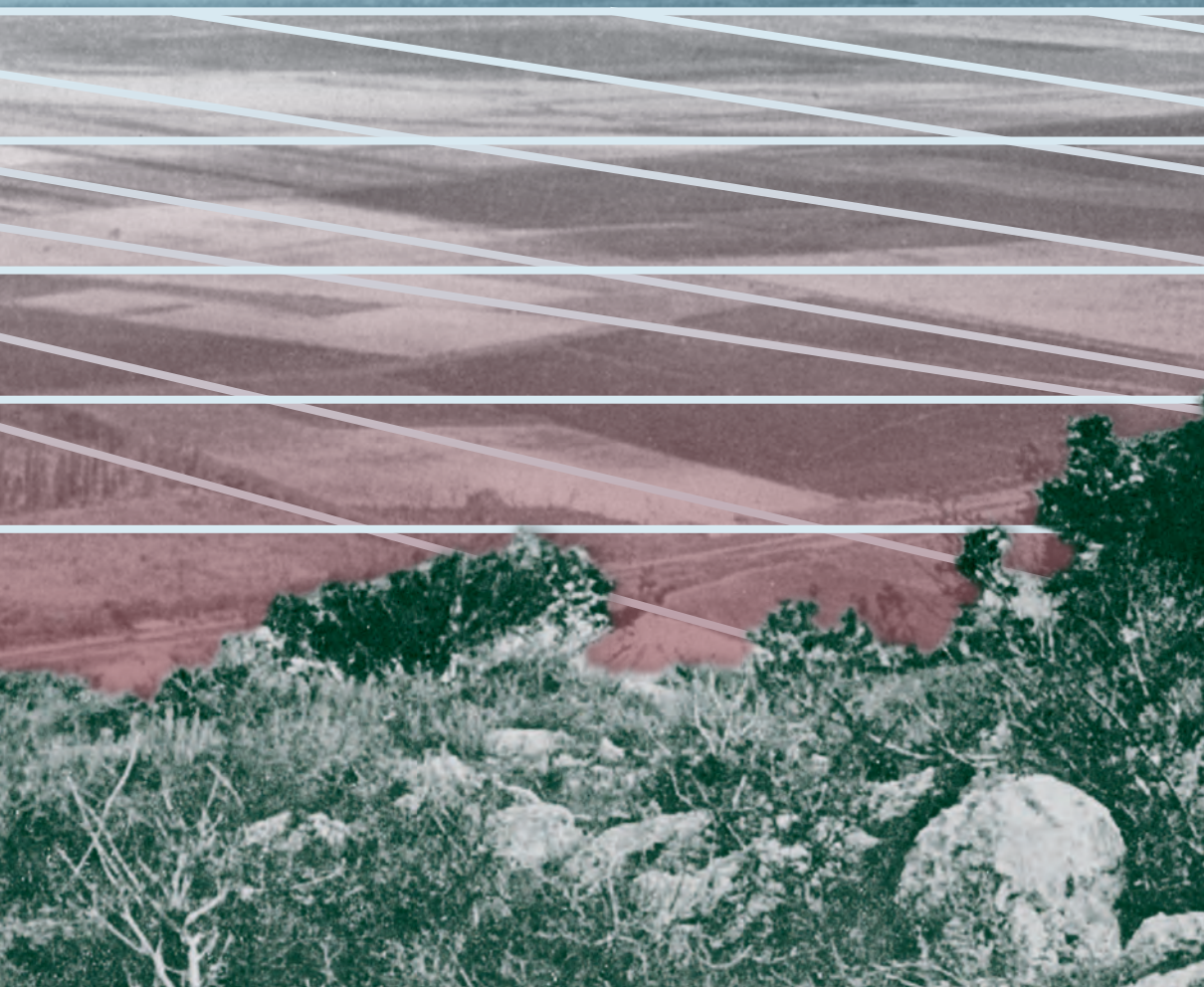


Gert van Klinken

# Nes Ammim

---

Protestants in the young  
State of Israel, 1952-1967



Nes Ammim



GERT VAN KLINKEN

# Nes Ammim

*Protestants in the young State of Israel, 1952-1967*



Hilversum  
Verloren  
2021

ReLiC  
Studies in Dutch Religious History  
Volume 5

The series Studies in Dutch Religious History is intended to advance the study of the history of religion and religious culture in the Netherlands by publishing individual monographs, collections of articles in English, or source material. The aim is both to integrate traditional church history and the history of ideas into general history and to offer scholars of Dutch religious history an international forum on which to present their findings. On the basis of a broad understanding of religion and religious culture, the series embraces studies on the history of the expression, mediation, consumption and institutionalization of religious experience, values and ideas in their cultural, social and political settings. The geographical focus comprises all regions within or directly associated with the northern Netherlands, and thus includes Dutch colonial, trade, diplomatic and expatriate settlements and outposts. Particular emphasis is put on the interregional, transconfessional, international and comparative dimensions of Dutch religion and religious culture.

Editors-in-chief  
Joris van Eijnatten, Fred van Lieburg and Bart Wallet

Cover illustration: based on the view from Abu Sinan in 1947,  
with the Plain of Asher in the background (photograph in Jacob Rosner,  
*A Palestine Picture Book*. New York: Schocken, 1947, 12).

ISBN 9789087049324

© 2021 Uitgeverij Verloren  
Torenlaan 25, 1211 JA Hilversum  
[www.verloren.nl](http://www.verloren.nl)

Typesetting: Rombus/Patricia Harsevoort, Hilversum  
Cover design: Rombus/Tanja Stropsma, Hilversum

*No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher*

# Acknowledgements

Many have offered their generous assistance during the course of this research. First of all, I would like to thank Thys VerLoren van Themaat of Verloren Publishers, and the members of his staff (Patricia Harsevoort, David Verster and Tinja Stropsma) for transforming the digital manuscript into a proper book; Joris van Eijnatten, Fred van Lieburg and Bart Wallet, who kindly permitted this work to be included in the Relic Series; the staff members of the HDC Centre for Religious History of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, especially George Harinck, Hans Seijlhouwer and present director Bart Wallet for all of their help and encouragement during the years; Kristin Anderson (Schagen) for correcting the English text and her thoughtful comments; Daan Dijk, Dineke Houtman, Tjitte Dijkstra and Cor van der Spek for their assistance in retrieving source materials in Israel and translating from modern Hebrew.

A much-appreciated financial grant was gratefully received from the Inter-Church Contact Israel (ICI).

I am also deeply indebted to the professional aid of the staff members of the Archive of the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland, in Düsseldorf); Archive Nes Ammim Galilee (via Tjitte Dijkstra); Archive Nes Ammim Germany (via Werner Böcker, Thomas Kremers and Liselotte Ueter), Archive Nes Ammim Netherlands (Michael Elias and Gonnie Smeets); Beit Lieberman, in Nahariya; Beit Pilon in Nes Ammim; Beth-El in Shavei Zion; the Bodleian Libraries in Oxford; the Central Archive of the Evangelical School in Berlin; the Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem; NIOD Dutch Institute for War Documentation, Amsterdam; Historical Centre Overijssel; the HDC Centre for Religious History of the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam (Wim Berkelaar, Hans Seijlhouwer and Bart Wallet); the Israel State Archives in Jerusalem; the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam; the Library of the Protestant Theological University in Amsterdam (Wiljan Puttenstein and others), the Library of the Theological University in Apeldoorn; the National Archives of Great-Britain in Kew (London); the National Library of Israel, Givat Ram (Jerusalem); the National Service Centre of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands, Utrecht); the Palestine Exploration Fund (London); the Peace Palace Library, The Hague; the Royal Library in The Hague; the Special Collections of Utrecht University; the University Archive of Münster; the Utrecht Archive and the Zürcher Lehrhaus, Zurich.

For access to personal correspondence I would like to thank the Bezek family in Tel Aviv (papers Shlomo and Miriam Bezek), Horst Dahlhaus in Sankt Augustin (documentation Nes Ammim-Germany), Jelle Feitsma in Amsterdam (papers of S. Feitsma relating to Nes Ammim-Holland), the late Machteld de Goederen, Wim van der Hout and Stien Slagmolen in Harderwijk, the Koller family in Zurich, Pauline Micheels in Amsterdam (archive Henriëtte Boas), the Pilon family in Haarlem (papers of their father Johan Pilon), Gerrit Polet in Paterswolde, Simon Schoon in Amersfoort, Ria Snoek in Leiderdorp (archive Johan Snoek), Cor van der Spek in Broek op Langedijk and Ies Walpot in Deventer.

Another great debt of thanks is to those who were willing to share their memories and perceptions with me: M. Assenberg, Zurich; J. Baars, Amsterdam; W. Böcker, Düsseldorf-Kalkum; J.P. Boendermaker, Hilversum; J.H. Boertien, Leiden; T. Brienen, Hoogeveen; G.H. Cohen Stuart and M. Cohen Stuart-Jumelet, Rhoon; H. Dahlhaus, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin), M.W. Eberlé-Gotlib, Rotterdam; R. Eshel-Bezek, Tel Aviv; R. Farah, Toronto; J. Feitsma, Amsterdam; J. Fishman, Jerusalem; J. van Gelderen, Kampen; D. Geva-Bezek, Tel Aviv; M. de Goederen, Amersfoort; Ch. Gysel, Wilchingen; W. van der Hout and S. van der Hout-Slagmolen, Harderwijk; C. Isings, Soest; E. Jabbour, Shefaram (Shefa Amr); A. Keuning-Rooks, Buitenpost; T. Kramer-Feitsma, Wolvega; A. Kremers and R. Kremers-Kamphausen, Moers (Duisburg); Th. Kremers, Duisburg; K. Kriener, Düsseldorf; R. Mackay, Edinburgh; M. Martens; C. Minnaar, Oostvoorne; H.A. Mubarki, Abu Sinan; Y. Mubarki, Nes Ammim and Abu Sinan; A. Pilon, A.C. Pilon, C. Pilon and R. Pilon, Haarlem; A. Pilon-van Ingen, Soest; L.J. Pilon and A. Owliaee, Hengelo (Twente); G. Polet, Paterswolde; J. Rentschler, Shavei Zion; G. Ridderbos, Amsterdam; J. Ridderbos Niczn; M.J. Robert, Thayngen; T. Ronen-Laron, Lohamei HaGettaot; Regba; P. Roost and E. Roost-Hoffmann, Thayngen; J. Schoneveld and E. Schoneveld-Tuyt, Rijswijk; S. Schoon, Amersfoort; D.J. van der Sluis, Westzaan; C. Smitsman, Woudrichem; J.D. Snel, Amsterdam; H. Snoek, Amsterdam; J.M. Snoek, Rotterdam; R. Snoek, Leiderdorp; C. van der Spek, Broek op Langedijk; J.T. van Stegeren and H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer; G. Theissen, Tolbert/Heidelberg; A. van Tol, Nieuw-Vennep; L. Ueter, Düsseldorf; D. Vermeulen, Etten-Leur; H. Vetterli and E. Vetterli-Habicht, Stein am Rhein; I. Visser-Feitsma, Veenendaal; I. Walpot, Nes Ammim and Deventer; M. Wichelhaus, Düsseldorf; R. Wichelhaus, Düsseldorf; G.A. Wiggers and J.G. Bollen-Wiggers, Barlo (Aalten).

The book is gratefully dedicated to the memory of Hanna-Louk van Stegeren-Keizer.

# Contents

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| Timeline     | 17 |
| Introduction | 25 |

## BACKGROUNDS

|                                       |    |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| <b>I Protestants in the Holy Land</b> | 31 |
| Medical Mission                       | 32 |
| Land and people                       | 33 |
| In the State of Israel                | 34 |
| Dialogue                              | 35 |
| Development                           | 37 |
| Geopietry                             | 38 |
| <b>II ‘An Indian boy’</b>             | 39 |
| The missionary background             | 39 |
| Early years                           | 39 |
| War                                   | 41 |
| ‘Keeping secrets’                     | 43 |
| Mamasa                                | 45 |
| An offer from Edinburgh               | 48 |
| Beth Cholim Scotti                    | 50 |
| Setting a course                      | 54 |
| ‘Splendid service’                    | 58 |

## INITIATORS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>III Claude Muller-Duvernoy</b>                             | 63 |
| Genesis of the idea of a Protestant kibbutz                   | 63 |
| Appeal to terminate Jewish Mission                            | 65 |
| ‘Communauté évangélique de langue hébraïque en Terre d’Israel | 67 |
| <b>IV Tiberias Fund</b>                                       | 69 |
| Rotterdam   | 69 |
| Christian Jews  | 69 |
| A Hebrew Christian moshav                                     | 71 |



|             |    |
|-------------|----|
| WCC         | 74 |
| Competition | 75 |

## VILLAGE LANDS

|                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>V Abdullah Salman Saleh Khayr</b> | 81  |
| Abdu'l-Bahá in Abu Sinan             | 81  |
| 'Abd Allāh Salman Saleh Khayr        | 84  |
| <b>VI The Plain of Asher</b>         | 88  |
| Western perceptions                  | 90  |
| Part of Israel                       | 92  |
| 'Village lands'                      | 93  |
| <b>VII 'Stolid Dutch'</b>            | 95  |
| First contacts                       | 95  |
| Jacob Blum                           | 96  |
| Arab mediation                       | 98  |
| 'A little board'                     | 101 |
| Christian Zionism and America        | 102 |
| 'An enormous undertaking'            | 104 |

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| <b>VIII Nazareth</b>           | 110 |
| EMMS hospital                  | 110 |
| Hans and Madeleine Bernath     | 111 |
| <b>IX Settlement plan</b>      | 113 |
| Aims                           | 113 |
| Jacob Bernath                  | 114 |
| Shlomo Bezek                   | 114 |
| Israel and the Church          | 116 |
| Tiberias                       | 117 |
| Tiberias Fund and RCN          | 118 |
| Roelof Bakker and Frits Kuiper | 119 |
| Hebrew Christians              | 120 |

## BANNER OF THE NATIONS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>X God's chosen remnant in Israel</b> | 127 |
| 'Full speed'                            | 127 |
| Israel Christian Settlement Inc.        | 128 |

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| God's Chosen Remnant in Israel    | 129 |
| Yeshuv Meshichee Israeli          | 130 |
| Mennonites                        | 131 |
| Maas Boertien                     | 132 |
| <b>XI Velbert</b>                 | 134 |
| Preliminary moves                 | 134 |
| Critical questions                | 137 |
| <b>XII Costs and participants</b> | 139 |
| Shlomo Bezek's estimation         | 139 |
| Christian Arabs                   | 142 |
| <b>XIII September 1960: Baarn</b> | 143 |
| Inaugural international meeting   | 144 |

#### EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES

|                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| <b>XIV Nes Ammim-Germany</b>    | 149 |
| Heinz Kremers                   | 149 |
| Beror Hayil                     | 150 |
| Shavei Zion and Beth-El         | 152 |
| Rhineland perspectives          | 154 |
| <b>XV Nes Ammim-Switzerland</b> | 155 |
| 'A tiny Swiss colony'           | 155 |
| Charles Gysel                   | 156 |
| <b>XVI Nes Ammim-Holland</b>    | 157 |

#### MEMORANDUM 1960

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>XVII Raphael Zwi Werblowsky</b>  | 161 |
| 'Is it any wonder that the Jewish soul is allergic to Christians<br>and the Christian message?' | 161 |
| Israeli embassy in The Hague, 11 October 1960   | 162 |
| Advised by Werblowsky   | 163 |
| <b>XVIII Levi Eshkol</b>  |     |
| Mediation   | 166 |
| 'A perfect spot for the village'  | 167 |
| Tel Aviv, 11 December 1960  | 168 |
| American comments   | 169 |
| Rejection of the missionary approach  | 170 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| The Jerusalem consultation of 23 March 1961 | 171 |
| Foundation Nes Ammim-Netherlands            | 173 |
| Brunner and Ehrlich                         | 173 |

### NEW DIRECTIONS, 1961-1962

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>XIX Internationale Aktiengesellschaft</b>       | 177 |
| At the Ministry of Finance                         | 177 |
| Aktiengesellschaft Nes Ammim (AG)                  | 177 |
| Press conference                                   | 179 |
| <b>XX A painful decision</b>                       | 180 |
| ‘Nes Ammim will not be settled by Jewish converts’ | 182 |
| ‘In a new gear’                                    | 184 |
| Indirect missionary approach                       | 185 |

### AL-MANSURA

|                             |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| <b>XXI Land deal</b>        | 189 |
| Neglected land?             | 189 |
| Protest                     | 191 |
| Deed of sale, May 1962      | 193 |
| Shlomo Bezek                | 194 |
| Lohamei HaGettaot and Regba | 195 |
| Pioneers                    | 196 |

### KNESSET PROCEEDINGS

|                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>XXII Under criticism</b>          | 201 |
| Objections in Holland and Israel     | 201 |
| Knesset investigation                | 205 |
| Press coverage                       | 206 |
| District Council                     | 208 |
| Resignations                         | 208 |
| Betrayal of Hebrew Christians?       | 210 |
| <b>XXIII Riftin commission</b>       | 212 |
| Consultations                        | 212 |
| Ja’akov Riftin                       | 214 |
| Implementation of agreements         | 215 |
| Protest in Nahariya                  | 216 |
| Knesset                              | 217 |
| Between Jewish and Christian opinion | 219 |

|                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| Jediot Chadasjot | 220 |
| Eshkol           | 222 |
| Responses        | 224 |

‘UN VILLAGE HOLLANDO-SUISSE’

|                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| <b>XXIV Permits</b>           | 227 |
| Building a village            | 228 |
| Four nations, four approaches | 228 |
| ‘The wind is turning.’        | 231 |
| <b>XXV The bus</b>            | 232 |
| Pioneers                      | 232 |
| ‘As if on an island’          | 233 |
| Kremers in Nahal Oz           | 236 |
| Machteld de Goederen          | 237 |
| The va‘adah                   | 239 |

UNDER THE CONSTELLATION OF SCORPIO

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>XXVI ‘Fiddling with the concept’</b> | 245 |
| America                                 | 245 |
| Switzerland                             | 246 |
| Germany                                 | 248 |
| Holland                                 | 251 |

‘SERIOUS RECONSIDERATION’

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>XXVII Va‘adah</b>                                | 257 |
| Jacob Bernath                                       | 258 |
| July 1963: shipwrecked within sight of the harbour? | 259 |
| ‘Sinn und Aufgabe’                                  | 263 |
| Reactions   | 264 |

OPERATION ‘FOX TERRIER’

|                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| <b>XXVIII ‘Green light’</b>   | 269 |
| Cabinet decision              | 269 |
| Madrach                       | 271 |
| Hansruedi and Gerda Koller    | 272 |
| ‘A fabulously free mentality’ | 275 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>XXIX Gé Dorland</b>                                    | 277 |
| ‘Balagan’   | 278 |
| Yonah Malachi   | 279 |
| ‘Nes Goyim’?  | 285 |
| Faith and Humanism  | 286 |
| Meir Orkin, Chaika Grossman, Josef Meir and Shlomo Harari | 287 |
| Nes Ammim-America   | 289 |
| Board meeting in Nahariya                                 | 292 |
| <b>XXX al-Sumayriyya</b>                                  | 295 |
| Remembering a vanished community                          | 295 |
| Relics  | 297 |
| ‘That old village’  | 298 |
| Zakaria Elnatour and Gil Shner                            | 301 |
| <b>XXXI Burdens of history</b>                            | 303 |
| Sign for the nations                                      | 304 |
| Germans in Nes Ammim                                      | 305 |
| Elohut  | 306 |

#### PURIM-STREIT

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>XXXII Emil Schwaller</b>              | 311 |
| Financial crisis                         | 312 |
| ‘No progress without pain’               | 313 |
| Renewal                                  | 313 |
| Lack of transparency                     | 314 |
| Israeli concerns                         | 315 |
| Control mechanisms                       | 316 |
| ‘The sun will come through’              | 319 |
| Realignment of relations                 | 320 |
| German views regarding Church and Israel | 322 |
| Differences                              | 324 |
| Customs                                  | 326 |

#### ‘ONCE WE WERE FRIENDS’

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>XXXIII Failing partnerships</b>                        | 331 |
| A foreign enclave?  | 331 |
| March 1966  | 332 |
| German intervention                                       | 334 |
| ‘No longer Jewish Mission, but Church and Israel instead’ | 334 |
| Ultimatum   | 335 |
| Management  | 337 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| 'Once we were friends'   | 338 |
| D-Day?   | 340 |
| Comments among Jews and Christians                                 | 341 |
| <b>XXXIV Final round</b>   | 346 |
| Between the alternatives of a closed settlement or an open village | 346 |
| Departure of the Swiss   | 350 |
| Changing of the guard  | 352 |
| 'Only the Lord could have turned the project around'               | 354 |

## 1967

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>XXXV Moshav in wartime</b>                  | 357 |
| Re-establishing the community                  | 357 |
| Six-Day War                                    | 358 |
| After effects                                  | 359 |
| Economic priorities                            | 361 |
| Theology                                       | 363 |
| <b>XXXVI Retrospective</b>                     | 365 |
| Evaluation in Israel                           | 365 |
| Protestant evaluations                         | 367 |
| 'Help and learn in Israel'                     | 371 |
| Abbreviations                                  | 373 |
| Archives and libraries                         | 375 |
| Printed sources                                | 379 |
| Film   | 380 |
| Internet                                       | 380 |
| Interviews                                     | 381 |
| Bibliography                                   | 383 |
| Scrapbook in Archive Nes Ammim, Galilee (ANAG) | 396 |
| Glossary                                       | 397 |
| Register                                       | 400 |



# Timeline

- 1823 Ottoman authorities allow an English mission post on Mount Zion, Jerusalem.
- 1841 English-Prussian bishopric of Jerusalem.
- 1847 Latin patriarchate re-established.
- 1861 Nazareth hospital founded by the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society (EMMS).
- 1881 American Colony in Jerusalem.
- 1885 Free Church of Scotland establishes a Missionary hospital in Tiberias.
- 1889 German Lutherans create an Agricultural settlement in the plain of Sharon.
- 1905 Abraham Kuyper visits Tiberias.
- 1906 ‘Abd Allāh (Abdullah or Abdallah) Salman Saleh Khayr born in Abu Sinan.
- 1916 Shlomo Bezek born in Scheveningen (Holland), under the name of Sal Lorsch.
- 1917 Johan Pilon born in Java.  
– Balfour-declaration; Jerusalem taken by the British.
- 1920 League of Nations assigns the Palestinian mandate to Great Britain.
- 1929 Free Church of Scotland reunited with Church of Scotland.
- 1933 Hitler takes power in Germany.
- 1937 Abram Poljak attempts to set up an agricultural settlement of Jewish Christians in Palestine. Leon Levison tries to do the same in Gaza. Both initiatives fail.
- 1947 Jacob Blum proposes the placement of a Jewish Christian kibbutz in Israel to the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, to propagate Calvinism in the Middle East.
- 1948 Creation of the State of Israel. The majority of the former Arab population flees. Druze form a compact with Israel.
- 1949 The Council for Church and Israel (Dutch Reformed Church) becomes a partner in the Scottish missionary hospital in Tiberias. *Fundamentals and Perspectives*, announcing their intention to engage in Jewish-Christian dialogue, is released by the DRC synod.  
– Hans and Madeleine Bernath (Switzerland) arrive in the Middle East to work for the Red Cross.  
– Berliner Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit established by Heinrich Grüber and others.
- 1950 The Law of Return grants the right to any Jew to settle in the State of Israel, and to become a citizen. Whether Jewish Christians are entitled to this right remains a contested issue.



- Full recognition of the State of Israel by the Netherlands.
- 1951** Jewish-Christian dialogue takes precedence over the missionary approach in the revised Church Order of the Dutch Reformed Church.
  - Johan Pilon appointed as gynaecologist for the Church of Scotland Mission Hospital in Tiberias.
- 1952** The Pilon family arrives in Galilee.
- 1953** Diplomatic ties to Israel cancelled by Stalin. Relationships between Israel and Western democracies improve.
  - Hans Bernath becomes a surgeon in the EMMS-hospital in Nazareth.
  - Reformed businessmen establish the Tiberias Fund (Rotterdam).
- 1954** Disagreements between Arabs and Westerners during the assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Evanston.
- 1955** The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) become a partner in the Tiberias hospital.
  - Roelof Bakker (RCN) meets Claude Muller-Duvernoy. Both are dissatisfied with Jewish Mission and are looking for alternatives. Bakker contacts Pilon, Bonda, and Max Enker (International Christian Hebrew Association).
- 1956** Lutheran *Kreisdekan* Hermann Maas visits moshav Shavei Zion (Galilee).
- 1957** Muller-Duvernoy demands repatriation of missionaries, unless they contribute to education, healthcare, or the local economy. His aim is to create a Protestant kibbutz in Israel, in support of the Jewish State.
  - Establishment of the United Council of Churches in Israel (UCCI).
  - Bakker and Pilon devise their own plan for a Protestant settlement in Israel (moshav), and are joined by Hans Bernath in Nazareth.
  - The British consulate in Haifa receives reports by sheikh Abdallah Khayr. Access to the Plain of Asher is limited, and he fears expropriation of Druze land in that area.
- 1958** Following appeal by Oswald Rufeisen, a Roman-Catholic Jew who has applied for citizenship, the Supreme Court of Israel rules that converts to Christianity can no longer be regarded as Jewish.
  - Raphael Zwi Werblowsky establishes the Israel Inter-Faith Committee.
  - Christian Adventists receive permission to build kibbutz Amirim near Tzefat.
  - Muller-Duvernoy fails to win the support of the WCC for his project.
  - Hans Bernath is informed that Abdallah Khayr seeks a non-Jewish buyer.
  - The Tiberias Fund announces support for a Protestant Christian moshav in Israel, as proposed by Bakker and Pilon.
- 21 February** Pilon tries to gain support for the State of Israel and for Jewish Christians within that State. A meeting follows with Shlomo Bezek from Ayeleth Hashachar.
- 16 August** The Dutch Society of Jewish Christians *Hadderech* wants to purchase land for the International Hebrew Christian Association (IHCA).
- 1959 January** Friedrich Nothacker (Württemberg) visits Pilon in Tiberias without reaching agreement. He collaborates with Helene Wyman, to build a German institution on behalf of Holocaust victims in Galilee.
  - A few miles West of Khayr's land, Shavei Zion receives the Hamburg Gesellschaft für christlich-jüdische Zusammenarbeit.

- 14 April Bonda visits Khayr to announce that the Tiberias Fund is interested in property he might put up for sale.
- 21 April The Scottish hospital in Tiberias closes most of its operations.
- 10 June Jacob Blum, Rafiq Farah and Johan Pilon meet Khayr to discuss the sale of part of the 'village lands' of Abu Sinan to a Christian party. Bonda donates IL 50,000 as starting capital.
- July Bakker visits Switzerland. Hans' brother Jacob Bernath, cantonal engineer of Schaffhausen, is asked to oversee the technical planning of a prospective Christian kibbutz. Americans Chava Kranhouse (Hebrew Christian Church, Jerusalem), Orié Miller and Roy Kreider (both from the Mennonite Church) are also interested, while Joseph Alkahé in Tel Aviv becomes the legal advisor for the project.
- August The International Hebrew Christian Association aims to settle Jewish Christian families in the proposed moshav. To prepare the way, the DRC informs a representative of the Department of Religious Affairs (Chaim Wardi).
- September Khayr resumes talks with Farah and Pilon. The Bernath brothers mobilise their sympathizers in Switzerland.
- October The DRC paper *Israel and the Church* makes a great impression on Johan Pilon, who is warned that a Jewish Christian settlement will not be accepted by Israelis.
- November N. Levison (International Hebrew Christian Alliance) believes that diplomatic introductions by a Western government will be required to gain the ear of authorities in West-Jerusalem.
- December American supporters publish *God's Chosen Remnant*, emphasizing witness by 'Hebrew Christians'. Bakker visits Erich and Elisabeth David in Velbert, Germany.
- 1960 The Tiberias Fund is taken over by the RCN executive of the Jewish Mission. Pilon becomes international secretary for the intended Protestant moshav, his salary being paid by the RCN.
- Theodor Heuss, former president of the Federal Republic of Germany, visits Shavei Zion. After consultation with the local Jewish community, Nothacker starts nursing home Beth-El in Nahariya. Publicity is kept to a minimum. Staff members are German, and some are Jewish-Christian. The local rabbi Aharon Keller supports the initiative.
- 12 February In anticipation of a Protestant moshav, a Hebrew Christian board is set up under supervision of the UCCI in Jerusalem. The Bernaths and Pilon do not accept the authority of this committee.
- March 'Israel Christian Settlement Inc' is established in America. Roy Aldrich (Detroit Bible Institute) becomes president, Chawa Kranhouse secretary. Another committee for the moshav is formed in Velbert in Western Germany. Nikolaus Becker, Lothar Ahne, and Horst Dahlhaus are key members.
- April Shlomo Bezek presents a draft for a moshav shitufi of 195 pioneers, on land leased from Keren Kayemet LeYisrael. Heinz Kremers brings German students to kibbutz Beror Hayil.
- May Jacob Bernath becomes chairman of a preliminary Swiss committee. Arab Christian participation is welcomed by the Swiss.

- A working committee is established in Velbert. Dahlhaus becomes secretary, on the payroll of the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland. Costs of the moshav are estimated to be about four million D-Mark. The Velbert committee insists on full Israeli approval.
- 15 *June* Pilon informs the Americans of his concerns regarding the absence of dialogue in *God's chosen remnant*. Bakker presides over a Dutch preliminary committee.
- 22 *July* The Mennonite Central Committee considers the proposed moshav as part of their missionary outreach in Israel.
- August* Dahlhaus opposes Jewish-Christian participation, given the missionary aims of both *God's chosen remnant* and the IHCA. The Dutch embassy is of the opinion that German participation will only be acceptable in Israel if members of the former German resistance are included.
- 1 *September* International conference organised by a Protestant settlement in Israel is attended by participants from America, Switzerland, Germany, Israel, and Holland in the Missionary Centre of the RCN in Baarn (Holland). They accept the name Nes Ammim (Isaiah 11:10). Much to the disappointment of the American committee, Jewish Christians are no longer central to the enterprise.
- 11 *October* Pieter Sjoerds Gerbrandy, former Prime Minister of the Netherlands, arranges a meeting in the Israeli embassy with Pinchas Sapir, Israel's Minister of Trade and Industry.
- November* The American committee is disbanded. Only Mennonites continue to support the plan. In order to draft a memorandum for the Israeli government, Bakker and Pilon take up residence in St. Andrew's Hospice, West Jerusalem. Tentative efforts to approach the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are rebuffed. Prof. Raphael Zwi Werblowsky of the Hebrew University offers to assist in drafting the memorandum. Jacob Bernath, Dahlhaus and Ahne come to Jerusalem.
- December* Following Werblowsky's lead, Nes Ammim presents itself as a non-missionary effort that aims at Jewish-Christian dialogue and support for the State of Israel. A seat of the international board will be established in Switzerland (Jacob Bernath president and Charles Gysel secretary). Mennonites in America are summarily briefed about developments. Pilon is received by Teddy Kollek, director-general of the Prime Minister's bureau. Kollek arranges the meeting with Minister of Finance Levy Eshkol.
- 11 Jacob Bernath and Pilon present Werblowsky's version of the memorandum to Eshkol.
- 1961 The RCN *deputaatschap* (executive) for Jewish Mission alters its name to 'Proclamation of the Gospel in Israel'.
  - The *Kirchentag* in West Berlin of the Evangelical Church in Germany launches its programme for Jewish-Christian dialogue.
- January* Nes Ammim-Germany meets in Mühlheim-Selbeck. They fully oppose Jewish Mission and consider cooperation with Jewish Christian agencies as out of the question.
- 23 *March* Meeting of the Committee for Inter-Faith Understanding in West Je-

rusalem, at the invitation of Werblowsky. Representatives of all Protestant denominations in Israel are invited to attend. The Ministry of Religious Affairs is also represented. Werblowsky warns Protestants that dialogue is impossible if they continue to support Jewish Mission. Within Nes Ammim only the Germans accept this principle without equivocation.

– Swiss Nes Ammim Society established in Zurich.

*April* Holland and Switzerland find fault with the Velbert committee for taking sides with Werblowsky, as it will jeopardise fundraising in Europe.

– 14 Nes Ammim-Netherlands formally established, with Gerrit Polet as head of office in Rotterdam, Bakker president and Pilon international secretary.

*July* The Israeli Consul General in Zurich worries about rumours that Nes Ammim might be intended as a missionary base of Christian Jews in Galilee.

31 Accompanied by two Israeli citizens (architect Dan Ben-Dor and banker Joop Voet), Bakker discusses financial details with Eshkol and his secretary Ja'akov Arnon at the Ministry of Finance.

16 *November* Aktiengesellschaft Nes Ammim (AG) established in Zurich. The board (Verwaltungsrat) consists of three Swiss and two Dutch members, presided over by Jacob Bernath. It is intended that the AG will purchase and own the land.

*December* Meeting of Jacob Bernath, Minnaar and Pilon with Khayr, who is given to understand that his migration to the Lebanon may be part of the deal. Israeli authorities prefer Tel Aviv as the seat for the AG.

– 20 Press conference is held in Amsterdam, with disastrous results. The Jewish community notes that Bakker is officially engaged in ongoing missionary efforts by the RCN. The kibbutzim in the Plain of Asher protest that they have not been consulted, while they prefer to obtain Khayr's land for themselves. Shavei Zion and Nahariya wonder why the newcomers failed to obtain advice from the respected and already-established Protestant project Beth-El. Misgivings result in a general feeling that Nes Ammim is being used as a cover for the IHCA. Dutch rabbi's Salomon Aaron Rodrigues Pereira and Aharon Schuster inform their contacts in Israel of this development.

1962 Nes Ammim-Switzerland confirms the importance of Christian witness to Israel. The Swiss insist on *millet* autonomy: supervision of internal affairs by Israeli authorities will not be accepted.

*January* Israel embarks on a policy to strengthen relationships with the Druze. Abdallah Khayr becomes president of a national Tobacco Board.

*February* Johan Pilon grants an interview to Henriëtte Boas (*Jerusalem Post*), with the following message: 'Nes Ammim will not be settled by Jewish converts, although some press reports have mistakenly alleged this'. Meanwhile, Hans Bernath comes under pressure in Nazareth, where Arab Christians feel excluded.

*April* Swiss and Americans distance themselves from the *Jerusalem Post* interview but take no further action. District Council Ga'aton declares that there are no legal impediments for a sale of the land.

- 30 *May* Khayr, Hans Bernath and Pilon sign the deed of sale. Khayr receives 985,388 Swiss francs for a portion of Abu Sinan's village land. Total costs for Nes Ammim are 2.7 million euro (2016 value).
- July* Building application forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- August* Opposition in Israel gathers strength. All permits are frozen, pending an investigation by a Knesset committee. *Christian News in Israel* (Blum) maintains that a 'haven' for Christian Jews is intended.
- September* The Knesset commission convenes to investigate. According to Secretary-General Shmuel Kahane (Religious Affairs) scarce farming land should be reserved for Keren Kayemet. Hans Bernath and Pilon come under scrutiny as missionary doctors. Shlomo Bezek visits Holland, referring to Christian Jews as traitors against their people.
- October* Urged by H.A. Cidor (Israeli ambassador to the Netherlands), Pilon affirms that missionaries and Christian Jews must leave the board and that no Christian Jew will live in the settlement. Cidor reacts that he will hold Nes Ammim accountable to these commitments. Bakker resigns, together with the Christian Jewish members of the Dutch board. Ja'akov Riftin (Mapam) becomes chairman of the Knesset committee.
- 13 *November* Bezek and Pilon meet with the Knesset committee and with representatives of the Israeli Ministry of Religious Affairs.
- December* Jacob Bernath and Pilon received by Zerah Wahrhaftig, Minister of Religious Affairs. They also meet Eshkol, who insists that Nes Ammim submit to a supervisory committee (*va'adat pikuach*). Bezek and Ben-Dor testify for the Knesset committee.
- 1963 *January* Now that the plan seems to discriminate against fellow Christians, Swiss support wavers. The Knesset discusses the Protestant moshav on January 16. Eshkol states that the government is intending to give Nes Ammim 'the green light'.
- February* Rabbi Keller heads protests in Nahariya. Mirjam Gerzon calls for the immediate installation of a supervisory committee (*va'adat pikuach*).
- 1 *March* Dutch Jewish press quotes Pilon as saying that Jews have no need for Jesus.
- 5 *March* Nes Ammim accepted by majority vote in the Knesset commission, on three conditions: no mission, no Christian Jews among the settlers and a *va'adat pikuach* (*va'adah*).
- 8 *March* German Nes Ammim Society formally established in Velbert. Kremers takes a group of students to Nahal Oz, a kibbutz near the Gaza border.
- 19 *March* Knesset accepts the majority advice of the Riftin Commission. Pilon acknowledges Israeli conditions in the *Jerusalem Post*. He studies the concept of 'two separate ways', as expounded by Martin Buber.
- 15 *April* Building permit delayed, due to absence of a *va'adah*. A non-functioning bus is ferried from Nazareth to the hill of al-Mansura, where Hans and Ella Vetterli become the first pioneers. Hans Bernath and Johan Pilon tour America. Compliance with Israeli conditions advocated by Hanna-Louk van Stegeren-Keizer, Jewish member of the RCN.
- 30 *April* RCN deputies 'for the proclamation of the Gospel in Israel' demand that statements to the Jewish press be revoked.

- 7 May Eshkol reiterates the importance of guaranteeing against mission and committing to a 'joint supervisory committee' (va'adah).
- 20 May US Nes Ammim Committee established in New York, Miller is made secretary. Right wing Christian Zionists are represented by the Southern Baptists and Church of the Covenant. Machteld de Goederen joins the Vetterlis in the bus.
- 1 June During a meeting in Frankfurt, Switzerland, Holland and the US agree on financial planning. Germany considers leaving Nes Ammim, should it continue to ignore the demands of Eshkol. AG board membership for Germany is blocked by the Swiss, still opposed to a va'adah. To appease Velbert, Kremers is invited to comment on basic principles (assisted by Bakker).
- 4 July Jacob Bernath officially refuses to accept the va'adah, as unwarranted interference in Christian affairs. He is supported by the Americans on this score, but not by the Germans and Pilon. Eshkol, now Prime Minister of Israel, responds, stating that Bernath is putting the entire program at risk. Cor van der Spek (Holland) and Hansruedi Koller (Switzerland) develop the building programme, following guidelines laid out by Dan and Raphael Ben-Dor.
- 20 August On behalf of the Prime Minister's bureau, Shlomo Amir reacts to Jacob Bernath's letter of 4 July: the Israeli government is disappointed by the lack of economic progress and still awaits the establishment of the va'adah.
- 6 September Jacob Bernath finally gives in. Bezek, Joseph Meir (chairman District Council Ga'aton), Chaim Grüngold (Lohamei HaGettaot) and Fritzl Arnstein (Regba) form a va'adah. Pilon refers to established conditions as a 'gentlemen's agreement', unpublished but valid: no Jewish Christians in the village, and also no Germans 'for now'.
- 24 September Heinz Kremer and Josef Meir hold a meeting in Haifa. Werblowsky, David Flusser and Buber consulted by Kremers in Jerusalem. His resulting paper 'Sinn und Aufgabe von Nes Ammim' shocks Bonda, who steps down from the Dutch board.
- October The Vetterlis move to Regba. New arrivals include the Roberts family from Switzerland and Mennonites Bob Hoover and Mart Miller from America. Koller pleads for a moshav where all material goods will be held in common, with strict Christian ethos and Ivrit as the common language.
- November Jacob Bernath becomes *Stadtingenieur* of Zurich, a responsibility that will leave him with hardly any time for Nes Ammim.
- December Dan Ben-Dor and Cor van der Spek present building plans to the District Council, after the *Evangelische Kirche in Westfalen* donated 100,000 DM. Roelof Bakker succeeded by Ko Minnaar in the AG Verwaltungsrat.
- 14 December Bezek reports to Eshkol in Degania.
- 29 December Nes Ammim discussed in the Israeli cabinet.  
 – In 1963 the equivalent of 76,000 francs was donated from Holland, 54,000 from Switzerland, 100,000 from Germany and 6,000 from the USA.
- 1964 9 January A new policy is introduced stating that organisations first need consent of the Verwaltungsrat before they can send pioneers.
- 13 January Restrictions on Nes Ammim lifted by the Israeli cabinet.
- 15 January L. Arden Almquist and Russell A. Cervin (board members Nes Ammim-America) maintain witness for Jesus.

- Gabi Sommerfeld (Regba) suggests utilizing Dutch expertise for a rose nursery. The idea is forwarded to the international board by Van der Spek and approved. Arie van Tol arrives to build and maintain a greenhouse.
- Abdallah Khayr presides over the newly installed municipal council of Abu Sinan.
- Rabbi Robert Raphael Geis takes his leave from the *Arbeitsgruppe Christen und Juden* in Germany. He agrees with Werblowsky that Jewish-Christian dialogue and Jewish Mission are incompatible. This view is endorsed by Kremers (Nes Ammim Germany) and Gé Dorland (Nes Ammim Holland).
- April* Koller family arrives from Switzerland, followed by Henri Clot, Paul Roost, Hans Oberli and Paul Brodbeck. Dorland acts as the representative of Johan Pilon, increasingly wary of Hans Bernath's commitment to the Arab Christian community in Nazareth. The international board plans to appoint an American village manager, who will take over from Bezek and Dorland.
- July* 'Sinn und Aufgabe von Nes Ammim' is refuted by Maas Boertien, representative of the Dutch Christian Reformed Church in Jerusalem, who urges America and Switzerland to cancel their commitment to Nes Ammim.
- August* Jacob Bernath wants to replace the Israeli *madrish*, Shlomo Bezek, with a Christian. While Pilon supports Bezek, Yonah Malachy rebukes Nes Ammim for allowing workers into the settlement who only have a tourist visa.
- September* District Council Ga'aton urges the AG to open a seat for the Germans.
- November* Meeting of the international board in Nahariya, still without a voting member from Germany. A Swiss proposal is accepted to lay down the principle that Nes Ammim witnesses to Jesus Christ. The decision is opposed by Nikolaus Becker, observer for Germany. Pilon, Bezek and Dorland take Becker's side.
- December* Cor van der Spek becomes a member of District Council Ga'aton and is also trained by Bezek to act as prospective mazkir, secretary of an elected village council.
- 1965** *January* The village council, presided over by Léon Robert, decides to observe Shabbat. A greenhouse for rose growing becomes operative. Kremers publishes *Das Verhältnis der Kirche zu Israel*. German youth, not allowed to live and work in Nes Ammim, are sent to an Israeli kibbutzim.
- February* The international board, alarmed by deficits, enlists Emil Schwaller to oversee a financial overhaul. The Van der Spek family leaves for Bremen. Gerhard Wiggers oversees construction of more greenhouses. S. Colbi (Ministry of Religious Affairs) expresses concern about the compliance with the 1960 memorandum.
- March* Dorland wants spokesmen for Christian witness expelled. Koller is sacked by Schwaller and Pilon.
- April* Russell Cervin, board member for America, claims his right to evangelize from Nes Ammim. Germany refuses to cooperate with him.
- May* Full diplomatic relations established between Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany. Becker is finally admitted to the board. Jacob Bernath wants to have more Lutherans and members of Free Churches in the German

- committee. Inclusion of Arab Christians is once again proposed by the Swiss.
- June* Kremers urges Pilon to take the lead as foreman of the moshav.
- July* Minnaar succeeds Jacob Bernath as AG president, assisted by Edwin Müller (Switzerland) as secretary.
- August* Fundraising for a Dutch school is opposed by the Swiss who prefer teaching in Hebrew. Velbert finds it hard to accept that German workers are still not allowed. Mennonites question the military build-up of the State of Israel. The Covenant Church deplors the absence of Christian Jews. Mennonite John Wenger appointed as village manager.
- September* The new chairman of the District Council, Shlomo Harari, takes affront after his request to see the minutes is refused by the Verwaltungsrat. *Das Verhältnis der Kirche zu Israel* is welcomed by authorities, who add Becker's name to a list of suitable German representatives in Israel.
- October* Schwaller resigns, threatening to brief Israel about ongoing missionary efforts, 'below the radar'. Müller takes over. Germany demands the resignation of Jacob Bernath.
- 4 November* Nes Ammim Floriculture Ltd. formally registered (Minnaar, Pilon and Bezek directors), with most shares being held by the Dutch. Cervin tries to get Bezek dismissed, only to find that the *madrich* is supported unconditionally by Germany and Pilon.
- December* Dorland returns to Holland. Hans Bernath, Orië Miller and Roy Kreider take charge of running the affairs of the village, assisted by Bezek.
- 1966** The distribution of missionary pamphlets among Dutch Jews is finally halted by the RCN. Bonda breaks ties with Nes Ammim.
- January* Wenger asks to be relieved of his position. Cervin proposes to bring in a manager from the Covenant Church.
- March* According to a Canadian paper, Nes Ammim will continue to proclaim the Gospel. Wenger refuses to house the Pilon family in Nes Ammim. Johan Pilon is summoned to take a position as gynaecologist in Nahariya.
- Sam Gerssen, secretary of the DRC Council for Church and Israel, takes sides with Pilon. They conclude that the present Nes Ammim is meaningless for its proper goal of Jewish-Christian dialogue. Pilon is appointed as representative in Israel for Nes Ammim-Germany.
- April* Bezek informs authorities that only the Germans, together with Pilon, can be trusted to uphold the 1960 memorandum. On 15 April Harari declares that Nes Ammim does not meet Israeli expectations. He repeats his request to see the minutes. He expresses trust in Pilon and Bezek.
- May* Decision by majority vote in the international board that they will not give in to Harari. After the post of international secretary is cancelled, the *Verwaltungsrat* feels no obligation to inform the *va'adab* about the new policy. Instead, a supervisory committee is set up consisting of Hans Bernath, Roy Kreider and Johan Snoek. Thomas Mallon (Covenant Church) is appointed as the new manager. Israeli authorities refuse to give him a visa.
- Konrad Adenauer visits David Ben-Gurion in the Sde Boker kibbutz.
- July* Economic viability of the rose nursery is acknowledged by the District Council.



*August* Pilon anticipates a 'D-day'. Holland will have to take sides.

*September* Kremers confers with authorities in Jerusalem.

*October* Jac Looijen (Holland) calls for the break-up of the international board. Kremers and Bezek agree.

*November* The rose nursery begins exportation of roses to Europe. Holland and Germany meet in Mühlheim on 25 November. Bezek also attends the meeting.

*December* Nes Ammim-Holland affirms the authority of the *va'adah* and asks the other participants to do the same. Only Germany complies.

**1967** *January* Pilon and Bezek are dismissed.

*February* Harari and Malachy notify Nikolaus Becker that Israel denies the validity of the latest decisions by the international board.

*3 March* The American committee withdraws. Malachy phones to say that a continuation of the project by Holland and Germany alone is favoured by authorities. The Dutch and German Nes Ammim Society decide accordingly ('Arnheimer Resolution'). Pilon takes responsibility for the village.

*14 April* The international board is disbanded and replaced by an *Immobilien-Gesellschaft* chaired by Jacob Bernath. In his capacity as chairman, Bernath assists the Germans and Dutch in continuing the project. Germany and Holland agree to provide financial compensation to Switzerland and America. The Swiss and Americans will leave the *moshav*.

*22 May* The Straits of Tiran are closed by Egyptian forces. There is overwhelming support for Israel in Holland and Germany.

*30 May* Nes Ammim-Switzerland will continue to support the *moshav*, where German workers are still not allowed to live.

*5 June* Outbreak of the Six-Day War. Nes Ammim is not damaged. Kremers volunteers to join Israeli forces.

*August* Rebuffed by Nes Ammim, Kremers settles German volunteers in Givat Chaim near Hadera.

*September* The Six-Day War strengthens support for Israel in the West. Nes Ammim is generously funded by churches and the Dutch and German public.

# Introduction

*I had crisscrossed Israel several times, and yet the community of Nes Ammim always evaded my radar. Only later, on the Internet, did I stumble across a mention of the paradoxical place: a Christian kibbutz built in the heart of Arab Galilee as common ground with the Jewish people.<sup>1</sup>*

David Leach, *Chasing Utopia*

How to explain a paradoxical place? Nes Ammim's once famous rose nurseries have closed, many volunteers have left. Catering for paying guests has now become the main source of income, and arable fields have been turned over for construction of homes for the Israeli middle class. Protestantism in this corner of Galilee seems to be yesterday's Fata Morgana. In 2014 Leach looked around in wonder:

A village started in the shadow of the Holocaust with only a dream and an old school bus. None of my Israeli friends had heard of the place. I wondered if Nes Ammim was a hoax. The Christian kibbutz, it turned out, was no mirage. It was a living place, with a history stranger than fiction and a future as uncharted as any utopia.<sup>2</sup>

That 'stranger than fiction' history began in the twentieth century. Nowadays, Europe has become a favoured destination for refugees from all over the world. We might have forgotten an earlier exodus during the aftermath of the Second World War in the opposite direction, when Canada, South Africa, and Australia were the favoured destinations. Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, however, had an aim of their own: Palestine, and after 1948, the State of Israel.

Dutch, Swiss, Americans, and Germans devised a plan to create a Protestant village in Galilee. The Netherlands had been occupied during the war; Switzerland had remained neutral. Germany carried the taints of guilt and defeat, the United States the laurels of the victor. What made them work together in Galilee? And why did the Americans and Swiss drop out from the scheme in 1967, the year of the Six-Day War?

The many unanswered questions surrounding this 'history stranger than fiction' do not end here. Nes Ammim was founded near Akko in 1962. Just fourteen years earlier, a large majority of the population in the area had been Arab. Most of these former Arab residents ended up as refugees in Lebanon or Syria, and their land was repurposed for the kibbutzim. What did Nes Ammim think of

<sup>1</sup> David Leach, *Chasing Utopia. The future of the kibbutz in a divided Israel*, 181.

<sup>2</sup> David Leach, *Chasing Utopia*, 181.

that? Since most of the pioneers have passed away, written sources are required to provide answers to such questions. Many players in this strange story are all but forgotten, but there are a few exceptions, such as Johan Pilon. ‘He has a kind of mythical status’, says Atalwin Pilon about his grandfather:

Supposedly he was a special man. When he was still a gynaecologist in Tiberias there were some people who wanted to touch him to get some of his goodness. Because I grew up with a father who completely ignored my existence, my successful grandfathers were my distant role models. I grew up with the feeling I had partially rotten genes, but there was some holiness in the distance.<sup>3</sup>

Other noteworthy players were Hans Bernath who moved from Switzerland to Nazareth, Shlomo Bezek who was the only surviving member of a Dutch Jewish family and lived in Ayeleth Hashachar, Roy Kreider from Virginia and Heinz Kremers, who committed himself to the kibbutz plan from Germany, without being allowed to live there.

‘Utopians’, according to Leach, were driven by the dream ‘of restoring the bridge between Christians and Jews.’<sup>4</sup> Utopias may or may not come true. Even though Nes Ammim still exists after so many years, an American verdict after the fact sounds emphatically sceptical: ‘Rather than creating a reconciling “sign to the nations”, the international committees themselves could not be reconciled.’<sup>5</sup>

As a historian I rely on archival materials from many different countries. There are also letters, diaries, and photographs I have referenced from private collections. Together they allow us to check on ‘oral history’. Degani and Kark believe that Nes Ammim was founded by the Pilon family.<sup>6</sup> ‘Israel for Tourists’ states that the founders were Israeli citizens, ‘joined by overseas volunteers’.<sup>7</sup> The reality was more complex and continues to be a puzzle.

Interest in this story is connected to my personal background. When I was a teenager in the seventies, ‘Dialogue of Church and Israel’ became a driving force in Dutch Calvinism. Contrary to previous assumptions, the Bible could be explained as a fully *Jewish* book. This new exegesis invited scholars to explore innovative ways of understanding the scriptures, inspired by contemporary Jewish thinkers. My parents’ generation had been raised differently, in a Reformed Church that considered itself a new Israel. Well into the sixties, the teachings of the Gospel had been proclaimed with zeal to any non-believer, including Jews. Of course, there was also a longstanding fascination by the ‘Land of the Bible’, a standard topic during Sunday School. Interest in Israel did not originate in a vacuum. Even so, many elements of ‘Church and Israel theology’ as introduced by the Dutch Reformed Church during the fifties, were new and surprising. The Jew-

3 Atalwin Pilon, ‘Basic Goodness’, <http://basicgoodness.com/2012/going-back-to-my-roots>.

4 David Leach, *Chasing Utopia*, 182.

5 John E. Sharp, *My calling to fulfil. The Orie O. Miller story*, 320.

6 Rami Degani and Ruth Kark, ‘Christian and Messianic Jews. communes in Israel; past, present and future’, in *Social Sciences Directory* II nr. 4 (Oct. 2013), 26-44 and in Eliezer Ben-Rafael, Yaacov Oved and Menachem Topel, (eds.), *The communal idea in the 21st century*, Leiden/Boston 2013, 221-240.

7 ‘Nes Ammim’, <http://www.israelfortourists.com> (retrieved 10 January 2016).

ish people, the DRC proclaimed, continued the Bible story in the present. Sacred history and profane history seemed to overlap in the State that had been born out of the ashes in 1948. Was this perhaps the reason that Protestants felt the desire to join the Jewish adventure?

The generation 'that had been through the war' remained aware of scarcity. Limited resources called for a sober and hardworking life and for setting priorities. Adherents of 'Church and Israel-theology' lavished more attention on the Jews than on any other people in the Middle East. This implies not only a substantial difference in prioritization between 1940 (Jewish Mission) and 1970 (dialogue between Church and Israel), but also between 1970 and the present day (when most oecumenical churches are engaged in dialogue with *all* major religions of the Middle East).

It is not my intention to impose present-day views onto the founders of Nes Ammim. The challenge of understanding their mindset is exactly what makes them so fascinating. Huge efforts were involved, whether the Jews liked their attention or not. Another relevant question guiding this research is why did this dialogue project start in a far-off settlement in the countryside, instead of in a major population centre? My primary reasons for this investigation stem from admiration of the project. Such a project provides inspiration and the potential for self-improvement by learning from moral failure (Christian responsibility for the Holocaust) and by developing new relationships and realities. Even today, the Nes Ammim legacy can provide inspiration; now that Protestants find themselves struggling with the challenge of positioning their faith in a context of secularisation. Another attractive aspect of this story is that it allows us to perceive Protestantism as a phenomenon that is not primarily shaped by (male) church officials and theologians. Though ecclesiastics figure prominently, most of the participants (including women) came from other backgrounds and professions, especially medical backgrounds.

There are also some awkward questions that will need answering. The Nes Ammim pioneers came from missionary and colonial backgrounds that they could no longer acknowledge as their own. Now they themselves have become a 'previous generation', even for their children and grandchildren. The most striking example of this psychological distance is provided by the effects of the Palestinian war in 1948. Only fourteen years before Nes Ammim arrived, the ethnic population of the surrounding district of Akko had changed by a staggering eighty per cent. For reasons that require an explanation, the pioneers hardly ever referred to that momentous event. Even now, raising questions about this issue is often interpreted as taking sides in the contemporary conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. But that should not make us avoid the subject. To gain a true contemporary perspective of the past, it is simply impossible to discuss the history of Nes Ammim without also addressing the broader context.

Another contested issue is the connection between the ideals of Nes Ammim and the preceding era of missionary efforts to convert Jews to Protestantism. In a striking reversal of attitudes, it became the village's policy to exclude any Jewish Christians, and initially Germans as well. Once again, it is difficult to understand this decision from a present-day perspective. For contemporary Protestantism,

exclusion from a Christian village for reasons of an ‘unfitting’ ethnic background would be strange to say the least.

I have tried to tackle such questions from different international perspectives. Having lived in both the US and the German Federal Republic, I have some basic experience with Protestantism in these countries. I know far less about Switzerland and Israel. In this respect, the book is also a search for Protestantism as an international phenomenon. The chosen timespan for this research project is the era between 1952 and 1967: between the arrival of Johan Pilon in Israel and the ousting of the Swiss and Americans on the eve of the Six-Day War.

My first visit to Israel in 1996 came as a surprise. The ‘land of the Bible’ reminded me of America’s Midwest, mainly populated by European migrants. Most of them had arrived in 1948 or even more recently. No one in Nes Ammim or in the surrounding kibbutzim could tell me about local conditions during Ottoman times or even the Mandate. Obviously, people had made a fresh start, without an eye to the history of the area. Later visits in 2008 and 2011 enabled me to meet inhabitants of Regba, Lohamei HaGettaot, Mazra’a and Abu Sinan. It seemed that Jews, Arabs, and Druze held widely diverging perceptions of the area. Differences in approaches to Nes Ammim were no less striking. Americans displayed an eschatological interest that most Europeans seemed to have lost. I did not meet any Swiss. Germans and Dutchmen stressed the importance of Jewish-Christian dialogue and righting the wrongs of the Second World War. That Germans were even admitted here seemed a favour extended to them by other participating nations.

Apart from that, the atmosphere seemed strangely familiar. As far as I could tell, there were no Roman-Catholics, Arabs, and – most surprising of all – very few Jews. An old bus, not unlike the specimen in *Jesus Christ Superstar*, rusted in a quiet nook. This bus, someone told me, had been the abode of the very first Swiss pioneers. That was all. The Swiss ‘had gone’. The story of this mysterious place remained elusive.

One of my most pressing questions was ‘what had become of the founders?’ A breakthrough followed in 2012, when Reverend Simon Schoon introduced me to Allaert, Richard, Annebiene en Stiene Pilon. They allowed me access to the archives of their late father Johan Pilon. My research could finally start. It turned out to be the beginning of a long road. Despite the complexity of the subject matter, three people in particular urged me to push on, all motivated by different reasons. Tanja Ronen-Laron, from Regba, hoped for a reaffirmation of Jewish-Christian friendship, the ideal that had been dear to Johan Pilon. Yusuf Mubarki, from Mazra’a, drew my attention to the ruins of al-Sumayriyya. ‘Without considering that dusty spot’, said Yusuf, ‘it was impossible to write the history of Nes Ammim’. And finally, it was Marjorie Eberlé-Gotlib in Rotterdam, who told me about the impact on the Christian Jews. All three were unanimous in their opinions that the true story of Nes Ammim had not yet been written.

# BACKGROUNDS



Fig. 1 Palestina 1890. Biblical topography, where Western Galilee is shown as part of Phoenicia. La Palestine au temps de Jésus-Christ, in: L.C. Fillion and H. Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible d'après les documents anciens et les meilleures sources Françaises, Anglaises et Allemandes contemporaines* (Lyon/Paris: Delhomme & Brigueut, 1890).

# I Protestants in the Holy Land

For Luther and Calvin, Scripture sufficed to know the will of God, and thus not surprisingly, few Europeans during the Reformation era ever visited Palestine. Places of pilgrimage were controlled by Greek-Orthodox or Roman-Catholic caretakers, or in some cases by the Maronites, Melkites, Copts, or Ethiopians. The land held few attractions for Protestants. ‘Kanaan’, said one Protestant, resembled ‘a wilderness, despoiled by fiery Arabs and maladministrating Turks’.<sup>1</sup>

Even so, religious tolerance in Palestine compared favourably to Reformation Europe. Ottoman authorities introduced the so-called *millet*-system:<sup>2</sup> recognized religious minorities were allowed a measure of autonomy if they paid taxes and refrained from turning on each other. The nineteenth century brought new incentives, now that Great-Britain and Prussia had become major players on the international stage. In 1823 the British established an Anglican outpost at Mount Zion, resulting in a joint English-Prussian bishopric. The Swiss followed with their Basel Mission, and an American Colony was founded from Chicago.

Protestantism had been steadily developing. Typical for the nineteenth century was a keen anticipation of the bodily return of Jesus Christ. British Puritans had developed the notion that this event depended on settling the Jews in their ancestral lands.<sup>3</sup> The next step was conversion to Protestantism. To promote that aim, the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews began operations in 1809. Basic principles were explained in *A general and connected view of the prophecies, relative to the conversion, restauration, union and future glory of the Houses of Judah and Israel*.<sup>4</sup> Anthony Ashley Cooper, seventh earl van Shaftesbury, advocated ‘Jewish-Christian restauration in the Holy Land’.<sup>5</sup> The Australian George Gawler envisaged a modern Jewish State, allied with Great-Britain in the battle against Islam.

American writer George Elliot (Mary Ann Evans) developed a similar vision in her novel *Daniel Deronda* (1876), albeit without the conversion motive.<sup>6</sup> Such an omission would be unthinkable for the Scottish Free Church, which seceded in 1843 from the Church of Scotland. Protestantism and social progress were regarded as complementary and their hospital in Tiberias (1885) meant to propagate both. Seventy years later, Nes Ammim would be launched by this institution.

1 J.A. Oostkamp, *Bijbelsche Land- en Zeereizen*, 55-56.

2 *Milla*: non-Muslim minority group, recognized by the Ottomans. Plural: *millet*.

3 Henry Finch, *The World's Great Restauration*, London 1621. Cf. R.J. van Elderen, *Toekomst voor Israël*, 133-143.

4 G.S. Faber, *A general and connected view of the prophecies*, London 1809.

5 Shlomo Sand, *The invention of the Land of Israel*, 151.

6 Martin Gilbert, *Israel. A history*, 4.



### Medical Mission

A *milla* formed a recognized non-Muslim group. The system was meant to keep minorities from harm, not to provide them with strongholds to interfere with each other. However, by 1860 the Porte in Constantinople lacked the muscle to curb the encroaching Western powers. Missionaries became bolder; from their schools and hospitals, they also tried to attract converts. Palestine depended on Western investors for *tanzimat* (modernisation). It was because of Western investment that shipping lines connected Jaffa and Haifa to Europe, hotels opened their doors and the French built a railroad into Jerusalem. Much of this was appreciated. The Jews, however, had bad memories of earlier Christian schemes to baptise them. Even though Muslims and Greek-Orthodox Christians were more inclined to use missionary schools and hospitals, conversion to Protestantism occurred only rarely.<sup>7</sup>

As could be deduced from its creed, the Free Church of Scotland followed the teachings of John Knox. Predestination was discussed with Muslims, who referred to the principle to explain their failure to convert. They simply lacked the Christian faith, which only God could grant. Jews in their great majority simply avoided the 'Scotti' in Tiberias, building their own hospital in that city with American funds. Western medical care was attractive to people of all religions. In comparison, Jewish Mission seemed the ultimate failure. Observers wondered why the Scots, despite their famous frugality, continued to put money into this futile effort.<sup>8</sup> Director David Watt Torrance (1862-1923) stubbornly referred to his medical work as 'forerunner and handmaid of the Christian evangelist.'<sup>9</sup> Converts to Protestantism came mostly from the Arab Greek-Orthodox Churches. Arab doctors in Tiberias had been trained by the Americans in Beirut.

Compared to that cosmopolitan city, Tiberias seemed antiquated. The Scots' hospital was overlooked by a crumbling fortress that had been reduced to ruins by the 1837 earthquake.<sup>10</sup> The town had been rebuilt, together with the tombs of rabbi's Akiba, Maimonides and Isaiah Halevi Horowitz. From the minaret of the mosque, the muezzin's call to prayer reverberated on the waters of the lake.<sup>11</sup> Missionaries were perceived as an intrusive presence here. Zionist Jesaias (Yeshuyahu) Press published a detailed Tiberias map in his 1934 guide to Palestine. The Scots compound was clearly marked, but not a word was written about its purpose.<sup>12</sup>

7 E. Zickermann, 'Evangelische Liebesarbeit', 200.

8 E. Zickermann, 'Palästinensische Städtebilder', 83.

9 W.P. Livingstone, *A Galilee doctor*, 161.

10 'Crusader Fortress', in Sven Hedin and Georg Landauer, *Palästina*, München 1925, 180.

11 W.P. Livingstone, *A Galilee doctor*, 45.

12 Jesaias Press, *Neues Palästina-Handbuch*, 372-373.

## Land and people

Dutch Prime Minister Abraham Kuyper, a Calvinist, admitted that Jewish Mission 'ploughed the rocks'.<sup>13</sup> There were 3,160 Jews, 2,570 Muslims and 270 Christians in Tiberias in 1916.<sup>14</sup> Two years later Australian cavalry galloped in.<sup>15</sup> The League of Nations would grant the Palestine Mandate to Great Britain in the aftermath of the war. Another relevant change for the hospital was the reunion between the Free Church and 'Auld' Church of Scotland in 1929. Herbert Torrance, a decorated war veteran, took over the hospital from his deceased father. As a cautious moderniser he intended 'to present a correct conception of Christianity and to enable those who saw his medical work and heard his message to judge and decide for themselves.'<sup>16</sup>

Patients were classified by their religions, as the ethnic background of most of them seemed too complex for even an educated guess. Sephardim and Ashkenazim do not look alike, reflecting a long history in many continents. The indigenous character of the *fellahin* was less in doubt: 'The modern fellah of Palestine is a true descendant of the Philistines. He has in no way changed in character.'<sup>17</sup> To judge by the presence of some red hair and blue eyes, they might even carry a bit of Crusader blood in their veins.<sup>18</sup> In contrast to the *fellahin*, Ashkenazim were admired for their intellectual prowess. Even Sephardim came off as second-rate in comparison to this peer group. Yet, according to Puritan eschatology, both would play their assigned role. 'All Israel' would be saved,<sup>19</sup> but this did not necessarily imply that Jews were regarded as autochthonous.<sup>20</sup> The land had been promised to them, but it did not follow that they were indigenous.

Druzes and Bedouins were described as 'true Arabs' and imposing warriors, from Lebanon and the desert regions. In comparison, native Christians cut a sorry figure. Maronites and Melkites had survived under the protection of John Knox's nemesis, the Roman Catholic Church. The Orthodox obeyed the whims of withered patriarchs in Constantinople and Moscow. 'Feelings of superiority over Eastern Christianity permeate the Latin West', said a Roman-Catholic priest.<sup>21</sup> For once, the Scots agreed.<sup>22</sup> The pattern was to repeat itself in Nes Ammim half a century later.

13 A. Kuyper, *Om de Oude Wereldzee* 1, 451-452.

14 Sven Hedin, *Jerusalem*, Leipzig 1918, 75.

15 Brian Perrett and Ed Dovey, *Megiddo 1918*, 67.

16 W.P. Livingstone, *A Galilee doctor* (abridged), Perth 1962, 9.

17 Philip J. Baldensperger, *The Immovable East*, 57.

18 Jesaias Press, *Neues Palästina-Handbuch*, 75.

19 Letter to the Romans 11:25.

20 Michael Marten, *Attempting to bring the gospel home*, 11.

21 C.A. Bouman, *De breuk tusschen Oost en West*, 29.

22 Michael Marten, *Attempting to bring the gospel home*, 11.

### In the State of Israel

Tiberias was heavily afflicted by the 1948 war. A Zionist attack on Khirbat Nasr al-Din resulted in casualties. After the Muslim quarter had been shelled, the town fell to the Haganah on 18 April. After that, only a handful out of five thousand former Arab residents remained.<sup>23</sup> Depending on who is telling the story, the Arabs had been chased out (by the Jews) or had fled (urged by their own leaders). Five hundred homes were blown up to prevent any prospect of return. ‘Twerja’ became ‘the capital of Galilee, (...) the economic hub of the surrounding countryside. All inhabitants are Jewish, most of them immigrants.’<sup>24</sup>

With a few exceptions, Arab patients and staff members of the ‘Scotti’ had departed. Why persevere? Against all odds, the hospital survived. An unexpected new partner presented itself: the Dutch Reformed Church with its daring program of theological renewal, highlighting the importance of Israel for a proper understanding of the Bible. After the terrible experience of Hitler’s extermination policy, Jewish Mission had been abandoned by the DRC, though hopes persisted that Jews might accept Jesus by means of friendly dialogue. It came as a disappointment that hardly any of the surviving Jews in the Netherlands were interested in converting to Christianity. On the other hand, the young State of Israel welcomed Christian support. But there was a problem: it required cooperation with a church that was already established. Authorities decided that Christians had to content themselves with their existing holdings, which used to be quite large. If the DRC wanted to operate in Israel, it could only do so by joining the pre-existing Protestant organisations already located there.

Tiberias met the requirements, as the Scots shared a Calvinist background with the DRC. Both were members of the newly created World Council of Churches. A partnership was agreed upon in 1949. Jo Grolle, secretary of the DRC Council for Church and Israel, explained the proceedings:

It was immediately clear that [the Scots] were in financial trouble. Any effort in the young State of Israel was expensive. Meeting with the brethren in Edinburgh we found out that they were short of staff members and even shorter of cash. During the summer, a Scots delegation came over to the New Church in Amsterdam. We had invited missionary deputies of the Reformed Churches<sup>25</sup> as well (...). Without our support this work would founder. This splendid *ped à terre* in Israel would be lost to Protestantism.<sup>26</sup>

The Church of Scotland had been won over by the inclusion of the RCN, still actively committed to Jewish Mission. Israeli authorities, desperately short of funds, planned to deploy Christian doctors in their health care system. Grolle saw a unique opportunity: via the hospital in Tiberias he would be directly in touch with the Jewish community.

23 Ilan Pappé, *The ethnic cleansing of Palestine*, 92.

24 Zev Vilnay, *Israël*, 480.

25 Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN), established 1892 by two earlier secession movements from the DRC.

26 Retrospective in J.H. Grolle, ‘Zuster Augusta Steller’, *Kerk en Israël* November 1965, 9-10.

## Dialogue

Under German occupation, in 1942, two societies for Jewish Mission (the Dutch Society for Israel, and Elim) had been integrated into the DRC, under the auspices of the newly founded Council for Church and Israel. Koeno Gravemeijer, secretary of the General Synod, publicly condemned the Nazi persecution of the Jews. Interest in 'Church and Israel' was promoted by K.H. Miskotte, author of a much-admired dissertation on Jewish religion.<sup>27</sup> According to Miskotte, it was highly relevant that the Nazis were willing to compromise with Christians, but not with Jews. Hitler could safely ignore scholastics but felt threatened by the Old Testament. Like his theological mentor Karl Barth,<sup>28</sup> Miskotte recognized the existence of a community of God, encompassing both Christians and Jews.

The exhibit *Fundamentals and Perspectives of Believing* received synodal approval in 1949.<sup>29</sup> Much of the language sounded familiar, including the implication that the Jews had been subjected to divine judgement. Nor were missionary tenets entirely forgotten: 'The community of Jesus Christ is not fully established, nor the Kingdom of God fully revealed, until Israel, in times and ways known only to God, has been returned to the Messiah (...)' Still, the intention was innovative. Church and Israel would meet as equals, presenting their arguments in a mutual bid to win the other over. At the heart of the argument lay a premise of friendship. Israel was and remained a chosen people (art. 3), endowed with a living present and future (art. 17). Theologian Arnold van Ruler advised the application of a 'maieutic' or Socratic method. By questioning the Jews, the Church might assist them to discover the truth for themselves. For Van Ruler this obviously implied a Christian truth. However, this conclusion could not be enforced.<sup>30</sup>

It was the Jewish people the DRC intended to meet, not just a few select converts. Dialogue between Church and Israel found its way into the new Church Order of 1951.<sup>31</sup> Unlike Miskotte or Van Ruler, Jo Grolle had few intellectual pretensions. He preferred to translate the new DRC programme into positive action. Holland was hardly suited for that, considering the staggering death rate of Dutch Jews under German occupation. Jewish survivors had been baptized while in hiding, and custody of war orphans was granted to Christian foster parents after liberation. Bitterness toward this policy ran deep. The RCN Jewish Mission had immediately been reactivated after 1945, causing further aggravation. Therefore, Grolle had his sights on an alternative base of operations: Israel.<sup>32</sup>

27 Cf. S. Gerssen, *Het grote schisma*, Kampen 1975.

28 K. Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik* II (Die Lehre Gottes) 2, § 34 (Die Erwählung der Gemeinde), Zurich 1946<sup>2</sup>, 218 and 227.

29 *Fundamenten en Perspectieven van Belijden*. Presented by the General Synod of the DRC as a specimen of renewed Reformed confessing, The Hague 1949.

30 D. van Keulen (ed.), *Verzameld werk A.A. van Ruler* 2, 326, 385, 394, 399, 404 and 460.

31 *Church Order DRC*, The Hague 1951, article 8.1.

32 Hester Damman-Klees, 'Getuigend gesprek met Israël', 3-19.

The 'Scotti' had been plundered during the aftermath of the fighting in 1948. 'We desperately need help', admitted Reverend Clephane Macanna,<sup>33</sup> receiving an immediate reply from the DRC.<sup>34</sup> Grolle did his utmost to make a favourable impression in Scotland. Liberal DRC theologians like Abraham Kuenen (1828-1891) had never enjoyed much popularity there. Much to the horror of the Free Church of Scotland, Kuenen had analysed the Old Testament as a product of ancient Semitic culture.<sup>35</sup> Another difference related to the Jewish victory of 1948, which Grolle acclaimed as an act of providence. For Macanna this was hard to swallow. In the 'old' Tiberias community, the Scots had been engaged in interreligious encounters, but mostly with Muslims and Christian Arabs. George L.B. Sloan (1905-1947) had presided over the Near East Christian Council and had attempted to bring Zionists together with the emerging Arab middle class.<sup>36</sup> Until 1948 Tiberias fell into the category of 'mixed towns'.<sup>37</sup>

Grolle, on the other hand, focused mainly on the Jews. He hoped to resume Sloan's discussions with Shalom Ben-Chorin,<sup>38</sup> who shared his interest in Karl Barth. The connection between Israel and the Church was not linear (as in substitution theology) but dialectic.<sup>39</sup> Bernard Walker, who had succeeded the younger Torrance as director of the hospital, would have none of this dialectic approach. After serving in the RAF during the war, he had joined the Red Sea Mission in Aden. He expected a classic Calvinist profile. The Dutch were welcomed in the Scotti, to work for the common Reformed cause.<sup>40</sup>

Millet regulations still applied, which meant the Scots were under few restrictions within their own domain. Israeli patients with an interest in Christianity were stimulated to become 'secret believers'. A more radical step was baptism, the final goal of Jewish Mission. Grolle took it all in stride. He welcomed discussion, took an interest in secret believers, and believed that baptized Jews would be pivotal in the future dialogue of Church and Israel. He also became a staunch ally of the State of Israel, whatever the faith of its citizens.

Authorities remained wary about what was going on in the Scotti, but also pragmatic. For the time being, medical care remained the paramount concern. 'We were always free to talk about the Christian faith', says doctor Runa Mackay. 'We always prayed for patients in the theatre before operating.'<sup>41</sup>

33 Minutes International Missionary Council's Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews, London 20 July 1949, in LDC KEI inv.nr. 280.

34 J.H. Grolle, *Een volk op weg naar huis*, The Hague 1953.

35 Margaret Oliphant, *Jerusalem the holy city, its history and hope*, xiii.

36 Shalom Goldman, *Zeal for Zion*, 159.

37 Other 'mixed towns' were Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa and Safed. 'Purely Jewish': Tel Aviv, Petah Tikvah, Rehovoth, Rishon leZion and Ramat Gan. 'Purely Arab': Ramallah, Ramleh, Lydda, Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Bersheba, Hebron, Gaza, Majdal, Khan Junis, Nazareth, Nablus, Akko, Tulkarm, Jenin and Beisan. David Horowitz, 'Arab economy in Palestine', in J.B. Hobman (ed.), *Palestine's Economic Future*, London 1946, 63.

38 Cf. Schalom Ben-Chorin, *Mein Glaube – mein Schicksal*, 30 and 56.

39 *Fundamenten en Perspectieven van Belijden*, 37-38 (art. 17).

40 B.C. Walker to J.H. Grolle, Tiberias 12 April 1954, LDC KEI inv.nr. 281.

41 Runa Mackay, *Exile in Israel*, 29.

## Development

Life in Tiberias could be spartan.<sup>42</sup> Yet it was also a bustling place, driven by a forward-looking spirit. Few seemed to care about recent demographic changes. Arabs, Grolle used to say, belonged to the Muslim world in Syria or Lebanon. He presumed that they had left voluntarily, as described in *The story of modern Israel for young people*:

During the recent war, the old Arab population of about 3,000 fled the city, much to the surprise of their Jewish neighbours. The relationship had been good until that time.<sup>43</sup>

Lotte Eisenberg, owner of hotel Galil Kineret, had been on good terms with the Arabs in the old days. Now she considered them enemies.<sup>44</sup> Most of the Jewish newcomers were traumatized and penniless. They had other things to worry about than the fate of the former inhabitants. The Arab quarter had stood right in front of the Scotti, including the al-Tabari drugstore. Now the area looked like ‘a London bomb site’.<sup>45</sup> New housing blocks along the Golani and Palmach streets replaced the former al-Jalil hotel and other mementos of the past.<sup>46</sup> Mosques ‘just crumbled away’.<sup>47</sup> Worldwide numbers of refugees were immense: about 48 million in Europe, 31 million in Asia. Events in India, Pakistan and Korea swelled the numbers.<sup>48</sup> Under such circumstances, nostalgia made no sense. Neither did claims for compensation, as they did not stand a chance and could complicate a future peace settlement. Jewish migrants in Israel would most likely never return to Marrakech or Latvia, just as al-Kartabils and al-Tabari’s would never return to Tiberias.

There was a lot of building activity in Kiryat Shmuel (Qiryat Shemuel), where Ben-Gurion and Weizmann used to stay in the Eisenberg hotel. Along the shores of Lake Kinneret, rows of tents and barracks dotted the landscape: the *ma’abarot*.<sup>49</sup> Maternity care was assigned to the Scotti. About 90 per cent of the expenditure was paid for by the Israeli Ministry of Public Health, on the condition (hard to enforce) that no proselytization would take place. Though millet-autonomy prohibited an effective control of that ruling, the Israelis were showing great trust in the medical staff of the Scotti, even to the point of closing the maternity care in the Schweitzer-hospital.<sup>50</sup> However, the arrangements were intended for a transition period only,<sup>51</sup> as ‘all kibbutzim shunned the Christian mission.’<sup>52</sup>

42 Kai Bird, *Crossing Mandelbaum Gate*, 46.

43 Dorothy F. Zeligs, *The story of modern Israel for young people*, 125.

44 Lotte Eisenberg, *Meine Gäste*, 58–80.

45 K.M. Willcox, *Your guide to Israel*, 275.

46 Tiberias tour report 26 November 2011, <http://zochrot.org/en/content/tiberias>.

47 Interview Runa Mackay by author, Edinburgh 12 January 2015.

48 Cf. Paul Charles Merkley, *Christian attitudes towards the State of Israel*, 10.

49 Abba Eban, *Mijn land*, 80.

50 Since 2011 Arazim Apartment Hotel.

51 Minutes Joint Committee, Rotterdam 6 April 1955, in HUA archive Church and Israel RCN, inv.nr. 353.

52 Minutes Joint Committee, Edinburgh 16 May 1956, in HUA archive Church and Israel RCN, inv. nr. 353.

### Geopiety

The daily atmosphere in the town has been described as stoic. An alternative attitude could result from what has been described as ‘geopiety’.<sup>53</sup> For many Christians, it seemed as if Jesus still walked this part of the earth.<sup>54</sup> Such feelings were actively stimulated by the DRC. After a perceived absence during the years of darkness, God revealed His loving presence once more. Here, in the land of Israel, the divine presence made itself known. The idea was appealing, especially to those who had suffered so much during the war years:

The Jewish people, scattered among the peoples during the ages and persecuted by Hitler, finally received its State, its home of refuge.<sup>55</sup>

Removal of the Arabs had been necessary to make this possible, explained DRC theologian Theo Vriezen:

The transition from Arab to Jew implies a transition from an Eastern to a Western form of life, affecting the rhythm of life. There is a feverish urge to work hard. (...) We can positively affirm that great things have been achieved (...). No more whining and begging kids, or filth and stench, no more sleeping Arabs, and invalids in the streets, with all their signs of poverty, no more slums – much has changed for the good.<sup>56</sup>

It was an exciting time in Israel. Roy Kreider arrived in 1953 from the United States:

The morning haze that had partially obscured Haifa was slowly lifting. We could read the English words painted above the entrance to the Customs House: ‘Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord.’<sup>57</sup>

Another arrival was a young Dutch gynaecologist: Johan Pilon.

<sup>53</sup> Heleen Murre-van den Berg (ed.), *New Faith in Ancient Lands*, 10.

<sup>54</sup> J. van der Linden, *Het Heilige Land*, 86.

<sup>55</sup> Johan M. Snoek, *Joodse en Palestijnse tranen*, 51-52.

<sup>56</sup> Th.C. Vriezen, *Palestina en Israël*, 193. Vriezen would modify his views during later years. Cf. Bob Becking, ‘Sympathie, betrokkenheid en kritiek’, 179-192.

<sup>57</sup> Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 51.

## II ‘An Indian boy’

### The missionary background

A basic question in the story of Nes Ammim is why Protestants between 1850 and 1950 would have gone to such lengths in their efforts to convert Jews to their faith, only to reconsider during the second half of the twentieth century. It has become common for general overviews of Protestant history to portray Jewish Mission as a rather marginal phenomenon, that was quickly and effectively discarded after the Second World War. A more critical assessment can be found in Jewish historiography. For the Jews in Europe, America, and Palestine in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Protestant efforts to convert them to Christianity were anything but marginal. During this entire era, they were emphatically told that mission belonged to the core principles of the Protestant faith. If that were true, they wondered, how could it be reconsidered?

The State of Israel wanted to make sure that proselytization, in the form of ‘soul hunting’ came to an end within its jurisdiction. The idea was that Christians would respect the national laws on this score, like they had done before in China and Japan during the early modern era. But it was an open question how a Christian could stop being a missionary while still maintaining the basic tenets of his faith. In this sense, it was easier to accept a sensible orthodox Protestantism (refraining from more direct forms of mission because Israel compelled them to do so, but still hoping that the Jews would be won for Jesus Christ), than a ‘renewing’ Protestant theology that seemed to believe that the missionary command in the Gospel was open for interpretation. How could such a momentous change mean anything but a contradiction in itself? I intend to approach this complicated subject by focussing on the biography of one of the key members of Nes Ammim: Johan Jacob Pilon. He came from a missionary family and practised as a missionary doctor. In time he would come to endorse what seemed to be the opposite principle. In order to fully understand this principle change, it is important to first explore his background.

### Early years

Johan Jacob Pilon was born on 27 October 1917 in Temanggun (Java, Dutch Indies), where his father worked as an ophthalmologist in a Salvation Army Hospital. Their Huguenot ancestors had settled in Holland,<sup>1</sup> where they joined the 1834

1 P.R. van den Berg, *Pilon*; [www.genealogieonline.nl/stamboom-pilon](http://www.genealogieonline.nl/stamboom-pilon) by David Dirk Pilon.





Fig. 2 Marriage Johan and Stijn Pilon, Keizersgrachtkerk 1945 (L.J. Pilon and A. Owliaee, Hengelo).

Secession from the Dutch Reformed Church.<sup>2</sup> Johan's grandfather Tonke Jacobs Pilon studied theology<sup>3</sup> and became a minister. Oral tradition claims that it was a boring life. Drawn to adventure, he applied for a job in the Dutch Reformed Church in the Dutch Indies. Contrary to free church principles of the Secession, this institution was tightly controlled by the government. What counted for Tonke Jacobs Pilon was the opportunity for adventure, starting in 1890 in Banda and later in Bandjermasin on Borneo.<sup>4</sup>

The 'Secessionist vicar' became a 'civil servant, providing for the religious needs of Protestants in the Dutch Indies'.<sup>5</sup> He was a believer, but also restless, a wanderer: 'The State Church was no *Church*, in his opinion. Neither were the Secessionists. Nor the Kuyperians.'<sup>6</sup> The latter were adherents of Abraham Kuyper, who visited Tiberias. His followers joined the majority of Secessionists in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) in 1892.

Tonke's son Pieter Pilon studied medicine at the Amsterdam Municipal University. Though officially a member of the RCN, he preferred the meetings of the Pentecostal Church and may have been rebaptized there. In 1911 he went to Java to work for the Salatiga Mission, which was a private initiative.<sup>7</sup> It was here that he met Pauline van Alphen. Her mother was from Ceylon, her father was a missionary for the RCN in Sumba. Presumably, he arrived at the island in a native craft (a *prauw*) in 1881.<sup>8</sup>

2 J. Wesseling, *De Afscheiding van 1834 in Groningerland* 2, 114-115.

3 J. van Gelderen and F. Rozemond (eds.), *Gegevens*, 105 (nr. 220).

4 M.W.L. van Alphen jr. (ed.), *Nieuw Kerkelijk Handboek*, Gouda 1901, 395.

5 Jan Roelf Berend Jakobus Tonke (Tonke) Pilon to J.G. Geelkerken, Soestdijk 26 October 1953, HDC VU, archive J.G. Geelkerken, box 54. J.R.B.J.T. Pilon (1881-1961), uncle of Johan Pilon, survived a Japanese camp and repatriated after Indonesian independence. I would like to thank Dr Maarten Aalders (Amstelveen) for drawing my attention to this correspondence.

6 Jan Roelf Berend Jakobus Tonke (Tonke) Pilon to J.G. Geelkerken, Soestdijk 3 September 1953, HDC VU, archive J.G. Geelkerken, box 54.

7 Cees van der Laan, *Moesje Alt*, 81.

8 Jac.B. Looijen, 'In Memoriam Johan Pilon', *Ter Herkenning* September 1975.

Pieter and Pauline married in Purwodadi (regency Grobogan). They had five children: Jennigje<sup>9</sup> in Temanggung in 1916; Johan also in Temanggung in 1917; Tonke in Blitar in 1919; Pieter (Piet) in Trenggiling in 1920; and Pauline (Paulie), born during sabbatical in Holland in 1922. All attended a native missionary school in Garut. Happy days; the children were fond of swimming in the rivers.<sup>10</sup> Soon they became fluent in Javanese and Sundanese, their character forming within the cultural context of Asia.<sup>11</sup> All this came to an end when the parents decided to send them to Holland to live with an aunt in Heemstede.<sup>12</sup> Pauline Pilon-van Alphen saw her children off, saying that they would meet again in five years.<sup>13</sup>

Johan had started his secondary education in Bandung. It was hard to adapt to the strict atmosphere of the Christian Grammar School in Haarlem. He remained an 'Indian boy': fond of warm summers and an outdoor life, often late for appointments and yet a hard worker; slow speaker and as an adult seldom seen without his pipe. Annebiene Pilon says that Indonesia had made a lasting impact on her father:

Java was in his soul. His constant being late related to his perception of time: there was only the now. He was inclined to act slowly and carefully.<sup>14</sup>

'A special man', says Max Laron in Israel:

It was no coincidence that Johan followed a medical career and that patients loved him. As a practical Christian, he cared for the body and soul.<sup>15</sup>

Piet Pilon describes his brother as a busy man, and a voracious reader too.<sup>16</sup> Johan entered the Municipal University of Amsterdam to study medicine in 1935, followed by his brother Tonke. Johan's aim was to become a missionary doctor. J.H. Bavinck, professor at the Free University, acted as his advisor in this field.<sup>17</sup>

## War

Though Dutch national pride was a standard element in the curriculum, it hardly stood up against reality. The country was impoverished, hard hit by unemployment and public discontent. Once under attack in May 1940, Dutch defences collapsed within days. Johan and Tonke both served in the medical staff of the army, resuming their studies after surrender. At first it seemed as if the Germans would

9 Jennigje Pilon went on to work as a nurse in Amsterdam. She lies buried in Nes Ammim, where she arrived on a one-way ticket when she was already terminally ill.

10 Interview Leonard Jacob Pilon and Azadeh Owliaee by author, Hengelo 6 March 2015.

11 Television interview Johan Pilon by Jan van Hillo, 'Onder vier ogen' (NCRV, April 1964).

12 Joke Lam, 'Indië en de Nederlanden', 136 ([laventana.nl/uploads/kalf\\_in\\_het\\_kozijn](http://laventana.nl/uploads/kalf_in_het_kozijn)).

13 Interview Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 15 May 2020.

14 Interviews Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013, and 15 May 2020. 'He had a feeling that he somehow possessed a paranormal gift, but immediately added that he would need at least a week to retrieve it.'

15 Max Laron, 'Herdenking van het overlijden van Johan Pilon', Regba 1975, in archive Machteld de Goederen, Amersfoort.

16 P. Pilon to J. and S. Pilon, Rotterdam 1 January 1956, ANAN.

17 Television interview Johan Pilon, NCRV April 1964.

pursue a lenient policy. What followed was a regime of terror, culminating in the segregation, dispossession, and deportation of more than one hundred thousand Jewish citizens. In later years Johan Pilon would blame himself as a bystander. Even so, in his capacity of chairman of the student club S.E.S.A.M. (affiliated to the Societas Studiosorum Reformatorum SSR), he had been actively engaged in clandestine activities.

Rather than accepting the removal of Jews from the official student corpora, S.E.S.A.M. went 'underground'. Members came together in the cellars under the Keizersgracht-church (RCN). 'Student resistance in SSR was motivated and led by *amice* Pilon.' The so-called *mensa pilonica* helped to circulate a clandestine paper, *De Geus*. In the meantime, the Far East was taken over by Japan (1942). Europeans, including the parents and grandfather of Johan Pilon, were locked up in internment camps.

The Municipal University of Amsterdam seemed more intent on its own survival, than on aiding victims of Nazi policy. Churches showed some more spirit. Protests were read from the pulpit in the Keizersgracht-church. However, when a declaration of loyalty to the occupier was required, many students hesitated. The Nazis assigned the Colonial Institute as the place where they were required to sign this declaration. Pilon patrolled the Linnaeus Street, 'in the mist', urging those on their way to the Institute to make off.<sup>18</sup>

He went into hiding, and could not be traced by the authorities.<sup>19</sup> To his relief, this did not imply the end of medical training. Hospitals and first aid-stations, desperately short of staff, asked few questions when 'non-signing' students presented themselves. Hospital papers often kept them from harm during *razzia*'s, as the Germans were keenly aware of the importance of a functioning health care. Once, Pilon got arrested in Haarlem, only to be released the next day. Others were not so lucky. After the disclosure of a weapon arsenal under the Keizersgracht-church, sexton Sieberen van der Baan and reverend Taeke Ferwerda were executed on the spot.<sup>20</sup> S.E.S.A.M.-member Wim Speelman, head of distribution of the illegal paper *Trouw*, met the same fate.<sup>21</sup> Comparing himself to these men Johan Pilon qualified his own acts of resistance as 'small stuff'. Nonetheless, memories of this time would remain with him for the rest of his life.<sup>22</sup> Van der Baan's widow would eventually visit him in Nes Ammim.<sup>23</sup>

18 A. Kok and A.J. van Dijk, 'S.E.S.A.M.', [www.iodesesam.nl](http://www.iodesesam.nl).

19 Erich M. Lehmann, 'Der Vater von Nes-Amim. Dr. Johan Pilon', cutting from *Jediot Chadasjot* (ca. 1967), in ANAN. Previously the Pilon brothers had stayed with the Schiltmeijer family, details unknown.

20 B. Wielenga, *O sieraad Israëls*, Amsterdam 1945.

21 Gert van Klinken, 'Johan Pilon', 227-228.

22 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 7 February 2013.

23 M.A. van der Baan-de Jong. As granddaughter Joke Baars related to author, 9 April 2015: 'Grandma hardly ever spoke about wartime events. Intuitively we assumed that it was better not to ask.'

## 'Keeping secrets'

In 2014 Clasina (Ina) Isings (1919–2018) shared her memories of their first meeting.<sup>24</sup> She sat for the exams of 1943, unaware of the whereabouts of her father, illustrator Johan Isings, who was on the run after having been reported for assisting Jews. Ina stayed with the family of her school friend Sofia Maria (Fie) Oosten in Amsterdam. The Oosten's home was also where Johan and Tonke Pilon had gone into hiding.

Fie's father, Hendrik Jan Oosten, fell in defence of his country in 1940. In daily life he had managed the Kirberger and Kesper bookshop on the Rokin (now: Oude Turfmarkt) 153, specialising in English literature. His family still lived upstairs. Hotel de l'Europe, at the opposite side of the street, had been requisitioned by the *Luftgau Kommando Holland* – German presence was a daily reality.<sup>25</sup> Fie became engaged to Tonke Pilon. Johan courted a pretty nurse, Stijn Wentholt. 'Sometimes the brothers miraculously purchased red peppers in the Albert Cuyp-market, showing their girlfriends how to prepare sambal.' Services in the Keizersgracht-church were faithfully attended. Johan and Tonke used their hospital papers to move through the city. Medical jobs also provided them with some sort of income. Ina Isings recalls the atmosphere in 1944:

The Jewish quarter was a few blocks away. It was a ghastly sight, the empty houses looked like skeletons. Houses were turned over to use the wood for fuel.

'Mad Tuesday', 5 September, brought chaos. Allied troops were expected any moment. Collaborators thronged to the Central Station on their way to reach Germany. A shipping company at Munt-square hoisted the Dutch flag, only to have it torn down by the Wehrmacht. Officers in Hotel de l'Europe fired warning shots, shattering the Oosten family's bay window. Ina Isings:

I liked Johan for his social character and discretion. I could not help but notice his illegal activities. But he would never comment on that; never. I have no clear memories of his fiancée. They had met during one of Fie's birthday parties, she and Stijn being friends. Stijn kept to the background, a nice, good-looking girl. It was all very decent, no living together before marriage. What amazed us, then, was that Johan chose a Roman-Catholic partner.

In 1944 members of the Reformed branch of Protestantism had a falling out among themselves over dogmatic issues, with the Free Reformed Churches breaking away. The Pilon brothers remained loyal to the RCN. The winter brought an ordeal of terror and hunger in its wake:

The blacked-out city at night was both terrifying and hauntingly beautiful. I still see a full moon, rising over silent snow-clad roofs. A dangerous place, even for drunken soldiers who had lost their way in the dark. *Hilfe*, someone cried, but we respected *Sperrzeit* and did not come to the rescue. Next morning, a body was dragged from the Amstel River. Hard times for civilians too. Lack of relations or strength to forage in the countryside could be fatal. Young people were adaptive. With the Oostens and Pilon I celebrated the arrival of the year 1945. Piet Pilon read poems by Slauerhoff to us.

<sup>24</sup> Interview C. Isings by author, Soest 13 August 2014.

<sup>25</sup> Bianca Stigter, *De bezette stad*, 87.

Ina wondered how the Pilon's coped with the fact that they were completely cut-off from Indonesia:

They never ceased to long for it. Jennigje worked in the former Juliana-hospital (renamed by the Germans), Pauline in the Binnen-Gasthuis. Piet had symptoms of schizophrenia and was taken to the Valerius clinic. He recovered and would work for the Chamber of Commerce after the war. Being cut off from the Indies defined their lives. It came too early. Dad and mom and the babus were at home. In Holland they were on their own. They had not heard from their parents. Since 1942; not a single message.

On 10 January 1945 Johan Pilon married Christine Maria Lieuwke (Stijn, or 'Stijn-nie') Wentholt (1922-2002). The civil marriage was followed by a consecration in the Keizersgracht-church, where Ferwerda and Van der Baan had been shot a few months before. Guests left when an armed patrol arrived at the scene, though the Germans were primarily interested in requisitioning any bicycles.<sup>26</sup> Stijn hailed from Zwolle, where her father had been a butcher and salesman.<sup>27</sup> She remembered visits to an uncle who served as a parish priest in Kampen.<sup>28</sup> But according to her son Allaert, she rarely spoke about her early years:

It seemed that my grandfather went bust during the economic crisis of the thirties. My mother did not look back with any nostalgia.<sup>29</sup>

Johan and Stijn found an attic at the Oudezijds Voorburgwal in Amsterdam, where the young husband used bait tied to a rope to catch a gull for supper. 'He was a hunter.'<sup>30</sup> After liberation, Johan was able to resume his quest to become a doctor and soon took his medical exams. Medical exams followed, after liberation. By then Johan had heard that his mother, 'Moes', had died on 26 March in camp Halmaheira near Semarang.<sup>31</sup> His father survived, but his remaining grandfather had died in Bandung on 4 April 1943.<sup>32</sup> How Johan reacted has not been recorded, but there is little doubt that he wanted to return to Indonesia as soon as possible after the Japanese capitulation. This was a serious undertaking: he signed a contract with the RCN for no less than six years. On 5 October 1945 Bavinck gave the affidavit: 'Appointed to medical missionary service in South Middle-Java: J.J. Pilon in Amsterdam.'<sup>33</sup> The problem was that the area had already been taken over by Sukarno's Republic, rendering this assignment untenable. An alternative position was found in a public hospital on the island of Celebes in Makassar in a part of Java that remained under Dutch control.

26 Christine (Stijn) Pilon, 'The years before Nes Ammim', 13.

27 Historisch Centrum Overijssel (HCO), civil register 1860-1940, family Herman Johannes Maria Wentholt and Johanna Angelina Holterman.

28 Wilhelmus Leo Maria Wentholt (1868-1933) served the Our Lady (Buiten-) Church, as told by Stijn Pilon to Jaap van Gelderen, church historian in Kampen (personal communication to author).

29 Interview Allaert Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

30 Personal communication Allaert Pilon, Bilthoven 12 October 2016.

31 Interview Allaert, Richard, Christine (Stiene) and Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 9 March 2012.

32 <http://gw.geneanet.org/davepilon>.

33 Acknowledgement by J.H. Bavinck and missionary director B. Richters, Bussum 5 October 1945, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

Army-chaplain Arie Bikker belonged to the Christian Reformed Churches (CRC), one of several denominations that had originated from the 1834 Secession. Bikker enquired whether Pilon might be interested in the CRC-hospital in Mamasa, also on Celebes. The compound had been hastily patched up. With seventeen years of experience, Bikker knew his business. Sem Bombong, a Toraja, served as the local pastor in Mamasa. Scheduled to return to the Netherlands in 1946, Bikker tried to ensure that the work would continue by maintaining a certified doctor. A recording was made for donors in Holland: *Toraja sing the praise of God*.<sup>34</sup>

Denominational differences did not bother Johan Pilon. Nor did they bother Bikker, who recommended him for the job: 'Very favourable impression. A quiet young fellow. His wife, still in the Netherlands, has booked the next sailing of the passenger ship *Oranje*'.<sup>35</sup> The missionary departments of RCN and CRC also agreed. Formalities being concluded, Pilon headed out for Makale-Rantepao (Celebes) in June 1946.<sup>36</sup> Part of the duties of the residing doctor in Mamasa was to visit the districts of Tawalian, Orabua and Osango, together with villages of Oelusalu, Pana, Nossu and Tabone.

### Mamasa

Animism was still common among the Toraja. Mamasa is 1200 meters above sea level, on the lower slopes of the Mambuling mountains. As part of efforts by the Dutch Indies government to provide medical care to the outliers of the archipelago, maintaining the hospital had been entrusted to the CRC. After years of neglect, the buildings were in terrible condition. Organisational skills, 'golden hands' and robust health were essential for the local doctor. On arrival, Stijn found the heat stifling. Johan ensured her that it would be cooler in the mountains. He was twenty-nine, she twenty-four. On 26 September 1946 they were formally greeted by *guru* Bombong and the Dutch assistant-resident. Johan addressed the villagers in Malaysian, while Bombong translated into Toraja. The next day, he took off on horseback for an inspection of the outlying areas. Matassak, *parenge* in Oeraboea, had died. Sounds of death drums carried the news to outlying villages. Matassak had been a chief, or what the Dutch government preferred to call 'district administrator'. Though nominally Christian, Matassak had lapsed into his ancestral beliefs during Japanese rule. To the indignation of Bombong, it was decided that he would receive an Animist funeral.

The hospital was staffed by a head mantri (from Menado), an assistant (from Amboina), three young Toraja in training and an Ambonese nurse. A cook, a laundryman, nannies, and domestic servants lived in the compound. Their garden was tended by 'a prison inmate: an old easy-going Toraja serving time after ne-

<sup>34</sup> Collection Beit Pilon, Nes Ammim.

