

*Religious Zionism
Post Disengagement:
Future Directions*

EDITED BY
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THE MICHAEL SCHARF PUBLICATION TRUST
OF THE YESHIVA UNIVERSITY PRESS
NEW YORK



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The Orthodox Forum
gratefully acknowledges the support
of the Joseph J. and Bertha K. Green Memorial Fund
at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary
established by Morris L. Green, of blessed memory.

The Orthodox Forum Series
is a project of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary,
an affiliate of Yeshiva University

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Religious Zionism post disengagement: future directions / edited by Chaim I. Waxman.
p. cm. – (Orthodox Forum Series)

ISBN 978-1-60280-022-9

1. Religious Zionism – Israel – History. 2. Religious Zionism – United States – History. 3. Israel and the diaspora. 4. Judaism and state. 5. Religion and state. 6. Jews – Israel – Politics and government – 21st century. 7. Jews – United States – Politics and government–21st century. I. Waxman, Chaim Isaac.

DS150.R32R45 2008

296.3'82–dc22

2008031986

* * *

Distributed by

KTAV Publishing House, Inc.

930 Newark Avenue

Jersey City, NJ 07306

Tel. (201) 963-9524

Fax. (201) 963-0102

www.ktav.com

bernie@ktav.com

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This book was typeset by Koren Publishing Services

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Holy Land in Exile: The *Torah MiTzion* Movement – Toward a New Paradigm for Religious Zionism

Adam S. Ferziger

INTRODUCTION

The familiar sights and sounds of the *beit midrash* drew me in. Young men wearing knitted skullcaps and sandals, some of them bearded, were sitting in twosomes and debating the intricacies of ancient talmudic texts. The large study hall was lined with books and panels made of Jerusalem Stone that were engraved with citations from the works of Rabbi Avraham Isaac Hacoen Kook.¹ Huge volumes rested upon the tables that separated the pairs, most of them in

their twenties. As I watched these students engaged in intellectual duel, *tzitzit* fringes spilling out of their untucked shirts, their excited Hebrew discussions brought back warm memories. It was soon after finishing high school that I went to Israel, enrolled in a yeshiva and learned side-by-side with young *hesdernikim* who dedicated five years of their lives to a program mixing intensive Jewish study with service in the Israel Defense Forces.²

But this time I wasn't in the hills of Jerusalem, I was in Cleveland.³

How had this Israeli-style institution sprouted in Middle America? Indeed, how had more than twenty such kollels (loosely, post-yeshiva centers for Torah fellows),⁴ all predicated on that quint-essentially Israel-based model, taken root throughout the world? In the following discussion I will argue that the emergence of this framework points to a strengthening of the global, "transnational"⁵ direction within Religious Zionism.⁶

That day in September 2004 was my first encounter with the beit midrash of the Cleveland Torat Zion Kollel (Torah of Zion, henceforth *CTTK*). This institution had been created ten years earlier through a collaborative effort between Bob Stark, philanthropist and Orthodox activist, and the leaders of Yeshivat Har Etzion, one of the oldest and best known Israeli hesder yeshivas.⁷ Har Etzion committed to sending senior rabbis to Cleveland for two-year stints, along with a group of post-Army married students.⁸ There they established a study hall in a local day school that served as a base both for advancing their own talmudic erudition and for educational activities with the student body. In addition, they created an open beit midrash to offer Torah learning opportunities in the evenings and on weekends for the surrounding Orthodox community.⁹ Stark provided the initial annual budget of \$250,000 for the first few years.¹⁰

Almost simultaneously, a similar framework was initiated by Har Etzion alumnus Rabbi Jonathan Glass in Cape Town, South Africa.¹¹ Shortly after, the *Torah MiTzion* organization (henceforth *TMZ*) was inaugurated in Jerusalem. Under the guidance of founding executive director Zéev Schwartz, also a former Har Etzion student,¹² it became a worldwide movement that today encompasses twenty-

two such Religious Zionist kollels. They range now from Moscow¹³ to Montevideo¹⁴ and from Melbourne¹⁵ to Memphis.¹⁶ Fifteen of them are located in North America, in addition to seven affiliated Jewish Learning Initiative (JLI) programs on major university campuses.¹⁷

TMZ is part of a broader phenomenon: the emergence since the 1970s – both within the modernist and haredi (traditionalist) Orthodox sectors – of the community kollel as a new framework for Jewish education.¹⁸ The community kollel can be described as a cottage industry within American haredi Jewry, with over thirty functioning programs and an average of four new start ups each year.¹⁹ The growth of these initiatives implies, among others, a change in focus away from collective ritual and toward individualized study as the method for strengthening Jewish life in America. Indeed, Yeshiva University (henceforth YU) the flagship institution of American Modern Orthodoxy, sponsored its first community kollel in 2004, and is in the process of trying to create its own nationwide network.²⁰

In previous articles I have explored the commonalities and differences between TMZ and Lithuanian-style haredi community kollels,²¹ as well as between the latter and the hasidic Chabad House.²² Among others, I have focused on the ways that kollels were developed by the haredi Orthodox as vehicles for “reaching out” to nonobservant and unaffiliated Jews. By contrast, from the outset the main orientation of TMZ (and more recently YU’s kollels) was inreach – strengthening the religious and ideological commitments of active participants in Modern Orthodox schools and synagogues. This distinction offers insight into the main concerns and outlooks of each group and the local communities that sponsor them.²³

Here the focus is more specifically on TMZ and the implications of this nascent movement for the evolution of Religious Zionism. While reference is made to TMZ activities throughout the world, the basis for the discussion is the Israeli headquarters and its North American branches. My central contention is that TMZ points to a shift away from conceptions that until recently dominated Israeli Zionism in general and Israeli Religious Zionism in particular. This

is reflected in its global character, its ambivalence in respect to promotion of *aliya*, or immigration to Israel, as well as in the cooperative Israeli-Diaspora nature of the project. Toward the conclusion of the discussion I will also suggest an alternative to the prevailing TMZ model that would address some of the critiques that have been leveled against the movement.

To this end, I will first describe two ideals that long stood at the core of Israeli Zionism's approach to Jewish life outside of Israel, *shelilat ha-galut* (negation of the exile) and *shelihut* (sending emissaries) and the evolutions that took place in these terms from the last decades of the twentieth century. In addition, I will offer some brief comments about the place of Zionism within American Orthodoxy that will serve to contextualize some of the tensions that will be described afterwards. Subsequently, I will explore how TMZ navigates these concepts and explain why its structure, outlook and activities represent a modification in the previous paradigms. While TMZ is the main subject, data regarding the haredi and YU kollels, as well as Chabad, will be utilized to sharpen appreciation of the relative uniqueness of the Religious Zionist model.

SHELILAT HA-GALUT AND SHELIHUT

One of the fundamental motifs of the Modern Zionist rebellion against tradition was its negative perception of Jewish life outside the Land of Israel. Initially, this attitude found its most vehement expression among the anti-religious streams of the movement. The exile was the venue where the Jews had lost their historic national character and mutated into a powerless and passive minority lacking the will as well as the skills to take their destiny into their own hands. Religious beliefs that centered on praying for divine intervention had replaced national pride and ingenuity. Obsession with ritual law and practices symbolized the stagnation and abnormality of the ghettoized *galut*, or exile.²⁴ Naturally, this was an issue that generated a great deal of ambivalence among the Religious Zionists who sought to synthesize the modern political aspirations of Jewish nationalism with rabbinic tradition and authority.²⁵

During the late twentieth century *shelilat ha-galut* began to

lose credibility among the predominant secular Zionist schools of thought.²⁶ The distancing of Israelis from this previously-held notion can be understood as part of a societal maturation process that no longer needed the negation of the Diaspora “other” and its religious traditions to sustain a cohesive collective identity. Alternatively, one can view this change as a symptom of a broader sense of ideological malaise²⁷ – or possibly an example of the influence of Post-Zionism that seeks to detach the State of Israel from its role as a unique homeland for the Jewish people.²⁸

Concurrent with this secular about-face, the anti-exile position was championed from the late 1960s by the dominant trend in Religious Zionist thought and education, the Kook Messianic school.²⁹ Already in the ideas of Rabbi Avraham Isaac Hacohen Kook, whose writings achieved canonic stature among his disciples,³⁰ the galut is described as placing limits on the Torah and the Jewish people (*zimzum* in kabbalistic terms). This stagnant condition is juxtaposed with the boundless spiritual creativity that comes to fruition when the Jewish people live in their natural habitat. It is in the ideology of his students, most prominently his son Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, as well as their followers, that negation of the exile actually transformed into demonization. The Land of Israel is the wellspring of holiness, while the galut is the home of the *goyim*, or gentiles, who despise the Jews. Living beside them is the seed of Israel’s destruction. Thus, “The only true Israel is redeemed Israel: Israeli sovereignty, Israeli Armed forces, the nation as an integrated whole and not in Diaspora exiles.”³¹

This position was partially a reaction to the Holocaust which, in Kook the younger’s opinion, was the “absolute negation of a Jewish reality in the exile.”³² “The destruction of the exile...clarifies substantively...that the true existence of the Torah is only in our place – here, which exists exclusively for us.”³³ Indeed, this radical rejection of galut existence was part of a broader messianic ideology that began to dominate mainstream Religious Zionism after the Israeli victory in 1967. It focused on expanding the borders and strengthening Jewish sovereignty over all of biblical Israel in conjunction with the prophetic promise of ingathering of the exiles. Not only did a

flourishing Jewish exile run counter to the new redemptive reality, it was also a stumbling block to nurturing an Israeli population large enough to control the entire Land.³⁴

Since the 1970s, the ideology put forward by the Kook school gradually infiltrated and eventually set the tone for Israeli Religious Zionism both on a political and educational level. To offer but a few examples, the students of Zvi Yehuda Kook were highly influential in the rise and development from the 1970s of the Gush Emunim settlement movement.³⁵ Educationally, the Kookian Mercaz ha-Rav yeshiva in Jerusalem became the standard bearer for high level Religious Zionist Torah study. In addition to establishing an independent national educational network that runs from pre-school on up, many of its graduates created their own offshoots, while others gained leading positions within the state educational system. Similarly, Bnei Akiva, Religious Zionism's largest youth movement and the sponsor of an independent network of Religious Zionist high schools throughout Israel (as well as two high schools in North America), has long been led by prominent disciples of the Kook school.³⁶

To be sure, not all of the followers adopted a thoroughly demonic perception of the exile,³⁷ and other voices were heard within Religious Zionism besides the greater Kook camp.³⁸ Notwithstanding, the core messianic Zionism that it promulgated – which emphasizes Jewish control over all of historical Israel, the illegitimacy of galut existence and the need to advance the process of ingathering of the exiles – rose to dominate Religious Zionist ideology and education since the War of 1967.³⁹

Below I will explore to what degree the self-stated mission and activities of TMZ, a movement predicated on servicing the Jews of the galut, is consistent with the aforesaid approach of Israeli Religious Zionism toward the Diaspora. Does the growth of TMZ support the idea that “the true existence of the Torah is only in our place?” Before doing so, however – due to the classification of the TMZ rabbis and students as Zionist emissaries, I will first describe the evolution in the concept of shelihut that took place during the course of the twentieth century.

