The Sacred and the Profane: the Differential Organization of Social Spheres between Liberal Elites and Lower Class Mizrahim in Israel

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Abstract

This article addresses an Israeli sociological riddle: Working class Israeli Jews of Middle Eastern and North African origin have good and empathetic relations with Arab co-workers and fellow students in work and school spaces while affirming, right wing, ethno-centric political attitudes and behaviors that tend to deny Arabs and Palestinians political and even civil rights (often offensively). The article explores the fact that both sociologists and liberal activists note this behaviour but tend to treat it as an anomaly without attempting to explain it. The article argues that both functionalist and critical sociologists tend to treat Mizrahim in an essentialist manner which does not allow for differentiation in their behaviour. The second part of the article suggests that lower class Mizrahim possess a radically different cosmology than liberal elites. The cosmology of traditional Mizrahim is that of "ritual" (Seligman et al., 2008) which posits a disjunction between spheres of social interaction especially between the "sacred" and "profane" spheres. The cosmology of the liberal elites is that of totalizing utopian social ordering which demands that all the spheres of interaction be organized according to the same principles. According to the Mizrahi cosmology, the spheres of work and school are "profane" and hence they can allow relations of friendship and empathy based upon joint work and fellowship. In the sacred spheres of politics and the family, relations with Arabs often are expressed in ritual contexts which emphasize subjunctive, ideal states of Jewish purity and victoriousness.

Keywords Mizrahim · ritual · sacred · profane · liberal · work · cosmologies

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When I lived in the Har Nof section of Jerusalem in the nineteen eighties, large parts of the neighborhood were construction sites. Our house too, was adjacent to a construction site. The foreman was a member of the contractor's family named Rachamim (a common Mizrahi name. The term Mizrahi or Mizrahim in the plural denotes Jews of Middle Eastern and North African origin). Most of the workers, though, were Arabs from East Jerusalem and the nearby villages. The most senior Arab worker was called Hasan. The workers from both the Jewish and Arab groups worked harmoniously together with concern and care for each other in this somewhat dangerous work. One day Hasan received a wound in his head. Immediately Rachamim personally rushed him to the emergency room taking the most tender and careful attention and care. At the same time, occasionally, political topics came up in the workers' conversation. When that happened Rachamim and the other Jews who were Mizrahi rightwing Likud supporters did not hesitate to express themselves in an ethnocentric and even offensive manner even expressing the sentiment that the Arabs should "drop dead" or "go to Hell."[1]

This description fits what my students in the School of Education of Hebrew University would tell me about their lower class or lower middle-class students in academic high schools in Jerusalem. Palestinian students from East Jerusalem attend several well-known Jewish-Israel schools. My students (who are teachers or student-teachers) report that socially the Arab students are well integrated. The Jewish and Arab students play soccer (football) together, go to the same parties, and in general "are pals". However, when the Jewish students attend professional football games of the local (immensely popular) Beitar team, they sit in the Eastern Bleachers (reserved for local Beitar fans) and yell "Death to the Arabs" along with all the other fans. Similarly, when politics come up either among the students themselves or in class, they express similar ethno-centric and offensive sentiments.

This phenomenon of good social relations between lower class or lower middle-class Jews and Arabs at work or in school together with hostility, extreme right-wing sentiments and even racism when it comes to politics seems to be quite common and it crops up in academic research. Vicky Bronstein documented this phenomenon in ten auto repair shops in the Tel Aviv area in her master's thesis in Tel Aviv University (2015) and Shwed, Kalish and Shavit (2018) recorded it in nine Jewish Israeli high schools.

Nissim Mizrachi (2016) also recorded this phenomenon. Just as importantly, he also recorded that for liberal observers, including those who have sociological training and a "sociological gaze", it presents something of an anomaly and a riddle: If the Mizrahim can have friendship with Arabs and relate to them as human beings with empathy, concern and friendship why do they not accord to the Palestinians full human and civil rights, why do they endorse right-wing policies that deny them these rights and a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

I am going to place this sociological riddle at the heart of this paper. In the course of this article, I will also propose a solution to this riddle. However, I am as interested

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[1] It is a commonplace of Israeli politics that the great majority of lower and middle class Mizrahim support the right wing Likud Party or the Ultra-orthodox right wing Shas Party. See Mizrachi's introductory essay to this issue and Mizrachi (2016, 2017). The Likud party has been Israel's ruling party since 1977.

in the riddle itself as I am in its solution. I believe that an examination of this riddle itself and the assumptions that lay behind it – why a certain social phenomenon was understood not only as a problem but also as a riddle – can lead us to important insights concerning Israeli sociology, its connection to nation-building, its history and its changing agendas. It can perhaps also lead to insights regarding contemporary critical sociology both in Israel and the US and the influence of American critical sociology on Israeli sociology.

The Riddle – Description of the Phenomenon and Review of the Literature

While the Mizrahi broader strata often manifest right wing, nationalist and particularist political orientations that are conflictual with Palestinians and Arabs, in their work lives they engage easily with the Palestinian Arab population and even develop extensive shared social life and friendship. Thus in garages, construction sites and other blue collar labor sites Mizrahi Jewish workers[2] mix easily and cooperate with Palestinian Arabs (including Israeli citizens, residents of East Jerusalem and residents of the Palestinian Authority.) They develop forms of camaradie and, even to a certain extent, friendships outside of the workplace. This interaction continues even as some of the Mizrahi Jewish workers continue to express anti-Arab and conflictual attitudes (denial of rights, expulsion etc.) both in contexts other than work and occasionally in the workplace itself. Thus this riddle has two aspects: 1- the Mizrahim are anti-Arab and 2 – they should be consistently so, but they are not.

As I have indicated above, this pattern of Mizrahi behavior has been noticed by research literature and it has described various aspects of it. The first to describe and analyze it was Bronstein (2015). Bronstein stressed that not only did cooperative and friendly relations obtain between Jewish and Arab workers, but that within the work framework, the Jewish workers employed an universalist language that explicitly recognized the humanity of the Arab workers. "Nevertheless, this attitude is not translated into the political sphere in terms of adopting a liberal-universalist politics" (Bronstein, 2015, p. 3).

