Department of State. (1969-2000). *Hankookinui Dosi Sanghwal* [The chronology of urban lives]. Seoul, South Korea: Author.

Department of State. (1979-2000). *Hankookinui Sahoi Jeesoo* [The social index of South Korea]. Seoul, South Korea: Author.

Elias, N., & Dunning, E. (1993). The quest for excitement in leisure. In N. Elias & E. Dunning (Eds.), *Quest for excitement: Sport and leisure in the civilizing process* (pp. 63-90). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Foucault, M. (1997). Governmentality. In *The essential works of Foucault, 1954-1984* (R. Hurley, Trans.; pp. 87-104). New York: New Press.

Guilianotti, R., & Robertson, R. (2004). The globalization of football: A study in the glocalization of the "serious life." *British Journal of Sociology, 55*, 545-568.

Hardt, M., & Negri, A. (2000). *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hogan, J. (2003). Staging the nation: Gendered and ethnicized discourses of national identity in Olympic opening ceremonies. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 27*, 100-123.

Kim, D. (1999). 20 Saekee Hankookesuui "Kookmin" [Kookmin in Korea in the 21st century]. *Changjakwa Beepyungsa, 106*, 30-47.

Kim, D. (2000). Elite sports Jungchaek Byunhwa [The changes of elite sports policies in South Korea]. *Journal of Korean Sports Philosophy, 8*(1), 181-190.

Maguire, J. S. (2002). Michel Foucault: Sport, power, technologies and governmentality. In J. Maguire & K. Young (Eds.), *Theory, sport & society* (pp. 293-314). Amsterdam: JAI.

Miller, T. (1993). *The well-tempered self: Citizenship, culture, and the postmodern subject*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Miller, T., Lawrence, G., MacKay, J., & Rowe, D. (2001). *Globalization and sport: Playing the world*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rose, N. (1999). *Governing the soul: The shaping of the private self* (2nd ed.). London: Free Association Books.

Rowe, D. (2003). Sport and the repudiation of the global. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport, 38*(3), 281-294.

Scott, D. (1999). *Refashioning futures: Criticism after postcoloniality*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Shin, K.-Y. (2000). The discourse of crisis and the crisis of discourse. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies, 1*(3), 427-442.

Silk, M., Andrews, D. L., & Cole, C. L. (2005). Corporate nationalism(s)? The spatial dimension of sporting capital. In M. Silk, D. L. Andrews, & C. L. Cole (Eds.), *Sport and corporate nationalisms* (pp. 1-12). Oxford, UK: Berg.

Spivak, G. (1999). *A critique of postcolonial reason: Toward a history of the vanishing present*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Tomlinson, A., & Young, C. (Eds.). (2005). *National identity and global sports events: Culture, politics, and spectacle in the Olympics and the football World Cup*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Tomlinson, J. (1999). *Globalization and culture*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Wong, L. L., & Trumper, R. (2002). Global celebrity athletes and nationalism: Futbol, hockey and the representation of nation. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 26*, 168-194.

Yoon, K. (2000). *Theoretical trends in modern Korea* (H. Jang, Trans.). Seoul, South Korea: Dangdae.

Young, R. J. C. (2001). *Postcolonialism: An historical introduction*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Younghan Cho, PhD, is a postdoctoral fellow in Asia Research Institute at National University of Singapore. His major research is on nationalism, sports, media, and popular culture, and his current projects include East Asian popular culture.

Contested Masculinities

The New Jew and the Construction of Black and Palestinian Athletes in Israeli Media

Eran Shor
State University of New York at Stony Brook

This study examines how Israeli media present the masculinity of two non-Jewish groups, foreign Black players and Israeli Palestinian players. A systematic qualitative content analysis during the years 2002-2003 revealed very similar media images of these two groups. In both cases, the players are often portrayed as tough and physically superior (i.e., more masculine) but also as cognitively inferior and childish (i.e., less masculine). These findings shed light not only on Israeli views of the other, but also on the way the media perceives Jewish masculinity. The tension between the hypermasculine and the hypomasculine perception of non-Jews serves as an inverse mirror. On one hand, it allows the cultivation of a cognitively superior and mature Jewish image. On the other hand, it corresponds with the historic image of the weak and frail Jewish man and serves as a constant reminder of the failure to achieve the demands of masculine physical ideals.

Keywords: masculinity; sport; Israel; media

In May 2005, the Israeli basketball team Maccabee Tel-Aviv won the European championship for the second time in a row. During the following days, the Israeli public and media enthusiastically celebrated the victory over the Gentiles. The television channels and the newspapers were filled with excited praise, commending the team that brought "us" national pride. However, not everyone in the public and media shared this joy. Many found it hard to enjoy the achievement fully because the team's prominent players are not Israeli or Jewish. One of the Internet surfers expressed these feelings:

> I find the recent national erection odd. . . . Not everyone takes part in this sad festival. . . . Let us not forget that the ones who brought us this achievement are three Americans, a Lithuanian and a Croatian [the team's predominant players]. . . . Only when the game was already decided an anemic Israeli came off the bench. . . . Things would have been different if five Israelis took Europe apart, but this is a foreign legion. . . . How can we say that *Maccabee Tel-Aviv* represents Israel, the Jewish state, when so few Israelis play there? (posted to *Ynet*, May 18, 2005).

This statement demonstrates a common concern among Jewish writers and commentators in the Israeli media: the feeling that others are fighting their wars prevents them from fully enjoying the victory. The following study examines the representation and reconstruction of non-Jewish masculinities in Israeli media. It focuses on two major groups: foreign Black players and Israeli Palestinian players.[1] The representation of both groups draws from portrayals found in other Western countries. It interlaces racial and oriental traditions to create an image of tough and physically superior but also childish, servile, and cognitively inferior men. The main uniqueness of the Israeli-Jewish context stems from the interplay between the constructed hypermasculinity of the other and the perception of Jews as hypomasculine, which is deeply rooted in Jewish history. Thus, Israeli media's reconstruction of Black and Palestinian masculinities reveals not only its view of these two groups but also the way Jewish masculinity is perceived and reproduced in comparison to the other.

The article starts with a short historical review of Jewish masculinity, focusing on the attempt of the Zionist movement to create a new masculine Jewish image. This review serves as a base for looking at the construction of other masculinities in nowadays Israel. Next, I provide a brief background of Black and Palestinian athletes in Israel and their social and legal status. The central part of the article presents a systematic content analysis of the media coverage of these two groups. Finally, I return to the hegemonic Jewish group and argue that the presentation of other masculinities as flawed mirrors a media conception of contested and insecure Jewish masculinity.

The Invention of the New Jewish Man

Connell (1995) argues that masculinities must always be studied and understood as an aspect of large-scale social relations, structures, and processes. To understand the formation of any unique pattern of masculinity in a given society, we must look at the cultural and historical context in which this pattern was shaped. Accordingly, in order to comprehend the perception of Jewish manhood in present Israel and the interplay between this perception and the reconstruction of non-Jewish masculinities, we should first trace the origins and evolution of Jewish images of masculinity.

Hypomasculine Jewish images have been dominant throughout the past two millennia. Harkabi (1983) suggests that the perception of Jewish men as passive originates in the second century, following the failure of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt. Rabbinic culture sought to erase the memory of this revolt, together with other myths of the Jewish warrior, from the national memory in order to establish an image of a timid and studious Jewish man. Boyarin (1997) describes the ideal Jewish masculinity in early modern Eastern Europe (and before that throughout the Middle Ages): A gentle, timid, soft and studious rabbi or Talmudic student, the exact opposite of the dominant strain within romantic European culture idealizing the active and powerful "knight in shining armor."

