir was apparently keen to discuss the role of women in modern Palestinian society. No doubt, he was against such customs as 'honour killing' – the murder of women who had lost their virginity before marriage. His ideal was an intellectual, chain-smoking woman-fighter. For all that, premarital sex 'defiles' such a woman. Still, *one* affair can be forgiven by a such a progressive, open-minded man as his protagonist Ziad. However, a female student who slept around was killed in Sabra – predictably the only possible ending for this lost soul. The *Sovetish heymland* reader could easily understand such indigenous forms of patriarchy. Even if it was too conservative for a Soviet urbanite living in the Slavic and Baltic republic of the Soviet Union, it corresponded to the familiar traditions of Soviet Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Parallels between the Arab and Soviet Muslim worlds were natural for Soviet people of any descent. It is illuminating, for example, that the Soviet literary critic Leonid Terakopyan, 'tempted by the idea of placing the literatures of Soviet Central Asia in a broader geographical context', was happy to read the novel *The Road of Men* by the leading Kazakh writer Anuar Alimzhanov, whose protagonist, a Kazakh archeologist

and an embodiment of 'pan-Orientalism', travels to Iraq and Syria, and later witnesses Israel's invasion of Beirut.[14]

The literature of Soviet Central Asia and the Caucasus found much more place in *Sovetish heymland* than Palestinian literature. In fact, the journal's very first issue contained translations of the Kirghiz prose writer Chinghiz Aitmatov and the Avar poet Rasul Gamzatov from Dagestan. True, these and many other similar Yiddish translations targeted mostly the non-Soviet readership, because they 'recycled' previous, easy of access Russian translations (Aitmatov and Gamzatov, for example, were among the most widely-read Soviet writers). On the other hand, the journal from time to time published translations of the works tailored to Jewish readers. Such is the story 'Dzhokhid' (meaning 'Jew') by the Turkoman writer Seyitniyaz Ataev, published in issue 1, 1969. Ataev's protagonist recalls his experience as a Soviet POW in a German concentration camp. During a selection parade he, a circumcised Muslim, was mistakenly identified as a Jew. In the Jewish barracks he became friends with an engineer, who had solved a technical problem for a peat-cutting machine and asked the Turkoman POW to preserve his invention. In an improbable turn of events, the scheme explaining the breakthrough in peat-cutting had been tattooed on the narrator's back and thus survived the war.

Events behind another of these 'tailored' publications even inspired Dina Rubina, a popular Russian Jewish (now Israeli) writer, to write an excellent story, 'Apples from Shlitsbuter's Orchard' which related how she was asked by an Uzbek writer to deliver to the *Sovetish heymland* editorial office his story – a sample of 'out-and-out internationalism'.[15] Indeed, this story, 'Listen, Zakirdzhan', by Sukhrob Mukhamedov appeared in issue 3, 1982. Its internationalist pathos consisted in the life-long friendship between two Tashkenters, the Uzbek Zakirdzhan and the Jew Mikhail – and Mikhail and his family's rejection of emigration to Israel. Mukhamedov is so full of friendship towards Jews that he even makes a *Russian* woman – Mikhail's in-law – play the role of the evil person who agitates for the emigration.

Although *Sovetish heymland* was not a mainstream Soviet publication, it exemplifies the Soviet mass media's treatment of the Palestinian Arab problem. On the one hand, myriads of articles and TV and radio hours were dedicated to condemning Israel as an outpost of imperialism, racism and colonialism. On the other hand, hardly anything was done to create a perceptible image of Palestinians, apart from portraying them as a featureless, backward population, which was constantly victimized by the Israelis. Vergelis, who often travelled in Europe and

America, never visited Israel or Arab countries. Only in May 1988 did Shimen Sandler (albeit an academic rather than a journalist), visit Israel as a member of the Soviet delegation, invited by the Friendship Movement 'Israel–USSR'. Like Rabinovich in 1966, Sandler (whose report appeared in issues 5 and 6, 1989) failed to mention any Arabs at all. In fact, by that time, with Gorbachev's *perestroika* in full swing, there was no need to condemn Israel. The media was no longer strictly controlled by the central authorities, and Vergelis stopped his anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian propaganda, thus proving the acquiescent nature of the journal's anti-Israeli campaign. Characteristically, Lionel Dadiani, the tireless writer of anti-Zionist books and articles, suddenly changed topic and, in issue 11, 1990, directed his bile against the Russian anti-Semitic organization Pamiat.

All in all, the pro-Palestinian campaign in the Soviet media in general and in *Sovetish heymland* in particular did not leave any tangible traces in the outlook of Soviet Jews. It is hard to comprehend the real objectives of the Soviet apparatchiks, who orchestrated the pro-Palestinian publications. It is clear, however, that they were under something of a delusion if they thought they could rouse sympathies for a 'fraternal people' by barraging Soviet readers with ideological publications without creating an appealing cultural context for the friendship. Such a context, for example, has been successfully created in the 1960s for the friendship with Cuba: Soviet people sang about Cuba, watched Cuban films, danced the Rumba, drank (even if with aversion) Cuban rum, and smoked (for the sake of curiosity) Cuban cigars. Cuba – the Island of Freedom – was associated with Ernest Hemingway, who was so popular in the country that some critics called him 'the main Russian writer of the 1960s'.[16] Palestinians, on the other hand, did not exist in Soviet cultural or material life. Yassir Arafat – the only recognizable Palestinian – certainly did not radiate Fidel Castro's or Che Guevara's charisma. Thus, lack of cultural links with Palestinians reduced all the media's efforts to another Sisyphean toil of Soviet propaganda.

Notes

1 For the establishment of *Sovetish heymland*, see G. Estraikh, 'Aron Vergelis: The Perfect Jewish Homo Sovieticus' in *East European Jewish Affairs*, vol. 27, no. 2, 1997, pp. 3–20; M. Chlenov, 'Puteshestvie iz Birobidzhana v Moskvu: Reabilitatsiia iazyka idish v SSSR, 1956–1961' in *Tirosh*, vol. 4, Moscow, 2000, pp. 248–67.

2 See G. Estraikh, 'The Era of *Sovetish heymland*: Readership of the Yiddish Press in the Former Soviet Union' in *East European Jewish Affairs*, vol. 25, no. 1, 1995, pp. 17–22.

3 For a panoramic representation of the Middle East in Soviet periodicals see *Jews and the Jewish People: Collected Materials from the Soviet Press*, published in the 1960s and 1970s in London by Contemporary Jewish Library.
4 I. Howe, *World of Our Fathers*, New York, 1993, p. 34; E. Rekhess, 'Jews and Arabs in the Israeli Communist Party' in Milton J. Esman and I. Rabinovich, eds., *Ethnicity, Pluralism, and the State in the Middle East*, Ithaca and London, 1988, p. 123.
5 P. Novick, *Yisroel, tsionizm, un amerikaner yidn*, New York, 1961.
6 On the Israel tourists' activities in the Soviet Union see Y. Ro'i, *The Struggle for Soviet Jewish Emigration 1948–1967*, Cambridge, 1991, pp. 236–43.
7 Cf. M. Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, Cambridge, 1993, p. 150.
8 See G. Estraikh, 'Elf teg in Yisroel' in *Sovetish heymland*, 6, 1990, pp. 136–40.
9 *Rasskazy izrail'skikh pisatelei*, Moscow, 1965.
10 Cf. Y. Nir, *The Israeli–Arab Conflict in Soviet Caricatures 1967–1973*, Tel Aviv, 1976.
11 Estraikh, 'Aron Vergelis' in *East European Jewish Affairs*, vol. 27, no. 2, 1997, p. 12. For parallels between fascism and Zionism in the Soviet press see also 'Pravda: Zionism Equated with Fascism' in *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1984, pp. 71–5.
12 Apart from the journal *Sovetish heymland* proper (issues 4 and 5, 1981), in April 1982 it was reprinted as a supplement pamphlet to the journal.
13 Cf. Baruch Kimmerling and Joel S. Migdal, *Palestinians: The Making of a People*, Cambridge, Mass., 1994, 171.
14 L. Terakopyan, 'Studying the Map of the East' in *Soviet Literature*, 2, 1987, 149.
15 D. Rubina, *Odin intelligent uselsia na doroge*, St Petersburg, 2000, pp. 296–329.
16 P. Vail and A. Genis, *60-e. Mir sovetskogo cheloveka*, Moscow, 1998, p. 55.

12

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The virtual other in the Israeli–Russian web

Mikhail and Anna Krutikov

The study of the phenomenon of the Internet as a political media resource is still at the very early stage, and many methodological issues still remain unresolved. How can one assess the influence and effectiveness of Internet publications and discussions? How can one evaluate the degree of 'seriousness' of an Internet publication? Who sponsors a site and whose interests and opinions does it reflect? In spite of these concerns, it is clear that in recent years the Internet is playing an increasingly important role in Russian political life.

During the decades of the Communist Party's control over access to and production of information, the Soviet intelligentsia, and particularly its Jewish segment, developed peculiar forms of acquiring, distributing and creating news and opinions. It included reading 'between the lines' in the Soviet newspapers, listening to foreign radio broadcasts, 'kitchen talks' and producing *Samizdat* materials. Israel was at the centre of this underground Soviet Jewish discourse, with topics ranging from its role in international politics to Hebrew linguistics to minute details of everyday life. While information about Israel in the official Soviet media was scarce and unreliable, and comments and opinions were biased, most of the Arab countries had a reserved place in the official Soviet discourse as showcases of progressive cultural and political development. Probably in no other non-Arab country did the media and publishing industry pay so much attention to the contemporary Arab, and particularly Palestinian, culture as in the Soviet Union during the 1970s–80s. Books by Palestinian poets and studies of Arab–Palestinian culture were readily available in most of the bookstores, whereas of course virtually no books of Jewish or Israeli interest were to be found

except in a few major libraries with restricted access. All this created an impression that the culture of the 'Arab people of Palestine' (to use the official Soviet term), along with Cuban, Korean, Black South-African and other 'progressive' cultures, was largely sponsored by the Soviet Union and was not viable without Soviet support

The situation changed radically at the end of the 1980s, when the Communist grip on the Soviet media weakened, and many of the previously forbidden topics, Israel and Jews included, became subjects of hot debate in the press and on the television. The re-establishment of full diplomatic relations with Israel in 1991, and the opening of many offices of the Jewish Agency in the former Soviet Union prepared the way for Israeli and Zionist educational programmes, directed primarily at Jews in the post-Soviet countries, and since then the representational balance between Arabs and Israelis has been redrawn to the advantage of the latter. The Palestinian cause, and particularly the PLO and Arafat, are largely perceived as unreformed relics of Brezhnev's era, like Castro's Cuba and Kim Il-Sung's North Korea. The negative image of the Palestinian leadership in the eyes of the liberal Soviet intelligentsia in the early 1990s was enhanced by the widely advertised financial backing by Palestinian sponsors of anti-Semitic Russian newspaper, such as *Den'* and *Al-Kuds*. Most recently anti-Arab feelings have become part of the general anti-Islamic resentment among a large part of the Russian population provoked by the war in Chechnya and the increasing instability in Central Asia. Muslim fundamentalism, usually termed 'wahhabism' in Russian, is presented as the most dangerous variety of terrorism threatening the peaceful coexistence between 'traditional Islam' and other religions in the former Soviet Union. Today Russian nationalist propaganda often emphasises parallels between Israel, Serbia and Russia, representing them as strongholds of Western 'Judeo-Christian' civilisation resisting assaults by an aggressive Islamic civilisation, while careless democratic governments in Western Europe and America ignore the threat and flirt with the enemy.

The emergence of the 'political Internet' and the growth of access to it in Russia during the second half of the 1990s naturally led to the creation of several Russian sites devoted primarily to Jewish and Israel-related topics although these themes are regularly discussed on the mainstream Russian sites as well. Our purpose here is confined to an analysis of some Russian Internet publications of the years 2000–2001, which deal with Jewish-Arab relations and are produced by authors living both in Russia and Israel. As the nature of the Internet differs in many aspects from more conventional media such as books, periodicals, radio and television, no specific tools have as yet been developed for

proper analysis of this phenomenon, and we shall therefore be obliged to rely on conventional methodologies however limited and limiting their use in this case may be.

At first we would like to make a few general observations which may be helpful for understanding the nature of the Russian Internet community. A substantial number of people currently active in Internet journalism in Russia and Israel remember the period of censorship and limited access to information. To them, the Internet functions as a global 'virtual kitchen', a playground where one can freely share views and ideas, argue, provoke and sometimes irritate. Russian political Internet has dozens of lively publications of different persuasions, some directly or indirectly sponsored by the government or government-affiliated agencies, others by various politically active groups and personalities with various degrees of opposition. Unlike the more conventional media, Internet publications are all equally accessible to anyone with an access to an Internet provider. They all operate in the same densely populated virtual space, saturated with cross-references and links. In this situation presentation of events and opinions has to be clear, concise and constantly updated. As 'Russian–Jewish' sites operate within the same space as other Russian sites, it is only natural that there are many links among them.

To my knowledge, there are about a dozen sites which regularly report and comment on the situation in and around Israel. They mainly offer news but often provide some background information and express opinions. Two or three sites (http://www.ijc.ru, apparently supported by the Russian–Jewish Congress, and http://www/sem40.ru sponsored by 'Provintsiia' press) also monitor Russian media and make available Jewish-related materials. The overwhelming majority of sites are of a right-wing nationalist orientation; the more moderate support Ariel Sharon and his policy, the more extreme criticise him for continuing Ehud Barak's line of appeasing Arafat. One of the clearest formulations of the view on the Arabs taken by the majority of Russian–Jewish Internet publications is taken from an interview with a certain Igor Tribelskii, introduced as 'the author of the bestseller *Jerusalem: A Mystery of Three Millennia*':

> To begin with, there is no people with such a name [Palestinians]. There are however Arabs who speak the same language as the rest of their brothers (the Syrian dialect which differs substantially from the Egyptian or Iraqi dialects). They have the same food, traditions, customs, culture and internal structure, based on the concept of 'hamula' – a large family or

a clan. Just like Arabs in Syria and Lebanon, they may be Christian (Orthodox, Catholic, Syrian, etc.) or Muslim (mainly Sunni). Many of them came to the Land of Israel in the 9th century, while the majority came in the 20th century. This 'nation' left no trace in history, no mark on the past.

We, the Jews, returned to the Land of Israel only because of History, which received an unprecedented sacralisation in the Holy Book we created ... The main aspiration of the 'Palestinians' is not only to create their own state, but to replace Israel ... Jews make the most convenient enemies. They pity the conquered, feel guilt towards the aggressor ...

Is the 'peace' process peaceful? From the very beginning it was pregnant with war, and we are now witnessing its labour pains. It is important to note the moral aspect of this process, to see who promises and gives what to whom. We give the 'Palestinians' land, which they never owned (everyone has forgotten, that in 1967 the West Bank was taken away not from them, but from Jordan, who had occupied it in 1948, and who did not build schools or hospitals for its Arabs, let alone universities. It was Israel, who took 'Palestinians' out of the Middle Ages in the 20th century). Besides land we give money (it is not Arab counties who finance the autonomy, but Israel and the sponsors it manages to convince).

I am asked, what are the Palestinians' rights? I do not know, I am a Jew ... I am profoundly certain of the historical justice of my people.[1]

Tribelskii makes a number of points which are common for the majority of Russian–Jewish Internet publications and, indeed, for the Israeli Press in Russian:

1 There is no Palestinian nation – Palestinians are part of a larger Arab nation and particularly part of its Syrian-Jordanian sub-ethnic entity.
2 The development of national consciousness among Palestinians and their aspiration to have a state of their own with the capital in Jerusalem are projections of Zionist ideology. The successful realisation of the Zionist project in Israel provided Palestinians with a role model.
3 Palestinians have no historical rights on the land they call Palestine. Jews have a deep historical right, even though they did not live in that land for many centuries.

4 Palestinian Arabs are better off in Israel where they enjoy economic prosperity and civil rights than under the authoritarian Arab regimes.

These points reflect the tone dominant in discussions of the current political situation in Israel amongst Russian–Israeli journalists. Representatives of the more extremist wing place special emphasis on the mythological aspect of the problem, where these radical Jewish nationalists find common ground with the Russian ideologues of 'Eurasianism', a theory according to which the whole world is divided into two irreconcilably hostile civilisations, the 'Insular' or 'Atlantic', and the 'Continental'. The former is characterised by economic mercantilism, political liberalism, democracy, and aggressive colonialism, whereas the latter is based on the values of conservatism, patriarchy and peaceful coexistence within an authoritarian empire whose borders are determined by nature. Russia and China represent the continental type of civilisation, whereas Britain and America are insular. This ideological complex, which some Russian observers dubbed 'soft fascism', has recently gained some currency among the Russian political elite, although it remains confined to the sphere of fringe demagogy and does not affect official policy and decision-making. Thus, *The Financial Times* published an article about the movement's founder, Alexander Dugin, describing him as 'a formidable mastermind of global empire'.[2]

The Eurasian movement attempts to present itself to the public as a non-nationalistic, territory-based ideology. Here all 'traditional' nationalisms can peacefully coexist united but apart, resisting the common enemy, American imperialism. Even though such views are fully dismissed as delirious by mainstream public opinion in Israel and the West, their exponents, such as Avigdor Eskin, the scandalous Russian–Israeli follower of Meir Kahane, sentenced to a prison term in Israel for acts of anti-Arab violence, find a receptive audience in their country of origin. Thus, Eskin reiterates a number of points in his article in the influential albeit idiosyncratic *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (incidentally, owned by Boris Berezovsky, the Russian media tycoon of Jewish origin). Like most of the right-wing journalists, Eskin stresses the fundamental similarity between Israel and Russia:

> It is important to note the fact that even officially, Jerusalem refused to condemn Russia for its military actions against Chechen bandits, despite the position taken by the USA and other Western countries … In fact, the recent events in the Middle East, which have triggered an unprecedented wave of

> anti-Semitism in the West (the most powerful one since the Second World War), have not caused a single anti-Jewish incident in Russia. The similarity between the fighters of Basaev and Khattab and the rebelling Palestinian warriors of the sword of Muhammad is all too obvious.[3]

Russia is thus the only country capable of understanding and supporting Israel's side in this conflict. The USA, representing the opposite end of the spectrum, is the main culprit of the Middle Eastern crisis, keen to promote and implement its own version of world order:

> In the last ten years, Israeli liberals advocate the idea of 'Post-Zionism' – a locally adapted view of the new world order – and 'end of ideology' – made in USA. The liberals bury the heroism of the first settlers together with the past ... Israel's military triumphs that had astonished the world, are relegated to the past, while peace in its American interpretation becomes the window to the future ... Americanisation versus Zionism: this is the essence of the fight for the future of the Jewish state.[4]

The only way out of the present predicament according to Eskin is in the return to the 'traditional values' of Judaism and Zionism, a model which he, paradoxically, believes the Arabs have embraced. This return can be brought about by ideologically motivated Jewish settlers supported by the broader masses of immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Arab countries. It is important to note here a duality of vision central to all discussions and evaluations of the 'Arab question' on the Russian–Israeli Internet. Arabs unquestionably pose the main threat to Israel's very existence. And yet, paradoxically, they are also the Jews' natural allies and role models in the struggle against American liberalisation and denationalisation that threatens to overrun Israeli government (the distinction between Jews and Israelis is important in the context, the former upholding the cultural and moral heritage, and the latter readily submitting to American domination). Exponents of Eurasianism exploit this paradox, proclaiming their desire to unite all extremist movements in the struggle against 'Atlantist centrist' liberalism. Eskin goes on to elaborate on this ideological battle:

> The process of subjection to American interests is met with increasingly strong opposition. The Jewish settlers in Judea, Samaria and Sector Gaza, threatened by forced deportation if

> the 'peace process' under Washington's aegis continues, are loudly asserting their rights. These Jewish Cossacks are made up mainly of traditionalists who despise the American way of life and the American mentality. For them, the 'new world order' is not a vague slogan, but a real threat to life as they know it in their houses and settlements. Today, the majority of the nation supports them.[5]

The logic of Russia's ascendance to glory dictates the forging of traditionalist alliances to act against the mondialists (Americans in Eurasianism's terminology). The strengthening of Israel's Zionist and religious foundations may change the way it is perceived by many sceptics and enemies, such as India or Iran. Israel's military potential makes it an attractive ally in any large geopolitical alliance. All of these factors would allow the Jewish state to find new friends, were it to break its relations with Washington.

Within the context of the struggle against liberalism which seeks to conquer the world, supporters of the Eurasianist movement propose two models for Israel's future: either a 'Middle Eastern Switzerland', or part of a 'Eurasian confederate empire':

> Had Peres seen the New Middle East not as a 'Middle Eastern Switzerland', but as a Jewish confederate empire, where 'Jewish democracy' would also have to undergo some changes in order to fit in – his project may well have been successful.[6]

Following this second model, the ideological, political and historical differences between Israel and the neighbouring Arabs are superseded and obscured by a common extremism of their nationalist (read 'anti-mondialist') convictions. This view expresses the essential ambivalence of Eurasianists' perception of the Arabs. On the level of current political affairs, Palestinian Arabs have become identical to Chechens, and the Arab–Israeli conflict is reminiscent of Russia's war against Chechnya, a war sanctioned in the eyes of the Eurasianists by its ultimate goal of preserving Russia's territorial/imperial integrity. At the same time, in the battle of civilisations that is Eurasianism's world view, the Arabs have embraced the extremism of 'the right side'. On the one hand, Arafat and his supporters are used by America and act against their own best interests. Instead of recognising the Jewish historical and religious right to live on their land and accepting Jews as their brothers, Arabs, together with the Westernised Israeli liberal elite, play opposing parts in a farce called the 'Peace Process' which should lead, according to the

American master-plan, to the full dissolution of nations and religions in a uniform liberal cosmopolitan community 'Erev rav' [the great mixture]. The self-destructive conflict between Jews and Arabs over Palestine can never be resolved on the basis of shared 'liberal' values. At the same time, however, Jews and Muslims should realise their need to unite in the face of the common enemy of 'mondialism', which threatens to erode and thus destroy the traditional foundations of their respective collective identities.

This view is reiterated by a certain Rabbi Avrom Shmulevich, a Hebron settler who actively participates in various activities of the Eurasianist movement in Russia:

> Judaism has no irrevocable metaphysical contradictions with Islam. We have a conflict regarding a certain territory, which we consider ours on legitimate, Biblical grounds. Moslems have been living there for a long time, and do not want to leave. This conflict can be resolved through peaceful or military means. Historically, they are always combined. But these conflicts do not concern fundamental issues. By the same token, alliances are made not with Islam or Judaism, but with a specific regime. The Islamic world is by no means homogeneous. Even in Chechnya you are not fighting Islam. Relations with the Turks and relations with Arabs are very different. And besides these, there is also India, Pakistan, Indonesia. Wahhabites are active in Chechnya and Uzbekistan. But they are also active in Israel. American mondialists use religious trends to achieve their own ends. Kosovo is a clear example of this tactic. America needs this hotspot to pressure its European competitor. Kosovo, filled with drugs, is acting as a pocket dog that the mondialists can let out the moment Europe stops behaving itself. The Palestinian autonomy has the same role. America is exerting pressure on Israel to leave the land it has conquered, so that Tel Aviv can be bombarded by cannons from the hills of Judea. The Arab world around Israel is fully controlled by America. If Israel becomes obstinate, there will be bus explosions on the streets of our cities. And it would be a big mistake to blame these explosions on a metaphysical conflict between Islam and Judaism.[7]

Rabbi Shmulevich is an active participant of the Eurasianist movement in Russia, even going to the extent of giving an interview to the notoriously anti-Semitic newspaper *Zavtra* published under the title

'Russians and Jews Against the Oligarchs'.[8] He has been known to support anti-Semitic allegations made by various editors and journalists, but places the blame squarely on the cosmopolitan ruling elite of Israel, whose collaboration with America will bring the Jewish people to ruin.

The information network of Russian settlers is closely connected with the general Israeli information resources of right-wing and nationalist orientation. Russian sites often make use of and refer to English and Hebrew-language sites and publications. The Arabs here are represented as the enemy, and the predominant feeling is that there can be no compromise between two claims on the same land. There is a consensus among Russian–Israeli settlers that the Land of Israel in its entirety should belong to the State of Israel. These materials stress the unity and interconnection of all Israelis and emphasise the role of the settlers. Describing the opening of a new shopping centre in the West Bank settlement of Karnei-Shomron, the Russian journalist Eli Lichtenstein approvingly quoted the minister of security Uzi Landau:

> Karnei-Shomron is not only a place to live. It is the meaning of life, it's a worldview, it's working for a great goal, it is true Zionism. Today, you find yourselves at the heart of the war with terrorism. At the time, when some parts of the population, living by the sea, have come away from Judaism and Zionism, when these people's conscience has been perverted, you show a beautiful example of stalwart courage ... If you had not created your settlements, there would long be a 'Palestinian' Arab state here, and the seaside valley would end up in a fiery trap. This is why I, living in the Shfela, came here not to help you, but to absorb some of your strength and optimism.[9]

Russian sites maintain close monitoring of Arab-related sites and use them as their main source of information. They often reproduce the most virulent anti-Israeli articles in Russian translation, as well as providing links to Palestinian sites in Russian and English. The information portal rjews.net includes these links under the special rubric 'Know Your Enemy'.

The anti-Israeli texts serve a double purpose. On the one hand, they demonstrate that there can be no peace between the two peoples because the Arabs will never agree to the existence of the Jewish state. On the other hand, these incitements of anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic feelings serve as a source of inspiration. The Arabs' militant rejection of compromise, readiness to die for such values as nation, religion and land are taken as examples to be imitated by Jews. To quote Michael

Karaivanov's article *'Voz'memsya za ruki, druzya'* (Friends, let us hold hands):

> '*Jihad* is the essence of faith'. This is a quote from the *Hadith*, a collection of legends from the time of the founders of Islam. The word '*Jihad*' today is the main slogan of our cousins, the Arabs.
>
> I respect our Arab brothers, and think that they are created in the image of the same Invisible God that we believe in, and who took us out of Egypt three thousand years ago. I have great respect for their culture and philosophy and for the Quran they follow. In some sense (and with some tension), I can even say I love them, as I love all the other people on earth.
>
> But more than that I love my brothers, my friends, and my family, the people of Israel. And for the sake of this love that is beating in my heart (together with the ashes of six million), I am ready to go to war. More than that, I want to fight and die in this war. Such are the paradoxical rules of the game that Jews refuse to understand: to live in peace today, one must be ready to fight and die.

Karaivanov believes that Russian immigrants in Israel are better prepared for the coming hardships than the liberal Israelis among whom they live:

> Despite all the problems of the Russian *Aliyah*, we have a unique experience, and great advantages in understanding the situation in Israel today. Let us begin with small things. Remember, that even in a hopeless situation, the smallest step towards the truth will help save the dignity, and sometimes the lives of people in trouble. Start 'living without lies', tell yourselves the truth.

The only adequate response to the Arab threat of *jihad* is the religious 'war by commandment':

> The 'peace process' is helpless against Jihad. But the Jewish tradition does provide an adequate response to *Jihad*: '*Milhemet-mitzvah*', the holy war for the salvation of the Jewish nation, and it is the duty of every Jew to participate in it. We, immigrants from the former Soviet Union, could add

> our own emotional experience, based on the slogans of the Second World War. Today in Israel, the literal meaning of the words 'Motherland in danger' is clear as never before.

