

Introductory Remarks

Tradition and Innovation

Shlomo G. Shoham and Paul Knepper***

Israeli criminology expresses two of criminology's greatest themes: tradition and innovation. The system of Israeli criminal justice system is new, stitched together after 1948 from institutions and practices during the British Mandate. It is a fabric that has been stretched to administrate justice throughout periods of war and political violence. Israel, the only democracy in the region, has been besieged by terrorist attacks from the beginning. The system of criminal justice has also been stretched to cover Israel's multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural society. Waves of immigrants have arrived throughout the twentieth century to create a brilliant mosaic of Ashkenazi and Mizrahi, modern Orthodox and Haredim, Russians, Arabs, Bedouin, Druze, and Ethiopians. This environment has been the source of marked innovation in criminal justice, from wide-scale organization of citizen-volunteers to assist police to the placement of troubled youth on the kibbutzim.

At the same time, Israeli criminology references ideas and beliefs spoken at the dawn of recorded history. The newest exiles returning to join Israel's growing cities take their place alongside the villages of Peki'in and Shefar'am in the Galilee, where Jews have lived continuously from ancient times. Israel is the land of history, legends, archaeology, and religion. This tiny nation, equivalent in size to the US state of New Jersey or Wales in the UK, occupies the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa. The holy sites within its borders, especially Jerusalem, are venerated by half of the world's population-adherents of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The contested history of the region has bequeathed a wealth of archeological treasures from the numerous civilizations of ancient Israel and those left by foreign invaders during the most recent millennia. The religious, cultural, and legal understandings that animate social activity evidence long-standing practices. Tradition shapes criminal activity, and the response to it, in both promising and regrettable ways. Tradition and innovation reveal themselves whenever the voices of Israeli criminologists join the grand conversation of international criminology.

Israel Studies in Criminology has brought Israeli criminology to the English-speaking world for more than three decades. Founded by Shlomo G. Shoham in 1970, this annual review has appeared in seven volumes. Israeli criminologists have a

* Professor, Faculty of Law, Tel Aviv University, Ramat Aviv, Tel Aviv, 69978 Israel, (shoham@post.tau.ac.il).

** Professor, College of Human Ecology, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, USA, (knepperp@mail.ecu.edu).

great deal to offer criminology, situated as they are—as Shoham put it in the very first volume—in a “country of social change.”¹ What follows includes works on Israel by Israelis and Israeli émigrés, as well as contributions by other international scholars on wider issues in criminology. True to the model established in previous years, the eighth volume of *Israel Studies in Criminology* includes a range of theoretical works and research analyses.

This volume opens with a theoretical work by Shoham. In “The Twenty-First Century *Kulturkampf*,” he explores the ideology of fundamentalist Islam. As he observes, the mindset that carries out suicide-bombings does not limit itself to Israeli victims, nor even institutions of democracy, but nothing short of Occidental culture. September 11 attempted to reverse the flow of civilization; it is a revolt against history itself. Shoham’s chapter identifies the social character of fundamentalist Islam drawing on his personality theory; conventional criminology theory, such as Thorsten Sellin’s culture-conflict approach; and more recent works by Oriana Fallaci and Samuel Huntington.²

The other theoretical work in this volume deals with Karl Popper. Popper, as Nick Tilley demonstrates, contributes to criminology in the area of situational crime prevention. Tilley describes several points of convergence across Popper’s social philosophy and Ronald Clarke’s approach to crime prevention, including the applied focus and piecemeal social engineering, the stress on science, problem-solving, methodological individualism and rational choice, style, and response. Tilley goes on to discuss the significance of Popper’s “rationality principle” in the light of criticisms within the situational crime prevention literature.