Since its inception in the 1920s, the Jewish Agency has pro-

moted sending out emissaries to Jewish communities in the Diaspora as a central mission of Zionism and the Jewish State. The *shelihim* (emissaries) were involved in a host of activities ranging from teaching Hebrew and Jewish studies and running youth movements, to facilitating clandestine illegal immigration, providing medical care, and serving as nature counselors and kitchen workers at Jewish summer camps. From the Zionist and Israeli perspective, the main aim and justification for this complex and costly campaign was to convince Diaspora Jews to immigrate to Israel – or at least facilitate this goal indirectly by encouraging them to visit. This was, of course, consistent with the negative view of the exile that had long dominated classical Zionist discourse. Religious Zionists, even those who did not share the Kook school's extreme antagonism toward the exile, also viewed generating immigration to Israel as the main goal in working with Jews abroad. As the former National Religious Party (NRP) figure, Moshe Haim Shapiro, put it, "In the Diaspora top priority must be accorded to the encouragement of aliya on the part of religious Jews who wish to settle in Eretz Israel."⁴⁰ Indeed the members of the communities throughout the world who hosted the emissaries may have viewed them more as reinforcements for their own local educational needs than as aliya agents. That being said, particularly since 1948, for the most part they presented the Israelis as the exclusively authentic Jews who came from the center of the Jewish universe to share some of their pure Jewish identity and spirit with their fractured and assimilation prone brothers and sisters.⁴¹

Recent scholarly discussion of shelihut has pointed to the abandonment of the classical Zionist view of aliya as the central purpose in sending government funded emissaries abroad. Along with the decline in the shelilat ha-galut approach to secular Zionism, alternative perceptions of the Israel-Diaspora relationship were introduced which filtered down into the shelihut enterprise. Rather than the center going to the periphery in order to encourage its inhabitants to return home, new terms like Jewish peoplehood, partnership, and *mifgash* (meeting) became the main reason for sending emissaries, as well as encouraging visits to Israel.⁴² The implication of this fresh terminology is that both sides of the Israel-diaspora axis possess

inherent legitimacy and that the relationship is reciprocal. Rather than encouraging the galut to join or at least idealize the Zionist collective, each participant has what to learn from the other. Ultimately, the goal is to facilitate the quest of individual Jews throughout the globe – including Israelis – to discover their particular Jewish identity and connection to the Jewish people.⁴³

A third position has also been articulated since the 1990s regarding the goal of shelihut that seeks to compromise between promotion of aliya as the only response to the galut and the complete removal of the State of Israel from its pedestal above all other Jewish communities. The adherents of what has been termed “New Zionism” want to create a fresh paradigm that recognizes the importance of individual quest and appreciates Jewish life throughout the world. Yet they feel that ideally and practically speaking, Israel is the cultural and spiritual center of the Jewish people to whom all other communities turn for enrichment and inspiration. To a certain degree this is a reversion to or fulfillment of Ahad Ha’am’s (Asher Ginzburg) vision of cultural Zionism. Unlike almost all other early Zionist ideologues, he sought to downplay the contradiction between the political aims of Zionism and the continuation of Jewish life in exile.⁴⁴ The shelihim in an age of New Zionism are sent abroad to act as cultural agents who stimulate and reinforce the idea that Israel is the center of Jewish life and the deepest reservoir of Jewish culture and knowledge. Yet in the spirit of partnership, they are meant to learn through their exposure to other Jews, and to strengthen their sense of connection with them. Aliya is certainly a valuable option, but it is far from the *raison d’être* for sending shelihim.⁴⁵

As part of examining which paradigm of serving as an emissary is closest to the model developed by TMZ since 1994, it bears noting that the Zionists were not the only Jewish group in the twentieth century that turned shelihut into a central aim of their movement. Particularly after the rise of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson to the helm of the Chabad-Lubavitch hasidic sect in 1951, this Brooklyn based movement turned shelihut into its most hallowed vocation. Rather than promoting a land-centered ideal, however, the shlichim of Chabad seek to fulfill their leader’s aim of

bringing all Jews closer to his vision of God and the Torah by creating religious centers known as Chabad houses.⁴⁶ Chabad is truly a global organization, with over four thousand emissaries serving in sixty countries.⁴⁷ Partly in response to Chabad, since the 1980s the non-hasidic haredi world also introduced shelihut as part of its worldview, a significant adjustment from the enclavist position that it previously championed. The Jerusalem-based yeshiva organizations Aish Hatorah⁴⁸ and Ohr Somayach,⁴⁹ for example, both established their own outreach centers to nonobservant and unaffiliated Jews in communities throughout the world.

As pointed out above, from the late 1980s American Lithuanian-style yeshivas also internalized the shelihut ethos and created outreach kollels in North American communities. Similarly to TMZ, these frameworks are built around a group of young men and their wives who divide their time between personal daily study in the kollel beit midrash and providing Torah learning opportunities and informal programming to local Jews. Yet like Chabad, Israel orientation and aliya are by no means the educational aims of these organizations. Rather, strengthening connections to Judaism and raising levels of observance are the exclusive goals of these initiatives. Both Chabad shelihim and haredi community kollel *jungerleit* (fellows) are encouraged to remain permanently in their postings.⁵⁰

On the surface, then, TMZ shares characteristics with both the Zionist shlichut concept and the haredi variants. Exploring how the organization and its branches navigate the tense path between these models will offer insight into the new paradigm for Religious Zionism that it engenders.

AMERICAN ORTHODOXY AND SPIRITUAL ZIONISM

American Orthodox Jews, as Chaim Waxman has demonstrated, show a stronger attachment to Israel than any other Jewish denomination. They visit more often, send their children regularly to study for extended periods, and thousands have made Israel their permanent home.⁵¹ Indeed, they account for a great deal of the increase in North American aliya from 1400 in the year 2000 to 3201 in 2006.⁵² Yet since the founding of the State of Israel, only some 120,000 North

American Jews have made it their permanent home. By contrast, the American Jewish population is estimated to be between five and six million.⁵³ Thus, there is an increased interest in aliya, and the Orthodox may be leading the way. But like their fellow American Jews, most of the Orthodox are not motivated to uproot themselves. This does not mean that they are anti-Zionists or even neutral on the issue. This view certainly has its proponents among the American Orthodox, including some who actually choose to settle in the Land of Israel, but it is a minority opinion. Certainly for most Modern Orthodox Jews, Zionism or some form of connection to the State of Israel functions as a core tenet of their American Judaism.⁵⁴

The approach of Modern Orthodoxy to the role of Israel resembles the “Americanized version of spiritual Zionism” articulated by Israel Friedlander in the early twentieth century and adopted by the Conservative movement. “The vision that now evolved,” in the words of Evyatar Friesel, “was that of an American Judaism made richer by the Zionist influence.”⁵⁵ Mordedcai M. Kaplan too saw Zionism as a core element for cultivating a worldwide sentiment of Jewish peoplehood, and deeply opposed the negation of the galut. He believed that one of Zionism’s main functions was to motivate diaspora Jewry to advance their own connection to their Jewish heritage.⁵⁶ Similarly, the aim for the Modern Orthodox is for Zionism and the existence of the State of Israel to inform their Judaism and inspire all aspects of their spiritual lives. As long as Orthodox Jews can alleviate their concerns regarding the halakhic imperative of settlement in the Land, living in America is not necessarily viewed as contradicting identification with Zionism. Alternatively, there are certainly Modern Orthodox Jews who would prefer to acknowledge that they are living a non-ideal existence in the galut, with all the guilt that this entails. In both cases, however, the common approach is that Zionism is meaningful, and even central, to living a Modern Orthodox life in America.⁵⁷

With an appreciation for the historical changes that have taken place in Israeli approaches to the Diaspora and to shelihut since the end of the twentieth century, as well as for American Orthodox perceptions of Zionism, I will now look more closely at TMZ itself.

The discussion is split into five main categories: Israeli Perspectives, North American Viewpoints, Two Zionist Yeshivas, A Post Modern Alternative, and Conclusion: *Torat Eretz Israel* and the Transportation of Place. The first focuses on what ideals the TMZ organization and its emissaries hope to achieve. The second looks at motivations, attitudes and developments among TMZ's North American hosts. The third highlights one of the possible sources for the alternative direction in Religious Zionism through a brief consideration of the roles of Yeshivat Har Etzion (Gush) and Kookian yeshivas in TMZ. The fourth section suggests a variation on the community kollel that addresses some of the problems that have been raised regarding the current predominant TMZ model. In the conclusion, I expand upon how TMZ points to a shift in the prevailing Religious Zionist paradigm.

ISRAELI PERSPECTIVES

Haim Zohar is the former Israel Consul in New York and Secretary General of the World Zionist Organization, and currently the vice-chairman of TMZ. In 2006, he published an article about TMZ in a collection honoring the centennial of Religious Zionist education. There he asks: "What is our direction? Outreach or inreach? Aliya?"⁵⁸ His answer is inreach, strengthening the commitment of the "hard-core Jews."⁵⁹ As to encouraging aliya, he states unequivocally that he is against any talk on the subject by the kollel emissaries with the local Jews. Such discussions are ineffective and at best tend to produce immigrants motivated by fear for their personal welfare rather than deep-seated love for the Land. Mass Western immigration will only take place after the Torah of Israel is planted in the hearts of Diaspora Jewry. The practical goal of the kollels, according to Zohar, is to help educate the Jews of the world toward an appreciation of the Torah and Zion as fundamental and inter-related concepts within Judaism.⁶⁰ This mission is predicated on full partnership between the shelihim and the local communities, and must be devoid of any sense of superiority or condescension on the part of the Israelis. Broadly speaking, he hopes that by Israeli yeshiva graduates teaching the Torah and interacting with Jews from

around the globe, “a world-wide fellowship of those who study in Zionist kollels will arise – an ideological-spiritual movement and not a political-organizational one.”⁶¹

This statement by one of the founders and main figures in the TMZ hierarchy shows no hint of the negativism regarding the galut that entered mainstream Religious Zionist education through the Kook school. Moreover, it significantly downgrades aliya as the central message of shelihut. It encourages, instead, the creation of a global network that is reminiscent of the land-neutral “Jewish Peoplehood” approach to shelihut on one hand, and the haredi Torah-focused community kollel on the other.⁶² More likely, however, it can be understood as consistent with the “New Zionism” model of shelihut that seeks to balance between a reciprocal Israel-diaspora relationship and an Ahad Ha’am-like effort to bring forth the fruits of Judaism’s cultural and spiritual center to the periphery. As such, Zohar’s mandate seems perfectly suited to the “spiritual Zionism” of American Modern Orthodoxy.