He finds support for his argument in the writings of the prominent twentieth-century Jewish theologian Rabbi Soloveichik:

> Rabbi Joseph-Dov Soloveichik, a remarkable leader of American Jewry in the 20th century stressed the fact that, when all Arab states unite to annihilate Israel, the war with them becomes the fulfilment of the commandment about war with Amalek. This assertion, surprising for many people, is based on the fact that Torah's commandment 'Erase the memory of Amalek' has two aspects. The first one concerns the individuals belonging to the ancient nation of Amalekites, the deadly enemy of the Jews from the time of exodus from Egypt. The second aspect concerns Amalek as a whole, Amalek as the embodiment of hatred of Israel.

He comes to a conclusion:

> Following this interpretation, one can conclude, that the war with Hitler's Germany was 'war with Amalek' in traditional Jewish terms. The same can be said for Israel's wars against the Arab states that try to annihilate it.[10]

Characteristically, Russian–Israeli journalists use linguistic idioms and conceptual references from the Soviet past: the Second World War slogan 'Motherland in Danger', as well as references to the 'unofficial', but nevertheless widely known writers, Alexander Solzhenitsyn 'zhit' ne po lzhi' (not to live by lies) and Bulat Okudzhava, 'Voz'memsya za ruki, druzya' (friends, let us take hands). Use of these references is meant to stress the sense of unity and solidarity among the Russian immigrants – as opposed to the external enemy, the Arabs, and the internal 'fifth column' – the liberal, left-wing Israeli establishment. Russian immigrants emerge as the true spiritual heirs not only of the religious tradition of Biblical Israel but heirs of the political tradition of genuine, uncorrupted Zionism (not surprisingly, Vladimir Jabotinsky is one of the most referred-to figures) as well as the idealism and readiness for sacrifice of the Russian intelligentsia.

The perception of the Arabs in Russian–Jewish/Israeli Internet sites is two-fold. On the one hand, the Arabs are the enemy, and 'Palestinian'

becomes synonymous with 'Chechen' or 'Afghani'; the participants of Russian–Israeli forums (such as the ones maintained by http://www.judea.ru) are often veterans of these wars, and add the bitterness of their experience to the discussion of the current conflict 'Arabs are scoundrels. But they are patriots. We cannot live together'.[11] On the other hand, in common with the position held by Dugin and his supporters, the settlers feel a certain affinity with their Arab neighbours, at times even preferring them to their own government. The Arabs' uncompromising readiness to sacrifice everything to their cause and their extremism should be embraced by the Israeli government, or so feel the settlers. This reluctant admiration is further strengthened by memories of the Soviet Union and the imperial worldview practised there. Despite themselves, immigrants from the former Soviet Union still see themselves as part of a large and powerful empire with a central role in global politics. From this position, many of them find it easier to identify with the sheer size and power of Arab-controlled territory and authoritarian regimes than the small liberal State of Israel entirely at the mercy of, and dependent on, the West. This sense of solidarity with Arabs, the common values the two groups share and the fundamental resentment of America are mixed with profound antipathy: it is a strange amalgam, redolent of the sentiments of the earlier settlers.

Despite, or perhaps because of the relatively short time Russian immigrants have spent in Israel one can discern some parallels between their perception of the Near East in general and its inhabitants in particular, and that of the pioneers of the Second and Third Aliyah who came to Palestine after the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 respectively. It is no accident that contemporary Russian–Israeli journalists often refer to the idealistic spirit of early Zionism associated mostly with the Second Aliyah. As Gila Ramras-Rauch (1989) tells us in her study of the image of the Arab in Israeli Literature, 'In much of the work of Hebrew writers at the beginning of the twentieth century, there is an ever-present fear of, and fascination with, the Arab. The early archetype contains the combined sense of the Arab as 'noble savage' and as constant threat'.[12] As she acutely notices further 'The Arab poses a challenge to the moral constitution of the Israeli', and this observation can be applied to the situation of today's Russian–Jewish immigrants. For them, the Arab exists as an archetype or as a mythological concept rather than as a concrete human being. Moreover, the humanity of the Arab is merely a surface, which hides his or her eternal mythological essence. Arabs are perceived as members of one uniform community, which puts its own interests before the interests of the individual. Paradoxically, this makes them dangerous and evil, but also real and

worthy of imitation. The words of Ramras-Rauch seem to be applicable to the image of the Arab in the consciousness of Russian Israelis:

> The mythic element can draw its patterns from biblical motifs – e.g. the struggle of two brothers vying for the privileges of the first-born; or the struggle between the one who is first-born and the one who is chosen. Classic myth, which does not accept compromise in its literary expression, is synoptic, timeless, whereas history is shaped and changed in the course of events. (1989: 205)

The connection between the Internet and the creation of contemporary mythology will no doubt provide material for a good deal of future study. This limited case study of the representation of the Arab on the Internet demonstrates that the Internet helps to create both effective instruments and conducive environments. It is extraordinarily open and very secluded at the same time and therefore ideal for the creation and dissemination of mythological images and explanations of reality. Post-Soviet society at large, and its Jewish segment, including more than one million immigrants who arrived in Israel over the past decade, have been formed by precisely this type of environment – one which is easily affected by new mythologies. These mythologies help to confront the painful, sometimes psychologically unbearable contradictions of this new reality and offer clear, simple, irrational – and therefore convincing – explanations.

Notes

1 http://www.ijc.ru/i_who3.html (accessed 11.08.2003).
2 C. Clover, 'Will the Russian Bear Roar Again' in *The Financial Times* (UK), 2 December 2000.
3 'Russko-yevreiskii simbioz nashih dnei'. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 01.30.2001, http://www.ng.ru/ideas/2001-01-30/8_simbioz.html
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
6 http://zvezda.ru/2000/10/28/israel.shtml (accessed 11.08.2003).
7 Ibid.
8 Avrom Shmulevich, interview by Alexander Prohanov, editor of *The Zavtra*. 'Russians and Jews against the Oligarchs', 27(344), 4 July 2000.
9 http://rjews.net/maof/lihtenshteyn/lihtensht7.htm (accessed 11.08.2003).
10 http://www.rjews.net/gazeta/karaiv.html (accessed 11.08.2003).
11 http://www.judea.ru/show_topic.php3?topic_id=685, entry #2 (accessed 11.08.2003).
12 G. Ramras-Rauch, *The Arab in Israeli Literature*, Bloomington, 1989, p. xi.

13

READING *THE GUARDIAN*

Jews, Israel–Palestine and the origins of irritation

Colin Shindler

According to the organisation 'Reporting the World', there were 4393 mentions of Israel and the Palestinians in the British press from the start of the Al Aqsa Intifada, 29 September 2000 until 20 March 2001.[1]

The coverage of the Intifada by *The Guardian*, in particular, during 2000 and 2001 was the subject of criticism and bewilderment on the part of many Jews in Britain and abroad. Although the paper had projected a pro-Palestinian orientation for many years[2] this was not a fundamental deterrent against reading the paper – its liberal Jewish readership had similarly argued that the Palestinians did have a case and a right to national self-determination. They continued to read *The Guardian* because it projected their broad world outlook despite the paper's *idée fixe* on Israel.

The Guardian had been associated with the Zionist cause for almost a century. Harry Sacher and its leader writer, Herbert Sidebotham, had both embraced the Zionist cause while working for the Manchester *Guardian* at the turn of the century. Together with Simon Marks and Israel Sieff, they transformed Manchester and the North of England into a nucleus of Zionist activity. Chaim Weizmann's appointment to an academic position in Manchester and the introductions provided to him by C.P. Scott, the *Manchester Guardian* editor, proved crucial to the development of the Zionist movement and the decision to formulate and then implement the Balfour Declaration. Scott's successors continued such support – especially as a reaction to the persecution and extermination of European Jews. Under A.P. Wadsworth who edited the *Guardian* between 1944 and 1956, enthusiasm for Zionism waned and was deemed to be 'an albatross slung around the *Guardian*'s

neck'.[3] Yet Wadsworth encouraged his foreign editor, Alaistair Hetherington to write about the Middle East. Hetherington was fascinated by the emotion, theatre and complexity of the Israel–Palestine struggle. He applauded 'the sheer drama of the Jewish success in building or rebuilding a homeland ... and at the same time wishing to see reconciliation of Zionist ambition with Arab rights'.[4] *The Guardian* thereby projected a balanced approach up to the Six Day War and beyond during Hetherington's sojourn in the editorial chair between 1956 and 1975. However, the departure from this position began on the eve of the Six Day War when the leader writer, Frank Edmead attempted to explain the Arab viewpoint:

> Non-Zionists may surely ask why if Jews claim the right to return after 2000 years, the Palestinian refugees have no such right after only twenty years.[5]

Edmead, a pacifist Quaker, believed that Nasser had been forced into action through Israeli reprisal raids. A parallel was drawn between Ian Smith's Rhodesia and Israel. Hetherington, however, took a contrary view and felt that Israel had been morally justified in responding in self-defence following attacks upon them.[6] Edmead parted company from *The Guardian* shortly afterwards but his leader which questioned uncritical support for Israel had broken the mould. It was later characterised as 'a dialectical half-nelson from which no subsequent leader-writer was able to escape'.[7] Hetherington's support for Israel remained steadfast until his retirement in the mid-1970s. Indeed, he refused to carry an advertisement styled as an 'open letter to the Jews of Israel and the Western World'. He rejected it on the basis that he did not agree with the contention that the government of Israel constituted a 'dire threat to world peace'.[8] After Hetherington's departure, the line on the Palestinians began to reflect the changing position of the British Left on Israel and in particular its support for Third World liberation movements including the PLO. The new line was clear as *The Guardian* later commented in its editorial on the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the state of Israel.

> And in the 1970s, before it was fashionable to do so, we pioneered the argument that there must be justice for the Palestinians[9]

However, the reporting of the Al Aqsa Intifada seemed to elevate the pro-Palestinian orientation to new levels. Several British Jews expressed

the view that there was a sense of advocacy, which took precedence over fair reporting – that this was not simply a struggle for justice for the Palestinians but a subtle delegitimisation of the state itself through selectivity of both facts and quotations.[10] The complexity of the Israel–Palestine conflict was often simplified into a polarisation between 'Zionist villains against Palestinian heroes'.[11] This, in essence, reflected the general Palestinian position during the Intifada of wishing to reject the Oslo Accords and to return not to 1967 but instead to 1948. The criticism of many Jewish readers was implicitly recognised by the editor's willingness to defend such coverage in an article in *The Jewish Chronicle*.[12]

The political culture of the 1960s and 1970s was reflected in *The Guardian* when a new generation was making its mark. The benevolent rule of five generations of the Scott family was drawing to a close. Alastair Hetherington's radicalism, 'more in the C.P. Scott mould' co-existed with 'this solid phalanx of left-wing leader writers'.[13] It was the era of the liberation struggles of small peoples such as the Vietnamese in a war against a superpower, the fight against apartheid South Africa and admiration for iconic individuals such as Che Guevara who personified an international struggle against first world privilege and injustice. The Irish struggle, first for civil rights and then for a united Republican Ireland, was also highly influential. Several of the leader writers were involved in protests about Vietnam and there was a general support for the reunion of the two halves of the island of Ireland.[14] The student revolts of 1968, the declaration of UDI in Rhodesia and the invasion of Czechoslovakia all left their mark. Above all, this was a search for a political identity by the postwar generation of the British Left in an era of decolonisation and emerging multi-culturalism. It also symbolised the freedom of theory without boundaries and constraints in contrast to the restrictions of state power as personified by the USSR and their allies.

The New Left of the postwar era differed from the Old Left in that its adherents were essentially of middle class origin and often students. It did not grow out of the ranks of the deprived and the oppressed. It was a movement based more on age than class. In one sense, it can be argued that *The Guardian*'s support for the SDP[15] at the beginning of the 1980s was similarly a separation from the practices of the Old Labour Party and a search for something new.

An academic observing the New Left on campus in the United States at the end of the 1960s commented that they had a keen sense of space but a poor sense of time.[16] They could identify with events and peoples thousands of miles from home, but insisted that such struggles had to be resolved now. In the context of the Israel–Palestine conflict, this

meant a selective understanding and knowledge of history. This observer of the New Left defined their broad perspective in early 1970:

> A social issue should not be subject to a direct evaluation. It should rather be viewed as a part of a world-wide struggle between two camps which represent for the political activist absolute good and absolute evil, as would God and devil for the religious believer. An issue acquires real meaning only from its relationship to this struggle: does it contribute to the victory of human progress and liberation, or does it serve regression and imperialism? Everything beyond this is a detail.[17]

In Britain, far left groups such as the Socialist Labour League, the International Marxist Group and the International Socialists attracted considerable numbers of young people who were unable to relate to the social democratic governments of Harold Wilson during the 1960s. It was also a period of distancing from the Communist Party in particular whose members were tainted as fellow travellers in downplaying or turning a blind eye to Stalin's crimes. It thus meant the reclaiming of Trotsky, Rosa Luxembourg and Gramsci.

The New Left fervently looked to the Third World which often created the distance from their own bourgeois origins. Many who did not subsequently go into full-time politics via the Labour Party became writers, academics and professionals in general. They often held fast to their views and did not have to face the choice of an expedient compromise when confronted with practice rather than theory. Thatcherism in the 1980s was undoubtedly a radicalising experience which forestalled any reconsideration and the political successes of liberation movements in Vietnam, Zimbabwe and South Africa further provided a vindication of the truth of longheld positions. Many Jews on the Left similarly identified with such causes and principles. However as Jews they carried in addition an understanding of recent Jewish history including two seminal events, the Shoah and the establishment of the State of Israel. This tied them as well to the Old Left, which had led the struggle against fascism and antisemitism. Thus *The Guardian*'s editorial the day after the United Nations proposed the partition of Mandatory Palestine into two states in December 1947 expressed their view.

> It was Britain who created the Palestinian state; it was Britain who, by the Balfour Declaration, encouraged the Jews to

> found the national home; it is Britain who has ruled the country for 27 years as the Mandatory Power. Nothing has been done in Palestine without our permission and if things have gone wrong (as they have) we must share some of the blame.[18]

The Old Left essentially espoused the two state solution, according to UN Resolution 181 of 29 November 1947. Aneurin Bevan considered resignation from the Atlee government because of British policy towards a Jewish state.[19] Indeed, Bevanites such as Richard Crossman and Maurice Orbach acted as intermediaries between Nasser and Moshe Sharett. The New Left essentially rejected all this by hesitatingly embracing the idea of a democratic secular state which had been the broad position of the PLO in the late 1960s. In Palestinian eyes, this was not interpreted in universalist terms leading to the building of socialism but as an Arab national state in which some Jews would remain as a minority. The origin of the irritation of left wing Jews with *The Guardian* stems from this difference of understanding and interpretation. It is thus not merely a dispute over loaded or shallow journalism but one which posed a fundamentally different ideological outlook on Jews and the Jewish question and a different understanding of history.

The Israel–Palestine conflict was both different from and more complex than other struggles. Israel's victory during the Six Day War in 1967 turned the clock back thirty years on the question of the dimensions of the State. The Israeli Right argued that the original borders of the British Mandate including the East Bank (Jordan) had been sacrificed through two partitions in 1921 and 1947. The National Religious Movement adhered to one of several Biblical definitions of the borders of *Eretz Israel*, usually 'from the River of Egypt to the Euphrates'.[20] The acquisition of the West Bank in 1967 thus reopened schisms between left and right, between secular and religious, within Israel – all of which were reflected in the Diaspora.

The political culture of the 1960s catalysed the emergence of a Jewish New Left in the Diaspora which identified with Israeli groups such as *Siach*[21] and supported the Palestinian right to national self-determination. At the conference of the World Union of Jewish Students (WUJS) in Arad in 1970, a resolution was carried which recognised this right – 'it being understood that this right cannot be implemented at the expense of the right of the Israeli nation to live in peace and security within its own state'. WUJS significantly linked Zionism and Palestinian nationalism:

> Zionism is the national and also, by virtue of its territorialistic aspect, the social liberation and emancipation movement of the Jewish people; it is to be realised in Israel. This goal can only be realised if the national rights of the Palestinian Arabs are considered so that they may be recognised to be a consequence of Zionist ideology.[22]

The Jewish New Left in the Diaspora was by no means ideologically homogeneous. There were many who perceived Zionism as the central answer to the Jewish question, but there were also many others who took a different path. In Britain as in other countries, the Jewish Left was historically divided between those who identified their 'Jewishness' in mainly particularist terms and those who understood it in an overtly universalist and often assimilationist way. There were others who followed in the footsteps of Isaac Deutscher who came from traditional Jewish backgrounds and transcended it by immersing themselves in the Left. There were still others who forged a neo-Bundist approach such as the Jewish Socialist Group. The prime emphasis of such universalist Jews was the de-Zionisation of Israel which would be carried out by the Israeli working class. This view transcended borders: thus they advocated 'a united Arab–Israeli front against Zionism, imperialism and Arab reaction'.[23]

The emerging New Left in Britain was generally unsure how to treat the upsurge of Palestinian nationalism after 1967. The formation of *Fatah*, Arafat's take-over of the PLO, the Palestinian espousal of a neo-Maoist strategy all suggested that the Palestinian cause was part of the broad struggle against colonialism and imperialism. While their parents viewed the Jews as a persecuted people with whom they expressed solidarity, for the postwar generation, confronting fascism and antisemitism were not life moulding watersheds. But for the first post-Shoah generation of Jews in the Diaspora, however, this was not a backdrop, but recent if not living history.

The policies of successive Israeli governments since 1967 have no doubt created sympathy for the Palestinians as the underdog. But these views embellished those which had already emerged on the Left in the struggle against colonialism. Much of the material published on the Left at that time testified to a staggering lack of familiarity with Zionist ideology[24] and Jewish history *per se* and occasionally reflected the crudity of the anti-Zionist campaign in the Soviet press. The intellectual Left through *New Left Review* first attempted to analyse the Israel–Palestine conflict in an article[25] by Fawwuz Trabulsi in September 1969. It significantly remarked in its introduction that although it did not

'endorse all the theses in the text, we believe that it represents an important contribution to the development of a Marxist analysis of this question and of a revolutionary strategy for Israeli and Arab revolutionaries'.[26]. This was expounded upon in early 1971 by an article on 'The Class Nature of Israeli Society' [27] by members of the Israeli Socialist Organisation (*Matzpen*). The introduction commented:

> There can be few issues that have caused as much bitterness and disagreement on the Left as the nature of the state of Israel. For a long time it attracted the sympathy of many both because of Nazi genocide and because of the social character of the regimes it faced in the Middle East. However, 1956 showed it had an active collusion with Western imperialism, and after 1967 the rise of the Palestinian resistance movement refocused attention on the colonial and exploitative character of the Zionist state. But discussion of Israel has rarely been based on any class analysis of that society, and that confusion outside Israel has been compounded inside the country by the almost unanimous support of the Israeli working class for Zionist policies.[28]

In addition, a central factor in the adoption of a pro-Palestinian line was the presence of universalist Jews either as founders or as leading members of far Left groups which provided the analysis. It also provided, as a by-product, a bulwark against accusations of antisemitism.

Tony Cliff, founder of the forerunner of the Socialist Workers Party[29] analysed the situation in the Middle East in late 1967. He concluded that 'Israel is not a colony suppressed by imperialism, but a colon, settler's citadel, a launching pad of imperialism'. Significantly he made no mention of the Palestinians and their national movement. Cliff's solution was 'a workers' and peasants' revolution aimed at the establishment of a socialist republic with full rights for Jews, Kurds and all national minorities'. Previously, in Mandatory Palestine, Cliff was known as Yigal Gluckstein and had been a member of *Left Poale Zion* and *Ha'hugim Ha' marxistim* (the Marxist Circles) in the 1930s.[30] But the post-1967 Left was divided – in most cases along generational lines. Other luminaries of the Left such as Sartre and Marcuse took contrary views.[31] I.F. Stone understood it as a question of 'right against right' – a view which often espoused the two state solution of November 1947.[32]

Israeli anti-Zionists played an important role in guiding the New Left. *Matzpen* which had split from the Israeli Communist Party in 1962 gave primacy to the overthrow of Zionism in Israel by Israeli

revolutionaries. It significantly recognised the right of both Israelis and Palestinians to national self-determination and denounced both Arab nationalism and Nasserism.[33] It further argued that all national groups including the Kurds and South Sudanese would have the right to self-determination 'as a basis for integration without compulsion or repression'.[34]

In addition, the views of the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP) were also circulated. These views promoted a people's war and a Marxist-Leninist programme which did not recognise the right of national self-determination of the Jews. The DPFLP held discussions with *Matzpen* in 1969 – and disagreed with them on the issue of a coexistence between the two peoples since it advocated a specifically Palestinian state.[35] Attempts to model the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) in Britain on that of the successful one in support of the Vietnamese NLF floundered. A demonstration called to coincide with Israel's independence day in May 1969 attracted very few people.[36] It was thus difficult to stereotype the Israel–Palestine conflict. In a statement issued by International Socialism, the International Marxist Group and Arab Revolution at the first PSC Conference in November 1969, there were complaints that the Zionists threw out 'red herrings' such as Arab reaction and antisemitism and that 'also there remains amongst sections of the Left, residual beliefs that Israel is a beleaguered socialist country'. [37]

Yet these two positions, one an essentially Israeli–Jewish one (*Matzpen*) which advocated co-operation between Arab and Jewish workers in a binational de-Zionised Israel, the other a Palestinian nationalist one (DPFLP) which proposed the defeat of Israel, the evacuation of the West Bank of all settlers, the right of return of all Palestinian refugees to create a democratic secular Arab state of Palestine, were effectively blurred. The former suggested a certain egalitarianism within a socialist framework, the latter the nationalist righting of an historic wrong in the form of a Greater Palestine. Little attempt was made to note this fundamental distinction because of the profound opposition to Israeli government policies in the 1970s. When maximalist Israeli policies were promulgated by the Begin and Shamir governments in the 1980s, the blurring effect was accentuated. The lack of symmetry in terms of power between Israelis and Palestinians further relegated the idea of a two state solution to the back burner in that the New Left totally identified with the liberation struggle of the Palestinians.

Guardian journalists reflected this development and thereby identified Palestinian nationalism as a progressive force. Little attention

was therefore paid to history or the alternative Israeli narrative. This was further enhanced by *The Guardian*'s appeal to the youth market since the mid-1980s – as a means of distinguishing it from *The Independent*.

By the commencement of the Al Aqsa Intifada in September 2000, the right of national self-determination of the Jews was perceived to be of secondary concern. This approach was often projected as the 'liberal' view in terms of it being a continuation of *The Guardian*'s historic role. In fact, the approach represented both discontinuity and substitution.

Intellectuals on the Left began to re-evaluate the alliance with Jews and Zionists even before the Six Day War. In 1959, Richard Crossman remarked:

> Was it that we were all on the lookout in 1939 for appeasement and saw the Arabs as a fascist force to which Jewish liberty was being sacrificed? Partly perhaps. But I suspect that six years of this war have fundamentally changed our emotions. We were pro-Jew emotionally in 1939 as part of 'anti-fascism'. We were not looking at the actual problems of Palestine, but instinctively standing up for Jews, whenever there was a chance to do so. Now, most of us are not emotionally pro-Jew, but only rationally 'anti-antisemitic' which is a very different thing.[38]

Two points arise from Crossman's insight. Combating antisemitism did not automatically mean philosemitism. As Harold Nicolson confided to his diary, one could dislike Jews but dislike the unfairness practised against them even more. [39] Liberalism did not automatically imply an affinity for Jews and their aspirations. Secondly, support for Zionism was seen as a consequence of the struggle against Nazism and not in terms of the continuing struggle between two national movements which had existed before the advent of fascism. By 1967, these positions were not part of the New Left's agenda. This thus removed the obstacles towards criticising Jews and attacking Zionists. The embourgeoisement and acculturation of Anglo-Jewry, its simultaneous movement to the Right, the diminishing of antisemitism and the development of a multi-cultural society integrating less privileged ethnic groups all assisted in this process.

Alain Finkelkraut and Bernard-Henri Lévy have suggested that knowledge, understanding and emphasis on the Shoah during recent years has paradoxically allowed Europe to deny an important element in its cultural heritage – antisemitism.

> By nurturing the memory of the Holocaust, the Jews are also perpetrating two extremes of thinking – absolute evil and absolute justice – and this bi-polarity eases the creation of the opposite: The victims of yesterday become the hangmen of today, as no middle possibility is proposed. Therefore, the more it encourages the memory – the greater Israel's isolation grows. This is expressed in the demonisation of Israel in the media.[40]

This distinction between Jews who died in the Shoah and Zionists who live in Israel was not a new one. The former is paid due respect, but the latter emerged during the Al Aqsa Intifada as the 'Zionist SS'[41] or viewing Israelis as the equivalent of the Nazis during the Munich crisis in handing Arafat an impossible ultimatum at Camp David.[42] To convert Zionists into Nazis was effectively to de-Judaise Israelis and thereby further disconnect the Holocaust from its Jewish definition. This tendency to semi-universalise the Shoah carried with it – almost by definition – antagonism to Jewish particularism – and by extension opposition to Jewish nationalism. 'Jewishness' at least in an intellectual sense can be transferred. Indeed, in embracing a binational state, the Palestinian Edward Said, has referred to himself as 'the one true follower of Adorno – I'm the last Jewish intellectual'.[43] All this further reflected the difficulty on the British Left of defining Jews in terms of a multi-cultural, multi-national society. This was in evidence in the criticism voiced about the campaign by Jewish groups to secure compensation for Holocaust survivors.[44] Thus if Jews attempted to assert themselves collectively through their organisations in support of Israel, this was perceived as symptomatic of a pernicious kind of particularism. Such public assertion was embarrassing in particular to acculturated and assimilated Jews. The separation of Jews and Zionists had to be clear-cut. Thus it was suggested, albeit humorously, that it was certainly not a good career move for Sacha Baron-Cohen aka Ali G. to publicly admit that he was visiting his grandmother in Israel.[45]

The official response by Jewish communal organisations to perceived distorted comment about Israel during the Intifada was patchy. This was to some extent inherent in the minority outlook of British Jewry as compared with the robust attitude of American Jewry who as an indigenous group in an immigrant society regarded it as legitimate to assert its strongly held views. The collapse of BIPAC, the British–Israel Public Affairs Committee, the Israel public relations arm of the Jewish community, shortly before the Al Aqsa Intifada, permitted a fair degree of uncoordinated activity and comment to be aimed at *The Guardian*

particularly in the electronic media.[46] This vacuum was filled by supporters of the Israeli Right and opponents of the Barak government in the United States. They had supported the parties in Israel which actually left the Barak government before the Camp David meeting in the summer of 2000. The collapse of that summit and the outbreak of violence brought them to power through the election of Sharon, but it also permitted them to take control of the public relations on behalf of Israel in the Diaspora with their own interpretation of events. Ironically such websites which were both crude and simplistic in their explanations did not publish critical liberal Jewish opinion on the Intifada or indeed arguments by left wing Jews against *The Guardian*.[47] Their campaign was directed in particular against *The Guardian*'s Jerusalem correspondent who had also been the target of more general criticism. In the spring of 2001, the London Press Club awarded her the Edgar Wallace Trophy for 'reporting of the highest quality'. Although several judges had been tabloid editors, none had any experience in reporting the Israel–Palestine conflict.

