THE HILLTOP YOUTH

A Stage of Resistance and Counter culture Practice

Shimi Friedman

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Titles in this Series

The Hilltop Youth

A Stage of Resistance and Counter culture Practice

Shimi Friedman

This book is dedicated to the memory of my teacher, guide, and mentor, Prof. Michael Feige, who taught me the meaning of deep insight. His passion of knowledge motivated the writing of this book. His intellectual curiosity and questioning helped me with this research. Michael was killed in a terrorist attack at Tel Aviv, Israel, June 2016.

S.F.

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Foreword

Dr. Joshua Sinai

In this important book the author presents new information and analysis about the "Hilltop Youth," the militant Jewish movement in Israel, that is generated from his extensive fieldwork and personal familiarity with the group and its members. The "Hilltop Youth" is the name for the extremist religious-nationalist youth movement in Israel, who, through their militant activities, push for establishing new illegal settlements in the West Bank, including preventing through civil disobedience the evacuation of illegal settlements that the government opposes. They also engage in other terrorist-type attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank, for which many of their members have been arrested by Israeli security authorities, who closely monitor their involvement in such activities.

Who are the members of the "Hilltop Youth?" As the author explains in the chapter on their origin and evolution, the members of this movement number several dozens, and, interestingly, many of them are actually young adults in their early twenties or even younger. What makes their militant activism unique is that they present an internal threat not only to the Israeli government—and its military, police, domestic intelligence and security forces—which attempt to regulate (as much as possible) the demands to expand the number and size of Jewish settlements in the West Bank due to various political considerations, but they also present a significant generational threat to the older right-wing Jewish organizations, such as the Yesha Council, the umbrella organization of municipal councils of Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

What is especially noteworthy about this book is that it is one of the few to present a close-up anthropological account of the daily life and activities of the "Hilltop Youth" members, based on the author's numerous interviews with them. Such field research enables the author to reveal insights such as

their motivations to engage in militant activities, their internal ideological disputes, the nature of their rebellion against the older Jewish settlers and their more "mundane" jobs in agriculture and other settlement-related jobs. This is important, the author writes, in understanding, the "human, social and ideological environment" in which they operate. Such extensive field research and anthropological analysis make this book a comprehensive and detailed account which is missing in most of the media and academic coverage of this group.

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Prologue

When concerned people ask me "What's going to happen with those Hilltop Youth?" I usually stick to my belief, which is based upon insights drawn from research, and tell them that the phenomenon will pass, and it will not leave an impression. Then, I usually jokingly add: "Just like your teen-ager will eventually make his bed when he gets up in the morning." My position regarding this worrying and serious phenomenon, at first, seems to be a frivolous, not very serious, response but when one looks at it more deeply, as one can in this book see the curious phenomenon that actually presents a stage of passage in the growing up of the youth involved, and in the development of society. Moreover this can be done without diminishing the importance of the great challenge that the legal and policing authorities have to face in Israel in their attempts to moderate the rising violence in the region.

More than ever governmental, civil and military bodies are now very interested in, and concerned about, the grouping of youths who have become fundamentalist and who, as we are now witnessing today, have in some cases turned to terror practices against ethnic groups or nations. The case of the youth in the Judea and Samaria regions, especially because of the manifestation of their group violence in a constantly tense environment, can reveal more than we see at first glance and can shed light on the troubling phenomenon of the growth of fundamentalism in youth from a general point of view. This work intends to create some "order" in the presentation of the phenomenon and to draw clear boundaries around the youth gangs that are both intriguing and worrying. The picture presented by the local and international media, on the one hand, presents chaos but, on the other, shows a homogeneous picture of the actors on this stage. The research presented here suggests that the opposite is the case and that the stage itself contains a wide range of actors, among which, like the central theatrical star actor, we find the gang of Hilltop Youth.

On the periphery of the settlements Sussia and Beit Yatir in the South Mount Hebron region I encountered groups of youths who were spending their days working at raising sheep and goats on the farms. The youths, who are the subject of this study, come to this wild region of South Mount Hebron and, in the farms—which are not defined as official frameworks for rehabilitation and education—they receive personal attention as well as employment and economic support. Through working in pasture grazing, agriculture and a range of maintenance jobs the youths construct a reality in the process of their adolescence through demonstrating their strength not only in local masochistic displays against the Palestinian environment but also, as can be seen when one looks more deeply, against the local Jewish settlers society. The tension created around the social groups expresses a struggle over the identity of the settlement project and the aspirations of each side to establish meaningfulness of the region.

These groups are called "Hilltop Youth" by Israeli society and very little has been written about them. It is very important to understand this subgroup in the context of Israeli society as such, and in the context of the Middle East in general, as a means of observing the political and diplomatic ramifications that might exist in relation to it. We have before us a study that is both interesting and intriguing during the making of which I joined one of these groups in order to try and understand the human, social and ideological environment that encompassed it in the tense and conflicted region in which it existed.

***In the major context, while writing about these rows, the human society, in general, was exposed to two more fundamentalism phenomenon, which has been bothering the society, as we focus from the viewpoint of the Hilltop Youth.

The first phenomenon got its nickname from Israeli media as the "Lone Intifada" or Wave of Terror,[1] and represented the terrorist attacks by youth and young people against Israeli civilians. Between September 2015 and October 2016, 450 people were injured and forty were killed in hundreds of attacks. A single piece of data surprised the security authorities; more than 33% of the terrorists were below the age of sixteen. The rest belonged to ages between seventeen and late twenties. The average age was around twenty-one.[2] They were all young. Through online social network such as Facebook, the youth presented a mature ideological process on their private "walls" as pre-action.

The second youth fundamentalism phenomenon was breaking into our lives while the previous phenomenon was taking place, and consisted of European youth who chose to join the ISIS army forces in the fighting fields of Syria and Iraq, among other places. They are taking part in terrorism attacks back home and in Europe (Neubronner & Ramakrishna, 2017). The research shows different causes that became motivations for action—high sensitivity to the social

environment, family conflict, adolescence and masculinity. While doing field-work at the hills of Judah and Hebron, I was amazed to see a sixteen-year-old taking care of hundreds of sheep, and having an afternoon fight with an old Palestinian shepherd. I was astonished on seeing increasing number of youths coming to the frontier looking for a new kind of adolescence. In between my research,[3] I would never have imagined that two fundamentalism groups would show up, and be present very close at hand, at least at first glance. In those two cases we can notice three distinguishing characteristics:

1. The social enthusiasm motivated by young people. 2. Their belief in and efforts to make a social change. 3. Last but not the least is that their main motivation came from personality development, adolescence process and identity formation. The last characteristic might lead us—social researchers, education teams, policy makers—to light up the thinking to reduce this phenomenon. In other words, the three different groups present the same hidden meaning. These social movements have been built not only on ideology, but also by a collection of marginal youth who decided to turn off from their past social life with family and friends. That is to say, the ideology here is only a framework, which presents a value system with hidden deeper reasons that are far from obvious to society. I will expand on this point of view in the next chapters.

But, despite all the above, there is one point that makes it so special and unique when we try to read the Hilltop Youth groups story. As we shall see, I have not found any leader or any signs of one. The opposite is the truth—the youth prefer to stay remoteness from austerity as rabies, or any social guides. They express resistance against the older, veteran generation. I have never found any spontaneous or official organization which propagates ideology. This fact is a way different from the data which came from ISIS youth and the youth intifada at Israel. In most cases, according to researchers and media,[4] the youth have been socialized—by hidden or open resources—to take part in the resistance. In that point, my research subjects became hard to understand. Without leaders, or an officially movement behind them, they design their ideology, and fills it up with rival atmosphere, and left us many questions to discover.

The findings that are revealed are surprising and new and through them one will able to read about their personal, social and ideological story. This work provides the reader with a picture of their profile and an answer to the very disturbing question; "*Who Are the Hilltop Youth?*" By adopting an ethnographic approach combined with a lot of innovation with the research subjects in my attempts to get closer to the youths I finally succeeded in establishing a trusting relationship despite the charged and complex, tense social climate in the region and thus the study before us is an important document that tells of another chapter in the history of the settlement project.

This work is based upon intensive field research carried out from 2008–2013 and its purpose is to provide new knowledge about the settlers' society. This society has known many ups and downs, especially during the last decade, and the appearance of the Hilltop Youth gangs in the vacuum that was created during the crisis period that the settlers' society went through has led to many social, political and cultural changes. The region, which is anyway filled with tension, is presented here as being concerned about internal tensions and the lack of harmony and unity it was perceived to have had in the past. Because of this the reader can find new information and many revelations relating to the riddle of the Hilltop youth about what has been written up till now about the phenomenon in the context of the history of the settler project from a macro point of view of both the socio-historical aspects of the settlers' society and the local point of view.

I am grateful to the youths who, in their kind, lovely and pure naiveté, were prepared to allow me to share their world and become close to them and, out of a true feeling of intimacy and closeness that developed between researcher and researchee, revealed their thoughts, feelings and passions to me. Despite the great anger that I more than once felt toward them together with criticism and ethical dilemmas, which I shall later discuss, I spent days and nights experiencing caring and open empathy.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The first chapter presents the case study, the place and people, as well as the research questions and claims. As this book is based on anthropological research, I will provide examples of things that took place on my journey into the fieldwork and while doing it. Using anthropological tools, which have included an intensive stay in the research field and the collection of data by way of close observations, interviews and conversations, I will discuss problematic ethical situations into which I became involved during my stay in those conflict areas. In chapter 2, I will show how frontier spaces can be seen from a point of view which differentiates between borders and frontiers in ways other than the demarcation of political limits in which there exists the mechanical creation of a frontier region in a space which has heretofore been considered to be empty, vague and shapeless or without an identity in order to achieve control of such a space in future days. This chapter also presents a discussion on the rebellion of youth and the social protest against the older generation as a dynamic process that might instruct us about the changes the community of settlers and the settlements are going through. Chapter 3 presents the daily life routine of the *Hilltop Youth* and shows how the teenagers abandoned social frameworks such as family and school and

how, in their search for another future, have found themselves on the South Mount Hebron farms in places which have provided them with shelter, food and a warm shoulder. The exposure of these young people to the tensions of a politically and nationally charged space seen through the prism of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict surrounding them is what has motivated the development of the teenagers' subcultures from the ideological and practical point of view.

NOTES

1. See: http://www.dailynews.com/general-news/20151019/latest-violence-in-israel-and-palestine-marked-by-lone-wolf-attacks.

2. Benoist, Chloe (October 4, 2016). "Death in numbers: A year of violence in the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel." *Ma'an News Agency*. Retrieved 10 October 2016.

3. Friedman, S. (2015) Hilltop youth: political-anthropological research in the hills of Judea and Samaria. *Israel Affairs* 21(3), 391–407.

4. Gili Cohen, 'Shin Bet: Feelings of Discrimination Driving Palestinian Youth Toward Terror,' Haaretz November 11, 2015.

Chapter 1

The Hilltop Youth

Who, What, Where?

THE FIELD AND THE ACTORS

**The Settlements: Susya, Yatir and the Hilltop Outpost
Mitspeh Yair.**

In the late 1970s and early 1980s a few communities meant to be agricultural settlements were established in the South Mount Hebron region, the first of which was Beit Yatir ("Yatir") which was founded in 1979 by Mercaz HaRav[1] Yeshiva graduates. Currently this settlement of a hundred families is designated as a shared settlement community that acts as a cooperative which produces dairy products and wine for export and maintains vineyards and other agricultural branches. A religious pre-army preparatory course, which was established in 1991, not only attracts many young people who are both studying and preparing themselves for their army service but also other young people who find it valuable to spend their spare time forming social contacts that they develop with the preparatory course students.

The Susiya settlement, consisting of 150 families (approximately 1,000 people), was founded in 1983 by an ex-Nahal[2] group in conjunction with Mercaz HaRav students who wished to establish a working settlement. The settlement is surrounded by a large area of vineyards, olive groves and other projects that include beehive and honey production, greenhouses for the production of plants and flowers and some private businesses. Most of the settlers are from middle-class families supported by salaried members and professionals, some of whom work in Beer Sheba (230,000 people) which is the closest big city (25 minutes by car).

In 1997 a high school yeshiva was opened, which was defined and characterized by its founders as an "environmental" yeshiva, whose orientation was

1

Figure 1.1   Israel and the Palestine Teritories. *Source*: iStock.com/PeterHermesFurian.
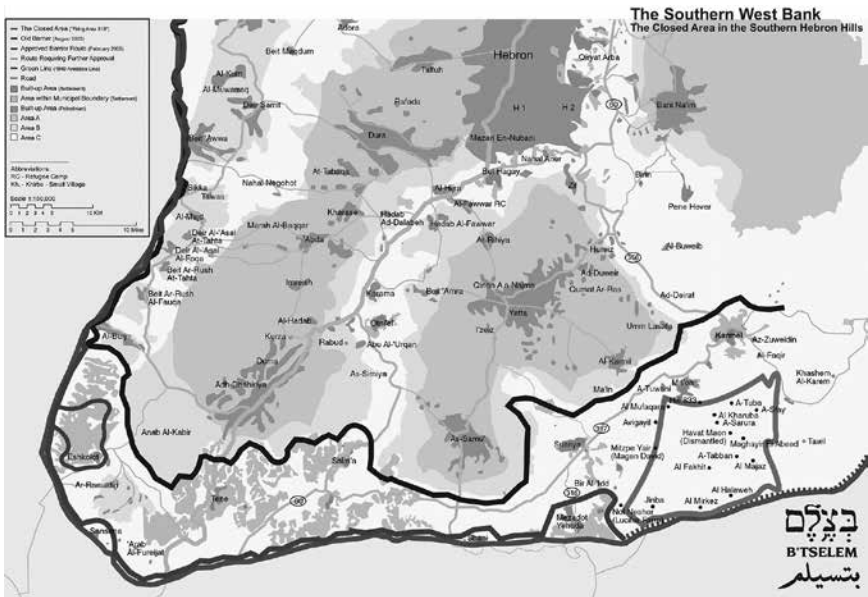
Figure 1.2 The Southern West Bank and Susya Region. *Source*: © 2017 B'Tselem, The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories.

toward the values of nature and ecology. The institution was perceived by the religious-Zionist society as something that also provided an opportunity for young people who had not found their way in the classical urban religious frameworks. Some of these youths from the school would sometimes join their friends on the hilltops for nighttime activities in the region and so are also the subjects of research.

The settlements under discussion present a classical conservative right-wing Zionist ideology that includes the spiritual messianic concepts of redeeming the nation through the redemption of the Holy Land. From their point of view violence is forbidden against anyone—Jewish or Muslim—and, compared to other settlements in the area such as *Bat -ayin*[3] and the *Maon*[4] farm, the Yateer and Susya settlements should be seen as relatively mainstream calm communities with no fundamentalist practices.

In the region there are a few Palestinian villages containing approximately 500 people, including Bir-al-Eid, Beir al Ghawanmeh, Tawamin and Khallet Susya, between the area of north Yateer and south-south/north west of Susya. The villagers work as shepherds, in the olive groves and in other agricultural jobs.[5]

The settlement on the Mitspeh Yair outpost was established on the hill bearing its name in 2002 as part of the Magen David farm that had been operating there since 1999. There are thirteen families working in agriculture

who are living in the settlement at the moment that is linked to the Susya settlement. They take part of the social everyday life of Susya. The name of the settlement was given in the memory of Yair Har Sinai who was murdered in 2001. The fact that the settlement was established next to the Magen David farm caused tension between those who held the idea of establishing settlements in the pasture grazing areas and those who supported farming in these areas.

The Magen David, Har Sinai and Lucifer farms

The Magen David farm is further away from the Susia settlement, located on a hilltop near the Mitspeh Yair outpost. The farm was established in 1999 and specializes in raising sheep and goats and crops. For the last fifteen years it has been run by a Jewish man, who is in his forties today, who emigrated from Germany to Israel twenty years ago and, without planning it or so he claims, has collected young people around him who want to work on his farm. Depending on the needs of the farm, there are usually two to four youths working there but sometimes there is only one working there, while the others look for casual work in the area. The Har Sinai farm, which was established in1999,

Figure 1.3   The Magen David Farm: The Farmer House.

Figure 1.4   The Magen David Farm: The Farmer House.

is located on the outskirts of the Susia settlement and its founder, Yair Har Sinai, was murdered by terrorists while he was working as a shepherd near the Susia settlement. Today the farm is managed by Ophir, a young resident who employs several youths whenever he needs them—usually about three or four who work in maintenance of the farm. The Lucifer farm is located on a hilltop north of the Yatir settlement and is named after the Jordanian police station that operated during the period when the border with Israel existed there. One family was headed by Yaakov Talia, an immigrant from South Africa who came to Israel at the beginning of the 1980s and was killed in 2015 in a work accident on the farm. From time to time he did mechanized work for farmers in the district and employed youth for short periods of work on the farm. Other school-aged youths who overtly carry on a normative lifestyle gather together from the settlements in the region and join these working youth. They do not work on the farms and become part of the crowd that hang out together in their spare time. Altogether there are about fifteen to twenty youths between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one who live in the region and have contact with each other despite the fact that not all of them work on the farms.

In the routine life on the farm that includes different agricultural tasks, shepherding and regular maintenance of the animal pens and the irrigation

system in the orchard, the youths benefit not only from the farmer's support and sympathetic ear but also from their work mates. Their stay there becomes a kind of support group with rules of behavior and, through working physically, the youths internalize the basic values of living within a framework: commitment, responsibility and diligence. The tasks are allotted according to the experience of the worker and the shared decision made by him and the farmer the night before. The farmer explains what the task involves and how it should be carried out and the youth is free to work by himself the next day. Sometimes the youth ask not to work and if someone else can do their job the farmer agrees—after making a disciplinary comment that is aimed at balancing the hours of.

JOINING THE FARMS: THE SOCIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE

One of the most interesting and challenging components of the phenomenon of the youth groups from the hilltops of South Mount Hebron is the way the youths find their way to these open spaces. These conflict areas attract different types of youth and provide them with a stage upon which they can express their ideas. I found that a large number of the youths who come to the region talk about several years of wandering after having left their parents' homes until they reached Mount Hebron. They describe coming to the area as spontaneous and as part of a process of finding themselves. Their stay on the farms expresses a choice of stability and security through designating the place as "home."

Social and Familial Contact

It is possible to divide the youth groups in the South Mount Hebron region into two groups—settlers and city dwellers. The settlers are the second generation from the settlements in Judea and Samaria, and some who are studying toward a partial or full matriculation certificate (depending on the school administration's decision and the wishes of the youths themselves) within the framework of the organization called "Menifa[6]—for the prevention of dropping out of school" and the studies take place in the community settlement of Maon. Joining this group are the youth from settlements in the area who are studying in the high school yeshiva at Susia settlement and who spend their official, and nonofficial, spare time with one of the youth gangs. These youth from the settlements, when they do not stay to sleep the night in a building that has been constructed on the hilltop, come back to their parents' home each night or early morning after hanging out with their friends.

In contrast, the group of city dwellers is made up of young people from the central Israel, who grew up in nationalist-Zionist families and came to the region in the middle or toward the end of their high school studies. Most of these youths come from middle-class families in Israel with parents working as salaried employees or as professionals. The youths have decided to leave their homes because of personal or social distress often after fighting with their parents and are on a journey of self-discovery. The youth do not earn any money from their work on the farms and, as a result, some of them look for casual work to earn some pocket money. In many cases there is economic support from their parents despite the youths' separation from the family. They use their pocket money to buy cigarettes and sometimes alcohol, as well as for travelling and hobbies such as music and excursions.

