Introduction

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> The Jews as a people, are defined by their religion which is distinctive among the world religions in its territorial focus on *Eretz Yisrael* the [promised] Land of Israel. Yet the people themselves . . . have been de-territorialized through the millennia. Now that they have restored themselves to the primordial territory (or part of it), the question arises: how are they to behave *there*? (Paine 1989:123).

PLACE AND PROBLEMATICS

The chapters in this volume represent attempts to examine processes associated with constructing what has variously been called "The Holy Land," "*Eretz Israel*," "Zion," "Palestine," or "Israel." More specifically, this book focuses on the ways in which the landscapes of Israel figure in creating and re-creating the identity, presence, and history of groups living there. By landscapes we mean the systems of socially constructed spaces "superimposed" upon and, in effect, constituting the "land" (Jackson 1984:8). Why the focus on space and place, on land and locations? A brief history of our own intellectual interests may explicate the reasons for choosing this theme of inquiry, and set out the implications of the book as a whole and of each contribution found within it.

Our own preoccupation with Israeli spaces and places developed out of a confluence of intellectual and personal interests. Upon completing a Ph.D. thesis on Japanese white-collar communities (written in England), Ben-Ari returned to Israel and felt a need to join his research interests with a commitment to studying 'things Israeli.' One outcome of this commitment has been an ongoing project on social and cultural aspects of the Israeli army (Ben-Ari 1989; Feige and Ben-Ari 1991). Bilu, for his part, had since the beginning of his academic career dealt with aspects of Israeli society,

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specifically with the folk psychology of healing among Israelis of North African origin (Bilu 1986; Bilu and Abramovich 1985). But he, too, sensed the need to deal with some of the wider issues implied by this work. As a consequence we decided to undertake a joint project on the southern development town of Netivot, which we discuss in more detail below. Soon we began teaching a joint research seminar on the "Sanctification of Space in Israel," and to establish contacts with other scholars who seemed to have intellectual interests similar to or bordering on ours. Later we organized two panels at one of the annual meetings of the Israel Anthropological Association on the same subject. Indeed, we were often as surprised at the intense curiosity people showed in our project, as we were at the large number of scholars—based in such fields as sociology, political science, history, literature, folklore, or Jewish thought—who were dealing with space and place in Israel.

Between 1986 and 1989 we carried out fieldwork in Netivot: the gravesite of a renowned Jewish Moroccan rabbi called Rabbi Israel Abu-Hatzeira (diminutive—Baba Sali), which is a major center of activity for the thriving cults of saint worship among North African Jews in Israel (Ben-Ami 1984; Weingrod 1990). Our initial aims were to document and analyze the development of this holy site and to compare it to the rise of similar places in Israel (Bilu and Ben-Ari, 1992; Ben-Ari and Bilu, chap. 3 of this volume). Yet, as we carried out fieldwork, we gradually became aware of a phenomenon we had only been dimly conscious of before. People, and at times the same people, talked about Netivot and what they associated with it in different, often contrasting voices. For instance, we often found that people would speak about the town in "traditional" North African terms as the locus of a saint's tomb bearing special powers, while at other times they would characterize it as being the heart of "superstitionland," a setting for "primitive" beliefs and practices. Other informants discussed Netivot in terms of the sacred geography of holy places in *Eretz Israel* (the Land of Israel), while at the same time evoking images of the development town as the product of the Zionist initiative of developing and settling Israel's southern desert.

While such representations are obviously related to how the "reputational content" (Suttles 1984) of Netivot is promoted or besmirched, their import seems to go beyond the local. We found that people inside and outside the town used Netivot or the sacred site as mediums for talking about or evoking images of themselves and Israel. Through discussing this specific place, and its attendant qualities, people were constantly advancing or denigrating certain visions of what Israel is like and what it should be like. To give two examples, the characterization of the town as the "Bnei Berak of the Negev" (Bnei Berak being a city heavily populated by ultrareligious Jews) or of the gravesite as the "Southern Wailing Wall" is a vehicle for simultaneously commenting about growing religiosity in Israel, about a greater respect for

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religious pluralism (at least in its 'ethnic' guise), about a positive valuation of these trends, and about Netivot being an exemplar of this whole process.

Our increased awareness of these points led to more general questions: Are discussions about and criticisms of Israel through talk about land and locations not a pervasive quality of Israeli society? Could a focus on discourses of space and place provide fruitful entry points for analyses of wider cultural processes unfolding in this country? During the initial stages of our project we attempted to answer these questions by drawing upon the vast literature written about Judaism, the Israeli-Arab conflict, and especially Zionism. Here, however, we increasingly found that what was needed was a kind of "defamiliarization" with some of the assumptions and analytical approaches at the base of these works.

According to much of this 'received' intellectual wisdom, the centrality of land and of place is part and parcel of the "traditional"—or what is perceived by many Zionists to be the pre-Zionist—Jewish ethos. The best-known examples brought to confirm this view are the plethora of prayers that emphasize the close connection between the "people of Israel" and the "Land of Israel." Yet this linkage is also said to be evident in the preeminence of people and places in such sources of Jewish thought as the Bible, the Talmud (commentaries and codes of law), fables and popular lore, the Midrash (exegeses of the Scriptures), and the Kabbalah (the mystical tradition in Judaism), as well as works of poetry, philosophy, and interpretation of the Middle Ages (Schweid 1979). Within these sources, it is argued, *Eretz Israel* (the Land of Israel) has repeatedly figured as a place to long for, to make pilgrimage to, or to die and be buried in.