<sup>35</sup> A. Bikker to missionary deputies CRC, Makassar 26 June 1946, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

<sup>36</sup> J. Hovius (missionary deputies CRC) to J.J. Pilon, Zwolle 2 November 1946, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296. Salary partly by CRC and partly by the Dutch government.

glecting the difference between mine and thine'.<sup>37</sup> Pilon liked working in the clinic, but also liked to mend roofs, assist in the village school and to tour the district. He would assist Bombong in church, plead for funds with donors in Holland, and perform as a lay preacher (*pana kebaktian*). Stijn had taken up nursing duties and was learning Malaysian. Even though food was grown locally, there was still scarcity and food had to be rationed.<sup>38</sup>

Johan respected the army for its efforts to stop looting and public violence. Colonialism still offered some benefits: security, education, medical care and – for those who were willing to accept it – Christianity. But for how long? Casualties were mounting. 'Now that the Javanese have landed here, the Buginese have changed sides. Rumours about gang activities abound.' Christianity was far from secure:

Under Japanese rule the Toraja said: the Belandas have gone, they have lost. Their religion was not strong enough to protect them, so let us return to our ancestral ways.<sup>39</sup>

There was no way to predict how things would develop:

The Toraja lands are still quiet, due to their remoteness and the fact that only a few administrators and missionaries ever settled here. A revolt would make no sense, given the absence of effective colonial rule. The few Europeans have delivered more than they ever took.<sup>40</sup>

The lintel over the door of the Beatrix-church bore the inscription *la melepas-kan kaoemnja dari pada segala dosanja* ('He will save his people from their sins', Matthew 1:21). The doctor's family lived downhill from the church, increasingly aware of an impending crisis.<sup>41</sup> By the end of 1946, Republican forces from Java had become established on the coast. They organised local paramilitaries, the feared 'rampokkers'. In response, Dutch authorities requested the Toraja to pledge their loyalty to Queen Wilhelmina under oath. The ceremony in Mamasa was concluded by the formal sacrifice of a buffalo, slaughtered in front of the doctor's house.<sup>42</sup> The Toraja's willingness to pledge such loyalty was partially due to their dependence on the hospital in being a self-supporting community. Even rooftiles were produced locally and by hand.<sup>43</sup>

In what looked like an unspoiled Arcadia, conflicts between Javanese, Buginese, Dutch and Toraja were becoming a bitter reality.<sup>44</sup> Pilon continued his trips on horseback, by car and canoe (*prauw*).<sup>45</sup> Decades later in Israel, he would demon-

37 J.J. Pilon to J. van Dalen, Mamasa 30 December 1946, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296. A mantri is a supervisor (Malay).

38 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Mamasa 30 September 1946, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

39 J.J. Pilon to J. van Dalen, Mamasa 30 December 1946, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296. Belandas: the Dutch.

40 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Mamasa 12 November 1946, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

41 Formerly the home of the Menadonese doctor B.F. Rotti and reverend A.C. Noort. Cf. A. Bikker, 'In vogelvlucht', in *Uw Koninkrijk Kome. Maandblad uitgegeven door de zedingsdeputaten der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* August 1958, 10-20.

42 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Mamasa 4 November 1946, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

43 *Yearbook CRC* 1968, 187.

44 A. Bikker, 'De Kota Mamasa', in *Missionary calendar CRC*, Dordrecht 1959.

45 Interview Allaert, Richard, Christine and Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 11 December 2012.

strate how to dodge flying bullets while driving his car – a trick he had learned in Celebes.<sup>46</sup>

Pieter Johan Jacob Pilon was born on 17 July 1947. A few months later, Stijn had to undergo a ‘nasty surgery’ on her thyroid gland, with hardly any anaesthesia. Sensing ‘the fragility of life’, it was her aim to become mentally stronger:

The pulse of life is all around us: both confusing, joyful, and sad. Often it seems as if God is absent.<sup>47</sup>

Her husband was away, out in the jungle:

16 September 1948. In the afternoon, went to Kurawak via the *kampongs* Patondokan and Durian. Was received by the *tobara* (*adat*-figure, who sees to traditional dispensation of justice), in full dress with red headgear and embroidered clothing. Also present was the *to doti*, or medicine man, wearing a red feather in his headscarf as a marker of his status and fame for his *ilmu* (magic spells). The village had twenty cases of frambusia-symptoms such as belah and bubul, ulcers, and a specimen of scrofuloderma. There was also widespread malaria.

After polyclinic, there was an impossible bush road to Sendana. Had to walk most of the way, pulling the horses in my wake. Across fallen boulders, through swamps, cutting my way through *rotan* by using a machete. Late in the afternoon bivouac in the bush, a hut of leaves and sprigs was ready in less than a few minutes.<sup>48</sup>

Allaert Constantijn (Allaert) Pilon was born in January 1949. Stijn would have preferred a safer place for her boys. Later in life, her eldest son would say that his mother’s somewhat reserved character had formed in Mamasa. Yet her being there was pivotal for the family. Pieter remembered his panic as a child when she left for even a few days to visit a friend in Makassar.<sup>49</sup>

That same year, Indonesia became an independent State. Better so, Johan remarked: ‘Independence is normal. (...) We missionary workers have never posed as colonial rulers.’<sup>50</sup> Yet this transition was not without problems. Somarogong hospital, halfway between Mamasa and the coast, fell victim to arsonists. The Pilon family went on leave in Holland, moving in with Stijn’s widowed mother in Maasniel. It was there that they received the message that Sem Bombong had been shot. Stijn wrote to the Bikker family:

Poor Bombong, in his white gym shoes in the grass! Only now do I fully appreciate how dear he was to us. Johan was devastated when he heard. Memories kept popping up.<sup>51</sup>

Johan went to Batavia, now Djakarta. Efforts to return to Mamasa came to naught. The compound, including his medical library, had been looted. Stijn confided to the Bikker family that her husband wondered what to do next. Should he go to Maasniel? Her response was that the decision was for him to make.<sup>52</sup> His ad-

46 Interview Thomas Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

47 S. Pilon-Wentholt to F. Bikker, Mamasa 19 November 1947, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

48 J.J. Pilon, report of a medical tour in the Kalumpang area September 1948, HUA archive CRC, inv. nr. 296.

49 As Machteld de Goederen remembered, after having spoken to Pieter Pilon in his parental home in Nes Ammim in 2002 (telephone conversation, Amersfoort 1 September 2013).

50 J.J. Pilon to RCN, Mamasa 29 March 1949, copy in HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

51 S. Pilon-Wentholt to A. and F. Bikker, Maasniel 2 June 1950, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

52 S. Pilon-Wentholt to Bikker family, Maasniel 7 July 1950, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.



venturous spirit had set them on a path that lifted their lives out of the ordinary. She was willing to accept that:

This evening I wrote a long letter to Johan. Judging by his letters it seems that he might repatriate because of us. I now advised him to decide on Indonesia regardless of family considerations.

Of course, I would enjoy having him back. And yet it is my feeling that we should not interfere with his conclusions. The boys are quite young and can make do for a while without him. Of course, that will be hard. But for the moment he is not indispensable at home.<sup>53</sup>

Johan became a physician in the Dutch hospital in Makassar, only to find out that Indonesian authorities intended to replace European staff as soon as possible. Repatriation became inevitable. 'Quite a move', commented Stijn. 'He is so dedicated. It will be hard to start all over again.'<sup>54</sup> Reunited with his family in November 1950, his first idea was to negotiate a renewed posting in Indonesia. Stijn 'would agree, if the situation would calm down a bit, considering the kids'.<sup>55</sup> For the time being, Johan had to content himself as a temporary family doctor in Gorinchem: 'Meaning: visits to patients who mostly are afflicted by flu or measles.'<sup>56</sup>

### An offer from Edinburgh

There was another State that had won independence: Israel, recognized *de iure* by the Netherlands on 16 January 1950.<sup>57</sup> Opening moves had been cautious: 'Dutch entrepreneurs did not want to put their interests in the Arab countries at risk. The Israeli market was hardly attractive, the population small, infrastructure mediocre. (...) Israelis were equally uninterested in Holland.'<sup>58</sup>

Jo Grolle, secretary of the DRC Council for Church and Israel, thought otherwise, using his press connections to reignite the passion for the Holy Land.<sup>59</sup> Johan Pilon felt that the country was somehow familiar. The offer to come to Tiberias was accepted immediately, without even consulting Stijn.<sup>60</sup> The story became part of family lore:

Holland did not feel natural to him anymore. The initial idea was to go to Congo. Uncle Tonke mentioned him to the Scots. Johan accepted their invitation on the spot. Mother reacted without any obvious enthusiasm. After Indonesia she was beginning to enjoy a 'normal' existence in Holland, shopping and chatting with friends around the corner.<sup>61</sup>

53 S. Pilon-Wentholt to Bikker family, Maasniel 18 April 1950, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

54 S. Pilon-Wentholt to Bikker family, Maasniel 12 September 1950, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

55 S. Pilon-Wentholt to Bikker family, Maasniel 24 January 1951, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

56 J.J. Pilon to Bikker family, Gorinchem 12 February 1951, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

57 'De facto' recognition had been decided on 29 January 1949. Cf. Peter Malcontent, *Nederland, Israël en Palestina*, 51.

58 Edgar Senne, *Een korte geschiedenis van de staat Israël en zijn betrekkingen met Nederland*, 96.

59 Josephie Brefeld, *Jerusalem pilgrimage*, Hilversum 1994, 71.

60 Interview Allaert, Richard, Christine and Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 9 March 2012.

61 Interview Allaert Pilon by author, Haarlem 13 April 2013. Tonke Pilon accepted a position in *Sonnevanck* sanatorium in Harderwijk.

They both had reasons to go, however, apart from 'geopiety'. Their Mamasa correspondence shows how Johan and Stijn appreciated the need of self-defence. A person that would not strike back when under attack would meet the same fate as Johan's mother or Sem Bombong. It explains why they felt attracted to Israel, where a persecuted people had stood up against fate. It also fitted their perception of decolonisation. Local churches in Israel needed help, in order to be able to stand on their own after becoming independent from Europe.<sup>62</sup> Though Stijn had some doubts on that score: 'Christianity over here', she had written from Mamasa, 'is as dead as a dry old stick.'<sup>63</sup>

Johan had been raised with missionary idealism. Matthew 28:19 provided the *locus classicus*: 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' Mamasa had already demonstrated the difficulty of the task to him: 'Many [Toraja] were baptized, without being born-again.'<sup>64</sup> Whether personal conviction could be changed by missionary action seemed questionable. The alternative was to show Christian mettle by other means: medical care, construction, education. 'Without forcing ourselves on the other.'<sup>65</sup>

Purposeful action required conviction. That is what Johan liked in the dogmatic strictness of the RCN. As he wrote to Bikker: 'DCR members tend to be weaker and looser in dogma. (...) We should guard against a thinning of our beliefs.' He remembered the Keizersgracht church only too well: 'Our Reformed heritage was born out of struggle.'<sup>66</sup> It is unclear whether he was already aware of the ideas that were being developed by the DRC, especially the new Church Order that included dialogue of Church and Israel.<sup>67</sup> The RCN boldly continued with Jewish Mission, to the indignation of the remaining Jews in the Netherlands.

Protestant convictions would be tested in Israel. According to the census taken in 1950, the country had 1,029,000 Jewish inhabitants, compared to a remaining 150,000 Arabs (Druzes included).<sup>68</sup> A staggering 350,000 Jews were Holocaust survivors from Europe. Their experience echoed the poetry of Aaron David Gordon (1856-1922): Eretz Israel was about healing the soul. Operation 'Flying Carpet' relocated 49,000 Yemenite Jews to Israel, and operation 'Ezra and Nehemiah' almost the entire Jewish population of Iraq. In 1951, close to 100,000 Ashkenazy Jews from Poland and 120,000 from Romania were brought to Israel. Sephardi Jews arrived from North Africa, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya. They would need homes and jobs, but above all, a new purpose and identity.<sup>69</sup>

Grolle encouraged his fellow Protestants to meet the reborn Jewish people in their homeland and provided Tiberias as a base to do so.<sup>70</sup> Augusta 'Gussie' Steller

62 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Mamasa 28 June 1947, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

63 S. Pilon-Wentholt to F. Bikker, Mamasa 19 November 1947, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

64 J.J. Pilon to J. van Dalen, Mamasa 30 December 1946, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

65 J.J. Pilon to Public Health Service Batavia, Mamasa 28 March 1949, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

66 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Mamasa 28 June 1947, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

67 *Church Order DRC*, The Hague 1951, art. 8.1, 5.

68 Martin Gilbert, *Israel. A history*, 344.

69 Abba Eban, *Mijn land*, 75-77.

70 Minutes DRC Council and deputies Jewish Mission RCN, Amsterdam 20 October 1949, LDC CI, inv.nr. 280.

belonged to those who answered the call. With a background in Indonesia (Surabaya), she believed that prophecies were being fulfilled in the Jewish State. Despite a condition of rheumatism, she became a nurse in the Scotti, 'a warm love for Israel in her heart'. 'For the promises of the Father are not invalid; if that were not the case, I would leave immediately.'<sup>71</sup> Pilon was about to join the staff as head gynaecologist. Confirmation arrived from Edinburgh on 21 May 1951:

This is to certify that Dr. J.J. Pilon, Gebroeklaan 38, Maasniel, Holland, has been appointed a member on the staff of the Church of Scotland Hospital, Tiberias, Israel. As this hospital is working with the Israeli Department of Health and undertaking midwifery work in Northern Galilee, and as Dr. Pilon is urgently required to replace Dr. M. Aitken, who is returning to Scotland, it is requested that every priority should be given to the application for a visa for himself, his wife and family.<sup>72</sup>

The necessary papers duly arrived from the Immigration Department.<sup>73</sup> This was no minor gesture, as most missionaries had to content themselves with a tourist visa. A notification was sent to the Dutch envoy in West-Jerusalem. While Tel Aviv was the location of the representation of most foreign embassies (Jerusalem having been assigned international status by the UN), Holland had moved its representation to the city that had been claimed by Israel as its capital in 1950.<sup>74</sup>

### Beth Cholim Scotti

'Mamasa remains dearest to our hearts. We still sing the *Tanah Toraja*.'<sup>75</sup> The Pilon family initially intended to remain in Tiberias, with its 'brown and yellow hills', for a limited span of time.<sup>76</sup> There was much to do. No less than 15,000 mostly Jewish children would be delivered at the maternity in the years to come,<sup>77</sup> the expense being covered by Kupat Cholim (National Health Insurance). Fellow Protestants in Nazareth expressed concern about implied State supervision.<sup>78</sup> There was an average of seven deliveries per day in a distinctly Victorian setting. Stately mansions like Lake View, Yakfie and Ford House surrounded the main building. 'The leaning tower' dated from Ottoman times, and the beach carried the grand name of The Lido. Until 1948 waterplanes had alighted at the pier, on their way to British East-Africa.<sup>79</sup>

Once an Israeli patient showed any interest in Jesus, he could be assured of receiving visits by a clergyman. However, 'this is not the only opportunity to draw attention to the Gospel', as Pilon reported to Bikker. He liked to sit down with

71 A. Steller to J.H. Grolle, Tiberias 11 June 1952, LDC CI, inv.nr. 281.

72 R. Clephane Macanna joint secretary of the Overseas Department of the Church of Scotland, letter of appointment J.J. Pilon, Edinburgh 21 May 1951, in archive Johan Pilon, Haarlem (AJP).

73 A. Malchi (Ministry of Health) to H.W. Torrance, Jerusalem 15 July 1951, in AJP.

74 J.A. Nederbragt, *Jeruzalem indien ik u vergete ...*, The Hague 1953.

75 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Tiberias 22 November 1951, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

76 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Tiberias 22 November 1951, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

77 J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël* 1, 449.

78 J. Tester to H. Leslie Kirkley, Nazareth 13 March 1958, in: BA Oxfam archives PRF box 388.

79 Cf. Lotte Eisenberg, *Meine Gäste*, 58.

people after work and simply talk. Grolle had been right to note that Israel offered better opportunities for ‘that kind of conversation’ than Holland. ‘The Jew in Israel represents a different type than his counterpart in the Old World, more open-minded.’<sup>80</sup> Something ‘great’ was happening here. Up until this point, all that Pilon had seen of Jewish history was death and destruction. Here it was different. The Galilee of playwright Shalom Asch aroused feelings not unlike his own passion for Indonesia:

*Schlicht ist das Volk des Galil wie die Palme und die Zypresse, die auf seinem Felde stehen. Es lebt von Saat und Ernte; auch seinen Gott kennt es vom Felde her, das seine Arbeit ist.*<sup>81</sup>

Kitsch? Perhaps. Even so, these words had been printed in Berlin in 1935, lighting sparks of hope. Faith held the potential to change reality – that is to say, for the strong. According to Pilon the Sephardi had more difficulty adapting than the Ashkenazim:

Half of our patients hail from the East: Iraq, Iran, Yemen, etc. Primitive fellows, I noted a woman using her fingers to eat her meal, not knowing how to use a fork or spoon! Although they wear shoes now, supplied by the immigration authorities, they treat them as if they were slippers. The maximum level of immigration has been reached and there are plans to limit the influx.

He became fascinated by the people in the ma‘abarot. Not by the poor wretches who provided regular customers for the missionaries, but by those ‘who know how to till the land’. And especially the fighters, who knew how to defend themselves:

This land is pacified, and secular. Quite an uncommon situation for a country in the East.<sup>82</sup>

Pilon was impressed, yet irritated as well. As soon as he left the compound, he felt like a stranger in a Jewish town. Supervision by Israeli authorities remained difficult to accept:

The fact that we are partly regulated by the government is hard to overcome. Apart from strictly medical work, activities are few. If things remain in their present state, it makes no sense to carry on.<sup>83</sup>

How to proceed? An inspiration was provided by Grolle, who liked to spend time in Tiberias where he finished his book on the Jewish State: *A people returns home*.<sup>84</sup> It was not individual salvation that mattered, but rather the living faith community. Denying a basic tenet of Jewish Mission, regeneration had little to do with an egotistic desire of being admitted to heaven after death. What mattered was God’s plan for the world, working on a blueprint in the Old Testament. Johan listened with attention. His original wish, ‘that Christianity may come to this country’, was about to be overtaken by a wider view. Jews and Christians held the

80 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Tiberias 22 November 1951, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

81 Schalom Asch, ‘Die Galiläer’, 18.

82 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Tiberias 22 November 1951, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

83 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Tiberias 22 November 1951, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

84 J.H. Grolle, *Een volk keert terug naar huis*, The Hague 1953.

Old Testament in common. Their task was to work together, to develop Biblical 'basic principles' for a new society.<sup>85</sup>

Being 'born again' represented a classic Protestant aspiration. In the Zionist version this aim became linked to a land and a people. Dialogue, as propagated by the DRC, opened a way for non-Jews to participate. The famous Martin Buber seemed to welcome the idea – on the condition that the Church gave up her pretences to be the new Israel:

Surely Calvin understood the importance of the Israelis as a chosen people and a theocratic example. However, his appreciation was limited to Biblical times. (...) The Christian eye failed to notice the continuity between the State of Israel and Judaism.<sup>86</sup>

DRC innovators emphasized that the Church descended from a Jewish community; it was a daughter of Israel. Grolle noted the divine sparks that according to rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Kook became reassembled as the Jewish people returned to the land; the beginning of the redemption (*atchalta d'geulah*). The Second Coming might follow the gathering of the exiles (*kibbutz galuyot*) as prophesied by Ezekiel.<sup>87</sup> Mystical experience and social action were mutually supporting.

People in the ma'abarot showed how it worked. As a Dutchman driven out from the Indies and looking for a new home, Pilon identified with them. His Huguenot forefathers had been refugees, settling in new worlds by virtue of faith and hard work.<sup>88</sup> Men should look forward: Jews to a future in Israel, Arabs to a future in Lebanon, Syria, or Jordan. Pilon had not forgotten about Muslim terror against the Toraja. How reassuring that Israel would strike back, unlike Sem Bombong and so many others. Whatever the reason, modern Islam seemed inclined to an aggressive 'hyper-nationalism'.<sup>89</sup>

The Scots' perception of the fellahin as the natives of Palestine had been endorsed by RCN theologian Arie Noordtzij.<sup>90</sup> That Pilon came to regard Galilee as a *Jewish* land does not necessarily contradict that supposition. As experience has shown, people do not naturally belong to a certain territory. There is a human capability to accept loss and start over again. Zionism could serve as an example, in the same way as Dutch migrants in Canada or South Africa. Man had the potential to overcome pain as a path to renewal: healing was not the same as a return to a previous state of being.

Israel struck the visitor as a young society, resembling America or Australia in this respect.<sup>91</sup> Many children were born during this time, including Annebiene Pilon in 1954 and her brother Richard in 1955. They were taught privately in the compound, together with David Walker.<sup>92</sup> David's father was still vexed by the question of why the Mandate had failed:

85 Hester Damman-Klees, 'Getuigend gesprek met Israël', in *DNK* nr. 82 (June 2015), 3-19.

86 Martin Buber, *Israel und Palästina*, 103.

87 Colin Shindler, *A history of modern Israel*, 85.

88 Ritsema, P.J., 'Pilon, een hugenotengeslacht', 373-387.

89 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Tiberias 21 January 1953, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

90 A. Noordtzij, *Palestina en het land van den Jordaen*, 75.

91 J.P. Pilon to R. Bakker, C.B. Bavinck and J.H. Grolle, Tiberias 22 April 1953, LDC KEI, inv.nr. 281.

92 Interview Allaert Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

The knottiness of this part of the world is proverbial. The Romans, Crusaders, Jews and British have all experienced that the Middle East is tied with the most intricate knots, the likeness of which is unknown in any other part of the world.<sup>93</sup>

The best policy, said Reverend George A. Henderson, was to link medical aid to witness to the Gospel:

It is of immense importance that the Jews in their new State should have this witness and experience of Christian discipleship and friendship, and if in its early years not many come out openly into the Christian Church, nevertheless the seed is being sown, and there may well be a growing number of unknown disciples.<sup>94</sup>

The ‘Jewish Mission Committee’ admitted that future evangelization in Israel would have to be ‘indirect’.<sup>95</sup> For sister Annie te Groen this meant distributing copies of the Bible, including the New Testament, in cooperation with a group of Christian Jews.<sup>96</sup> At times Johan Pilon assisted this kind of work.<sup>97</sup> Ellen Tuyt, assistant librarian, remembers:

Off he went with Bernard Woodhead, our head technician who also happened to be a RAF veteran. Together they toured the kibbutzim, handing out their Hebrew Bibles. Some recipients responded by tearing out the New Testament. Johan showed his boyish bravura, he would not allow civil authorities to dictate what he could or could not say. At times it put the cat among the pigeons, but never really got out of hand.

Nor did it hurt his emerging friendship with Shlomo Bezek. Johan possessed Indonesian charisma. Some would call it an almost magic quality. Talks under the stars by candlelight, discussing *Gott und die Welt*.<sup>98</sup>

Jewish Mission of the kind that would threaten nonbelievers with hellfire was already on the wane. But those who tried to ‘win the hearts for Jesus’ met with few restrictions, especially if they stayed within the limits of the Scotti. Runa Mackay, working for a similar institution in Nazareth, put it as follows:

Belief could be demonstrated by healing the sick and by evangelization. Woodhead used to take his car and to pick up hitchhikers. And then he would bring up Jesus. He was not supposed to, but he did. Sometimes he was so busy talking, that he forgot where they were heading to. Bernard was a man of convictions, but not starry eyed – very competent, he built the water filter in our pharmacy. We felt free to talk about the Christian faith.<sup>99</sup>

Even Grolle could not tell what ‘dialogue between Church and Israel’ really meant. At the very least, it would imply a reciprocal event: a free exchange of opinions. It remained natural for a Christian to hope that a Jew might be saved by Jesus, but not by aggressive means. This was going to be a meeting of friends. ‘Church and Israel’ moved at a different level than any other world religion. God had re-

93 B.C. Walker to J.J. Pilon, Tiberias 24 September 1954, in AJP.

94 G.A. Henderson to J. and S. Pilon, Edinburgh 10 December 1954, ANAN.

95 Church of Scotland Jewish Mission Committee, regulations for missionaries, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

96 Petra A. Smit e.a., *Volk van God*, 19.

97 J.J. Pilon and J.M. Snoek to Dutch members of Joint Committee, Tiberias 12 October 1958, AJP.

98 Interview Ellen Schoneveld-Tuut by author, Rijswijk 17 September 2014.

99 Interview Runa Mackay by author, Edinburgh 12 January 2015.

vealed his Word to the Jews, and by Jesus to the Church. It made them special.

The same applied to the Jewish State. People in the Scotti became accustomed to the noise of gunfire at the border. As Pilon used to say, all the great questions of mankind became manifest in Israel. While DRC theologians were discussing their concept for dialogue, he was already at work in the Jewish State. It was a privileged position. Missionaries were shunned by most Israelis, as if they carried a contagious disease. A doctor seemed to belong to a different category.

### Setting a course

Sarah David worked together with midwife Zareefy Saleeba, a presence at the Scotti since times immemorial, and with the blind masseuse Elsie Nasralla.<sup>100</sup> Doctor Moshe Shelman had come over from the Schweitzer. He attended the wedding of bookkeeper Paul Re'emy, a baptized Polish Jew. It was rumoured that his speech impediment was caused by Nazis, who had driven a nail through his tongue. He married Clärli Vos, a Reformed teacher from the Netherlands.<sup>101</sup>

Re'emy's knowledge of Ivrit was essential for running the Scotti, given the fact that very few Christians were fluent in this language. Reverend William Gardiner-Scott, by whom Re'emy had been baptized, preached as if from a pulpit in Edinburgh, moving around in a black suit even during the *chamsin*.<sup>102</sup> Life behind the stately facade could be exacting, especially the backbreaking laundry work in the cellars. Grolle had a look:

These gloomy dungeons were the abode of Arab laundresses. About twenty of them, toiling every day in the most old-fashioned way as if they lived in the days of Abraham, stealing linen like the ravens. I remember it as medieval and intolerable.<sup>103</sup>

These laundresses had a status of migrant labourers.<sup>104</sup> Grolle agreed with Minister of Education, Ben-Zion Dinur that they were here by permission.<sup>105</sup> One member of the DRC Council unsuccessfully suggested to have them replaced.<sup>106</sup> Nevertheless, they seemed out of place here: 'big children, unable to cope in this new vigour of life (...) without vision and divided among themselves'.<sup>107</sup> Vriezen put it like this:

One can only deplore that the Arab had to give up his place in the land – a tragic event that really affects us – but we must also admit that the Arab lost his opportunities.<sup>108</sup>

100 Kai Kjær-Hansen, 'Sitt Elsie of Tiberias: a Bible-Woman Evangelist in the Land', <http://www.lcje.net>.

101 Interview M. Cohen Stuart-Jumelet by author, Rhoon 8 January 2014.

102 Arie Noordtzij mentions a 'scorching' *khamzin* (*Palestina en het land van den Jordaen*, Kampen 1926, ix). Compare Jeremiah 4:11: 'A hot wind in the bare heights in the desert'.

103 J.H. Grolle to J.J. Pilon, Utrecht 8 April 1955, ANAN.

104 Cf. J.H. Grolle, *Dit komt u tegen in Israël*, 22.

105 Shlomo Sand, *The invention of the Land of Israel*, 208-209. Cf. Martin Gilbert, *Israel*, 277.

106 J. Zalmann to J.H. Grolle, The Hague 26 May 1959, LDC KEI, inv.nr. 282.

107 J.H. Grolle, *Een volk op weg naar huis*, 7-10.

108 Th.C. Vriezen, *Palestina en Israël*, 194.

Ad van Selms visited from Pretoria, where he taught Semitic languages. In his opinion, Arab backwardness resembled that of the Blacks and Coloured in South-Africa. While Israel developed, Egypt and Syria remained ridden with corruption. They simply did not match the Jewish calibre.<sup>109</sup> It was a view that was not taken well by the Scots, who had been dreaming of a different Tiberias:

There was no intention to make the country completely Jewish or to eliminate the Arab population and culture. No class of citizens would have an exceptional position, all would enjoy the full status of Palestinians (...). The British Government, in short, held that the interests of the Arabs and the Jews were not antagonistic but complementary.<sup>110</sup>

Grolle conceded that the refugees had fallen on hard times. However, the simultaneous ousting of Jews from Arab countries restored the balance. The healthy effect of a population exchange could be seen in Greece and Turkey, where old adversaries had been at peace since the population exchange occurred. Van Selms referred to similar benefits of racial separation in South Africa. Why would it be any different in the Middle East? There was no lack of barren but potentially fertile land in Jordan.<sup>111</sup> Settlement in places of the world that formerly had been inhabited by other peoples was a global phenomenon. In this respect, Israel was hardly exceptional. Levi Eshkol, the man responsible for the ma'abarot, was a man Pilon would get to know well:

Between 1948 and 1951 a staggering 345 new villages, moshavim, kibbutzim and moshavot<sup>112</sup> had been realized. The chart of Jewish settlement, patchy in 1948, showed a heart-warming array of new settled toponyms. Settlements in Western Galilee, Negev and Judean Hills remained sparse at this time.<sup>113</sup>

The Dutch introduced a positive appraisal of Zionism into the Scotti. 'Dr. Pilon and the Dutch team changed the atmosphere completely', said Shelman, 'partly because there was a permanent staff now and partly because of Dr. Pilon's great and unrestricted sympathy for Israel'.<sup>114</sup> There was so much that needed attending to:

What a lot of odd jobs there are to do in a hospital like this! There is always something on the electric system or apparatus to mend. Incubator, sterilizers, and fridges stop working every now and then. Mr. Riese asked if you could bring 3 or 4 batteries for the telephone-system. The ones available here are of poor quality, he says. We got two little trolleys for oxygen cylinders, one from the factory in Haifa for 30 lira and one from the Kupat Cholim stores. The spare new oxygen reduction valve that was out of order is working now.

We are gradually improving our blood bank. There were two cases of bleeding which gave us a fright, and these spurred us to carry on. The rains have now started properly. As always: left and right the roofs are leaking.<sup>115</sup>

109 A. van Selms, *De verscheurde stad*, 26-27 and 140.

110 W.P. Livingstone, *A Galilee doctor*, 264-265.

111 A. van Selms, *De verscheurde stad*, 135.

112 A moshava allows private plots for inhabitants. Cf. Malkit Shoshan, *Atlas*, 155.

113 Abba Eban, *Mijn land*, 81-82.

114 Moshe Shelman, 'The years in Tiberias', 23.

115 J.J. Pilon to B.C. Walker, Tiberias 18 November 1953, AJP.



At the age of thirty-six, Johan Pilon felt like he was the right man at the right place. He liked the work and the opportunity to meet with people. Inspired by Grolle, he took time to read theology.<sup>116</sup> He no longer accompanied Walker on his tract missions, as he believed the Christian faith needed a different approach to be effective.<sup>117</sup>

Roelof Bakker arrived as a representative of the RCN. In Rotterdam, his duties included distributing leaflets door-to-door in Jewish communities or, if no one was home, placing them in their mailboxes. In Israel he would assist missionary pastor Johan Snoek. Bakker was aware of the difficulties of his converts: they were regarded as traitors by their kin and were often ill at ease in the church. That is why being in Tiberias came as such a relief. His dearest wish was a place in Israel where the members of his flock might harmonize their Jewish identity with Christianity. Bakker also helped set up a Joint Committee (JC) for international cooperation in the Scotti. Four seats were held by the Scots, and two for the RCN and DRC, respectively. Meetings used to alternate between Rotterdam and Edinburgh, where 'Mac' (secretary) stood guard for the interests of the 'old guard'. His responsibilities included Jewish Mission in Alexandria and an aid program in Jordan on behalf of former residents of Tiberias. He and Grolle did not always see eye to eye. It shaped a situation in which the RCN could make the difference.

Macanna wished to maintain the missionary function of the Scotti among 'receptive Jews'. Many felt burdened by social problems, psychic disorders, or both. A man from Ein Karem walked straight into the polyclinic, with the intent of being baptized on the spot. Pilon offered him a copy of the New Testament and referred him to evangelist Jacques (Jacob) Blum.<sup>118</sup> 'Brother Blum' was a Jewish acquaintance of Gussie Steller, who used to visit him in Jerusalem. He worked for an American missionary society. Before the war he had studied at the (Calvinist) Free University in Amsterdam, where he had received a bachelor's degree in divinity.

Bakker had informed Pilon about the problems of Christian Jews. Grolle did not expect a solution for their quandary from Macanna, who seemed 'peculiar' or perhaps simply 'too old'.<sup>119</sup> It was common practice at this time for the Israeli government to open letters addressed to the Scotti. 'Mac' found this act of censorship unacceptable. Mayor Moshe Zahar of Tiberias responded by saying that the Scots were pushing the 'freedom of evangelical activity' to the limits and beyond.<sup>120</sup> Unknown to Macanna, Zahar had already enlisted Snoek as an informer. 'He couldn't refuse, knowing that his job depended on the good will of the authorities', says his daughter. 'He wrote these reports about what went on in the Scotti reluctantly.'<sup>121</sup> The Scots still insisted on *milla* autonomy. They would carry on or leave with honour:

116 J.J. Pilon to B.C. Walker, Tiberias 25 September 1953, AJP.

117 J.J. Pilon to B.C. Walker, Tiberias 18 November 1958, AJP.

118 Correspondence from Ein Karem, 22 November, 13 December 1954, 3 and 8 April 1955, ANAN.

119 J.H. Grolle to J.J. Pilon, Utrecht 19 March 1955, ANAN.

120 Church of Scotland Overseas Department, Jewish Mission Committee to B.C. Walker, Edinburgh 15 June 1954, AJP.

121 Telephone conversation Ria Snoek by author, Leiderdorp 10 October 2013.

We are no sightseers, ours is a living message, and those who have not a vocation or a message had better stay at home.<sup>122</sup>

Grolle felt that time was on his side. The RCN, on the other hand, found themselves in a quandary. Any credits earned in the Dutch-Jewish community for their wartime resistance had been eroded by their Jewish Mission,<sup>123</sup> which was also rapidly losing its appeal within the churches. The new catchwords were 'piety without ostentation', and 'decent work on behalf of others'. There was a committed group of female workers in the Scotti: Hilda 't Hart, Diena Prins, Gussie Steller, Ada van Vliet, Anna Slot, Jannie van Wijlen, Lydie Verkruijsen, Alida Pekel, Annie te Groen and Ellen Tuyt. Deaconess Alida Pekel, from a Jewish family, used to sing Christian songs in Modern Hebrew (Ivrit). Together with Gussie Steller, she explored the surroundings:

The Bible comes to life during these trips to Kana and Nazareth, seeing Mount Thabor, the Jizreel Plain and the Karmel Ridge. It is as if time dissolves and as if we see the Lord walking these very places in our spirit.<sup>124</sup>

Sisters Steller and Pekel naturally engaged in 'dialogue', for many Israelis were equally fascinated by geopiety. 'The part which archaeology, and the Bible, played in the mind and activities even of secular Israel was profound', says Martin Gilbert.<sup>125</sup> It was as if Biblical times touched the present. Steller and Pekel sailed to Ein Gev, 'across the Lake, like Jesus and his disciples'. The kibbutz covered a narrow strip at the eastern shore, an obvious target for Syrian guns:

A moving experience. It is as in Jesus' days. The fishermen, the boats, the nets. Moments later we were at the Syrian border.<sup>126</sup>

The sense of danger only added to the thrill. Like Steller and Pekel, Johan Pilon felt confident about Israel's military prowess though uneasy about the outcome if the USSR were to intervene directly:

The army is constantly on the move. Last night they practised the dropping of parachutists. Several of them were wounded in the dark, suffering brushes and broken legs. All night there was this rumble of airplanes and of jeeps moving around the lake: a massive build-up of guns and armour. The Israeli army is small but strong. (...) Arabs will stand no chance against it. Against the USSR, Israel can only hope for help from above.<sup>127</sup>

Rev. Snoek promoted the use of Ivrit during devotions and hymn services. He noted that fellow pastors like Bakker, Ben Smeenk (RCN), Max Enker and Israel Tabaksblatt (DRC) eagerly accepted any chance of temporary postings in the Scotti. Enker acted as secretary for the International Hebrew Christian Associa-

122 B.C. Walker to J.J. Pilon, Tiberias 24 September 1954, AJP.

123 Cf. Frans Rozemond, 'Van zending naar evangelieverkondiging 1945-1965', 133.

124 A. Pekel to J.H. Grolle, Tiberias 12 March and 28 October 1955, LDC KEI inv.nr. 281.

125 Martin Gilbert, *Israel*, 341.

126 A. Pekel to J.H. Grolle, Tiberias 28 December 1955, LDC KEI inv.nr. 281.

127 J.J. Pilon to A. Bikker, Tiberias 17 September 1957, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 296.

tion (IHCA).<sup>128</sup> In this capacity he proposed the establishment of a Jewish Christian home in Lake View.<sup>129</sup>

Mayor Zahar would do anything in his power to prevent a hunting ground for the IHCA. As a result of his quarrel with Macanna, 'the Bible text on the ward had to be removed and singing in the hospital was forbidden'. Shelman had complained, to the annoyance of the Christian staff.<sup>130</sup> Curbing sister Pekel's singing hour was ridiculous, said Pilon, and the removal of Bible texts in a Christian building an unwanted form of interference:

Especially the removal of the Bible text panel we cannot understand, since this was an Old Testament part and it is difficult to see how this could be offensive. One really wonders what is left of the freedom of witness, as promised by the Government. And the question comes up whether we can continue giving in?

With Bakker, we also talked about all these questions and the troubles we come across in our position in Israel (...). *If*, by all hamperings, the witness would be reduced to nil, there would be hardly any reason to continue in the present form.<sup>131</sup>

Johan's elderly father reacted from the Netherlands: 'The Jews at your place seem to be quite fanatic.'<sup>132</sup> Before long the argument was hushed up. Now that the Israelis had made their point, the Bible panel and songs about Jesus could stay. Pilon and Shelman remained the best of friends. Zahar was no quibbler either, expressing regard for Jesus as a noble Jew: 'I read the New Testament. The way Christianity chose to follow, apart from Judaism, was unnecessary. Jesus' teachings were completely Jewish. I believe that Christian actions differed from Jesus' intentions.'<sup>133</sup>

### 'Splendid service'

During a visit to Bakker in Belgium, Pilon was told that three Jews had been recently baptized – the standard missionary work. However, Bakker seemed to be more at ease in a reading club, where Roman-Catholics, Jews and Protestants would come together to discuss the Old Testament.<sup>134</sup>

On 23 September 1954 Pilon met the RCN deputies for Jewish Mission in Amsterdam: mostly elderly gentlemen, fond of cigars and acting on instructions that had been laid down in 1896. 'The Holland people of my Church still don't know what they're up to', he reported to Walker. The meeting had convinced him that 'dialogue' was key. But how to act upon that principle? Bakker's bleak descriptions of the impossible situation of most Christian Jews were foremost in his mind. Many regarded Israel as their sole opportunity to be Jewish and Christian.

128 Founded in Islington (London), 1915. In 1975 the name changed to Messianic Jewish Alliance.

129 The house had been left to the Scotti by H.W. Torrance.

130 J.J. Pilon to B.C. Walker, Tiberias 19 October 1953, AJP.

131 J.J. Pilon to B.C. Walker, Rotterdam 15 September 1954, AJP.

132 P. Pilon to J. and S. Pilon, Heemstede 3 March 1955, ANAN.

133 Interview Moshe Tsahar (Zahar), in Rik Valkenburg, *Gesprekken in Jeruzalem*, 56-62.

134 J.J. Pilon to B.C. Walker, Rotterdam 15 September 1954, AJP.

The idea had come to Enker that the Scotti might provide a base where their hope might come true: ‘If we, Gentile Christians, help the people of Israel to build its State, then we might also help to improve relations between Jewish Christians and their non-Christian kin.’<sup>135</sup> As Pilon returned from furlough, by plane from Schiphol to Lydda, there was a letter waiting for him from George Henderson:

You have given splendid service to the Hospital and its missionary witness in Israel. Your own Church, as well as the Church of Scotland, should be glad and grateful for that. It has never been easy to be a missionary among the Jews. It requires tact, patience and constant faith, and you have shown those qualities in a marked degree. I am quite sure your witness to our Lord has made its impression on many of those whom you have so faithfully served.<sup>136</sup>

The unspoken gist of this letter was that the maternity hospital could expect to undergo closure within the next few years. Israeli authorities had announced their intention to build a new hospital in Poriya, making the Scotti redundant. Walker expected the Dutch staff to repatriate.<sup>137</sup> Pilon did not look forward to this idea. According to his brother, Holland held few attractions for him.<sup>138</sup> It was better to stay in Israel as a doctor engaged in ‘dialogue’ and endeavouring ‘to do something’ for Bakker’s hapless flock.

It sounded like a reprise of Mamasa: grand ideals in a dangerous corner of the world. As Stijn knew too well, her husband felt attracted to taking risks. Great-Britain, France and Israel attacked Egypt in 1956, responding to the nationalisation of the Suez Canal by Nasser. Haifa took some shells from an Egyptian frigate. As expected, the Egyptian army proved to be no match for the IDF. Johan admired the firm Israeli response. Although Israel retreated from Sinai in 1957, pressed by the USA, it had proven itself as a force not to be trifled with. The Dutch government endorsed the Sinai campaign as an act of self-defence.<sup>139</sup> It looked like an opportune moment to rally the RCN behind the Jewish State.

135 Quoted in: J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerke en Israël 1925-1965* I, 547.

136 George A. Henderson to J.J. Pilon, Edinburgh 25 March 1956, AJP.

137 Minutes Joint Committee, Utrecht 20 September 1956, HUA archive church and Israel RCN, inv. nr. 353.

138 P. Pilon to J. and S. Pilon, Rotterdam 1 January 1956, ANAN.

139 Cf. Abba Eban, *Mijn land*, 143 and 151.



# INITIATORS

Protestantism at the beginning of the 1950s began to feel the secularizing impulse from within. Miracle belief no longer fit with contemporary education. Bible research had proven the Jewish origins of Old and New Testament, with implications for theology. 'The worldwide trend towards developing sophisticated institutions for higher education and medical care required a different type of missionary: a woman or man who had been educated as a doctor or teacher, not as a minister or evangelist.'\*

\* Heleen Murre-van den Berg, 'Introduction', in *New Faith in Ancient Lands*, 8.

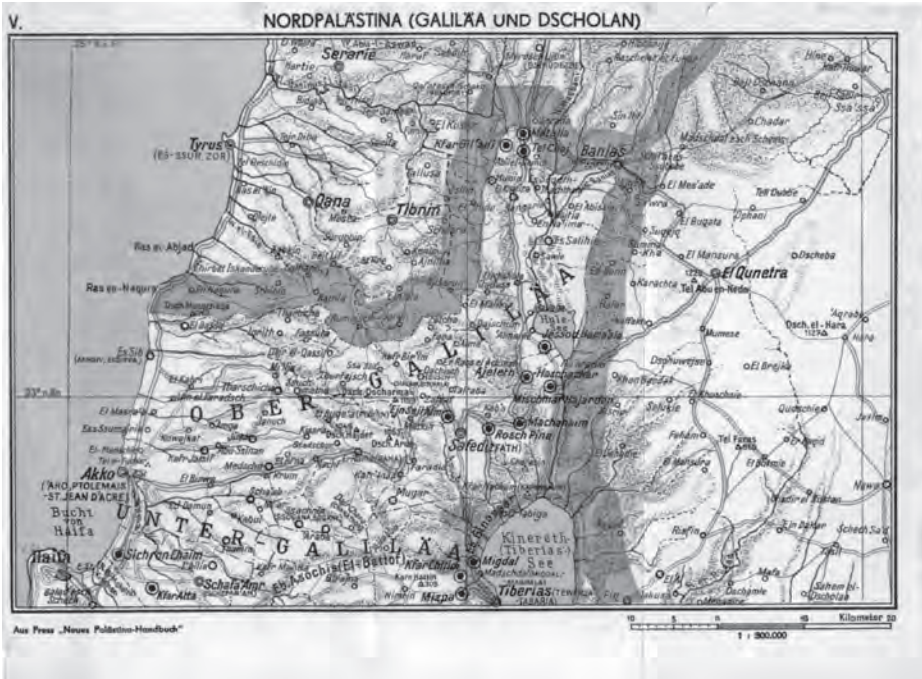


Fig. 3 The situation in 1935, when Western Galilee was mostly Arab – Jesaias Press, *Neues Palästina-Handbuch. Führer durch Palästina* (Wien: Fiba Verlag, 1935), 400-401: Nord-Palästina (Galiläa und Dscholan).

### III Claude Muller-Duvernoy

Fourteen Christians and four Muslims converted to Judaism in Israel in 1956. Six Jews became Muslim, ten Jews plus a single Muslim were baptized as Christians. The countless Protestant institutions in the Holy Land wondered how to continue, now that their missionary heydays were obviously over.<sup>1</sup>

Willie Miller from Glasgow raised the subject during the late evening discussions on the rooftop of the Scotti. ‘Church oligarchy’ seemed moribund to him, together with many of its favourite hobbyhorses. Who seriously expected a returning Jesus on the clouds?<sup>2</sup> An alternative approach was required. But how? And when? During his furlough in Holland, Johan Pilon had met a young Jewish woman who was baptized in the RCN after having survived the war in hiding. Hanna-Louk van Stegeren-Keizer (1925-2011) worked as an assistant for Bakker.<sup>3</sup> Israel, she told Pilon, offered opportunities worth exploring:

The world of the Jews, risen from the ashes as it were. Were they really rejected by God? Had the Church rightly claimed their place as the chosen people? Why would Jewish religion be defunct or meaningless?<sup>4</sup>

#### Genesis of the idea of a Protestant kibbutz

Pilon sensed that mission could still be relevant, but only ‘if related to practical outreach’.<sup>5</sup> ‘After the burning heat of the day’, he sat together with medics, kibbutzniks and officials.<sup>6</sup> He also listened to what his sons told him about youth movements in Israel, like Beitar:<sup>7</sup>

Affiliated with Herut, Menachem Begin’s party: paramilitary scouting. We learnt self-defence and boxing. The idea was to expand to ‘Judah and Samaria’ and even East of the Jordan.<sup>8</sup>

1 Petrus Huigens, *Israël*, 142-143.

2 W.R. Miller to family Pilon, Blantyre (Glasgow) 17 July 1956, in AJP.

3 As her husband remarked: ‘Bakker sensed that things would have to change. By ecumenism and by solidarity to Israel.’ Interview J.T. van Stegeren by author, Heemstede 19 January 2016.

4 Interview H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer by author, Heemstede 1995.

5 J.J. Pilon and J.M. Snoek, discussion paper, Tiberias 13 October 1958, in HUA archive deputies Church and Israel RCN inv.nr. 356.

6 Petrus Huigens, *Israël*, 141.

7 Cf. Martin Gilbert, *Israel. A history*, London 2008, 76.

8 Interview Allaert Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.



There were more than two hundred kibbutzim at this point, totalling 85,000 inhabitants and producing 30 per cent of the agricultural and 5 per cent of the industrial output of the nation. With an average size between 500 and 2500 acres,<sup>9</sup> they were still being built around the reclaimed Lake Huleh. The Jewish National Fund handled the land allotments.<sup>10</sup>

A Christian kibbutz might try to obtain some Scottish property, but Macanna seemed opposed to the idea. Pilon remarked that the Scots had no idea of the potential of their landholdings. 'For them it's too hot here.'<sup>11</sup> Dutch supporters of the hospital encouraged him to develop the idea nevertheless.<sup>12</sup> One of them was Ies Walpot, a Dutch student of theology,<sup>13</sup> who had hitchhiked to Marseille in order to catch a steamer to Haifa. 'The tragedy of the Jewish people, outcasts in the entire world and marred by the hell of Nazi terror, had gripped me', he said. 'Now I wanted to witness how the survivors – gathered from all directions – make the desert bloom.'<sup>14</sup> Youngsters could be trusted to find new ways, Pilon commented, unlike the old men in the Scotti:

Ten years have elapsed since the State of Israel came into being, but it is now over 75 years ago that this Hospital was built; in circumstances, as we know, quite different from those prevailing at present in this country. Certainly, these last years have put missionary work in a quite different setting.

So many mementoes of the old days. Walking the corridors, we find big glass-stoppered jars in hidden places, with pickled viscera and all kinds of tumours. Cupboards hold collections of gallbladder and kidney stones, Torrance's surgical trophies. There is the so-called snake room, where dozens of snakes are displayed in bottles.

No such medical cases come to us anymore. They are going to the Government Hospital. Yes, we still have the maternity. Not that we need to be dissatisfied, given the fact that so many local children have been born in the Hospital.

Obviously, the times called for modernisation: 'One might even claim that the previous period was to an extent preparatory.'<sup>15</sup> But where to achieve this? 'Our hospital, however pretty, may have reached the end of the road.'<sup>16</sup> The tables had been reversed. Israel demonstrated superiority over a Europe that had not been able to overcome an economic crisis, combat Antisemitism, or protect its citizens. This was the way mayor Zahar remembered his native Hungary. He had reached his destination elsewhere,<sup>17</sup> in a city that was 'nearly all Jewish'.<sup>18</sup>

9 Yosef Shatil, 'The kibbutz in Israel'.

10 Founded in 1901, 'to coordinate and centralize Jewish land purchases and to ensure that land thus bought would never again be available for sale (...). This conception of the inalienable nature of the land purchases by the Jewish National Fund became central to official Zionist policy' (Charles D. Smith, *Palestine*, 122).

11 Petrus Huigens, *Israël*, 141.

12 K.H. Kammeyer to J.J. Pilon, Heerde 25 September 1958, AJP. See for Kammeyer: Petra Smit, *Volk van God*, 17.

13 Cf. Izaak Jan Walpot, *Levensweg*.

14 I.J. Walpot, 'Eindelijk zullen zij vrij zijn in het nieuwe land', *Leeuwarder Courant* 14 October 1958.

15 J.J. Pilon, annual report of the hospital 1957-1958, LDC KEI inv.nr. 282.

16 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, Tiberias 12 January 1959, AJP.

17 Interview Moshe Tsahar (Zahar), in Rik Valkenburg, *Gesprekken in Jeruzalem*, 56-62.

18 J.J. Pilon, annual report of the hospital 1957-1958, in LDC KEI inv.nr. 282.

Faded photographs showed Herbert Torrance surrounded by Muslims, Jews, and Christians.<sup>19</sup> In contrast to such scenes from a bygone world, the al-Zaydani mosque,<sup>20</sup> in front of the Scotti, now served as a slaughterhouse for poultry. ‘Children would not know any better,’ said Ria Snoek. ‘It was just the way it was.’<sup>21</sup> According to Ria’s father, Pilon had cleared out redundant files of former Arab patients. Any of their remaining holdings had been nationalized in 1950, in accordance with the Absentees’ Property Law. Registered as ‘absentee’ was anyone ‘who – at any time from when the State was founded until then – was outside the area under Israel’s rule, fled his home or was a resident of a neighbouring Arab state’.<sup>22</sup> Properties administered by a Custodian of Absentee Property could be legally sold off or leased out.<sup>23</sup> ‘Travelling through the country, ruins of Arab villages are everywhere’, Walpot remarked. ‘At first sight they look ancient. He blamed the British for what had happened here:

A small road, now overgrown by weeds, gave access to the hill: overgrown remnants of walls were everywhere; a single house even had a roof. I was reminded of the suffering here, a suffering for which the Western countries are to blame (...). The English carry a major burden of responsibility. It was they who left too soon, leaving chaos in their wake. The Jews had to fight for their lives against superior Arab numbers (...).<sup>24</sup>

Snoek recalled an outing in the countryside:

Fifteen kilometres or so to the West of Tiberias is a crossroads. We came to a halt. Johan Pilon left the car and climbed his way to a cactus hedgerow and a dilapidated wall. I followed. We picked some grapes, planted by the former residents of the place.<sup>25</sup>

The aftermath of the Second World War demonstrated the necessity of making a new start. ‘That memory shaped our perception, not 1948’, says Johan Snoek. Traces of previous habitation in fresh woodland plantations were also noted by Ellen Tuyt. ‘Those ruins had no place in any intended dialogue of Christians and Jews. One had to choose between Israeli and Arab friendship, that was how we felt. They could not coexist.’<sup>26</sup>

### Appeal to terminate Jewish Mission

The Frenchman Claude Muller-Duvernoy (1929-2016) came from Huguenot stock, like Pilon. As a boy he had witnessed the deportation of the Jews in his hometown of Nancy. A few had escaped to the wilds of the Cevennes, his future wife Marianne among them. As for the rest of the deportees, hardly a soul would return. Claude never forgot:

19 Bertha Spafford Vester, *Our Jerusalem*, 63.

20 Referred to by Arie Noordtzijs as *dsjamie el-babr*, ‘mosque by the lake’. *Palestina*, 183.

21 Telephone conversation Ria Snoek by author, Leiderdorp 10 October 2013.

22 Ran Kislev, ‘Land expropriations’, 23. Cf. Musa E. Massawi, *Palestine*, 185-187.

23 Ami Pedahzur, *The triumph of Israel’s Radical Right*, xii.

24 I.J. Walpot, ‘Arabieren in isolement’, in *Leeuwarder Courant* 18 October 1958.

25 Interview J.M. Snoek by author, Rotterdam 27 January 2012. The story refers to the Lubiya village.

Since 1949 the grounds belong to kibbutz Lavi (cf. Martin Gilbert, *Israel*, 263).

26 Interview Ellen Schoneveld-Tuyt by author, Rijswijk 17 September 2014.

Dès ma petite enfance, le peuple juif 's est fait étrangement proche. Certes, comme il se doit dans toute famille issue de la Réforme, avant tout par la fréquentation de la Bible, par une solide instruction religieuse.<sup>27</sup>

It seemed that theology provided no answers. Instead, Muller-Duvernoy went to Chicago to study psychology. Here he encountered Evangelicals. Calvin might have objected, but belief in Jesus and Zionism seemed quite compatible for many of them. At the Moody Bible Institute, this point had been made by Harry Ironside (1876-1951): Israel offered living proof for the infallibility of prophecy. Returning to France, Muller-Duvernoy went on to Strasburg University, attending courses by André Neher and Jules Isaac.<sup>28</sup> Next, he became a missionary for the *Schweizerische Evangelische Judenmission* (SEJ). His command of French, English, German and Hebrew qualified him for the job. Muller-Duvernoy's main interest in this appointment was the opportunity it provided to go to Israel. In 1955 he would return to Israel on a scholarship provided by the Société des Amis d'Israël (SAI), another missionary society that was based in Zurich.

Ironside had shown that the presence of God, after a spell of 'absence' in the death camps, had become manifest in the Jewish State and without direct Christian intervention.<sup>29</sup> Muller-Duvernoy came to believe the same, enjoying the hospitality of kibbutz Ein Hanatsiv at the foot of the Gilboa mountains. He also became enamoured with the idea that both the earliest Jewish Christians and Rabbinic Judaism had been influenced by the Essenes of Qumran.<sup>30</sup> Following the example of 'le rabbin le plus émouvant d'Israël, Shaul de Tarse', Muller-Duvernoy discovered 'la séduction et l'amour de la Bible hébraïque, Nouveau Testament compris'.<sup>31</sup> Fluent in many modern languages and also in Ivrit, he socialized easily. Israel met his expectations: a free and democratic society, based on biblical principles and an antithesis against Islam:

Here, we find Social Democratic rule surrounded by feudal and dictatorial regimes. In these surrounding areas, women were treated as if they were slaves. Here the Foreign minister [Golda Meir] is a woman.<sup>32</sup>

All that missionaries had created among the Jews in this country was irritation or indifference:

They know little about Judaism and are hardly interested in learning more (...). What is their aim? Being on a foreign payroll allows these missionaries to do as they like, to distribute Bibles and ridiculously simple tracts. Baptisms were used irresponsibly, as a means to obtain a visa for Canada or Australia.<sup>33</sup>

27 Claude Duvernoy, *Pour l'Amour de Sion*, Jerusalem 1970, 3.

28 Cf. F.J. Krop, 'Duvernoy koos Jeruzalem', in *Nieuwe Haarlemmer Courant* 13 August 1966.

29 Interview Claude Duvernoy by Michaël Cohn, in *Nieuw Israëlitisch Weekblad* 24 February 1967.

30 Thomas Willi, 'Geschichte', 69-70.

31 Claude Duvernoy, *Pour l'Amour de Sion*, Jerusalem 1970, 3.

32 Claude Muller-Duvernoy, 'Ein Jahr in Israel', in *Der Freund Israels* 1957 nr. 1 (Zürcher Lehrhaus, Zurich).

33 Claude Muller-Duvernoy, 'Ein Jahr in Israel', in *Der Freund Israels* 1957 nr. 2 (April).

Muller-Duvernoy was of the opinion that all missionaries should withdraw from Israel, unless they made themselves useful in education, healthcare, or economy. He believed that only Jews were entitled to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus to their kin. All others should either leave or switch to more useful occupations. Amazingly, he was given the benefit of the doubt by his superiors. SEJ and SAI were quite aware that they could not continue as before. The underlying shift was analysed by Murre-Van der Berg: ‘Introduction and development of education and medical health care were seen more and more as laudable aims in themselves, even when not generating conversions.’<sup>34</sup> That, explained Muller-Duvernoy, was why young people should go to Israel. Preferably to a *Christian* kibbutz, that would also offer a useful base to Jewish followers of Jesus:

The pioneering efforts of these youngsters will not fail to make an impression in Israel.

Muller-Duvernoy referred to existing Protestant traditions in the Holy Land. The American Colony had maintained that God directed Jewish history, without a need of intervening churches.<sup>35</sup> The Lutheran *Jerusalemverein* had stimulated agricultural enterprise as a way to get closer to the people of the land.<sup>36</sup> The difference was that the Lutherans had recruited primarily among the Arabs. Muller-Duvernoy dreamt of a Jewish Christian community, joined by Gentiles from the West. Abram Poljak (1900-1963) pleaded for a ‘Jewish Christian colony’<sup>37</sup> but his attempts to create one in Haifa in 1947 had failed. To turn the idea into reality would require an international Protestant committee.<sup>38</sup>

### ‘Communauté évangélique de langue hébraïque en Terre d’Israël’

Muller-Duvernoy took his lead from Poljak. He also felt encouraged by Max Enker and the International Hebrew Christian Alliance (IHCA). A colony might be the first step in building an ‘indigenous Church’ in Israel.<sup>39</sup> There was some urgency in this, as the Roman-Catholics also tried to establish a Hebrew speaking branch of their church.<sup>40</sup> He published a manifesto for a Protestant audience:

Jewish followers of Jesus of Nazareth intend to become loyal citizens of the State of Israel.<sup>41</sup>

Ulrich van Beyma, an official of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, asked the DRC Council for their opinion, receiving a supportive answer.<sup>42</sup> After all, the young Frenchman only repeated what Torrance had been saying long before:

34 Heleen Murre-van den Berg, ‘Introduction’, in *New faith in ancient lands*, 15.

35 Sven Hedin, *Jerusalem*, 217.

36 Ludwig Schneller, *Evangelienfahrten*, 564.

37 Abram Poljak, *Das Kreuz im Davidstern*, 11.

38 Poljak finally established his Patmos-Siedlung in Germany, near Möttlingen (Liebenzell).

39 *The International Hebrew Christian Alliance. What it is and what it does*, London 1953, 13.

40 Danielle Delmaire, ‘La communauté catholique d’expression hébraïque en Israël’, 237-287.

41 Claude Muller-Duvernoy, ‘À la communauté évangélique de langue hébraïque en Terre d’Israël’, in *La vie Protestante*, 7 December 1956.

42 S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.H. Grolle, Tiberias 13 February 1957, LDC KEI inv.nr. 281.

‘There is no reason why a Jewish-Christian should not be a member of a Jewish State.’<sup>43</sup>

Claude and Marianne were cordially received by Johan and Stijn in Tiberias, enjoying their Indonesian *cuisine*. ‘Vous êtes mes plus chers amis en Erez Israël’, Claude wrote, ‘vous le savez’.<sup>44</sup> During his strolls in the city, he approvingly noted the memorial for 1948. It was a mortar or *dauidka*, that had been used to shell the Arab quarter. A plaque carried the text of Psalm 2:8-9:

**Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,  
and the ends of the earth your possession.**

Claude used his columns in *L’Ami d’Israël* to make an appeal: ‘Jewish Mission is finished. Now is the time for witness by means of labour.’<sup>45</sup> During the summer of 1957 he invited Pilon and Bakker to collaborate with him on behalf of a ‘Christian settlement, sponsored by the World Council of Churches.’<sup>46</sup> A Protestant kibbutz in Galilee was the aim:

It is our intention to establish an agricultural colony, together with our friends in Tiberias.<sup>47</sup>

43 W.P. Livingstone, *A Galilee doctor*, 281-282.

44 C. Muller-Duvernoy to Pilon family, undated letter (1956) AJP.

45 C. Muller-Duvernoy, ‘Retour d’Israël’, *L’Ami d’Israël* October 1957, 77-78.

46 J.J. Pilon to B.C. Walker, Heemstede 21 June 1957, in AJP.

47 C. Duvernoy, ‘Ness Ammim. Un village chrétien en terre d’Israël’, *La Réforme* January 1965.

## IV Tiberias Fund

### Rotterdam

Johan Snoek could not imagine Muller-Duvernoy in the role of a toiling kibbutznik. Though he envied the Frenchman's charms that impressed the ladies in Tiberias,<sup>1</sup> building a village required talents of another sort. People who had the 'right stuff' were available in Rotterdam, said Bakker. The city boasted a School for Hebrew language and culture under the guidance of Max Reisel, author of a translation of the Book of Genesis<sup>2</sup> that was positively received by the Christian public.<sup>3</sup> Sympathies for Israel were in the ascendant, now that Ben-Gurion had ended his liaison with the USSR.<sup>4</sup> Bakker, who was from Rotterdam, had talked some of his wealthier church members into setting up a Tiberias Fund. It was intended to support Protestant initiatives in Israel, starting with the Scotti.<sup>5</sup> Board members were banker A.R. Henkemans, Hendrik Bonda (Provimi animal seeds)<sup>6</sup> and Ko Minnaar, director of a fruit and vegetable export firm.<sup>7</sup> All three were well off, used to hard work and living without ostentation. They read the newspaper *Trouw*, founded by the anti-Nazi resistance in 1943 and now supportive of the Jewish State. Israel was the home of 'a dispersed people returning: the very people that bestowed Christianity on the rest of mankind, in accordance to the prophecies'.<sup>8</sup> Bonda visited the Scotti several times, where he heard Enker preach, had coffee with Stijn Pilon and talked with her husband till late in the night.<sup>9</sup>

### Christian Jews

Max Enker knew the difficulties of a convert's life in Israel from experience. Christian Jews who kept quiet about their faith encountered few problems. Those, however, who tried to evangelize were ostracised. As a DRC pastor, Enker dreamt of an environment where he could be fully Jewish and fully Protestant.

1 Interview Johan Snoek by author, Rotterdam 27 January 2012.

2 M. Reisel, *Genesis*.

3 *Bulletin Judaica et Hebraica*, Rotterdam April 1958, introduction.

4 Cf. Enne Koops, *De dynamiek van een emigratiecultuur* and Jaap van Gelderen, *Een Rotterdammer in Kampen*.

5 Frans Rozemond, 'Van zending naar evangelieverkondiging 1945-1965', 132-133.

6 The company exists to this day. Cf. [www.bonda.nl](http://www.bonda.nl).

7 Albert (Ab) Wolting, 'Jacobus Minnaar', *Nes Ammim. Zeichen für die Völker* 2/3-1967, 26.

8 J. Klatter, *De wondere wereld van Nijl tot Eufraat*, 19.

9 Report Israel journey by H.J.Bonda, March 1955, LDC KEI inv.nr. 281.

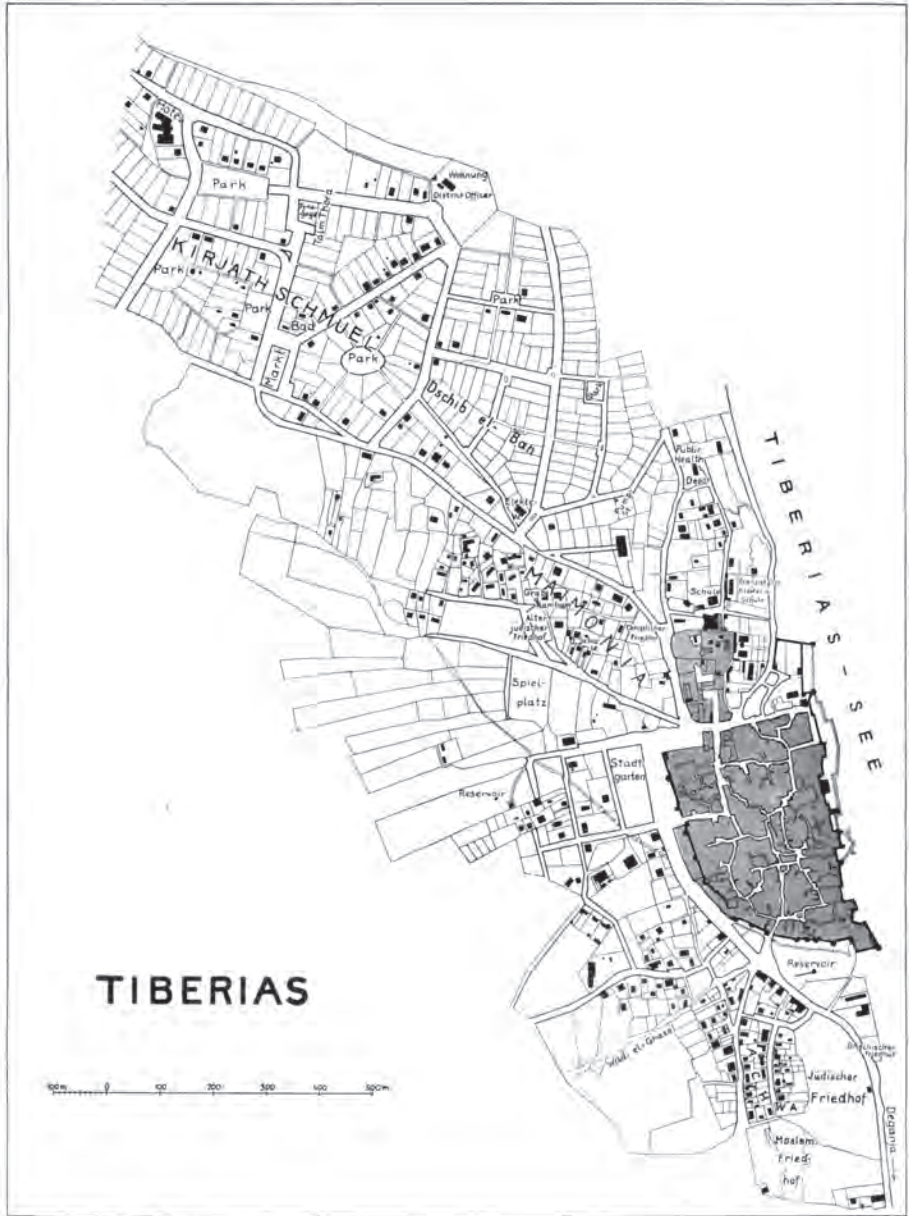


Fig. 4. „Neues Palästinahandbuch“.

Fig. 4 Tiberias – Jesaias Press, *Neues Palästina-Handbuch. Führer durch Palästina* (Wien: Fiba Verlag, 1935), 372; the buildings of the Scots Hospital are shown to the north of the Old City, but not mentioned as such.

Together with Bonda he responded to the ideas of Muller-Duvernoy with a flush of enthusiasm. Johan Pilon remarked that this was no matter for amateurs.<sup>10</sup> He remembered plans of the elder Torrance for Jewish Presbyterians, including 'industrial and agricultural departments in which they could be taught and trained to be economically independent'.<sup>11</sup> That was also what Enker wanted, if only to get rid of the stigma of being 'on the payroll' of Jewish Mission. Propaganda for Protestantism was obviously malfunctioning, 'if the result is a massive repudiation of their message and contempt for those who have received it'. As Pilon dryly commented, 'most missionaries in this land are Anti-Semites at heart'.<sup>12</sup> This was his way of saying that they felt affronted by the almost total lack of appreciation for their work. Even Grolle admitted that this feeling ran deep.<sup>13</sup>

Dialogue, the pet project of the DRC, had attracted few Protestants so far, and even fewer Jews. Enker and Grolle attempted to broaden the audience by positing the Jewish Christians as key mediators between the parties. It came as a disappointment to them that the grounds of the Scotti were not available for a settlement. Macanna remembered many earlier attempts, including a fishing boat that had been transported from the Clyde to Lake Kinneret. It had ended in total failure.<sup>14</sup>

### A Hebrew Christian moshav

The IHCA and the International Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews (ICCAJ) followed the plan with interest, though for different reasons. Both were missionary organizations, but the 'Approach' had become aware of dialogue as an alternative. That was why Woodhead preferred the IHCA:

Do pray for more openings into the hearts, homes, and villages. Pray for the raising up of a Hebrew Christian moshav or kibbutz to gather scattered believers.<sup>15</sup>

Critics would point out that the IHCA was already struggling to sustain its three existing centres in Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem. Why would they even consider a fourth?<sup>16</sup> Bakker referred to a recurring problem experienced by Christian Jews: their marriages were not being recognized as a 'Jewish marriage' in Israel. He wanted to solve this problem in the 19th century way: by Western pressure on local authorities in Palestine, channelled by a Protestant base in the area.

<sup>10</sup> J.J. Pilon to J.H. Grolle, Tiberias 12 March 1955, LDC KEI inv.nr. 281.

<sup>11</sup> W.P. Livingstone, *A Galilee doctor*, 109-110.

<sup>12</sup> M. Enker, 'Christelijke problemen in Israël', in *'s-Gravenhaagse Kerkbode* 3 May 1958. Pilon is referred to as 'one of the few positive exceptions (...) a missionary doctor'.

<sup>13</sup> J.H. Grolle, *Dit komt u tegen in Israël*, 11.

<sup>14</sup> W.P. Livingstone, *A Galilee doctor*, 110-111.

<sup>15</sup> Bevan and Elna Woodhead, circular letter 1957, LDC KEI inv.nr. 281.

<sup>16</sup> R. Clephane Macanna to J.J. Pilon, Edinburgh 25 October 1958, HUA, archive deputies Church and Israel RCN, inv.nr. 356.



Pilon became superintendent, now that Walker was about to retire.<sup>17</sup> Macanna had consented, presumably out of fear ‘that an Israeli doctor might be appointed instead.’<sup>18</sup> Any spare time would be spent on the settlement plan. Pilon presented his draft for a village with family units (*moshav*) to the Tiberias Fund on 21 February 1958.<sup>19</sup> He had studied the Keren Kayemet handbook *Forms of Settlement*,<sup>20</sup> which described a *moshav shitufi* or ‘cooperative settlement with separate family life’.<sup>21</sup> ‘Return to the soil’ promised to reassert the organic bond between man and land, that had come under pressure of modern urbanization. City dwellers would be offered an opportunity to return to an agricultural way of life.<sup>22</sup>

How realistic this was remained to be seen. The Law on the Return of 5 July 1950 granted any Jew the right to apply for citizenship and to live on the land. However, whether Christians could qualify as Jewish was still undecided.<sup>23</sup> As noted by Bakker and others, ‘suspected non-Jews’ encountered problems while trying to obtain Rabbinic permission for a Jewish marriage, divorce or funeral.<sup>24</sup> Ben-Gurion’s Mapai-party,<sup>25</sup> though secular, had to take sensibilities of the Orthodox coalition partners into account.<sup>26</sup> Besides, there were less than three hundred Jewish-Christians in Israel at this time.<sup>27</sup>

Their cause came into the open when Oswald Rufeisen claimed his right to be a Jew under the Law of the Return. While hiding from the Nazis in a Carmelite monastery in Poland, he had become a Roman Catholic under the name of brother Daniel. In 1958 his case received a verdict from the Supreme Court of Israel, ruling

17 Cf. J. Zalmann jr., ‘Het medische werk in Tiberias’ (Voorburg 1979), in archive Johan Snoek. Copy kindly supplied by Ria Snoek, Leiderdorp.

18 Minutes Joint Committee, Glasgow 28 March 1957, in HUA archive deputies Church and Israel RCN, inv.nr. 353.

19 ‘*Mosjaw-Owdim* (Mehrzahl: *Moschwej-Owdim*): genossenschaftliche Kleinbauernsiedlungen, die auf den Grundsätzen gegenseitiger Hilfe und völliger Gleichheit für alle aufgebaut sind. Jeder einzelne Bauernhof wird von dem Mitglied und seiner Familie bearbeitet, wobei jedoch der Verkauf der Erzeugnisse und der Einkauf von Geräten, Maschinen und Gebrauchsgegenständen durch die zentrale Genossenschaft erfolgt. Die Voll-Versammlung aller Mitglieder wählt einen Gemeindevorstand; *Moschaw*: dem Moschaw-Owdim nicht unähnlich, jedoch ohne die strenge ideologische Grundlage – die Beschäftigung von Lohnarbeitern ist z.B. gestattet; *Moschaw Shitufi*: beruht wie der Kibbuz auf Gemeineigentum und Gemeinwirtschaft, mit dem Unterschied, dass jede Familie ihr eigenes Haus hat und für die eigene Haushaltsführung, wie das Kochen, die Wäsche und die Kinderpflege verantwortlich ist.’ *Das Israel Buch, herausgegeben von der Informationsabteilung der israelischen Mission, Köln, im Auftrage des israelischen Außenministeriums, Düsseldorf 1960/1961, 41–42.*

20 E. Orni, *Forms of Settlement*, published for the World Zionist Organisation by Keren Kayemet, Jerusalem 1955. Personal copy Johan Pilon (with *ex libris*) in Beit Pilon, Nes Ammim.

21 Abraham A. Weinberg, *Migration and belonging*, The Hague 1961, 266. A *moshav* differs from a *moshava*, ‘der aus einzelnen privatwirtschaftlichen Familienfarmen bestehende Siedlung’ (Gudrun Krämer, *Geschichte Palästinas*, München 2015, 226).

22 E. Orni, *Forms of Settlement*, published for the World Zionist Organisation by Keren Kayemet, Jerusalem 1955, 92–94.

23 This interpretation of the Law on the Return was vindicated in 1970: ‘For the purposes of this Law, “Jew” means a person who was born of a Jewish mother or has converted to Judaism and who is not a member of another religion.’ Cf. Colin Shindler, *A history of modern Israel*, 87.

24 Howard M. Sachar, *A history of Israel*, 604.

25 Mapai (*Miflegat Po’alei Eretz Yisrael*; Party of Labourers in the Land of Israel) was left-wing Zionist. Cf. Martin Gilbert, *Israel*, 62–63.

26 Gerhard Jasper, ‘Der Judenchrist’, 156–157.

27 J.H. Grolle, *Dit komt u tegen in Israël*, 119.

that a convert to a non-Jewish religion could not be accepted as a Jew.<sup>28</sup> The outcome was well received in Israeli society, though sharply criticized by the IHCA.

Shlomo Bezek had known Pilon since 1952, since his wife Mirjam had delivered their daughter Racheli in the Scotti. Shlomo, a kibbutznik from the Netherlands, enjoyed playing chess and having discussions in Dutch.<sup>29</sup> He warned against stirring up a hornets' nest, by allying with the IHCA. Pilon would not let the idea go. Grolle believed that Christian Jews could break the deadlock between Church and Israel. Why not give it a try? Enker claimed that the number of 'secret believers'<sup>30</sup> was huge, regardless of what the statistics said. They deserved a place of their own in the land of their fathers:

Where they can find spiritual development, freedom of speech and above all Christian education for their children.<sup>31</sup>

Either a *moshav ovdim* (private homes and plots) or *moshav shitufi* (with communal ownership of the land) would be acceptable. A classic kibbutz, with communal childcare and both parents working, was considered less appropriate for traditional Christians.

A core population of *Meshichim* in the village would be supported by Gentiles. Half a century before, Laurence Oliphant<sup>32</sup> had urged Protestant sympathizers of Jewish settlement to join the endeavour from Europe and America. He had moved to Galilee, unlike Christian Zionists who preferred the comforts of the West.<sup>33</sup> Pilon also followed Oliphant's advice to prevent supervision by a church. 'The business has to earn money and it is no place for theological disputes!' As the Rufeisen case showed, publicity could best be avoided.<sup>34</sup> After the expected closure of the maternity in 1959, he still hoped to use the facilities of the Scotti, perhaps in partnership with a new clinic for rheumatic diseases<sup>35</sup> and a chicken farm.<sup>36</sup> The Tiberias Fund suggested to move to Brazil or Canada, where agricultural land was much cheaper.<sup>37</sup>

Ies Walpot advised them to settle in the countryside. His teacher Willem Banning had introduced him to religious socialism, that reminded him of Mapai.<sup>38</sup> There was nowhere better to work on principles of religious socialism than in a kibbutz. Walpot tilled the land in Ayeleth Hashachar, where Shlomo Bezek

28 Sachar, *A History of Israel*, 604. Rufeisen received permission to live in the Carmelite monastery in Haifa.

29 Interview Racheli Eschel-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018. 'Shlomo and Johan: they talked and talked and talked. And played chess.'

30 Evangelist Jacob Blum used the expression in 1949: 'Together with the *olim* (immigrants) many Jewish Christians arrive in the country. We have very many secret believers here, though they are afraid to show it openly.' J. Blum to F.W. Grosheide, Jerusalem 15 April 1949, HDC VU archive F.W. Grosheide, box 1.

31 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, Tiberias 21 February 1958, HUA, archive deputies Church and Israel RCN inv.nr. 371.

32 Cf. Linda Osband and Jan Morris, *Famous travellers*, 93.

33 Shlomo Sand, *The invention of the Land of Israel*, 163.

34 J.J. Pilon to J. Alkahé, 21 December 1959, HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

35 H.J. Bonda to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 18 October 1958, AJP.

36 J.J. Pilon, J.M. Snoek and C.A. van Walraven to C.B. Bavinck, Tiberias 19 October 1958, AJP.

37 H.J. Bonda to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 14 February 1959, AJP.

38 W. Bouwman, 'Willem Banning', in G. Harinck (ed.), *Christelijke Encyclopedie* I, Kampen 2005, 132-133.

lived.<sup>39</sup> Johan Pilon felt attracted to the idea, but also kept an eye on the Scotti. For the time being, these were the only land holdings available.<sup>40</sup>

## WCC

When the World Council of Churches secretary-general Willem Visser 't Hooft invited project proposals, Muller-Duvernoy tried to enlist their help.<sup>41</sup> A 'VIP-meeting' was held in Geneva in the summer of 1958. Harcourt Samuel, Heinz Leuner and Nahum Levison attended on behalf of the IHCA, together with Israel Tabaksblatt, as a representative for DRC. Muller-Duvernoy was disappointed to find that their support was lukewarm at best.

Levison's father, Sir Leon, had converted to Presbyterianism. He had struggled to realize 'a Hebrew Christian Colony' (in Gaza), but had given up. Levison Jr saw no reason to try again.<sup>42</sup> At the end of the Mandate, Jewish-Presbyterians had been advised to move to the United Kingdom.<sup>43</sup> Apart from these considerations, the rural settlement idea seemed outdated, even in Israel: 'The vast majority of the million new immigrants have turned their backs on the kibbutz.'<sup>44</sup> The WCC noted that attacks on Jewish Mission had earned Muller-Duvernoy few friends in Christian circles.<sup>45</sup> He was distrusted by Leuner, whose deepest desire was that Jews and Christians would become 'one flock'.<sup>46</sup> In the end, Muller-Duvernoy had to admit defeat: the road via the WCC and IHCA led to nowhere.<sup>47</sup> Tabaksblatt warned Pilon against a similar attempt.<sup>48</sup>

That left the Tiberias Fund. 'The Rotterdam committee can handle this, unlike the unwieldy, less business-minded church bodies.'<sup>49</sup> 'In our view, the Geneva talks have failed', Pilon reacted. 'The IHCA was the dominant factor. Well, we can say confidently that they do not have the proper people, nor the money, not in this country. All they will do is talk, and little else.'<sup>50</sup> He preferred to keep even the DRC at arm's length:

We could not refuse Tabaksblatt access to our report, but it would have been wiser to keep him out (...). Personally, I like him. He remains a good friend. Nevertheless, until we have the whole thing firmly on its feet, I will no longer show him any details.<sup>51</sup>

39 Interview I.J. Walpot by author, Deventer 30 January 2014.

40 J.J. Pilon, memorandum on possible uses of the Church of Scotland Hospital properties after closure of the government-sponsored maternity in April-June 1959, LDC CCI DRC inv.nr. 282.

41 U.H. van Beyma to J.J. Pilon, Geneva 7 September 1956, AJP. They knew each other from Indonesia.

42 H.L. Ellison, N. Levison and H. Samuel, *The International Hebrew Christian Alliance. Report on Israel*, in HDC VU collection K. Kroon.

43 Cf. Kees Jan Rodenburg, *Joodse volgelingen van Jezus*, 104.

44 H.L. Ellison, *The Christian Approach to the Jew*, 43.

45 U.A. van Beyma to J.J. Pilon, Geneva 19 December 1956, AJP.

46 H.D. Leuner, *Ein Christuszeugnis aus Israel*, 16.

47 S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.J. Pilon, The Hague 20 March 1958, AJP.

48 S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.J. Pilon, The Hague 8 May 1958, AJP.

49 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, Tiberias 12 January 1959, AJP.

50 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, Tiberias 13 May 1958, AJP.

51 Ibidem.

It was Shelman who drew his attention to a Swiss surgeon in Nazareth, who might bring in much-needed expertise.<sup>52</sup> Hans Bernath and his wife Madeleine Perret belonged to the Free Evangelical Churches.<sup>53</sup> A basic principle for them was the autonomy of local communities. Pacifism was another defining trait. The Nazareth hospital of the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society tried to reach out to those who were most in need. A third of the Arab population in Israel depended on its services, included the Druzes.<sup>54</sup> Pilon was impressed but was also aware of the fact that the Free Church model differed from the highly organized structures of the DRC and RCN. More importantly, Swiss Free Churches kept their distance from any military rule; including that of the State of Israel.

### Competition

Settlement had already become something of a fancy among Protestants in Israel. While Robert Lindsey planned a Baptist farm near Petah Tiqva, the Seventh Day Adventists managed to build a vegetarian kibbutz near Tsefat (Safed). These settlements were basically private enterprises, without backing of any major church or ecumenical body. Pilon and Bakker believed they could do the same. There were plenty of suitable plots near Lake Kinneret:

Church of Scotland owns parcels near Tabga,<sup>55</sup> with some graves. Do they have official confirmation of ownership? How large is the site near Ford House<sup>56</sup> and the Bible stand, where they planned the Memorial Church? Near Yakfie<sup>57</sup> lies a plot beside the lake cemetery, suitable for a first start there. A few families perhaps, operating a chicken farm or growing tomatoes and citrus fruits?<sup>58</sup>

Muller-Duvernoy had plans for the same area,<sup>59</sup> eliciting a question by Van Beyma why they did not work together.<sup>60</sup> The Dutch, however, had no intention of cooperating with the WCC. Elfan B. Rees, WCC advisor in the Middle East, opposed the funding of projects in Israel – unless the same amount of aid went to the Arabs. Van Beyma, connected to the Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees, thought this a reasonable proposition, but Bakker dismissed it as nonsensical.<sup>61</sup> In his opinion the WCC simply did not possess the guts to take sides in the conflict between Israel and the Arab States. Even less could be expected from the IHCA: ‘Because of the cost and because there are so few confessed Hebrew Christians desirous of joining.’<sup>62</sup>

52 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, Tiberias 12 June 1959, AJP.

53 Ueli Jungen, ‘Die Freien Evangelischen Gemeinden’, 134–140.

54 A.M. Kerr (EMMS) to H. Leslie Kirkley, Edinburgh 24 January 1959, in BA Oxfam archives PRF box 388. The Victoria Hospital in Damascus closed in 1958.

55 To the North of Lake Kinneret, not far from Capernaum.

56 In Safad.

57 Close to Tiberias.

58 R. Bakker to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 24 August 1958, AJP.

59 C. Muller-Duvernoy, ‘Ness Ammim. Un village chrétien en terre d’Israël’, *La Réforme* 30 January 1965.

60 H. van Beyma to J.J. Pilon and S.P. Tabaksblatt, Geneva 20 March 1957, AJP.

61 R. Bakker to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 21 June 1958, AJP.

62 S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.J. Pilon, The Hague 2 July 1958, AJP.

It appeared that Claude Muller-Duvernoy had got wind of Pilon's report via *Tabaksblatt*. Claude still hoped to join forces, praising 'Johan's intelligent plans for our moshav'.<sup>63</sup> He badly needed a sponsor like the Tiberias Fund: sympathetic to Israel but not entangled in church policies.<sup>64</sup> Bakker had attended a Geneva meeting where Claude walked out and slammed the doors behind him.<sup>65</sup> Disappointed in church policies and even in his native France (a country of 'stupid colonels and apprentice-fascists'), Muller-Duvernoy wanted to move to Israel as soon as possible. Going to Geneva had been a mistake:

I am a little fed up with parishes and polite ministers, with sermons and conferences (...). But I am just back, and not at all reconciled with the British. Ellison and Harcourt Samuel rivalled in pious hypocrisy concerning Israel and the moshav. I was alone there with that dear Bakker.<sup>66</sup>

Alas for him, Claude's crusades had cost him too much goodwill among his fellow Christians.<sup>67</sup> After quitting the SEJ and clashing with the WCC, he was facing the challenge of realizing his 'colonie agricole en Eretz-Israel' by other means.<sup>68</sup> The Dutch however had already decided not to cooperate with him, but with Bernath, despite their differences.

Bernath was as busy as ever in his overcrowded hospital, where Walpot came to visit.<sup>69</sup> The Swiss surgeon had not forgotten about the refugee camps Akaba and el-Auja near Jericho. 'The misery was heartbreaking.'<sup>70</sup> This was the harsh reality of power politics. The effects could be seen in Nazareth as well: 'Restrictions on movement imposed by military rule, absence of means of travel and the general depressed mood of the people'.<sup>71</sup> Tourist guides used to warn unsuspecting pilgrims against squalor and pushy street vendors. It was advised to only plan a short visit to the holy places, and then to be off again as soon as possible.<sup>72</sup> Walpot was taught by Hans and Madeleine Bernath to view this situation differently. 'The Israeli government seems oblivious to the troubles of these people, who are living as a minority on their home ground.'<sup>73</sup> Celebrations for Independence Day, 1 May 1958, ended in local disturbances.<sup>74</sup> It fell to the EMMS hospital to treat the wounded.

Hans Bernath did not favour a settlement on confiscated Arab land. Muller-Duvernoy had presumed that a suitable plot would be rented out by Keren

63 C. Muller-Duvernoy to Pilon family, Neuchâtel 18 June 1958, AJP.

64 R. Bakker to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 21 June 1958, AJP.

65 R. Bakker to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 12 July 1958, AJP.

66 Claude and Marianne Muller-Duvernoy to Stijn and Johan Pilon, Cernier (Neuchâtel) 19 July 1958, AJP.

67 Claude Muller-Duvernoy to Pilon family, Neuchâtel 18 June 1958, AJP.

68 Claude Muller-Duvernoy to Pilon family, Cernier 18 December 1958, AJP.

69 Interview I.J. Walpot by author, Deventer 30 January 2014.

70 Shafik Farah, *What shall I do with my life?*, 75. Even Grolle admitted: 'These tent camps are hardly suitable for beasts' (*Een volk op weg naar huis*, 8).

71 Elias S. Srouji, *Cyclamens from Galilee*, 182.

72 Erich Lüth, *Israel. Heimat für Juden und Araber*, 31-32.

73 I.J. Walpot, 'Arabieren in isolement', in *Leeuwarder Courant* 18 October 1958.

74 Rami Kassis (ed.), *Palestine & Palestinians*, 331-340 (Nazareth).

Kayemet LeYisrael (KKL)<sup>75</sup> or assigned by Israeli authorities from available ‘abandoned land’. Such assets, however, were treated as the exclusive property of the Jewish nation.<sup>76</sup> Keren Hayesod, a semi-governmental institute, had been founded to assist in the national development of agricultural settlements.<sup>77</sup> A farm that was also to be used for ‘Jewish Christian activities in Israel’ had little to expect from these quarters.<sup>78</sup> A location near the coast or the border was out of the question anyway, for military reasons. As Bakker remarked: a plot in the interior was the only remaining option.<sup>79</sup> But how, if the KKL remained unforthcoming? The answer came from Hans Bernath. One of his patients, a Druze, considered selling a plot of land near Akko.<sup>80</sup>

75 Jewish National Fund. ‘The Hebrew name, *Keren Kayemet Le’Yisrael*, came from a Talmudic dictum about good deeds: their fruits enjoyed in this world, while the capital abides [*ha’keren kayemet*] in the world to come’ (Martin Gilbert, *Israel*, 19).

76 Shlomo Sand, *The invention of the land of Israel*, 226-227.

77 Established in 1920 as a ‘Foundation Fund’ (*Keren Hayesod*). Cf. Dorothy F. Zeligs, *The story of modern Israel*, 229 and Martin Gilbert, 46: ‘a fund to enable the newly acquired land to be developed’.

78 C.A. van Walraven, J.J. Pilon, J.M. Snoek to C.B. Bavinck, Tiberias 19 October 1958, HUA, archive deputies Church and Israel RCN inv.nr. 356.

79 Minutes ICI Amsterdam 19 October 1961, HDC VU collection K. Kroon. ‘Why go to Galilee? For strategic reasons, the border is out of the question (...). The interior is our only option.’

80 Cf. Gert van Klinken, ‘De dokter en de sjeik’, in *DNK (Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse kerkgeschiedenis na 1800)* 80 (June 2014), 39-57.



## VILLAGE LANDS<sup>I</sup>

Sheikh ‘Abd Allāh (Abdullah or Abdallah) Salman Saleh Khayr lived in Abu Sinan, in the foothills of Western Galilee. It was commonly assumed that the Druze people had split off from Shia Islam during the eleventh century. Their number in Israel in 1958 stood at 20,800, with the Khayrs in control of one of the three leading *hamulas* or ‘extended families’.<sup>2</sup> Originally they hailed from Lebanon, the two other hamulas being the Tarifs in Julis and the Muadi’s in Yarka. Their sheikhs formed the spiritual leadership of the Druzes in Israel, a Tarif acting as chairman. As top-ranking hamula, the Tarifs also controlled the ‘grave’ of Nabi Shu’ayb (Jethro) near Hittin.<sup>3</sup> Following their belief in reincarnation<sup>4</sup>, the Druze treated the site as a cenotaph.<sup>5</sup>

Smaller families<sup>6</sup> such as the al-Biri depended on the Khayrs. ‘Selon ce qu’on raconte, la famille Kheir acquit par l’épée la situation prépondérante qu’elle occupe.’<sup>7</sup> Lebanon and the Gebel Druse in Syria were major centres of the Druzes. Grains and cattle from the Hauran had been exported via Haifa, where the Hedjaz-railway connected to Beit Shean and from there to Damascus.

1 Cf. Gert van Klinken, ‘Local Leadership’, 212-230.

2 ‘The hamula, or larger family – based on patrilineal association – is kept together by kinship and several rights and associations.’ J.M. Landau, *The Arabs in Israel*, 8.

3 Laila Parsons, *The Druze*, 18-19.

4 Cf. Runa Mackay (EMMS): ‘One of their beliefs is the transmigration of souls. A Druze friend in Lebanon named his second son after a brother killed in the war. He told me that, although he was delighted with his new son, there was sadness given the fact that somebody else must have lost a son.’ *Exile in Israel*, 49.

5 Gerard Russell, *Heirs to forgotten kingdoms*, 145.

6 Druze leaders ‘of local importance’ mentioned by the British in 1952 were: Yusuf Saleh Nasr-Eddin, Kaftan Azzam en Hussein Azzam (all from Daliat el-Karmel), Najib Mansoor (Isfiya) and sheikh Saleh Kneffis (Shefar’am; Knesset member). C.N. Ezard (British Consulate General, Haifa), report on Druze community in Israel, 26 March 1952, in: National Archives (Kew), Foreign Office 1018/84.

7 Yoel Bar, ‘Le millionnaire druze voyage en autobus...’. Newspaper clipping 1966 from unknown provenance, ANAG.





Fig. 5 Sheikh Abdallah Khayr from Abu Sinan (Cor van der Spek, Broek op Langedijk).

## V Abdullah Salman Saleh Khayr

Had the UN partition plan of 1947 been put into effect, then the district of Akko would have become part of Arab Palestine. The war brought about another outcome. From now on it became easier for the Khayrs to visit Switzerland than to have tea with their relatives fifty kilometres away in Lebanon. The nearest place for a *rendezvous* was Cyprus, as anyone who visited an Arab country ran the hazard of being unable to return to Israel. Prospects in Galilee looked bleak. The Druzes had managed to retain their assets, as they had taken sides with the Zionists in 1948. However, the people of Abu Sinan could not freely access their property in the Plain of Asher. Due to military surveillance, they could only leave their village after being granted a signed Israeli permit allowing them to do so. Their outlying fields in the plain, close to the kibbutzim, became difficult to access. As could be expected, yields went into decline. These Druze lands were the only remaining places where Bedouins were still allowed to graze their flocks at will. Within a decade, crops vanished, ending up in the bellies of goats and sheep, leaving a desert of thistles and weeds. It was presumed that Khayr would accept a financial compensation for land that was obviously of no use for Abu Sinan, and move to Lebanon. The village lands would then become part of the assets of Keren Kayemet.

### *Abdu'l-Bahá in Abu Sinan*<sup>1</sup>

A Bahai community had settled in Haifa during the nineteenth century. The Bahai originated from Persia, where they had come under persecution. Subsequently, they attracted converts to their faith in Europe and America. Abdu'l-Bahá (1844-1921) was a son of Baha'u'lláh (1817-1892), prophet and founder of the faith.<sup>2</sup> Due to cordial relations between the Bahai and the Druzes, Abdu'l-Bahá decided to move to the relative safety of Abu Sinan after the outbreak of the First World War. Hospitality had been offered by the aged sheikh Saleh Khayr and his four sons, daughters-in-law, and many children. Others who moved to Abu Sinan at that time included Habib Mu'ayyad (1888-1971), Abdu'l-Bahá's daughter Ruha Khanum and the Americans Edith Sanderson (1871-1955) and Lua Getsinger (1871-1916).

1 I thank Marga Martens, secretary for external affairs of the Bahai community in the Netherlands, for her comments (personal communication to author, Amsterdam 9 February 2015).

2 Cf. J.E. Esslemont, *Bahá'U'lláh*, Wilmette (Illinois) 1961.

Thanks to their keen observations, we have a picture of the household in which the then nine-year-old Abdallah Khayr grew up. The core of the family residence had been built in 1617 by emir Fahu'd-Din Mani.<sup>3</sup> By village standards it was described as a palace, noted by the Frenchman Victor Guérin in 1868.<sup>4</sup> Guérin's visit to Abu Sinan had not been without motive. As an admirer of the Crusaders, he hoped to revive their days of glory by turning the area into a French protectorate.<sup>5</sup> Habib Mu'ayyad viewed Abu Sinan in a different way, as a society in its own right:

A hamlet (...) on a choice hill, with a pleasant and vivifying air and water. The people cultivated fig and olive trees and grew grapevines. The inhabitants were mostly Druzes, with a few Catholic or Jewish residents, all of whom were engaged in farming. The Druzes are a mostly robust people, adapted to mountain life. Though their religious convictions are not known with any degree of certainty; that is, they believe in a single, all-powerful Omnipotent One who revealed Himself through His manifestations.<sup>6</sup>

Discussion of religious topics came naturally. Sitarieh Khanum (Sarah Louisa Blomfield) remembered this aspect of her stay in Abu Sinan:

Khidr, a prophet of pre-Mosaic times, is greatly honoured by the Druzes. He, according to their sacred legend, having drunk of the Water of Immortality, is now alive, and will live for evermore. He dwells in the Invisible Kingdom but assumes bodily form and appears to those who love him in their dreams.

The places where Khidr is seen in dreamland are held sacred. These holy places are numerous. Muslims also hold these shrines in veneration, make pilgrimages to them, praying for such benefits as healing, and vowing to return and give thanks, when their prayers are granted.

The Cave of Elijah on Mount Carmel is one of the shrines, where Khidr is also honoured both by the Druzes and Muslims. Important pilgrimages are made to this cave at certain seasons of the year, where a lamb is sacrificed in memory of Abraham and of Isaac, whom they look upon as friends of Khidr, also associated with Moses and Elijah.<sup>7</sup>

The Druzes also honoured the sixth Fatimide Shia khalif of Egypt, al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah (985-1021). Manifestations of the divine were manifold, a belief shared by the Bahai. Abdu'l-Bahá was revered by the people of Abu Sinan: 'They loved Him, trusted Him, and honoured Him, with all their hearts, feeling and believing that His wisdom grasped the future as well as the present. Prayers were chanted at these meetings, the Druze friends joining with the Baha'is.'<sup>8</sup>

3 'Fakhreddin, the pre-eminent Druze feudal lord in the early seventeenth century, carved out of the Ottoman domain a territory that was essentially independent, and whose borders were close to those of modern Lebanon. Fakhreddin is a figure of national importance: he gives Lebanon a native founder and a historical legitimacy in the face of those who say that the country was a creation of the French colonial powers in 1926.' Gerard Russell, *Heirs to forgotten kingdoms*, 141.

4 Victor Guérin, *Description géographique 3* (Galilée), 21.

5 Ilan Pappé, 'The many faces', 48-50.

6 Quoted in Ahang Rabbani, 'Abdu'l Bahá in Abu Sinan: September 1914 - May 1915' ([http://bahai-library.com/rabbani\\_abdubaha-abusinan](http://bahai-library.com/rabbani_abdubaha-abusinan)).

7 Sitarieh Khanum, *The Chosen Highway*, 199. Near Kafr Yasif is sanctuary Maqam Sayyidina al-Khidr, which is in the care of the Tarif family.

8 Ibidem, 191.

A balcony offered panoramic views of the Plain of Asher below, where village lands of Abu Sinan bordered the fields of al-Summayriyya, an Arab village nearer to the coast. Habib Mu'ayyad also mentions the *divan* of the Khayr residence, 'the reception room, vast and comfortable, for the male portion of the family'. The ladies had their own separate wing. Yusuf Khayr, eldest son of sheikh Saleh, took responsibility as 'shaykh of the Khalwa – the sacred House of Prayer – which is entered by none but the Druzes who are initiated'. He belonged to the selected '*uqqal*', those initiated in the holy traditions. Sitarieh Khanum paid another visit in 1922. By that time Abdu'l-Bahá had passed away:

Across one end of this room were bookcases filled with beautifully bound books. How I longed to know what they contained! Sacred writings naturally; but their religion is secret, none but the initiated are ever permitted to either enter their houses of worship (khalwa<sup>9</sup>), or to read their holy books.

They are not Christians, although they revere the Lord Christ. They are not Jews, but they revere Moses and some of the other prophets: Nabi-Shu'ayb, the father-in-law of Moses, is one of the saints they esteem. (...) The Druzes wear a white amice, under the zombaz, a long, black coat, which, with a large snow-white turban, has a pleasing and dignified effect. Both men and women are extraordinarily fine, noble-looking, strong and healthy people. (...) Tilling the ground, growing corn, olive oil and fruit for their simple needs, spending most of their days in the fresh, pure, bracing air. (...) The ladies are lovely, with slight, graceful figures, regular features, wonderful eyes with long lashes (...).

What their beliefs are, and their mode of worship, no outside person is ever permitted to know. But their religion is deep and real, as shown in their lives. The Druzes are kind, courteous, and nobly hospitable. Strict in their morality – the husband of one wife; no lapse from virtue is permitted – the penalty would be terrible, even death. No Druze family would suffer dishonour. No Druze, either man or woman, can with impunity breach any of their religious laws.<sup>10</sup>

Until then, the Khayrs had been landed gentry in their nook of the world. Abdu'l-Bahá had encouraged them to broaden their ambitions and to join the British civil administration. Much was expected from the intelligent Abdallah, son of Salman (Yusuf's brother) and grandson of sheikh Saleh.<sup>11</sup> Lebanon provided proof of the transforming impact of Western education. Gifted youngsters learned languages and other useful crafts. By doing so, they qualified for professions that remained out of grasp for their parents.<sup>12</sup> Young Khayr was to study with the British or the Americans. The French protected the interests of the Maronites, who were affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church<sup>13</sup> and viewed as rivals of the Druzes. Abbé

9 'Druze society is divided into those who have been initiated into the secrets of doctrine, the '*uqqal*', and those who have not, the '*juhhal*'. (...) They gather every Thursday in a meeting house (*al-kehakwa*) to discuss the affairs of the village and to study the *Rasa'il al-bikma* (Druze epistles). The '*juhhal*' are allowed to attend only the first, secular session in the '*khalwa*', the spiritual part being reserved for the '*uqqal*.' Laila Parsons, *The Druze*, 12-14.

10 [http://bahai-library.com/blomfield\\_chosen\\_highway](http://bahai-library.com/blomfield_chosen_highway).

11 Ahang Rabbani, 'Abdu'l Bahá in Abu Sinan: September 1914 – May 1915', in *Bahá'i Studies Review* XIII (2005) ([http://bahai-library.com/rabbani\\_abdubaha-abusinan](http://bahai-library.com/rabbani_abdubaha-abusinan)).