Attitudes Toward Religion

About two-thirds of the youths hold on to religion symbolically, although they do not carry out many of the religious practices. In such cases the source of the severance from the family is about their attitude toward religion. The adolescent does not succeed in satisfying the expectations and religious demands made of them and the two sides come to an impasse in which the youth gets to a point where there is severance from his home and family. The youth display vagueness in the way they relate to the way they see religion but not one of them presents themselves as being "non-religious" even though they do not wear skullcaps on their heads. Some youths who have left ultra-orthodox homes arrive in unconventional ways at the farms. Since the wandering youths from the different religious streams get to the same urban centers as the ultra-orthodox youths who find themselves in the streets, they are probably exposed to the possibilities that others tell them about and which are mainly based upon the stories told by their friends.

THE ROUTINE OF WORK AND FREE TIME ON THE FARMS

When a youth comes to the farm it is usually because of some other youth in the area. The rumor about being able to live on the farm spreads and it is rare to find anybody who comes to the farm alone unaccompanied by some other youth who is living in the area. After having an introductory discussion about the rules of behavior in the house and on the farm the youth is expected to take part in working on the farm and be available to do whatever chores the farmer demand. After a while the youths learn to carry out the various tasks on the farm. Sometimes one of them will choose to deal with some specific task because of a real connection to the work or because of a desire to acquire

the skills involved in it so that he can specialize in it in the future. Jobs like shepherding, maintenance work on the farm and working in the fields are routine activities which generally end a little before sunset. Sometimes, there are fewer jobs to do on the farm but this depends on how many people are there and, in such cases, the youth is permitted to do what he wants to. The farmers encourage the youths to also find work outside the farm and to try and balance between work on the farm and paid casual work that provides them with pocket money that the youth can use. When the work the boys have to do is over they are allowed to go out and meet friends and use their leisure time in doing anything they want. The youth established the practice of using this window of free time to "settle" in the surrounding hilltops and their activities are mainly concentrated around political events that have recently taken place. There will always be a link between the hilltop activities and political statements made by the prime minister, the defense minister, or some other important personality, any terrorist attack, an evacuation, or even just a rumor about the evacuation of an unauthorized questionable settlement in the area. The youths organize their activity very quickly, taking only a few minutes, and find their way toward the goal mainly by foot. Sometimes the youths manage to rustle up a vehicle from one of the local youth and they ferry people and equipment to the designated site. Since the activity takes place during the night, clashes between the youths and the army or police in the area are rare and it seems that the forces turn a blind eye to what is being done under their noses. In the morning the youths disperse and go back to what they had previously been doing. The "Menifa" youths go back to their learning frameworks and the farm youths go back to work. In both cases there are sometimes conflicts between the youths and the adults who are authority figures. The youths come back tired to their work routines or studies and try to "steal" several hours of sleep under the watchful eyes of those responsible for them. In most cases the conflicts end with a warning or a discussion to clear things up. Events like these are routine, but obviously hanging around together and smoking from a hookah, or around a campfire with coffee are more regular as ways of spending the evening.

SOCIALIZATION AND LEADERSHIP

Surprisingly one can argue that the youths are motivated by the understanding of an internal ideology that does not come directly from any specific authority figure at the space. In other words, despite the expectation of meeting some kind of leader who directs the youths toward activism, there is no organized group with a hierarchy and a clear educational leader. The youths clarify things among themselves concerning their insights about the region and their

way of reacting to the events taking place in it through constant negotiations with the region and its people. Beyond the above, however, it is worth noting two factors that might act as significant parts of a process of socialization for the youths.

The Farmers

In their naturally accepting, unprejudiced ways of being adult authority figures, the farmers make it possible for the youths to express their personalities through conversations that are carried on during their work or after it. The farmers are "fed up" with the settlers' society and express their political and social ideas bluntly. It has been said here that the farmers have declared that they have no intention to "educate" the youths but, together with this, they do aspire to help them to learn how to behave in society and how to clarify their ideological views for themselves. As a result it is not surprising that the youths completely support the attitudes of the farmers and it sometimes seems as if they are their emissaries in the area. The night activities of the youths are looked at ambivalently by the farmers because, on the one hand, they get a tired-out youth who slacks off work on the farm the next day and, on the other, they are happy to see something that has values motivating them—something that attests to some progress and positive growing up in matters concerning understanding and thinking about abstract ideas.

Rabbis

In most cases, as described above, the youths are not officially connected to any Torah institute and do not maintain any connection with any rabbi or spiritual teacher who might have some authority for them. Together with this I found that what is published in the Torah portions in the weekly commentary magazines, that are distributed in the synagogues every Saturday night, and on the internet sites that the youths sometimes browse have become a popular subject of discussion at their social meetings. In these texts support for, or criticism of, the activities of the Hilltop Youth are revealed and they find encouragement and support for their protest activities. Both the settlers' society and the media view figures such as Rabbi Yitshak Ginzburg and Rabbi Eliezer Melamed as the two who show the way for the Hilltop Youth, and this is a result of their publications that encourage attacks upon Palestinians.[7] The ideas rely upon the support of Rabbi Ginzburg for the murder of those praying in Hebron by Baruch Goldstein,[8] and other publications that call for the transfer of Arabs and express opposition to Arab citizens of the state of Israel.[9] His tenure as president of the "Od Yosef Hai" (Joseph still lives) Yeshiva in the settlement of Yizhar that symbolizes the hard core of the

most extreme settlers in Samaria makes it easier to intuitively perceive him to be connected with the radical factors in Judea and Samaria. Rabbi Eliezer Melamed has more than once also been quoted as someone who is rumored to support the activities of the Hilltop Youth.[10]

The findings of my study have revealed that there is no validity to these assumptions that have been denied by both sides. The youths I discussed this with disassociated themselves from any connection to both Ginzburg and Melamed, and the rabbis, when they were asked about their positions, also disassociated themselves from any connection.

NOTES

1. Mercaz HaRav Kook ("The Rav Kook Center") is a national-religious yeshiva in Jerusalem, Israel, founded in 1924 by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook. It has become the most prominent religious-Zionist yeshiva in the world and is closely identified with Rav Kook's teaching.

2. Nahal (acronym of Noar Halutzi Lohem,: Fighting Pioneer Youth) refers to an Israel Defense Forces program that combines military service and the establishment of agricultural settlements, often in peripheral areas.

3. Bat Ayin is an Israeli settlement in Gush Etzion, northeast from Hebron since 1989. It contains roughly 200 Jewish families consisting mainly of "Ba'alei T'shuva," Jews who have became religious orthodox after a secular way of life.

4. Ma'on is an Israeli settlement in the Judean Hills of the West Bank, located south of Hebron. It contains roughly 60 Jewish families. In the late 1990s, Palestinians were frequently attacked by hostile settlers from the Ma'on outpost around. (http://www.btselem.org/hebrew/south_hebron_hills).

5. For more information visit http://www.btselem.org.

6. "Menifa—A force for life" is an organization that has existed since 2004 as an interventionist program to prevent young people at risk from dropping out of school. The organization works in full cooperation with the Ministry of Education and other factors (from the organization's internet site at /http://www.menifa.org.il).

7. Nadav Shragai, "The new policy of the settlers: 'Price Tag' for every evacuation by the army." In the Haaretz website: http://haaretz.co.il/misc/1.352560.

8. See his paper: "Baruch Hagever (Baruch the man)"—a pamphlet that explains the significance of the slaughter carried out by Baruch Goldstein according to the principles of Jewish law and the Kabbalah.

9. From Rabbi Ginzburgh's blog http://haravginsburgh.com/2011/05/16/dealing-with-enemies/: The Holy One, blessed be his name, the king, loves the spirit of the youth of the People of Israel. The youth of Israel fight against the different temptations of the badness of fighting the Holy One and are even ready to give up their lives for the Holy One. The people of Israel need strong youth led by an adult leadership.

10. "It has become clear that the policy of 'Price Tag' is most efficient, and the security services are doing everything to destroy it. In order to do this they spread

false stories about the settlers (…), so now we have to praise the precious Hilltop Youth who devote themselves to the settling of the country and the flowering of the wilderness." Eliezer Melamed, "To Praise and Not to Condemn," in Sheva, 13/11/2008. "The rabbi expressed support for the widespread demonstrations at the junctions through committees of settlers whose role was to keep as many of the large number of armed forces as possible busy, but also said that he had never expressed support for harming individuals, Arabs or their property." Rabbi Eliezer Melamed from his internet site "Yeshiva" in answer to a question about harming Arabs as part of "Price Tag," 8/3/2011.

Chapter 2

Research in a Conflict Zone

Moral and Ethical Thoughts in Fieldwork

Between October 2007 and February 2008 I carried out a pilot study on a farm which included weekly half-day visits. I tried to vary things and visit at different times of the day, so I went to the farm twice in winter in the late morning and stayed until sunset when the agricultural work ended and the youths came back to both the house and their private domains. I understood that it was impossible to forecast how efficient and productive my visits would be, and so I soon found myself varying things and appearing at the farm in the afternoons as well so that I could spend the evening and early nighttime with them, talking and getting to know them. At this stage of the research I coordinated my visits to the research field with visits to the library at the Ben-Gurion University. During this period the conversations and observations I carried out formed the background to the development of my research proposal. Through making these visits and having telephone conversations with the research subjects, I tried to keep up contact with them while I was preparing my proposal before the beginning of the intensive field work. The concentrated and essential fieldwork in which most of the material was collected continued for a year beginning in the middle of 2009. During this period I stayed at the farm three days a week, and slept in the Magen David farm on the Mitspeh Yair outpost. All discussions and observations were recorded on a small recording machine and the content was transferred to a computer when I returned home.

Ethnography is the product of communication between the researcher and his research subjects in which the research subjects are described via the subjective observations of the researcher (Clifford, 1986). Thus, during the process of collecting information, participant observations and in depth interviews I tried to be conscious of my presence in the work field and of my influence upon the specific events and different interactions. With the help of

the "participant observation" method I succeeded in establishing close rela-
tions with research subjects and, at times, I actually felt like one of them and
my "otherness" almost completely disappeared. Rabinovitch writes: "Every
interpreter who writes from 'positionality' has a nationalist background, a
personal situation, a political position, a gender identity, a historical situa-
tion, a class status, and more which become an inseparable part of his claims"
(Rabinovitch, 1996: 8).

In the next section I will try to deal with the kind of situations I found
myself in during the research, and will try to answer the question of how my
position in the research field, together with the connections I had with the
research subjects, was part of the process of influencing the research.

One more information that I have found that was also widespread was the
popular literature such as magazines that deal with the weekly Torah portion.
Those papers are distributed in the synagogues dealing with current events
which are published by religious Zionists, public figures and rabbis. The texts
attest to the religious-Zionist's society's preoccupation with its youth and the
period of change that the society is faced with.

CONTACTS WITH THE RESEARCH SUBJECTS

During the research I made contact with about twenty young people with
whom I had discussions and became part of their routine of activities and
free time. The quality of the connection I succeeded in building with each of
the youths was obviously different and noteworthy during the time of data
collection and, of course, later on when I was processing the knowledge and
insights derived from the research. Wulff (1995), in the study of youths that
she carried out in London, describes how her young appearance helped her
to connect and socialize with the youths in the research field. Obtaining the
information at the time she joined up with the street gangs was an easy, free-
flowing process for her. Thus, it is clear that an older researcher, who does
not look young, can also find encounters with adolescents to be beneficial and
cause them to open up to him and discuss things. There is no doubt that my
own youthful appearance helped me to get closer to the youths and, with my
long hair and pony tail and a small skullcap on my head, perhaps they felt that
I was more familiar than alien to them especially when I looked more like a
young Hilltop Youth than a settled family man.

In addition to my getting to know the youths, I also made a connection
with three farmers who had contact with the youths in the region. Each of
the farmers represented a wide-ranging and creative world of practices that
helped him deal with the challenges he had to face. Together with this, how-
ever, their attitudes were found to be identical in both social and educational

contexts in two points: with the youths and with the settlers. In addition the three farmers were three very different people and my success in communicating with the three of them and listening to their stories can be felt in the texts that are presented in the research. It is especially worth noting the deep and honest connection I developed with Yohanan Sharret, the farmer from the Magen David farm. Perhaps this was due to the fact that he was very open and always made his home available to me, leading to the connection which may otherwise have been undermined by the researcher-researchee dichotomy. After he married and had children I brought him presents and, later on, was given a present by him to celebrate the birth of my first daughter and we often found ourselves in personal conversations that had nothing to do with the questions raised in this study. The trust Yohanan had in me at the beginning of my research work helped a lot with my entry into the complex and challenging field of researching the Hilltop Youth gang.

Because of the range of reactions by the research subjects to my appearance in the region as a researcher from academia, it is important to note that my attempts to make contact with the research subjects proved to be no simple experience. In contrast to the study carried out on the Hilltop Youth—that touched upon the farm routine and the agreement to carry them out in both public places and more private ones—which were almost immediately agreed upon with hardly any reservations, it was difficult to get any agreement from the settlers in the region to carry out interviews. I assume the polite refusal that I received more than once arose mainly from the suspicion that people had about the official nature of the interviews. Another reason that might explain the lack of interest in my research idea was the atmosphere and mood that developed in the settlements at that time regarding the withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, from Amona in 2006 and from Megron in 2010. I think this state of mind played a significant role in the reluctance the settlers had about being involved in the idea of carrying out an academic study in their area.

Academia, and my being a part of it, was something that represented the secular left and it located me in the position of being alien and not a supporter of the settlers and the settlements. Despite the fact that I wore a skullcap which, however, was a little smaller in size than the typical ones the settlers wore, there were many more who refused my request to interview them than those who responded positively. Sometimes people agreed to be interviewed but, when the appointed time came, they cancelled the meeting. In everything that involved with the representatives from the regional council, and especially the local secretariat of the Susiya settlement, the problem was much more severe. In the battle between the different sides the fact that most of my time in the research field was spent in the farms where I accompanied the youths and the farmers in their daily routines and even slept there, clearly placed me on the side of the farmers and the youths, as rivals of the settlers,

the local council and its secretariat. I carried out two brief official discussions with representatives of the authorities and was met with a refusal to have additional discussions, so I stopped trying to set up additional meetings with them.

Together with this it is important to relate the clear interest the farmers had in cooperating with external factors in general, especially with factors that they perceived to be antiestablishment. In regard to the farmers' attitude toward me, I found myself to be in a place that was welcoming and comfortable. The farmers willingly allowed me to provide them with a platform as research subjects and it is possible to assume that they saw me as a means to advance their political and social interests.

The interaction with the youths was positive and smooth from the outset. Except for their legitimate suspicions about my "true" identity, a suspicion that lasted about two months (and, as will be explained further on, which I inadvertently understood to be, from their point of view, justified), the meetings were characterized by a lack of obstacles, limitations and the concealment of information and by the research subjects' strong desire to express themselves.

"IT'S ALL RIGHT BROTHER. HE'S ONE OF OURS": EXPERIENCES IN THE RESEARCH FIELD

In one of my first visits to the research field, after having already received the farmers' permission to wander around the farmland and after having succeeded to get to know several of the youths, Shlomi, a youth aged 17, invited me to join him in grazing in the afternoon. I was of course happy about the invitation and the trust he had demonstrated in me and, in the late afternoon, I found myself wandering about the arid hilltops next to a youngster who was shouting and dancing among the sheep and goats to get them to go in the direction he wanted. After complicatedly skipping around the giant boulders and climbing up steep hillsides, we walked by "Benny's tented camp" which was a shaded space under canvas in which there was an improvised kitchen in one corner consisting of a tap connected to a giant water tank, a gas burner and a big table upon which there were several blackened frying pans. Opposite in the sleeping space, which was a three-sided tent with plenty of mattresses spread all over the ground, sat a group of four youths staring at the odd couple that had appeared before them—Shlomi with his sheep dogs and me. Shlomi ignored my presence and went to the kitchen to prepare himself a glass of raspberry cordial. When he turned around to face the group of youths with the drink in his hand they expressed their curiosity about who I was. He demonstratively dismissed their suspicions by looking at me and loudly

declaring: "It's all right brother. He's one of us. Trust me; I'm telling you there is nothing to worry about." One of the youths took Shlomi a couple of meters aside and tried to speak to him relatively quietly. I didn't succeed in hearing what they said to each other but understood from what was happening that I was the focus of their conversation which quickly involved all five of them. All of a sudden someone shouted loudly: "What's the matter with you, you screw-up? What if he's a Shabaknik? (a security agent). Is there a short-age of people here? You tell me! What, do I need this mess?" Shlomi tried to dispel the suspicions of the group and explained: "Yohanan knows him. He's a friend of Yohanan's and I am telling you not to worry."

The event took about two minutes which seemed like forever to me. Their ignoring me and passing judgment was not an easy experience and it undermined my feeling of confidence as a researcher facing his research subjects. Questions about the balance of power in the field and doubts about the researcher ability to establish the knowledge went through my mind as I tried to accept the rejection I was now facing. Bilu (1998) describes the loss of his control over managing the knowledge he had gained in the research fields and the possibility that the research subjects might themselves fashion the knowledge for the researcher. In my meeting with the youths their suspicions about my true identity managed to weaken my control and abilities in the research. After a while their suspicions diminished and their acceptance of me became better.

POSITIONING IN THE RESEARCH FIELD

During my adolescence I was never exposed to the question of the settlements and, even though I grew up and was educated in the state-religious system, in an environment that educated us toward Jewish religious-nationalist values in the family, school and the religious-Zionist youth movement, I do not feel any ideological or religious attachment to the settlement ideology. Apart from taking part in youth movement activities that called upon the government not to give back the Golan Heights (1993–1995), this particular political-social issue has been absent from my life. My army service in an elite unit also distanced me from this arena since all my army period was spent in the north of Israel on the Lebanese border (1996–1999). This geographic distance prevented me from dealing with this problematic subject and, in hindsight, I understand that, as a result, in my adult years I also remained distant in my approach from the people who represented the settlement project in the terri-tories. Thus, from an ideological point of view, I was never close to the *Gush Emunim* movement. Together with this, it is important for me to note that, despite the ideological distance that I demonstrated during the years in which

I was gathering the information, when I was intimately experiencing the struggles the research subjects were going through in the situation into which they had become involved, I did develop a feeling of connection and obligation toward the political situation of the farmers and the youths as well as a desire to give something of myself to the community I was closely researching. My way of helping the community being studied was to try to "tell its story." Hertzfeld writes the following about the connection between the researcher and his research subjects: "What you make of your village reflects a good deal of what the villagers have made of you." (Herzfeld, 1983:158). He argues that there is a power in the field that is not necessarily in the hands of the researcher since the people in the field possess knowledge and can direct him/her toward specific conclusions that the researcher will eventually write about. At one stage I felt I was a reflection of what my research subjects "were doing" to me. Their perceptions of me were an integral part of my perceptions of them and of the space they wanted to connect themselves with. I was the cultural product of the people I encountered in the field and, in this way, I adopted for myself the role of "agent of…" for those taking part in the research who asked me to accept it in their attempts to develop public favor and support which they considered to be a "weapon" in their struggle for staying on ground while engaged in legal conflict with the local council. I found myself forwarding emails for distribution to friends such as letters that came from the postboxes of the youths and farmers in their attempts to mobilize support from the wider public, letters written by youths expressing their support for the farm. I adopted a clear position and so became a member of my research group.

ANTROPOLOGIST OR A SHBAK AGENT?
MORAL DILEMMAS

The Role of Researcher-Participant, Law-Breaker And Witness To Violent Events

My attachment to the research subjects created moral and ethical dilemmas that researchers sometimes have to face when they are in the research field. It is difficult to describe the mental conflicts that a researcher faces when he is in the research field, spiritually far away from home and, not infrequently, physically as well. Then there is the daily struggle with accepting and listening to other people, the obligations of the scientific, professional code of behavior that is shown to the research subjects and their faithful representation at the same time as standing by people whose ideology causes constant tension during the research. The honesty of the research subjects, together

with their complete acceptance of me as a researcher who is seeking to peep into their world, obliged me to demonstrate solidarity and support for their practices even when they were not agreeable and against what I believed in. Gideon Aran (1987), in the first ethnographic study carried out in Israel on the settlers, describes how, during the field work, he took part in violent activist protest demonstrations against both local Arabs and security bodies such as the police and the army, together with his research subjects. In the process of carrying out my research I was exposed to the protest activities of the Hilltop Youth and found myself participating in this activity as part of my efforts to gather information. At times I found myself to be part of deeds and in situations that conflicted with my beliefs and judgment, and my silence about these situations sometimes caused me personal discomfort and confusion. At times I found myself witnessing human dignity being maltreated, verbal and physical violence and activities that involved the infringement of law and order. Sometimes the events that I was witness to, or heard stories about, appeared marginal to me when compared with unconnected violent cases that were reported upon by the media at the same time or those that were described by Aran in his study. Without going into a discussion about the goals of the settlers, the way they acted and the force demonstrated, I need to say that I did see violence and aggression during all the protest activities and acts of social antagonism carried out by the Hilltop Youth. Science does not prepare the researcher for exposure to violent acts and the question of whether I should remain in the space during such moments occurred to me more than once.