The research of Shwed, Kalish and Shavit (2018), also supports this description. The research examined 63 friendship networks in 14 schools. Five of the schools adopted an explicit "multi-cultural" educational policy, while the other nine were standard Israeli-Jewish schools with a Zionist and Israeli-Jewish orientation. Surprisingly, the research found that lower and middle class Jewish and Arab students that attend standard Israeli-Jewish schools share integrated friendship networks to a far

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[2] When I refer to Mizrahi workers or working class, I am mainly refering to educational attainment and occupational status. Mizrahim who work at blue collar sites, especially if they are contractors or taxi or garage owners often earn middle class or upper midle class incomes. What contributes to their low stratification position is their low occupational status and low educational attainment (10–14 years of schooling – without college or university.)Mizrahim who have achieved university education work in higher status occupations where there are fewer Arabs (except in medical related fields). Since educational attainment in Israel and elswhere correlates with liberal political and social views, most highly educated Mizrahim share the liberal world views (Peretz, 2022; Dahan, In Press).

greater degree than Jewish and Arab students who attend the ideologically multi-cultural school. The difference between the degree of friendship in the two schools exists despite the fact that the parents of the students in the standard Israel-Jewish school (who often are right wing) ideologically support Jewish-Arab integration much less than do the parents in the multi-cultural school. The aim of the research was to test two competing theories of intergroup relations – contact theory (Allport, 1954), and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The study showed that specifically in the multi-cultural schools which salience the different identities there is a greater tendency towards separation between the two populations. In the standard Israeli schools, on the other hand which do not stress social identities, Jews and Arabs are integrated.

Recently, Khaled Abu Asbah interviewed 323 Arab workers and 101 Jewish ones that work in joint work spaces. The interviews took place on 38 Arab and 40 Jewish towns (Abu-Asbeh, 2020). 90% of both the Arab and Jewish workers reported that relations at work are good. The Arab workers rated the relations more positively than did the Jews, but both groups said that the relations were good. Only a small percentage of Arab workers reported that they were the recipients of racist or offensive remarks from the Jewish group. Nevertheless, an overwhelming majority of the Arab respondents supported a ban on discussing politics at the workplace. Such support seems to indicate that most Arabs find the political views expressed by most Jewish workers (with whom they normally have good relations) as aggressive or offensive.

Finally, Mizrachi (2016) brings the testimony of human rights activists concerning "contractors" that is (Mizrahim who work with Arabs, either in construction or other trades) who are empathetic towards Palestinians and treat them as human beings "just like us" yet they continue to vote for right wing parties to support policies that deny human and civil rights to their fellow workers. The activists adduce this testimony against the hypothesis that they express, that the reason why lower class Mizrahim reject the liberal human rights message is because they lack human contact with the Arab and Palestinian populations. This testimony shows that, on the contrary, some Mizrahim have extensive human and empathetic contact with Palestinians and that they still reject the liberal human rights message.

The monologues of the activists that Mizrachi quotes reveal basic underlying liberal assumptions (See Mizrachi 2022). One of the most common of these is that every human being is an autonomous rights bearing entity and in principle is worthy becoming an equal partner of every contract based political collective. In order to join such a collective all that one must do is to support the social contract that implicitly underpins every liberal polity and then she can receive equal rights and be protected against discrimination and political oppression. This characteristic is thought to derive from one's very humanity. Thus, they reason, if a social group is oppressed or discriminated against it must be because the oppressors/discriminators do not see the oppressed group as fully human.

Thus, the liberal human rights activists really find Mizrahi-Arab social relations extremely puzzling. In work and school settings they clearly relate to the Arabs as human beings yet they persist in denying them human and civil rights. Nevertheless, as Mizrachi underlines, this puzzle or anomaly, this recalcitrance on the part of social reality to organize itself according to liberal categories or classifications, does

not result in a questioning on the part of the activists of liberal assumptions. It does not cause any doubt or feeling that such categories may not be adequate. Mizrachi attempts to explain this by reference to a "liberal politics of certainty", which among other factors rests upon the premise that human rights are "natural". That is, they are pre-social and, in fact, the social order rests upon them.

In connection with this, I would like to raise a somewhat different question. Why did not **Israeli sociology** attempt to find an explanation of this pattern of social relations? All of the articles that we cited above describe the phenomenon. Some of them mark it as anomalous, yet none of them attempts to explain it. I suggest that the two traditions of Israeli sociology, the functionalist tradition that was dominant until around the mid 1990's and the critical tradition that replaced it mitigated against providing such an explanations. Despite the differences between them, each of these, as we shall see, pursued an essentialist logic that prevented researchers from giving full weight to situationally differential social relations, from recognizing that there could be an inner logic that dictates different relations in different social arenas and spheres. Each of these traditions tended to essentialize Mizrahim and prevented sociologists from giving a more complex account (cf. Abbott, 2016).

Israeli Sociology and Primordial Ethno-Religious Identity

The right wing and anti-Arab sentiments attributed to the Mizrahim have often been characterized by Israeli social scientists, of various, persuasions schools and disciplines as primordial, ethno-religious or ethno-national identity. Thus, Eisenstadt (1985), Fischer (1991, 2016) and Kimmerling (1985) have described the Mizrahi supporters of the Likud as possessing primordial Jewish identity and Yoav Peled and Gershom Shafir wrote of an "ethno-national citizenship discourse" (2002) which they saw as carried by the right wing Likud party and by the Shas Mizrahi ultra-orthodox party and especially their Mizrahi supporters (as well as Orthodox religious groups).

However, the analysis of the primordial/ethnic mode collective identity did not start with the analysis of the Mizrahim. In fact, it has played a crucial role in Israeli sociology for many decades, perhaps from its beginnings. An understanding of this role will help us understand the approach of both the functionalists and that of critical sociologists towards the Mizrahim.

As John Meyer and his students (e.g. Ramirez & Rubinson 1979) have pointed out, all education and especially higher education is connected to nation building. However, the connection of sociology to Israeli nation-building was closer because of the homology between Zionist ideology and functionalist theory.

The basic theory of secular Zionist ideology as founded by Theodor Herzl was that creating a civic universalist Jewish nation state (that is, a nation-state along the lines of the liberal 19th Century European nation states) solves the problem of anti-semitism (Elon, 1975; Hertzberg, 1959). Herzl and his associates believed that anti-semitism was a reaction to anomalous Jewish existence, that is, that it is a minority everywhere and it depended upon the pre-modern ties of blood, ethnicity and religion. They believed that if the Jews abandoned their ethnic-minority identity and adopted a modern one through the rational-legal instrument of the state, they would remove the

root cause of antisemitism. Thus, one of the essential aspects of the Zionist project is that the Jews should move from a particularist-primordial collective identity to civic-universalist one. Zionist state-building in fact emphasized this territorial-civic construction especially in the early years of the state in the nineteen fifties and sixties despite defense and other pressures (Medding, 1990). This state building was supposed to construct universalist political, social and economic and judicial institutions, though it is true that this aspiration was more declarative and symbolic than actual.

