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The Self-Destructiveness of the Jews

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The enthusiastic acceptance of the Oslo Accords by the Israeli Left in 1993 presented an insoluble enigma for the many who saw these accords as a monumental error, and the ensuing “peace process” as putting Israel on a path leading to disaster and dissolution – the many who could not understand how it came about that Israelis allowed themselves to become seduced into following such a path. In warning, they pointed out the incontrovertible fact that these agreements would bestow unprecedented legitimacy to alien rule in *Eretz Yisrael*.

Since then, and especially after the Rabin murder, it has become apparent that many on the right, as well, have come to support the Oslo process – even if only conditionally – and even if only in the service of reaching an understanding, and, perhaps – just a semblance of peace.

Some Questions

This paper, then, addresses itself to an analysis of the factors underlying the acceptance of what is called the “peace process” in Israel, and the support it has garnered from Jews both in Israel and abroad; the question is asked: How is it that the Oslo agreement, which was worked out by two young amateurs (Pundak and Hirsch) in collusion with foreign interests, was accepted wholeheartedly by the majority of the Israeli left, despite the fact that a great number of foremost experts insist that rational analysis would have shown clearly that such a flawed agreement could not lead to anything but disaster and dissolution for the Jewish state, and the essential end of the Jewish, Zionist dream?

How was it that the left was prepared to place trust in an arch-terrorist, the murderer of children in Maalot, the murderer of the helpless Leon Klinghoffer – confined to a wheelchair on the ill-fated Achille Lauro – the orchestrator of numerous bloody acts of terror?

For those who ask these questions it is clear that acceptance of Oslo and the peace process involved more than simple wishful thinking, or the wish for surcease from war and bloodshed – though these are motives not to be denied; for the acceptance of “Oslo” and that particular process involves, ipso facto, self-abnegation, conceding, giving up/giving in, disavowing the basis for the return to Zion; implicit is an

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acknowledgment that Zionism was an error – and our cause unjust. We suggest that this reflects serious pathological processes in large sectors of the Israeli and non-Israeli Jewish public.

Many have asked, also, how it is that an ancient people-come-home, a people who dreamt of the return to Zion for two thousand years, and formed the first movement of national liberation – in fact can justly claim to be the first successful national liberation movement in history – Zionism, in order to actualize that dream, a people who fought five wars to ward off attackers and maintain its integrity, how has this people come to succumb to the enemy's rhetoric and to be ready to settle for living, eventually (if at all) in what would be no more than a number of ghettos in what should be their inalienable and indivisible homeland?

It is asked, too, how is it that a people, known even to its detractors for its intelligence, its “brains”, has allowed itself to be led down an illusionary path towards an ephemeral “peace”, has colluded in allowing itself to be deluded by fantasies that the “peace process” can lead to something other than disaster? Has willfully blinded itself to the repeated manifestations of Arafat's true intentions – though these can be and have been, amply documented?

An attempt at understanding will lead to the realization, that we are dealing with far from healthy dynamics, that this people, our people, are flawed by a number of destructive elements.

Denial

The most obvious, the most surface, is the excessive and inappropriate use of the defense mechanism of *Denial*¹ which, leads to avoidance of recognizing the actual inherent dangers, and causes a virtual cognitive distortion of reality. This allows not only for the maintenance of unrealistic expectations, and the projection of one's own views and wishes onto one's opponent, but also to the irrational assumption that one's enemy will hold to these projected beliefs and intentions, and that things will be as one hopes – regardless of facts or probabilities.

This excessive use of *denial* reflects a basic change in what may be called the modal “national character” of Israeli society, for, although at one time Jewish society was characterized more by what is described² as an “obsessive – compulsive” style, (e.g., *Yekkim* [folkloristic nickname for Jews originating in Germany] and Yemenites) it would seem now to have developed into a society in which hysterical tendencies are rampant – with all that implies. Hysterical characters excessively use repression and denial, avoid reality – have slogans like “*Yihye Tov*” (all will be well), are blind to reality factors and make unbased assertions that things will “work out”. This tendency to deny, to avoid reality, of course, falls among the more primitive defenses. Thus it appears that Israel has now become, to a large extent, a society within which denial is rampant; facts are not accepted for what they are, but are disregarded and denied; therefore reality becomes distorted, things are not what they seem, information not reckoned with. People see what, and only what, they want to see.

This is the mechanism that explains how it is possible that Arafat, in some quarters, comes no longer to be perceived as a terrorist leader of an outlaw organization, his repeated and documented calls for “Jihad” (holy war) are not believed, are deemed not real, or not really meant, and he, it is said – “truly” – wants peace. His rantings are explained away as necessary for internal consumption, his preparations for warfare and insurrection are ignored. It is the mechanism whereby Israel, not Arafat, comes to be at fault, is not fulfilling the “accord”, not abiding by its agreements.

There are, of course, “none so blind as those who will not see” – this adage reflects, in lay language, the use of denial as a defense mechanism, a mechanism that allows for selective perception, to see only what one wishes to see, and to deny and avoid unpleasant facts.

Denial, however, is basically, a negation of reality, and does not, by itself explain the motivations and characteristics that bring about such drastic forms of avoidance.

Basic Lack of Security

Taking perspective, it is probable that the eagerness to rush towards a chimera of “peace”, the readiness to accept peace at any price, is due to, at least in part, a pervasive and deep rooted *lack of security*, that makes opting for any semblance of security – even in the guise of a false peace (or a false messiah) – seem attractive.

This leaves us to try to understand the source of this so profound insecurity? Certainly we know that the Jewish people as a whole, and individual Jews in most of the world, have grown up not only lacking physical security in the reality sense, but also lacking the feeling of security that comes from being an integral, integrated, part of society. Jews have been, except recently in Israel, what is known in psychological and sociological jargon as “marginal”, on the outside, bystanders. This is at the “macro”, national, community, group level. With this, at the micro level, it may be suggested that many individual Jewish children, for generations, have also lacked the feeling of basic security that comes from adequate mothering in the early stages of life, that is communicated non-verbally by mother, and reinforced by steady and consistent nursing and caretaking – that comes from and flourishes within an atmosphere of warmth and security, the basic security that Karen Homey³ posited as a requirement for mental health and stability – the “basic trust” that Erikson⁴ considered to be a sine-qua-non for continued healthy growth.

This was because mothers who are under threat, who are fleeing danger, who are lacking basic needs themselves, cannot easily provide basic security; mothers whose own feelings of security are fragile or non-existent, cannot communicate them – and thus children grow up lacking the feeling of security that is so necessary for healthy personality development.

Anxiety

The above has consequences. For it follows that, in the absence of basic security, we find yet another powerful factor, one that undermines the ability to withstand adversity – i.e., that of pervasive and *deep anxiety*. The Jewish people, it is fair to say, is a people ridden with anxiety – an anxiety that is causally connected to the feeling of insecurity discussed above, anxiety regarding safety, even survival.

Anxiety, furthermore, is associated with uncertainty, uncertainty about the future, about outcomes – and is exacerbated thereby. Thus, because Jews are so particularly vulnerable to anxiety, they experience uncertainty and ambiguity as particularly difficult states to bear, and so are often propelled towards a resolution – any resolution – that puts an end to the uncertainty and thus serves to relieve the anxiety in some way. For some, therefore, even giving up, giving in, becomes an acceptable solution – a solution that, at least for them, is better than continued uncertainty.