In this way I was a party to quarrels that took place between Israeli and Arab shepherds which on a number of occasions developed into physical violence. On other occasions it was enough just to listen to the mutual cursing between the hawks in order to feel discomfort and repugnance, and one should know that I could only understand what was being said in Hebrew. I was present at a clandestine settlement operation on a hilltop close to the farm and, in one case, I even helped build the temporary dwellings on another hilltop. In several other incidents in which there was physical and verbal violence between the farmers and the Palestinians I was in the middle attempting to separate the sides and making a great effort not to take sides with either of them. For all the moral dilemmas as shown above, it is must be said clearly that as an "adult in place," who was wearing also the hat of an academic researcher, I was deeply uncomfortable with the youth violence. While attempting to observe the anecdotes from an academician's point of view, to explore a way of understanding the meanings of this, I could never accept their violent practices and could not condone their behavior. I was not part of them when the violence had erupted, but as I was present above, in some acts, I tried to quiet down the youth.

Anthropological Fieldwork as an Agent of the Jewish Security Services

Surprisingly, a telephone call that I received during those days helped me to better understand how high the level of my exposure was to contents that arose out of my presence in the politically sensitive and tense region. On the other end of the line, a man called Avishai identified himself as someone who worked in the Ministry of Defense and asked to meet with me. Because of my surprise at the call I did not succeed in directing my questions very well, and my requests to know how he had got to know of me were repeatedly rejected. After my curiosity got the better of me I agreed to meet him in the cafeteria at the Ben-Gurion University. The goal of the meeting was to recruit me as an informer about the activities of law-breakers to the Jewish Department of the Shabak in the Ministry of Defense and to offer help in getting my research published in the Defense Ministry's publications. The meeting lasted about twenty minutes and, when it ended, we politely parted but not before he shoved his telephone number into my pants pocket.

The fascinating and unusual meeting with someone from the Shabak raised concerns for me about my wandering about in the region. Firstly, I was concerned that the youths would lose confidence in my being in their presence and would continue to suspect me of being an undercover agent who was trying to trap them for the authorities. Another event like the event described above took place later on in my research when, in the middle of 2010, an investigative program on the South Mount Hebron area was broadcast on Israeli television.[1] In the program the story of a young female who was working on the Har Sinai farm but who, in fact, was an actress sent there to investigate things was exposed. The program revealed extreme characteristics of the culture of the youths on the farms, and, when the program was broadcast, it created a furor and several of the farm people sued those who had created the program. This event made my position as a researcher even more difficult as well as weakening my credibility in the eyes of my research subjects. Several of the settlers were wary about talking to me and mentioned the events that took place because of the program. In addition to this, I had concerns about my involvement in illegal and immoral activities. My discussion with the man from the Shabak reminded me of the research carried out by Ruth Benedict (1946) during World War II, when she was asked to provide a social analysis of Japanese society for the American government and its army. For a few moments I wondered whether it wasn't my responsibility to help my country. I understood that I possessed knowledge that nobody apart from me had and that, perhaps, I should share it with the state authorities in order to prevent political and diplomatic conflicts. After some deliberation, my conscience and my feelings of being part of the research field and my

research subjects prevented me from accepting the state's offer and provide it with information about the criminal activities of the Hilltop Youth.

Ohnuki-Tierney (1984) claims that the anthropologist needs to keep some physical and mental distance between "himself" and the culture he is researching. She deals with the fear that, over time, the locals will sweep him along to another place and that he will continue to be more and more "like them." She describes the researcher as being in a process that he/she is, perhaps, not conscious of when being swept into the community being researched. On its part the community also fashions its insights for him, also unconsciously, as he becomes closer and closer to them.

When the youngster shouted out to his friends that they can trust me: "It's OK brother. He's one of us!" I felt that he was recognizing me as being identical to him, as belonging to his society. He felt comfortable in my company and close to me and expected me to behave according to the accepted norms of this society. This was the society's demand that I be like them.

On the one hand I felt that I was part of the society I was studying and which, in relation to certain things, I identified with—but, on the other hand I was not able to ignore the other cultural world that I brought with me to the field. The field, about which I had reservations, accepted me with open arms and, sometimes, I was part of it and looked and thought like it and, sometimes, I was against it and did not identify with it at all. Whenever I entered and left the field I always asked myself questions about how much I belonged or not to this society.

NOTE

1. For more information visit http://www.mako.co.il/mako-vod-keshet/under-cover-s2/VOD-8dfd6b784452821004.htm.

Chapter 3

At a Liminal Space and Stage
Theoretical Background

1. THE ROOTS AND HISTORY OF THE
SETTLEMENT PROJECT

It is possible to see the period of euphoria after the Six-Day War as an era that heralded the entry of the Gush Emunim movement onto the social map of Israel—and more since this movement became a major player in Israel's political arena during the first twenty years of its existence (Sprinzak, 1985; Newman, 1985). After the war the people in the movement felt great excitement about the new territories that had been conquered and they established their first settlement, Alon Shvut, in Gush Etsion in 1969. With the coming to power of the first Rabin government in 1974 the main settlement "campaigns" of Gush Emunim began in Judea and Samaria. The idea was to demand sovereignty over all this territory and, paradoxically, it was actually the trauma of the Yom Kippur War and the feelings of divisiveness that enveloped Israeli society that provided the movement with the need for change and the drive to establish these settlements (Sheleg, 200). During these years many of the movement's leaders were students in the "Merkaz Harav" yeshiva in Jerusalem and followers of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, the son of Rabbi Avraham Yitshak Hacohen Kook. The young people from Yamit, on the eve of their evacuation, were full of confidence and announced that, as told by their rabbi, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, the decision to retreat would not be carried out (Shafat, 1995, Ravitsky, 1997).

The first settlements, Alon Moreh and Efrat, were established by a small group of students during the period of the Begin government, which supported the establishment of the settlements beyond the "Green Line," while the settlements in the South Mount Hebron region were established in 1979. A small nucleus of graduates of the Mercaz Harav yeshiva and several Nahal groups established Beit Yatir, Maon and Susia.

At the end of the 1980s, with the outbreak of the "First Intifada" the settlers found themselves in a continuing dispute with their neighbors and made great efforts to preserve and display a firm position for the Jewish presence in face of continuing and repetitive acts of violence. From the 1980s onward, following the murderous events in Hebron of Baruch Goldstein and the murder of Prime Minister Yitshak Rabin by a young man identified with religious Zionism, the settlers realized that their image in Israeli society was that of a negative, violent and extremist society. (Harnoy, 1994).

The decade in which most of this research was carried out opened with riots in September 2000 when a visit made by Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount and the opening of the Western Wall tunnels led to the renewal of the Israeli-Palestine conflict and led to the outbreak of the "Second Intifada." In the summer of 2005 an event took place that can be seen as one of the most influential event in the history of the Gush Emunim movement. The Gaza Strip evacuation program of the Israeli government included the removal of twenty-two settlements from the area and the movement suffered great trauma, pain and grief over the loss of the settlements but, more than this, the feeling that the settlement project was falling apart (Feige, 2009).

During the same period an ideological rift could be seen among the settlers and their confidence in the values of settlement was shaken. This ideological vacuum was quickly filled by a new group of settlers that had a special "weird" appearance and was given the name "Hilltop Youth." These families of youth, together with many single ones—mostly second generation children of the founders of the settlements—set up illegal outpost settlements near the existing settlements on hilltops near them and, in this way, demonstrated their vigorous antiestablishment opposition to the policies of the government, the army and the police. One of the groups of settlers of this type which operated in the South Mount Hebron region plays a central role in the present research.

Radical Groups in Judea and Samaria and the Research on the Hilltop Youth

Today, more than in the past, one can find small groups of extremists on the margins of Gush Emunim that have found their place in different settlements and have even established illegal outpost settlements. Apart from the fundamentalist "Kach," which has been made illegal, a phenomenon of new religiosity has become more common with a kind of "new settler" who has found his spiritual home in the wild spaces of Judea and Samaria (Sheleg, 2000). The belief of these radical groups that the hastening of the "end of days" by the native born will lead to the precipitation of "divine" redemption as the completion of their actions, was, for the youths favorable grounds for developing a radical model that, apart from other things, encouraged the creation

of chaos and the incitement of crisis and war with their Arab neighbors as a way of hastening the coming of the "end of days" (Shwartz, 1999, 2001).

This kind of radicalism could be found among the new kind of settlers who appeared in the wild spaces of South Mount Hebron during the middle of the 1990s when the settlers in the Maon outpost were found to be wearing different clothes from those society had been familiar with for the settlers. In addition to this, their approach was more aggressive and violent toward the media people. Lots of young people joined up with these religious movements and radicalized the political and social attitudes toward the Arabs in South Mount Hebron and, of course, toward the state. During the last few years research has paid more attention to these youth groups that have become extremist groups that are a threat both to the settlers' movement, on the socio-political level by exerting a negative influence on their young people, and to Israeli society in general in the diplomatic context—by igniting the atmosphere in the place and by exacerbating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

There has been no scientific study carried out on the youth, and on the Hilltop Youth in particular, apart from the work done by the two researchers I will present anon and this makes any in depth discussion about the different contexts of the phenomenon, which deserves more research attention, more difficult. The anthropological research presented here can contribute a great deal to research carried out on the new social structure of the settlements in general and on the Hilltop Youth in particular.

In an exploratory research carried out among the settlers on the hilltops of Judea and Samaria, Kaniel (2004) makes the claim that the young settlers, who are often the next generation of the settlement founders, are developing different, more radical, forms of behavior than that of their parents and teachers. The religious fundamentalism and the partial to complete negation of the state establishment by the hilltop settlers are the result of that same seclusion and isolation that their parents created for them during the period of settlement establishment. This seclusion drove the young settlers toward developing feelings of independent thinking and the creation of a different, more extreme identity than that of the previous generation. Feige (2009) presents the young settlers and the Hilltop Youth as people who relate to their presence in the space as something that is obvious. My research will try to characterize the image of the "new settler," the "third generation" settler, and it shows that many of those who belong to the group of youths living on the hilltops are not second-generation settlers and have in no way adopted the settler ideology of any kind in the past. The culture of the Hilltop Youth, as can be seen in this work, actually develops out of the adolescents' getting to know the area and not from any earlier ideological assumptions. Over and above the definition of the youth gangs as a form of new settlement, however, I will try to examine how the Gush Emunim movement, those who belonged

to the founder generation, developed a special "type" of marginal youth and how their people perceive these youth. I will try to learn how, over and above their leaving the frameworks of normative society, the youths chose to express their opposition to the way society runs things.

The Terminology of the Hilltop Youth

Many myths have already managed to develop about the Hilltop Youth that include stereotypes and their belonging to categories that do not always correspond with the truth. This work, which is the first of its kind that uses anthropological fieldwork, manages to present an authentic and faithful description of the reality of this intriguing group. At the beginning of the research I expected to find a group of youths who were following in the footsteps of their parents who were the founders of the settlements. The name "Hilltop Youth" was given to this group openly during the period before the carrying out of the evacuation from Gaza in 2005 when we first witnessed the mass public appearance of youth in an organized protest against the evacuation process. During those years young people could be seen dressed in oriental clothes who were living in temporary dwellings on hilltops around the settlements (Feige, 2009). The appearance of these youths on remote hilltops in the spaces of Judea and Samaria provided the ratification for the name "Hilltop Youth." Later on in the research process, while I was carrying out discussions and observations, I understood how misleading this term was because it includes different kinds of young people of different ages who belong to different categories and so do not characterize one clear homogeneous group.

Two contemporary academic works have tried to draw characteristic lines for the image of the "Hilltop Youth" as we have been exposed to it through the mass media. Kaniel, from the Department of Education at Bar Ilan University, carried out a pilot study involving outposts on the hilltops of Samaria (Kaniel, 2004) and characterized this group's members as young people in their mid-twenties who established themselves in the outposts as members of a conformist-ideological movement that was continuing the settlement project of the founding generation. The outposts are hilltop settlements which mostly have an informal connection with the neighboring settlement from which they get electricity and water. Kaniel calls them "Hilltop Settlers" and claims that one can characterize them as young people who share common beliefs as well as an ordered ideology organization on the hilltops. The outpost, he claims, is different from the "hilltop" in that the members make up a united community that has a committee and representatives from the settlements just like a settlement community. According to Kaniel, the "hilltop" is a collection of individuals who are not officially organized and, in his study, he focuses on "hilltop settlers" and shows how they have

adopted a biblical style of clothing and a cultural lifestyle that expresses their connection with nature. Kaniel calls them "Biblical Sabras" alluding to the culture of Sabras during the days before the establishment of the state. In his book Feige claims that the use of the term "Hilltop Youth" refers to the young males who came in order to join the existing illegal outpost settlements on the hilltops (2009). In other words, they accepted the hilltop ideology before they even got to the place. In both cases the researchers agree about two important things; the first of which touches upon who the youths identify with and what their social origins are. According to Kaniel and Feige, they are the second generation of the settlers (Kaniel, 2004; Feige, 2009). The second thing arises out of the first since the youths are presented as being motivated by pure Zionist ideology. In the present study I discovered that both principles are not given expression by the Hilltop Youth of South Mount Hebron. Regarding the first principle which relates to the generation they belong to, I found that, except for a few individuals, all the youths who are active in the region are not second-generation settlers but young people who have come to the region from different places in Israel. The claim about planned organization based upon an ideology is also baseless and does not reflect this arena. The youths who come to South Mount Hebron come to the region in search of themselves and some meaning in their process of adolescence. The picture that I present anon reveals spontaneous organization, the absence of a shared ideological denominator and exposure to the ideology of settlement through their encounter with the region and not through any previously acquired cultural knowledge. What then is the social significance of what young people say when it crystallizes when they are living in a wide open wilderness? How do young people present a different way of fashioning religious Zionism from their place on the outskirts of the settlements after struggling with the surrounding Arab population? In order to clarify these questions about the world of the youths one has to deconstruct the social category called "youth."

2. ADOLESCENCE AND THE YOUTH OF RELIGIOUS ZIONISM

Adolescents intrigue society in general and education and social researchers in particular. The notion that the young psyche is exposed to confusion and bewilderment while, at the same time, possesses great power leads to the aspiration to better understand them and the ways in which we will be able to better deal with young people at this stage of their lives. It is common to relate to adolescence as a stage in the life of a young person in which s/he is busy with forming a personal identity following physical changes and the new social expectations made of him/her. During these years, when physical,

sexual and cognitive developments are heightened, the demand is made of them to ready themselves to accept adult roles. The youth are torn between the struggle that takes place between the forces of nature which impel them toward growth and the cultural forces that impel them toward expressing expected social behaviors and norms (Erikson,1968; Diego Vigil, 1988; Muncie, 1999;). According to Muss (1995), the young adolescent has to answer certain different questions for himself such as: Where did I come from? Who am I? What do I want to be? This is a process of searching whose results are not obvious and whose solutions are not provided to the individual by society. Turner (1997) deals with the passage from childhood to adulthood and describes this period as a limit space—*liminal*— a period in which society tries to deal with. Thus in certain societies we can see how the adults want to make the complex passage from childhood to adulthood easier. Thus, for example, various educational ceremonies take place whose goals are to include the young person and help him fashion his/her emerging identity (Berry & Schlegel, 1980). During a period of social change, the youth's task of searching is much more challenging and difficult and, because the social anchors that are supposed to help the adolescent form his identity are confused, he sets out on his way without any of the ideational support provided by the clear social models of the previous generation.

In the context of identity formation one has to examine the adolescence of young people not only on the micro-level but also on the macro-level that relates to the youth as players in a broad social system. In other words, not only does one have to deal with the experiences of the individual and ask how failures and successes lead to rebellion and changes being made in the youth's identity but also have to deal with the broader social context and examine how these experiences cause the youth to take part in social processes that are taking place around them. Sociological-anthropological research views youth as social players in a society that they belong to and focuses upon their practices and their place in the process of constructing an identity and ideology of the society (Rasmissen, 1994; Van Kessel, 1993; Markowitz, 1996). One of the internal struggles within the religious-Zionist society is connected with their acceptance of modernism, on the one hand, and their adherence to a religious way of life, on the other. As a historical movement religious Zionism, from its very beginning, adopted the approach of connection, and not separation, between holiness and secularity which involved walking the line between traditionalism and openness to "the outside world" by adopting modern values and amalgamating them into the spiritual world of their society as a response to the contemporary changes taking place (Sagi, 2000).

Among the young religious people "secularism" might be an inseparable part of their cultural lives and their society and practices such as going to pubs and mixed gender dancing and swimming have become legitimate and

routine (Elor,1998; Sheleg, 2000). The exposure of the youth to such a variety of cultural lifestyles has led them to seek other things to experiment with and this experimentation is generally more extreme than the earlier experimentation that took place at the stage of probing and weighing alternatives in the process of crystallizing their identity (Fisherman, 1998). These are experiments whose goal is "to be someone" on the background of the social-cultural struggle in which their society finds itself. The young people are trying to examine other forms of life, sometimes through behaviors which are rebellious—even though they do not declare them to be such. The rebellion does not necessarily have a negative foundation of defiance or of not accepting authority nor does it have to appear as a social deviation. The rebellion may also be positive involving the need for autonomy and meaningfulness (Kaniel, 2004).

In the process of constructing the social ideas the young people are partners in the negotiations that take place with the adult generation about the how their society should look. In the young people's encounter with the world of traditional knowledge that their parents wish to pass on to them they come up against the conflict between the aspiration for modernism and traditionalism and, in this way, the young person is exposed to contradictory messages which have to be re-examined in the process of his/her identity formation and that of his society as a whole. Kahane (2000, 2007) claims that searching for meaningfulness that is characteristic of the post-modern era is an expression of the value of freedom, autonomy and spontaneity. He describes global, informal cultural patterns and the ability of young people, despite their being free of formalization, to help in the construction of meaningfulness in their worlds. Apart from the question about whether adolescents can be seen to be social agents and not only passive individuals who respond to the social structure that is managed for them, this work will discuss the question of whether and, if so, to what degree does society as a whole perceive young people as those who are capable of making changes.

3. THE FLOWER CHILDREN, THE SEBASTIA YOUTH AND THE HILLTOP YOUTH

By basing ourselves on the assumption that youth is not only a category of age but also a social agent we can examine the social phenomena and the phenomena of rebellion that grow out of a specific society. To relate to youthful rebellion as something that motivates social processes I will be using the concept of "generation" here in the meaning suggested by Manheim (1952) according to which the concept characterizes society's recognition of it as a "generational unit" which has a historical significance and for whom the

events of the period fashion the consciousness of the people who take part in them. This generational unit is a group of young people who have been affected by the events of the time during their adolescence and this has helped them to undermine the norms in society. The generational unit crystalizes around a nuclear group, the generation's elite, who succeed in developing and expressing new ideas and concepts. The group motivates its followers and acts as a model of behavior for all of society. The generational unit defined by Manheim is not biological but phenomenological meaning that it is a subgroup that is distinctly different from the rest of its generation because of experiences that were unique only to it (Brinker, 2001; Griffin, 2004; Mali, 2001). Lomski-Feder and Ben Zeev (2009) have demonstrated in their work how two such generational units have fashioned a "canonical generation" in society in different periods. They carried out a comparative study between men who participated in the Israeli War of Independence (1948) and men who took part in the Yom Kippur War (1973) which showed how the experiences of the battle fighters went through fashioned a frame of mind for those of the same generation (Lomsky-Feder and Ben Zeev, 2009).