This Zionist state-building orientation overlapped, or constituted a homology, with functionalist modernization theory which emphasized institution–building according to the Parsonian pattern variables (Parsons, 1951, 1967). That is, functionalist modernization theory insisted that the institutions of the Israeli state and society achieve a pattern that is affect-neutral, achievement oriented and not ascriptive, and universalist and not particularist. Thus sociology became the discipline which documented and tracked Israeli state and institution building according to both Zionist and functionalist theories (Eisenstadt, 1967). This role was also facilitated by a homology between the theoretical structures of Israeli functionalist sociology, Zionist ideology and the collective biography of its first-generation practitioners. Sociologists such as S.N. Eisenstadt and Joseph Ben-David were brought up in the ethno-religious Jewish frameworks of Eastern Europe and transformed themselves into modern-rational Jews.

The great Jewish immigration to Israel from the Middle East and North Africa of the 1950's and 60's was adapted to this paradigm of pre-modern primordial Jewish identity that had to be modernized with an additional twist. The Jews of these areas were thought to be under-developed in a Third-World sense. The Israeli governing and academic elites assumed that they had to be modernized culturally, technologically and politically. As is well known, the Israeli state and society regarded these Jews with an orientalist gaze (Shenhav, 2003).

Until the 1970's it was assumed that the primordial mode would shrink and be restricted to specific areas. As is well known, this all changed in the turbulent period between 1967 and 1977. The conquest of the Biblical territories of Judea and Samaria together with East Jerusalem and Temple Mount in the Six Day War[3] opened up the possibility of constructing Zionism in a religious, Biblical or Messianinc mode. The failures of the Israeli government and the IDF[4] in the Yom Kippur War[5] and the growing autonomy of the immigrants from Middle East and North Africa (MENA) who began to reject their paternalistic/orientalistic treatment all undermined Labor Zionist

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[3] The Six Day War was an armed conflict between Israel and a coalition of Arab states, Egypt, Syria and Jordan that took place between June 5 and June 10, 1967. In the course of the war Israel conquered the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsulan and the West Bank (Judea and Samaria). The Golan Heights and the West Bank are under Israeli control to this very day.

[4] The official designation of the Israeli military is the Israel Defense Forces. It is commonly refred to by its initial IDF.

[5] The Yom Kippur War was an armed conflict between Israel and Egypt and Syria which respectively attacked the east bank of the Suez Canal and the Golan Heights. The fighting took place between October 6–25 1973. At the end of the fighting, the Egyptians had obtained a foothold on the east bank of the Canal, however, they were encircled by an Israeli force on the west African bank. The attacks found the Israelis unprepared and they sustained heavy casualties.

secular hegemony.[6] Right wing, religious and traditional factors started to challenge the Labor Zionist hegemon and the institutional format of Israeli society opened up. This challenge achieved significant political success in the 1977 elections in which the right-wing ethno-populist Likud party under Menahem Begin became the ruling party, a position that it has held for the past forty years (Eisenstadt, 1985; Kimmerling, 2005; Shafir & Peled, 2002). Mainstream sociologists responded by presenting an analysis in which primordial identity became a challenger and a threat to the hegemonic modernist-universalist model (Kimmerling, 1985; Horowitz and Lissak 1990). Being mostly identified with secular Zionism, they tended to regard this threat in existential terms, as threatening the entire modernizing project of secular Zionism.

Critical approaches in Israeli sociology and primordial collective identity. -

These same events (together with changing intellectual currents in the US and Europe) brought about the rise of critical sociology, the first expression of which was Shlomo Swirsky's *Ashkenazim and Orientals in Israel: The Ethnic Division of Labor* (1981). The contention of Swirsky was that the Israeli state and society proletarianized the immigrants from MENA and turned them into a cheap and mobile labor force that could be exploited for political and economic ends. Other critical sociologists and cultural studies scholars such as Shohat (1988, 2017), Shenhav (2002, 2003) Yonah & Sasporta (2002) explored other aspects of the exploitation and exclusion of Mizrahim. Israeli critical sociology also highlighted the treatment of the Palestinian populations, arguing that the expulsion, exclusion and discrimination of the Palestinians is constitutive of the identity and institutional format of the State. It also concentrated upon patriarchy and gender discrimination despite Israel's vaunted image of gender equality.

The question thus arises – how did critical sociology relate to the empirical finding that most Mizrahim support right wing parties that endorse restricting the rights of Palestinians and that often in political rallies and other events Mizrahim express extreme hostility towards Arabs and Palestinians?[7] That is, they seem to affirm a primordial ethno-national identity that in situations of conflict issues in hostility towards the Other and even racism. According to the thesis that the Mizrahim are an oppressed group, interest and logic should dictate that they should join with other oppressed groups (Palestinians, women, LGTB's) and press for progressive social and cultural policies as well as re-distributionist economic policies. By supporting right wing parties, they seem to act against their economic interest as a lower-class population, for these parties often endorse neo-liberal economic policies.

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[6] The Labor Zionist movement headed by David Ben-Gurion built the economic, social, cultural and poltical frameworks and institutions of the Zionist settlement of pre-state Palestine (1918–1948) along with providing leadership in all these spheres. The Labor Party (under its various rubrics) was the ruling party of Israel from 1948-to 1977.

[7] Compare "the scissors movement" described by Michael Burawoy (2005), in which society moves to the right while sociology moves or stays left.

Critical sociological theory does try to explain this paradox. The most prevalent explanation that they give is that of the "Arab-Jews"(Shenhav, 2003; Shohat 2017; Dahan-Kalev 2010). In its most skeletal form, this approach argues that because most of the Mizrahim come from Middle Eastern countries, speak Arabic (the older generation) and participate in Arab-Muslim culture (food, music), they are liable to be assimilated to the Arab population of Israel, that is, the lowest stratification group. In order to avoid that, they must demonstrate most vociferously their hostility to the Arabs and pursue ultra-nationalist policies. This basic explanation has a number of articulations, some more economic (split labor market theory, Peled 1990), and some more socio-cultural (Shenhav, 2003; Dahan-Kalev, 2010.) .