Moreover since the Lebanon war, opinion within the Jewish community in Britain had changed, reflecting the ideological schisms within Israel. There was thus a considerable pluralism of views and certainly not automatic support for Israeli Government positions. Although such situations always bring forth the unstable and the extremist, *The Guardian* referred on several occasions to the 'intolerable pressure' under which journalists had been placed. Thus 'a shadowy ultra-orthodox Jewish group' had organised a 'campaign of vilification and denigration'[48] However, no mention or analysis of the right-wing ideological background of the campaign or from where it originated was made in *The Guardian*. The impression given was that this was the work of mainstream Jewish organisations in Britain. This also helped to deflect and divert genuine criticism of *The Guardian* by the Jewish Left.

The accusation of 'Jewish pressure' was also raised in *The Guardian* by contributors close to Islamic radical circles who often projected an absolutist view of the Israel–Palestine conflict.[49] Again there was mention of 'shadowy Israeli lobbyists in Westminster'.[50] Several articles in *The Guardian* in 2000 attempted to examine domestic Muslim issues through the eyes of the younger and more ethnically nationalist constituency. With a shrinking Jewish community and an expanding Muslim community six times larger in Palestine, *The Guardian* was a natural attraction and a sympathetic ear for many Muslim readers. Thus parallels were drawn between disaffected Muslim youth and the Palestinians:

> In the inner cities, there is much that the average Muslim youngster has in common with the foot soldiers of the Intifada. Jobless, discriminated against, marginalised and devoid of any hope, he too feels a victim to a system that appears to exist only to oppress his people.[51]

Jemima Khan, as a recent convert to Islam wrote that 'the (US) media is largely controlled by Jews as is Hollywood and they account for more than half the top policy making jobs in the Clinton administration'.[52] Such comments had repeatedly featured as a claim of Islamic Palestinian groups and their supporters within the Muslim world. But they also fell into the realm of classical anti-Jewish remarks as opposed to the more ambiguous anti-Zionist comment. For example, in 1996, *The Guardian* published a half-page advertisement by Ayatollah Khamenei of Iran on the occasion of the Hajj which similarly implied 'Zionist' control of the US media.[53] Although Jemima Khan later retracted any anti-Jewish motivation,[54] an unanswered question was what prompted a 'progressive' paper such as *The Guardian* to publish such remarks. Such an attitude pushed some Jews to comment that they felt that they were often differentiated from other ethnic groups and treated as 'fair game for crank provocations'.[55] To be labelled as 'racist' by Asians and Blacks was taken seriously. To be criticised by Jews for insensitivity, subtle discrimination and lack of understanding often invited disbelief and ridicule. This concatenation of criticism persuaded some to ask aloud whether all this was simply a guise for genteel antisemitism rather than a robust attack on Israeli policies.[56]

In commencing with the rhetorical comment that she was 'generally sceptical of conspiracy stories ... but', Jemima Khan's article similarly raised the question of a coordinated campaign by Jews and Jewish organisations.[57] In *The Evening Standard*, Brian Sewell referred to 'international Jewry'[58] – a phraseology which many Jews believed had been relegated to the past. In late February and early March, an exchange of articles in *The Spectator* between Conrad Black,[59] chairman of Hollinger International Inc. which owned several right-wing newspapers and Taki Theodoracopulos[60] on the nature of criticism of Israel were published. Black and his wife Barbara Amiel were noted for their close connections to the Likud and their support for right-wing policies through the Hollinger-owned *Jerusalem Post*.[61] While the exchange propagated more heat than light, three writers accused Black of using his authority to quash criticism of Israeli policies in his publications, particularly *The Spectator* and *The Daily Telegraph* in Britain. Black's use of accusations of antisemitism was countered by

claims of denial. Implicit in the writers' argument was the opinion that Black's right to free expression could not be dissociated from the possibility of intimidation of those who were employed by him. One of the writers, William Dalrymple in an article 'Bullied into Silence on Israel' in *The Guardian* further juxtaposed Black's 'right-wing brand of Zionism' with his dismissal of journalists at the *Jerusalem Post* for 'an unhealthy enthusiasm for Palestinian rights'.[62] The message sent by *The Guardian* was again that the supporters of Israel were an internationally powerful group allied with and funded by the forces of reaction. Moreover, the projection of Jews as Goliath rather than David helped *Guardian* journalists to psychologically dismiss protests from both individuals and organisations in terms of 'resisting pressure'. [63]

History has been the first casualty in the propaganda war between Israelis and Palestinians. Although it has partly been reclaimed by the Israeli new historians, the Palestinians and the Arab states have yet to open their archives and confront the black spots in their history. This facility of not confronting the past was often reflected in *The Guardian*'s reporting of Sharon's ascendance to political power in Israel. *Guardian* commentators compared Sharon to Pinochet, Milosovic and Jorg Haider[64] because of his military record of killings, adventurism and disobedience of orders. Significantly, few examined Sharon's political history as a basis for predicting the future. Thus Sharon's role in the massacres of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla camps during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 was repeatedly mentioned in the *Guardian*.

One journalist questioned the nature of Israel's judiciary when it attempted to determine responsibility for the atrocity. 'Israel's own Kahan commission found Sharon 'personally' – but 'indirectly' responsible for the massacre, 'though whether an independent court would be so generous is open to question'.[65] In contradistinction, another *Guardian* journalist wrote that 'an independent inquiry mildly criticised his role in the atrocity and he was forced to give up the defence portfolio'.[66] An educational resource in the paper commented that 'he had the power to stop the massacre of Palestinian refugees in neighbouring Lebanon but did nothing'.[67] Yet another commented that 'the massacres by the Israelis and their Lebanese allies at the Sabra and Shatilla camps in 1982 are a wound that has never healed'.[68] *The Guardian* Middle East editor wrote that Sharon 'watched passively as right-wing Lebanese militias massacred hundreds of Palestinian refugees'.[69] Israeli intelligence estimated that 7–800 had been killed, the Palestinian Red Crescent 2000 and *The Guardian* 2500.[70] No *Guardian* account mentioned that 400,000 Israelis demonstrated

against the massacre which was probably Israel's largest protest. Such references in *The Guardian* to the Phalangist massacre of Palestinians contradicted the findings of the official Kahan Report[71] in 1983 and were at variance with several highly critical accounts of Israeli actions at the time including the much praised investigative journalism of Schiff and Ya'ari.[72] In part, *The Guardian* reporters viewed the massacres through the prism of Palestinian public relations after 1983 during the megaphone war, but it also indicated a lack of acquaintance with Israeli history. This was not a question of difficulties in ascertaining the truth about a current incident, but being knowledgeable about the conflict and conversant with the facts of an historical event.[73]

The Guardian welcomed the Oslo Accords in 1993, but gave increasing space to specialists such as David Hirst[74] and the American-Palestinian academic Edward Said who opposed them. Hirst saw Oslo as an instrument of delegitimisation and a means 'to deprive the Palestinians of any sense of historic injustice'.[75] Said was perhaps the most eloquent spokesman for the Palestinian cause in the liberal and left wing press in Europe. Like Hirst, the memory of 1948 and therefore the right of return was the fundamental demand which defined Said's stand in the 1990s. As one of the first to propose recognition of Israel and a two state solution in his book *A Question of Palestine* in 1979, his position in the 1990s was different. In his *Guardian* articles, the two state solution was implied, but never formally stated, only the idea of coexistence between Israeli and Palestinian peoples on the land of historic Palestine. Palestinian self-determination was often mentioned, but not specifically national self-determination. Jewish national self-determination was never mentioned. During the Hasmonean tunnel crisis in September 1996, Said wrote in *The Guardian* that

> the present crisis is a glimmering of the end of the two state solution whose unworkability Oslo perhaps unconsciously embodies ... the challenge is to find a way to coexist not as warring Jews, Muslims and Christians, but as equal citizens in the same land.[76]

In 1998, Said formally espoused a binational state since he believed that the two state solution could no longer be implemented. Just before the outbreak of the Al Aqsa Intifada, he suggested that the Jews should give up sovereignty 'as a step toward a more generous idea of coexistence' and accept their status as a minority in a binational state.[77] Said's model for the creation of a binational state is the struggle against apartheid and the emergence of a rainbow South Africa.

In 1991, he had resigned from the PNC in protest against the policies of Arafat and the PLO leadership in attending the Madrid Conference – 'an unseemly rush to discard principles and strategic goals with equal abandon'.[78] The Palestinians had 'ceased being a people determined on liberation; we had accepted the lesser goal of a small degree of independence'.[79]

As an academic and writer, Said was widely applauded by the liberal intelligentsia in Britain. Part of his appeal was his embrace of areas of universalism within the container of Palestinian nationalism. He presented as an alternative to Zionism 'the idea of Palestine, a non-exclusivist, secular, democratic, tolerant and generally progressive ideology'.[80] In 1999, he wrote:

> This substitution of a short-range nationalism for a longer social movement is one of the intended effects of Oslo, in effect, to depoliticise Palestinian society and set it squarely within the main current of American style globalisation, where the market is king, everything else is irrelevant or marginal. Just to have a Palestinian institute of folklore research or a Palestinian university or a Palestinian medical association is therefore not enough, any more than nationalism is enough. Franz Fanon was right when he said to Algerians in 1960 that just to substitute an Algerian policeman for a French one is not the goal of liberation: a change in consciousness is.[81]

As a product of American academia, Said was also influenced by the political culture of the 1960s and the disdain for fellow travellers of the USSR. In the 1993 Reith Lectures, he viewed any support for Israel from the liberal intelligentsia in the West as 'an abrogation of intellectual responsibility comparable to the connivance of the Old Left with Stalinist crimes'.[82] This further reflected his view that Israelis and Jews were in a state of denial about the past and the present.

Said's literary prowess animated his political writings, but it also distanced him from the difficulties of realpolitik. In the 1980s, he commented that 'Israel means less to me as a real place than as a force whose imponderable power and purpose weaves disparity and contradictions into a figure in the carpet'.[83] Said significantly has been criticised by leading Palestinians for not dealing with the reality on the ground.[84]

Although Said's contributions were an example of good passionate writing, *The Guardian* readership was rarely exposed to any other type of Palestinian intellectual. Said's fame and presumed liberalism

dominated. The failure of Oslo thus became synonymous with the corruption of the Palestinian Authority. Opposition to Oslo and Arafat's policies became synonymous with intellectual honesty – no compromise on the truth of 1948 and the accompanying right to return according to UN Resolution 194. In opposing a two state solution, Said logically therefore opposed 'separation'[85] and thereby bypassed any suggestion of 'Land for Peace' – and looked upon supporters of the Israeli peace movement – in particular academics and writers such as Amos Oz – with a particular disdain. Thus Said dismissed the Abu Mazen-Yossi Beilin agreement as the cornerstone of a resolution of the conflict.[86] In the context of a binational state, the right of return to Israel as well as to the Palestinian state was a logical outcome. In opposing the Hebron Agreement in January 1997, he informed *Guardian* readers:

> For the Palestinians, peace with such a state is illusory, not least because Israel is still privileged according to a 'western master-native, highlighting Jewish alienation and redemption' which excludes the Palestinian experience of dispossession and exile.[87]

Such views were echoed in an analysis by the Deputy Foreign Editor of *The Guardian*.[88] It utilised the arguments and material of the Palestinian 'Right to Return' campaign and the research of Salman Abu Sitta to suggest that approximately four million Palestinian exiles could be absorbed within the existing boundaries of Israel.

> Lebanon refugees could mostly return to their homes in Galilee, making little impact on the Jewish community. Gaza refugees could return to almost empty land in the southern part of Israel.

In turn, such views were dismissed not only by the mainstream peace camp as a metaphor for the destruction of Israel, but also by new historians such as Benny Morris.[89] It did not reflect the views of Palestinian thinkers such as Ziad Abu Zayyad[90] and Rashid Khalidi who understood the right of return as 'a return to national soil' (in the West Bank) rather than a return to their 1948 homes (in Israel) but more the absolutist views of Edward Said and Hisham Shirabi.[91]

In conclusion, *The Guardian*'s coverage of the Israel–Palestine conflict during the Al Aqsa Intifada certainly provided opinion from both Israelis and Palestinians – but only from Palestinian rejectionists of the two state solution and advocates of the absolutist interpretation of

the right of return. Jewish criticism of the general reporting was interpreted as a matter of 'denial' and not another narrative. In addition to advocating justice for the Palestinian cause, the zeal of this reporting and the determination to stand up to the 'Jewish lobby' was also catalysed by a belief that Jews should be 'rescued' from their misconceptions. This coverage has served to emphasise that there is a ideological gulf between *The Guardian*'s general direction and its liberal Jewish readership based on a different analysis of both Jewish history and the Israel–Palestine conflict.

Edward Said's advocacy first of a two state solution and then of a binational state is ironically symbolic of the historic confusion of the Left towards the Jews. The emancipation of the Jews after the French Revolution led to the conclusion that Jews had the freedom to assimilate, to be part of the revolutionary movement, to be part of a domestic nationalist movement, to participate in society, but only in the context of a mono-national state. The hopes unleashed by Mirabeau and Robespierre were diminished by the barriers of ethnic identification and religious labelling which were erected by nineteenth century Europe. Indeed, Theodor Herzl's desire to assimilate was blocked by literary and other antisemites.

There was also a philosophical basis on the Left for antisemitism as characterised by Marx's *Zur Judenfrage* and the public and private commentary of luminaries such as Proudhon, Fourier and Bakunin. This, in turn, led to self-deprecation by many Jewish socialists who wished to obliterate their origins. Thus Lassalle commented wryly that 'there are two classes of men I cannot bear: journalists and Jews – unfortunately I belong to both'. To this was added Lenin's condemnation of any form of Jewish nationalism and the Bolsheviks' early advocacy of assimilationism as a means of solving the Jewish problem. This evolved into state antisemitism in the USSR under Stalin. Although in Western Europe, there was considerable condemnation by the Left of the persecution of the Jews and respect for their disproportionate participation in socialist and revolutionary movements, such developments led many Jews to believe in auto-emancipation rather than emancipation through the socio-political movements of the assimilated Left.

Zionism evolved as a solution to the problems of Judaism and Jewish identity in Eastern Europe. It evolved in Western Europe as primarily an answer to antisemitism. In Britain, it was historically underdeveloped because of the lower levels of antisemitism, the reformist attitude within British society and the relative ease of assimilation and conversion compared to continental Europe. Jews thus neatly fitted in within the

British Left as assimilationists or as invisible members of the Jewish community. The opposition to Zionism and any form of Jewish nationalism by the Soviet Union added to the confusion within the British Left who at the same time had to confront antisemitism in the context of the anti-fascist struggle. Even so, the idealism of a socialist Israel was understood and well received by the British Left in 1948. With the coming of age of the postwar generation, the rise of Palestinian nationalism and Israel's apparent movement away from its founding ideals, there has been a return on the British Left to earlier more traditional attitudes. The alliance between British Jews on the Left and the British Left in general during the 1930s and 1940s was thus the exception rather than the rule.

The Guardian's advocacy of Palestinian nationalism has been accompanied by a lack of in-depth knowledge about Israel, Zionism and Jewish history. The publication of a critical but rational editorial only took place after a visit by the editor to Israel and Gaza[92] – nearly eight months after the outbreak of the al Aqsa Intifada. *The Guardian* often reflected the historic inability of the Left to define and categorise the Jews – even more so given the emergence of a multi-cultural society in Britain. It also struggled with its original inheritance as propagator of Zionism and as interlocutor of both the Shoah and the rise of the State of Israel for a liberal and left wing readership. Given the multiplicity and complexity of all these diverse historical influences, *The Guardian* honestly espoused the ideological confusion on the British Left and mirrored it faithfully.

Notes

1 '*Israel and the Palestinians – Are We getting the Story?*' Reporting the World Seminar, London, 21 March 2001.
2 *The Guardian*, editorial, 10 August 1982.
3 J.M.D. Pringle, *Have Pen, Will Travel,* London, 1973, p. 36.
4 A. Hetherington, *Guardian Years*, London, 1981, p. 250.
5 *The Guardian*, 29 May 1967.
6 Hetherington, *Guardian Years*, p. 240.
7 G. Taylor, *Changing Faces; A History of The Guardian 1956–1988*, London, 1993, p. 112.
8 Taylor, *Changing Faces.* Hetherington to Solly Sachs, 22 April 1971, p. 169. E.S. 'Solly' Sachs was a Communist and Trade Union leader from South Africa who was active during the 1960s and 1970s in attacking Zionist ideology.
9 *The Guardian,* 30 April 1998.
10 *The Guardian,* 17 November 2000.
11 Jonathan Freedland, *The Guardian,* 18 October 2000.

12 Alan Rusbridger, *The Jewish Chronicle,* 13 April 2001.
13 Taylor, *Changing Faces*, p. 80.
14 Ibid., p. 147.
15 Ibid., p. 313.
16 Y. Peres, 'The New Left and Israel' in *New Outlook*, February 1970, vol. 13, no. 2.
17 Ibid.
18 *The Guardian*, 1 December 1947.
19 Michael Foot, *Aneurin Bevan 1945–1960*, London 1975, p. 653.
20 *Genesis* 15:18.
21 Smol Israeli Hadash – the Israeli New Left.
22 Resolutions of the 15th Congress of the World Union of Students, *New Outlook*, v. 17, no 7, September–October 1970.
23 Nathan Weinstock, *Red Mole*, 1–15 October 1970.
24 'Zionism – Religious Fascism' in *Socialist Leader*, 10 October 1970.
25 Fawwaz Trabulsi, *New Left Review*, no. 57, September–October 1969, pp. 53–92.
26 Ibid., p. 2.
27 *New Left Review*, no. 65, January–February 1971, p. 26.
28 Ibid., p. 1.
29 *The Struggle in the Middle East*, *International Socialism Pamphlet*, 1967.
30 Prior to his departure to study in Britain, his views on Zionism were decidedly different. He argued that Jewish immigration did not influence all Arab fellahs equally, but that it did encourage the process of class division and development of capitalist relations in the village. It was not however the source of class differentiation which was the result of other causes. (*Lamifneh*, 20 March 1936). Thirty years later, Cliff argued that Israel's existence was never in danger during the 1967 war as Britain and America would have intervened militarily.
31 Marcuse in debate with Rudi Dutschke, July 1967 in *Imperialism and the Middle East Conflict: Progressive Views*, no. 1.
32 *New York Review of Books*, 3 August 1967.
33 *New Left Review*, no. 65, January–February 1971, p. 25.
34 *Black Dwarf*, 14 June 1969.
35 *Al -Tali'a*, November 1969, p. 100 quoted by Y. Harkabi in R.S. Wistrich, ed., *The Left against Zion: Communism, Israel and the Middle East*, London 1979, p. 241
36 *Black Dwarf*, 26 November 1969.
37 *Middle East for Revolutionary Socialism*, no. 1, 1969.
38 Richard Crossman at a lecture given in Rechovot in April 1959, in A *Nation Reborn: The Israel of Weizmann, Bevin and Ben-Gurion,* London, 1960, p. 69.
39 Harold Nicolson, *Diaries and Letters 1939–1945,* N. Nicolson, ed., London, 1967, p. 469.
40 Tom Segev, *Ha'aretz*, 23 February 2001.
41 Tom Paulin, *The Observer,* 18 February 2001.
42 Brian Sewell, *The Evening Standard,* 31 October 2000.
43 Interview with Edward Said, *Ha'aretz*, 18 August 2000.
44 Norman Finkelstein, *The Guardian*, 12 July 2000.
45 Matthew Norman, *The Guardian*, 14 March 2001.

46 Matthew Engel received 200 e-mails after referring to the attempt of the West Bank settlers as gaining lebensraum. *The Guardian*, 28 November and 5 December 2001.
47 David Leigh, *The Guardian*, 22 February 2001. At a press conference in New York in January, Media Watch International was founded. It was started at the initiative of the Jerusalem Fund of Aish ha'Torah which has attracted many hitherto distant Jewish youth back to Judaism. Those in attendance were Knesset members Uzi Landau and Natan Sharansky, Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, former New York Mayor Rudy Gulliani and President of the Presidents Conference, businessman and philanthropist Ronald S. Lauder.
48 Roy Greenslade, *Media Guardian*, 7 May 2001.
49 Faisal Bodi, *The Guardian*, 3 January 2001.
50 Faisal Bodi, *Media Guardian*, 21 May 2001.
51 Faisal Bodi, *The Guardian*, 24 October 2000.
52 *The Guardian*, 1 November 2000.
53 *The Guardian*, 14 May 1996.
54 *The Sunday Telegraph*, 12 November 2000.
55 *The Guardian*, Letters, 13 July 2000.
56 Simon Sebag-Montefiore, *The Guardian*, 28 March 2001.
57 *The Guardian*, 1 November 2000.
58 Brian Sewell, *The Evening Standard*, 31 October 2000.
59 *The Jerusalem Post*, 9 March 2001.
60 *The Spectator*, 24 February 2001.
61 C. Shindler, *Israel, Likud and the Zionist Dream: Power, Politics and Ideology from Begin to Netanyahu,* London, 1995, pp. 232–4. See also R. Siklos, *Conrad Black: Shades of Black and the World's Fastest Growing Press Empire,* London, 1995, pp. 192–210.
62 *The Guardian*, 16 March 2001.
63 Ewan McGaskill, *Reporting the World*, seminar 21 March 2001.
64 Seumas Milne, *The Guardian*, 9 February 2001.
65 Ibid.
66 Derek Brown, *The Guardian*, 5 January 2001.
67 *The Guardian*, First Edition (with Channel Four), 10 October 2000.
68 Victoria Brittain, *The Guardian*, 26 April 2000.
69 Brian Whitaker and Khaled Dawoud, *The Guardian*, 7 February 2001.
70 Derek Brown, *The Guardian*, 5 January 2001.
71 The recommendations of the Kahan Report found that Sharon bore 'personal responsibility' and should 'draw the appropriate personal conclusions arising out of the defects revealed with regard to the manner in which he discharged the duties of his office'. Begin was reminded of his authority under Section 21-A (a) of the Basic Law in which he could remove a Minister from office. The official English translation was published in full by *The Jerusalem Post*, 9 February 1983.
72 Z. Schiff, E. Ya'ari, *Israel's Lebanon War*, London 1985.
73 Lack of familiarity with Middle East history re-occurred in *The Guardian* during the period of the Al Aqsa Intifada. The Temple Mount is 'thought' by Jews to be the site of the Second Temple – thereby leaving leeway for doubt – in spite of all archaeological evidence to the contrary. (*The Guardian*, 10 October 2000). The Palestinians would have created a Palestinian State

after the First World War if the British had allowed them to do so – despite the fact that they considered themselves as part of Southern Syria until 1923 and strove to unite with their northern neighbour (*The Guardian*, 10 October 2000).

74 Taylor, *Changing Faces*, p. 278. According to this history of *The Guardian* by a long time employee, Hirst is 'an advocate of the Palestinian cause'.
75 *The Guardian*, 2 December 1994.
76 *The Guardian*, 29 September 1996.
77 Ari Shavit Interview with Edward W. Said, *Ha'aretz*, 18 August 2000.
78 E.W. Said, *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination 1969–1994*, London, 1994, p. xxxii.
79 Ibid., p. xxiii.
80 Ibid., p. xix.
81 E.W. Said, *The End of the Peace Process; Oslo and After*, London, 2000, pp. xviii–xix.
82 Malise Ruthven, *The Guardian*, 9 July 1994.
83 E.W. Said, *After the Last Sky: Palestinian Lives*, London, 1986, p. 138.
84 E.W. Said, *Al-Hayat*, 27 June 1996.
85 E.W. Said, *London Review of Books*, vol. 21 no. 1, 7 January 1999.
86 E.W. Said, *Al Ahram*, 10–16 February 2000.
87 E.W. Said, *The Guardian*, 15 February 1997.
88 Victoria Brittain, *The Guardian*, 26 April 2000.
89 Benny Morris, *The Guardian*, 16 January 2001.
90 Ziad abu Zayyad, *Palestine–Israel Journal*, no. 2, Spring 1994.
91 Hisham Shirabi, *Al Ahram*, 30 November–6 December 2000.
92 *The Guardian*, 19 May 2001.

14

FACING AND DEFACING THE 'OTHER'

Israel television's live representation of Arabs in ceremonies and disaster marathons

Tamar Liebes

A group of researchers in the Communication Department at the Hebrew University have been interested for years in the phenomenon we termed 'media events' on television. By media events we mean ceremonial occasions broadcast live on TV. Unlike big news events these are planned in advance, and nationwide networks interrupt their routine schedule for their live showing, and prepare audiences for the occasion.[1] These broadcasts we consider significant because they are the moments in which television does not only broadcast to more or less tired consumers but realises its potential for integrating a community around a historical moment for the nation (sometimes for the whole world).

Americans (and non Americans) who watched the first moon landing on live television, felt that they were part of a great nation, and that they were witnessing, and taking part, in a giant leap for humanity in crossing natural obstacles which had been considered insurmountable. *Mutatis mutandis*, gathering around the screen to view President Kennedy's funeral, they shared in the mourning. These are indeed the moments in which television may bring together viewers in their roles as members of communities (sometimes diasporic) and transcend the petty grievances and daily strife that divide people.

Live ceremonial broadcasts are based on a contract between media, public and initiators in which all three agree to accept that the event merits this type of treatment. This is a difference between totalitarian

regimes and democratic governments. The fact that it is a voluntary decision of the media and the people (who may decline to watch) is what distinguishes such media events from the ceremonies that we associate with the aesthetisation of politics. Of course journalists do not particularly like the respectful tone, almost priestly, they are expected to employ on occasions such as the Royal Wedding or the Diana funeral. It is their least professional role – the furthest from the critical watchdog. But they do get carried away.

Dayan and Katz have sub-divided the genre of media events into three sub-categories, all beginning with a capital C: Conquests, Contests and Coronations. The message of *Conquests* – the first moon landing, the falling of the Berlin Wall, or the Rabin–Arafat handshake at the signing of the Oslo accord – is that of crossing new frontiers, and creating a transformation of a reality considered unshakeable. *Contests* – in politics (the Presidential debates, the Hill–Thomas confrontation) and in sports (the Olympics) celebrate the rules of the game. It is this year's champion who wins, but his victory can, and will be, challenged in the next elections, or in the next games. But the game has to be played within the rules. *Coronations* are the life passages of great people. Shedding a tear America mourned the death of John Kennedy, its young president by the hand of an assassin and, 30 years later, Israel mourned the death of its old but courageous Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, by the hand of an assassin who wanted (and succeeded, at least for a while) to stop the peace process between Israel and its Arab neighbours, which Rabin had supported.

The event that ignited our interest in the broadcasting of live ceremonial events was Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, which for me is still the most transformative of televised events. Sadat had grasped the power of TV and caused a dramatic shift in Israeli public opinion, which probably could not have been achieved otherwise, thereby making it possible for Israelis to accept painful concessions in order to sign a peace treaty with Egypt.

Since the meeting in Saudia Arabia between Haim Weizman and Emir Hussain, Arab leaders had refused to meet with Israeli leaders in public. Israelis felt like a pariah nation in the region. Sadat for Israelis was a dangerous enemy – hardly known personally, too well known as the leader who managed to surprise Israel four years earlier by crossing the Suez Canal. Two years before the Yom Kippur War he had proposed peace in exchange for the handing back of the Sinai peninsula and was rejected point blank by Golda Meir, Israel's Prime Minister at that time.

Sadat set the stage for his visit by making sure that all three days would be shown live to Israelis.[2] He maximised the effect of the visit by

addressing himself directly to the Israeli audience, as if over the heads of their own leaders and his government. Presenting himself as the hero of a Western, riding into the enemy camp unarmed, taking risks that he was advised against, not listening to anybody, Sadat convinced us that he was following his own wish to make peace. He opened his arms to Israelis, promising that Israel could embark on a new future in which it would be recognised as a legitimate neighbour by neighbouring countries.