Two articles describe aspects of Israeli criminal justice. Uri Timor and Efrat Shoham³ present a study of a program for the rehabilitation of discharged prisoners, first put into practice by the Kibbutz Movement in the early 1980s. From 1983 to 1999, the program absorbed 110 ex-prisoners who were placed with adoptive families in a kibbutz. Their study is based on interviews with 93 adoptive families and 42 ex-prisoners. Timor and Shoham explore the motivations of the adoptive families and the settlement of ex-prisoners into the life of the kibbutz. They consider the failures (22 percent returned to prison) and issues such as separating the ex-prisoners from criminal elements outside the kibbutz. Meir Hovav, Eli Lawental, and Maayan Lawental describe drug treatment services in Israel. They review drug treatment services within three historical periods (1948-1967, 1968-1989, and 1990 to the present), giving particular attention to the present situation. Specifically, they review services provided by the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Welfare, and the Prison Service. They discuss the availability of services relative to the target populations and review evaluation studies concerning substance abuse treatment in Israel.

Two articles concern crime problems in Israel and the criminal justice response. Gad J. Bensinger’s contribution concerns trafficking in women for prostitution. As Bensinger notes in his conclusion, trafficking of women for commercial sexual exploitation is not a new problem, nor particular to Israel. In the early decades of the twentieth century, so many women were victimized in this way that several European nations held an international conference on the issue. The conference led to an international agreement signed by thirteen nations, including the United States. Bensinger’s chapter covers Israel’s response, including that of law enforcement officials, political figures, and the public; he observes that many measures proposed to

deal with this problem have yet to be fully-implemented. The article by Edna Erez and Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian considers violence against women in the Arab/Palestinian community and the police response. They present research findings from interviews with 60 Israeli police officers drawn from a larger survey of 375 police officers working in areas with a mix of Jewish and Arab citizens. They discuss social and cultural factors affecting police response to violence against women and offer several recommendations for improved policy. They argue that the *culturally-sensitive* approach leads to policy of “malign neglect;” and argue for a policy of respect based on a *contextually-sensitive* approach.

Israel, a “country of social change,” has also been referred to a “nation of immigrants.” Andreas Kapardis’s chapter considers crime in a near-by Mediterranean nation, the Republic of Cyprus, also home to significant numbers of immigrants. Kapardis offers this among other points of comparison in his review of crime in Cyprus; he describes crime in earlier times, official statistics for serious and minor offenses, juvenile crime, and discusses issues related to serious crime and gender and foreigners and crime. His chapter contributes to criminological knowledge concerning immigration and crime.⁴

Finally, we dedicate this volume to the memory of W. Byron Groves, or “Casey” as he preferred to be known to his students, co-authors, and colleagues. Casey had a brief career in criminology, cut short by a tragic auto accident when he was 37 years of age. But what he had was brilliant. Casey brought to criminology an astonishing array of philosophical interests, including Freud, Foucault, and Sartre, as well as Marx and the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory.⁵ He was an inspiring teacher, an engaging colleague, and a great friend. It was his intellectual interest and personable manner that brought us together; we planned this volume in Tel Aviv after discovering our mutual friend. To Casey, we say: *todah rabah, chaver*.

NOTES

- ¹ Shlomo Shoham, “Introduction: Research in Criminology in a Country of Social Change,” In *Israel Studies in Criminology*, vol. 1, edited by S. Shoham. Tel-Aviv: Gomeh Publishing House, 1970.
- ² This is a timely analysis as demonstrated by a recent report to the European Union documenting a wave of anti-Semitic incidents during spring 2002 within many EU Member States. This wave of anti-Semitism started with the “Al-Aqsa-Intifada” in October 2000 as was fueled by the conflict in the Middle East and the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, which triggered a fierce debate on the causes of radical Islamic terrorism. See W. Bergmann and J. Wetzler, *Manifestations of anti-Semitism in the European Union.: Report to the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia*. Center for Research on Antisemitism. Technical University, Berlin, 2003, p. 5.
- ³ No relation to the chief editor.
- ⁴ In 1999, Shlomo G. Shoham and Moshe Addad organized an international conference on Migration, Crime and Culture held at Kibbutz Ma’ale Hahamisha in Israel. See J.D. Frielich, G. Newman, S.G. Shoham, and M. Addad, *Migration, Conflict and Crime*. Dartmouth: Ashgate, 2002.
- ⁵ See W.B. Groves, G. Newman and M. Lynch, *Discovering Criminology: From W. Byron Groves*. New York: Harrow and Heston, 1993.