12 Julius Jost, *Ein Frühlingsritt*, 8.

13 Runa Mackay: 'Until the nineteenth century the Maronites remained confined to Mount Lebanon and it was there that they established their own feudal structure but also developed a deep sense of affinity with Christian Europe, especially France. Maronites to this day use French as their first language and even deny being Arabs, saying that they are Phoenicians. They view themselves as European, not part of the Arab world, and are seen in this way by the rest of Lebanon.' *Exile in Israel*, 48.

J.J. Bourassé took no pains to conceal his loathing for their ‘fanaticism’.<sup>14</sup> The British, however, were undismayed to seek a strategic alliance with Druze interests in the area.<sup>15</sup>

Western descriptions of Druze tended to be rather vague. Some presumed they were some sort of Deists, lacking a personal God. Others noted the martial attitudes of the ‘sect’,<sup>16</sup> but also their hospitality and abstinence from alcohol or tobacco among the initiated.<sup>17</sup> For Zionist authors, they ranked as resident strangers<sup>18</sup>: ‘half Arab, half Christian’.<sup>19</sup> Walpot attended a festival, as a tourist would: ‘The womenfolk in colourful costumes, the males in long Arab knickerbockers and white headdresses (...) consummate singers and dancers.’<sup>20</sup> Rumours circulated about their implication in a bloody revolt on the Syrian side of the border in 1953. It was also widely assumed that most Druze villages maintained an arsenal to cope with any emergency.<sup>21</sup> Pilon’s idea of a Druze sheikh was a clansman from the mountains, with a dagger at his side. To his surprise, he met a gentleman in Western clothes, whose English was flawless.

### ‘Abd Allāh Salman Saleh Khayr

Abdallah Khayr, born in 1906, had received a degree in Beirut (political sciences), while also studying law at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Druze emir Muhammad Arslan was one of his heroes. In the late nineteenth century, Arslan had presided over a Syrian scientific society, *al-Jam‘iya al-‘Ilmiya al-Suriya*. His success had opened a way to a career in politics.<sup>22</sup>

The Syrian Protestant College in Beirut had developed under the leadership of the American Howard Bliss (1860-1920), with courses in English and Arabic. T.E. Lawrence, later ‘Lawrence of Arabia’, visited in 1909. ‘Chief study is medicine, & pharmacy: but law, agriculture, dentistry, and teaching are now commencing. Nearly every educated Syrian in Beyrout has been through some part of this college, & all through the country one finds the leading men in the village its graduates.’<sup>23</sup> The ‘American College’ was of such importance, that it remained operational during the First World War. George Antonius, from an Arab Greek-Orthodox family in Jerusalem, became gripped by the ideal of a secular Arab State while studying here.<sup>24</sup>

14 J.J. Bourassé, *La Terre Sainte*, 512-513.

15 Gerard Russell, *Heirs to forgotten kingdoms*, 161.

16 J. Krayenbelt, *Het Heilige Land*, 265-266. Cf. Jaap van Gelderen, ‘Kruistocht’, 61-81.

17 Julius Jost, *Ein Frühlingsritt*, 148.

18 Jesaias Press, *Neues Palästina-Handbuch*, 81-82.

19 J.J.L. Engelsman, ‘De ontwikkeling van Israëls economie in de jaren 1948-1958’, in *Bulletin Judaica et Hebraica*, Rotterdam April 1958, 16.

20 I.J. Walpot, ‘Reisindrücken uit Israël’, in *Leeuwarder Courant* 20 October 1958.

21 Cf. Walter Bosshard, *Conflict en intrige in het Nabije Oosten*, 211.

22 George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening*, 53.

23 Anthony Sattin, *Young Lawrence*, 52.

24 George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening*, 42-43.

In 1920 the College became a full university, with a campus overlooking George’s Bay. By 1956 they had 12,000 alumni. ‘This school’, in the poignant words of Bliss, ‘is destined for all, without discrimination by colour, race or religion. All are welcome to use our facilities and remain believers in one God, many gods or no god at all.’<sup>25</sup> Abdu’l-Bahá had especially appreciated the progress in the field of medicine:

There is spiritual healing and there is also material healing. Unless they work together, a cure is impossible. The material element is medicine; spiritual healing is of God. Man must work in unison with the laws ordained by providence.<sup>26</sup>

When old sheikh Saleh expressed concerns, Abdu’l-Bahá predicted that his grandson would keep his moral integrity. Abdallah Khayr was enrolled in the American University. Abdu’l-Bahá did not live to see it: he died in 1921 and was buried on the slopes of Mount Karmel. His tomb, set in a lovely garden, became a destination for pilgrimage.

In the early 1930s, Abu Sinan had a population of 311 Druzes and 274 Christians.<sup>27</sup> For Abdallah Khayr, academic success opened a way into the wider world. He founded a Druze Union Society in Palestine in 1932. Sheikh Hasan Abu Rukn from Isfiya, in the Karmel region, became a member. According to Laila Parsons, one of the aims was to undermine the dominance of the Tarif family:

Khayr respected Zionism as a political movement, with all its ancillary political organizations, and based the Society’s charter on a Zionist model. In setting up the Society, he hoped to create a political body that would take power over Druze affairs away from the Tarif family. He also wanted the Society to obtain control of the *waqf* (religious endowment) of Nabi Shu’ayb, thereby removing it from Tarif control.<sup>28</sup>

From 1935 until the end of the British mandate, Khayr served as ‘district officer’ in Galilee. In that capacity he met Aharon Chaim Cohen and Itzhak Ben-Zvi, who would later become president of Israel. However, Khayr felt more at ease with the English, an appreciation that seems to have been reciprocal. The sheikh even received a British passport. Visitors to his home noted a ‘country style’, while being served a high tea.<sup>29</sup> His archaeological collection was exhibited in a small museum near the Crusader castle Starckenberg (also known as Montfort or Kul’at el Kurn).<sup>30</sup>

Presided by sheikh Salman Tarif, the heads of the hamulas received a Jewish delegation in the Khayr residence in Abu Sinan in 1948, to confirm their formal recognition of the State of Israel. Meanwhile, inhabitants of Muslim villages like al-Summayriyya and Kuwaykat, if still in the country, were forbidden to show themselves in their former fields. Khayr was much better off, but still had to tread carefully: ‘The Druze were not immune to arbitrary land seizures. Although rela-

25 For a Dutch impression: J. Klatter, *De wondere wereld van Nijl tot Eufraat*, 121–123.

26 Ahang Rabbani, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Abu Sinan’ ([http://bahai-library.com/rabbani\\_abdubaha-abusinan](http://bahai-library.com/rabbani_abdubaha-abusinan)).

27 E. Mills (ed.), *Census of Palestine, 1931*, 99.

28 Laila Parsons, *The Druze*, 23.

29 Interview Simon Schoon by author, Amersfoort 5 December 2013.

30 David Nicolle, *Crusader Castles*, 48.

tively peaceful, this period was chaotic, and there was no guarantee that co-operation with the Jews during the war enabled one to keep one's land in peacetime.<sup>31</sup>

The British consulate in Haifa wrote a report about them in 1952. Their main centres were Daliat el-Karmel (2,700), Yarka (1,900) en Julis (850). Isolated pockets in Jewish surroundings: 'They remain part of the wider Druze community of the Middle East rather than part of the people among whom they live'. Nominally the Khayrs were being headed by sheikh Yusuf ('an amazing 93'), who would die later that year. Amin Tarif (Julis) was sixty, Kamal Muadi (Yarka) thirty. 'These three men, now as during the Mandate, constitute the religious leadership of the Druzes in Israel, and apparently in matters of religion, their authority is not disputed. In civil matters, the custom is to consult and persuade rather than to impose decisions.' The Druzes were mostly farmers, but hardly 10 per cent of their population could find employment in agriculture. Many opted for the Israeli army. It is no wonder that they tried to keep their land assets intact: in Israel they held approximately 12,000 dunam, most of it the joint property of many smallholders.<sup>32</sup> Large landowners, such as the Khayrs, were an exception. Their sons used Israeli education to their advantage. Nevertheless, they also had the word 'Arab' stamped in their identity papers and were being supervised. It was expected that the more affluent would sell out and cross the border towards Lebanon or the Hauran.<sup>33</sup>

Both the Custodian of Abandoned Property and the kibbutzim were eager to obtain Druze lands in the coastal area. After the death of old sheikh Yusuf Khayr, it seemed unlikely that his young nephew and successor could resist the pressure to sell. His authority was a fraction of what it had been as district officer. The Tarifs were as firmly in control of Druze affairs as ever, and youngsters were leaving Abu Sinan. 'The pool of employment in the Civil Service etc., became closed to the Arab population', including the Druzes, whatever they thought about themselves as being different.<sup>34</sup> The sheikh felt ousted, with little to do but to look after his personal affairs.<sup>35</sup> It seemed indeed tempting to sell out, to invest in education of his children and to migrate to more promising parts of the world. Yet there was also a persisting feeling of obligation. The family was still held in some regards, with Abdallah's brother Ahmad being well-read in Druze matters.<sup>36</sup> Abdallah's son Ismael was educated by the Scots in Jaffa. As to the sheikh, Runa Mackay found his ways unchanged since he had been a district officer:

An English gentleman in the way he talked and clothed himself, briefcase in hand. Sheikh Abdallah saw himself as being part of something special. He could be rather authoritative. Rules regarding visiting times in the Nazareth hospital could be ignored: 'That's for the other people, not for us.' Also, he was an absolute strict Druze, with a traditional attitude

31 Laila Parsons, *The Druze*, 107.

32 A metric dunam is ten acres.

33 C.N. Ezard (British Consulate General, Haifa), report on Druze community in Israel, 26 March 1952, in National Archives (Kew), Foreign Office 1018/84.

34 Elias Srouji, *Cyclamens of Galilee*, 30.

35 Yoel Bar, 'Cheik Abdallah Kheir', *Information d'Israel* 21 January 1966.

36 Salman Falah, 'The Druze community in Israel', in *New Outlook. Middle East Monthly* June 1962,

to women. When his wife delivered a girl, he did not hide his disappointment that the child was not a boy.<sup>37</sup>

Khayr's aim during negotiations with Yitzhak Ben-Zvi had been to secure Druze autonomy.<sup>38</sup> It had not materialized. The sheikh felt angered by the policy of resettling Muslim 'present absentees' in Abu Sinan, which changed the social fabric beyond recognition. Together with Nimr al-Hawāri and the Christian lawyer Eliyās N. Kūsa, he tried his hand at party politics. Al-Hawāri had been a member of the Arab delegation in Rhodes in 1948, where the ceasefire with Israel had been agreed upon. Al-Hawāri, Kūsa and Khayr now campaigned for full civil rights of Arabs and Druzes and for the return of the refugees. Results were disappointing. Young Druzes seemed more committed to their chances in Israel than to a pan-Arab cause.<sup>39</sup> Muslims resented the preferential status of the Druzes. 'The Hawāri-Khayr-Kūsa group proved unable to attract sufficient Arab backing.'<sup>40</sup>

It came as little consolation that the Druzes were no longer subject to the Sharia-court in Akko (a remainder of Ottoman regulations). The ministry of Religious Affairs installed a supervisory committee for the registration of Druze marriages and divorces, the *Lajnat al-Murāgaba al-Madhbiyya*.<sup>41</sup> Members were sheikh Salman Tarif from Julis (chair), sheikh Husayn 'Alayān from Shefar'am and sheikh Khayr. Their task was to check that civil registers (*ma'dhuns*) conformed to Druze law and to Knesset regulation. The Druzes received their formal recognition as a religious entity in 1957. It was a step towards autonomy, but for Abdallah Khayr, there were few benefits. Unlike Jabr Dahish Muadi, he had failed to win a Knesset seat. His position hardly differed from a traditional 'clan elder', as described by Shimon Shamir:

In his way of life, a clan elder was almost indistinguishable from the other village family heads, but the power concentrated in his hands was manifold. In addition to his control of the clan's physical strength, he also benefited from the daily dependence of the clan members on his vasta (mediation) in their contacts with government authorities or other external bodies (landowners, moneylenders, other village notables and the like).

The Ottomans had granted full powers over their villagers to the sheikhs, provided they guaranteed the payment of taxes.<sup>42</sup> Nowadays, people would ask for democratic rights, job opportunities and health care. The Druze were not covered by the national healthcare Kupat Cholim, using the Christian EMMS-hospital in Nazareth instead. Runa Mackay came to know them well: 'The Druze women absolutely refuse to see a male doctor, so I would always be called to see and treat them.'<sup>43</sup>

37 Interview Runa Mackay by author, Edinburgh 12 January 2015.

38 Ahmad H. Sa'di, 'The role of social sorting', Ben Gurion University of the Negev 2011, www.ssc-queens.org.

39 E-mail R. Farah to author, Toronto 5 January 2013.

40 Jacob M. Landau, *The Arabs in Israel*, 73.

41 Aharon Layish, *Marriage, divorce and succession*, Leiden 1982, 4-5.

42 Shimon Shamir, 'Changes in village leadership', in *New Outlook. Middle East Monthly* March-April 1962, 93-112. Cf. Ilan Pappé, *The forgotten Palestinians*, 46.

43 Runa Mackay, *Exile in Israel*, 49.



## VI The Plain of Asher<sup>1</sup>

After years of depredation by the Bedouin flocks, the Druze ‘village lands’ east of kibbutz Lohamei HaGettaot had become a wilderness. Yields had been reduced to almost nil, but taxes still had to be paid. The sums involved would have been substantial, for the alluvial soil was of good quality. Khayr finally made up his mind to sell – but not to the Israelis, as he felt that this would amount to giving in to blackmail. Nor was a sale to Muslims an option, even if they had the money. As noted in the British report of 1952, ‘traditional antagonism between Druzes and Muslims’ still persisted, ‘while customarily Arab Christians and Druzes got on well together’. In mixed villages, Christians used to live among the others, as a buffer zone.<sup>2</sup>

Khayr communicated to Rafiq Farah, the Arab Anglican priest in Haifa, that he preferred a Christian buyer. Farah informed Bernath, who alerted the Tiberias Fund. They immediately responded, although no one had heard of Abu Sinan before. Pilon learned more about the qualities of this parcel of land in the *Guide Bleu Israel*, edition 1955:

The plain of Akko is exceptionally productive (...) especially now depredations by successive foreign invaders have come to an end.<sup>3</sup>

To the West the sea, to the South the Karmel, to the East the Galilean Hills, on the Northern skyline the rocky spur of Rosh Haniqra. In between lay a plain of about thirty kilometres in length and ten kilometres in width. Under the alluvial top layers lay *kurkar*, chalk mixed with red sandstone. It curved up towards the coastline, forming dunes and marshes behind the beaches. The yearly rainfall was about 600 mms. Sediments by streams from the hills added to the fertility<sup>4</sup> that was referred to in the patriarchal blessing of Jacob:

Asher’s food shall be rich, and he shall yield royal dainties (Gen. 49:20).

- 1 Named after the tribe of Asher, that according to traditions had mixed with the native Canaanites and Phoenicians (Judges 1:31 and following). Based on information in Gen. 49:13 and Deut. 33:18-19 some prefer to assign the plain not to Asher but to Zebulun. Cf. A. van Selms, *Levend verleden*, Nijkerk 1967 and for Talmud and Midrash on this matter J. Press, ‘Beiträge’, 267.
- 2 C.N. Ezard (British Consulate General, Haifa), report on Druze community in Israel, 26 March 1952, National Archives (Kew), Foreign Office 1018/84.
- 3 Elian Finbert, *Israel (Les Guides Bleus)*, Paris 1955, 179. In the library of Johan and Stijn Pilon, Beit Pilon in Nes Ammim.
- 4 Johan Negenman, *Geografische gids*, 33.



Fig. 6 View from Abu Sinan 1947 – Jacob Rosner, *A Palestine Picture Book* (New York: Schocken, 1947, 12).

Dutch seventeenth century maps portrayed the tribal area of Asher as part of Lebanon.<sup>5</sup> Whether it belonged to the Holy Land was debatable. Assyriologists suspected that the name had a non-Hebrew background, related to Ashur or perhaps Ashera.<sup>6</sup> According to the Gospels, the Plain of Asher had never been visited by Jesus. Akko in his days had been part of Phoenicia. The New Testament relates that the apostle Paul stopped over in Akko, during his voyage from Tyrus to Jerusalem (Acts 21:7). Somewhere in the vicinity Misrefôt Maïm and Beit HaEmek,<sup>7</sup> mentioned in the Book of Joshua, were supposed to have existed. Where precisely, no one could say.<sup>8</sup>

5 Tribus Aser, on the map of Nicolaus Visscher, *Terra Sancta, sive Promissionis, olim Palestina*, Amsterdam 1659. In: National Library of Israel (Givat Ram, Jerusalem), Eran Laor cartographic collection.

6 A.T. Olmstead, *History*, New York/London 1931.

7 Joshua 11:8 and 19:27-29.

8 The Anglican Henry Baker believed that the former Arab village of Amqa was the successor of Beit

Perhaps it could even be in the fields of Abu Sinan. According to Khayr, a village had once existed near al-Mansura. A hill bearing the same name was right in the middle of the plot that he put up for sale.<sup>9</sup> Mansura in Arabic means ‘victory’, perhaps an allusion to a takeover in an unspecified past. A British map noted a mud track that ran towards Abu Sinan: Tala el Bellâneh, or ‘mountain path’.<sup>10</sup> Land registry documents referred to ‘Salaib’, or ‘crosses’.<sup>11</sup> In 1969 a mosaic would be uncovered that may have belonged to a former Byzantine church.<sup>12</sup>

Khayr also owned an olive orchard near Kafir Yasif, which was also up for sale. Nearby was the Anglican chapel where Rafiq Farah used to preach.<sup>13</sup> Bernath and Pilon politely declined the offer. They wanted to create distance between themselves and their neighbours – whether Druze or Jewish – in order to build a settlement according to their own ideas.<sup>14</sup>

### Western perceptions

As far as Pilon could tell, there was nothing about al-Mansura in his books. Flavius Josephus had described Galilee as densely populated, but that was long ago. Zionist authors portrayed the area as barren and underdeveloped, at least until their arrival. It is not immediately clear why they did so, as maps prepared by Napoleon and the Palestine Exploration Society showed otherwise. The fields were well looked after, according to French sources.<sup>15</sup> Eliza Rogers (1828-1910) mentioned cereal crops, lentils, tobacco, cotton and sesame seeds, with the major obstacle to prosperity being the hefty taxation system of the Ottomans. The fellahin lacked the means for further development: ‘If the plain of Akka were cultivated with skill and energy, it would yield abundantly.’<sup>16</sup> This rather condescending view was reflected in proposals to ‘improve’ the area by European or American colonization. This idea, though also attractive to the Zionists, originated with the Christians. German geographer Carl Ritter (1779-1859) had advocated for a takeover of the Plain of Asher by European farmers, as the soil was excellent, and the port of Haifa was nearby. In his plan, the natives would be pushed off to the hills, just like the Indians in America had been relocated to the reservations.<sup>17</sup> This idea was not realized at that time. The *Baedecker* edition of 1894 mentioned a population that

HaEmek (*Bible Places, or the topography of the Holy Land*. Society for promoting Christian knowledge, London/New York 1897, 343 (<http://babel.hathitrust.org>). Cf. H.Th. Obbink, *Op Bijbelschen Bodem*, 222. Jesaias Press locates Misrefôt Maïm to the South of Rosh Haniqra (*Neues Palästina-Handbuch*, 492).

9 Hans Vetterli, ‘תִּישָׁאָרִי’, Stein am Rhein 2013, 2.

10 Survey of Western Palestine 1882-1888, sheet 5, in Palestine Exploration Fund, London.

11 Salman H. Abu-Sitta (ed.), *Atlas of Palestine*, 194-195. Aerial photograph in Salman H. Abu-Sitta (ed.), *Atlas of Palestine 1948*, map 153.

12 Interview Yusef Mubarki by author, Nes Ammim 10 May 2013.

13 C.R. Conder and H.H. Kitchener, *The survey of Western Palestine 1882-1888* 1 (Galilee). Palestine Exploration Fund, London 1998 (reprint), 146.

14 J. Bernath, ‘Technischer Bericht’ Thayngen 1 May 1960, HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.

15 Louis Lortet, *La Syrie d’aujourd’hui*, Paris 1884 (<http://www.mom.fr/digimom>).

16 Mary Eliza Rogers, *Domestic life*, 141-142.

17 Carl Ritter, *The comparative geography*, 367-368.

was almost exclusively Arab (Muslim or Christian) or Druze. Al-Sumayriyya and Kuwaykat, with the hill of al-Mansura in between them, received praise for their well-tended fields: 'The land is richly cultivated'.<sup>18</sup>

An uncommonly detailed description appeared in Germany in 1910. Married to an Arab wife, Julius Jost had a keen eye for the environment. He distinguished between intensive and extensive zones of cultivation. The former zone was found near villages such as ez-Zib (Achziw), Mazra'a and al-Sumayriyya with their gardens and orchards, protected by cactus hedges. The latter was an open field system. This dichotomy in the landscape could be explained by the fact that the extensive zones were also used by the Bedouin. Farming techniques were modernizing, though hampered by a lack of capital.<sup>19</sup>

Dutch Zionist Jacobus Henricus Kann admired the 'fertile plain of Acre' in 1907 primarily for its potential for Westerners. 'Eretz Israel, the Jewish Land, in ancient times known as Canaan, that is Lowland or Holland', seemed both exotic and familiar. 'Indeed, the plain is reminiscent of the Dutch coastal landscape.'<sup>20</sup> He was not alone in perceiving similarities of this kind. In 1874 the low-lying rocks on the beaches near al-Sumayriyya reminded Samuel Colcord Bartlett of Maine in the United States. 'The rocky coast, incessantly pounded by the waves, was familiar-looking.' There was a potential for development here, under Western supervision of course. Repairing the road to Tyr for example, 'built by the Romans, now neglected for more than a thousand years'.<sup>21</sup> Cultured men like Kann and Bartlett found the lack of any notable ancient monuments disappointing:

The whole of this plain of Acre is studded, especially at the foot of the surrounding hills, with mud-built villages, many of them inheriting ancient names, but none bearing any other signs of antiquity.<sup>22</sup>

The map in Kann's *Erets Israël* does not mention a Jewish settlement near Akko. Zionist holdings in 1907 were located further South or in the Jordan valley. Even the Zionist map of 1935 lacks a Jewish presence in the Plain of Asher.<sup>23</sup> Kann had visited again in 1919, accompanied by his wife and their friend Marie Lighthart-Lion Cachet who produced a memoir of their voyage. The coastal route, improved since Bartlett's days, traversed an open landscape with some occasional holm oaks. 'At a distance from the road, but clearly visible, were the black dots of Bedouin tents, surrounded by large herds of their cattle.'<sup>24</sup> *Harmworth's New Atlas of the World* (1920) stressed the importance of the coastal route, crossing the Wadi el-Mejūneh between al-Sumayriyya and Mezra (Mazra'a).<sup>25</sup> A railway connec-

18 Albert Socin and Immanuel Benziger, *Palestine and Syria* (ed. Karl Baedeker), 269.

19 Julius Jost, *Ein Frühlingsritt*, 57-75.

20 Jacobus Henricus Kann, *Erets Israël*, vi.

21 S.C. Bartlett, *From Egypt to Palestine*, 519.

22 Charles Wilson, *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai, and Egypt* 2, 71. Cf. Hisham Khatib, *Jerusalem, Palestine and Jordan*, 158-159.

23 'Erez Israel. Übersichtskarte', appendix to Georg Landauer, *Palästina*, Jüdische Buch-Vereinigung, Berlin 1935.

24 R.M. Lighthart-Lion Cachet, *Door Erets Israël*, 146-147.

25 *Harmworth's New Atlas of the World*, London 1920, 224 and 225 (ancient and modern Palestine).

tion was constructed as late as 1941-1942, with a tunnel underneath Rosh Haniqra.

Akko district in 1931 was inhabited by 31,905 Muslims, 5,269 Druzes, 7,672 Christians and 296 Jews.<sup>26</sup> Nahariya became the first Zionist settlement, applauded by a Dutch observer: 'If properly cultivated, this plain may become an important producer of corn, like in the days of the Phoenicians. In its present state this potential is not being realized.'<sup>27</sup> Zionist Jesaias (Yesha'yahu) Press took a more positive view: the area was 'adequately irrigated and maintained'.<sup>28</sup> He made his remark while stopping at the border crossing on the Tyrian Steps in 1934. According to the *scala Tyriorum*, Saladin was supposed to have viewed the Crusader walls of Akko.<sup>29</sup> In 1949 an Israeli settlement, Kfar Rosh Haniqra, was built here.

### Part of Israel

The coastal plain was known as *es-Sahil* to the Druzes. The Palestinian album of Jakob Rosner contains a photograph, taken from Abu Sinan: flat land with strip parcelling, that had reminded Kann of Holland. Far away, bordering the coastline, were the white houses of Nahariya: founded by German Jews, also known as 'Jeckes'.<sup>30</sup> It was common to hear the German language in this seaside resort,<sup>31</sup> where the water tower became a well-known landmark in the area.<sup>32</sup> Near Haifa, German Jews also established moshav Kfar Bialik (1934). To the South-East of Akko, Czechoslovakians named their kibbutz after President Masaryk. Most of the surrounding land was still held by Arabs.

That would all change in 1948. Al-Summayriyya and Kuwaykat vanished from the map, their fields taken over by Lohamei HaGettaot, Regba and Beit HaEmek. The latter was established by British and Hungarian Jews (1949), its name ('house of the plain') referring to Joshua 19:27.<sup>33</sup> Shavei-Zion ('those who return to Zion') had been established at the seaside by German refugees. Only Mazra'a, visited by Napoleon in 1799, retained its Arab population – though without its former agricultural subsistence. Nearby was kibbutz Evron (1945) where writer Hayka Grossmann lived. Only Nahariya had the size of a small town, with a population of 6,000 in the 1950s. Local rabbi Aharon Keller came from Silesia. He had studied in Berlin, where he wrote his PhD thesis on Karl Barth's theology. He arrived in Palestine in 1939.<sup>34</sup> Kibbutz Amqa, located in an Arab village of the same name, was settled by a community of Yemenite Jews.

26 Erich M. Lehmann, *Nahariya*, 13.

27 J.H. Ronhaar, *Palestina*, Groningen/The Hague 1930, 46.

28 Jesaias Press, *Neues Palästina-Handbuch. Führer durch Palästina*, Vienna 1934, 492.

29 A. Letremble, *Het Heilige Land* 2, 171.

30 Julius J. Rothschild, 'A commentary on the map of historical sites and roads, Haifa-Akka district', in *Palestine Quarterly*, London 1938, 54.

31 Erich M. Lehmann, *Nahariya*, 7.

32 Jakob Rosner, *A Palestine Picture Book*, 12. 'In the north, the coastal plain sweeps quickly to the foothills.' Cf. Amiram Gonen, *Israël*, 203. Lotte Eisenberg, *Meine Gäste*, 51-52.

33 Zev Vilnay, *Guide to Israel*, 405-407.

34 Cf. Simon Schoon, *Nes Ammim*, 65.

Following the Law on Israeli nationality (1952), Israeli-Arabs obtained the right to vote, though still under military surveillance. In Western Galilee they were 'concentrated' in medieval Akko and in Mazra'a, with the alternative of being resettled in Kfar Yasif or Abu Sinan. Arab 'present absentees' lost any claims to their former homes or properties. Druzes found it annoying to be registered as Arabs. The population of both groups expanded rapidly, and villages were unable to provide enough employment for everyone. 'The old quasi-feudal structure breaks down', according to a British observer.<sup>35</sup> Travel guides blissfully referred to 'villages druzes et arabes très pittoresques: Kfar Yasif, Abou Sinan, Makr, Joud-eida, Joulis, Yirka.'<sup>36</sup> Simha Flapan, head Arab affairs of the left-wing Mapam-party, reported a very different reality:

The lands of many villages have been cut down to a minimum to make possible the establishment of new settlements around them. As a result, many of the villages have become a reservoir of landless peasants or smallholders who must make a living as hired workers outside the village.<sup>37</sup>

Noting that agricultural lands of good quality had become a scarce commodity, the Knesset accepted the Land Acquisition Act in 1953. Owners of lands earmarked for expropriation would receive compensation, based on nominal value in January 1950.<sup>38</sup> This was the sword of Damocles, bungling over the head of sheikh Abdallah Khayr. As he was aware, the Land Acquisition Act had already been applied in Mazra'a. Of the original 312 acres only 30 had been retained by the village.

### 'Village lands'

Abu Sinan's village lands were mainly (but not entirely) registered in the name of the Khayr family. Concentration of common property into the hands of one single owner had been common practice in Palestine. Small farmers encountered difficulties with the Ottoman program of modernisation (*tanzimat*), as it required them to pay taxes in cash. The land laws of 1858 favoured private ownership, on par with the enclosures of common lands in Great Britain and the Netherlands. Harms and Ferry analyse the effect for the common man:

As peasants often could not withstand the imposed tax burden, the fellahin frequently registered their lands with wealthy notables and village sheikhs, who would then in turn pay the taxes. Doing so also kept a family's name off the tax rolls, used by the Ottomans to conscript their sons into the military.

All the same, the fellahin continued farming, with the presumption that their rights to the land had not changed. Registration was thought of merely as a formality. (...) Eventually, however, it started to become apparent that this registration wasn't just so much

35 Norman Lewis to E.A. Chapman-Andrews (British ambassador Beirut), Shemlan (Lebanon) 20 October 1952, British National Archives (Kew), Foreign Office 1018/84.

36 Elian Finbert, *Israel (Les Guides Bleus)*, 180.

37 Simha Flapan, 'Integrating the Arab village', 24-25.

38 Ran Kiselev, 'Land Expropriations', 26.

paperwork. The fellahin claim to the land was caught in a lose-lose predicament: register your family and risk losing the land owing to insufficient means to pay your taxes, or have a landlord register for you and risk losing the land through purchase to a third party.<sup>39</sup>

The British still referred to Abu Sinan as ‘Abdullah Khayr’s village’. The sheikh, ‘generally a reliable informant’, continued to brief them on current developments. He was clearly worried. Young males, and even females, left to serve in the Israeli army. Even worse, he felt that he was being treated as a pawn. ‘Khayr’, according to a British report in 1957, ‘approached by the assistant to the military Governor of Galilee, evidently showed himself reluctant to use his influence at Abu Sinan to secure local acceptance of the Israeli authorities’ demands, but privately he recognises that resistance is bound in the end to collapse.’<sup>40</sup> The most acute danger was requisition of land. What happened to remaining Arab villages, might also happen to Abu Sinan: ‘Isfiya’s Jalameh lands (450 dunams) and those of Beit Jann’<sup>41</sup> (8,000 dunams) have been taken over by the Israeli authorities on an indefinite tenure without compensation.’ Effective Druze autonomy did not extend beyond religious affairs.<sup>42</sup> Sheikh Khayr felt cornered.

39 Gregory Harms and Todd M. Ferry, *The Palestine Israel conflict*, 59-60.

40 N.O.W. Steward (British consulate-general) to P.A.G. Westlake (British embassy, Tel Aviv), Haifa 28 February 1957, in: B. Destani (ed.), *Minorities in the Middle East. Druze communities 1840-1974* iv (1927-1974), 418.

41 Also known as Bait Jan, West of Safad.

42 N.O.W. Steward (British consulate-general) to Sir Francis Rundall (British embassy, Tel Aviv), Haifa 3 May 1957, in B. Destani (ed.), *Minorities*, 421.

## VII ‘Stolid Dutch’

Real estate property of an Arab or Druze village might be registered in various forms, according to rules that had been laid down during Ottoman times: *Molk* was private land (‘mainly in the cities’), *Miri* was leased out by the State on a hereditary tenure, and *Matruka* could ‘not be sold since it was for communal village use such as pasture’. Uncultivated areas were known as *Mirwat*. *Musha’a* referred to ‘the common property of the village, which is generally granted for two-year periods to those sharing in ownership’. Besides *Deshiflik* (lands held by the government), there were land assets reserved for the benefit of the *Waqf* (for religious and charitable purposes).<sup>1</sup>

It is likely that Khayr considered selling former *Matruka* or *Musha’a* grounds, that apparently had been obtained as *Molk* by his family. He could argue that they offered few benefits to the local population of Abu Sinan, as the permit system made it impossible to work them properly. Druze villagers might counter that this land traditionally belonged to their common assets. Muslims struggling to make a living in Abu Sinan as ‘present absentees’, would not be pleased either. In 1930 the family of Hussain Ali Mubarki had been forced to leave their village of al-Nahr.<sup>2</sup> In 2013 he recalled this event, saying that the Khayr family had been accused of exploiting the common people. The fellahin – who had grown watermelons and honey melons, sesame and sorghum in the former village lands for many years – remained convinced that the soil rightfully belonged to them.<sup>3</sup>

### First contacts

On 14 April 1959 Bonda informed Khayr that a well-funded party in Europe was interested in acquiring his land. Pilon visited in June, accompanied by Farah, and Jewish missionary Jacob Blum. How to deal with a Druze sheikh? Pilon scoured Kuyper’s travel book for clues, finding that Druzes were ‘impossible to control’. Kuyper admired their literacy, even among women. Yet there lingered a clear undertone of distrust:

1 Mahmood Bayadsi, ‘Land Reform and the Israeli Arabs’, 18-19. Obbink presents variant spellings: *Mulk* (‘private (...) mostly orchards and gardens’) en *Metruka* (also for common pastures). *Op Bijbelschen Bodem*, 226.

2 ‘Al Nahr’, in Mahmoud Darwish (ed.), *I come from there ... and remember*, 76-78.

3 Interview Hussain Ali Mubarki by author, Abu Sinan 30 April 2012.



'While in the company of a Muslim they will gladly cite Quran. Talking to a Christian, they will open the Bible. In their hearts they believe in neither, keeping their own peculiar, curious ways of thought.'<sup>4</sup>

Laurence Oliphant viewed their presence as an impediment to Jewish and Protestant colonisation. A copy of *The Land of Gilead* was in the Scots library in Tiberias. Druzes, it was believed, possessed a 'Jesuit' ability to hide their true intentions from others:

Under a bold, frank, manly exterior, they conceal the utmost subtlety and cunning, and have a captivating way of deceiving (...). They are indebted to their religion for this art, and from early youth are trained to economise truth, and to dissemble both with Muslim and Christian in respect to their creed. (...) Dissimulation is recognised by their religion as a laudable acquirement, and the necessity for it has doubtless been forced upon them by the peculiarity of their position.<sup>5</sup>

Philip J. Baldensperger claimed that natives of the Middle East, including Druzes, lacked the ability to transform their society. 'The days of Fellaḥ Sheikḥdom are over.'<sup>6</sup> It was easy for Pilon to jump to the conclusion that a land transfer was the best option for all parties. But how to convince Khayr of that? One possibility could be found in American Harry Franck's *The fringe of the Muslim World* (1928). He believed that successful negotiations with 'excitable races' depended on the rational premises of the West. Arab parties were likely to put up a show. It was advisable not to pay too much attention to that. Those best qualified to strike a deal with Arabs and 'raiding Druzes' were 'the phlegmatic English' and 'stolid Dutch'.<sup>7</sup>

Whether or not Pilon was aware of Franck's book, he followed his advice. The consequences for Abu Sinan fell under Khayr's responsibility. Should the sheikh find himself under pressure to sell, then all the better.

### Jacob Blum

Blum was born in Rosh Pina. As a yeshiva boy, he had hurled stones at church windows, only later to become drawn to 'Yeshua' and join a Presbyterian church. He claimed to be a descendant of the famous Sephardi community in Tsefat (Safed) in the sixteenth century. During the twenties, he showed up in the Netherlands, reading theology at Kuyper's Free University. His aspirations to be employed as an RCN Jewish missionary amounted to nothing. He survived the Nazi years in hiding. Letters to F.W. Grosheide, New Testament professor at the Free University, show a repetitive pattern of great ambitions followed by deep depressions. In 1947 he was taken on as an evangelist by the Hebrew Evangelisation Society (HES) and dispatched to Palestine. Blum had married in the Waal church in

4 A. Kuyper, *Om de Oude Wereldzee* 2, 430-431.

5 Laurence Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead*, 346-347.

6 P.J. Baldensperger, *The Immovable East*, 292.

7 Harry Franck, *The fringe of the Moslem World*, 141 and 176.

Amsterdam, a major centre of Jewish Mission. From Jerusalem he urged his fellow-Protestants to take on the good work in the Holy Land:

Do you know, Professor, what would be delightful to me? This is it: to have a Dutch missionary post over here, preferably through the RCN. Why should Holland, where Jewish Mission is comparatively strong, not be active in this field in Palestine, where the Jews are being gathered in our days?<sup>8</sup>

Blum was also impressed by Zionism. A neighbourhood in the dunes near Jaffa had formed his first impressions of Tel Aviv. Now it was a thriving city. The famous kibbutzim were in the countryside, with their well-tended fields and healthy colonists. Once Blum had learnt Ivrit, he began to translate the New Testament into that language. He was both a Jewish missionary and an advocate of the Jewish State, commenting on the Wailing Wall in 1947:

These poor blind people! My heart is moved by pity when I hear their prayers (I often go there) and I feel urged to ever the same prayer myself: o Lord, open their eyes and ears so that they may acknowledge Jesus as Messiah of the Jews – and so may turn toward Golgotha where the one true Temple of God once stood and where the great and unique sacrifice was offered for the forgiveness of sins and salvation also of the people of Israel.<sup>9</sup>

After the HES interlude, Blum moved to Italy, followed by a renewed stay in Israel as evangelizer for the ‘American Messianic Fellowship’. They tasked him with ‘an extensive visitation ministry to disciple to believers scattered throughout the land, living mainly on the agricultural settlements’.<sup>10</sup> Always an imaginative storyteller, he claimed to produce broadcasts from Tangier.<sup>11</sup> Blum also founded a Jewish Christian cultural association in Israel, the *Irgun Tarbuti shel Yehudim Meshichim*. Another idea of his was a commemorative meeting in Jerusalem for the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of John Calvin’s birth. He was assessed as an ‘odd-jobber’ by the DRC Council for Church and Israel.<sup>12</sup>

The reasons why Blum was interested in Pilon’s moshav are evident in his correspondence with Grosheide. His aim was to ‘bring together young Jewish Christians who feel attracted to Palestine (...) and to bring them together in a colony.’ Money was expected from sponsors in the West:

My grand idea is a Jewish Christian Colony, as the cradle of the first Jewish Christian Church founded on God’s Word; and Calvinist in its doctrine.<sup>13</sup>

Blum survived by taking on all kinds of work, including sketching portraits in the streets. Muller-Duvernoy, who shared many of his ideals, called him ‘un pauvre homme qui a besoin d’amitié et de soutien’.<sup>14</sup> Arabs did not feature in his dreams: they simply did not belong in the Land that God had earmarked for the Jews.

8 J. Blum to F.W. Grosheide, Upper Baka’a (Jerusalem) 5 June 1947, HDC VU archive Grosheide, box 1.

9 Ibidem.

10 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 70.

11 S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.H. Grolle, Tiberias 29 January 1957, LDC KEI inv.nr. 281.

12 S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.J. Pilon, The Hague 20 December 1957, AJP.

13 J. Blum to F.W. Grosheide, Upper Baka’a (Jerusalem) 8 August 1947, HDC VU archive Grosheide, box 1.

14 C. Muller-Duvernoy to family Pilon, undated letter (1956), AJP.

## Arab mediation

'After his chat with Bonda, we haven't approached the sheikh again', Pilon remarked. 'Surely he will wonder whether we remain interested in his dunams. It's time to have another cup of coffee with him.'<sup>15</sup> Farah was asked to make an appointment and to attend as a translator if necessary. The date was set for 10 June 1958, though Farah would have preferred to negotiate via Bernath. This, however, was impossible, as the Swiss surgeon operated almost non-stop in his hospital.

Farah was born in 1921 in Shefaram (Shefa Amr), not far from Nazareth.<sup>16</sup> His grandfather had belonged to the Melkite Greek Orthodox Church but became an Anglican during the late nineteenth century. Rafiq had been trained at the Bishop Gobat School in Jerusalem. During the Second World War he took up theology in Beirut. By March 1948 an ordination followed in the Evangelical Episcopal Community: an Arab church that belonged to the Anglican bishopric in the Middle East.<sup>17</sup> After cessation of hostilities, the curacy of the parish of St. John the Evangelist in Haifa was assigned to Farah: a shattered community of which most members had fled to Lebanon. Remaining parishioners were concentrated in the Wadi Nisnas quarter.

Farah proved himself as an able administrator, presiding over the Arab Anglican Community in Israel and the Society for the Defence of Arab Minority Rights in Israel. He also acted as the main editor of *Al-Akhbar al-Kana'isiyya*, renamed *Al-Ra'id* ('the pioneer') in 1957, which was intended for Christian and Muslim readers.<sup>18</sup> By that time Farah had also become responsible for the pastoral care of all Anglicans in Western Galilee, including Kafr Yasif. His wife Nadjwa Qa'wār (1923-2015) was a teacher who was born in Nazareth. Her novels *'Abiru al Sabil* (*The Passersby*; Beirut 1954) and *Durub Masabih* (*Lamp Paths*; Nazareth 1957)<sup>19</sup> received positive acclaim in the Israeli press.<sup>20</sup> Years later, her husband would also author a book: *History of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem 1841-1991*.<sup>21</sup>

The conversation in Abu Sinan on 10 June 1959 did not go well. It was a hot day. Farah introduced Pilon and Blum to Khayr, who was recovering from a bout of dysentery.<sup>22</sup> The sheikh received them at his home, courteously but cautiously. The language, English, raised no problems. However, according to Farah's brother Shafik, the guests seemed unfamiliar with 'the particularities of local customs'.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Pilon's report depicts Khayr as an 'excitable' man, who needed

15 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, C.B. Bavinck, J.H. Grolle and J. Zalmann, Tiberias 1 June 1959, LDC KEI inv. nr. 282.

16 Biographical data on: [www.st-andrew-anglican.ca](http://www.st-andrew-anglican.ca). I thank Elias Jabbour for informing me about Shefaram (e-mail to author 21 March 2013).

17 Rafiq Farah, 'The Evangelical Episcopal Community', 86-87.

18 Jacob M. Landau, *The Arabs in Israel*, 62.

19 <http://arabwomenwriters.com>.

20 'Mrs. Maja [sic] Qa'wār-Farah was distinguished for her penetrating studies of human emotions', according to Howard M. Sachar, who was generally critical of the merits of contemporary Arab literature. *A history of Israel*, 581.

21 Rafiq Farah, *A history of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem 1841-1991*, Jerusalem 1995.

22 J.J. Pilon to J.H. Grolle, J.M. Snoek, R. Bakker and C.B. Bavinck, Tiberias 12 June 1959, LDC KEI inv.nr. 282.

23 Shafik Farah, *What shall I do with my life?*, 124.

a firm hand to be manoeuvred into the right direction. To use Harry Franck's phrases, Pilon posed as a 'phlegmatic' and 'stolid' negotiator. His report quotes the sheikh as saying that he was willing to become a Christian. It is impossible to verify whether such a statement was ever made. Rafiq Farah, the sole surviving witness, remembers nothing of the kind. It is possible that Pilon simply made it up, as the stereotype fitted so well with portrayals in his literature. Then came the business part:

We told him that payment for his land in foreign currency was impossible without the consent of the Israeli Government, and that we needed a fully legal contract. He replied that as a qualified lawyer he knew the rules. Receiving the money in Israeli currency posed no obstacle. Our priority was that the plan would materialize and the moshav would be established. He would go to the government himself and settle the deal.

We said that in that case, if we understood him well, there was no need for secrecy. Would he permit us to make it public that 'Sheikh Abdullah Khayr of the village of Abu Sinan wants to sell land to Christians abroad for the establishment of a Jewish Christian settlement'? He said that we were perfectly free to do that.

'How would his own people react?' we asked. He said that he would stand by us to establish the settlement (...) and that he expected more from Christianity than from his own (Druze) religion. 'Maybe one day I might become a Christian myself', he said.

'This outcome was a pleasant surprise', Pilon remarked. 'Might this man be driven by anything else but material gain? However, he is a diplomat, so we will have to wait and see.'<sup>24</sup> In Pilon's version of the conversation, Khayr also hinted at a willingness to leave the country. 'I'm not happy in this big palace where I'm living now', the sheikh is supposed to have remarked. 'I love my people and they love me. But due to my education, I feel estranged from this environment.'<sup>25</sup> Most important for Blum and Pilon was what came next:

Sheikh Abdullah is offering 1,000 dunams of land. Of this, 700 dunams is of top quality, good for agriculture. Price: IL 450 per dunam, making IL 315,000 the price for 700 dunam. Besides, there are 300 dunam of poor quality for building purposes: price IL 150 per dunam; thus IL 45,000 for the 300 dunam. The total sum required is IL 360,000. This price may seem disproportionate on the European scale, but according to Israeli standards, it is quite reasonable.

The equivalent of a square kilometer represented about a sixth of the village lands of Abu Sinan.<sup>26</sup> Farah had raised the question whether Christian Arabs would be admitted to the Protestant settlement. Pilon refrained from giving a definite answer:

We thought that as a matter of principle this certainly could be so.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> J.J. Pilon to H.J. Bonda, Tiberias 12 June 1959, AJP.

<sup>25</sup> J.J. Pilon to J.M. Snoek, R. Bakker, C.B. Bavinck and 'Jan', Tiberias 12 June 1959, AJP.

<sup>26</sup> Survey of Druze real estate property per village, prepared by C.N. Ezard, British consulate of Haifa 26 March 1952. In: National Archives (Kew), Foreign Office 1018/84. Julis also possessed about 6,000 dunam; Kafr Yasif just 200.

<sup>27</sup> J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Tiberias 13 June 1959, AJP. In the Dutch version, the answer given to Rafiq Farah is rendered as: 'In principle we might, but the whole idea is meant for the Jews.'

Rafiq hoped that the venture would benefit his campaign for lifting the permit system:

We feel that the Arabs of Israel should no longer be treated as second-class citizens, nor should their collective future be left hanging until some change takes place in the relations between Israel and the Arab states. (...) I think that peace will be brought closer by treating the Arab citizens of Israel as citizens with full rights and duties.<sup>28</sup>

It was widely believed that Druzes practised *taqiyya* in their dealings with outsiders, a strategy by which they sought 'to blur their distinctive traits by outward assimilation'.<sup>29</sup> Khayr was described by Pilon as a wily old fox.<sup>30</sup> As Kuyper had said: 'They may seem quite accommodating, but that appearance is only cosmetic. They will always hide their true beliefs and intentions.'<sup>31</sup> According to the Farah brothers, Khayr sensed this depreciation only too well. He feared that Pilon coveted the land of the Druzes, and Blum their souls. And yet their interests were related. The Christians needed a party who was willing to sell the soil, a commodity they could not purchase from Keren Kayemet. Khayr aspired to obtain a maximum price for the village lands in the plain of Asher before any expropriation could take place. The Tiberias Fund hoped to strike a quick deal. The effect such a sale might have had on the Druzes was not even brought under consideration. Nor was the impact on the Arabs, no matter the expectations the Farah brothers may have entertained. Historian Shlomo Sand believes that even Christian Arabs were treated as second rate citizens by the average Westerner, a pattern already established during the nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup> As Richard Pilon remarks:

When it came to substance, Arabs had less to offer, simply because of their schooling. In manual work my father would join with them as an equal. It was different in the intellectual sphere.<sup>33</sup>

The Druzes' veneration of Al-Hakim was well-known. Christians had not forgotten that this khalif had ordered the destruction of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem in 1009. 'A fine-looking race of mountaineers', according to Henry Vollam Morton (1892-1979), 'but it is scarcely surprising that their Christian neighbours have attributed dark and horrible practices to them.'<sup>34</sup>

Khayr did not feel that he had been treated with due respect. Farah urged Bernath to come to Abu Sinan without delay, to offer excuses. The Swiss immediately complied. Apologies were accepted, perhaps unsurprisingly – Khayr needed the Christians as much as they needed him. Shafiq Farah describes how Bernath ensured that negotiations would continue, even after this unhappy start:

28 Rafiq Farah, 'The Evangelical Episcopal Community', 87.

29 Aharon Layish, *Marriage, divorce and succession*, xvii. Runa Mackay, who helped organize medical care in Abu Sinan in 1955, recognizes that the strategy was indeed practised in cases of emergency (*Exile in Israel*, 49).

30 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Nes Ammim 21 September 1964, HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

31 A. Kuyper, *Om de Oude Wereldzee* 2, 431.

32 Shlomo Sand, *The invention of the land of Israel*, 148.

33 Interview Richard Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

34 H.V. Morton, *In the steps of the Master*, 258-259.

A group of Christians from Holland (...) had the idea to buy land in Galilee to establish a Christian settlement there. Their desire was to build a bridge between Jews and Christians. They had approached [Abdallah Khayr], but not knowing the particularities of local customs, they angered the sheikh who withdrew his offer. Rafiq was sure that Hans would be able to mend the relations. After all, the sheikh had been a patient at the Nazareth Hospital. His father, who was about eighty years old, had come to the hospital a year before with a broken forearm, the bone sticking out of the torn *abayeh* sleeve. The material of his garment was tightly stuck to the end of the bone – a rather frightening picture.

The astonishing recovery without infection impressed the whole clan. Hans attributed the complete recovery of the sheikh’s father to the splendid condition of the patient, rather than medical skill. The accident had opened the way for an excellent relationship with the family. Hans accepted Rev. Farah’s suggestion, and the sheikh’s invitation. After three or four visits, Hans attempted to come to the subject of the intended land sale. At first the sheikh expressed anger over the approach of the Dutch buyers, but finally he consented to see them again on the condition that doctor Bernath would be present as guarantor of an honest, non-aggressive deal.<sup>35</sup>

### ‘A little board’

Pilon formed ‘a little board (quite unofficially)’ with Blum, Snoek and Kees van Walraven. The latter had joined the Scotti medical staff in 1958, sharing an Indonesian background with Pilon. Bonda donated IL 50,000 as starting capital.<sup>36</sup> The Tiberias Fund advised them to keep the committee small. ‘Participation by too many people in the talks might result in unnecessary delays.’<sup>37</sup>

Bakker travelled to Switzerland to meet Hans’ brother Jacob, cantonal engineer of Schaffhausen. ‘Seems to be an influential man’, Pilon noted.<sup>38</sup> The DRC Council made a provisional estimation of costs: a million Dutch guilders for acquiring the land and paying legal fees. They advised them to cooperate with Jewish authorities and to obtain a lease from Keren Kayemet.<sup>39</sup> The ‘little board’ insisted that the land needed to be bought. So far, the only person making that possible was Khayr.<sup>40</sup> They wanted to avoid the problems Muller-Duvernoy had encountered with the WCC:

Our Rotterdam committee is not intended as a milking cow for Geneva. We insist on a position in which we can shape policy.<sup>41</sup>

Another meddling influence to be kept at bay was the Dutch Society of Christian Jews *Hadderech*, that hoped to acquire the settlement for itself. During a meeting in the DRC missionary centre, the IHCA endorsed the idea<sup>42</sup> on the provision

35 Shafiq Farah, *What shall I do with my life*, 124.

36 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Tiberias 13 June 1959, AJP. In Dutch guilders, Bonda contributed f 100,000.

37 H.J. Bonda to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 13 September 1958, AJP.

38 J.J. Pilon to J. Alkahé, Tiberias 10 August 1958, HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

39 S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.J. Pilon, Den Haag 17 June 1959, AJP.

40 R. Bakker to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 19 June 1959, AJP.

41 R. Bakker to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 28 May 1958, AJP.

42 J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël* 1, 547.

that the churches paid for it. Bakker thought that unrealistic: 'Most of the money needed may have to come from America.'<sup>43</sup>

### Christian Zionism and America

American Protestantism presupposed a free market. Like any firm, churches were supposed to advertise. The Bible story was ongoing: in Jesus, during the Reformation, in the present. Obviously, human history displayed a tendency towards better things, blueprinted in the Bible. As a result, progress, according to the divine plan, could be referred to as a sign of the times. Did the State of Israel qualify as such? Those who answered the question in the affirmative, considered themselves as Christian Zionists. The Jewish State, they believed, belonged to the preliminary stages of the Second Coming.<sup>44</sup>

The Tiberias Fund hoped to attract sympathizers in the USA. Christian Zionists shared the 'Restorationist zeal', as defined by Merkley: the Jews were destined to own the land by divine right, to which they had been 'restored' in 1948. Partly, that is, for the Jews were also entitled to the land on either side of the Jordan. Another Christian Zionist, archaeologist G. Douglas Young helped to establish the Israel-American Institute of Biblical Studies in Jerusalem in 1957. From a mainstream Presbyterian background, he had become a member of an Evangelical free church. What mattered for the DRC Council was that he had gained the trust of Israeli authorities, ensuring a speedy build-up of his Institute.<sup>45</sup> A working relationship of this kind was exactly what the settlement project needed. This would require some effort. The Bernath brothers refrained from calling the Jewish State 'a sign of the times' because it had been established by the force of arms. Their Pacifist leanings had to be considered by the Dutch if they were going to cooperate on the settlement. Outspoken Christian Zionists, like Muller-Duvernoy and Blum, were not included in the 'little board'.

A young Jewish American woman had stayed in the Scotti and had also become acquainted with the Hebrew Christian Church (HCC) in West-Jerusalem. This small group of enthusiasts used to meet in the YMCA building, where they proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah of Israel. The authorities let them be. Response in the streets, when confronted with their evangelizing zeal, was less favourable. Eva (Chava) Kranhouse felt ostracized, claiming she had to quit a job as a social worker due to her beliefs. She kept up a correspondence with Shalom Ben-Chorin. As a Liberal, he assured her she was free to believe whatever she liked.<sup>46</sup> That was not the general feeling among the public.

Kranhouse had been informed about the settlement plan via Tiberias. During the summer of 1959 she discussed it in the HCC. 'Almost everyone was sympa-

43 J.J. Pilon to R. Clephane Macanna, Tiberias 23 August 1959, AJP.

44 Paul Charles Merkley, *Christian Attitudes*, 21-35.

45 Ibidem, 163-165.

46 Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon, Detroit 14 July 1960, AJP.

thetic and some constructively so.<sup>47</sup> In Ramat Gan she met a fellow American, the Mennonite Roy Kreider who worked for the travel company Sharon Tours and who could trace the roots of his church to Swiss and Dutch Anabaptists in the sixteenth century. Kreider travelled to Tiberias with Orië Miller, another Mennonite, for a meeting. Both were Pacifists and socially engaged in both Arab countries and Israel. 'Mennonites were drawn to the Middle East because it was the land of the Bible: the home of the patriarchs; the promised land of refuge for the Hebrews delivered from Egyptian bondage; the land where Jesus walked; Jerusalem, the city of Pentecost; and Antioch, where the followers of Jesus were first called Christians.'<sup>48</sup> The Mennonites seemed perfectly placed as intermediaries between Christian Zionists like Kranhouse in the United States and the Bernath brothers in Switzerland. Pilon immediately enlisted them.

Miller directed the shoe plant Miller, Hess & Company in Pennsylvania. Relevant for Pilon was his involvement in an agricultural settlement in Paraguay, intended for Anabaptist refugees from Soviet Russia. He was also in touch with the kibbutzim, where American Pacifists came to work as a civil alternative to the military draft. Miller recommended Pilon's settlement plan to the Mennonite Central Committee in Akron (Pennsylvania). His ancestors had moved from Switzerland to America, where they joined the Amish Mennonites. However, Orië was no Fundamentalist. He believed that literal interpretations of the Bible were untenable, being influenced in this respect by the Liberal theologian William Newton Clarke. He also didn't take the Amish dress-code too seriously. It was more important to contribute to a fair distribution of global wealth and to equal rights for all. Like Hans Bernath, Miller saw no contradiction in being simultaneously engaged for an orphanage in Hebron in Jordan, a travel agency in Beirut and a prospective moshav in Israel. 'Everywhere Orië travelled, he saw possibilities.' He had participated in an Anabaptist conference in Holland in 1936, where Menno Simons had been commemorated.<sup>49</sup> Pilon made a favourable impression on him, as a man 'from whom a serious job could be expected'.<sup>50</sup> Miller alerted the Anabaptist pastor T.O. Hylkema in Holland and Abner Stoltzfuss in Pennsylvania via letters, for Stoltzfuss had no telephone at his Amish farm. They all took it for granted that Christian Arabs would join the scheme, even though Pilon warned that the priorities lay elsewhere.<sup>51</sup>

Nevertheless, the Mennonites retained their interest in the plan.<sup>52</sup> Miller financed a travel budget for Kranhouse as ambassador for the plan, enabling her to attend the IHCA-conference in Leiden. A resolution was carried to contribute IL 20,000 for each Jewish Christian family in the proposed moshav.<sup>53</sup> Kranhouse heard Tabaksblatt preach in The Hague and went to visit Enker in Middelburg and Marjorie Eberlé-Gotlib (Hadderech) in Rotterdam. Enker had been IHCA secretary in Israel until 1958, overstaying his tourist visa. In the end he left in dis-

47 Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 20 July 1959, AJP.

48 John E. Sharp, *My calling to fulfill*, 76.

49 Ibidem, 19-25 and 323.

50 J.J. Pilon to V. Buksbazen, Heemstede 18 July 1960, AJP.

51 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 136.

52 Abba Eban, *Mijn land*, 85.

53 S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.J. Pilon, The Hague 6 October 1959, AJP.



illusion. 'His enthusiasm for the State of Israel never faltered, but the small, quibbling Christian community in Israel exasperated him.'<sup>54</sup> Enker talked with Kranhouse till four in the morning. His pragmatic advice was to speak less and to do more. 'Any spiritual attempt in Israel is premature now.'<sup>55</sup>

### 'An enormous undertaking'

The Israeli ministry of Religious Affairs had become aware that something was afoot. An official, Chaim Wardi (1901-1975), asked Grolle and Tabaksblatt for their comments.<sup>56</sup> The DRC pledged sympathy for the plan, though there was little chance that it would succeed. Muller-Duvernoy had tried and failed. The IHCA lacked funds. Since Enker had left, it was not even clear who was in charge in Israel. Nor did the fact that Pilon and Bakker belonged to the RCN, committed as it was to Jewish Mission, bide well for experiments in Israel.

The Tiberias Fund and 'little board' considered themselves a private enterprise, sponsored by Christians but without church supervision. 'An enormous project like this can only be realized through the cooperation of a wide variety of Christian believers.' It was essential to move fast:

The owner is in a hurry to sell, if not to us, then to another bidder.<sup>57</sup>

The more momentum, the better:

Khayr can wait but needs to be sure that we mean serious business. In order to sell the land in one piece, he will have to reallocate it. This shouldn't be a problem, as most of the parcels belong to him or to his family.<sup>58</sup>

Sister Pekel also felt confident of success:

I have seen the land that has been offered to us by the sheikh and I believe it to be God's will that we cooperate in this effort.<sup>59</sup>

Accompanied by Farah, Pilon had another conversation with Khayr on 27 September. They discussed a down payment, and the idea of building a barrack on the land as soon as possible. That night, unable to sleep, Pilon wondered how to proceed. 'The sheik is a clever man. Someday I will go to him all alone and have a long, long talk with him and try to break into his soul and then pin him down morally, man to man.'<sup>60</sup> He worried about being outbid by a third party, a kibbutz or perhaps even Muller-Duvernoy. There was a plot for sale near the Druze village of Rama, but the quality of the soil did not compare to that of the village

54 F.G.M. Broeyer, 'Max Enker', 63.

55 Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon, New York 11 September 1959, AJP.

56 J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël* 1, 547-548.

57 H. Bernath to J. Bolten, Nazareth 14 January 1959, AJP.

58 J.J. Pilon to J.H. Grolle, C.B. Bavinck, J.M. Snoek and R. Bakker, Tiberias 16 August 1959, LDC KEI inv.nr. 282.

59 A. Pekel to J.H. Grolle, Amerongen 29 August 1959, LDC KEI inv.nr. 282.

60 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 3 October 1959, AJP.

lands of Abu Sinan. Pilon felt that Khayr was going to make his move soon. 'He is, no doubt, going to sell anyhow. If not to us, to others.'<sup>61</sup>

Victor Smadja introduced him to lawyer Joseph Alkahé, a member of a Baptist community in Tel Aviv. He was a lawyer who knew the village councillor of Rama. Youssef Kassem made an interesting remark on Khayr's motives to sell:

The government price for land, 100-120 IL per dunam, is so ridiculously low that only stupid people sell for that price. Others sell because of fear that their land might be confiscated anyhow. Then they will receive even less.<sup>62</sup>

Pilon asked Alkahé and Kassem to keep this conversation confidential:

It is best not to make this public, until we are firmly established on the land. Until then we should proceed quietly.<sup>63</sup>

After consulting with Asher Barak, 'specialist in land transfer' at the Rothschild Boulevard in Tel Aviv, public notary Joseph Ganon in Haifa was asked to help set up a company in whose name the land might be registered, at a 'transfer fee' of 4.5 per cent. 'We could buy about 1,000 dunam of land', Pilon estimated in January of 1960. 'Costs about 380,000 Israeli lira. (...) A sum of about one million Swiss francs would have to be guaranteed. Mr. Bakker is working on this, and in Holland he has accumulated 170,000 guilders. (...) In Switzerland, some 20,000 francs have been promised, but as of yet, nothing definite from the other countries.'<sup>64</sup> It was not possible for the IHCA to provide sums of this magnitude: 'We need the Gentiles.' Pilon urged Kranhouse to work harder. 'Don't found a committee just yet, unless you feel very sure. You are still too short in the States. Make a list of names (...) Jews and Gentiles.'<sup>65</sup>

Tabaksblatt spoke out against the idea of a moshav for Jewish Christians, as it would antagonize the Israeli neighbours. A 'general' Protestant village seemed to be the best solution, including some Arab Christians, 'if they can be trusted'.<sup>66</sup> The DRC recommended Jacobus (Coos) Schoneveld as an assistant for the project.<sup>67</sup> His father Jacobus Schoneveld Snr<sup>68</sup> was a member of the Council and a friend of Tabaksblatt. The younger Schoneveld studied at the Hebrew University, in West-Jerusalem.<sup>69</sup> Bakker cautioned against informing too many people about the plans, which might trigger 'unfavourable and untimely reactions in Israel'.<sup>70</sup> A Protestant village, staffed by Jewish converts and purchased from the Druzes, was bound to arouse suspicion.

61 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 11 January 1960, AJP.

62 Note by J.J. Pilon after meeting Youssef Kassem in Rama, Tiberias 13 January 1960.

63 J.J. Pilon to J. Alkahé, Tiberias 21 December 1959, HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

64 J.J. Pilon to 'miss Deutsch', Tiberias 15 January 1960, in AJP. The Israeli pound (lira) was the equivalent of two German marks; an American dollar equalled IL 1,80.

65 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 11 January 1960, AJP.

66 J.J. Pilon, The Hague 6 October 1959, AJP.

67 S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.J. Pilon, The Hague 9 July 1958, AJP.

68 H. Jagersma, Jacobus Schoneveld', in *Biografisch Lexicon voor het Geschiedenis van het Nederlands Protestantisme V*, Kampen 2001, 452-453.

69 Interview J. Schoneveld and E. Schoneveld-Tuyt by author, Rijswijk 13 March 2009.

70 R. Bakker, circular Rotterdam 3 March 1960, HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.



# INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Bernath felt reassured: no church supervision, no confiscated land. It was time to set up a committee. Farah wondered how Hans and his brother Jacob expected to find time for this endeavour. Members of the Tiberias Fund were amazed for a different reason: the Bernaths' connection to Nazareth.



Fig. 7 Map of Nazareth with the EMMS hospital – *Tour Israel* 1975 (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Post/Steimatzky, 1975), 102-103.

## VIII Nazareth

*en-Násira* is an Arab town in Lower Galilee, 488 meters above sea level. ‘White, cheerful-looking’, according to a visitor in 1882. Two thirds of the inhabitants were Christians. Greek Orthodox, Muslims and ‘Latins’ (Roman Catholics) all lived in their separate quarters. The Plain of Jezreel ranged to the South, with mount Tabor. The skyline in the west featured mount Karmel, the Gilboa lay to the east. ‘Here it was that Jesus spent His early days.’<sup>1</sup>

Routes between Haifa and Tiberias ran through Nazareth and contributed to the development of the town.<sup>2</sup> Missionaries tried to get new followers, even if that meant followers from other churches. It was not uncommon to exchange one denomination for another, especially in the poorer classes.<sup>3</sup> Protestants (three hundred in 1900) preferred to build their institutions on the surrounding hills, where the air was cleaner.<sup>4</sup> Most of their native converts came from a Greek Orthodox or Melkite background.<sup>5</sup>

Tourists tended to be disappointed. Nazareth had been thoroughly raised to the ground by sultan Baybars in 1263, leaving hardly any relics from the past. Only the simpleminded would take the ‘workshop of Joseph’, ‘the synagogue attended by the Holy Family’ and the ‘kitchen of Mary’ at face value. Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox even had their separate churches of the annunciation. ‘Nazareth has become a hub of Christian sects’, Jost had remarked disapprovingly.<sup>6</sup>

### EMMS hospital

The resettling of ‘present absentees’ after 1948 brought the percentage of Muslims up to 60 per cent. This rapidly expanding population had to make do with less space than before, as the Eastern part of the city was taken over by Nazareth Illit (Higher Nazareth). Acting on ‘emergency regulations’, the land had been expropriated in 1954 and building began in 1957. Arab Nazarenes had fallen on hard times. They ‘found themselves cut off from jobs in Haifa, Acre and Jaffa, largely due to travel restrictions as well as to their replacement by Jews. Farmers and la-

1 James Kean, *Among the Holy Places*, 228.

2 Amiram Gonen, *Israël*, 177.

3 E. Zickermann, ‘Palästinensische Städtebilder’, 78.

4 Abraham Kuyper, *Om de Oude Wereldzee* 1, 472-473.

5 Edward W. Said, *Culture & Imperialism*, 46.

6 Julius Jost, *Ein Frühlingsritt durch Syrien*, 106.

bourers, predominantly Muslims, were uprooted (...). Unemployment soared.<sup>7</sup> The Arab city was controlled from the police station in al-Masowbia, formerly a property of the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>8</sup> Industrial plants developed not in the old city, but around Migdal HaEmek, a Jewish town on former lands of al-Mujaydil.<sup>9</sup> 'Old' Nazareth became a reception area for impoverished people. Many voted communist.<sup>10</sup>

The Arab population soared from 16,000 in 1948 to 25,000 in 1960. A penniless community with few prospects, according to alderman Abdul Aziz Z'Ubi.<sup>11</sup> 'Nearly a third of the town's area is owned by the churches, monasteries and missions, who are exempt from any rates and taxes, including payment for public services supplied by the municipality. On the other hand, nearly a third of the town's inhabitants are landless refugees.'<sup>12</sup> Freedom of movement was restricted, as was the economic traffic flow:

Regulation 109 which permitted the arrest of a person for being in a prohibited area; Regulation 110 which allowed police supervision over a person for up to one year; Regulation 111 which provided the legal basis for administrative detention by military commanders; Regulation 124 which provided for house arrest; and Regulation 125 which permitted military commanders to declare certain areas closed, persons entering or leaving which had to possess a special permit.<sup>13</sup>

The Nazareth hospital of the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society had been founded by Pacradooni Kaloost Vartan (1835-1908). As head of the department of surgery,<sup>14</sup> Hans Bernath cooperated with X-ray specialist George Abdo, Basil Bashlawi, Edmund Sabbagh, Saleem Nassar, Runa Mackay and others.<sup>15</sup> They emphasized the principle of neutrality for a doctor. However, as Runa Mackay remarked, sympathy for the Arab plight ran deep: 'As ninety-nine per cent of the patients and local staff were Palestinian-Arabs, one absorbed the history, the culture and the ethos.'<sup>16</sup> Mackay, a Presbyterian from Hull, remembered in 2015:

Female participation was essential for the proper functioning of the EMMS Hospital, as most Arab and Druze families would only allow their mothers, wives and daughters being treated by a woman. The hospital was poor, we asked a winery in Safed for alcohol to clean gunshot wounds. My interest was not very political, I did not understand half of what was going on. Most people refrained from referring to their personal past. That was a common

7 Charles M. Sennott, *The Body and the Blood*, 87.

8 Edward W. Said, *Out of place*, 114.

9 Ilan Pappé, *The forgotten Palestinians*, 74.

10 Jacob M. Landau, *The Arabs in Israel*, 83. In 1965 the Communist Party split up in 'Soviet' Rakah and 'Euro-Communist' Maqi (Colin Shindler, *A History of modern Israel*, 182).

11 'Abd al-'AzDz Zu'bD belonged to the Mapam Party. 'Following graduation from the Arab college in Jerusalem, he had become secretary of the Government Workers' Union in Nazareth and, later, deputy mayor of this town and an active promoter of Arab culture in Israel' (Jacob M. Landau, *The Arabs in Israel*, 142). Mapam adhered to Socialist principles of Hashomer Hatzair.

12 'Abd al-'AzDz Zu'bD, 'Nazareth', 33.

13 Martin Gilbert, *Israel. A history*, 345.

14 Wmw.nazarethtrust.org.

15 'In memoriam' for Baker by rev. Ibrahim Sim'an, www.baptist.org.il. Cf. Edward Said, *Out of place*, 76.

16 Runa Mackay, *Exile in Israel*, 15-17.

attitude, we were all so busy. I did all the obstetrics, caesarean sections, and so on. Which was fine, I felt that I was needed. (...) The Jews had been through the Holocaust, the Arabs through the Naqba (to use the modern description). In the fifties, people would not talk about it. The Arabs were frightened that, if they said something 'wrong', someone might report them to the Israeli police.<sup>17</sup>

### **Hans and Madeleine Bernath**

Bernath had been trained as a soldier in the Alps, despite his Pacifist inclinations. He said it improved his skills in improvisation. When they were boys, Hans and his brother Jacob had enjoyed tending the fields of their parents: 'It was understood that food on the table, though a gift of God, would not turn up by itself without someone to plant and someone to harvest. So why should they not be partners in the process?'<sup>18</sup> Madeleine Bernath-Perret had been raised in Romania. She taught in French, English, German, and Arab.<sup>19</sup> Mackay wondered why they wanted to join a project that was intended primarily for the Jews. Israel was perceived as the cause of many problems in Nazareth:

Getting to work in Haifa required a permit, every day. If a man failed to obtain that piece of paper, he would be put off from the bus. There were no industries. Most of the educated had left in 1948. There was censorship. It was hard, if not impossible, to hear from your family in a refugee camp in Lebanon or in Syria. You could not simply make a telephone call, or even send a letter.<sup>20</sup>

Paramount for Hans and Madeleine Bernath was a Christian ethos of reaching out to others, without discrimination. Since they were living and working among the Arabs, they felt it their moral duty to cooperate with the Jews as well. The general idea was to work for the common good, and to demonstrate the substance of Christian faith during the process. The Tiberias Fund had no doubt about their stamina.<sup>21</sup>

17 Interview Doctor Runa Mackay by author, Edinburgh 12 January 2015.

18 Shafik Farah, *What shall I do with my life?*, 49-50.

19 Ibidem.

20 Interview Doctor Runa Mackay by author, Edinburgh 12 January 2015.

21 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 3 October 1959, AJP.



## IX Settlement plan

A Swiss committee of recommendation included manufacturers Ernst Bachofner (Wettingen), Philippe Gold (Geneva) and Willi Blaser (Hasle-Rüegsau). There was also *Oberstbrigadier* Robert Ackermann from Säriswil, bankers Arthur Beney from Montreux and Benedikt Vischer-Staehelin from Basel, director Eugen Scholl (Zofingen), transporters Armin Matti (Murten) and Willy Messmer (Riedt), teachers Fritz Blanke (Zurich) and Ernst Jenni (Basel), Dutch theologian Hendrik van Oyen who presided over the Jewish Christian working community in Basel, and architects Hansruedi Koller (Zurich), Robert Constam (Zurich) and Max Schwank (Küsnacht). Gaston Clottu served as ‘président du Conseil d’État de Neuchâtel’, Jean Treina as ‘conseiller d’État de Genève’; *Bundesrichter* Kurt Schoch came from Lausanne.

Churches were represented by Pfarrer Richard Bäumlín (Bern), Fritz Brechmühl (‘président du conseil synodal de l’Église Réformée de Fribourg’), Pfarrer Paul Frehner (Zurich), pasteur Charles Freundler (Lausanne), Armin Hoppler (*Bibellesebund* Winterthur), Eugen Kroll (Baptist, Bülach), Walter Lüthi (Münsterpfarrer Bern), *Prediger* Edgar Schmidt (Zurich), *Bischof der Methodistenkirche* Zürich F. Sigg, Pfarrer Rudolf Vollenweider (Basel) and Ernst Zeugin (*Präsident des Kirchenrates*, Baselland).

### Aims

If the project could promote the integration of Christian Jews into the State of Israel, all the better:

The aim is to secure jobs for those who had to give up their positions elsewhere, due to their faith. (...) We will also demonstrate the loyalty of the Christian Jew to his people. There is no intention to leave.<sup>1</sup>

They looked forward to international cooperation, but made an exception for Muller-Duvernoy:<sup>2</sup>

Taking an aggressive approach, he has made himself intolerable for most of our supporters in Switzerland.<sup>3</sup>

1 H. Bernath to J. Bolten, Nazareth 14 January 1959, AJP.

2 C. Muller-Duvernoy to Pilon family, Neuchâtel 3 September 1959, AJP.

3 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Thangen 24 June 1959, AJP.

Fig. 8 Shlomo Bezek (NA Netherlands).



Further participation by Muller-Duvernoy was not needed, as the Swiss were now in charge of negotiations with Khayr.<sup>4</sup> Grolle announced the DRC intention ‘to support this project, but unofficially.’<sup>5</sup> He did, however, pave the way to a wealthy sponsor, H.M. Gravemeijer-Meissner. Blum claimed to be in touch with officials in Jerusalem and Pilon seemed to take that seriously:

According to Blum, the Israeli Government will *not* oppose the establishment of the moshav.<sup>6</sup>

4 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 3 October 1959, AJP.

5 J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël* 1, 548.

6 H. Bernath to J. Bolten, Nazareth 14 January 1959, AJP.

Alkahé had spent time in Switzerland during his theological studies.<sup>7</sup> He would make a perfect legal advisor, Johan Pilon said. ‘A sensible man and quite able to make a substantial contribution to our scheme.’<sup>8</sup> In the future... Pilon bristled with impatience. ‘We have no time to waste’, he wrote to Kranhouse, ‘and no need for futile talk.’<sup>9</sup>

### Jacob Bernath

Hans’ brother Jacob, cantonal engineer of Schaffhausen, would be in charge of technical planning.<sup>10</sup> Engaged in the multi-million francs construction project of the Herblingenthal highway, his style was that of a manager.<sup>11</sup> Cor van der Spek, a Dutchman who got to know him well, attributes the somewhat bossy demeanour of Jacob to an inner insecurity:

He should have been a few inches taller (...). Normally the responsibilities of a cantonal engineer would require a certificate from the ETH in Zurich. Jacob had studied at the Technicum in Winterthur. Ever conscious of this ‘deficit’, he was also encumbered by the fact that he spoke no English. He tended to overcompensate.

His brother was a brilliant surgeon, who could have made a fortune if he had not devoted his life to that destitute hospital in Nazareth. Hans moved around in workmen’s clothes, Jacob in a suit and tie. Even their wives were different. Hannie made a rather shy impression, quite unlike the formidable Madeleine.<sup>12</sup>

They had the investment, the property and the team in order. Now, it was simply a matter of getting started. Samuel Külling, an Evangelical Reformed pastor nicknamed *Hühnervater* after his hobby, easily devised a plan for a chicken farm. Disapproving comments from the United Council of Christian Churches in Israel, founded in 1957, came as an unpleasant surprise for him.<sup>13</sup> Arab members questioned a village that was primarily intended for the Jews. Opposition could be expected in Nazareth too. Pilon suggested giving the UCCI a wide berth: ‘The job is tremendous, and the plan stands or falls on the support from Christians abroad.’<sup>14</sup> But what about the Jews?

### Shlomo Bezek

Sal Lorsch (1916-1971) hailed from a Socialist family in Scheveningen, at the Dutch seaboard. He and his sisters were active members of Zionist youth orga-

7 Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon, Akron (Pennsylvania) 18 October 1959, AJP.

8 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Tiberias 5 July 1959, AJP.

9 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 3 October 1959, AJP.

10 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Thangen 24 June 1959, AJP.

11 ‘Jakob Bernath’, in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* 12 November 1963.

12 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 18 February 2014.

13 Saul P. Colbi, *Christianity in the Holy land, past and present*, 131.

14 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 29 August 1959, AJP.

nizations, though they rarely attended a service in the synagogue.<sup>15</sup> From his early days, Sal had wished to go to Palestine. Basic training in Aalten (by a farmer who was a member of the RCN)<sup>16</sup> opened the way to the Zionist agricultural school in Wieringermeerpolder. Via Hashomer Hatzair<sup>17</sup> he had met Alice de Vries, from The Hague. Together they made *aliyah* in 1936.<sup>18</sup> Sal became Shlomo, labouring in Haifa, herding flocks, and driving a tractor. ‘A free and easy type, who liked to crack jokes.’<sup>19</sup> In Tiberias he would reminisce about the old days with Ellen Tuyt, also from Scheveningen: ‘Antisemitism had forced him away from Europe. Holland was no exception. It hurt all the more because he remained so essentially Dutch in many of his attitudes.’<sup>20</sup>

Without Zionism, Jews would have no protection at all.<sup>21</sup> In the Plain of Jizreel the young couple helped to build Beit HaShita. They married, taking the name Bezek, after a peak in the Gilboa mountains. Two sons and a daughter were born. Meanwhile, Shlomo’s mother Rachel Groen died in Scheveningen in 1938. All other members of the Lorsch family were murdered by the Nazis in the years to come.<sup>22</sup> Shlomo’s marriage to Aliza failed. He fell in love with Marianne (Janny; later Mirjam) van Praagh. She had gone into hiding, but was betrayed and arrested in 1944, and liberated from the Westerbork camp in 1945.<sup>23</sup>

Shlomo and Mirjam married and had children of their own. They lived in Ayeleth Hashachar, North of Lake Kinneret, which was the same area where Aliza and her family lived.<sup>24</sup> The kibbutz, begun in 1917, had persevered despite teething troubles.<sup>25</sup> ‘There was no escaping of hardship, or sacrifice, if you will’, daughter Diklah says. ‘Father protected himself by humour and wit.’<sup>26</sup> Shlomo tilled the land, Mirjam ran a laboratory for soil analysis. Ies Walpot came to visit:

While there are few trees in this hilly country, Ayeleth Hashachar is like an oasis. In the middle of the kibbutz stands a lofty hall with a dining room. A large garden is in front, surrounded by houses and trees. Everything is carefully maintained. The nurseries and schools are like a little village within the kibbutz. Given the facts that all females work outdoors, the kids dine and live mostly together. Only after 4:00 PM, when work is finished, do they rejoice their parents and family. They will return to the kindergarten for the night.<sup>27</sup>

Collectivism was no trifle. ‘No one has private earnings, everything is purchased or sold by the community, by decision of the *chaverim*. One of them is the sec-

15 Wim Willems and Hanneke Verbeek, *Hier woonden wij*, 242, 264-265 and 372.

16 Jac.B. Looijen, ‘Shlomo zette z’n auto stil’, in *Trouw* 30 November 1976.

17 ‘The young guardsman’; cf. Henry Near, *The Kibbutz Movement* 1, 74-75.

18 Obituary Shlomo Bezek, ANAG, file 1966.

19 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 7 February 2013.

20 Interview Ellen Schoneveld-Tuyt by author, Rijswijk 17 September 2014.

21 Ari Shavit, *Mijn beloofde land*, 176.

22 Genealogy in: Wim Willems and Hanneke Verbeek, *Hier woonden wij*, 242.

23 I. Gutman, S. Bender, J. Michman and B.J. Flim (eds.), *Rechtvaardigen onder de Volkeren*, 576 and 720.

24 Bert Schüssler, *Nes Ammim*, 8-9. Ayeleth Hashachar means ‘hind of dawn’ or morning star. The Canaanite tell of Hazor, excavated between 1955 and 1959 by Yigael Yadin, is nearby.

25 Tom Segev, *The seventh million*, 175.

26 Interview Diklah Geva-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

27 I.J. Walpot, ‘Leven in de “kibboets” lokt vooral jongeren’, in *Leeuwarder Courant* 15 October 1958.

retary, with a small staff. Every-one is a volunteer, helps to govern the community and has a say in any matter, even putting up a chicken pen (...).’ There was no synagogue. The Bezeks celebrated Pesach ‘as if it were a secular event’.<sup>28</sup> Jews had to look after themselves now that Providence had so clearly failed to do so. ‘Trenches and hideouts are everywhere, some hidden, some in plain sight. A small and seemingly derelict building is the arsenal.’ The community also enjoyed a reputation for open-mindedness. Not only Walpot received a cordial welcome, but also the Iranian Jalal Al-e Ahmad.<sup>29</sup>

The first time Bezek had seen Pilon was when he had been passing out New Testaments. That episode belonged to the past.<sup>30</sup> By 1957 the two men simply talked over a game of chess,<sup>31</sup> without hidden agendas.<sup>32</sup> As Racheli Bezek recalls: ‘They both liked to read, to discuss things: Buber, the Bible. Feeling the practical drive to make something work. Jews and Christians together.’<sup>33</sup> Shelman felt that Pilon was driven by a ‘humane Christian philosophy that lacked any tendency towards mission’.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, a broad platform of Christian support would be required to make the moshav settlement possible – including those who were still actively engaged in proselytizing among the Jews.

### Israel and the Church

Even Ber Bavinck (RCN deputy for Jewish Mission) believed that ‘aggressive’ mission would no longer do.<sup>35</sup> In 1959 both he and Pilon studied the DRC paper *Israel and the Church*,<sup>36</sup> prepared by Grolle and his Council. Israel, it said, represented a threefold sign for the Gentiles: of the Church’s failure to prevent a mass murder, of the enduring importance of Judaism and of their shared expectations for the future.<sup>37</sup> In a radical interpretation of Barth, dialogue between Church and Israel became a unique phenomenon, operating at a higher level than any ‘natural’ religion. The Jew was the Christian’s ‘elder brother’. Judaism and Christianity extended like parallel lines towards the Messianic age.<sup>38</sup> It was a program of action, ahead of the churches if need be. Pilon took up the latter point:

Churches are not fit to run this kind of thing. We trust the Rotterdam Committee to take the initiative and then hope for God’s help.<sup>39</sup>

28 Interview I.J. Walpot by author, Deventer 30 January 2014.

29 Jalal Al-e Ahmad, *The Israeli Republic*, 84-88.

30 J.M. Snoek to J.H. Grolle, Tiberias 24 June 1959, LDC KEI inv.nr. 282.

31 Preferably at the ‘chess-pits’ in the Scotti garden.

32 S. Schoon, *Nes Ammim*, 33.

33 Interview Racheli Eshel by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

34 Moshe Shelman, ‘The years in Tiberias’, 24.

35 Minutes Joint Committee, Baarn 9 June 1959, HUA archive Church and Israel GKN, inv.nr. 353.

36 The copy in Pilon’s library in Nes Ammim, with his ex libris, shows tell-tale signs of frequent reading.

37 *Israël en de Kerk*, 41-43.

38 Cf. H.C. van der Meulen, 22-25.

39 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, Tiberias 13 February 1959, AJP.

This fitted only too well with the Swiss preference for a low-key church approach. The difference was that *Israel and the Church* also envisaged a change in Christian theology, a subject that so far had never been discussed with the Bernath brothers.

## Tiberias

Now that Israeli staff prepared to move out, the Scotti withered. ‘An unpopular posting for a person of any ambition’, said nurse Marian Jumelet, ‘boring.’<sup>40</sup> Snoek felt the same: ‘For the time being we simply continue.’<sup>41</sup> The maternity ceased its operations in April 1959. ‘It’s time to get rid of the Scots’, said Pilon, ‘at least of their dominance here. They’re blocking any progress.’<sup>42</sup> Ellen Tuyt remembers the atmosphere during these days:

My boyfriend Coos Schoneveld studied Gemarah and Jewish philosophy in Jerusalem, stimulated by an adventurous DRC theology. In comparison, the Scotti seemed totally outdated. Woodhead prayed for anything that came to his mind, as if handing in a wish list at the gates of Heaven. As if God were Santa Claus, rewarding the happy few.

Rules of conduct would have been familiar to queen Victoria, if not to the apostle Paul. Females as ‘helpers’ (Genesis 2:18). Especially of the missionaries, who stayed at the Scotti for almost nil. And found a hunting reserve, for the place still attracted lost souls: ‘seekers’ who were sought out by several recruiters at a time. In some cases, with bizarre results – one family was split up between Baptists and Anglicans.

I made up the beds of the missionaries, watched them have their cup of tea during siesta time, enjoying the panorama of the lake. With Christmas we had pudding and a Christmas tree. Claude Muller-Duvernoy liked to drop in, conceited and charming. Johan Snoek was having a bad time. His Ivrit church services hardly attracted an audience, apart from dishevelled ‘seekers’.<sup>43</sup>

To his dismay, Snoek found out that a missionary was shunned as a *komer* (‘idol-  
atrous priest’) by the general public in Tiberias.<sup>44</sup> The former Scotti teetered on the brink of financial collapse, now that it had to pay taxes as a hotel.<sup>45</sup> Ellen Tuyt wondered what kept the Pilon in a place like this: ‘A very smart-looking couple, Stijn reminded people of film star Ingrid Bergman. No wonder that she easily made friends.’<sup>46</sup> Now that the new regional hospital had opened in Poriya,<sup>47</sup> an outpatients’ clinic, chapel and hotel were all that remained in the Scotti.<sup>48</sup> Though Pilon had been offered a position in Poriya,<sup>49</sup> he decided to remain in what was

40 Interview Marian Cohen Stuart-Jumelet by author, Rhooen 8 January 2014.

41 NIOD, archive J.M. Snoek, diary 31 December 1959.

42 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, Tiberias 12 January 1959, AJP.

43 Interview E. Schoneveld-Tuyt, Rijswijk 17 september 2014.

44 Shalom Ben-Chorin, ‘Religiöse Ko-Existenz’, *Jediot Chadashot* 14 April 1965. Compare Zephaniah 1:5.

45 Minutes Joint Committee, Baarn 9 March 1960 and Edinburgh 27 September 1961, HUA archive CI RCN, inv.nr. 353.

46 Interview Ellen Schoneveld-Tuyt by author, Rijswijk 17 September 2014.

47 J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël* 1, 448-449.

48 Johan M. Snoek, *Soms moet een mens kleur bekennen*, 171.

49 J.J. Pilon to H.J. Bonda, Tiberias 12 June 1959, AJP.

now the Church of Scotland Sea of Galilea Centre,<sup>50</sup> where Vriezen hoped to train his theological students during part of their curriculum.<sup>51</sup> Annie de Jonge, an Indonesian veteran, became head of the clinic and noted that most of the patients were tourists.<sup>52</sup> Pilon hoped to have time on his hands for the settlement plan.<sup>53</sup> ‘Does Stijn agree?’, asked Tabaksblatt, who had not forgotten how Johan had accepted Tiberias in the first place. The DRC Council was pleased though. ‘If the settlement plan succeeds – as we hope it will – your future life task will be in Israel.’<sup>54</sup> Christine Pauline (Stiene) was born in Tiberias in 1959 as a ‘Christian sabra.’<sup>55</sup>

### Tiberias Fund and RCN

Up until this point, desires for Jewish-Christian dialogue had invariably originated with the DRC. The missionary deputies of the RCN were eager to make an impact of their own by means of the settlement plan, offering financial means that had hitherto been earmarked for missionary efforts. The Dutch committee had no objections. Board members of the Tiberias Fund were the brothers-in-law Dirk Roelof Dooyes and Sieberen (Siep) Feitsma, owners of a textile factory in Amsterdam.<sup>56</sup> Israel was a modern State that vindicated Biblical values, where hard work was held in proper esteem and where enemies were kept at bay. There was much here that was relevant for Holland.<sup>57</sup> Feitsma’s daughter revealed another motive: ‘My parents were asked to take a Jewish family into hiding. With a German officer next door, they decided against it. The memory has gnawed at them ever since. It helps explain their unswerving support for Israel.’<sup>58</sup> Dooyes resided in Swaenenburgh manor in ’s Graveland.<sup>59</sup> Reverend Jan Ridderbos was a regular visitor:

Amiable, that was Dooyes. Unflinchingly RCN, conservative. I spent many hours by his fireplace, discussing the latest developments in church, state and society. Theological dons often preached their sermons in ’s-Graveland, just to enjoy the hospitality of the manor after church.<sup>60</sup>

Dooyes and Feitsma proposed a transfer of the Tiberias Fund to the RCN. Their suggestion that missionary might be channelled to the settlement was very tempting. The Swiss, whose opposition to church supervision was well known, were given to understand that it was an internal Dutch matter. As a result, the Tiberias Fund was taken over by the RCN deputies for Jewish Mission. Starting on 1 Jan-

50 S. Syman (Ministry of Health) to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 14 October 1958, AJP.

51 J.H. Grolle to J.J. Pilon, Tiberias 17 June 1959, AJP.

52 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, Tiberias 23 June 1959, AJP.

53 Annual survey 1959 DRC Council for Church and Israel, HDC VU, collection K. Kroon.

54 S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.J. Pilon, The Hague 30 May 1959, AJP.

55 C.B. Bavinck to J.J. Pilon, Amsterdam 8 October 1959, AJP.

56 Interview Jelle Feitsma by author, Amsterdam 8 July 2016.

57 Telephone conversation T. Kramer-Feitsma, Wolvega 23 June 2016.

58 Iteke Visser-Feitsma, Veenendaal 25 June 2016 (telephone). Her father had been in the Dutch army in 1940.

59 Interview Jelle Feitsma by author, Amsterdam 8 July 2016.

60 E-mail Jan Ridderbos Niczn to author, Assen 14 June 2015.

uary 1960, they would pay the salaries for all remaining RCN staff members in Tiberias, including Pilon.<sup>61</sup> The arrangement was temporary. In due time an international foundation would take responsibility for all financial obligations of the moshav, including Pilon's salary as international secretary.<sup>62</sup>

For the moment, however, he was in the pay of Jewish Mission. He did not seem to care, sensing that the deputies were more dependent upon him than the other way around. Their customary work no longer roused enthusiasm among the RCN membership.<sup>63</sup> The deputies were eager to have a firm foothold in Israel: 'Starting on 1 January the Tiberias Fund will be dissolved, transferring all of its assets to the RCN. Now that we have achieved what we wanted, the work in Tiberias is tightly connected to our church.'<sup>64</sup> If the DRC Council felt any misgiving, they took care not to show it openly.<sup>65</sup> Pilon's commitment seemed boundless. He would even give up his medical career if it would help to realize the settlement.<sup>66</sup>

### Roelof Bakker and Frits Kuiper

Bakker spent a third of his working hours on the project, happy to remove himself from the task of editing missionary leaflets in Amsterdam or Brussels. He preferred to be abroad, especially in ecumenical organisations like the WCC – no matter that the RCN was not even a member. Jewish Mission, on the other hand, was becoming something of a bygone era, a legacy that somehow had to be settled in a tidy manner. In his view, the moshav would enable Jewish-Protestants to remain part of the Christian world, while also assisting their reintegration into the Jewish world.<sup>67</sup> Pilon thought it an excellent idea.<sup>68</sup> The Swiss were given to understand that funding was another reason for recent developments:

We need a large infusion of money.<sup>69</sup>

Mennonite Frits Kuiper offered help in the Netherlands. He was a colourful man, an admirer of Lenin and Barth who also supported Israel. It was an imperative moral duty for Christians in the post-war world.<sup>70</sup> Kuiper affirmed the Arab expulsion in 1948 as unavoidable, if the Jewish people were to be reborn in its promised homeland.<sup>71</sup> Israel demonstrated basic principles of the Torah in the context of the modern world, and in opposition to Islam. In 17th century

61 C.B. Bavinck to J.J. Pilon, Amsterdam 17 December 1959, AJP.

62 C.B. Bavinck to J.J. Pilon, Amsterdam 8 October 1959, AJP.

63 Cf. G.J. van Klinken, *Opvattingen in de Gereformeerde Kerken over het Jodendom, 1896-1970*, Kampen 1996, 569-576.

64 C.B. Bavinck to J.J. Pilon, Amsterdam 20 November 1959, AJP.

65 S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.J. Pilon, The Hague 29 December 1959, AJP.

66 Elisabeth (Bets) Minnaar-Quaat to S. Pilon, Overschie 2 June 1966, in ANAG, folder 1967.

67 Cf. J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël* 1, 547.

68 J.J. Pilon to C.B. Bavinck, Tiberias 6 February 1960, AJP.

69 J.J. Pilon to S. Külling, Heemstede 3 January 1960, AJP.

70 F. Kuiper to K. Barth, Amsterdam 28 January 1948. Alle G. Hoekema and Pieter Post (eds.), *Frits Kuiper*, 240-241.

71 Frits Kuiper, *Israël en de Gojiem*, 105 and 177.



‘Staten’-translation, the Book of Nehemiah counts ‘Arabs’ among the enemies of Israel. Feeling justified by this text, Kuiper argued as follows:

An Arab is perfectly religious, in his own eyes. But he rejects the special calling of Israel. (...) He believes, but (...) in material force and in the ultimate invisible power of fate. Nehemiah says of him, that he will have no memory in Jerusalem. History is not being made by this kind of people.<sup>72</sup>

Lenin’s dealings with the *kulaks* provided an example of how to deal with feudal landowners like sheikh Khayr, even though this time the aim would be attained by more humane means.

### Hebrew Christians

Macanna remained unmoved. In conversation with Blum, he called Pilon a dreamer.<sup>73</sup> Levison feared the possible effect on his flock. Their Protestant understanding was shallow at best, and in an Israeli setting, they were easily tempted to return to ‘the Law and the Prophets [as] the main source of faith and life’.<sup>74</sup> The likely prospect was that they would become enamoured with ‘Judaist Christianity’, as propagated by Muller-Duvernoy and Hugh Schonfield. The latter was preparing an ‘authentic’ Jewish version of the New Testament, based on Qumran texts. All this, according to Levison, was as far removed from Calvinism as could be:

A Judaistic Christianity which does not confess the Holy Trinity and the grace of Christ as manifested in the love of God, and taught by Paul, cannot be regarded as Reformed.<sup>75</sup>

Macanna agreed. ‘He thinks we have gone mad’, Pilon remarked.<sup>76</sup> He took Levison for a ride through Haifa in the fall of 1959. ‘No luxuries, no televisions, no electric gadgets in the households. Few personal possessions. No inheritances from the past, no old-fashioned heavy furniture (...) This was a new land, everything basic and simple.’<sup>77</sup> But, Levison added, with no acknowledged place for Jewish Christians – not while they publicly confessed their faith. ‘As things are now, there is no future for them in Israel.’ He gave an example:

Moshe Mashada (...) wanted to witness in his moshav. Now (...) he must leave. I hope that the IHCA will look after him. But think of the intolerance and the terrible position the man is placed in!<sup>78</sup>

Mashada needed a place ‘where really confessing and deserving Hebrew Christians can bear witness to our Lord and Saviour’.<sup>79</sup> Any hope to find it in Israel had been jettisoned by Levison: ‘I made enquiries as to the government’s attitude and

72 Frits Kuiper, *Wij en ons erfdeel*, 20.

73 J. Blum to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 24 November 1959, AJP.

74 N. Levison to C. Macanna, Haifa 8 December 1959, AJP.

75 Ibidem.

76 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, Tiberias 7 July 1959, AJP.

77 Sijfra Herschberg and Tami Zer, *Oost West. Familieportretten uit Israël*, 11.

78 N. Levison to J.J. Pilon, Haifa 23 February 1960, AJP.

79 N. Levison to C. Macanna, Haifa 8 December 1959, AJP.

was told on very good authority that it would not allow the establishment of such a settlement. They could and would prevent it.<sup>80</sup> Realistically, the only hope for success lay in applying pressure via a friendly power among the Western States:

No other source would do. I suggested that the good offices of the Dutch ambassador would be sought, for I was sure that our [British] Foreign Office would not be willing to do it.<sup>81</sup>

The number of 'Hebrew Christians' was less than a few hundred. H.B. Pencovic, from a Pentecostal church in America, directed a homebased community in Tel Aviv. Frenchman Zeev Kofsmann was the figurehead of a 'Hebrew Christian Church' in Jerusalem. He had founded the HCC as a 'messianic assembly', to which Kranhouse had become attracted: *ha-Qehila ha-Meshichit ha-Yisraelit*. Most members were Eastern Europeans.<sup>82</sup> Their children were 'initiated', instead of baptized.<sup>83</sup> Kofsmann had no intention to make them anathema. His ideal was a return to the very first Christian assembly, before the breach between church and synagogue had become final. As a first step, his assembly was admitted to the UCCI.<sup>84</sup>

Services were held during Shabbat, in the YMCA building opposite the King David-hotel.<sup>85</sup> The Young Men's Christian Association had been founded in 1844 in London. Members 'tended to be rather vague on theological positions but strong on personal earnestness, piety, and especially diligence in the pursuit of business opportunity'.<sup>86</sup> Kofsmann preached his sermons in Ivrit, with translations in English, Yiddish, and French. Jesus descended from king David, had died to atone for the sins of the world and would return – but his virginal birth was out of the question.<sup>87</sup> A Dutchman in the audience had difficulty catching up:

A very curious bunch of people, where strange things are going on. Recently I attended and heard a little sermon. Verses were read from Psalm 119, all starting with *mem* or *nun*. Exposition: what does *mem* refer to? Of course, the Messiah. What does *nun* remind us of? Of *nitzachon* (victory). Which means that we have victory only in the Messiah. But how? Add the numerical value of *mem* to that of *nun*. Result? *Tzade* = 90. What does *tzade* mean? Tzaddik, the righteous one. Who is righteous? A man who has victory in the Messiah.<sup>88</sup>

Kofsmann attended UCCI meetings in Tiberias, where Victor Smadja regarded him as a spiritual father<sup>89</sup>, and Kreider heard him preach:

80 N. Levison to C. Macanna, Haifa 27 October 1959, LDC KEI, inv.nr. 282.

81 Ibidem. Dutch ambassador in Israel was nobleman J.Q. Bas Backer, who would be succeeded in 1960 by W.J.G. baron Gevers.

82 M. Boertien to M. Drayer, Jerusalem 4 August 1960, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105.

83 M. Boertien to CRC Groningen and deputies for evangelization in Israel, Jerusalem 25 March 1960. HUA, archive CRC inv.nr. 104.

84 M. Boertien to M. Drayer, Jerusalem 4 August 1962, HUA archive CCR, inv.nr. 105.

85 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 70.

86 Jane Fletcher Geniesse, *American priestess*, 24.

87 Kees Jan Rodenburg, *Joodse volgelingen van Jezus*, 106.

88 M. Boertien to M. Drayer, Jerusalem 5 September 1960, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105.

89 J.J. Pilon to J.H. Grolle, J.M. Snoek, R. Bakker and C.B. Bavinck, Tiberias 23 September 1959, LDC CI inv.nr. 282.

In Zeev's sermons there was repeated reference to God as One, but with no reference to the Trinity. Yeshua was the Messiah of Israel, but there was no mention of his divinity or virgin birth. A favourite theme was the election of the Jewish nation as people of God, and Israel as the fulfilment of the prophetic promise with eternal claim to this ancestral Land. Zeev taught that the Hebrew Bible was itself the title-deed granting them sole right to the Land, and that believers in Messiah Yeshua had a double benefit by virtue of the second election, with position of priority as inheritors of the New Testament promises. His teaching emphasized this double election privilege for Messianic believers.<sup>90</sup>

The HCC was officially registered by Israeli authorities in 1958.<sup>91</sup> Pencovic continued his missionary work in the classic style, aided by Gardiner-Scott. They had to compete with Victor Buksbazen, the missionary of the American Friends of Israel Missionary and Relief Society. Buksbazen also taught mathematics at the Finnish School in Jerusalem.<sup>92</sup> His periodical *Israel My Glory* opposed interreligious dialogue:

Missionary activity is at the very heart of Christianity. Without it there is no Christianity. 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature', were the last words of our risen Saviour.<sup>93</sup>

It did not stop Pilon from approaching Buksbazen too, asking him to raise support in the English-speaking world:

The girl Chava Kranhouse [sic] tries to promote it, but apart from her we need a person of 'poid' and organizational capabilities.<sup>94</sup>

Kranhouse, however, had not been idle. Potential sponsors were approached as follows:

Dear friend of Israel,

We present a new project for your prayerful interest and for your fellowship as the Lord shall direct. (...) It has the function of enabling Christians to come together for mutual help in an agricultural settlement at a time when they are misunderstood and unwanted in Israel because of their faith in Christ.<sup>95</sup>

It was hoped that no less than 40 per cent of the expenditure would be covered by the US. Kranhouse soon discovered that fundraising for projects in Israel had already become something of a household industry. 'Many charlatans have milked the Christian public.'<sup>96</sup> What if American support failed to occur, Pilon wondered? It was imperative to 'put in all efforts'.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 94.