The dominance of the gentle Jew ideal started to erode at the end of the 19th century, as some of the most famous European Jewish figures of the time led attempts to create a new model, one that would be considered manly according to the masculine standards of European culture. The prominent leaders of the emerging European Zionist movement (such as Theodor Herzl and Max Nordau) saw Jewish Diaspora as essentially queer and Diaspora men as weak and effeminate. In their view, only breaking off from Europe and establishing a strong independent Jewish state could rescue Jewish masculinity and return the national erection (Boyarin, 1997; Gluzman, 2007). The Zionist leaders sought to create an alternative, muscular Jewish body (drawn mainly from the Aryan imagery), as well as a new spry and belligerent Jewish spirit. For that they tried to revive, and often to rewrite and reconstruct, a glorious Jewish past. Although traditionally Diaspora Jewish culture had little interest in ancient Jewish warriors and military figures such as Samson, biblical warlords, the rebels of Masada, and the Maccabees, the Zionist Jews enthusiastically adopted all these as icons (Breines, 1990).

This obsession with creating a new Jewish man did not stop with European Zionists. During the first decades of the 20th century, leading Zionist figures in Palestine (David Raziel, Ze'ev Zabotinski, and others) sought to "bring the power to Israel" and turn the Jews into tough men (Breines, 1990). The Sabras (the Palestine-born Jews) were depicted as the reincarnation of this new Jew—tall, sturdy, muscular, and above all, tough and ready for a fight—everything that the Diaspora Jewish man failed to be (Almog, 2000). In the following decades, this new Jewish man model has dominated the perceptions of ideal masculinity in the forming state of Israel. It still holds great influence on its culture and images today.

The Role of Sports in Creating the New Jewish Masculinity

During the past two decades, the relations between sports and masculinity have been widely studied. Some see masculinity as the primary ideological core of sport and its culture (e.g., Anderson, 2005; Burstyn, 1999). Whannel (2002) believes that in sports, the prototype of hegemonic masculinity—active, muscular, and outdoor—is fully manifested. Sport is an extremely gendered domain; an entrenched bastion of patriarchy, and one of the few spheres in which feminist politics failed to weaken the hegemonic masculine control. It is therefore one of the major fields for producing and reproducing masculine ethos and heroes. These heroes (sport stars) serve as role models and provide a potentially productive field of study.

The sports field seems especially promising in the Israeli case. One of the main ways for constructing the new Jew was, as previously mentioned, through rewriting and reconstructing a glorious Jewish past. Old (Samson, David and Goliath, the rebels of Masada, and the Maccabees) and new (the Warsaw Ghetto rebels, heroes from recent Israeli wars) myths of Jewish bravery and heroism were mobilized to create a model of a tough and courageous man. These founding myths of bravery and

toughness are extremely eminent in the Israeli sports arena. One of the more common myths is that of the *few facing the many*, which celebrates the victory of the inferior (in number, weapons, and physics) sons of Israel over their superior foes. This victory is achieved through the help of God, but also through superior courage, faith, wisdom, strategic skills, and moral values (Almog, 2000). In sports events, the number of players in rival teams is equal. Therefore, Israeli media and public discourse often seek to emphasize other kinds of inferiority. Israeli athletes are often depicted as physically inferior (shorter and weaker) but also as united, full of combat spirit, and playing smart.

The most prominent example of these stereotypes can be seen in the media coverage of Israel's leading basketball team, Maccabee Tel-Aviv. Since the 1970s, the team's contests with Greek opponents have often been scheduled around the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah. They were therefore portrayed in the newspapers as replicating the heroic and mythical fight between the ancient Maccabees and the ancient Greeks: A team of physically inferior Jews confronts and overcomes superior foes through a mixture of willfulness, determination, self-sacrifice, and shrewdness. Often, these portrayals were also extended from the teams to certain individuals who were considered as their emblems. Thus, during the 1970s and 1980s, whenever Maccabee Tel-Aviv faced Russian teams, the Israeli media would contrast Miki Berkowitz or Moti Aroesti—the small but talented and courageous Israeli players— with Vladimir Takachenko or Arvidas Sabonis—the hypermasculine Russian giants. The obvious allusion to the Biblical myth of David and Goliath prepared the ground for an expected loss. It is, after all, hard to overcome such physical inferiority. However, in case of a miraculous victory, it served to strengthen the ancient myth— the victory of Jewish spirit, courage, and wisdom over the strength and physical superiority of the Gentiles.

Such descriptions help in sustaining national pride. However, they also perpetuate the stereotype of the physically weak and inferior Jew, who overcomes the goyim by the help of his wisdom and not through his physical skills. Still, different from the Jews of the Diaspora, this new Israeli Jew is courageous and ready to face his adversaries. He may be physically inferior, but at least he is out there with the guys, taking part in the masculine game, no longer watching it from the sidelines. In light of these images, it is interesting to examine how Israeli media represent and reconstruct the masculinities of non-Jewish athletes who play for Israeli teams and play a central role in their achievements.

Media, Masculinity, and Subordinate Groups

According to constructionist approaches, the media serve as a mediator, which builds meanings and produces unifying messages and symbols (Adoni & Mane, 1984). Like any other mediation of reality, media coverage is inevitably partial. Media reporters control our access to the public sphere and introduce their own views to the public (Bourdieu, 1998; Gerbner & Gross, 1976). Media hegemony theory, based on Gramsci's (1971) theory of hegemony, takes these ideas one step further. According to this theory, not only is the media subjective, but it also deliberately and systematically prefers the social elites and dominant groups (Hargreaves, 1986). Even if we choose not to accept these claims in full, studies show frequent biases in media coverage. Minority and subordinate groups are often excluded from the public sphere or portrayed in a negative stereotypical way.[2]

This study focuses on the Israeli media's coverage of two subordinate groups: foreign Black players and Israeli Palestinian players. Media representation of Black masculinity in Israel has yet to be studied. However, former studies in America (Burstein, 1999; Sabo & Jansen, 1994) and Britain (Whannel, 2002) found that the media tend to emphasize Black athletes' physicality and toughness. The players are depicted as extremely athletic "big bad brutes" embroiled in scandals; tough guys par excellence, animal-like and savage. Seldom are they connected to hard work, discipline, and intelligence, all necessary elements in producing top athletic performances (in fact, natural athletic skills are believed to compensate for inferior intellect).

As for Palestinian masculinity, Almog (2000) describes the hybrid images of Arab masculinity in early Zionist culture. On one hand, Arab images were romantic: pure and primal people free of complexes, hospitable and brave—"the noble savage." On the other hand, especially since the end of the 1930s, the more common image was of the Arab as primitive, wild, bloodthirsty, vengeful, and deceitful. These hybrid depictions of Arab masculinity can still be found, although somewhat more moderately, in today's media images (Avraham, 2001; Herzog & Shamir, 1994; Wolfsfeld, Avraham, & Aburaiya, 2000). Yosef (2002) studied representations of Arab masculinity in Israeli movies of the 1980s and 1990s. In these movies, Arab men are largely shown both as hypermasculine—strong, simple, violent, and hypersexual— and as hypomasculine—submissive, cowardly, effeminate, and homosexual.

These studies present a fascinating duality, which bears startling resemblance to the portrayal of Jews in anti-Semitic Europe. Sports media is a promising field to further pursue non-Jewish masculinity representations, both because non-Jewish athletes are prominent in Israeli media and because the sports field in general is highly masculine. The study of Israeli Arab sport has substantially accelerated during the past decade (e.g., Ben-Porat, 2000; Carmeli & Grossman-Eliav, 2000; Sorek, 2006). However, references to media representations of the players themselves remain scarce.

Background

Foreign Black players. Foreign players have been a part of Israeli basketball leagues since the 1970s. They arrived in order to strengthen the Israeli clubs that compete in the pan-European club championships.[3] Officially, the players carry the status of foreign workers. In 2002-2003, three foreign players were allowed in each

basketball major league team, and one in the second league. Almost all of these players come from the United States, and almost all of them are Black (in total there are about 40 to 50 Black players in the two major Israeli basketball leagues at any given season).