Generational units such as these were examined and analyzed in relation to several social revolutions in history. The case of the Hilltop Youth can be compared with two examples. In the middle of the 1960s in the United States, young people once again pushed the musical styles of rock and roll and the blues, which had become less popular during the 1950s, to front stage and, in this way, created a new cultural system which also included some form of social protest. The "Hippie" generation, also called the "Flower Children" generation, swept masses of the civilian population along into a social movement against the war in Vietnam and in support of civil rights. Researchers of this period describe the phenomenon of youthful social mobility and used concepts such as "crisis," "social unrest," a trend toward "changes in values," and even "counter culture" (Foss & Larkin, 1976). During these years, groups of youths waved the anti-capitalism banner toward the American society of that time by adopting an egalitarian lifestyle in which they supplied basic goods such as clothes and food to communities of their friends for nothing. (Lewis, 1976; Haenfler, 2004).

In the historical-social context of Israel, the young people of the *Halutz* (pioneer) and *Tsabar* (native born Israel—literally a prickly pear) generation were adopting a new social model. The Sabra youth were called upon to blur and even erase the image of the Diaspora Jew and defend Jewish honor in face of the persecutions it had suffered in the past in the form of the "parachutist, the pilot and the frogman" as heirs of the "palmachnick" (members of the Palmach which was a socialist paramilitary group that operated before and during the War of Independence) (Almog, 1997:207; Shapira, 2001) and so present a new social perception for Jews living in the Israel of the prestate

days. The Sabra was a manual worker who mainly worked the land, who was ready for battle, was self-confident and had no feelings of inferiority and fear of gentiles—things that were viewed as typical of the Diaspora Jew.

Kaniel describes a new "Sabra" image as the image of the biblical Sabra who lives on the hilltops and who is the brother of the secular Sabra. The biblical Sabra and the secular, earlier Sabra have similar authentic characteristics in several areas such as geographical distance from the center of the country, love of the homeland and a view of the neighboring Arabs as cruel and bad enemies. The biblical Sabra has returned to the nature of Genesis in the landscape of Judea and Samaria (Kaniel, 2003). The Gush Emunim movement, when it repeatedly tried to sweep society along with it to the hills of Sebastia and the rest of Samaria, based itself on those same young people who were full of motivation and the vision of changing the face of society in Israel. The students of the "Merkaz Harav" yeshiva, who were graduates of the army (and some just before mobilization), wanted to design the map of society and the state via the hilltops. The special case that I want to examine shows how a fundamentalist group of young people, in the post-modern era, obstinately adopt patterns of behavior that are more primitive than those of the Hippie generation and the young people of Sebastia. Take, for example, the fact that they are similar to these earlier generations in the way they express their closeness to nature and the way they cross boundaries. The case is interesting because here the youth are, in fact, expressing conformity to the generation of the settlers that preceded them, but they do it in extreme ways using other means from those that characterized the previous generation.

The term "youth sub-culture" was already in use during the middle of the last century when the sociologist Parsons (1964) showed how young people reject the process of accepting responsibility from the adults and want to enjoy and exploit the pleasures of life. Most of the studies since then that have dealt with the lifestyles that adolescents adopt as a subculture have focused upon lower-class groups of youths and they have interpreted the culture of adolescents as a subversive culture that is antiestablishment. According to this interpretation, the adolescents remain dependent on the adult world and adopt oppositional, more extreme, ways of acting than those exhibited by the earlier generation (Wills, 1977; Clarke, 1981). The struggle of the adolescents is described as transitional and ineffective and the research shows how they ultimately blend into the lower-level society. The earlier study carried out by White (1973) that focuses on street gangs shows how a youth subculture in the streets was a common adolescent norm. Diego Vigil (1998) agrees with these claims when, in his studies, he describes the development of street gangs as an alternative to the institution of family for the adolescent. Habidge describes the development of the punk subculture in England after the Second World War and later as, among other things,

the response of young people to the economic crisis of the same period. He shows how they groups of youths demonstrate their opposition to the majority of society and to the consensus through their new musical style and use of violent expressions (Hebdige, 1979). The youth group present subculture, through style which can tell her resistance story. It usually begins with "anti-nature" activities, anti-hegemonic and against the mainstream, and similar to Hebdige analyses of the 1960s *punk*, we can find here, on the top of the hills at Hebron, sloppy clothes, long hair, bare feet, they are all ways of style, a structure of nonconformism, and a way of ridiculing the adult attitude. Hebdige used the jail graffiti metaphor from Mailer graffiti analyses (Mailer, 1974 in Hebdige, 1979) to show how it expresses weakness and strength together. The graffiti attracting attention, but is caged in the space. It is the dub-culture social say in the space of the hegemony. This graffiti is the magic secret that we are trying to explore. Cohen (1972) claims that youth culture is only a way of adaptation. The youth react to social changes which bother the adults. It is like they felt the need to act as middleman between two generations, between the old traditions and new experience. They wanted to solve the contradictions. Hebdige definition for subculture shows how youth fundamental activities in its ridicule way (punk, skin heads) were express social norms disintegrating. It is not only a reaction of adaptation, and a between generation negotiation, it is a trying to analyze and doubt the "nature" meanings of "community." Hall and Jefferson suggest focusing in youth rituals as a resistance stage. They claim that reading the subculture should be done by observing the style which can be found in the rituals. Their Birmingham assumption was based on analyzing contradictions. When we find a conflict between two points, we can see how—in many cases—the hegemonic society does not present her antagonism but does try to naturalize it (Hall & Jefferson, 1976). Hebdige sees how the subculture gives the opportunity to make "noise" and interrupt the social order. In that point, moral panic theory could help us to look over the Hilltop Youth. Cohen shows how the society is terrified from a social phenomenon and is trying to deal with it (Cohen, 2002). The society is worried of the new subculture which would damage its norms and morals. The main way for protecting itself is by using the media. By demonization the other and signing the subculture as a marginal and a deviation, the hegemony excludes it from the mainstream. It can be extremely non-proportional from the real case, so the panic feelings can grow easily (Cohen, 2002). The recent study shows how the Hilltop Youth is a classic case to enlarge the phenomenon by presenting extra coverage on the youth and drawing them as a moral threat. In this case, Hebdige would analyze the Hilltop Youth as a resistance subculture. The youth are kicking the norms, the symbols, the organization and social hierarchy. We have here a resistance style, which maybe chaotic.

During the last two decades, studies of young people have appeared that deal with the subjective interpretation of lifestyles and make connections between the social structure and cultural practices. The American-Indian researcher Sunaina (1999) carried out a study of second-generation immigrant Indian youth in New York and, in her work, she describes how, through spending time in clubs and adopting unique styles of clothing, language and music, they provide their ethnic worlds with meaning and identity by characterizing structures that are unique to them. An Israeli study carried out by Shabtay (2001) describes the leisure time patterns of adolescents of Ethiopian background in closed clubs as a reaction to their immigration crisis and the way they deal with it. Blackstone (2005) writes about the structuring of another citizenship in Great Britain through the anarchistic "Rustafrican" gangs that oppose the conventional social values in Great Britain and express their protest through extreme acts of violence. These studies wish to show that the lifestyle of adolescents expresses their symbolic, and sometimes active, opposition.

Nagata (2001) suggests examining the Islamic-fundamentalist trend among young people in Malaysia, Egypt and North America that rejects the religion with which they are familiar and replaces with a reality based upon radical views. She shows how, in certain circumstances, the radical movements attract youths who feel deprived and marginal in their societies. Feelings of a lack of existential confidence that is common among the youths, and which comes from a problematic socioeconomic situation in countries such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia, contribute to the construction of an extremist approach. Moreover, feelings of religious pride also strengthen patriotism for the country and construct feelings of hatred for "the other" among the young people (Moaddel & Karabenick, 2008). In the current study existential conditions are not the basis for the rebellion of the youth but a lack of confidence about the social political situation, together with a combination of nationalist-religious—and not political—pride are substantial components that influence the process of reality construction of the fundamentalist protest as a way of expressing the innovative attitudes of these young people and the way they present them to society.

With the help of these approaches I am focusing on the attempt to understand the world of the young people while seeing them as people who are expressing a social message and with the understanding that they look at the religious-Zionist society from which they emerged critically. An examination of their long physical and psychological journey in the region—as an act of rebellion against their parent's generation—not only can act as a way of learning about the processes of these youths' adolescence but can also be an instrument that can be used to examine the values they wish to present through their stay in these border regions as an alternative to the political and

social philosophies of the adult generation. Over and above these things we have to examine the special connection these youths have with the isolated farms that the border areas offer as a hostel, a framework for socialization and a liminal space.

4. THE LIMINAL BORDER REGION

The nature of a social group in an area like this is influenced by its very isolated and far-removed existence from any social order, sometimes on the levels of religion and politics as well. The group wanted to get away from the conventional norms and went off to the border region with the purpose of securing territorial-settlement goals (Hogan. 1985). Frederick Barth's (1998) classic differentiation between boundaries and borders is also relevant here. The concept "boundaries" relates to neutral lines of demarcation that separates between social worlds and do not relate to bodies of knowledge that make them unique, while the concept "borders" establishes geographical demarcations of limitation as a charged concept that allocates and grades individuals according to regions and categories. Interpretation of the concept of borders in the context of "space" mainly focuses upon meanings that people bestow for their existence in the space—in other words their being a border in the sense of "frontier." The Jews structured a broad policy for settling the border regions in order to give a Jewish character to the areas that were mostly populated by non-Jews, by local Arabs. In this way the common culture in Israel since then has made the "frontier" areas sacred and something that is undoubtedly for the public "good." The policy adopted by the government glorified the frontier and provided it with a uniquely homogeneous population through a deliberate. In the specific arena of South Mount Hebron I will argue that the settling model used to gain control of the region was applied when the settlers took control of the region. Douglas (1966) describes an intermediate situation in her research in which people pave their way between the ideas and constraints of time and place. This sort of situation helps society to move between contradictions and boundaries since it is fluid and undefined and its goal is to make it possible for people to better deal with the structure of dichotomic thinking that characterizes the perception of the reality of human society as suggested by Levi-Strauss (1952). In South Mount Hebron we can identify what we can describe as a social-communal enclave; the settlers are struggling with demographic and ideological changes which are likely to influence the formation of its social boundaries. In this context I am using Foucault's concept of heterotopia (2003). According to Foucault, spaces that have a multiplicity of meanings are capable of including encounters between identities within them and this is something that might

make mutual recognition of the ideas of the other possible. In the space we are dealing with the settlers ignore the existence of other social groups and want to create a hierarchical homotopic structure in the space (for the silencing and social glorification, see also Rabinowitch 1992,1996; Clifford, 1986). They aspire to enforce a single hegemonic conception for the space that defines the social content within it. The dominant group produces an ideology and tries to impose it as policy and, in the struggle for social-political hegemony, it tries to create public-political content in order to achieve a popularity that will lead to a consensus about the ownership of the space (Gramsci, 2011).

Ohnuki-Tierny (2001) widens the discussion and emphasizes that when we research the established history of a certain country we especially have to pay attention to the agents that influence the fashioning of that history through cultural forces and to the way they act to harness the space to the strengthening of their arguments. One has to take agents such as memory, forgetfulness or the erasure of events and the way they are presented into account when we come to learn about the culture via the dimension of time. Individuals and groups use history, fashion it and harness it to serve their purpose of achieving social and political ends in the space (Weingrod, 1993; Zerubavel, 1991; Aronoff, 1991). Eliada's (1987) model of the "return" which deals with human renewal describes the dynamics of a return to previous days. Thinking is done through imitating deeds that took place in the distant past and, in this way, man makes a return to the past. Thus, when territory that is seen to be sacred is conquered, activities are carried out that contain some kind of imitation and a symbolic return to those events in the past that established the sacred reality. He explains that man draws his identity and the meaning of his life in everything that is holy to him from the recycling. The effort made by different groups in the space to achieve a connection with the sacredness is part and parcel of the way the authenticity of the space is demonstrated and presented. The social group depicts the space as sacred and as possessing spiritual meaning and thus capable of establishing a connection with a gate to heaven (1987) and God. Friedman (2000) describes the aspiration to connect up with the space out of the perception of it as sacred and the attempt to claim the right to build the point of connection to the sacredness in it—meaning the temple. The groups disagree about the question of who will be the guardian of the source of the legitimacy and each of them wants to build the temple in its own olive grove. According to MacCannel (1973), the sides try to make connections that exhibit the authenticity of the sacredness with the space. This is a staged practice that makes it possible for us to look backstage, something that will help us to learn about the research subjects. The settlers present authenticity for the purposes of locating themselves as a social center while the farmers present authenticity through practices such as building houses out of natural materials, using traditional working tools and claiming that

their connection with the space is because of their connection to the past. In the case of my research the "return" is a struggle going on between different groups over control of the space and the fashioning of its identity. This leads to the space being built in an amorphous, unclear and chaotic manner which leads to practical life there being anarchic. The spaces remain unclearly defined but the people living there bestow them with a range of meanings. This is the way liminal spaces that are capable of being populated by different ideas, people and social groups are created under one roof.

Agricultural Farms As Informal Rehabilitation Institutions

Because of the fact that the owners of the farms where the boys were staying do not define their farms as live-in rehabilitation institutions, we can identify socialization in an informal framework in them which does not have any unambiguous direction. On the one hand, the farmers do reveal their political and social views about this charged and tense region to the youth while, on the other, there is no presentation or official demand made in regard to education and the youth are only obliged to enter into an "oral" agreement about their work on the farm.

One of the common arguments in research in favor of boarding schools focuses on the educational and mental benefits one can gain from staying and learning in such a framework. Motivation, cooperation, mutuality and communication are central principles that educators want to develop in adolescents in boarding places (Wessner, 1991; Kashti & Arielli, 1997; Bridgman, 2001). In the farms in South Mount Hebron the youth I have found have shown that being distant from home and family as well as the informal stay and activities on the farm act as a fertile ground for the development of ideology and independence in the youth. In other words, as opposed to the arguments that present institutions such as boarding schools as places that develop intellectual ability and educate toward values, we can see here how the weakness that might develop in such institutions— an extreme amount of independence given to the adolescents—can be creatively exploited by the adolescents to construct a subculture and a system of social values. Their unrealistic aspirations turn into an ideology which they think they can realize and which can be used to deal with issues such as masculinity, Zionism and religion in the process of forming their identities. According to Kahane (2007), the absence of formality provides the feelings of spontaneity and freedom which encourages the adolescents to actualize goals and passions while using expressions of being faithful to "themselves." In such informal institutions the youth can develop and interpret experiences according to their needs and, in this way, construct their perceptions of reality.

An Informal Institution in an Area of Conflict

The youth bestow their special experiences with meanings on their journey toward constructing a personal and social identity (Kahane, 2000). The following questions that touch upon the adolescents' identity formation need to be asked in South Mount Hebron, between Israeli and Palestinian villages—also in the context of the identity of the community. One has to examine the quality of the relations that the adolescents have between themselves, as part of an agricultural farm which is a kind of boarding school, and the social environment in the region. Unlike previous perceptions that relied upon Goffman (1973) and saw boarding schools as total institutions (Arielli, 1976; Nevo, 1986), I suggest learning from the subject of the following research with the assistance of approaches that analyze the youth's exposure to the environment as a contributing and forming exposure. This encounter might make it possible for the youth to learn about another culture and behavioral norms in the social space they are coming in contact with. Kahane (1986), basing himself on his claims about the absence of formality, explains that when connections are formed between individuals in an informal framework we may expect to witness the development of cooperative roles and a commitment to values. In this way, when the youth are exposed to a new environment, they explore and learn about their ideological paths and the ways they should act in the space that is hosting them. A dialectic process exists between the parties in which the youth are exposed to a culture and ideology that are new to them and they enter into negotiations with them. They get to know the ideology of settlement at the same time as they are coming into contact with the farmers and, in line with the level of identification they have with it and the insights about it that they have, they respond. The community of settlements around them receives physical and ideological support from the youth who actively, "with boots on the ground," present their ideological approaches against the Palestinian villages in the district. One can therefore look at this arena from a point of view that perceives the alternative relations as a form of connection that has political and social significance. Through an alternative mechanism that exists between the youth and the environment, the adolescents weigh the issues of masculinity, religion and Zionism in the process of identity formation that they are going through in this regional space.

Chapter 4

Ahead to the "Tire Hilltop"

A Cultural–Ideological Framework

PROLOGUE: TO THE "TIRE HILLTOP"

It is four o'clock in the afternoon, a heavy winter fog makes visibility difficult and the sun is beginning to set over the hilltops of Mount Hebron. I am driving slowly and being careful at each curve on the twisting road that leads to the Susia settlement. The name Shlomi appears on my ringing cell phone. "How are things? Where are you my man?" says the voice of a young man of nineteen and a half who will apparently not be going to the army because he has several criminal files involving violence toward Palestinians. I asked him how he plans to spend this rainy night and he described to me how he intended to sleep that night in the new tent he had erected together with his friend in the hilltop next to the settlement and that he was, at that very moment, collecting wood for the fire for the long and cold night he would spend there. "Come and join us. I am at Susia junction."

When I got out of my car, wrapped up in my down coat, I felt a blast of bitter cold that reminded me where I was—some 800 meters above sea level. Shlomi, wearing only a sweater for warmth, was loading whole branches of pinewood that had fallen during the storm onto his tractor-drawn wagon. He explained to me that he had been given the tractor by Dalya Har Sinai from the farm for a couple of hours until nightfall and went on to tell me how he and his friend had erected the tent on the hilltop. I couldn't take the cold anymore and decided to go to visit the farmer Yohanan in his warm house on the fringes of the Mitspeh Yair outpost. I made an arrangement to meet Shlomi later in the evening after he had organized his stay in his tent. I went back to Susia Junction and drove in the direction of the Mitspeh Yair outpost. At the hitchhiking pickup place there were three youths wrapped up in coats and wearing hats who were trying to protect themselves from the cold wind.

I identify them as young people from Sussia who are trying to go out and do something that night. After a few minutes I arrive at the Magen David farm and am soon sitting in the sitting room warmed by a fireplace that is giving out the delicate smell of burning wood.

While I was in my car slowly driving through the region, the cold weather and the stormy conditions were the normal backdrop of winter in the wild spaces of South Mount Hebron and what I and other citizens like me experience as extreme conditions act as fertile grounds for the youthful organization of activities on the hilltop. When night falls young people full of adrenalin and motivation at facing the challenge of occupying the hilltops as subtenants and camping in places in which sheep and goats wander around grazing during the daytime. Low temperatures are good for carrying out activist protest activities by the Hilltop Youth. From the youths' point of view, darkness and cold are the optimal conditions for hiding themselves so they can meet and exchange ideas. It is actually the amorphous reality, a reality of no order, which makes it possible for them to operate in the region. The heavy fog makes it possible to further interfere with any order and it is this that allows them to go up to the naked hilltops. The adults will awaken at dawn and will discover the lines of a new site made up of tents or rough wooden huts on yet another hilltop. Some of the adults will be happy about the erection of a new separating neighborhood that protects their settlements and some will be more circumspect about the fate of the more normative youth of their settlements who, themselves, may even have gone up to the hilltops.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the stories of the youths and describes the complex ideological, social and political connections that the youth gangs on the hilltops have with other groups in the region.

