

# Book Reviews



**Jacob Shamir and Khalil Shikaki**, *Palestinian and Israeli Public Opinion: The Public Imperative in the Second Intifada* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 205 pp., \$27.95 (paperback).

Public opinion plays a particularly important role in the continuation and resolution of conflict because leaders seek domestic legitimacy. They attempt to mold, exploit, and respond to public opinion, while appealing to their publics for support or pointing to public opinion as a constraint. Jacob Shamir and Khalil Shikaki's *Palestinian and Israeli Public Opinion* contributes key empirical and theoretical insights about the part played by the public in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, in its ongoing negotiations, and in the maneuverings of elites. Shamir and Shikaki's sustained and coordinated collaboration, based on the Joint Israeli-Palestinian Poll, brings together their expertise on Israeli and Palestinian public opinions, respectively, in a creative and rigorous analysis. This comprehensive and accessible study is an important resource for readers at all levels, and its findings will be of particular interest to scholars of the conflict, public opinion, and conflict resolution.

Shamir and Shikaki give an account of negotiations, violence, and opportunities for a final settlement, from Camp David in 2000 to Hamas's 2006 electoral victory. The first four chapters present their methodological and theoretical foundations. Their analysis is anchored in Robert Putnam's (1988: 427–460) famous 'two-level games' metaphor: political leaders simultaneously play one game internationally and another domestically. Shamir and Shikaki are not confined by this framework, however, noting instances where the game becomes more complicated, as when Sharon threatened Abbas's political survival through policies that "erode[d] the latter's standing among his domestic public" (103). Of theoretical interest is their argument that public opinion is not merely a constraint that enhances bargaining power but can also be an active and informed player that punishes, rewards, presents opportunities, and forces leaders to adapt and respond

through various mechanisms and institutions—especially elections. Chapter 8 is devoted to this “electoral connection,” from the First Intifada to Olmert’s replacement of Sharon and Hamas’s victory over Fatah.

Chapters 5–7 analyze public opinion during Camp David, the Second Intifada, and the Geneva Initiative and Gaza Disengagement Plan. Shamir and Shikaki persuasively argue that Camp David failed because of the “closed lips syndrome,” a dynamic inherent in many two-level games where neither leader prepares his public for concessions: both Arafat and Barak feared that the other’s demands would increase if he did so, and each assumed that the other could concede more (56–60, 152). It is also in these chapters that two exciting findings emerge: first, Palestinians and Israelis used compensatory logic to assess final settlement proposals and valued a proposal more than the sum of its parts; second, there existed, albeit momentarily, a final settlement package to which the majority of both Israelis and Palestinians would have agreed—the “win-set” (108–110).

In one poll, the Geneva Initiative finds majority support on both sides when it is presented without a name. Shamir and Shikaki speculate that this phenomenon may be due to Arafat’s death or to the delegitimization campaigns against this initiative. Another possibility is that public opinion is more likely to see foreign labels as indicative of foreign meddling.

*Palestinian and Israeli Public Opinion* explains and discusses the foundations for public opinion research and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, while also suggesting important avenues for future research. Indeed, developments after 2006 demand as much. These include the failed negotiations from 2007–2010, Israel’s war in Gaza, the Palestine Papers scandal, the PA’s UN statehood bid, Israel’s 2011 social protests, Fatah-Hamas attempts at reconciliation, and Benjamin Netanyahu’s refusal to negotiate if Palestinian national reconciliation is successful.

Given these events, one wonders if the 2004–2005 win-set may be an irretrievably lost opportunity. Has another win-set existed since then? Do the majority of Palestinians and Israelis still support negotiations or a two-state solution? Is the ‘one-state’ approach gaining support? How does either electoral system—with Israel’s system favoring smaller groups (179n3) and that of the Palestinians rewarding party discipline and members’ obedience (134)—mediate or obstruct public opinion? Does either make a final settlement more or less likely? And, given foreign actors’ important role in Shamir and Shikaki’s narrative, should the simultaneous games be understood as three-level or more, rather than two-level?

