Jewish Ideas Weekly

www.jewishideasdaily.com

December 14-21 2012

Friday, December 14

Warfare on Shabbat: The Legacy of the Maccabees

By Moshe Sokolow

The recent Operation "Pillar of Cloud" against Hamas, though of brief duration, did encompass a Shabbat. Yet for those directly affected, both military and civilian, the restrictions of the sacred day were scarcely observed. This was as it should be—but not as it has always been. A look at the history of waging warfare on Shabbat reveals an ambivalence that required major shock therapy to remedy.

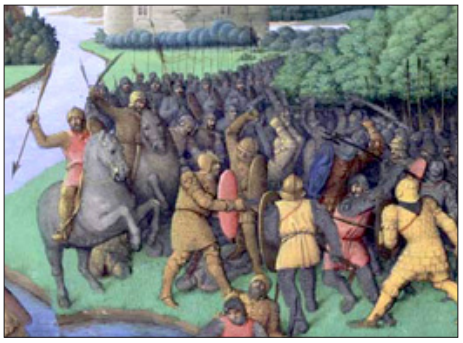
To put this issue into its historical context, we must go back to the beginning of the Second Temple period (516 B.C.E.-70 C.E.), when Ezra and Nehemiah found that the laws of Shabbat were being routinely violated. They took remedial action, instigating a series of enactments, or *takkanot*, which led to a more stringent observance of Shabbat throughout the balance of their era.

Indeed, they were so successful in instilling the spirit of Shabbat observance that during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, the Jewish people appear to have taken it to near-fatal excess, refusing to take up arms on Shabbat even in their own defense.

The principal sources of our historical information about this ritual piety are the Apocryphal Books of the Maccabees and the works of Josephus Flavius. In I Maccabees (2:29-37), we find the following narrative about a Greek attack on the Jews:

> The [Greeks] arose, suddenly, to fall upon [the Jews] on Shabbat, saying to them: How long will you refuse to obey the king . . . . And the men in their midst did not raise their hands to hurl a stone or to silence them . . . and they fell upon them on Shabbat and killed all those in the cave . . . about 1,000 people.

The deaths of 1,000 Jewish men, women, and children prompted Matthias and the Maccabees to respond. They decided, the text continues, that if they were again attacked on Shabbat, they would fight a defensive battle:



> They said to one another: If we all act as our brothers have, and refuse to defend our lives and beliefs, we will shortly be destroyed. They decided on that day: Whosoever will attack us on Shabbat, we will fight back; we will not die like our brothers in the caves.

But, while the Jews now responded to attacks on Shabbat, they still refrained from responding to less imminent threats. Thus, the Syrian general Nicanor attempted to surprise the Maccabees by an attack on Shabbat (2 Maccabees 15:1-5), reasoning that the Jewish defenders would not begin to arm themselves until they actually came under attack on that day. He failed, but only because he lost the element of surprise for long enough to enable the defenders to reach their weapons.

A reformulation of the law was clearly required.

The reformulation can be found in the *Tosefta*, a collection of early rabbinic comments not included in the canonical Mishnah. The new rule not only permitted self-defense on Shabbat but allowed the storage of arms in soldiers' individual homes rather than a collective storehouse, precisely in order to prevent the kind of potentially fatal pandemonium caused by Nicanor's attack.

The regulations now permitted not just self-defense but a posture of defensive readiness. Yet preemptive strikes against the enemy were still prohibited. In 63 C.E., Israel's next significant foes, the Romans, under the command of their general, Pompey, built a siege ramp to assault Jerusalem. Josephus described the resulting problem (Antiquities Book 14 4:2-3):

> Had we not been accustomed, from the days of yore, to rest on Shabbat, that ramp would never have been completed. . . . Even though the law permits us to protect ourselves against attacks, it still does not permit us to engage our enemies when they are not [directly attacking].