In the process of adolescence that the youths go through they fashion an ideological system and cultural practices for themselves and these function as rites of passage for them but they also reverberate in the religious-Zionist world that they wish to outgrow and free themselves from. The stage of separation when they physically leave their parents' homes, which is also a sort of ideological separation, brought the youths to the farms in South Mount Hebron where the periphery becomes central and liminality becomes a static situation. The period spent on the farm demonstrates how the spontaneous coming together and the youths' unsystematic organization becomes an informal institution of rehabilitation for them that provides easy grounds for them to produce an ideology and oppositional subculture. The regional space will be described here as a network of feelings and insights provided by the people

that works through a mutual dynamic with them and it is the thoughts and perceptions of the people that brings the space to life (Basso, 1996). Over and above the goals that involve the progress of youth at risk and the improvement of their physical and psychological conditions I would argue that the employment of the youths on the farms and the daily routine they have act as a stage that allows them to express their views about what the ideal life in a frontier space like this should be and also challenges the settlement ideology of the veteran settlers' movement (Shafat, 1995). By adopting a lifestyle of closeness to nature and to "Biblical life" (Kaniel, 2004) and by using practices that involve violent protest and aggression, they present a model of settlement through which they wish to define, both for themselves and the veteran generation, what the new model of settlement could be. Understanding the youth gangs is essential to an understanding of the settlers' society and they are an influential factor in the formation of the anti-culture that wishes to express social arguments against the adult generation that founded the settlements.

Despite the above, however, this study also presents the stage of a new expansion of this generation—the "day after." Not all the youths remain in this liminal phase and some of them try to find their place in some other new place as a continuation of their maturation and identity formation and the army, studies and family are all legitimate institutions for them after their hilltop phase. We will see here how the youth subculture is not a way of life but a spontaneous and temporary phenomenon.

An interesting and challenging component of the phenomenon of the youth gangs on the hilltops of South Mount Hebron is the way the youths actually get to the region. Completely against all my expectations and my assumption that this area of conflict would attract types of people with fixed ideologies and provide them with a stage upon which they could express their ideas, I found that many of the youths that come to the region have spent several years of wandering about after having left their parents' homes until they came to Mount Hebron. They describe their coming to the region as spontaneous and a stage in their process of searching for something. Their choice to stay on the farm expresses a choice of stability and confidence by way of fashioning the arena as a "home."

1. GETTING THERE: FIRST STEPS ON THE GROUND

I learned from the descriptions of the youth that there are several ways to get to the farms. Yehuda, a young man of eighteen years who left home at thirteen and eventually found his way to the Magen David farm, tells us about one of these ways and describes the series of events that led to him staying on the Magen David farm.

Yehuda: I mainly left home because I lost my faith. I did not get along with my parents regarding anything to do with religion and they simply gave me a choice—if I don't follow in their footsteps I have to leave. So, when I was thirteen, I left, got a job and rented an apartment with some guys who were older than me and, in this way, I went from place to place living in all sorts of places in Israel and then, in Jerusalem, I met some good people. I also started taking drugs until a friend invited me to come with him to here (to the Magen David farm) for a weekend. At that time he was working here. I came here and fell in love with the place so I decided come and live here and I have been here for more than a year.

As we can see from Yehuda's story his coming to South Mount Hebron was unplanned and arbitrary. The way that ultimately brought him to the farm was full of opportunities in which he tried to find his place and this is a journey that is characterized by nonnormative behavior and the use of drugs. During the years that he wandered about in the streets, in apartments, and with fleeting friendships acted as a process of clarification and crystallization for him regarding his needs and aspirations. In his long journey looking for a home he was exposed to the rural nature of the region and felt that the closeness to nature provided him with calm and serenity. In other words, the farm, beyond its being a home that provided for his daily needs and giving him psychological support, was for Yehuda a place that structured reality around him by virtue of its being in a geographical space that was desirable and which pleased him. From Yehuda's point of view the frontier spaces of Mount Hebron are the most suitable for him to attain the feeling of permanence and calm. He characterizes the period of wandering about as temporary while the farm and its surroundings symbolize stability for him. He actually finds the necessary balance in his connection to the amorphous liminal spaces, the border region, which embody temporariness and transience.

Motti, a young man of twenty one who has been working for more than a year on the farm and is now living in a neighboring settlement, tells us about another way of getting to this place. From his story one can see that the search for work is what brought him to South Mount Hebron since, after he left his parents' home, his goal was to find work that he could focus on and invest all his energies into.

Motti: I come from an ultra-orthodox family. When I was fourteen I started arguing with my parents because I didn't want to live in an ultra-orthodox framework. I wanted to find something that would suit me as a profession because the idea of studying until 2100 at night didn't suit me—but there is no other possibility, no choice. My parents told me that that's what there was and, at a certain stage, matters started to become explosive because these things really weren't for me. Nothing was working. I didn't want it. Things came to a head

one Sabbath meal when they told me "Or everything or nothing!" and things exploded. I decided to wander around in the streets of Bnei Brak and Jerusalem looking for work and food until a friend gave me the telephone number of someone who was looking for building workers in Bat Ayin. I lived there for three years until I came to Magen David on a visit. At that time Elyashiv, a youth who had already worked there, was there as was someone else who used to come and go all the time. Yohanan told me "Come here to live. I can't pay you wages but you can live here and work for me and if you find work elsewhere you can work there as well. Work on the farm and we'll see where things go."

In Motti's case as well one can see that the unplanned wandering around was a search for quiet, normality and a home. In other words beyond what could be seen on the visible level—the search for work—one could see that Motti was looking for security and expressed his hope to find a permanent place in which he could work and live. The way he got to the farm was perhaps unintended but he was in search of a goal. In contrast to Yehuda, who came to the farm without any declared goal, Motti was very purposeful and his way to the farm was clear.

The stories about the agricultural farms found in the Mount Hebron region spread among young people and identified the farm as an attractive place that was worth visiting. The understanding that he would be able to come to a place he could live in led Motti to the Mount Hebron region and all of this was taking place in complete ignorance, at that stage, of the political significance attributed to the area. When young Motti talks about acquiring knowledge and a profession he, above all else, describes a reality of having a relationship and closeness with the farm owner. In the process of being trained for work the farmers relate to the youths as young people who need attention and intimacy and, instead of giving orders, the farmer explains things. Thus, over and beyond the wide knowledge that Motti benefited from, his perception of reality also changed. He became liberated from his labeling as someone who was needy and sheltered and constructed an identity as a free man for himself—one who was free to choose and act within the space provided by the professional knowledge that had been laid out for him. When the youth are absorbed into the new "home" and adapt to the spaces they develop a subculture that also includes the construction of a Zionist settlement ideology.

The journey, from the moment of leaving their parents' homes and up till the youths arrive in South Mount Hebron is a journey that is characterized by a search for the self, a home and security. They describe their coming to the area as spontaneous and as a stage in their search for an identity. The fact that it is possible to characterize the different ways that brought the youths to the farms strengthens the understanding that group organization to prepare them

for living and working on the farm did not exist at all, neither from the social point of view nor from the political-ideological point of view. The youths arrive at the peak of their personal struggle with their lives and the formation of their identities, and their remaining on the farms expresses a personal decision concerning the attainment of a feeling of stability and security through establishing the arena as their "home."

The following sections will deal with the meaning of the space as expressed by the youths in the first stages of their stay on the farm, and we will see how they bestow meaning upon the space as home, as a place in which they can not only receive both an education and socialization but also as a place in which a different socialization of the concept "home" is offered to them.

2. JOINING THE FARMS, MATURATION AND SOCIALIZATION

Arieh is a young man of eighteen who left home at the age of thirteen and, after a while, came to the Magen David farm and from his story we can learn that, over and above the meanings that the youths bestow on the regional space, there is another inseparable dimension in their routine of life and the process of socialization they undergo in the place and that is the input of content by the farmer. The following section makes how the youths perceive the farmer, who is the responsible adult in the space, concrete as an important image who accompanies their process of maturation.

Arieh: I was with him for three years. When I got here I found calmness and quiet in the beautiful area here and the farmer talked to me a lot as well. I slowly gave up the drugs and even stopped smoking. Yohanan explained things to me, how things worked and taught me how to think—not like the farmer at Bat Ayin who told me: "Do this here and here!" Yohanan really taught me about the logic of things –electricity, physics, everything. I feel that instead of doing army service of three years the time I spent with Yohanan gave me a lot, lots of knowledge, things that I never knew before and had never seen. They opened my eyes. I worked at everything—with animals, in agriculture. It was exciting, fun. I felt that I was finally holding onto something, that I was doing something, that I had something in my hand. He arranged for me to work with Yaakov Talya mostly in grazing and on the farm and later on the tractor. Up until today I worked just to survive but today—I choose to work.

As one can see Arieh describes a long and comprehensive learning process that includes not only the accumulation of knowledge but also the acquisition of values and norms. He tells us about how the farmer "talked

to me a lot … and I slowly gave up the drugs" and, in this way, he endows the farmer with the same qualities he endows to the regional space: calmness and quiet. The initial experience the youth had of the place was one of calmness and quiet accompanied by long talks with the farmer. Both of these things preceded the practical learning about the different skills that were needed to work on the farm. What we have here is a socialization process that the youths undergo on the farm. The farmer understands who these youths who come to him are and he, as a precursor to managing this human resource that he now has, wants to balance the forces that are being stirred up in the youths. Assisted by the calm and quiet space, as described by Arieh, the farmer provides the youths with the experience of change, success and productivity. He helps them to abandon drugs and delinquency through working at the things he presents them with and helps them to assimilate the values of independence, commitment and diligence. The youths experience success and a feeling of vitality during the stage of identity formation in the period of adolescence and the home is, for them, endowed with the meanings of prosperity, hope and a future. The young man declares that his work is not a means but a value when he says: "… in order to work, not just to survive."

The next case will present the way the farmer Yohanan perceives the change and the rehabilitation of the youths who come to him.

Yohanan: When Shlomi came here he was sixteen and a half and wasn't very diligent, to say the least. He would start doing some work and wouldn't finish it. I would give him an easy task, for instance to feed the animals—not complicated–and he would feed some of them and leave the others hungry. He couldn't carry out any work to the end. One day he came up to me and said: "Yohanan, we need to put up some sign at the entrance of the farm, on a post or something. What do you say?" I was very pleased with the idea and gave him a free hand. Very slowly, as I explained the technical things to him, he built this post with the letters J-E-H-O-V-A-H on it and when he finished building it he was happy for a whole month. He couldn't stop looking at it and said to me: "What do you think of me now? I did it." Just like that and, up till today, when he comes to visit he stands by that post, looks at it and at me, is filled with pride and remembers the days he spent here. From my point of view he did what he had to with that statue and was ready to set out on a new path.

From the point of view of the farmer the mission completely carried out defines what is, for him and the youth, success and thus also what is the normality that allows one to set out to a new life after experiencing confusion and a useless lack of growth. According to Yohanan even if the building has no real value and the product is only something decorative, he relates to it as a means of causing a change in the thinking of the youth and in his ability

Figure 4.1   Shlomi's J-E-H-O-V-A-H Sign.

to evaluate himself as an independent adult. Acts such as constructing some garden decoration that will be placed at the entrance to the farm will later develop into political activity and, even if it they have no practical use, they will be endowed with some ideological meaning. The garden decoration has

a meaning as a social statement and as a milepost in the maturation of the youth—just like the political activity on the hilltops. When the youths build a ramshackle tent on a hilltop, or a temporary wooden building that will be dismantled the next day by the police they understand that the purpose of the building is, in fact, identical to the purpose of the garden decoration—to act as a symbol and a statement about a certain ideal. In other words not every activity has a practical purpose but an activity without a practical purpose might have value of another kind.

The farmer Ophir from the Har Sinai farm tries to evade the labeling I use for him as a youth educator and guide in a rehabilitation institute. He describes how, from his point of view, the discussions with the youths are spontaneous and are not part of the defined routine of the farm.

Ophir: The youths come here from all sorts of places and not just from the settlements in the area. From my point of view if I need someone for work I don't care where he comes from. I speak to him, see if he is serious and ready to work hard and hire him but I am not a social worker or the like. That doesn't interest me. Of course I talk to the youth, explain things and all that, but that isn't my goal. First and foremost I need workhands. Look they know my place is always open to them and they come. We talk a lot even when we are working. We talk about everything—family, friends, politics—and I often pass on the ideas of Yair har-Sinai , may God avenge his blood. They want to hear about him, about how he lived and how he established the farm. There are children here who come from broken homes with all sorts of stories. I, of course, cannot ignore this but I am not here to act as a youth village or anything like that.

Ophir, even if he does not consciously and purposely wants to accept the role that has fallen upon him, is central to the socialization of the youths. He is conscious of the fact that the youths need support and direction and he gives them what they need. The professional knowledge that he imparts to the youths is spiced with his insights about life and, of course, about the social and political space which, in this case, is fed by the heritage of the farm's founder Yair Har Sinai. Ophir is not put off by the categorization of his workers as "youth at risk" and he includes them in the routine of work and learning and thus acts as a socializing agent who guides and directs the youths not only in the practical areas of farming but also in everything involving social ideology.

Yehuda Shef, a young soldier of twenty one, tells us how he spent his youth on Yohanan's farm and how he gave him guidance and self-confidence at a time he was forming his identity as an adolescent.

Yehuda Shef: I left home at twelve years old because of arguments with my parents about religion and wandered around from place to place. Things started

to change when I got to the Magen David farm and I had to manage things for myself according to a normal routine that included early rising, prayers, work, and the preparation of meals. In short I began to live like a normal person and to be able to see that I was doing something and that someone needed me in the world raised my self-confidence. From then on my personal life only got better and today I am studying towards my matriculation certificate and am a soldier in the air force. None of this would have happened if I hadn't come to the farm and met Yohanan. Nobody in the world before that had allowed me to take responsibility for something. We had lots of long conversations about the meaning of life, about the potential that was trapped inside me and that I was suppressing because I had gotten used to being without any framework or boundaries and didn't have to answer to anyone about what I was doing. Yohanan planted hope in me and I harvested a life from it together with optimism and the knowledge that I could make myself into a decent human being. Now I am an entirely different person and have changed from being a broken, depressed and desperate person into being a happy person who has desire to act for myself and others.

Yehuda finishes what he had to say with the insight that his adolescence on the farm and the assistance of Yohanan caused him to feel commitment toward others. After he recovered from his difficult and confusing past he turned toward others and society. This story presents us with the journey that the youth make from wandering the urban streets to coming to the farm where they developed a social and political understanding of their place in the space. Yehuda and his friends, after years of random and useless wandering about, arrived to the South Mount Hebron region and there—as they present— established the basic values a mature adult needs for themselves. They found a home that symbolizes stability, security and also a future for themselves, and now they were ready to act for other significant people and for their immediate society in the settlements.

The youths view the society that is hosting them as needing change, as needing their assistance and, after taking care of their home, their personal home, they are prepared to concern themselves with the wider context of what a home is—their social home. After they turned to saving themselves from their wandering and the failing search for a better life they are now interested in saving the settlements from social and political failure in offering them an alternative future. The youths want to turn their personal histories into a general component of history for the history of the settlements. They understand that the settlement project is in a period of change and they want to contribute their part to making this change. The presentation of the very successful change that they have undergone as a form of personal redemption is an expression of their claim to ownership of the location. Their coming to South Mount Hebron, which saved them as individuals, now receives a meaning of

salvation for the regional space. They are saying that the settlers began the process of redemption and we, the young people, will continue to do this in different ways. They see themselves as bringing a new and refreshing spirit to the space and, because of their motivation to make changes which has already been demonstrated in their personal lives, they are now fashioning new settlement practices in order to be able to make claims for the desired identity of the settlements and, by doing this, also believe they are redeeming their fellowman. What we have here is the crystallization of the adolescent's identity which begins with the search for a personal "self" and continues toward the formation of a social view that connects the youth to his space. The building of a personal home is later translated into the building of social and national home.

The farm, as an informal institute of rehabilitation, acts a cushioning ground for the creation of social and political ideas. The youths develop the ideas that they get from the farmers and, in the routine of their work and free time, they work out practices that express the ideology they have adopted. The encounter between Jewish and Arab shepherds in the wide open spaces is an instrument for the youths to be used to clarify social, political and national issues. The work in the fields invites friction between the groups and becomes the discussion of the day during the youths' free time meetings. From here they move to the stage of initiating and organizing social activism.

3. BECOMING A MARGINAL YOUTH

We will now see how youths became socially marked by the settlers' society and how the society chose to deal with them. The fact that they dropped out of the normative educational system, and that their leaving their homes and families increased their chances of deviating from behavioral norms, exposed them to criminal activities and delinquent people which put them into the category of "youth at risk" by the welfare authorities in Israel. In the case being researched here the youths are under informal supervision during the time they stay with the farmers in the farms, and become a party to the conflict between the different groups of Jews in South Mount Hebron.

The settlers' society views the arrival of the youths to the spaces of South Mount Hebron in a negative way, categorizes the youth gangs into the social category of losers and sees them as marginal and problematic. The adults generally expect the youths to be committed to the religious-Zionist ideology and, as we will soon see, when a gap developed between the young people and the adults, the adults defined them as deviants. The veteran settlers present themselves as the founding settlers in the region, albeit because they do not take the Palestinian who live on the hill into account. The farmers who

arrived twenty years after them have been marked and presented as different despite their practical belonging to the settlers' society. The youths are considered to be the latest settlers and are presented as "temporary visitors" who are mostly considered to be undesirable. The clear hierarchy that the settlers have established thus places the farmers and the Hilltop Youth at the bottom of the social pyramid and, because of this they are relatively easily marked with a negative label. The youths accept the label "unsuccessful and not normative" and the society rejects them.

In the next section I will show how the society turns the youth into marginal youth and how they deal with this tag.

SOCIAL DEVIATION

We can learn from the point of view of Yohanan from the Magen David farm what the social failings of religious Zionism, which he calls "social and educational mistakes," were.

According to Yohanan, the connection between young people and adults in the religious-Zionist society was characterized by the adults rejecting the young who are not able to become part of the normative stream of their society. Yohanan explains that the adults labeled the youths and marked them as social deviants. He claims that the settlers' society is an immature society that is not capable of dealing with difference and, instead of trying to include the youths that had not succeeded in following their ways, they chose to ignore and alienate themselves from them.

Yohanan: The problem with that society is that they are simply impotent! They don't know how to pass on the message that there is a future and a place for you as well! This is not because they don't know how to broadcast such messages but because they don't believe in this message. It rejects things, constantly rejects. The society defines success and anyone who slightly deviates from this success—is rejected. This is a mistake and the youths see all this and understand that they don't want to think like the council, like the generation that established the settlements.

For Yohanan the main weakness of the settlers' society is the fact that it is an insular society whose boundaries are rigid and impenetrable. This is a society that tries to preserve the ideology it has built and thus it fears the appearance of any foreign ideology—even if it is close to its own. The Hilltop Youth are characterized as a dangerous social group that could influence the whole society. According to the farmer, the impotence is its inability to act, produce and improve. In other words the settlers' society has the potential

to deal with the changes that are taking place in the surrounding society but chooses to be insulated and to protect itself from the youths. As a result, in order for them to join this society, the youths have to undergo total socialization and, when an individual does not succeed in this, he remains outside and is defined as a deviant. Yohanan claims that the social model of the settlers' society produces whole groups of youths that are not able to become part of this social construct.

The settlers produce a center that is not capable of living at piece with its periphery. In other words a society that is, in fact, made up of many marginal groups (Sheleg, 2000) makes efforts to present one main center and so rejects all the marginal groups that might influence it. The religious-Zionist society finds itself in a period of change and is struggling with the infiltration of modernity and its influence on the secular society that it comes in contact with, but, as one can see from the texts offered by her, this society chooses to reject those who are different in order to emphasize where its boundaries lie.

I heard similar things that express the spiritual climate among the Hilltop Youth when I visited the "tire encampment" on the hilltop next to Susia where I met a gang of five youths warming themselves grouped around a stove. The atmosphere slowly warmed up and the youths began to express their bellyful of criticism about the settlers' society and the adult generation as a whole.