This work is a must-read for scholars of Israeli-Palestinian relations and the peace process. The book’s concluding policy recommendations on how to strengthen ‘moderates’, prepare publics for concessions, and maintain each player’s unity are also a valuable resource for policymakers. With

important empirical, theoretical, and policy contributions, Shamir and Shikaki's collaboration should appeal to a variety of audiences. At a time when the conflict seems more and more intractable, their findings may produce a ray of optimism.

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**Eytan Gilboa and Efraim Inbar**, eds., *US-Israeli Relations in a New Era: Issues and Challenges after 9/11* (London: Routledge, 2009), 254 pp., \$148.00 (hardcover), \$44.95 (paperback).

This collection of essays is a useful compendium of perspectives on the controversial topic of the US-Israel 'special relationship' during the George W. Bush era. Developed as the result of a conference (convened at Bar-Ilan University on 20–21 May 2007) and underwritten by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the collection poses an interesting question for academics. The ADL clearly states that it "[s]upports the Jewish State by advocating for Israel and explaining political and security issues and the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian/Israel-Arab conflict with U.S. policymakers, the media and the public."<sup>1</sup> Does the ADL's support of this project, then, create a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest for its academic participants who are, after all, delving into a highly controversial foreign policy issue? We will return to this unsettling and complex question at the conclusion of this essay.

The 13 essays in this book bring together scholars representing a variety of approaches. As is often the case with collections that juxtapose different disciplines and styles, the final product is not fully integrated, and the essays often address wildly divergent questions. Thus, some of the pieces appear to be speaking past the others rather than to each other. Nevertheless, the implicit question, what is the glue that holds this unique alliance together? runs through many of these essays. Is America's support for Israel based on strategic interest, shared cultural and moral values, or interest group lobbying? Or some combination of these explanations?

The opening essay by Benjamin Miller attempts to explain four historical cases of US involvement in the Middle East (in 1973, 1991, 2003, and 2006) from an international relations perspective and thus seems oddly

out of place. It adds little to the volume's larger themes related to US-Israel relations. Miller's attempt at developing a theoretical framework to explain US strategy is intriguing, but it does not succeed in fully explaining four very different historical case studies with a relatively simple two-factor analysis.

Many of the remaining essays deal much more directly with different aspects of the special relationship between the US and Israel. Co-editor Efraim Inbar tackles the critical question of why the US-Israel relationship has survived in the post-Cold War era despite the end of its original strategic rationale. Inbar discounts moral and cultural factors as well as the influence of the pro-Israel lobby. Instead, he offers a fairly conventional analysis of strategic advantages and shared interests that the alliance provides each country—primarily, access to oil, preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and anti-terrorism.

Conversely, co-editor Eytan Gilboa places much more stress on the role of US domestic politics and shared values in explaining the special relationship through public opinion research. His essay is usefully supported by a treasure trove of public opinion data on the mutually positive attitudes of Americans and Israelis toward each other. However, Gilboa does not explore the next logical question of whether Americans have positive attitudes toward Israel because of the close strategic alliance, or whether the close strategic alliance is a product of the positive attitudes as a result of shared values—or some combination of both. In other words, is the basic rationale of the alliance derived from strategic interests or from politics?

Several additional essays explore aspects of American domestic politics as they relate to the special relationship. Mitchell Bard provides a fairly straightforward explanation of the influence and limits of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Contrary to Inbar, Bard clearly suggests that AIPAC plays a key role in shaping the contours of the US-Israel relationship, although he demonstrates that it is far from the all-powerful force that its critics often portray it as. The emergence of J Street, a pro-Israel, pro-peace organization founded in 2008, after this collection was published, further demonstrates the limits of AIPAC's power to maintain a monopoly on pro-Israel activism.

