INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI®

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ALMOST PILGRIMS

AUTHENTICITY, IDENTITY AND THE EXTRA-ORDINARY

ON A JEWISH TOUR OF ISRAEL

Saul J. Kelner

Volume I

A dissertation submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Sociology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,

City University of New York
2002

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

UMI Number: 3063843

Copyright 2002 by
Kelner, Saul J.

All rights reserved.

UMI®

UMI Microform 3063843
Copyright 2002 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

© 2002

SAUL J. KELNER

All Rights Reserved

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

9/12/02
Date

Chair of Examining Committee
PROF. CHARLES KADUSHIN

9/12/02
Date

Executive Officer
PROF. PHILIP KASINITZ

PROF. PAUL ATTEWELL

PROF. SAMUEL HEILMAN

PROF. JULIA WRIGLEY

Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

/uw.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ABSTRACT

ALMOST PILGRIMS

AUTHENTICITY, IDENTITY AND THE EXTRA-ORDINARY

ON A JEWISH TOUR OF ISRAEL

by

Saul J. Kelner

Advisor: Professor Charles G. Kadushin

There has been an unrecognized convergence in sociological, psychological and anthropological theory surrounding situations outside of the ordinary. Synthesizing works of Weber, Durkheim, Turner, Maslow and others, this dissertation argues that routine-shattering situations generate intense collective experiences that foster the perception of an unmediated encounter with the sacred. One instance of the routine-shattering situation is modern mass pilgrimage-tourism, a hybrid of two forms of travel that are often thought to be distinct, but in practice blend into one another with considerable ease.

Traditional notions of pilgrimage see it as a deliberate journey to commune with sacred symbols whose meanings are established. The pilgrim orientation, however, can also emerge *en route*. The collective experience of the routine-shattering situation generates an emergent sense of the sacred, which, in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

classic Durkheimian form, is projected totem-like onto the pilgrimage center. Normative meanings frame the emergent experience, and the emergent experience rejuvenates the established symbols. Modern organizational technologies enable the systematic mass production of such sacred experiences.

Combining archival, ethnographic, survey and sociometric data, this dissertation examines the case of Taglit/*birthright israel*, a ten-day educational pilgrimage-tour that has sent over 28,000 Diaspora Jews to Israel since 1999. It presents the 50-year-old history of the "Israel experience program," a systematic effort to use pilgrimage-tourism as an educational medium. It then considers how meaning is produced in pilgrimage-tourism. The question of authenticity - both Israel's and the travelers' - is a central focus. Authenticity is found to rest on a notion of a boundary that divides the authentic from the inauthentic, and then proceeds to characterize each of these in terms of idealized conceptions that invariably oversimplify. This oversimplification maintains the exalted position of the pilgrimage center and permits a fleeting sense of thematic unity to pilgrim-tourists' otherwise fragmented lives. The routine-shattering situation is implicated in making the issue salient to travelers.

Meaning is also found to emerge from the group experience. Communitas and collective effervescence are produced both by the routine-shattering situation and by the pilgrimage-tour's structure as a Goffmanesque temporary total institution. The dissertation concludes by elaborating a theory of routine-shattering situations, or "anti-routine."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

PERMISSIONS

Grateful acknowledgment is made to the following for the permission to reprint:

Images and descriptions of 10 *agorah*, 1 *sheqel* and 10 *sheqel* coins from the Bank of Israel website, (www.bankisrael.gov.il). Origin and copyrights, Bank of Israel.

Table from *The Ritual Process* by Victor Turner. Copyright © 1969, Cornell University Press.

Excerpts from Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, translated with an introduction by Karen E. Fields. Translation and Introduction, Copyright © 1995 by Karen E. Fields. Reprinted with the permission of The Free Press, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Adult Publishing Group.

"Hillel's *birthright israel* trip" Sample Itinerary. Origin and copyrights, Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life.

Taglit / birthright israel pre- and post-trip questionnaires. Copyright © 2000-2001, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Like the pilgrim-tourists I describe here, who found community among their fellow travelers, I have been supported by a strong community of family, friends and colleagues.

In my undergraduate years at The George Washington University, Max Ticktin, Jarol Manheim and Steven Livingston nurtured my budding interest in combining social science and Judaic studies. Upon completing my studies, my musings over whether to pursue such an academic career were given concrete shape by conversations with Howard Charish and Ellen Cannon at the 1993 Moriah Conference in Tiberias. They might not remember the conversations, but I do, and I thank them for helping me to seal the major decision about my professional direction. Stan Brecher helped me to articulate the value of my skill sets, and encouraged me to pursue my professional interests vigorously. As I applied to graduate schools, I received sage counsel from Jacob Neusner and William Helmreich. Ambassador Gad Yaacobi, Ambassador Daniel Ayalon, Betsy Landis and again Max Ticktin helped convince the Wexner Graduate Fellowship Program that I was a good bet. The program provided generous financial support through the first four years of my graduate training, and even more generous moral support that continues to this day.

I would not have made it through even the first year of graduate school without the vote of confidence and the network of support that the Wexner

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Foundation provided to me. Whenever I questioned whether the arduous course was worth the time and effort, the thought of disappointing Larry Moses was enough to keep me focused on the goal. It also reminded me that many people whom I hold in the highest esteem believe strongly in the value of the career I have chosen. Leslie and Abigail Wexner, Rabbi Maurice Corson, Larry Moses, Bob Chazan, Cindy Chazan, and Andy Koren helped me envisage my career not only in terms of what it meant to me, but to the communities that sustain me. The semi-annual institutes were a highlight of my graduate career, always reminding me why I chose this field of study. Much of the credit for this goes to my fellow fellows, whom I respect and admire deeply.

I had the good fortune of learning from an intelligent and committed faculty at CUNY. Mervin Verbit showed me the ropes in my first year in the program. When it came time to write the dissertation, I was lucky to have on my committee a superb group of faculty members from whom I had learned much over the years. Phil Kasinitz taught the first class I ever took at CUNY - a 1995 seminar on modernity and the metropolis that helped me appreciate living in New York even more than before. Paul Attewell has been for me a voice of reason and sound advice. I also owe to him my solid grounding in statistical methodologies. Julia Wrigley has helped me to envisage my research projects in grander terms than I would have thought possible. Sam Heilman introduced me to ethnographic research, and in the process saved a naïve positivist from himself. Under his tutelage, I have conducted some of the most interesting

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

research I feel I have done. In addition to my committee, I have gained much from the guidance of Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, Egon Mayer, Barry Kosmin, David Rindskopf, Juan Battle and Herb Danzger, among others.

Outside of CUNY, I have benefited immensely from the collegiality and mentorship of other scholars. Bethamie Horowitz and I developed a fast friendship that has taken us to many of the best breakfast spots on the Upper West Side, where we trade ideas and news about our common field of research. The food is great, and the conversation is even better. From the day we met, Steven M. Cohen has given me encouragement and backing at every turn. Jenna Weissman Joselit has provided the intellectual grounding for the populist tendencies in my own scholarship. If I display any excellence in teaching, it is thanks to the guidance of Diane Tickton Schuster.

The camaraderie of fellow graduate students is one of the nicest aspects of graduate school. From the outset of my studies, Warren Bass, Scott Lasensky, Aaron Panken and Ruth Abusch-Magder were fellow travelers who marched on the long road with me. Each taught me, enlightened me, and inspired me, celebrated with me and supported me. I hope they can say that I did the same for them. Special thanks to Scott for guiding me through the politics of dissertating, and to Warren for his intuitive feel for the right headline. At CUNY, Matthew Lindholm, was a wise older brother, who blazed many a trail that later I followed. I owe my sanity to David Livert. I have no doubt that one day he will make a superb advisor and mentor to his students.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Most of my on-the-job training took place at Brandeis University's Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS). This has provided me with the collegiality of a fine group of individuals - Larry Sternberg, Amy Sales, Erez Yereslove, Christie Cohen, Archie Brodsky, Mark Rosen, Fern Chertok, Gloria Tessler, and the rest of the Cohen Center faculty and staff. In New York, the staffs of Brandeis House and the Mandel Foundation were supportive office-mates who both gave me company and left me alone to write. CMJS has also given me the fulfilling opportunity to supervise and mentor a talented group of young interns, several of whom contributed to the research on Taglit/*birthright israel*. My gratitude and friendship goes out to Heather Shapiro, Randi Zuckerberg, Nathan Shike and Abby Rubenstein.

Sincere thanks as well are due the sponsors of Taglit/*birthright israel* for recognizing the value of studying their program and supporting a sustained research effort. Foremost in this regard is Barry Chazan, who understood the importance of this from the outset. It has been a true honor to work with him. Thanks also to Shelly Zimmerman and Liz Sokolsky for their interest and support. Heartfelt gratitude also goes to the members and staff of the bus groups we observed, especially those on Bus "194," who welcomed me eagerly and made the research both interesting and fun. Although confidentiality precludes me from mentioning them by name, they know who they are. I hope they find this a reasonable and worthwhile meditation on their experiences. During the first two years of the Taglit evaluation, I was fortunate to supervise a team of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

field researchers who performed yeoman's work. It was a pleasure to work with them. They included Amy Adamczyk, Matt Boxer, Rachel Canar, Hal Ossman, Jennifer Perloff, Benjamin Phillips, Diane Purvin, Mark Rosen, Craig Schneider, Heather Shapiro, Rishona Teres, Minna Wolf, and Meredith Woocher.

Two people who contributed to this research are no longer - lights in the world that were extinguished too quickly. Shira Palmer-Sherman z"l was one of my summer interns and a beautiful human being. J.J. Greenberg z"l was a colleague and friend who always brought a smile to my face. I hope that the stories of joy and life in these pages are in some small way a memorial to these two individuals who embodied both so well.

Assistance with specific aspects of this dissertation were provided by many people. On the history of Israel experience programs and Jewish youth, thanks go out to Barry Chazan, Simon Chasdi, Michael Cook, Christine Crandall, Andrew Davids, Elan Ezrachi, Paul Freedman, Harvey Goldberg, Alexis Gruber, Jules Gutin, William Helmreich, Annette Hochstein, Moshe Horn, Simon Klarfeld, Doron Krakow, Keith Krivitzky, Riv Ellen Prell, Kevin Proffitt (and the staff of the American Jewish Archives), Paul Reichenbach, Joe Reimer, Jonathan Sarna, Morton K. Siegel, Hank Skirball, Allan Smith, Joe Wernik, Jonathan Woocher, Susan Woodland (and the staff of the CJS and Hadassah Archives), Gary Zola, and Julie Zupan. For helping me understand the issue of self-authenticity as it is conceived of in psychoanalysis, thanks to Ghislaine Boulanger. On hypertext, thanks go to Daniel Newman. And a sincere thank you

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

to Danny Weinstock, whose semi-annual visits to New York helped me realize when was I making progress and when I was merely marking time.

The Cohen Center provided me with the opportunity to study Taglit/*birthright israel* and to make of this study a doctoral dissertation. For this, my heartfelt thanks go Maurice (z"l) and Marilyn Cohen and their children, to Bob Rifkind and the CMJS board, and especially to Leonard Saxe, the Center's director. He enabled me to take on this project, devoted resources that allowed me a sustained bloc of time and a convenient, quiet office to work in, all the while keeping the other demands of work at bay so that I might finish without distraction. This was something to be wished for but never expected. Len, however, provided this and much more. He is deserving of the highest kudos for this commitment to his staff and to marrying applied social research to serious scholarship.

None of this would have happened without the unparalleled mentoring of Charles Kadushin, my dissertation chair, colleague, teacher and friend. And so to him go my profound thanks. What I know about the practice of sociology, I learned from Charles. Much of this came via the projects we worked on together. But just as important were our five years of shuttling to and from Boston. These flights would be filled with tales of Lazarsfeld, Merton, the Columbia Bureau of Applied Research and its refugees. This was the intellectual heritage of sociology passed down in stories and legends from one generation to the next. Grounded

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in a historical context, I have been better able to develop a self-aware, reflexive sociology of my own.

The last and the most beloved: My family has been constant source of strength and support throughout the years. David Richman guided me at every step of the way - helping me to see the lay of the land and avoid the pitfalls that loomed before me. My parents and siblings - Barry, Rhoda, Mort, Gerry, Joan, Jared, Debbie, Andrew, Rachel, Jeffrey, Kristy, Evan and Eric - always expressed their faith and pride in me, which helped me in turn have faith in myself. Coby and Tori granted me my degree long before my university did, and I am grateful for it. My children, Boaz and Shoshana, were an inspiration to finish graduate school quickly. They contributed their stickers to the cause. Originally purchased to mark their progress in toilet training, the little colored stars ended up on my office calendar, marking my progress through the chapters of the dissertation. My wife, Pam, has been at my side for almost half my life. She has supported me in my career path lovingly and unfailingly, never second-guessing my career choice even once (which is more than I can say for myself). It gives me a great sense of fulfillment to know that this dissertation is as much hers as it is mine.

I have dedicated this work to my father, who I know would be proud.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Dedicated to my father, teacher, role model and friend

Barry I. Kelner z"l

who gave me roots and wings

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

BRIEF CONTENTS

Volume I

ABSTRACT IV

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS VII

DETAILED CONTENTS XVI

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES XXI

I. Saving the Jews in Six Weeks or Less 1

II. Pilgrims, Tourists and Spiritual Experiences 86

III. Israel's Authenticity 145

IV. The Traveler's Authenticity 223

Volume II

V. The Collective Experience 289

VI. The Ten Days that Shook the Jews: Anti-Routine in Theory and Practice 393

APPENDIX A: DATA AND METHODOLOGY 503

APPENDIX B: TOUR OPERATORS 523

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE ITINERARY 525

APPENDIX D: LIMINALITY CONTRASTED WITH SOCIAL STRUCTURE 529

APPENDIX E: SOCIAL NETWORK PROTOCOL 531

APPENDIX F: TAGLIT WINTER 2000-2001 PRE-TRIP QUESTIONNAIRE 533

APPENDIX G: TAGLIT WINTER 2000-2001 POST-TRIP QUESTIONNAIRE 551

APPENDIX H: GENDER AND THE PILGRIM VS. TOURIST ORIENTATION 569

ARCHIVAL AND HISTORICAL REFERENCES 571

REFERENCES. 579

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

DETAILED CONTENTS

Abstract iv

Acknowledgments vii

Brief Contents xvi

List of Tables and Figures xxi

TABLES xxi

FIGURES xxii

I. SAVING THE JEWS IN SIX WEEKS OR LESS 1

THE TAGLIT PILGRIMAGE-TOUR IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT 7

AMERICAN JEWRY IN THE 1990'S 11

JEWISH TRAVEL TO ISRAEL OVER THE AGES 15

THE 1950S WATERSHED 18

IDLEWILD TO LYDDA (VIA SHANNON) 24

INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND EXPANSION 41

ON THE COMMUNAL AGENDA 59

A SYSTEMATIC EFFORT 73

THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE 77

DATA 78

OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION 80

II. PILGRIMS, TOURISTS AND SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES 86

THE BLURRING OF PILGRIMAGE AND TOURISM 91

RIVAL APPROACHES TO THE QUESTION OF MEANING IN TRAVEL 103

THE SEMIOTIC APPROACH 103

THE GROUP PROCESS APPROACH 105

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ASSESSING THE RIVAL CONCEPTIONS: THE CASE OF TAGLIT 108

DIVERSE PARTICIPANTS *108*

DIVERSE REACTIONS *114*

PREDICTING THE SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE: AN EMPIRICAL MODEL *124*

MULTIPLE ROUTES TO MEANING 140

III. ISRAEL'S AUTHENTICITY 145

IDEOLOGICAL CLAIMS TO AUTHENTICITY 151

AUTHENTICITY IN THE DISCOURSE OF TAGLIT PARTICIPANTS 166

TOWARD A THEORY OF AUTHENTICITY 186

BOUNDARIES *190*

IDEALIZED CONCEPTIONS *199*

COMMUNICATION THROUGH SYMBOLS *212*

CONCLUSION 221

IV. THE TRAVELER'S AUTHENTICITY 223

"I FELT SO ALIVE" 225

EXISTENTIAL AUTHENTICITY IN TOURISM 232

AUTHENTICITY AND THE SELF-AS-STORY 239

NARRATIVITY AND AUTHENTICITY ON TAGLIT 248

INSTITUTIONALIZED PROCESSES OF GROUP DISCUSSION *248*

SPARSE NARRATIVES *253*

SITUATED NARRATIVES *265*

NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTION AND THE RESEARCH PROCESS 267

TOURING AND HYPERLINKING 272

TRANSCENDING LINEARITY *276*

TRANSCENDING TEXTUALITY *280*

TRANSCENDING THE UNITY OF THE NARRATIVE *281*

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

HYPERTEXTUALITY, WHOLENESS AND AUTHENTICITY *283*

CONCLUSION 285

V. THE COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE **289**

GROUP PROCESSES: A STATISTICAL MODEL 297

METHODOLOGICAL PRIMER *297*

DIFFERENT BUSES, SIMILAR GROUP PROCESSES *300*

COMMUNITY CONSCIOUSNESS 311

GROUP IDENTITIES *312*

NETWORK STRUCTURE OF BUS 194 ..... *318*

DURKHEIMIAN MOMENTS 330

PEAK EXPERIENCES *330*

SPECTACLE *338*

ISRAEL AS TOTEM *350*

BEYOND COLLECTIVE EFFERVESCENCE 358

CONVERSATIONS, COMMUNITAS AND THE CONSCIENCE COLLECTIF *358*

THE LIMITS OF DISSENT *364*

TEMPORARY TOTAL INSTITUTIONS *378*

CONCLUSION 389

VI. THE TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE JEWS: ANTI-ROUTINE IN THEORY AND PRACTICE **393**

VICTOR TURNER: LIMINALITY AND COMMUNITAS 396

LIMINALITY *397*

COMMUNITAS *402*

MARX MISSES THE MARK *406*

SOCIETY'S TONIC *409*

EMILE DURKHEIM: COLLECTIVE EFFERVESCENCE 411

DURKHEIM'S AGENDA *411*

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

THE AFTERMATH OF EFFERVESCENCE *418*

CHICKEN OR EGG? *421*

COLLECTIVE EFFERVESCENCE AS ANTI-ROUTINE: A SUMMATION *425*

MAX WEBER: CHARISMA 427

PARSONS' WEBER: A RECONSIDERATION *430*

THE CHARISMA OF LEADERS *433*

THE CHARISMATIC SITUATION *436*

ANTI-ROUTINE'S GUIDING HAND *442*

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL VIEWS OF ANTI-ROUTINE 443

ABRAHAM MASLOW: PEAK-EXPERIENCE *444*

WILLIAM JAMES: MYSTICAL CONSCIOUSNESS *450*

MIHALY CSIKSZENTMIHALYI: FLOW *454*

SUMMARY *456*

ANTI-ROUTINE AND TAGLIT 458

THE CHARACTER OF ANTI-ROUTINE *458*

THE OUTCOMES OF ANTI-ROUTINE *469*

ANTI-ROUTINE, TOTAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE RETURN TO NORMALCY *486*

ANTI-ROUTINE AND AUTHENTICITY *489*

CONCLUDING REMARKS 496

Appendix A: Data and Methodology 503

MY ROLE WITH CMJS *503*

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS *504*

FIELD WORK 504

SURVEYS 506

PRE-TRIP SURVEY OF WINTER 2000-2001 COHORT *507*

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

POST-TRIP SURVEY OF WINTER 2000-2001 COHORT *507*

PANEL *508*

IDENTIFICATION OF BUS GROUPS *508*

EXCLUSION OF LATE RESPONDENTS *509*

WEIGHTING *510*

SOCIOMETRIC DATA 510

LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS 511

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTROLS *511*

JEWISH SOCIALIZATION *512*

JEWISH COMMITMENTS *514*

EXPECTATIONS ABOUT THE TRIP TO ISRAEL *516*

GROUP ORIENTATION *518*

MULTICOLLINEARITY TESTING *521*

Appendix B: Tour Operators 523

Appendix C: Sample Itinerary 525

Appendix D: Liminality Contrasted with Social Structure 529

Appendix E: Social Network Protocol 531

Appendix F: Taglit Winter 2000-2001 Pre-trip Questionnaire 533

Appendix G: Taglit Winter 2000-2001 Post-trip Questionnaire 551

Appendix H: Gender and the Pilgrim vs. Tourist Orientation 569

Archival and Historical References 571

References 579

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLES

Table 2.1: How Much Does Being Jewish Involve... 113

Table 2.2: Spiritual Experience by Degree to which Trip was Personally Meaningful 117

Table 2.3: Comparison of Pilgrims, Meaningful Tourists and Recreational Travelers 119

Table 2.4: Descriptive Statistics 129

Table 2.5: Logistic Regression Coefficients 131

Table 2.6: Likelihood of Jake Reporting a Very Spiritual Taglit Experience 138

Table 5.1: Variance Accounted for by Bus-Group 304

Table 5.2: Core/Periphery Structure of Bus 194 320

Table 5.3: Structural Equivalence Block Model of Bus 194 324

Table 5.4: Density Matrix for Structural Equivalence Block Model of Bus 194 .. 324

Table 5.5: Average Degree Centrality Scores within Blocks 327

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

FIGURES

Figure 2.1: The Classes of Meaningful and Meaningless Travel 89

Figure 3.1: The 10-*agorah* Coin 155

Figure 3.2: The 1-*sheqel* Coin 155

Figure 3.3: The 10-*sheqel* Coin 156

Figure 5.1: Group Orientation Index 301

Figure 5.2: Close Friendships among Bus 194 Members 323

Figure 5.3: Seating during Bus 194's Ride to Atlit; January 10, 2001, 8:30 AM ... 386

Figure 5.4: MDS Map of Social Networks in Bus 194 387

Figure 6.1 Routine and Anti-Routine in Durkheim's Writings 414

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER 1

SAVING THE JEWS IN SIX WEEKS OR LESS

Jewish tradition invokes a concept known as *yeridat hadorot*, "decline of the generations," to explain things like the disappearance of overt miracles and divine prophecy, the deference of latter-day Talmudic scholars to the sages of yore, and even the shortened human life-spans since the days of Methuselah. It is a theologized privileging of the past that draws on a particularly long historical memory, but it is far from unique. Nostalgia and romanticization of halcyon days are common in most cultures, even those otherwise host to a vibrant modernism. The critique of mass culture has often relied on positing a movement away from ideals that were better realized in the past. Such a notion is implicit in any discussion of the homogenization of taste or erosion of face-to-face community.

Among the many aspects of mass culture that critics have located in their crosshairs has been modern travel. Often, it has been portrayed as frivolous, cookie-cutter and fabricated, in contrast to the grand tours and pilgrimages of old which were serious travel for serious people. Today, however, Da Vinci's Last Supper has been transformed into wax museum sculptures in California, and pilgrimages are made to Elvis Presley's Graceland. *Aich naflu giburim*. How the mighty have fallen!

A close examination of mass pilgrimage-tourism in the Jewish context, however, suggests that the path downward is not as clear-cut as either the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

cultural critics or guardians of the Jewish past portray it. Modern life has created novel forms of Jewish experience that are hard to compare with things that have come before, much less judge in terms of them. One of these is a travel experience modern to its core: a strange hybrid of mass pilgrimage and group tourism in Israel that makes room for the lighthearted, the mundane and even the campy, but leaves the vast majority of travelers—intelligent, college-educated men and women, no less—stirred with a sense of the profound. This, of course, is not supposed to happen. Understanding why it does will be the main concern of this dissertation.

The emergence of a sense of meaningfulness in such a travel experience is rooted in the social processes that envelop it and unfold within it. There is no single explanation that suffices to account for it. Rather, an explanation of the phenomenon requires that we explore a complex tangle of issues regarding authenticity in tourism versus authenticity in personal identity; the relationship between normative sacred symbols and emergent experiences of the sacred; the systematic production of quasi-religious experiences; and the routine-shattering situation as a sociological category.

Collectively, these issues constitute the agenda of this dissertation. The consideration of Jewish pilgrimage-tours to Israel will shed light on ways that a sense of meaning and even sacredness can emerge from something modern and something tourism-related—both of which have been presumed to be inimical to such an outcome. In the process, I will speak to some of the profound

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

sociological questions embedded in the seemingly common act of leisure travel. This will be as much by necessity as by choice, because the theoretical work on which I would draw to explain the phenomenon at hand has either been confused (as in the case of authenticity), or surprisingly underdeveloped (as in the case of routine-shattering situations).

Because no one methodology or theory would be sufficient to cover the topic in all its facets, my approach has been governed by a open-minded eclecticism. Methodologically, I employ an unconventional but useful combination of both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The bulk of the study relies on ethnographic observation of a ten-day North American Jewish pilgrimage-tour to Israel, but the issues that I address with the ethnography are first framed by survey data gathered from several thousand program participants. This stands the typical blending of qualitative and quantitative research on its head. Rather than rely on the survey to determine whether conclusions derived from ethnography are 'representative,' I use it primarily to identify some matters of importance that I then examine in depth through a combination of ethnography and applied social theory. In addition to these two forms of data, a third approach, social network analysis, is also utilized to help shed light on certain issues surrounding the group context in which the pilgrimage-tour took place.

This study evinces a theoretical eclecticism that emerges naturally from the multifaceted nature of the issues at hand. The discussions of authenticity in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

tourism are rooted in the sociological literatures on pilgrimage and tourism. The issues surrounding personal authenticity invoke theories of narrative identity, or self-as-story, that have become popular in cognitive psychology, women's studies and sociology. I also break new ground here by bringing literary and computer science theories of hypertext into the realm of the sociology of identity.

My consideration of the group experience invokes classical Durkheimian theory on religion and totemism, as well as the institutional theory Goffman developed in *Asylums* (1961). The concluding chapter on routine-shattering situations synthesizes classic works of sociology, anthropology and social psychology that address the related phenomena of charisma, collective effervescence, communitas, peak-experience, mystical consciousness and flow. All this takes place against the backdrop of a study of American Jews, a group that can be understood in terms of the sociology of religion and the sociology of ethnicity, and that also has a literature devoted specifically to it in the social scientific branch of Judaic studies.

Casting anything less than a broad theoretical net would leave much of the topic unexplained. Pilgrimage-tourism is too complex a phenomenon to be squeezed into a single, tidy theoretical package. I have accordingly looked for insight and inspiration in diverse corners. I give due consideration to important continuities that bring coherence amidst the diversity, especially in the concluding chapter. But readers looking for a Seinfeld ending, where the threads of each of the main characters' stories come together in one climactic scene, will

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

find themselves disappointed. Narrative unity, as I will suggest in a later chapter, is at best a rhetorical device and at worst a lie. There is no one-sentence answer to the research question posed above. Meaningfulness emerges in a number of ways, some of these more tightly intertwined than others.

This is evident if we consider some of the main findings of this work: People need not think of themselves as pilgrims at the outset of a voyage to return home feeling that they had been on a pilgrimage or a pilgrimage-tour. The travel situation itself can contain within it the means for producing a powerfully moving experience irrespective of travelers' initial motivations. Its institutional arrangements - including its Goffmanesque character as a voluntary, temporary total institution - play a crucial role in breaking down routines that normally keep the sacred at bay. Liberated from the strictures of daily existence and thrown into social relationships of great intensity, people come to experience for themselves the effervescence of collective life and the sacred power inherent in it. But although this sense of the sacred is largely an emergent phenomenon born of the routine-shattering situation, the visit to sacred symbols influences the process at every stage. It 'primes the pump,' encouraging pilgrim-tourists to be sensitive to the sacred, to expect it, to seek it and to interpret their feelings in light of it. It also provides the framing discourse that prevents the emergent sense of the sacred from spinning off in non-normative directions. Much of the power of these symbols rests in their perceived authenticity. This is rooted not only in ideology, but also in the imaginings of the travelers' themselves who come to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

understand what is authentic by simultaneously calling forth images of what is inauthentic. One of the things that distinguishes pilgrimage from other forms of travel is that the same judgments of authenticity that are applied to the place visited can also be applied to the self. But rather than leaving people feeling inauthentic by comparison, the encounter with the authentic Center enables a communion with it. Pilgrim-tourists thus come to see their own lives in terms of a framing narrative that bestows a sense of coherence to otherwise fragmented lives. In all these ways, a sense of meaningfulness emerges from modern pilgrimage-tourism.

The result of this research effort, I hope, will be a study that speaks to issues of importance to sociologists and Judaic studies scholars alike. In the most general terms, the phenomenon of mass pilgrimage-tourism stands at the intersection of core issues of modern life, including the relationship between personal identity and the social group; the possibility of religion in modern life; surveillance, control and bureaucratization; and globalization and transnationalism. For those interested in the condition of contemporary Jewish life, the study will be of interest for a number of additional reasons. It devotes sustained attention to the topic of Jewish travel to Israel, something that has become an important element of post-war American Jewish folk culture. In so doing, it takes a clear position in the central debate among scholars of contemporary Jewry, staking a strong claim for the "transformationist" school of thought which argues (in contrast to the "assimilationist" school) that

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

contemporary life provides novel grounds for ongoing Jewish cohesion in a manner that builds on the past while reshaping it for the present (S.M. Cohen 1988; Goldscheider 1986; Goldscheider and Zuckerman 1986). Moreover, in a field that has increasingly emphasized the personalization of identity (Cohen and Eisen 2000; Horowitz 2000), this study draws attention to the persistence of institutional and collective frameworks that influence and constrain personal choice.

THE TAGLIT PILGRIMAGE-TOUR IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The empirical research for this dissertation was conducted on a series of group pilgrimage-tours that over the past three years have brought tens of thousands of Jewish young adults from around the world to Israel. Known in Hebrew as *Taglit* ("Discovery," pronounced Tahg-LEET) and in English as "birthright israel,"[1] the tours represent a coordinated social intervention to influence Jewish religious and ethnic identity among Diaspora Jews. The core of the Taglit program is a ten-day pilgrimage-tour in Israel, provided cost-free to North American Jewish youth aged 18 to 26, inclusive. To date, the program has enrolled over 28,000 participants who have traveled in winter and spring cohorts each year since the program's launch in Winter 1999-2000.

---

[1] In a legal settlement with the pro-life organization "Birthright," which had claimed copyright infringement, Taglit adopted an entirely lowercase spelling for its English trademark name.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Initiated by private philanthropists, and supported by North American Jewry's communal institutions and the Israeli government, the $210 million intervention, slated to run semi-annually for five years, was conceived as "an outreach effort to young [Jewish] people who have not been drawn into existing Jewish frameworks" (Post 1999).[2] Since its conception, the sheer scale of the program has stirred up the grandest hopes and staunchest criticisms. Many influential Israeli and Diaspora Jews considered Taglit to be misguided and simplistic. Skeptics argued that a trip to Israel was not a "magic bullet" or "quick fix" that could, in ten days, re-socialize American Jewish youth to affirm the personal salience of ethnicity and religion (Liebler 1999; Rosenblum 2000; Treiman 2001; for responses to the charges, see Post 1999; Weinfeld 1999; Wohlgelernter 2000). While the long-term effects of the effort remain to be seen, program evaluators, myself among them, have concluded that it has met with short-term success, especially in the realm of ethnic identity (Kelner et al. forthcoming; Saxe et al. 2000, 2002).

The actual operation of the Taglit pilgrimage-tours is out-sourced to approximately 30 independent organizations that fall into five categories: campus-based, community-based, religious, non-denominational not-for-profit,

---

[2] The specific nature of these "frameworks" was left unclear -- although they presumably referred more to organizations such as synagogues than to institutions such as the family. The assumption of a clear demarcation between a group that had "been drawn into existing Jewish frameworks" and a group that had not was not borne out in subsequent research (Kelner et al. 2000, forthcoming; Saxe et al. 2000, 2002).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and for-profit.[3] Taglit coordinates these separate efforts, providing funding, support (e.g. negotiating group rates with El Al Israel Airlines and other carriers), and mandating curricular and logistical standards (Taglit 2001). These standards essentially codify what had in any case become standard practice among many of these organizations, a number of which had been running similar programs for decades (cf. Ritterband and Kadushin 2000).

The only eligibility requirements are that participants consider themselves to be Jewish, fall between the ages of 18 and 26, and have not previously participated in a "peer educational trip" to Israel. Participants in Taglit are drawn from around the world, with the largest block (and the one focused on in this research) coming from the United States and Canada. In many regards, these North American Jews have been a homogeneous group—mostly white, middle and upper-middle class college students or recent graduates. On Taglit, a plurality of them travel in groups organized by campus. Still, the participants[4] have varied along lines of internal differentiation particular to North American Jews, a not-insignificant fact given the religio-ethnic goals of the program organizers. Initially, women outnumbered men on the trips, but this reversed itself in the second year of the program, a result of the escalating violence in the region (Kelner et al. forthcoming). While the fact that trip is free has been a major

---

[3] A categorized list of these organizations is presented in Appendix B.
[4] From here on, I use the term "participants" to refer to exclusively to the North American participants.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

source of the program's appeal, most participants entered the program with a general awareness of Taglit's mission and an openness to the possibility that they might find the trip more meaningful than simply a free vacation (Kelner et al. 2000; Saxe et al. 2002:16-7).

The pilgrimage is a fast-paced bus-trek across the length and breadth of Israel, a country about the size of New Jersey.[5] Each group of approximately forty people has its own itinerary, tour bus, driver, American staff and Israeli guide. Israeli medics and armed guards also join the groups for periods of varying duration. Itineraries, which tend to be standardized due to established patterns, logistical constraints and curricular guidelines of the Taglit organizers (Chazan 1999; Ritterband and Kadushin 2000; Taglit 2001), include visits to Jewish holy sites, nature hikes, meetings with Israeli youth, social events, tours of ancient and modern historical areas, and guest lectures on a variety of topics regarding Israel and Judaism.[6] Free time is structured into the program, usually at night. Accommodations usually include hotels, youth hostels and kibbutz guest houses. Meals are frequently taken there, provided as boxed lunches, or eaten at local restaurants or shopping mall food courts.

---

[5] The itineraries largely exclude areas transferred to the Palestinian Authority under the 1993 Oslo Accords and subsequent agreements.
[6] A sample itinerary is found in Appendix C.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

American Jewry in the 1990s

Taglit entailed a massive mobilization of human, organizational, financial and technological resources that would have been technically impossible fifty years ago and politically impossible even one decade ago. To understand the changes that made a program like Taglit feasible it is best to place it in the context of American Jewish life in the latter half of the 20th century, and especially the 1990s. While a general concern over the erosion of community has figured prominently in American public discourse in recent years (Putnam 2000), this has been expressed as variations on a theme, with diverse groups voicing similar anxieties in different idioms. Americans Jews have phrased it as a deep-seated anxiety that Jewish group cohesion has weakened to the point of threatening the very survival of the ethnic community. Hand-wringing over the decline of Jewish distinctiveness is nothing new (Rawidowicz 1987), but during the 1990s, the North American Jewish community became increasingly preoccupied with a perceived 'crisis of continuity.' This sense of crisis was spurred in large measure by a demographic study of American Jews that showed evidence of dissipating group cohesion and weakened commitment to Jewish religious and ethnic norms, especially among the young (Kosmin et. al. 1991).

The Council of Jewish Federation's 1990 National Jewish Population Study (NJPS) came at a time when the major challenges that had galvanized the American Jewish organizations and grass roots in the 1970s and early 1980s had ceased to mobilize attention and passions. On the one hand, this was the result of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

missions accomplished. The campaign to free Soviet Jewry had largely been won in the context of America's broader Cold War victory (Friedman and Chernin 1999; Goldberg 1996). At home, with barriers to Jews more remembered or imagined than actually experienced, Jews basked in affluence and security (Lipset and Raab 1995; Silberman 1985). On the other hand, it was also the result of a changing world. The sense of pride and moral clarity with which American Jews viewed Israel following the 1967 Six Day War (Woocher 1986) fell casualty to the 1982 war in Lebanon, 1987 Palestinian intifada, 1993 Oslo Accords and 1995 assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (see Goldberg 1996). Moreover, this growing ambivalence came to the fore at the same time that internecine conflict between Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews over Israel-centered issues of religion and state boiled over repeatedly (Freedman 2000; Goldberg 1996; Wertheimer 1993). All this led to a growing assertiveness of denominational movements, each of whose core agenda had long been to advocate a religious lifestyle in accordance with the tenets of its particular stream of Judaism. By the 1990s, the retreat from consensual politics, the increased assertiveness of denominational institutions and religious leaders, and the statistics 'proving' that Jews were 'assimilating' combined to redirect attention away from issues of public policy to the question of how to perpetuate American Jewish life in its then-current form.

In the debate over ways to address this issue, innovative and ambitious plans were introduced, but far-reaching structural reform was never seriously

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

considered. This was, after all, an American community, given to thinking in terms of psychology, not sociology. The classical European Zionist argument that acculturation and assimilation were inevitable in open societies, and that communal boundaries and cultural integrity could be maintained only by physical resettlement in a self-determining Jewish state, was so far from communal consensus that no serious plan for promoting mass emigration was ever put forward in the central organs of American Jewry. This was so in spite of the fact that the federated system of Jewish philanthropies was even then engaged in a multi-billion dollar effort to resettle millions of Jews who had emigrated *en masse* from the former Soviet Union to the United States and Israel. Supporting emigration from the United States was therefore neither unthinkable nor organizationally unworkable. Likewise, no efforts were devoted to reinforcing communal cohesion through action to prevent Jewish geographic dispersion within the United States, and no attempts were made to stave off a projected decline in population size by working to increase fertility rates. Had Jewish organizations thought to address these issues, they might have offered subsidized housing in neighborhoods with established Jewish communities or free day care. Such grandiose efforts at social engineering may have been doomed to failure, but the prospects were never seriously assessed because the concepts themselves were simply beyond the realm of the thinkable. Jewish communal responses to the perceived crisis accepted as unchangeable certain ground rules of American social and economic life, and focused instead on

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

influencing people's mindsets within this context in a manner that accorded with existing institutional frameworks. Programs were therefore initiated to "transform" synagogues, expand enrollment in Jewish parochial schools, encourage adult Jewish learning, and bring generations together in family Jewish education, to name only a few.

In short, the North American Jewish community responded to concerns over its continued viability and vitality by directing attention and funding at educational interventions to foster Jewish commitment, especially among the young.[7] Most of these interventions built on established institutions and patterns of activity. The youth pilgrimage-tour to Israel—a type of program that was begun in the 1950s and that by the mid-1980s was involving several thousand American Jewish young people each year[8] was one beneficiary of this approach. Advocates of communally-sponsored educational youth trips to Israel argued that such "Israel experience programs," as the trips had come to be known, were "one of the most powerful resources that the North American Jewish Community has at its disposal to face the challenge of adult Jewish identity and involvement" (Chazan 1997). They backed up their claims with more than a

---

[7] Efforts have also been devoted to strengthening the organizations that implement Jewish communal policy. This includes, for example, programs to improve training of educators and other Jewish communal service professionals.

[8] Exact figures are difficult to come by. Different sources count the numbers in different ways. Low estimates with incomplete data hover around 8,000 teenagers and college students participating in such programs during the mid-1980s (Cohen and Cohen 2000:14-5; Mittelberg 1999:137-8). A more comprehensive effort at assessing participation in a single year, 1985, placed the numbers around 15,000 (Hochstein 1986:15-7).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

quarter-century of research. By the early 1990s a coalition of educators and volunteer leaders had emerged to advocate a central role for Israel travel in communal efforts to address issues of Jewish identity. Indeed, the very terminology they employed bespoke their views on the matter. Barry Chazan, whose work has helped give the field both self-awareness and theoretical coherence, wrote that "The introduction of the word 'experience' rather than 'trip' signified the belief that going to Israel was more than a one time pleasure jaunt, but rather that it had the possibility of being an important formative educational event in a child's development" (1997:5n).

Jewish Travel to Israel over the Ages

The mass movement of Jewish pilgrim-tourists to Israel is less the restoration of an ancient heritage than a new development in its own right. Biblically mandated pilgrimages, or *regalim*, required travel within Eretz Yisrael (the land of Israel) for the purpose of offering sacrifices at the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. Although this was a collective movement of large numbers of people, the timing and behavior for these *regalim* were mandated, and were intended to serve God and the communal welfare rather than the pilgrim himself. Offerings to expiate sin or express thanks could be made at other times, but in these cases, the purpose of travel was again the conduct of a ritual act in a ritually-appointed place. Following the Romans' expulsion of the Jews from Judea and their dispersion throughout the world, individual Jews who had the means and the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

opportunity continued to visit Palestine, but mass Jewish pilgrimage as such essentially ceased to exist. The example of the 12th-century Jewish pilgrim and trader, Benjamin of Tudela, is sometimes cited as evidence of the persistence of Jewish pilgrimage in the Middle Ages (Mittelberg 1999), but the moment we begin mentioning pilgrims by name the suspicion is warranted that we are talking about an exception rather than the rule. The political condition of the dispersed Jews is not the only or even the primary reason for the paucity of post-exilic Jewish pilgrimage. Travel primarily for pleasure began to emerge among the elite only during the 18th century (Mittelberg 1999), and did not become democratized until the 19th (Aron 1999; Urry 1990).

American travel to Palestine did not emerge on any significant scale until after the Civil War, when a proliferation of "travel agencies, cruise lines, and professional guide services" laid the groundwork for a modern mass tourism industry that could span the globe (Shandler and Wenger 1997:13; see also Katz 1985). Palestine's infrastructural capacity to accommodate the growing number of overseas visitors also developed, including the improvement of transportation links throughout the territory and the construction of new hotels. By the 1920s and 30s, American Jewish travel to Palestine had become common enough that its leadership was regularly paying visits, and uncommon enough that these received coverage in the American Jewish press (Shandler and Wenger 1997:14-20).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Among the infrastructural supports for Diaspora Jewish travel to Palestine and later Israel was the growth of the Zionist kibbutz[9] movement. Kibbutzim met their demand for agricultural labor in part through the use of young volunteers from overseas. At a minimum, the kibbutzim offered volunteers lodging, food, and a base of operation for an extended stay in the country. In their heyday, they also offered Diaspora Jewish volunteers the fantasy of recreating themselves anew. Or as Philip Roth's alter-ego, Alexander Portnoy, exclaimed, "Hey, here *we're* the WASPs!.... I should stay. Yes, stay! Buy a pair of those khaki short pants—become a man!" (Roth 1969:286,304). But they not only played on images of masculinity. Women, too, found themselves swept up by the experience. In a 1951 article for the Young Judaea youth movement's newspaper, *The Senior*, high school students Tammi Hendel and Sherry Steinberg described a summer in Israel that ended with a week-and-a-half on Kibbutz Geva.

> To me,[10] those last ten days will always be the most memorable. I have never felt the peace of complete exhaustion after a hard 8½-hour working day. That feeling of belonging to a land; of being able to look around at a range of mountains on one side, turn around and feel them rolling into a valley; to be able to look down from a

---

[9] The kibbutz (pl. kibbutzim) is a communal settlement in Israel originally centered around agriculture.

[10] Although the article was co-authored, one of the co-authors (I do not know which) chose to write in the first-person singular.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> ladder and see just how many olives I've picked; to feel the sun forcing by its strength perspiration where the breeze had just dried it up – that feeling will never again be recaptured as it was at that moment (Hendel and Steinberg 1951).

The 1950s Watershed

The earliest travel programs bringing young Diaspora Jews to Palestine were the *hachsharah* programs of youth movements like Habonim, Hashomer Hatzair and Hapoel Hamizrachi that flourished in the 1930s. These entailed agricultural training in Diaspora followed by settlement as a group in Palestine. The relocation was intended to be permanent. For the less ideologically committed, year-long university- and leadership training programs enabled college-age Diaspora Jews to enjoy extended, but temporary, visits to Palestine during the years of the British Mandate (Porath 1987; Machon 2001). In spite of the existence of such programs, organizationally-sponsored youth pilgrimage-tours began in earnest only in the 1950s, after the May 14, 1948 establishment of the State of Israel.[11] In 1950, the Jewish Agency/World Zionist Organization[12] ran for the first

---

[11] The development of such long-term programs is a separate story that, like the evolution of the youth pilgrimage-tours, has not been adequately documented. I refer interested readers to M. Herbert Danzger's (1989) chapters on the emergence in the 1960s and 70s of Israeli seminaries (*yeshivot*) to train non-Orthodox Diaspora Jewish youth in the ways of Orthodoxy, one of the few works of scholarship that focuses an historical lens on the issue.

[12] Prior to the establishment of the State of Israel, the Jewish Agency served as the quasi-governmental organization representing Palestinian Jewry. For all practical purposes the Jewish

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

time an Israel Summer Institute (Rolnick 1965:47, 302). A year later, the Zionist youth movement Young Judaea inaugurated its first "Summer-in-Israel Course" along similar lines to the JA/WZO summer program[13] (Young Judaea 1951:9,13). Other Zionist youth movements also established programs around this time. The two largest American Jewish religious denominations, Conservatism and Reform, followed suit several years later, each establishing summer trips through their congregational youth movements.[14] United Synagogue Youth (USY), established by the Conservative movement in 1951, sent its first group of ten members to Israel in the summer of 1956 for an eight-week "Israel Pilgrimage" tour ("1957 Can Be Your Israel Year," *News and Views*, February, 1957; Lewis

---

Agency was indistinguishable from the World Zionist Organization (WZO). In 1952, the Israeli government passed a Basic Law that defined the WZO-Jewish Agency's legal status in relation to the state, recognizing it as the authorized agency for "the development and settlement of the country, the absorption of immigrants from the Diaspora and the coordination of the activities in Israel of Jewish institutions and organizations active in those fields" (cited in Elazar and Arbel 1994:131). Under this rubric, the WZO-Jewish Agency supported Zionist youth activities, including the summer tours which initially served people seen as prime candidates for immigration. Later, Jewish and Zionist education in Diaspora would be reserved specifically to the WZO, and subsequently transferred to a Joint Authority of the WZO, Jewish Agency and Israeli Ministry of Education (Elazar and Arbel 1994; Likhovski 1994). For all the changes, the WZO, Jewish Agency or some combination thereof have been central to the implementation of Israel experience programs from their inception to the current day. I sometimes adopt the convention, common in the documents I examined, to refer to the WZO-Jewish Agency conglomeration simply as the Jewish Agency.

[13] There was overlap of personnel assigned to the two programs. Young Judaea's post-trip report noted with some disappointment, "The madrich [leader] who had been assigned to our course and had been instrumental in developing the outline (Walter Ackerman), unfortunately appeared to have been reassigned by the Agency to its own summer program" (Young Judaea 1951:13).

[14] In the case of Conservative Jewry, separate programs were run by the congregational and clerical arms. The former established USY, which is the primary focus of this section. The latter had established a camping movement, Ramah, under the religious and educational auspices of the movement's rabbinic seminary. Its Israel experience program, Ramah Seminar, was intended for campers in the summer before the 11th grade.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1991; Dr. Morton K. Siegel, Interview, May 8, 2002). The Reform movement's National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) began its own "Bible Tour" and "Antiquities Tour" programs in the 1950s as well (Cook 1979:9; NFTY 1989:9-10, 2001; Rabbi Henry Skirball, interview, April 29, 2002).[15]

The emergence of these summer trips, which by the 1980s would come to be known as "Israel experience programs," was tied to a confluence of political, economic, social, organizational and technological factors. The Great Depression and World War II effectively precluded the establishment of such programs in the 1930s and first half of the 1940s. Upon the conclusion of the War, British colonial rule in Palestine became increasingly untenable. Although the turmoil and uncertain political fate of the territory provided no guarantee to would-be planners that the situation on the ground would remain stable in the months between a trip's planning and execution, in 1946 the Jewish Agency/World Zionist Organization brought 30 South African Jewish youth leaders to its first *Machon LeMadrichei Chutz La'aretz*, or "Institute for Youth Leaders From Abroad," which lasted for the better part of a year (Machon 2001). By 1947 there was enough confidence in the future that American and European-based Zionist youth movements began looking into the possibility of establishing of summer camping programs in Israel for their members (Cohen and Cohen 2000:6-7 ;

---

[15] I continue to search for archival material from the 1950s that will allow me to firmly establish the year of origin of NFTY's Israel programs. Various sources from 1979 to the present have reported the programs' year of origin as anywhere from 1954 to 1959.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"Summer Israel Scholarship Plan With Tsofim Announced," *The Senior*, December 1949). The Jewish Agency/WZO's Youth Department, which was the relevant quasi-governmental partner in Israel for such an initiative, took up the issue only after the United Nations recommended partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states in November of that year. Cohen and Cohen (2000:6-7) present minutes of a December 26, 1947 meeting which discussed "many inquiries" from abroad to establish "summer camps in Israel" for Diaspora Jewish youth.[16] A decision was taken in principle to respond favorably, and that the implementation of the project would fall to the Youth Department in conjunction with the Zionist Information Tourist Bureau and the Youth Bureau of the National Council's Education Department. It was agreed that a one-month summer program of touring, culture and recreation should be established for three groups of 30 American, British and French 13-17 year-olds. A decision was explicitly made not to attempt to implement such a program in the summer of 1948, and instead the hope was expressed that it would be feasible in the summer of 1949. In 1950, the Jewish Agency was running a summer program of its own (Rolnick 1965). A year later it was also helping to organize and subsidize trips for at least one other youth movement (Young Judaea 1951).

In the United States, the market-segment for such programs was a new category of youth known as "teen-agers." The term itself came into being only in

---

[16] The translation from the Hebrew is mine.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1941, and was associated with an effort that dated back to the mid-19th century but gained renewed impetus during the New Deal to keep young people out of the work force by extending the length of their training in school settings (Hine 1999; see also Coleman 1961; Nasaw 1981). With their lives structured around a 10-month academic calendar, summers became leisure time for teenagers who could afford not to work (Gold 2002). As for the financial means to enable teenagers to spend two months in Israel, a growing affluence among post-war American Jews (Gans 1958; Glazer 1958; Kramer and Leventman 1961; Moore 1994) made it easier for many families to bear part of the cost. In addition to family resources, financial support from sponsoring organizations, local Jewish communities and the Jewish Agency/WZO was available in the form of scholarships to individuals and subsidies to programs.[17] These helped defray the costs of the trip, which in the 1950s ranged from about $750 to $900[18] for an eight-week program, including airfare ("Israel Summer Program," *The Senior*, February 1951; "1957 Can Be Your Israel Year," *News and Views*, February, 1957; USY 1957; Rabbi Paul Freedman, interview, May 7-8, 2002; Siegel, interview, May 8, 2002; Skirball, interview, April 29, 2002).

---

[17] In the early 1950s Young Judaea applied 10% of funds raised from its Hava Emergency Drive to subsidize travel on its Israel trips. In the late 1950s and early 60s, the Conservative movement's Building Spiritual Bridges campaign gave United Synagogue Youth a rebate of 25% of the funds USY members raised. This rebate was applied to USY's Israel Pilgrimage Scholarship program. Both programs will be described more fully below ("...Our Israel Tour" *The Senior*, May 1951; "B.S.B.," *News and Views*, October, 1964).

[18] Adjusted for inflation, this is about $5,000 - $6,000 in 2002 dollars (see Sahr 2002; the base year

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Organizationally, the post-war years represented a period of expansion for youth-oriented American Jewish organizations. The mass migration of Jews to newly-established suburban communities sparked a boom in synagogue construction. Much of this new institution building was motivated by the new suburbanites' desires to give their children a Jewish education (Gans 1958, Sklare 1955; Sklare and Greenbaum 1967; Wertheimer 1999). In many ways, the organized American Jewish community became preoccupied with anxieties and hopes for the Jewish future embodied in its youth (Prell N.d.). In addition to the expansion of congregational schools, the Jewish educational infrastructure generally experienced rapid growth in these years, including camps (Prell N.d.; Moore 1994; Sales et al. 2002), youth groups and teachers' associations (Wertheimer 1999). The growing focus on youth and the development of institutional structures to serve them were a crucial enabling factor in the emergence of Israel experience programs. In 1947 and 1951, for example, the two Conservative movement organizations that would eventually operate Israel experience programs—Camp Ramah and USY—were founded. Similarly, in 1941, the Zionist youth movement Young Judaea established a separate "Senior Judaean League" for its 15- to 18-year-old members, who became known as "seniors" (*Hashachar* 1941). Six years later, the league's reorganization into

---

used for the calculation was 1955).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"Senior Young Judaea" transferred full authority from adults to elected teenage officers (Schanin 1959).

The primary technological change of the 1950s and 60s associated with the creation of Israel experience programs was the development of inexpensive overseas commercial air travel and especially the commercial application of the jet engine. BOAC inaugurated jet travel in 1952 on its London - Johannesburg route (Ward N.d.a). But it was eight years later, in 1960, that El Al Israel Airlines began its first jet service. Prior to that, it employed Lockheed Constellations and Super Constellations for the New York to Lydda (Lod) route that it opened in 1950 (Ward N.d.b; see also, "Go In Peace!" *News and Views*, July, 1958). Dr. Morton K. Siegel, who from 1952 to 1965 served as the director of the Conservative Movement's Department of Youth Activities, which oversaw USY, recalled flying these "old Connies which they got third-hand, which was fine and they always got to where they were going, but the only thing new about them was the blue and white paint" (interview, May 8, 2002).

Idlewild to Lydda (via Shannon)

Many of today's basic elements of the Israel pilgrimage-tour for Diaspora Jewish youth were set in place when the first programs emerged a half-century ago. Three of the pioneers in the field were Young Judaea, the largest non-partisan, non-denominational American Zionist youth movement; and the youth groups of the two largest American Jewish religious denominations—the Reform

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

movement's National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) and the Conservative movement's United Synagogue Youth (USY). Archival research and oral history interviews with individuals who coordinated or staffed these organizations' summer Israel trips in the 1950s and 60s revealed numerous commonalities among the programs, as well as considerable differences. Sponsored by religious or ideological youth movements and run by educators, they were conceived and implemented as *mission-driven educational programs rather than simple tours or pilgrimages*. Sightseeing and paying homage, while important, were only two aspects of multifaceted curricula that included (depending on the orientation of the sponsor) activities like prayer, study, group-building, physical labor and meetings with Israeli counterparts. Both Siegel, who founded USY's Israel Pilgrimage in 1956, and Rabbi Paul Freedman, who was involved with the program as Associate Director of the Youth Department from 1960-66 and Director from 1967-1991, emphasized that in their view the program's core content was as much about training people in a Conservative Jewish lifestyle as about seeing Israel. The means for achieving this were a combination of formal and informal educational techniques. Religious text study, lectures, and discussion sessions addressed classical topics like the Book of Joshua and more immediate concerns like Jewish views of premarital sex. The traditional Hebrew grace was recited after every meal,[19] and the three daily worship services were

---

[19] A shortened form was recited on weekdays, and the full version on the Sabbath.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

conducted regularly. Knowing that such experiences of prayer and study would be unfamiliar to many of the participants, Siegel and Freedman saw the trip as an opportunity to construct an experiential learning environment where familiarity and comfort with the religious lifestyle could be developed (Freedman, interview, May 7-8, 2002; Siegel, interview, May 8, 2002).

Participants echoed these ideas. Addressing the final banquet of his 1963 USY Pilgrimage group, a USY Pilgrim named John Ruskay (who would later become the Executive Vice President of UJA-Federation of New York) told his travelmates about "one highlight of Pilgrimage 1963 which strongly came once a week and which I feel had special significance. For all of us, Shabbat became a beautiful day where we could sit down with our fellow USY'ers and just talk, whether it be about Torah, USY, or what we had seen during the preceding week." Whatever it had been before, Ruskay suggested that it had become something else, something that they "will have to try to emulate in the Unites States." The perceptive pilgrim understood that this was the result of experiential learning. "For six weeks we lived in an intensive Jewish atmosphere. As a result, the meaning of Birkat Hamazon, of Shaharit, Minhah, and Maariv, Shabbat, or Aiha and Tisha B'Av became a little clearer.[20] We now realize how much more we must study and how limited our education was previously" (Ruskay 1963).

---

[20] The Hebrew references are to religious worship: Grace after meals; morning, afternoon and evening prayers; the Sabbath; and the Book of Lamentations which is read on the fast day of the Ninth of Av.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The mission-driven orientation was especially evident in the development of Young Judaea's program. Young Judaea had established a relationship with the Israeli scout movement, Tsofim, in 1924 ("Our Hava," *The Senior*, November 1950; Schanin 1959:82). From the outset, the ability to strengthen ties with Tsofim was a key element in Young Judaea's conception of its goals for a summer Israel program. In 1949, an ultimately abortive effort to launch a program the following summer was announced. Readers of Senior Young Judaea's national monthly learned that "Our seniors and leaders will go together as a group, and live in Tsofim homes and summer camps while touring and studying in Israel" ("Summer Israel Scholarship Plan With Tsofim Announced," *The Senior*, December 1949). By late 1950, developments in Israel only served to increase the perceived link between a summer program and the partnership with Tsofim. Two years prior, Tsofim had proposed to Young Judaea the joint establishment of a leadership training center, or "*hava*," in Israel (Schanin 1959:90-1). In Autumn 1950, the Jewish National Fund sent word to Tsofim that it had conditionally allocated a plot of land for the building of the *hava*, provided that construction would commence within a certain time period. Young Judaea immediately launched a Hava Emergency Drive (H.E.D.) to raise $10,000 toward the construction of the facility. As plans simultaneously progressed for Young Judaea's first Summer-in-Israel Course, the two became conflated in the minds of Young Judaeans. No longer did the trip stand on its own; it had become the opportunity to inaugurate the Tsofim-Young Judaea *hava* and take possession of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

a physical asset in the land of Israel. In the months after the announcement of the JNF land allocation, *The Senior*'s reports on plans for the summer trip were as enthusiastic that "the Tsofim-Young Judaea Hava will serve as headquarters" as that the trip would be taking place at all. A November 1950 editorial entitled "Our Hava" devoted some attention to the summer-in-Israel program, but as the title suggests, the editorial conveyed the sense that the point of going to Israel was less to see the country than to see the *hava*. "By next summer, if a fast rate of building is kept up, Judaeans will be able to attend the opening of the Hava-Tsofim. Scholarship plans are now being made to enable these Judaeans to go to Israel and take part in the first summer session at the Hava" ("Our Hava," *The Senior*, November 1950; "Israel Summer Program," *The Senior*, February 1951; "Hava Dedication Spurs H.E.D. Responses," *The Senior*, May 1951).[21]

Ultimately, the *hava* was not ready for the summer of 1951. A dedication ceremony took place in the Spring of that year, with construction slated to begin

---

[21] USY's summer Israel trip also became linked to the Conservative movement's broader efforts to establish a physical plant in Israel. In the July 1958 edition of USY's national newspaper, *News and Views*, a front page article wishing a "Safe Journey to Our USY Pilgrims" appeared under a large architect's sketch of a multi-building complex. "Of special note to all USY'ers will be the ground breaking ceremonies of the Seminary Center in Jerusalem on July 29 in which the USY contingent will play a role" ("Go in Peace!" *News and Views*, July 1958). Construction of the Center, which "for the first time, [has] given our Conservative Movement a physical base in Israel" was financed by the movement's "Building Spiritual Bridges" program, in which USY took part. Twenty-five percent of USY's contribution to this fundraising effort was channeled back to the USY regions to finance a USY Israel Pilgrimage Scholarship program, which in turn enabled Pilgrims to visit the Center their funds had helped to establish ("B.S.B.," *News and Views*, October, 1964). Photographs and entire articles devoted to the USY Pilgrims' visits to the Center were common features of the paper's coverage of subsequent USY Israel Pilgrimages, and other articles on the trips frequently made passing reference to the visits ("*Tzeitchem L'Shalom*," *News and Views*, May, 1964; "Dr. Posner Addressed USY," *News and Views*, October, 1964; "Summertime! - And the Living is USY," *News and Views*, May, 1965; "BSB Contributions Up

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

months later. On the practical level, plans for the trip had to proceed irrespective. The material impact that the excitement over the *hava* had on the first trip was ultimately financial. The National Senior Convention passed a resolution mandating that 10% of the H.E.D. money collected would be allocated to Israel trip scholarships ("Hava Dedication Spurs H.E.D. Responses," *The Senior*, May 1951; "...Our Israel Tour" *The Senior*, May 1951).

The lack of a *hava* did not deter Young Judaea from realizing its hopes of using the Summer-in-Israel Course to foster ties with Tsofim. Upon their arrival in Israel, the 19 American participants were put up in Jerusalem for the night. It had taken them five days' travel to get to Israel, but the city that had figured so prominently in Jewish thought over the ages was not their destination.[22] "Even sleeping over night in Jerusalem," two young women on the trip later wrote, "we saw so little that we felt only another sense of delay" (Hendel and Steinberg 1951). When morning broke, the group quickly caught a public bus out of the city to go to its real destination, a Tsofim camp in the surrounding hill country. There they spent six days working on "general scoutcraft projects" with their Israeli counterparts. Since eleven of the 19 Americans had attended Young Judaea's camp Tel Yehudah during previous summers, the scouting activities were not

---

20%," *News and Views*, November, 1966; Trolin 1964).

[22] In contrast, USY, a religious movement, informed potential applicants in its 1957 Pilgrimage brochure that it would be spending the entire first week in Jerusalem and returning to the city several times over the course of the summer. A total of 18 days were slated to be spent in the city, more time than in any other place. This, in spite of the fact that the walled Old City, where most of the holy sites are located, was under Jordanian control at the time and off limits to the Jewish

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

unfamiliar to them, and in many ways the only difference was that they were being done with Israelis at a camp in Israel (Young Judaea 1951).

The point, however, was to meet the Tsofim personally. Young Judaea's report on the summer's activities, which included a section devoted to the "Relationship with the Tsofim," expressed some disappointment with what they found at first, finding fit to comment on the relative lack of "halutzic [pioneering] intent" of these "middle-class" youth from "white-collar families" compared to other scouts they met later (Young Judaea 1951:6,13). More enthusiastic than the authors of the report, participants Hendel and Steinberg also revealed an interest the Zionist education that the meeting with Israeli scouts afforded. "We spent hour upon hour asking them questions about the land, the immigration problem, [and] the Tsofim movement," they wrote, although they also admitted that "not seldom did we end up discussing the boy-girl relationships in Israel compared to those here" (1951).

Ideologically committed to preparing its membership for a life of physical labor as Zionist pioneers in Israel, Young Judaea saw its Summer-in-Israel Course as an opportunity to provide a first-hand experience with the lifestyle it advocated. Toward the end of the trip, participants split into two groups that were sent to two different kibbutzim for ten days of work and study.[23] Even

---

visitors (USY 1957:1).

[23] The division was based on whether people were members of the "garin," or seed-group that was preparing to emigrate and settle in Israel together.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

when not picking olives there or pitching tents with the Tsofim, the sightseeing stuck close to the primary mission as well. Jewish religious sites were not given much more prominence than Christian and Moslem ones. For the handful of synagogues they visited,[24] they also saw churches and mosques. At the time, the Old City of Jerusalem was under Jordanian control, and access to many Jewish holy sites was restricted. Even so, the modern Zionist enterprise was the aspect of Israel most prominently on display to the Young Judaeans. The detailed itinerary prepared soon after the conclusion of the 1951 trip showed that in the first five weeks, over twenty kibbutzim were visited, some twice, and usually with two or more seen in a given day (Young Judaea 1951:1-2). Visits were also made to waterworks, desert pumping stations and factories that produced automobiles, aluminum, chocolate and olive oil. A good indicator of the nature of the tourism is given by the first actual sightseeing excursions in Israel. Having left Jerusalem without touring the city, the travelers used their Tsofim camp as base for a two-day excursion to see not holy sites or ancient ruins, but a tent city for Jewish immigrants from Arab countries, a tuberculosis sanitarium, three kibbutzim, and an Arab village (Young Judaea 1951).

Because of the specificity of the missions, programs in the early years were targeted not to the Jewish adolescent population at large, but to members of the

---

[24] Only two were named in the itinerary, but sites like Safed that are famous for their synagogues were mentioned.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

specific youth movements and especially the leadership.[25] Recruitment took place primarily through networks of rabbis and youth advisors, flyers and brochures mailed to congregations, advertisements and articles in national youth group publications, regional structures that tied local chapters to a national office, and promotional tours by staff people. Alumni of the programs were also used, both to recommend specific friends and family members and also to speak about the programs at meetings of local youth group chapters ("Summer Israel Scholarship Plan With Tsofim Announced" *The Senior,* December 1949; "...Our Israel Tour" *The Senior,* May 1951; "1957 Can Be Your Israel Year," *News and Views,* February, 1957; Freedman, interview, May 7-8, 2002; Siegel, interview, May 8, 2002; Skirball, interview, April 29, 2002).

The focus on youth movement members tended to keep the numbers low at first, and helped to establish the normative age range of the programs at 15-18 years old. NFTY generally took two groups of about 40 teenagers each during the program's early years (Skirball, interview, April 29, 2002). The Young Judaea trip began with 19 participants in 1951 (Young Judaea 1951). By 1959, it was reserving slots for 35 (Weisberg N.d.). USY's Israel Pilgrimage, which had six girls and four boys for its first trip in 1956, was sending 61 people two years later. For most of

---

[25] In 1964 and 1965, USY hired Pilgrimage alumni Jerry Epstein, John Ruskay, Dan Siegel and Elliot Rosen to return with subsequent cohorts as Junior Hanhalah [leadership] ("*Tzeitchem L'Shalom,*" *News and Views,* May, 1964; "Summertime! - And the Living is USY," *News and Views,* May, 1965). Rabbi Jerome Epstein is today the Executive Vice President of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. Dr. John Ruskay is the Executive Vice President of UJA-Federation of New York. Danny Siegel went on to become one of the Conservative movement's leading authors

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the 1960s its enrollment fluctuated between 100 and 150. USY's first recruitment efforts after the Six Day War yielded a cohort of over 250. A participant-staff ratio of about 12:1 was maintained throughout these years of growth ("1957 Can Be Your Israel Year," *News and Views*, February, 1957; "Go In Peace!," *News and Views*, July, 1958; "More About Our Israel and European Pilgrimages," *News and Views*, December, 1959; "120 to Israel," *News and Views*, May, 1963; "*Tzeitchem L'Shalom*," *News and Views*, May, 1964; "Summertime! - And the Living is USY," *News and Views*, May, 1965; "BSB Contributions Up 20%," *News and Views*, November, 1966; "Israelis to Join USY Summer Trips," *News and Views*, May, 1968; "'68 Summer Great for USY," *News and Views*, Summer 1968; "Get Ready for USY Summer ... Now!" *News and Views*, Fall 1968; Keller 1966; Lewis 1991; Vilnach 1964; Siegel, interview, May 8, 2002).

Would-be participants to the programs were required to submit a written application. These collected basic demographic and contact information, inquired into health and fitness to travel, and usually asked about applicants' backgrounds in their respective youth movement. *News and Views* announced that applicants to USY's 2nd Israel Pilgrimage, in 1957, would be "selected on the basis of interest and activity in USY or upon the recommendation of their United Synagogue congregation" ("1957 Can Be Your Israel Year," *News and Views*, February, 1957). The Pilgrimage publicity brochure elaborated on this with

---

and activists for social justice, and remains influential in the USY movement today.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

characteristic sobriety. "Naturally first preference will be given to those whose organizational background and educational background indicate that they will benefit most from the trip and bring back information and attitudes of value to the members of their USY groups." To this end, applicants would be required to submit "a personal letter of not more than 300 words indicating why the applicant wishes to go and two letters of reference—from either the rabbi or president of the congregation, or chairman of the Board of Education or Youth Activities committee of the congregation" (USY 1957:3-4). In the end, "the final decision" would rest with the Israel Committee of the Department of Youth activities, which would personally interview each applicant.

Staff for the programs typically included an American male and female and an Israeli guide (usually male). Millie Rubenstein and Robert Levine, two teenage members of Young Judaea's 1951 trip played the additional role of program staff, with the primary responsibility of getting the group safely to Israel and then turning the reins over to Israel leaders (Young Judaea 1951). Applicants to USY's 1957 trip were duly informed that "The supervisors will be mature men and women all of whom will be rabbis[26] or educators specifically

---

[26] At the time, the rabbinate was still an all-male profession. Rabbi Albert Lewis staffed the first USY trip ("1957 Can be Your Israel Year, *News and Views*, February, 1957; Lewis 1991). Mainstays of the Israel Pilgrimage staff throughout the 1960s were Rabbi and Mrs. Harold and Etta Kamsler, of Norristown, Pennsylvania ("Go In Peace!," *News and Views*, July, 1958; "*Tzeitchem L'Shalom*," *News and Views*, May, 1964; "Summertime! - And the Living is USY," *News and Views*, May, 1965; "'68 Summer Great for USY," *News and Views*, Summer 1968; Siegel, interview, May 8, 2002). Among the rabbis who staffed NFTY's early trips were Balfour Brickner and Stephen Schafer. Schafer would later become Director of the Union of American Hebrew Congregation's Youth

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

chosen on the basis of their intimate acquaintance with USY and the objectives of our movement" (USY 1957:5). Often these were married couples who worked as volunteers in exchange for the plane tickets to Israel. The same phenomenon characterized NFTY's staff. In later years, the growing ease of travel to Israel and the rising popularity of synagogue congregation trips[27] made the youth trips less attractive to rabbis. But in the 1950s and 60s, the summer youth programs were one of the few ways rabbis and other interested Jewish communal professionals could make an extended Israel trip affordable (Freedman, interview May 7-8, 2002; Skirball, interview, April 29, 2002). Rabbi Henry Skirball, who began working with NFTY in 1962 and headed it from 1967 to 1971, recalled that little effort was needed to recruit staff to the NFTY programs. "They came to us," he said, noting competition for the limited number of positions. More problematic were the rabbis' congregations which sometimes considered the trips to be vacation time. It fell to Skirball and others to convince the synagogues' lay leadership that staffing the trips should be treated as part of their rabbis' work time, "and that if their rabbi didn't do it, some other congregation's rabbi would be doing the work for their kids" (interview, April 29, 2002).

Israeli staff were found either through the Jewish Agency/WZO or through Israel-based organizations affiliated with the American movements.

Division (which oversaw NFTY) in the 1970s (Skirball, interview, April 29, 2002).

[27] For studies of contemporary congregational trips, see Grant (2000a,b).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Young Judaea's first trip, for example, was staffed by "Momo" (Mordecai Forman), a member of Tsofim who was called in after the two men originally hired by the Jewish Agency to lead the group were withdrawn. Guides were sometimes attached to the group for the duration of the trip, and were sometimes specialists brought on only to guide specific segments of the itinerary (Young Judaea 1951; Siegel, interview May 8, 2002; Skirball, interview, April 29, 2002). Qualified Israeli "teacher-guides" could be found thanks to the *Yediath Ha'Aretz* ("Knowledge of the Land") movement that had begun in the 1920s. At the time, the *yishuv*'s umbrella organization for trade unions, the "*Histadrut*," sought to develop adult education programs for Palestinian Jews. Employing walking tours (*tiyulim*) in the service of nation-building, the *Histadrut*'s efforts sprouted into a full-fledged movement with training schools, journals, and hundreds of part- and full-time professional tour leaders who conceived of their role as both teacher and guide (Katz 1985) .

Much of the logistical work necessary for implementing the programs was contracted to third parties in Israel, primarily the Jewish Agency/WZO (USY 1957; Young Judaea 1951; Freedman, interview, May 7-8, 2002; Siegel, interview, May 8, 2002; Rabbi Joe Wernik, interview, May 26, 2002). "Thanks to the cooperation of the Youth Department of the Jewish Agency," USY's eight-page brochure for the 1957 Israel Pilgrimage informed applicants, "a most complete, instructive and exciting stay has been planned" (USY 1957:3) For Young Judaea's 1951 program, an "entire curriculum, including sichot [lectures], discussion

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

topics and itinerary had been worked out in the late spring by two young men" who worked for the Jewish Agency (Young Judaea 1951:4). The Agency was also responsible for Young Judaea's travel arrangements and housing. Tsofim also played a role in logistical coordination, but the involvement of a second Israeli organization introduced a complicating element. "It seemed quite apparent to us," the authors of the post-trip report wrote, "that there was no real clearing of the lines between the Tsofim and the Jewish Agency, with the result of buck-passing on several instances" (13). To facilitate oversight of the planning process, both Young Judaea and USY hired Jerusalem-based liaisons with the Jewish Agency ("Summertime! - And the Living is USY," *News and Views*, May, 1965; Young Judaea 1951:14; Jules A. Gutin, interview, June 5, 2002; Wernik, interview, May 26, 2002)

Until they had permanent staff in Jerusalem, supervision of the planning process was of a limited nature. The March 1951 edition of *The Senior* devoted a front-page article to a month-long trip to Israel by Normal Schanin, Young Judaea's National Executive Director. There, he would "complete arrangements for the Summer-in-Israel Scholarship Plan." The very newsworthiness of the Schanin trip, including the fact that article saw fit to mention that he would make "a quick tour of the country," serves to emphasize exceptional character of the visit ("Our Links in Israel", *The Senior*, March 1951). Nearly twenty years later, parenthetical references to professional leadership's planning-visits in Israel

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

were appearing in USY's house organ, *News and Views*, but with much less fanfare ("Israelis to Join USY Summer Trips, *News and Views*, May, 1968).

NFTY was somewhat of an exception to the pattern established by Young Judaea and USY. Instead of relying on the Jewish Agency to make logistical arrangements, NFTY sub-contracted the work to a Boston-based educator/entrepreneur named Simon Chasdi, who had immigrated to the United States from Palestine some years earlier and had maintained contacts there. Chasdi began his relationship with NFTY's Israel program in 1960 when the UAHC Youth Division was under the director of Rabbi Sam Cook, and continued it through the tenure of Rabbi Hank Skirball, which ended in 1971. Skirball's successor, Rabbi Stephen Schafer, then decided to bring the project in-house, where he expanded it dramatically (Simon Chasdi, personal correspondence, August 5, 2002; Paul Reichenbach, interview, June 19, 2002; Skirball, interview, April 29, 2002).

Air travel was the predominant mode of transportation to Israel.[28] Flights, especially those reserved by the Jewish Agency, typically were booked with El Al Israel Airlines (Hendel and Steinberg 1951; "1957 Can Be Your Israel Year," *News and Views*, February, 1957; Freedman, interview, May 7-8, 2002). Not all providers maintained an exclusive relationship with the Israeli carrier, however

---

[28] The 1957 USY Pilgrimage brochure informed applicants that they "will travel by ship or by ship and plane," but in the end, air travel was the sole mode of transportation used (USY 1957:3; Siegel, interview, June 26, 2002).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(Skirball, interview, April 29, 2002; Wernik, interview, May 26, 2002). Skirball, for example, recalled that El Al was less than enthusiastic about selling blocks of youth tickets during their peak summer months and had "disappointed" NFTY with a lack of reliability. NFTY trips therefore tended to seek out the best deals available on a variety of carriers, often using the Dutch airline, KLM (interview, April 29, 2002). Prior to jet engines, the flights took as long as five days, when mechanical difficulties and the Jewish prohibition on travel during the Sabbath were taken into account (Young Judaea 1957). Departing from Idlewild Airport in New York, the planes stopped either in Newfoundland or Reykjavik to refuel and then continued on to Shannon. The second leg of the journey went from the Irish city to a refueling stop on the continent (typically Paris or Rome) and finally on to Lydda Airport in Israel.[29] The Paris and Rome stops afforded the opportunity to tour these European cities, and plans for a several-day European excursion were commonly incorporated into the itineraries ("And Away We Go!" *News ands Views*, December, 1960; Young Judaea 1951; Siegel, interview, May 8, 2002). Jet flight did not entirely end these incidental European visits. USY's 1964 flight to Israel was scheduled to depart June 29th and arrive on the 30th, but its 1968 brochure promised "a stopover in a European city (Amsterdam,

---

[29] Before JFK and Ben Gurion were the end points on the NY-Tel Aviv route, the two men for whom Idlewild and Lydda airports were renamed met in Jerusalem for the first time shortly after the first Young Judaea Summer-in-Israel Course concluded. For a fascinating account of the Fall 1951 encounter between the young Massachusetts congressman and the "wizened dumpling" of a Prime Minister, and of their subsequent interactions over the course of the Kennedy administration, see Bass (2002).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Rome, Paris or London)" on the return flight ("1957 Can Be Your Israel Year," *News and Views*, February, 1957; "*Tzeitchem L'Shalom*," *News and Views*, May, 1964; USY 1957:3; USY 1968:5).

Within Israel, travel included both public and chartered buses (Hendel and Steinberg 1951; Young Judaea 1951). Accommodations ranged from the spartan to the deluxe, but were chosen with cost clearly in mind. Young Judaeans began their stay living in tents that they pitched themselves at Tsofim camps. In Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, they were hosted by families of Tsofim members. (This kept their costs low, but at the price of oft-referenced feelings of "guilt" at eating food that families generously offered in spite of strict government-mandated rationing). The Shfeyah Youth Village, which served as a headquarters, provided dormitory-like accommodations. Only in Tiberias did the Young Judaeans enjoy a "top grade" hotel, which had opened in its off-season especially to accommodate the group (Hendel and Steinberg 1951; Young Judea 1951). USY, for its part, promised that "every effort will be made to accommodate participants in the same kind of accommodations as prevail at most summer camps" (USY 1957:6). All of the programs kept expenses low by including extended stays on kibbutzim, where the teenagers worked in exchange for their room and board ("1957 Can Be Your Israel Year," *News and Views*, February, 1957; "Go In Peace!," *News and Views*, July, 1958; "120 to Israel," *News and Views*, May, 1963; "*Tzeitchem L'Shalom*," *News and Views*, May, 1964; "Go To Israel In

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1965", *News and Views*, December, 1964; Hendel and Steinberg 1951; USY 1957:1; Young Judea 1951; Skirball, interview, April 29, 2002).

Institutionalization and Expansion

Summer Israel trips in the early years were notable as much for what they did not include as what they did. Two highlights of the contemporary experience – the visit to the Western Wall and the sunrise on the ancient mountaintop fortress of Masada – did not emerge until the late 1960s. The Old City of Jerusalem was off the itinerary entirely until Israel captured it from Jordan in 1967. Masada's archaeological ruins were excavated by Yigael Yadin's team from 1963-65 and the mountain was developed for tourism only thereafter.[30] As Israel changed, and as its tourism industry developed, the Israel programs evolved accordingly. For new sites and activities to be added, others had to be dropped. By 1968, USY was no longer advertising a week on kibbutz (USY 1968), a common element of its earlier promotional efforts. Instead it was celebrating "itinerary revisions" that were "enabling the group to see many areas closed to visitors prior to the war in June 1967." ("1957 Can Be Your Israel Year," *News and Views*, February,

---

[30] References to Masada were pointedly absent from itineraries, reports and testimonials (otherwise chock full of trip highlights) from USY Pilgrimage in the years from 1956 to 1965. Little documentation was available for the 1966 and 1967 trips. The brochure for the 1968 trip, however, has a photograph of three prayer-shawl clad USY Pilgrims with heads bowed into their prayerbooks, worshipping at the edge of the mountaintop. Above them, an Israeli flag fluttered in the bright morning sunlight (USY 1968:3). By 1974, the next year for which a sample itinerary was preserved, "Metzada" was listed as the first activity of the day on one morning of the trip (USY 1974), and in 1976, it was one of the 15 labeled and illustrated sites on the map of Israel that decorated the cover of the program brochure (USY 1976).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1957; "Go In Peace!," *News and Views*, July, 1958; "120 to Israel," *News and Views*, May, 1963; "*Tzeitchem L'Shalom*," *News and Views*, May, 1964; "Go To Israel In 1965", *News and Views*, December, 1964; "'68 Summer great For USY," *News and Views*, Summer 1968; USY 1957:1,3, 1974, 1976 1981, 1988, 1992).

Other things changed too as Israel developed its tourism industry. Hotel stays became more common. Chartered buses became almost the sole means of group travel within Israel.[31] Specialized organizations like *Melitz*: The Centers for Jewish-Zionist Education (est. 1973) and Archaeological Seminars Ltd. (est. 1981) were hired to conduct aspects of the programs that organizations preferred not to run in-house (Archaeological Seminars 2002; Melitz 1998). Recruitment was facilitated by new arrangements and institutions. A "Kibbutz Program Center" was established in New York in the late 1970s to coordinate recruitment of volunteer workers on kibbutzim, as well as to other programs in Israel (Mittelberg 1999:11). Israeli emissaries (*shlichim*) to Diaspora communities—formerly agents for immigration and political/financial support—had their missions redefined in the 1970s to include Jewish education. This included promoting participation in youth-oriented Israel pilgrimage-tours (Bar-On 2000; E. H. Cohen 1997:32).

---

[31] Excluding the recreational modes of travel such as the hike, camel ride or jeep tour. Public transportation was also sometimes used by participants during their free time.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Changes on the North American organizational side also influenced the programs. Staff recruitment and selection became more formalized. In addition, the trips came to rely on 'feeder programs' that generated a steady flow of young women and men with predictable demographic profiles to lead the programs. USY commonly recruited as staff people the counselors from the Conservative movement's Camp Ramah. Later, its own year-long "Nativ" program in Israel for North American high school graduates (est. 1981) served as a source of staffing, reaching as much as 30% of staff in recent years (Nativ 2002; Freedman, interview, May 7-8, 2002; Gutin, interview, June 5, 2002). On a 1994 NFTY trip studied by Goldberg, the head counselor was a NFTY regional director, the *mehanekh* ("educator") was a student in the Reform movement's rabbinic seminary, one assistant counselor was an alumnus of Reform movement camps and a participant in a NFTY-sponsored college year program in Israel. The only staff member without previous NFTY experience was an Israeli who had a familial connection to the *Melitz* organization that trained NFTY educators, and herself went through a formal NFTY training program upon being hired for the job (Goldberg 1995:13).

With their deepening institutionalization, Israel programs have grown in scope and evolved as a cultural and organizational form. The clearest trends have been a growing democratization and diversification of the programs. What began as leadership development for a carefully selected organizational elite now attempts to appeal to a broader market of teenage consumers by tailoring

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

programs to specific niches and interests. At the same time, a self-awareness of "the Israel experience" as a distinct enterprise has emerged and expressed itself in organizational form.

Of these developments, only the scope of enrollment has been the subject of historical inquiry. Mittelberg (1999:137-8) and Cohen and Cohen (2000:14-5) have each traced changes in the numbers of participants in Jewish Agency-affiliated trips over the years.[32] Although discrepancies between their figures were common for most years (sometimes by as much as three thousand people)[33], both studies pointed to the same basic trends. Enrollment in short-term summer programs remained low in the years prior to 1967, below 2,500 people, in spite of a modest but steady growth. After the Six Day War enrollment spiked sharply upwards but became much more volatile. As larger numbers of Jewish teenagers were recruited to the programs, the elasticity in demand became more evident. Sensitive to political conditions in the Middle East and to economic conditions at home, participation rose and fell between the years 1969 and 1981 in a series of three- or four-year trends that added or subtracted thousands of people. At its lowest point during this period, enrollment hovered around 4,000,

---

[32] Mittelberg reported figures from 1966 to 1993, Cohen and Cohen from 1949 through 1997.

[33] This is based on comparison of reports of summer-program participants. The size of the discrepancies would be even higher if we also consider winter and long-term programs. But focusing only on summer programs has the advantage of eliminating one identifiable source of error, in which Cohen and Cohen added figures from long-term programs into their totals only for the years 1986-1996, artificially inflating them relative to their totals for the previous years (2000:14-5).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and at its highest, in the mid-1970s, it peaked at about 10,000. Through the early and mid-1980s, these quadrennial trends had broken down and enrollment was fluctuating on an annual basis by about plus or minus 2,000 people, with total enrollment figures bouncing between 7,000 and 9,000 people. This figure was cut by a third for much of the 1990s, in part a casualty of the Palestinian intifada of the late 80s and also the 1991 Gulf War. By the end of the decade, numbers of participants began rising again (Cohen and Cohen 2000; Mittelberg 1999). The Israeli-Palestinian fighting that broke out in September 2000 and that has continued unabated in the two years since has led paid-participation in some programs in 2001-2 to drop to pre-1967 levels (Gutin, interview, June 5, 2002). A number of sponsors have cancelled their Summer 2002 programs entirely (Schleifer and Friedman 2002). At the same time, the Taglit program's free 10-day trips for Jewish college students have helped maintain higher overall number of participants in such programs.

Although the drop in participation associated with wartime tends to draw attention to the demand side of the equation, the role that Taglit has played in maintaining overall numbers is indicative of the importance of supply. From a handful of trips in the 1950s, over one hundred organizations now sponsor programs that bring young North American Jews to Israel for visits lasting from a few days to the better part of a year (Wertheimer 1999:94; birthright israel 2001). Many of these organizations are relative newcomers to the field, such as the New England-based Camp Yavneh which began its *Na'aleh* program in 1985

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and the Samuel Bronfman Foundation which launched the Bronfman Youth Fellowships in Israel (BYFI) in 1987. A number of the program organizers run more than one trip, having diversified their offerings to appeal to specific demographic and interest groups. In 1999, for example, USY offered five other Israel trips in addition to its "classic" Israel Pilgrimage: A combined London/Israel trip designed to attract Jewish teenagers who might not otherwise consider going to Israel; a Poland/Israel trip with an emphasis on Holocaust education; an Eastern Europe/Israel trip that focused on the history of Jewish communities of Prague, Budapest and Warsaw; An Italy/Israel trip that included "a three-day sea voyage simulating the 'illegal' immigration to Palestine that took place in the 1940s;" and "Etgar! The Ultimate Israel Challenge," designed for people who had already been on a USY Israel program (USY 1999). In 2001, Young Judaea was offering three summer programs, B'nai Brith Youth Organization (BBYO—another pioneer in the field) was offering ten, including a combined "Israel & Safari in Kenya," and the Orthodox Union's National Council of Synagogue Youth (NCSY) was offering six, including two separate-gender Torah study tours (birthright israel 2001).[34]

---

[34] The primary exception to this trend was NFTY. In the 1970s and 80s, NFTY was running as many as eight different summer Israel trips for high school students (NFTY 1978, 1979, 1981, 1984). These included four- and six-week special interest programs that emphasized hiking, archaeology, social service volunteering, Hebrew language study and kibbutz work. Not included was European travel. By the mid-1990s, NFTY's leadership had come to the conclusion that "most of the kids, while they thought they wanted differentiation... just wanted to be in Israel with their friends... and wanted the best thing that we had to offer" (Reichenbach, interview, June 19, 2002). NFTY scaled back its offerings to three programs, two of which

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Thus, a combination of heightened demand and diversification of supply helped the youth movements that sent the bulk of Israel program participants significantly broaden participation beyond their leadership to encompass more of their own rank and file. (Still, this did not prevent a wave of criticism in the early and mid-1990s that they should have been reaching larger numbers of teenagers outside of their membership.) Beyond the youth movements, some organizations have emerged specifically to serve highly-targeted market niches. The Nesiya Institute focuses on running arts-oriented tours. Shorashim emphasizes joint travel with Israeli peers. The Israel Basketball and Hockey Academy offers young athletes exactly what its name announces, combined with touring and Torah study. Bnos Chofetz Chaim runs tours specifically for Orthodox girls. Potential applicants to any of these programs can decide among the abundance of choices by looking through comprehensive resource guides, available in print or on-line, with check-boxes indicating which programs offer archaeological digs, European travel, army simulation, academic credit or 10 other special features (birthright israel 2001).

The expansion in numbers of trip providers and programs is one aspect of the democratization and diversification that has characterized the field generally.

---

included European stays (NFTY 1999, 2001). A week-long options track afforded participants the customization that had previously been afforded by the "cafeteria"-style menu of programs. In spite of the smaller number of trips, the numbers of participants (which had declined dramatically in the late 1980s and early 1990s) returned to and even surpassed the record highs that had been established in 1985 and '87. From 1997 to 2000, enrollment climbed from about 900 to approximately 1,400, before the violence in Israel led to the cancellation of trips in the summer

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Once an instrument of leadership development targeted to "those whose organizational background and educational background indicate that they will benefit most from the trip" (USY 1957:3), the trips are now marketed with professionally-designed glossy brochures and multimedia web sites to a wider, more diverse population of young Jews. Marketing and responsiveness to consumer demand have thus become greater organizational imperatives.[35] To Israel program organizations that are run for-profit (also a cause and effect of the expansion of the market for such programs), this is simply part of doing business. For religiously or ideologically motivated non-profits, striking the right balance between market-orientation and value commitments can be more problematic. Both by default and design, the elite and the masses tend to be distinguished from one another and targeted separately. Some trips are designed and marketed as 'outreach' programs. USY's London/Israel trip for instance, was initiated not because of a compelling Jewish educational reason to visit England, but because organizers believed it could appeal to certain teenagers who otherwise would not be interested in going to Israel. England was the hook, Israel was the goal. In contrast, the Israel Pilgrimage/Poland Seminar, introduced in 1986, quickly developed a reputation among USY members as the

---

of 2001.

[35] Business consultants have been hired and marketing studies have commissioned by organizations seeking to increase the number of young people participating in such programs (e.g. S.M. Cohen 1986; Tobin 1995; Goldfarb Consultants 1991; Levenberg 1992).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Israel program of choice for the youth movement's teenage leadership (Gutin, interview, June 5, 2002).[36]

Diversification and a market orientation is not an entirely new phenomenon. In the late 1950s and early 60s, both USY and NFTY offered combination Europe/Israel tours. In contrast to NFTY's seven-and-a-half-week Israel "Bible Tour", the NFTY "Antiquities Tour" spent its first three weeks in Britain, France and Italy, and then continued on to Israel for the final four weeks of the program (Skirball, interview, April 29, 2002). USY ran a "European Pilgrimage" from 1960 to 1962,[37] which for $1,595, combined a ten-day visit to Israel with a five week tour of Western and Eastern Europe, including the USSR. Both of these programs, however, lasted only a few years[38] ("More About Our Israel and European Pilgrimages," *News and Views*, December, 1959; "And Away We Go!," *News and Views*, December, 1960; Siegel, interview, May 8, 2002).

---

[36] The development of Holocaust pilgrimage-tours for Jewish youth from Israel and Diaspora is a separate study in its own right. For work on the subject see Feldman (2000) and Heilmreich (N.d.).

[37] Documentation from 1960 and 1961 firmly establishes the existence of the European Pilgrimage in these years. I was unable to locate documentation regarding the 1962 USY trips, and rely on the generally crisp recollection of Dr. Morton K. Siegel, director of USY at the time, who indicated that the European pilgrimage ran for three years, was staffed by Rabbi Jonathan Porath and Mr. and Mrs. Harry and Pearl Malin, and was cancelled due to changes in the political climate there.

[38] USY initiated other non-Israel travel programs at the same time. In 1961, it launched an "American Pilgrimage," which was soon renamed "Camp USY on Wheels" and remains in existence to this day. It also advertised for a Summer 1964 Latin American Pilgrimage for people with "a speaking knowledge of Yiddish or Spanish or Hebrew." The program was not offered in subsequent years ("And Away We Go!," *News and Views*, December, 1960; "120 To Israel," *News and Views*, May, 1963; "First Latin American Pilgrimage Set For Summer '64," *News and Views*, November, 1963; "Pilgrimages Set For Summer '64," *News and Views*, February, 1964; Gutin, interview, June 5, 2002).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Even as the programs adapted to broaden their appeal, they became more explicit in articulating the undergirding educational philosophy that has been present from the outset, and that was evident even in its Palestinian-based precursor of the 1920s, the *Yediath Ha'Aretz* movement (cf. Katz 1985). The awakening was supported by a growing interest in evaluation research into the effects of the programs,[39] much of which was sponsored by the Jewish Agency/WZO and later by Charles R. Bronfman's eponymous, acronymous CRB Foundation. Such research dates back at least to 1963, when Rolnick conducted pre- and post-trip surveys of 332 participants in Jewish Agency sponsored trips (Rolnick 1965), and continued into the 1970s (Bubis and Marks 1975; Hakimian 1978; Schfatya 1975). Even so, a 1986 Jewish Agency-sponsored study could note that "there was no systematic or comprehensive body of knowledge or information about Israel education programs" (Hochstein 1986:7). The study, under the direction of Annette Hochstein and with a research team of over thirty people on three continents (Kaufman and Aronovitz 1986:2), constituted the first broad look at the field as a whole, and inaugurated a vigorous program of research that continues to this day.

Data from post-trip evaluation surveys (see, e.g., Bubis and Marks 1975; E.H. Cohen 1993, 1994, 1995a,b; Cohen and Keysar 1993; S. M. Cohen 1991a,b;

---

[39] Indeed, the concern with the immediate needs of program evaluation and enhancement are largely responsible for the lack of historical perspective in most Israel experience program research. For reviews of this literature, see Chazan (1997) and Cohen and Cohen (2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

London and Hirshfeld 1989; Kafka et al. 1990; Rolnick 1965; Sales 1998, 1999; Weinstein 1998), longitudinal panel surveys of program alumni (Mittelberg 1999), community demographic surveys (Mittelberg 1994, Israel and Mittelberg 1998) and studies of adolescent development (Levinson and Zoline 1997; Kadushin et al. 2000) have all demonstrated correlations between Israel program participation and subsequent indicators of Jewish identity. Although correlation is not causation (see Mittelberg 1999:18; Saxe et al. 2002),[40] the practical effect of the research was to buttress the arguments of those who advocated the utilization of Israel trips for Jewish education. Such voices had been present before the 1986 Hochstein report inaugurated a new era of stepped-up research efforts; a 1984 international conference on Jewish education declared the Israel experience to be a key means for enriching Diaspora Jewish education (Mittelberg 1994:1). The research only buttressed their claims and encouraged a greater self-conscious within the field.

Having established that the programs 'worked,' the question for educators then became, "Why?" and "How can could they be made to 'work' better?" Much of the actual development in the area occurred within the programs

---

[40] Those for whom Jewish identity is more salient might be more attracted to Israel programs in the first place. Past attempts to impute causation by controlling for background variables such as denomination and Jewish education are limited because the demographic variables are poor proxies for Jewish identity (Horowitz 2000). In the past few years, though, any lingering questions of causality were dispelled by the quasi-experimental design of the Taglit evaluation (Saxe et al. 2000, 2002). Prior to this, the strongest evidence that the correlation was not spurious came from Mittelberg's (1999) integration of multivariate analysis of cross-sectional Jewish population survey data with qualitative data and longitudinal survey analysis on long-term

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

themselves. But even here, research—primarily sponsored by Bronfman-associated ventures—attempted to shed light on some of the issues (Bar-Shalom 1998; Cohen and Wall 1994; Goldberg 1995; Heilman 1995; Hochstein 1986; Kelner et al. 2000). There was considerable overlap in the research and policy worlds. Much of the Israeli leadership in the field consisted of an intelligentsia (often Diaspora-born) who held doctorates in education or sociology, and who played the multiple roles of scholars, activists, administrators and educators.[41] By the 1990s, they were speaking of the youth Israel trip as "a new form of Jewish education" (Chazan 1994) that could be located within general philosophies of education (Chazan 2001).

Organizational efforts also reflected and reinforced the trend to greater educational self-awareness. NFTY, for example, created the special staff role of *mehanekh / mehanekhet*,[42] an "educator" who served as something other than counselor and more than tour guide. Rabbi Julie Anne Zupan, who worked as a *mehanekhet* in 1995, explained that upon being hired for the job, she was required to complete a six-month training course in Israel, paid for by NFTY and provided by *Melitz*, an independent non-profit agency that specialized in informal education for Jewish groups from abroad (Melitz 1998). The course would not

---

Israel program alumni.

[41] A partial list includes Walter Ackerman, Janet Aviad, Barry Chazan, Elan Ezrachi and David Mittelberg.

[42] The "et" at the end of the second version signifies the feminine form of the Hebrew noun.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

meet government requirements for becoming a licensed tour guide,[43] but NFTY's interest was less in having state certification than in having the confidence that the educators had been trained to their own specifications in informal Israel-based education with North American youth. To further ensure this end, NFTY supplemented the *Melitz* course with in-house training in which the cohort of would-be educators collectively visited and received instruction at each of the sites they would tour on the summer trip (Rabbi Julie Anne Zupan, interview, June 6, 2002). In more recent years, NFTY stopped out-sourcing the work to *Melitz* and brought the entire training process in-house (Rabbi Allan Smith, interview, June 12, 2002). The effect of the decision to rely on *mehankhim* was a cadre of personnel with standardized training in educational theory and practice, all in accordance with the philosophy and goals of NFTY.

NFTY's decision to adopt such a staffing model was the outcome of a broader reconceptualization of its Israel programs. Initially, the programs developed as a function of NFTY, the Reform movement's youth group. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, it came to be seen as function of an integrated camping system. Around this time, NFTY camps suspended North American programming for teenagers entering Grade 11, reformulating the Israel experience as the 11th grade camp program.[44] The ability to create a camp-like

---

Plural, *mehankhim*.

[43] In addition to the NFTY enrollees, the course is also taken by licensed guides as a form of supplemental education.

