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The image of the Amish in the *New York Times* versus the image of the Haredim¹ in *Haaretz* (1980-2010)²

Kurzfassung: Der vorliegende Aufsatz vergleicht die Presseberichterstattung über die Beziehung zweier ultra-religiöser Gruppen, der Amish-Gemeinde in den USA und der Haredi-Gemeinde in Israel, zu ihren jeweiligen Staaten. Obwohl die Amish in Israel mitunter als "amerikanische Haredim" bezeichnet werden, gibt es bedeutende Unterschiede zwischen den beiden Gruppen und ihrer Darstellung in den Medien. Nichtsdestotrotz gibt es aber auch hinreichend viele Ähnlichkeiten, um einen Vergleich zu rechtfertigen.

Im Wesentlichen spiegeln die Unterschiede der Berichterstattung über die beiden Gruppen in der *New York Times* und in *Haaretz* die grundlegenden Unterschiede ihrer Stellung in ihrer jeweiligen Gesellschaft und ihrer Haltung gegenüber dem Staat wider. Während die Amish die USA als "land of freedom" akzeptieren, betrachten die Haredim Israel nicht als einen wirklich jüdischen Staat. Während sich der Dialog zwischen den Amish und ihrem Staat um bürgerliche Freiheiten und Rechtsgrundsätze dreht, leitet sich die Auseinandersetzung mit den Haredim von einer abweichenden Wahrnehmung des Charakters des israelischen Staates her. Die Haltung der Haredim gegenüber der Mehrheitsgesellschaft und dem Staat ist in großem Maße konfliktthaltig und damit meilenweit entfernt von der Einstellung der Gelassenheit, die für die Amish charakteristisch ist.

Abstract: This article compares the newspaper coverage of the relationship of two ultra-religious groups, the Amish community in the USA and the Haredi community in Israel, with their respective states. Although the Amish are sometimes called 'American Haredim' in Israel, there are major differences between the two groups and their representation in the media. Nevertheless, they share enough similarities to allow for a comparison.

Basically, the different coverage of the two communities in the *New York Times* and in *Haaretz* seems to reflect major differences in the standing of these groups in their respective societies and differences in their attitude towards the state. While the Amish accept the United States as a land of freedom, the Haredim do not regard Israel as a truly Jewish state. While the Amish dialogue with the state is about civic liberties and the rule of law, the Haredi struggle derives from a different perception of the character of the state. The Haredi attitude towards the wider society and the state is to a large extent conflictual, and thus miles away from the Amish approach of *Gelassenheit*.

General introduction

The following article compares the newspaper coverage of the relationship of two ultra-religious groups, the Amish community in the USA and the Haredi community in Israel, with their respective states. Although the Amish are sometimes called "American Haredim" in Israel, there are major differences between the two groups and their representation in the media. Nevertheless, they share enough similarities to allow for a comparison.

To provide a basis for comparison, we have chosen two prominent newspapers – *The New York Times* (henceforth *NYT*) and *Haaretz*. Both are liberal dailies that are read by the political, economic, cultural, scientific, and social leadership in their respective countries. Consequently, the impact of these papers is quite substantial, even if their distribution is lower than that of their more populist competitors.

The American Amish and the Israeli Haredim are both highly visible communities: they live in their own enclaves, where they follow a very special way of life, based on a distinct ultra-religious culture. Both groups are in a sense ethno-religious. The Amish are not only a religious denomination: they have their own history, dating back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; they cherish a specific ethnic origin (mainly from Switzerland, Alsace, and the Palatinate in Germany), and have their own language, Pennsylvania Deitsch. The Haredim are ultra-orthodox Jews, who believe in the total fusion of religion and nationhood. They reject the views of assimilating Jews in the diaspora (who regard Judaism only as a confession) as well as those of Jewish secular nationalists (who see Judaism as predominantly a nation like any other nation).

Although both the Amish and the Haredim are strongly committed to age-old traditions, they allow for certain adjustments to modern life and technology. Basically, the Amish live as a religious community in eighteenth-century Europe, while the Ashkenazi (or Western) Haredim aim to maintain Orthodox Jewish life as it had been in the ghettos and shtetl of Europe ever since medieval times. The Sephardi (or Eastern) Haredim, who hail from the Arab countries want to restore the former *atarah* [or glory, literally crown] of Jewish traditional life in the Muslim countries. Both communities strongly believe and uphold ancient living traditions.

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1. *Haredim* is the plural form of the Hebrew singular *Haredi*, and will be used throughout the article, as will other, similar, plural forms of Hebrew words.
 2. We owe a debt of gratitude to the study's dedicated research assistants: Hagar Yehezkely, Oren Magal, Lior Soroka, and the statistical advisor, Tali Avishai-Arbel.

Both groups faced similar, so-called enemies (such as science, rationalism, and modern education), and secular ideologies (such as liberalism and socialism). Both strongly object to the pull of assimilation – the American melting pot on the Amish side, and the European nations and, later on, non-Haredi Israeli society on the Haredi side. Both have an uneasy relationship with nationalism – the Amish because they reject all forms of state-patriotism, and the Haredim because they oppose Zionism, which has revived a Jewish state not to their liking (since it should have been a religious state created by the Messiah).

The Amish and the Haredim have their own, private school systems. In both, education is overwhelmingly religious. Only reading, writing and arithmetic are taught – but no science whatsoever. The Amish will also learn Amish and American history, and the Haredim study Jewish history, but general history is taught in neither school system. The same holds for general literature, civics, social studies, and geography. Neither school system will display the national flag, nor will they authorize the singing of the national anthem.

The two communities have a problematic relationship with the state. While the most extremist Haredim boycott the state and its institutions, the mainstream Haredi majority maintains a pragmatic or utilitarian relationship with the state. The Haredim don't believe the State of Israel offers a solution to the "Jewish problem." They see the survival of the Jewish people as depending on maintaining the ancient religious traditions and on being faithful to the Torah, and not on having a "normal" political state. Overall, the Amish cooperate less with the state and its institutions – e.g. the federal government, Congress and the courts – but they are also less hostile to the state than the Haredim because they have great respect for the U.S. as the land of religious freedom.

While the Amish accept the laws of the state, but lobby for exceptions to be made for their community in order to guarantee their religious freedoms, the Haredim in principle deny the legitimacy of the law, as it is not enacted by a rabbinical authority and not based on the Halacha (i.e. Jewish religious law). Relations between the Amish and the state are based on *Gelassenheit*, a live and let live attitude, while those of the Haredim with the State of Israel are more conflictual. There is nevertheless enough scope for a meaningful comparison of the two communities with regard to their principles and culture, their involvement in or opposition to politics, their attitude toward the military and the courts, and to problems related to health, education, and transportation. We will analyze the reports on both communities in the *New York Times* and in *Haaretz*.

The Amish in the *New York Times*

The Amish, at times referred to as "the quiet people of the land," are an Anabaptist group that split away from the other Anabaptist congregations in the late seventeenth century. The denomination was established by Jakob Ammann in Switzerland in 1693. Ammann (1656–1730) broke away from the other Anabaptists against the backdrop of his intransigence with regard to the strict observance of religious principles. Above all, he espoused a tight ban on people who had been expelled from the community for failing to comply with its religious precepts.