Israeli Palestinian players. Unlike the foreign players, who are a small and unique group, the Palestinian players are an inseparable part of the Israeli Palestinian public. Seemingly, they are locals, born and raised Israeli citizens, and an integral part of Israeli society. In practice, however, the Jewish dominance in Israeli society and the constant conflict between Israel and the Palestinians turned them into foreigners in their own homeland. The Jewish majority is mostly hostile toward the Palestinian minority, which is viewed mainly as a security and demographical threat (Benziman & Mansour, 1992; Smooha, 1998). Although Israeli Palestinians successfully integrated into the higher levels of Israeli soccer (15 players in the major league in 2002-2003 and even more today), almost none of them reached the major basketball leagues.

Method

The data for the study were gathered and analyzed according to the constant comparative method for qualitative content analysis. This method, first introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967), integrates some interpretation of the data in what Maykut and Morehouse (1994) call interpretive-descriptive research. Accordingly, I use a hermeneutic approach, which emphasizes the meanings people ascribe to reality and to their actions and tries to mediate between the reader and the text.

Sampling. The sampling includes *all* the articles and interviews dealing with foreign or Israeli Palestinian players in major men's soccer and basketball leagues that appeared in Hebrew newspapers, television channels, and Internet sites between July 2002 and June 2003. The data were systematically gathered from

(a) Daily newspapers: Articles and interviews were collected from the three major Hebrew daily newspapers: *Yediot Ahront, Maariv, and Haaretz.* In addition, all the weekly *Maariv*-chain local newspapers were thoroughly searched for relevant articles.
(b) Television channels: Articles and interviews were gathered from the following channels: Channel 1, Channel 2, Channel 5, and Channel 5+. The first two are the biggest Israeli public channels. They both broadcast daily sports news reports. Channels 5 and 5+ are sports channels. Both broadcast daily half-hour sports news magazines.
(c) Internet Web sites: Daily articles and interviews from the following Web sites were examined: Salnews.com, Sport5.co.il, Safsal.co.il, One.co.il, and Ynet.co.il. The first four sites on this list are exclusively sports sites. *Ynet* is a general news site, with a large section dedicated to sports.

In addition to articles and interviews, the Internet makes it possible to follow surfers' responses to articles and news, often referred to as *talkbacks*. The relatively new talkbacks phenomenon has yet to be thoroughly examined by media scholars. Studies show that readers who write responses to printed newspapers have higher than average willingness to be exposed and tend to express resolved and extreme stands regarding controversial issues (Eyal, 1983). Internet talkbacks, too, should be looked at carefully and not automatically considered as representative of public views. Still, talkbacks are undoubtedly an important part of today's public discourse. Internet surfers are exposed to them, and they may affect them in the same way other media exposure does. Moreover, the study of talkbacks is compatible with recent approaches to media studies, emphasizing not only the text but also its mediation and interpretation by the readers (Hall, 1980/1999). I look here at responses to a limited number of articles dealing with controversial issues. In each of these cases, all *Ynet* talkbacks related to the issue were monitored.

Overall, I examined 168 long reports, articles, and interviews from the written press, television, and Internet Web sites. Of these, 76 focused on foreign Black players, 52 on Israeli Palestinian players, and 40 were profile articles and long interviews with Jewish players (randomly sampled for comparison). In addition, 1,430 Internet surfers' talkbacks were examined, 1,114 dealing with foreign Black players and 316 dealing with the Palestinian players. Finally, I watched about 200 broadcast sports news magazines and about a hundred full basketball and soccer matches, randomly sampled throughout the year.

Findings

Foreign Black Players

Most interviews and profile articles with foreign players are published either when the player first arrives in Israel or when he turns out to be successful. These interviews and articles often reveal a tendency to simplify the players' life stories and fit them into a stereotypical schematic narrative: tough childhood with few prospects for the future but also athletic excellence and determination, which eventually lead to redemption. Another stereotype, often only hinted at, is that of physical Black superiority accompanied by cognitive inferiority.

"Instead of Stealing Cars He Went to the Park to Shoot Hoops": Redemption Narratives

In profile articles and interviews with Black players, a recurring narrative appears: The player grew up in a hostile and violent neighborhood. He had to choose between three options: developing a criminal career, becoming a junky, or becoming

an athlete. He *chose* basketball, and with the help of determination, natural talent, and luck managed to escape the cruel destiny that awaited him and his peers. This is a motive of a miraculous salvation: In the face of an almost impossible point of departure, the player turned out to be a successful and friendly man who deserves to come and play in Israel.

This motive was repeated, with slight variations, in the life stories of many of the players (about half of the cases). First, the reporters present a graphic, detailed, and dramatic description of the player's childhood neighborhood and its harsh conditions. Examples for that can be found in interviews with basketball players Gerald Brown and Billy Keys:

> Brown comes from a Black neighborhood in east Los Angeles, famous by its hostility towards cops, [where] violent freedom fighters and filthy heinous criminals live side by side. . . . In the main street gangs stop cars for inspection. If you are White, a tourist or just a passerby, your life dramatically change. (Goren, 2003a)
> Keys's childhood is sadly typical of a Black American. . . . His parents split up when he was 6, his friends competed over the size of their automatic weapon, and finding light inside the big darkness was only a matter of luck. . . . On the way back from school, instead of stealing cars, Keys went to the park to shoot some hoops. (Goren, 2002)

The dramatic descriptions seem to be taken from a Hollywood movie. The player's family is a broken, single-parent family: The mother raises the children alone. The father left the house, robbing the children of a manly role model. Another example comes from an interview with Randal Jackson:

> Jackson grew up with five brothers and sisters in one of the toughest neighborhoods in Boston. His father did not live in the house, and his mother had to struggle by herself to get him away from drugs and other trouble awaiting him in the street. (Ornan, 2003a)

These descriptions emphasize one consensual "fact": Black children growing up in a typical American neighborhood have only two alternatives: deterioration (to either crime or drugs) or salvation (through sports). When the Black player grew up in a neighborhood that is not considered to be problematic, as for example in the case of the player David Bluthenthal, this fact is mentioned with a slight note of surprise, as if to say that this is the exception that serves to prove the rule: "You will not read here about deprived childhood and racism." (Segal, 2003a)

Of interesting, the players themselves often cooperate with the harsh presentation of their life stories and do not hesitate to color their childhood neighborhood in very dark shades. Many claim that if it was not for basketball, they would have surely deteriorated to crime or drugs, and quite possibly would not even be alive today. Billy Keys, for example, describes his Chicago childhood neighborhood:

> In every way, it was all negative. People selling drugs on the streets, addicted kids all around you, you live in a gangs' battlefield. Just like the stories you see on television, no one exaggerates, this is how reality looks like. . . . I knew many people who associated with drug dealers, but I went the other way, and the fact that I was a good basketball player gave me a certain status in the neighborhood. People respected me although I was far from the drugs. . . . Basketball was my escape from all the negative influences in my community. (Ornan, 2002)

Randal Jackson describes a similar reality:

> There are many bad influences in the street: drugs, people carrying weapons, women. . . . I think I am one of the few who survived this neighborhood. People kill each other for no reason whatsoever. . . . But you get used to the idea. Just as you are not afraid to live in Israel despite the war threat and the suicide bombers, I am not afraid of people who deal drugs and carry weapons in the street. (Ornan, 2003a)

Why should Black players be so eager to cooperate with such a negative and one-sided display of their childhood background? Perhaps it is because they can gain quite a lot from this bleak presentation. After all, only a strong, tough, and dedicated man could have overcome such odds and still become a successful basketball player. In any case, such cooperation fortifies the deterioration-salvation dichotomy. Other options, such as success in school or the acquisition of a profession, are never mentioned. Hence, Black people who do not choose sports will necessarily find themselves deteriorating to crime or drugs.