[44] This addressed a common problem faced by camps of how to treat older teenagers who are too

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

environment depended in part on trip staff that could function like camp counselors, who were seen as educators / mentors / role models. Skeptical that hired tour guides would be willing or able to take on such a role, NFTY decided to train some of its best staff to lead camp-like educational programs at the different sites. Further, the very rationale for sending teenagers to Israel was reconceived. Whereas in the 1960s and '70s, it had been seen largely as a means of inculcating a love of Israel and teaching about Zionism, by the 1990s it had come to be valued, in the words of Paul Reichenbach, Director of NFTY's Israel Program since 1978, as "the most powerful Jewish learning experience on a whole range of levels that the kids would ever have" (Reichenbach, interview, June 19, 2002; Smith, interview, June 12, 2002).

In USY, a similar reconceptualization of Pilgrimage's educational model was the product of opportunities created by an organizational restructuring. Prior to 1991, responsibility for the Pilgrimage program was bundled among the multiple responsibilities of the USCJ Youth Director. With the retirement of Rabbi Paul Freedman from the directorship in that year, the USCJ decided with the agreement of the incoming director, Jules Gutin, that the two positions would be separated from one another and that an Israel-based position of Pilgrimage coordinator would be established. The person hired for the position, David Keren, a former director of USY's year-in-Israel program, Nativ, and Education

---

young to be hired as staff but too old to be treated as children. The Conservative Movement's

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Director of the Conservative movement's Camp Ramah in Wisconsin, quickly initiated a review of Pilgrimage's educational program. The outcome was a more explicit educational strategy that tightly integrated the curriculum with the itinerary (Gutin, interview, June 5, 2002).

Inter-organizational arrangements also helped create a self-awareness among program providers as collectively constituting a distinct sub-field of Jewish education. In the 1950s, Zionist youth movements, a number of which sponsored summer Israel trips, enjoyed some degree of coordination in their activities and exchange of knowledge through meetings of the Youth Activities Committee of the American Zionist Council (Israel Dance Festival 1957, 1959; Wernik, interview, May 26, 2002). The WZO-sponsored American Zionist Youth Foundation (AZYF) served a similar role, not always successfully, from the 1960s until its closure by the Joint Authority for Jewish Zionist Education[45] in December 1995 (Ain 1996; Berman 1996; Gann-Perkal 1996; Henry 1995). The degree of coordination should not be overstated. AZYF was as much an arena for inter-organizational competition and conflict. Moreover, the by the late 1980s, it had largely ceased to serve as a coordinating body for Israel program providers (Smith, interview, June 12, 2002).

Camp Ramah had adopted a similar policy many years earlier.

[45] JAJZE was created in April 1991, unifying the Jewish Agency's and WZO's educational departments and programs. It includes the WZO's Department of Education and Culture in the Diaspora, Department for Torah Education in the Diaspora, and Youth and Hechalutz department for Informal Jewish Education (Elazar and Arbel 1994:65).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

AZYF's closure, which left the Joint Authority saddled with over $1 million in debt and unpaid bills (Ain 1996), was the result of the Jewish Agency's decision, in the words of its Director of Foreign Press Relations, "to work with another subcontractor for the marketing of Israel programs for North American youth" (Gann-Perkal 1996; see also Henry 1995; Berman 1996). This other subcontractor was the soon-to-be-announced Israel Experience Inc. ("Israel Experience head office moves to Toronto," *Canadian Jewish News*, October 3, 1996), an initiative that itself was quickly dismantled and reconceived as Taglit/*birthright israel*.

The dismantling of AZYF changed the nature of Israel program coordination in several ways. First, it eliminated a structure that gave disproportionate influence to dwindling Zionist youth movements. Second, by throwing its support to Israel Experience, Inc., the Jewish Agency backed a structure that was not owned by the program providers (Zionist, denominational or otherwise) but rather by the CRB Foundation and the central representative bodies of American Jewry—the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF) and the United Jewish Appeal (UJA). Third, the loss of the ostensible coordinating agency ironically created the opportunity for improved coordination among the program providers.

Earlier efforts to create alternative, independent lines of inter-organizational cooperation had been quashed by a variety of vested interests,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

AYZF included.[46] Left on the sidelines as the large agencies engaged in their own restructuring efforts, the program providers were free to band together to address their own needs. Much of the impetus for a collaborative effort came from Rabbi Allan Smith, director of the UAHC Youth Division at the time, who felt that "We need to have an umbrella organization and the youth directors need to control what's going on within informal education" (Smith, interview, June 12, 2002). Led by the denominational and non-partisan youth movements (i.e. NFTY, USY, Young Judaea and BBYO—the groups with the largest share of Israel program participants), the North American Alliance for Jewish Youth (NAA) was formed in April 1996 under the chairmanship of Young Judaea's National Director Doron Krakow. Its membership quickly came to include most of the major organizations running Israel experience programs. Today it includes as affiliate members both Taglit/*birthright israel* and the Education Department of the Jewish Agency. The NAA's primary goals indicate the sense of common interest that had emerged among professionals in what was becoming known as "informal" Jewish and Zionist education:

1. To provide a forum for discussion, debate, and mutual education for the field of informal Jewish and Zionist education.

---

[46] Similarly, a power struggle in another organization that might have served such a purpose, the Jewish Welfare Board's Jewish Camping Conference, led to the demise of that mechanism. The Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE), which worked primarily in the arena of formal education, attempted to subsume a network of informal educators under its rubric (Smith, interview, June 12, 2002).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

2. To create opportunities for advancing the common agenda of its members.

3. To represent the goals, needs and concerns of its constituent members to the broader North American Jewish community, the international Zionist community, and the State of Israel.

4. To enhance the status and stature of the field of informal education, and to raise the profile of the informal Jewish and Zionist education professional. (NAA 2002)

Whereas involvement in the AZYF was limited to organizations that ran Israel programs, the NAA significantly broadened the community of interests by also including North American Jewish camps, university programs and year-round youth programs (NAA 2002; interview, Gutin, June 5, 2002; interview, Smith, June 12, 2002). As a result, over the past six years, the Israel program organizers have become even more rooted in a broader conception of themselves as providers of "informal education." This, at a time when the notion of informal education has itself gained greater currency, ideological articulation and institutional groundedness in North American Jewish life generally.[47]

---

[47] In 1999, for example, Brandeis University established the Institute for Informal Jewish

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

On the Communal Agenda

"We didn't send kids to Israel in the '60s and '70s [in order] to 'inoculate' them prior to going to off to college." NFTY's Israel Programs Director Paul Reichenbach said, using a medical image popular in contemporary Jewish discourse on issues of identity and continuity. "Jewish identity wasn't in doubt in the way in which it is today. It was about teaching them about Israel and Zionism and developing a love for Israel.... But the purpose and function for which *birthright* [*israel*] was created, of course, could not have been understood 20 years ago."

Racked by concerns over its long-term viability, American Jewry in the 1990s came to see the "Israel experience" as a partial solution to its continuity woes. The outcome was a series of initiatives that culminated in Taglit. Four decades developing Israel travel programs for youth had provided American Jews with the conceptual framework that made the Taglit initiative thinkable, and the practical experience, infrastructure and relationships that made it doable. But in a system with finite resources and competing priorities, the ability to place Israel pilgrimage-tourism squarely on the community's agenda was no mean feat.

Education (IJE), which trains leadership, develops programming and supports research in the field.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Throughout the 1990s, local Jewish federations—the umbrella fundraising organizations in each Jewish community—had become increasingly active in promoting Israel travel to their communities' youth. After the 1990 National Jewish Population Study sparked fears that American Jewry was circling the drain, UJA-Federation of New York established a Jewish Continuity Commission, one of whose projects was an Israel Experience Workgroup.[48] This ran an Israel program telephone "hotline," offered need- and merit-based scholarships, partnered with synagogues to give money towards a trip to every child who celebrated a *bar/bat mitzvah*, subsidized trips for college students, and provided seed money to organizations developing specialized programs for specific populations. Such initiatives were representative of the types of activities occurring in other large federations as well.

Federations' efforts notwithstanding, the major institutional base for the advocacy of Israel programs was Charles and Andrea Bronfman's CRB Foundation, which was established in 1986 with a goal of enhancing relations between Israel and the Jewish Diaspora (European Foundation Center 1998). Within this overall rubric, it inaugurated in the early 1990s a program of research into Israel experience programs that investigated questions of impact, process and market (e.g. Chazan 1994; Cohen and Keysar 1993; Cohen and Wall 1992, 1994; S. M. Cohen 1991a, 1991b; Goldberg 1995; Goldfarb Consultants 1991;

---

[48] I served as a member of this task force.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Heilman 1995; Kafka et al. 1990; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995; Levenberg 1992).[49] Academics from the three major centers of applied social research on Jews—Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Brandeis University, and CUNY—all contributed to the effort, in addition to individuals from other institutions (academic and non-academic) as well.[50] The research helped convince an already sympathetic Foundation of the value of nurturing Israel experience programs. Moreover, it enabled CRB to make a case for greater resource allocation by the Jewish community at large, armed with 'objective' data that had the seal of approval of researchers whose reputations in the Jewish organizational world were well-established.

As described by Barry Chazan, who has served since 1987 as educational consultant to CRB and its various initiatives, and who has been instrumental in the Foundation's research program, "By the early-1990s the commitment [of CRB to funding Israel experience programs] was conclusive and the research was conclusive. Then the question became operational: how to turn this into policy and into practice?" (Prof. Barry Chazan, interview, June 11, 2002). CRB had, in

---

[49] This program of research continued under the sponsorship of Foundation-supported projects like Israel Experience, Inc. (e.g. Chazan 1997; Israel and Mittelberg 1998; Sales 1998), the Bronfman *Mifgashim* Centre (e.g. Avivi 2000; Bar Shalom 1998), and Taglit/*birthright israel* (Kelner et al. 2000, forthcoming; Saxe et al. 2000, 2001, 2002).

[50] Interestingly, the Jewish religious movements' academies - Conservatism's Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTS) and University of Judaism (UJ), Reform's Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), and Modern Orthodoxy's Yeshiva University (YU) - had little representation in this effort. A partial exception has been Lisa Grant's research into adult congregational trips, conducted while at JTS (2000a,b). The Wilstein Institute of Jewish Policy Studies at UJ helped fund Harvard School of Education professor Perry London's investigations

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

fact, already been funding Israel experience ventures before this point—providing, for example, a major grant in 1987 to the fledgling Nesiya program (Nesiya 2002). The first half of the 1990s saw a continuation of program grants. In addition, CRB also made some attempts to build inter-organizational coalitions in order to increase participation in Israel programs. In 1992 it announced a pilot program with the UJA, CJF, the Jewish Community Centers Association (JCCA) and the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA) that would provide grants to local communities to subsidize trips (Fishkoff 1992). Efforts to work with the youth movements that sent the bulk of Israel program participants occurred on a much smaller scale. For example, CRB co-sponsored a 1993 meeting of NFTY youth workers to discuss the challenges of increasing enrollment (Shapiro 1993).

"We hope to make it a new rite of passage in the lives of young Jews," Charles Bronfman said of the Israel experience. But for all the Foundation's efforts, its goal of raising the annual number of participants to 50,000 by decade's end appeared unlikely to be realized (Fishkoff 1992). In mid-1995, the Foundation shifted gears and prepared to launch a major effort that would place Israel experience programs squarely on agenda of the major North Americans Jewish organizations (see Henry 1995). The results were unveiled a year later at the CJF General Assembly, American Jewry's annual corroboree. Under a large

---

in the late 1980s (London and Hirshfeld 1989).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Boeing banner in the Seattle convention center's main hall, Charles Bronfman announced in November 1996 the establishment of Israel Experience, Inc. "I ask you, I plead with you," he appealed to the 3,000 delegates, "Send your children to Israel in an educational experience that will change their lives. The unity of the Jewish people, whose soul is in Jerusalem, depends upon it" ("Religious Pluralism Dominant Theme at Council of Jewish Federations General Assembly, *Canadian Jewish News*, November 21, 1996).[51]

Headquartered in New York, Israel Experience, Inc. (IEI) reestablished the CRB Foundation's partnership with the UJA/UIA[52] and CJF, and brought in the Jewish Agency/WZO and the Israeli Ministry of Tourism as well (Chazan 1997:5n). The goals were straightforward. On the one hand was agenda-setting. IEI hoped to market Israel programs not only to Jewish youth, but to Jewish organizations, to convince them of their centrality to Jewish education and to the efforts to address concerns over waning Jewish identity. Thus, the gala unveiling at the Seattle G.A., replete with keynote address, panel discussions,[53] PowerPoint-presented marketing strategies, and buttons, stickers and assorted other paraphernalia to be worn in show of support for the new enterprise. The

---

[51] My discussion of IEI's inauguration at the 1996 CJF General Assembly in Seattle relies heavily on my own participation there. I attended as part of my Israel experience program-related volunteer work with UJA-Federation of New York, and thus had a particular interest in the aspects of the program devoted to IEI. I have supplemented my recollections with newspaper reports from the time and with oral history interviews.

[52] UIA, the United Israel Appeal, refers to the Canadian equivalent of the United Jewish Appeal.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

other goal was more programmatic and practical in nature—to get more Jewish teenagers to go to Israel. To this end, the greater part of IEI's resources were devoted to a coordinated marketing effort and to improving the quality of the programs.

The effort was not without controversy. Prior to IEI, the Israel experience field was largely 'owned' by the Jewish Agency/WZO and the organizations that sent the bulk of the participants, namely the denominational and Zionist youth movements. The Jewish Agency's decision to withdraw support from the AZYF in order to form a coalition with central agencies like UJA and CJF was in part responsible for the decision by the program providers to create the NAA as an institutional umbrella of their own. Moreover, IEI's strategy for expanding the market to include teenagers unaffiliated with youth movements contained within it a not-always-implicit criticism of the youth organizations' performance (i.e., that they took an elitist approach which capped enrollment below its potential maximum). The flip side of the coin was criticism within the Israel program community of IEI's marketing efforts, which placed slogans like "Surf Israel" on web banners, teen magazines, and record store postcard ads. The campaign's emphasis on enjoyment rather than Jewish identity or Zionism was considered misrepresentative by some, demeaning of teenagers by others, and was a source of much contention and skepticism. IEI's rationale for emphasizing

---

[53] I served as a panelist on one such session.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the fun, tourist elements of the programs while playing down their pilgrimage-like aspects was a market-tested conviction that an appeal to religion would not attract a broad spectrum of North American Jewish youth, and would simply reproduce the existing situation whereby the trips attracted those who were already engaged in Jewish life. Eventually, after a considerable butting of heads and a related leadership change in IEI, a *modus vivendi* was worked out and the NAA, representing the program providers, assumed a seat on the IEI board.

During the two years of its existence, prior to its November 1998 metamorphosis into Taglit, IEI engaged in a number of activities. In addition to its advertising efforts, it marketed Israel programs by publishing annual print and on-line editions of a "Complete Guide to the Israel Experience." These collected in one convenient location important information about each of the high school, college and post-college programs available. It also attempted to directly target teenagers who might not otherwise be interested in an Israel trip by subsidizing experimental four-week Israel programs (two weeks less than the norm) (Ain 1998). IEI also continued the research program begun by CRB. Among its products were a synthesis of the major research findings about Israel experience programs (Chazan 1997), and a report of a committee headed by Brandeis University president Jehuda Reinharz (Reinharz et al. 1998). The report framed the Israel trip in the broader context of identity development, and constituted an ideological link between the work of IEI and the Taglit/*birthright israel* program that would succeed it (Chazan, interview, June 11, 2002).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The notion of using Jewish communal dollars to provide every Jewish teenager with a subsidized or free trip to Israel was first popularized by Yossi Beilin, Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister during the Rabin administration (1992-95). "I was aware of polls indicating this trend of the vanishing American Jew, vanishing Diaspora Jews," Beilin recalled in a 1998 interview with the Jerusalem Post. "I asked myself whether we have to accept this, or whether we could change something" (quoted in A.D. Cohen 1998). At the 1994 CJF General Assembly, Beilin offered a proposal according to which "every young Jew would receive a birthday card from the local federation on his or her seventeenth birthday with a coupon for travel and accommodations in Israel during the next summer vacation" (Beilin 2000:122). Such a visit would be considered every Jew's "birthright." Funding would come from the UJA dollars traditionally raised for social services in Israel (122-4). Beilin's controversial notion that American Jewish charity was best spent on American Jews rather than on Israelis (Goldberg 1996:347-8) was an albatross around the "birthright" idea's neck, and for three years it went nowhere. It probably would have continued doing so were it not for the fact that it sparked the imagination of philanthropists not beholden to the UJA-CJF system. On their own initiative, and with over $10 million of their own funds as seed money, they began moving the idea from concept to reality. The Jewish federations eventually followed the philanthropists' lead (United Jewish Communities 2000), but even today, as Taglit approaches the fourth year of its five-year mission, their commitment to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

funding the program remains in question. The issue continues to be the federated system's long-standing orientation toward supporting Israel's social welfare needs over Diaspora Jewry's identity woes, a predilection heightened during these times of political and economic crisis in Israel (Ain 2002).

During the years that Andrea and Charles Bronfman were concentrating their charitable efforts on Israel programs, another couple was also rising to prominence in the Jewish philanthropic world. Judy and Michael Steinhardt had established a family foundation with money that Michael had earned during his years as a hedge fund operator (Massing 2000:30). The foundation disburses over $10 million annually to support a variety of initiatives (Foundation Center 2002). Among these is the Jewish Life Network/*Chaverim Kol Yisrael* (JLN) established by the Steinhardts in 1993-4 under the directorship of Rabbi Irving "Yitz" Greenberg, to "revitalize Jewish identity through educational, cultural and religious initiatives that are designed to reach out to all Jews, with an emphasis on those who are on the margins of Jewish life" (*Contact* 2002:2). To that end, JLN has supported a long list of high-profile projects over the past decade including Makor, a cultural center for Jewish 20- and 30-somethings on Manhattan's Upper West Side; a Jewish Campus Service Corps that hires recent college graduates as Jewish outreach workers on campuses nationwide; and the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education, which provides grants and technical assistance to Jewish day schools. The Steinhardt name quickly became associated with

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

major projects in a variety of Jewish program fields, but not at first with the effort to make the Israel experience central to the American Jewish agenda.

In the summer of 1997 that changed, and the transformation of IEI into Taglit/*birthright israel* was set in motion. At a meeting of Jewish philanthropists, Michael Steinhardt approached Charles Bronfman to suggest a partnership. Utilizing the infrastructure Bronfman had created in IEI, the two, he proposed, would realize the vision of making an Israel visit the "birthright" of every young Diaspora Jew. The two men were in some ways an odd couple. Bronfman, as his extended of program of Israel experience program research suggests, worked in a calculated, deliberate manner. Steinhardt, the consummate Wall Street trader, was more likely to follow his instincts. Beilin's idea impressed him for its audacity and sheer scale. He felt that he was onto something big, and his enthusiasm for the project proved infectious (Beilin 2000:129; Massing 2000; Wohlgelernter 2000).

When the staffs of their respective foundations gathered in 1998, conversation initially centered on how to expand Israel Experience, Incorporated in order to meet the new mission. But as discussions evolved, the project took on an entirely new cast. The focus on marketing existing programs to high school students was dropped, and instead a plan was developed to bring together a variety of program organizers to provide college-age young adults with free 10-day trips run according to strict educational and quality-control standards. Any organization that met the standards would be eligible to participate as a program

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

provider. To the young adults, the trip would be presented as a "gift" from the Jewish people.

All of these things represented significant departures from the earlier model of Israel experience programs: The nature of the population shifted from high school students to college-age and post-college young adults. The trips, which usually ranged from six weeks to a year and which had only recently begun experimenting with four-week programs, were packed into ten days. This decision was the result of the shift in funding structure. Whereas most of the Israel experience programs in the past were paid for by participants' families, albeit with costs held down by scholarships and program subsidies, 100% of the cost of these trips would be covered by the program's sponsors. Finally, instead of being run as a separate program, it would coordinate the activities of a variety of program providers. All these departures represented gambles. Would the older population be attracted to such trips, and if so, would they be as influenced by them as younger adolescents had been shown to be? Would a ten-day trip produce effects similar to those observed on the much longer six-week programs? Would the fact that they did not have to pay for the trip prevent people from taking it seriously? Would the decentralized organizational model prove unworkable?[54]

---

[54] The short answers to these questions, some of which are elaborated later in this dissertation, are yes, yes, yes, no and not insurmountably. Attracting young adults proved no problem. In fact, the program was oversubscribed within a month of opening registration. Post-trip evaluations of the ten-day trips for college students were generally consistent in their findings with the earlier

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In spite of the risks, planning moved forward with a great sense of urgency and excitement. If the previous decade had been the time for research and deliberation, 1998 felt to those involved like the time for action. "The groundwork had been done, the idea was a big one, and the philanthropists were hot.... That constellation said, 'Go for it!'" (Chazan, interview, June 11, 2002). The two staffs quickly put together educational standards and an organizational framework for the as yet unnamed new program. A funding plan was devised whereby the total cost of the program, estimated at $210 over five years, would be split evenly among three parties: the philanthropists, the Government of Israel and local Jewish communities via the UJA, UIA and CJF (which merged in 2000 to become United Jewish Communities, or UJC), Keren Hayesod, and The Jewish Agency for Israel. Bronfman and Steinhardt each contributed $8 million, and began recruiting ten other philanthropists to commit $5 million a piece to the project[55] (Massing 2000:33). In July 1998, Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin

---

research on longer-term teenage programs: effects were seen primarily with regard to ethnic identity, but not with regard to religious identity or practice. The fact that the trip was free and that it was perceived as the personal gift of the two lead philanthropists actually made people feel guilty when they complained over minor things. Its overall effect, therefore, was to make people more compliant, not less. Finally, the decentralization has entailed certain problems (see Ritterband and Kadushin 2000), but the sponsors have been satisfied enough with the model that they expanded the number of providers after the first year of the program.

[55] The number of private donors has since increased. The Taglit/*birthright israel* website lists the following "Jewish philanthropic partners": S. Daniel Abraham, The Abramson Family Foundation, Andrea and Charles Bronfman, Edgar Bronfman Sr., Richard and Rhoda Goldman Foundation, Hadassah - The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Ronald S. Lauder, The Samberg Family, Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, Judy and Michael Steinhardt, The Wasserman Foundation, Leslie and Abigail Wexner, Karen and Gary Winnick, Marc Rich, and The Ted Arison Family Foundation. It also notes "special contributions" from the Avi Chai Foundation, Sandy Baklor and Arlene Kaufman, Len and Alex Blavatnik, Keren Keshet

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Netanyahu, agreed in principle to commit $20 million of state funds to the project, but before the money was actually budgeted, elections led to a new government under Ehud Barak, which left the issue still open a year later (Ain 1998, 1999).

At the November 1998 CJF General Assembly in Jerusalem, Steinhardt, Bronfman and the Chairman of Israel's Ministerial Committee on Israel-Diaspora Relations, Natan Sharansky, unveiled "Birthright Israel"[56] (Birthright Israel 1998). North American and Israeli offices were set up, and the program was also given a Hebrew name, Taglit. The Jerusalem office was initially headed by Avraham Infeld, a veteran Israel experience program educator, but soon came under the direction of Shimshon Shoshani. As the Director-General of the Jewish Agency and former Director-General of the Israeli Ministry of Education, Shoshani brought with him experience in the educational field, knowledge of the Diaspora and its organizations, and connections and clout in Israel's political echelon that speeded the program's development.

Recruitment began the following autumn for the first trips, which were slated to depart in Winter 1999/2000 (Birthright Israel 1999a). Neither the federations nor the Israeli government had committed funds to the program at that point, which was being attacked by critics on any number of grounds, both

---

- The Rainbow Foundation, Lev Leviev and Steven Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation (Taglit 2002).

[56] At the time, it had not yet introduced the all-lowercase spelling of its trademark name.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

political and substantive. Nor were Bronfman and Steinhardt finished recruiting the other philanthropists. Regardless, its advocates were passionate, and the project pressed on (Ain 1999). A $3 million advertising campaign promoted the program in magazines, newspapers and on the radio. One print ad that appeared in *Rolling Stone* juxtaposed images of a baby boy about to be ritually circumcised and a young man floating in the Dead Sea. "Sometimes it's hard being Jewish. Sometimes it isn't," the caption read (Elliot 1999; Rosenblatt 1999). Meanwhile, campus Hillel staff added to their already full portfolios a recruitment drive for the program (Kelner et al. 2000:18n). Internet-based registration for the first trips opened at the beginning of September 1999 and closed a month-and-a-half later with 12,000 applicants for 5,000 slots, a surpassing of expectations that Taglit/*birthright israel* made sure to point out (Birthright Israel 1999b,c).

In final week of 1999, the first planeload of Taglit participants touched down at Ben Gurion Airport. This was followed by a succession of flights that brought over 6,000 young Diaspora Jews from all over the world to Israel through February 2000. By the following June, the 1999-2000 Winter Launch of Taglit was completed successfully, Spring trips were underway, financial commitments had been made to the program, third-party evaluations were positive, and alumni spoke of their experiences in glowing terms. In the hot summer months that followed, however, developments that were beyond Taglit's control transpired in Israel, to the detriment of many things including Taglit. When Israeli-Palestinian negotiations broke down in a spasm of violence,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Israel suddenly became a less attractive place to visit. Although applications doubled to 25,000 for the Taglit's Winter 2001 trip, enough people changed their minds in the intervening months that Taglit was unable to fill the 10,000 available slots for the program. Still, the numbers were impressive in light of the situation. Over 8,000 people, 6,000 of them from North America, went on the Winter 2000-2001 trips, more than had gone the previous year.

Throughout the ensuing period, participation in Taglit has remained higher than in paid programs for high school students. But as the violence has continued in its steady spiral of escalation, it has become harder and harder to induce people to visit Israel, even with a free trip. Taglit has largely succeeded in its goals of expanding the numbers and nature of participation in Israel experience programs, and providing a meaningful Jewish experience in the process, but it has found itself competing with suicide bombers who strike on a sometimes daily basis. For Taglit, as for Israel programs generally, the crucial question now is how to maintain the infrastructures needed to run these trips after the situation in Israel calms down again.

A Systematic Effort

Taglit was an ambitious program in many ways. It was rooted in a supremely modern confidence that such a giant effort was organizationally and technically feasible—a proposition that would not have been taken for granted in times past. But in an era of mass society, mass markets and mass communication, Taglit

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

conceived of and created the quintessential mass pilgrimage-tour, one that centralized, coordinated and replicated a religious travel experience for tens of thousands of people. Such a feat was possible only by dint of the standardized procedures and institutionalized behaviors that Weber considered a hallmark of modernity (1978b:956-1005). These procedures, by their very nature, entail a significant degree of impersonality, but as a result achieve great efficiency and enable collective achievements of considerable magnitude. While the relationship between bus staff and participants allowed Taglit to address travelers on a personal level, in most aspects essential to the successful deployment of the program, the needs, desires and peculiarities of individual travelers were irrelevant.

Taglit sponsored group programs, not individually-tailored itineraries. Participants had some measure of control in defining the broad contours of their experience by making their selection among approximately thirty organizations that actually ran the tours. Even so, the programs were more notable for their similarities than differences. Part of this was intentional. Taglit mandated educational and logistical policies in order ensure that certain standards were met. The effect of these standards was in accordance with their intent—that is, they *standardized* the program delivered. As a result, Taglit was a coherent social intervention in spite of the fact that it sub-contracted many different organizations to actually run the trips (Chazan 1999; Ritterband and Kadushin 2000; Taglit 2001).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

On the educational side, these standards involved mandating trips to certain sites or categories of sites (*viz.* the Western Wall, at least one Holocaust-related site, one Jewish historical site, one Zionist historical site, and one national site), participation in certain Taglit-sponsored events (e.g. the Expo for educational and volunteer programs in Israel), the conduct of certain activities (e.g. at least three group tie-in/discussion sessions), and the composition of staff (at least one staff member each from Israel and from the participants' home country, with a minimum ratio of staff to participants). On the logistical side (and to the great displeasure of tour organizers), the level of specificity of requirements extended to the number of ladles of soup that would constitute an acceptable minimum.

Taglit's ability to coordinate and standardize the pilgrimage-tourism experience of thousands was not the result of its directives alone. Institutionalization and rationalization in Israel's tourism industry were an indispensable contributing factor. For example, by law, all Israeli tour guides receive similar training in licensing programs authorized by the Ministry of Tourism. Souvenir shopping was frequently conducted in specialized tourist districts in Safed and Jerusalem. Transportation was handled efficiently through existing tourism channels. To get to Israel, tickets were simply purchased on established airlines flying established routes. In Israel, participants traveled not in private cars, on bicycle, or by public transportation, but on chartered Egged Tours buses that came complete with drivers who knew enough about the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

tourists to run bottled-water concessions out of coolers stored in the luggage compartments below. Rather than leading visits to archeological sites themselves, many tour operators sub-contracted to Archaeological Seminars Ltd., an outfit of specialists that controlled a significant share of this market. And in Eilat, the existence of a well-developed leisure industry led to the easy utilization of its hotel-, waterfront- and watering hole services, but tended to foreclose other types of tourism in the city.[57]

From before the first application was submitted to the time the last participant de-planed at Newark Airport, layers of bureaucratic organization[58] in and outside of Taglit enabled the program to be implemented successfully. Essential to this were standard procedures for moving vast sums of money, receiving and processing applications, ticketing flights, processing visas, feeding and housing travelers, and ensuring security as best as possible, among other things. An international effort, it was made possible only through the extensive deployment of modern technologies: Applications were submitted via the World Wide Web and then managed with database and spreadsheet software. Offices in New York, Toronto and Jerusalem were linked by telephone, e-mail and video conferencing. Travel to Israel, once a matter of weeks or months by sea, was

---

[57] One exception proved that other forms of tourism were possible if sufficient desire and effort existed. A Canadian Jewish community had a sister-city relationship with Eilat. It used this relationship to organize activities that portrayed Eilat as an exemplar of Israel-Diaspora partnership, and not merely a capital of leisure (Kelner et al. 2000:11-14).

[58] I use the term not as a pejorative, but in the Weberian analytic sense.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

shortened to 11 hours by jumbo-jet. The movements of hundreds of tour buses stretched across the length and (narrow) breadth of the country were supervised and coordinated by a cadre of professionals armed with cell-phones and private automobiles. In short, Taglit is an exemplar of the modern, mass-society pilgrimage tour. Nothing like it existed, or could have existed, in centuries past.[59]

The Historical Perspective

The contemporary youth pilgrimage-tour in Israel that has developed since the 1950s is less the continuation of an ancient Jewish tradition of pilgrimage than the institution of a new form of Jewish experience and expression, made possible by modern organization, modern technology and modern conceptions of travel and leisure. It exists at the intersection of Israel's tourism industry and Diaspora Jewry's educational system. As the field has institutionalized, it has developed an increasingly explicit conception of itself as an instrument of informal Jewish education, and a deepening conviction that participation in Israel experience programs yields demonstrable effects on Jewish identity. As a result, and with a great sense of mission, the field has sought to provide this Jewish educational experience to an ever-wider population of young Jews. What began as a leadership development program for youth movements is now a major

---

[59] Pilgrimages much larger than Taglit have been around for millennia. But the point here is not about numbers. It is about the how modern rationalized technologies were deliberately used to engineer a mass pilgrimage where one had not existed before.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

philanthropic, communal and governmental effort to make an educational pilgrimage-tour in Israel a universal rite of Jewish passage. Taglit's strategy for doing so is to make the trips short, convenient, numerous and free.

Taglit emerged against the backdrop of an Israel program field that had already become institutionalized and self-aware, a Jewish community that was concerned for its survival and looking to education for solutions, and a funding system that was coming to rely less on consensual decision-making and more on entrepreneurial initiative. The program's development exemplified the power of so-called 'mega-donors'[60] to set the communal agenda and to build coalitions to effect the large-scale mobilization of human, financial and organizational resources. It was also a testimony to the seam of self-confidence than ran stubbornly below the surface of anxieties about American Jewry's future. Taglit was an effort unprecedented in its ambition and scope, undertaken with an unshakable faith that it could be done, and done well.

DATA

This, then, is a rough sketch of the historical circumstances that enabled tens of thousands of young Jewish adults to make a brief pilgrimage-tour to Israel in the

---

[60] In 2000, *The American Prospect* reported that more than 4,000 foundations gave more than $1 billion annually to Jewish causes, and that about $300 million of this, or 30%, came from about 20 individuals commonly referred to as "'megadonors'." In addition to Steinhardt and Charles Bronfman, this list includes Edgar Bronfman, Morton Mandel, Lynn Schusterman, Steven Spielberg, Laurence Tisch and Leslie Wexner, among others (D.N. Cohen 2002; Eisenberg 2002; Massing 2000:31).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

past three years. The nature of their experiences, and the ways in which these inform our understanding of broader sociological phenomena, stand at the heart of the remaining chapters. To investigate these issues, I will rely on secondary analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from the evaluation of Taglit conducted by Brandeis University's Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) from 1999 to the present. The evaluation included ethnographic participant observation as well as pre- and post-trip surveys of participants. Sociometric data were gathered by CMJS researchers in the course of field work. Reports of the CMJS evaluations are publicly available (Kelner et al. 2000, forthcoming; Saxe et al. 2000, 2001, 2002).

I was employed by CMJS as a participant-observer and coordinator of the evaluation's field work team for the Winter 1999-2000 and Winter 2000-2001 trips. In the program's first year, I spent one day with each of the groups being studied by other CMJS researchers. In the second year, I stayed with one group as a participant-observer for most of the duration of the trip.

During this same period, I also served as a member of the evaluation's survey design and analysis team. The surveys of participants in the Winter 2000-2001 Taglit cohort incorporated a pre-trip questionnaire administered via the internet in the weeks immediately preceding the trips, and a post-trip

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

questionnaire administered in the same manner three to four months after the trips.[61]

Sociometric data were gathered by participant observers in several of the bus groups. My analysis here will be restricted to the group which I observed in 2000-2001. It was the only case in which a 100% response rate, necessary for the validity of network data, was obtained.

Details about the research methods and my specific roles are provided in a methodological appendix.

Outline of the Dissertation

This is not, and does not intend to be, an overall analysis of Taglit or Israel experience programs. Rather, the study concerns itself with the more limited question of the emergence of a sense of meaningfulness, invoking ethnographic and other methods to address facets of this issue. With a different research agenda, more emphasis might be given to issues of staff, gender, or the political context of Zionism vis-à-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict. All of these are mentioned in the pages to come, but none are given prominence of place. Nor do I concern myself with the question of long-term impacts, which is fundamentally a separate issue influenced by any number of exogenous factors. Students of education might take issue with my decision to treat Taglit as an instance of

---

[61] A control group of applicants who ended up not participating on Taglit was also surveyed, but is irrelevant in the context of the research questions being asked here. For a comparative analysis of the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

pilgrimage-tourism to be studied in the discourse of authenticity and effervescence, rather than in terms of curriculum, pedagogy and philosophy of learning. I believe, however, that the basic social form in question is group travel, and that any attempts to structure it educationally do not change this fundamental character.[62] Worthwhile insights into the topic have been gained from both perspectives; I have chosen the one that I found most compelling. I will confess that this study shares with earlier investigations of Israel programs a penchant to take its subject matter too seriously, a common problem in studies of contemporary Jewry.[63] An entire book could be written on Taglit as a setting for fun, humor and light-heartedness. Though I hope to have captured some of this in the coming pages, for better or for worse, this is not that book.

Before describing the organization of the subsequent chapters, I offer the reader two suggestions on how to read this work. The first point regards the multiple methodologies used here. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods may be jarring to readers accustomed to a strict division between the two modes of analysis. I utilized both here for a variety of substantive, methodological and rhetorical reasons: to convince people in both methodological "camps" of the validity of the conclusions contained herein; to assure myself and the readers that the conclusions I draw are robust and

---

participants and the control group, see Kelner et al. (forthcoming).

[62] Feldman (2000) makes a similar argument with regard to Israeli youth pilgrimages to Poland.

[63] The outstanding exception to this is Joselit's *The Wonders of America* (1994), a book as delightful

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

reinforced when examined from a number of perspectives; to explore my own facility with both forms of analysis; and to encourage a dialogue on the utility of the multi-method approach. After reading this, some may conclude that the combination of methods detracts from the work more than it adds. Others may take the opposite position. Whatever the reader concludes, if the use of multiple methods sparks consideration of the analytic and rhetorical issues embodied therein, a worthwhile purpose will have been served. Those unmoved by this plea to consider the contributions of both methodological approaches, and who choose to forego the statistical analyses will want to skip Chapter 2 and the first parts of Chapter 5, and should take it on faith that the claims I make in these sections are true.

The second piece of advice I wish to offer the reader regards the often dense theoretical treatments that suffuse every chapter of the dissertation. It is the norm for empirical studies to front-load the sociological theory in a section entitled "Lit Review," and then to make passing reference to it (if at all) in subsequent chapters devoted to data analysis. The present work, by contrast, will tax the reader with extended theoretical discussions at every turn. The reason for this departure from the norm is simply that the theoretical issues are too broad and diverse to collapse into one chapter up front. Accordingly, my recommendation to the reader is simply to be aware of this, prepared for it, and

---

as it is scholarly.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

not to expect that the forthcoming chapters will read like something written for the popular press or even for an undergraduate text. I have taken the liberty of treating the dissertation as a dissertation.

The structure of the remaining chapters is as follows:

Chapter 2 sets the stage for the principal theoretical and ethnographic analyses that appear in Chapters 3 through 6. It begins by discussing the unavoidable but exasperating question that faces anyone studying pilgrimage-tourism: just what is it that distinguishes one from the other? I consider how other scholars have treated the issue, but ultimately find the distinction of limited use. People can find travel meaningful for a variety of reasons, and can end up seeing themselves as pilgrims during and after their trip even if they did not set out on the journey with such a self-image. With this in mind, I use survey data to describe the population of travelers who went on Taglit and to weigh the possible reasons many of them found the trip to be meaningful. I find extensive support for the notion that meaning emerges from the group experience, as well as a degree of support for the notion that it emerges semiotically, from the encounter with holy symbols. These findings lay the groundwork for the subsequent three chapters, which thoroughly address these issues through a combination of ethnographic data and sociological theory.

The semiotic account of the emergence of meaning is addressed in Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 3 focuses on the authenticity of things the pilgrim-tourists see in Israel. I consider the nature of Zionism's claims to Jewish

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

authenticity, and the ways that participants do and do not borrow from this hegemonic ideology to construct their own visions of Israel's Jewish authenticity. Arguing that they are no ideological dupes, I examine how the social construction of authenticity on the pilgrimage-tour remains rooted in the direct experience of the travelers themselves. The chapter concludes by extending these ideas to a broader consideration of how people perceive authenticity generally.

Chapter 4 considers a rival conception of authenticity that sees it not in terms of a pilgrim-tourist's views of the destination, but in terms of his or her own feelings about truly being in touch with him or herself. The two uses of the term authenticity seem radically divergent and can be reconciled only uncomfortably and only partially. In considering how the pilgrimage-tour encourages travelers to feel that they themselves are more personally authentic, I offer an ethnographically-rooted critique of identity theories based on the metaphor of self-as-narrative. I propose an alternative metaphor that more accurately reflects the identity-construction process on Taglit—self-as-hypertext.

Chapter 5 shifts attention away from the semiotics of pilgrimage-tourism to the nature of the group experience. It demonstrates the formidable strength of the social forces that Taglit's pilgrim-tourists were subject to during the course of their travels, and analyzes their effects. I begin by using hierarchical modeling of survey data to argue that the group dynamics I later describe were ubiquitous phenomena rather than unrepresentative idiosyncrasies. I then present sociometric data to argue that intense group cohesion emerged in spite of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

persisting social structural differentiation within the pilgrim-tourist groups. The remainder of the chapter offers an extended ethnographic argument that the pilgrimage-tours functioned in a manner akin to Goffman's total institutions (1961). They fostered intense experiences of communitas and collective effervescence even as they domesticated expressions of dissent. The chapter attempts to resolve the important question of the relationship between the semiotic and group aspects of the pilgrimage-tour, arguing that holy symbols take on a totemic character, representing the effervescent group experience as well as the pre-existing normative meanings.

The dissertation concludes in Chapter 6 with an extended theoretical treatment of classic work in sociology, anthropology and social psychology. I demonstrate that social scientific theory has arrived at a consensus regarding the nature and effects of extra-ordinary, routine-shattering situations. I describe this convergence and consider its implications for our understanding of pilgrimage-tourism. I then offer some concluding remarks that tie this to previous discussions of authenticity and the possibility of religious experiences inside the iron cage.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER 2

PILGRIMS, TOURISTS AND SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES

Pilgrimage, traditionally conceived, is an effort to find religious meaning through travel. As an ideal type, it has often been placed on the opposite pole from tourism. The axis on which the two are contrasted, however, is a source of some contention, largely because the phrase "religious meaning" is, in the language of survey research analysis, double-barreled. Some, especially those who see tourism as the modern form of pilgrimage (Graburn 1989, MacCannell 1989), believe that meaning can be found in tourism – just not religious meaning, which is technically reserved to pilgrimage (E. Cohen 1992). Others consider this a semantic rather than substantive distinction, and prefer an approach that assigns primacy to the issue of meaning. In this view, pilgrimage is the representative effort to find meaning through travel. Tourism, by contrast, is meaningless itinerancy *par excellence* (Boorstin [1961] 1985).

Although the terms are generally invoked as ideal types, empirical research into the phenomena must inevitably confront the real-world ambiguity of the pilgrimage/tourism distinction. In the modern world, mass tourism and mass pilgrimage interpenetrate and blur (Reader 1993b). Meaning is found in the seemingly mundane, and the ostensibly holy can be sold as a two-dollar souvenir.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

As long as one focuses on the purity of travelers' motivations and the experiences they have when they stand in the presence of holy destinations, these ambiguities can be ignored and pilgrimage can remain elevated on its pristine pedestal. But pilgrimage and tourism are complex phenomena encompassing not only motivations, but also reassessments, reflections and *post hoc* re-interpretations; not only destinations, but also extended periods of traveling and incidental touring; not only sacred sites, but also hotels rooms and bathrooms, museums and musicals. Modern mass tourism has changed the nature of contemporary pilgrimage. At some point in the travel experience, we are all pilgrims and tourists, shifting back and forth between modes (Reader 1993b:131-32; Walter 1993:72,84). If so, then the proof of the pilgrimage is not in the intent, but in the retrospection.

The noted cultural critic Daniel Boorstin was so emphatic when accusing tourism of being "diluted, contrived, [and] prefabricated" (1985:79) that he will long remain a convenient punching bag for those like MacCannell (1973, 1989) who deride his dismissiveness as elitism, pure and simple. But when the alternative offered is a deep-structural account of sightseeing as "a ritual performed to the differentiations of society" (MacCannell 1989:13) one wonders if Boorstin's approach does not remain more faithful to tourists' own understandings of their experiences. It is not that it is "intellectually chic," as MacCannell wrote, to deride tourists (1989:9). Neither intellectualism nor chicness has much to do with it. We are speaking of a widely-shared sentiment

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

among tourists themselves (Waller and Lea 1998), as even MacCannell admits: "Tourists dislike tourists. God is dead, but man's need to appear holier than his fellows lives" (1989:10). It just so happens that the sentiment has also found expression among intellectuals, who themselves play the role of tourist in their off-hours as much as any other moderns. We should not be so hasty, then, to throw out in a fit of anti-elitism the meaningful/meaningless polarity that Boorstin shared, after all, with popular opinion. But neither must we accept a sweeping dismissal of tourism. Nuances exist, and can be identified if we recognize that secular meaning in travel can exist separately or alongside religious meaning.[1] By adding an axis of secular meaningfulness/ meaninglessness to the more customary axis of religious meaningfulness/ meaninglessness, pilgrimage and tourism are reconceived as cells in a property space (Barton 1955; Lazarsfeld 1993) rather than end-points on a continuum (see Figure 2.1). Within each category we ask whether the travel experience is perceived as meaningful.[2] By treating these two variables as dichotomous and then combining them, we produce a four-category attribute- or property space.

---

[1] In practice, of course, the lines between the religious and secular are not so easily drawn. But good definitions should take account of general usage, and given that there are many times when the differences between religious travel and secular travel are clear, the distinction is worth keeping.

[2] As is elaborated throughout this chapter, the focus on the experience rather than the motivation is central to my understanding of pilgrimage.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure 2.1: The Classes of Meaningful and Meaningless Travel

		Religious Meaning	
		Low	High
Secular Meaning	Low	Pure Recreational Travel	Traditional Religious Pilgrimage
	High	Meaningful Tourism	Pilgrimage-Tourism

The first advantage of such an approach is that it definitively marks off meaningful travel in either its religious or secular variants from those tourist experiences that bear little or no meaning for the traveler. I refer to the latter as "pure recreational travel," and use the term to indicate not only experiences involving actual touring of places, but also other forms of leisure travel like sitting on a beach or riding a roller coaster at an amusement park.

Another advantage is that while recognizing the distinction between secular and sacred meaningful travel, it does not insist on the incompatibility of the two. Travel can be meaningful in a purely religious sense (i.e. 'traditional religious pilgrimage'), in a purely non-religious sense (i.e. 'meaningful tourism'),

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

or in a manner that combines both religious and secular meanings into an experience greater than either. I refer to this synergy as 'pilgrimage-tourism.'[3]

This is far from a perfect resolution of the conceptual dilemmas posed by tourism and pilgrimage. It is sometimes an empirically useful distinction, as we will see later in this chapter. More than other conceptions of tourism and pilgrimage, it enables nuanced analysis of survey data that addresses important questions about meaningful travel: How is meaning found? Who finds it? Who doesn't? In part, it does so by expanding the focus beyond why people set out in the first place, to also encompass how they end up reinterpreting their experiences after they have assimilated them. It is, after all, in this retrospective evaluation that a person can ultimately declare with confidence whether a travel experience made a difference in his or her life.

We turn, then, to the question of meaning in travel. We begin by considering competing hypotheses about the ways meaning is constructed during pilgrimages and tours. We then look at the empirical case of Taglit, a Jewish pilgrimage-tour to Israel, to see what light can be shed on the questions raised. This will be done in three parts. First, we consider the diverse backgrounds of the travelers that might affect their responses to the trip. Second,

---

[3] In practice, we are probably more likely to find instances of meaningful tourism and pilgrimage-tourism rather than traditional religious pilgrimage. In the modern experience of religious travel, the secular world is rarely kept so far away that elements of secular meaning do not creep in. Few pilgrims to the Vatican would return home without having also taken in Rome's other sights.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

we explore these various responses using the three categories introduced above, and relate them to other differences among the travelers. Finally, we use multivariate models to assess the relative weights of factors influencing whether or not the visit to Israel was felt to have religious meaning.

The Blurring of Pilgrimage and Tourism

The act of setting out on pilgrimage is at heart an attempt to derive meaning through travel. Morinis defined it as a "journey undertaken by a person in quest of a place or state that he or she believes to embody a valued ideal" (1992a). But while individuals might set out on a pilgrimage to a place of private meaning - a childhood home, for instance - it is only when the journey is undertaken by many, or when some consensus exists regarding the meaning of the destination, that it enters the realm of sociology. Erik Cohen[4] emphasizes the collective character of the phenomenon in the definition he proffers: "a movement toward the Center.... the source of the hallowed (socio-moral) order of the cosmos" (1992:51).

Cohen's focus on the sacred destination reflects the fact that traditionally, the meanings sought in pilgrimage have been conceived in religious terms. While pilgrimage is an acceptable form of devotion in many religions - Christianity has for centuries tolerated some (but not all) Marian pilgrimages (Turner and Turner

---

[4] This Erik Cohen, a sociologist at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, is a different individual from the Erik H. Cohen mentioned in the previous chapter, who conducts research on Israel

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1978: 140-171); Shingon Buddhism encourages devotees to follow in the Kobo Daishi's footsteps at the 88 temples of Shikoku (Reader 1993b) - some religions go beyond this by enshrining pilgrimage as a positive prescription: Varkari Hindus are obligated to make an annual journey to the shrine of Vithoba Bhave in Pandharpur; Ancient Judaism mandated three *regalim* festivals when all community members were to make offerings at the temple in Jerusalem; Islam established the *hajj* to Mecca as one of the religion's five pillars, incumbent upon all faithful who are able to make the journey (Turner [1974] 1987: 170-5). In modern times, as religion has lost its monopoly over the sacred ordering of the cosmos (Berger [1969] 1990; Bellah 1967) it is not uncommon to find numerous examples of pilgrimages that imbue non-religious destinations with sacred meaning. Examples of these include political pilgrimages (Hollander 1981; Margulies 1968; Woocher 1986), visits to sites of disaster or death (Davie 1993; Sellars and Walter 1993; Walter 1993), and travel to the resting places of authors and rock stars (King 1993, Reader 1993c).

Pilgrimages, then, come in many flavors - personal and collective, voluntary and obligatory (E. Cohen 1992; Reader 1993a,c; Turner and Turner 1978), secular and religious. The lines between categories frequently blur. An individual desire to mourn the deaths of British soccer fans killed in a stampede was quickly transformed into a collective phenomenon that drew thousands to

---

experience programs.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the team's Anfield stadium (Davie 1993).[5] Japanese pilgrims to Shikoku felt a sense of "voluntary obligation," expressed by the phrase, "I just had to come" (Reader 1993a:233-5). The religious imagery infusing Elvis Presley's Graceland reinforced a hagiography in which Elvis "sealed his sainthood with his tragic death" and contributed to an environment where pilgrims frequently "attest to how Elvis makes them feel; how he 'lifts their spirits' and makes them young and whole" (King 1993).

Studies of such a complex phenomenon could easily give way to oversimplification in the name of narrative consistency, perhaps even more so when the pilgrimage in question has been institutionalized by religious tradition. In such cases, "official" meanings abound. It would be quite easy to assume that pilgrims' motivations and their interpretations of their experiences during and after the fact conform to these normative patterns. In the contemporary era, however, it has become harder and harder to distinguish religious pilgrimage from modern secular tourism. It has accordingly become more and more difficult to make blanket declarations about what motivates pilgrim-tourists and what outcomes emerge from pilgrimage-tours. Uniformity of motivation and outcome can no longer be assumed.

---

[5] A similar phenomenon occurred in New York in the days following the destruction of the World Trade Center. Unable to approach Ground Zero, a steady throng descended day and night upon Union Square, the closest public space to the police barricades, where they lit candles, wrote thoughts on large poster boards, placed flowers and made donations to the rescue and recovery effort.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The growing difficulty in distinguishing pilgrimage and tourism spawned a debate that began in the early 1960s over the similarities and differences between the two forms of travel. On one side of the argument were those like MacCannell (1989) and Graburn (1989) who contended that tourism was a "sacred journey" (Graburn 1989) - the modern equivalent of ancient pilgrimage. Through leisure travel, we make a cyclical break with the profane world of work. Tourism thus becomes a sacred time and space, where the worker defined by modern relations of production can simultaneously liberate himself from work roles, appreciate the totality of human productive capacities instead of the normally fragmented view, and actualize himself fully as a consumer - the apotheosis of modern man. "Because the touristic journey lies in the nonordinary sphere of existence," Graburn writes, "the goal is symbolically sacred and morally on a higher plane than the regards of the ordinary workaday world" (1989:28). In contrast with this view, Boorstin (1985) argued that modern tourism was a shallow, degraded form of travel. Whereas eras past were graced with pilgrimage and the grand tour, travel in the contemporary world has become a "lost art," - "diluted, contrived, pre-fabricated" (1985:77,79).

Erik Cohen attempted to bridge the gap between the contending views. Over the course of several articles published from the 1970s through 1990s, he elaborated several points of distinction, two of which bear particular importance for our present purposes. First, pilgrimage represents "a movement toward the Center," whereas tourism is a "movement in the opposite direction, toward the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Other" (1992). This implies that tourism, like pilgrimage, is also an attempt to derive meaning from travel. Second, travelers' motivations vary (1972, 1979, 1984, 1992). Together the two notions suggest that even people traveling together might have different orientations as to whether they are engaged in a tour or a pilgrimage. In the modern era, mass-tourism and mass-pilgrimage are not distinct phenomena. Much depends on the orientation of the travelers themselves, and even these may shift over the course of time.

The particular case we will consider in-depth - a trip to Israel offered free to any Jew who met minimal requirements - highlights even further the ways that pilgrimage and tourism blur in the contemporary world. Here, the program was offered to all qualified participants regardless of their motivations for participation. Some may have seen this as a pilgrimage, others may have seen it as a tour, others might not have been sure what they wanted, and others might have changed their minds at some point between applying, attending and returning. A complicating matter for those who did view this as a pilgrimage is that it took place in a foreign country. The dialectic between familiarity and strangeness is inherent to all tourism (E. Cohen 1972). For Jews worldwide, travel to Israel - as the Jewish state and Land of the Bible - represents a movement toward the Center. But in its status as a multi-ethnic country of the Levant, Diaspora Jewish travel there represents movement toward an Other. (It was in this regard that one of the participants, upon viewing the walled city of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Jerusalem, exclaimed, "It is so different here from the U.S.! The colors are right out of the movie *Aladdin*.")

The blurring of tourism and pilgrimage was built into Taglit from the very first, and has long been a basic part of the marketing efforts of these types of programs (see, e.g., the similar marketing described in Heilman 1995:6). On their websites, Taglit tour providers like Hillel promised "a Jewish journey to Israel" that would both let participants "explore Jerusalem," "swim in the Dead Sea," and "enjoy free time" even as they "learn about Israel and [their] Jewish identity" (Hillel 2001). And indeed, the itinerary combined trips to holy sites, graves and memorials with tours of museums and public buildings and recreational activities like shopping, swimming, hiking, dancing, singing and seeing performances. In addition to this, the participants themselves were by no means a homogenous group with regard to their motivations for going on the trip. With both pilgrim and tourist elements structured into the itinerary, and with diversity among the participants the order of the day, it was perhaps inevitable that travelers would engage in a continual, sometimes even rapid, shifting between reverential and playful modes of behavior.

Two examples are noteworthy. On a sunny, breezy Sabbath afternoon, one tour group walked from its Jerusalem hotel down a combination of dirt roads, stone steps, and paved sidewalks, through a green and rocky valley and up a winding hillside path towards the Western "Wailing" Wall, Judaism's holiest existing site. For approximately forty-five minutes, people visited the Wall alone

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

or in small groups. Many were deep in prayer, others approached it and stood in silence. Some remained at the back of a plaza chatting quietly. As the group gathered to return to the hotel, the pensive mood was broken by the sight of two cats copulating in a flurry of fur, shrieks and arched backs. The group erupted in peals of laughter, flashing cameras, and topical jokes ("It's a triple *mitzvah*!" [6]). Even the exasperated staff person who tried with a mixture of dismay and chagrin to shuffle the group along, disappointed that their memory of the holy site would be colored by this unholy sight, eventually relented and purchased a stuffed toy cat for the group: "We need a bus mascot," she said, "and I thought, a camel? No, because we haven't seen any camels. So what about a donkey? Because we are going to be riding donkeys. But that wasn't good either. And then I thought, what animal do we have a connection with?..."

An opposite shift, from tourist to pilgrim, occurred when the same group visited the mountain fortress of Masada in the Judean Desert. In order to watch the sun rise over the Dead Sea, departure was set for 4:00 AM. By 3:30, unshowered college students, clad in sweat-suits that advertised their universities or fraternities and sororities, were slowly trickling into a hotel meeting room whose fluorescent lights only brought out the dingy yellow in the walls. On a table in the front of the room was a brown cake that may have been

---

[6] This plays upon a phrase "double *mitzvah*" that is applied to marital relations on the Sabbath. Being fruitful and multiplying, and observing the Sabbath are each a commandment (*mitzvah*) in their own right. Doing them together increases the merit of each, leading to the phrase, "double *mitzvah*." In this case, the feline fornication was observed on the Sabbath at the Western Wall, a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

chocolate or honey, and something else that Lucas[7], a staff member, called a "holiday fruit cake." After about fifteen minutes, the room had become crowded, but the decibel level was still low. Every few minutes, a new guy (always a guy, and I choose the word carefully) would enter the room and initiate the same discussion about the football games the previous night between the Ravens and the Titans (the Ravens "wiped" the Titans), and the Giants and the Eagles (depending on which university one studied at, it was either called "the Eagles game" or "the Giants game").

When we walked outside into the cool night air, we heard American disco music circa 1977 blasting from the bus stereo. This was Lucas's idea. "It's the last thing they expect at 3 AM," he said, adding that it excites them and has the side benefit of tiring them out so that by the time sunrise comes, they can enjoy it quietly. Lucas was only about 10 years older than his charges, but had been doing this sort of work for enough time to know whereof he spoke. People danced down the aisle as they went to their seats, continuing to dance as the bus began to move. Three people pressed up against each other and danced "the butt" to the cheers of those around them. In the front of the bus, the medic, an Israeli woman about the same age as the rest of the group and who packed a tongue-stud as well as a rifle, stood up and did a similar dance with one of the American men. More cheers. Those not dancing in the aisles bounced in their

---

holy site. Hence the joke, "triple *mitzvah*.".

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

seats to the beat of the music. Occasionally, the dancers would be thrown to one side or the other as the bus careened down the mountain curves that were seen only by the bus driver but felt by all. The windows revealed nothing. Outside in the desert, all was black. Only the dim blue overhead lights illuminated the scene, contributing to my own sense of being in a submarine, hermetically sealed from the environment whizzing by us at speeds I did not want to think of. The curves felt sharp.

In the back seats, two fraternity brothers rapped to the beat of one of the songs. Hearing them, someone looked at Jesse, a South Philadelphia native with an Eminem crew-cut, and screamed out, "Let's get Jesse to freestyle for us!"[8] As the bus approached Masada, Lucas turned off the music and took the microphone: "We should thank Ofir [the bus driver] for handling the curves, Ravit [the Israeli tour guide] for shaking her groove *thaanng*, and the Bus '194' dancers who sometimes bordered on the inappropriate."

Masada is a diamond-shaped mesa located in a range of mountains in the Judean Desert. Although it is only 160 feet above sea level, it towers over the lowest point on earth, rising 1,300 feet above the Dead Sea. Legend has it that

---

[7] Names and identifying characteristics of people and institutions have been changed.

[8] Some definitions may be in order for those less versed in contemporary youth culture: The tongue stud is a form a body piercing. The butt is danced by standing behind another person in close contact and gyrating pelvises in unison. It can also be done facing the dance partner, especially when three people are dancing together. Freestyling is extemporaneous rapping. Eminem is a Grammy Award-winning white rap artist, and among the most popular rappers with college students.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

from the years 70 - 73 CE (Christian Era), the Romans laid siege to the mountain fortress in an attempt to subdue the last pocket of Jewish resistance to Roman rule. When the army finally breached the last defenses, they found that all but seven of 967 Jewish zealots who had sought refuge on top had taken their own lives in a final act of defiance.[9] In the 20th century, Masada became a point of Zionist pilgrimage symbolizing Jewish heroism and resistance unto the death (Ben-Yehudah 1995). We were only the most recent in a century-long stream of visitors who have come there to witness the sunrise, explore the archaeological ruins, and participate in the ongoing act of collective mythmaking.

Our ascent of Masada was made by way of an ancient Roman ramp. By the time we reached the top, the sky had lightened and people quickly made their way over to the eastern edge in order to see the sunrise. The group had quieted down since the bus ride, but was still in a jocular mood. "We sacrifice the virgin cat at sunrise!" one prankster known by his nickname, Isosceles, exclaimed. Nearby, another man said to the two women with whom he was walking, "This is great! "I'm on top of a mountain with a mass suicide, with my good friends." He put his arms around them and they continued along the path. When we arrived to the place from which we would watch the sun rise, Ravit briefly pointed out the wide, flat valley below us that contains what is left of the

---

[9] That this legend is not fully in accordance with the sole contemporaneous historical account of the events there is the subject of Nachman Ben-Yehuda's fascinating book, *The Masada Myth: Collective Memory and Mythmaking in Israel* (1995).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Dead Sea, saying that it was "the lowest thing on Earth." Hearing this, Sam, who like Isosceles also prided himself on his sense of humor, called out in a deliberately squeaky voice to a woman standing next to him, "See, Beth! I'm *not* the lowest thing on Earth."

But the joking stopped as people went, alone or in clusters of two or three, to face the mountains of Moab to the East and to sit patiently in silence while waiting for the sun to rise. As the time passed, some people further removed themselves from the group by wandering down to some ruins below us, where they sat alone closer to the edge. Most people appeared focused on making the moment special. Ravit left the group to do Tai Chi on a ridge above. Some members of the group joined the staff to privately recite the morning prayer service, the men wrapped in prayer shawls and phylacteries. When members of a different Taglit group several hundred meters to our south began shouting out people's names, derogatory comments were made about them for disturbing the peace. The free-spirited atmosphere of the disco bus was now long past. It was about 6:10 A.M.

A half hour later, the ridge of the mountaintops to the East, which until then had appeared a diffuse brown on powder-puff blue, became a pencil-thin black line sharply defined against the narrowest band of radiant gold. People started whispering excitedly, "It's coming! It's coming!"

At 6:50, as the sun finally crested the mountain, we heard a piercing blast on the *shofar*. To the north, Sam was standing on a stone wall with a two-foot

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ram's horn to his mouth, all traces of silliness gone for the moment. Lucas called out from below to Sam to sound the *shofar* again. He struck another single blast, then a string of several medium length blasts, recognizable to many as the traditional sounds of the Jewish New Year prayer services. Some people sat in silence. Others snapped photographs. Two birds chirping "hee-hoo, hee-hoo" wove quickly from behind us on the left to disappear in front of us below Masada's edge. When the sun was fully over the mountains of Moab, Sam let out one long final blast, a *tekiah g'dolah*. A Bedouin worker saw him on the wall and yelled at him, "Down! Down!" Sam ran over to me, smiling. He had asked me to carry the *shofar* in my bag up Masada, and confided that he was nervous that he would "screw up" when it came time to blow the *shofar* at sunrise. But he rose to the occasion, and the group was appreciative. "That was definitely a *moment*!" a woman named Lynne exclaimed. I must have given some indication as to my research interests when we first met several days earlier, because she had taken to giving me regular updates about which activities she felt moved by and which she did not. This was only a quick report, and then she returned to some of her friends and screamed, "I'm king of the world!", only half-jokingly referencing Leonardo DeCaprio's signature line in *Titanic*.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Rival Approaches to the Question of Meaning in Travel

The Semiotic Approach

In attempts to understand why people find modern travel experiences personally meaningful, different perspectives have emerged. Much ethnographic literature on tourism sees meaning constructed semiotically, through individual reactions to symbols (Culler 1991; E. Bruner 1991, 1994; MacCannell 1989; Pretes 1995; Taylor 2001; Urry 1990). This approach forms the basis of Urry's (1990) contention that tourism essentially consists of placing objects under the "tourist gaze:"

> The gaze is constructed through signs, and tourism involves the collection of signs. When tourists see two people kissing in Paris what they capture in the gaze is 'timeless romantic Paris.' When a small village in England is seen, what they gaze upon is the 'real olde England' (1990:3).

In a representative application of Urry's approach, Pretes (1995) analyzed the Santa Claus Village in Lapland, a contrived tourist attraction developed near the Arctic Circle to play upon associations with the North Pole. There, "tourists consume Santa Claus and the Santa Claus Village as markers of a deeper, intangible cultural product, the spirit of Christmas, which itself conjures up memories of childhood" (12). From this perspective, the consumption of symbols

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

evokes emotions and meanings that had been present in latent form in the tourist's mind. Goldberg's (1995) study of an Israel pilgrimage tour for teenagers affiliated with the Jewish Reform movement found that "one aspect of the heightened emotions associated with the Kotel [Western Wall] is that whole worlds of abstract associations and meanings are suddenly conjured up in and concentrated in a single concrete time and place" (47).

A two-step process is at work. First, an external object is gazed upon and recognized as a symbol of something other than itself. Second, the thing symbolized evokes certain cognitive meanings and affective associations. The process can break down at either point. Things may not be recognized as symbolic of anything other than themselves, or they may evoke cognitive meanings but not affective ones.

Prior socialization is a prerequisite for objects to be recognized as collective symbols. In the case of Jewish pilgrimage to Israel, the socialization may be subcultural or generic. For example, Jewish symbols may be learned through synagogue-run religious schools that typically prepare North American Jewish children for the *bar/bat mitzvah* coming of age ceremony. Alternatively, travelers may also learn to recognize Jewish symbols in Israel by seeing Israeli Ministry of Tourism advertisements in general circulation newspapers, images on the nightly news, or reports from friends who have traveled to Israel.

Recognition of symbols, of course, does not imply that strong affect will be attached to the things they symbolize. Consider, for example, symbols of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

authenticity. Travel, especially to foreign lands, is motivated in part by a desire for authenticity (MacCannell 1973, 1989; Taylor 2001), albeit to varying degrees (E. Cohen 1976a; Pearce and Moscardo 1986; Waller and Lea 1998). When it is present, the desire for authenticity often exists as a set of expectations of what one *should* see in a given culture. In Waller and Lea's (1998) study of potential British tourists to Spain, for example, respondents said a visit to "the real Spain" would involve "some element of sunshine, bullfights, excitable locals, and so forth" (125). Visitors to the reconstructed 1830s Illinois village of New Salem, where Abraham Lincoln spent several years as a young man, encounter weather-beaten buildings not because this is how they looked in Lincoln's day (they were new and very well-kept) but because this conforms with expectations of how the old village "should" look, thereby contributing to the perceived authenticity of the site (E. Bruner 1994). The resonance of symbols depends, in large measure, on conformity with prior expectations.

The Group Process Approach

An alternative approach to the question of meaning in travel that predates the semiotic perspective is found in Turner's studies of pilgrimage (Turner 1987; Turner and Turner 1978), as well as in studies in particular of Israel pilgrimage tours (Goldberg 1995; Grant 2000a,b; Heilman 1995). These have tended to see meaning as emergent in the group travel experience itself. Turner views the process of pilgrimage as an initiation "into a new, deeper level of existence"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(Turner and Turner 1978:8) that comes about through "communitas, a spontaneously generated relationship between leveled and equal total and individuated human beings, stripped of structural attributes" (Turner 1987:202). It is not so much the destination and what it symbolizes that makes pilgrimage a transforming[10] experience, but the process of traveling itself. By setting out on the journey, the shackles of ordinary life are shaken off, relationships with others attain much deeper levels of intimacy irrespective of role and status differences that would typically divide people, and a recognition of a common human bond emerges. Of course, this conception presupposes that pilgrimage is a "social process," not an individual trek (1987).

In a study of American Jewish teenagers traveling on a summer Israel tour that resembled Taglit's trips in intent and design, Heilman (1995) took a similar approach. Like Turner, Heilman concluded that the personal meaning derived from the trip emerged from the group experience. For the participants, he wrote, "the primary product of the summer" was "not a set of connections to Israel but to one another" (50). The staff's emphasis on group-building, as well as the structure and pace of the program, focused the teenagers' attention and energies inward on the group experience rather than on the highly symbolic tourist attractions offered by Israel. "In essence, as the group becomes one of the only constants in an ever-changing fluid environment, it grows in importance, filling

---

[10] The term is in keeping with Turner's view of pilgrimage as a *rite de passage*.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the life-world of the participants" (21). As a result, Israel and Judaism receded into the background, to become merely a "setting or backdrop for an American teen adventure" punctuated with a series of "peak experiences" and "moments of highest happiness and fulfillment" (83, 91).

To summarize, there are two major approaches to the question of how meaning emerges in travel experiences - one focusing on symbolic processes, the other on group processes. To understand from a semiotic perspective whether and how a meaningful experience emerged on Taglit, we would look at the degree of prior Jewish socialization and commitment, expecting to find that those with stronger backgrounds would be more likely to experience the trip as something other than pure recreational travel. Moreover, those whose expectations specifically prime them to expect a specifically *spiritual* experience will be predisposed to resonate to the religious symbols they encounter. In contrast, if we adopt the group process focus of Turner and others, we would expect to find that the critical factors predicting whether the Israel visit ended up being perceived as meaningful travel would be the individual's relationship with the group, as well as his or her feelings about things that influence the group experience, such as the staff.

Before introducing multivariate models to assess these alternative hypotheses we must have some background on the Taglit participants themselves. In the next section, I will introduce the population who chose to join

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Taglit. I follow this by considering how this diverse group distributed across the three categories of travelers: those who found religious meaning, those who found non-religious meaning and those who found little or no meaning. The middle group will be addressed at greater length because of the light it sheds on the nature of the other two categories. This will provide additional groundwork on which we can base our account of what leads people to find meaning through pilgrimage-tourism.

Assessing the Rival Conceptions: The Case of Taglit

Diverse Participants

At first glance, the people who traveled to Israel on Taglit as pilgrims or tourists or both appear to be a homogenous group: young, white, college-educated Jewish North American adults. Young, in that they were all between the ages of 18 and 26 (31% were 18-19, 22% were 23-26). Educated, in that 72% were enrolled full-time in undergraduate institutions, 8% were enrolled full-time in graduate programs, another 4% were enrolled in college part-time, and of the remaining 17% who were not enrolled school, 9 out of 10 had some college education.

Such a characterization, however, pays short shrift to other aspects of participants' backgrounds that evince greater diversity. For example, Canadian organizers of Taglit correctly insist that Canadian and American Jewries constitute two different communities, with different histories and patterns of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

religious education and practice. In all, 26% of participants were Canadian. Moreover, rather than representing only the descendents of the great 1880-1920 wave of Eastern European Jewish migration - the population that constitutes the bulk of North American Jewry - at least 13% of participants were new arrivals on these shores and another 17% were children of immigrants (mostly from the former Soviet Union [FSU], but also from Israel,[11] Iran, South Africa and other countries). The numbers are probably even higher than reported in the survey because response rates in surveys of American Jews tend to be lower among recent arrivals from the FSU.

In the context of American marketing, Taglit participants would still probably be seen as a narrow demographic. In the context of a 28,000-person religious pilgrimage, however, such descriptions gloss over a wealth of diversity in perspectives and predispositions that may have more bearing on trip outcomes than any demographic factors would.

Consider, for example, participants' motivations for going to Israel. When asked in a pre-trip survey[12] how important in the decision to go on Taglit was a desire to have a "spiritual experience," one quarter of respondents (26%) said "extremely," one-third (32%) said "somewhat," another quarter (26%) said "a

---

[11] Because Taglit's eligibility requirements did not exclude people based on previous travel to Israel generally but only on previous travel to Israel in the context of a "peer educational trip," many Israeli-Americans were eligible for Taglit

[12] All survey questions presented in this section were asked prior to participation in Taglit.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

little," and a sixth (16%) said "not at all." Their desire to learn more about Judaism through the trip to Israel was similarly far from uniform: One third (37%) said it was extremely important, a third (36%) said it was somewhat important, a fifth (20%) said it was a little important, and the remaining 7% said that a desire to learn more about Judaism had nothing at all to do with their decision to visit Israel. Clearly, what was hoped to be a religious pilgrimage for some was seen simply as something different by others.

In part, this reflects the diversity in participants' feelings about Judaism's role in their lives. The degree to which they expressed their Jewish heritage through actions, both in the present and in the past, varied widely. Three quarters (75%) celebrated becoming a *bar/bat mitzvah* at age 12 or 13, but a substantial minority - disproportionately female[13] - did not. Less common were people who had actually visited Israel before, but even so, fully 17% of participants had first-hand familiarity with the country. In terms of their ritual practices just prior to the trip, as reflected in a Guttman scale[14] that measured adherence to four increasingly stringent religious commandments (*mitzvot*) - lighting Hanukkah candles, fasting on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), attending worship services more than three times a year, and observing some or

---

[13] A twentieth-century innovation, the *bat mitzvah* ceremony for girls remains less practiced than the much older *bar mitzvah* ceremony for boys, especially among the more traditional segments of the Jewish population. The lower rates of *bat mitzvah* versus *bar mitzvah* does not, therefore, imply that the women on Taglit had been less involved Jewishly than the men.

[14] The construction of this variable is described in greater detail in the Methodological Appendix.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

all of the kosher dietary laws - 13% adhered to all of the *mitzvot* including the observance of the kosher dietary laws. An additional third (30%) attended worship services more than thrice a year, but did not observe the kosher rules, while another third (33%) did no more than fast on Yom Kippur. Just under one fifth (18%) lit candles for Hanukkah but did not fast, attend services frequently or keep kosher. Six percent observed none of the ritual practices. The diversity in ritual practices is paralleled by a diversity in denominational affiliation that essentially replicated the overall distribution of denominational affiliations among American Jewish adults: 6%, Orthodox; 31%, Conservative; and 28%, Reform; with 27% refusing to adopt any label, identifying themselves as "Just Jewish;" and with 8% choosing other denominational labels including Reconstructionist Jewish, Sephardic Jewish, as well as non-Jewish denominations.[15]

As indicators of identity and feelings, these behaviors and affiliations are only suggestive. We can have confidence that they point to some underlying realities because the diversity they manifest is also reflected in questions that inquire directly into individuals' views of the role Jewishness plays in their lives. The salience of social identity categories like gender, ethnicity and role has often been conceived in terms of the degree to which people's self-conceptions reflect a

---

[15] The latter were eligible for the program because they defined themselves Jewishly in ethnic terms, even if not in religious terms.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

discursive awareness of the categories and use them to construct narratives about the self (Horowitz 1999; Phinney 1990). As a rough indicator of this, Taglit participants were asked prior to the trip, "To what extent do you explore your Jewishness?" [16] While only 5% responded "Not at all," participants were scattered across the three remaining categories. 28% said only "A little," compared to 24% at the high end of the scale who said "Very much." The remaining 43%, a plurality but not a majority, placed themselves between these two categories by replying "Somewhat."

What these people find when they "explore" Jewishness is similarly diverse. The multidimensionality of Jewish identity (Herman 1977) has drawn greater attention in recent years (Cohen and Eisen 2000, Horowitz 2000). CMJS adapted a battery of indicators developed by Horowitz (2000) to inquire into various facets of Jewish identity among Taglit participants. The series began with the introduction: "There are different ways of being Jewish. For you personally, how much does being Jewish involve...." Among the specific ways mentioned were twelve items, to which respondents could answer Not at all, A little, Somewhat and Very much. The marginal distributions of these twelve questions are presented in Table 2.1.

---

[16] The term Jewishness may include Judaism, the system of Jewish religious beliefs and practices, but need not. It is also a more expansive term than Judaism, also encompassing non-religious aspects of Jewish culture. Most importantly, it eschews a normative stance to allow for the idiosyncratic definitions that are crucial to the notion of personal identity.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 2.1: How Much Does Being Jewish Involve...

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very Much
Remembering the Holocaust	1%	10%	27%	61%
Leading an ethical and moral life	3%	11%	30%	56%
Countering anti-Semitism	4%	14%	32%	49%
Caring about Israel	2%	15%	38%	45%
Celebrating Jewish holidays	3%	14%	40%	43%
Making the world a better place	6%	18%	33%	43%
Having a rich a spiritual life	13%	28%	35%	24%
The importance of dating only Jews	31%	23%	24%	22%
Supporting Jewish organizations	9%	32%	40%	19%
Observing Jewish law	17%	35%	34%	15%
Observing the Sabbath	24%	34%	28%	14%
Attending synagogue	19%	38%	31%	11%

It appears from the data that some aspects of Jewish identity show more diversity than others. A high degree of clustering at the positive extreme is evident with regard to the importance to personal Jewish identities of Holocaust remembrance, ethical behavior and countering anti-Semitism. Diversity of opinion is also reduced, but to a lesser degree, among things like caring about Israel, supporting Jewish organizations, celebrating holidays, and making the world a better place. A scattering of opinion across the spectrum is much more in evidence with regard to the importance of spirituality, Sabbath observance, synagogue attendance, observance of Jewish law and dating within the faith. Essentially, a degree of consensus surrounds the more abstract symbolic aspects of Judaism. A sense of victimization through genocide and racism is an especially powerful feeling, but one that does not obligate specific behavior. Likewise, the affirmation of ethics and good deeds is a noble sentiment that can serve as a general guide to action, but that still leaves much room for personal

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

autonomy. When it comes to down to specifics, however, like observing Talmudic laws and Sabbath restrictions, showing up at synagogue, choosing a lover, or pursuing a life of the spirit, people are much more likely to incline in different ways.

In short, Taglit participants, similar in so many superficial ways, set out possibly on a pilgrimage, possibly on a tour, with a wide range of goals and expectations, predispositions and past experiences, all of which could have some bearing on the nature of their experience. Any presuppositions that take for granted the motivations and outcomes associated with this Israel trip are quickly called into question by the diversity of the tens of thousands who chose to make the journey.

Diverse Reactions

In the previous chapter, I discussed the systematic organizational efforts necessary to implement Taglit. On one hand, the program is yet another example of how modernity, rather than destroying the foundations of religious experience, may actually facilitate it in new and different ways. On the other hand, we would be justified in asking about the effects of a pilgrimage that is standardized as a consumer good. Could the mass-market character of the trip and its reliance on bureaucratic organization undermine the very effects it was trying to produce? After all, there is a broad agreement across the social sciences that religious effervescence is antithetical to routinized structures (see Chapter 6

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

for a full explication). Alternatively, say that such experiences could be systematically engineered: Would the delivery of a consistent product therefore lead to a similar consistency of result? A third perspective would see the "supply side" as irrelevant and instead focus on the consumers' varying predispositions toward the product. Motivations for going to Israel were by no means uniform, nor were general sentiments regarding Judaism as a religion or Jewishness as an ethnicity.

Of the three options - that the program's organization would so undermine its goals that few would find it a meaningful or spiritual experience; that the program's organization would so successfully engineer the social environment that most would find it meaningful and/or spiritual; or that the diverse motivations of the participants would lead to a corresponding diversity in their reactions, irrespective of the efforts of the organizers - the first finds little empirical support. There is, however, reason to believe that Taglit generally succeeded in its attempt to engineer social environments that inspired participants to feel the trip was meaningful on an intimately personal level (see below; also Saxe et al. 2000, 2001, 2002). This, however, did not automatically translate into the experience of religious or spiritual enthusiasm. On this count, diversity did indeed reign supreme.

When asked in a survey three months after returning from Israel whether they found their trip to be "personally meaningful," over 80% of the Taglit alumni who answered the survey responded "Very Much," the highest rating

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

offered in the survey. Nearly all of the remainder replied "Somewhat," the third highest of the four response categories. Of course, it remains an open question just how the respondents interpreted the meaning of the phrase "personally meaningful." The words, after all, were written not by them, but by the survey's designers. It is quite possible that while an overwhelming majority found that the trip was personally meaningful in the extreme, the specific contents of these meanings were not nearly as uniform. One indication that this was indeed the case is found by examining the relationship between this question and another that asks to what extent the trip was "a spiritual experience." One might assume that a pilgrimage to the Holy Land might naturally be perceived through religious lenses, regardless of whether or not the travelers are attuned to Israel's place in Judaic religious conceptions. As citizens of the United States and Canada, who are as likely to know the words to "Silent Night" as to "*Hava Nagila*," even the Christian narrative of the Land of the Bible might cue Taglit participants to conceive of this voyage to the font of Western religion in explicitly religious terms. If so, then we would expect that those who declared the trip to be very personally meaningful would also affirm that it was very much a spiritual experience.[17]

---

[17] A methodological note: Simply by virtue of the question's inclusion in the questionnaire, there is an implication made to respondents that finding the trip "personally meaningful" and a "spiritual experience" are normal and perhaps even normative responses to the trip to Israel. It is unlikely that this is the first time such a suggestion would have been made to the participants, having formed an important part of the discourse on the trips themselves (see Chapter 5), but even so, its appearance in writing might force or reinforce a social desirability effect. If this

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 2.2: Spiritual Experience by Degree to which Trip was Personally Meaningful

		To what extent was the trip a spiritual experience?				
		Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very much	Total
Was the trip personally meaningful?	Not at all	86%	14%	0%	0%	100%
	A little	47%	42%	9%	2%	100%
	Somewhat	14%	38%	40%	8%	100%
	Very much	2%	9%	28%	61%	100%

Kendall's Tau-B=.466 p<.000; Chi-square=591.206, d.f.= 9, p<.000

As Table 2.2 shows, there was a fairly strong association between perceiving the trip as personally meaningful and perceiving it as a spiritual experience (Tau-B =.466). In spite of this, 39% of those who said their trip to Israel was very meaningful personally also claimed that it was *not* a very spiritual experience. In other words, the meaning derived from the trip to Israel may have been spiritual for some, but it was not so for all. A significant number of others derived the strongly felt personal meaning commonly associated with pilgrimage, but this meaning was not conceived of in spiritual terms. Understanding how this occurred will help us better understand the nature of meaningful travel, secular or religious. It will be useful here to invoke the property space introduced at the start of this chapter. By combining the responses to the two variables, we can classify participants into three categories: 1) Those who found Taglit to be both very meaningful and very spiritual (51%

---

occurred, one way of correcting for it in analysis is to treat anything less than an emphatically affirmative answer as a qualified "no."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

pilgrim-tourists and traditional religious pilgrims);[18] 2) those who found it to be very meaningful but not very spiritual (32% - meaningful tourists); and 3) those who found it to be neither very meaningful nor very spiritual (16% - pure recreational travelers).[19] Let us compare those who fall in the middle with those in the other two categories (see Table 2.3).[20]

---

[18] For our purposes, the main axis of distinction falls between those who found religious meaning and those who did not. Accordingly, I chose not to distinguish between traditional religious pilgrims and the pilgrim-tourists who together comprise this 51%. As noted earlier, the likelihood of finding traditional religious pilgrims given the nature of modern tourism is small. This is even more the case with regard to Jewish travel to Israel, because of the interpenetration of Jewish ethnic and religious culture.

[19] A fourth category - those who found it very spiritual but not very meaningful - is an empirical possibility but not a logical one, more likely to be the result of response error than anything else. Only 1.2% of the respondents (19 people out of 1,646) gave this pattern of response.

[20] Men and women did fall equally into each of the three categories. Controlling for gender sometimes altered the magnitudes of the effects we will be describing, but not their basic patterns. I therefore present the analysis here for both genders combined. A presentation of the data that controls for gender is presented in Appendix H.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 2.3: Comparison of Pilgrims, Meaningful Tourists and Recreational Travelers

	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3
Very Meaningful	Yes	Yes	No
Very Spiritual	Yes	No	No
Proportion of Sample	51%	32%	16%
Percent Male	43%	52%	56%
Explores Jewishness (Very much) [a]	31%	16%	17%
Being Jewish involves... (% responding Very Much)			
Having a rich spiritual life [a]	32%	16%	14%
Attending synagogue [a]	15%	7%	5%
Leading an ethical and moral life [a]	61%	53%	48%
Caring about Israel [b]	54%	38%	23%
Remembering the Holocaust [b]	68%	59%	48%
Lights Hanukkah Candles [c]	91%	90%	82%
Fasts on Yom Kippur [b]	79%	75%	64%
Attends worship services (at least several times a month) [a]	19%	12%	9%
Keeps kosher (at home or all the time) [d]	22%	17%	19%
How would you rate... (% saying "One of the best things")			
Sabbath [b]	53%	29%	15%
Western Wall [b]	85%	69%	47%
Old City of Jerusalem [a]	53%	37%	30%
Being with thousands of Jews [b]	74%	56%	30%
Being in a country with a Jewish majority [b]	75%	57%	28%
Spending time on the bus [b]	39%	30%	17%
Talking with friends [b]	53%	43%	27%
Tel Aviv	33%	37%	31%
Golan Heights [c]	36%	36%	19%
Encounter with Israeli peers (*Mifgash*) [b]	34%	30%	20%
Kibbutz [a]	20%	15%	13%

[a] χ^2 partitioning reveals Group 1 differs significantly from other two groups at the p=.05 level.
[b] χ^2 tests show statistically significant differences between all three groups at the p=.05 level.
[c] χ^2 partitioning reveals Group 3 differs significantly from other two groups at the p=.05 level.
[d] χ^2 partitioning reveals that Group 1 differs significantly from Group 2 at the p=.05 level.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The first group, those who felt Taglit to be both very meaningful and very spiritual, were those who at the beginning of their trip were the most likely to feel and express their religion strongly. They were twice as likely as the others to raise their Jewish identity to the discursive level by "exploring their Jewishness;" they were most likely to see spirituality, worship, ethics, Israel, and the Holocaust as crucial to their own Jewish identity; and they were the most likely to engage in Jewish ritual practice like service attendance, fasting and holiday candle lighting. At the other extreme, the pure recreational travelers in Group 3, for whom the trip was just a nice winter vacation, nothing more, were among the least likely to express or enact any strong religious convictions.[21] Then there were those who fell in the middle. These people had an experience on Taglit whose personal meaning to them they willingly described in the strongest positive terms, but at the same time avoided a similarly emphatic response when asked if the trip was a spiritual experience. For this group, the "meaningful tourists" of Group 2, religion was something generally taken in moderate doses. Although their religious practices more closely resembled the higher activity of Group 1 rather than the lower activity of Group 3, this was not matched by similarly strong belief. On issues like exploring Jewishness, and seeing spirituality, worship, ethics and Israel as central to their Jewish identity, the proportion of

---

[21] That they were generally out of step with the vast majority of the participants is revealed by the fact that they did not even like spending time with the others on the bus. (Only 17% rated this one of the best things, the lowest proportion by far of the groups.)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

people voicing fervent sentiments was lower than that of Group 1, but greater than that of Group 3.

What does this imply about the nature of the personal meaning derived from pilgrimage-touring? Groups 1 and 3 attest to the fact that, for some, personal meaning and the spiritual experience are inextricably tied. The religiously oriented people of Group 1 find spirituality meaningful and meaning in spirituality. The recreational travelers of Group 3, in contrast, do not. Group 2, however, is an anomaly: pilgrims who find their experience personally meaningful but do not frame this in religious terms. In terms of ritual observance, this group is only slightly less observant than Group 1. But identity and behavior are two separate issues (Cohen and Eisen 2000; Horowitz 2000), and in terms of identity, this group's general predisposition to take religion in moderation suggests that those in it, while not devoid of Jewish feeling, are reluctant to invoke a religious discourse to account for their experience.

Does this mean that the personal meaning of which these people speak is derived from something other than religious sentiment, or is it merely an exercise in self-deception on their part, an unwillingness to call a spade a spade? We find that the people who avoid calling their own experience on Taglit "spiritual" were, in fact, less enamored of religious sites and activities during the program. Participants were asked to rate comparatively about 20 different aspects of the program as being among "the best things" or not. This can be used as a rough indicator of the potential "peak experiences" that Heilman (1995),

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

invoking Maslow (1968), identified as an important way in which Israel experience programs influence personal identity. The discrepancies in the response patterns across the three groups vary depending on the nature of the activity. Moving in order from Group 1 through Group 3, the steepest declines in site- and activity ratings were observed with regard to religious things like the trip's celebration of the Sabbath, and the visits to the Western Wall and the Old City of Jerusalem. Specifically religious aspects of the trip were, in fact, less appealing to the people who did not call their trip a spiritual experience. This suggests that for those who found the trips meaningful but not spiritual, the meaning was being derived in other ways.

Declines were also observed with regard to the sense of ethnic peoplehood that could emerge when thousands of Jews travel together to a country where both the majority and the official public culture is Jewish. These aspects of Taglit were rated much more highly by people who found the trip to be both meaningful and spiritual than by people who did not. The salience of this aspect was still felt by a majority of Group 2 and by about a third of Group 3, but the percentage of people who viewed this as one of the best aspects of the trip dropped sharply as we moved across the three groupings. Similar results were observed with regard to feelings of group solidarity, as expressed by spending time with friends on the bus and talking with friends late at night and at meals. Ratings of these aspects of the program dropped in a monotonic fashion across the three groups.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In contrast, the encounter with modern Israel was notable for its consistency of rating across the groups. Approximately one third of the people in each of the three groups rated Tel Aviv to be among the best aspects of their trip to Israel. There was no difference in ratings between Groups 1 and 2 with regard to their experience of the border settlements and jeep tours of the Golan Heights, their structured encounters and discussion groups with Israeli peers (*mifgash*), and their visits to a kibbutz. People who found Taglit neither very spiritual nor very meaningful were less likely than both of the other groups to consider these three things peak experiences. This can be taken as evidence supporting the proposition that an encounter with modern Israel allows some people to derive personal meaning from an Israel pilgrimage in ways that are not specifically religious.

What can we conclude? First, personal meaning that is not specifically religious in nature can be gained through pilgrimage-tourism. Second, the derivation of religious and non-religious meanings are not mutually exclusive. Tel Aviv and Jerusalem can both be pilgrimage destinations. Religious pilgrimage and meaningful tourism can coexist and blend into one another. Third, the categorization of certain meanings as religious or not religious is ambiguous. Symbols are multifaceted and layered, communicating different meanings to different people and multiple meanings even to a single individual. Fourth, there is reason to believe that the perception of a trip as meaningful and/or spiritual emerges not merely through individual peak experiences, but in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the gestalt experience that occurs when many such peaks are piled one on the other (cf. Heilman 1995). The percentage reporting peak experiences for most of the 20 sites and activities increased monotonically with every increase in the overall perception of the trip as both personally meaningful and spiritual. Moreover (and recognizing that the matter cannot be reduced to sheer arithmetic), the average number of sites and activities rated as peak experiences also increased from 3 among those who said the trip was neither spiritual nor meaningful, to 4 among those who said it was meaningful but not spiritual, to 5 among those who said it was both.

Predicting the Spiritual Experience: An Empirical Model

We have reviewed the competing, though not incompatible, semiotic and group process hypotheses about how meaning is constructed through travel. We have seen that the people who traveled to Israel with Taglit were diverse in ways that might have affected their responses to the trip. We have also seen that there indeed was a diversity of responses to the trip, and that this diversity was in part related to certain characteristics of the travelers. Using survey data gathered from participants both before departure and after return, we now will assess the two hypotheses introduced above, by modeling the relative weight of factors that influence whether Taglit was perceived by participants to be a spiritual experience. Although it would be theoretically preferable to model the more general perception of the trip as a "personally meaningful" experience,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

empirically, the overwhelmingly positive response to this question leaves little variance to account for. The more specific variant that asks about the "spiritual experience" is a reasonable proxy that still allows us to assess the two hypotheses. It is also particularly well-suited to empirical analysis with logistic regression modeling.

Model

Using logistic regression, an appropriate dichotomous dependent variable (described below) was regressed on predictors derived from the rival approaches in the previously discussed literature on pilgrimage and tourism. In addition to basic demographic controls, four categories of predictors were tested:

Jewish socialization

Jewish commitment

Expectations about the trip to Israel

Group orientation

The first three categories of predictors are drawn from the semiotic approach whereas the latter is drawn from a focus on emergent processes. To reiterate the hypotheses mentioned earlier, if we adopt the semiotic perspective, we would expect to find that those with stronger degrees of prior Jewish socialization and commitment would be more likely to perceive the trip as a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

spiritual experience. The same argument would apply to those who have greater expectations about the potential for a spiritual experience. In contrast, if we accept the view that the meaning generated in pilgrimage-touring emerges from interactions among the travelers, then the likelihood that the trip will be considered spiritually meaningful will depend on the strength of the individual's relationship with the group.

Each block of predictors was analyzed separately in successive logistic regression models. OLS regressions using the same predictors were also run on the original four-category variable from which the dichotomous dependent variable for the logistic regression was constructed. The purpose of these OLS models was heuristic only. They provide a rough confirmatory estimate of the amount of variance accounted for by the four sets of predictors.

Data came from the 2000-2001 CMJS pre- and post-trip surveys of Taglit applicants and were weighted so that respondents reflected this population. Only responses from people who actually ended up participating on Taglit and who completed both pre- and post-trip surveys were included in the analysis. There were no significant differences between the 1,677 respondents of this panel and the overall group of pre-trip survey respondents on the variables from the pre-trip survey that are included in this model. More information on the weighting and the panel can be found in the Methodological Appendix.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Dependent Variable

Religion thoroughly suffused the Taglit experience. Organizers designed the program this way, and many participants often perceived it, whether they liked it or not. Travelers in successive Taglit cohorts consistently rated the Western Wall, the venerated remains of the ancient Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, as the best experience of the program (see Saxe et al. 2000, 2002). The synagogues of Safed, and Sabbath worship were also prominent features of the program. Blessings over wine and prayers of thanksgiving were said upon groups' first arrival to Jerusalem. And at a "Mega-Event" held in the Binyanei Ha'uma convention center for thousands of assembled Taglit participants, laser light images of ritual objects flashed on a screen where moments later a children's choir sang a stirring rendition of the hymn *Adon Olam* ("Master of the Universe").

Religious aspects of Taglit were not limited to the tradition. The cardinal tenet of Jewish civil religion – "Sacred Survival" (Woocher 1986) – was also prominently on display. Just like the UJA "missions" to Israel that Woocher identified as the quintessential civil Jewish ritual (1986:146-151), Taglit's itinerary struck the theme of sacred survival by touring life, death and defense on the frontier settlements of the northern Galilee and Golan Heights; freedom-loving defiance at the mountaintop fortress of Masada; and the phoenix-like rebirth from the ashes that is proclaimed and enshrined on the Jerusalem hilltop where

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

both the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial and the Mount Herzl military cemetery are physically and symbolically juxtaposed.

Subsequent chapters will address some of these sites and experiences specifically. For now, I focus on the gestalt of the trip.[22] Three months after returning from Israel, participants were asked in a survey, "To what extent was the trip a spiritual experience?" Half of them (51%) answered "Very Much." The remaining 49% offered less enthusiastic responses ranging from "Not at all," through "A little" and "Somewhat." For use as a dependent variable in a logistic regression, this variable was dichotomized to contrast those who gave the highest response with those who did not. Dichotomizing had the added advantage of mitigating social desirability effects that may have been present in the question and that may have encouraged some of those who did not consider Taglit to be a spiritual experience to respond "somewhat" or "a little" rather than "not at all."

Independent Variables

Variables were entered into the analysis in five blocks: demographic controls, Jewish socialization, Jewish commitments, expectations about the trip to Israel, and group orientation. Descriptive statistics for all variables are presented in Table 2.4. Detailed descriptions of the specific variables used in the analysis

---

[22] Such an approach is in line with Heilman's (1995) finding that that memories of specific sites quickly become blurred, leaving in the travelers' minds only general impressions and emotions.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and the testing for multicollinearity are provided in the Methodological Appendix.

Table 2.4: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev
Taglit was very much a spiritual experience	1632	0	1	0.51	0.50
Sex (Female)	3187	0	1	0.51	0.50
Country of residence (Canada)	3189	0	1	0.25	0.44
Graduate student or part-time undergrad	3190	0	1	0.06	0.23
Not enrolled in school	3190	0	1	0.08	0.28
Raised orthodox	3190	0	1	0.07	0.25
Children of interfaith or non-Jewish parents	3190	0	1	0.13	0.34
Children of conversionary households	3190	0	1	0.09	0.28
Bar / bat mitzvah	2946	0	1	0.75	0.44
Jewish studies college classes	2934	0	1	0.35	0.48
Explore your Jewishness	2512	0	3	1.86	0.83
Ritual observance Guttman scale	2995	0	4	2.28	1.10
Importance of rich spiritual life	3040	0	3	1.69	0.97
Importance of Israel, holocaust & Jewish organizations	3051	0	3	2.14	0.62
Wear a Jewish star / emblem	2987	0	2	0.83	0.73
Looking for a spiritual experience	3087	0	3	1.68	1.02
Wanted to learn more Judaism	3099	0	3	2.03	0.92
Parents, friends and/or I think Israel not safe	3132	0	3	1.07	1.06
Number of times previously in Israel	3180	0	4	0.25	0.65
Know people who have gone on an Israel experience trip	2907	0	1	0.78	0.42
Follow news about Israel	3040	0	1	0.54	0.50
Composite rating of preparatory aspects of trip	1617	-2.62	1.13	-0.02	0.74
Group orientation index	1633	-5.51	4.49	-0.01	1.60
Sensational North American senior staff	1614	0	1	0.47	0.50
Sensational Israeli staff sensational	1606	0	1	0.68	0.47
Valid n (listwise)	1089				

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Results

Table 2.5 presents coefficients from the five logistic regression models. Model 1 included only the demographic variables present as controls. Sex [E(B)=1.52] and country of residence [E(B)=0.66] were statistically significant, with women and Americans being more likely than men and Canadians to report that the trip was very much a spiritual experience. Student status made no difference in such evaluations of Taglit. The model predicted approximately 55% of the cases accurately, and was more likely to correctly predict those who did not find the trip very spiritual (59% correct) than those who did (51% correct).

Model 2 added indicators of Jewish socialization, none of which were statistically significant. Household religious affiliation and childhood or adult Jewish education - hypothesized to provide participants with cognitive content and affective attachment to Jewish symbols that could be activated on a trip to Israel - appeared to have no bearing on whether such a trip would be perceived in religious terms. Model accuracy did not improve by adding this block of non-significant predictors. This model, like Model 1, accounted for only 2%-3% of the variance in the dependent variable.[23] The adjusted R-square of the corresponding OLS model was .011, or 1%.