From a number of standpoints it can be argued that Zohar’s article should not necessarily be viewed as representative of the TMZ approach. For one, it is the opinion of a single individual who is offering his vision of the movement. In addition, it appears in a *festschrift* published by the World Religious Zionist Mizrachi organization. In the interest of not alienating the diaspora communities who sponsor the TMZ kollels, the author may have taken pains to downplay the underlying desire to promote aliya. Nevertheless, I believe that, for the most part, Zohar’s essay is an accurate representation of the tension inherent in the TMZ concept, and a reliable expression of the ideological implications that it entails.

The TMZ organization and emissaries certainly would like to see more of the Diaspora Jews with whom they interact immigrating to Israel. Like the outreach activist who is empowered when a previously unaffiliated Jew accepts full halakhic observance, for Israeli Religious Zionists aliya remains the ultimate confirmation of their ideal. Yet the focus of contemporary haredi outreach has shifted from full transformation to the less demanding aim of strengthening connection to Judaism.⁶³ Following this analogy, TMZ’s main thrust

is toward buttressing the identification of Orthodox Jews with Torah study and the Land of Israel, not encouraging them to uproot their lives. As such, the aliya imperative has not been renounced, but it has been downgraded significantly.

This interpretation is supported by the official literature published by TMZ and that which appears on the main website of the organization. Consistently the emphasis is placed on expanding and upgrading the opportunities and level of Torah study taking place in local communities, strengthening Jewish identity and Israel-diaspora relations, and promoting what is referred to as the “values of Religious Zionism” – the most prominent of them being an undefined, almost mystical idea called “*Torat Eretz Israel*” (Torah of the Land of Israel).⁶⁴ Rarely in any of the publications does the idea of direct promotion of aliya appear. When it does pop up, it is low on the priority scale, almost hidden.

To offer a number of representative examples: on the inside cover of the folder given out both to communities considering opening up a TMZ kollel, as well as to yeshiva students being recruited for shelihut, the following aims are listed in order:

...to transmit the values of Religious Zionism by promoting the lofty ideal of *Torat Israel*, *Am Israel* and *Eretz Israel*

[TMZ] stresses the importance of building ties between all Jews and undertakes to strengthen Jewish identity and unity.

[TMZ] aims to bridge the gap between Israel and Diaspora communities, emphasizing the centrality of Israel, as it is written: “from Zion the Torah will come forth...”

It is notable that the end of the first paragraph is an inverted allusion to the Mizrachi Religious Zionist movement slogan attributed to Rabbi Meir Bar-Ilan: “*Am Israel, be-Eretz Israel, al pi Torat Israel*” (the nation of Israel, in the Land of Israel, according to the Torah of Israel). Whereas in the original statement the Torah is intended to

define the nature of life in the Land, here it is the “Torah of the Land” that is being carried by the emissaries to the nation in the Diaspora. In addition, as opposed to the original attempt at combining the three components into one cohesive whole, here each value can stand independently. Consistent with this tone, the self-description of TMZ on its official website states: “The aim of the program is to assist the local leadership to strengthen Judaism in their communities through the creation of a unique Torah atmosphere which includes Judaism and Zionism.”⁶⁵ Similarly, in a letter dated Kislev 5767 (November-December, 2006) recruitment director Moshe Gadot focused on the idea that “Today, more than ever, there is great importance to spreading Torah, and particularly ‘*Torat Eretz Israel*’ among the Jewish communities that are struggling with problems of assimilation and problems of Jewish and religious identity.”

The end of the aforesaid letter, however, hints that while shelilat ha-galut of the Kookian sort is clearly nowhere to be found, the classical Zionist approach to shelihut that focused on promoting aliya still makes an appearance. When describing the positive results of the TMZ effort, Gadot lists the following (in order):

Batei Midrash in the spirit of Religious Zionism.

Many community members have begun to dedicate time to Torah study and as such strengthen their connections to the Torah and the nation.

A growing number of young men and women from the diaspora come and participate in Zionist oriented programs in Israel.

Families come on exploration and identification trips, and Thank God, we are beginning to see the results in aliya to the Land.⁶⁶

Clearly the immediate goal is to create bastions of Torah and Religious Zionism abroad, but increasing aliya remains a distant and certainly highly laudable endeavor. In the same spirit, the guidelines to the shelihim on the TMZ website, include:

Aims of the *Kollelim Tzioniim* in the Diaspora

1. To endeavor to disseminate the study and knowledge of Torah amongst *Am Israel* by religious *Shlichim*, who shall be Zionist models of Torah scholars, acting in the spirit of: “Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace.”
2. To strengthen Jewish identity and to forge links with all Jews.
3. To bridge between Israel and Jewish communities in the Diaspora, while emphasizing the centrality of the State of Israel.
4. To disseminate the values of religious Zionism by promoting the ideal of “*Am Israel* in *Eretz Israel* according to *Torat Israel*” and by personal example to the various target populations: students, youth, adults, men and women.
5. To encourage *Aliya*; to encourage educational programs in Israel, of both short and long duration.⁶⁷

Unlike in the TMZ folder cited earlier, a more accurate rendition of the Mizrachi slogan appears. More significantly, the goal of promoting aliya is stated openly. That being said, it remains last on the list of priorities.

The fact that encouraging aliya only appears on a list that is intended for the consumption of the Israeli shelihim is significant. The classical Zionist approach to shelihut has not disappeared from TMZ’s Religious Zionism. It remains a hallowed goal or a prized achievement, but in practice it has been severely downgraded. For one, most Western Jews will not immigrate and therefore concentrating the efforts of the shelihim on this aim would be self-defeating. In addition, even if the Israelis want to talk about aliya, if the host communities were to know that this was their main purpose they might be less eager to support the programs. Indeed, the former head of the TMZ kollel in Detroit – himself a graduate of a yeshiva headed by a Kookian disciple – was lambasted by some of the local kollel sponsors for focusing too much on aliya. When time came

to replace him, a request was made to send a head emissary with a different focus.⁶⁸

These tensions suggest sublimation, rather than a full renouncement of efforts to increase immigration. Yet the end result remains that TMZ is a banner Religious Zionist initiative that has grown dramatically since its inception in 1994, in which encouraging aliya has been formally removed from center stage. This does not contradict the fact, expressed by both its supporters and critics, that its existence in North American communities has raised consciousness regarding aliya and studying in Israel. What it does say, is that this is not its reason for being. Its primary focus is on strengthening the existing religious atmosphere among American Modern Orthodox Jews.

Indeed, a review of questionnaires filled out by TMZ shelihim upon return from their period abroad suggests that for most of them encouraging aliya was not the central focus. Among the five that returned from the Chicago TMZ kollel in 2003, for example, only one wrote that his main goal was to convince local Jews to immigrate. The others spoke primarily in terms of increasing the amount of Torah learning within the Modern Orthodox community, providing a “Zionist alternative” to the many thriving haredi community kollels in the area, and doing outreach with the non-affiliated Jewish population in the area. Actually, one of the chief causes of disappointment among the group was that, unlike their initial expectations, the sponsor community wanted them to work almost exclusively with the observant families. Reaching out to more rapidly assimilating Jewish populations, by no means an inherently Zionist endeavor, was not part of their mandate.⁶⁹

It would appear that the role models put forward by the TMZ emissaries certainly inspire individuals to consider immigration to Israel more seriously or at least a term of study. At the same time, TMZ’s heightened position and expansion within Modern Orthodox communities in America, and for that matter throughout the globe, insinuates an alternative to the classical Religious Zionist focus on aliya. TMZ creates and sustains dynamic Religious Zionist enclaves within American Modern Orthodox neighborhoods. By doing so it

helps to instill a new vitality to Orthodox communal life outside of Israel – paradoxically one that makes aliya less of a necessity. When *Torat Eretz Israel* is so easily accessible, and without the sacrifices that full-fledged uprooting entails, there is less motivation for taking the more radical step. This is particularly so at a time when Israeli society has abandoned much of the collectivism and idealism that was once its main drawing card. Individuals will always exist whose commitment to Zionism leads them to move. But among the majority who are inclined toward “spiritual Zionism,” there is comfort in knowing that one can live in the diaspora and still interact with hesder yeshiva graduates and their wives. It certainly makes the task of preserving a utopian picture of modern day Israel easier. As to the cathartic experience of a visit to the Western Wall, to Hebron, or to Masada, the heightened availability and lower cost of international air travel can satisfy this need on a regular basis without having to revamp one’s life.⁷⁰

Taken a step further, in the process of creating this network of Israeli Torah centers outside the country, TMZ’s Religious Zionism has buttressed its global, transnational quality. Certainly such a shift from the mainstream approach of Religious Zionism was not the intention of its Israeli leaders. Neither was this clearly what the North American sponsors of the TMZ kollels had in mind. Yet it is consistent with the “spiritual Religious Zionism” that prevails within North American Modern Orthodoxy. The following section, which focuses on three TMZ chapters, supports the transnational quality of TMZ that I have identified. In addition, it raises critiques that call into question the ongoing viability of the current TMZ model.

NORTH AMERICAN VIEWPOINTS

TMZ is a movement that is predicated simultaneously on centralization and decentralization. Through the base office in Jerusalem, an organ has been created for recruiting kollel members from Israeli yeshivas, providing them with some basic training, generating interest among diaspora communities, matching the Israelis with appropriate locales, handling the complex financial issues and logistics that such a mass endeavor entails, and providing the shelihim with

the sense that they are part of something larger than an individual kollel.⁷¹ Sometimes it even helps raise seed money for new chapters. On the other hand, the decision of each community to sponsor a kollel is highly individual. It may stem from the private initiative of a wealthy local Jew, but it generally results from the collective efforts of a coalition of rabbis and laymen. In addition, the communal needs that motivate the establishment of TMZ are not identical, but as will be seen below, are often quite similar. While the TMZ headquarters may have both a vision for the movement and a plan for achieving it, its loosely affiliated communities may see things differently. This has resulted in a great deal of tension and accounts for some of the ups and down of various branches. Keeping this complex dynamic in mind, it is instructive to look at the variety of motivations, goals, and critiques expressed by communal representatives.