The next two essays examine the political role of two key communities in maintaining the US-Israel alliance. Ira Sheskin provides a useful analysis of the demographics of American Jews and considers the political impact of this community on the US-Israel relationship. Paul Merkley, on the other hand, examines the role of Christian Zionists and delivers a full-throated and highly one-sided defense of their crucial importance as a bulwark of the US-Israel alliance. Both chapters in their own way demonstrate the importance of politics and lobbying in maintaining the stability

of the US-Israel relationship. When taken together, these two chapters make the point that the politics of the special relationship has become bipartisan in the US due to the existence of a significant pro-Israel base within each major American political party.

The next three articles are focused on particular bilateral issues in the relationship, specifically Iraq, the peace process, and the status of Jerusalem. Dov Waxman expertly dissects the spurious claim that the Iraq War (2003–2011) was a ‘war for Israel’. However, he skirts the more nuanced question of whether neo-conservatives’ commitment to Israel was a significant factor in their evaluation that the invasion of Iraq was in the US’s national interest. This inquiry opens the door to a wider analysis of the extent to which Israel and the United States have broadly shared national interests, and where and when those interests converge and diverge. Jonathan Rynhold systematically examines the US role in the Middle East peace process and, in a quite reasonable and nuanced manner, argues that it is unlikely that the US can impose a comprehensive settlement. He suggests that the US is better off pursuing a more modest conflict management approach rather than a more risky conflict resolution strategy.

Schlomo Slonim delves into the fascinating history of US policy on Jerusalem as it relates to the location of the American Embassy and the debate over designating Jerusalem as part of Israel on US passports (which was recently decided by the US Supreme Court in the case of *Zivotofsky v. Clinton*). This is less an issue that concerns the American relationship with Israel and more a study of the complexities of the constitutional separation of powers between the legislative and executive branches when it comes to the making of American foreign policy.

The last four articles expand the discussion of the US-Israel relationship to include broader multilateral relationships with other countries, mainly, Europe, India, Turkey, and Iran. Emanuele Ottolenghi critiques European views of the United States and its foreign policy in the Middle East. He blames European hostility toward US policy on a deep-seated strain of anti-Americanism and anti-Zionism and seems to reject the possibility that Europeans might be reacting rationally to the problematic nature of American and Israeli policies. Unfortunately, his evidence of this antipathy seems to be mostly anecdotal citations from the writings of European leftists rather than any systematic analysis of the European press.

Cherian Samuel shines a light on the intriguing and relatively unexplored topic of the improving Israel-India relationship and its implications for the United States. Samuel’s analysis is both clear and detailed. Amikam Nachmani similarly provides a nuanced systematic analysis of the complex and critical relationship between Israel and Turkey. Finally, P. Edward Haley provides a thoughtful, if necessarily somewhat speculative, analysis

of possible future scenarios for the US-Israel relationship. Intriguingly, he sees the question of whether a *modus vivendi* can be reached with Iran as central to the future of the US-Israel relationship.

Although it is clear that this volume does not read as an extension of the ADL's advocacy agenda, it also does not contain any voices particularly critical of the ADL's positions on the US-Israel alliance or Israeli or American policy. Its frame of reference seems limited to those who are basically supportive of the special relationship and tends to read as a defense of the US-Israel alliance rather than as a broader debate over its costs and benefits for the US, Israel, and the region. The collection thus fails to capture the full range of the academic debate surrounding the special relationship.

The volume would have benefited from an effort to include a more diverse group of scholarly viewpoints. The result does not compromise the credibility of the individual authors in any way, since their essays stand and fall on their own individual merits, but it raises questions about the collective end product. The original conference was organized during the 2006 controversy over the publication of John Mearsheimer and Stephan Walt's article critical of the US-Israel relationship.<sup>2</sup> Several of the authors take potshots at Mearsheimer and Walt, as well as President Jimmy Carter's (2007) *Palestine Peace Not Apartheid*, but none really takes the opportunity to engage them or their arguments fully. In not doing so, they missed the opportunity to encapsulate the nuanced and complicated nature of the debate over the US-Israel relationship.