---

[23] For the logistic models, I have reported R-square statistics as a range, with the low end representing the Cox-Snell statistic, and the high end representing the NagelKerke statistic.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 2.5: Logistic Regression Coefficients

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	B	E(B)	B	E(B)	B	E(B)	B	E(B)	B	E(B)	B	E(B)
CONSTANT	-0.06	0.94	-0.28	0.76	**-2.58**	**0.08**	**-2.69**	**0.07**	**-2.86**	**0.06**	**-2.60**	**0.07**
DEMOGRAPHIC CONTROLS												
Sex	**0.42**	**1.52**	**0.44**	**1.55**	0.26	1.29	0.23	1.25	0.17	1.19		
Country of residence	**-0.41**	**0.66**	**-0.36**	**0.69**	**-0.36**	**0.70**	-0.20	0.82	-0.19	0.83		
Grad student, P/T undergrad	0.06	1.06	0.06	1.07	0.22	1.25	0.34	1.41	0.42	1.52		
Not enrolled in school	0.12	1.13	0.14	1.16	0.22	1.24	0.20	1.23	0.26	1.30		
JEWISH SOCIALIZATION												
Raised orthodox			-0.25	0.78	**-0.65**	**0.52**	-0.45	0.64	-0.40	0.67		
Interfaith or non-Jewish HH			0.11	1.12	0.20	1.22	0.12	1.13	0.15	1.16		
Children of conversionary HH			0.23	1.26	0.21	1.23	0.16	1.18	0.21	1.23		
Bar / bat mitzvah			0.14	1.15	-0.03	0.97	0.04	1.04	-0.04	0.96		
Jewish studies college classes			0.16	1.18	-0.05	0.95	0.06	1.06	0.09	1.09		
JEWISH COMMITMENTS												
Explore your Jewishness					0.17	1.18	0.12	1.13	0.15	1.16		
Ritual observance Guttman scale					0.03	1.03	0.05	1.05	0.02	1.02		
Importance of rich spiritual life					**0.48**	**1.62**	**0.26**	**1.30**	**0.29**	**1.34**	**0.28**	**1.32**
Import. of Israel, Holocaust, Jew. orgs					**0.59**	**1.80**	**0.47**	**1.60**	**0.39**	**1.47**	**0.37**	**1.45**
Wear a Jewish star / emblem					0.11	1.12	0.08	1.09	0.06	1.06		
EXPECTATIONS OF TAGLIT												
Looking for a spiritual experience							**0.41**	**1.51**	**0.41**	**1.51**	**0.56**	**1.75**
Wanted to learn more Judaism							0.14	1.15	0.16	1.17		
Parents/friends/ I think Israel unsafe							-0.04	0.96	-0.08	0.93		
Number of times previously in Israel							**-0.20**	**0.82**	-0.20	0.82		
Know people who went on Israel trip							-0.15	0.86	-0.22	0.80		
Follow news about Israel							-0.15	0.86	-0.20	0.82		
Composite rating of trip preparation							**0.44**	**1.55**	**0.22**	**1.24**	**0.22**	**1.24**
GROUP ORIENTATION												
Group orientation index									**0.24**	**1.27**	**0.22**	**1.25**
Sensational North American senior staff									**0.49**	**1.63**	**0.45**	**1.56**
Sensational Israeli staff sensational									**0.34**	**1.40**	**0.30**	**1.35**

Coefficients in bold are significant at the p=.05 level.

The predictive power of the model increased considerably with the addition of variables indicating Jewish emotional commitments, but not behavioral commitments. The proportion of variance accounted for increased to 14%-18% (Cox-Snell/ NagelKerke R-square; the OLS adjusted R-square was .157, or 16%). The model's predictions were accurate in approximately 66% of the cases, but now with a greater likelihood to correctly predict those who found the trip very spiritual (71% correct) as opposed to those who did not (61% correct). The two concrete behaviors measured, ritual observance and marking oneself with the Jewish "totem" through adornment with appropriate jewelry, were unrelated to whether the trip to Israel was perceived as spiritual. In contrast, the two measures of Jewish religious and ethnic identity - states of mind rather than sets of actions - showed positive relationships with the dependent variable [E(B) = 1.62 and 1.80, respectively] and were among the strongest of all predictors. An indicator that straddled the line between feeling and behavior - the extent to which the respondent explored his or her Jewishness - was not statistically significant.

With Model 4, we move beyond generalized Jewish background characteristics that may have primed respondents to resonate to the symbols evoked in Israel. Here, the trip to Israel was placed in the foreground to consider how specific expectations might have led to a specific outcome. Variables related to these expectations were of two types: potential sources of expectation-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

generating information, and the expectations themselves. Of the first, the only one that showed a relationship with the dependent variable was the rating of Taglit's preparatory and administrative efforts [E(B)=1.55]. Following news about Israel, knowing people who had been on previous rounds of Taglit or similar programs, and even first-hand knowledge of Israel itself did not make people more or less likely to see the trip as a spiritual experience. One caveat must be offered about the composite rating of Taglit's preparatory work: In contrast to the other three variables, the questions in the composite were asked after the program ended. The time-order necessary to impute causality is therefore called into question. It could well be the case that those who found the trip a very spiritual experience were more generous in their retrospective evaluations of the pre-departure aspects.

The specific expectation that the trip would be a spiritual experience, asked prior to departure, significantly predicted whether participants, three months after returning home, would report that they very much had a spiritual experience [E(B)=1.51]. This finding is of considerable importance because it suggests that the experience of an Israel trip as a religious pilgrimage is in large measure a self-fulfilling prophecy, or in a language foreign to the Taglit participants but native to the locale, "Seek, and ye shall find" (Matthew 7:7).

Those who sought before, however, are another matter. People who had previously spent time in Israel were less likely to find this return trip as religiously moving as the first-time visitors, other things being equal. It suggests

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

that the power of sacred symbols, or perhaps even the likelihood of perceiving things as symbols in the first place, depends in part on the novelty of the encounter. The sacred can only maintain its radical Otherness if familiarity is held in check. This finding persisted at a reduced level of statistical significance ($p<.06$) when further controls were added to the model.

Expectations that one might be putting one's life on the line by travelling to Israel during a period marked by a particularly high degree of violence may have increased the spiritual dimensions of the trip by making life and death issues especially palpable. Alternatively, fear may have so distracted participants from positive aspects of the trip that they were unable to achieve a heightened degree of spirituality. In actuality, neither of these things occurred generally. There was no relationship whatsoever to be found in the data between concerns for safety and spiritual outcomes.

The addition of the trip-specific expectations increased the predictive power of the model. The R-square range increased such that 19%-26% of the variance in participants' responses was accounted for. (OLS adjusted R-square increased to .233, or 23%). Accuracy of prediction increased modestly to an overall rate of 69% of cases correctly predicted. 73% of those who found the trip very spiritual had their responses predicted accurately, compared to 64% of those who did not. None of the initially significant demographic controls remained so in this model, nor did exploration of one's Jewishness.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The final model, Model 5, added three predictors indicating the respondent's evaluation of the group experience: a composite measure of group orientation, and separate evaluations of the North American and Israeli staff. All three were positively correlated with the dependent variable and were statistically significant at the p=.05 level [E(B)=1.27, E(B)=1.63 and E(B)=1.40, respectively]. Participants who liked their fellow pilgrim-tourists, who enjoyed spending time talking, relaxing and partying with them, and who found them to be open and considerate, were much more likely to find the trip a spiritual experience. Similarly, participants who felt their staff to be "sensational" were also more likely to find the trip a spiritual experience. Variance accounted for increased to 23%-31% (OLS adjusted R-square increased to .272, or 27%). Model accuracy stayed essentially the same however, with the overall rate of correct predictions remaining at 69%, the rate for those who found the trip very spiritual holding at 73%, and the rate for those who did not inching from 64% to 65%. The model, in short, was quite powerful. It should be borne in mind, however, that the questions about the group experience were asked in the post-trip survey along with the dependent variable. Caution in imputing a causal relationship is therefore warranted. Eliminating all non-significant predictors yielded the simplified Model 6 (R-square range: 21%-27%, OLS R-Square: .267, Predicted Correctly: 69%).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

For the sake of argument, let us consider how Model 5's predictions would change if we vary certain characteristics of a hypothetical individual.[24] Take, for instance, Jake, a junior studying American History at the University of Michigan. Jake had a fairly typical Jewish upbringing in the suburbs of Chicago. His parents, who were both Jewish, but not Orthodox, sent him to Hebrew school to receive a Jewish education as a child and to prepare him for his *bar mitzvah* at the age of 13. This was a nice affair, with a basketball-themed reception, a *hora* and, of course, Kool and the Gang's "Celebration." Since then, however, Jake's Jewish education has largely come to an end. In terms of his current Jewish practices and identity, he is average in most respects: he fasts on Yom Kippur; sometimes wears a small gold Jewish star on a necklace he was given by an ex-girlfriend; and went to see *Schindler's List* on the day it came out. He liked it, although not as much as *Exodus*, which he thinks is still the best Jewish movie there is. Spirituality is not unimportant to him, but he is so busy with school and his fraternity (not a Jewish one) that he doesn't have as much time for it as he thinks he should. He actually felt a bit guilty when filling out the survey question that asked about it. He felt the same way when the survey asked if he explored his Jewishness. Was it "a little" or "somewhat?" Maybe it would be better just to choose the higher answer. When he heard about Taglit and told

---

[24] Jake is a hypothetical individual based in part, but not entirely, on the field work. We use Model 5, rather than Model 6, because it takes into account the detailed background variables that allow us to draw the portrait.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

his roommate that he was thinking of applying, his roommate told him he was "nuts" for going to a war zone. But Jake wasn't concerned and his parents weren't either. They had never been there, but they had family friends who sent their son - Jake's best friend in high school - on a summer teen tour to Israel. He came back with glowing reports. All in all, Jake's parents were excited that he would have the opportunity to be the first in their family to see the country. Beyond what his friend had told him, all that Jake really knew about Israel was what he read occasionally in the newspapers and what he had learned in Hebrew school. Jake applied for Taglit a few days after returning to school after having spent the High Holidays at home with his parents. About a month later, he got a call from the Hillel rabbi telling him he was accepted. The orientations and pre-trip mailings were generally good. Jake was no more or less pleased with them than anyone else. The sessions had already taught him some things about Judaism he had not known, which he thought was a good sign, since one of the things he hoped to get out of the trip was to learn a little more about his religion.

Would this be just a nice winter vacation for Jake, or would it become something more? A religious pilgrimage? A spiritual experience? Much depended on how much he was looking for a spiritual experience in the first place. Much would also depend on the people he found himself travelling Israel with: his peers, his North American staff and his Israeli tour guide.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 2.6: Likelihood of Jake Reporting a Very Spiritual Taglit Experience

	Not at all important	A little important	Somewhat important	Extremely important	
Looking for a spiritual experience	30%	40%	50%	60%	
	Lowest	Midpoint Low	Average	Midpoint High	Highest
Group Orientation Index	19%	31%	47%	60%	72%
	Not sensational	Sensational			
North American Senior Staff	41%	53%			
Israel Tour Guide	41%	49%			
Lowest values of all four variables	7%				
Average values of all four variables	47%				
Highest values of all four variables	86%				

Variations in Jake's attitudes toward these four things could lead the model to predict anywhere from a 7% chance to an 86% chance that Jake would find the trip very much a spiritual experience (Table 2.6).[25] If Jake's experience with regard to these four issues was that of the average Taglit participant, then there would be a 47% likelihood that he would evaluate the trip in these religious terms.

Of these four predictors, staffing contributes least of all to the ultimate experience of the trip as a pilgrimage. Rating the Israeli or North American staff

---

[25] Appropriate values were entered into the logistic regression equation based on the above profile. In cases where Jake was described as average, the mean value of the independent variable was entered into the equation. In the case of the four variables whose effect sizes are being demonstrated, as one was varied the other three were held constant at their mean. The reader will recall that dependent variable used in the logistic regression is whether the respondent said that Taglit was "very much" a "spiritual experience." The reader should be aware that the effect

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

as sensational leads to an 8% - 12% increase in the probability of finding the trip to be very much a spiritual experience. Still, this is a large amount, especially in comparison with the variables we have held constant for this profile.

When all other variables are held constant, each stepwise increase in Jake's pre-existing wish to have a spiritual experience adds 10% to the chances that he will realize this desire. Imagine that Jake has a twin brother, like him in every respect except that Jake feels that having a spiritual experience on Taglit is extremely important whereas his brother feels that it is not at all important. The chances that Jake would have such a spiritual experience would be 60%. For the twin, the probability would drop by a half, to only 30%.

But what if Jake and his twin share an equal desire to have a spiritual experience, but end up having very different relationships with the other members of the group. Jake—who gets along well with his peers, goes out to clubs with some of them when they are in Tel Aviv and Eilat, and appreciates the way that they speak frankly about their feelings in discussion groups - scores among the highest on the group orientation composite. The chances he would describe his time in Israel as very spiritual are 72%. But his twin, who finds he has little in common with the other group members, tends to sit by himself on the bus, is rebuffed by the woman he is most interested in, and resents the way people are always "sharing" their intimate "feelings" - why can't they just shut

---

of changing each variable is non-linear and depends on the effects of the other variables.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

up for once?! Doesn't anyone have any shame? - rates at the bottom of the group orientation index. The chances that he would have a spiritual experience in Israel are only 19%.

MULTIPLE ROUTES TO MEANING

Overall, the more distant in time an independent variable was from the actual experience of the trip, the less difference it made in influencing whether the trip was perceived as a spiritual experience. Participants' Jewish upbringings were unrelated to this outcome - an important finding in itself - and the demographic characteristics that were initially significant ceased to be so once indicators of current Jewish life were taken into account. With regard to the participants' Jewish lives just prior to the trip, what mattered were attitudes, not behaviors. This might be unexpected in a religion that has traditionally mandated practice rather than belief (Maimonides' 13 Principles of Faith notwithstanding). But it is in perfect accord with studies of American religion that show it becoming much more a matter of personal feeling than collective standards of behavior (Bellah et al. 1985; Cohen and Eisen 2000, Gans 1994, Horowitz 2000, Wuthnow 1998). It is also worth noting that the feelings that mattered were those that explicitly involved spirituality and Israel. These can be viewed as general orientations that formed the background to specific anticipations about the Taglit program itself. Here, the existence of a desire to have a spiritual experience, more than the exposure to potential generators of expectations about Israel, made the crucial

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

difference. Finally, a key contribution to the ultimate evaluation of the program as something spiritually moving was made by the group experience on the trip itself.

To return to the alternative approaches found in earlier works, we found some limited support for the contention that meaning in travel emerges through semiotic processes. On the negative side of the balance sheet, the socializing experiences that may have generated symbolic orientations were unrelated to outcomes, as was exposure to sources of specific information about Israel. In spite of this, those for whom Israel and the Holocaust played an important role in their Jewish identity were more likely to find the experience spiritual. So too were those who were primed to resonate to spiritual symbols, both through general predispositions as well as specific desires for Taglit.

There existed considerable evidence supporting the notion that the group experience itself generated a religious or quasi-religious experience, independent of other factors. This group experience referred not only to the interactions with peers, but also to the relationship with staff as well. This was true of both the North American staff and the Israeli staff, despite the different roles generally assigned to them on the program. In most cases, only the North American staff were employees of the sponsoring organizations. Most Israeli guides, in contrast, worked for Israel-based tour companies. Without insisting on too strict a division of labor, North American staff were charged with responsibility for group building, logistics, and interactive education - in short, creating an environment

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

conducive to a positive group experience. The Israeli staff, on the other hand, tended to be responsible primarily for presenting a narrative about Israel and the sites visited. They were the professional tour guides. Sensational performances among both contributed to the participants' perceptions that the trip to Israel was a very spiritual experience. Were the processes underlying this different in light of the different roles they tended to play? We can only speculate. North American staff perhaps did more to foster the group environment that led to feelings of communitas. Israeli staff perhaps did more to make the Israeli symbols of Judaism manifest and resonant. In practice, however, the lines were often blurred and the roles picked up and dropped as needed. There are also enough examples of staffing situations that did not follow this general pattern to suggest caution in taking this interpretation too far.[26]

In sum, although scholars have tended to give the semiotic and group-process approaches separate treatment, neither alone is sufficient. This is a case of both/and, not either/or. In travel experiences, meaning is produced in multiple ways. In part, it depends on the motivations and predispositions of those who set out on the journey. But it also is shaped by what happens *en route*

---

[26] For example, on one bus comprised of students from two universities in different regions of the United States, each school sent one staff person who did more to focus on his/her own particular students than to forge a unified bus community. The Israeli tour guide, who had no stake in either of the two school communities, took on a leadership role in unifying the group in large part by becoming a charismatic symbol of Israel that the group could rally around. On another bus, both the North American and the Israeli staff were affiliated with the religious movement sponsoring the trip, and were given equal roles in group building. It was rare, however, for North American staff to take on the role of tour guide beyond adding supplementary remarks to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

as travelers interact with each other. The sense of a meaningful experience - be it traditional pilgrimage, pilgrimage-tourism, or meaningful tourism - is most likely to emerge when the two work together.

---

the descriptions offered by the Israeli guide or asking leading questions of the guide to draw out certain issues.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER 3

ISRAEL'S AUTHENTICITY

Whether they are religious or secular, collective or individual, normative or spontaneous, all variants of pilgrimage share the common core of a destination that represents something beyond itself. On occasion, the desire to see what already exists in the imagination is so great that it overshadows any concern for the physical realities of the place. Bowman's (1992) consideration of Medieval Christian pilgrimage narratives of the Holy Land found that they often "purport to describe a distant terrain (Palestine and its peripheries) while, in fact, using that terrain only as a pretext for presenting images of the holy places already deeply inscribed in the popular imagination" (152). For example, one pilgrim wrote that at the Dead Sea he observed "'the Wife of Lot'" and "'a hole emitting smoke and from the hole comes a voice saying 'Woe to Sodom.' Rumour has it that this is the chimney of Hades, where the prisoners are'" (150).

Pilgrimage is not so much a journey to a signifier as a journey via a signifier to the signified. Turner and Turner have claimed that "behind the visible image [stands] not a single significatum... but an entire semantic field, an area of multivocality" (1978:145). Pilgrims can thus find divergent meanings in a single site. The signified is not foreordained. Sometimes, the entire "semantic field" is contested or variable. Muslims in al-Quds see the Haram al-Sharif where Christians and Jews see Jerusalem's Temple Mount. But even this Judeo-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Christian consensus is narrow, for few Jews look to that hilltop as the place where Jesus chased out the moneychangers, and fewer see its ruins as evidence that God has repudiated an old covenant. Still, this multiplicity of meanings, shifting and transforming with the eye of the beholder, does not alter the fact that the symbolism of the destination is the key to its attraction. Preston (1992) called the "power of a pilgrimage shrine to attract devotees" its "*spiritual magnetism.*" Although he did not explicitly refer to this as a symbolic phenomenon, he did recognize that the magnetism did not derive from any "intrinsic 'holy' quality" of the place itself, but rather from "human concepts and values" (33).

In studying the symbolism associated with Israel as a pilgrimage center, my goal is not to enumerate, à la Turner and Turner (1978), the meanings attached to various shrines. Rather, I will use specific examples from the Israeli context to help reveal patterns in meaning construction that may be readily generalized. In the previous chapter I began developing the argument that semiotic processes are in part responsible for the emergence of personally meaningful experiences in pilgrimage-tourism. Here, I examine these processes in greater depth.

Erik Cohen argued that pilgrimage destinations are posited to be the "Center out there" to which one journeys because it represents "the source of the hallowed (socio-moral) of the cosmos" (1992:50-1). In practice, of course, the "Center out there" need not be a normatively sanctioned locus of socio-moral

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

cosmic order. It could just as easily be something as idiosyncratic as a tree under which lovers first met or the childhood home of an adored author. But even in these cases, the site is perceived as a 'raw' or minimally mediated representation of something important to the traveler. To invoke a term used frequently in the sociology of tourism (as distinguished from the sociology of pilgrimage) the pilgrimage destination is chosen for its "authenticity" (e.g. Crang 1996; MacCannell 1973, 1989; E. Bruner 1994, Pearce and Moscardo 1986; Taylor 2001; Waller and Lea 1998; Wang 1999).

"Authenticity" is a chameleon of a word. It can camouflage sloppy thinking, and hide shifts in meaning not only from readers but even from authors themselves. Definitional precision is therefore in order. Edward Bruner's (1994) delineation of four specific ways that the term is invoked is of some benefit here. Bruner examined the use of the concept in the discourse of museum professionals at a historical village. The first way that these living history practitioners used the term referred to the "historical verisimilitude" that made the village "credible and convincing... a historic site believable to the public." In other contexts, authenticity was used to refer to the site's historical accuracy. The reconstructed 1830s village of New Salem, Illinois could look believable to the visiting public and accurately reproduce the materials and styles of the 1830s, but still, it was not the New Salem. This suggests a third sense of authenticity, meaning "original, as opposed to a copy; but in this sense, no reproduction could

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

be authentic, no matter how credible." Finally, a fourth notion of authenticity was noted - the "duly authorized, certified, or legally valid" (399-400).

The authenticity of traditional pilgrimage centers is bound up with notions of originality and authority. The believing Christian's choice to visit Bethlehem is inescapably tied to the fact that she *knows* this to be the birthplace of Jesus. This knowledge is sanctioned by the authority of scripture and the exact site is officially marked by the Church of the Nativity erected there. In contrast to this Christian notion of pilgrimage to the *fons et origio*, verisimilitude emerges as a more important motif in Jewish encounters with Israel, particularly because Israel's claims to be a Jewish state place the contemporary on the itinerary as much as the ancient. If the pilgrimage is to be successful in this regard, the country must present a reasonably convincing picture of what a Jewish society might be expected to look like.[1]

---

[1] In the case of Taglit and other Jewish pilgrimages to Israel, we are speaking of several layers of authenticity and signification. The ultimate complex of values represented are those I simply label as "Jewishness." Israel claims to be an authentic representation of these values, in contrast to inauthentic representations of them. These claims are manifested through a variety of 'empirical indicators.' To draw on examples that I will develop later, the Hebrew-speaking environment possesses cultural verisimilitude, that is, it conforms to expectations of what a Jewish country should be. The Hebrew is seen as authentically Jewish, and by extension, the country is seen in the same terms. Likewise, the marking of ancient Jewish historical sites invokes the authority of the Bible, archaeology, tradition and the tour guides. As the repository of these authentic originals, the entire country is perceived in these terms. The question is whether people make the link between the Jewish symbols and Israel's claims to Jewish authenticity, or whether the consumption of Jewishness takes place without regard for the Israeli context in which they are set. It is my contention that the act of pilgrimage presupposes this connection, and that the empirical evidence supports this notion. On a pilgrimage to Israel, Israel's authentic symbols of Jewishness are also symbols of Israel's Jewish authenticity.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

When pilgrimage sites are perceived as original, authoritative, convincing or accurate, they are more readily taken as representative of the values the pilgrim has come there to affirm. Sites that seem authentic enable the pilgrimage experience. At the same time, the pilgrim-tourist's quest for authenticity in signifier and signified is not an end in itself, but rather a means to achieve some state of personal authenticity. By virtue of the pilgrimage to the site of Jesus' birth, the pilgrim's faith is reinvigorated and she feels herself a better (i.e. more authentic) Christian, individual and human being.

For the Jews on Taglit, Bethlehem was not on the itinerary - in part because it did not adequately represent the normative Jewish narrative and in part because it was in the Palestinian controlled West Bank, which Taglit deemed off-limits, citing security reasons - but the intertwining elements of authentic signifiers and authentic selves were just as present. Examining them will shed light on the how authenticity is constructed in travel particularly, but also in general.

Over the course of the next two chapters, I will argue that pilgrimage rests in the meeting of two types of authenticity: that which is symbolized by the holy destination and that which is perceived in one's lived experience. Most Taglit participants were drawn to Israel because they believed it represented something authentically Jewish. They may not have been motivated by the intense religious urges people tend to associate with pilgrimage (although some certainly were), but their choice to travel on a Jewish trip to Israel is indicative that the Jewish

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

nature of destination held some significance for them. Once there, the encounter with symbols of Israel's Jewish authenticity encouraged many of them to perceive their own lives in Jewish terms. This fostered a sense of life-coherence that was interpreted as a feeling of somehow being more authentically oneself.

Each of these forms of authenticity will be addressed in turn. The current chapter will discuss the construction of Israel as an authentic Jewish center. This will be done in three parts. First, I address the ideological context that pervades the entire notion of Israel's authenticity. The idea did not emerge as a novel creation of the Taglit program or its participants, but rather is a core Zionist tenet and one that enabled programs like Taglit to become thinkable in the first place. Second, we consider the relationship of these ideological framings to the concept's articulation in the discourse of Taglit participants. We will see that while the Zionist notions were present, the travelers were no mere ideological dupes. Their notions of Israel's Jewish authenticity were often novel and at odds with the traditional ideology. Finally, we consider how these empirical findings contribute to a grounded theory of authenticity, its construction and perception. This theoretical elaboration will lay the groundwork for the next chapter, where we examine what happens when the lens of authenticity is turned inward and applied to the self.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

IDEOLOGICAL CLAIMS TO AUTHENTICITY

The Jewish authenticity of Israel has been a pillar of Zionist ideology and polemics since the movement was founded in the late 19th century. Its specific nature has been expressed in many different ways, reflecting the "hybrid discourse" that frames discussions of Jewish authenticity generally (Charmé 2000:134). Eliezer Ben Yehuda saw a Jewish homeland with a Jewish majority as the only place where the Hebrew language would thrive ("[W]e cannot revive [Hebrew] with translations; we must make it the tongue of our children on the soil on which it once blossomed and bore ripe fruit" [cited in Avineri 1981:85]); Ahad Ha`am's similarly romantic spiritual Zionism saw a revived Jewish settlement in Palestine as the only place where the Jewish spirit could develop as "the fruit of the unhampered activity of a people living according to its own spirit" (cited in Hertzberg 1997:267); Rav Kook's religious Zionism raised the earthly Jerusalem to the level of the heavenly ("Jewish original creativity... is impossible except in Eretz Israel"[2] [cited in Avineri 1981:190]); and in Borochov's Marxist-Zionist synthesis, the mass immigration of Jewish proletariat to Palestine was the only way the Jews could become dependent solely on their own labor (Avineri 1981:149). In these views, Israel's Jewish authenticity is related to its Jewish population's autonomy from gentile political, economic and cultural domination; and in its history as the setting for pre-dispersion Jewish collective

---

[2] The Land of Israel.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

life and subsequent focus of Jewish messianic longings. The ideas are also enshrined in the country's Declaration of Independence, whose preamble reads:

> The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and national identity was formed. Here they achieved independence and created a culture of national and universal significance. Here they wrote and gave the Bible to the world.
>
> Exiled from Palestine, the Jewish people remained faithful to it in all the countries of their dispersion, never ceasing to pray and hope for their return and for the restoration of their national freedom.
>
> Impelled by this historic association, Jews strove throughout the centuries to go back to the land of their fathers and regain their Statehood. In recent decades they returned in their masses. They reclaimed the wilderness, revived their language, built cities and villages, and established a vigorous and evergrowing community, with its own economic and cultural life. They sought peace yet were prepared to defend themselves. They brought the blessings of progress to all inhabitants of the country (quoted in Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz 1980:477).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In the Declaration, Israel - as land, state and society - stakes its claim to Jewish authenticity on an account of the Jews' ancient historical experience in the land, their subsequent faithfulness to it even when not physically present, and their efforts to reclaim and develop the land in modern times. As such, the varying notions of authenticity are sometimes complementary and sometimes competing (c.f. Charmé 2000). If one cares nothing for the present but is concerned only for the past, the land of Israel remains authentically Jewish as the stage on which Jewish history was recorded in the Bible.[3] Some claims for the Jewish authenticity of the modern state of Israel pay little heed to this historical argument, arguing instead that the country is authentically Jewish because it is the free expression of its autonomous Jewish population. The mytho-historical connections with an ancient Jewish past are irrelevant in this regard (and even counter to the free self-determination of Israel's Jews today, some would argue). What is important in this line of argument is that Israel is physically separated from gentile-dominated space, and that demographic, economic, military, political and cultural control over the territory is held by Jews. With these differing approaches, the notion of authentic Israeli Jewishness is up for grabs. If authenticity is determined by a connection with the past, then modern Israeli secularism could be characterized as inauthentic. On the other hand, if

---

[3] The actual occurrence of these events is immaterial. Even non-believers can affirm that such and such a place is generally agreed to be the site associated with this or that mythic story. Finnish tourism capitalized on a similar phenomenon by marketing Lapland as the North Pole home of Santa Claus (Pretes 1995).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

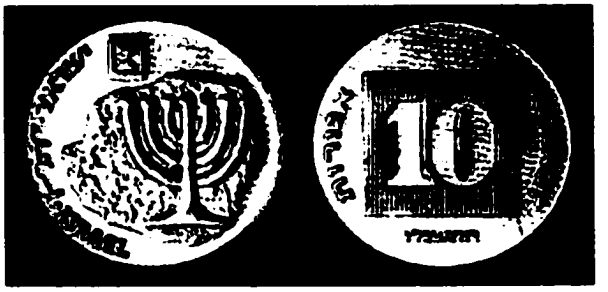
authenticity lies in the folk culture of a free people, then the secular majority are a realization of the Zionist dream – a novel yet authentic Jewish existence that is free to develop without the shackles of the old religion or the compromises impelled by minority status.

A slightly different approach to Jewish authenticity is evident in the quotations from Ben Yehuda and Ahad Ha`am cited above. For them, the crucial point was the link between the ancient and modern. The contemporary expressions of Jewish culture in Israel would be authentic inasmuch as they exhibited continuity with the past. The ancient language was to be revived. The free life of the Jews of Palestine would be an expression of an enduring Jewish spirit that Ahad Ha`am traced back to Moses, before the Hebrew settlement of Canaan (1894, 1904). From this perspective, the reinstatement or modernization of ancient Israelite forms simultaneously would affirm the Jewish authenticity of ancient Israel and assert an unbroken lineage between the ancient and the contemporary. Liebman and Don-Yehiya (1983) documented this process and its relationship to Israel's civil religion. Don-Yehiya (1995) traced the history of the Zionist movement's use of the festival Hanukkah to "assert the continuity of Jewish identity and the national right of the Jews to the Land of Israel" (303). In this instance the Hasmonean revolt of 166-160 BCE was commemorated as a struggle for national liberation whose historical echoes were being played out again by the Jews of British-controlled Palestine.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

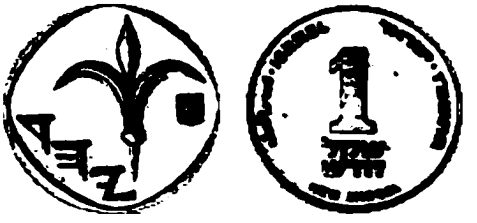
An example of how this process has shaped Israel's material culture is found in the adoption of the "sheqel" as the official currency and the minting of coinage that replicates ancient Israelite coins. The following images and descriptions are taken from the Bank of Israel (Bank of Israel N.d. a,b,c):

Figure 3.1: The 10-*agorah* Coin



"Replica of a coin issued by Mattathias Antigonus (37 - 40 BCE) with the seven-branched candelabrum..."

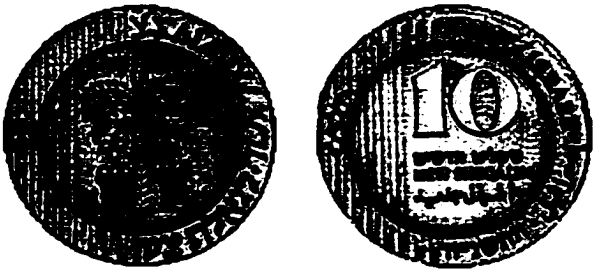
Figure 3.2: The 1-*sheqel* Coin



"Lily; 'Yehud' in ancient Hebrew....Origin of motif: A Judean coin during the Persian period (6th–4th century BCE)."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure 3.3: The 10-*sheqel* Coin



"Palm tree with seven leaves and two baskets with dates; the emblem of the State of Israel; the words 'for the redemption of Zion' in ancient and modern Hebrew; vertical lines... Origin of motif: Ancient coin from 69 CE, the fourth year of the Jewish-Roman war, one year before the destruction of the Second Temple."

A variant of this approach posits Israel's Jewish authenticity in terms of its role in Jewish eschatology. As Neusner wrote,

> The language associated with the State of Israel is the language of redemption. The hopes evoked are expressed in the imagery of classical Judaic messianism. The ancient prayers for the restoration of Zion - meant, in olden times, to express the messianic hope for the end of days - today are indistinguishable from prayers for the welfare of the State of Israel, containing phrases such as 'the beginning of the sprouting forth of our redemption' (1985:48).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The Israeli victory in the 1967 Six Day War reinvigorated this stream of Zionist thought. In a study of Gush Emunim, a movement inspired by the religious Zionist philosophy of Rav Kook, Aran wrote:

> Even secular Israelis had some sense of the religious import 1967; for the Kookists it meant nothing less than a rebirth.
>
> They declared 1967 (not 1948 nor even the traditional rabbinic dating from Creation) to be the year zero, marking the start of a new era, the era of Redemption, which had begun with the Six Day War.... The victory of Israel's army was the 'victory of the Sons of Light over the Sons of Darkness.' The battles at the various fronts became stages in the mystic restoration of the cosmos... (1995:199).

We have, then, four general ways in which Israel's Jewish authenticity has been conceived in Zionist ideology: First, as the principal stage of Jewish history: the land of Israel is the setting for the Biblical narratives and the focus of Jewish yearning following exile. Second, as an autonomous Jewish culture: free from gentile hegemony, the society of Israel is able to develop according to patterns it alone establishes. Third, as the link between the Jewish past and Jewish present: the state of Israel represents the reestablishment of historical continuity with an ancient past that had been severed by exile, and fosters the social conditions that enable the perpetuation of Jewish culture. Fourth, as an historical development

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

with religious significance: in Jewish religion, God is revealed through history, and the history of modern Israel has been integrated into the broader religious narrative. Israel is thus conceived of not merely as a political entity, but as an expression of God's will and a part of God's plan. To this list a fifth aspect might be added—Israel as a Jewish democracy. As representative government in a society with a Jewish majority, Israel ideally represents the democratically expressed will of the Jewish people.

Each of these claims to authenticity implicitly posits an alternative state of affairs. There is a Jewish land (Israel) a non-Jewish land (everywhere else). There is autonomous Jewish life in a Jewish society or a compromised Jewish life among the nations of the world. There is a corporate life in Israel that itself exhibits continuity with the Jewish past and also allows such continuity to be manifested among its individual members, and there is a individualist life outside of Israel whose connections with Jewish heritage are always tenuous and under threat. There are religiously significant actors and there are spectators who watch from afar. There is a Jewish democracy in Israel and there is a Jewish oligarchy abroad.

In practice, of course, none of these claims are fully realized. All the variants on the claim to Jewish authenticity tend to oversimplify. They ignore alternative narratives about the authentic meaning of the land, two thousand years of Jewish history in other countries of the world, and the cultural penetration of a global marketplace. This is in part a result of the politicization of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

memory in the service of nation-building (Anderson 1991; Don-Yehiya 1995). It can also be understood simply as something implicit in the cognitive construction of authenticity. Idealized conceptions and perceptual filters are inherent to understandings of what is and is not authentic, and oversimplification necessarily results from this. I will elaborate on this point later.

Perhaps because they are selective readings of the history of Israel and the Jews, the Zionist notions have not gone uncontested in Jewish discourse. In 1885, three years after the first Jewish agricultural settlements were being established in Palestine, Reform rabbis in America responded by rejecting the entire Zionist enterprise. In a statement of principles adopted at a national conference held in Pittsburgh, the rabbis asserted, "We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine... nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state" (CCAR 1997). But after the establishment of the state in 1948, this opposition view largely disappeared as an organized force in American Jewish life. Even in the years shortly before statehood, the Reform movement had abandoned its opposition to Zionism, adopting in 1937 a new platform that addressed the matter as follows:

> In the rehabilitation of Palestine, the land hallowed by memories and hopes, we behold the promise of renewed life for many of our brethren. We affirm the obligation of all Jewry to aid in its

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> upbuilding as a Jewish homeland by endeavoring to make it not only a haven of refuge for the oppressed but also a center of Jewish culture and spiritual life (CCAR 1999).

By 1999, the movement had adopted Israeli Hebrew terminology and was even looking favorably upon emigration from the United States:

> We are committed to *Medinat Yisrael*, the State of Israel, and rejoice in its accomplishments. We affirm the unique qualities of living in *Eretz Yisrael*, the land of Israel, and encourage *aliyah*, immigration to Israel (CCAR 2000).

Still, this did not amount to an adoption of classical Zionist *shlilat hagolah* ("negation of exile"), which was a critique not only of the quality of *Jewish* existence in a condition of national homelessness, but a scathing indictment of the *human* quality of such a life (Schweid 1996:136-140). A half-century after the establishment of statehood, even most Israelis had come to feel that the historical moment for such an extreme view had passed (134-136). Never an adherent to the idea, the Reform movement in 1999 could comfortably

> affirm that both Israeli and Diaspora Jewry should remain vibrant and interdependent communities. As we urge Jews who reside outside Israel to learn Hebrew as a living language and to make periodic visits to Israel in order to study and to deepen their

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> relationship to the Land and its people, so do we affirm that Israeli Jews have much to learn from the religious life of Diaspora Jewish communities (CCAR 2000).

It is worth pointing out that this text uses the word *diaspora,* rather than *exile.* This reflects a rejection of Israeli Hebrew terminology that characterizes all Jewish settlement outside of Israel as *golah* or *galut,* exile. Still, even the word "diaspora" implies a center from which dispersion once originated, and in some American Jewish circles a two-centered terminology is being invoked that draws on the historical case of rival centers of Jewish scholarship in Babylon and Jerusalem, from which the two versions of the Talmud, the Bavli and Yerushalmi, derive their names.[4]

All classical Zionist formulations of *shlilat hagolah,* "the negation of exile," accept the basic premise that some degree of Jewish inauthenticity is inherent in Diaspora (Schweid 1996). One of the most common, if simplistic, forms of the debate has centered on the question of Jewish immigration to Israel.[5] If Israel is the authentic landscape of the Jewish past and the authentic bearer of the culture's future, then this cannot but have negative implications for the Jewish

---

[4] For instance, a newly instituted program of joint religious text study that brings together in cyberspace and in person Jews from New York and Jerusalem is called Bavli-Yerushalmi, recognizing the centrality of Jerusalem while at the same time asserting New York's status as a leading Jewish center in its own right (Breakstone 1998).

[5] Again, the Hebrew terminology is value-laden. Jewish immigration to Israel is referred to as *aliyah,* or ascent (also the root of the Hebrew term for pilgrimage – a foot ascent, *aliyah laregel*) and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

lives of those Jews who choose to stay abroad. The positing of Israeli authenticity is inseparable from a conception of at least a minimal degree of Diasporic inauthenticity. (On this point we will have more to say later.)

Not surprisingly, American Jewish intelligentsia have bristled at the delegitimization (explicit or implicit) of Diaspora Jewish life. Neusner criticized the Zionist reinterpretation of a classical Jewish concept in purely political contexts: "Only propagandists seriously ask us to interpret *Galut* so crassly that its effects may be washed away by a trip across the oceans" (1981:105). Fein, in a polemical retort to the Israeli charges, dismissed the territorial aspects of the concept: "At its core, Exile is not an idea that has anything to do with geography" (1988:115). Instead, he argued, it is a purely metaphysical notion that refers to "God's world... not working the way it was meant to work" (117). Eisen critiqued the reductionism inherent in both American and Israeli polemics, insisting on the inseparability of the political and metaphysical aspects of *galut* (1986:175-6). In his view, *galut* refers to "the difficulties involved in carving out Jewish time and space inside a larger culture, hostile or at best indifferent to that effort" (xix). This has direct bearing on Jewish authenticity. Addressing a perspective put forth by Halpern ([1956] 1983), Eisen wrote:

---

emigration is known by the equivalent *yeridah*, or descent. Emigrants are known as *yordim* (descenders).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> To the degree that American Jews are estranged from traditional sources and the language in which those sources are written; construct Jewish time and space only with difficulty; are surrounded by a culture hostile or indifferent to their commitments; and are defined in part by that culture's definition of what religion is and should be—to that degree *the Judaism of American Jews is filtered through a medium that compromises the clarity of transmission and therefore its authenticity* (1986:179, emphasis added).

People's ability to live comfortably with inconsistency is a point that intelligentsia throughout the ages have never quite grasped. In contrast to intellectual discourse, popular sentiment among American Jews has generally accepted the Zionist notion of Israel's Jewish authenticity without much concern for the logical implications of these positions (cf. Halkin 1977). New York Jewry's annual ethnic parade down Fifth Avenue does not celebrate Jewish life in New York, but rather bills itself as the "Salute to Israel Parade."[6] In a tradition that dates back to the 1920s, Jewish centers around the United States have commonly

---

[6] This is not because New York Jews are primarily of Israeli descent. Analyses of the 1991 New York Jewish Population Study (NYJPS) indicate that Israeli emigrants make up under 2% of New York's Jewish population- 27,000 out of 1,633,000 Jews (Gold and Phillips 1996:61). My own analysis of the 1990 U.S. Census 5% PUMS for New York City found 23,345 children of Israeli Jewish immigrants living in households with at least one immigrant parent (Kelner 1996). Even if this number were doubled to account for Israelis living in Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester counties (also included in the 1991 NYJPS), the proportion of Jewish New Yorkers of Israeli origin would be under 5%.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

organized folk dancing classes. But these have tended to be *Israeli* folk dances rather than *American* ones (Goren 1997:56-7). (For its own part, American Jewry has not developed an indigenous dance culture of its own, folk or otherwise). Synagogue gift shops have long placed Israeli *objets d'art* alongside traditional Jewish ritual items in deliberate attempts to inculcate an attachment to Israel through "consumer education" (Joselit 1994:161). By 1990, this attachment had become so deeply rooted that of the 4.2 million Americans who identified themselves as Jewish by religion, one out of three (31%) had visited Israel (Kosmin et al. 1991). What little comparative data exists suggests that this proportion is at the high end of the range for white ethnic groups (Alba 1990:157).

American culture in general reinforces Jewish acceptance of Israel's Jewish authenticity. Best-selling novels like Michener's *The Source* tell of the land's history as reflected in the experience of modern Israeli archaeologist-statesmen. Paul Newman and Frank Sinatra have brought the Zionist narrative to the silver screen in *Exodus* and *Cast a Giant Shadow*. During Hanukkah, the Empire State Building is lit up in two bands of blue surrounding a band of white, an image of the Israeli flag. Like Israel's Declaration of Independence and the writings of Ahad Ha`am, colloquial English has also adapted Herzl's phrase *der Judenstaat*

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(the state of the Jews) - which referred to country's population - to instead assert something about its character: "the Jewish state".[7]

The Taglit program itself was predicated on the very notion of Israel as a locus of authentic Jewish life and history (but not necessarily the only one). If the goal was simply Jewish education and identity development, why not address it at home? A signed editorial in a national Jewish student publication wrote, "There is a certain irony in that, to sustain Jewish life in America, our community has to ship its youth thousands of miles away to Israel" (Treiman 2001). Hillel's staff manual essentially provides the answer in explaining under the heading of "basic concepts" that Israel is "the greatest repository of Jewish memory and experience (but not the only one)" and that it "afford[s] the possibility of seeing Judaism 'in action'..." (Hillel 2000:14). Taglit's North American chairperson went further, asserting the essential unity of Israel and Jewish identity: the Taglit program, she wrote in a popular Jewish news magazine, "is an all-out effort to engage an unprecedented number of young people in a stimulating encounter with Israel - *and by extension, with their own identity*" (Post 1999, emphasis added).

---

[7] Ahad Ha`am expressed the hope of establishing "*lo rak medinat yehudim, ki im medinah yehudit be'emet*" ([1897] 1979:13) - which Hertzberg translates as "not merely a State of Jews but a really Jewish State" (1997:267). The operative paragraph in the Declaration of Independence proclaims the "establishment of a Jewish state" (*hakamat medinah yehudit*). The draft press release of the American recognition of Israel's statehood approved by President Truman originally referred to "the new Jewish state," but this phrase was stricken, presumably by Truman himself, and replaced in handwriting by the country's name, the "State of Israel" (U.S. National Archives and Records Administration 2001).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In short, the Zionist notion of Israel as the expression of authentic Jewish history and community had won acceptance long before Taglit emerged. By the time the program was initiated, its underlying assumption that Jews should see Israel to bolster their Jewish identity had an almost taken-for-granted air about it.[8] Taglit participants were not naïve babes, oblivious to all this. They entered Israel well aware that they were going not only to the Jews' state, but also to what had come to be seen as "the Jewish state."

Authenticity in the Discourse of Taglit Participants

Having established that any conceptions of Israel's Jewish authenticity that emerged on Taglit did so against the backdrop of an ideological context that was largely taken for granted, we turn now to explore how these ideas were articulated in the discourse of Taglit participants. The relationship between the ideological and emergent expressions of Israel's Jewish authenticity were more complex than one might initially assume.

On the most basic level was a generally unquestioning acceptance of the notion that the land of Israel was the setting where famous moments in Jewish history have been played out. Israel was authentic in the sense that it was the official original (E. Bruner 1994). Thus, after gazing on a vista of Jerusalem's Old

---

[8] Charmé (2001) offers an incisive critique of the essentialist thinking that underlies popular conceptions of Jewish authenticity. The taken-for-granted character of these notions, however, presents the fundamental challenge to reshaping the discourse. My analysis in this and the next chapter sets aside the very legitimate criticisms of typical thinking on authenticity to investigate

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

City from an observation point on nearby Mount Scopus and listening to the tour guide's presentation, it was not out of the ordinary for a student to comment, "When [the tour guide] mentioned that Abraham and Isaac and David were part of the history of the city, it felt like it was everything I was taught as a kid coming to life. This is where Judaism really happened—beyond any text book." During a tour of the excavated tunnels extending westward along the base of the Temple Mount from the Western Wall into the Moslem Quarter, the visitors were told at a certain moment that they had reached the point closest to the where the Ark of the Covenant was held, the holiest place in Judaism. Acceptance of this claim was evidenced not only by its repetition among the Taglit participants, but also by their emotional reactions. For example, one man attested to having an even "stranger feeling [there] than I had at the [Western] Wall," thanks to this understanding of what the location 'was.' Outside of Jerusalem, a nature hike in Ein Gedi -usually prefaced with the story of David hiding there from King Saul - was in one instance described instead only as the source of the perfumes in the Bible. This choice of framing was received with mixed reviews. One woman said she "like[d] how the nature hikes are related to the history," whereas a man in the same group said that "the Ein Gedi hike might have been a waste of time, because the stories weren't too relevant and it didn't have much to do with the classic history of Israel." But in both cases the desire to see the connection

---

the social processes by which these over-simplified conceptions take root.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

between the Jewish history recorded in the Bible and the modern place was the motivation of the comments.

In each of the examples above, travelers were responding to tour guides' descriptions of sites. But the dynamic was not a result of the guides' promptings alone. Taglit participants not only accepted the idea that Israel is the setting where biblical history happened, they *wanted* to accept the idea even when it might not have been appropriate. This desire was evident in their reactions to contrived activities. A participant recommended to one of the CMJS field researchers that the donkey ride in the desert would be made more meaningful if it were tied into the story of Abraham and other Biblical travel episodes. The desire was also evident in their inventions of imaginary histories. Standing in the Judean desert, someone commented, "I can see Moses leading the Jewish people through the desert here," apparently unaware or unconcerned with the fact that according to the Bible, Moses never set foot anywhere in the land of Israel. And it was evident in the utter lack of concern shown for modern scholarship that calls into question favored historical myths. The well-known story of Masada as told by its only chronicler, Josephus Flavius, identifies it as a site of Jewish resistance to Rome, where a Roman siege of the mountain fortress culminated in the Jewish rebels choosing mass suicide over whatever fate the Romans would have meted out to them. But in his assessment of Josephus's credibility in light of the archaeological and literary evidence, historian Shaye Cohen concludes that "[a]t the very least... archaeology reveals that Josephus' narrative is incomplete and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

inaccurate" and that on the story's "important points it contradicts him" (1982). Tour guides mentioned the new scholarship, some giving it greater emphasis than others, but even in these cases, the Josephan history - or the further mythologized version that has figured prominently in Zionist nation-building efforts (Ben-Yehudah 1995) - was generally taken as fact and served as the starting point for discussion about the significance of the site. "We think of this as heroic," one group member pronounced in a discussion circle, "but maybe that's just because it was our people. Would we be saying these same things if this group was called Waco instead of Masada?" To this, another responded, "I think what they did was cowardly. If all of the Jews did what they did, there would have been no more Judaism. It's much more courageous to try to live and keep Judaism alive." In a third person's view, "They were right because they died for the dignity of their families, for something bigger than themselves." At no point did the students challenge the facticity of the events being discussed. This was only voiced by a staff member, responding to the comment of his colleague with whom he often entered into public dispute:

> Female staff member: "The one who made the most contribution was the woman who hid herself and saved her life because without her there would be no story at all."
>
> Male staff member: "That was probably just a literary device Josephus used."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Female staff member: "Fine, but we're talking about ideas here."

The male staff person's reframing of the events from history to myth was promptly dropped by the next speaker, a student who exclaimed, "I think what they did was a bullshit ego trip," sure that they had in fact done it.

Beyond the notion of Israel as the original setting for Jewish history, it is difficult to identify a direct one-to-one-correspondence between various ideological assertions of authenticity and the ways in which Taglit participants expressed this concept. The notion that Israel's Jewish authenticity rested in being an expression of Divine will was little in evidence. For example, eschatological interpretations of the 1967 Six Day War were exceptions rather than the rule, perhaps a reflection of staff's general reluctance to take firm political and religious stands, or perhaps a reflection of the post-Oslo political context.[9] In 1967, the "Israeli messianism" that emerged after the war was partly the result of the scale of Israel's conquests - especially considering that they came on the heels of a pervasive sense of almost-certain destruction (Neusner 1985:14). But just as critical was the specific victory in the Old City of Jerusalem, including the Western Wall and Temple Mount (Aran 1995). And yet, when groups visited the Western Wall and its environs, the Six Day War was mentioned only in

---

[9] Under the 1993 Oslo Accords between Israel the PLO, both Labor and Likud-led governments began turning over territories captured in 1967 to Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority, striking a core article of faith of the Gush Emunim and effectively ending any notion that 1967 heralded the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

passing by tour guides and was rarely invoked by participants. The comment of one young man - "I went and watched from behind the fence. I thought about the video from the Six Day War. I was struck by the purity of thought at that moment when they took back the Old City. I realized that you get purity out of religion." - was not echoed in public discussions among other members of his group nor among the members of other buses observed by CMJS.

Although reduced to a side note in Jerusalem, the war was integral to the story woven by tour guides on the Golan Heights, and universally so. Explanations of the reasons Israel fought to seize the Heights from Syria (to protect the northern settlements from shelling and to secure the water supply in the Sea of Galilee) were followed with day-by-day descriptions of the progress of the war on the Syrian front. In only one observed instance was the war framed as a miraculous victory made possible by God. The exceptional nature of this case is also reinforced by the fact that the tour guide concluded his presentation by telling people that the future of Israel depended on their support for the Golan. He then handed out political bumper stickers, "The nation is with the Golan," associated with the grass-roots campaign to prevent concession of the territory to Syria. The staff member concerned was fired immediately following the trip for this and other 'infractions.'

---

dawning of a new era of national redemption.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

For their part, participants seemed less concerned with the history of 1967 than with the ramifications of returning the Golan in exchange for a peace accord with Syria. A common pattern in groups was to allow local residents to explain the history. In one such case, Izzi, a South African-born Galilean *kibbutznik* who had fought in Israel's 1948 War of Independence described seeing the 1967 war "with a wide angle, in Technicolor, and in stereophonic sound. We saw the plane crashes, the bombings, the blood of the soldiers, and tanks burning. Our soldiers were dying, but we made it up the slope of the Heights." But rather than inquire more into the prelude, conduct and aftermath of this conquest, or Izzi's views of its national or religious significance, the only questions were about his personal feelings about trading the Golan.

As for Israel's claim to constitute a cultural island where Jewish life could develop authentically, unfettered by other cultures, participants' views were somewhat tempered by perceptions of economic globalization:

> Will: "When I see Burger King and McDonald's here it really ticks me off that my country is going and polluting other cultures."
>
> Marco: "I disagree. I think it's kind of neat. I keep kosher and am excited to eat a McDonald's hamburger."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Robert: "I like seeing Sbarro and McDonald's here. It reminds me that we live in the best country in the world! Our economy dominates!

Participants showed little interest in Hebrew McDonald's signs, in spite of the tour guides' repeated cues to look, but Hebrew t-shirts bearing the names of rock bands like the Doors were popular souvenirs. Mostly, however, it was outside of the marketplace that a marriage of Jewish forms and Western content were taken as evidence that Israel had created some type of modern culture with a distinctly Jewish accent. A use of a *shofar* in a pop music song got approving nods at a concert. Streets named after biblical characters, rabbis and famous Jews were spoken about as one of the things that "remind you that you are in a Jewish state." And the ubiquitousness of Hebrew was probably Israel's trump card in this respect. In America, traditional Jewish forms are almost always encountered in the context of some explicitly Jewish content. For example, Hebrew (the form) is the language of synagogue and the Torah (the content).[10] In Israel, a decoupling of form and content and a recontextualization of the form seemed to transform the mundane into something worthy of note among Taglit participants. "Hey did you hear that DJ on the radio last night? That was so funny" "Why?" "Oh, it was just so funny to hear someone speaking Hebrew in

---

[10] My use of the form/content distinction differs somewhat from that of Simmel. For him, the contents refer to basic psychological and biological drives that are channeled into the forms of social life (1950:40-3).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

this smooth, phone sex kind of voice. It wasn't like hearing prayers in synagogue." The decontextualization of what were essentially perceived as religious forms caught people's attention, especially (at least among the men) when it implied some subversion of religious norms. This includes the "phone sex" Hebrew voice. It includes the name of Maccabee Beer and its slogan, "The beer the Chosen People choose." One man who bought a t-shirt with an image of the bottle on the front and the slogan emblazoned across the back tied it into a structured group discussion that took place the previous day entitled, "Special vs. Normal, You Choose" (referring to the question of whether the Jews and Israel should strive to be a people with a special mission or a normal state like any other state). "We have *special* beer, versus, like, *normal* beer," he joked. And it includes a Hebrew phrase recited frequently and with glee by the men in one group, *Ma hamatzav, calbah?* ("What's happenin', bitch?").

All this suggests that on a functional level, and in spite of the criticisms some of them had about Israeli secularism and the Americanization of the country, participants on Taglit perceived Jewishness not merely in terms of specific contents, but also in terms of the forms in which they are usually wrapped. Things that at home would be considered patently not Jewish in Israel were made Jewish by wrapping them in a cloak of Hebrew and religious imagery. Hence, street signs, beer, pop music and t-shirts could all signify the Jewish character of Israel.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

We might reasonably debate whether form alone is enough to make something authentically Jewish. From a phenomenological point of view, the issue appears to have been settled for us. People who came to Israel on Taglit were more than willing to accept the premise that, at least in Israel, if the form is Jewish, it Judaizes the content.[11] Thus, the oft-repeated notion that in Israel one can *be* Jewish without having specifically to *do* anything in particular. Still, it is important to note that this perception of Israel's Jewish authenticity is very different from the Zionist ideological claim to link present and past. Here the past is represented in form only and the content can be entirely discontinuous. The notion of an authentic bridge to the Jewish past posits an essential continuity of both form *and* content. But perceptions of this were not as clearly evident as those that decoupled the two.

Instead of merely echoing Zionist polemics, participants tended to envisage Israel's Jewish authenticity in terms that reflected their own experiences and encounters. As will become apparent, in most of these cases, the experience of authenticity entailed some demarcation of boundaries. Consider, for example,

---

[11] It is worth pointing out that this is a crucial differences between the Zionist response to modernity and the response of the religious reform movements that emerged in Diaspora. As the word "re-form" suggests, the diaspora movements sought to adapt the forms of Jewish religion without challenging the premise that Jewish life was essentially religious in content. Zionism, on the other hand, rejected this narrow circumscription of Jewish life, and sought the novel application of Jewish forms broadly to all areas of life. It was a movement to "re-content" Jewish life, not "re-form" it. Where Diaspora movements poured the sanctuary's old wine into recyclable plastic bottles, Zionism poured Beaujolais, motor oil and saline solution into ancient casks.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the encounter with Orthodox Jews in Israel, both Zionist *datiim leumiim* and the non-Zionist *haredim*. That these were often seen as representative of an authentic Jewish religious life is of note because Orthodox communities exist in North America as well. One need not travel to Israel to encounter these cultures.[12] But Israel was the setting in which this construction of Jewish authenticity was experienced, and as we will see, a transference from people to place was readily made.

One common aspect of the tourist experience is seeing the natives (Taylor 2001; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998). When Taglit participants subjected ultra-Orthodox worshippers at the Western Wall to the tourist gaze ("The highlight was being at the Wailing Wall and seeing the way that religious people actually observe *Shabbos*[13] there"), not only was Israel being toured but also Judaism. It is tempting to see the ultra-Orthodox, in their 19th century Eastern European garb, as icons of pre-modern Jewish culture. Where other Jews had capitulated to the forces of modernity, these symbolized a refusal to change, a refusal to compromise. Like Heilman at the outset of his ethnographic foray, the Taglit tourists may have seen the ultra-Orthodox as "'Jewish primitives,'" "the absolute

---

[12] I am setting aside the question of distinctions between American Modern Orthodoxy and Israeli *datiut leumit*. The Zionism of the Israeli Orthodox in question was irrelevant to the Taglit participants' experience of them. They were seen largely in the domestic sphere or in the ritual sphere, not as public or political actors. Thus, they were taken as representative of a traditional religious lifestyle, not a specifically Zionist accent on Orthodoxy.

[13] Sabbath. Also "*Shabbat*."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

other, sequestered and opaque, whom modern, secular culture had somehow left untouched." (1992:xvii). Their authenticity would that of verisimilitude (E. Bruner 1994) - they would be seen as a convincing reproduction of Judaism in its 'original' state. (Never mind that Judaism predated their variant of it by several thousand years. The important thing was to look like "what Grammy Hall would call 'a Reeeaal Jew'" [*Annie Hall* 1977]). I had fully expected that the Taglit travelers would see the Orthodox in this manner.

There was, however, little direct evidence from the participants themselves that they did or did not perceive the Orthodox as such. What was commented upon was the "joy," "passion" and commitment to ideals that the Orthodox of all stripes apparently manifested. This perception stood in contrast with images of other Jews of whom this could not be said.

Impressions of the Orthodox were generated among participants in the course of observations of their public behavior during Sabbath eve services at the Western Wall as well as in private encounters in the homes of Orthodox Jews who hosted members of some groups for Sabbath lunch.[14] Those observing the Orthodox in prayer spoke of their enthusiasm and commitment.

---

[14] Shabbat home hospitality was rare on Taglit. Orthodox-sponsored trips were a major exception to this rule. Participants in these organizations' programs were broken up into groups ranging in size from 6 to 25 and hosted for lunch by Jerusalem-based officials of the sponsoring organizations, usually rabbis in local *yeshivas*.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> I've never experienced such joy and such passion in religion as I've seen in this *Shabbat*. The Western Wall was probably the thing I remember the most, when there was dancing around and the people chanting prayers, I thought it was really amazing that people can have as much passion, as much devoutness, and they can be so focused on this one particular thing and believe in it so much. - Yevgeni, a new American who emigrated six years ago from St. Petersburg. [15]

The image that seemed to stick in people's minds was that of young modern Orthodox men, including a fair number of *yeshiva* students, dancing. Yevgeni's group had split up with the men going alone to the Western Wall where they waited for a rabbi from the *Ohr Sameach yeshiva*[16] to lead a *minyan* that they would join. With the arrival of the rabbi, a man in his mid-forties with a neatly trimmed-beard and a beaming smile - the kind of smile, the CMJS field

---

[15] With regard to quotations about Sabbath worshippers at the Western Wall, bear in mind that the Orthodox constitute the vast majority of those praying there. In addition, the groups from which these quotations were drawn were Orthodox-sponsored groups for non-Orthodox participants. Groups under non-Orthodox sponsorship tended to avoid the Western Wall on Friday nights, ostensibly for security reasons. For the Taglit participants who did visit the Kotel on Sabbath eve, their experience in some cases involved prayer with a local *minyan* (prayer-group) for the men and dancing on a nearby rooftop for the women. In other cases, both men and women went to the Kotel and clustered on opposite sides of a *mechitza* (divider), where they joined in prayer as one congregation.

[16] lit. "Happy Light." *Ohr Sameach* is a *yeshiva* whose students are *ba'alei tshuvah*, non-Orthodox, often non-religious, Jews who choose to adopt Orthodoxy. The *yeshiva* and the movement in general is profiled in Danzger's book, *Returning to Tradition: The Contemporary Revival of Orthodox Judaism* (1989).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

worker wrote, "that makes me like him instantly" - the *minyan* began its prayers. The opening psalms of the Sabbath eve service were sung to music written by Shlomo Carlebach, a charismatic *Hassidic rebbe* whose liturgical music is increasingly being adopted by worshipers across the Jewish denominations. The words of the prayers dissolved away leaving only the melody, sung over and over again, "*yai-dai-dai, ai-ai-ai.*" And with this, the large group of men began to dance in a circle that grew ever more fervent and energetic. Along a low stone wall marking off the area immediately in front of the Kotel from the large plaza behind it, women, perhaps over a hundred, stood and watched.[17] Men from the Taglit group jumped into the circle and themselves danced with great enthusiasm. As the service progressed, each new psalm led to a new melody and new dance. Bodies were tightly packed together, but as the circle turned, faces of the various students from the group could be seen, smiling as they sang at the top of their lungs.

The youngest member of the Taglit group, an 18-year old man from Detroit later told the field researcher,

> My *Shabbat* experience was amazing. Like, I've never, ever done anything like that in my entire life. I'd have to say it's my most amazing religious experience that I've ever had. Because I never

---

[17] The spot chosen for the worshipping allowed women to watch, listen and perhaps pray, even though they were barred from taking full part in the singing and dancing due to the strict gender segregation enforced by custom and by the religious authorities at the site. On the construction of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> knew that people could be so incredibly passionate about being Jewish, I mean, it just gave me a whole different outlook on everything, because people are so proud to live here, and people are so proud to be celebrating this. And, it just gave me this sense of belonging, this sense of my religion's really, really important to me. And it just changed my view on everything as a whole. And I'm grateful for that.

When asked if anything in particular was especially moving, he said,

> I thought it was just amazing how hyper and how crazy they got in between each of the prayers that they were saying, like going around in circles and screaming and singing and clapping and stuff. I've never seen anything like that in my life. And I think just to have that much joy and that much happiness, just that part of the services, it blew me away completely. It was like a party, it was so wild, it was like New Year's Eve every week, that's how crazy it was and how wild it was.

The perceptions of an authentic commitment to faith, expressed with joy and love, were also voiced by people who entered Orthodox homes. In this

---

gender traditions at the Western Wall, see Charmé (2001).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

activity, both men and women were full (though not equal)[18] participants, and the comments of women reflected similar sentiments to those voiced by the men with regard to the Sabbath eve worship:

> It was really cool that the families here invited people they don't even know into their houses to just come in and have a meal.... It enlightened me a little bit seeing these people so into it, like it really gives them joy. - Cassandra, second-generation American of Latvian descent living among the Christian faithful in the Bible belt.

> The Lazars were amazing because, like, not only did they open their house but they really, genuinely love everyone. Like they asked all of us our names, and where you were from. The feeling there is so amazing. - Joanie, a Jewish day school-educated women with a brother studying in *yeshiva.*

In summarizing the ideological variants of Israel's assertion of Jewish authenticity, I commented that the framing of authenticity carries with it a simultaneous contrast with inauthenticity. If this is indeed true, then we would expect that the framing of the Israeli Orthodox as authentic in their commitment

---

[18] Seating in the homes was generally segregated by sex, and the women tended to volunteer to help in the kitchen while the men sat and talked with the male hosts. When not in the kitchen, the female members of the group were full participants in the conversations, even broaching the topic of women's status in Orthodox Judaism.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

to Judaism would lead to an implicit contrast with other actors. In fact, the comparison was often made explicitly, lending credence to the overall argument. In the following quotation, one of the most persistently inquisitive members of one of the tour groups contrasts behavior observed at the Western Wall with his memories of Sabbath behavior at home:

> The *Shabbat* experience, I thought, was the most interesting *Shabbat* experience I've had, because I've been to *Shabbat* where people just light some candles, go to temple, come back. The one at the Wall was so much festivities, so much energy. So many people there really, really were deep into the whole meaning of *Shabbat*, taking the commandment of honoring *Shabbat*, the Sabbath. I just never had an experience where so many people were just so energized to be doing something on a Friday night that wasn't going out [to a party, the movies, etc.]. Where I'm from in America, people go out, most of them don't go to *Shabbat*.

Likewise, Joanie, who was moved by the Lazar family's hospitality, said that they were "the opposite of people who are always looking to get something in return, people who are materialistic, like the opposite. Like they're good-natured, wholesome, share with the world, giving people - something that's leaving American culture. People aren't so open."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The contrast with American culture in both cases is indicative of how the construction of Israeli Orthodox as authentic religious Jews becomes broadened to assert the Jewish authenticity of Israel as a whole. As experienced by the visitors from Taglit, Israel is seen as a place where the Jewish religious ethic can thrive unfettered by American individualism or a culture that is, in Eisen's phrase, "hostile or at best indifferent," (1986:xix). It is in this sense that a pilgrimage is a journey not to the signifier (Israel), but to the signified (Judaism).

There is a tension in the travelers' discourse between conceptions of Jewish authenticity that are rooted in the collective Israeli experience and in those that merely reflect the commitments of committed Jews who happen to live in Israel. The examples given above tend to emphasize the latter, but in other instances, the contrast with Jewish life abroad is more explicitly expressed in terms of the Israeli folk song, *Rak B'Yisrael* - "Only in Israel." For instance, Joanie also described taking a tour of the tunnels along the base of the Temple Mount.

> ...the tunnel tour, that was amazing.... We had this lady Ruthie - she made it seem, I don't know if she was acting, but it's her *real life*. Like this woman, her family has died for Israel, she grew up here, now she's getting pushed out, you know what I mean, and has to fight for it. So that really impacted me... she particularly made it, like it's life.... She cried. [At] the Holy of Holies, she cried

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and had everyone say *Sh'ma*[19] together... People don't feel that way about America, you know. Would you ever cry for America? No.

This takes the authenticity of Israel to a more profound level than just the signifier of Jewishness. Here, membership in the Israeli collective, expressed through the sacrifice of Ruthie's family and potentially her home, the connection of this with the holy places of the ancient Jewish past, the raw emotion and assertion of Judaism's fundamental proclamation of faith all intertwine to convey a sense of a life lived, a "*real life*" with meaning. And in contrast to this is an image of America devoid of anything linking the private person and matters of ultimate life significance. There is no crying for America in Joanie's pre-September 11th vision.

Others invoked a contrast with American *Jewish* life in particular:

Carrie: "In America you have to do Jewish things to be Jewish. In Israel you can just be Jewish because there are so many Jews around."

Brenda: "[In the U.S.] if you were to tell me you didn't go to temple, have a bat mitzvah, go to [Jewish] camp, et cetera, I would say 'Oh, you're not very Jewish.'"

---

[19] The basic liturgical affirmation of Jewish faith begins, "*Sh'ma Yisrael...*," "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Carrie: "Yeah. But here, in Israel you don't have to do any of that and you're still Jewish."

In contrast to the Sabbath-goers' views of the Orthodox, these Taglit participants in a non-denominational Israeli-run group saw Jewish authenticity not in terms of specific value commitments, but rather as a general cultural ambience that shapes individuals on some pre-conscious level. Israel's Jewish authenticity in this view reframes Jewishness not as a quality of individuals, but as a characteristic of the social order. This definition avoids the question of the specific content that is called Jewish, instead viewing it as the naturally emerging culture of society whose Jewish authenticity is taken as axiomatic.

At this point, it is worth stating the obvious, because the obvious contains an important truth. The repeated contrasts between Israel and home is based on the common sense notion that here is not there and there is not here. In other words, Israel's Jewish authenticity is maintained in the mind of the tourist by drawing a boundary in space. The idea that cultural integrity is maintained through demarcation of territorial boundaries underlies the entire Zionist project - as it does all nationalisms (Anderson 1991) - and has roots deeply embedded in classical Jewish thought. Indeed, the very act of pilgrimage affirms the salience of this concept. Taglit is premised on the notion that to find Jewish authenticity, one must cross boundaries in space and travel from here to there.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TOWARD A THEORY OF AUTHENTICITY

The sponsors of Taglit took Israel's Jewish authenticity for granted and built a pilgrimage program around it. We have investigated some of the ways that this sense of authenticity has been articulated - both ideologically and phenomenologically. In the final section of the chapter, we consider how these empirical findings contribute to a grounded theory of authenticity, its construction and perception. In attempting to broaden the discussion beyond a mere description of a single case, the specific meanings attributed to Israel's Jewish authenticity will recede in importance, and our attention will shift to the generalizable processes by which these meanings are constructed.

The question of authenticity is one of the ultimate questions of human philosophy. It is also at the heart of all pilgrimage, and as I will argue later, forms a crucial link between the travel experience and the personal growth presumed to entail from it. The theoretical elaboration I undertake here will lay the groundwork for the next chapter, where we examine what happens when the lens of authenticity is turned inward and applied to the self.

Authenticity is a social construction. This proposition has not always been accepted, in part because the term itself has suffered from a lack of conceptual clarity. Before describing how notions of authenticity are constructed, then, a brief review of the concept's history in tourism research is in order.[20]

---

[20] Wang's (1999) typology of *objectivist, constructivist* and *existential* conceptions of authenticity

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

As Kadushin noted, "there is a use of 'authenticity' which at its extreme is totally objective and which seemed non-problematic and therefore not worthy of further analysis" (Kadushin 2001:1). Such was the case when the concept figured prominently in Boorstin's ([1961] 1985) critique of mass tourism and in MacCannell's (1973) rebuttal. These two pioneers of the sociology of tourism presented divergent assessments of whether tourists actually saw authentic cultures when they traveled abroad. They agreed on little, but on one point there was absolute consensus: the scholars knew they could determine what was authentic and what was not. This view, labeled *objectivism* by Wang (1999), treated authenticity as a property inhering in toured objects - one that could be definitively measured against a gold standard.

In this debate over tourists' desire and ability to encounter authentic foreign cultures, Boorstin took the position that travel had become "diluted, contrived, [and] pre-fabricated" - a "lost art" (1985:77,79):

> Formerly, when the old-time traveler visited a country whatever he saw was apt to be what really went on there.... Today what [the tourist] sees is seldom the living culture, but usually specimens collected and embalmed especially for him, or attractions specifically staged for him (102).

---

provides a solid exposition of the concept's development. The following paragraphs are based to a large degree on his typology.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Both the commodification of tourism as well as preferences of the tourists themselves, have led to the insulation of these "willing gulls" (107):

> The tourist seldom likes the authentic (to him often unintelligible) product of the foreign culture; he prefers his own provincial expectations. The French chanteuse singing English with a French accent seems more charmingly French than one who simply sings in French. The American tourist in Japan who looks less for what is Japanese than what is Japanesey" (106).

MacCannell (1973) disputed Boorstin's assertion that tourists prefer contrived pseudo-events to authentic cross-cultural encounters, but he did not argue with the notion of a definitive distinction between the real Japanese and the "Japanesey." Instead, he suggested that touristic space is structured to satisfy the "desire for authentic experiences" that motivates "touristic consciousness" (1973:597). But the very structuring of the space to meet this end invalidates the authenticity it seeks to represent. Borrowing Goffman's dramaturgic metaphor, MacCannell claimed that "back regions" are staged for tourists to enable them to feel as if they are penetrating beyond a false front. (The *Shabbat* hospitality in the homes of rabbis affiliated with the tour sponsors could be seen as an example of this). In the end though, MacCannell, like Boorstin, doubted the ability of tourists to actually encounter what is authentic in foreign cultures. The "staged authenticity" ends up undermining the tourists' goal: "The idea here is that a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

false back may be more insidious than a false front, or an inauthentic demystification of social life is not merely a lie but a superlie, the kind that drips with sincerity" (599).

These notions of the definitively authentic foundered on the shoals of empirical ambiguity, anti-elitism and deconstructionism. In the 1980s and 1990s, some writers lost faith in the entire enterprise of passing judgment on the authenticity of tourist attractions ("object-related authenticity" [Wang 1999]). Seeing simulacra everywhere, postmodernists jettisoned the concept (e.g. Baudrillard 1983, [1986] 1989; Eco 1986). Others, however, sought to rescue the term by reconceptualizing it as a problematic to be explained rather than an established fact to be accepted unquestioningly.

Seeing authenticity as socially constructed through symbolic processes, "constructivist" positions emerged as a corrective to objectivism's "essentialist vocabulary" (E. Bruner 1994:409) and implicit privileging of the judgments of "experts, intellectuals or elite" (Wang 1999:353). Instead, attention was directed to the emic perspective of tourists themselves. Wang identified five features common to constructivist conceptions of authenticity: First, "there is no absolute and static original or origin on which the authenticity of originals relies." Second, our notions of origins are constructed to serve present needs and are contested. Third, "the experience of authenticity is pluralistic." Fourth, things are often labeled authentic when they conform to stereotyped images. Authenticity is, in this regard, a projection of tourists' own expectations. Finally, things once

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

defined as inauthentic can be redefined over time through a process of "emergent authenticity" (E. Cohen 1988:379-380; Wang 1999:355). Taken as a whole, constructivist positions transformed authenticity from a property inherent in toured objects to a set of socially-constructed symbolic meanings signified by the objects.

While these five characteristics identified by Wang (1999) outline the general assumptions and orientations of the constructivist school of thought, they do not address the specific meaningful elements used to construct notions of authenticity. It is here that the Taglit data can help tie together themes that have been scattered throughout previous works on tourism.

Boundaries

In my discussion of perceptions of authenticity on Taglit, I noted repeated instances where contrasts were drawn. The perception of religious joy among the Orthodox contrasted starkly with memories of rote religious practice experienced with other Jews. The collectivism envisaged in Israeli life stood out as meaningful against the familiar backdrop of an America felt to be overly individualistic. (Or, to borrow the language of Durkheim, Israel was seen as "altruistic" whereas America was "egoistic.") The ability to "just be Jewish" in Israel differed from the work that a person had to do to maintain a Jewish identity in the United States. The Zionist ideologies we discussed also invoked contrasts to assert Israel's Jewish authenticity: Israel as the stage for actors

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

making Jewish history versus Diaspora as a sideshow with a passive Jewish audience; Israel as the link between present and past versus Diaspora as the ossification of the past in Talmudic Judaism or the severing of ancient cultural ties through assimilatory processes.

These contrasts are essential to the perception of authenticity, and suggest that we only know what is authentic by having an image in our minds of what is *inauthentic*. In other words, authenticity is of the genre of concepts that derive their meaning only through the positing of their opposites. At the core of all such dualisms is a conception of boundary. This may be drawn between specific *places* (e.g. separating the authentic Israel from the inauthentic Diaspora), between *historical eras or times* (e.g. dividing the authentic Jewish life before the Exile and after the Return from the millennia of dispersal and inauthenticity in between) or between *sets of actors* (e.g. differentiating the Jewish authenticity of the joyful Orthodox from the blasé attempts of some non-Orthodox Jews to go through the motions of religious ritual).

Previous literature on authentic touring has tended to treat these various components in isolation, failing to recognize the common act of boundary construction that underlies each. Hughes (1995), for example, treated authenticity as a property of place, examining how the Scottish Tourist Board created a campaign to invent and promote the culinary heritage of Scotland. To construct a conception of authentic Scottish cuisine, a notion of "a natural relationship between a region's land, its climatic conditions, and the character of the food it

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

produces" had to be imagined (1995:787). This required a good deal of selective perception because Scots, like other Westerners, largely consumed store-bought packaged goods manufactured by international corporations, and because even older foods and recipes were generally not unique to Scotland, as evidenced by the French names of some of the traditional foods (1995:786). Authenticity resided here in a strict demarcation of space and a firm notion of territorial integrity. "In a traditional view," Hughes wrote, "authenticity is validated by kinship with its conceiving culture and discernable from its especial characteristics that have been preserved through territorial separation" (1995:783). For his part, Hughes argued that the global influences upon Scottish cuisine destroyed any notion of an impermeable boundary between Scotland and the rest of the world that could be used as the basis for an authentic Scottish culture. But this denial affirms the very point being made here: the imagining of firm spatial boundaries is crucial to the construction of authenticity. Anything that discredits this notion of boundary undermines the concept.

Likewise, Taylor's (2001) study of Maori authenticity traced the concept to the imagining of boundaries in time:

> Attempts to locate the original and "true" Maori culture in the pre-European past.... proposed that European explorers introduced Time to the Other. Before the "discovery" of New Zealand, Maori culture is seen to have existed in a vacuum, as a holistically defined

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> and static form of social organization.... Tourism projects which invoke the culturally "authentic" thereby seek to "realize" value and uniqueness in their products through the application of a distance between subject and object that is both spatially and temporally defined (2001:9-10).

The onset of modernity (E. Cohen 1988) or the first contact with Europeans (Taylor 2001) is often considered to be the dividing line between the authentic cultures of the past, and the corrupted, Westernized forms of the present. A major reason for this is that the same dichotomies of change/stasis and fragmentation/holism used to distinguish the modern from the pre-modern are also used in our imaginings of authenticity.

The establishment of a temporal watershed allows the content of authenticity to be attributed to one side of the divide. Authentic culture is (usually) found in the past. But how does one visit what no longer exists? Tourism overcomes the dilemma of time-travel by recreating prior historical eras - e.g., living history (Handler and Saxton 1988; E. Bruner 1994; Crang 1996; McIntosh and Prentice 1999), museums (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998) and archaeological sites (Ben Yehudah 1995) - and also by presenting living cultures (such as the Maori) as signifiers of the past and pastness (Taylor 2001).

This manner of conceptualizing authenticity was less prominent on Taglit, but not entirely absent. The authenticity (originality) of Masada's archaeological

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

remains were signified by a blue line painted along most of the walls marking off - again, a boundary - the original structures below from the restorations above. Likewise, guides at Kfar Kedem, a living history reproduction of a biblical-era village, continually stressed how the Talmud was first developed to address the practical lives of villagers doing the same activities (pressing olive oil, plowing, threshing, grinding wheat, and baking pita bread) with the same technologies as those on display for the tourists. The subsequent elaboration of Jewish law to make it applicable to changing circumstances over two millennia and seven continents mattered not. In the discourse of the site, the Talmud's authenticity was based on its relevance to the lives led by Jews in ancient Judean villages.[21]

In contrast to the conception of authentic Maoriness that Taylor (2001) discussed, there was little sense among Taglit participants that contemporary Jewry is any less authentic than what went before. Ideological *shlilat hagolah*, which claims that Jewish authenticity ended once sovereignty was lost and the Jews were dispersed, was an alien concept to them. As already noted, the perception of *haredim* as faithful bearers of pre-modern Jewish culture that I assumed would be voiced by Taglit participants was, in fact, not. Nor did I or the other researchers ever record any indication that participants felt that change

---

[21] Kfar Kedem's website claims that "After conferring with historians and archeologists and studying the relevant Jewish and Christian texts, Kfar Kedem was built with the highest standards of authenticity regarding the agriculture and architecture of an ancient Galilean village. As part of that authenticity, Kfar Kedem is run according to halacha, the ancient Jewish law that proscribes [sic] that the village remains closed on the Sabbath as well as all Jewish holidays and that all food served at Kfar Kedem is strictly kosher (Kfar Kedem N.d.).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

was inimical to Jewish authenticity. There was no assumption that the animal sacrifice of Biblical Judaism was any more Jewish than the synagogue-centered ritual of post-Biblical eras. On the contrary, a presumption of evolution and change tended to prevail. In a group discussion about collective memory, the following exchange occurred, sparked by a question about the "loss" of the Yiddish language as a living element in Jewish culture:

> Jeffrey: [Yiddish is] a Jewish memory for most of us. I'm pretty sure that most of your grandparents spoke to you in Yiddish, yelled at you. That is a Jewish memory.
>
> Mark: What are we supposed to provide [as Jewish memories for our children]? I really can't see anything we can provide.... It didn't end with us. It ended with our parents.
>
> Jeffrey, disagreeing with Mark: It's not that. It's how we interpreted that [Yiddish] as being Jewish. We remember the Holocaust, but we can't remember the hurt of the Holocaust. But we have our own Jewish memory of the Holocaust. Future generations will have their own Jewish memories. It is not better, not worse, just different.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Max: My rabbi in Jewish day school said... everything you lose, you gain something. Now we have Hebrew. We've learned, you have to stand up for yourself and not be ashamed.

Mark: So maybe that's our Jewish memory.

At first, Jeffrey affirms that Yiddish was part of the old Jewish culture that had been passed down to his generation. But then Mark wonders what his generation will be able to pass on, because Yiddish and the old culture was not transmitted well enough to be a part of his living Jewish experience. Jeffrey responds by encouraging Mark to see Jewishness not as an unchanging set of specific cultural products, but rather to recognize that what is defined as Jewish changes over the generations. Max echoes this point and Mark makes a comment suggesting he is swayed by their arguments.

For many of the travelers on Taglit, Israel's citizens came to represent the country's Jewish authenticity. The drawing of boundaries to locate authenticity in specific actors, be they individuals or aggregations or collectivities, usually manifests itself in two ways. The first differentiates *us* from *them*, *subject* from *object* (Taylor 2001), and *observer* from *observed*. In principle, if authenticity is seen to reside in the observed Other, then an explicit contrast is set up with the observing Self. But the definition of the traveler him/herself as inauthentic is problematic. It may occur if the criteria by which observers judge authenticity are considered applicable to themselves as well. This is commonly the case in Taglit,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

where the lens of Jewish authenticity through which Israel and Israelis are observed and evaluated is also turned upon the Jewish visitor him/herself. Contrast this with Taylor's (2001) example of the non-Maori Westerner touring Maori culture in New Zealand. One might reasonably ask, "What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?" On a continuum of ideal 'Maoriness' only the Maori can be placed, not the tourist. But if the Maori represent not only Maoriness, but also the antithesis of modern Western culture - "the timeless and spiritually pure primitive," in Taylor's terms (2001:10) - then the tourists fit quite comfortably into a schema that contrasts authentic 'primitives' with inauthentic 'moderns.' Most attempts to portray tourism as a quest for the authentic (Graburn 1989; MacCannell 1989; Taylor 2001; Wang 1999) have relied on this "deep-structural" framing (E. Cohen 1992). The degree to which tourists actually conceive of their own experiences in these terms is an empirical question that has yet to be adequately addressed.

An alternative means of locating authenticity in others involves drawing distinctions between authentic and inauthentic Others. We have seen how the Israelis are often contrasted with other Jews back home,[22] but they can just as well be contrasted with other Israelis. Participants in Taglit sometimes spoke of meeting "real Israelis," as if this were a notable or exceptional event on their

---

[22] These points of comparison are not necessarily the travelers themselves, but could be people they know. It is always possible that the travelers identify with these others back home and see them in some respects as representations of themselves. The line between the Other/Self and Other/Other distinction I am drawing is therefore admittedly blurred in certain circumstances.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

tour. Because the tourists rarely if ever labeled other Israelis as "fake" or "not real," the contrast between authentic and inauthentic locals was only implied, leaving it to examination of specific usages and contexts to unpack the implicit meanings. Definitions that invoked the Israelis' ethnic or religious backgrounds (e.g. secular vs. religious, native vs. immigrant, Jew vs. Arab, Ashkenazic vs. Sephardic) were less common than definitions structured around varieties of the tourist experience. MacCannell (1973) argued that the perception of authenticity is associated with what Goffman called back-stage regions. This was certainly true of participants in Taglit, for whom "real Israelis" were most easily found far away from anything associated with the tourist industry - on side streets away from the shopping district; out of earshot of the 40-odd other members of the tour group; and in interactions with Israelis whose roles were not defined by the North Americans' status as tourists.

In sum, authenticity, in true Levi-Straussian form, is rooted in the imagining of boundaries. Onto a dualistic space are projected meanings appropriated from other binary oppositions: Self/Other, here/there (Hughes 1995; Taylor 2001), now/then (Taylor 2001), familiarity/strangeness (E. Cohen 1972; Harkin 1995; Hughes 1995), change/stasis (cf. Taylor 2001), fragmentation/holism (cf. Lett 1983; cf. Taylor 2001), profane/sacred (Graburn 1989). Tourism generally and pilgrimage in particular tend to presume that authenticity is located in remote half of these dualisms. This is structured into the nature of act, as the Self moves from the familiar here and now to the strange

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

there and then in order to gaze upon an Other. Authenticity is seen to reside 'back then,' 'over there' or 'in them.' By contrast, 'now,' 'here' and 'we' are implicitly or explicitly conceived of as bearers of inauthenticity.[23]

Idealized Conceptions

Authenticity is and must be constructed simultaneously with its opposite, which is possible only by implicitly positing the existence of a boundary dividing the two. But how permeable is this dividing line? Can authenticity be maintained if elements of inauthenticity are able to seep in? Some who have insisted that the impermeability of this boundary is crucial to the integrity of the concept ended up abandoning the notion of authenticity altogether as chimerical. For Hughes (1995) the inability to draw a strict demarcation between Scotland and the rest of the world was the undoing of any notion of authentic Scottish culture. Likewise, the postmodern critique of authenticity offered by Eco (1986) and Baudrillard (1983,1989) "totally deconstructs the conception of authenticity through

---

[23] It is no surprise, then, that the tourist enterprise has been an object of derision (MacCannell 1989:9), both at the hands of intellectuals (see, e.g., Boorstin 1985) and at the hands of the touring masses themselves, who consider the presence of large numbers of other tourists to be barriers to authentic encounters with foreign cultures (for empirical confirmation, see Waller and Lea 1998; applications of this notion appear in Boorstin 1985; E. Cohen 1972). This also sheds light on why the commoditization of culture has been said to sometimes harm either authenticity itself or at least tourists' perceptions of it (cf. E. Cohen 1988; Greenwood 1977; Taylor 2001). Associated with modernity, commoditization is of the 'now.' Moreover, it implies that the toured cultures are themselves oriented toward the tourist bearers of inauthenticity. The strict boundary that distances the authentic there, then and them from the inauthentic now, here and we is thus blurred. But without this boundary, the concept of authenticity cannot stand.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

destructuring the boundaries between the copy and the original" (Wang 1999:356).[24]

But in any tourism situation, one need not look hard to find breaches in the fence separating the supposedly authentic from the supposedly inauthentic, and to find travelers perfectly comfortable with this fact. In part, this is because not all tourists are concerned with authenticity (E. Cohen 1988; Pearce and Moscardo 1986). Those who care less about it are likely to be more lax in their cognitive construction of it.[25] But in the case of pilgrimage, the concept is crucial and cannot be so easily dismissed.

Perhaps in religious pilgrimages of yore, travelers approached their mission with a deadly seriousness (although Chaucer's tales would suggest otherwise). But we have seen how in contemporary pilgrimage-tourism travelers constantly shift between solemn and playful modes of behavior. In this respect contemporary pilgrimage, like contemporary tourism, contains elements of play (Lett 1983). This fact allows for flexibility in travelers' judgments of authenticity (E. Cohen 1988:379; see also E. Bruner 1994; Daniel 1996). On a 5 A.M. ascent of the Roman siege ramp at Masada, one person said in all seriousness, "Now it

---

[24] For a similar analysis of Eco's and Baudrillard's treatments of authenticity in tourism, see also E. Bruner (1994).

[25] One could salvage the rejectionists' position by claiming that even these couldn't-care-less tourists have their red lines beyond which they would not consider the observed objects authentic. The boundary remains impermeable to whatever salient criteria are used to judge authenticity. But since the criteria appear to be so flexible, it seems silly to retain the notion of impermeability.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

feels like we're really in Israel," and then immediately joked about the way the park appeared to have been "cleaned up" for tourists: "Is that the original Roman handrail? Are those steps original too?" Coleridge's "willing suspension of disbelief" is apt. As Edward Bruner (1994) noted in his study of a reconstructed 1830s Illinois village, within the rules of the game, some types of boundary violations are acceptable (gift shops and public restrooms) while others are unacceptable (reenactors costumed in blue jeans) (401-2). According to E. Cohen, tourists "will often focus in such judgments on some traits of the cultural product and disregard others" (1988:378).

I would take the argument a step further. As I alluded to earlier in the chapter, selective perception and oversimplification are inherent in all conceptualizations of authenticity. This is because boundaries, even flimsy ones, can be drawn only by eliminating disconfirming evidence. Attempts to consign authenticity to oblivion must ultimately fail for the concept, in the end, rests not on the actual existence of impermeable boundaries, but on the ability of human beings to imagine them by seeing what they want to see and ignoring the rest. Diaspora Jewish intellectuals can deliver a point-by-point rebuttal of Zionism's claim of Israeli authenticity and Diasporic inauthenticity[26] - Independence? An American protectorate. Self-sufficiency? With a $7.15 billion trade deficit and

---

[26] One of the most entertaining pieces in this regard is Philip Roth's *Operation Shylock* (1993), in which an impostor who calls himself Philip Roth launches a movement call "Diasporism." The movement sets as its goal the return of the Jews from Israel to Europe, where, according to the impostor, Jewish culture was at its most authentic, vibrant and productive.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

dependent on Palestinians and guest workers for labor? Cultural integrity? At the McDonald's at Golani Junction or in the Seinfeld reruns on cable? Even the Declaration of Independence's first sentence, "The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people" is at odds with the traditional Jewish account.[27] According to the Bible, the Jews came together as a people somewhere in the Egyptian desert at the foot of Mount Sinai, 40 years before they crossed the Jordan into Israel.[28] But to those who left home to "encounter... their own identity" and to the Taglit sponsors who sent them abroad for this purpose, these complexities and contradictions were irrelevant. Not necessarily worthy of outright denial, but just not important enough to change the narrative.

The ability to simultaneously recognize and ignore disconfirming evidence is exemplified by people's reactions to the Israeli landscape and the trash that marred it. It was common, perhaps even normative, for people to testify that the Israeli landscape was beautiful in a way that gave them a deep sense of connection with the place. Several days after my desert disco bus ride with Bus 194, described in the previous chapter, I sat on the top of Mount Meron in the Galilee with Sam, the college senior who had blown the *shofar* at Masada. He was a joker, perhaps *the* joker, in the group, but this description alone would do him an injustice. He had befriended the staff as well as many others, was both

---

[27] Though not necessarily with the archaeological record -- a matter of *heated* debate (See e.g. Herzog 1999; Karpel 1999; Levi-Yanovitz 1999; Shanks 1999).

[28] This was pointed out to me in a discussion led some years ago by David Arnow.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

proud of and humbled by his self-appointed role as group *shofar*-blower, and seemed actually hurt when someone referred to him as "Backstreet Boy" in spite of the fact that on one level the nickname implied boyish good-looks. The sun had dipped below the mountain in the West, and as the tour guide spoke, Sam and I hung back under a large tree, sitting on a low stone wall built into the hillside. His friend Ron had just made a humorous remark and some of the men nearby complimented him on his jokes (the women were off listening to the tour guide). Sam muttered about having "used up" all his "material" and not being funny anymore. I asked him what he meant. He lowered his voice and we walked away from the group a bit. "Mark repeats everything I say, and kills it. So I just keep quiet," he said somewhat sullenly, referring to another member of the group. I hadn't realized there was tension between Sam and Mark, and I kept silent. For a few moments, we stood there looking down on a lush green landscape of farms, pastures and scattered areas of human settlement, with the city of Safed in the distance and the snowy peak of Mount Hermon on the Golan Heights peeking up above thick gray clouds that lined only the horizon. The he turned to me again and said quietly, "In America, you have beautiful things and places and you appreciate it, but I don't feel like it's *mine*. Here, this is mine. This is *my* tree," he said, as he grasped the slender trunk. The sentiment echoed others I had heard before: the woman who choked up reading at Independence Hall (Geoff: "That was a beautiful speech. Why were you so emotional?" Sari: "I don't know... well, it was such an important time and this is a beautiful country, our

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

country"). The Southwestern man who gazed through the bus window at the Judean Desert cliffs: "This is Israel. Maybe it is a little less beautiful than other places in America, but in my heart it is *more*." All were variants of Pat Boone's opening lyrics for the theme to Otto Preminger's *Exodus*, "This land is mine, God gave this land to me; this brave and ancient land to me."

Why, then, didn't the trash strewn across the Israeli landscape figure more prominently in people's consciousnesses? On a bus ride from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, an American Jew who had spent a year volunteering with Jewish communities in Israel and the Former Soviet Union was giving a recruiting speech to the Taglit participants over the bus' P.A. system. At one point he spoke of his desire to move to Israel permanently. "I love this country," he said, then paused, looked out the window at the vultures circling a mountainous landfill,[29] and added, "...as I stand here looking at the national garbage dump." Asked what she thought of the landscape, one woman answered with the random thoughts that popped into mind, "It's beautiful. So pretty. So much garbage. I'm surprised about the rain." The presence of the trash didn't change the perception of Israel as a beautiful country, nor did the large landfill on the side of the road make the volunteer love Israel any less. In some cases, the image of Israel as beautiful was preserved by blaming Arabs for the trash. As the bus drove high in

---

[29] Israelis have nicknamed the landfill "the *Chiriyah*," a play on the words *chara* ("excrement") and *kiriyah* ("city"). It is a Hebrew equivalent of the New York pun, "gar-barge."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the Galilean hills, my seatmate and I looked out on discarded furniture and piles of waste that marred the landscape. He pointed this out to me, explaining, "They don't have garbage cans because of the bombs. Especially the Arabs, they just throw their garbage wherever they want. It's disgusting. I don't particularly like environmentalists, but even *I* think this is disgusting."

Israel, preconceived as a beautiful land, was perceived as such largely because in the minds of the visitors, the garbage was swept under the rug or dumped in the neighbor's yard.[30] The same processes were at work with regard to perceptions of authenticity. Disconfirming details did not undermine claims to authenticity because they were often conveniently ignored. On either side of the boundary separating the authentic from the inauthentic, idealized conceptions provided the meaningful content. An authentically Jewish land looked convincingly Jewish, which meant that it adhered to certain preconceived notions that were by definition oversimplifications.

In tourism and pilgrimage, the concept of verisimilitude plays a crucial role in this. The sacred center should look enough like a sacred center to be convincing. (Hence one man's semi-rhetorical inquiry about the Temple Mount, "Are the mountains here all so small?!" and another's response, which elicited

---

[30] Here I would call attention to the fact that many of the trips departed from Newark, New Jersey, which can be seen as the flip side of the Israeli story. In spite of New Jersey's billing as "The Garden State" the presence of the airport near the Elizabeth seaport, Linden cogeneration facility and the industrial zones outside of New York City have led to an idealized conception of New Jersey that is at odds with its stretches of coastline, its farms, estates, forests and lakes. In Jersey, people remember the garbage, not the beauty. (Full disclosure: I grew up next to a farm -

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

guffaws from those nearby, "I hope Mount Sinai isn't such a piece of shit, or it might really shake my Jewish identity!") The relationship between verisimilitude and authenticity was elaborated on by E. Bruner (1994), in his description of the various ways the term authenticity was used by professionals at the museum village of New Salem, Illinois, which had been reconstructed to look as it did when Abraham Lincoln lived there as a young man. Recall that Bruner distinguished authenticity-as-"verisimilitude" from authenticity-as-historical "accuracy." In the former case, "a *1990s* person would walk into the village and say, 'This looks like the 1830s,' as it would conform to what he or she expected the village to be." In the latter, "an *1830s* person would say, 'This looks like 1830s New Salem'" (399). The two viewers might come away with different assessments, but only the judgment of the contemporary traveler concerns us here. Implicit in the notion of verisimilitude is that the viewer has in mind images of what the object is supposed to look like. Mount Sinai is *not* supposed to look like "a piece of shit" but should resemble something worthy of DeMille. These images are the Platonic forms that actual travel experiences only imperfectly reflect, a point underlying essayist Walker Percy's lament that "it is almost impossible to gaze directly at the Grand Canyon under these circumstances and see it for what it is... because the Grand Canyon, the thing as

---

now a housing development - in central New Jersey).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

it is, has been appropriated by the symbolic complex which has already been formed in the sightseer's mind" (1982:47).