My contention is that though they criticized the entire functionalist model, especially its modernization and evolutionary orientation as legitimating the oppression of the Mizrahim, in point of fact, the two approaches – the functionalist and the critical are similar in their basic parameters. Both approaches have an element of essentialism to them. According to the functionalist approach, the Mizrahim are ethno-centric and hostile to the Arabs because they are still mired in a less advanced stage of modernization. According to critical approaches, this hostility derives from their socio-cultural and economic proximity to the Arab population and their need to distance themselves from that population. **Neither explanation allows for differential behavior on the part of the Mizrahim.** That is, that in situations of work and school, you can have friendship, comaradie and empathy between Jewish Mizrahi and Arab workers and students, while in the political sphere, Mizrahi Jews can still maintain right-wing exclusivist, ethno-centric attitudes. The essentialism of both explanations dictates that Mizrahim be consistently ethno-centric and hostile.

Secondly, in both approaches the key to understanding the attitudes and behavior of the Mizrahim are elements of the Zionist-Israeli saga. In the functionalist framework, the Mizrahim serve as another example of the modernization of Jewish identity. They also illustrate how difficult and fragile such modernization is. According to the critical framework, the attitudes and behavior of the Mizrahim are an outgrowth of the Zionist-Israeli confrontation with the Arabs and Palestinians. **In other words, both approaches are so focused on the Zionist-Israeli Grand Narrative (one positive and supportive and the other critical and condemnatory) that they are not attentive to the lived lives of actual Israelis** – that actual Israelis can have differential behaviors and attitudes, depending on the situation and the nature of their social activity.

Recently, Mizrachi (2016) has offered a third approach to understanding the Mizrahim and their ethno-centric orientations, one based upon the "sociology of meaning."[8] Referencing Peter Berger and Charles Taylor he has suggested that two alternative cosmologies serve Israelis as tools to deal with the issues of intergroup relations in Israel –that of honor and that of dignity. The honor cosmology ranks groups and identities hierarchically while the dignity one stresses the basic equality of all human

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[8] Meaning and the sociology of meaning have a rich history within the sociological tradition starting with Weber (1978/1922) and Mannheim (1997/1929). Contemporary practitioners include Alexander (2003) and Charles Camic (Camic & Gross, 2004). On the nascent reemergence of the sociology of meaning in Israeli sociology upon the background of the dominance of critical sociology's "suspicion" see Mizrachi (2017).

beings. The honor cosmology is more characteristic of lower class Mizrahim and more prevalent in their networks of meaning while the dignity cosmology is more characteristic of the liberal elites.

In the remainder of this article, I am going to suggest an explanation of the differential attitudes and behaviors by Mizrahim towards the Palestinians by anchoring them in an overall cosmology that addresses perennial human issues such as the relationship between the real and the ideal and the relationship between different social spheres. According to this explanation the Mizrahim are not inconsistent in their differential behaviors but rather their behavior reflects a deep-seated cosmology. The suggested explanation will offer **specification** as to in what social situations Mizrahim tend to treat Palestinians as human beings "just like us" and in what situations their cosmology dictates that they engage in an ethno-centric and hostile discourse.

Two Alternative Cosmologies

I suggest, in a preliminary way, a hermeneutical framework for analyzing this "riddle". We can understand the differential behavior of lower class Mizrahchim – and the difficulty liberal elites have in understanding it - by considering how the different arenas and spheres of social life, and the relations between them, are organized in the two populations. Liberal elites, following modernist patterns of social organization, expect these relations to be totalistic, that is, that the same principles should organize the various spheres of social interaction - the personal, the civic and the political.[9] For example, that tolerant, egalitarian universalist principles should be the organizing principles in all three spheres. In contrast, based upon the work of Durkheim (1915), Bloch (1988) and Adam Seligman and his associates (2008), I suggest that for traditional broader strata, all social arenas and spheres are not assumed to be continuous and similarly organized, but on the contrary they are assumed to be different and display different and even contrasting inner logics and organizing principles.

This differentiation is especially prominent between those spheres that are considered to be "sacred" such as the religious, the political, the family and to a certain extent – sports - and those that are considered to be "profane", the most prominent of which (as Durkheim taught us) is the realm of work. I suggest that behavior (mostly verbal) that is ethno-centric, racist and hostile towards Arabs occurs in those spheres that have a sacred character whereas behavior and attitudes that express empathy, friendship and concern within the framework of universalistic premises take place in the "profane" spheres such as those of work and school. Thus, the behavior of the Mizrahim is not anomalous but rather fits their inner cosmology.

The totalizing tendency of modernism can be well understood if we identify it as a feature of modern totalitarian and revolutionary movements whether they be "secu-

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[9] Louis Dumont pointed out a related case in which the cultural assumptions of Western anthropologists impede their understanding of traditional societies. The taken for granted individualist assumptions of Western researchers prevents them form comprehending Hindu society which is holistic and grants primacy to the group. Dumont's work also parallels the argument in this paper in that he argues that contemporary Western individualist assumptions themselves are informed and shaped by medieval and Reformation religious orientations. See Dumont (1975, 1980, 1986).

lar" in character such Communist, Fascist or National Socialist or "religious" such as Islamic fundamentalism (or early modern sectarian and Calvinist Protestantism (Walzer, 1965). As Eisenstadt (1999a) has pointed out all of these movements have a Jacobin character. They all aimed to take control of the center of society and from that vantage point reorganize all of social and political life. However, as Eisenstadt (1999b) has shown, similar tendencies also characterize liberal, nonviolent and democratic movements. Liberal, democratic and Enlightenment based movements also aimed to reorganize the various spheres of social interaction, only they choose not to use overtly violent and coercive means (cf. Foucault). The totalistic character of all these movements stem from two central modernist cultural orientations – (1) that modern reflexivity and self-conscious construction of the social and political orders can bring about the resolution of perennial social dilemmas such as the relationship of order and spontaneity, equality and hierarchy, collectivism and individualism and also cosmic issues such as the relationship of the mundane to the trans-mundane or transcendent orders, the ordering of time, the place of primordial characteristics and the place of human contingency and finitude. (2) That the Axial tension between the mundane and transcendent orders (Jaspers, 1953; Weber 1988; Eisenstadt, 1982a; Voeglin, 1956) can be resolved by political and social ordering. In other words, the totalistic drive of modernist societies and polities has a strong utopian quality to it both in its totalitarian and liberal versions.