The preoccupation with space has also taken pride of place in portrayals of the Israeli-Arab and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. These struggles have very often been depicted as competition over places, locations, and land. Thus, not surprisingly, most analyses carried out by political scientists, political sociologists, or experts in international relations have focused on issues of resources and territoriality. A good example is Kimmerling's important work (1982, 1983), which highlights the variety of patterns of control over territory. Within Israel this approach (heavily clothed in neo-Marxist jargon) has been at the heart of Hasson's efforts (1981) to map and analyze how spatial inequalities are related to disparities of political, social, and economic resources.

Capping and reinforcing these diverse emphases has been a very wide scholarly consensus about the pivotal role of the land in Zionism (Schweid 1979). To summarize somewhat crudely, one central role of Zionism has been establishing a national homeland—a Jewish state with all of its territorial and political qualities—for the Jewish people. Yet as we continued our readings we found that the way in which this 'role' has been discussed in

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more recent studies seemed to offer a more complex, critical approach to the questions we had formulated. As Liebman and Don-Yehiya (1983:3–4) put it:

> The primacy Zionist-socialism gave to agricultural labor stemmed from the bond between man and nature and the redemption of the nation and its homeland, which found their most forceful symbolization in *working the land*. This was the antithesis of the "exilic" way of life. The return to nature was appropriate to a people returning to its own land. . . . A recurrent metaphor in the Zionist-socialist literature was the plant that returns to the soil of the homeland, strikes roots and blossoms anew.

What we found interesting in Liebman and Don-Yehiya's work were their insights into the essentially metaphorical nature and the fundamentally contested quality of various discourses about land. Realizing this point, we continued to ask ourselves whether a change of theoretical focus was not called for. Should we not begin by questioning the very assumption of the centrality of land and place in various Jewish and Jewish Israeli discourses? Could we not benefit from an approach that problematizes the manner by which such concepts as site and space, or "Israel" and the "Holy Land" are used for a variety of ends?

Recently a number of studies have attempted to provide a sustained answer to these questions. Let us briefly cite three such instances, two by other scholars and the third our own. The first example is the work carried out by Katriel and Shenhar (1991) on the discourse of "Tower and Stockade" (*Homa U-Migdal*). As they show, Israel, like many newly established nation-states, has been the site of ongoing efforts to invent and legitimate "new" traditions; that is, sets of cultural forms and practices that provide, inter alia, storified versions of past events that stand as models for collective action (Katriel and Shenhar 1991:376; see also Shamgar-Handelman and Handelman 1986). In this respect, acts of settlement, including but not exclusively those of the "Tower and Stockade" variety, and the rhetoric of place attending them, have been at the heart of Israel's nation-building ethos. As Katriel and Shenhar show, within the parameters of this kind of discourse cultural members portray—and in this way come to regard—themselves as participating in the making of history. Such specific acts as establishing a new kibbutz or a development town are characterized as part of a collective effort to "fix" a link to the land. In this way the rhetoric of place and the rhetoric of action become so intimately intertwined in the discourse of Zionism that "establishing settlements" and "being active agents" come to mean the same thing (Katriel and Shenhar 1991). Indeed, we would further argue that this is as true of the early Zionists (Cohen 1977) as it is of such con-

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temporaries as *Gush Emunim* (Aran 1991), Jerusalem's Teddy Kollek, and (in a curious way) Baba Baruch (Baba Sali's heir) in Netivot. In all these cases the emphasis is on "making" or "creating" Israel on two analytically distinct levels: through transforming the country's actual landscape—by building, assembling, and creating "facts"—and through actualizing one of the Israeli Jewish culture's "key scenarios" (Ortner 1973; Katriel and Shenhar 1991:376).

Our second example is the work carried out by Hannan Hever (1987, 1989), who has dealt with the cultural and political implications of literary work produced in Hebrew by Israeli Arabs such as Anton Shammas. Included in a range of examples that Hever provides is a fascinating story by Emile Habibi about street and place-names in Haifa (a city in the north of Israel that was until 1948 heavily populated by Arabs). The power of the story lies in making "us" (Israeli Jews) question the taken-for-granted geographical appellations that are part of our "common" public knowledge (for example, we refer not to Halsa but to Kiriyat Shemona [a development town], not to Malcha but to Manachat [a Jerusalem neighborhood], and no longer to the Masmiya intersection [of highways] but to the Mesubin intersection). Habibi does this through juxtaposing the 'new' Hebrew and the 'old' Arab names. But because this is done by someone who lives among us—in Israel and at the present time—and in a book written in our language and published by one of our leading publishing houses, the effect is jarring.

By sharpening our awareness of the uneasiness that such works evoke in many Israeli Jews, and especially among members of Israel's literary establishment, Hever has shown how these works of prose and poetry question political assumptions underlying Israeli public discourse: the view of Hebrew literature as a Jewish national literature, and through that the unstated assumption about the link between language and territory (Hever 1987:73). Arabs writing in Hebrew—and critics like Hever—can be seen as contributing to a process of linguistic deterritorialization. They challenge the assumed coincidence of the Hebrew language, its Jewish subject matter, and its "natural" location within the geopolitical boundaries of Israel.