(The recent publication of findings that suggest that there is a genetic factor that tends to predispose certain individuals to greater incidence of anxiety does not invalidate the above. It may, however – in the event that such a gene is ubiquitous among Jews – work to exacerbate the problem.)

It is obvious, of course, that anxiety afflicts not only Israeli Jews, but those of the Diaspora as well.

American Jews, for example, though they may deny their insecurity and anxiety in a country perceived as having provided a new “golden age”, show the effects of a lack of security in the fear reaction manifested every time they think some Jew is “rocking the boat”. Two recent – and one not so recent – events, will serve to illustrate my point. First, it was clear that when Washington’s Holocaust museum appropriately denied Arafat a V.I.P. reception and tour, many American Jews, including members of the museum board, quickly

succumbed to government pressure, forcing the museum head to capitulate, illustrating that American Jews do not feel free and equal, and certainly not free to stand firm for a principle.

A second case in point, and one which reveals genuine malaise among American Jews, is the one involving a young Jewish lady, (Monica Lewinsky) represented by Jewish counsel, (William Ginsburg) who may have had an illicit affair with the American president. Interestingly, though no one mentions, and none may know, what religion Paula Jones practices or espouses, nor what are the religious affiliations of their counsels – American Jews have been made terribly uncomfortable as Jews are literally feeling threatened, as the “Jewish” names compile.

Last, but certainly not least, is the Pollard affair and the failure of American Jews to recognize that what they were witnessing, 100 years after the Dreyfus affair, was America’s pillorying of a Jew because he is Jewish.

The apparent embarrassment and desire to dissociate from Jonathan Pollard that was apparent among American Jews, testifies to the basic insecurity that is still felt by them; moreover, the fact that the American Jewish community protested neither America’s failure to fill its commitment to convey needed information to Israel, nor the disproportionate and unprecedented punishment meted out to Pollard, indicate, sadly, that Jewish “Uncle Tom”ism is widely operative.

Insecurity, however, is not entirely an intrapersonal problem, for it often becomes manifest as a lack of self-confidence – a lack of confidence that is sufficiently obvious to be detrimental in interactions with others in the social, economic, and international arenas.

Lack of Confidence

Though Israel is an ancient people, it is a relatively new nation – and, as such, especially since its rebirth was in a sense accompanied by the “midwives” of the League of Nations, and the United Nations, Israel has not yet, despite its creativity and military power, come to assume the authority that its history and abilities would rightfully bestow. Israel is a nation second to none in the things that should count: morality, creativity, contribution to mankind; a nation with a long and proud history; a nation with an integrated monotheistic religion which gave monotheism to the world; Israel is a nation second to none with regard to a history of values, laws and moral attitudes – in fact it is the nation that enlightened the world with regard to these.

However, having been rejected, hated, threatened, driven, harassed, persecuted and decimated, it has failed to develop self-confidence. Israel is seemingly unable to demand the recognition and acceptance that its contributions warrant; unable to utilize its power and creativity in its own service. Israel has given much to the world, but gets little in return, contributes much to mankind, but is, in return, only barely tolerated.

Israeli (and non-Israeli) Jewish scientists, have been in the forefront of scientific research and discovery, yet have not taken advantage of the gains that their success could have bestowed in financial, prestige or political terms. This, too, can be attributed to a lack of self confidence.

I suggest that the lack of self-confidence is also a function of a quite pathological inhibition of the use of power and aggression, which shall be discussed below. It is also most important to emphasize that the self confidence that should normally accrue in consequence of Israel’s admitted talents, creativity, and military power, are mitigated by the well recognized and ubiquitous inhibition regarding their use.

It is fair to argue that the confidence and assertiveness that normally come with strength and talent, are aborted by the unwillingness to use these except in a moment of ultimate danger and imminent disaster. This, however, does not provide security and confidence, rather, and ironically, it serves to invite the state of imminent disaster – makes one lose all that can be lost before one actually arrives at the very brink and becomes ready to act.

Dependency

Insecurity and lack of confidence characteristically lead, at the national level no less than at the personal, to *Dependency*. Thus Israel seems to have developed a tendency to lean, to be dependent, to allow interference, to seek patronage. The dependence-independence continuum is one of the most central dimensions in the field of personal psychology – and it is of no less importance or centrality in the realm of international relations – and the two are not independent (no pun intended). The Israeli people have come to manifest dependence on protectors, patrons, “friends”. (No other nation speaks of its “friends” in the same way as one has come to speak of “friends of Israel”). Unfortunately, however, the price for dependency is paid in the coin of loss of respect: loss of self-respect, and loss of respect by others. It cannot be overemphasized that even friends respect only those who remain proud and independent, who assert themselves and their rights, who demand recognition and equality, and will not accept less.

Israel, however, instead of setting the tone, making demands, setting the conditions – instead of making just demands – has been allowing itself to be shifted into a position of dependence, almost to that of a supplicant, in a sense expecting “patrons” to take, come of it and see to its interests. It has, unfortunately, become accustomed to patronage of one kind or another – the patronage of the Baron, of the Western countries, of the Jews of the Diaspora, and certainly not in the least, of the U.S.A, all of which has led, too, to an undesirable tendency towards *passivity*.

Passivity

It is *passivity* that has been responsible for making the disasters that befell the Jewish people, both in Israel and in the Diaspora, even greater, a passivity which makes them loath to act, though disaster is imminent. It is passivity that made many wait too long when they might have escaped Hitler’s maelstrom of death, might have escaped Houmeni’s Iran on time, might have acted successfully in time to stop the Oslo process.

Allied to this is another factor, one which is not specific to the Jew – i.e., the universal tendency for paralysis in the face of approaching disaster, for a kind of frozen fascination and immobilization, as in the case of man facing a snake which is about to strike or of Chekov’s famous protagonists in “The Cherry Orchard”⁵, or in the case of a deer caught in a car’s headlights – the example of frozenness recently cited by William O. Ginsburg, representing Ms. Lewinsky.

A factor more specifically Jewish, however, is “expecting the worst”. Sadly, the Jewish people, as a people as well as individuals, have come to expect the worst, – disaster has become normative and expected. This is not only because of historic experience, but also because of constant threat – a threat that makes disaster appear to be always around the corner. Because of this, and because of past failure in averting disaster, it has become habitual to wait for “disaster-in-the-coming”, yet hoping, still, that it may somehow be deflected – primarily by some “miracle”, by “mother luck”, by Divine intervention.

Certainly, in primitive people, acquiescing to the inevitability of oncoming fate is a common, understandable attitude – in a modern sophisticated people like the Jewish people today, however, with its impressive level of education, military strength, international connections, and technological prowess – it is surprising and inappropriate. Though the belief in G-d and the possibility of Divine intervention are understood – Jews have always been taught not to rely on miracles, and that it is man’s responsibility to “do” (what he can) and G-d’s to “accomplish.”

Another explanation of this inactivity and passivity is the incessant assault these many years upon Jewish identity, belief, and legitimacy that has led many Jews to put into question their own basic rights – even their own right to exist. Thus they are prevented from striving in their own self interest, intimidated against seeking their own success and welfare.