This second tendency can be understood with the framework of the analysis of Axial societies (Jaspers, 1953; Eisenstadt 1982a). As researchers such as Jaspers (1953), Weber (1988), Voeglin (1956) and Eisentstadt (1982a) explained, in Axial civilizations such as the Christian, Muslim, Buddhist and Jewish ones, the notion of a chasm or gap between the mundane and transcendent orders became institutionalized. These civilizations adopted the premise of a fundamental gap or disparity between "the truth of existence" – the fundamental moral, religious and metaphysical truths – and how mundane, earthly life was actually lived. One of the central aims of the religious, intellectual and cultural elites in these civilizations was to order mundane, human life so that it will be congruent with these higher, moral, metaphysical and religious truths. In these civilizations ideological and religious and often as well, political conflict focuses – to one extent or another – on the definition of the Axial chasm and what steps need to be taken in order to bridge this gap (should they be defined in religious, socio-economic or political-religious terms). Modern societies and social movements (such as Communism) tend to define this gap in socio-economic and socio-political terms (economic inequality, human rights, democracy, multi-cultural recognition) that social, political and economic ordering can resolve. This tendency reflects the belief that, in Augustinian terms, the City of God (the transcendent order) can become conflated with the City of Man (the mundane society and polity). In other words, many modern societies and movements (including contemporary American progressive ones) have a strong utopian character. They feel that it is possible to solve, once and for all, perennial social problems and dilemmas (such as inequality and difference) and erect a perfect state and society. This utopian approach informs the totalizing drive of certain ideologically motivated modern societies.

According to the reading of modernity that I am taking in this article, modern societies and elites continue the orientations of heterodox movements of the Late Antique

world and the Middle Ages (Voeglin, 1952, Eisentstadt 1982b). During the entire Late Antique and Medieval periods heterodox and millenarian movements attempt to resolve the Axial chasm by political and social ordering (by instituting a communist property regime, or a regime of communal possession of women or free love or – to take a totally different example – by freeing Judea from the Romans) (Cohn, 1999; Landes, 2000).

In contrast to this, the central theological trend in medieval Christianity denied the possibility of fully resolving the gap between transcendent ideals and mundane life by ordering the state and society during the course of ordinary human history (Voeglin, 1952). The ultimate resolution can only come at the end of history with the Second Coming and the Last Judgement, or momentarily at the moment of the administration of the Eucharist or in the Jewish context, during the recitation of the Shma[10].

This totalistic drive towards consistency does not only restrict itself to the social and political planes. Following Toulmin's illuminating discussion of Descartes' monolithic and totalistic rationalism as opposed to Montaigne's pluralistic rationalism (Toulmin, 1990) we can say that it extends to the intellectual realm as well. It also extends to the personal realm of the emotions. The great modern cultural ideals of sincerity and authenticity (Trilling 1971) demand consistency and totally of emotions. If the great problem of medieval courtly love was the unavailability of the beloved, a great problem of modern writing about love, as Flaubert, Tolstoy and Joyce suggest is ambivalence, fidelity and sincerity. As Seligman (Seligman et al., 2008) points out we are constantly obsessed with clarifying our own emotions and making sure that our love and faith extend throughout our personalities.

The Alternative Traditional Cosmology - Ritual

In contrast to liberal elites, I suggest traditionally oriented (Mesoratiim – traditionists) Mizrahi broader strata organize their social interaction according to a different principle which generates disjunction and even fragmentation. Seligman and his associates (Seligman et al., 2008) have referred to this principal as "ritual" and have suggested that it characterizes non-modern societies and in fact provides an alternative to modern totality. Ritual creates the fundamental distinction between the sacred and the profane spheres, which again, are organized in a highly disjunctive way.

The key to understanding this is that ritual creates or evokes the state of the "subjunctive" (Seligman et al., 2008)[11]. The subjunctive is not the actual reality that obtains but rather what "could" or "should" be. In other words it creates or evokes ideal states which are in contrast to what actually obtains. We can illustrate this nicely by taking an explicitly non-religious ritual – that of table manners. When we say

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[10] Together with the Silent Standing Prayer of Eighteen Benedictions (see below), the Shm'a forms the centerpiece of daily morning service. It consists of the recitation of the three biblical passsages, Deuteronomy 6, 4–9, Deuteronomy 11, 13–22 and Numbers 15, 37–41. Its essence consists of accepting God's lordship and his commandments.

[11] Victor Turner was apparently, the first researcher to utilize the concept of the subjonctive in connection with ritual (Turner, 1969).

"please pass the salt", even to one who is clearly dependent upon us or a child, we evoke an ideal reality – a subjunctive state- in which all are equal and autonomous, even children and dependents. By saying "please" we merely request that the other individual pass the salt. In principle he can refuse. This of course, in the case of a child or an underling who is dependent upon us utterly contradicts the actual power relations that characterize the situation. However, in the enclosed space of the ritual occasioned by the use of table manners, this ideal state "as it were" obtains. The actual power relations can break through if in fact the dependent individual does not pass the salt. In that case, we can bang on the table and yell – "pass the salt dammit". In our use of rituals, we pay homage to ideal subjunctive states while recognizing that, in actual fact, the reality in which we live is very different. As opposed to totalizing modern orientations, societies organized by ritual are built upon a disjunction between the ideal and the actual. In the performance of the ritual these ideal states are experienced, not only imagined. Collective and personal identity are often rooted in the "subjunctive", normative vision of social and cultural relations evoked in ritual, but it is recognized that profane, everyday life is often not organized according to these principles.

A similar situation obtains in regard to religious ritual. In Jewish religious ritual the Jewish People – the People of Israel - appears as holy, pure and one with God. Of course, the reality is somewhat different. We can illustrate this through an examination of the central "*Kedusha*" (Holiness) prayer uttered daily in the Reader's repetition of the *Amida* (the Silent Standing Prayer of Eighteen Benedictions).[12]

> We shall sanctify Your Name in this world.
> Just as they sanctify it in the heavens above.
> As it is written by your prophet: "And one angel will call another and say: "Holy, Holy, Holy is God the Lord of Hosts. The whole world is filled with His glory|".

In this prayer, Israel – represented by the praying congregation, compare themselves to the ministering angels in heaven and join with them in praising God. But anyone who has ever attended the service in an Orthodox synagogue knows that in many *shuls* (synagogues in Yiddish) immediately at the conclusion of this exalted prayer the congregants turn to each other and start to discuss politics, the stock market and sports. In other words, we have a fragmentary, distjunctive, organization of social interaction. The lofty character of the "Holiness" prayer ceases to characterize the behavior and demeanor of the congregants even in the synagogue itself. In fact, the entire service can be characterized by counter-punctual moments of sublime spiritual prayer alternating with relaxed social interactions.