The expectations underlying perceptions of authenticity can take two forms: One regards specific images of the object being viewed. Numerous visitors to the Western (Wailing) Wall in Jerusalem, for example, said they thought that it would fill them with religious inspiration when they saw or touched it. Others merely remarked that the Jewish holy site was smaller than they thought it would be. One invoked the colloquial English name of the site to describe the "wailing" of a woman standing next to her. Would she have characterized the woman's behavior in these terms if the place were called something else? In all these cases, tourist-pilgrims had some specific notions about the site they were encountering. The second form of expectations are generalized categories that can be applied to a variety of sites. For example, Bruner noted that the reconstructed New Salem houses were made to look weather-beaten to make them more credible to the tourists, even though in the 1830s they would have been extremely well-maintained (1994:402). In this case, a general expectation about how an old building should look is applied to the specific case of the buildings in New Salem. This allows for easy translation of preconceptions to new and unfamiliar settings. In this regard, the expectations on Taglit tended less to reinforce images of Israel as an authentic Jewish place than as an Orientalist's stereotyped version of a Middle Eastern country, replete with camels, deserts, and pita bread. Thus, the comment cited in the previous

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

chapter as one Taglit participant gazed on Jerusalem's Old City: "It is so different here from the U.S.! The colors are right out of the movie *Aladdin*."[31]

The idealized images of what Israel 'should be' are cultural products, generated not only by deliberate efforts of the tourist industry (Taylor 2001; Urry 1990), but also by "a variety of non-tourist practices, such as film, TV, literature, magazines, records and videos" (Urry 1990:3). Yad Vashem, for example, has planted trees in honor of gentiles who rescued Jews during the Holocaust. The only tree Taglit participants asked to see was the one dedicated to Oskar Schindler, the eponymous hero of Spielberg's Academy Award-winning film. The case of Taglit demonstrates that religious and educational institutions are also among the "non-tourist practices" that inculcate these preconceptions. ("[Masada] was beautiful. It was moving... to see a place that I've heard about many times before in my Hebrew school learning." When another person on top of the fortress asked who had "done the reconstructions," she and others were shocked to learn that Arabs did most of the construction work in Israel, having been taught in Hebrew school that Jews did "all the work to build Israel into a great country from nothing."). Moreover, such images are not only *preconceived*, but also *reconceived* through interactional processes that occur while touring. The

---

[31] This example raises a point worth mentioning: Perceptions of Israel's authenticity were not limited to its Judaic character. It represented many things to many people, including a typical Middle Easternness as well as a generic foreignness (i.e. it was not America). Although we might draw a conceptual distinction between these different significations, in practice, they tended to blend into each other.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

cueing that Heilman (1995:70) noted in his study of an Israel tour similar to Taglit is a good case in point. Here, staff would indicate - sometimes subtly, sometimes not so subtly - both what to expect and how to respond appropriately.

Because these idealized conceptions and the bounded space they are projected onto are not idiosyncratic in nature, issues of authority are inevitably present. We have explored some of the ideological, institutional and cultural factors that are at play in asserting Israel's Jewish authenticity. The point to remember is that a confluence of Zionist ideology, American Jewish educational strategy, a developed tourist industry, and a general American cultural milieu have given the notion of Israel's Jewish authenticity a taken-for-granted quality. Although social and political critiques have been made, not infrequently by Israelis themselves, since 1948 few Jewish challenges to Israel's Jewish primacy have emerged and none have garnered mass support.[32] This is not to say that the notion of Israel's Jewish authenticity is not problematic. For example, not all Israelis are comfortable with burden of being seen only as symbols of other people's Jewish fantasies (cf. Beilin 2001). Doesn't the pilgrim's desire to see the

---

[32] Even the Israeli human rights organization monitoring government policies in the West Bank and Gaza invokes Judaic terminology to define its identity. *Btzelem*, which means "In the Image," takes its name from the biblical passage referring to humanity being created in the image of God (*btzelem Elohim*). With regard to potential Diaspora critiques of Israel, one might argue that there is a trend among leaders of Diaspora religious movements to affirm American Jewish denominationalism as the authentic form of Jewish religious expression in the 20th and 21st centuries. But this largely has been played out in the Israeli political arena, where the non-Orthodox American Jewish movements are struggling for recognition by the Israeli state. As the issue has grown beyond a mere contest for political rights and assumed symbolic dimensions of greater proportion, the Diaspora movements' recognition of the state's primacy in defining what is Jewish concedes at the outset the principle of "Babel and Jerusalem" as co-equal centers of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Israel of his or her dreams represent an imposition upon the Israelis who must either live up to that image or be accused of not measuring up? (Derisive references to Israelis as "Hebrew-speaking *goyim*" are not uncommon, as any web search will quickly reveal, and are bandied about by Israelis and Diaspora Jews alike). Both Heilman (1995) and Goldberg (1995) noted the difficulty teenage Jewish tourists had in encountering "contemporary Israel as 'real place' where people lived" (Goldberg 1995:55). To address this concern, Taglit mandated that all groups participate in structured "encounters" (*mifgashim*) with Israeli peers. These usually lasted for one of the trip's ten days, but in some cases Israeli peers were included as full members of the group for the duration of the program. Yehuda Amichai's famous poem, "Tourists," commonly read and discussed on the Taglit trips, expresses the concern that the *mifgashim* were designed to address:

> 1
>
> So condolence visits is what they're here for,
> sitting around at the Holocaust Memorial, putting on a serious face
> at the Wailing Wall.
> laughing behind heavy curtains in hotel rooms.
>
> They get themselves photographed with the important dead

---

authentic Jewish life.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

At Rachel's Tomb and at Herzl's Tomb, and up on Ammunition Hill.
They weep at the beautiful prowess of our sweet boys,
lust after our tough girls,
and hang up their underwear
to dry quickly
in cool blue bathrooms.

2

Once I was sitting on the steps near the gate at David's Citadel and I put down my two heavy baskets beside me. A group of tourists stood there around their guide, and I became their point of reference. "You see that man with the baskets? A little to the right of his head there's an arch from the Roman period. A little to the right of his head." "But he's moving, he's moving!" I said to myself: Redemption will come only when they are told, "Do you see that arch over there from the Roman period? It doesn't matter, but near it, a little to the left and then down a bit, there's a man who has just bought fruit and vegetables for his family" ([1986] 1992:137-8)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Communication through Symbols

In the mind of the traveler, perceptions of authenticity are constructed as sets of idealized conceptions projected onto one side of a dualistic space. On the other side of the boundary lies the ostensibly inauthentic. Such conceptions are activated in the tourist or pilgrim experience through an encounter with sites and attractions that is essentially symbolic in nature (Culler 1991; MacCannell 1989). Where there is no symbolism, there is no sense of authenticity.

A good example of this is the case of Tel Aviv. Israel's cultural and financial center could easily stake a claim to Jewish authenticity; its very name represents the link between the ancient and the modern,[33] and 'the first Hebrew city' represents one of Zionism's crowning achievements. But rather than seeing it as representative of anything, Taglit participants were generally blasé about the metropolis. Unlike Jerusalem, it was rarely mentioned in open-ended survey questions about the strongest memories of the trip. And when asked to rate their experience in the city, 30%, a middling figure in the greater scheme, said it was one of the best things.[34] Part of the problem was that it was hard, in the words of one staff person, to "show" Tel Aviv. What story could be constructed around it? How could it be shown as a signifier of something beyond itself? Groups

---

[33] A tel is an archaeological mound. *Aviv* is Hebrew for Spring. The city took its name from both from the Bible (Ezekiel 3:15) and from the Hebrew title of Theodor Herzl's 1902 Zionist novel *Altneuland* ("Old-New Land") which was published in Hebrew under the title *Tel Aviv*.

[34] When asked this question about other places, 74% said the Western Wall was one of the best things, 66% said so of Masada, 56% said so of the Dead Sea. Tel Aviv was rated similarly to Yad Vashem (36%) and the Golan Heights (32%), and was significantly more appealing that Mount

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

celebrated *Shabbat* on the beach ("This will be one of my most memorable Shabbats"), so it was not a symbol of pure secularism. The inspiring story of Independence Hall had the counterpoint of the conversation-ending memorial where Prime Minister Rabin was assassinated. Nighttime was spent in bars on Allenby Street, which one reveler said were "very American. I was not impressed." (Still, he had fun.) Daytimes, on the other hand, were often a Chinese menu of museums, *mifgashim*, and malls ("How can you process a day at the mall?!"). In short, there was little consistency to the narrative of the large city, and as such it ended up not being symbolic of very much at all.

Although in principle virtually anything can be subjected to the tourist gaze, in practice, tourists often ignore the "routine aspects of life as it is really lived" (MacCannell 1973:601) - Amichai's "man who's bought fruit and vegetables for his family" – and instead look for authenticity elsewhere. This fact logically follows from the proposition that authenticity must be communicated symbolically. Much that the traveler observes glides past the eye without recognition because it is not seen as representing anything other than itself. It is treated as fact, not symbol. For Taglit tourists in Eilat, the environmental and experiential aspects of the visit - palm trees, azure waters, coral reefs, cocktails, bars, and dancing on the decks of yachts - were perceived as symbols of authentic beach leisure. The local working class upon whose labor Eilat's tourism

---

Herzl (12%) and the Israel Expo Fair (6%).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

industry rested were ever-present but scarcely noticed. Authentic Eilat, then, was largely perceived as a City of Leisure rather than a City of Labor.

The perception of authenticity should be seen, then, as part of a communicative act. Not necessarily as the premeditated work of tourism-industry providers, Taglit organizers or Jewish educators, but a communication nonetheless between viewer and viewed. The agency of the sender in the communicative interaction is less important than the willingness of the recipient to impute meaning to what he or she perceives as symbols coming from the observed object. Such a process occurs in what Kirshenblatt-Gimblett refers to as "The Museum Effect" (1998:51):

> [The] museum experience becomes a model for experiencing life outside its walls. As the gaze that penetrated exhibitions of people from distant lands was turned to the streets of European and American cities, urban dwellers such as James Boswell reported that walking in the streets of London in 1775 was 'a high entertainment of itself. I see a vast museum of all objects, and I think with a kind of wonder that I see it for nothing.'....[As] areas are canonized in a geography of attractions, whole territories become extended theme parks. An ethnographic bell jar drops over the terrain. A neighborhood, village, or region becomes for all intents and purposes a living museum in situ. The museum effect,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> rendering the quotidian spectacular, becomes ubiquitous (1998:51,54).

With regard to perceptions on Taglit of Israel's Jewish authenticity, people, when left to their own devices, tended to pay attention to things that had some prior symbolic value (the Hebrew language, for example), that diverged from common experience from home (the ever-present gun-toting soldiers), or that confounded expectations (Describing his impressions of Israel on a family trip he had taken several years prior, one man said, "You think of Israel as being this Holy Land, but you meet people and that's the last thing on their minds. Obviously, they have other issues but you hope their religion would be a big part of their lives, which it is not." This person so wanted to see Israel as the Holy Land, that he specifically chose a religious organization for his return trip with Taglit.)

When not left to their own devices, tourists could easily be shown highly symbolic constructions organized by people with a message to communicate. The standardization of training programs due to state licensing of Israeli tour guides tended to produce a certain consistency in the narratives attached to various places. On the drive to Beit Guvrin, for example, *madrichim* inevitably commented, 'This is where the battle between David and Goliath took place,' and in the process transformed a nondescript hill into an affirmation of Israel's position as the authentic setting of Jewish history. On Bus 194, the *madrichah,*

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Ravit, launched into character. "I was there, I was getting really pissed off," at Goliath's taunting, she said. Then (the following is a reasonably accurately record of the dialogue reconstructed from field jottings) 'this little guy David came and said he could kill Goliath, and he was angry because Goliath was insulting God. People thought he was crazy and tried to discourage him, but David was a shepherd and knew how to use a - how do you say?" She quietly muttered the Hebrew word "*rugatka?*" to no one in particular. 'Sling shot!' people called back. 'No, not the thing with the rubber band and stick. It is a piece of leather that you twirl.' 'Yes. This is also a sling shot,' people replied, and someone shouted, 'It's what Xena uses.' (Xena, played on television by Lucy Lawless, is a female Hercules-type in an ancient Greek mythological setting. The show has developed a cult following). Ravit was oblivious to Xena and continued on, now speaking as herself and not her character, "I used this once." It was difficult, she said, not just to be accurate, but also not to hit yourself with the rock. The whole telling, from the "This is where" to the "I was there" to the "I used this" concretized the Biblical legend. No longer just a story from a book, we were in the place where it happened, with a person who actually used the same weapon David did.[35]

As shown in Taylor's (2001) research on the Maori and Daniel's (1996) study of Caribbean dance, overtly structured performances are also common

---

[35] Neither Ravit nor the participants made mention of television images showing Palestinian

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

vehicles for conveying images of authenticity to tourists. The case of Taglit reveals a more complex picture than either of these other studies suggested, however. First, it is important to emphasize that there were few such instances on Taglit of staged performances. The primary exception was the "Mega-Event" that brought together thousands of participants at Jerusalem's Binyanei Ha'uma convention center. This extravaganza, however, was more a celebration of Taglit than of Israel. Produced by Taglit, it incorporated quickly-produced but professional-looking videos set to popular music showing participants at various points in their trips. (Cheers went up from small pockets of the crowd every time people saw themselves or others from their group). A laser light show set to the music of Queen did intersperse symbols of Jewish ritual objects like Sabbath candlesticks and *kiddush* cups with the logo for Taglit and drawings of camels, the Western Wall and falafel. But the modern dance troupe avoided any explicitly Jewish themes, preferring instead to have a thong-clad androgynous chanteur/se on stilts gyrate lewdly over a 1930s-style microphone. The speeches by Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert were boilerplate, geared less to the young people in the hall than to the to the Israeli electorate who would hear sound bites on the nightly news and go to the polls the following month. The only aspect of the program that could be said to convey something the participants might recognize as an expression of Israel's

---

youth currently using this weapon as well.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Jewish authenticity was the finale performed by an Ethiopian-immigrant children's choir led by the *sabra* Shlomo Gronich. He played the *shofar* like a musical instrument, decontextualizing it from its familiar setting in the Jewish New Year worship service, and using it to introduce the choir's riveting and upbeat performance of *Adon Olam*, one of the most well-known and popular synagogue hymns. People flooded the stage and began dancing a *hora*, but the scene quickly degenerated into the waving of large Argentinean, Canadian and Jewish National Fund flags, and Gronich threatened to call off the whole performance. With order restored, the choir concluded with a song in English, Hebrew and Amharic about the 1984 trek that thousands of Ethiopian Jews made by foot across the deserts of Sudan to a secret airlift that brought them to Israel and established the Ethiopian Jewish community there. "A little bit more, a little more/ The dream will be fulfilled/ Soon we will arrive in the land of Israel."

All in all, the performance seemed to convey a complex message that invoked tradition, suggested Israeli ability to comfortably manipulate it in novel and relevant ways to produce a unique fusion of ancient and modern, recalled the heroism of Israel and the Zionist ethos, and affirmed the diversity and unity of the Jewish people, centered in Jerusalem where everyone had gathered. After the performance people were still humming the choirs' songs, and a few asked where they could buy their CDs. Inspired, students in one group even prodded their Israeli bus driver to lead them in a round of Hebrew folk songs on the bus

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ride back to the hotel: *Yerushalayim shel Zahav* ("Jerusalem of Gold"), *Al Kol Eileh* ("God, Watch Over These"), and *Hava Nagilah* ("Come, Let Us Rejoice").

The Mega-Event, however, was exceptional on Taglit. Aside from museum displays, slides shows and "debates" among residents of local *kibbutzim* over the future of the Golan Heights, few other instances of explicit stagings of Jewish culture were presented. Arab culture was more readily objectified in this manner. Many groups visited a desert tent where Israeli Bedouin (or sometimes even costumed Jews) in traditional garb described aspects of Bedouin culture, demonstrated the grinding of coffee, played drums, and served a meal consisting of large loaves of pita bread with salads. Of such performances, we might claim what Taylor said of similar instances he studied among the Maori: "Such shows transmit the over-signification of an identity of difference, a repetitious inscription of essentialized 'Maori-ness'" (Taylor 2001:16), or in this case, 'Bedouin-ness'. This was Taglit's common handling of Arab heritage in Israel, as was evident in visits to Druse villages. Almost all of the tours shared the same structure: A speaker would describe the culture and then host the group in a local home for an "authentic" Druse meal eaten on low tables. It was also the common method for exposing participants to Arab voices on issues of conflict and coexistence – again largely confined to formal presentations by people whose only relationship with the group was to 'represent' an Arab point of view. Otherwise contact with Arabs was uncommon. The East Jerusalem *souk* was off-limits (security concerns were given as the reason for this). Christian and Islamic

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

holy sites also tended to be omitted from the itinerary. Arab service workers and shopkeepers were generally treated like their Jewish counterparts, which is to say that they were basically seen in their narrow role context rather than as opportunities for human encounters. In one exceptional instance, an attempt to include Israeli-Arab students in one of the *mifgashim* eventually went ahead, but not after a good deal of controversy. The tendency toward the extremes of over-signification or invisibility largely stemmed from the fact Taglit's organizers saw it as an educational program, not a tour. The focus was on influencing the participants' Jewish identities and not on teaching about Israel except to the extent that it was a means to achieve the former. Hillel's staff guide made the point explicitly:

"The Israel Experience as a Jewish Experience

Basic Concepts...

3. Israel is a means, not an end.

The purpose is not to learn (about) Israel – hence one doesn't have to be an expert on Israel to be successful.

We use Israel because it is the greatest repository of Jewish memory and experience (but not the only one)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> Israel affords the possibility of seeing 'Judaism in action' in a context in which one doesn't have to 'opt in' (but can opt out)." (Hillel 2000:14).

Arabs do not figure in this conception. Further, when buses traveled by or through Arab towns (Palestinian, Druse and Bedouin) or passed Arabs along the road, guides usually made no comment and no interpretation as to what was being seen. They were invisible.

Perhaps to make Jewish culture seem less remote, overt stagings of Jewish life were eschewed in favor of more interactive, participatory encounters. The Israeli-Jewish cultural performances participants experienced, such as the *minyanim* (prayer groups) at the Western Wall and Sabbath lunches in people's homes, had elements of staging to them but basically emerged through a more natural flow of interaction. And as mentioned before, these were perceived as instances of Jewish authenticity that were contrasted with examples of inauthenticity in America and among American Jews.

CONCLUSION

As a pilgrimage destination, Israel appeals to Jews because its claims to be the authentic center of Jewish historical and collective existence are widely affirmed. Certainly, they constituted the root premise of the Taglit program - accepted both by its organizers and by many, if not most, of its participants. The nature of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

these claims are multifaceted, but they all rest on a notion of a boundary that divides the authentic from the inauthentic, and then proceeds to characterize each of these in terms of idealized conceptions that invariably oversimplify. The act of going on a pilgrimage-tour entails the consumption of signifiers of these claims to authenticity. But this is only the first half of the pilgrimage-touring act. It is completed when the traveler begins to apply the notion of authenticity to him or herself as well.

Having established how Israel's claims to Jewish authenticity are asserted and, to the degree that they are, accepted, we turn in the next chapter to the question of what implications this has for pilgrims' perceptions of self.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER 4

THE TRAVELER'S AUTHENTICITY

Lionel Trilling once noted that the term *authenticity* "comes so readily to the tongue these days, and in so many connections, that it may very well resist... efforts at definition" (1972:12). If we take it to mean *originality* or *authortitativeness*, it is a reasonable concept to apply to a religious artifact such as Jesus' burial shroud or the chiseled limestone of Herod's ancient Temple. But in a world where human cloning is not yet a reality, what sense is there in saying that I am the original, official me and not a replica. Clearly, the term *authenticity* takes on a different meaning when applied to living human beings as when applied to a stone wall.

In this chapter, I will attempt to account for the feelings of personal authenticity that commonly emerged on Taglit. To do so, I will focus on the currently popular metaphor of the self-as-story (Barbre et al. 1989; Belenky et al. 1986; Ely et al. 1997; Fisher 1991; Grumet 1991; Narayan 1991; Stafford 1991; Witherell 1991; Witherell and Noddings 1991; Wuthnow 1994). I will argue that the ethnographic record of these pilgrimage tours forces us to reconceptualize narrative identity and consider the possibility that the process is much less developed than the theory currently suggests. Rather than seeing personal authenticity in terms of a coherent autobiography, I will propose that the metaphors of tourism and the internet help us better understand how such

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

feelings are actually produced. On Taglit, the travelers toured not only Israel but also their own selves.[1] With apologies for the mixed metaphor, this self-touring was done in a manner akin to surfing the internet. Hyperlinks connected different memories in a web of relationships that had thematic coherence without a set narrative structure. Compared to the self-as-story, I believe that the metaphor of the hyperlink better captures the process of identity construction in a wired age.

The structure of the chapter is as follows: I begin by invoking multiple data sources to make the case that it is reasonable to speak of feelings of personal authenticity in connection with Taglit. People commonly felt that they were being true to themselves on the program, perhaps truer than in other circumstances. From here, I turn to the theoretical issues surrounding the concept of self-authenticity as it has developed in the sociology of tourism. My focus will alight on the issue of narrativity, which has been the object of growing inquiry in the social sciences over the past quarter-century. After critically reviewing the relevant literature in the sociologies of tourism and of narrative, I will critically assess the theory in light of ethnographic data drawn from Taglit and develop the alternative paradigm that I have introduced above.

---

[1] I use this term in a somewhat different sense than Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2000). She wrote that when Israel experience program operators promote their programs as opportunities for "'exploring your Jewish heritage' or 'discovering your Jewish identity,'" the "unstated premise...is that these youngsters are unknown to themselves.... They are tourists in relation to themselves and to their Jewish culture." In contrast, I portray self-touring as an act of touring the familiar.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The chapter will conclude with some thoughts on the overarching issue that frames this and the previous chapter, namely, the relationship between the authenticity of the self and the authenticity of the place in a pilgrimage-tour.

"I Felt So Alive"

Heilman wrote that "the goal" of the Israel experience program is to lead participants "to the realization that here in Israel, perhaps for the first time in their lives, they have personally found out who they are and where they belong" (1995:84). Raising a rhetorical eyebrow, he added, "This is a tall order" (85). Indeed it is.

Exceedingly difficult to measure, we can rely only on imperfect indicators that feelings of personal authenticity did indeed emerge on Taglit. These were evident through a variety of quantitative and qualitative measures.[2]

Personal testimony is suggestive, but by no means definitive. At the very end of the post-trip *survey*, respondents were asked the unassuming question, "Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your Birthright Israel experience?" They were then given space to write whatever came to mind. In addition to common responses that the trip was "amazing," "fun," and "the best experience of my life," statements which I take at face value, a small number of respondents—between five and ten percent—volunteered that the trip 'changed their lives,' which implies that some reflection about who they were and who

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

they wanted to be took place. In their minds, the program figured as a turning point in the story of their lives. The following quotations[3] were selected for their illustrative character from among those who claimed that the trip was life-changing:

> I am so grateful. The trip reconnected me to Judaism. I felt accepted even though I am only Jewish on my father's side. This trip brought me home to myself and has changed my life. Thank You.
>
> THANK YOU. It was simply incredible—the best thing I've done in my entire life and I will be eternally grateful. It gave me a passion and a meaning to live and has literally changed my life. Thank you so much for providing this incredible opportunity and I am harassing each and every one of my Jewish friends to go.
>
> THANK YOU SOOOOOOOO MUCH! In many ways this trip literally has changed my life. I have been much more outgoing and positive. The friends I have made through this trip have since introduced me to their friends so my social circle has grown. This was an amazing gift. I still can't believe it was free.... that's so generous of the sponsors.

---

[2] In the pages that follow, each of the different data sources is highlighted in italics.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In-depth interviews during and after the trips also suggested that some participants felt they were getting in touch with themselves. In an email correspondence with the CMJS researcher who had been attached to her group, one woman described a sense that there existed a special connection between Self and Place:

> After leaving Israel I find myself wanting to return so badly, I think about it at least 50 times a day and hope I never stop thinking about it. After letting everything soak in I realized how comfortable I felt while in Israel. I don't think I realized it at the time but there is just something about being there that is really special, like no other place in the world.

What is intriguing about this testimony is that this person suggested she understood her feelings in Israel *only after she returned home*. On the trip itself, the sense of ease and peace of mind that she described seemed so natural that they were basically imperceptible. They became apparent only when contrasted with her feelings after the dislocation from that setting. The pangs of longing to return that she felt were related to a feeling that something important was missing and that she could find wholeness if only she returned to Israel.

Participant observation revealed behaviors that might be taken as indicators of feelings of personal authenticity. In a cafeteria near the Lebanese border, I was

---

[3] Spelling and punctuation have been edited.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

sharing a plate of humous with Misha, Lynne and Mickey, all members of Bus 194. Lynne had become friendly with Mickey, in spite of the fact that his close friends in the group tended to be those of whom she had said, "If I were alone in an elevator with them, I wouldn't feel comfortable." She also considered the members of his fraternity to be obnoxious, and was thus surprised to learn that Mickey not only was a member of φρτ, but also one of its officers.[4] She thought he was too nice for φρτ. Mickey, though, tended to see eye-to-eye with Lynne on the character of his fraternity brothers. He had been pledge master in the past, but stopped most of his involvement as a senior, upset that a merger with another fraternity whose charter had been revoked by the university changed the character of his group. "JAP-py assholes," he called the younger brothers, and said that they did not really understand the fraternity's values and what it was about.

I mention this to preface Mickey's comments at the lunch table. Our conversation had somehow turned to previous travels. Mickey, quite characteristically, took center stage in the conversation. He was one of the most vocal members of the group—alternately funny and profound. He often served as the Greek chorus of the group, and people generally listened when he spoke. He was both liked and respected, and none used his name in a teasing sense. (Mickey was a nickname. He was identified on the official bus roster as Joshua

---

[4] Like everything else, the name of the fraternity is a pseudonym.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Goldman, but he had been called Mickey since he was a teenager, when people decided that with his large ears he resembled Mickey Mouse. Although his friends knew the origins of the nickname, that was ancient history. He was Mickey now, not because of his ears, but because he had been Mickey for as long as anyone there had known him. Only the staff called him Joshua, and even then, only rarely. To them too, he was Mickey.)

"Acapulco was probably the best week of my entire life," Mickey said. "Except for this. This tops it.... I haven't thought about weed at all this entire trip—" Lynne interrupted with a sarcastic, but joking, "Mazel tov!" But Mickey went on to explain what he meant. "—But that's what Acapulco was all about.... You don't need to [think about weed on this trip]. This takes care of all the senses." He then went on to describe the sights, smells, and tastes on the program, and Lynne told him not to forget hearing. She recalled two episodes on top of Masada: one, the *shofar* blown at sunrise; the other, a Hebrew phrase, 'Masada will not fall again' shouted as a group over the edge of a cliff to a resounding echo from the mountains nearby. "When I heard the *shofar*, I cried," she said. "I wrote this in my journal. I haven't told anybody this. When I heard the echo, I cried." Mickey agreed, "It was a spiritual moment."

For Mickey, whose previous "best week of [his] entire life" was defined by an acute awareness of his physical senses, the Taglit program again put him in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

close touch with the bodily experiences that were taking place.[5] In a different group, by contrast, a man named Sean described feelings of personal fulfillment that derived not from the physical experience but from the emotional.

In the midst of a particularly self-revealing group discussion about hopes and expectations for the trip, conducted in a hotel meeting room on Sean's third day in Israel, both the words he spoke and the responses of his peers suggested that an openness to one's own feelings and those of others was valued by the group. In other words, masks were off. Sean, a chain-smoking art student who was generally well-liked, had started choking up even before he got his first words out. "Sorry guys, I'm a little *farklempt*," he said. The Yiddishism, familiar from a *Saturday Night Live* sketch, elicited sympathetic laughter from others in the circle. After getting out of his chair to collect himself, he sat down to speak. "The reason I came here.... In Canada we seem to have everything: loving parents, bars, women, television, rights, freedoms, etc. But I don't have *happiness*." At this point he burst into tears again. "Seeing Uri in the caves... so much emotion... it's the first experience of this sort." (He was referring to a tour of the archaeological excavations at Beit Guvrin, where the tour guide, Uri, said that ancient Jews had been driven to cannibalism in order to survive—an example, he said, of innumerable times Jews had been forced into dehumanizing situations.) Others were also crying by now, as Sean continued, "I feel so

---

[5] For a discussion of the sociology of body on Israel experience programs, see Kirshenblatt-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

comfortable with you guys. I was looking for direction and something to believe in. In Canada, I don't have a chance to really feel life. Being at the Wall... I was there and seeing the Hasidim... it was an interesting experience, weird and engaging. I put my head on the Wall and felt so alive. It was the best feeling. Being able to share this with people is really special." He closed to the applause and tears of his groupmates simply by saying, "Thank you."

Not only did Sean's words attest to feeling "alive" in a way that was foreign to his experience back home, but the responses of his friends validated and perhaps even echoed these feelings. Moreover, he was able to express these very personal sentiments, tears and all, in public without any significant degree of self-consciousness. "I feel so comfortable with you guys," he said, and even joked in Yiddish about being *farklempt* (i.e. emotional).

Close-ended survey questions suggest that this was not an uncommon occurrence. Asked to what extent people on their buses were "willing to share personal details about their life with the group," 48% responded "very much" and another 41% responded "somewhat." Only 10% answered "a little" and 1% said "not at all." In other words, half the people found this to be very characteristic of their groups, and almost all said that the phenomenon was occurring to some extent on their buses.

Gimblett (2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Further evidence from the post-trip survey that participants were reflecting on their lives in the context of the program was noted in Chapter 2. Asked whether they found their trip to be "personally meaningful," over 80% of all participants responded "Very Much."

In sum, data gathered through multiple methodologies at various points during and after the trips suggest that participants on Taglit were aware of themselves as Selves and encountered one another on these terms.

Existential Authenticity in Tourism

In tourism studies, the notion of personal, or existential, authenticity emerged in a manner that makes it a problematic concept. It is perhaps natural that the initial objectivist discussions of authenticity in tourism (Boorstin [1961] 1985; MacCannell 1973) should most accord with common sense views of the term. Authenticity referred to the things seen by tourists, who probably shared a general agreement that the hidden café they stumbled upon on a Parisian side street was more "authentic" than the kitschy Eiffel Tower bank they bought for their six-year-old in the gift shop at Orly. As Edward Rose wrote in 1960, "Indeed, almost all of the established technical vocabulary of sociology has been taken over from the common stock of words in ordinary languages, and there is hardly a widely-received sociological term that was not long ago assigned a non-professional and yet clearly sociological meaning" (196).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

With the constructivist attack on the idea of gold standards of authenticity, academic and colloquial understandings of the term began to diverge. No longer was the authenticity of toured objects the main question, but rather the processes by which people imputed authenticity to things they encountered. In the minds of constructivists, they had rescued the term. And yet, some scholars who shared their criticisms of the objectivist notion were not fully convinced that authenticity could be salvaged as a viable concept in the study of tourism. Seeing all things as simulacra, postmodernists considered the very idea of authenticity to be a *non sequitur*. This was especially so when Europeans passed judgment on American "perpetual simulation" (Baudrillard 1989) and "hyperreality" (Eco 1986). Eco wondered about a society that produced wax sculptures of Da Vinci's *Last Supper* which were more vivid and lifelike than the original fresco (Eco 1986). Were these supposed to be more authentic renderings of Jesus' final meal? If so, then why base it on the artistic imaginings of a 15th-century Florentine? Or perhaps Da Vinci's version of Jesus' final meal was the object of reverence. But could these sculptures out-Da-Vinci Da Vinci—*fartaytsht un farbessert*[6] like the Yiddish production of Hamlet?

Partly by default and partly by design, a different approach to keeping authenticity relevant to the study of tourism redirected the focus away from the things the tourist sees to the existential Being of the tourist him or herself. Wang

---

[6] "Translated and improved."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(1999) labeled the competing conceptions "object-related authenticity," on the one hand (further sub-divided into objectivism and constructivism), and "existential authenticity," on the other hand.

While some scholars have retained an interest in the authenticity of, say, the native dances presented for tourists in the Caribbean (Daniel 1996), others have been preoccupied with the sense of wholeness felt by vacationers who spend their days sunbathing nude on the decks of chartered yachts and their nights disco dancing at the Bath and Turtle Pub on the island of Virgin Gorda (Lett 1983). This shift in referent away from tourist attractions and to the tourist him/herself, however, is problematic. There is a slippery quality to the word "authenticity" that can lead authors to conflate divergent meanings and shift usage from context to context. Discussions of authenticity can thus become what Stuart Charmé has referred to as a "shell game,"[7] in which both the reader and the writer can be easily suckered.

Examples abound. After determining that the lack of clear boundaries made it useless to talk about authentic Scottishness, Hughes (1995) tried to salvage the term by redefining it. No longer treating it as a yardstick for assessing Scottish culture, Hughes concluded that "Authenticity continues to reside in the resistances, choices, and commitments that individuals express within the opportunities and constraints provided by globalized markets and

---

[7] Personal conversation, December 16, 2001.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

global imagery to which international tourism is an increasingly major contributor" (800). Crang's (1996) study of authenticity in living history[8] alternately used the concept to refer to historical accuracy in materiel (420) and "the *communitas* felt" with fellow reeenactors (428). Conceivably, one could exist without the other; the two bear no necessary relation. Likewise, in the study of touristic dance performances mentioned above, Daniel argued that the perception of authenticity was determined not only by faithful adherence to "style, type and context" but also by "'the performer's commitment to the dance'" (1996:785).

In other cases, authors were explicitly aware that they were treating authenticity as a feature of personal experience rather than of things tourists see. Wang (1999) has been one of the most self-conscious voices in this regard. In a call to "rethink" the concept, he articulated the notion of "activity-related" or "existential" authenticity.

> [E]xistential authenticity, unlike [object-oriented authenticity], can often have nothing to do with the issue of whether toured objects are real. In search of tourist experience which is existentially authentic, tourists are preoccupied with an *existential state of Being*

---

[8] Living history is the term applied to tourist attractions like Williamsburg, Virginia, or reenactments of Civil War battles. Authenticity in living history has been studied both from the perspective of the practitioners (E. Bruner 1994; Crang 1996; Handler and Saxton 1988) and from the perspective of the tourists (E. Bruner 1994). Practitioners tend to have stricter definitions of what qualifies as authentic, which is part of the appeal of studying them from a social

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> activated by certain tourist activities.... [T]hey do not literally concern themselves about the *authenticity* of toured objects.... They are rather in search of their authentic selves with the aid of activities or toured objects (359-60, emphasis in original).

Relying on Berger (1973), Wang saw existential authenticity as "a special state of Being in which one is true to oneself, and [which] acts as a counterdose to the loss of 'true self' in public roles and public spheres in modern society" (1999:358). This conception was foreshadowed by Lett's (1983) study of charter-yacht tourists in the Caribbean and by Graburn's (1989) understanding of tourism as a ritualized alternation between profane work time and sacred leisure time.

There are two central problems with this approach. The first is that proponents of an existential notion of authenticity have not shown that it bears any necessary relationship with tourism. Hughes (1995) abandoned the tourism connection altogether to redefine authenticity as some generic assertion of "resistance" in the global marketplace. Even the most helpful contribution to the discussion, which I will discuss at greater length below, concentrated only on the experience of living history reenactors (i.e., the objects of tourism) and never developed the concept to address the perspective of tourists themselves (Handler and Saxton 1988). Wang's (1999) examples largely concerned beach holidays,

---

constructionist point of view.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ocean cruises, mountain climbing and other forms of leisure travel that do not constitute tourism *per se*, insofar as the activities are not structured around a "tourist gaze" upon an objectified Other (Urry 1990). While existential authenticity may be prominent in other forms of leisure travel, no one has yet speculated how it emerges through taking in the sights as a tourist.[9]

The second problem regards the positing of a "real self" defined through a contrast with the social self. "It can never be the case," Jerome Bruner wrote, "that there is a 'self' independent of one's cultural-historical existence" (1986:67). This is because the stories told by each culture

> define the range of canonical characters, the settings in which they operate, the actions that are permissible and comprehensible. And thereby they provide, so to speak, a map of the possible roles and of possible worlds in which action, thought, and self-definition are permissible (or desirable) (66).

Kadushin (1966) developed Simmel's work (1955) to argue that individuality emerges from the intersection of each person's unique set of social circles. Durkheim ([1897] 1966) explained that even though "Social man superimposes himself upon physical man," this physical being contains nothing recognizably human:

---

[9] Taglit did incorporate these types of activities into its itinerary. My research interest, however, is whether the feelings of personal authenticity emerged in relationship to the tourist gaze.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> Social man necessarily presupposes a society which he expresses and serves. If this dissolves.... we are bereft of reasons for existence; for the only life to which we could cling no longer corresponds to anything actual.... Because we have been initiated into a higher existence, the one which satisfies an animal or a child can satisfy us no more... (213)

Goffman (1959) demonstrated in minute detail the folly of conceiving of a "true self" independent of social life. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* does not claim a separation between an authentic self standing behind and directing the presentation and a performed self that is the outcome of it. Rather, the performer and character are each creations of the other. There can be no sense of "performer" outside of the social context which gives meaning to an individual's actions. This social context, in turn, is the product of performed characters' interactions (252-3).

More recently, feminist theory and postmodern anthropological theory (Charmé 2000; Fischer 1986) have taken the position that because the self is a process of social construction, it is preferable to speak in the plural of multiple selves and alternative selves. Contemporary psychoanalysis also struggles with what Mitchell (1993) called the "dialectic between the multiplicity and integrity of self." He argued that "the self-conscious designation of or coronation of one

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

version of the self as the true self brings with it an inauthentic foreclosing of experience and an arbitrary claim made both on oneself and on others" (134).

In short, the notion of an objectively existing authentic or "true" self is problematic as an analytic category, and is best left outside of the framework of our discussion about Taglit. Did the participants find their authentic selves or behave in a manner that was indeed true to themselves? If the evidence presented at the outset of the chapter is to be considered, then it seems that a good number of them felt this to be the case. Were they deceiving themselves, victims of a false consciousness? Even if the notion of a "true" self were not a problematic concept, it would still entail a good dose of arrogance to presume to answer this question for them. We have no firm intellectual or ethical grounding from which to question their determination. Accordingly, just as I rejected an objectivist analysis of Israel's Jewish authenticity in favor of a constructivist approach, I will refrain from passing judgment on the ontological status of the travelers' attainments of personal authenticity.

AUTHENTICITY AND THE SELF-AS-STORY

My own efforts to reconcile the disconnected conceptions of existential and object-related authenticity, and to remain faithful to a constructivist position in the process, lean heavily on the notion of *narrativity* put forth by the anthropologist Richard Handler and philosopher William Saxton. In their essay "Dyssimulation: Reflexivity, Narrative and the Quest for Authenticity in 'Living

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

History'" (1988), they noted a "crucial ambiguity" in the two ways producers of living history speak of authenticity: "[O]ne [way] speaks of replicating the experiences of others in order to understand those others, while the other focuses on the authentic experiences that one achieves or 'has' for oneself" (1988:247). The attempt to understand the Other is the crux of objective authenticity.[10] By contrast, the concern for one's own experience is the essence of existential authenticity.

Drawing upon Heidegger (1926), Handler and Saxton argued that *narrativity* is critical to feelings of existential authenticity. "Heideggerian authenticity, writ large, is life as a readable first person narrative, operationally read in the process of its composition, a life individuated in its authorship, integrated through its emplotment, and creative by dint of its invention" (1988:250). Such a life is "autobiography" rather than "obituary" (250). The appeal of living history, they find, is that its practitioners

> *expect thereby to gain access to lives and experiences characterized by the wholeness that historical narratives can provide....* Living historians latch onto the satisfying configurational unity that a good plot provides, and read into it the world represented by the narrative rather than seeing it as a function of narrative representation. Thus

---

[10] Constructive authenticity presents an ambiguous case, because it implies that any efforts to genuinely appreciate and comprehend the Other are undermined by the way the Other is imagined. Although the intention remains to understand the Other, the project often fails in the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> the life of the past is seen to possess an authenticity that we find impossible to experience in the present (251, emphasis in original).

Later in this chapter, I will extend Handler and Saxton's conception to encompass the experience of tourists. In so doing, I will argue that a focus on narrative *content* is a necessary corrective to their emphasis on narrative *process*. That is, on the Jewish pilgrimage-tour of Israel, the travelers' ability to "latch onto the satisfying configurational unity" that the Jewish plotline provides depends on the fact that a shared narrative of Jewishness links the authenticity of destination with the authenticity of the visitors.

For now, however, I wish to ground their understanding of narrativity in current sociological and psychological theory on the matter. Handler and Saxton's work was conducted independent of a stream of investigation into narrative that gathered momentum among cognitive psychologists in the mid-1980s (J. Bruner 1986; Gergen and Gergen 1986; McAdams 1985, 1993; McAdams et al. 1997; Mishler 1986; Polkinghorne 1988; Sarbin 1986a, 1986b; Spence 1986; Steele 1986). At the same time, scholars, in education, women's studies and religion were becoming interested in narrative, especially in its role in the construction of empowered selves (Barbre et al. 1989; Belenky et al. 1986; Ely et al. 1997; Grumet 1991; Narayan 1991; Stafford 1991; Witherell 1991; Witherell and Noddings 1991; Wuthnow 1994). By the 1990s these literatures had begun to

---

implementation.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

influence sociologists. Earlier sociological work on narrative (Mills 1940; Scott and Lyman 1960) had focused on accounts people gave for engaging in specific (usually deviant) behaviors, but with some exceptions (e.g. Danzger 1989) this tradition largely laid dormant. The assimilation of the recent work in psychology and education led to a growing sociological interest in the relationship between narrativity and self-identity (Ezzy 1998; Gubrium and Holstein 1998; for reviews of this literature, see Maines 1993; Orbuch 1997).

The basic conception underlying narrative identity theory is that people "make sense of their sometimes scattered lives by fashioning and internalizing stories that integrate their reconstructed past, perceived present, and anticipated future" (McAdams et al. 1997:678). McAdams and his colleagues articulated the broad point well, in spite of the understatement in their claim that human lives are "sometimes scattered." Better to say that they are always scattered. Without the imposition of some meaningful framework to make sense of it all, all human life resolves itself into fleeting, fragmented moments. The act of narration transforms this welter of moments into episodes that cohere in some meaningful fashion. The key element is emplotment, the temporal ordering of events into a thematic whole. This, in Ricouer's view is what turns "time" into "human time" (1984:3,52).

There are many ways that isolated units can be related to one another to produce meaning. Narrative is only one of them. What Jerome Bruner (1986) called "paradigmatic" or "logico-scientific" thought creates meaning by relating

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

elements to one another in mathematical form, as in the famous syllogism proving Socrates' mortality. *All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal. QED.* Two mathematical relationships unite the elements in a meaningful configuration here: First, the *theoretical* relationship between "all men" and "mortality." If A, then B. Second, the *categorical* relationship between "Socrates" and "all men." The former is an example or element of the latter ($a \in A$).

Narratives construct meaning differently. Rather than relating elements theoretically or categorically, their ordering is *configurational* (Polkinghorne 1988:53). "Narrative meaning," Polkinghorne wrote, "is created by noting that something is *part* of some whole and that something is the *cause* of something else.... The meaning of each event is produced by the part it plays in the whole episode" (6, emphasis in original). The part-whole configuration has two elements, known in literary theory as the "*sjuzet* and *fabula* (the linear incidents that make the plot, versus the timeless, motionless, underlying theme)" (J. Bruner 1986:7). The two are linked through the process of *emplotment*. Meaning, in this sense, is thus constructed "organically,"[11] through context rather than the strictures of logic.

---

[11] The term is taken from Max Kadushin ([1938] 2001). In an extensive study of rabbinic thought, he argued that "the coherence between the rabbinic concepts is not such that one concept proceeds from another in an inferential fashion. Instead, here the integrated pattern or complex as a whole supplies coherence, relationship with other concepts, meaning, to each of its individual constituent concepts" (13). Kadushin termed this "organic thinking," using the term to imply a system characterized by a definite, but flexible, structure.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Studies of how individuals construct more or less coherent life stories out of the disparate elements of their lives tend to be envisioned in terms of *explicit acts of narrativity*. This has encouraged a sensitivity to the interactional, institutional and normative constraints that govern what narratives are considered acceptable (Danzger 1989; Ezzy 1998; Gubrium and Holstein 1998; Orbuch 1997). This follows in the line of the early work by Mills (1940) and Scott and Lyman (1960), but diverges from it in several ways. First, the questioning and subversion of received categories prominent in feminist methods has led some researchers to move beyond looking at the normative constraints imposed by existing categories to also consider "the important discontinuities that always exist between received cultural categories and the way those categories are narratively applied (Gubrium and Holstein 1998:5).[12] Gubrium and Holstein referred to this as "narrative slippage" and re-analyzed as a case in point Chase's (1995) study of the gendered narratives of female school superintendents.

Second, inquiry into the constraints on narrative has moved beyond assertions of general normative contexts to clarify specific institutional and interactional processes that produce coherent, topical narratives. Gubrium and Holstein (1998) identified four such process: *Linkage, editing, substantive monitoring* and *formal control. Linkage* refers to tying one's personal narrative into

---

[12] This article was accessed on-line in HTML format that did not preserve the original pagination of the printed article. The page numbers I cite are therefore those produced by printing the document from the web site.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

a broader storyline. The collective narratives are constraining, but not all-determining, because each individual retains control over the way she links her own story to generalized narratives (4-8). *Editing* refers to the deliberate process of choosing what to tell and how to tell it, always with an awareness of other possibilities (8-11). This implies that there is not one narrative, but many, and that there is not necessarily any overarching coherence uniting them. *Substantive monitoring* emerges in interaction, when one's story is being to told to others. The content of stories are monitored by speaker and audience alike for topicality, determined usually by the setting in which the narrative construction is taking place. The narrative's structure tends to be monitored as well, using more generalized criteria of what constitutes a well-formed story. Substantive monitoring is exemplified in the question, "So, what's your point?" (11-13). *Formal control* institutionalizes substantive monitoring in specific settings, such as a courtroom, and also on Taglit, where group discussions were led by a staff person with discussion manual in hand (13-16). Both the structure and content of narratives in such settings tend to be circumscribed to some degree.

In short, the sociology and psychology of narrative have developed a concept of narrative identity that focuses on *sjuzet*, the processes by which individuals in specific institutional and interpersonal contexts explicitly weave together elements from their "reconstructed past, perceived present, and anticipated future." Although useful, this approach suffers from two major weaknesses. First, for all its focus on the sense of self-coherence that emerges

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

through narrative processes, the relation of this to notions of authenticity has not been a major theme. There are many ways to emplot a life story. Why do people tend to privilege some self-narratives over others when thinking about who they "really" are? Second, as noted above, the notion that individuals arrange disparate elements of their lives into coherent life stories envisions narrativity as an explicit, elaborated act. This could very well be an artifact of methodology; studies have tended to focus on written autobiographies (Barbre et al. 1989; Helle 1991; Makler 1991), in-depth interviews (McAdams et al. 1997)[13] or observation of support groups like Alcoholics Anonymous where personal stories are shared with a group (Buckholdt and Gubrium 1979; Gubrium 1986; Gubrium and Holstein 1988; c.f. Polkinghorne 1988:178; Wuthnow 1994). If such explicit acts of narration do not take place, does self-identity not emerge? How much explicit narration is required for coherent identities to coalesce? So far, these questions remain unexplored.

Handler and Saxton avoided this problem by focusing on the *fabula*, the thematic *gestalt* found in a closed historical narrative that is separate and distinct from the self. Although Handler and Saxton began with a Heideggerian notion of authenticity as "autobiography," their main concern rested with narrativity in the general historical sense, not in people's individual life stories. Personal

---

[13] The method adopted by McAdams et al. (1997) foreordains that identity will be constructed in narrative terms. Their interviews, "designed to elicit the main features of a person's self-defining life-story," force the narrative construction through questions like, "What is the overall theme of your life story?"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

authenticity, something which goes beyond the individualistic ideal of coherence, emerges in their view from the communion with a historical whole.[14] But what, exactly, is the nature of this communion?

I will attempt to answer these questions by examining how connections between authenticity and narrativity were manifested on Taglit. Explicit processes of public life-history narration were integral to Taglit's structure. But these were much more limited than the extended acts of narration described by other scholars in the humanities and social sciences. In addition, these narrations were linked to the historical narratives about Israel's Jewish authenticity that were so prominent on the tour. In the end, the emergence of feelings of personal authenticity seemed rooted less in the process of weaving a text than in linking a hypertext. An editing process constrained the links that could be made, so that what emerged was a virtual tour of one's Jewish self that was linked thematically and processually to the tour of Israel that was simultaneously occurring.

---

[14] As mentioned, Polkinghorne (1988) identified two aspects to configurational coherence that make narrative meaningful: the relationship of part to whole, and the relationship of cause to effect. Handler and Saxton's (1988) conception ignores the second of these. Their perspective implies that the part/whole relationship would be enough to establish configurational coherence.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Institutionalized Processes of Group Discussion

Heilman (1995:58) described a T-shirt designed by teenage travelers to Israel to commemorate their group experience: "We came. We saw. We can't remember a thing." From the perspective of tourism, this might be unexceptional (recall the 1969 spoof, *If It's Tuesday, This Must be Belgium*). From the perspective of Taglit, which had explicit educational and identity-building goals, the whirlwind of experiences was a potential problem. Accordingly, the program mandated in its Educational Standards (2001) that

> All programs must include at least three group tie-in/discussion sessions. These tie-in discussions should be conducted every few days. *Their aim is to enable participants to reflect on and process experiences they are having, and to link them to their own lives.* These sessions need to be led by staff skilled in the area of group dynamics and inter-active discussion (2, emphasis added).

The frequency and level of formality of these discussion sessions varied. Some groups limited themselves to personal reactions to the places visited, whereas others utilized formal curricula to address a variety of thematic issues that were sometimes related to the itinerary and sometimes not. The diversity in approach was reflected in the names given to the discussion groups. Some

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

groups had no special names for them. Others called them by a Hebrew term, "*ma'amad.*" The word derives from a root meaning 'to stand still' and can be translated as a 'stop action.' The term conveys a sense that that although the trip has been constantly moving, for one moment the group will take time out to reflect on what has occurred before resuming the quick pace again.

Hillel, for its part, preferred the word "Conversation" to "discussion" or "*ma'amad.*" Rabbi Avi Weinstein, director of Hillel's Center for Jewish Learning, designed a program entitled "The Seven Conversations" that was billed as "The Educational Model for Our Ten-Day Experience" (Hillel 2000). Staff and participants were provided with background material for "Conversations"[15] on seven specific topics, each given a title: My Connection to Jewish Memory; Jews and Gentiles; How I Relate to Israel—How Israel Relates to Me; Special or Normal: You Choose; Spirituality: Wrestling with God; Israelis and Arabs: An Exploration of the Political Situation; and My Connection to the Jewish People. The staff manual included readings that had also been provided to the students, as well as guidelines for facilitating discussions, including suggested introductory lines, specific talking points, open-ended questions associated with the various readings, and notes on the structuring of the conversations. The readings themselves, 66 in all, ranged from one sentence to one page in length and were taken from traditional sources like the Bible and the Talmud, as well as

---

[15] From here on, I drop the quotations and the capitalization.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

from a array of individuals including the 18th-century Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, Theodor Herzl, Mark Twain, Elie Wiesel, the Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai and the comedian Lenny Bruce. Introducing the program to its staff, the author of the curriculum outlined its goals and rationale:

There are two educational goals for Hillel's Birthright Israel trips:

Enhance the participants' connection to the greatest living laboratory of the Jewish people, the State of Israel.

Strengthen the participants' connection to the Jewish community.

Note that the Jewish content of this trip is to be transmitted through conversation, and not through lectures or conventional classroom techniques. All conversations begin with the participant and build on the participant's values, memories and perceptions.

The methodology is simple:

Step one is to introduce the conversation by asking personal questions of the participants.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> Step two is to use that knowledge of individual experiences and apply it to the collective experience of the Jewish people.
>
> Step three is to bring that experience back to the participants to help individuals articulate where they stand in this new context (Hillel 2000:72, emphasis in original).

Taglit may have differed from other forms of tourism or pilgrimage in that it institutionalized a formal process of group discussion that otherwise would have occurred, if at all, only informally. On Taglit, discussions instigated by the formal process often continued after the group circle had broken up and participants went on to meals or to the buses. Several participant observers noted that conversations of the type held in the formal settings also occupied participants during their free evenings in the local pubs, a setting where the official program had receded the most and the participants were most free to shape their own experience. Such serious bar chatter may have been the exception rather than the rule, or it may have been a common experience for most participants. The fact that it occurred at all is significant because it suggests an intrinsic motivation to talk about Jewish subjects. One might speculate whether this would have occurred were it not for the group discussions serving as a spark to further conversation. But this probably attributes too much influence to one particular element of the program. It seems perfectly reasonable to assume that even without the formal group discussions, people would talk

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

about their personal reactions to the things they were seeing in Israel and broader issues that these things might be tied into.

For example, on one night that I went bar-hopping with members of Bus 194, the presence of a Christmas tree in a Jerusalem bar was a trigger for a conversation about Jewishness, Christmas and boundaries. The ethno-religious diversity of our group of four was also the springboard to some very interesting exchanges about our lives. Evan's mother was an Irish-American who had converted to Judaism. Evan was thus automatically eligible for both Irish and Israeli citizenship. He had begun pursuing the Irish option in order to be able to work in anywhere in the European Union. Atamveer, who pronounced his nickname Tommy with a thick Boston drawl, was a second-generation American with a Central Asian Bahá'í father and Jewish mother. Like Tommy, Ellen had also adopted an English name, and unless you heard her speak Russian with Misha, a Ukrainian émigré in the group, you would not know that she had immigrated years ago as Yelena from what had been the Soviet Union. I, a fourth-generation American Jew, took the opposite route and had Hebraized my given name, Saul, to Shaul about ten years before. Our diverse backgrounds did not dominate the conversation. We spent much more time talking about parties, school and work (Tommy and Evan were graduating seniors and the work world was looming before them). But the conversations did nonetheless occur and seemed at the time to be related more to the *gestalt* experience of being on a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Jewish tour of Israel rather than to the particular element of the formal conversations the group sometimes had.

Sparse Narratives

In spite of these informal occurrences, it is to the formal conversations that I wish to draw attention. I do this in part because these were institutionalized processes for narrating autobiographies and explicitly linking them to collective Jewish and Zionist narratives. But I also do it because the truncated nature of the stories that were told contrast with the full, rich narratives that others have seen in similar settings and that have predominated in the literature on narrative identity.

Group discussions focused on many issues—people's views about racism, the value of tradition, American democracy, Yiddish, and many other things. Within these exchanges about diverse topics, personal histories were often addressed or invoked. Participants, for example, frequently recalled grandparents in discussions surrounding the visit to Yad Vashem—who had escaped the Holocaust, who had survived, who spoke of it and who did not.

The degree of narrative coherence in these personal stories was quite variable at any given moment. Much of this depended on the way that the staff person structured the discussions. In some cases, there were specific requests to weave together a number of elements that had occurred across an expanse of time. For example, one rabbi asked the group she was meeting with to introduce

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

themselves and tell where they and their families were from. Some responses, paraphrased by the field worker, were as follows:

> Harold says his father's side of the family is from Hungary.... His mother's side is from Lodz. His grandfather was in Siberia, and then came to Vancouver. Each generation in his family is less religious. His father went to temple and his mother to Hadassah and is also on the temple board. Dave played in Maccabee.[16] He's not sure where life will take him.
>
> Half of Jill's family came from Russia several generations ago, and half are German immigrants of the pre-war period. On her father's side her great-grandfather was Orthodox while her grandparents were more Conservative. Her mother's parents were assimilated German Jews and Reform. Her parents are Reform and grew up strongly Jewish and very active in Jewish youth groups and summer camps.
>
> One side of Andy's family came from Dublin, and one from Russia. He had a Conservative education. His parents decided to leave for Reform a year ago. He likes it a lot better—he can understand what

---

[16] An international sporting tournament for Jewish athletes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

goes on. His mother is very religious. Even if he doesn't go to temple, Jewish identity is very important to him. He hopes to pass this on and be involved in the community.

Lewis's great grandparents were all Eastern European and Orthodox. His mother was in one of the first Reconstructionist synagogues. He grew up not very religious. Going to temple dropped off post-Bar Mitzvah. He was in a youth group. Three years ago he became religious.

These narratives are thin, and rely largely on labeling and categorizing—born in such-and-such a place, affiliate with this or that denomination, etc. It is not inconceivable that this is the result of poor work on the part of the participant observer. But there are good reasons to believe that it is an accurate reflection of how people actually told their stories. The constraints of a story-telling situation often lead to a similarity of discourse (Gubrium and Holstein 1998), and it requires no stretch of the imagination to envisage a presentation of self before an inquiring rabbi that takes on the character of a recitation of denominational labels. Even if other details were omitted from the observers' field notes, it is clear that once the parameters were set, there was a recognizable pattern of identifying grandparents' or great-grandparents' countries of birth, religious affiliations and organizational involvements of parents, some personal statement of past Jewish commitment and expression of hope or expectation for the future.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

On Bus 194, the presentation of Jewish backgrounds did not follow such a structured narrative form. For our first group conversation, held in a Jerusalem hotel, we had gathered in a windowless meeting room that had been decorated in forest green and earth tones. A hundred or so chairs had been set up auditorium style, but we pushed these against the walls so that we could sit on the floor in a large circle. It was the first night of the trip, after a full day of touring that began immediately upon our arrival to the country. Straight from the plane to the bus to the tour of King David's Tomb, the Jewish Quarter and the Western Wall. It had been a long 24 hours. Some people leaned back, stretching their legs out straight. It felt good to sit, but the prospect of a group program was daunting to many of us, myself included, exhausted from the flight and the day's activities.

The conversation began with a staff person introducing the discussion and asking us about our expectations for the trip. People at first answered the question directly.[17] Beth, whom a social network analysis later revealed to be the most widely-liked woman in the group, responded first. "I have no expectation, no clue about what this will mean," she said. "I will change in many ways... I'm open-minded." Sam, who several days hence would blow the *shofar* on Masada, echoed the sentiment, "I have a lot of friends who came back transformed, so I

---

[17] I present the responses in the order they were given, to preserve the flow of the group meeting. Not all responses are included here, however. All quotations are based upon written notes, because, at the request of a staff person, the conversations were not tape recorded.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

was upset when we *started* in Jerusalem. I'm open-minded, not trying to force anything." Jewish backgrounds were largely irrelevant to this discussion, except for one woman who said, "My mom lost her religion. I want to see how I respond."

As the conversation evolved away from the initial question the staff person had posed, Dina, who later displayed much more interest in her clique than in the tour, expressed frustration with her inability to understand what she saw. "The Hebrew is so frustrating. We can't understand anything." This comment opened the floodgates for a mixture of Jewish autobiography and arm-chair sociology. Sam piped up immediately. "Our elders did a piss-poor job of passing down the culture. Who speaks Yiddish?! I feel cheated!" Others picked up on this and the conversation shifted to people's relationships with Jewish heritage. In one of the few times he contributed something to any of the group discussions, Evan confessed, "I feel this pressure to dilute myself. Maybe its just not really understanding my relationship to it [Jewish heritage]." No details, just a hint that there was a story he was not telling. No one picked up on it. Another hand was raised and the string of two-sentence monologues continued.

Mickey decided to tell about his "path to being the type of Jew" that he had become. He spoke in denominational labels. "I mean, I was raised Reformed [sic]. I'd like to leave here with a fuller Jewish identity. I'm definitely not Reformed. I'd like to move up to Conservative." Then for the first time, the participants directly engaged each other. Mickey asked, "I'm curious what

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

everyone's level of Judaism is? [Someone] asked me, "How do you know the *Shehechyanu*?" and I was like, "Are you kidding?!" Ellen (Yelena) explained, "Its purpose is whenever you do something new," neglecting to mention the important facts that Mickey was referring to a prayer and that its name came from one of the Hebrew words in it. In what would become a recurring pattern in the group, Ellen was ignored. Instead Eliza engaged Mickey directly, "Not to pick on you... but 'moving up' [in Judaism] ... We should be careful with the terms we use." Eliza struck me as one of the most intelligent people in the group, speaking rarely but almost always thoughtfully and to the point. She was criticizing Mickey's use of colloquial American Jewish language that ranks the denominations from 'least Jewish' to 'most Jewish,' measured in terms of adherence to Eastern European traditions and Talmudic law. On this scale, Reform, Conservative and Orthodox constitute rank-ordered "levels of Judaism," to use Mickey's term. Mickey's terminology was not picked up by others, but the discussion, or series of semi-connected statements, did respond to the line of questioning he initiated. More and more people began speaking about their Jewish backgrounds:

> Male[18]: "I want to experience my culture. My parents are not religious but my grandmother is."

---

[18] Because it was the first day of the trip, I still had not learned everyone's name.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Female: "I don't know what I'm going to get. In Hebrew school, I never had the drive. [It was] forced. [Now, I'm] looking for something to believe in."

Female: "[I have a] strong religious background. I knew that I would [eventually go to Israel], but I wasn't ready. Women's studies and Judaism opened my eyes."

Some presentations that indicated knowledge or previous Jewish experiences led a number of others to assert that they felt at a disadvantage. Misha's comment at the end of this conversational thread suggests a competition to be the one with the least Jewish background.

Nell: "I'm sure I'm not at the level you guys are at."

Evan: "I don't want to sound like a traitor but I have a lot of... ambivalence."

Lindsey: "I don't have the Jewish background a lot of you guys have."

Misha: "Out of all of you, I have no idea what's going on. I have no idea because I grew up in a communist country."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

This was followed by a string of comments that defined Jewish background in terms of educational experiences:

> Male: "[I took] Intro to Judaism [in college]. I thought it would be an easy class. I learned more in one semester than in all my years of Hebrew school."
>
> Male: "[I was in a] horrible Hebrew school. Most of the teachers were witches. They turned me and my friends off to Judaism from the get-go. [I'd like to] find out why [other people] are so passionate about it."
>
> Mickey: "Confusing... [I was raised in] an Orthodox school, and a Reform home. I'd like to celebrate Sukkot, celebrate Purim, becoming more religious. Hundreds of thousands of Jews risked their lives [for being Jewish]..."

The final word went to Andrew, who distinguished himself from the crowd in many ways during the trip, here included. Where the others were focusing on themselves as Jews, Andrew begged to differ. "I wasn't *Jewish*," he said. "I was the *little white boy*." As he presented it in that discussion, his sense of himself as a Jew did not come through the socializing agents of family, or synagogue or Hebrew school. Rather, it came through a work experience at a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

local Holocaust museum, where he had to come to terms with the existence of anti-Jewish bigotry. "I faced anti-Semitism after working at the Holocaust museum. 'What do you mean I look Jewish?!' I'd always wanted to come to Yad Vashem. I worked in the photo archives [of the museum]. Every photo was 'Courtesy of Yad Vashem.'"

These were not elaborate autobiographical constructions. The group discussions, with their norm of giving everyone a chance to speak, generally did not allow for extended storytelling. Instead, they provided repeated opportunities for one or two elements of people's Jewish pasts to be recalled and invoked. Even so, the result of the process was an extended exchange that centered on presentations of Jewish selves.

In other group conversations, fragments of memory were retrieved and related not as one-minute life histories, nor as selected vignettes, but rather as snippets extracted from some larger episode that was only hinted at. Consider, for example the discussion of "Jewish memory" that occurred in the same group several days after the conversation described above:

Staff: What are your Jewish memories?

Mickey: Masada. Climbing it for the first time.

Staff: It could also be something like seeing Coca-Cola written in Hebrew.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Isabel: After my brother was born, watching him grow up and be all into Hebrew and Judaism.

Isosceles:[19] Well, I didn't feel spiritual at the Wall. I stood in front, able to touch it. I thought every time we pray, we faced East. This is what we turn toward.

Max: Family.

Ron: Matzo ball soup. Whenever [my mom] made that, it was for something Jewish.

Mark: My grandparents. They were members of B'nai B'rith, always. I remember when [my grandfather] passed.... That was the most intense. I am eternally grateful to him.

Beth: When I did the semester abroad, and I was abroad for Passover, we prepared a large *seder*.

Ellen: I was also abroad, in Spain, and we also got together for Passover.

---

[19] Isosceles is a nickname based on an episode of Seinfeld. It was specifically requested as a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Jeff: The movie Independence Day. In the end they're praying. And also when Will Smith says, "I'm not Jewish," and Jeff Goldblum says, "Nobody's perfect," and nobody in the theater was laughing except me.

Lindsey: I went to a boarding school that had a very small Jewish population. Every year there was an international fair, but there was never anything Jewish. I thought there should be Jewish food. I got all the recipes and spent all day cooking.

As noted above, if there is one thing that the literature on narrative identity has failed to make clear, it is the degree of explicit narrativity that needs to take place before coherent identities emerge from the process. The examples presented here are typical in their sparseness. Staff did not ask for a life history, but for selected memories. Beth and Lindsey spoke of specific episodes preparing Jewish food for specific events—Passover in one instance, an international fair in another. Ron on the other hand, remembered Jewish food not from any specific episode in his life, but as a theme recurring again and again at holiday-time.

An analogous process of retrieving fragments (the kabbalistically inclined might prefer to call it a gathering of shards) occurred throughout the trip in the course of touring. The Jewish symbols all across Israel repeatedly triggered

---

pseudonym by one man in the group I observed. The request was in keeping with his generally

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Jewish memories in the minds of participants. I noted, for example, how the encounter with Orthodox Jews prompted comparisons with home. At the Western Wall and when planting trees in Jewish National Fund forests, participants commonly mentioned thinking of family, especially grandparents, the ill and the deceased. These people were often portrayed as "beacons" of Jewish authenticity (Horowitz 2000), whose dreams the participants were fulfilling by coming to Israel. Describing his experience at the Western Wall, one man said,

> When I went up to the Wall, I did not know what to write. I am not a religious person. My grandfather just died. He always talked about it but never went. I touched the Wall and a funny feeling went through my hands. I heard my grandfather saying a poem to me in my head. I felt like all of the meaningful people in my life were in my head.

Another also thought of his grandfather, but went beyond the immediate link with a specific individual to more generalized imaginings of his historical roots:

> "Being at the Western Wall just blew me away. This is it! This is it! In Jerusalem at the wall of the holy Temple. My grandfather was a

---

light-hearted attitude. I am happy to oblige him in these pages.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> *kohen*[20] and this is where my ancestors prayed. It was breathtaking, so much so that I was left at a loss for words. Jewish history came alive here. Wow! I will never ever forget it."

Both the touring and the group conversations, then, elicited memories or imaginings of people's Jewish pasts. At any one discussion session or tourist site, the opportunity to construct a full-blown Jewish autobiography was minimal. Rather, each and every instance provided another opportunity to retrieve elements that could be pieced together into a larger narrative, and that for a fleeting moment *signified* the possibility of such a narrative construction. A piece of a jigsaw puzzle, held in the hand, is not a completed picture. It might contain a recognizable element of the larger whole. Or it might not. But the person holding the piece knows that there is a completed puzzle to which this belongs. Such is synecdoche; the part signifies the whole.

Situated Narratives

Citing Wallace Martin's (1986) explanation of why readers experience depth in characters they read about, Polkinghorne explained that "the reader moves beyond experiencing the character as a single, whole life to experience the character as a historically situated person.... The social forces and the historical unfolding show through the character, and thereby give the experience a fullness

---

[20] The priestly caste in Judaism.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and a richness..." (90). The argument is essentially the same as that made by Handler and Saxton, and it clarifies considerably the nature of what was emerging on Taglit.

Taglit directed attention to certain historical narratives that individuals could use to situate their autobiographies. Something like this occurred when participants summarized their lineage, one after another beginning with their ancestors who had emigrated from Eastern Europe to North America. However perfunctory the exercise might have been, it provided an opportunity for people briefly to conceive of themselves as rooted in a historical context. Some might have perceived this only in terms of personal family history, whereas others might have recognized that broader currents of Jewish, American and world history were evident in the stories they were telling.

Moments like these, however, led to few, if any, epiphanies. In contrast, highly evocative symbols did elicit responses that indicated that the sense of historical rootedness was a salient category. Recall the gentleman who said, "Being at the Western Wall just blew me away. This is it! This is it! In Jerusalem at the wall of the holy Temple." Why was this "it?" Why did it "blow him away?" Because, he said, "My grandfather was a *kohen* and this is where my ancestors prayed.... Jewish history came alive here. Wow! I will never ever forget it." Who knows if his "ancestors" really ever prayed at the Western Wall? What matters is that in his mind, they (a generic they, he could probably point to no individual in particular) did. Taglit provided and indeed encouraged a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

succession of brief opportunities to conceive of oneself as rooted in a historical whole larger than oneself. As we have seen, under the right circumstances the implicit sense of meaning that this generated could and did burst forth to the level of discursive awareness.

Narrative Construction and the Research Process

My thinking on the issue of narrativity and authenticity has evolved over the course of this research. When I alighted on the concept of narrativity, it was as if I had discovered the key to an encrypted message. How could pilgrimage-tours like Taglit have such an impact on personal identity? In previous research on pilgrimage (Turner [1969] 1982, [1974] 1987; Turner and Turner 1978), tourism (Pretes 1995; Urry 1990) and Israel experience programs (Goldberg 1995; Heilman 1995; Kelner et al. 2000) there was a gulf between the proposed causes (the social situation or symbols consumed) and the ostensible effect (a change in personal identity). Because they were not of the same material, the challenge has been to explain the process of translation from external cause to internal mental state. No division between cause and effect plagues the narrative conception of identity change. Taglit influenced identity by forcing people to focus on and construct identity. That is, identity is the result of the linguistic process of narration—the arrangement of events in temporal sequencing according to a unifying theme that determines what will be selected for inclusion and what will be omitted as insignificant. Taglit, with its group discussions but perhaps even

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

more with its tour of memory-evoking Jewish symbols, created an environment that encouraged people to recall or imagine elements from their past. It provided opportunities, structured and unstructured, for people to begin weaving these elements together. Most importantly, it provided a thematic template that guided the process of recall and synthesis. 1) Select what was Jewish. 2) Conceive of your life as a "Jewish journey" (Hillel 2000). 3) Embed your narrative in the historical narrative of Israel and the Jewish people. The medium that the program worked in was the very medium that constitutes identity: personal memories and imaginings structured in language. Taglit offered new ways of configuring elements that already existed in people's minds. Like many pilgrimages, it encouraged a focus not only on the destination, but on the self.

I believe this conception contributes much to an understanding of what actually occurred—on Taglit in particular and on pilgrimage-tours generally. But the more closely I analyzed the ethnographic record of Taglit, the more I came to believe that my first formulation was somewhat overstated. The process of narrative construction on Taglit was not as complete as I had initially thought. As I reexamined the reasons for my initial impressions that relatively coherent Jewish narratives were being constructed, an eye-opening realization slowly dawned on me. Some of it had to do with us, the participant observers, trying to understand how the program was influencing the way the participants understood themselves as Jews. We did this not only through observation but also through *conversation* (see Mills 1940:904-5). We asked. We asked about their

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Jewish backgrounds. We asked about their current feelings. We asked about their expectations for the future. And in the process, we advanced the process of narrative identity construction that was already taking place.

The realization led me to think of a conversation I had during a bus ride to Atlit, which in the 1940s served as British detention camp for illegal Jewish immigrants. I had decided to sit next to someone with whom I had not yet gotten to know well. Gail was in the first empty seat, and I took it, probably to the chagrin of one of the men nearby, who was obviously smitten with her. In appearance, Gail resembled Anne Baxter's Nefertiri in Cecil B. DeMille's *Ten Commandments* – long straight brown hair, cut in bangs over heavily mascaraed eyes and plucked eyebrows; a slight build with a cheeky face. But the resemblance ended there. In terms of her character, Gail was a far cry from Baxter's passionate and scheming princess. In large groups, she tended to be quiet, but sitting on the bus she was very friendly and talkative with those nearby. If she ever got angry, she never showed it.

On the morning we rode to Atlit, Gail was excited to find out that someone had brought a mix of 1980s music. She borrowed the disc and listened to it on her headphones throughout much of our ride. She was also listening to some newer music and gladly obliged when I asked if I could hear some of the songs. We talked for a while about music. I used the opportunity to brush up on pop culture. Thanks to her, I was able later to impress my wife by conversing

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

knowledgeably about the British female vocalist Dido, whose name I was even able to pronounce correctly because of Gail's primer.

After we talked about Dido, Eminem and Duran Duran, Gail put her headphones back on while I wrote for bit. When I tired of that, I pulled out a Hebrew children's book (Hochman 2000) I had bought for my two-year-old son the evening before without really reading it to see if it was any good. The daughter of the woman who owned the bookshop was reading it out loud while I was in the store, and she seemed to like it so much that I bought it sight unseen. I felt bad that the owner took the copy out of her daughter's hands to sell it to me, but the little girl didn't seem to mind and I figured that she had just made a sale for her mother. The book, it turns out, was nicely written and illustrated and would later become one of my son's favorites. Gail looked over my shoulder at the book and then turned to watch the passing street signs. She stopped playing her music to ask me at what age Israeli children begin to read without vowels.[21] I told her I did not know, and asked whether she could read Hebrew.

This was a reasonable question for someone trying to learn about the Jewish lives of the people on the trip. Gail said that she could read a little bit. I asked her asked how she had learned it. And then the stories began. Over the course of the next several minutes, Gail had told me about Jewish experiences

---

[21] The Hebrew alphabet consists almost entirely of consonants. Vowels are usually written as dots or lines below the letters. Most modern Hebrew, however, is printed without vowels. The primary exceptions are poetry, children's books and instructional texts for new Hebrew speakers.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

she had both as a child and as an adult. She attended Hebrew school from grades four through eight, "Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday." Now, 18 years old, she recently attended her older sister's wedding, which was done "in a new style" where various people were asked to recite the Hebrew blessings in the Jewish marriage ceremony. "I got the longest one." She also was asked to say "the *hamotzi*," the blessing over bread. "I didn't practice because I know it. I sing it every Friday night at home." But she claimed that she got stage fright, and in front of all the guests said, "*Baruch atah adonay, hamotzi lehem min haaretz,*" leaving out three Hebrew words in the middle.[22] "Everyone came up to me and said that no one noticed. But if they all said that, then..." and she bobbed her head in bemusement and embarrassment.

I do not know if this storytelling episode made a significant difference in Gail's experience of the trip. My methodological sensitivity and my humility make me of two minds on the matter. Still, whether the impact of the researchers was large or small, the research methods bore crucial similarities to the intervention itself. A few researchers carried this approach farther than others, conducting unstructured or semi-structured Jewish life history interviews. While this was helpful for understanding the subjects of the research, I now question the desirability of utilizing an intervention's own tools in the process of researching it. (On the other hand, we could not have known this going in, and it

---

[22] The full prayer, in English, is "Blessed are You, Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who has

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

is only thanks to the research that I discovered that this was a key element of the intervention).

My initial sense that Taglit fostered reasonably elaborated narrative constructions was largely a result of the research methods that encouraged such narrations during researcher-subject interactions. When these were set aside, and the determination was made based on observations rather than interviews, the telling of Jewish lives appeared not so much to weave coherent Jewish autobiographies, but rather to signify that such autobiographies exist, even if they have not yet been fully worked out.

TOURING AND HYPERLINKING

Theorists of narrative identity would have us conceive of identity as an elaborated act of autobiography. There is much to be said for this understanding of the self. But the case of Taglit reveals several deficiencies in this approach. The first is methodological. Narrative theories of identity generalize from studies of specific empirical contexts (autobiographies, interviews, support groups) where detailed, well-developed life-stories have emerged. A causal link is drawn from the processes of narration that are said to occur in these situations to constructions of identity. Taglit presents important evidence that calls into question this causal reasoning.

---

brought forth bread from the earth." Gail left out the words, "our God, King of the Universe."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Like support groups and therapeutic self-help groups (Buckholdt and Gubrium 1979; Gubrium 1986; Gubrium and Holstein 1988; Polkinghorne 1988:178; Wuthnow 1994), Taglit's group conversations were opportunities for participants to publicly share, and thereby affirm (see Lewin 1958), stories about their lives in a narrowly defined context—in this case, as Jews. But in contrast to the elaborated narratives that emerged in support groups, the stories on Taglit tended to be sparse and episodic. Considering that the conversation planners deliberately sought to encourage personal reflection through this vehicle, and that the theme-oriented discussion groups with a recurring cast of characters were structural analogues of the support groups studied by other researchers, the lack of elaborated narrativity is surprising. Theories of narrative identity rest in large measure on the assumption that this is a relatively well-articulated process. The assumption is rarely called into question because the empirical studies are conducted in venues where the process is indeed elaborated. But here we find a case where, in spite of all the structural supports for an articulated process of narrative development, what emerges is much thinner than would be expected based on previous research.

There are two possible explanations for this, both of which suggest the need to reexamine the prevailing theory. It is possible that the Taglit conversation groups differed from the other research settings in some way that made the narrative process less developed. If so, then this calls into question any generalizations about identity drawn from the earlier research, because if

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

elaborated narrativity is not evident in a situation that bears as many similarities to the other research contexts as do the Taglit discussion groups, *a fortiori*, there is no reason to presume that elaborated narrative processes would take place in situations that are even less similar. I do not believe that the Taglit groups were so different as to warrant this conclusion. Therefore, I prefer an alternative explanation: The "story" upon which the self-as-story is based is rarely as elaborated as current narrative identity theory would have us believe, and any narratives whose tidiness suggests otherwise should be treated with suspicion.[23] A new metaphor is therefore in order.

It is one of the ironies of narrative theory that it came into vogue in the social sciences just at the dawn of the internet era. The approach, after all, conceives of identity as a relatively unified linear text. But the notion of textuality on which this metaphor rests was blasted into cyberspace by the World Wide Web with its loosely organized non-linear hypertext links. If theory reflected the *zeitgeist*, "your life as autobiography" would be replaced by "your life as personal web page." (In fact, some scholars' decisions to study identity through autobiographical writings rather than through personal web pages, makes the notion of narrative identity seem somehow an artifact of the research process).

---

[23] C. Kadushin notes that such a view resonates with the experience of psychoanalysis (personal correspondence, February 24, 2002). "As cases are written up, the psychobiography appears to be clear. Yet the biography is built from seemingly unconnected fragments gathered sometimes over many years -- and with an occasional 'breakthrough' in which the unconnected fragments appear to come together."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The metaphor of identity as hypertext may indeed be a more fruitful conception than the metaphor of identity as text. Contemporary literary theories of hypertext clarify observations from Taglit that fit only reluctantly into the narrative paradigm. The term "hypertext" has been with us since the days when sociologists were reserving room-sized mainframes to run crosstabs on sorted punch cards, and the idea (without the name) was around even before that. In a 1945 *Atlantic Monthly* article, Vannevar Bush, the director of the wartime Office of Scientific Research and Development outlined a research agenda for the post-war era that included the development of a "memex" technology for document retrieval. The goal was to replace artificial systems of classification with something that would mimic the human mind's "association of thoughts" (Bush 1945:16-8). In 1962, Theodor H. Nelson coined the term "hypertext" to refer to "nonsequentially read (or written) text" (qtd. in Potter 1998). With the development of the internet and the World Wide Web, Bush's and Nelson's vision was realized and the fusion of computer technology with hypertext was hailed for its potential to revolutionize the relationship between authors, readers and texts (Landow 1989,1992; McGann 1992,1996). In the past five years, the question of whether hypertext has actually lived up to its promise has become the source of some debate (Miall 1999; Potter 1998).

The central points of contention among theorists of hypertext regard the actual degree of non-linear reading that computerized hypertext enables, the quality of the knowledge that emerges therefrom, the editorial control over the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

links that are made, and the ability of this mode of reading to supplant the traditional narrative form (Miall 1999; Potter 1998). Among the nay-sayers, much of the argument comes down to a criticism that the constraints of the technology a) do not realize the potential that is claimed for hypertext, and b) inevitably fall short and thereby harm the reading process.

True hypertextuality may not yet have been realized in literature and computers, but as a metaphor to understand identity construction it is as true now as in 1945 when Bush wrote that, "The human mind... operates by association. With one item in its grasp, it snaps instantly to the next that is suggested by the association of thoughts, in accordance with some intricate web of trails carried by the cells of the brain" (16). The mind is not constrained by any silicon-based technological limitations, and is thus immune from the charges flying in the current debate. As a metaphor of identity construction, hypertext offers vital correctives to the linearity, textuality and unity of narrative conceptions.

Transcending Linearity

Narrative theory portrays the construction of self-identity as a process by which elements from one's past are strung together in a neat temporal ordering. While it is the *result* that is most often portrayed in linear terms—a story with a beginning, middle and eventual end—the *process*, too, is conceived as an exercise

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in linear thinking. It is the sequencing of events into a coherent plot that constitutes the essential narrative act. On Taglit, although mini-narratives were told, the broader pattern of recollecting and integrating the past did not evince such strict linearity. Continually throughout the program, fragments of memory from different times of life were evoked by questions from staff and triggered as associations with sites that were visited. A part-whole configuration, as described by Polkinghorne (1988) was in evidence, but it was not that of narrativity. A graphical metaphor, such as the image of the jigsaw puzzle I suggested earlier, is an easy way of visualizing it. The order in which the pieces are picked up does not matter. The metaphor is limited in its usefulness, though, because each piece in a typical jigsaw puzzle has only one specific place in which it fits. Real life is more malleable, and this is nicely represented with the metaphor of hypertextuality.

Both Potter (1998) and Miall (1999) noted the importance of "editors" in determining what should be marked up (i.e. transformed into a hypertext link) and where those links should go.[24] Internet hyperlinks are not random, but

---

[24] I was interested in learning how the issue was seen not only from the perspective of academic observers, but also by the professionals whose work is shaping the growth of the World Wide Web. One web developer explained to me that "we have seen that more and more the reader prefers to use the more coherent content. They are attracted to content web sites with strong organization and fuller editorial control." He noted as examples the increased editorial decision-making power that accompanied Yahoo's transformation from a search engine into a full-fledged portal, and the rise of a About.com, "which became the 5th trafficked site due to its ability to rein in more editorial, organizational and creative control of what were basically personal interest homepages." Both instances reflect a market-driven trend in which content providers have "all found a need to rein in the free-association concepts which the Internet was known for" (Daniel Newman, personal correspondence, March 15, 2002).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

exhibit some degree of editorial constraint. On Taglit, the hyperlinks from conversations and sites to personal memories, feelings, projections, imaginings, etc., were constrained by the Jewish context of the program. In some cases, this was explicit and deliberate on the part of the trip staff. In other cases, it emerged from the context, from people's own desires and from the norms of the situation. There was, so to speak, a conceptual field labeled "Jewish," into which the Taglit participants hyperlinked repeatedly throughout the program. The field itself was partly pre-existing and partly constituted by the very act of repeatedly hyperlinking to a thematically unified set of thoughts. One man saw the Western Wall and thought about his grandfather the *kohen*. A staff person asked for "Jewish memories" and got in response everything from *seders* in Spain to cinematic *Sh'ma Yisrael*s. A camel ride sparked a conversation about whether the animals were kosher. There were, of course, associations that had nothing to do with Jewishness. An entire book could be written simply on the pop cultural references that various sites elicited. Lynne, on Masada at sunrise, shouting the tag line from the movie *Titanic*, "I'm king of the world!" Still, the presence of other associations does not undermine the basic premise of this argument. Jewish associations were by no means all-encompassing or exclusive. They did, however, emerge again and again, day in and day out, while in Israel.

Jewish identities, then, were constructed in a fluid, intermittent process, that in the end evinced little narrative coherence but a clear sense of *gestalt*. In this sense, the end result of the identity construction process more accurately

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

resembled the messy nature of the process. No crisp, textbook psychobiographies were in evidence here. Sandbothe's contrast of textuality and hypertextuality is particularly apt. He wrote,

> Whereas the linear book or essay text artificially linearizes the complex entangled relationships which exist between our thoughts and forces them into a hierarchical ordering, hypertext allows a direct representation of the structures and connections which are belatedly and inadequately recreated in a book through footnotes and indexes (Sandbothe 1996).

Although the talk of "direct representation of the structures and connections" is a bit overstated, the underlying point holds.

Conceived as a hypertextual construct, both the process and the result of identity construction is freed from the constraints of linearity that narrative theory would impose. The result is a much less deliberate, much more plastic sense of identity than that suggested by narrative theory. It is also more representative of what actually occurred on a pilgrimage-tour with an educational program designed specifically to intervene in this on-going process of identity construction. The process is nicely summed up in Potter's description of hypertext:

> Rather than experiencing a text as a single, straight-line narrative running along the author's determined path from beginning to end,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> readers of hypertext are able to rearrange their experiences of text both in time and in depth. Information in hypertext is often broken down into small chunks, each item containing a series of links to other, related items, which can be followed or not at the reader's discretion. By clicking on words or markers in the original document, readers may follow the link to related material more or less on their own free-associational path (Potter 1998).

Transcending Textuality

The limitations of the textual nature of narrative conceptions of identity were foreshadowed in my invocation of the graphical metaphor of the jigsaw puzzle. In the world of computers, hypertext has been noted for its ability to link pictures as well as words, to transform words into icons (Miall 1999), and to destabilize any hard and fast distinction between text and image. One need only compare the DOS- or UNIX-based operating systems of the past with Macintosh's and Windows' graphical user interfaces (GUIs) to understand that in our daily lives, text is losing privileged status. Narrative identity theory argues that the coherence of a person's life is based on a configurational unity in which the parts are made meaningful by their relationship to a whole. That whole has been conceived of in textual terms, but it need not be. It would be a mischaracterization of what occurred on Taglit to say that the traveler's read their lives in order to author their autobiographies. It would be less

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

inappropriate to say that they made a collage of their lives from old photographs they pulled down from the attic. It would be even better to say that they linked together a personal web page that showed some thematic unity centered on Jewishness, but that included links to other elements as well and was clearly left as a work in progress. Site under construction.

Transcending the Unity of the Narrative

The result of this intermittent, rarely deliberate process of hyperlinking to memories and other mental constructs, was a paradoxical experience of self. On the one hand, the experience did not exhibit the crisp narrative unity that is usually portrayed by researchers of narrative identity. Much of the time, conversations centered on people known at school, great parties and exploits, and quotations *ad nauseum* from Adam Sandler movies. Individual conversations I had with people clearly revealed them to be unique, well-rounded individuals, each with a diversity of interests, talents, concerns and characteristics. They brought these elements of their personalities with them to Israel and did not check them at the airport.

At the same time, conceptions of themselves as Jews were evident in their public presentations, especially during group conversations.[25] There, Jewish

---

[25] These were also evident after seeing sights that struck them in particular ways. For example, visits to *kibbutzim* in the North left people talking about how they identified with the secular nationalism of the *kibbutznikim*, and how the explosions they heard across the Lebanese border made them feel that as Jews, they had enemies who wanted to kill them - that is, them

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

memories were retrieved deliberately at the request of staff people (or program participants themselves) who were asking participants to think back only to one specific aspect of their lives. Participants were not asked to reflect on their histories or memories as Americans or Canadians, as men or women, as consumers, as students, etc. They were asked only to select those elements of their lives had something to do with being Jewish. What was not germane was filtered out—not by outright denial or denigration, but by a general framing of what was locally relevant and what could be conveniently set aside for the moment. This encouraged participants to see themselves as Jews, and to bracket for the moment other conceptions of themselves. The bracketing was never total, but it occurred enough that among the welter of different identities that each individual could and did enact,[26] the conception of oneself as a Jew, and specifically, a North American Jew in Israel, stood out.

The process of constructing identity through hyperlinks thus evinced greater tolerance for diverse images of self than narrative identity theory allows for. At the same time, the editorial process that constrained the hyperlinking downplayed the significance of alternative constructions. The result was a

---

personally.

[26] For example, in one group I observed, I was aware of my role as researcher and as representative of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies. I was simultaneously conscious of myself as an alumnus of Israel programs, as an aficionado of Israeli pop culture, as a college graduate who had attended the same university as some of the people I was observing, as a husband and farther who had left his pregnant wife and baby son in America during the ten days of field work, as a Jew, as a man, as someone shocked by the realization that his undergraduate

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

process that tolerated "dissent" by domesticating it in the face of a hegemonic construction.

Hypertextuality, Wholeness and Authenticity

In sum, the narrative metaphor of identity, like any metaphor, can be stretched only so far. It tends to imply a greater clarity, unity, and linearity to self-concepts than generally exist in reality. The less totalizing metaphor of hypertext suggests that identities are better conceived as ever-evolving personal web pages rather than published autobiographies. It embraces the evanescence, contradiction and non-linear thought inherent in imaginings of the self. All this it does while retaining the crucial insight of narrative identity theory—namely, that meaning emerges when seemingly isolated parts are configured in accordance with a broader thematic whole.

In addition to this, it resolves one of the major dilemmas I identified with regard to narrative identity theory. The theory, as noted earlier, says little about authenticity, offering no indication why one version of a life story should be preferred over any other. The problem lies in narrative identity theory's focus on the meaningful sequencing of life-events rather than the relationship of these events to broader themes external to the individual. A concern with the coherence of personal narratives places more emphasis on the wholeness emergent from the coherence than the wholeness emergent from the narrative's

---

days were father off than he had thought, etc.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

location in a broader social and historical context. Although narrative identity theory does not see these contexts as irrelevant, they are usually relegated to background and context.[27] The approach is decidedly atomistic.

More than this, it also misses the mark empirically, for if well-elaborated autobiographies—grand personal narratives, so to speak—are exceptions rather than the rule, then fragmentation rather than configuration is likely the norm. I do not wish to overstate the case. A sense of autobiographical wholeness can be experienced, but it is likely to be sensed only partially, glimpsed in fleeting moments, and never quite grasped (cf. James [1902] 1985). The partial glimpses can indeed contribute to a sense that the fragments of life have some larger meaning. But this is a far cry from the explicitly conscious life-story narrations generally referred to in narrative theory.

In contrast, hypertextual identity theory devotes less attention to the sequential ordering that gives life a coherent plot, focusing instead on the ways in which various elements in a person's life are linked to broader social contexts. Perceptions of authenticity rest in awareness of the *fabula* more than the *sjuzet*. This hearkens back to the work of Handler and Saxton. It shares their view that the sense of personal authenticity does not emerge from seeing one's self as a whole in itself, but by seeing oneself as a part rooted in some other whole.

---

[27] An important exception is detailed in Fisher's (1999) dissertation on amateur genealogy. She argues that "Genealogy is pursued to fill a gap in knowledge that is perceived as vital to identity.... [The] combination of history, imaginings and collective memory enables genealogy to function like myth, to empower a person in relation to the present and the past" (21).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Handler and Saxton (1988) spoke of the historical whole, but one could easily imagine that people might envisage themselves rooted in religious, national or ethnic groupings (Anderson 1991), particular social classes (Marx and Engels [1848] 1978) or tightly knit small groups (Durkheim [1897] 1966). Key to the sense of these collective wholes is a degree of boundedness: in terms of the social groups, a relatively clear sense of who is in and who is out; with regard to the historical eras, a boundedness in time and space. Hence the intolerance of anachronisms among practitioners of living history (E. Bruner 1994; Crang 1996; Glass 1996; Handler and Saxton 1988; Horwitz 1998).

There is an irony bound up in this notion that feelings of personal authenticity emerge from a sense of historical and communal rootedness, from fitting in to a complete setting where all parts can be seen as meaningful in terms of a larger whole. It is the eternal irony of sociology, identified by Durkheim in his classic study of suicide ([1897] 1966) and rediscovered in so many contexts in the century since. Something seemingly individualistic to its core reveals itself to be an eminently social phenomenon.

Conclusion

Tourism has often been criticized for presenting a rapid succession of images, haphazardly juxtaposed by the dictates of geographic proximity rather than historical chronology or other logics of ordering. But although the process may appear disjointed, it is often embraced by a thematic gestalt, however loose this

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

may be. In this sense, tourism resembles nothing so much as reading a hypertext. Inherent constraints help maintain an overall sense of thematic coherence even as the processes organically transcend linearity, textuality and narrative unity. The result has a 'psych-logic'[28] of its own, more akin to dreams than to linear text.

The pilgrim-tourists on Taglit were repeatedly encountering a sweeping notion of "Jewishness" that never revealed itself fully but signified itself through the piecemeal revelation of its parts. The lofty analogy would be Moses' inability to look on God's face; the pedestrian one, the story of the blind men and the elephant. The travelers' awareness of the whole emerged both through the attempts to delineate the boundaries that defined exactly how Israel was authentically Jewish, and through the repeated retrieval of Jewish memories and associations from their own lives. In other words, the concern for Israel's Jewish authenticity helped enable a sense of a broad category of "Jewishness" that Taglit participants could use to give meaning and order to their own lives.

As a result, the travelers on Taglit simultaneously toured Jewish Israel and their Jewish selves. A mental process of hyperlinking related the one to the other. Sites jogged memories, imaginings framed sites. In this manner, the processes of identity construction and tourism were fused. Both entailed synthesizing fragments into meaningful wholes. Both accomplished this by placing these fragments in the context of a broader Jewish-Zionist theme. By viewing their

---

[28] The term is Kadushin's (personal correspondence, February 24, 2002).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

own lives in terms of this theme, Taglit participants experienced feelings of personal authenticity.

Authenticity, in other words, was not experienced as a generic category, but rather, in terms of a specific identity. In its specificity, it inevitably ignored alternative self-definitions. Handler and Saxton (1988) believed authenticity emerged through the *act* of seeing one's life in terms of an orienting whole. But no sense of wholeness can emerge without some degree of oversimplification and selective perception. For this reason, it is meaningless to speak of this act independent of its content. Feelings of authenticity crucially depend on the thematic *content* that gives lives their specific, historically-rooted meanings and that serves as a filter for what is and is not relevant, what is and is not meaningful. In the case of Taglit, personal authenticity was typically related to a reductionist perception of oneself as a Jew.

The travelers' lives were complex. But to understand themselves as Jews, they had to overlook much of this complexity and focus on a simpler notion of who they were. Oversimplification and selective perception are inherent to all conceptions of authenticity—be they applied to inanimate objects or to the human self. And thus, we are left with the paradox that the perception of personal authenticity rests precisely in that "coronation of one version of the self" that Mitchell proclaimed an "inauthentic foreclosing of experience" (1995:134). For the participants in Taglit, the essentializing category of "Jew" inevitably ignored or downplayed other possible self-definitions. But at the same

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

time, it let people perceive thematic coherence to their lives. As Jews, they had a personal past, a present and future, a normative tradition to measure themselves against and wrestle with, a set of rationales for behavior, a community to feel a part of, and a mytho-historical explanation of who they were, where they should be going and what this all meant. This sense of coherence helped people to feel that they were authentically themselves. And it was by only focusing on the Jewish that they achieved this state.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ALMOST PILGRIMS

AUTHENTICITY, IDENTITY AND THE EXTRA-ORDINARY

ON A JEWISH TOUR OF ISRAEL

Saul J. Kelner

Volume II

A dissertation submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Sociology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,

City University of New York
2002

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER 5

THE COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE

But for the bus drivers there would have been no crossing the Jordan River to the Golan Heights, no access to the trash-strewn playgrounds in Beit Shemesh that needed volunteers to clean them, no descent down dusty roads to the Dead Sea—in short, no Israel tour whatsoever. And yet these drivers, so integral to the Taglit pilgrimage-tour, were usually seen as part of the background if they were seen at all. For the most part, they were invisible men (always men). It was as if they, the staff and the participants had made a tacit agreement that the drivers would basically keep to themselves and the participants would basically leave them alone. At meal time, the Israeli guides and American staff would sit among the participants. The drivers, though, usually sat at a separate table with their colleagues from other buses in the caravan. Taglit participants who chose to engage the drivers might have learned that they often had definite opinions about the trip, the staff, the group (as it compared to others they had driven), and the core Zionist agenda of bringing Jews to Israel. But good Hebrew was usually a prerequisite to any sustained conversation with them, and so, most interactions tended to be limited to purchasing the bottled water that they sold from coolers underneath the bus. For the most part, they shed their cloaks of invisibility only when they were treated as celebrity caricatures in college-age versions of "Three Cheers for the Bus Driver." When one drove too fast, he was pegged as a crazy

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

driver. When one drove too slow, people stopped calling him by his name, Shlomo, and started calling him "Slow-Mo" instead. But never to his face.

So it was that late one night, after a Taglit gala brought thousands of participants together at the Jerusalem convention center, the bus ride back to the hotel represented a striking divergence from the norm. Egged on by the participants, Baruch, a personable leathery-faced man in his late fifties, adopted a new role in the group on top of his responsibilities as bus driver. People were giddy from the evening's performance, which had included fireworks, music, and the Prime Minister of Israel. Some decided that they wanted to sing and so recruited Baruch as song leader. He took them through a hit parade of classic Hebrew folk songs like *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav* ("Jerusalem of Gold"), *Al Kol Eileh* ("All These Things"), and, in the CMJS researcher's words, "the resounding favorite and the only song everyone knew" – *Hava Nagila* ("Hava Nagila"). It was a unique moment that people were talking about at breakfast the next morning, at the closing group discussion, and months after the trip had ended.

The song session subtly changed the group's relationship with their driver. His political opinions, translated by the tour guide, were sought. ("We should never give the Golan Heights back to Syria," he told them.) He was invited to take part in the group's closing conversation. ("I hope to see you all again in Israel. Make *aliyah*[1]!") And when he was late to pick up some

---

[1] i.e. Immigrate to Israel.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

participants at the end of their free night in Jerusalem, they took it as a personal affront, as if now that they had established a relationship, he had a responsibility to his friends. But when they found out he was late because he had just become a first-time grandfather, they wished him hearty *mazal tovs* and took pride in being among the first to hear the good news.