As an ethnocultural confessional group, the Amish in the U.S. live apart from the rest of society. They adhere to a strict code of behavior and are widely known because of their distinctive horse buggies, traditional dress, and unique language. While their daily language is a German dialect called Pennsylvania Dutch (Deitsch), the liturgical language they use is High German. They refer to other Americans as "the English." The Amish lifestyle is based on a strict set of rules, called the *Ordnung* (literally, order). For instance, men grow long hair and a beard, but no moustache (since moustaches are identified with the soldiers who oppressed the Amish in Europe, and are therefore seen as repugnant). Amish clothing must be plain and uniform: (e.g. all men don special felt hats in the cold months and straw hats the rest of the year).

The Amish stand out for their ascetic lifestyle. They don't own or drive cars because, according to their worldview, this would contravene the Amish principle of modesty. Cars are also frowned upon because they would make it possible for people to travel long distances away from home, and thus perhaps loosen their connections to their families and community. In emergencies or for other important reasons, however, they have no objection to using a car, albeit owned and driven by non-Amish. For the same reasons, bikes are also deemed inappropriate. The sect's primary means of transportation is indeed the horse-drawn carriage. Amish do not consume public electricity or keep telephones in the house, but there is no prohibition against using them when the need arises. In addition, other luxuries, such as carpeting, blinds, radio, and television, are also frowned upon (for background literature on the Amish, see Holt 1992, Hostetler 1989, 1993; Kraybill 2001, 2003; Zimmerman Umble & Weaver-Zercher 2008, Kraybill et al. 2007, 2010; Scott 1997, 1998; Fisher & Stahl 1997).

Agriculture and love of the land are central to the Amish way of life: the farm is a "man's kingdom" and working the soil is akin to cultivating the Garden of Eden. Needless to say, its objective is not to make a fortune, but to serve God and the community. Until recently most Amish depended on farming for their livelihood. Farm husbandry involved the entire family, and was bound by strict rules, applied to different degrees of strictness: the wheeled tractor and combines were (and still

are in some communities) generally off limits, as was the lawn mower for instance, for such apparatuses constituted an act of defiance against God and a breach of the principle of plainness and modesty. As in days past, labor had to be carried out with mules, horses, and simple tools. The Amish are hard-working and skilled farmers and artisans. A 1980 article¹ in the *NYT* describes them as – at least to some extent – preserving a preindustrial past [1, 2].

In nearly all *NYT* articles, the Amish are presented as a people at one with nature and maintaining a simple and quiet lifestyle, without “big-city hurry” [3], and as having always lived the peasant’s life of “hard work, plain clothes, horse-drawn plows and no electricity” [4]. Their farms are portrayed as coming “straight out of children’s books. There are ducks and chickens, cattle and hogs” [5]. The Lancaster area – the Amish heartland in Pennsylvania – is said to resemble “an ever-changing picture postcard of rural America” [6]. Their lifestyle is depicted as healthy, since they are accustomed to physical activity and are hence immune to the nation-wide phenomenon of obesity [7], and the Amish family life is described as a as “strong,” harmonious, and “free of divorce” [4, 8, 9].

The group’s unique lifestyle – e.g. their shunning of cars, computers, television, and electric ovens – comes up in quite a number of *NYT* stories [10, 11, 12]. On occasion, the newspaper goes beyond mere description. For example, one journalist explains that the objection to cars stems from the fact that it distances community members from their surroundings [13]. There are also reports on the diversity within the Amish community. While, say, the Amish in Indiana allow farmers to use tractors, other groups forbid such equipment [14]. Some of the articles have a nostalgic side. A case in point is the following observation: “A river of black, horse-drawn buggies flowed over the hills near here today in a funeral procession that stretched back to another time when America was younger and the automobile was for most only a dream or a nightmare” [15]. There are also references to how the community avoids the sensations and “scoops” that inform mainstream society. For example, the Amish press ignored the Monica Lewinsky affair, including the impeachment hearings, and the drama surrounding the 2000 presidential elections in Florida [16].

A handful of *NYT* articles deal with Amish history. In post-Reformation Europe, the Amish were persecuted for refusing to pledge allegiance to any ruler or lord, for not bearing arms or fighting on behalf of the king or feudal ruler, and for eschewing the official churches. Thousands of their members were burnt at the stake, drowned in rivers, decapitated, or starved to death in prisons, while others were sold into slavery. As a result, the entire community fled to the New World during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The two major waves of immigration took place between the years 1727–1790 and 1815–1860. Whereas some members of other Anabaptist streams (like the Mennonites and Hutterites) remained in Europe, all Amish eventually settled in North America – first in Pennsylvania (1727), and then in Ohio (1808), Indiana (1839), and Iowa (1840). Today, the largest concentrations are in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana (624 communities). Another 274 communities are scattered all over Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Oklahoma, and Tennessee, as well as Ontario in Canada.

As it now stands, there are approximately 285,000 Amish in North America. The group’s hopes for security and freedom of religion did indeed come to fruition in the United States. Since their arrival in 1727, not one Amish has been put to death or tortured. While there have been disputes with the authorities, and even arrests, compared to the sect’s traumatic memories from Europe, the United States (and later Canada) has indeed been the “land of freedom” (for more on the history of the Amish, see [3, 17]).

Dozens of articles deal with the community’s basic principles and values: faith, plainness, commitment to work, modesty, humility, and compassion. The *New York Times* is Amish-friendly. Although liberal, it is not opposed to religious communities, as long as they are not fundamentalist or politically right wing. The Amish are presented as “simple-living, God-fearing country folk” [18], who accept tragedies as “God’s will” [19]. Pacifism is a major tenet of the Amish faith. Their worldview is one of peace, love, equality, and unity. Any use of violence – be it in the framework of the state [e.g. military service and capital punishment] or the personal sphere – is anathema. Consequently, members never resort to force, even if they are attacked, whether as individuals or as a collective. When their communities were persecuted in a European country, the group’s sole “defense” was to migrate. They indeed adhere to Jesus’s exhortation “Love thy enemy,” and desist from retaliating in kind. The press also highlights another Amish trait – modesty. One Amish woman was quoted thus: “So many people have an idealistic view of the Amish and treat us as if we are wonderful people . . . I love the Amish people, but we have our faults and our problems. It’s not good for us to be looked upon as morally great. We aren’t perfect” [20].

Forgiveness and compassion are two of the Amish precepts that have most caught the media’s attention. The murder of five Amish girls at a school in Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania in 2006 elicited a reaction from the bereaved that is difficult for outsiders to fathom. They spoke of “the need to forgive the killer” [who committed suicide], attended his funeral, and consoled his wife and three children [21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28]. “There is no anger,” they said. As a result of this stunning

1. Since the 1980s the Amish have increasingly abandoned agriculture because of scarcity of agricultural land, high land prices and the large Amish families. The majority of the Amish now work in small businesses (e.g. in carpentry, tourism, toy workshops, craftsmanship), in construction and larger factories.

response, the incident drew a great deal of press coverage. There was a similar response when Amish children were run over by a negligent driver. "I don't feel better than the man who did this," insisted one of the community members.

The denomination's positive traits even come up when some of their own sons have transgressed. For instance, when two Amish youth were caught dealing drugs, the entire community was shocked. Even the prosecutor talked of "the well-deserved reputation of the Amish as hard-working, decent people" [8].