The chasm between the high spiritual ideals and the profane everyday life was solved by Jewish and Christian pre-modern religious mainstream mainly by reli-

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[12] The Silent Standing Prayer is the centerpiece of every Jewish prayer service. On regular workdays it consists of Eighteen Benedictions.(really nineteen. One Benediction was added after the initial composition of the prayer.) Seven of these are petitionary. The Reader repeats the prayer out loud for the benefit of those in the congregation who cannot read. During this repitition the Holiness prayer has been added.

gious ritual. During the time of the Holiness prayer, the congregants are momentarily assimilated to the heavenly angels and their earthly lives become an extension of their supernal being. Thus the broad, traditional strata adopt the theological stance of the "Orthodox" medieval mainstream (represented by Aquinas and the Codes of Jewish Law. See Voeglin 1952, Eisenstadt 1982b) in the same fashion that the liberal elites basically continue the theological orientations of the heterodox messianic and millenarian pre-modern movements who sought to close the chasm through constructing a perfect society and polity. In other words, there is no such thing as a purely modern group or orientation. Both the liberal elites and the lower- and middle-class traditional groups are the heirs of medieval traditions that they combine with modern orientations. In other words, a central component of modern societies is the selective adaptation of pre-modern cultural orientations.

Ritual, on the one hand and modern totalism constitute two alternative paths of organizing the relations between the Ideal and the everyday routine reality. This comes out clearly in the conclusion of the expanded Sabbath "Holiness" prayer.

> Reveal Yourself from Your place O our King, and reign over us. for we are waiting for You. When will You reign in Zion? May it soon be in our days, and may You dwell there forever and all time. May You be exalted and sanctified in the midst of Jerusalem Your City….

The guiding principle of the opening part of the prayer, which we have seen above, is spatial. The heavenly angels above and the People of Israel below are united in adoration of God. The enclosed space of the ritual (and that alone) unites with the heavenly dimension. In the latter part of the Sabbath Holiness prayer the ideal is realized in time – after history, in the Messianic era. God appears to as to reign in Jerusalem and establish his ideals upon earth. The heterodox millenarial sects and modern liberalism (according to writers such as Voegline and Eisenstadt) though, attempt to realize these eschatological ideals *now, in history and through the social and political order*.

Blue collar Mizrahim organize their social interactions according the traditional "ritual" pattern. That is, they divide their social interaction into separate spheres - those that are sacred and "ritualized" and those spheres that are "profane". The sacred ritualized spheres are about collective identity - "who I am" and "who we are" - my/our core. They are permanent and non-negotiable. In contrast, the profane is more situational, changeable and negotiable. It refers to "what I do." **There is no continuity between the spheres**. That is, in the sacred spheres they evoke, create and experience a reality that is frequently opposed to the everyday, routine reality of work, livelihood etc.

One of the primary sacred spheres is that of the political. In the social sciences, the origin of the distinction between the sacred and the profane and of the cardinal importance of ritual for social life is found in the writing of Durkheim (1915). Durkheim argued that ritual grants social norms moral force and that it establishes collective boundaries. In modern secularized societies the rituals that establish such boundaries are often civic-national.

In this connection Durkheim (1915) himself points to the celebration of Bastille Day and the military parade on the Champs Elysee as as being parallel to the rituals

enacted by the aboriginal tribes in Australia. In Israel, as Don Handleman and Elihu Katz (1990) have noted, the Memorial Day ceremonies and the lighting of the Twelve Bonfires which opens the Independence Day celebrations which are viewed on television by most of the households in Israel perform identical functions. In accordance with this, politics, which translates these boundaries and norms (including, of course, the normative hierarchies of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation etc.) into the concrete resources of power and funds, has a sacred-ritual aspect. This aspect justifies and grants legitimation to the differential flow of power, money and prestige to different sectors and strata in Israeli society.

In Israel, the sacred-ritual aspect of politics is emphasized because collective boundaries and the norms associated with it are constantly contested. Thus, all sides in these strugggles (religious vs. secular, right vs. left etc.) feels that they constantly have to symbolically affirm their particular construction of norms and boundaries. This generates political activity which is essentially symbolic (such as the legislation of the Basic Law: Israel – The Nation State of the Jewish People (2018) and political discourse which is identity centered and not pragmatic. In regard to this situation, one should understand much of the discourse of the right wing Likud party as evoking a subjunctive state in which Israel is dedicated entirely only to the welfare and good of the pure ethno-national entity of the Jewish People. It is clear that such discourse does not correspond to practical political reality. Rather it reflects what the Likud supporters would like to see as the ideal state. But there is no expectation on their part that the practical, workaday state of affairs actually correspond to the ideal state. Thus is in interviews with Likud political figures such as Miri Regev, (fomer Minister of Culture and confidant of former Prime Minister Netanyahu) she proudly discusses in workaday, practical terms the funding that she channels to the Arab sector. At the same time, she is adamant when discussing the definition of the state, that Israel is to be defined only as a Jewish State dedicated in principle to the Jewish people alone (Lansky, 2018; Levy, 2020)[13] The practical distribution of budgets (and patronage) belongs to the **profane** workaday world. But when she discusses the definition of the state she moves on to the **sacred, symbolic-ritual** realm where she invokes what is to her and her supporters the subjunctive ideal of exclusive dedication to Jewihs ethno-nationalism.

Understanding this distinction is crucial to understanding the behavior of the Likud and its supporters. In the aftermath of the fourth election of the recent Israeli political crisis in the spring of 2021,[14] the Islamist United Arab List found itself to be the kingmaker between the pro-Netanyahu and anti-Netanyahu blocs. Neither bloc could form a governing coalition without the support (tacit or explicit) of the UAL. Accordingly, as he had done when he was Prime Minister, Netanyahu negotiated

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[13] MK Regev is herself of Mizrahi traditional origin

[14] Starting in January 2019 Israel entered into a political crisis in which four general elections took place withing the space of two years. The crisis was precipitated by then Prime Minister Netanyahu's successive failed attempts to form an all –right wing government. This occurred because several right wing parties while ideologically aligned with Netanyahu's Likud party, were personally and politically opposed to him. The crisis was resolved in June 2021 when a wall to wall anti-Netanyahu coalition was formed headed by Naphtali Bennet (Prime Minister) and Yair Lapid (Foreign Minister and Alternate Prime Minister). See Zonszein (2021).

with the UAL and attempted to make a deal that would allow him to form a government. All of these deals and negotiations with the UAL that Netanyahu undertook do not really bother the Likud members and supporters. At the same time, identical deals that Yair Lapid and the anti-Netanyahu bloc made and identical parliamentary support that the this bloc receives from the United Arab List (in the context of the current government) earns them unprecedented verbal abuse from the Likud and its supporters as "being traitors" and betraying Zionist ideals. Despite the analysis of liberal commentators, such behavior is not hypocritical nor inconsistent. For the Likud members and supporters there is a deep distinction between the two cases and it is to be found in relation to the subjunctive. The Likud supporters suspect that for an important part of the, Anti-Netanyahu bloc in which Left and Center parties are a crucial component, on the ideal subjunctive level, the state of Israel should be a "state of all its citizens," that is, it should lose its Jewish ethno-national character. In other words, the Likud supporters suspect that the deals that the Left and center parties (which they lump under the rubric "the Left") makes with the United Arab List are not because they are constrained to do so by political circumstances against their ideals. Rather they suspect that such deals are a fulfillment of their ideals which really do betray Israeli-Zionist commitments.