Passivity is ubiquitous, also, because although this has been a nation known for its innovativeness, its cockiness, and its successes against overwhelming odds, there are sectors of the population who have been,

or have become, passive and dependent, unable to take things into their own hands, convinced they cannot effect change. This is related to, and perhaps an outcome of what, in academic psychology, is called “learned helplessness”, and which is discussed at some length in an article in “Nativ”⁶. These are the helplessness and passivity that ensue when, after numerous experiences of frustration and failure, the individual has come, not to try, not to attempt, not to act – as there is, for him, as he has come to feel, no chance of success.

However, passivity alone does not explain the willingness of many citizens of Israel to give over their patrimony to the enemy. It is important to realize that some of this behavior results from a deeper factor: Ironically, the very same factor that brought about the return to and the liberation of the homeland, i.e., the very experiences of the *Galut*, the many years of dispossession, generations of being outsiders. For, the “wandering Jew”, although home at last, still suffers from a lack of rootedness, a lack of the feeling of belonging in one particular place. There are, of course, in this country, many for whom Israel is, incontrovertibly, their land, their birth-place, (whether literally or not) their homeland, the land of their fathers. They are integrated and committed, they are not ambivalent about their belonging here, they are not hankering for greener pastures, not homesick for the Galut, not following false values, strange gods; they do not feel as sojourners, guests, visitors, or observers.

The Ever-Wandering Jew

With this, there are, however, many who remain, still, essentially “homeless”, floating, lacking roots, even lacking in the ability for attachment and rootedness; many for whom being an Israeli is merely adventitious – some would much have preferred to have landed in the U.S., Canada, or even Australia. Their devotion and commitment to this homeland is not unconditional, their identity as Jews, tenuous, and even their identity as Israelis, not the proud, unquestioned commitment and identification that “*Shivat Zion*” (the return to Zion) was meant to foster. Though they would reject the comparison to the pictures, actual and imagined, of “The Wandering Jew”, they have incorporated it to the point where they cannot be anything else; in this sense they are not essentially different from their Jewish brethren who have opted to remain in the lands of exile and try to find some sense of stability there.

It is, of course, fact that the Jewish people wandered, tore up roots frequently, became, time after time, a barely tolerated – if that – guest in yet another host country. This mitigated against taking root, against committing, against identifying. A people that has lived as sojourner and “guest”, at the mercy of the host, marginal in society, is not a people that can easily – despite a dream – take root, settle down, commit, and pronounce “this is it”.

Instead, Jews learned to live by their wits, to placate and serve the authorities, to make themselves valuable if not indispensable; despite this, of course, they always became dispensable – and often were dispensed with.

This rootlessness and awareness of always being a guest appears to have led many who, now finding themselves living in a primarily Arab region of the globe, to transfer to the surrounding “Arab world” (which, by the way, is a most racist concept which has been allowed to stand surprisingly unchallenged) some of the attitudes developed vis-a-vis the erstwhile host countries – with the ensuing seeking of acceptance and tolerance; – they seek suffrage and tolerance rather than assert their “*droit d’etre*”. The attitudes bred in a 2000 year *galut* (exile), and transferred into the sphere of home and homeland, are not easily countered and eradicated.

The fact that the Jewish state has not seen fit to continue the education toward Zionism and patriotism that generations in the Diaspora received, has allowed the erosion of the kind of commitment that characterized the pioneers and the founding fathers even within the State of Israel itself. Similarly, the current emphases on parochial issues in Jewish schools in the lands of the exile, and the de-emphasis

on Zionism and education towards *Aliyah*, has served to erode the identification and commitment of Diaspora Jewry to Israel and the Jewish people.

Like a hydroponics plant, unrooted – there are many Jews, Israelis, who have not yet learned, not yet felt, that they have, at last, come home. They are still looking over their shoulders, back to the *galut*, much as the generation of the Exodus looked back upon the fleshpots of Egypt. They have yet to learn to forget the many way-stations, and disregard the lure of foreign shores – and must do what is necessary to preserve their homeland for themselves. For to remain unrooted, uncommitted to home and homeland, is to be destined to eternal suffering, to eternal damnation.

A number of anthologies include a poem by that most prolific of authors, “anonymous” whose relevance becomes easily apparent, and whose message is most poignant:

Lives there the man with soul so dead,
 Who never to himself has said:
 “This is my own, my native land”?
 Whose heart has ne ‘er within him burned,
 As home his footsteps he has turned,
 From wandering on a foreign strand?
 If such theme live go mark him well,
 For him no minstrels’ voices swell.
 Great be his glory, proud his name,
 Boundless his wealth as wish can claim,
 Despite his glory power and self,
 The wretch, concentrated all in self,
 Living, shall forfeit fair renown, and doubly dying,
 Shall go down to the vile depths from whence he sprung,
 Unwept, un-honored, and unsung.

The lack of roots, of home, of belonging – the lack of identity, pride, territoriality – these have made many Jews, even when home at last, feel and behave as if still in *galut* – as if eternally in exile.

It is, interesting, apropos of this, that spokesmen of the left have, for many years, actively fought and countered the idea that land, territory, is necessary for Jewish renaissance and existence, necessary for the existence of Judaism. They have, instead, touted the idea of a philosophic Judaism, a kind of humanism, a Judaism stripped of its national, territorial, and even religious identity. This is due not only to the fact that such a theory helps rationalize their remaining, in whatever comfortable slot, in Canada or the US that they find themselves, but is promulgated also because it helps deny the claim of the Jewish people for the total and final liberation of its homeland – something they are not comfortable with and which their self-hatred (to be discussed below) cannot allow. One example of this was the statement by Gad Yaakobi, while Ambassador to the U.N., who said: “There is no Jewish Land; there is only Jewish people”⁷. (I will not, here, go into discussion of the “ideological” teachings of the socialist and other negating systems, nor into that of the sundry vested interests involved.)

These Jews do not want to be in a position to have to assert their rights and take their proper place in the family of nations, they do not want to be catalysts for negative responses from the “others”, they do not want to engender conflict, they do not want to make waves or rock the boat, they want to keep a low profile; what is important to them is to be accepted, wanted, liked – and to achieve recognition and success in whatever part of the world they find themselves.

This wanting to be liked, accepted, loved, is then, yet another factor – not necessarily to be analyzed, – that leads to what, for want of a more sophisticated term, I call the “good child” complex.

The Good Child Complex

The “good child” is generally the one who, not having had enough of it, seeks love – behaves obediently so as to achieve love and acceptance, as well as to preclude punishment. He may have been brought up where love was conditional, conditional upon compliance and obedience. Thus every action must be weighed in view of its possible consequences, especially calculated to avoid the probability of negative response – the goal being to achieve approval and avert disapproval. This is manifest not only at the personal, private level, but in the public arena as well. We can see it, and often shockingly, for example, when Israeli journalists and media people ask foreign diplomats what they will do if Israel does “X”, how they would react if Israel were to refuse “Y” – i.e., virtually inviting sanctions, threats, and negative responses.

