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Culture and Communication in Israel: The Transformation of Tradition

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Abstract
This paper is an introduction to a study of what 4,000 Israelis had to say about their leisure, culture, and communication. In a national survey conducted during the spring of 1970, we gathered data on a large variety of cultural activities. With respect to each of them, an effort was made to measure both supply and demand. Thus, we know for cultural events taking place outside the home which events were advertised where, and we know who attends which activities. Likewise, we studied the cultural activities that take place inside the home, paying particular attention to the effect of the introduction of television, and to the fate of the book the newest and oldest media in Israel. We try to do this within two broader contexts. One is behavioural: using the method of time-budget analysis, we have reconstructed the way in which Israelis invest time, that most scarce of human resources, over the 24-hour period of a weekday, a Friday, and a Saturday. The other context is that of attitudes and values: we discuss the functions of cultural activities and communications within the framework of attitudes towards work, leisure, the Sabbath, and holidays, and more generally, in terms of the social and psychological 'needs' that are experienced as salient by Israeli Jews, in their several social roles.

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CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION IN ISRAEL: THE TRANSFORMATION OF TRADITION

Elihu Katz

THIS paper is an introduction to a study of what 4,000 Israelis had to say about their leisure, culture, and communication. In a national survey conducted during the spring of 1970, we gathered data on a large variety of cultural activities.[1] With respect to each of them, an effort was made to measure both supply and demand. Thus, we know—for cultural events taking place outside the home—which events were advertised where, and we know who attends which activities. Likewise, we studied the cultural activities that take place inside the home, paying particular attention to the effect of the introduction of television, and to the fate of the book—the newest and oldest media in Israel. We try to do this within two broader contexts. One is behavioural: using the method of time-budget analysis, we have reconstructed the way in which Israelis invest time, that most scarce of human resources, over the 24-hour period of a weekday, a Friday, and a Saturday. The other context is that of attitudes and values: we discuss the functions of cultural activities and communications within the framework of attitudes towards work, leisure, the Sabbath, and holidays, and more generally, in terms of the social and psychological 'needs' that are experienced as salient by Israeli Jews, in their several social roles.

Since facts never speak for themselves, we sought to find a way of presenting this huge array of detailed data as a meaningful whole. Three quite different approaches suggested themselves, of which we rejected two and adopted the third.

Three approaches to ordering the data

One approach would have been to report on Israel as a small state with modest but essentially modern patterns of leisure and culture. We

can demonstrate that Israelis are not very different from the British, for example, in the proportion of the population who are outside their homes on a weekday evening, or in the number of books they read; and not so different from the French in the time they spend caring for children. A good case can be made for the contention that modern societies are becoming homogeneous in their patterns of spending leisure, and that Israel—for all its ostensible difference—is moving in the same general direction.[2]

Another way in which these findings might have been summed up is in terms of changes which are believed by some to be taking place in Israeli society today. Thus, it has become routine for journalists, some of whom are sensitive observers, to find materialism and pleasure-seeking on the increase in Israel; they suggest that officials and business men are more corruptible than before; they find more aimlessness and crime; they say tension among ethnic groups is increasing; they argue that there is a desensitizing to human suffering; and they find that the interdependence of the Jewish people is a matter of decreasing concern to young Israelis.[3]

We have rejected both those approaches. The first seems to us excessively behaviouristic and too matter-of-fact; it ignores nothing less than the long saga from which Israel arose, the short and dramatic history of its nation-building, and the imprint of both of these—Judaism and Zionism—upon its culture. To say, in behaviouristic zeal, that it resembles other small European states is to ignore its idiosyncratic meaning: where it has come from, what it is about, and the choices that lie before it.[4]

We have rejected the second approach because, while it has time perspective and is concerned with values, it is too near-sighted. It is based on a too facile romanticization of the recent past, very selectively recalled. It is based on the behaviour of very small groups and on sensational cases. Perhaps some of these indictments are correct. Indeed, our own data do give some support—though far less dramatically—to some of the allegations; for example, we find that Israeli youth are somewhat less convinced than their parents of the mutual dependence of the Jews in Israel and abroad. But this is a far cry from the radical changes that are alleged, and a finding that is counter-balanced by the essential *similarity* which characterizes the Israel-born generation and its parents even in this matter. Altogether, as we shall argue, we find very little evidence of a generation gap. Perhaps today's exceptional and sensational will at some future time prove to be the rule; perhaps the sensibilities of today's minorities are portents of those of tomorrow's majorities.[5] But for the moment, and in the absence of serious and much-needed longitudinal studies of Israeli values, we demur. We shall be unable to say that we were not warned.

