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THE FIRST RABBINIC YEAR IN ISRAEL:

A STUDY IN SOCIALIZATION AND PROFESSIONALIZATION

To Cheri

for her love and support in the past,

and the

promise of the future she carries within.

By

John H. Spitzer

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters
and
Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

1973

Referee, Professor Norman B. Mirsky

To Cheri

for her love and support in the past,

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promise of the future she carries within.

DIGEST

Since 1970 the Hebrew Union College has required all entering rabbinic students to spend their first year of study in Israel. No study has been made of the effect of this Year-In-Israel Program on the entering classes. In this thesis I attempted to examine the class which began their studies in September of 1972.

I draw heavily on the ideas of Dr. Norman Mirsky from his doctoral dissertation "The Making of a Reform Rabbi". The thrust of that dissertation is that the socialization process of the College-Institute tends to implant a value system in its students which is oriented toward Hebrew Language Skills, a scientific approach to Jewish studies and the ability to handle texts. The thesis of this paper is that the Israel experience tends to accelerate that process.

It was found that a high percentage of entering students were predisposed to this socialization process because of their non-Reform backgrounds and previous Hebrew studies. The wide diversity of the group prohibited the formation of group identity which could have resisted the socialization attempts of the College-Institute. Because of initial contacts

with the Jerusalem campus, students were made to feel that they were not the central focus of the College-Institute. They felt that the institution treated them like children. They also experience a strong dependency on the College-Institute because of their need for assistance in adjusting to the host culture. The lack of a group identity, devalued sense of worth, and strong dependence made the students very open to socialization and professionalization attempts on the part of the institution. Students manifested their degree of socialization in various ways such as the desire to own unpointed Hebrew texts and willingness to accept textual knowledge as a criterion of equality when confronting the Orthodox elements in Israel.

The fact that students began to doubt their self-image when relating to the College-Institute, that they accepted the traditional Jewish criteria of textual knowledge for relating to the Orthodox and that they exhibited an openness/affinity for traditional Judaism while training for the Reform rabbinate indicates that students were experiencing problems with defining their personal identities.

This paper presents the early careers of Reform rabbinic

students beginning their studies in Israel and shows the effects of the students' encounter with Israel, the College, and their peers.

INTRODUCTION

The desire to become a rabbi has appeal to a variety of people. At any given time, applications to the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion reflect students of widely divergent academic, religious, and social backgrounds. From these applicants, the College-Institute selects an entering class which, it is hoped, will emerge from the institution at the completion of the program as Reform rabbis capable of meeting the challenge of contemporary Judaism. The College-Institute, as the rabbinic training arm of the Reform Movement, has this as the goal for which it strives.

The manner in which it attains this goal has been the object of a number of studies in the recent past. The most notable is the Doctoral Dissertation of Dr. Norman Mirsky, "The Making of A Reform Rabbi".[1] This study attempts "to describe and analyze sociologically and social psychologically the ways in which Jewish young men are prepared for the Reform Rabbinate in America by a school, the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion of Cincinnati, Ohio".[2] Subsequent to this study, and used as data for it, was the Rabbinic Thesis of Rabbi Charles Sherman, "Factors Influencing the

Selection of the Rabbinate as a Career".[3] As indicated by the title, Rabbi Sherman is primarily interested in what influences a young man to pursue the rabbinate as a career. The data reported in his thesis also provides two additional areas of information. First, it provides an idea about the type of cultural "baggage" entering students are likely to bring to the College-Institute. Second, it provides a measuring stick to determine the amount of change and the kind of change which has occurred in the entering classes of the College-Institute.

Both these studies provide important insight into the seminary's program. Yet both studies are, in a sense, dated. Neither Rabbi Sherman's study (June, 1969) nor Dr. Mirsky's study (January, 1971) focus on the greatest programatic change in perhaps the entire history of the institution. As of the Summer of 1970, the entire entering class of the College-Institute was sent to the Jerusalem campus for one full academic year. The magnitude of this change can be easily seen. The financial commitment of the College in terms of the number of students who participate in the program at a given time is extremely high. In addition it was thought that sending the students to Israel for an academic

year would lengthen the entire course of study, raising the question of a different degree system at the conclusion of the program. Also, the fundamental statement of the relationship of the American Reform Movement to the State of Israel is strongly, if somewhat ambivalently, articulated by this commitment of time and money. A change as radical as this must, in turn, have a pronounced effect on the students who participate in the program.

In as much as the Year-In-Israel Program is now in its third year of operation, I determined to study this particular aspect of the training of Reform rabbis. For the purpose of conducting this study, I resided in Jerusalem for a period of five and one-half months. Prior to my departure from the United States, and prior to the departure of the majority of first year students, I sent out a questionnaire to the entire entering class. This questionnaire was designed to give the following information:

(1) a general profile of the entering student body.

(2) a view of the students' expectations from the trip and what the students felt the College-Institute expected of the trip.

(3) an overview of how the students felt about such areas as Israel, Israelis, HUC and Reform Judaism. This questionnaire, with minor modifications was readministered approximately two weeks after the formal opening of the program in Israel, and again at the first of December.

Further data was collected by means of individual taped interviews with the students and most of the administrators. While I did not participate in the course load of the entering students, I was present at the Jerusalem school and observed the social interactions of the student body. Also classified as data for this study is what might be terned "self-observation". In that this was my first trip to Israel, my feelings and expectations can be considered roughly equivalent to those of the first year class.[4]

The result of this data provides a sweeping picture of how entering students of the College-Institute adjusted to their new environment. This new environment required a doubly complex adjustment as the students not only had to deal with the beginning of a professional training program, but also with a foreign culture in which they would be living for the duration of the first rabbinic year. In as much as the primary

activities of the student body were controlled by the College-Institute program, the adjustment made by the students represents the socialization process of the students to the College-Institute.

To a great degree, the results and observations of this study about the socialization process of the entering students will confirm the findings of Dr. Mirsky. For the purposes of defining the thesis of this study, it would be well to provide a survey of Dr. Mirsky's results.

(1) Dr. Mirsky suggests that there are three basic types of students enrolled at the College-Institute; the Careerist, the Scholar, and the Student of the Middle Range (SMR).[5]

(2) Dr. Mirsky suggests that the socialization process of the College-Institute often replaces students' value systems, with respect to what they envisioned the rabbinate and the seminary to be, with a new value structure heavily weighted on the side of scientific scholarship, along with a heavy emphasis on Hebrew and the ability to "handle a text".

(3) Dr. Mirsky suggests that a common by-product of

this particular socialization process is a crisis of identity or authenticity.

With the conclusions of Dr. Mirsky in mind, the hypotheses of this study are:

(1) by sending the students to Israel for their first rabbinic year, the College-Institute effectively accelerates the socialization process. This I interpret as the internalization of the need for Hebrew Language skills as the sine qua non of rabbinic education.

(2) by sending the students to Israel for their first rabbinic year, the College-Institute effectively heightened the crisis of authenticity in its students.

(3) the College-Institute is generally meeting with success in its major goal of teaching Hebrew. The secondary goals of the program are also successful, but to a lesser degree.

(4) Aside from the normal student anxieties, entering HUC students are faced with the complexities of entering a foreign culture, an adult-child identity

conflict, and a conflict of ideal views versus reality.

While this study is in no way complete, covering only the first few months of the adjustment period, it is hoped that it will provide those who read it with an insight into the feelings of the students. It is recognized, and will be pointed out, that often the students' feelings grow out of something other than real situations, and that at times these feelings are unavoidable. However, in many cases, the attitudes of the students toward the College-Institute and toward Israel could have been anticipated. Were this done, the students' experiences could have been made more meaningful and more positive. In this light, while it is acknowledged that the program generally achieves it goals, it does so at the price of a great deal of animosity which can, and probably will, sap the energies of the students. It is impossible to quantify how much more successful the program would be if its participants were "happy" with a clear idea of the goals of the program. Yet, one may assume that the financial investment and time commitment would be more productive were this the case.

CHAPTER I

Student Body Profile

While this study was not primarily concerned with arriving at statistical data with regard to the backgrounds and present character of the 1972 entering class, the first questionnaire contained a series of questions designed to yield a general profile of the students. This information is by no means conclusive, yet in many areas it strongly suggests particular trends in the class and differences from previous entering classes.

In addition to Rabbi Sherman's thesis, which includes a profile of the students he studied, there are three other works which, when compared to the group under consideration, provide interesting insights. The first work is that of Sidney Goldstein and Calvin Goldscheider entitled Jewish Americans: Three Generations in a Jewish Community.[1] This study focused on the Jewish community of Providence, Rhode Island. The authors of the study do not claim that the Providence community is a "typical" Jewish community, nor that conjectures about the general Jewish population of of the United States made from the Providence study bear

any stamp of authority. None-the-less, the Goldstein-Goldscheider study provides a method and a measure for ascertaining profile information about a group of Jews.[2]

The second work which will be used for comparison is the Union of American Hebrew Congregations' self-study, Reform is a Verb: Notes on Reform and Reforming Jews.[3] This report, compiled for the Long Range Planning Committee of the UAHC by Leonard J. Fein, provides a way of comparing the entering rabbinic student with the present constituency of the Union, the constituency he will most likely serve upon ordination. It will give an idea of the relationship between the potential professional and the laity.

The third study which will be used is the "Lenn Report", Rabbi and Synagogue in Reform Judaism,[4] compiled by Theodore I. Lenn and associates for the Central Conference of American Rabbis. This study, representing the attitudes of the Reform rabbinate, will give an idea of the relationship between the potential professional and his future colleagues.

The roster of the Jerusalem campus of the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion contained the names of 56 entering students. For the purposes of this study

we will consider only 55 of these students, as one student had sufficient Hebrew backgound so as not to be required to attend the Year-in-Israel Program, but elected to participate in a limited capacity. Of this group of 55, 53 were male and 2 were female. 15 of the students were married upon arrival in Isreal and 11 others were engaged. Of the 8 engaged students at least one planned on being married during the first year of the program. Thus, 26 of the entering students were socially bound in one way or another.

The age range of the entering students was between 19 years and 34 years of age.[5] The majority of the class were 21 or 22 years of age (10 respondants (24%) 21 years and 18 respondants (43%) 22 years). 8 of the respondants were over the age of 24. Thus, the majority of students entered the rabbinic program directly from undergraduate school. A significant number, at least 8 students, entered after graduate school or after pursuing some form of career.

TABLE I[6]

Family Background

Reform	19	(46%)
Orthodox	8	(19%)
Conservative	10	(24%)
Reconstructionist	1	(2%)
Convert[7]	1	(2%)

The above table shows student responses regarding their family backgrounds. It will be noticed that there is almost an even split between students with a Reform background and students with a non-Reform background. The above figures are from respondants to the questionnaire alone. In the total class of 55, there remain 16 students about whom no information is available. Yet, even if <u>all</u> the remaining 16 were from Reform backgrounds, a situation which I doubt seriously, at least one out of three students was raised in a "non-Reform" home. As noted (see footnote 6) I believe that the general trends in the returned questionnaires can be loosely applied to the general population. Therefore, it is safe to assume that no more than two thirds of the student body, and possibly as few as 50% of the student

body come from Reform homes.

TABLE II

Emphasis on Zionism While Student Was at Home

Strong emphasis	9	(22%)
Good deal of emphasis	10	(24%)
Some emphasis	18	(43%)
No emphasis	1	(2%)

This table shows how much emphasis students felt was placed on Zionism in their family background. This table can be viewed in two ways. First, nearly half of the respondants (46%) felt that they had at least a "good deal" or "strong" emphasis on Zionism at home. A less conclusive, but at the same time more suggestive, implication flows from the nature of the question. While the students weren't asked whether their families were pro- or anti-Zionist, the nature of the question is positively oriented. If one will grant this positive orientation, it is possible to say that Zionism was viewed with at least "some" positive emphasis by 89% of the students' homes. Even if this assertion is not accepted, it is a telling comment that only one student

felt there was no emphasis at all on Zionism in his home.

TABLE III

Frequency of Service Attendance While at Home

Regularly	6	(14%)
1-3 times per mo.	18	(43%)
4-11 times per yr.	15	(36%)
Never	0	(0%)

The above table suggests that entering students were, on the whole, fairly regular attenders at religious worship services. 57% attended several times per month or more. These figures pertain to when the students were at home. Other data (see Rabbi Sherman's thesis) indicate that when students were at college, one of their main activities was Hillel and this activity usually involved worship services. It may then be inferred that students who were predisposed to the Rabbinate or had already made their decision probably were more frequent attenders when at college than my data shows.

TABLE IV

Frequency of the Lighting of Sabbath Candles at Home

Always	22	(53%)
Usually	6	(14%)
Sometimes	8	(19%)
Never	3	(7%)

Respondants reported that half the class observed the ritual of lighting the Sabbath candles in their homes. At least 67% usually observed the ritual.

TABLE V

Frequency of Holding a Passover Seder at Home

Always	38	(91%)
Usually	0	(0%)
Sometimes	1	(2%)
Never	0	(0%)

The above data show that the Pesach Seder is the most consistently popular ritual observed in the home backgrounds of this class. 91% of the respondants always had a Pesach seder.

TABLE VI

Frequency of Having Kosher Meat in the Home

Always	7	(17%)
Usually	4	(10%)
Sometimes	10	(24%)
Never	18	(43%)

The above data is not at all conclusive. On the surface however, one may say that 1/4 of the students enrolled in the first year program came from homes in which there usually or always was Kosher meat. It indicates that at least 11 of the 55 entering students came from homes where something more than passive observance of Kashrut existed.

TABLE VII

Frequency of Separate Dishes in the Home

Always	6	(14%)
Usually	0	(0%)
Sometimes	2	(5%)
Never	31	(74%)

The data of this table is strange indeed. The fact that 74% of the students never had separate dishes in their

homes might indicate that, from the previous table, observance of Kashrut was limited to the presence of Kosher food stuffs without regard to the utensils used for their cooking. That 14% always had separate dishes and 17% always had Kosher meat might be attributable to the fact that 19% of the respondants indicated that they came from Orthodox backgrounds. If this is a true inference, then we may say, by the standard of keeping Kashrut, there were at least 6 practicing traditional Jews in the entering class.

TABLE VIII

Frequency of the Ritual of Lighting Chanuka Candles at Home

Always	35	(84%)
Usually	4	(19%)
Sometimes & Never	0	(0%)

While the observance of the Passover Seder is the most consistently popular ritual (91% always have a Seder), the lighting of Chanuka candles is generally most popular (94% usually or always light them).

Of the students who returned the questionnaire, 19 or

46% had been to Isreal at some previous time and 22 or 52% had not. Of those who had been to Isreal prior to the first year program, the range in duration of stay was 2 1/2 weeks to 10 months. The average length of stay was generally close to 3 months (a summer). Of those who had been to Isreal previously, close to 70% had made the trip under the auspices of the Youth Group (probably Temple Youth Group) or as a study trip.

The data, which follow, is extremely relevant, but may tend to be misleading. The material concerns amount of previous Hebrew Study. Before presenting the findings, the reader is cautioned in the following areas:

(1) The question itself is open-ended, no standard responses are suggested. Therefore, the response of the student to "how much Hebrew have you studied?" depends in large measure on how the the student interprets the question. It is possible that some students would assume this meant only formal courses while others would include informal Bar Mitzvah tutoring.

(2) At the high school level no qualitative difference

is made between a student who takes one hour a week in a Reform week-end high school program, the student who took Hebrew as a language requirement in a public high school and the student who might have attended a Jewish day school.[8]

(3) It is impossible to determine on the college level the meaning of a "one year" response. It may mean two college-semester courses, or three tri-mesters. For the purposes of interpretation, I assumed a college semester system and that any response of six months or less indicated one college course, while a response of one year indicated two college courses, etc.

Thus, the results of this question only tell <u>for certain</u> the length of time students were concerned with Hebrew in some kind of teacher-student relationship. In a broader perspective, the results are significant for they suggest a relatively high degree of previous Hebrew study. The question yielded the following information:

31 students had Hebrew in grade school years. Their

collective study time was 141 years or an average of 3.5 years a student. Most of these students had between two and five years of Hebrew study. Two students had 8 years and one student had 7 years.

10 students studied Hebrew in high school. Their collective study time was 41 years[9] or an average of about 4 years each.

24 students had studied Hebrew while in college. Their collective study time was 54.25 years or 108 college courses (see (3), page 11). Of these 24 students, 16 had two or more years of Hebrew study in college.

8 students had some kind of private tutorial study at some point in their education (one student indicated this was his Bar Mitzvah training).

20 of the 40 respondants had Hebrew instruction at at least two of the three stages in question.

Total time commitment to Hebrew study from our 40 respondants was 246 years.[10]

The data just reported are difficult to evaluate. Part of the difficulty has been explained in the cautions prior

to the data. The other difficulty is that I have seen no other study which deals with prior Hebrew study for our seminarians. What is available is the data from Rabbi Sherman's thesis and Dr. Mirsky's dissertation. These studies suggest that the prior Hebrew background of students entering the Hebrew Union College was quite low. In my own experience, as an entering student five years ago, I can verify this fact. I was placed in the fourth highest out of six groups. The level of my group was the ability to read, minimal translation and minimal grammar. The lowest group of the summer program of 1968 could not differentiate one Hebrew letter from another. This being the case, the data just reported suggests a much higher degree of previous Hebrew study than that of the students studied by Sherman or Mirsky. 78% of the respondants had Hebrew in their grade school years. Even if we assume that all our students were Reform (a situation which already has been shown to be manifestly false) we note that four out of five went through an average of three and one-half years of study in a Reform Hebrew program.

More telling than this is the number of students who

took some Hebrew in high school or college. On the high school level, it is safe to assume that the course requirements would go beyond the reading of prayerbook Hebrew. At the college level, we may assume that Hebrew studies would be at the level of linguistics, comparable with other college language courses. Thus, where previous students of the College might have studied one or two courses in religion or near eastern studies, 60% of the respondants from this years' entering class also had some kind of advanced Hebrew study.

While I repeat that the figures may be misleading, it is safe to say that the entering student of the Hebrew Union College had a greater exposure to Hebrew language study than previously. One can go futher and say that the general level of competency for this class was higher. This conclusion is attested to by the reports of the faculty at the Jerusalem school. While the HUC ulpan generally had three levels, this year, to the surprise of the staff, it was found that a fourth level was required. These fourth level students were studying at the beginning of the year at a level generally equal to or higher than the highest class

at the end of the previous year.

In the profile section, students were also asked to identify causes and organization they had worked with prior to enrollment at the College-Institute. The following table illustrates the number of students who responded that they had worked with these causes and organizations.

TABLE IX

Pre-Enrollment Affiliations

Jewish Peace Movement	16	(38%)
Soviet Jewry	25	(60%)
Hospital work	13	(31%)
Working with the aged	7	(17%)
Religious School teaching	25	(60%)
Tutorial Programs	23	(55%)
Working with underprivileged	22	(53%)
Temple Youth Group	29	(70%)
College Youth Movement	29	(70%)
Zionist Movement	15	(36%)

This data illustrates that the entering student body was, by and large, quite active in various organizations and

and causes. Topping the list, as might be expected, are high school and college youth movements. Organizations, such as the National Federation of Temple Youth, United Synagogue Youth, and Synagogue Youth Organization in high school, and the B'nai Brith Hillel Foundations on college campuses, provide ready vehicles for Jewish expression on the part of students who have decided or are disposed to entering the rabbinate. Neither is it surprising to find that 60% of the respondants taught in Temple religious schools and that 60% were involved, in one fashion or anothr, with the contemporary issue of Soviet Jewish Repression.

The last data of the profile section of the questionnaire once again is inconclusive, but provides an interesting insight into the entering students. In response to the request to indicate when the student had decided to pursue the rabbinate, five students responded with long-ago decisions as follows:[11]

> have been thinking about it for a long time
> after years of interest
> in the 11th grade
> early in high school
> when I was 15.

The remaining 36 respondants gave a more or less specific

date or time. These responses break down into the following levels:[11]

6 out of 36 decided a matter of months ago,[12]
13 out of 36 decided 1 1/2 years ago or less,
20 out of 36 decided 2 years ago or less,
34 out of 36 decided in the last four years.

What is significant is that 50% of the students made their decision to pursue the rabbinate two years or less prior to entering the college. The possible significance of this will be discussed below.

While much of this data is tentative, in that the questions were not scientifically constructed to elicit precise data, the information conveyed gives us a general picture of the entering class on one dimension. Before making any kind of summary, I shall make observations about our entering sample with reference to the studies mentioned earlier.

TABLE X

Religious Composition and Comparison[13]

	Sherman's Oldest Three Classes	Sherman's Youngest Three Classes	My Sample
Orthodox	8%	5%	19%
Conservative	17%	22%	24%
Reform	64%	60%	46%

Table X illustrates that the trend towards a more traditional student body is increasing. The last class, which Sherman studied, was the entering class of 1968, my class. In these five years the percentage of entering students from reform backgrounds has dropped 14%. This rise of the traditional influence in the college can also be seen in other areas as well.

TABLE XI

Frequency of Synagogue Attendance

	Regularly	Often	Seldom	Never
Providence[14]	11.7%	16.2%	60.8%	10.3%
Sherman[15]	22.0%	33.0%	35.0%	5.0%
My Sample	14.0%	43.0%	36.0%	0.0%

It will be noted that while my sample has a lower percentage of regular service attenders, the combined "regular" and "often" of my sample is equal to the sum of these catagories of the Sherman study. It will be further noticed that frequency of service attendance among HUC students is considerably higher than the figure for the Providence Jewish community. This becomes even more striking

when one considers that HUC students entering the college this year are more and more likely to be third generation Americans. Goldstein and Goldscheider suggest a further drop should occur with this generation. Consequently, in this case, maintaining a consistent percentage of regularity in service attendence is resisting a further deterioration in frequency.