The song session that night in the bus did more than transform the relationship with the bus driver. During their farewell conversation, each member of the group had an opportunity to share his or her thoughts publicly. David, a senior majoring in science and business, said, "What I'll remember most is how great this group is. Especially that night when we were all singing on the bus. That was one of my best Jewish experiences ever." The tour guide had expressed a similar sentiment some days before, during a group conversation in which people told of spiritual moments in their lives. "Remember how after the ICC [Israel Convention Center] event on Saturday night we all sang *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav* together on the bus, even the people that never sing? Well, this was one of the most spiritual moments of my life."

A month after the trip, in an email correspondence with the CMJS researcher who had observed his bus, David reiterated the point that the group experience was central to the meaning he derived from participating in Taglit—as important as the encounter with ancient, holy Israel:

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> The trip meant something different for every participant, but a dream for everyone. For some, it enhanced their religious conscience, for others it allowed them to make lifelong friendships with Jews their age from all over the world. For me it did both, as well as created an awe-inspiring feeling within me as I visited 4,000 year old sites and ruins that I had only read about. Finally, the Birthright Israel 2000 trip increased my spiritualism. Spiritualism is a very vague term. By spiritualism I refer to that mind-altering indescribable feeling that occurs intermittently and unknown to the person until it happens. Such occasions occurred on top of Messada [sic], while watching the sun rise over the Dead Sea and Jordan's mountainous silhouette, and also in the bus when I joined in singing Jewish songs with 50 unfamiliar faces as of three days prior to that event.

David's assertion that he found "spiritualism" in the group experience and especially in the bus songfest went further than statements made by some of his groupmates. But he was not the only one who chose to highlight the importance of the group in making the pilgrimage-tour meaningful. Consider the following remarks, all made by people speaking in the farewell discussion with David:

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Female: "The way we bonded by all being silent at Masada was so special. We all got along so well, not just because we are all college students, but because we all have this connection that we discovered here."

Female: "I've never felt as comfortable and as accepted as I have here. There are no words to describe that sunrise on Masada, or singing [the hymn] *Adon Olam* with 6,000 Jewish kids."

Female: "This will always be a place that I will envision that defines happiness. I've made friends for life here, and I know that we will always appreciate what we went through as a group to get to this point."

David's group had adopted for itself the name *Mifgash,* a Hebrew word meaning "Encounter." The term had been introduced as the name for the encounter sessions they had held with Israeli peers. They liked the sound of the Hebrew, and repeated the word often. Somehow, it stuck. In the closing discussion, two people invoked this adopted group name to express their feelings about their traveling companions.

Female: "'*Mifgash*' really summarizes the best part of this trip: Meeting people, soaking all this in, encountering everything."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Male: "I've had a *mifgash* with everyone in this room. I can walk up to anyone here and remember an encounter I've had with you on this trip. I really feel that we are all one people."

Others spoke of the group less articulately, but with as much passion:

Female: "This group was so incredible. You guys really made this great for me. Thank you all so much."

Female: "I love Jews! That's all I can say right now. I just love Jews!"

Similar sentiments were expressed in the closing conversations of other Taglit groups as well.

Male (Small Campuses Hillel Group): "This trip meant so much to me. The best part was being with the group and not necessarily any of the experiences."

Female (Small Campuses Hillel Group): "I have the group to thank for making this experience special."

Male (Small Campuses Hillel Group): "I don't want to go home at all, but if I stayed none of you would be here with me."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

What was the nature of the collective experience on Taglit that led such sentiments to be a common result of the trip? In previous chapters, even as we focused on the linkage between travelers' constructions of Israel's authenticity and their own perceptions of personal authenticity, it was never possible to entirely isolate this from the collective character of the mass pilgrimage experience. But this fact largely remained in the background. Here, it is placed center stage.

In this chapter, I argue that group processes on Taglit shaped perception, thought and behavior in ways that contributed to a feeling that the trip was personally meaningful. First, I utilize survey data to demonstrate that such processes were ubiquitous on Taglit, and that they should be seen as rooted in the very structure of the program. I then consider three defining aspects of the group experience: community consciousness, collective effervescence and constant surveillance.

Examining the extent to which the group formed an "imagined community" (Anderson 1991), I present evidence indicating that a consciousness of group did indeed exist. Ethnographic and social network data are then used to highlight the fact that this overall sense of cohesion existed in tandem with multiple lines of internal differentiation within groups. This and other reasons lead me ultimately to question the proposition that self-identification as a group member was a primary mechanism by which the collective experience became personally meaningful.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In the subsequent section, I invoke Durkheim's notion of collective effervescence ([1912] 1995) to argue that much of the group's impact was felt on a pre-conscious level but not subject to discursive analysis. I demonstrate that collective effervescence manifested itself in diverse ways, each of which influenced perception. Often unaware of the underlying social phenomenon of collective effervescence, people generally attributed the heightened emotional states to the Israeli and Jewish settings in which they took place. Theory, past research and ethnographic data are combined to argue that Israel took on a totemic character. Its symbolic reach expanded beyond its traditional normative limits to incorporate new meanings associated with the Taglit group experience.

Durkheim's conception of effervescence is useful in many respects, but it does not explain other important elements of the group experience. The last section of the chapter therefore focuses on certain characteristics of Taglit as an institution that fostered intense and open personal relationships, a general subordination of the self to the group, the domestication of dissent, and normative environments supportive of the pilgrimage-tour's official goals. Each of these was related to the ultimate perception of the trip as a meaningful experience. I argue that these can be best understood by conceiving of Taglit as a temporary total institution (Goffman 1961).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

GROUP PROCESSES: A STATISTICAL MODEL

Methodological Primer

Much of what follows in this chapter will be an ethnographic analysis of the group processes that emerged on the Taglit Bus 194, which I spent the most time observing. Lest this decision to concentrate on the case of one bus mislead the reader into thinking that the conclusions are idiosyncratic, I wish to emphasize at the outset that I could have focused on any one of the buses on which CMJS participant observers conducted ethnographic research; my conclusions would be essentially the same. Although I highlight for clarity's sake the experience of the one group I am most familiar with, the conclusions rest on my analyses of two years worth of field notes produced by 16 researchers on over 20 buses.[2] Moreover, while the majority of the ethnographic analysis here presents the findings from Bus 194, references to the experience of other groups are scattered throughout these pages as well.

One of the advantages of a multi-method study is that the weakness of one method can be compensated for by the strengths of another. I began the empirical analysis of Taglit by examining survey data which suggested that certain factors led the trips to become personally meaningful for the vast

---

[2] This included my coding of the notes with the help of a software package for preliminary analysis (Nova 1998), the publication of early findings (Kelner et al. 2000), the presentation of later results at academic conferences (Kelner 2001a, 2001b), and the incorporation of revisions based on feedback about these papers.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

majority of participants. But surveys tend to be blunt instruments, and so I spent much of the next chapters utilizing ethnographic data to flesh out these initial findings. Ethnography, however, is perpetually plagued by the question of representativeness. It therefore makes sense to address this concern, when possible, by invoking survey data that is better suited to such matters. Therefore, rather than insist that the reader simply take my word that what I describe is not idiosyncratic to the one bus I focus on the most, or even to the two dozen buses that CMJS observed out of hundreds, I will demonstrate this empirically using survey data collected from a representative sample of thousands of participants. This will necessitate stepping back for a few moments from the thick description that has characterized much of this dissertation. But doing so will only lend weight to the ethnographic analysis that follows.

The analytic approach used in this section is a procedure known as Variance Components Analysis, or VCA for short. Normal survey analysis presumes that each respondent is completely independent from every other respondent. In the case of Taglit, this is a false assumption. For example, when people were asked to rate their tour guide, all those who traveled on the same bus would be rating the same individual. The quality of that one tour guide will, therefore, influence the ratings of 30 to 40 people. As such, their responses are not independent from one another. In a case like this, where individuals are "nested" within bus-groups, we can calculate how much of the rating of the tour guide was due to the shared experience of having the same guide, and how

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

much was due to individual idiosyncrasies. For example, we would expect that on a bus with a fantastic guide, ratings would be high on average because of the guide's overall quality, but would still not be totally uniform. Low average ratings, again with some variation, would likely be found on a bus with a boring, inexperienced guide.

The statistical procedures that let separate out how much of the survey responses are based on the shared group experience and how much are due to residual personal factors are called hierarchical linear models, or HLM (Bryk and Raudenbush 1992). The more advanced models let us look at how the group effects and individual effects are related to each other. But these will not concern us here. To see how much the group processes I will be discussing were common to all Taglit groups or confined to just a few, we can use the most elementary form of HLM, known as Variance Components Analysis (VCA). This simply calculates how much the response to a question depends on the bus-group a person traveled with. It expresses this amount as a percentage. A bus that entirely determined its members' responses to a given question would account for 100% of the variance in the response. A bus that had no impact whatsoever on the responses would account for 0% of the variance in the responses.

If the group processes were not a general phenomenon of Taglit, then we would expect them to vary from bus to bus. If they vary from bus to bus, then what bus a person was in should have a strong influence on their responses to questions about the group processes. In terms of the statistics, this means that we

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

would expect the VCA to give us high percentages rather than low ones. We will find, however, that the actual percentages we get are low, which means that the group processes did not vary much from bus to bus, and that we can therefore conclude that the group processes I will be describing with the ethnography were broadly representative of the Taglit program as a whole, and not the result of a biased look at a discrepant case.

Different Buses, Similar Group Processes

Chapter Two's logistic regression analysis found that the closer a Taglit participant felt to his or her group, the more he or she was likely to consider the trip a spiritual experience. The empirical indicator of orientation to the group was a composite variable that took into account participants' thoughts about the people they traveled with, their feelings about being with them, the degree to which they spent time socializing together, and the actual number of close friendships they formed.[3] On an individual basis, some people felt closer to their group than others did, but scores tended to cluster around the mean (see Figure 5.1). On a more or less normally distributed index[4] that ranged from 1 (low group orientation) to 12 (high group orientation), the standard deviation around the mean of 7.5 was a low 1.6.

---

[3] Details on the construction of the index can be found in the Methodological Appendix, under the heading "Group Orientation."

[4] Skewness = -.49 (SE=.05). Kurtosis =.08 (SE=.10).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

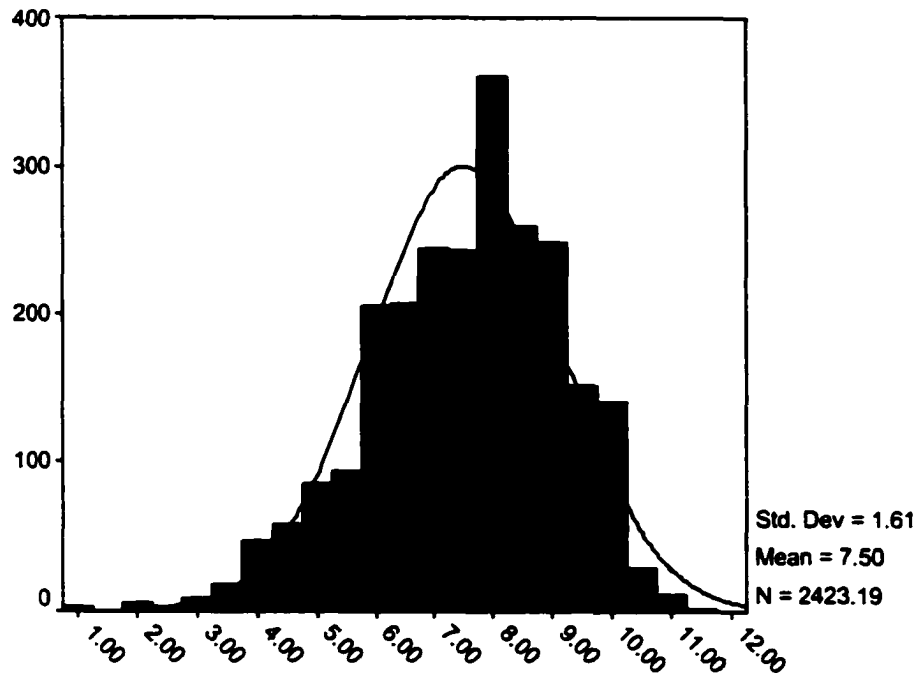


Figure 5.1 Group Orientation Index

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

One might reasonably assume that in a bus marked by a great deal of in-fighting, people would be less likely to say that their traveling companions were friendly or considerate, less likely to enjoy the time spent on the bus in each other's company, and therefore less likely to have high scores on the index. However, when we partition the variance in the group orientation index to assess how much is accounted for by the bus-groups to which people belonged, the groups themselves had little impact on the these scores. Only 9% of the variance was explained by the bus. The remaining 91% was a result of other, presumably individual, factors.[5]

By aggregating the group orientation indices of every member of a given bus-group, I produced an average that can be taken as a measure of overall group cohesion. Groups in which many people were highly oriented to each other would be considered more cohesive, whereas groups in which the converse held true would be considered less cohesive. Average cohesion scores were computed for each of 176 bus-groups in the Winter 2000-2001 round of Taglit trips. For the least cohesive bus, this score was 5.2, whereas for the most cohesive it was 9.3. The average cohesion score across all the buses was the same as the average of individual scores (7.5), but the standard deviation was reduced to 0.7.

---

[5] While these individual factors could quite reasonably be the subject of a separate study, they are not germane to the question at hand, which is focused on a different level of analysis, namely the collective. Just as Durkheim (1995) was interested in effervescence as a collective phenomenon, and not in which aborigine was more likely to collapse from exhaustion at the corroboree, so too I am interested in the group processes on Taglit that foster perceptions of spirituality and meaning, and not in which participant sang the bus chant the loudest.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The range of 11 (12 minus 1) in the original individual-level variable has been reduced to 4.1 (9.3 minus 5.2) for the bus-level average. Bus 194 had an average cohesion score of 7.9. The scores of the other buses observed by CMJS researchers in 2001 (and thus that have informed the ethnographic understandings in this dissertation) ranged from 7.0 to 8.5. The narrow range lends weight to the conclusion based on the ethnographic observation that the group processes we will be discussing were endemic to the program as a whole and did not vary much from bus to bus.

Corollary evidence supporting this contention is found by examining the influence of the group on other aspects of the trip, such as ratings of the itinerary, staff and logistics (see Table 5.1). In some things, such as staffing, the group one traveled with appeared to make a substantial difference on individuals' survey responses. These bus-level variations were greatest when people were rating the quality of specific staff members. They were smaller when the ratings turned to whether they created an atmosphere that was too religious, preachy, Pollyannaish or political.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.1: Variance Accounted for by Bus-Group

	Var(Bus)	Var(Error)	Accounted Variance
Staff			
Israeli staff rating	0.10	0.47	**18.1%**
Senior North American staff rating	0.14	0.66	**17.0%**
Too religious	0.08	0.56	**11.8%**
Too preachy	0.10	0.82	**10.4%**
Staff reluctant to say bad things about Israel	0.06	0.80	**7.2%**
Too political	0.03	0.49	**6.5%**
Time Use, etc.			
Attended Shabbat services	0.03	0.11	**24.5%**
Visited Israeli family	0.05	0.17	**23.4%**
Got to know Israelis your age	0.24	0.78	**23.3%**
Able to use free time as you liked	0.13	0.65	**16.6%**
Got sick	0.01	0.21	**4.6%**
Logistics			
Accomodations	0.18	0.67	**20.8%**
Food	0.18	1.20	**12.7%**
Organization / administration	0.10	0.78	**11.8%**
Pre-trip information	0.10	1.08	**8.5%**
Medical care	0.06	1.04	**5.5%**
Information about security	0.04	0.81	**4.9%**
Registration	0.03	0.73	**3.6%**
Site / Activity Ratings			
Mifgash	0.33	1.20	**21.6%**
Mega-event	0.34	1.34	**20.4%**
Golan heights	0.19	0.90	**17.4%**
Tel Aviv	0.17	1.01	**14.6%**
Israel program expo fair	0.18	1.29	**12.5%**
Archeological dig	0.18	1.30	**12.2%**
Shabbat in Jerusalem	0.16	1.20	**11.9%**
Speakers, lectures and seminars	0.12	1.05	**10.5%**
Dead Sea	0.08	0.70	**9.7%**
Mount Herzl cemetary	0.11	1.08	**9.2%**
Formal group conversations	0.10	1.14	**8.4%**
Masada	0.04	0.54	**6.2%**
Being on a program thousands of Jews	0.06	0.90	**6.1%**
Being on the bus	0.07	1.17	**6.0%**
Western Wall	0.03	0.49	**5.9%**
Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial	0.06	0.93	**5.7%**
Kibbutz	0.06	1.11	**5.2%**
Talking with friends	0.05	0.95	**4.6%**
Being in a country with a Jewish majority	0.04	0.83	**4.3%**
Jerusalem's old city (excluding Western Wall)	0.03	0.75	**3.9%**

continued on next page

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.1: Variance Accounted for by Bus-Group, continued

	Var(Bus)	Var(Error)	Accounted Variance
Group Orientation			
People in group were always complaining	0.08	0.64	**11.7%**
People shared personal details about their lives	0.06	0.42	**11.7%**
Group cohesion index	0.24	2.39	**9.1%**
People in group were considerate	0.04	0.43	**9.0%**
People in group were friendly	0.03	0.28	**8.2%**
Did you go to a bar, club or disco	0.01	0.08	**7.1%**
Did you drink to get drunk	0.01	0.21	**5.1%**
People in group were similar to you	0.02	0.63	**2.8%**

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The area that most consistently showed evidence of bus effects related to straight reports of what people did and did not do. Whether one attended services, visited Israeli families, got to know Israeli peers, and was able to use free time as one saw fit were influenced to a considerable degree by the bus-group and the sponsoring organization with which one traveled. Some groups mandated *Shabbat* service attendance, whereas others made them optional. Some groups arranged for home hospitality with Israelis, whereas others did not. About a quarter of the variance in the reports of these activities are accordingly attributable to the group a Taglit participant belonged to. This proportion represents the high-water mark of group effects.

When considering logistical aspects of the trip, we find a great deal of consistency across buses with regard to things like registration and information about security. No surprise given Taglit's insistence on standardized procedures for these.

Of the twenty sites and activities participants were asked to rate on a scale from "waste of time" to "one of the best things," the bus-groups accounted for 15% or more of the variance in only four cases. The top two activities in this short list (in terms of variance accounted for) were the structured *mifgash* encounters with Israeli peers (22%) and the Mega-Event (21%). The first reflects the fact that the *mifgashim* were incredibly variable in their implementation, quality and success (Avivi 2000:11-12). As with participation in *Shabbat* services and home

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

hospitality visits, there was substantial variation in the substance of the program delivered to participants. Their reports vary accordingly.

The Mega-Event, however, seems a different case. This was a gala festival held at the Jerusalem convention center for the thousands of Taglit participants in the country. But if this delivered the same program at the same time to all participants, why then do we see such significant group effects here? First, not all participants were at the same Mega-Event. Because the succession of trips stretched over the course of three months, several Mega-Events were held—some more Mega than others. This refers both to the numbers in attendance and the actual program. Whereas then-Prime Minster Ehud Barak appeared at the largest Mega-Event[6], the much smaller gala held a week later was greeted by his opponent in the upcoming elections of February 2001, Ariel Sharon. No matter that Sharon would ultimately defeat Barak to become the next Prime Minister, at the time he was only an opposition candidate (albeit with a commanding lead). Only one group, then, actually got to see the Prime Minister of Israel. Another factor that may account for the emergence of group effects in ratings of the Mega-Event has to do with the fact that at the largest Mega-Event, the seating capacity of the main hall could not accommodate everybody. Many groups therefore watched the entire event via video simulcast in a smaller auditorium nearby. Discussions among CMJS observers, some of whom sat in the main hall

---

[6] I will describe this gala spectacular in detail later in this chapter.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and some of whom watched the proceedings on the big-screen TV in the annex suggest that there was a qualitative difference between live and Memorex. Finally, as I will discuss later, groups tended to sit together during the performances, and this mediated the mass experience.

The two touring components of the trip whose ratings evinced the most variability attributable to the group were the Golan Heights (17%) and Tel Aviv (15%). In discussing Tel Aviv in Chapter 3, I mentioned the difficulty trip planners had in using tourism to construct a coherent narrative around the city. Contrast this with the Western Wall or Masada, both of which were associated with coherent narrative themes and normative tourist or pilgrimage practices (c.f. Ben-Yehuda 1995; Charmé 2001; Storper-Perez and Goldberg 1994). In these instances, the variance in site ratings accounted for by the group was much smaller—only 6%. Although the narratives surrounding the Golan Heights tended to be more consistent than those of Tel Aviv (the main themes being security on the Northern border, the uncertain political status of the Golan and the surprising news that kosher wine need not be a sweet viscous paste but can actually pass muster in proper company), the means used to convey these varied. On the political front, some groups heard local *kibbutznikim* debate about negotiating with Syria over the future of the Heights. Others saw a sound and light show presenting the residents' dominant perspective on the historical significance of the area. Some groups toured the Syrian bunkers captured in the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1967 Six Day War. Other activities less related to the political/military included a tour of the wineries in the region and jeep rides on open roads.

In short, a look down the sorted list of site and activity ratings will reveal that the group made the least difference when the activities were universally engaged in by all groups, or when the sites had a clear set of behaviors and narratives associated with them. The more leeway trip organizers had in determining the specific program to be delivered, the more we saw the group's influence on individuals' ratings of the itinerary.[7] This reinforces the overall thrust of the findings with regard to the staff and logistics. One might reasonably hypothesize that interpersonal dynamics could lead groups to interpret their collective experiences differently from one another - group norms or consensuses emerge, shaping the responses to the survey questions. But the Variance Components Analysis consistently shows that on the variables where this is most likely to hold true, there was little actual difference across buses. Rather, bus differences tended to be found in relation to variables most influenced by *exogenous* factors that could not be part of the internal discourse on the bus.

---

[7] There was no straightforward relationship between the group's influence on a site or activity's rating and its propensity to be rated highly or poorly. The Mega-Event and the *mifgashim* were among the worse-rated activities (in both instances, 23% said it was a "waste of time" or just "OK"), but other things received low ratings by far higher proportions. In contrast, both Tel Aviv the Golan were rated as "great, but not the best" and "one of the best things" by 67% of respondents. Still, other sites had even higher ratings than these.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In light of the findings regarding staff, logistics and itinerary, we can now hypothesize that a lack of bus-level variation in the group orientation index indicates that the collective processes underlying the individual perceptions were relatively uniform across the different buses. Individual responses to the questions that made up the group orientation composite were, like the composite as a whole, not greatly affected by the specifics of which bus a person traveled on. The group influence was greatest with regard to questions about whether people were open about themselves and whether they were always complaining. But even here, the group accounted for only 12% of the total variance, a smaller proportion than any of the others variables I have written of here.

It may seem paradoxical that questions specifically about the group did not appear to be influenced much by the actual groups which people had in mind when they answered the survey questions. But this seeming paradox resolves itself when we consider a parallel case—illness. Ten-days, a hectic pace, and close quarters; it is no wonder that one out of three (32%) Taglit participants took sick. Here was the real contagion effect. If anything was group related, illness was. Once one person caught the bug (symptoms: head cold, achy joints, stomach cramps and worse), it was only a matter of time before it would be 'going around.' Woe to the unsuspecting person on the air-conditioned bus, sitting in the seat nearby. And yet, the group accounted for only 5% of the variance in reports of who got ill. The reason for this: not that the laws of microbiology were different in Israel, but that they were precisely the same. On

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

every bus, they were precisely the same. *The epidemiological process that spread the illness to one-third of Taglit participants was the same on the each of the buses, such that no substantial group effect was evident. In precisely this manner, the group processes that fostered a personally meaningful experience on Taglit were ubiquitous.*

It was these processes that, drawing people together, allowed the group experience to emerge as a locus of the sacred experience in its own right. How this occurred, how it interacted with the sacred symbols being encountered through the itinerary, and how it persisted in the face of dissent will be the subjects of the remainder of this chapter.

COMMUNITY CONSCIOUSNESS

In my discussion of personal authenticity, I focused on the contextualization that roots the individual in larger frames of meaning. I specifically focused on the frames provided by history and ideology. But it is possible that the immediate community of travelers on Taglit functioned in a similar manner. The notion of finding oneself by losing oneself in a tightly knit group was present at sociology's inception, with Durkheim's writings on altruistic suicide ([1897] 1966). Since then, it has been developed in various forms—some treating it as noxious and others as benign. Observers of religious cults have harbored an abiding suspicion that there is something about strongly cohesive groups that is inherently coercive and contemptuous of the dignity of the individual. In contrast, the proposition that the more cohesive the group, the more salient it

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

will be to the sense of self, follows in a value-neutral way from the basic premises of social identity theory (see Tajfel and Turner 1979, 1986; Worchel et al. 1998; also see Sherif et al. [1961] 1988). In this view, much of our self-conception is naturally rooted in the groups with which we affiliate. The degree of cohesiveness in groups is merely a variable characteristic whose fluctuations should, in theory, influence social identity accordingly.

A sense of significance as a result of participation in a cohesive community can result from the immediate emotional excitement of the communal moment and/or from the abstract identification with the idealized "community." Durkheim ([1912] 1995) and Turner ([1969] 1982) have shown that collective experiences can arouse the passions in ways that generate an almost palpable sense of personal fulfillment. But beyond this lies a discursive awareness of group membership that rests on imagining a community in an idealized form (Anderson 1991). If the latter, as a meaning-bestowing orienting whole, tends to emphasize the cognitive, the former operates more directly on the senses and the emotions. The question before us is, which was more characteristic of the Taglit experience?

Group Identities

Let us begin by considering the possibility that this second level of group experience, the *consciousness* of being part of a group, contributed to a perception of Taglit as a meaningful or spiritual experience. The indications that a sense of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

bus-group identity crystallized on Taglit are many. Groups, originally labeled according to their universities, trip sponsors or bus numbers, re-christened themselves, so to speak, with names of their own choosing. As mentioned, one group, amused by and enamored of the Hebrew word *mifgash* took to calling themselves the *Mifgash* group. On another bus where staff required each person to publicly divulge his or her most embarrassing moment, one person's story was adopted by the group, which began calling itself "The Farts." Even though buses tended to travel in caravans with a fixed set of other groups, there was not much mixing across group lines in hotel dining rooms or during free time. Just as people developed attachments primarily to others in their group, they also developed a sense of ownership that was reflected in language. People spoke of "our" bus driver, and "our" tour guide. A member of the CMJS research team observed an instance in which this was taken to an extreme. After an evening of festivities on one Saturday night in Eilat, shuttle buses were hired to take people back to the hotel. Members of one group refused to get on any bus but their "own." They "made quite a fuss until persuaded by [the staff person] that the plan tonight was different."

Not surprisingly, a consciousness of group also emerged through comparison with others, although the specific grounds for comparison varied from group to group. On one bus, the staff's eagerness for scheduling many activities was the important distinction. At first, some people complained that they were woken up early on a rainy day to travel to Masada whereas students

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

from their university traveling on another bus in the caravan were allowed to sleep in. But after some of these other students complained to their schoolmates about missing Masada, those who made the rainy trek to the mountain decided that the grass was not greener on the other side. On another bus, the staff's apparent care for the group was key. One evening, rather than eating with other Taglit groups at the Bat Ya'ar Ranch, Rami, an Israeli *madrich* with teen-idol looks and a smile to match, took his group to the well-appointed home of a young couple in Safed. The husband and wife team ran a small business hosting groups for homemade gourmet dinners. Rami's group was ecstatic. In her field notes, the CMJS researcher traveling with them wrote, "There seems to be no doubt among the students now that we are the best, most fortunate group, with the best leader. There is a sense that Rami has somehow bent the rules to give us a special experience that no other group will have."[8]

Whereas these examples concern matters surrounding the staff, there were also cases where the character of the participants was the salient point. "I think everybody likes everybody [in our group]. We lucked out, we're past that immaturity crap, unlike Group 14." The tone of this remark hints at the inter-group hostility that had taken root among members of three buses traveling together in a caravan. In one telling instance, enthusiasm for a New Year's Eve disco boat waned once participants learned that it would be for all three groups.

---

[8] In fact, no rules were bent. Rami had been ordered by his superiors to find another place to eat.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"Our group wanted to have nothing to do with Group 14, and wasn't interested in doing a program with Group 15 either," the researcher wrote.

Although there is evidence that a sense of group consciousness emerged on Taglit, there is little ground on which to claim that this generated any sense of personal meaning. The actual names adopted by groups suggest that they were chosen more for their laugh-value than for anything they said about the actual group identity. It is the rare specimen who finds fulfillment in the knowledge that he a member of "The Farts."

This raises another point. Not everyone was enamored of this scatological moniker. The degree to which people identified with the group as a whole varied widely. Group names and symbols were not used universally, but tended to be the sub-cultural property of certain elements within the group. For example, on Bus 194, collective identity was, for lack of a better word, contested (although that may dignify it too much). Ravit, the Israeli *madrichah*, had taught the word *sababa*, a Hebrew slang expression lifted from Arabic that roughly translated to "groovy." The word became one of the more popular Hebrew sayings that participants self-consciously used to pepper their speech, usually shouting it out for no apparent reason. One night, I accompanied Julie Beth, one of the American staff people, to a book store in the Arad mall where she purchased a stuffed cat as a mascot (in honor of the two cats seen copulating at the Western Wall).

The ranch was filled to capacity. The students, however, did not know this.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"They're going to name it Sababa," she said confidently, and sure enough they did. On the bus the next day, she presented the stuffed animal to the group. "We need a bus mascot," she said over the microphone. "And I thought, a camel? No, because we haven't seen any camels. So what about a donkey? Because we are going to be riding donkeys. But that wasn't good either. And then I thought, what animal do we have a connection with?" She held up the small stuffed cat as people around her laughed. (No matter that the sight of the cats in heat was ignored by a number of the women in the group. By asserting that this was something "we," meaning all of us, "have a connection with," Julie Beth reinforced the connection where it already existed and helped to forge it where it did not.) She continued, "We need a name for it." From the back of the bus someone shouted "Chavchalash," a frequently-referenced nonsensical Arabic-sounding word from a movie I was never able to identify. But within a matter of seconds, several people including Mickey (whom I described earlier as the Greek chorus of the group) called out "Sababa," which was chosen by acclimation.

Subsequently, the *madrich* Ravit began referring to the group collectively as "Sababa Cats." The term remained hers alone. No one else adopted it. Most continued to refer to the group simply as "Bus 194." Mickey took possession of the cat much more than others in the group, both physically and symbolically. In the sociometric survey, he even wrote down "Sababa" as one of the "people" he

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

felt close to in the group.[9] His fraternity brother, Todd, who looked like he stepped off the set of *The Lords of Flatbush*, was the only other who did the same. In contrast, Mark, who fancied himself a part of Mickey's crowd but was never really accepted as such,[10] later tried to no avail to get people to call it "The Bus 194 Pussy." In short, the mascot was adopted mostly by Mickey, it's name was contested by Mark, whose alternative retained the numeric designation of the group. Only Ravit made the Durkheimian leap and called the group by the name of its totem. But in spite of the authority she commanded, her attempt to label the group identity was a lead balloon.

Differential attachments to group symbols reflected that fact that all groups were characterized by lines of internal differentiation. These included age and gender lines. On buses that mixed various ethnic sub-communities (e.g. New York groups that mixed Persian Jews with Russian Jews; Canadian groups that mixed second-generation Moroccan Francophones with third and fourth-generation Ashkenazi Anglophones) clear lines of demarcation were often maintained. A divide between members of fraternities or sororities and those who were not members was a salient distinction primarily to the people who

---

[9] Needless to say, all statistical analyses of the social network data were performed on a cleaned data set that did not include this response. But here we see that we can learn even from seemingly frivolous survey responses.

[10] Recall Sam's resentment of him as a joke-stealer. The sociometric survey revealed an uncommonly large discrepancy between the number of people Mark said he felt close to (11) and the number of people who said they felt close to Mark (3). See also the Structural Equivalence Model below for more details.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

were not members. On several buses there were small groups of people who tended to speak ill of the members of Greek-letter organizations. I had mentioned Lynne's surprised reaction to the news that Mickey was in a certain fraternity. On another bus, several people were complaining about the sorority members who were "whining and crying because of bats when we went through the caves. They started crying when they got dirty." This evoked the response, "Anti-JAPpy group of the world unite. If you let the girls bother you, you have been JAPped!" They then proceeded to create a dictionary entry for their new verb, to JAP.[11]

Network Structure of Bus 194

On Bus 194, the group I spent the most time observing, I administered a sociometric survey designed to identify the extent to which the bus community could be viewed as a conglomeration of subgroups. By asking which others each person felt close to, I was able to map lines of internal differentiation within the group.[12] Of course, the main feature of structural differentiation was the division

---

[11] I found the use of the term JAP, from the initials of the phrase "Jewish American Princess," surprisingly common in the groups I observed. The term, which had come under fire since the 1980s as both sexist and anti-Semitic (Prell 1999), was a favorite term of opprobrium, almost always used in a context that implied us versus them. The word was hurled freely without the slightest sign of discomfort that other slurs might have elicited.

[12] On the seventh day of the trip, I asked participants, "At this point in the trip, which people in our group would you say you are close with?" Each person wrote down his or her answers on sheet of paper, which I then entered into a computer and analyzed using UCINET V (Borgatti et al. 1999) and *Pajek* (Batagelj and Mrvar 2002). The same data-collection procedure was conducted by other CMJS researchers. But no other bus except the one I analyzed had the 100% response

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

between staff and participants. But my concern here is specifically with the extent to which cohesion and differentiation characterized relations among participants.

The portraits of Bus 194 offered by various network analytic tools can be compared to the styles of representation favored by different 19th and 20th century painters. Some analyses paint the group in the sweeping brushstrokes of Van Gogh. Others look like a Seurat viewed too close. It will be helpful to start briefly with the former, and then try to the resolve some detail to produce a reasonable Impressionist view of the social relationships on the bus.

In the broadest terms, a Core/Periphery analysis (Borgatti and Everett 1992) of the sociometric data identified an 11-person "core."[13] This group had many strong relationships amongst themselves, but far fewer ties to the other 18 members of Bus 194. Table 5.2 represents this graphically as a blocked adjacency matrix.[14]

---

rate necessary for the validity of the network analytic procedures. The protocol for the social network survey is attached in Appendix E.

[13] The language of network analysis is constraining. As we will see, the two blocks do not relate much to one another. Moreover, there is no proof that membership in either of the blocks is related to allocation of scarce resources. Accordingly, there is little basis for privileging one as "core" and denigrating the other as "periphery."

[14] A "1" signifies the presence of tie between the people identified in the row and column. Specifically, it means that person in the row said he/she felt close with the person in the column. The matrix is arranged to show the relationships within and across the two blocks.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.2: Core/Periphery Structure Of Bus 194

		1		1	1				1	2	1	1	1	1	1		1	1		2		2	2	2	2	2	2	2
		1	6	3	8	9	6	7	8	9	4	1	0	3	1	2	2	7	5	5	0	4	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		M	B	R	M	A	T	D	L	M	M	S	T	J	A	N	E	I	G	J	L	E	J	C	M	P	L	A	E	J
1	MAX			1			1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1			1		1								
16	BETH	1			1				1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1			1	1								
3	RON	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					1	1					1							
18	MISHA	1	1	1		1			1	1	1	1				1	1	1	1		1		1							
19	ALLAN	1					1	1	1	1	1	1											1							
6	TODD	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1				1					1	1	1					
7	DINA			1		1			1	1	1													1						
8	LAURA		1	1		1		1		1	1	1											1							
9	MARIE			1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1		1		1														
14	MICKEY	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1		1		1			1		1	1	1	1				
21	SAM		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1							1					1							
10	TOMMY														1	1					1			1						
13	JUDY	1		1			1	1		1	1						1													
11	ANDREW														1		1	1								1			1	1
12	NELL	1	1										1		1		1	1			1						1	1		
2	EVAN	1	1										1																	
17	ISOSCELES		1									1									1		1							
15	GAIL	1												1						1	1	1				1			1	1
5	JEFFREY	1																1	1		1		1							
20	LYNNE	1	1		1									1	1			1	1	1			1				1	1	1	
4	ELLEN		1										1			1		1												
22	JESSE										1	1						1												
23	CAREY							1																						
24	MARK	1	1	1	1	1			1		1	1	1										1			1				
25	PAUL																													
26	LINDSEY														1	1					1							1		
27	ADRIENNE														1	1					1					1				
28	ELIZA																		1		1								1	
29	JODIE		1												1				1									1	1	

Starting fitness: 0.171; Final fitness: 0.530; Fitness measure: CORR

The density of ties within the "core" block, seen in the upper left-hand quadrant, was .782. In other words, 78% of all possible dyadic ties within this block were present. In contrast, only 22% of the "core's" total possible ties with the "periphery" were present (upper-right quadrant). There is little reason to believe that the so-called "periphery" saw itself as peripheral or the other group as central. Their relationship to the other block was certainly not one of unrequited love. Rather, they showed even less feeling for the "core" than the "core" showed for them. The density of "periphery-to-core" ties, seen in the lower left-hand quadrant, was 15% - the lowest within or among the blocks.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

They themselves did not form a cohesive group like the "core." Only 21% of possible ties among members of the "periphery" were present (lower right quadrant).

The Van Gogh is a coarse and somewhat stereotypic image of a yellow school bus where a gang of cool kids sit in the back while pairs of good little boys and girls behave themselves in the front next to the teacher. While this reflects certain realities of the group's social life, it has a cartoonish aspect that distorts more than it reveals. We are therefore in need of a subtler approach to mapping the lines of cohesion and differentiation on Bus 194. Structural Equivalence Modeling (SEM), which looks at the similarity of people's relationships to third parties, retains enough of the broad brushstrokes of the Core/Periphery analysis to keep the Van Gogh recognizable. But it resolves details more finely, allowing a nuanced portrait. In actuality, the results of the SEM are in much greater accord with the ethnographic observations that serve as a check on algorithms which know only mathematical validity.

In broad terms, SEM analysis suggests a tripartite social structure among Taglit participants on Bus 194. One of the three structural categories participants fell into can be further divided in two. The three major categories are 1) a large, cohesive group of nine people with three others who "hung on," 2) a dozen more people broken up into a series of smaller cliques, dyads and isolates, and who had almost no close ties to people in the large group, and 3) five popular "floaters" who easily crossed the lines separating the other two categories. The

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

second category, those in the smaller cliques, can also be distinguished further by whether or not they maintained reciprocal relationships with the "floaters."[15] This structure was evident in spite of the fact Component Analysis revealed that entire bus constituted one strongly connected component. That is, a path from friend to friend could be drawn to link any person in the group to any other (see Figure 5.2). Taglit groups were characterized by differentiation in the face of cohesion, and cohesion in the face of differentiation.[16]

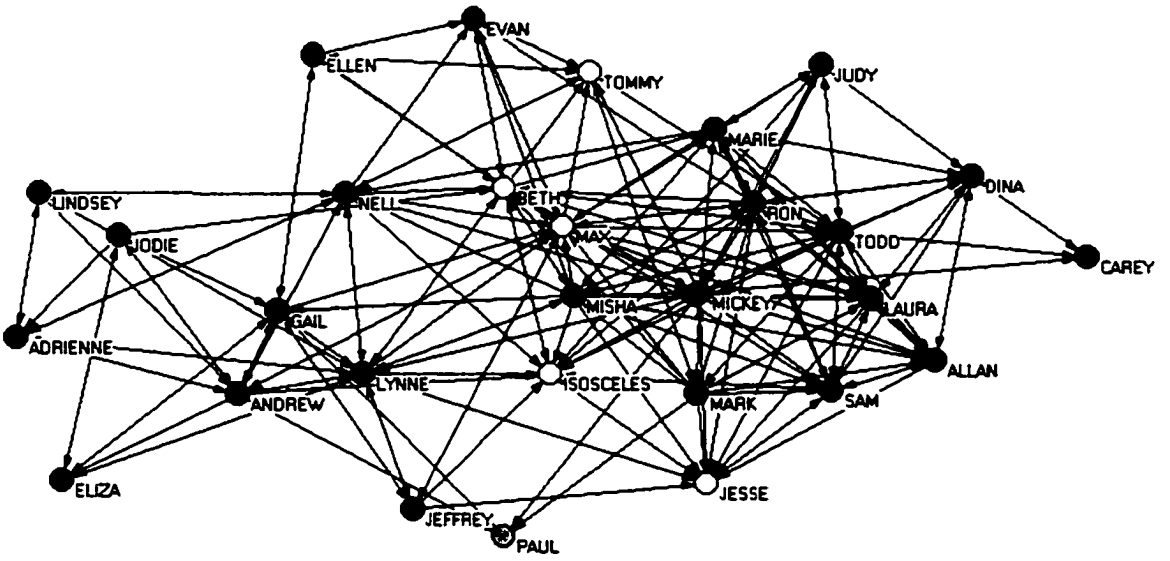
---

[15] The measure of structural equivalence used to identify these patterns is not designed as a direct measure of cliques or subgroups. Instead it considers the similarity of ties within a set of actors. In some instances, this ends up identifying cohesive sub-regions of a social network, as in the large, cohesive group mentioned here. In other instances, though, the blocks are best spoken of as categories rather than actual social groups (Wasserman and Faust 1994:348-9). For example, the "floaters" are not a cohesive group amongst themselves. What they have in common is that they all maintain ties with people in the other blocks.

[16] Note that this is the *observer's* view. Participants themselves may or may not have perceived this. The point of one style of network analysis is that these divisions have consequences even if they are not recognized by the "natives" themselves.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure 5.2: Close Friendships among Bus 194 Members



Note: Arrow pointing from A to B means A said he/she felt close with B. Ties are not necessarily reciprocal. Shading refers to SEM blocks discussed later in the text.

The block model presented below (see Table 5.3) is a graphical representation of membership in each of the categories and of the ties people maintained within and across them.[17] Members of Bus 194 are grouped into four blocks. Block 1 represents the floaters, Block 2 the large, cohesive group, and Blocks 3 and 4 the people in smaller cliques and dyads.

---

[17] The block model was produced using the CONCOR procedure in UCINET V (Borgatti et al. 1999). Diagonal values were ignored. The maximum number of partitions allowed was 2.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.3: Structural Equivalence Block Model Of Bus 194

		16MB	17BI	10TJ	22	6TD	8MM	9AL	7DJ	14MR	13LS	23C	24M	4E	26L	20L	12N	2E	27A	15G	25P	5J	11A	28E	29
1	MAX (13)			1		1			1	1	1	1		1			1	1				1	1		
16	BETH (13)	1		1	1		1		1	1			1	1		1	1	1							
17	ISOSCELES (12)		1		1								1			1									
10	TOMMY (8)													1				1	1						
22	JESSE (11)			1						1			1												
6	TODD (7)	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1												
18	MISHA (8)	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1		1					
19	ALLAN (9)	1			1	1		1	1	1	1		1												
9	MARIE (11)					1	1	1		1	1	1	1				1								
7	DINA (10)							1	1	1	1		1												
14	MICKEY (13)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1				1				
8	LAURA (11)		1		1			1	1	1	1		1												
13	JUDY (4)	1		1		1			1	1	1		1												
3	RON (10)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1					1							
21	SAM (11)		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1														
23	CAREY (3)								1																
24	MARK (3)	1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1									1				
4	ELLEN (4)		1		1													1		1					
26	LINDSEY (3)															1	1		1			1			
20	LYNNE (10)	1	1	1		1									1		1		1	1		1	1	1	
12	NELL (10)	1	1	1	1										1	1		1	1			1			
2	EVAN (7)	1	1		1																				
27	ADRIENNE (4)														1	1	1					1			
15	GAIL (7)	1												1		1					1	1	1	1	1
25	PAUL (4)																								
5	JEFFREY (3)	1		1	1											1				1					
11	ANDREW (7)			1													1			1	1		1	1	
28	ELIZA (4)															1				1				1	
29	JODIE (3)		1																1	1		1	1		

Table 5.4: Density Matrix for Structural Equivalence Block Model Of Bus 194

	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Block 1	0.350	0.267	0.367	0.067
Block 2	0.517	0.629	0.097	0.042
Block 3	0.433	0.014	0.467	0.222
Block 4	0.200	0.000	0.167	0.500

R-squared = 0.262

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Block 1 did not function as a highly cohesive group. Its within-block density was .350, the lowest of any of the blocks (See Table 5.4).[18] A glance down the Block 1 column indicates that Max, Beth, Isosceles, Tommy and Jesse all shared a general popularity throughout all of the blocks on the bus.[19] They did not always reciprocate the feelings of closeness others said they felt toward them, however. Reading across the rows in Block 1, we see that Isosceles, Tommy, and Jesse were rarely likely to say that they felt close to people in Block 2. Max was the only one who felt close to anyone in Block 4 (Jeffrey and Andrew). This absence of ties with Block 1 was the main factor distinguishing Blocks 3 and 4.

Block 2 was a cohesive group (within-block density = .629) roughly corresponding to the "core" identified above. The main differences were that Max and Beth, who were identified as members of the "core" are here seen as "floaters" who maintained ties with people throughout the bus. In addition, the "core" analysis failed to identify the special position of Mark, Carey and Judy, who here are seen as forming a true periphery to this group. Mark thought of

---

[18] In the density matrix, as in the main chart itself, the diagonal represents ties within a block. The off-diagonal represents ties across blocks. Density is measured on a scale of 0 to 1, with 1 indicating that every person in a network has a tie to everyone else, and 0 indicating that no ties whatsoever exist. Density is calculated simply by dividing the number of actual ties over the number of all possible ties.

[19] When reading the block-model chart, a "1" in a cell indicates that the person in that row said he or she felt close with the person in the column. To see who a given person said he or she felt close with, read across the row. To see who said they felt close with that person, locate that individual in the column and read down. For example, in Block 1, Beth said she felt close with Max, Isosceles and Tommy (reading across Beth's row). But only Isosceles said he felt close with Beth (reading down Beth's column).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

himself as a member of this group, saying he felt close with six of its core members. But, as I noted above in the story Sababa the Cat, these feelings were generally not reciprocated. Carey was a quiet person who kept to himself. He was associated with the large group because the only close relationship he claimed was with Dina, who herself was a member. Judy was close with a subset of this group. For much of the trip, she seemed withdrawn and upset, often sitting by herself and not engaging others in conversation. The other nine people in this group (Allan, Dina, Laura, Marie, Mickey, Misha, Ron, Sam and Todd) almost all expressed mutual affection for one another, and were all identified as members of the "core" in the Core/Periphery analysis conducted above.

With the exception of only one dyad (Lynne -> Misha)[20], the people in Block 2 were not considered close friends by people in Blocks 3 or 4 (cross-block density = .014 and .000, respectively). For their part, Block 2 returned the sentiments (cross-block density .097 and .042, respectively). Most members of Block 2, however, felt close with the "floaters" in Block 1. These affections were returned by Max and Beth more than by Isosceles, Tommy or Jesse, explaining why the former two were identified earlier as members of this "core" whereas the others were not.

---

[20] Recall that the two of them dined on hummus with Mickey and me at the Rosh Hanikra cafeteria. I described elements of our conversation there in the previous chapter.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Blocks 3 and 4 had a similar profile in that there was a sharp divide between them and Block 2. As noted before, the main difference between Blocks 3 and 4 was that Block 3 was more popular with the "floaters" (density =.367) than Block 4 was (density =.067). Neither of these blocks constituted a cohesive group. Instead, they each incorporated several small cliques and dyads. This is reflected in lower mean in- and out-degree centrality scores for these blocks (see Table 5.5).[21] In terms of both the number of people they felt close to and the number of people who felt close to them, people in Blocks 3 and 4 tended to be less gregarious and less popular.

Table 5.5: Average Degree Centrality Scores Within Blocks

Block	In-Degree	Out-Degree
1	7.2	11.4
2	10.3	8.3
3	6.0	6.3
4	4.5	4.7

Lynne[22] and Nell represented an exception to this general pattern. The most well-liked people from Block 3, both maintained a relatively large number of friendships with people throughout the various blocks on the bus. In this respect, they resembled the "floaters" like Isosceles and Tommy. But they were

---

[21] Centrality in asymmetric networks can be partitioned into out-degree and in-degree scores. In this instance, out-degree is a measure of gregariousness: How many other people does a person say he or she feels close to? In-degree is a measure of popularity: How many other people say they feel close with a given person?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

distinguished from the people in Block 1 in the following ways. Neither of them considered themselves close with the people in Block 2. (When I administered the sociometric survey, Lynne asked a clarifying question "Do you want to know who we feel close with, or who we feel comfortable with? Because there are some people that if I were alone in an elevator with them, I wouldn't feel comfortable.") Likewise, not many people in Block 2 considered themselves close with Lynne and Nell. In contrast with the "floaters," Lynne also had more reciprocal ties to Block 4.

The "floaters," of course, were defined by their popularity throughout the bus. But in every other block, degrees of popularity – measured in terms of in-degree centrality (the number of people who said they felt close with a given person) - spilled out along a range. Blocks 2, 3 and 4 each included people with few close ties to others.

For all this, it is worth calling attention to the obvious point that the social network data provide a snapshot in time of a dynamic, multifaceted process. They reflect reality, but do not constitute the whole of it. A social structure existed, but it was much more fluid than numbers with decimal points tend to suggest.

In short, the cohesion that emerged on Taglit groups needs to be seen against the backdrop of structural differentiation that persisted throughout the

---

[22] Lynne was one of my key informants, along with Mickey, Evan, Ellen and Sam.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

trip.[23] There were more popular people and less popular people, more gregarious individuals and more reserved ones, large cohesive sub-groups and small cliques, people who crossed lines easily and people who locked themselves into one circle of friends. This may have hampered the ability to derive of a sense of meaning from the meta-awareness of the group qua group, but not necessarily. After all, this structure belonged to the group, and was a part of the social experience that made Bus 194 what it was. Even if people did not like others in different cliques, the line attributed to F.D.R. could have held: "They may be bastards—but they're our bastards." Beyond this, the fact of structural differentiation should remind us that the group made its influence felt not just at the level of the group as a whole, but also on the more immediate levels of sub-group, clique and dyad.

A sense of group coexisted with a recognition of the diversity and structure within the group. It appears that identification with the group was fun and functional. But 'bus spirit' was distributed unevenly among Taglit participants. It would be a mischaracterization of the experience to claim that a meta-awareness of group membership provided radical new understandings of self. The orienting wholes on Taglit, to the extent that one existed, remained religion, ideology and history, but not the immediate community of fellow

---

[23] It would be interesting to see whether the four blocks had divergent response patterns on survey questions about the trip. Unfortunately, only 11 of the 29 people responded to the post-trip survey. With only 2 to 3 people per block, no meaningful comparisons can be made.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

pilgrims. *To the extent that personal meaning did grow out of the group experience, it was more felt than considered, more experienced than understood. It was the result of the first-order experience that Durkheim called* collective effervescence.

DURKHEIMIAN MOMENTS

Peak Experiences

In Chapter Two's multivariate model, I found evidence that the more a person was oriented to the group, the more likely it was that he or she would describe the entire Taglit experience as "spiritual." The group experience, in other words, was a relevant variable explaining reactions to the trip. The logistic regression model, however, tells us nothing about the nature of this group experience that might account for its effect. The only insights statistics offer about this are gleaned from the Variance Components Analysis, which suggested that the relevant group-level phenomena had to be so rooted in the structure of the program that they did not differ much from bus to bus. Beyond this, the statistics are silent. Other evidence must therefore be brought to bear.

My account for these findings will be grounded in ethnographic data from Taglit as well as a body of theory based on previous research. In short, I take the repeated finding of moments of collective effervescence on all groups CMJS observed as confirmation of Heilman's (1995) contention that this was a central aspect of the Israel experience's ultimate meaning to participants. I will examine

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in this section three representative moments of collective effervescence and their effects on behavior. I then apply Durkheim's theory relating effervescence to the totem. I propose that this offers a reasonable account of how feelings rooted in the group experience become associated with collective symbols of Israel and Judaism.

Let me first offer a caveat. I do not intend to predict individual reactions to situations of effervescence. I take it as a given that the degree to which people are swept away in the moment will necessarily vary from person to person. But the point here is not to conduct a reductionist analysis of individual-level variation, especially on exogenous variables that skirt the question at hand. Of concern here is group process, not demographically-based predispositions. I am interested in collective effervescence as a phenomenon that commonly emerges on Taglit groups—the various forms it takes, the diverse settings in which it emerges, the different collectivities it embraces, and the many possible ways it might make its effects felt on individuals (regardless of how these are distributed among them). Collective effervescence constituted a general characteristic of Taglit groups in spite of the fact that some people got more caught up in it than others.

Later in this chapter and the next, I devote more time to a theoretical treatment of Durkheim's understanding of collective effervescence. For now, I will simply note that he saw it as an "intense hyperexcitement of physical and mental life" that engenders in people a sense of direct encounter with the sacred

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(1995:218). To the extent that the conception is valid, we would expect that intense moments of group solidarity on Taglit would be experienced as religious or spiritual moments, personally meaningful to people who took part in them.

The notion that Israel pilgrimage-tours for Jewish youth were settings for the experience of collective effervescence was a theme of Heilman's (1995) ethnographic account. The effervescence, he noted, was episodic, occurring as "peak experiences"[24] that punctuated an otherwise unremarkable hodge-podge of walking tours, bus rides, meals and hotel rooms. As with the group of teenagers Heilman observed, the collective effervescence experienced by the young adults on Taglit emerged in a variety of ways. Examples of these have been brought forth earlier. Recall, for instance, the people who said that singing Hebrew classics with Baruch the bus driver was one of their most spiritual moments in Israel. An analogous experience took place on Bus 194, when the sleep-deprived group began its trip to Masada on a disco bus barreling through the Judean Desert at 4:00 A.M. For reasons I will discuss, people in the group did not speak of this bus experience in terms of spirituality or personal meaning. This lexicon was reserved for the experience atop Masada, where the group greeted the sunrise with blasts of a *shofar*. It is worth elaborating on these two halves of the Masada trip—the bus ride to the mountain and the sunrise witnessed upon arriving—because they juxtapose two moments of collective

---

[24] The term is Maslow's (1968). I will explore it in some detail in the next chapter.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

effervescence that evinced both similarities and differences in their form and in their effects.

The surprise dance party on the bus saw aisles filled with gyrating hips, and seats occupied by others who were focused on the dancers, the music, the laughter and the 'public square' of shouted jokes and comments. All of this had nothing whatsoever to do with the tour of Israel *per se*. If anything on this group's trip resembled the tourist's "bubble" (Boorstin [1961] 1985; Goldberg 1995; Heilman 1995; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2000), this was it. We were sealed in a small metal capsule careening down unseen roads. Metaphors raced through my mind as I considered the scene around me. A spaceship, a submarine, a zooming time capsule from 1977. Nothing could be seen outside the windows, which could have been made of polished ebony for all the view they afforded us. The only light came from the bus itself - a faint blue glow in the ceiling that ensured that anyone who wanted to gaze into the desert night would see only her own reflection. The eerie fluorescent blue contributed to the sense of being in outer space, under water, or in Studio 54 with a young John Travolta (before it turned into a theater and before he turned into a has-been and a once-more).

The sensory experience contributed much to the moment's other-worldly character. The veil of sleep that had lingered from the 3:00 A.M. wake-up call was suddenly torn off by a far-from-routine mix of noise, rhythm, speed, motion and blackness. The limited visual field focused people on what they could see (i.e. each other), and enhanced the other physical sensations. Things felt

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

different, and people acted differently. The bus aisle, normally an empty path during travel time, became a stage alive with movement. Seats still faced forward, but the people in them were positioned in a variety of ways that let them see in front, across and behind them - wherever the action was. Lines that had not been crossed before were. The tongue-pierced Israeli medic, who previously huddled alone with her Meir Shalev novel, was up in the aisle dancing, her back side pressed closed to Tommy's crotch as they moved their hips in unison. People cheered them, while another group of three danced in an identical fashion further down the aisle.

In this instance, the intense group experience was unrelated to symbolic aspects of Israel. It could have taken place anywhere; there was nothing specifically Israeli or Jewish about it. With the outside world sealed off, the group unified for a short period of time around a sensory barrage, reinforcing the excitement more and more as they got swept away in the collective effervescence. People were focused on the moment and on the fact that it was a shared experience. Not everyone danced in the aisles, but everyone's attention was directed to those who did, and many joined in by dancing in their seats. Not everyone shouted across the bus, but those who did (and those who listened) unified the public space. By the time we reached Masada, we had become a unit.

At the top of Masada itself, a different experience of collective effervescence emerged as we sat together watching the sun rise over the mountains. By the time the sun was about to appear, the disco bus was almost

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

two hours behind us. People had calmed down, and most were spread over a wide area sitting silently in clusters of two or three. Some people had wandered off to an adjacent section of ruins, but every member of the group was within the range of vision, and with the exception of one Bedouin worker, no other people were in or near the space we had claimed for ourselves.

In two cases, people who stood alone became a focus of group attention: Ravit, the Israeli guide, who wandered off to move her limbs gracefully in the meditative martial art of Tai Chi; and Sam, who went to find a raised area from which he could stand and blow the *shofar* when the sun rose. Both cases encapsulated the simultaneously private and public, individualistic and collective character of the experience. Ravit and Sam separated themselves from the group, but in a conspicuously public way. Although from their vantage point they could not see themselves framed against their respective backdrops, I suspect they knew the shots they had established even before the cameras of their groupmates began preserving both their poses for posterity—Ravit with arms extended and leg raised; Sam profiled on a ruined stone wall with a *shofar* raised to his lips. Each stood apart from the group, but neither were truly alone.

So it was with all of us. Sitting in relative silence, spread over a large area extended left, right, up and down, we were still able to hear the whispered *oohs* and *aahs* and to see the looks on each others faces as the sun rose. And we could observe those in the distance as part of the scene we were taking in. As I watched the sun rise over the mountains of Edom, I watched Ron watch the sunrise. He

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

became a part of my sunrise. The seemingly solitary experience in the midst of a group is hardly ever such, because the awareness of the presence of others invariably colors perception. On top of Masada, we participated in an experience of collective solitude. The solemnity of the experience cannot be understood outside of the social context that produced it.[25] If the collective effervescence on the bus took the group's energy and reflected it back on itself in a feedback loop, that on the mountaintop echoed our stillness and the silence.

I never asked anyone whether they felt that the disco bus ride was a spiritual moment, nor did I hear any remarks later volunteered that it was. Perhaps this was due to a poverty of imagination. The language of spirituality is often confined to a narrow and limited repertoire. But the staff person who set up the experience did so deliberately in the belief that it contributed to the sense of excitement he was hoping to build for the sunrise. (He also hoped it would tire out the participants so they could greet the dawn quietly). What was clear on the bus—best evidenced by the dancing and physical contact that "bordered on the inappropriate"[26]—was that a loss of self-consciousness and level of camaraderie was attained that went beyond the norm for the group. Even if they failed to

---

[25] During another group's pre-dawn visit to Masada, one man who was engaged in quiet conversation stopped himself mid-sentence when the sun appeared. "Wait," he said, "I want to find my sister," also a member of the group. She was probably thinking the same thing - this should be shared with someone special - because she appeared at that very moment.

[26] The phrase belonged to Lucas, the senior staff person, who used it in a humorous, not critical, manner. ("We should thank Ofir [the bus driver] for handling the curves, Ravit [the Israeli tour guide] for shaking her groove *thaanng*, and the Bus 194 dancers who sometimes bordered on the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

recognize or articulate it later, their behavior at the time exhibited indications of the merging of action and awareness, the limited stimulus field, and the unambiguous feedback that characterize what Csikszentmihalyi called "autotelic" behavior, or "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi 1975, 1988, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi 1988; Csikszentmihalyi and Larson 1984; Mitchell 1988). This notion of "intrinsically rewarding" behavior, which I will elaborate in the next chapter, is probably as close as social psychology has come to theorizing the state of grace.

In spite of this, the moment that more people actually did describe as "spiritual" was one of collective solitude. I mentioned elsewhere that several people said the highlight of that moment was when Sam blew the *shofar* to herald the dawn. Further comment is in order. First, the three people whom I heard voice this sentiment - Mickey, Lynne and Ellen - traveled in different social circles. In spite of this, they all agreed that the meaningfulness of the entire experience crystallized in that instant. Second, Sam's act mediated the direct encounter between human being and nature. It introduced an intrinsically social element to the mix. It was that social element in particular which Lynne said brought her to tears, and Mickey and Ellen said was the most spiritual element of the trip.

---

inappropriate").

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Spectacle

Both these instances of collective effervescence highlighted the bus group as the social unit of import. A somewhat different experience emerged in a carefully-crafted extravaganza tellingly referred to as the "birthright israel Mega-Event." The term 'mega' was mathematically accurate. The Saturday night festival at the Binyanei Ha'umah Convention Center in downtown Jerusalem brought together thousands of Taglit participants.

Every Taglit group then in the country converged on the Center's parking lot soon after sundown, when the Jewish Sabbath ended. Rumors buzzed that Prime Minister Ehud Barak would be addressing the participants. One hint that the scuttlebutt was accurate came by way of a phalanx of metal detectors and police officers that greeted the arriving throngs. As thousands of people converged on the same entrance, it took an effort to remain with one's group. Once a bottleneck at the Convention Center's large glass doors was passed, we waited for a considerable amount of time in long amorphous lines that led to the metal detectors and a second line of security guards. As Laura, Ron and I waited together, Laura looked around at the crowd and said "I'm kinda nervous. If anyone knew there were so many Americans in one place..." Ron told her not to worry. "They won't fuck with the U.S." I also tried to reassure her, saying that to the best of my knowledge terrorists had never targeted American tourists in Israel. This was nine months before the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. We wallowed in our naïveté.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

A large group of Argentines waving their country's powder puff blue and white flag entered the hall, singing "Olé! Olé! Olé!" and leading us to wonder aloud why the Americans, who made up the overwhelming majority of those present, seemed to have less national spirit. One by one, we passed through the security checkpoint with the metal detectors and bag inspection. We ascended stairs, many of us picking up yellow or blue scarves with the Taglit name and logo sewn into it, and small plastic Israeli flags on white plastic sticks. In a very crowded hall with a balcony overlooking it, three Canadian men standing above unfurled the Maple Leaf to a roar of cheers and jeers. For a moment, there was a lull in the din of conversations as people's attention focused on the flag. The display of Canadian pride evoked responding chants of "U.S.A! U.S.A.!" and "Blame Canada!" (a reference to the *South Park* movie in which this became the American battle cry). Hummed strains of *The Star Spangled Banner* began to swell in the room, but were mostly drowned out by the amplified klezmer music being played on a stage at the far end of the great hall.

Around me, people gaped and absorbed the scene. Isosceles said he was "overwhelmed." (At least, that's what I thought he said. I could only read his lips because it was too noisy to hear much.) Dina was shocked and impressed at the same time. "Whoa!" she said looking at the flag-waving Canadians above and chanting Americans below. "So much animosity!" But then, she stopped seeing them as Americans and Canadians and exclaimed, "This is the coolest thing! I've never seen so many Jewish people in my life!" This surprised me, because I

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

recognized her accent and knew the demographic make-up of her university. "Where are you from?" I asked, shouting to be heard. "White Plains, New York. The center of Jewish life." No surprise there. But even to her, this was a lot of Jews.

Evan walked over holding one of the small plastic Israeli flags, a mischievous smile pasted on his lips. "I never was given a flag at a political event before. I feel like we're at a Cuban rally," he shouted. He waved the flag and chanted, "Fi-del! Fi-del!" Max, who was standing with me, smiled, and I laughed. Knowing that this was my second Mega-Event, Evan leaned in to ask, "Was there this much unbridled nationalism last year?" "No," I shouted back so that they could both hear me. "Just some school rivalry, and Brazilian soccer chants." Looking up at the Maple Leaf draped over the balcony, the three of us talked about the premeditated decision to pack such a huge Canadian flag. It would never have crossed any of our minds to pack an American flag for the trip. "That's why they had to be silenced," Max teased. For an event that was supposed to be celebration of Jewish unity, most of what I had seen so far was a celebration of the national identities that divided people.

There was some milling about in the huge crowd, but bus groups generally kept together. Later, this allowed them to proceed as groups to the seats in the large auditorium. When we finally started moving in, Max, Evan and I found our way up the stairs, entered the performance hall and took seats in the right-hand balcony immediately next to the entrance. From this vantage point,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

we could see everyone who walked in by that route. They could see us, too. One of the entrants glanced at us and shouted "Oh, my God! Max!" I was sitting in the aisle seat, and Max had to climb over me to hug his old friend. He spoke with her for a few minutes then returned to looking over with Evan each woman who passed by. For them, the spectacle had already begun.

One result of the seating by group was that the audience was not composed of a mass of anonymous individuals. In some ways, this may have prevented the entire crowd from coming together as one. Different sections of the audience were marked by different group personalities, perhaps because each person could always see how his or her friends were behaving and adapt accordingly. On the other hand, this almost guaranteed that the audience would coalesce at least at the level of group. As people filed into the performance hall, took seats and waited for the festivities to begin, a group of French Taglit participants sitting in front of us on the far right-hand side of the upper balcony sang soccer chants, Jewish and Zionist songs like *David Melech Yisrael* and *Artza Alinu*, twirled their Israeli flags, and tried many times to start a wave. Bus 194 sat in the seats strategically placed to block the wave from going any farther. Penned in their corner by the sedate American group, the French never succeed in exporting their *joie de vivre* to the rest of the audience. Eventually, like their Révolution of 1789, their positive expressions of *fraternité* grew uglier and uglier

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

until all that was left was an angry, shouting mob intent on disruption for its own sake.[27]

But long before the expulsion, when the French group defiantly marched out of the auditorium screaming and shaking their fists, the program began on a happier note. The lights were cut. The hall erupted in applause and cheers. Most surprising to me was that even Evan was clapping enthusiastically. For the moment, all trace of cynicism had drained from his face and he stood there wide-eyed. Max, too, was visibly excited, but I somehow had expected this more of him than of Evan. He was a staff person's model participant. Intelligent, articulate, handsome, Jewishly knowledgeable, moved by the Israel experience and willing to tell others that he felt this way. Peer modeling was important to the program's success, and Max was their Tyson Beckford.

The emcee—the same tall, thin, 30-something American-born comedian who hosted the Mega-Event the previous year—came onstage. He welcomed people by their country of origin, calling out the names of the various countries represented in the room: Brazil, Argentina, Canada, Ukraine, France, U.S.A. Whenever a country was named, its citizens stood up and cheered with raucous

---

[27] Comments recorded afterwards by a CMJS researcher with another group there at the time captured the anger. Ellen: "There must be something really wrong with them. Why wouldn't they shut up?" Laura: "God, what the fuck was wrong with them? They were so rude!" Jane: "Why did they take so long to kick them out?" Melissa: "What a bunch of assholes!" Beth: "You'd think they'd catch on after an hour of everyone in the room telling them to shut up." Sam: "I wish they'd left sooner. They really took away from the acts." Jonah: "I hope we don't have to see them again." But upon hearing these reactions, two others, Noah and Wes were critical of some of the things their friends said about the French group. Noah: "We're trying to advocate peace

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

enthusiasm, except for the Americans who were more subdued. Many people did not rise. An American woman sitting behind us said loudly enough for us to hear, "This sucks bullshit that our country is so not into anything!" Then, inexplicably, the comedian said "Texas!" And finally, he got a response.

In the middle of the orchestra section a large block of seats was open. A line of dignitaries including Taglit's founding philanthropists Charles R. Bronfman and Michael Steinhardt filed in to fill the seats. People applauded them. Near us, the French tried to start another wave, but again Bus 194 acted as a spoiler. Jeffrey, sitting a row in front of me, said, "I feel like such a crabby person. Not to do a wave." But he apparently decided that it was better to feel bad about seeming "crabby" than to be the only member of Bus 194 to stand up and join the French. This reflected the fact that individual participation was largely conditioned by the behavior of the bus-group as a whole. The French were up the whole time, but the group I was with sat quietly throughout the Mega-Event.

Then to the blasting strains of *Hava Nagila* and *Heveinu Shalom Aleichem,* recorded music that was piped in over the loudspeakers, Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Barak entered the room. The crowd roared to its feet. I heard someone shout, "Oh, my God!" People rushed forward to the edges of the aisles in order to see and touch Barak, and take photographs. Barak smiled widely, pressing

---

among nations and we're fighting each other." Wes echoed Noah's opinion.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

himself into the cheering mass of young people, grasping and high-fiving their outstretched hands. One of the CMJS evaluators later said that this was probably the most welcoming reception he had received in months, and that the Taglit participants were the only group left in Israel that actually seemed to like him. If only they could vote, Barak might have thought. Weeks later he would go down to a resounding defeat at the ballot box. For the moment though, the level of excitement was at a peak. Evan's skepticism of nationalist fervor was shed for the time being, as were Mark's right-wing political leanings. (A declared supporter of the opposition candidate for Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, Mark had earlier responded to a tour guide's comment that the ancient Maccabbean revolt produced a drive to "conquer and expand," by shouting out, "Sweet!") Regardless of how they felt at other times on the trip, both Evan and Mark were on their feet applauding with gusto.

Barak took his seat, and the crowd then did the same. The lights dimmed, and then a burst of drum beats and fireworks from the balconies on either side of the stage made people at first jump in their seats, then elicited gasps and wows. Small rockets shrieked overhead on invisible wires, and others boomed as sparks flew. Last year, these almost lit a performing choir girl on fire, but not this time. Sitting next to me, Evan wore a look of rapture. I was amazed at the transformation that had come over him. Only the French group was still shouting. "*Yisrael, Yisrael, Yisrael*!" Others did not appreciate the disruption,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Zionist though it may have been. "Shut up! Sit down!" came the response from individuals in the crowd.

After the drumming and fireworks, Steinhardt and Bronfman rose to speak. The crowd rose with them and gave them a heart-felt ovation. There was nothing *pro forma* about it. Steinhardt spoke first, mentioning "sleep deprivation" to the cheers of the crowd. He talked about the difficulties of convincing people to come to Israel during a time of "hostilities." "Still," he said, "you chose to keep your rendezvous with Jewish memory." People responded with loud applause and shouts of support.

Charles Bronfman then took the podium. "Charles, we love you!" someone shouted out. This elicited scattered cheers. As he did at the Mega-Event the year before, he asked people to shout with him, "I'm Canadian (or American, Ukrainian, etc.)! I'm Jewish! And I love it!" As he concluded his brief remarks, people whistled, hooted and clapped their hands as if he were a rock star. "God bless you all! Thank you!"

From there, a succession of Israeli speakers was interspersed with videos, laser light shows, modern dance performances, and percussionists whose instruments were chain saws, garbage cans and other heavy metal equipment. Barak lost the crowd with a boilerplate campaign speech that began for several minutes in Hebrew—just in time for broadcast on the 9:00 news, but understood by only a fraction of the people in the hall (judging from who applauded at the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

appropriate lines in the speech). When he finally did switch to English,[28] he dwelt on thanking a laundry list of dignitaries and ended in precisely formulated campaign pledges. "I do not intend to sign any document that passes sovereignty over the Temple Mount to the Palestinians." Sovereignty over other areas of Jerusalem's Old City was another matter that he chose to leave unsaid. Old rhetoric about a "united Jerusalem" was replaced by language about a "stronger Jerusalem." His statements on Jerusalem received loud cheers, among the loudest heard during the speeches. Mark, Max and Evan discussed the nuances amongst themselves, asking each other, "Do you think people understand?" They obviously felt that at least the three of them did.[29]

By the end of the evening, the stage was crowded with audience members dancing and waving flags. The French group had earlier grown so disruptive that they had been escorted out, while much of the auditorium jeered them. But

---

[28] People from non-English speaking countries had been given headsets for simultaneous translation into their own language.

[29] A deep skepticism about the level of participants' Jewish knowledge or commitment pervades Taglit to its core. It informs the funders' views of the program's worthiness, the organizers' views of the participants, and, as we see here, even the participants views of each other. Empirical evidence seems to make little difference in the judgments that are passed. Survey data from Taglit evaluations have repeatedly revealed a high level of early Jewish socialization including religious schooling and *bar/bat mitzvah*. Researchers who have spent extended time getting to know people in over a dozen Taglit groups have found people able to engage in informed, serious discussions of Jewish issues. And whether they recognize it or not, staff depend on the collaboration of participants to achieve their programmatic goals. This would not be possible if the participants were really as ignorant and unmotivated as they have been portrayed to be. In spite of this, a rush to judge the Jewish lives of participants as somehow inadequate in content or affect persists. This, in itself, is a topic worthy of study. Powerful institutional motivations merge with deep-seated Jewish prejudices (Rawidowicz 1986) and common American stereotypes about young people (Gaines 1998; Males 1996,1999).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the nationalist fervor persisted, and Argentinean and Canadian flags were again unfurled, this time on the stage. The concluding performer, a rock musician who led a children's choir, threatened to walk off the stage, which had devolved into chaos as the charging participants usurped the young performers' space. To a large degree, the enthusiasm had gotten out of hand. Americans could be heard angrily blaming the other nationalities for the disruptions, and the positive feeling that had earlier reigned was dampened somewhat by what the Israelis in the room would have described as a *"balagan."*

In spite of this, the event was generally remembered with favor. Almost one in three participants (31%) rated it one of the best things about Taglit, and another 27% said it was "Great, but not the best."[30] I would be remiss were I not to mention that the proportion who gave the Mega-Event the highest ratings was lower than the proportions who said this of the Western Wall (74%), Masada (66%) and being in a country where the majority is Jewish (61%). But the fact of being on a program with thousands of other Jews, which the Mega-Event made

---

[30] The ethnographic description of cross-national differences may also be reflected in the survey data. Canadians were much more likely than Americans to say that the Mega-Event was one of the best things about Taglit (45% vs. 26%) This difference is statistically significant (χ^2=88, d.f.=4, p<.001). Canadian-American differences of this magnitude were not seen in ratings of other aspects of the program. Part of this may be accounted for by the fact that many of the Canadian trips traveled in February, and thus participated in a separate Mega-Event from the one in January which I described above.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

so palpable to Dina from White Plains, rated at this high level, with 61% saying it was one of the best things about Taglit.[31]

To summarize, we witnessed in the Mega-Event a number of interesting things. Foremost was the power of the mass political rally to sweep along even established skeptics (like Evan) and political opponents (like Mark). Many of us, especially in the academy, like to consider ourselves critical free-thinkers whose ability to recognize a charismatic appeal confers on us some immunity to it. We believe we are too smart to succumb to such a crass play for the emotions. This may be little more than an affectation. For examples of the less-than-sterling performances of Western intellectuals who were actually put to the test, see Hollander (1981) and Margulies (1968). I would caution against dismissing Evan, Mark and their peers as dupes. They too prided themselves on their intellect, their critical faculties, and their ability to see through manipulations. Not long before, Evan himself had called attention to the similarities between the Mega-Event and political rallies in communist Cuba—not a flattering comparison by any means. Later, after Barak's embarrassingly flat speech chipped away at the charisma of office he entered the room with, Evan and the others sat parsing the meanings of his carefully worded phrases. These were sharp-minded young adults, in the prime of their undergraduate years. Not village idiots. And yet the power of charisma and collective effervescence was such that it produced

---

[31] The Pearson correlation coefficient between ratings of the Mega-Event and of being on a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

behavior that was out of character for them, but in tune with a collective consciousness that electrified the great hall.

A second interesting point about the Mega-Event was that it became the setting for assertions of collective identity on multiple levels. National identities were strongly in evidence, especially among the Canadians, South Americans and Europeans. American identity was on display mostly as a smug disdain for the others' flag-waving, although there were times when it was expressed in kind. Bus-group identities were strongly felt, as people looked for familiar faces in a room of thousands, and as different groups gave different flavors to the various sections of the audience. Jewish identity was invoked by the formal program, by the Zionist songs of the French group, and by the recognition that in spite of all the divisions in the crowd, this was the largest gathering of Jews most people there had ever been a part of.

The portrait of collective effervescence that emerges in this analysis of the Mega-Event is more nuanced than the standard understanding of the Durkheimian corroboree. Sub-groups mediated the experience, sometimes encouraging a unity in the crowd and other times working against it. Multiple assertions of identity were present. Canadian and Argentinean flags, totems from other lands, competed with Jewish and Israeli symbols. Conflict and cohesion each at times manifested themselves. Official messages of Jewish unity were lost

---

program with thousands of other Jews was .334 ($p < .001$).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in a tsunami of competing nationalisms, only to burst to the surface again and bob along, gathering strength.

Israel as Totem

Durkheimian theory links collective effervescence with the intuition of the sacred (1995). Much of the next chapter will be devoted to an extended theoretical treatment of this issue. In short, Durkheim argues that the excited state of collective effervescence is notable for its contrast to the hum-drum of daily life. Similar to the authenticity/inauthenticity duality that I elaborated earlier, the special character of the effervescent state is called to consciousness by awareness of its binary opposite. Durkheim argues that people become aware of two worlds, one which is bland and routine and one which sweeps them away, carrying them to emotional states they rarely achieve and behaviors that seem uncharacteristic even to themselves. The dualistic conception of profane and sacred is born through experience of these two radically discontinuous states of existence.

Durkheim further argues that people are unable to clearly recognize the actual social dynamics which foster such unconventional behaviors and perceptions and therefore latch on to more concrete elements of the experience's setting. That is, rather than understand the altered state as a function of complex group processes, a "transfer of feelings takes place" (1995:222). He writes,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> The clan is too complex a reality for such unformed minds to be able to bring its concrete unity into clear focus.... All [that the 'primitive'] feels is that he is lifted above himself and that he is participating in a life different from the one he lives ordinarily. He must still connect those experiences to some external object in a causal relation. Now what does he see around him? What is available to his senses, and what attracts his attention, is the multitude of totemic images surrounding him.... Thus placed at center stage, it becomes representative. To that image the felt emotions attach themselves, for it is the only concrete object to which they can attach themselves (1995:223).

Ignore Durkheim's talk of "primitives" with "unformed minds." His interpretation is applicable to human beings generally. It is the totem, he claims, that people believe has the power to transport them to otherworldly states of being both frenzied and sublime. The totem seemingly calls forth otherworldly forces, and because of this is treated as sacred.

I noted earlier that on Taglit, collective effervescence was something that was more felt than considered and more experienced than understood. This has made it difficult to demonstrate a direct link between collective effervescence and the opinion that the Israel pilgrimage-tour was personally meaningful or spiritual. For once I start speaking of opinions, I am speaking about something

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

that implies a discursive awareness. The cognitive bias inherent in the phrase "personal meaning" seems to demand that I bring forward statements like David's ("Especially that night when we were all singing on the bus. That was one of my best Jewish experiences ever.") But as I noted, such explicitly conscious linkages were rare. No one, for example, spoke of the disco bus to Masada in these terms.

According to Durkheim, however, there is no reason to expect any explicit recognition of collective effervescence. In his view, the sensory, emotional and behavioral effects of collective effervescence are perceived but not recognized for what they are. The experience becomes cognitively meaningful only through the mediating element of the totem. In other words, if Durkheim's theory is correct, then we would expect to find that the pervasive symbols of the environment would be attributed with the power to evoke the special feelings that were experienced. In this case, there is no need to look for new symbols such as Sababa the Cat or the Hebrew word *Mifgash* (although these too may suffice), because the entire pilgrimage-tour is already suffused with the dominant sacred symbols of Judaism and Zionism. Nor need these symbols be limited to mere physical representations. Once the issue is one of semiotics, then anything can be a symbol as long it conceptually evokes thoughts of something else. The Sabbath, the Western Wall, the Hebrew language, falafel, the Judean Desert, a kibbutz, even the grand condensational symbol "Israel"—all these can come to represent the feelings that emerged in the effervescent moments on Taglit. Stated coarsely,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

if Durkheim is right, then Israel should become a totem that evokes the Taglit trip.

In fact, this is exactly what Heilman (1995) found in his ethnography of "ID X," a group on a similar Israel pilgrimage-tour.

> The Israel 'where almost everyone gets along with one another' is the Israel which ID X inhabited, not the real place, with its complex society struggling with itself and against hostile enemies. Theirs is an Israel shaped by and seen through the ID X experience. This experience often indifferently lumped together the large, Israel, [and] the small, ID X.... The reality of the group becomes indistinguishable from the reality of Israel (90).

Heilman was skeptical of this development. "Israel became confused with ID X," he wrote, and questioned whether the symbolic attachments to Israel so developed would be sustainable. After all, the temporary community with which it had become "confused" would eventually dissolve, and he had little reason to believe that this would be replaced with a connection based on a sophisticated understanding of Israel proper. Quoting one of the staff members, he wrote, "although the campers may have believed they were getting into Israel, coming to know it, their actual encounter was 'quite a shallow knowing of Israel'" (90).

I am reluctant to characterize the symbolic relationship between Israel and the Taglit groups as one of confusion. Instead, I believe that Heilman's

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

conclusion affirms the validity of the theoretical perspective I have introduced here. In the minds of ID X participants, the symbolic meanings that Israel held expanded to incorporate the group experience itself. This is without prejudice to any other associations they had with the symbol, including the more normative ones implied by Heilman. "Israel" is a robust condensational symbol (see Elder and Cobb 1983) that can index a variety of cognitive and affective meanings ranging on an axis of consensus to idiosyncrasy.[32] Its established position in traditional Jewish thought (M. Kadushin [1952] 2001:55-6) that helped it evolve into a quasi-sacred symbol of American Jewish civil religion (Neusner 1985; Woocher 1986), its sufficient breadth and ambiguity, and its focal role in the pilgrimage itself made it ripe for its emergence as a totem encapsulating the experience.

In a previous chapter I presented an e-mailed letter from a Taglit alumna. It is worth reviewing here because it is exemplifies so clearly the attribution to Israel of the power to elevate and enervate.

> After leaving Israel I find myself wanting to return so badly, I think about it at least 50 times a day and hope I never stop thinking about it. After letting everything soak in I realized how comfortable I felt while in Israel. I don't think I realized it at the time but there is just

---

[32] We might also note that the axis will differ for different groups.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> something about being there that is really special, like no other place in the world.

Is there truly "something about being there that is really special" – something intrinsic to the place, independent of the social and institutional context in which this person saw the country? From the perspective of faith, perhaps. From the perspective of social science, such an explanation will not suffice. In this e-mailed example the transference is complete. The social experience has been associated with its setting, and that setting is then believed to have the power to independently reproduce the feelings that were actually grounded in the specific social experience. Not only Durkheim's "primitives" are given to the raising of totems, but modern, educated men and women too.

It is important to realize that these processes unfold in real time during the pilgrimage-tour, such that the occurrences on Day 1 condition those of Day 4 which in turn shape those of Day 10. Thus, as the trip goes on, the sacred symbols that are encountered find their normative contents increasingly overlaid with totemic meaning as well. This has important implications for our understanding of mass pilgrimage-tourism. Ultimately, it is impossible to distinguish between the semiotic encounter that is often thought to be at the heart of pilgrimage and the group context in which these meaningful symbols are invoked and revitalized. When E. Cohen (1992:51) speaks of pilgrimage as a "movement toward the Center," the motivation to go and the expectation of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

what one will find may be based on individual interpretation of what the Center symbolizes. But in the actual act of pilgrimage, the meanings which ultimately emerge might be a good deal more complex than the pilgrim originally imagined. To an extent, all people who travel on group pilgrimages are 'accidental pilgrims,' because what they find is the result of emergent processes that cannot fully be known in advance.[33] Notions of pilgrimage that view it as an individual encounter with sacred symbols tend, therefore, to be guilty of oversimplification.[34] The symbols themselves can contribute to excited collective states (Levi-Strauss 1963:70-1). But the heightened feelings of meaning, awe, and fulfillment that are associated with groups worked up to a state of excitement exert their own influence on perceptions of sacred symbols.

The evening prior to their trip to Masada, participants on Bus 194 crowded into a tight, dingy hotel conference room to discuss 'the meaning' of Masada. All was normative narrative, even when a critical perspective was adopted: the mytho-historical Josephan account of a defiant mass suicide in the face of Roman conquest, the elevation of national identity over physical survival,

---

[33] Leonard Saxe first suggested to me that Taglit participants might be thought of as "reluctant pilgrims." As I developed my own thought on the matter, I settled on the term "accidental," for Taglit participants had a high motivation to see Israel because they were Jews and it was 'the Jewish state.' After writing this I discovered that Grant (2000b) addressed the same issue in a similar manner, referring to "paradoxical pilgrims."

[34] My focus here is on group pilgrimage-tours. The social experience of the lone pilgrim remains an open question. It is likely that a private pilgrimage to a personal "shrine" exhibits a different character. But even the solo traveler visiting collectively-affirmed pilgrimage destinations like the Ka'ba in Mecca or St. Peter's Basilica in Rome may find the experience influenced by the presence of others on site.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the heroism of self-defense, the debate whether suicide can ever be justified, the Zionist reading of the tale as metaphor for the tenacity of a garrison-state determined that "Masada will not fall again." But this alone did not account for the description of Masada as one of the most spiritual moments of the pilgrimage-tour. All these meanings were overlaid with the first-hand experience of sunrise, *shofar*, and collective silence—all of which took place with the Zionist framing fresh in mind. What, then, are the cognitive and affective contents associated with Masada as a symbol if not a mix of the ideological and the emergent? Such a finding alters the notion of what pilgrimage is. No longer a mere visit to a holy site with pre-determined meanings, it is seen as a dynamic process whose fluid meanings emerge through the interaction of semiotic and group processes.

This returns us to Durkheim's notion of the totem. The totem is the means of preserving symbolically an immediate experience which is itself fleeting. It is the residue of collective effervescence. "The image goes on calling forth and recalling those emotions even after the assembly is over.... [It] lives beyond the gathering. By means of it, the emotions felt are kept perpetually alive and fresh" (1995:222). Masada's old meanings are not lost. But the symbol's flexibility is evidenced in its ability to sustain new cognitive and affective contents. It is

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

through this interaction of normative sanctity and collective effervescence that old symbols can become young again.[35]

BEYOND COLLECTIVE EFFERVESCENCE[36]

Conversations, Communitas and the Conscience Collectif

There was more to the group processes that emerged on the Taglit buses than can be accounted for by Durkheimian notions alone. Sean's tearful confession to his assembled group, described in the previous chapter, suggests a depth of camaraderie that is not apparent when we focus only on collective effervescence. "I don't have *happiness*," he admitted to a room full of people who only three days before were strangers. He had no qualms about doing this. Not because of the Jerry Springerization of North American popular culture. True, the public discourse in the United States and Canada may be growing ever more debased. But the daytime talk shows' incentives of a Warholian fifteen minutes and several thousand dollars in the pocket, plus the protection afforded by the lack of any true community linking the talk show guest with home viewer were remote from the context of Taglit. Sean was speaking to people he had come to know by name, and with whom he would be living in close quarters for the next seven days—not a lot of time in the scheme of a life, but enough to make someone

---

[35] Compare M. Kadushin's concept of "concretization" ([1952] 2001: 79-81; Chapter III, passim.).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

think twice before exposing himself to potential ridicule. For Sean, the ability to pour forth his heart rested on his declaration, "I feel so comfortable with you guys."

The incident is representative of a form of interaction that anthropologist Victor Turner termed *communitas*. He defined this as "the direct, immediate, and total confrontation of human identities," ([1974] 1987:169). The connection with Buber's thought was not lost on Turner, who elsewhere described communitas as "quintessentially a mode of relationship between total and concrete persons, between *'I'* and *'Thou'*" ([1969] 1982:136). I will develop the concept at greater length in the concluding chapter. For now, it is important to note that the environment in which Sean could feel comfortable bearing his soul publicly to a group was the product of a self-reinforcing process, shaped by structural elements of the situation, deliberate actions taken by the staff, and a widespread willingness on the participants' part to play along.

During a Conversation about "spirituality," people in one group were asked/told to lie down on the floor in a small hotel meeting room. With the lights dimmed and their eyes shut, they were guided through a meditation by the Israeli *madrichah*. She then instructed everyone to think of a spiritual moment in their lives and to remember what made it special. After several minutes, the lights were turned on and the staff person instructed the students to pair off and

---

[36] Parts of this section appeared previously in Kelner et al. (2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

discuss the spiritual moments they had been reflecting on. No option was given to keep one's thoughts private, but participants gave no indication that they saw this request as unreasonable or out of the ordinary. It was in keeping with an expectation that held sway generally throughout the trip that personal feelings and thoughts were the property of the entire group, rather than the private domain of the individual. No doubt, some people bristled at this. But more often than not, there appeared to be a genuine desire among many to share intimate details of their lives.

Often these intimate details had little to do with Israel or Judaism.[37] I was surprised by the frequency of instances in which participants, young adults mostly in their late teens and early twenties, revealed that they were struggling with emotions raised by the loss or illness of friends and family. Such revelations typically occurred during tree-planting ceremonies at Jewish National Fund forests and group discussions surrounding visits to iconic places like Yad Vashem and the Western Wall. Standing in a discussion circle at Yad Vashem, one woman announced that she had undergone life-saving heart surgery as an infant and might need to undergo the operation again. She was crying, as were many people in the circle. Later, she told the staff that it was the first time she had ever spoken of her medical condition in a group. Several days later, she thanked the other students as they held their concluding conversation of the trip:

---

[37] This is another indication that that the constraints encouraging people to view their lives

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> I kinda wanted to thank the whole group because, umm, the other day at Yad Vashem—I've never felt like I've been supported by people, and so I just wanted to thank you guys because I felt like I could say that to you. Like, I wasn't going to, but I did.

Characteristic of communitas relations, people put themselves in a vulnerable position by baring intensely private matters and emotions to a group of thirty or forty others. To the extent that this vulnerability was not abused, trust was fostered among members of the group. Of course, there were always exceptions to the feelings of trust. After one group conversation raised the issue of interfaith marriage, the woman who felt so comfortable sharing her medical condition reported to a CMJS researcher that another woman, born to an interfaith couple, felt "attacked" and unable to enter the conversation. In other groups, gays and lesbians who were out in their home communities closeted themselves during the trip. One finally outed herself to the group when she felt that the staff had allowed a joke about homosexuals to become a running bit of bus humor.

The fact that group conversations served as a setting for the development of trusting relations added another dimension to their role in creating feelings of personal meaning. In the previous chapter, I discussed how they contributed, if not to a fully elaborated sense of narrative identity, then at least to a meaning-

---

through a Jewish lens were not absolute.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

providing sense of *gestalt*. Here, however, I call attention to their role in making the private public.

Depending on whether one views the Taglit groups as examples of community cohesion or as arenas of power, one could interpret this either as a vocalization of the collective consciousness or as a mechanism of surveillance and social control. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett wrote that similar group discussions on other Israel Experience trips were "among the ways that interior processes of reflection are exteriorized, monitored, and regulated" (2000:41). Rather than leave the individual to interpret experiences for him or herself, it was as if staff was trying replicate Lewin's experiments in group decision-making (1958). They instituted a process that made each participant privy to other people's thoughts. When a person's own sentiments were echoed by others, one could feel comfortable that such feelings were legitimate. Conversely, by making very clear what thoughts were dissenting, it forced people to decide whether to express them and if so, how. Moreover, a dynamic was created in which participants communicated the party line directly to their fellow travelers, including the crucial message from the perspective of the program organizers—that the trip was personally meaningful. Regular features of group discussions included comments such as these:

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"I found the *Kabbalat Shabbat*[38] service amazing. Singing songs made me feel connected to Jews all over the world."

"Recognizing that I had Israel made me a Jew. I realized I have a large Jewish family, and where I belong by being here."

"I feel I have to ensure that the next generation has the opportunity to be around other Jews."

Such testimonials contributed to a normative environment that encouraged to people to evaluate the program on an axis of emotional, ethnic or spiritual meaning. They may have placed themselves at the low end of this axis, but the presence or absence of personal meaning was still a salient point of reference. In terms of specific sites, this was more true of some places than others. The Knesset tended not to be spoken of in this trope. But, not surprisingly, the ur-totem Western Wall usually was, even among people who shrugged off the visit:

"I just sort of felt I was going through the motions. There wasn't anything really too meaningful to it. It just kind of seemed like we were doing this, doing that and I don't know, I can barely even remember it."

---

[38] The Sabbath eve worship service.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"I didn't feel a really big connection with the Wall. I didn't feel anything at the Wall."

"Basically, I wrote a little something on a piece of paper and I went over to the Wall and placed it over there and that's about it. Didn't really do any praying or anything. Just placed it in the Wall. There was no real significant feeling while I was there. It was just 'doing something else.'"

Even those who chose to hold their tongues were subject to the influence and constraint that this normative environment imposed. In fact, for those who felt uncomfortable in this environment, silence was often a preferred form of dissent.

The Limits of Dissent

At Yad Vashem, near a memorial sculpture of an educator who accompanied his pupils to the concentration camps, four participants sat on a low stone wall, far removed from the rest of the group. A strong wind blew, rustling the leaves in the trees that provided some shade to the four. It also ensured that even those standing near Uri, the Israeli guide, had a difficult time hearing his remarks about the sculpture. There was certainly no way that Alyse or Scott could hear a word of what Uri said, nor did they seem at all interested. The same could be said of Alyssa and Eli, who sat several feet away from them on the same wall.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Most of the group indicated their interest in the visit and in what Uri had to say by straining to listen, by snapping photographs of the sculpture, and, in a customary Jewish sign of remembering the dead, by placing rocks upon it at Uri's urging. This strange juxtaposition of behaviors—at once taking pictures like tourists in a museum and simultaneously placing stones on a memorial like mourners in a cemetery—bespoke the layers of meaning that were characteristic of the visit to Yad Vashem. The sculpture was not to be 'appreciated' as if it were resting in some municipal art museum. Nor was it only a memorial to a specific educator and his children. It stood as a metonym that might help people grasp the essentially ungraspable whole that is referred to as the 'Holocaust.'[39]

Only moments before Uri began speaking about the sculpture, the group had exited from a darkened hall of mirrors surrounding a single candle reflected an infinite number of times. Black and white slides of children's faces cross-faded continually as a recording intoned the names of Nazism's youngest victims. Outside, Uri asked if anybody wanted "to say or share something," as if something needed to be said or shared. When he was greeted only with silence, he pulled a sprig of rosemary from a bush nearby and passed it around. "We smell rosemary at times like these to revive ourselves." In this manner, he offered what Heilman called an "emotional cue" (1995:70-71), indicating that one should be in an emotional state in which revival was necessary. The same Jewish

---

[39] On the use of metonymy in museum displays, see Chapter 1 of Kirshenbaltt-Gimblett (1998).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

educational system that produced the teen tour Heilman observed was responsible for the programmatic content of the Taglit programs. It is therefore no surprise to find that in these groups too, Yad Vashem entailed "an 'obligation to be moved'" and an obligation to tender "demonstrations of how much they 'felt the Jewish pain' of the Holocaust" (1995:71).

Against this backdrop, Alyse, Scott, Alyssa and Eli's bored looks and physical separation from the group represented a physical expression of dissent from the collective enactment of the obligation to be moved. But the nature of this dissent was more complex than meets the eye. Aware of her self-imposed separation from the community, Alyse expressed some discomfort with it, even though she remained unapologetic. As the group left the area of the sculpture, she said to Alyssa, "I'm not, like, not listening to be rude, I just want to experience it for me."

A program like Taglit, where the overwhelming majority of people came away saying that the experience was extremely meaningful, and where the language used to describe it was often gushing with superlatives, tends to breed in onlookers a natural skepticism. Surely, the experience was not wonderful for everybody. Surely, some people had a hard time swallowing the ideological agenda of the sponsors. From a research perspective, we would be tempted to seek out those people who could be called contrarians. On each bus that CMJS researchers observed, dissent was certainly present. But the notion that there was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

a class of people we could label contrarians, who consistently objected to the ideological predilections of the program organizers, is difficult to sustain.

Consider, for example, Isabel. Park Avenue progeny, she would just as easily discourse on Phoenician pottery and Roman conceptions of glory as drop the names of the famous rich kids she had partied with. Although she had a large group of friends, she was insular in a way, not interacting much with others outside of her circle. In a sense, her male friends enjoyed being around her for the same reason other men on the bus timidly kept their distance; tall and stately, she was considered by many men to be the most beautiful woman in the group. She carried herself as if she knew it, too—deciding, for instance, to wear a bikini at the Dead Sea (and in the process to reveal several intimately-placed tattoos) even though or especially because doing so set her apart from almost every other woman in the group.

During a group conversation about spirituality, Isabel issued the sharpest dissent of the session. Another person had just described his experience at the Western Wall in perfectly normative terms for Taglit: "I was rubbing the Wall, I pushed my head up against it. I felt like I was speaking directly to God." The staff person thanked him and said that his comment was in line with what she had wanted to say next. To this, he responded enthusiastically, "Score! The segue!" His friend nearby pumped a fist in the air as a gesture of support. It was an attitude like this that generally allowed the conversations to hit their mark. But Isabel, by contrast, had no interest in playing along and refused to affirm the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

direction that the conversation was taking. The staff person spoke of the reciting "the *Sh'ma,*"[40] with "*kavanah,*" which she said meant a state of deep concentration and intention. "'Tradition.' 'To really concentrate.' How do these words make you feel?" Isabel answered immediately. "It makes me think of being a little kid.... My parents would make me say the *Sh'ma* every night before I go to sleep. As I got older, I realized they were words that meant nothing to me."