It may not be surprising that members of a nation that has so long been hated and abused, rejected and maligned, wish to have the semblance of approval and acceptance – even at the price of subservience and obedience – but it is undeniably a reflection of an unhealthy process.

No discussion of pathological factors current in the Jewish national character would be complete without a serious look at what has been called “Jewish guilt” – guilt which has played, and plays, a central role in several ways.

Guilt

First, from a global point of view, it is fair to say that the Jewish people have, to a great extent developed what can be called a “guilt culture”, one in which control of behavior is brought about by instigation of guilt, rather than by shaming or physical means⁸. Guilt, however, is assuaged only by punishment, and, therefore, despite the fact that the Jewish history of persecution and disaster might have led us to suppose that this people would see itself as sufficiently punished to satisfy even the most tyrannical super-ego, the strong guilt feelings still lead to the need for self-punishment, self castigation, and even self-destruction; it is perhaps in this vein that acceptance of the process begun in Oslo can be begun to be understood.

What are some of the ways in which “guilt” develops and is fostered? First, and most basic, the tendency to guilt is a function of a strong superego, a strong sense of morality, and is intrinsically related to a particular personality style (character type), i.e., that of the obsessive-compulsive style mentioned above⁹. These are the people who do not do wrong because of an inner code – because of an internalized moral authority – and a mechanism that would make them feel bad indeed (guilty), were they to act contrary to their own incorporated standards.

We can add to this the traditional Jewish (religious) emphasis on sin-avoidance, on doing things right. We note the liturgical emphasis on our guilt and responsibility for our misfortunes, e.g. “*Mipnei chataenu galinu me'artzenu*” (because of our sins were we exiled from our homeland), as well as the Confessional *vidui*: “*ashamnu, bagadnu, gazalnu*-etc.”, (we sinned, we were traitorous, we robbed, etc.) which are not only a central aspect of the Yom Kippur *AMIDAH* (silent) prayers, but are also part of the regular morning prayers for many.

Though she has been much caricatured in the past, we cannot refrain from pointing to the traditional Jewish mother who exhorted her child to obedience by emphasizing how much she has suffered for him: to bring him into the world, to bring him up, etc., the mother, who, when her son does wrong, says “You’re killing me” or “Look what you are doing to your father”. These are all familiar examples which play upon, as well as foster, guilt.

As if this were not enough, for the Jewish people today, guilt is more than an historical, socio-cultural phenomenon. As I have written before¹⁰, since the Holocaust, there are two new facets to the face of Jewish guilt, so that the Jewish people have come to bear what is an unbearable burden of guilt. Balance theory has taught us that human beings seek cognitive balance, or fittingness. When things go wrong for someone, we cannot escape the thought that maybe he “deserved it”, deserved punishment, for we cannot allow ourselves to assume arbitrariness in a properly run world. Thus we see lucky, blessed people as deserving, as “good”, and those who suffer, as “punished”, and probably deserving of punishment.¹¹ Such an analysis has serious implications for the generation following the Holocaust – for many of the world’s people, especially those who were so pre-disposed, perceived the Holocaust as a just punishment for the infidel Jew, a “punishment” that served to support their prejudices and to prove to them that they had been always “right”, that the Jew was, indeed, evil. Unfortunately, it appears that the Jewish people too, have been left unaffected by such a “balancing” process. The horrific experiences of the Holocaust led, for many, to the not-necessarily conscious, unexpressed feeling that somehow we, the Jews were punished by G-d for some unknown, inchoate, unexplained sins.

In addition to the above, as a cause of guilt, is the attribution process post Holocaust. It was a grave error for the nations – and for Israel among them – to allow for the rehabilitation and re-integration of Germany among the family of man. For, by ceasing to continue to blame the Germans, to fail to consistently attribute the full burden of guilt for the Holocaust to them and their allies, we have allowed the guilt in the system – and such guilt cannot evaporate and must be allocated – to become attributed, even if only in part, to the Jews themselves.

Inhibition of Aggression

Guilt, furthermore, as was indicated, is intimately connected with an additional and serious manifestation, i.e., *the Pathological Inhibition of the Use of Aggression (or force, or power)*, a reluctance to act aggressively even in one’s own self-defense; this is an inhibition that comes, in a large measure from guilt feelings and is exacerbated by them.

It comes too, in part, from long experience of having been the victims of aggression. Thus, ironically, it is its enemies who benefit from the Jewish people’s suffering. Because they have so long been the victims, Jews have not only come to be especially sensitive to the suffering of others, but have also come to be more comfortable as passive victims than as users of even justifiable force. There has been, too, within this people, the ubiquitous denigration of aggression, the casting of even the legitimate use of force (at least by Israel) as evil, as unacceptable. Thus the mole of victim has come to be known and familiar, even comfortable – and that of aggressor foreign and unacceptable.

I recall a letter I received from someone who was then a new *Olah* (immigrant to Israel), right after the Six-Day War – someone who had been one of the youngest survivors of Auschwitz – a letter in which she was ecstatic over Israel’s success, over Israel having conquered. It did not take long, however, in fact it was in her very next letter, that she told me that she was undertaking to help the “poor Arab children” by becoming a teacher of English for them. (I am not here denigrating the wish to help and/or teach – rather to bring a clear example of the process I have referred to).

Forgotten, even by Israelis, it appears, is the long-standing tradition dating back to Rabbi Akiva¹² which states that, even in a case of two friends: “*chayecha v’ chaye chavercha, chayecha Kodemet*”. When it is a choice of your own life or that of a friend, your own has precedence. How much more so does it take

precedence in the case of the life of an enemy? Seemingly forgotten, too, is the “*psikah*” (adage) “*Haba l’hargecha, kum v’hargo*”. If someone comes to kill you, arise and kill him first¹³.

This inhibition of aggression has serious consequences, for the individual and for the people – for the body politic – alike. For aggression does not evaporate, aggressive drives are intrinsic to the human condition, and, in the case of Israel, are fueled by constant frustration, attack, denigration, and unfairness. This aggression – like a build-up of steam, or water – seeks and must have an outlet, needs to find expression. In a situation where the use of aggression has been delegitimized, especially where aggression against the source of the frustration, the instigator of anger, (the Arab enemy), has been precluded, it comes to be turned against what remains, by default, as the only “legitimate” target, one’s own self, one’s own people, one’s own nation.

Thus anger does not go away, and so it is displaced against an acceptable scapegoat, or turned against the self – and so the pent up angers, and aggression, fueled by continued frustration, not allowed to be turned against the source of that frustration, and inhibited in legitimate expression, come to be turned against one’s own people, one’s own interests, oneself.

Last year’s furor regarding the opening of the Hasmonean tunnel near the Western Wall is a case in point. The tunnel itself existed for centuries, it had been cleared and was in use for some time, all that was, in fact done at the time of the opening, was a final breakthrough. That the Arabs yelled, was understandable, that the nations – even the US – castigated without bothering to find out the facts, was not unusual, but that Israeli citizens blamed their own government for an act that was utilitarian in nature and perfectly within its rights, reflected the pathological tendency to turn blame upon oneself-one’s own.

Even more indicative of pathological attitudes was criticism that the government, that Netanyahu, had not consulted Arafat (sic.) – as if any self-respecting autonomous government should have done so. At this point we may say we meet the tip of the iceberg of the very dangerous process described below, i.e., identification with the aggressor.