The third instance we would like to cite relates to the way place has found new ways of expression within the past decade or so. Since the late 1970s Israel has witnessed a renaissance of gatherings for *shira-betzibur* (singalongs). At these assemblies, which are held throughout the country, well-known songs out of a core body of a few hundred pieces are sung to the accompaniment of small bands or accordion or piano players. Many of these occasions are broadcast on Israeli radio and television. Shokeid (1988:104) discusses his reactions to these programs (in a book devoted ironically to *yordim*, Israelis who have left Israel only to dote upon those very things they have left). He notes something that may be characteristic of many Israeli

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Jews in general. For him, the programs evoked a "nostalgia for a different Israel than that of my own urban upbringing. It was Israel as depicted on posters, untainted by the harsh realities of mounting economic, political, and social problems." What is significant for us in this context is that these programs are almost always broadcast from kibbutzim or from studios that have been arranged to represent rural scenery, to represent agricultural settlements. This is mirrored in the contents and origins of the songs, most of which were written during, and depict, the period when the Israeli ethos of pioneering was most closely associated with rural settlements.

Within this kind of depiction, we would argue, rural localities are seen as a sort of repository of the past, of ideals and of "tradition." The portrayal of past or peripheral places thus serves to remind many Israelis of how things used to be and of how they should be. This Israeli nostalgia 'boom,' however, clouds the relationship between the local and the national (see Kelly 1986). It places sing-alongs within particular or specific localities but then decontextualizes them in the service of more general emphases on how folk songs represent notions of the Israeli people. To put this somewhat coarsely, for television viewers or radio listeners it matters less that the program takes place in specific places like Beit Alpha, Yagur, or Negba (all kibbutzim) than that these places represent a more generalized notion of what kind of place a kibbutz is.

RUPTURED CULTURES

By raising such issues, this volume extends and develops recent social scientific inquiries into notions of space and place. Recent studies in anthropology and related disciplines well underline the contested—essentially labile and political—nature of spatial identities (Cohen 1986; McDonogh 1991; Bendix 1992). According to this set of approaches, such identities are no longer conceptualized as a given but rather as an assortment of typifications and images that are constantly negotiated and struggled over (Cooke 1990; Watts 1992). The thrust of such studies has been to question the distinctiveness of societies, nations, and cultures as based on some kind of unproblematic division of space; to interrogate the "fact" that they occupy naturally discontinuous spaces. Indeed, it is "so taken for granted that each country embodies its own distinctive culture and society that the terms 'society' and 'culture' are routinely simply appended to the names of nation-states, as when a tourist visits India to understand 'Indian culture' and 'Indian society' (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:7). Thus to take off from Gupta and Ferguson's evocative formulation, the aim of this volume is to expand current discussions about "the rupture of independent states and autonomous cultures." We do so by recognizing that space and place are central organizing

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principles in all complex societies, but also by framing our principal task as one of making problematical the very "naturalness" of such principles. Two kinds of naturalisms are challenged in this respect (Malkki 1992): the first is the anthropological convention of taking the association of a culturally unitary group (the "tribe" or "people") and "its" territory as natural; the second naturalism is the national practice of taking the association of citizens and states and their territories as natural (see Handler 1988; Wright 1985).

This problematization does not only entail (as is the current fashion in anthropology) a matter of producing new kinds of ethnographic texts. An introduction of more sophisticated self-criticism and a greater openness to more flexible methodologies and literary possibilities in ethnographic writing does not imply shirking an analysis of the world out there. To do so would, to put this by way of caricature, lead to a 'navel' anthropology. As Strathern (1987:279) puts it,

> We must, as anthropologists, monitor ourselves. But the world is not entirely composed of anthropologists. Whether we like to or not, our ethnographic subjects continue to play an externalizing role in the judgements of others. This is a political fact with which our communications—not least among ourselves—must deal.

To reiterate, we argue not for a simple concern with new modes of textual experimentation and the creation of spaces for the voices of our various others: "the politics of otherness is not reducible to a politics of representation" (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:17). Rather, we identify a need to address through our work the extratextual roots of the issues we have singled out for analysis.

Along the lines we have just outlined, the chapters presented in this volume suggest a shift of focus from strictly political, geographical, or ideological emphases to an exploration of dimensions hitherto relatively little discussed in writings about Israel. More specifically we propose to go beyond the analysis of specific areas or locations, and ask questions about the manner by which settlement and settlements, sites and territory, figure in different discourses within and about Israel. Our assumption is that the salience of phenomena associated with space is "seized upon" by a variety of groups, commentators, and thinkers in order to promote or denigrate certain visions they have of this society.

At the risk of overstressing disciplinary differences, let us state clearly that our approach is anthropological rather than historical or sociological. We mean by this—following Lofgren (1987:77)—that our level of generalization does not primarily concern the distribution of cultural forms over space and time. Our aim is to generalize about the cultural processes that produce variations in form. This assertion implies (1) that atypical cases have analytical

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value beyond their place in the search for frequencies; and (2) that the prime analytical focus is on such phenomena as categories of classification, on bases of identity, or on 'imaginings of community' (Anderson 1983).