Other common themes in the *NYT* articles are the camaraderie and mutual assistance that prevail among the Amish, which stand in sharp contrast to what many see as an ideology of extreme individualism in American society. In fact, the community refuses any help from the Social Security program, lest reliance on the state undermine its sense of solidarity [3]. This very issue was the topic of a long-running legal dispute between the Amish and the authorities. According to the law, all citizens are required to pay Social Security taxes; in return, they are entitled to retirement benefits and, if need be, other forms of assistance (such as a disability and survivor benefits). In 1955, the program was expanded to include independent farmers, thereby affecting many Amish, who refuse to pay Social Security (unlike other government taxes, which they do pay) for they view it as a form of insurance. More specifically, the Amish consider it to be a serious infringement on freedom of religion. Indeed, receiving support from the government is tantamount to denying that God looks after man and to institutionalizing the group's dependence on the state. Therefore, they see it as a grave violation of the principle of *Gelassenheit* – a calm and peaceful, yet determined separation between their religious community and the outside world.

As noted earlier, the Amish contend that any government support detracts from their familial and communal solidarity. In other words, the community's support for the infirm, the old, the disabled, and orphans preserves their sense of togetherness, whereas government aid is liable to destroy it. Self-reliance is indeed a cardinal Amish virtue. Members repeatedly cite the following passage from the New Testament: "And whoever does not provide for relatives, and especially for family members, has denied faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8). When a tornado struck the Amish communities in Indiana and Michigan in 1965, carloads of their coreligionists from Alabama and Pennsylvania arrived to help the victims – which was clearly considered preferable to having to rely on government support.

This principled stance is also evident in *NYT* articles and reports. For example, the paper reported that, after arsons decimated five Amish farms, hundreds of volunteers came to help the victims and tens of thousands sent cash donations [29]. Likewise, following a terrible tragedy in which a driver hit eight children, Amish business people immediately organized support for the families of the dead and injured children [15].

The Amish also object to any kind of medical insurance, be it private (e.g. Blue Cross and Blue Shield) or public (Medicare and Medicaid). In their view, it is incumbent upon the family and community to tend to the sick, with minimal assistance from the state and public services. The group deems the illness of any member to be a communal problem, not a personal one. Sickness is a punishment from on high that is imposed on the collective; therefore, the community must pay for any treatment, regardless of the cost, if the family cannot afford it.¹

Another conflict reported in the *NYT* related more directly to the field of health. For example, some Amish objected to mandatory immunizations for children (against tetanus, polio, and diphtheria, amongst others) on the grounds that this type of preventive care expresses a lack of faith in God – the sole giver and sustainer of life. In this context, the Amish frequently cited the following Biblical verses: "I am in great distress. Let me fall into the hands of the Lord, for His compassion is very great, and let me not fall into the hands of men" (1 Chronicles 21:13). And "Worry not about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today" (Matthew 6:34). According to the Amish worldview, death is an integral part of life – an admission ticket to a better world so to speak. It is thus neither the parents nor the state's duty to safeguard children, for all belong to God. The *NYT* considered it newsworthy to report on the controversial attitude of radical Amish groups, who believe that immunizations are, in a manner of speaking, akin to interfering in the work of the creator [5].

The Amish commitment to work and excellence surfaces in many contexts. For example, numerous articles deal with the Amish's entrepreneurial acumen. As long-standing top-notch farmers, they bring their "entrepreneurial instincts" to new businesses [3, 4]. This may explain their success in tourism ventures, construction, candy factories, bakeries, carpentry workshops, clothing and hat stores, and toy craftsmanship [4, 12, 30, 31, 32].

Not all stories on the Amish are paeans to their values, behavior, and way of life. For instance, the *NYT* reported on a fine that was imposed on twenty members of an extreme Amish group, the Schwartzentrubers, who for religious reasons refused to attach large, red safety signs to their horse buggies. This affair was a riveting test case for the State of Ohio's tolerance of the denomination's separatist lifestyle. From the community's standpoint, the buggy symbolizes their detachment from the outside world. While state governments have exempted the Amish from carriage and drivers' licenses, road

1. It bears noting that the Amish have no reservations about organ donations, implants, or any advanced medical technologies, so long as the treatment does not needlessly prolong the patient's suffering.

tests, and mandatory insurance, Ohio demanded that they affix a large sign bearing a reddish-orange triangle on the back of their vehicles as a safety precaution.

The Schwartzentruber group viewed the flashy triangle to be a symbol of conspicuousness, immodesty, and arrogance. Therefore, to hang it on a wagon constitutes an act of defiance against God. From their perspective, then, the struggle was a matter of freedom of religion. However, the state claimed that the sign is merely a safety measure and does not infringe on any group's rights. As a result, the government refused to back down. The issue was bandied about at various levels of the court system, and there were rulings in both directions. As in other government-Amish disputes, a compromise was ultimately reached, as the litigants settled on a less conspicuous red light or reflector [33].

On March 15, 2003, a bizarre story appeared in the *NYT* about a "window war" between the Amish and the authorities: New York State promulgated a new fire safety code that specified the minimum size of bedroom windows. Following Amish tradition according to which houses must be simple and modest, sect members in Chautauqua refused to abide by this ordinance. Insofar as the village's extremely conservative community was concerned, "If you break a tradition, where's the tradition? You're not a faithful member" [34]. The local government and fire department indeed agreed to give them a special permit for undersized windows, but the state government stood its ground. Consequently, the Amish threatened to leave New York.

Another struggle revolved around their objection to having their pictures taken, even for passports or drivers' licenses. From their standpoint, a photo is a symbol of arrogance and a transgression of the Biblical commandment "You shall not make yourself a sculptured image, or any likeness . . ." (Exodus 20:4). Conversely, the state sees photo IDs as a legitimate demand of all citizens. In the past, the United States was inclined to compromise on this matter. In 1972, for instance, it allowed Amish people to emigrate from Canada to the U.S. without attaching photos to their passport; this was followed by a sweeping exemption from all passport or visa pictures. In Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana, this exemption was conditional on a letter from the communal bishop. Pennsylvania also backed down on their demand for a drivers' license photo. However, all this changed abruptly after September 11, 2001. The Amish based their objection to the photos on the Constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion, whereas the state premised its demand on the rule of law, equality before the law, and national security. The case of an Amish Canadian who married a U.S. citizen and wished to settle down in the United States without providing photo IDs became a major news story. In the end, he lost the case and was deported to Canada [35, 36, 37].

The denomination has several fundamental principles and an ecclesiastical-religious *Ordnung*, or set of rules that dictate a clear and rigid code of behavior. As Anabaptists, they do not compel their youth to join the community and vehemently reject the practice of baptizing children. In their view, only upon reaching the age of 18 is a person mature enough to deliberate over whether to embrace the Christian faith. With this in mind, Amish youth between the ages of 16 and 18 are permitted to vacillate, a tradition called *rumspringa* (from the Pennsylvania Dutch *rumspringen*, i.e. to run around), but a decision must be reached by the age of 18. The vast majority indeed chooses to enter the fold, accept the *Ordnung*, and maintain a fitting lifestyle. Joining and membership in the church must be volitional. Once one has become part of the community, one has to accept the *Ordnung* in toto. The *NYT* covered some incidents that occurred during *rumspringa*, as when one Amish youth reportedly got drunk while others broke windshields and tipped over horse carriages [38].