In fact, in 66 C.E., when King Agrippa II called on the Judeans to cease their rebellion against Rome, he tried to sap their morale by telling them, in essence, that they would fail whichever way they turned. If they kept the Shabbat scrupulously, the Romans would again take advantage of them, just as Pompey had. And if they broke Shabbat in order to fight, their God would not be responsive to their prayers, since they would have violated His ritual laws.

Fortunately, these words of demagoguery did not describe the actual record of the war against Rome. Josephus reports on a number of Jewish military actions on Shabbat. True, he notes, the Jews of Caesarea were slaughtered by their Gentile

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neighbors on Shabbat, but only because they were attacked before they were able to mobilize to defend themselves. (Wars Book 2 18:1 ff.) And when the Jews of Jerusalem were attacked on the festival of Sukkot, Josephus notes that they mounted a spirited resistance without regard to the sanctity usually afforded to the day. Indeed, he exults in their decision and its effects: "The intense anger which drew the Jews' attention away from their sacred rituals, gave them added strength and determination to fight." (Wars Book 219:2)

Faced with the apparent contradiction in desecrating the Shabbat in order to thwart the further desecration of Shabbat, the Sages concluded, "It is preferable to violate one Shabbat in order to observe many other Shabbatot." This principle continues to guide such lifesaving activities as emergency medical services on Shabbat and holidays. And since the restoration of Jewish sovereignty in the State of Israel, the considerations that allow the waging of war on Shabbat, both defensive and offensive, have been revived and given added force. The presence of religious soldiers in the Israel Defense Forces—indeed, their overrepresentation in the officer corps—testifies that the halakhic issues involved have been successfully resolved. This resolution is a particularly valuable legacy of the Maccabees.

Monday, December 17

The Whole Body

By Viva Hammer

My rabbinic father-in-law and my lay leader mother agree on one thing: no body piercing. Ears, nose, and bellybutton, all are sacred property on loan from God. No girl in either my family or my husband's had her ears pierced in childhood, although one girl on each side did make the cut during her rebellious teens. I was not one of the latter: my father relinquished me under the huppah whole and unpierced.

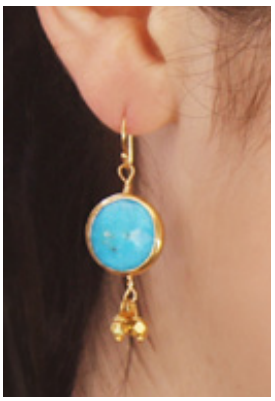
This united family front was disturbed by my daughter while she was still a pre-teen. Every girl in the *world* was getting pierced earrings, she claimed; she wanted them, too. Her father's blood pressure rose visibly whenever she raised the topic. I attempted to avert a battle, asking him, how bad it could be if our biblical foremothers were lavished with ear and nose rings by their beloveds? Her father wasn't convinced. Maybe our foremothers wore clip-ons.

As tenacious as any of her stiff-necked clan, my daughter wouldn't let go. "Hasidim pierce their little girls' ears when they're born," she said. "Famous *Yeshiva* rabbis let their daughters do it. Why do we have to be holier than everyone else?" Her father was still unmoved. So, she smiled sweetly and changed tack: "What if I publish an essay proving that it's permitted?"

Ahhh! My daughter had hit upon the charm. Also common to our family, on both sides, is a predilection to print a monograph for every occasion, joyous, tragic, or humdrum. Here was the next generation offering to add to the family resumé. My daughter's father promptly agreed to the proposal.

For months, together, we scrutinized the Jewish law against wounding. It is certainly forbidden, we learned, to injure anyone; and a person may not wound her own body any more than anyone else's. But if the victim gives prior consent, or the self-wounding is voluntary, there are venerable sources permitting it—unless the wound is inflicted in a humiliating manner, which is always forbidden.

In fact, among the flurry of sources, my daughter found an article by her very own rabbinic grandfather, permitting plastic surgery, despite the clear dangers, if performed to repair a disfigurement that causes a person to shun society. A promising precedent, it seemed; but my daughter decided that not getting her ears pierced wouldn't cause her the degree of anguish required by the article. She conceded that an undecorated ear is not a deformity.