Like the TMZ Israeli representatives, some of their North American hosts express the tension between a classical Zionist approach to shelihut and a less well-defined recognition of the centrality of Israel. Still others appreciate the energy and dynamism of the Israeli yeshiva graduates, but primarily because they feel that they can be effective disseminators of Torah. Indeed, in certain cases it would appear that the main attraction of TMZ has little to do with the specifics of Israel and Zionism. What TMZ offers is simply an educational product that is perceived by Orthodox Jews as authentic without being haredi. To offer one bold example, in 2003 a group of local rabbis and laymen tried, unsuccessfully, to create a TMZ kollel in Toronto. In their application to TMZ they expressed intense feelings of being attacked from both the haredi and liberal sides of the spectrum:

Toronto has numerous haredi kollels and even a very successful kollel run by a Female Reform Rabbi, but none in the “centrist orthodox community”... The *Dati-Leumi, national religious* community in Toronto suffers from a sense of inferiority. Many look toward the *haredi* community for serious learning and religious commitment. We would like our community to learn that intense learning and deep Torah knowledge is not limited to the *haredi*

world. Our goal in having a Kolel Mitzion in Toronto is to demonstrate that seriousness and dedication to learning and Torah observance exists in the *Dati Leumi* community as well.⁷²

Here I will concentrate on three of the veteran TMZ kollels: Cleveland, Chicago, and Montreal. Through the analysis of these branches I will describe the variety of attitudes and the complexities that arise from the perspective of the North American sponsors. A good example to begin with is the first Zionist kollel in North America, CTKK.

When Bob Stark, the driving force behind the founding of the CTKK, was asked to describe the idea at the basis of creating an Israeli kollel in Cleveland, he declared: "I wanted to bring Israeli scholars to Cleveland who are living Torah a different way than those of us in exile... Theirs is the Torah of redemption and as such has a different flavor."⁷³ According to former CTKK Kollel Head, Rabbi Binyamin Blau, the current principal of the Fuchs Mizrachi Upper School (henceforth FMUS) where CTKK's weekday activities are housed, Stark is an avid follower of the Kookian school. His aim, therefore, was to create a "total *Zioni* (Zionist) experience." This, Blau claimed, was expressed in the hope that by the time an FMUS student was graduated, they would "no longer feel comfortable with living in the diaspora." Indeed, according to Blau, since CTKK was established there has been a marked increase in aliya among Modern Orthodox Jews in Cleveland.⁷⁴ Yet even in CTKK, as the kollel developed, the aliya thrust was tempered by other more locally-oriented goals. As Blau acknowledged, when tension arises between strengthening connections to Torah and Zionism, clearly Torah is the priority.⁷⁵

Rabbi Michael Unterberg is another veteran FMUS teacher who has maintained his affiliation with CTKK since its establishment. Like other Judaic studies instructors in the school, in the afternoons he studies in a program that allows for continued enrichment and personal intellectual growth known as the Kollel Mechanchim. On the issue of whether Torah or Zionism comes first, he is emphatic about Torah. The main motivation for the founding of CTKK, in his view, was actually defensive. As a community under the strong influence

of the haredi Telz Yeshiva, Modern Orthodoxy in Cleveland had “a bad self-image.” “Zionist-Orthodox” role models were testimony to the existence of an “authentic” non-haredi brand of Judaism that was not just a product of compromise. In his opinion, the type of “Israel-centric extremism” that Stark had sometimes promoted was detrimental to CTTK’s main goal of generating heightened excitement regarding Torah study.⁷⁶ Consistent with this critique, the current CTTK mission statement seems closer to the view of Zionism as an integral part of American Modern Orthodox identity than as a practical directive:

This “Torat Tzion” inspires those of us in *Galut* (Diaspora) to develop a profound commitment to Torah and to cultivate a real relationship with Israel. Through this process we are invigorated and motivated to assume the responsibilities of a people who have been returned to our land...⁷⁷

Recent events suggest that in the battle within CTTK between Torah and Zionism, the pendulum has swung clearly toward Torah. According to Blau, due to economic difficulties that developed since Stark cut his yearly funding to \$50,000, as well as dissatisfaction with the caliber and language skills of the kollel heads and emissaries being sent by TMZ, “for the moment we have taken a step back from the Israeli model.”⁷⁸ As much as the Israeli component was cherished by the community, if the emissaries were ineffective Torah disseminators, it was preferable and more financially viable to bring in native English speakers, albeit ones who identify with Religious Zionism.⁷⁹

This retreat from the Israeli model by one of the pioneering kollel outposts clearly calls for TMZ to critically review and possibly revamp its offerings. It highlights the difficulties in sustaining a kollel that has no permanent staff and whose emissaries may be equipped with the amorphous *Torat Eretz Israel*, but not necessarily functional English. In this case, then, even the transnational Israeli Religious Zionism that was being put forward could not overcome

other cultural and linguistic barriers. Indeed, the roots of this more dramatic move away from the Israeli model can actually be found in the year 2001. That was the year when *CTTK* chose to hire Binyamin Blau, the first American resident to serve as rosh kollel. His three predecessors in the position were all Israeli hesder rabbis who had taught or studied at Yeshivat Har-Etzion.

Unlike *CTTK*, causing Modern Orthodox Jews to feel uncomfortable about living outside of Israel was never part of the Chicago *TMZ*'s mandate. But the history of the Chicago kollel, which was founded in 1997, also illustrates a number of the tensions inherent in the *TMZ* model.⁸⁰

Rabbi Dr. Leonard A. Matanky is the Dean of Chicago's Ida Crown Jewish Academy and rabbi of the Orthodox Congregation *K.I.N.S.* of West Rogers Park.⁸¹ He has served as the driving force in creating and sustaining the *TMZ* kollel since its inception. In his opening letter to the first group of emissaries in 1997, he stated enthusiastically, "We are convinced that this wonderful experiment will bring, not only an extraordinary resource of *Torat Eretz Israel* to our community, but also a rebirth of Religious Zionism as well."⁸² Yet in his response to my oral presentation of this paper, Matanky acknowledged that efforts were made to make sure that the focus was on strengthening local Jewish life rather than on *aliya*, so as not to disturb our sense of equilibrium living in the Diaspora."⁸³

Indeed, when the first Rosh Kollel, Rabbi Moshe Aberman of Yeshivat Har-Etzion, was asked in 1999 "Why the need for an Israeli-style Torah Center?" he referred more directly to the desire to offer an alternative to the learning opportunities provided by the Chicago *haredi* kollels. "The feeling had been that one could choose between Zionism or Torah. Our goal is to show that the two can blend together."⁸⁴ Moreover, their aim was to provide the Zionist community with opportunities to study Torah "with people more up their alley in way of life – open minds, more modern, broader viewpoints."⁸⁵ Here the "spiritual" role of Zionism as a vehicle for cultivating Modern Orthodox group identity rather than for focusing on Israel as a religious goal onto itself is manifest.

Even if Aberman's fellows possessed the qualities that he

described, his comments point to one of the ironies of TMZ. American Modern Orthodox Jews may think that they and the Israeli Zionist yeshiva graduates share the same perspectives on the modern world, but this is far from clear. It is actually more likely that, other than regarding the State of Israel, the worldview put forward in many of the Religious Zionist yeshivas has more in common with American haredism than with Modern Orthodoxy.⁸⁶

In August 2006 Matanky and Rabbi Yehuda Sussman, a former rosh kollel who currently heads a yeshiva for Americans in Jerusalem, produced a highly informative retrospective on their experience with TMZ in Chicago. Here they affirmed that the founding of the kollel was in response to the haredi programs:

...major communities have witnessed the emergence of community *kollelim*. Whether staffed by alumni of Ner Yisrael, Beth Medrash Gevoha of Lakewood, Chafetz Chaim or other charedi yeshivot, these *kollelim* have made tremendous in-roads, not only among like-minded lay leaders, but also among those who in the past, had identified with Modern Orthodoxy/Religious Zionism. In essence, for many, these community *kollelim* and the ideals that they represented became the prime source of an authentic Jewish voice, but one that was often at odds with modernity, and the *hashkafa* (worldview) of *Tzionut Datit* (Religious Zionism). In response to this, a group of lay leaders and rabbis in our community sought to establish a community kollel that would not only be a serious voice of Torah, but also reflect the values of Tziyonut and Modern Orthodoxy.⁸⁷

The authors go on to list the many benefits that Chicago's Modern Orthodox community has gained from the TMZ's existence, including "strengthening both the Torah atmosphere and Religious Zionist identity of the high school" and providing "a place for those seeking a more direct connection with Torat Eretz Israel." Despite these achievements, like in Cleveland, there have also been problems in

sustaining an Israeli kollel. Prominent among the difficulties are the obvious cultural differences between Israelis and Americans, and the lack of staff continuity – particularly in regard to the kollel head who sets the tone. As they point out, this dilemma is built into a program whose message is secured by the very fact that the emissaries return to Israel after a year or two. In a tone of frustration that hints at the apparently more seamless success of the haredi alternatives, Matanky and Sussman concede, “*Kollel Torah Mitzion* can never truly be an ‘American’ Community *Kollel*. The ramifications (be they positive or negative) should not be underestimated.”⁸⁸ This frustration has led them to experiment with other models such as integrating American yeshiva graduates and working more directly with Yeshiva University. Yet Matanky and Sussman acknowledge the difficulty in finding local fellows who possess “strong Religious Zionist identities.”