The not so subtle subtext of the conversation was that Jewish spirituality was both possible and of value. By saying that the words of the basic Jewish statement of faith "meant nothing" to her and were essentially a child's trifle, forced upon her by insistent parents, Isabel made it known that she rejected the core message that the staff was trying to communicate. She then attempted to steer the conversation into a technical discussion about the Hebrew grammar in the *Sh'ma,* drawing on a Jewish day school education that few other participants had. This led to a five minute digression that eventually had to be reined in by the staff person who tried to return to the theme of participants' personal feelings.

In spite of her open dissent, it would be a gross oversimplification to slap the label "contrarian" on Isabel. She was among the first at Yad Vashem to place a stone on the sculpture of the educator, and it was her act that prompted Uri to suggest that others do the same. She contributed to other group discussions,

---

[40] Judaism's core affirmation of faith: Hear (*Sh'ma*), O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

defending the Masada zealots' decision to commit mass suicide (in line with the hegemonic narrative) and talking about her brother's strong commitment to Judaism. Her Jewish day school education was on display when she engaged the conversation on the grammar of the *Sh'ma*, and when she happily spoke Hebrew to the Israelis they encountered. Her surprise reunion with an Israeli friend was so filled with delighted squeals and jumping and hugging that the personal nature of her connection to Israel could not be missed by those looking on.

A more common form of dissent eschewed outright rejection of the program's ideology in favor of an open-minded skepticism. This was different in character than the gauntlet Isabel threw down, because it held open the possibility that the person was willing to be convinced otherwise. In this sense, it conceded the basic parameters of the normative environment that had emerged. On Bus 194, this position was epitomized by Jeffrey, a pallid, lanky man who seemed ill-at-ease in large groups and who made few close connections with his peers. I wondered how much of his seeming self-consciousness was induced by the context of a group that probably appeared to him to be much more comfortable with the explicit Jewishness that pervaded the trip. He did say repeatedly that he did not feel very knowledgeable about things Jewish. Still, my impression was that there was something constitutional underlying it. In a group that generally welcomed my presence, asked me to write down their reactions and jokes, and volunteered to speak into the tape recorder and even to record for

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

me on a day I stayed behind to type field notes, he reacted to my 'wearing a wire' with sidelong glances, furrowed brows, and suspicious questions that were such obvious indicators of discomfort that I dismantled the entire system on my own accord to assure him that I was not there to violate his trust. Jeffrey did not shrink from confrontation. He was an honest man who held his ground intellectually and freely voiced his opinion, even when it went against the grain. When he spoke, Mark often smelled blood and pounced quickly. But Jeffrey could be combative when need be, and Mark never really got the better of him.

In his group's discussion about spirituality, Jeffrey expressed similar views to those Isabel voiced to her group. But whereas Isabel simply asserted that the *Sh'ma* was meaningless to her, Jeffrey expressed interest in why Judaism, which admittedly held no salience for him, was meaningful to others. Repeatedly throughout the trip, he seemed honestly bewildered by the interest and apparent excitement that things Jewish generated in his peers.

The conversation took place on Masada, several hours after the sunrise, and following a guided tour of the ruined palace, bath house and synagogue on top of the mesa. All told, we were an unwieldy 29 participants, one researcher and four staff. Therefore, for the purposes of all group discussions the group was divided in half alphabetically. This meant that the same people were always together at conversation time. On this day, our two conversation groups sat about twenty-five yards apart in a large clearing near Masada's southern edge. To the south, behind the staff-person, Julie Beth, the cliff of the neighboring

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

plateau could be seen. From my vantage point, I had a view of the strata of rock in the mountainside—the shades of red, brown, gray, yellow and purple that would have been more visible had it been overcast. But on that day they were mostly washed out by the bright sun that shone down from a nearly cloudless blue sky.

Julie Beth opened the conversation by asking whether we had "had spiritual moments here" in Israel. Isosceles responded first. "Being up here so high, stepping back to see the world and get some perspective," he said. It was the only time in the entire conversation that he would speak. The conversation progressed, but the theme of spiritual moments connected with Judaism and the Taglit trip persisted. For about twenty minutes, Jeffrey remained silent. Finally, he spoke up. "I'm not feeling spiritual," he said. "I didn't feel spiritual at the [Western] Wall," in contrast to other people who had just said that they did. But rather than leave it at this, as Isabel did in her group discussion, Jeffrey continued, and adopted a more tentative, questioning tone. "When I read a book that speaks to me... is that what it is to have a spiritual experience? When something strikes a match inside of you?" (For all his professions of ignorance, he could speak the metaphoric language of the soul). Mark, who by now had been used to arguing with Jeffrey, jumped in.

"I disagree."

"What do you mean 'you disagree?!' Jeffrey shouted back. "It's the way I feel! You can't disagree.'" Jeffrey was correct. He was describing an emotional

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

state, and not a matter of fact that could be evaluated as true of false. But Mark paid no attention to this and continued talking. Jeffrey would have none of it, and demanded, "Can I finish?!" The interaction was characteristic of Jeffrey's participation in the group discussions. He seemed to evoke a response in Mark, Max, and a few others that would heat up conversations. Such confrontation was a deviation from the norm. Most of the time, people waited their turns to speak, and everyone was allowed to have his or her say without being interrupted.

Two other group members, Ellen and Beth, both gave Jeffrey some support. Beth said, "That book could be someone else's Western Wall. You can't know when it's gonna come over you."

Mickey leaned up off his hands, dusted the dirt off of them and said, "For me, it's math. When you look at something and it completely makes sense."

"Will Hunting!" Ron exclaimed. "That who you are." People smiled at the reference to the fictional math genius in the Matt Damon - Ben Affleck movie.

Mickey shrugged off Ron's incessant banter, then waxed poetic. "On this trip, my view of God has totally changed. God is the universal connection of everything.... In my opinion, it's a more mature view of God." He said he began thinking seriously about his view of God "after Avraham spoke to us." Avraham Infeld was a lecturer who had been referenced several times by participants since he spoke to them on their first night in Jerusalem.

As Mickey continued, a plane flew overhead in the bright blue, the sound of its engines drowning out his voice. The faint scent of suntan lotion wafted in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the cool breeze. Isosceles leaned back and tilted his head toward the sky, eyes closed, basking in the sun. Judy passed around a bag of pretzels she had brought, a general gift to the entire group.

Jeffrey waited for Mickey to finish, then responded, "I don't really believe in God. But I see that some of you [do]. At what moment were you convinced [that there was a God]?" It was an invitation to the group to help him empathize with their feelings. Ron, Mark, and Max each responded with some variant of "There is always doubt," but that it can be reconciled with belief. Julie Beth, who was facilitating the discussion, echoed the sentiment, prompting Jeffrey to respond, "I marvel at the amount of dedication. I can't be so dedicated."

At this point, Julie Beth repeated the bland refrain that all feelings were legitimate. It was a superfluous comment. Jeffrey views were being engaged seriously by others in the group, even if there was a sense that they needed to help him see the light. But Jeffrey had, after all, asked for it.

"Did you ever do a what-if?" Mickey asked him. I was curious as to what he was thinking. Why would Mickey ask this? Was he trying to encourage Jeffrey? Jeffrey responded by saying that he had put on *tefillin*[41] at the Western Wall, where a booth had been set up and manned by two long-bearded Orthodox men with thick Brooklyn accents. He felt uncomfortable though, he said. This was not him. He wasn't pious enough. The *tefillin* were slapped on him

---

[41] Phylacteries.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

quickly and forcefully. He went up to the Western Wall with them on but did not—could not—pray. Instead he just thought.

"I did the same thing," Mickey responded in affirmation. Most of the men in the group had gone together to the *tefillin* booth, and so shared the experience. "I had a conversation with myself." He said he didn't want to share its contents, but it was about where he was in life and in school at that time.

Mark also offered uncharacteristic words of support to Jeffrey. "You've got to find your own way." Max, a day school graduate of French Moroccan descent, gave by way of example personal testimony how he integrated 'finding his own way' with the established tradition. "In the *amidah*,[42] there is a spot for personal prayer."

As Max spoke, a *shofar* blast echoed in the distance. The other half of the group had finished their conversation and were gathered by the southern edge of the mountain, where Sam again was sounding the *shofar*. We heard the horn blow and a faint echo. Julie Beth pulled out a prayerbook from her bag, and said that we would conclude by reading a line from the *amidah* prayer that Max had spoken. He had scored the segue, but neither Ron nor anyone else pointed that out. Julie Beth read, "May the words of my mouth and meditations of my heart be acceptable to you O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer."[43]

---

[42] The silent prayer recited at least three times a day during the appointed prayer times.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In addition to the vocal dissent exemplified (with all its contradictions) by Isabel and the open-minded skepticism voiced by Jeffrey, a third form of dissent was sometimes evident in the silence people maintained. The difficulty in analyzing silence is that it gives little indication of what underlies it. Did silence equal consent? Thoughtful consideration? Skepticism? Anger? Disgust? Discomfort? Boredom? Exhaustion? Timidity? Haughtiness? During a Sabbath meal that crowded several hundred Taglit participants into the large dining room of a Jerusalem hotel, two singers from the Israeli army choir tried to lead the assembled in song. Whereas many of the tables joined enthusiastically in the singing, I sat in silence with Misha, Evan, Ellen and three others. It was difficult to tell from the looks we gave each other whether people felt uncomfortable, ignorant, or just too cool to join in. The songs were common ones that people at other tables were familiar with, and sometimes they were repetitive tunes that had no words at all. But perhaps a lack of familiarity with the songs made the whole scene appear bizarre to them. As for me, I knew the songs and could have easily joined in the singing and would have had the people at my table participated. But given their silence, I had no wish to model an alternative behavior. Given the choice, I chose to reinforce the prevailing dynamic rather than encourage another one.

---

[43] The prayer took the line from Psalm 19.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Other indications that silence masked dissent were given when people who were often quiet broke their silence. This, however, is problematic as a method of inquiry because it means that we are analyzing not silence but speech. Misha tended to keep his own counsel on the trip. At Yad Vashem, he removed himself from the group much as the four people at the sculpture did. (On the other hand, he did come looking for me to tell me he had found the engraved name of my ancestral town of Zitomir in a memorial to the Jewish communities that suffered in the Holocaust. Misha knew my background, because upon finding out he was a Ukrainian émigré, I told him that I had been conducting genealogical research on my ancestors from Zitomir, which was near to where he grew up.) During the tour of the colonial British detention camp at Atlit, Misha, Mickey and I stood off on our own, not paying attention to Ravit's explanation of the place we were in. Out of the blue, Mickey said to us, "You know what's weird? I can't wait for it to be *Shabbat* again. I'm looking forward to it." "I can wait," Misha muttered.

Evan was another one of the people who sat with Misha through the Sabbath songs in silence. When he admitted in the first group conversation that he had ambivalent feelings about being Jewish, he sensed that his views might not be seen as legitimate given the context of the program. "I don't want to sound like a traitor..." he prefaced his remarks at that time. After that, he rarely spoke up during subsequent group conversations. His interactions with peers were peppered with a sarcastic humor. It was he who said, upon seeing how

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

small Mount Moriah was, "I hope Mount Sinai isn't such a piece of shit, or it might really shake my Jewish identity!" It was also he who compared the Mega-Event to a Cuban rally. And when we were asked to wear name tags on the second day of the tour, he smiled and asked the people around him, "Can I just *brand* 'tourist' across my face? It would be more comfortable." But these were private comments, spoken with humor. In the formal public fora of the group conversations, he mostly listened in silence.

In sum, dissent was present on Taglit, and tended to express itself in three ways. The most explicit were direct statements of dissent. These were the least common for a combination of reasons. People entered Taglit largely knowing the official rationale of the program they had signed on to. Many who truly opposed this rationale probably chose not to go. Among those who went, there was a general unwillingness to look a gift horse in the mouth. Even minor complaints were stifled. When people did say negative things about the pace, itinerary, food, staff, etc., their remarks were commonly followed by some variation of 'I can't complain too much. After all, the trip is free.' Finally, the program very effectively co-opted participants. When they articulated official messages, dissenters would be opposing not only the staff, but also their peers. This strong group pressure, more than anything else, led people more commonly to choose one of the two other routes to express dissent: open-minded skepticism or selective silence.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Temporary Total Institutions

The Batsheva Dance Company had been a controversial choice of performers for the Taglit Mega-Event in Jerusalem. Batsheva, Israel's premier modern dance company, was still anathema to many Orthodox Jews for a performance in which the dancers dressed in Hassidic garb and sang a traditional religious song as they stripped down to their skivvies. Orthodox trip sponsors had protested their inclusion in the program, to no avail. At the Mega-Event, the troupe's performance consisted of several segments. The last saw the performers dressed like anonymous corporate drones in identical gray business suits and fedoras. Each dancer danced alone. The choreography was nothing special. Standard club movements that anyone could do. But no dancer so much as looked at another. Then, without warning, they went into the audience and selected individuals to join them on stage. Some people appeared more comfortable than others to be up there dancing. Each dancer from Batsheva danced with his or her partner from the audience. Then, the troupe unified their movements leaving the participants startled and exposed. I loved the performance, and found it raised in me a series of thoughts about individuality in an impersonal group setting among strangers.

Most Taglit groups started as a collection of strangers. Only over time would anonymity be overcome and a group forged. But what would be the place of the individual in that group? I have already noted that group conversations eroded the boundary between private and public, exposing personal feelings to the surveillance and monitoring of the group. People modeled 'appropriate'

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

behaviors, shaping the perceptions and actions of others accordingly. Open dissent was rare, having been channeled away from explicitly oppositional statements to more passive expressions. As a result, a normative discourse about the trip's personal meaning emerged. This was backed by the weight of peer pressure. But let me be perfectly clear about what I mean by this. Peer pressure should not be confused with coercion to conform. Lightfoot offers the best clarification I have seen of this much misunderstood concept. She wrote, "Peer pressure is less a push to conform than a desire to participate in experiences that are seen as relevant, or potentially relevant, to group identity" (quoted in Harris 1998:281). As a result, what may appear to the outsider to be coercion was commonly experienced by the insiders in much more positive terms. The emergent communitas allowed people to open up in ways they normally would not have. The collective effervescence enabled them to reach heights both raucous and sublime. The more closely people identified with the group, the more likely they were to derive spiritual meaning from the trip, to experience themselves in some fulfilling way.

It is difficult to reserve value judgment on a question as charged as the nature of the individual's relationship with the group. What appears as cohesion to some looks like coercion to others. It is probably worth recognizing that the participants themselves tended not to speak in the language of monitoring, surveillance, peer pressure and conformity. That has largely been the purview of outside observers. Still, if it is possible to invoke this language while maintaining

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

a respect for the participants' generally positive evaluations of the experience, and a recognition that such language is an external imposition rather than an internal discourse, we can find our understanding enhanced by considering the relevance of Goffman's study of insane asylums. On the face of it, this seems a ridiculous assertion. What does a mental hospital, whose patients are committed often against their will, have to do with these free ten-day vacations? But just as Taglit's ultimate intention was to effect a transformation in the personal identity of its charges, the asylums had a similar goal.

Erving Goffman, in his landmark 1961 study of the subject, saw asylums as examples of "total institutions." These so structured the social environment upon which all identity is grounded that they constituted "a natural experiment on what can be done to the self" (1961:12). Goffman identified four defining features of total institutions, all of which found echoes in Taglit:

> First, all aspects of life are conducted in the same place and under the same single authority. Second, each phase of the member's daily activity is carried on in the immediate company of a large batch of others, all of whom are treated alike and required to do the same thing together. Third, all phases of the day's activities are tightly scheduled.... Finally, the various enforced activities are brought together into a single rational plan purportedly designed to fulfill the official aims of the institution (1961:6).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

I do not wish to overstate the case. On the spectrum of total institutions, Taglit was rather benign. The program uprooted participants from their home environments and identities and placed them as a group in an unfamiliar setting they had to make sense of. This created a dependence on the staff and on each other, and forced them to adopt an identity appropriate to their new position. But for all this, participation was not compulsory and lasted only for ten days, at which point the group disbanded. It was, then, a voluntary temporary total institution.

Just as important, in contrast to other forms of total institutions, Taglit began from the premise of affirming the value of each human being's individuality. At its core, the program's self-identity was rooted in the notion that its mission was educational. Its discourse developed accordingly. Taglit's "educational standards" insisted that the program "inspire... nurture... and incorporate fundamental values" (Taglit 2001:1). It also instructed trip organizers to "respect the integrity and sensibilities of participants" (3). The educational consultant who authored these guidelines explained the philosophical rationale underlying the program. Invoking Dewey and Erikson, he said,

> [L]et the secret be told, this action project is actually rooted in a multidimensional contemporary educational theory.... How would we categorize it in terms of prominent categories of educational philosophy? It is part existential humanist. It is part experimental

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> and progressive. It is part essentialist and core knowledge. It ultimately is an interesting new venture in a postmodernist philosophy of education for young Jewish adults (Chazan 2001:2,8).

The notion of Taglit as a temporary total institution therefore diverges from the self-concept and discourse of the program itself—organizers, staff and participants. But with this caveat in mind, the concept still offers some insight into the nature of the modern group pilgrimage-tour. The central argument I propose in this regard is that to meet its goal of inspiring Jewish identity, the program entailed a certain degree of subordination of the self to the group.

As Taglit participants, thousands of young adults—almost all accustomed to the freedom of college life and many already graduated and earning a living for themselves—freely chose to accept limitations on their autonomy for the duration of the trip. Most did this without even considering the choice significant. This was just what it meant to be on a group tour. It was even nice in a way, to be absolved of responsibility for a while. After all, this was vacation. And so, the itinerary was presented as a *fait accompli* that was binding on all. No individual had the option of deciding, say, to stay an extra day in Katzrin during the ten days of the program, or to abandon the group's accommodations at Jerusalem's Windmill Hotel in order to spend the night in the comfort of an uncle's apartment in Mevasseret Zion. New Americans from the Former Soviet Union and children of Israelis found it difficult, if not impossible, to visit family

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

members living in Israel. (One man who missed part of the Jerusalem tour in order to see family was not refunded his $250 deposit on the grounds that he had not completed the program.) The daily activities were "tightly scheduled," required of all, and "designed to fulfill the official aims of the institution" (Goffman 1961:6).

Often the limitations entailed minor discomforts. Privacy and personal space were rare. A hectic pace was maintained in spite of exhaustion, illness, and hunger. Vegetarians endured shortages of vegetarian food (beginning as early as the El Al flight to Israel). Husbands and wives traveling together found themselves unable to share hotel rooms. Friends from large campuses were split onto different buses. Boyfriends and girlfriends were, too. So were siblings, even twins.

Part of this was simply brought on by the needs of bureaucratic administration. The requirements of managing hundreds of groups of 30 to 40 individuals a piece required some suppression of individuality and processing of people as units. This was especially so with regard to the logistical matters surrounding travel, lodging and meals. But it went beyond this to include a variety of violations of personal boundaries identified by Goffman as characteristic of total institutions (23-35): forced revelation of private information (conversations as milieu therapy, icebreakers), bodily defilement (hard physical activities, uncomfortable accommodations, lack of vegetarian food), forced social contact (on the bus and in hotel room assignments) and contamination of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

relationships (husbands and wives roomed separately, boyfriends and girlfriends split onto different buses). For women especially, religious strictures may have entailed personal indignities, requiring them to dress in certain ways and denying them access to privileged spaces. Goffman's language of "defilement" and "contamination", with such awful connotations, seems overstated given the case. But all these things did occur, and did contribute to a sense that personal preferences had to be set aside for the good of the group and for the privilege to participate in the free trip. Hence the finding that Goffman labeled *disidentification* (23): When people were unhappy with certain things on the program, they frequently chose to suffer in silence rather than voice open dissent. Their bodies were present, but their hearts were not.

The normative character of the subordination of the individual to the group became apparent when the norm was breached. One of the other CMJS researchers wrote in her field notes:

> At one point during the trip our morning process breaks down a bit for the first time: no-one gets a "wake-up knock," and there is confusion over what time we are actually leaving. As a result, the students pile onto the bus at 7:30 grumpy, sleepy, and unshowered (which particularly upsets some of the women in the group.) Then, we are held up by the absence of Neil, who, we are told by his roommate, went back to the room to "take a shower and dry his

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> hair." (Neil is rather obsessed with his hair and its good days and bad days, despite the fact that to the untrained eye it always looks exactly the same.) Near mutiny on the bus—growling, grumbling, veiled and not-so-veiled threats against Neil's health and well-being. Finally he boards the bus to a chorus of boos, which he takes in stride. Although many in the group find Neil, with his loud voice and outspokenness, quite annoying, Neil is either impervious or oblivious to their frustration with him.

Along with the subordination of the individual to the group came the general disruption of the boundary between private and public. I mentioned above the role played by the conversations in opening personal thoughts and feelings to the surveillance of the group. The demands of touring shaped the physical organization of space in a way that contributed to this as well. Much of the group's time was spent moving from one place to another. This was not done in private cars, or in a train with separate compartments, but in a bus that was an entirely public space. By returning to the same seats again and again, people tried to claim some proprietary right. This strategy succeeded to an extent. Bus 194 exhibited seating patterns that were clearly related to the cliques and sub-groups described above. A typical day's seating chart is presented in Figure 5.3, along with a map of the group constructed from the social network data (Figure

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

5.4).[44] Note how in both the seating chart and the map, the large, cohesive group (Block 2) and the members of the smaller cliques (Blocks 3 and 4) were physically separated from each other, and the "floaters" (Block 1) who maintained ties with both sides tended to cluster in the center.

Figure 5.3: Seating During Bus 194's Ride to Atlit; January 10, 2001, 8:30 AM

Ofir (Bus Driver)		AISLE	STAIRS	
Lucas (American Staff)		1		*Ravit* (Tour Guide)
Eran (Male Medic)	*Osnat* (Female Medic)	2		Julie Beth (American Staff)
	Lynne (10)	3	Shaul	Gail (7)
Eliza (4)	Jodie (3)	4	Jeffrey (3)	*Lindsey (3)*
JESSE (11)		5	*Adrienne (4)*	
	Paul (4)	6	Andrew (7)	
Ellen (4)	**MAX (13)**	7	JUDY (4)	**ISOSCELES (12)**
Evan (7)		8	**TOMMY (8)**	*Nell (10)*
BETH (13)		9	CAREY (3)	DINA (10)
MISHA (8)	MARIE (11)	10	STAIRS	
RON (10)	SAM (11)	11		
MARK (3)	ALLAN (9)	12	LAURA (11)	
	MICKEY (13)	13	TODD (7)	

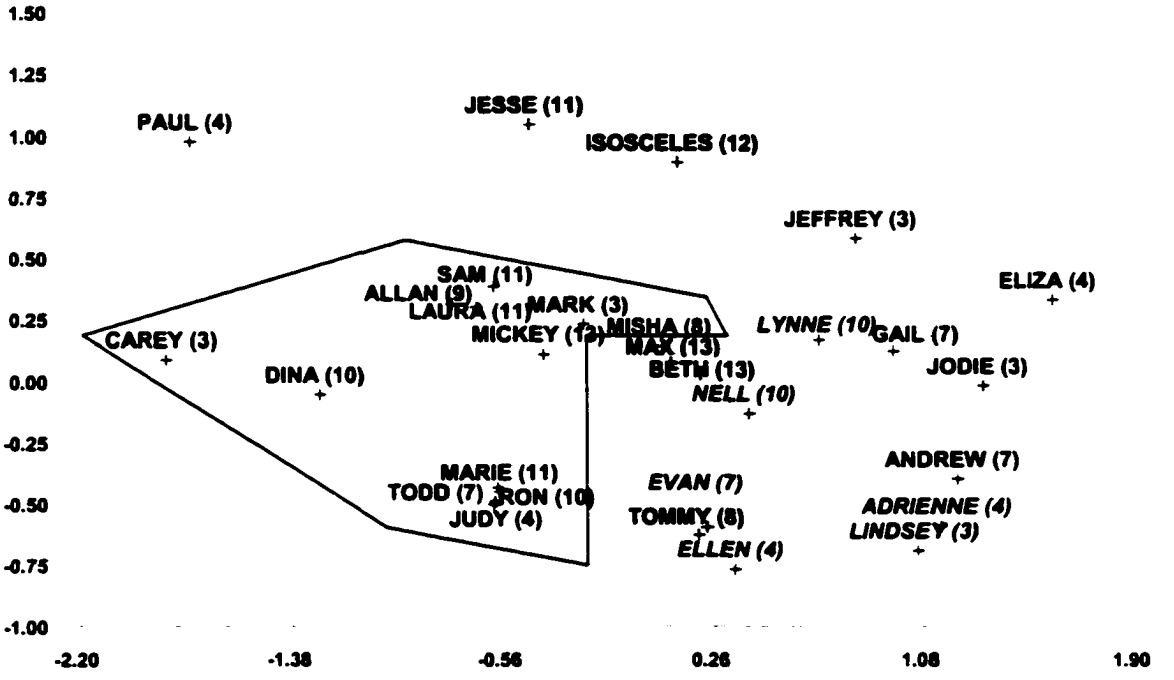
In-degree centrality scores are reported in parentheses after each pseudonym
Non-participants (staff, medics, driver, researcher) are printed in a smaller font.
Results of block model indicated are in diagram as follows:
Block 1 ("floaters") is in 11 pt. **ALL CAPS BOLD.**
Block 2 (the large, cohesive group) is in unbolded ALL CAPS.
Block 3 (small cliques and dyads) is in *italics.*
Block 4 (small cliques, dyads and isolates) is in normal font.

---

[44] The Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) map treats the social network data as a proximity matrix that is represented as a set of coordinates in space. The coordinates themselves refer to computational processes, and can be ignored when using the map as a heuristic to visualize a network. Points that are close together in a MDS map are more similar to each other than points that are far away.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure 5.4: MDS Map of Social Networks in Bus 194



Stress = 0.024 (input file not symmetric)
Starting config: TORSCA; Type of Data: Similarities. 29 items, 406 dyads.
In-degree centrality scores reported in parentheses after each pseudonym
Results of block model indicated in diagram as follows:
Block 1 ("floaters") is highlighted in gray.
Block 2 (the large, cohesive group) is circled.
Block 3 (small cliques and dyads) is in *italics*
Block 4 (small cliques, dyads and isolates) in normal font

Off the bus, almost all was public space as well. Hotel rooms were shared. Even staff were roomed with each other, separated only by sex. Only the bus driver and I, a researcher, were allowed to have a hotel rooms to ourselves, and even this was not guaranteed. For participants, there thus was not a quiet space one could retire to in order to be alone. For ten days, people were constantly in the public eye.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Free time was an opportunity for people to go off on their own. In general, though, this did not occur. People tended to spend their free time with others. In part, lack of knowledge of the locales led people to stick together, but it also reflected a desire not to be alone. Free time did allow sub-groups to go their separate ways. This did not give privacy, but it alleviated some of the pressures of the forced social contact that was otherwise a constant of the trip. With the increasingly frequent terrorist attacks against Israeli civilian targets, however, Taglit's efforts to keep participants away from cafés, shopping districts and other potential danger zones has resulted in this outlet from the temporary total institution rapidly being sealed up.

Writing of Israel Discovery Group "X" (ID X), Heilman described a "realization that the most outstanding element of their summer, the one constant to which the campers and staff could cling as they moved through an ever-changing landscape, was their group, ID X and the attachments they established to it" (1995:46). The current analysis of Taglit as a temporary total institution adds to our understanding how the groups could rise to such prominence in the minds of the travelers. It also helps us to understand how the social conditions in which a modern pilgrimage-tour is experienced contribute to the altered perceptions of self that are part and parcel of the pilgrimage experience.

As a total institution, Taglit undermined the traditional social grounding on which the self was constituted. Self-definition on Taglit could not but be done in reference to the ever-present, always-monitoring, always-monitored group. As

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

individuality was subordinated, the empty spaces were filled by the collective consciousness. Never truly private, individual encounters with sites were forced out into the public square, where the group made its views known and influence felt. The semiotic processes associated with pilgrimage-tourism were thus always mediated by the imposing social environment in which they took place.

Unable to escape the company of the others, most people exhibited no desire to anyway. In the absence of privacy, all they had was each other. As Heilman wrote, the group filled their life-world (1995:21). The result was an intense camaraderie, if not with everyone, then at least with some; the development of I-Thou relationships, sometimes with specific individuals, more often with "the group" as a living ideal directly experienced. Under certain circumstances, the collective consciousness bubbled over in true Durkheimian effervescence. The group experience was felt to be enervating and inspiring. And thus the spiritual experience of pilgrimage was not merely found in the ancient religious symbols of the generations, but created anew in the collective effervescence of the intimate community that had become conscious of itself.

CONCLUSION

Statistical analysis found that the more participants were oriented to their groups, the more likely they were to say that the Taglit pilgrimage-tour was a spiritual experience. During and after the trip, in speech and in writing, participants commonly made explicit linkages between the group experience and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the sense of meaningfulness they said they felt on Taglit. Aggregating the data bus by bus strongly suggested that the group processes that produced these feelings were structurally rooted in the Taglit program, present on every bus.

What, then, was the nature of the group experience on Taglit, and to what extent can we infer that any given characteristic of the group contributed to the sense of personal meaning that generally emerged on the program? The three major characteristics of the Taglit group experience discussed here were 1) the creation of group identities, 2) the recurring moments of collective effervescence, and 3) the imposing forces of the temporary total institution.

With regard to the first, I argued that participants developed a consciousness of their group's existence qua group and of their membership in it. In the face of this, however, was a persistent division into smaller sub-units that did not necessarily interact much with one another, at least not voluntarily. In addition, the group identities that did emerge tended to be more humorous than serious and were adopted more some by people and sub-groups than by others. With only ten days together, these mitigating factors probably prevented the emergence strongly felt social identities based on bus-group membership.

Collective effervescence in a variety of different forms was experienced at repeated intervals throughout the trip. This produced marked changes in behavior. But excitement does not necessarily imply meaningfulness, and the sensations of collective effervescence were not always raised to the discursive level of awareness. Still, established theory links collective effervescence with the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

perception of the sacred and its ultimate transformation into a symbolic form. If the theory is correct, then sacred symbols of Judaism and Israel would take on new meanings as they also became totems of the Taglit group experience. This was what Heilman (1995) found in his study of another Israel pilgrimage-tour, and what emerged on Taglit as well. There is accordingly a body of theory as well evidence from multiple studies suggesting that collective effervescence contributed to the sense of personal meaning that emerged on Taglit.

The dominant structural feature of the Taglit group experience was the program's character as a temporary total institution, especially its radical contraction of the private realm. This had several crucial effects, all inter-related. It fostered communitas among participants. Such relationships are not often experienced, but when they are, they tend to be perceived as personally fulfilling and reflective of the way human relations ideally should be (Turner 1982). It subordinated the individual to the group, and subjected each person to constant surveillance. This tended to quell dissent and created a normative environment that supported the official goals of the program, one of which was that the Israel trip should be thought of as personally meaningful.

My analysis of the temporary total institution was based on the same theoretical proposition that animated Goffman's work (1961) -- namely, individual identity is grounded in social conditions. Taglit altered this grounding in a way that fostered more intimate human relationships coupled with a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

normative environment that encouraged people to interpret their experience in the language of personal meaning and spirituality.

The quintessentially modern element of Taglit lies in its deliberate institutionalization of social processes that have long been present in a less systematic way in group pilgrimages. Two core sociological premises underlie the pilgrimage enterprise: 1) The radical alteration of social conditions for a brief time regrounds individual identity. 2) The specific nature of this regrounding can be constrained and directed. The invocation of sacred symbols and the fostering of normative environments were the two primary mechanisms by which this constraint was achieved on Taglit.

In the concluding chapter, I expand this argument to address these two premises in the broadest social scientific terms. Pilgrimage-tourism, I will argue, is best understood as a particular instance of a more general sociological category or routine-shattering situations. Synthesizing classic writings of sociology, anthropology and social psychology, I will develop the concept and consider its implications for Taglit, its participants and the evolution of religious life in the contemporary era.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER 6

THE TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE JEWS:

ANTI-ROUTINE IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Since its inception, sociology has been preoccupied with the relationship of the self to the social environment. There is hardly a major thinker in the discipline who has not addressed him or herself to the issue. The desire for understanding has only been intensified by the prospect inherent in social science that, for better or for worse, systematic efforts might reshape the social worlds in which we live and upon which we base our understandings of who we are as individuals.

Taglit's ability to structure a social environment that was symbolically charged and decidedly non-routine in character—and to use this environment to achieve goals vis-à-vis the participants' sense of self—points to an issue of broad sociological import, namely, the causes, nature, consequences and harnessing of social conditions that are literally *extra*-ordinary,[1] that break through the routine of daily life. This concluding chapter will attempt a conceptual elaboration of such "anti-routine" situations. Many of the concepts that I will focus on, like

---

[1] Throughout this chapter, I use the word "extra-ordinary" in its literal sense, "outside of the ordinary." Colloquial usage substitutes the term for words like "superb," or "awe-inspiring." I emphatically reject any of these colloquial meanings, and will insist here on using the term in accordance with its technical, literal, and etymologically accurate meaning. To emphasize this, I will retain the hyphen in my spelling of the word.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Durkheim's collective effervescence and Turner's communitas, have already been applied in previous pages to help shed light on Taglit.

If Ecclesiastes was correct, then even he was not the first to discover that "There is nothing new under the sun" (1:9). But he stated it well, concisely, poetically, and of course he benefited from publication in a well-regarded and much-cited anthology, and so to him go the kudos and the attribution. Likewise, much work—even great work—in the social sciences falls under the rubric of Ecclesiastes' dictum. When this goes unnoticed, it is often because lines of interdisciplinary communication are poor, or because the differences in empirical cases or areas of emphasis distract attention from underlying similarities. It is left to the synthesizers, like Parsons, to point out that not Weber nor Marshall nor Pareto nor Durkheim alone discovered the normative basis of social action, but that each in their own way arrived at a similar conceptualization of human behavior ([1937] 1968).

The notion of extra-ordinary, routine-shattering situations is not new. It has been theorized and examined in some shape or form by a host of sociologists, anthropologists and social psychologists over the past century. But, working independently of each other, addressing different empirical issues, using different disciplinary jargon, and only rarely engaging in dialogue, the various studies have littered the field with "rediscoveries," "anticipations" and "adumbrations." The terms are Merton's, who explained that tracing the systematics of theory development often reveals that ideas have been

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

independently rediscovered by researchers ignorant of previous (or, I would add, concurrent) work, and other ideas knowingly extend earlier formulations or foreshadowings (1967b). Such is the situation at hand.

It is also to Merton's credit that he identified the pressure that empirical research exerts on sociological theory (1967a). Indeed, were it not for the search for theoretical frameworks that might make sense of what I and others observed on Israel pilgrimage-tours, I would not have been sensitized to the similarities underlying the theoretical perspectives I had found most useful. If this dissertation demonstrates anything, I hope it is that he and Paul Lazarsfeld were correct in asserting that, "All applied research has its potential theoretic by-product," and that "the development of professionally competent research will advance the development of the social science disciplines" (1972:368).

At its core, the routine-shattering, or "anti-routine," situation is distinguished both by its characteristic circumstances, and by the outcomes it induces. Each of the scholars whose work I will consider here framed the matter in unique terms that reflected his own particular research interests. But when their approaches are viewed in juxtaposition to one another, their work suggests a broad interdisciplinary consensus on the nature of the phenomenon. I will address their work individually, beginning with the anthropologist Victor Turner's writing on communitas, liminality and anti-structure. I then turn to two of the three foundational thinkers in sociology—Emile Durkheim, who wrote about collective effervescence, and Max Weber, who discussed charisma. (I will

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

address Marx's failure to develop a parallel conception in the section devoted to Turner). Although the work of these thinkers will form the bulk of the conceptual elaboration, some attention will also be given to three relevant perspectives from social psychology: Maslow's notion of peak-experience, James' writings on mystical consciousness, and Csikszentmihalyi's more recent work on flow. After exploring the works of all these thinkers individually, I will tie together the various threads into a unified conception of anti-routine and discuss Taglit in light of it. I will conclude with some final thoughts on pilgrimage-tourism's implications for religion and community in the contemporary world.

VICTOR TURNER: LIMINALITY AND COMMUNITAS

Dissatisfied with his academic tradition's "grooved dependence on 'structure' as the sole sociological dimension" ([1969] 1982:viii), Victor Turner seized upon exceptional cases where social structure underwent radical simplification in order to demonstrate the limitations of British anthropology's conception of society as an ordered system of roles and relationships. He claimed this was motivated, in part, by his experience in the field, and in part, by reading outside his discipline, in the arts and humanities (1982:131). In a series of works published over a dozen years beginning in the mid-1960s, Turner explored the "anti-structural" aspects of Christian pilgrimages and Ndembu rites of passage. He arrived at a characterization of the situation I call "anti-routine" that is

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

striking for its resemblance to the work of others whose similar conclusions emerged from very different empirical cases and research agendas.

The crux of Turner's conception of the anti-routine situation are the twin concepts of *liminality* and *communitas*—terms which Turner often conflated. Because his lack of precision has often confounded scholars,[2] I will spend the better part of my exposition of the topic elaborating the specific distinctions between the two. In short, liminality can be thought of as a situation a person can find him/herself in—"the phases betwixt and between states where social-structural role playing is dominant" (1982:138), whereas communitas is a form of human interaction that typically emerges in such situations—"a relationship between concrete, historical, idiosyncratic individuals" (1982:131). Liminality refers to a positional relationship to social structures, whereas communitas refers to an interactional relationship with other people.

Liminality

In his 1969 book, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, which is based on field work among the Ndembu people of Zambia, in Southern Africa, Turner invoked the concept of liminality in much the same context for which van Gennep ([1909] 1960) invented it: interpretation of rites of passage. Van Gennep

---

[2] Catherine Bell, for example, missed the conceptual distinction Turner drew but repeatedly blurred. She wrote of the "period of social disorder and liminality (anti-structure) that [Turner] termed *communitas*" (1997:40). This was correct only in the technical sense. Otherwise, it merely repeated Turner's own mistaken conflation of two distinct concepts.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

noted that a similar ritual structure characterized a variety of transitions, such as the movement from one place to another; the integration of outsiders into a community; the demarcation of space into public and private zones or sacred and profane zones; and the elevation or demotion of a person from one status to another (1960). The last circumstance is the one now most commonly associated with the term *rite de passage*, the classic example being the coming of age ceremonies that mark the transition from childhood to adulthood.

All these transitions, van Gennep argued, are characterized by a three-phase ritual process: a disaggregation, in which separation from the former state is made; a threshold (*limen*), in which the person occupies neither the former nor the latter state; and a reaggregation, in which the new state is entered into. The threshold, or *liminal* state is transitional, temporary, and extra-ordinary—existing merely as a way-station between two more enduring endpoints.

Turner's innovation was to turn the lens on the liminal state itself, attempting to identify features that positively characterized what was otherwise seen only as a void. This, as Bell noted (1997:40), recast van Gennep's tripartite process of separation, threshold, and reaggregation into a binary opposition between structure and anti-structure, in which the status of the liminal state was elevated to a central position.[3]

---

[3] Turner accomplished this through empirical research on rites of status elevation, including puberty rites and the installation of a Ndembu chief.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Conceptually, liminality began like authenticity or the sacred—one side of a binary opposition, meaningless but for its juxtaposition to an alternate state of affairs.[4] Turner characterized "[t]he attributes of liminality or of liminal *personae*" as,

> necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in a cultural space. Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial (1982:95).

The institutionalized roles, statuses and classifications which comprise social structure are presented here as the "normal" state of affairs. Liminality is merely a deviation from this norm, "neither here nor there," "betwixt and between," and "ambiguous and indeterminate," but without positive attributes of its own. Deriving its existence and character solely from its relationship with social structure, liminality is essentially a negative state, defined by the absence of something else rather than by any qualities positively inhering in it.

With the conceptual simplicity of the structure/liminality dichotomy might have come a temptation to accept this tidy package as the culmination of

---

[4] Although van Gennep used the term to describe a multitude of phenomena, including the simple act of passing under a doorway, Turner confined his usage to the social structural context.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

analysis and to forego further investigation. To his credit, Turner did not fall into the trap of a facile reification of the two interrelated terms. Instead he recognized that each concept manifested itself in specific ways that had to be explicitly identified, and that if the terms were indeed binary opposites, then this would be reflected even in the details. Accordingly, he utilized ethnographic material to contrast structure and liminality along a number of specific dimensions.[5]

To understand his points, it might be helpful to picture the images that confronted him—for instance, a group of boys removed to the outskirts of a Zambian village, "wearing only a strip of clothing," with "no status, property, [or] insignia... that may distinguish them from their fellow neophytes," and meekly accepting the commands given them by tribal elders (1982:95). Here, the sartorial distinctions inherent to social structural differentiation are eliminated when structure is exited, replaced with simple uniforms or even nakedness. Likewise, the legitimacy of the status system that typically leads to "just pride of position" is in abeyance. When the hierarchies no longer apply, what remains is a general sense of "humility" among all. Some distinctions are less concrete, though still important to elucidating the content of the essential opposition between liminality and structure. Examples of these include "equality" vs. "inequality," "totality" vs. "partiality," and "homogeneity" vs. "heterogeneity." Finally, a series of distinctions probably emerged in the act of comparison;

---

[5] The complete list is reproduced in Appendix D.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

certainly, they are not readily suggested if established definitions of social structure were the starting point of the comparison.[6] The association of "silence" with liminality as against "speech" in social structure is one such example. So too are the contrasts of "foolishness" vs. "sagacity," "continuous reference to mystical powers" vs. "intermittent reference to mystical powers," and "acceptance of pain and suffering" vs. "avoidance of pain and suffering" (1982:106-7). By working at such a level of specificity, Turner managed to offer a positive definitional content to liminality.

In all, Turner identified no less than twenty-six contrasts between liminality and social structure. Among these, he assigned special importance to differences in the economic realm: "absence of property" vs. "property;" "no distinctions of wealth" vs. "wealth;" and "suspension of kinship rights and obligations" vs. "kinship rights and obligations" (1982:106). Invoking as proof text the "absurdity" of Gonzalo's utopian vision of social equality and natural fecundity in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Turner reminded the reader that mobilizing resources for self-sustenance "also means to mobilize people," and this "contains within it the seeds of structural segmentation and hierarchy" (1982:135-6). Gonzalo circumvented this limitation only by assuming nature's complicity through an abundance that makes work unnecessary. But Turner

---

[6] Turner cites definitions from Spencer, Firth and others, summarizing them by noting that most "contain the notion of an arrangement of positions and statuses. Most involve the institutionalization and perdurance of groups and relationships" (1982:125-6).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

would have none of it. "The moment a digging stick is set in the earth, a colt broken in, a pack of wolves defended against, or a human enemy set by his heels, we have the germs of a social structure" (1982:140). Until Gonzalo's "Edenic fantasy" is established on Earth, social arrangements that dispense with normal economic relations, such as the renunciation of all property or common ownership, are "possible only for a short time," Turner tells us (1982: 129, 140). Retreat from economic routines is fundamentally unsustainable. Economic pressures inevitably force a return to the stratification, hierarchy, and routine that constitute the antithesis of liminality.

By focusing on specific lines of contrast between liminality and structure, rather than treating the concepts as reified wholes, Turner also avoided an easy mischaracterization of liminality as the total absence of social structure. Definitionally, Turner could not accept as possible such a state of affairs. He considered some structure as inevitable in human life. He therefore saw liminality as a *partial* withdrawal from social roles and from the symbols of the stratification system. In his most precise formulations, liminality results from a radical simplification of social structure, not its complete disappearance (e.g. [1974] 1987a:253-4).

Communitas

Eventually, a return to daily routines within an elaborated social structure becomes inevitable. But before that point is reached, the experience of liminality

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

can have profound effects on individuals and societies. Turner drew his primary examples from rites of passage, which give liminality a special character. Such rites are institutionalized, supervised by representatives of the very status system that is being exited, and often involve a collective experience that incorporates an entire cohort of neophytes.[7] The shared experience of liminality means, in practice, that these "liminars" find themselves part of a collective where in-group distinctions of status and role are minimized or non-existent, while the group as a whole is subject to the authority of community representatives. "It is as though they are being reduced or ground down to a uniform condition to be fashioned anew," Turner wrote. In the process, "neophytes tend to develop an intense comradeship and egalitarianism" (1982:95).

Turner was sensitive to the parallels with total institutions, mentioning in passing that, "The processes of 'leveling' and 'stripping' to which Goffman has drawn our attention, often appear to flood their subjects with affect" (1982:128) - a point which I explored at some length in the previous chapter. The state of liminality suppresses the individuality of the liminars and forges them into a cohesive group of equals. In a culture that tends to worship the individual (Bellah et al. 1985), this carries unmistakably negative connotations. But to paraphrase Weber, the notion must be taken in an entirely value-free sense. How

---

[7] Taglit displays all of these characteristics. Other models of liminality are also possible, and one can imagine a variety of crises and unplanned circumstances, such as colonization, technological change, migration, or natural disaster, that might disrupt established structures. Whether such a case represents liminality or merely structural change depends ultimately upon whether a radical

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

much of one's self-concept is defined through socially sanctioned roles and identities? Marx ([1844] 1978:86), Mead ([1934] 1967:passim) and Durkheim ([1897] 1966:213) long ago taught, each in their own way, that individuality is itself a collective product inconceivable without social life. When a person exits the structures that support these identities, both the sense of self and the understanding of one's relationships to others must find an alternative grounding. Liminality, then, is not the imposition of the social on free, atomistic individuals. Rather, it is a social condition that redefines the social self, emphasizing what is common and shared among a group of people.

In Turner's view, there are, "two major 'models' for human interrelatedness, juxtaposed and alternating."

> The first is of society as a structured, differentiated, and often hierarchical system of politico-legal-economic positions.... The second, which emerges recognizably in the liminal period, is of society as an unstructured or rudimentarily structured and relatively undifferentiated *comitatus*, community, or even communion of equal individuals.... (1982:96).

The social relationship embodied in the latter model, Turner termed "communitas," deliberately choosing the Latin term over the English "community" to avoid creating the misimpression that the phenomenon is

---

simplification of social structure takes place.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

rooted in geographic proximity. Communitas is a type of human interaction. It emerges in periods of liminality as "the direct, immediate, and total confrontation of human identities which tends to make those experiencing it think of mankind as a homogenous, unstructured, and free community," ([1974] 1987b:169) and not as "'segmentalized' into statuses and roles" (1982:177). Citing Buber, Turner described communitas as "quintessentially a mode of relationship between total and concrete persons, between '*I*' and '*Thou*' (1982:136).

Like the liminality that produces it, such a form of interaction is difficult to sustain. In its demise, however, a process of institutionalization similar to Weber's routinization of charisma can transform communitas from an interactional style into something quite different. Turner was aware of the parallels to Weber's work, stating that "it is not only charisma of the leaders that is 'routinized' but also the communitas of their first disciples and followers" (1982:133). Among the historical cases he traced to exemplify this was the Franciscan order of the Catholic Church, cited also by Weber as an example of charisma and its routinization. The Franciscans instituted a variety of rules designed to encourage a state of perpetual liminality, oxymoronic though that may be, and thus maintain an orientation to communitas relations.

Turner, unfortunately, retained the term communitas for these institutionalized forms, blurring the term's definition and removing it from the interactional context. Thus, he distinguished between three types of communitas: 1) existential/spontaneous, 2) normative and 3) ideological, only the first of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

which regards the interactional style I have described above. The latter two are "already within the domain of social structure," differing from each other more in degree than in kind (1982:132). Normative communitas constitutes an explicit set of rules to govern relationships in certain settings and among certain groups. For example, Turner saw the institutionalized hospitality on pilgrim trails as an instance of this. Ideological communitas is even further removed from the original meaning of the term, applying not to concrete interactional settings, but to "a variety of utopian models of societies believed... to supply the optimal conditions for existential communitas" (1987b:169).

As a result of these reconceptions, communitas acquires an alternate framing in Turner's work: Its meaning shifts from *I-Thou* interaction to a cognitive appreciation of the essential unity of humankind. It is only in this latter sense that Turner found communitas beyond the temporal bounds of liminality. His various examples of communitas-bearing groups or individuals—court jesters, pariah peoples, and certain kinship groups among the tribes of Ghana and the Sudan—are more about the ideals these people express than the concrete manner in which they relate to others and others relate to them.

Marx Misses the Mark

A consideration of Marx's approach to these issues reveals some of the strengths of Turner's conception. The considerable attention devoted to Marx's materialism and revolutionary program has often obscured the fact that in the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

end, all the hoped-for changes in the material basis of social life were intended to generate a consciousness among people much the same as that which Turner claims is expressed by the communitas-bearing groups. Marx spoke of "communism therefore as the complete return of man to himself as a *social* (i.e., human) being—a return accomplished consciously" ([1844] 1932).[8]

In Marx's thought, people are social beings who collectively create their world. Without their combined labor, neither society nor human meaning (consciousness) could exist. And yet, rather than a sustained common awareness of the collective nature of the human endeavor and an equal allocation of the labor and the rewards, human history has been characterized instead by division and domination.

In identifying liminality as the optimal setting for communitas, Turner suggested that only by stepping outside of the structure, differentiation and hierarchy of normal life do people experience each other as total human beings and thus develop a consciousness of their common humanity. So too, Marx saw social structure as the key impediment to the development of such a "species" consciousness ([1844] 1978:75-7). But, materialist that he was, he defined this structure much more narrowly than Turner. Marx saw the failure to achieve full human potential as rooted in the very source of that potential—the productive

---

[8] The reader edited by Tucker (1978), which I prefer to cite elsewhere, translates this last phrase as "a return become conscious" (84). The original German text reads, "darum als vollständige, bewußt und innerhalb des ganzen Reichtums der bisherigen Entwicklung gewordene Rückkehr des Menschen für sich als eines *gesellschaftlichen*, d. h. menschlichen Menschen."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

social interaction that allowed consciousness to emerge in the first place. Modify these "social relations of production" to abolish the concentration of the products of collective human labor in the hands of the few—that is, abolish private property and estranged labor—and share equally the burdens and benefits of that labor, and the consciousness of the collective nature of the human endeavor should naturally emerge. In such an ideal society, "the labour-power of all the different individuals is *consciously* applied as the combined labour-power of the community" ([1867] 1967:83, emphasis added). On that day, all people on earth will recognize Marx's truth that "my *own* existence *is* social activity, and therefore, that which I make of myself, I make of myself for society and with the consciousness of myself as a social being" ([1844] 1978:86).

Marx's prescription suggests that a sustained state of communitas is possible, so long as the social structural forces that encourage division are eliminated. Turner's insights on liminality and communitas reveal the folly of this notion. Marx sought to transform what is by nature an ephemeral interactional state into a permanent feature of consciousness. He, of course, was not the only one to seek this; Turner's own confusion as to whether communitas was as a form of interaction or a cognitive awareness of fraternity testifies to the ease with which one concept shades into the other. But beyond this misconception of the durability of communitas, Marx (and this is not a new critique by any means) also equated social structure too narrowly with the relations of production. As Turner's multiple contrasts between liminality and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

structure indicate, the structural impediments to an *I-Thou* meeting include kinship, dress, grooming, gender, sexuality, pain avoidance, speech and a host of other things that cannot simply be dismissed as superstructural.

My invocation of Turner to critique Marx diverges somewhat from Turner's own brief remarks on the matter. Although we both argue that Marx's error lay in seeing communitas as characteristic of an era that itself is a "higher plane" of existence, Turner felt that Marx wrongly projected this backward onto the "archaic or primitive society," whereas I charge Marx with projecting it onto an as yet unrealized future. This, however, amounts to a difference of emphasis. Turner's point is still applicable as a critique: A dialectic between structure and communitas is fundamental and ever-present in all societies (1982:130). Any effort to separate the two misunderstands the nature of the phenomena.

Society's Tonic

Not limited to either an idyllic past or a messianic future, communitas relations can emerge whenever social structure recedes and the liminal state is entered into. It therefore poses a threat to all social orders, "for its very existence puts all structural rules in question and suggests new possibilities" (1987b:202). Communitas offers an alternative model for relationships among people, not bound by the strictures of daily rules, regulations, roles and responsibilities. It shows that 'what is' is not necessarily 'what need be.' And because "there is in it the feeling of endless power" (1982:139), the incentive to act on it is great. Indeed,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the subjective feeling of power it brings is so intense that it is often perceived as a sacred experience. This is understandable. It demonstrates its supremacy over the already powerful institutions of society. In a sense, it slays the Durkheimian God, society, by revealing the "essential and generic human bond, without which there could be *no* society" (1982:97).

The implications for social institutions are clear: Communitas must either be suppressed or co-opted. "From the perspectival viewpoint of those concerned with the maintenance of 'structure,'" Turner wrote, "all sustained manifestations of communitas must appear as dangerous and anarchical, and have to be hedged around with prescriptions, prohibitions, and conditions" (1982:109). In the process, the power of communitas is harnessed, and the potential revolutionary force becomes a favored tool for societal regeneration. Without it, "structural action swiftly becomes arid and mechanical" and social divisions may threaten to overwhelm a sense of common belonging and fate (1982:139). The cohort-wide rite of passage—in which ritualized liminality encourages an intense sense of community in the shadow of society's sacred symbols and under the watchful eye of its representatives—is the quintessential use of communitas to achieve these ends, which are at once conservative and yet egalitarian.

In Turner's conception, the routine-breaking situation can be understood as a radical simplification of social structure that brings with it a revolution in interpersonal relations. The twin concepts, *liminality* and *communitas*, together formed what Turner termed *anti-structure*. And although he argued that this state

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

is both evanescent and disruptive, he, unlike Weber, saw it less as a force for social revolution than the key to a cyclical process of societal rejuvenation.

EMILE DURKHEIM: COLLECTIVE EFFERVESCENCE

Durkheim's Agenda

For Turner, situations of anti-routine were of interest in their own right for the way they influenced social relations and psycho-social states. The same was true of Weber, as we shall see later. In contrast, anti-routine emerged as the arrival point along the path Emile Durkheim traced while accounting for the origins of religious sentiment. Perhaps because he invoked the concept to explain something else, Durkheim's treatment stopped short of the detailed elaborations provided by Turner and Weber.

Durkheim's project in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* ([1912] 1995) was to establish a theoretic grounding for "the religious nature of man" in the lived realities of human existence, in contrast to prevailing views of religion that reduced it to a mere error in judgment (1995:1-2).[9] Calling into question the very terms of the debate between empiricism and idealism, he identified not two, but

---

[9] For a discussion of Durkheim's "insistence that religions are founded on and express 'the real,'" see Karen Fields' introduction to her English translation of Durkheim's classic (1995). It is not my intention here to present a thorough exposition of Durkheim's conception of religion. The lines of argument he presented in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* are well known and have been reasonably represented time and again, most famously by Parsons ([1937] 1968), Aron (1970), Lukes (1973), Nisbet (1974) and Pickering (1975). What material I do present is only that necessary to allow us to consider the topic at hand.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

three forms of concrete experience (three *realities*, so to speak) from which a religious sentiment might conceivably emerge: the physical world, the psychological world and—his innovative contribution -- the social world. With empiricists arguing that religion was rooted in the experience of awesome nature, and idealists seeing its roots in the dreamlike states of the human mind, the debate over the origins of religion had reached a dead end. Neither account was correct, Durkheim argued, wielding his sharp pen to deftly dispatch these before making his case for religion's origins in the realities of social life.

A primary methodological problem, from Durkheim's perspective, was that the institutionalized forms that have maintained religion do not necessarily account for its origins. These institutions constituted social facts that constrained and shaped religious behavior, transforming it into something it previously was not, and effectively masking the original nature of the religious experience.[10] The historical residue of thousands of years of religious development would first have to be stripped away, and the origins of religion sought in "the simplest and most primitive religion that is known at present"—totemism (1995:3).[11]

---

[10] A commitment to the distinction between primary and secondary causes is a fundamental methodological underpinning of Durkheim's work. This was given clearest expression in *The Rules of the Sociological Method* ([1895] 1982), emerged explicitly in *Suicide* ([1897] 1966), and was manifest even in his earliest work, *The Division of Labor in Society* ([1893] 1984), where Durkheim organized his two-part manuscript to distinguish between the causal and functional explanations. Unlike Weber and Marx, who gave prominence to the concrete roles of institutions in perpetuating forms of social life, Durkheim's notion of secondary causes tended toward an ill-defined functionalism.

[11] I bracket the question of whether his decision was warranted. Durkheim's evolutionary perspective has been criticized, as has the anthropology on which he based his characterizations of totemism. For a consideration of the controversies, see Lukes (1973:454-9,477-84).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The central component of Durkheim's conception of religion was the division of the world into two absolutely dichotomous categories: the sacred and the profane. Such a categorization was not suggested by anything inherent in the things themselves that were thought to be sacred or profane. On the contrary, the overwhelming diversity and underwhelming character of many sacred objects and symbols (rocks, plants, rodents) suggested that the only thing uniting them was the fact that people treated them as sacred, setting them off and guarding them from contact with the profane. Therefore, to account for the origins of this attitude in the context of the ur-religion totemism would be to account for the birth of the religious sentiment. And so, Durkheim asked the key question, "What led man to see the world as two heterogeneous and incomparable worlds, even though nothing in sense experience seems to have suggested the idea of such a radical duality" (1995:39). Committed to grounding the answer in something "real," he located the source of dualism in the social experience of time[12]: sacred times of communal gathering and "collective effervescence" versus profane times of isolation and routine.

Like Turner, Durkheim viewed social life (at least the social life of the Australian aborigines of whom he wrote) as an oscillation between two juxtaposed states different in their character, duration and effect on the psyche:

---

[12] This anticipates what Zerubavel ([1981] 1985) would later term the "sociotemporal order."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> Life in Australian societies alternates between two different phases. In one phase, the population is scattered in small groups that attend to their occupations independently.... In the other phase, by contrast, the population comes together, concentrating itself at specified places for a period that varies from several days to several months....
>
> These two phases stand in the sharpest possible contrast. The first phase, in which economic activity predominates, is generally of rather low intensity.... The dispersed state in which the society finds itself makes life monotonous, slack, and humdrum. Everything changes when a corroboree takes place. (1995:217)

We could follow Turner in expressing this as a set of dichotomies:

Figure 6.1 Routine and Anti-Routine in Durkheim's Writings

	ROUTINE SITUATION	ANTI-ROUTINE SITUATION
"MORAL AND PHYSICAL DENSITY"	Small groups	Large groups
	Dispersed	Concentrated
	Individual action	Collective action
	Independent living	Communal living
ORIENTATION TO ACTION	Materially oriented	Not materially oriented
	Economic	Non-economic
	Instrumental	Expressive
TEMPORAL FRAME	Durable	Transient
PSYCHOLOGICAL PERCEPTION OF EXPERIENCE	Low intensity	High intensity
	Passionless	Impassioned
	Monotonous	Varied
	Humdrum	Exciting

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The table is divided into four sections, grouping together different concepts upon which Durkheim based his distinctions: "moral and physical density,"[13] orientation to action, temporal frame, and psychological perception of experience. The overlap with Turner's conception is readily apparent. Again, we see an association of economic activity with sustainable, but lifeless, routine. So too does the routine-shattering state again emerge as transient and emotional.

Durkheim's conception differs, however, in its emphasis on the coming together of large numbers of people. Although communitas was presented as communal phenomenon,[14] Durkheim conveyed the notion that sheer numbers are important to creating the anti-routine experience. In fact, his portrait of behavior under these circumstances resembled nothing so much as Le Bon's mass hysteria of the crowd ([1895] 1977),[15] and his rationale for claiming that the state is not sustainable is biological: Revelers will inevitably exhaust themselves. In Durkheim's words,

---

[13] Durkheim uses these terms in *The Division of Labor in Society* to refer to the degree of interpersonal contact within a given population (1984:201).

[14] Weber, too, treated charisma as a phenomenon with communal aspects. He assigned an important role to the fellowship of charismatic disciples and also identified the charismatic community as a distinct category of social organization.

[15] Steven Lukes argued that Durkheim was doubtless aware of and affected by studies of crowd behavior by Le Bon and others, but he disputed Mary Douglas's claim that he was specifically affected by Le Bon's writings (Lukes 1977:462).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> The very act of congregating is an exceptionally powerful stimulant. Once the individuals are gathered together, a sort of electricity is generated from their closeness and quickly launches them to an extraordinary height of exultation.... [The] passions unleashed are so torrential that nothing can hold them.... They bring about such an intense hyperexcitement of physical and mental life as a whole that they cannot be borne for very long. The celebrant who takes the leading role eventually falls exhausted to the ground (1995:217-8).

I will not claim Durkheim as a pioneer of the Sociology of the Body, but there is something to the idea that anti-routine is experienced not just intellectually or emotionally, but also in an earthy, physical way. Sleep deprivation alters perception, lowering barriers of self-consciousness that separate people from one another. Communitas and collective effervescence are expressed in close physical contact and in the audible unity of group song. The technology of team building has institutionalized this, also adding physical challenges to the mix both to let people feel anti-routine in their bones, and to foster mutual dependence and communitas relations. All of these bodily aspects of anti-routine were manifest on Taglit[16] - the 4:00 A.M. disco bus that had

---

[16] For a more detailed treatment of Israel Experience programs' application of "techniques of the body," see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

people dancing crotch-to-rear in the aisles, the spontaneous Israeli songfests on buses or in hotel lobbies, the hikes up desert mountains and long rolls down giant sand dunes. Taglit's website, like those of many other Israel experience programs, encapsulated the notion with publicity photographs that have long been a cliché of Israel experience program marketing. In the pictures, smiling bunches of friends huddle together, not just arm-in-arm, but leaning, hanging or sitting on one another. The nature of the social relationships bred by anti-routine is expressed in their physicality.

In Durkheim's view, the *contrast* between the excitement of the crowd and the humdrum of daily life is the wellspring of the sacred/profane duality in human thought: "[H]ow would experiences like these not leave him with the conviction that two heterogeneous and incommensurable worlds exist in fact? In one world he languidly carries on his daily life; the other is one that he cannot enter without abruptly entering into relations with extraordinary powers that excite him to a point of frenzy" (1995:220). Durkheim was able to establish this and thus answer his primary research question with only a meager characterization of the anti-routine situation. Elements of a more thorough conceptualization were scattered across the pages of *The Elementary Forms*, but were never gathered or mined. Therefore, we are left only with hints that routine-shattering situations are fundamentally of non-economic, although we do not know why this might matter beyond the vague notion that daily work is often uninspiring and isolating.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The Aftermath of Effervescence

What suggests that Durkheim was formulating a conception similar in ways to the ideas generated by Turner and Weber was less his description of the character of the "corroboree" than his analysis of its effects. Two points are worth mentioning. First, Durkheim also saw in anti-routine a window onto the sacred. Collective effervescence creates a palpable sense moral justification: "People are so far outside the ordinary conditions of life, and so conscious of the fact, that they feel a certain need to set themselves above and beyond ordinary morality" (1995:218).[17] But "ordinary morality" has an inviolable (i.e. sacred) character backed up by the full punitive weight of society.[18] Although this implies that the moral authority of society is found in other forms beyond the state of collective effervescence (including, as Durkheim noted, the congealed forms of tradition and law), it also implies that the extra-ordinary situation of collective effervescence is powerful, indeed, to be able to influence people to "set themselves above and beyond" an already sacred morality. It is able to do so, Durkheim argued, because it is the *fons et origo* of the sense of the sacred.

How is this so? We touched on the answer earlier when referring to the dualistic perception of time. Durkheim essentially argued the following (214): Social life alternates between periods of ordinary and extra-ordinary time. In the

---

[17] Durkheim focused on the integrative functions of communal gathering. But it is almost impossible to miss the threatening undercurrent of revolution implied here. Indeed, this was Le Bon's essential concern in his treatment of crowd phenomena (1977).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

latter case, the state of collective effervescence leads people to sense powerful external forces that influence their mental state and behavior. They are simultaneously aware that in their daily lives they tend not to encounter such forces in so palpable a manner. Thus, they begin to conceive of two distinct worlds of reality, one populated by powerful forces, the other not. These two worlds correspond to the sacred and the profane. In Durkheim's view, the sense of the sacred is born in the unmediated encounter with social life that occurs when groups affirm their solidarity in congregation. But these experiences are, by nature, separated from daily life. *It is only by contrasting the feelings of effervescence with the humdrum of everyday life that one is able to recognize the special (deviant, sacred, superior) character of the extra-ordinary state.* Like the notion of authenticity, to which it is closely related, the experience of the extra-ordinary state takes on meaning only by having the point of comparison.[19]

The second line of convergence among Durkheim and the others whose work I consider here regards the process by which the extra-ordinary experience extends its effects beyond the passing moment into the realm of the everyday. Inasmuch as "collective effervescence" is a crowd phenomenon, its implicit transience is pronounced. Even so, Durkheim argued that the fleeting encounter with the sacred takes on institutionalized forms that perpetuate its effects. Specifically, the experience is transfigured and preserved symbolically in the

---

[18] Durkheim elaborated on this point in *The Division of Labor in Society* (1984, esp. Book I, Ch. 2).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

image of the totem. "The image goes on calling forth and recalling those emotions even after the assembly is over.... [It] lives beyond the gathering. By means of it, the emotions felt are kept perpetually alive and fresh" (1995:222).

Unlike Weber, who described the social processes by which charisma becomes routinized, and Turner, who examined elaborations of ideological communitas, Durkheim avoided discussion of concrete social processes of institutionalization. Instead, he grounded his argument in the limitations of the human mind. The complex of social interactions that generated the sense of otherworldliness are too abstract for people to understand and imagine. "We cannot detect the source of the strong feelings we have in an abstract entity.... We can comprehend those feelings only in connection with a concrete object whose reality we feel intensely.... The symbol thus takes the place of the thing, and the emotions aroused are transferred to the symbol" (1995:221). Because the totem, the group's emblem, is placed prominently in view at the times of gathering, it is the one symbol common to all upon which the emotions can attach. The totem thus becomes symbolic of the sacred power experienced at the corroboree.

---

[19] This point has been developed by Zerubavel in his work on the sociology of time (1985), and has been utilized fruitfully by sociologists of leisure and tourism (e.g. Graburn 1989; Urry 1990).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chicken or Egg?

Compared to Turner and Weber, Durkheim presents the most problems for developing a conception of anti-routine. In *Suicide*, Durkheim also considered situations when the rules of normal life were suspended. In this treatment, however, the result was not communion with the sacred, but death. Anomie, the "state of de-regulation" (1966:253), allows the passions to run wild, unchecked by social constraints. Knowing no limits and hence insatiable, these passions lead some ultimately to a suicidal sense of Sisyphean futility. This is a very different conception from Durkheim's later articulation of collective effervescence, where the passions generated by the collective liberation from normative constraints are experienced as a positive. Durkheim never reconciled the two notions, nor he did feel it necessary to address why the corroboree would be experienced as religious rather than anomic. In both cases, the rules of normal social life are in abeyance and the passions hold sway over the individual.

Durkheim's conception of anomie was complex. Sometimes he used the term to refer to a moment in social life, and sometimes he used it to speak of the way such moments made people feel. When he did portray it as a moment in life, he sometimes treated it as a condition of society as a whole (e.g. an economic boom or bust), and sometimes as an acutely individual condition (e.g. widowhood). Sometimes he wrote of it as a temporary phenomenon and sometimes as a chronic condition. Whereas the notions of anomie as a collective, temporary and sociological phenomenon are in accordance with my conception

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

of anti-routine, the individualist, routinized and psychological approaches are not. It would therefore be inappropriate to make a direct equation between anomie and anti-routine.[20] Still, with this caveat, Durkheim's notion of anomie can be viewed as the major exception to the theoretical convergence described in these pages. It stands apart from charisma, communitas and collective effervescence in that it is the only instance where the withdrawal from routine is not replaced by an alternative patterning of social relations.[21]

In addition to the issue of anomie, Durkheim's conception of collective effervescence presents other problems as well. Long-standing criticisms of Durkheim's tendency to *petitio principii* potentially raise the concern that any notion of anti-routine Durkheim developed in *The Elementary Forms* is a circular argument. In a line of argument picked up by Lukes (1975:31, 480-1), Levi-Strauss contended that Durkheim's search for the origins of religious sentiment presumed the very religious festivals and icons which he sought to explain (1963:70-1). Religion, in Durkheim's conception, first emerges spontaneously from the group experience. Sanctity attaches to the images surrounding the experience. In this manner they acquire totemic status, signifying the power of the collective

---

[20] There are other reasons for this as well. For instance, in focusing on periods of economic turbulence, the situation Durkheim describes is not one in which there is a withdrawal from economic activity, but precisely the opposite. Economic concerns consume a disproportionate amount of attention and energy.

[21] It may characterize crises (like the economic shocks Durkheim described) in which the firm hand of a charismatic leader does not emerge to impose order on a situation of turmoil and turbulence.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

over the individual. Levi-Strauss took issue with this view, arguing that Durkheim placed the cart before the horse: "[I]t is not present emotions, felt at gatherings and ceremonies, which engender or perpetuate the rites, but ritual activity which arouses the emotions" (1963:71). Rather than the religious experience generating the sacred symbols, the presence of sacred symbols inspires the religious ebullience when the group gathers. If Levi-Strauss is correct, then the attempt to discover in Durkheim's work the nature and outcomes of the routine-shattering situation itself risks reduction to a tautology: Anti-routine is nothing more or less than a religious festival and therefore, not surprisingly, takes on a religious character.

Led astray by the evolutionism implicit in Durkheim's writings, Durkheim's critics engage the futile argument over whether there actually was some primordial corroboree in which sacred symbols initially coalesced.[22] This misses the more important point, which Durkheim certainly emphasized when repeatedly asserting the crucial role of the religious cult in generating and re-generating religious sentiment: Knowledge of the sacred is born again and again in the firsthand experiences of collective effervescence by individuals in every era of history. Often, this is facilitated by existing sacred symbols, but this is not a *sine qua non*. Moreover, the sacred character of religious symbols is not merely

---

[22] Perhaps he invited the critique. Even so, it rests on too narrow a reading of Durkheim, who likely recognized that an account of the origin of religion could not suffice to explain the maintenance of religion (cf. Durkheim 1982).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

residue of the past, as Levi-Strauss' position implies. Rather, it emerges anew from the life-experiences of each generation.

Levi-Strauss disputed this point, taking it as self-evident that the ritual attitude is typically far from effervescent. On the contrary, he argued. It tends to be exceedingly conventional (1963:70). While such is often the case, it is by no means always so. Perhaps his penchant for posing binary oppositions led Levi-Strauss to engage the debate with Durkheim in exaggerated either-or terms, even though a both-and position would have better sufficed to account for the multiplicity of human experience.

For several reasons, then, Levi-Strauss' critique is untenable. It offers an unacceptably static model of religion whose emphasis on the constraints of the past leaves no room for change and innovation in the symbolic system. Durkheim's conception allows for this, specifically because he outlined the conditions of an extra-ordinary, routine-shattering situation that can create the sacred anew as well as revivify existing symbols, infusing them with both traditional *and untraditional* sacred meanings.[23] Moreover, Levi-Strauss' recognition that ritual behavior need not imply effervescence affirms that anti-routine and the religious festival are not one and the same. Anti-routine can indeed manifest itself in the religious festival, but it is not reducible to it.

---

[23] This raises once again the question of authenticity.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Collective Effervescence as Anti-Routine: A Summation

In addition to the problem of *petitio principii*, The Durkheimian view is also open to the charge of demographic reductionism.[24] Certainly, his formulation was less well-defined than those of his counterparts. Still, the basic thrust in Durkheim's thinking contains valuable insights upon which we can draw to create a synthetic conception of anti-routine. The crux of Durkheim's approach is the state of collective effervescence. This does not emerge spontaneously, but is the product of precipitating causes that are themselves central to the extra-ordinary character of the phenomenon. These include a withdrawal from economic routine, a gathering in a collective, and a preexisting or emergent consciousness of the group's existence *qua* group. Such a reordering of social life creates circumstances in which the excited passions of the effervescent state become, for a brief moment possible, although not foreordained.

If these are the causes of collective effervescence, what are its effects? On one level, they are psychological. Collective effervescence is often perceived as a state of intense emotional and physical excitement. This perception stands in such sharp contrast with the experience of everyday life that it forces onto consciousness a heightened (thought not always fully articulated) awareness that such a situation is decidedly out of the ordinary. As a result, people feel as if they

---

[24] A quarter-century ago, Lukes was calling Durkheim's stress on crowd-psychology "dated" and "no longer of such great interest" (1975:485).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

are in direct contact with a source of life-giving power, external to themselves, that is its own justification.

Whether or not the individual understands the true nature of the situation, this power is real, Durkheim claimed, and *is* society. As a result, the other effects of collective effervescence are sociological. In the immediate sense, the solidarity of the group is re-established through collective affirmation and enactment, as individual consciousnesses are all oriented toward a common object. The corollary is that each individual becomes bound more tightly to the group as his or her own actions center themselves not on private goals, but on "the social being that each individual bears within himself" (1995:353). But fleeting though the extra-ordinary situation may be, its effects are perpetuated through a process of symbolization. By transfiguring the experience of collective effervescence into symbolic form, the welter of meanings and experiences associated with it can be communicated and thus shared and preserved. The communication can involve oneself at a later time, and others both during and after the corroboree. Symbolization is a collective act that transforms effervescence from a mass experience of assorted individuals (i.e. an anonymous crowd) into a shared experience of members of a group (i.e. a Taglit bus). Levi-Strauss, describing functionalist theories of totemism, expressed this notion even more clearly than Durkheim: "This permanence and solidarity [of the social group] can be based only on individual sentiments, and these, in order to be

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

expressed efficaciously, demand a collective expression which has to be fixed on concrete objects...." (1963:60).

In sum, the concept of anti-routine germinating in *The Elementary Forms* is collective, expressive and symbolic in character. Far from the potentially revolutionary force of which Turner and Weber wrote, Durkheim's conception constitutes a force for conservatism, stability and social solidarity.

MAX WEBER: CHARISMA

In asking why people obey authority, Max Weber offered three possible reasons. First, because tradition has always dictated so. Second, because the rules demand it. Or third, because the leader is uniquely qualified to lead. These traditional, legal-rational (bureaucratic) and charismatic forms of authority are each ideal types which tend to be intermingled in practice. But although they are rarely encountered their "pure" form, Weber identified a category of situations in which the "pure type of charismatic rulership" (1978b:1121) could emerge and flourish. Such situations are those I call anti-routine. Weber's main contribution to our understanding of anti-routine is that leadership can impose order on such situations and direct them to specific ends. The means to achieving this is a nascent charisma born in and of the extra-ordinary situation itself.

It is not at all clear that charisma, in this sense, adds much of significance to our understanding of Taglit. Indeed, I have found little reason to invoke it in the pages preceding. In spite of this, a conceptual elaboration of anti-routine can

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

benefit greatly from a consideration of Weber's concept and the ways it parallels and diverges from Turner's and Durkheim's conceptions.

Before beginning such a theoretical treatment, however, some words about the ways the concept relates to Taglit are in order. These will also be addressed in more detail later in this chapter.[25] Issues of authority were relevant to Taglit in two ways. On the mundane level of trip administration, the program could proceed according to plan only if participants obeyed the rules. They had to meet at the bus at the appointed time, allow the tour guides to present their material without disruption, etc. On the deeper level of the trip's ideological goals, Taglit's organizers sought to foster an experience that would be perceived as personally meaningful, and to *constrain the interpretation of this meaning* in Jewish-Zionist terms. Authority issues were thus writ small and large. If charisma was born in the anti-routine of Taglit, it was potentially relevant both to how participants *behaved* and also to how they *thought*.

For all the admirable characteristics program staff may have had, the roots of their authority were largely legal-rational in character. Group leaders were professionals hired to do a job. Some, like rabbis and Hillel directors, may also have benefited from being seen as representatives of the Jewish community, which gave them the ability to draw on the routinized charisma and traditional

---

[25] See point number five in "The Outcomes of Anti-Routine," and also the latter part of the section entitled "Anti-Routine and Authenticity."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

authority this entailed. But as for being possessors of a charisma born of the extra-ordinary situation, all we need note is that none seized power in a *coup*. Sources of legitimacy other than a charisma of their own were the primary basis of their authority. Even the most charismatic of the staff found themselves constrained by the regulations, ideologies and goals of Taglit's organizers.

True Weberian charisma—authority by virtue of appeal to superlative personal characteristics—was not irrelevant to Taglit. But it was neither foreordained nor free to command as it saw fit. Some staff people found the appeal to charismatic authority a useful supplement to help keep the group in line. Its presence also added to the feeling that the pilgrimage-tour was a meaningful experience, as I will explain at greater length below. But because these feelings were simultaneously emerging as a result of other factors, the absence of charismatic authority did not substantially detract from the meaningfulness of the experience.[26] Moreover, in terms of convincing participants to understand in Jewish-Zionist terms any special feelings they were having—that is, the program's ability to exert authority over the way people thought—the presence or absence of charismatic authority was largely irrelevant.

---

[26] Recall the example of Jake, from Chapter 2. Holding other things constant, the likelihood that he would consider the trip a spiritual experience was 53% when he considered the American staff sensational, and 41% when he did not. (The corresponding figures regarding the Israeli staff were 49% and 41%). Good staff made a difference, but in spite of participants' testimony to the contrary (see "The Outcomes of Anti-Routine", point five, below) it did not make or break the trip. Too many other factors were at work. Kelner et al. (2000) therefore referred to Taglit as a "teacher-proof program." CMJS field workers observed participants speaking of the Taglit experience in the most laudatory terms and testifying to its personal meaning, even when it was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The terms of the discourse were constrained by other things. In short, personal charisma born of anti-routine was relevant in some ways, but not in others. It helped staff assert their authority in the day-to-day operation of the trip, but it was largely irrelevant to compliance with the ideological agenda of Taglit.

Parsons' Weber: A Reconsideration

Talcott Parsons was the first to call attention to the parallels between Weber's use of the term charisma and Durkheim's conception of the sacred (Parsons 1968b:658-72).[27] In Parsons' attempt to resolve the "utilitarian dilemma" and establish the existence of an orienting value system for human action, he interpreted both charisma and the sacred to embody the compelling force of moral authority. Later in his career, he went further and declared the two founders' concepts to be "identical" (Parsons [1964] 1991:xliv).

In drawing the equivalence, however, Parsons extracted charisma from its locus in concrete personages or situations, portraying it instead as a universal underpinning of all legitimate systems of domination. Where Weber originally treated charismatic domination as one ideal type in a troika that included traditional and bureaucratic domination, the Parsonian "reinterpretation" (Parsons 1968b:668) elevated charisma to a generalized moral force underpinning

---

clear that these same participants clearly disliked staff or held them in low esteem.

[27] The similarities have been noted by other writers as well, including Nisbet (1974:36), and more recently Tiryakian (1995).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

all legitimate political orders. Weber himself prepared the groundwork for Parsons' reformulation, by insisting that pure charismatic authority is an ideal type only approximated but never achieved in reality (1978a:216), and by elaborating in intricate detail the pathways of routinization through which charisma becomes institutionalized and merges with other systems of domination (Weber 1978a:246-54; 1978b:1121-46).

Other scholars have followed this line of interpretation as well. Perhaps not satisfied with Parsons' "reinterpretation," Edward Shils' offered his own "redefinition of charisma" (1965:200) that despite its divergences from the Parsonian understanding had a similar universalizing effect. Ignoring the structural and interactional characteristics that were central to Weber's use of the concept in his sociology of domination, Shils highlighted the ideational component, labeling it "awe-arousing centrality." Having sufficiently redefined the term, he proceeded to identify charisma "dispersed in a diminished but unequal intensity throughout the hierarchy of roles and rules" within legal-rational political systems, where it functioned as a force for conservatism (1965:205). At this point, however, the concept bore little resemblance to that which Weber called "*the* great revolutionary force" (1978a:245) and "indeed the specifically creative revolutionary force of history" (1978b:1117). But in this vein, Shils echoed Parsons, who chided Weber for "a theoretical bias for highlighting" the revolutionary potential of charisma (Parsons 1991:lxxv).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

As the person who introduced the English-speaking world to Max Weber, Parsons wielded in his pen the power to provide the authoritative first interpretation of the German scholar's work. As Weber's writings took on a foundational character in American sociology, it was inevitable that such a tempting target as Parsons' first framings would be assailed by later generations of scholars seeking to discover Weber (and make a name) for themselves. Cohen et al. charged Parsons with "what is today [in 1975] the major misinterpretation of Weber's sociology," arguing, among other things, that he distorted Weberian concepts by redefining them in his own vocabulary. Lost in the translation were the crucial divergences between Weber's ideas and Parsons' (1975:230).

The Parsonian reinterpretation of charisma, which treats it as the compelling moral force underlying all structures of authority, exhibits this character. Although rooted in Weber's own writings on charisma, the universalizing impulse denudes the concept of the particular content which made it a fruitful category for sociological analysis. Parsons and Shils are correct in their assertion that a compelling moral force underlies all forms of legitimate domination (hence their legitimacy). But although this fact is clearest in the case of charismatic domination, this is not because charisma and the compelling moral force are one in the same. Rather the break with the routines and norms of everyday life, which is fundamental to pure charismatic domination, requires the claim for authority to be made explicit. In other words, charisma is a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

characteristic of social interactions that allows the claim of moral compulsion to be invoked explicitly, rather than implicitly.[28]

The Charisma of Leaders

What characteristics of the routine-shattering situation allow the compelling moral force to emerge in an explicit manner? In part, we can point to the emergence in such circumstances of individual leaders who combine the semblance of special abilities[29] with the assertive self-confidence, perhaps hubris, to demand submission (1978b:1112-3). But such individuals are present in a variety of situations, including bureaucratic systems whose rule-boundedness and stability would seem the antithesis of charismatic ferment. Weber, in his 1918 essay "Politics as a Vocation," asserted the crucial position of such leaders at the helm of state bureaucracies as the only alternative to "the rule of professional politicians without a calling, without the inner charismatic qualities that make a leader" (1958:113).

As Weber revisited the subject over a period of years and in different contexts, he appeared to be of two minds about its essential nature. At times, he

---

[28] If this interactional perspective is not typically associated with Weber, it is because he was of two minds about the issue. This will be elaborated fully in the coming pages.

[29] Although the word charisma has as its original meaning a "gift of grace," I speak here of the *semblance* of special abilities rather than their existence *per se*. Critical to Weber's conception is not the actual possession of special abilities, but the imputation of charismatic authority to the leader on the part of the followers, based on their belief in the existence of the special abilities. It is for this reason that I speak of charisma as an interactional process. I will explore this issue more thoroughly below.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

portrayed charisma as a possession or characteristic of individuals, be they prophets ([1922] 1991:46-59), party leaders (1958:103, 113), warriors, literati or others (1978a:242). In his condensed typology of legitimate domination in Part One of *Economy and Society*,[30] the section entitled "Charismatic Authority" begins with as explicit a statement as Weber made on the topic: "The term 'charisma' will be applied to a certain *quality of an individual* by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities" (1978a:241, emphasis added). In this conception, charisma is the factor that allows a person to claim authority on the basis of unique abilities and special individual characteristics. Parsons and Shils both stripped this conception of its qualifiers, reducing charisma to nothing more and nothing less than *the legitimizing force itself*.[31] The qualifiers, however, were critical to Weber's distinction of charismatic domination from patriarchy and bureaucracy. If one insists on distilling the concept, it might seem more appropriate to demand the retention of its personal nature, and view it as the force that allows *individuals* to claim authority without regard for established norms of leadership selection. Regarding the quintessential bearers of charisma, Weber wrote, "It is characteristic of the

---

[30] Published posthumously under the co-direction of Weber's wife Marianne, *Economy and Society* was divided into two parts. Part Two is the lengthier, and was written first, from 1910 to 1914. In 1918, Weber began systematically organizing a condensed version of the same material. This later work was eventually published as Part One of *Economy and Society* (Roth 1978:lxii-civ).

[31] Such a reduction reveals Shils' argument to be tautology, asserting merely that all legitimate

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

prophets that they do not receive their mission from any human agency, but seize it, as it were" (1978a:444).

Yet even this is problematic. Others have noted the tendency in popular usage to treat charisma as an individual personality trait (Roth 1975:148). Two points are in order. First, Weber's formulation in Part One of *Economy and Society* identifies it not as a characteristic of the person, but of some attribute s/he possesses. That is, it never exists alone, but always in tandem with some other characteristic to which it attaches. A prophet may possess a highly developed sense of moral outrage, and technically, it would be this attribute which we would say possesses charisma, not the prophet himself. The prophet will claim authority on the basis of the charismatic trait. Second, one who believes him/herself possessed of special abilities and accordingly demands the submission of others is free to assert this claim, but it is the others' willingness to accept this authority that determines whether charisma actually exists. In Weber's words: "It is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma" (1978a:242). Charisma, then, is a *relational* quality that does not exist but for the presence of the observer. This suggests charisma is better viewed as an interactional process of claim and acceptance, rather than an individual quality. The false prophet and false messiah are none other than would-be leaders whose claims to charismatic authority are rejected

---

orders, including the legal-rational, are undergirded by a legitimating force.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

by those they seek to lead. Like the proverbial tree in the forest, charisma falls silent when none heed the call.

The Charismatic Situation

The focus on the individual assertion of authority in a variety of different circumstances (from ancient Asian religions to modern American political machines) forms one line of Weberian thought on the subject of charisma. It is this which frames Weber's abbreviated typology of legitimate domination. Such a formulation, however, constitutes a marked shift in emphasis from the more detailed exposition, "Charisma and Its Transformation," on which the material in the typology was based. There, Weber was only secondarily concerned with the individual bearer of charisma, who takes on importance because he[32] is rooted in a social context that facilitates his emergence as leader. Chief among Weber's concerns was the social organization of need-satisfaction under conditions that deviate from the routine (1978b:1111-2). This, crucially, extended beyond the characteristics of the individual leader to include the economic and administrative arrangements that sustain charismatic domination, the issues it commonly addresses, the constraints upon its exercise of power, and primarily, its relationship to routine.

---

[32] Weber's examples were all men.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In short, a second line of thought in Weber's work treats charismatic domination as rooted in and generative of a distinct confluence of circumstances. This originating set of circumstances[33] can be called the "charismatic situation."[34] The primary feature of the charismatic situation is that it enables the emergence of a charismatic leader, that is, one whose claim to moral authority must be asserted explicitly because it constitutes a break with existing norms, including the normative patterns of leadership selection.

Weber began his exposition of the subject not with the individual leader, and not even with charisma. Rather he started by elucidating an underlying continuity between bureaucratic and patriarchal systems: namely, their permanent structure, embeddedness in routine, and orientation to satisfaction of "calculable needs." He then introduced charisma as a residual category. "All

---

[33] I draw a distinction between the origins and evolution of charismatic domination. Whereas Weber was primarily interested in the latter, my intent is to elucidate the former. Therefore, I focus here on the circumstances allowing for the initial emergence of the charismatic domination, rather than those generated by the process of routinization. The routinizing process merges the "two basically antagonistic forces of charisma and tradition" and creates something conceptually distinct from the "pure" form of charismatic domination present "in statu nascendi." Weber used the images of a "slow death by suffocation", an ebbing tide, a waning and a petrification to characterize the transformation of charisma "beyond recognition" as it becomes "mechanized... displaced... or fused" with other structures of domination (1978b:1121-2).

[34]The charismatic situation represents one class of the broader category of anti-routine, distinguished by the emergence of charismatic authority. The closest term for this found in Weber is the "pure type of charismatic rulership" (1978b:1121). By this, he meant that in contrast to other forms of rulership that combine various mixtures of traditional, legal-rational and charismatic authority, this involves charismatic authority alone. If one visualizes the relationship among the three forms of authority as a property space, the pure type of charismatic rulership would be positive on the dimension of charisma and negative on the dimensions of tradition and legal-rationality. I have chosen not to use Weber's term "rulership," preferring instead the term "situation," which emphasizes the multidimensionality of the concept and directs attention away from a focus on the leader to the other constituent elements of this form of domination.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

*extra*ordinary needs, i.e., those which *transcend* the sphere of everyday economic routines, have always been satisfied in an entirely heterogeneous manner: on a *charismatic* basis" (1978b:1111). Charisma, here, is notable more for what it is not than what it is. Unlike patriarchy and bureaucracy, charisma is antithetical to permanent structure, released from the shackles of routine, and oriented not toward the calculable needs of everyday life, but to the extra-ordinary needs of the extra-ordinary moment.

Hovering on the interstices of structure, charisma is the domination emergent in liminality. It emerges when established patterns—be they normative or habitual—recede into the distance. The passage out of structure and into liminality can be temporal, as in periods of ferment or upheaval; spatial, as people are physically separated from the structure-bearing environments; or both. For example, one might expect to find charismatic domination among groups of refugees, who are displaced from their places of residence and whose routines of life are further disrupted by the upheaval of living in the center of a war zone. One might also look for it in groups of pilgrim-tourists, who remove themselves from their normal environments and roles for a brief period of time.

The features of charismatic domination that make it the revolutionary force *par excellence* are rooted in the essential liminality of the charismatic situation. Weber emphasized the freedom from constraint inherent in the leader's claim to authority. Because the charismatic leader does not need to climb to leadership according to a prescribed set of rules, and wields a highly personal

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

power not grounded in tradition or law, the leader is free of all external regulation—free, that is, to espouse radical change (1978b:1111-7). But the revolutionary potential is not merely the product of one individual and the claim to authority s/he makes. The aberrant path to authority common among charismatic leaders is rooted in a breakdown of the normative system of advancement and/or leadership selection. Thus, even before the charismatic leader assumes authority, the conditions for revolutionary change have already begun to ripen. The receding of structure creates the space for novel claims to be asserted and enacted.

The structure of charismatic domination[35] (as distinct from its legitimation and its origins) also exhibits features of liminality that contribute to its revolutionary potential. First among these is its *ad hoc* means of economic support. Ever-mindful of the willful intent of human beings in creating their social situations, Weber explained this as a result of a strong antagonism to the constraints that "methodical rational acquisition.... [and] all systematic economic activities" would place on the leader and his/her disciples (1978b:1113). Freed of the obligations of daily life, those in the charismatic situation are a potent force

---

[35] Charisma is a liminal phenomenon in the sense that it stands outside the bounds of enduring structures. However, as Weber writes, "charismatic authority does not imply an amorphous condition; it indicates rather a definite social structure with a staff and an apparatus of services and material means that is adapted to the mission of the leader" (1978b:1119). Untethered from established structures, charisma forms its own. These, however, are transitory in nature. The inevitable passage out of the liminal state is marked by the dissipation of these temporary arrangements, or their metamorphosis into more permanent forms.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

for change. Whatever the reasons for its emergence, the shunning of economic routine perpetuates the state of liminality. Structural conditions and ideology thus combine in a mutually reinforcing manner.

Support of the administrative staff is often dependent on these *ad hoc* economic arrangements. Typically chosen by the leader for their devotion and own charismatic qualifications, the administrative staff hold their positions not as salaried professionals, but as a personal staff of loyal disciples. Unless they have other sources of support their needs are provided in a "communist" manner, by which Weber meant "the absence of formal accountability in the *consumption* sphere, not as the rational organization of *production* for a common account" (1978b:1119). Disciples share equally (or at least without keeping accounts) the common goods within the leader's court, such as food, clothing, living quarters and the like.[36] These are acquired by the leader on an irregular basis through conquest or from donations. Weber noted the difficulty in maintaining such a lifestyle, seeing the staff's inevitable drive to secure their positions as the critical factor in the routinizing processes that mark the demise of pure charismatic authority (1978b:1122).

It is inherent to the condition of liminality that it eventually comes to an end. By definition, it is a temporary passage between two end points. In the economic sphere, the need to secure regular means of subsistence will inevitably

---

[36] The fellowship which forms around this communistic lifestyle is a major element of Turner's

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

reassert itself, and charismatic freedom will give way to the antithetical forces of routine. Moreover, the specific status group interests of the administrative staff will serve as the seed of social structure from which rationalization and institutionalization will germinate (cf. Bendix 1962:308). In Weber's words, "Every charisma is on the road from a turbulently emotional life that knows no economic rationality to a slow death by suffocation under the weight of material interests: every hour of its existence brings it nearer to this end" (1978b:1120).

Weber described the charismatic situation ("the pure type of charismatic rulership") as fundamentally "unstable" (1978b:1121). The reasons for this are manifold. At the level of leadership, there is the locus of authority in a single mortal who will eventually pass, and the evanescence of the charismatic gift which is always subject to disconfirmation if not continually re-proven. At the level of administration, there is the case-by-case nature of policy-making and adjudication, and the desire of the administrative class to secure their positions and the appointment of successors. At the level that concerns us most, the social and economic conditions that form the backdrop of charismatic rule, there are its origins in extra-ordinary situations that themselves are inherently unstable; and the routinizing pressures of economic life. With regard to the latter, Weber wrote, "[C]harisma is basically an extraordinary and hence non-economic power,

---

concept *communitas*.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and its vitality is immediately endangered when everyday economic interests become predominant, as it threatens to happen everywhere" (1978b:1120).

Anti-Routine's Guiding Hand

In his writings on charisma, Weber treated the situation I have labeled "anti-routine" as a distinct social phenomenon: short-lived and inherently unstable, but with an intense, even revolutionary, power. Existing outside of established structures, but with a loose organization[37] of its own, it has the freedom to challenge such structures and pose alternatives. Antagonistic to all routine, it can, for brief periods, command the undivided loyalties of people unencumbered by competing responsibilities.

Most important, from Weber's perspective, is the catalyst to realize this revolutionary potential: the charismatic leader who seizes control of this situation and attempts to shape it according to his/her will. Precisely because the situation represents a break with established patterns and norms, anyone claiming to exercise moral authority within it must make the assertion explicit. This is done both in its articulation—with the leader demanding others' submission in accordance with his/her professed superior personal abilities—and in the immediacy of its perception. Here, Weber's descriptions of the charismatic followers invoke explicitly religious language whose tone is reminiscent of Durkheim's writings on collective effervescence: Arising "from

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

collective excitement" and "out of the anxiety and enthusiasm of an extraordinary situation," followers subordinate themselves to the charismatic leader in a deeply personal manner that is rooted in a "sense of loyalty and obligation which always has a religious aura." This "acutely emotional faith" and "belief in revelation and heroes" derives from "the surrender of the faithful to the extraordinary and unheard-of, to what is alien to all regulation and tradition and therefore is viewed as divine" (1978:1115-22).

Weber's unique insight into the nature of anti-routine is that it is often given order by a unique, transient form of domination known as charisma. Where Durkheim and Turner saw collective effervescence and communitas primarily as democratic constructs, Weber was sensitive to the lines of authority that shape and direct the collective sentiment.

Social Psychological Views of Anti-Routine

We have seen that Turner, Durkheim and Weber each noted the interplay between societal and psychological factors in their conceptualizations of anti-routine. Although my purpose here is manifestly sociological—I am concerned with understanding the social conditions and collective meanings associated with routine-shattering circumstances—I wish to call attention to work outside of sociology and anthropology that exhibits striking parallels with the ideas I have written about above. Specifically, I will consider Abraham Maslow's concept of

---

[37] The phrase is suggested by Bendix (1962).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"peak-experience" (1968), William James' "mystical consciousness," ([1902] 1985) and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi 1975, 1988, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi 1988; Csikszentmihalyi and Larson 1984). All these writers adopt a social psychological approach whose unit of analysis is the individual rather than the collective. The resultant conceptions are therefore distinguished in important ways from the notion of anti-routine I have been developing. It is precisely because of these differences, though, that the degree of convergence that does exist seems so striking.

Abraham Maslow: Peak-Experience

Perhaps the most important psychological treatment bearing on our topic is found in Maslow's writings on "peak-experience." The core of Maslow's argument is, first, that people have the ability to experience for brief moments an exceptional form of cognition at variance with the type that predominates under routine circumstances; and second, that this experience has effects on the individual that outlast the transient peak-experience itself. Heilman was the first to apply the concept to the empirical study of pilgrimage-touring, arguing that peak-experiences were deliberately fostered as part of the Israel experience program's strategy to shape personal identity (1995:83-8). In Chapter 2 of the present work, I used an operational definition of the concept to study the relationship of specific sites and activities to emergent feelings of spirituality.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Maslow defined the "peak-experience" as "moments of highest happiness and fulfillment" (1968:73). The divergence from the sociological treatments of anti-routine is immediately apparent. There, happiness and fulfillment are nowhere present as necessary elements of the situation. Durkheim's empirical cases included not only celebration, but also gatherings to mourn the dead or expiate sin. Weber wrote of times of crisis when established patterns of collective action no longer sufficed to meet needs.