The exercise was my daughter's first in legal analysis and rhetoric. At the end of it, she made a PowerPoint presentation to the family. She argued to us that if she brought a wound upon her own ears, it would be well within the law, since only fanatics could claim that the procedure is humiliating in process or outcome.

Her father bowed to the strength of her arguments. Together, my daughter and I hiked to the surgeon who seemed to offer the safest piercing procedure. If this had been a visit for any other medical purpose, like a vaccination, she would have approached it with a well-nurtured hysteria. But this was a fully researched, self-inflicted cut. She endured it without a sound.

The wound had healed in time for my daughter's bat mitzvah. She received a shower of earrings as multitudinous as the sweets rained on a bar mitzvah boy at the end of his Torah reading. Shelves in her room had to be cleared for a storefront-full. Every day she wore a different color.

It's been several years now, and most of the time my daughter goes forth earring-free. Recently she read to us an article she wrote for her college newspaper on the fashion for tattooing. It featured an interview with an Israeli student at her college who has embellished a significant portion of her body with permanent engravings.

The student who was interviewed had saved up for many months to pay for her tattoos; her first engraving was made to reward her arrival on the dean's list. In Israeli-style English, she explained herself: "If I'm asked, 'Why did you put so much money on body ink?' I say, 'Because I earned it; I did well in school.'" Each tattoo reflected a central element of this woman's identity. "In some ways," she said, "getting a tattoo is like wounding yourself. But at the same time, they make me feel more complete. They are a beautiful series that have serious thought and meaning behind them."

As we listened to my daughter read the article, I began to cringe. Tattooing is unquestionably forbidden in the Torah, and there are people still alive whose arms are carved with the Nazis' enumeration of our destruction. As she finished reading, my daughter said, "I wish I hadn't pierced my ears. Why is a pierce on the earlobe different from any other self-mutilation?"

I started to get up to look for the essay she had written to the contrary almost a decade before, but I stopped myself. *Al tomar l'ba'al teshuvah,* "*zekhor ma'asekha harishonim*": No need to remind the repentant of her blemished past.

Tuesday, December 18

Where Did the Gaon Go?

By Lawrence Grossman

Although the Jewish encounter with modernity emerged out of a complex interplay of social, economic, and intellectual currents, Moses Mendelssohn (1729-86) is acknowledged as its godfather. The small-town Jewish boy who became a leading Enlightenment philosopher in Berlin not only embodied the synthesis of observant Jew and European intellectual; he also advocated equal rights for Jews in an overwhelmingly Christian society and produced a German Bible translation and commentary to help his fellow Jews acculturate. The subsequent development of the religiously neutral state (in principle if not in fact) whose de-ghettoized Jewish citizens identify with national values may be traced back directly to Mendelssohn.

Historians have long recognized, however, that this model of modernization, while accurate for Germany and points west, including the United States, does not fit Eastern Europe, where the great bulk of the world's Jews lived until World War II. Governmental authorities there did not consider Jews part of the nation; and the Jews, for their part, rarely identified with Polish, Russian, or Romanian culture.

How, then, shall we conceptualize the modernization of East European Jews?

Enter Eliyahu Stern, assistant professor of modern Jewish intellectual and cultural history at Yale. In his new book *The Genius: Elijah of Vilna and the Making of Modern Judaism* (Yale University Press), Stern identifies an East European contemporary of Mendelssohn who, though different from Mendelssohn in every imaginable way, performed a functionally equivalent role in symbolizing modernity to the Jews beyond the Elbe. The man was Rabbi Elijah ben Solomon (1720-97), better known as the Vilna Gaon, the latter word meaning "pride or "splendor" in biblical Hebrew and, since the 19th century, "genius" in modern Hebrew. He was the genius of Vilna—the Polish city annexed by Russia in his lifetime that is today Vilnius, capital of Lithuania.