We have chosen a third way. The story in our data, we think, is

neither one of small-nation normality nor of drastic demoralization, but of the transformation and secularization of tradition. Our thesis, in a word, is that the predominant patterns of leisure and culture in modern Israel are anchored in a set of traditional Jewish values which are undergoing a process of transformation. It might be better to say that these data describe both the ways in which Israeli society has incorporated traditional values in its rapid evolution, and the ways in which those values are transformed in the course of their secularization.[6] Perhaps the end result will be normality and/or demoralization, but in the meantime, it is important to see and understand the process that is at work.

The concept of secularization

Secularization is presumably one of the attributes of modernization. Nowadays, however, some observers are not so sure; others would grant only that life has become more compartmentalized, and that certain institutions are governed by sacred and others by secular, norms.[7] All agree, however, that the concept has been used in a variety of ways and merits clarification; one writer has even pleaded for a moratorium on its use.[8]

To apply the concept of secularization to Judaism is even more problematic because Judaism, from the beginning, was suffused with secular elements. It is, first of all, a national religion, albeit with a universalistic God and a universalistic ethic. It is, moreover, preoccupied with history, making it all the more difficult to decide, for example, which elements of which holidays are sacred or secular. Indeed, its overall strategy is to sanctify the secular, not in the sense of mystification but in the sense of giving religious significance to the round of everyday life. It is a religious culture which emphasizes observance and form, perhaps more than belief. Nevertheless, if the society and values of modern Israel are viewed against the backdrop of the traditional Jewish society of not so long ago, some meaningful comparisons can be made.

It is in this sense that we find the concept of secularization applicable to the situation we want to portray. Sometimes, we refer to the secularization of form but continuity of traditional consciousness—as in the transformation of the age-old longing for a return to Zion into the business of irrigating deserts and electing parliaments.[9] Sometimes, we refer to the secularization of consciousness but continuity of form—as the re-infusion of nationalistic and naturalistic meaning into religious holidays. In either case, there appears (at first glance) considerable continuity with traditional Jewish values. In fact, however, the process of secular transformation, while preserving external forms or internal meanings, is sometimes subversive of that which it purports to maintain.[10]

The themes which seem central to this framework are the following:

(1) the traditional collectivity-orientation of the Jewish people, as opposed to the primacy of individual self-interest;
(2) the traditional centrality of the nuclear family;
(3) the traditional idea that the content of leisure—and, indeed, the entire round of life—is normatively prescribed rather than that one is free 'to do one's own thing';
(4) the traditional conception of 'the chosen people' and its reappearance in Zionist thought as a 'spiritual centre' for Jewish and humanistic creativity;
(5) the traditional qualities of asceticism (sobriety) and reality-orientation as opposed to hedonism and free-floating fantasy.

1. *Collectivity-orientation*

It is a nice paradox that the establishment of modern nationhood was probably easier—psychologically speaking—for the Jews than for the embryonic nations that were living on their own soil. Jewish nationalism did not have the difficult task of overcoming loyalties to village and region that stood in the way of the unification of other nations. Jewish loyalties always reached beyond the local community to regional, national, and international alliances with other Jewish communities everywhere, all of which shared the memory of the collective national experience in the past and of its promised renewal in the future. It was easy to adapt this image to the conceptions of European nationalism.

It hardly needs an elaborate empirical study to establish that the materialization of this dream is at hand. 'To feel pride that we have a state' tops a list of 35 personal, social, and other 'needs' presented for evaluation to the sample of respondents.[11] Similarly, of all the holidays about which we enquired, *Yom Haatzmaut* (Independence Day) is the one which holds meaning for everybody—young and old, religious and irreligious, educated and uneducated, Western and Oriental immigrants —while Yom Kippur, by comparison, is alleged to have 'no meaning for me' by 16 per cent of the respondents. Again, the 'readiness to sacrifice oneself for the national ideals'—which was associated in our question with the traditional concept of *kiddush haShem* (sanctification of the Name)—is adjudged one of the most characteristic of contemporary national traits by religious and irreligious alike.

The nation is united not only by the fact of the State and not alone by the memory of the collective experience of long ago, but by more recent experience as well. The Holocaust of European Jewry preoccupies a majority of the population; the extent of reading on this subject is widespread, and there is disquiet lest something like it happen again. It

is true that this concern is more characteristic of older persons and of Ashkenazim, but it is a matter of no small concern to younger people and Oriental immigrants as well.