Identification with the Aggressor

Identification with the Aggressor is the most pernicious of the dynamic processes that have served to disarm the Jewish/Israeli people vis-a-vis its enemies. In seeking security by means of this defense mechanism, of identifying with the enemy, by incorporating the calumnies and accusations leveled at one, one loses one’s own fulcrum of identification, and ends up identifying with the aims and objectives of the enemy/aggressor, at the expense of one’s own being and identity. It is this dynamic of identifying with the aggressor that has led many in Israel today, (e.g., Yael Dayan and Tamar Gojansky, Anat Maor, Uri Avnery and Dalia Rabinovitz) to enthuse over the enemy’s progress, to thrill to his accomplishments, and to cheer the fulfillment of *his* goals and plans.

Anger and aggression toward the enemy are quelled, denied, and repressed. The enemy is now an esteemed friend, his goals legitimized, the fulfillment of his aspirations has become one’s own cherished goal.

Such identification with the aggressor, however, must be recognized as also involving projection, as being a function of a combination of the two. It is this process which can help us understand the tolerance of Israelis for the rabid nationalism and racism of the Arabs, for the latter’s flagrant and unjust demandingness, and for the terrorist violence perpetrated by Arabs against them. It can help explain, too, the fatuous “pleasure” seen on the faces of so many, as Arafat marched into Gaza and Jericho, and the enthusiasm with which they pressed for the renunciation of Hebron. Identifying with the enemy has led respectable adults, scions of renowned families decimated in Hebron in ‘29, to publicize a call to renounce Hebron, to give up their/our patrimony – all in the service of a pathological self-abnegation, cloaked in the seeming interest of the so-called “peace process”¹⁴.

This is an example not merely of an identification with the aggressor that serves primarily to help allay anxiety, but, rather, combined with projection, one which helps to fulfill vicariously all those wishes which,

for reasons of a perverted inhibition of ego, and a misguided irrational superego, are no longer tolerated in the self. Jewish, Israeli nationalism and patriotism are perceived as bad, as racist, they are therefore rejected, and projected. Arab nationalism and chauvinism are acceptable and accepted – and then enjoyed vicariously. Arab “rights” are considered “just”, and the demand for them enjoyed vicariously, while one’s still Zionist and patriotic brethren are deemed “extremist” and vilified.

Some have been shocked by, and have asked how it is that we see among the vociferous left, even some who are children of survivors of the Holocaust. It is sad, indeed, to see these young people who, having lived with and as victims, while prevented from expressing vengeance, or even thoughts of vengeance, project and identify with their present enemies, and thus come to feel somewhat empowered and vindicated.

Since the beginnings of “Oslo”, we have seen repeated evidence of this means of defense, repeated manifestations of this mechanism at work. There were those Israelis who thrilled to Arafat’s entry into Jericho – while Ehud Yaari (Israel TV’s reporter on Arab affairs) was castigated for reporting that the Arabs themselves were less than ecstatically enthusiastic. Most shocking, of course, have been the extreme, even pathological acts such as the incredible draping of herself in the Palestinian flag by MK Anat Maor, and the more recent kissing of Arafat by MK Binyamin Ben Eliezer – as well as statements like that of Dalia Rabinovitz that “now Arafat has returned to the land of his forefathers”(sic.)¹⁵. This tendency was recently brought to its ultimate absurdum, when so called “peace groups” chose the 29th of November (the anniversary of the establishment of the state according to the Gregorian calendar) to publish an advertisement in Haaretz calling for a PLO state¹⁶.

Thus anger and aggression toward the enemy are, in these people, quelled, denied, and repressed. The enemy becomes an esteemed friend, his goals legitimate, the fulfillment of his dreams and national aspirations have become their own goal. For, identifying with the aggressor in the case of Israeli Jews, means identifying with the actual enemy – Arafat.

An example that would be funny, were it not so sad – but one that could not be clearer – was a poll conducted regarding the popularity “competition” between the puppets used on the *Hartzufim* show, (a so called program of political satire using life-size puppets) a competition won by the Arafat doll. One is reminded of the famous experiment by Clark & Clark¹⁷ in which they found that Negro children had incorporated White prejudice to the point that they had come to prefer and identify with White dolls rather than Black ones.

So we see that aggression, even assertion, in the self, for Jews, has come to be inhibited, rejected, and projected; aggression by the Arabs is tolerated and explained away as response to the “occupation”, to Israeli/Jewish “oppression”, oppression by those who now become designated as the “enemy” and against whom their aggression is ultimately leveled, i.e., the still-Zionist “settler” – hated and vilified because he dares be himself, dares to continue to maintain his own rights, dares fight for his own country, his own existence, his own ego, and his own self.

The “settler” becomes targeted as the ultimate “enemy”, to the extent that a soldier was quoted in an Israeli newspaper last year as saying to a mother in Judea; “I would rather guard the garbage truck than your children.”¹⁸

The settlers have been honored, too, with descriptions that would have done credit to the publication *Der Sturmer* of the Hitler era in Germany. Thus, Dan Tadmor wrote (and long before the Rabin assassination),

A settler, adorned with an Uzi and a standard blue winter coat, traces of spit and crumbs of food stuck in his wild beard, and next to him, his settler wife, at the height of her national sex act, babies are constantly dropping from her womb while she eagerly speaks about ancestral rights...Screaming, stuttering idiot...¹⁹

And a “professor” who specializes in – and apparently identifies with – Germany and things Germanic, one Moshe Zimmerman, asserted (and with *impunity*) that: “A whole sector of Israeli society is a copy of the Nazis. Look at the children of Hebron. They are exactly like the Hitler Jugend.” (sic).²⁰

This identification with the enemy is, as already noted, most pernicious, both because it leads to the championing of the enemy's interests and the denial and denigration of ones own, and even more so, because it leads to and fosters an inner time-bomb, one that can lead this people ultimately to self-destruct, i.e. Jewish self hatred; it is fair to say that the plague of Jewish self-hatred is more dangerous for the survival of the Jewish people than any outside threat.

Jewish Self-Hatred

This is true not only because self-hating Jews constitute a fifth column within the ranks of their people, a fifth column which rejects the identity of the Jew, his culture, his tradition, his patrimony, and introduces those of, and extols, that of the outsider (both benign and anti-Semite), of the enemy – thus working against Jewish interest, but also because this self-hatred fuels a vicious cycle that can lead to disaster and dissolution of the Jewish people and the Jewish state.

This is so, because the self-hating Jew, having incorporated the “other's” view of himself tries more and more to be like the “other”, to identify with him and his values and interests. Then, in turn, he projects the rejected (stereotypical) aspects of himself as Jew onto one of the identifiable subgroups of his people, e.g., the new-immigrants, the religious, the Zionists, and casts them as having the so-labeled undesirable traits – and by so doing, not only serves to vitiate these aspects in the overall society, but also thus weakens Jewish culture and identity in general. Moreover, to the extent that the now scapegoated group sees the self-hating Jew (be he a member of the “paparazzi”, the “intelligentsia”, the left, etc.), as a member of a desirable group to join, or as a group whose favor he wishes to curry, these will, in turn, try to be like him, and project the “negative” characteristics on yet another sub-group, etc., etc., endlessly.