According to the narrative, some of the Black adolescents needed an additional condition for becoming professional players, escaping their harsh destiny and completing their redemption. This condition is a surrogate father, a substitute for the missing biological father. This part can be fulfilled by the high school or college coach:

> In Carl Hayden high school in Phoenix Brown met for the first time *his professional father*, a basketball coach named Argie Rhymes. Rhymes taught Brown *to think in basketball*, to use his large body and take his opponents to the paint, *and mainly to do what he was told to do. . . . Except for hitting him, he was like a father.* . . . When Brown arrived at Pepperdine College four years later . . . he proved that the combination of tough discipline and talent can lead to success. (Goren, 2003a, italics added)

According to the redemption narrative, the coach is, in fact, even better than the missing biological father. Unlike the father, he can teach the young athlete to be responsible and disciplined without even having to hit him. He also teaches the player how to use his brain. In fact, the coach is everything that the biological father was not. The discipline and wisdom he provides will follow the player throughout his career. They will pave his way to success and save him from becoming one of the talented but undisciplined Black athletes playing basketball in the streets of New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

Eventually, those Black players who chose basketball over crime and drugs rose up from the gutters. They became nice, friendly, polite, and calm players. Jerald Brown, for example, is described in the following way: "It is hard to believe that he comes from a place where police forces enter with an armored car. He is so polite, quiet and shy. Nothing from the evil of his neighborhood stuck to him" (Goren, 2003a). Between the lines, one can read that these are not the expected characteristics of Black men, considering their harsh background. This feeling is enhanced when looking at the article on Randal Jackson: "It is a little hard to believe his childhood stories. He looks like a good child from Park-Avenue: quiet, amiable, and hilariously funny" (Ornan, 2003a).

The redemption narrative teaches us that through basketball the Black players not only escaped their bleak destiny, but they also became nice, calm, and friendly people. These descriptions often carry a note of surprise, attesting that for the writers, these are not typical Black characteristics. In some cases, it is implied that this happened only because of socialization processes, in which the Black players learned discipline and self-control and managed to repress primitive and violent instincts. For example, an interview with Tunji Awojobi, a Nigerian basketball player, was titled "I can kill a man with one punch. I have to be more careful than others" (Ornan, 2003b). During the interview, however, the reporter stresses Awojobi's calmness and niceness. This leaves the reader with an impression of someone violent enough to kill a man with his bare hands (and strong enough to do that) who learned, through basketball, to channel his impulses into positive competitive routes.

Wilson (1997), who examined the way Canadian media present Black basketball players, found a tendency to portray them as either good or bad with no middle shades. The "good" ones are depicted as natural leaders, positively competitive, hardworking, and energetic (characteristics that led them to success). The "bad" are described as problematic, violent, nervous, and unpredictable. Similar patterns can be traced in Israeli media, but here the dichotomy is less stringent. Although the players are mostly described as nice and friendly, one can also trace a worried tone regarding the latent aggressiveness hidden inside, threatening to erupt if not carefully handled. An example of that can be found in a report on the American Quincy Louis: "They say Louis is friendly, but this week he sounded aggressive when I tried to speak with him" (Sahar, 2002). On Tunji Awojobi, another reporter wrote, "Rumor has it that five years ago, while playing in Turkey, . . . Awojobi threatened the team manager with a gun" (Ornan, 2003b). Awojobi himself firmly denied the incident, but that did not prevent the reporter from writing about it. These descriptions suggest that Black players are indeed nice and calm, but this may be just a thin layer behind which hides an unexpected and dangerous man. The Black players are nice only because they, unlike others in their neighborhood, managed to overcome the unstable and violent tendencies that lie deep inside them. Such fear of unexpected violence does not characterize media portrayals of White players.[4]

The final phase of the redemption narrative comes with the player's arrival in Israel, the Promised Land. According to the narrative, Black players come to Israel, and stay in it during hard times, mainly because they are tough. This toughness is only ascribed to Black players and not to White ones. The writers believe that it comes from the players' forging childhood background. This explanation can be seen as an attempt to close the circle: The childhood suffering was not in vain. The misfortunes of the past prepared the player for the confrontations of the present. When many foreign players decided to leave Israel in March 2003, before the beginning of the war in Iraq, one of the reporters wrote,

> The massive desertion of foreign players was quite dramatic. . . . But even more surprising was the fact that many chose to stay. . . . The main consideration, besides their career, is the really fascinating one. . . . "I'm from Chicago" said Billy Keys. Bryan Notery, who landed in Israel in the midst of fighting, also explained the madness by saying "I'm from Chicago." . . . In this present situation, the toughness of those who grew up in the Chicago projects left them here. (Goren, 2003b)

Once again, the players themselves are more than happy to play along with their portrayal as tough and undaunted men. A study by Majors and Billson (1992) provides some insights regarding this self-presentation of toughness and superior mentality. The writers talk about the "cool pose," a form of what Erving Goffman would call impression management. It includes a unique appearance (gestures, movements, dress style, and hairstyle) and patterns of speech that are designed to demonstrate toughness and self-control. Young Black American men adopt these in order to show physical superiority and competence to survive in a hostile world. In the Israeli case, we find cooperation between the writers, who expect to find this cool image, and the players, who happily supply it.

"Huffman Has a Mac; McDonald a Big-Mac": Physical Stereotypes

Media depictions of Black athletes often emphasize their physical superiority. The players are presented as having unusual athletic and sexual abilities, which equip them with a "natural advantage" over the Israeli players not only on the court but also in the bedroom. First, in accordance with American stereotypes (Entine, 2000; Sage, 1990), Black players are often presented as exceptionally athletic and strong. Willie Sims, a Black former basketball player who converted to Judaism and remained in Israel after his retirement, is described as "a noble horse that excited the audience with his athleticism, speed and leaping ability" (Bahir, 2002). Randal Jackson is depicted as "210 centimeters that defy gravity. He goes up like a helicopter and finishes fast breaks like a Guard" (Ornan, 2003a).

Despite such depictions, Black physical superiority remains implicit in most of the articles and broadcast games. Although this may testify that the stereotype is not

that common, it can also be because the reporters see this superiority as so obvious that there is no need to mention it. The media portrayal of White Israeli players lends support to the latter explanation. In an article on the Maccabee Tel-Aviv basketball team, the reporter mourns what he sees as the deterioration of Israeli basketball: "For years it was the uncompromising warfare of the physically inferior Israeli character which brought him achievements. The physical inferiority is still here, only now there is nothing left to fight over" (Bogen, 2002b). Another reporter writes about the Israeli young national team "They have no natural skills, but still they represent what was always best about Israeli basketball—speed, wisdom and warfare" (Amikam, 2002). The extent to which Israeli Jewish players (men) are considered physically inferior is best shown in the description of the American basketball player, David Bluthenthal. Bluthenthal, who is both Black and Jewish, played a few years in an American college. An Israeli reporter who saw him in action was impressed:

> An antithesis to the image of the Jewish athlete (smart, scheming and full of faith) is growing up. David Bluthenthal, 202 centimeters of springy iron muscles . . . proved his true and definitely non-Jewish potential, when he took 28 rebounds in one of the games. (Bogen, 2002a)

Bluthenthal is indeed a Jew, but he is also Black. This is how the writer explains his "non-Jewish" athletic abilities. Of interest, Bluthenthal eventually found his way to the Maccabee Tel-Aviv basketball team. The team's matches during the 2002-2003 season revealed a very talented player, but hardly a remarkable athlete.