When rank and file Likud supporters talk about politics they often pass over into a ritual-subjunctive mode and they make statement concerning the well-being, welfare and security of the Jewish people (or the lack of such well-being and welfare and security). They thus affirm collective boundaries and ethnic (and gender) hierarchies. In contrast, because the liberal sector operates according to mode of realization of transcendent ideals in this mundane world through social and political ordering, since the failure of the Oslo peace process, they can only remain silent.

The family is also a social sphere, within the traditional Mizrahi population, that is imbued to one degree or another with the sacred. The connection to family is frequently bound up with a connection to the religious tradition. Family rituals such as Sabbath meals are also occasions for the performance of religious rituals which are not commonly observed by individuals such as Grace after Meals. Beyond that, the family has a strong connection to Jewish collective identity. Jews, both in Israel and the Diaspora, tend to identify themselves as Jews because of their ancestry and family (Pew Research Center 2013, 2016, 2020). This implies that in connection with family and relations between the sexes there will be great emphasis on maintaining boundaries between Jews and Arabs. Not only is this a general sentiment but there are two organizations, whose rationale is religious and ethno-national that are dedicated to enforcing this boundary. These generally "rescue" lower class Mizrahi girls (or girls from the former Soviet Union) who have formed a relationship with, or married, Arab men. The first is an ultra-Orthodox organization called Yad L'Achim which uses persuasion and religious and moral pressure (together with material incentives) to break up these unions. The second is Lehava. Its membership is that of Mizrahi traditional young men and women. Lehava combines this activity of policing the sexual borders with extreme right wing ethno-nationalism. It has been known to employ violence against Arab men. Both of these organizations justify their activities with religious arguments and with references to the purity and sanctity of the Jewish family and the

Jewish people (Engelberg, 2021). Thus, Jewish-Arab comradery in the workplace never extends to the sacred realm of the family.

Soccer (football), in Israel and other places has a strong connection to both local and national collective identity. The players often are from local neighborhoods and they belong to the local football club since they were children. Soccer games are in effect rituals which celebrate the collective identity of the fans. That is why social tensions between groups often manifest themselves in verbal and physical violence between fans of rival teams. In Israel, this celebration of collective identity often takes an anti-Arab and anti-Muslim turn, especially when teams that heavily supported by Mizrahi lower class supporters, such as Beitar Jerusalem, play against Arab teams. This aggressive celebration of collective identity has a ritualistic-subjunctive cast to it. It does not spill over into everyday life. In this subjunctive ritual, the fans celebrate the superiority and victory of the Jews over the Arabs.

Just as the anti-Arab manifestations are confined to the ritualistic space of the games, that space itself is held to be sacred. Violations of that space are considered to be desecrations of the holy. While many observers and sociologists would consider sports to be the most profane of activities due to its lack of "seriousness," a persistent (though minor) tradition within the sociology of sport insists on tying it to religion mainly due to its ritualistic and all pervasive qualities. (Shilling & Mellor, 2014). On the basis of a review of theoretical approaches to the sociology of sport and utilizing the work of both Durkheim and Weber, Shilling & Mellor (2014) suggest competing modalities of the "sporting sacred" as a framework of analyzing the ways that societies prize sporting activities. Upon that theoretical background I suggest that in situations in which sports and sports teams are closely identified with overlapping dimensions of collective identity (ethnic, religious, political) and these are engaged in conflict with other overlapping (ethno-national, religious political) identities there will be a tendency for the ritualistic aspect of sports to assume a sacred character in the sense of being non-negotiable and of incalculable value and defining the very identity of the "we". Such is the case in Israel in which the national, religious and ethnic identity of the state and society are constantly being contested.

An interesting case of the desecration of a sacred sporting space occurred in connection with Beitar Jerusalem. In 2013 the owner of Beitar Jerusalem bought two Muslim players from Chechnya. The fans, or at least a good portion of them (who generally are famous for their enthusiastic support of the team) reacted with fury. They continuously booed these players and subjected them to verbal abuse, leaving the stadium when they appeared on the playing field. They justified their actions by resorting to religious metaphors saying that the "purity" of Beitar Jerusalem had been violated or sullied and that this was a stain on the team's "honor" [15] in the sense that "family honor" can be violated by non-normative sexual relations.

In contrast to these three realms, the realm of work belongs to the everyday profane sphere (as Durkheim understood over a hundred years ago), which is organized according to different principles. In the profane sphere friendly social ties can grow based on shared work, shared interests and shared fellowship. The Jewish and Arab workers that Bronstein interviewed describe a form of social differentiation. They

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[15] See the documentary about this, Maya Zinshtein (dir.)*Pure Forever*, Yes Docu. 2017.(Hebrew).

said things like "at work there is no place for political discussions". Or "it does not matter whether one is Jewish or Arab, what matters are one's professional skills." Such statements seem to be based upon the awareness that different social spheres – specifically the sacred and profane one - are, respectively, based upon opposing principles. Thus, the comradery never spills over to those spheres that are that are colored with sacredness, such as the family, as we have seen. The comradery is restricted exclusively to the workers themselves. Working and middle class Jewish and Arab families almost never go out together.[16]

The Jewish and Arab workers that Bronstein interviewed also expressed universal values that explain the social relations that obtain at the workplace. They say things like "a human being is a human being; it does not matter whether one is an Arab or a Jew." However, statements such as these do not mark a sacred philosophical or theological truth. Rather, these statements are made as common-sense maxims, like the assertion that "there are good Jews and bad Jews; there are good Arabs and bad Arabs". Make no mistake, the Arabs are certainly human beings in the eyes of the Mizrahi workers and therefore they deserve respectful and empathetic relations. However, both the Jewish and the Arab workers do not accord the universal, autonomous individual the sacred halo that she receives from modern liberal theory. For that reason, the autonomous individual (who is detached from his ethnic or national affiliations.) does not serve as the basis for the formation of the political collective. For the political collective has to be anchored in a "sacred" basis, in some cosmic or otherwise ultimate entity or values. Such anchoring provides legitimation for the (arbitrary) social hierarchies and the differential flow of resources that the political collective and its boundaries establish.