Thus, this volume attempts to make a more general point regarding the anthropology of Israel. Anthropological discussions of this society, like similar studies carried out in other complex societies (Lofgren 1989), have long been dominated by analyses placed at the level of villages and neighborhoods, of communities and subcultures, or of 'ethnic' and 'minority' groups. Only rarely have anthropological inquiries focused on a grander scale to ask questions about the wider processes that keep parts of this society together or separate them. Indeed, for many decades the anthropology of Israel was heavily influenced by the British tradition of community studies, which was guided by the assumption that a picture of the total society could be created by the addition and juxtaposition of series of local studies (Lofgren 1987:75). Once such example is Deshen's attempt (1982) to create a typology of urban settlements on the basis of ethnographic case studies published in the previous decade.

Since the early 1980s, however, an increasing number of scholars have begun to tackle such issues as the root metaphors that stand at the base of Israeli culture (Katriel 1986; Dolev-Gandelman 1987), the central narratives that figure in the construction of collective meanings (Bruner and Gorfain 1984; Schwartz et al. 1986), and the conceptions of "peoplehood" that underlie various views of what being Israeli entails (Goldberg 1985; Dominguez 1989). These studies all proceed from the realization that a fuller understanding of Israel and 'things Israeli' necessitates making problematical commonplace, everyday cultural notions and conceptions. The chapters presented here, and which follow from these studies, attempt to problematize the taken-for-granted realities of Israeli space and place. It is in this spirit that we turn to the chapters.

A word about the arrangement of the chapters. In general, we have intended the sequence to represent a set of wider analytical movements. By beginning with a motion from cases located outside Israel (Levy and Goldberg) to a case dealing with Israel's periphery (Ben-Ari and Bilu) we underscore the importance of border regions and border-crossings in laying bare the fiction of cultures as discrete phenomena. Next, by relocating to the mainstream or center of Israeli Jewish society (Handelman and Shamgar-Handelman, Ben-David, and Katriel), we offer an analysis of the very assumptions upon which much of contemporary research has proceeded. The next two chapters lead out again to both the most conflictual issue at the heart of contested spaces in Israel (Rabinowitz) and finally to the most general deconstruction of the Israeli Jewish conception of space (Gurevitch). In this manner we hope to underscore how the questioning of the received wisdom (both academic and

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popular) about boundaries and places is at the heart of more obvious transnational phenomena such as pilgrimages, as it is the analytical examination of the seemingly most stable of concepts, Israel as *the* place of the Jewish and Palestinian peoples. The final piece (Boyarin), situated as it were outside the geographical, cultural, and academic boundaries of Israel, serves to further challenge us as editors and to raise further questions for readers.

THE CHAPTERS

The first chapter is André Levy's "To Morocco and Back: Tourism and Pilgrimage among Moroccan-Born Israelis." During most of Israel's history, many Israeli Jews have been barred from countries from which they originated. In the past few years, however, as relations with some Arab states have thawed and as Eastern European countries have opened up, many Israelis have begun to visit their birthplaces. This chapter is an analysis of one such voyage, a search for identity in a place geographically—and in a sense also temporally—distant. It is based on fieldwork carried out when the author accompanied a group of Moroccan-born Israelis on what can be described as a part pilgrimic voyage and part tourist excursion back to their land of birth. When the group left Israel, these people thought of Morocco as an integral part, in a sense as the 'real' part, of their identity. But what Levy found was a paradox: people discovered their Israeli-ness in Morocco. They had, as it were, to go back in time (to their previous 'selves') and away in space (to contemporary Jews and Muslims in Morocco) to discover how Israeli they had become.

In this respect Levy's contribution raises a number of points that merit mention. The first has to do with the complexity inherent in constructing Israeli identities. By carefully showing the variety of arenas in which the Israelis interact with Muslims in Morocco, he shows how the identities of each group shift with each context. For example, in the cemetery, Jews take a subordinate position vis-à-vis the king, while he himself (in their eyes) takes an inferior position in relation to Jewish saints. In the marketplace, however, as an outcome of their greater purchasing power—and, in a subtle way, as a consequence of Israel's military power—Israelis can invert their older (i.e., preimmigration) status of junior partner. At the same time, these relations are saturated with a deep-seated ambivalence: the Israeli Jews are at one and the same time sure and unsure of themselves, threatened and threatening. In this portrayal, then, Israeli identity is no longer static (or even a set of fixed "entities"), but something that constantly shifts and moves, open to negotiation and full of contradictions.

Levy's analysis—and this is the second point—poses another question mark in regard to discussions of Israeli society—specifically, the unquestioned

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assumption at the base of many studies that there is an isomorphism between the geopolitical boundaries of the state and its social and cultural limits (Kimmerling 1989). Levy's contribution should thus be seen alongside Shokeid's research (1988) on *yordim* in the sense of arguing for a reconceptualization of Israeli culture. This culture—without assuming too much about its unitary nature—could thus better be understood, we would propose, as a set of negotiated symbols and meanings that cross and travel across national boundaries. In this processual view, gone are the older theoretical concerns with system boundaries (Murphy 1990:333). To put this by way of example, just as it is possible to gain a richer appreciation of the variety of experiences entailed in being Israeli through visiting their hangouts in New York, so it may be possible to learn something about Israeli-ness in contemporary Morocco.

The next chapter, "Gravesites and Memorials of Libyan Jews: Alternative Versions of the Sacralization of Space in Judaism" is by Harvey Goldberg. The case Goldberg focuses on involves the Jewish cemetery in Tripoli over which the contemporary Libyan authorities decided, a few years ago, to build a road. In response, a group of Libyan Jews resolved to build commemorative plaques honoring the graveyard both in Italy (Rome) and in Israel. By concentrating on the experience of one (rather unique) individual, Goldberg shows how people can—in contrast to many of the assumptions upon which modern states are predicated—hold to a set of nonexclusive national identities. He does this through showing how this individual has created a set of metaphors in which Israel is his 'fatherland,' while Italy and Libya are his 'motherlands.' In this way he seems both to accommodate and to question the very notion (basic to Zionism) of the exclusivity of Israeli identity.