TABLE XII

Frequency of Service Attendance Compared With Fein[16]

	Adult Sample	Youth Sample	My Sample
Regularly	7%	7%	14%
Often	17%	17%	43%
Seldom	74%	66%	36%
Never	3%	11%	0%

Table XII illustrates that, if service attendance is to be a criteria, our entering rabbinic students are far more traditional in their service attendance than the congregants they will potentially serve, both young and old. Even if we were to look at Fein's "High Temple" figures, our students are more frequent attenders.[17]

TABLE XIII

Ritual Observance[18]

	My Sample	Providence Orthodox	Providence Conservative	Providence Reform
Sabbath Candles				
Always	53%	62.2%	38.6%	26.5%
Usually	14%	----	----	----
Sometimes	19%	----	----	----
Never	7%	19.3%	21.0%	32.8%
Passover Seder				
Always	91%	80.7%	83.5%	74.3%
Sometimes	2%	----	----	----
Never	0%	7.6%	4.4%	6.8%
Kosher Meat in Home				
Always	17%	72.3%	34.4%	14.4%
Usually	10%	----	----	----
Sometimes	24%	----	----	----
Never	43%	10.1%	27.0%	90.4%
Separate Dishes in Home				
Always	14%	64.4%	24.8%	7.0%
Sometimes	5%	----	----	----
Never	74%	33.1%	69.7%	90.4%
Chanuka Candles				
Always	84%	81.4%	79.8%	68.9%
Usually	10%	----	----	----
Never	0%	14.4%	9.3%	17.9%

By this standard of measuring ritual observance it is interesting to note that the entering class of HUC is, in every case, more traditional-minded than the Providence Reform Sample. In fact, with the exception of observance of Kashrut, entering students are more observant than the Conservative community of Providence. If one were to look at the third generation of Providence Orthodox Jews for the above observances, again with the exception of Kashrut, our entering students would virtually equal or surpass them.

One should not read too much into this observation. It would be ludicrous to suggest that the entering class of the Hebrew Union College was, indeed, comparable in ritual observance in general to the third generation Providence Orthodoxy. However, it is clear, that there is a marked increase in ritual observance among our students.

How do we account for this trend toward a more traditional student? Part of the answer is suggested by Mirsky, that a number of our traditional and conservative students are rejects from Yeshiva University and Jewish Theological Seminary. Yet, this is not the complete answer. In conversations and interviews the students often said they

compared HUC with the other seminaries, including the Reconstructionist, and opted to apply to HUC only.

The greater part of the answer, I believe, lies in a complex of changing attitudes on the part of the Rabbinate and HUC. First we must see the difference in trend.

The Lenn study's summary to the chapter dealing with the Jewish and Religious Origins of the Reform Rabbinate states the following:[19]

> 4) About 54% of the Reform Rabbinate came from Orthodox backgrounds one generation ago. In the past five years, only 9% have come from Othodox backgrounds.
>
> 5) Over the past 20 years, Reform rabbis from Conservative backgrounds have increased from 14% to 24%.
>
> 6) As Orthodox living becomes more "assimilable", it is expected that "defectors" to Reform will continue to decrease.

If we accept Lenn's figures, the traditional backgrounds of our rabbinic students should be decreasing year after year. Yet, the trend shown in my sample and the study of Rabbi Sherman is of a greater influx of non-reform students. I believe this new trend can be explained in the following ways:

(1) Ethnicity, which might be defined as traditional practice without traditional belief, is more

acceptable in the Reform movement today. An example of this would be the youth group. The Missouri Valley Federation of Temple Youth now makes Kipot available to its members at services.

(2) A great many of the rabbis of the Reform movement are experiencing a shift to the right.

a) The Lenn Report points out that the majority of Reform rabbis still come from traditional backgrounds.[20]

b) The shift to the right is indicated by the fact that 65% of Reform rabbis favor either the incorporation "more of traditional Judaism" in Reform belief and practice, or an outright merger with Conservative Judaism.[21]

c) The shift to the right is also indicated by the major issues on the contemporary scene of the CCAR, i.e., a more stringent stand on inter-marriage, the development of a Reform Halacha, etc.

Both Mirsky and Sherman suggest that one of the major influences on young men, who choose the

(3) Reform rabbinate, is close contact with a Reform rabbi. Thus, this major influence is becoming more traditionally oriented.

(3) The College-Institute, because of its desire to raise the level of Hebrew competency of its student body, is growing more disposed to accept students from non-Reform backgrounds.[22] As Dr. Mirsky points out,[23] students from traditional backgrounds (notably JTS rejects) have a greater facility with texts than the average HUC student from a Reform background.

Summary of Chapter I.

(1) While the average entrance age of HUC students has not changed from five years ago (21-22 years old), more of the students are married or engaged than in previous years (close to 50%).

(2) Entering students appear to be fairly evenly divided between those with Reform backgrounds and those with non-Reform backgrounds. This is a continuation of a trend discovered by Sherman.

(3) Entering students appear to be more traditional in ritual observances studied than the majority of Jews in the Providence study, and definitely more traditional than the average Reform congregant.

(4) Entering students appear to have a greater background in Hebrew study prior to entrance to the College-Institute.

(5) Entering students appear to be deciding later to pursue the rabbinate as a career.

CHAPTER II

Initial Expectations of First Year Students

Prior to examining what the students expect from the first year program, it is pertinent to again summarize the two major hypotheses of Dr. Mirsky's dissertation. This, because we will see the principles in operation throughout the rest of this paper.

(1) Dr. Mirsky contends that the socialization process of the College-Institute is one which tends to strip away the prior attitudes of students as to what the rabbinate is all about, and to place in their stead the notion that the measure of authenticity and competence is a Wissenschaft, or scientific, approach to the Hebrew texts of Judaism.

(2) Dr. Mirsky further suggests that because students generally enter the institution with a poor knowledge of Hebrew, their goal of being able to "handle texts" continuously seems to slip further and further away from their grasp. Students are made to feel that even when they "properly" use translation aids, even when they come to grips with the

meaning of the text, because the material isn't "second nature" to them they lack what it takes to be a true "Rabbi in Israel."

It was contended at the beginning of this paper that Dr. Mirsky's principles were still operative in the New Israel program, and that part of the reason that these processes are accelerated is because the program is located in Israel. What follows in this and the next chapter will be an explanation of the early careers of entering students into the Year-In-Israel program.

From the previous chapter we have an idea of what kind of student was admitted to the College-Institute. We do not yet know what kinds of attitudes were brought ot the program by these students. These attitudes and expectations were basically formed from four sources:

(1) Information provided about the program by the College-Institute.

(2) Information provided about Israel and the Program through contacts with fellow students, who had either been to Israel or had actually participated in the Program the year before.

(3) Previous trips to Israel.

(4) Information conveyed through one's background (UJA, JNF, religious school).

Of these four catagories, the most significant in the lives of the students seemed to be (1) and (4). While a number of students had the opportunity to discuss the Program with "experienced" others, very few students mentioned on the questionnaires, in interviews, or during social intercourse, that advice or comments of these others were either verified or invalidated. Further while close to half of those students who returned Questionnaire One had been to Israel, very few of the students said "I expected this..." or similar comments when they encountered Israeli society. Most of the students were oriented toward the College-Institute, this being their primary, if not total, reason for being in Isr l. A number of students also were confronting the reality of Israel for the first time. Even those students who had been in the country previously had not been confronted with the everyday problems of living in one place. Rather, they had lived a relatively carefree existence, touring, studying, working in a mobile, temporary fashion. Often, in interviews, students

expressed the relationship between naive, idealistic pictures of Israel they received when they were young, and the reality they were now experiencing.

Generally speaking, the first formal contact students had with the first year probram was by means of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Catalogue. In this publication the student received this first information about the Year-In-Israel Program.[1]

> At the time this catalogue goes to press, a thorough revision of the rabbinic course of studies is under way. The new course includes a Year-In-Israel Program for all rabbinic students matriculating in 1970 and thereafter. Entering students will spend a year in study at the Jerusalem School of the College-Institute. The aim of this program is twofold. Instruction is primarily for the purpose of developing a high degree of facility in Hebrew. In addition, a year of study in Israel will provide the future rabbi with the opportunity of gaining a well founded understanding and appreciation of the land and the people of Israel.[2]

This information is given in a boxed announcement entitled "Important Notice". Later in the catalogue additional information is provided.

> The Year In Israel Program
> Beginning with the academic year 1970/71 rabbinic students admitted to any of the

> American Schools of the College-Institute are required to spend a preparatory year in Israel. The Year-In-Israel Program at the Jerusalem School of the College-Institute concentrates on the study of Hebrew; other courses are given in the field of Bible, Reform Judaism, and Biblical Archaeology.[3]

This then is the sum of the information received by students contemplating entrance into the rabbinic program. Considering the fact that the catalogue was published before all the details of the Year-In-Israel Program had been determined, one can understand the brevity and lack of specificity of the above announcements. At this point, all an entering student can count on is a concentration on Hebrew language skills. He might also expect that he will be studying Bible, Reform Judaism and Biblical Archaeology.

During the interviews, when students were asked to recall their early reaction to the requirement for a year of study in Israel, prior to arrival, the majority of the interviewees expressed initial curiosity (and in some cases anxiety) about what the program was all about. Indeed, the catalogue spelled out the course loads, testing schedule, calendar, and degree program for the American campuses, but gave only the information quoted about the Israel Program.

Following acceptance, students generally received two types of information from the College; administrative and travel aid. Administrative information included such things as applications for and information about financial aid for the year abroad, information regarding tentative group flights for students, and forms regarding the type of housing for the student available upon arrival.

This administrative information caused some difficulties to students. In the course of the time prior to the beginning of the summer, the possibility of a group flight was ruled out because of a lack of interest on the part of the students. Financial aid forms produced what appeared to at least a few of the students to be inequitable distribution of funds. One student commented on the second questionnaire that he and his friend applied for aid, his friend's financial condition being much better than his own, yet his friend received a larger sum of money. This could easily have been the result of a misunderstanding on the part of the respondant, but indicates a real concern of many students. Finally, the housing forms in many cases, produced disappointments. This difficulty of housing will be discussed in the following chapter.

The type of information which I call "travel aid" took the form of a 15 paged mimeographed booklet entitled "Your Year in Israel--1972." The intent of this booklet is summarized in the first paragraph of the cover letter.

> The following is a practical guide sheet which has been compiled in consultation with the staff, students and wives, of the Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem. From our experiences, we feel that the information below will be helpful to you in planning your year in Jerusalem.[4]

The cover letter is aimed at introducing not only the booklet, but at instilling an attitude toward the trip in the minds of the students. That attitude may be characterized as "cautious optimism". Students are asked to remember that part of the "charm of any new country is its uniqueness", that Israel is a "charming little country" with a people who are "hardworking, friendly and, for Americans, sometimes a bit overwhelming". Finally, the booklet offers the advice that each student should be armed with Savlanut (patience) and Chutzpah. With these two attitudes a student will "get into the spirit of things, and have a very successful year in Israel". Following the cover letter are sixteen sections covering practical information students would most likely need in preparation for the trip. The following is a list of

the information with applicable explanations:

1) Documents - passport, health certificate, visa, student ID card.

2) Travel - Flight information, student flights, approximate costs.

3) Shipping - trunk information, costs, time factor.

4) What to Bring - clothing, general information for those who plan on living in apartments.

5) Money - transfering and converting dollars to pounds.

6) Customs

7) Arrival - Instructions on how to get from Lod Airport to Jerusalem.

8) Housing - Single student dorms, apartments, approximate rents, procedures for procuring apartments.

9) Cost of Living - estimated costs for 10 month student year, both married and single students.

10) Health Insurance - explanation of Kupat Holim for wives, plus additional insurance information.

11) Financial aid - information regarding Minhal Hastudent grants.

12) Summer Ulpan - suggestions of Summer Hebrew Programs for early arrivals.

13) Program of studies - Ulpan requirements, additional course requirements, lecture series, courses offered for advanced students.

14) Tours - explanations of Negev, Galilee and Sinai tours.

15) Other Projects - listing of other possible visits during the year.

16) Tentative Calendar Academic Year 1972-73.

Reading this publication, <u>after</u> having gone through the experience of arrival and the process of getting settled, is indeed helpful. It does provide, in retrospect, a concise statement of "need-to-know" information for one who is planning to move his life to Israel for a year, However, even in retrospect, the brochure is "colorless". The information is presented factually, without any subjective reaction to the trauma of making one's residence in a new country. While it might be unreasonable to suggest that this booklet contain more about one's emotional adjustment to the country, the next section will indicate that, even forearmed with this information, students had difficulty in adjusting to their introduction to Israeli culture. For the present, however, we are concerned with materials which helped to form student attitudes toward the trip.

This "travel aid" information must be divided into two areas. First, the bulk of the material deals with physical

relocation, what is required to leave the United States, enter Israel and return again after a year's absence. The other type of material, sections 13-16, deals directly with what the student may expect from the College-Institute in terms of a program. Since the next chapter will deal with entrance into Israeli life, I would like to concentrate on that material which directly relates to the program.

Section 13 is of greatest significance. The following is a digest of this information:

a) The student will attend an intensive Hebrew language course, 4 hours a day, five days each week.

b) The student will attend three required courses first semester, each meeting for 2 hours each week. These courses are Jewish Liturgy (which becomes Rashi second semester), Introduction to Bible, and the History and thought of Reform Judaism.

c) On Thursday evenings, every other week, there will be a series of lectures on "Israel Today".

d) Advanced students (undefined) will probably have the opportunity to take any of five additional

courses (Modern Hebrew Liturature, Midrash, Talmud, Archaeology, and Bible).

From this information, the beginning student can anticipate a minimum of 26 class hours (20 uplan, 6 other required courses) not counting the lecture every other week, not counting the possible option of "additional courses for advanced students". Applying the old rule of "two hours out of class for every hour in class" entering students could anticipate 78 hours per week of school work, quite an impressive work load.

While much can be said about this "ideal" work load, the following will suffice for the present. On the face of it, a student, to optimumly fulfill this schedule would have to work 11 hours a day, every day of the week. Following the College's five-day-week program with weekends free to "take advantage of the country," a student would have to be involved with his studies in one way or another for 16 hours a day, Monday through Friday. Even if the student, sophisticated from his undergraduate work, doesn't apply the rule of "two hours for every one", but only allows equal time for outside study, he comes up with a 52 hour work week. What minimally can be said about student reactions to this suggested

program is one of two attitudes; the first year program will be extremely difficult, not like any other graduate program commonly known to our students, or that the College-Institute is totally unrealistic in its requirements. Neither of these attitudes are positive. In the course of the year, virtually all the students I interviewed complained about the extreme work load and the scarcity of time. These complaints were brought up after the students were actually involved in the program. Given the information provided by "Your Year In Israel," without the benefit of actual exposure to the program, one can imagine the level of anxiety students brought with them from the United States and Canada.

Before looking at what the students themselves anticipated from the first year program, it would be well to summarize the impression the College-Institute conveyed to the entering student through its literature and mailings.

(1) Initial information was most sketchy. Students were told only that they would be required to spend a year in Israel with a primary emphasis on Hebrew Language Skills.

(2) Students were probably under the impression that

the program itself was well organized -- i.e., group flights were being organized, grants of funds were available, housing was being taken care of.

(3) Students were given a technically accurate description of how one enters Israel and what one should bring. Aside from having Savlanut and Chutzpah, the procedure was fairly well defined.

(4) Students were given the impression that their work load would be extremely heavy.

With this in mind, I would like to survey the attitudes and expectation of the students themselves. This information is taken from the initial questionnaire. There are, essentially, three groups of questions which yield information about the students' attitudes and expectations. The first group asks the student to order a list of priorities he has for himself with regard to the trip to Israel. The second aspect of this group is a request for the student to order a list of priorities in the way he feels the College-Institute would order its goals for the students in the program. The second group of questions asked the student to describe how

he felt his year of study in Israel would be of benefit to him in his future rabbinic studies, and how they would benefit his being a rabbi. The third group asked the student if he felt the College-Institute had been of sufficient help to him in his plans for making the trip and what suggestions, if any, he had to improve the "service".

When students were asked to order their personal priorities and hopes for the trip to Israel they indicated the following as "a major hope or expectation".[5]

91% - to become conversant in Modern Hebrew.
58% - to learn Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew.
38% - to study Israeli Culture.
36% - to learn about the rabbinate.

Second choices, indicating simply "a hope or expectation", indicate the following ordering:

70% - to meet and become friends with Israelis.
60% - to feel a kinship with Israelis.
55% - to study Israeli Culture.

Given this information, it is clear that most students brought with them the feeling that Hebrew was important. 91% felt that learning Modern Hebrew was their primary goal for their Israeli experience. Three-fifths of the students also felt that a primary goal was to learn Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew. When it comes to secondary goals and expectations of

the student body, we change perspective. While the major goal was academic, learning Hebrew, secondary goals were social, meeting Israelis, feeling a kinship.

Students were then asked to order the priorities of the College-Institute as they felt the institution would order the list. They were restricted in their responses to this question. Students were asked to indicate only one primary goal for the program, only two secondary goals, and as many tertiary possible goals as they felt were present. The following is a list of the responses to the primary goal of the first year program:

72% - to teach you the Hebrew you will need to know for your academic work.
14% - to give you an example of a living and vibrant Jewish community.
2% - to teach you reform Jewish theology and philosophy.
2% - to make you feel closer to Jews in other lands.

The students ordered secondary goals as follows:

36% - to give you an example of a living and vibrant Jewish connumity.
24% - to teach you the history of Israel.
22% - to teach you the Hebrew you will need to know for your academic work.
22% - to give you positive feelings about Judaism.

From this data several interesting insights emerge.

First of all, it is apparent that the majority of the students

are predisposed to the goal of learning Hebrew. While students didn't respond whether they were pleased or displeased by this goal, they indicated, almost to a man, that Hebrew was their primary interest. This majority response concerning student expectations matches up with what the majority of students felt the College-Institute required of them. One cannot underestimate the possible causes for this.

(1) Students were heavily influenced by rabbis who were either traditional in their backgrounds or in a process of moving toward the right. To these rabbis, the ability to handle text would be most significant, and this significance would be passed on to the prospective student.

(2) The students' only introductory information with regard to the program (i.e., the General Information Catalogue and "Your Year In Israel") stressed Language Skill development as the most important portion of the program in terms of emphasis and time.

(3) It would be inconceivable to the student for the College-Institute to require the investment of time and money in a Year- In-Israel Program if Hebrew

were not the major goal.

Next, the data shows a disparity between what the students held as their secondary goals and what they felt the College held as its secondary goals. For the students, the majority (70%) indicated a desire to become friends with Israelis. This could mean the international experience of meeting a foreign populace. There is evidence from my interviews that this was, indeed, what many people meant when they spoke about meeting the Israeli. Next highest in terms of responses to this question was to feel a kinship with the Israeli. Again, this is a social goal. It also has overtones of a desire of the American Jew to feel a tie with the Israeli Jew.

When it came to ordering the priorities from the College's point of view, the students had great difficulty in agreeing. Indeed, no particular choice was selected by a majority of the students as a secondary goal of the College. The highest degree of agreement was 36% who felt that the College-Institute hopes students would experience a living and vibrant Jewish community.

These findings are significant in that students, in their

own minds, tended to have secondary goals which they did not feel the College held for them. What is even more significant, is that the students who responded to this questionnaire had a very vague idea of what the College-Institute hoped to accomplish beyond the instruction of Hebrew. This response was made after the students had received their "Your Year In Israel" publication which discussed other goals for the program in detail.

Confusion about the program becomes even greater when we consider the second grouping of question. These questions asked the student to evaluate the benefit he felt he would derive from studying in Israel, first in terms of his future studies and then in terms of his being a rabbi.

Before describing the particular responses the students made, it is well to point out that all responses to both questions were decidedly vague. This, I feel, was due to two factors.

(1) Students had a great amount of difficulty distinguishing between Rabbinic studies and being a rabbi. In many cases they indicated that the answer to the second question was the "same as above".

(2) Beyond learning Hebrew, upon which the literature from the College placed great weight, the students hadn't thought in "rabbinic catagories". While this will be discussed later in greater detail, it will be sufficient to say that the students generally hadn't considered questions such as aliyah, Reform Judaism's role in Israel, or the legitimacy of a Galut Judaism.

To the question of benefit to their rabbinic studies the vast majority noted that the Hebrew they learned would be helpful. They hoped they would benefit by "learning Hebrew, beginning study of Talmud, Bible, etc." Some students combined the areas of future academic work and being a rabbi.

> The classes, tours, etc. will help me to understand and teach the Bible as well as the daily prayers. They will also help me to answer questions which may arise from inside or outside my congregation.

One gets the feeling, from reading responses like this, that for these students, the reality of the rabbinate, and indeed, the reality of the rest of the HUC program is still distant.

There were some students whose answers indicated a deeper awareness of the relationship of the Israeli experience

to their rabbinates. One student responded:

> Get a better perspective on Israel which will enable me to answer personal questions about the relationship of "Galut" to Israel and the inner dynamic of a Jewish community anywhere in the world.

I must underscore the reason for my evaluation of student responses to this question. As I and my peer group approach ordination, after having had the benefit of five years rabbinic study, plus practical experience in our bi-weekly congregations, we are more and more coming to grips with questions such as these. Were I, and I believe most of my colleagues, to answer this question now, we would respond that the benfit of a year of study in Israel for our rabbinic studies would be Hebrew skill. One need only note that when one returns from Israel, the majority of his colleagues believe that any Hebrew courses he takes after the year of study will be a "snap" or a "piece of cake". Similarly, if my class were to answer the question about benefit of a year of study to being a rabbi, we would probably respond on the level of personal questions of the legitimacy of Reform Judaism, the meaning of Galut, and our relationship to Traditional Judaism.

One student, in response to his feelings about the benefit of the year to his rabbinic studies responded:

> Other than becoming comfortable with the Hebrew language, I feel that my major hope is to vitalize my nefesh so that the future years at HUC-JIR don't turn me into a "black suit, white shirt" standardized American rabbi.

Finally, a number of the students felt that the primary benefit of the program, after the learning of Hebrew, would be to establish a feeling of chevrah with their fellow classmates, a "solidarity" with the class through "experiencing things together" and generally an "exciting introduction" to their future rabbinic studies.

By far the more interesting responses, from the point of view of my studies, were the responses to the question concerning benefit of the year's study to being a rabbi. A great majority of the students answered this question using Hebrew as their frame of reference. Some examples of their responses follow:

> The year will give me a command of the Hebrew language.
>
> ... I'll be more at home with the original texts.
>
> Learning Hebrew....

This was not the only response to this question. Other students run the spectrum from providing information which a rabbi can convey to his congregation to providing moving, emotional experiences.

We must focus for a moment on those who felt that they would gain most from their year in Israel, with respect to their being rabbis, by gaining a facility with text. Let us quickly survey what has thus far been uncovered:

(1) Students' primary goal is generally learning Hebrew.

