Zionism of the Religious Settler Movement: Historical Context, Ideology, and Public Institutions in Israel

Nabih Bashir
Lecturer and Researcher on Zionism and Jewish Theology

Opening Remarks

Over the last few decades, Israeli society has been undergoing a process of strong religiosity at all levels. The growing presence of religious figures in high-ranking positions at various governmental and nongovernmental institutions and departments, including the army, media outlets, cultural institutions, higher education, archeology, the judiciary, and the voluntary civil service, is a clear indicator of the growing stature of religion in the public sphere and its influence on public discourse. In addition, Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities, which had previously opposed Zionism, have integrated within several Israeli official institutions and adapted some central values of Israeli society. This integration is particularly evident in relation to settlements and the army's composition and its military-religious rhetoric, which increasingly evokes the biblical imagination, ancient historical events, and Jewish religious conventions as part of its combat doctrine. Numerous studies have discussed the growing influence of religious groups on the military; however, the growing influences of the religious establishment on settlement activity and its rhetoric have not received adequate scholarly attention. This essay reviews this transformation and focuses on the religious discourse that translated into political and settlement activities and identifies its strategic implications. It explores the origins, paths, and contexts in which these transformations appeared and were reinforced and describes their impact on the official political establishment.[1]

Introduction

Since its inception, Zionism has drawn on the Jewish religion--its beliefs, rituals, traditions and institutions--to formulate Zionist perceptions and implement various plans. Most important were its colonization plans, shaping Jewish consciousness and marketing of Zionist ideals, discourses, and ideologies among Jewish communities globally. It has become clear that Israeli society has gone through a phase of infusing Zionism together with Jewish religious interpretations into state institutions, educational programs, settlement projects, and the army. Many researchers have noted this shift while in its infancy.[2] However, Zionism is not a rigid or static ideology; like all ideologies, it is based on many conflicting and divergent perceptions and trends that transform over time in relation to the existing reality and its various interactions and developments. Zionism should be thought of as an ever-changing ideology with fixed foundations that are subject to different interpretations depending on the context.[3] Zionism is also perceived differently by various political currents and Zionist parties, as well as among different ethnic groups. Undoubtedly, over the last decade the policies and views of Israeli government coalitions embody these transformations, including its political theological-military discourse and the expanding settlement enterprise.

Labor Zionism in general, and the Labor Party (MAPAM Party) in particular, have recruited religious perceptions as "national" and cultural perceptions and have evoked biblical and historical events and Jewish figures in all their projects. This was mainly done for ideological motives, shaping a new "Hebrew culture", aimed at recruiting Jews for the Zionist enterprise. However, Messianic religious Zionism has transformed these ideological motives into a religious project related to ancient Jewish history and has portrayed the entire Zionist enterprise as an extension of the ancient "Kingdom of Israel." Messianic Zionism insists that its activities and projects are merely a continuity of the classic Zionist enterprises and a fulfillment of Jewish prophesies dating to ancient Jewish kingdoms.[4]

The following major events drew the various religious currents into the Zionist enterprise: 1) The emergence of the *Mizrahi* movement and later the national religious ideology established by Abraham Kook, which reinterpreted Jewish tradition in a way that makes it consistent with the goals of Zionism; 2) The Balfour Declaration, which was depicted as international recognition of "the historical rights" of the Jewish people in Palestine and as permission from the international community for Jews to establish a Jewish state (or: a State for Jews) in Palestine, 3) The Nazi Holocaust, which was cast as conclusive evidence of the eternal hatred of non-Jews toward Jews and pushed many leaders and religious groups to merge into Zionism; 4) the Palestinian *Nakba* and the victory of the Zionist movement in the 1948 war, which were perceived as a divine miracle that did justice to the Jews and as a divine sign of the Lord's satisfaction after their long and severe punishment in the diaspora; 5) the outcomes of the June 1967 war, which were interpreted as yet another divine miracle that reinforce the previous miracle and portray the Lord's satisfaction with the Zionist enterprise; 6) the results of the October 1972 war, which led to an end to the Labor Zionist movement's mo-

nopoly over power and the reinforcement of the right-wing ideology, which was particularly embodied in the *Hirut* Party, and the Messianic religious tendencies embodied in the *Gush Emunim* settlement movement; 7) the accession of the *Hirut* Party to power in 1977 and the increasing prominence of religious perceptions and discourses in the Zionist right-wing parties ; and 8) the adoption of a liberal economic policy and the exacerbation of the housing crisis among poor and vulnerable Israeli segments, especially among oriental Jews who are traditionally close to religion and religious discourse, as well as the Orthodox (*Haredi*) communities who saw the need to embrace a pragmatic policy with the Zionist movement and the State of Israel in order to obtain material gains.

The Fusion of Religious Discourse into Zionism: An Historical Overview

Historically, Zionism has challenged the Jewish belief that prevailed from the first and second centuries until the twentieth century: that the dispersion of the Jews across the world is a divine punishment and that they must wait for the Messiah to reunite them and establish his Divine kingdom on earth. This doctrine was reinforced in the wake of the disastrous results of the Jewish rebellion against the Romans during the reign of Caesar Hadrianus, which lasted from 132 to 136 AD. This rebellion is referred to in the Zionist lexicon as the rebellion of *Bar Kokhba*. According to Jewish tradition, it resulted in the complete extinction of the Jewish presence in Palestine and the Levant (with the exception of Iraq), the killing of hundreds of thousands of Jews, and the destruction of their homes.

Fundamental transformations swept the European continent following the French Revolution (1789), among them the emergence of liberation movements during the first half of the nineteenth century (especially in the Balkans, Greece, Bulgaria, and Italy), the emergence of English evangelical streams that called for the "Reconstruction of the Jewish Kingdom in the Holy Land" and the deportation of all Jews to it, and the anti-Jewish movements that regarded the Jews as an alien element in the newly formed European nation-states that were based on ethnic grounds (with the exception of France). Concurrent with these transformations, new theological-political interpretations of Judaism emerged beginning in the 1830s. These new interpretations, developed to be consistent with "modern times," were premised on the notion that the fate of a nation is determined by its people's worldly actions--political, economic, and military - and not by divine destiny, and that human activity affects divine judgment and destiny. Among the most important rabbis who introduced such new interpretations were Serbian rabbi Yehuda Alkalai (1798-1878) and the Polish rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer (1795-1874). These interpretations underwent modifications, but the core view was preserved and reformulated in secular terms, most notably after the massacres committed by the Russian public and authorities against the Jewish population (famously known as "Storms in the South," beginning in 1881-82). As soon as the Zionist movement was established, all its core ideas were already crystalized: the need for an independent political entity for the Jews, like other peoples, provided that this entity be outside the European continent; its consistency with colonial discourse; the establishment of such an entity on modern scientific and technological foundations; and the normalization of the personality of the Jew and the restoration of his relationship with nature and the soil as the Jews in Europe lived for centuries a lifestyle dominated by alienation with nature, territory, and agricultural work.

All religious Jewish parties and political tendencies opposed these new interpretations of Zionism, except for a few religious figures who joined the Zionist Congress. After 1902, with the great encouragement of the leaders of the Zionist movement, they established the HaMizrachi bloc within the Zionist Congress despite the apparent clash between the ideas advocated by Zionism and Jewish religious tradition. In retrospect, it seems clear that the importance of this bloc in shaping the religious intellect greatly outweighed its political weight at that time. It sought to integrate the Zionist core ideas into Jewish creed and tradition. These religious figures accepted the European ethno-national idea in its German and East European senses, absorbed it, and looked to expand it by infusing it with religious Jewish dimensions. By contrast, all other Jewish religious views completely opposed this emergent idea.