I wish to expand upon this distinction. Liberalism, whether in Kant's or in Locke's version, makes the autonomous individual into a sacred value, as Durkheim (again) noted over a hundred years ago (Durkheim 1975/1903). According to Locke (1690), human equality and autonomy stem from the fact that God created all men "in a state of perfect freedom to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons as they think fit" and of the same "species and rank." (Locke, 1690, Sect.4). In other words, "natural rights" are granted by the Creator in the state of nature, before the creation of the political collective through the social contract. Individual rights derive from the very act of God's creation and are endowed with His sacredness.

Similarly, Kant argues in the second formulation of the categorical imperative that human beings must always be considered ends and not only means or instruments (Kant 1959/1785). Moreover, as the formulators of their own moral laws and as the source of their authority, human beings possess a unique dignity which earns them a special "respectful attention" (*Achtung*) which no other creature can claim. Thus, according to Kant as well, the individual human being is sacred and his unique dignity is the basis for human rights. Thus, is it any wonder that Michael Perry chose to entitle one of his essays on human rights " Is the Idea of Human Rights Ineliminably Religious?" (Perry, 1998) Because of the sacred status of the universal individual, it becomes the cornerstone of the liberal political order. Given this, in liberal circles,

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[16] Very sophisticated liberal academic, journalistic or legal elites might go out together in couple or family format.

the respectful treatment awarded to autonomous individuals in social and family life is immediately associated with, and translated into political terms.

The Mizrahi Jewish and Arab workers in contrast speak about sensible, practical maxims of behavior – there are good and bad Jews, there are good and bad Arabs. These maxims or rules are different than the sacred ideals that are subjunctively expressed in their rituals, and perhaps even contradict them. For the Mizrahi workers this difference or even contradiction is just another expression of the disconnected, fragmented character of their social interaction. The human, empathetic treatment of individuals is not translated into political terms because the sacred individual is not, in their outlook, the basis of political order. Rather the **sacred group** – the Jewish People is the basis for such order. (Among the Arabs, the Muslim Umma or the Arab nation or the Palestinian People is the sacred collective that grounds the political order.)

According to the totalistic, utopian liberal order, the sacred ideals of equality, human rights etc. are supposed to inform all the levels of social existence and especially the political sphere. Therefore the liberal elites are not able to explain the disconnectedness that characterizes the social interactions of the Mizrahi working classes. Even more important, their approach to spreading the liberal message, especially to those groups who do not fully accept it (Mizrachi, 2016), tends to stress the sacred liberal values. Yet, it is on the sacred plane that the most intense resistance to this message is manifested by traditional groups such as blue collar Mizrahim. The liberal values of universal human rights and equality when presented as ultimate sacred values present a direct threat to the particularistic sacred values of the blue collar Mizrahim and other traditional groups.

Summary

Blue collar Mizrahim recognize the common humanity of the Arabs, particularly those with whom they share the workspace. Nevertheless, they do not necessarily translate this recognition into a basis for constructing the political collective. The political collective as a sacred entity is constructed according to entirely different principles – the subjunctive ideals of a sacred, pure and perfect Jewish people [People of Israel).

Every intervention that is designed to strengthen democracy, human rights or peace, among broad non-liberal strata, must take into account the distinction between this sacred and the profane. Traditional strata often reject liberal initiatives because these are understood as threatening collective identity and its associated subjunctive, sacred values. As we have seen, it is specifically in profane, non-sacred interactions which take place at work, that coexistence, tolerance and friendship exist between the groups. The question that researchers and policy makers ought to ask is: Is it possible to "stretch" the profane spheres. Will traditional strata accept initiatives strengthening citizenship, fairness, equality and human rights if these are presented as part of profane relations? One example of such "stretching the boundaries of the profane" would be the meetings between the leaders of the Jewish Shas Mizrahi Ultra-Orthodox party and the leaders of the Islamic Movement (affiliated with the Muslim Broth-

erhood) that Mizrachi and Weiss described (2020). At the beginning of each meeting, each side declares that they have no intention that the meeting shall violate the social and cultural boundaries of each group. That is, each side declares its loyalty to its own particularistic subjunctive vision and ideals. On the basis of this declaration, each side can then in a profane interaction, get together with the other group and try and solve common problems of drugs and youth crime, poverty and unemployment. On the basis of this common effort, there develops, like in the auto garages, friendship, empathy and close social relations between the two groups. Further research is required in order to determine how flexible are the borders of the profane and to what extent can they be stretched.

Sociology has an uneasy relationship with liberalism. Historically, sociology had some of its most important origins both to the right of liberalism – in the critique of the Catholic reactionaries, De Maistre and De Bonald of the French Revolution (Nisbet, 1943, 1944, 1968; Milbank, 2006) and to the left- the critique of Marx of the bourgeois rights and freedoms (Marx 1972/1843). A third point of origin, German Idealism (Parsons, 1937, Hughes 1958), also arose in dialectical reaction to the Revolution and shared important aspects of its analytical approach with the other points of origin.[17]

While some of its most important practitioners such Toqueville and Durkheim (and in his own way, Max Weber) affirmed liberal values, they were always aware that the account that sociological analysis gave of human society was infinitely richer than the bare bones account that liberal theory provided – which concentrated on the individual and her rights and the state. In recent years, sociology in the United States, and, under its impact, in other parts of the world such as Israel, has turned into a sort of handmaiden of liberalism. It measures the deviation from such liberal values such as equality and human rights, taking these to be "natural", self-evident values and not cultural constructions.[18] In doing so it not only tends to give up on the rich analytical repertoire of its birthright, but to forfeit its ability to give an adequately rich account of the people and societies that are the objects of its investigation.

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[17] A fourth origin was in the investigation of the immigrant and urban populations in the University of Chicago and in Columbia University at the turn of the Twentieth Century.

[18] At the same time there are important sociologists who present alternatives to the liberal grammer. See Baehr 2019, Bellah 1985, Bellah 2017 and Barbara Celarent 2017.

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