Unlike Cleveland and Chicago, in Montreal the main motivation in 1998 for starting what eventually became known as the *Kollel Torah miTzion* (КТМ) was neither ideological battles, nor a search for Modern Orthodox role models, and especially not a strong yearning for Zion. The rabbis and laymen who initiated the idea were simply looking for any way possible to “jump start” intensive Torah study in the Modern Orthodox area of Cote St. Luc/Hampstead. In fact, they first turned to the existing “Lakewood” haredi kollel in the neighborhood of Utremont and asked its head to start one in their area. Only after the haredi kollel board turned down the invitation did the Modern Orthodox group approach YU, which brought TMZ in as a partner.⁸⁹

As to the original group, the two emissaries were Israelis and one was a Har-Etzion hesder graduate, but the rosh kollel came from an American haredi yeshiva and had previous experience serving in the haredi community kollel in Seattle. His personal description of the mission of the kollel makes no mention of the Land of Israel or Zionism, “The *Kollel*’s general mission is to raise the level and enthusiasm for Torah u’Mitzvot (religious commandments) in the modern orthodox community of Cote St. Luc/Hampstead.”⁹⁰

During the second year, the effectiveness of the КТМ grew, along with the role of Zionism. This was due to the arrival from Israel

of a highly capable and charismatic rosh kollel.⁹¹ Upon coming to Montreal in the Summer of 1999, Rabbi Yitzhak Neriah created a very ambitious program that, among others, expanded the activities of the kollel from working exclusively with the Modern Orthodox to outreach on college campuses as well as investing greater energies in communal Israel programming.⁹² Over time, the TMZ organization attained a more dominant position in guiding the direction of the branch and the Zionistic character became well-established. Like in Chicago and in Cleveland, however, this was for the most part a spiritual Zionism that buttressed the Modern Orthodox identity of the community, but did not challenge its taken-for-granted approach toward living in the Diaspora. As the current kollel mission statement declares: “*Kollel Torah MiTzion* is a unique initiative designed to aid Jewish communities throughout the world grappling with the problems of assimilation and disunity, strengthen its Jewish young leadership and to bridge the gap between the Diaspora and the State of Israel.”⁹³

The Montreal example highlights a number of points that have not been raised until this juncture. For one, it demonstrates how crucial the rosh kollel is to the success and direction of the institution. In addition, it shows that if the community is interested or open to the idea, TMZ kollels can be effective vehicles for outreach in addition to inreach. Indeed, Rabbi Ya’akov “Jack” Bieler of Silver Spring, Maryland, suggested that the lack of language skills that so often limits the ability of the TMZ emissaries to lecture effectively in the communities might be less of an impediment in working with nonaffiliated Jews. Such outreach activities, in his opinion, are more individually based and generally do not demand the same level of sophisticated oral communication that is needed in a public presentation to a large crowd of knowledgeable Modern Orthodox Jews.⁹⁴ A third point that emerges from the Montreal example is that creating a hybrid Israeli/American TMZ model is a particularly challenging endeavor if the Zionist element of the kollel is meant to play a central role. Finally, KTM offers another illustration of the complex dynamic between focus on Torah and on Zionism that is symptomatic to all TMZ frameworks. As Rabbi Michael Broyde, of

the Young Israel of Taco Hills and the permanent rosh kollel at the Atlanta Torah MiTzion (ATM) kollel, argued, Israeli yeshiva graduates can serve as role models, but “Religious Zionism can’t be the center of Modern Orthodoxy.”⁹⁵ Here I would add the caveat, “the classical, territorial oriented Religious Zionism.”

THE POST MODERN ALTERNATIVE

Unlike Israeli emissaries, haredi kollel couples are encouraged to settle permanently in the communities to which they are sent. Another distinction is that as North American natives, they are more familiar with local cultural language. One example of this knowledge is their focus on the individual rather than the collective. The main activity with the public is study of Jewish texts and ideas in *hevrutot* (pairs) or in small groups.¹¹³ The goal is to enable Jews of all ages to learn about the Torah in an active way. Certainly the kollel member will share his understanding of the material, but as opposed to frontal lectures, such text learning is oriented to give and take. Implicit within this dynamic is the recognition that the opinion of both individuals is valuable and worthy of expression. The community kollel offers contemporary Jews an environment that can facilitate their personal religious quest.¹¹⁴

But like in any match, what if the kollel member and the person with whom he has begun to study just don’t “hit it off”? As is well known in formal education, the lack of chemistry between a teacher and student can have a highly negative influence on the child’s attitude toward the particular subject taught by the said instructor. Here the community kollel, by presenting a number of members as possible study partners, offers at least a partial solution to this problem. Some may be more charismatic, while others more cerebral. Some may be more philosophically oriented, while others possess musical and theatrical talents. Once a number of options exist, the likelihood of finding the appropriate facilitator for one’s individual spiritual journey rises dramatically.

Adoption of such an orientation may remedy some of the deficiencies that have been expressed by veteran sponsor communities within the TMZ movement. Rather than following the relatively

homogeneous model of purely Israeli kollel fellows that has prevailed until now, a diverse group might ultimately be more effective and sustainable. For some in the target audience a full-fledged Kookian Messianic Zionist may be just the inspiration that they need. For others, a more cerebral individual who focuses on texts rather than on Zionist ideology might be more meaningful. Moreover, with all the problems that it entails, a hybrid kollel that includes both Israeli hesder-type graduates and Americans seems to be the most promising long term-model. Clearly the cultural and ideological gap between the emissaries and the local members would demand proper management. Such a conglomeration, however, offers many of the advantages of the Israeli TMZ approach, while at the same time engendering greater continuity and immediate communal impact. The spiritual vitality and *Torat Eretz Israel* that touches the souls of many American Jews would remain part of the formula, while the kollel would gain credibility with communal members of all levels of knowledge as a resource for Torah knowledge. Assuming that the sponsor communities would consider it to be a value, such a framework could more easily encompass a *shaliah* (emissary) or a local member whose focus would be on outreach to the Jewish population beyond the Modern Orthodox community. Clearly the one issue that would not change is that the key to the success of the community kollel is the choice of a rosh kollel who possesses the leadership and interpersonal skills necessary to create an environment that will utilize the talents of each individual.

The hybrid model clearly offers an alternative atmosphere to the concentrated “Israeliness” of the TMZ beit midrash. At the same time, in a kollel that thrives on diversity rather than homogeneity, there would be less pressure on those Israeli representatives who wanted to promote aliya to repress or downgrade their more activist orientation toward the Land of Israel. Some may view this kollel as a mixed message. An alternative perception is that the individualistic nature of the framework itself engenders a less ideologically cohesive orientation, and offers its greatest promise for long term viability within diverse American Jewish life.

Having suggested the hybrid model as a viable alternative, I

should point out that despite their criticisms of aspects of the TMZ model, some American educators who have long worked with TMZ are reluctant to take this route. Rabbi Jack Bieler of Silver Spring, Maryland, for example, believes that “Part of the attraction of the Kollel is that it is a bit exotic, different, other-worldly, featuring individuals who think differently, and have had different experiences. Partnering with YU will ‘normalize’ the Kollel to the point that it will lose some of its attraction.”¹¹⁵

The best precedent that I have observed for the hybrid model is The Community Kollel in Boca Raton, Florida. In the past the kollel included young college-educated YU rabbis – some of them more oriented toward ideological Modern Orthodoxy and others who expressed sympathy for the haredi approach – as well as TMZ Israeli emissaries. Depending on the skill-set of the individual kollel member, he was assigned to a particular niche, including outreach, inreach and adult education. Clearly what enabled this diverse group to be effective was the skill and charisma displayed by the kollel’s founder and dean, Rabbi Kenneth Brander of the Boca Raton Synagogue.¹¹⁶

Since my encounter with the Community Kollel in Boca Raton in 2003, Brander has moved on to head YU’s Center for the Jewish Future (CJF), which is responsible for its community kollel initiative.¹¹⁷ Simultaneously, the Israeli board of directors of TMZ has placed greater emphasis on working with strategic partners such as YU.¹¹⁸ The stage is set, then, for a reconceptualization of the TMZ model along the line outlined here.

TWO ZIONIST YESHIVAS

Throughout this article I have pointed out that many of the key figures in TMZ, particularly at its initial stages, were associated with Yeshivat Har-Etzion (Gush). While by no means monolithic, this institution has projected an approach to Religious Zionism, Israeli politics, and many other aspects of contemporary life that differs dramatically from the worldview promoted by the Merkaz ha-Rav Kook Yeshiva and its offshoots. One of its leaders is Rabbi Dr. Aharon Lichtenstein. An American-bred and Harvard-educated scholar, he

was head of the kollel in Yeshiva University until moving to Israel in 1971 and joining Rabbi Yehuda Amital at the helm of Har-Etzion.⁹⁶ Lichtenstein himself is the son-in-law and disciple of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik (1903–1993). Soloveitchik was Yeshiva University's most respected rabbinic authority, and the leader of Religious Zionism in America. Nevertheless, he remained settled in the United States until his passing. The Zionist philosophy that he articulated, moreover, was devoid of the messianism and negation of the galut that pervades the Kook school.⁹⁷ Beyond exposure to Lichtenstein and to the writings of his father-in-law, the Israeli Har-Etzion students experience directly the ideal of Israeli Religious Zionism contributing to Modern Orthodox communal life through daily interaction with foreign students. The yeshiva runs a large program for young men from North America as well as other English speaking countries who study Torah for one or two years before returning to their country of origin in order to attend university.

Lichtenstein and his yeshiva are committed to Israel as the ideal place for Jewish existence,⁹⁸ but neither disdain nor lack of familiarity with the diaspora characterize the institution.⁹⁹ Indeed, one of its major initiatives, the *Virtual Beit Midrash* (VBM), is an Internet-based archive that makes a broad range of lectures and homiletical material available to the English speaking public around the world.¹⁰⁰ The advancement of major projects such as the VBM to the diaspora communities is reflective of Har-Etzion's self stated message:

Since its establishment, the Yeshiva has been dedicated to producing top-quality Jewish educators and communal leaders for Israel and the Diaspora. Alumni of the Yeshiva hold prominent positions in Jewish schools, organizations and youth groups throughout the world and have made a significant contribution to improving the level of Jewish education in their respective geographic areas.¹⁰¹

It is not surprising, therefore, that products of this orientation would

have taken the lead or at least been inclined to the TMZ model of Torah study in service of the diaspora communities.

What is more notable, however, is that TMZ did not remain a “Gush” project. Numerous hesder yeshivas as well as other Zionist yeshivas that are wholly identified with the Kook school are associated and send their students as TMZ emissaries.¹⁰² These include institutions like the Beit El and Har Berakhah yeshivas. The former is led by Rabbi Zalman Melamed, a disciple of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, while the latter is directed by his son. Boaz Genut, the executive director of TMZ, pointed out that the son is particularly eager for his students to dedicate time to shelihut abroad.¹⁰³ In addition, TMZ has received the imprimatur of two of the most authoritative figures in the Kook camp, the former chief rabbis Mordechai Eliyahu and the late Avraham Shapira.¹⁰⁴

Does this mean that the Kook school has abandoned the negation of galut that was so vehemently promulgated by its founders? Are these rabbis comfortable with a Religious Zionism that deemphasizes territory and focuses on presenting Torat Eretz Israel as a foundation for American Modern Orthodoxy? I discussed this matter with Rabbi Chaim Druckman, the Head of the Bnei Akiva Movement and one of the former leaders of Gush Emunim, as well as a strong supporter of TMZ. Druckman feels that TMZ is totally consistent with Kookian ideology. Even if there is minimal direct influence on aliya, TMZ is crucial for American Orthodoxy because it introduces Israel and Zionism into local discourse. To his mind, the alternative for most American Jews is assimilation, while for the Modern Orthodox it is haredization. Furthermore, he was unconvinced by the conclusion being reached by some communities that Americans are more effective at teaching the Torah. “Torah without Eretz Israel, is not Torah,” he said.¹⁰⁵

Druckman certainly does not acknowledge the global, transnational direction engendered by TMZ. At the same time, he supports the drafting of Israeli yeshiva students to battle assimilation and to buttress ideological Modern Orthodoxy in North America. In both cases the value of the people of Israel, without connection to their

geographic location, is supreme. Moreover, in contradistinction to those medieval commentaries who suggested that there was an inherent difference in performing the commandments outside the Land,¹⁰⁶ Druckman's last statement highlights the content of the Torah and not the location where it is taught.