With the rain pouring down outside and the wind freezing our faces we were sitting in a ten square meter tent made of plastic sheeting. There was a heating stove in the middle whose chimney goes out through the roof of the tent and lets a few drops of rain drip into our warm space. Three sides of the tent are equipped with old mattresses, the corners of which have been soaked by the rain that has succeeded in getting in. Three of the boys who say they have run away from the Susia yeshiva have come up here from the settlement. There is the seventeen year old Shlomi, who erected the tent together with seventeen-year-old Matan, who lives in Susia and is part of the educational framework "Menifa" that operates out of the neighboring settlement *Maon*. I am wearing a very thick down jacket that I acquired in a cold East European country on one of my trips and a woolen hat on my head. I am taking part in the discussion and want to hear from the youths who have just dropped in for a visit. The three of them go to the school at Susia from settlements around Mount Hebron. Daniel, who lives in Bat Ayin east from Kiryat-Arba city, is telling us about what is happening in the settlement, about the prevailing mood and what the young people think about the place.

Daniel: People in Bat Ayin are always fighting amongst themselves. Jews. These are arguments that the Arabs would not believe take place among Jews. People are burning each other's fields! Unbelievable! Several times already people have

come in the night and punctured the tires of someone's car and written totally sick things there. And this really happens all the time. Once they organized a boycott of a family. A boycott! Someone would walk into the synagogue—and everyone would leave. Crazy! It's shameful and a disgrace! But for what reason? His daughter abandoned religion. Just like what they did to Yohanan—the same garbage. They decided he was strange and that they didn't want him any more—so they kill him; they ostracize him. What is that?? I'm not going to stay here after the army; I'm out of here that's for sure! And it's not only me' lots of my friends are the same. Just look at how disgusting these people are.

One can see from what Daniel is saying that the young people see the adults in a negative light and, from their point of view, the adults are associated with rejection and alienation. They describe how the building of a community in which they have no interest in being a part of is taking place—a reality of communal insularity that does not allow in any individuals who do not fit their norms. The adolescents are more exposed to the secular world

Figure 4.2   A Plastic Tent on the "Tire Hill".

Figure 4.3   A Plastic Tent on the "Tire Hill".

than the adults. Their familiarity with Western culture is more profound as a result of the time they spent in city centers such as Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. And they are more prepared to accept openness and social difference. The anecdote about the boycotting of a family in the settlement because of the girl who abandoned religion exemplifies the attitude of the settlers in this settlement toward young people who deviate from the normative center. This is an act of branding the deviate and expulsing them from society and, in this way, the society creates a marginal group. What we have here is an example of the reality of an abandonment of religious Zionism in general, and a separation and fragmentation in the settlers' society in particular. This is a society in a period of change and at a stage of transition from being in a balanced, harmonious situation with a high level of unity to being in a situation in which the ideology that provided the impulse to creating the movement that established this society—is being questioned. At the moment different social groups want to fashion the identity of the settlers' society and the way the society's veterans deal with the changes is through defensiveness and insularity, branding deviates, and creating social margins in order to mark the boundaries. In the case of the girl who became an apostate even those closest to her, her family, were branded as deviants. The social margins are broadened and the family is

Figure 4.4   A Plastic Tent on the "Tire Hill", Inside the Tent; Few Mattresses and Stove Heater.

compartmentalized as being outside of society. When the youth who grew up in the settlements, or friends who didn't, are exposed to events like this they identify the lack of loyalty of the adults toward the values they claim they have, and the gap between the ideology that sees the people of Israel as one and the local practices that filters those coming into the society and chooses to distance them from the social framework that behaves in this way.

The farmer Yohanan adds a few words to what the youth in Shlomi's tent were saying and offers a social analysis of the phenomenon of rebelliousness of the youths against the adults. He explains why, in his opinion, the social movement of Gush Emunim was doomed to failure from the very beginning, and describes how the founding generation of the settlers have not succeeded in preserving the social cohesion that characterized the settlements in the past and which now cannot convince its young to remain and be the generation of continuance.

Yohanan: What's happening in the settlements? Most of the youths want to leave. They tell me: "I don't have anything here. I don't want to stay here." And why don't they want to be here? Because theirs is not a healthy society. It was built from one homogeneous level of the population and what is going to happen to this kind of settlement is that they will die from their own auto-toxin. This

is homogeneity according to a certain idea, a certain age and a matriculation certificate from a certain "yeshiva."[1] Most of the younger generation has nothing to look for here and in another ten years you will feel the results. Lots of the young people are leaving religion in the same way and there will be no continuing generation—only just a few, and what will be left will be the generation of founders—old people and all sorts of outsiders. The older people are zealously trying to preserve their land here but they have already stopped working it and they have dug themselves into this trap.

Yohanan makes a connection between the tough and uncompromising approach of the adult generation of religious Zionism and the rebelliousness of the settlement youth. In his opinion, in both cases, the society is not able to deal with change and when a young person wants to present some other way that doesn't suit the conventional norms he is immediately branded as a deviant and social rebel. This view, according to Yohanan, arises out of the very building of the settlements as defined and socially closed. The society wants to preserve its social core and duplicate it by creating a homogeneous population of settlers but, in Yohanan's view, it is, in fact, the mechanism of preservation that is the mechanism that will destroy this society which is not capable of including the different people developing within it. He describes this phenomenon in terms of self-poisoning which means that the "glorious project" of the settlers realized itself when it created the need of the young to be different, nonconformist and rebellious toward their parents.

The farmer endows the total fanaticism of the settlers with a material meaning when he connects with the issue of tracts of land. When he interprets their fanaticism as part of the efforts to safeguard their land in South Mount Hebron he is connecting the mental set with the ideological struggle over the character of the settlements in Judea and Samaria. The social insularity of the adult generation has pushed the young people beyond the social margins and has thus made room for new settlers who suit the existing social model.

The following story exemplifies the mental set about the issue of accepting others that is, according to the youth, characteristic of the people in the local secretariat of Susia. What we have before us is the individual story of a young person who was born and grew up in the Susia settlement who, after marrying, asked for a dwelling so he could continue living in the settlement. When he turned to the local council with a request for help to find a place to rent he was faced with a violent and extreme response which, in practical terms, forced him to leave the settlement. The story stirred up a lot of reactions among the residents of Susia who knew the family and the young man, and demonstrates the power of the council and the closed-minded, conservative view that characterized the settlement in its early days. In a nighttime meeting that I attended on one of the hilltops, Matan, a youngster of seventeen from

Susia, told me about how the events of the young man called Levi, who had been rejected by the settlement council, unfolded.

Matan: The fact that they won't accept somebody to the settlement is already not okay. The guy grew up here in the settlement, worked here and lived here. He didn't go to the army—I don't know why. He is from the days they established the settlement. He and his brothers are from the period when people used to fight with the Arabs over the well where. All he wanted was for them to rent him a caravan; to rent a home. They, sort of, got back to him from the absorption committee—well, not exactly got back to him; somebody came up to him after prayers, just like that, when he was getting into his car, came up to him and said: "We decided that, at the moment, you're not suitable. Come back next year and we'll re-examine things. Listen to this! What makes me maddest is that he tells him: "There are too many 'Levis' in the settlement. Do you get that? He was really hurt. And then, very hush hush, right behind his parents' house; he built a hut out of stone. Then the settlement imposed a kind of half-boycott on his parents and him. All of a sudden the secretariat doesn't want to talk to them; they don't say hello; nothing!

Ok, now I'll explain it to you. On the one hand the veterans can say "Aha, he's a Breslov[2] fellow, a strange guy, non-conformist, didn't done an army service. We don't want him in the settlement." Apart from that what does it matter? So what if he is a Breslov guy? What's their problem? The problem is that there are people in the secretariat that want everybody to look like them and, if they are a little different—they are unsuitable.

From this story we can learn about how the youths construct a reality of distancing and alienation from the adult generation in the settlement as a response to the conservative and insular administration of the heads of the settlement. The establishment, that is, the leaders of the community, those who founded the settlement and represent it, branded the different young people as deviants and pushed them out of their community. The young people, in response, accept the rejection and react to it with their own distancing. Levi, the young man in question, who did not serve in the army and who had already distanced himself from the center of the settlers' society, even adopted the identity of being a *Breslov* hassid and so, from his point of view, sealed his fate and was already unsuitable to be included in the social category desired by the Susia local council. He was branded as a deviant and so was compartmentalized. The members of the secretariat were concerned about a negative influence upon the young people who are not identified with the central stream and tagged Levi as a Hilltop Youth who might endanger the social balance of the settlement. Young Matan in fact joins the farmer Yohanan in his argument, which explains how the settlers' society aspires

to duplicate itself and create a one homogeneous society, and he tells us the story of Levi in order to exemplify the rejection that he feels toward this society following the attempts of the settlement to construct the future for him and his friends. They think the settlement should be open to everybody and that there should be no difference between different streams and different kinds of people. Even if someone did not grow up in the settlement he should have the right to live in it. Matan feels contemptuous toward the concept of an "absorption committee" when he says: "There is no use whatsoever to make any decisions about the possible acceptance or rejection of someone who asks to live in the settlement." The incident and the reactions to it, as they are described by a typical settler youth, express the way the young people view changes in the character of the settlement. The young people distance themselves from the ways of the founders on both the level of religion and society when they open up to accepting different social forms.

In a discussion I had with a regular visiting official from the regional council of South Mount Hebron an important point of view concerning the analysis of the event came up. Shai, a young family man of about thirty, has been living in the Otniel settlement for the last three years and is the regional representative of the Ministry of Education in matters concerning children and youth without families. His job is to look for youth who have left the legal compulsory educational frameworks and to try and get them back to school.

Shai: In the framework of visiting homes I quite often got to the home of one of the youth from our settlements for a talk with his parents and he takes me to some tent that he and his friends have erected where they spend their time having these discussions, listening to music and hiking around. In the evening, if it's cold, they come home to their parents. What happens is that there are always one or two, usually not local youth, who come from Jerusalem or the center of the country and they erected a tent and, somehow, attracted youth from the settlement to come to them. In this way a sort of gang developed so our society, the settlement, is concerned about this phenomenon. Youth from all sorts of places, but who are not from the settlements, come here and create a movement made up of youth who run away from home and start to do stupid things. You understand? So the society is afraid of them. What do they need them here for? Our region has become a refuge for youth at risk and the people in the settlements are afraid that the normative youth will be infected by them.

Shai, as a representative of the normative system, also described the prevailing mental set among the settlers in the settlements. They view the wayward youth as being atypical and alien and assign him to the category of deviant. Thus one is supposed to keep away from such young people and they should be kept as far away as possible from the normative central stream of "good" youth. In

other words the representatives of the establishment claim that the future of their youth is endangered when they come into contact with the deviant youth and so they choose the shut the gates that give access to this unfamiliar world. As one of the youth who dropped out of formal educational system put it succinctly in his letter to one of the brochures that deal with the weekly portion of the Tora:

> I understand that you have decided to remove us from the public we grew up in so please know this: We are the marginal youth, those who turn up in the center of town every Thursday and Saturday night, the ones you always see at the hitchhiking spot. But we are also those who studied with you in the yeshiva and grew up with you in the settlement. Instead of vomiting us out and abandoning us and ignoring us perhaps you could try and understand what we are going through. We are grown—people whose frameworks no longer have anything to offer them, that gave them no satisfaction, that didn't provide answers, people that weren't afraid to go ahead with their conclusions and clarifications even if they were fateful. We learned that these institutes did not know how to include those who change a little and don't come up to their standards.

The society "vomits," "ignores" and "abandons" this wayward youth. The adults perceive the dropout youth as losers and label them with the tag of failure so they can distance them from the youth who are still under their control. This letter expresses the profound dilemma that the religious-Zionist society, and in particular its educators, are facing. The ability to deal with those who are different without characterizing them as deviants is the test of survival for this society that finds itself in a period of change. The youths express their desire to belong to the society they grew up in, despite their lack of success in assimilating into the educational and/or social frameworks. As we can see from this letter, and also from the stories told by the youths in general, the dropping out is part of the process of losing faith which, according to the youth, is just that: a state of having no answers, no response. The youth describe the deep antipathy the adults display and their revulsion at the youth who lose faith, which also is expressed in their presentation of the youths as deviants.

Unfortunately for the settlers, in their struggle with the nonnormative youths they have created the opposite response to what they wanted. The normative youth have perceived the lack of honesty of the adults in their attempts to hide what is happening "outside" from them and this attracts them to joining up with those same young hilltop people who are not afraid of telling the truth and expressing criticism to the adults.

The farmer Yohanan, who, over the last few years, has found himself managing and working with youth who have come to work on his farm, understands the conflict that is illustrated in the story about Levi and his attempt to get a dwelling in the settlement and, as he shares his thoughts with me about the situation, he also expresses his criticism of the settlers' society.

Yohanan: The youth are bored, wander from place to place, smoke outside some-
where and do stupid things on some hilltop building some stupid thing. But what
do the people in the settlement care? Do you think they care? They're inside
their own bubble and don't see anything else. They must get into the heads of the
kids they just put them off and so lose them. They're losing a whole generation.

According to Yohanan, it is this rejection by the adults of the youth that
produces the deviation and pushes them toward making a new culture that,
perhaps, they wouldn't be attracted to if this inter-generational conflict didn't
exist. The mistake of the religious-Zionist society's adults in general, and that
of the settlers in particular, is their inability to include the young people that
have overstepped the norms. Yohanan accuses the adult generation of creat-
ing this subculture of marginal youth which turns its rage against society in
the form of political activism that also contains social criticism. Being a con-
servative, closed society, it ignores those who are different and does not allow
them in. According to the farmer, the settlers are not capable of dealing with
the atypical—so they choose to ignore them. This is the way a sociocultural
process in which young people form a different identity for themselves comes
into the world and they create a social framework called the "Hilltop Youth."

The following sections will present the individual stories of youths who
have come to the farms of South Mount Hebron and, as I have shown up to
here, the Hilltop Youth gang includes youths who have come to the region
spontaneously, not previously knowing anything about it. We will now see
how youth from different places with varied personal and social backgrounds
come to the region and, here, enter the category of marginal youth and
become, according to the regular supervision officer, dangerous. They tell
us about their long journeys which began with moments of crisis in their
families and includes complex adventures involving survival until they finally
arrived at the farms. Their arrival to the farms, which are liminal spaces in
which the youths find themselves as they go through a transitional passage, is
the beginning of a comprehensive and complex socialization process in which
the youths pass from wandering about without any ideological motivation to
socialization in a cultural group with a social and political ideology.

4. ADOLESCENCES AND SOCIALIZATION IN
THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT ZONE

Now we will see how the youth in the farms moved from their place as
"youth at risk" to deviant and rejected youth by the local society in South
Mount Hebron and how they became socially located as Hilltop Youth. As
part of their struggle with their self-image and the changes they underwent

and as a response to the way the adults perceived them, the youth fashioned expressions of social rebellion against the adult generation. These included the way they spent their free time in the areas of conflict which are neutral areas forbidden to both Israelis and Palestinians as places of permanent settlement. The youth want to demonstrate an alternative form of settlement and their nocturnal roaming between isolated hilltops and the erection of temporary unprotected, open buildings, without any fence or tower, expresses their "boots on the ground opposition" to the veteran form of settlement which they argue has become bankrupt.

By spending time in the wild space they choose to express their opposition to the way their society conducts itself. They are trying not only to lead toward a new social form of settlement but also to express their anger and criticism of the adults in the settlements who couldn't include them when they were undergoing crises as they were dropped from the normative track of being adolescents. What appears to be harmony—expressions of new settlement as a conformist component made toward the previous generation—is, in fact, a power that has turned against the adult generation and which is crystallizing and coming into being among the youth.

External Socialization—Spiritual Guidance

In the encounter of the youth with the regional space one can identify an additional component of socialization that is part of the process of identity formation of the youth in their journey to becoming Hilltop Youth which is over and above the role of the farmers as primary instruments of socialization. I will now present parts of articles published in the brochure on the Torah portion that is distributed each week in the synagogues and youth movements throughout Israel. The brochures are an informal social platform that makes it possible for religious Zionists to express their ideas about various political and social issues. The identities of the writers are very varied and include, on the one hand, rabbis and key figures from the religious-nationalist public and, on the other, young people and youth that want to express the things close to their hearts. The brochures and their contents are widely distributed and even if the Hilltop Youth do not browse through them on the Sabbath or afterward, the prevailing mood and the ideas that are relevant for them find their way to becoming part of their cultural structure as activist youth in the regional space.

The rabbis direct their words at the young people in the hope of arousing protest practices. They understand that the younger generation is full of the desire to act and if change is possible—it will come from them. Such texts appear every few weeks in the brochures, usually in the Sabbath ones, which are especially directed at the youth and young people. Not everybody reads

these texts but, if somebody does, he will pass the contents and the gist of things on, or sometimes just the spirit, to his friends when the issue of their social change and political activism comes up.

Rabbi Elyashiv Hacohen, who acts as the rabbi of the summer camps of the Bnei Akiva movement, talked about the potential power of the youth.

Hrav Elyashiv Hacohen: When the youth exercise their power most strongly they are happy. Young people have limitless powers that are irrepressible and when they discover them—like when climbing a hill and one sometimes also needs spiritual strength—they discover that they can do it. (Olam Katan, 313, Vaethanan, 12th Av, 5771)

The Bnei Akiva youth movement rabbi and his educator colleagues understand the reality in which young people are expected to go out and do things for values in general and, when needed, will be turned to and asked to take part in activities of a specific political nature. This is an appeal to the young people's subconscious and the adults wish to influence them through constructing a reality of social and political activism. They tell the young people about abilities and potentialities that the youth have inside them and that they are not aware of and, in this way, construct a reality that makes it possible for them to get organized for action when an important social issue has to be addressed. The weekly brochure is a platform for the adults who want to arouse the youth' nascent powers to action and thus fashion an activist identity for them that is antagonistic to ideological attitudes that oppose the settlement project and will be able to be utilized when needed. It appears that this structure is what is active in the youth when they go out to carry out nocturnal activities or have some unplanned encounter with Palestinian shepherds.

In many cases one can find critical passages and even full-page articles in the brochures that young people have themselves written in their desire to fashion a culture for themselves and their friends. They express their views in the brochures about the construction of a social and political reality in Israel in general, and in the settlements in particular.

Following are two pieces that have been written by young people that relate to the youth as a powerful social group that has the potential to make changes.

We are sorry about our pessimism but we simply see the evacuation of Judea and Samaria very soon before us. There is no longer any question about a Palestinian state … they are now discussing whether they should place the IDF on its borders. We, the youth for Eretz Yisrael, are gathered here. A precious youth! This is the time to wake up. To try and tie up a wild bear with orange ribbons is very nice but it is much smarter not to let him out of his cage in the first place. Everybody become aware! (Olam Katan, 238, Jethro, 22nd Shvat. 2070)

In the next section we will be able to see how the young people crystallize ideas and possible ways to act when they are designing a social-political protest. We will be able to read the insights of a young fifteen-year-old female writer about the need for propaganda. The column was published in a brochure entitled "Yesha Shelanu" (Our Judea and Samaria), the official brochure of the Judea and Samaria Council.

> My friends! This is the time to establish outpost strongholds,
>   propaganda strongholds! (…) we are young, full of motivation
>   To do and change things, we are not tied to the family we will have to
>   Raise and support and we have lots of time. We have to continue
>   To build the country but we have to embrace the media, to hold On strongly.
> We have to maintain a watch upon our ideology of settlement in all parts of our country. (Avigail Mendelsohn, fifteen years old from Tal Menasheh. Yesha Shelanu, 252, Tammuz 5771)

The two pieces assume as obvious that the youth group is a social category that can be used for the good of society. The writer is appealing to her peer group to start to act. She details the potential that exists in the power of youth that has an extra advantage that does not exist for the adults. The motivation for change together with convenient practical conditions place the youth, or so she claims, in a better position to work toward making changes. The youth are a social and cultural resource (Manheim, 1952) and as such they should act and assist at times of social crises. A possible interpretation of the metaphor used in the text from "Haolam Hakatan" is that the "bear" is nothing if not the youth, whose release from the cage is similar to the releasing of a wild animal back to nature. The orange ribbons are thus the symbol of protest against the abandonment of the Gaza Strip, a protest that, according to the writer of the text, was minor and insufficient—it was "nice" but did not arouse the wider Israeli public to oppose it. Over and above the call to the youth there is also criticism aimed at the adults who organized the struggle against carrying out the evacuation. The message is clear: we have to act like a bear that has been released from its cage—passionately and forcefully.