In the *NYT* articles over a period of 30 years (1980 to 2010), we came across reports of only three more serious crimes. The first was the above-mentioned cases of arson of five farms in 1993 by an Amish bishop's grandson who had abandoned the community. The perpetrator received a 10-year jail sentence [39]. Then, in 1998, two Amish youth were arrested for pushing cocaine [4, 40]. The final case was a community member who was handed a 15-year prison term for assaulting a minor. The very fact that these stories did appear in the newspaper, while thousands of similar and more serious offenses committed in the U.S. on a daily basis merit no coverage whatsoever, attests to the fact that instances of crime within the Amish community are rare and thus considered to be especially newsworthy. Put differently, these few incidents stand in stark contrast to the Amish life and reputation as simple, moral, peaceful, and hardworking people who detest any and all forms of violence.

The Haredim in *Haaretz*

Over the next pages, we will attempt to demonstrate that the image of the ultra-Orthodox (Haredim, in Hebrew), as reflected in the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, is radically different from that of the Amish in the *New York Times*. The majority of stories on the Haredim deal with politics, money, violence, and conflicts (recommended background literature on the Haredim: Friedman 1977, 1991; Levy 1988, Shahar 2000, Grylak 2002, Neugroschel 2001, Shilhav 1991, Cohen 1993, Peled 2001, Kaplan & Stadler 2009, Fund 1999, Haim n. d.). Unlike the material on the Amish, there were very few articles about the Haredi community's history, lifestyle and customs, work, and creative output.

The origin of the word "Haredim" is in the Book of Isaiah ("Hear the word of the Lord, you that tremble [the Hebrew term for tremble is *hared*, whence the word Haredim] at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, have said, Let the Lord be glorified: that we may see your joy; but they shall be ashamed" (Isaiah 66:5). The Haredim developed into distinct communities in Europe in the eighteenth century in order to defend the ultra-orthodox Jewish way of life against the then prevailing winds of change: emancipation, enlightenment, secularism, Reform Judaism, Zionism, and social radicalism.

The Israeli Haredim belong to three large mainstream currents, and to some smaller, more extremist groups. The three mainstream currents include the Hasidim (who are divided into courts named after past Eastern European centers, such as Gur, Belz, Chabad, Vizhnitz, Lubavitch, Braslaw¹, and are ruled by dynasties). They represent a spontaneous, joyous, and mystic Judaism. The other large Ashkenazi grouping includes the so-called *Mitnagdim* (i.e. opponents) or "Lithuanians," who oppose the Hasidic way, emphasize the importance of learning, and are centered around monastery-like yeshivas (schools of higher religious learning). They are led by a learned rabbinical elite (called the Torah Greats) and have their origin in Lithuania. The third major current in Israel is the Sephardi or Eastern Haredi stream², which developed in the 1970s and 1980s in Israel. They include Jews from Arab and Muslim Countries. The Eastern Haredim came to Israel as traditional-religious Jews. Their moving toward Haredi ultra-Orthodoxy was a reaction to the shock they experienced when, instead of encountering a messianic Jewish state, they found themselves in a largely secular, modern state. Each of these mainstream currents have their own political parties – Agudat Yisrael (Hasidim), Degel Hatorah (Lithuanians) and Shas (Eastern Haredim). Most of them reject Zionism, do not see Israel as a truly Jewish state, and oppose many of its institutions. Nevertheless, they are also pragmatic, in the sense that they are organized in parties, sit in parliament, join coalition governments, receive large allowances from the government for their schools, and use their political power to get major concessions from the state (e.g. de facto exemption from the draft).

The more extreme Haredim (e.g. the Satmar Hasidim and Neturei Karta) boycott the state institutions and do not vote; some of them also reject any financial support from the government. They regard themselves as the "true Israel" and consider the others as a "mixed multitude," whose Judaism is questionable. Many of the Haredim's violent clashes with the police or with secular Israelis are led by these extremist groups. They represent a minority within the Haredi population, but are given wide media exposure.

A recurring theme in *Haaretz* is the ultra-Orthodox position on the constitutional and legal system in Israel. The paper routinely examines the statements of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, the spiritual leader of Shas on this matter, such as, for instance, his assertion that "the nation of Israel has no other laws save for the laws of the Torah." It also discussed whether, as Ovadia Yosef argued, the drafting of a secular-liberal constitution (which the state currently does not have) that would be subject to the interpretation of the High Court of Justice would be tantamount to antireligious compulsion. In a similar way, Aryeh Deri, Shas's political leader in the 1990s, declared that his movement would indeed try to implement the Halacha, i.e. Jewish traditional religious law [41]. Demands for religious-oriented laws, which would replace current Israeli law based on legislation by the Knesset (the Israeli parliament), receive top billing in *Haaretz*. A case in point is the story about Agudat Yisrael³ conditioning its support of the state budget on the passage of bills to its liking on matters like "Who is a Jew?"⁴ and archeological excavations [42].⁵ The paper devotes no less attention to the Haredim's objection to "antireligious legislation," such as the initiative to grant legal recognition to common-law unions and civil marriage [43]. In general, the liberal-secular *Haaretz's* staunch opposition to the Haredi goal to transform Israel into a clerical Jewish-Orthodox state comes to the fore again and again.

Time and again, *Haaretz* reports on ultra-Orthodox confrontations with the Supreme Court. Haredim persistently accuse the judiciary of anti-religious rulings, like the recognition of non-Orthodox Reform and Conservative conversions to Judaism and the appointment of Reform or Conservative Jews to religious councils (bodies charged with providing religious services on the local level) [44]. In this respect, there is a striking contrast with the coverage of the Amish. There was not one news

1. In Belarus, thus not to be confused with the former German Breslau in today's Poland.
2. The term Sephardi, or its adjective Sephardic, comes from the word "Sepharad" (that is, Spain) and is used to indicate Jews originating from mainly Muslim-Arab Algeria, Egypt, Iraq and Yemen. Many – though not all – of them descend from Jews expelled from Spain during the Inquisition in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. Ashkenazi, on the other hand, means Western, thus indicating Jews from the Occident (i.e. from Eastern and Central Europe).
3. Agudat Yisrael (Hebrew for 'association of Israel') is the mainly Hasidic Ashkenazi ultra-Orthodox faction in the Knesset. The term Hasid (or its plural form Hasidim) is used to denote a person maintaining high standards of piety, that is, both religious observance and morality.
4. The Haredi definition of a Jew is matrilineal, according to the mother, or by conversion that follows the traditional Orthodox law. Liberal and secular Jews support a more pragmatic definition. The issue is of crucial political importance in Israel because it defines, amongst others, the question of "Who is a Jew?" and thus determines who has the right of return to Israel according to the Law of Return.
5. The Haredim oppose archeological excavations, which may perturb ancient Jewish cemeteries.

item in the *NYT* about, say, the Amish seeking to impose their beliefs on others, raising objections to the U.S. Constitution, or expressing hostility towards the Supreme Court, for they are indeed not involved in any such activity. At most, the community is involved in struggles to receive an exemption from a law or ordinance (e.g. the compulsory draft law until the early 1970s or the compulsory education laws, the Social Security tax, or a safety ordinance instructing construction workers to wear a hard hat).