The conference (and the resulting book) could have engaged critics, but instead it adopted a more defensive position. Unfortunately, the role of the ADL as a supporter of the conference appears to have created a situation that limited the range of participation and debate. This raises a more fundamental disciplinary question, mentioned earlier, as to whether it is wise for academics to cooperate with advocacy groups in this manner or whether doing so compromises their academic enterprise.

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## NOTES

1. [http://www.adl.org/About\\_ADL2\\_print.pdf](http://www.adl.org/About_ADL2_print.pdf).
2. <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/john-mearsheimer/the-israel-lobby>.

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**Uri Cohen and Nissim Leon**, *The Herut Movement's Central Committee and the Mizrahim, 1965–1977: From Patronizing Partnership to Competitive Partnership* (Jerusalem: Israel Democracy Institute, 2011), 178 pp.

Many Israelis tend to identify the Likud with a distinct sociological group. Most of its members are lower-middle-class Jews of Oriental origin (Mizrahim) and a traditional background, who usually live in relatively poor areas of the country. Currently, this sociological characterization may not be entirely true, but historically it was. This socio-political identification is somewhat puzzling from the ideological point of view. Why do so many Mizrahim support a party that traditionally advocates a free market economy and that in recent years has adopted a neo-liberal policy that widens the gap between rich and poor and between metropolitan and peripheral areas?

Some Israeli scholars have tried in recent decades to solve this 'contradiction', using such theories and principles as 'politics of status', 'class politics', and 'neo-populism' (Peled 1990; Ram 2007: 70–75; Shapiro 1989). In his seminal study *Chosen to Command*, Yonathan Shapiro (1989) explained the rise of the Herut movement in the 1970s and 1980s by the concept of politics of status. According to Shapiro, the former conflict over status between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim shifted, in the 1950s and 1960s, to the national political arena. Thereby, the Mizrachi periphery, which felt deprived and exploited by the hegemonic party Mapai, proceeded to empower Mapai's traditional enemy, Herut.

Peled and Ram suggested different explanations for this process but remained close to Shapiro's theoretical basis. They emphasized the active role played by the leaders of Herut after 1948 in manipulating the mass of Oriental Jews by offering them an ideology of hatred, whether against the Arabs, the leftists, or the current elite. In so doing, Herut conferred a sense of superiority (prestige and status) on those in the periphery, helping them to forget their essential marginality. According to Ram and Peled, despite the symbolic structuration, the marginalization of the Mizrahim has not changed—indeed, it has worsened. Thus, voting for the Likud reflects irrational behavior or the outcome of manipulation.

From a wide theoretical perspective, Shapiro, Peled, and Ram share a common theoretical view rooted in structuralist epistemology (especially structuralist-materialist thinking) that explains the phenomenon as an outcome of macro-sociological forces. In the political context, this way of thinking assumes a political dynamic based on power structure, that is, an asymmetry in access to power between the center and the periphery. However, these authors ignore particular conditions of time and place; do

not acknowledge that actors, whoever they might be, are aware of themselves and of their environment; and deny that there is a dynamic internal mechanism of change at the micro-level. In other words, these explanations ignore values, history, and geography, as well as the humanistic tradition in social science.

Cohen and Leon's study sets out to provide an alternative explanation, based on historical perspective and empirical examination. The authors do not reject the structural explanations but rather seek to add a critical explanatory variable. By means of examining contemporary documents and interviewing politicians, they review the decision-making process of the Central Committee of Herut during the years 1965–1977. The authors found rich data, neglected by previous studies, that shed new light on the dynamic and unexpected nature of politics during this period.