Black superiority is a topic of discussion not only on the court but also outside it. In Israel, much like in the United States (Entine, 2000) and Britain (Whannel, 2002), the superior athleticism of Blacks is linked with better sexual performance. On October 22, 2002, the Internet Web site *Ynet* published parts of an interview with the White American center Nate Huffman, who played for Maccabee Tel-Aviv side by side with the Black point guard Ariel McDonald (Avrahami, 2002). During the interview, Huffman (who by then had already left the team) spoke about McDonald: "I hope someone blows up his knee, so he can not play anymore. He ruined my life" (Avrahami, 2002). Huffman did not say anything about the reason for his hostility. However, 60% of the Internet talkbacks written in reaction to the article (out of a total of 202) quickly concluded that McDonald slept with Jennifer, Huffman's wife. About a quarter of these talkbacks did not stop there. They went on to argue that McDonald is sexually superior to Huffman and that this is why he was able to lure Jennifer. The talkbacks included statements such as "They always say Blacks have a big one. Huffman could not satisfy his wife, so she went to McDonald"; "Does his name (Huffman/Half-man) say something in comparison to the Big-Mac?" and "Once you go Black, you can never go back" (Avrahami, 2002). The vulgar stereotypical gossip did not stop with the talkbacks. The comedian Adir Miller (2002) put on a skit dealing with the affair in his prime-time television show. In the skit, rumors

became facts, and Miller crudely explained to his viewers that the reason for the whole affair is Black sexual superiority: "I have been in the shower with both of them: Huffman has a Mac; McDonald a Big Mac."

The physical stereotypes presented above emphasize Black superiority: Success (in basketball and with women) comes to the Black players naturally, genetically. However, this coin also has a flip side. In Israel, as in the United States (Devine & Baker, 1991; Stone, Perry, & Darley, 1997), "positive" stereotypes regarding Black superiority intertwine with negative stereotypes about their cognitive inferiority.

"Blacks Are Really Stupid . . . They Are Like Slaves": Cognitive Stereotypes

"Playing smart" is, according to the common stereotype, one of the major ways for Israeli players to deal with their assumed physical inferiority. In fact, playing smart is an implicit code for general smartness, because of the common association between players' behavior on the court and their general intelligence. Although Israeli players are perceived as endowed with game smartness, this seems doubtful when the Black players are discussed. A quote by basketball coach Pini Gershon provides a glaring example. Gershon is the senior and most successful Israeli basketball coach. In 2002, he coached Maccabee Tel-Aviv and led the team to the European championship. During that year, Gershon was invited to lecture on leadership in front of senior military personnel. He was quoted saying,

> Even among the Blacks, there are colors. There is dark Black and there is Mocha. The Mocha ones are smarter. The darker Blacks are really stupid. They are from the street. . . . [At this stage, there was laughter coming from the crowd. Gershon quickly clarified] I am not kidding. Those who are a little more mixed, you can see their class; see their personality. They check you out and they are smart. The others are really stupid. Whatever you tell them to do, they will. They are like slaves. (*Evening News*, Channel 2, July 1, 2002)

When this quotation was aired, Gershon denied it. When later faced with videotapes of the event, he apologized but claimed that his words were taken out of their context. Most media people and Internet surfers vehemently denounced the crude racial doctrine. However, a significant minority of the Internet surfers (15% out of 425 talkbacks in *Ynet*, July 1, 2001) supported the content of the speech ("It may be racism, but it is also true"), questioned media people's credibility ("Gershon is the recent scapegoat of the media"), or devalued the event ("Let's talk about what's really important. In any case there are not a lot of Black Jews").

Quite surprising, the official response of Gershon's team, Maccabee Tel-Aviv, to the incident resembled that of the minority Internet surfers who tried to devalue the comments and question the media's reliability. The team denounced Gershon's

words "if indeed they were said," but added that "Gershon said he was sorry, although he claims that his words were taken out of context" (Gozgal & Feis, 2001). Also interesting is the reaction of the senior managers and military officers who sat in the lecture and listened while Gershon developed his racial doctrine. Most of them laughed, and not even one rose to protest. Evidently, in the Israeli public discourse such statements may be categorized as no more than negligible foolishness.

Following the chain of events in the following years shows that the sweeping public and media reprehension to Gershon's statements was in part a façade. At the end of 2002, shortly after Gershon's coaching career ended, a number of television channels (the educational channel, the sports channel) gladly signed him as a commentator. Two years later, Maccabee Tel-Aviv decided that employing Gershon would no longer jeopardize the team's reputation and resigned him as head coach. Shimon Mizrahi, the team's chair, explained the decision: "It was a slip of the tongue, but Pini apologized. . . . I believe that people did not understand his sense of humor" (Segal, 2003b). The newspapers, in reaction, mentioned the episode but did it in a sterile and nonjudgmental way: "Gershon retired with the Black and Mocha affair in the background. The audience already forgave him, and so did *Maccabee Tel-Aviv*" (Segal, 2003b). The mellow response shows that not only the audience and the team forgave Gershon, but also the reporters. A year and a half later, Gershon was offered the position of head coach for the Israeli national basketball team. Once again, media and public protest was virtually unfelt.[5]

In such media and public atmosphere, it is no wonder that stereotypes of Blacks' inferior intelligence flourish. These stereotypes, along with the complementary stereotypes of physical superiority, are well interlaced into the salvation narratives. The overall picture is that of a physically gifted Black man, deft for basketball (although maybe not much more than that), who is not too bright but was saved (by basketball, toughness, and willpower) from a bleak destiny in the streets of the ghetto.

The Israeli Palestinian Players

The media coverage of Israeli Palestinian players is surprisingly similar to that of the foreign Black players. Once again, we find a schematic narrative of redemption throughout sport (soccer, in this case) and a depiction of tough and at times even brutal masculinity, accompanied by negative cognitive stereotypes.

"If You Wish to Succeed, You Will": Narratives of Redemption

When describing the life stories of the Palestinian players, the media often uses a fixed scheme: The player grew up in the slums, but at a young age he chose sports instead of deterioration. Thanks to his talent and tough character, he grew up to be worthy of playing on one of the elite Israeli soccer teams, escaping the brute destiny of his peers.

First, the player's background is introduced. Although articles and interviews with Jewish soccer players rarely include family and socioeconomic background,[6] the reports on Palestinian athletes often contain detailed and graphic accounts of this background. For example, an article about Rifat Turk, former soccer player and later the deputy mayor of the city of Tel-Aviv-Jaffa, reports, "Eight out of the thirty children who were Turk's classmates are already dead, murdered or overdosed. The survivors are not much better . . . and it is not an unusual class" (Rapaport & Yehoshua, 2003). The harsh description suggests that only by accident is Turk still alive, and not as a criminal or a junky. An interview with soccer player Salem Abu-Siam conveys a similar impression. This time the description comes from the player himself:

> Abu Siam fully agrees that soccer is youth's refugee from crime and drugs: "I was raised in the train neighborhood in Lydda [Lod, one of the mixed Jewish-Arab cities in Israel]. It's hard to believe what is going on there. Children walk the streets barefoot from morning till sundown. Cows and goats wander around. Everything is neglected. . . . Lydda's Arabs have a reputation of murderers and drug dealers. It goes with me since I was young. (Zcharia, 2003)

The stories of Turk and Abu Siam present the reader with a narrow set of options available to Israeli Palestinian children. These include deterioration to crime or the drug world (as dealers or drug abusers) or alternatively turning to soccer, which represents hope for a better and more respectable future. Other options are not even mentioned. How, then, does someone who grew up under these severe conditions become a success instead of a criminal or a drug addict? Both the reporter and Abu Siam have a clear answer for that:

> *Reporter:* So how can you get out of there and be a successful player?
> *Abu Siam:* Because after all, it doesn't matter where you grew up. What matters is what you feel and want inside. How strong you are.
> *Reporter:* So there is no way to get out without willpower?
> *Abu Siam:* Look, if you want to succeed, you will.