<sup>91</sup> S. Schoon, *Christelijke presentie in de Joodse staat*, Kampen 1983, 20; Kees Jan Rodenburg, *Joodse volgelingen van Jezus*, 106.

<sup>92</sup> J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 8 February 1960, AJP.

<sup>93</sup> V. Buksbazen, 'Niebuhr and the Gospel for the Jew', *Israel My Glory* February/March 1959.

<sup>94</sup> J.J. Pilon to C.B. Bavinck, Tiberias in the spring of 1960, AJP.

<sup>95</sup> Circular Ch. Kranhouse, Detroit 20 May 1960, in Library Utrecht University, special collections, archive Th.C. Vriezen, folder 1960-4. I thank Dr. Jaap van Amersfoort for bringing this source to my attention.

<sup>96</sup> Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon, Minneapolis 19 November 1959, AJP.

<sup>97</sup> J.J. Pilon to N. Levison, Tiberias 18 January 1960, AJP.

As a last resort he thought of Germany. Though many Israeli abhorred it, compensations by the Federal Republic of Germany had become one of the pillars of their economy. ‘Aside from its moral component’, historian Anita Shapira remarks, ‘the agreement rescued Israel from a deep economic and financial crisis.’<sup>98</sup> Major parts of the electricity system, railways, oil industry and even cranes in Haifa were either financed by Germany or manufactured there.<sup>99</sup> Israel also loomed large in the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirchentag* in Munich in 1959. Hamburg boasted a *Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit*. Ben-Gurion was scheduled to meet Adenauer. Pilon felt that it was time to get in touch with German Protestants – of the right mindset, of course. But where to find them?

98 Anita Shapira, *Israel. A history*, London 2014, 285.

99 Tom Segev, *The seventh million*, 241.



# BANNER OF THE NATIONS

Funding required finding allies and donors. As it happened, they came from different Protestant backgrounds.



# X God's chosen remnant in Israel

## 'Full speed'

A potential sympathizer from the Netherlands was Maas Boertien,<sup>1</sup> posted in Jerusalem by the Christian Reformed Churches. He seemed to share many of the convictions of the DRC:

Mission is for places in the world where the Word of God is unknown. Israel on the other hand, *does* know the Word of God. It has the same Bible as the Lord Jesus had (...) A dialogue means a partnership. Not only does the Church speak, Israel does too. And the Church listens.<sup>2</sup>

Grolle had lobbied for his appointment as secretary of the UCCI,<sup>3</sup> where he tried to curtail Evangelical influences. Billy Graham had become popular among Protestants in the Holy Land. It did not stop Boertien from criticizing the American's 'simple sermons', 'funny' songs, and scanty knowledge of Biblical languages.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, Blum, Pencovic and Kofsmann were under his spell. Boertien advised them to seek a proper synagogue, where they might be served by some serious Jewish knowledge.<sup>5</sup>

By 1 January 1960 it was estimated that there were 1,858,841 Jews, 159,236 Muslims, 48,277 Christians and 22,331 Druzes in Israel.<sup>6</sup> Jewish Christian splinter groups did not figure in the statistics. Undaunted, Blum, Anglican priest James Ayre, Josef Isakoff, Levison and Pencovic installed themselves as the 'executive committee' for a moshav of Christian Jews, under supervision of the UCCI. Pilon was not amused. A chaotic meeting in the home of Pencovic<sup>7</sup> had convinced him that most attendants were mentally unstable and their ideas 'hocus-pocus'. Levison had no faith in the settlement, but drafted a declaration of principle just to make sure:

We the undersigned, being Christian labourers of the Gospel in Israel, and belonging to different Churches and societies, believe that the establishment in Israel of a Hebrew Chris-

1 Cf. Kees Budding, *Als een zwerfver tussen kerk en Israël*.

2 'Geen zending drijven' (interview M. Boertien), in *Nieuwe Provinciale Groninger Courant* 20 February 1960 (HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105).

3 Interview Jeannette Hannah Boertien by author, Leiden 30 March 2016.

4 M. Boertien to CRC Groningen and Israel evangelization deputies CRC, Jerusalem 6 June 1960, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

5 Notebook April 1960–April 1961, in Nes Ammim, Beit Pilon.

6 *Das Israel Buch. Herausgegeben von der Informationsabteilung der israelischen Mission, Köln, im Auftrage des israelischen Ausenministeriums*, Düsseldorf 1960/1961, 36.

7 J.J. Pilon to C.B. Bavinck, Tiberias spring 1960, AJP.



tian industrial and agricultural settlement would be of great value for the furtherance of the cause of our Lord Messiah in the Holy Land.<sup>8</sup>

Officials in Tel Aviv warned against what they called 'sectarians'.<sup>9</sup> They might be right, Pilon reluctantly admitted.<sup>10</sup> Boertien believed that many of these Christian Jews had 'lost their way', or were suffering from a 'diaspora mentality':

What they are so afraid of is a mystery. True, some of them have lost their jobs. However: some of them provoke that outcome by their attitude.<sup>11</sup>

The idea so far had been to close the chapter of Jewish Mission in a way that suited everyone: by dialogue, but also by providing opportunities for Christian Jews. Now it seemed that the latter aim might prove even more difficult than the former. Bakker and Snoek admitted that most of their converts did not feel at home in the RCN. To his dismay, Pilon found out that an 'indigenous Hebrew church in Israel' might be even worse.

### Israel Christian Settlement Inc.

Communicating his misgivings to the Americans presented a problem, now that Kranhouse had engaged the *Messianic Messenger to Israel* (Waco, Texas).<sup>12</sup> One of her heroes was William E. Blackstone of the Chicago Hebrew Mission,<sup>13</sup> best-selling author of *Jesus is coming*<sup>14</sup> and organizer of a world conference about 'Past, present and future of Israel'.<sup>15</sup> This was the very type of Evangelicalism Boertien had been warning against.

It came as a surprise for Pilon that the 'girl' Eva Kranhouse succeeded in bringing together an American committee (5 March 1960). 'Israel Christian Settlement Inc' was presided by Roy Aldrich of the Detroit Bible Institute. Kranhouse became secretary, and Buksbazen vice-president. Board members were Herbert B. Munce, Doralene Weitzman, W. Alex Thompson, Fred G. Kendal and Moses H. Gitlin of the Hebrew Mission who Kranhouse regarded as another spiritual mentor. Their emblem was Christ's symbol of a fish: its eye a small star of David, scales representing 'building blocks' (for Israel) and the tail 'agriculture' (for the kibbutzim).<sup>16</sup> Paramount consideration for Pilon was a concrete American contribution to the build-up. Amazingly, it seemed as if his doubts about Jewish Christianity in Israel had suddenly evaporated:

8 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse and J. Alkahé, Tiberias 13 February 1960, AJP.

9 J. Bernath, 'Technischer Bericht', Thayngen 1 May 1960, HDC VU, archive NAN, box 37.

10 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Heemstede 9 May 1960, AJP.

11 M. Boertien to CRC Groningen and to Deputies evangelization Israel, Jerusalem 24 November 1960, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

12 L.E. Williams to Ch. Kranhouse, Waco 27 May 1965, in: HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

13 Gerhard Falk, *The restoration of Israel*, 86.

14 Williams Eugene Blackstone, *Jesus is coming*, reprint 2014.

15 Jane Fletcher Geniesse, *American priestess*, 144.

16 Preliminary draft for the settlement, Baarn 1 September 1960, HDC VU archive NAN, box 27.

I cannot tell you how tremendously encouraging and inspiring this message has been to us and in the name of our committee may I express our gratefulness to God that He is giving us the friends to commence this great task.<sup>17</sup>

Arab-Christian participation, as anticipated by Farah, the Mennonites and the Bernaths, might have to be postponed, perhaps indefinitely. Christian Zionism in the United States tended to share this view in Oliphant's *Land of Gilead*:

Arabs have little claim to our sympathy. They wasted this country, ruined its villages, and plundered its inhabitants, until it has been reduced to its present condition; and if they were driven back to the Arabian deserts from which they came, there is abundant pasture in its oases for their camels and goats.<sup>18</sup>

### God's Chosen Remnant in Israel

A declaration of intent was published by the Americans in the fall of 1959.<sup>19</sup> Jewish history centred around a 'remnant' of true believers.<sup>20</sup> In present-day Israel, this remnant was represented by the 'Hebrew Christians'. '[They] must be God's witnesses to Israel (...), taking the place of the holy prophets of old, pointing out prophecies as found in the Hebrew Scriptures, warning of the judgement to come and proclaiming the way of salvation.'<sup>21</sup> The scenario referred to chapter 20 of the Book of Revelation. Jesus would assemble the converted Jews in their ancestral lands, undaunted by Satan's attacks, preceding the final judgement.<sup>22</sup>

A century before, Presbyterian William McClure Thompson<sup>23</sup> had prophesied a pact between an anticipated Jewish State and a Western maritime power.<sup>24</sup> Once they were recognized as politically dependable, so the American committee believed, the right for Christian Jews to evangelize in Israel would follow. *God's Chosen Remnant* defined the purposes of the intended moshav as follows:

- That there would be a visible representation to Jew and Gentile of God's faithful remnant in Israel;
- That unbelieving Jews may be given a better opportunity of knowing their Messiah, the Holy One of Israel, by hearing the message of everlasting life from the lips of self-supporting consecrated Jews;
- That Gentile Christians and churches may be able to meet not one, but many real Jewish believers;
- A self-supporting Hebrew Christian community, able to remain in their native land and to bear witness of Him Who was rejected, the Holy One of Israel.

17 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 6 March 1960, AJP.

18 Laurence Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead*, 285.

19 *To God's Chosen Remnant in Israel*, Newark (New Jersey), 1959.

20 Isaiah 10:21: 'A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob.'

21 *To God's Chosen Remnant in Israel*, 2.

22 A.B.W.M. Kok, 'Chiliasme', in *Christelijke Encyclopedie* 2, 154.

23 William McClure Thompson, *The Land and the Book*, New York 1859.

24 Cf. Shlomo Sand, *The invention of the Land of Israel*.

### Yeshuv Meshichee Israeli

They intended to host 'Hebrew Christian Bible Conferences', plus 'travelling evangelistic groups, ministering to Jews and Gentiles', 'a printing press for tracts', etcetera. The core group of 'Jewish believers' would be joined by 'unbelieving relatives of believers who are willing to live where the Lord Jesus is exalted'.<sup>25</sup> It was at this stage that Pilon began to feel some alarm:<sup>26</sup>

The term 'Christian' in Israel carries a negative bias and produces shock and embarrassment, not to say fear. So it is better to avoid it when possible. It involves a matter of principle. (...) We have been asked repeatedly, by government people and Israeli friends (non-Christian), whether this settlement was intended to proselytize. As a form of disguised missionary work.<sup>27</sup>

Bakker, ever eager for jobs overseas, had made himself available to the Holland-America shipping line. In the capacity of naval chaplain, he was scheduled to visit New York on 25 July, on board the liner *Maasdam*. It offered an opportunity to share Pilon's concerns with Aldrich and the others, without antagonizing them: 'We *have* to get a delegation from America.'<sup>28</sup> Preferably of a kind that would be acceptable for the DRC. 'You will not be able to do your job properly', Pilon told Kranhouse, 'if you are not really in touch with Europe.' She answered that she had no intention to back down:

You mentioned the disrepute into which the term Christian has fallen. This is not our problem. I do not call myself *notzri* (feminine *notzriah*), but *yehudi meshichi*. Or in English, we would translate this as Messianic Jew. In Hebrew I would translate Israel Christian Settlement very simply: *Yeshuv Meshichi Yisraeli*.<sup>29</sup>

Her committee<sup>30</sup> claimed the right to proclaim their message from a base within the State of Israel. Now that the Jewish people had been reborn, it seemed certain that the return of Jesus was imminent:

Since May 14, 1948, Israel has tripled in population to a present 2,032,500, welcoming home her children from the four corners of the earth as foretold: *The Lord thy God will bring thee again into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and He will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers (Dt. 30:5)*. One cannot explain this integral relationship between the people of Israel, the land of Israel, and the Book of Israel, apart from the supernatural.<sup>31</sup>

25 *To God's Chosen Remnant in Israel*, Newark, 4.

26 'Inc.' stands for 'incorporated'.

27 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Heemstede 15 June 1960, AJP.

28 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Heemstede 19 July 1960, AJP.

29 Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon, Detroit 14 July 1960, AJP.

30 Other board members were Herbert Munce, Doralene Weitzman, W. Alex Thompson, Rev. Fred Kendal and Dr. Moses H. Gitlin. On the board of recommendation: Robert Berry (Cleveland, Oh.), Judith Brigham (Louisville, Ky.), J. Frank Burkhardt (Detroit, Mich.), Rev. Robert Burrows (Chicago, Ill.), Dr. Alfred A. Cierpke (Chattanooga, Tenn.), George T.B. Davis (Philadelphia, Pa.), Rev. Daniel Finestone (Philadelphia, Pa.), Rev. Rachmiel Frydland (New York), Rev. Arthur E. Glass (Augusta, Ga.), Dr. Theodore C. Mercer (Dayton, Tenn.), Ori O. Miller (Akron, Pa.), Clement S. Schifreen (Philadelphia, Pa.), Abner G. Stoltzfus (New York), Dr. V. Vojta (Minneapolis, Minn.) and Dr. Judson A. Rudd (Dayton, Tenn.).

31 *A Christian Settlement in Israel*, Detroit (Mi.) 1960, HUA archive deputies Church and Israel RCN inv.nr. 371.

According to this prophetic scenario, Israel would surely convert – if not to a church, then to the Lord Jesus:

Amongst those God has regathered to Israel are Jews who believe in Jesus as the Messiah and Saviour; and these (...) are faced with the 20<sup>th</sup> century challenge of proving the reality of their faith.<sup>32</sup>

Their aim for the moshav followed these premises: ‘In his new community, the Jewish Christian will have the advantage of normal working opportunity together with the freedom of spiritual conviction.’<sup>33</sup>

### Mennonites

Pilon had to admit that ‘our system of communication for international contact, etcetera is not yet in order’.<sup>34</sup> The Swiss worried about the RCN, Holland wondered how to present dialogue to the Americans. Even the more moderate Mennonites wanted to create a connection between the moshav and their evangelizing work in Israel.<sup>35</sup>

Roy Kreider<sup>36</sup> was a farmer’s son from Pennsylvania. After graduating at the Eastern Mennonite College, he and his wife Florence Cressman went to Israel in a missionary capacity. ‘The Spirit of the Lord gradually dissolved the walls of insecurity and fear’, was how he described the conversion of an Israeli. ‘In time, he came to faith that Yeshua was the Jewish Messiah.’<sup>37</sup> Miller had stimulated him to take a broader view and to investigate the spiritual potential of Israel too:

We have been meeting for almost two years, praying to know the significance of this Israel phenomenon, and what it means for the church. The circumstances giving rise to the State of Israel have stirred the church to prayer and to a deepening sense that we should be there. In what way is not yet clear. We are praying for the Lord to call workers from among us and to open the way for ministry service in the Land.<sup>38</sup>

Ministry service might eventually attract Jews to Jesus, without the prerequisite of baptism: ‘We believe that people who have experienced so much pain will be helped through your ministry to experience the healing love of Jesus. But we are not assuming that those coming to faith must become Mennonite.’<sup>39</sup>

Kreider used to attend services in Hasidic synagogues, where he liked the atmosphere and liturgy. He described Pilon as a ‘sensitive Christian in Europe, who has seen the suffering of the Jewish people and wants to help the State of Israel’. That was all right, but Americans obviously belonged to a different category. Their beliefs had decisively contributed to Hitler’s defeat. So why not propagate that same Christian vision now? Modesty was hardly a virtue:

32 Ibidem.

33 Ibidem.

34 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Heemstede 9 May 1960, AJP.

35 O.O. Miller to J.J. Pilon, Akron, Pennsylvania 22 July 1960, AJP.

36 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*. Cf. Marie Shenk, *Mennonite encounter with Judaism in Israel*.

37 *Land of Revelation*, 60.

38 Ibidem, 42-43.

39 Ibidem, 44.

The government of Israel will have more respect for us if we make a distinctive Christian contribution and simply state that we expect to live as Christians working toward building up the country. Let us not hide what we are ... we have a banner and it must be unfurled.<sup>40</sup>

### Maas Boertien

Accompanied by his family, Boertien had arrived on board of the *Theodor Herzl*.<sup>41</sup> Pencovic arranged a flat in Rehov HaRakevet 5 in the al-Baq'a quarter.<sup>42</sup> Next door, at nr. 3, lived the Armenian photographer Hovhannes Krikorian.<sup>43</sup> The Land of the Bible was an overwhelming experience:<sup>44</sup>

I can hardly describe my feelings. (...) Here, in this very land, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob shaped the history of His people.

Boertien's enthusiasm did not extend to the many local branches of Protestantism. There were myriads of organizations, of churches and initiatives, completely out of touch with each other and with Israeli society. What kept them going was a steady flow of cash from donors in Europe and America. Pencovic could serve as an example of 'an old-guard missionary who has no idea of current thinking'. Kreider talked of conversion as if it were a miracle cure. Educated Israelis gave this 'pep-talk about Jesus' a polite smile, the Orthodox did not recognize it 'as based in Holy Scripture'. A walk along the shores of Lake Kinneret offered an opportunity to discuss the situation with Pilon: 'Around us the spicy smell of orange plantations, silvery waters, mountains in the distance.' In their opinion, the expected visit of Billy Graham would not do any good. Loud sentimental music, people raising their hands as token of their devotion:

How on earth is it possible, in this land where the Psalms were born, that these ghastly songs have been translated into modern Hebrew? A complete farce for anyone who has experienced the beauty of a synagogue service firsthand.

The two Dutchmen discussed the obvious difficulty of harmonizing *Israel and the Church* with *To God's Chosen Remnant*.<sup>45</sup> A few days later, Pilon boarded the *Herzl* for Europe.<sup>46</sup> His stay with Jacob Bernath and his family went well.<sup>47</sup> He was introduced to pastor Johannes Gutscher of the Schweitzer Evangeliumsdiens and Alfred Rueff, a Christian Jewish lawyer from Basel. Hans Bernath sent a letter about Billy Graham, whom he clearly admired:

<sup>40</sup> Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon, Detroit 14 July 1960, AJP.

<sup>41</sup> The Boertiens were shown around by Norse pastor Magne Solheim (cf. Menahem Benhayim, 'The Messianic Movement in Israel', in Kai Kjær-Hansen (ed.), *Missions in Israel 1948-1998*, 6.

<sup>42</sup> Interview Jeannette Hannah Boertien by author, Leiden 30 March 2016.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Hisham Khatib, *Jerusalem, Palestine & Jordan*, 198.

<sup>44</sup> M. Boertien to CRC Groningen and deputies for evangelization Israel, Jerusalem 25 March 1960. HUA, archive CRC inv.nr. 104.

<sup>45</sup> Karl Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik* iv/3 (Die Lehre von der Versöhnung), Zurich 1959. Cf. Mark R. Lindsay, *Barth, Israel, and Jesus: Karl Barth's theology of Israel*, Ashgate 2007.

<sup>46</sup> J.J. Pilon to R. Clephane Macanna, Tiberias 23 August 1959, AJP.

<sup>47</sup> J.J. Pilon to J. Blum, Heemstede 13 May 1960, AJP.

What he offers is a clear message of salvation for all. (...) What Israel needs is not just words, but the example of men and women who live the Christian faith.<sup>48</sup>

Pilon kept his preferences to himself. Even Ko Minnaar would remark that it was only after many years that he discovered that the DRC position was also that of Johan Pilon.<sup>49</sup> The Swiss, who had been annoyed by Muller-Duvernoy's rants against missionaries,<sup>50</sup> did not realize that either. Boertien had a feeling that they and the Americans underestimated what had happened in occupied Europe during the Nazi era:

They ignore the root causes of that event. Repeatedly I witnessed how pulpits were being abused to condemn the 'stubborn' Jews. The wretches believe this is Pauline teaching. (...) 'Jesus theology' is popular here in Jerusalem. As if Jesus substitutes for the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

He repeated that he preferred a (Liberal) synagogue over a meeting of 'born-again Christians':

My wife and I are having difficulties with existing churches in Jerusalem. It is easier to take part in the services of the Reform community of Shalom Ben-Chorin, where Psalm texts are being used for prayer and where we find other deeply Biblical elements.

Of course, we may have second thoughts. But it is easier for us in the Reform synagogue than in the average Christian place of worship in Jerusalem. Should a Jew ask about a suitable church, we would simply not know what to answer. The official churches are so very foreign, the Jewish Christian splinter groups so messy and uprooted. If at least they had preserved some of the riches of the synagogue, that might compensate a little. But they did not. They just mess around, create a smug atmosphere, deal in small talk. Their liturgy is atrocious.<sup>51</sup>

48 H. Bernath, circular letter Nazareth 3 July 1960, AJP.

49 J. Minnaar to NAN, Rotterdam 18 December 1970, HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

50 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Tiberias 6 June 1960, AJP.

51 M. Boertien to CRC Groningen and deputies for evangelization Israel CRC, Jerusalem 24 November 1960. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

# XI Velbert

If *Israel and the Church* were to be given a chance, some counterbalance would be needed against prevalent American and Swiss opinions. Germany was an obvious option, though far from easy. Apart from wartime memories, Pilon held a low opinion of the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD). A synodal meeting in Berlin-Weißensee had offered regrets about ‘silence and negligence’ but failed to mention any participation in the persecution of the Jews.<sup>1</sup> Bakker however, was convinced of the German potential. There were supporters of the State of Israel, he said, among them Karl Heinz Rengstorf.<sup>2</sup>

## Preliminary moves

*Missionsinspektor* Paul Achenbach and Friedrich Nothacker had visited Tiberias. Both men belonged to the Pietist tradition of Württemberg, Achenbach as a Lutheran and Nothacker as a member of a Free Church: the Liebenzeller Mission. They were in touch with the Dutch chiliast Johannes de Heer, for whom the State of Israel was a direct outcome of Biblical prophecy.<sup>3</sup> Pilon invited young Germans to do odd jobs in the Scotti.<sup>4</sup> Nothacker (1901-1968), who presided over a retreat in the Black Forest, showed an interest in the moshav plan. As a medic in the Wehrmacht in 1942 he had witnessed the horrors of the Warsaw Ghetto. Haunted by the memory, he felt eager to act. ‘There was a clear vision: to serve contemporary Israeli society by practical love.’<sup>5</sup> Helene Wyman (1877-1959), an English Protestant deaconess of Jewish origin, joined him in this effort. Their aim was to build a nursing home for victims of Hitler’s concentration camps:

The love of the Lord will be demonstrated without an abundance of words.<sup>6</sup>

Just like Pilon, they were looking for a suitable location in Galilee, but with more immediate success.<sup>7</sup> After Wyman’s death in 1959, Nothacker and his wife Luisa

1 Helmut Schwier (ed.), *Kirche und Israel*, 24. Cf. Ralf Hoburg, *Die Israel-Dokumente der deutschen Kirchen seit 1945. Ergebnisse und offene Fragen*, Basel 1996.

2 K.H. Rengstorf to R. Bakker, Münster 17 March 1958, UAM Nachlass K.H. Rengstorf, Bestand 193 nr. 126.

3 Johannes de Heer, *Drie Verborgenheden Gods en hun openbaring*, Driebergen 1950.

4 J.J. Pilon to P. Achenbach (Bad Krozingen, Baden), Tiberias 7 October 1959, HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

5 Gerhard Maier, introduction to: Traugott Thoma, *Friedrich Nothacker*, 10-11.

6 F. Nothacker to J.H. Grolle, Maisenbach 5 March 1959, LDC CI inv.nr. 282.

7 P. Achenbach to J.J. Pilon, Bad Krozingen 20 October 1959, HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

contacted the Jewish community in Nahariya. With their knowledge and permission, they started to build a nursing home in that city. The couple knew Bernath, but had lost touch with the Dutch.

Allies for Pilon came from the Rhineland, not from the Black Forest. Bakker met pastor Erich David and his wife Elisabeth. They lived in Velbert, to the Northeast of Düsseldorf. Their church was Calvinist (*reformiert*) and a member of the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland (ECR). Bakker came to see the Davids in the parsonage on 8 December,<sup>8</sup> with the intention of bringing them into the moshav plan despite the anticipated objections. Aversion to anything German ran deep in Nes Ammim Netherlands. ‘For all of us it was quite a step to pick up the thread’, Ina Isings explains. ‘A lot had happened.’<sup>9</sup>

Erich David felt history in the marrow of his bones. Born in Silesia, he had been under arms between 1939 and 1945.<sup>10</sup> His wife refers to ‘heated discussions about events under the Third Reich. Pastor Bakker and Dr Pilon seemed to believe that German participation in the village plan was essential for a process of reconciliation. I felt deeply moved by their efforts to normalize their relationship with former enemies.’<sup>11</sup> They were introduced to Nikolaus Becker (1929–2002), a lawyer who was also an *Oberkirchenrat* in Velbert. Born in Stettin (now Poland), he had served in the Wehrmacht, studying in Bonn after being released from a British POW camp.<sup>12</sup> ‘He was not only a theologian, but also trained in legal matters’, Pilon reported. ‘Pastor Becker knows what he is talking about. In him we will have an excellent advisor.’<sup>13</sup> It was presumed that he would guide the Velbert group to become a junior partner.<sup>14</sup> Bakker and Pilon signed the guestbook of the David family ‘in confidence of success for our planned settlement in Israel’.<sup>15</sup> Becker asked *Sozialreferent* Horst Dahlhaus and pastor Lothar Ahne (Essen) to join them.<sup>16</sup> Both were leading members of their church. Asked for his motives many years later, Dahlhaus (1927) referred to his early life:

At the age of seventeen, I served in an anti-aircraft battery. My father, a National Socialist, forbade me to have any contact with Jews. My mother however remarked that God would punish us for our crimes against them. After a short time as POW I returned to a devastated country, becoming an active member of both the Free Democratic Party (Liberal) and the Evangelical Church. It might somehow contribute to reconciliation, although I did not have the faintest idea how to achieve this.<sup>17</sup>

Becker and Dahlhaus tried to enlist *Probst* Heinrich Grüber, Lili Simon and Rengstorf. Grüber had organized an aid program for ‘non-Aryan Christians’ during the

8 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 142–143.

9 Interview C. Isings by author, Soest 13 August 2014.

10 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 485.

11 Elisabeth David, ‘Legende und Wirklichkeit. Über die Gründung des deutschen Nes Ammim-Vereins’, in *Nes Ammim* 1998 nr. 2, 42–43 (NAD, Düsseldorf).

12 Erhard Krause and Dietrich Dehnen (eds.), *Kirche im Übergang*, 219.

13 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, 9 May 1960, AJP.

14 J.J. Pilon to N. Levison, Tiberias 18 January 1960, AJP.

15 Elisabeth David, ‘Legende und Wirklichkeit’.

16 Christian Bartsch (ed.), *Schalom ist mehr als nur ein Wort*, 125.

17 Interview H. Dahlhaus by author, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin) 25 January 2013.



Nazi era, for which he had been arrested and imprisoned in Dachau. The Allies had engaged him in their post-war reconstruction plans, resulting in the Berliner Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit.<sup>18</sup> Pedagogist Lili Simon from Königsberg (now Kaliningrad) was a Jewish member of the Evangelical Church. From Tel Aviv, where she had been a teacher, she moved to the Federal Republic: 'A self-conscious woman, and a lively presence in any debate.'<sup>19</sup> Rengstorf directed the Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum in Münster. Before the war it had been based in Leipzig, where Bakker had received his missionary training. Rengstorf often engaged in discussions with Jewish scholars in the academic world, defending a sanitized missionary approach in church. He also appealed to the Adenauer administration to make reparations for the Jewish people a top priority.<sup>20</sup>

Hans Bernath hoped to benefit from the original ideals of the former *Tempelgesellschaft* in Palestine.<sup>21</sup> The Rhinelanders had different ideas. They were not interested in reviving the past, but in creating a new beginning. On 7 May 1960 it was exactly fifteen years since the Third Reich had capitulated. This very day was chosen for a meeting in Velbert, in the home of Professor Friedrich Karrenberg, chairman of the socio-ethical council of the ECR. Next to the core group, additional attendees included *Oberkirchenrat* Heinz Stöver (Düsseldorf), *Superintendent* Hans Himmelsbach (Kirchenkreis Niederberg), professor of Reformation Theology Paul Jacobs (Münster) and *Landeskirchenrat* Friedrich-Wilhelm von Staa.<sup>22</sup> Pilon and Bakker had been invited from Holland. The Velbert group had noted their 'reservations in any dealings with Germans, after what had happened under National Socialism'.<sup>23</sup> They asked the Dutch to speak first. Bakker described the aim as a settlement primarily for Christian Jews, but also for Protestants in general. Pilon stressed the importance of German financial support.<sup>24</sup>

'Velbert is an industrial town of 50,000 inhabitants, in the centre of the Ruhr-area, near Essen. Though it was a cloudless, sunny day, the air seemed to be filled with a foul haze, most likely caused by smog from big factories. The sun had difficulty shining through.' The 'foul haze' seemed almost symbolic. However, during the meeting, Pilon's mood brightened:

I was impressed by their openness and fellowship. We arrived at an immediate understanding and sympathy after the presentation of the subject. A very lively and, one might say, intelligent discussion followed on matters of principle and practical issues. I was particularly struck by the spirit of humility and the absence of the notorious German arrogance, which I somehow had expected to manifest itself (...). With people of this spirit however, something can be done.

18 Josef Foschepoth, *Die Anfänge der Gesellschaften für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit*, Göttingen 1993, 55 and 108.

19 Interview with Rike Wichelhaus by author, Düsseldorf 27 September 2013.

20 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus. Wahrnehmungen in Kirche und Publizistik von 1948 bis 1972*, Göttingen/Bristol, Ct (USA) 2013, 121.

21 Sven Hedin, *Jerusalem*, Leipzig 1916, 259.

22 Nikolaus Becker, 'Auf dem Wege', in N. Becker en G.E.H. Koch (eds.), *Bewahren und Erneuern*, 25-26.

23 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 143.

24 Horst Dahlhaus, 'Protokollnotiz über ein Gespräch am Sonnabend, dem 7. Mai 1960', AJP.

An acute consciousness of being a *Täternation*<sup>25</sup> did not discourage the Germans from developing ideas of their own. They laid down a principle from which they would never waver: unequivocal approval of Israeli authorities. Under this condition they accepted the junior profile that was expected from them. Other nations would take the lead. Pilon thought this realistic, given ‘the touchiness which still prevails, quite understandably, towards Germany’.<sup>26</sup>

Lili Simon, Rengtorf and Grüber found a cooperative effort between a Dutch concept of Jewish-Christian dialogue, Christian Zionists in America, and a Swiss surgeon in Arab Nazareth curious to say the least. All three withdrew. The others pressed on and a preliminary committee was founded on the spot.<sup>27</sup> Karrenberg made Dahlhaus secretary,<sup>28</sup> on the payroll of the ECR. Elisabeth David believed church backing to be essential.<sup>29</sup> A start had been made, though many issues needed further reflection:

As Germans we failed to understand why a Jewish Christian village was needed for the aim of reconciliation between Jews and Christians.<sup>30</sup>

### Critical questions

Dahlhaus addressed the Dutch secretary in a cordial and respectful tone, as ‘Sehr geehrter, lieber Herr Dr. Pilon!’ It did not deter him from asking some pertinent questions:

- Considering all of the negative implications of further isolation, is it really advisable to separate Christian Jews from other Israeli citizens?
- Don’t you agree that it is harmful to cooperate with those who are still actively engaged in Jewish Mission?<sup>31</sup>

At first, the Dutch committee was annoyed by this self-assured tone. They were even doubting the wisdom of having approached the Germans. Pilon asked ambassador J.Q. Bas Bakker in West-Jerusalem for his opinion. The ambassador’s secretary J.G.N. de Hoop Scheffer strongly recommended having representatives of the former *Widerstand* in the committee. If Grüber stayed aloof, that would cause a serious setback.<sup>32</sup> There was no objection, however, against a subsidiary role for the Velbert group. Shlomo Atir (Mapam) had recently acknowledged the importance of the Federal Republic for Israel:

25 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 9 May 1960, AJP.

26 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Heemstede 9 May 1960, AJP.

27 Christian Bartsch (ed.), *Schalom ist mehr als nur ein Wort*, 125.

28 Email H. Dahlhaus to author, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin) 8 December 2012.

29 Elisabeth David, ‘Legende und Wirklichkeit’.

30 Interview H. Dahlhaus by author, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin) 25 January 2013.

31 H. Dahlhaus to NAN, Velbert 16 August 1960, AJP.

32 J.J. Pilon to P. Jacobs, Heemstede 9 August 1960, AJP. De Hoop Scheffer left in 1961 for The Hague, where he took on responsibilities as State Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

In March 1953 West Germany signed the Reparations Agreement which is intended as compensation for Jewish property confiscated by the Hitler regime. (...) A considerable part of Israel's industry, agriculture and transport is now irrevocably tied to West Germany because of the constant need for spare parts.<sup>33</sup>

Chancellor Konrad Adenauer facilitated a yearly loan of \$50 million, 'a sum that dwarfed earlier credits provided by France, Israel's closest ally, or even by the United States.'<sup>34</sup> The Dutch embassy concluded that German participation in the economic build-up of Israel was no longer anathema.

33 Shlomo Atir, 'Germany and the Middle East', *Outlook. Middle East Monthly* October 1959, 5.

34 Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel*, 560-561.

## XII Costs and participants

Israeli offices Mekoroth (irrigation) and Tahal (hydrology) provided a preliminary indication of costs:

For the land and for the start-up costs, we would probably have to aim for a guaranteed capital of one million Swiss francs or £100,000.<sup>1</sup>

The equivalent was *f* 834,000 in Dutch guilders, about three million euros in present-day value.<sup>2</sup> Pilon believed that this sum could be raised, as it seemed like an opportune moment. Former Prime Minister Willem Drees visited the Knesset in March 1960. There were no harsh words about the appalling death toll of Dutch Jews between 1941 and 1945. To the contrary, Knesset chairman Kaddish Luz (Mapai) praised the ‘time-honoured Dutch hospitality and their aid during the Second World War’. Trees were planted as ‘an evergreen testimony to the friendship between Holland and Israel’.<sup>3</sup> The Tiberias Fund expected a similarly warm welcome.

### Shlomo Bezek’s estimation

A mud track branched off from the coastal road. In the land that Khayr had on offer, a small hill could be made out, thirty meters above sea level. All around, the once fertile fields had become overgrown by thistles and weeds. There was a wadi, which remained dry during the summer months. ‘Fertilization had stopped, the soil seemed devoid of bacterial life’, an expert remarked. ‘Yet the land had potential. Old, eroded dolerite: its porosity perfect for our aims.’<sup>4</sup>

Bezek dispatched his draft for a moshav shituvi to Holland. He hoped to acquire 5,000 dunam for a village of approximately 195 inhabitants by 1962, presuming that the land would be bought by Keren Kayemet and then leased to the moshav.<sup>5</sup> His estimate of costs was much higher, *f* 1,500,000 in Dutch guilders. The equivalent in Israeli currency would be as follows:

1 J.J. Pilon to J. Alkahé, Tiberias 18 January 1960, HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

2 Calculation: [iisg.nl/hpw/calculate-nl.php](http://iisg.nl/hpw/calculate-nl.php).

3 ‘Dr. Drees in Israël’, in *Gereformeerd Weekblad* 30 March 1960.

4 Interview Cees Smitsman by author, Woudrichem 18 September 2014.

5 ‘Organization and layout of a moshav shituvi’ (prepared by Shlomo Bezek), with added notes by Johan Snoek (Tiberias 20 April 1960) and Miriam Bezek (Kiryat Shmona 25 April 1960), AJP.

|                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Fifty houses                     | IL 225,000 |
| Granary                          | IL 40,000  |
| Communal building                | IL 15,000  |
| Fröbelschool                     | IL 10,000  |
| Shop                             | IL 15,000  |
| Medical clinic                   | IL 7,000   |
| Three chain tractors 50 hp.      | IL 42,000  |
| Five tyre tractors 30 hp.        | IL 20,000  |
| Two sowing machines              | IL 4,000   |
| Two combines                     | IL 24,000  |
| Two haycarts                     | IL 8,000   |
| Three plows                      | IL 9,000   |
| Two lorries                      | IL 24,000  |
| Four thousand laying hens        | IL 60,000  |
| Two thousand chicken for poultry | IL 16,000  |
| Forty cows                       | IL 50,000  |
| Eight hundred sheep              | IL 80,000  |
| Two pumps of 50 hp.              | IL 12,000  |
| Waterpipes                       | IL 60,000  |
| Total                            | IL 750,000 |

An ample labour force would be needed:

Permanent staff: 1 general manager; 2 administrators; 1 secretary; 1 purchasing agent; 1 mechanic; 1 carpenter; 1 fitter; 2 servicemen; 2 drivers and 1 retailer. That's about 25% of the workforce. The others are engaged in agriculture: 5 men for sheep; 3 to 4 for cows; 2 for chickens; 8 tractor drivers; 7 others to till the land; 3 for groves; 3 for olives. For vineyards 200 dunam; olives 30 dunam and corn 4,500 dunam. We'll also have maize and cotton.

Expected incomes about IL 30,000 per month, or plm. IL 400,000 per year. Daily costs per family about IL 10. For forty families: IL 125,000 per year.

At this moment Bezek held no objections against Christian Jews, as long as they kept 'quiet'. His immediate concern was whether they had any expertise in farming.<sup>6</sup> Miriam did some soil analysis, puzzled by the enthusiasm of her husband:

You should see Shlomo slaving! You have a gift of making people *meshogge* for this kind of thing.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>7</sup> M. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Kiryat Shmona 25 April 1960, AJP.

Pilon had the draft translated into English and German. Next step, he wrote in May 1960, would be to present the plan to the public.<sup>8</sup> He still hoped to press Khayr for better terms. The board would need to be given ample decision-making power in order to minimize time-consuming consultations. 'Of course we want people involved, engaged', explained Kuiper. 'However, *leadership* should be restricted to a few persons. They deal with delicate matters, unsuitable for plenary discussions.'<sup>9</sup> This implied a top-down model of decision-making:

During the first years a direct democracy will probably be impracticable, as the community is still in the process of being built. Democracy would invite chaos. A central command (direction) and strong discipline are required. Those who want to participate will have to submit to this voluntarily.<sup>10</sup>

The two top positions were international secretary and international president, with commensurate wages. The stated goal would be to meet the Israeli population 'in daily life (...) in their new State':

After the terrible experience of the Jews in Europe, our intention is to show the love of Christ by the example of our deeds.<sup>11</sup>

The DRC cautiously remarked that involvement of American evangelists was bound to cause trouble. 'While they lived in Europe, Jews had to submit to the fact that they were being missionized. In Israel they are *free* and can stand up against this kind of treatment'.<sup>12</sup> Apart from that, was a 'refuge' for Jewish Christians really required for their well-being? Kofsmann's community had been granted the status of 'a recognized non-profit society' in 1958.<sup>13</sup> It was imperative to brief Israeli authorities about these issues before coming out in the open.<sup>14</sup>

The Dutch committee was formally established in June 1960. Bakker became president, Henkemans treasurer and Pilon secretary. That same month, Ben-Gurion was received by Queen Juliana, 'in an atmosphere of warmth and sincerely intended friendship'.<sup>15</sup> Hans Bernath kept Khayr informed.<sup>16</sup> Boertien paid a visit to the Nazareth hospital, impressed by the performance of the staff.<sup>17</sup> What he liked less was the Billy Graham style of the chapel. Pilon waved away this problem: he welcomed a 'positive Evangelical spirit'.<sup>18</sup> The Bezeks were visited by Blum and RCN theologian Anton Honig, both confirming their strong support for the 'kibbutz-project'.<sup>19</sup>

8 J.J. Pilon to M. and S. Bezek, Heemstede 2 May 1960, AJP.

9 Minutes committee for a Christian settlement in Israel, Rotterdam 27 March 1961, HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.

10 Notebook April 1960–April 1961, in Nes Ammim, Beit Pilon.

11 R. Bakker, circular letter Rotterdam 3 March 1960, HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

12 [S.P. Tabaksblatt], 'Motivation', AJP.

13 Menahem Benhayim, 'The Messianic Movement in Israel', 8.

14 J.J. Pilon to C.B. Bavinck (Jewish Mission RCN), Tiberias Spring 1960.

15 'Ben Goerion een opgetogen gast', *De Telegraaf* 23 June 1960.

16 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 15 August 1960, AJP.

17 M. Boertien to CRC Groningen and deputies for evangelization Israel, Jerusalem 6 June 1960, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

18 J.J. Pilon to J. Gutscher and J. Bernath, Heemstede 14 May 1960, AJP.

19 M. Bezek to family Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 10 July 1960, AJP.

### Christian Arabs

Both Bernath and Tabaksblatt still hoped to have Christian-Arab participation,<sup>20</sup> only to be told by Boertien that it was unrealistic. He had met Rafiq and Nadjwa Farah in Jerusalem. They aimed at reconciliation, but also for the return of the Arab refugees and abolition of the pass system. Nadjwa admitted that the disastrous outcomes of the 1948 War had not only been caused by the Jews.<sup>21</sup> Rafiq proclaimed a double loyalty: towards Israel and towards the Arab community.

Alas for the Farahs, their balanced view ingratiated them to no one. Boertien doubted their suitability for a project aimed at gaining Jewish trust. Edward Said, from a Protestant-Arab family in Jerusalem, believed they were simply adrift. Protestantism had alienated itself from the Greek-Orthodox background. People like the Farahs were half English, half Arab. In Israel this translated to a 'present absentee'. In Egypt or Syria: Christian, thoroughly despised. For the West: potential refugees. Like Boertien, Said could not see them operating in a 'dialogue of Church and Israel'. It was impossible, by the existence of 'the unbridgeable gap, repressed for want of words or concepts to discuss it, between Palestinian Arabs and Jews'.<sup>22</sup> Boertien helped Nadjwa get some of her writings published. But he saw no role for her or her husband in the Christian moshav. For those who had witnessed the Holocaust, meeting the needs of the Jews was the top priority. Boertien could not help but notice that Rafiq Farah read the Bible from the perspective that the Church had become the new Israel – the very concept that was being questioned by the DRC Council.<sup>23</sup>

20 Report S.P. Tabaksblatt (May 1960), AJP.

21 Jacob M. Landau, *The Arabs in Israel*, 66.

22 Edward W. Said, *Out of place. A memoir*, 112.

23 M. Boertien to CRC Groningen and deputies Evangelization Israel, Jerusalem 25 March 1960. HUA, archive CRC inv.nr. 104.

# XIII September 1960: Baarn

Holland would host the inaugural meeting of an international committee, to which the IHCA was not invited.<sup>1</sup> Nor was Pencovic, self-proclaimed head of ‘the policy-making committee’.<sup>2</sup> Enker had urged to keep him at a safe distance, especially from financial matters.<sup>3</sup> The Scots had been invited, but declined.<sup>4</sup> The Anglicans did not even bother to respond. Blum asked the Swedish Institute, his neighbours in Jerusalem, to provide theological training.<sup>5</sup> He was kindly rebuffed, remembers a Dutch student who followed courses there. ‘Times had changed.’<sup>6</sup> The Swedish Institute intended to focus on Rabbinic studies.

Switzerland, Holland, the United States and Germany agreed to meet in the RCN Missionary Centre in Baarn. Together they would appoint delegates to negotiate with Israeli authorities in Jerusalem:

The delegation would: 1. Establish legal representation in Israel and acquire the land; 2. Get in touch with authorities at the highest level (Ben-Gurion) and obtain their cooperation for the project; 3. Coordinate activities.<sup>7</sup>

The Dutch convened on 24 June 1960, setting the following goals:

1. Moral and material support for the State of Israel;
2. Improvement of the relations between Christians and Jews;
3. Aid for Christian Jews.

It was the Jewish people as such that had ‘given the Gentiles their Bible and created the State of Israel.’<sup>8</sup> Pilon found Chaim Weizmann<sup>9</sup> ‘highly instructive’ in this respect. ‘Spiritual Zionism’, as he understood from Israel’s first president, demonstrated a way of life that was both Biblical and modern. Friendly Gentiles were welcome to participate. That was precisely the aim of the moshav.<sup>10</sup> Problems of Christian Jews would not be allowed to distract from this:

1 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse and V. Buksbazen, Heemstede 4 August 1960, AJP.

2 H.B. Pencovic to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 14 June 1960, AJP.

3 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 6 August 1960, AJP.

4 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 21 June 1960, AJP.

5 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 69.

6 Interview G.H. Cohen Stuart by author, Rhoon 8 January 2014.

7 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 21 June 1960, AJP.

8 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 3 October 1959, AJP.

9 Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and error*, Philadelphia 1949.

10 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 3 October 1959, AJP.



It struck me time and again, discussing the settlement with Jewish friends – non-Christians. They gave me pertinent advice: ‘But why do you put emphasis on a *Jewish*-Christian settlement? Call it just a Christian settlement (*Goy*), and you will have less resistance, less trouble, more chance of success.’<sup>11</sup>

He had become exasperated by the ‘Hebrew Christians’, whom he described as squabbling,<sup>12</sup> not to be taken seriously,<sup>13</sup> ‘large children’.<sup>14</sup> Kranhouse tried in vain to have Hadderech included in the Dutch committee.<sup>15</sup> Pilon was moving in a different direction: ‘Gradually I am beginning to grasp the intrinsic sense and meaning of the new conception and can see its point. (...) We need to have open minds and permit ourselves to be moulded and developed, and tread new paths of the old truth.’<sup>16</sup> It required participation by professionals:

As I understand it, a practical planning is required. We need businessmen at the helm. I am no businessman and would not be able to provide that kind of leadership. I am a doctor (...) That is why I fail to understand why those whose job it is to be a pastor would meddle in the tricky and very complicated technicalities of a multi-million dollar affair.<sup>17</sup>

### Inaugural international meeting

The delegates met on 1 September 1960 in Baarn, under the chairmanship of Bakker. Buksbazen, Kranhouse and Miller represented the United States. Kranhouse would have preferred to stay away<sup>18</sup>, but had been persuaded by Buksbazen to give it one last try. Isakoff arrived from Israel whether invited or not, claiming to represent the IHCA.<sup>19</sup> Külling was the only Swiss delegate. Horst and Hanny Dahlhaus represented Germany. Bavinck, Minnaar, Dooyes and Feitsma represented the RCN. Gravemeijer, Schoneveld, Tabaksblatt, Vriezen and J.R. Wolfenberger attended for the DRC, Kuiper and L. van Veen represented the Dutch Mennonites. Conversations were in German, a language understood by all except Kranhouse.

First on the agenda was the name. The Americans came up with ‘Israel Christian Settlement’, Külling preferred Immanuel.<sup>20</sup> ‘Though this name would not have any specific meaning to an outsider, it would mean everything to an insider.’<sup>21</sup> However, the proposal that was finally accepted had been proposed by Kuiper:

11 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Tiberias 3 October 1959, AJP.

12 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 14 July 1960, AJP.

13 J.M. Snoek to J.J. Pilon, Tiberias 13 July 1960, AJP.

14 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 3 August 1960, AJP.

15 Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon, New York 9 August 1960, AJP.

16 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Heemstede 15 June 1960, AJP.

17 J.J. Pilon to J. Blum, Heemstede 28 July 1960, AJP.

18 Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon and R. Bakker, Detroit 14 July 1960, AJP.

19 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 12 September 1960, AJP.

20 Immanuel (God with us) is implied in Isaiah 7:14 as the Messianic King, identified in Christian tradition as Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:23).

21 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Heemstede 15 June 1960, AJP.

Nes Ammim ('banner of the nations', Isaiah 11:10), evocative of the Zionist conception of Israel as a 'light to the nations'.<sup>22</sup> The Swiss translated this as light to *all* nations.<sup>23</sup> Külling took this to mean that Arabs could join. Nes Ammim was translated by the Germans as sign for the nations. Oddly, this came from the Tempelgesellschaft tradition.<sup>24</sup> For Kreider the name obviously referred to Jesus: 'Isaiah 11:10, signifying the Coming One as an ensign to the nations, showing the way to return to the Lord.'<sup>25</sup> He translated 'Nes' as portent of the eschaton.<sup>26</sup> Orië Miller took sides with Külling: 'Jewish and Arab believers would work together.'<sup>27</sup> The name Nes Ammim had the potential of being interpreted in many different ways. Perhaps it was for this reason that it was readily accepted.

The next topic of discussion was the Swiss concern about the overbearing influence of mainstream churches like the RCN or the Evangelical Church of the Rhineland. Both Pilon and Dahlhaus argued that there was no danger of that. Their reassuring answer was accepted after a short discussion, despite a remark by Vriezen that the subject deserved more attention.<sup>28</sup> When the plenary discussion shifted to the topic of Christian Jews, the atmosphere became heated. Kranhouse, Buksbazen and Isakoff insisted on an IHCA 'bulwark'. They were met with a firm rebuff from Dahlhaus who said that entrenchment could only add to their isolation.<sup>29</sup> Tabaksblatt pleaded for the DRC position. It was imperative to convince Israeli authorities of the potential of dialogue. Participation of converts was inopportune, as they were regarded as spearheads of an ongoing missionary campaign. Holland and Germany voted with Tabaksblatt. Külling and the Menonites abstained from a veto,<sup>30</sup> though they were hardly convinced:

It may be unavoidable to abstain from mentioning any missionary intention, but only for practical reasons.<sup>31</sup>

The views of the Americans and the IHCA had come as an unpleasant surprise for Dahlhaus:

We could not accept missionary ideas of this kind.<sup>32</sup>

A discussion about financing had also been planned,<sup>33</sup> but Bakker thought it better to conclude the meeting. He urgently needed a word with Pilon, who apparently had communicated in different veins to America, Switzerland, and Germa-

22 Amos Oz, *My Michael*, Orlando (Florida) 2005, 153-167; Kai Bird, *Crossing Mandelbaum Gate. Coming of age between the Arabs and Israelis, 1956-1978*, New York 2010, 68.

23 *Nes Ammim. Christliche Siedlung in Israel*, brochure Schaffhausen 1962.

24 Otto Eberhard, *Palästina*, 57.

25 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 137.

26 Cf. Jane Fletcher Geniesse, *American priestess*, 6.

27 John E. Sharp, *My calling to fulfill*, 320.

28 Th.C. Vriezen to J.J. Pilon, Den Dolder 12 March 1961, HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.

29 Minutes of the essentials of the international meeting for the establishment of a Christian settlement in Israel, Baarn 1 September 1960, HDC VU collection K. Kroon.

30 F. Kuiper to J.J. Pilon, Amsterdam 22 February 1961, AJP.

31 S. Külling to J.J. Pilon, De Heezenberg (Hattem) 4 October 1960, AJP.

32 Interview H. Dahlhaus by author, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin) 25 January 2013.

33 J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël* 2, 999.

ny, respectively.<sup>34</sup> Minutes were kept deliberately short, with an emphasis on the agreement regarding the name Nes Ammim. Bakker and Pilon summed up the results as they understood them:

- that the settlement would not be ‘missionary’. The intention was not to make Christian proselytes, but to establish a Christian working community;
- with the material goal of promoting investments and transfer of technical know-how;
- with the spiritual aim of bridging the historical gap between Judaism and Christianity and working for better relations;
- with a Protestant identity, without discriminating against nationality, race or creed.<sup>35</sup>

Kranhouse, Buksbazen and Isakoff were furious.<sup>36</sup> Blum felt let down by Pilon: ‘This good friend and collaborator of mine had deeply disappointed me. Incomprehensible.’<sup>37</sup> Leuner wrote to Dahlhaus to say that the IHCA would no longer have anything to do with the project.<sup>38</sup> The American committee was disbanded.<sup>39</sup> Only the Mennonites continued their commitment. Pencovic intended to leave Israel for the US, Blum turned up in Monte Carlo, and Isakoff expressed his discontent in a formal letter.<sup>40</sup> Kuiper expressed sympathy for ‘these troubled fellows’.<sup>41</sup> Pilon simply commented that they were at liberty to do whatever they liked. Bakker felt ‘exhausted’,<sup>42</sup> though determined to persevere: ‘The relation between Israel and the Christian nations is at stake. This is a big issue.’<sup>43</sup>

34 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 6 October 1960, AJP.

35 Report R. Bakker and J.J. Pilon, Baarn 22 December 1960, AJP.

36 Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon, New York 9 August 1960, AJP.

37 J. Blum to J.B. Looien and J. Minnaar, Nahariya 3 August 1966, in ANAG, folder 1966. The letter was written shortly before Blum’s death.

38 H.D. Leuner to H. Dahlhaus, London 7 November 1960, HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.

39 Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon, Tiberias 12 October 1960, AJP.

40 J. Isakoff to family Pilon, Tel Aviv 23 January 1961, AJP.

41 F. Kuiper to NAN, Amsterdam 9 January 1961, ANAN.

42 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 3 August 1960, AJP.

43 R. Bakker to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 5 November 1960, AJP.

## EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES

Dahlhaus had decidedly contributed to the outcome in Baarn. Apparently, the Velbert group held strong views. But what exactly did they want to achieve? The answer came from a 36-year-old pedagogue.

\* Cf. Gert van Klinken, 'Settlers in a Strange Land', 223-240.



Fig. 9 Heinz Kremers (collection Thomas Kremers, Duisburg).

# XIV Nes Ammim-Germany

## Heinz Kremers

In Rheydt near Mönchen-Gladbach<sup>1</sup> the Kremers family belonged to the ECR. Their father had evangelized as a lay preacher for the *Bund für entschiedenes Christentum*. His son Heinz met his future wife Ruth via the Bund, where many shunned the Nazi party. Even so, it was hard to miss the atmosphere of the Third Reich. Rheydt was the birthplace of Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels.<sup>2</sup> As Ruth remembered in later life, National Socialism dominated every aspect of public life.<sup>3</sup> Nor could anyone fail to note the ‘Reichskristallnacht’ of November 1938, when Jewish property and synagogues were put to the torch. It did nothing to bring the Bund closer to Hitler. Yet there was also an equally strong feeling of pride in the strength of Germany under the leadership of its Führer. Heinz took part in an elite training of the Hitlerjugend in Xanthen. Documented facts are hard to come by, apart from what he would tell about it himself many years later:

I hail from a pious background, but was also in the Hitler Youth. I went through the full roster of Nazi education.<sup>4</sup>

His parents talked him out of the idea of joining the SS-Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler. Instead, at the age of seventeen, he volunteered for the Wehrmacht in 1943. Being attached to a corps of sappers suited his technical interests. They built installations at the Western front and blew up bridges as the Allies approached. During the final days, he had the grim experience of hand-to-hand combat. Ruth served as a *Flakhelferin*, witnessing the destruction of the city of Münster by phosphor bombs. Heinz never succeeded in giving a comprehensive account of his actions in a Nazi combat unit.<sup>5</sup> As his children remark:

Our impression is that our father resented the Anti-Semitic campaign (refusing to see the movie *Jud Süß*), but that he remained loyal to the army and the fatherland. It seems that he was stationed in the Emsland. He rarely talked about it, with a few exceptions. There was a memory of soldiers like himself, their dead bodies dangling from the trees that lined the road, hanged by the SS, on the accusation of desertion.<sup>6</sup>

1 E-mail Thomas Kremers to author, Duisburg 26 March 2015. ‘My father was from a staunchly Calvinist background, where the Lutheran use of a cross raised strong objections.’

2 For Rheydt in this era: Maik Kopleck (ed.), *Pastfinder Düsseldorf*, 143-145.

3 Interview Ruth Kremers-Kamphausen by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

4 Interview Heinz Kremers (West-Deutsche Rundfunk 1986), quoted in Thomas Kremers, *Heinz Kremers – Vom Judentum lernen*, 6-7.

5 Kremers was no exception, says New Testament scholar Gerd Theissen (born in Rheydt in 1944). Reconstruction took priority. Communication by Gerd Theissen to author, Tolbert 24 April 2017; email Heidelberg 25 May 2017.

6 Interview Thomas and Annedore Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

Heinz, just nineteen when he was released from a British POW camp in August 1945, was disoriented after the breakdown of so many things he had been taught to believe. In his quest for moral bearings, he felt simultaneously attracted to Socialism and to the Evangelical Church. Instead of becoming an engineer, he chose theology as his future occupation:

As a result of the collapse of the entire Nazi worldview, I arrived at the conclusion that this was a time to act, to approach things in an entirely different way; a way that had somehow proved itself as worthy of pursuit. To study theology, to live for the church.<sup>7</sup>

The former Hitler boy became an admirer of Israel, to the amazement of later biographers: 'It seemed incredible.'<sup>8</sup> He explored new and unexpected directions. As his son Thomas explains:

Many Germans came to believe that their churches had resisted Hitler. He was sceptical about that – renewal was needed, not a return to an idealised past. Nevertheless, the churches offered Biblical foundation. The Federal Republic appreciated their role and saw to it that they were well funded (*Kirchensteuer*).

'Father also belonged to the Socialist party SPD. A tough man, who knew the value of personal prayer. Rebuilding society, sound education, theological renewal, reconciliation: these were his goals'.<sup>9</sup>

The Bible required effort for common justice, rather than salvation of the individual.<sup>10</sup> Still in his thirties, Kremers became a professor of catechetics in Duisburg-Kettwig. In that capacity he planned to bring students to Israel. Mapai demonstrated the potential of a vibrant Socialism that was also embedded in original Biblical values. He was fascinated by Israel:

It was not easy, during the late 1950s, to convince people that a real change in their attitude towards Judaism was needed, and that this necessary change entailed both religion and the State of Israel.<sup>11</sup>

### Beror Hayil

With some effort, a kibbutz was found that was willing to accept a workforce from the Rhineland. Kremers could hardly believe it:

As young Germans, we were looking for ways to show our political commitment. We had decided to go to Israel, to join the Jewish people, to assist in the building of a living bridge of understanding. Would they be willing to accept us? In 1959 we asked the Israel office in Cologne<sup>12</sup> for their help. It took more than a year, but then the confirmation finally came: we were invited by kibbutz Beror Hayil.

7 WDR interview 1986.

8 Eberhard Bethge, 'Heinz Kremers, der Türenöffner', ANAG.

9 Interview Thomas and Annedore Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

10 Communication Thomas Kremers to author, Wuppertal 22 November 2018.

11 WDR interview 1986.

12 Representation of the State of Israel, officially 'Handelsvertretung', in the Federal Republic.

No German had been there before. Our stay in 1960 was far from easy, but also tremendously inspirational. It soon became obvious that we would not gain any trust by a flurry of words and excuses. Only our being there and our labour would do. Most of the members of the community found the decision to allow us in (30 students!) difficult to handle. No one knew for sure how it would work out. There was opposition: 'We do not want these Germans!' Michael Doetzbacher, originally from Germany, was one of the few to stand by us from the very beginning (...). And then, after some time, the ice began to melt. People started talking to us (...).<sup>13</sup>

Holy places and archaeology hardly mattered, compared to the living Jewish people. Rabbi Robert Raphael Geis had already become a trusted mentor. They had met in Düsseldorf, where Geis helped him prepare for the move to Beror Hayil. 'To be accepted by this Theresienstadt survivor as a friend and a brother in the Biblical faith, belongs to the greatest religious events in my life.'<sup>14</sup> Grüber, who had been received by Ben-Gurion in 1958,<sup>15</sup> also helped with introductions for those who were looking for an entry into Israeli society:

He contributes greatly to a climate of mutual understanding. (...) Here is a man who came to the aid of the Jews, urged by his Christian belief. Though one must admit that his style is a bit pathetic.<sup>16</sup>

Unlike Grüber, Kremers opposed the IHCA. Guided by Geis, he came to believe that the proper place for a Jew was with his people and not a church. This viewpoint, shared by Dahlhaus, seemed rather extreme to the Dutch: 'While we try to show some flexibility, these Germans stick to definite opinions indeed.'<sup>17</sup> Pilon had a point, says Rike Wichelhaus (born 1927). For Kremers, Israel was indeed almost like a new faith:

This generation had been truly captivated by the Hitler Youth. What followed was the war, the horrors, the crimes. My husband used to relive them in his nightmares, but he was incapable of talking about these horrific events. It still amazes me: endless discussions about theology, but never about the trauma he underwent. They just couldn't handle it. It was pushed away. Or perhaps, to frame it more positively: transformed into a new commitment, for Nes Ammim.<sup>18</sup>

A daunting workload interfered with the writing of voluminous books. Fellow academics made him feel that,<sup>19</sup> but Kremers did not change his ways.<sup>20</sup> Preciously little time remained to spend with the family:

We could join him during walks in the countryside. Mother cared for the household; she had more opportunities to observe how we grew up. Father had a sound grasp of Hebrew. Despite his hearing problems, he mastered Ivrit. A tireless worker, we got used to the sound of the typewriter. A heavy smoker too, surrounded by the 'mists of Avalon'. Hardly any

13 Heinz Kremers, 'Kibbuz', in *Nes Ammim. Zeichen für die Völker* 2/3-1967, 6-7.

14 Quoted in Thomas Kremers, *Heinz Kremers - vom Judentum lernen*, 9. Cf. Thomas Kremers, 'Wie omkeert, doe komt men tegemoet. Aanzetten van Heinz Kremers voor de christelijk-joodse dialoog in Duitsland', in *Ophef* xix (2016) nr. 1, 34-41.

15 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 512-513.

16 M. Boertien, report December 1960-June 1961. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

17 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 1 February 1961, AJP.

18 Interview Rike Wichelhaus by author, Düsseldorf 27 September 2013.

19 Annedore Kremers: 'Ein Bisschen hat er auch unter diese Arroganz gelitten.' Interview by author, Moers (Duisburg), 27 April 2014.

20 Heinz Kremers, *Judenmission heute?*, 28-31.



moments of leisure, attending lots of important meetings instead. And of course, to preach in church during Sundays.<sup>21</sup>

There was a marked difference in atmosphere between the Rhineland and the Pietists of Southern Germany or Switzerland. Liselotte Ueter could understand why Kremers and the Bernath brothers did not always see eye to eye. The atmosphere in Velbert remained 'Prussian', even when dealing with the scars of war:

It was considered a privilege to be alive, not to have been mutilated or raped by the Russians, and to see your father return from the PoW camp. There was the nagging feeling that we needed to earn our place in the world. Also a strong sense of work ethos, discipline, even of perfectionism.<sup>22</sup>

The 'Prussian' style had little in common with the Lutheran South or the attraction that Billy Graham held for Hans Bernath. Kremers liked DRC theology and its related programme of action.<sup>23</sup> What he failed to understand was how this programme could be squared with traditional Pietism or RCN influence. Pilon said that he was being theoretical and should concentrate on fundraising.<sup>24</sup> At least it was still possible to discuss such matters with the Dutch. Americans, on the other hand, believed that humble reconciliation was something for ex-Nazis, rather than for themselves.<sup>25</sup> Pilon noted that Velbert lacked affinity with the US, 'where there has been no overt anti-Semitism in the later periods, [and where] the matter of collective responsibility for persecutions would be much harder to accept'.<sup>26</sup> In short, bringing in the Germans had complicated the working relations the Dutch had established with the other partners.<sup>27</sup> Not only did Velbert encounter difficulties in their dealings with the Americans, but also the communications with the Lutherans and Free Churches remained rather cool and distant. This was a matter of concern, as Lutheran plans for Galilee were far ahead of those of Nes Ammim.

### Shavei Zion and Beth-El

Moshav Shavei Zion, established by Jewish refugees from Schwaben in 1938,<sup>28</sup> was located a few miles to the West of al-Mansura. 'Many of them had been in the cattle industry in Germany; now they became pioneers.'<sup>29</sup> Shavei Zion had been approached by Hermann Maas, a Lutheran who had attended the sixth Zionist con-

21 Interview Thomas and Annadore Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014. Their mother Ruth commented upon the countless sermons that her husband used to deliver: 'Das machte ihm ja auch Spaß.'

22 Interview met Liselotte Ueter by author, Düsseldorf 30 April 2015.

23 *Israel-Reise des Institutum Judaicum der Universität Tübingen 1961*, 17.

24 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Kranhouse, Heemstede 19 July 1960, AJP.

25 V. Buksbazen, Philadelphia 18 May 1961, in ANAN. With a final word for Pilon: 'I will always retain my warm personal regard for you.'

26 J.J. Pilon to V. Buksbazen, Heemstede 8 May 1961, AJP.

27 Cf. Ulrich H.J. Körtner, 'Die Haltung der Evangelischen Kirche zum Judentum', in *Das Jüdische Echo* 46, Wien 1997, 157-165; Johann Michael Schmidt, 'Umkehr und Erneuerung', 99-113.

28 Rexingen (Württemberg) in Schwaben.

29 Lotte Eisenberg, *Meine Gäste*, 42.

gress in Basel in 1933.<sup>30</sup> Maas brokered a visit of the Hamburgse Gesellschaft für christlich-jüdische Zusammenarbeit to Shavei Zion in 1959:

It was a marvel to witness how this young society fitted together with ancient Jewish history and with the living words of the Old Testament.<sup>31</sup>

More ‘remorse-feelers’ were to follow.<sup>32</sup> The following year Shavei Zion received another Lutheran: Theodor Heuss, also from Schwaben. During his tenure as the president of the Federal Republic of Germany, reconciliation with Israel had been added to the national agenda. Heuss furthered joint programmes by Jewish and Protestant Bible scholars.<sup>33</sup> At the cemetery of Shavei Zion, he paid his respects to Otto Hirsch, murdered in Mauthausen. As co-founder of a Jewish learning centre (*Lehrhaus*) in 1926, Hirsch had advocated Jewish-Christian dialogue even then.<sup>34</sup>

Guided by ‘love for Israel and awareness of the ways of the Lord with His people’,<sup>35</sup> Friedrich and Luisa Nothacker started their Beth-El centre for Holocaust victims in Nahariya. They had collaborated with the local Jewish community every step of the way. Beth-El became part of the neighbourhood, with the blessing of rabbi Aharon Keller. Carefully selected German volunteers received Israeli visas. Old-timers among the Jeckes viewed them as a rejuvenated version of the Templars who were also from the Black Forest,<sup>36</sup> their Schwaben accent sounding familiar. The Institutum Judaicum in Tübingen established another link, embedded in the Pietist tradition but no longer inclined to convert the Jews: ‘Mission lacks the true faith; it is narrow-mindedness.’<sup>37</sup>

Velbert did not try to get in touch. This seems hard to explain, given the many similarities. Shavei Zion received students of New Testament scholar Otto Michel (former member of both SA and Bekennende Kirche)<sup>38</sup> and Reinhold Mayer. Both were ready to accept responsibility for the genocide inflicted upon the Jews.<sup>39</sup> Grüber also visited Shavei Zion.<sup>40</sup> Velbert, however, seemed to believe that they had too little in common for a cooperation to be successful. By now there were rumours circulating in Shavei Zion about a Protestant initiative in the neighbourhood, with German participation but without consultation with local Jewish communities. What were these mysterious newcomers attempting to do?

30 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 115.

31 Frida Beling, ‘Tausend Herzen für tausend Neueinwanderer’, in *Friede mit Israel. Mitteilungsblatt der Gesellschaft für christlich-jüdische Zusammenarbeit e. V. in Hamburg* December 1959 (HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105).

32 Pinchas E. Lapide, *Israël-Kaleidoskoop*, 170.

33 Cf. Renate Pahlow (ed.), *Pastor Erich Bock im Heiligen Land*, 4.

34 Karl-Josef Kuschel, *Theodor Heuss*, 41-44.

35 History Beth-El, op: <http://www.zedekah.de>.

36 Cf. Fritz Barth, *Templer und andere Erweckungsbewegungen im nördlichen Schwarzwald*.

37 Elly Huth (ed.), *Israel-Reise des Institutum Judaicum*, 50-51.

38 Cf. Reinhold Mayer, *Christentum und Judentum in der Schau Leo Baecks*.

39 Reinhold Mayer, *Zeit ist's. Zur Erneuerung des Christseins durch Israel-Erfahrung*, 12.

40 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 140.

### Rhineland perspectives<sup>41</sup>

Nes Ammim needed the financial support of donors. Contacting the Jews would have to wait until that aim had been achieved. Holland was not content with the German efforts in this respect: 'They are too close to their own church, and should try harder to attract businessmen from other Christian circles.'<sup>42</sup> Velbert, however, did not intend to cooperate with those who were still committed to even some 'modernizing' sort of mission among the Jews. Ulrike Wiel redesigned the American emblem for the village.<sup>43</sup> Communications between the Rhineland and Switzerland were sparse and between the Rhineland and America almost non-existent. As Kreider put it, 'the German Committee expressed its support through the Holland Committee'.<sup>44</sup>

The Dutch hoped that the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirchentag* might provide a platform for attracting the broadest possible support. Its brain trust 'Christians and Jews' had enlisted rabbi Geis as one of its working members. And this, as Kremers pointed out, made it imperative to enlist only those Christians who had committed themselves to a new way of thinking. Israelis remained the true People of God. Christians could enter the covenant via a Jewish Messiah<sup>45</sup> and via contemporary Jewish teachers:

Meeting with the Chosen People will show that Jews and Christians both live by the grace of God.<sup>46</sup>

Dutch pastor Joop Boendermaker was impressed.<sup>47</sup> Helmut Gollwitzer (1908-1993), also a Lutheran, said that the very fact of being a Christian implied solidarity with Israel.<sup>48</sup> Fritz Rosenthal, now Shalom Ben-Chorin, participated from Jerusalem.<sup>49</sup> As a Liberal Jew, he had confidence in the forces of renewal in German Protestantism:

I participated in this *Kirchentag* as a Jew from Israel, and was pleased to find that we had common ground.<sup>50</sup>

Possibilities for Jewish-Christian dialogue looked promising in Germany. However, unknown to the Dutch or the Swiss, Geis felt quite uncomfortable in these seemingly progressive Christian quarters. He implored his pupil Kremers not to engage with those who seemed to think that they were Israel's friends and could evangelize among the Jews as well.

41 Nikolaus Becker, 'Auf dem Wege zu einem neuen Verhältnis von Christen und Juden', 23-99.

42 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 1 February 1961, in AJP.

43 Christian Bartsch (ed.), *50 Jahre Israel. Verantwortung und Versöhnung*, 119.

44 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 137.

45 Helmut Schwier (ed.), *Kirche und Israel*, 24.

46 Quoted in: Helmut Gollwitzer, 'Einleitung', in Dietrich Goldschmidt and Ingrid Ueberschär (eds.), *Leiden an der Unerlöstheit der Welt*, 226.

47 Interview prof. J.P. Boendermaker by author, Hilversum 12 March 2015.

48 Quoted in Christian Bartsch (ed.), *50 Jahre Israel. Verantwortung und Versöhnung*, 107.

49 Shalom Ben-Chorin, *Im jüdisch-christlichen Gespräch*, 123.

50 Ibidem, 5 and 85.

## XV Nes Ammim-Switzerland

The Swiss looked forward to cooperation and friendship with Israel, within a modified missionary context. Their Nes Ammim committee charged the 76-year-old Johannes Gutscher with the task of promoting the moshav plan. He asked his ‘dear missionary friends’ to assist the moshav plan as a means for Christian community building in Israel. ‘The work is God’s doing.’<sup>1</sup>

### ‘A tiny Swiss colony’

Swiss Jewish Mission had been renamed *Evangeliumsdienst*. Gutcher believed that Nes Ammim depended on an existing network of missionary well-wishers, mostly from the middle class, who also assisted Alkahé in his theological studies.<sup>2</sup> Gutcher envisaged future pioneers would come from this network:

It makes us a small but committed Swiss community, happy in the service of the Lord. Pray for us, that we may truly and meekly take up the task.<sup>3</sup>

Missionary director Robert Brunner understood the plan in the same way,<sup>4</sup> even though Jacob Bernath warned that Christian witness in Israel could not continue as before.<sup>5</sup> A managing board was convened in April 1961. Members from the French speaking part of the country were in touch with Muller-Duvernoy,<sup>6</sup> who recommended a farmer in the Jura mountains as a suitable pioneer: Léon Robert.<sup>7</sup> Relations with Dutch and Americans were cordial. The Swiss found it less easy to communicate with the Rhinelanders.<sup>8</sup> Becker, says his former assistant Katja Kriener, would not allow an open show of emotions.<sup>9</sup> The Bernaths received the impression of a bureaucrat, stiff and formal, mirroring their longstanding objections against the German Evangelical Church.<sup>10</sup> It was easier for them to work with Cor van der Spek whose fiancée Anneke Paulus worked in Jacob Bernath’s

1 Johannes Gutscher, leader in *Schweizer Evangeliumsdienst in Israel*, Wädenswil April 1960.

2 J. Gutscher to J.J. Pilon, Wädenswil 3 February 1960, AJP.

3 H. Bernath, circular letter Nazareth February 1961, AJP.

4 Circular letter R. Brunner to Missionsrat der Schweizerischen Evangelischen Judenmission, Zurich 5 October 1960, AJP.

5 J. Bernath, report November/December 1960, AJP.

6 Muller-Duvernoy would change his name to Duvernoy during the sixties.

7 C. Muller-Duvernoy to J.J. Pilon, Neuchâtel 24 February 1961, AJP. He settled in Israel in 1962.

8 Interview Liselotte Ueter by author, Düsseldorf 4 February 2016.

9 Interview Katja Kriener by author, Düsseldorf 4 February 2016.

10 Cf. Walter Persson, *Free and United*, 273-276.

office, Hochstraße 265 in Schaffhausen. The Dutch couple felt immediately at home:

These Swiss were merry Protestants. Orthodox fellows, but not of the brooding or censoring type. Active men, go-getters.<sup>11</sup>

Next to Jacob Bernath (president) the Swiss provisional board included Friedrich Ess (*Beamter*), the pastors Jacques Genton, Lorenz Lutz, Jakob Schildknecht and Theophil Schubert, and legal consultant David von Wyss. Considering his advanced age, Gutscher did not take a seat. A program was laid out:

Our aim is to bridge the gap by Christian deeds. Limited as the effect may be, we intend to contribute to a mutual atmosphere of proper understanding, cooperation and good will.<sup>12</sup>

### Charles Gysel

After Baarn, the Dutch wanted to oblige the Swiss as much as possible. A way to achieve this was to assign the seat of the international board to Zurich. The Germans and Mennonites approved, and Charles Gysel was appointed secretary. He had spent his youth in Wilchingen, not far from the parental home of the Bernaths in Thayngen:

We belonged to the *Landeskirche*, but relations between us and the Free Evangelical Churches were cordial. We had been neutral during the war, but were uneasy about the likely fate of so many of the refugees who were refused at our borders during those dark years. I was idealistic; I wanted to contribute something for the good.<sup>13</sup>

Gysel looked forward to the challenge: “The essence was to serve others. That was how we intended to be Christ’s witnesses in Israel.”<sup>14</sup>

11 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013.

12 *Nes Ammim. Christliche Siedlung in Israel*, leaflet Schaffhausen 1962.

13 Interview Charles Gysel by author, Wilchingen 4 May 2015.

14 *Ibidem*.

## XVI Nes Ammim-Holland

Core members of Nes Ammim-Holland were Pilon, Bakker, Bonda, Dooyes, Feitsma, F.F.C. Heule, treasurer Henkemans, Kuiper, Dick Lam (Heemstede), Jan Cornelis Minnaar (Kralingen), his brother Ko (Overschie), sister Pekel, Tabaksblatt, L. van Veen and M.C. Vetten (Slavenburgs Bank, Rotterdam). Lam lived close to the Pilons in Heemstede and frequented the same church as the Van Stegeren family. The firm of the Minnaar brothers dealt in agricultural produce and fruit, transported by their own shipping line.<sup>1</sup> They were committed members of the RCN<sup>2</sup> but eager to modernize:

Millions have been spent on lavish church buildings in Israel. What has that to do with improving the relations with Christians and Jews?<sup>3</sup>

Lam knew Pilon since their schooldays in Haarlem,<sup>4</sup> Ko Minnaar was a friend of Bakker. Even though Kuiper remained an outsider in this RCN network, his views matched with theirs. God had ordained Palestine as the home of His people, ‘by his free decision as Lord of Heaven and Earth’. Minnaar appealed to his fellow members of the Tiberias Fund to come to the aid of the Jewish State: ‘The promised land is God’s gift, and yet it must be conquered by human effort. Providence includes human endeavour.’<sup>5</sup> Kann had admired the craftsmanship of the Templars,<sup>6</sup> who had contributed so much to the development of Zionist settlements. Nes Ammim would follow their example, ‘motivated by idealism, and along commercial lines.’<sup>7</sup>

The main concern of the DRC was the absence of any clearly defined concept of dialogue. Vriezen withdrew for this reason.<sup>8</sup> Berkhof was amazed that the change of plans in Baarn had hardly affected the donors. ‘It is as if they did not note it.’<sup>9</sup> The committee of recommendation showed an impressive array of names in the Dutch Protestant world: Jan Aantjes, J. van Aertsen (Minister of Public Housing), H.J. Beernink, Bergema, Berkhof, G.C. Berkouwer (Free University), B.W. Biesheuvel, Sieuwert Bruins Slot (*Trouw*), Jan Buskes, Fenna Diemer-Linde-

1 Telephone conversation with Cornelis (Kees) Minnaar, Oostvoorne 28 November 2012.

2 Telephone conversation Mrs. D.J. Minnaar, Rotterdam 28 November 2012.

3 J. Minnaar, circular letter 1966, HDC VU archive NAN, box 5.

4 Joke Lam, ‘Indië en de Nederlanden’, 136, on: [laventana.nl/uploads/kalf\\_in\\_het\\_kozijn](http://laventana.nl/uploads/kalf_in_het_kozijn).

5 Frits Kuiper, *Israël en de Gojien*, 25.

6 J.H. Kann, *Erets Israël*, 44. Cf. Mahmoud Yazbak, ‘Templars as Proto-Zionists?’, in *Journal of Palestine Studies* XXVIII nr. 4 (1999), 40-54.

7 *Nes Ammim. Een christelijke nederzetting in Israël*, Brakel 1961.

8 Th.C. Vriezen to J.J. Pilon, Den Dolder 12 March 1961. HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.

9 H. Berkhof, ‘Nes Ammim als toetssteen’, HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

boom, K. Dijk, Gerbrandy, W.J. Kooiman (Lutheran), J.L. Koole, Miskotte, J.A. Oosterbaan (Mennonite), B.J. Oosterhoff (CRC), H.N. Ridderbos, Van Ruler, J. Schoneveld Sr, J. Schouten, C. Veenhof and J. Waterink. Grolle had the ominous feeling that trouble would arise from the RCN connection:

If it becomes known that this enterprise is sponsored by churches, it may result in a veto by Israeli authorities. As for the DRC, it is imperative not to commit ourselves in any official way (...) notwithstanding our sympathy for the plan.<sup>10</sup>

In a letter to Princess Beatrix, Pilon stressed the importance of Jewish-Christian dialogue that she was familiar with via the DRC.<sup>11</sup> However, this concept had never been discussed at length with the Swiss. Nor did it belong to the accepted policy of the RCN.

<sup>10</sup> J.H. Grolle to P. Oskamp, Hilversum 23 May 1964, ANAN.

<sup>11</sup> J.J. Pilon to Her Majesty Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands, Heemstede 18 December 1961, HDC VU NAN, box 28.

## MEMORANDUM 1960

The District Council Ga'aton, representing fourteen Jewish and two Arab villages, held office in Evron. 'It is yet to be seen whether they are willing to let us in', Pilon commented. 'It is up to God how this will develop.'\*

\* J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 12 September 1960, AJP.





Fig. 10 West-Jerusalem, with the Y.M.C.A. and St. Andrews: *Les Guides Bleus Israël* sous la direction de Francis Ambrière (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1966), 385-386.

## XVII Raphael Zwi Werblowsky

Attempts to arrange a meeting with the Minister of the Interior, via the Liaison Bureau of Foreign Investments in Tel Aviv, produced no result.<sup>1</sup> Pilon was told by the Dutch embassy that success depended on proper references. They suggested enlisting R.J. Zwi Werblowsky (1924-2015), a scholar in the field of comparative study of religions. He was the founder of the Israel Inter-Faith Committee (1958) and aware of DRC ideas in the Netherlands.<sup>2</sup> As a scion of a Sephardi family in Frankfurt, Werblowsky had established himself as an expert on the work of the English puritan John Milton and as a professor at the Hebrew University.<sup>3</sup> The Dutch embassy once again advised the committee to enlist Grüber too, as a German exponent of dialogue.<sup>4</sup> Alas for Nes Ammim, he doubted the value of a Christian settlement. An enclave in the countryside, at a distance from the Jews, would inevitably rouse suspicion. Like Levison, Grüber failed to see how Israeli authorities might ever consent to such a scheme.<sup>5</sup>

### **'Is it any wonder that the Jewish soul is allergic to Christians and the Christian message?'**

Werblowsky appreciated Kreider as a friend of Israel, but worried about his missionary zeal. He wondered how the American got along with Velbert. Werblowsky corresponded in Ivrit with Kremers and had already received the Institutum Judaicum at the Hebrew University. Still, it required an effort. He tried to be friendly but confided to Roy Kreider that he would prefer that 'former Wehrmacht soldiers' left him alone. Jewish experience in Europe amounted to 'one long cry of pain, that came to its unimaginable climax in the days of the Third Reich'. The liberation of the concentration camps by the Russians and Americans was no excuse for the church:

Christians went peacefully to sleep with their Bibles by their bedside, while Jewish neighbours were hounded from their beds and hiding places to be herded like doomed cattle onto death trains destined for concentration camps, with no one having the courage to protest. Is it any wonder that the Jewish soul is allergic to Christians and the Christian message?<sup>6</sup>

1 J.J. Pilon to Liaison Bureau of Foreign Investments (Tel Aviv), Heemstede 22 December 1960, HDC VU, archive NAN, box 37.

2 Cf. J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël* 2, 978.

3 Cf. Andreas Grefen, *On the way to a new relationship*, 82.

4 H. Grüber, preface in Petrus Huigens, *Israël*.

5 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 146.

6 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 91-92.

Pilon approached Werblowsky with some trepidation, knowing that he advised the Israeli government in Protestant matters.<sup>7</sup> Would he be willing to help Nes Ammim during the process of drafting a memorandum for the government? After some hesitation, Werblowsky consented. His advice was to address it to the Minister of Finance, Levi Eshkol,<sup>8</sup> known to appreciate technical support from the West. That is: *if* Christians would give up Jewish Mission unequivocally and *if* they offered their unambiguous political support. Werblowsky had already assisted the founding of the Israel-American Institute of Biblical Studies. The Institute's director William Young met with both requirements. Jewish Mission was superfluous, as Jewish conversion would be determined by the coming of the Messiah. As a Christian Zionist, Young was also a staunch defender of the Jewish State.<sup>9</sup>

Still, there were reservations about the dialogue concept of the DRC that Pilon presented. After consulting the New Testament, Werblowsky failed to see how anyone could renounce mission and yet remain a follower of Jesus. Of course, change of heart was a laudable thing. Yet one might ask whether Kremers and Pilon remained Christian in the accepted sense. While Young and Kreider struck the well-known chord of prophecy, penance, and eschaton, they preferred to focus on Jewish-Christian dialogue. Werblowsky doubted whether such a concept could be deduced from the Old Testament, let alone from the New. 'I am the way, and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me (John 14:6).' It seemed hard to deny that this was the core of Jesus' message.

This made him cautious in his dealings with Nes Ammim. 'I am unable to recognize what kind of Christian you are. It is certainly not the New Testament version of the Christian faith.'<sup>10</sup> It might be best to focus any future cooperation on practical matters.<sup>11</sup> Chances for success seemed slight. By dealing with Khayr without consulting the Jewish community first, Nes Ammim held none of the advantages of Nothacker's initiative in Nahariya.

### Israeli embassy in The Hague, 11 October 1960

Former Prime Minister Pieter Sjoerds Gerbrandy, offered his services as a mediator. His wife, Hendrina Elisabeth Sikkell, was attracted to 'geopietiy' and by extension also to Nes Ammim.<sup>12</sup> Izaak Leo Palache, representing Keren Kayemet LeYisrael in the Netherlands, sent a message that Minister Pinchas Sapir was scheduled to visit The Hague, to discuss industrial cooperation.<sup>13</sup> Gerbrandy would attend as a representative of Verolme shipbuilders. Palache helpfully arranged a slot in the agenda for Nes Ammim, with the consent of ambassador Hanan Cidor.

7 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 12 September 1960, AJP.

8 Howard M. Sachar, *A history of Israel*, 548-549.

9 Paul Charles Merkley, *Christian Attitudes*, 164-165.

10 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 92.

11 'Bericht über die Verhandlungen in Israel der internationalen Delegation, zur Vorbereitung einer christlichen Siedlung vom 24 November bis 4 Dezember 1960', AJP.

12 J.J. Pilon to J.M. Snoek, Heemstede 18 February 1961, AJP.

13 Cf. Amiram Gonen, *Israël*, 154-155.

During the meeting, 'mention of a *Christian* settlement caused a certain amount of tension'. Reactions were lukewarm at best. 'Mr. Sapir seems first and foremost a businessman', said Pilon, 'and more interested in practical than ideological matters.' Cidor merely said that the idea was 'interesting'. 'The Israelis were intrigued by the idea, but also nonplussed.'<sup>14</sup> Miller received a briefing:

Only half an hour was allotted to us, so we could only very briefly touch upon the questions which Mr Sapir had posed to us. Where was the land? Who would the workers be? Did people in Israel know about the plan? Mr Sapir suggested that the delegation should have seen Mr Ben-Gurion first, and then the other Ministers the project concerned in Israel. He said that he would assist in establishing contacts. Also, he requested that a memorandum be prepared with more details.<sup>15</sup>

At least there was room for negotiation.<sup>16</sup> As Berkhof remarked, 'Mapai liked the idea, for economic considerations.'<sup>17</sup>

### Advised by Werblowsky

Returning on board the *Messapia*, Pilon once again enjoyed the sight of modern Haifa, with the Technion towering over Mount Karmel. The Biblical Qishon estuary had become the domain of Phoenicia Glass, Nesher Concrete, Kaiser Illin Cars, chemical plants of Dashanim, Shemen Soap, Ata Textile and the massive silo of the Dagon company. He drove by car to Jerusalem, which – with a population of 167,000 – was less populated than Haifa. Next destination was Ayeleth Hashachar, where he was joined by Snoek. Mirjam Bezek described their meeting to Stijn, with both their husbands in good spirits: 'Yours talking and talking – quite exciting. We saw his draft for the memorandum and feel sure that Ben-Gurion will be enthusiastic about it. (...) Shlomo is not so sure. As befits a man of political insight.'<sup>18</sup> Johan Pilon's next stop was in West-Jerusalem, where he had booked lodgings in St. Andrews Hospice.

The hospice offered a sweeping panorama of the no man's land of the Valley of Hinnom. The bricked-up Jaffa Gate belonged to Jordan, where the pejorative term 'Zionist Entity' was used for Israel.<sup>19</sup> Next to the Benedictine monastery Dormitio Beatae Mariae Virginis on Mount Zion<sup>20</sup> lay the medieval tomb of David, at the very edge of the Israeli perimeter. Desecrated Thora scrolls were kept here, together with cans of the poison gas Zyklon B and other mementos of the Holocaust. Meters away, the Arab Legion patrolled the ramparts of the crumbling Old City. On the Israeli side of the perimeter, a vibrant modernity spread in all di-

14 J.J. Pilon, report after meeting with P. Sapir, The Hague 11 October 1960. HDC VU, archive NAN, box 24 and 37.

15 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Heemstede 11 October 1960, AJP.

16 R. Bakker to H.D. Leuner, Rotterdam 8 November 1960, HDC VU archive NAN, box 24.

17 H. Berkhof, 'Nes Ammim als toetsteen', *Kerk en Israël* March 1966, 34.

18 M. Bezek to S. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 18 November 1960, AJP.

19 Kai Bird, *Crossing Mandelbaum Gate*, 34.

20 Nikodemus Schnabel, *Zuhause im Niemandsland*, 15-18.

rections. Werblowsky lived in Kiryat Shmuel, not far from the spot where count Folke Bernadotte had been killed by Lohamei Cherut Yisrael.

Bakker joined Pilon in St. Andrews where they met Chava Kranhouse, who volunteered as matron.<sup>21</sup> It was no happy reunion, as she blamed Nes Ammim for two lost years of her life.<sup>22</sup> Kofsmann continued with his services in the adjacent YMCA building.<sup>23</sup> ‘He has even adopted a new name: Messianic instead of Nazarene Jews.’<sup>24</sup> Kofsmann refused to meet with them. As he told Duvernoy, the project didn’t stand a chance. Authorities would prevent the sale of Khayr’s land to a non-Jewish buyer.<sup>25</sup> Instead, Pilon spoke at length with Werblowsky at the Hebrew University. They were joined by Abraham Melamed (1921-2005) of the National Religious Party, who came from Lithuania and had fought for Palmach in 1948. As Kofsmann had predicted, Melamed was not happy with the idea of scarce agricultural land being taken over by non-Jewish buyers.<sup>26</sup> At this point in the conversation, Werblowsky proposed to draft a memorandum that might overcome these difficulties. Pleasantly surprised, Pilon immediately accepted. A few days later the draft arrived at his desk:

The unhappy relationship between Christians and Jews during the centuries of Israel’s exile, as well as the heavy Christian responsibility – directly and indirectly – for the immense Jewish suffering, have created a gulf between Jews and Christians which only a most determined moral and spiritual effort can heal.

Methods adopted in the past to bring about a so-called ‘rapprochement’ (i.e. efforts to convert the Jews) only increased suspicion, particularly as the missionary preaching contrasted so lamentably with the reality presented by the Christian World.

Taking into account that the Jewish people, firmly established in its own land, no longer requires (...) a suspicious self-defence [against] Christian fellow-countries<sup>27</sup>, a number of Christians have concluded that a radically new departure is necessary. Their duty is not only to help the young State, by way of amends for the past, with sympathy and financial aid from afar, but also to work towards mutual goodwill and understanding on the concrete level of human relationships.

Inspired by the genuine desire to turn over a new leaf in Jewish-Christian relations, the aim of the sponsors is a Christian community, serving Israel by investment, economic initiative, and technical know-how.<sup>28</sup>

It came as a gift from heaven.<sup>29</sup> Simon and Rengstorf had already anticipated a fiasco, blaming the Velbert group. ‘They made me feel like a beaten dog’, Dahl-

21 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Jerusalem 5 November 1960, AJP.

22 J.M. Snoek to J.J. Pilon, Tiberias 21 February 1961, AJP.

23 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Jerusalem 4 November 1960, AJP.

24 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 9 May 1961, AJP.

25 C. Muller-Duvernoy to J.J. and S. Pilon, Neuchâtel 4 October 1960, AJP.

26 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Jerusalem 4 November 1960, AJP.

27 In Dutch translation: *Dat het Joodse volk, thans stevig gevestigd in zijn eigen land, niet langer in argwanende zelfverdediging zich te weer hoeft te stellen tegenover de christelijke buitenwereld.*

28 Memorandum concerning the presentation of an investment project in Israel, November 1960, AJP.

29 J.J. Pilon to H. Dahlhaus, Jerusalem 12 November 1960, AJP.

haus muttered.<sup>30</sup> Werblowsky brightened his mood considerably. Even better, the Ministry of Commerce did not object to German participation in an eventual delegation.<sup>31</sup> Germany assumed that the Americans and the Swiss also agreed.<sup>32</sup> The Dutch left it to Bakker and Pilon to proceed.

Dahlhaus was accompanied to Jerusalem by Lothar Ahne, an ECR pastor who tried to cleanse his catechesis of Anti-Semitism. He was dismayed by the discovery that this hatred might already be present in the Gospel of John.<sup>33</sup> They accepted Werblowsky's memorandum without reservations or conditions. Symbolically, Pilon traded his old Fiat for a second hand Volkswagen. While Ahne introduced him to the subtleties of the gear change,<sup>34</sup> they discussed the impressive volume of trade between Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany.<sup>35</sup> Ahne pleaded for a full German partnership in the settlement scheme.

30 H. Dahlhaus to J.J. Pilon, Velbert 12 November 1960, AJP.

31 J.J. Pilon to H. Dahlhaus, Jerusalem 30 October 1960, AJP.

32 'Bericht über die Verhandlungen in Israel der internationalen Delegation, zur Vorbereitung einer christlichen Siedlung vom 24 November bis 4 Dezember 1960', AJP.

33 H. Dahlhaus to J.J. Pilon, Velbert 12 November 1960, in AJP. Vgl. Lothar Ahne, 'Passion und Judenhass', in *Der Zeuge. Organ der Internationalen Judenchristlichen Allianz* June 1968.

34 J.J. Pilon to J. Blum, Heemstede 1 February 1961, AJP.

35 Howard M. Sachar, *A history of Israel*, 468-470.

# XVIII Levi Eshkol

No answer had yet been received from Eshkol in regard to the memorandum, despite discreet enquiries by the Dutch embassy.<sup>1</sup> By 27 November Nes Ammim was getting positively worried. The delegation in St. Andrews assembled for prayer, after reading Habakuk 2:3 in German: *Die Erfüllung der Offenbarung drängt jedoch dem Ziele zu und trägt nicht, wenn sie auf sich warten lässt, so harre ihrer, sie kommt sicher und bleibt nicht aus.*<sup>2</sup> And then, slowly, things started to move after all.

## Mediation

If properly handled, Christian support for the Jewish State could receive a warm welcome. Mirjam Gerzon (born in Groningen in the Netherlands) and architects Dan and Raphael Ben-Dor were quite happy to pull some strings for Nes Ammim.<sup>3</sup> Mirjam had met the Pilon family via the Dutch Jewish community in Haifa, while the Ben-Dor brothers had participated in the building of St. Andrew's Church in Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> They had their offices in Rehov HaNeviim, in the stately mansion where the famous paediatrician Max Sandereczki had practised in the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Their brother Immanuel taught in Atlanta, Georgia.<sup>6</sup> They promised to deliver a sketch for the layout of the future Nes Ammim village.<sup>7</sup> The brothers were famous for their 'splendid parties, where anyone who is anything in the State of Israel is invited'.<sup>8</sup> Mirjam Gerzon recommended Pilon to Jacob Tsur (Tschernowitz), head public relations of the Jewish Agency Executive.<sup>9</sup> With her husband Leib de Leeuw, an engineer who had been trained at Delft, she had settled in Palestine in the thirties. They used to assist *halutzim* from the Netherlands who were finding their way in Israel.<sup>10</sup> Pilon felt like the odd man out in this circle, but Mirjam seemed to have a soft spot for him.

1 J.J. Pilon to S. Külling, Heemstede 28 December 1960, AJP.

2 The Bible reading (*Losung*) for that day.

3 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, M. Boertien and J.M. Snoek, Heemstede 18 July 1961, AJP.

4 Eyal Meiron (ed.), *Jerusalem. A walk through time*, 170.

5 *Ibidem*, 68.

6 Immanuel Ben-Dor also took part in Kathleen Kenyon's excavations near Jericho ([www.sbl-site.org](http://www.sbl-site.org)).

7 J.J. Pilon, report on proceedings in Israel, Heemstede 22 December 1960, HDC VU archive NAN, box 23.

8 M.B. Gerzon to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 5 February 1963, AJP.

9 'Jacob Tsur', <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org>. Cf. J.J. Pilon, report proceedings in Israel, Heemstede 22 December 1960, HDC VU archive NAN, box 23.

10 Henriëtte Boas, 'Mirjam de Leeuw-Gerzon', 80-92.

The Swedish Institute, which ran a program that provided Jewish knowledge to Christian theologians, was located next to the office of the Ben-Dor brothers.<sup>11</sup> That was fine for Dan and Raphael. A few doors over was the ‘House of Seekers of Truth’, founded by the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA). Their aim remained to convert Jews – if not to the Church, then to Jesus. Roy and Florence Kreider had been staff members.<sup>12</sup> Blum lived next door. The Ben-Dor brothers were introduced to Dahlhaus and Ahne instead. After receiving a proper introduction by the Ben-Dor brothers and Mirjam Gerzon, Pilon made an appointment with Teddy Kollek (1911–2007), director-general of the Prime Minister’s office. Kollek arranged a meeting with Eshkol.<sup>13</sup>

The Minister of Finance held an interest in agricultural matters. He had joined the Zionist movement in Palestine in 1914, becoming a pioneer of kibbutz Degania<sup>14</sup> and later director of the Jewish Agency’s land settlement department and a cabinet for Mapai in the State of Israel. Born in a Yiddish-speaking family in the Ukraine, Eshkol was above all a ‘true kibbutznik’: ‘His fame in the history of Israel had not been achieved by dashy strategies or international politics, but in the dust and heat of hands-on economy.’<sup>15</sup>

### ‘A perfect spot for the village’

Khayr offered to sell at least 1,250 dunam and a maximum 3,000 dunam. The rest was needed for the economic future of Abu Sinan. No problems with tenants were foreseen, after expiration of their contracts. Out of a transfer sum of approximately IL 525,000, Khayr expected to receive a net amount of IL 406,500, part of which would be needed to compensate those who held a share in the former village lands. Dan Ben-Dor, Pilon and Hans Bernath arrived at the Al Mansura-hill on 6 December, marvelling about the antiquity of the site:

Said Ben-Dor: ‘What a wonderful place. Why on earth would the sheikh consider selling this? (...)’ The hill is littered by ancient remains. Ben-Dor, who loves archaeology, takes a closer look: ‘This shard is Roman, that one even older.’ And so on. The sheikhs comment that these remains were wisely kept off the record, as a dig would only complicate matters for us.’<sup>16</sup>

Khayr produced papers to attest that he possessed a thousand dunams of private property, while between 250 and 500 belonged to close relatives and between 500 and 1,000 to other villagers. He needed time to have all of these plots registered in his own name and permission from the Ministry of Finance to receive at least part of the purchase price abroad.<sup>17</sup> Meeting with a sheikh was an exhilarating experience for Dahlhaus:

11 Elly Huth (ed.), *Israel-Reise des Institutum Judaicum*, 24.

12 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 72 and 81.

13 J. Bernath, report November/December 1960, AJP.

14 Cf. for Degania (‘cornflower’): Martin Gilbert, *Israel*, 26.

15 Abba Eban, *Mijn land*, 189.

16 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 23 December 1960, AJP.

17 Ibidem.



We were invited for dinner, according to local customs, which meant that we did not meet the ladies of the house.<sup>18</sup>

### Tel Aviv, 11 December 1960

A few days later, Jacob Bernath and Pilon were received by Eshkol:

As minister of Finance, he is also responsible for settlements. He makes the decisions, especially about investments. His positive attitude came as a pleasant surprise. Jacob informed him about our ideology and about technical details. Eshkol suggested that we try to acquire more than a mere 1,000 dunams, said that authorities might be able to assist in this. He asked about finding the right people for the settlement, about agriculture and industry. Then he suddenly informed us that he had already spoken to Ben-Gurion and Golda Meir. They were all willing to help. (...) As a parting remark for Jacob, he said that a shop of Swiss clockmakers might be a good idea!<sup>19</sup>

The memorandum followed Werblowsky's draft. The aims of the project were given as follows:

- *practical*: the establishment of a Christian village in Israel, as a way to support the development in the region by investments, enterprise and technological innovation;
- *moral*: showing good will, service, and respect towards the Jewish people; and offering an opportunity for Christians to experience life and work in Israel.<sup>20</sup>

Dan and Raphael Ben-Dor attended, together with some officials of the Ministry. That same day, the memorandum was approved by Eshkol. Pilon affirmed the intentions of the Christian initiators:

It's not about theology, but about Christian 'attitude' towards the Jews, marked by humility and a sense of guilt. It is not about religious faith.<sup>21</sup>

The Germans were meekly waiting on the street. However, the Israeli hosts did not want them to be downgraded in this way. Asked to come in, they eagerly joined the meeting, stating that Germany would only take part if confident they had the full trust of Israeli authorities.<sup>22</sup> It was a great moment: 'Finally we were received by Eshkol in the Ministry of Finance. A substantial conversation. Eshkol wanted: 1) no mission and 2) practical solidarity (economic perspectives). We fully agreed with these propositions.'<sup>23</sup> Velbert had every reason to be content: 'The memorandum clearly states that abnegation of Jewish mission is a presupposition

18 Interview Horst Dahlhaus by author, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin) 25 January 2013. Rafiq Farah explained to me in a letter from Toronto (8 January 2013) that Druze women normally did not attend a business meeting of this sort.

19 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, M. Boertien en J.M. Snoek, Heemstede 18 July 1961, AJP.