In setting up the memorial plaques the Libyan Jews seem to link—to prefigure a theme we return to shortly—their autobiographical, personal action to history. Yet this action bears wider significance, for it raises the issue of the interrelationship between Israel and the Jewish diaspora. As Breckenridge and Appadurai (1989:i) note, diasporas are movements of peoples and experiences that leave trails of collective memories about other places and other times, and in this way create new maps of desire and attachment.

> Diasporas, like pilgrimages, military campaigns and diseases, are indifferent to the idiosyncracies of nation-states and often flow through their cracks and exploit their vulnerabilities. They are thus a testimony to the inherent fragility of the links between people, polity and territory and to the negotiability of the relationship between people and place (Breckenridge and Appadurai 1989:i).

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In this regard, Goldberg's chapter suggests something Israeli Jews do not readily admit. If we realize that the Jews he writes of have *chosen* to settle in Rome after their banishment, and that they long for Libya as well as Israel, the notions of 'home' and of 'belonging' are no longer the preserve of Israel. He raises, in their words, the possibility that for many aspects of Jewish attachment Israel may not be necessary at all.

The third contribution is our own composition, "Saints' Sanctuaries in Israeli Development Towns: On a Mechanism of Urban Transformation." In this chapter we examine the reemergence of sacred sites of Jewish saints in a number of Israeli development towns. In focusing on these towns our chapter highlights a type of urban settlement that is often viewed by Israelis with a mixture of condescension, mild disdain, and paternalistic concern (Goldberg 1984:7). We maintain that the appearance of these saints' sanctuaries is rooted in North African 'folk' religiosity and reflects a strengthening of attachment of people to "their" places. This phenomenon is related to what may be termed an internal Israeli cultural debate centering on its identity as a 'Middle Eastern' society. On one level, the continued existence and personal relevance of saints' cults bespeak of a persisting affinity between the beliefs and practices of North African Jews in Israel and similar tenets and rites among our Islamic neighbors (Gellner 1969; Geertz 1968). This similarity has led Cohen (1983:123–24) to characterize saint worship as part of a larger process by which Israel is undergoing "demodernization."

> The re-emergence of saint cults can be interpreted as a sign of symbolic 'diasporization' of Israel: the country . . . loses much of its precedence and special status as the Holy Land and universal center, and is seen increasingly as just another state, though governed by Jews. The spiritual life of North African Jews is consequently re-assimilated to that which has characterized its diaspora past.

The use of such terms as "demodernization" and "diasporization" is indicative of the distress many Ashkenazi intellectuals like Cohen feel in face of the regeneration of saints' cults. Indeed, this cultural elite, placed as it is at a cultural and ethnic distance from these phenomena, has reacted to them with a compound of contempt and wonder, and dread and fascination (Shohat 1992). But could these reactions, we would ask, have to do with the perceived "Arab" nature of saints' cults and of this version of Jewish folk religiosity? Are such responses indicative of the fear that Israel is becoming "just another" Middle Eastern country?

These questions bring us to the next suggestion: while elegant, Cohen's thesis is still too simple. The strengthening of saint worship does not appear to be a unidimensional or unidirectional process of diasporization. Such

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practices should also be understood as part of the "Israelization" of the Jewish diaspora. In focusing their attention on soliciting contributions from a variety of Jewish communities (in Israel and outside of it), the people who have set up saints' tombs follow paths well trodden by many of the country's Zionist leaders. In seeking to change Israel's landscape by erecting various tombs and synagogues for the saints, such people act in accord with the Zionist ethos. According to this view, then, have these 'saints' entrepreneurs not adopted many of the assumptions of wider Israeli public culture to simply become people like "us"?

The fourth chapter, written by Don Handelman and Lea Shamgar-Handelman, is entitled "The Presence of Absence: The Memorialism of National Death in Israel." Their contribution is about the relationships between the presence or absence of the body of the dead and the visual representation of death on the surface of the land. They single out three different landscapes of national sacrifice for analysis: military cemeteries, military memorials and monuments, and the Holocaust Memorial (in Jerusalem). In more general terms their contribution focuses on the manner by which death is appropriated by the Israeli state for the purpose of creating collective memories within its territory. To use Boyarin's terms (1991b), they show how problematic it is for the state to map history onto territory.

We find that this chapter represents one of a very few sustained and systematic anthropological attempts in Israel to discuss the way in which a geopolitical space is transformed into a nationwide cultural space, a space of national sharing. What is of significance in this respect is the place of death, especially military death, in the construction of national sharing. While a long line of scholars have intuited the central place of the military and military action in legitimating the Israeli state, few studies have attempted to go beyond polemical declarations to show just how this is effected. The authors demonstrate that implicated in military death and sacrifice are a number of elements that resonate with—that is, make sense and stir the emotions of—Israeli Jews. At one and the same time, we find in military deaths a contrast to the Holocaust and the 'exilic' way of life it represents, and in military memorialization a stress on uniquely 'Israeli' style and values (e.g., absence of large amounts or a stress on uniformity and equality). Thus the authenticity of the military graves—reinforced by the presence of the body—is one way in which the state appeals to various unquestioned beliefs and emotions among Israeli Jews (for another, still rather exceptional example, see Rubin 1984–85).