To summarize briefly, during this period the administrative leaders of Herut initiated organizational reforms that reoriented the party toward decentralization. Behind this change was Yitzhak Shamir, then head of the Likud Administration Committee. In March 1977, Shamir initiated a program that abolished the old Ranking Committee, a small forum of members who had the authority to prepare the party's list of candidates for the Knesset, and shifted the power to a wider base of supporters. In sociological terms, this reform reduced the power of the old Ashkenazi group (largely veterans of Etzel and Lehi) and increased the power of activists representing lower-class Oriental Jews. At the moral level, that change produced a new model of partnership between the center and the periphery, which Cohen and Leon call "a model of competitive partnership" based on "meritocratic principles."

Through these reforms, many local activists, formerly far removed from power, gained genuine access to national politics. Well-known personalities, including David Levi, David Magen, Ovadia Eli, Shaul Amor, and Meir Sheetrit, were elected to the Knesset. The political change also led to a social change: since 1977, as part of the political leadership of the Likud, these national activists have promoted significant social mobility on behalf of Mizrachim. This political uprising, put in motion by leaders of Herut, became a vehicle that enabled many Mizrachim to join the Israeli middle class.

These findings may have important implications for evaluating voting results. Implicitly, Cohen and Leon maintain that support for the Likud by the Mizrachi lower class (assuming that politics means an exchange of resources, a give and take) does not reflect irrational or mistaken behavior, as some scholars have suggested, but rather a rational and reasonable strategy. These findings and the ensuing conclusions follow from a particular methodology and point of view: Cohen and Leon wish to move

toward subjectivization and historicization of the object of study. They appear to approach social research from a humanistic point of view, or at least to integrate social research within the humanistic tradition.

Nevertheless, as I demonstrate below, Cohen and Leon stop short of that goal. Shapiro, Peled, and Ram argued that the voting patterns of the Mizrachim are an outcome of manipulation or irrational politics, while Cohen and Leon argue the opposite. However, both groups are on common epistemological ground by denying and ignoring the cultural dimension. Thus, both have missed the political culture paradigm, in its deep, idealistic meaning, as a key factor in analyzing relationships between politics and society.

Political culture, as theorized by Aaron Wildavsky (1987), treats politics (parties, interests, power centers, coalitions, etc.) as a partially autonomous variable that is always bound up with culture (values, beliefs, traditions, collective memory, cosmological systems). This interdependence means that in analyzing any specific case we cannot use the power structure (which is based on universalistic principles) as the only explanatory variable.<sup>1</sup> We cannot talk about exchanging resources or give and take without any relation to cultural preconceptions or interpretations of the givers and takers. Methodologically, this means that we must address the particular meanings behind universal conceptions such as status, politics, interests, and resources.

To the best of my knowledge, the relationship of the Likud and the Mizrachim has not been studied using this theoretical approach. Nevertheless, there are some general studies that can provide some direction and insight for further research. It is well-known and well-documented that during the 1950s and until 1977, most Oriental Jews experienced ethnic antagonism and alienation under Mapai's political hegemony. All studies emphasize that the victory of the Likud in 1977 represented a reaction to this. But history cannot be understood merely as antagonistic push-and-pull factors.

In his study, *Nation Building or a New Society*, Zeev Sternhell (1995) discussed the differences between national Jewish movements in Europe and their non-Jewish roots. He noted that "[Jabotinsky] looked with compassion on the mass of Polish Jews who felt hostility toward Zionist pioneering movements that externalized contempt toward Yiddish culture and toward their religious way of life. It was not an accident that the time of the Revisionist party [later Herut] came when the great wave of Jewish Sephardic immigrants—who were sociologically similar to most Polish Jews—assumed their place in the State of Israel" (ibid.: 48; my translation). This reference indicates an important dimension that was operating while Herut was building a political culture profile. As opposed to the socialist

movements, the Herut movement did not share an anti-traditionalist attitude toward the Jewish masses, whether East European or North African.

This approach does not imply that analyzing contemporary socio-politics has nothing to do with political structures or the dynamics inherent in these structures (e.g., the exchange of resources, coalition building, and manipulation). But while considering that realm, we must also integrate cultural hierarchies and historical and geographical factors, and investigate whether political attitudes might reflect some core elements of the group identity. This dialectic makes the rational-irrational controversy somewhat irrelevant. Voting patterns always reflect, among other things, the price that groups and individuals are willing to pay for establishing their identity.