The feeling of connexion with Jews abroad is strong. The feeling that those Jews are spiritually dependent upon Israel is shared by all segments of the population. The feeling that Israelis, in turn, are dependent on Diaspora Jewry is also strong, but younger people are less likely than their parents to agree to that.

Israelis see little difference between their identities as Jews and as Israelis. Whereas Professor Herman, in *Israelis and Jews*, finds that religion is a component of Israeli identity only for religious but not for irreligious Israelis, the present study finds that the same holds true for *Jewish* identity.[12] That is, non-religious Israelis find it possible to maintain their identity as Jews (not just as Israelis) without making room for religion. For a significant proportion of the population, in other words, the religious element has been subtracted from both Jewish and Israeli identities, whereas it is present in both sets of identities for religious persons. Indeed, it appears that the two sets of identities are virtually synonymous. For all its contribution to integration of the society, here are first warnings concerning the consequences of a facile transformation of the traditional collectivity orientation of the Jewish people into the typical forms and symbols of nationhood. We shall see the manifestation of this problem again in the discussion of the transformation of traditional holidays.

We find very little evidence of a generation gap. The young hold values and attitudes similar to those of their parents—that is, the statistical distribution of the opinions and attitudes and behaviour of youth with respect to almost any issue is almost exactly like that of the parent generation.[13] Where the young and their parents differ, each party knows exactly where the other stands; there is no confusion about the fact that the parents are somewhat more ascetic and that the young are more present-oriented and say they have a stronger sense of social justice!

The lines along which the population in fact divides are educational and religious. Education is generally much stronger than ethnicity, with people of different ethnic backgrounds acting and thinking similarly, given similar educational attainments. Of course, 'holding education constant', as we say, is easy to do statistically; but it ought not to blind us to the fact that the educational gap is still very wide. Religion stands out as potentially the sharpest dividing line in the society. Religious people—while concentrated in the lower educational groups—not only differ in their outlook and behaviour on many things; they are also more solidary among themselves than is the non-religious population. The educated religious person is in the vanguard in upholding values and practices which have a bearing on the religious outlook.

Religious identification, however, does not in any way conflict with national identification. The religious groups in our sample (some extremists are under-represented) are, if anything, *more* Zionist than the non-religious.

How are these integrative tendencies represented in the institutions of culture and leisure? For one thing, people rely very heavily on the newspaper, on the radio, and on television to feel close to what is going on. These are the media of involvement with state and society, and they are very heavily used for that purpose. The newspaper is the medium *par excellence* in this respect. Again, the shared experience of the Holocaust and the Six-Day War—both actual events and the reporting of them—symbolize the common fate. The reading of books on those two subjects has cut across all the dividing lines of the society.

Second, we are impressed that internal tourism (the *tiyul*) is a major integrating mechanism. There is a very large amount of travelling within the country—more than two-thirds of the population have visited Caesaria, Hebron, Tsfat, and the Negev: three-quarters have visited a kibbutz, and half have been to the Israel Museum. Even if *tiyul* may not be a Zionist invention (curiously Jacob Katz, in *Tradition and Crisis*, suggests that it was popular even in eastern Europe before emancipation[14]), there seems little doubt that the people meet one another on the road and at historical and national sites.

The holidays are also major integrating events. As we shall note below, most of them are still very alive not only for religious persons, but for the irreligious as well.

Finally, there is a strong trend towards homogenization in the consumption of culture in the country. More explicitly, if one compares a person with eight years' schooling in Dimona with a person of like education in Tel Aviv, the odds are very high that each will have been to the theatre, to the cinema, on a *tiyul*, etc., with about the same frequency. It is also very likely—though we did not investigate this specifically—that they saw the same films and plays and visited the same sites. This is quite remarkable in view of the great disparity of cultural offerings between large and small towns; it does not mean that Dimona or similar towns are content; they are not. Their residents complain of inadequate facilities and 'unsuitable companionship'. Moreover, the proportion of well-educated people is much smaller in the development towns than in Tel Aviv, and one should beware—we caution again—of generalizations based upon 'holding education constant'. Nevertheless, the homogeneity of cultural consumption—education being held constant—is remarkable. And, of course, this homogeneity is further abetted by national radio and television broadcasting and a national press. The two afternoon papers are read by 69 per cent of the population.