This is no mean point, for it leads us to the question of the place of landscapes—particular arrangements of features such as buildings or gardens—in the creation of a national sharing. The force of landscapes lies, the authors suggest, in their ability both to embody (i.e., give concrete form to) concepts

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and to serve as a means for triggering emotions and sentiments. Handelman and Shamgar-Handelman's analysis thus suggests the importance of the nondiscursive, the sensuous, or the experiential in the creation of a national cultural space. This point is related to an issue hitherto largely ignored by the recent spate of excellent studies dealing with the logic and root metaphors of Israeli culture. These studies have tended to neglect the experiential and performative. What is suggested by the chapter written by Handelman and Shamgar-Handelman is the possibility of linking the powerful tools developed in regard to the analysis of performance and experience (by such people as Turner 1985) with discourse analysis. Such a linkage may enrich both. We thus may be able to employ theoretical concepts to understand the power of landscapes and such performances as pilgrimages or hikes, and to uncover the rich layers of meaning found in public discourse. This stress on the experiential leads us, in turn, to the next contribution.

Orit Ben-David's "*Tiyul* (Hike) as an Act of Consecration of Space" discusses hikes organized by the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel. Ben-David shows that these hikes can be understood as combining two aspects: the ritualistic and the taxonomic. The ritualistic aspect of the hikes is evident in their contemporary expression of valued actions found in earlier versions of Zionism: on actualization (*hagshama*) of a link to the land. Thus she suggests that for many Israelis hikes are a means for 'marking' territory and for declaring ownership of the land. In other words, hikes, like similar rituals found the world over, are means for effecting a legitimate connection between people and land.

But Ben-David is not content with this aspect of the hikes, adding a series of rather intriguing suggestions about their taxonomic aspect. Through the hikes, she argues, the land is not expropriated, as a simple political reading of Israel would have it, from some enemy but rather from society. The redemption of the land (*geulat ha-aretz*), a central tenet of Zionism, is not a redemption from the hands of another people but, according to this version of Israeli-ness, from the unrestrained use of civilization. If it is indeed true that the *tiyul* is a means of returning the land from "culture" to "nature," then today's Zionism, while ostensibly using 'old' jargon and symbols, actually presents a radical departure from that of the past. Ben-David does not state so explicitly, but we would suggest that her analysis shows how certain groups in contemporary Israel are motivated by ideas found in any 'normal' Western society. By this we mean the simple, if hardly acknowledged, fact of Israeli groups like the Greens in Europe, which deal with environmental issues and attempt to re-create romantic versions of 'natural' places (Cotgrove 1976). We realize that such a reading flies in the face of many intellectual stereotypes of Israel, but we do think it important to recognize the cultural implications of Israel as 'just' another consumer or postconsumer society

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(Birenbaum-Carmeli 1994). It may be ironic (and this is our point, not Ben-David's) that *at times* Israelis are so sure of themselves, so sure of their ownership of the land, that they can turn to the protection and conservation of nature.

"Remaking Place: Cultural Production in Israeli Pioneer Settlement Museums" is the title of Tamar Katriel's chapter. The word "remaking" captures attempts in contemporary Israel to advance certain versions of history by creating anew, by reconstructing 'old' places. The case she discusses involves the plethora of museums now being built to commemorate and to celebrate the country's socialist-Zionist past and the values associated with this past. As she shows, the construction of museums should be seen in the context of history-making practices that inevitably construct selective interpretations of the past.

For many years British and American anthropologies were overwhelmingly preoccupied with the study of peoples placed outside their countries' geopolitical boundaries. Israeli anthropologists, by contrast, have studied their own society almost to the exclusion of others. But the objects they have studied have been—like those of their British and American counterparts—esoteric, exotic 'others': new immigrants, ethnic groups (read Jews from Arabic-speaking lands), or minorities (Arabs or Druze, for example). Katriel's study, like Ben-David's, however, deals with a different group—with "us," the mainly Ashkenazi middle class. In focusing our attention on the largest but as yet little-studied category of 'regular' Israelis, she prefigures, we think, a major scholarly effort that will characterized Israeli anthropology and the anthropology of Israel in the coming few years.

An analysis of museums raises the question, being asked increasingly in anthropological circles, about the relationship between the disciplines of anthropology and folklore, and organized and institutionalized power. By carefully examining how one such museum is organized, Katriel shows its power to engender certain experiences among visitors. These experiences—often containing a set of unstated and unexamined messages—are important because it is through them that the organizers of the museum try to establish their claims to truth. The picture that emerges is, as Herzfeld (1987:13) suggests in regard to modern museums, that of a highly regulated and organized folklorism that creates images of spontaneity and naivete in order to base its claim about the importance of the exhibited material. In this sense Katriel's contribution shows how a cultural analysis can be linked to political economy: to the interests behind discourses and the construction of experiences. The objectifications of space and place in museums are not only about 'symbolic' collective identities; they are simultaneously semiotic and political (Dominguez 1989).