Acknowledged by them or not, I suggest that prominent representatives of the Kook school have thrown their support behind a project that engenders an alternative perception of the galut and of shelihut than that expressed by their mid-twentieth century mentors. The interest on their part in promoting TMZ is particularly illuminating in light of the heavy influence of teachers and graduates of Yeshivat Har-Etzion on its emergence and development.¹⁰⁷

The support given by the Kook camp to the TMZ concept can be understood in the context of the upheaval within the Religious Zionist camp that arose in the aftermath of the 1995 assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and in response to the 2005 disengagement from the Gaza Strip. After years of focus on settlement as the primary activity of Religious Zionism, the abandonment by much of the Israeli Jewish population of this enterprise and its ideals caused a partial shift away from this monolithic path or at least a diversification. Many within this population reached the conclusion that "settling the Land" had not engendered "settling in the hearts" of most Israelis. As such, alternative Religious Zionist initiatives began to appear.¹⁰⁸ One of the local Israeli examples is the *Tzohar* organization which proffers rabbinical services to the nonobservant public in a user-friendly manner.¹⁰⁹ Another is Rabbi Moti Elon's *Mibreishit* outreach movement that seeks to raise the level of religious interest and commitment within broader Jewish society. The latter, in particular, shares certain common ground with TMZ, since its activities are not limited to the State of Israel. Its educational materials are distributed widely throughout the world in numerous languages and Elon himself has promoted *Mibreishit* on numerous visits to communities throughout the Diaspora.¹¹⁰ It is notable that Elon, as well as numerous members of *Tzohar*, have strong connections to the Merkaz ha-Rav Kook inner circles.¹¹¹ Another new direction within Religious Zionism that has direct parallels with TMZ is the option

made available to girls to spend the second year of their national service (*sherut leumi*) on shelihut abroad.¹¹²

CONCLUSION: TORAT ERETZ ISRAEL AND THE TRANSPORTATION OF PLACE

The shelihut of TMZ differs dramatically from the classical formula that focused almost exclusively on aliya. Not only is encouraging immigration to Israel low on the priority scale, the main focus of activity – as illustrated both from the Israeli and American perspectives – is actually on strengthening Jewish life in the diaspora. Like the haredi community outreach kollels, this is done primarily by creating a vibrant beit midrash that can attract Modern Orthodox children and their parents and in some cases unaffiliated Jews to Torah study. Without declaring so in words, the very structure and goals of TMZ's activities in America neutralize any attempt to preserve negation of the galut as a serious element in the Religious Zionist worldview.

Not only has the diaspora gained greater legitimacy through TMZ, in the process Religious Zionism has acquired a new global character. The TMZ emissaries do not leave their sacred Israeli territory as individuals. They travel as small collectives called kollels, whose mandate is to cultivate a Religious Zionist atmosphere in a given Jewish community somewhere in the world. But these Israel-like environments are not created as appendages to the home territory that will necessarily facilitate the arrival of more Jews. This may happen in some cases but it is not the main objective. Certainly for the North American Modern Orthodox communities, the value of the Zionistic spirit of the emissaries lies primarily in its potential to reinvigorate the local environment. This process points to a move of Israeli Religious Zionism away from its territorial character. Instead, it acquires a cultural or spiritual ambience that shares much in common with the role that Zionism has long played in the lives of most American Orthodox Jews.

Surely the shelihim return home and on an individual level reassert their territorial Zionistic identity. But they are immediately replaced by others who sustain the Zionist enclaves that were

established and continue the role of nurturing American Judaism with their Zionist spirit. Indeed, the term Torat Eretz Israel is quite accurate. A culture of the Land has been articulated that exists independently from the Land itself. As this network grows larger, the idea of a Torat Eretz Israel that stems from the Land but does not exist for it exclusively, becomes more real.

In 2005 the photographers Max Becher and Andrea Robbins opened a new exhibit entitled “770.” The two had taken pictures of the Lubavitcher hasidic movement’s Brooklyn headquarters (770 Eastern Parkway), and of 11 replicas of this building that serve as Chabad centers throughout the world. The display included photos from Brooklyn, Buenos Aires, Haifa, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, Melbourne, Milan, Montreal, New Brunswick, and Sao Paolo.¹¹⁹ In the explanation that accompanies the exhibit, the artists refer to the phenomenon portrayed through their pictures as “the Transportation of Place:”

The primary focus of our work is, what we call, *the transportation of place* – situations in which one limited or isolated place strongly resembles another distant one... Traditional notions of place, in which culture and geographic location neatly coincide, are being challenged...¹²⁰

This, essentially, expresses the feeling that I had that day in September 2003 when I first entered the beit midrash of the Torat Tzion Kollel in Cleveland. Right in the middle of America I had come across a study hall whose sounds and sights I identified directly with Israel. In this paper I have claimed that this seemingly surreal sensation was indicative of a broader phenomenon. Parallel to Chabad and “770,” TMZ reflects a new direction for Religious Zionism from a Land focused movement that encouraged those outside to come in, to a global network that is Land based but emphasizes Judaism’s “transnational” character, in which the Torah of the place is being transported to other distant venues.

NOTES

1. Rabbi Avraham Isaac Hacoheh Kook (1865–1935), was the first Ashkenazic chief rabbi of Palestine and was the most prominent rabbinic authority to support the early twentieth century Zionist settlement movement. Through the efforts of his students, including his son Rabbi Zvi Yehudah Kook (1891–1982), his writings became the centerpiece for the dominant trend in contemporary Religious Zionism. See, for example: Aviezer Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism and Religious Radicalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 79–144; Dov Schwartz, *Faith at the Crossroads: A Theological Profile of Religious Zionism* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 131–230; Chaim I. Waxman, “Messianism, Zionism, and the State of Israel,” *Modern Judaism* 7, 2 (May, 1987): 175–192.
2. On the hesder program and concept, see: Stuart A. Cohen, “The Hesder Yeshivot in Israel: A Church-State Arrangement,” *Journal of Church and State*, 35 (1993): 113–130; Aharon Lichtenstein, “The Ideology of Hesder,” *Tradition* 19, 3 (1981): 199–217.
3. See picture at <http://www.torahmitzion.org/cleveland/section.asp>.
4. On the history of the kollel as a modern institution that provides fellowships and a framework for advanced Torah study, see: Mordechai Breuer, *Ohalei Torah: Ha-Yeshivah, Tavnitah ve-Toldotehah* (Jerusalem: Merkaz Shazar, 2004), 28, 149; Adam S. Ferziger, “The Emergence of the Community Kollel: A New Model for Addressing Assimilation,” Position Paper 13 (Ramat-Gan: Rappaport Center for Assimilation Research – Bar-Ilan University, 2006), 15–32; Shaul Stampfer, *Ha-Yeshivah ha-Litait be-Hithavutah* (Jerusalem: Merkaz Shazar, 2005): 360–382.
5. On globalization and transnationalism, see for example, M. Kearney, “The Local and the Global: The Anthropology of Globalization and Transnationalism,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24 (1995): 547–565. “Transnationalism,” according to Kearney (548), “operates worldwide,” but is “centered in one home nation.”
6. The primary sources utilized below include: official Torah MiTzion (henceforth TMZ) organizational literature and websites; TMZ questionnaires filled out by participants upon return to Israel; interviews with TMZ officials, former kollel heads and members, American rabbis and laymen involved in TMZ, American Jewish educators, rabbis, and laymen who have observed TMZ, haredi community kollel officials, heads and members; written correspondence with American rabbis and laymen involved in TMZ; correspondence between TMZ officials and kollel members, local communal officials, and representatives of other American Orthodox organizations; essays and communications written about TMZ by those involved in TMZ; applications by communities for a TMZ kollel; TMZ kollel mission statements; articles in the American Jewish press; and personal site visits to ten North American community kollels. All interview transcripts and tapes are stored at Rehov ha-Ramah 3a, Kfar-Sava, Israel 44538 or at Bar-Ilan University, Faculty of Jewish Studies, Room 32, Ramat-Gan, Israel 52900.
7. See: Conversation with Robert L. Stark, Beachwood, Ohio, September 6, 2003; <http://www.torahmitzion.org/cleveland/section.asp>. On Stark, see Samuel G.

- Freedman, *Jew vs. Jew: The Struggle for the Soul of American Jewry* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 2000), 284–287. On Yeshivat Har Etzion, see David Morrison *The Gush: Center of Modern Religious Zionism* (Jerusalem: Gefen, 2003).
8. From 1997, single students were also integrated. See: “Site Visit by David Roth and Ze’ev Schwartz to Cleveland,” November 2001. TMZ Cleveland File, TMZ Jerusalem Office, 54 King George St., Jerusalem 91710, entrance floor; Interview with Rabbi Binyamin Blau, former rosh kollel of סתק and principal of Fuchs-Mizrachi High School, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, Sept. 8, 2003.
 9. Blau Interview; Interview with Vicky Epstein Frolich, סתק Administrator, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, Sept. 8, 2003.
 10. Blau Interview; Frolich Interview.
 11. See <http://www.torahmitzion.org/CapeTown/section.asp>.
 12. Moshe Green, an American philanthropist who was active in Religious Zionist circles, gave the initial support for the TMZ organization and served as chairman until his death in 1999. One testimony to the prominence of the movement within the Religious Zionist camp is the recent appointment of Schwartz as general secretary of World Bnei Akiva, the main Religious Zionist youth movement. Rabbi Boaz Genut, who returned to Israel in the Summer of 2006 after three years as head of the TMZ kollel in St. Louis, was appointed the new executive director. Schwartz remains formally involved through the position of chairman of TMZ. See the letter from Larry Roth, president of TMZ, announcing the change, <http://www.torahmitzion.org/eng/news/view.asp?id=290>.
 13. See <http://www.torahmitzion.org/Moscow/section.asp>.
 14. See <http://www.torahmitzion.org/montevideo/section.asp>.
 15. See <http://www.torahmitzion.org/melbourne/section.asp>.
 16. See <http://www.torahmitzion.org/memphis/section.asp>.
 17. For a full list see <http://www.torahmitzion.org/eng/aboutus/kollels.asp>. On JLI, see <http://jli.co.il/>.
 18. On distinctions between American Modern Orthodox and haredi Orthodoxies, see for example: Samuel C. Heilman, *Sliding to the Right: The Contest for the Future of American Jewish Orthodoxy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Charles S. Liebman, “Orthodoxy in American Jewish Life,” *American Jewish Year Book* 66 (1965): 21–97; Chaim I. Waxman, “From Institutional Decay to Primary Day: American Orthodox Jewry Since World War II,” *American Jewish History* 91 (2003): 405–21.
 19. For a list of haredi kollels, see <http://ajop.net:80/ajop/KollelDoc.cfm>.
 20. Discussion with Rabbis Ronny Schwarzberg, Director, and Rabbi Elli Krimsky, Associate Director, Department of Rabbinic Placement, Center for the Jewish Future of Yeshiva University, Ramat-Gan, February 7th, 2007.
 21. See: Adam S. Ferziger, *The Emergence of the Community Kollel*; idem, “Church/Sect Theory and American Orthodoxy Reconsidered,” *An Ambivalent Jew: Charles S. Liebman Memorial Volume*, eds. Stuart Cohen and Bernard Susser (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary Press, 2007): 107–124.