2. *Familism*

An equally familiar trait of Jewish civilization is dedication to the family, and to the extended family as well. The data from this study show that the family is at the centre of the society's conception of itself.[15] The need 'to spend time with my family' is next in importance to the pride in having a state.

These are not mere expressions of values or of attitudes. Familism is expressed in action. Three-quarters of those adults whose parents are alive visit them at least once a week, and parents report visiting their married children with equal frequency![16] Education and social class make almost no difference here; unlike other societies, a higher degree of education, if anything, increases the frequency of visits.

One has the impression that Israelis—despite or because of the uprooted character of the society—are very sensitive to familial continuity: a large majority of the population feel that they have a good idea of how life was lived in grandfather's house.[17]

Household duties do not seem to be a heavy burden for Israelis; familism is not expressed, apparently, in house-cleaning. On the other hand, the time devoted to care for children is high compared with most other nations.[18]

When people are asked to imagine what they would do with an extra day of leisure if the five-day working-week came to pass, by far the most frequent answer is: 'I would spend the time with my family'. That a man 'should' so spend most of his leisure time is affirmed by 71 per cent of the respondents.

How *does* the family spend its time? What cultural activities bind it together? Of the mass media, television contributes most to family solidarity; households spend an average of about two hours around the television set every night. Television is rather less effective in keeping at home adolescents and young adults, or those of higher education.

Other activities that go on inside the home are more particularized: reading, hobbies, listening to records, study. Radio listening has also become a much more private affair since the advent of the transistor and the introduction of television. All these activities increase with increased education. Indeed, the culture of the home is primarily a function of education (whereas the selection of activities outside the home is governed at least as much by age). The less educated spend more of their leisure sleeping or resting or looking after their home.

Far more important than television as a focus for family solidarity are Saturdays and holidays. The Sabbath is the day which families spend together: it is the day for visiting, for more leisurely meals. For the religious, it is the day of prayer and rest. For the non-religious, it is a day for family trips and house-cleaning.

A clear majority of the population want to preserve the quiet,

homely character of the Sabbath eve as it exists today in Israel. This holds equally true for young and old. On the other hand, when asked more explicitly whether public transport should operate on the Sabbath and whether theatres, concert halls, and cinemas should be open, they are rather less traditional in their response. Still, even here, there is a clear differentiation between more 'cultural' activity—such as community centres and theatres—and the cinema, for example. Far fewer (about 40 per cent) are in favour of opening the cinemas on Friday night. While the scriptural definition of the Sabbath is by no means the guiding ideal, it is obvious that there is a 'cultural' ideal that is shared by a good part of the population. (Only the stoutly irreligious among the well-educated want a drastic change in the character of the Sabbath eve.) Once more it should be said that while there are clear signs of cultural continuity here, one should not make the mistake of assuming that no changes are at work: a drive in the family car, or playing chamber music, or watching television (however cultured the content of those activities) is not what our forbears had in mind for the Sabbath.

Still another sign of the commitment to family and tradition in connexion with the Sabbath is in the preference expressed for Friday, rather than Sunday or another weekday, for the second free day of the desired five-day work-week. The preference for Friday—from the point of view of the quality of the culture—will have very different consequences, if adopted, from that of a Saturday–Sunday weekend. The Friday–Saturday weekend implies a day of 'preparation'—as Friday is today—for the following Holy Day, while the Saturday–Sunday weekend provides for tension-release at the conclusion of the Holy Day. Saturday night is now the popular night for going out, but there is a higher risk of anomie and its accompanying malaise if it is to be followed by a day which is normatively unstructured. The questions of (1) whether an extra day? (2) which day?, and (3) what provisions will be made for cultural activities on the extra day? are major questions for cultural policy-makers.

3. *Normative prescriptions for spending leisure*

Traditional Jewish culture, like nature, did not tolerate a vacuum. It sanctified activities governing the entire round of life—not merely prayer-time or rites de passage but eating-time, sleeping-time, and leisure-time. It is another one of those nice-sounding paradoxes to say that the Jews invented leisure (in the institution of the Sabbath) and then took it back again (by minute prescriptions on how to spend it). Indeed, leisure was not left at all to the individual's discretion on weekdays either; normatively, his every moment—and all the more so if he could free himself from work—was to be devoted to sacred study. Like other norms, this one was not easy to live up to, but people were well

aware of the fact, and they made the attempt. Nor is there reason to think that it was experienced as oppressive; quite the contrary. Moreover, as with other aspects of Jewish religious strategy, certain things that people wanted to do—like getting up parties, for example—were subsumed and legitimated in terms of the *halakha* in the same way as the things they had to do—such as eating. Thus parties could be legitimately given on certain occasions—such as when group-study of a book of the Talmud was completed, or on certain holidays; then the party became a *mitzva* and was not considered mere frivolity organized at the expense of study.[19] And days off from work (and study) were called holidays, and each of them was a legitimation of leisure too.