The most important ideas of the Zionist settler-religious ideology are listed here:
1) The movement affirms the old-new Holy Trinity: "The Torah of Israel," "The People of Israel," and "The Land of Israel." Each of these concepts feeds the other two, none can stand alone, and all acquired new meanings.
2) The Zionist movement arose to propose a solution to the Jewish question after it became evident that the

"diaspora" was no longer a home for the Jews, and there must be a "return" to the "promised land."
3) Zionism did not only appear to preserve the whole of the people of Israel, but also to return to traditional Judaism and to purify Jews from the grime that results from living among Gentiles, in addition to being the cure to the spiritual crisis.
4) Although Zionism is a secular movement, religious value is its fundamental tool, just as the hammer is to the blacksmith and the saw is to the carpenter.
5) Settlement in Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish state on its soil is a very essential religious and political obligation.
6) The success of Zionism leads to the empowerment of Judaism and its prosperity, and settlements provides a real alternative to residing and integrating among other nations.

Wooing Religious Jews
The Jewish residents of Jaffa summoned a clergyman from Daugavplis in Lithuania named Abraham Isaac HaCohen Kook to assume the position of the city's chief rabbi. Kook accepted the position and immigrated to Palestine in 1904. Soon, he became one of the most prominent religious figures who worked to reinterpret Jewish tradition to make it consistent with Zionism. Before him, members of the HaMizrachi bloc and rabbis since the mid-nineteenth century, including Rabbi Yehuda Alkalai and Tvi Hirsch Kalischer among others, had focused on the same mission. Kook did not limit himself to writing journalistic articles and sermons; he worked also on a new theological and intellectual approach to give religious legitimacy to the entire Zionist enterprise. He claimed that Zionism was simply "the peel to the fruit," a new cloak for Jewish notions that have always been latent in the Jewish creed, tradition, and conscience.

The Zionist movement was in dire need of such religious voices to recruit Jewish immigrants from all parts of the world and to convince them of its religious legitimacy. However, the movement had primarily to degrade the status of the local Palestinian (Sephardic) Jewish community and its leaders, because they were not part of the Zionist aspirations, a goal that was facilitated by the defeat and fall of the Ottoman Empire in World War I. Indeed, in 1919 the Zionist movement quickly established the Supreme Religious Council for Jews of Western descent (Ashkenazim) in Palestine, and Rabbi Kook was appointed as its Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem, and soon after, as first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Palestine in 1921. With the strengthening of the British Mandate in Palestine, the status of the local Palestinian Jewish community and its leaders declined; they were looked down on by the Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants and leaders of the Zionist movement.

The new conciliatory religious thought permeated all Jewish communities, apart from the so-called Orthodox communities, mostly East European. The Orthodox leadership sought to undermine the Zionist enterprise and delegitimize it; it maintained a principled position not to grant religious legitimacy to Zionism, even though it represented communities that were mainly poor and could not afford to immigrate and reside in Palestine without significant financial and economic support from the Zionist movement, especially after losing all their assets in Europe. However, the issuance of the Balfour Declaration and then the rise of the Nazi movement to power in Germany and the Holocaust all prompted many Orthodox communities and their leaders to reconsider their opposition to the Zionist movement, which promised to provide a safe haven for them in Palestine. Over time, it adopted a pragmatic approach in dealing with the Zionist movement and the institutions of Israel after its establishment.

The Labor Zionist movement, which was the largest bloc within the Zionist institutions since its inception until 1977, viewed the Jewish tradition in its entirety (including beliefs, holy books, transitional tradition, and religious laws) as a cultural tradition and a historical document attesting to the presence of Jews over an extended period of history as an ethnic group whose identity was formed in Palestine. The Zionist movement used the Hebrew Bible as a land ownership certificate over Palestine, as providing evidence of the undeniable presence of Jews as a distinct ethnic group in Palestine. It also interpreted religious symbols and holidays as national rather than religious ones. For example, Passover was interpreted as the festival of spring and freedom, while throughout Jewish history it was considered the feast of the revelation of religious laws and rulings to Moses. Likewise, Hanukkah, which reminds the believer of the need to cleanse the temple from all manifestations of polytheism and idolatry, was interpreted by the Zionist movement as a celebration of the victory of Jewish revolutionaries (Maccabees) against the Roman rule in Palestine. Zionism viewed the Jewish religion as a constraint that hindered the progress and integration of the Jews in the modern world and generally had a negative view of religious Jews as the embodiment of the diaspora Jews who still carry

these values in their consciousness, lifestyle, clothing, and food.[5] Over the years, the Zionist movement has sought to secularize religious Jews and limit their control over some communities and to replace them with secular Zionist leaders who belong to the socialist Labor bloc. This view still prevails in Zionism. Many researchers believe that the Jewish religion was and still is a central component in the Zionist ideology,[6] except that it took on a greater presence since the *Hirut* movement came to power in 1977.[7]

In contrast, in 1925, Revisionist Zionism was developed by Vladimir Ze'ev Jabotinsky and posited that Jewish tradition was the bearer of historical memory and Jewish conscience. It viewed religious Jews positively and was more tolerant toward them than the Labor movement. With the creation of Israel, the Revisionist movement was transformed into a political party, *Hirut*, led by Menachem Begin. This view of the Jewish tradition in general and religious people in particular would have significant effects later on the rapprochement of religious movements and streams to *Hirut* and other right-wing parties, and their distancing from the Labor and left-wing Israeli parties.

National Religious Parties and Orthodox Community in Electoral Politics and Israeli Politics

The newly established Israel incorporated several religious movements, lists, and parties, the most important of which were *Hamizrahi* and *Agudat Yisrael*. *Hamizrahi* melded the Torah and socialist values; it supported the establishment of *Kibbutzim* and *Moshavim*, which was done according to religious law. *Agudat Yisrael*, founded in Poland in 1912 for religious and political purposes, is an umbrella organization that includes the majority of the Orthodox parties. Groups that split from *Agudat Yisrael* include the *Poalei Agudat Yisrael*, whose members hold more rigid socialist values; and the non-partisan Religious Union (1944-1948), which did not want to be bound by *Agudat Yisrael*'s objection to participation in Zionist national institutions. In 1949, these parties ran for election on a joint list (the United Religious List) and won 16 seats in the first Knesset and became part of the government coalition. However, this alliance did not last, and each party (except for the Religious Union List) ran separately in the second term of the Knesset in 1951. The total number of seats won this time amounted to 15 seats, with 8 seats won by *Hapoel HaMizrachi* alone. In the third term of the Knesset (1955), *Agudat Yisrael* joined forces with *Poalei Agudat Yisrael* in a joint list, Religious Torah Front, and won 6 seats. *HaMizrachi* also allied with *Hapoel HaMizrachi* (National Religious Front) and won 11 seats. The two joint lists merged in 1956 to form one party: the National Religious Party or *Mafdal*.