20 Full text of the memorandum in German by Nikolaus Becker and Gerda E.H. Koch, *Bewahren und Erneuern*, 148-150.

21 J.J. Pilon to J. Blum, Heemstede 26 February 1961, AJP.

22 H. Dahlhaus to potential donors, Velbert 23 December 1960, AJP.

23 Interview H. Dahlhaus by author, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin) 25 January 2013.

for our commitment. Our aim of founding Nes Ammim can only be carried out with the full consent of local authorities.<sup>24</sup>

In a gesture of goodwill, the government offered the services of a bus and driver to take the group to the Negev. That no meeting with Ben-Gurion had been forthcoming was a slight disappointment, 'but we still hope to make that up'.<sup>25</sup> Pilon already felt confident that Nes Ammim had been 'accepted'.<sup>26</sup> The Germans presented themselves to Bezek:

While we stood on his porch, Shlomo made a point of telling us that most of his family had been wiped out by the Nazis and that he was strongly inclined to have nothing to do with Germans for the rest of his life and least of all in his own house. Only the introduction by our Dutch friends had made him change his mind.<sup>27</sup>

### American comments

While the memorandum had been conveyed to Eshkol in Werblowsky's version, Orie Miller received the *original* text, with the latest version added as an attachment.<sup>28</sup> When asked by Miller what he thought about it, Buksbazen answered that the project had been changed beyond recognition.<sup>29</sup> Pilon argued that this was the only way to make progress. The Germans were right to say that Israeli society was 'allergic' for Christian propaganda:

Former missionary efforts, in Jewish experience at least, applied varying degrees of force to achieve conversion. Given the background of this problematic past, our project implied an *Auseinandersetzung* between the entirety of Christianity and Israel. Our task is to broker human relationships, not by proselytizing, but by witness through deeds. Even more than in Baarn, we intend to give the approach the prominence which we now believe it deserves.

Pilon admitted that donors might not understand:

The points above, exposed in the memorandum, are, to a large extent, not apprehended in our circles. Certainly, many will not yet be able to accept the general trend.<sup>30</sup>

He wrote in a similar vein to Jacob Bernath. Providing economic aid for Israel was not enough, the Christian mindset needed to be changed:

This new attitude implies that we will have to reconsider some of our established convictions. Not an easy thing to do.<sup>31</sup>

24 Email H. Dahlhaus to author, Sankt Augustin 8 December 2012.

25 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 23 December 1960, AJP.

26 J.J. Pilon to Th. Booiij (private secretary of Princess Wilhelmina), Heemstede 18 December 1961, HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

27 Horst Dahlhaus, 'Deutsch-israelische Begegnungen', 93.

28 J.J. Pilon, report proceedings Israel, Heemstede 22 December 1960, HDC VU archive NAN, box 23.

29 V. Buksbazen to R. Bakker, Philadelphia 5 April 1961, AJP.

30 J.J. Pilon to V. Buksbazen, Heemstede 8 May 1961, AJP.

31 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 9 May 1961, AJP.

Unavoidably, former allies would drop out. ‘Which is just as well. We need to keep Fundamentalists at a distance.’<sup>32</sup> A delighted Ahne addressed Pilon as ‘dear Johnny’: ‘Under no circumstance can we allow Nes Amim to become a castle for the hidden believers and Jewish Christians. It would herald the end for our sign (Nes), both for Israel and the Amim.’<sup>33</sup> On 30 January 1961 the Germans gathered in Mülheim-Selbeck, the day when a ‘Heinrich Grüber forest’ was being planted in Jerusalem.<sup>34</sup> Dahlhaus still tried to win the *Probst* for the plan.

### Rejection of the missionary approach

The awkward task of communicating Velbert’s opinions to other participants fell to Pilon: ‘The stark difference between them and the Anglo-Saxons is obvious. Given the German background, the *Wiedergutmachung* is duly emphasized.’<sup>35</sup> Blum replied that it had been a serious error to include Velbert in the project in the first place:

I am convinced that this implies a wrong turn. Clearly this is not what we planned for in the beginning. I am afraid that it will produce a hotbed of anti-mission, anti-church – for that is what Werblowsky is aiming at. The intention is to keep the Jewish-Christian element out. It makes me suffer, Johan.<sup>36</sup>

Ko and Bets Minnaar paid a visit to Abu Sinan in the company of Snoek, Nadjwa Farah and Soleiman Habib.<sup>37</sup> Everything depended on finding money for the land purchase. And for that, Ko remarked, ‘we depend on America’. Snoek coolly replied that it was unrealistic to expect massive American investments after adopting Velbert’s policies.<sup>38</sup>

Mrs. Gerbrandy-Sikkel was staying in the Scotti with the intention of celebrating Easter in Jerusalem. Nes Ammim asked ambassador W.J.G. Gevers<sup>39</sup> to assist her in any possible way. ‘Prof. Gerbrandy promotes our efforts. His wife’s visit to Israel serves as an extension of our plan.’<sup>40</sup> A plan that clearly had the interest of the authorities, given the fact that letters from the sheikh were opened by censors.<sup>41</sup> Pilon urged Hans Bernath to make time for discussing strategy with Minnaar: ‘The Gravemeijer couple is too old for that.’<sup>42</sup> Koeno Gravemeijer defended Apartheid policies in South Africa as a model of coexistence for Jews and Arabs in Israel. Obviously, this was no suitable subject for a discussion in Nazareth.

32 J.J. Pilon to M. Boertien, Heemstede 22 June 1961, ANAN.

33 L. Ahne to J.J. Pilon, Essen 31 December 1960, HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

34 Jörg Hildebrand (ed.), *Bevollmächtigt zum Brückenbau. Heinrich Grüber*.

35 J.J. Pilon to J. Blum, Heemstede 11 February 1961, AJP.

36 J. Blum to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 18 February 1961, AJP.

37 J.J. Pilon to J.M. Snoek, Heemstede 18 February 1961, AJP.

38 J.M. Snoek to J.J. Pilon, Tiberias 13 March 1961, AJP.

39 Baron Gevers was a career diplomat, who also had postings in Teheran and London (interview Baron A.J. Gevers by author, Zwolle 17 November 2017).

40 The former Prime Minister also taught law at the Free University in Amsterdam. J.J. Pilon to J.M. Snoek, Heemstede 18 February 1961, AJP.

41 A. Khayr to J.J. Pilon, Abu Sinan 15 April 1961, ANAN.

42 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 17 February 1962, AJP.

### The Jerusalem consultation of 23 March 1961

The memorandum had already been condemned by the UCCI. 'Jewish-Christian dialogue' meant nothing for Arab Churches, Boertien explained. 'Little wonder, as these fellows yet have to learn even the most basic principles of the relation between Church and Israel.'<sup>43</sup> Werblowsky had no intention of waiting all that time. Acting on behalf of the Committee for Inter-Faith Understanding in Israel, he invited representatives of nineteen Protestant churches and agencies, among them the UCCI, to a consultation in the YMCA building. Yonah Malachy and Chaim Wardi represented the Ministry of Religious affairs at this occasion. They immediately came to their point. Christians should realize that they could only expect Jewish participation in dialogue if their continued missionary efforts were halted. Shalom Ben-Chorin attended what he called the 'Jerusalem interkonfessionelle Aussprache' with great interest:

In no uncertain terms, Dr Werblowsky told the ladies and gentlemen of no less than nineteen Protestant churches and missionary societies that they had to make a definite choice between either a cordial relationship between Christians and Jews, or continuing their program of Jewish Mission. These diverging attitudes could not co-exist.

Werblowsky praised Karl Barth in Basel, Rudolph Bultmann in Marburg and Paul Tillich in Chicago as paragons of an innovative theology. The same could hardly be said of Protestants in Israel. Their best bid was the Old Testament as 'common heritage' and as a suitable discussion theme. That is to say: at a few select 'academic' occasions, for at the basic strata of Protestant communities it was still common to address the Jews in missionary terms.

Israel had been tolerant of this, but such leniency could not be expected to endure forever. Churches were entitled to their religious freedom, but were not at liberty to evangelize at will. 'We expect that our established policy of tolerance will not be misused for the aim of making proselytes.'<sup>44</sup> Pilon was not present at this meeting, but understood its relevance only too well. His foremost Jewish advisor categorically opposed an attitude that was all too common among the Mennonites, the RCN and the Free Churches in Switzerland: to open a dialogue with Judaism, while allowing Jewish Mission to continue in the hope that it would 'modernize'. Within Nes Ammim, only the Germans agreed with Werblowsky.

Simultaneously the Jerusalem trial against Eichmann was being conducted, 'le bourreau nazi dans sa cage de verre' as Duvernoy put it.<sup>45</sup> The impact on public opinion was immense:

For younger Germans particularly, the trial came as a horrifying revelation. It supplied answers their parents had never given them. Following proceedings in the press or on television, they sensed the truth of what had been done in the name of their nation. Deeply penitent, thousands asked allowance to atone by working in Israel. (...) They went, no less than 20,000 of them, between 1961 and 1967.<sup>46</sup>

43 M. Boertien to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 21 January 1961, ANAN.

44 Shalom Ben-Chorin, 'Religiöse Ko-Existenz', in *Jediot Chadasjot* 14 April 1961.

45 Cl. Duvernoy, *Pour l'Amour de Sion*, 36.

46 Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel*, 559-560.

The effect on Dahlhaus and Ahne, Pilon observed, was an even stronger rejection of any remaining missionary aims:

Did we not – so they asked – still have somewhere in the back of our heads these aims lingering? (...) Exactly the opposite of the attitude in the English-speaking countries, where the first concern is that the missionary side not be neglected. The task will be to find a synthesis. In Germany, of course, the *Wiedergutmachung* idea prevails and will even be emphasized by the Eichmann-process.

His worry was that the Lutherans would be frightened away by Velbert's rigidity:

We need a different kind of people in Germany (...). Jacob agreed. Dahlhaus means well but is overcautious. Rev. Ahne, good fellow, is altogether too theoretical.<sup>47</sup>

Velbert, the Dutch complained, suffered from 'Aufschubitis'.<sup>48</sup> If the money was not forthcoming soon, Khayr might be tempted to sell to another bidder.<sup>49</sup> The pressure was on, now that a new Land Consolidation Act, currently under study in the Knesset, might force the Druzes out of their last holdings in the coastal zone. In the words of the owner of a few plots near Shomrat:

He fears that he might have to exchange his land with land on the hillside and give these plots to the kibbutzim.<sup>50</sup>

Velbert was told by Pilon to focus on finance and to leave their crusade against the missionaries alone. Minnaar and Gravemeijer donated f 25,000 each. The Gravemeijer couple also provided funds for the acquisition of asbestos, corrugated sheets, concrete and soft-board sheets. 'All made in Israel.'<sup>51</sup>

The Swiss Nes Ammim Society was officially founded in Zurich in March, with Jacob Bernath as its president. Other board members were Schildknecht, Friedrich Ess-Meyer and Armin Marti (owner of a transport company in Murten), while the 'Finanz- und Rechtsausschuss' was presided by architect Max Schwank. The next step would be to establish an international company of limited liability: an *Aktiengemeinschaft* (AG), 'for conducting business'.<sup>52</sup>

The Swiss preferred the structure of a society to that of a foundation.<sup>53</sup> Their idea was a village in the Herrnhut tradition, a truly international place.<sup>54</sup> Donations could be transferred to the giro account of the SEI. Only Brunner kept insisting on a Hebrew Church.<sup>55</sup> Romandia, the French-speaking part of Switzerland, opened a 'Nes Amim' secretariat in Geneva. A brochure featured pastoral pictures of Galilee and of Külling's chickens:

47 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 31 January 1961, AJP.

48 R. Bakker to J.J. Pilon, 30 May 1961, AJP.

49 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 8 January 1960, AJP.

50 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 25 January 1961, AJP.

51 J.J. Pilon to D. Ben-Dor, Heemstede 19 June 1961, AJP.

52 J.J. Pilon to S. Külling, Heemstede 21 April 1961, AJP.

53 Johannes Gutscher, circular letter in *Schweizer Evangeliumsdienst in Israel*, Wädenswil April 1961.

54 Abraham Wüsten, 'Statt Mission ein Werk praktischer Handreichung', in *Schweizer Evangeliumsdienst in Israel*, Wädenswil April 1961.

55 R. Brunner, 'Christlicher Aufbau in Israel', in *Der Freund Israels*, Basel April 1961.

Les Israéliens pourront se convaincre que le vrai christianisme est fait d'amour, de respect et de service pour Israël.<sup>56</sup>

### Foundation Nes Ammim-Netherlands

On 14 April 1961, the deed for the Dutch foundation was passed by a public notary. The objective was given as 'the furthering of good relations between Israelis and Christians' (art. 2) and establishing 'one or more settlements in Israel' (art. 3). Board members were Minnaar (president), Bakker, Bonda, Dooyes, Feitsma, the Gravemeijers, Heule, Henkemans, Kuiper, Lam, Jan Minnaar, sister Pekel, Pilon, Tabaksblatt, Van Veen and Vetten.<sup>57</sup> 'Now we can start business.'<sup>58</sup> Payment of Pilon's salary as international secretary devolved from the RCN deputies to the foundation. The Rotterdam office was to be headed by Gerrit Polet, who in daily life, was an insurer. He had fought against Sukarno and retained a certain 'tropical fever' ever since.<sup>59</sup>

Theological broadcastings of the Dutch Christian Radio Society were directed by Okke Jager (RCN). Interest in Judaism was booming. Christianity had originated in Judaism, which implied that Israel was entitled to check theology against the norm of the Hebrew Bible. Jewish roots of the Gospel were being rediscovered, as the only way to make the message of Jesus Christ relevant for a contemporary audience.<sup>60</sup> Christianity and Judaism were compared to 'parallel lines', related but not identical.<sup>61</sup> The recent DRC publication *Israel and the Church* found a receptive audience in the RCN too. Jager quoted a Yiddish saying, *wer kayn tashlikh gemacht hot, ken es noch machen*:

Anyone who has not yet performed 'tashlikh' – the New Year's ritual to say a prayer on the bank of flowing waters – can still do it. Never too late to make up for the sins of the past. We owe Israel.<sup>62</sup>

This also implied standing by Israel against the Arab enemy.<sup>63</sup> When the Swiss repeated their arguments for Arab participation, they received the answer that Nazareth was the proper place for that.

### Brunner and Ehrlich

Pilon was asked by the Bernaths to sort out their difficulties with Brunner, director of Freunde Israels. This society had been founded in 1830 for Jewish Mission but was also respected by the Swiss Jewish community as a staunch friend of Is-

56 *Nes Amim, Bannière des Peuples. Un village chrétien en Israël*, Lausanne/Geneva 1962.

57 Copy of the charter (Rotterdam 11 April 1961) in archive S. Feitsma, Amsterdam.

58 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 17 February 1962, AJP.

59 Interview G. Polet by author, Paterswolde 15 March 2013.

60 J.M. Hasselaar, 'Israël en de Kerk', in *In de Waagschaal* 28 May 1960.

61 *Israël en de Kerk*, 18-20.

62 O. Jager to Nes Ammim-Netherlands, Haarlem 14 May 1961, AJP.

63 Frits Kuiper, 'Nes Ammim (aims)', Amsterdam April 1961, AJP.

rael.<sup>64</sup> The Israeli consul-general in Zurich worried about the possible effects of Brunner's insistence that the proposed Christian village was intended as a haven for Jewish converts. Together with Theo Schubert, Pilon went to see him:

We explained that our committees have nothing to do with Brunner's articles (...) and that we maintain the memorandum to the Israeli government: non-missionary, a business proposition to come to the aid of Israel and to contribute to a real meeting of the minds.<sup>65</sup>

Convincing the general Protestant public would be a difficult job: 'We also pointed out what difficulties and misunderstandings we are apt to encounter in the process of introducing this new idea in our own Christian circles. Mr. Naor showed himself very sympathetic and said he would report our conversation to Israel.'<sup>66</sup> Schubert left it to Pilon to confront Brunner in person. It was only now that Brunner saw Werblowsky's text. He furiously objected:

He would never have given his support, had he known this. (...) This was an attempt to destroy all that he stood for.

After Brunner had calmed down a bit, he advised to make it a project that was strictly economic.<sup>67</sup> Next stop was Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich, who lived in Riehen. He taught at Basel University and was the European director of B'nai B'rith (Benei Brit, 'Sons of the Covenant'). Raised in New York in 1843, it worked for tolerance and for disseminating Jewish knowledge. Ehrlich, secretary-general of the Christlich-Jüdische Arbeitsgemeinschaft in Switzerland, strongly advised to pay serious attention to Naor's warnings:

Missionary papers edited by Brunner portray your village as a means for the goal of conversion. Obviously, Israel will not tolerate this.<sup>68</sup>

Approaching Barth would make no sense: 'He had not been interested until now. He used to consider Jewish-Christian dialogue as one of Van Oyen's more eccentric ideas.'<sup>69</sup> Holland should take the lead, preferably under the guidance of Grolle and Beek. Pilon, however, knew already that the DRC Council would not commit itself directly. Beek was too Liberal anyway.<sup>70</sup> Swiss strength, he believed, was in technology. They seemed mortified at the prospect of contradicting an established authority like Brunner. 'There are many theologians on the Swiss board. They are still bickering about the idea among themselves. Fine, but it should not distract from practical matters where businessmen will have to take the lead. We have to make sure that theology does not hamper the business side.'<sup>71</sup>

64 'Robert Brunner', in *Der Freund Israels* (Schweizerische Evangelische Judenmission/Stiftung für Kirche und Judentum) April 1980 (jubilee edition 1830-1980), 58-61; Lydia Schächli, 'Erinnerung an Pfarrer Brunner', in *ibidem*.

65 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, M. Boertien and J.M. Snoek, Heemstede 18 July 1961, AJP.

66 J.J. Pilon to D. Ben-Dor, Heemstede 18 July 1961, AJP.

67 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, M. Boertien and J.M. Snoek, Heemstede 18 July 1961, AJP.

68 E.L. Ehrlich to J. Bernath, Bazel 5 June 1961, AJP.

69 Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich to R.R. Geis, Basel 14 May 1964, in Dietrich Goldschmidt and Ingrid Ueber-schär (eds.), *Leiden an der Unerlöstheit der Welt*, 263. Cf. J. Veenhof, 'Hendrik van Oyen', in *Biografisch lexicon voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlandse protestantisme* V, Kampen 2001, 401-403.

70 Interview D.J. van der Sluis by author, Westzaan 8 April 2009.

71 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, M. Boertien and J.M. Snoek, Heemstede 18 July 1961, AJP.

## NEW DIRECTIONS, 1961-1962

Most Jewish immigrants had become city dwellers. Far from being the core of the nation, kibbutzim began to feel the lack of suitable land that would allow them to grow. While authorities tried to strengthen the Jewish hold on rural areas, it was for good reason that Kofsmann wondered why they even considered to deal with Nes Ammin.



1962 071823

## Ga'aton Regional Council Opposes Christian Village

ACRE. — Opposition to the establishment of the Dutch-Swiss sponsored Christian village of Ness Amim in Western Galilee was expressed yesterday at a meeting of the Ga'aton Regional Council.

According to "Itim," the Council has no religious objections to the foundation of the village, but feels that there is not sufficient land or water in the area to justify the establishment of another farming village.

(Land for the settlement was bought from a Druze Sheikh in 1961 by the International Federation of Ness Amim Organizations, which has branches in Switzerland and Holland. In February, 1962, Dr. J.J. Pilon, one-time physician at the Scottish Hospital in Tiberias, and then secretary of the Ness Amim Society in Holland, told *The Jerusalem Post* correspondent in Holland that the settlement would be disbanded if it appeared it was unwelcome by its neighbours.)

Fig. 11 *Jerusalem Post* 1962  
(NA Galilee).

# XIX Internationale Aktiengesellschaft

## At the Ministry of Finance

On 31 July 1961 Bakker and Ben-Dor were received by Eshkol and secretary-general Ya'akov Arnon.<sup>1</sup> Bank director Joop Voet,<sup>2</sup> originally from Amsterdam, accompanied them in an advisory capacity. Their intention was to finish the transaction as soon as possible. 'Once we have the land, we can start operations.'<sup>3</sup> Permission was asked to pay half of the purchase price via Switzerland, as Khayr had specifically requested.

Eshkol and Arnon promised a formal reply, on the condition that Nes Ammim would help strengthen the industrial branch of the kibbutzim in the area.<sup>4</sup> 'Although inspired by idealistic motives', the plan would be carried out 'on a strictly business basis'.<sup>5</sup> Ra'anán Weitz<sup>6</sup> was informed by Voet.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile the Swiss made plans for housing, a road and – once again following the example of the Tempelgesellschaft – a clockmaker's workshop. Holland hired an expert on irrigation, J. Wesseling.<sup>8</sup> A transfer deed was duly prepared by notary Isaac Ganon in Haifa, though his plea to have the international company registered in Israel fell on deaf ears.<sup>9</sup> He sent a concept to the Ministry of Finance for comments.<sup>10</sup>

## Aktiengesellschaft Nes Ammim (AG)

Nes Ammim International was founded in Zurich on 16 November 1961. Members of the executive committee (*Verwaltungsrat*) were Jacob Bernath (president), Bakker, Minnaar, Schwank, Vital Hauser and Miller: three Swiss, two Dutchmen and an American. Germans, considered as junior partners, were excluded. Starting capital was a modest 50,000 Swiss francs. Banking secrecy had been a consideration in the choice for Zurich, rather than Tel Aviv, as seat of the AG:

1 Arnon became the founder of the Israeli Council for Israel-Palestine Peace in 1996. Cf. Colin Shindler, *A history of modern Israel*, 184.

2 Joop Voet was a maternal uncle of journalist Ischa Meijer. Cf. Evelien Gans, *Jaap en Ischa Meijer*, register in voce.

3 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 23 August 1961, AJP.

4 Henry Near, *The Kibbutz Movement. A History* 2, 245.

5 J.J. Pilon to Y. Arnon, Heemstede 14 August 1961, AJP.

6 Not to be confused with Yosef Weitz (1890-1972), head of the Land and Reforestation Department of the JNF.

7 A.S. Khayr to J.J. Pilon, Abu Sinan 20 July 1961, ANAN.

8 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 23 August 1961, AJP.

9 J.J. Pilon to J. Alkahé, (?) 21 December 1957, HDC VU archive NAN.

10 I. Ganon to J.J. Pilon, Haifa 17 December 1961, AJP.

Money can go in and out of that country without hindrance, tax conditions are very favourable, there is absolute bank secrecy. A very skilful lawyer in Zurich is now preparing the statutes for the Incorporation.<sup>11</sup>

Minnaar and Bernath took twenty shares each, Bonda the remaining ten.<sup>12</sup> The AG office was in Schaffhausen, above a pharmacy in the Vordergasse. In Israel Minnaar and Bernath had another meeting with Eshkol.<sup>13</sup> They stayed in the YMCA, together with Pilon and Tabaksblatt,<sup>14</sup> with whom they climbed the tower to enjoy the views.<sup>15</sup> Moab and the Dead Sea were clearly visible, behind the Judaeen desert. This was the Biblical panorama that Minnaar had been expecting. Modern Jerusalem was less to his taste: 'Most of the inhabitants practically live without the God of Israel, even in the Land of Israel. Frightening!'<sup>16</sup> He was happy to focus his thoughts on Khayr and the efforts to bargain him down:

The sheikh will deliver at least 1,400 dunams of land (metrical or 'British' dunam = 1,000 sq. metres) at the price of IL 75 per dunam. Half of this will be paid in foreign currency in Switzerland. The Israeli government had to grant special permission for this paragraph, which it did.<sup>17</sup>

As Pilon reported to Velbert, this was strictly business indeed:

It wasn't like the first time (when Horst Dahlhaus was present), when principle came under discussion. This time we went through the technical details. (...) We were told that we would need permission by Eshkol and Ben-Gurion before we could buy the land. Ben-Dor spoke to minister Moshe Dayan of Agriculture.<sup>18</sup>

Another briefing went to Thijs Booij, private secretary of Princess Wilhelmina:

Dealing with a Druze sheikh is a matter of drinking countless cups of coffee – unlike a quick deal in the European way. (...) Fortunately, the cabinet includes persons that already accepted our plans last year (Ben-Gurion, Eshkol, Golda Meir, Sapir, Dayan).<sup>19</sup>

Voet still felt unsure about Khayr:

The sheikh asked me repeatedly whether he would be forced to leave the country after concluding the deal (...). I explained about the condition imposed by the Israel Government: if he wants full control of the foreign currency the implication is that he must go abroad. If he decides to remain in Israel, he can have the money in a so-called blocked account with an Israeli Bank. (...) The real difficulty is where to go (...). He does not wish to move to Syria, nor Jordan; considers Lebanon, but hesitates. Plays with the idea of England (...).

11 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Heemstede 20 April 1960, AJP.

12 J. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Thayngen 21 January 1961, AJP.

13 Circular letter J. Bernath, Thayngen 1 December 1961, AJP.

14 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, Jerusalem 15 November 1961, HDC VU archive NAN, box 24.

15 Edward Said describes the YMCA complex as it had been before 1948, when the 'Y' was also frequented by the Arab middle class (*Out of place. A memoir*, 112). The chapel, used in those days for Arab Anglican services, was the abode of Kofsmann's community in 1961.

16 J. Minnaar to S. Schoon, Schiedam-Kethel 8 February 1983, ASS.

17 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Heemstede 13 December 1961, AJP.

18 J.J. Pilon to H. Dahlhaus, H-A. Ritter, and J. Bernath, Heemstede 1 January 1962, AJP.

19 J.J. Pilon to Th. Booij, Heemstede 18 December 1961, HDC VU archive NAN box 28.

Personally, I have the feeling that unless this point is solved, the whole transaction might never materialise.<sup>20</sup>

As Ganon had already predicted, the Ministry of Finance was unhappy with Zurich as seat of the AG.<sup>21</sup> They were approached by Amqa with the proposal that Beit HaEmek would purchase Khayr's land, leasing parts of the property to its affluent Jewish neighbours.<sup>22</sup> To complicate matters even further, little was known in Israel about the exact authority of the 'Verwaltungsrat der AG Nes Ammim'.<sup>23</sup>

### Press conference

A press conference was scheduled for 20 December – in Amsterdam, not in Israel. Publicity was handled by the Dutch Christian Radio Society in the Biblical Museum, on Protestant territory. Questions would be answered by Minnaar and Pilon.<sup>24</sup>

The Jewish community had not been briefed in advance and reacted with the utmost scepticism. They were still being subjected to evangelizing leaflets, distributed by a major Nes Ammim sponsor: the RCN. Was the moshav in any way connected to that kind of activity? Despite his efforts to reassure the critics on this point, Pilon failed to convey a clear picture of the relation between himself and the RCN:

We disapprove of Jewish Mission. This kind of activity is an insult to the Jews, as it puts them on the same level as the heathens, the *goyim*. Our insight is that Christians and Jews belong together and need each other. The best way to show our solidarity is to live and work amid Israelis and to contribute to the build-up of the land that God has returned to His chosen people.<sup>25</sup>

Max Kopuit, editor of the Jewish weekly *NIW*, thought that there must be more to the story. Did Pilon himself not belong to the RCN, that operated an official 'evangelization among Israel'? As an unwilling but regular receiver of *Light and Life*, Kopuit had difficulty containing his anger. Pilon was a missionary doctor. Could Nes Ammim explain that? Who was selling the land, and why? Did KKL agree? No definite answers emerged, and the press conference ended in upheaval.

Henriëtte Boas<sup>26</sup> of the *Jerusalem Post* had started some research of her own. Within a few days she had found out that the probable seller was Abdallah Khayr, a Druze at loggerheads with the kibbutzim. The revelation of the sheikh's name came as an unpleasant surprise for Pilon: 'We may assume that his many opponents will turn loose on him.'<sup>27</sup> He could only pray that a dry comment by am-

20 J. Voet to J. Minnaar, Tel Aviv 11 December 1961, AJP.

21 J. Voet to J.J. Pilon, Tel Aviv 21 November 1961, AJP.

22 J.J. Pilon, report April–July 1962, HDC VU archive NAN, box 23.

23 Erich Lehmann, 'Nes Amim ohne Pathos', in *Jediot Chadasjot* February 1965.

24 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 23 December 1961, AJP.

25 Quoted in: M. Kopuit, 'Nes Ammim een opgave', in *NIW* 25 March 1966.

26 Cf. Pauline Micheels, *De waarheidszoekster*, 131.

27 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath and Ch. Gysel, Heemstede 10 January 1962, AJP.

bassador Cidor would carry the day: 'As Israel acknowledges a full freedom of religion, the government has no objections against the founding of this village in its territory.'<sup>28</sup> He also hoped that secular Jews would overrule the Orthodox: 'Mapai (Ben-Gurion's party) took responsibility. After all, 80 per cent of the Israelis are Liberal!'<sup>29</sup>

A press conference under the given circumstances required 'mental gymnastics', admitted Boertien. Every puppet in the game was held by many strings.<sup>30</sup> Even so, this failure in Amsterdam demonstrated the futility of withholding sensitive information. Pilon had underrated the complexities:

One feels the temptation just to quit. Think of the problems of living together in the intended settlement: with people of all sorts and backgrounds, from different churches and nationalities. Look at the recurring mess in micro-societies like our hospice Tiberias (...). You know. It will be a miracle if we will be able to start at all.<sup>31</sup>

Visiting students from Tübingen on their way to Lohamei HaGettaot were asked by Shavei Zion whether they knew anything about Nes Ammim. They hadn't heard of it.<sup>32</sup> They could only refer to Beth-El.<sup>33</sup>

No help was forthcoming from Grüber either, who preferred to work for *Aktion Sühnezeichen*.<sup>34</sup> Kremers commented that he had lost his touch,<sup>35</sup> but Pilon repeated that Velbert should try harder to get the Lutherans on board with the project.<sup>36</sup> Becker, Kremers and Dahlhaus did not give in. They had been told about the disastrous Amsterdam press conference by Eliezer Shinnar, the Israeli chargé d'affaires in Cologne. They had not obtained the goodwill of the Jews, and until they did, they saw no reason to make haste.

Ayeleth Hashachar was formally approached to see if Bezek could be enlisted as the manager (*madrich*) of the prospective village. Shlomo was inclined to accept. Diagnosed with a heart condition, a supervisory job suited him better than continuing with heavy physical work.<sup>37</sup> The Swiss agreed, though hesitantly, as Bezek would surely brief the authorities about current developments.<sup>38</sup> The village council of Ayelet Hashachar gave the go ahead. Shlomo was well-liked, and it was obvious to the *chaverim* that he relished the opportunity. 'It seemed very unusual', as his daughters recount. 'Still, they allowed him to go.'<sup>39</sup>

28 'Een teken der volken', in *NIW* 29 December 1961.

29 J.J. Pilon to Th. Booij (private secretary Princess Wilhelmina), Heemstede 18 December 1961. HDC VU, archive NAN, box 28.

30 M. Boertien to CRC Groningen and deputies evangelization Israel, Jerusalem 29 November 1961. HUA archive CRC inv.nr. 104.

31 J.J. Pilon to J. Blum, Heemstede 26 February 1962, AJP.

32 Elly Huth (ed.), *Israel-Reise des Institutum Judaicum*, 48.

33 *Ibidem*, 101.

34 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 135.

35 Heinz Kremers, *Judenmission heute?*, 32.

36 J.J. Pilon to H. Dahlhaus, Heemstede 29 September 1961, AJP.

37 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 30 October 2015.

38 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 8 June 1961, AJP.

39 Interview Racheli Eshel-Bezek and Diklah Geva-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

Sobered by the Amsterdam experience, Pilon was happy to have Bezek at his side.<sup>40</sup> Boertien remarked that he should worry about his fellow Christians as well. There were still no indications that Werblowsky's text had ever been discussed in depth with the Swiss and Americans. The newly arrived Dutch ambassador in Jerusalem, Jhr, Mr J.A. Beelaerts van Blokland, had expressed the same concern.<sup>41</sup> Velbert knew what Werblowsky intended to achieve, which might explain why they were so reluctant to bring the Lutherans in. Though Germany did not even have a seat in the international board, Boertien believed that Kremers was making it increasingly difficult for the Swiss and Americans to continue with their vision of Christian witness. Velbert promoted a romantic vision of the Jewish State instead, 'where faith articles ceased to be all-important, as one could see the reality of God's promises with one's own eyes'.<sup>42</sup>

40 J.J. Pilon to H. Dahlhaus, Heemstede 13 June 1961, AJP.

41 J.A. Beelaerts van Blokland to J. Aantjes (bureau Nes Ammim, Brakel), Jerusalem 28 June 1962, HDC VU, archive NAN, box 28.

42 M. Boertien, report November 1962 to CRC Groningen and deputies for evangelization Israel, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

## XX A painful decision

Initially, Boertien had been enthusiastic about Israel. However, that was beginning to change. The more he saw of the Jewish State, the more he believed it was nationalistic and disdainful towards Christianity. He felt it as an affront that Werblowsky connected the history of the Church to the Hitler regime. Within the UCCI he held the view that Christians should stand up for their faith. Johan Pilon sensed that he was losing an ally. Shlomo and Mirjam were happy enough to see how Pilon's views were more aligned with Werblowsky's and seemed to be breaking away from traditional Christianity and Boertien. They also liked the witty sense of humour of Jo Grolle, who came to visit them in Ayeleth Hashachar. Grolle said that Protestantism was in transition, and that awareness of the Jewish faith of Jesus was growing:

The first rays of morning light, over the mountain tops on the Eastern side of the River Jordan, touch the village. The name is Ayeleth Hashachar: Hind (Deer) of the Dawn. Any reader of the Dutch States' Bible translation will be acquainted with this motto of Psalm 22, the song of utter ordeal and forsakenness. The Lord Jesus went to his death on the cross with the opening words. Their meaning is given by the best Jewish interpreters as 'the strengthening power of dawn'. Dawn, *shachar*, is something between night and morning. The danger is acute as if it were in the thick of darkness. But no longer, it is dawning, implying that the sun is already rising (...) That is how this kibbutz expects victory by God's help and deliverance. Jesus Christ is our Ayeleth Hashachar.<sup>1</sup>

*Our* faith: for the Christians, not necessarily for the Jews.

### 'Nes Ammim will not be settled by Jewish converts'

The Amsterdam press conference did not feature well in Protestant media. Only the Free Reformed Churches reacted, and negatively at that: Christ's command to evangelize had been flagrantly disobeyed.<sup>2</sup> That was also the Scots opinion.<sup>3</sup> The Jewish press noted that Blum still insisted on a pivotal role for Christian-Jews.<sup>4</sup> There were also concerns in Israel about the meddling influence of the Arabs and Druzes.<sup>5</sup> Werblowsky cautioned that something had to be done to redress this.<sup>6</sup> Pilon finally concluded that a parting of the ways with Blum could not be avoided:

<sup>1</sup> J.H. Grolle, *Dit komt u tegen in Israël*, The Hague 1963, 86-87.

<sup>2</sup> J.C. van den Akker to NAN, Hilversum 1 May 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

<sup>3</sup> Telephone conversation M. Cohen Stuart-Jumelet (Rhoon), 16 December 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Interview J. Blum in *Jediot Chadashot*, January 1962.

<sup>5</sup> S.P. Tabaksblatt to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 11 February 1962, AJP.

<sup>6</sup> R.J.Z. Werblowsky to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 6 February 1962, AJP.

At the present state of things, our aims are twofold: 1) bridging the gap between Christians and Jews, and 2) to offer job opportunities for Jewish-Christians, with the formula 'no discrimination'. It seems that these twin goals are mutually exclusive, at least in the opening stages.

Israel considers the matter of *Mesbumadim* or 'renegades', who are not being recognized as Jews, as an internal affair. It is not the business of the Christians (...). Mingling the two aims is confusing and it antagonizes the Jews.

He made up his mind:

We must draw the obvious conclusion, which implies that we drop this dual approach. From now on this will be an affair between Jews and *Goyim*. The issue of the Jewish-Christians belongs in another category.

Still, parting of the ways would be painful: "To make a public choice. Meaning that we admit that there will be no Jewish-Christian settlement. No easy decision."<sup>7</sup> He turned to Henriëtte Boas in the hope that she could convince her readers that he was in earnest. 'He seemed keen on seeing me', she remarked.<sup>8</sup> Boas, however, remained as sceptical as ever. The Israeli embassy would do well to keep these overenthusiastic Christian friends at some distance.<sup>9</sup> David Shaltiel, Cidor's successor, was a hardened army veteran.<sup>10</sup> He would surely not let himself be duped by 'an official Protestant missionary among the Jews' like Bakker?<sup>11</sup> Desperate to prove that he belonged to a different category, Pilon allowed himself to be quoted as follows:

Nes Ammim will not be settled by Jewish converts, although some press reports have mistakenly alleged this.<sup>12</sup>

No one had been consulted in advance. It was Shlomo Bezek who drew the attention of an unsuspecting board in Zurich to the *Jerusalem Post*, adding some unsolicited advice of his own. It might be wise to exclude both Christian Jews and Germans, given local sensibilities. His suggestion received a cool reception. Jacob Bernath responded, saying it was not for Bezek to decide who could and could not partake in this Christian community.<sup>13</sup> Now that Shlomo had conveyed the message, Johan could start the process of easing the pain: 'Of course, in the long run the Jewish Christian will join, bit by bit,'<sup>14</sup> but not in the foreseeable future. Allaert Pilon says that his father was not a harsh man, but could be if a principal issue was at stake.<sup>15</sup> An 'asylum for converted Jews' no longer fit into the scheme as he saw it:

7 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, F. Kuiper, J.H. Grolle and K.H.E. Gravemeijer, Heemstede 6 February 1962, AJP.

8 H. Boas to D. Shaltiel, Amsterdam 3 May 1964, AHB.

9 H. Boas to D. Shaltiel, Amsterdam 8 September 1963, AHB.

10 Cf. Tom Segev, *The seventh million*, 118.

11 H. Boas to D. Shaltiel, Amsterdam 1 December 1963, AHB.

12 Henriëtte Boas, 'Constructive atonement', in *Jerusalem Post* 19 February 1962.

13 S. Bezek to J. Bernath and Ch. Gysel, Nahariya 18 August 1963, HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

14 J.J. Pilon to Th.C. Vriezen, in University Library Utrecht, special collections, archive Th.C. Vriezen, 1962-12.

15 Interview Allaert Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.



We want to come to Israel with the sole aim of developing a better understanding between Christians and Jews, to work together to dispel prejudice and hatred and to promote a new idea about Israel among the Christian nations.<sup>16</sup>

### 'In a new gear'

Pilon took a calculated risk with America. All that Miller had offered so far were Pax workers: conscientious objectors to the military draft who were entitled to perform humanitarian duties at home or abroad.<sup>17</sup> The Americans believed that Velbert was behind Pilon's change of heart. Germany would surely endorse the kind of Israeli supervision Shlomo had been hinting at, a supervision that was deeply repulsive to free church traditions:

The German Church (...) has committed herself to only forward money when the Israeli Government gives its O.K. on Nes Ammim. Germany is in a delicate situation with Israel in the light of World War II history.<sup>18</sup>

Predictably, the Mennonites were baffled by the article in the *Jerusalem Post*, with its alarming undertones of discriminating against Christian Jews: 'There was as yet no clearly defined vision statement, and commitments were being made unilaterally without mutual agreement of the participants involved.'<sup>19</sup>

Pilon went to Nazareth to see Hans and Madeleine Bernath. It came as a relief that they were still willing to contribute to the moshav, feeling that it was their duty to support all religious denominations in the country. Up until this point, they had made little effort to cooperate with the Jews. In this light, the idea of Christian Jews not partaking in the initial stages of the moshav seemed like a pragmatic decision that might indeed be a step to improving cooperation. Of course, Christian Jews were as welcome as ever to join the hospital in Nazareth or Beth-El. Paul Roost, who came from the same area as the Bernath family, was also present:

As a young technician, I did not find it hard to find a job in Israel where everything needed to be built up from scratch. The Bernaths showed great hospitality; their home was always full of guests. They knew how to share, the cutlery in the Nes Ammim bus came from Madeleine Bernath. Help others, and you will receive help. This very real experience was embedded in faith; we took part in the blessing of Israel (Gen. 22:18). Hans introduced me to Johan Pilon and to Victor Smadja, who had been evicted from a kibbutz because of his Christian faith. Jewish Christianity represented the earliest stages of the Church, its very beginnings.<sup>20</sup>

The RCN maintained that the recent 'switch' in Nes Ammim<sup>21</sup> did not imply any 'discrimination on the grounds of belief or nationality'.<sup>22</sup> That was simply

16 J.J. Pilon to J. Minnaar, Schaffhausen 20 September 1962, ANAG.

17 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 137.

18 R. Kreider to O.O. Miller, Ramat Gan 15 December 1962, AJP.

19 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 136-137.

20 Interview Paul Roost by author, Thayngen 30 April 2014.

21 Minutes Amsterdam 3 April 1962, in HUA, archive deputies Church and Israel inv.nr. 466.

22 R. Bakker, 'Nes Ammim', in *Centraal Weekblad* 12 May 1962.

not true, said Boertien. Israel, he said, refused to treat Christian Jews like other Jews. While the United States had found the courage to act against discrimination of the blacks, Judaism entrenched itself in a 'titanic Humanism' as described by Miskotte. The result, as Boertien put it, was a differentiation between first and second-rate citizens.<sup>23</sup> That was why he could not endorse the concept of Jewish-Christian dialogue as presented by Pilon or Kremers:

We have been too admiring of the State of Israel and uncritical in our attitude towards Judaism. I'm increasingly inclined to the view that Zionism (...) essentially exemplifies a non-Biblical and even anti-Christian movement.

Aware of the crimes committed against the Jews during this century, I cannot openly publish this view in my articles. Yet I tend to agree with Miskotte (...). It seems as if we have let this view slip in recent years, which may be due to the DRC Council for Church and Israel. We have become overly optimistic in our appraisal of Judaism.<sup>24</sup>

Especially if this entailed some sort of discrimination against fellow Christians:

To silence their critics, the Nes Ammim people have announced in Amsterdam that their future village excludes Jewish Christians. If they mean to say: a specific kind of Jewish Christian (selection), that is fine with me. But then let them explain the selection principle. Presently, the statements [in the *Jerusalem Post*] are interpreted as a categorical no against all Jewish Christians as such, and against any form of Christian mission (whatever its name). For me, that is appalling. It is a betrayal of Jewish Christians and a dagger in the back of those who are dutifully performing their missionary work.

If there is no turning back (and it's almost too late to repair what has been done already) the only remaining solution will be to disband the Nes Ammim club and to continue only with those who have kept a level head, without being impaired by silly, idealistic, petty so-called Israel-theologies.<sup>25</sup>

### Indirect missionary approach

Baptist preacher Bob Lindsay, working on an improved Ivrit translation of the New Testament in Tiberias, fully agreed. So did Chawa Kranhouse, eking out an existence in Jerusalem on the verge of poverty.<sup>26</sup> None of them could understand the reasons the Bernath brothers, Miller and Kreider continued to press on. The Mennonites simply said that they had sought guidance in prayers and felt that the Lord encouraged them to continue the effort.<sup>27</sup> Frits Kuiper worried about Miller's visits to refugee camps and his becoming susceptible to 'Arab wailings' as a result.<sup>28</sup> It was greatly reassuring that the American Mennonites had no intention of leaving Nes Ammim:

23 K.H. Miskotte, *Het Wezen der Joodsche Religie*.

24 M. Boertien, report December 1961–July 1962, HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

25 M. Boertien, report October–November 1962 to deputies evangelization Israel. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

26 J.J. Pilon to J.M. Snoek, Heemstede 19 January 1961, AJP.

27 Laurence Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead*, 317.

28 F. Kuiper to J.J. Pilon, North Newton (Kansas) 13 July 1962, ANAN.

We feel the whole scheme has sufficient value for helping to relieve some of the distress in the situation of local Christians, in interpreting wholesomely and with possibly greater clarity to the people of Israel our Christian love and good will (...). Something of a different stripe than that conceived by Eva Kranhouse, both ideas being worthy, and therefore we do not incline to be negative toward this present project.<sup>29</sup>

Miller's biographer explains: 'Deeply embedded in the Mennonite DNA is the call to care for the sister and brother in need as well as to serve those beyond the community of faith. Mutual aid and service to one's neighbours is not the means to salvation, but rather a distinguishing characteristic of Christ's followers, an expression of true evangelical faith'.<sup>30</sup> Hans Bernath came to see Kreider in Ramat Gan, to introduce him to Roost. Kreider approached the meeting with confidence: 'I still feel that this will be an effective avenue of mission, effective because of its indirect approach.'<sup>31</sup> Nes Ammim was perceived by the MCC as a form of 'Christian witness'.<sup>32</sup> What Miller had understood of the Werblowsky memorandum was the following: 'As it was outlined to me by the Holland committee, I felt that it was soundly envisioned and completely Christian and Mission motivated, and a promising self-help pilot project.'<sup>33</sup>

29 R. Kreider to J.J. Pilon, Ramat Gan 30 December 1961, AJP.

30 John E. Sharp, *My duty to fulfill*, 110.

31 R. Kreider to MCC, Ramat Gan 10 April 1962, AJP.

32 O.O. Miller to J.J. Pilon, Leopoldville (Congo) 18 March 1962, AJP.

33 O.O. Miller to Mennonite Central Committee, Akron (Pennsylvania) 18 April 1962, AJP.

# AL-MANSURA

By 1962 authorities intended to integrate the Druzes and to bring military supervision to an end.<sup>1</sup> Khayr might have a career in Israel after all. He was appointed president of the National Tobacco Council, that regulated prices of this commodity since Ottoman times.<sup>2</sup> Tobacco formed a staple produce for Isfiya and Daliat al-Karmel. Ironically, initiated Druzes were non-smokers.

<sup>1</sup> Martin Gilbert, *Israel. A history*, 345.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Louis Lortet, *La Syrie d'aujourd'hui*, 42 ([www.mom.fr/digimom](http://www.mom.fr/digimom)) and Philip J. Baldensperger, *The Immovable East*, 57.



# XXI Land deal

## Neglected land?

‘Arab and Druze villages’, the *Jerusalem Post* noted, ‘own about 75 per cent of the country’s 40,000 dunams of tobacco fields. (...) Mr. Kheir will preside over the council on behalf of the Agriculture Ministry while Mr. Ze’ev Carmi will serve as deputy chairman on behalf of the Finance Ministry.’<sup>1</sup> He found it especially satisfying that three Israeli employees were assigned to him. Pilon reported:

The sheikh has become a big man, with an office of his own and a very official installation on 29 April. There will be a splendid party of 200 or even 300 invitees in Tel Aviv, Minister Moshe Dayan among them.<sup>2</sup>

Khayr declared that he still wanted to part with the fields in the Plain of Asher, described by Nes Ammim as uncultivated wastelands. The crop of 1961 had been negligible. Limited access produced a wilderness of thistles, where almost everything else had been eaten by the herds of the Bedouin. The sale seemed a logical step,<sup>3</sup> but there was a persistent worry that the sheikh might reconsider now that his prospects had improved. Demographic numbers among the Druzes were steeply on the rise and they might be tempted to keep the land for themselves.<sup>4</sup>

The deal might be called off by Khayr, but also by Nes Ammim. The latter course was advised by Erich Lehmann, the journalist in Nahariya who came to visit Pilon.<sup>5</sup> Lehmann urged him to follow the example of Beth-El: to plan the project well in advance with the intended Jewish neighbours and to lease the land via them. Khayr’s only aim, he said, was to make an easy profit.<sup>6</sup> Pilon didn’t contradict him:

The old fox has lost none of his wiles. It seems impossible to go round his back, he has his ears everywhere.<sup>7</sup>

1 ‘Druze to head Tobacco Board’, in *Jerusalem Post* 8 January 1962.

2 J.J. Pilon to J. Minnaar, Nazareth 19 maart 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.

3 J. Bernath, report November-December 1960, Thayngen 21 December 1960. ‘Pachtverträge hat Sheikh Abdallah keine mehr ausgestellt. Er hat lediglich den Pächtern bewilligt, das Land in diesem Winter noch einmal zu bebauen, im Mai erfolgt die Ernte, die letzten Früchte werden am 31. August eingeheimst, sodass am 1. September unsere Traktoren mit der Bebauung beginnen könnten. Den Pächtern gegenüber besteht keine Verpflichtung mehr.’ HDC VU archive NAN, box 24.

4 Ilan Pappé, *The forgotten Palestinians*, 110-111.

5 Dedication in Lehmann’s history of the city of Nahariya, presented to Pilon.

6 Erich M. Lehmann, ‘Die letzte Chance von Nes Ammim’, in *Jediot Chadasjot* 26 May 1967.

7 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 26 January 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

Snoek wondered what would become of the tenants,<sup>8</sup> knowing that Nes Ammim wanted to get rid of these field hands.<sup>9</sup> An answer to Snoek's question is provided by Simha Flapan:

On the one hand, transfer of lands limited employment in agriculture and created a reserve of unemployed farmers; on the other, the system of travel permits prevented this reserve from leaving the village and settling down in places where employment prospects were favourable.<sup>10</sup>

Better prospects existed for the leadership of the hamudas. Sheikh Amin Tarif from Julis presided over the Religious Council of the Druzes in Israel. Other Council members included Kamal Mu'adi from Yarka and sheikh Ahmad Khayr.<sup>11</sup> His brother Abdallah oversaw the installation of Abu Sinan's municipal council. According to Voet, he had regained some of his self-confidence: 'His newly found official status [in Israel] not only provides him with a job but also with the recognition he has been craving.'<sup>12</sup> He would settle the land deal, 'as he believes that it is wise to see this through as long as he can do it on his own terms. He remains aware that he belongs to a class of large landowners who may be forced to part with their holdings in the future.'<sup>13</sup>

Nes Ammim promised to pay the total sum up front.<sup>14</sup> 'The wet long days of winter appear to pass away, and we look forward to the coming spring', Khayr reacted poetically.<sup>15</sup> Israeli currency devaluated, making 3 IL the equivalent of 1 dollar. Fifteen hundred Ottoman dunams (114 hectares) were under negotiation, the equivalent of 277 *Jucharten*.<sup>16</sup> 'Our impression is that the sheikh hasn't changed his mind', Pilon commented, 'though he wants an adjustment of the price to the effects of devaluation.'<sup>17</sup> Nes Ammim raised its bid to IL 540 per dunam, causing an Israeli assessor to remark that expropriation by the Land Development Authority remained a real option if negotiations failed. In this scenario Khayr would receive IL 450 per dunam as compensation. The sheikh was advised by Baruch Chen, an official who was attached to the land registration bureau of KKL.<sup>18</sup>

As the assessor had pointed out, the Land Acquisition Act of 1953<sup>19</sup> made it possible for 'neglected land' to be expropriated 'for the purpose of advancing development, settlements or security'. The Israeli Lands Law of 1960 eased the way for this scenario even further.<sup>20</sup> Effects were already being felt. Not even twenty

8 J.M. Snoek, *Soms moet een mens kleur bekennen*, 189.

9 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Ayelet Hashachar 1 August 1962, AJP.

10 Simha Flapan, 'Integrating the Arab village', 25-26.

11 Ami Tarif, 'The Druze Community', in *New Outlook. Middle East Monthly* March-April 1962, 84-85.

12 J. Voet to J.J. Pilon, Tel Aviv 23 January 1962, AJP.

13 Ibidem.

14 J.J. Pilon to C.B. Bavinck, Tiberias 6 February 1960, AJP.

15 Sjeik A. Khayr to J.J. Pilon, Abu Sinan 16 February 1962, ANAN.

16 J. Gutscher in *Schweitzer Evangeliumsdienst in Israel*, Wädenswil April 1961.

17 J.J. Pilon to H.J. Bonda, Heemstede 2 February 1962, AJP.

18 J.J. Pilon, report April-July 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 23.

19 Section 2 of the Land Acquisition (validation of Acts and Compensation) Law legalized expropriation on behalf of 'purposes of essential development, settlement or security'. Cf. Musa E. Mazzawi, *Palestine and the Law*, 189.

20 Cf. Ami Pedahzur, *The triumph of Israel's Radical Right*, 28.

kilometres away from Abu Sinan, Battour and Shaghur village land was being expropriated on behalf of the new Israeli city Karmiel.<sup>21</sup> The same could happen in the Plain of Asher. No wonder that Khayr became agitated.<sup>22</sup> Final negotiations were conducted by Khayr and Bonda, assisted by an interpreter. Suddenly, the sheikh seemed to be in a panicky mood.<sup>23</sup> Nes Ammim played the game by suggesting that they were also in touch with other parties.<sup>24</sup> Finally, an agreement was reached: 1.1 million Swiss francs would be paid by Holland (60%) and Switzerland (40%).<sup>25</sup> Nes Ammim was also in a hurry:

Dr Pilon tells us that 10 June is the day to put our money on the table.<sup>26</sup>

The Land Registry registered the plots for their eventual sale.<sup>27</sup> A remaining deficit was paid by Swiss entrepreneur Jörg Keller and the Gravemeijer family, while the Ministry of Finance checked proceedings.<sup>28</sup> Payment would be made to Khayr's account in Tel Aviv.

### Protest

Angry responses poured in from the kibbutzim in the Plain of Asher.<sup>29</sup> Bezek did not understand why the deal was concluded without his consultation, or even a press conference in Tel Aviv. Mirjam Gerzon commented that Nes Ammim seemed ruefully unaware of Bezek's vital contribution.<sup>30</sup> It fell to him to brief the local population and to convince them of the intruders' benevolent intentions. It was a tough job.

Shlomo knew the kibbutzim, the people, and their way of life. He had more problems in his dealings with the Dutch embassy. However, Gerzon insisted that Shlomo Bezek was the only person with the ability to make Nes Ammim acceptable to its Jewish neighbours, the very people for whose benefit the moshav was said to be intended:

Diplomats may get irritated by his unpolished manners. Yet I gave my honest opinion to Eshkol: Bezek is a first-rate fellow, a true chutzpah, a dependable hard worker, a rock of honesty. Perfect for dealings with District Council Ga'aton, for technical negotiations regarding the village. (...) True, he is not from a highly intellectual background, but he will never pretend otherwise. He is the one and only useful contact available to NA. I prefer him over Ben-Dor, as intermediary to Eshkol.<sup>31</sup>

21 Ilan Pappé, *The forgotten Palestinians*, 74.

22 H. Bernath to J. Minnaar, Nazareth 6 March 1962, AJP.

23 H. Bernath to J. Minnaar, J.J. Pilon and J. Bernath, Nazareth 22 January 1962, AJP.

24 H. Bernath to J. Minnaar, J.J. Pilon and J. Bernath, Nazareth 25 January 1962, AJP.

25 J. Bernath to NA Switzerland, Schaffhausen 31 January 1962, AJP.

26 Jacob Bernath, Gebetsbrief Schaffhausen 14 May 1962, AFK.

27 J. Bernath to NA Switzerland, Schaffhausen 31 January 1962, AJP.

28 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 23 December 1961, AJP.

29 J. Bernath to NA Switzerland, Schaffhausen 31 January 1962, AJP.

30 Cf. Henriëtte Boas, 'Mirjam de Leeuw-Gerzon'.

31 M.B. Gerzon to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 5 February 1963, AJP.



Ayeleth Hashachar had already agreed that Bezek could serve in this role, provided that Nes Ammim would pay his salary as *menahel avodah* for agriculture.<sup>32</sup> Shlomo relished the opportunity to mobilize support from his former homeland. He invited Snoek to lecture in Ayeleth Hashachar, on the subject of 'new developments in Christianity'.<sup>33</sup>

Ganon had been succeeded by Alkahé.<sup>34</sup> While attempting to organize a cooperative undertaking between Nes Ammim and the local kibbutzim to acquire heavy agricultural machinery, Alkahé came to understand Bezek's concerns: Nes Ammim displayed a rather careless attitude in its dealings with the kibbutzim. Bendor seemed 'afraid to lose his connections'. The Ministries of Agriculture (water quota), Interior (visas and work permits) and Housing complained that they had not been adequately briefed.<sup>35</sup> The most serious offence was that the kibbutzim felt cheated out of the opportunity to buy the land for themselves. Bezek implored Pilon to grasp the importance of Jewish cooperation:

Every district has agricultural experts of its own, and these fellows can be quite helpful. Besides, they have a lot of influence. It is important to get them on your side.<sup>36</sup>

The Ministry of Finance allowed preliminary work to begin, pending a final Knesset decision.<sup>37</sup> Hans Bernath received a phone call from *Kol Yisrael*, but politely excused himself from making any comments, knowing that rumours about the land sale had not been taken well by the Arab and Druze communities either:

I am losing the trust of the Arab Nationalists, now that the press tells them that this project is solely for the benefit of the Jews.<sup>38</sup>

Any unnecessary publicity should be avoided:

My work depends on cooperating with the Arabs, on a position of strict neutrality.<sup>39</sup>

In Nahariya, Friedrich and Luise Nothacker demonstrated how such problems could be overcome. Beth-El had become part of a Jewish neighbourhood, an approach that their friend Lehmann had also suggested to Pilon. Jewish guests could visit their own synagogue right at the corner of the road, and all major decisions were discussed with Israeli authorities. Working on an established basis of trust, Beth-El operated with a German staff that included Christian Jews. Lehmann and Rabbi Dr Aharon Keller had been present during the opening of the Beth-El home in 1960 and served in the supervisory board.<sup>40</sup> Ominously, Keller received a very different impression of Nes Ammim: a Christian moshav on former Druze land, an unannounced intruder of unknown intents.

32 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 10 February 1962, AJP.

33 J.M. Snoek to J.J. Pilon, Tiberias 31 January 1962, AJP.

34 J.J. Pilon to J. Alkahé, Heemstede 28 July 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

35 J. Alkahé to J.J. Pilon, Tel Aviv 22 August 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

36 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 4 February 1962, AJP.

37 J. Alkahé to J.J. Pilon, Tel Aviv 27 August 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

38 H. Bernath to J. Minnaar, J.J. Pilon and J. Bernath, Nazareth 25 January 1962, AJP.

39 H. Bernath to J. Minnaar, J.J. Pilon, J. Bernath and Ch. Gysel, Nazareth 22 February 1962, AJP.

40 Luise Nothacker, *Dreißig Jahre Arbeit in Israel 1960-1990*, 8-9.

## Deed of sale, May 1962

Public opinion in Abu Sinan was hardly more favourable, according to Bernath.<sup>41</sup> However, now that the fees had been paid,<sup>42</sup> cancellation was not an option. After conferring with the AG in Switzerland and with Miller, Pilon arrived on site. Galilee seemed a land of promise, 'green and full of flowers'.<sup>43</sup> Nes Ammim-Netherlands had taken out a loan of f 390,000 to meet its obligations.<sup>44</sup>

On 7 May Khayr and Pilon met at Voet's home in Tel Aviv.<sup>45</sup> Outside, the streets were being decorated for *Yom Ha'atzmaut*, Independence Day:

Tel Aviv and Haifa are full of banners, the tanks are lining up for their parade. Even Nazareth is in festive attire. The military governor held a reception for local dignitaries, Druzes and Arabs included. Hans was there to represent the hospital. He had a meeting with the inevitable sheikh Abdullah Khayr, his religious cousin, sheikh Ahmed, and his brother sheikh Soliman, all in flowing white garments and scarlet headgear.<sup>46</sup>

Four days later the transaction was approved by District Council Ga'aton. 'The sheikh was as happy as a child.'<sup>47</sup> The deed of sale was signed by Khayr, Pilon and Hans Bernath on 30 May, in the Farah home in Haifa.<sup>48</sup> Via the Schweizerische Kreditanstalt,<sup>49</sup> the sheikh was to receive 985,388 Swiss francs for a plot of 1,128 square kilometers.<sup>2</sup> Together with the administrative fees (48,000 frs.),<sup>50</sup> total costs amounted to about a million euros in present-day value (2020):

It was a solemn moment. The sheikh said it had been an honour to conduct business with us.<sup>51</sup>

'The sheikh delivered an inspiring speech for the occasion', Minnaar commented. 'Looking at it from his perspective, he has clearly pulled it off. I'm convinced that he received more than the market price would have allowed.'<sup>52</sup>

Adjacent plots were acquired from Ahmad Khayr and others.<sup>53</sup> Abu Fauzi, village headman in Kafir Yasif, mediated while Keren Kayemet approved an exchange of territory between Nes Ammim and kibbutz Shomrat. Border markers, some of which had been mislaid, were set up in their proper places.<sup>54</sup> Shomrat had been founded in 1948 on the land of the former village al-Manshiyya.<sup>55</sup> British maps, compiled in the forties, featured local fieldnames like el-Mansūr, el-But-

41 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 24 October 1962, AJP.

42 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon and J. Minnaar, Nazareth 10 April 1962, AJP.

43 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Nazareth 13 May 1962, AJP.

44 Evaluation dated Rotterdam 30 August 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

45 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath and J. Minnaar, Nazareth 8 May 1962, AJP.

46 Ibidem.

47 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath and J. Minnaar, Nazareth 11 May 1962, AJP.

48 Cf. 'Die Brüder Jakob und Hans Bernath', [www.nesammim.org/de](http://www.nesammim.org/de).

49 Deed of sale between sheikh Abdullah Salman Saleh Khayr (Abu Sinan) and Nes Ammim AG (Zurich), attested Haifa 25 May 1962 and signed Haifa 30 May 1962. Copy in AJP.

50 Balance Nes Ammim AG 31 December 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

51 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, J. Minnaar and Ch. Gysel, Nazareth 30 May 1962, AJP.

52 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 5 June 1962, AJP.

53 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon and J. Minnaar, Nazareth 10 April 1962, AJP.

54 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 22 September 1962, AJP.

55 The name Shomrat is derived from *shomer*, 'guardian'. Cf. Martin Gilbert, *Israel*, 199.

tuf, esh-Shuna, ez-Za'arir and Ard el Kalb.<sup>56</sup> Hans Bernath wanted to connect to the Protestant past of the region. Together with Gottfried Meyer, a veteran of the Tempelgesellschaft, he planted a cypress at the top of al-Mansura. 'It was a moment of great joy.'<sup>57</sup> The idea of the AG was to settle twenty pioneers.<sup>58</sup> Agriculture was the priority; industry would follow:

With proper irrigation we might be able to harvest three times a year. Dr. Pilon has volunteered to become the manager of the settlement.<sup>59</sup>

Minnaar studied the markets and concluded that he needed advice by local experts.<sup>60</sup> Van Walraven sent congratulations from Pakistan, with a cautionary remark: 'Next you will have to stand the test of forming a proper team.'<sup>61</sup> Much depended on the Israeli:

Before any arrangement is made in these matters, a decision of principle is required on the political level. The Minister of the Interior has to give his permission. The matter must be tackled with tact and care, since the Minister is a religious man.<sup>62</sup>

Yitzhak Navon, chief of staff for Ben-Gurion, remarked that Nes Ammim was already behind schedule: 'He [Navon] said that recognition of the village as an approved enterprise should have been secured.'<sup>63</sup> The board of the Aktiengesellschaft (AG), that owned the land and held responsibility for payments and salaries, was known as the Verwaltungsrat. Their main worry was not about the Israelis, but about Christian sponsors. Rather than rejoicing about the land deal, Brunner and his followers accused Nes Ammim of treason towards the Christian Jews.<sup>64</sup> Koole and Veenhof withdrew from the Dutch sponsor list,<sup>65</sup> the former because he deplored the absence of the Arabs and the latter out of solidarity with Jewish Mission.<sup>66</sup> The mood of celebration was fading fast.

### Shlomo Bezek

Hardly noticed by the AG, the *menahel avodah* was in constant contact with the kibbutzim. Though dismissed as an amateur by Ben-Dor, Bezek was highly thought of by Joseph Meir, chairman of the District Council.<sup>67</sup> Meir (born as Jóska Megyeri in Hungary) had a conversation with Rinke Rekker, a Dutch volun-

56 Mennonite Central Committee, *Remembering al-Sumayriyya*, 38.

57 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J. Minnaar, Nazareth 5 November 1964, AFK.

58 J. Bernath to D. Ben-Dor, Schaffhausen 9 August 1962, in AJP.

59 *Nes Ammim. Christliche Siedlung in Israel*, brochure Schaffhausen 1962.

60 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 12 June 1962, AJP.

61 C.A. van Walraven, Taxila (Rawalpindi District, West-Pakistan), 5 May 1962, AJP.

62 J. Alkahé to J.J. Pilon, Tel Aviv 27 July 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

63 Ibidem.

64 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 22 September 1962, AJP.

65 J.L. Koole to NAN, Kampen 27 July 1962. HUA archive deputies Church and Israel RCN, inv.nr. 372; C. Veenhof to NAN, Kampen 27 January 1963, AJP.

66 Cf. J.C. van den Akker to NAN, Hilversum 1 May 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

67 M.B. Gerzon to J.J. Pilon, 5 February 1962, AJP.

teer in Gan Shmuel.<sup>68</sup> Bezek's cooperation, said Meir, was essential for an enterprise of foreign enthusiasts. Rekker believed that he had a tough job:

In my opinion he is still a Scheveningen man, with a slight inferiority complex. This may relate to the fact that he has an educated and clever wife, who is his superior on both points. Shlomo is a practical man, who likes speedy solutions and who is likely to bump his head occasionally.<sup>69</sup>

The Dutch embassy tended to think of him as a representative of the labour class. Bezek himself did not seem to care. He was the first to visit the neighbouring Jewish communities on behalf of Nes Ammim, planned an Ivrit language course (ulpan) for Christian pioneers, and negotiated with archaeologists who were threatening to obstruct building on this ancient site. He anticipated that water would have to be provided via Lohamei HaGettaot and that access via a modern road required the cooperation of Regba.

### Lohamei HaGettaot and Regba

The neighbouring kibbutz in the West had been founded by Yitzhak Tabenkin, Yitzhak 'Antek' Zuckermann and his wife Tzivia Lubetkin. They had participated in the revolt of the Jewish Ghetto in Warsaw in 1943. Auschwitz survivor Yehuda Bornstein was also living in Lohamei HaGettaot at that time. The terrible experience of the Endlösung had framed their world view: Jews were surrounded by mortal enemies and could only survive through self-defence.<sup>70</sup> Memories of the genocide were preserved in the museum Beit Katznelson,<sup>71</sup> while the kibbutzniks named themselves fighters, *lohamei*. Having gone through the worst tribulations that anyone could imagine, they had a reputation for being grim. Pupils at school were taught never to fear.

The village was surrounded by banana and citrus plantations, cattle barns, vegetable gardens and chicken runs. Most of the produce was sent off to Haifa for exportation. Modest houses had been laid out between gardens and shrubs, each with two living rooms and a veranda. Lohamei HaGettaot had already received Protestants from Beth-El (Nahariya) and Tübingen (Shavei Zion). However, they were clearly not happy with Nes Ammim's takeover of Khayr's land.

Regba was located a mile to the north. This moshav had been established in 1946 by demobilized Jewish soldiers in the British army, on fields they had bought from a land proprietor in Lebanon. Many came from Germany, some of them having fought their former fellow countrymen at el-Alamein. Josef Ornstein was the acting secretary. Kitchen designs produced in Regba were famous all over Israel.<sup>72</sup> Similar to Lohamei HaGettaot, most inhabitants were secular.

68 Part of District Council (*Moatza*) Mateh Asher since 1982.

69 R. Rekker to J.J. Pilon, Gan Shmuel 31 July 1962, ANAN.

70 Cf. Tom Segev, *The seventh million*, 141, 182 and 450-451; Colin Shindler, *A history of modern Israel*, 139.

71 Named after the poet Itzhak Katznelson, murdered in Auschwitz.

72 Erich M. Lehmann, '25 Jahre Regba', in *Jediot Chadasot* 10 August 1971.

Rachel Laron, born in Holland as Jacoba Snijders, had a DRC background. During the German occupation she met Max-Hermann Lönberg while he was in hiding via the network of pastor Leendert Overduin (Enschede). Jacoba converted to Judaism and then they got married,<sup>73</sup> changing their names to Mordechai and Rachel Laron. Bezek came to Regba and urgently asked for their help. As a consequence, the Larons were to play a pivotal role in checking the Ivrit correspondence of Nes Ammim during the coming years.<sup>74</sup> Yet, Fritzl Ornstein remarked in 1970, it took some time before Nes Ammim was 'understood and accepted'. 'We still had to see how these ideas would work out. The prospect of yet another village in our district did not appeal to us.'<sup>75</sup>

### Pioneers

Bezek, regarded as rather uncultured by the Dutch embassy, encountered no such problems while dealing with Dayan's staff on matters of agriculture. Accompanied by Khayr and a couple of his former tenants, he inspected the land, discovering that the fellahin knew even more about local conditions than their sheikh.<sup>76</sup> An application for a building permit was forwarded to Josef Dagan of Karka'ot Yisrael (Planology). Meir was supportive, but the final decision lay with the Ministry of the Interior. Dagan's office held the land register. Meanwhile, finding money (and keeping sponsors happy) remained the top priority for the AG in Switzerland. At least IL 100,000 was needed for building materials while 110,000 Swiss francs were scheduled to be refunded to creditors by the end of 1962. 'We are mainly trying to raise these sums in Germany.'<sup>77</sup> A pioneering family settling in the moshav required an investment of IL 36,500 (70,000 Swiss francs). Ploughing (using personnel and material of the District Council, as arranged by Bezek) came at a bargain, but still required an investment of IL 25,000. The AG had to admit that the money was not yet available: 'Not very business-like and not very satisfactory, but what can we do.'<sup>78</sup>

Kibbutz Evron provided a sowing plan, and the District Council would lend tractors.<sup>79</sup> Shlomo coached the newcomers: 'After the sale of the land, the contract requires you to take effective possession', he explained. 'This happens by ploughing the land. Before the rains of autumn, the land must be sown.'<sup>80</sup> Swarr and Kreider, raised on American farms, would like nothing better. 'Enchanted to see the beautiful sight of the level plain, and the good productivity of the land.'<sup>81</sup>

73 Interview Tanja Ronen-Laron by Anna Ravve. Michael Elias and Simon Schoon (eds.), *Van rozenkassen tot dialoog. Vijftig jaar Nes Ammim*, 51.

74 Ibidem.

75 Minutes of a consultation between Nes Ammim and District Council (*Moaza*) in March 1974, in archive S. Feitsma (Amsterdam).

76 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 17 July 1962, AJP.

77 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Schaffhausen 25 September 1962, AJP.

78 J.J. Pilon to J. Alkahé, Heemstede 28 July 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

79 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 1 August 1962, AJP.

80 J.J. Pilon, report April-July 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

81 J. Alkahé to J.J. Pilon, Tel Aviv 25 July 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

Cor van der Spek (1937) had studied road and water engineering at the Higher Technical School and worked in concrete construction. Jobs in the Netherlands were readily available, yet he preferred Israel. Jacob Bernath provided him with a job at the *Kantonale Strasseninspektion* in Schaffhausen. Like Veenhof, Van der Spek belonged to the Free RCN.<sup>82</sup> But unlike Veenhof, young Van der Spek had fallen under the spell of Israel:

The film *Exodus* by Leon Uris had impressed me. I also read Arthur Koestler. This was a way of life I would like to be part of! The youth club at our church in Zoetermeer tried to figure out what the Bible had to say on the future of the Jewish people. In my modest opinion, the apostle Paul clearly states that there *is* a future for the Jews by the will of God. Israel is Israel, not just an appendix of the Church.<sup>83</sup>

After a Hebrew copy of Werblowsky's memorandum had been presented to the District Council by Alkahé, a preliminary building permit was received on 25 August.<sup>84</sup> Nes Ammim-Switzerland proposed to establish an advisory board. There were no objections. However, there was more to this proposal than was apparent at first sight. It was presumed by the Swiss that an advisory board would prevent the establishment of a supervisory board, as intended by Werblowsky and Eshkol (*v'adat pikuah*).<sup>85</sup> From the perspective of the Swiss *Freikirchen*-tradition, a *v'ada pikuah*, overseen by the Israeli government, was an intolerable affront to the autonomy of a Christian community.

82 Missiologist D.K. Wielenga exemplified the traditionalist view in the Free RCN: 'After Pentecost the Jews had their chance to convert to Christ (...). What they did was to persecute the Church and to kill the apostle James. They're no longer God's people. Israel is just one of many Socialist States.' P. Bergwerff and Tj.S. de Vries, *Vrede door recht*, 55.

83 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013.

84 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Heemstede 26 August 1962, AJP.

85 David von Wyss, 'Vorschlag für die Organisation und Finanzierung des Nes Ammim', Basel 25 January 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.



## KNESSET PROCEEDINGS

Philanthropy had become a feature of modernisation in Palestine and Israel. Despite its lofty ideals, philanthropy was contested, and at times even resented. Philippe Bourmaud offers an example: the British medical mission in Nablus around 1900. Potential benefits were obvious, but disregard for local customs resulted in a series of procrastinations before the intended hospital could become operative. Which actions were required for a successful start? Bourmaud distinguishes between five necessary steps:

1. Acquiring a suitable plot of land via middlemen;
2. Registration of ownership, after verification of the deeds;
3. Diplomatic aid by a friendly Western government (in this case: Great Britain);
4. Confirmation of the proceedings by top-ranking political authorities (in this example, by *firman* signed by the Porte in Constantinople);
5. Finding a *modus vivendi* with the local opposition.<sup>1</sup>

The similarities with Nes Ammim, seventy years later, are striking. Substitute Jewish opposition with Arab opposition, and Israeli government for the Porte, and the patterns appear to be basically the same. The initiators in 1962 focussed their attention on steps 1, 2 and 3, assuming steps 4 and 5 to be a mere formality. Events would show that they were wrong.

<sup>1</sup> Philippe Bourmaud, 'Public space and private spheres: the foundation of St Luke's Hospital of Nablus by the CMS (1891-1901)', in Heleen Murre-van den Berg, *New faith in ancient lands*, 133-150.





Fig. 12 Rabbi Aharon Keller (NA Netherlands).

## XXII Under criticism

### Objections in Holland and Israel

The Dutch felt confident about their relationship with Israel. If problems arose, the tendency was to blame them on others: American missionary zeal, Swiss traditionalism and of course the German Nazi legacy. There is some irony in the fact that a gulf of Jewish protest, that would bring Nes Ammim to the brink of collapse, originated in Holland.

Bakker and Pilon informed ambassador Hanan Cidor about Nes Ammim by the end of 1961, blissfully unaware of any impending problems.<sup>1</sup> Negative responses to the Amsterdam press conference came as an unpleasant surprise. Misreading Jewish opinions proved to be a costly mistake. The RCN had aggravated the Jewish community since 1917, when it started distributing the missionary paper *De Messiasbode* on a massive scale. The adoption in 1950 of a new name, *Licht en Leven*, seemed cosmetic. The RCN still claimed to deliver an astounding 8,300 copies each year, at Jewish addresses in Amsterdam alone.<sup>2</sup> Via Nes Ammim, Bakker was working for change. At the same time, as part of his job, he wrote columns for *Licht en Leven*. Once his name was detected in the colophon, alarm bells went off. Angry questions appeared in the *NIW*, prompting Sephardi chief rabbi Salomon Aaron Rodrigues Pereira and Ashkenazi chief rabbi Aharon Schuster to alert their contacts in Israel. Given the circumstances, the Swiss believed a press conference on Nes Ammim should be avoided at all costs:

We owe no explanation to the press, but only to the government.<sup>3</sup>

So far, Israeli authorities had been cooperative. That might change if they discovered that key information had been withheld from them, especially now that land was becoming a scarce commodity.<sup>4</sup> The national census of 1961 showed a comfortable Jewish majority of 88 per cent (1,932,400), but also a rapid growth of Arabs and Druzes (150,000 in 1950; 220,000 in 1961).<sup>5</sup> Dan Ben-Dor reported that Keren Kayemet insisted that it should have a fair chance to acquire Khayr's land for itself.<sup>6</sup>

1 J.J. Pilon to H. Dahlhaus, H-A. Ritter and J. Bernath, Heemstede 1 January 1962, AJP.

2 C. Kapteyn, 'De praktijk van het huisbezoek', in *Zendingsblad van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland voor de Zending onder de Joden*, May 1956 and March 1957.

3 H. Bernath to J.C. Minnaar, H. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 27 October 1962, AJP.

4 Comment by Y. Weitz in *Haaretz*, 22 December 1961.

5 Martin Gilbert, *Israel. A history*, London 2008, 344.

6 Fifth Knesset, second session, protocol nr. 78 commission for the Interior, Tel Aviv 24 Kislev 5723 (21 December 1962), in: Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Je-

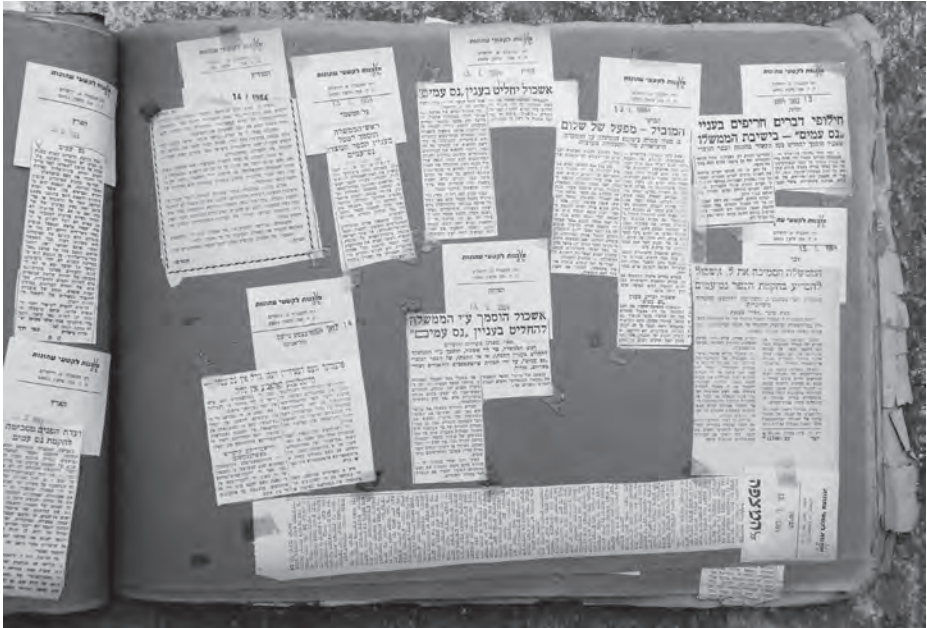


Fig. 13 Scrapbook (NA Galilee).

As chairman of the Anglo-Palestine Company (precursor of Bank Leumi), Kann had expressed concern that churches controlled a disproportionate amount of land in Palestine; so much in fact, that it negatively affected Zionist colonization. Sooner or later, the Jewish State would have to negotiate a *reduction* of Christian land holdings.<sup>7</sup> Nes Ammim needed to operate with the utmost tact, a challenge that became even more difficult now that the moshav was being associated with Jewish Mission. Kranhouse had already warned that the project would be ‘exposed’ sooner or later.<sup>8</sup> It had been silly to presume that Bakker’s activities could remain a secret. He also featured in Buksbazen’s periodical *Israel My Glory*.<sup>9</sup> So this was the man who was operating in the Plain of Asher, apparently with official permission! Had Sapir and Eshkol permitted this, the Israeli press wondered, simply to attract Western economic aid?<sup>10</sup> Protests were gaining momentum.<sup>11</sup>

Grüber, who was received at the Ministry of Religious affairs as an honoured guest, had the kind of entry that Nes Ammim now desperately needed.<sup>12</sup> But the

rusalem. I thank Dineke Houtman (Amersfoort) for tracing this source and Cor van der Spek (Broek op Langedijk) for the translation.

7 J.H. Kann, *Erets Israël. Het Joodsche Land*, Leiden 1908, 45–46. Cf. CZA archive J.H. Kann A121.

8 Ch. Kranhouse to J.J. Pilon, Detroit 14 July 1960, in AJP.

9 *Israel My Glory* (The friends of Israel. Missionary and Relief Society, Inc.), Philadelphia (USA) 25 December 1961.

10 ‘Christliches Dorf bei Schawej-Zion geplant’, in *Jediot Hayom* 9 January 1962.

11 J. Blum to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 13 January 1962, AJP.

12 M. Boertien to CRC Groningen CGK and deputies Israel evangelization, Jerusalem 29 November 1961. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

*Probst* would not entangle himself. Nor did Swiss pastor Paul Vogt, who was leading a children's home in Israel.<sup>13</sup> Even the DRC agreed with the critics on an essential point: Pilon and the others had been less than frank with Eshkol:

As a result, doubts arose regarding the truthfulness of the commitments that had been made.<sup>14</sup>

'We can only wait and see whether we will be able to brave this storm', wrote Pilon.<sup>15</sup> Instead of taking the DRC's advice to provide a full briefing to the authorities, he took his wrath out on Blum:

This Blum is a leftover from the time when Jewish Christians participated, before we approached the government. True, the problem of Jewish Christianity was a factor we discussed. Later we adopted a different approach (...). And now comes Blum, would you believe, a bystander publicly claiming the whole thing as his private pet project. He is a phenomenon in stirring up trouble, a genius in ensuring that things get broken down. If we ever manage to build the moshav, he will not be allowed to set a single foot there.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, Schuster was urging the Minister of Religious Affairs to take appropriate steps.<sup>17</sup> *Zerah (Zorach) Wahrhaftig* was also a Knesset member for the National Religious Party. Judaism, he said, was not in the habit of imposing its views on others, something that Nes Ammim still had to learn. As he explained to a Dutch journalist:

All these missionary activities boil down to the same thing: approaching someone else, to tell him that his religion is not good enough.<sup>18</sup>

*Wahrhaftig* proposed to set up a fund for the takeover of Nes Ammim's lands in exchange for compensation.<sup>19</sup> He believed that Israelis had been duped, among them notary Ganon.<sup>20</sup> The religious Right was in favour of cancelling the entire project.<sup>21</sup> On behalf of the cabinet, Sapir announced a Knesset investigation. All permits were temporarily frozen.<sup>22</sup> What next? Pilon advocated for concessions to the plan: for the time being, no Germans and no Christian Jews in the village. Bezek insisted on immediate action:

We need to do something: contact the Knesset commission, once assembled. They are going to make enquiries. To whom will they turn for information?<sup>23</sup>

The Knesset commission was due to convene in September. Pilon hoped to downplay the commotion, explaining that the concerns of the Jewish communi-

13 J.J. Pilon to H. Dahlhaus, H-A. Ritter and J. Bernath, Heemstede 1 January 1962, AJP.

14 H. Berkhof, 'Nes Ammim als toetsteen', in *Kerk en Israël* March 1966, 34.

15 J.J. Pilon to S.P. Tabaksblatt, Heemstede 5 February 1962, AJP.

16 J.J. Pilon to R.J.Z. Werblowsky, Heemstede 5 February 1962 (draft), AJP.

17 'Deining in Israël', in *Het Parool* 8 March 1963.

18 Interview *Wahrhaftig*, in Rik Valkenburg, *Gesprekken in Jeruzalem*, 20-21.

19 'Nes Ammim', in *Haaretz* 4 October 1962.

20 I. Ganon to J.J. Pilon, Haifa 23 April 1962, AJP.

21 Gilbert remarks on Mapai ambivalence towards the religious Right, that was 'not regarded as of any relevance to the daily conduct of life' (*Israel. A history*, 289).

22 Quoted in letter by J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Schaffhausen 4 August 1962, AJP.

23 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 8 August 1962, AJP.

ty in Amsterdam were caused by rearguard action of an elderly generation in the RCN. Also, he would emphatically dissociate himself from the Christian Jews.<sup>24</sup> Secretary-general Shmuel Kahana of Religious Affairs promised a fair hearing but added ominously that the first impression was not favourable.<sup>25</sup> At Foreign Affairs, Golda Meir denied any previous involvement. Israel would no longer tolerate intimidation, even by those who introduced themselves as friends:

We move constantly on the brink of a 'Kulturkampf' (...). In this critical situation it is beyond our power to take on a discussion about Christianity as well.<sup>26</sup>

Even the ever helpful Mirjam Gerzon thought that dialogue was primarily a Christian desire and that it was premature to presume that it was shared by the Jews.<sup>27</sup> Especially when ulterior motives were suspected. Not only Bakker was targeted in the press, but also Hans Bernath and Pilon in their capacity as missionary doctors.<sup>28</sup>

Ayeleth Hashachar was pressed to answer questions about Bezek's involvement.<sup>29</sup> 'To ensure a crystal-clear position', it was confirmed that converted Jews were excluded.<sup>30</sup> Undeterred, Wahrhaftig's Ministry activated its department for combatting missionary activities, led by rabbi Eli Toren. The World Union for the Propagation of Judaism made an appeal to 'purge this unclean disease from Medinat Yisrael'. Uncertain of the best course to follow, the AG waited until the 20<sup>th</sup> of August before writing to the Israeli cabinet. Their letter abounded with protestations of good will, but a clear presentation of connections between Nes Ammim and missionary organizations in the Protestant world once again failed to materialize:

Our Christianity has nothing to do with anti-Jewishness, we are here to espouse the redemptive effort of Israel to restore her national life.<sup>31</sup>

Even a modest addition that had been suggested by Pilon ('We are definitely opposed to any missionary attacks upon the Jews'<sup>32</sup>) had been omitted. The Ministry of Finance just said that the government would investigate first. Alkahé harboured no illusions:

The Prime Minister's office has not yet given us the official letter of introduction we need to contact other Ministries. (...) We need approval by the Ministry of Agriculture for custom duty exemptions, the Ministry of the Interior (Religious Party) for visas and the ministry of Housing for building materials. All this is in abeyance because of the lack of a proper governmental presentation.<sup>33</sup>

24 'Memorandum Realisierung einer christlichen Siedlung in Israel', drafted by Ch. Gysel and commented upon by J.J. Pilon, HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.

25 'Opposition against Christian village in Galilee', in *Haaretz* 5 September 1962.

26 'Plan-Nes Ammim wekt orthodox verzet', in *Trouw* nr. 5319 (14 September 1962).

27 M. Gerzon to G. Polet, Jerusalem 18 March 1963, HDC VU archive NAN, box 24.

28 Yoseph Charif, 'Nes Ammim', in *Maariv* 13 September 1962.

29 Report Ayeleth Hashachar to Knesset, 15 August 1962, in Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Jerusalem.

30 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 9 August 1960, in AJP.

31 *Verwaltungsrat* AG Nes Ammim to D. Ben-Gurion, P. Sapir, M. Shapira and Z. Wahrhaftig, Schaffhausen 20 August 1962. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

32 Draft letter to Z. Wahrhaftig, August 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 5.

33 J. Alkahé to J.J. Pilon, Tel Aviv 22 August 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

Boertien insisted that Christian autonomy had to be defended at all costs. He strongly suspected that the Ministry of Religious Affairs had a file of anything that was going on, including confidential matters that had somehow been leaked.<sup>34</sup> Informers belonged in the USSR, he said, not in a modern democracy. To give in to Israeli supervision would be cowardly<sup>35</sup> and an example of the pernicious effects of the ‘uncritical’ DRC appraisal of the Jewish State.<sup>36</sup>

### Knesset investigation

The commission was chaired by Chaim Zadok (Mapai). Ayeleth Hashachar had told him that they would withdraw Bezek if required.<sup>37</sup> The Dutch Jewish community in the Netherlands expected the project to be cancelled.<sup>38</sup> It came as a surprise that Bezek showed no intention of giving up. ‘You ask whether my father found it strange to help a project of this kind’, his daughter Diklah says. ‘I wouldn’t say that *he* found it strange, or even a burden on his health. Rather the opposite. It was fascinating.’<sup>39</sup> Shlomo had a meeting with Zadok:

The chairman of the Knesset committee will be a member of Mapai and sympathetic to Nes Ammim.<sup>40</sup>

Hans Bernath anticipated that he would have to step down, together with Johan Pilon. Meir had spoken to him about Wahrhaftig’s concerns:

He had been shown documents to prove that this was a missionary set-up, aiming to promote Jewish Christianity in Israel. For Joseph Meir, it all came as an unpleasant surprise (...). For the time being he is taking a neutral view, but he will have to answer to the District Council within ten days.<sup>41</sup>

Wahrhaftig had piles of angry letters on his desk: ‘The money came from Jewish Mission. The main idea was to smuggle converts into Israel, and that authorities would never be informed about what was really happening.’<sup>42</sup> Trouble was also brewing in Galilee: ‘The Orthodox are quite capable of sending a lorry with their adherents off to Nes Ammim for a little demonstration, cursing the whole thing and petitioning the Minister to push the settlement into the sea.’<sup>43</sup> Both Grüber and the DRC felt that the protesters had a point. Even apart from the mess creat-

34 M. Boertien, report for deputies evangelization Israel and CRC Groningen August-October 1962, in HUA archive CCR, inv.nr. 104.

35 Ibidem, Oktober 1962–February 1963, in HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

36 M. Boertien to M. Drayer, Jerusalem 13 September 1962, in HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105.

37 Kibbutz Ayeleth Hashachar to H. Zadok, 15 August 1962, in Fifth Knesset, second session, protocol nr. 78 Commission for the Interior, Tel Aviv 24 Kislev 5723 (21 December 1962), in: Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Jerusalem. Translated by Cor van der Spek (Broek op Langedijk).

38 F. Spitz, ‘De zaak Nes Ammim’, in *NIW* 21 September 1962.

39 Interview Diklah Geva-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

40 J. Alkahé to J.J. Pilon, Tel Aviv 27 August 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

41 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 16 September 1962, in AJP.

42 Ibidem.

43 R. Rekker to J.J. Pilon, [Israel] September 1962, in ANAN.

ed by the press conference, Israel was simply too small to assign land to incoming foreigners. Nes Ammim had probably gone too far.<sup>44</sup> Despite the mounting pressure, Pilon took sides with Bezek:

I believe that the door in Israel will not be closed. The government, notwithstanding the outcries, has not withdrawn its support.<sup>45</sup>

While Alkahé accompanied Ben-Dor to the Ministry of Agriculture to discuss access to water,<sup>46</sup> Bezek had already reached the conclusion that, as a Baptist, he would have to leave. Unlike the situation in Beth-El, participation of Christian Jews had become impossible in Nes Ammim. After the recent events, the Orthodox would never allow it. Unless they were to be appeased in some way, the Knesset commission would deliver a negative verdict. Asked to step down, Alkahé gave an angry response. If the non-missionary principle held, he did not see what Christian Jews (bound to that rule like any other) could do wrong. Two former members of the Tiberias Fund, Heule and Vetten, were so concerned that they withdrew from Nes Ammim.<sup>47</sup>

The Verwaltungsrat seemed unable to decide what to do next. Finally, it was Vriezen who dropped his work on early Israelite religion for an afternoon<sup>48</sup> and wrote to Pilon. Now that the international board was paralyzed, it was up to him to act in his capacity of international secretary. The inevitability of this crisis should have been obvious to anyone who was remotely in the know:

So sorry, but I am not surprised at all. There is simply no way I can imagine that the Jews (especially the Orthodox) will allow this. The only way to see it through would be (...) the permission of Ben-Gurion himself. Support by intellectuals (...) seems questionable. If I am right, most of them are professors and not inclined to be part of this sort of political battle.<sup>49</sup>

The AG had provided none of the elucidation that was needed. The Israelis were angered and had good reasons to insist on disclosure of all relevant background information.<sup>50</sup> A negative report by the Knesset committee would be fatal. Pressed on by Vriezen, Pilon prepared to enter the fray once more, notwithstanding the fact that not he but Hans Bernath had been appointed as an AG representative in Israel.<sup>51</sup>

### Press coverage

For a dialogue project, Nes Ammim seemed singularly ill-prepared for consultations of any complexity. As a result, a deeply concerned Cidor insisted on unambiguous guarantees against 'mission by proxy'. Referring to Werblowsky's mem-

44 W.J.H. Baart to NAN, Blaricum 12 October 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

45 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Schaffhausen 25 September 1962, AJP.

46 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 5 September 1962, AJP.

47 Minutes Rotterdam 16 October 1962, HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

48 Th.C. Vriezen, *De godsdienst van Israël*, Arnhem 1963.

49 Th.C. Vriezen to J.J. Pilon, Utrecht 24 September 1962, in ANAN.

50 Meijer J. Perath to Henriëtte Boas, Beth Hakerem 20 September 1962, AHB.

51 Minutes Verwaltungsrat Zurich 6 October 1962, in HDC VU, archive NAN, box 25.

orandum was not enough, as many of Nes Ammim's supporters seemed totally unaware of its content.<sup>52</sup>

Mirjam Bezek agreed with her husband: adequate measures could not be delayed any further. The alternative was to stop and sell the land with a profit. 'But that would be ridiculous. I think you must make haste; now that public opinion is turning against you.' Stories were circulating about Pilon's missionary activities in Tiberias in the early fifties. 'Kupat Cholim has this on good authority.'<sup>53</sup> Finally it was arranged for Bezek to go to Holland and make 'amends', starting with an RCN youth rally in Delft. They had been promised a 'damned interesting discussion'<sup>54</sup> and were not disappointed. Shlomo was in fine form:

It is your duty as Christians – supposing you are engaged for Nes Ammim and supposing you might meet any Jews considering Christian baptism – to warn them against such a step. (...) We consider it as a betrayal of the Jewish people.

The idea of Jesus being God's only-born son was simply un-Biblical. Deification of a son of God derived from 'a religion quite alien to Judaism'. The audience, mostly long-haired Dutch youngsters, was captivated.<sup>55</sup> Johan Pilon followed suit with two interviews of his own, in *Trouw* and the *Jerusalem Post*. The Jewish viewpoint needed serious attention:

Christians have accused us of having crucified Jesus. They keep blaming us, even after two thousand years. They persecuted us. The more we suffered, the more they believed we were punished by the retaliatory hand of God. The cross was modified into a sword. We were supposed to be cursed, no longer God's chosen people (...) At best we were tolerated, but never acknowledged as full human beings.<sup>56</sup>

Only the State of Israel could provide Jews with an independent platform of their own. Now, at last, they could bring in their charges: 'Though you Christians have been proclaiming love and brotherhood, the reality for us is persecution and suffering.' The Church would do well to listen attentively and to change its attitudes accordingly. Jewish belief was 'a matter between God and His people', to be respected by others. 'Meeting the Jewish people implies a recognition of guilt, humbly, without pretence (...) Meeting the other opens the possibility of dialogue, which opens the possibility of reconciliation.' Israel was the proper place for that. 'There the Jew is no longer outnumbered by a hundred to one; there he stands as an equal partner.' This implied as an 'a priori' that continuation of Jewish Mission, 'as a byword of coercion and provocation', was out of the question.<sup>57</sup>

Henriëtte Boas interviewed Pilon once more for the *Jerusalem Post*. Publication coincided with the Cuban Missile Crisis, which may have lessened the impact. Once

52 H.A. Cidor to J.J. Pilon, The Hague 8 August 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

53 Note Mirjam Bezek 6 Oktober 1962, in AJP.

54 Frits Engelen to J.J. Pilon, Delft 11 September 1962, in ANAN.

55 'Nes Ammim kan slagen als men geen zending zal bedrijven', in *Nieuwe Haagse Courant* 8 October 1962.

56 'Vertrouwen in toekomst van Nes Ammim-project' (interview J.J. Pilon), in *Trouw* 24 October 1962.

57 Ibidem.



again, the AG had not been consulted in advance. Pilon announced that missionaries and converts were excluded from the intended village and even from the board.<sup>58</sup> Though ‘harassing’, there was no way to avoid such measures. ‘A goy may be presentable, but not a *meshumad*.’<sup>59</sup> Cidor said he would keep Pilon to his word.<sup>60</sup> There would be no turning back. He expected Bakker, Tabaksblatt and Alkahé to resign.<sup>61</sup>

No one assumed that the Knesset would settle for less than Cidor. The Verwaltungsrat was left with the alternatives of accepting the outcome or halting the project. ‘The piece by Mrs. Boas in the *Jer. Post* is terrible’, Minnaar fumed. ‘The most unpleasant aspect of the situation is that we are in no position to deny it.’ It was do or die.<sup>62</sup> The Germans backed Pilon, though they found it hard to understand why they should be accepted in the ‘traditional’ Beth-El only to be refused in the ‘progressive’ Nes Ammim a few miles away. America did not reply, and the Swiss protested in private. Their neutrality forbade a differentiation of this kind.<sup>63</sup>

### District Council

The District Council met on 22 October: ‘Unanimously it has been decided to oppose Nes Ammim. Neighbouring communities in the district are lacking water and arable land. They do not desire strangers as neighbours, who may cause them social and practical difficulties.’<sup>64</sup> Hans Bernath immediately drove to Nahariya. To his amazement, he was received quite cordially by Meir:

He asked whether I had noted the media coverage, which I had. Then he added: *But please, go ahead with your plans*. Votes against Nes Ammim in the District Council were a means to attract the attention of the central government for other problems. Religion is not the real issue.<sup>65</sup>

Pilon’s interview in the *Jerusalem Post* went public the next day. Hans Bernath felt dismayed by the ‘disgraceful concessions’ but also unable to alter what had been done.<sup>66</sup>

### Resignations

Not a single American was required to step down, even though Kreider was a staff member of the House of Seekers. As the crisis had originated in Holland, it was

58 ‘No missionaries in Nes Ammim’, in *Jerusalem Post* 25 October 1962.

59 J.J. Pilon to A. Gjerding, Heemstede 8 October 1962, in ANAN.

60 Cidor was a brother of artist Paul Citroen, painter of a portrait of Johan Pilon. H. Boas to D. Shealtiel, Amsterdam 14 April 1964, in AHB.

61 J.F.L. Bastiaanse, ‘Israel Paulus Tabaksblatt’, in *Biografisch Lexicon voor de Geschiedenis van het Nederlandse Protestantisme V*, Kampen 2001, 498-499.

62 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 12 November 1962, in AJP.

63 J. Bernath to H. Bernath, Thayngen 12 November 1962, in AJP.

64 ‘Ga’aton Council opposes Nes Ammim’, in *Haaretz* 23 October 1962.

65 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 24 October 1962, AJP.

66 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 29 October 1962, AJP.

the Dutch board that underwent a 'purge'. Bakker protested that 'all these years, he had been striving to modernize Jewish Mission'. It was to no avail, and even old sister Pekel would have to go.<sup>67</sup> Kuiper proposed that *all* Christian pastors, himself included, would resign and reassemble as an advisory committee presided over by Bakker.<sup>68</sup> The proposal was not acted upon. Bakker, Tabaksblatt, Alkahé and Pekel were on their way out. Bezek said it was simply unavoidable:

Alkahé is a convert, Mrs. Pekel<sup>69</sup> has a missionary past, Tabaksblatt is a converted pastor. Pastor Bakker writes for a periodical of the old sort, the kind that makes our hair stand on end (if I'm correctly informed).<sup>70</sup>

The resignations were accepted by the Dutch board, reluctantly but unanimously.<sup>71</sup> 'We do not abandon the feature of non-discrimination', Pilon argued rather unconvincingly. He felt especially sorry for Bakker and Tabaksblatt: 'Neither of the two had any missionary intention. But how to explain that in Israel?'<sup>72</sup> Tabaksblatt felt devastated. He had always supported the non-missionary policy. Apparently, it accounted for far less than the fact that he was both a Christian and a Jew. Bakker protested: 'I officiated at the cradle of Nes Ammim (...) as a God-given chance to work for renewal.'<sup>73</sup> Shlomo's habit of circulating correspondence between staff members enabled him to see how Pilon had insisted on his removal. No wonder that Bakker was angry.<sup>74</sup> Pilon was liked for his stamina and flair; but this time he exhibited a more ruthless side to his character.<sup>75</sup> Old friends had been abandoned, and the episode would continue to haunt his reputation.<sup>76</sup>

Jacob Bernath took his wrath out on the *madrich*. 'Bakker's resignation is a matter of the international board, not just of Holland and Israel. For that reason, I have difficulty accepting it. (...) Whether Shlomo understands this or not is irrelevant. We hope to keep him on, but his opinions will not decide our policy.'<sup>77</sup> Mirjam Gerzon believed that the whole mess could have been avoided.<sup>78</sup> It would have been perfectly possible to explain well in advance 'that Pilon had indeed worked for a missionary centre (Tiberias), but did not feel that way anymore; that rev. Bakker represented a movement for change, etc.' Like Cidor, Gerzon had discussed the matter with Bakker in person, whereas Pilon had not. However, only one thing really mattered: that this project would not fail:

Be candid (...). If we want to make up for ages of estrangement, then we need to learn. Learn to listen, learn to understand, learn how we are being perceived by others.<sup>79</sup>

67 J.J. Pilon to A. Gjerding, Heemstede 8 October 1962, ANAN.

68 Telegram F. Kuiper 16 October 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

69 Alida Pekel was also a board member of Nes Ammim Netherlands.

70 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 9 August 1962, AJP.

71 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Heemstede 23 October 1962, AJP.

72 J.J. Pilon to R. Masson (Geneva), Heemstede 28 December 1962, ANAN.

73 Minutes NAN, Rotterdam 19 January 1963. Archive H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer, in HDC VU.

74 Ch. Gysel to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 7 August 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

75 Ibidem.

76 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 24 October 1962, in AJP.