The modern secular city is at the opposite pole. Its ideal-type, at any rate, makes available the widest variety of individual choice to suit all tastes and proclivities. And modern leisure, the dominant voices say, is a time for individual self-expression.

Israel (like most other countries) is in-between, though it is probably on the more traditional side also here. First of all, there is a six-day working-week—which obviously spares the society the problem of deciding what to do with a non-normatively prescribed leisure day.

Moreover, in so far as people can foresee how they would spend another eventual free day, they do not have very radical ideas. Most would spend more time with their families; some would rest; some would engage in household duties; others would take trips. The main thrust of most of these replies is that people would do more of, or better with, the roles to which they are already committed. Most of the extra leisure would be spent close to, or inside, the home. It is interesting that reading is ahead of any of the arts or the media in the list of things people say they would do with more time.

The need for rest appears to be particularly acute for some elements of the population: the working woman, first of all; then people employed in commerce, workers in building, in industry, and in service occupations. They are all tired; and want a five-day week. Agricultural workers are tired too, but they are not enthusiastic about a shortened week since they would not benefit much from it and might only feel deprived when others were free. Those with low incomes are also tired, and are also unenthusiastic (relatively) about a shortened work-week—perhaps because they fear reduced earnings, or perhaps because they have little idea of the potentialities of leisure. While these groups are the more likely to relate leisure and rest, the equation of leisure and respite and of leisure and privacy (or familism) is predominantly emphasized by almost all groups. It is important to stress that while physical rest certainly figures in the traditional conception of leisure, so do its sacred and public aspects: the Sabbath, in the tradition, is a day of 'rest and sanctity'; and it is a day of assembly—for festive prayer and study. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the idea of spending leisure in public,

and of devoting it to collective rather than private pursuits, also underlies the concept of political participation in a democracy. It is not only Jewish ideals that require the normative and public use of leisure for their fulfilment. But the trend, overall, is towards privatization.

The preference for normatively prescribed leisure rather than for do-your-own-thing leisure is shown in the attitudes of Israelis towards public holidays. The traditional holidays, in general, continue to have meaning for persons who are not religious. Unlike New Year's Eve or the First of May, for example, the Holy Days of Purim, Passover, Rosh Hashana, Hanukka—and even Shavuot or Lag Ba-omer—have retained their meaningfulness for most people. As in the case of the Sabbath, these are not the original meanings: the latter have been somewhat transformed by elevating familial, historical, natural, and other aspects of the holidays to primary positions. Thus Passover becomes a holiday whose primary meaning for many is to provide a feeling of connexion with past generations and with history, while Shavuot connects them to changing seasons, and so on. They might have answered (as some in fact did) that the holiday had no meaning for them; or that it was a day for rest or for doing what they pleased; but they did not so answer. On the other hand, as many as 16 per cent said that Yom Kippur had 'no meaning for me' —probably because it is incapable of undergoing secular transformation; it is not a day on which one can go out for a picnic, or even celebrate national or social emancipation. It is a Holy Day for which Jewish tradition provides no other alternative to personal confrontation with God.

To a certain degree, unprescribed leisure time is made available to young people. They go out often, and engage in a variety of activities involving friends, the cinema, and light entertainment. Their going out is probably more aimless than the outings of their elders. Even in the case of young people, however, there is an important need to feel that leisure is being spent constructively.

But what of the classic prescription to employ leisure time for study? Here again, we have an example of the secular transformation of a traditional concept. Relatively to other countries, Israelis spend more of their leisure-time reading books. Compared with the countries of Western Europe, a larger proportion of Israelis read at least one book last year, and more are 'active readers' (eight books or more per year). The proportion of 'active readers' among all readers is about as high as in England and the Scandinavian countries, and is somewhat higher when looked at as a proportion of the population as a whole.[20]

Perhaps, therefore, the Israelis still deserve the title of the People of the Book (an appellation given to Jews and Christians by the Prophet Muhammad). Nevertheless, it is important to distinguish between the classical conception of the People of the Book and the secular transformation of that concept.