The reporter's pointed questions, together with the unequivocal answers by Abu Siam, portray a single path for success for Israeli Palestinians: dedication, commitment, and especially willpower rather than talent, opportunities, or luck. Hence, Abu Siam's and Turk's childhood friends deteriorated to crime and drugs because they were weak and failed to make the right choices. However, this psychological analysis neglects to address two basic facts. First, most children are not talented enough to become senior soccer players and make their living in that way. Second, the very low starting point of Palestinian children, so graphically described earlier, does not lead the reporter and the player to an evident conclusion: Willpower by itself is not enough. According to the interview, if you just want it badly enough, you will succeed. This view echoes an idea that is deeply rooted in Jewish public perceptions:

the Israeli Palestinians are inferior not because of discrimination or a lower starting point but mainly because they do not wish to put in enough effort to succeed.

Abu Siam's case is also a good example for the strength of the stereotype regarding the Israeli Palestinians' rough background. Another article, published half a year later, reveals a surprising picture. Hussein Abu Siam, Salem's father, is described in this latter article as a man who prior to a work accident (that occurred when Salem was 13) was

> an affluent contractor . . . a successful businessman, who employed 30 workers. . . . When in need he also pulled out his wallet for a gesture. Three small houses in *Maccabee Tel-Aviv's* coaching area serve as testimony to his donations." (Tuchman, 2003)

It is further reported that the family lives in a nurtured villa, and the father has political connections. This is a very different picture from the one portrayed by the interview with Abu Siam only half a year earlier in which both the reporter and Abu Siam were more than happy to perpetuate the distress stereotype.

The graphic descriptions of the harsh background are therefore only partly accurate, and often exaggerated. Nevertheless, even when they are true to reality they portray a one-dimensional narrative: Israeli Palestinians come from a background of stringency and hardship. The players are an exceptional example of Palestinians who rose up and achieved success. They did that, as I show below, mainly due to their special tough character.

"You Learn to Overlook": A Matter of Character

In most of the articles and interviews with Israeli Palestinian players, the reporters relate to the players' "special character." This character combines, according to the common narrative, toughness, endurance, and determination but also patience and a tendency to compromise. To become successful, the player must combine these contradictory ingredients. In fact, a successful integration of these characteristics is what distinguishes the players from other Palestinians who do not possess such a combination of toughness and restraint.

In an article about soccer player Salah Hasarma, for example, the reporter analyzed the player's chances to succeed on a Jewish team: "Arabs know that along with technical qualifications they need a strong character to succeed" (Morano, 2002). The strong character is needed primarily to endure racial invectives from the Jewish supporters. Therefore, strong character is actually a code name for the willingness to "suck it up." This can be seen in the way different reporters describe Rifat Turk's endurance of racial insults: "Turk was constantly cursed and was called a terrorist. But he restrained himself, fastened his teeth and did not break down; he did not lose his head" (Rapaport & Yehoshua, 2003). Palestinian players are expected to swallow

their pride if they wish to be part of the major soccer league. The players themselves internalize these demands. Thus, Salah Hasarma relates to the possibility that fans would curse him: "I have the right character to deal with it" (Morano, 2002). Salem Abu Siam also learned how he is expected to deal with the curses: "You learn to ignore, and in any case, it [cursing] doesn't always occur" (Zcharia, 2003). The players accept the current state of affairs. They agree to the demand to show restraint, and they show pride in their "special tough character." The media reporters encourage these perceptions by not challenging them.

The strong character includes an additional element: willingness to fight and give it all on the field. Here, there is no more room for compromise. The Palestinian players must show toughness and sacrifice. They are portrayed as technically limited and are required to compensate for this with determination, sacrifice, and tough play. An example of that can be found in an article on former soccer player Ali Otman: "Otman was the scariest stopper in Israel. To this day, he looks like an Amstaff dog with two legs. Otman took apart and then reconstructed every brave player that dared to attack Hapoel . . . unrestrained brutality" (Yalon, 2002). Otman himself is more than happy to talk about those days:

> In 1968 I was the only Arab player in the league. They [the Jewish players and fans] would curse me and I was hot tempered. I couldn't play with all those curses, so I paid them back. I tore them to shreds. . . . After five years all the players respected me. . . . I would ram their faces, bite them, grab their balls, and pull their hair. This was the regular routine, but when someone really got on my nerves, I had something special. I would tackle him and bite his leg near the crotch. I remember once I stepped on one of the players' hand and broke all his bones. (Yalon, 2002)

Otman adopted a tough image in order to deal with the hardships of playing on a Jewish team in front of hostile audiences. In the late 1960s, this was also a first step in constructing a tough and courageous masculine image, an antithesis to the cowardly Palestinian self-image shaped by the downfalls of 1948 and 1967. Otman's conduct resembles the demeanor of American Blacks who adopt the cool pose (Majors & Billson, 1992). Whereas Black Americans try to cope with White hegemony, the Palestinians face a strict Jewish hegemony. The rough image forces the Jews to recognize their presence and buys their respect.

At times, the cultivation of the tough image is accompanied by doubts regarding the players' cognitive skills. Shortly before Rifat Turk was nominated as Tel-Aviv's deputy mayor, one of the city council's members responded to the prospective nomination:

> Turk is our cover. He is 'our Jew'. I can't remember him ever confronting Michael Roe'e [one of the council's other members]. He is Michael's poodle, and Michael is his patron. Turk is amiable and not harmful, but this is not enough. . . . He is very nice, but it is cynical to take him as a representative of the most problematic sector. (Zilka, 2002)

Turk is described as weak and dependent. He is nice, but apparently not too bright. The reporter adds his own impression:

> Turk is an honest and decent man, but he is not sophisticated. Many of his speeches are written by others. . . . He is warm, maybe too warm. . . . His English by the way is plausible. (Zilka, 2002)

The reporter clearly sees Turk's selection to the council as a result of electoral calculations and not of his skills. Turk is described as warm but not sophisticated (or in other words, not very smart). He finds it hard to write his own speeches or make serious decisions alone. The plausible English is mentioned with slight surprise: An Arab soccer player is obviously not expected to master foreign languages.

Discussion

This study examined how Israeli media presents the masculinity of two non-Jewish groups, foreign Black players and Israeli Palestinian players. The findings attest to nearly identical presentation patterns, which are largely drawn from available Western images of the East (e.g., Bhabha, 1994; Fanon, 1967; Said, 1978). Edward Said (1978) describes the construction of a binary between the Occident and the Orient, serving the Occident in building a positive and progressive self-identity. The Oriental, usually an Arab man, is constructed through a series of contradictory stereotypes: He is wily but not intelligent, irrational and childish but a sexual predator. He is also gullible, static, effeminate, and servile. Some of these stereotypes found their way to the media representations of Black and Palestinian athletes in Israel. Players from both groups are often presented as tough but also childish and servile, lacking sophistication and intelligence. The narrative life stories of players from both groups follow a myth of redemption: childhood in a hard neighborhood, high likelihood of becoming a criminal or a drug addict, and salvation through sports, unusual toughness, and willpower.

The representation and reconstruction of Black players' masculinities is especially intricate. The binary presented by Fanon (1967) and Said (1978)—the Occident as the object of control and imitation versus the submissive inferior Orient—is replaced here by a more conflicted relationship. Israeli media often depict Black players as submissive, childlike, impulsive, and unintelligent but also as physically and sexually superior (making them an object of fantasy and envy) and as tough men, able to handle pressure. This ambivalence is better explained by the framework of Homi Bhabha (1994). Bhabha offers a dialectical relationship between East and West, simultaneously composed of contrasting psychological processes of attraction and rejection, identification and denial. This relationship produces attempts to construct sharp and clear borders through generalizations and stereotypes.