(2) Students see the College's primary goal for them as learning Hebrew.

(3) Students anticipate benefit to future rabbinic studies from the first year program as a knowledge of Hebrew.

(4) Students anticipate benefit to being a rabbi from first year program as a facility with texts, and Hebrew Language Skills.

It becomes clear that, prior to entering the seminary proper (these responses were taken from questionnaires which were sent out prior to the arrival of most students) a great many of our students are predisposed to the central requirement

of Hebrew. This predisposition goes beyond the boundaries of the College itself. A large number of students feel that learning Hebrew will be of significant benefit to them as rabbis. That, in the words of one of the respondants, as a rabbi he will "be more at home with the original texts".

Dr. Mirsky suggests that part of the socialization process of the College is to implant this value, the primacy of text and scientific understanding of same, in place of many other notions of what the rabbinate is all about. He further suggests that from everyday observation there is nothing to suggest that Hebrew skills, beyond prayerbook Hebrew, are significant need-to-know items for the Reform Rabbi. The socialization process of the College-Institute is the implantation of the value of Hebrew as something essential to the rabbinate. What this study has thus far shown is that a great percentage of the students come <u>already indoctrinated</u>! They have more background of Hebrew study. They come, more and more, from backgrounds in which Hebrew texts are revered. They see as their primary goal the study and learning of Hebrew, and they envision the learning of Hebrew to be of significant benefit to them as rabbis.

Yet the questionnaires clearly indicate, because of the kind of students that are admitted and the location of the program in Israel, that there is an acceleration of the socialization process.

One last group of questions remain to be discussed. Not all students answered the question dealing with suggestions for improvement in service rendered by the College-Institute. Prior to their arrival in Israel, most students, by their responses, had little or no idea about what they would be studying in Israel. They suggested, with great regularity, that the College provide more detailed information as to what the course of study would be upon arrival. This is understandable considering the explanations they received thus far were at least sketchy, and at best provided only course titles. The next frequent suggestion had to do with placing students in contact with their classmates, or people who were already in Jerusalem. Finally, a few students suggested that the College-Institute could have provided more help by increasing financial aid. The significance of these responses can only be understood after one remembers the information previously sent out to the students. The booklet

"Your Year In Israel" contained the majority of information the students requested. Is also contained addresses to which students could write in order to be placed in contact with other members of the class or students from previous years. Apparently, the students either didn't read the booklet, or they read it and were not satisfied. I suggest the latter to be the case.

If it is true that most students read the booklet and were not satisfied some explanation must be offered. I believe that this is an indication of the height of student anxiety to making the trip. Their major focus for the trip was the College-Institute. The questionnaire indicates that this was their primary purpose for the trip. The questionnaire also indicates that most students had little idea of what the program was about, what they would be studying, what book they would be needing etc. Coupling this uncertainty with the whole problem of moving into a foreign culture and the anxiety is understandable. We must realize the magnitude of the events which were taking place. First, the students were about to embark upon training for their life's work. In many cases students weren't certain as to how much they really

wanted to be rabbis, or whether they could "cut" the program. At the same time, the students were bound for a land which had strange customs, strange food, and a strange language. For most of them this would be the first time they were away from home, meaning that the distance, and expense of communication indeed placed them on their own. For a good number, recent marriages added the additional stress of marital adjustment to the trip. It is apparent from their responses to the questionnaires, as well as their reminiscence after arrival, that they not only wanted detailed information about factual matters, but they were concerned with the emotional question. They wanted to know about what they were getting into, what it would be like and if they could master the situation. Thus, explaining how to get from the airport to Jerusalem didn't explain how it would feel to come to a strange land with a foreign language. Telling the students to have patience, and that the country was charming but unique raised additional questions--patience for what? and in what way unique?

Thus, with all these various stresses on the students, with all the anticipations and excitements and fears, it is

understandable how the possession of technical information about preparation for the trip could still lead to questions about the trip.

Summary of Chapter II

In this chapter I have discussed the type of prior information the students received about the trip to Israel. I have suggested that their primary source of information was the College itself. This information was very sketchy with regard to the program and, while technically adequate with regard to the problems of moving to Israel, did not answer some of the emotional questions students had about the trip.

It was seen that the students' primary goal for themselves was the acquisition of Hebrew Language Skills and that this goal matched up with what they felt the College expected of them. Further, the student's secondary goals were in the realm of social intercourse with Israelis and Israeli culture. The students had difficulty in describing the College's secondary goals and never attained higher than 36% agreement in this area. Students generally saw the Year-In-Israel Program as benefiting their future studies as well as their

future rabbinates by increasing their Hebrew fluency. It was suggested in terms of Dr. Mirsky's hypothesis of HUC socialization, students came to the College-Institute predisposed to Hebrew study and that a number felt that this was also significant to their future rabbinates.

Finally, it was suggested that the students were under a good deal of stress with regard to the beginning of their rabbinic studies. The sources and expressions of this stress will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

The Early Career of the Entering Student

In this chapter I shall attempt to recreate the early career of the entering student. The main focus will be on the events during the first month to six weeks of the student's sojourn in Israel. This period covers the time of arrival, getting to Jerusalem, getting settled in some kind of living facility, pre-ulpan testing, tours, beginning classes and the High Holidays.

Much of the information for this chapter will be drawn from personal experience. As previously noted, this was the first trip to Israel for my wife and me. Our adjustment experiences are very comparable to those of entering students. Where there are varying attitudes, these will be sighted, primarily from the private interviews with the students.

The majority of the student body arrived in Israel during the first week in September. Their calendar called for the following activities:

September 4	Registration
September 5-7	Negev Tour
September 8-10	Rosh Hashana
September 11	Classes Begin
September 18	Yom Kippur

September 22-23 Sukkot
September 24-28 Galilee Tour.

On the face of it, this schedule provided little, or no time to get settled in a living facility. The compactness of this schedule will come into focus as this chapter proceeds.

The students' first encounter with Israel took place upon landing at Lod Airport, outside of Tel Aviv. As the plane taxied to the debarkation point, military trucks surround the craft and passengers remain on board while soldiers search the plane. Most students commented on this with mixed emotions. The presence of armed troops, a common sight throughout the country, was initially both disturbing and reassuring to most students. It should be kept in mind that only three months prior to the arrival of most students the "Lod Massacre" took place. Throughout the stay in Israel, most students felt very secure, yet often voiced appreciation for the visual presence of the army.[1]

Following the military inspection, passengers were loaded on motor coaches and driven to the arrival hall of the airport. Here, long lines of arriving passengers awaited passport inspection and the issuance of visas. It was at this point,

that some students remember being a bit "nervous" as this was the very spot where the "Massacre" took place. The lines move slowly, but finally the student is free to claim his luggage. This too can be quite time consuming. After claiming one's luggage, one proceeds through customs and arrives at the money changer. Here he converts, usually, travelers checks from dollars to pounds and encounters his first Israeli currency. The subject of money will come up again. It is safe to say that most students don't make the mental transition from dollars to pounds until after at least a month. For the initial period, everything will seem either very expensive (taking a little more than four units of Israeli currency to one unit of U.S. currency) or very cheap (mentally converting the larger Israeli figure into the smaller American figure).

The student is now faced with the problem of transporting himself, his wife, if he is married, and between 44 and 100 plus pounds of baggage to Jerusalem. For this purpose, assuming he has arrived during the week and during the daylight hours, several possibilities are available. He may take an El Al bus to Tel Aviv, catching an Egged bus for Jerusalem, or take an Egged bus from the airport to Jerusalem.

He may take a "special", a hired cab which takes him directly to where he wants to go in Jerusalem. Or, he may take a Sherut, or collective taxi to Jerusalem. Most students had been advised to travel by Sherut. Several things commonly occur at this point. Students encounter, for the first time, the language barrier, and students have their first real monetary transactions.

While flying to Israel and getting out of the airport, most service personnel speak English. It is the most expeditious language for them to use, especially on planes arriving from New York. However, while taxi drivers often speak English, they generally begin communication in Hebrew. For the student with no Hebrew background, this is frustrating, but presents little real difficulty. Once the driver understands that there can be no communication in Hebrew, English is employed.

It is the student with a grounding in Biblical Hebrew and a little Modern Hebrew who encounters his first frustrations. For this, I draw directly from my own experience. I had studied four years of Biblical, Rabbinic, and Modern Hebrew. While I knew that I would not be able to conduct abstract

conversations in the language of the land, I assumed that I could make myself understood and understand in return. There is more at stake here than simple communication. In my case, I felt that as a student close to being a Rabbi, a student who, by American standards was supposed to be an "expert" in Hebrew, I <u>should</u> be able to communicate. For the entering student, with his notion of the magnitude of the Hebrew he will be studying, this first exposure and its success or failure cannot help being a measure in his mind of the kind of future success or the relative difficulty of future studies he will encounter.

One generally encounters four difficulties in these initial contacts. First, Americans generally have little opportunity to hear or speak Hebrew. Most previous study centered on reading. Hearing and understanding, as well as formulating thoughts and uttering them involve different skills from those most students were acquainted with. Second, the rate at which the average taxi driver speaks is considerably faster than most American ears are prepared to hear. Third, most Americans, even those with Hebrew backgrounds, are not prepared for the various dialects and accents of Hebrew they

hear. Words cease to have distinct sounds. Certain vocalic changes occur in speaking, and the stress of words is often different. Fourth, as one might expect, the vocabulary of the speaking Israeli is incomparably larger than most Americans.

What commonly occurs is the student's formulation of a question or a direction for the driver, followed by a response from the driver which is either totally or nearly incomprehensible to the student. Ideas may come through, but exact meaning, or anything near exact meaning eludes the hearer. While one may be prepared for difficulties, the initial encounter with spoken Hebrew, especially after the fatigue of traveling, is a frustrating experience. Feelings of inadequacy immediately well up. Questions about one's state of preparedness for the studies ahead; one's ability to learn the language at all, and one's self image often begin at this point.

Additionally frustrating, as students express all through the time of my observation, is that one's determination to make oneself understood in Hebrew is generally met with an English response from the Israeli. There are two

reasons for this. First, the Israeli welcomes the opportunity to practice his English. Israel is a tourist-oriented country and most tourists are American. Consequently it is to the benefit of the Israeli to practice his English. Secondly, it requires a great deal of patience on the part of the Israeli to help an American learn Hebrew. He must drastically reduce his rate of speaking, lengthening the time required for communication. The taxi driver, storekeeper or government clerk, for example, often lack this patience.

Also significant at this point is the student's first financial transaction. The agreement on a price for the journey to Jerusalem, and similar transactions in the first few weeks of the sojourn, produce, to one degree or another, the feeling that the student is being taken. There are complex reasons for this. They are crucial since this is the student's first real contact with flesh and blood Israelis. The reasons are:

(1) Most students, as indicated by the questionnaires, realized that the Israeli would most likely see

(3) him as an "American" rather than a "Jew". Further, students felt that Israelis saw them as "rich

Americans", i.e., like the stereotypical tourist.

(2) Students were generally under the impression that in Israel, the American barters for everything. This impression is again a manifestation of the tourist image the student believes he projects. Tour guides frequently begin their tours with explanations about the bartering system. Stories of bartering, of Arab businessmen in the Shuq (Arab market) inviting the potential buyer in for Arab coffee and extended negotiations, are common. This is often a misleading impression. Bartering often goes on in Arab sections, but fees for certain services and goods are generally fixed. Throughout the period of observation very few students actually bartered for anything successfully. This is perhaps due to the fact that the difference in money and the American idea of a set price makes Americans not only bad at bartering, but also embarassed to do so.[2]

(3) The language barrier immediately makes the student feel at a disadvantage. He feels on the outside

of the system. If he tries to speak in Hebrew his preoccupation with grammar and vocabulary add pressure to the bargaining procedure. If he speaks in English he has the feeling that the seller has some hidden agenda beyond the simple meaning of his words.

These three factors often add up to the feeling that one has been cheated. The initial impression that the Israeli will often take advantage of the American tourist is generally fixed in the minds of the students because of these early transactions. This is primarily due to the insecurities produced by the above factors. After the conclusion of these transactions students are moved to count their change to make sure that the strange money was returned to them properly. They convert Israeli currency to American currency to be certain that they have been treated fairly. Because they are being bombarded with new data at an ever increasing rate, the swiftness of the transactions make the students suspicious.

But something else also comes into play. The majority of the students (58%) who responded to the first questionnaire had hoped that Israelis would view them as Jews. I believe

this percentage, after informal discussions with the students, to be too low. Consequently, even though most students felt they would be viewed as Americans, they hoped to be viewed as Jews. Thus, when they felt they had been taken advantage of, their feelings of despair were often heightened for they were taken advantage of by a fellow Jew.

Arrival in Jerusalem took many forms. Those who traveled by bus were dropped at the Central Bus Station and had to either transfer to another bus or take a cab. Those who took a Sherut were dropped at a central collection point, about one mile from the school. Some paid an additional sum to convert their Sherut into a "special". Finally, via one means or another, the student arrived at the school. It was not uncommon to see these students and their wives literally dragging their baggage up the steps into the reception hall of the College.

They Arrival at the College instituted another phase of initial adjustment. Previous exposure had been to Israel. Now, for the first time, the student came up against the institution which would control so much of his life for the rest of the year. At the same time, students obviously came

face to face with the fact that they had embarked upon a rabbinic training program, that they had finally arrived in Jerusalem and were about to begin.

I have never seen a systematic study about how rabbinic students feel about becoming rabbis. Yet, I remember how I felt when I entered the program and how I felt when I encountered the Cincinnati campus and the Jerusalem campus for the first time. There is a feeling of self-importance along with whatever trepidations one experiences. Usually, families have been thrilled and supportive about a student's decision to pursue the rabbinate. The student's rabbi (if he has one) is generally supportive and often indicates by his overt attention that there is something special about a boy of his who chooses the rabbinate. Whether or not the student is frightened or certain about his decision, most students bring with them a very "OK" attitude about themselves. They are "good boys" with something special about them.

Most students who arrived at the Jerusalem campus, also had a particular attitude about that school. Like students in Cincinnati, prospective rabbis feel that the Hebrew Union College is dedicated to developing rabbis. These two factors,

the self-image and attitude about the school, generally create in the student the feeling that the college will go out of its way to be of assistance. He, as a rabbinic student, is the end to which the college bends its energy. Most students found this attitude met with continual frustration.

The arriving student is welcomed by the receptionist and directed to Mr. Michael Kline's office or to the office of Esther Lee, the Executive Secretary of the Jerusalem campus. In both places his first encounter is likely to be a secretary who is busy with College business. Most students felt that these secretaries seldom smiled, that they did not show real concern for the student and that they were too busy with official business to focus their attention on what the students felt was the major purpose of the school, namely the student himself. The feeling, that the administration of the program was not primarily concerned with the students, continued throughout the term of my observation.

At this point, the student usually received assistance in finding housing. Many students, especially married couples, had arranged, via mail, to take one of the "HUC apartments" (apartments rented on behalf of the students by

the College-Institute). Those single students who chose not to live in apartments were directed to Beit Hastudent, the dormitory of the Hebrew University. The process of housing students is not an easy one and bears further attention.

Our experience upon arrival in Israel was similar to most married students. The difference was that we arrived in the summer, a time when the College staff is least busy and when there are a minimum of students in residence to detract from the time the assistant[3] to the Director of Jewish Studies has to devote to student needs.[4]

We arrived at the College before noon and met Mr. A. After a brief greeting and numerous phone calls, Mr. A. furnished us with several addresses and informed us of some of the details of apartment hunting in Jerusalem. We left him with the understanding that if we did not find anything by the evening, he would arrange temporary housing in an apartment which had been reserved for another student couple who were yet to arrive. After an afternoon of tiring, frustrating searching Mr. A. took us to the temporary apartment in Tol Piyot, a suburb of Jerusalem. He showed us the apartment and gave us various details about how certain things (like the hot

water) were operated. We were then left on our own.

I dwell for a moment on our reaction to this apartment since it is similar to the reactions of other couples. Apartments in Jerusalem are hard to come by. Further, unless they were in Arab buildings, they were usually very small, even by American student standards.[5] They are made of stone and concrete, lack carpeting, and often contain a variety of "danish modern" furniture of flimsy appearance. Because of the constant building in the Jerusalem area they are often dusty and dirty, especially if they haven't been recently occupied. Our temporary apartment, for example, had moldy food stuffs which had been left in the refrigerator. The kitchen utensils were of a mixed variety and made of light "cheap looking" alloys. By American standards, they appeared to come from a child's tea party set. Beds, in Israeli apartments, are often converted couches (in our case, two couches pushed together and covered with a large cloth.

It is at this point that students begin to experience their first culture shock. Most students were prepared to "rough it" a little when they came to Israel, yet the shock of first encounter leads one to dispair. It should be

pointed out that most students, after a while, were able to adjust to and be comfortable in their accomocations. Culture shock in this instance can be defined as the encounter with "difference", and at this point, <u>everything</u> is different. In addition, that one is exhausted at this point aggravates the situation.

Another factor which intensifies the problem of house hunting is the lack of "necessities". Students were informed in "Your Year..." that trunks would not arrive for up to two months after shipment. Most students brought much of what they thought they would immediately need. However, most students didn't realize that they would need bedding immediately (we slept in bathrobes) and towels (we dried ourselves with T-shirts). Though this kind of introduction to Israeli culture was upsetting in the beginning, we, as most couples, were able to look upon it in retrospect as "pioneering" and enjoyable.[6] Because of our prior preparation for the trip we were able to anticipate and understand our feelings. To the average student,who had not been emotionally prepared, the trauma was heightened.

It is important that we look at the housing problem from

the point of view of the students themselves. The next chapter will discuss the housing problem in more detail. It should be stated that the treatment we received was quite adequate. Students who arrived in Jerusalem at the beginning of September were less lucky. First, there were more of them. Mr. A. could not spend the amount of time with each of these new students that he was able to afford us. Second, as a consequence of this lack of time, students often had to wait while Mr. A. showed apartments to their colleagues. Third, with the beginning of the semester close at hand, the additional administrative demands on Mr. A. were considerable.

The essence of the entire housing problem is the student's initial dependence on the College. Because of time considerations, the College cannot provide the kind of continuous support the student needs. It appeared that the administration determined who much assistance students required. This determination was made in full awareness of the dependence relationship. Most administrators claimed that they were aware of the students' desire to be treated as autonomous adults. Administrators also understood that because of the initial dependence of the student upon the

College, students often tended to feel like children. Even though there was this awareness, the College often presented conflicting images of itself. For example, the students were encourage to act like adults, but the College offered to hold student monies in the school safe, doling it out at regular intervals, much like an allowance. This dependence-independence relationship will be examined further in the next chapter.

Following the location of housing and registration the first all-school activity took place. This was the Negev Tour. The tours were conducted by Mr. A. who is an excellent and knowledgable tour guide. They were heavily packed with a great deal to see and to learn. This being the first whole class experience, it was also the first opportunity most students had to meet their classmates. Initial acquaintances were tentative at first. The variety of the student body (both in background, appearance and sex) produced many different small group arrangements. After the first day the initial lines of contact were drawn. Essentially the single students were on one side and the married students on the other. This occured as a result of the sleeping accomodations for the

first evening of the tour.

The tour stayed overnight in Beersheva. Single students were housed in a local youth hostel, unless they desired the additional comfort of a hotel which involved extra cost. Married students almost automatically paid the extra charge for the hotel in order to have the privacy. For the single students there was the common ground of living in the Hebrew University dormitory, being single and the general experience of rather uncomfortable hostel living. The married students, aside from the relative comfort of the hotel were bound together because they were married. Wives had wives to talk to, and couples had couples. Their commonality was also in the realm of apartment seeking and comparing of rents and facilities in various places.

This pairing off of singles on one side and marrieds on the other did not appear to have anything to do with age. In the initial pairing a commonality was found to exist solely on the basis of being married. There were several couples who had been married for some time and were older. There were a greater number of students who had been married just prior to the beginning of the first year program. For as much as six

weeks, students would see the class divided essentially as marrieds and singles. This would not be the case after the beginning of classes, but many students would still perceive it to be so.

Following the completion of the tour, which was enjoyed by almost all the students, Rosh Hashana was observed. Because the tour was exhausting, and because most of the students still weren't really "settled", the Holydays offered a chance to live through a familiar experience. It was, in a sense, a link with home, something constant in the midst of a world in flux with new experiences constantly flowing into the student's awareness. For many of these students Rosh Hashana was to be a great disappointment and to be the first impetus for dissent among the class.

The services were a disappointment to many of the students. They verbalized their complaints in contradictory fashion. On the one hand the services were too traditional, meaning that they were entirely in Hebrew and participants wore kipah and talit with many of the traditional rubrics. On the other hand, the music for the service was radical. An organ, flute and cello played the musical portions of the

service. Further, the music was derived from the traditional modes for the Holydays. The students were for the most part ignorant of these traditional modes. What they thought they were hearing was something completely new.

The analysis of these compalints is revealing. First, it is true that many of the participants in services wore Talit and kipah, but the option was open to each individual. Further, it is true that the services were all in Hebrew, with the exception of a brief summary of the sermon which was given in English. However, the prayer book which the congregation used was virtually identical with the Union Prayer Book II without the English portions. So close were the two machzorim that when the Jerusalem prayerbook ran out, members of the congregation were given UPB copies. From this it is seen that the complaint concerning the traditional nature of the service was unfounded. Something else was bothering the students. We have already seen that the musical portions of the service were derived from traditional Holyday modes. The students felt that these were "new" melodies because they weren't what students had grown accustomed to hearing in their home congregations.

I believe that the basic complaint of those who were discontent was that the services were not satisfying to them. Students came to the school expecting to find a bit of home, something familiar and constant in the everchanging world they had come to. What they found instead was something different. They found that Israeli Reform is considerably different from American Reform. They found that what they had hoped would be understandable was undiscernable. To make matters worse, a number of Jerusalemites and tourists consider the HUC chapel their synagogue during the High Holydays. Again the students felt that the College was catering to a clientele other than the students who were alleged to be its main focus. Thus the complaints and discontent can be explained as disappointment in a religious experience that was looked to for comfort and support, but did not produce the desired effect.

Following Rosh Hashana Services formal classes began. Sometime prior to the beginning of classes students had been examined by Dr. H., the Director of the Hebrew program. Dr. H., an Israeli national who had taught at the College-Institute in California, is at first glance an imposing figure.