The traditional idea of the Book is that an entire people is simultaneously—indeed, almost continuously—occupied with the same set of symbols and metaphors in terms of which their society and their perception of the world is organized. The Book is the source of rules, and the constitution by which all members—leaders included—are bound. It is an ongoing collective creation, to which each generation contributes. The secular transformation of the concept, People of the Book, is people of books, or people of reading; something quite different, obviously. There is nothing shared about the experience any more. Reading is now a private experience and everybody is reading a different book. There is no little irony in the fact that something of the collective experience which once derived from the Book is now to be had from viewing television, for a majority of the population spend their evenings tuned to Israel's one channel. In this sense, television is more like the original conception of the Book than are books! But 'Mission Impossible' is no match for Genesis.

4. *Chosenness*

Book-reading relates, in turn, to the conception of a 'spiritual centre', which is a modern transformation of the concept of 'chosenness'. When asked, 'Do you think Israel should be more actively engaged in culture and learning than other nations?', 70 per cent said yes. There is some reason to believe that they mean it. Not only are there more readers than in other countries, but there are also more people who study (as many as a third study regularly—on their own, or with teachers). They express a strong interest in the possibility of formal study—and not necessarily for credit or degrees. They say that radio and television might be used for this purpose, even at the expense of prime-time programming. Indeed, judging from the response to this proposal, if television were to devote one night a week to courses in adult education, there is a good likelihood that the new programme would be well received. But the emphasis of adults is not on instrumental career-oriented learning; it is on learning for learning's sake. People say they want that: why not believe them?

The argument that adult education via television requires another channel because the present one is 'full', is based on the assumption that 'Family Affair' and 'Bewitched' and 'The Saint' are the kinds of programme people will not do without—indeed, they say they are satisfied with them—but they do not want more of them. What they do want more of, however, is home-made Israeli programmes—in preference to the technically superior imported ones. And for the same reason they are enthusiastic about Israeli-made films: the loyalty to the Hebrew-speaking cinema is remarkably high.

That is not the case, however, for original Hebrew books. While

—time spent at work or at leisure, the former out-distanced the latter by far—although the proportion answering that 'both' work and leisure were important is higher still. Altogether, the characterization of Israeli society as 'puritan' seems not too far off the mark. On the other hand, the high percentage who feel that luck is a major component of success, and the high proportion of participation in the several national lotteries argue in another direction. Nor is high productivity or pride in work—attributes which were not explicitly examined by us—especially conspicuous to the observer of this society. Still, orientation to reality and a general sense of sobriety and of purpose appear to be important basic values.

6. *Conclusion*

The threads of continuity are still clearly visible in Israeli culture. The Jewish values of collectivity-orientation, familism, learning, sense of purpose, and orientation to reality are all much in evidence. Some of these values seem to have remained intact. Others are undergoing transformation. Thus, the People of the Book have become the people of reading; the religious festival is transformed in meaning; ethnicity and national identification appear to be dominating religious integration.

In all this, the generation gap does not seem much in evidence—although there are some differences. The young (18–25 years old in our study) feel less dependent on Diaspora Jewry; their thoughts turn less often to the Holocaust; they seek more immediate gratification as compared with the future-orientation of their parents; they may be somewhat less religious. But on the whole they are not very much different—and will be even less so, one suspects, when they grow older.

The big question is whether the transformation will preserve any semblance of the uniqueness of traditional Jewish culture. What will become of Yom Kippur, if secular Jews find difficulty in investing it with a transformed meaning? What will become of religious holidays that have—once again—returned to nature, family, and nation (whence they arose)? What will happen to the tradition of learning if it is oriented towards individualistic rather than collective experience, and to career rather than to learning for its own sake? Will the sense of peoplehood become standardized patriotism? Will chosenness become mere chauvinism? These are some of the major questions raised by this study.

Another set of problems is concerned with artistic and cultural creativity in a small nation bent on reviving an ancient culture in a modern world. Will the satellite leave room for indigenous expression on the airwaves? Will the book written locally and in Hebrew hold its own against the avalanche of translated foreign works? Will the nascent Israeli film have a chance against the sub-titled films of Hollywood?

Indeed, will traditional Holy Days survive the electronic transmission of other people's celebrations? Will Judaism survive Zionism?