The Yesha council people understand that the period of adolescence can be accompanied by confusion and self-consciousness and they are trying to direct the energies of the youth toward the assimilation of their settlement ideology.

In a column that was published in the young people's brochure following the actions of "Tag Mehir" (Price Tag) in the region of Samaria, the young writer presents his criticism of the settlers' movement who not only doesn't adopt the aggressive ideology of the youth but also condemns them.

> "Enough with giving us a price tag"
>   The thing that most annoys me is that in our camp,

> In our settlements, all sorts of respectable people are
> Coming out and saying: It's the fault of the hilltop youth.
>
> It's just because of the media's brainwashing that we have become enemies in the eyes of the public, the army officers, the authorities, the police and even the Arabs—clearly they are the good guys … the time has come for us, the settlers themselves, to stand like a wall and declare: there's a limit! The army and police are not stationed here to extract a "price tag" from the hilltop youth. The time has come for our adults (who were once young people at Sebastia) to stand up for us and not condemn us. (Hanmael Dorfman, Olam Katan, 320, Yom Kippur, 5772)

Hanmael, the young writer, criticizes the settlers and accuses them not only of neglecting the way that they themselves established but also of betraying the younger generation. His outcry against them also expresses astonishment at how the young people of Sebastia "changed their stripes" when once they used force to achieve their goals. He argues that the violent practices that his peers are using on the hilltops are defensive tactics whose goal is to replace the defense bodies who have not mobilized themselves to carry out the task of guarding the hilltops. His view is that the adults in the settlements are distancing themselves from their identity of being the Hilltop Youth of the past who established the settlements. In this they are in league with the positions taken by the media and the Israeli society that oppose the actions of the hilltop youth. The adults have placed themselves on the wrong side of the argument and he demands that they return to their original ways they practiced when they were establishing the settlements.

The youth from the farms in South Mount Hebron adopt Hanmael's ideas and act according to their activist understanding of the way to change things. They adopt masochistic, aggressive jargon in everything connected with encounters with Palestinian farmers and in the way they act when erecting their temporary buildings on the hilltops.

5. BECOMING A *HILLTOP YOUTH*

Internal Socialization: "Since Then, The Arabs Don't Come Near Here ..." A Fight between Shepherds or a Nationalistic Conflict?

For the youth the spaces of South Mount Hebron are both a refuge and a home in which they can be find quiet and calm while they are forming their identities in the process of their adolescence. The time spent on the farm provides a flexible framework without any limiting rules, except for the work duties and the rules about how to behave in the sleeping quarters. This fact makes it possible for the youth to busy themselves with local questions about the local

area and its social and political issues. This lifestyle has led them to the creation of a flexible form of socialization by the farmers that, on the one hand, directs and guides then but, on the other, liberates the creative thinking of the adolescents and even leads to the construction of a new ideology. The following anecdote expresses the style of this socialization that allows the creation of rules and norms while living in the melting pot of the charged space and also shows how the youths use the space as an instrument for constructing a masculine identity as adolescents but, together with this, use it as a platform to demonstrate their settlement ideological practices.

Yaakov is a twenty-year-old soldier who worked on the Magen David farm for three years and made it his home to which he returns during his leave from the army. He tells me about a fight that took place in the past that he took part in when he was on the farm:

Yaakov: In the summer of 2008 there was this fight with the Arabs here because of which they opened two police files for me. On the other side of the farm an Arab shepherd came onto a dirt road on our territory. There were four of them, three adults and a kid, and I was alone there. I quickly contacted David and I wanted the two of us to go down to face them and frighten them a little. The soldier girl from the patrol unit that was here also told us not to go down there and I said to her: "What do you know! Just shut up. Shut up!" We went down and they were the ones who started the fight. We shouted to them that they had come onto our land and I shouted wildly that that they should simply get out. Then, what happened was I was arguing with two of them and David was with another one. Suddenly one of them punched David and I jumped on him and he had a pipe in his hand with which he hit me. I had scars all over my back. I got really mad and took the pipe from him and opened up his jaw … all of this was on our land and the Arabs also admit that these are our fields. He says to me: "I only want to go through here to the well of our fathers." I said: "I don't care. Go around. Why do you have to go through my fields?" Their sheep eat up all our crop—even the weeds but they don't care about anything—just what's good for their grazing. But, why go into our fields? Why, what happened? And they were just provoking us on purpose. They came up here and the girl soldier told them not to. But they didn't take any notice of her because she was just a girl soldier. But, you know what? Since that incident the Arabs don't come near here anymore.

The event expresses the two claims made by the youth in their encounter with the space and demonstrates for us how they create an atmosphere of tension and rivalry. The tension provides a limitless number of opportunities for a confrontation between Jews and Palestinians. In the case before us the youth chose to use the encounter to actualize two components of identity. First, despite the warnings and advice of the adults around them—including

the farmer who was close to them—they mark the physical and ideological border in the space through confrontation and thus produce a position of power and masculinity, an important component of the personal identity they wish to form for themselves. Second, by taking a steadfast position against the Palestinian shepherds they are criticizing the previous generation of the settlers and, in doing so, they clarify their own connection with an ancient, authentic past. In the words of the Palestinian shepherd the water well is part of his connection to his ancient forebears and wants "to go through here to the well of our fathers," not only on the technical level but also on the ideological level—and the youth very clearly understand this. They identify the Palestinian's claim to a historical link with the place and "stand their ground" to demonstrate their own connection with the well when they say: "The well belongs to our forefathers and not to yours." This is an attempt by the youth to present the ideological struggle between Lot's shepherds and Abraham,[3] a struggle over the identity of the regional space, as a conflict between shepherds who are fighting over a well (Benvenisti, 1995). They are attempting to hide the essence of the conflict by making it into just a conflict between neighbors but, in opposition to the view of the famer that they should allow the shepherds to use the dirt road in his property and so avoid a possible confrontation, the youth choose to express their views about the way to actualize the idea of settlement through making a violent claim to ownership of the land. They learned the principle of demonstrating force to the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria from the previous generation who established the settlements but they apply this principle in more extreme ways, which sometimes involve physical confrontations. The use of the component of "scare tactics," as told by Yehuda, serves then in both these things, the demonstration of violent force whose aim is the actualization of a masculine identity and also the demand for a social order that is different from that presented to them by the adults. This masculinity is also expressed in the brusque ignoring of the female soldier who, in their words, "doesn't understand anything." According to their way of thinking about women, because she is "just a girl soldier," she has no power or authority over them. In this practice, which is characteristic of these youth in their free time, the expression of masculinity and aggressiveness is their way of dealing with two issues of identity: one which is personal and another which is both national and local. The story they tell themselves expresses a social statement whose goal is to protest about the way the previous generation of settlers are dealing with the idea of settlement on the local and national level at a time when the future of settlement is being questioned.

The following case describes a similar situation of a classic clash between shepherds that is given an ideological interpretation by the youth in the regional space.

Yaron, a young person of twenty-one, has been living in the Har Sinai farm for about a year after having left his parents' home in Arad—a south-east city from Beer-Sheva. He did not serve in the army because of the police have files on him involving delinquency. His job on the farm is to graze the sheep. Yaron goes out twice a day with the flock of 200 sheep and goats and every grazing period takes 4–6 hours. Yaron surprises me with his ability to identify the sheep and goats that are dominant and lead the flock and has given them names to make the identification easier. From time to time he can be heard calling out to them in the following way: "Tsippi, come here! Now I said!" After he throws a stone at her she comes. Yaron explains to me that Tsippi is called after Mrs. Tsippi Leevni (previous foreign minister), and so on. He really talks to them, comforts them and asks them to get up when they have to. When I ask him what the boundaries of the pasturing area are, up to where he allows himself to take the flock, he tells me about an incident that happened to him involving a Palestinian shepherd when he was grazing the flock.

Yaron: They, more or less, told me, in principle, where to go, and what areas that it's better to avoid so as not to get into some mess, but, if truth be told, there is no boundary. Look, right now I can go past this olive tree, down there and I go over the border. Why? Who decided that this is the border? Why is that olive tree already not in the territory of the Jews? In short, what happened was that one day I came to that area down there next to the wadi because the animals went in that direction and that was fine with me. I planned to continue from there to the right and then to the well, to let them drink and come back to the farm. While I was wandering around in the wadi I suddenly saw another flock of sheep and understood that an Arab shepherd was coming in my direction. I started to call all the sheep to me and he comes up and starts shouting in Hebrew and Arabic using all sorts of curse words. I didn't understand everything but I did understand the word "Yahud" (Jew) and the words "Ruh min hon!" which means "Get out of here!" I immediately got mad. Who the hell was he to kick me out of here? The nerve of him! I walked up to him and also cursed him and continued on with my flock. All of a sudden a few more Arab kids turned up so I contacted Ophir on my radio phone because I understood there was going to be trouble. Ophir got here in a couple of minutes with another two guys and there was a fight. And then Ophir called the border police and they came here really quickly and it was all over. I continued on with the flock in order to walk in the direction of home. Now understand! From my point of view what happened doesn't matter at all. If I got punched or someone threw stones at me or I cursed somebody or punched him. What was important was the fact that I don't take them into account and that they shouldn't, for a moment, think that this is their territory. Do you think he can tell me where I can and cannot go? As if this land belongs to them! What were they thinking? They're living in a dream world!

We can learn about the way the youth see things involving the question of whose land it is from Yaron's description and interpretation of this event. As in the story of the fight that Yaakov presented, this encounter with the shepherds could have been avoided if the Jewish shepherd had so chosen.

Yaron chose to ignore the boundaries that his superiors had informed him of, which were, from the beginning, virtual borders that were open to interpretation, and in doing so wished to present his claims about these borders and question the validity of their existence. From his point of view these borders were nonexistent and he rejected them just as he rejects political personalities whose ideas he opposes when he names his sheep after them to indicate the level of his respect for them. The evidence he directs toward areas that are not defined as permitted for Jews to graze their sheep expresses his claim for possession of the land. Moreover the expected confrontation serves him as a means of demonstrating his power over the shepherd from the neighboring village who wished to define these areas as belonging to him. The young Jewish shepherd could have just separated himself from the Palestinian shepherd, backtracked and still have created the impression he wanted to. He wasn't satisfied with just physically going over the border of his territory for a visit in order to demonstrate his criticism of establishing a boundary for his pasture rights which, from his point of view, meant that, after all, only part of the regional space belonged to him. Thus he initiated a "media" confrontation of such a nature that it would be engraved in the hearts of the participants. By creating this violent event Yaron both strengthens his claims and clarifies them to himself and others. What we have before us is the creation of an encounter situation which is aimed at, and exploits, the demonstration of power and control.

Whose Water Well Is This? The Creation of a Confrontation as a Means to Demonstrate Ownership

Over and above the question of the problematic borders as described, there is an interesting symbolic component that arouses tensions between the parties. There are a number of artificial wells spread around the pasturing and agricultural area and the shepherds of both parties quite often find themselves fighting over the right get water for their flocks. Because the question of the borders is still unresolved the ownership of the wells is also unresolved since the wells are always in the regional space that belongs to one of them.

Ophir, a farmer from the Har Sinai farm, describes the arrival of left-wing activists whose goal was to create provocation around the use of the well.

Ophir: On day I received a telephone call from our shepherd who ran across some left wing activists who were at the well and were preventing him from

giving the flock water. It's just next to Mitspeh Yair or, more correctly, next to the cemetery. I immediately ran to the place and saw a group of about fifteen people who were kind of helping a Palestinian to plough. What happened was they brought a towable water tanker and connected up to the well to draw some water—from the well we use to let our flock drink. Every day a left wing activist, Ezra Nawi has been there and wanders around here with the Arabs and creates provocations with the media. What's funny here is that with this well, in particular, we don't have any dispute with the villagers. We even reached agreement to share the water of this well equally. In brief it was all much ado about nothing and it was clear that their intention was to create a provocation. Then the nasty stuff began. I began to pull out the pipe that the activists had connected to the well and they jumped on me while I was pulling out the pipe. One of the women there started to tear off my trousers and then tore my shirt. Of course an army jeep came immediately, fenced off the place and declared it a close military area and told everybody to leave. You understand? This all happened because of a few left wing activists who came here to cause a provocation.

The Jewish farmer describes a reality of ideal relations with his Palestinian neighbor regarding this specific well and the equal distribution of the water, but when people come whose whole purpose, as he sees it, is to create a provocation he cannot ignore it and he reacts. He chooses to be dragged into a confrontation with people he defines as left-wing activists and fight over the well as a symbol. From his point of view the water well is a cultural resource. Usually, he claims, he doesn't have any problems about using the well with his Palestinian neighbors and only when people manipulate him by creating a confrontation, which he claims had never happened before, does he insist upon taking a position about who owns the well.

In other words, on the overt level of this anecdote one can see that he views the well as being something shared by him and his neighbor but, in fact, he doesn't act according to this. He fights over the well as though it belongs to him and only to him. If he had chosen to ignore the visit of the left-wing activists he would have thus demonstrated his indifference to the question of to whom the well belongs—since it is shared anyway. The firm position he takes against the provocative activity of drawing water expresses his uncompromising, forceful attitude toward the subject of who can use the well. From his point of view the well, like all the other wells in the regional space, belongs to him and is for the exclusive use of his shepherds. As far as proper neighborly relations or any kind of agricultural cooperation are concerned he works according to a business contract that deals with the resource with his partners. When the farmer fights over the well he wants remind everybody that this resource is not really shared. The event of the confrontation over the well demonstrates how the socialization has been passed on to

the second generation of settlers and receives a more extreme expression. The farmer adheres to the settlers' view about whom the land belongs to and he demonstrates a stubborn fight for the well that is shared by him and the Palestinians—who are his neighbors. When the group of left-wing activists arrives the farmer claims ownership and does not mention the fact that the well is shared. From his point of view the rival has changed from being his neighboring Palestinians to being his Jewish brothers. When the curtain comes down the rivalry between him and his neighbor will vanish.

"Hilltop and Tower"

One of my first encounters with the youth of the region took place at the beginning of autumn in 2007. I met Didi, a young man of eighteen, who had already spent a year at the Magen David farm. He suggested we pop over to visit some friends in a tent near the Jewish cemetery. I was happy about the opportunity and after a few minutes' drive in my car we arrived at the Susia cemetery. A three-minute walk through a pine forest that overlooked the cemetery brought us to a large tent inside of which were ten mattresses on the ground strewn out on rugs. The tent had three sides and the opening faced a shed of about twenty square meters which was used as a kitchen in which there was a sink with a tap that provided water from a large plastic tank suspended above it, a table and several chairs, eating utensils and a gas cooker. Two menacing dogs were tied up by rope to one of the corners of the shed. Didi introduced me to the three residents of the tent and explained to me that the tent was not used every night.

Didi: This is a tent erected by somebody who isn't here anymore but who once was here for almost a year and worked now and then at the Har Sinai farm and came here to sleep at night. We used to join him in the evenings to smoke a little and grill some food and now Michael is trying to make the place his.

Michael: Listen. I first came here to in order to stay and not just have a good time. I have a great place; I look after it well and, with these two dogs, nobody comes near. The whole area here is open and full of Arabs roaming around here near the plant nursery. There have already been thefts and they also bring their flocks here as though this is their territory. Our well is up there and they go up there as well. Now that I am here everything is different and there is no way they will come up here or bring there their flocks—not here and not to the well up there.

Michael and his friends gather together in the tent and spend their free time there everyday. Spending time here imitates earlier settlement practices particularly the "Tower and stockade"[4] settlements of the period of the struggle to establish Jewish settlements during the years before independence. They are presenting a model that emphasizes the importance of their political

activism and the time they spend in the tent expresses the alternative meaning that they want to give to settlement. The youth have no fear of the tense environment, the danger of encountering violent Palestinians or the possibility of becoming involved in some act of terrorism and they exhibit a form of living that is completely open, isolated from any population and without any fence. Michael views his living in the place as filling the function of defending the regional space. He believes that his presence helps to guard the property and, even more important, the land. The youth wants to demonstrate his concept of ownership of the wild spaces through his staying in the temporary tent. What bother him, he claims, are the material things and not the spiritual, the equipment and property and not the identity of the land. Although water from the well is presented here as a material resource, it also expresses a spiritual and ideological struggle since the water from the well is drinking water that allows the shepherd and his flock to live and is thus a symbolic source strength and vitality. The well, as a cultural text that contains social and national meaning, expresses not only the idea of plenty but also connection with the nation and its land.

What we have here is an adolescent practice that adopts the tower and stockade settlement model of the Hebrew settlement period in which temporary buildings, that is, a tower with a fence around it, were erected and symbolized the building of a future settlement. The tower here has been replaced by a tent and the fence by threatening watch dogs. In their activist practice the youth take the familiar model and add to it and, through their nocturnal activities in the tent together with their roaming around the nearby surroundings they reenact "going out beyond the fence" that symbolizes creating facts on the ground. The replacement of the fence with watch dogs suggests offence as the best form of defense.

The youth want to construct an alternative reality for settlement, the reality of anarchy, control and aggressiveness. What superficially seems to be a temporary tent, of a feckless bunch of young people, reveals itself to be an exhibit in the regional space that embodies the meanings of settlement and the struggle for the land. In other words the free-time routine of the youth is not only a classic adolescent practice of the type found in youth gangs in urban centers or at the beach but also a mission-oriented practice aimed at achieving political and national goals. In their social meetings in the improvised strongholds the young people clarify, for themselves and others, the issues of social and political identity and, through demonstrating an alternative ideology of settlement, they construct an old-new practice and form an independent identity for themselves as the new settlers.

Because I had my own car in the research field I found myself becoming a kind of taxi driver taking the youth from one social meeting to another. The culture of these youth includes smoking from a hookah together in a group,

sometimes playing the guitar, drinking coffee and smoking cigarettes. What is special about these gatherings is , that apart from the youth working on the farms in agriculture and shepherding and so roaming around the wild regional space and challenging the vague borders, the fact that they choose to spend their free time roaming around the points of "conflict." In a specific event that I witnessed about ten young people from the area, erected the" Flag Hilltop" overnight whose purpose they explained to me was "to be."

Itamar, a seventeen-year-old from the Susia settlement, interprets this practice for us:

> It isn't anything. After all it's clear to everyone that the hilltop will be evacuated and the buildings destroyed the next day by the border police—usually without any interference on our part. The idea is quite simply "to be there." I build in order to build. Do you understand? No problem. Let them break it up—we'll build it again. There's nothing to wait for, even if we don't build it now, we'll continue building. So we shouldn't build at all? I don't intend to get into a fight with the "magavniks" (border police). Only puncture their tires. They come here to evacuate us and I tell them to give us a week and I will evacuate. I take everything down there and they have no chance of getting to it because it's very difficult even for tractors.

Figure 4.5   The "Flag Hilltop".

Figure 4.6   The "Flag Hilltop", Inside the Shed: A Day before Israeli Police Border Ordered to Disassemble the Place.

The idea of settlement is changing and is even receiving an aggressive push forward by the boys through activities whose goal is to express rebellion, to make people angry and to demonstrate protest. Over and above the political and diplomatic protest they want to protest against the previous generation of settlers who have remained privately wishing for things in their close settlements.