The topic of the Sabbath did not taper off throughout the period of study either. Among the controversies that drew the paper's attention was a bill proposed to prohibit commerce on Saturdays, while allowing recreational places to operate all week long [45]. Likewise, there were articles about ultra-Orthodox initiatives to ban stores, travel agents, and leisure venues that "desecrate" the Sabbath [46].

Of the sampled news stories (N = 131) in *Haaretz*, 48.1% deal with ultra-Orthodox politics. They describe rifts between different Haredi parties and between the Haredi bloc (comprising all Haredi parties) and the National Religious Party (NRP). For instance, the paper reported on the ultra-Orthodox objection to having public funds transferred to them through the NRP-controlled Ministry of Religion, preferring that the allocations be channeled via the Finance Ministry or the Prime Minister's Office [47]. Basically, these articles deal with the fierce competition between the Haredim and the Religious Zionists on the allocation of state resources for religious matters.

The feuds between Shas – the largest Haredi party – and the NRP surface from time to time. For example, one story in *Haaretz* disclosed the ongoing power struggle over control of the Rabbinate of Tel-Aviv, especially attempts to land plum jobs for each camp's members [48]. The paper likewise reported Shas's threat to dismantle the Religious Front alliance¹ in the municipal government, following the NRP's decision to appoint a woman to the Tel-Aviv Religious Council [49], as well as the bitter dispute between the two parties over portfolios in the Ministries of Religious Affairs and of the Interior [50]. In addition, spats within United Torah Judaism (UTJ), the Ashkenazi Haredi tactical electoral alliance between the parties of Agudat Yisrael and Degel HaTorah receive in-depth coverage. There were stories, inter alia, of Degel HaTorah (Hebrew for "the flag of the Torah") grumbling about discrimination in the Ministry of Housing and the religious councils controlled by Agudat Yisrael, as well as about Agudat Yisrael's alleged decision "to wipe us out" [51]. Moreover, the paper also features news items on personal feuds within the parties – especially in Shas between the supporters of Eli Yishai and Aryeh Deri (the sitting and deposed party chairmen respectively) – over, say, the formation of the Knesset member lists [52, 53], and concerning the tension between rabbis and lay party activists [54]. Only one article referred to cooperation within the greater religious camp (including the NRP) – an agreement between all the political-religious currents (and the Likud) to increase the public funding for parties [55].

Ultra-Orthodox power struggles, which transcend the corridors of parliament, are also covered by *Haaretz*. A case in point was the fight for control over the revered Ponevezh Yeshiva, a feud that entailed fist fights and cutting off the other party's electricity [56]. Particularly riveting was the highly publicized dispute between Elazar Menachem Shach (the spiritual leader and founder of Degel HaTorah) and the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson, over the occupied territories. Shach claimed that Israel was needlessly provoking the United States by bolstering the settlements. However, the Chabad luminary took issue with this approach: "And who said that we must avoid provoking the nations? How is it that a Jew with rabbinical ordination [i.e., Shach] dares say that the existence of the Jewish people is dependent on a foreign leader or nation – this is the opposite of the Torah and the opposite of the truth and the opposite of wisdom." Yet another Haredi leader cited in this piece was the Rebbe of Belz (a Hassidic dynasty), Yissacher Dov Rokeach, who took a dovish stance, calling upon the UTJ [United Torah Judaism] to resign from the government because it had wasted an opportunity to advance the peace process [57].

During election seasons, the paper ordinarily canvasses the ultra-Orthodox parties' campaigns, primarily those of Shas. In 1996, Aryeh Deri was quoted as saying that "the members of the Mizrahi or Eastern [Sephardic] communities were humiliated and ground into the dust and turned into the water carriers and woodchoppers [i.e. menial workers]" [58]. Ten years later, the emphasis was on the movement's social agenda, and its campaign slogan "Vote Shas – Get Ahead in Life" [59]. Other articles dealt with the municipal elections in Jerusalem [60, 61] and Ashdod [62]. In addition, there was a news item about the Chief Rabbinate instructing rabbis not to participate in election rallies, an NRP measure that was directed at Shas's rabbis [63].

Haaretz reporters and commentators also survey ultra-Orthodox coalition politics. In 1990, for example, they reported that Shas would be given the Ministry of Communications in a coalition deal. What is more, the party was promised a Haredi channel in the Israel Broadcasting Authority and a representative on the public broadcasting company's steering committee [64]. In late 1995, a story began to circulate about the price that Agudat Yisrael and Degel HaTorah were demanding from the Peres government in return for keeping the coalition afloat: amendment of the Conversion Law, modification of the

1. A tactical electoral alliance of the Haredi parties and the religious-Zionist NRP.

Antiquities Law, cancellation of the reform in Judaic studies in the school system,¹ and suspension of the efforts to pass additional Basic Laws [65].² That same year, the paper covered the Lubavitcher rebbe's efforts to forge an alternative, rightwing government [66]. In the run-up to the 1996 elections, Shas declared that "all options are open" with respect to coalition alignments [67]. Three years later, *Haaretz* covered the "turbine crisis,"³ which threatened to break up Labor's coalition with the Haredim, and put paid to the negotiations over a coalition between the Likud and Shas [68]. There were numerous articles in 2000 about the government that Ehud Barak's Labor-led bloc of dovish parties had formed with Shas, including the deal concocted by Yossi Beilin: "Shas will get the money, Barak will get 17 mandates, UTJ will get the Tal Committee⁴ report" [69]. Six years later, it was the Kadima-Shinui-Haredi⁵ triangle that made headlines, particularly Shinui's refusal and subsequent backtracking on its promise not to sit in a government with ultra-Orthodox parties [70]. There were also detailed reports about the Sephardic movement's negotiations in both 2006 and 2008, as Shas leader Eli Yishai declared that "there is no coalition without Shas" [71, 72].

In all that concerns the political arena, there cannot be a wider gap than the one between the Amish and the ultra-Orthodox. The Christian community totally abstains from "politics:" Community members are not active in any political party; they eschew all ties with parties or political factions and demand absolutely nothing of them; and Amish individuals do not run for office and have no interest in government or its policies. What is more, none of the group's internal rifts even approach those on the Haredi scale. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that while *Haaretz* is saturated with ultra-Orthodox politics, we have not found so much as a single news item on Amish "politics" in the *NYT*.

On the topic of education, there is a certain resemblance between Haredim and Amish in that both refuse to integrate the national core subjects into their curriculum. Furthermore, both groups limit themselves to teaching the bare minimum in general subjects like language and arithmetic, while focusing on particular areas, like Bible studies (in the Haredi schools) or Amish history (in the Amish schools). Despite the similarity, there was no reference to the problem of education among the Amish in the *NYT* between 1980 and 2010. This is apparently because the major disagreements between the Amish and the state over compulsory schooling were settled by the Federal Supreme Court in the 1970s. Major conflicts related to U.S. state laws that set compulsory education to the age of 16 or 18. For religious reasons, the Amish objected to mandatory schooling beyond the age of 14. In 1972, the Supreme Court finally accepted the Amish claim that to compel them to accept compulsory education beyond the age of 14 violates the Constitution's First Amendment on the free exercise of religion.