Similarities between the peak-experience and other conceptions of anti-routine emerge only upon Maslow's further elaboration of the concept. It is worth noting that methodologically, Maslow began with the notion of "the most wonderful experience... of your life" and asked several hundred people to describe it in depth (71). Their experiences were not necessarily routine-shattering or extra-ordinary in the sociological sense. Rather, they were largely idiosyncratic and often occurred within the structural conditions of ordinary life. As a result, Maslow's elaboration of the peak-experience was based on things such as "the parental experience, the mystic, or oceanic, or nature experience, the aesthetic perception, the creative moment, the therapeutic or intellectual insight, the orgasmic experience, certain forms of athletic fulfillment, etc." (73).

Maslow made no attempt to account for the emergence of this state, treating it as a matter of individual psychology rather than a set of social conditions with psychological implications. For Maslow, the main question was not 'How and why does the peak-experience occur?' but rather, 'What is it like to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

be in the peak-experience?' He answered this by arguing that the peak-experience leads to a distinct form of cognition - a "Cognition of Being," in which individuals perceive and interpret things in a manner that contrasts with "ordinary cognitions" (73, 82). In other words, although the peak-experience might not be out of the ordinary in sociological terms, it is far from ordinary in cognitive terms.

Maslow's understanding of the Cognition of Being can be distilled into four major inter-related aspects of perception/interpretation, all of which have parallels in the writings of the authors considered previously. First, individuals in the peak-experience tend to perceive things in their *wholeness or totality* (75-6). Nothing is seen as unimportant, and thus, small details take on great meaning. It is as if the conceptual frameworks applied in daily life to sort and filter experience are suspended, allowing aspects of existence that usually go unnoticed to assume a place in consciousness. Just as, on the macro-level, the contraction of social structural roles breeds communitas relations, on the micro-level, the suspension of conceptual frameworks allows the individual to see things and people as unique wholes and not as a instances of a class.

Second, from the vantage point of the peak-experience, the universe (or those aspects of it immediately present) is conceived not in terms of means and ends, but as an *end-in-itself,* independent of human interests (76). Moreover, the very fact of being in such a frame of mind is "felt as a self-validating, self-justifying moment which carries its own intrinsic value with it" (79). Maslow did

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

not use the term "sacred" to describe this, although he clearly had this conception in mind when he described how it could easily by profaned: "It is felt to be so valuable an experience, so great a revelation, that even to attempt to justify it takes away from its dignity and worth" (79).

Third, Maslow believed that people in the peak-experience become so completely absorbed in their environment or activity that all *consciousness of self departs* (74-86). This is implicated in the emergence of communitas relations.[38] Maslow, however, did not draw a connection to Turner's work. For him, the importance of the lack of self-conscious rested in its relationship to other elements of the peak-experience. As consciousness of self departs, the self is no longer perceived as separate and distinct from its activity and environment, but rather merges into the wholeness. In the process, the individual stops perceiving him/herself as an actor who utilizes means to affect external conditions in the pursuit of some end. Actor, environment, intention and existence all blend into one. One result of this is a "disorientation in time and space" (80) that creates a sense of timelessness.[39]

Last, Maslow, like Weber and Durkheim, identified the peak-experience with a *sacred power made manifest*: "The emotional reaction to the peak-experience

---

[38] For there to be a "direct, immediate, and total confrontation of human identities" neither person, figuratively, can be wearing a mask. The loss of self-consciousness is the equivalent of the shedding of masks.

[39] Maslow treats this as an effect, but, as I have discussed earlier, the break with the normal sociotemporal order is an important social condition underlying anti-routine.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

has a special flavor of wonder, of awe, of reverence, of humility and surrender before the experience as before something great" (87-8). Here, Maslow tended to resist analysis in favor of simple description. At most, he put forth some tentative hypotheses that served only to beg the question of why the peak-experience would be perceived in this manner. For example, he cited descriptions of the experience as delightfully painful, "too much for me," "more than I can bear," and "too wonderful" (88) -- suggesting some basic biological or psychological limitation in the human capacity to experience it. But why the peak-state could push people to these limits, Maslow did not indicate. Perhaps Maslow simply mischaracterized the direction of cause and effect: rather than the peak-experience producing a reaction of surrender, the feeling of surrender before something powerful is constitutive of the peak-experience. Maslow's methodology suggests this likelihood. He first posited "moments of highest happiness and fulfillment" and then asked for descriptions of these. Maslow was thus describing a state of consciousness divergent from the norm, in which the sense of surrender before an immediate sacred power is part and parcel of the loss of the self as it merges into a great wholeness in which ends and means, actors and objects, Self and Other are obliterated. Something about the relationship between these aspects of the altered state accounts for the reaction of awe, wonder and submission. The only suggestions Maslow offers to account for this are a sense of insignificance in the face of something enormous, and, echoing Durkheim, the contrast with "the valley of ordinary experience."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Anti-routine is at heart a *sociological* phenomenon that has distinct social and psychological consequences. Maslow's work on the peak-experience helps to ground the latter component. The peak-experience is not the exactly same as the sociological condition of anti-routine; Maslow described experiences that extend beyond the realm of the social.[40] But in spite of the differences, Maslow's work teaches us that people have the ability to experience a fleeting form of cognition different from that common to ordinary life. Why and how this occurs, he does not suggest. Such a state of being, in which the self becomes one with the surroundings and a sense of sacred power is perceived directly, stands in sharp contrast with ordinary cognitions (82). Indeed, the special nature of the peak-experience is recognized, in part, due to the contrast. The ability to achieve and sustain such a mental state is, however, exceedingly difficult. This tends to make the experience infrequent and transient (75). But transient though it may be, it leaves residual effects (101). First, because the peak-experience by definition is experienced only as good and never bad (81), people remember it as desirable and seek to repeat it. In addition, the marked shift in perception of the world and one's place in it during the altered state can effect longer-term changes in one's views of self, others, relationships, and the world, and can also stimulate a

---

[40] For example, he discussed peak-experiences that resulted from biological processes like orgasm (which need not be achieved in an interpersonal context).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

release of creative energies (101). It is for this reason that Maslow called peak-experiences "acute identity experiences" (103-114).

William James: Mystical Consciousness

Maslow's conception of peak-experience substantially echoes William James' description of the mystical state ([1902] 1961),[41] especially in its core presumption that what passes for ordinary consciousness is but one state of mind that, although usually privileged, is not the only form of human cognition. "[O]ur normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness, as we call it," James' wrote, "is but one special type of conscious, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different" (305). Among these potential forms are "mystical states" (299).

The defining characteristic of the mystical state is its ineffability (299-300), a fact whose realization usually marks the end of analysis rather than its beginning. Just as Turner noted of communitas, James commented that the attempt to give voice to the mystical experience tends to the aesthetic. "[N]ot conceptual speech, but music rather, is the element through which we are best spoken to by mystical truth.... Music gives us ontological messages which non-

---

[41] Maslow cited James' work in the book containing the essays on peak-experience, but not in the specific essays themselves. He did note, however, that in addition to relying on his informants' reports, his analysis "tapped the immense literatures of mysticism, religion, art, creativeness, love, etc." (71). It is reasonable to suppose that James' chapter on mysticism influenced Maslow's thought.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

musical criticism is unable to contradict, though it may laugh at our foolishness in minding them" (330).

But in spite of the fundamental limitations in expressing the nature of the mystical experience, James attempted to elaborate its basic characteristics, methods of cultivation, "distinct theoretic drift" (326), and claims to authority. Like Maslow, who understood peak-experiences to constitute a distinct form of cognition, James recognized in the mystical experience a "noetic quality" that distinguishes it from mere emotional states (300). That is, it is perceived by those who experience it as a form of knowledge, a state of understanding and comprehension. Such an experience of "insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect" is often perceived as a revelation, a sensation certainly bound to the ineffable character of the knowledge gained (300). Reduced to the most elementary level, then, the mystical experience is an ineffable sense of understanding Truth. Such an experience is typically fleeting and passive. Deliberate steps may be taken to enter into the state, but once entered into, "the mystic feels as if his own will were in abeyance, and indeed sometimes as if he were grasped by a superior power" (300).

Inasmuch as religious movements are institutionalized cooperative efforts to shape society in accordance with some absolute Truth, the methodical cultivation of mystical states has often occurred within the context of religion. As described by James, the practices in Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity generally involve various exercises of the mind, often performed in solitude (314-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

26). But not only the methods of inducing mystical states exhibit cross-cultural consistency. The knowledge thus produced, while expressing itself in culturally specific terms, is generally optimistic and monistic in character. James was emphatic about this point:

> This overcoming of all the usual barriers between the individual and the Absolute is the great mystic achievement. In mystic states we both become one with the Absolute and become aware of our oneness. This is the everlasting and triumphant mystical tradition, hardly altered by differences in clime or creed (329).

In many ways, James' conception resembles Maslow's. Both described the experiences they studied as fleeting moments when the self as a unique entity evaporates into a sense of a great Unity, when mutually exclusive categories coexist without contradiction, and when submission before a higher power is perceived as a pleasure too great to bear (James 1961:300-30; Maslow 1968:74-92). Both acknowledged that these states bestow feelings of energy and power upon those who experience them (James 1961:324-326; Maslow 1968:101). And Maslow echoed James' contention that "[m]ystical states, when well developed, usually are, and have the right to be, absolutely authoritative over the individuals to whom they come.... [But] no authority emanates from them which should make it a duty for those who stand outside of them to accept their revelations uncritically" (James 1961:331-336; c.f. Maslow 1968:98-100). Implicit in this

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

statement is a blanket rejection of charismatic claims to leadership, which "demands that others obey and follow" because "it is their *duty* to recognize" the moral authority inherent in the "highly personal experience" (Weber 1978b:1112-5).[42] This highlights a central disjuncture between the psychological and sociological approaches. From the latter perspective, the general validity of the moral authority emergent in extra-ordinary situations is not at issue. Instead, the important thing is to account for the processes by which individualistic claims to authority, experienced in the first- or third-person, achieve general acceptance.

James' study of mystical states of mind sheds light on this sociological question. By virtue of its near-monopoly over consciousness, ordinary experience holds a privileged position as an arbiter of what is real and what is valued. By its mere existence, however, the fact of experiencing a different form of consciousness undermines the authority of the ordinary frame of reference by depriving it of its taken-for-granted quality. Thus relativized, its monopoly on defining reality and value is broken. This obtains regardless of the content of the mystical knowledge. That is, the vision could be a delusional fantasy with no element of truth in it whatsoever, but its relativizing effect will be the same. In this manner, mystical states "break down the authority of the non-mystical or rationalistic consciousness.... They show it to be only one kind of consciousness.

---

[42] James' and Maslow's objection stems from the individualistic character of mystical knowledge. Regardless of whether or not they are rooted in mystical revelation, charismatic claims to authority all assert a unique, personal access to truth. The objection is thus applicable to charismatic truth claims to authority in all its forms, mystical or not.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

They open out the possibility of other orders of truth, in which, so far as anything in us vitally responds to them, we may freely continue to have faith" (331). Likewise, the existence of anti-routine relativizes ordinary life. This undermines the authority of the very form of existence which the emergent authority claims usually challenge. The processes of routinization, institutionalization and symbolization described, respectively, by Weber, Turner and Durkheim, can be seen as dialectic processes through which competing claims of authority are reconciled.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi: Flow

Like Maslow, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi was interested in things that made people happy. He observed that under certain conditions, "people even enjoy work, extreme danger, and stress" (1975:xiii). Why, he asked, did people perceive certain things as enjoyable? In answering this question, he developed the notion of "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi 1975, 1988, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi 1988; Csikszentmihalyi and Larson 1984).

Csikszentmihalyi considered flow to be "the holistic sensation that people feel when they act with total involvement" (1975:36). In such a state, action follows action according to an internal logic that seems to need no conscious intervention by the actor. Csikszentmihalyi saw the idea as akin to Maslow's "peak-experience," and developed his notion partly to rectify Maslow's failure to address "what makes peak experiences possible" (1975:xiii; 1988:4-5).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Csikszentmihalyi described seven elements of the flow experience that simultaneously comprise both its causes and effects. Flow emerges in situations in which there is a *limited stimulus field* (1975:40); *control* over one's actions and over the environment (44); and clear, *unambiguous feedback* (46). This typically leads to a *merging of action and awareness,* so that one is able to concentrate without distraction (38); to an *altered sense of the duration of time* (1990:49); and to the state of *ego-transcendence* that Maslow also described (1975:42). Finally, this state of being is "*autotelic*" – it is its own reward and needs no external reinforcements (1975:47). All these elements of the flow experience are interrelated. Because the stimulus field is limited, concentration is possible. Because the activity has clear rules and feedback, people can feel control over it while not being restrained by self-consciousness. The result is an intrinsically rewarding state.

In delineating the conditions that enable people to enjoy themselves,[43] Csikszentmihalyi defined a situation that is not extra-ordinary in the sociological sense. Even the economic realm can be the setting for the flow experience. (Csikszentmihalyi gave the example of surgeons in the operating room.) Csikszentmihalyi, however, considered flow to be exceptional in the psychological sense, seeing it as "an experience that is not accessible in 'everyday

---

[43] Actively enjoy themselves. He considered "enjoyment" to be different from the passive experience of "pleasure" (1990:3).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

life'" (1975:35). He saw ordinary life as conspiring against flow. In many situations, we are far from having mastery over our actions and environment. Nor is feedback is always immediate and unambiguous. Often, the stimulus field presents a distracting barrage that necessitates multi-tasking, divided attention and prioritization. Even in the moments when we do enter a flow state, we find it transient and unstable. Interruptions break our concentration; we stop acting effortlessly and start paying attention to the fact that we are trying to act (38).

During those exceptional moments when flow is achieved, it produces certain effects whose descriptions will by now be familiar. By suppressing consciousness of the self, flow encourages the sense of holism described by Maslow and James (42-3,93-9), as well as the ability to forge communitas relationships with other people.[44] Flow also exerts a commanding power over those who experience it. "In a variety of human contexts," Csikszentmihalyi wrote, "one finds a remarkably similar inner state, which is so enjoyable that people are sometimes willing to forsake a comfortable life for its sake" (37).

Summary

Durkheim and Turner, and to a lesser extent Weber, argued that situations of anti-routine generate psychological states which, in practice, contain elements of the peak-, mystical- and flow experiences. Maslow, James and Csikszentmihalyi,

---

[44] Both Csikszentmihalyi and Turner cite one another's work and use each other's terminology (Csikszentmihalyi 1975:30, 93-7, passim; 1998:9; Turner and Turner 1978:138-9, 254-5).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

for their part, argued that these psychological states were themselves exceptional and transient. But Csikszentmihalyi's work on flow cautions us against treating similarities as identities. Even if the psychological state generated by anti-routine resembles or contains elements of flow, Csikszentmihalyi teaches us that anti-routine is not necessary to create it. It can be found in normal life as well, even in the midst of the very economic activities that Turner, Weber and Durkheim all rejected as antithetical to communitas, charisma and collective effervescence.

None of the social psychologists whose ideas I have represented here presumed to argue sociological consequences for the psychological phenomena they discussed. For them, the transcendence of routine forms of cognition led only to alternative forms of the same. At most, they might effect long-term changes in personal identity. But the effects were still psychological and individual, not social. Maslow, James and Csikszentmihalyi tended to agree on the core elements of these altered states of perception—ego-transcendence, holism or oneness, a feeling of directly encountering awe-inspiring power,[45] and a sense that being in such a state of mind was an end in itself. They agreed that such states were fleeting and evanescent. There was consensus too that such states could be evoked deliberately in religious or other contexts. Their vision, in sum, was not identical to that of the sociologists and anthropologist whose work

---

[45] On the last point, Csikszentmihalyi was an exception. He addressed it, but it was not central to his thought.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

concerns me the most. But the extent of the overlap is striking, especially given that they were preoccupied with different empirical questions and conducted their work at a different level of analysis. The theoretical convergence on a conception of anti-routine as a distinct phenomenon with distinct characteristics is thus not merely *sociological*, but *social scientific* in the broad sense.

ANTI-ROUTINE AND TAGLIT

As we consider the notion of anti-routine that emerges from this cross-disciplinary theoretical convergence, and the bearing of this on our understanding of Taglit, one point must be emphasized because it underlies everything else in this chapter: *All the thinkers discussed here agreed that extra-ordinary circumstances in which the normal rules of social or psychological life are suspended constitute a distinct category for social scientific analysis.* The deviant case is not merely a residual category to be defined by the absence of something else, but can sustain a positive definition in its own right.

The Character of Anti-Routine

An elaboration of the routine-shattering situation will benefit by distinguishing (to the extent possible) the situation's character from its effects.[46] Consensus about the nature of anti-routine more or less reigns with regard to the following

---

[46] The nature of the phenomenon makes a hard and fast distinction between character and effect admittedly problematic.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

points: Anti-routine 1) is fundamentally unstable, 2) has anti-economic tendencies, 3) is perceived as a contrast, 4) entails a simplification of social structure, and 5) is a collective phenomenon. Let us consider each of these in turn, highlighting the relevance they bear to Taglit.

1) *Anti-routine is fundamentally unstable.* It would be tautology to argue that exceptional situations are temporary. The question that arises regarding this transience is its cause. It seems clear that the temporary character of anti-routine is less a result of social norms that impel a return to regular life than a basic inability to sustain the state. It is as if the law of entropy is reversed, and that social life has a tendency to revert to a state of routinized structure. The demands of economic life, both the actual labor necessary to produce the means of subsistence and the social organization that accompanies this, are strongly implicated in the instability of the extra-ordinary state. The effort that is needed to maintain anti-routine often takes the form of an anti-economic orientation that is designed to keep the routinizing force at bay (see no. 2).

2) *Anti-routine has anti-economic tendencies.* The anti-economic character of routine-breaking situations is threefold. At one level, this is simply part of the definition of what it means to leave routine in the first place. Weber defined "*extra*ordinary needs" as "those which *transcend* the sphere of everyday economic activities" (1978b:1111, italics in original, underlining added). Turner and Durkheim shared similar views. Second, in addition to this definitional matter is the fact that normal economic behavior is inimical to other emergent

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

characteristics of anti-routine. Turner saw economic life as inevitably producing the status distinctions that are antithetical to communitas. Weber considered the *ad hoc* means of support for the charismatic leader and staff to be central to the personalized and arbitrary nature of that form of domination. Routinized efforts to secure the means of subsistence entail constraints on the charismatic leader's freedom of action, thereby undermining the very basis of that form of rulership. Durkheim saw in it the forces of isolation and boredom that precluded any experience of collective effervescence. Third, a recognition of the incompatibility of economic life with anti-routine has led people in such situations to devalue or denigrate routine economic activity. In this manner, ideology makes an independent contribution to the perpetuation of the anti-routine state.

Both the fundamental instability and the anti-economic character of anti-routine were built into Taglit insofar as the program was a vacation. For the participants, though not the staff, it represented time off from their work lives.[47] The program did not, however, denigrate labor. It was taken for granted that this was a temporary leisure time activity to be scheduled around more important commitments. For that reason, the trips were planned around universities' Winter and Summer breaks. There was also no expectation that people could or

---

[47] Most were not immediately engaged in income-generating activities, but their work as students can be conceived of as labor nonetheless. The time spent in college, after all, was an investment in their own human capital (and for the more savvy ones, their social capital, too). This investment was expected to translate into advantages once they entered the labor market. Moreover, the nature of their work required the regular application of labor (studying) to produce certain goods (demonstrations of learning) that were subject to a system of rewards (grades).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

would want to go on indefinitely living out of suitcases, always on the go, never spending more than three nights in the same room. Nor would the philanthropic and governmental funding be forthcoming to support such a lifestyle.

The anti-economic character of Taglit was exemplified by one instance where a participant attempted to engage in business activity. Cole Winnick, a graduating senior and already chief technology officer of an internet start-up, had quietly arranged some business meetings one day with potential business partners in Herzliyah, where Israel's high-tech industry is concentrated. In order to have his power lunch in Silicon Wadi, Cole had to leave the group and miss a day of Taglit. The one was incompatible with the other. It was unclear whether or how he worked this out with the program staff. They had to be aware that he would not be with them for the day, because had he simply disappeared, the bus would have been thrown into turmoil, which did not happen. The CMJS researcher observing the group had suspicions that he left under false pretenses. He tried to avoid the subject when she brought it up, conveying the impression that he considered this to be an illicit activity in the context of Taglit. The program was open about its official agenda, and although fostering Israel-Diaspora relations was among the goals, Cole's profit-oriented deal-making was not exactly what planners had in mind.

3) *Anti-routine is perceived as a contrast.* Human beings are hardly oblivious to the exceptional character of routine-shattering situations. On the contrary, it is the contrast with everyday life that makes people so aware of their

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

new circumstances. Turner believed this leads to two competing models of human existence. Durkheim saw in it the seed from which the notions of sacred and profane sprout. The importance of anti-routine's contrast with everyday life is not merely that there is an *awareness* that one is in the midst of an extra-ordinary situation. The actual *meanings* that anti-routine takes on are also shaped by having the point of comparison. Routine and anti-routine tend to be held in opposition in an evaluative context that sees one (usually anti-routine) as a higher state than the other. This explains the finding that people often seek to reenter the anti-routine state or transform their regular environments to somehow reproduce or recapture it.

The sensitivity to contrast is one of the primary elements enabling pilgrim-tourists to find authenticity – both in the place they visit and in themselves. This manifested itself repeatedly in the experience of the young men and women on Taglit. Their conceptions of Israel's Jewish authenticity were rooted in their ability to see it as a counterpoint to their experiences in North America. Sometimes, this expressed itself in denigration of aspects of American Jewish life, such as a supposed lack of religious devotion and a confining restriction of Jewish life to religious and communal institutions (in contrast to the public Jewishness of the Israeli street). Many also attributed their own feelings of personal authenticity to the Israeli setting, believing that something about the country that was unlike other places allowed them to achieve ecstatic and sublime feelings. The evaluative component of the contrast with home was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

evident in both these phenomena. Hence, the strong desire among many to extend their stays, return in the future, or hold on to these feelings in North America through Jewish involvements. On these, I will have more to say later.

4) *Anti-routine entails a simplification of social structure.* Turner was the most explicit on this point, arguing that the withdrawal from normal routine eliminates the grounding on which social differentiation and stratification are based. Hierarchy is replaced with a "relatively undifferentiated *comitatus*, community, or even communion of equal individuals" (1982:96). This simplification of social structure finds expression in the minutiae of life. For example clothing tends to become uniform or is discarded altogether, and private property is abandoned in favor of shared communal goods. In other words, within certain limits, things that may designate rank are treated as irrelevant or undesirable. These limits are important though. Turner rejects the notion that structure can be eliminated entirely. To the extent that anti-routine is deliberately fostered, the overarching distinction between those in control of the situation and those taking part in it is not merely maintained but often enhanced. A similar notion is evident in Weber's writings on charisma. Weber is known for demonstrating encyclopedic knowledge about layers within layers of competing status groups in various societies. But in his writings on the situation of pure charismatic domination, he collapsed status differentiation into a tripartite structure of leader, disciples and masses. As for Durkheim, his descriptions of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the corroboree make no meaningful distinction between any status groups. The overwhelming impression he leaves us with is of an undifferentiated mob.

Many of these elements were evident on Taglit. For the ten days of the trip people were defined less by pre-existing roles than by their temporary status of Taglit participant. Indeed, throughout this dissertation, "participant" is how I most commonly refer to them. Some lines of differentiation were still maintained. Rooming assignments were segregated by sex, and on some Orthodox-sponsored tours, certain religious activities were as well. An ethnic divide between Russian-immigrants and native born Americans emerged quickly on many buses, often to the disappointment of the staff.[48] Some people continued to express a dislike of members of fraternities and sororities. But in these instances, the members of the fraternities and sororities were usually unaware of these sentiments and did not reciprocate the ill will. Overall, friendships tended to cross barriers of age, student status, and even university (in the cases where several school groups traveled in one bus). Although an informal social status system emerged (i.e. popularity), this status system was never formalized or translated into status distinctions on other dimensions. I was not aware of any instances where a sub-group of participants received preferential treatment on the basis of status or

---

[48] Amongst themselves, immigrants from the former Soviet Union made a distinction between "refugees" who arrived prior to late 1980s, and "immigrants" who arrived afterwards. In contrast to the more recent "immigrants," the "refugees" who arrived earlier were usually indistinguishable from native-born Americans and did not self-segregate. On other buses, ethnic self-segregation was noted between Francophone and Anglophone Canadians, and among Persian Jewish New Yorkers.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

role. The only line of distinction that mattered was participant/staff. Staff may have liked some participants better than others, but their behavior was governed by set policies and a legal-rational ethic that precluded them from displaying this in the form of special treatment or favors.

The simplified social structure was certainly reflected in the details of life on Taglit. Hotel rooms were shared. Dining was communal.[49] The participants who flew business class rather than coach were assigned their seats randomly. Participants tended not to be distinguished by their clothing. The choice of casual wear (jeans, sweatsuits, sneakers, etc.) was governed largely by functionality, but there was a normative element as well. When an Ivy League freshman was seen running down the street to Yad Vashem in black leather heels, black stockings, a black denim skirt and a pink sweater, students from another university who were standing on the sidewalk mocked her after she passed, laughing even harder when someone mentioned that he had seen her several days ago wearing Prada shoes to a muddy archaeological dig.

5) *Anti-routine is a collective phenomenon.* Because it is a collective state, anti-routine's effects on the individual are not merely psychological, but *social*-psychological. Moreover, the individual need not be the sole unit of analysis to understand anti-routine's effects. As a collective phenomenon, it also influences groups and societies on a purely sociological level.

---

[49] Both of these applied to staff and participants alike. The line separating staff from participants

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The collective character of the phenomenon is the central issue distinguishing sociological and anthropological conceptions of anti-routine from the psychological states that Maslow and others described. The psychological conceptions require neither an extra-ordinary setting nor the presence of others to occur. Communitas, collective effervescence, and pure charismatic domination, by contrast, are inconceivable outside of the social context. Whereas the peak-experience may be personally fulfilling, it is decidedly individualistic and has no socially integrative results. In fact, it is unclear whether it has any bearing on social life whatsoever. But to the extent that the social conditions of anti-routine provide psychological experiences akin to those described by Maslow, James and Csikszentmihalyi, they do so in a manner that ties these psychological experiences back into the social setting. In this manner, anti-routine provides a psychological basis for linking the individual to the group.

Although it is not clear that Taglit produced a "mystical consciousness" in the pure sense of the term, there is ample reason to believe that the program provided psychological experiences like those described by Maslow and Csikszentmihalyi. Heilman (1995) argued convincingly for the applicability of the peak-experience concept to similar Israel experience programs. Turner and Turner (1978) described the relationship between pilgrimage experiences and flow, and I described in the previous chapter how this was embodied on one

---

was not crossed in room assignments. Staff roomed with staff, participants with participants.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Taglit group's drive to Masada. The collective experience of these psychological states tied people to the fellow members of their bus-groups by generating collective effervescence and communitas. In addition, it tied Taglit participants to the imagined community of "the Jewish people" by framing these experiences with Jewish symbols that took on a totemic character. In these ways, the collective experience of such psychological states had implications for the social identities of Taglit participants.

The fact that anti-routine is a collective experience also means that it can never be entirely non-normative and non-structural. Rather, it generates norms and rudimentary structures of its own that differ from those which commonly obtain in everyday life. Weber, Turner and Durkheim (or at least the Durkheim of *The Elementary Forms*, if not the Durkheim of *Suicide*) appear to be in agreement that in collective situations where routine is broken for delimited periods of time, the emergent social forms do not devolve into Hobbesian chaos, but rather orient people to common ends[50]: Charisma orients people to the goals of the charismatic leader, communitas orients people to one another, and collective effervescence orients people to common symbols.

---

[50] The journalist Thomas Friedman made a similar point in describing how Beirut's residents managed to cope with the disruption of normal life caused by the Lebanese civil war of the 1970s and 80s. He observed in the city's residents "an instinctive desire to bring order and comfort" to their lives. This did not make life there any less "nasty, brutish and short," but it did prevent it from becoming "solitary" and "poor" (1989:29-30). The case differs from those considered here, however, because the state of war took on an aura of permanence, having become the routine state of affairs for almost two decades.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Stated differently, each of the three writers came to understand extra-ordinary situations in which routine is shunted aside as circumstances in which group life takes center stage. An awareness of the social nature of existence is forced onto consciousness. People find themselves absorbed in a self-conscious community that focuses a great deal of attention on its own existence as a collectivity. This was certainly true of Taglit, which drew attention both to the immediate community of pilgrim-tourists and the extended community of Jews across the world and throughout time.

The three writers, however, did not agree on the way in which the community comes to focus on itself. Turner considered this to emerge without mediation, as people encounter their collectivity and its members directly through communitas relations. In Weber's view, the community focuses on itself through the medium of the charismatic leader who comes to personify the group and direct its collective action. Durkheim, like Weber, also argued that the perception of collective existence is not generated directly, but is mediated. He argued that the group is able to become self-aware by developing symbols that enable it to represent itself. Taglit, as a creation of modern bureaucracy, did not evince the charismatic mediation suggested by Weber. It very much embodied the visions set forth by Turner and Durkheim, however.

Turner, Weber and Durkheim's views each capture distinct aspects of the same underlying phenomenon. The collectivity is the emergent composite of its individual members (Turner), its goal-oriented structure (Weber) and its

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

integrating symbolization (Durkheim). Although each of the three writers concerned himself with only one of these elements, each used it as a window onto the same phenomenon: *Anti-routine generates an intense collective experience where the social nature of existence is made manifest and heralded publicly, and is internalized and deeply felt privately. This was the essential nature of Taglit. It was the primary reason that the pilgrimage tour was so commonly felt to be deeply meaningful. The program set up an intensive group experience that emphasized and made palpable the social nature of human life; it framed this experience in the symbols of the Jewish collective; and as a result, the participants came to an awareness of themselves not merely as social beings generically, but specifically as Jews.*

The Outcomes of Anti-Routine

Such a situation does indeed differ markedly from normal life. Its effects are profound. I have summarized the psychological effects at the end of the previous section, and the social-psychological effects in the paragraphs immediately above. Now, I will highlight seven outcomes more sociological in character, which are areas of general consensus among Durkheim, Weber and Turner, and in some instances among Maslow, James and Csikszentmihalyi as well. These regard anti-routine's 1) transcendence of individuality, 2) ability to transform human relationships, 3) explicit assertion of moral authority, 4) relativizing power, 5) susceptibility to manipulation, 6) contradictory implications for established social orders, and 7) transformation in the name of preservation.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1) *Anti-routine involves a transcendence of individuality.* I have repeatedly noted that the suppression of the self among Taglit participants was perceived less as a coercive imposition of society on the individual than as a transcendence of an isolating egocentrism. Every single one of the authors whose work I have considered in this chapter each recognized in anti-routine the emergence of a more social human being. Not necessarily a fully-realized Marxian species-being, but at least on the road to recognizing something shared with his or her community, and possibly beyond this as well. This idea was manifest in Turner's communitas, with its I-Thou bonds and eschewing of symbols of rank, and in Durkheim's description of revelers losing themselves in the effervescence of the crowd. Maslow, James and Csikszentmihalyi all talked about the sense of being at one with the universe. Only Weber's characterization differed. It took on a more sinister feel because it placed the element of power in the foreground. The transcendence of the ego that emerged in Weber was that of total submission to the leader who embodies the collective. Regardless of outsiders' evaluations of this, Weber made it clear that from the perspective of the charismatic follower, this is perceived as desirable and good.

The crucial importance of communitas and collective effervescence to the ultimate experience of Taglit was detailed at great length in the previous chapter. Little remains to be said, other than to reiterate that the transcendence of individuality was both the deliberately fostered product of structural

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

arrangements reminiscent of total institutions and an emergent phenomenon of group dynamics in a symbolically charged environment.

With regard to the theory of anti-routine, I would also note that there is a stream of thought that sees ascetic tendencies as part and parcel of the anti-routine situation. Turner noted the willingness of liminars to accept pain and suffering. Durkheim's descriptions of collective effervescence included not only the corroboree, but also the piacular rites. These might be seen as a manifestation of ego-transcendence. The sensation of insignificance in the face of an awe-inspiring holism or unity may reveal itself in a desire to abase oneself before that higher power as a means of acknowledging and communing with it.

2) *Anti-routine transforms human relationships, enabling I-Thou encounters.* Weber's writings on the fraternity of charismatic disciples echoed Turner, whose work on communitas was the clearest statement of this proposition. When the distinctions of role and rank that characterize normal life are shed, people can begin to encounter one another as equal human beings united by their common humanity, or at least by their common situation. The emergence of such communitas relations on Taglit has constituted a running theme throughout this and the previous chapter. In the theoretical writings, this transformation of relationships is associated with a holistic sensation, and is generally perceived to be empowering and liberating. It also allows people to recognize that the restricted, codified forms of interaction they are most accustomed to are not the only model for human coexistence (see no. 4, below).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

This may actually pose problems for Taglit alumni who seek to recapture elements of their pilgrimage-tour through participation in North American Jewish communal institutions. These institutions inevitably have organizational structures, replete with hierarchy, interest groups and politics. They represent the codified forms of social life perhaps even more than they represent the communitas alternative that Taglit displayed.

3) *Anti-routine produces explicit assertions of moral authority and feelings of directly encountering sacred power.* The compelling moral force of the routine-shattering situation is one of the major themes emphasized by every one of the six social scientists discussed here. Durkheim went so far as to locate the very birth of the sacred in the extra-ordinary experience. The sense of encountering something sacred is enmeshed in a welter of complementary feelings of *holism, submission, excitement,* and *difference.* Underlying all these is the element of power. The *holistic* sensation of being at one with the universe and with fellow human beings implies power in a number of ways: through the sense of vast scale it produces, the sense of ones' own finiteness in the face of it, and the ability to transcend that finiteness through communion; through its totalizing inclusivity, and through its totalitarian exclusivity—it brooks no exception, nothing escapes it. The urge is strong to *submit* in the face of something so vast. This tears away any masks and makes manifest the power relations inherent in the situation. The *excitement* it produces is also perceived, in Durkheim's view, as a loss of control at the hands of external forces. One's body and mind are felt to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

be subject to powers beyond one's control. On the other hand, the excitement may also be perceived as empowering, as if one was also a conduit for this power to influence the world. Finally, the sense of *difference* reveals the power of anti-routine to overturn the realities of normal existence. Since these were vested with an implicit power of their own—the force of tradition and law—their suppression can only be a sign of a power even greater.

Circumstances in which such raw power is manifest exude a palpable moral authority. But because this is experienced democratically, the only way to seize control of it is to be equally as explicit in asserting the moral authority to do so. In the rites of passage Turner described, the tribal elders invoke their traditional authority to structure the experience. In the situations Weber described, charismatic leaders attempt to personify the raw power of the experience, co-opt it and direct it. In both cases, the experience of anti-routine takes on a quasi-religious character—be this religion in the traditional sense or in the functional sense (e.g. civil religion, see Bellah 1967)

Taglit staff deliberately tried to avoid telling participants what they as Jews *should* believe, feel or do. They modeled behaviors and made suggestions, but explicit "proselytizing" was considered poor form.[51] Accordingly, the explicitness of the moral force and the concomitant feelings of holism,

---

[51] The term was even used by organizers as a pejorative. There was an element of absurdity in this. The entire program, after all, was premised on the notion of being an "outreach program" to Jews who were at risk of being "lost to the Jewish people" (Post 1999). In spite of this, the term "proselytize" was applied by program organizers and staff only to describe activities aimed at

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

submission, excitement, and difference came not from the staff, but from the setting, the circumstance and the other participants. For example, the compulsion to submit was evident not only in the self-imposed domestication of dissent but also in comments like Isosceles', who said to me as we stood in the yard of a community center, "some people are so gung-ho Israel that sometimes I feel guilty." Likewise, as I described in Chapter 4, a sense of holism emerged through the framing Jewish-Zionist narrative that gave thematic unity to disparate elements of participants' own lives.

Of course, the immersion in an environment laden with some of Judaism's most sacred symbols also contributed to the feeling of directly encountering the sacred. In classic Durkheimian form, people interpreted this as being subject to powerful forces beyond their control. At the Western Wall visitors behaved as if the stones possessed an otherworldly force that could be accessed directly through physical contact. "I touched the Wall and a funny feeling went through my hands," one person said. Another expressed disappointment when this did not happen to him. "I touched the Wall and felt nothing—cold rock. I was upset because the Wall meant so much." The expectation that the Western Wall would touch their souls when they touched its stones was part of a culturally prescribed script. The effect of this script was to remove the locus of religious power from the individual and project it, fetish-like, onto the physical object.

---

developing specific institutional loyalties or intensive ritual observance.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The finding that half of all Taglit participants considered the pilgrimage-tour to be very spiritual, and that over 80% found it to be very personally meaningful is no doubt related to the explicit way the sacred was invoked and perceived on Taglit. The mixing of the emergent sacred experience with the sacred symbols of the Jews constrained the way the emergent experience would be interpreted. The Jewish symbols stimulated a sense of encountering the sacred, but they also ensured that aspects of the sacred encounter that were not particularly Jewish would be seen in a Jewish light.

4) *Anti-routine is a relativizing power.* The relativizing power of anti-routine is rooted in the fact that it is perceived as a contrast to ordinary life. By demonstrating the possibility of alternative forms of social existence, anti-routine eliminates the monopoly that normal, everyday life has on defining what is real. The ordinary can no longer speak with absolute authority because it has been compromised by being relativized (see Berger 1966, [1969] 1990; Berger and Luckmann 1967). This clearly has implications for the legitimacy and stability of existing social orders. These are addressed in the next two items.

The Taglit experience of Israel called into question basic assumptions about North American society and also about American-Jewish life. Much of the Jewish experience in North America is structured by the existential fact of being a non-Christian minority in predominantly Christian countries. For all the multiculturalism evident in America and Canada today, a more or less secularized Christian public culture continues to have a taken-for-granted

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

character. It was no accident that over 60% of participants considered "being on a program with thousands of other Jews" and "being in a country with a Jewish majority" as two of the very best aspects of Taglit. Both demonstrated that minority status in a Christian culture is not the natural order of things, but rather only one model for society.

But not only was North American life relativized by Taglit, so too were the institutionalized patterns of Jewish life there. As noted in the discussion of Israel's authenticity, there was a common perception that, "In America you have to do Jewish things to be Jewish. In Israel you can just be Jewish because there are so many Jews around." The notion that Jewishness could be separated from its classical Diasporic institutional supports (i.e. religious practice, communal institutions) might weaken the foundations on which these arrangements rest by showing the possibility of an alternative that to all appearances was as "Jewish" if not more so.

From Taglit's inception, people questioned whether it really was a "Jewish" experience. Would it accurately portray traditional Jewish norms? Would it foster commitment to traditional Jewish beliefs, institutions and practices? It would have been better to ask the converse. We saw that people's perceptions of Israel's Jewish authenticity rested in perceiving the counterpoint of a less authentic Jewish life at home. Would the normal institutions of North American Jewish life, then, provide only weak substitutes for Taglit's morally-compelling experience of Jewish community? Would people who had

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

experienced communitas in Israel be willing to settle for politics on the Federation board? Would people who had experienced collective effervescence in a timeless moment of sunrise on Masada also find a similar window onto the sacred sitting through three-hours of Sabbath-morning worship services in a suburban synagogue? If Taglit was conceived as a Jewish peak-experience, what incentive would participants have to accept anything less than the peak in the future? And what could the North American Jewish community provide them beyond a return ticket on El Al?

Taglit may highlight the limitations of North American Jewish life, but the results of this are not foreordained. Some program alumni may choose to opt out altogether, either by going to Israel or by remaining in North America but eschewing participation in Jewish institutions. Others may try to reform Jewish life from within or from without, in accordance with their newfound visions of what is possible. Others may simply accept the given state of affairs as an acceptable translation of the experience to the North American context. It is likely that all these responses will be observed among Taglit alumni as they are researched in the future.

5) *Interest groups can guide anti-routine to achieve their own ends.* Weber's treatment of pure charismatic authority revolved around this central point. Anti-routine can emerge in a variety of ways. Its ultimate outcomes are neither predetermined nor the product of mechanistic laws, but are crucially shaped by human agency. Such situations are amenable to control by charismatic leaders

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

who do not need routinized means of administration to dominate. But not all routine-shattering situations are governed by a nascent charisma born in and of the moment. A good number of these situations, such as Taglit and the rites of passage Turner described, are the deliberate work of social institutions and their elite. These are so "hedged around with prescriptions, prohibitions, and conditions" (1982:109) that the likelihood of a charismatic leader arising to seize control of the situation for other purposes is exceedingly small.

This is not to say that charisma was entirely irrelevant to Taglit. The program emerged, after all, by virtue of the charismatic leadership of its two founding philanthropists, Michael Steinhardt and Charles Bronfman, who were able to back a grandiose vision with enormous financial resources. At the program's operational level, however, the main source of the bus staff's legitimacy was rooted in their status as hired professionals who had their authority both sanctioned and constrained by the program's organizers. Still, people grumbled when they thought the staff were incompetent, inflexible, uninteresting or unattuned to the group. This reduced the staff's ability to ensure participants' compliance with rules and regulations. Some bus staff found that an appeal to charismatic authority enhanced their ability to control the group. Not all of the staff tried to make such an appeal; not all of those who tried were successful; and not all participants agreed as to whether a given staff person commanded obedience out of sheer admiration and respect for their personal characteristics. If the post-trip surveys are any indication, the Israelis tended to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

be more successful than the North Americans in asserting charismatic authority. Two thirds of Israeli staff (67%) were rated as "sensational," the top category on a four point scale,[52] compared to just under half of the senior North American staff (48%). These check-box ratings do not explicitly tap the notion of charisma, but the thoughts underlying the ratings are evident in some of the responses to a general open-ended question asked at the end of the survey. Participants were asked not specifically about staff, but simply whether there was anything else they would like to tell the researchers about their experience on Taglit. They could have written anything, and they often did. A number of participants volunteered comments about their staff. Negative comments tended not to name names, but those that were positive were explicit. Their tenor is reasonably represented by the following examples[53]:

> "I just want to say that our Israeli guides, Avinoam and Rafi (sorry, no last names), were the most incredible guides ever. I learned so much from them, and they were both able to move us all to tears with their incredible knowledge and understanding of Judaism and Israel."

---

[52] A survey of an earlier Taglit cohort revealed that participants were extremely reluctant to characterize any of their staff people as poor (field work revealed that people could always find redeeming qualities in staff members that they otherwise did not like). Rather, they tended to be so effusive in their praise of the staff, that CMJS revised the questions to allow for more nuance in the laudatory categories. The four-point scale ranged, therefore, from "So-So" through "Good" to "Very Good" and "Sensational." Even with these adjustments, only 5% chose the lowest category for the American staff and only 3% chose it for the Israeli staff.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"I can not praise enough my two Canadian supervisors and my Israeli guide. They were fabulous, caring, and very helpful in all respects. Shana Kurlandsky, Ira Marcus and Mary Friedlander made this trip so much more special for me."

"My tour guide is my new hero. My trip leaders - mentors and role models. Every single person on my trip - friends. And Israel - a new home. It was perfect."

"My tour guide, Yigal, was absolutely amazing. He made our trip everything I had imagined and more."

"I had an amazing time. I have told as many people as I can to apply. Asher was a fantastic tour guide. He made our trip. He was excited and passionate about everything we did."

The qualities praised in these staff people included their knowledge, caring, excitement and passion. They were seen as "incredible," "amazing," "fabulous" "hero[es]" who held in their hands the power to 'make the trip.'

Why was there a discrepancy between perceptions of Israeli and North American staff? In part the answer lies in the fact that the Israelis were

---

[53] Staff names have not been changed. Parts of the responses not connected with staff have been edited out.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

experienced professionals who had chosen to make a career guiding tours. In contrast, North American staff were more likely to be employees of sponsoring organizations, chosen by default (e.g. the heads of campus Hillels) and whose skills in leading tour groups were more variable. Part of the answer might also lie in the fact that few participants had meaningful contact with Israelis other than their guides. Israeli guides, in their role as ambassadors, were therefore seen as personifications of Israeli society. They took on a symbolic character in a manner unlike the North American staff.

Appeals to personal charisma, then, were a helpful supplement to leaders whose main source of authority was rooted in their appointment as staff and their agreement to abide by the common definition of the situation as a Jewish identity-building pilgrimage-tour. But their ability to deviate from this consensus was severely restricted, reflecting the fact that they were not true charismatic leaders in a pure charismatic situation, but appointed officials in a bureaucratized organizational system. For all their charisma, they did not seize control of the situation in order to redefine the experience in something other than Jewish-Zionist terms. Even their deviance took place within the general ideological frame that the program had established from the outset. At most it consisted of a tendency to take sides in political debates rather than to adhere to a centrist position and fairly represent alternative viewpoints within the Israeli-Jewish political spectrum. One charismatic Israeli staff person who tried to utilize his authority over the group to promote a highly partisan position in the Israeli

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

debate over the future of the Golan Heights was told during the trip that he was being fired immediately upon its conclusion for this and similar infractions. Another who took a partisan stance on issues of religion and state was privately reprimanded by his North American colleagues and told to keep his views to himself.[54] As long as they remained within the consensus, staff found that charismatic appeals rooted in knowledge, interpersonal skills and passion were effective supplements to their officially-sanctioned authority over the group, at least in convincing people to follow the rules.[55] But the ideological framing of the Taglit experience in specifically Jewish-Zionist terms was not the result of leaders asserting a charismatic authority entirely their own, but rather the Turnerian "prescriptions, prohibitions, and conditions" set by the Jewish communal authorities who established the program in the first place. These conditions may have endowed some of the staff with the routinized charisma of Judaism and Israel, but this was an entirely different phenomenon from the emergence of new charisma that has characterized other situations of anti-routine.

---

[54] The two staff people in question held diametrically opposed political viewpoints on these two issues. Deviance too far to either the right or to the left was considered unacceptable.

[55] Submission before charismatic authority was not the only (or even the primary) mechanism by which compliance was maintained. Other reasons have been identified at various points throughout these chapters. For all the stereotypes about American youth, participants for the most part were not recalcitrant. Most were there because they wanted to be there and signed on having known and accepted the rules of the trip. In any case, these rules were not so different from the standard norms applicable to any group tour. In addition to this, the fact that the program was free tended to encourage compliance. People did not want to look a gift horse in the mouth (Kelner et al. 2000). Moreover, as described at length in the previous chapter, enormous social pressure from peers helped stifled dissent. Finally, free time served as a steam-valve that relieved some of the pressure generated in the total institution by giving people a daily block of time to shape as their own.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The experience of anti-routine that emerged on Taglit was thus the product of systematic efforts to create such an experience for the explicit purpose of influencing Jewish identity. The successful harnessing of anti-routine was evident in the overwhelming consensus in discourse that framed the experience in Jewish and Zionist terms.

6) *Anti-routine can have either revolutionary or conservative implications for established social orders.* The ability of human agency to guide anti-routine means that the effects of its relativizing power upon existing social orders is not foreordained. Anti-routine can be a force both for revolution, as Weber emphasized, or a force for societal rejuvenation, as Turner highlighted.[56] The difference lies in the degree of control that existing societies can exert over the experience, including control over the emergence of such a situation in the first place. Weber focused his attention on times when crisis overwhelmed social institutions and precipitated anti-routine. Turner, in contrast, was concerned with the methodical cultivation of anti-routine in the service of social solidarity.

Taglit is clearly an example of a Turneresque case, rather than a Weberian one. Organizers of the program sought to use it to influence the social identities of the individuals who participated in it, on the assumption that the basis of Jewish cohesion in 21st century North America is social-psychological rather than

---

[56] Durkheim also saw anti-routine as a force for communal solidarity, but in a much more conservative sense than Turner. His work was not concerned in the least with the revolutionary potential inherent in anti-routine that animated the inquiries of both Weber and Turner.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

sociological.[57] Ultimately, the goal was not merely to influence individuals, but to perpetuate the existence of the American and Canadian Jewish communities by ensuring the commitment and involvement of the young generation. In this sense, the program fostered a constrained experience of anti-routine for conservative, rather than revolutionary purposes. CMJS evaluations suggest that, at least in the short term, the program has succeeded to an extent in meeting these conservative ends.[58] Little attention has been paid by organizers to the program's effect on inter-ethnic relations, and whether these have conservative or revolutionary implications for the broader American and Canadian societies of which the Taglit participants are also a part.

7) *The impetus to preserve anti-routine inevitably transforms it, and is thus self-defeating*. The final point about anti-routine on which most of the writers agreed is that evanescent though the state may be, its effects can long outlast the fleeting moment. The condition tends to be experienced as so pleasurable, morally compelling and powerful that there commonly exists a strong impetus to remain within it. But as anti-routine is fundamentally unstable, this is an impossible dream. Still, it inspires efforts to maintain the state of being for as

---

[57] This is in accordance with the symbolic ethnicity thesis proposed by Gans (1979). Gans argued that as the structural bases of ethnic cohesion (such as ethnic neighborhoods) decline, ethnicity will be perpetuated to the degree that people choose to think of themselves in ethnic terms. This idea was developed generally for American whites by Alba (1990) and Waters (1990), and specifically for American Jews by Horowitz (2000) and Cohen and Eisen (2000).

[58] Other aspects of the program not related to anti-routine may have had more turbulent effects. For example, my discussions with Hillel professionals working as Taglit bus leaders indicated that the decision to invest heavily in the program initially strained resources of campus Hillel

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

long as possible, and then to preserve elements of it in perpetuity. Hence, the anti-economic ideologies that tend to be found in charismatic communities.

On Taglit, the desire to remain in the state of anti-routine was usually expressed as a desire to remain in the State of Israel. Some people quickly decided to extend their stay in Israel. Many others who did not expressed strong wishes to return in the near future.

Because anti-routine cannot be sustained as is, the efforts to preserve it invariably transform it. Weber described political and administrative changes involved in the routinization of charisma, whereby charismatic authority decomposes into modified forms of traditional or bureaucratic domination. Turner wrote about the elaboration of religious and secular ideologies that seek to preserve the values of communitas that are self-evident in liminality. Durkheim explained how states of collective effervescence leave a material residue—symbols that can be used to re-evoke feelings associated with the extra-ordinary moment. Each of these may ease the return to a routine state of existence, but none can succeed in lengthening anti-routine's short half-life.

I mentioned above the problems inherent in transforming the Jewish experience of anti-routine on Taglit into participation in the Jewish communal institutions of North America. It is the hope of program organizers that just such a transformation will be made, and that participants will return home to become

---

staff, calling into question their ability to fulfill other elements of their mission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

involved in their local Hillels, synagogues, Jewish federations, Jewish community centers, etc. Taglit has recently decided to devote resources to follow-up activities for alumni. If successful, these efforts will encourage, co-opt and direct the transformation of anti-routine along normative channels and within established communal institutional frameworks. The efforts are motivated by a concern that, left to their own devices, alumni will not take steps to preserve the experience. Program organizers and Jewish communal leaders appear to have less of a concern with non-normative transformations of the experience than with a total dissipation of program effects over time.

Anti-Routine, Total Institutions and the Return to Normalcy

Both anti-routine and total institutions tend to foster a collective, rather than individualistic, identity. Awareness of group memberships and social categories are heightened in both contexts. But the similarity of effect does not imply that the causes must be related. In the case of Taglit, the condition of anti-routine happened to be experienced in a setting that was simultaneously a temporary total institution. Goffman's study of more enduring total institutions, however, indicates that such social forms can exist under routine circumstances as well. Nor does the existence of a temporary total institution, i.e. a form of social structure, contradict the notion of liminality. Turner correctly noted, after all, that the complete elimination of social structure is impossible. Liminality, in his view was merely the radical simplification of social structure. The total institution, by

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

reducing status groups to a basic dichotomy between authority and subject, or in the language of Taglit, staff and participant, achieves precisely this simplification. In this sense, the temporary total institution might be a form of social structure particularly well-suited to liminality. Given the knowledge that such a state of existence is an exceptional circumstance, submission to it can be pleasurable for a short time, but when it becomes the normal pattern of existence it exacts its price from the human soul. As Goffman demonstrates, the ability to maintain such an arrangement indefinitely is possible, but usually at the expense of its humanistic character. Hence the difference between the case of Taglit and Goffman's examples of an insane asylum, concentration camp and army barracks.[59] In its transformation to something permanent, the voluntary temporary total institution loses the first two of its three modifying adjectives. Mechanisms of social control expand in number, scope and blatancy.

Total institutions that stand at the juncture between evanescence and permanence must take deliberate steps to preserve a sense of liminality. A good example of this is found in summer camps. For children whose lives are structured around a ten-month academic calendar, the summer vacation is in many ways a liminal period. On the other hand, for summer camps to maintain their authority for a full two months, steps have to be taken to maintain the perception that the time spent there is both voluntary and fleeting. A common

---

[59] The example of a monastery may be an exception to this.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

means to accomplish this is to foster a sense of anti-routine by deliberately undermining routines that do emerge. Standard weekly schedules are thus suspended by designating special weeks for color war or other special theme programs, the timing of which often is hidden from campers and then suddenly introduced as a surprise.

Temporary organizations that emerge in liminal states have special powers of influence for the duration of their existence. But because they are ultimately unsustainable, they pose long run challenges for actors who wish to utilize such institutions to achieve more lasting ends. In the case of Taglit, this expressed itself as a concern for the program's impact on Jewish identity and practice. In fact, the CMJS program evaluation that provided the data used here was commissioned and designed to address this issue more than any other (Saxe et al. 2000, 2002). Similarly, business and other organizations often harness anti-routine and temporary total institutions in the form of retreats and workshops with the intention of influencing patterns of behavior back in the workplace. Evaluations of Taglit have revealed that the program's influence on participants' ethnic self-concept as Jews endured at least a year after the program ended. But like many interventions in the corporate world, there was less actual behavioral change (Kelner et al. forthcoming; Saxe et al. 2000, 2002). In light of the experience of corporations that have utilized such methods, the fact of any change at all marks Taglit as exceptional. One wonders, however, whether the difference stems from the expressive rather than instrumental character of the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

change sought, and the mobilization of powerful sacred symbols in pursuit of this end. In short, the difficulty of sustaining the effects of anti-routine and temporary total institutions following the return to 'normal' social life is one of the enduring problems plaguing those who would employ these social forms for particular ends.

Anti-Routine and Authenticity

One of the central products of Taglit was an experience of anti-routine that led to the communitas relationships that are one source of feelings of existential authenticity. The point is crucial and was therefore treated at length in the sections above and in the previous chapter. What remains an open question, however, is the extent to which the experience of anti-routine influenced perceptions of authenticity that emerged not in relationship to the group experience, but in relationship to the tourist gaze.

Any attempt to assess the connection between Taglit's routine-shattering character and the perceptions of authenticity that emerged on the trip must contend with the problematic nature of the latter concept. Although central to pilgrimage, it is elusive and resistant to precise definition. The term authenticity attaches itself as readily to stone walls as to human selves, without regard for the quantum distinction between the two or the kaleidoscopic shifts in meaning it itself must undergo to achieve such a feat. And yet, the notion of authenticity has so thoroughly penetrated popular and scholarly conceptions of pilgrimage and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

tourism that a deconstruction of the term is ultimately unsatisfying. It must be invoked, even as we recognize the problems inherent in doing so.

For sociologists of tourism, the concern with travelers' feelings of existential authenticity was partially the product of sloppy thinking and partially the result of a desire to be done with the debate over which tourist attractions were and were not "authentic" without discarding the term entirely. In many if not most instances of tourism, the object-related and existential forms of authenticity have nothing to do with one another.[60] But in the case of a pilgrimage-tour like Taglit, both are salient categories. Evidence in the chapters preceding demonstrated that there was not merely a co-presence of the two forms, but an actual relationship. The individual experience, group program and tourist gaze continually shaped one another in a dialectical process. The same conversations in which people discussed how the Holocaust affected their own families also saw them discuss what they expected to see or had seen at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial. The touristic concern for Israel's Jewish authenticity constructed a broad category of "Jewishness" that travelers used to give meaning and order to their own lives.

---

[60] Consider, for example, the first three cells that emerge when the two forms of authenticity are related to each other in a four-cell property-space:

		Object-Related Authenticity	
		No	**Yes**
Existential Authenticity	**No**	Disneyland	Maori Dance (Taylor 2001)
	Yes	Caribbean Charter Yacht (Lett 1983)	Taglit

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In terms of the cognitive structure of conceptions of authenticity, object-related authenticity is characterized by idealized conceptions that emerge when boundaries are imagined to separate binary opposites. Things are seen either as "authentic" or "inauthentic," and the criteria used to make the determination entail a great deal of over-simplification and selective perception. Existential authenticity, in turn, is characterized by the comprehension of a *gestalt* that gives meaning to otherwise isolated fragments of personal existence. The two conceptions are not as different as they may seem at first glance, for a sense of thematic unity to life is possible only through an editing process that invariably applies filters to determine what is relevant and what is not. The result is a reductionist view of the "authentic" self, also rooted in oversimplification and selective perception. On Taglit, the relationships between object-oriented and existential authenticity were realized because the lens of Jewish authenticity through which Israel and Israelis were observed and evaluated was also turned upon the Jewish tourist him/herself.

Taglit, like any pilgrimage-tour, broke down the conventional touristic distinction between Self and Other. This was not merely a tour to a foreign place. Visitors felt that they were seeing things that belonged to them. The cliché greeting delivered by Israeli tour guides to Jewish tourists arriving at Ben Gurion Airport, "Welcome home," is an accurate representation of the mindset that

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

shaped how these Jewish pilgrim-tourists in fact saw Israel.[61] One might assume that focusing the tourist gaze on Israel's Jewish authenticity would produce a general feeling of *in*authenticity among participants, as they set themselves up as the contrasting case.[62] But this misreads the essential nature of the pilgrimage tour. The point of gazing upon Jewish authenticity was to enable communion with it.

Dorian Dayne, who among many other things is a Taglit participant from Madison, N.J., wrote a letter to the editor of the *New Jersey Jewish News* one month after returning from a Taglit trip (Dayne 2001). "My Israel experiences," Dayne wrote, "will remain unparalleled in my mind, my heart and my spirit." (As we have seen before, it is not uncommon for participants to wax poetic about the trip.) "I cannot express how now, more than ever, I feel an immensely strong connection to my religion, my people, my culture, my Judaism." How did this occur 6,000 miles from home when such a sense failed to emerge not even with "four years of Hillel, seven years of Hebrew youth-group activities, 12 years of religious schooling or 22 years of attending various synagogues?" Dayne's

---

[61] Those who saw the country with a sharply critical eye were not so different in this regard from those who viewed it through rose-colored glasses. The same sense of connection that was a source of pride for the latter was the source of much of the consternation of the former. The hegemony of Israel's claim to Jewish authenticity forces individual Jews to take sides because they feel those claims impinge upon them somehow.

[62] From a classical Zionist perspective, such an outcome would have been desirable inasmuch as it might encourage people to rid themselves of those feelings through emigration to Israel. But the program, to the chagrin of some Israelis (Meir 2001), largely had as its goal the perpetuation of Jewish life in the Diaspora.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

answer: Israel's Jewish authenticity. "The Jewish events, history, spirituality and potential encountered through this program were incomparable to anything in the United States."

When pilgrimage sites are perceived as original, authoritative, convincing or accurate, they are more readily taken as representative of the values the pilgrim has come there to affirm. This is because, as noted in earlier chapters, pilgrimage is not so much a journey to a signifier as a journey via a signifier to the signified. Israel was the setting to gaze on signifiers of Jewishness. But consider the nature of symbolism. One sees X, but thinks Y. Symbols evoke cognitive and affective meanings that pre-exist within the human mind. Accordingly, even if one is physically in Israel, much of what one tours are notions and conceptions and feelings that already reside within the traveler him/herself. Hence, the act of touring can be deeply significant to self-conceptions. After all, Taglit took people not only on a tour of the Jewish state, it took them also on a ten-day tour of their Jewish states of mind.

Nowhere in this argument does anti-routine emerge as an essential condition. Israel was not perceived as Jewishly authentic simply because the pilgrim-tourists were in a state of anti-routine. The ideological claims to authenticity existed independently of the visit of any particular tour group. People have chosen to live their entire lives near the Western Wall due to the same beliefs in its authenticity that draws visitors to it from around the world. On the other hand, as the saying goes, familiarity breeds contempt—or at least a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

more quotidian response to sites that are otherwise considered holy. Recall Amichai's poem, where the stones that the tourists saw as an ancient Roman arch were simply a place to stand under for a local man buying vegetables. Even Taglit participants on only their second visit to the Western Wall were more likely to ignore the sacred site, sitting far from it and talking with friends rather than approaching it with reverence. The state of anti-routine, therefore, while not the source of claims to authenticity, emphasized the symbolically-laden aspects of sites that could otherwise have been treated as mundane objects. In doing so, it focused attention on the authenticity of the things the pilgrim-tourists saw.

This concern with authenticity was important because it enabled the explicit assertion of moral authority that is associated with anti-routine.[63] Holy and quasi-holy sites possessed a charismatic authority that rested in their authenticity. Although the framing of effervescent feelings in Jewish-Zionist terms was largely unrelated to novel charismatic claims by bus staff, it was strongly influenced by the charisma inherent in the authenticity of Israel's Jewish sites. Although some of these sites also held a traditional authority that was relevant in this regard, the explicitness of their moral force came less from this than from the fact that in the hierarchy of traditional authorities, these were seen as uniquely original, official and authoritative.

---

[63] This is not tautology. Anti-routine encourages explicit assertions of moral authority. The concern with authenticity is one way it accomplishes this in the context of tourism. Anti-routine leads to a focus on symbolic meanings of sites, which leads to a concern with authenticity, which leads to a perception of an explicit moral force.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

More importantly, in addition to directing attention to the symbolic aspects of sites and thereby fostering a concern for authenticity, anti-routine also provided the cognitive template by which notions of authenticity were constructed. This, after all, is the essence of Durkheim's argument in *The Elementary Forms*. But where he applied it to the conceptions of the sacred and profane, I apply it to the similarly dichotomous notions of authentic and inauthentic. Anti-routine is perceived as a state of existence that contrasts starkly with ordinary life. The awareness of these two forms of existence is pervasive during the experience. In the case of Taglit, it contributed to the repeated comparisons of Jewish life in Israel and North America. Notions of authenticity and inauthenticity, you will recall, were not simply regurgitated from ideological conceptions that were force-fed to travelers. Rather, they were constructed through these repeated acts of comparison. Anti-routine drew attention to the very dichotomies around which notions of authenticity were based.

Finally, the oversimplification and selective perception inherent in all conceptions of authenticity, object-related and existential alike, were facilitated by the extra-ordinary, unstable character of anti-routine. Alternative conceptions of self that would undermine perceptions of personal authenticity and thematic coherence to life could be easily set aside, both because the experience was a bracketed period of time with a clear end in sight, and because it simplified social structure. Many categories relevant to self-definition under ordinary circumstances were suspended—a feat that is not sustainable over the long term.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The result was that for a brief ten days, travelers on Taglit were in a situation where their common basis of affiliation became their Jewish background and their decision to act on it by going on a Jewish pilgrimage-tour to Israel.

Concluding Remarks

This study of modern mass pilgrimage-tourism is part of a broader movement in sociology away from the secularization thesis. Modernity, far from dooming religion to irrelevance, provides the means for its perpetuation. The phenomenon under consideration is uniquely a product of the modern world. The notion of sending tens of thousands of people overseas for a ten-day pilgrimage tour with a standardized format would have been inconceivable without the complex organizational and technological systems of the 20th and 21st centuries. Such programs, we saw in Chapter 1, began only in the 1950s—a moment when political, technological and organizational conditions simultaneously ripened. Since then, they have developed into an institutional system in its own right. In the late 1990s, this system succeeded in articulating a rationale and mobilizing support for a massive expansion in scope.

The result of these efforts was Taglit, an inter-organizational partnership that utilized the opportunities afforded by modernity in order to mass produce a religious experience for a specific target demographic. Representing the application of rational means to achieve quintessentially non-rational ends, the program demonstrates that religious effervescence can be deliberately fostered

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

through systematic planning and organization. It helps us understand why the personalization of religious and ethnic life (Alba, 1990; Bellah et al., 1985; Cohen and Eisen, 2000; Gans, 1979; Horowitz, 2000; Roof, 1993; Waters, 1990; Wuthnow, 1998, 1999) has not led to radically individualistic understandings of what it means to be Jewish. As Taglit exemplifies, the construction of ethnic and religious identities remains an eminently social phenomenon, constrained by institutional forces that act consciously and deliberately. Religion and ethnicity are still collective representations, sustained by much consensus and also by vested interests that define the terms of discourse. The agreement among Taglit participants and organizers about Israel's Jewish authenticity is a case in point.

The combination of ways that pilgrimage-tours mass-produce the profoundly meaningful experience was the central focus of this dissertation. According to the Taglit data presented in Chapter 2, about five out of six people felt that the program was deeply meaningful, but the language they used to articulate this varied. Some spoke of the religious experience, others the spiritual experience. Some avoided both of these notions and instead framed their feelings in terms of a connection to Jewish history, the Jewish people and/or the Jewish state. Still others spoke about the intensity of the social bonds they developed on the program. Many used a combination of these framings to describe their reactions to the trip. Although people's predispositions influenced the extent to which they felt Taglit to be a spiritual experience, I found that people need not have come on the trip thinking of themselves as pilgrims to leave it feeling that

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

they had been on a pilgrimage. Motivations evolved and orientations repeatedly shifted from tourist- to pilgrim-mode throughout the ten days of the journey.

One of the central questions about the effects of modern pilgrimage-tourism regards the relationship between being in an effervescent group setting and being at a pilgrimage destination with a concentration of sacred symbols. At issue is not merely the relative impact of the two (i.e. which accounts for more of the pilgrimage-tour's impact), but also the ways they influence one another. On Taglit, the sense of encountering the sacred was largely an emergent phenomenon that was born in the collective experience of anti-routine. The visit to holy symbols, however, influenced this process at every stage. It 'primed the pump,' encouraging pilgrim-tourists to be sensitive to the sacred, to expect it, to seek it and to interpret their feelings in light of it. The specifically Jewish nature of the sacred symbols encountered on Taglit also exerted important constraints on the interpretations that would be given to the emergent sense of the sacred. It framed the experience in Jewish terms, even when Jewishness was actually peripheral or irrelevant. Perhaps most importantly, the framing in a Jewish language tied idiosyncratic and emergent group experiences into a Jewish collective much broader than the specific group of pilgrim-tourists. For the *travelers*, the embedding of their experiences in the grand narratives of the Jewish people helped them see cosmic significance in their pilgrimage-tour rather than only local significance. For the *Jewish people as a whole*, it prevented these small communities' emergent sense of the sacred from spinning off in non-normative

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

directions, and it reinforced group solidarity by heightening the salience of the affective bonds tying individuals to the larger social group.

In the course of exploring these questions, I addressed at length the problematic notion of authenticity. I withheld judgment on the questions of whether the Taglit program was Jewishly authentic and whether the participants on the program attained a true state of personal authenticity. Instead, I adopted a constructivist approach that focused on the social and psychological processes by which pilgrim-tourists perceive authenticity in the things they see and in themselves. In the final analysis, the term authenticity conflates so many different meanings that it is impossible to fully reconcile them all. Still, in each of its separate meanings, the concept contributes to an understanding of how a sense of meaning emerges in pilgrimage-tourism.

Three forms of authenticity were considered: that of the destination, that of traveler as it related to the framing narrative of the destination; and that of the traveler as it emerged from the group experience. In all cases, the notion of authenticity was actively constructed on the program. The pilgrim-tourists did not blindly accept normative assertions of Israel's Jewish authenticity. Rather, they imagined it for themselves in ways that had roots in normative frameworks but that primarily reflected their own experience of the country. Their understanding of Israel's Jewish authenticity rested in the projection of over-simplified images onto a dichotomous symbolic space that separated the authentic from the inauthentic. The concern with Israel's Jewish authenticity

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

encouraged participants to see their own lives as parts of a collective Jewish narrative that had both historical and eschatological dimensions. Although they did not develop coherent autobiographies of their Jewish selves, the possibility of thematic coherence was repeatedly signified by processes of the pilgrimage-tour, including sight-seeing and formal group discussions. Here too, the ability to conceive of oneself in terms of a Jewish narrative demanded a degree of oversimplification and selective perception that temporarily set aside other aspects of people's identities. A sense of personal authenticity also emerged from the quality of human relationships that developed on the program, the repeated sensation of encountering something sacred, and the awareness of how this differed from ordinary experience. The Jewish narratives that gave meaning to other aspects of the pilgrimage-tour also shaped the perceptions of this experience of anti-routine.

Do modern mass pilgrimage-tours have any lasting effects on the people who participate in them? With regard to Taglit, the jury is still out. Evaluations from three and fifteen months after the trip suggest that while the program had only a small impact on the religious practices and beliefs of its alumni, it strongly influenced their social identity as Jews. Moreover, the studies have found that this impact did not diminish over the course of the year that separated the two surveys (Kelner et al. forthcoming; Saxe et al. 2000, 2002). Beyond this, however, no one can yet say.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

What of the effects on religious communities as a whole? Here, the answer is clear. The sacred character of religious symbols lies not merely in the ossified residue of prior generations' religious projects. Rather, a sacred power newly created and perceived in the first-person is a continual and necessary part of their vitality. Modernity provides the means for reinvigorating ancient symbols, and modern men and women have proven adept at using them to this end. Not only is God not dead, He's available for bookings. All you need is a good conference planner.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

APPENDIX A

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The empirical work contained in these pages represents secondary analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from the evaluation of Taglit conducted by Brandeis University's Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) from 1999 to the present. The evaluation included ethnographic participant observation as well as pre- and post-trip surveys of participants.

My Role with CMJS

As a research associate with CMJS, I served as the coordinator of the evaluation's field work team for the Winter 1999-2000 and Winter 2000-2001 trips. My responsibilities included formulating the research design; working with others to secure the logistics of the field work; assembling, training and supervising a team of participant observers; joining the trips myself as a participant observer; and using our collected field notes to first-author the team's reports. I also participated as a member of the evaluation's survey team. In this capacity I helped to design the surveys administered to program applicants and alumni; initiated and oversaw development of a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview) system to administer the questionnaire by phone; supervised a team of telephone interviewers; analyzed the survey data, and co-authored the team's reports.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Protection of Human Subjects

This research involved human subjects. CMJS received approval of the project from Brandeis University's IRB, and this approval was renewed as the project entered its second year. Because this dissertation consists of secondary analysis of data collected with IRB approval, the Committee on the Protection of Human Subjects at the CUNY Graduate Center determined that the analyses conducted here were exempt from IRB review.[1]

FIELD WORK

In December 1999 and January 2000, seven graduate student researchers each joined a Taglit group with whom they remained for the duration of the program. CMJS chose deliberately to observe a variety of program sponsors and Israel-based tour operators. The vast majority of participants traveled with others from their college. To reflect the diversity of such trips, participant observers were placed in groups from private and public universities, large and small; from all regions of the continental United States; and from campuses that traveled alone, with one other campus or as part of large multi-campus delegations. As coordinator of the field work, I spent at least one day as a participant observer with each of the groups to which a graduate student researcher had been assigned. One of the principal investigators, Leonard Saxe, spent a half-day or more with each group and, as well, served as liaison with Taglit and the sponsor

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

groups. Contact between researchers was maintained through daily cell-phone contact, through a team meeting in Jerusalem, and through incidental encounters as buses crossed paths throughout Israel. In February, the other principal investigator, Charles Kadushin, visited approximately six Canadian groups.

Because the goal was to understand the Taglit experience from the perspective of the students, the observers that CMJS assigned full-time to particular groups were graduate students. They were close in age to the Taglit participants and trained in participant observation. All but one grew up in North America. All were Jewish, however they had varying levels of familiarity with Israel. For one observer, this was her first trip to Israel. Others had spent varying amounts of time in Israel, working, studying or participating in short- and/or long-term Israel experience programs.

Following the trip, I collected the field notes written by all participant observers, coded them, and first-authored a report for the funders (Kelner et al. 2000).

No observations were conducted on the second wave of Taglit, which went in May and June 2000. For the third wave of Taglit, from December 2000 through February 2001, the above procedures were replicated with a group of observers more diverse in age, student status and religious affiliation. Seven field workers were again assigned, one of whom was an undergraduate alumna of the

---

[1] IRB 6-14-06-01, Memo dated June 18, 2001.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Winter 1999-2000 Taglit trip. She had worked as a CMJS intern on the program evaluation under my supervision during Summer 2000. The remaining participant observers formed an older cohort than those who had joined the trips in the previous round, with the oldest being a Ph.D. in his mid-40s. Six of the field workers were Jewish, one was not. Although I continued to supervise the team, my own role vis-à-vis the bus-groups changed. Having seen a variety of groups for a short period of time in January 2000, I decided to spend the duration of my time with only one group in January 2001. To that end, I joined a campus Hillel group for eight of the program's ten days.

The ethnographic component of the dissertation constitutes a secondary analysis of the field notes gathered for the Taglit evaluation.

SURVEYS

Surveys of Taglit applicants were conducted for both the Winter 1999-2000 and Winter 2000-2001 cohorts. For the purposes of this dissertation, I have restricted the analysis to the latter of these. This decision was made for two reasons. First, Taglit did not commission a pre-trip survey in the first year. Of the data sets available at the time of analysis, only the applicants to the Winter 2000-2001 trips were administered both pre- and post-trip surveys. Second, experience with the 1999-2000 survey allowed CMJS to make improvements to the Winter 2000-2001 questionnaires and their administration. The Winter 2000-2001 data set was therefore the most comprehensive and useful of those available for use.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Pre-trip Survey of Winter 2000-2001 Cohort

Using database information provided by Taglit, all applicants were sent an e-mail asking them to click a link to an on-line survey. This produced a data set of 9,370 people, 39% (3,630) of whom participated in the trip and 61% of whom did not. The pre-trip survey inquired into demographic and religious characteristics of the applicants, their decision to apply to Taglit, their activities, values and opinions. Post-stratification weighting was used to ensure that respondents matched the sampling frame on key demographic variables. A print-out of the on-line pre-trip questionnaire is presented in Appendix F.

Post-trip Survey of Winter 2000-2001 Cohort

A post-trip survey was administered in April and May 2001 to all participants in the Winter 2000-2001 program for whom usable contact information was available, as well as to a control group of students who applied but did not participate in the trip. To ensure a representative sample, a stratified random sub-sample of participants was selected for intensive follow-up. This produced a data set of 5,210 people, 47% (2,467) of whom participated in the trip and 53% of whom did not. The survey asked a variety of close- and open-ended questions about Taglit, Jewish identity and practice, and feelings about Israel, among other things. A print-out of the on-line post-trip questionnaire is presented in Appendix G.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Panel

When data from the pre- and post-trip surveys were both included in analyses, as in the logistic regression models in Chapter 2, only those Taglit participants who responded both to the pre-and post-trip surveys were included. This panel consisted of 1,677 people, which constitutes 46% of the participant respondents to the pre-trip survey and 68% of the participant respondents to the post-trip. The panel did not differ significantly from the other participant respondents on important variables.

Identification of Bus Groups

Because the surveys' data consist of individuals nested within tour groups, I was able to conduct analysis at both the group-level as well as the individual-level (Bryk and Raudenbusch 1992).[2] For a variety of reasons, Taglit was unable to provide an authoritative determination of who did and did not participate in the Winter 2000-2001 trips. To rectify this situation, CMJS worked with individual trip providers to compile the final participation lists for each sponsoring organization. This afforded the opportunity to also determine the specific bus assignment for each participant, which enabled bus-level analyses to be conducted. Of 30 organizations which fielded buses, 20 provided lists detailing bus assignments. Of the remaining 10 organizations, 7 sent only one bus. In only three cases - Jewish Identity Project (107 participants on 3 buses) ,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Shorashim (67 participants on two buses) and Unitours Israel (61 participants on two buses) - was CMJS unable to determine the specific bus assignments. The final lists that were provided by the 20 sponsoring organizations revealed some discrepancies with a participant list Taglit compiled prior to the program. In such cases, CMJS adopted the provider's information as the authoritative determination of participant status. In cases where final numbers from trip organizers were unavailable, Taglit's original designation of participant status was retained. Confirmation of participation along with specific bus assignments were available for 5,788 out of 6,205 participants, or 93% of the total.

Exclusion of Late Respondents

American Taglit groups traveled in December 2000 and January 2001, and Canadian groups traveled in January and February 2001. However, in order to acquire as much valid data as possible for demographic and other variables that would not be affected by participation in the trip, CMJS continued to field the "pre-trip" survey into mid-March 2001. Knowledge of specific bus assignments allowed CMJS to identify which respondents completed the "pre-trip" survey after having participated in the program, rather than before. 182 respondents to both surveys completed both of them after having gone on Taglit. I dropped these 182 from all models that sought to predict outcomes based on pre-trip attitudes and behaviors.

---

[2] This analysis appears in Chapter 5.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Weighting

CMJS produced post-stratification weights to facilitate generalization from the survey sample to the population of all Winter 2000-2001 Taglit participants and non-participants. Because certain subsets of this population were more likely to respond to the survey than others (e.g. women rather than men), an unweighted sample would not accurately reflect the demographic makeup of the applicant population as a whole. Weighting was used to ensure that the sample would have the same proportions on certain major demographic variables as the sampling frame. Weights were therefore computed so that the sample would reflect the population in terms of country of home residence (USA/Canada), age, sex and participant status. For further details on the calculation of weights, see the methodological appendices in Kelner et al. (forthcoming) and Saxe et al. (2002).

SOCIOMETRIC DATA

Field workers in six groups (five during the Winter 2000-2001 trips, and one during the Winter 1999-2000 trips) gathered social network data as part of their participant observation. At either one or two points during the trip, they asked participants to write down the names of the people they felt closest to in the group. I was the only one of the participant observers to achieve a 100% response rate, a *sine qua non* of validity in network data. Accordingly, only the data from the group I observed is analyzed here. Data were entered into a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

computer and converted into pseudonyms, which were then analyzed using two network analytic software packages, UCINET V (Borgatti et al. 1999) and *Pajek* (Batagelj and Mrvar 2002). The protocol for the social network survey is attached in Appendix E.

LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Five categories of independent variables were included in the logistic regression analysis presented in Chapter 2: demographic controls, indicators of Jewish socialization, indicators of Jewish commitments, expectations about the trip to Israel, and indicators of group orientation. The specific independent variables used in the models are detailed below.

Demographic Controls[3]

Sex. This dummy variable based on respondents' self-report prior to departure coded males as 0 and females as 1.

Country of Residence. For students, recruitment and participation in Taglit generally operated through the university context. Accordingly, students' country of residence was defined by their college address rather than their parents' home address. For non-students, country of residence was based upon

---

[3] Detailed information about parental socio-economic status was not available in the CMJS data set. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of respondents were college educated, narrowing the range of social classes represented. A rough indicator of affluence, indicating whether respondents relied exclusively on family funds to pay for college tuition, was of limited value because it was asked only of students.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

their current address. The dummy variable (CAN_USA), based on respondents' self-report prior to departure, codes residents of the United States as 0 and residents of Canada as 1.

Student Status. In this series of dummy variables, based on self-report after returning from Taglit, full-time undergraduates served as the contrast category against which were compared people not enrolled in school (STUDNOT), and graduate students and part-time undergraduates (STUDOTH).

Jewish Socialization

Denominational affiliation. The denominational affiliation of the households in which respondents were raised, based on their self-reports prior to the trip, were coded into a dummy variable (DENORTH) that indicated whether the respondent was raised with an Orthodox Jewish affiliation (coded as 1) as opposed to some other affiliation (including Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist, Christian, other) or no denominational affiliation (e.g. just Jewish, no religion), all of which were coded as zero.[4]

Interfaith heritage. Combining responses to the Yes/No questions, "Were your parents born Jewish?" and "Are your parents Jewish now?" - asked separately about mothers and fathers - a five category variable was constructed indicating whether the respondent's parents were an endogamous Jewish couple,

---

[4] I chose not to clutter the model with dummy variables for the other denominations, after preliminary data runs revealed denomination to be a non-significant predictor.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

a conversionary Jewish couple, an interfaith couple, a couple that was never Jewish or a that couple converted out of Judaism. These were recoded into dummy variables (CONVERT, INTERFTH), with the last three categories collapsed and the contrast category representing children of endogamous Jewish parentage.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Respondents who reported having a *bar* or *bat mitzvah* ceremony were coded as one. All others were coded as zero (P6Q2). Since this ceremony generally serves as the culmination of most elementary North American Jewish education, it is used as an indicator of Jewish educational background (for more on the relationship between Jewish education and *bar/bat mitzvah*, see Kadushin et al. 2000).[5]

Adult Jewish Education. Participants were asked if prior to going on Taglit they had "taken any college courses specifically focusing on Jewish subjects, such as Jewish history, the Holocaust or Hebrew" (P5Q2). Those who had taken at least one class were coded 1. Those who had not were coded 0.

---

[5] In the course of exploring various models, I operationalized Jewish education through survey questions that asked whether people had attended Jewish day schools, supplementary schools and Sunday schools for a given number of years. In no case did these items reveal significant relationships with the dependent variable. This was not unexpected because the variables incorrectly specified the theoretical problem in the first place: The issue at hand is not whether additional schooling leads to incremental increases in the resonance of Jewish symbols, but whether a basic level of Jewish socialization instills symbolic orientations that are activated through travel to Israel. In light of these empirical and theoretical reasons, I have chosen to use the *bar/bat mitzvah* as the indicator of this basic level of Jewish socialization.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Jewish Commitments

Discursive Awareness of Jewish identity. Respondents were asked prior to departure, "To what extent do you explore your Jewishness?" Response categories were Not at all, A little, Somewhat and Very much and ranged from 0 to 4 (R1Q4B).

Jewish religious practice. To examine religious behavior, I utilized a Guttman scale of religious observance (FRUM2) where adherence to stricter norms implied adherence to the less rigorous ones as well. Four questions comprised the index. Listed from least stringent to most stringent, they were: "Did you participate in lighting candles this past Hanukkah?", "Did you fast this past Yom Kippur?", "In general, about how often if at all do you attend some type of organized Jewish religious service?", and "Which of the following best describes your current practices? Keep kosher all the time; Keep kosher only at home; Follow some kosher rules like avoiding pork and shellfish; Don't follow kosher rules at all." All variables were dichotomized: The first two were simply left with their Yes/No coding. Service attendance was coded 0 if the respondent said they never attended services, attended only on special occasions like *bar/bat mitzvah* ceremonies and weddings, or attended only on the High Holidays (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur). It was coded 1 if the respondent reported attending services a few times year or more, with the highest category being "daily." Observance of kosher rules was dichotomized with those keeping kosher all the time or only at home being coded as 1, and the others coded as 0. The scale of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ritual observance refers not to the respondents' upbringings in their parental households, but to their own current practices immediately prior to participation in Taglit.

Jewish religious identity. Jewish religious *identity*, which is a matter of self-perception, is not the same thing as Jewish religious *practice*, which is a set of behaviors. Moreover, the term religious identity is not used here to refer to *identification* or *affiliation* with various religious streams (discussed above), but rather, to indicate whether one sees oneself as a person who places priority on matters of the spirit. The variable used as the indicator of Jewish religious identity was drawn from a battery of questions designed to capture the salience of various facets of Jewish identity, religious and otherwise. All questions in the list were prefaced by the introduction, "There are different ways of being Jewish. For you personally, how much does being Jewish involve...." The specific aspect utilized here was "Having a rich a spiritual life." Respondents could answer Not at all, A little, Somewhat and Very much (R3Q2A).

Jewish ethnic identity. The battery of questions about aspects of Jewish identity also included among other things, "Supporting Jewish organizations," "Remembering the Holocaust," and "Caring about Israel." Factor analysis revealed that these items loaded on the same factor. The three were indexed to create a composite variable measuring the salience of Jewish peoplehood (COMMUN2A, alpha=.68). Other composites excluded from the analysis included the salience of Judaic ethics and the salience of Jewish ritual

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

observance. The peoplehood composite represents an ethnic, as opposed to religious, dimension of Jewish identity.

Totemic markings. Marking oneself with an emblem of Jewish identification was taken as indicating an assertion of group membership. Prior to departure, respondents were asked, "Do you wear a Jewish star, *chai*[6], or other Jewish emblem?" Response categories were Never, Sometimes and Always (R5Q6).

Expectations about the Trip to Israel

Desire for spiritual experience on Taglit. Respondents were asked to consider their motivations for traveling to Israel: "How important were each of the following in your decision to apply to Birthright Israel?.... I was looking for a spiritual experience." Response categories were Not at all important, A little important, Somewhat important, Extremely important and were coded 0 through 3 (R2Q4I). This question represents the most explicit statement in the CMJS data set of participant motivation to frame the trip in terms of spirituality. It is important to note that this question was asked prior to departure in a separate survey administered at least three months prior to the survey from which the dependent variable was drawn. Any correlation between this predictor and the dependent variable cannot be written off as an artifact of the word spirituality appearing twice in the same survey.

---

[6] The two-letter Hebrew word *chai*, meaning "life," is commonly worn as a pendant.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Desire for Jewish learning on Taglit. Among the other specific motivations for applying to Taglit that respondents were asked to comment upon was the statement, "I wanted to learn more Judaism." Response categories were the same as described above (R2Q4C).

Security concerns. Because of the violence occurring between Israel and the Palestinians at the time of the Winter 2000-2001 Taglit recruitment and launch, security concerns were especially prominent among applicants and were the primary predictor of participation versus drop-out (Kelner et al. forthcoming). As an indicator of the degree to which participants shared concerns about their personal safety, a scale (SAFETY2) was created that summed dichotomous responses to three questions administered prior to the trip: "Whether or not you have been accepted [to participate in Taglit], which of the following might make you decide not to go on this trip right now? (Check all that apply).... My parents don't think Israel is safe right now; My friends don't think Israel is safe right now; I don't think Israel is safe right now." The resultant composite ranges from 0 (none apply) to 3 (all apply).

Previous Travel to Israel. Respondents were asked prior to departure, "Before you applied for this Birthright Israel trip... how many times had you visited Israel?" A drop box of numerical responses was collapsed to three categories: zero, once, and two or more times (R1Q3).

Socially-Generated Expectations. Expectations about the trips may have been generated by hearing stories and reports from people who have been on similar

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

programs. Prior to departure, participants were asked if they "know people who have gone on an Israel experience trip" (P7Q3). Those who said yes were coded as 1. Those who said no were coded as 0.

Media-Generated Expectations. Expectations about Israel may have been generated by general news media. Prior to departure, participants were asked the extent to which they "followed news about Israel" (R3Q3B). Those who said "often" were coded as 1. All others were coded as 0.

Program-Generated Expectations. Taglit's attempts to prepare participants bespoke a belief that their own organizational efforts could help prepare participants to be more receptive to the messages delivered on the program. After participants returned to North America, CMJS asked them to rate things like information about security, registration for the trip, and pre-trip information. The centered composite variable (LOGIST2, alpha=.76) combined these ratings.

Group Orientation

Orientation toward the group. Ethnographic studies of Israel experience programs commonly report the importance of the group nature of the program in shaping the emotional reactions of participants (Cohen and Wall 1994; Goldberg 1995; Grant 2000a,b; Heilman 1995; Kelner et al. 2000). Individuals, however, are not all oriented toward the group to the same degree. After conducting an exploratory factor analysis, a measure of an individual's orientation toward the group was constructed as a weighted index (GPC2,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

alpha=.77) based upon the following questions: "Were the people in your bus: Friendly? Similar to you? Considerate? Always complaining? Willing to share personal details about their life with the group?" (Response categories: Not at all, A little, Somewhat, Very much). "Did you go to a bar, club or disco?" "Did you drink to get drunk?" (Response categories: Yes/No). "How do you feel about the following activities on your trip: Being on the bus with the other people in your group? Talking with your friends on the bus, late at night, at meals?" (Response categories: Waste of time, O.K., Good, Great but not the best, One of the best things.) "How many people did you feel close to at the end of the trip?" (Open-ended). The coding for the question about people complaining was flipped. All questions were weighted equally except drinking to get drunk which was weighted at 50% of the other questions. The measure of orientation toward the group was centered, and ranged from -5.5 (low group orientation) to 4.5 (high group orientation).

Opinion of staff. The tour groups consisted not only of program participants, but also staff. Program providers invested considerable resources into staff recruitment and training in the belief that much of the program's success in achieving identity-shaping outcomes rested on their work. "Israel is the stage; *we* are the actors," Hillel's 271-page staff manual asserted (2000:13). Among the roles assigned to the staff was "Building Community" (Hillel 2000:ch. 3). In contrast, an ethnographic study of Taglit (Kelner et al. 2000) found little evidence that staff quality affected anything other than perception of staff

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

quality. To examine this with the current data set, the senior North American and Israeli staff persons were rated separately (D3Q4A, D3Q4B). Each variable was dichotomized, with ratings of "Sensational" being coded as 1 and ratings less than sensational being coded 0.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Multicollinearity Testing

Independent variables were tested for multicollinearity first by examining the correlations among them. The highest correlations are shown in the table below.

Independent Variables with Highest Correlations

	R1Q4B	FRUM 2	R3Q2A	R5Q6	R2Q4I
R1Q4B Explore your Jewishness	-				
FRUM2 Ritual observance Guttman scale	**0.48**	-			
R3Q2A Importance of rich spiritual life	**0.49**	**0.40**	-		
R5Q6 Wear a Jewish star / emblem	0.25	0.24	0.20	-	
R2Q4I Looking for a spiritual experience	0.32	0.19	**0.50**	0.17	-
R2Q4C Wanted to learn more Judaism	0.30	0.15	0.36	0.19	**0.53**

Several predictors had correlations with that ranged from .40 to .53 - values that do not warrant an immediate conclusion of multicollinearity, but that are strong enough to make further testing desirable. Using SPSS to run collinearity statistics on the OLS models, I determined that no two variables loaded highly on any one eigenvalue. Moreover, in only instance was a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) greater than the test statistic generated from the model's R-square. But this variable (*bar/bat mitzvah*) was not one of the six whose high correlations with each other generated concern. In light of the various tests, I concluded that multicollinearity was not a problem for these statistical models.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

APPENDIX B

TOUR OPERATORS

Community/Campus Based
- Canada Israel Experience
- Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life

Religious
- Hibba & Zionist Council
- Isralight
- Jewish Heritage Program
- Jewish Identity Project
- KOACH-United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
- Mayanot Institute
- National Council of Synagogue Youth
- Neve Yerushalayim
- New England Institute
- Ohr Somayach Institute
- Sephardic Educational Center
- Union of American Hebrew Congregations - KESHER
- Yeshivat Aish HaTorah

Non-Denominational Not-for-Profit
- Israel Experience - Jewish Agency for Israel
- Jewish Community Centers' Maccabi Xperience
- Jewish National Fund
- March of the Living
- Progress Tours
- Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel
- Shorashim

For-Profit
- Ayelet Tours
- Eshel HaShomron
- ISRAGO
- Omega 2000
- Oranim
- Sachlav
- Unitours Israel

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE ITINERARY[1]

Departure: Sunday
Depart U.S.A.
Overnight: Flight

Day 1: Monday
Arrival at Ben Gurion International airport.
Festive welcoming at airport with music and food.
Drive along the Coastal Highway towards the northern part of Israel.
Lunch on route.
Visit Caesarea - ancient Roman amphitheater on the Mediterranean Sea.
Orientation/ice breakers/security briefing/expectation session on the beach.
Check-in to hotel in Zichron Yaakov, a quaint town on the northern coast of Israel.
Tour the Bahai Gardens in Haifa.
Festive opening dinner in Haifa with sunset over the Mediterranean.
Opening conversation at hotel: My connection to Jewish Memory.
Moonlight music by the pool of the hotel. Overnight in Zichron Yaakov.

Day 2: Tuesday
Opening lecture about the current political situation in Israel and the Middle East with noted expert.
Return to Haifa for a tour of a mixed Arab/Jewish neighborhood and a discussion on co-existence with people on both sides of the conflict.
Picnic lunch and walk through the Banias Nature Reserve; cool off underneath a refreshing waterfall.
Jeep ride in Golan Heights following the history of Israel's wars, providing insight into the strategic complexity of the Golan. View Hula Valley, Border with Syria, UN Outpost.
Raft down the Jordan River.
Dinner at Decks restaurant in Tiberias, followed by a dance cruise on the Sea of Galilee with other twentysomethings.
Overnight at a kibbutz guest house.

Day 3: Wednesday

---

[1] Reproduced from the "Hillel's *birthright israel* trip" website (Hillel 2002), with permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Hike Mount Arbel - beautiful Cliffs in Northern Israel.
Visit Tzfat - Center of Jewish Mysticism for Centuries and a contemporary artist's colony. Visit the many synagogues and explore the origins of Kabbalah.
Lunch on promenade in Tzfat.
Visit Tzippori- a city where Jews and Romans lived together after the destruction of the Second Temple.
Conversation at Tzippori: Jews and Gentiles.
Return to Zichron Yaakov.
Early evening stroll and shopping in town, replete with fine galleries and shops.
Dinner/tour of a local winery with some of the best vintages in Israel, followed by jazz.
Overnight in Zichron Yaakov.

Day 4: Thursday

Drive to Tel Aviv- Israel's most modern city.
Visit Independence hall - spot where the Declaration of Independence of Israel was signed.
Visit Rabin Square and the Yitzchak Rabin Memorial.
Walk around Neve Tzedek, one of Tel Aviv's first neighborhoods and now home to galleries, quaint restaurants and shops. Lunch in Neve Tzedek.
Conversation Special vs. Normal: You choose.
Drive South.
Camel Riding.
Dinner at Bedouin Tent - learn about Bedouin culture & customs.
Star gazing in the desert.
Overnight: Bedouin tent.

Day 5: Friday

Climb Masada by sunrise via the Roman Ramp, site of the Jewish Zealots's last stand against the Roman Legionnaires. Explore Herod's mountain palace, synagogue and bathhouse.
Conversation: Spirituality/Wresting with God.
Descend Masada via the snake path.
Hike in Ein Gedi - a fresh water spring and waterfall in the desert.
Enjoy the Dead Sea - cover yourself in mud, float in the Dead Sea and enjoy the natural sulfur springs.
BBQ lunch at the Dead Sea.
Drive to Jerusalem.
Welcome to Jerusalem ceremony overlooking the Old City of Jerusalem.
Welcome Shabbat with your group.
Festive Shabbat Dinner.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Overnight: Jerusalem.

Day 6: Saturday

Service options.
Kiddush luncheon at Hotel.
Free time.
Optional Shabbat activities.
Guided walks through Jerusalem.
Discussions on career and life choices with Israeli young professionals.
Program with Israeli artists and poets.
Group Havdallah service to mark the end of Shabbat.
Jerusalem Gala - gathering of 3,000 students for a celebration and gala entertainment at the Jerusalem Convention Center.
Overnight: Jerusalem.

Day 7: Sunday

Take part in the birthright israel Expo, including special professional tracks, like law, medicine, business, ethics.
Explore the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem.
Visit the Western Wall and the tunnels under the Western Wall.
Enjoy lunch in the Jewish Quarter.
Experience David's Citadel, a Jerusalem landmark.
Dine in the Roman fashion in the Cardo - center of the Roman city of Jerusalem.
Evening lecture with Avraham Infeld, Hillel's Consul for Jewish Affairs.
Pub crawl in the trendy neighborhood of Ein Karem.
Overnight: Jerusalem.

Day 8: Monday

Visit Yad Vashem - Israel's national museum and memorial to the Holocaust.
Visit the graves of Theodore Herzl, founder of modern Zionism, and Yitzhak Rabin, late Prime Minister of Israel; hear personal stories from Israelis about their fallen comrades.
Depart for nature walk in Sataf.
Tzedek/social justice project.
Go on a night Archeological dig at Beit Guvrin.
Overnight in Jerusalem.

Day 9: Tuesday

Full day mifgash (encounter) with Israeli soldiers on Hazor Air Force base.
Conversation about relationship to Israel.
Travel to Ashkelon, a town on the Mediterranean coast.
Cool down in the local, ancient hot springs.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Farewell beach party on the promenade in Ashkelon with other twentysomethings.
Overnight in Ashkelon.

Day 10: Wednesday
Morning at the Beach in Ashkelon.
Final conversation/evaluation.
Farewell lunch at restaurant in Tel Aviv.
Depart for Airport.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

APPENDIX D

LIMINALITY CONTRASTED WITH SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Transition	State
Totality	Partiality
Homogeneity	Heterogeneity
Communitas	Structure
Equality	Inequality
Anonymity	Systems of nomenclature
Absence of property	Property
Absence of status	Status
Nakedness or uniform clothing	Distinctions of clothing
Sexual continence	Sexuality
Minimization of sex distinctions	Maximization of sex distinctions
Absence of rank	Distinctions of rank
Humility	Just pride of position
Disregard for personal appearance	Care for personal appearance
No distinctions of wealth	Distinctions of wealth
Unselfishness	Selfishness
Total obedience	Obedience only to superior rank
Sacredness	Secularity
Sacred instruction	Technical knowledge
Silence	Speech
Suspension of kinship rights and obligations	Kinship rights and obligations
Continuous reference to mystical powers	Intermittent reference to mystical powers
Foolishness	Sagacity
Simplicity	Complexity
Acceptance of pain and suffering	Avoidance of pain and suffering
Heteronomy	Degrees of autonomy

(Reproduced from Turner 1969: 106-7, with permission)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

APPENDIX E

SOCIAL NETWORK PROTOCOL

Please administer this one-question survey twice: Once on the 3rd day of the program and once on the penultimate day of the program.