Furthermore, self-hating Jews, by casting other Jews in negative and pejorative moles, perpetuate the excuse for hatred towards the Jew, in general, and supply some of the fuel and the stereotypes for it. Thus German Jews ostracized the “ost-jude”, the eastern (mid-European) Jew, the *Yishuv*, made fun of the “Franks” and American Jews at the time of WWII made fun of the “greenhorns”, the “refugees” – the newcomers who had succeeded in escaping Hitler's clutches and had not yet shed their dress, language and habits, (yes, it happened).

This process is well-described by Sender Gilman, in his book: *Jewish Self-Hatred*.²¹ He, too, sees self-hatred as a function of the Jews identifying with the stereotypes projected upon them by what he calls the “reference group” – and, after adopting these, then projecting them on a sub-group within their group. This explains, of course, some of the internecine prejudice we have been witness to historically, referred to above.

Gilman also makes an important and very interesting point, that those Jews who accept the reference group's stereotypes of the Jew and then attempt to deny and extirpate these in themselves, essentially serve to prove to the anti-Semites that, indeed, these stereotypes were true. Furthermore, by projecting these negative aspects on other Jews, the self-hating Jews can never really achieve their goal of acceptance, because, in the final analysis, the anti-Semitic “other” will believe, when all is said and done, that he – the self-hating Jew (the “white Jew”) – is no better, really, than that Jew whom he has now in turn stigmatized.

In Israel we have Jewish self-hatred not only at the micro, personal, level, but also at the macro-national level. The wish to be like the “*goyim*” manifests itself in multi-faceted efforts to adopt foreign mores, culture, and even language; more and more, as we see product labels, storefronts, etc., in foreign languages and alphabet, and witness incredible efforts by Israelis to speak foreign languages, particularly English, (even in the media) we come to the conclusion that Eliezer Ben Yehuda's monumental achievement of the resurrection of Hebrew as a spoken, everyday language, needs re-affirmation and resurgence.

It should be emphasized that the need to deny characteristics that are traditionally Jewish, is one that has led the self-hating Israeli Jew to demonize those sub-groups who are the most “Jewish”. The recent imbroglio

involving Yigal Tumarkin, in which he was quoted as saying that when he sees the “*charedim*” (black-garbed Jews) he can understand the nazis, is a clear example of this. Thus we have the vilification of the “*datim*” (religious), the *charedim* (above) and the “*mitnachalim*” (settlers), who not only pose a challenge and point out the weaknesses of the self-hating Jew, but also continue to embrace all those things which he, as a more “modern” Israeli Jew has learned from the anti-Semites is not acceptable. This has come to include not only religion and traditional Jewish culture, but Zionism itself, as well.

Thus, many have now arrived at the age of “post-Zionism”. Examples of this kind of vilification abound. Yaakov Sharett, son of Moshe Sharett, Israel’s first foreign minister and second president, in his book *The State of Israel Does Not Exist*,²² wrote: “It is an historic fact that throughout the years of the Zionist enterprise... facts have been and are being determined on the ground... by all the violent uncontrolled steps... of the Jews... and this against the background of Israeli everyday life saturated with vengefulness, the fruit of a religious tradition, ghettoistic and sectarian... based in fostering primitive, vengeful drives...(p.17).” Another compelling example comes from the writings of Amos Oz²³ who described the settlers as: “A messianic cult, closed and cruel... criminals against humanity, sadists, pogromists and murderers, a cult that popped out... from some dark corner of Judaism... out of the cellars of bestiality and pornography... in order to impose a thirsty, savage cult of blood...”. These quotations, and others like them, demonstrate not only the degree to which these Jews have assimilated the hates and prejudices of the “other” and have turned them, with venom, upon groups of their brethren who for them are seen as legitimate scapegoats, (in line with the known process common to all racism and prejudice) but also serve to illustrate to us the nature of what is being projected, and which tells one more regarding him who projects (and scapegoats) than about the objects of his calumny; and the nature of these projects is both shocking and frightening.

It is important to note that many of these statements, had they been made by non-Jews in the US, would have aroused quite a furor in the Jewish community, and strong and appropriate reaction by the Anti-Defamation league and other Jewish organizations. The sad fact that they are made by Jews, seemingly brings about an embarrassment here in Israel as well as in the US, such that the promulgators of the most outrageous statements can get away with it.

This is, however, quite dangerous, as allowing statements like these, by Jews, – who, in the final analysis are simply mirroring and echoing the statements of the non-Jewish anti-Semites, to stand unchallenged legitimizes the calumnies beyond what their expression by gentiles would have done.

Efraim Kishon, in his insightful way, recognized the effects of self-hatred, and, in a piece published last year in an English daily dealing with then current TV satire, writes that: “behind the chase after ratings, lurks no small measure of self-hatred, the sad legacy of a people which... has clothed itself in the vile accusations of its persecutors. “Kishon goes on to suggest that “Envy, too, might play a role in this gnawing away at the self one finds among the enlightened -...the envy that those who despise their country direct toward those who believe in it, who still take their Judaism seriously”²⁴.

It is not only from the world’s anti-Semites that the Israeli leftist has learned to reject these subgroups of his brethren, but also from the viscous anti Israeli Jewish-Americans across the sea, who have come to use Israel and Israeli Jews as the out-group upon which to project all their own self-hatred. One outstanding example of this comes from the Canadian McGill Daily, which, while listing an editorial board loaded with Jewish names, asserted that: “Zionism is an alien concept that no civilized people can adhere to...”²⁵

Gilman sees this virulent anti-Israel feeling of Jews like Woody Allen, Michael Lerner, etc. (examples mine) as a projection of self – hatred that the establishment of the State of Israel made possible. This allows us to understand, too, that all the American anti-Israel, pro-Arab organizations (Women in Black, *Yesh Gvul*, *Tikkun*, etc.) are essentially manifestations of this very self-hatred. (This is not to deny the manipulative intent, and the ulterior designs being served by these groups). Israel, we see, is in the midst of a potentially deadly spiral, with many American, English and other Diaspora Jews projecting all that is foisted upon them by the world’s anti-Semites onto it, using it as a scapegoat, and thus fueling further the Israelis’ own self hatred – a self hatred that can, in fact, lead to ultimate (self) destruction.

This analysis may help answer the question that is often asked (by those who overlook the fact that groups like “Professors for a Safe Israel” are clearly and actively in the nationalist camp) as to why it is that so many of Israel’s “intellectuals”, of the more “educated”, etc., are on the left, are overtly pro-Arab, and are unwilling to take and champion a Zionist, pro-Israel, pro-Jewish position. The explanation here is, I believe two-fold. First, self-hatred is essentially a function of identifying with the “other” and wishing to be like him, of accepting his negative perception of the Jew, and, by then trying to be like him, seeking to find acceptance. This is, of course, what happens in the process of achieving what is colloquially known as “political correctness”, and is based on the lack of an integrated healthy Jewish identity. There are many in academia who seek to be accepted by their foreign colleagues, who wish to be that which the anti-Semites have determined is “politically correct”, and who yearn to lose their Jewish identity in exchange for some blending into the international academic community. They, more than anyone else, wish to be “citizens of the world” – and thus they are among the first to succumb to the self-hate process, and to develop what for them are utopian fantasies of acceptance, of “one-world” of which they will be a prominent part. Ironically, while fostering Arab nationalism and particularism, they are among the first to deny and decry Jewish-Israeli nationalism and identity.