Mafdal adopted a pragmatic policy and joined the government coalitions formed by the labor movement until 1976, although the aforementioned Zionist-religious "Holy Trinity" ("Torah of Israel," "People of Israel," and "Land of Israel") remained the core values of the party. In the aftermath of the October 1972 war, the *Gush Emunim* movement was established by Abraham Kook's son, Zvi Yehuda Kook, to advance the settlement project more intensively in the occupied Palestinian territories in 1967. Zvi Kook adopted the integrative mechanism of Jewish creed and tradition with Zionism. He promoted the view that the modern state of Israel is the state that the prophets of the Israelites talked about throughout time; he equated the tools utilized in prayer as a religious order and the military tanks as "sacred tools" needed to fulfill the biblical obligation to occupy the land. This movement transformed *Mafdal* into a right-wing ideological party that supports the settlement enterprise in the "greater land of Israel" from the river to the sea and an ally of the *Gush Emunim* movement in all its settlement endeavors and educational activities.[8]

According to some observers, since the 1970s the Religious Zionist movement has adopted a strategic plan aimed at influencing the Jewish consciousness in general and Israeli Jews in particular through its activities and the ministries it seeks to lead within government coalitions. Most important of which is the Ministry of Education through which it attempts to influence future generations by defining what they are taught and shaping their historical memory and identity. It also seeks to take over the Ministry of Construction and Housing to establish and strengthen settlements,[9] and the Ministry of Interior Affairs, which controls budgets, grants, and zoning for new towns and settlements. As noted by researcher Ze'ev Drori, who interviewed one of the founders of the *Gush Emunim* Movement, Knesset Member Hanan Porat, the movement has developed a new strategy since the early 1980s aiming at urging the followers of the Zionist Nationalist movement to join the army and occupy positions in the media sector in order to drive substantial changes in decision-making positions in the army and media, as a step toward changing awareness and political culture in Israel.[10] This strategy has succeeded beyond all expectations. The settlement movement has managed to shape the public political discourse in Israel through its religious values, perceptions and concepts; has

drawn large parts of the Orthodox community that is primarily anti-Zionist to actively participate in settlement projects; has drawn them closer to the general Israeli society through military or civil service; imposed religious narratives and perceptions in governmental and non-governmental educational curricula; occupied prominent positions and establishing influential media outlets and channels; and attracted massive financial support from Jewish communities in the United States to finance large parts of their activities.

The religious extremist community (known in Israel as the *Haredi*/ Orthodox community) has become increasingly integrated within the Israeli society. This integration led the Orthodox community to embrace several tenets of the Zionist ideology. Among other results, the Orthodox population now constitutes about 35 percent of total settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Several studies from the last three decades confirm the steady increase in the religiosity of the Israeli society and the penetration of religious discourse into all aspects of life in Israel, especially in political and military awareness and culture and their perceptions, and the confusion between political and religious concepts and their goals. New patterns of religiosity internalize all these developments and shape them to form the basis of life in Israel.[11]

Since the late 1970s, Israel's society, culture, and politics have undergone profound transformations. Especially since the mid-1980s, these transformations have been prompted by the characteristics of Zionist ideology and East European political culture on the one hand, and the contradictory outcomes of the June 1967 and October 1973 wars on the other.[12] The June War created a feeling of "euphoria of the legendary victory" among all Israelis, who granted the state supra-human superpowers and attributes. By contrast, the outcomes of the October War were perceived by Israelis as disastrous and triggered great fear and a sense of helplessness among the population. The October war revealed the weakness of this Israeli entity, raising again fears and memories of the Holocaust and the fall of the Jewish communities in Europe during the Nazi period. This can explain to a large extent the Israeli endeavors aimed at portraying Arabs in general and Palestinians in particular as neo-Nazis.

Consensual vs Consociational Politics

At the core of these transformations lie two basic issues: the first is the redefinition of Zionism both by the left wing and by the right wing (in religious terms); and the second is the attempt by large sectors and segments of Israeli society and politics to fight judicial and political battles that seek to undermine the "consensual politics" that Israel has long embraced in its dealings with the internal Jewish community and with the Jewish communities across the world. This policy is characterized by not discussing differences in principles; rather, it attempts to compromise and submits to agreements between the conflicting parties. This is because such politics is based on the common foundations among most citizens regardless their ethnic, social, and cultural segments. Further, it attempts not to resolve fundamental differences on issues but rather to postpone them for the far future (an approach known as *consociational politics*).

Since the mid-1970s, various sectors in Israel have been seeking to replace consensual with one that would decide on the disputed matters. Israeli society and politics are engaged in an ongoing struggle over the cultural character of the State, the demand for drafting a constitution, the status of the settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, and compulsory military service for the Orthodox community. Researchers call this type of politics the "tyranny of the majority" or the *majoritarian politics*, which implies that the majority, even the slimmest of majorities, has the authority to make decisions that are binding to all. This kind of policy allows tension, hostility, and the emergence of new disputes among the conflicting parties, which at times can threaten the existing social and political stability. The Israeli researcher Sami Smooha, for instance, claims that this "new culture" is a product of the cultural transformations that took place in the Israeli society and politics, which were largely embodied in the transformation of government into the hands of the Likud list in 1977 (a joint list of the historical *Hirut* and other parties). He adds that this new political culture is nourished by the right-wing interpretations of Zionism, which rely on ethnic racial nationalism and military force (the Iron Wall). This interpretations place the nation, the land, and the constant mistrust of the intentions of non-Jews at the core of its discourse. Further, Smooha claims that this new culture, which forewarns a new form of Zionism, merges the modern national idea with traditional values and religious tradition.[13] Dan Horvitz and Moshe Lissak adapt another theoretical approach (functionalism); since the end of the 1970s, they argue, we have been witnessing profound transformations in the Israeli political culture, especially in the religious

camp, which initially opposed Zionism but which later turned into a party that adopts the doctrine of "Greater Israel" even while rejecting the secular foundations upon which Zionism is based. Accordingly, we are seeing a distinct and new phenomenon that combines both sides of the "hawks" at the political level into a non-Zionist or non-classical Zionism.[14]

In their orientations and demands, the Orthodox groups merge unite the two sides of this dual center. On the one hand, Orthodox groups are trying to redefine Zionism, while on the other they demand the subjugation of all citizens - secular, religious, and traditionalists - to Jewish religious law. In addition, large segments of the Israeli society seek to reinforce the right-wing Zionism as an ethno-secular movement. Other parties, considered by Israelis to be left wing (*Meretz* Party, the Association for Civil Rights, and other civil organizations), promote the underlying civil characteristics of Zionism, that is emphasizing the civic base of the state in the political and cultural discourses, which can be closer to the Israel's definition as a "state of all its citizens".[15] These parties, whether right or left, do not threaten the primary and central basis of Classical Zionism or Labor Zionism. However, since the 1980s, some segments in Israeli society have tried to limit the dominance of the Labor Zionism of the early twentieth century and to replace it with pre-modern interpretations that privilege the central role of religious notions in refining Zionism and in enriching it with a cultural-historical dimension. In other words, these new interpretations represent an attempt to re-read Judaism based on the Zionist ideology, as if to infer that Zionism has been embedded in Judaism since ancient times and that the missionaries and intellects of Zionism have succeeded in penetrating into Judaism to devise Zionism and formulate it in modern and seemingly nonreligious terms.

Judaism and Religiosity within Zionism: Public Opinion Polls

In the 1990s, a new form of Israeli-Jewish identity emerged that combined and reconciled secular lifestyles with religious ritual elements. This has provided an opportunity for certain secular segments of society to internalize religious dimensions into a new individual and collective identity.[16] The Avi Chai Foundation, in cooperation with the Israel Democracy Institute in Jerusalem, conducted public opinion poll at three time points (1991, 1999, and 2009) in order to monitor the most important transformations in the Israeli society's values, identity, their relationship to the religious discourse, state identity, and apparent characteristics of religiosity.[17] In comparison with the first poll (1991), the second poll (1999) depicts a decrease in the relationship of Israelis to religion and Jewish tradition. This is attributed to the mass immigration from the countries of the former Soviet Union. However, the 2009 survey showed that a large portion of these immigrants have adopted, over time, Jewish values and have drawn closer to Jewish tradition and religious perceptions. (This result is also due to the increasing percentage of religious Jews in society due to their high reproduction rate).