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Of no less importance are the contents of what is being represented in the museum. This point is related to the variety of 'preserved others' displayed. Let us highlight one point in this regard: the portrayal of Arabs in the museums. The depiction of these people is, as Katriel shows, basically ambivalent: they are shown as primitive and native, yet closest to nature and its workings and thus to be respected; they are anachronistic and autochthonous, yet only by understanding and emulating them can Israeli Jews find a way to connect to the land. This portrayal thus leads us to the penultimate chapter.

Dan Rabinowitz has entitled his contribution "In and Out of Territory." While the empirical case chosen for study is of a mixed (i.e., Jewish-Arab) town that lies next to a larger Arab city (Nazareth), the analytical focus is on the metaphors and constructs that Arabs use in conceptualizing the territory of these settlements. Rabinowitz's interest lies in examining the socially constructed means individuals employ in order to conceptualize the space associated with their identity as members of a certain nation. Following earlier analyses (Pahl 1975), Rabinowitz looks at the town not only for an understanding of its urban dynamics, but no less importantly, as an arena for understanding the overall society and the complexity of the social forces operating within and without it. Here again the picture is far from unitary. Rooted in a profound ambivalence to the state, Arabs living in Natzeret Illit are at once participants in and outsiders to Israel. Like other Arabs in Israel they seem to be unable to decide whether Israel represents homeland or exile (Hever 1987:50). Ironically, they seem similar to Israeli Jews who have emigrated to America to become citizens of that country, only to turn out to be "permanently temporary." They wait for things to work out, and seek uneasy alliances with their present situation in the hope for some change in the future in which they will somehow belong more to their place of residence.

Being aware of the situatedness of each viewpoint of Israel—in this case, the pictures depicted by Israeli Arabs—provides an antidote to some of the older, more totalizing images of Israeli society (Eisenstadt 1967). Rabinowitz underscores the fact that like any society or culture Israel ceases to be a unitary phenomenon. As the Arabs within (and without) show us, it cannot be apprehended from any one angle, nor by any one viewing instrument. At best we can only capture partial Israeli worlds.

This brings us to the final chapter, a discussion by Zali Gurevitch of "The Double Site of Israel." Gurevitch takes off from a struggle over place—*Hamakom*. Yet this is not a struggle between "us" Israelis and others, be they Palestinians, Arabs, Europeans, or diaspora Jews. It is, rather, a struggle within us. Thus in talking about *Hamakom—the* place—he does not explore the significance of specific points in the Land of Israel but examines the place as it figures in different versions of Jewish and Israeli identities. He shows

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that there is something that is not-fixed, not final—perhaps never fixed or final—in the definition of place in Jewish and Israeli conceptions.

Gurevitch has written a *midrash*, an interpretation. In the tradition of the *midrash*, the study is a way of interrogating, of asking things of place. We find this kind of interrogation to be of special significance because by breaking many of the codes of accepted writings, it serves to effect the distancing that is so essential to any analysis of one's own society and culture. In this sense Israeli anthropology must—like the anthropology of mainland Europe (Lofgren 1987:75 –76)—devise techniques not so much for getting *into* a new culture, but for getting *out of* its all too familiar surroundings.

Yet Gurevitch's contribution bears wider import: it necessitates, we propose, a different way of thinking about methodology. Specifically, we refer to issues related to what have been termed in anthropological circles "good entrances" to the field. Older traditions of simply picking a specific community, a cultural scene, or even a set of cultural texts need to be supported by more flexible combinations of sources, sites, and strategies that can serve to link local processes to national ones. This does not imply the abandonment of methodological rigor nor relinquishment of criteria by which to appraise scholarly work. It does mean, as Gurevitch's piece suggests, a greater openness to hitherto little explored avenues and ways of writing and research.

AND THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF ISRAEL?

We began this introduction with a short history of our joint project in order to bring us to the problematics of the book as a whole and to the issues raised by each chapter. It may now be appropriate to suggest something about the relationship between this volume and what may be termed its specific historical situatedness. Any cultural critique must tackle two interrelated tasks: (1) exploring the ways in which social reality is represented by various 'cultural' mechanisms, and the manner through which these mechanisms form part of the reproduction *and* production of social relations; and (2) accounting for the relationship between the position of the authors in a concrete sociohistorical situation and their work. This attempt at self-critique—partial though it may be—is at one and the same time a precondition for, and a limit on the validity of any 'findings' (see editorial foreword to Theory and Criticism 1991). Thus, we think it fruitful to offer a number of speculations about the historical moment in which we write and its relation to our scholarly engagement with place and space. It is also for this reason that we invited Jonathan Boyarin's "Response from New York" as the volume's postscript.

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We would suggest that this connection between our scholarly focus and present historical circumstances is related to a set of processes that Israel has been undergoing in the past two-and-a-half decades. For a variety of (political, social, demographic, and economic) reasons, since 1967 Israel has been the site of steady changes in what could be termed the prevailing public attitudes and sentiments (see Aronoff 1989; Horowitz and Lissak 1989; Lustick 1988). Some of the more important of these changes (and the list could be expanded) include a greater acceptance of the Jewish diaspora and the concomitant openness to *Jewish* 'ethnic pluralism'; a certain enhancement of religious sentiments and a related strengthening of nationalistic feelings; a changed attitude toward the Holocaust and a greater willingness to search for continuities with past Jewish identities; the eruption of the Intifada (the Palestinian uprising), the increased militancy of Israeli Arabs, and the unease this has wrought among many Israeli Jews; and, following Israel's debacle in Lebanon, the decreased legitimacy of such institutions as the army. Closely related to all of these, as Dominguez (1990:13) notes, has been the weakening of the centralized state as *the* agent of social transformation affecting housing, language, health, technology, production, dress, and childrearing.