He wears a thin, sideburn-to-chin-to-sideburn beard, usually dresses in casual clothing and speaks an accented English. The first impression is one of a Mormon farmer.

The process of testing is a two phased operation. First students complete a written examination with sections dealing with Modern Hebrew reading, writing, grammar, and Biblical Hebrew. Upon completion of the examination students appear before Dr. H. for private evaluation interviews. At this time the examination is gone over with the student and the student's Modern Hebrew speaking and understanding is evaluated. This is accomplished by asking the student, in Hebrew, about his background, what books he has read and similar questions. The student, of course, is expected to respond in Hebrew. Further, the student is asked to read and translate several newspaper articles on popular subjects. This evaluation test gives Dr. H. a general idea of the student's competency and fluency.

In as much as each interview was a private experience, there was not fixed time for each interviewee. Therefore, there was often a small group of two to four students outside the office waiting their turn. This group exhibited a natural

anxiety while waiting. This anxiety is understandable since this was the first evaluation of the student's ability made by the College-Insitute, and it was on the basis of these interviews that a student would be placed in the ulpan. Though there was anxiety about this placement, few students felt that they were incorrectly placed. Several students to whom I spoke expressed satisfaction at the personal nature of their evaluation. As time passed and as students demonstrated their abilities in class there was some mobility between classes. The biggest change in the system, however, was the division of the original four ulpan sections (Aleph, Bet, Gimmel, Daled). The lower three sections (Aleph, Bet, and Gimmel) were divided in half producing Aleph I and Aleph II, Bet I and Bet II, and Gimmel I and Gimmel II. This division was made within each class. Thus, students who were in the top half of the Bet class, for example, but not sufficiently competent to move into Gimmel, had their own section. This division appeared to be a good idea as classes became more homogenious with fewer students being held back or pushed ahead by their classmates. There were one or two students who were dissatisfied with their placements, but the

majority of the class was satisfied with their section and with their performance in the section.

After classes began students were concerned about the purchase of texts. There was a class meeting with Mr. A. during which the subject of texts was to be discussed. Mr. A. explained the differences between various editions of Bible, Mishnah, Midrash, and Talmud. The advantages and disadvantages of purchasing vocalized or unvocalized texts was discussed. This gave rise to some interesting conversations for in many cases it was the student's first real encounter with the professionalization process.

Students began weighing the merits of the vocalized texts against the unvocalized texts. The discussions generally revolved around the fact that a vocalized text was easier for a beginner to read. It would make class work easier and learning quicker. However, the advantages of an unvocalized text were that the vowels ceased to be a crutch, "we have to learn to read without vowels sooner or later", "a rabbi ought to be able to read unvocalized texts". A good number of students purchased books on this basis: A rabbi ought to have ... a rabbi ought to be able to read....

These decisions were being made after only two weeks of class. In terms of the socialization process, the students were already caught up in the idea that a rabbi ought to be able to handle text. Not only should he be able to handle text, but he should be able to handle it without vowels, without aids. Even those students who might have been said to be on the fence with regard to the need to be fluent in text were highly influenced by peer group pressure. Discussions of the purchase of books generally left the impression that to purchase pointed texts, or translations, was to take the "easy way out". One was not really coming to grips with the language if he didn't at least own unpointed texts. One must not underestimate the idea of <u>owning</u> the texts. A number of students admitted they didn't know whether or not they would ever use some of the books they desired to purchase, but they wanted to own them, to have them on their shelves, because a rabbi ought to have them in his library.

There are several possible explanations for the students' desire to own certain texts. As will be pointed out below, students often felt that the only difference between themselves and the Orthodox element in Israel was that the

Orthodox had a greater knowledge of the texts of Judaism. There is little doubt in my mind that many students anticipated, sometime in the future, becoming competent to read and understand some of the desired texts. The College also brought certain pressures to bear. Certain instructors made it clear that vocalized texts would not be permitted in class. This ruling devalued the vocalized text as something not fitting a rabbinic student. Students were also influenced by other rabbis with whom they had come in contact. A Rabbi's study is quite impressive with its various sets of large sized Hebrew texts. Whether or not the rabbis ever use these texts is not significant. A rabbi's library is an impressive decoration. Even beyond this, the library produces the illusion of authority, stability, and ability. It is part of the image of the rabbi, roughly comparable to the various medical instruments in a doctor's office. We assume that the more complex the instruments the more competent the doctor. It is irrelevent whether the doctor uses every piece of equipment all the time. The mere fact that he owns them enhances his image to his patients. So it is with the rabbi. It seems clear that the students had

accepted this visual manifestation of authority and used it as a criteria in purchasing their texts.

If we allow that the questions involved in the purchasing of texts for class are not solely those of what one will need for course work, we can assume that the students are also making decisions to buy or not to buy based on what they think a rabbi ought to have. From this standpoint, the socialization process of the school is already well established. While the ideas students held about what they wanted to be as rabbis, and ideas about what they felt a rabbi did varied widely, most students purchased text books with the thought in mind that "a rabbi ought...." It may be said that minimally the students had accepted the scholar role of the rabbi as significant along with or in place of their previous notions.

Summary of Chapter III.

In this chapter I have described the first five or six weeks of the average first year student's stay in Israel. I have discussed the student's initial encounter with Israeli culture and explained the frustrations of that encounter. First encounters with speaking Hebrew can lead to frustration

and depression because of an essential re-evaluation of the student's capacities as a Hebrew speaker and a questioning of one's self image. Further, the initial encounter with Israeli culture often implants initial distrust of the Israeli in the mind of the student. This often revolves around financial matters. This distrust is aggravated because many students hoped to be seen by Israelis as Jews, i.e., brothers, related.

In the discussion of the first encounter with the College the student was shown to feel a letdown. Students entered the College feeling that they are something special and got the impression that school, which was there for the benefit of the students, really didn't care about them.

Finding suitable living accomodations was often traumatic due to the first encounter with difference, culture shock. This initial encounter was often frustrating and productive of depression.

The first real social breakdowns were observed during the Negev Tour when the marrieds seem to gravitate to each other and the singles gravitated to themselves.

High Holyday services were a further letdown to many

students. They didn't meet the expectations of something familiar and constant in the student's everchanging world. This disappointment produced the first real student conflict.

Finally, the process of purchasing books showed the student's first encounter with the professionalization process. Their concerns about which texts to purchase were not governed solely by academic requirements. In many cases they decided on the basis of what they felt a rabbi "ought to have". Since, in most cases, the students chose unvocalized, untranslated texts, they exhibited the high degree of socialization which had already taken place.

This chapter was a basic overview of a six week period of time. The next chapter will deal with particular problem areas in the student's adjustment to Israeli culture and the College-Institute.

CHAPTER IV

Problem Areas

This chapter will deal with four basic problem areas observed among the student body of the first year class. These areas are: Housing, Religious adjustment, Information, and Peer Group adjustment. These were not the only difficulties experienced by the first year class. However, these areas were of major concern to the students and illustrate the type of adjustment students made.

Housing

Before discussing the students' difficulties in housing it is important to understand the position of the College. In an interview, Mr. A., who was intimately involved in the housing process, gave his position. As was explained earlier, housing is at a premium in the Jerusalem area. Even with the building boom which Israeli construction industries are experiencing, adequate units for Israeli families, immigrant families and tourists are not readily available. Part of the reason for this is that the apartment house as a business is relatively new. Most apartments are more like condominiums where the residents purchase the flat. Therefore, much of

housing that is available is from Israeli citizens who, for one reason or another temporarily leave the country or the city. This usually occurs during the summer tourist months. Israelis go on vacation and rent their apartments to tourists who often pay exhorbitant prices for a plcae to live. Since Jerusalem is a tourist attraction, the supply of potential renters is always adequate and the rents do not dip markedly.

The College, realizing the difficulties students would have in finding apartments, attempts to ease the burden by anticipating student needs. This is done by reserving a certain number of rooms in Beit Hastudent for single students, and contracting to rent a certain number of apartments. The College is therefore obligated to pay rent on all its apartments, whether or not there is a student living in them. Consequently, should a student decide at the last moment not to come to Israel, or should he decide that the program is not for him and leaves early, the College is left holding the lease. Given the nature of Israeli bureauocracy and the high rental costs, the investment in time and money becomes great.

As was mentioned previously, one of the forms students

received prior to departure for Israel was a housing preference form. This gave Mr. A. an idea of how many apartments and dormitory rooms would be required. These living units were contracted for prior to the students' arrival. This is sound administrative procedure in that the early schedule for the students did not permit time for them to find apartments on their own. In the school's eyes, then, a great service was being rendered to the students and a great responsibility was taken on by the institution. With this in mind let us survey student reactions to housing.

The majority of the single students were housed in Beit Hastudent, the dormitory for the Hebrew University. The initial reaction to this on the part of the residents was not exuberance. The reasons for this are easily seen. A large percentage of the entering students assigned to Beit Hastudent had lived for some time during their College years in their own apartments or in some of the unique student accomodations of the eastern schools. For them, dormitory life was something from the past. They felt they had outgrown this life-style. For others, who had lived in conventional dormitory facilities, the possibility of

continuing this mode of living was not pleasing. However, being single and unattached, most of the students accepted the idea. Some even looked forward to the contact they would have with Israeli students.

Difficulty was encountered on two fronts, The dormitories of the Hebrew University are "dati", religious, in orientation. Consequently there was great pressure to observe the Sabbath strictly. For example, the students could not get hot meals in the dormitory during Shabbat, taking showers (thereby using hot water) on Shabbat was frowned upon. For our students, with the heavy schedule during the week, Shabbat tended to take on special meaning as a day of rest and relaxation. The stringency of the dormitory observance became a burden on the students.

The second difficulty of the students living in the dormitories was social. This was not primarily due to the dormitories themselves, but the living situation did aggravate it. It was very difficult to make contacts with Israeli girls. Part of this is due to the culture of Israel which prescribes a different form of social contact. It is more informal, lacking the structured "dating situation" of the

United States. This difference in culture, when coupled with the language problem, placed single students at a considerable disadvantage when it came to initiating relationships with members of the opposite sex. It is interesting to note that most single students I spoke to who had had some dating experience in Israel, had dated American girls touring or studying in the country.

This difficulty in making social contacts was heightened by the dormitory living situation. On the simple level, HUC students saw their Israeli counterparts with dates and a full social life, a social life which was denied to the "foreigners". Further, the living situation placed these men together. Consequently, HUC students took their loneliness and frustrations out on each other. One manifestation of this, especially in the early stages of the sojourn, was a change of language usage and a pre-occupation with sex. The scatological language didn't seem to bother most of the students. They appeared to anticipate it as the natural outgrowth of men living together. The pre-occupation with sex did bother a number of students. A number of the "dormies" I spoke to looked with distaste upon their colleagues whose

lack of female companionship had "brought them low". This kind of behavior caused certain social splits in the class as time went on. Those students who were unable to adjust to the male environment and continued to use crude language and be preoccupied with sex formed their own friendship cluster. Those who found this distasteful began to seek friendships outside of the dormitory, primarily with married students.

The social adjustment of those students who were engaged was particularly difficult. It should be recorded that many of the students, married and engaged, had become so because of the first year program. Knowing that they were to be separated from their girl friends and fiances for a year moved a number of students to cement their relationships prior to leaving the States. This is perhaps the most significant social development to grow out of the first year program. Married students, while having the problems of marital adjustment to contend with, at least had their wives with them. The engaged men were completely isolated. Not only was it difficult for them to have any contact with Israeli girls, but even if it were possible, they were, after all, engaged. The engaged males did not generally follow the pattern

of the single males. Their language was noticeably milder. The engagement, in most cases, was a maturing experience for most of them.

The initial frustrations of the "dormies" generally became defused as time went on. In place of the verbal expression of frustration came depression and loneliness. Loneliness was perhaps the major reason for student discontentment with the dormitory accomodations. Virtually every day one or another of the students was "down" or had received a "Dear John" letter. The dormitory situation was productive of support for this loneliness. The problem became so real that even the married students began to realize what one student called "the plight of the dormies". After the first six weeks to two months, married students began to take up the cause of the dormies in conversation. They expressed their concern for them by inviting them to Shabbat dinner or social evenings.

The problems of married students were somewhat different. It is to be remembered that a goodly number of the married students had gotten married just prior to the Israel Program because they did not choose to be separated for a year.

Therefore, many of the students came to Israel having been married but a few weeks prior to arrival. For these students the double adjustment of entering Israeli Culture and the Hebrew Union College was made yet more difficult by adding the dimension of marital adjustment.

Most of the marrieds had sent in forms to Mr. A. and anticipated that they would have something waiting for them when they arrived. As mentioned previously, students were shown different apartments upon arrival. Generally this took the form of one or two couples going with Mr. A. to see three or four locations and then making a decision. From the description of Israeli apartments previously given, one can understand the dismay of the young marrieds. The prospects of living in an apartment which appeared shabbily decorated, with a minimum amount of furniture, where laundry had to be done in the bathtub for want of a washing machine, where one could only cook on a gas burner for want of an oven, caused consternation on the part of many arriving couples. Added to this was the fact that rents were high compared to the value one received in accomodations and many of the young marrieds were already financially strapped due to the trip.

To make matters even worse, apartments were given out on a first-come-first-served basis. Thus, those students desiring apartments who arrived a day or two late had the worst of the lot from which to select.

In most cases student complaints about apartments revolved around cleanliness. One student mentioned that the apartment suggested for her was "infested". Other students had difficulties with plumbing and electricity. By and large, these difficulties were overcome by the students as they began to realize that Israeli accomodations "are just like that". "Infestation" means ants, common in almost every Israeli household, or perhaps a lizard, also very common. As time went by, students adjusted to an economy which didn't spend large sums on painting and decorating rentable apartments. They made do with what they had and often began to "decorate" in their own ways.

As might be expected, this system of prearranged apartments caused some resentment among the students who were already under pressure to adjust to the new surroundings. What appears to be the most serious difficulty occured when a couple arranged for a specific apartment in the spring.

Money was sent as a deposit and a receipt was received. Upon arrival, the couple found that their apartment had already been rented. Because they felt that they had taken care of their living accomodations, they had intentionally arrived late. Thus, they had to take what they considered one of the least desirable apartments of the group. This kind of mix-up is understandable in a sense. The amount of responsibility on Mr. A. is considerable. He not only teaches, but wears the mantels of two full time jobs, namely assistant to the Director of Jewish Studies and Student Assistance. I believe it is a sign of a lack of planning on the part of the College to assume that student services can be combined with Mr. A.'s other position. It is clear to me that in terms of the human needs of the students, a full-time student administrator is required at the Jerusalem School. It should carefully be noted that this is not a condemnation of Mr. A. He is an energetic, bright and truly concerned individual. In my estimation he performs his duties with competence and sincerity. It is, however, clear that because students are extremely sensitive at this period of complete dislocation, someone devoted solely to their needs is warranted.

Religious Adjustment

One of Dr. Mirsky's findings was that students go through a crisis of identity. When students enter the College-Institute program they bring with them certain ideas about what becoming a rabbi and being a rabbi means. These ideas are generally derived from the contacts students have with Rabbinic personages such as their congregational rabbi or Hillel rabbi. Dr. Mirsky suggests that the faculty of the College-Institute holds a different value system; it is based on the importance of a scientific-orientation toward Hebrew texts. In Dr. Mirsky's study, the encounter of student value systems with faculty value systems generally resulted in the modification of the former to conform with the latter.

The area of religious adjustment of Israel program students is all the more critical in the light of the above findings. In Israel, student value systems were confronted by Orthodoxy. Indeed, Orthodoxy is the standard of "Jewishness". Perhaps the best way to explain the course of student religious adjustment is to relate the early portion of the students' sojourn and focus on their religious attitudes and manifestations.

Prior to the Negev Tour a number of students, perhaps

six to ten, were seen around the campus wearing not only kipot, but also Tsitsit. The kipah was not unusual. A large percentage of the students donned the skull cap upon arrival or had brought the custom with them from the States. The appearance of fringes, however, was occasion for much discussion. Initial reactions by many of the students were to label this outright Orthodox manifestation as the wearing of the "uniform". This term was placed in perspective by a number of interviewees. When in college one wears the "uniform", which is jeans or coveralls. When one comes to Israel, these uniform-wearers simply changed uniforms, wearing the fringes.

Among this group of fringe-wearers there was at least one authentically observant traditionalist who had brought the ritual with him from the States. This individual also kept a rather stringent Kashrut, davened and fulfilled numerous other mitzvot. He was generally accepted and honored as one who was authentic. The others, however, were considered highly inauthentic. In a sense, they were also threatening for they raised to consciousness the problem of Reform's relation to tradition. Many students were ignorant

of that tradition. Their classical Reform backgrounds made them uncomfortable with visible manifestations of difference. Thus, they were threatened by the prospect that the others were "correct" and that they "ought" to wear the uniform which they neither understood nor felt comfortable with.

As mentioned above, the High Holydays were the cause of the first student conflict. A number of those who were dissatisfied by the services began to voice complaints along religious lines. The services were "too traditional". What place did a traditional service like this have in a Reform chapel? The discussions became very heated and ranged not only among the students but also between students and faculty members. Since this was the first real opportunity for students to vent their emotions, the issue took on a highly charged tone. Suddenly students were concerned about what "Reform really meant", and what kind of rabbis an institution which allowed "Tsitsit wearers" would turn out. The students who wore fringes became a highly visible focal point for this argument. From listening to the discussions, one would think that fully half the class or more were Orthodox in disguise. While this might be true in terms of

background, I could only identify six students whom I would call practicing traditionalists.

It is interesting to note that while the cause of this argument was, I believe, an emotional let-down, the focus of the discussion was on Reform religious identity. The result of the discussion was many facited.

(1) A group of traditionally minded students became concerned with the daily davening and attempted to organize morning minyan in which traditional modes of worship would be followed.

(2) Previously non-vocal, non-committed Reform students became committed for the first time to a Reform ideology and philosophy.

(3) The fringe-wearers began to decline in number.

It would be well to examine the reasons for the fringes and the reasons for their removal. In discussions with many of those who began to wear the fringes, it became apparent that the surface reason for this manifestation was primarily experiential. Students often said that they didn't know exactly why they wore them and they weren't certain that they would wear them when they returned to the States. However,

they felt they should "give it a chance" to "see how it feels".

The reason behind the fringes goes yet deeper. Many students had come from backgrounds in which little ritual beyond family observance of Shabbat and holidays existed. These students now found themselves in a country where Orthodoxy was not something that was hidden. On the contrary, it was extremely visible on the streets. Further, these students were now embarking upon a career as religious professionals. The majority of the students, beyond a Hebrew background, had little knowledge of these rituals. Many students made it plain in conversations that they wanted to experience Judaism. This can be translated into a desire to feel Jewish, to feel authentic. The easiest way to achieve these feelings is to wear physical manifestations such as the skull cap and the fringes. It should be further noted that many of the students who didn't actually buy fringes expressed an interest in them. I would suggest that the desire to don traditional garb was far greater than the actual occurance of the wearing of them.

This suggests a very important condition. The sudden

interest in wearing fringes, observing Shabbat and davening suggests to me that the students were beginning to be involved in a crisis of authenticity. Students were in a country where these traditional manifestations were inexpensive and where the wearing of ritual garments was not frowned upon or even thought about in the general society. It was "easy to begin to wear" fringes. Because it was easy, and because Orthodoxy was the standard of Jewishness, many students from non-observant and Reform backgrounds began to feel the pinch. Few students were able to maintain religious stability during this initial time. Some of the Reform students would ignore the issue by saying "It's how I feel, not what I do that counts". Others became dogmatic in their particular philosophy. Reform was justified by classic Reform thinkers beginning with I.M. Wise and going through to Eugene Borowitz and Rolland Gittelsohn. Those who opted for tradition asked the often overused question of "How can you be Jewish if you don't...?"

While the dispute began to quiet down after about one week, the authenticity crisis was still apparent. Initially, the students who wore fringes slowly began to forget to put

them on. A good number of them forgot to put them on during the Negev Tour. This gave rise to the observation that the "uniform was only good in cool weather. When it gets hot, they (the Tsitsit) just hang on the back of the chair". Finally, the fringes gave way (with the exception of the one aforementioned traditionalist) to the pressures of the class and the administration.

The pressure of the administration must be discussed briefly. There was no concerted effort to have the traditionalists "reform". Rather, in the course, "The Development of Jewish Thought", offered as a required course by Dr. T., the idea of wearing fringes was "clarified" for for the students. Dr. T. explained how the traditional Jew is concerned with fulfilling the Mitzvah and not with the outward appearances. He explained the image of the traditionalist, whose tsitsit were dirty and frayed. He wasn't concerned that they appear attractive, only that they were there. He then contrasted this to "certain people" who were more concerned that they have clean tsitsit, and that they be arranged just so. This was a clear expression of Dr. T.'s feelings about what he considered inauthentic displays of

Orthodoxy. The point reached home with some finality.

Few students, after the High Holydays actually expressed their ambivalence about the kind of Jews they were and the kind they thought they should be. Yet, indirectly, they showed themselves to be in conflict about the subject. When asked about any encounters they might have had with the Orthodox element in Israel most students had some kind of story about an incident at the Wall, or in the street, or in the Orthodox section of Jerusalem. Most suggested that these encounters did not produce any feelings of inadequacy in them. Only one student said "I got that sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach that he was the real Jew". In my opinion, this feeling was far more widespread than the students verbalized. What was consistent among them was the rationalization that the only "difference between the datiim (Orthodox) and me is that they know more than I do. When I learn the material, we will be equal". Statements such as this were quite common. They say a good deal beyond the point of rationalization. In essence what the student is saying is that the Orthodox Jew is more authentic than he because he (the Orthodox) knows more about Judaism. The implication is, however, that as one

progressed in his studies, one would gradually attain the level of learning which would allow one to be an equal of the Orthodox. In essence, students were saying that they did feel inauthentic, but that they also felt that the study of Judaism at the College would eventually make them authentic.

What students as a group did not like about the Orthodox was the feeling that they were being coerced by them. In not a few cases a traditionalist would approach an HUC student and ask "How can you call yourself Jewish if you don't..." In most cases the students would be "turned off" to the inquiring individual whom they felt was being coercive.