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## NOTES

1. Cohen and Leon, as well as Shapiro and others, use the concepts 'political culture' and 'political tradition'. However, in their studies, these terms appear with a different meaning, depicting political culture as a reflection of the power structure, implying that building a power structure leads at the same time to the reorganization of hierarchies and political traditions, and vice versa. The authors do not regard culture as an autonomous element—that is, they do not see it as carrying on a continuing dialogue with the objective structure.

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**Sharon Aronson-Lehavi**, ed. *Wanderers and Other Israeli Plays* (New York: Seagull Books, 2009), 362 pp., \$24.95 (paperback).

Israeli drama has been described in turn as the most neglected genre, the one that is the most reflective of society, and/or the most immediate of all art forms. It is, unsurprisingly, a very political art form. Aronson-Lehavi's anthology reflects the highly political nature of the theater and several of

the main trends that currently dominate the Israeli stage: the preoccupation with the Palestinian plight, fascination with the religious, and the shift toward performance art and experimental forms.

The introduction serves to set up the plays that follow. The artists represented include two of the more obvious choices—Hanoch Levin, for his lifetime contribution to the Israeli theater, and Joshua Sobol, one of the most prolific playwrights today—but with pieces not otherwise available in English translation. The collection also includes lesser-known playwrights and more women than one finds in most anthologies.

Sobol's play, the eponymous *Wanderers*, is a dialogue between two characters: "a scorched man" and a professional-dancer-turned-intelligence-officer. The man's work as a double agent infiltrating Palestinian society has left him shattered (or scorched). 'Bob' hires the woman 'Ana', ostensibly to make a coherent narrative of his boxes of shredded paper, but only belatedly is it revealed that she has been sent to cover him. They dance around each other, taking turns offending, apologizing, and taking offense. The reader/spectator needs to piece together the story in much the same way as the woman. On the one hand, this is a conventional drama about two people seeking meaning and personal connection who need this conversation in order to find themselves; on the other, it is specifically about Israel, examining the effects of the Israeli-Palestinian issue on the Israelis themselves.

Also in this first section, titled "Identities In/sides," are the plays *The Maiden of Ludmir: A Story of a Woman Who Asked for a Man's Soul*, by Yosefa Even-Shoshan, and *In Spitting Distance*, by Taher Najib. The former is based on a historical character, Hannah Rachel Verbermacher (1805–1888), one of the few women to take on the role of a rebbe in the Hasidic community. It recalls not only I. B. Singer's short story "Yentl" but also Yehudit Rotem's "Beruriah." While the play considers the nature of male and female relationships and roles, it is more about religion and its perverse power. The translation gives some sense of the "elevated poetic style" noted in the introduction, yet many of the allusions are lost. At the beginning of Israeli theater, a number of plays drew upon Jewish religious sources and history for material, but more recently drama has become an arena for meeting secular Israelis' heightened interest in the ultra-Orthodox community.

Taher Najib's monologue *In Spitting Distance* grows out of the actor-writer's attempt to fly back to Israel from France a year after 9/11. The play is rife with irony, much of which the speaker himself recognizes. As a security precaution, the airline delays his return so that he ends up flying on 11 September 2002. He leaves Ramallah in order not to get stuck there during the Second Intifada and so that he can get to Paris as planned—but instead he gets stuck in Paris. His trip to Paris is an exercise of free will,

but he is not free to leave when he chooses. As he walks through Ramallah to the theater in the first act, he asks: "Why do I struggle to get to the theater when the action is happening outside?" (130). The play raises questions of identity, free will, the purpose and effect of theater, and the essence of reality.