All these matters require policy decisions. There is no use evading the fact that the Government *is* actively involved in cultural policy: it subsidizes some theatres; it gives tax rebates to some films; it organizes the Independence Day celebrations; it does not concern itself with the high cost of books; it makes the public performance of Richard Strauss very difficult; and so on. Cultural policy, however, is rarely made explicit. The Ministry of Education and Culture is only now beginning to live up to the latter part of its name. Public discussion of the issues deserves to be encouraged.

At the same time, the education of the consumer of culture needs to be cultivated. Learning how to view a television programme, or how to read a newspaper is one aspect of this; pondering the contemporary meaning of traditional holidays is another. Contemplating how—or whether—to give expression to the national quest for moral purpose is still another. Adult education—in its broadest sense—is the challenge of Israeli culture. It is, potentially, also the most important link with the kind of continuing education which was the most distinctive aspect of traditional Jewish culture. Thought and resources must be made available for its cultivation.

NOTES

[1] The study on which this paper is based was commissioned by the late Zalman Aranne, when Minister of Education and Culture; it was carried out jointly by the Communications Institute of the Hebrew University and the Israel Institute of Applied Social Research. Members of the research group were Elihu Katz and Michael Gurevitch (co-directors), and Hanna Adoni, Gila Brand, Oved Cohen, Hadassah Haas, and Leah Isaac. This paper constitutes the second of two introductory chapters to the report on the study by Katz and Gurevitch which is being published by Faber and Faber (London) and, to the volume in Hebrew, by Am Oved (Tel Aviv). Empirical data referred to here are documented in those works. The present version of the paper was prepared for presentation at the Symposium on 'Israel Society' organized by the Institute of Jewish Affairs in London, 18 March 1973, and benefited from the discussion of participants and panellists. It was written while I was Simon Research Fellow at the University of Manchester.

[2] For a persuasive argument that students of leisure focus too much on national and sub-group differences and too little on the *similar* rhythms of modern societies, see Kenneth Roberts, *Leisure*, London, 1970.

[3] In fact, the collection of our data pre-dates much of this criticism. This is of some import in as much as it is the *relative* decline in concern over security problems which is blamed for some of these alleged changes. This is another possible reason why our data do not reflect them (or why we did not focus on them as directly as we might have done, if our study were being designed

today). It is certainly true that a decline in the preoccupation with security brings the domestic problems of social and economic relations to the fore; Israel will have to grapple with these. It is also true that in circumstances of ostensible calm the newspapers have more room, and more time, to put these problems on society's agenda.

[4] This is the objection to all purely behavioural analysis, of course, whether of Kinsey-type studies of human sexual behaviour or of behavioural studies of the uses of time where one kind of act is equated with another so long as they consume the same amount of time. There is much to be learned from such data, however; indeed, as noted above, a considerable part of our own analysis is based on such material. But, clearly, they are not 'sufficient'.

[5] Survey research, based on random sampling, gives every respondent an equal vote. It is now well known that radical social change is not usually accomplished by a majority vote. Professor S. J. Gould of Nottingham University, in a private conversation after the Symposium, suggested that our analysis reminded him of sociological analyses of American society on the eve of the violent racial, urban, and student upheavals of the 1960s. Even if such a fate is in store for Israel, it is important to say that, even today, as the smoke is dying down, the vast majority of the American people are not very different from what they were, nor did the much-vaunted generation gap affect more than only a fraction of the college-educated youth. But this is not to gainsay the importance of the social crisis in America. Methodologically, it suggests that several parallel lines of social inquiry must be carried out at the same time, and with different populations, and that each of these lines of investigation must be continued over time.

[6] We are sidestepping the question of how Israeli culture and leisure are different from those of Jewish communities in the Diaspora. Clearly, the process of secularization in Judaism did not begin with Israel, or even with Zionism. And the tension between ethnicity and religion has marked the history of modern Jewish thought not only for the irreligious but for the religious as well; indeed, this is part of what Reform Judaism was (is?) all about. We ask forgiveness of those who would have liked us to face this larger question head on. We hope, none the less, that this portrait of Israel will contribute to the larger discussion, in which the role of Israel—as the Jewish state—features so prominently.

[7] See, for example, Andrew Greeley, *The Denominational Society*, New York, 1972.

[8] David Martin, *The Religious and the Secular*, London, 1969. See especially Chapter 1, 'Towards Eliminating the Concept of Secularisation', and Chapter 4, 'Secularisation: The Range of Meaning'.