Among the interesting results indicated by the third poll (2009) is the decreased tension between Jewish religious and secular groups in Israel (compared to previous polls) and between Jews in Israel and Jews abroad, which might indicate stronger religious perceptions and Jewish nationalism, if compared to the first poll. In general, all the data from 1991 to 2009 show the strengthening of religiosity in Israeli society, even among secular groups, which have become more inclined to adopt and integrate religious perceptions into their secular perceptions and understandings.[18] The percentage of those who do not observe religious duties in Israeli society decreased from 21 percent in 1991 to 16 percent in 2009 (Chart No. 6, as well as Chart No. 11). The majority of respondents indicated that they observed religious duties and read the Hebrew Bible and Jewish tradition books more than they had previously (Chart No. 7). About 71 percent of the respondents in the third survey indicated that it is very important for them to read the Hebrew Bible and Jewish tradition books, 24 percent indicated that they visit *tzaddiks*' (righteous man) gravesites and tombs, and about 13 percent consult the rabbi on personal matters (Chart No. 20). About 80 percent of all respondents in the third poll expressed belief in God; 67 percent believe that the Jewish people are "unique," "distinct," and "chosen"; 34 percent stated that a Jewish person who does not adhere to religious duties threatens the entire Jewish collective (Chart No. 23); and 61 percent of all Jews in Israel believe that the State of Israel should follow religious tradition in managing public life (Chart No. 32). However, 50 percent of secular people in Israeli society have retreated from observing some religious duties and reading Jewish tradition books and feel more distant from religion (graphs 7.4 and 7.5). This does not necessarily indicate their retreat from confirming their Jewish identity but rather their resentment of the growing power of religious discourse and the severity of religious influence on various aspects of life in Israel. When democratic values conflict with Jewish law, only 44 percent indicated their preference of democratic value, while 36 percent indicated a "moderate" po-

sition - even among those who define themselves as secular (16 percent according to Chart No. 42). The rest (20 percent) say that religious Jewish law should have the upper hand (Chart No. 39). Many researchers tend to claim that one of the most important results of strengthening religiosity in Israeli society is the growing of imposing doubts on the Gentiles, i.e. "non-Jews" including the Palestinians, the Arabs and the Europeans. In summary, the results of the three surveys suggest an increasing inclination toward right-wing ideologies and away from leftist ideologies that emphasize the universality of human values and their importance in all societies.[19]

The representation of religious parties in the Knesset changed over time as well. Whereas the religious parties won only 16 seats in the first Knesset in 1949 (through one list called the Unified Religious Front), the religious parties in the nineteenth Knesset (2013) won 30 seats and were represented by three religious parties: *Shas*, *Yahadut HaTorah*, and the Jewish HomeIn the twenty-third Knesset (March 2020), these parties together with *Yamina* Party won 22 seats. In addition to this increase in the number of religious seats in the Israeli parliament (from 16 to 22, an 80 percent increase), other political parties in the Knesset allocated seats for religious representatives. Researcher Leon Mizrahi concluded that the *Shas* movement, despite the non-extremist political orientation of their former founder and leader Ovadia Yusef, has over time adopted a more right extreme political approach that reflects the very right-wing political consciousness of its electorate. The housing crisis was considered one of the most important reasons for *Shas* to legitimize the moving of its supporters to live in settlements built in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967.[20]

This change in the Israeli political map can be traced to the influence of the Orthodox parties in determining the composition of Labor Party (*Mapai*) and the *Likud* list (*Hirut and other small parties*) coalitions, especially between the 1977 and 1988 Knesset elections. However, since the election of 1992 Knesset elections, the Orthodox parties, including the religious Zionist parties and lists, no longer have the same power to tip the scale due to their full and unconditional support to the right-wing camp. The weakness of the left camp and its inability in the last two decades to form a strong government has helped push some Orthodox parties, such as Shas, into the arms of the political right. In the last elections (March 2020), the number of religious seats decreased to 16 (9 seats for *Shas*, and 7 seats for *Yahadut HaTorah*), whereas the *Yemina* Party, which adopts the religious discourse but is a non-religious party that focuses on the settlement enterprise, won 6 seats.

Housing Crisis and Soaring Land Prices
Orthodox Settlement and Government Policies
Israel has one of the highest apartment prices in the world. By 2018, the average price for an apartment was the equivalent of 145 monthly paychecks (according to the price table issued by the Ministry of Housing in Israel). For comparison, the average apartment price was about 41 monthly paychecks in 1961. It appears that prices are increasingly rising compared with the average monthly paychecks.

Various Israeli governments have leveraged their control over land (93% of the land is controlled by the state) as well as distress caused by government policies to push many lower income social groups to move to live in settlements in the West Bank and the eastern parts of Jerusalem.[21]

Until the early 1980s, the settlement enterprise, consisting mainly of people belonging to the Messianic religious trend, relied on messianic motives to re-establish the "Kingdom of Israel" and fulfill the visions of the prophets. According to Erez Maggor, the Likud government headed by Begin took a strategic decision in the early 1980s that sought, on the one hand, to deal with the massive protests against the housing crisis, especially among the oriental ethnic groups, and on the other to organize the settlement enterprise economically, schematically, socially, politically, and infrastructurally.[22] The Israeli government assigned this task to the Ministry of Construction and Housing under the leadership of David Levy. The ministry reached a decision that the settlement policy must be changed; instead of establishing small and scattered settlements that lack organization and prior planning, it decided to establish large municipal settlements that depend on zoning and planning in all aspects, that would be closer to metropolitan centers and major cities (as Tel Aviv and Jerusalem) and to industrial and commerce centers and that would be linked through advanced road network. This plan was adopted to provide cheap housing for low-income groups and to satisfy the desires of religious and national movements to expand and establish the Third Kingdom of Israel. Indeed, the planning of the major settlement blocs began in the early 1980s: Pisgat Ze'ev in 1982, Givat Ze'ev in 1983, Beitar Illit in

1985, and Modi'in in 1986. Existing settlements, like Ariel were the number of its settlers grew by fivefold between 1981 and 1986. In addition to the religious Zionists, the focus at this stage was on two groups, Middle-East Jews and the Orthodox, as they suffered the most from the housing crisis and were easily recruited for the settlement project because they could not afford to buy apartments in Israel.