The Gaon would hardly appear to be a candidate for leadership of any kind. He was a reclusive, primarily self-taught scholar who held no communal position. One of his few public campaigns was to denounce and urge the excommunication of the newly formed group called Hasidim. Though revered by the Jews of his city and its environs, he conducted no classes and issued no publications or responsa. Occasionally he imparted his views to visiting students; and the notes he scribbled in the margins of books, often cryptic and hard to decipher, were published after his death. Members of his family said he almost never took time off from study to socialize with them or anyone else.

Stern makes his case for the Gaon by setting up unique criteria of modernity for regions heavily populated by Jews. Mendelssohn, he argues, spoke for and to a Jewish minority; hence, making Judaism modern meant reformulating it as rational and unthreatening to Christians and urging the Jews to westernize so that they might fit into the body politic. In Vilna, however, Jews constituted a majority of the population, and neither Rabbi Elijah nor other Jews cared very much what the locals thought of them. In East Europe generally, the Jews remained separate and apart. Their modernization would not come via rapprochement with the neighbors.

Stern claims that East European Jews developed a modern consciousness through an intertwined series of social changes: "the differentiation between public and private spheres, the weakening of religious governing structures, and the democratization of knowledge in Jewish society." Coming soon after the Polish government's dissolution of the Council of Four Lands, which had functioned as the coordinating body for Jewish life in Poland for close to two centuries, the Gaon's legendary life of solitary, unstinting pursuit of knowledge, unconnected to any communal institution, was an embodiment of this new social reality and, as such, was indelibly etched on the cultural consciousness of East European Jews as an ideal for emulation.

Stern believes that all subsequent innovative Jewish trends emanating from Eastern Europe ultimately flow from the Gaon's individualistic and nonconformist persona. Such trends include the new-style yeshiva that one of his students set up in Volozhin in 1804, which became the prototype for the "Lithuanian" yeshivot today; the *Mussar* pietistic-ethical movement; Zionism; and Jewish socialism and radicalism. Stretching hyperbole to its limit, Stern even credits the Gaon for the lifestyle of "those residents of Tel Aviv and New York who live as if they are majorities."

There are substantial problems with Stern's thesis. Can the Vilna Gaon, who wholeheartedly backed the persecution of Hasidim, seriously be associated with individualism and democratization? Can he be designated the source of the modernization of East European Jews when a majority of them—those same Hasidim—justifiably viewed him as their nemesis? Even for the opponents of Hasidism who shared the Gaon's insatiable thirst for Talmud study, his long-term impact has been questioned by historians Shaul Stampfer and Immanuel Etkes, the two leading authorities on the subject.

Stern's arguments for the Gaon's influence, meant to designate him as the Mendelssohn of Eastern Europe, are not necessarily dispositive or even reliable. For example, Stern claims that students in Lithuanian yeshivot were "engrossed" in the Gaon's glosses to the *Shulhan Arukh*, the code of Jewish law, when in fact it was the Talmud, not the *Shulhan Arukh*, that was studied in yeshivot. Stern also cites Michael Stanislawski's *Tsar Nicholas I and the Jews* (JPS) to the effect that students in the Russian government-sponsored Jewish school in mid-19th-century Vilna "read the Gaon's commentary to the Bible." What Stanislawski actually wrote is that they studied the Bible with Mendelssohn's commentary, in an edition that also included a digest of other interpretations, one of which was the Gaon's.

In Immanuel Etkes' words, the Vilna Gaon's reputation rests simply on his "exceptional accomplishment in Torah studies," for which he became a "symbol and source of inspiration." Despite Stern's best efforts to prove otherwise, Rabbi Elijah was no herald of modernity.

Crossing Borders—Without Passports

By Moshe Sokolow

"Crossing Borders," a current exhibit at New York City's Jewish Museum featuring works on loan from the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, displays medieval Jewish manuscripts embedded in their native Christian and Muslim scribal milieus. No passports are required for this intercontinental tour, though occasionally it requires a scorecard to tell the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic players apart.