They become prey, too, to ludicrous wishful thinking like that of Shimon Peres, expressed in his recent book “The New Middle East”²⁶.

(I recall a number of such “universal” Jews at an international conference in Auckland, New Zealand, who, though obviously Jewish, and even quite interested in what the Israeli delegates had to say, literally scurried off when they spotted anyone coming, lest they be identified as Jewish and – tainted).

Secondly, it is a fact that it is precisely the Jewish pseudo-intellectual, writer, artist, academician, etc., who most comes into contact with, and is most aware of, what in fact, the “others” projected stigmata regarding the Jew are. It is he who is faced with the dissonance inherent in deciding whether these in fact apply to him, and he who determines to reject these in himself, to be “better” – to be better than his brethren, to be a “white Jew”.

Furthermore it is precisely people in these professions who see the media as important in shaping opinion, who are convinced that they are opinion makers, who are most suggestible themselves and most subject to the opinions of others. In sum, he is both more aware of what it is that Jews are accused of, and cares more to escape from the “limits” of Jewish peoplehood for the sake of acceptance into the international, “universal” community.

It is also these pseudo – intellectuals, academicians, writers, and artists who are often most affected by the most rabid kind of self-hatred. Thus Yigal Tumarkin, referred to before regarding his outrageous comments about *Charedi*-type Jews – was also quoted a number of years ago as having stated “...The real educators are Kahane, Rafal and Gandhi. My true contribution will be if I take a sub-machine gun instead of pen and pencil and kill them.”²⁷

It has been suggested by some that a person’s beliefs and views should not be taken into consideration when looking at or evaluating his art; this position, however, from a psychological point of view, is not valid. To the extent that art is art, it is an expression of personality, specifically, according to Kubie²⁸, of the pre-conscious part of the personality, the place where conscious and unconscious meet, and material is worked through by *the person who* creates. As such the nature and belief system of that person are very much part of the issue.

That the process leading to self-hatred described above “works”, and is most pernicious, can be seen, I think, in the erosion of the position of many on the right who came, to some degree or other, to be “for” the continuing of the Oslo process, to give it, in the popular jargon, “a chance”. It is not, we believe, that these former right-thinking Israelis have come to believe that these accords were good agreements for Israel, or that they have come to have confidence in Arafat, or that they have come to believe that the Arabs truly want peace – rather, I contend, they have been affected by the incessant denigration by the left, by the incessant calumny, by the incessant delegitimization, stereotyping and scapegoating, such that, at some point they

came to wish to dissociate themselves from the “extremists”, from the “settlers”, from the “fringe”. (In this, the left and their allies have been most successful, and not, we believe, accidentally. There is considerable evidence that the left employs some of the most sophisticated methods developed by social psychologists, and has advisors who direct and guide it.) Now, they too, want to be appear to be lovers of peace, reasonable and rational, not messianic or extremist; they want to be perceived as “enlightened” – and then, they, in turn, point pejoratively to those they now deem extremists. Extremists, then, we see, are called those who have not given up being loyal Jews, who are Zionists still, who love their land and their heritage, who abide by their religion, who are “Jews” first and whatever else second and third.

Things are very different for the many Jews – and those segregated *dati* communities are among them – who neither know nor care what is said about them. They are not motivated to reject aspects of themselves, as they are not motivated to make themselves over to suit some anti-Semitic reference group; they do not need to seek approval, do not need to please the Arabs, the US, the Europeans or the Israeli left – they are and intend to remain who they are; so too the settlers, so too some of the once immigrant Yemenite and other groups, so too the healthy, proud and patriotic Israeli.

For it is a fact, of course, that those who are psychologically healthy are protected from joining this vicious cycle. Having an identity, a self, being aware of and proud of who one is, being rooted in one’s culture, tradition, people, land – one is relatively impervious to the others’ subtle manipulation, unaffected by the standards the other might want to set. Not wanting to be like the *goyim*, one has no problem remaining a Jew, a Zionist, a loyal, proud member of Jewish/Israeli society; it is the weak, the marginal, those lacking in identity and confidence, who are vulnerable.

There are, of course, ways to combat this most insidious process – and the teaching of Jewish history and tradition, the emphasis on Jewish culture and values, the encouragement of patriotism, loyalty and commitment, are among the ways. It is hard, however, to expect to accomplish this, when so many in the Israeli educational establishment have perverted their roles and reneged on their responsibilities, and, rather than educate youth to be loyal, patriotic, committed citizens, they undertake to brainwash, in line with current P.C., to teach “Democracy” rather than Zionism or Judaism, love of the enemy, rather than love of one’s own brother. An example that comes to mind is that, when, in response to a question put to him as to why Jewish children do not sing the national anthem, *Hatikva*, every morning as do American children who sing the Star Spangled Banner, Israel’s then Minister of Education answered, “chauvinism!” (Yitzchak Navon, private conversation.)

Gilman, who turned to an analysis of literature and Jewish writers for his material, quotes George Eliot who, in her masterpiece *Daniel Deronda* ²⁹ paints an unforgettable picture of the Jew who attempts to ingratiate himself with the *goyim* via self hatred; – thus she speaks of those Jews “who must walk among the nations and be known as Jews, and with words on their lips which mean ‘I wish I had not been born a Jew, I disown any bond with the long travail of my race, I will outdo the Gentiles in mocking at our separateness’. The self – hating Jew mocks all” (p.19). We can see examples of this on the weekly “Popolitika” program – and not only there.

This need to dissociate from and disown the bond with the long travail of our people is not a matter of history, but is only too current. Hence, for example, the strong opposition from political and “educational” institutions regarding our young people’s joining in the “March of The Living” lest that visit to the sites of the Holocaust lead to too much identification with the Jewish people, Jewish history, and Jewish pain. Shulamit Aloni was in the forefront of those opposed to these marches, for just these reasons. The Hebrew University, too, made it in recent years virtually impossible for its students to participate by posing cruel and unusual sanctions for students who miss lectures and/or tests, as a consequence of such a pilgrimage.

There are those, who, while being the first to call attention to the suffering of our enemies, who are sensitive to every real and imagined slight vis-a-vis the Arabs, feel threatened by the possibility that Jewish youth will develop empathy for its own people. They have forgotten the importance of righteous indignation – the righteous indignation which George Sand called for as a response to evil.

Recognition of this trend to disavowal of Jewish history leads us to make explicit what has been implicit, i.e., the current relatively pervasive and deep reluctance for taking responsibility for Jewish existence, for Jewish roles and burdens. There is much intrinsic rebellion, not only against the traditions and mores of the fathers³⁰, but also against the very idea of “chosenness”, of being special, of being “better”. The suggestion that the Jewish people is “better” or thinks of itself as superior, has now become anathema; thus, though Israelis are interested in, encourage and foster “folk-lore” of various minorities, there is shocking intolerance and disdain from the very same groups for their own Jewish heritage and mores. There is even the need to deny the meal superiorities, the genuine talents, and the superior morality of the Jew when compared to others.