Ministry Budgets and Non-Disclosed Parties Allocated to Settlements

Some researchers conclude that Israel adopts two contradictory policies at the same time: an economically liberal policy in Israel and a social welfare policy in the settlements.[23] According to figures released recently Adva Center:

> "The settlements received – and continue to receive – preferential treatment in a variety of areas, primarily in government transfers to municipal budgets. With this surplus funding, settlements are able to invest large amounts in local development compared with other groups of localities such as Jewish development towns within the Green Line and Arab localities".[24]

According to the official figures released and analyzed by Peace Now movement (in December 3, 2019):

- The Israeli government invests over NIS 1 billion a year in surplus funds for the settlement development (not including security expenditures and expenses for the ongoing maintenance of the settlements).
- In recent years, there has been a 50% increase in investment in settlements – in 2017 expenditure was 1.650 billion and in (2018) 1.4 billion. The first quarter of 2019 data indicate another increase.
- The settlements receive about 12% of the Interior Ministry's grants to local authorities, while their share of the population is less than 5%. In 2018, the authorities in the settlements received NIS 648 million out of NIS 5.5 billion granted by the Interior Ministry to local authorities.
- As of September 2018, following the recognition of the Trump administration in annexing the Golan Heights, the Finance Ministry stopped reporting to Americans on investment in Israeli communities in the Golan Heights. At the same time, the first quarter figures for 2019 indicate record expenditures in the settlements, with NIS 390 million (between January – March 2019), compared with an average of NIS 354 million in each quarter in 2018 (including the Golan).[25]

The Israeli Peace Now movement issued few years ago a document summarizing the huge budgets that Israeli governments allocated for the settlements in the West Bank.[26] Here we summarize the most important findings of this document. On average, the Israeli governments have allocated one billion NIS annually for settlements between 2001 and 2012. In addition to this regularly allocated budget, there are allocations for security, fortification, and roads. This budget peaked in 2003 when the government transferred more than 1.7 billion shekels in surplus to settlements. According to data from the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, while the number of settlers (in the West Bank and the eastern part of Jerusalem) increased by 5 percent in 2011, budget allocation increased by 38 percent. In addition, the movement published a report revealing suspicious funds (from American sources) that flow into the settlements and settlers' movements from banks with a reputation for money laundering and connection to crime and drugs; 94 percent of these funds came from non-disclosed parties through banks in Panama and the Virgin Islands that are well-known for suspicious activities and money laundering.[27] *Haaretz* newspaper published a report revealing that legitimate US organizations transferred one billion shekels, exempted from tax, to settlements and settlers' entities in Israel between 2008 and 2013 for various purposes,[28] including financing settlers' personal firearms and financing security equipment.[29] Other funds have been shown to finance settlers' terrorist acts.[30] For example, a report in *Haaretz* written by journalists Nir Hasson and Uri Blau revealed that half of the budget of the Elad Association, which is active in the settlement activities in the village of Silwan, is coming from unauthorized "suspicious" sources. For eight years since 2008, the annual budget of this association amounted to about half a billion shekels.[31]

There are hundreds of Zionist global funds for fundraising, the largest of which is the Jewish National Fund (JNF), spread in forty-five countries. JNF raises funds for Israel in general and for the settlements in partic-

ular. The settler organizations that receive these funds are also active in many religious activities and in the enhancing religion in various aspects of life in Israel, especially in the army and public institutions.[32]

The Ministry of Housing allocates budgets to settlements that are four times larger than those allocated to towns within the Green Line. In total, 17 percent of its budget goes to the settlements, an additional 29 percent of the budget for financing the construction of public buildings was transferred to the settlements and 34 percent of its budget for rural construction has transferred to settlements, even though settlers make up only less than 5 percent of the total population. The Israeli governments allocate a budget for construction in the settlements that is three times larger than the budgets allocated for construction within the Green line.

The Orthodox Settler Community

In 2017, the Orthodox population was over one million.[33] Being part of the poor class, the Orthodox community has been suffering from a housing crisis since the end of the 1960s, especially due to their desire to live only within their coreligionists. Israeli governments, as well as the settlement establishments, have been exploiting this fact to a great extent. Despite the fundamental opposition of the Orthodox community to Zionism and the State of Israel, its dependence on the services provided by the state has gradually undermined this opposition over time. Nowadays, the Orthodox community constitutes a large proportion of all settlers in the West Bank and the eastern parts of Jerusalem. Some argue that this fact does not stem from political or ideological motives, the very real need for affordable housing prevails over ideological positions.[34] Living in the settlements provides many economic benefits and social welfare that the residents of Israel lack as we just emphasized. It seems that the leaders of the Zionist religious movement are well aware of this. According to Pinhas Walterstein, the former director general of the Settlements Council, “Even if they have arrived here without ideological motives, they will not easily abandon their homes” in the event of resumed negotiations between Palestine and Israel, and in the way they will enrich their arguments with ideological and religious motives and beliefs.[35]

According to Population and Immigration Department data, 421,600 settlers resided in the West Bank (excluding the eastern part of Jerusalem) and the Jordan Valley at the end of 2016, distributed between cities (184,000, or 43 percent) and towns under the authority of regional councils (146,000, or 35 percent), and towns with the authority of local councils (91,600, or 22 percent). By my calculations, at least 235,000 settlers in the occupied territories are Orthodox Jews (see Table 1); Orthodox settlers are 22.5 percent of the entire Orthodox community, and they make up about 35 percent of all settlers in all settlements in West Bank and East Jerusalem. According to the data published on the Jerusalem municipality website, the number of settlers in the eastern part of Jerusalem is about 226,000, distributed among 12 settlements (see Table 2). Consequently, more than 647,000 settlers live in the 1967 occupied territories, including about than 135,000 Orthodox settlers in the West Bank and about 100,000 Orthodox settlers in the eastern part of Jerusalem. The 235,000 Orthodox settlers who reside in these two areas constitute about 37% of all settlers in the West Bank and the eastern part of Jerusalem.

Table 1. Orthodox Settlement in the West Bank (Excluding the Eastern Part of Jerusalem)

Settlement	Established	Location	Population in 1992	Population in 2006	Population in 2016
Ma’ali Amos	1981	Adjacent to Kissan; to the southeast of Bethlehem	364	340	384

Matityaho	1981	Established on the lands of Ni'lin, adjacent to Kharbatha and Safa	187	450	698
Metzad (Asfar)	1983	Between Bethlehem and Hebron. Established on the lands of Qanub -to the northeast of .Sie'r	237	257	583
Immanuel	1983	In Cana valley, east of Jenin. Established on the lands of Dir Istaia and Jinsafout	3,150	2,583	3,253
Nachliel	1984	North of Ramallah, est. on lands of Bitllo and Janieh	220	264	665
Bitar Illit	1988	West of Bethlehem, on the lands of Housan, Nahallin, Joubeh and Wadi Foukin	2,160	29,126	49,343
Modi'in Illit	1991	West of Ramallah, est. on the armistice line on the lands of Beit Sira, Beit Our alTahta and Safa	2,400	34,482	*68,000
**Tel Zion	2018	South of Ramallah, est. on lands of Kofor Aqab	-	2,800	6,000

The Western Agan Hayalot neighborhood within the Givat Ze’ev settlement)	2008	North of Jerusalem, on lands of Nabi Samuel, Jieb, and Betounia	N/A	N/A	(?)6,000
Total			8,718	70,302	**134,926**

* One of the neighborhoods of Modi’in Illit settlement became an independent settlement in 2016 bearing the name Ghani Modi’in within the Regional Council of Mati Binyamin. It had been an independent settlement before it was joined to Modi’in Illit in 1996. It is a settlement inhabited by Orthodox Jews only and had a population of about 4,000 (800 families) in early 2016.

** Tel Zion is considered one of the neighborhoods of the Kochav Yaqoub settlement.
Sources: *Central Bureau of Statistics Yearbook* (2016), miscellaneous years; Lee Kahner, “Between Ghetto-Politics and Geopolitics: Orthodox Settlements in the West Bank,” *Journal of Theory and Criticism* 47 (Winter 2016), 68-69.