The selected works of text and illumination, originating in territories that extend from the eastern reaches of the Muslim Orient, through the Asian and Aegean preserves of Byzantium, across North Africa to the western ranges of Iberia, and into the northern stretches of the Holy Roman Empire, blend together harmoniously, so that their mutual influences are patent. Indeed, the Jewish manuscripts on display exhibit a greater affinity for their neighboring Latin, Greek, or Arabic manuscripts than they do for comparable Jewish works from other cultural domains.

The cross-religious similarities give evidence of the Jews' proximity to their non-Jewish neighbors, but perhaps they also owe something to the universal exactitudes of the scholarly calling. They recalled to me a time, 30 years ago, when I visited the Bodleian to get a firsthand look at a manuscript I had previously examined only on microfilm. I arrived in Oxford on Christmas Eve; in only a few hours, the library would close and my opportunity would be lost. I hurried to the registrar's office to obtain the requisite entry pass only to find him in coat, muffler, and hat, locking up for the holiday. I explained my predicament, and he graciously agreed to reopen the office. He unlocked the door, went to his desk, withdrew the pass form, and filled in my name. He then removed his hat, muffler, and coat—and donned his academic gown before stamping the pass and handing it to me.

I had previously pondered the talmudic declaration that the sacrificial order in the Temple is voided if the *kohanim*, the priests, are missing even one of their vestments. At the time, I was unable to grasp why their apparel should either validate or nullify their activities. I now understood: clothes, occasionally, *do* make the man.

The exhibit first utilizes a 13th-century traditional *Sefer Torah* as a benchmark to introduce us to the rotulus, a scroll unrolling vertically rather than horizontally, on which mainly liturgical passages were recorded. Scrolls, however, were uneconomical and were eventually replaced by the codex—in the plural, codices. These were made up of individual leaves of parchment or paper, laid upon one another and fastened together, that could exhibit writing on both sides. While Christian codices began to appear in the earliest centuries of the Common Era, Jewish codices did not appear until the 8th to 9th centuries. The delay may attest to the persistence of a strong oral tradition in the transmission of Jewish texts.

Jewish codices were also distinctive in the manner of their preparation. Christian works were copied in monasteries and hewed to standardized forms dictated by ecclesiastical authorities. Jewish works, lacking the influence of centralized authorities and catering to more widespread literacy, were produced by private copyists many for their own personal use, and tended towards greater individualism. While many Jewish codices were lost or destroyed due to the vicissitudes of persecution and expulsion, the evidence of the Cairo Genizah—which suffered neither—suggests that the greatest danger to the preservation of a Jewish codex was posed by the wear and tear of its regular use.

One private party who produced a Jewish codex was Maimonides (1135-1204), and the exhibition displays a leaf from a draft of his monumental code of Jewish law, the *Mishneh Torah*, written in the sage's own hand. A comparison between this holographic draft and the standard printed edition illustrates another lesson of the exhibition: unlike modern books, which are published only in completed form, medieval works were ongoing. Drafts of Maimonides were circulating even as he was engaged in revising them. While most of the differences between drafts and final editions were stylistic, a study of Genizah texts indicates that Maimonides occasionally altered his halakhic rulings, not just their formulation.

If you follow the link to the Maimonides manuscript, or to Nahmanides' (1194-1270) *Torat Ha-Adam*, on laws of death and mourning, a further lesson emerges, concerning Jewish calligraphy. Jewish scribes and copyists utilized different styles of writing, distinguished from one another by the number of strokes required to form letters. The most formal script, called "square," was reserved for copying monumental texts such as the Bible, Talmud, and liturgy. A less formal "cursive" script was used initially for private records and correspondence and later for personal copying. The works of Maimonides and Nahmanides on display were written in a Sephardic cursive hand closely resembling that of a contemporary Arabic manuscript exhibited alongside them. Such resemblances also characterize Jewish codices that originated in the Christian world: Ashkenazic manuscripts were influenced by Latin Gothic script, Italian Jewish manuscripts by humanistic script.