77 J. Bernath to H. Bernath, Thayngen 12 November 1962, in AJP.

78 M.B. Gerzon to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 6 February 1963, in ANAG.

79 M.B. Gerzon to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 2 March 1963, in AJP.

Nes Ammim had received Israeli confidence, she said, and was duty-bound to bring the expected results.<sup>80</sup>

### Betrayal of Hebrew Christians?

Christian Jews were neither traitors, said Hans Bernath, nor chosen ones. Whether agriculture would suit any of them remained to be seen. But their exclusion was absurd:

Nes Ammim has acted in a cowardly manner. (...) In my view, the explicit intention to exclude any Hebrew Christians amounts to treason against the Christian Church.<sup>81</sup>

The idea of an exclusion imposed by Christians on other Christians was repulsive. The Swiss would prefer a direct order by the Israeli government. Hans Bernath urgently asked to leave the Christian Jews alone, and preferably not to mention them at all.<sup>82</sup> Pilon's *Jerusalem Post* interview came as a blow,<sup>83</sup> causing his brother to comment: 'He has become too close to Shlomo.'<sup>84</sup> The Dutch Society of Jewish Christians Hadderech also protested.<sup>85</sup> They would be barred, they said, not as a result of what they did but on account of their combined backgrounds and beliefs. It was to remain a painful subject for all Nes Ammim supporters, who would be questioned about it for years to come.<sup>86</sup> No formal demands by the Israeli authorities had been made public. The kindest possible verdict would be that the moshav had no alternative options. Berkhof's conclusion resembled that of the Bernaths: 'Others, including myself, object to this kind of pressure on principle, but (...) we can only submit – under protest.'<sup>87</sup>

A Dutch Jewish periodical expressed its amazement for different reasons. After all their strenuous missionary efforts, churches dropped their hard-won converts at the first difficulty.<sup>88</sup> This disparaging view was contradicted by Hanna-Louk van Stegeren-Keizer. Together with Dick Lam she wrote a memo. Incorporating Christian Jews (like herself) would impede the aim of reconciliation, given the prevailing public mood in Israel.<sup>89</sup> She would remain committed to Nes Ammim for the rest of her life, not as a member of the board of course, but as an RCN representative. Hans Bernath still wondered about the inconsistency of the 'purge'. If necessary, then why were missionary medical doctors exempted? It seemed as if emotion had gotten the better of reason.<sup>90</sup> Pilon realized that feelings had been hurt:

80 M.B. Gerzon to G. Polet, Jerusalem 2 March 1963, in AJP.

81 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 27 October 1962, in AJP.

82 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 14 October 1962, in AJP.

83 H. Bernath to J. Minnaar, J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 27 October 1962, in AJP.

84 J. Bernath to H. Bernath, Thayngen 12 November 1962, in AJP.

85 J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël. Een generatie in dienst van de Joods-Christelijke toenadering*, Zoetermeer 1995, I 550.

86 Interview M. de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 15 February 2013.

87 H. Berkhof, 'Nes Ammim als toetssteen', in *Kerk en Wereld* March 1966, 36-37.

88 M.H. Gans, 'Nee tegen christen-vrienden', in *NIW* 7 December 1962.

89 Discussion memo by D. Lam and H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer, Heemstede 10 April 1963. Archive H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer, in HDC VU.

90 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 29 October 1962, in AJP.

Even with Snoek and Hans Bernath I am slightly at loggerheads. We will make it up in due time (...). Since my pronouncements caused a lot of consternation (...) I must take care to remain on speaking terms (...), to approach people in such a way that they will see things *by themselves* and are convinced that way.<sup>91</sup>

Conflicts were unavoidable, if the aim was to be achieved, says Annebiene Pilon:

My grandfather told stories about regular rows in that ophthalmic hospital in Indonesia. That the same now happened to my father in Israel did not come as a surprise.<sup>92</sup>

91 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 8 April 1963, in AJP.

92 Interview Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

# XXIII Riftin commission

## Consultations

Dan Ben-Dor grumbled about the fact that Tabaksblatt had ever been included: 'I had warned you when I saw him with you in the YMCA!' Ben-Dor did not object to Christians, but decidedly to proselytizing. 'I have respect for some Jewish Christians, but most of the lot are simply opportunists (...). The word traitor might be too strong, but Quislings nevertheless.'<sup>1</sup> It was enough to sympathize with Azhkenasy chief rabbi Isser Yehuda Unterman, who had formally asked president Itzhak Ben-Zvi to ban this 'village of missionaries'.

On 13 November Bezek and Pilon went to the Ministry of Religious Affairs for a meeting with Saul P. Colbi.<sup>2</sup> Presenting a Hebrew copy of Werblowsky's memorandum was rather superfluous, as Colbi had already acquainted himself with that text. He promised to arrange a meeting with Wahrhaftig. Bezek saw Chaim Wardi, another official of the Ministry and president of a committee for improving interreligious relations.<sup>3</sup> Christians were free to do as they liked, within the limits of the law, Wardi said. It was another matter whether Jews could be expected to be interested in Christian theology:

What might they offer us? In Judaism all we need is (...). Grace, penitence, return to God – it is all there. Our difference with Christianity has to do with the expected Messiah. Once He comes, the world will be changed. Do you really believe that this world as it is, has already been changed?<sup>4</sup>

Wardi appreciated the DRC: positively interested in Judaism, yet not imposing itself. It remained to be seen whether the same could be said of Nes Ammim. As promised by Colbi, Bernath and Pilon received an invitation for a meeting with Wahrhaftig. The Minister was polite and courteous, even serving cakes at tea. But he remained opposed: 'For no less than two thousand years, Christianity has been trying to destroy our people during its exile. And now you tell us that you want to make a fresh start – we do not believe you!'<sup>5</sup> Unlike Eshkol, Wahrhaftig tended to be somewhat long-winded. His guests were treated with a '2 ½ hour talk'.<sup>6</sup> While

1 J.J. Pilon to J. Minnaar and J. Bernath, Jerusalem 13 November 1962, in AJP.

2 Saul P. Colbi, *Christianity in the Holy Land, past and present*, Tel Aviv 1969. At the Ministry, Colbi headed the department of Christian affairs.

3 J.J. Pilon, report November-December 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

4 Petrus Huigens, *Israël, land van de Bijbel land van de toekomst*, Baarn ca. 1960, 143-144.

5 Minutes NAN, Rotterdam 19 January 1963. HDC VU archive H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer.

6 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Heemstede 22 January 1963, in AJP.

the Minister spoke at length, Bernath pondered the barriers between Judaism and Christianity. ‘They seemed to rise before my eyes like the walls of Jericho.’<sup>7</sup> However, his host also seemed to be an accomplished lawyer, with whom an agreement might be possible after all.<sup>8</sup> On conditions, of course.<sup>9</sup>

A meeting with Eshkol was set for 11 December.<sup>10</sup> This time, Jacob Bernath and Pilon were seconded by Dan Ben-Dor.<sup>11</sup> According to the minutes, the conversation went as follows:

*Eshkol:* People came to me to say that missionaries and baptized Jews are on your board. They said that you have ulterior motives.

*Bernath:* It is true that Rev. Bakker and Rev. Tabaksblatt are on the Dutch board. However, their intentions are in no way missionary. To the contrary, they always impressed upon us that Nes Ammim should *not* become a place for mission. Also, they are willing to step down voluntarily, given the objections to their participation.

*Eshkol:* Is it possible that you declare in public that your intentions are friendly and that you intend no missionary activity? Would you agree to a supervisory board, where people from the land can evaluate from time to time together with the village Nes Ammim? I consider this as an important point, to prevent any trouble. You can choose the people yourself. Preferably including a Jewish-Orthodox – not a fanatic, someone of a broad horizon, but religious, nonetheless. We have men like that, I could name one myself, a Russian by origin, whose outlook is as wide as the steppes, I can recommend him. This board of trustees can draft a constitution for itself, affirming its field of competences. It can safeguard against any difficulties with missionaries or baptized Jews in Nes Ammim.

*Pilon:* We understand that feelings against Christian Jews in Israel are quite strong, even if religious freedom is guaranteed by law. In our countries we Christians find that hard to understand, repudiation of Christian Jews is felt as discrimination. According to our faith, no distinction between Jew and Goy exists. Christians are brethren, whatever their national background.<sup>12</sup>

Eshkol did not budge. By mishandling the situation in Holland, Nes Ammim itself had created a situation that forbade the inclusion of ‘odd characters and baptized Jews’:

Yes, indeed we have religious freedom by law. However, baptized Jews are less trusted in this country, I would almost say: less loved. I hardly know why, perhaps it is related to the sufferings of our people for two millennia. You see how it is, considering the recent verdict of the Israeli High Court in the case of brother Daniel of the Karmel. Though a born Jew, he is no longer considered as such, on account of his being baptized. The verdict may differ from the *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>13</sup>, the halachic corpus of authoritative rabbi’s in former days (...) It shows you that we think differently now. If you have the intention of settling in Israel, you need to understand these feelings.<sup>14</sup>

7 J. Bernath, circular letter Schaffhausen January 1963, in AJP.

8 Retrospective: minutes Rotterdam 19 January 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

9 J.J. Pilon to H. Dahlhaus, Heemstede 2 January 1963, in AJP.

10 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Heemstede 22 January 1963, in AJP.

11 Minutes in Dutch of the meeting with Eshkol on 11 December 1962, in ANAN.

12 Ibidem, in AHS.

13 Compiled by Josef Karo (1488-1575).

14 Minutes in Dutch of the meeting with Eshkol on 11 December 1962, in ANAN.

It did not suit Bernath, who dreaded the prospect of the supervisory board (*v'adat pikoeach*). The aim of this va'adah was clearly to offer some sort of control to the neighbouring Jewish communities.<sup>15</sup> Eshkol said that there were political realities to be considered:

The Mapai-Orthodox coalition of the government could be endangered because of the orthodox opposition to the plan. A cabinet-crisis should be prevented. 'Please help me!', [Eshkol] said. How? By getting positive voices in the press and gaining support in the kibbutzim.<sup>16</sup>

Pilon mentioned the Christian Jews,<sup>17</sup> but it was cut short by the Minister of Finance. This matter had been decided by his own statements in the *Jerusalem Post*. Eshkol proposed to stage a press conference that very afternoon. He advised to make the following statements:

You should be precise about the aims. Say that you come to help Israel, that you want to live as 'Jews in Israel'. That you want to contribute to a better understanding, not by words but by your actions. Make it clear that it is not in your interest to dissuade anyone from the Jewish faith. Tell them about the idea of a board of trustees. Be frank, show that you have nothing to hide. That you are motivated by humanitarian considerations, together with Christians from Scandinavia, etc. Tell about the substantial support in your countries.<sup>18</sup>

The press conference was duly held, and Hebrew copies of Werblowsky's memorandum were distributed to attending journalists.

### Ja'akov Riftin

The Chairman of the 'internal affairs committee of the Knesset'<sup>19</sup> was Ja'akov Riftin (1907-1978), who belonged to Mapam. During the morning hours of 24 Kislev 5723 (21 December 1962) he presided over a meeting of the committee. Also attending were S. Lorenz for the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Bezek and Dan Ben-Dor. Bezek told the audience that Dutch initiators had been part of the resistance against Hitler and that some had even been concentration camp inmates. Ironically, the latter only applied to Tabaksblatt and Bakker.<sup>20</sup> When asked about Jacob Bernath, Ben-Dor answered as follows:

15 Minutes in Dutch of the meeting with Eshkol on 11 December 1962, in HDC VU archive ANAN, box 31.

16 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Heemstede 22 January 1963, in AJP.

17 Minutes in Dutch of the meeting with Eshkol on 11 December 1962, in HDC VU archive ANAN, box 31.

18 Ibidem, in AJP.

19 Members, apart from Riftin (Mapam): Mordechai Bibi (Ahdut HaAvodah), Aharon-Ya'akov Greenberg (National Religious Party), Diyab Obeid (Cooperation and Brotherhood (Arab)), Amos Degami (Mapai), David Bar Rav-Hai (Mapai), Avraham Drori (Herut), Menahem Cohen (Mapai), Benno Cohen (Liberal Party), Rachel Cohen-Kagan (Liberal Party), Chaim Landau (Herut) and Yosef Shofman (Herut).

20 G.J. van Klinken, *Opvattingen*, 364.

During the Hitler persecutions he was not involved with the Jewish problem, not even interested. That changed after 1945, when [Jewish] refugees from Austria were admitted to camps in Switzerland. A committee was started up to come to their aid. It was at that moment that he began to take an interest in Jewish matters.<sup>21</sup>

Ben-Dor admitted that there was a missionary background. However, the initiators had started to question that approach. Now they envisaged a village for young people, to take part in contemporary Jewish life. This would promote a better appreciation of Israel among Christians, 'especially the Dutch':

They are beginning to understand that their reading of Tenakh had been faulty for many years.<sup>22</sup>

A church was not part of their intentions. Chaim Landau (Herut)<sup>23</sup> still worried about a Christian school. What if Jews decided to send their children there? And what if present leaders were replaced by others? Was there any guarantee that the next generation would remain committed to the Werblowsky memorandum? Aharon Ya'akov voiced another concern. Why was it that this project, intended for getting to know the Jewish population, preferred a remote corner of the countryside? Was that perhaps to avoid effective Israeli control?

### Implementation of agreements

Bastiaanse, who investigated the exclusion of Jewish Christians from the pioneer group, was unable to find any formal decisions on this matter notated in the Nes Ammim archives. He surmised that 'this difficult decision' had apparently (but without definite proof) been made somewhere between March 1961 and September 1963.<sup>24</sup> Since then, more documentation has surfaced. The emerging picture suggests that Bastiaanse was right: indeed, there was never a formal decision made. The outcome had been forced by the *Jerusalem Post* interview and by Eshkol in personal communication. By making this vital concession, the village still stood a chance of being built. Though the willingness to submit was only skin-deep: not only the Swiss and Americans but also Minnaar made no secret of their intention to include the Christian Jews at the first opportunity.<sup>25</sup> As a result, common understanding between the AG and its Israeli hosts was still less than sound. As Boertien put it: 'Statements that were considered by Nes Ammim board members as a tactical move, were interpreted in Israel as a fundamental decision against Jewish Christians.'<sup>26</sup>

21 Fifth Knesset, second session, protocol nr. 78 of the Committee for the Interior, Tel Aviv 24 Kislev 5723 (21 December 1962), in: Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Jerusalem. Translation Cor van der Spek (Broek op Langedijk).

22 Ibidem.

23 Landau, born in Krakow in Poland, had served in the Irgun forces in 1948. He passed away in 1981.

24 J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël* 1, 549.

25 H. Bernath to J. Minnaar, J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 25 January 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

26 M. Boertien to NAN, Wassenaar 6 April 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.



Velbert maintained that it was imperative to work within Israeli guidelines, whether in writing or not. The *Kirchliche Aussenamt der EKD* was unsure how to respond to this. ‘We are trying to find out what is happening.’<sup>27</sup> The German Nes Ammim Society was founded on Friday 8 March 1963 in the headquarters of the *Sozialethischer Ausschuß der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland*, after having received an Israeli affidavit.<sup>28</sup> Dahlhaus became president, Kremers vice-president. In the Netherlands Bakker would be succeeded by Minnaar, ‘no man for the lime-light’.<sup>29</sup> Pilon insisted on the latest commitments: ‘Jewish Christians will *not* be admitted to Nes Ammim, as their presence would be taken as a byword for mission. This is not a temporary measure (as in the case of the Germans) but definitive.’<sup>30</sup> The Verwaltungsrat finally resigned itself to this inevitability:

As far as we are concerned, there is no problem with Christian Jews. We ask them to keep their distance out of respect to the sensitivities on this subject within Israel.<sup>31</sup>

For many Protestants, it came as a shock. Boertien accused Nes Ammim of allowing a form of inverted mission.<sup>32</sup>

### Protest in Nahariya

Orthodox Jewish Nahariya benefitted from the Soglowek-Kvilecky family and their kosher butcher shop. They knew rabbi Aharon Keller (1909-1998) from Breslau<sup>33</sup> and shared his opinion of Christian Europe:

History has taught us that Christians are under the religious imperative to win souls for their faith, especially Jewish souls. So, hearing that a Christian village was to be established in the neighbourhood, we immediately assumed that a missionary settlement was intended.

Another factor, to be candid with you, was the rumour that Doctor Pilon had been engaged in missionary work in Indonesia. We anticipated that he would continue that sort of thing here in Israel.

There were also practical objections:

The new settlement would surely claim its share in land and water, while success was not assured. Christian pioneers, unlike the Jews, could not be expected to devote the rest of their lives to Israel. Surely, most would return to their former homes after a year or so. They would transfer the work to others, if others could be found to labour under the Israeli sun.<sup>34</sup>

27 A. Wischmann to D. Schlatter, Frankfurt am Main 15 February 1963, in EZA archive 6/1583.

28 ‘Unter Registernr. 222 des Amtsgerichts in Velbert eingetragen’. Cf. Christian Bartsch (ed.), *Schalom ist mehr als nur ein Bild*, 125. Horst Dahlhaus, ‘Vierzig Jahre Nes Ammim’, in *Nes Ammim International* 1/2003, 18.

29 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013.

30 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 8 April 1963, in AJP.

31 Minutes Frankfurt 22 June 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

32 M. Boertien, report November 1962 to deputies Israel evangelization and CRC Groningen, in HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

33 Andreas Meyer, *Nahariya Foto Projekt*, 21.

34 Interview Aharon Keller by Ad Bloemendaal, ‘Nes Ammim: missionarissen van jodendom’, in *Het Parool* November 1986. Cutting in HDC VU archive NAN, box 4.

Keller was willing to cooperate with Christians after proper introductions.<sup>35</sup> This included Beth-El, even though Nothacker came from a missionary background and Wyman was a converted Jewess. Nes Ammim came under suspicion for different reasons: for moving ahead without consulting the Jewish community, unclear communication in general, dealings with a Druze sheikh and disambiguation about the RCN connection. It suggested that there was something to hide – perhaps even a scheme of ‘Jewish renegades’ of the most obnoxious proselytizing kind.<sup>36</sup> Bezek had a long conversation with Keller but failed to sway him. He was an atheist, the rabbi complained to Mirjam Gerzon, without Jewish religious knowledge to speak of.<sup>37</sup> Nor did he seem particularly well informed about the initiators of Nes Ammim. ‘All that Mr. Bezek could tell me, is that they are committed Christians.’ As Shlomo’s daughters put it, their father enjoyed building a village. ‘However, at the theoretical level, he found the Nes Ammim *programme* a hard nut to crack.’<sup>38</sup>

If Christians wanted to work in Galilee, the rabbi insisted, why not in an existing kibbutz? If the aim was interreligious dialogue, why not discuss that with rabbinical authorities?<sup>39</sup> Keller rebuked Lehmann for his supportive attitude: ‘I cannot believe that you have dealings with this kind of people. It hurts and disappoints me.’<sup>40</sup>

The Swiss and Americans believed that Jewish anger had been triggered by Holland and that it was for the Dutch to repair the damage. Like the Germans, the Swiss refrained from public comment, though for entirely different reasons. It was up to the Lord to show whether the project could proceed or not.<sup>41</sup> As Jacob Bernath remarked:

The path the Lord provided us led in a direction we had not been expecting.<sup>42</sup>

Hans and Ella Vetterli prepared to move to al-Mansura. Opposition came as a surprise, but they were willing to learn: ‘We should thank Rabbi Keller. He opened our eyes to the aggressiveness of Jewish Mission. We were happy to make a fresh start, in good conscience, focusing on solidarity.’<sup>43</sup>

### Knesset

Erich Lehmann (1912-1986) belonged to the Reform synagogue in Nahariya. As a Liberal, his reports on Keller’s campaign carried an ironic undertone. Rabbis

35 Cf. Fritz Barth, *Templer*. Nowadays Beth-El is based in Shavei Zion, as part of the Zedakah Foundation.

36 Aharon Keller, ‘Warum ich gegen Nes Amim bin’, in *Jediot Chadasjot* 12 March 1963.

37 M.B. Gerzon to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 5 February 1962, in AJP.

38 Interview Diklah Geva-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

39 Aharon Keller, ‘Warum ich gegen Nes Ammim bin’, in *Jediot Chadasjot* 12 March 1963.

40 A. Keller to E.M. Lehmann, Nahariya 13 February 1963, in ASS.

41 Johannes Gutscher, circular letter, in *Schweizer Evangeliumsdiens in Israel*, Wädenswil July 1963.

42 J. Bernath, circular letter Summer 1963, in AFK.

43 Ella Vetterli, ‘Nes Ammim am Anfang - Nes Ammim heute’, in *Mitteilungsblatt Nes Ammim Schweiz*, Meilen December 1986.

came from all directions, begging the help of the Almighty against this new threat. A mouse was being presented as an elephant.<sup>44</sup>

Lehmann was not alone in this assessment. Uri Aloni (Regba) welcomed the token of support for Israel,<sup>45</sup> as did Joseph Meir – sole survivor of a large Jewish family in Budapest.<sup>46</sup> Disengagement from the non-Jewish world was simply not an option. Gerschon Tatz, Nahariya's mayor, who was born in Lithuania, remembered the seclusion of the former *shtetl* as stifling. Israel was not intended as a theocracy.<sup>47</sup> Assured by the Knesset commission that 'active missionaries, proselytes and especially Christian Jews' had been removed from Nes Ammim,<sup>48</sup> it was time to focus on more urgent matters.<sup>49</sup>

Jacob Bernath would like nothing better. Partners in Switzerland began to hesitate, since Brunner accused him of betraying missionaries and Christian Jews. Others seemed to fear that any support for Nes Ammim would imply an Arab boycott.<sup>50</sup> All in all, some positive results were urgently needed.<sup>51</sup> A meeting with Riftin was scheduled for 11 February in Jerusalem.<sup>52</sup> Mirjam Gerzon arranged for Bezek to be available to translate. Avraham Ofer would attend for Foreign Affairs and director-general Ya'akov Arnon for Finance. Beelaerts van Blokland received a briefing at the Dutch embassy in Jerusalem. Beelaerts believed that Cidor had come under pressure for being 'too soft in dealing with strangers'.<sup>53</sup>

Arnon, who was born in the Netherlands, considered Nes Ammim's performance up until this point as unimpressive.<sup>54</sup> Too much had been muddled up by the organizers, resulting in the loathsome 'purge'.<sup>55</sup> Bezek had an easier time in the District Council, with Yitschak Sternberg (Lohamei HaGettaot), Boris Sternberg (Beit HaEmek), Ischak Sassoon (Ayeleth Hashachar) and agricultural specialists Meir Orkin and Shmuel Golew. All felt that they should have been consulted in

44 Erich Lehmann, 'Nes Ammim ohne Pathos', in *Jediot Chadasjot* February 1965. See for Lehmann and Nahariya: Andreas Meyer, *Nahariya Foto Projekt*, Nahariya 2005, 45.

45 Traude Litzka, *Nes Ammim im Spiegel Jüdisch-israelischer Reaktionen. Dokumentation und Analyse* (Diplomarbeit Universität Wien), Wien 2001, 73-75. Uri Aloni was born in Essen (Germany), as Hans Euler.

46 Another Holocaust survivor was the secretary of the District Council, Drori. J.J. Pilon, report 23 April-1 July 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 23.

47 Quoted in 'Gegen die Tätigkeit der christlichen Missionen in Israel'. *Schaffhauser Nachrichten* 7 January 1963.

48 M.D. Kasper and N.A. Shorali (Committee for Interfaith Understanding in Israel and in the World) to J. Riftin, Jerusalem 11 Tsevat 5723 (5 February 1963), in: Fifth Knesset, second session, protocol nr. 78 of the Commission for the Interior, Tel Aviv 24 Kislev 5723 (21 December 1962), in Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Jerusalem. Translated by Cor van der Spek (Broek op Langedijk).

49 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 24 January 1963, in AJP.

50 Christian Bartsch (ed.), *Schalom ist mehr als nur ein Wort. Verantwortung und Versöhnung. Nes Ammim – Zeichen für die Völker*, Düsseldorf 1998, 119.

51 J. Bernath to J. Riftin, Schaffhausen 30 January 1963, in Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Jerusalem.

52 J. Riftin to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 11 February 1963, in Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Jerusalem.

53 Pauline Micheels, *De waarheidszoekster. Henriette Boas, een leven voor de Joodse zaak*, Amsterdam 2016, 137.

54 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath and J. Minnaar, Nazareth 18 November 1962, in AJP.

55 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath and J. Minnaar, Nazareth 25 November 1962, in AJP.

advance but were still willing to help. Meir explained that local uproar against the project might provide a unique opportunity to get in touch with authorities in Jerusalem and to bring to their attention all sorts of problems that until now had been drowned in bureaucracy.

However, the campaign was far from over. Israel Ben-Zeev, spokesman for the World Union for the Propagation of Judaism, complained that the countryside was overrun by Christians. Two pious ladies from Stuttgart, Emma and Elsa Berger, had bought land near Zikhron Ya'akov for a Christian Zionist agricultural village.<sup>56</sup> In addition, American Baptists were building a settlement in the Plain of Sharon.<sup>57</sup> It was simply too much. Nes Ammim's land rightfully belonged to the District Council, and was perhaps more suited for the founding of a Jewish kibbutz of the same name. Christian friends of Israel would be welcome to live and work there, in a proper Jewish environment.<sup>58</sup>

Parliament discussed Nes Ammim on 16 January 1963. Eshkol said that the initiators had proven their non-aggressive intentions.<sup>59</sup> Unless an unexpected complication might arise, the cabinet intended to give it a go-ahead. Rabbi Yitzchak Lewin (Agudat Yisrael) and Ya'acov Greenberg (National Religious Party) protested in vain. Shlomo Lorenz (Agudat Yisrael) still wanted to see Druze landholdings in the coastal area expropriated without further ado.<sup>60</sup>

Bezek listened from the public gallery,<sup>61</sup> while Lewin debated with Arab MP Tewfik Toubi (Mapam). Toubi believed that the commotion was only a pretext for a Jewish takeover of landholdings in Galilee.<sup>62</sup> The Knesset debate would resume on 19 March. Mirjam Gerzon noted Eshkol's anger about Nes Ammim's incomplete briefing in 1960:

It can be said that we were misled. The topic during the talks in 1960 was the furthering of an industry. I admit that industries attract me. We were told nothing about other matters than industry and 'philo-humanism'.<sup>63</sup>

### Between Jewish and Christian opinion

Pilon had to find a way to honour his commitments to Israel without alienating his backers, especially those in the RCN. As Snoek remarked: 'It is confusing. Es-

56 Beth-El near Zichron Ya'akov – not to be confused with Nothacker's Beth-El – is still in existence. Cf. 'Beth-El. Deutsche Christen in Zichron Ja'akov', [www.goethe.de/ins/il](http://www.goethe.de/ins/il).

57 Paul Schmidgall and Ruth Kark, 'German Christian communal-settlement activities in and around Sichron Yaakov, Israel, 1963-2005', in Jakob Eisler (ed.), *Deutsche in Palästina*, 185.

58 J.J. Pilon to unnamed friends, Nazareth 25 November 1962, in AJP.

59 Press communication 17 January 1963, quoted in Christian Bartsch (ed.), *Schalom ist mehr als nur ein Wort*, 120.

60 Protocol Knesset proceedings 16 January 1963, in ANAG, scrapbook Nes Ammim.

61 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 21 January 1963, in AJP.

62 Knesset report in *Jerusalem Post*, 17 January 1963.

63 Transcription Knesset debate 16 January 1963, Minister Eshkol answering questions posed by Yitzchak Lewin, ANAN.

pecially for Jews, who will find out sooner or later.’<sup>64</sup> Reading the scathing comments in *NIW*, Pilon realized that Snoek might be right:

I would never have imagined that the rabbi’s opposition could hit us so hard, that it could be so effective, especially in *Holland*.<sup>65</sup>

He had an urgent communication problem on his hands, said a grumbling Bezek.<sup>66</sup> The right human touch, Mirjam Gerzon stressed over and again, formed a prerequisite to get things done:<sup>67</sup>

We live in a Levantine country. Western European standards do not apply. You need to push here. Do not remain passive, do not wait. Move on. Ring, write letters, make appointments, compile reports, get access to people of the press (...). The last thing you should do is to sit down and simply wait for the green light to flash. Take the wiring in your hands, threaten to short-circuit, be ready to switch the red to the green. Keep pushing.<sup>68</sup>

Compromise was attainable even in the Netherlands, where M.J. Perath felt that the importance of Christian support for Israel outweighed the nuisance that was still being created by missionary papers. ‘We can understand that the myth of a dead and resurrected god proved acceptable for the heathens. To presume that it also might attract Jews (...), who have done away with mythological thinking since millennia, is preposterous.’<sup>69</sup> Jewish religion could not be threatened by *Licht en Leven*. Any fuss over such trivial matters implied a risk of ‘hillul Hashem’.<sup>70</sup>

### Jediot Chadasjot

Lehmann was a correspondent for *Jediot Chadasjot*, a Liberal newspaper established by Shalom Ben-Chorin. Lehmann felt proud to be a Jecke. ‘He was born and bred with *Bildung*, which was typical for German Jewry. As a liberal Israeli, he had an ineradicable spark of longing for a world that had been cruelly exterminated. *Pünktlich*.’<sup>71</sup> He had a ‘Kopje Koffie’ with Pilon, and gave him the opportunity to present himself to *Jediot Chadasjot* readers:

Our goal is to heal the rift between Jews and Christians, a rift that has been caused by the immense suffering of the Jewish people. As Christians, we bear direct or indirect responsibility for that suffering.

Basically, this was Duvernoy’s vision, minus reference to Hebrew Christians:

64 J.M. Snoek to J.J. Pilon, Tiberias 24 February 1963, in AJP.

65 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 26 January 1963, in AJP.

66 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 14 February 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

67 M.B. Gerzon to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 5 February 1963, in AJP.

68 M.B. Gerzon to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 4 February 1963, in AJP.

69 M.J. Perath, ‘Nes Ammim’, in *NIW* 4 January 1963.

70 Improper use of God’s name.

71 Interview Simon Schoon by author, Amersfoort 5 December 2013.

Sympathy and financial aid are not enough for a new relationship. That can only be built on the foundation of connecting and working together. Our Christian settlement will take part in the existential struggle of the State of Israel.

Lehmann came up with the ‘Gretchen-Frage’. Was there any intention of converting the neighbours? Pilon had been prepared for this:

I know that this is what our critics suspect, but I ensure you that we have no such intentions. All converted Jews have been asked to step down from our organisation, both in Holland and Switzerland.<sup>72</sup>

Meanwhile, Shlomo Bezek’s meeting with Eshkol had also gone well:

[Eshkol] was very friendly. He wanted to know who I was, to be informed about my life. How I got in touch with Nes Ammim, why I chose to work for this project (...). Did I feel any inclination to become a Christian myself? His questions about any possible missionary motives were repeated at least ten times.<sup>73</sup>

Shlomo had replied that Christian Jews betrayed their own people and that he would have nothing to do with them.<sup>74</sup> Keller, however, still had no intention of giving up. In February he organized a rally in the central synagogue of Nahariya. A rhetorical question was brought up by Jakob Fink, president of the Rabbinical Court in Haifa: ‘Can we allow for arable land in the coastal plain that remains barred for our *olim*, to be handed over to Nes Ammim colonists?’<sup>75</sup> Bezek supposed that this ‘little storm’ would blow over,<sup>76</sup> even though an article in *Jediot Chadasjot* reported that a real risk of physical violence remained:

Should inhabitants of Nes Ammim get hurt now or in the future – God forbid – we will know where to look for the instigators!<sup>77</sup>

Sympathizers of Nes Ammim held a meeting of their own, in the city hall that Tatz obligingly made available. Benjamin Jeremias – who was born in Posen, owned an electricity shop and was the organizer of youth exchanges between Israel and Europe – presided over the meeting.<sup>78</sup> His ‘Nahariya-Freundenkreis’ had already welcomed Beth-El and Heuss.<sup>79</sup> Jeremias wanted to maintain Herzl’s Secularism.<sup>80</sup> Mirjam Gerzon trusted that he would prevail:

It is deplorable that this Christian vanguard is being rebuffed by opposition and mistrust from our quarters. They are being hectored as dangerous revolutionaries in their own circles. This is not mainstream Protestantism but rather a kind of avant-garde.<sup>81</sup>

72 Correspondent in Nahariya [Erich M. Lehmann], ‘Kennwort: Ness Amim’, in *Jediot Chadasjot* January 1963.

73 S. Bezek to J. Bernath, Ayeleth Hashachar 14 February 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

74 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 14 February 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 24.

75 S. Enstein Achusa, ‘Die Streitfrage Nes Ammim’, in *Jediot Chadasjot* 18 March 1963.

76 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 8 February 1963, in AJP.

77 ‘Nes Ammim’, in *Jediot Chadasjot* (Tel Aviv) 8 February 1963.

78 Cf. Simon Schoon, *Nes Ammim*, 132.

79 Andreas Meyer, *Nahariya Foto Projekt*, Nahariya 2005, 63.

80 ‘Nes Ammim’, in *Jediot Chadasjot*, (Tel Aviv) 8 February 1963.

81 M.B. Gerzon to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 4 February 1963, in AJP.

Eli Berlinger, scion of a famous family of rabbi's, agreed: 'True Judaism is not so petty minded as to fear the presence of Nes Ammim in the land of our fathers, now that they have offered the required guarantees.'<sup>82</sup> Ben-Chorin quipped that Keller seemed a bit too 'wahrhaftig'.<sup>83</sup> Meir had been in communication with the resident rabbi of Amqa, who consented to give it the benefit of the doubt.<sup>84</sup> Even in Holland things were quieting down. Henriëtte Boas indicated that her point had been made and that it was time to end the discussion.<sup>85</sup> Hans Bernath thought so as well:

I intend to write to Benjamin and Lehmann in Nahariya, to ask that they refrain from any polemics against the Orthodox. This is a sensitive matter.<sup>86</sup>

Jacob Bernath and Pilon were being interviewed by *Haaretz*, Pilon doing most of the talking. Despite so many previous warnings he once again succumbed to the temptation of saying things in public before discussing them with his partners in private. Europe, he said, had become so thoroughly contaminated by Anti-semitism that he hoped to turn his back to the old continent and to settle with his family in Israel. Christianity as such had little to offer in terms of dialogue. Roman-Catholic dogma based itself on a claim of superiority. Protestantism was hardly different, especially in Germany – Eichmann's country. This background, Pilon implied, explained the teething problems of Nes Ammim. 'Protestant official authorities failed to support us.'<sup>87</sup> Ellen Schoneveld-Tuyt shook her head in disbelief while reading the interview: Pilon seemed to believe that he could build his moshav by disabusing his donators, especially his loyal backers in Velbert.<sup>88</sup>

Asked how one should respond to a request by an Israeli for a copy of the New Testament, his answer was to refer the man to a local library or rabbi. For good measure, Pilon added that Alkahé had been removed, 'once we discovered the fact that he was a convert'.<sup>89</sup> Bernath hardly said a word. Pilon, on the other hand, was convinced that this was the way to go. He needed the Jewish press to gain acceptance: 'In regard of Israeli sensibilities, the correspondent got to the quintessence of the matter.'<sup>90</sup>

### Eshkol

Eshkol attended the next meeting of the Riftin committee. Jews, Lewin said, had a right to live according to their own laws in their own land, without being disturbed by a third party. The government should summon its courage to say no to the Christians in this sensitive matter: 'The founding of this village, near to the border, is also a security issue.' Eshkol disagreed:

82 E. Berlinger to A. Keller, Haifa 15 February 1963, in ASS.

83 Shalom Ben Chorin to E.M. Lehmann, Jerusalem-Romema 4 March 1963, in ASS.

84 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 14 February 1963, in AJP.

85 H. Boas to J.J. Pilon, Amsterdam 2 March 1963, in ANAN.

86 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 20 February 1963, in AJP.

87 'Settlement of European Christians in Galilee' (1), in *Haaretz* February 1963.

88 Interview Ellen Schoneveld-Tuyt by author, Rijswijk 17 September 2014.

89 'Settlement of European Christians in Galilee' (2), in *Haaretz* February 1963.

90 J.J. Pilon, comment on *Haaretz* interview, Heemstede 17 March 1963, in AJP.

I feel assured – now carefully selecting my every word – that this is not about missionaries in the sense of converting Jews to their Christian faith. (...) It is my conviction that they do not intend this. Rather the opposite. In my opinion this is borne out by conversations we had. Borne out by anything that has been read, heard, said, investigated, checked.

Werblowsky's memorandum formed a guarantee, together with further elucidations in the press:

Their position on converted Jews is as follows: 'Once we believed that a former Jew who has converted to Christianity, might help us to understand these dual worlds [of Judaism and Christianity]. Now we see that this is counterproductive. As a result, we have removed all converted Jews from our organization.'

Interestingly, Eshkol described Nes Ammim as a *Dutch* enterprise:

Any of us who has visited Holland, can witness a deep and tender feeling for the State of Israel. People in this Nordic country feel pained for what has been done to the Jews by Christianity. I can find nothing wrong in their propaganda. (...) What is it they say? 'We have been impressed by the shock of the founding of the State of Israel, where the Biblical prophesies and promises have been fulfilled. We are conscious of the past, of what has been done to the Jewish people during the war. There is a will among us to help the State of Israel being built up, and to explain the significance of the Jewish State and the Jewish people to the wider world.'<sup>91</sup>

District Ga'aton stood to benefit by the manufacture of Swiss precision watches and Dutch agronomical know-how. Riftin proposed to submit Nes Ammim for the approval of the Knesset.

Benno Cohen and Zvi Zimmerman (Liberal Party) were in favour, Rachel Tsabari (Mapai) simply said that enough words had been spilled. Chaim Landau (Herut) still feared that the current initiators might be succeeded by missionaries in the future. Ya'acov Greenberg (National Religious Party) shared this concern: 'If they send the wrong kind of people, adventurers, how to get rid of them?' A properly functioning va'adah was essential to ward off any such risks. David Bar Rav-Hai (Mapai) shrugged, saying that no law forbade anyone to buy a plot of land in Galilee. The Druze member of the commission, Jabr Moade from Yarka, refrained from taking part in the discussion.

Now that Eshkol and Riftin were in favor of acceptance, the die had effectively been cast. A week later, on Tuesday 5 March, a majority voted for acceptance. The following conditions were stated: no mission, no Jewish converts among the residents, supervision by a va'adah. A minority voted for Greenberg's proposal to expropriate the land and to thank the Christians for their efforts.<sup>92</sup> Implementation of stated conditions would follow common procedure: it was up to kibbutz members to decide on admission to their community. Sephardi complaints about

91 Fifth Knesset, second session, protocol nr. 93 committee of the Interior, Tel Aviv 3 Adar 5723 (26 February 1963), in Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Jerusalem. Translation Cor van der Spek (Broek op Langedijk).

92 Conclusions of the Commission for Internal Affairs regarding the village Nes Ammim, discussed in Knesset 19 March 1963. In Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Jerusalem. Translated by Cor van der Spek (Broek op Langedijk).



being barred from joining an Ashkenazi kibbutz had been dismissed by parliament as a matter within the jurisdiction of the kibbutz. Following the same logic, the Nes Ammim community was expected to take responsibility for barring the Christian Jews, without referring to a government order.<sup>93</sup>

### Responses

The District Council expressed its hope ‘that Nes Ammim will strengthen the relations between the State of Israel and the countries from where the settlers will come’.<sup>94</sup> Meir cabled the good news:

Dear Dr. Pilon! I am glad to inform you that our Ga’aton Council on its meeting 18.3.63 has decided to approve and support the establishment of Nes Ammim.<sup>95</sup>

The majority verdict of the Riftin commission was accepted by Knesset the next day, ignoring a final protest by Chief Rabbinate.<sup>96</sup> David Hacoen (Mapai) welcomed these ‘well-meaning Albert Schweitzer-types’.<sup>97</sup> Nes Ammim would be treated like any other kibbutz or moshav.<sup>98</sup> ‘Thank God’, replied Hans Bernath.<sup>99</sup> His brother believed that full recognition had been gained:

This long episode of delay and anxiety is finally over.<sup>100</sup>

Events would show this assumption to be overoptimistic.

93 Cf. David Leach, *Chasing Utopia*, 153 and 190.

94 Telegram M. Gerzon, Jerusalem 19 March 1963, in HDC VU, archive NAN, box 37.

95 J. Meir to J.J. Pilon, Ga’aton 19 March 1963, in AJP.

96 J. Riftin to Chief Rabbinate, Jerusalem 20 January 1963, in Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Jerusalem. Translation by Cor van der Spek (Broek op Langedijk).

97 ‘Nes Ammim’, in *Jerusalem Post* 27 March 1963. Hacoen figures in Martin Gilbert, *Israel. A history*, 270.

98 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath and H. Dahlhaus, Heemstede 21 March 1963, in AJP.

99 J. Bernath to H. Bernath, Schaffhausen 19 March 1963, in AJP.

100 J. Bernath to L. Eshkol, Schaffhausen 10 April 1963, in ANAN.

## ‘UN VILLAGE HOLLANDO-SUISSE’

*Jediot Chadasjot* organized a ‘Gallup-poll’: 60 per cent of the respondents were willing to admit Nes Ammim, 30 per cent had no definite opinion, and 10 per cent remained opposed.<sup>1</sup> The journal concluded that the Christians should be allowed a chance to prove the validity of their intentions.

1 ‘Es geht um Nes Ammim’, in *Jediot Chadasjot* 28 February 1963.



Fig. 14 The bus, 1963 (NA Germany).

## XXIV Permits

Jacob Bernath maintained his position of demonstrating the value of following Christ to the people of Israel, by a practical example.<sup>1</sup> The obvious question was whether this showed a missionary intent,<sup>2</sup> a point referred to by Pilon. Mirjam Gerzon told them that they had better things to do than to engage in lengthy discussions about this subject:

Too much ink is being spilled on these matters. It may be that officials are able to digest such heavy stuff. But the wider public, intellectuals included, is entitled to a warmer briefing with an added human touch.<sup>3</sup>

Protestants in the English-speaking world did not understand the rationale for a concession of this order. But that, Pilon remarked, was only to be expected:

Wiedergutmachung does not appeal there. On the contrary, I believe that the British would rather be inclined to await Wiedergutmachung from the *Jews*, because of having caused them so much trouble in Palestine and finally having chased them out of there.<sup>4</sup>

Ellison was far from convinced by Nes Ammim's explanations:

They have been so skilfully handled by officials that Hebrew Christians must be excluded from the community if it ever gets going. Obviously, the Hebrew Christians feel that they have been betrayed, even though few, if any, would have joined. Israeli authorities are more than ever convinced that the Christian Church does not stand behind the Israeli Hebrew Christian and is not really interested in his welfare.<sup>5</sup>

The Swiss and Mennonites, however, were convinced that 'witness' was compatible with the memorandum, a position that was denied by Velbert.<sup>6</sup> For the time being it seemed best to start work as soon as possible, hoping that the problem would be resolved during the process.

1 J. Bernath, Gebetsbrief Schaffhausen 14 May 1962, in AFK.

2 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 20 February 1963, in AJP.

3 M. Gerzon to G. Polet, Jerusalem 18 March 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 24.

4 J.J. Pilon to O.O. Miller, Heemstede 20 April 1961, in AJP.

5 H.L. Ellison, editorial in: *The Hebrew Christian* autumn edition 1963, 74.

6 H. Bernath to J. Minnaar, J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 27 October 1962, in AJP.

### Building a village

Architect Hansruedi Koller graduated from the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (ETH) in Zurich in 1957. His business partner Robert (Robi) Constantam would meet with specialists in the Plain of Asher.<sup>7</sup> Pilon implored him to leave witness unmentioned: ‘Difficult. After all, Christianity is essentially aiming at mission (...). Yet I am convinced that even adding a little touch of mission, more or less camouflaged, would doom the enterprise.’<sup>8</sup> Talk about Jesus the Messiah would not do:

We have to make clear, here and in Israel, that statements of such kind, which could also occur in the future and cannot always be prevented, have nothing to do with the initiators and the project.<sup>9</sup>

Principles laid down by the Riftin commission were unambiguous, said Bezek.<sup>10</sup> Ever anxious for the latest news, Lehmann invited him for lunch. The two men conversed in a mix of Hebrew, Dutch and German.<sup>11</sup> Public relations needed attending to:

The names of Bakker, Tabaksblatt and Pekel must be deleted.<sup>12</sup>

The AG was not pleased by their action.<sup>13</sup> Explanation of Christian principles remained a responsibility of Christians:

Ben-Dor and Shlomo present a one-sided view of Nes Ammim to the Israeli public.<sup>14</sup> (...) Their struggle against mission fails to communicate the Christian opinion.<sup>15</sup>

Bezek wondered why there had been no further mention of the va‘adah.<sup>16</sup> It had been promised to Eshkol, but the AG did not seem to be in a hurry. Lacking any decisive action by Nes Ammim, a provisional va‘adah was formed by the Israelis themselves. Given the delicate task of keeping a watchful eye from the inside, Shlomo became a pivotal figure.

### Four nations, four approaches

Differences between the international partners could be connected to their history:

7 Hansruedi and Gerda Koller to parents, Zurich 31 January 1963, in AFK.

8 J.J. Pilon to H. Young, Heemstede 15 April 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

9 J.J. Pilon to D. Ben-Dor, Heemstede 19 June 1963, AJP.

10 Interview Tanja Ronen-Laron by author, Regba 10 May 2013.

11 E.M. Lehmann to H. Bernath, Nahariya 11 August 1963, in: ASS. Lehmann writes the name as ‘Nes Amim’.

12 S. Bezek to Nes Ammim AG, Ayeleth Hashachar 14 February 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

13 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 23 November 1962, in AJP.

14 H. Bernath to J. Bernath, Nazareth 28 January 1963, in AJP.

15 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 27 March 1963, in AJP.

16 S. Bezek to Nes Ammim AG, Nahariya 18 August 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

- The right of free speech was firmly entrenched in the American Constitution. The Menonites also supported the Civil Rights Movement of Martin Luther King.<sup>17</sup> Orrie Miller and Roy Kreider failed to understand why Jewish Christians should not have the right to make their views public: ‘While we can understand Israel’s concern in this, (..) a Jewish Christian that otherwise qualifies and applies for participation, should be exactly on the same status as any other Christian. The reference to barring Jewish Christians is meeting considerable resentment (...) as being discriminatory.’<sup>18</sup>
- The Swiss *Freikirchen* distinguished between the separate spheres of Church and State. They aimed at political neutrality, extending a practical form of Christian witness to all, regardless of national or religious backgrounds. That is why Hans Bernath, who worked among the Arabs, found it so important to take part in a program that reached out to the Jews. He amazed Boertien by saying that while he shared his misgivings, he would nevertheless still pursue the matter.<sup>19</sup>
- Pilon and Kremers had witnessed the murder of European Jewry first-hand and opted for political support for Israel and a programme of theological change at home. Christian respect for the feelings of the Israeli people was more important than the interests of the churches in the Middle East or the Christian Jews.

Lehmann felt an affinity for the Velbert people, on account of their shared German *Bildung*. Pilon visited Jabotinski Street once again, where Lehmann joked about ‘charity from a safe distance’. Joking aside, how long would the village remain a castle in the air? Pilon assured him that the plan was ripening,<sup>20</sup> but admitted that he felt unsure about Miller and Kreider:

Missionary ideals are *solidly entrenched* in America. There is ample opportunity for massive blunders, so we should remain ever watchful to prevent that!! So-called Fundamentalist churches have the potential to ruin our cause, so we need a tight selection to rule that out.<sup>21</sup>

By now, Pilon was also facing a difference of opinion with the Swiss. ‘If Jewish religion offers all that the Israelis need’, quipped Hans Bernath, ‘what is the relevance of Christ?’<sup>22</sup> ‘Let them agree on the principles, before starting construction work’, said Boertien. ‘Pilon is not up to it. A nice chap, but maddingly volatile (...). This whole project, however sympathetic, lacks a proper ecclesiology.’<sup>23</sup> Boertien urged the Bernath brothers to restrain Pilon, only to find that they had more pressing duties on their hands.<sup>24</sup> They remained confident that they would find common ground with the Dutch:

We agree that Nes Ammim is no missionary enterprise, not in the classical sense. Even so, it should be recognizably Christian.<sup>25</sup>

Berkhof, cooperative as ever, tried to find a solution that would work for everyone. ‘Is it possible to work in the name of Christ and yet not to mention His

17 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 23 March 1963, in AJP.

18 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen April 1963, in AJP.

19 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 5 September 1962, in AJP.

20 E.M. Lehmann, ‘Kennwort: Nes Amim’, in *Jediot Hayom*, January 1963.

21 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 20 February 1963, in AJP.

22 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 27 March 1963, in AJP.

23 M. Boertien to M. Draayer, Wassenaar 2 April 1963, in HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105.

24 J.J. Pilon to R.J.Z. Werblowsky (draft), Heemstede 5 February 1962, in AJP.

25 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 27 March 1963, in AJP.

name?’ It might be possible indeed, as both Jews and Christians lived by the Torah. Their relationship could be described as a reciprocal *exemplarische Existenz*;<sup>26</sup> not by theological bickering, but by demonstrating the potential of the Bible in the practicalities of human life, either as a Jew or as a Christian. Bezek liked the idea.<sup>27</sup> It was hoped that a resident pastor would preach accordingly, a job for Külling perhaps.<sup>28</sup> The Swiss made their preferences explicit in rules for personnel:

1. The international Nes Ammim board can employ any person of clear Christian convictions.
2. All staff members are committed to an attitude of mutual brotherly love.
3. They also commit themselves to a life that can be perceived by others as a form of Christian witness.
4. They will attend Protestant church services as often as possible under the circumstances.<sup>29</sup>

Sympathizers were invited by the Gravemeijer couple to their stately mansion Ter Veken.<sup>30</sup> Pilon appreciated the gesture,<sup>31</sup> aware that support in the RCN was growing thin: ‘They think I am an extremist Liberal.’<sup>32</sup> Ambassador Beelaerts had received an alarming visit by the residing RCN missionary pastor Ben Smeenk in Jerusalem:

What is mission but confessing Jesus Christ to mankind? How can a believing Christian object to that! Pilon must be forced to work properly for his daily bread, rather than to live off Nes Ammim.<sup>33</sup>

In Smeenk’s opinion ‘Christ’s unambiguous command’ was being disobeyed. A difficult conversation followed between Minnaar and RCN deputies. It appeared that their chairman (Sikkel) would prefer to sever any existing ties. Other deputies believed the cause of Jewish Mission was already lost, making the moshav plan the only alternative they had. It was hoped that the moderates would carry the day, ‘even though a traditionalist wing will remain opposed’.<sup>34</sup> Minnaar did what he could to prevent a showdown. His wife worried about the stress of it all:

Ko starts in the morning in his office, working two or three hours for Nes Ammim after lunch. Then back to work for the firm, with some telephone conversations after supper. In the evening he has things to do for the church, pastoral visits, meetings and all kinds of activities.<sup>35</sup>

26 H. Berkhof, ‘Nes Ammim als toetssteen’, in *Kerk en Israël* March 1966, 34-35.

27 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 20 March 2015.

28 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 29 October 1962, in AJP.

29 Anstellungsreglement Nes Ammim, in EZA folder 6/1582.

30 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 20 November 2013.

31 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 20 February 1963, in AJP.

32 J.J. Pilon to H. and J. Bernath, Heemstede 5 April 1963, in AJP.

33 B.D. Smeenk to A. Holvast, Jerusalem 18 February 1963, and to C.B. Bavinck, Jerusalem 8 March 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

34 J.J. Pilon to J.A. Beelaerts van Blokland, Heemstede 28 March 1963, in ANAN.

35 B. Minnaar to S. Pilon, Overschie 2 June 1966, in ANAG, file 1967.

**'The wind is turning'**

Much would depend upon the man who was simultaneously acting as *mazkir*, *madrich* and *menahel avodah*: Shlomo Bezek. The accountant and bookkeeper (*gizbar*) post remained vacant. Alkahé and Reëmi were both qualified for the job, but they were ruled out because they were Christian Jews. Bezek's proposal to appoint a *gizbar* from the kibbutzim was vetoed by the AG, once again blocking the placement of an Israeli in a position of responsibility. This resulted in starting the project without the presence of a *gizbar*. Administration would be directed from Schaffhausen, while the pioneers would take care of bookkeeping on site. As events would soon show, they underestimated the importance of having a *gizbar* – who was fluent in Ivrit and up to date with standards of Israeli accounting – on the moshav team.



## XXV The bus

According to the press, Nes Ammim owed its survival to Israeli politics. If the rabbis had decided, the scheme would never have gotten this far.<sup>1</sup> As things had turned out, the Christians were invited by the District Council ‘to take practical steps’. ‘The initiative is in your hands.’<sup>2</sup> Koller developed Ben-Dor’s plans for a ‘village Hollando-Suisse’.<sup>3</sup> Kreider stressed the need for skilled workers:

Dr. Pilon feels that churches with missions in Israel should wait until the ‘second stage’ to participate. The first stage is agricultural.<sup>4</sup>

Thinking in the same direction, Bezek and Gerzon wanted to select level-headed professionals. There were too many dreamers among Christian fans of Israel: ‘Driven by Philosemitic love for any Jew they happen to meet, uncomplicated nice souls in my opinion, but hardly grown-ups.’<sup>5</sup> Working in Galilee would be a challenge.

### Pioneers

Teacher Hans Vetterli was born on a farm in Rheinklingen. While serving in the military, he had risen to the rank of cavalry officer. His wife Ella taught at a domestic science school:

Schaffhausen was close to the German border. During the war we had met with refugees, some of whom would be handed over to the Nazis, a terrible fate. As far as Jews were concerned, churches restricted themselves to caring for Christians among them. More refugees arrived in 1945. Their suffering was evident in their eyes, without saying a word. I became a pacifist with the ideal of joining an international peace service.<sup>6</sup>

Hans and Ella were committed members of their Evangelical Reformed Church. They intended to spend the first year of their marriage on a volunteer project. In the autumn of 1962, they headed to Mizra for an *ulpan* language course. It proved challenging to relate their strict Protestant background to this new setting:

1 M. Kopuit, ‘Nes Ammim a challenge’, in *NIW* 25 March 1966.

2 J. Meïr, Ga’aton 24 March 1963, to J.J. Pilon, in HDC VU, archive NAN, box 28.

3 ‘Un village Hollando-Suisse’, in *La Suisse* 18 January 1963.

4 R. Kreider to MCC, Ramat Gan 10 April 1962, in AJP.

5 M.B. Gerzon to G. Polet, Jerusalem 18 March 1963, in AJP.

6 Interview Ella Vetterli by author, Stein am Rhein 30 April 2014.

In Switzerland there is direct democracy. We liked that same atmosphere in the kibbutzim. People could speak for themselves, both men and women. Late-evening discussions in Mizra went on for hours. This was the proper way to learn Hebrew and to get to know the people.<sup>7</sup>

Hans adds that information provided by Nes Ammim seemed rather sketchy:

Surprisingly, no one had told us about the original intention to build a village for Christian Jews. We learnt that later on.<sup>8</sup>

Another Swiss couple considered devoting their entire life to the moshav. In Val de Ruz in the Jura mountains, Léon and Jeanne Robert intended to sell their farm, just like Swedish farmers from Nås had done in 1896.<sup>9</sup> Léon, born in 1912, believed that prophecies were being fulfilled in Israel, as his daughter recalls:

Et moi, âgée de 13,5 ans: j’ai suivi.<sup>10</sup>

Though Reformed, Léon also sympathized with Evangelicals like Billy Graham. Duvernoy and Léon had visited a kibbutz in the Negev together. It was Duvernoy who brought Nes Ammim to his attention. Restrictions on Christian Jews came as a disappointment, but the Roberts intended to press on nevertheless.<sup>11</sup> Al-Mansura should be settled as soon as possible. Hans Bernath proposed to use an old bus coach.<sup>12</sup> Bezek advised to take more time for the ulpan.<sup>13</sup> The Swiss, however, believed that developing the land should take priority, as leaving the land untended would only lead to trouble. After the Galil Bus Company confirmed that the vehicle was available, they decided not to wait any longer to occupy the land.<sup>14</sup> Bernath made the arrangements. ‘Agriculture always provided a welcome recreation for Hans after the long hours in the operating room’, as Shafik Farah relates.<sup>15</sup> He enjoyed being part of it.

### ‘As if on an island’

The Roberts had stocked their belongings in a 2CV and boarded the liner *Césarée*.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, the bus arrived at al-Mansura on Easter Monday. Once the wheels were removed, Paul Roost played a tune on his trumpet. All around were thistles, interspersed with a few fields that had already been cut free, fertilized, and sown by the District Council. ‘No proper road, no water, no telephone, no electrics, just that old bus. Nes Ammim, banner of the peoples.’<sup>17</sup> Hans Vetterli recalls:

7 Interview Ella Vetterli by author, Stein am Rhein 4 May 2015.

8 Interview Hans Vetterli by author, Stein am Rhein 4 May 2015.

9 Odd Karsten Tveit, *Anna’s House. The American Colony in Jerusalem*, Nicosia 2011, 130.

10 Mary-Jeanne Robert, ‘Nes Ammim 1963-1967’, Fontainemelon 2013, in ANAG.

11 Interview Mary Jeanne Robert by author, Thayngen 30 April 2014.

12 H. Bernath to J. Bernath, Nazareth 28 January 1963, in AJP.

13 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 26 March 1963, in AJP.

14 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 27 March 1963, in AJP.

15 Shafik Farah, *What shall I do with my life?*, Thornhill (Ontario) 1995, 125.

16 Mary-Jeanne Robert, ‘Nes Ammim 1963-1967’, Fontainemelon 2013, in ANAG.

17 C. van der Spek to M. de Goederen, Broek op Langedijk 30 January 1985, in ACS.

The old bus was taken in tow by Eisa Said. Accompanied by the Roosts and the Bernath family, we set out from Nazareth in the early morning of Easter Monday, 15 April 1963. The route took us through Arab villages. We finally arrived at our destination, on top of the hill where the village Mansura had once stood. Madeleine Bernath had prepared dinner. Then we said a prayer of thanksgiving for our safe arrival and asked the Lord for further guidance.

Once the others had returned to Nazareth, we were on our own. The views were gorgeous, but it was quite lonely. We were especially aware of the presence of snakes.<sup>18</sup>

Even without electricity we managed to turn the rusty bus into a real place to live, with the help of Paul Roost.<sup>19</sup>

Hans Bernath felt a pang of conscience after leaving them in their improvised home in the wilderness. Chickens rummaged round the bus; there were also two dogs. Beth-El presented a refrigerator. Lehmann was reminded of his own experiences as a pioneer almost three decades earlier. He liked the atmosphere in the bus:

So primitive, and yet a home. The guestbook told us that Benjamin Jeremias had already been here. He brought salt and bread as traditional tokens of welcome. There is also an entry with the coordinates 161635/262385. Surely this must be the work of Hans Vetterli, former officer in the Swiss army. A few kilometres away in Lohamei HaGettaot, preparations are being made for commemorating the Warsaw Rising. Remembering those untold horrors. Here in the bus is a tiny new beginning, a glimmer of hope in the midst of a sea of indifference.<sup>20</sup>

‘We had no intentions to missionize’, says Ella. ‘Unexpectedly, one week after we had settled, twenty people arrived, carrying an Israeli flag. They told us they were friends, coming from Nahariya!’<sup>21</sup> The trip had been organized by Benjamin Jeremias and his wife Hannah.<sup>22</sup> When in a jolly mood, Jeremias liked to parrot *Feldwebeldeutsch*.<sup>23</sup> ‘The quiet attitude of the Swiss couple is very much to our liking.’<sup>24</sup> They sent a good-humoured postcard to the Netherlands: ‘So many mosquitoes!’<sup>25</sup> Ella said that she was learning to look at the land with Israeli eyes.<sup>26</sup>

Bernath praised Hans as ‘the right man on the spot’.<sup>27</sup> He anticipated that the madrich would stand back a bit, now that the first Christian pioneers had arrived:

Shlomo is *not* the central figure in Nes Ammim.<sup>28</sup>

18 Erich Lehmann: ‘Bei meinem ersten Besuch war ich Augenzeuge, wie Hans Vetterli einer Giftschlange mit einem kräftigen Schlag den Kopf abhieb. Der Schweizer hatte sie in ihrem Verdauungsschlummer gestört. In ihrem aufgeblähten Leib fanden wir einen großen Vogel.’ E.M. Lehmann, ‘Erster Besuch in Nes Amim’ (*Jediot Chadasjot* 1963), in AFK.

19 Hans Vetterli, ‘ÐÐÐÐÐÐ’, Stein am Rhein 2013.

20 E.M. Lehmann, ‘Erster Besuch in Nes Amim’ (*Jediot Chadasjot* 1963), in AFK.

21 Interview Ella Vetterli by author, Stein am Rhein 29 April 2014.

22 Her father was agronomist Dr. Selig Eugen Soskin (1873-1959), founder of Nahariya in the thirties. See Andreas Meyer, *Nahariya Foto Projekt*.

23 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broeck op Langedijk 29 October 2015.

24 E.M. Lehmann to Ch. Gysel, Nahariya 11 May 1963, in ASS.

25 Hans Vetterli, Ella, Elisabeth Hofmann, Hans, Madeleine, Dorette and Marc Bernath to Pilon family (Heemstede), Nes Ammim 15 April 1963, in AJP.

26 Ella Vetterli, ‘Erste Eindrücke in Israel’, in *Nes Ammim Mitteilung* III/63, in AFK.

27 Quoted by J. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 10 April 1963, in AJP.

28 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 5 April 1963, in AJP.

Bezek pressed the Vetterlis with questions about AG policy.<sup>29</sup> Finances for a building permit were ready. However, a crucial condition had not yet been fulfilled: the va‘adah. Ominously, the AG failed to respond to his queries on this point.<sup>30</sup> Shlomo took the Vetterlis to Meir in order to establish working relations with the District Council.<sup>31</sup> Ella, though pregnant, wanted to stay in the bus as long as possible. In case of emergency, a white sheet would be lowered from the window. (Christine Vetterli would be born in Nazareth on 28 August 1963.) Her father battled thistles, grew melons, and planted cypress trees. Authorities were kept informed by Bezek and Ben-Dor:

The plan is to build a road first and then to bring industries. The road will be about three kilometres in length. The hill is unsuitable for agriculture. We intend to start building there: four complexes, with forty living units each (...). We plan to collaborate with the neighbouring kibbutzim and moshavim to build the factory.<sup>32</sup>

Pilon had made the acquaintance of the Roberts:

The man 45, his wife 40, the daughter 15. Rather simple farming folks, hard workers. Intend to stay for at least ten years. Speak only French. He knows his way with tractors and mechanics. They seemed all right, though rather taciturn.<sup>33</sup>

Bezek’s impression of them was that of a *Haredim* wing of Christianity.<sup>34</sup> Paul Roost fondly remembers these days: ‘living by the motto that was displayed in the bus’:

*Vom Aufgang der Sonne bis zu ihrem Niedergang sei gelobet der Name des Herrn.*<sup>35</sup>

The one cloud hanging over the project was that they had still not received the building permit. Hans Vetterli had no idea what was causing this delay.<sup>36</sup> Having come so far, it was imperative that Nes Ammim not disappoint its Jewish friends. They came from Nahariya, but also from Regba:

Waving with Israeli flags, they announced their intention to start a society of Friends of Nes Ammim. Regba was close by and we were invited to attend all kinds of community meetings there. Gabi Sommerfeld (later Peled) acted as our agricultural advisor.

There were also meetings with Druzes and Arabs:

We used to attend the (Arab) Greek Orthodox church in Kfar Yasif. Ali, one of sheikh Khayr’s supervisors, used to visit us from Abu Sinan on horseback.<sup>37</sup>

29 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 6 April 1963, in AJP.

30 S. Bezek to Ch. Gysel, Ayeleth Hashachar 15 May 1963.

31 S. Bezek to H. and J. Bernath and to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 23 April 1963, in AJP.

32 Fifth Knesset, second session, protocol nr. 78 Commission of the Interior, Tel Aviv 24 Kislev 5723 (21 December 1962), in: Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Jerusalem. Translation Cor van der Spek (Broek op Langedijk).

33 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 20 February 1963, AJP.

34 S. Bezek to Ch. Gysel, Ayeleth Hashachar 3 May 1963, AJP.

35 P. Roost to *Verwaltungsrat*, Nes Ammim 9 May 1965, ANAG folio 1965.

36 Interview Hans Vetterli by author, Stein am Rhein 4 May 2015.

37 Hans Vetterli, ‘DDEDEDE’, Stein am Rhein 2013.

Building a village would require no less than 1,200,000 Swiss francs, the equivalent of a million Dutch guilders.<sup>38</sup> In addition to that was the cost of the Schaffhausen office (50,000 frs. annually) and Pilon's salary as the international secretary (24,000 frs., 3/4 payable by the AG and the rest by Holland). Sent out by Holland, Jan and Hanny Hoogendonk chose to go to Kfar Blum for ulpan, in the Huleh valley. She was a pharmacist, while he had studied tropical agronomics.<sup>39</sup> Failing a building permit, there was little for them to do in al-Mansura.<sup>40</sup> Jan concluded that 'there is no clear idea in Switzerland why they have sent us here'.<sup>41</sup> Bezek wrote an angry letter:

I have to say that I consider you and the rest of the Dutch as great *labbekakkers* in your dealings with the Hoogendonks (...) they have been completely let down.<sup>42</sup>

Plans to arrange a second bus came to nothing: 'It seems Holland had engaged Jan for managing a developed farm (...) this was clearly not the environment they had anticipated.'<sup>43</sup>

### Kremers in Nahal Oz

Until the va'adah had been arranged to Eshkol's satisfaction, the Germans were in no great hurry. Jacob Bernath complained about 'Zweifrontenkrieg', caused by procrastinations in Velbert and Jerusalem.<sup>44</sup> Kremers was having second thoughts indeed: was this really what he wanted? Surely an Israeli kibbutz would offer better opportunities to get to know the land and the people? And especially in a place where German volunteers were not put on probation, as in Nes Ammim?

In 1963 he decided to put it to the test. After mediation by Israel's representatives in Germany,<sup>45</sup> he and a student group were accepted as volunteers by kibbutz Nahal Oz where the Institutum Judaicum had preceded them. There were eighty Jewish inhabitants, a quarter of them born sabras. Close to the demarcation line: the minarets of Gaza were clearly visible.<sup>46</sup> Kibbutzniks hardly possessed any property of their own. Children spent most of their time in a communal kindergarten, since their parents worked long days and also took part in armed patrols.<sup>47</sup> Decisions were made during the weekly chaverim meeting:

38 J. Bernath, circular letter Schaffhausen 22 March 1963, AJP.

39 J.G. Hoogendonk to J. Bernath, Evron 7 July 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

40 J.G. Hoogendonk to J.J. Pilon, Evron 19 June 1963, in *ibidem*.

41 J.G. Hoogendonk to J.J. Pilon, Evron 17 July 1963, in *ibidem*.

42 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 25 July 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

43 Interview Hans and Ella Vetterli by author, Stein am Rhein 30 April 2014.

44 J. Bernath to J.G. Hoogendoorn, Schaffhausen 1 July 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

45 The 'Israel-Mission' in the Federal Republic, based in Cologne. Cf. Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 119.

46 Martin Gilbert, *Israel. A history*, London 2008, 272. Nahal Oz had been founded by the army in 1954. Several Jewish pioneers came from Latin America.

47 The 'Nahal (Pioneering Fighter Youth) outposts originated as a series of settlements built in collaboration with the JNF and IDF to populate the border areas. Malkit Shoshan, *Atlas*, 159 and Yadin Roman, *The early years*, 29.

The *Asefa* elects a *Maskir* (responsible for social matters), a *Mekares* (for agriculture), a *Gisbar* (for financial matters) and other specialists (...). Together with other elected *Chawerim* they form the *Maskirut*, or board of the kibbutz.<sup>48</sup>

Kremers felt deeply attracted to this community, even to the extent of considering exchanging Nes Ammim for Nahal Oz. Benefits would be obvious: daily collaboration with the Israelis, no more haggling with traditional churches and international Christian partners, no ban on full German participation. The crucial factor that held him back was communal childcare: fathers and mothers, who both fully engaged in the work roster, only saw their offspring one or two hours a day.<sup>49</sup> Also lacking were religious services. Finally, he decided to go with Nes Ammim, despite its disadvantages. Too much had been invested there. Even so, it had been a close match. Kremers' children had enjoyed the opportunity to accompany him to Nahal Oz:

It was a perfect place for debate. He liked that style. For him it was not just confrontation, but rather a way of learning from each other. We heard shooting during the nights, raids by the fedayeen. The land and the people mattered to us, more than any Holy Land memories of Jesus' ministry. The smell of the countryside and its colours, the experience of moving through the desert. Of course, coming to Israel as Germans wasn't easy. However, what struck us was that the victims of the Holocaust, the people with the numbers tattooed on their arms, were often more friendly and more willing to talk to us than the younger generation. Father would have liked to live in Nahal Oz, but mother vetoed it.<sup>50</sup>

### Machteld de Goederen

The AG intended to create a village of 'positive' Christians.<sup>51</sup> Remarkably, the first Dutch woman to arrive in the bus was a Liberal. Machteld de Goederen (1927-2016) was originally from Bandung, Indonesia.<sup>52</sup> As a teenager she had been confined to the Kampili camp near Makassar, between 1942 and 1945. The experience would haunt her for the rest of her life:

The camp had taught me about the harsh realities of life, at an early stage. Yet I remained a child, arrested as it were, in the absence of a natural and gradual evolution to adulthood. I perceived myself as a stranger in the Netherlands, preferred to be on my own. Socially underdeveloped, I suppose. Sweating for exams in a tiny room.<sup>53</sup>

'Yet', she remarked in 2015, 'what is trauma? There is a natural inclination to hide that black hole behind a mental wall of your own making. But that is not going to work. Somehow you must move forward.'<sup>54</sup> A reason for becoming a confess-

48 Elly Huth (ed.), *Israel-Reise des Institutum*, Tübingen 1961, 33.

49 David Leach, *Chasing Utopia*, 16.

50 Interview Annedore and Thomas Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

51 Article 1 of the 'basic principles': 'Nes Ammim can engage any person of positive Christian beliefs.' Regulations 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

52 Stien van der Hout-Slagmolen, 'In memoriam Machteld de Goederen', in *Nes Ammim* March 2016 (supplemented by Racheli, Salma, Ziva and Diklah Bezek).

53 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 30 October 2015.

54 Interview with Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 20 March 2015.

ing DRC member in 1951 was her hope to find a much-needed moral strength. Dogma's like predestination, or the trinity, did not appeal at all to Machteld, who would later become a dedicated member of a freemason's lodge. Her great-grandfather Johannes de Goederen had been a follower of the famous Liberal pastor and poet François Haverschmidt in Schiedam,<sup>55</sup> and her father had been an admirer of Multatuli. Their open-mindedness paved her way to Israel:

Our family longed to return to the Indies but found that impracticable. My sister Els joined kibbutz Ma'ayan Zvi instead, near Zikhron Ya'akov. Interest in Judaism had been kindled by the DRC. My dream was simplicity, rooting the earth under a sunny sky. Thinking of Kampili, I tried to return to that pivotal moment of my youth. In Kfar HaNassi, near Ayeleth Hashachar, it was normal for intellectuals to perform manual labour. Pruning olive trees, picking apples, ironing, scrubbing the dining hall, cleaning. Shabbat ritual made a lasting impression: a token of moral strength for a people that was supposed to have died. At Sunday School in Ambon I had been told that the Old Testament 'foreshadowed' the New, that it belonged to the past. Only now, did I understand the presence of the living Jewish people; a people that had decided that they were no longer to be trifled with. The appeal for someone of my background was obvious.

In Tiberias I home-schooled the Snoek children. There were rumours about a Protestant kibbutz. When asked, Johan Snoek said: 'That's a messy business, since they have introduced a regulation: *Juden nicht erwünscht*.' This referred to the decision that Christian Jews could not live there. Corrie Snoek suggested that I ask Madeleine Bernath in Nazareth. She was very kind, but it seemed that I would have to wait for further developments.

Back in Kfar HaNassi there was someone waiting for me: Shlomo Bezek. I could start right away, he would settle it. Moments later I sat next to him in his car. I felt like a tramp: no money, hardly any assets. It was the kind of life I had come to seek. Near Regba we turned off the trunk road. We first saw banana plantations, then a wilderness of thistles and then finally Nes Ammim! The Vetterlis immediately made me feel welcome. We were young and healthy, though for Ella's pregnancy the conditions seemed impossibly primitive. It is hard to believe that the AG allowed it! On the other hand, the place was gorgeous. Clear views of Lebanon, the hills of Abu Sinan, Karmel and Mediterranean. We took to each other and enjoyed our freedom.<sup>56</sup>

Later that year the Vetterlis moved to Regba, giving their place in the bus to the Roberts. Machteld felt especially impressed by the international secretary of Nes Ammim:

And then Johan. Very charming *and* as tough as nails. I liked him, also for that nice Indonesian accent! And for that Asian elusiveness. He would invariably follow his personal vision and ideas.<sup>57</sup>

The Roberts intended to build a farm.<sup>58</sup> Their patience was about to be tested. Apart from its financial woes<sup>59</sup> the AG had also run into trouble with the new Prime Minister of Israel, Levi Eshkol.

55 H. Noordegraaf, *François HaverSchmidt*, 65.

56 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 7 February and 20 November 2013.

57 Machteld de Goederen to author, Amersfoort 21 November 2013.

58 Mary-Jeanne Robert, 'Nes Ammim 1963-1967', Fontainemelon 2013, in ANAG.

59 Ch. Gysel to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 12 July 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

## The va'adah

Mirjam Gerzon offered to convene a board of suitable curators, supposing that this would be a matter of routine.<sup>60</sup> To her utter amazement no reply was forthcoming, even after Eshkol had required it in writing in May.<sup>61</sup> The AG had no wish to submit to Israeli control, Jacob Bernath finally stated in his reply of 4 July. The Germans and Pilon, for whom the va'adah was a *conditio sine qua non*, were given to understand that the Swiss objected to an Israeli 'committee of inspection'. It might include some headstrong Jewish members 'who will only make trouble' – Mirjam Gerzon, for example.<sup>62</sup> Out of the blue a serious problem arose. A much-annoyed Eshkol engaged Hans Krause and Bezek as intermediaries, to make sure that the Christians understood that there was no room for bargaining in this matter. Krause commented that Bernath's letter of 4 July had been foolish.<sup>63</sup> Even Minnaar did not deny that:

It would have been better to follow Pilon's concept for a letter to Eshkol. The Germans share this opinion.<sup>64</sup>

Arnold de Leeuw approached an agitated Pilon at precisely the wrong moment. He was the son of a Jewish father and a Christian mother<sup>65</sup> and demanded to be admitted as a believer in 'Jeshuah Melech Jisrael'. He was flatly rebuked by Pilon, who told him that a visa would be denied,<sup>66</sup> a statement confirmed by the Israeli embassy in The Hague.<sup>67</sup>

Even Bezek's patience was wearing thin. No money, no va'adah, no building permit. To top it all off, he had read an RCN missionary paper while visiting the Snoek family, *De verkondiging van het evangelie onder Israël*. 'It told me how to convert Jews. A nasty periodical. In the colophon, I found Bakker listed as the administrator of funds for this aim. I wonder if Minnaar, Bonda, Lam and the others are also connected to this.' Had Keller been right all along?<sup>68</sup>

Pilon came under pressure from all sides. RCN deputies, alerted by Snoek, demanded that he retract his recent statements in the *Jerusalem Post*.<sup>69</sup> Things had gone too far, said Snoek<sup>70</sup>: 'I hope and trust that you hope, trust and pray that the Jewish people will find its Messiah. (...) Do you agree?'<sup>71</sup> As Machteld de Goederen had already noted, Snoek was beginning to turn away from the moshav plan:

60 M. Gerzon to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 14 February 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

61 L. Eshkol to J. Bernath, Jerusalem 7 May 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 23.

62 Ch. Gysel to H. Dahlhaus, Schaffhausen 17 July 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

63 H. Krause to S. Bezek, Jerusalem 15 August 1963, in AJP.

64 J. Minnaar to Ch. Gysel, Rotterdam 17 July 1963. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

65 A.C. de Leeuw to J.J. Pilon, Almelo 17 June 1963, AJP.

66 A.C. de Leeuw to J.J. Pilon, Almelo 20 June 1963 / 28 Siwan 5723, in ANAN.

67 I. Goldschmidt to A.C. de Leeuw, The Hague 24 June 1963, ANAN.

68 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 26 March 1963, AJP.

69 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath and Ch. Gysel, Heemstede 21 March 1963, AJP.

70 Matthew 28:19.

71 J.M. Snoek to J.J. Pilon, Tiberias 10 April 1963, AJP.



People keep asking me about Nes Ammim. Initially I could answer in the affirmative. But until the underlying issues have been cleared up (...) I must put myself at a distance.<sup>72</sup>

In a way, Pilon was happy to be harassed by his own church, as it might convince Shlomo that he was truly on his side:

The RCN opposition believes I'm an extremist, rather a Liberal than a true Christian, a traitor to the one true faith, etcetera. Our *dati'im* demand that I explain myself.<sup>73</sup>

And yet the appalling lack of funds made it imperative that commitment from the RCN continue. Even basic commodities were lacking at the bus site: 'We really need a jeep and tractor, or we'll find ourselves completely isolated during the rainy season.'<sup>74</sup> The *madrach* did all he could to improve matters. 'He was an open-minded Socialist', as his daughters say. 'Humour was his way to deal with problems. He was extremely human, but *not* a conformist. He would always talk to people in the margins. He had an eye for the other.'<sup>75</sup>

Assistance by well-meaning Israelis remained essential, 'without being able to pay them a proper fee'.<sup>76</sup> The Laron family slaved on the paperwork, Lohamei HaGettaot connected them to their water supply and Jokwei Hagalil provided machinery.<sup>77</sup> The net profit of the harvest was IL 17,000, (\$ 5,666). Kurkar (marl) from the quarry rendered IL 25,000. By now the group at the bus had been joined by the Hoogendonks and Willi Däscher from Switzerland. Cultural differences began to manifest, madame Robert being no fan of the rock & roll music of the Hoogendonk couple.<sup>78</sup> The Americans were expected soon. 'Pax men are usually around twenty years old', Orié Miller explained. 'Folks with sound experience in their farms, mechanics, carpenters and skilled builders.'<sup>79</sup> They also needed robust health. Hans Vetterli was laid up with typhus, Hanny Hoogendonk with kidney trouble, Däscher with jaundice. Jeanne Robert suffered from a scorpion bite, Ella Vetterli from a salmonella infection.<sup>80</sup> Henri Clot was not to be deterred, aged 23 and until recently, a schoolteacher in Vallorbe. Cor and Anneke van der Spek journeyed to Mizra after their wedding:

Their industrial branch produced fork-lift trucks. We learnt to speak in Ivrit. Mapam members advocated for making Israel a binational state, equally shared by Jews and Arabs. There were no ill feelings towards Christian Jews, if they kept quiet.<sup>81</sup>

Next came Nes Ammim. Money had been scraped together for a bulldozer. Even barracks were built, until the order arrived to take them down. 'We had put up the walls', remembers Van der Spek. 'Pity that they did not allow us another day,

<sup>72</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>73</sup> J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 8 April 1963, AJP.

<sup>74</sup> S. Bezek to H. Bernath, Nahariya 17 June 1963, ASS.

<sup>75</sup> Interview Racheli Eshel-Bezek and Diklah Geva-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

<sup>76</sup> Ch. Gysel to S. Bezek and E.M. Lehmann, Schaffhausen 9 July 1963, ASS.

<sup>77</sup> Agricultural cooperation in Evron, 'Winepresses of Galilee'.

<sup>78</sup> S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 20 May 1963, AJP.

<sup>79</sup> O.O. Miller to J.J. Pilon, Akron (Pennsylvania) 16 August 1962, AJP.

<sup>80</sup> H. Bernath to H. Kremers, Nazareth 1 November 1963, ANAN.

<sup>81</sup> Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013.

then we might have fixed the roof as well. A still valid Ottoman legislation rules that one cannot remove a roofed house.<sup>82</sup> The Roberts would have to spend at least another season in the bus:

Un seul moyen est de prendre la vie du bon côté (...) et de s'adapter aux circonstances du moment. Après tout, nous sommes en Israël pour un témoignage.<sup>83</sup>

Koller, engaged as the leading architect, wondered how this related to similar job descriptions of Ben-Dor and Van der Spek.<sup>84</sup> Even so, he was ready for the adventure.<sup>85</sup> From Nahariya, Cor presented a blueprint for the village to the District Council together with Dan Ben-Dor.<sup>86</sup> He finetuned his Ivrit by daily readings of the Hebrew Bible,<sup>87</sup> and welcomed international cooperation.<sup>88</sup> However, the contested subject of the va'adah had still not been finalized.

82 C. van der Spek to M. de Goederen, Broek op Langedijk 30 January 1985, ACS.

83 L. Robert to J.J. Pilon, Nes Ammim 17 November 1963. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

84 H.R. Koller and G. Koller-Zuppinger to J. Bernath, Rasa 20 October 1963, AFK.

85 Email H.R. Koller to author, Zurich 17 June 2015.

86 C. van der Spek to J.J. Pilon, Mizra 22 December 1963. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

87 Email C. van der Spek to author, Broek op Langedijk 17 July 2017.

88 C. van der Spek to H.R. Koller, Mizra 18 January 1964, AFK.



# UNDER THE CONSTELLATION OF SCORPIO

A 'free church' tradition appealed to the Bernaths, ever wary of churches with 'lots of officials and bureaucracy.'<sup>\*</sup> Free churches sought to avoid top-down interference by secular or ecclesiastical authorities. They opposed a va'adah. As Pilon seemed to side with the Germans in this vital matter, the Swiss tried to secure Evangelical support from the USA.

\* Interview Charles Gysel by author, Wilchingen 4 May 2015.



## XXVI ‘Fiddling with the concept’

‘Meeting you was a great comfort for me’, Jacob Bernath confided to Miller.<sup>1</sup> Machteld de Goederen was less enthusiastic, wondering whether Mennonite arrivals had ever been briefed on Werblowsky’s memorandum: ‘Orie Miller was one of Johan Pilon’s mistakes. I still hold that against him, that he kept bringing people in without assessing their suitability. The results were for the village community to find out.’<sup>2</sup>

### America

A Swiss proposal to raise additional support in the United States was accepted by Pilon, who saw the necessity of finding additional donors. He only confided to Bezek about his reservations regarding ‘selling’ the memorandum there.<sup>3</sup> Hans Bernath and Pilon planned to visit the States in April 1963. Miller scheduled consultations in New York, Elkhart, Chicago (Evangelical Covenant Church), Kansas City (Southern Baptists), Atlanta, Washington (National Association of Evangelicals NAE) and Akron. Unlike Southern Baptists and NAE, most Mennonites did not belong to the religious Right in politics. ‘About 150,000 members’, Pilon noted. ‘The majority is Orthodox, which differentiates them from the rather more Liberal Mennonites in Europe. Sturdy folk, non-smokers and no alcohol.’<sup>4</sup>

Both Bernath and Pilon took a risk. As an admirer of Billy Graham, Bernath hoped that Christian witness would benefit by a strengthening of the American connection. The problem for the Swiss surgeon was that Pacifism was opposed by most Fundamentalists. A connection to the Arabs of Nazareth did not make things any easier. Pilon too had a problem on his hands. If it was his intention to continue to oppose mission, Lehmann failed to understand what he might achieve by enlisting Evangelicals in Texas. Unequivocal support for Israel’s military build-up could hardly be the answer,<sup>5</sup> given the fact that Mennonites were simultaneously engaged in relief for the Arabs via their Bible Lands Services.<sup>6</sup>

1 J. Bernath to O. Miller, Schaffhausen 4 December 1963, ANAN.

2 Ibidem.

3 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 8 April 1963, AJP.

4 J.J. Pilon, report American journey 22 April–21 May 1963, ANAN.

5 H. Bernath and J.J. Pilon to E.M. Lehmann, Chicago 3 May 1963, ASS.

6 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 20 May 1963, AJP.

Velbert had not even been consulted about the trip. Minnaar explained why: 'Financial support from the USA is urgently needed.'<sup>7</sup> The US Committee reconvened on 20 May in the Prince George Hotel in New York. They failed to mention the Werblowsky memorandum, apart from a statement that 'direct' mission was not intended. The Church of the Covenant emphasized the workings of the Holy Spirit.<sup>8</sup> It was assumed that 'love and goodwill' for Israel<sup>9</sup> would suffice for Eshkol. Methodist Addison Eastman (New York) became chairman, Miller secretary. Southern Baptists were represented by Fred Worill, the NAE by Henry Hostetter. Miller was perceived as the driving force: 'The stamina and range of activities of this man, at an age of over seventy, are astounding.'<sup>10</sup> The aim was to 'establish a new kind of Christian presence and service amidst our Jewish brethren in Israel'.<sup>11</sup>

Most important for Pilon was that the US Committee would accept responsibility for a quarter of all running costs. Bernath counted on the Americans to resist a *va'adah* or any discrimination against the Jewish Christians. It came as a shock to him to find that many of the Americans were also deeply opposed to the Arabs. Even Kreider, a Mennonite, believed that they had 'forfeited their rights to the Land'. 'The Land had been a neglected, impoverished wasteland until it was revived by Jewish investment and creative energy.'<sup>12</sup> This view would enrage Nazareth if it were to become known there.

### Switzerland

The AG desperately needed to reassure its Swiss sympathizers. Rumours were rife that the moshav was discriminating, that it was being controlled by the Jewish State, and that Christian witness was forbidden. Philippe Gold, owner of a chemical plant and president of a Society of Christian businessmen, was one of the major donors. He was sympathetic to the Pentecostal movements and a longstanding friend of the Perrets, Madeleine Bernath's family. Gold visited the Swiss group in the bus, where he discussed his concerns.<sup>13</sup> Paul Vaucher, head of the 'secrétariat romand' and editor of *La Vie Protestante*, said that the *Jerusalem Post* only reflected Pilon's personal views.<sup>14</sup>

Hans Bernath had turned to the Americans as exponents of 'positive' Christianity. He believed that the Germans lacked a proper spiritual foundation, incap-

7 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 7 May 1963, AJP.

8 Kurt W. Peterson, 'The Evangelical Covenant Church (USA)', 170-181.

9 *Nes Ammim of Galilee*, 'Banner of the Nation'. *A challenge - an opportunity*, Akron (Pennsylvania) 1965, 2.

10 J. Bernath, circular letter, summer 1963, in AFK.

11 Minutes US Nes Ammim Committee, Chicago 15-16 October 1963, in ANAN.

12 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 167.

13 Ch. Gysel to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 29 May 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28. Cf. for Gold and the Pentecostal Movement in the Netherlands: 'Pinkstervuur in Genève', in *Kracht van Omhoog* 4 March 1966.

14 Ch. Gysel to J.J. Pilon and H. de Haas, Schaffhausen 6 February 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

sulated in bureaucracy, living in a paper world. Kremers had done the right thing when he decided to work with his hands in Nahal Oz. Bernath deplored the fact that he could not do the same at al-Mansura:

Pity, that Kremers is not here. I would like to have him in the mud, in the middle of things.<sup>15</sup>

Kremers addressed a Kirchentag in Basel but failed to capture the audience.<sup>16</sup> A meeting between Lili Simon and Madeleine Bernath did not fare any better. They shared a common background in Bucharest, where Madeleine had spent her early years and where Lili had been involved in the Jewish Mission.<sup>17</sup> That seemed like a long time ago. Lili had become unyieldingly opposed to missionaries in whatever capacity, which rather shocked Madeleine.<sup>18</sup> Germany, she repeated, insisted on a *va'adah*.<sup>19</sup> The Working Community of Christians and Jews, founded in Switzerland by Van Oyen, tried to mediate but to no avail. Theological innovation, the field in which Kremers excelled, had no part in the planning of Nes Ammim as the Bernaths understood it. 'This was never an aspect of our common planning for the village.'<sup>20</sup> Gysel begged Pilon to stop quoting Buber, Kremers or Werblowsky at any moment. 'Our statutes regarding missionizing have already done enough to antagonize the Free Churches. Remember that it is among them that we find most of our donors.'<sup>21</sup> Finding a common ground would require a major effort. Gysel tended his resignation:

Nes Ammim means an extraordinary burden for Jacob Bernath, next to his duties in Switzerland. He needs a fellow worker to brief him on conditions in Israel. I begin to doubt whether I am capable of doing that.<sup>22</sup>

Minnaar asked him to continue,<sup>23</sup> while Johan Pilon deliberated about his future course. 'The Swiss have no idea of the Dutch mentality and neither do the Dutch understand the Swiss.'<sup>24</sup> Bezek was not impressed. If it was the Dutch intention to maintain Werblowsky's memorandum, then bringing in of the NAE or the Covenant Church had been an act of folly. Pilon brazenly told him that 'ideological matters are primarily a Dutch responsibility in the time to come'.<sup>25</sup>

Van der Spek was impressed by the good spirits of the Bernath brothers. 'Cheerful folks. They liked guitar music.'<sup>26</sup> 'Don't let yourself be swept away by the whims of theology', Jacob used to say. 'Witnessing to our Lord is not a theological but rather a practical challenge.'<sup>27</sup> The idea was to witness to the pow-

15 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and Ch. Gysel, Nazareth 24 October 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

16 V. Hauser to *Verwaltungsrat*, Zurich 19 January 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.

17 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 512-513.

18 H. Bernath to J. Bernath, Nazareth 12 February 1963, AJP.

19 J. Bernath to J. Minnaar, Schaffhausen 5 July 1963. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

20 J. Bernath to J. Minnaar and J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 8 August 1963. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

21 Ch. Gysel to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 24 October 1963. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

22 Ch. Gysel to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 6 July 1963, HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

23 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 12 November 1962, AJP.

24 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 1 August 1963. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

25 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 8 April 1963, AJP.

26 Interview Anneke and Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 18 January 2014.

27 J. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 10 April 1963, AJP.



er of Christ to the Jews by good works.<sup>28</sup> They were surprised when Genton seemed to side with Kremers: there was a need for 'cleansing' Christian theology of Anti-Semitic taints.<sup>29</sup> The co-optation of the Church of the Covenant was not well received by Genton. Nor were the Swiss mainstream churches pleased. The 'Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirchen der Schweiz', asked to contribute 500,000 francs, turned it down:

The needs of the poor in Africa and Asia are rather more urgent.<sup>30</sup>

To make things worse for the Bernath brothers, the American alliance failed to appease Philippe Gold. He withdrew his money, saying that Kofsmann had been right all along.<sup>31</sup> Enlistment of Southern Baptists and the Church of the Covenant did not suffice to bring him back, not while there remained any doubt about commitment to the Christian Jews. Mainstream Protestants on the other hand had no intention of backing a project of Fundamentalists. Even in this early stage, support started to grow thin among Swiss Protestants.

### Germany

Israel's Ministry of Religious Affairs seemed to be under the impression that a national Protestant Church controlled the German branch of the moshav project. Werblowsky did not believe that. Velbert, he said, amounted to little more than a band of friends in the Rhineland, held together by the force of Kremers' charisma: a bunch of freebooters. That was also the impression of the *Evangelische Kirchenkanzlei* in Germany: 'Empfehle daher Vorsicht und Zurückhaltung.'<sup>32</sup> Relief programs for refugees in the Middle East feared that Velbert had come under the spell of Christian Zionists, mortally afraid of anything Arab. The result was another financial setback, this time in Germany. While a substantial grant for the Nazareth hospital was funded by *Brot für die Welt*, they simultaneously rejected a request for Nes Ammim.<sup>33</sup>

Indignantly, Bezek remarked that so far only a fraction of the German national potential had been mobilized: 'Should you happen to meet Kremers, please say hello for me and tell him that so far these Germans have hardly been of any use.'<sup>34</sup> If they did not act soon, a golden opportunity would go to waste. 'German-Israeli economic relations in fact were expanding in every sphere', as Sachar remarks:

28 *Nes Ammim. Christliche Siedlung in Israel*, Zurich 1963.

29 J. Genton, circular letter nr. 5, Lausanne 1963.

30 H. Hellstern (Hilfswerk EKS) to J. Bernath, Zurich 1 November 1963, HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

31 Ch. Gysel to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 29 May 1963. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

32 Evangelische Kirchenkanzlei Bremen to Kirchenkanzlei Hannover, Bremen 16 September 1963. Evangelisches Zentralarchiv in Berlin (EZA), Bestand 2 / 5253.

33 Gerhard Stratenwerth to Horst Dahlhaus, Berlin 11 September 1965, in EZA, Bestand 6 / 1584.

34 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 27 November 1963. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

Following the Shilumim<sup>35</sup> agreement, German business automatically obtained a market in Israel; by the 1960s, Israel's purchases from West Germany amounted to \$25 million annually. (...) To assist Israel economically, therefore, individual German companies and German institutions (with active government encouragement) purchased large quantities of State of Israel Bonds. Banks and insurance companies, as well as hundreds of German municipalities, were among the largest subscribers. The Trade Union Bank of Frankfurt in 1961 bought substantial shares of *Koor*, the Histadrut's iron and steel complex. The German government and the Volkswagen Foundation underwrote specific research projects carried out by the Technion and the Weizmann Institute. German universities and technical institutes provided scholarships for Israeli students.<sup>36</sup>

Boertien predicted that Kremers would transfer to Nahal Oz. What indeed could he expect from the Church of the Covenant?<sup>37</sup> It came as a surprise that he remained staunchly committed to the German society, now formally established as 'Verein zur Förderung einer christlichen Sieding E.V.'<sup>38</sup> Dahlhaus served as president, but basic principles had been laid down by Kremers:

We should relinquish all forms of Jewish Mission (...), meaning any attempt to disconnect a Jew from the Jewish people, by making him a church member.<sup>39</sup>

Heinz-Adolf Ritter, Waldemar Brenner and Wilhelm Silber joined the board from Southern Germany. Silber lived close to the Swiss border, where he could easily confer with the office in Schaffhausen.<sup>40</sup> Kurt Scharf, Ernst Wilm, Theodor Schlatter and Joachim Beckmann became curators. Wilm was a former member of the Bekennende Kirche and president of the Evangelical Church in Westfalen. Beckmann, Reformed, chaired the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland. The Lutheran Schlatter (Ludwigsburg) advocated a policy of 'Tatzeugnis', like the Swiss.<sup>41</sup> Curators were related to their *Landeskirchen*. 'That dwarfs the presence of a few pastors in the board', said Minnaar. 'All the more reason that people in Israel should not interfere with our internal affairs.'<sup>42</sup>

The Swiss required German technical know-how, the Hebrew University invited Kremers to teach, and the Dutch demanded extra financial support. Nonetheless, Germans had to prove their unrelenting contriteness by abstaining from sending pioneers or claiming a seat in the international board. Kremers seemed to accept that, unlike Becker. Hauser was supposed to act as a representative for Germany in the Verwaltungsrat, but messages from Schaffhausen were conveyed via Silber. Becker perceived the procedure as humiliating.<sup>43</sup> He was adamant that the Rheinische Kirche (Velbert) should maintain control, given the fact that the Lutherans were still operating a sanitized form of Jewish Mission. Otto von Har-

35 Reparations.

36 Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel*, 561-562.

37 M. Boertien, report October 1962 to deputies evangelization Israel and CRC Groningen, in HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

38 EV: eingetragener Verein.

39 Adam Weyer (ed.), *Heinz Kremers*, 250.

40 J.J. Pilon to J. Meir and H. Bernath, Schaffhausen 8 August 1962, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

41 Th. Schlatter to A. Wischmann, Ludwigsburg 2 February 1963, in EZA Bestand 6/1583.

42 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 29 November 1962, AJP.

43 Minutes VR Zurich 9 January 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 25.

ling could serve as an example: president of a society for Jewish-Christian cooperation, but also of a Lutheran society for Jewish Mission. Rengstorf concluded that Becker was leading Nes Ammim astray:

The whole project is an example of *Schwärmerei*, and I fail to understand the ulterior motives. My advice is to spend not a single penny on Nes Ammim. (...). The simplest answer to their requests is to reply that we have no funds available.<sup>44</sup>

Rengstorf suspected that Velbert had fallen under the spell of Geis, Barth and the DRC. Kremers did not deny it.<sup>45</sup> He did not find it easy to put up with the pressure. 'He was a sensitive man', said a Dutchman. 'His sermons had the capacity of moving the audience to tears. His frenetic non-stop activity suggested that there was more to this man than showed on the surface.'<sup>46</sup> Church members felt affronted by his advice to Jewish Christians to return to Judaism.<sup>47</sup> For many of them, his restricted concept of dialogue was unusual to say the least:

Our duty in Israel is to raise the white flag of surrender, instead of any crusading ensign. We will not even promote dialogue, knowing too well that this would be perceived as yet another strategy for conversion. We will only talk about Christianity if invited to do so by the Jews. We do not come as trespassers. We need official Israeli approval.<sup>48</sup>

Statements of this kind made Velbert dependent on the wing of German Protestantism that was willing to consider drastic reform. A much-needed 100,000 DM was supplied by the Evangelical Church in Westfalen, for the explicit aim of a change in relationship between Christians and Jews.<sup>49</sup> Becker, 'a strong headed young man', would settle for nothing less.<sup>50</sup> Rike Wichelhaus:

Dr Becker was a dominant man, which was part of his success. Despite his opposition to the traditionalists, he managed to raise the funds that were necessary for Nes Ammim's survival.<sup>51</sup>

Newcomers to the German board were Gollwitzer and chairman Hans-Joachim Kraus of the Gesellschaft für christlich-jüdische Zusammenarbeit (Hamburg).<sup>52</sup>

44 K.H. Rengstorf aan Innere Mission und Hilfswerk der EKD, [Münster] 28 October 1963, quoted in Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 146-147.

45 Heinz Kremers, *Das Verhältnis der Kirche zu Israel*, 18 and 31.

46 Interview Simon Schoon by author, Amersfoort 5 December 2013.

47 Heinz Kremers, *Judenmission heute?*, 11.

48 Minutes Nes Ammim conference Frankfurt 22 June 1963. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

49 *Nes Ammim. Christliche Siedlung in Israel*, Gottmadingen 1963.

50 Interview H. Dahlhaus by author, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin) 25 January 2013.

51 Interview Rike Wichelhaus by author, Düsseldorf 27 September 2013.

52 Other curators were Rudolf Ahrens (Lüdenscheid), Heinz Autenrieth (Stuttgart), Paul Deitenbeck (Lüdenscheid), Karrenberg, August Kröhl (Gevelsberg), Rudolf Schmidt (Bielefeld), Paul Schmidt (Berlijn), Ernst-Otto Schumann (Keulen), Von Staa, Stöver, Gerhard Stratenwerth (Frankfurt am Main).

## Holland

The Dutch had set up quarters in a wing of the Christian Migration Office in Rotterdam, under the direction of Gerrit Polet. 'Believing man', Pilon told the Bernaths, 'of the RCN'.<sup>53</sup> Pauline den Blijker headed the administration, '*meshuge* of Nes Ammim'. Polet even considered selling his insurance firm, to make himself fully available.<sup>54</sup> Gysel advised them to stay level-headed:

What we need is not Romanticism but a constructive approach.<sup>55</sup>

Mirjam Gerzon had another chat with the ostracised Bakker, 'and it turned out that we understood each other very well'.<sup>56</sup> He explained to her that changing an established theological tradition would take more than just a few years.<sup>57</sup> Grolle wanted to attract the traditionalists in the DRC to Jewish-Christian dialogue and tried to speak their language. That was why *Israël en de Kerk* included sentences that were so annoying to Henriëtte Boas. 'The fullness of the Jews and of the Gentiles will be harvested for sure (...) Christ will claim the world for his kingdom.'<sup>58</sup> It was exactly the type of discourse that Geis and Kremers denounced as incompatible with dialogue.

Pilon found himself in the crossfire. In America he had helped bring the Church of the Covenant on board with Nes Ammim. In Holland he came under siege because of his quotes in the *Jerusalem Post*.<sup>59</sup> This did not improve after Pilon's lecture to the Dutch Zionist Student Organization, where he answered the question whether mission was a Christian duty in any circumstances, was published in the *NIW*:

For me as a person, no. Perhaps in Africa. But with the Jewish people, that's an entirely different matter. The Jewish people are already connected to God.<sup>60</sup>

Missionaries fumed, saying this amounted to 'raping the message of the Gospel' and sticking a dagger into the backs 'of those of us who are labouring in Israel'.<sup>61</sup> For Boertien it was another example of 'silly, starry-eyed Israel pseudo-theology'.<sup>62</sup> Sister Pekel replied that 'every pastor is a missionary, and if not, he's unfit to be pastor'.<sup>63</sup> Minnaar wrote in private to Pilon to say that 'there's just *one* single path of salvation – not two, as argued by Buber and assumingly also by you'.<sup>64</sup> Van der Spek asked to stop the bickering and to focus on the bigger issue of Christian presence in the Middle-East: 'Western influence diminishes every day. All

53 J.J. Pilon to H. and J. Bernath, Heemstede 5 April 1963, AJP.

54 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 8 April 1963, AJP. Den Blijker would join the international secretariat in Schaffhausen, as the successor of Anneke van der Spek.