Table 2. Orthodox population as a percentage of the Existing settlements in eastern part of Jerusalem (2017)[36]

Settlement	Established	Location	Orthodox Population in 2007	Orthodox Population in 2017	%
Ramat Shlomo	1995	Northeast of Jerusalem, est. on lands of Shufat	14,911	16,800	٩٧
Ramot Alon	1974	Northwest of Jerusalem, est. on lands of Beit Iksa, Beit Hanina, and Lifta	؟	38,322	٧٦
Gilo	1971	South of Jerusalem, est. on lands of Sharafat, Biet Safafa and Biet Jala	؟	3,321	١٠
French Hill	1971	Northeast of Jerusalem, est. on lands of Issawiya and Shufat	؟	450	٧,٥
Jewish Quarter	*1968	Old City of Jerusalem	؟	2,106	٥٠

Ma’alot Dafna	1972	Northeast of Jerusalem, est. on lands of Lifta and Sheikh Jarrah	؟	3,639	٨١
Neve Yacov	1970	North of Jerusalem, est. on lands of Beit Haninaand Hizma	؟	17,283	٧٠
Pisgat Zi’ev	1982	North of Jerusalem, est. on lands of Shufat, Beit Hanina and Anata	؟	4,026	١٠
Jabal Abu Gh-neim (Homat Shmuel)	1997	Southeast of Jerusalem, est. on lands of Sor Baher and Biet Sahour	؟	2,640	١٣,٥
Talpiot- East	1973	Southeast of Jerusalem, est. on lands of Sheikh Sa’d, Abu Tur and Sor Baher	؟	750	٥
Ramat Eshkol	**1968	Northeast of Jerusalem, est. on lands of Shufat, Beit Hanina and Anata	؟	6,393	٧٣
Givat Hamivtar	1970	East of Jerusalem, est. on lands of Lifta and Sheikh Jarrah	2,860	3,000	١٠٠
Total				**98,730**	

* The Jewish Quarter has existed since the nineteenth century, but it was abandoned between the 1948 and 1967.
** It is the year when the neighborhood was built, but it is difficult to know when it was inhabited; however, a few hundred families had certainly resided in it in the mid-1970s.
*** The municipality’s website does not explicitly indicate the number of the Orthodox settlers nor others, but rather it lists the number and percentage of Orthodox kindergarteners, as well as the number and percentage of Orthodox students. Because of the high fertility rate among Orthodox community, the percentage of kindergarten and school children makes up one third of the Orthodox population. So I roughly calculated this percentage by adding the number of kindergarden children and schoolchildren and multiplying by 3.

The following are the percentages of Orthodox settlers in the various settlements in mid-2017: Ramat Shlomo (97%); Ramot Alon (76%) Gilo (10.2%); French Hill (7.5%); The Jewish Quarter (50%); Maalot Dafna (81%, was established in the so called “no-man’s land” that separated the eastern and western sides); Neve Yaqouv (70%) Pisgat Zi’ev (10%); Jabal Abu Ghneim (Humat Shmuel, 13.5%) Talpiot-East (5%); Ramat Eshkol (73%) Givat Hamivtar (100%).

The number and percentage of the Orthodox population in the settlements is higher than what is listed in these two tables; some are distributed among other settlements in smaller numbers and so were not included

here. It is worth noting that when a few Orthodox families move into neighborhoods inhabited by diverse Jewish communities, more Orthodox families are encouraged to move there. This in turn causes the non-Orthodox families to fear that their properties will decline in value and that a religious lifestyle will dominate their neighborhoods, and so they move out.

Settlements are typically described as being either ideological or non-ideological. In other words, some were established for ideological motives or residents moved there for ideological reasons; the non-ideological settlements house mostly middle class people who are looking for a better quality of life and cannot afford to buy suitable homes in Israel.[37] Some researchers have recently added a third category of settlements: "settlers with reluctance," who lack housing options and thus end up living in a particular settlement.[38]

Jewish settlers in the West Bank, the eastern part of Jerusalem, and the Jordan Valley consist of three population groups: the national-religious, the Orthodox, and the secular. According to a statistical research paper published in January 2017 by the Settlement Council (*Yesha* Council, the umbrella organization of all the local authorities in the West Bank and Jordan Valley), 421,400 settlers live in the West Bank and the Jordan Valley (excluding the eastern part of Jerusalem).[39] In the eastern part of Jerusalem, the number of settlers is about 210,000, distributed in dozens of settlements (independent settlements and neighborhoods within and around the Palestinian towns). The rate of population increase in these settlements in the last decade was 4.7 percent per year (which is much greater than the rate that existed a decade ago, 3.9 percent per year), and is two and a half times the general rate in Israel (1.9 percent, the result of lower birth rates and migration). About 190,000 (43 percent) of all Jewish settlers in the West Bank (excluding Jerusalem) and the Jordan Valley live in three major settlements in the greater Jerusalem area (Modi'in Illit, Beitar Illit, and Maaleh Adumim) and in the settlement of Ariel near Nablus. In addition, about 100,000 (22 percent) reside in smaller settlements scattered in the West Bank, while about 150,000 (about 35 percent) reside in small settlements that are administratively part of six different regional councils. It should be noted that the settler community is a very young society: only 53 percent of the settlers are 18 years old or older (compared to 73 percent in Israel as a whole), which means that slightly less than half of the settlers are under the age of 18, indicating that the fertility rate among them will be the highest in the next few years. Likewise, the two Orthodox settlements of Beitar Illit and Modi'in Illit are the fastest growing communities in the country, with an annual growth rate of 5.6 percent and 5.3 percent, respectively.[40]

The settlements built at the eastern part of Jerusalem - such as Ramat Eshkol, the French Hill, Neve Yaqouv, Gilo, Talpiot-East, Ramot and others - have not been a subject of academic debate in the context of discussing settlement policy in the West Bank since the early 1980s.[41] This includes critical researchers and the various associations and frameworks belonging to the Israeli left opposing settlement in the West Bank, with the exception of the Peace Now movement. The number of settlers in the West Bank is currently about 421,000 (according to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics), and their number in the eastern part of Jerusalem (according to the Jerusalem municipality website) is about 226,000. According to data provided by the Jerusalem municipality (mid-2016),[42] about 100,000 Orthodox settlers reside in the eastern part of Jerusalem, and this includes neighborhoods that Israelis do not consider as settlements but rather as Jerusalemite neighborhoods, even though they were built on land occupied in 1967.[43] As for the number of Orthodox settlers in the West Bank outside the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem, according to the Israeli convention, it was about 123,000 at the end of 2015 (the most recent official figures available). Accordingly, the percentage of Orthodox settlers in the West Bank[44] and the eastern part of Jerusalem together constitute 37% of all settlers. The Orthodox population in Israel and the West Bank (including the eastern part of Jerusalem) is more than 900,000 (11% of the total population). It should be added that the fertility rate among Orthodox women is very high (Which dropped from 7.5 children per woman to 6.9 between 2003 and 2014), currently standing at around 7, hence a women can have 7 children in average. On the other hand, we are witnessing an increase in the fertility rate of all religious Jewish women in Israel and in the settlements. It increased from 3.8 in the early 1980s to 4.2 in 2014.[45] These numbers and percentages are high and become more relevant when we point out that about 58% of the Haredi community is at the 0-19 age group (compared with an average of 29% for the rest of the population in Israel).[46]

As for the settlement of Ma'aleh Adumim, which is defined as an independent municipality and adjacent to Jerusalem from the eastern end on the Jericho road, the number of the Haredi population there is unclear, perhaps because of the acute conflict that has existed there since its inception until the present day between residents and the local authority on the one hand and Haredi parties seeking housing in this settlement on the other. However, according to various estimates, it seems that the percentage of Haredi there is only about 10 percent (i.e. about 4,000 settlers).