By adopting this strategy Sadat achieved two important aims: he made Israelis love him. And trust in the Egyptian leader meant that Israelis suddenly had real hope that peace was achievable. His stratagem ensured that there would be public support for relinquishing Sinai. Sadat managed to convince Israelis that continued occupation of Sinai was not negotiable.

My own work in the case of Sadat has been to study his speech in the Knesset in order to show how he persuaded Israelis to agree enthusiastically to exactly the same, unacceptable demands he had made before.[3]

When I looked more carefully into the terms used by the Egyptian president and into the stories he recounted in his speech in order to elicit our trust, I began to see that Sadat used the fact that he was talking to several different audiences – Israelis and Arabs (not to mention the Americans and the rest of the world), to convey two different messages to his publics, each listening within their own cultural context. Among other things he was indeed leaving a back door open to his Egyptian and other Muslim audiences for retreating from the deal.

The most prominent example (discussed at the time) was the word Sadat used for 'peace'. The Hebrew *Shalom* can be translated in Arabic in two ways: *salam* and *shullh*. *Salam* is cognate with the biblical root. In the Koran *salam* is used to describe only a limited, temporary, type of peace treaty, made for reasons of expediency. *Shullh* is the real reconciliation Israelis long for. Sadat chose to use *Salam*, winking at his Arabic hearers; Israelis anyway listened only to the translation.

Second, there was reference to the Koran account of the treaty between the prophet Muhammad and the Jews of Medina. This was supposed to provide evidence that Muslim tradition approves of signing treaties with the Jews. To Israelis this sounded hopeful; the Muslim listeners must have smiled as they recognised the story and knew how it ended. What they knew and we did not is that the treaty signed by Muhammad did not last, and that the Prophet, feeling betrayed by the Jews, declared that they were treacherous, could not be trusted, and should not be considered as partners for an alliance.

A third example involved both Sadat and his host, Menachem Begin, the right-wing leader who had invited Sadat to Jerusalem. Both leaders opened their Knesset speeches with the story of Abraham's sacrifice of his son. But the message conveyed was contradictory. Whereas Begin, in his welcoming speech, chose to quote the Quranic interpretation of the story, Sadat this time preferred the Biblical version. Begin, adopted the story in the Muslim scripture, in which Abraham's move was purely manipulative, or if you will, pedagogic. In this version Abraham never seriously entertained the idea of sacrificing his son but was going through the motions in order to have God *absolve* the believers from the custom of sacrificing their first born. In this spirit Begin declares 'no more sacrifice, no more bloodshed'. Sadat, on the other hand, offered to the Israelis the Biblical account of their ancestor, one who was ready to make the most painful sacrifice if needed. In *Genesis* Abraham passed the ultimate test as a true believer in God; we Israelis should, likewise, pass the test as ultimate believers in peace.

The way Sadat represented his visit on television at the time was in terms of a grand gesture. He told us that he was risking his life by 'deciding to go even to the end of the world' to make peace come true. My colleague Daniel Dayan has pointed out that Sadat was engaging in a strategy not unlike the custom carried out by certain African tribes, and described by anthropologist Marcel Mauss as 'potlatch', an exchange of gifts. Potlatch is a ceremony in which a chief from another tribe comes to visit, carrying with him a gift. The rules of the game dictate that the host tribe is to reciprocate by giving in return an even bigger and better present; otherwise they would be giving offence. By that token, Sadat's grand gesture called for an even greater sacrifice.

Moreover, Sadat presented himself as speaking in the name of all of Israel's neighbouring countries, promising us that we would finally be accepted in the region as legitimate neighbours. In fact, he barely represented his own nation, let alone any other neighbouring countries. But in the euphoric, liminal, atmosphere created by the visit, a subjunctive mood of wishing to believe, Israelis preferred not to destroy the illusion; his words were accepted as true.[4]

Looking back, a more realistic evaluation of Sadat's televised visit was that it was planned ahead by the Israeli establishment in order to enlist public opinion for the sacrifices ahead. This is reinforced by the knowledge of the meeting in Tunisia between Dayan (Israel's Minister of Defence at the time) and Tohami (Sadat's emissary), which preceded the visit, in which the whole of Sinai was promised to Sadat in advance. The televised visit did everything that television usually fails to do in its routine coverage of the conflict. Whereas 'normal' news coverage

depersonalises and dehumanises the enemy this memorable broadcast totally transformed Sadat's image in the minds of Israelis.

Since Sadat's visit such televised reconciliation rites have been received with less euphoria and with more scepticism, as it became apparent that while ceremonies may be viewed as the High Holidays of the peace process they do not always lead to the hoped-for results. The signing of the Oslo Agreement in 1993, accompanied by the historic handshake of Rabin and Arafat in Washington carried no such electricity as did the reconciliation ceremonies with Egypt.[5] The open negotiation apparently carried on by Sadat on television made Israelis partners to a process in the making. Socio-linguists would say that he was making 'performative' statements, the kind of ceremonial statements, such as 'with this ring I thee wed', which by virtue of being said in the right context become deeds. Signing the Oslo Agreement was only the sealing of a treaty achieved secretly, in which the two signatories had no part. It was also unclear who was responsible for the treaty; was it the will of the leaders or the constraints of history (the weakening of the Palestinians after the Gulf War and the fall of Soviet Russia, which made the United States the only world policeman)?

Moreover, both leaders showed little enthusiasm. Rabin decided to attend the ceremony himself (rather than send an emissary) only one day before it took place; Arafat decided to come only once Rabin made up his mind, and, loath to wholly transform his image, came to the White House in his old soldier's uniform (the pistol was taken away at the door).

With time we understood that the media were good at covering events but failed to follow processes. Anwar Sadat was assassinated two years after the signing of peace. Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated two years after the signing at Oslo. After his death the Israeli press protested: how did we not pay more attention to the incitement against the Prime Minister when the writing was on the wall?

The reason mainstream Israeli media did not notice the danger was that the scholarly Rabbinical debates carried out about '*din rodeff*' and '*din mosser*' (a Talmudic debate about the conditions under which a leader becomes a traitor, which, according to *din tora*, is punishable by death) were carried out in cultural enclaves, and on their segmented, radio and television community channels. Mainstream Israeli media were not tuned into these channels and did not expect to find anything of relevance to them in their discourse.

The shocked surprise provoked by the assassination, like the surprise provoked by the Palestinian uprising a decade before, demonstrates that whereas media are good at covering (or rather, performing) events, they

cannot be depended on for systematic observation of ongoing processes in anticipation of the eruption of those events. Therefore, as a rule, they are not capable of putting on the public agenda the issues, which are brewing just under the surface, or the threats they imply. If the daily (and 'minor' from the perspective of news) humiliation of the Palestinians at the roadblocks on their way to work (from 1967 on) had been documented time and again, and shown on television, it may have pushed policy makers to make decisions *before* the outbreak of violent protest.

To return to ceremonies of reconciliation, their glamour started to fade also because they were interspersed with the live coverage of violence – that of terrorist attacks designed to stop the moderates among Palestinians and Israelis from arriving at a long term agreement. Television's coverage of the terrorists' bus attacks in the spring of 1996 made me (and other students of communication and political science) pay attention to the new format which became institutionalised for television's coverage of terrorist attacks which had more than a small number of victims and which I labelled 'disaster marathons'.[6] I would like to state from the outset that I see this new genre not only as a sign of a further erosion of journalistic standards but also as a potential threat to the workings of the institutions of democratic societies.[7]

In February–March 1996, two months before the 1996 general elections, Israel was shaken by a series of terrorist attacks, carried out by Hamas fundamentalist groups, on buses in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. In Jerusalem a no. 18 bus exploded on two consecutive Sundays, followed, on the Monday after, by a bomb causing a massacre in the centre of Tel-Aviv. Fifty-four people were killed. Following the bombings Israeli television cancelled all scheduled programmes and for 72 hours switched to live broadcasting of an increasingly familiar kind – that of disaster marathon.

What we saw for three days running was the recycling of the sights of dead bodies, of crying witnesses, of screaming mothers searching for their children, of injured victims on stretchers. We listened to the evaluation of the situation by waiting relatives, outside operating rooms, called to comment on policy issues at their worst hour of grief, and watched reporters' aggressive and/or whiny interviewing of officials, whom they ordered to admit to the failure of their policies.

The non-stop, open ended mode chosen by Israel radio and television became the object of heavy criticism, and was later considered a major reason for the loss in the elections of the government headed by acting Prime Minister Shimon Peres, the initiator of the Oslo process. The two television stations were accused by political scientists and

media scholars of inciting hysteria, of losing all proportion in reporting the attacks, of competing among themselves over who would attack government representatives most aggressively. In reply to these criticisms, editors and reporters alike pointed to their obligation to represent the public outrage, and satisfy the public's right to know.

Editors of the popular press – whose pages screamed 'return to hell', 'hell on Purim', and 'a nation in fear' – were similarly accused of making the wrong assumption about what people wanted at that moment. Television's senior news anchor was accused by a distinguished political scientist of acting as an agent of Hammas.

There can be no question that television assumed a dominant role in the wake of the bombings. It had done so only four months earlier in the days following the Rabin assassination. But that event had soon enough assumed a familiar structure, well known in advance. After the first hours of news coverage, television could switch to the ceremonial mode. This time it had no idea how to go about it or how to get out of it. The directors of television were pushed into an open-ended live coverage of disaster without the benefit of a script and for which they had no previous experience.

Traditionally, nationwide and public channels (the carriers of media events) tend to resist switching to live marathons for reasons of responsibility to their pubic, to their scheduled programmes, and to their advertisers, and because of a general aversion to sensationalising news. This changed as the scope of disaster coincided with major changes in the technology and organisation of television. The monopoly of public broadcasting gave way to a multiplicity of competing channels, and the technological revolution made it possible to transmit live from multiple points in the field.[8] A number of issues, crucial for the social responsibility of television in crisis, have to be considered.

The decision to cancel all scheduled programmes and to abolish commercials was taken at the level of television's Director General. Viewers were told that broadcasts would continue throughout the night and into the next day 'when the funerals would take place'. The rationale was twofold: the need to provide a shared space for mourning, and the need to update the public on current developments in the aftermath of the tragedy. In a country with radio news bulletins on the hour every hour, with updates on the half-hour, it may be argued that there is no need for open space for news. But putting that aside, the question remains: do television disaster marathons provide either?

The Director General of public television explained afterwards: 'the public would stone the television building if we continued routine

broadcasting'. This admission points to the ad hoc nature of the decision, and raises the following questions: should the Director General alone have the authority to decide that the country is in a period of national mourning? If he *does* have such authority on what should he base his decision to embark on a live mourning mode? On the number of dead (over 10? over 20)? On the nature of the incident or on the identity of the attackers (carrying on as usual following massive road accidents but switching into disaster mode following death by terrorist bombings)? And – most importantly – what are the genres that befit television mourning?

As the traditional division of news versus entertainment has been all but abolished by new electronic journalism, the production of disaster time-out was allocated to the department that carries most weight in each of the two channels: Public Television put the news in charge; Channel Two, quicker to acknowledge that disaster is mostly entertainment, put its major money-making talk-show host in charge. But both did the same thing anyway. The cleared space for disaster created enormous pressure for repetition. 'Celebrating' the bus bombings ran in a number of reinforcing strands: in an open-ended live talk show based in the studio as war-room, anchors were in charge of 'reliving' or re-enacting the disaster, monitoring the treatment of injured victims in hospitals and updating from arenas of expected 'action'. On ordinary days, the killing of a soldier in Lebanon would be reported for a minute or two on the evening news. Here, reporting the state of the injured lasted the whole night.

The competition – which socialised viewers to expect entertainment on all television genres; the constraints of the medium – with its demands for visual, personalised stories; and the live-studio genre – with its demand to keep the story going, all combined to confuse analytic discourse with emotional experience. The programmes catered to voyeuristic, even pornographic, aspects of viewing, and, at the same time, adopted a populist voice, calling for the discrediting of the social institutions 'at fault'. The discussion was necessarily based on confounding the personal tragedy of the victims with a catastrophe for the whole society, with the aim of pushing the government, the military and the other security institutions to react in accordance with the magnitude of the disaster displayed on the screen, within the time confines of the show.

Daily commercials were replaced by the specials for the day – tightly edited soundbites for recycled pictures and sounds, tightened to retain only the most horrific sights and sounds. The marathon was punctuated by a 'logo' featuring the city square moments after – of people without

arms, without legs, without faces; a religious soldier collecting bits of skin and bone from a tree. At the time of the evening news this logo replaced the daily news-logo – which tells us that 'here we are again and in control' – symbolising that all order had been destroyed. As in art, literature and architecture – the repetition of the edited sequence of images intensified the images and sounds while decontextualising them. None of this can be justified in terms of 'the right to know'.

Images of what had happened were not enough. There had to be something to wait for. The question that permeated the show was – what next? This led to expectation of, and pushing for, immediate retaliation. The broadcast was transferred again and again to the reporter at the door of the cabinet meeting who would speculate on the various extreme measures that were presumably being discussed: postponement of the elections, the establishment of an emergency cabinet to focus only on fighting terrorism. Opposition leaders were heard to suggest the invading of Gaza in order to attack Hamas bases (and in so doing destroy the peace process). In between, the political reporter turned his attention to demonstrations of militants on the other side of the street. On cue, they enthusiastically raised placards with 'the government of the final solution', and 'in blood and fire we'll throw Peres out'. Later, cheered by the attention they received, they started to burn tyres each time the camera came near. Such high expectations were bound to be disappointed, but they nevertheless pushed Prime Minister Peres to declare that 'we are in a state of war', and President Ezer Weitzman to pronounce that 'we in Israel have never experienced more difficult days'.

Experts and scapegoats: Disaster is a good time for opposition party leaders and dubious security experts-cum-politicians (Ariel Sharon, was hosted at length in the studio, and permitted to freely exploit the disaster for a vicious attack on the government). Following the reporters' long vigil at the cabinet door, one minister, sent to convey the government's decision was reprimanded by the studio host: 'This is all you come up with? What about action? Immediate action?'

Victims as public opinion representatives: The voices of the public who gain access to disaster-time are the ones who scream the most, either in agony or in rage – the louder, the less controlled – the better. Some, caught in the worst moment of their lives, were not only asked about their personal tragedy but allocated the privilege of expressing their political diagnosis (what line should the government take now?) having been chosen by fate as representatives of the public.

The use of victims as policy experts on terrorism has become an accepted news convention in the process of defining news as melodrama. This convention clearly provides for the worst possible sampling of public opinion at such a time. The victims are too involved in their own predicament to deliver a considered opinion. But they answer television's need for emotional gimmicks.

Disaster marathons share with media events a departure from routine but unlike media events they communicate its sudden breakdown. In these hours people turn to television when they have lost their personal sense of safety (for themselves and their families), and when they feel that they are in an unresolved condition – when disaster may strike again. If this is the case with a hurricane, it is much more so with terror. People find themselves in a time-out, mostly glued to the screen, with no routine to support them and having lost confidence in the government's capacity to protect them. Television's anchor remains the only anchor.

Television marathons worked to maximise the impact of the attacks in several ways. First, to use Walter Benjamin's metaphor, television decontextualised the attacks from their historical context, recontextualising them in a series of 'tiger leaps', which connect the current event only to structurally similar incidents, without regard to the immediate reality in which it occurred. Thus, the story of the attacks on screen erased all the achievements of the Oslo process – the young people's rising hopes of not having to fight more wars, the opening of the Arab world to Israel after almost fifty years of isolation, the economic boom with the new surge of foreign investments.

Second, television's marathon pushed the government to an instant response by creating public expectations of action while the broadcast is waiting to conclude the story with a happy ending. The drama on air ignored all the rules of decision making according to which governments do not make decisions to fit in with live broadcasting. The coverage also ignored the probability that there are no immediate solutions – perhaps no long-term solution either – to terrorism. There was no way the government could come up with an immediate solution demanded by its critics on the screen, even after a whole night of deliberation.

Why then did media professionals, not known for their right-wing sympathies, play the game of the opposition? The answer may lie in their sense that this kind of story satisfied the public's urgent need for a scapegoat and accorded with the public mood of anger and frustration, which demanded a quick solution, coupled with an apparent distrust of more complex, realistic, answers. In aligning themselves with populist sentiment journalists found it easier to squeeze the event for all it was worth emotionally and forgo serious discussion of the issues.

No doubt terror movements hope exactly for this kind of coverage. Wittingly or not, the commercial competition, the new technologies of live transmission, and the marathon genre prevented the use of traditional journalistic practices, and made it much more exploitable politically. It was a classic moment where extremists on both sides used the media for a common cause, and both were assisted by media professionals. The polls confirm that the bus bombings turned the tide against the Labor party and helped the Likud opposition back to power.

The very openness that makes a media marathon an opportunity for national soul-searching often provides a vacuum that invites a different kind of voice. While ostensibly fulfilling the role of opposition in parliamentary democracy, the live broadcast of disaster may be exploited by governments, or its opponents, for making easy gains with the public.

This was a moment for demagogic attribution, for the stirring up of emotions, even for the symbolic lynching of political candidates, leaders, or parties. The intensified drive at such a moment to search for someone to blame might have been manipulated by power groups, with a vested political interest, allowing the parties or politicians who stood to reap easy gains to transform the discourse into populist rhetoric, aimed at destroying political opponents.

The live coverage of a bus-bombing in Tel Aviv, demonstrated how, when the manipulative version of an interested party gained legitimacy, media professionals collaborated in the melodrama of a 'high-tech lynching' of a public figure – a president, a prime minister, a judge, the chief of staff, or the head of police, or a number of figures – who at that moment, had symbolised the evil forces which had caused the disaster.

Notes

1 D. Dayan and E. Katz, *Media Events*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1992.
2 From the moment he emerged from his 'United Arab Republic' plane in Ben Gurion Airport, causing ABC's commentator to exclaim 'will miracles never cease?' Sadat conducted the visit as a grand gesture for the Israeli public. My analysis in this chapter refers in particular to his Knesset speech, spoken in Arabic and translated simultaneously into Hebrew and English.
3 T. Liebes-Plesner, 'Shades of Meaning in President Sadat's Knesset Speech' in *Semiotica* v. 48, nos. 3–4, 1984, pp. 229–65; T. Liebes, 'Television's Disaster Marathons: A Danger to Democratic Processes?' in T. Liebes and J. Curran, eds., *Media, Ritual and Identity*, London and New York, 1998, pp. 71–86.
4 Liminality is a term coined by anthropologist Victor Turner for spaces of 'time out', characterised by a spirit of freedom, equality and comunitas. At such times – in pilgrimages, or in rites of passage, or during Sadat's visit to

Jerusalem – the social structure opens up and the climate of hope or even euphoria makes social change possible.

5 Liebes, 'Television's Disaster Marathons' in T. Liebes and J. Curran, eds., *Media, Ritual and Identity*, pp. 71–86.

6 Ibid.

7 Whereas in times of crisis media marathons can reinforce public anxiety and encourage populist tendencies among reporters and politicians, the increasing trivialisation of marathonic broadcasting with the (feeble) excuse of 'breaking news' exacerbates the blurring of the boundaries between news reporting and entertainment, and often prevents politicians from carrying on their work. Consider the United States television's obsessive preoccupation with the Monica affair.

8 Liebes, 'Television's Disaster Marathons' in T. Liebes and J. Curran, eds., *Media, Ritual and Identity*, pp. 71–86.

15

ARE THEY STILL THE ENEMY?

The representation of Arabs in Israeli television news

Anat First

This chapter focuses on the representations of Arabs in Israeli television news a decade after the beginning of the Intifada (the Palestinians' uprising in the occupied territories that started in December, 1987) and five years after the Oslo Agreement (the peace treaty signed between the Palestinians and Israel in September, 1991).[1] This research departs from the view that television helps us construct our perception of political conflicts.[2] The use of the term 'construction' indicates that news is stories created within a certain narrative framework, which places the day's events within a wider context.[3] In this process the television news presents the picture of different social groups and their social identities through images. The images manifest the process of stereotyping. The importance of investigating the representation of images in television news, as in other products of the cultural industry, arises from the fact that this representation provides the materials from which the viewers construct their sense of class, ethnicity and race, their concept of 'us' and 'them', and of nationality.[4] Even a nation is a cultural artifact, which refers to a symbolic reference – an 'imagined community'[5] which is maintained by a wide variety of discursive institutions.

This study attempts to present the changes in the representation of Arabs in Israeli Television news in relation to the changes in both the 'symbolic reality', i.e., the media sphere, as well as the 'social reality', i.e., the political sphere. This kind of research is significant especially in Israel, since the Israeli media is almost the sole information source from which the Israeli population learns about the Israeli Arabs, who are Israeli citizens,[6] as well as about other Arab groups.

The concept of representation has come to re-occupy the study of culture and especially of mass communication, which is its most dominant producer and distributor. Representation means 'using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to "other" people ... Representation is an essential part of a process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture'.[7]

Representation is considered as both a process of ongoing construction of identities in any given culture, as well as a stereotyping force.[8] Stereotyping[9] 'reduce[s] people to a few, simple, essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by nature'.[10] Thus, stereotyping fixes 'difference'. Moreover, stereotyping deploys a strategy of 'splitting'; that is, it divides the normal and the acceptable from the abnormal and then excludes or expels everything that does not fit, everything that is different. Furthermore, it tends to occur where there are gross inequalities of power.[11] In other words, stereotyping is a classification system, which also serves as a regulator in the maintenance of social and symbolic order. The media exercise this regime of stereotyping by distorting the 'social reality' of a certain social group into a media image. Thus, the consequence of this process is that even if they are only images they do have real effects:

> They can affect the self-esteem of those being stereotyped; they can often come close to determining the way some people think and behave toward members of the group being stereotyped; and sometimes, if they are repeated often enough, people forget entirely that they are dealing with images; the image becomes the reality and determines the way people, institutions, and even governments act in the world.[12]

Most of the research concerning the display of the 'other' on television focuses on minorities, especially on minorities formed by gender or race,[13] which share a common media fate of relative invisibility and a demeaning stereotype-image.[14] Yet this approach has not been applied to discuss the 'enemy' construct. Furthermore, those who suggest a postcolonial interpretation of the 'other',[15] challenge the colonial and imperialistic tendencies manifest in the constructions and representations of 'third world' subjects by 'first world' countries. Besides, one of their main questions is: 'How do Western discursive practices, in their representations of the world and themselves, legitimize the contemporary global power structure?'.[16]

In contrast to the above stated approach, we propose to widen the common definition of the 'other' in order to include more than one

concept/adjective at the same time. The widening of the common definition enables us to examine the portrayal of Arabs in the Israeli news as a complex issue and helps us to understand how the Arab-'other' is framed in more than one position. The construction and perception of the Arab as 'other' is constantly changing. Therefore, the Arab may at the same time be an enemy, a friend, a neighbor, a partner, or any kind of person in transition.

At the time this study was conducted, there were four Arab groups that, on the one hand, shared the same religion, language and culture, but on the other hand, differed in their stances towards, and relation to, the State of Israel. The four groups were:

1 Arabs who live within the pre-1967 borders, and are commonly referred to as Israeli–Arabs. As citizens of a declared Jewish democratic state (18 percent of the population) they have been subject to and of Jewish discourse in terms of social inclusion, as well as in terms of social exclusion.[17] Thus, this group can be discussed within the terms of postcolonial discourse, since it constitutes an 'other' within Israeli society.
2 Palestinians. Arabs who live in the Gaza strip and the West Bank, which are still partly controlled by Israel, and who, for several years, have been negotiating for their independence. This group is divided into two: the Palestinians who support the Oslo Agreements and are lead by the PLO, and the Palestinian opposition, primarily the Islamic movement Hamas. The first group can be seen as the 'other'-partner, while the latter can be still seen as the 'other'-enemy. Nevertheless, relations in this case can be described as two nations fighting to create their own 'imagined communities'.[18] Here the Palestinians are in transition – from the 'other' as enemy to another sort of 'other'.
3 Arabs who live in countries that have made peace with Israel and can be viewed as the friendly 'other' as in the neighboring countries of Egypt and Jordan.
4 Arabs who live in countries that have not yet made peace with Israel, such as Syria. They are the 'other' as enemy. The relationship of the last two can be described as relations of peace and war between nations. Therefore, this investigation considers the diversity of portrayal of the 'other' that emerges from the political-cultural reality of Israel.

The work of representation is done in the 'symbolic reality', which consists of various forms of representative expressions, such as the arts

and the media including television news. The media, first radio and later television, have proved potent means of manufacturing the 'we-feeling', or collective identity, as well as the stereotype of the 'other'. They make a nation real and tangible through a whole range of images and symbols, events and ceremonies, relayed to audiences direct and live.[19] Language is also a powerful resource in the politics of a nation, which explains the struggle of nations to return to their old languages in the media, a struggle that has become especially prominent since the late 1980s.[20]

Up until 1988, there was only one channel on Israeli television, and that was the government-operated television station. A very significant change took place in the Israeli mass communication arena in 1988 when, for the first time, a pluralistic environment was created by the cable television network. The monopoly was broken finally in 1993, when a new commercial television channel in Hebrew was created. That is, more news channels exist that enlarge the scope of representation both in Hebrew and other languages.

The press plays an ambiguous role within Israeli society. This can be seen when the local press is examined within a liberal-democratic context. Traditionally, the Israeli press acted in many ways like a state press in a non-democratic environment, imposing restrictions on itself to an extent unparalleled in any other democratic country.[21] The main explanation for this phenomenon is that the State of Israel was born into the Arab–Israeli conflict and existed in its shadow throughout its history. In times of war, the media rallies to the national cause and invariably represents the situation from a national point of view. This explains why the Israeli press, existing in a continual state of political turmoil, represents the picture from 'our' point of view.[22] Language is a source of the boundaries of the 'imagined community',[23] and since the Arab–Israeli conflict focuses on the boundaries among nations, the importance of having two Hebrew channels is profound. A nation, as Benedict Anderson[24] points out, is a cultural artifact of a particular kind. Referring only partially to the external world of 'fact' it mainly invokes a symbolic referent – an 'imagined community', which is maintained by a wide variety of social institutions.

It has been learned that any report on reality expresses the reporter's stances, especially in a national conflict, and that journalists have to tell stories that are relevant and familiar to their community, and thus they are servants of their political culture. This practice can also be referred to as the hegemony's work, according to Raymond Williams' definition, which 'reminds us that hegemony is an internalization of a particular way of life that expresses certain meanings and values'[25] of a dominant culture through which people experience reality and see themselves.

Until the establishment of the commercial television channel, television news in Israel consisted of only one major news program broadcast at prime time, plus several short bulletins of hard news. This monopolistic situation served as the sole focus for the portrayal of the Arabs. Thus, the important question is whether or not a multi-channel system represents the Arabs differently. The purpose of this chapter is twofold: first, to provide evidence of the display of the Arabs over time – between the late 1980s and the late 1990s; and second, to provide a comparison between the image of the Arab in the two contending news programs on Israeli television – the governmental one, and the commercial one.