The second section of the anthology, "Mythical Landscapes," includes Hanoch Levin's *Those Who Walk in the Dark: A Late-Night Spectacle* and Tamir Greenberg's *Hebron*, the longest piece in the collection. Levin's play is, in many ways, vintage Levin: characters wander aimlessly, paralyzed by their hyper-self-consciousness and by the inability to make decisions, while dialogues are disconnected and communication unattainable. The humorous roles include four thoughts: foggy, vague, ass, and herring ("And the herring they forgot/I'll never be able to penetrate French culture") (182).

Where Levin's play is disconnected from place and time, Greenberg's play is firmly rooted in contemporary Hebron but harkens back to Greek tragedy in tone. The mythic dimension of Greenberg's landscape is created by the characters who represent nature: olive trees, Mother Earth, a warm spring day. The problem at the crux of the drama is the earth's 'refusal' to accept children for burial because of their mothers' oaths, vowing justice. Mother Earth spits up the bodies in a biblical reference (Leviticus 18:25, "the land vomited forth its inhabitants"). Two families, one Arab, one Jewish, are caught up in a storm of anger, violence, and revenge. Corpses pile up. The play unexpectedly ends on a note of hope when the Jewish family's young daughter and the Arab family's developmentally disabled son join forces with the orphan at the roadblock.

The collection's last section, "Performance on the Threshold," underscores the question of reading plays. The issue here is not so much literary versus performative (i.e., plays that are meant to be read versus plays that are meant to be performed) as it is prescriptive as opposed to descriptive—those that function as blueprints (however detailed) for directors and dramaturges, and those that describe an actual performance.

*Disgust*, by Ruth Kanner, stretches the genre of documentary. It is drawn from interviewing people about what disgusts them—a question that is inferred. A variety of characters are represented by different dress. The reader can only imagine how confusing it might be to the spectator when the stage directions state that the actor does not have time to change clothing. Yet the characters as such are less important as individuals. While many of the answers are the visceral, universal responses of the unclean, the inedible, or the infectious (cockroaches, smells, food taboos), some are specific to the individual (sex, hairiness), and others are learned prejudices (Arabs, Russians, homosexuals). This work is not only an exploration of a basic human emotion but also a commentary on contemporary Israel.

The play concludes, somewhat perplexingly, with performances by a ballet dancer and violist—perhaps as the antithesis of disgust (interestingly, both recall the end of Sobol’s play)—and with biblical verses about leprosy. It is at such moments that one wonders if seeing a play, rather than reading it, would render the conclusion easier to interpret.

*Old Wives’ Tales: Rise Woman and Make Us a Cake* is further subtitled *A Play with Recipes*. More descriptive than prescriptive, we have a record of this piece created by Tamar Raban and Guy Gutman. It was performed in a bakery built in the Central Bus Station in Tel Aviv just for the occasion. As a concession to print, the script includes recipes, as it would not be cost-effective to bundle the book with freshly baked cream puffs. Although the most experimental in form, it makes use of traditional material: the play stitches together a number of fairy tales and folk songs or poems from around the world, including the Irish tale that lends the work its title. This approach challenges the very basis of theater—that drama shows, while storytelling tells. The collaborative nature of theater, and of the baking that the spectators see before them, contributes to the idea of creating community.

The editor’s introduction sews the plays together as employing “the dramatic metaphor of walking, transition, or passing by” and claims that in each “a liminal space emerges” that allows tragedy or hope. While one might differ with her judgments of “dramatic quality, stylistic innovativeness, and universal appeal” (xiii), this collection offers a wonderful slice of Israeli drama presented in the last 15 years. Anthologies such as this help make the genre and the culture more accessible to the reading and academic public.

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**Shalom Goldman**, *Zeal for Zion: Christians, Jews, and the Idea of the Promised Land* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 384 pp., \$35.00 (hardback).