Here is a model script to introduce it:

"We are studying lots of things about Birthright Israel. One of the issues that came up is how the group dynamic affects the trip. We are trying to get some statistics about the group dynamic that we can compare across the different groups we observe. This is a one-question survey that we're doing on all five of the buses we are researching.

"It is pretty straightforward, and basically just asks people to report who they are close friends with. In the end, all the names get erased, so it will be completely confidential. We'll immediately put your answers in a sealed envelope and mail it back to the States later today."

Provide all participants with paper and pen. And ask them to do the following:

> ***Please write your full name at the top of the sheet.***
>
> ***"At this point in the trip, which people in our group would you say you are close with?"***
>
> ***You can name as many people as you'd like.***
> ***Please give their first and last name, so there won't be any confusion.***
>
> ***Now fold your paper and put it in the envelope.***
>
> Confirm that everyone has participated.
>
> Seal the envelope in front of the group and mail it at the next opportunity.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

APPENDIX F

TAGLIT WINTER 2000-2001 PRE-TRIP QUESTIONNAIRE

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

b i r t h r i g h t i s r a e l

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 1 OF 7

INTRODUCTION

1. Had you applied for the Birthright Israel trip last year?

- ☐ Yes, for Winter 1999-2000 trip
- ☐ Yes, for the Spring or Summer 2000 trip
- ☐ No

If "yes," you had applied for either or both of the previous Birthright Israel trips but didn't actually go:

- ☐ I was not accepted
- ☐ I needed to earn money over the vacation period
- ☐ Some family/personal emergency came up
- ☐ I needed to spend time studying and/or writing papers
- ☐ I wanted to spend time with friends instead
- ☐ Other: _____

2. Were you eventually accepted to participate in the Winter 2000-2001 trip?

- ○ Yes -- and I am coming!
- ○ Yes -- but I decided not to go.
- ○ No

If you have not been accepted, please complete the rest of the questionnaire anyway. We need to know as much about people interested in Israel as we possibly can!

3. Before you applied for this Birthright Israel trip...
how many times had you visited Israel?
(use right arrow to scroll for options and choose the best one)

0

4. To what extent do you...

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very Much
Feel connected to Israel?	C	C	C	C
Explore your Jewishness?	C	C	C	C
Feel a connection to the Jewish people?	C	C	C	C
Seriously consider living in Israel?	C	C	C	C

Continue to Part 2

Reset This Page

Questions by E-mail?



TAGLIT · תגלית
birthright israel
www.birthrightisrael.com

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

birthright israel

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 2 OF 7

DECIDING TO GO TO ISRAEL

1. Before you heard about Birthright Israel, how much did the following prevent you from planning a trip to Israel?

	Not At All	*A Little*	*Somewhat*	*Very Much*
A trip is too expensive.	○	○	○	○
Israel is not safe.	○	○	○	○
I did not know about Israel Experience programs.	○	○	○	○
My parents did not want me to go.	○	○	○	○
I needed to work to earn money.	○	○	○	○
Israel was of little interest.	○	○	○	○

2. Whether or not you have been accepted, which of the following might make you decide not to go on this trip right now? (*Check all that apply.*)

- ☐ I discovered I needed to earn money over the vacation period
- ☐ Some family/personal emergency has come up
- ☐ I should spend time studying and/or writing papers
- ☐ I decided I want to spend time with friends instead
- ☐ My parents don't think Israel is safe right now
- ☐ My friends don't think Israel is safe right now
- ☐ I don't think Israel is safe right now

3. Before you applied, how did you hear about the Birthright Israel trip?
You could have heard about the Birthright Israel trip from more than one source. Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Someone who went on Birthright Israel
- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Family member
- ☐ Rabbi or teacher

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

- ☐ Israeli representative (*shaliach*)
- ☐ Advertisement in a college newspaper
- ☐ Advertisement in a general newspaper
- ☐ Newspaper article
- ☐ Magazine ad
- ☐ Birthright Israel poster, flyer, or brochure
- ☐ Radio commercial
- ☐ Israel Experience Program Guide
- ☐ Hillel or other Jewish organization
- ☐ Jewish community center
- ☐ Jewish federation
- ☐ Other:

From the list above, please select your most important source of information about the Birthright Israel trip:

-Select one-

4. How important were each of the following in your decision to apply to Birthright Israel?

	Not At All Important	*A Little Important*	*Somewhat Important*	*Extremely Important*
I always wanted to see Israel.	○	○	○	○
I wanted to meet other Jewish students.	○	○	○	○
I wanted to learn more Judaism.	○	○	○	○
The trip was free.	○	○	○	○
My parents wanted me to go.	○	○	○	○
I thought it would be fun.	○	○	○	○
My friends were applying.	○	○	○	○
It was more attractive than my other choices.	○	○	○	○
I was looking for a spiritual experience.	○	○	○	○

5. To what extent was the selection process fair?

- ○ Not at all
- ○ A little
- ○ Somewhat
- ○ Very much

Continue to Part 3

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

b i r t h r i g h t i s r a

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 3 OF 7

YOUR VIEWS

1. Here are positions that some people have taken about Israel's current relations wi Palestinians. Which is closest to your own views?

- ○ Negotiations should continue regardless.
- ○ Negotiations should be put on hold until Palestinian violence stops.
- ○ Negotiations should continue only if Palestinian violence stops and if division of Jerusalem and return of Palestinians to Israel is not on the agenda.
- ○ Negotiations cannot continue in the foreseeable future.

2. There are different ways of being Jewish. For you personally, how much does being Jewish involve...

	Not At All	*A Little*	*Somewhat*	*Very Much*
Having a rich spiritual life?	○	○	○	○
Supporting Jewish organizations?	○	○	○	○
Remembering the Holocaust?	○	○	○	○
Caring about Israel?	○	○	○	○
Leading an ethical and moral life?	○	○	○	○
Celebrating Jewish holidays?	○	○	○	○
Observing Shabbat?	○	○	○	○
Making the world a better place?	○	○	○	○
Attending synagogue?	○	○	○	○
Countering antisemitism?	○	○	○	○
Importance of dating only Jews?	○	○	○	○
Observing Jewish law?	○	○	○	○

3. In the past month or so, how often have you...

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally
Gone to an activity of a Jewish campus organization?	C	C	C
Followed news about Israel?	C	C	C
Engaged in Jewish study?	C	C	C
Attended Jewish worship services?	C	C	C
Been involved in the Jewish community off-campus?	C	C	C

Continue to Part 4

Reset This Page

Questions by E-mail?



TAGLIT - תגלית
birthright israel
www.birthrightisrael.com

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

b i r t h r i g h t i s r a e l

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 4 OF 7

ABOUT YOU

1. Are you currently--

- ○ Not enrolled in school -- *(Please press submit and skip to Part 5)*
- ○ Full-time student
- ○ Part-time student

2. Do you live...?

- ○ In a dorm
- ○ In a fraternity
- ○ In a house/apartment/room off campus
- ○ At home with your family

3. Are you a member or pledge of a fraternity or sorority?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes, Jewish fraternity or sorority
- ○ Yes, non-Jewish fraternity or sorority

4. Thinking about this school year, how many hours do you spend during a typical week...

	0	*1-2*	*3-5*	*6-10*	*11-15*	*16-20*	*20+*
Studying/ homework?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Partying?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students clubs or groups?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Activities that make you feel Jewish?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Exercise/ sports?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

5. What is the highest degree you intend to obtain?

- ○ Vocational certificate
- ○ Associate (A.A. or equivalent)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

- ○ Bachelors degree
- ○ Masters degree
- ○ Ph.D. or Ed.D.
- ○ M.D., D.D., D.D.S., or D.V.M
- ○ LL.B., or J.D. (Law)
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Other degree: _____

6. How do you cover the cost of college tuition?

- ○ Your own earnings
- ○ Family contributions
- ○ Scholarships
- ○ Loans

7. What is your major course of study? (*Check all that apply.*)

- ☐ Business
- ☐ Communications
- ☐ Computer Science
- ☐ Economics
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ English
- ☐ Health professions
- ☐ Law
- ☐ Liberal arts
- ☐ Philosophy
- ☐ Political Science
- ☐ Psychology
- ☐ Social Science/History
- ☐ Social work
- ☐ Visual and performing arts
- ☐ Undeclared
- ☐ Other _____

Continue to Part C

Reset This Page

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

birthright israel

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 5 OF 7

MORE ABOUT YOU

1. How many of your close friends are Jewish?

- None
- A Few
- Half
- Most
- All

2. Prior to going on Birthright Israel, had you taken any college courses specifically focusing on Jewish subjects, such as Jewish history, the Holocaust, or Hebrew?

- No
- Yes, *how many courses?* 0

3. Which of the following best describe your current practices?

- Keep kosher all the time.
- Keep kosher only at home.
- Follow some kosher rules like avoiding pork and shellfish.
- Don't follow kosher rules at all.

4. Did you fast this past Yom Kippur?

- No
- Yes

5. Did you participate in lighting candles this past Hanukkah?

- No
- Yes

6. Do you wear a Jewish star,*chai*, or other Jewish emblem?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

- C Never
- C Sometimes
- C Always

7. In general, about how often if at all do you attend some type of organized Jewish religious service?

- C Never
- C On special occasions (bar/bat mitzvah, weddings)
- C On High Holidays (Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur)
- C A few times a year
- C About once a month
- C Several times a month
- C Weekly
- C Daily

8. In terms of religion, do you consider yourself to be...?

- C Orthodox Jewish
- C Conservative Jewish
- C Reform Jewish
- C Reconstructionist Jewish
- C Just Jewish
- C Other

9. Your sex:

- C Female
- C Male

10. In what year were you born?

19

11. Where were you born?

Country: United States

State:

12. If you were not born in the US or Canada, in what year did you

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

arrive?

19 ☐

13. Are you a citizen of--?
(Check all that apply)

☐ US
☐ Canada
☐ Other: ☐

14. Are you currently--?

○ Employed full-time
○ Employed part-time
○ Not currently employed

15. From what kind of secondary school did you graduate?

○ Public school
○ Private—Jewish day school
○ Other private school

16. What is the highest degree or year in school that you have *completed*?

○ High school
○ 1st year college
○ 2nd year college
○ 3rd year college
○ 4th year college
○ B.A./ B.S.
○ Some graduate school
○ Masters
○ Professional Degree
○ Ph.D.

17. How important is each of the following to you in your life...

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

	Not Important	A Little Important	Somewhat Important	Extremely Important
Becoming accomplished in the arts?	C	C	C	C
Becoming an authority in your field?	C	C	C	C
Influencing the political structure?	C	C	C	C
Marrying a Jewish person?	C	C	C	C
Helping people in need?	C	C	C	C
Raising your children Jewish?	C	C	C	C
Being very well off financially?	C	C	C	C
Becoming successful in business?	C	C	C	C
Being Jewish?	C	C	C	C

Continue to Part 6

Reset This Page

Questions by E-mail?

TAGLIT - תגלית
birthright israel
www.birthrightisrael.com

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

birthright israel

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 6 OF 7

YOUR FAMILY AND JEWISH UPBRINGING

1. Did you attend...

	No	Yes	Number of Years
Full-time day school or yeshiva? *(not including nursery school or kindergarten)*	C	C	
Part-time Hebrew school that met several times a week?	C	C	
Part-time Hebrew school that met only once a week?	C	C	

2. Did you have a bar or bat mitzvah ceremony?

C No
C Yes

3. Did you have a Jewish confirmation?

C No
C Yes

4. Did you ever belong to a Jewish youth group?

C No
C Yes

5. Did you attend or work at a Jewish overnight camp with a Jewish educational program?

C No
C Yes

6. Were you raised...? *(Check one)*

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

- C Orthodox Jewish
- C Conservative Jewish
- C Reform Jewish
- C Reconstructionist Jewish
- C Just Jewish
- C Christian
- C No religion
- C Other: [ ]

7. During your high school years:

	No	*Yes*
Did someone in your home regularly light Sabbath candles?	C	C
Did your household keep kosher?	C	C
Did you ever have a Christmas tree in your home?	C	C

The remaining questions in this section ask about your parents.

8. What is the highest level of education completed?

	Mother	*Father*
Some high school or less	C	C
High school graduate	C	C
Some college	C	C
College degree	C	C
Graduate degree	C	C
Don't know	C	C

9. In what country was your mother born?

- C U.S.
- C Canada
- C Russia/FSU
- C Israel
- C Other: [ ]

10. In what country was your father born?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

- C U.S.
- C Canada
- C Russia/FSU
- C Israel
- C Other: [ ]

11. Were your parents born Jewish?

	No	*Yes*
Mother	C	C
Father	C	C

12. Are your parents Jewish now?

(If deceased, were they Jewish at the time of their death?)

	No	*Yes*
Mother	C	C
Father	C	C

Continue to Part 2 >>

Reset This Page

Questions by E-mail?

TAGLIT · תגלית
birthright israel
www.birthrightisrael.com

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

birthright israel

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 7 OF 7

THOUGHTS ABOUT BIRTHRIGHT ISRAEL

1. How much do you agree or disagree with these statements about the possibility of a free trip to Israel?

	Strongly Disagree	*Slightly Disagree*	*Slightly Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
I am grateful.	C	C	C	C
I might have gone to Israel anyway.	C	C	C	C

2. What do you think you would get out of this trip to Israel?

3. Do you know people who have gone on an Israel experience trip?

C Yes
C No

If "yes," what have they told you about their experiences, if anything?

4. What places in Israel did you most want to see? Why?

5. Why do you think the funders are giving out these free trips to Israel?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

6. Do you know who is paying for these trips?

C Yes
C No

If "yes," who?

7. Would you like to receive a notification about where you can find a summary of the results of this survey on the web?

C No
C Yes

Finish The Survey
Reset This Page

Questions by E-mail?

TAGLIT - תגלית
birthright israel
www.birthrightisrael.com

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

APPENDIX F

TAGLIT WINTER 2000-2001 POST-TRIP QUESTIONNAIRE

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

b i r t h r i g h t i s r a e l

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 1 OF 8

PART I: INTRODUCTION

1) Who was the sponsor organization?

Do you happen to recall the number of your bus?

- Yes. What number?
- No

2) Was the trip...

	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very Much
Fun?				
Exhausting?				
Personally meaningful?				
Educational?				

3) How likely is it that you will return to Israel within the next two years?

- Not all likely
- A little likely
- Somewhat likely
- Extremely likely

4) To what extent is the likelihood of your returning to Israel affected by the current conflict between Israel and the Palestinians?

- Not at all
- A little
- Somewhat
- Very much

5) Was the length of your trip...?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

- Too short
- Just about right
- Too long

6) Optional: What is your strongest memory of the trip?

7) Prior to your birthright israel trip... how many times had you visited Israel?

(Please type a number)

Continue To Part 2

Questions by E-mail?

TAGLIT · תגלית
birthright israel
www.birthrightisrael.com

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

birthright israel

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 2 OF 8

PART II: THE BIRTHRIGHT ISRAEL TRIP

1) How many people on your bus were you close to before the trip?
(Please type a number)

2) Were the people in your bus...

	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very Much
Friendly?	○	○	○	○
Similar to you?	○	○	○	○
Considerate?	○	○	○	○
Always complaining?	○	○	○	○
Willing to share personal details about their life with the group?	○	○	○	○

3) During the trip...

	No	Yes
Did you go to a bar, club or disco?	○	○
Did you drink to get drunk?	○	○
Did you start dating someone?	○	○

4) To what extent...

	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very Much
Were you able to use free time as you liked?	○	○	○	○
Did you get to know Israelis your own age?	○	○	○	○
Was the trip a spiritual experience?	○	○	○	○

5) Participants in prior trips told us that some parts of the program were better than others.

How do you feel about the following parts of your trip?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

	Not Applicable (We didn't do this)	Waste Of Time	O.K.	Good	Great, but not the best	One of the best things
The Golan Heights?	C	C	C	C	C	C
Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial?	C	C	C	C	C	C
Mount Herzl cemetery in Jerusalem?	C	C	C	C	C	C
The Western (Wailing) Wall?	C	C	C	C	C	C

	Not Applicable (We didn't do this)	Waste Of Time	O.K.	Good	Great, but not the best	One of the best things
The rest of the Old City of Jerusalem?	C	C	C	C	C	C
The Dead Sea?	C	C	C	C	C	C
Masada?	C	C	C	C	C	C
Tel Aviv?	C	C	C	C	C	C
Seeing how people live on a Kibbutz?	C	C	C	C	C	C

	Not Applicable (We didn't do this)	Waste Of Time	O.K.	Good	Great, but not the best	One of the best things
Sabbath in Jerusalem?	C	C	C	C	C	C
Being in a country where the majority is Jewish?	C	C	C	C	C	C
Being part of a program with thousands of other Jews?	C	C	C	C	C	C

6) Optional: Where would you have liked to spend more time in Israel? Why?

Continue To Part 3

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

birthright israel

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 3 OF 8

PART III: BIRTHRIGHT ISRAEL TRIP ACTIVITIES

These questions are about the activities you participated in on the birthright Israel trip.

1) How do you feel about the following activities on your trip...

	Not Applicable (I didn't do this)	Waste Of Time	O.K.	Good	Great, but not the best	One of the best things
Digging in an archaeological site?	○	○	○	○	○	○
Being on the bus with the other people in your group?	○	○	○	○	○	○
Organized conversations about Israel and Judaism?	○	○	○	○	○	○
Speakers, lectures and seminars?	○	○	○	○	○	○
Talking with your friends on the bus, late at night, at meals?	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mifgash (organized encounter) with Israelis?	○	○	○	○	○	○
Saturday night gala (Mega event) at the convention center?	○	○	○	○	○	○
Israel Expo Fair?	○	○	○	○	○	○

2) Optional: Do you have any suggestions about how any of these program activities could have been made better?

3) Optional: What other activities in Israel would you have liked to have done or done more? Why?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

4) On your bus there was at least one Israeli and two North American guides and educators.

How did you personally feel about the...

	So-So	Good	Very Good	Sensational
Senior North American staff person?	C	C	C	C
Israeli staff person?	C	C	C	C

5) How much do you agree or disagree with these statements about your trip?

	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
Staff were reluctant to say negative things about Israel.	C	C	C	C
There was too much "preaching."	C	C	C	C
It was too religious.	C	C	C	C
Current politics was talked about too much.	C	C	C	C

6) During your trip...

	No	Yes
Did you get ill?	C	C
Did you attend Sabbath services?	C	C
Did you visit with an Israeli family?	C	C

7) Knowing what can be made better about the logistics is critical to improving birthright Israel. How do you feel about the quality of...

	Not Good	So-So	Good	Very Good	Sensational
The food?	C	C	C	C	C
The accommodations?	C	C	C	C	C
The medical care?	C	C	C	C	C
The organization and administration of the trip?	C	C	C	C	C
Information about security?	C	C	C	C	C
Registration for the trip?	C	C	C	C	C
Pre-Trip information?	C	C	C	C	C

8) How many people on your bus did you feel close to at <u>the end</u> of the trip?
(Please type a number)

9) Optional: What aspect of the trip was most disappointing to you? Why?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

b i r t h r i g h t i s r a e l

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 4 OF 8

PART IV: CURRENT VALUES AND VIEWS

1) To what extent...

	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very Much
Do you feel connected to Israel?	C	C	C	C
Are you exploring your Jewishness?	C	C	C	C
Do you feel connected to the Jewish people?	C	C	C	C

2) There are different ways of being Jewish. For you personally, how much does being Jewish involve...

	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very Much
Having a rich spiritual life?	C	C	C	C
Supporting Jewish organizations?	C	C	C	C
Remembering the Holocaust?	C	C	C	C
Caring about Israel?	C	C	C	C
Leading an ethical and moral life?	C	C	C	C
	Not At All	A Little	Somewhat	Very Much
Celebrating Jewish holidays?	C	C	C	C
Observing the Sabbath?	C	C	C	C
Making the world a better place?	C	C	C	C
Attending synagogue?	C	C	C	C
Countering antisemitism?	C	C	C	C
The Importance of dating only Jews?	C	C	C	C
Observing Jewish law?	C	C	C	C

Continue To Part 5

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

b i r t h r i g h t i s r a e l

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 5 OF 8

PART V: SINCE YOUR RETURN FROM ISRAEL

1)How often are you in contact (in person, telephone, email) with...

	Never	Every few weeks	Once a week	Every few days
Other participants from your trip?	○	○	○	○
Trip leaders, guides?	○	○	○	○
Israelis you met on the trip?	○	○	○	○

2) Since your return from Israel have you...

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often
Followed closely news about Israel?	○	○	○	○
Engaged in Jewish study?	○	○	○	○

3) How many times have you attended a Jewish worship service in the last month?

- ○ Never
- ○ Once
- ○ A couple of times
- ○ Three or four times
- ○ Five or more times

4) If someone asked you about the current situation in Israel, how confident do you feel in your ability to give a good explanation?

- ○ **Not at all confident**
- ○ **A little confident**
- ○ **Somewhat confident**
- ○ **Very confident**

5) Have you sought information about the current situation in Israel from any of the following sources?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(Check all that apply)

- ☐ **Birthright Israel webpage**
- ☐ **Haaretz (Internet or hardcopy)**
- ☐ **Jerusalem Post (Internet or hardcopy)**
- ☐ **Listserv devoted to Jewish/Israeli affairs**
- ☐ **North American news media**
- ☐ **Webpage of the Israeli Government or Defense Forces**
- ☐ **Webpage of a Jewish organization or "webzine"**
- ☐ **Other** [ ]

6) Here are positions that some people have taken about Israel's current relations with Palestinians. Which is closest to your own views?

- ○ **Negotiations should continue regardless.**
- ○ **Negotiations should be put on hold until Palestinian violence stops.**
- ○ **Negotiations should continue only if Palestinian violence stops and if division of Jerusalem and return of Palestinians to Israel is not on the agenda.**
- ○ **Negotiations cannot continue in the foreseeable future.**

7)Have you told friends, siblings, and others that they should register for future birthright israel trips?

- ○ Yes, several others.
- ○ Yes,at least one other.
- ○ No, but I would if asked.
- ○ No, I don't know others who would appreciate it.

Continue To Part 8

Questions by E-mail?

TAGLIT · תגלית
birthright israel
www.birthrightisrael.com

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

b i r t h r i g h t i s r a e l

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 6 OF 8

PART VI: COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY LIFE

1) Are you currently...

If you are not currently enrolled in school please click here to skip this section and go directly to part 7.

- ○ Full-time undergraduate student?
- ○ Part-time undergraduate student?
- ○ Full-time graduate student?
- ○ Part-time graduate student?

2) What is the name of the University or College in which you are now enrolled?

3) Do you also have a job?

- ○ Yes, full time: What?
- ○ Yes, part time: What?
- ○ No

4) About how often do you ...

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often
Go to an activity of a Jewish campus organization?	○	○	○	○
Are involved in the Jewish community off-campus?	○	○	○	○

5) Here is a list of things some college and universities are doing in connection with the Birthright Israel trips. Did any of these happen on your campus? Did you participate in any of these activities? (Check all that apply)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Activity	Aware	Participated
Reunions and parties for participants	☐	☐ Went to at least one
Off campus retreats for people who were on the trip	☐	☐ Went to at least one
Orientations for new birthright Israel participants	☐	☐ Participated
Listserve for people who were on the birthright Israel trip	☐	☐ Participated
Newsletters for people on trip	☐	☐ Get regular mailings
Other: ☐	☐	☐ Participated

6) Here are some other events that might have taken place on your campus. Check those of which you are aware of as well as those in which you have participated.

Activity (Check all that apply)	Aware	Participated
Celebrating special event(s) connected to Israel	☐	☐ Went to at least one
Jewish learning program	☐	☐ Went to at least one
Special Shabbat events or Holiday events or programs	☐	☐ Went to at least one
Jewish cultural activities (film, music, theatre)	☐	☐ Went to at least one
Political activity related to Israel	☐	☐ Participated
Other: ☐	☐	☐ Participated

7) Do you now have a leadership position in a ...

	No, don't have time	To some extent	Yes, One	Yes, more than one
Jewish activity	○	○	○	○
Non-Jewish activity	○	○	○	○

8) Do you live...?

- ○ In a dorm
- ○ In a fraternity
- ○ In a house/apartment/ room off campus
- ○ At home with your family

9) About how many hours do you spend during a typical week...

	0	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
Studying/ homework?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Participating in community service?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Reading Jewish books?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other reading?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Surfing the Internet?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Partying?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Student clubs or groups?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Activities that make you feel Jewish?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Exercise/ sports?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Part VIa

This coming summer, how do you expect to spend your time? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Work at a full-time paid job for at least one month
- ☐ Work at a part-time job for at least one month
- ☐ Travel away from home/college for more than 1 week
- ☐ Take a university-level course for credit
- ☐ Intern at a business, law firm or health facility
- ☐ Volunteer in a social service program for at least one month
- ☐ Other. What? _____

2) How much do you anticipate earning this summer?

3) What percentage of the yearly amount that you need to earn for school do you expect to earn during the summer?

4) How rewarding would it be to spend at least 8 weeks working in each of the following jobs?

	Not at all 1	Not at all 2	Not at all 3	Not at all 4	Extremely 5
Salesperson or other retail employment	○	○	○	○	○
Intern at business or law firm	○	○	○	○	○
Lifeguard	○	○	○	○	○
Counselor at an overnight camp	○	○	○	○	○
Laborer/house painter, outdoor worker	○	○	○	○	○

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

5) How much money after expenses do you think you could earn if you worked at least 8 weeks in each of the following jobs?

	$1000 or less	$1001-$2000	$2001-$3000	$3000 or more
Salesperson or other retail employment	C	C	C	C
Intern at business or law firm	C	C	C	C
Lifeguard	C	C	C	C
Counselor at an overnight camp	C	C	C	C
Laborer/house painter, outdoor worker	C	C	C	C

6) For you, how difficult would it be to work at each of the following jobs?

	Not at all	Not at all	Not at all	Not at all	Extremely
	1	2	3	4	5
Salesperson or other retail employment	C	C	C	C	C
Intern at business or law firm	C	C	C	C	C
Lifeguard	C	C	C	C	C
Counselor at an overnight camp	C	C	C	C	C
Laborer/house painter, outdoor worker	C	C	C	C	C

7) How much do you think you would learn if you worked at least 8 weeks in each of the following jobs?

	Not very much	Not very much	Not very much	Not very much	A great deal
	1	2	3	4	5
Salesperson or other retail employment	C	C	C	C	C
Intern at business or law firm	C	C	C	C	C
Lifeguard	C	C	C	C	C
Counselor at an overnight camp	C	C	C	C	C
Laborer/house painter, outdoor worker	C	C	C	C	C

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

b i r t h r i g h t i s r a e l

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 7 OF 8

PART VII: WHAT YOU ARE DOING NOW

1)Where are you now living?

City: _____

State or Province: _____

2) Are you currently--?

	No	Yes		About how many hours a week do you work?
Employed full-time?	○	○	Please, describe _____	▼
Employed part-time?	○	○	Please, describe _____	▼
Looking for a job?	○	○	What Kind? _____	

3) Here is a list of some things Jewish communities have been doing in connection with the birthright israel trips. Did any of these happen in your community? Did you participate in any of these activities?
(Check all that apply)

Activity	Aware	Participated
Reunions and parties for participants	☐	☐ Went to at least one
Retreats for people who were on the trip	☐	☐ Went to at least one
Orientations for new birthright participants	☐	☐ Participated
Listserve for people who were on birthright israel trip	☐	☐ Participated
Newsletters for people on trip	☐	☐ Get regular mailings
Other: _____	☐	☐ Participated

4) Here are some other events that might have taken place in your community. Check those of which you are aware of as well as those in which you have participated.
(Check all that apply)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Activity	Aware	Participated
Celebrating special event(s) connected with Israel	☐	☐ Went to at least one
Jewish learning program	☐	☐ Went to at least one
Special Shabbat or Holiday events or programs	☐	☐ Went to at least one
Jewish cultural activities (film, music, theatre)	☐	☐ Participated
Political activity related to Israel	☐	☐ Received at least one
Other: ☐	☐	☐ Participated

5) About how many hours do you spend during a typical week...

	0	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
Surfing the Internet?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Participating in community service?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Reading Jewish books?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other reading?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Partying?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Activities that make you feel Jewish?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Exercise/ sports?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

6) Do you now have a leadership position in a...

	No, don't have time	To some extent	Yes, One	Yes, more than one
Jewish activity	○	○	○	○
Non-Jewish activity	○	○	○	○

Continue To Part 8

Questions by E-mail?

TAGLIT · תגלית
birthright israel
www.birthrightisrael.com

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

b i r t h r i g h t i s r a e l

Check my status
Logout
(If you need to logout, you can login again later to continue the survey starting with this part)

PART 8 OF 8

PART VIII: CONCLUSION

1) About how many times, if at all, did you visit the *birthright israel* website after your return from Israel?

- ○ Never
- ○ Once or twice
- ○ Three to five
- ○ Six to ten
- ○ More than ten

2) How do you rate this site?

- ○ Excellent
- ○ Very Good
- ○ Good
- ○ Fair
- ○ Poor

3) Are you married?

- ○ Married
- ○ Divorced
- ○ Separated
- ○ Never married

4) Do you have children?

- ○ Yes How many? [ ]
- ○ No

5) How much do you agree or disagree with these statements about being given a free trip to Israel?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree
I am grateful.	○	○	○	○
I might have gone to Israel anyway.	○	○	○	○

6) Would you like to receive an email notification about where you can find on the web the summary of the results of this survey?

○ Yes
○ No

7) Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your Birthright Israel experience?

Thank you very much for your cooperation.
Your help is most appreciated and we hope you found this survey interesting.

Finish the Survey

Questions by E-mail?

TAGLIT - תגלית
birthright israel
www.birthrightisrael.com

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

APPENDIX H

GENDER AND THE PILGRIM VS. TOURIST ORIENTATION

The following table reports the data presented in Table 2.3, with gender controlled. Group 1 represents those who said the trip was both very meaningful and very spiritual (pilgrim). Group 2 represents those who said it was very meaningful but not very spiritual (meaningful tourists). Group 3 represents those who said it was neither very meaningful nor very spiritual (recreational travelers).

	Male Group #			Female Group #		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Explores Jewishness (Very much)	29%	18%	19%	31%	14%	18%
Being Jewish involves... (% responding Very Much)						
Having a rich spiritual life	25%	12%	10%	37%	22%	17%
Attending synagogue	15%	9%	6%	15%	6%	4%
Leading an ethical and moral life	60%	51%	52%	62%	54%	44%
Caring about Israel	47%	40%	22%	59%	37%	26%
Remembering the Holocaust	65%	55%	42%	71%	64%	55%
Lights Hanukkah Candles [a]	89%	87%	82%	92%	92%	83%
Fasts on Yom Kippur	79%	80%	65%	79%	69%	62%
Attends worship services (at least several times a month)	20%	12%	10%	18%	11%	9%
Keeps kosher (at home or all the time) [b]	20%	19%	21%	24%	17%	19%

Continued on next page

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Continued from previous page

	Male Group #			Female Group #		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
How would you rate... (% saying "One of the best things")						
Sabbath	47%	25%	15%	58%	33%	15%
Western Wall	83%	64%	47%	86%	73%	47%
Old City of Jerusalem	49%	35%	32%	57%	39%	28%
Being with thousands of Jews	65%	51%	27%	81%	60%	33%
Being in a country with a Jewish majority	66%	52%	25%	81%	62%	31%
Spending time on the bus	36%	31%	17%	40%	30%	17%
Talking with friends	45%	41%	23%	59%	45%	33%
Tel Aviv [b]	33%	34%	25%	32%	40%	37%
Golan Heights	33%	37%	16%	37%	36%	23%
Encounter with Israeli peers (*Mifgash*)	31%	32%	20%	37%	27%	19%
Kibbutz [b]	18%	13%	10%	21%	17%	16%

All χ^2 tests significant at the p=.05 level except:
[a] χ^2 tests significant for women but not for men
[b] χ^2 tests not significant for either sex

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ARCHIVAL AND HISTORICAL REFERENCES

To avoid cluttering the References section with the scores of primary documents used to reconstruct the history of the Israel experience program field, I present them separately in this section.

The documentation on Young Judaea's trips was available in the Young Judaea collection of the Hadassah Archives located at the American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS). Materials for USY and NFTY were not housed systematically in archives, but were available in an *ad hoc* manner from the organizations themselves.

* * *

"120 to Israel; 45 on Wheels; 3000 in Camps USY mark summer program." 1963. *News and Views,* May, pp. 1.

"1957 can be your Israel year." 1957. *News and Views,* February, pp. 1.

"'68 summer great for USY." 1968. *News and Views,* Summer, pp. 7.

Ain, Stewart. 1998. "Bibi Pledges $20M." *New York Jewish Week,* July 31. Retrieved May 20, 2002 (http://www.thejewishweek.com/news/newscontent.php3?artid=441).

------. 1996. "Costly Demise." *New York Jewish Week,* March 8. Retrieved May 22, 2002. Available: Shamash: The Jewish Network (http://shamash.org./listarchives/jweek/960306).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

------. 1999. "Free Heritage Trip on the Runway." *New York Jewish Week,* August 6. Retrieved May 20, 2002 (http://www.thejewishweek.com/news/newscontent.php3?artid=1668).

------. 2002. "Money Woes for Birthright." *New York Jewish Week,* June 7. Retrieved June 7, 2002 (http://www.thejewishweek.com/news/newscontent.php3?artid=6275).

American Zionist Council Youth Activities Committee. 1957. "6th Annual Israel Dance Festival Program." Program brochure. Addendum, Israel Programs. RG 8, Box 7. Hadassah Archives at AJHS.

------. 1959. "8th Annual Israel Dance Festival Program." Program brochure. Addendum, Israel Programs. RG 8, Box 7. Hadassah Archives at AJHS.

"And away we go!" 1960. *News and Views,* December, pp. 6.

Archaeological Seminars, Ltd. 2002. "About Us." Jerusalem, Israel: Archaeological Seminars, Ltd., Retrieved June 10, 2002 (http://www.archesem.com/about.html).

"B.S.B." 1964. *News and Views,* October, pp. 5.

Bank of Israel. N.d.a. "Israel Notes and Coins: 1 New Sheqel." Jerusalem, Israel: Bank of Israel, Retrieved November 13, 2001 (http://www.bankisrael.gov.il/catal/c39.htm).

------. N.d.b. "Israel Notes and Coins: 10 Agorot." Jerusalem, Israel: Bank of Israel, Retrieved November 13, 2001 (http://www.bankisrael.gov.il/catal/c37.htm).

------. N.d.c. "Israel Notes and Coins: 10 New Sheqalim." Jerusalem, Israel: Bank of Israel, Retrieved November 13, 2001 (http://www.bankisrael.gov.il/catal/c41.htm).

Berman, Julius. 1996. "The Closure of the AZYF." *Jerusalem Post,* January 21. Retrieved June 7, 2002 (http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/jpost/).

Birthright Israel. 1998. "$300 Million Initiative Announced for Every Jewish Youth to Visit Israel; Michael Steinhardt and Charles R. Bronfman Lead Efforts to Promote Jewish Youth's Connection to Their Heritage." *PR Newswire,* November 17. Retrieved May 20, 2002. Available: LEXIS-NEXIS® Academic Universe (http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

------. 1999. "Birthright Israel Announces Free Trips to Israel Beginning This Winter 2000; Sign-Up Begins for Jewish College Students Fall Semester 1999." *PR Newswire,* August 6. Retrieved May 20, 2002. Available: LEXIS-NEXIS® Academic Universe (http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe).

------. 1999. "Birthright Israel Announces Successful Enrollment for Inaugural Season of Free Trips to Israel Signaling Youth Interest in Jewish Heritage; Overwhelming Response to 5,000 Free Winter Break Trips Offered by Birthright Israel." *PR Newswire,* October 12. Retrieved May 20, 2002. Available: LEXIS-NEXIS® Academic Universe (http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe).

------. 1999. "Birthright Israel Gives American Jewish Youth Largest , Most Meaningful Hanukah Gift Ever; 5,000 Jewish Youth to Visit Israel for Free at Dawn of Millenium; Planned $210 Million Jewish Philanthropic Program Seen As Critical to Healing North America's Jewish Assimilation Crisis." *PR Newswire,* November 22. Retrieved May 20, 2002. Available: LEXIS-NEXIS® Academic Universe (http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe).

birthright israel North America, inc. 2001. *Israel Experience 2001: Your Complete Guide to Programs for College, Post-College and High School Students.* New York: birthright israel North America, inc.

Breakstone, Cindy. 1998. "Bavli-Yerushalmi Paints the Shuk." Jerusalem, Israel: Partnership 2000 -- Israel Department of the Jewish Agency for Israel, Retrieved November 20, 2001 (http://www.partner.org.il/jerusalem/news-9807-shuk.html).

"BSB contributions up 20%." 1966. *News and Views,* November, pp. 3.

Cohen, Aryeh D. 1998. "Beilin's Baby: A Right of Passage." *Jerusalem Post,* November 18. Retrieved June 13, 2002 (http://www.jpost.com/com/Archive/18.Nov.1998/Features/Article-3.html).

Cohen, Debra N. 2002. "The Feminine (Giving) Mystique." *New York Jewish Week,* June 14, pp. 10-12.

Contact: the journal of Jewish Life Network / Chaverim Kol Yisrael. 2002. Vol. 4(3, Spring). New York: Jewish Life Network / Chaverim Kol Yisrael.

Cook, Samuel. 1979. "Four Decades." *Visions,* Winter, pp. 8-9.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"Dr. Posner addresses USY." 1964. *News and Views,* October, pp. 6.

Eisenberg, Norman. 2002. "Foundations for Change." *New York Jewish Week,* June 14, pp. 6-9.

Elliott, Stuart. 1999. "The Media Business: Advertising -- Addenda; Accounts." *New York Times,* August 2, p. C12. Retrieved May 20, 2002. Available: LEXIS-NEXIS® Academic Universe (http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe).

European Foundation Centre. 1998. "Funders Online: Orpheus Profile -- The CRB Foundation." Brussels, Belgium: European Foundation Centre, Retrieved June 12, 2002 (http://www.fundersonline.org/orpheusprofile.asp?AN=CRBF001).

"First Latin American pilgrimage set for Summer '64." 1963. *News and Views,* November, pp. 1.

Fisher, Meredith and Ruth B. Margolin. 1989. "NFTY at Fifty: Looking Back." *Ani V'Atah,* February 21, pp. 4-5.

Fishkoff, Sue. 1992. "Program Aims to Bring More US Teenagers Here." *Jerusalem Post,* November 20, p. A3. Retrieved June 7, 2002 (http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/jpost/).

Foundation Center. 2002. "Foundation Finder: The Judy and Michael Steinhardt Foundation." New York: The Foundation Center, Retrieved June 13, 2002 (http://fdncenter.org/cgi-bin/findershow.cgi?id=STEI070).

Gann-Perkal, Lisa. 1996. "The American Zionist Youth Foundation." *Jerusalem Post,* January 8. Retrieved June 7, 2002 (http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/jpost/).

"Get ready for USY summer... now!" 1968. *News and Views,* Fall, pp. 4.

"Go in peace! *Tzeitchem leshalom!* Safe journey to our USY pilgrims." 1958. *News and Views,* July, pp. 1.

"Go to Israel in 1965." 1964. *News and Views,* December, pp. 3.

Hashachar. 1941. Vol. 1(1, December). New York: National Young Judaea. Hadassah Archives at AJHS, RG 17, Box 1.

"Hava Dedication Spurs H.E.D. Responses." 1951. *The Senior,* May, pp. 1.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Hendel, Tammi and Sherry Steinberg. 1951. "Our Israeli Adventure." *The Senior,* October, p. 4.

Henry, Marilyn. 1995. "Jewish Agency Closing AZYF." *Jerusalem Post,* December 21, p. 12. Retrieved June 7, 2002 (http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/jpost/).

Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life. 2001. "Israel 2001." Washington, DC: Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, Retrieved October 12, 2001 (http://www.israel2001.com).

Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life. 2002. "Millennials Trip: Graduating Seniors Itinerary." Washington, DC: Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, Retrieved July 1, 2002 (http://israel.hillel.org/trips/b_itin_seniors.html).

"Israel Experience Head Office Moves to Toronto". 1996. October 3, p. 20. Retrieved May 20, 2002. Available: LEXIS-NEXIS® Academic Universe (http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe).

"Israel Summer Program." 1951. *The Senior,* February, pp. 1.

"Israelis to join USY summer trips." 1968. *News and Views,* May, pp. 1.

Keller, Madelyn. 1966. "Israel Speaks..." *News and Views,* November, p. 5.

Kfar Kedem. N.d. "Profile." Hosha'aya Nazareth, Israel: Kfar Kedem, Retrieved December 10, 2001 (http://http://www.kfar-kedem.co.il/profile.htm).

Machon L'Madrichei Chutz La'Aretz Machzor 109. 2001. "Machon L'Madrichei Chutz La'Aretz Website - Course - History." Jerusalem, Israel: The Jewish Agency for Israel, Department for Jewish Zionist Education , Retrieved June 3, 2002 (http://www.jajz-ed.org.il/study/m-chul/english/Course/CourseHistory.htm).

Melitz - Centers for Jewish-Zionist Education. 1998. "Melitz." Jerusalem, Israel: Melitz - Centers for Jewish-Zionist Education, Retrieved June 4, 2002 (http://www.melitz.org.il/index.html).

"More about our Israel and European pilgrimages." 1959. *News and Views,* December, pp. 3.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

NAA. 2002. "What Is the NAA?" Metuchen, NJ: North American Alliance for Jewish Youth, Retrieved June 3, 2002 (http://www.naajewishyouth.org/html/body_who_are_we_.html).

Nativ. 2002. "Bogrei Nativ Directory." New York: United Synagogue Youth, Retrieved June 10, 2002 (http://www.usy.org/programs/nativ/directory1.asp).

Nesiya. 2002. "History of the Nesiya Institute." Beachwood, OH and Jerusalem, Israel: Nesiya, Retrieved June 12, 2002 (http://www.nesiya.org/History.htm).

News and Views. 1953-1968. Vol. I-XV. New York: United Synagogue Youth of the United Synagogue of America. United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Rapaport House, 3rd Floor.

NFTY. 1999. "NFTY in Israel 1999: 'Your youth shall see visions'." Program brochure.

------. 2001. "NFTY in Israel 2001: 'Your youth shall see visions'." Program brochure.

------. 1978. "NFTY in Israel for Reform Jewish youth 1978." Program brochure.

------. 1979. "NFTY in Israel for Reform Jewish youth 1979." Program brochure.

------. 1981. "NFTY in Israel for Reform Jewish youth 1981." Program brochure.

------. 1984. "NFTY in Israel for Reform Jewish youth 1984." Program brochure.

"Our Hava." 1950. *The Senior,* November, pp. 2.

"... Our Israel tour." 1951. *The Senior,* May, pp. 4.

"Our Links in Israel." 1951. *The Senior,* March, pp. 1.

"Pilgrimage set for Summer '64." 1964. *News and Views,* February, pp. 1.

"Religious Pluralism Dominant Theme at Council of Jewish Federations General Assembly". 1996. November 21, pp. 1,34. Retrieved May 20, 2002. Available: LEXIS-NEXIS® Academic Universe (http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe).

Rosenblatt, Gary. 1999. "Is It Hard Being Jewish?" *New York Jewish Week,* October 8. Retrieved May 20, 2002. Available: Shamash: The Jewish Network (http://shamash.org./listarchives/jweek/960306).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Ruskay, John. 1963. "A Pilgrim Speaks." *News and Views,* November, p. 3.

Sahr, Robert. 2002. "*CJR* Dollar Conversion Calculator." New York: *Columbia Journalism Review,* Retrieved June 3, 2002 (http://www.cjr.org/resources/inflater.asp).

Schleifer, Yigal and Ina Friedman. 2002. "Not This Year in Jerusalem." *The Jerusalem Report*, May 20, pp. 12-18.

The Senior. 1941-1952. Vol. 1-10. New York: National Young Judaea. Hadassah Archives at AJHS, RG 17, Box 1.

Shapiro, Haim. 1993. "Jewish Activists' Mission: Getting US Youth Here." *Jerusalem Post,* January 13, p. 3. Retrieved June 7, 2002 (http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/jpost/).

"Summer Israel Scholarship Plan With Tsofim Announced." 1949. *The Senior,* December, pp. 1.

"Summertime! - And the living is USY." 1965. *News and Views,* May, pp. 8.

Taglit/birthright israel. 2002. "FAQs: Who Is Behind the Birthright Israel Gift?" Tel Aviv, Israel: Taglit/birthright israel, Retrieved June 13, 2002 (http://www.birthrightisrael.org/bin/en.jsp?enPage=BlankPage&enDisplay=view&enDispWhat=Zone&enDispWho=Faqs&enZone=Faqs&channel=AboutUs#1).

Trolin, Cliff. 1964. "The Pnimiyah -- a Pilgrim's View." *News and Views,* October, p. 3.

"*Tzeitchem L'Shalom!*" 1964. *News and Views,* May, pp. 1.

United Jewish Communities. 2000. "United Jewish Communities Pledges Over $50 Million to Become Full Partner in Birthright Israel Program." *PR Newswire,* June 15. Retrieved June 17, 2002. Available: LEXIS-NEXIS® Academic Universe (http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe).

USY. 1957. "1957 ISRAEL Pilgrimage." Program brochure.

------. 1968. "The most fabulous summer of your life." Program brochure.

------. 1976. "An unforgettable summer: USY Israel Pilgrimage ." Program brochure.

------. 1999. "USY great summer escape." Program brochure.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

------. 1992. "USY Israel Pilgrimage." Program brochure.

------. 1974. "USY Israel Pilgrimage 1974: An unforgettable summer." Program brochure.

------. 1988. "USY Israel Pilgrimage 1988." Program brochure.

------. 1984. "USY Israel Pilgrimage: An unforgettable summer." Program brochure.

Vilnach, Bruce. 1964. "A Pilgrim's Comparison: Israel's New Cities and the 'Futurama'." *News and Views*, December, p. 5.

Ward, Sarah. 2000a. "Airliners of the 1950s." United Kingdom, Canada, South Africa: Airline History, Retrieved May 8, 2002 (http://airlines.afriqonline.com/aircraft/bydecade/1950.htm).

Ward, Sarah. 2000b. "El Al Israeli Airlines." United Kingdom, Canada, South Africa: Airline History, Retrieved May 8, 2002 (http://airlines.afriqonline.com/airlines/749.htm).

Weisberg, Bernard. Letter to Senior Young Judaeans, N.d. Mimeographed cover letter for 1959 Summer-in-Israel Course Application. Hadassah Archives at AJHS, *Young Judaea Collection*, RG 17, Box 1, File (Application and Correspondence 1959).

Young Judaea. 1951. "Young Judaea Course in Israel: Summer - 1951." Young Judaea, New York. Unpublished manuscript.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

REFERENCES

Annie Hall. 1977. Directed by Woody Allen. United Artists.

Ahad Ha`am. [1897] 1979. "Medinat Hayehudim Ve-'Tzarat Hayehudim'." in Ahad Ha`am, *Al Parashat Drachim* (in Hebrew), Vol. 2, edited by Yirmiyahu Frenkel. Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, Israel: DVIR Publishing House and Hotzaah Ivrit Ltd.

Alba, Richard D. 1990. *Ethnic Identity: The Transformation of White America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Amichai, Yehuda. [1986] 1992. "Tourists." Pp. 137-38 in *The Selected Poetry of Yehuda Amichai*, edited and translated by Chana Bloch and Stephen Mitchell. New York: HarperPerennial.

Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined Communities*. London, England: Verso.

Aran, Gideon. 1995. "A Mystic-Messianic Interpretation of Modern Israeli History: The Six Day War in the Religious Suture of Gush Emunim." Pp. 197-209 in *Israeli Judaism*, edited by Shlomo Deshen, Charles S. Liebman, and Moshe Shokeid. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Aron, Cindy S. 1999. *Working at Play: A History of Vacations in the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Aron, Raymond. 1970. *Main Currents in Sociological Thought*, Vol. 2, translated by Richard Howard and Helen Weaver. New York: Anchor Books.

Avineri, Shlomo. 1981. *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State*. New York: Basic Books.

Avivi, Orit. 2000. *Birthright Israel Mifgashim: A Summary of the Planning, Implementation and Evaluation of Mifgashim During Birthright Israel Programs. Executive Report: Winter Launch 1999-2000*. Jerusalem, Israel: Bronfman Mifgashim Center.

Bar-On, Mordecai. 2000. "Introduction." Pp. 1-4 in Erik H. Cohen and Eynath Cohen, *The "Israel Experience"* . Jerusalem, Israel: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies.

Bar-Shalom, Yehuda. 1998. *Encounters With the Other: An Ethnographic Study of Mifgashim Programs for Jewish Youth, Summer 1997*. Jerusalem, Israel: The Charles R. Bronfman Centre for the Israel Experience: *Mifgashim*.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Barbre, Joy W., Amy Farrell, Shirley N. Garner, Susan Geiger, Ruth-Ellen B. Joeres, Susan M. A. Lyons, Mary J. Maynes, Pamela Mittlefehldt, Riv-Ellen Prell, and Virginia Steinhagen, eds. 1989. *Interpreting Women's Lives: Feminist Theory and Personal Narratives*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press.

Barton, Allen H. 1955. "The Concept of Property-Space in Social Research." Pp. 40-53 in *The Language of Social Research: A Reader in the Methodology of Social Research*, edited by Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Morris Rosenberg. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Bass, Warren. 2002. "Support Any Friend: Kennedy, Nasser and the Origins of the U.S.-Israel Alliance." Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, Columbia University, New York, NY.

Batagelj, Vladimir and Andrej Mrvar. 2002. *Pajek*. Vers. 0.81.

Baudrillard, Jean. 1983. *Simulations*. New York: Semiotext(e).

------. [1986] 1989. *America*, translated by Chris Turner. London, England: Verso.

Beilin, Yossi. 2000. *His Brother's Keeper: Israel and Diaspora Jewry in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Schocken Books.

Belenky, Mary F., Blythe M. Clinchy, Nancy R. Goldberger, and Jill M. Tarule. 1986. *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice and Mind*. New York: Basic Books.

Bell, Catherine. 1997. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bellah, Robert N. 1967. "Civil Religion in America." *Daedalus* 96:1-21.

Bellah, Robert N., Richard Madsden, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M. Tipton. 1985. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Ben-Yehudah, Nachman. 1995. *The Masada Myth: Collective Memory and Mythmaking in Israel*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Bendix, Reinhard. 1962. *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.

Berger, Peter L. 1973. "'Sincerity and 'Authenticity' in Modern Society." *Public Interest* 31:81-90.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

------. [1969] 1990. *A Rumor of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural*. New York: Anchor Books.

------. [1967] 1990. *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. New York: Anchor Books.

Berger, Peter L. and Thomas Luckmann. 1967. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Anchor Books.

Boorstin, Daniel J. [1961] 1985. *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*. New York: Atheneum.

Borgatti, Stephen P. and Martin G. Everett. 1992. "Notions of Position in Social Network Analysis." *Sociological Methodology* 22:1-35.

Borgatti, Steven P., M. P. Everett, and Linton C. Freeman. 1999. *UCINET V for Windows: Software for Social Network Analysis*. Natick: Analytic Technologies.

Bowman, Glenn. 1992. "Pilgrim Narratives of Jerusalem and the Holy Land: A Study in Ideological Distortion." Pp. 149-68 in *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, edited by Alan Morinis. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Bruner, Edward M. 1991. "Transformation of Self in Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research* 18:238-50.

------. 1994. "Abraham Lincoln As Authentic Reproduction: A Critique of Postmodernism." *American Anthropologist* 96:397-415.

Bruner, Jerome. 1986. *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bryk, Anthony S. and Stephen W. Raudenbush. 1992. *Hierarchical Linear Models: Applications and Data Analysis Methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Bubis, Gerald B. and Lawrence E. Marks. 1975. *Changes in Jewish Identification: A Comparative Study of a Teen Age Israel Camping Trip, a Counselor-in-Training Program, and a Teen Age Service Camp*. Los Angeles, CA: Florence G. Heller - JWB Research Center in cooperation with the Jewish Community Centers Association.

Buckholdt, David R. and Jaber F. Gubrium. 1979. *Caretakers: Treating Emotionally Disturbed Children*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Bush, Vannevar. 1945. "As We May Think." *Atlantic Monthly* 176:101-8. Retrieved May 10, 2002. Available: (http://www.theatlantic.com/unbound/flashbks/computer/bushf.htm).

Central Conference of American Rabbis. 1997. "Declaration of Principles: 1885 Pittsburgh Conference." New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, Retrieved November 20, 2001 (http://www.ccarnet.org/platforms/pittsburgh.html).

------. 1999. "The Guiding Principles of Reform Judaism: Columbus -- 1937." New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, Retrieved November 20, 2001 (http://www.ccarnet.org/platforms/columbus.html).

------. 2000. "A Statement of Principles for Reform Judaism." New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, Retrieved November 20, 2001 (http://www.ccarnet.org/platforms/principles.html).

Charmé, Stuart Z. 2000. "Varieties of Authenticity in Contemporary Jewish Identity." *Jewish Social Studies* 6:133-55.

------. 2001. "The Construction of Gender Traditions at the Western Wall in Jerusalem." Paper presented at the 33rd Annual Meetings of the Association for Jewish Studies, December 18, Washington, DC.

Chase, Susan E. 1995. *Ambiguous Empowerment: The Work Narratives of Women School Superintendents*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

Chazan, Barry. 1994. "The Israel Trip: A New Form of Jewish Education." Pp. 1-26 in *Youth Trips to Israel: Rationale and Realization*. New York: CRB Foundation and the Mandell L. Berman Jewish Heritage Center at JESNA.

------. 1997. *Does the Teen Israel Experience Make a Difference?* New York: Israel Experience, Inc.

------. 1999. "Update on the Educational Activities of Birthright Israel." CRB Foundation, Jerusalem, Israel. Unpublished manuscript.

------. 2001. "*Birthright Israel*: A 'Mega-Experiment' in Jewish Education." Paper presented at the 33rd Annual Meetings of the Association for Jewish Studies, December 16, Washington, DC.

Clifford, James and George E. Marcus, eds. 1986. *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cohen, Erik. 1972. "Toward a Sociology of International Tourism." *Social Research* 39:164-82.

------. 1979. "A Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences." *Sociology* 13:179-201.

------. 1984. "The Sociology of Tourism." *Annual Review of Sociology* 10:373-92.

------. 1988. "Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research* 15:371-86.

------. 1992. "Pilgrimage and Tourism: Convergence and Divergence." Pp. 47-61 in *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, edited by Alan Morinis. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Cohen, Erik H. 1993. *The North American Participants of the 1993 Summer Israel Experience Programs of the Youth and Hechalutz Department, an Evaluation Survey*. Jerusalem, Israel: JAFI Youth and Hechalutz Department, The Joint Authority for Jewish Zionist Education.

------. 1994. *Toward a Strategy of Excellence: The Participants of the Israel Experience Short-Term Programs Summer/1993- Winter/1994*. Jerusalem, Israel: The Youth and Hechalutz Department and the Joint Authority for Jewish Zionist Education.

------. 1995a. *The Participants of the Israel Experience Short-Term Programs: Summer 1994*. Jerusalem, Israel: JAFI Youth and Hechalutz Department, the Joint Authority for Jewish Zionist Education.

------. 1995b. *The Summer 1993 Israel Experience American Alumni: A Follow-Up Survey*. Jerusalem, Israel: JAFI Youth and Hechalutz Department, the Joint Authority for Jewish Zionist Education.

------. 1997. *Educational Shlihut: An International Systemic and Policy Analysis*. Jerusalem, Israel: The Joint Authority for Jewish Zionist Education.

Cohen, Erik H. and Eynath Cohen. 2000. *Ha-Chavayah Ha-Yisraelit* (in Hebrew). Jerusalem, Israel: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies.

Cohen, Erik H. and Ariela Keysar. 1993. *The 1992 Summer Israel Experience Educational Programs*. Jerusalem, Israel: CRB Foundation and Mandel Associated Foundations.

Cohen, Jere, Lawrence E. Hazelrigg, and Whitney Pope. 1975. "De-Parsonizing Weber: A Critique of Parsons' Interpretation of Weber's Sociology." *American Sociological Review* 40:229-41.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cohen, Shaye. 1982. "Masada: Literary Tradition, Archaeological Remains, and the Credibility of Josephus." *Journal of Jewish Studies* 32:385-405.

Cohen, Steven M. 1986. *Jewish Travel to Israel: Incentives and Inhibitions Among US and Canadian Teenagers and Young Adults*. Jerusalem, Israel: Jewish Education Committee of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

------. 1988. *American Assimilation or Jewish Revival*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

------. 1991a. *Committed Zionists and Curious Tourists: Travel to Israel Among Canadian Jewish Youth*. Jerusalem, Israel and Montreal, Canada: CRB Foundation.

------. 1991b. *Israel Travel Program for Canadian Youth: Levels of Participation and Cost for 1989 and 1990*. Jerusalem, Israel and Montreal, Canada: CRB Foundation.

Cohen, Steven M. and Arnold M. Eisen. 2000. *The Jew Within: Self, Family and Community in America*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press.

Cohen, Steven M. and Susan Wall. 1992. *The Good Trip*. Montreal, Canada: CRB Foundation.

------. 1994. "Excellence in Youth Trips to Israel." Pp. 1-66 in *Youth Trips to Israel: Rationale and Realization*. New York: CRB Foundation and the Mandell L. Berman Jewish Heritage Center at JESNA.

Coleman, James S. 1961. *The Adolescent Society*. New York: Free Press.

Crang, Mike. 1996. "Magic Kingdom or a Quixotic Quest for Authenticity." *Annals of Tourism Research* 23:415-31.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. 1975. *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety: The Experience of Play and Work in Games*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

------. 1988. "Introduction." Pp. 3-14 in *Optimal Experience: Psychological Studies of Flow in Consciousness*, edited by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Isabella S. Csikszentmihalyi. New York: Cambridge University Press.

------. 1990. *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly and Isabella S. Csikszentmihalyi, eds. 1988. *Optimal Experience: Psychological Studies of Flow in Consciousness*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly and Reed Larson. 1984. *Being Adolescent: Conflict and Growth in the Teenage Years*. New York: Basic Books.

Culler, J. 1981. "Semiotics of Tourism." *American Journal of Semiotics* 1:127-40.

Daniel, Yvonne P. 1996. "Tourism Dance Performances: Authenticity and Creativity." *Annals of Tourism Research* 23:780-797.

Danzger, M. H. 1989. *Returning to Tradition: The Contemporary Revival of Orthodox Judaism*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Davie, Grace. 1993. "'You'Ll Never Walk Alone': The Anfield Pilgrimage." Pp. 201-19 in *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture*, edited by Ian Reader and Tony Walter. London, England: The Macmillan Press, Ltd.

Dayne, Dorian. 2001. "Birthright Awakening." *New Jersey Jewish News - Metrowest*, p. 7.

Deshen, Shlomo, Charles S. Liebman, and Moshe Shokeid, eds. 1995. *Israeli Judaism*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Don-Yehiya, Eliezer. 1995. "Hanukkah and the Myth of the Maccabees in Ideology and Society." Pp. 303-21 in *Israeli Judaism*, edited by Shlomo Deshen, Charles S. Liebman, and Moshe Shokeid. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Durkheim, Emile. [1897] 1966. *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*, translated by John A. Spaulding and George Simpson. New York: Free Press.

------. [1895] 1982. *The Rules of Sociological Method*. New York: Free Press.

------. [1893] 1984. *The Division of Labor in Society*, translated by W. D. Halls. New York: Free Press.

------. [1912] 1995. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, translated by Karen E. Fields. New York: Free Press.

Eco, Umberto. 1986. *Travels in Hyperreality*, translated by William Weaver. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers.

Eisen, Arnold M. 1986. *Galut: Modern Jewish Reflections on Homelessness and Homecoming*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Elazar, Daniel J. and Andrea S. Arbel, eds. 1994. *Understanding the Jewish Agency: A Handbook,* 3rd ed. Jerusalem, Israel: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

Elder, Charles D. and Roger W. Cobb. 1983. *The Political Uses of Symbols.* New York: Longman.

Ely, Margot, Ruth Vinz, Maryann Downing, and Margaret Anzul. 1997. *On Writing Qualitative Research: Living by Words.* London, England: Falmer Press.

Ezzy, Douglas. 1998. "Theorizing Narrative Identity: Symbolic Interactionism and Hermeneutics." *Sociological Quarterly* 39:239-43. Retrieved December 28, 2001. Available: EBSCO*host* database (Academic Search Elite) (http://search.epnet.com.).

Fein, Leonard. 1988. *Where Are We? The Inner Life of America's Jews.* New York: Harper and Row.

Feldman, Jackie. 2000. "National Identity and Ritual Construction of Israeli Youth Pilgrimages to Poland." *Neue Sammlung* 40:499-517.

Fields, Karen E. 1995. "Religion As an Eminently Social Thing." Pp. xvii-lxxiii in Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life.* New York: The Free Press.

Fischer, Michael M. J. 1986. "Ethnicity and the Post-Modern Arts of Memory." Pp. 194-233 in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography,* edited by James Clifford and George E. Marcus. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Fisher, Rachel E. 1999. "A Place in History: Genealogy, Jewish Identity, Modernity." Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Religion, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA.

Freedman, Samuel G. 2000. *Jew Vs. Jew: The Struggle for the Soul of American Jewry.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Friedman, Murray and Albert D. Chernin, eds. 1999. *A Second Exodus: The American Movement to Free Soviet Jews.* Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press.

Friedman, Thomas L. 1989. *From Beirut to Jerusalem.* New York: Anchor Books.

Gaines, Donna. 1998. *Teenage Wasteland: Suburbia's Dead End Kids.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Gans, Herbert J. 1958. "The Origin and Growth of a Jewish Community in the Suburbs: A Study of the Jews of Park Forest." Pp. 205-48 in *The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group*, edited by Marshall Sklare. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

------. 1979. "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2:1-20.

------. 1994. "Symbolic Ethnicity and Symbolic Religiosity: Towards a Comparison of Ethnic and Religious Acculturation." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17:577-92.

Gergen, Kenneth J. and Mary M. Gergen. 1986. "Narrative Form and the Construction of Psychological Science." Pp. 22-44 in *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct*, edited by Theodore R. Sarbin. New York: Praeger Publishers.

Glass, Ira. 1996. "Simulated Worlds." *This American Life*. Chicago, IL: The WBEZ Alliance, Inc., and Ira Glass. First radio broadcast, October 11, 1996. Retrieved December 31, 2001 (http://www.thislife.org/ra/38.ram).

Glazer, Nathan. 1958. "The American Jew and the Attainment of Middle-Class Rank: Some Trends and Explanations." Pp. 138-46 in *The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group*, edited by Marshall Sklare. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Anchor Books.

------. 1961. *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.

Gold, Kenneth M. 2002. *School's in: The History of Summer Education in American Public Schools*. New York: Peter Lang.

Gold, Steven J. and Bruce A. Phillips. 1996. "Israelis in the United States." Pp. 51-101 in *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 96.

Goldberg, Harvey E. 1995. "A Summer on a NFTY Safari 1994: An Ethnographic Perspective." CRB Foundation, Jerusalem, Israel. Unpublished manuscript.

Goldberg, J. J. 1996. *Jewish Power: Inside the American Jewish Establishment*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Goldfarb Consultants. 1991. *Attitudes Towards Travel to Israel Among Jewish Adults and Jewish Youth.* Jerusalem, Israel: CRB Foundation.

Goldscheider, Calvin. 1986. *Jewish Continuity and Change: Emerging Patterns in America.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Goldscheider, Calvin and Alan S. Zuckerman. 1986. *The Transformation of the Jews.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Goren, Arthur A. 1997. "Celebrating Zion in America." Pp. 41-59 in *Encounters With the 'Holy Land': Place, Past and Future in American Jewish Culture,* edited by Jeffrey Shandler and Beth S. Wenger. Philadelphia, PA: National Museum of American Jewish History; The Center for Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania; and the University of Pennsylvania Library in association with Brandeis University Press.

Graburn, Nelson H. H. [1977] 1989. "Tourism: The Sacred Journey." Pp. 21-36 in *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism,* edited by Valene L. Smith. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Grant, Lisa D. 2000a. "Planned and Enacted Curriculum Stories on a Congregational Israel Trip." Unpublished manuscript.

------. 2000b. "The Role of Mentoring in Enhancing Experience of a Congregational Israel Trip." Paper presented at the 14th Annual Meetings of the Network for Research in Jewish Education, June 4-6, New York.

Greenbaum, Michael B. 1997. "The Finkelstein Era." in *Tradition Renewed: A History of the Jewish Theological Seminary,* Vol. 1, edited by Jack Wertheimer. New York: JTS Publications, Retrieved May 8, 2002 (http://learn.jtsa.edu/topics/reading/bookexc/tradren/greenbaumh.shtml).

Greenwood, D. J. 1977. "Culture by the Pound: an Anthropological Perspective on Tourism As Cultural Commoditization." Pp. 129-39 in *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism,* edited by Valene L. Smith. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Grumet, Madeleine R. 1991. "The Politics of Personal Knowledge." Pp. 67-77 in *Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education,* edited by Carol Witherell and Nel Noddings. New York: Teachers College Press.

Gubrium, Jaber F. 1986. *Oldtimers and Alzheimer's: The Descriptive Organization of Senility.* Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Gubrium, Jaber F. and James A. Holstein. 1998. "Narrative Practice and the Coherence of Personal Stories." *Sociological Quarterly* 39:163-87. Retrieved December 28, 2001. Available: EBSCO*host* database (Academic Search Elite)
(http://search.epnet.com).

Hakimian, Leah E. 1978. "Extent and Nature of Change in Selected American High School Students As a Result of Participation in Israel Summer Programs." Ph.D. dissertation, Saint Louis University, Saint Louis, MO.

Halkin, Hillel. 1977. *Letters to an American Jewish Friend: A Zionist's Polemic.* Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society.

Halpern, Ben. [1956] 1983. *The American Jew: A Zionist Analysis.* New York: Schocken Books.

Handler, Richard and William Saxton. 1988. "Dyssimulation: Reflexivity, Narrative, and the Quest for Authenticity in 'Living History'." *Cultural Anthropology* 3:242-60.

Harkin, Michael. 1995. "Modernist Anthropology and Tourism of the Authentic." *Annals of Tourism Research* 22:650-670.

Harris, Judith R. 1998. *The Nurture Assumption: Why Children Turn Out the Way They Do.* New York: Free Press.

Heidegger, Martin. [1926] 1962. *Being and Time.* New York: Harper and Row.

Heilman, Samuel C. 1992. *Defenders of the Faith: Inside Ultra-Orthodox Jewry.* New York: Schocken Books.

------. 1995. "A Young Judea Israel Discovery Tour: The View From Inside." CRB Foundation, Jerusalem, Israel. Unpublished manuscript.

Helle, Anite P. 1991. "Reading Women's Autobiographies: A Map of Reconstructed Knowledge." Pp. 48-66 in *Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education,* edited by Carol Witherell and Nel Noddings. New York: Teachers College Press.

Helmreich, William. N.d. *The March of the Living: A Follow - Up Study of Its Long Range Impact and Effects* . New York: March of the Living.

Herman, Simon N. 1977. *Jewish Identity: A Social Psychological Perspective.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Hertzberg, Arthur. [1959] 1997. *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader.* Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society.

Herzog, Ze'ev. 1999. "Deconstructing the Walls of Jericho." *Ha'Aretz,* October 29. Retrieved April 30, 2002. Available: Biblical Archaeological Society (http://www.bib-arch.org/bswbBreakingIllSpecial1.html).

Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life. 2000. *Hillel's Birthright Israel: The Tour.* Washington, DC: Hillel.

Hine, Thomas. 1999. *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager.* New York: Bard Books.

Hochman, Neta. 2000. *Lizxol LaMerxaqim.* Tel Aviv, Israel: Sifriyat Poalim.

Hochstein, Annette. 1986. *The Israeli Experience: Educational Programs in Israel.* Jerusalem, Israel: Jewish Education Committee, Jewish Agency for Israel.

Hollander, Paul. 1981. *Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Horowitz, Bethamie. 1999. *Indicators of Jewish Identity: Developing a Conceptual Framework for Understanding American Jewry.* New York: Mandel Foundation.

------. 2000. *Connections and Journeys: Assessing Critical Opportunities for Enhancing Jewish Identity.* New York: UJA-Federation of New York.

Horwitz, Tony. 1998. *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches From the Unfinished Civil War.* New York: Vintage Book.

Hughes, George. 1995. "Authenticity in Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research* 22:781-803.

Israel, Sherry and David Mittelberg. 1998. *The Israel Visit -- Not Just for Teens: The Characteristics and Impact of College-Age Travel to Israel.* Waltham, MA: The Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

James, William. [1902] 1961. *The Varieties of Religious Experience.* New York: Collier Books, Macmillan Publishing Company.

Joselit, Jenna W. 1994. *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture, 1880-1950.* New York: Hill and Wang.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Kadushin, Charles. 1966. "The Friends and Supporters of Psychotherapy: On Social Circles in Urban Life." *American Sociological Review* 31:786-802.

------. 2001. "Notes on Authenticity." Unpublished manuscript.

Kadushin, Charles, Shaul Kelner, and Leonard Saxe with Archie Brodsky, Amy Adamczyk, and Rebecca Stern. 2000. *Being a Jewish Teenager in America: Trying to Make It.* Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

Kadushin, Max. [1938] 2001. *Organic Thinking: A Study in Rabbinic Thought.* Binghamton, NY: Global Publications.

------. [1952] 2001. *The Rabbinic Mind.* Binghamton, NY: Global Publications.

Kafka, R. R., Perry London, S. Bandler, and Naava L. Frank. 1990. *The Impact of 'Summer in Israel' Experiences on North American Jewish Teenagers.* Montreal, Canada: CRB Foundation.

Karpel, Dalia. 1999. "It's Insignificant." *Ha'Aretz,* October 29. Retrieved April 30, 2002. Available: Biblical Archaeological Society (http://www.bib-arch.org/bswbBreakingIllSpecial1a.html#b).

Kaufmann, Lori B. and Haim Aronovitz. 1986. *The Israel Experience Project: Resource Booklet.* Jerusalem, Israel: Jewish Education Committee, Jewish Agency for Israel.

Kelner, Shaul. 1996. "Revised Analysis of PUMS Data for Second-Generation Israeli Americans in New York City." Department of Sociology, Graduate School and University Center, City University of New York , New York, NY. Unpublished manuscript.

------. 2001a. "Authentic Sights and Authentic Narratives on *Taglit.*" Paper presented at the 33rd Annual Meetings of the Association for Jewish Studies, December 16, Washington, DC.

------. 2001b. "Narrative Construction of Authenticity in Pilgrimage Touring." Paper presented at the 96th Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association, August 19, Anaheim, CA.

Kelner, Shaul, Charles Kadushin, and Leonard Saxe. Forthcoming. *Birthright Israel Evaluation: The Second Cohort.* Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Kelner, Shaul, Leonard Saxe, Charles Kadushin, Rachel Canar, Matthew Lindholm, Hal Ossman, Jennifer Perloff, Benjamin Phillips, Rishona Teres, Minna Wolf, and Meredith Woocher. 2000. *Making Meaning: Participants' Experience of Birthright Israel*. Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

King, Christine. 1993. "His Truth Goes Marching on: Elvis Presley and the Pilgrimage to Graceland." Pp. 92-104 in *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture*, edited by Ian Reader and Tony Walter. London, England: The Macmillan Press, Ltd.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. 1998. *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums and Heritage*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

------. 2000. "Learning From Ethnography: Reflections on the Nature and Efficacy of Youth Tours to Israel." CRB Foundation, Jerusalem, Israel. Unpublished manuscript.

Kosmin, Barry A., Sidney Goldstein, Joseph Waksberg, Nava Lerer, Ariela Keysar, and Jeffrey Scheckner. 1991. *Highlights of the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey*. New York: Council of Jewish Federations.

Kramer, Judith R. and Seymour Leventman. 1961. *Children of the Gilded Ghetto: Conflict Resolutions of Three Generations of American Jews*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Landow, George P. 1989. "Hypertext in Literary Education, Criticism and Scholarship." *Computers and the Humanities* 23:173-98.

------. 1992. *Hypertext: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F. 1972. *Qualitative Analysis*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

------. 1993a. "Classifying and Building Typologies." Pp. 158-71 in *On Social Research and Its Language*, edited by Raymond Boudon. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

------. 1993b. *On Social Research and Its Language*, edited by Raymond Boudon. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F. and Merton, Robert K. [1950] 1972. "A Professional School for Training in Social Research." Pp. 361-91 in Paul F. Lazarsfeld, *Qualitative Analysis: Historical and Critical Essays*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F. and Morris Rosenberg, eds. 1955. *The Language of Social Research: A Reader in the Methodology of Social Research.* Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Le Bon, Gustave. [1895] 1977. *The Crowd.* New York: Penguin Books.

Lett, James. 1983. "Ludic and Liminoid Aspects of Charter Yacht Tourism in the Caribbean." *Annals of Tourism Research* 10:35-56.

Levenberg, Jay. 1992. *Marketing Trips to Israel: Recommendations of the Israel Experience Marketing Project.* Jerusalem, Israel: CRB Foundation.

Levi-Strauss, Claude. 1963. *Totemism,* translated by Rodney Needham. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Levi-Yanovitz, Dafna. 1999. "Herzog Is Almost in the Consensus." *Ha'Aretz,* October 29. Retrieved April 30, 2002. Available: Biblical Archaeological Society (http://www.bib-arch.org/bswbBreakingIllSpecial1a.html).

Levinson, Tamar A. and Susan Zoline. 1997. "Impact of Summer Trip to Israel on the Self-Esteem of Jewish Adolescents." *Journal of Psychology and Judaism* 21:87-119.

Levy, Sholmit, Hanna Levinsohn, and Elihu Katz. 1993. *Beliefs, Observances, and Social Interaction Among Israeli Jews.* Jerusalem, Israel: AVI CHAI.

Lewin, Kurt. 1958. "Group Decision and Social Change." Pp. 197-211 in *Readings in Social Psychology,* 3rd ed., edited by Eleanor E. Maccoby, Theodore M. Newcomb, and Eugene L. Hartley. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Lewis, Albert. 1991. "Looking Back at USY Israel Pilgrimage." *Hamadrich: A Journal of Jewish Education* 8:13-15.

Liebler, Isi. 1999. "Birthright Israel: Too Quick and Superficial." *New York Jewish Week,* November 19. Retrieved October 18, 2001 (http://www.thejewishweek.com/top/editletcontent.php3?artid=554).

Liebman, Charles S. and Eliezer Don-Yehiya. 1983. *Civil Religion in Israel: Traditional Judaism and Political Culture in the Jewish State.* Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Likhovski, Eli. 1994. "Legal Status of the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Israel." Pp. 133-35 in *Understanding the Jewish Agency: A Handbook*, 3 ed., edited by Daniel J. Elazar and Andrea S. Arbel. Jerusalem, Israel: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

Lipset, Seymour M. and Earl Raab. 1995. *Jews and the New American Scene.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

London, Perry and Alissa Hirshfeld. 1989. "Youth Programs in Israel: What the Findings Mean." *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 66:87-91.

Lukes, Steven. 1973. *Emile Durkheim: His Life and Work.* Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books.

MacCannell, Dean. 1973. "Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings." *American Journal of Sociology* 79:589-603.

------. [1976] 1989. *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class.* New York: Schocken Books.

Maccoby, Eleanor E., Theodore M. Newcomb, and Eugene L. Hartley, eds. 1958. *Readings in Social Psychology,* 3rd ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Maines, David R. 1993. "Narrative's Moment and Sociology's Phenomena: Toward a Narrative Sociology." *Sociological Quarterly* 34:17-38. Retrieved December 28, 2001. Available: EBSCO*host* database (Academic Search Elite)
(http://search.epnet.com.).

Makler, Anita. 1991. "Imagining History: 'a Good Story and a Well-Formed Argument'." Pp. 29-47 in *Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education,* edited by Carol Witherell and Nel Noddings. New York: Teachers College Press.

Males, Mike A. 1996. *Scapegoat Generation: America's War on Adolescents.* Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press.

------. 1999. *Framing Youth: Ten Myths About the Next Generation.* Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press.

Margulies, Sylvia R. 1968. *The Pilgrimage to Russia: The Soviet Union and the Treatment of Foreigners, 1924-1937.* Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Martin, Wallace. 1986. *Recent Theories of Narrative*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Marx, Karl. [1844] 1932. "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844." in *Marx and Engels Collected Works 1843-44*, Vol. 3. Moscow, USSR: Progress Publishers, Retrieved April 11, 2002 (http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/comm.htm).

------. [1867] 1967. *Capital*, Vol. 1, edited by Frederick Engels. New York: International Publishers.

------. [1844] 1978. "The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844." Pp. 66-125 in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed., edited by Robert C. Tucker. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. [1848] 1978. "Manifesto of the Communist Party." Pp. 469-500 in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed., edited by Robert C. Tucker. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

------. 1978. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed., edited by Robert C. Tucker. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

Maslow, Abraham H. 1968a. "Peak-Experiences As Acute Identity-Experiences." Pp. 103-14 in Abraham H. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.

------. 1968b. *Toward a Psychology of Being*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.

Massing, Michael. 2000. "Should Jews Be Parochial?" *The American Prospect*, November 6, pp. 30-35.

McAdams, Dan P. 1985. *Power, Intimacy and the Life Story: Personological Inquiries into Identity*. New York: Guilford Press.

------. 1993. *The Stories We Live by: Personal Myths and the Making of the Self*. New York: Morrow.

McAdams, Dan P., Ann Diamond, Ed de St. Aubin, and Elizabeth Mansfield. 1997. "Stories of Commitment: The Psychosocial Construction of Generative Lives." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 72:678-94.

McGann, Jerome J. 1992. *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*. Charlottesville, NC and London, England: University Press of Virginia.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

------. 1996. "Radiant Textuality." *Victorian Studies* 39:379-89.

McIntosh, Alison J. and Richard C. Prentice. 1999. "Affirming Authenticity: Consuming Cultural Heritage." *Annals of Tourism Research* 26:589-612.

Mead, George H. [1934] 1967. *Mind, Self and Society*, edited by Charles W. Morris. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Meir, Yitzhak. 2001. "*Hachavayah Hareshumah Al Shmeinu*" (in Hebrew). *Haaretz*, June 14. Retrieved June 14, 2001 (http://www.haaretz.co.il).

Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Jehuda Reinharz, eds. 1980. *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Merton, Robert K. 1967a. "The Bearing of Empirical Research on Sociological Theory." Pp. 156-71 in Robert K. Merton, *On Theoretical Sociology: Five Essays, Old and New*. New York: Free Press.

------. 1967b. "On the History and Systematics of Sociological Theory." Pp. 1-37 in Robert K. Merton, *On Theoretical Sociology: Five Essays, Old and New*. New York: Free Press.

------. 1967c. *On Theoretical Sociology: Five Essays, Old and New*. New York: Free Press.

Miall, David S. 1999. "Trivializing or Liberating? The Limits of Hypertext Theorizing." *Mosaic* 32:157-71. Retrieved January 4, 2002. Available: OCLC FirstSearch (http://FirstSearch.oclc.com).

Mills, C. W. 1940. "Situated Actions and Vocabularies of Motive." *American Sociological Review* 5:904-13.

Mishler, Elliot G. 1986. "The Analysis of Interview-Narratives." Pp. 233-55 in *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct*, edited by Theodore R. Sarbin. New York: Praeger Publishers.

Mitchell, Richard G. J. 1988. "Sociological Implications of the Flow Experience." Pp. 36-59 in *Optimal Experience: Psychological Studies of Flow in Consciousness*, edited by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Isabella S. Csikszentmihalyi. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mitchell, Stephen A. 1993. *Hope and Dread in Psychoanalysis*. USA: Basic Books.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Mittelberg, David. 1994. *The Israel Visit and Jewish Identification.* New York: The Institute on American Jewish - Israeli Relations of the American Jewish Committee.

------. 1999. *The Israel Connection and American Jews.* Westport, CT: Praeger.

Moore, Deborah D. 1994. *To the Golden Cities: Pursuing the American Jewish Dream in Miami and L.A.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Morinis, Alan. 1992a. "Introduction: The Territory of the Anthropology of Pilgrimage." Pp. 1-28 in *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage,* edited by Alan Morinis. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

------, ed. 1992b. *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Narayan, Kirin. 1991. ""According to Their Feelings": Teaching and Healing With Stories." Pp. 113-35 in *Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education,* edited by Carol Witherell and Nel Noddings. New York: Teachers College Press.

Nasaw, David. 1981. *Schooled to Order: A Social History of Public Schooling in the United States.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Neusner, Jacob. 1981. *Stranger at Home: "The Holocaust," Zionism and American Judaism.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

------. 1985. *Israel in America: A Too-Comfortable Exile?* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Nisbet, Robert A. 1974. *The Sociology of Emile Durkheim.* New York: Oxford University Press.

NOVA Research Company. 1998. *AFTER 3.02 -- A Framework of Tools for Ethnographic Research.* Bethesda, MD: NOVA Research Company.

Orbuch, Terri L. 1997. "People's Accounts Count: The Sociology of Accounts." *Annual Review of Sociology* 23:455-78.

Parsons, Talcott. [1937] 1968a. *The Structure of Social Action,* Vol. 1. New York: Free Press.

------. [1937] 1968b. *The Structure of Social Action,* Vol. 2. New York: Free Press.

------. [1964] 1991. "Introduction." Pp. xxix-lxxvii in Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Pearce, Philip L. and Gianna M. Moscardo. 1986. "The Concept of Authenticity in Tourist Experiences." *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology* 22:121-32.

Percy, Walker. 1982. "The Loss of the Creature." Pp. 46-63 in *The Message in the Bottle: How Queer Man Is, How Queer Language Is, and What One Has to Do With the Other*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Phinney, Jean S. 1990. "Ethnic Identity in Adolescents and Adults: Review of Research." *Psychological Bulletin* 108:499-514.

Pickering, W. S. F. 1975. *Durkheim on Religion: A Selection of Readings With Bibliographies*. London, England: Routledge.

Polkinghorne, Donald E. 1988. *Narrative Knowing and the Human Science*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Porath, Zipporah. 1987. *Letters From Jerusalem: 1947-1948*. Jerusalem, Israel: Association of Americans and Canadians in Israel.

Post, Marlene. 1999. "Don't Bash Birthright." *Jerusalem Report*, December 20, p. 54.

Potter, Aaron P. 1998. "Centripetal Textuality." *Victorian Studies* 41:593-619. Retrieved January 4, 2002. Available: OCLC FirstSearch (http://FirstSearch.oclc.org).

Prell, Riv-Ellen. 1999. *Fighting to Become Americans: Jews, Gender, and the Anxiety of Assimilation*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

-----. N.d. "Post-War American Jewish Youth and the Redemption of Judaism." Unpublished manuscript.

Preston, James J. 1992. "Spiritual Magnetism: an Organizing Principle for the Study of Pilgrimage." Pp. 31-46 in *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, edited by Alan Morinis. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Pretes, Michael. 1995. "Postmodern Tourism: The Santa Claus Industry." *Annals of Tourism Research* 22:1-15.

Putnam, Robert D. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Rawidowicz, Simon. 1986a. "Israel: The Ever-Dying People." Pp. 53-63 in Simon Rawidowicz, *Israel: The Ever Dying People and Other Essays*, edited by Benjamin C. I. Ravid. Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

------. 1986b. "On the Concept of Galut." Pp. 96-117 in Simon Rawidowicz, *Israel: The Ever-Dying People and Other Essays*, edited by Benjamin C. I. Ravid (tr. Benjamin C.I. Ravid and Stephen Simons). Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

------. 1986c. *Israel: The Ever-Dying People and Other Essays*, edited by Benjamin C. I. Ravid. Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Reader, Ian. 1993a. "Conclusions." Pp. 220-246 in *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture*, edited by Ian Reader and Tony Walter. London, England: The Macmillan Press, Ltd.

------. 1993b. "Dead to the World: Pilgrims in Shikoku." Pp. 107-36 in *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture*, edited by Ian Reader and Tony Walter. London, England: The Macmillan Press, Ltd.

------. 1993c. "Introduction." Pp. 1-25 in *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture*, edited by Ian Reader and Tony Walter. London, England: The Macmillan Press, Ltd.

Reader, Ian and Tony Walter, eds. 1993. *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture*. London, England: The Macmillan Press, Ltd.

Reinharz, Jehuda, Walter Ackerman, Cindy Chazan, Tova Halbertal, David Harman, Alan Hoffman, Avraham Infeld, Simon Klarfeld, Myra Kraft, Daniel Lehmann, Alisa R. Kurshan, Marlene Post, Joseph Reimer, Bernard Steinberg, Barry Chazan, Arianna Koransky, Michael Papo, and Jonathan Woocher. 1998. *The Israel Experience in North American Jewish Education: Embracing the Challenge of Cultural Change*. New York: Youth and Education Task Force, Israel Experience, Inc.

Reinharz, Jehuda and Anita Shapira, eds. 1996. *Essential Papers on Zionism*. New York and London, England: New York University Press.

Ricoeur, Paul. 1984. *Time and Narrative*, Vol. 1, translated by Kathleen McLaughin and David Pellauer. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

------. 1985. *Time and Narrative*, Vol. 2, translated by Kathleen McLaughin and David Pellauer. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

------. 1988. *Time and Narrative*, Vol. 3, translated by Kathleen McLaughin and David Pellauer. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Ritterband, Paul and Charles Kadushin. 2000. "The Birthright Suppliers Speak Out." Unpublished manuscript.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Rolnik, Don. 1965. "A Study of Attitudes Towards Israel of American Jewish Youth Participating in a Summer Institute." Ed.D. dissertation, Department of Education, New York University, New York, NY.

Roof, Wade C. 1993. *A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation*. San Francisco, CA: Harper San Francisco.

Rose, Edward. 1960. "The English Record of a Natural Sociology." *American Sociological Review* 25:193-208.

Rosenblum, Jonathan. 2000. "Misplaced Generosity." *Jerusalem Post*, January 7, p. B9. Retrieved June 17, 2002. Available: LEXIS-NEXIS® Academic Universe (http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe).

Roth, Guenther. 1975. "Socio-Historical Model and Developmental Theory: Charismatic Community, Charisma of Reason and the Counterculture." *American Sociological Review* 40:148-57.

Roth, Guenther. 1978. "Introduction." Pp. xxxiii-cx in Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Roth, Philip. [1967] 1969. *Portnoy's Complaint*. New York: Ballantine Books, Fawcett Crest.

------. 1993. *Operation Shylock: A Confession*. New York: Vintage International.

Sales, Amy L. 1998. *Israel Experience-Is Length of Time a Critical Factor?* Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies.

------. 1999. *Israel Experience '98: Testing the Four-Week Option (Preliminary Findings)*. Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

Sales, Amy L. and Leonard Saxe with Matt Boxer and Mark I. Rosen. 2002. *"How Goodly Are Thy Tents, O Israel": Summer Camps As Jewish Socializing Experiences*. Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

Sandbothe, Mike. 1996. "INTERACTIVITY - HYPERTEXTUALITY TRANSVERSALITY: A Media-Philosophical Analysis of the Internet." Jena, Germany: Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Institut für Philosophie, Retrieved January 4, 2002 (http://www.uni-jena.de/ms/tele/e_top.html & www.uni-jena.de/ms/tele/part2.html).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Sarbin, Theodore R. 1986a. "The Narrative As a Root Metaphor for Psychology." Pp. 3-21 in *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct*, edited by Theodore R. Sarbin. New York: Praeger Publishers.

------, ed. 1986b. *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct*. New York: Praeger Publishers.

Saxe, Leonard, Charles Kadushin, Shaul Kelner, Mark I. Rosen, and Erez Yereslove. 2001. *A Mega-Experiment in Jewish Education: The Impact of Birthright Israel*. Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

------. 2002. *A Mega-Experiment in Jewish Education: The Impact of Birthright Israel*. Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

Saxe, Leonard, Charles Kadushin, Juliana Pakes, Shaul Kelner, Bethamie Horowitz, Amy L. Sales, and Archie Brodsky. 2000. *Birthright Israel Launch Evaluation: Preliminary Findings*. Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

Schanin, Norman. 1959. "Young Judaea: A Survey of a National Jewish Youth Movement in 1951-1952." Ed.D. dissertation, Department of Education, New York University, New York, NY.

Schfatya, D. 1975. *Visit in Israel of American High School Students and Its Influence on Academic Achievement and Changes in Attitude*. Jerusalem, Israel: World Zionist Organization, Department of Education and Culture.

Schweid, Eliezer. 1996. "The Rejection of the Diaspora in Zionist Thought: Two Approaches." Pp. 133-60 in *Essential Papers on Zionism*, edited by Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira. New York and London, England: New York University Press.

Scott, Marvin B. and Stanford M. Lyman. 1968. "Accounts." *American Sociological Review* 33:46-62.

Sellars, Richard W. and Tony Walter. 1993. "From Custer to Kent State: Heroes, Martyrs and the Evolution of Popular Shrines in the USA." Pp. 179-200 in *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture*, edited by Ian Reader and Tony Walter. London, England: The Macmillan Press, Ltd.

Shandler, Jeffrey and Beth S. Wenger, eds. 1997a. *Encounters With the 'Holy Land': Place, Past and Future in American Jewish Culture*. Philadelphia, PA: National Museum of American Jewish History; The Center for Judaic

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Studies, University of Pennsylvania; and the University of Pennsylvania Library in association with Brandeis University Press.

------. 1997b. "'The Site of Paradise': The Holy Land in American Jewish Imagination." Pp. 11-40 in *Encounters With the 'Holy Land': Place, Past and Future in American Jewish Culture*, edited by Jeffrey Shandler and Beth S. Wenger. Philadelphia, PA: National Museum of American Jewish History; The Center for Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania; and the University of Pennsylvania Library in association with Brandeis University Press.

Shanks, Hershel. 1999. "Herzog's Attack on the Bible Unjustified." *Ha'Aretz*, November 5. Retrieved April 30, 2002. Available: Biblical Archaeological Society (http://www.bib-arch.org/bswbBreakingIllSpecial2.html).

Sherif, Muzafer, O. J. Harvey, B. J. White, William R. Hood, and Carolyn W. Sherif. [1961] 1988. *The Robbers Cave Experiment: Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Shils, Edward. 1965. "Charisma, Order, and Status." *American Sociological Review* 30:199-213.

Silberman, Charles. 1985. *A Certain People: American Jews and Their Lives Today*. New York: Summit Books.

Simmel, Georg. 1950. *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, edited by Kurt Wolff. New York: Free Press.

------. 1955. *Conflict and the Web of Group Affiliations*, edited by Reinhard Bendix. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Sklare, Marshall. 1955. *Conservative Judaism: An American Religious Movement*. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.

------, ed. 1958. *The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group*. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.

Sklare, Marshall and Joseph Greenblum. [1967] 1979. *Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier; a Study of Group Survival in the Open Society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Smith, Valene S., ed. 1989. *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Spence, Donald P. 1986. "Narrative Smoothing and Clinical Wisdom." Pp. 211-32 in *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct*, edited by Theodore R. Sarbin. New York: Praeger Publishers.

SPSS Inc. 1999. *SPSS for Windows 10.0.5*. Chicago, IL: SPSS Inc.

Stafford, Kim R. 1991. "The Story That Saved Life." Pp. 15-28 in *Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education*, edited by Carol Witherell and Nel Noddings. New York: Teachers College Press.

Steele, Robert S. 1986. "Deconstructing Histories: Toward a Systematic Criticism of Psychological Narratives." Pp. 256-75 in *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct*, edited by Theodore R. Sarbin. New York: Praeger Publishers.

Storper-Perez, Danielle and Harvey E. Goldberg. 1994. "The Kotel: Toward an Ethnographic Portrait." *Religion* 24:209-332.

Taglit/birthright israel. 2001. "Revised Educational Standards 2001." Taglit/birthright israel, Jerusalem, Israel. Unpublished manuscript.

Tajfel, Henri and John C. Turner. 1979. "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict." in *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, edited by William G. Austin and Stephen Worchel. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

------. 1986. "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior." Pp. 7-24 in *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, edited by Stephen Worchel and William G. Austin. Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall Publishers.

Taylor, John P. 2001. "Authenticity and Sincerity in Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research* 28:7-26.

Tiryakian, Edward A. 1995. "Collective Effervescence, Social Change and Charisma: Durkheim, Weber and 1989." *International Sociology* 10:269-81. Retrieved July 17, 2002. Available: New York Public Library via ReCAP (Research Collections and Preservation Consortium) (http://recap1.princeton.edu/ArielLogin.htm).

Tobin, Gary A. 1995. *Teen Trips to Israel: Cost, Price, and Marketing*. Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Institute for Community and Religion, Brandeis University.

Treiman, Daniel. 2001. "Is Birthright Israel the Cure for What Ails Us?" *New Voices: National Jewish Student Magazine*, April, p. 1.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Trilling, Lionel. 1972. *Sincerity and Authenticity*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers.

Turner, Victor. [1969] 1982. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Turner, Victor. [1974] 1987. "Passages, Margins and Poverty: Religious Symbols of Communitas." Pp. 231-71 in Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* . Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Turner, Victor. [1974] 1987. "Pilgrimages as Social Processes." Pp. 166-230 in Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Turner, Victor and Edith Turner. 1978. *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*. New York: Columbia University Press.

U.S. National Archives and Records Administration. 2001. "Teaching With Documents Lesson Plan: The U.S. Recognition of the State of Israel." Washington, DC: NARA, Retrieved June 27, 2002 (http://http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/us_recognition_of_israel/us_recognition_of_israel.html).

Urry, John. 1990. *The Tourist Gaze*. London, England: Sage.

Van Gennep, Arnold. [1909] 1960. *The Rites of Passage*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Waller, Jo and Stephen E. G. Lea. 1998. "Seeking the Real Spain? Authenticity in Motivation." *Annals of Tourism Research* 25:110-129.

Walter, Tony. 1993. "War Grave Pilgrimage." Pp. 63-91 in *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture*, edited by Ian Reader and Tony Walter. London, England: The Macmillan Press, Ltd.

Wang, Ning. 1999. "Rethinking Authenticity in Tourism Experience." *Annals of Tourism Research* 26:349-70.

Wasserman, Stanley and Katherine Faust. 1998. *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Waters, Mary C. 1990. *Ethnic Options: Choosing Identities in America*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Weber, Max. [1930] 1958. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, translated by Talcott Parsons. New York: Scribner's Sons.

------. 1978a. *Economy and Society*, Vol. 1, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

------. 1978b. *Economy and Society*, Vol. 2, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

------. [1922] 1991. *The Sociology of Religion*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Weinfeld, Morton. 1999. "Reflections About Birthright Israel." *Canadian Jewish News*, September 30, p. 10. Retrieved June 17, 2002. Available: LEXIS-NEXIS® Academic Universe (http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe).

Weinstein, Meryle. 1998. *An Assessment of the Koret Israel Teen Trip and Summer in Israel Youth Program*. Waltham, MA: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

Wertheimer, Jack. 1993. *A People Divided: Judaism in Contemporary America*. New York: HarperCollins, Basic Books.

------. 1999. "Jewish Education in the United States." Pp. 3-115 in *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 99, edited by David Singer and Ruth R. Seldin. New York: American Jewish Committee.

Witherell, Carol. 1991. "The Self in Narrative: A Journey into Paradox." Pp. 83-95 in *Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education*, edited by Carol Witherell and Nel Noddings. New York: Teachers College Press.

Witherell, Carol and Nel Noddings, eds. 1991. *Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Wohlgelernter, Eli. 2000. "The Arrival of an Idea." *The Jerusalem Post*, January 7, p. B5ff. Retrieved June 17, 2002. Available: LEXIS-NEXIS® Academic Universe (http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe).

Woocher, Jonathan S. 1986. *Sacred Survival: The Civil Religion of American Jews*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Worchel, Stephen, J. F. Morales, Dario Paez, and Jean-Claude Deschamps, eds. 1998. *Social Identity: International Perspectives*. London, England: Sage.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Wuthnow, Robert. 1994. *Sharing the Journey: Support Groups and America's New Quest for Community*. New York: Free Press.

------. 1998. *After Heaven: Spirituality in America Since the 1950s*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

------. 1999. *Growing Up Religious: Christians and Jews and Their Journeys of Faith*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Zerubavel, Eviatar. [1981] 1985. *Hidden Rhythms: Schedules and Calendars in Social Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.