Summary

Israeli society continues to blend Zionism and Jewish religious national and radical interpretations within various state institutions, especially the Ministries of Housing, Interior, and Education, a process that began in the late 1970s. The involvement of the ultra-orthodox Jewish community in the settlement enterprise will have a profound short-term impact on the nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in terms of political discourse, strategic planning, and social conflict. This is especially relevant in light of the housing crisis that largely impacts this segment of the population and their accelerated integration in the Zionist discourse, the army, and its reinterpretation of the entire conflict. All of these underlying transformations that were discussed above will provide a new dimension to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as a conflict that stems from the theological religious imagination and transforms the conflict from a struggle for existence into a struggle that goes backwards in history in order to rebuild the imagined biblical Kingdom of Israel, especially since many secular and religiously non-puritan Israeli and Jewish sectors are involved in this direction.

Endnotes

1 See, for example, Nabih Bashir, *The Political–Religious Dialectics in Israel: The Shas Movement as a Case Study* (Ramallah: Madar–The Palestinian Center for Israeli Studies, 2006) [in Arabic]; Nabih Bashir, *Reversus est ad Historia Sacra - Return to Sacred History: The Jewish Ultra-Orthodoxy in the Shadow of the Zionist Project* (Damascus and Beirut: Qadams for Publishing and Distribution, 2005) [in Arabic]; Yair Sheleg, *The New Religious Jews: Recent Developments among Observant Jews in Israel*, translated from Hebrew by Said Ayyash (Ramallah: Madar–Palestinian Center for Israeli Studies, 2002) [in Arabic]. It should be noted that several very important doctoral studies and theses have emerged in recent years in Hebrew, the most important of which is a group of twenty studies edited and published by the former chief psychologist of the Israeli army, Dr. Reuven Gal: Reuven Gal and Tamir Label (eds.), *Between the Kippah and the Military Helmet: Religion, Politics and the Army in Israel* (Ben Shemen: Modin Publishing House, 2012) [in Hebrew]. In addition, the Avi Chai Foundation, in cooperation with The Israel Democracy Institute in Jerusalem, prepared an opinion poll conducted in 1991, 1999, and 2009 to monitor the most important transformations in Israeli society in relation to its values, the identity of its sons and daughters, and their relationship to the discourse on religion, the identity of the state, and the characteristics of the phenomenon of religiosity: Asher Aryan et al., *A Portrait of Israeli Jews–Beliefs, Observance, and Values of Israeli Jews–2009* (Jerusalem: Avi Chai in cooperation with The Israel Democracy Institute, 2012).

2 See Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel: Traditional Judaism and Political Culture in the Jewish State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

3 See Raef Zreik, "Israel: An Ideological and Historical Background," in C. Mansour (ed.), *The General Guide to Israel - 2011* (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2011), 1–58. (This material was recently republished as part of the General Israel Handbook–2020 [in Arabic].

4 See, David Ohana, *Modernism and Zionism* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Yaacov Shavit, "Messianism, Utopia and Pessimism in the 1950's A Study of the Critique of the 'Ben Gurion State," in B. Frankel (ed.), *A Restless Mind; Essays in Honor of Amos Perlmutter* (London: Frank Cass, 1996), 23-48; Yaacov Shavit and Zohar Shavit. "Jewish Culture: What if it? In Search of Jewish Culture," in M. B. Hart and T. Michels (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism, VIII* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 677-698.

5 See Ze'ev Drori, "The Separation Zone between the Kippah and the Military Helmet: How Does the Israeli Army Deal with the Religiosity Process?" in Reuven Gal and Tamir Label (eds.), *Between the Yarmulke and the Beret: Religion, Politics and the Military in Israel* (Ben Shemen: Modin Publishing House, 2012), 115–150, especially 117–119 [in Hebrew].

6 See, for example, Emmanuel Gottman, "Religion in Israeli Politics: A Unifying and Dividing Element," in Moshe Lissak and Emanuel Guttmann (eds.), *The Israeli Political System* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1979) [in Hebrew].

Emanuel Guttmann, "Religion in Israeli Politics," in J. M. Landau (ed.), *Man, State and Society in the Contemporary Middle East* (New York: Praeger, 1972), 122–34.

7 See Yonathan Shapiro, *The Road to Power: Herut Party in Israel* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991).

8 See Gideon Aran, "From Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion: The Roots of Gush Emunim," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 2 (1986), 116–43; Gideon Aran, "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History: The Six Day War as a Key Event in the Development of the Original Religious Culture of Gush Emunim," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 4 (1988), 263–75.

9 On the enormous role of this ministry in establishing and strengthening settlements, see Erez Maggor, "State, Market and the Israeli Settlements: The Ministry of Housing and the Shift from Messianic Outposts to Urban Settlements in the Early 1980s," *Sociologia Yisraelet*, no. 16 (2015), 140–67 [in Hebrew].

10 Zeev Drori, "The Separation Zone between the Yarmulke and the Beret: How Does the Israeli Army Deal with the Religiosity Process?", in Gal and Lebel (eds.), *Between the Yarmulke and the Beret,* 115–50, 131–32 [in Hebrew].

11 I have devoted an extensive study to this matter; see Bashir, *Reversus est ad Historia Sacra*.See also Sheleg, *The New Religious Jews*. It is worth noting that the general notion in these two studies, in terms of the historical background and the description of general trends, has not eased over time, but rather grown more exacerbated.

12 See, Shapiro, *The Road to Power*.

13 See Sammy Smooha, "Class, Ethnic, and National Cleavages and Democracy in Israel," in L. Diamond and E. Sprinzak (eds.), *Israeli Democracy under Stress* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1993), 309–42. Also see Erik Cohen, "The Changing Legitimations of the State of Israel," in P. Medding (ed.), *Israel: State and Society, 1948–1988. Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, 5 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 148–65; Ilan Peleg, *Begin's Foreign Policy, 1977–1983: Israel's Move to the Right* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987).

14 Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *Troubles in Utopia: The Overburdened Polity of Israel* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), 99.

15 See, "Benjamin Netanyahu says Israel is 'not a state of all its citizens'," The Guardian, 10 March, 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/10/benjamin-netanyahu-says-israel-is-not-a-state-of-all-its-citizens; Middle East Monitor, https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190311-netanyahu-israel-not-a-

state-of-all-its-citizens; “A State for Some of Its Citizens,” *Haaretz*, editorial, March 10, 2019, https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/editorial/a-state-for-some-of-its-citizens-1.7004500; Yoav Peled, “Ethnic Democracy and the Legal Construction of Citizenship: Arab Citizens of the Jewish State,” *The American Political Science Review*, 86: 2 (Jun., 1992), 432-443.

16 The following survey reached this conclusion by tracking the evolution of this phenomenon from 1991 to 2009; see Aryan et al. *A Portrait of Israeli Jews*.

17 Ibid. Studies of the first poll have been published in English. See Charles Liebman and Elihu Katz (eds.), *The Jewishness of Israelis: Responses to the Guttman Report* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997).

18 For reference, see Ben-Rafael and Y. Peres, *Is Israel One? Religion, Nationalism and Multiculturalism Confounded* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2005); Gershon Shaked, “Israeli Society and Secular Jewish Culture,” in Charles Liebman and Elihu Katz, (eds.), *The Jewishness of Israelis: Responses to the Guttman Report* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 159–68. For the recent developments, see Eliezer Don-Yehiya, “Changes and Developments in Israeli Civil Religion: 1982–2017,” *Israel Studies* 23: 3 (2018), 189–96. As for Sammy Smooha, he rejects this interpretation and believes that it does not mean that seculars are becoming more religious but rather an attempt to enrich the personal identity of the secular with Jewish cultural elements. See Sammy Smooha, “Is Israel (a State) Really Western?” U. Cohen et al., *Israel and Modernity* (Beersheba: The Ben Gurion Institute for the Study of Israel, 2006), 49–83 [in Hebrew].