55 Ch. Gysel to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 6 July 1963. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

56 M. Gerzon to G. Polet, Jerusalem 18 March 1963. HDC VU, archive NAN, box 24.

57 M.J. Arntzen, 'Het Israël Gods', in *Het Gereformeerd Weekblad* 24 November 1961.

58 *Israël en de Kerk*, 54.

59 Cf. Gert van Klinken, *Christelijke stemmen over het jodendom*.

60 'Nog een keer Nes Ammim' (lecture J.J. Pilon), in *NIW* 1 March 1963.

61 Quoted in *Ingelijfd in Israël* (edited by T. Brienens), Amersfoort 1992.

62 M. Boertien, report October 1962–February 1963, in HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

63 A. Pekel to J.J. Pilon, Deventer 31 January 1963, in AJP.

64 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon (Nahariya), Rotterdam 25 September 1964, in ANAN.

over the world, the Westerners are being kicked out.'<sup>65</sup> Help for Pilon came from Hanna-Louk van Stegeren-Keizer. The decisions regarding Christian Jews made sense:

1. Anyone who is acquainted with the situation in Israel could see this coming.
2. A sensible Jewish Christian has no intention to settle in Nes Ammim, as it is obvious that this will benefit neither himself nor the Jewish people nor the service to the Jewish people.
3. The Israeli position regarding converted Jews and Jewish Mission is fully understandable.
4. Nes Ammim must continue. If it succeeds, it will also be for the benefit of the Christian Jews.<sup>66</sup>

This appeal, by a Jewish member of the RCN, came at exactly the right time. The 'fuss' in the churches threatened to get out of hand.<sup>67</sup> Pilon had to admit that: 'Dogmatics (...) turn the pious into tigers, ready to devour each other, Bible in hand!'<sup>68</sup> Van Stegeren-Keizer was the first to summon the courage to explain the memorandum to the RCN deputies without leaving out the awkward bits.<sup>69</sup> Grolle felt grateful that she had taken the lead:

For there should be no misunderstandings: the idea is *not* to 'evangelize among the Jews'. We are opposed to that anyhow. (...) Neither is it a refuge for Jewish Christians. (...) Israeli authorities would never cooperate. We need to be candid about these matters.<sup>70</sup>

Machteld de Goederen believed that Pilon had been prepared for the challenge by his personal past:

The Dutch Indies, experience of loss, of physical violence, being part of a war generation. A will to act was fuelled by the memories, to make a difference. Johan was a go-getter, born under the zodiac sign of the Scorpio: all or nothing.<sup>71</sup>

It was not going to be easy:

My head is full of rubbish. (...) Plans for starting up business, together with investors and agriculturists, have been frustrated by this ideological headache.<sup>72</sup>

Sikkel, president of the RCN deputies for Israel Evangelization, concluded that things had gotten out of hand.<sup>73</sup> He agreed with Snoek that Pilon would have to make an explicit statement of his firm belief 'that this people will find its Messiah'.<sup>74</sup>

65 C. van der Spek to J.J. Pilon, Nahariya 27 January 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

66 H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer, 'No Jewish Christians in Nes Ammim', memorandum April 1963, in ANAN.

67 J.J. Pilon to J.A. Beelaerts van Blokland (embassy Jerusalem), Heemstede 28 March 1963.

68 J.J. Pilon to C. van der Spek, Heemstede 8 February 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

69 Minutes NAN, Rotterdam 15 February 1963 (at the office of J. Minnaar), in AJP.

70 J.H. Grolle, 'Nes Ammim', in AJP.

71 Interview M. de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 7 February 2013.

72 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 8 April 1963, AJP.

73 HUA archive deputies Church and Israel RCN inv.nr. 11 (minutes 28 March 1963).

74 J.M. Snoek to J.J. Pilon, Tiberias 10 April 1963, AJP.

Though Kremers urged him not to give in to this kind of pressure,<sup>75</sup> an RCN withdrawal would have serious repercussions. The deputies solemnly summoned Pilon, requesting him to affirm the following principles:

1. An eventual Israeli ban on Jewish Christians is unacceptable.
2. Only tactical considerations can refrain from accepting Christian Jews *for the moment*.
3. Nes Ammim should promote 'a more positive view regarding the Christian religion'.
4. The idea of two separate ways to God (Buber) is irreconcilable with the Gospel;
5. No Christian can ever be exempt of the duty to evangelize.<sup>76</sup>

Without referring to the other principles, he submitted to the final point, in writing:

It is my conviction that the only way to salvation is via Jesus Christ, also for the Jewish people. I expect that the Jewish people will accept Jesus in the future.<sup>77</sup>

Deputies replied that their continued support depended on this affidavit,<sup>78</sup> and denied any formal tie to the moshav in their report for the RCN Synod.<sup>79</sup> For Pilon it was a humiliation, a scar that would never heal. Next time he would stand for his principles, together with Velbert. Pilon's interviews in the Jewish press, Kremers flatly stated, were in full accordance with the German view.<sup>80</sup> Sikkel's policies belonged to the past. The only way forward, also the only way to warm Protestant youngsters for the action field of 'Church and Israel', was the very program that Werblowsky's memorandum had been proposing and that the deputies had tried to stifle with their five points.

75 J.J. Pilon to A. Gjerding (Geneva), Schaffhausen 27 April 1963, ANAN.

76 HUA archive deputies Church and Israel RCN inv.nr. 11 (minutes 30 April 1963).

77 J.J. Pilon to deputies, 19 June 1963, in HUA archive deputies Church and Israel RCN, inv.nr. 372.

78 Cf. *Acta Generale Synode GKN Groningen-Zuid 1963/Lunteren 1964* (appendix LXIIIb), 221.

79 *Acta Generale Synode GKN Groningen-Zuid*, art. 269.

80 Retrospective: M. Boertien to H. Bernath, Jerusalem 18 August 1964, ANAN.



## ‘SERIOUS RECONSIDERATION’

Abba Eban (1915-2002), Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations, marvelled at the sudden surge of Western sympathy. The country was ‘visited, inspected, explored and often praised’. Protestant friends displayed a fondness that somehow reminded them of their former missionary fervour.<sup>1</sup> Nes Ammim was just one example among many that showed that forging a new relationship was not as easy as it might seem.

1 Abba Eban, *Mijn land*, 153-154.





## XXVII Va'adah

As far as Jacob Bernath was concerned, the AG had met its obligations.<sup>1</sup> However, Eshkol asked for written confirmation of a few additional points:

The Internal Affairs Committee of the Knesset agreed to withdraw its objection to the setting up of Nes Ammim only after I assured them that no religious missionary activity would be undertaken by the initiators or the inhabitants of the village, nor would any educational activity be undertaken by you for outsiders, whether children or adults.

Noting present objections and the concern which the Knesset Committee and Governmental authorities have expressed, I propose that you give serious reconsideration to the whole matter. If you feel that you can unreservedly take full responsibility that no form of missionary activity will be undertaken by the village and that educational activity will be limited solely to the inhabitants, I request an express affidavit in writing. In addition, I request that you confirm your consent to establish a joint supervisory committee, should the Government decide upon such action, the function of which will be to assure that all commitments undertaken are strictly adhered to.<sup>2</sup>

This was the va'adah, translated in German as 'Überwachungskomitee'.<sup>3</sup> Shlomo Bezek complained that this matter, if properly handled, should have been settled months ago.<sup>4</sup> Pilon hoped that Ben-Dor and Voet would be represented.<sup>5</sup> The Swiss and Americans, however, claimed a millet-status. So did Minnaar, referring to Abraham Kuyper's insistence on sphere sovereignty. An advisory board was the maximum they were willing to accept:

A consultive committee (...) with dependable Israeli members who sympathize with our project.<sup>6</sup>

A stalemate followed. Eshkol became Prime Minister in June, as successor of the great Ben-Gurion. To break the deadlock, Velbert organized a consultation in Frankfurt, with Gjerding attending for the WCC.<sup>7</sup> Velbert insisted on the va'adah, as required by Eshkol. Becker presented an ultimatum: 'Without full confidence of the Israelis, we cannot continue.'<sup>8</sup> Jacob Bernath protested that this was a form of blackmail:

1 J. Bernath to international Nes Ammim committees, Schaffhausen 11 April 1963, AFK.

2 L. Eshkol to J. Bernath (president Nes Ammim AG), Jerusalem 7 May 1963, AJP.

3 Ibidem.

4 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, 20 May 1963, AJP.

5 J.J. Pilon to R. Bakker, Nazareth 22 March 1962. HDC VU, archive NAN, box 24.

6 D. von Wyss, 'Vorschlag für die Organisation und Finanzierung des Nes Ammim'. HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.

7 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath and NA-Germany, Heemstede 29 June 1963, in ANAN.

8 Nikolaus Becker, 'Auf dem Wege zu einem neuen Verhältnis', 36-38.

The Germans refused to proceed until they had Eshkol's definite OK.<sup>9</sup>

Lehmann remarked that it was a colonialist idea to think that the initiators of a project of this kind could barter with Eshkol.<sup>10</sup> After much haggling it was decided that a draft of basic principles would be prepared by Kremers and Bakker. Becker thought this was a clever move. Bakker was perceived in Switzerland as a victim of the same 'purge' that had befallen the Christian Jews. What the Swiss did not realize, though Mirjam Gerzon could have told them, was that Bakker basically agreed with Velbert. Jacob Bernath withdrew to a log cabin near the Thunersee to consider his options. In the end he realized that he could not force the issue,<sup>11</sup> even though the Americans expected him to do so.<sup>12</sup> The best course of action was to get the project started under the most favourable terms available, and to try to renegotiate at a later moment.

### Jacob Bernath

Two months after sending his letter, Eshkol finally received an answer. Jacob Bernath sent his reply on 4 July, without prior consultation with his international partners. He congratulated Eshkol at being nominated Prime Minister, but still maintained his refusal to accept a *va'adah*:

Our impression is that it would jeopardize our freedom of action, and that it would not be understood by our sponsors in Switzerland and America.<sup>13</sup>

The Prime Minister was given to understand that the slow start was mainly due to Velbert:

Germany is procrastinating. They will only move once they have received your explicit approval.<sup>14</sup>

Bernath knew that the Germans would never agree to the content of this letter, so he sent it on personal authority. Gysel begged Pilon not to interfere:

I strongly ask you to accept this. It is up to Jakob to make the decision. After all, he is Nes Ammim's president.<sup>15</sup>

It is ironic that it was Bezek who saved the AG president almost singlehandedly from the potentially dire effects of his rash move. The *madrach* never faltered in his efforts to convince the authorities. 'The pioneers in the bus were fine, it was the ideology that remained opaque and contradictory.'<sup>16</sup> His role was pivot-

9 J. Bernath to J. Meir (Nahariya), Schaffhausen 5 July 1963, in AJP.

10 E.M. Lehmann to Ch. Gysel, Nahariya 26 June 1963, in ASS.

11 J. Bernath to international partners, Schaffhausen 22 July 1963, in ANAN.

12 O. Miller to J.J. Pilon, Akron 21 May 1963, in ANAN.

13 J. Bernath to L. Eshkol, Schaffhausen 4 July 1963, in ANAN.

14 J. Bernath (president Nes Ammim AG) to Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, Schaffhausen 4 July 1963, in ASS.

15 Ch. Gysel to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 6 July 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

16 Interview Racheli Eshel-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

al. Israelis turned invariably to Shlomo: ‘They expected him to explain. *He* had to convince them.’<sup>17</sup> For good reason: Gysel admits that the AG lacked any first-hand knowledge of Israel.<sup>18</sup> No one could force Eshkol and the Knesset to assist an undertaking they did not like.<sup>19</sup> The American historian Merkley believes that Protestants only gradually realized that the West was no longer the ruling power in the world. It was only with ‘great difficulty’ that they accepted that final decisions about religious rights in Israel were being made by the Jewish State.<sup>20</sup> Bernath’s attitude is an example of this reluctance, like Boertien’s insistence that Israel should conform to international (Western) standards.<sup>21</sup>

### July 1963: shipwrecked within sight of the harbour?

Lehmann failed to understand why there was a problem in the first place.<sup>22</sup> A few kilometres away, Beth-El was thriving under supervision of a va‘adah.<sup>23</sup> Bezek put pressure on Pilon: ‘You know well enough what the Israeli opinion is. If the matter is not resolved to their satisfaction, there will be *no* approval forthcoming for building, water or visas.’ The Ministry of the Interior threatened to evict those who overstayed their tourist visas.<sup>24</sup>

Jacob Bernath had manoeuvred himself into a tight corner. Fellow Christians in Switzerland kept asking why he was not standing up for missionaries and Christian Jews. Bankers and industry leaders made fun of him: apparently it was easier to build a multi-million dollar Autobahn through the Alps than to run a simple farm in Galilee. Now he also had to face the wrath of Eshkol:

Most of our problems are the result of the hesitations of the Israeli government and the delay of permits they had promised. Many of our supporters, especially among the industrials, are beginning to wonder whether it makes sense to continue.<sup>25</sup>

Kremers would have none of it. He insisted on compliance with principles that had already been agreed upon:

Will Jacob Bernath finally admit that we were right, and that it is only by openness and honesty that we can get anywhere in Israel? Let us hope so! (...) Eshkol is adamant about this matter.<sup>26</sup>

17 Interview Diklah Geva-Bezok by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

18 Ch. Gysel to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 6 July 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

19 Interview Charles Gysel by author, Stein am Rhein 4 May 2015.

20 Paul Charles Merkley, *Christian Attitudes towards the State of Israel*, Montreal 2001, 52.

21 M. Boertien, reply to ‘Sinn und Aufgabe von Nes Ammim’ by H. Kremers, Wassenaar 17 August 1963, in AJP.

22 E.M. Lehmann to J. Bernath, Nahariya 26 June 1963, in ASS.

23 Cf. Günter Gottschalk, ‘Drei Fragen waren maßgebend für mein Leben’, <http://www.kinder-noah.de>.

24 S. Bezok to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 25 July 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

25 J. Bernath to H.R. Koller, Schaffhausen 15 March 1965, in AFK.

26 H. Kremers to J.J. Pilon, Kettwig 9 August 1963, in ANAN.

Authorities would halt the project, if the AG did not come to its senses soon.<sup>27</sup> Pilon agreed that 'this supervisory commission is urgently needed',<sup>28</sup> only to find that Bernath prevaricated even now.<sup>29</sup> He had to act without delay, warned Lehmann: 'Quo vadis?'<sup>30</sup> Ben-Dor and Shlomo Amir warned about the debilitating economic effects of the stand-off.<sup>31</sup> Machinery orders for the sum of IL 70,000 were left unpaid, Ayeleth Hashachar failed to receive Shlomo's salary. Things simply could not continue this way.<sup>32</sup> Eshkol left it to Amir to answer Bernath's letter of 4 July:

I brought your letters to the attention of the Prime Minister and regret to inform you that the contents of the same were a great disappointment to him. The information that there has been no progress in mobilising industrial capital and know-how practically removes the whole idea behind the project.

As you know, there is no additional water in the region for another agricultural village. The idea of establishing Nes Ammim assumed that it would be based on industrial enterprises and industrial know-how, which would be brought by you from abroad and which would help the industrialisation of the State of Israel and its economic development and expand its export. This assumption underlay the positive attitude of the responsible authorities towards the project.

Also, the reservations which you expressed regarding the participation of a Government representative in a supervisory committee of the village, to which you formerly agreed, add a further obstacle. Therefore, I am afraid that (...) cooperation of responsible authorities is being jeopardised.<sup>33</sup>

Ben-Dor was available for further comments:

[Amir] told us that Eshkol was so deeply disappointed by this letter that a total shutdown was considered. Amir took judicial advice. Their conclusion was that Nes Ammim will have to offer extra insurances, apart from what already has been agreed upon.<sup>34</sup>

Bernath finally capitulated, announcing his readiness 'to accept any legal arrangements which are deemed necessary'.<sup>35</sup> Amir intended to appoint Bezek, Meir, Chaim Gringold (Lohamei HaGettaot) and Fritzl Arnstein (Regba) to the *va'adah*, while the District Council reserved its right of veto. On 6 September Bernath, representing the Verwaltungsrat of Nes Ammim International, confirmed the agreements to Eshkol:

27 S. Bezek and E.M. Lehmann to J.J. Pilon, Nahariya 3 August 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

28 J.J. Pilon to S. Bezek, Heemstede 1 August 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

29 J. Bernath to S. Bezek and E.M. Lehmann, stationery Nes Ammim 9 August 1963, in ANAN.

30 E.M. Lehmann to H. Bernath, Nahariya 11 August 1963, in ASS.

31 J.J. Pilon to J. Minnaar, Ayeleth Hashachar 7 September 1963, in ANAN.

32 S. Bezek to J. Bernath, Nahariya 18 August 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 25.

33 S. Amir (economic assistant to the Prime Minister) to J. Bernath, Jerusalem 20 August 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

34 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Jerusalem 4 September 1963, in ANAN.

35 J. Bernath to L. Eshkol, Schaffhausen 5 September 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

Your Excellency,

Referring to your letter of May 7th, after ample consideration within our Board of participating countries, I herewith declare in the name of the Nes Ammim organisations:

1. that no form of activity of a missionary nature will be engaged in the village or by its inhabitants;
2. that educational activity will be limited solely to the inhabitants of the village;
3. that we are prepared to establish in cooperation with the Government a joint supervisory committee, whose function will be to assure that all commitments undertaken are strictly adhered to;
4. that furthermore we agree to accept any legal arrangements which are deemed necessary for the implementation of the above stated.

We reiterate, that we sincerely intend to carry out the project of Nes Ammim along the very lines as laid down in our Memorandum to the Government.

Yours faithfully, Jacob Bernath, president of Nes Ammim-AG.<sup>36</sup>

Curiously, he still tried to make his partners believe that these were minor matters: 'Israeli concerns regarding mission and a supervisory committee are just a matter of politics. Eshkol is not really interested.'<sup>37</sup> The Israelis, however, insisted that the agreements should take effect immediately.<sup>38</sup> Bernath came to the office of Amir on 17 September to sign specific commitments that had been laid before him:

Further to our letter of September 6th, we agree to the following legal arrangements for the carrying out of the undertaking in the said letter:

- every contract between ourselves and our employees will contain a clause, forbidding him to participate in any form of missionary activity in Israel;
- our corporation will not employ any person or allow any person to reside in our village, who has not signed the said contract.
- we agree that in any contract that we will sign with any public body in Israel for any special amenities, there will be a clause inserted to the effect that we will not undertake any missionary activities.<sup>39</sup>

Also agreed was an official declaration, to be signed by all workers in Nes Ammim:<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> J. Bernath to Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, Jerusalem 6 September 1963, in ANAN.

<sup>37</sup> J. Bernath to J. Minnaar, O. Miller, H. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 10 September 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

<sup>38</sup> S. Bezek to J. Bernath, Nahariya 18 August and Jerusalem 4 September 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7 and 28.

<sup>39</sup> J. Bernath to Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, Jerusalem 17 September 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

<sup>40</sup> Model form for Nes Ammim employees 17 September 1963, ANAN.

Dear Sir,

The undersigned, .....

employee of the Nes Ammim Association in ....

wishes to join the Nes Ammim Settlement in Israel.

I/We declare, that I/we will not participate in any missionary activities in Israel.

For the Nes Ammim Association:

The employee:

.....

.....

Meir, aware of Bernath's predicament, invited him for the Shabbat meal. They conversed in German, something Meir had refused to do during previous meetings. Bernath went on to see various technical experts.<sup>41</sup> However, the AG president still tried to downplay his recent commitments.<sup>42</sup> Gysel on the other hand, affirmed unequivocally that concessions had been made.<sup>43</sup> Neither did Pilon doubt the outcome:

On request of Mr. Eshkol, we signed a simple statement, confirming that Nes Ammim would not engage in missionary activities, not establish a missionary school and is willing to set up a joint supervisory committee for the settlement together with the Government. (...) So, with the confirmation in writing, we assume that the ideological part is now settled.<sup>44</sup>

Meir believed that only Pilon could guarantee a faithful adherence to what had been agreed to: 'Jacob Bernath impressed me by his commitment and sense of purpose. However, the many hours spent with Dr. Pilon were more fruitful. He has become very dear to us.'<sup>45</sup> Stijn Pilon suspected that Bernath had signed for the sole reason that he could not avoid it.<sup>46</sup> Her husband's version of events was that the president of Nes Ammim AG had also committed himself to an *unwritten* gentlemen's agreement to exclude the Christian Jews.<sup>47</sup> Pilon said he had personally guaranteed its observance, under control of the va'adah.<sup>48</sup>

Boertien immediately requested a confirmation of this gentlemen's agreement but failed to receive a response.<sup>49</sup> His comments were scathing: 'NA has agreed to a policy of *apartheid*. (...) In order to get the necessary permission to build their settlement, NA has sacrificed its Christian character on the altar of Jewish nationalism.'<sup>50</sup> In contrast, reports by the AG president sounded as if business had been conducted in the usual way:

41 J. Bernath to international partners Nes Ammim, Schaffhausen October 1963, AFK.

42 J. Bernath to J. Minnaar, O. Miller, H. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 10 September 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28. The date is obviously an error, as it may be assumed that the letter was sent after Bernath's return to Switzerland on 20 September.

43 Ch. Gysel to E.M. Lehmann, Schaffhausen 30 August 1963, in ASS.

44 J.J. Pilon to A. Gjerding, Heemstede 18 October 1963, in AJP.

45 E.M. Lehmann to H. Bernath, Nahariya 2 October 1963, in ASS.

46 M. de Goederen to author, Amersfoort 21 November 2013.

47 J.J. Pilon to J. Minnaar, Nazareth 15 September 1963, in AJP.

48 M. de Goederen to author, Amersfoort 24 October 2015.

49 M. Boertien to M. Drayer, Wassenaar 14 June 1963, in HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105.

50 M. Boertien to M.C. King (Geneva) and others, Jerusalem 30 July 1964, in ANAN.

Our journey was obviously blessed by the Lord and by prayers of our supporters. It is obvious that Israel is positively interested in Nes Ammim.<sup>51</sup>

According to Bernath, there was no intent of discriminating against anyone:

Everywhere in Israel I encountered a willingness to help us. Surprisingly, no one ever mentioned any discriminating against the Christian Jews or against the Germans.<sup>52</sup>

To improve public relations in Israel, Lehmann was engaged as a press agent. Building material remained in storage until the necessary permits would finally be issued. A decision by the cabinet was scheduled for January 1964.

### ‘Sinn und Aufgabe’

Soon after Bernath had departed, Kremers arrived at Lod airport. In an exact reversal of traditional mission, he wanted to bring a Jewish message to the Christian world. ‘God’s partiality’ implied that Israel had been elected by divine providence. Jewish exegetic principles took precedence over accepted dogma that dominated in the RCN, ‘still actively committed to its remaining Jewish Mission’.<sup>53</sup> That is why Kremers insisted on strict rules of conduct: ‘Settlers in our community are committed to their promise not to evangelize among the Jews in any way. Anyone who does, will have to leave.’<sup>54</sup> The meeting with Bezek left a lasting impression on him:

I will never forget how we first met. Together with Johan, Shlomo came to Haifa to pick me up at the docks. At first he just stared at me. Finally, we shook hands, and I heard him say: ‘I’m Shlomo.’ He was ever aware of what had been done to his people. And yet he summoned the inner strength to engage himself in reconciliation between Jews and Christians, Jews and Germans.<sup>55</sup>

Shlomo’s murdered siblings had expressed hope of their being united at the waterfront of Haifa.<sup>56</sup> Now he was standing there, awaiting a German. They met with Joseph Meir in café Penguin in Nahariya, where Kremers preferred to speak Ivrit:

Meir stimulated German members of Nes Ammim to come forward, as a living proof of their commitment to Israel. To demonstrate that they differed from the Neo-Nazis in their country.<sup>57</sup>

While his students went on to Lohamei HaGettaot, Kremers presented his ideas in Tel Aviv ‘till late at night’, as Pilon recalled. Jewish friends were given access to Kremers’ memorandum beforehand. In general, it was well received. Israelis found it a hard read, but Heinz a nice guy. Lehmann invited him to Nahari-

51 J. Bernath to international partners Nes Ammim, Schaffhausen October 1963, AFK.

52 J. Bernath to H.R. Koller, Schaffhausen 2 October 1963, AFK.

53 Heinz Kremers, *Judenmission heute?*, 13.

54 Annotated concept for ‘Nes Ammim. Sinn und Aufgabe einer christlichen Siedlung in Israel’, in Archiv Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 119.

55 H. Kremers to M. Bezek-van Praag, Moers 7 April 1971, AFB.

56 Dora Lorsch to Sal Lorsch (Bezek), Alice de Vries and their son Raffi, Bussum 21 April 1940, Fig.

57 J.J. Pilon to NA-Germany, Heemstede 10 October 1963, ANAN.



ya, 'as the ideologist of Nes Ammim',<sup>58</sup> and promptly offered to correct proofs.<sup>59</sup> Reception in Ayeleth Hashachar was equally cordial. In Jerusalem Werblowsky and Flusser made plans for academic cooperation, and Kremers was introduced to Buber via Geis. He also met Yehoshua Amir, whose father had served as a rabbi in Duisburg. Flusser paved the way to Jehuda Ashkenazy, saying: 'That is a man you have to get to know, a *tzadik*.'<sup>60</sup> Ashkenazy had been born in Breslau and was an Auschwitz survivor.

Kremers forwarded his concept<sup>61</sup> to the DRC and to Eshkol (via Krause). Bakker received regular briefings. However, despite Gronauer's affirmation to the contrary<sup>62</sup>, Kremers remained sole author of *Sinn und Aufgabe von Nes Ammim*. He denounced Bernath's efforts to circumvent the va'adah as a grave error and wanted to ensure that nothing of the kind would ever occur again.<sup>63</sup> The aim was not millet status but solidarity, subject to the laws of Israel: 'Our pioneers intend to spend many years, and perhaps their remaining lives, together with the Israelis, sharing the political, physical and economic challenges of their young State.' But *not* to provide witness from a Christian enclave: 'For we are convinced that God has withdrawn our mandate of preaching the Word to the Jews in our time, on behalf of our guilt.'<sup>64</sup>

### Reactions

Berkhof appreciated the paper for its directness,<sup>65</sup> unlike others who thought it 'written by a German (...) exaggerating.'<sup>66</sup> A horrified Rengstorf, supervisor of Boertien's dissertation, called on donors to withdraw their support of Nes Ammim.<sup>67</sup> Americans failed to respond. Minnaar was not happy either but felt that the die had already been cast by Jacob Bernath's formal pledges to the authorities.<sup>68</sup> A distraught Bonda left Nes Ammim<sup>69</sup> and it took some effort to refrain him from reclaiming his investments as well.<sup>70</sup> Bakker definitively stepped down from the international board.<sup>71</sup> His last major act in that capacity, hardly noted by anyone, was to ensure that Kremers could publish his declaration of principles without restrictions. Bakker anticipated a speedy modernization of the RCN, preferably with his former assistant Van Stegeren-Keizer at the wheel.

58 E.M. Lehmann to H. Bernath, Nahariya 2 October 1963, ASS.

59 H. Kremers to E.M. Lehmann, Tel Aviv 8 October 1963, ASS.

60 Interview Thomas Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

61 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 190.

62 Ibidem, 144.

63 H. Kremers to J.J. Pilon, Kettwig 9 August 1963, ANAN.

64 'Sinn und Aufgabe von Nes Ammim', ANAN.

65 H. Berkhof to J.J. Pilon, Oegstgeest 14 August 1963, ANAN.

66 Notes by P. Oskamp, Den Hoorn (Texel) August 1963, ANAN.

67 M. Boertien to NAN, Wassenaar 17 August 1963, ANAN.

68 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 20 September 1963, AJP.

69 After Bonda's death in 1969 his heirs would try to recoup his donations to Nes Ammim, without result.

70 J. Minnaar to NAN, Rotterdam 18 December 1970. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

71 Minutes Verwaltungsrat Zurich 9 January 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 25.

Meanwhile the pioneers had to make do with a bus, a shed and a chicken pen. Jan Hoogendonk steered the John Deere plough, on loan from Sochnut. The harvest produced a net result of IL 17,000 via the Hamashbir cooperation.<sup>72</sup> Martin Miller and Bob Hoover arrived, the former from a farm and the latter from a carpentry shop in Ohio. Both were in their twenties.<sup>73</sup> Martin's Pennsylvania Dutch resembled the dialect of the home district of the Vetterlis. Martin came from an Amish background, rooted in Switzerland.<sup>74</sup> Dwight Baker visited the 'boys' in their new environment:

Rectangular shaped plots for the first housing units, while farm buildings will occupy the southern grade. The view from the centre is expansive and creates the sensation that the soul as well as the vision is being stretched. At night, the settlers say they can count the lights of twenty-three villages in the outlying area.<sup>75</sup>

The Hoogendonks compared it to the ultra-Orthodox Protestant Staphorst village in their home country.<sup>76</sup> 'A small Swiss village, strict and narrowminded, at least from a Dutch point of view', said a sympathizing Pilon. 'Opposed to smoking in general, especially for girls, to the wearing of shorts and bikinis etcetera.'<sup>77</sup> Van der Spek thought it more helpful if all of the pioneers would be able to engage in conversation in Ivrit:

Then it would have been possible for all of us to communicate in the national language of Israel. Now we had to contend with the fact that even German, French and Dutch speakers were not able to have a proper conversation among themselves. Announcements were made in Dutch and German, followed by an English translation. Even that would not help Léon Robert, who felt excluded. Language barriers created social barriers in their wake. We were lacking proper leadership.<sup>78</sup>

'Léon and Jeanne acted as patron and matron', says Machteld de Goederen. 'They felt responsible. They made the rounds in evening hours to make sure that everyone was behaving properly.'<sup>79</sup> 'The Dutch, always individualists, opted for a private kitchen', adds Van der Spek. 'The Swiss for a communal kitchen and dining hall. As customary in a kibbutz, but also reminiscent of Acts 2:42.'<sup>80</sup>

Shlomo Amir assured them that permits would be granted.<sup>81</sup> Why had it taken so long? Lehman blamed it on Israeli coalition politics.<sup>82</sup> Little was heard from Jacob Bernath, by now *Stadtingenieur* of Zurich: a job that came with immense re-

72 C. van der Spek to M. de Goederen, Broek op Langedijk 30 January 1985, ACS.

73 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Gysel, Heemstede 7 February 1964. HDC VU, archive NAN, box 28.

74 Interview Ella Vetterli by author, Stein am Rhein 30 April 2014.

75 Dwight Baker, 'A Christian moshav on Asher's plain', in *Hayahad digest. Official organ of the Baptist Congregations of Israel*. ANAG, scrapbook Nes Ammin.

76 J.G. Hoogendonk to NAN, Santpoort 14 July 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

77 J.J. Pilon to J. and H. Hoogendonk, Heemstede 22 November 1963, in ANAN.

78 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013.

79 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 15 February 2013.

80 C. van der Spek to M. de Goederen, Broek op Langedijk 30 January 1985, ACS.

81 S. Amir (economics assistant to the Prime Minister) to J. Bernath, Jerusalem 13 November 1963, ANAN.

82 E.M. Lehmann to J.J. Pilon, Nahariya 12 December 1963, ASS.

sponsibilities, that required his attention almost non-stop.<sup>83</sup> Kremers was relieved to hear that Bezek had managed to have a meeting with Eshkol on 14 December, in kibbutz Degania:<sup>84</sup>

It must have taken tremendous courage, to stand up for Nes Ammim in the presence of Levi Eshkol and the authorities.<sup>85</sup>

Shlomo was in good form. 'As a seasoned *chaver*, he had experience. Meeting people, at all levels of society. He felt at ease with Eshkol. The country was so much smaller than it is today... Even cabinet members were low-key, accessible.'<sup>86</sup> He would rush home at the end of the week for *kabbalat Shabbat*, where 'he would read and discuss the parashat ha-Torah.' After a day of rest and reflection, work continued as normal. 'The Nes Ammim job was tough', said his daughter Racheli. 'The AG did not understand how things worked in Israel. Few were fluent in Ivrit. So there was a lot of stress. Most parliamentarians in the Knesset were against it, initially. It took a lot of talking by my father to make them change their minds. The Nes Ammim people believed that they were pulling the strings, while in fact they were depending on my father. Did they ever truly acknowledge his work?'<sup>87</sup>

The village plan was submitted to the District Council. During Christmas, a brittle layer of snow decked the fields. Shlomo and Mirjam Bezek came over for the celebration: 'Plain and unaffected. Next to the bus a simple table adorned by cornflowers and pine branches. By candlelight the nativity story was read in Dutch, French and English.'<sup>88</sup> Absent from the scene were the Hoogendonks, whose contract had been cancelled by the AG.<sup>89</sup> 'It can't be helped', as they wrote to Lehmann. Israel had been a tremendous experience, but they parted with a sense of relief.<sup>90</sup> On 29 December 1963 Nes Ammim would be discussed in the Israeli cabinet.

83 J. Bernath to Nes Ammim-Germany, Schaffhausen 21 November 1963, HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

84 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 16 December 1963, ANAN.

85 H. Kremers to M. Bezek-van Praagh, Moers 7 April 1971, AFB.

86 Interview Diklah Geva-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

87 Interview Racheli Eshel-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

88 S. and M. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 29 December 1963, in AJP.

89 H. and J. Hoogendonk to J.J. Pilon, Haifa 24 January 1964, HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

90 H. and J. Hoogendonk to Lehmann family, Haifa 20 January 1964, ASS.

## OPERATION ‘FOX TERRIER’

‘Religious belief is not an issue’, people in Mizra used to say.<sup>1</sup> Yet Cor van der Spek found himself at liberty to discuss the subject. Why was that so difficult for Nes Ammim?<sup>2</sup> It might have something to do with church history. The Reformed tradition tended to differentiate between approved members and excluded dissenters. The founders of the moshav were quite aware of that. It was important to know where the authority lay to decide who could, and who could not become a member. Meanwhile, the cohesion remained fragile at best:

Is it possible to plan a new village in a foreign land, inhabited by people from abroad, differentiated by confession? In theory yes, but reality told a different story. The first thing you need is a clear economic plan, a global indication of costs and profits, time schedule etcetera. We had none of that in the beginning!

Control was severely hampered by the fact that the international board had failed to establish unequivocally who was in charge. As a result, no one was accountable to anyone.<sup>3</sup>

1 Menahem Benhayim, ‘The Messianic Movement in Israel’, 9.

2 Retrospective in: C. van der Spek to C. Smitsman (Nes Ammim), Hoornaar 11 April 1972, ACS.

3 C. van der Spek, ‘Nes Ammim. Management van het begin’ (note 1984), ACS.



## XXVIII 'Green light'

Like Cor van der Spek, Ella Vetterli wondered why this tiny community of Christians should be so much more complex than an ordinary kibbutz:

The idea was to build a kibbutz in Israeli fashion, to live and work together. But then the problems began, mostly over small matters. The Dutch, the Swiss and the Americans, all seemed to have their own preferences in cooking. And farming in the USA was rather different from farming in the Alps. It might seem that finding a solution for these minor matters would not be too difficult. Was it not Christianity that motivated us all? Alas, we were to find out that our real problems were related to the widely diverging interpretations of that same Christian faith.<sup>1</sup>

Another thorn in the side was the 'gentlemen's agreement',<sup>2</sup> that according to Jacob Bernath did not exist:

The Prime Minister never asked to exclude Christian Jews. It is because of the public commotion that we move with caution.<sup>3</sup>

### Cabinet decision

In January 1964 Pope Paul VI arrived in Nazareth for the consecration of the Basilica of the Annunciation. As Hans Bernath reported, there was hardly any time to meet with the locals:

People are disappointed (...). And because of the Pope's visit, the cabinet had to postpone its decision on Nes Ammim!<sup>4</sup>

A few days later, the cabinet accepted the project by a majority vote. Since the Knesset had been assured by Eshkol that Nes Ammim had provided proper guarantees against missionary activity,<sup>5</sup> *Jediot Chadasjot* published the 'gentlemen's agreement' as hard fact: 'Participation of baptized Jews has been withdrawn by the founders.'<sup>6</sup> So much for Christian concern for the fate of Jewish converts to Protestantism, *NIW* sourly commented.<sup>7</sup> *Jerusalem Post* added some detail:

1 Ella Vetterli, 'Nes Ammim am Anfang – Nes Ammim heute'.

2 'Jacob and I met with the authorities and the press. Anyone can make inquiries with them about the agreements.' J.J. Pilon to J. Minnaar, Nes Ammim 5 October 1965, ANAN.

3 J. Bernath to M. Boertien, Schaffhausen 13 August 1964, ANAN.

4 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 5 January 1964. HDC VU archive NAN box 7.

5 S. Schoon, *Nes Ammim*, 15.

6 'Minister Eschkol übernimmt Verantwortung für Nes Ammim', in *Jediot Chadasjot* 13 January 1964.

7 M. Kopuit, 'Nes Ammim een opgave', in *NIW* 25 March 1966.

The Government will fully support the establishment of an international Protestant moshav at Nes Ammim in Western Galilee, as agreed by a Cabinet majority yesterday, over strong opposition of the National Religious Party (NRP). The Prime Minister was authorized to make the final ruling in this issue (...) and to cancel an earlier Cabinet decision which froze any official action.

The decision on Nes Ammim, which is to comprise Christians of various denominations and nationalities excluding baptised Jews, was postponed until after the pilgrimage of Pope Paul VI.<sup>8</sup>

*Jediot Chadasjot* referred to proper supervision of this 'complex project'.<sup>9</sup> An official letter, dated 21 January in the Prime Minister's Office and signed by Shlomo Amir, was addressed to Jacob Bernath:

I am happy to inform you that a Cabinet meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1964 decided to cancel the previous decision regarding the freezing of construction work.

We have also informed all the Ministries. I hope that you will now be able to proceed with mobilizing capital and know-how for the industrial and economic development of Israel, your stated aim for the establishment of Nes Ammim.<sup>10</sup>

While Bezek was briefed by Amir in Jerusalem, Eshkol dropped in with a promise of 'fair treatment.' He was counting on results: 'Now the Nes Ammim people have to prove that they are in earnest.'<sup>11</sup> The Orthodox parties had been promised improved kosher facilities in public transport, to sweeten the outcome for them.<sup>12</sup> Bezek went on to visit the Ministry of Economic Affairs (for building permits) and then David Hacoen (for visas).<sup>13</sup> On his way home he stayed the night with Hans and Madeleine Bernath. They noted that he was close to exhaustion:

Shlomo seemed not as healthy as he used to be. The scheduled departure of Hans Vetterli, who did a great job, troubles him. Léon Robert is not able to speak to Shlomo without the aid of a translator.<sup>14</sup>

Bezek would have preferred a document with Eshkol's signature,<sup>15</sup> though Jacob Bernath was not unduly concerned about that.<sup>16</sup> Without spending a word on the *va'adah* it was assumed that 'the go-ahead had been given for a settlement according to Christian rules'.<sup>17</sup> 'All Nes Ammim' assembled in Nazareth, where Georg Vischer conducted a service. The moshav, he said, would succeed 'if all accept Jesus, as their only aim in life'. Hans Bernath spoke next:

8 'Cabinet backs founding of Christian moshav', in *Jerusalem Post* 13 January 1964.

9 'Ministerpräsident Eschkol übernimmt Verantwortung für Nes-Amim', in *Jediot Chadasjot* 18 January 1964.

10 S. Amir (Prime Minister's Office) to J. Bernath, Jerusalem 21 January 1964, ANAN.

11 Retrospective in flyer *Nes Ammim* (in English). HDC VU archive NAN, box 4.

12 Personal communication Cor van der Spek, 22 November 2018.

13 S. and M. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, *Ayeleth Hashachar* 29 December 1963, AJP.

14 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 20 January 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

15 Cf. J. Bernath to H. Dahlhaus, W. Brenner and J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 29 January 1964, ANAN.

16 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 21 January 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

17 Memorandum by J. Minnaar, J.J. Pilon and F. de Wit 1965, in ACS.

We are personally and directly responsible for what happens next. Our major challenge is not to find the money, but to ensure the proper spiritual development (...).

Rather than to bring in as many pioneers as possible, we need to make sure that we select the right people: those who live a humble life as disciples by the grace of Christ. It is essential to select them from the mass of those who are moved by other motives, however altruistic: curiosity, Pacifism, Humanism, Philo-Semitism or Romanticism.<sup>18</sup>

The village plan was accepted by authorities.<sup>19</sup>

### Madrich

Heart condition or not, Bezek was everywhere and in full time-capacity.<sup>20</sup> He brought his invaluable kibbutz experience and maintained standards of behaviour: ‘No *madrich* gained respect through either force or bullying, or by barking orders. Character, personality, talent, charisma, athleticism, proficiency on the guitar, good looks, confidence, persuasiveness, quiet intelligence – these were some of the attributes. (...) While leadership was important, it was matched by an irreverent attitude to authority.’<sup>21</sup>

Shlomo knew instinctively whom to give a much-needed pat on the back, says Machteld de Goederen. ‘Your place is here! – I can still hear his voice.’<sup>22</sup> He cared: ‘When someone really needed a break, he’d invite him or her to spend a weekend in Ayeleth Hashachar.’<sup>23</sup> He effectively doubled as *madrich* and *menahel avodah*. ‘The scale of his activities is much larger than envisaged: agricultural advisor, negotiator, opinions regarding mission, dealings with kibbutzim, ulpan, customs, water authorities, signing of letters and contracts, sales and purchases etc’. The AG planned to transfer some of these responsibilities to a Christian, once they had found a person who could qualify for the job.<sup>24</sup> The kibbutzim preferred the addition of more Israeli staff members. Pilon liked the idea as well,<sup>25</sup> but could not convince the international board:

It seems to me (I hope that I am wrong) that some people in Nes Ammim would rather not directly engage any Israelis. This also affects Shlomo. If an Israeli were to head the administration, he would have inside access to anything that is going on.<sup>26</sup>

This meant that there would be no Jewish *gizbar*, despite the obvious need for someone who had working knowledge of Israeli accounting.<sup>27</sup> Bezek realized that this lack of expertise was causing real problems:

18 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and NAN, Nazareth 25 January 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

19 C. van der Spek to H.R. Koller, Nahariya 18 February 1964, in AFK.

20 *Madrich (madrigh)*: Hebrew for guide or leader; in particular, a person giving information or guidance to youth or to new immigrants.’ Abraham A. Weinberg, *Migration and belonging*, 264.

21 Antony Lerman, *The making and unmaking of a Zionist*, 9.

22 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 20 March 2015.

23 Cor van der Spek, quoted in Gudrun Laqueur and others, *On the way to a new relationship*, 94.

24 H. Koller, G. Dorland, S. Bezek and C. van der Spek to J. Bernath, Nahariya 13 July 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

25 J.J. Pilon to E. Sa’ar, Heemstede 21 April 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

26 E. Sa’ar to J.J. Pilon, Tel Aviv 13 June 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

27 M. and S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 6 March 1964, in: HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.



I am encountering problems with suppliers demanding payment for ordered goods (...) Do not misunderstand me: if you give the go-ahead, approving money to do it, I will set to work accordingly. Now suddenly I am confronted with the fact that there is no money at all. We are stuck in the *bots* (mud).<sup>28</sup>

At this point Gabi Sommerfeld (later: Peled) from Regba suggested that growing roses might produce a handsome income. Van der Spek eagerly took up the idea:

During a late evening conversation on the doorstep of our barrack, the idea came up between Sommerfeld, Bezek and me. Shlomo had a knack of dampening unrealistic expectations. Gaby however, was a professional who knew about problems of flower cultivators in the region. They lacked proper expertise for this kind of thing. During our talk we came up with the idea to build a glasshouse of our own, exporting the produce to the Dutch market – a small but innovative contribution to the rural economy.<sup>29</sup>

Next came the task of convincing the AG of the idea:

Galilee offered an opportunity to grow roses in wintertime, which was impossible in the Netherlands. Conditions seemed favourable, but the offices in Switzerland and Holland did not show interest at first. Gabi and I then came up with a trick that was immediately successful. He gave me a paper with Hebrew letter heading. If I remember correctly, it belonged to Madrichut Chaklai Yad Natan in Akko. I repeated the proposal and had it signed by Gabi. European authorities were so impressed that we had a favourable answer within the week.

For some reason it seemed as if opinions of Nes Ammim villagers were hardly noticed by the decision makers. Anyhow, the greenhouses were duly approved and became a huge success.<sup>30</sup>

Flower gardener Arie van Tol (1935-2015) arrived from Haarlemmermeer, invited by Pilon: 'First destination Nazareth, where everyone knew doctor Bernath. Then staying with the Van der Speks. No road to Nes Ammim, just a cart track: barren land, now and then a jackal.'<sup>31</sup>

### Hansruedi and Gerda Koller

Nine-hour-long working days were concluded by a common evening prayer.<sup>32</sup> After Mart Miller had finished carpentry, a single barrack was available for Van Tol, Clot and the Kollers. Their Spartan pioneering life included picking up hitchhikers whenever they used the car. 'A very sensible way of doing things', said Gerda Koller.<sup>33</sup>

Hansruedi had moved from Anthroposophy to born-again Christianity. The Vereinigte Bibelgruppen (VBG) offered a platform for combining spirituality

28 S. Bezek to J.J.Pilon and Ch. Gysel, Ayeleth Hashachar 6 March 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

29 C. van der Spek, 'Nes Ammim. Management from the beginning' (note 1984), in ACS.

30 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013.

31 Interview Arie van Tol by author, Nieuw-Vennep 27 March 2013.

32 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 4 May 1964, HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

33 Gerda Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nahariya 16 April 1964, AFK.

with the egalitarian ideals of Christian Socialism. He supervised a VBG student home and adapted traditional farms in canton Tessin to their new function as retreat centre Campo Rasa.<sup>34</sup> Now Gerda described their first impressions of Israel:

We find ourselves in the legendary bus in Nes Ammim; darkness has fallen, we see the lights of Haifa on the far horizon. There is a pleasant sense of loneliness here, as we are not alone. Hansruedi plays chess with our Jewish farmer Shlomo (Salomo), who has already beaten him three times (in chess of course ...). Shlomo is our connection to the authorities and all kinds of business partners. He is a Humanist in his fifties, and we like his dry sense of humour.

Today brought a sensation, as they struck water beneath our fields. Hurrah! (...) The landscape reminds me of Geneva. Fields all around, hills and picturesque villages in the background. The air is full of healthy smells – a very paradise.<sup>35</sup>

There were differences between pioneers. However, ‘Jeanne Robert (47), the farmer’s wife, knows how to handle them with tact.’<sup>36</sup> The Schaffhausen office noted how things were proceeding:

Koller is discussing our plans with Israeli neighbours. Among them is architect Fredy Cohen, the *mazkir* of kibbutz Beth HaEmek. Paul Roost is working on sanitation and has installed a solar water heater.<sup>37</sup>

The barracks, small as they were, boasted a patio and a little garden. Meals were eaten in the *chader ochel*. Other buildings included an office, toilet block, laundry, and guesthouse. Melons, wheat, and sorghum were grown in the fields. Gerda Koller (violin) and Paul Roost (trumpet) joined a chamber orchestra in Nahariya. They heard Vischer preach in the barrack that was also used as a common dining room:

The Vischers are pleasant people to be with (...) they have been staying with the Bernaths in Nazareth to assist in pastoral care and Bible studies (...); fine Christians.<sup>38</sup>

There were many contacts in Israeli society:

The day before yesterday the feast of the first fruits of the land was celebrated; we were invited by the kibbutzim, and also for the 15th anniversary of Lohamei. There was a piano concert. It is very touching, all this friendliness and hospitality. Mrs. P. Salzmann played Chopin, Mendelssohn, Liszt and best of all Moussorsky’s *Bilder einer Ausstellung*. This glorious day was crowned by our return journey, on foot through the fields!<sup>39</sup>

Israelis were warm-hearted and generous:

Our Jewish friends: there is *Rivka* (Rebecca), who is French and is a teacher, though she took a break after Tami (one year now) had been born. She is very sprightly, and has looked after Karin when I was invited to play the cello. Her husband (Shavei Zion) has invited Hans-

34 ‘50 Jahre Campo Rasa. Geschichte und Schätze des VBG-Ferienzentrums im Centovalli 1962-2012’, <http://www.vbg.net>.

35 Gerda Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 22 April 1964, AFK.

36 Gerda Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 15 July 1964, AFK.

37 Description by Jacob Bernath, in *Mitteilungen Nes Ammim* 1966 nr. 1 (January), AFK.

38 Gerda Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 23 May 1964, AFK.

39 Gerda Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 19 May 1964, AFK.

ruedi for a diving expedition. Then *Myriam + Asser*, parents of two children. She is from Geneva, he came from Hungary. They invited us for Shabbat! Not to forget our friendly architect *Fredy + Hanna Cohen* (England), who offered Hansruedi to work on plans for Nes Ammim in his office and likes to discuss local conditions. They have three boys. *Tamar* (gym teacher) and *Gabriel* (farmer), with three grown-up kids. They invited us for dinner (...) All these people are so generous (...). If we compare ourselves to them, it seems hard to maintain any form of Christian superiority.<sup>40</sup>

Gerda even preferred a Jewish hospital over Hans Bernath's facility:

Nazareth is still predominantly Arab and a latent animosity against Jews and Israel is very much in evidence – why then annoy my Jewish friends by going there?<sup>41</sup>

It was important to maintain the austerity of the kibbutz ideal. Hansruedi:

Relations between us and other *Nes Ammimlern* are fine and open-minded. However, there is still a long way to go (working and adapting) before we can say that responsibility is shared by all in the same measure. (...) This is something we need to learn from the Jews.<sup>42</sup>

Shlomo Bezek invited him to Ayeleth Hashachar. 'He wants to show Hansruedi some of the established kibbutzim and the way they function – as an example for us.'<sup>43</sup> He listened with amusement while Hansruedi discoursed about reviving the way of life of the first Christians, with all material assets held in common. Shlomo described Hansruedi as a nice man, but perhaps a bit starry-eyed: 'The strong Israeli soil has gone to his head: as if ancient Christianity can solve any problem. Better to restrict such daydreams to leisure time, for they do not fit into the actual Nes Ammim concept. That aims at bridging the gap between Christians and Jews, while [Koller] dreams about a self-centred Christian community. He possesses considerable charisma and is sweeping the others off their feet, Hans Bernath included.'<sup>44</sup>

Külling wrote his PhD on the dating of the Book of Genesis, at the Free University in Amsterdam.<sup>45</sup> Boertien sourly remarked that items of 'Un-Reformed Swiss Pietism' should have been purged before publishing the manuscript.<sup>46</sup> Boertien's own PhD on the Mishna was being supervised by Rengstorf and Beek.<sup>47</sup> By now he felt seriously disappointed by Israel, sending letters rather via the Dutch embassy than having them examined by local censorship.<sup>48</sup> Jacob Bernath's acceptance of the *va'adah* had come as a shock. Boertien maintained that *he* would never submit to that kind of supervision:

40 Gerda Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 23 May 1964, AFK.

41 Gerda Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 9 September 1964, AFK.

42 Hansruedi Koller to parents, Ayeleth Hashachar 24 May 1964, AFK.

43 Gerda Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 24 May 1964, AFK.

44 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Nahariya 14 June 1964, HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

45 S.R. Külling, *Datierung der Genesis P-Stücke*.

46 M. Boertien to deputies evangelization Israel and consistory CRC Groningen, Jerusalem 16 September 1964. HUA archive CGK, inv.nr. 104.

47 M. Boertien, *Der Mischnatraktat Nazir*, dissertation Amsterdam University 1964.

48 M. Boertien to M. Drayer, Jerusalem 9 July 1964. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105.

It is common knowledge in this country, though rather hushed-up. (...) During a conversation with an official of Religious Affairs he let slip that he knew about an item I had written about in a confidential letter, something this official could not know by any other way. Which means that my mail is being opened. Important matters are scrutinized by the Security Service and the Ministry of Religious Affairs.<sup>49</sup>

### **'A fabulously free mentality'**

Kees van der Spek was born on 29 June, Snoek performing the baptism a few days later. 'On return we put him to bed, the legs of which are in water cans to prevent scorpions from crawling up.'<sup>50</sup> In a room of 4 by 4 meters: 'There we lived with the three of us, and with Shlomo Bezek as a regular visitor (...).'<sup>51</sup> Mary-Jeanne Robert enjoyed attending school in Regba so much, that Hans Bernath began to worry about her becoming too Hebrew.<sup>52</sup> Her parents followed the customary routine. 'Inflexible in their established opinions. Hands of gold.'<sup>53</sup> Miller and Clot learnt to drive a Caterpillar tractor. On occasion there would be an outing to Tel Aviv or a hiking tour to Mount Tabor. There were ball games in the evening hours. Paul Brodbeck played guitar and Hans Oberli banjo, much to the enjoyment of Mary-Jeanne.<sup>54</sup> Hans Bernath had his doubts about some of the Menonites. 'What's the point of moving to Israel, if your goal is Pacifism, instead of God?'<sup>55</sup> Even more worrying for him was the cool reception by the Evangelicals in whom he had hoped to find natural partners. To his dismay, that was not the case: they were accusing him of laxness in furthering Christian witness and were clearly apprehensive of his Arab connections.

Johan Pilon wondered how much Evangelicals understood about Jewish-Christian dialogue. Slightly patronizing, he added that the same could be said of 'small farmers from the Alps'<sup>56</sup> and their hopes for a model Christian community.<sup>57</sup> Koller expostulated that close cooperation with the Israelis was exactly what he wanted. To prove the point, Hansruedi took a job as partner of Fredy Cohen in Beit Haemek. It would save Nes Ammim the costs of a salary, and it would enable Gerda and him to get to know Israeli society even better. Nes Ammim pioneers should try to find paid jobs in surrounding communities: 'We have serious financial problems.'<sup>58</sup>

49 M. Boertien to M. Drayer, Jerusalem 31 July 1964. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105.

50 Anneke and Cor van der Spek, 'Het begin', Broek op Langedijk October 2012.

51 C. van der Spek to M. de Goederen, Broek op Langedijk 30 January 1985, in ACS.

52 J.J. Pilon to Ch. Gysel, Heemstede 7 February 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

53 G. Dorland to J.J. Pilon, Nes Ammim 6 July 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

54 Mary-Jeanne Robert, 'Nes Ammim 1963-1967' (Fontainemelon 2013), in ANAG.

55 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 4 May 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

56 J.J. Pilon to G. Dorland, Heemstede 25 May 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

57 J.J. Pilon to G. Dorland, Heemstede 26 May 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

58 H.R. Koller to J. Bernath, Nes Ammim 13 June 1964, in AFK.



## XXIX Gé Dorland

Pilon needed a trusted manager on the spot. The job was given to Gé Dorland, a youth worker in the DRC who was born in 1920. He and Pilon knew each other since their schooldays in Haarlem. At the age of nineteen, Gé had been drafted into the Dutch army, participating in the battle at the Grebbeberg in 1940. When summoned for forced labour in Germany, he went into hiding and took part in resistance activities in the Hilversum area. After liberation he worked as a sales representative, completing a DRC training for social workers in the evening hours. His application letter highlighted the need for a new challenge.<sup>1</sup> Now that his marriage was foundering, he wanted to start immediately, even though he had not yet attended an ulpan. He was hired on the authority of Pilon, but without a go-ahead from the AG in Switzerland.

By charging the inexperienced Gé Dorland with ‘public relations,’ Pilon took a considerable risk. The Israeli embassy, clearly puzzled, would only assign him a tourist visa and even Dorland himself admitted that it was a ‘confusing’ start. ‘What is he supposed to do here?’, the others were wondering.<sup>2</sup> A self-assured man, he immediately claimed the position of secretary, with the hopes that it would enable him to coach the community towards a ‘progressive’ course of action. The Church and World Movement (DRC) highlighted social justice as more important than Calvinism, which had already lost much of its validity through a Jewish reading of the Bible. Belief in miracles had to go, together with fear of hell and hope of heavenly reward. What the Bible did have to offer was a much-needed blueprint to change existing realities on earth. At first these ideas were received with a grain of salt by the madrich, who assigned him to the poultry farm, ‘without taking him too seriously.’<sup>3</sup> Van der Spek hoped that he would calm down.<sup>4</sup> This hope would only lead to disappointment, as Dorland made no secret of his intention to become a ‘catalyst’. ‘*Viel* wird geredet’, according to Gerda Koller.<sup>5</sup>

The District Council questioned the wisdom of spending money on a ‘public relations’ person who did not come cheap, given his need to support his family in the Netherlands. Pilon simply said that he needed Dorland as his personal assistant in the moshav.<sup>6</sup> His first task would be to bring the Swiss up to standards. ‘They are rather Pietist’, Dorland remarked, ‘and seem to believe that theirs is an

1 G. Dorland to NAN, Heemstede 13 June 1963, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

2 G. Dorland to G. Polet, Nes Ammim 21 September 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

3 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Nahariya 14 June 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

4 Interview A. and C. van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 18 February 2014.

5 Gerda Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 1 June 1964, in AFK.

6 Ch. Gysel to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 14 June 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.



Fig. 15 Nes Ammim village 1964 (NA Germany).

infallible truth.’ Americans were simply ‘Conservatives’. Van der Spek urgently asked him to stop riding his hobbyhorses and to focus on poultry, but Dorland would not budge:

The Swiss are causing the trouble. They should rid themselves of their mountainous narrow-mindedness.<sup>7</sup>

### ‘Balagan’

The Roberts did not see how Dorland might contribute to their farm, while he felt annoyed by their Bible hours and prayer sessions.<sup>8</sup> The newcomer constantly talked about innovation. ‘The growth of our community requires confronting these tensions’, he argued. ‘It’s all part of the *pressure cooker*.’ He wanted to discuss ‘discrimination’ against Israeli citizens who could not apply for the position of *gizbar*. The Roberts replied that it was the Christian Jews, rather than the Israelis, who were being discriminated against. Soon the general atmosphere was ‘a bit in the state of a *balagan*’.<sup>9</sup> Léon Robert found himself accused of having a ‘closed’ mindset. Dorland even proposed that Hans Bernath should resign. He

7 G. Dorland to J.J. Pilon, Nes Ammim 6 July 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

8 H.R. Koller to parents, Nes Ammim 10 August 1964, AFK.

9 J.J. Pilon to J. Meir, Heemstede 25 June 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

was uncomfortably close to the Arabs and for that reason ill-suited for a project aiming at reconciliation between Christians and Jews. ‘Anything that has to do with Nazareth will bring us under Israeli suspicion.’<sup>10</sup> It came as a warning shot across the bows of the Swiss, even though Dorland was dissuaded from sending a letter to this effect. Dorland referred to his programme of confrontation as operation *Fox Terrier*.

It was with some relief that the Kollers moved to nearby Shomrat, to complete their ulpan. ‘Four hours for language course, everyday – until 15 March! That should suffice to teach us proper Hebrew!’ And there was agriculture:

There are over 12,000 orange trees in this kibbutz alone. The work is pleasant, as are the locals. In fact, communal life in a kibbutz makes quite an impression on us. Everyone labours to the best of their ability, whether you are the manager or a fieldhand. On the same conditions. Financial earnings are almost nil, about 250 francs a year. And yet they have all they need! A living, food, clothing (..) but also education for children and adults, insurance, etc.<sup>11</sup>

Why was it so difficult to coexist in Nes Ammim? Like the Vetterlis and Van der Spek before him, Hansruedi tried to answer that question:

Belief in Jesus Christ can be expressed in many different ways. Regrettably, we tend to claim that our way is right, to the detriment of all the others. And there arises the problem, for we come from diverse backgrounds. (...) Nes Ammim is like the crew of a ship on the high seas: isolated, and yet closely packed together. There is no escaping from the others. It is a recipe for trouble.

Being confronted with these problems further increases our respect for the Jews, who managed to overcome them in their kibbutzim.<sup>12</sup>

In early September Gerda went for a bike ride from Shomrat:

The weather is perfect, we are beginning to look forward to autumn. Before me stretches a winding mud track. All around are fields and ever more fields. Far away on the horizon the barren outlines of the Lebanon. The bluish hills of Galilee remind me of the Jura. Then there is a slight elevation in the landscape, and there I can see six simple concrete barracks. They are painted white to protect them from the sun. Hardly any trees or flowers, a bleak site – but a lovely sight: Nes Ammim!<sup>13</sup>

## Yonah Malachi

Hans Bernath did not know about Dahlhaus’s recent activities.<sup>14</sup> Unlike the Swiss, Pilon visited Velbert regularly. In his efforts to prevent Evangelical predominance, he tried to strengthen the German connection. ‘It seems to me that you

<sup>10</sup> Draft of a letter from Nes Ammim secretariat (Galilee) to Nes Ammim AG (Switzerland), Nahariya 13 July 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

<sup>11</sup> G. Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 1 September 1964, AFK.

<sup>12</sup> H.R. Koller to parents, Shomrat 7 November 1964, AFK.

<sup>13</sup> G. Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 1 September 1964, AFK.

<sup>14</sup> H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 4 May 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.



have set up a regular shuttle service between yourself and our neighbours in the East', Dorland commented. 'I take it that Operation Fox Terrier is in full swing.'<sup>15</sup> Due to the controversy over the va'adah, Velbert barely communicated with the AG. 'Letters sent to Velbert were left unanswered', lamented Jacob Bernath. 'Under such circumstances the cooperation makes no sense.'<sup>16</sup> The sooner Dahlhaus, Kremers and Becker would be ousted from their predominant position in Nes Ammim-Germany, the better:

We absolutely need a complete reorganization of the German branch. My attempts to cooperate with them during the last three years have come to nothing.<sup>17</sup>

Velbert was not impressed. As Benjamin Jeremias remarked, they had good reason to keep a distance from the AG that refused to grant them a seat on the board and did not even acknowledge *Sinn und Aufgabe*.<sup>18</sup> Contrary to what Rengstorf had predicted, interest of German donators showed no signs of abating. The willingness of the Landeskirchen to contribute increased accordingly. However, Velbert insisted that none of these funds would be available for 'witness', not to mention the whims of the Covenant Church: 'German funds are in place, presently at the value of 400,000 DM. But we need to be assured that this money will be used for the proper aims.'<sup>19</sup> Bernath phoned the Pilon residence in Heemstede, and the call was taken by Stijn Pilon:

He is no longer willing to cooperate with the Germans, that is, the German with whom he is supposed to work: Herr Becker. He feels driven to such extremes that one of them must go. For Jacob, it goes without saying that Herr Becker is on his way out. I did not elaborate, only asked why they cannot work together. Because, to quote Jacob, Becker behaves *eingebildet und wie ein Diktator*. I said, mischievously: 'Make it your duty to prove your great modesty.' But that was obviously impossible, he had shown a maximum of consideration already! It tells us how little we know ourselves. Poor Jacob. I can only wish that he does not create even more difficulties for himself.<sup>20</sup>

The atmosphere between Johan Pilon and Horst Dahlhaus was far more relaxed.<sup>21</sup> They agreed on Nes Ammim as a bridge towards Israel, not an extension of Christianity into Israel. Flusser was invited to Velbert in October.<sup>22</sup>

Meanwhile, the Swiss wondered how a Christian could object to a village based on Christian principles. Communications between Switzerland and America on the one side and Germany on the other, had effectually broken down. Financial support from Switzerland had steadily diminished since it had become known that the Christian Jews could not fully participate. The Americans lacked inside

15 G. Dorland to J.J. Pilon, Nes Ammim 6 July 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

16 J. Bernath to Verwaltungsrat, Schaffhausen 26 May 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

17 J. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 23 September 1964. HDC VU, archive NAN, box 28.

18 J.J. Pilon to A. Freudenberg, Nes Ammim 28 September 1964, ANAN.

19 H. Kremers to J.J. Pilon, Kettwig 9 October 1964, ANAN.

20 S. Pilon to J.J. Pilon, Heemstede 9 October 1964, ANAN.

21 J.J. Pilon to H. Kremers, Nes Ammim 3 October 1964, in Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 91.

22 S. Gessulat and H. Kremers, Laasphe/Lahn 20 October 1964, in Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 91.

knowledge about the complicated history of the moshav. The AG seemed unable to control unilateral actions, such as the posting of Dorland. Perhaps it was simply impossible to control the enterprise from a central office in Switzerland. The alternative was autonomy for the village, a kibbutz-like democracy. Such an approach required a strong sense of common purpose. Operation Fox Terrier, according to Hansruedi Koller, did not make it any easier to achieve this:

The moshav was being directed from Europe, which entailed a marked differentiation between manager and common laborers. In Shomrat I began to question this state of things. Was this the reason that there was so little unity in the Christian village? It also became clear to me that spiritual differences added to a mutual irritability.<sup>23</sup>

During the Swiss prayer meetings, Dorland suggested an alternative of taking a swim at the beach or going to the cinema in Nahariya.<sup>24</sup> Praying to God to find a solution for the moshav's financial troubles looked suspiciously like an act of superstition.<sup>25</sup> He remained focussed on confrontation: 'We have fundamental differences at hand. We have to clear this up.'<sup>26</sup> Dorland insisted on the gentleman's agreement.<sup>27</sup> Miller asked Minnaar, who in turn asked Snoek about the matter:

It came as a shock to me when I received his reply: 'Jacob Bernath denies that NA is committed to excluding the HC, but since I have talked to Pilon I know better. He confirmed categorically that NA has pledged itself to this policy.' I felt dizzy, at a loss of what to think about the matter.<sup>28</sup>

Whether a gentlemen's agreement existed or not, Kremers defended its propositions. Baptism fatally harmed the bonding between a Jew and the people of Israel. He had no intention of allowing Nes Ammim to inflict that kind of harm on potential seekers. His views on this point were fully supported by Werblowsky, Flusser, Bezek and Malachy.<sup>29</sup> Flusser asked the *Konsularabteilung der israelischen Mission* (Cologne) to provide Kremers with any assistance he might need. Yonah Malachy (1930-1972) was born in Germany and worked for Wahrhaftig at the department of Christian affairs. He also acted as chief editor of the *Christian News from Israel*. Amir and Meir openly supported 'Sinn und Aufgabe'. Objections voiced by the UCCI only enhanced Kremers' standing with the Israelis, as he was fully aware:

I was condemned [by the UCCI] as a false preacher, who betrayed Christ's missionary commandments.<sup>30</sup>

Malachy was losing patience with Boertien and his increasingly negative reports of what he called the Zionist propaganda apparatus. As Boertien put it, 'Jewish nationalism stands at the brink of collective and idolatrous self-adulation (...).

23 Interview H.R. Koller by author, Zurich 5 May 2015.

24 G. Dorland to NAN, Nahariya 4 August 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

25 E-mail H.R. Koller to author, Zurich 17 June 2015.

26 Secretariat NA Galilee to J.J. Pilon, Nes Ammim 6 July 1964 (draft), in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

27 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 149.

28 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon (Nahariya), Rotterdam 25 September 1964, ANAN.

29 Traude Litzka, *Nes Ammim*, 44.

30 Concept 'Sinn und Aufgabe', in Archiv Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland, Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 119.

Are we supposed to indulge in the kind of exaggerated Israel-talk of so many European tourists?’<sup>31</sup> He compared Israel to South Africa, where an Apartheid regime differentiated between first and second-class citizens.

Malachy could not fail to note that mounting tensions in Nes Ammim might have a political component. Kremers seemed to be under pressure in the Protestant world, making his memorandum ‘Sinn und Aufgabe’ even more interesting from an Israeli perspective. He agreed with the American rabbi Joseph Baer Soloveitchik (1903-1993) that dialogue needed the approval of both partners, the implication being that the messianism of Christ was ill-suited as a subject of discussion between them.<sup>32</sup> The consequences for the Christian dialogue partner were as follows: ‘Awareness of our failings in the past forbids us to speak. That is why we do not missionize in Israel but pray and work instead.’ The essential factor was solidarity with the Jewish people and with the State of Israel:

Nes Ammim is part of the multifaceted Protestant presence in Israel. But more important is its solidarity with the Jewish people, motivated by the memory of the Holocaust and of the founding of the State of Israel.<sup>33</sup>

Kremers stood his ground against criticism by fellow Christians:

We are Christians of heathen descent. By forcing Christian Jews to accept our interpretation of the revelation in Christ we have led them astray (...). We severed them from their life-roots in Israel.<sup>34</sup>

Deeply worried about the effects of this viewpoint, Jacob Bernath was determined to block Velbert’s ambition to gain a seat on the international board:

During our last board meeting, we decided not to admit any German representatives for the time being.<sup>35</sup>

There were to be no further talks, however, not for the foreseeable future. Exhausted, Kremers slumped into mental depression.<sup>36</sup> In November he was assigned to a psychiatric clinic, ‘mentally and physically broken’.<sup>37</sup> Supported by his family, Geis and Aschkenasy, he was discharged after three tortuous months:

Total exhaustion. My soul had gone numb. Years of relentless and endless work (why had I ignored the Sabbath as a day of rest, granted by God for such good reasons?), so the doctors say, caused a complete exhaustion and deep depression. Like Elijah I prayed: Lord, I have enough, do take my soul away from me – and this at an age of 38!<sup>38</sup>

31 M. Boertien to deputies Israel evangelization and CRC Groningen, Jerusalem May 1964. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

32 Cf. Reinier Munk, ‘Taal en transcendentie’, in J.B. Soloveitschik and others, *Confrontatie*, 68-84.

33 Quoted in Friedrich Haselhoff, ‘Lernort Nes Ammim’, 199.

34 Kurzmemorandum über Sinn und Aufgabe einer christlichen Siedlung in Israel (1964), ANAG.

35 Jacob Bernath to J. Minnaar and J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 26 May 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

36 H. Kremers to S. Gerssen, Kettwig 29 October 1964. Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), inv.nr. 91.

37 H. Kremers to Landespfarrer Günther Heidtmann, Kettwig 30 October 1964. Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), inv.nr. 91.

38 H. Kremers to Martin Hauser (Tel Aviv), Kettwig 7 January 1965. Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 108.

The episode had been a sojourn ‘in the valley of gloom’:

Thanks be to God that I followed the advice of my doctor, wife and Jewish pastor and friend rabbi Dr Geis: not to apply hormone injections – for that was my idea – but stop!

Obediently I consented to be admitted to a clinic for the duration of seven weeks. For the first time in my adult life, weeks of absolute quiet! In the beginning it was absolutely terrible. Then, very slowly, I gradually began to recover.<sup>39</sup>

Becker and Dahlhaus took care of current affairs, totally ignoring Hauser who was still ‘Mandatträger für Deutschland’ in the Verwaltungsrat. They regarded Pilon and Dorland as their trusted representatives and advocated the appointment of an Israeli *gizbar*.<sup>40</sup>

Jacob Bernath felt almost relieved that his work as *Kantonsingenieur* left him hardly any time for Nes Ammim. ‘The difficulties threatened to overwhelm me.’<sup>41</sup> His brother Hans complained that Dorland behaved like a pasha on a tourist visa.<sup>42</sup> Pilon breezily announced that Jan Baars would become the next pioneer. ‘We had not been consulted’, Van der Spek commented. ‘We had been asking for an experienced rose grower and were given a tobacco planter who brought his family in tow.’<sup>43</sup> Baars set to work with enthusiasm, planting a 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> plot with pink carnations.<sup>44</sup> After growing tobacco in Indonesia, he had switched to begonias in Holland. He expected that he would be able to operate the flower business in Israel as he saw fit.<sup>45</sup> Van der Spek preferred to work with a small staff of specialists who were versed in Ivrit. He was supported by the Swiss:

Revenues and contributions should be used for investments, not for the upkeep of a large staff.<sup>46</sup>

Income generated by agricultural produce, brought to the market via Tenuvah, did not suffice for investments. Since so many Swiss industrialists had withdrawn (either because they believed that Christian principle had been sold out, or because of the delays) the idea of producing watches had been abandoned. The Americans intended to build a hotel, and Regba invited Nes Ammim to participate in its furniture industry.<sup>47</sup> However, as none of these initiatives was likely to produce an income anytime soon, Bezek advised them to concentrate on rose growing.<sup>48</sup> This was a job beyond the capacity of amateurs: ‘When Cor and Shlomo are absent from the scene, organisation tends to break down.’<sup>49</sup> Pilon needed

39 Ibidem.

40 G. Dorland to NAN, Nahariya 4 August 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box nr. 7.

41 J. Bernath to H. Bernath, Schaffhausen 7 April 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box nr. 6.

42 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 24 September 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box nr. 28.

43 E-mail C. van der Spek to author, Broek op Langedijk 24 July 2017.

44 Ewout Janse, ‘Een christelijke nederzetting in Israël’, 25 December 1964. ANAG, scrapbook.

45 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013.

46 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 28 April 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

47 Dorothy F. Zeligs, *The story of modern Israel for young people*, 165. Cf. Martin Gilbert, *Israel*, 52.

48 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Nahariya 14 June 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

49 H. Bernath to J. Bernath, Nazareth 26 March 1964. J. Bernath to H. Bernath, Schaffhausen 7 April 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

Dorland for operation Fox Terrier, but Minnaar for business.<sup>50</sup> Minnaar had a disconcerting feeling that there was an economy of truth in their relationship:

You maintain a habit of sharing many things with me, while avoiding the essential points. I implore you to change this. (...) Bakker and Sikkel also tell me that it is impossible to get full or candid answers from you.<sup>51</sup>

In Indonesia Pilon had moved in a mixed society. Getting things done required flexibility, the art of striking the right chord with everyone. The difference between Pilon's letters to the Bernaths and to Bezek demonstrates the *modus operandi* of Nes Ammim's international secretary. Even if it worked in the short run, this method was fraught with danger. It angered Eshkol when he found out that he had not been told everything. Lack of transparency remained a weak point in Nes Ammim's consultative procedures ever after. Snoek called it 'unbusinesslike': a rather simplistic way to get things done smoothly and quickly.<sup>52</sup> Minnaar had a less charitable view:

It puts our partnership at risk. The *Verwaltungsrat* has a right to know exactly what the situation is, without ambivalence or economies.<sup>53</sup>

The pattern did not change, as evidenced by fundraising for a Dutch school without prior permission of the District Council. Nes Ammim's style of leadership, as exemplified both by the AG and the international secretary, was already beginning to look outdated. 'The way decisions were being made remained a mystery for us, and Pilon didn't take the trouble to explain', says Machteld de Goederen. 'The one factor in his pep talks that never changed was the absolute necessity to build that village. Apart from that, Johan's views were in a state of flux, depending on his whims. The *Verwaltungsrat* was not any better. Disclosure of administration was unheard of.'<sup>54</sup> The dubious consequence was that inhabitants of the village tended to ignore instructions they did not like and had not been consulted about. The Swiss and Americans denied the validity of the infamous 'gentlemen's agreement', Dutchmen made fun of Swiss instructions ('Die Frau, in die Küche und Waschküche eingeschaltet, fügt sich dem von Frau Robert festgelegten Arbeitsplan im Haushalt').<sup>55</sup> The *Verwaltungsrat* resented the Dutch proclivity for unilateral decisions:

As emphatically stated in protocols of 6 October 1962 and 9 January 1964, it is not for the national committees to decide who they will send to Nes Ammim. It is for the *Verwaltungsrat* to make that decision, after having consulted the village.<sup>56</sup>

It did not work, said Van der Spek. 'Bringing a certain order into the patterns of income and expenses of the village was extremely difficult.'<sup>57</sup> Lack of funds added

50 Interview Charles Gysel by author, Wilchingen 4 May 2015.

51 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 16 October 1964, ANAN.

52 Interview Johan M. Snoek, Rotterdam January 1995.

53 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 3 November 1964, ANAN.

54 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 7 February 2013.

55 J. Bernath to *Verwaltungsrat*, Schaffhausen 12 August 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

56 Minutes *Verwaltungsrat* Nahariya 27 and 27 November 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 25.

57 Quoted in Gudrun Laqueur and others, *On the way to a new relationship*, 94.

to the problems. Implementation of a substantial building programme was impossible without appropriate funds.<sup>58</sup>

### 'Nes Goyim'?

Berkhof acknowledged the fact that concessions had been made to Eshkol that were 'extremely difficult from a Christian point of view'.<sup>59</sup> Jewish Mission had been a major effort, resulting in small but significant numbers of converts to the Protestant faith. Now they were being told by Kremers that their ensuing separation from the Jewish people had been a tragic mistake. Boertien had been visiting with Blum, 'a strange man', embittered by what he called 'Nes Goyim'. Both men insisted that a Christian moshav had to accept Christian Jews. If not, Nes Ammim had to be stopped. Boertien stepped up his campaign. He had already been successful with Philippe Gold. Now he tried to make the Americans withdraw.<sup>60</sup> 'It is most frustrating for all of us', Minnaar admitted.<sup>61</sup>

Boertien had plenty of time available to conduct his crusade.<sup>62</sup> Even Lesslie Newbiggin, acting secretary of the WCC, was briefed about the dangers posed by the 'Philo-Semitism' of Kremers and his band of brothers. Christians might be attracted to Judaism instead of the other way around.<sup>63</sup> Boertien found it hard to understand why his pleas were ignored by most of the Dutch. Cor and Anneke van der Spek understood his arguments well enough but remained unconvinced. 'After all, there had been an Endlösung', Cor said, 'new openings were needed between Jews and Christians'. Better to try in Nes Ammim on Jewish conditions than simply stick to the old ways:

Sure: it was my hope and expectation that the Jews would find their way to Jesus. However, I no longer presumed that it depended on us. I simply wanted to help, to remove obstacles.<sup>64</sup>

Nes Ammim was still being recommended by an impressive array of Protestant dignitaries. Among them were J. van Aartsen (Minister of Housing), H.J. Beerink (chairman of the Christian Historical Union), Bergema, Berghuis (chairman of the Antirevolutionary Party) and theologians Beek, Berkhof, Berkouwer, Buskes, Dijk, Miskotte, Van Ruler and H.N. Ridderbos. Gerbrandy had died.<sup>65</sup> Boertien presumed that this broad level of support had something to do with contemporary changes in Dutch society, which he found difficult to fathom from Jerusalem. The UCCI denounced Kremers as a heretic, but apparently Dutch Protestant elites thought otherwise.<sup>66</sup> And yet Boertien did not halt his crusade:

58 H.R. Koller to parents, Shomrat 12 December 1964, in AFK.

59 H. Bergema and H. Berkhof to NAN, Baarn/Oegstgeest 28 January 1964, ANAN.

60 M. Boertien to NAN, Jerusalem 30 July 1964, in ANAN.

61 J. Minnaar to J. Pilon, Rotterdam 25 September 1964, in ANAN.

62 H. Bernath to E.M. Schwaller, Nazareth 7 April 1965, in ANAG file 1965.

63 M. Boertien to L. Newbiggin, quoted in report on Christian activities in Israel, September 1963–August 1964; and to M. Drayer, Jerusalem 10 December 1964, in HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

64 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013.

65 *Nes Ammim mededelingen*, January 1964.

66 Heinz Kremers, *Judenmission heute?*, 33.

Continuing their present policy, accepted in 1962, NA will degenerate into a probably sympathetic, but spiritually dangerous symptom of Philo-Semitism or into a 'Christianised' pseudo-Zionist movement.<sup>67</sup>

The impact in Holland was minimal. Van Stegeren-Keizer was now at the helm of the RCN deputies for Israel Evangelisation, with the intention of reform along similar principles that Kremers was advocating for in Germany. Berkhof, Grolle and his successor Gerssen did not waver in their support. Another active promotor was Bakker, whose travel agency Thacir included the moshav in Israel tours for the Protestant public.<sup>68</sup>

Based on the dialogic principle developed by the DRC, Nes Ammim is a practical exponent, a 'putting to the test' of this way of thinking.<sup>69</sup>

Dutch Protestantism was changing fast, faster perhaps than its counterparts in Switzerland or the United States. Jewish Mission had become a memory of the past, Jewish converts a curiosity, Arab Christians an exponent of a part of the world that was perceived as hostile and dangerous. It came as a shock for Boertien to find that this approach was not only tolerated by the DRC and now even by the RCN leadership, but rather stimulated.

### Faith and Humanism

Christianity remained the cornerstone of solidarity: 'The Holy One of Israel has destined the land for this very people.'<sup>70</sup> Humanism was out of the question,<sup>71</sup> said Dick Lam. Dorland used to listen to Bach recordings in his 'wood cabin'. Old and New Testament referred to Jesus – Jesus as a Jew.<sup>72</sup> Protestantism was changing but vibrant, Dorland said. Nes Ammim-Holland set a target of f 150,000 in yearly donations and this target was duly met.

Seeing that he was making no headway, Boertien made an appointment with Pilon. He asked Lindsey, vice-president of the UCCI, to attend: 'I need a witness, knowing too well that he is likely to distort anything we discuss.' The meeting ended with Pilon accusing his adversary of conducting a smear campaign and Boertien advising the Verwaltungsrat to sack both Pilon and Kremers to be rid of their 'Philo-Semitic nonsense'. 'How is this possible', he gasped, 'that sound Reformed people can feel enthusiasm for Nes Ammim'?'<sup>73</sup> In 2017 I posed this same question to Rev. Teunis Brienens, Boertien's colleague in the CRC for many years. According to Brienens, he had underestimated the importance of Israel. That Nes

67 M. Boertien to M.C. King (Geneva), J.H. Grolle, C.B. Bavinck and others, Jerusalem 30 July 1964, in ANAN.

68 Cf. G.J. van Klinken, *Opvattingen*, 590.

69 J.J. Pilon to P. Oskamp, Nes Ammim 31 August 1964, ANAN.

70 Circular letter (1964 or 1965), ANAN.

71 Notitie D. Lam, Heemstede 10 April 1964, ANAN.

72 G. Dorland to Corrie van der Baan, Heemstede 4 November 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 4.

73 M. Boertien, report September 1964 to deputies Israel evangelization and CRC Groningen. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

Ammim tried to *do* something in a world after the Holocaust, something common Protestants could contribute to, had more impact than any of his objections:

Boertien excelled in razor sharp criticism. In most cases, he had a point. Oddly enough, he had more difficulty in providing practical alternatives.<sup>74</sup>

### Meir Orkin, Chaika Grossman, Josef Meir and Shlomo Harari

Through a huge effort, a budget of IL 280,000 was gathered to build the road.<sup>75</sup> After Van der Spek had carefully surveyed the route, construction began in June. Jokwei Hagalil acted as the building contractor. Supervisor Meir Orkin was ‘a real technician, a man like myself’, Cor used to say.<sup>76</sup> Meir and his wife Chaika Grossman hailed from Poland, where they had joined Hashomer Hatzair. Chaika had survived the ghetto of Bialystok. In 1945 she became a member of the Central Committee of Polish Jews and left for Israel three years later. After their marriage, the couple had settled in Evron, where Chaika was elected chairman of the District Council Ga’aton. In later years Chaika would become a Knesset member. They shared a practical ‘hands on attitude’, an acute sense of the necessity of the State of Israel but also a willingness to consider Arab rights along the principles of Mapam.<sup>77</sup>

The road was opened in the summer of 1964. ‘Within easy reach of the outside world, it’s fantastic.’<sup>78</sup> Access to water was negotiated with Minhal Hamayim and Tahal. Meir paid a visit to Europe, staying with the Pilon in Heemstede where he felt at home.<sup>79</sup> In contrast, a meeting in Germany ended in disaster. The Velbert group felt mortified when industrial barons began to make supposedly funny jokes about concentration camps. Their Israeli visitor remained stoic. ‘Josef Meir holds nothing against Becker and the Velbert group’, said Pilon. ‘They represent a new generation.’<sup>80</sup> Meir advocated for a German seat in the Verwaltungsrat, under the condition that it was tightly controlled by Velbert. ‘Authorities and public opinion consider it imperative that Germany becomes a full partner.’<sup>81</sup> Even though visiting German businessmen had not been duly impressed by Nes Ammim:

*Spielerei*, that is what they called us.<sup>82</sup>

Meir was succeeded by Shlomo Harari, who invited an observer to attend meetings of the District Council. Bezek was proposed, but Harari preferred to have a Christian.<sup>83</sup> Bezek began to train Van der Spek as *mazkir*: secretary of the village

74 Interview T. Brienens by C. Budding and author, Hoogeveen 20 June 2017.

75 J. Meir to J. Bernath, Nahariya 15 December 1963, ANAN.

76 Interview Cor van der Spek, Broek op Langedijk, 29 October 2015.

77 <http://www.haika.org.il/poland-eng.html>.

78 G. Dorland to J.J. Pilon, Nes Ammim 6 July 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

79 J. Meir to J.J. Pilon, Nahariya 27 March 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

80 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Nes Ammim 21 September 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

81 Ibidem.

82 E-mail C. van der Spek to author, Broek op Langedijk 25 January 2014.

83 J.J. Pilon to NA Germany, Nes Ammim 16 October 1964. Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 108.



council and its representative in district Ga'aton. It boded well for cooperation with the Jewish neighbourhood:

Ga'aton District Council will do everything within its power to assist the development of Nes Ammim and to promote friendly relations between this village and the surrounding communities. It is with great pleasure that we can tell you that in its session of 21 December 1964, our Council has decided to admit a representative of your village in the capacity of observer.<sup>84</sup>

On 23 February 1965 Van der Spek attended for the first time. He had the right to speak, if not to vote.<sup>85</sup> Fluent in Ivrit,<sup>86</sup> the newcomer performed well:

Israel remained the underdog of the Middle East, a small country under siege where everything still needed to be built up. That was where we came in, standing shoulder to shoulder with the Israelis in daily toil. Our practical solidarity was met with appreciation.<sup>87</sup>

A source of water was detected behind the banana plantation.<sup>88</sup> Ami Kamir, secretary of the economic office of the Prime Minister, issued a permit to bring it into exploitation. A Nes Ammim village council was elected, meeting every Wednesday. Members were: Van der Spek (mazkir), Robert (chairman), Baars, Miller, Brodbeck and Bezek (advisor). They decided that from now on, divine services would be scheduled on Shabbat instead of Sunday.<sup>89</sup>

Visits to or from Abu Sinan had become rare. Khayr was an elected mayor now, 'courteous and smiling' as ever<sup>90</sup> and often away in Spain or Switzerland. A son served in the IDF and played in its military band Tzahal. Travel guides for Western tourists treated Abu Sinan as a view to be enjoyed at a distance:

You pass along an avenue of eucalyptus, over a fertile plain sometimes known as the Emek Asher (...). The hills of North-West Galilee now loom ahead of you. The villages on their flanks can be picked out clearly, looking like a few scattered crumbs of bread crust on the vast bare slopes.<sup>91</sup>

Mary-Jeanne Robert loved Regba. 'De mes années d'école, je garde d'excellents souvenirs: un accueil exemplaire, de compréhension, de la tolérance et un programme de qualité.'<sup>92</sup> Mazra'a built a mosque. It had been lacking so far, as the mosque of al-Sumayriyya had been used in the past. By 1964 Mazra'a had 1,096 inhabitants, many from cleared coastal villages such as al-Bassa (near Rosh Hanikra)<sup>93</sup> and Achziv (al-Zeeb). The picturesque houses of Achziv remained, converted by Eli Avivi into a hippie centre where rock & roll concerts could be staged.<sup>94</sup> Since Mazra'a no longer possessed its fields, inhabitants needed to make an income elsewhere.

84 German translation in *Mitteilungen Nes Ammim* 1965 nr. 1 (February).

85 Email C. van der Spek to author, Broek op Langedijk 25 January 2014.

86 *Mitteilungen Nes Ammim* May 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

87 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013.

88 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 28 April 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

89 *Nes Ammim. Banier der Natiën*, Rotterdam February 1965.

90 Yoel Bar, 'Cheik Abdallah Kheir', in *Information d'Israel* 21 January 1966.

91 K.M. Willcox, *Your guide to Israel*, 248.

92 Mary-Jeanne Robert, 'Nes Ammim 1963-1967' (Fontainemelon, 2013), ANAG.

93 <http://zochrot.org> (al-Bassa).

94 David Leach, *Chasing Utopia*, 177-179.

Some found construction jobs in Nes Ammim. Mazra'a was a farmers' village without land of its own to farm, says Yuseph Mubarki who was born there in 1957.<sup>95</sup>

### Nes Ammim-America

Between 1 January and 30 September 1964, IL 247,721 had been invested, against an expenditure of IL 340,953 and a revenue of IL 343,003. The agricultural contribution was modest. Sales of sorghum, wheats, cotton and melons produced a net gain of IL 11,556.54.<sup>96</sup> Bezek was in control, notwithstanding the fact that his actions were viewed with some suspicion by the Verwaltungsrat,<sup>97</sup> where some believed that 'the activity of Shlomo (...) was mostly to supervise kosher proceedings, untainted by missionary efforts'.<sup>98</sup>

Now that Nes Ammim could not afford to accommodate Christian Jews, Jacob Bernath toyed with the idea of extending the principle to *any* Jew, Bezek included.<sup>99</sup> Pilon would have none of it. He arrived in October 1964 to survey the progress that had been made under the guidance of the madrich: 'A true metamorphosis (...). Now we have six pretty barracks, inhabited by twenty pioneers including five children.' However, he also noted growing tensions caused by operation Fox Terrier:

There were stories about struggle for control between Swiss and Dutch. For now the latter are the victors, due to superior numbers (...) the office is firmly in their hands. Obviously, Shlomo is counted as a Dutchman.

Koller, Roost, the Roberts and the rest of the Swiss and Peace workers feel that they are not taken seriously. A minor religious war has been going on, in which both parties try to educate the other. Koller complained that the Dutch refuse to take part in his weekly prayer sessions.

Boertien's letters hit their mark on public opinion in the USA. The American committee felt it prudent to keep some distance and wait until the situation was cleared up. Mennonites in the village were regularly inspected by Dwight Baker and his secretary Ibrahim Sim'an, to make sure that MCC instructions were complied with.<sup>100</sup> Visits by Miller also served this purpose:

Orie was dressed in an unbuttoned waistcoat and his wife in a bonnet. Not as Orthodox as the Amish though: Orie relished driving his car. He behaved as a benevolent patriarch towards the 'boys'. They might have 'gone wild' a few times, meaning they had been off to watch a movie in Nahariya. After being reprieved by Orie, they fell into line once more.<sup>101</sup>

The Southern Baptists, Church of the Brethren, Christian Reformed Church and Covenant Church all gave the 'gentlemen's agreement' a wide berth, focussing on

95 Interview Yuseph Mubarki by Tjitte Dijkstra, in Michael Elias and Simon Schoon (eds.), *Van rozenkassen tot dialoog*, 105.

96 C. van der Spek, 'Nes Ammim. Management in the beginning' (memo 1984), in ACS.

97 Report 6-10 August 1964, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

98 J. Minnaar to S. Schoon, Schiedam-Kethel 8 February 1983, ASS.

99 J. Bernath, memorandum on Nes Ammim August 1964, HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

100 Interview Ibrahim Sim'an, in Michael Elias and Simon Schoon (eds.), *Van rozenkassen tot dialoog*, 72-73.

101 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013.

plans that could never be squared with those of Velbert. Kreider discussed this with Miller:

I was concerned that the project's purpose and vision had never been clarified and wondered at the rationale for increasing Mennonite involvement in a project where fundamental differences persisted. (...) Orie felt that the emerging vision and plans were encouraging, and that the potential for healthy growth was promising.<sup>102</sup>

Reverend Arthur H. de Kruyter (Western Springs, Illinois) believed that Nes Ammim should continue to resist attempts of State supervision and that free churches offered the best prospects for success. That was music to Bernath's ears:

He [De Kruyter] told me that it is the experience in America, that established churches are hardly suited for an endeavour of this kind.<sup>103</sup>

To be sure, Nes Ammim could not engage in 'direct missionary activity'.<sup>104</sup> However, 'believers in the God of Israel as manifested in Jesus Christ' were bound to 'Him, who said and says: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.' It might well be impossible 'to keep one foot in the Liberal Ecumenical church world and the other in the conservative Evangelical church world.'<sup>105</sup> De Kruyter felt that Christian spirituality needed strengthening, 'to find each other in Jesus Christ'.<sup>106</sup> Henriëtte Boas followed developments with a growing sense of apprehension.<sup>107</sup> The Kollers encountered less difficulties in Beit HaEmek and Shomrat:

The living presence of Christ becomes apparent in interhuman relations and most impressively in the kibbutzim; even if his name is not mentioned there.<sup>108</sup>

Boertien wanted to reinstate the original working principles of 1958. 'If NA will not be able or is not prepared to revise without delay and openly change their attitude in regard to Hebrew Christians, even at the risk of losing the permission to develop their settlement, there will only be one way out: dissolve the settlement, send the settlers home, and sell the plot of land.'<sup>109</sup> His relentless campaign did not fail to make an impact. Harold Row told the American committee that the Church of the Brethren intended to withdraw:

[Row] insists that we should draw up a policy statement on this matter, which would underscore the part that we will not discriminate against Hebrew Christians. He would like to know from us that we originally intended to allow Hebrew Christians to have a share in Nes Ammim and that the government stopped us. He would also like us to state that we will continue to work with good intention toward Hebrew Christians in the future. I am certain that he will not be interested in Nes Ammim unless he is satisfied on this score.<sup>110</sup>

102 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 148-149.

103 J. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 23 September 1964. HDC VU, archive NAN, box 28.

104 *Nes Ammim. International Christian Settlement in Israel*, Akron (Pennsylvania) 1964.

105 A.H. de Kruyter, Nes Ammim report 24 November 1964, ANAN.

106 *Nes Ammim. Banner of the Nations*, Akron (Pennsylvania) 1965.

107 H. Boas to D. Shaltiel, Amsterdam 14 April 1964, AHB.

108 G. Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 30 April 1964, AFK.

109 M. Boertien to M.C. King (Geneva) and others, Jerusalem 30 July 1964, ANAN.

110 A.H. de Kruyter to J.J. Pilon, Western Springs 12 October 1964, ANAN.

Russell Cervin of the Covenant Church pleaded for drastic action. Together with L. Arden Almquist he drafted a memorandum to affirm the paramount importance of Christian witness:

Since outright missionary activity is forbidden by law in the State of Israel, evangelical Christians have been asking a pointed question for some time: 'How can you witness in a country where witness is forbidden?' To simply assume that we have no obligation to bring the Christian witness to such a country is unthinkable in view of the message and direction of the Gospel itself. The answer finally came. The only way such witness could be established was by creating a Christian settlement in Israel which would be made up entirely of dedicated and committed Christian people – most of whom would be laymen.<sup>111</sup>

Jews could be made receptive to the Gospel:

The Jewish refugees who have settled the new Israel, think of Christians as the people who have persecuted them through the centuries. They remember only too well that the countries of Europe from which most of them came were so-called Christian countries. It is the desire of Nes Ammim to live in Israel in a manner that changes this image, so that Israelis will be receptive rather than antagonistic toward the Gospel we proclaim.

It might be said that, without question, the basic purpose of this community is to be a witness to Jesus Christ and His salvation. Christian services are allowed within the settlement. Should anyone from outside wish to come in and attend they may do so and share in conversations or worship as they desire. Though it is not permitted to go out to persuade people to come in, Christian worship and activities can be carried on within the community. It is hoped that in time this kind of witness will bring many interested inquirers within the context of the settlement and that many will ultimately be won to Jesus Christ.<sup>112</sup>

For Buksbazen this was still too deferential towards Eshkol. Nes Ammim simply had to claim its right of free speech.<sup>113</sup> Jacob Bernath took supportive action in the Verwaltungsrat, announcing that Dorland was to be relieved by an American.<sup>114</sup> Pilon and Bezek were given to understand that they were not in charge. De Kruyter suggested Bob Geerdes, who had been working as a missionary in Peru. De Kruyter was suggested for the position of chaplain of Nes Ammim.<sup>115</sup> The Bernath brothers were in full support,<sup>116</sup> only to find that Geerdes and De Kruyter declined the invitation.<sup>117</sup>

By now, Nes Ammim Switzerland was in serious trouble. They had antagonized the Germans, while American efforts were hampered by Boertien's campaign. Investors had become shy. Consequently, Jacob Bernath failed to produce the industry that he had promised to Eshkol:

Switzerland is hardly an industrial country. Our mechanical clocks are unable to compete with electronic products from Japan.<sup>118</sup>

111 L. Arden Almquist and Russell A. Cervin, memorandum 'Nes Ammim USA', Chicago 15 January 1964, ANAN.

112 Ibidem.

113 V. Buksbazen to J. Bernath, Philadelphia 15 September 1964, ANAN.

114 J.J. Pilon to D. Black (New York), Heemstede 17 April 1964, ANAN.

115 A.H. de Kruyter to J.J. Pilon, Western Springs 30 October 1964, ANAN.

116 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J. Minnaar, Nazareth 5 November 1964, ANAG.

117 A.H. de Kruyter to H. Bernath, Western Springs 16 November 1964, ANAN.

118 Interview Charles Gysel by author, Wilchingen 4 May 2015.

Unless the Americans would commit fully, the Swiss felt unable to make headway:

Our people feel depressed and under pressure. Many feel that they cannot continue this way (...). It would help to have more humility and mutual trust. However, the essential problem is that spiritual goals are diametrically opposed. It cannot work this way. Some have come here to provide Christian witness as a community. For them the enterprise makes no sense without a shared sense of the love of Christ. For others it is economy that really matters, *only* economy (...).

A few kilometres away, in Beth-El, there were no problems about either witness or Christian Jews. Hans Bernath failed to understand why Nes Ammim could not simply follow the same course:

As you know from previous letters, it is my firm conviction that Nes Ammim will end in disaster if we fail to provide communal Christian witness. Economic aid, industry, know-how, sympathies for Israel, building bridges, dialogue ... those are just hollow words. Others could do that better than we can. If Nes Ammim were to become an economic success without confessing Christ, Mark 8:36 would apply here: 'What does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?'

(...) It is obvious that we need a pastor, to provide spiritual care: a man of proven Biblical faith, able to bring the necessary discipline of the Word of God. A man like De Kruyter. (...) We will not sacrifice our community to Israel's demands.<sup>119</sup>

### Board meeting in Nahariya

The Verwaltungsrat assembled on 26 and 27 November 1964 in the Rosenblatt guesthouse in Nahariya, a few doors away from Beth-El. Jacob Bernath presided over the meeting. Also present were Pilon, Hauri, Schwank, Miller, Minnaar, Gysel, Snoek and Boertien. Becker attended on behalf of the Germans,<sup>120</sup> despite his annoyance that he had to do so as a mere observer. In the Rhineland he was a respected *Landeskirchenrat*, whereas here he felt as if he was on probation.

Machteld de Goederen witnessed their arrival in al-Mansura: 'Gentlemen in dark suits and often with a cigar stepped down from the car. Jeanne Robert curtsied, before serving coffee. We had many questions, but before we were given a chance to bring them up, they were already on their way back to Nahariya.'<sup>121</sup> Discussions back in Rosenblatt were tough. Becker categorically resisted the inclusion of witness in the basic principles. Finally, a compromise text was accepted by a majority vote:

Even if we abstain from missionary labours, our work and toil in Israel serves as witness for the Jewish people that love for the Saviour brings us to the aid of the people He was descended from.<sup>122</sup>

119 H. Bernath to J. Bernath and J. Minnaar, Nazareth 5 November 1964, AFK.

120 J.J. Pilon to NA Germany, Nes Ammim 16 October 1964, in Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 91.

121 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 20 November 2013.