The most profound change that has taken place in the Israeli 'social reality' in the last decade has been the peace treaty with the Palestinians. While at the beginning of the first Intifada the Palestinians and their allies were considered by the Israeli institutions as enemies, the famous handshake between Arafat, the Palestinians' leader, and Rabin, the Israeli Prime Minister, transformed them into human beings.[26] The fight over the Oslo[27] peace process is not over yet. It should be mentioned that at the time this research was being conducted the Government in Israel was lead by the Likkud, a right-wing party, which believed that the Oslo agreements were a national disaster that constituted a serious blow to the country's security. While at the beginning of the Intifada there were the 'good guys', the Israeli government, and the 'bad guys', the Palestinians, after ten years, there were four major antagonists attempting to promote their views and to win the Israeli public's opinion: The Israeli government, the Israeli opposition, the PLO authorities, and the Palestinian opposition.[28] The Israeli Likkud government tried to portray the Arabs, especially the Palestinians, as the 'enemy'. The Israeli opposition (Israel 1), tried to present the Arabs as potential partners, even though sometimes they broke the rules. The PLO leadership had to change its image from the 'enemy', the terrorist, to a genuine partner for peace. And fourth, the Islamic movement Hamas, also tried to present themselves as a partner for peace, but with stricter conditions than those proposed by the PLO. It is important to note that during these years, a separate peace treaty was signed with Jordan. Thus most of the neighboring Arab countries were in a state of peace with Israel.

The role of the news media in the Arab–Israeli conflict is a central arena of research in the field of communication studies.[29] Yet, in comparison to other areas of research, the representation of the Arabs in the news media has received very little attention. The focus of the previous studies made on this topic, deal with the portrayal of the Israeli–Arabs in the newspapers.[30]

The most notable work on the coverage of the Israeli-Arabs over the years, emphasizing the role of newspapers in the construction of reality, was carried out by Avraham.[31] He found that the coverage of Arab–Israeli settlements and groups of settlements is influenced by a number of characterizations based on the settlement type, i.e., size, location and socio-economic status. But the most prominent determining factors are the settlement type and its socio-political proximity to the centers of power. Another extensive work concerning the presentation of the Israeli–Arabs in the newspapers, tried to reveal the frames within which the Israeli press covered the Arabs' Land Day protests.[32] This study is grounded in the framing approach. That is, the news media construct frames for conflicts by attempting to fit the information the journalists are receiving into packages that are professionally useful and culturally familiar. Thus, the focus of the research rests mostly on the way in which the journalists construct reality.

The focal point of these studies is the framing of the Arabs in the Israeli newspapers. Therefore, in the circuit of culture which contains the following domains: production, identity, representation, regulation and consumption,[33] these projects are associated primarily with the production realm, while this present study is primarily concerned with the representation domain.

Herzog and Shamir[34] provide another point of view on the way Arab–Jewish relations were depicted in the Hebrew press between 1949 and 1986. They found five stable interpretative packages that were used in the newspapers: hard core nationalism, liberal nationalism, Jewish democracy, equal rights and 'no problem'. Yet, this work, once again, focuses on newspaper coverage. Furthermore, it is important to note the timing of the research: it was conducted before the first Intifada.

In this study, we are interested in representation (a different theoretical approach) of various groups of Arabs (not just the Israeli Arabs) in television broadcasts (a different communication-medium). The use of representation theory enables us to examine different representations of the Israeli–Arab as transitional, since the images by which the Arabs are portrayed are constantly being remodeled. This approach enables us to view them as multi-dimensional. It also exposes the stereotype, which is, as stated earlier, a central discursive strategy in national identity. This study analyzes the patterns of media discourse by investigating the techniques used by the media to debunk or enhance the legitimacy of the 'other'. In other words, we are interested in discovering the ways in which the Israeli media portray Arabs, as a means of bettering our understanding of how social groups considered to be 'other' can be 'turned' by the media into either enemies or allies.

We ask:

1 How frequently do Arab participants appear in Israeli news[35] and what form of identification are they given?
2 Are Arabs more likely to be present in items about violent events than in events about peaceful activities, and of what professional status are they?
3 In which locations are Arab participants depicted by the media?
4 How do the Israeli news reports frame the identity and activity of Arab participants?
5 What is the nature of the interaction between Arab and Israeli participants?
6 Is there any difference in the representation of Arabs between the two periods of research discussed at the beginning of the chapter?
7 Does the governmental channel's portrayal of the Arabs differ from the representation of the commercial channel?

The methodological perspective of the present study relies on one of the few studies that focuses on the portrayal of Arabs on Israeli television news that was conducted during the first four months of the first Palestinian Intifada.[36]

The main research tool in this study was a quantitative content analysis of the television news for which a codebook was developed. The codebook consists of three recording units, according to the structure of the news broadcast. The criteria for analysis in the codebook related both to textual and visual aspects of the news.

1 The News Item – defined as a unit beginning with an introduction by the newscaster in the studio regarding something new on a subject/idea and ending by moving on to another matter. The analysis included all the news items that appeared in the broadcasts: 794 news items.
2 The Event – defined as a sub-news item, including an entire story or idea, and dealing with specific participants and/or with the same issue in a particular place. A change in place or in participants indicated a transfer to another event. Only events that dealt with the Arab–Israeli conflict were coded. The first five events in every news item were analyzed in order of appearance. A total of 328 events were analyzed. 175 from 'Mabat' the governmental channel, and 153 from Channel 2, the commercial channel.

3 The Arab Participant – defined as an Arab participant in an event. Every Arab participant was analyzed according to the following criteria:
   i Rate of appearance
   ii Participants' order of appearance. The first five characters in every event were analyzed in order of appearance. When a group of Arab participants appeared on the screen simultaneously, the five most salient characters were analyzed.
   iii Participants were identified according to four criteria: anonymity, participant's name introduced by the broadcaster, participant's name presented on screen, participant presented by another participant.
   iv The political status of participants was categorized to include two groups: leadership and others. The leadership included heads of Arab states and politicians, Palestinian mayors of cities in the administered territories, other PLO leadership members, religious leaders both in Israel and the administered territories, and Israeli–Arabs who were mayors, party leaders, or members of the Knesset (Israeli Parliament). The participants' professions were designated according to Hartman's status-scale.[37] The scale consists of nine levels. The first level addresses the lowest professional status in Israeli society, blue-collar professions for which no special skills are usually required. The ninth level addresses the highest professional status in Israeli society, white-collar professions associated with advanced education and significant income.
   v The main activity in which the participants were engaged distinguished between orderly and disorderly activities. Disorderly activities included participating in demonstrations, throwing stones, shooting, as well as being 'punished' after a violent activity: for example being arrested or cleaning up the streets after demonstrations. Orderly activities referred to activities involving the participant civilian actions such as politics, culture, and sport.
   vi The geographic location of participants according to their place of residence: Israel, the administered territories and other countries.
   vii The physical environment of participants was determined according to the presence and the condition of the houses, the streets, means of transportation, the sidewalks, the yards, and the trees.
   viii The physical appearance of participants was determined by their style of dress.

The study coded all items in which Arabs appeared, not just those concerning the Arab–Israeli conflict. There was a total of 794 distinct news items, 328 of which covered events dealing with various aspects of Arab–Israel relations. In these 328 events 251 Arab participants were presented (153 from 'Mabat' and 98 from Channel 2).

The sample of news broadcasts

The research sample included 38 news broadcasts, which include 20 'Mabat' programs – the public news program, and 18 programs from the commercial channel, from 7 December 1997, until the end of February, 1998. From December through February, every other broadcast during the working week was included in the sample; e.g., Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, the following Monday, Wednesday and so on.

Two trained individuals, who worked independently, coded the content of the sampled news programs. The coders were a man and a woman, aged 25, students in the New School of Communication at the Management College of Tel Aviv. The role of the judges was to watch the news broadcasts and to analyze them according to a series of criteria specified in the codebook. Each judge received the text of the broadcasts and a page of technical instructions and guidelines with which to codify the news content according to the various units. We tested both coders on a small sample of news stories, deliberately selected because of their complexity, before allowing them to begin work in earnest. When the coders had mastered the coding technique, they began to work. The reliability of the portrayal of Arab people in the coding process was tested by means of the model presented in Light.[38]

The Results section consists of three parts. The first part displays the data from the 1998 study. The second part summarises the 1988 study, which contains only those variables that are relevant to the 1998 research. The third part compares and contrasts the representation of Arabs on the two channels.

The 1998 study

The salience of the Arab participants: overall, 1920 participants appeared on the news items in both channels. Of these 67 percent were Jewish-Israeli, 13 percent were Arabs, and 20 percent were from other nations. However, these proportions changed dramatically when we examined the order in which participants appeared in event units. There were 328 events that dealt with the Arab–Israeli conflict, which included 405 participants (251 Arabs and 154 Israeli–Jews). That is,

Table 15.1 Distribution of Arabs and Israeli-Jews in news events about Arab-Jewish relations and the Arab-Israeli conflict, by order of appearance.

Order of appearance	*Jewish-Israeli*	*Arab*[1]	*Total*
1	97	82	179
2	16	94	110
3	12	33	45
4	28	19	47
5	1	23	24
			405

[1]This category includes all Arab groups

62 percent of the participants in the news broadcasts were Arabs and only 38 percent were Israeli–Jews. Table 15.1 shows that Jews constituted 54 percent of all the first participants in news events regarding Arab–Jewish relations and the Arab–Israeli conflict, while 46 percent were Arabs. Progressing down the scale, Arab participants became more dominant. In other words, the first participant on the screen in an event is usually a Jewish person, yet there is only a small gap between Arabs. Israeli–Jews and the Arabs become visible when they are part of any discussion about them.

Who were those 'Arabs'? The largest group of Arabs presented on television news events were the Palestinians (38 percent), the second largest group consisted of those who are still 'enemies' (31 percent). It is important to note that a large proportion of this group was made up of participants from Iraq. The Israeli–Arabs were the third group (17 percent), and the rest (14 percent) were Arabs from 'friendly' countries especially from Jordan and Egypt. Yet, it is important to remember that these numbers have to be divided by 8 since they were only 13 percent of all participants. (i.e. 14 percent of 13 percent of the total number of participants).

Most of the Arab participants were presented as individuals. The names of 58.5 percent of all the Arabs in the news broadcasts were mentioned. The names of 38 percent appeared on the screen, and the broadcasters introduced 20.5 percent by name. The other 41.5 percent remained anonymous. Also, if the Arab person had an official position he was portrayed accordingly, and we found resemblance between the official title of the participant and his presentation in the news.

Another way to attend to identity characteristics is by looking at the political status of the participants. The participants were divided into

two groups according to their political status. The first group consisted of political leaders, while the second consisted of non-leaders. The distribution of Arab participants in the news events according to their political status and their geographic location was as follows: most of the Arabs from 'friendly' as well as 'unfriendly' countries, and more than half of the Palestinians who appeared on the television news, were politicians. In contrast, Israeli–Arab leaders were invisible, even in proportion to their small numbers in the Israeli political system (for example, Israeli–Arabs represent less than 10 percent of the Knesset). A better understanding of the non-representation of Israeli–Arab leaders can be found in the analysis of the following item (Channel 2, December 9, 1997). The subject of the item was the recommendation of the IDF (Israeli Defence Forces) that the Israeli–Arabs should be drafted to national service. The first event described confrontation between Jewish youngsters in front of an army recruitment base; the second event displayed a demonstration of a group of Arab youngsters in one of the villages; the third event presented a meeting of IDF representatives in the Knesset, and only in the fourth event was an Israeli–Arab MP, MK Azmi Bishara, interviewed. Most of the Israeli–Arabs who appeared in the news events were 'ordinary people'.

The distribution of the participants' professions follows the Hartman[39], and Krous and Hartman[40] status scale. The profession of 40 percent of the Arab participants was not identified. Seven percent of Arab participants were in the lowest three ranks of the status scale: peddlers, farmers or unskilled laborers. A disproportionately large number of Arab participants (37 percent) were politicians, as described above. The rest of the Arabs were soldiers (seven percent), doctors or journalists (five percent), students (three percent) and religion leaders (15 percent).

Most of the Arab participants observed during the coding, were engaged in their professional activities: 70 percent were engaged in law and order pursuits (soldiers, policemen, lawyers), 12 percent were engaged in sports and leisure activities, three percent were employed in activities for the Palestinian Authority and one percent were engaged in activities against the Palestinian Authority. Only three percent were occupied in anti-Israel activities (for example demonstrating).

Of all news events, 72 percent were about different dimensions[41] of conflict. The frame of reference for most of the items was about a crisis, whether it was a story about the Oslo Agreement, or Iraq and Gulf crises, or a conference in Teheran. For example the headlines from a news broadcast ('Channel 2' 24 February 1998): 'five months after the failure of the assassination in Jordan, (the attempt to murder one of the

military leaders of the PLO), Dani Yatom (the head of the secret services) resigned; UN Secretary-General Kofi Anann reports to the UN Security Council on the agreements with Iraq, while the USA still doubts his achievements; the murder of Noa Eyal, 17, from Jerusalem, could have been prevented if the buses had run after midnight'. All the events that composed these items dealt with various aspects of the relations between Israeli and Arab authorities and most of them pledged imminent peace; yet their frames of reference were those of conflict.

The rest of the news events dealt with every day activities. The most interesting news event regarding 'good news' was a case of organ donation. The fifth item in 'Mabat' (22 January 1998) concerned the Janzarra family, who donated the liver and kidney of their nine year old son, Ahmad, to an Israeli patient. The family lived in a refugee camp. It is important to mention that one of the family members (Naeed Janzarra) said, that although he considered Prime Minister Netanyahu an enemy, he wanted to donate the organs as a sign of good will towards the Israeli people. The uncle gave two reasons (in Arabic): 'First, from a human point of view, because I am going to save life – any life, and the second reason is because I am doing a good deed and maybe God will do a good deed and will help a boy in this hospital and I hope that he will be healthy'. This story is a very interesting one, because although the reporter tried to portray their humanity, thereby humanizing the Palestinians, who were, until recently, the enemy, he simultaneously reminded the viewers that the village named Al-Fawar served as a stronghold for 'Hamas' – an Islamic movement which had rejected the Oslo Agreement. Moreover, the reporter added: 'And it was from here that the terrorists Ibrahim Sarahma and Majidi Abu Wafaka came who laid the bombs on the no. 18 bus in Jerusalem and at the hitch hiking station in Ashkelon'. Thus, 'order' and 'disorder' were mixed together.

We examined every news event that described the Arab population's physical surroundings. That is, we coded the presence and the condition of the houses, the streets, the sidewalks, the yards, and the trees. In almost half of the houses that were shown there were yards or flowers beside Arab houses (43 percent). More than half of the houses were painted and well maintained. Inside the houses the walls were often bare, yet the residents had nice furniture. On the streets there was little traffic, yet about 40 percent of the cars were quite new models. Some of the traffic consisted of horses and carts. We found (according to Western aesthetic standards), that in most of the news events the Arab streets were clean, but run down and neglected in some way.

We examined the physical appearance of 214 Arab men and boys, and of 37 Arab women and girls in the broadcasts. Most of the men

were dressed in Western clothes (79 percent). Some of them added a kafiyah (Arab head-dress) to their western costumes (28 percent), 20 percent were dressed entirely in traditional costumes or in religious or ceremonial outfits. Most of the time their appearance was very tidy and respectable. Only 16 percent of the Arab participants were women. Most of them were also dressed in Western clothes (80 percent).

Arab participants in the news events were usually described by their official titles, names, or occupations (79 percent). The rest of the participants were described as Palestinians or Palestinian bureaucrats/policemen. The nature of the interaction between Arab participants and Israeli participants in most of the news events (70 percent) contained some level of dialogue or negotiation.

'Then and now'[42] *– The 1988 Study*

To understand the changing nature of representation and to answer question six of this study, it is important to inform the reader of the portrayal of the news ten years ago. Then, at the beginning of the first Intifada, the Arab as 'other' was represented differently. At that time 2440 participants appeared on the news items. Of these 65 percent were Jewish-Israeli, 15 percent were Arabs and 20 percent were from other nations. These proportions remained broadly the same when we examined the order in which participants appeared in event units. Seventy-one percent of all the first participants in news events touching on Jewish–Arab relations and the Arab–Israeli conflict were Jewish, while 26 percent were Arabs. Progressing down the scale, Arab participants became dominant, but the overall numbers were very low.

Most of the Arab participants were presented as anonymous individuals. The names of 75 percent of all the Arabs in the news broadcasts were not mentioned. The broadcasters introduced only 12 percent by name. It is noteworthy that the Palestinians (in the administered territories) were the largest group of anonymous Arab participants (88 percent). In contrast, fewer than half of the Israeli-Arabs were anonymous (48 percent), and most of the Arabs from the rest of the world were introduced by their names (75 percent).

Looking at the political status of the participants, we found that most of the Palestinians who appeared on the television news were citizens (93 percent), rather than leaders (seven percent). In contrast, Israeli–Arab leaders were overrepresented (39 percent), given their numbers in the Israeli political system. The broadcasts presented the non-Palestinian Arab world mainly by its leadership, and Palestinian Arabs almost entirely by their citizenry.

The profession of most of the Arab participants (64 percent) was not identified.[43] Fourteen percent of Arab participants were in the lowest three ranks of the status scale: policemen, peddlers, farmers or unskilled laborers. A disproportionately large number of Arab participants were politicians, as described above. The rest of the Arabs were mostly doctors or journalists. The fact that the profession of 64 percent of the Arabs was not given, forced us to look at their roles and activities in the scenes portrayed. We found that Arab participants tended to be engaged in Intifada activities.[44]

Looking at the Arab population's physical surroundings, we found that there were usually no yards or flowers beside Arab houses. More than half of the houses had no sidewalks, while half were not painted. Inside the houses the walls were often bare, and the residents had few plants and little furniture. On the streets there was little traffic, and most of the cars were old models. Some of the traffic consisted of horses and carts. The streets were clean, but run down and neglected in some way.

We examined the physical appearance of 267 Arab men and boys, and of 93 Arab women and girls in the broadcasts. Most of the men were dressed in Western clothes (76 percent). Some of them added a kafiyah to their western costumes (21 percent), but only three percent were dressed entirely in traditional costume. In a few cases the Arab participants appeared without shoes, or were not adequately dressed for the winter weather. Only 25 percent of the Arab participants were women. Most of them were also dressed in Western clothes (80 percent).

Arab participants in the news events, especially Palestinians from the administered territories, were usually described with negative modifiers (79 percent). For example, most of the Arab participants were presented by the broadcaster as 'instigators', 'trouble-makers', 'rioters', or the 'ill-tempered masses'. Only in 21 percent of the events was an Arab described using positive terms like 'peace-maker' or 'decent citizen'.

The nature of the interaction between Arab participants and Israeli participants in most of the news events (70 percent) contained some level of violence or confrontation.[45] Altogether we analyzed 328 items from both channels. 175 items from 'Mabat' (Channel 1, governmental) and 153 from 'Chadashot' (Channel 2, commercial). In 'Mabat' we observed 153 Arab participants and 81 Jews while in 'Chadashot' only 98 and 73 Jews. This difference was found to be significant to both groups (Arabs, chi-square 31.728, df 6; Jews, chi-square, 22.064, df 4).

But is there any difference in the presentation of each group as the 'other'? The major group in both channels constituted the Palestinians,

the second group comprised of those who were still considered as 'enemies', the third group embodied Israeli–Arabs and the smallest group was composed of people from 'friendly' countries. There was no significant difference between the channels regarding this variable. In both channels we revealed the same patterns of representation, which resembled the patterns that were explicated in the first part of this chapter.

The aim of this study was to reveal the representation of Arabs as four different groups of the 'other' in Israeli television news over ten years (1988–1998). The 1998 research showed that as a whole, the Arab participants were underrepresented (13 percent) in all Israeli news items. For instance, the Israeli–Arabs group, which makes up 18 percent of Israel's population, appeared in only 17 percent of the 13 percent mentioned above. This means that they appeared in less than 1.5 percent of the total news. This gloomy picture extends to incorporate all four groups, but to different degrees, as will be elaborated on shortly. These findings were similar to those of the 1988 study, but it is worth pointing out that overall we can observe a mild reduction in the instances in which Arabs appear, and fewer Arab–Israeli relations items than in 1988. One explanation may be the change of the political scene, that is, the change in the 'social reality'. Even though the dynamic relationship between media content and the social world is complicated, media content is affected by the social world.[46] That means that the move from the intensity stage of the conflict during the Intifada to the solvability stage of the conflict during peace negotiations, reverberated on the television news in at least one form – the salience coverage of the subject.

Hence the results of both studies showed that Israeli news coverage barely represents the four Arab groups. However, we found that in 1988 as well as 1998, each group was represented in relation to its political location. Thus, at the beginning of the Intifada, Israeli television actually diminished the significance of Arab 'others' by underrepresenting two groups in particular: 1) Israeli–Arabs, who were perceived as a hostile minority within the State of Israel; 2) Palestinians living in the administered territories, who were depicted as an enemy, threatening Israeli soldiers and citizens, in an effort to secede from the Israeli state.

Ten years on, we have found both change and stability in the media's depiction of the four 'other' Arab groups. The Palestinians with whom the Israeli political system tried to construct an agreement about the boundaries of both the State of Israel and the Palestinian State, became the salient group, represented mostly by its political leaders. Yet, the

portrayal of the ordinary people, is a very ambivalent one, as shown by the case of the organs' donation item. On the one hand, those Palestinians, who lived in a refugee camp, were shown to posses a 'heart of gold' since they saved Jewish people because 'we are all God's children', yet the reporter insisted on reminding us that they lived in the company of murderers. We share Hall's[47] idea that what has been said about 'race' can in many instances be applied to other dimensions of 'difference', even though in this instance we are referring to a political 'other' based on nationality and religion. In our case about the Arabs, we can find the narrative parallel to the black narrative in popular culture. Usually we can find two images of black people: first, the simple, loving childlike and devoted 'Mammy', or the faithful retainer or employee like the Arab family that saved a Jewish life. The second image is of the black person 'turning nasty' and 'cut-throat' once his or her Master's or Mistress's back is turned. This image resembles that of the Arab murderers who belong to that village, and significantly no explanation was given as to why those people were in a refugee camp to start with.

The representation of this family shows the complex nature of the transitional status of the representation of Palestinians as 'other', as they shift from being the enemy (terrorist) in one event, to being the partner (organ donor) in another. In both cases the Palestinian remains the 'other' and suffers the same representation of 'otherness'.

The findings concerning the representation of the Israeli–Arabs can be explained in relation to the ethnic nature of the Israeli State, which has not changed in the last ten years. The state declares itself to be the homeland of the Jewish people. Hebrew is the dominant language, and state institutions, official holidays, symbols and national heroes are solely Jewish.[48] The media, and television in particular, are not only a powerful source of ideas, but also a site for the articulation, working through, transformation and elaboration of those ideas.[49] Moreover, according to Smooha,[50] the conflictual status, with three out of the four Arab groups could be solved politically. The status of the fourth group, namely the Israel–Arabs, is more complicated and remains as yet unsolved.

The media handles this problematic 'other' by making them invisible, thus reducing their total representation to merely 1.5 percent of all the news stories. It is important to note that the representation of Israeli–Arabs was significantly high during the first Intifada but sharply declined as the Intifada faded out and the Oslo Agreement was signed.

An in-depth analysis of the identity of Arab participants depicted in the news shows the transitional nature of representation. In the 1988

study the vast majority of Arabs were anonymous people, especially the Palestinian group. The names of the Arab participants (75 percent) were not given in the broadcasts. This phenomenon amplifies the sense of the Arabs' invisibility. People on television usually have names or some other form of identification; if they lack these, they become figures, rather then people, and viewers tend to perceive them differently, often with less respect and understanding.

In the 1998 study, the Arab participants in the news broadcast, especially the Palestinians, were represented as individuals, 58.5 percent had names. Moreover, from terrorists and politicians, the Arabs have become varied groups of professional 'others'. This transformation is strengthened by the news broadcaster, who frames the new identity of the various groups by adapting their new image.

News broadcasts are mostly about elites. So, another way to discuss the identification of Arab participants is through their political status. We chose to look at political status because we were analyzing a national and ethnic conflict that, first and foremost, involves political leaders. In this respect, we found an overrepresentation of politicians. As stated above, during the Intifada, the Israeli–Arab leadership was over-represented and the Palestinian leadership of the occupied territories was underrepresented. The tendency to hide the Palestinian leadership at that time can be explained with the help of a publication that specifies the rules of conduct for broadcasters and reporters on Israeli television programs dealing with news and topical issues.[51] The 'Mabat' broadcasting policy manual was published in 1972 and updated in 1985. Section 19 includes recommendations for interviews with Palestinians from the administered territories. Every interview had to be approved by the director of the broadcasting authority, and the reporters were asked not to use the word 'person' when they reported on Palestinian leaders because that word in Hebrew conveys importance and respect. In that way, discrimination against the Palestinian leadership was institutionalized in the news.

In 1998, the picture was different as already elaborated. The difference occurred owing to the shift in the 'social reality' but also because of the modification of the 'symbolic reality'. The additional sources of news, as well as the establishment of another channel in Hebrew, allowed the media to free itself from the rigid rules of the authorities.

As we have shown in the findings section, there was only a minor difference in the portrayal of the four Arab groups between the channels and overall the picture tended to be similar. This finding is not in contradiction with the above argument. The changes in both the 'social

reality' as well as the changes in the 'symbolic reality' affected the practices of the reporters and softened the hegemony. Yet, the reporters on both channels are mostly Israeli–Jews, who still share the Zionist idea, summarized as 'Israel is a Jewish state'. Thus, they treat each group of Arabs in accordance with that group's position in relation to the negotiation of boundaries of the 'Israeli image community'. Therefore, the alterations in the political and media spheres contributed to the transitional nature of representation. That is, Arabs from all groups have been transformed from enemies into different types of 'other', yet these 'others' still suffer from stereotyping as a representational practice.

The representational practice is also evident in both studies in regard to the physical environment of the Arab participants. The Arabs' standard of living differs from the standard that Israelis have enjoyed in the past and still aspire to in the future. That is to say, the representation of the houses, streets, cars and yards in Arab neighbourhoods (whether the picture reflects 'objective reality' or not) stands in stark contrast to Western-life styles. This implies that the Arab way of life is not characterized by the pursuit of progress, economic stability ('the material person'), or improving the quality of life ('the post-material person'[52]). Israeli society tends to embrace 'Western tradition' and to reject the Arabs' 'Oriental' way of life.[53] The presentation of Arab participants' physical appearance, homes and neighborhoods is one aspect of the myth reflected in the news and may be compared with Himmelstein's 'Myth of the Puritan Ethic'.[54] Like his American counterpart, the Israeli viewer sees the television screen extolling the values of hard work and middle-class life, while simultaneously questioning the values of the underclass. If you work hard, says the myth, you will reap the benefits of the American Dream, which Israeli society holds in great regard. The news shows that Arab participants lack such ambitions, implying that they do not share these values.

The physical environment of the Arab participants in the news reinforces a 'commonsense understanding' of the Arabs for Israelis. 'The danger of the commonsense claim to truth is in its exclusion of those who live outside the familiar world it represents. In terms of news, it can mean a false sense of perspective'.[55] This claim reiterates the perception of Arabs already commonly held throughout Israeli society. Moreover, it can be said that this depiction of the Arabs in Israeli news production, reveals two levels of narration regarding the 'other'. The first arises from the postcolonial perspective, which criticises the attempt to define Arabs in terms of Western social values rather than those of 'Oriental' culture.[56] The second, and more crucial level for Israel, is the one that emerges from the 'we-feeling' generated in the context of the

'imagined community'. A nation, as we noted earlier, refers both to the external world of 'facts' and to a symbolic referent, which in our case is the existence of Israel as a Jewish State. In Israel, both 'facts' and symbolic referent were most fully and clearly mobilized in times of war or during serious conflicts, and in a more moderate fashion after the peace treaty with Jordan was signed, and the Oslo Agreement reached with the Palestinians.