These religious "hang-ups" were present throughout the period of observation. There were "ups" and "downs" in the intensity of feeling. Some students would epxress great satisfaction after a liturgy class because they had begun to learn the traditional "true" liturgy. Others would have continuous problems with the datiim and so forth. The College capitalized on these difficulties as will be seen in the next chapter.

Information

Part of the reason moving into a foreign society or

entering a new phase of one's education causes anxiety is the lack of information about what one might expect. It is understandable then that students beginning their studies in Israel were hungry for as much information as they could receive. In this way they would be able to anticipate and more effectively handle the new situation.

Prior to the trip most students felt they did not have enough information. The questionnaires showed that students felt the College-Institute could have been of greater service to them by providing more specific information about what to bring, how to get to Israel, and what the students would be studying.

It should again be noted that students weren't primarily concerned with factual information. "Your Year In Israel" provided a list of things to bring, as well as directions and suggestions about how one could best effect the move from the States to Jerusalem. Even with this booklet, the students still wanted more "information". Upon arrival in Jerusalem the student received a booklet entitled "The First Year Program", which detailed the requirements of the program the students would be studying. It gave in detail descriptions

of the classes the students would be taking, the academic schedule with tour dates etc., and a description of opportunities for volunteer work and private travel. Again, this was not enough. Students still questioned what they were to be studying, even after they were actually in the program.

About two months after the beginning of the program the questions took on a new perspective. Students became concerned about how their work in Israel would effect their future studies at the American campuses. They wanted to know the length of the program, what courses they would be taking and what degrees they would be receiving.

With regard to questions about Israel, most students found the answers experientially. Periodically booklets would be placed on the receptionist's desk in the entry hall of the College. These booklets were primarily question-and-answer publications about the workings of Israeli society. The problem was that they were not available at the beginning of the program, but found their way into student hands after the students had already found out the information the booklets contained. I feel that had these booklets and publications been available early in the stay of the students, their

adjustment to Israel would have been hastened and the process of settling down would have been far smoother.

I attribute the problem of information to two factors within the College-Institute itself. I don't believe the administration of the institution was sufficiently sensitive to the kinds of infomration students want and need. It is acknowledged that the factual information was available for students. However, had the administration been aware of the short-comings of factual information, I am certain they would have arranged to have the other publications available shortly after student arrival. An example of such a publication is Answers to Unasked Questions, published by the Jewish Agency and the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption. It is an 88 paged booklet which presents in detail the very basic subjects a student needs to know, i.e. weather, business hours, food shopping, banking, transportation and the like. The title of the publication suggests it value. It contains information which students need, but might not be aware that they need, until they go to a shop and find it closed or encounter the frustrations of Israeli banking. It would be a great service to the entering students if the whole area of information

were evaluated prior to the arrival of students and a packet of relevent materials prepared in advance.

With regard to information about the program and the course of future studies, the College-Institute was in a bind. The entire Rabbinic program was undergoing change. While the students cried for information the College-Institute just didn't have the answers. At one point a concise explanation of the "new program" was mimeographed and passed out to the student body. It detailed the kinds of courses students would have to take and the timetable for the rabbinic program. This became the subject for much conversation for it really told the students nothing. It was so schematic that after reading it one was left with only a frame and no real content. This the College could not help.

It is significant to note the progress of student interest in information. Prior to the trip the students were primarily interested in what they would be studying in Jerusalem. This is explained by a fact already discussed, that students' lives were completely bound up in the College at this point. It was the primary if not sole purpose for their traveling to Israel. After arrival, their need for information was in the

area of day-to-day transactions in society. It wasn't until many weeks later that students began to concern themselves with what would happen after the conclusion of the first year program. I believe that their new concern for the future is a sign of how much they had adjusted to their living and academic situations.

Simon Herman discusses adjustment to Israel in terms of the time perspective of the sojourner.[1] He delineates three periods of time perspective:

Spectator phase - when the student, freshly arrived, is, like the tourist, an onlooker.

Involvement phase - when the student can no longer remain an onlooker, but must undertake his tasks in the host culture.

Coming-to-terms phase - arriving at a <u>modus vivendi</u> for the duration of the sojourn.[2]

These three phases are easily discernable in our students. During the period immediately after arrival our students were controlled primarily by the tight scheduling of the College. They had little time to reflect on what was happening to them, but were receptacles for vast amounts of new data about Israel and the College with which they were being bombarded. At

this phase the students were passive speacators.

As the students began to settle down and encounter the difficulties of living in a foreign culture they found that passivity could no longer be their mode of operation. They had to set up apartments, purchase food, arrange their finances, etc. As they became involved in the society, their world was very small. It centered around the daily needs and requirements which touched their lives directly.

It isn't until the third phase that students are sufficiently adjusted to come-to-terms with the living situation. When this occurs, the students are able to move their concerns from the present and project them into the future. Thus, it may be said that as the students became more and more concerned with the place of the first year program in the entire Rabbinic course of studies, they exhibited a greater and greater degree of adjustment to the new living situation.

Peer Group Adjustment

This area was by far the most complex. Before discussing the actual situation the operative principle must be described. For this purpose I again draw upon Simon Herman.

Dr. Herman suggests that foreign students entering a

new society for the first time are entering a highly unstructured situation. By this he means that the ability of the student to organize his responses to given data input is limited due to the change of social matrix. Because the student is in an unstructured situation he often feels insecure for he is not truly aware of the potentialities of his situation. It is common for a student "stranger" to seek the security of a group of similar individuals. For examples one need only look at the various enclaves in the Jerusalem area. Americans living together, French living together, Russians living together indicate that foreigners tend to seek out people of similar background or situation. Thus, for our students, there also was a need for a "stranger group".

The function of the stranger group is basically to test out and verify experiences in the host society. The group also functions as a support to individual anxieties. Because everyone shares a similar situation they lend strength and credibility to everyone in the group.

The obvious choice of a stranger group on the part of our students is the first year class itself. Here the students not only have a group of Americans in a foreign land, but

they are of similar ages and one would think backgrounds. Most important, they had all chosen to enter the rabbinate and to go through the process of rabbinic training. On the face of it one would expect a perfect match between individual needs and capabilities of the class to provide for those needs. However, this did not occur.

Initial student contacts with fellow classmates produced a good deal of unrest. From appearance alone they showed a great deal of diversity. In politics it appeared as though every gradation between right and left was represented. Initial reactions of students to their classmates were generally stand-offish. Virtually every student commented at one time or another on the "immaturity of the class".

I believe the explanation lies in the area of what students expected to find in an entering class of the Hebrew Union College. Students assumed that because there was a common bond between members of the class, namely the desire to become rabbis, there would be a good deal of similarity among the members of the class. This similarity was of great importance to most students. For this stranger group functioned in a dual capacity. On the one hand the stranger

group functioned to verify or deny impressions about the host culture. On the other hand, and more important I believe, the stranger group served to potentially confirm a student's image of the rabbinate and his decision to pursue the profession.

Given the diversity of the class from "hippy" to "straight", from Reform to Orthodox and from Liberal to Conservative, the students did not find the kind of confirmation they sought. This produced an initial distrust and lack of respect within the peer group. The manifestations of this distrust and lack of respect are many. I would illustrate the point with a few examples.

During the first month a number of students were "turned off" by the amount of drug usage they thought was present among the class. It is irrelevent whether or not this drug usage was a fact. The impression a number of students received was that it was occurring. Several students made light of this. One individual had developed a "game" whereby he would approach a student and begin a conversation of "great highs I have had". The conversation would develop into a comparison of drug experiences. (The initiater of the

game had had no drug experience at all.) The culmination of the game came when the initiater commented "You haven't lived until you've smoked in the sukka, man the fruit, the colors, oh wow!" By this time the player of the game was trapped as far as the initiater was concerned. Any response he made was entertaining to the initiater. In one instance the player responded "I never thought about that, I must try it!" In another case a player responded to the effect that he had smoked in a lot of places but drew the line at the synagogue. There was something wrong about smoking in the Temple or in the Sukka! The initiater and his small circle of friends used these game experiences to verify the low moral character of the student body as well as its superficiality and stupidity.

Rumors about the moral character of certain members of the class also began to run wild. It was suggested that one individual had openly announced that was "AC-DC" sexually. Another student was reported to have been an embezzeler, having taken a considerable amount of money from the university student government of which he was an officer. These rumors were often followed by comments such as "how could the College

admit someone like this?" or "this person isn't fit for the rabbinate".

Broom and Selznick discuss rumors and suggest:

> In any case, the truth or falsity of the rumor is often irrelevent, because the story is told and often believed not because it is true and has been shown to be true but because it serves a need for the teller and for the listener who then becomes a teller. Often the aim is not to convey information but to induce in the listener the same emotional attitude toward the alleged information that the teller has.[3]

In view of this, these rumors take on new significance. It is not significant for our discussion to determine whether or not the College enrolled people of the above-described nature. What is important is what the rumors tell about the people who told them. They saw in the class such great diversity that they found a large number of students who did not measure up to what the observers felt to be the standards of rabbinic students. The rumors were an attempt to confirm what the observers felt to be the case and to induce the same attitude of distaste in the listener. By saying, "how could the College-Institute admit..." or "how can 'x' become a rabbi?", the students are expressing their own personal judgement that a good number of the class would not be

admitted if the observer had his say about it.

Other manifestations of this same distrust and distaste are seen academically. One highly vehement student was totally dumbfounded when he heard that "x" got admitted with combined Graduate Record Examination scores below "y" percentile. He couldn't believe that people so "stupid" were in the class. Even after he had adjusted to the program and being in Israel, he found it difficult to accept the student body. What follows is a comment he made to the third questionnaire in December:

> While at this point I am not as antagonistic, at least emotionally, toward my fellow students, as I was a few months ago, I still feel they are intellectually, and in terms of preparation, inadequate. Pastors-in-training ought not to water down a training program for rabbi-scholars... These (rabbi-scholars) ought not to have to contend with immature, stupid, or Jewishly unmotivated or ungrounded individuals....

Needless to say, the rumors of drug abuse, of moral terpitude, and of academic incompetence illustrate that there was a great deal of animosity between a number of the students. The degree of this emnity can be seen from the various interviews I conducted. Students were asked if they trusted the admissions policy of the College, meaning did they feel the

procedure had selected a good student body. Only one student said he felt that the overwhelming majority of his classmates would have received his personal vote for admission. The vast majority of students who responded to this question suggested that there were large numbers in the class for whose presence the respondant could find no justification. Most students felt that there was a significant number of students who shouldn't have been admitted because of one of the following factors: academic incompetence, moral terpitude, immaturity or psychological instability.

I would dwell for a moment on a possible explanation of this situation. It was mentioned that one of the reasons our students sought out a stranger group was to confirm their ideas and decisions about the rabbinate. It was also suggested that the student body represented a wide diversity of people. I feel this does in fact reflect admissions policy of the institution. Rabbi Sherman's study, Dr. Mirsky's study and the present Director of Admissions confirm the fact that there seems to be no hard standard for admissions to the rabbinic program. Generally, admissions committees rely on academic performance, a personal interview with the candidate,

and a psychological screening. Beyond these three indicators, each member of the admissions committee relies on his own perceptions of what is needed to become a rabbi and what is required to be a successful rabbinic student.

It is likely then, if one were to poll a given admissions committee, one would come up with five, ten or fifteen additional criteria beyond the academic and psychological criteria. If one multiplies this by a factor of three (students were admitted through all three campuses of the College-Institute) one discovers an extremely wide range of admissions criteria. Thus, if the total list of requirements for acceptance runs to twenty or thirty characteristics, and a student is admitted if he fulfills ten or fifteen of these requirements, then the diversity among the student body will be great. Add to this the fact that students receive psychological screening at all locations. What might be considered psychologically disqualifying in Cincinnati, a relatively conservative environment, might be considered admissible in Los Angeles, a more liberal environment. Thus, because the College-Institute has not or cannot arrive at a concrete selection process, the student body becomes extremely heterogenius.

The result of this matter is evident. A student comes to Jerusalem and attempts to verify his reactions and reasoning about the rabbinate. He looks at his fellow students as a mirror image of himself. Yet, if he possesses requirements 1-10 and a psychological make-up of a-e and he observes a fellow student possessing requirements 11-20 and a make-up of f-j, he will be confronted with a discordant image. While, presumably, all students will be "rabbinic material" in the broad spectrum of the total admissions system, in the eyes of the observer looking for verification, there will be so little similarity between himself and others, that the others must be wrong. To admit otherwise is to admit that the observer is wrong.

Now this attitude began to soften as time passed. By the termination of my period of observation many students had begun to see hidden facets to their colleagues. What this discovery means in terms of adjustment to Israel is complex. The initial pressures of settling in the country and beginning studies had begun to subside. Through confrontation with the discordant images of one's fellow students, many individuals also went through a process of self-examination about

their own motivations. This procuded a firmer image of what the student himself believed. Further, as time passed students reached an accomodation with each other. Because they were compelled by the schedule to spend so much time with each other new friendships began to develop. What many students regarded as "discovering new qualities in their fellows" was really the willingness of others to "open up".

In December, at Chanuka time, the class organized a celebration which drew all the students together. Many students commented that this was the first real breakthrough in student relationships. There was a feeling of accomplishment in having planned a satisfying social engagement and all seemed to get along together. This is a significant event, for it set the stage for a concerted class effort to change the conditions under which they lived.

Throughout the first months of the program students had a generally negative attitude toward Dr. T.'s course in the Development of Jewish Thought. It became a focus for much of the student anxiety about the college and the program. The essential complaint narrowed down to the fact that the required term paper was a great burden on the students and that the

material in the course was not being effectively taught.[4] After the first of the year the students rallied in what was termed, loosely, a "rebellion". During approximately one week the students discussed their complaints with the administration. Reports indicate that Dr. T. was quite cooperative in the process of changing the program. The students requested that the requirement of the paper be lifted. They also requested that the classes cease to meet in the whole, but rather be parcelled out to small discussion groups meeting at various student's residences. The procedure of these small groups would be the presentation, by a student, of a specifically prepared topic. A student presentation would be the equivalent to writing the term paper. Dr. T. agreed to these suggestions.

There was an amazing show of solidarity among the class. Had it stopped here, tremendous social progress would have been achieved. What, in fact, did happen, was the surfacing of the class extremists. Additional proposals, which were inappropriately radical, were suggested. One theory of this was that as soon as the administration was shown to be a "willing" authority figure, several students

wanted to push the now vulnerable authority figure as far as possible. A number of students viewed this emerging extremism as infantile and inappropriate. When the "confrontation" ended there was a general depression. It was described by one student as being the expression of "shame that we were so immature". The potential breakthrough in peer group relationships was to a great extent nullified.

It can be anticipated, as students become more accomodated to the routine of rabbinic studies and to the idea that they are pursuing these studies, that peer group relationships will improve. By the end of the year strong friendships will no doubt emerge. Upon return to the States a big change will occur. The first year class will again be "foreigners" in the new environment of the College-Institute. The new stranger group will be those who shared the experience of Israel. Like classes in the past which have returned from the Israel program, there will be a new esprit de corps which did not necessarily grow from relationships in Israel, but rather the common bonds of facing the new institution and of having gone through the emotions of the Israel program.

Summary of Chapter IV

This chapter discussed four areas of difficulty for the first year class. While these were not the only difficulties they are representative of the types of problems the students perceived.

Housing - The system of College procurement of housing was discussed. Single students lived in the dormitory of the Hebrew University. Because of the religious nature of the dormitory, it was found that students felt restricted. Further, single students had a difficult time making social contacts with members of the opposite sex. It was observed that one of the reactions to this living situation was a decay of language and a preoccupation with sex.

The process by which married students found housing was explained. It was found that married students were generally disappointed at the selection of apartments, primarily because they were significantly different from housing standards students brought with them from the States. Married students were also frustrated by the "lack of attention" they received in locating apartments. Often they felt that they had had no real choice. However, given the situation, with the large responsibility

focused on one person, Mr. A., it was shown to be extremely difficult to provide the students with the kind of attention they desired. Further, it was shown that many of the couples were recently married and this added to the difficulties of adjusting to Israel and the College.

Religious Adjustments - It was found that a number of students expressed their feelings of inauthenticity by wearing physical manifestations of Orthodoxy, which was the apparent standard of Jewishness in the country. Most of these students did so in order to "see what it's like". The majority of the students regarded this as wearing a "uniform" and looked upon the wearers as inauthentic people. Further manifestations of a religious confliect were seen in the reaction that students would be on a par with the Orthodox when they had learned enough. This they felt would be achieved by study at the College-Institute. Since "learning enough" is equivalent to knowing texts, the students had again progressed in the socialization process of the College.

Information - The students' hunger for information was shown to be a function of their desire to anticipate what would be happening to them. It was suggested that the College,

while prividing accurate factual information, didn't meet the needs of the students. The College-Institute could have been more receptive by carefully considering the kinds of information students wanted and needed and prepared packets of publications prior to student arrival. It was suggested that the desire for information was related to the students' time perspective, which was further indicative of the students' degree of adjustment to the country and the school.

Peer Group Problems - Students were found to have initial distrust of each other. This was manifest in stories and rumors as well as references to academic backgrounds. The general attitude in the beginning was that one's classmates were immature. It was suggested that part of the reason for this was that the first year class, as stranger group, functioned to verify attitudes about the rabbinate. Due to the diversity of the admissions policy, students could not easily find fellow students sufficiently similar to themselves to verify their attitudes.

Chapter V will deal with attitudinal areas, how students and faculty felt about areas such as Israel, the Israeli, and the course work of the College.

CHAPTER V

Student Attitudes

This chapter will deal with the attitudes of students and faculty. Thr format of the chapter will be taken from the general format of the private interviews with students. The interviews began with a question about the interviewee's background. This was primarily intedned to open the interviewee up and give him an opportunity to relax in the presence of the tape recorder. The second area of questioning pertained to the student's initial expectations about the trip to Israel. Following this the student was questioned about his attitudes toward Israel and the Israeli. The next area concerned the College-Institute. Students were asked to comment on the Administration, the Hebrew program, the non-Hebrew program and finally, on their peer group. The final section of the chapter will deal with administrative views of the student body.

Attitudes Toward the Trip

In my work I observed three basic attitudes among the students with regard to the year of study in Israel. The majority of the students reported that they had been quite

excited about the prospect of traveling to and living in Israel. For these students there were no special feelings of apprehension or specific goals for the trip. They tended to parrot the College's expectations and feel a pervasive excitement about the program.

The second group of attitudes were also positive. However, these students were vocal about their apprehensions. Without question, apprehensions about the trip derived from a fear of lacking the language skills needed to progress in the program and to make one's way around the country. This anxiety was exhibited in the questionnaires. Prior to arrival in Israel 72% of the respondants felt that, given their present Hebrew background, they were either incompetent to handle the year in Isreal or required "much additional study". This figure was constant on the second questionnaire which was administered after the beginning of the program (71%). By the time of the third questionnaire, this figure began to decrease. Most students expressed satisfaction that they were learning the language at a rapid rate.

The third group of students with specific attitudes toward the year of study in Israel were decidedly negative

about the trip. What follows is an extended quotation which is typical of these students:[1]

> First of all, I was never excited about coming to Israel. I have never had real Zionistic leanings and although I was very happy that Israel existed and wanted to keep existing I thought when I made my decision to enter the rabbinate it was commitment to Jewish life in the Diaspora... When I first got accepted right around the first of January I was resigned to the fact that I was coming here... But the general apathy grew into distaste as the time grew nearer. Because, between January and the time I left in July I met a girl and became engaged to her, and began to hold grudges against HUC for taking me away from her.

Students who had negative attitudes about coming to Israel often based these attitudes on the difficulty of separation from girl friends and fiances. The possibility of separation caused a number of students to get married or become engaged earlier than originally planned. The pattern of resignation turning into distaste was common among this group of students. A number of students commented that they "resented" the College-Institute, feeling that "they are just trying to lengthen the program by another year". Over 10% of the class formally declared these resentments to me during interviews. General discussion, which I overheard, would indicate that an even greater percentage carried this negative attitude.

Attitudes Toward the Land of Israel

The questionnaires showed a predictable pattern with regard to feelings about the land of Israel. Prior to the trip 94% of the respondants had a favorable or very favorable impression of Israel. Shortly after arrival only 81% had this attitude. More significant still, those who had a "very favorable" impression dropped on the second questionnaire by 25%. Whereas no students responded that they had an unfavorable impression of the country prior to departure from the United States, 11% had an unfavorable or very unfavorable impression shortly after arrival. Given the early adjustment difficulties of these students, it is understandable that the figures should fall upon arrival. However, after several months of living in the country, after a considerable amount of adjustment, all respondants reported a favorable or very favorable impression.

The interviews produced a very amorphous picture of how students regard the land of Israel. Most of the students found it to be "beautiful" and "diversified" in topography. Very few students had developed strong attachments for the land or its historical sites. In this respect the students

were in a group by themselves. They exhibited little of the "tourist"mentality of great sentimental attachment for the soil, and little of the Israeli attitude of nationalistic attachment. While a number of students talked at one time or another about historical roots in the Land of Israel, very few students initially identified with their <u>own</u> historical heritage with the land. Of the students I interviewed, only four indicated special feelings, beyond general interest, when touring ancient historical sites. Of these four students, only one said that he felt he had come close to his heritage as a Jew.

This would be an alarming situation for rabbinic students if it were left at this point. However, as time went on, students appeared to be "warning up" to the Land. It is important to note that even several months into my period of observation, many students had not arrived at a complete <u>modus vivendi</u>, and all students were still being bombarded with new data about the society in which they were temporary residents. I would suggest that as time went on, after the period of observation, ties with the Land would grow stronger and more widespread within the class.

Attitudes Toward the State of Israel

During the interviews students were asked to comment on how they felt about the State of Israel. It was at this time that the conflict between the ideal and the real came to the surface. It will be remembered that the majority of students has some emphasis on Zionism while they were still at home. This emphasis was generally the picture of Israel painted by the United Jewish Appeal or the Jewish National Fund. It was an ideal picture of pioneers and milk and honey and "Jewish State". Most students, especially those who had not been to Israel previously, expressed the feeling that their expectations had not been met upon arrival.

The most common disappointment was that "Israel is growing like any other nation-state". Students generally felt that a "Jewish State" should embody certain Jewish values. Seeing a government run by politics, the increasing pollution of the country, and the rising crime rate[2] was disillusioning to many students. Observations such as these deflated the students' concept of the "speciality" of the Jewish state. Their response, that Israel was becoming like an other nation-state, was negative because they felt that it should be

something more.