There are resemblances in content as well as form. Christian manuscripts on biblical themes, such as those of Nicholas of Lyra (1270-1349), borrowed shamelessly from Jewish predecessors such as Rashi (1040-1105). Indian fables transmitted through Arabic reappear in later Hebrew translation. Secular subjects that aroused no partisan passions, like Euclidian geometry, were presented identically in Arabic, Latin, and Hebrew.

The most striking meeting of cultures, though, occurs in the several illuminated manuscripts on display. Only in a miniscule number were the illuminators Jewish; the lion's share of artwork on Jewish manuscripts was done by Christians, whose lack of any acquaintance with Hebrew led to such anomalies as the upside down figures adorning a *mahzor*. Occasionally, religious Christian motifs spilled over onto the pages of Jewish manuscripts, with cherubs and putti, unicorns, and even the Virgin Mary adorning Hebrew Bibles.

Samuel Ibn Tibbon (1165-1232), the preeminent translator of Judeo-Arabic literature into Hebrew, wrote of Hebrew codices, "Make your books your companions; let your cases and shelves be your pleasure grounds and gardens. Bask in their paradise, gather their fruit, pluck their roses, take their spices and myrrh." He would have found "Crossing Borders" not just a meeting place of cultures but as sensually satisfying as one of those gardens.

America and the Muslim Brotherhood: A Romance

By Alex Joffe

One of the most consistent and depressing aspects of U.S.-Middle Eastern relations is the determination of our intellectuals and officials to defend Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. When Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi made his recent power grab, for example, immunizing his decrees from judicial review, Yale law professor Noah Feldman, said that Morsi merely "overreached"—and did so "in the service of preserving electoral democracy." State Department spokesman Victoria Nuland lamely characterized Morsi's actions as a "far cry from an autocrat just saying my way or the highway."

This indulgence, though, is merely the culmination of a more-than-60-year relationship, mostly hidden from view. There has long been an on-again-off-again American romance with the Brotherhood.

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna as a puritanical, reactionary pan-Islamic movement. It developed as a state within a state, including a network of social welfare organs like hospitals, and an underground party apparatus that quickly spread to other countries. Al-Banna had already met with the Mufti of Jerusalem in 1927; in 1945, he sent his son-in-law, Sa'id Ramadan, to set up a branch of the Brotherhood in Palestine. Hamas, established in 1987, is the Brotherhood's most recent Palestinian branch.

The Brotherhood collaborated with the Nazis before and during World War II. In 1948 it murdered an Egyptian Prime Minister and in 1954 tried but failed to assassinate Gamal Abdel Nasser. There followed a violent Egyptian crackdown on the organization. The Brotherhood went underground, spawning more radical groups. In the 1970s, while those groups picked up guns, the Brotherhood disavowed violence and, despite periodic bouts of suppression, re-entered Egyptian politics and, more important, Egyptian society. When Mubarak was overthrown, it was well-positioned as the only organized and funded opposition group. Little of this was foreseen or correctly understood in the West.

This lack of understanding has a history. In the wake of World War II, the U.S. government's perceptions of the Middle East were filtered through a single lens: the threat of Communism. The threat was hardly just theoretical. Moving into the vacuum created by Britain's retreat from its colonies, the Soviet Union abrogated a treaty with Turkey in 1945 and demanded large chunks of Turkish territory. It continued its wartime occupation of northern Iran until 1946 and attempted to set up puppet regimes in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. The entire "Northern Tier" seemed poised to fall to Communism, taking oil supplies with it.

The United States countered with proposals for NATO-like security alliances and ever-larger development schemes, like the Aswan Dam, designed to revolutionize standards of living across vast swaths of the Middle East and lessen the appeal of Communism. The U.S. government also tried to make Islam itself into an American partner. During the 1940s American officials met regularly with the Brotherhood, seeing it as a perfectly useful anti-communist tool. What they knew about the Brotherhood's violently anti-modern, anti-Semitic ideology is uncertain.