22. See Adam S. Ferziger, "From Lubavitch to Lakewood: The Chabadization of American Orthodoxy," in *Reaching for the Infinite: The Lubavitcher Rebbe – Life, Teachings and Impact*, eds. Naftali Loewenthal, Lawrence H. Schiffman, and Elliott R. Wolfson (forthcoming). Since the movement spells its name "Chabad" – see www.chabad.org – it is spelled that way throughout this article.
23. On this distinction, see Adam S. Ferziger, "Between Outreach and 'Inreach': Redrawing the Lines of the American Orthodox Rabbinate," *Modern Judaism*, 25, 3 (2005): 237–63.
24. See, for example: Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Galut in Zionist Ideology and in Israeli Society," in *Israel and Diaspora Jewry: Ideological and Political Perspectives*, ed. Eliezer Don-Yehiya (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1991): 219–257; Arnold Eisen, *Galut* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1986).
25. See Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "The Negation of the Galut in Religious Zionism," *Modern Judaism*, 12 (1992): 129–155, esp. 129–30. For an updated and expanded Hebrew version, see idem, "Shelilat ha-Galut ba-Ziyonut ha-Datit," *Me'ah Shenot Ziyonut Datit*, 3, eds. Avi Sagi and Dov Schwartz (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2003): 229–258, esp. 229–32.
26. Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Shelilat ha-Galut ba-Ziyonut ha-Datit," 229. There are, however, prominent figures such as novelist A.B. Yehoshua who continue to promote negation of the galut as a central secular theme. See, for example, Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Galut in Zionist Ideology," 233–36.
27. Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Galut in Zionist Ideology," 253.
28. See E. Nimni, "From Galut to T'futsoth: Post Zionism and the Dislocation of Jewish Diasporas," *The Challenge of Post Zionism*, ed. E. Nimni (London: Zed Books, 2003): 122.
29. Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "The Negation of the Galut in Religious Zionism," 229–32.
30. See note 1.
31. Citation from his famed sermon delivered at the Mercaz ha-Rav Yeshiva in Jerusalem on the Israel Independence Day that immediately preceded the War of 1967, see Zvi Yehuda Kook, *Le-Netivot Yisrael*, vol. 2 (Beit El: Beit El, 2003 [Cited in Don-Yehiya, "Negation," 142]. See also Dov Schwartz, *Erez ha-Mamashut ve-ha-Dimayon* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1997), 101–127.
32. Zvi Yehuda Kook, *Le-Netivot*, 1, 100 [cited in Don-Yehiya, "Negation," 143].
33. Zvi Yehuda Kook, *Le-Netivot*, 1, 68 [cited in Don-Yehiya, "Negation," 143].
34. Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "The Negation of the Galut in Religious Zionism," 145.
35. See Gideon Aran, "From Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion: the Roots of Gush Emunim," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, 11 (1986): 116–143; Ella Belfer, "Bezipyat ha-Yeshua ha-Shelemah: The Messianic Politics of Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Kook and Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook," *Tolerance, Dissent and Democracy: Philosophical, Historical and Halakhic Perspectives*, ed. Moshe Sokol (Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, 2002), 311–61; Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Jewish Messianism, Religious Zionism and Israeli Politics: The Impact and Origins of Gush Emunim," *Middle Eastern Studies* 23, 2 (1987): 215–34.

36. See Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "The Book and the Sword: The Nationalist Yeshivot and Political Radicalism in Israel," *Fundamentalisms Observed*, eds. Martin Marty and Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994): 264–308.
37. Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Shelilat ha-Galut," 243–44.
38. See an alternative position in Moshe Unna, "The State of Israel and the Diaspora," in *Religious Zionism: An Anthology*, ed. Yosef Tirosh (Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization, 1975): 259–97.
39. Schwartz, *Erez ha-Mamashut ve-ha-Dimayon*, 228–31.
40. Moshe Haim Shapiro, "The Mission of Religious Zionism," *Religious Zionism: An Anthology*: 117.
41. See Ezra Kopelowitz, "Between *Mifgash* and *Shlichut*, Paradigms in Contemporary Zionist Education and the Question of the Ideological Relationship between Israel and Diaspora," Version Presented to the Research Seminar of the Department of Jewish Zionist Education (March 12, 2003), <http://www.jafi.org.il/education/moriya/newpdf/Eparadigms-kopelowitz.pdf>.
42. See, for example, Erik Cohen, "Mifgashim: A Meeting of Minds and Hearts," *Journal of Jewish Education*, 66 (2000): 23–37.
43. Kopelowitz, "Between *Mifgash* and *Shlichut*," 11–15.
44. See Yitzhak Conforti, *Zeman Avar* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2006), 125–126; Eliezer Schweid, "Shte'i Gishot la-Ra'ayon 'Shelilat ha-Golah' ba-Ideologiyah ha-Zionit," *Ha-Zionut: Me'assef*, 9 (1984): 21–44.
45. Kopelowitz, "Between *Mifgash* and *Shlichut*," 13–17.
46. On Chabad and its emissaries, see for example: Sue Fishkoff, *The Rebbe's Army: Inside the World of Chabad-Lubavitch* (New York: Schocken, 2003), 27–32, 111–117; Yitzhak Kraus, *HaShevi'I – Meshihyut be-dor ha-shvi'I shel Habad* (Tel Aviv: Yediot Sefarim, 2007).
47. For the official list and information on all the Chabad houses, see <http://www.chabad.org/centers/default.asp?AID=6268>.
48. For details on Aish Hatorah international branches, see <http://www.aish.com/aishint/branch/>. On Aish Hatorah and the approach of its founder, Rabbi Noah Weinberg, see Janet Aviad, *Return to Judaism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 28–29, 38–41; Aaron Joshua Tapper, "The 'Cult' of Aish Hatorah: *Ba'alei Teshuva* and the Newly Religious Movement Phenomenon," *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 44, Nos. 1–2 (2002): 5–29.
49. For details on Ohr Somayach's international branches, see <http://ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/2208>. On Ohr Somayach, see Aviad, *Return to Judaism*, 23–28; for an in-house description of its history and activities, see *The Ohr Somayach Story* (Jerusalem, 1982).
50. See Adam S. Ferziger, *The Emergence of the Community Kollel*, 32–48; Ya'akov Feitman. "It Takes a *Kollel*: How Higher Learning is Transforming American Jewry," *Jewish Action*. 63, 2 (2002), <http://www.ou.org/publications/ja/5763/5763winter/ITTAKEA.PDFN.A.>; "Kollelim," *Nitzotzot Min HaNer*. 16 (Jan-March, 2004), <http://www.nerleef.com/janmar4.pdf>.

51. See Chaim I. Waxman, "Israel in American Orthodox Identity," *Israel, World Jewry and Identity*, eds. Danny Ben-Moshe and Zohar Segev (Brighton, UK: Sussex Academic Press, 2007): 52-61.
52. See www.Jewishagency.org/jewishagency/English/press+room/aliyah; www.wzo.org.il/en/resources/view.asp?id=1508/aliyah+statistics.
53. The *National Jewish Population Survey*, Year 2000, reached the figure of 5.2 million. See http://www.ujc.org/content_display.html?ArticleID=83784; According to a study by Brandeis University published in 2007, the figure is closer to six million. See Shmuel Rosner, "Brandeis Finds One Million More Jews than Thought," *Haaretz* (February 9th, 2007), <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/823218.html>.
54. See: Yoseph Salmon, "The Mizrahi Movement in America: A Belated but Sturdy Offshoot," *American Jewish Archives* 48 (1996): 161-175; Chaim I. Waxman, "Preface," *Israel as a Religious Reality*, ed. Chaim I. Waxman (Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, 1994): xiii-xviii.
55. Evyatar Friesel, "The Meaning of Zionism and Its Influence among the American Jewish Religious Movements," *Religion and Zionism*, eds. Shmuel Almog, Jehuda Reinharz, and Anita Shapira (Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1998): 177-179.
56. I thank Dr. Yoel Finkelman for suggesting that I look at Kaplan's model of Zionism. See, for example, Mordecai M. Kaplan, *A New Zionism* (New York: Herzl Press, 1955): 41, 119; idem, *Judaism Without Supernaturalism* (New York: Reconstructionist Press, 1958): 165; Arnold M. Eisen, "Reflections on the State of Zionist Thought," *Modern Judaism* 18, 3 (1998): 256, 259; Emanuel S. Goldsmith, "Salvational Zionism and Religious Naturalism in the Thought of Mordecai M. Kaplan," *Process Studies*, 22, 4 (Winter, 1993): 204-210.
57. To my understanding, Rabbi Shalom Carmy's essay on Religious Zionist existence in the galut offers a philosophically oriented articulation that is quite similar to the approach described here. See Shalom Carmy, "A View from the Fleshpots: Exploratory Remarks on Gilded Galut Existence," *Israel as a Religious Reality*, 34.
58. Haim Zohar, "Mai Kollel Zioni," *Me'ah Shenot Hinukh Zioni-Dati*, ed. Shlomoh Raz (Jerusalem: Histadrut ha-Mizrachi - Ha-Poel ha-Mizrachi - Ha-Merkaz ha-Olami, 2006): 365.
59. Haim Zohar, "Mai Kollel Zioni," *Me'ah Shenot Hinukh Zioni-Dati*, ed. Shlomoh Raz (Jerusalem: Histadrut ha-Mizrachi - Ha-Poel ha-Mizrachi - Ha-Merkaz ha-Olami, 2006): 367.
60. Haim Zohar, "Mai Kollel Zioni," 368-69.
61. Haim Zohar, "Mai Kollel Zioni," 367.
62. Indeed, the haredi community kollels have also articulated their own version of the "Jewish peoplehood" model. In March 2005 a number of community kollels turned the completion of the seven year *daf yomi* Talmud study cycle into a "celebration of Jewish unity." As part of their "unity" activities, the Phoenix Community Kollel developed a curriculum on different expressions of peace in the Talmud. Workshops were held utilizing this program with children from local Orthodox