These feelings of disappointment were heightened because of the material quest of the Israeli and the apparent secularization of the country. Students were "turned off" because "Israelis are so hung up on material things. It's worse than the States". Secularization produced apprehension in a number of students. They felt that the country was becoming Jewish by nationality only, and that Judaism as a religion was dying. The reasons for this varied from student to student. Some felt it was due to the power of the Orthodox and the alienation it produced. Others felt that it was a function of the materialist drive of the Israeli. One student summarized the picture of what most students observed.

> Herzl talked about 'normalization' of Jewish life. What normalization means is that the Jew can live like any other citizen in any other country. That means the Jew should have a nation-state like any other people. That's what's developing here. The price of security and progress is pollution, higher crime and secularization. Now we (Jews) are not just the upper middle class and professionals, we are also the garbage collectors and the criminals.

Even with the disillusionment of the students there was a certain toleration of the reality of the State of Israel.

Almost all students regarded Israel as a "Jewish homeland" in the sense that Jews must have a place to go in time of emergency. No student felt that the emergence of Israel was a bad historical event.

What I found to be most significant was the fact that only three of four of the students I spoke to had considered aliya as a possibility. Most students didn't even bring the subject up in conversation. I find this to be most interesting when compared to Dr. Herman's study. Among his student sample 59% had at least considered the possibility and acknowledged that they "possibly" would settle as opposed to 41% who felt they would not or were unlikely to do so.[3] This seemed strange to me. However, one must consider that our students are generally older than Herman's sample. Further, we have observed that our students' lives revolve immediately around the College-Institute and the road to ordination. Having made, at least tentatively, the career choice of the Reform rabbinate, the intention to settle in Israel would require a major attitudinal switch. Herman's group, being less committed to a career goal, was freer to consider emigration.

Of the four students who brought up the subject of aliya

one student and his wife had definitely considered the possibility prior to arrival in Israel. They were certain that within the next five years they would return to the country as permanent Olim. Two students had thought of the possibility and had rejected it more or less permanently. One student was ambivalent. He felt a great involvement with the State. Whether or not he decided to settle, he felt that Israel was the Jewish State. As such, he, as an American Jew, had a say in the running of the state. He felt strongly that, even though he was only a temporary resident in the country, he had the obligation and the right to work for social change in the State.

Attitude Toward the People of Israel

The general attitude of the student body to the people of Israel was one of tolerance. Students seemed to be very aware of the fact that they would be in a host country which had a different cultural setting from what they were accustomed. Therefore, they generally rationalized what they felt was rude treatment by the Israeli. A classic example brought up by all the students were contacts with the Israeli on the street. Every student had a favorite story about the bus

system. One needs to experience an Israeli bus ride in order to understand. It is a microcosm of other everyday business dealings. First there is no concept of a line. Even in places where railing delineates a bus stop, people push and shove to get on board without regard to who has waited the longest, who has small children, etc. (This is the same in banks and stores.) It is very common for the Kupaee, (conductor-ticket taker) to repeatedly attempt to close the pneumatic doors on entering passengers. Buses travel extremely fast, waiting for no one and giving no quarter. Indeed, riding a bus in Israel is a physical experience of elbows, feet, and compressed bodies hanging from the doors and pushing.

The physical nature of these public experiences has been explained by Edward T. Hall. Dr. Hall's investigations indicated that the Arab's concept of public space is quite different from that of an American's concept. Here is an example. For the American, a line in a public place serves to delineate a right to a certain area and a certain order. To break a line is to violate someone's right to that particular space and order. The Arab, on the other hand, regards public space as "public", meaning that it is unbounded and

open to anyone. Hence, pushing ahead in a line is a legitimate usage of public space and not considered rude.[4]

Most students find these manifestations of Israeli culture to be at least annoying and often anger producing. They find that in every quarter of daily contact the Israeli is generally devoid of manners. But, as mentioned at the beginning of this section, the students, while angered at times by this treatment, are very forgiving and tolerant. The following is a typical reaction:

> I certainly feel that we are all Jews, but while in Israel I have certainly found that the Israeli people are a very rude and pushy people. And then I stop and think and generally rationalize that if they weren't this way Israel wouldn't be where it is today.

This rationalization indicates two important factors. Most students, while they dislike the way they are treated by the average Israeli, have a generally high regard and respect for the Israeli. The student body felt a sense of awe at what the Israeli has accomplished. Students acknowledge that the building of the State of Israel was a difficult process and the people who built it did so through a kind of pioneer spirit and tenacity expressed by an outward manifestation

of independence and arrogance. Secondly, students were very aware of the Holocaust experience. Many students rationalized the street behavior of the Israeli by suggesting that in the concentration camps, "those who pushed the hardest survived".[5] A few of the students even found the Israeli a charming and inspiring figure. The very manifestation of independence was the embodiment of an idealism and a pioneering spirit. They enjoyed the Israeli because "he really lives his life. He is a happy, strong person filled with gusto".

By and large, at the early stages of the sojourn, most students were able to identify with the Biblical Jew to a greater extent than the contemporary Israeli. Students would often acknowledge that "the Israeli is my brother" intellectually, but find it hard to feel an emotional closeness to him. As time went on and the students adjusted to a greater degree, the Israeli became emotionally closer and closer to our students.

I have discussed previously the feelings of our students toward the religious element in Isreal. Generally, our students did not feel "threatened" by them, but did manifest a feeling of a lack of authenticity because of their lack of

knowledge of Jewish sources. What was not mentioned was the attitude toward the Israeli secularist. On this subject there was a considerable split in opinion. Some students, depending on their degree of attachment to religious Judasim, felt closer to the Orthodox elements than to the secularists. By and large, however, the students identified positively with the secularists. This identification was more on a human than a Jewish level. However, one student suggested a very interesting concept of the function of the secularists.

I asked this student where he felt more Jewish, in the United States or in Israel. He responded that he felt equally Jewish in both countries. From this I assumed that his Judaism was an internal function not related to his place of residence. When I suggested this to him he indicated that I was wrong. In the United States he felt very Jewish because there were always Gentiles around whose presence made him aware of his Jewishness. While in Israel, he found the same distinction between himself and the secular Israeli. The idea that the secularist in Israel can function in the same way as the Gentile in the United States is an engaging hypothesis. While it is not the subject of this paper, it

would make an interesting future study.

Attitudes Toward the HUC Jerusalem School Administration

When speaking of the Administration of the Jerusalem School we may speak of two entities. In the broad sense, the administration includes all individuals from Dr. T., Director of Jewish Studies, through the maintenance staff. These are the people who "administer" the program and the facility of the Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem. In a more restrictive sense, the administration is composed of the aforementioned Dr. T., his assistant, Mr. A., Dr. H., Director of Hebrew Language, and Dr. L., a faculty member from the Los Angeles school who served for several months on the Jerusalem faculty.

Very few students were totally satisfied with the administration in its broad interpretation. In most cases this lack of satisfaction relates to the initial let-down the students experienced upon arrival in Jersulem. It was suggested that the student brought with him a self image of one who is special. First contacts with the school produced a change in that self image as the College did not appear to place the student in as significant a position as the student felt he

was entitled. At various times during the period of observation, especially when there was heightened stress on the student body, dissatisfaction with the administration became vocal.

Students received constant reinforcement of the idea that they were not the center of the College's world. Secretaries appeard distant and preoccupied with the daily business of the institution. Students desired signs of friednship and accessability from the secretarial staff. The predominant feeling among the students was that they were intruding when they had business with the secretarial staff. While there was a more friendly atmosphere between the students and the maintenance personnel, these relationships also produced a negative self image for the students. Examples will illustrate this point.

Half way through each morning of class students received a coffee break. Common practice was for students to gather in the "student lounge" for coffee, tea, and biscuits. Often the maintenance worker who prepared the hot drinks would play ping pong with the students. However, when the time came for the return to class, he would announce the conclusion of the break with a hand-held bell. Students felt that this was a

demeaning signal. They referred to their break as "recess", conjuring up the image of a primary grade teacher calling the children in from the playground.

Another example had to do with student use of the building and its facilities. Immediately upon completion of ulpan classes the process of closing the building began. Students who desired to stay in classrooms and talk or study were told they had to leave. If a student needed to use a typewriter, he was granted permission to use a very old manual machine in one of the back offices. The machine did not work well to begin with. Worse was the fact that the ribbon on the machine was worn and torn, making efficient typing virtually impossible. During the entire period of observation this ribbon was never replaced. Usage of the library also caused problems. Initially, the library was not open to students during the evenings. Students were also limited to checking out only two books at one time. Thus, students who did not want to make the trip back to the dormitory and preferred to study in the library had to negotiate later hours for the library. Those students who desired to study at their living facility were hindered by the amount of reference material they could

take home with them.

These examples serve to illustrate the constant reinforcement of the idea that the College was not for the students. Students felt that the main purpose of the institution was to educate rabbis, yet they also felt that the building was not open to them, that the staff demeaned them, that they were considered, in many cases, a minor annoyance to the personnel. This situation was frustrating to student who felt they were special.

Two things must be said to place student dissatisfaction in perspective. First, the Israeli members of the staff were not aware that they were conveying a rude image of themselves to the students. When I suggested the student attitude to one secretary, she was mystified. Much of the students' reaction can probably be explained as a breakdown of communication between American and Israeli. One might assume that as students become more adept at reading the Israeli responses to given situations, they will find less frustration in encounters with administrative personnel. Second, and most important, the College was the center of the student's world. It was highly visible and very open to attack. Thus, when

frustrations mounted, regardless of their source, the College and its staff were convenient targets.

Feelings toward the administration in its restrictive sense were generally varied, but tended to be negative. The administrator who enjoyed the most positive image among the students was Dr. H., Director of the Hebrew program. Most students felt that Dr. H. was genuinely concerned about their progress in the ulpan. They felt he took a personal interest in them from the time of their initial placement interviews. Some students felt there was a personality conflict between themselves and Dr. H., but most students respected his competence in the field of linguistics and his ability to manage their Hebrew education.

Another popular administrator in the students' eyes was Dr. L. A number of students had had dealings with him during their undergraduate years. He projected the image of the young, energetic academic. It was Dr. L. who counseled a number of students before and during the first semester. Certain conflicts did arise between Dr. L. and particular students. These conflicts were most likely on the basis of personality. One student reported that Dr. L. insisted on

called "Doctor" at all times but called students by their first names, even when a student also held a PHD. This report was never confirmed and most students felt that Dr. L. was fairly easy-going. Nevertheless, there were several students who were very put off by Dr. L.

Conflicting feelings remain for Mr. A. and Dr. T. Few students were "lukewarm" to these two men. Because Mr. A. was in a position to aid the students, when arrangements were not to the students' liking he was the target for their frustrations. However, many students liked him very much, especially after the various tours when he proved to be an unending source of information and enthusiam. Dr. T. was generally loved or hated with little or no middle ground. Students were especially vocal with reference to the course which Dr. T. taught. This course will be discussed below.

It is significant to note that students had the most positive feelings for administrators who had clearly defined roles. Dr. H. was not a rabbi and was responsible for the ulpan program. Student expectations of him were well defined and they were seldom disappointed in his performance. Dr. L. was primarily a teacher but also took on the role of counselor-

rabbi. Again, student expectations were fairly well defined.

In the case of Mr. A. and Dr. T., role confusion occurred on the part of the students. They considered Mr. A. as primarily concerned with student services. As mentioned previously, this is but one of the roles Mr. A. fills at the Jerusalem school. He also teaches, assists Dr. T. in the administration of the program and hosts visitors to the campus. Similarly, students felt that Dr. T. was supposed to be in charge of the rabbinic program. In reality, this was but one of the roles Dr. T. filled. Other roles included responsibility for the facilities of the College, public relations, fund raising, and representative of the Liberal Jewish Movement in Israel. Because these two men filled such complex roles, they could not present a consistent image to the students.

Student attitudes toward the administration reflected a basic lack of understanding of the Jerusalem Campus. The College-Institute's endeavor in Jerusalem is considerably more than training rabbinic students. The investment of time, money and personnel is also politically motivated. In the larger scheme of things, the Hebrew Union College Jerusalem school is a Liberal presence in the State of Israel. The

issues involved in this political presence are not only the training of rabbinic students, but the creation of a liberal movement in Israel, the creation of a positive public image for a movement which had had an anti-Zionistic history, the obtaining of civil and religious rights for American Reform rabbis and American Reform immigrants. As long as the students fail to comprehend the larger agenda of College-Institute in Israel, and as long as they remain self-centered, one may expect continued conflicts between students and administration.

Attitudes Toward the Hebrew Program

Students generally agreed that they were satisfied with the ulpan program. Very few felt that they were not learning to speak Hebrew. The test of this positive feeling is the manner in which students regarded the work load of the ulpan. Even though this occupied tremendous quantities of time, most students willingly did their homework. Since there was general agreement that the program was successful, it would be more fruitful to concentrate on the two complaints students raised.

The first complaint was generally voiced by students in the lower classes. The structure of the ulpan was geared to

the learning of Modern Hebrew, i.e., a speaking vocabulary and a vocal skill. Some time was devoted to introductions to textual study. Some classes read a little Bible, some a little Mishnah. The more advanced students received instruction in Talmud. Most students in the lower levels of the ulpan were learning to speak Hebrew, but expressed a desire to get deeper into textual study. Some students expressed this as a desire to move ahead and to get into "rabbinic studies". Other students, few in number, expressed the desire for textual studies more vocally. Two students felt that the learning of Modern Hebrew was interesting, but it wasn't what they had come to Israel for. Their primary purpose was to begin studying for the rabbinate. That meant studying text. One student suggested that "unless we devote more time to Bible, Mishnah and Talmud, this whole year will be waste".

The second complaint came from the highest ulpan level. Initially no provision had been made for a Daled class. When students showed their high competence in Hebrew the new level was created. These students had special problems understanding their relationship to the rest of the program. They were so far ahead of most of their classmates that the material they

would cover in class probably wouldn't be seen by their fellow students till the following year. Daled students didn't know whether they would have to repeat this material the following year with the rest of the class. Initially, most Daled students didn't understand why they had to be in Israel for a year. These were the students who felt it would be possible to learn the required Hebrew in six months, or even in the United States.

It was at this high level that the only real flexibility in the ulpan program took place. While other students could change levels as needed, the Daled students could acutally tailor their academic program to their own needs. With the exception of a class in Hebrew conversation in which these students were urged to participate, Daled students were encouraged to take courses at the Hebrew University or some of the other institutions in the area. During the first semester a number of students from the Daled class had outside Talmud studies. This helped to pacify those who were concerned about their future studies. Whatever their concerns were about the second year, at least they were presently engaged in a high level program.

Attitudes Toward Other Required Courses

There were two other required courses in addition to the ulpan. One course was Liturgy. Its objective was to familiarize the student with the content and translation of the prayer book. The other class was the Development of Jewish Thought, which purported to be a survey of Jewish religious thought to the present time. This course attempted to give the students a fundamental knowledge of Reform Judaism.

The liturgy course was instructed in different sections. The sections were supposed to be grouped according to Hebrew ability. However, a number of students in the higher sections maintained that their classes were entirely in English. Many of the students were genuinely interested in the Jewish concept of prayer and what it could mean to them. Even those students who were unsure of the value of prayer found the course interesting. One incident will serve to illustrate. On the first meeting of one section the instructor explained that he did not believe what the prayerbook contained, but since it was required that students study it, he would get through the material. A number of student commented that this was perhaps too candid an attitude to teach the prayerbook effectively.

One student even transferred out of the section because he felt that his questions about prayer could not be answered by someone who was negatively disposed to the issue from the beginning.

Other students had an opposite opinion of the liturgy class. These, while few in number, were quite vocal. They did not see the need to study the prayerbook at all. The course in Reform Judaism also met with similar disdain. One student suggested "no one in my congregation is going to ask me what the service says. No one will ask 'what does Reform say about this?'". This kind of attitude seemed to grow out of a misconception of what the rabbinate was all about. This particular student had a "social work" model of the rabbi as one who counsels in the synagogue. Other functions, such as leading worship and teaching were secondary to the rabbi's role.

By far the strongest feelings were expressed with reference to Dr. T.'s course on the Development of Jewish Thought. It should be kept in mind that Dr. T.'s role was not clear in the students' minds and much of the criticism might be <u>ad hominum</u> because of this. In class, Dr. T. is very easy-going. He may or may not have notes which he follows, but he seldom

has a formal outline to structure the class. This conveyed the image to the students that Dr. T. was not prepared for his sessions. I believe this to be an erroneous image. Further, Dr. T. presents his lectures in a very conversational manner. Since his subject was broad, he seldom developed ideas fully. Students felt that his presentations were "infantile" and demeaning. It was "Sunday School" or "Adult Education", but not at the level of a rabbinic graduate school. These criticisms were most vocal from those students who were, or regarded themselves to be, the brighter members of the class. They wanted to speak of philosophies but received misas about Dr. T.'s grandmother. These misas were, in fact, extremely illustrative of traditional attitudes. However, because they were misas and not "academic material", students often felt they weren't suitable for rabbinic study.

What seemed to disturb most students was the feeling that Dr. T. was not being fair to Orthodox Judaism and not being sufficiently critical of Reform. This is a revealing criticism. The booklet, "Your Year in Israel", expressly states that this is a course designed to present the fundamentals of Reform Judaism. Dr. Mirsky points out in his dissertation that much

of the initial socialization process for student from a non-Reform background is the introduction to Reform ideology. With these two points in mind, Dr. T. was justified in being pro-Reform. Indeed, that was the function of the course.

Student resistence to this course suggests that many of them were at least open to Orthodoxy and in some cases anti-Reform. Given the fact that they were in a country where Orthodoxy was the standard of "Jewishness", student criticism of this course can be related to the identity crisis previously discussed. Students were in an environment where traditional trappings were visible and socially acceptable. For the most part they really didn't understand the issues involved in Reform Jewish thought. The students resented what they felt was intellectual coersion on the part of Dr. T. They appeared to be intellectually critical of Reform and emotionally drawn to Orthodoxy. This had a dual effect. First, the class itself was continuously criticized. It was the focal point of the "student revolt" previously discussed. Second, students appeared to adopt a kind of eclectic Judaism. Their Shabbat observance became more traditional, as did their observance of the festivals. This inclination toward traditional Judaism

was done with a "liberal attitude", meaning that students picked and chose freely but without any apparent criteria. This is not a serious flaw in the student body. It is reasonable to assume that this immediate immersion in the Rabbinic program heightened student sensitivity to things Jewish. Further, as they progress in their rabbinic studies and come in contact with such men as Petochowski and Reines, whose systems are highly developed, students will begin questioning their own rationales for the observances they practice.

General Attitudes Toward the Program as a Whole

While there was much complaining about various areas of the College program, students indicated by their conduct that they were favorably disposed to the program. Homework was done and attendance at class was generally good.

Aside from the particular complaints there were two general complaints which the vast majority of the class voiced. One was in the area of time usage and the other in the area of the College's attitude toward the students.

Every student I spoke with suggested to me that there were not enough hours in the week to adequately prepare for class and take advantage of Israel. We have seen that the

class load was quite heavy. In addition to the class work, students were encouraged to volunteer several hours each week to tutorial programs, to take advantage of Hebrew University courses, to attend various social and cultural events in the area, and to travel independently to other parts of the country. Because of the rigors of the weekly class schedule, most students remained in Jerusalem on the week-ends and relished the little free time they had.

Students often felt that they were missing much of Israel. They didn't feel they had the opportunity to use their Hebrew outside of class, that they didn't have the opportunity to come into contact with the Israeli and get to know him.

The complaints are understandable and stem from the total involvement of the students in the College program. In reality they were accomplishing most of these goals without being aware of them. While it is possible to get around Israel using only English, most students used Hebrew in everyday situations such as the bus, the store, and advertisements. It is true that they did not usually engage Israelis in general conversation using Hebrew, but the reinforcement of Hebrew was constant. With regard to having contact with Israelis,

again the goal was accomplished without student awareness. All ulpan teachers were Israelis. During class students learned about their teachers through Hebrew conversation. They often discussed political and social attitudes with their instructors. They came in contact with the Israeli members of the staff every day. More significant still, was the contact students had with people such as Mr. A. and Mrs. S. (the receptionist at the Jerusalem school) who were American olim (immigrants). These people were roughly contemporaries to the students and had decided to come and live in Israel. That these contacts were not exploited to a greater degree is perhaps explained again because of the students' total involvement in the College program. Students knew they were American rabbinic students at an American Seminary. They generally looked upon the staff of the College as though they too were American, or at least not Israeli. This is an unfortunate observation as the students had a great deal to gain by contact with these individuals.

The second complaint, viz. the College's attitude, has partially been discussed in other sections. Students felt that the administration considered them to be children. One example of this, which became a touchstone for the students, revolved

around use of the College kitchen facilities. It was previously noted that students in the dormitory could not prepare hot meals on Shabbat in the dorm. They approached Dr. T. requesting permission to make use of the College kitchen to prepare Sabbath meals. Dr. T.'s response became legend. He refused permission because students didn't know how to clean up after themselves. One student related Dr. T.'s response:

> Then he (Dr. T.) talks to a group of students and says the reason he doesn't want us to have Shabbat dinners together is because guys don't know how to cook, they can only clean up -- the women have to do the cooking. 'I have a daughter who's a student and she can't even clean up after herself so how can you expect the guys to?'.

This incident occured during the early weeks of the program. The impact on the students was so great that throughout the period of observation it was cited as evidence for the College-Institute's paternal attitude toward students.

One also detects the students' impression that the Administration (in the person of Dr. T.) was chauvanistic. The feeling was articulated by one of the female students as follows:

> (Dr. T.) has made it completely clear that he does not believe that women belong in the

> program. ...he doesn't even look very favorably on the fact that the wives are around... He has said nothing to me since I came to this country which has been five weeks now. Except on Yom Kippur when he said 'you are on the clean up committee'.

This student's response will be duscussed in further detail as she eventually left the program. She was extremely sensitive to what she considered discriminatory remarks. One of the things which upset her a good deal was the constant reference to the class as "gentlemen". However, even male students were aware of the lower social status of women in the program. Wives were allowed to participate in the HUC ulpan but only after they had been admonished that they must keep up with the homework and attend class regularly. Many students resented the implication that the wives would be lax in their studies. It is significant to report that a number of wives did participate in the ulpan and that most of them dropped out in the first three months of the program. The requirement that wives who participate in the ulpan "take it seriously" was born of previous experience on the part of the College. The pattern of wives dropping out was established in previous years. This is educationally dysfunctional from

the point of view of the Director of the Hebrew Program.

