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CONTRIBUTORS

Superintendent Dr. Shlomi Chetrit is the commander of the Israel Police Heritage Center and a postdoctoral research fellow at the Institute of Criminology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His research focuses on the history of policing and internal security in Israel. His doctoral dissertation, completed in the Martin (Szusz) Department of Israel Studies and Archeology at Bar-Ilan University, under the guidance of Dr. Gad Kroizer (2020), looked into the British counterinsurgency campaign against the Arab Revolt in Palestine (1936-1939).

Roi Irani is a graduate student at the School of History and the Leifer Center for Gender Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and a fellow of the Mandel program for outstanding graduate students in the humanities. His research work, supervised by Prof. Moshe Sluhovsky, focuses on the experiences of sexuality and masculinity of young men in Israel's largest cities during the second decade of the State's existence. He holds a bachelor's degree from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in history and in the Amirim interdisciplinary honors program.

Dr. Nomi Levenkron is a postdoctoral research fellow at the faculty of Law, Bar-Ilan University. Her fields of interest include history of law enforcement, gender, and migration. She is a lecturer at Tel Aviv University, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Kinneret Academic College.

Dr. Joseph Ohayon serves as a special constables' (volunteers) base in the Israel Border Police. His fields of research include military and police history, with emphasis on security practices in the 1950s. His doctoral dissertation, completed in the Martin (Szusz) Department of Israel Studies and Archeology at Bar-Ilan University, under the guidance of Dr. Gad Kroizer (2019), deals with the evolution of Israel's Border Police (1953-1956) and its contribution to routine security in the nascent State of Israel.

Shlomi Chetrit / Breaking Barriers: Integration of Female Troopers in Israel's Border Police (1995-1998)

In 1995-1998, Israel's Border Police (BP) underwent a revolutionary change. The corps recruited, trained, and deployed women in operational combat roles for the first time in its history. The female troopers held positions and responsibilities identical to those of their male counterparts, another first in Israeli history. The BP was not the obvious candidate to lead such progress: at the time, the corps projected a masculine, traditional, and aggressive image. But the first trials proved successful, leading to the broader integration of women into the BP and Israel Police. The article examines the early beginnings of female trooper integration in the BP, the motivations for the project, the challenges its participants faced, and its consequences. The integration of women into operational units of the Border Police may serve as a case study for other military or paramilitary organizations seeking to improve gender equality in their ranks.

Roi Irani / Between Condemnation and Compassion: Images of Women in the Israel Police Journal 9-9-9 (1953-1957)

The article deals with images of Israeli women associated with crime, appearing in the police journal 9-9-9. The journal, published by the Israeli police between the years 1953-1957, sought to improve the police's public image and was the first publication in Israel to exclusively cover issues of law-enforcement and crime. Alongside diverse but essentialist traditions of representing women, which originate in contemporary criminological research and popularized writing by journalists, 9-9-9 also offered new representations of women associated with crime. Unexpectedly, these representations incorporated orientalist and Zionist perspectives. Writing from these prisms, the writers of 9-9-9 presented the women (both victims and perpetrators) as positioned in the wider circumstances of their lives, at times even with a tolerant and compassionate view of their actions. Such perception of women and crime, which depicted women's involvement in crime as stemming from sociological and not biological causes, only appeared in the Western press and criminological research in the 1960s and 1970s.

The conclusions of the article contribute to the understanding of the role of the Israel Police in shaping social perceptions of crime in general, and images of women associated with crime by contemporary Israeli society in particular.

Josef Ohayon / “The Battle for Gaza is Over, the Battle for Tel Aviv Begins:” Enforcement of Prostitution Laws in Tel Aviv by the Border Police (1972-1973)

In September 1972, for the first time in Tel Aviv’s history, the Border Police (BP) permanently stationed one of its paramilitary units in the city. This action followed a surge in crime, including bank robberies, drug trafficking, theft, violence in public places, and more. Among other issues, BP troopers dealt with prostitution, perceived as a public nuisance that reflected the city’s social and moral degeneration.

The encounter in Tel Aviv between BP troopers and women engaged in prostitution was the result of two parallel processes: one having to do with the characteristics of prostitution in Israel, the other with the BP. In 1965, the Israeli Supreme Court ruled that engaging in prostitution in a residential apartment amounted to running a brothel, an offense punishable by five years in prison. This ruling caused the proliferation of prostitution in the public sphere, leading residents to demand urgent police response. The BP underwent significant organizational changes and had newly assigned duties in the early 1970s. Unlike in earlier periods, when the corps dealt mainly with protecting Israel’s border with Jordan and policing the Arab population in Israel and the territories held by her, now BP troopers had to police a predominantly Jewish urban area.

The article is based on a wide range of primary sources. It examines, for the first time, how BP troopers dealt with the phenomenon of street prostitution, and discusses the complex and charged relationship that developed between them and the women engaged in prostitution.

Nomi Levenkron / The Usual Suspects: Israel Police Investigates Infanticide and Abandonment of Infants by their Mothers (1948-1968)

Infanticide, the killing of babies by their mothers, is an offense with deep cultural, social, religious, and gender roots, as are enforcement actions against it. The article focuses on police investigations of such offenses in Israel in the first two decades of its existence. The investigations were based on two complementary elements: social norms and medical science. When looking for suspects in such cases, police considered the social norms that pushed women to commit the offense, searching for “morally suspect,” single, divorced, or widowed pregnant women, who gave birth shortly before the discovery of a baby’s body. The police used forensic and other scientific methods to collect evidence with the assistance of pathologists, physicians, and gynecologists to examine both the victim and the suspected woman.

These police investigations form the starting point of an intriguing journey to the depths of Israeli society in its formative years, from hospital delivery rooms to the Pathological Institute, and from the city to the transit camp for new immigrants. It follows contemporary cultural norms and the fate of women who have overstepped societal boundaries and gender perceptions, as well as police work carried out according to the requirements of law and justice.