In contrast, *Haaretz* devotes quite a bit of space to ultra-Orthodox education issues, foremost among them the debate over the core curriculum and the discrimination against Sephardic pupils in mainly Ashkenazi Haredi schools. In the main, the Israeli paper gives voice to the general criticism of Haredi schools, especially those of Shas. With respect to the national curriculum, *Haaretz* ran a story about the attempts by ultra-Orthodox MKs (members of Knesset) to pass a "Supreme Court-circumventing" law that would allow the state to fund Haredi schools even if they refrain from teaching the core subjects [73].⁶ In the article, Gilad Kariv, a prominent Israeli Reform rabbi, is quoted as saying that "this bill sentences tens of thousands of youth to a life of poverty and perpetuates their hostility to the values of democracy." A news item on the instruction of Hebrew noted that "for the first time Haredim will learn the language in the same way as the state schools (that said, they will learn neither abbreviations like Zahal (the Hebrew acronym for IDF, or Israel Defense Forces) or Bagatz (the Hebrew acronym for the High Court of Justice) nor slang, and the text books will not mention the secular way of life and will be devoid of design)." Despite this headway, ultra-Orthodox pupils were not scheduled to study "general literature" or "Hebrew poetry" [74].

Similar criticism was expressed in an article on the Tel-Aviv education system. According to Ronit Tirosh, at the time director of the municipality's education department, city hall was to launch municipally funded kindergartens for children aged three to six for the purpose of "curbing the outspread of the Shas daycare centers." She also opined that "all that is important" for Shas "is serving God, not imparting knowledge." Consequently, the argument ran, they only trained *mohelim* (people who perform circumcisions), ritual slaughterers, and rabbis. In so doing, Tirosh added, they ensured that generations of Sephardim would remain trapped in a cycle of poverty [75].

1. The reform aimed to teach a more pluralistic view of Judaism.
2. Instead of a constitution, Israel has a number of what are called Basic Laws. Very few of them deal with basic rights. The Haredi parties object to passing Basic Laws on civic liberties for fear that they might undermine many of the gains these parties achieved after the foundation of the state (e.g. the absence of civil marriage).
3. The "turbine crisis" followed the decision by the government to transport (for safety reasons) a heavy turbine of the electrical company on the Sabbath night – which would entail an unacceptable breach of the Orthodox law by the state.
4. The Tal Committee proposed that the Haredi exemption from the draft be in point of fact indirectly legalized.
5. Kadima is a centrist party founded by PM Arik Sharon in 2004, while Shinui was a liberal, fiercely anticlerical party created in 1999 and dismantled in 2008.
6. The High Court of Justice decided that teaching the core curriculum should be a precondition for receiving financial aid from the state by the (private) Haredi school system.

Of the news items, 22.9% percent pertained to the Haredim's budgetary demands. In many of the news items, there was a direct link between education and funds, as ultra-Orthodox educational and cultural institutions received massive government support. For example, an investigative piece revealed that the average Haredi pupil enjoys three times as much public funding (from the ministries of education and religion) as his counterpart in the regular state system [76]. Other articles covered Agudat Yisrael's request for parity between the material living conditions of university and yeshiva students [77], and for greater public funding of Haredi boarding schools [78, 79].

The paper also puts much emphasis on the ultra-Orthodox campaign over child stipends (allowances for large families) [80, 81] and their budgetary requests for "special funding" [82, 83] for Torah institutions, and for financial support that is independent of objective criteria, like the size of classes or the number of pupils in schools [84]. Coalition negotiations are usually presented within the context of Haredi financial demands [85, 86], which are inevitably accompanied by threats to either stay out of or abandon the coalition. For instance, *Haaretz* described how ultra-Orthodox parties stipulated their backing for the Sharon government (2001–2005) on the repeal of cutbacks to child allowances [87]. Likewise, they promised to display "flexibility" on the matter of the disengagement from the Gaza Strip if their financial needs (e.g. the child allowances and yeshiva budgets) "are worked out" [88]. In 2000, there was even a story on opposition leader Ariel Sharon's attempt to woo Shas into leaving the Barak government by promising funds for the Haredi education system [89].

Haaretz also covered other financial issues that pertained to the ultra-Orthodox parties: Shas's proposed amendment to the Parties Funding Law, enabling the transfer of money from one faction to another (the objective at the time was to have the Labor Party "purchase" Shas's entry into the coalition); Haredi demands for assets from the Estate Committee, which was accused of discriminating against the sector [90, 91]; and the Housing Ministry's policy of designating clusters of apartments for ultra-Orthodox families [92].

In light of the above, it turns out that the substantial difference between the Amish and the ultra-Orthodox is also clearly evident in financial news items. All the Haredi pecuniary demands, which are often accompanied by stipulations and threats, are completely alien to the Anabaptist group. The latter neither wants nor receives a red cent from the government, as their homes, institutions, and schools are all paid for by its members. Whereas the ultra-Orthodox are belligerent towards the Zionist state, yet eager to tap into its budgets, the Amish display no hostility towards the government, nor are they willing to accept any funding from the state – they simply wish to be left alone, adhering to their guiding principle of "touch naught unclean" (2 Corinthians 1:17). The Amish may be classified as quasi-subjects of the state, rather than citizens-cum-partners. In this sense, they perhaps resemble the ultra-Orthodox. However, the small Christian community does not challenge the authorities, has no interest in the government or its money, and desires absolutely no role in or influence over politics.

10.7% of the news items survey acts of violence that were carried out by Haredim. As the examples below demonstrate, most of the cases entail "ideological" violence, rather than the standard criminal variety: against Christians and Messianic Jews, who were assaulted for singing songs of praise in their own homes [93]; arson committed in apartments of Christians in ultra-Orthodox Mea Shearim [94]; IDF Haredi brigade members suspected of attacking Palestinian civilians [95]; acts of vandalism committed against the offices of "pornographic" channels; an altercation between the Modesty Guard¹ and members of an ultra-Orthodox family whose door was painted black because it owned a television [96]; setting fire to and flooding the house of a member of the Council of Torah Greats² for daring to stand up to *shabavnikim* (Hebrew slang for yeshiva dropouts) accused of being involved in debauchery and drugs [96]; and the planting of an explosive device in protest of the annual Gay Pride March in Jerusalem. On the matter of ideological violence, there was indeed a marked difference between the reporting on the Haredim in the Israeli newspaper and on the Amish in the American paper. More specifically, there were no reports in the *NYT* on Amish violence of the sort described above because the use of force runs counter to everything they stand for.

Yet another area in which Haredim have drawn negative press is their involvement in fraud, e.g. fictitious yeshivas that receive state budgets funding [97, 98, 99]; a full-fledged apparatus suspected of forging certificates for so-called *avraikhim* (married yeshiva students) [100]; duplicate allotments of funds for ultra-Orthodox institutions by the ministries of education and religion, despite denouncements by the state comptroller; and a convoluted system that Haredi activists devised for funneling money from the interior ministry to municipalities and from there to recognized or, at times, unaccredited religious bodies. In fact, some of the recipients of government support turned out to be the foundations of Haredi politicians (e.g. funds for one "outreach" group reached the mailbox of MK Menachem Porush) [101]. Conversely, acts of fraud against the state never come up in the *NYT* because the Amish summarily eschew public funding, so that there is no motive for such transgressions.