The representation of the Black players also draws from the pseudoscientific racial theories of the late 19th century (such as social Darwinism) and their softer successors, still prevalent in much of the West (Fleming, 2001). These popular theories see Black success in sports as a function of superior athletic skills. However, alongside this natural athleticism, many of these theories also suggest, explicitly or implicitly, complementary assumptions: Blacks are not intelligent enough to fill key positions on the field (quarterback, e.g.) and outside it (managing and coaching positions). Racial intelligence is thus the subtext of almost any discussion of Black superior athleticism (Entine, 2000).

At this stage, we should address an important question: How valid are the stereotypical descriptions of Black and Palestinian players? It seems that at least some of the stereotypes found here have some factual base,[7] whereas others are completely fallacious. However, even when the stereotypes are based on real-life events, they often receive tendentious and exaggerated interpretations. Take, for example, the common assumption regarding the narrow set of options available to the players: deterioration to crime and drug abuse or alternatively, redemption through sports. It is quite clear that these are not the only options. Statistically, these are not even the main options (Quillian & Pager, 2001). Contributing to such misperceptions is the hypothesis that it is all a matter of choice: "If you just want it bad enough you will make it." This hypothesis has been widely refuted (Hoberman, 1997).

Another major theme found in this study is the cooperation of Black and Palestinian athletes with media narratives, in particular those of redemption and toughness. Semiotic approaches, emphasizing not only the text but also its social context and the way actors interpret their actions, may help us make sense of this cooperation. Accordingly, one must examine the symbolic dialogue between the players and their media images. Swigonski (1993) argues that minorities are often compelled to adopt two perceptions of social reality—their own and that of the dominant culture. Hence, the players' cooperation with certain narratives and images does not necessarily testify to the validity of these narratives, as was clearly shown in the case of Salem Abu Siam. Rather, it might show how the players internalize their media images, in line with Said's (1978) claim that "the modern Orient participates in its own colonization" (p. 284). Stereotypes, says Boyarin (1997), are rarely the result of a one-way process of domination. Rather, they form in processes of complex, mutual, and specular relations.

I wish to return now to my point of departure—the creation and maintenance of the new Jewish male image. Jewish masculinity in present Israel is mostly identified with the masculinity of the tough and victorious Israeli soldier (e.g., Biale, 1986; Sasson-Levi, 2002). Seemingly, the project of building an image of a tough Jewish warrior was successfully accomplished. However, this study reveals the partiality of this picture. Sports in Western society represents a central site for the formation and expression of masculinity. Sports contests clearly carry far less dramatic results than

the ones of real wars. Still, in sports the "real" and "natural" masculinity is manifested. Unlike modern wars, where men use the mediation of weapons, tanks, and airplanes, the myth about sport is still that it is a bare-hand, face-to-face battle, "just as nature intended it to be."

Turning to this study, Jewish players are mostly depicted as using their smartness, shrewdness, and fighting spirit to match up with the Gentiles. Although this image is an improvement from the slandered old submissive Jew, it is still a model of a physically inferior man who uses his brain and not his body and who is not tough enough when compared to the Gentiles. This is especially eminent when realizing that foreign players are often the ones who bring Israeli teams international achievements, making it clear that Jewish masculinity by itself is not enough. To subdue their opponents, Jews must be supported (and largely overshadowed) by bigger, tougher, and more muscular men. Thus, Israeli Jewish men are left with the feeling that others are fighting their wars, or in the words of one Internet talkbacker, "Who needs to wave the European cup through foreign hands, and fake national orgasms?" (posted to *Ynet*, April 30, 2002)

What, then, are we to conclude regarding the masculinities of Blacks, Palestinians, and Jews in present Israel? Bordo (1999) argues that the present ideal hegemonic masculinity in Western cultures demands an impossible merging of a thoughtful, civilized gentleman and a wild, brutish beast. In this model, Blacks and Palestinians take the part of the beast. They are considered as cognitively inferior, uncivilized, and undisciplined (the players who did learn discipline and restraint are the exceptions who clearly do not represent their public). These childlike qualities portray them as less manly. However, it is exactly this wild, animal-like, impulsive, and sensual reconstruction that makes these tough men a threat to Jewish masculinity. It touches the most sensitive segment of Jewish masculinity, its perceived physical inferiority; the historic weakness of the body that not even a new spirit could compensate for. Thus, as is often the case with today's unattainable images and models of manhood, no man can be fully satisfied, and all masculinities remain contested.

Notes

1. The study focuses on these two groups mainly because of their prominence in Israeli sports—their large numbers and the media interest they stimulate.

2. See, for example, Entman (1990); Van Zoonen (1994); and in Israel Lefkowitz (2001); Lemish (2000); Weimann (2000); Yonay and Spivak (1999).

3. Israeli clubs have been competing in the pan-European arena for more than four decades now. This is due both to Israel's orientation toward the continent and to the refusal of its neighboring Middle Eastern countries to engage in sporting competitions with Israeli athletes.

4. In a comparative review of 15 articles and interviews of White foreign basketball and soccer players, I found no sign of apprehension from latent or manifest aggression.

5. In the United States, statements less severe than that of Gershon have terminated the careers of coaches, sports commentators, and team managers (see, e.g., the cases of Dan Issel, Jim Snyder, and Al Campanis).

6. A random sample of 20 broad articles and interviews was examined.

7. For example, many Black people in the United States and many Palestinians in Israel indeed come from low socioeconomic conditions with high crime and poverty rates (Krivo & Peterson, 2000; Smooha, 1998) and (for Blacks) high rates of single parenthood (Hamilton-Wright, 2004; Ruggles, 1994). However, different studies (Hoberman, 1997; Quillian & Pager, 2001), including the present one, show that quite often the dramatic descriptions are exaggerated or even false.

References

Adoni, H., & Mane, S. (1984). Media and the social construction of reality: Toward an integration of theory and research. *Communication Research, 11*, 323-40.

Almog, O. (2000). *The Sabra: The creation of the New Jew.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Amikam, R. (2002, July 19). [Title unknown]. *Maariv* (Hebrew).

Anderson, E. (2005). *In the game: Gay athletes and the cult of masculinity.* New York: State University of New York Press.

Avraham, E. (2001). *Israel that is hidden from the eyes of the media: The kibbutzim, the settlements, the development towns and the Arab villages in the press.* Jerusalem: Academon (Hebrew).

Avrahami, Z. (2002, October 22). Huffman blues. *Ynet.* Retrieved October 22, 2002, from http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-2200495,00.html

Bahir, M. (2002, September 19). Patriot. *Anashim*, p. 34 (Hebrew).

Ben Porat, A. (2000). *Biladi Biladi.* Tel-Aviv, Israel: Babylon (Hebrew).

Benziman, U., & Mansour, A. (1992). *Subtenants.* Jerusalem: Keter (Hebrew).

Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture.* London: Routledge.

Biale, D. (1986). *Power and powerless in Jewish history.* New-York: Schocken Books.

Bogen, A. (2002a, March 26). David Bluthenthal: A true profit, a false messiah. *Ynet.* Retrieved March 26, 2002, from http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-623688,00.html

Bogen, A. (2002b, September 29). Maccabi Tel Aviv: The fake passport of Israeli basketball. *Ynet.* Retrieved September 29, 2002, from http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7-540,L-2001754,00.num

Bordo, S. (1999). *The male body: A new look at men in public and in private.* New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux.

Bourdieu, P. (1998). *On television.* New York: New Press.

Boyarin, D. (1997). *Unheroic conduct: The rise of heterosexuality and the invention of the Jewish man.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Breines, P. (1990). *Tough Jews.* New York: Basic Books.

Burstein, V. (1999). *The rites of men: Manhood, politics, and the culture of sport.* Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Burstyn, V. (1999). *The rites of men: Manhood, politics, and the culture of sport.* Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Carmeli, Y., & Grossman-Eliav, R. (2000). It's a game between Jews and Arabs: Soccer journalism, otherness and abjection in the Israeli context. *Culture, Sport, Society, 3*, 23-43.