The ulpan system is based on small group learning. By adding the wives these groups grew in size. Further, to drop the ulpan is a distraction to the other students in the group. Most important was the fact that most wives placed in the lower levels of the ulpan and detracted from the HUC students in these groups who especially needed personal attention.

Whether or not there is real foundation for the students' feeling that the College disapproved of women is debatable. What is important is that students held this impression and it reinforced their idea that the College disapproved of them.

Administrative Attitudes Toward the Students

During the period of observation I had the opportunity to interview three of the top four administrators of the Jerusalem program. I do not intend to present the complete content of those interviews. Rather, I hope to explain the highlights and focus on what I consider to be significant observations on their part.

Mr. A. sees his role as threefold. First he feels that he is involved in

simply helping the student as much as possible

> without overdoing it, without pampering. Helping them whether it be with housing or health services, or whether it be with selection of Hebrew University courses, even if there is some sort of plumbing problem or telephone problem, or if the wife gets sick and needs Kupat Cholim (insurance covered medical treatment).

Secondly, Mr. A. sees himself as helping the student gain an exposure to Israel.

> ... I see (my role) as not necessarily a missionizing job, but presenting Isreal in the favorable light that I really see it. Not to fool oneself and not to idealize things that are wrong... (but) to reinforce the student with a strong pro-Israel stand during the year that he is here.

Finally, Mr. A. views himself as a teacher who is not a rabbi. He doesn't "preach liturgy" but teaches it "university style". This multiple role is accompanied by this responsibilities to Dr. T.

Mr. A. was asked to assess the class and discuss what he felt to be its major difficulties. He echoed what a number of students suggested. Many students aren't fully committed when they enter the program. They

> don't even know what the rabbinic studies are all about, and I would say that a large percentage of the group don't even know what Judaism is all about and already they have decided to

become professionals and leaders of Judaism.

Mr. A. pointed out that it might be easier to let students "find themselves first". Bringing them to Israel "really compounds the problems of acclimating to a new type of studies. You have a new atmosphere, a new society. Students being away from home for the first time ... (these factors can) psychologically have a negative effect on the students".

However, Mr. A. was convinced that Israel was the place for students to acquire the Hebrew Language skills which provide the tools of the rabbinate. Further, he felt that the exposure to the various modes of Jewish expression in Israel served to focus student attention on the problem of "finding themselves".

Dr. H. also conveyed similar impressions of the students. After discussing the Hebrew program and his general satisfaction with its progress, he suggested that one of his secondary goals was to "Judaize" the students. He hoped to offer them opportunities to learn traditional Judaism and place a warm feeling for Judaism within the students. He too felt that many students were not firmly committed to the program.

Dr. H. pointed out the difficulties his teaching staff

encountered dealing with American students. His teaching staff was composed of Israelis. He noted that there was a difference between American student attitudes and Israeli student attitudes. The most notable difference is that the Israeli student is motivated by peer group pressure to a greater degree than the American student. American students, on the other hand, depend to a greater extent on personal interaction between themselves and their instructors. He felt American students needed more"coddling" than Israeli students. This was not a value judgement on his part, rather an observation related to the different approach this teaching staff had to adopt in the classroom.

It was Dr. H. who made the significant observation about student contact with Israeli's within the College itself. He noted that students received a great deal of information about the country and its people by their daily contacts with their ulpan instructors. He expressed regret that these relationships were not developed more fully.

Dr. L. was in a strange position. He was on Sabbatical from the Los Angeles campus of the College-Institute and had agreed to teach a liturgy section. He had hoped for a nominal

time commitment to the Jerusalem program, but found himself devoting more and more time to the program. He analyzed this as indicating a need for another full-time administrator on the College's staff. He was occupied not only with teaching but also with student counseling, student relations and program administration. In a sense, he had allowed the students to define his role by making himself accessible to their demands on his time. He saw himself as not only a teacher but also as the nominal "dean of students".

In discussing the sources of student discontent Dr. L. suggested that the difficulty was grounded in two areas. First, students were lead to believe that the Israel program would solve all their problems academically. I agree with his analysis. Literature which comes from the College conveys the impression that upon completion of the first year program students will be competent to handle texts and will find their future studies manageable. In reality, students found that they were having problems in the program. They were losing their self image as important people. They were having difficulty seeing the relationship between their present course of studies and the future. They were having difficulty relating their

present experience to being rabbis.

Dr. L. picked up on this point and suggested that another major source of difficulty was the lack of adequate role models for the students. It was his feeling that few of the personnel at the College presented favorable models for the various kinds of careers students envisioned for themselves. Noticeably lacking was a pulpit rabbi. The effect of this void was tne need for delayed goal gratification on the part of the students. They did not have a model to relate to and to help them in organizing their experiences. Thus, the goal of becoming a rabbi became a kind of bait. They felt that they must get through this year because becoming a rabbi was sufficiently important to them to warrant the enduring of present difficulties. Dr. L. felt that had there been adequate role models to help bridge the gap between the first year program and HUC in the States as well as the rabbinate itself, students would find their way more easily.

Before moving to the conclusion of this chapter, it must be pointed out that all three of these administrators were positive about the Israel program. They might have disagreed about whether the program should have been the first year,

second year or third year, but they were committed to rabbinic students studying in Israel. They were favorably disposed to the manner in which the program was developing. Their comments, therefore, are observations about the program's weak points. They should be considered seriously as suggestions for the improvement on the one hand and as sensitive insights into the human problems of the first year class.

Summary of Chapter V

This chapter surveys student attitudes toward various aspects of the first year program. It also discusses the attitudes of three of the four top administrators. General findings are as follows:

(1) Most students had a positive attitude toward making the trip to Isreal. They expressed either a general excitement about the trip, or positive feelings coupled with apprehension about their ability to get along with the Hebrew Skills then available to them.

Some students were very negative about the journey.

(4) They felt that the year in Israel was an imposition. This was often due to unhappiness over separation from loved ones.

(2) Student attitudes toward the Land of Israel were generally favorable. The percentage of students favorably impressed with the land drops significantly with the first exposure to culture shock upon arrival, but climbs as students become more adjusted to the country. Students' attitudes, while positive, are generally unspecified.

(3) Student attitudes toward the State of Israel were generally favorable, but exhibited the conflict between students' idealized image of a Jewish State and the reality they encountered. Most students could accept this disparity but were troubled by the preoccupation of Israelis with what they considered to be the negative aspects of Western culture, materialism and statecraft. They were concerned that what could have been a "Jewish State" was growing into "just another state". Few students had seriously considered the possibility of making aliya.

(4) Student attitude toward the Israeli was generally tolerant. Students were aware of the cultural difference between themselves and the Israeli. They

rationalized their negative encounters with the Israeli by the feeling that the Israeli had reason for conducting himself as he does. Without the aggressiveness, Israel wouldn't be what it was.

(5) Students were generally negative about the Administration in its broad interpretations. They felt that the College devalued their status as special people. This may be partially explained as a lack of awareness on the students' part of the meaning of the College's enterprise in Israel. With regard to the administration in its restrictive sense, it was found that students had the most positive feelings for those administrators whose roles were clearly defined. Those administrators with complex roles were subject to misinterpretation resulting in animosity.

(6) Students were generally favorable about the Hebrew program but felt that it consumed so much time that they were prohibited from experiencing Israel. It was also shown that because of their tremendous involvement with the program, students were not aware of the quantity of data they received from Israelis on the

College staff.

(7) Students were generally favorable about their required liturgy class. Most students held strong negative feelings for the Development of Jewish Thought course. Much of these feelings may be explained as ad hominum attacks at the instructor. It was also suggested that the complaints of prejudice against traditional Judaism on the part of the instructor reflect the students' openess to traditional Judaism and neutral, if not negative, position with regard to Reform Judaism.

(8) Students felt that they didn't have sufficient time because of the demands of the entire program. Further, they felt that the College administration considered them as children and was decidedly anti-feminist.

(9) Taken together, the Administrators interviewed presented the following insights:

a) It was felt that students generally brought a low degree of commitment to the rabbinate with them when they enrolled at the College-Institute.

b) Students needed to be "Judaized", i.e., encouraged to take advantage of Jewish religious experiences in Israel.

c) There was a need for an additional full-time staff person who would fill the role of "dean of students".

d) There was a lack of adequate role models which could help students relate to the American campuses and with the ultimate goal of the rabbinate.

CHAPTER VI

Impact and Conclusion

The goal of this chapter is to present an over-view of the impact of the Israel experience on the students entering the rabbinic program beginning in 1972. In doing so, I shall focus on the socialization process and its characteristics.[1] By drawing on material from previous chapters the hypotheses of this paper will become clear.

> Adult socialization is most intensive during critical periods when adjustment to new situations must be made. If these adjustments are difficult to make and far reaching in their effects, the individual may undergo great changes in his self conception, habits and values.[2]

We have seen that the entering class was going through a critical period of adjustment. This period involved two levels. Students not only had to adjust to the beginning of professional studies, they also had to contend with a completely new and foreign environment. It is self evident that this was not an easy adjustment to make. We may conclude that the majority of the entering students underwent great changes in self-conception, habits and values.

It is clear that there were changes in the habits of the

students. Most visible was the wearing of various kinds of ritual garb. In most cases, the wearing of the kipah, tsitsit, and talit were conscious choices made by students after arrival in Israel. Many students who chose to wear these articles claimed that they were "just trying them out" to feel what is was like. It is apparent that one of their motivations, perhaps their primary motivation, was to reach an accomodation with their new surroundings.

The wearing of ritual garb was somewhat limited. A relatively small number of students chose to wear tsitsit. A larger precentage chose to wear kipa and talit during worship services. However, the change of habit was more widespread than this indicates. In almost every case, students observed the Sabbath and holidays in a more traditional fashion. Part of this may be explained by the prevailing culture. In Israel there is very little one can do on Shabbat. Bus transportation does not exist on the Sabbath, stores are closed as are most forms of entertainment. Even so, student observance was enformed as much by student choice as cultural necessity. Students began special Sabbath activities and observances. Some students formed a Sabbath discussion

series, meeting in a small group each week to discuss topics of general interest. The motivating force behind these group meetings was that it was appropriate to do so on the Sabbath. Other students gathered to study the Torah portion for the week. Some students made it a point to be at the Western Wall for Sabbath services. The Sabbath meal became a focal point for many students. I have suggested that these changes of habit were facilitated by the culture in which the students lived. Yet, it cannot be ignored that most students opted to perform certain rituals and activities.

We should also expect a change in values during this period of critical adjustment. The changes our students went through are many faceted. They can be catagorized as: a) solidification of values, b) acceptance of new values and c) expansion of present values.

a) Solidification of Values - It was seen that in many cases students came to Israel without specific value systems. For example, some students came with a generally favorable attitude toward Israel, or a generally favorable attitude toward Reform Judaism. These attitudes were not usually founded on established value systems. As time passed and

students were forced to adjust to the new environment, general feelings began to solidify into value systems. Unspecified feelings about Israel became grounded by values such as "Jewish State", "Jewish Sanctuary". Unspecified attitudes toward Reform Judaism became grounded by an ever increasing body of knowledge. Solidification of values was the response to the new situation (for example living in a foreign culture or dissatisfaction with the traditional orientation of the class) and usually as a result of the accumulation of knowledge (seeing the country and learning its problems, learning Reform ideology).

b) Acceptance of New Values - Many students found themselves either accepting new value systems or at least being open to them. Perhaps the best example of this is the dispute concerning the Development of Jewish Thought Course. Many students from classical Reform backgrounds found themselves drawn toward Orthodoxy. Minimally they were open to Traditional Jewish values. Other students began to desire a traditional mode of prayer or to accept the wearing of kipot as a valid symbol of Jewish identity. It should be pointed out that acceptance of new values also worked in the direction of Traditional to Reform. Some students, a smaller number, saw

how the Orthodox elements functioned in Israel and found themselves accepting more liberal values.

c) Expansion of Present Values - This catagory falls somewhere between the two previously mentioned. It is primarily related to expanding horizons and the learning process. In this catagory one would find the student who had a set of values which became the core of a more complex value system. For example the student whose concept of "rabbi" focused on the social work model and whose idea of Israel focused on "Jewish Refuge". These values remained during the adjustment period. While they became more firmly rooted, the student also accepted the role of rabbi as scholar-teacher and Israel as a center of creative Judaism. These two additional value structures were adopted because of exposure to new information provided by the College program and because the intellectual horizon of the student had been broadened by exposure to other sectors of Israeli culture.

Finally, during the period of critical adjustment we would expect changes in the student's self-image. This was seen to be the case with the first contact of the students and the Jerusalem campus. Mirsky suggested that students who chose the

rabbinate generally received special attention from their home rabbis or other Jewish authority figures. They had very positive self-images, feeling they were unclean individuals who were special. The initial contact with the College in Jerusalem began a change in their self-image. They were made to feel that the College-Institute existed solely for their benefit began to deteriorate. Through contacts with administrative personnel, especially secretarial and maintenance personnel, students began to lose their feelings of specialness.

Further, students came to the College after completing undergraduate degrees, and in some cases graduate degrees. They felt that they were adults and entitled to adult considerations. Due to a number of incidents like the "legend of the kitchen", students were made to feel that they were considered as children.

At times, this change of self-image developed into crises of authenticity for the students. This will be discussed below.

Many of the changes mentioned above came about simply by contact with a new environment. However, the majority of student change was not brought about by happenstance. On the contrary, there were definite agencies for the socialization

process. One of the agencies for socialization is peer group interaction.

> Peer group interaction is assumed to be best when children are at the same level of social and psychological development, and this is believed to be closely linked to chronological age.[3]

From the above quotation we might expect the first year class to be an inefficient agency for socialization. This is, in fact, the case. Chronologically there was a spread of up to 14 years between the oldest and the youngest students. There was a varience between students engaged in a combined program to finish their Bacheloriate degrees to one student who had been awarded a PH.D. in Philosophy. There were students from practicing traditional backgrounds, Conservative backgrounds, Reform backgrounds, Reconstructionist backgrounds, plus a student from a Gentile background. Some students were married, some single, some engaged and one on the verge of divorce. There were political activists from the left and right, Zionists, Socialists and uncommitted middle-of-the-roaders. There were students who had career goals of the pulpit rabbinate, academic rabbinate, social work rabbinate as well as a large percentage

of students who weren't certain about what goal they were pursuing. There were students who looked "Ivy League", students who looked "Hippy Commune" and students who looked like "Farmer Jones" in coveralls and flannel shirts. When one considers the tremendous diversity of this entering class. it is somewhat of a minor miracle that they got on together at all.

A group as heterogenious as this was not, initially, an effective agency for socialization. While it was not productive of building group values into its individual members, it did have certain very definite effects. First, it produced tenuous feelings on the part of many students with regard to their decisions to become rabbis.

> Through interaction with others and through language, the individual comes to think of himself as an "I". As he perceives the attitudes of others toward this "I", he developes a self-image. He takes on a view of himself from observing the ways others respond to him. For this reason Cooley spoke of a "looking-glass self".[4]

Prior to beginning the first year program the majority of the entering students had self-images based on positive responses to their decisions to pursue the Rabbinate. Their attentive rabbis, tauting families and supportative friends

produced in most students the feeling that they were doing something that was commendable. They were very special individuals.

Once the students became a part of the class and realized that they had actually begun to prepare for the career they had chose, they looked for reinforcement of their self-images in their fellow students. Because of the diversity of the entering class, students could not find confirmation of their feelings in more than a few of their classmates. As they looked at other members of the class they were often greeted by such great contrast between what they perceived themselves to be and what they perceived their colleagues to be that many students were incredulous. If they accepted the "looking-glass" self-image they perceived, many students would find that their motives and expectations were in question. Rather than place themselves in this tenuous position, many students criticized the admissions policy of the College-Institute. They often suggested that there were large numbers of their colleagues who didn't belong in the program due to to academic, emotional and character deficiencies. Predictably, as the adjustment to the new environment progressed, students became

less harsh on their classmates. They acquired insight into the motivations of their colleagues and were better able to reconstruct a satisfying self-image.

Perhaps the most significant effect of the peer group as a socializing agent was the initial instability it caused in the class. Because of the diversity of the class in social, religious and academic backgrounds many conflicts arose. Friendships were slow in forming. The effect of this was the prohibition of early group formation. It might be said that a cohesive group did not exist among the first year class until the "revolt" in January. This instability prevented the individuals from arriving at group values and attitudes. The effect of this retarded group development was to make the students more open to the socialization process of the College.

The second major agency for socialization was the institution of the College itself.

> When a socializing agency has special and unique values to impart, it tends to seek a degree of social isolation. It tries to minimize the access of other groups to the individual...[5]

There are various ways in which an institution can reduce

"contaminating influences" on its clients. One way is to schedule the client in such a way as to prohibit free time to interact with other individuals outside the institution. We have seen that the prescribed course load, plus the suggested outside activities, placed a tremendous demand on the student. If he were to be the "ideal student" he would not only be completely out of contact with the outside world, but would probably have difficulty finding time for sleep and other physical necessities.

A second way an institution can isolate its clients is to relocate them. This is common of most institutions of higher learning. A "Freshman Camp" or dormitory system effectively limits the access of outside influences on the client. The Hebrew Union College used this method in the past. The Towanda summer Hebrew program, initially located at a camp and later at the Cincinnati campus, relocated students and placed them under a great deal of pressure. With the advent of the Year in Isreal Program, this isolation was made complete. Not only were students removed from their home territories, they were sent half way around the world to a country with a different culture and language. Even if the student could find

the time to get out in the society he was a foreigner, a stranger.

One of the hypotheses of this paper was that the socialization process of the College-Institute was accelerated by the Israel Program. Part of the proof of this hypothesis is the above described isolation. Without a solid peer group to create resistence to change, and physically and culturally isolated from contaminating influences, the students were extremely open to institutional suggestion. But there is yet another factor which accelerated the socialization process. I maintain that the student who participated in the Israel Program was reduced in many ways to a child-like status.

> ... increasing educational requirements (tends to) postpone the transformation of child to adult, and there is a longer period of "being on the outside looking in".[6]

Students resent being on the outside. They have been educationally isolated throughout their learning experiences. Their major contacts with the reality of the working world are generally limited to summer jobs. Under the former College-Institute system, students at least had access to upper classmen who were engaged in congregational experiences. They had contacts with people who were finishing the program and

achieving the goal for which the entering student was striving. Placing the program in Israel removed the entering student from the above contacts with "reality". Not only that, but most students were under the impression that their rabbinic studies had been lengthened from five to six years.[7] While many of their friends were becoming "real people" by going out into the "real world" our students had six additional years to wait until they, too, could consider themselves "adults".

In addition to prolonging the educational process, the Israel program reduced students' psychological age in two additional ways. First, the emphasis on the study of Hebrew caused students who previously had been concerned with philosophy and mathematics to focus their attention on learning "A,B,C's". The acquisition of Hebrew Language skills was frustrating because students encountered every day young children whose ability to speak Hebrew immeasurably surpassed that of the rabbinic student. Our students had ideas they wished to communicate but their language skills for the most part were on the level of "Dick and Jane" primers.

The second way in which being in Israel made our students feel like children was by creating the need for students to be

concerned with their basic physical well being. Students were concerned about the fundamental necessities of life such as housing, food, clothing and the maintenance of health. Under the previous program at the Cincinnati campus students were usually housed in the dormitory, fed in the dining hall, carried their clothing with them, and had the services of the College-Institute medical staff. In Isreal, each of these functions took on monstrous proportions. Finding an apartment was difficult and disappointing, purchasing food was a major project, trunks with household necessities were weeks late, and students had to be concerned about maintaining their health with a radically different diet.

At this basic level of existence students found themselves almost utterly dependent on the College for information, advice and other assistance. In many respects the College functioned as a parent, making certain that the student-children were housed, fed and cared for. As a "parent" the College had a great effect on how the students felt about themselves and the world they lived in. It has been illustrated that the effect of the College was generally to devalue the students' sense of worth, to make the student-child not the "parent's" focus of

affection.

What were the by-products of this socialization process? First it was pointed out that students readily accepted the concept that Hebrew Language skills and the ability to handle texts were valid criteria for judging success or failure. Early into the program students illustrated the acceptance of this value by their selection of text books.

Second, students experienced a good deal of anxiety. Initially, because of a lack of information about the program and because of the strangeness of the group in which students found themselves, feelings of apprehension were almost universal. These feelings of anxiety were operative long into the first semester. One would image that even if the students were able to rid themselves of this apprehension, they will encounter it again as they prepare to continue their studies back in the United States.

A third by-product of the process is rage and hositlity.

> The human organism does not suffer deprivation and frustration passively. It reacts by manifesting rage, anger, hostility and aggression. As the child matures and is expected to control his impulses, part of his frustration may be expressed as hostility and resentment against those adults who are the sources of his frustration.[8]

There can be little doubt that the students felt themselves to be deprived and frustrated. Their expressions of rage and anger are easily seen throughout the sojourn. During the initial phase of the trip the peer group was a source of frustration to many students. Thus, there was a good deal of hostility expressed toward various members of that group. Further on in the program the College became the focus of student frustration. As expected, the target for the students' hostility were those "adults" who were considered the sources of the frustration; namely Dr. T., and Mr. A. During periods of intense frustration no member of the administration was spared student anger. The last bit of information received about the first year class was news of the "revolt", which certainly fits into the above-mentioned pattern.

The fourth and final by-product of the process is a crisis of authenticity on the part of many students. This crisis of authenticity was manifest in numerous ways. The most common manifestation was the reaction to the Orthodox element of the country. Students would suggest that they did not feel threatened by the Orthodox, but they admitted that the Traditionalists knew more than they. In essence, they were saying

that they were not equal to the traditionalists, but would become so after they acquired a knowledge of text. Although students said they did not feel inauthentic around Orthodox Jews, they still felt the need to conform to the Orthodox standard in order to feel equal.

Other common manifestations of the crisis were the wearing of traditional garb, the complaints about the lack of fairness in the treatment of Orthodoxy in the "Development" course, and experimentation with traditional ritual. It should be remembered that the class was not just a group of Jews. It was a group of students training to become Reform rabbis. Thus, the College not only centralized the importance of Hebrew and textual competency by moving the program to Israel, it also created difficulties within the students religious identity.