Jews and Arabs are engaged in the solvability dimension of a conflict that has existed for over a hundred years, both on intercommunal and international levels. Therefore the Arab–Israeli conflict is less dominant in the news. Yet, the Arab participants in the news are still framed as the 'other' within conflictual or security-related frameworks. Since the process of creating peace is not yet completed, there is an overlap of both national and ethnic stereotypes. However, the transitional nature of representation is revealed by the changing images of the Arabs, shifting from the 'enemy' to a wider concept of the 'other'. Those involved within the television news network of both channels, have tried to draw the boundaries of 'imagined Israel' by depicted these 'others' in accordance with their perception of the diverse Arab groups.

Epilogue

In this chapter I compare the representation of Arabs on Israeli television news at two points in time a decade apart. The first, 1988, was a year in which conflict between Israelis and Palestinians erupted (Intifada 1). The second, 1998, was a year of relative calm during which negotiations took place towards reaching a solution of the conflict. The study sought to detect the ways in which this difference was expressed in the television news.

In October 2000 however, a second surge of violence erupted, labelled by the Palestinians as 'Intifadat Al-Aqsa'.[57] At the outset of this Intifada, the Israeli Arabs joined the Palestinians from the administrative territories in violent demonstrations. They continue to support their Arab brethren but no longer take an active part in their struggle. The Palestinian uprising has now become a nation-wide war of attrition. This will raise the question as to whether the representation of the Arabs is returning to the pattern deployed in the Intifada 1, or whether it is undergoing a reconstruction process in the light of the new political reality and the different media structure. Initial research shows that representation is not reverting to its former patterns. Instead, we have found a new pattern of (re)presentation.

The comments that follow concern only two of the four groups of Arabs discussed above, the Israeli Arabs and the Palestinians, since it is they who are directly involved in the new Intifada. For many years the Arab Israelis were perceived as an internal security threat. In the first Intifada (1988) they fulfilled a central political role by acting as go-betweens and were accordingly represented by the Israeli media as important partners in the peace process. In 1998, they were represented in the same manner as any other minority group in Israel. In 2001 however, following their active support for the Palestinian uprising, they are once again represented as a security threat. There is a steady process of delegitimization and exclusion. The Israeli media have separated and distinguished between Arab citizens and the Jewish majority creating a two-tiered society: Arab Israelis are no longer included in the term 'citizen', they are always referred to as Arab Israelis.

Moreover, during the demonstrations in October 2001, thirteen Israeli Arabs were killed by Israeli armed forces. The immediate news reports at that time did not specify the identity of the casualties, did not investigate the reason for which they were killed, nor whether it could have been avoided. In addition, the struggle of the Israeli Arabs for equality of rights was merged with the struggle of the Palestinians for independence. In this manner, the coverage presented the situation as a potent threat from without and from within.

We would suggest that the manner in which the Israeli Arabs were represented during their demonstrations was influenced by the character of ethnic democracy in Israel. The Israeli media did not function as a national, egalitarian voice of all the citizens of the country, but as a representational tool for the Jewish majority. And once the direct confrontation ceased, the Israeli Arabs were conveniently sidelined. They are now almost completely ignored by the press. The media focus centers on the Palestinians. The Palestinians are, on the one hand, blamed for both the instigation of violence and its continuation. On the other hand they are represented as freedom-fighters whose hardships and distress are given legitimacy. They are interviewed, questioned and allowed to present and explain their grievances and actions. Moreover, the news focuses on the personal stories of victims, so that the Palestinians are no longer portrayed as a mass of initiators but only as private victims. The reason for this double representation seems to lie in the changed media reality. During the first Intifada there was only one channel, loyal to government policy. This ensured that Israeli society was presented with one point of view and did not suffer dissonance as to questions of which side was right. Now, the multiplicity of channels and information sources, both Israeli and foreign, makes

censorship impossible. The commercial channels are committed first and foremost to profit making and ratings. Thus, they do not rally to the national cause – a function previously expected of the media at a time of conflict. In fact, this Intifada has become a media-war; its struggle is primarily conducted on the television screen. The news is therefore not only a tool for divulging information, but for explaining, forwarding and advancing one's cause, both to one's own people and to the world. These initial findings support our thesis in this study. Representation is indeed transitional. It can never repeat itself and it is forever changing and developing, for it is directly influenced by both the political reality and the symbolic reality. It appears that the representation of the Israeli Arabs was most influenced by the political reality, while the representation of the Palestinians was most influenced by the media reality. This emphasizes that the struggles of these two groups of Arabs and their significance in relation to Israeli society are very different. Our findings in 1998 showed little difference between the representation of Arabs on the different Israeli channels. A vital difference has emerged as a result of the conflict. This naturally calls for extensive further research.

Notes

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3 G. Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, Cambridge, 1997.
4 D. Kellner, *Media Culture*, London, 1995.
5 B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, London, 1991.
6 I. Abu Raiya, E. Avraham, G. Wolfsfeld, *The Arabs in Israel in the Eyes of the Hebrew Press: Media and Delegitimization*, Givat Haviva, 1998 (Hebrew).
7 S. Hall, 'The Work of Representation' in S. Hall, ed., *Representation, Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London, 1997, p. 15.
8 L. Grossberg, E. Wartella, C.D. Whitney, *Media-Making, Mass Media in a Popular Culture*, London, 1998.

9 For a distinction between typing and stereotyping see R. Dyer, *Gay and Film*, London, 1977.
10 S. Hall, 'The Spectacle of the "Other"' in S. Hall, ed., *Representation*, p. 257.
11 Ibid.
12 Grossberg, Wartella, Whitney, *MediaMaking*, p. 224.
13 For instance, G. Dines, M. Humez, eds., *Gender, Race and Class in Media*, London, 1995; B.S. Greenberg, J.E. Brand, 'Minorities and the Mass Media' in J. Bryant, D. Zillman, eds., *Media Effect: Advance in Theory and Research*, New Jersey, 1994, pp. 273–315.
14 L. Gross, 'Minorities, Majorities and the Media' in T. Liebes, J. Curren, eds., *Media, Ritual and Identity*, London, 1998, pp. 87–102.
15 E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York, 1993; H.K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London, 1994; R. Shome, 'Postcolonial Interventions in Rhetorical Canon: An "Other" View' in *Communication Theory*, vol. 6, no. 1, 1996, pp. 40–59.
16 R. Shome, 'Postcolonial Interventions in Rhetorical Canon: An "Other" View' in *Communication Theory*, vol. 6, no. 1, 1996, p. 42.
17 H. Herzog, R. Shamir, 'Negotiated Society? Media Discourse on Israeli Jewish/Arab Relations' in *Israel Social Science Review*, vol. 9, no. 18, 1994, pp. 55–88.
18 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
19 P. Scannell, D. Cardiff, 'The Nation Culture' in O. Boyd-Barrett, C. Newbold, eds., *Approaches to Media*, London, 1995, pp. 319–25.
20 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
21 I. Pappe, 'Post-Zionist Critique on Israel and Palestinians. Part 2: The Media' in *Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol. 26 no. 3, 1997, pp. 37–43.
22 T. Liebes, *Reporting the Arab–Israeli Conflict*, London, 1997.
23 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
24 Ibid.
25 R. Williams, *The Long Revolution*, Harmondsworth, 1965, p. 57.
26 On the nature of the celebration of the Oslo Agreement as a media event, and the changes in the public opinion at that time see T. Liebes, E. Katz, 'Staging Peace: Televised Ceremonies of Reconciliation' in *The Communication Review*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1997, pp. 235–57.
27 For more details about the struggle over the Israeli media during the Oslo peace process see Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*.
28 Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*.
29 Cohen, Adoni, Bantz, *Social Conflicts and Television News*; A.A. Cohen, G. Wolfsfeld, *Framing Intifada: People and Media*, Norwood, NJ, 1993; Liebes, *Reporting the Arab–Israeli Conflict*; Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*.
30 E.g. E. Avraham, *Media and Social Construction of Reality: The Coverage of Settlements in Marginal Areas in National Newspapers*. Thesis accepted for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1998; Herzog, Shamir, 'Negotiated Society? Media Discourse on Israeli Jewish/Arab Relations' in *Israel Social Science Review*, vol. 9, no. 18, 1994, pp. 55–88; Wolfsfeld, Avraham, Abu Raiya, 'When Prophecy Fails, Every Year: Israeli Press Coverage of Arab Minority Land Protests', a paper presented at the 48th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association, July 1998, Jerusalem. The Land Day protest refers to a

violent Arab demonstration against the Israeli Government, which confiscated Arab-owned lands. The event took place on 30 March 1976.

31 Avraham, *Media and Social Construction of Reality*.

32 Wolfsfeld, Avraham, Abu Raiya, 'When Prophecy Fails, Every Year: Israeli Press Coverage of Arab Minority Land Protests'.

33 P. Du Gay, ed., *Production of Culture/ Culture of Production*, London, 1997.

34 Herzog, Shamir, 'Negotiated Society? Media Discourse on Israeli Jewish/ Arab Relations' in *Israel Social Science Review*, vol. 9, no. 18, 1994, pp. 55–88.

35 There is also one news broadcast in Arabic.

36 A. First, *The Role of Israeli Television in Developing Attitudes of Jewish Adolescents toward Arabs and the Arab–Israeli Conflict*. Thesis accepted for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1995; A. First, 'Who IS the Enemy? The Portrayal of the Arabs in Israeli Television' in *Gazette*, vol. 60, no. 3, 1998, pp. 239–54. In this period Israeli society was forced, for the first time since the establishment of the State of Israel, to contend with a civil uprising that influenced the Israeli economy, the image and role of the Israeli Defence Forces, the relationship between the political parties, and the ideological debate between a fractionalized Israeli society and Israeli Arabs. See M. Lissak, 'The Intifada and Society' in R. Gal, ed., *The Seventh War*, Tel Aviv, 1990, pp. 17–37; A. Shalev, *The Intifada: Reasons, Characteristics and Implications*, Tel Aviv, 1990 (Hebrew).

37 M. Hartman, 'Prestige Grading of Occupations with Sociologists as Judges' in *Quality and Quantity*, vol. 13, 1979, pp. 1–19.

38 Reliability, as suggested by Light, is based on the chi-square test ((2=44.54 D.f.=6, p<0.00).

39 Hartman, 'Prestige Grading of Occupations with Sociologists as Judges' in *Quality and Quantity*, vol. 13, 1979, pp. 1–19.

40 V. Krous, M. Hartman, 'Changes in Prestige Grading of Occupations in Israel 1974–1989' in *Megamot*, vol. 40, 1993, pp. 78–87 (Hebrew).

41 Sociological literature describes various dimensions of conflict. Here we use three dimensions: complexity, intensity and solvability. For more see, Cohen, Adoni, Bantz, *Social Conflicts and Television News*; A. First, 'Television and the Construction of Reality: The Israel Case Study' in M. McCombs, D.L. Shaw, D. Weavers, eds., *Communication and Democracy*, pp. 41–50.

42 In the 1998 study we analyzed 54 broadcasts only from the governmental channel that was operated at that time.

43 The distribution of the participant's professions follows the Hartman, Krous and Hartman status-scale, as in the 1998 study. See Hartman, 'Prestige Grading of Occupations with Sociologists as Judges' in *Quality and Quantity*, vol. 13, 1979, pp. 1–19; Krous, Hartman, 'Changes in Prestige Grading of Occupations in Israel 1974–1989' in *Megamot*, vol. 40, 1993, pp. 78–87 (Hebrew).

44 Intifada activities, which means that they were demonstrating, throwing stones, being arrested, and cleaning up the streets after demonstrations under the Israeli army's supervision, including the removal of burning garbage.

45 For example, about 27 percent of all the events reported Palestinians engaging in violent activities such as throwing stones or molotov cocktails,

shooting, burning wheels or Israeli flags, 39 percent of all events reported Israeli army activities against Palestinians such as arresting Palestinians, shooting at them, demolishing houses, while the rest dealt with confrontations between the Israeli police or army and other groups such as Jews who live in the administrative territories, and verbal confrontations between Arab and Jewish leaders.

46 D. Croteau, W. Hoynes, *Media/Society*, Thousand Oaks, 1997.

47 Hall, 'The Spectacle of the "Other"' in S. Hall, ed., *Representation, Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.*

48 S. Smooha, 'Arab–Jewish Relations in the Peace Epoch' in J.M. Landau, A. Ghanem, A. Hareveen, eds., *The Arab Citizens of Israel Toward the Twenty First Century*, Hamizrah Hehadash 38, Jerusalem, 1995.

49 S. Hall, 'The Whites of Their Eyes' in G. Dines, J.M. Humez, eds., *Gender, Race and Class in Media*, London, 1995, pp. 18–23.

50 Smooha, 'Arab–Jewish Relations in the Peace Epoch' in J.M. Landau, A. Ghanem, A. Hareveen, eds., *The Arab Citizens of Israel Toward the Twenty First Century.*

51 D. Caspi, Y. Limor, *The Mediators: The Mass Media in Israel 1948–1990*, Tel Aviv, 1992 (Hebrew).

52 R.E. Rosengren and B. Reimer, 'The Cultivation of Values by Media' in S. Thomas, W.A. Evans, eds., *Communication and Culture.* Language Performance, Technology and Media, Norwood, 1990.

53 Said, *Culture and Imperialism.*

54 H. Himmelstein, *TV Myth and the American Dream*, New York, 1984, p. 205.

55 C.P. Campbell, *Race, Myth and the New*, London, 1995, p. 18.

56 Said, *Culture and Imperialism.*

57 Intifadat Al-Aqsa broke out on 28 September 2000. It was instigated by the visit of Ariel Sharon, then head of the opposition and now Prime Minister of Israel, to the Dome of The Rock Mosque in Jerusalem. This mosque is considered the third most holy Muslim site.

16

APPROACHES TO PEACEMAKING IN THE ISRAELI PRESS

Michael Keren

Introduction

Since diplomacy has shifted from secret chambers to the public sphere, the press has turned into a major actor in diplomatic processes.[1] The modern era of diplomacy is the era of public opinion and the latter is both reflected in and led by the press.[2] The saliency and importance of electronic mass media has not diminished the leading role of newspapers in shaping public opinion and the need of political leaders to gain support of the press in their war and peacemaking efforts.[3] It is hard to conceive of a major war initiative by a modern government, definitely by a democratic one, without the support of a substantial part of the written press. It is equally hard to imagine a government calling for public mobilization or working towards a peace without first gaining the support of newspaper publishers, editors and columnists. It is therefore worthwhile trying to understand the role of the Israeli press in peacemaking. This chapter attempts to throw light on that role by comparing approaches by the written press to peacemaking identified during three Middle East peace conferences: the Camp David summit of September 1978, the Madrid conference of November 1991 and the Sheperdstown talks of December 1999–January 2000.

The analysis of approaches by the press over time allows the generating of hypotheses about the shifting role of the press in peacemaking. My major argument, stemming from the comparison between the three cases, is somewhat counterintuitive: contrary to common perception, the support given by the Israeli press to peace diplomacy diminishes over time. What seems like a growing importance of the media in our

lives will here be shown to reflect a growth in sensational press behavior that increases the manipulative capacity of social forces opposed to peace.

I begin by explicating what I mean by 'approaches to peacemaking'. I then describe three different approaches by the press as demonstrated in the above peace conferences, and conclude by arguing that the recent increase in press sensationalism is related to a diminishing role of the press in peacemaking.

Newspapers in democratic societies are complex compositions of features that can hardly be compiled into a single 'approach'. Nor can a press known for its diversity be generalized to represent a clear narrative. And yet, just as intellectual history may be shown to follow intellectual traditions so the press follows certain traditions which impose distinct constraints. These traditions refer to the ways in which journalists perceive the world and their relation to it. They refer particularly to what newspapers consider fit to print and the ways and means by which they communicate it to their readers. Different newspapers have different modes of communication but there exist broad traditions that seem to affect these modes. For instance, the distinction between a 'solid', 'cynical' and 'sensational' press may be used not only to distinguish between newspapers but between eras in which any of the three categories is more prevalent. Here I propose three categories of approaches to peacemaking by the Israeli press which can be shown to represent a significant and meaningful shift in press behavior over time. The categories are based on five variables by which newspapers' approaches to peace negotiations may be classified:

1 *Focus*
This variable refers to the emphasis given in the press to the substantive issues involved in the negotiation process as opposed to an emphasis on procedural matters or merely to the virtual images it generates.
2 *Attitude*
This variable refers to the degree of trust the press expresses towards the negotiations, distinguishing between a view of the process as open-ended, as predetermined or as dependent on forces (hereafter labeled 'surrealistic') transcending both the negotiating partners as well as common political determinants.
3 *Time Span*
This variable refers to the time span in which peace is considered, distinguishing between the medium range, the long range and the immediate.

4 *Orientation*
This variable distinguishes between an orientation that accounts for the interests, needs and demands of one's negotiating partners as against a self-centered orientation and one that, whether focusing on the 'other' or the 'self', is concerned with abstract entities rather than real people.

5 *Mood*
This variable distinguishes between the treatment of the negotiations with an optimistic mood, a pessimistic mood or one shifting dramatically between the two.

The five variables may be clustered into many categories marking differing approaches by the press to peace negotiations. Three clusters are stressed here, derived from my reading of press reports of each of the three peace conferences. It must be remembered that the cluster found in each case may be partly dependent on specific political conditions, e.g., the government in power at the time, its ideology or its relations with the press, etc. Also, the variation identified here has its exceptions; the characterization of a given era as 'substantial', for instance, does not mean that no procedural or virtual focus can be identified in specific newspaper accounts in that era. The following analysis of approaches by the press to peace negotiations over time thus represents general trends supported by examples rather than exclusive, rigid models. However, as I will try to demonstrate the following changes in approaches to peace from Camp David through Madrid to Sheperdstown represent a meaningful trend in press behavior in Israel and elsewhere.

As shown in Table 16.1 the approach by the press to the Camp David negotiations may be characterized as substantive, open-ended, middle range, 'other' oriented and optimistic. The summit was called by U.S. president Jimmy Carter in September 1978 with the hope of reaching a comprehensive Middle East peace agreement after the momentum

Table 16.1 Approaches by the Israeli press to three peace conferences.

	Camp David	*Madrid*	*Sheperdstown*
Focus	Substantive	Procedural	Virtual
Attitude	Open-ended	Deterministic	Surrealistic
Time Span	Middle range	Long range	Immediate
Orientation	Other oriented	Self centered	Abstract
Mood	Optimistic	Pessimistic	Unstable

created by Egyptian President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977, and the fading of the momentum in the year since the dramatic visit. The conference was conducted behind a veil of secrecy, and the press had little to report besides colourful accounts about the Maryland enclave – who played chess, who rode a bicycle, who strolled in the grounds, etc. Yet an overview of the reports indicates relatively little interest in such trivia: the general trend was rather to try and sort out the substantive issues at stake. 'The alert reader of the Israeli press', wrote Avraham Schweizer shortly after the conference began, 'has certainly already come to the conclusion that the reports coming out of the Camp David meeting are "grinding water". The news arriving from there belongs to the sphere of social gossip; who met with whom, who took a walk with whom . . . yet heavy issues are to be decided in Camp David'.[4] Schweizer reminded his readers that the important questions had not been reported on yet, stressing that even the declarations made so far by the leaders were not the main thing to be concerned with for 'peace is not a mere linguistic asset but a real strategic asset in the sense of avoiding war'.[5]

Schweizer was known as a serious journalist working for a solid newspaper. But even the popular evening papers were little concerned with colorful reports, as indicated by the little space devoted to Camp David in days in which nothing of substance could be reported. While Egyptian officials quoted in the Israeli press emphasized procedure, their Israeli counterparts did not. For instance, on 8 September, Ilan Kefir quoted Egyptian journalists as saying that relations between the countries were strongly dependent on the restoration of personal relations between the leaders participating in the summit. A smile exchanged at Camp David, they said, would be the equivalent of white smoke in the Vatican.[6] But the Israeli press generally concerned itself less with procedural outcomes than with substantive ones.

The Israeli press during Camp David showed a strong trust in the negotiation process. From the beginning, they were deeply concerned over a possible failure of the negotiations which, they argued time and again, could lead to a return to war. Shortly after the delegation left for Camp David, military commentator Zeev Schiff, for instance, published a detailed scenario indicating that for Egypt, the military option was a real one. Despite their lack of spare parts, and the difficulty they would have winning any future war with Israel, he wrote, the Egyptians' capacity to act militarily should the negotiations fail was substantial.[7]

A general attitude prevailed in the Israeli press that the negotiations were crucial and that much depended on their outcome. This attitude took less the form of scenarios of doom than of an analysis of different

options that could be expected once the negotiation partners emerged from their seclusion. Each side was expected to have a rather broad range of proposals that could be put on the negotiating table. 'The reaction span of the Israeli delegation', wrote Uzi Benziman on 8 September, 'allows it to propose a variety of possibilities in accordance with the expected proposals by the Egyptians and Americans'.[8] This and other references to the discussions taking place behind close doors resembled descriptions of negotiation processes in international relations textbooks. It was expected that serious proposals would be presented, objections raised, and compromises reached.

Much of the optimism with which the conference was treated was related to the trust in negotiations as a means of reaching agreement in the international arena. Such optimism stemmed not from the feeling that a favorable outcome had been agreed upon by the parties in advance but from the opposite feeling that all options were open in Camp David. The trust in negotiations can be found time and again; when the summit began, *Yediot Aharonot*'s Ron Ben-Yishai defined Israel's main criterion for success as continued negotiations. So did *Jerusalem Post*'s Wolf Blitzer and David Landau who believed the summit had had a promising start not only because of the warm and relaxed atmosphere but because both options – to make or to break, as they put it – were available. And when the summit ended the two reporters defined its outcome as favorable because 'at least Israel's minimum objective – continued peace negotiations – has been ensured'.[9]

The press reports by correspondents situated both in Maryland and at home expressed a clear sense of caution. In its editorial of 10 September the solid *Haaretz* newspaper exhorted his readers to be very patient and avoid drawing conclusions in the first days of the summit. Even if a dramatic change occurred it would depend on substantive concessions by the parties that were still unknown at that point. The editorial recognized the enormous curiosity raised by the conference, but recognized that this curiosity sprang not only from a thirst for sensation but from a common feeling that whatever was agreed upon in Camp David, would determine 'how we shall live in the foreseeable future'.[10]

The reference to the foreseeable future is not incidental; this is the time span within which the press generally considered the future. Despite the drama involved in a first major peace initiative between Israel and the strongest Arab state, peace was not seen as eternal but as relating to a medium range time span. While Israeli intellectuals, especially poets, were known for their messianic visions of peace, the press showed greater soberness than that, as did politicians expressing themselves in the press. Shimon Peres wrote that although he did not

consider peace with Egypt to be temporary as many claimed, a peace agreement for ten years was also worthwhile, as it would allow Israel to divert its attention to internal nation-building tasks. Even Menachem Begin, known for his messianic rhetoric, declared in Parliament upon his return from Camp David that 'the circle of wars has been closed ... perhaps for five years, perhaps for ten, perhaps for fifty years, perhaps for a generation, perhaps for two generations'.[11]

The Israeli journalists' preoccupation with their Egyptian counterparts during the Camp David conference stemmed not only from the familiar need of journalists left behind a veil of secrecy to endlessly interview each other, but from what seems in perspective a genuine concern for the other side. By then, the initial curiosity over former enemies turned negotiation partners had already faded somewhat but not the understanding, brought about by the Sadat visit, that peace involves compromise. An overview of the Israeli press during Camp David reveals a comprehension that it would be insufficient if only one side's interests were satisfied. As Ron Ben-Yishai put it, success in peace negotiations demands mutual agreement; once the other party comes out of the negotiations with its desires unfulfilled, failure is assured.[12] Writings in the press referred a lot to the 'chemistry' that ought to prevail between leaders but it was also emphasized that personal interaction was not enough, for the Egyptian demands were as important to consider as the Israeli demands and a serious exchange had to be made. Although opinions differed, of course, over the desired outcome of the conference, 'the other' was seen as a legitimate negotiating partner and one's own leadership was evaluated by its stand *vis à vis* an actor whose interests, whether accepted or not, were seriously considered. As Yehoshua Bar-Yossef summarized it: 'What is important for the chances of peace is not what we think will appease the Arabs but what the Arabs think and believe and are ready to accept wholeheartedly'.[13]

The various titles referring to the probability of failure (e.g., 'what if the summit fails?'), as well as references to the possibility of a resort to war if the talks fail, reflect a feeling that nothing had been closed in advance, and that all possibilities were open. At the same time, a general optimism may be detected in the Israeli press of September 1978. Although it is not easy to operationalize this variable, which refers to a general mood, one is struck by the optimism in the press, particularly in moments of crisis. In one such moment, for example, on 8 September, Joel Marcus reported that by cool theoretical analysis, the conference was destined to fail and yet, since all sides would lose too much if it failed, a blueprint must be found that could return the talks on track.[14]

The press's relative optimism during Camp David was undoubtedly related to the fact that internal political disagreements in Israel were not yet as deep as in later years, when it became hard for any government to reach agreement. When on 18 September, for instance, *Maariv* announced the reaching of an agreement, it wrote that the agreement involved joy, hope and worry and assumed that 'the entire nation shares in the hope'.[15]

The Madrid conference of 1991 was convened under different conditions than the Camp David summit.[16] However strained Israeli–Egyptian relations were in 1978, following a year of tough negotiations and frequent crises, they were held under the shadow of Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, which signified an intention by all parties to reach a peace agreement, as well as the realization that they would have to pay a price for it. The Israeli–Palestinian conflict, which lay at the core of the overall Arab–Israel conflict, was discussed in general formulae which did not prevent the signing of a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt. In 1991, no event similar to the Sadat visit inspired the talks. The various combatants in the Middle East were summoned to an international peace conference by the Bush administration, when it became clear they were weakened enough by the Gulf War to have to accept the summons, however reluctantly. It was their strategic weakness which brought Syria's tough leadership, Israel's right-wing Likud government and, as part of a joint Jordanian–Palestinian delegation, the PLO, to Madrid.