Shalom Goldman’s *Zeal for Zion* tells the story of Zionism in an unusual way. Zionism here is not presented as a discourse and endeavor of Jews alone. Instead, from its beginnings to the present, Goldman sees highly influential Christians engaged in the promotion of Zionist theory and practice. Three chapters are dedicated to individual Christian supporters of Zionism prior to the foundation of the state: Alice and Laurence Oliphant, the Reverend William Hechler, and the rabbinic scholar Herbert Danby. Three other chapters

look at broader phenomena of Christian support for the Jewish state during the second half of the twentieth century, such as the papal visits to Jerusalem, literary figures in support of Israel, and the Christian fundamentalist identification with the Gush Emunim movement. Each chapter effectively stands on its own and can be read and understood independently.

Goldman's portraits of the early Christian supporters of Zionism (the Oliphants, Hechler, and Danby) are well-written and full of interesting details. Danby's early plea for a Christian understanding of contemporary Judaism based on rabbinic literature, instead of the Hebrew Bible alone, has still not lost its relevance in the twenty-first century. The close cooperation between Theodor Herzl and Hechler is certainly not a fact presented in Israeli textbooks. Their very concrete political collaboration—Hechler helped arrange for Herzl to meet with Kaiser Wilhelm II—was not at all disturbed by their very different kinds of Zionism.

Does Goldman see this model repeated in the present by Jewish settlers who are not disturbed by the end-time ideas of the fundamentalist Christians supporting them? The arrangement of the book, which closes with the chapter on contemporary fundamentalist Christian Zionism, suggests that he does. Clearly, Goldman presents Christian Zionism as reflecting a continuity of Christian support for Jewish statehood in Palestine, and he does not fundamentally differentiate between Christian support for statehood and for the settler's movement. Although Goldman mentions non-missionary Christian theologians and liberal literati who are supportive of Israel—such as Marcel Dubois, Cardinal Kasper and Jorge Luis Borges—his book emphasizes the prototype of the Christian Zionist pursuing a Christian agenda rather than sympathizing with Judaism in its own right.

But it is the recognition of Judaism as Judaism that epitomizes mainstream Christian views in the last third of the twentieth century and certainly the story of the Catholic Church since Vatican II (despite some recent setbacks). The chapter dedicated to the papal visits to Jerusalem in 1964 and 2000 could have helped to explicate the fundamental changes that have taken place in the Catholic understanding of Judaism, especially as Goldman does refer to the Second Vatican Council and its most famous document, *Nostra Aetate*. But the Christian attitude toward Jewish statehood is not analyzed in the context of the complex theological approach to Judaism and its revolutionary changes.

Thus, the main conceptual problem of the present book is that the model of Christian support for the State of Israel is that of a Christian fundamentalist with a missionary agenda. While the loud support of the settlements by fundamentalist American Christians underscores this characterization, recent developments in the relationship of the Jewish state and the Catholic Church (still the world's largest Christian denomination) tells a very

different story. Here, it was the Church's recognition of the theological validity of Judaism that paved the way for the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Jewish state. And it is precisely this recognition of the legitimacy of Judaism that has led the Catholic Church to refrain from missionary activity directed at Jews.

No doubt there are continuities to be found between Christians supporting the Jewish return to Zion at both the beginning and end of the twentieth century. But using the same label—Christian Zionist—for individual Christians who opposed anti-Semitism in the 1930s, on the one hand, and for members of a fundamentalist movement engaged in calculating end-time scenarios, on the other, is historically and politically problematic. The question is, how much does a Christian scholar of rabbinics like Danby, who advocated for the rights of Jews amid violent anti-Semitic upheaval, really have in common with contemporary Christians who deny any human rights of Palestinians?

Goldman's book tells a fascinating story of Christian Zionism that thoroughly undermines the myth of Zionism as a solely Jewish endeavor. Although *Zeal for Zion* is not the first such account, its clarity and rich detail make it one of the best. Where it falters is in its too narrowly conceived characterization of Jewish-Catholic relations in regard to Zionism. Despite this conceptual deficiency, this volume is highly recommended to Jewish as well as Christian readers, and especially to Israelis.

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