- and non-Orthodox schools as well the Hillel houses of Arizona State University and the University of Arizona. At the central public event, the kollel hosted Hadassah Lieberman, the wife of the former Democratic Vice-Presidential nominee. Unity awards were also given by the kollel to the leaders of the local Federation, Jewish Community Center, United Jewish Committee and the Jewish National Fund. The regional director of the Anti-Defamation League chaired the evening that was “designed to bring Jews of all backgrounds together in celebration of that which truly unites us – our Torah.” See Leisah Mann, “Jewish Unity 2005 Makes World Debut,” *Jewish News of Greater Phoenix* (February 18, 2005), <http://www.jewishaz.com/jewishnews/050218/unity.shtml>; <http://www.jewishunitylive.com/>.
63. See Adam S. Ferziger, “Between Outreach and ‘Inreach,’” 244–45.
 64. The term appears in the writings of Avraham Isaac Hacohen Kook. See, for example, *Orot ha-Kodesh* (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1985), 13.
 65. See <http://www.torahmitzion.org/eng/aboutus/default.asp>.
 66. Open Letter from Moshe Gadot, Recruitment Coordinator, TMZ, Nov.-Dec., 2006.
 67. See http://www.torahmitzion.org/eng/aboutus/shlichut_guidelines.asp.
 68. Telephone discussion with Rabbi Boaz Genut, Executive Director of TMZ, February 1, 2007.
 69. The questionnaires are on file in the respective *kollel* site folders at the TMZ office, 54 King George St., Jerusalem 91710, entrance floor.
 70. As Chaim I. Waxman noted in his description of the close ties between American Orthodoxy and Israel, the Orthodox travel to Israel far more frequently than other American Jews. See Chaim I. Waxman, “Israel in American Orthodox Identity.”
 71. The questionnaire for returning fellows asks whether they thought that the midyear weekend meeting for all the TMZ emissaries was beneficial. Interestingly, all the respondents agreed that it was, but few could articulate why.
 72. Rabbi Chaim Sacknovitz, Rabbi Jay Kelman and Yisroel Dov Meyer, “Kolel Mitzion Application – Toronto Shvat 5763,” TMZ Montreal File, TMZ Jerusalem Office.
 73. See “Cleveland is Springboard for *Kollel* Movement,” *Cleveland Jewish News* (Dec. 1, 2005), appears on <http://torahmitzion.org/eng/news/view.asp?id=237>.
 74. Blau Interview; See also his essay on TMZ published on the Lookjed educational website as “Creative Solutions to Current Educational Challenges: The Torah MiTzion *Kollels*,” <http://www.lookstein.org/lookjed/read.php?f=1andi=13437andt=13437>.
 75. Blau Interview.
 76. Interview with Rabbi Michael Unterberg, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, Sept. 8, 2003.
 77. See <http://www.fuchsmizrachi.org/kollel.htm>.
 78. Email communication from Rabbi Binyamin Blau, February 7, 2007.
 79. Telephone Interview with Rabbi Binyamin Blau, February 7, 2007.
 80. See, for example, the email letter from Rabbi Moshe Aberman to Ze’ev Schwartz, June 13, 1997, TMZ Chicago File, TMZ Jerusalem Office: “It would seem to me that each community would know best what its needs are and should decide the goals and format of its kollel. Your organization should work in the direction of helping bring to fruition these goals.”

81. On Matanky, see www.rabbis.org/news/article.cfm?-10071.
82. Email message from Leonard Matanky to Ze'ev Schwartz and Moshe Aberman, August 4, 1997, TMZ Chicago File, TMZ Jerusalem Office.
83. Leonard A. Matanky, "Israel's Impact on American Orthodoxy: A Response," 19th Orthodox Forum, New York, March 12, 2007.
84. Sid Singer, "Kollel Torah MiTzion: Torah Study, Israeli Style," *JUF News* (January 1999): 21.
85. Singer, "Kollel Torah MiTzion," 21.
86. On distinctions between Israeli and American Orthodoxies, see Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Orthodox Jewry in Israel and in North America," *Israel Studies*, 10, 1 (2005): 170–184; idem, "Does Place Make a Difference: Jewish Orthodoxy in Israel and in the Diaspora," *Israel as a Religious Reality*, ed. Chaim I. Waxman (Northvale N.J.: Jason Aronson, 1994), 43–74.
87. Leonard A. Matanky and Yehuda Sussman, "Creative Solutions to Educational Challenges – The Torah MiTzion Kollels II," *Lookjed Forum*. (Aug. 28, 2006), www.lookstein.org/lookjed/read.php?f=1+1=13474andt=13437.
88. Matanky and Sussman, "Creative Solutions II."
89. See "Internal memo from Rabbi David Israel to Rabbi Robert Hirt and Ze'ev Schwartz." (April 30, 1998), TMZ Montreal File, TMZ Jerusalem Office.
90. Email letter from Rabbi Avi Hyman to Ze'ev Schwartz (February 5, 1999), TMZ Montreal File, TMZ Jerusalem Office.
91. Email response by Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz to questions posed to him by Adam S. Ferziger (January 31, 2007).
92. Email letter from David Noveseller to Ze'ev Schwartz and others (Sept. 29, 1999), TMZ Montreal File, TMZ Jerusalem Office; "Letter from Yitzhak Neriah to *Kollel Emissaries*," (July, 1999), TMZ Montreal File, TMZ Jerusalem Office.
93. See "About КТМ," <http://www.ktmmtl.org/about/index.php>.
94. Interview with Rabbi Yaakov "Jack" Bieler, Kemp Mill Synagogue, Silver Spring, Maryland (September 11, 2003).
95. Interview with Rabbi Michael Brody, Young Israel of Taco Hills, Atlanta, Georgia (September 18, 2003).
96. On Lichtenstein, see: Alan Brill, "An Ideal Rosh Yeshiva," *Edah Journal*, 5, 1 (Tammuz, 2005), http://www.edah.org/backend/JournalArticle/5_1_Brill.pdf; David Singer, "For Torah and Culture," *First Things* (May 2005), http://www.first-things.com/article.php3?id_article=197.
97. An enormous amount has been published about Soloveitchik since his death. Regarding his approach to Zionism, see for example: Chaim Navon, "Tefisato ha-Zionit Datit shel ha-Rav Soloveitchik," *Tzohar* 22 (Summer 2005): 159–170; Dov Schwartz, "Mishnato shel Ha-Rav Y" D Soloveitchik be-Re'i ha-Hagut ha-Zionit-Datit: ha-Hilun ve-Hamedina," *Emunah be-Zemanim Mishtanim*, ed. Avi Sagi (Jerusalem: Sifriyat Eliner and Merkaz ha-Rav Herzog, 1996), 123–148.
98. See for example, Lichtenstein, "The Ideology of Hesder."
99. In Aharon Lichtenstein, *By His Light*, adapted by Reuven Ziegler (Jersey City and Alon Shevut: Ktav and Yeshivat Har Etzion, 2003), 152–155, 234–37, he addresses

- some of the distinctions between his approach and the Kook school regarding Zionism and the State of Israel.
100. See www.vbm-torah.org.
 101. See www.vbm-torah.org/yheprog.htm#SAKS.
 102. See the list of TMZ partners at www.torahmitzion.org/eng/aboutus/partners.asp.
 103. Genut Discussion.
 104. Email letter from Ze'ev Schwartz to Leonard Matanky and Moshe Aberman (April 17, 1997), TMZ Chicago File, TMZ Jerusalem Office.
 105. Telephone interview with Rabbi Chaim Druckman, February 9, 2007.
 106. Nahmanides, *Commentary to the Torah*, Leviticus 18:25.
 107. In the interest of maintaining full transparency, I should like to acknowledge that I studied at Yeshivat Har-Etzion during the school year 1983–84.
 108. See, for example, Michael Avraham, “Ha-Derekh ha-Sheleesheet o: ‘al Zionut Datit’ le-lo Makaf,” *Tzohar* 22 (Summer 2005): 131–140, and the responses that it provoked in the same volume 141–158; Yair Sheleg, “Lo Maspik le-Hitnahel, Zarikh gam le-hithazek” (Sept. 10, 2003), <http://www.haaretz.co.il/hasite/pages/ShArtPE.jhtml?itemNo=348351>.
 109. See Adam S. Ferziger, “Religion for the Secular,” *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 7 (March 2008): 67–90.
 110. See www.mibreishit.org.
 111. Rabbi Ya'akov Ariel is the chief rabbi of Ramat-Gan and the central halakhic mentor of Tzohar. In the previous elections for chief rabbi of Israel, he was the candidate of the Kook camp.
 112. I thank my friend and colleague, Mr. Aryeh Arazi, for suggesting this parallel.
 113. Charles S. Liebman and Bernard Susser identified Orthodoxy's emphasis on learning as one of the keys to its survival, as well as one of the values that non-Orthodox Jews should emulate in order to stem assimilation. See Bernard Susser and Charles S. Liebman, *Choosing Survival: Strategies for a Jewish Future* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 133–144, 146–149.
 114. On the role of individual quest in contemporary American Jewish life, see, for example: Steven M. Cohen and Arnold Eisen, *The Jew Within* (Bloomington, Indiana, Indiana University Press: 2000), 13–42; Steven Sharot, “Assimilating, Coalescing and Spiritual-Seeking: Recent Trends among American Jews,” *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* XVIII (Jerusalem, 2002): 240–246; Chaim I. Waxman, *Jewish Baby Boomers: A Communal Perspective* (Albany SUNY Press, 2001), 135–143.
 115. Email correspondence from Rabbi Jack Bieler, April 23, 2007.
 116. During my site visit to Boca Raton in September 2003, I observed a variety of kollel activities and conducted interviews with the local rabbis, the kollel heads, the kollel members, communal activists and other local Jews. On the Boca Raton Orthodox community, see Jane Musgrave, “Boca Raton's Orthodox Revolution,” *Boca Magazine* (July 1, 2001), available at www.bocamag.com/index.php?src=news&dprid=8&category=articles. On the Community Kollel, see www.kollel.org.
 117. On Brander and the CJF, see for example, Ari Fridman, “Rabbi Kenny Brander to

Join Yeshiva Leadership: Administration Announces Center for the Jewish Future,” *The Commentator* (March 29, 2005), available at <http://www.yucommentator.com/media/paper652/news/2004/10/26/News/Rabbi.Kenny.Brande.To.Join.Yeshiva.Leadership-772211.shtml>.

118. See “TMZ Board Meeting Minutes.” (January 13, 2005), TMZ Boca Raton File, TMZ Jerusalem Office. Section six describes a meeting held in Jerusalem with Richard Joel, YU President.
119. See the photos and a description of the exhibit at www.robbinsbecher.com.
120. www.robbinsbecher.com.