[9] The distinction between secularization of social structure and of consciousness is Peter Berger's in *The New Reality of Religion*, London, 1968. In discussing 'Israelite religion', Berger tends to see the Jews as demystifiers of primitive religions and hence as having a secularizing influence from the beginning. Our outlook is rather different, as noted above.

[10] Here we disagree with writers like Andrew Greeley who argue that secularization is not rampant in modern society and that the sacred and the traditional are holding their own, at least as well as in earlier societies. For the case we reported, the evidence of the continuity of tradition is there to be

seen; indeed, that is the point of this paper. But the process of secularization and its ultimate subversion of the sacred seems equally apparent. One can remember what Passover used to be like in one's parents' home, and, re-enacting its forms, infuse it with secular meanings. But even if the result can be institutionalized, one cannot transmit this *process* to another generation: that is the problem.

[11] These 'needs' or goals or values are derived from the literature on the functions of mass communications for self and society, supplemented by 'needs' which seemed to us particularly characteristic of the Israeli scene. Respondents were asked to say, with respect to each, how 'important' it was.

[12] Simon Herman, *Israelis and Jews*, New York, 1970.

[13] Here we differ with Amos Elon, *The Israelis: Founders and Sons*, New York, 1971. We did not explore attitudes to the stereotype of the Diaspora Jew, though the generation gap in this respect might be more likely to exist between our first generation and their *parents* rather than with their children. As for attitudes to Arabs, we find that the important differences are far better explained by education than age: the better educated, at any age, are more open to friendship with Arabs. Further support for the absence of a conspicuous generation gap can be found: the last elections revealed no differences in the voting patterns of younger and older voters.

[14] Jacob Katz, *Tradition and Crisis*, New York, 1961.

[15] This use of 'centre' is more than rhetorical. Using a technique for the mapping of matrices of inter-correlations (the Guttman–Lingoes method of Smallest Space Analysis), we find family at the centre of the map. This means, essentially, that the magnitude of the correlations between commitment to family and a large variety of otherwise disparate values is equally high.

[16] Cf. Bert Adams, *Kinship in an Urban Setting*, Chicago, 1967, and Michael Young and Peter Wilmott, *Family and Kinship in East London*, London, Penguin edn., 1968. A recomputation of the figures in these volumes on the frequency of meetings between adult parents and married children suggests that the Israeli rate is very high, even when compared with the small Southern city studied by Adams or the family-based networks studied by Young and Wilmott.

[17] This is one of the points at which a comparison between second- and third-generation Israelis and their cousins in the United States might be very revealing. One has the impression that immigrants to America did not give their children much of a picture of what life was like in their parents' home in eastern Europe, whereas Israelis of the same origin have a clearer picture. However, this is just a guess—and eminently worth studying, though the picture grows cloudier with each new fiddler on each romantic roof.

[18] References to the comparative use of time are all based on Alexander Szalai, ed., *The Use of Time*, The Hague, 1972.

[19] See Jacob Katz, op. cit., for a discussion of such phenomena.

[20] Statistics on books and reading abound, but they are not always easily comparable, being based on differing definitions and methods of research. Data in the table below are from the Reader's Digest Association, *Survey of Europe Today*, London, 1970, pp. 120–21; they are from specially com-

missioned sample surveys in each of the countries listed, and the methods employed were similar to ours. For further details on reading in Israel, see Elihu Katz and Hanna Adoni, 'Function of the Book for Society and Self', in *Diogenes* (forthcoming) and in Kalma Yaron, ed., *Lifelong Education in Israel*, Association for Adult Education, Jerusalem 1972, as well as a Master's thesis by Mrs. Adoni submitted to the Department of Sociology of the Hebrew University, 1972 (in Hebrew).

Readers of books and readers of more than 8 books a year in Israel and in European countries

	% *who read one book in the last year*	*the readers of more than 8 books a year*	
		% *among the entire population*	% *of all readers*
Israel	77	42	55
France	56	33	59
England	63	39	61
Italy	24	9	38
West Germany	52	17	32
Switzerland	69	23	33
Austria	54	14	26
Denmark	67	39	58
Holland	66	35	53
Belgium	42	21	49
Portugal	28	15	53

[21] One of the great 'natural resources' of first-generation Israelis (their multi-linguality) is not being passed on to the next generation.

[22] This psychological struggle, and particularly the anguish over making war, is one of the great problems of Israeli intellectuals. This echoes Amos Elon's discussion, op. cit.