Connell, R. W. (1995). *Masculinities.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Devine, P. G., & Baker, S. M. (1991). Measurement of racial stereotype subtyping. *Personality and Social Psychological Bulletin, 17*, 44-50.

Entine, J. (2000). *Taboo: Why Black athletes dominate sports and why we're afraid to talk about it.* New York: Public Affairs.

Entman, R. M. (1990). Modern racism and the images of Blacks in local television news. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 7*, 332-45.

Eyal, H. (1983). Editorial letters: The direct contact with the reader. *The Journalists Year Book, 112*, 15 (Hebrew).

Fanon, F. (1967). *The wretched of the earth.* Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.

Fleming, S. (2001). Racial science and South Asian and Black physicality. In B. Carrington, I. McDonald, & P. Gilory (Eds.), 'Race', sport and British society (pp. 105-120). London: Routledge.

Gerbner, G., & Gross, L. (1976). Living with television: The violence profile. *Journal of Communication, 26,* 173-199.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory.* Chicago: Aldine.

Gluzman, M. (2007). *The Zionist body: Representations of the body in modern Hebrew literature.* Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad (Hebrew).

Goren, Y. (2002, August 25). [Title unknown]. *Haaretz* (Hebrew).

Goren, Y. (2003a, February 16). He usually does what he is told to do. *Haaretz,* p. D5 (Hebrew).

Goren, Y. (2003b, March 30). Still a better place than Chicago. *Haaretz,* p. D3 (Hebrew).

Gozgal, M., & Feis, Y. (2001, July 1). Pini Gershon: "Blacks are like slaves." *Ynet.* Retrieved July 10, 2002, from http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-867828,00.html

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (Q. Hoare & G. N. Smith, Eds.). London: Lawrence & Wishar.

Hall, S. (1999). Encoding/decoding. In S. During (Ed.), *The cultural studies reader* (pp. 507-517). New York: Routledge. (Original work published 1980)

Hamilton-Wright, K. (2004). In search of daddy. *Black Enterprise, 34,* 90.

Hargreaves, J. (1986). *Sport, power and society.* Oxford, UK: Polity.

Harkabi, Y. (1983). *The Bar Kokhba syndrome: Risk and realism in international politics.* New York: Rossel.

Herzog, H., & Shamir, R. (1994). Media discourse on Jewish/Arab relations. *Israel Social Science Research, 9,* 55-88.

Hoberman, J. (1997). *Darwin's athletes: How sport has damaged Black America and preserved the myth of race.* New York: Mariner Books.

Krivo, L. J., & Peterson, R. D. (2000). The structural context of homicide: Accounting for racial differences in process. *American Sociological Review, 65,* 547-559.

Lefkowitz, D. (2001). Negotiated and mediated meanings: Ethnicity and politics in Israeli newspapers. *Anthropological Quarterly, 74,* 179-189.

Lemish, D. (2000). The whore and the other: Israeli images of female immigrants from the former USSR. *Gender and Society, 14,* 333-349.

Majors, R., & Billson, J. M. (1992). *Cool pose: The dilemmas of Black manhood in America.* New York: Touchstone.

Maykut, P., & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide.* London: Falmer.

Miller, A. (2002, November 11). *Erev Adir.* Channel 2.

Morano, O. (2002, July 11). The Arab League. *Tel Aviv Local Newspaper,* p. 60 (Hebrew).

Ornan, A. (2002, September 27). King: "I told Billy that if he helps me take the championship, I will retire from basketball for a whole year." Keys: "He should start packing." *Maariv,* Friday appendix, p. 8 (Hebrew).

Ornan, A. (2003a, March 7). I keep explaining to Efi that he needs to speak quietly to me. *Maariv,* p. 6 (Hebrew).

Ornan, A. (2003b, January 10). My punch can kill, I have to be more careful than others. *Maariv,* Friday appendix, p. 8 (Hebrew).

Quillian, L., & Pager, D. (2001). Black neighbors, higher crime? The role of racial stereotypes in evaluations of neighborhood crime. *The American Journal of Sociology, 107,* 717-767.

Rapaport, M., & Yehoshua, Y. (2003, March 14). I am a Palestinian. *Yediot Ahronot,* Friday suppl., p. 20 (Hebrew).

Ruggles, S. (1994). The origins of African-American family structure. *American Sociological Review, 59,* 136-151.

Sabo, D., & Jansen, S. C. (1994). Seen but not heard: Images of Black men in sports media. In M. A. Messner & D. F. Sabo (Eds.), *Sex, violence and power in sports* (pp. 150-160). Berkeley, CA: Crossing Press.

Sage, G. H. (1990). *Power and ideology in American sport: A critical perspective.* Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Sahar, E. (2002, October 13). Memories or longings to Parker. *Haaretz,* p. D4 (Hebrew).

Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism.* New York: Pantheon.

Sasson-Levi, O. (2002). Constructing identities at the margins: Masculinities and citizenship in the Israeli army. *The Sociological Quarterly, 43,* 357-383.

Segal, H. (2003a, May 2). A man within himself. *Maariv,* p. 8 (Hebrew).

Segal, H. (2003b, June 20). Pini Gershon: "My madness is back." *Maariv,* p. 16 (Hebrew).

Smooha, S. (1998). Ethnic democracy: Israel as an archetype. *Israel Studies, 2,* 198-241.

Sorek, T. (2006). *The integrative enclave: Arab soccer in a Jewish state.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Stone, J., Perry, Z. W., & Darley, J. M. (1997). "White men can't jump": Evidence for the perceptual confirmation of racial stereotypes following a basketball game. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 19,* 291-306.

Swigonski, M. E. (1993). Feminist standpoint theory and the questions of social work research. *Affilia, Journal of Women and Social Work, 8,* 171-183.

Tuchman, Y. (2003, March 11). [Title unknown]. *Maariv.*

Van Zoonen, L. (1994). *Feminist media studies.* London: Sage.

Weimann, G. (2000). Gender and commercials: Women and men in television commercials in Israel. *Theory and Criticism, 19,* 45-69 (Hebrew).

Whannel, G. (2002). *Media sport stars: Masculinities and mortalities.* London: Routledge.

Wilson, B. (1997). Good Blacks and bad Blacks: Media constructions of African-American athletes in Canadian basketball. *International Review for the Sociology of Sports, 32,* 177-189.

Wolfsfeld, G., Avraham, E., & Aburaiya, I. (2000). When prophesy always fails: Israeli press coverage of the Arab minority's land day protests. *Political Communication, 17,* 115-131.

Yalon, Y. (2002, June 6). They mention our team from the sixties and seventies. *Maariv,* Friday appendix, p. 6 (Hebrew).

Yonay, Y., & Spivak, D. (1999). Between silence and denunciation: The identity reconstruction of gays in the Israeli legal discourse, 1948-1988. *Israeli Sociology, 1,* 257-293 (Hebrew).

Yosef, R. (2002). Homoland: Interracial sex and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Israeli cinema. *Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, 8,* 553-579.

Zcharia, M. (2003, July 10). Home player. *Tel Aviv Local Newspaper,* p. 56 (Hebrew).

Zilka B. (2002, August 29). Foreign player. *Tel Aviv Local Newspaper,* p. 62 (Hebrew).

Eran Shor is a doctoral candidate at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. His recent *Social Problems* article reevaluates salient theoretical approaches to the socialization of global human rights norms by local governments. In his dissertation, he examines factors that shape and determine state response to terrorism, paying close consideration to the nexus of terrorism and human rights. He is also working on research projects that look at the antecedents of environmental degradation, at sociological explanations for incest avoidance, at the interaction of ethnicity, religion, and nationality in Israeli sports, and at the influences of psychosocial stress on health and mortality.