1. The Modesty Guard is a shady, extremist Haredi organization that enforces compliance with Haredi modesty norms within the community.
2. The Council of the Torah Greats is the highest rabbinical authority of the Ashkenazi Haredim, while the Council of the Torah Sages is the leading body of the Sephardi Haredim.

Haaretz also reports on derogatory language emanating from the mouths of ultra-Orthodox leaders and journalists. For instance, Haredi opposition to archeological digs in the City of David prompted the following imprecation: "May the hand of anyone who supports the desecration of graves be cut off" [102]. Rabbi Ovadia Yosef characterized the graduates of secular schools as "drug pushers" [103]. In a similar vein, the ultra-Orthodox newspapers *Hamodia*, *Yated Ne'eman*, and *Hamachaneh Hacharedi* dubbed the Supreme Court a "dictator," and its judges "Zionist Bolsheviks," who impose "legal tyranny" on the majority and have established a "totalitarian regime of oppression" [104].

Both the *NYT* and *Haaretz* also ran stories about non-ideological acts of violence. We found a grand total of seven (out of a total of 131) news reports in *Haaretz* on "routine" ultra-Orthodox violence or infractions, be it in the family, sex crimes, fraud, and smuggling [105, 106, 107, 108, 109]. In this respect, there does not appear to be a significant difference between the two groups (three reports in the *NYT*, out of 75).

The Amish have had their share of run-ins with the American government over, inter alia, military enlistment (until the repeal of the draft in the early 1970s), compulsory education, labor laws, Social Security, and transportation ordinances. In most cases a pragmatic compromise was found. It is therefore hardly surprising that the only reports of Amish-government strife in the *NYT* in the years 1980–2012 concerned the "window controversy" in New York State and the battles over photo ID.

Compared to the *NYT*, there were significantly more items in *Haaretz* on conflicts between the ultra-Orthodox and the state or the non-Haredi public. By comparison with the U.S., Israel seems awash in unresolved conflicts. For example, the issue of enlisting yeshiva boys in the army grabs the headlines time and again. In 1986, *Haaretz* reported that the Chief Rabbinate – an official state body – urged yeshiva students (the Hesder Yeshiva Program included)¹ not to enlist, on the grounds that studying Torah "protects the people of Israel more than military service" [110]. There were also occasional stories on the largely futile attempts – such as the Tal Law [111] and the Haredi brigade² – to resolve the inequalities that derive from the fact that the Haredim do not enlist in the army [112]. Conversely, the Amish stance towards the military has not been brought up by the *NYT* since the annulment of the U.S. draft in the early 1970s. That said, even before the termination of compulsory enlistment, the character of the denomination's struggle with the state was totally different from the Israeli case. The Amish's refusal to serve in the army stemmed from their pacifist beliefs, which are based on the verse "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in His image did God make man (Genesis 9:6). In contrast, the Haredim shun enlistment for an array of reasons, none of which involve a principled objection to the military or to war.

A mere 7.6% of the news items in *Haaretz* presented the traditional side of the Haredim's special lifestyle, such as the rules of kashruth, matrimonial laws, protests against archeological excavations, the status of Reform and Conservative Jews, or the opening of a "mixed" (i.e. for both men and women) swimming pool in one of Jerusalem's neighborhoods. The paper featured an in-depth story about the community's efforts to expand Passover kashruth supervision over products like medicinal pills, lipstick, soap, toilet paper, bleach, rubber gloves, Haggadoth (the festival's liturgy books), and water [113]. In one article about marital law, *Haaretz* discussed the proposed amendment to the Rabbinical Court Law whereby only conversions approved by an Orthodox rabbinical court would be recognized [114]. Another story canvassed the publication of pedigree books listing only men and woman with unadulterated Jewish lineage, for the sake of safeguarding "pure" Jews from "the hundreds of thousands of non-Jews who have infiltrated the vineyard of Israel"³ [115].

The topic of archeology turns up throughout the survey. In the 1980s, there was an account of demonstrations of Haredim throughout "four continents" against excavations at the City of David [116]. A decade later, *Haaretz* covered the riots that broke out on Sabbath Square (the epicenter of Mea Shearim in Jerusalem) during a protest against the excavations in Migdal HaEmek [117]. Another story covers the establishment of an ultra-Orthodox archeological park in quite unexpected terms: "We have no conflict with archeology . . .," a community spokesperson insisted, "save for the desecration of graves" [118].

Haaretz viewed the status of Reform and Conservative Jewry within the context of Supreme Court rulings. For example, there was a piece on the High Court justices striking down decisions by the local governments in Haifa, Jerusalem, and Kiryat Tiv'on, giving in to Haredi demands that non-Orthodox (Reform or Conservative) candidates for the religious councils be disqualified [119].

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1. The Hesder ("agreement" in Hebrew) Program enables religious-Zionist young men to combine army service with Torah studies. In contrast to the IDF's standard compulsory term of a three-year army service, the Hesder track lasts for five years, but enlistees spend only sixteen months in uniform.
 2. The Haredi brigade is brigade of Haredi soldiers, most of whom are dropouts from the Haredi yeshivas. They comprise a very small percentage of the draft-age Haredi youth.
 3. Orthodox Jewish law recognizes only the children of Jewish mothers as Jews, while Israel's Law of Return also accepts the "return" to Israel of wives and husbands of Jews and of children whose father or grandfather is Jewish, while their mother is not. In the eyes of the Haredim, they are not Jewish.

In another interesting news story, *Haaretz* showed an indirect link between the issue of the territories and an ultra-Orthodox halachic ruling. In this specific case, Shas's rabbis brought considerable pressure to bear on the Barak government not to concede the East Jerusalem Arab neighborhood of Abu-Dis in any future peace treaty with the Palestinians. The actual reason behind this lobbying was that Rabbi Ovadia Yosef had prohibited *kohanim*¹ (priests) from using a road passing through the Mount of Olives Cemetery and instructed them to travel through Abu-Dis (nicknamed "the *kohanim* tunnel") instead [120].

Over the years, the Israeli paper has underscored the issue of gender. For example, it covered the Labor Court's ruling concerning the exclusion of women candidates from elections in the Haredi teachers' union. Two female instructors who complained about this discriminatory policy had their salaries withheld and the schools tried to fire them [121]. Likewise, the presence of women on religious councils was the subject of debate between the Haredi parties and the NRP. Moshe Maya, a Shas parliamentarian and deputy minister of education under Izhak Rabin, explained his party's objection to female representation in the following terms:

Imagine a woman having to sit with the chief rabbis. What a disgrace. We have lost our [moral] compass. Where is the logic, what have we come to when a chief rabbi has to sit with a woman? What do they want to do – turn the religious council into Bnei Akiva [a mixed Religious-Zionist youth movement]? Every child can understand that a chief rabbi should not have to sit for hours in meetings with women or to plead before them. Can you imagine them electing a woman as the chairperson of a religious council [122]?

Haaretz has also devoted space to the following gender-related issues: the ultra-Orthodox objection to woman passing through Mea Shearim in "improper" dress [123]; the setting up of *ezrat nashim* (a women's section, usually in a synagogue) in a neighborhood bank [124]; the segregation between the sexes on buses to a Haredi city [125]; and matters concerning *agunot* (wives whose husbands have disappeared or are MIAs [missing in action]). The aforementioned resistance to "mixed" swimming pools can also be viewed in this light [126].