In 1953, the American Embassy in Cairo asked the State Department to invite Sa'id Ramadan, son-in-law of the Brotherhood's founder, at U.S. government expense, to a "Colloquium on Islamic Culture" organized by Princeton University and the Library of Congress. The colloquium was a cover for American efforts to enlist the aid of Muslim scholars and notables. During the colloquium, Ramadan even met President Eisenhower. When Egypt cracked down on the Brotherhood in 1954, Ramadan escaped, fleeing to Switzerland. In Geneva he founded an Islamic Center and Al Taqwa Bank, both of which, with ample Saudi funding, have spread the Brotherhood throughout Europe and beyond. Ramadan traveled widely, in part at American expense and perhaps on a CIA-supplied official Jordanian passport. He spoke out against Communism—and promoted the Brotherhood.

Today, one of Ramadan's sons, Hani, runs the Geneva center. Another, Tariq, is a public intellectual who, as Paul Berman and others have noted, has mastered the art of appearing to be a liberal Islamic modernizer when in fact he is steadfast Islamist. He is, of course, widely lauded in academia.

But U.S. involvement in the Brotherhood during the 1950s was more than anti-Communism. As Ian Johnson shows in *A Mosque in Munich* (Houghton Mifflin), it also appealed, with its overtones of an "authentically" Arab and Muslim Middle East, to State Department Arabists and their academic counterparts who regarded Israel as an impediment to American friendship with the Arabs and an aberration that ruined an otherwise romantically pristine region.

The Cold War was a bonanza for Middle Eastern studies—which, as Martin Kramer has shown, rapidly moved away from analysis of history, religion, and texts toward models of "modernization" and "development" aimed at providing practical, relevant knowledge. Study of religion and ideology played a reduced role. Thus prepared, the field's academics and the policy-makers they trained failed to predict the rise and fall of Arab nationalism, the emergence of Islamic fundamentalisms, and various revolutions from Iran to Egypt. One might do better to examine what these experts confidently predict, then expect the opposite.

America's fundamental inability to take religion and ideology seriously persists. Senator John Kerry, likely the next Secretary of State, stated confidently after meeting Morsi in Cairo in June, 2012 that the Egyptian president was "committed to protecting fundamental freedoms" and "said he understood the importance of Egypt's post-revolutionary relationships with America and Israel."

The delusional quality of such thinking was exposed by Eric Trager of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy in a recent piece tartly titled "Shame on Anyone Who Ever Though Mohammad Morsi was a Moderate." Trager, who has had first-hand experience with the Brotherhood, details its rigid ideological worldview and cell-like structure and laments the fact that such religious totalitarians could ever be mistaken for democrats. But Trager's remains a minority view inside and outside government. Believing what people say about the religious foundations of their politics cuts against the grain for overwhelmingly secular and politically liberal academics, who believe that materialism must be the true prime mover. In this view, radical-sound-

ing leaders, once in power, become "responsible" and "pragmatic;" "moderates" can be separated from "extremists" and "military wings" from "political wings." Suggestions to the contrary are crude prejudice.

For its part, the U.S. government has long displayed what historian Fawaz Gerges approvingly called an "accomodationist" approach, predicated on the belief that Islamic groups like the Brotherhood have sworn off violence. But the Obama administration has shown even more willingness than its predecessors to look the other way in the face of Brotherhood abuses of power—and of women and religious minorities—in pursuit of an "authentic" Egyptian democracy. It has not taken the Brotherhood's credo to heart: "Allah is our objective; the Quran is our law; the Prophet is our leader; jihad is our way; and death for the sake of Allah is the highest of our aspirations."

For Israel the situation has become especially grave. Morsi, who can barely bring himself to utter its name, was lauded by the U.S. government, shortly before his coup, for his handling of the Israel-Gaza conflict. He may face hundreds of thousands of internal protestors, but there is little to restrain him while there is no American financial pressure or Egyptian army opposition. The Brotherhood's Islamization of Egypt continues, transforming schools, courts, and mosques down to the local level. When Mohammad Badie, "Supreme Guide" of the Brotherhood, states that "jihad is obligatory" for Muslims and calls peace agreements with Israel a "game of grand deception," it behooves all parties to listen.