However, the breakdown of the political and cultural hegemony of Labor-Zionism and its associated political bodies seems to be of no less importance. This breakdown has not spelled the disappearance of values and sentiments associated with this group. What does seem to be happening in Israel is that competing worldviews and assertions of Israeli identity and peoplehood are finding greater public expression. As Paine (1989; see also Aronoff 1984) suggests, Israel today is the site of an ongoing and at times violent competition over 'tradition,' that is, a set of meaningful and worthwhile guidelines for people's lives. It is at the interstices of the aforementioned trends and the new—or, perhaps more aptly, renewed—'competition' over tradition that a number of cultural critiques have appeared. Two examples of this pattern are the new journal entitled *Theory and Criticism* and Ram's (1993) reader comprising critical perspectives on Israeli society. The specific aim of both forums is to provide a platform for critical discussion by intellectuals and academics from a variety of disciplines (see also Handelman 1994).

Yet the development of these critiques in Israel cannot be understood apart from changes in the wider (perhaps worldwide) intellectual atmosphere. A number of developments within the human sciences in general, and within anthropology in particular, bear import in this regard. Marcus and Fischer (1986:8) call this a postcolonial or postmodern period, a moment of a crisis of representation; one of its main features is the loosening of the hold of both specific totalizing visions and a general paradigmatic style of organizing research. In regard to anthropology, Jackson (1989) has termed this period one

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of an anxiety on the part of scholars about the status of anthropological knowledge and methods. It is our suggestion that this crisis or anxiety and the attempts to deal with it have seeped into the human and social scientific disciplines dealing with and situated within Israeli society. The steady stream of publications and studies coming out of Israel since the beginning of the 1980s attest to this. It would have been hard to envisage the impact of a book like Grossman's *Yellow Wind* (1987) even fifteen years ago.

Within academia some people have dismissed these intellectual developments as mere 'fashions' soon to be superseded by other approaches, or as 'attention grabbers' used by (mainly younger) social scientists to establish their academic positions. We believe that there is something more to them; that parts of Israeli anthropology, and Israeli social science and the humanities in general, are undergoing a fruitful self-examination. This process of self-reflection couples a critique of scholarly—in our case anthropological—practice, with a more astute inspection of our 'conventional' objects and subjects of study. Yet the question still remains: What is the specific contribution anthropology can make to the study of Israeli society and culture within this emergent process of cultural critique? While we may sound unabashedly 'traditional' or 'conventional' in our approach, we would maintain that one of anthropology's continuing strong points is its emphasis on empirical work—on the analysis of how concepts and sentiments, feelings and perceptions are embodied *in action.* The strength of ethnography and of ethnographic criticism lies in their enduring respect for context and the recognition of the ambiguity and complexity of any situation (Marcus and Fischer 1986:159). Thus we believe that it is not enough to focus only on discourse in order to get at this complexity and ambiguity. Alternative forms of anthropological practice—which have been coming into vogue during the past decade—may be theoretically liberating but they should not come at the expense of empirical ethnographic work. Thus the chapters in this volume should both caution us and exemplify the need to ground our work in the reality of our subjects. To put this by way of example, a critique of the claims of truth by Labor-Zionism must be founded on the analysis of specific and actual practices such as the arrangement of museums. We realize, following Myers (1988:622–23), that our practices may continue, to an extent, to appropriate into our frameworks those whom we study. But this appropriation is now held in a tension that is more than just our translation of them by giving priority to local political purposes. Thus Rabinowitz, in his chapter, is careful to link the perceptions of Arabs in Natzeret Illit to the power relations and combination of interests that characterize the town.

Furthermore, the stress on openness and the pluralism of perspectives now in fashion in anthropology should not blind us to the "topography"—the broad contours or configurations—of possibilities within which the experi-

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ences of space and place in Israel take place. Let us single out two issues in this regard. Paine (1989:128) rightly observes that there is more than one "time" and more than one "place" that is Israel, among Jews living there today. What our volume tries to do is to map out some of the *limits* of the pluralism entailed by such an observation. For example, the chapters in this volume are populated by a limited field of 'others' through which Israeli Jewish identity is constructed: diaspora Jews, native Arabs, Zionist pioneers, Moroccan Muslims and Jews, and (maybe) European "Greens." While these 'others' change at the same time that self-definitions of Israeli Jews change, they nevertheless encompass the broad possibilities within which "Israeli-ness" is defined. As Handelman and Shamgar-Handelman caution (1990:221), we must be wary of an all-too-neat emphasis on the 'invention' of Israeli tradition or traditions. We miss continuities and limits on invention without recognition of the elements of enduring ontological coordinates—that is, the logics of the world and the way human beings within their historical worlds are constituted (Kapferer 1988:19)—in the way Israeli Jews conceptualize themselves, their history, and their tradition. To reiterate, a stress on mutability and change does not imply that 'anything goes.'

By writing and publishing about space and place we are also, of course, participating in the public discussion now taking place in Israel. Perhaps this is a modest aim, but what we can contribute, we believe, is a certain opening, a questioning of current trends. And that perhaps is not such a bad thing.

> You always have to travel, not settle down, like we thought
> when we were young.
> Only travel assures a perspective, a discount for those who
> pay in advance.
> (Zach 1988)

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