19 Regarding the 1991 poll, see, for example, Charles S. Liebman, “Cultural Conflict in Israeli Society,” in Charles Liebman and E. Katz (eds.), *The Jewishness of Israelis,* 103–18.

20 Nissim Leon, “Rabbi ‘Ovadia Yosef, the Shas Party, and the Arab–Israeli Peace Process,” *Middle East Journal* 69: 1 (2015), 379–95. Also see Bashir, *The Political–Religious Dialectics in Israel*.

21 See the article by A.D. Lev, professor of political economy at Ben-Gurion University: “Bibi Means a House in the Occupied Territories” *Al-Bait*, November 6, 2011.

22 Maggor, “State, Market and the Israeli Settlements.”

23 See Hussam Jeries and Mtanes Shehadeh, *The Settler Welfare State: The Political Economy of Settlements* (Ramallah: Madar - The Palestinian Center for Israeli Studies, 2013).

24 Adva Center, “Some are More Equal than Others: A Public Survey on the Government´s Preferential Treatment of the Settlements,” October 27, 2020, https://adva.org/en/price-of-occupation-corona-survey-settlements.

25 See, “Surplus Spending on Settlements Tops-NIS-1-Billion,” December 3, 2019, https://peacenow.org.il/en/surplus-spending-on-settlements-tops-nis-1-billion.

26 Peace Now, “The Price of Settlements, or How Does the State of Israel Prefer the Settlements and the Settlers’ Republic?” Summer 2013. For a deeper analysis, see Jeries and Shehadeh, *The Settler Welfare State*.

27 Ilan Shezef (ed.), “Peace Now Movement: Funding Sources and the Transparency of Nine Associations Close to the Israeli Right,” December 2015, https://peacenow.org.il/en/who-is-funding-the-right-wing-ngos; https://peacenow.org.il/en/whos-funding-the-right-wing-organizations-in-israel. The report was originally issued in Hebrew.

28 Uri Blau, “US Organizations That Have Transferred Nearly a Billion Shekels to Settlements over the Past Five Years and Received Tax Exemptions,” *Ha’aretz*, December 7, 2015 [in Hebrew], https://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/1.2792839

29 See also about a right-wing American fund known as The Central Fund of Israel, Uri Blau, “Haaretz Investigation;” Jim Rutenberg, Mike McIntire and Ethan Bronner. “Tax-Exempt Funds Aid Settlements in West Bank”. *The New York Times*, July 5, 2010; E.B. Solomont. “Beit Orot Holds NY Fundraising Dinner”. *The Jerusalem Post*, August 1, 2010.

30 See the report of the American Jewish journalist Richard Silverstein (March 27, 2009), who is interested in American funds financing the settlements, https://www.richardsilverstein.com/2009/03/27/american-jews-donate-33-million-for-settlements.

31 See the full report at http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/education/.premium-1.2873480.

32 See all above sources focusing fundraising. For recent figures on the role of Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael and the Jewish National Fund in various activities in supporting the settlements, see, Settlement Watch, Peace Now, *A report: KKL-JNF and its Role in Settlement Expansion*, April 2020 (Available at: https://peacenow.org.il/en/settler-national-fund-keren-kayemeth-leisraels-acquisition-of-west-bank-land).

33 According to estimates by Meir Gal, director general of the Advertising Agency, who specializes in this community, the number of the Orthodox population in 2011 was about 950,000. See Yair Ettinger, “How Many Orthodox Jews Live in Israel? Depends on the Identity of the Statistician You Ask,” *Haaretz,* April 21, 2011, http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/education/1.1171794.

34 See, for example, Lee Cahaner, “Between Ghetto-Politics and Geo-Politics: Orthodox Settlements in the West Bank,” *Journal of Theory and Criticism* 47 (Winter 2016), 65–87 [in Hebrew].

35 Quoted in Tamar Rotem, “We Are Settlers? God Forbid,” *Haaretz*, September 23, 2003, http://www.haaretz.co.il/misc/1.912534.

36 No accurate data are available on the demographic distribution of the Orthodox population in Jerusalem prior to 2002, the year a social opinion poll was adopted; the various research centers, especially the Central Statistics Department and the Jerusalem Institute for the Study of Israel, did not adopt the degree of religiosity as a statistical variable and did not deal with the

Orthodox Jews as a separate population group, the distribution prevailed among the population according to religious affiliation only (Jews, Muslims, Christians, and others). There is no doubt that the merging of Orthodox groups into Jewish neighborhoods took place slowly over many years, which made it difficult for researchers to monitor the number of Orthodox residents in these neighborhoods over the years.

37 On this division, see: Nissim Leon, "Self-Segregation of the Vanguard: Judea and Samaria in the Religious-Zionist Society," *Israel Affairs 21:* 3 (2015), 348–60.

38 Nissim Leon, "Self-Segregation"; see also Lee Cahaner, "Development of the Spatial and Hierarchic Structure of the Ultra-Orthodox Jewish Population in Israel," PhD Dissertation, University of Haifa, Haifa, 2009 [in Hebrew].

39 See the Settler Council position assessment paper, issued on January 31, 2017, on the council's website, http://www.myesha.org.il/?CategoryID=335&ArticleID=7428.

40 All data are taken from the above position assessment paper.

41 See Janet Abu-Lughod, "Israeli Settlements in Occupied Arab Lands: Conquest to Colony," *Journal of Palestine Studies 11:* 2 (1982), 16–54, 25.

42 See the municipality's website, https://www.jerusalem.muni.il/City/Neighborhood/Statistics/Pages/default.aspx

43 See, for example, the issues that researcher Lee Cahaner refers to in her article: Lee Cahaner, "Between Ghetto-Politics and Geo-Politics: Orthodox Settlements in the West Bank," *Journal of Theory and Criticism* 47 (Winter 2016), 65–87 [in Hebrew]. She indicates at the beginning of the article that the number of Orthodox settlers according to data from 2014 is 120,000. However, it excludes the Orthodox settlers in the eastern part of Jerusalem. The municipality's website does not explicitly indicate the number of Orthodox Jews and others, but rather the number and percentage of children in Orthodox kindergartens, as well as the number and percentage of Orthodox students. In light of the high fertility rate in the Orthodox community, I have roughly calculated this percentage; for example, if children are 20 percent and students are 10 percent, I estimate Orthodox Jews to be 15 percent of the total population of the settlement.

44 Some argue (in July 2017) that the percentage of Orthodox settlers in the West Bank in 30%. see, for example, Jacob Magid, "Black is the new orange: 30% of settlers are now Haredim," July 18, 2017, https://www.timesofisrael.com/black-is-the-new-orange-30-of-settlers-are-now-haredim.

45 Based on Table A/6 in Gilad Malach, Maya Hoshan, and Lee Cahaner (eds.), *The Statistical Yearbook of the Haredi Society in Israel 2016* (Jerusalem: The Israel Democracy Institute in Jerusalem and Institute for the Study of Israel, 2016), 42–43 [in Hebrew] (was recently translated the abstract to English, published as "Statistical Report on Ultra-Orthodox Society in Israel – Abstract," 2019, and this figures appears there in page 8).

46 Based on Table A/1 in Malach et al. (eds.), *The Statistical Yearbook of the Haredi Society in Israel 2016,* 8 (p. 7 in the English abstract); Table A/2 in Lee Cahaner and Gilad Malach (eds.), *The Statistical Yearbook of the Haredi Society in Israel 2019* (Jerusalem: The Israel Democracy Institute in Jerusalem and Institute for the Study of Israel, 2019), 12 [in Hebrew].