I would hesitate to say that the College intentionally attempted to produce the kinds of stresses students felt. However, part of the process was caused by the kind of student admitted to the program. It was the admissions policy which put together the highly divergent character of the first year class. It was the admissions policy which selected students

who were predisposed to the College's socialization goals. The relative merits or demerits of the admissions policy is not at issue here. However, it was a very real causitive agent in creating conditions ammenable to the imposition of the College's value system.

Thus, a general picture of the Israel experience begins to emerge. A diversified student body comes together in a strange land. They are confronted with the difficulties of adjusting to a new, strange society with a strange language. They are confronted with doubts about their selection of the rabbinate as a career. They must deal with the devaluation of their self-esteem which occurs when they come in contact with the College. They must come to grips with fundamental questions about their Jewishness.

If this picture is disturbing, appearing more like a caldron of emotion than a seminary, it is partially unintentional and partially intended. It would not be accurate to say that the students were miserable and oppressed, although there were times when this was the case. One must be aware that due to the limitations of this paper I could not deal with the truly positive aspects of the program. There were

numerous gratifications for the students, not the least of which were the tours, the constant progress in language skill, and the deep and meaningful personal insights that our students experienced as Jews in the "Jewish Homeland".

On the other hand, I intended to explore the human problems of our students. The feelings I have explained are real feelings. That a student is old enough to accept the fact that he must separate himself from his loved ones for a full year in order to become a rabbi does not lighten the burden of loneliness. The fact that the conclusion of a year's study in Israel may well be the removal of the fear a student feels when he confronts a Hebrew text does not compensate for the anxieties he feels during that year.

It is hoped that this thesis will serve to focus attention on these very real feelings of the student body. In many cases the College can do no more than forewarn students that they will experience some new and strange emotions along with the new and strange country. In other cases, negative reactions can be avoided if the College will be alive to the real needs of the students.

According to Fromm, mans' psychological needs

are as important as his physical ones...[9]

It can be said in all honesty that the College-Institute appears to be achieving all its stated goals for the Israel Program. The question then arises, how much more effectively could those goals be pursued if the students could acclerate their adjustment process. Even more important, to me, how much deeper, how much more meaningful could the experience of the "Jewish Homeland" be if students were psychologically freer to take advantage of the marvelous opportunity of beginning their Rabbinic studies in Ha'aretz.

APPENDIX

Due to the limitations of space it is impossible to record complete transcripts of all interviews conducted. What follows are excerpts from three different students. The first two students decided to leave the program prior to the conclusion of the first semester. The third student's responses indicate particularly strong attitudes or characterize the feelings of large groups of people.

Miss B.

Q. How do you feel about the Land of Israel?

A. I love the land, but I love Israel even more. I have very mixed feelings about Israel the State because I fear for Israel the Jewish State and I foresee simply another Middle Eastern state... I feel that there is a growing distinction between the Israeli and the Jew... They want nationality rather than ethnicity. More and more tradition is being foresaken for... whatever it takes to make a nation a nation economically. They don't even want to talk about religion -- as far as they are concerned they are Israeli, Judaism is an accident.

Q. How do you feel now that you are in the country?

I think I feel more rejected as a person than as a Jew here than in the States. My negative feelings since I came to Israel have been with HUC and not with Israel... I feel more threatened in terms of identity with the extreme traditionalism of the new (HUC) students than I do with the Israeli who is not concerned with tradition.

Q. How do you feel about the first year class?

... in a few words, number one, I think that they are immature. I think that they have little idea of their own identity in the perspective either of American or International Judaism. I think that they have all kinds of dreams with regard to their place within the community, not with regard to Judasim as a growing, ongoing movement in history. Most of them are not concerned with their religious life except in so far as they can costume it -- Tallit, Kipot, how many books they have. It's very important that they get the unpointed (texts) even though they can't read them, because it looks more professional, they have to have them. They have to have all the things that make them more Jewish visually... they definitely picked it (tsitsit) up here.

Q. How do you fit in with the class?

A. I don't fit in with it at all. Number one, I'm the oldest single student here, which in itself doesn't bother me. But I'm one of two girls. I think the other girl fits in much more in terms of her own attitudes towards Judaism... the fact that she is the same age as they are, I mean I've had six years of graduate school behind me... I taught as an instructor for three years, which isn't a long time, but I feel I'm in the first year of high school...

Q. How do you feel about the College-Institute?

A. ... everything that has happened has been negative, in that (Dr. T.) has made it completely clear that he does not believe that women belong in the program... he doesn't even look very favorably on the fact that the wives are around.

Q. How has he made this clear?

He has said nothing to me since I came to this country which has been five weeks now. Except on Yom Kippur when he said 'you're on the clean-up committee.' O.K? Then he talks to a group of students and says the reason he doesn't want us to have Shabbat dinners together is

because guys don't know how to cook, they can only clean up -- the women have to do the cooking. 'I have a daughter who's a student and she can't even clean up after herself so how can you expect guys to?'

He had an orientation meeting in which everything was 'gentlemen', which I can understand... because there are inborn attitudes which are carried by (Dr. T.)... that women do not belong in Rabbinic School.

There was nothing positive done with regard to living. (Interviewee went on to describe four different living arrangements she had experienced in the five weeks of her stay. She was presently looking for a fifth accomodation. Interviewee recounted experience of another student couple.)

Mr. A. said to the _____'s that the place really isn't fit to live in but the two rabbinic girls could live in it!
(Interviewee explained that she desired to leave the first HUC apartment and therefore listed it for rent. Mr. A. told Dr. T. about this situation.)

This situation T. has time for. I've got a PhD.... and I do not like being treated like a thirteen year old high school freshman.

Q. Why are you leaving the Program?

A. All I know about HUC is what I read in the catalogue and what I experience. I don't like the fact that now I can't get any straight answers from Cincinnati... I've never met this kind of anti-feminism anywhere in the world as I've met here....

Q. Why didn't you go on the tours?

A. (She didn't go because she had to find another place to live) ... but more than that I didn't want to spend that much time with Mr. A. or Dr. T. or 75 people most of whom I don't... (get along with).

Q. Do you have any additional comments?

A. The College has made it impossible for me to integrate myself into them... pseudo-academic or whatever the hell it is. What I think now, but didn't then, was perhaps it isn't such a good idea to go to graduate school and then start all over again. Because, yes, I had too many ideals with respect to the fact that this was a professional school and not merely another graduate school.

I feel more comfortable here than in the States. I know that I can be pushed, and shoved and stepped on but no one is going to shoot me in the back.

You know what I can't stand is the filth! The dirty children, dirty apartments, and smelly people...

Mr. W.

Q. What kind of hopes did you bring with you about HUC?

A. I hoped the seminary would give me an idea of what authentic Judasim was plus Jewish knowledge.

Q. What did you expect?

A. I expected the worst and I got it!... you're living with thirty-five people day in and day out and it really begins to grate on you. And I've lived in a dorm. To me it's not like these people are just average. I think they are far below average. This is a sign (on the part of the College-Institute) of being afraid that they have to have 50 rabbis. Instead of saying 'we have 20 good ones, 25 top-flight people, that's it' they say 'oh, we've got to have rabbis for every Jew in the country!' And there's a kind of elitist, a kind of obnoxiousness in that a Little Rock doesn't desrve as good a rabbi as a New York..

I've always maintained that it's better to have no contact with a minimal Jew than a bad one(contact) with a bad one...

(Interviewee suggested that Dr. H. and Dr. T. come down to the student level. This shouldn't be the case, the level of the class should be raised.)

You have to start weeding people out. And I don't mean some guys on a Ph.D. program and some guys on a Rabbinic Program. I mean blast some guys out of the College. I don't think it's enough for some guys to have a good Jewish heart. I would hope to hell that any Jew would have a good Jewish heart and that doesn't make him a rabbi.

Q. How do you regard your encounter with the traditional Element?

A. When I dance (on Simchat Torah) I dance because I'm having a good time. They (the Chasidim) dance because they love Torah. Coming from my background of 20th century Indiana, I'm never, probably, gonna have that kind of faith...

Q. How have you adjusted religiously to Israel?

A. (On previous trips he had 'real spiritual experiences'.) This trip I feel kind of hollow. It's been a lot harder for me to pray this time. Not because of Israel, but because of the environment of the College.

Q. Do you have any additional comments?

A. If we were students of philosophy and wrote an article, the world doesn't hinge so much on philosophy... the idea that these guys are going out and be bad rabbis and that they're gonna do this with the sanction of a Jewish institution -- to send these people out really gnaws at me!

Mr. C.

Q. How do you manifest your religiosity?

A. (Interviewee indicated that he makes a distinction between the things he does and the things he is.)
I don't go to minyon, but I consider myself a moral person.

I started wearing it (kipa) more out of pride than as a symbol of observance or religiosity. While I was in the States I caught a few anti-semitic remards because of it and in a way it only seemed to reinforce the way I felt about it. I caught some flack in Mea Shearim and at the Wall. A Chasid stopped me and said, 'Ah, you wear a kipa and have a beard. You look like a Jew from that, but with your long hair you don't know where to lay t'fillin'. How can you explain the division? I explain how I feel to him. It sits right with me and I'm questioning now whether I will have as much ease wearing it back in the States as I do here.

There are a lot of guys in the program who have picked up a lot of affectations. Who were here a couple of weeks and started wearing tsitsit, or started laying t'fillin every morning. I can see that it is easy for them to do it here but I really wonder how many of them are going to keep it up once they get back to the States.

Q. This is your first trip to Israel. What were your expectations?

A. First of all, I was never excited about coming to Israel. I have never had real Zionist or pro-Zionist leanings and although I was very happy about Israel existing and wanted it to keep existing, I thought that when I made my decision to enter the rabbinate it was a commitment to Jewish life in the Diaspora. It's the old line; I figured that Israel would be a nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there. When I first got accepted, right around the

first part of January, I was resigned to the fact that I was coming here. (I felt) general apathy about it. But the general apathy grew into distaste as time grew nearer because between January and the time I left in July I met a girl and became engaged to her, and began to hold grudges against HUC for taking me away from her. Whereas, had I stayed in the States, we probably would have been married by now.

Q. How do you feel about learning Hebrew?

A. As far as the language is concerned, I feel the things we are doing here could be done just as easily in Cincinnati.

Q. What were your initial difficulties and feelings upon arrival?

A. After I was here 7 or 8 weeks I got really into the throws of culture shock. I was ready to pack up and leave. It was largely caused by my loneliness... I was about fed up with Israelis. I started writing home pretty soon after I got here, 'I love the land but the people I'm not very wild about.' I guess that for so long I had been fed an image of the land of milk and honey and I was sort of disappointed when that wasn't what it was. (It is pollution, crowds and beaurocracy.) It just seemed that the country here was trying to become westernized quickly and that so far they had picked up a lot of the bad western habits... They have become so materialistic it is like a satire on the United States, sort of a caricature... I ended up talking to a couple of faculty members here and they helped calm me down from my initial crisis. After that I went to a psychiatrist here a couple of times and he was very helpful.

Q. How are you enduring the experience now?

A. I have come to grips with the idea of delayed gratification and I am sort of trying to make the most out of it now.....

Q. At this point do you see the advantages to starting your studies here?

A. I still don't find the advantages here. I see some kids who are in the upper levels of the ulpan and have some of the resources of Hebrew University -- if they use them, it could be a benefit. The assumption is that we are in an environment where we have to speak Hebrew. Unfortunately, the assumption is false. We don't have to speak Hebrew here... One of the things that infuriates me is going into a store and trying to speak Hebrew with the shopkeeper and he wants to speak English. It takes a lot of endurance to keep pursuing the conversation in Hebrew.

Q. How do you feel about the Biblical sites in the land?

A. I feel much more akin to the people who lived at those sites than I do to those who are walking up and down Yaffo Road.

Q. Why?

A. I had a sterotyped image that Jews do this or don't do that. I think in my mind, Jews don't sit out on the corner of the street making cat-calls at girls, smoking cigarettes, loitering in front of theaters, being rowdy in the theaters... The whole 'grease-ball' image of the Jew on the street doesn't seem to mesh very well with the image of the Jews that I had.

A lot of pictures that were painted for me about Israel, I'm finding that they were just pictures, and not appropriate to reality.

Q. How do you feel about the new reality?

A. Indifferent. Like finding out that Santa Claus doesn't exist. If that's the way it is, I just have to cope with it.

Q. What have been some of the Orthodox reactions when you tell them that you are studying for the Reform Rabbinate?

A. (They tell me) 'Reform Rabbis are a bunch of fakers. They are only in it for the money. An honest street cleaner is better than a Reform Rabbi.. (I) would like to find someone who is Orthodox who is interested in discussing things rather than just telling me how I should feel!

Q. How do you feel about the College and the student body?

A. I really find very little going on here at HUC that would make an outsider who came in cognizant of the fact that its a rabbinic institution.

... after being in college for a couple of years, and some of them (fellow students) have done graduate work, and after the time we have been taught to think... and be cerebral about certain things... we now have to deintellectualize everything, sort of like first and second graders learning a language. And that's a hard adjustment to make. To be sitting down in class and reading things like the "Dick and Jane" stories we used to do. At times I find it sort of demeaning.

(Interviewee indicated that he was withholding final judgement about the classes, but they seemed to be pretty good.

Q. If classes seem pretty good, what did you mean there was little going on here that identified the institution as a seminary or graduate school?

I would like to be able to say 'while I was in Israel we studied a little Torah,' which we really haven't done. Or, 'when I was in Israel we talked about the rabbinate in practical terms, or even in theory'. It seems that the things we are doing will be very much peripheral to the things we will be doing... once we are ordained. The only time I will have for using the type of knowledge

I'm getting (in Liturgy class) is in services doing the prayers, and even then, the things I will be using there are how well I happen to memorize the liturgy and not necessarily how well I know what it means, or where they're derived from... The same goes for the philosophy course (Development of Jewish Thought), I think it's really very rare that you find a member of your congretation that really warts to discuss Buber of Jacobson or Freidlander... They're more interested in talking about the things that are going on in the rabbinate today, or that are going on in Judaism today, if they are willing to talk about it at all. I find the stuff we're doing very detached from rabbinical life.

Q. How do you feel about the faculty?

A The faculty really isn't willing to rub elbows with the students. I think that the school is really sort of over formalized.

Q. How do you see the class?

A. (4 or 5 students are close to him.) I have a lot of questions about the other people. I can see us five (friends) and the other 45 all heading towards the same goal... I keep saying 'are we rabbinical material and they're not, or are they rabbinical material and we're not?'

I feel some of the kids in the program are 'kids', are still going through some of the high school games. It's particularly apparent in dormitory life. The type of language that some people use... I find it to be the type of thing that younger people use and grow out of...

Q. Do you feel that most of your classmates really want to become rabbis?

A. No!, well, yes and no. I feel that a number came into the rabbinate simply because they didn't know of something else to do.

Q. Do you question the admissions policy of the College because of the kind of student you see in the class?

A. Very much so... some of the things I can see wouldn't come out... in the admission process, but it seems some things are so blatant that I can't see how the admissions committee could miss something like this. (The class is really big.) it doesn't seem to be any sort of elect group.

Q. Do you have any additional comments?

A. I have the attitude at time that HUC is trying to do everything wrong this year in order to cut out as many people as possible.

FOOTNOTES

Introduction

[1]N.B. Mirsky, "The Making of a Reform Rabbi" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Brandeis University, 1971).

[2]Ibid., p. 1.

[3]C.P. Sherman, "Factors Influencing the Selection of the Rabbinate as a Career" (unpublished Master's thesis, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, 1969).

[4]Between July 5 and December 15, 1972 I resided in Jerusalem. This being my first trip to Israel, my adjustment, feelings, and opinions of the country are comparable to those of other students in the first year program. There are three significant variables in this hypothesis. First, a significant number of entering students had been to Israel prior to their admission to the College-Institute. Second, while I did have course work and ulpan, my study load was not equivalent to that of the entering students. Finally, my thinking on certain issues is necessarily shaped by the four years of rabbinic study I have pursued. This prior training has a real effect on the relative significance of certain questions such as the relationship of American Reform Judaism to Israel, the meaning of the rabbinate, etc.

[5]Dr. Mirsky's findings will be recapitulated at relevant points in this paper.

I. Student Body Profile

[1]S. Goldstein and C. Goldscheider, Jewish Americans: Three Generations in a Jewish Community. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968.

[2]This study was used as data in Rabbi Sherman's work, as well as Dr. Mirsky's. Questions relating to ritual observance in my first questionnaire were taken from Jewish Americans.

[3]L.J. Fein, et. al., Reform is a Verb: Notes on Reform and Reforming Jews. New York, N.Y.: UAHC, 1972.

[4]T.I. Lenn and Associates, Rabbi and Synagogue in Reform Judaism, New York, N.Y.: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1972.

[5]These statistics and those which follow are taken from the questionnaires. The profile section was administered on the first questionnaire only. I received 41 out of a possible 55 returns. The statistics are applicable only to this specific sampling. It is my feeling, however, that the basic trends in this group are generalized in the entire class.

[6]In so far as all percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and that those students making unscorable responses i.e., not answering a question or answering in a fashion other than that requested, percentages will not total 100%.

[7]The assumption that one member of the class is a convert is based on the responses to the profile section. To this question the respondant answered "Non-Jewish". To other questions concerning rituals the respondant answered "N/A" which I interpret as "not applicable".

[8]At least one student had said that he attended a Jewish high school program.

[9]Some students apparently added junior high to their responses.

[10]While this may seem ludicrous, it does indicate a good deal of previous exposure to Hebrew.

[11]From the questionnaires.

[12]Time figures are based on July, 1972.

[13]Sherman, p. 20.

[14]Goldstein and Goldscheider, p. 189, Table 9-9. Catagories have been conbined as follows: "Once a week" and "Several times a week" equal "Regular", "Once a month" and "2-3 times a month" equal "Often", "4-11 times a year" and "1-3 times a year" equal "Seldom". Figures for the Providence community are derived from the 45-64 age group, Second Generation.

[15]Sherman, p. 30, Table 13.

[16]Fein, p. 29. "Once a week (or more)" equal "Regular", "A few times a month" equal "Often", "Every few months" and "High Holidays only" equal "Seldom".

[17]Fein, p. 28. "High Temple" is an aggregate picture assembled from the highest percentages to a given question from the complete sampling.

[18]Goldstein and Goldscheider, p. 203, Table 9-18, Second Generation.

[19]Lenn, p. 52.

[20]Ibid., p. 52, #3.

[21]Ibid., p. 187, Table 29.

[22]That this is a concern of the College-Institute was expressed by Dr. Igal Yannay who spoke to me of the College's goal of having a Hebrew entrance requirement in the future.

[23]Mirsky, p. 60.

II. Initial Expectations of First Year Students

[1]In one instance, a student did not know of the requirement until he phoned Cincinnati to ask assistance in locating housing. He was informed that he was a bit premature in his search as he would be studying in Israel for a year.

[2]HUC-JIR General Information Catalogue, 1970/71--1971/72, p. 3. As of April, 1973, no new edition is available.

[3]Ibid., p. 47.

[4]"Your Year in Israel - 1972", anonymous, cover letter.

[5]Percentages following a particular choice indicate the percentage of the respondants selecting that choice.

III. The Early Career of the Entering Student

[1]On two occasions during our stay in Israel we heard expressions of insecurity because of the military situation. Once, while touring the Golan Heights after sundown, and a second time when a student's wife was in a "Supersol" supermarket when a small bomb detonated.

[2]See Hall, The Silent Language, pp. 117-119 for a discussion of the difference between Arab and American buying and selling. This discussion can explain the confusion on the part of two HUC wives. One had purchased a dress in the Arab quarter. After bargaining with the merchant, a price of 60 Israeli Pounds was agreed upon. Several days later the purchaser accompanied a friend to the same small shop. The friend desired to purchase the identical dress. After bargaining for some time the two women discovered that the seller would not conclude the transaction for less than 75 Israeli Pounds. The two women could not understand the discrepancy between the two prices. According to Hall, the difference could be explained by the particular market value or "pivot point" of the day.

[3]Hereafter referred to as Mr. A.

[4]A fact that may change due to the requirement that some students begin the program in July.

[5]Many of the buildings in so-called "New Jerusalem" are pre-Mandate Arab structures. These tend to have large rooms with high ceilings. For a discussion of the Arab concept of living space see Hall, The Hidden Dimension, pp. 154-164.

[6]Our reactions were significant for we had done a good deal of pre-departure preparation. We read various works such as Herman's American Student In Israel, as well as discussions and correspondance with our contemporaries who had already made the trip. This effort on our part helped us to anticipate many of the difficulties and frustrations of the initial encounter with Israeli culture.

IV. Problem Areas

[1]S. Herman, American Students in Israel, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970.

[2]Ibid., pp. 80-81.

[3]L. Broom and P. Selznick, Sociology: A Text With Adapted Readings, White Plains, N.Y.: Row, Peterson and Co., 1955, p. 259.

[4]Information about this incident was conveyed to me by one of the participants following my return to the United States.

V. Student Attitudes

[1]This and other student quotations are taken from taped interviews.

[2]Particularly disturbing to many students was the increased incidence of rape. The occurance of rape in Israel is lower than that of the United States. However, it recieves considerable publicity. It is not uncommon to read something on the subject several times each week. This gave the impression that rape had reached epidemic proportions. Apparently, for our students, rape was particularly antithetical to their concept of a Jewish State.

[3]Herman, American Students. p. 206, Table 32, before arrival.

[4]Our students are apparently products of the universalistic trend. On the questionnaires many students chose universalistic responses over particularistic responses to questions of identity. For example, when students were asked how they hoped Israelis would see them, many students rejected "as a Jew" and "as an American", and wrote in the response "as a human being".

VI. Impact and Conclusion

[1]The form of this discussion is taken from Broom and Selznick, Sociology.

[2]Broom and Selznick, P. 96.

[3]Ibid., p. 107.

[4]Ibid., p. 88.

[5] Loc. cit.

[6]Ibid., p. 96.

[7]Entering students were under the impression that they would be attending HUC for a total of six years. At this writing it appears that the six year program has been defeated.

[8]Broom and Selznick, p. 86.

[9]Ibid., p. 121.

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TAPES

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