These different conditions account for some of the differences between the press reports in the two events. The pessimism found in Madrid may be explained by the disbelief of many Israeli journalists that Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir could ever be pressed to sign a peace agreement. Keeping in mind such constraints, however, there are interesting differences in the approach of the press to the Madrid conference, which seem to be related to changes in the press itself in the 1980s. Thus, it preoccupied itself with procedure no less than with substance. For instance, reports on speeches held in the conference were far more concerned with their structure and style than with their content. This could be the result of the 'new journalism' style adopted by the press in that decade,[17] one emphasizing the subjective impressions of the writer. *Yediot Aharonot*, for instance, sent to Madrid none other than author Meir Shalev who indulged in cynical descriptions of the opening speeches as 'a concentrated salvo of clichés'.[18] The descriptions were not yet as picturesque as those of later years but they differed significantly from those of Camp David in their emphasis on procedural matters such as handshakes. If only a Lebanese

delegate had shaken the hand of Israeli minister Sara Doron, wrote *Maariv*, 'she would have credited the Arab side with many points'.[19] And Amnon Abramovitz made it explicit: 'On procedure, on protocol and custom will the Madrid conference rise or fall'.[20]

'Everybody is eating and drinking and rejoicing', reported Shalev from the conference, comparing its participants to guests at a circumcision party: 'the hall is elegant, the food excellent and what is most important – the guests know that nothing of theirs will be cut off'.[21] It is hard to attribute the low expectations of the conference only to most journalists' mistrust of Shamir. Begin was also no favorite of the press and yet the reports from Camp David seemed different. In 1991, the attitude prevailed, possibly as part of a broader cynical attitude exerted by the press, that negotiations were a façade for processes beyond the control of negotiators. This deterministic attitude could be found, for instance, in the writing of Amos Kenan who felt, without being able to adduce any proof, that something had happened to Shamir in Madrid, and that peace was now 'inevitable'.[22] Shimon Schiffer, quoted an Israeli official who after one day of speeches felt that 'the business is already finished' and that the conference existed within 'a script whose ending is known in advance'.[23] And David Witztum wrote that every point to be negotiated in Madrid was a step in a 'grand plan'.[24]

Perhaps the greatest indication of the deterministic attitude may be found in the lack of analysis of options. In contrast to the open-ended approach in Camp David, there were no speculations on the participants' expected moves, definitely no attempt to tie differing moves to alternative outcomes. The headlines dealt with the negotiation process as if it were an entity independent of its participants. The process was likened to a climb on the Himalayas, or to an airplane taking off and landing, but mostly it remained devoid of active negotiators who could make a difference. So much so, that its chances of success were attributed at one point, in surrealistic fashion, to the appearance of 'a supreme mediator, some kind of superstar'.[25]

Once a negotiation process is seen in deterministic terms rather than as a process whose outcome depends on particular human action, the time span within which peace or war are handled becomes limitless. Historical determinism does not consider such details as whether peace is negotiated over a five year, ten year or thirty year time span. Indeed, there was hardly any mention of time in the Madrid reports – just mention of 'history'. Newspapers distributed special issues capturing the historical moment in pictures; writers were preoccupied with the way the Prime Minister conceived his role in history, and generally, time

was taken from the sphere of the measurable and temporary to the sphere of the eternal. The opening day in Madrid was enough for some reporters to announce that history had been made. Although Shamir was not known to be interested in history, wrote Joel Markus, for instance, 'this week he nevertheless made a step that has brought him into history. Whether he is going to lead us towards a settlement or whether his resentment brings us to war, he at least is already a page in our historical annals'.[26]

One of the main differences between the press of 1978 and of 1991 concerns its preoccupation with internal affairs in the later era. Although the Madrid conference was defined as an historical event, this did not prevent many pieces on such matters as the relations between Prime Minister Shamir and Foreign Minister David Levy who decided not to join the conference for reasons of internal and personal politics. The Camp David process was also constrained by deliberate, well-calculated moves made by forces opposed to a compromise, but the situation in Madrid was different; it was the beginning of an endless preoccupation of the Israeli press with internal affairs, such as the Foreign Minister's tendency to get offended occasionally, whose role in the overall peace process seems in perspective to have been quite marginal.

Although one can find in the Madrid coverage some expressions despising Israel's negotiating partners, such as by *Yediot Aharonot's* guest commentator Uzi Machanaimi,[27] this was rather rare. On the contrary, journalists criticized their own government for going to the conference without considering the price it would be willing to pay. As Boaz Evron put it: 'Don't the people sitting down to negotiate have to understand that the other side also has a character, and fears, and hopes, and hatred, and a sense of revenge, but also generosity and largesse and understanding?'.[28] Where a self-centered orientation was apparent, though, was in analyses of the price of peace which, in comparison to similar analyses in Camp David, concerned almost exclusively the price Israel would have to pay. Ido Disenchik, complaining about this tendency in government, may have also referred to fellow journalists when he wrote that 'the Israelis and Egyptians came to Camp David from a starting point that says approximately: what is the maximum I can give in return for what I would like to achieve. On the other hand, the Israelis and Arabs who came to Madrid asked themselves: what is the minimum I can give in return for what I would like to achieve'.[29]

The pessimism we already detected above may well have been justified in the light of the reluctance with which the parties were brought to the Madrid conference. It is hard not to feel, however, that pessimistic expressions exceeded objective circumstances. One expression

by Disenchik may suffice to demonstrate the pessimism with which the Israeli press treated the entire endeavor after the opening day: 'The chance of a breakthrough is less than the chance of winning the lottery tomorrow'.[30]

The changes identified so far from the first to the second cluster – the first representing a more solid approach by the press, the second a more cynical one – cannot easily be extrapolated further. Between the early and late nineties, a qualitative change has occurred in press behavior that made the press's approach towards the Sheperdstown talks between Israel and Syria resemble nothing we have seen so far. This is particularly so as regards the disregard for both substance and procedure which were replaced by a focus on visual images for both. One can hardly find a more representative image portraying this approach by the Israeli press than the *Jerusalem Post's* huge, pink picture of a child playing with Barbie dolls under the title 'Barak and Barbie – Both Still Fresh and Perky'.[31] An observation of the press during the Sheperdstown talks shows an unusual preoccupation with visual images – the most famous of which was the handshake that had not taken place between Israel's Prime Minister and Syria's Foreign Minister. As if the talks involved no substance, journalists stationed in Sheperdstown filled the newspapers with colorful descriptions some of which were self-generated, such as the unearthing of an alleged descendent of Joseph Trumpeldor's fiancée, while others were finagled by governments, such as the pictures of a well orchestrated visit of the conference participants to nearby Civil War battlefields. Some pictures were sheer fake, such as one using camera angles to create the impression that the American President and Israeli Prime Minister were reaching out to an unresponsive Syrian Foreign Minister during a walk.

This concentration on image focus may be explained away as an attempt by the press to survive in a world dominated by the visual images of television, but its significance stems from the fact that it has replaced substantive, even procedural, discussions during the talks. Symbolic gestures such as handshakes became major focal points in the analysis of the talks; analysts concerned themselves with the significance of the refusal of the Syrians to abide by gestures at the expense of serious analysis of the substantive political interests involved. At one point, journalist Markus even complained that the Prime Minister had ignored the Syrians' bad manners as an attempt to focus on the substantive issues at stake. Markus expressed a truism of the present world in arguing that the making of peace today demands great attention to external manners, as these are functional in the preparation of publics for the acceptance of peace agreements.[32]

'Surrealism' has been defined above as an attitude towards the negotiation process that considers it as dependent neither on the negotiating partners nor on common political determinants. Such an attitude is the direct outgrowth of a press attributing major importance to virtual images. The more images prevail, the more the press is willing to attribute to non-substantial elements the power to determine the outcome of the peace process. Striking examples can be found in attributing political significance to the decision by the negotiators to shut off cellular phones during a meeting, in the endless preoccupation with such details as the former enemies crossing a bridge, in the extensive reporting of news items that are nothing but trial balloons released by government spokespersons (e.g., the announcement on the first day of the talks that 80 per cent of the matters had already been agreed on), and the incredible enthusiasm of the bored journalists in Sheperdstown when the American mediators put a working paper on the table. Journalist Hemi Shalev went as far as to dub them 'an army of salvation breaching the deadlock, Deus ex Machina, who appears at the critical moment and saves the situation'.[33] The American paper was known to include no new substantive points, nor did it provide an impressive new procedure for the negotiations. Its treatment in such awed tones stemmed from its effect on what has apparently become a major determinant of peacemaking today – the mood of the journalists themselves. As Shalev admitted: 'The document, containing less than ten pages, changed the mood here from one extreme to the other'.[34]

The change of mood from one moment to the other became a main characteristic of the Sheperdstown reports. With newspapers competing over the use of sensational headlines, peace between Israel and Syria was no longer conceived within a medium or long range span. It became contingent upon momentary shifts in mood during the negotiations themselves. Shalev blamed the Americans for introducing a sense of immediacy into the talks; the Americans were trying to achieve an agreement between Israel and Syria at the speed with which McDonald hamburgers were produced, he wrote. Yet this sense of immediacy may be attributed no less to the overwhelming presence of the mass media under pressure to produce new and sensational headlines every day.

The volume of words written about Sheperdstown is no help in the search for 'other oriented' vs. 'self-centered' reports, for it is all there – reports on the Syrian delegation, reports on the Israeli delegation, yet all actors are treated as abstract entities rather than as real people. One gets the feeling that all descriptions in word or picture of persons or groups is presented through a filter that places that person or group in an abstract context carrying a message to the public. This may be partly

because the talks took place under the shadow of a referendum, but the abstraction has become characteristic of the modern press. Prime Minister Barak was always presented in the Sheperdstown reports in relation to some message; as military hero, as reflective peacemaker, as family man, as strong man, etc. The Syrian delegation, despite its insensitivity to the modern media, did not escape similar treatment. At times its members were portrayed as business-like men in black suits, at other times as relaxed chaps playing basketball. The point is that for a sober analysis of the demands and interests of the actors the press had substituted messages related to broader narratives. As this became a main feature of the modern press, spokespersons learnt how to manipulate such narratives in a way that blurs the picture either of the 'other' or of oneself.

Once a virtual focus, surrealistic attitude, immediate time-span and abstract orientation take over, the mood expressed in the press is no longer optimistic or pessimistic in light of assessments about the conduct of the negotiations or their outcome but becomes contingent upon 'dramatic' events, however short-lived the drama. Thus, the mood, often expressed in apocalyptic terms and huge headlines, shifts fast. Most significantly, serious commentators in the written press seem to be quite influenced by the apocalypse generated by the press, providing in manic-depressive fashion assessments of the peace process that may seem deep and thoughtful but shift in accordance with the recent event, image, interview or gesture.

In conclusion, I would like to argue that the shift from a more solid approach by the press in 1978 to a more sensational one in 2000, mediated by the 'new journalism' of the 1980s and 1990s, carries important implications for the peace process and for peace processes. We are in fact facing a paradox. The growing impact of the mass media in our lives, manifested in our exposure to endless bits of information transmitted by them, was expected in the past to increase public control over governments and, subsequently, to support peace making efforts. However, sad to report, the sensationalism of the modern press, operationalized by the five variables: virtual focus, surrealistic attitude, immediate time-span, abstract orientation, and unstable mood, seems rather detrimental to peacemaking.

First, peace making is a rational process in the sense that opposed interests represented by real actors are recognized and are made the subject of compromise. Once real actors are replaced by abstract images and empty gestures are mistaken for genuine interests, compromise is hard to come by and becomes particularly hard to 'sell' to the public.

Second, peace making is an incremental process; difficulties are overcome in piecemeal steps that require enormous diplomatic sensitivity. The intervention by a sensational press distorts the consistency and delicacy of the process and makes it contingent upon fast-changing moods and momentary distortions.

Third, virtual reality, as is well known, is far more open to distortions by peripheral groups than non-virtual reality. For instance, once the peace process is transformed by the press into a set of images manipulated by spokespersons, the capacity of spokespersons for groups opposed to the process to produce headlines that introduce fear or ambivalence into the public sphere increases.

Fourth, a true assessment of the costs of peace are lost as a result of disproportionate press reports, e.g. endless interviews with settlers in the Golan Heights whose agony turns into a ritual, if only because of the sheer quantity of such reports.

And fifth, a press whose grand message is rather hedonistic, as manifested in its resort to sensational images touching upon the senses rather than the brain, may diminish the human capacity to pay any cost, and particularly the hard costs entailed by political compromise.

Notes

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22 A. Kenan, 'Reayon Baduy Im Shami', ibid., p. 7.
23 S. Schiffer, 'Harpatka Americanit', ibid., p. 2.
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31 *The Jerusalem Post*, 14 January 2000.
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17

ARGUMENT, WAR AND THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Marcelo Dascal

> Should we not analyze [power] primarily in terms of struggle, conflict *and war*? One would then confront the original hypothesis . . . with a second hypothesis to the effect that power is war, a war continued by other means.[1]
>
> Michel Foucault

> Even more precious perhaps is the tradition that works against . . . that misuse of language which consists in pseudo-arguments and propaganda. This is the tradition and discipline of clear speaking and clear thinking: it is the critical tradition – the tradition of reason.[2]
>
> Karl Popper

Introduction

We are all familiar particularly in Israel with the fact that the presence of a TV camera may bring about the radicalization of an otherwise peaceful demonstration: stones are thrown, the aggressiveness of the slogans increases, flags and offensive banners are displayed – in short, the crowd discharges its duty to 'make news'. We are also familiar with the fact that there is only scant correspondence between what goes on inside a negotiating room and what 'transpires' through the media. Inside the room negotiations are for the most part conducted in a cordial or at least businesslike atmosphere and the discussion is 'to the point', even if disagreement prevails. However, what spokespersons for the negotiating parties publicly declare – 'for the record' – is likely to be much tougher, at least as long as agreement has not been reached.

Thus, the media's presence has often the effect of stressing differences and emphasizing conflict.

But the media may also have the opposite effect. In the case of deep and violence-prone conflict, when the parties are not even negotiating or negotiations are stalled, the media can function as an alternative channel of communication. Through the media, so-called 'balloons' and deliberate 'leaks' are used in order to check the opponent's reactions, to make each other's demands mutually known, and to prepare the public for the upcoming moves. Often this has the effect of defusing the immediate danger of violent confrontation and of paving the way for the resolution of the conflict.

In this chapter, I examine these opposed roles of the media in conflictual situations. I argue that the use of violence and the use of argumentation belong to a set of 'communicative acts' structured by a double conceptual/rhetorical grid of metonymic and metaphorical relations. While the metaphorical relations conceptualize argument as *analogous* to war, the metonymical relations conceptualize argument as *continuous* with war. Metaphor allows the warlike aspects of argument to be identified, both in intellectual operations such as criticism and in emotive operations such as propaganda (as in the quotation from Popper). But it keeps these operations strictly apart from physical violence, to which they bear only a relation of similitude. Metonymy, on the other hand, conceptualizes the operations involved in argument as being themselves part and parcel of the power game. As such, they function either as a continuation of war in another register (as in the quotation from Foucault) or as nothing more than violence's temporary replacements (as in the belief that as long as the contenders negotiate they at least don't wage war).

This metonymic/metaphorical conceptual grid – I claim – forms a continuum that plays a constitutive role in conflict management and explains how these two types of communicative acts – 'talking' and 'fighting' – often function so as either to reinforce each other or to reduce each other's impact. What I would like to propose is that it is the intertwining of these two forms of communication and their underlying dual grid that permits us to understand how the media can, under different circumstances, fulfill the dual role described above.

My analysis also suggests that it might be possible to find an intermediate path between Foucault's pessimism (ultimately, argument *is nothing but* war, albeit in a disguised form) and Popper's somewhat naive optimism (rational argument, however warlike it may look, transcends war). This possibility rests upon the fact that, in spite of its powerful grip upon our conceptualization and rhetoric of conflict, the

current metaphorical/metonymic grid that relates argument to violence is not ineluctable. In so far as it is – however powerful – merely a contingent stage in the evolution of our cognitive, emotive, and linguistic apparatus, this grid can eventually be replaced by another one, constituted by more 'benign' metaphors and metonymies. This might pave the way for overcoming the paralyzing grip of endemic conflict. It is the responsibility of intellectuals, as well as of the media, to criticize the limitations and dangers of the extant grid and to contribute their share in creating and disseminating alternatives to it.

Argument *as* war

In their book *Metaphors We Live By* Lakoff and Johnson showed how ordinary language is permeated by what they call 'metaphorical concepts'.[3] These concepts underlie clusters of metaphors and thereby provide coherent structures for thinking and speaking about one domain (the target) in terms of another (the source). They are so ubiquitous that we are hardly aware of them *qua* metaphors, and tend to use them as if they were literal. Consider the metaphorical concept time is money. It underlies an unlimited number of expressions, such as 'I don't *have* the time to *give* you', 'That flat tire *cost* me an hour', 'I don't *have* enough time to *spare* for that', etc.[4] Metaphorical concepts are systematic, structured, and productive; they provide ready-made ways of organizing our thought and speech about a wide range of phenomena on the basis of our experience and our conceptualization of other phenomena.

The very first example of a metaphorical concept Lakoff and Johnson mention is war. The target (argument or debate) is conceptualized in terms of predicates primarily applicable to the source (war). This metaphor underlies such utterances as 'Your claims are *indefensible*, 'He *attacked every weak point* in my argument', 'His criticisms were *right on target*', etc.[5] War and argument have (partially) isomorphic structures, which include slots for participants, parts, stages, linear sequences, causation, and purpose. This isomorphism permits the projection of the components of war onto those of argument, and to use the terminology of the former in talking and thinking about the latter. The participants are thus conceived as *adversaries* who hold *positions*, devise *strategies*, perform *attacks*, *counterattacks*, *maneuvering*, and other *moves*, with the purpose of achieving *victory*; the argument is depicted as comprising different stages and sub-stages (*battles*, *skirmishes*, *truce*, *victory*, *surrender*, *peace*); there are more or less fixed causal sequences (*attack* results in *defense*, *counterattack*, or *retreat*), etc.[6] The productivity of

this metaphorical concept is apparent from the fact that this list can be easily extended. The words used by the contenders in an argument become *weapons*, their claims, *blows*, their *moves* have different *forces* and *strategical* or *tactical* roles, the anticipation of the opponent's objections can be related to *intelligence*, the accumulation of evidence in favor of one's position to *logistics*, and so on. I leave it for the reader to collect examples of the use of this metaphorical concept in the media.

It is not only ordinary parlance which is permeated by this metaphor. The seventeenth-century scientist Robert Boyle talked about debate as a 'spiritual warfare' and pointed out that debaters – no less than generals – are justified in employing 'stratagems' in order to defeat an adversary described as 'the old serpent'. The eighteenth-century philosopher Immanuel Kant described traditional metaphysics as a 'battleground' where 'dogmatists' fought 'internecine wars' which, along with the occasional incursions of the 'sceptic nomads', unsettled the 'despotic empire' of metaphysics.[7] The nineteenth-century philosopher Schopenhauer compared dialectic – the art of dispute – with the art of fencing. 'Dialectic – he wrote – need have nothing to do with truth, as little as the fencing master considers who is in the right when a dispute leads to a duel. Thrust and parry is the whole business. Dialectic is the art of intellectual fencing. . .'[8]

It is important to note that the use of a metaphorical concept can hardly be circumscribed to its initial domain. It tends to spill over into adjacent areas. For instance, the metaphorical conceptualization of the mind as a container requires one to conceptualize thought as a process that takes place *within* the mind and communication as consisting in the *transmission* of ideas from one container to another through an appropriate *conduit* (cf. Reddy 1979).[9] In the case of argument is war, this tendency leads to the conceptualization of the theories held by the opponents as having the structure of *fortresses*, comprising a 'core' (the theory's essential tenets, whose *fall* would mean the theory's demise) and a 'periphery' (its *external bastions*, that can be *surrendered* without major damage to the theory). For instance, referring to the physicist Honoré Fabri's attitude *vis-à-vis* the scholastic contribution to modern thought, the seventeenth-century philosopher Leibniz writes: 'From the Peripatetics he rejected that which he should have conserved above all . . . while, on the contrary, he heatedly defended some external bastions, very remote and not in need of defence'.[10] The assumption, of course, is that contenders in a debate should be able to distinguish clearly between what is essential and what is secondary, just as negotiators in a peace process should be able to define their 'red lines'

and generals in the battlefield to distinguish between strategical and tactical aims – which is not a trivial matter.[11]

Argument *is* war

In spite of its productivity and organizing power, the metaphorical relation between argument and war seems to be insufficient to capture a more intimate kind of relationship linking these two domains.

Consider for example, psychological warfare or propaganda. Words are used, in psychological warfare, as an integral part of the war effort. They seek to undermine the enemy's morale or to motivate one's forces in combat and to increase public support (as in President Bush's use of the Saddam/Hitler comparison during the Gulf War). In this case, *war* in fact boils down to the *actual use of words*. It would seem that here source and target partially coincide. Sure, propaganda is not debate (even if it sometimes mimicks debate). Still, it shows that words can be used to actually wage war. This raises doubts about whether the relationship between argument and war is only metaphorical.

Debate not only is similar to war in its structure but it can lead to war if its outcome is a stalemate between irreconcilable and clearly opposed views. In the early modern period, religious debates on points of doctrine were directly linked to religious wars. In the history of all religions, heresy, i.e. deviation from what was perceived as orthodoxy, led to ruthless persecution by the orthodox establishment. No wonder that it is commonly feared that the breakdown of the negotiations/debates that constitute the 'peace process' in the Middle East will inevitably lead to the outbreak of violence. Debate and war seem to be more closely intertwined than by a distant metaphorical relation.

The analogy or metaphorical view of argument as war can be related to the conception of competitive games as surrogates for actual warfare. This in turn is connected with the view that playing is a form of 'educational activity' which, like exercise, prepares for real life. There are many examples of playing behavior in the animal world that support both views, especially the one that relates playing with surrogate aggression.

In many cultures, indeed, debate is codified as a sort of game with precise rules. In ancient India, three kinds of debate – *discussion*, *disputation*, and *wrangling* – were codified and intensively practiced; in Ancient Greece, the rhetoricians boasted they were able to teach anyone how to win in any debate; in the late Middle Ages, the art of *disputatio* played a central role in scholastic teaching; in the United States debating clubs flourish today.

Consider the case of the medieval *disputatio*. This practice was embedded within an educational setting. A student was given a topic, not necessarily within his realm of specialization, which he had to defend against objections either by other students or by the teachers. The kinds of permitted moves as well as the time allottment were severely restricted. A panel of judges would determine whether the student passed the test by withstanding the objections. Some of the *disputationes* were preliminary 'exercises' intended to prepare the student for the 'real' ones. In the case of the 'real' ones, such as final *disputationes* – as in final exams – success would mean receiving the degree and being thereby entitled to pursue an academic or professional career. Failure, on the other hand, would mean either dropping out or the postponement of benefits that came with the degree.

What seems to make a case such as this akin to play is not only the existence of strict rules but mainly the fact that the behavior involved in them is not, ultimately, 'in earnest'. Just as a playing child does not really believe that the couch is a space rocket even though he treats it very seriously as if it were, so too the student who was assigned a thesis to defend in a *disputatio* had to do it in all seriousness even though he did not believe in it. One may suppose that the student in a military academy is required to behave similarly when participating in simulations or 'war games'. However, if we look at the matter not from the point of view of the mental state of the player but in terms of the consequences of his performance, then it is easy to see that such games may be very serious: it is sufficient to recall that losing a *disputatio* may mean losing a job, a reputation, a career, etc., sometimes even more than this: the sophist Philalectes was so distressed at having lost an argument that he died (presumably he committed suicide). In India, the philosopher/theologian who won an argument would carry over to his side all the disciples (these often included kings) of the disputant that lost.

Debate thus plays a *causal* role in inter-group or inter-individual relations, a role closely connected to power conflicts. In this sense, debate is not only analogous to war, but it actually *is* war. Consider the following, apparently metaphorical, assertions that describe academic life: 'Refutation *is* killing', 'Reputation *is* security', 'Not publishing *is* perishing', 'Delaying a promotion *is* torture'. If you successfully *refute* somebody's theory – a theory in which an investment of a whole career is at stake – you are actually not only killing metaphorically the theory but also badly hurting the scientist behind it. If you, through argument or public exposure of a similar kind, make somebody fall into disrepute, the person thus hurt will actually – not only metaphorically – lose his/

her security, i.e. his personal ability to continue to create, his job, perhaps even his family and friends.[12]

The metonymic link

What the preceding discussion shows is that argument is related to war in a more 'direct' way than through metaphor, a way that suggests a metonymic relation between them. Whereas metaphor links things by virtue of their similarity, which is a relationship that does not require any direct connection between them, metonymy depends upon a closer connection between the things it relates. When a waiter says to the cashier – to use a well-known example – 'The ham sandwich is waiting for the check', she refers not to the sandwich, but to the person that ordered (and presumably ate) it. The expression *the ham sandwich* can be used to refer metonymically to the customer because sandwich and customer are in a direct relation to each other. In principle, any kind of 'direct' connection between two things might be the basis for metonymy. Actually, we tend to make use, for metonymic purposes, of a subset of such relations.[13]

Consider the following metonymic sentences where argument and war are connected:[14] 'The sight of so much brass at the table made him smell blood and concede swiftly', 'Camp David's silence agitated the already tense streets of Jerusalem', 'The tanks stopped talking, bringing life to the dormant table'.[15] All of them rely upon a cause-effect relationship between war and argument (or vice-versa), which is taken for granted. This relationship is embedded in an implicitly accepted 'script' that organizes events sequentially, so that war and argument may follow and/or precede each other in the sequence.[16]

A war, usually, does not break out suddenly. It is preceded by each side in the conflict pressing claims *vis-à-vis* the other, justifying its claims, rebuffing the opponent's claims, issuing ultimatums, and then eventually resorting to armed assault. A war may be interrupted by a truce, during which negotiations or a further exchange of claims and counter-claims may be conducted. And, once it ends, a war is followed by further negotiations and debate, eventually yielding a peace treaty. Less typically – and therefore not included in the script – there is the possibility that secret negotiations are held without interruption of the war.

A script such as the above acts as a mental model that relates argument and war in such a way that they are acts belonging to the same domain and holding causal and other contiguity relations with each other. One might say that it is a mental model such as this that fleshes

out (psychologically) Clausewitz's well-known claim that 'war is a mere continuation of policy by other means'.[17]

The double grid

Argument and war are thus related both metaphorically and metonymically. That is to say, they belong to different domains, structurally similar to each other, but they also belong to the same domain; they distantly mirror each other while at the same time directly interacting on the same level as components of a single complex process. What are the implications of this double relationship?

First, it forces upon us some theoretical reflection on the notions we have been using so far to characterize the two relations. We talked about similarity and difference, distance and proximity. Metaphor requires similarity and distance: time is similar to money (in some respects), but it does not belong to the same ontological order as money; they are 'distant' in so far as they are different kinds of things. Metonymy, on the other hand, requires proximity and difference. Parts and wholes, causes and effects, places and events are (spatially and processually) contiguous but they bear little or no similarity: your butt is not similar to you, the fire is not similar to the smoke, the White House is not similar to the President.

It is tempting to account for the two sets of properties characterizing the two relations in terms of two simple tests: the 'is like' test and the 'one domain' test.[18] The former yields a 'yes' for metaphor and a 'no' for metonymy, while the latter yields a 'no' for metaphor and a 'yes' for metonymy. But this is likely to suggest that 'domain' (and with it the notions of distance and proximity) is used in the same sense referring to metaphorical and metonymic relations. This is not the case, however. The two domains involved in metaphor are different categories or concepts, presumably grounded on different experiences and ontological bases. Political careers form a category of social processes, whereas journeys are a category of events involving physical displacement. When they are connected in such metaphors as 'Barak climbed too quickly to the top', they remain different categories, thereby ensuring the conceptual 'distance' between source and target required by metaphor. The one domain involved in metonymy, however, is not a 'conceptual domain' in the sense of a category. Ham sandwiches belong to the same category as other dishes, but certainly not to the same category as the people who order and eat them (except in cannibal jokes). In so far as one wants to say that they belong to one domain, one should not forget that such a 'domain' is of a completely different sort. Its 'oneness'

derives from relations (e.g., part-whole, sequentiality, adjacency) other than the class-membership relation that underlies categories. So, in metonymy and metaphor two types of 'distance' or 'proximity' are involved.