Although the Amish do not have substantively different views on the role of women in society, the *NYT* does not report any problems or conflicts over this matter. In all likelihood, the reason for this is that the Amish do not try to force their values on the general public. Or, put differently, there are no Amish struggles that are on par with those of the Haredim against, among other things, the election of women to religious councils, the service of women (whether religious or not) in the IDF, or the fight for gender segregation in various public venues. The Amish keep their beliefs on gender relations from percolating beyond the confines of their homes and communities, so that the issue does not attract the scrutiny of the outside world.

Conclusion

As shown, there are indeed substantial differences between the Amish and the Haredim, differences that come to the fore in the presentation of the two minority groups by the *NYT* and *Haaretz*. Whereas the most prominent ultra-Orthodox topics in *Haaretz* relate to "hard" issues like politics, the military, security, and economics, the *New York Times'* reporting on the Amish emphasizes "soft" issues like education, culture, communications, technology, environment, agriculture, and medicine.

Of the Haredi news items and articles in the Israeli paper, 83.2% deal with substantial and thorny issues, while 54.7% of those in the *NYT* on the Amish are more "colorful" and "soft." This tendency points to the fact that, although readers are curious about the Amish, the group's political or economic sway is negligible. In the coverage on the ultra-Orthodox, the stress is on the group's conflicts with the rest of society, the state, the government, the army, the legal system, and rival political parties over, among other issues, military enlistment, financial matters, the Sabbath, kashruth, marital laws, archaeological excavations, and the status of the Reform and Conservative movements. Conversely, there were fewer reports in the American daily on Amish struggles (exceptions being the disputes over photo IDs and the size of bedroom windows). There is a certain affinity between the two communities with respect to education. Nevertheless, the Amish avoid making waves in this field as well, whereas many of *Haaretz's* stories on ultra-Orthodox education center on disputes, primarily over funding and the teaching of core subjects.

In summation, the coverage of the Amish in the *NYT* is by and large favorable, while the items on the ultra-Orthodox in *Haaretz* are generally negative and censorious. This difference largely reflects the standing of the ultra-Orthodox and Amish in mainstream society. The former constitute a rapidly growing minority that is perceived to be a threat to religious-Zionist, traditional, and secular Jews. Moreover, the Amish are a small, interesting, and romantic community, which is basically

1. In fact, men of priestly origin – for instance, men whose name is Kohen, Kohn, Kahn, or Katz, whatever their religiosity or profession may be today. According to Jewish religious law, *kohanim* are forbidden to enter cemeteries.

viewed as innocuous. The Haredim's intensive occupation with party and coalition politics, the reports of ultra-Orthodox acts of fraud, and the innumerable struggles over funding indeed contribute much to their poor image with the non-Haredi public in Israel. However, it could very well be that the Haredim's less than stellar reputation is also tied to the fact that the liberal *Haaretz* journalists are opposed to the Haredi community and to what it stands for. They stand up against the Haredim's dodging of the draft and shunning of productive labor, and against the Haredi support of an imposed Orthodox way of life in a semi-theocratic state. Moreover, the Haredim are perceived as a threat to Israel's secular society and polity. What and how reports on the Haredim are presented in *Haaretz* is a reflection of this perceived threat. Such is certainly not the case with the Amish and the *New York Times*.

Basically, we may conclude that the different coverage of the two communities in the *New York Times* and in *Haaretz* reflects on some major differences in their standing in their respective societies and in their different attitude towards the state. While the Amish accept the United States as a land of freedom, the Haredim do not regard Israel as a truly Jewish state. While the Amish accept the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, the Haredim reject major clauses in Israel's Declaration of Independence, and oppose the adoption of a liberal constitution. The Amish accept the U.S. law, but seek exemptions for religious reasons, while the Haredim see Israeli law as barely legitimate since it was not enacted by a rabbinical assembly and contains "foreign" (Ottoman, British, American, European) and secular-Israeli components. While the Amish dialogue with the state is about civic liberties and the rule of law, the Haredi struggle derives from a different perception of the character of the state. The Haredi attitude towards the wider society and the state is to a large extent conflictual and miles away from the Amish approach of *Gelassenheit*.

Methodological appendix

The selection process involved analyzing articles and news items whose titles contained specific words. With respect to the Amish group, we included all the articles with the word Amish in the heading. Given the size and sway of Israel's ultra-Orthodox community, we not only examined items with the Hebrew word *Haredim*, but also those with the name of an ultra-Orthodox political party (e.g. Agudat Yisrael or Shas), institution (the Council of Torah Sages), educational network (the Independent Education Center), or residential areas (most notably the ultra-Orthodox city of Bnei Brak and the Jerusalem neighborhood of Mea Shearim).

The sample covers the period from 1980 to 2010. Our statistical analysis shows that there were over 40 times more news reports in *Haaretz* concerning the ultra-Orthodox than about the Amish in the *NYT*. This figure underscores the political and social importance that is ascribed to the Haredim, on the one hand, and the relative marginality of the Amish, on the other. Given the plethora of stories and articles about the former, we searched editions of *Haaretz* for pertinent items every 43 days, with the objective of incorporating material from different days of the week. If the date fell on a Saturday (the paper does not come out on the Sabbath), it was omitted from the sample and no edition was taken in its stead. In selecting the first sample date, a number between 1 and 43 was drawn at random, whereupon the other editions were selected at equal intervals of 43 days. The procedure for the *NYT* was completely different. On account of the relative paucity of news reports on the Amish, all the items throughout the thirty-year sample period, and whose main headlines contained the word Amish, were included in the study. In toto, 206 news items were garnered: 131 from *Haaretz* about the ultra-Orthodox; and 75 on the Amish from the *New York Times*.

Quantitative appendix

News Topics	Haredim in <i>Haaretz</i> (N = 131)	Amish in the <i>NYT</i> (N = 75)
Politics and Political Parties	63 (48.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Defense/Army	8 (6.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Economy/Budgets/Funding	30 (22.9%)	7 (9.3%)
Education, Culture, and Communications	27 (20.6%)	21 (28.0%)
Technology/Environment/Agriculture/Medicine	10 (7.6%)	17 (22.7%)
Traffic Accidents/Transportation	0 (0.0%)	11 (14.7%)
Crime	14 (10.7%)	14 (18.7%)*
Religion	19 (14.5%)	3 (4.0%)

* Primarily against the Amish

Articles on Conflicts	Haredim in <i>Haaretz</i> (N = 131)	Amish in the <i>NYT</i> (N = 75)
Politics and Political Parties	36 (27.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Defense/Army	5 (3.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Economy/Budgets/Finance	22 (16.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Traffic Accidents/Transportation	0 (0.0%)	8 (10.7%)
Crime	7 (5.3%)	3 (4.0%)
Religion	25 (19.1%)	3 (4.0%)

Journalist's Attitude towards the "Other"	Haredim in <i>Haaretz</i> (N = 131)	Amish in the <i>NYT</i> (N = 75)
Positive	7 (5.3%)	27 (36.0%)
Neutral	95 (72.5%)	48 (64.0%)
Negative	29 (22.1%)	0 (0.0%)

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