As part of adolescence and the experimentation whose goal is "to be some-body" and on the background of the sociocultural struggle their society find itself in, the youth are trying out new forms of living, sometimes through employing rebellious behavior, even if they do not declare it to be such. In the socialization process the youth go through with their arrival to the farms, and during their time there, somebody teaches them how to work and act. They translate the knowledge they acquire form the farmers into their political activities.

Let's return for a moment to the 'Tire Hilltop" and examine how the youth view the adults who are found a few hundred meters away from them.

On another wintery night I am surprised to discover that the tire tent is still standing despite the civil authority's notice placed on a boulder in the entrance which announced its evacuation on the chosen date: today.

Figure 4.7   The "Flag Hilltop".

Shlomi, accompanied by two friends, receive me very happily. Two Amstaff pups jump around me in some kind of vital aggressiveness. Shlomi brought them here to guard the place and they remain tied up even when no one is here. Shlomi and Zohar, two eighteen year olds, are working outside

Figure 4.8   A lookout from the "Tire Hilltop" to the "Flag Hilltop".

the tent hammering nails into boards that will later on be a stand for a water tank outside the tent.

Zohar: Listen to what I am going to tell you now. People here don't care. They have their homes, great for them, inside the settlement; everything is legal. What do they need all this mess for? It only does them damage because the Arabs keep a greater watch on them. They get up in the morning and, all of a sudden, they see a tent. That's why we do this at night. That's the whole idea. But they don't interfere and kind of shut one eye to all this. For them it's great. When people start living in the areas near them it safeguards them and, in fact, actually increases the size of the neighborhood. Just think about it. This was a neighborhood at the rear of Susia and now it's behind you. Understand? It works out well for them—those people in the settlement.

The texts before us show how the youth have formed a model for conformity in the settlement activities of the nation's pioneers and those who followed them: the young people of Sebastia and the generation that established the settlements. What is different about the Hilltop Youth is their perception of the regional space as obvious, as already existing. The youth, as opposed to the previous generation, were born into the reality of the settlements and

their efforts focus upon changing this existing reality and not upon creating a new reality. From what they say, however, one can understand that they understand that their role in the political and social arena does not go beyond sounding a critical voice against the older generation. The erection of temporary buildings on hilltops near the settlements is not a real attempt to establish a stronghold but an attempt to focus attention on a change in the way the regional space is viewed by the founding generation. They are motivated by events that take place around them and react to them with improvisation. Zohar and his friends do not get excited about a border police jeep coming to dismantle their improvised stronghold and they even declare that they want to be peaceful—relatively. The puncturing of tires, as it is presented here by the youth, expresses the need they have to voice their protest. The puncturing of tires might be enough to engender a response and declare: "We are here!" By adopting aggressive practices the Hilltop Youth they want to add a chapter to the story of the settlers by way of a form of conformity that distances them from the norms their parents defined for their society but answers the need for the "authentic" values they are said to have. They are trying to make the margins into the center and convert themselves from being marginal youth into being the central stream that operates in the interests of society.

As I have shown, the regional space, as liminal, makes it possible for the social groups in it to remain in a state of passage and their liminality forms fluid and chaotic behavior that reacts to circumstances. To this point, however, that the border region demonstrates its liminality and so perpetuates its anti-structural characteristics it is, contrarily, we can see how it's able to impel people on to the next stage—the stage of renewed connection.

6. THINKING ABOUT THE "DAY AFTER"

The presentation of the culture of the Hilltop Youth reveals the way the youth move along the axis of conformity and rebelliousness. What Zohar says in the last piece can be seen to say that they understand their actual function in the settlement project and how they are an instrument that serves the purposes of settlers' society. This means that, despite the opposition they display toward the conservative ideas and positions of the founding generation they understand that they are partners in the same settlement movement. On the one hand, the youth display loyalty to the settlement values and to the claims of Jewish ownership of the land and, on the other, they express criticism of the practices used by the adult generation to actualize these values so they suggest other, more extreme actions. A result of this movement from rebelliousness to conformity and back again can help us examine their views regarding their assimilation into the army as a way of expressing their

return to normativeness and to the central stream of the religious-Zionist society in Israel. The youths' aspiration to enlist in the army expresses a desire to belong to the general society which is the society from which they dropped out several years earlier. All the youth I knew told me about their future ambitions for the day they left the region. In this way I learned how they see themselves as being only temporary in the settler landscape and, after presenting another future, they expressed their thinking about whether their illegal activities in the region were worthwhile in terms of benefits as opposed to losses. If this so, then what we have before us is a methodology of a ritual process that expresses passage (Van Gennep, 1960) that includes coming to the space, assimilating to it and leaving it in preparation for receiving another status. The following sections will show the mood and aspirations of the youth.

Motti, a young man of twenty, who was exempted from army service because of having criminal files involving violence toward Palestinians, tells us about his aspirations for another life.

Motti: Believe me—I'm dying to enlist in the army. As far as I'm concerned, even at my age when I'm not eighteen. Of course I want to contribute to the army and the country. If I didn't have a criminal record I would go as far as I could in the army. Afterwards I would go and finish my matriculation certificate and get myself organized. I would fix everything I didn't do during my high school years and childhood and then I would learn a trade—university wouldn't be for me—but a trade that would allow me to support a family would.

There is regret in what Motti says and a desire to improve and change his life in the future. He talks about fixing the things from his childhood and presents his present and past as being unsuccessful periods, as things he wishes to change and succeed. From his point of view army service and studies for the matriculation certificate are expressions of success and a normal future. From his point of view roaming the hilltops and political activism are temporary things and do not threaten his future chances of returning to the normative life he ran away from.

Jeremy, a young Englishman of twenty who left his ultra-orthodox family, half of whom still live in England, also tells me how the years he spent in the region and the work on the farm have been central to the forming of his normative life today.

Jeremy: During this period I developed self-confidence, learned what responsibility is and, from being a wandering, doped up delinquent, became a man with a personality. I know today that I want to enlist in the army, become an Israeli citizen and part of society; to serve and be a regular person.

From Jeremy's point of view the long period he spent working on the farm, because of the need to deal with the regional space with all its social and political meanings, was a springboard to a another future. In other words both of the youth understand that their political activities and social messages had a validity that would come to an end when they left the farm. As one can see the youth are thinking about their futures and are interested in their being normal so that they can return the central stream of society they initially left. Serving in the army is part of being a "normal person" for Jeremy and his friends, not more political and social arguments about ownership of the tension charged regional space. Leaving the farm also means leaving the hilltop and, from this, we can learn that the youth use the space as a means of creating a protest. They construct a connection between their political and social ideas and the place in which they are living. After leaving the place they turn to other ideals that also involve egocentric thinking and existential questions about their personal futures.

NOTES

1. Yeshiva is a studies institute for "THORA" and other Jewish tradition on its variety aspects.
2. Braslov is a Hasidic Judaism founded by Rebbe Nachman of Breslov (1772–1810). The Breslov approach places great emphasis on serving God through joy and happiness. It became very familiar and popular by the youth of the settlements, and some hilltop youths.
3. Genesis 13:5–13.
4. Tower and stockade was a settlement method used by Zionist early settlers in Mandatory Palestine during the 1936–39.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

While doing ethnography of South Mount Hebron, as a border area, I have found it as a wild, open space and blurring of the border. The countless pasturing conflicts and the treasure trove of ideas waiting to be adopted that can be improved or rejected in this region are fertile grounds for creating a Hilltop Youth subculture. The region contains a treasure trove of ideas and possibilities that act as a basis for the construction of an ideology. The youth come to the hilltops after experiencing a long and exhausting journey after having being cut off from their families and close surroundings and they want, more than anything else, to find some respite and quiet. The isolated farms not only provide the minimal conditions for the adolescents but also the farmers' attentive ear, company and support. This work raises most important and interesting conclusions for the understanding of this youth group which the media and Israeli society has become used to calling—as a generally manner—the "Hilltop Youth."

The first conclusion is the origins of the youth and, from what we have learned from their personal stories, we can see that most of them came to the area in a completely spontaneous way after having wandered around in different places looking for a home and are not the second generation of the settlers. This phenomenon of absorbing wandering youth organized itself in the form of informal hostels which, in time, have become a framework for educators and learners. The youth accept the instruction of the farmer and, surprisingly, attest to the fact that the framework is necessary for them and the process of their personal development. They learn the different trades of farming, develop independence, discipline, cooperation and values (Kahaneh, 1986; Kashtee & Arielli, 1977).

Second, the spontaneous arrival of the youth to the farms supports the understanding that this is a special arena that one can learn from about

informal rehabilitation institutes, including those that have no defined structure of order and organization. Over and above researching formal youth institutes such as boarding schools and youth movements, it is worth studying youth organizations that do not belong to any kind of social body. In this context the phenomenon of the Hilltop Youth is both unique and intriguing. Apart from the farmer, whose aim is to safeguard and manage his agricultural activity, there is no leader, or educator, who leads the organization of the youth in their activities. Their ideological world opens up through the time they spend in the wide open spaces and, to some degree, the organization of the youth is reminiscent of street gangs which are characterized by spontaneous gathering and the construction of social norms and values but do not belong to any social group that is supported by the adult generation. (Shorer, 1993; Diego Vigil, 1998). The phenomenon that is being investigated here, however, is less like the street gangs as they are described in the research literature and this study proposes to examine the Hilltop Youth gangs as an informal institution because of the way the farms host them. The farms not only act as frameworks of rehabilitation and a warm and protective home for the youth but also as fertile bed for the development social and political ideas.

I have shown how a fluid form of socialization takes place between the farmers and the youth with, on the one hand, the passing on of educational messages and values and, on the other, interpretations, the development of unrealistic aspirations and the construction of a reality. One can also interpret the process of adolescence of the youth in this place according to what Mauss argues (2005). According to the social model, we will be able to see how the youth carry out negotiations between themselves and the host society of farmers and the settler community. The youth gain fertile grounds for the development of ideas, an arena for expressing ideology and tools for fashioning a personal identity in their adolescence. The society that found itself reacting to the reality of their appearance in the regional space, in fact, receives ideological and physical support for the existence of the settlements because the Hilltop Youth act as a protective buffer that protects the settlements when they are spread out around it and so limit the movement of the Palestinians near the settlements.

More than these expressions of harmony the youth want to present a subculture opposed to the founding generation of the settlements. Through their activities during their free time, the demonstrations of strength against the Palestinian agriculturalists and the erection of temporary buildings on the hilltops surrounding the settlements the youth gangs present a different way of settlement. Through contending with the politically and socially tension-filled environment while undergoing identity formation in the process of their adolescence, the youth face up to the challenge of settlement that they claim has been neglected by the generation of founders.

In the practices that were adopted from stories of the settlement heroes of the 1970s the youth challenge those same founders who are now living a few hundred meters away from the hilltop. The erection of temporary buildings and nocturnal roaming around the wild spaces express a demonstration of strength, masculinity and protest by "walking the land."

We have thus seen how the hilltop gangs consolidate around rebellion against "parents" and opposition to the religious lifestyle that was imposed upon them—sometimes too aggressively. The expression of this rebellion may seem to us to be pointless wandering about but upon examining this more deeply one can identify the creation of an ideological system and cultural practice. One might have expected to find youth born in the settlements who had absorbed the meanings that their parents had endowed the regional space with among the Hilltop Youth but, instead, what we see at first glance is a picture of chaos. In time, however, this clears up and we see an organized presentation of a subculture. The youth come to the hilltops spontaneously having had no connection with each other except for one common denominator—the search for a new life. In other words, against all our expectations to find an organic, organized group of young ideologically inspired people who are the next generation of the settlement project, we discover temporary and spontaneous organization and the development of an ideology through time spent in the regional space during which they learn to understand the complex environment.

The third conclusion is focused together with the youth' first introduction and the choice to remain in the area of Mount Hebron is not accidental. In fact this point embodies the development of the cultural phenomenon. On their journey to becoming Hilltop Youth the youth were not only exposed to rejection by the adults of the host society but, at an earlier stage than this, by the communities from which they were omitted. From the stories of the youth we can see the feelings of isolation and the lack of openness on the part of their parents when they chose to distance themselves from religion. From the letters to the brochures that deal with the weekly interpretation of the Torah portion a picture is drawn of the adults' lack of control of the youths' actions that point an accusing finger at the educational frameworks about their status as rejectees. Thus in the search for a society that would absorb and include their difference the youth come to the wild spaces of South Mount Hebron that are characterized by the primary fact that there is no significance here to borders and so it is the optimal place for young people who have not been able to deal with borders. This book show how the youth, who are totally independent of each other, find a place to stay in the regional space in which they might find physical and spiritual refuge. The longer their stay is, the more the youth adapt lifestyles, norms and behaviors for themselves. The region which is charged with social and political conflicts becomes an arena

for their adolescence and their choice of this way leads them to adopting forms of behavior that, in the past, characterized the young people of Sebastia (Kaniel, 2004). They express closeness to nature and crossing boundaries and, in this way, express conformity with the characteristics of the earlier generation of settlers and their values—but in more extreme ways and using newer means. In this way an agricultural farm on a far off hilltop became an informal institution of rehabilitation and either a greenhouse for the cultivation of a new and threatening subculture or, perhaps, only the transitory expression of youthful rebellion.

This research has raised several interesting points that can make some contribution to the social knowledge about the Hilltop Youth and offer something new to contemporary research literature.

a. Over and above the social issues that were raised the one have to note the anthropological study before us as a groundbreaking study of the Hilltop Youth in particular and of the settlers in general. This study is one of the only ones of its kind that deals with settlement in the post-modern era (Friedman, 2007; Friedman, 2010). The pioneering studies of Gush Emunim focused upon the settlement movement during the 1980s and 1990s and mainly dealt with the attempt to understand the ideological, social and cultural character of the movement (Aran, 1987; Feige, 1995; Sprinzak, 1985, Newman, 1995). Apart from two studies carried out twenty years ago, there has been no anthropological research work carried out that interested itself in the routine life of the settlers in a period of change. The advantage of a work like this is that it can assist the researcher gain as close a vantage point as possible to the point of view of those being researched. Beyond the research about the ideology and social structure of the settlers, it is also important to understand the development of culture especially in the period of social and political turmoil and change that we are experiencing today. Moreover, since the protests about the process of disengagement appeared on television in 2005, the Hilltop Youth gangs, which both interest and challenge Israeli society, have sealed themselves behind defensive walls that are closed both to people inside and outside. Apart for the rare journalist who has come on some well-timed visit, there has been no one who has done any thorough and comprehensive field research like the one presented here that deals with the demographic characteristics, the cultural practices and ideological development of the Hilltop Youth as part of the development of a sociocultural profile of this group. The anthropological work presented here manages to touch upon sensitive issues involving tensions and conflicts between the three groups following the revelation of covert messages that are impossible to get to in any other way than through direct personal contact of the kind that is

necessary in anthropological field research. The observation and conversations that were collected during the intensive days and nights, which including sleeping over, stays on the farms, as well as texts provided by the research subjects, helped me to construct a more complete picture than was previously available—even though it is limited to the personal insights of the research subjects (Geertz, 1973, Shkedi, 2003).

b. This research relates to the settlements as an accomplished fact which means that the farmers and the Hilltop Youth joined the settlers—existing, established settlements—and wished to put down roots and become part of the regional space while ignoring the existence of another ethnic group— the Palestinians. The research describes the joining of this different group to the region that was already charged with political and ethnic-religious tension and relates to it as an accomplished product. The settlers ignoring of the Palestinians in the story being told here is an expression of the control and power they have over the region. It is the existence of the agricultural farms and the Hilltop Youth that bothers them—not the Palestinians. While it was already possible to conclude from earlier studies that the settler population is generally characterized by homogeneity and harmonious internal relations this study shows disharmony and settlement that is not uniform or clear. The previous decade opened up with turmoil following regular terrorist attacks. The disengagement from Gaza in 2005 undermined the confidence of the settlers and drove them toward creating chaos and lack of control as well as feelings of the end of a period which spread throughout their society (Feige, 2009). The events created new groups of settlers who brought people with different ideologies and practices from those of the central, dominant group in the settlements to the Judea and Samaria regions. The work here shows how the central group deals with the appearance of the new groups around them and describes its attempts to impose homotopic order in the region (Foucault, 2003). From its point of view the only one way to make this possible was to construct a homogeneous reality for the region. With the publication of this study I would like to show that this society, which over the last few decades has gained absolute social and political control over the region and has presented itself to the outside world as a harmonious society marked by homeostasis, now is revealed to have a different face that expresses confusion, and a lack of confidence and uniformity.

1. The present study shows that the settlers' society is going through a period of change and has also revealed the ways it deals with this change. The way of the settlers has always been marked by ups and downs as well as by being alternately closer and more distant from public opinion in Israel both socially and politically (Lebel & Billig, 2013; Sprinzak, 1985). In a period in which there is disengagement

and the evacuation of stronghold settlements the settlers are concerned about the unclear future and, even though they show it differently to the outside world, they are preparing themselves for the day that they will have to deal with decision to be evacuated. Because of this they are not free to deal with the demographic changes they are going through and are worried that the social groups that are different from them are causing the settlements to appear to be alien to the rest of the Israeli public and that this is a step that might distance Israeli society from the settlement project as a whole. The settlers are busy trying to establish public opinion that will advance the political interests of the settlements (Gramsci, 2004). The appearance of the farmers and the Hilltop Youth in the region is undermining the practical and ideological hold that the settlers have over the settlement project in the area and they feel that the ground is giving away under them. The struggle therefore not only touches upon one or more grazing areas but upon the form that the settlement project will have in the future in Israel.

2. Another new finding that this research offers also touches upon the Hilltop Youth. In the study one can see that the youth come from a variety of social groups and persuasions in Israel despite the widespread belief in Israel, mostly fed by the media, that the youth are the children of the settlers and are the second generation of the settlement founders who are expressing classic socialization in their behavior. What I found in the arena were the children of ultra-orthodox families who had lost faith alongside national-religious youth from the center of Israel and youth who had parted from educational frameworks in South Mount Hebron. The common denominator for the youth was their need to get away from the normative social frameworks. The first new finding relates to the way they come to the regional space and what we found was that their gathering together in the farms was coincidental and was not based upon any Zionist ideological beliefs about settlement. Not one of the youth admitted to any values or principles that motivated his coming to the region. In other words, over and beyond the natural assumptions I have presented here about youthful rebellion and the development of a subculture that has a national-political outlook that they have fashioned for themselves, I have shown how the appearance of the youth in the region has swept the settlers into a social debate about the question of who should belong and who should be removed from the local society. I learned that, ironically, the youth are social outcasts in the local settlements and are not seen to be settlers who make any contribution to the central social system.

   The Hilltop Youth, who have found themselves to be "stuck" in the heart of this social-political complexity, have presented their beliefs

in their own uniquely cultural way. The conclusion that can be made from the study here is that the Hilltop Youth gangs are a temporary phenomenon that will pass. Their spontaneous gathering together and their aspirations for self-rehabilitation are expressions of their search for meaning, identity and a home. From what they have learned on the farms about ideology and settlement, as it is described in this study, we can see that their coming to the region did not arise out of any clear Zionist goal and that they formed their ideas in the daily routine of the farm. Their declared ambition to enlist in the army and to leave the region only strengthens my claim about this temporary state. They are thinking about what happens next, afterward, and they understand that their protest activities are nothing but foolish pranks and that, even though their personal futures are unclear—they do not intend to adopt such a pattern in their adult lives.

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About the Author

Shimi Friedman spent several years doing research into children's identity construction and youth subcultures, including extensive ethnographic studies in Silwan Village, Jerusalem and south Hebron. His innovative findings have been published as chapters in books and academic journals. His analyses are depth and extent on his command of the subject of youth subcultures—its present-day manifestations, its psychosocial aspects and its political dimension. He has developed important insights from his twin interests of settler society and youth and adolescents, while his fascinating research on hilltop youth displays novel insights into the changes that settler society is undergoing, and has played a significant part in advancing the body of available knowledge in the field of Israel studies. He holds a PhD from the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. He teaches at Ariel University, in Sociology and Education.