This implies that the dimension of (metonymic) proximity-distance is in principle irrelevant for metaphor, while the dimension of (metaphorical) similarity-distance is irrelevant for metonymy. Metaphor can involve metonymic proximity, but it must preserve category distance.[19] And metonymy can admit category similarity, but it must preserve the 'distance' that separates even things of the same category in a script, a causal sequence or a part-whole complex.[20] The difference between metaphor and metonymy lies in how the mapping is performed through the similarity relation or through the proximity relation.

This lengthy theoretical excursus permits us to understand – I hope – how the coupling of metaphor and metonymy, in spite of the opposed requirements of these two cognitive schemes, is not contradictory. Their opposition, however, leaves traces that cannot be completely erased. To see this, let us return to our theme – argument and war.

The two axes of the grid are not quite independent. In fact, there is a sort of trade-off between their effects. Suppose, for instance, that one stresses the metaphorical similarity between argument and war, so that the former becomes more and more warlike.[21] At the metonymic axis, this implies that the stage 'argument' in the script 'political conflict' will become closer to the stage 'war' – both in terms of a reduction of category difference and in terms of proximity: it will become just a step in the direction of war, a preparation for war. Parties that entrench themselves in a negotiating table behind ultimative and inflexible positions, unbendable 'red lines', and absolute and untouchable rights are likely to find themselves facing each other across trenches, brandishing guns instead of words. However, if the metonymy is to be interpreted otherwise, with argument not as a step *leading* to war, but as a step *preventing* war (both possibilities being, of course, allowed for by the same script), as in 'Arafat surrendered in Camp David in order to prevent war', then, in the metaphorical axis the similarity between argument and war cannot be over-stressed. Perhaps this is what Bar-Hillel expressed when he said that 'in discourse, peace is more profound than war'.[22] The category distance will then be kept, and will presumably help to keep the stages 'argument' and 'war' separated, in spite of their proximity in the script.

The interdependence between the metonymic and metaphorical axes of the grid connecting argument and war suggests the possibility of conceptual blending between these two phenomena.[23] I will not

explore this possibility here, except for pointing out that this is what may underly a very famous phrase that has accompanied the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians since its inception: 'The peace of the brave'. Its appeal lies perhaps in the fact that it operates both metonymically and metaphorically. Metonymically, it evokes an earlier stage of the conflict, where bravery was displayed in the battlefield by the now negotiating leaders. Metaphorically, it construes the negotiating table as a battlefield where bravery, albeit of another kind, should be displayed by the same leaders, if peace is to be achieved.

Between Foucault and Popper

In stressing the warlike elements in debate, as we have done so far, we are perhaps just providing grist for Foucault's mill. We are eventually showing that what is involved, either in war or in argument, is simply a struggle for power. The rational ground where argument is supposed to unfold, the respect for the facts that is supposed to underly serious argumentation, the reliance upon valid patterns of inference – all of them are, according to Foucault, nothing but disguises of the struggle for power. The fact that argument is not only analogous to war, but also contiguous with it seems to provide further support for Foucault's thesis.

But are we necessarily in Foucault's hands? Should we despair of argument and rather turn to the 'real thing' – undisguised propaganda and armed struggle?

If the Foucauldian position means that there is no such a thing as a Popperian World III Refuge, no ideal battleground where debate and argumentation are ruled by the pure rules of logic, by clear and transparent speech, with no damaging consequences, i.e., with no World II (socio-psychological) and World I (physical) effects, I could not agree more.[24] For, as I have argued elsewhere,[25] the Popperian idealization of criticism overlooks the fact that criticism is a complex human *activity*, deeply embedded in the context where it occurs. As such, criticism, and argumentation in general, are both affected by context and affect it. Therefore, debate is governed by a mixture of motives and effects, of which epistemological and logical ones are only one component. Just as communication is primarily pragmatic and not semantic in nature, so too debate, as a form of language use, is essentially pragmatic and not semantic/logical in nature. Consequently, it cannot be understood without taking into account the variety of motives of those involved in communication, as well as the social and physical environment where communication takes place. In particular,

its proper understanding cannot overlook its actual and potential effects. In conflictual, violence-prone situations, one such effect is that debate may hurt people, although it may also prevent violence.

Nevertheless, to admit that much only implies the acceptance of the fact that there is no clearcut separation between debate and war, between argument and fight. This, in turn, does not imply – as Foucault would have it – that the former should be reduced to a disguised manifestation of the latter. The fact that the borderline between two phenomena is fuzzy does not *per se* mean that significant differences cannot be drawn between clear cases of each. Such clear cases can be placed at the two ends of a continuous scale. 'Pure debate' and 'pure war' can be then understood as the two poles of a continuum, as two 'ideal types'. The 'real types', located at various points on the scale, result from different mixtures of these ideal types. Let us explore this alternative way of conceiving the relations between debate and war.

First, notice that the term 'argument' does not univocally refer to power struggles. In fact, it has a dual meaning. No doubt, one of the meanings corresponds to the Foucauldian construct. Thus, in popular parlance, 'we had an argument' means we had a *fight*. An argument in this sense is a power conflict, purely emotional and irrational.[26] It may even involve the actual display of force (shouting is a display of force, no less than beating and shooting). But there is also 'argument' as understood by philosophers, logicians, and scientists. In this sense, we are talking about something that follows rules of rationality and can be evaluated accordingly. Winning here is not simply reducing the opponent to silence by shouting or killing, but rather *persuading* her.

The former sense is close to Foucault's. The latter, to Popper's. In the former, argument *is* war. In the latter, it is no doubt *analogous* to war, but only in limited respects, which notably leave aside actual or ensuing physical damage to the opponent. The former sense emphasizes the metonymic relation between argument and war. The latter, the metaphoric relation.

Traditionally, rhetoric has been polarized in the two senses/directions above: either as purely irrational/emotive (close to propaganda) or as purely rational (as a complementation of logic). But the fact that rhetoric involves both elements, intertwined in such a way that it combines both in different degrees, supports the continuum hypothesis, according to which each occurrence of argument – and, for that matter, of war – is a particular blend of power and rationality, of violence and persuasion.

Lakoff and Johnson have reached a similar conclusion. Having started, as we have seen, from a sharp distinction between the domains

of argument and war, which admits of bridging only through metaphorical mapping, they end up by admitting that, after all, the gap between the two domains is not so wide. They realize that there are cases where one can say that the two domains merge, so that their members become subcategories of a single domain, i.e. they must be viewed as 'the same kind of thing'. Whenever this occurs, however, the relation exemplified can no longer be described as metaphorical:

> Take, for example, AN ARGUMENT IS A FIGHT. Is this a subcategorization or a metaphor? The issue here is whether fighting and arguing are the same kind of activity. This is not a simple issue. Fighting is an attempt to gain dominance that typically involves hurting, inflicting pain, injuring, etc. But there is both physical pain and what is called psychological pain; there is physical dominance and there is psychological dominance. If your concept FIGHT includes psychological dominance and psychological pain on a par with physical dominance and pain, then you may see AN ARGUMENT IS A FIGHT as a subcategorization rather than a metaphor, since both would involve gaining psychological dominance. On this view an argument would be a kind of fight, structured in the form of conversation. If, on the other hand, you conceive a FIGHT as purely physical, and if you view psychological pain only as pain taken metaphorically, then you might view AN ARGUMENT IS A FIGHT as metaphorical.
>
> (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 84)

Accordingly, they propose to view subcategorization and metaphor as the endpoints of a continuum:

> A relationship of the form *A* is *B* (for example AN ARGUMENT IS A FIGHT) will be a clear subcategorization if *A* and *B* are the same kind of thing or activity and will be a clear metaphor if they are clearly different kinds of things or activities. But when it is not clear whether *A* and *B* are the same kind of thing and activity, then the relationship *A* is *B* falls somewhere in the middle of the continuum.
>
> (p. 85).

Note that subcategorization, which in this context means literal predication, amounts to reduction, i.e., to the Foucauldian pole. The only way to prevent such a reduction is to maintain argument at a safe

categorical distance from fight, permitting only a metaphorical link between them.[27]

There is, however, a third possibility, which Lakoff and Johnson do not consider. Argument and fight need not be related either *literally* or *metaphorically*. They can also be related *metonymically*, by virtue of some relation that makes them part of the same *whole*, rather than subcategories of the same category. Any metonymy, although grounded in more direct and closer relations than mere analogy, is still a trope, i.e., non-literal: nobody would, in normal circumstances, literally attribute impatience to a ham sandwich.

This complicates the picture somewhat. We can keep as the endpoints of the continuum the idealized, categorically 'pure' concepts of argument and war. Metaphor, metonymy, and literalization or subcategorization are three ways of connecting them. Whereas the latter eliminates the gap between the endpoints, the two others are different processes whereby some sort of *rapprochement* between the endpoints is achieved. As Max Black[28] has insisted, a metaphor creates similarity between target and source or topic and vehicle. Once connected through a metaphor, they 'interact' with each other, thereby breaking somehow the rigidity of category barriers: in 'John is a lion', the lion becomes humane at the same time that John becomes leonine. Similarly, metonymy highlights the systematic, although sometimes forgotten, connections between Nixons and bombings, foetuses and their descendants, and even sandwiches and customers.

The media reporting and commenting on a conflict operate within the above continuum. According to one idealized picture, the media are supposed to present the facts in an entirely objective way, and to allot perfectly balanced space and time for opposed opinions. On this view, the media's quintessential task is to *inform* the public, but not to *form* its opinions. Critics of this idealization contend that it is an illusion. Some stress the fact that the media are used by political agents not just as a vehicle of information, but as tools in advancing their ends. Others point out that the media have their own agenda, and it is they that manipulate politicians and other social agents for their purposes – which may include either fostering or softening conflict. On both views, rather than mirroring what happens independently of their intervention, the media play a decisive role in making things happen. Their posing as'observers' is merely a disguise for their actual role as interested agents in the power game.

No doubt there are newspapers, TV stations, and Internet sites that are or try to be very close to the one or to the other of these two ideal models. Most of them, however, operate somewhere along the scale

linking these two poles. Most journalists, I think, sincerely believe that what they report are 'the facts', that their duty is to provide 'information'. But they also know that by editing and selecting the information they powerfully shape opinion according to their own biases. As for those whose deliberate aim is to foster their own opinions, they know that success will depend on their ability to support their bias through some measure of 'objective' information. 'Pure' propaganda or wishful thinking is likely to backfire.

The balance of reason and the balance of power

Theoretical explanations apart, let me now speculate about why there should be – or at least why it is good there is – such a continuum in the case of argument and war.

Let us dub 'Hard Reason' a conception or rationality that admits only of the use of rigorously defined concepts, of experimentally controlled data, and of logically valid arguments. On this view, all solvable problems and disputes can be solved by strict adherence to the above requirements, which provide a decision procedure determining which side is right and which is wrong. Hard Reason also believes it is the only form of rationality deserving the name. Anything that deviates from its requirements is Non-Reason. Nevertheless, there are those who hold a conception of rationality that admits also the use of concepts that are not definable in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, the occasional reliance upon data and propositions that are only presumably correct, the acceptability (on occasion) of arguments that are not valid according to standard logic but are pertinent, and the existence of a variety of ways of resolving controversies which do not necessarily amount to a decision procedure. Let us dub this conception of rationality 'Soft Reason'.[29]

The notion of compromise has no room in a dispute conducted according to the requirements of Hard Reason, for its decision procedure should always allow for determining which of the contenders is right. In this sense, for Hard Reason there should be in all solvable conflicts a clear winner and a clear loser. Victory and capitulation are the only possibilities it permits. Soft Reason, which does not work with absolute dichotomies and does not play only zero sum games, can acknowledge the partial truth or rightness of each position, and thus lead to compromises without absolute winners and losers. Whereas Hard Reason stimulates the contenders to be persuaded that they are absolutely right and their opponents absolutely wrong, Soft Reason fosters a measure of scepticism toward one's own position as well as a measure of tolerance toward the opponent's position.

Hard Reason shuns all forms of figurative language, which it considers as violating its standards of rigor and as appealing to emotive rather than to cognitive factors. Soft Reason, on the contrary, acknowledges the cognitive role of figurative language, and sees in it an important tool for developing the flexible concepts and models needed for the exploration of new areas of knowledge, for dealing with inherently fuzzy situations, and for reconciling conflicting positions. It is aware of the power of metaphorical and metonymic models in providing ready-made thinking recipes that are hard to escape from. But it is also aware of the fact that, unlike logical inferences, metaphorical and metonymic inferences are inherently 'open'. Furthermore, unlike logic, no metaphor or metonymy can claim universality or exclusiveness. However powerful, handy, and habitual a metaphorical or metonymic schema may be, it is replaceable by a new one, or by one we can find in another culture or language. Soft Reason, but not Hard Reason, can put to use the multi-perspectivism afforded by these 'figurative' modes of cognition.

In some domains (such as mathematics), typical of the 'pure argument' endpoint on our scale, Hard Reason seems to prevail, and rightly so. But if it were to prevail in other domains, especially in violence-prone political conflicts, it would lead to 'Hard War', i.e., war to the bitter end. Fortunately there is Soft Reason around to permit an oxymoron like 'Soft War'.

In most domains, completely subduing an opponent through a masterful logical blow, a strike of pure rationality, is just as rare as winning a war in a single successful battle. In the case of debate, such a result is possible when there is – for both contenders – an accepted method of adjudicating 'correctness': an accepted logic, method of decision, system of calculation. In this event, the subduing amounts to the admission by the opponent that his position was the result of some sort of 'mistake'. In the case of war, full capitulation, without re-kindling of the conflict on another occasion, implies also recognition by the defeated party that his stand was based on a deep mistake. This, in turn, is based on the acceptance of a shared set of values or international adjudicating procedures. Usually such a capitulation is followed by the fall of the regime that led to the 'mistake', which signals, in fact, the fall of the 'wrong' set of values that engendered the conflict. Full capitulation thus suppresses the 'deep' causes of the conflict between the warring parties.

The reason why in neither argument nor in war 'hard resolution' of the kind just described is common, is that usually debating parties and combatting parties share only partially a set of methods and underlying

values. Furthermore, for hard resolution to work, opposition ought to be fairly well delimited and restricted to 'local' matters. It should not spread to adjacent issues and to the 'meta-level'. However, a study of controversies or of political conflicts shows that this is not usually the case. Controversies very often spread to other issues and levels. Opponents question each others' assumptions about method, systems of formalization, legitimacy of moves, data-collection procedures, as well as their concepts of 'right' and 'justice'. Under these circumstances, no appeal can be made to some shared and 'neutral' set of principles that would lead one party to acknowledge conclusive defeat. Similarly, political conflict tends to spread to a 'conflict of civilizations or cultures', where opponents question even the 'humanity' of each other. Under these circumstances, defeat in a battle and even formal capitulation does not necessarily amount to an acknowledgment of fault in one's position. Rather, in so far as the difference in value-systems persists, the defeat will be considered unjust, compensation will be demanded, and the conflict will persist.

If one acknowledges the existence of an irreducible plurality of incompatible methods, values, etc., rather than assuming a problematic set of universal methods or values, one ought not to be surprised that 'resolution' of debates or of conflicts is seldom 'hard resolution'. Rather, 'resolution' is always temporary and provisional, and involves some sort of compromise. Temporarily one party will have the upper hand, in so far as its arguments (in debate) or its limited use of power (in political conflicts) has the upper hand. Such an 'upper hand' is provisional precisely because it cannot suppress entirely the 'reason of the defeated'. Precisely because it *inclines* the Balance of Reason or the Balance of Power, one way or another, without *necessitating* one hand to remain once and for all in a given position.

Epilogue

As I conclude this chapter, Chairman Arafat, Prime Minister Barak, and President Clinton are negotiating in Camp David the future of this embattled region, which happens to be also the future of my children and of my granddaughter, as well as of many other human beings.

The media covering this event are working under tight constraints. A so far successful blackout preventing leakage forces them to try to satisfy the public's information hunger by providing bits and pieces of doubtful 'news' along with a lot of speculation, wishful thinking, and biased 'recommendations' for the negotiators. Furthermore, given the uncertainty of the results, they have to prepare the ground for the

different scenarios that will follow the different possible outcomes of the summit. And they have to address simultaneously different audiences: the international community, an American public on the eve of elections, and Israeli and Palestinian audiences – each divided into supporters of major concessions, opponents of any concession, middle of the way voters and politicians, skeptics, etc. I am sure the journalists are conscious of the weight of their task, of the influence whatever they say may have on the course of events.

The very fact that the usual public declarations accompanying such meetings were ruled out shows that the leaders themselves are fully aware of the role of the media as an intrinsic part of the process. They have also made clear, before the meeting, that they consider the thorough debate they are now conducting behind media-proof walls as decisive ('historical' is a word they have often used to characterize it). The metonymic links between their discussions and war or peace are thus quite clear. It is also clear that the negotiation itself is tough – as President Clinton's repeated remark, 'Oh! How hard it is!', has stressed. There is no doubt that the metaphor of war could not be more appropriate than in this case to describe the debate that is going on around the negotiating table. It is not difficult to imagine the moves and countermoves, tactics and strategy, threats and withdrawals, pressure and counterpressure, mobilization of additional forces, truces and regroupings, ultimative demands, and so on being displayed by the two political and military leaders negotiating in Camp David.

My hope is that what will finally emerge from their gigantic metaphorical fight, tough as it probably is and should be, is a reality that will allow future historians to use a metonymy like '*Camp David* opened a new era of peace and cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis', rather than '*Camp David* triggered a bloody war between Palestinians and Israelis'.[30]

Notes

1 M. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, New York, 1980.

2 K. Popper, 'Towards a Rational Theory of Tradition' in K. Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth Of Scientific Knowledge*, 3rd edn., London, 1969 [1949].

3 This book led to a flourishing series of studies on the metaphorical structure of language and thought, including many applications to various specific domains. See, for example, G. Lakoff, 'Metaphor, Folk Theories, and the Possibilities of Dialogue' in M. Dascal, ed., *Dialogue: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, Amsterdam, 1985; G. Lakoff, *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things: What Categories Revel About the Mind*, Chicago, 1987; G. Lakoff,

M. Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*, Chicago, 1989; G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought*, New York, 1999; M. Dascal, 'The Ecology of Cultural Space' in M. Dascal, ed., *Cultural Relativism and Philosophy: North and Latin American Perspectives*, Leiden, 1991; M. Dascal, 'La balanza de la razon' in O. Nudler, ed., *La Racionalidad: Su Poder y sus Limites*, Buenos Aires, 1996; M. Dascal, 'The Beyond Enterprise' in J. Stewart, ed., *Beyond the Symbol Model: Reflections on the Representational Nature of Language*, Albany, NY, 1996, pp. 303–34; V. Dascal, 'Walking the Tight Rope' in *Assaph* C(7), 1990, pp. 103–12; V. Dascal, 'Movement Metaphors: Linking Theory and Therapeutic Practice' in M. Stamenov, ed., *Current Advances in Semantic Theory*, Amsterdam, 1992, pp. 151–7; M. Johnson, *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Reason and Imagination*, Chicago, 1987; R.W. Gibbs, *The Poetics of the Mind: Figurative Thought, Language, and Understanding*, Cambridge, 1994; K.-U. Panther, G. Radden, eds., *Metonymy in Language and Thought*, Amsterdam, 1999.

4 G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago, 1980, p. 8.

5 Ibid., p. 4.

6 Ibid., pp. 80–1.

7 It is worthwhile to quote Kant in full in order to realize how the metaphorical concept ARGUMENT IS WAR provides the backbone of his account of the history of metaphysics: 'Her [metaphysics'] government, under the administration of the *dogmatists*, was at first *despotic*. But inasmuch as the legislation still bore traces of the ancient barbarism, her empire gradually through intestine wars gave way to complete anarchy; and the *sceptics*, a species of nomads, despising all settled modes of life, broke up from time to time all civil society' (Kant 1992[1781]: 8). The 'chaos and night' characteristic of dogmatic metaphysics up to Kant's time will be brought to a happy end – needless to say – by his own self-styled 'revolution'.

8 A. Schopenhauer, 'The Art of Controversies' in T.B., Sanders, trans., *The Complete Essays of Schopenhauer*, New York, 1942.

9 M. Reddy, 'The Conduit Metaphor' in A. Ortony, ed., *Metaphor and Thought*, Cambridge, 1979.

10 Letter to Des Bosses, 2 February 1706 (G.W. Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften*, vol. 2, C.J. Gerhardt, ed., Hildesheim, 1978 [1879], p. 295). The Jesuit Des Bosses had asked Leibniz to use his vast knowledge of the 'moderns' and the 'ancients' in order to show how a synthesis between the two schools of thought might be achieved – thus putting an end to the century-old 'querelle des anciens et des modernes'.

11 The conceptualisation of 'research programmes' in terms of 'core' and 'periphery' is an essential component of the influential methodology of scientific research proposed by Imre Lakatos (I. Lakatos, 'Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research programmes' in I. Lakatos, A. Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, Cambridge, 1970, pp. 91–196). For an analysis of Lakatos's proposal in the context of a study of scientific controversies, see M. Dascal, forthcoming, 'Controversies and Epistemology' in Tian Yu Cao, ed., *Philosophy of Science (Proceedings of the Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy, vol. 10)*, Boston.

12 On the relationship between reputation and refutation, see M. Dascal, forthcoming, 'Negotiating Merit: Refutation and Reputation' in E. Weigand, M. Dascal, eds., *Negotiation and Power in Dialogue Interaction*, Amsterdam.

13 Examples of this subset include: THE PART FOR THE WHOLE ('Get *your butt* over here!'), PRODUCER FOR PRODUCT ('He's got a *Picasso* in his den'), OBJECT USED FOR USER ('The *sax* has the flu today'), CONTROLLER FOR CONTROLLED ('*Nixon* bombed Hanoi'), THE PLACE FOR THE INSTITUTION ('*The White House* isn't saying anything'), THE PLACE FOR THE EVENT ('*Camp David* was a failure'), THE PLACE FOR ITS INHABITANTS ('Don't cry for me *Argentina*'), THE CONTAINER FOR THE CONTAINED ('The *bottle* enslaved him'), THE THING OWNED FOR THE OWNER ('The *gold medal* was very moved'), THE INSTRUMENT FOR THE PROFESSION ('He left the *sword* for the *pen*'), THE CAUSE FOR THE EFFECT ('She has a good *eye*'), THE EFFECT FOR THE CAUSE ('Two nations are in your womb' – *Gen*. 25:23, said of pregnant Rebecca), etc. See Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 38–9), Dumarsais (1988[1730]: 96–110), Fontanier (1977[1830]: 79–93). See Lakoff, Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, pp. 38–9, C.C. Dumarsais, *Des Tropes ou des Différents Sens*, Paris, 1988, pp. 96–110; P. Fontanier, *Les Figures du Discours*, Paris, 1977 [1830]

14 I am indebted to Omar Barghuti for some of these examples.

15 Some of the sentences involve also metaphor – e.g., 'talk' as applied to tanks.

16 The notion of 'script', introduced by Schank and Abelson (1977), refers to socially shared cognitive schemata that underly run-of-the-mill, recurrent experiences such as going to a restaurant, traveling, passing a school examination, etc. Lakoff (1987: 78–9) points out how scripts may underly metonymy. For example, in Ojibwa, a native American language, when asked 'How did you get to the party?', speakers will answer with the Ojibwa equivalent of 'I started to come', 'I stepped into a canoe', 'I got into a car'. According to Rhodes (the linguist who did the fieldwork whose results Lakoff reports), these answers amount to relying upon the script 'Going Somewhere in a Vehicle', which includes a precondition (having access to a vehicle), and the following stages: embarcation (getting into the vehicle and starting it up), center (moving to destination), finish (parking and getting out), and endpoint (being at the destination). What Ojibwa speakers do is to refer (metonymically) to the whole underlying script by mentioning one of its parts. English speakers – remarks Lakoff – do the same when they reply to the same question by saying 'I drove', 'I have a car' or 'I just stuck out my thumb'.

17 Clausewitz (1968: 119). 'War – he says – is a continuation of political commerce ... by other means'. I would include 'debate' in the category 'political commerce', although – as pointed out by A. Rapaport (p. 424, note 63), – Clausewitz doesn't use the category 'debate' in his theory.

18 See Gibbs, *The Poetics of Mind: Figurative Thought, Language, and Understanding*, p. 322. 'This is like test' is Gibb's expression. I have mimicked this expression in 'the one domain test'. This fits Gibb's claim that 'metonymy [unlike metaphor] involves only one conceptual domain' (ibid.).

19 In fact metaphor *creates* proximity by generating a link – and thereby some sort of interaction (cf. M. Black, *Models and Metaphors*, Ithaca, NY, 1962) – between the two categories.
20 Although typically metonymy relates things belonging to different categories, this is not necessary. The Oval Office can stand for The White House (both brick and mortar things) just as any of them can stand for the President (a blood and flesh thing).
21 Let us suppose the required category distance is nevertheless preserved, so that the metaphor doesn't collapse into literal predication. This would happen, for example, with a sentence like 'Brazil defeated Argentina' referring to a football match that degenerated into a fist fight between the players and led to killings among the fans.
22 Francis Jacques (F. Jacques, 'Argumentation et Stratégies Discursives' in A. Lempereur, ed., *L'Argumentation*, Liège, 1991, pp. 153–71) uses this quote as a motto for his paper. I was unable to locate this in Bar-Hillel's writings.
23 On the role of metonymic projection in blending see G. Fauconnier, M. Turner, 'Metonymy and Conceptual Integration' in Panther, Radden, *Metonymy in Language and Thought*, pp. 77–90.
24 For Popper's doctrine of the three worlds, see K. Popper, 'On the Theory of the Objective Mind' in K. Popper, *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach*, Oxford, 1972 [1968], pp. 153–90.
25 See, for example, Dascal, 'Controversies and Epistemology' in Tian Yu Cao, ed., *Philosophy of Science (Proceedings of the Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy, vol. 10)*.
26 In my typology of polemics (cf. Dascal 1998), I reserve the term 'dispute' for this sense of 'argument', while the term 'discussion' is reserved for the other ideal type, the purely logical one. I introduce also a third ideal type, between these two extremes, for which I reserve the term 'controver'.
27 In one of his writings on controversies, Leibniz also takes the subcategorization path, but in a somewhat different way. He includes both 'controversies' and 'war' under the category 'contest'. The former is defined as a contest by means of reasons, while the latter is a contest by means of force. The notion of 'success' in each case is different. While in the former it is 'persuasion', in the latter it is 'victory'. He points out that the use of 'authority' in the former amounts to an undue intervention of 'force' in a domain to which it does not belong. The paper where he introduces these distinctions, 'On sacred controversies in general' is part of Leibniz's efforts to find ways to replace the use of force that led to the devastating religious wars of the 17th century in the wake of doctrinal disputes between protestants and catholics, by a method for solving these disputes by means of argumentation, in 'colloquia' between the parties. He is thus clearly viewing 'argument' and 'war' as inter-related parts of the same script, i.e., as being in a metonymic relation. The subcategorization he proposes, however, keeps these two notion at sufficient conceptual distance to allow also for the possibility of a metaphorical connection between them – as the one he uses in the Letter to Des Bosses (see note 10). The paper in question is included in the forthcoming collection of Leibniz's writings on controversies, being prepared by M. Dascal and Q. Racionero.
28 Black, *Models and Metaphors*.

29 For details and references see Dascal, 'La balanza de la razon' in O. Nudler, ed., *La Racionalidad: Su Poder y sus Limites*.
30 This text has been in the making for exactly five years. I am tempted to believe that perhaps 'it' waited in my mind for the opportunity to be concluded with exactly this sentence!

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