An example of this kind of rebellion, as well as one of implicit self-hatred, is to be found in a quotation from Shulamit Aloni, talking of the then Likud government... “A period of fascistic nationalism characterized by brutal populism... in the name of the eternity of the people and it’s divine mission... that only the crucible of mystic and aggressive nationalism in which the idea of the chosen people is at its center, and ambitions of territorial expansion motivate it”³¹. It is not unrealistic to assume that she would apply the above to the present government as well.

That we may in fact be smarter, better, more powerful, must be denied, not only in word but also in deed. Therefore we must castigate ourselves, reveal and emphasize our failings and our faults, we must denigrate our achievements, and inhibit our power. We cannot allow ourselves to really be conquerors, only victims. Many, have come to see, and to expect to see, Jews only as victims, as weak, dependent, and needy.

Israel victorious, strong, independent and “cheeky”, aroused the discomfort that comes with a system out of balance, expectations flouted. Not only non-Jews, but Jews also, resented *Sabra* “arrogance” Israeli “*chutzpah*”. Such Jews, and they are not all abroad, find it more fitting and appropriate for Jews and Israelis to accept inferior status, to be properly humble and respectful, to realize that they are after all, inferior. Such non – Jews, and Jews, find it “fitting” for the Jewish nation to be subject to the will of others, while finding it dissonant for Israel to assert itself or to reject foreign demands.

Thus it became possible to see potential “transfer” of Jews as acceptable, but to be at the same time violently opposed to a possible transfer of Arabs. “Judenrein”, is an understandable, even acceptable state of affairs; a Jewish state free of Arabs, however, would be inconceivable, unacceptable, for it would be a “racist state”: anathema.

The Jew as victim, as persecuted, discriminated against, without rights or legal recourse still fits what many see as a balanced, “fitting” state of affairs. The Jew as victorious, as victor and authority, asserting dominion over his land and jurisdiction over its inhabitants, seemingly flouts some subtle rule, upsets the balance in some undefined system.

The problem is even deeper. Another, perhaps even more pernicious factor in inhibiting a healthy, assertive, “life-affirming” stance, is again, I believe, in great measure, a result of the Holocaust. I contend that it is due to the Holocaust that the question of “Israel’s right to exist” came to be posited – as it is the Holocaust that put the continued existence of the Jews into question; to this day no one has yet heard anyone question the right of France – *or even Germany* – to “exist”. There are powers of “balance” at work, as well as the inchoate suspicion that such punishment was in some sense deserved.³²

Since the process of stigmatization of others is specific to all prejudice, we cannot, before closing, avoid discussing the type of personality that is most prone to behave prejudicially, i.e., the personality type that is most prone to harbor prejudice. This personality type, was identified post WWII by a group of expatriate European psychologists in line with their attempt to understand that trauma, as “the Authoritarian personality”. This form of personality, which is characterized by and underlies prejudice and out-group hatred – and is, by the way, ubiquitous among Arabs, as well as Germans – is not unknown among Jews. Its outstanding traits are “authoritarian submission”, the giving in to, submitting to, becoming subservient to those perceived to be in authority, coupled with, on the other hand, “authoritarian aggression”, which is the readiness to aggress against, to ostracize and scapegoat those perceived as weaker or inferior (and who are sanctioned as scapegoats by those seen as in authority). Such personalities, too, are characterized by what is

known as “anti-intracception”, i.e., an unwillingness to incorporate new ideas or information; they are the people who “already have their opinions and do not want to be bothered with the facts”³³.

Such people are impressed by authorities, and do not feel free to thwart them. For them, the UN, the US and certain individuals with charisma and unswerving authoritarian demagoguery, become authorities to be listened to, and men – negative men – like Yeshayahu Leibowitz can therefore become the idols of the left, despite, or perhaps because of the self-hating statements he made. Thus this ex-German Jewish professor, speaking about the settlers, said: “The murderers on the other side of the green line... have weapons. Therefore I call to you to get guns. To get guns against them before they put you into concentration camps like leprous dogs...”³⁴, while yet at another time stated that “Hitler was an exemplary moral personality” (sic).³⁵

Authoritarian personalities do not want facts that might conflict with their opinions, and project all their unacceptable inclinations on the now designated and acceptable scapegoats who are then punished for having them. Thus the left projects on the right – hatred, fascism, undemocratic attitudes, the desire to force its will on the rest, violence, etc. – and then accuses and hates them for having these.³⁶

We may try to summarize, then, that with the proliferation of Authoritarian personality structure among Jews, associated with excessive repression and the tendency to deny – not only have we developed a large group of people who cannot – and will not – see reality, but rather, live with their own projected illusions. This same group, however, succumbs to and identifies with the prejudices and views of the “other” and projects these onto subgroups of its own people; it then has a good rationalization for scapegoating these, and vents its otherwise inhibited aggression against them.

The factors discussed above, obviously, are not mutually exclusive, and their interaction serves to reinforce each and all. Israel and Israelis have a long and uphill road to climb towards rationality and security. Similarly, the Jews of the exile have to be on their guard lest they continue to absorb and integrate the ceaseless anti-Semitic, anti-Jewish and anti-Israeli calumny that abounds and even has achieved new legitimacy today. For it is sad to see that now, fifty years after the establishment of the state, and fifty-four years after the liberation of Auschwitz, it has again become acceptable, and even fashionable, to engage in Jew-bashing.

Much of the responsibility for this lies with the Jews themselves; it is they who have allowed the distinction between “anti-Israel” and “anti-Semitic” to acquire legitimacy, they who have failed to fight anti-Jewish anti-Israeli propaganda as it should have been fought: immediately, strongly, ceaselessly, ruthlessly, and without quarter.

Furthermore, it is the self-hating Jews of the world who have provided much of the ammunition for these anti-Semitic campaigns; who have hidden their uncommitted selves behind their “criticism” of Israel. Thus, the same young American Jews who have never thought about the lot of the truly displaced American Indian, left to rot on ever shrinking reservations, come to Israel to champion and fuss – or who write from abroad – complaining about Israel’s (far better) treatment of its Arabs. They do not know, nor do they care, that at the time of the War of Independence there were only few Arabs here, who were literally the serfs of Arab absentee land-owners living in Amman and elsewhere. That it was only as the Jews built and the *Yishuv* grew, that there began an influx of Arabs to work and to take advantage of the better conditions, and who have no more claim to territory here than do foreign workers in California, Germany, or elsewhere in the many host countries.

The long-standing tendency of Jews the world over – and especially in the US – to champion him whom they see as the underdog, has been here perverted to the advantage of the Arabs. Forgetting, or perhaps never really knowing history, these Jews have forgotten the long and painful travail of their own people, – long a true universal underdog – and, seeing the Jewish Israeli, the *Sabra*, as strong, free and victorious, began to identify, as was their wont, with the “underdog” as they had been doing and to champion the “displaced Arab”.

This factor, coupled with, and serving as rationalization for the projection of self-hatred, has turned many Jews the world over not only away from, but often also against, their own Israeli brothers.

It is time to reverse the process.■

Endnotes

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