122 J. Minnaar, 'Bestuursvergadering te Nahariya', in *Nes Ammim. Banier der Natiën*, Rotterdam Feb-

Though an effort would be made to obtain a visa for a Christian Jew,<sup>123</sup> Boertien was still not mollified: 'Delegates had no idea of what we have been saying for so long. They seemed to think we were attending as admirers.'<sup>124</sup> Van der Spek was biting his lips. 'They were so busy with these so-called fundamental matters, that they ignored the financial prognosis.'<sup>125</sup> Nor was Becker having a good time. Some of his fellow delegates took sardonic pleasure in showing him his place as a German:

New chairman of the District Council is Shlomo Harari, former *chawer* of kibbutz Sa'ar. He received the foreign delegates in Yad Nathan near Akko instead of inviting them to the offices of the Council. The reason was the presence of three German observers among them.<sup>126</sup>

Velbert's request to be admitted to the board was denied. Only Pilon had supported Becker's candidacy, angering the others by saying that Israeli authorities would approve the idea.<sup>127</sup>

At first glance it seemed as if Boertien had prevailed. Christian witness had been affirmed, a visa for a Christian Jew would be applied for, and Velbert remained barred from the Verwaltungsrat. It soon turned out that his victory was Pyrrhic at best. A change of principle would need Israeli consent. Normally it would be Kremers or Pilon's job to bring it up in Jerusalem. Under the circumstances, they were not even willing to try. Minnaar admitted that there was probably no text that would ever satisfy both the Germans and Americans.<sup>128</sup> The Ministry of the Interior answered questions about the gentlemen's agreement, denying that Christian Jews were being screened. However, all prospective workers had to sign a 'declaration of non-missionary activity' and it was questionable whether converts would pass the test.<sup>129</sup>

Van der Spek pointed out that overhead costs had risen to unsustainable levels. For the Swiss bureau, 50,000 frs. were needed yearly, the salaries of Pilon and Kees de Goederen (industrial advisor) were 24,000 frs. each. In comparison, 76,000 frs. had been contributed by Holland in 1963, 54,000 by Switzerland, 100,000 by Germany and a mere 6,000 by America. Koller needed 200,000 frs. to build homes, plus an extra 50,000 for tools.<sup>130</sup> Meanwhile, De Goederen admitted that attempts to attract industries from the Netherlands had also ended in failure.<sup>131</sup>

Pilon retired to the bus, wondering how to proceed. A visitor arrived from the Netherlands: Ewout Janse. His notes of their conversation shed some light upon

ruary 1965.

123 M. Boertien, circular letter Jerusalem 7 January 1965, ANAG.

124 M. Boertien, report November 1964 to deputies Israel evangelization and CRC Groningen. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

125 C. van der Spek, 'Nes Ammim. Management at the start' (memo 1984), ACS.

126 *Nes Ammim Mitteilungen* 1965 nr. 1 (February).

127 Minutes Verwaltungsrat Nahariya November 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 25.

128 Retrospective in: J. Minnaar to S. Schoon, Schiedam-Kethel 27 November 1975, ASS.

129 A. Levy (Ministry of Interior) to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 20 October 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.

130 Appendix to minutes Verwaltungsrat Zurich 9 January 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 25.

131 G. Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Nes Ammim 1 June 1964. AFK.

what his host was thinking at the time. Kremers was incapacitated for the moment, but he felt sure that Bezek, Becker and Dorland would stand by him. Janse was left in no doubt that Pilon, an 'ascetic man, reminding him of Schweitzer', would take charge. 'Quite a metamorphosis', Janse remarked, 'to drop the aim of converting others and yet to remain a Christian'.<sup>132</sup> The Swiss, he was given to understand, had lost their touch. Reliable workers as they might be, they did not understand Israel. As to the Mennonites: they were a sect, using the moshav as a loophole to keep their boys safely away from Vietnam. Pilon prepared for a showdown. Janse had the impression that he had met a dedicated leader:

While he returns to his lonely station in the bus, darkness sets in behind the hills. The setting sun is wrapped in roseate and violet colour shades. It is still warm, cicadas still twittering. A new experiment in an ancient land.<sup>133</sup>

And so, operation Fox Terrier was set into full gear once more. The Verwaltungsrat was given notice that Dorland would stay on as manager. With the help of Bezek and Van der Spek, he hoped to make the best of it.<sup>134</sup> He began by organizing a Christmas celebration. There were shepherds, three kings, Joseph and Mary, and songs at a campfire. Yet in the cradle, there was no baby Jesus. A burning candle, symbol of light and of Hanukah, had taken its place.<sup>135</sup> German artist Gisela Harupa visited a few weeks later, and thought she was witnessing an idyll.<sup>136</sup>

132 Ewout Janse, 'Een christelijke nederzetting in Israël', 25 December 1964. ANAG, scrapbook.

133 Ibidem.

134 G. Dorland to J. Minnaar, Nes Ammim 17 December 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

135 G. Dorland to J.J. Pilon, Nes Ammim 31 December 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

136 Gisela Harupa to Marieluise Simpfendorfer, 10 January 1965. Quoted in Christian Bartsch (ed.), *Schalom ist mehr als nur ein Wort*, 121.

# XXX Al-Sumayriyya

In 1948, just fifteen years before, the population of Western Galilee had been predominantly Arab and Druze. Since that time, there had been no communication with the refugees over the border. For many of the inhabitants of District Ga'aton in 1963, it seemed as if they no longer existed. It was different for staff members of the Nazareth hospital. Runa Mackay, who also worked for the Red Cross in Lebanon, came to know the refugees quite well:

Some were bourgeoisie and intellectual elite of Haifa, who settled in Beirut, able to buy citizenship and easily assimilated into the upper strata of Lebanese society. The majority, however, arrived empty-handed, believing they would soon be returning home. This did not happen. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was formed in 1949. Seventeen camps were set up near Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon and Tyre for the refugees, who became a pool of unskilled labour as well as a source of resentment to their hosts.<sup>1</sup>

The site of one of the former villages, whose former inhabitants had ended up in Lebanon or Syria, was close to Nes Ammim: al-Sumayriyya.

## Remembering a vanished community

‘For a brief while in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the plight of Palestinian-Arab refugees temporarily lost its newsworthiness as the press abroad turned its attention to stories of the Jewish state’s herculean job of absorbing its own refugees.’<sup>2</sup> As for the refugees themselves, they found it hard – and possibly shaming – to share their experience with others. Edward Said hailed from a Protestant Arab family in Jerusalem:

What overcomes me now is the scale of dislocation our family and friends experienced and of which I was scarcely conscious, essentially an unknowing witness in 1948. As a boy of twelve and a half in Cairo, I often saw the sadness and destitution in the faces and lives of people I had formerly known as ordinary middle-class people in Palestine, but I couldn’t really comprehend the tragedy that had befallen them nor could I piece together all the different narrative fragments to understand what had really happened.<sup>3</sup>

1 Runa Mackay, *Exile in Israel*, 46-50.

2 Paul Charles Merkley, *Christian attitudes towards the State of Israel*, 11.

3 Edward W. Said, *Out of place*, 114.



There was no possibility of return, as authorities made quite clear. Commentators from the West tended to agree:

A third of the Jewish population of Israel is living on former Arab property. A full repatriation of the refugees to Israel would shake the land to its foundations.<sup>4</sup>

The Nazi legacy in Europe made it imperative to support Israel unequivocally in this issue, as even Maas Boertien had affirmed in 1960. Reconciliation between Jews and Christians was a top priority for any European country that had been subjected to the Holocaust:

The best friendship we can offer the Arabs is by affirming international law and the historical rights of Israel, by supporting the Jewish State and by efforts to bring some sense of reality to the Arabs. This attitude is squarely founded in loyalty towards Israel, we are not neutral.

Sure, there were some regrettable events. But we should not forget that Israel is doing everything within its power to set things right. Let us not forget that the Arabs have been opposing Zionism from the start (...), attacking Jewish settlements with the intention of wiping Israel from the map. Arabs who did not take part in this aggression were allowed to remain in the country. They are many times better off than their kin in the neighbouring countries.<sup>5</sup>

It was not uncommon to rank Arabs in Israel as resident strangers.<sup>6</sup> Few theologians questioned this assessment. In 1963 Koole got to know Rafiq Farah, admiring his fluency in English, his 'enticing' wife, the excellence of the school they were running next to the church, and Rafiq's translation of Emil Brunner into Arabic.<sup>7</sup> Koole wondered why Nes Ammim did not enlist these excellent people, who had been expecting a close cooperation. Pilon replied that it was impossible:

Yes, we would like to develop Nes Ammim together with a third party. Discussing the matter with our friends the Farah family, we stated this intention over and over again. However, our current endeavour is so difficult (if not impossible) that it would be premature. It is certain that, given the circumstances, strong ties with (Christian) Arabs would be viewed as incompatible with our commitment to Israel.<sup>8</sup>

This was in line with the intentions of the Velbert group. As Thomas Kremers explains:

The Arabs were simply not the main reason for their presence in Israel. They would try 'to do something for them', in Mazra'a, but it remained a matter of charity. Initially, it seems that my father really believed that the Arabs had left Palestine freely, urged on by their muftis. He was distressed by the alternative story: that they had been driven from the land. But that came later.<sup>9</sup>

The number of cleared Arab villages dotting the landscape ran into the hundreds. 'Expulsions'; that was the explanation offered by a Nazareth doctor. 'Villages

4 M. Wijnhoven, *Het feit Israël*, 112.

5 M. Boertien, report December 1960–June 1961, in HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

6 Petrus Huigens, *Israël*, 151.

7 J.L. Koole, 'Dit komt u tegen in Israël', in *Gereformeerd Weekblad* 20 December 1963.

8 J.J. Pilon to J.J. Koole, Heemstede 24 January 1964, in ANAN.

9 Interview Thomas Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

almost totally and immediately demolished so no one would be able to return now or any time in the future.’<sup>10</sup> ‘For some reason we did not note them’, says Machteld de Goederen. ‘That came later, after the sixties.’<sup>11</sup> Ari Shavit, born in Israel in 1957, reflects on the phenomenon. Having survived and building a new life required an immense effort. Had Israel admitted what had truly befallen the Arab refugees, the nation would have crumbled. ‘Looking away’ became a necessity.<sup>12</sup>

## Relics

Remnants of al-Sumayriyya were visible for the discerning eye between Regba and Lohamei HaGettaot, as were those of Kuwaykat near Beit HaEmek.<sup>13</sup> The former village is mentioned as early as the siege of Akko in 1291, when al-Malik al-Ashraf Khalil pitched his tents here.<sup>14</sup> The atlas by Charles William Meredith van de Velde (1865) notes ‘es-Semirieh’ and ‘el-Mezraah’ (Mazra’a).<sup>15</sup> A Franciscan crossed the ‘plain of St Jean of Akra’ about the same time, describing a thriving agricultural community:

Nearby are the remains of a substantial aqueduct. The fertile fields are used to grow corn, Turkish wheats and durah; they also have rich plantations of tobacco and sugar reeds. Next to the road stand orange, figs and pomegranate trees.<sup>16</sup>

British military surveyors C.R. Conder and H.H. Kitchener estimated that there were about two hundred Muslim villagers in al-Sumayriyya. A few houses were made of stone, but most dwellings consisted of adobe mudbricks, surrounded by olive trees.<sup>17</sup> E.H. Palmer was asked by the Palestine Exploration Fund in 1881 to research toponyms, explaining ‘Semeiriyeh’ as follows:

In Arabic, the word means ‘tawny’, ‘brown’; but the name is probably a survival of the Hebrew *Shimron Meron* (Joshua xii, 20). It is the *Casale Somelaria Templi* of the medieval writers.<sup>18</sup>

The French atlas *La Palestine contemporaine*, prepared by L.Cl. Fillion and H. Nicole applied the Crusader names St. Jean d’Acre and ‘Semireh’.<sup>19</sup> The 1912 edition of the Baedeker travel guide offered a pleasing picture: ‘La contrée est très bien cultivée.’<sup>20</sup> Under the British Mandate there were ninety-two houses (together with a mosque, a cemetery and a school), used by 392 Muslims and a single

10 Elias S. Srouji, *Cyclamens from Galilee*, 148 and 169.

11 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 20 March 2015.

12 Ari Shavit, *Mijn beloofde land*, 185 and 187.

13 Satellite pictures: [www.palestineremembered.com/Acre/Kuwaykat&alSummayriyya](http://www.palestineremembered.com/Acre/Kuwaykat&alSummayriyya).

14 David Nicolle and Graham Turner, *Acre 1291*, 56–57.

15 Produced in Gotha in 1865 (<http://hdl.huntington.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15150coll4/id/7145>).

16 A. Letremble, *Het Heilige Land en de Libanon* 2, The Hague 1867, 171.

17 C.R. Conder and H.H. Kitchener, *The survey of Western Palestine 1882–1888* 1 (Galilee). Palestine Exploration Fund, London 1998 (reprint), 147.

18 *The survey of Western Palestine. Arabic and English name lists*, 54.

19 L.Cl. Fillion and H. Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible*, planche xii.

20 Karl Baedeker, *Palestine et Syrie. Manuel du voyageur*, Leipzig/Paris 1912, 266.

Christian.<sup>21</sup> Kuwaykat numbered 163 houses, all of its 789 residents were Muslims.<sup>22</sup> Jews arrived when Nahariya was founded in 1935. Change seemed to arrive slowly in this part of the world. Distances were calculated from Beirut and Jerusalem.<sup>23</sup> Everything changed in 1948. The land was taken over by kibbutzim like Beit HaEmek, where the pioneers had been through so many horrors themselves that they instinctively perceived the Arabs as mortal enemies, on par with the Nazis. Any attempt to return to their former homes would be resisted by a show of force. The proximity to the Druzes of Kafr Yasif and Abu Sinan was already enough of a threat.<sup>24</sup> Next to Regba was Mazra'a, with many remaining fellahin but no fields to plough. Their story vanished behind the epic of the Israeli takeover of the region:

Commander of Western Galilee was Moshe Carmeli, one of the secret leaders of Haganah. He had been arrested by the British in 1939 during a raid on a Haganah officers' school and had spent a year and a half in the prison at Acre. Carmeli decided to take the offensive. There was a famous height just outside Acre which controlled the roads running north and south. It is called Napoleon's Hill because it is the point where Napoleon was defeated during his famous Egyptian campaign. Iraqi soldiers were stationed here. Palmach<sup>25</sup> units made a surprise attack on this position, with mortars and machine guns, taking the hill from the east. The Iraqis fled from both the hill and the camp. Now, armoured columns of Haganah with large supplies of food moved northward to Nahariya, clearing the roads before them. By noon of the next day, the whole road from Acre to the border of the Lebanon was cleared.<sup>26</sup>

Descriptions of the subsequent removal of a major part of the population to Lebanon are scarce.<sup>27</sup> The *Guide Bleu* that Pilon used in 1958 to get his bearings, does not mention al-Sumayriyya or Kuwaykat. The only reference is a passing remark on the inadequate farming methods applied by 'successives occupations étrangères' before 1948. As far as the *Guide Bleu* was concerned, the land had always belonged to the Jewish people, and was now being returned to its rightful owners.<sup>28</sup> The lands of al-Sumayriyya had been transferred to a kibbutz. The original idea was to name it Lohamei HaGettaot Samariah. Keren Kayemet preferred a Hebrew title, such as kibbutz Asher. Finally, the name Lohamei HaGettaot was adopted.<sup>29</sup>

### 'That old village'

In 1960 Nes Ammim tried to lease a plot from Keren Kayemet's Settlement Department: the 'unoccupied wasteland where an Arab village was once sited'.<sup>30</sup> The

21 E. Mills (red.), *Census of Palestine 1931*, 103.

22 E. Mills (ed.), *Census of Palestine 1931*, 101.

23 Jesaias Press, *Neues Palästina-Handbuch*, 493.

24 Henry Near, *The Kibbutz Movement. A History* 2, 153.

25 Elite forces of the Haganah, the Yishuv's army in 1948.

26 Dorothy F. Zeligs, *The story of modern Israel for young people*, 317-318.

27 Cf. Ari Shavit, *Mijn beloofde land*, 128-138.

28 Elian Finbert, *Israel (Les Guides Bleus)*, Paris 1955, 179.

29 Tom Segev, *The seventh million*, 451.

30 Technical report J. Bernath, Thyngen 1 May 1960, AJP.

location seemed perfect, bordering the main road between Nahariya and Haifa. The crumbling ruins of the school, mosque and cemetery were covered by weeds and debris. Nes Ammim asked permission to build a factory on the plot:<sup>31</sup> 'That the ruined village might be available is excellent.'<sup>32</sup> Jacob Bernath pulled strings with Meir, Ben-Dor and Yosef Weitz, director of Land Development and Forestry:

You will remember that there was a portion of land of the demolished village on the main Haifa-Acco road, which we would like to acquire for some industrial buildings. Only a few days ago, I was able to discuss the matter with Mr. Weitz who is now heading a joint Land Office (...). There is every reason to believe that the above area will be available in June.<sup>33</sup>

A few days after concluding the land deal, they approached Sapir:

In order to develop our industrial branch, we would like to lease or buy the plot of the former Arab village es-Sumarya.<sup>34</sup>

Ben-Dor broached the subject during a conversation with the Knesset committee in December 1962.<sup>35</sup> Nes Ammim brochures referred to 'an area of non-fertile land'.<sup>36</sup> Bezek welcomed the idea:

Ga'aton has already been offered money by the central government to clear the area next to the road (where that old village used to stand) to use the site for industry.<sup>37</sup>

Such pragmatism was hardly remarkable. Tanja Ronen-Laron, born in 1950 and raised in Regba, does not recall that al-Sumayriyya's ruins were ever discussed. No one remembered the former names of fields and meadows, and the land seemed pristine. People in Mazra'a and Abu Sinan might be able to tell, but contact with them was almost non-existent.<sup>38</sup> Gerhard Wiggers says that Jews and Arabs lived separate lives. He managed to pay a visit to Jordan via Mandelbaum Gate. The sight of the massive refugee camps of Akaba and el-Auja near Jericho came as an unpleasant surprise.<sup>39</sup> Dirk Vermeulen relates what he thought of al-Sumayriyya during the seventies:

The ruins of the old village belonged to archaeology of the land, they had nothing to do with contemporary history. We believed that native Palestinian Arabs had never left, as we knew how close they feel to the land. The refugees of 1948 had been migrant workers, who had moved to Galilee in the early twentieth century to find work and who had simply returned to their native countries.<sup>40</sup>

31 J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, Heemstede 23 December 1960, AJP.

32 J.J. Pilon to D. Ben-Dor, Heemstede 19 April 1961, AJP.

33 D. Ben-Dor to J.J. Pilon, Jerusalem 15 April 1961, AJP.

34 Quoted by J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath, J. Minnaar and Ch. Gysel, Nazareth 28 May 1962, AJP.

35 Fifth Knesset, second session, protocol nr. 78 of the Commission for the Interior, Tel Aviv 24 Kislev 5723 (21 December 1962), in: Israel State Archives, Knesset Archives, Rad Building, Hartom Street 14, Jerusalem. Translation Cor van der Spek (Broek op Langedijk).

36 Folder *Nes Ammim*. *International Christian Settlement in Israel*, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 4.

37 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 21 January 1963, AJP.

38 Interview Tanja Ronen-Laron by author, Regba 10 May 2013.

39 Interview Gerhard Wiggers by author, Barlo (Aalten) 4 December 2015.

40 Interview Dirk Vermeulen by author, Etten-Leur 10 January 2018.

The parents of Yusef Mubarki had managed to remain in 1948, thanks to Jewish friends. Johan Pilon helped to pave the way for Yusef's training as a teacher. He grew up in Mazra'a. Like Tanja Ronen-Laron, he cannot remember the fate of al-Sumayriyya ever being debated.<sup>41</sup> Neither does Gerrit Polet: 'I was engaged in building a technical school in Mazra'a but unaware of any mementos relating to 1948.'<sup>42</sup> Johan Snoek, who later was to become a supporter of the Palestinian cause, said that he had hardly been aware of them while living in Tiberias during the fifties and sixties:

A passing remark by our kitchen maid about traumatic events in her village was noted, but I did not take the trouble of making enquiries. Maybe some kind of defence mechanism: my job was to contact the Jews. I could not handle it.<sup>43</sup>

Ellen Tuyt heard the Arab version of events in 1948 from a cleaner in the Scotti. Only then did she begin to notice the overgrown walls and other relics during her walks in the hills and forestry plantations.<sup>44</sup> Boertien's attention was drawn by the UCCI, which made him change his former perceptions. Kremers was advised to look twice:

'That prophesy has been fulfilled in our days ...' No, it is really not as easy as that. (...) Rent a car and look for yourself in the Lebanese border area: new Jewish settlements everywhere and ruined Arab villages between them. It might be possible to rebuild these homes. What actually happens is the opposite: even more settlements for Jewish immigrants. The original inhabitants of the area have been pushed off, to live in tents in Lebanon, a mere fifteen kilometres further North. And that should be qualified as prophesy fulfilled? For me, that is a terrifying interpretation of existing reality.<sup>45</sup>

Nes Ammim left it to Hans Krause to reply:

The desolate Arab villages and the hopeless situation in the refugee camps, where Boertien is referring to, are not the result of Israeli but of Arab policy.<sup>46</sup>

Koole decided to see for himself. 'Everyone was enquiring: when will you visit Israel? As if Palestine is only the Israeli part of the land.' Travelling by car via Yugoslavia, Turkey and the Lebanon he finally reached Jordan. Mount Nebo, where Moses is said to have spotted the Promised Land from afar, overlooked the camps. The next day he was told in the UNRWA<sup>47</sup> headquarters in Ramalla that a refugee family received ten kilos of flour, a pound of sugar, a pound of rice, some beans

41 Interview Yusef Mubarki by author, Nes Ammim 8 January 2011. His family could stay. However, they had lost everything: 'Even the horse my father rode on was taken to the kibbutz. They collected the eggs of our chickens. All this happened in the part of Israel that, in the UN partition plan of 1947, was meant to become part of an Arab State. I am not making a drama of it. It is just part of my history. (...) On the other hand: I owe the beginnings of my educational career to a Jew, who taught me English. This man was a refugee from Iraq.'

42 Interview G. Polet by author, Paterswolde 15 March 2013.

43 Interview J.M. Snoek by author, Rotterdam 22 July 2008.

44 Interview J. Schoneveld and E. Schoneveld-Tuyt, Rijswijk 13 March 2009.

45 M. Boertien, reply to 'Sinn und Aufgabe von Nes Ammim' by H. Kremers, Wassenaar 17 August 1963, AJP.

46 H. Krause, reply to the same, Jerusalem 15 August 1963, AJP.

47 The United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

and oil and a bar of soap for their needs during a month. The UN had accepted resolution 194, urging their return or full compensation. No one expected Israel to comply. Koole was concerned:

There is no solution, not if we are solely guided by our emotions, by our feelings of guilt towards the terrible suffering of the Jews (...) It is a mistake that time will heal this conflict between Israelis and Arabs. Time only makes it more intractable. A dying Arab transfers the property certificates of his house within the Israeli side of the demarcation line to his children. A school paper in the refugee camp carries the title *Hope ... of return*. No, the next generation will not be more pliable than the present one. Perhaps it will possess better arms.<sup>48</sup>

### Zakaria Elnatour and Gil Shner

Tzvika Dror, historian of Lohamei HaGettaot, told Tom Segev about al-Sumayriyya in 1989. In her view it had been 'a village of terrorists'. Segev tried to discuss the 'Palestinian tragedy' with her, but to no avail.<sup>49</sup> Runa Mackay had difficulty understanding why Hans Bernath continued with Nes Ammim, now that she had met with people who had lived in that same area just two decades before:

The Palestinian camps around Tyre and Qasmiyeh (...). The people all originated from North Galilee, some Bedouin, some fellahin. (...) Prohibited from starting their own businesses and they cannot even own a shop, except inside the camps. Life seems without purpose and the future looks equally bleak.<sup>50</sup>

In the Plain of Asher, they seemed forgotten. Only in 2007 this was about to change. A pupil in Lohamei HaGettaot's secondary school, Gil Shner, felt intrigued by the crumbling walls next to the parking lot of the superstore. His intention was to write a paper about them for his history assignment. Via the internet, Gil managed to contact Zakaria Elnatour (Zakariyya Alantur), born in al-Sumayriyya in 1948 and now a US citizen in Milwaukee. Elnatour told his story of his boyhood via the computer:

The relation between the village and the Jews was good. We visited them and they visited us. We received medical care at Nahariya clinics and hospitals. An alderman from Nahariya was a good friend to the village, and many times I heard him saying to us: 'Be careful, bad days will come.'

One morning about thirty trucks entered the village. The soldiers were dressed Arabian style, so we thought: 'They are coming to defend us'. But they began shooting at anything that moved. The Zionists opened an outlet in the North, to kick us out in that direction (...). After our departure, the Zionists destroyed everything except the mosque and the old Romanian building. In Lebanon, we lived about one month in a village called Tyrharfa, with no clothes, no food and with the little money that my father was carrying in his pocket. We moved to Tyre City (Sour). They took us by train to Aleppo, Syria. About 95 per cent of

48 'Reisindrukken', *Gereformeerd Weekblad* June-December 1963. PThU Amsterdam, archive J.L. Koole inv.nr. 13.

49 Tom Segev, *The seventh million*, 451.

50 Runa Mackay, *Exile in Israel*, 78.

the village people stayed in Ein el Hillweh refugee camp, to the south of Sayda city in Lebanon. After one month, they moved us to a Syrian village called Altamanaa, from there to Maarat Alno'aman, from there to Hamah. That is what happened to my family.<sup>51</sup>

Gil Shner felt that he had gained a new insight into the backgrounds of Lohamei Hageetaot:

Zakariyya was cordial and understanding towards my being a Jew, an Israeli living today on the same land as he grew up on. I was excited to find a man who believes one must see a person's humanity and not his/her religion and faith, and to my surprise he treated me with no grudge or resentment. I have learned a lot from him.

I do not feel guilty for living on a land taken from its former residents, in part due to the fact that I am a descendant of people exiled from their land in Europe, who came to Israel as refugees and founded the kibbutz in which I live. However, I think it is important that people know and recognize the stories of this place and of the people who lived there in the past.<sup>52</sup>

The Mennonite Central Committee edited the mail correspondence between El-natour and Shner in *Remembering al-Sumayriyya*.<sup>53</sup> Zochrot, a foundation with the aim of discussing history between Jews and Arabs, organised an excursion to the site in 2009. Former inhabitant Rushdiyya al Yusuf went on the excursion, as did Hava Keller from Regba, who as a girl had witnessed the houses being blown up. Part of the area was now in use by the Regional Council (Mo'atza Azorit Mateh Asher), into which Ga'aton, Na'aman and Sulam Tzur had merged in 1982.<sup>54</sup> UNWRA interviewed the fifteen-year-old Inas Mahmoud in Ein el-Hillweh in the Lebanon. Koole had visited the camp in 1963. Inas Mahmoud's dream was to open a shop of her own. Aware of the fact that her family hailed from al-Sumayriyya, she looked forward to a future of her own.<sup>55</sup>

51 'Remembering al-Sumayriyya. Excerpts from the letter of a Palestinian refugee to a Jewish Student', <http://zochrot.org/en/content/remembering-al-sumayriyya>.

52 Ibidem.

53 Mennonite Central Committee, *Remembering al-Sumayriyya*, Tel Aviv 2009.

54 Umar al-Ghubari, 'al-Sumayriyya tour', op <http://zochrot.org/en/content/al-sumayriyya>.

55 Interview Inas Mahmoud, [www.unrwa.org/etemplate](http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate).

# XXXI Burdens of history

Once he returned to duty, it seemed as if Kremers had never been absent. A scintillating personality, said Rike Wichelhaus, ‘a Bonhoeffer-man’.<sup>1</sup> His life centred on theology. And yet he remained acutely aware that this same theology was fatally flawed by an age-old hatred against the Jews.<sup>2</sup>

Reconciliation required determination, a willingness to stand up against the forces of tradition and self-righteousness. On being awarded the Buber-Rosenzweig medal in 1986, Kremers remarked that he had made friends, but also enemies.<sup>3</sup> Some similarities can be found between his writings and the work of rav Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935), with its religious interpretation of Zionism. The promised land inspired the human will to assist in the unfolding of the divine will, starting a process with potential to change both individuals and the world. Working the soil became an act of sanctification. Similar ideas transpire in the work of Kremers, especially in his lyrical depiction of Nahal Oz. The backgrounds, however, were different, as Kremers’ views were connected to a radical self-reflection within German Protestantism.<sup>4</sup>

The Evangelical Church in the Rhineland published a summary of Kremers’ memorandum for Nes Ammim, *Das Verhältnis der Kirche zu Israel*. Early Christianity had been Jewish. The elevation of Jesus to the status of a God-man occurred much later. The difference between the Jewish perception of the messiah and the dogma of the trinity created an impossible situation for Christian Jews, equally distrusted in the church and the synagogue. Their interests were best served by returning to Judaism, as the unacceptable alternative would be to remain in limbo: ‘A Jew would remain Jewish in the original Christian community, but no longer so in the church where baptism was required – with the implication of losing Jewish identity.’ To avoid this dire consequence, Nes Ammim should never become a rallying point for the IHCA. In order to achieve this aim, it was hoped that the Dutch would accept some intellectual guidance from Germany.<sup>5</sup> Dorland’s progressive views were something of a fad and Pilon tended to spill the beans when talking to a journalist. ‘Johan Pilon was a committed doctor, but hardly a theologian.’<sup>6</sup>

1 Interview Rike Wichelhaus by author, Düsseldorf 27 September 2013.

2 Concept of ‘Nes Ammim. Sinn und Aufgabe einer christlichen Siedlung in Israel’, in Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland, Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 119.

3 Thomas Kremers, *Heinz Kremers – vom Judentum lernen*, 2.

4 Yehuda Mirsky, *Rav Kook*, 109.

5 H. Kremers, *Das Verhältnis der Kirche zu Israel*, 1-14.

6 Interview Annedore and Thomas Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.



### Sign for the nations

Velbert published a brochure for its donators. A radical interpretation of the DRC memorandum *Israël en de Kerk* allowed Nes Ammim to be presented as a sign for the nations that referred to a Jewish messiah and to the Jewish people that had returned home. Support for the State of Israel's struggle to survive was absolutely essential.<sup>7</sup> Curators did not object. Scharf, by now *Ratsvorsitzende der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland*, hoped that Jews would come to see that belief in Jesus turned the Goyim into better men, inspired by the God of Israel. German volunteers in Israel still depended on the goodwill of 'normal' kibbutzim. Lili Simon, Grüber and Kremers managed to convince Bror-Hajil and Mefalsim to take them in.<sup>8</sup>

Nazareth did not figure into the programme. Kremers believed it was impossible to communicate a Jewish theology to the Arab churches.<sup>9</sup> When asked about the refugees, he answered that the Federated Republic had integrated ten million ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe, more than a tenfold the number of Arabs that had left Palestine in 1948. The 'Heimatsvertriebene' were no longer refugees, nor were they second-rate citizens. Their future lay in Western Germany or in the GDR. Becker came from Szczecin, which was now a Polish city. In his opinion, it did not seem unkind to advise Arab refugees to make a new start in Syria or Jordan, as he had applied the same principle to himself. It triggered another riposte by Boertien, who found this cruel. Kremers asked Marianne Timm, a theologian from Hamburg, to make one last attempt to end this quarrel by approaching Rengstorf.<sup>10</sup> Timm tried, but to no avail.

Boertien and Rengstorf denounced Kremers as a heretic. The Swiss view was rather more nuanced.<sup>11</sup> Within Nes Ammim, he was the only person with a strong network of contacts in intellectual circles in Israel. 'He also had an excellent command of Ivrit, even though he had some hearing difficulties.'<sup>12</sup> Prayer belonged to his daily routine but he could also 'be quite blunt, the virginal birth of Jesus was *Quatsch*'.<sup>13</sup> 'In a sense, he retained his missionary zeal', says his son. 'His subject was pedagogics of religion. He practised this to confront German society.'<sup>14</sup> It came at a price, adds Werner Böcker:

His creation theology was based on Genesis and basically optimistic. It did not alter the fact that he was traumatized. *So hart sich gegenüber, hart für den eigenen Leib*. Heavy smoker, with no regard for the results of this habit. Obsessed with the big issues, but incapable of

7 Folder *Nes Ammim. Zeichen für die Völker*, Velbert 1965, in EZA Bestand 6/1584.

8 H. Kremers to M. Hauser, Ketwig January 1965. Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland, Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 108.

9 Marianne Timm (Katechetisches Amt der Hamburgischen Kirche) to H. Kremers, Hamburg 6 January 1964. Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 108. Timm suggested a mediation by an Arab pastor, but this suggestion was not acted upon.

10 M. Timm to H. Kremers, Hamburg 28 January 1964. Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers inv.nr. 108.

11 Interview Charles Gysel by author, Wilchingen 4 May 2015.

12 Interview Rike Wichelhaus by author, Düsseldorf 27 September 2013.

13 Interview Annedore Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

14 Interview Thomas Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

small talk and hardly any time for leisure.<sup>15</sup> ‘He forgot to look after himself’, affirms Rike Wichelhaus. ‘His health suffered. He had a mania for work.’<sup>16</sup>

### Germans in Nes Ammim

Contributions of DM 100,000 by the Evangelical Church in Westfalen in 1963<sup>17</sup> and of DM 50,000 by the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland prevented a bankruptcy.<sup>18</sup> Becker approached the Jews with more humility than he extended to his fellow Christians. Swiss industrialisation had not materialized. Apart from the Mennonites, the Americans had hardly made an impact so far. The only relevant partner was Holland, especially now that the greenhouses were showing promise.<sup>19</sup>

Surprisingly, it was Orië Miller who finally persuaded the AG to reserve a seat in the board for Becker. The composition of the village population remained unaltered. Rike Wichelhaus, who had visited her countrymen in Beror Hayil, was dumbstruck to find that they were absent in Kremers’ pet project:

Over tea we sat down with Johan and Stijn Pilon, under the porch of a barrack. (...) We understood that no German pioneers would be received in Nes Ammim in the foreseeable future.<sup>20</sup>

It was reminiscent, in a curious way, of the gentlemen’s agreement regarding the Christian Jews: there was no unambiguously written verdict against the presence of Germans. The Swiss were anxious to avoid the possibility of a similar situation happening in Nazareth, where they prized their millet autonomy. In the chapel of his hospital, Hans Bernath had set up a carpenter’s bench, for use during the eucharist. Jesus had lived and worked in simplicity: ‘We hardly know anything about his early years; the young Jesus shunned public attention. That’s also the way we try to work here; we do not aspire to fame.’<sup>21</sup> Hans Bernath admired Heinz Kremers, but also worried that the differing approaches to faith might have become insurmountable.<sup>22</sup> For Hans, witness was the essence of Christian life.<sup>23</sup> He would continue to work for Nes Ammim, under the principle that it was better to be engaged in a difficult job than to give up trying. The bitter complaints by the UCCI against Pilon served nobody.<sup>24</sup> By now, Hans Bernath knew full well

15 Interview Werner Böcker by author, Düsseldorf-Kalkum 27 July 2011.

16 Interview Rike Wichelhaus by author, Düsseldorf 27 September 2013.

17 J. Bernath to international partners Nes Ammim, Schaffhausen 6 November 1963, ANAN.

18 Circular letter J. Bernath, Schaffhausen 2 April 1964, ANAN.

19 H. Kremers, *Judenmission heute?*, 32–33.

20 Erika Wichelhaus, ‘Heinz Kremers und Nes Ammim’, in *Nes Ammim Israel Gespräche* 1 (Aus Liebe zu Israel. Gedenken an Heinz Kremers), 19.

21 M. Boertien, report May 1964 to deputies Israel evangelization and CRC Groningen. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

22 J. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Schaffhausen 12 October 1964. HDC VU, archive NAN, box 28.

23 Circular letter J. Bernath, Schaffhausen 2 April 1964, ANAN.

24 J. Bernath to M. Boertien, Schaffhausen 13 August 1964, ANAN.

that the AG in Switzerland was in trouble. With some difficulty, Arthur J. von Arx was dissuaded from casting a vote of no confidence against Jacob. Schubert could not understand why a Christian community should fail to missionize.<sup>25</sup> He asked for Sunday services to be reintroduced. It was more important to honour the day of Jesus' resurrection together with the Arab Christians than to have Shabbat together with the Jews.<sup>26</sup>

The portents did not augur well for the future. Golda Meir, never a fan, told the Swiss ambassador that she would gladly see the project go.<sup>27</sup> Henriëtte Boas felt the same way: 'The project is more or less a private hobby of Dr. Pilon and a few of his friends, and is not backed by any of the official Churches which, for various reasons, even look at it with disfavour.'<sup>28</sup>

### Elohut

Arie van Tol had never been briefed about exclusion of Christian Jews, Germans, or Arabs. His fiancée Nabiha Farah (Greek Catholic) worked as a nurse in Nazareth with the intention of simply offering medical aid to those in need, inspired by the Christian faith. 'For some reason it was less simple to describe the aims of Nes Ammin.'<sup>29</sup> Gé Dorland tried to change that. He avidly read books by Flusser and Henri van Praag, who both believed that Jesus had been a Jewish idealist.<sup>30</sup> Van Praag used the term 'living up to': 'It is the task of any Jew (and by extension of any human being) to live up to the word of Moses and the prophets. This can be achieved by an active participation in the Messianic event. Jesus took it upon himself to live up to the entire Law and the entire programme of the prophets in his own life, as a sign for Israel and for the nations.' This was how Van Praag interpreted the name Nes Ammin, proposed by his friend Kuiper and avidly promoted by Dorland. Van Praag also referred to the word 'Elohut', that featured in the Kabbalah. Elohut could be equated to a 'coming God'. This was not a God of dogma or divine wrath, but of social justice and commitment to change:

A *progressive* attitude in politics implies a solidarity with the movement of Elohut. (...)<sup>31</sup>

Christian theology could be saved by embracing a quintessentially Jewish message for the world. To quote Van Praag: 'It is a tragedy of worldwide proportions that millions of Christians came to believe that Jesus took up the cross for them, denying their personal effort (...) For centuries the Church was unable to fathom the true meaning of Jesus' acceptance of Messianic suffering.'<sup>32</sup> Many of Van Praag's points supported the concept Dorland had in mind for Nes Ammin:

25 Th. Schubert to Arthur J. von Arx (Zollikerberg), Riehen 4 May 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

26 Th. Schubert to J. Bernath, Riehen 28 August 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

27 C.W.J. de Goederen to J. Meir, Hilversum 10 April 1964, ANAN.

28 H. Boas to D. Shaltiel, Amsterdam 14 April 1964, AHB.

29 Interview Arie van Tol by author, Nieuw-Vennep 27 March 2013.

30 David Flusser, *De Joodse oorsprong van het Christendom*, Amsterdam 1964.

31 H. van Praag, *Het verschijnsel Israël*, 51.

32 Ibidem, 77-78.

Taking on the title of Jewish Christian implies participation in a movement that has been anti-Jewish throughout the ages. (...) It is impossible to accept the presence of missionary Jewish Christians in Israel *as Jews*. If they insist upon living there, they should apply for a residence permit as any other non-Jew (...) The Israel phenomenon is complicated enough as it is, without the additional burden of baptized Jews. The reader can be assured of our respect for their choices, but the inevitable outcomes of these choices are theirs. As things are at this moment, it is impossible to be a full member of Israel and the Church simultaneously.<sup>33</sup>

This kind of talk baffled Paul Roost. It was as if he and Dorland were living in different mental worlds. It began to affect their working relationship:

If only they had allowed us to have a workshop with proper equipment, as a starting point for joint work with the Israeli. (...) Léon Robert and I felt that our practical interests were completely overlooked.<sup>34</sup>

Unlike Roost, Kees de Goederen believed that Dorland was on the right track.<sup>35</sup> Nes Ammim should follow Herzl, combating those 'who stubbornly stick to their old way of life.'<sup>36</sup> He was convinced that a split-up could no longer be avoided: 'Is there any kibbutz where Orthodox and Liberal (Reform) Jews live together? I am afraid that cannot exist.'<sup>37</sup>

The tally of residents in September 1964 counted twenty-five pioneers housed in a set of barracks, plus 'Nathan, a 17-year old boy from France who simply walked in'. The District Council increasingly worried about the 'silent phoney war' that was going on here.<sup>38</sup> Pilon assured them that work continued normally:

The barracks are of a decent size, with a (...) length of 12 meters, width of 4 meters, and a spacious lean-to providing shade. One of these barracks is for the kitchen and office. Rooms measuring 4x4 have been panelled in bright colours. There is a shed for the washing machine, showers and lavatories. A generator provides power for light and electric tools. At the rim of the hill, we have our 'plants': flowerbeds tended by Baars, and the chicken farm (...).

Barracks are full to the brim, with three or four to a room. Water for the shower and the kitchen comes from a neighbouring kibbutz via a plastic hose (...).<sup>39</sup>

Harari was not impressed.

33 *Het verschijnsel Israël*, 87-88.

34 P. Roost to Verwaltungsrat, Nes Ammim 9 May 1965. ANAG, folder 1965.

35 C.W.J. de Goederen to J. Bernath, 7 June 1964 on board of MV *Bilu*, ANAN.

36 G. Dorland to J.J. Pilon, 6 July 1964. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

37 C.W.J. de Goederen to J. Meir, Hilversum 23 March 1964, ANAN.

38 Report on economic consultations in Switzerland and Holland by J. Meir, J.J. Pilon and Ch. Gysel, February/March 1964, ANAN.

39 J.J. Pilon, 'Kwartiermakers', in *Nes Ammim. Banier der Natiën*, Rotterdam autumn 1964.



## PURIM-STREIT

In 1963 the Jewish-Christian dialogue program of the German Evangelical Church came close to falling apart. Was 'witness' compatible with dialogue? Rengstorf answered in the affirmative. Geis held an opposing view. *Zeugnis*, the rabbi argued in his 'Purimbetrachtung',<sup>1</sup> implied disrespect. Those who believed in the witness approach refused to accept him as he was: as a Jew. Many self-styled Christian progressives took part in dialogue with Jews, while continuing to preach in their churches as if nothing had changed.<sup>2</sup> Geis withdrew, saying that he refused to be a toy for a sanitized Jewish Mission under the guise of dialogue. For him, it was a matter of principle:

Christian witness and hopes of future Jewish conversion, whatever form they take, imply a disrespect for the Jewish witness.<sup>3</sup>

Initially the discussion was hardly noted by Nes Ammim. This changed when Kremers started to support his revered mentor Geis in the 'Purimstreit', while the Swiss were no less unequivocal in their support for a policy of 'witness'.

1 R.R. Geis, 'Judenmission. Eine Purimbetrachtung', 242-247.

2 R.R. Geis to Adolf Freudenberg, Düsseldorf 6 September 1963, in *Leiden an der Unerlöstheit der Welt*, 230.

3 R.R. Geis to H. Gollwitzer, Düsseldorf 18 and 23 March 1964, in *ibidem*, 252-253 and 259.



Fig. 16 1964 (NA Germany).

## XXXII Emil Schwaller

Eshkol, 'a shrewd politician with a farmer's intuition and an avuncular sense of humour', introduced a new pragmatism into Israeli politics,<sup>1</sup> aware of the fact that many citizens were 'tired of living in endless crisis'.<sup>2</sup> Even terror attacks by a group under the name of Fatah (led by Yasser Arafat) could not suppress a cautious belief in economic growth and ties to the West. A landmark was the full mutual recognition between the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel, finally agreed to on 12 May 1965. Embassies opened in Bonn and Tel Aviv<sup>3</sup> and an associated membership of the European Economic Community came under discussion. An age of opportunity dawned, said Abba Eban.<sup>4</sup> The retired Ben-Gurion received teenagers from Berlin in Sde Boker: 'Bring us more young Germans. Let them come and meet with us, to tell their friends at home about the new Israel.'<sup>5</sup> Journalist Menachem Talmi (*Ma'ariv*) noted that they were still barred from the 'Swiss-Dutch' village Nes Ammim, for reasons that were not immediately clear:

A hillock with a few buildings and sheds, the noise of an aggregate: a settlement in its infancy. One is reminded of a *nahal*, a military farm at the border. A broad-shouldered man grips our hand in a firm handshake. 'My name is Dorland' he says in English with an audible Dutch accent. His room is in a prefab-building, where he has used pinewoods to put together his furniture. Books on Israel line the shelves, among them *Exodus* by Leon Uris. A wall tile says: 'Where there is smoke there is fire; where fire, people; where people: friendship.'

'Can you tell us who you are?', is our question. He has a kind way of looking at you, seems understanding. Dorland raises his brows, says almost apologetically: 'First of all we are people of friendly intents. We represent a Christian international organization. It aims to bridge the cleft that is still dividing Jews and Christians; caused by the suffering that has been caused to the Jews through the ages and especially during the last war. As Christians we acknowledge our responsibility for that suffering (...) We believe but are no missionaries. Our aim is understanding between human beings instead of any narrow religious bias. Our golden rule: to avoid anything that might be perceived as direct or indirect efforts to evangelize.'

Nes Ammim seems a rather barren place, enlivened by the flowerbox at the windows. Though the living rooms are quite small, the furniture is tasteful (...). The common dining hall is perfectly clean. It doubles as a disco. A church is absent from the scene, and currently there are no intentions to build one. The symbol of the cross is nowhere in sight.

1 Tom Segev, *The seventh million*, 387.

2 Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel*, 551.

3 Cf. Edgar Senne, *Een korte geschiedenis*, 48.

4 Abba Eban, *Mijn land*, 165.

5 Pinchas E. Lapide, *Israël-kaleidoskoop*, 170-171.



Talmi also visited Shlomo Harari, who kept his doubts to himself: 'More and more we feel that our cooperation and general goodwill towards this village have been justified. They refrain from missionary activity and stick to their promise not to settle any Germans here. As befits a pioneer settlement in Israel, Nes Ammim is part of the Zionist spirit.'<sup>6</sup>

### Financial crisis

Harari had said nothing about the 1964 audit that was being scrutinized at AG headquarters, now in Zurich.<sup>7</sup> Invoices in the amount of IL 150,000 had not been paid<sup>8</sup> and a bankruptcy was narrowly avoided by a German advance. 'It seems obvious that this is not the way to move forward.'<sup>9</sup> The Bernath brothers were under no illusions: their credits were running out. Jacob had failed to fulfil his industrial promise, Hans was no nearer to bringing the opposites of Nes Ammim and Nazareth together. Swiss sponsors insisted on participation of the IHCA and Arab co-believers. If they got their way it would alienate Velbert, at a moment when only German finance seemed to stand between the moshav and breakdown.<sup>10</sup> Gysel believes that the Bernath brothers were simply overwhelmed by the task:

Hans was always busy in his hospital. Jakob had a responsible job in Switzerland, had no inside knowledge of Israel, did not speak English. Too much was expected from them.<sup>11</sup>

Jacob suggested eliminating the international secretary position.<sup>12</sup> The Verwaltungsrat hired Emil Schwaller, a professional accountant, who was given the task of making a clean sweep:

One can hardly speak of proper bookkeeping in Nes Ammim village. We have too many amateurs there.<sup>13</sup>

Kann's warnings against continued dependence on financial support from the West were still valid.<sup>14</sup> In the opinion of the surrounding kibbutzim, the reorganization was long overdue. The Israelis worried about the departure of staff members who had proven their worth, like the Vetterlis and now the Van der Speks. The reason, Cor explained, was 'that we see no progress whatsoever'.<sup>15</sup>

6 Menachem Talmi, 'Nes Ammim in West-Galilea', in *Ma'ariv* 8 January 1965.

7 Financial overview 1964, in ACS.

8 J. Bernath to H. Bernath, Schaffhausen 19 January 1965, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

9 Financial planning NAN 1965, in ACS.

10 Email Ch. Gysel to author, Wilchingen 11 May 2015.

11 Interview Charles Gysel by author, Wilchingen 4 May 2015.

12 J. Bernath, circular letter to shareholders and Verwaltungsrat, early 1965, in Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers inv.nr. 91.

13 Minutes Verwaltungsrat Zurich 17 and 18 February 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

14 J.H. Kann, *Erets Israel*, 44-45. Martin Gilbert adds the risk of endemic quarrels between ethnic and ideological subgroups (*Israel*, 4).

15 C. van der Spek to J. Minnaar, Nes Ammim 23 January 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

### ‘No progress without pain’

Hans Bernath knew that his work with the Arabs was causing misgivings. Such misgivings seemed to be part of a more general trend in the affluent Western world. ‘It is not Nazareth that one can dislike’, said a travel guide, ‘but some aspects of its atmosphere. It houses the largest Arab community in the country.’<sup>16</sup> The old town was overcrowded, poor, filthy, home to a Communist Party and opposed to Israeli rule. Hans doggedly continued to believe that he could square his work here with his commitment to Nes Ammim. They were not so different, he maintained. He believed in a ‘gospel of simple work’.<sup>17</sup>

Dorland would have none of it. He foresaw ‘no progress without pain’.<sup>18</sup> If Nazareth continued to think that Israel needed Christian witness, he would stand by Geis. ‘No wonder that a Jew objects (...), he is rightly allergic to the cross.’<sup>19</sup> A ‘nice Christian tête-à-tête’ would doom any prospects for dialogue. Time for the progressive forces to rally: ‘Open the windows, allow a fresh wind to blow. Bury the status-quo. (...) Nes Ammim, aims at no less than a revolution in our concept of Judaism.’<sup>20</sup> Within the Dutch group, Gerhard Wiggers held a more practical view. He was not interested in theological revolution, but in work:

People at home were saying that I’d made a fool out of myself by giving up my job and moving to Israel. Despite being a member of the RCN, religion had little to do with it. My family lost everything during the last day of the war when their farm was burnt, but the neighbouring community did not let us down. That is what I tried to do here: to build, to assist.<sup>21</sup>

Wiggers agreed with Schwaller: ‘A community of this kind attracts adventurers, believers and idealists. It is a colourful lot, but without a sense of discipline, things tended to go awry.’

### Renewal

Kremers crossed swords with Eduard Lohse, the former *Schnellboot*-captain who taught the New Testament in Kiel and maintained that the Church was the new Israel.<sup>22</sup> Rengstorf feared that Geis was riling up a generation of Protestant hot-heads. He opposed the nomination of the rabbi in a theological chair, as he would be too controversial in that capacity.<sup>23</sup> Kremers tried to bring change to catechetical teaching, together with Ahne.<sup>24</sup> He proposed a thorough review by the Evan-

16 K.M. Willcox, *Your Guide to Israel*, 263.

17 Cf. Paul Wilhelm von Keppler, *Im Morgenland*, 145-146.

18 G. Dorland to J.J. Pilon, Nes Ammim 10 May 1965, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

19 G. Dorland to A.C. Laagwater (Ede), Nes Ammim January 1965, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

20 G. Dorland to NAN, Nahariya 22 March 1965, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

21 Interview G.A. Wiggers by author, Barlo (Aalten) 4 December 2015.

22 Eduard Lohse, *Israel und die Christenheit*, Göttingen 1960, 63.

23 K.H. Rengstorf to P.E. Hübinger, Münster 11 April 1958, in UAM, Nachlass Rengstorf, Bestand 193 nr. 343.

24 Edna Brocke and Hans-Joachim Barkenings (eds.), *‘Wer Tora vermehrt mehrt Leben’*, vii.

gical Church in the Rhineland of the attitudes of the Church towards Judaism.<sup>25</sup> Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt became a working member of the committee that was to make preparations for this revision.<sup>26</sup> In his view, Israel offered a perfect opportunity to realize Biblical Socialism under the conditions of a modern democracy. Dorland would like nothing better. 'We need to turn the minds.' What followed was a new series of collisions, alternatively reported as an effort to discipline the Swiss<sup>27</sup> or to 'purge the ranks'.<sup>28</sup> The reputation was being affected, said Hans Bernath:

It is a fiasco, and our Jewish neighbours know it.<sup>29</sup>

Machteld de Goederen listened in during discussions of St Paul's comments in Romans 11:11, where he refers to Christian endeavours 'to make Israel jealous':

An illusion, in my opinion. The Roberts were nice and of obvious good will. A small farmer's family transferred to this strange part of the world, vulnerable (...) I often asked myself: 'Why do I return to Nes Ammim, over and over again? Because I like the people.' Which was not to say that I agreed with the Swiss idea of a Christian kibbutz.<sup>30</sup>

### Lack of transparency

The Dutch board felt that the moshav was essentially their own undertaking, assisted by the Swiss, the Americans, and the Germans as junior partners.<sup>31</sup> Understandably this attitude triggered some irritation. Adolf Freudenberg visited Israel in 1965: German volunteers of the *Aktion Sühnezeichen* program were everywhere, except in Nes Ammim.<sup>32</sup> Even Kremers, who ruefully remembered Nahal Oz, began to show his impatience:

'How much longer are we expected to wait?' Whenever we ask this question the answer is stereotypically that we have to be patient. It becomes ever more difficult for us to accept this.<sup>33</sup>

Jacob Bernath replied that there was only so much that he could do:

Even in the case of Johan and Minnaar, I find it hard to perceive what they really think (...) During the last months, I have been completely overburdened with work. I intend to put some distance between myself and this project.<sup>34</sup>

25 Thomas Kremers, *Heinz Kremers—vom Judentum lernen*, 19.

26 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 227.

27 G. Dorland to E. Schwaller, Nes Ammim 11 May 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

28 G. Dorland to NAN, Nahariya 8 February and 22 March 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

29 H. Bernath to E. Schwaller, Nazareth 11 May 1965. ANAG, folder 1966.

30 M. de Goederen to author, Amersfoort 21 November 2013.

31 J. Minnaar, J.J. Pilon and F. de Wit to potential donors, Rotterdam 1965, ACS.

32 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 191.

33 Concept for 'Sinn und Aufgabe', with annotations. Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 119.

34 J. Bernath to H. Bernath, Schaffhausen 14 May 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

Duvernoy re-entered the scene, as household friend of the Roberts.<sup>35</sup> He advised them to follow their daughter's example: to become fluent in Ivrit and part of Israeli society.<sup>36</sup> Friends from Regba wondered how long they could go on solving problems for the Christians. 'I was fed up', said Hanna Golan.<sup>37</sup> Harari's patience was also running out. He still had to rely on Bezek for inside information. The Verwaltungsrat had flatly refused to share a copy of its minutes with the va'adah. Dorland noted his growing anger. 'He is no longer willing to take any risks with the moods in the other kibbutzim, moshavim and other villages, on behalf of a village that still has to prove itself.'<sup>38</sup> Colbi made enquiries for the Ministry of Religious Affairs, about Nes Ammim's less than obvious contribution to Christian-Jewish relations.<sup>39</sup> Lehmann, ever historically minded, was reminded of *Erets Israël* (1908). Read 'AG in Zurich' for 'administration', Nes Ammim for the pioneers and the Christian sponsors in Europe for the Rothschilds.<sup>40</sup>

Kremers marvelled about the unfaltering commitment of the madrich,<sup>41</sup> who took great pride in the fact that a greenhouse of 800 m<sup>2</sup> became operational in January. Wiggers was making progress, with hardly any interference of the AG.<sup>42</sup> Orders were pouring in from all over the country.<sup>43</sup> Promising as it was, further development would still require an investment of at least IL 700,000.<sup>44</sup>

### Israeli concerns

Gabi Sommerfeld arrived in Shomrat to discuss developments with the Kollers. Harari had been asking what was wrong with Nes Ammim and why he failed to receive proper briefings.<sup>45</sup> Together they went to see Hans Bernath, finding him uncharacteristically despondent. Even the success of Floriculture could not brighten him up:

Are we working on behalf of Nes Ammim, or on behalf of a Dutch flower business?<sup>46</sup>

Colbi insisted on a properly functioning va'adah.<sup>47</sup> Van der Spek had accepted a position in Germany, from which he returned for a short visit. 'Not much change (...) though trees and gardens around the barracks add to the friendly appeal of the

35 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 7 February 2013.

36 P. Vaucher, circular letter for Nes Ammim-Switzerland, Autumn 1965.

37 Traude Litzka, *Nes Ammim im Spiegel*, interview Hanna Golan (1999) in appendix.

38 G. Dorland to J. Minnaar, Nes Ammim 7 September 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

39 S. Colbi to H. Bernath, Jerusalem 19 January 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

40 J.H. Kann, *Erets Israël*, 100-101 and 127.

41 H. Kremers to M. Bezek-van Praagh, Moers 7 April 1971, in AFB.

42 Such behaviour was not unheard of: 'Moshavniks sold their own produce and established their own purchasing and marketing organizations, freeing themselves of Tnuva's guardianship.' Anita Shapira, *Israel*, 235.

43 Cf. Amiram Gonen, *Israël*, 145.

44 Letter NAN to potential donors, Rotterdam 1965.

45 H.R. Koller to J. Bernath, Shomrat 10 February 1965, AFK.

46 See the UN division plan of 29 November 1947: Charles D. Smith, *Palestine*, 190-194 and 212-213.

47 A. and C. van der Spek to J. Minnaar, Bremen 29 August 1965, ACS.

place.<sup>48</sup> An ancient olive press came to light at the site where the Americans intended to build their Holy Land Hotel. Regardless of what the Israelis had said, the Dutch were determined to build their school.<sup>49</sup> 'A Hebrew school offers no solution (...) the links with European educational standards are simply insufficient',<sup>50</sup> Dorland faced questions by an angered District Council. 'He can hardly cope', Van der Spek wrote to Hans Bernath.<sup>51</sup> Wiggers pushed on. 'I avoided the bickering', he said. 'We achieved something real. Shlomo paved the way to agencies, advised, translated. We were fine as long as we focussed on our proper business.'<sup>52</sup>

### Control mechanisms

Emil 'Mico' Schwaller had become executive secretary for the audit-accountancy. He inspected Nes Ammim in February and discovered a virtual anarchy.<sup>53</sup> Lehmann came over to meet him:

My impression is that of a sharp young man who knows his business.

Typically, Schwaller believed that there was too much religion in Nes Ammim:

The idea that prayers and pious talk can make up for the lack of professionalism is utter nonsense.<sup>54</sup>

Angered, the Roberts asked what 'a resident of a luxurious villa on the Zollikerberg' was doing in a moshav.<sup>55</sup> An exhausted Jacob Bernath resigned as president. Minnaar took over, while Jacob remained head of the economic department. 'We hope that this will allow the heat between Schwaller and Jacob to cool down somewhat.'<sup>56</sup> Schwaller appealed to lawyer Dvey Aharon for legal assistance,<sup>57</sup> while the Rotterdam office ordered Dorland to defend Dutch business interests at all costs. 'It must have been a difficult time for him', says Machteld de Goederen:

Baars refused to obey instructions, the Roberts avoided him, the District Council was angry. Gé sat brooding in his barrack, thousands of kilometres from his family in Holland. Can you imagine?<sup>58</sup>

Deteriorating health did not improve matters.<sup>59</sup> Dorland was seen daydreaming, observing overflying jetfighters, the khamsin blowing and Druze women tilling

48 C. van der Spek to A. Wolting, Bremen 3 November 1965, ACS. Wolting, an official of the Ministry of Defence, was a member of the DRC.

49 'School voor Nes Ammim', in *Leeuwarder Courant* 21 September 1965.

50 'Nes Ammim groeit', in *Correspondentieblad De Christelijke Onderwijzer* 20 April 1966.

51 A. and C. van der Spek to H. Bernath, Bremen-Schönebeck 4 July 1965, in ACS.

52 Interview G.A. Wiggers by author, Barlo (Aalten), 4 December 2015.

53 Minutes Verwaltungsrat Zurich 17 and 18 February 1965, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

54 'Nes Ammim ohne Pathos' (interview E.M. Schwaller), in *Jediot Chadasjot* 1 July 1965.

55 Erich M. Lehmann, 'Die letzte Chance von Nes-Amimm', in *Jediot Chadasjot* 26 May 1967.

56 J. Minnaar to C. van der Spek (Bremen), Rotterdam 9 August 1965, in ACS.

57 S. Schoon, *Nes Ammim*, 21.

58 M. de Goederen to author, Amersfoort 21 November 2013.

59 Interview Machteld de Goederen, Amersfoort 20 November 2013.

fields in the East.<sup>60</sup> He played his guitar by the campfire under a starry sky. Peter and Elisabeth Bosshardt, straight from Bible School in St. Chrischona,<sup>61</sup> were shown around by Kreider: 'Peter brought management and administrative skills to the project and strong, supportive commitment to development of the Nes Ammim vision.'<sup>62</sup> Dorland simply said: 'It is not that easy.'<sup>63</sup>

Geert Cohen Stuart watched Snoek preach in English, giving a sermon to an audience of twenty people. To make himself understood, he had to first translate his words into German and then into French. 'Every pioneer had invested in the ideal', mused Cohen Stuart. 'I wondered whether their efforts paid off. The basic idea was to meet the Jews, who rarely made an appearance in Nes Ammim. The disco was a Dutch bastion, abhorred by the Swiss. They seemed stuck with one another, in the middle of nowhere.'<sup>64</sup> Ad van Selms remembered the failure of Walden in the Netherlands in the early twentieth century, despite idealism and much publicity.<sup>65</sup> Was Nes Ammim heading in that direction? 'No pioneer', remarked Minnaar, 'without complaints'. Add to this the lack of coordination, as described by Van der Spek.<sup>66</sup>

Angered, Schwaller wanted to make an example of someone while he was still in Israel. To the amazement of the District Council he aimed his wrath at Hansruedi Koller, who was widely respected in the neighbourhood. Perhaps Schwaller thought that Koller was behaving in a manner that was *too* Jewish. Hansruedi argued for classic kibbutz principles of autonomy, equality (including salaries), democracy, Ivrit and common ownership. This was at odds with a capitalist model of efficiency. Schwaller had also been informed by Dorland about prayer sessions. Now he felt it was time to act. 'We cannot allow Nes Ammim to become a missionary village.'<sup>67</sup>

Hansruedi and Gerda planned to return to Nes Ammim on 1 April. However, on 28 March Schwaller and Pilon informed them that the Verwaltungsrat had decided to dismiss them. Gerda described the scene in a letter to her parents:

On our wedding anniversary Johan Pilon and Mister Schwaller arrived here in Shomrat, to announce that we had been sacked by Nes Ammim, 'without recall'. It made me feel like a dog that is being kicked away. The reason can hardly be financial, now that Hansruedi intends to earn his wages among the Israeli. It might be that there is some kind of spiritual reason, they told me that the *Verwaltungsrat* believes that Hansruedi was planning some kind of Christian Ghetto. Who is in this Verwaltungsrat?

The Kollers stayed in Shomrat, which held many benefits for them: 'Children, open discussions, contacts.'<sup>68</sup> Jacob Bernath sent a letter that mainly consisted of

60 Impressions by Dorland in: *Mitteilungen Nes Ammim* mei 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

61 Cf. Dietrich Denecke, 'Die deutsche Missionstätigkeit und die räumliche Entwicklung der Kulturlandschaft in Palästina', in Jacob Eisler (ed.), *Deutsche in Palästina*, 98.

62 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 156.

63 G. Dorland to C. van der Baan, Heemstede 4 November 1966, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 5.

64 Interview Geert Cohen Stuart by author, Rhoon 8 January 2014.

65 A. van Selms, *Levend verleden*, 42.

66 C. van der Spek to J. Bernath, Nes Ammim 9 March 1965, in AFK.

67 E.M. Schwaller to S. Bezek, Zurich 2 June 1965, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

68 G. Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Shomrat 30 March 1965, in AFK.

Bible quotations. He seemed to be on the brink of a mental breakdown<sup>69</sup> and had difficulty explaining himself:

The financial situation has become so precarious that we are no longer able to keep you on. Johan Pilon acted on instruction of the Verwaltungsrat.<sup>70</sup>

Hans Bernath and the Roosts protested:<sup>71</sup>

The Koller family was sent away for allegedly being 'too missionary'. Who said that? In Shomrat they are greatly respected.<sup>72</sup>

Hansruedi and Gerda reassured their friends that they were fine:

It is indeed our belief that all Nes Ammim members should earn exactly the same wages, and that there should be no private or national business operations here. It also seems that we are being perceived as missionaries.

However, we feel quite relieved to be able to remain among the Israelis. We will stay in Shomrat until the end of September. I'm learning to drive a tractor and currently working in the citrus grove.<sup>73</sup>

Pilon maintained that Hansruedi was unfit for Nes Ammim: 'You are quite unfit for cooperating with others.'<sup>74</sup> Rabbi Keller had no evidence of missionary activities, least of all by the Kollers. Allusions to Jesus in letters by the Roberts to their friends in Regba did no harm. As far as Keller could see, the problem was not mission but chaos, a constant 'coming and going'.<sup>75</sup> That was also Lehmann's opinion:

Our friends in Nahariya and Regba are very concerned (...) Does this imply that we will have no communal settlement, but instead a business concern that can sack its employees at will? Is this perhaps the reason why an idealist like Koller does not fit in? (...) I write you to express my disappointment.<sup>76</sup>

Hans Vetterli suggested that the moshav should become self-governing as soon as possible.<sup>77</sup> Jacob Bernath explained that the financial situation prevented this:

That is why we cannot make progress without management from Europe.<sup>78</sup>

The Bernath brothers felt that the moshav was moving in directions they had never even contemplated. They had not yet reached the point of giving up, but increasingly focussed on their work in Zurich and the EMMS respectively. Paul and Elisabeth Roost re-joined the Nazareth hospital and Beth-El in Nahariya, worried about what would become of the Roberts. The Kollers moved to Beit

69 J. Bernath to Koller family, London 26 April 1965, in AFK.

70 J. Bernath to H.R. Koller, Schaffhausen 28 May 1965, in AFK.

71 H. Bernath to E. Schwaller, Nazareth 11 May 1965, in HDC VU archive NAN, folder 1966.

72 Interview Elisabeth Roost by author, Thayngen 30 April 2014.

73 H.R. Koller to parents, Shomrat 4 May 1965, in AFK.

74 J.J. Pilon to H.R. Koller, Heemstede 14 June 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

75 Notes of conversation with rabbi A. Keller, Nes Ammim 22 July 1970, in ASS.

76 E.M. Lehmann to J. Bernath, Nahariya 1 May 1965, ASS.

77 H. Vetterli to E.M. Lehmann, Merishausen 19 May 1965, ASS.

78 J. Bernath to E.M. Lehmann, Schaffhausen 14 May 1965, ASS.

HaEmek, where Hansruedi's partner Fredy Cohn (Cahana) had his office for his construction company. Gerda had all kinds of jobs, played in a string quartet and taught music (cello) to pupils in Evron.<sup>79</sup> This was the way to get to know the Israelis.<sup>80</sup> Their children spent most of their time in kindergarten and seemed to like it.<sup>81</sup> Meanwhile, Jacob Bernath mortgaged his house to pay Nes Ammim's outstanding bills.<sup>82</sup> He admitted failure: 'It seems that we are now at our wit's end.' Koller, the man who had recently been dismissed, was asked for advice on how to proceed.<sup>83</sup>

### **'The sun will come through'**

The Americans sang close harmony during evening hours, 'in my Father's house are many mansions'.<sup>84</sup> Wiggers found time for beehives and a *pardes* (orchard), assisted by Dorland:

The sun will break through. It is, as ever, a gorgeous experience to observe the cumulus clouds over the hills of the Galil.<sup>85</sup>

Johan Pilon decided to settle in the village, to offer his leadership to the community and planned to take his family and the children's home school teacher Machiel van der Velden with him. Bets Minnaar responded negatively to the news, saying it would be better to follow Koller's example: take a job with the Israelis and send the children to a Hebrew school.<sup>86</sup> Bezek warned that the village was 'incapable of sustaining a family with five children, plus a teacher's family',<sup>87</sup> only to hear that they were already on their way.

'There is stuff coming in for a school', Arie van Tol observed. 'We will see where this will lead to ...'<sup>88</sup> Eshkol had been promised that the va'adah would have its proper say in such matters, so Harari sent a letter of warning.<sup>89</sup> The Verwaltungsrat had more pressing matters on its mind.<sup>90</sup> At this time, members included Bernath, Hauser, Hoppler, Schwank, Minnaar, Miller and Becker. Edwin Müller, head of the executive business committee, acted as secretary. A majority wanted to appease Boertien in order to regain the trust of donors.<sup>91</sup> Becker, the lonely dissident, bided his time. In his opinion the Bernaths were effectively

79 G. Koller-Zuppinger, Beit HaEmek 20 January 1966, AFK.

80 G. Koller-Zuppinger to A. van der Spek, Beit HaEmek 10 August 1967, ACS.

81 G. Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Beit HaEmek 15 November 1965, AFK.

82 J. Minnaar to O. Miller, Rotterdam 8 October 1965, ANAN.

83 J. Bernath to H.R. Koller, Schaffhausen 1 July 1965, AFK.

84 S. van der Hout-Slagmolen to author, Harderwijk 20 January 2014. 'I fondly remember those songs.'

85 G. Dorland to NAN, Nahariya 22 March 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

86 B. Minnaar to S. Pilon, Overschie 2 June 1966. ANAG folder 1967.

87 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 4 September 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

88 A. van Tol to Van der Spek family, Nes Ammim 10 December 1965, ACS.

89 S. Harari to J.J. Pilon, Nahariya 23 May 1965, ANAG folder 1966.

90 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 31 March 1965, ANAG folder 1965.

91 J.F.L. Bastiaanse, *De Jodenzending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël*, 550.



on their way out, and Schwaller was bound to fail. Miller 'had stubbed his toe',<sup>92</sup> given the fact that most of his fellow Mennonites would have nothing to do with a moshav in which Christian Jews, Arabs and Germans could not take part because of their ethnic background. Becker wanted to realign with Werblowsky and Geis. He relied on the Dutch to make that possible.

Nes Ammim Floriculture Ltd. was formally registered on 4 November 1965. Minnaar, Pilon and Bezek became the official directors on behalf of the international consortium<sup>93</sup> but effectually maintained control for Holland. Schwaller calculated what had been invested so far: USA 176,600, Germany 354,800, Switzerland 486,700, as compared to Holland's 708,700 Swiss francs. Still, it was not nearly enough. Minnaar wondered whether the Americans were holding back until Boertien's grievances had been redressed: 'We understand that the USA is aiming at a \$120,000 investment goal, but up to date only \$30,000 has been received. This portion was mainly contributed by the Mennonites.'<sup>94</sup> Jacob Bernath and Kremers paid a visit to Geneva, only to hear that nothing could be expected from the WCC. All that Visser 't Hooft had to offer was some advice regarding a suitable pastor.<sup>95</sup> Velbert was also in trouble. Their choice to take sides with Geis had angered church officials and an appeal for funds from Aktion Brot für die Welt foundered: it was not understood why German funds were needed for a village where German volunteers were not allowed to reside.<sup>96</sup> Kremers kept to his priorities. Once a new theology had been agreed upon, everything else would follow. However, it would be 1980 before the declaration of principle *Zur Erneuerung des Verhältnisses von Christen und Juden* was finally accepted by the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland.<sup>97</sup>

### Realignment of relations

Pilon had been among the few Dutchmen to note the importance of the 'Purim-Streit' in Germany. Surely a campaign to reassert the authority of Werblowsky's memorandum would receive Velbert's support? Mennonite Roy Kreider wanted to discuss practical matters, but Johan insisted that a basic understanding of dialogue between Jews and Christians had to come first. Over and over again, he mentioned the importance of Kremers' views. The name was understood by Kreider as 'Krembers'. According to the way Pilon talked about him, the American guessed that 'Krembers' had been a major leader of German opposition to Hitler during the Second World War:

92 John E. Sharp, *My calling to fulfill*, 320.

93 Regulations of Nes Ammim Cooperative Society Ltd. (4 November 1965). Archive S. Feitsma, Amsterdam.

94 J. Minnaar to A.H. de Kruyter, Rotterdam 17 August 1965, in ANAN.

95 H. Kremers to J.J. Pilon, Kettwig 19 June 1965, in ANAN.

96 Gerhard Gronauer, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus*, 147.

97 *Zur Erneuerung des Verhältnisses von Christen und Juden. Handreichung für Mitglieder der Landessynode, der Kreissynoden und der Presbyterien in der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland*, Düsseldorf 1980.

Kreiders concluded that the crimes committed by the church against the Jews confirmed that the church had lost its right to bring the gospel message to the Jews. Dr. Pilon said that, although he was once a missionary doctor, he now accepted the position that there are two equally valid covenants, and neither supersedes the other. The covenant between Israel and Yahveh made at Sinai is the Jewish way to God, and the covenant made by Jesus at Calvary is the Christian way to God. And, given what Christian societies had done to the Jews, it raised serious questions as to whether the Christian faith was, in fact, the preferred one. In Dr. Pilon's mind, the only justification for a project like Nes Ammim was to show solidarity with Israel, to be an atoning expression of repentance for Christian co-responsibility for the Holocaust and other unpardonable sins of the church against the Jews. Dr. Pilon saw his role as the official Nes Ammim representative, commuting between Holland and Jerusalem where he clarified and reassured the government of his unequivocal commitment and purpose.<sup>98</sup>

Kreider refused to accept that Christianity was partially to blame for the Holocaust. Gabi Sommerfeld came to see Hans Bernath to discuss the mounting tensions and quoting Matthew 16:26.<sup>99</sup> Dorland wanted to resume operation Fox Terrier.<sup>100</sup> Shlomo Bezek was in the unenviable position of having to report to the authorities. But he saw no alternative, as the District Council and va'adah received no information whatsoever via the official channels. He believed that Dorland was right: Pilon would have to act upon his own authority, before it was too late.<sup>101</sup> German support could be counted upon, now that Bezek had been formally recognized by Velbert as their representative, to maintain proper contacts with Israeli authorities.<sup>102</sup>

Pilon upheld the validity of the gentlemen's agreement:<sup>103</sup> 'Nes Ammim explicitly agreed to refrain from missionary activities and not to accept converted Jews.'<sup>104</sup> The Swiss disagreed.<sup>105</sup> Now that Pilon was putting his cards on the table, they followed suit. There was no valid reason why Arabs or Christian Jews could not be a part of a Christian village, nor to hide their beliefs.<sup>106</sup>

Hans Bernath put it like this:

Nes Ammim a business concern? Not if that means that we deny our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>107</sup>

Schwaller despaired about 'all this endless talk'<sup>108</sup> Withdrawal became a serious option, now that Hans Bernath's analysis of the present state of affairs presented such an awful situation. 'There is no respect. With diabolic pleasure, the young Mennonites are being tempted to break their vows and have a smoke.'<sup>109</sup>

98 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 150-151.

99 'Was hülfe es dem Menschen, wenn er die ganze Welt gewönne und nähme Schaden an seine Seele?' H. Bernath to E. Schwaller, Nazareth 11 May 1965. ANAG, folder 1966.

100 G. Dorland to J.J. Pilon, Nes Ammim 10 May 1965. HDC VU archive NAN box 7.

101 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 4 September 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

102 Minutes Nes Ammim AG, Zurich 18 February 1965, EZA Bestand 6/1584.

103 J.J. Pilon to J. Minnaar, Nes Ammim 5 October 1965, ANAN.

104 J.J. Pilon to J.M. Snoek, 29 September 1965, ANAG folder 1965.

105 R. Altherr to Verwaltungsrat, Nes Ammim 9 May 1965, ANAG folder 1965.

106 Th. Schubert to Arthur J. von Arx (Zollikerberg), Riemen 4 May 1965, ANAG folder 1965.

107 H. Bernath to E.M. Schwaller, Nazareth 7 April 1965, ANAG folder 1965.

108 E.M. Schwaller to H. Bernath, Zurich 13 May 1965, ANAG folder 1965.

109 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 7 April 1965, ANAG folder 1965.

### German views regarding Church and Israel

For Kremers, rethinking Jewish-Christian relations required cooperation with Jewish partners, such as Geis, Aschkenasy, Flusser and Shmuel Safrai. They shared the conviction that the first Christian community in Jerusalem had been first and foremost Jewish.<sup>110</sup> Now it was time to make definite choices in how they would deal with contemporary Jews. As Geis had made clear during the 'Purimstreit', the time for ambivalence had passed. Even 'witness' could not be allowed. The idea was immediately accepted by the madrich.<sup>111</sup> Now that Kremers had put his cards on the table, Schubert followed suit:

Love for Jesus Christ comes first, and only then comes Nes Ammim.<sup>112</sup>

The Kollers, now in Beit HaEmek, watched how things developed:

Now the question is: who will be forced to leave, Bernath or Schwaller? The Germans support Schwaller and threaten to cancel their commitment if he is forced to quit. The Mennonites are backing Bernath and the Dutch are undecided. You have no idea about all the intrigue that is going on here. And this is supposed to represent Christianity in this country!<sup>113</sup>

Schwaller and Max Schwank resigned. A project that aimed to meet the Jews in their own country could not simply deny local opinions regarding Christian Jews or the va'adah: 'We have no right at all to meddle in Israeli politics.'<sup>114</sup> Schwaller threatened to warn Eshkol against 'mission under disguise'.<sup>115</sup> His functions for the AG were taken over by Müller.

Authorities in Tel Aviv gave an indication of their preferences by putting Nikolaus Becker on a list of Germans who were considered as trustworthy and well-placed to represent their country in Israel.<sup>116</sup> Nes Ammim-Netherlands was strongly advised by the DRC to strengthen the Velbert connection. 'Sinn and Aufgabe' affirmed the principles of Werblowsky. The sooner it was accepted by the Dutch the better, now that even Regba wondered 'what the ideology of the Christian moshav actually is'.<sup>117</sup> No one better placed to promote the aim of Jewish-Christian dialogue than Kremers, who was planning an edition of Jewish sources of the New Testament together with Van Praag, Flusser and Aschkenasy.<sup>118</sup> Even so, Berkhof wondered whether it would suffice:

Nes Ammim finds itself in dire straits. It would be unfair to blame the Israelis for that. Authorities have even included them in their touristic program. The old Zionist pioneers show their sympathy for a village that reminds them of their own beginnings in the past.

110 Heinz Kremers, *Das Verhältnis der Kirche zu Israel*, Düsseldorf 1965, 5.

111 P. and E. Roost to M. Schwank, Nes Ammim 5 June 1965, family archive Roost, Thayngen.

112 Th. Schubert to M. Schwank, Riehen 11 August 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

113 H.R. Koller to H. Bürki, Beit HaEmek 31 October 1965, AFK.

114 M. Schwank to Th. Schubert, Zollikerberg 16 August 1965, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 28.

115 J. Minnaar to H. Bernath, Rotterdam 27 September 1965. ANAG folder 1965.

116 Erhard Krause and Dietrich Dehnen (eds.), *Kirche im Übergang*, 223.

117 K.H. Kroon, report for DRC Council on visit to Israel (14 April–27 May 1965). HDC VU collection K. Kroon.

118 Ruth and Heinz Kremers to Johan Pilon, Kettwig 19 June 1965, ANAN.

It is Christianity that hesitates. This project is not what supporters had in mind originally. Millennialists have second thoughts, Jewish Christians feel that they are being refused, those who insist on 'real' mission do not warm to it, established churches fail to fit it in, people of development aid have other priorities. Our present experience is this: working for the relationship of Church and Israel implies that we no longer automatically fit in with existing Christian perceptions.<sup>119</sup>

Berkhof visited Israel in 1965, where he had private discussions with the Chief Rabbinate, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Boertien. His wife Cornelia put up a strong defence for Nes Ammim. Jewish-Christian dialogue so far failed to commit anybody to anything. Here at last an opportunity beckoned for 'something substantial'. 'We cannot allow to let this experiment falter.'<sup>120</sup>

Wim van der Hout was twenty-two when he volunteered. The year was 1965. He hitchhiked through Italy and caught a Brindisi-liner to Haifa. He had graduated from a technical school and wanted to make himself useful:

Jews demonstrated how to survive in a hostile environment. Shlomo Bezek became my mentor in Israel. Imagine: if he needed something, he would simply stroll into a Ministry to discuss the matter over a cigarette. A beautiful hands-on attitude, without affectation or class prejudice. I was impressed. It was out of the question that I would ever try to divert Shlomo from what he was, a Jew.<sup>121</sup>

Stien Slagmolen (1940) shared the same 'lure of adventure'. 'Five girls on the train to Venice, proceeding as deck passengers to an Israeli port.' Stien went on to build furniture in Shomrat. While on board the train, she had tried to speak about Jesus to Jewish passengers. Once in Israel she concluded that they had their own way with God. 'I lost any inclination to discuss Christianity with them.'<sup>122</sup> *Sinn und Aufgabe* was brought to her attention via Machteld de Goederen. 'Think about Germans what you may', she said, 'but at that time they were the only ones with a clear vision. Kremers was under constant attack, but no one could say that he was ambivalent.'<sup>123</sup> Wim, Stien and Machteld looked forward to the life of a pioneer, which was visually described by Pauline den Blijker:

Wake-up call is at half past four, in the pitch-dark. Léon Robert and Bill Bailey take their tractors to the fields of surrounding villages, to assist with the ploughing. Irvin Borträger and Mart Miller will take over at noon, continuing till sunset. Bailey's first name is Ken, but he changed it to Bill, as Ken (Hebrew for 'yes') sounded confusing.

Others follow at six. Arie van Tol, Quirien Baars, Danielle Schlatter and, if not engaged elsewhere, Jan Baars and son Ceesjan set off to the 800 m<sup>2</sup> of carnations, that will be dispatched to the cooperative distribution centre. Arie van Tol is the rose expert. There is a large greenhouse dedicated just to roses.

Bob Hoover looks after chickens. Trees and shrubs are planted during the wet season. It is time-consuming work. In the workshop, Paul Roost, Hans Buchmüller, and Albin Zwahlen take care of electricity and sanitation. Mart Miller will join them once he is done

119 H. Berkhof, 'Nes Ammim als toetssteen', in *Kerk en Israël* March 1966, 37.

120 C. Berkhof-Van den Berg, Oegstgeest 4 June 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

121 Interview W. van der Hout by author, Harderwijk 1 April 2009 and 7 January 2014.

122 Interview S. van der Hout-Slagmolen by author, Harderwijk 1 April 2009 and 7 January 2014.

123 Interview M. de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 7 February 2013.

with the tractor. The greenhouse building is supervised by Gerhard Wiggers. Ceesjan Baars, Henk te Winkel, Wim van der Hout and Jan van der Pol construct these Dutch facilities all over Israel. Jan Baars ensures that orders keep coming in.

The kitchen team works wonders, even though the kitchen itself is too small. Jeanne Robert, Lien Baars and daughter Hedi, Elisabeth Roost and Suzanne Thut make the best of whatever facilities they have (...) During the evening hours they are assisted by Mary-Jeanne Robert after she returns from her school in Regba. Gé Dorland is the overall coordinator, assisted by Fritz Cohn and our dear friend Shlomo Bezek.

By now it is 7:30 AM and time for a proper breakfast. The gong calls us to the dining room. After Bible lecture, we return to work. At 10:00 AM there's a coffee break, then we work until noon, when we break for lunch. Then siesta till 2:00 PM; work till 5:00 PM. It's great that we have showers! Supper is alternatively Dutch or Swiss, concluded by another Bible reading. Evenings are free and used for talk, reading, writing and study. Once a week, a man from Regba arrives to give Hebrew lessons.<sup>124</sup>

### Differences

The bitter truth was that the community was already falling apart. The Roberts held a prayer meeting of their own at 5:00 PM. Zwahlen anticipated that those who could no longer pray together would soon have trouble working together.<sup>125</sup> The MCC had severe misgivings, whatever Miller said. This paved the way for Cervin, a self-confessed Fundamentalist. Kremers was shocked by Cervin's appointment in the Verwaltungsrat, and implored Pilon to do something to prevent an American takeover: 'I am convinced that you should go to Nes Ammim yourself, to take the lead yourself!'<sup>126</sup>

Kremers knew that this would cause trouble, as it had been decided that the next 'director-administrator' would be an American. Pilon was quite willing to take the risk. 'Simply to be of help during the first 2-year period of construction', as he put it to Miller.<sup>127</sup> The Americans had other ideas. They nominated John Wenger, a young Mennonite from Virginia, for the manager's post. A majority of the Verwaltungsrat agreed.<sup>128</sup> Lehmann did not expect Pilon to weather this storm, now that America seemed to be gaining influence.<sup>129</sup> Bezek, ears and eyes of the va'adah, would presumably have to go too, now that Cervin protested against what he considered Shlomo's 'usurpation of authority beyond his known assignment as agricultural advisor'.<sup>130</sup> The Germans, however, stood firm behind the madrich:

Think of what he suffered from us Germans. It is unspeakable. And yet, his heart glows for this ideal of reconciliation. He has faith in us (...).<sup>131</sup>

124 Pauline de Blijker, 'Een dag in Nes Ammim', in *Nes Ammim. Banier der Natiën*, Rotterdam December 1965.

125 A. Zwahlen to Verwaltungsrat, Nes Ammim 9 May 1965, in ANAG folder 1965.

126 H. Kremers to J.J. Pilon, Kettwig 19 June 1965, ANAN.

127 J.J. Pilon to O. Miller, Heemstede 25 April 1965, in ANAN.

128 J. Minnaar to C. van der Spek (Bremen), Rotterdam 9 August 1965, in ACS.

129 E.M. Lehmann, 'Baumwollepflücker in Nes-Amim', in *Jediot Chadasjot* 14 September 1966.

130 US Nes Ammim Committee Meeting, Chicago 18 November 1965, in ANAN.

131 Siegfried Gessulat, 'Nes Ammim. Brücke zwischen Juden und Christen', in *Unsere Kirche* 1967 nr.

Kremers trusted that the Dutch would not give in to American pressure. The release of *Ondergang*, Jacques Presser's detailed account of the Holocaust in the Netherlands came as a shock to the Dutch public. Pending the arrival of Pilon, Dorland was in place 'to maintain control of the community.'<sup>132</sup> Kremers felt that Stijn was more 'down to earth' than her husband, and he expected her to have a tough time under the given conditions.<sup>133</sup>

John and Lucille Wenger arrived in October, with daughters Paula and Sharon. Miller wanted them to put in a last effort for Nes Ammim, but they were keenly aware of the fact that the MCC was already beginning to give up. They were also shocked by the 'worldly' lifestyle of some of the Dutch.<sup>134</sup> Baars was leaving, without producing a balance or survey of his Floriculture commitments. Dorland also intended to leave as soon as possible. The *Jerusalem Post* mentioned Van der Velden, the '27 year old secondary school teacher who will be the new administrator of Nes Ammim'.<sup>135</sup> The AG immediately responded that Wenger, once he finished his ulpan, was in charge.

Dorland repatriated in December, after burning stacks of confidential papers. He paid a farewell visit to the Kollers in Beit HaEmek and told them he would be taking the job of Nes Ammim's public relations officer in the Netherlands. Gerda Koller wondered how he would manage in that capacity, after his recent experience.<sup>136</sup> It was not to be. After arriving at Schiphol airport, Dorland collapsed and was taken to hospital. Bezek called upon Bernath and Kreider to help him with the shattered remains of the administration. Miller arrived from America to assist. They felt no inclination to brief the Rotterdam office: 'The Holland Committee had been making unilateral decisions and would likely oppose what we recommended.' They felt that they were making the best of a bad job, 'where accounting records were secretive and might, in fact, be non-existent'.<sup>137</sup>

'Orie', Wenger pleaded, 'don't put me in the hot seat without assuring that I have the authority to take responsible action.'<sup>138</sup> 'There were no books, and no accounts. There was only a card file listing income and expenses. No one knew the actual financial condition of the project.'<sup>139</sup> Cervin turned up for the next inspection, pleased by the sound of gospel songs. Kreider seemed 'able', though perhaps slightly too 'humble'. Wenger lacked experience. Cervin brazenly told the others that he had found the solution to their problems:

The Covenant Church has been asked to provide a general manager, and a candidate will be presented to the board of missions. (...) When the new administrative structure becomes

132 'Een dag in Nes Ammim', in *Nes Ammim* December 1965.

133 Interview Ruth Kremers-Kamphausen, Thomas Kremers and Annedore Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg), 27 April 2014.

134 Noted with some concern by the Dutch board, The Hague 9 July 1966, in HDC VU archive NAN, box nr. 21.

135 Henriëtte Boas, 'Nes Ammim', in *Jerusalem Post* 29 September 1965.

136 G. Koller to parents, Beit HaEmek 15 December 1965, AFK.

137 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 153.

138 A. van Tol to family Van der Spek, Nes Ammim 10 December 1965, ACS.

139 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 153.

operative and the new manager arrives in Israel, a new day of advance will begin for Nes Ammim.<sup>140</sup>

The Israelis could only guess who was in charge: Schwaller, Wenger, Dorland, Pilon, Cervin, Robert or perhaps even Van der Velden.<sup>141</sup> Albin Zwahlen, from Switzerland, preferred to sit alone after working time, in the bus, with his two cats.<sup>142</sup>

### Customs

An ambulance cart had been donated from Switzerland and delivered at the pier in Haifa. However, Nes Ammim was unable to pay the customs fees. Baars had 'solved' the problem by stripping the car of its usable parts and making off. It fell to Kreider to be accountable to the authorities:

Commitments to erect greenhouses had already expired, and as yet, materials had not been sent from Rotterdam. The growers were taking Nes Ammim to court for a breach of contract. But of greater concern was the issue at Haifa Port Authority headquarters. A used ambulance had been donated by Switzerland for general vehicle use. When the customs duty came due, Nes Ammim did not have the money to pay the high charges. The motor, tires, and transmission had been removed, and the shell of the vehicle was deposited in the customs yard. Now the Port Authority had notified Nes Ammim of impending legal action. 'The customs issue', Bezek advised, 'must be addressed first and foremost.' When we asked for advice in approaching customs, he reminded us that we were now in the seat of responsibility.

When the Port Authority doors opened the next morning, John and I entered with some trepidation, requesting to meet the commander-in-chief. The building was a large warehouse without walls or partitions separating the departments and the array of desks. Above the din and noise, one voice was dominant from a desk in the centre of the room. When he spoke, everyone heard and paid attention. The officer at the entrance motioned toward the imposing personality at the central desk. 'Follow the sound to its source', he said. 'The one seated head and shoulders above the tallest and with a commanding voice is the chief. You can't miss him.'

We approached the chief and introduced ourselves as newly appointed management at Nes Ammim as of yesterday. We told him that we learned only last evening about the vehicle and our obligation and had come to arrange settlement. At this point, the chief rose to full height and raised his voice to full volume. 'Well, look at this! You will not believe it! These two are from Nes Ammim!'

Then, thrusting his finger toward our faces, he shouted: 'Who do you think you are? Where have you been since I sent the order to come here and settle the claim six months ago? What kind of childish game are you idiots playing? You had an obligation to pay the customs or surrender the vehicle. You stole the engine and transmission and tires and everything of value from the vehicle, then pushed the worthless junk through the customs gate and ran home. I extended every grace to you and waited. You ignored my letters. Still I waited for you to explain your actions. Finally, I gave notification to the police for your arrest. What kind of excuse do you have for such despicable behaviour?'

140 Russell A. Cervin, 'A sign for the people', *The Covenant Companion* 28 January 1966.

141 Erich M. Lehmann, 'Die letzte Chance von Nes-Amchim', *Jediot Chadasjot* 26 May 1967.

142 A. van Tol to family Van der Spek, Nes Ammim 10 December 1965, ACS.

‘Those actions were irresponsible, and we offer our apologies’, I said, ‘but the manager left Israel. We were appointed to this position only yesterday and came at once to apologize and to settle the claims. Please tell us what is due so we can finalize the payment.’ Everyone in the huge hall was quietly listening. Only then did the chief invite us to sit down. He leaned forward in his chair, and in a calmer voice replied: ‘Well, you both are apparently innocent of what happened earlier, and seem to be ready to level with us. If you will re-install the motor that was removed, the transmission, the five tires, together with all parts taken, and replace them so that the vehicle is fully operational, I will cancel all custom duties, fines and charges.’

We thanked the chief and assured him: ‘Tomorrow morning when the Port Authority gate opens, work on the car will begin, and will continue until it is finished.’ ‘Then with that promise’, the chief concluded, ‘I will phone the police immediately and call off the arrest.’

With that settled, we outlined and prioritized an intensive agenda of appointments. We met with each of the neighbouring farmers with whom contracts had been signed for greenhouse construction, the parts of which had not yet been shipped from Holland. One by one, each of them suspended lawsuits against Nes Ammim and was willing to await delivery and construction.<sup>143</sup>

Schwaller had been wondering about ‘the wrecked ambulance’.<sup>144</sup> Settling the affair came at a price of IL 11,500, a full quarter of the income generated by the cotton fields.<sup>145</sup> As the year 1966 fast approached, Kreider, Miller, Bernath and the Kollers tried to make up the balance. Most striking of all was that the Israelis had still not given up on the Christian experiment.<sup>146</sup>

143 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 153-155.

144 E.M. Schwaller to H.R. Koller, Zollikerberg 7 July 1965, AFK.

145 Minutes Verwaltungsrat Zurich 22/23 July 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 25. Harvesting the cotton fields had brought in IL 41,700, (58,300 frs.).

146 Circular letter H.R. and G. Koller, Beit HaEmek February 1966, AFK.





## ‘ONCE WE WERE FRIENDS’

Asked why he preferred Jewish colonization over Christian settlement, Oliphant had referred to ‘rivalries of the various Christian sects.’<sup>1</sup> Churches that were consistently at odds, were not likely to forget their differences in Palestine. His warning remained valid in the State of Israel.

1 Laurence Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead*, xvi.



Fig. 17 Jacob and Hans Bernath (NA Germany).

## XXXIII Failing partnerships

When District Council Ga'aton compared Nes Ammim to the former Tempelgesellschaft it did so for a reason. After some initial 'religious frenzy', the Templars had substantially advanced the local economy.<sup>1</sup> Bezek remembered a similar 'frenzy' in Scheveningen, where every denomination claimed to be the 'true church'. Nes Ammim needed level-headed leadership to bring the expected benefits to the local neighbourhood.

### A foreign enclave?

The Nes Ammim people seemed to forget why they had come to Israel in the first place. Even meetings of the District Council were rarely attended. Josef Fritzl Arnstein took it as a bad sign: 'The practicality of the scheme seemed doubtful to us. We wondered whether non-Jews were truly motivated for this kind of thing.'<sup>2</sup> Henriëtte Boas advised her Christian friends to join an Israeli kibbutz instead of a 'foreign enclave'.<sup>3</sup> Another ominous factor was the eroding authority of the AG. Pilon claimed that it had only been created to coordinate the build-up during the initial years of the moshav. The Kollers anticipated a demise in the near future:

What is wrong with us Christians? It seems to us that people in the kibbutzim are so far ahead of us (...).<sup>4</sup>

Wenger named Bosshardt as his assistant.<sup>5</sup> Kreider, now chairman of the village board, promised Harari that he would check that all pioneers had proper working permits, which was a matter of longstanding concern for the District Council.<sup>6</sup> He asked Malachy about Christian Jews and received the answer that, as far as Malachy was concerned, the gentlemen's agreement did not exist. 'Nes Ammim was under no restrictions or limitations as to what we could or could not do.'<sup>7</sup> It was a sensitive matter, of course. However, a 'quiet person' might be acceptable. Someone like Alkahé, 'a man of common sense'.<sup>8</sup> Solving the problem would re-

1 Compare the analysis by R. Eckardt, 'Kämpfende Mächte', 234-235.

2 Ad Bloemendaal, 'Nes Ammim' (interview Josef Arnstein), *Het Parool* November 1986 (copy in HDC VU archive NAN, box 4). In later years Arnstein was to donate a menorah, that still graces the grounds of Nes Ammim.

3 Henriëtte Boas, 'Nes Ammim', *Jerusalem Post* 29 September 1965.

4 H.R. Koller to parents, Beit HaEmek 15 November 1965, AFK.

5 *Mitteilungen Nes Ammim*, Schaffhausen 1966 nr. 1 (January).

6 S. Bezek and G. Dorland to J.J. Pilon, Nes Ammim 10 August 1965, HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

7 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 155.

8 J.B. Looijen, report visit to Nes Ammim December/January 1965-1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

quire some discreet negotiations and thus a properly functioning va'adah. Malachy, Kreider reported, 'indicated that cultivation of goodwill and good relations with neighbours was the best council he could give us.' He also warned against *Calvinist Contact* (Canada), that openly advertised Nes Ammim as a tool to circumvent regulations: 'Evangelization is not permitted in Israel, but this will not prevent the Christian witness.'<sup>9</sup>

Where was this to end? Shlomo Bezek worked quite well with Kreider and Bernath in all sorts of practical matters but abhorred the prospect of a takeover by the Covenant Church. He needed help – did his friend Johan perhaps prefer a cushy doctor's life in Holland over a moshav on the brink of disaster?<sup>10</sup>

### March 1966

Johan Pilon arrived promptly, accompanied by his family. Kreider told them that they had no authorization by the AG.<sup>11</sup> Pilon, however, was not to be dissuaded, as his daughter Annebiene recalls: 'We simply had to go, no discussion about that. My father believed in a transcendent power. Whatever others might say.'<sup>12</sup> 'Dad did his utmost to talk me round', says her brother Allaert. 'Well, there I was, but at first without an excess of enthusiasm.'<sup>13</sup>

Shlomo was waiting at the pier in Haifa.<sup>14</sup> Wenger had been taken on as manager by the Verwaltungsrat. No new residents could be admitted without prior approval by Müller in Zurich. The Pilon would probably have to go elsewhere to find accommodation. Jacob Bernath wrote that any problems they encountered were of their own doing.<sup>15</sup> Wenger reluctantly offered the barrack that had been used by the Baars family, on condition that Stijn join the kitchen staff and Johan accept a paid position in the Nahariya hospital. Minnaar urged Pilon to accept the deal.<sup>16</sup> Pilon said that he felt as if he were 'a stranger in his own house'. 'The Swiss are taking over, while the Dutch are paying the bill.'<sup>17</sup> Minnaar coolly replied that Nes Ammim was not his private estate. What now? Annebiene Pilon:

The response of my mother was to return *linea recta* to Heemstede. 'Oh no', my father said. We could rent a small apartment in Trumpeldor, a Sephardi neighbourhood of Nahariya. It had been raining, there was this smell of earth and crops. Nikolaus Becker came to visit, handing some banknotes to my mother for household money. I found that rather humiliating.<sup>18</sup>

9 'Nes Ammim', *Calvinist Contact. Dutch-Canadian Christian Weekly* 25 March 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 5.

10 S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon, Ayeleth Hashachar 4 September 1965. HDC VU archive NAN, box 7.

11 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 156.

12 Interview Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

13 Interview Allaert Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

14 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 20 November 2013.

15 J. Bernath, *Gebetsbrief* March 1967, AFK.

16 Minutes NAN, The Hague 9 July 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 21.

17 J.J. Pilon to J. Minnaar, Nes Ammim 11 March 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

18 Interview Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

Nevertheless, German support came at just the right moment. Then there was Floriculture, which was firmly in Dutch hands. Greenhouses were in demand and 5,000 flowers were being exported each day. ‘The climate is fantastic’, Pilon used to say. ‘Things are not that bad.’<sup>19</sup> He did not blame Wenger, ‘a nice chap’. It was the *Verwaltungsrat* that he intended to confront, with Velbert as his ally.<sup>20</sup> Annebiene recalls how spirits in Trumpeidlor remained high:

My father was an ingenious cook, he took his turn to prepare a meal, even after a long day. Over dinner we had our best conversations.<sup>21</sup>

Jacob Bernath came over in May, avoiding Pilon, Bezek and even the District Council. He was often seen just looking at the landscape, like Gé Dorland had once done. So near and yet so intractable:

This land, where Christianity was formed (...) the geometry of the kibbutzim (...) the urban sprawl of Tel Aviv. This was my first experience of spring in Israel. Fields and meadows rejuvenated. I looked at the waving grain, watched the grazing donkeys, sheep, goats and even camels. In Haifa and Jerusalem the army was preparing its annual parade.<sup>22</sup>

Ko Minnaar tried to convince Pilon to accept the Nahariya posting, with the prospect of a future family home in Nes Ammim added to sweeten the deal:

By decision of the American board, doctor Pilon will assist the present manager, an American.<sup>23</sup>

A takeover by the Covenant Church now seemed imminent.<sup>24</sup> It was a difficult time, also for Stijn Pilon. ‘As always, she had followed Johan’s lead. But now he spent more time with Shlomo than with her.’<sup>25</sup> A visit by Sam Gerssen, Grolle’s successor, offered an opportunity for coordination with the DRC. Bringing in right-wing American Evangelicals was now understood to be a grave error, even though it was partly Pilon’s own doing. Dialogue of Church and Israel, Gerssen believed, meant nothing for them. ‘Only the Presbyterian Church makes a serious effort in this field but remains at the sidelines.’ It seemed that America and Europe had too little in common for a fruitful partnership:

Wenger seems to be reasonably competent as a manager, but he has no idea how to interact with the Israelis. He seems mainly interested in being born again as a Christian and its signs. When I asked about different opinions in Nes Ammim, he answered: ‘We have left and right.’ Right seems to mean that the true Christian abhors a cigarette or a beer. Left implies that anything goes. These ‘left-wingers’ are the Dutch.<sup>26</sup>

19 Ibidem.

20 J.J. Pilon to Nes Ammim-Germany, Nahariya 25 March 1966, ANAG.

21 Interview Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

22 *Mitteilungen Nes Ammim*, Zurich 1966 nr. 3 (June), AFK.

23 J. Minnaar, ‘Een huis voor Nes Ammim’, *Nes Ammim* April 1966.

24 J.J. Pilon to C. van der Spek, Nahariya 27 June 1966, ACS.

25 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 20 March 2015.

26 S. Gerssen, report Israel visit (March-April 1966) for DRC, ANAG.

### German intervention

‘The first impression of Nes Ammim is rather disappointing: six barracks, that’s all!’<sup>27</sup> Becker agreed with Gerssen: the venture was meaningless without a viable programme of Jewish-Christian dialogue. That is why Velbert had decided to support Pilon so unconditionally, making him their representative in Israel, together with Shlomo Bezek. As Thomas Kremers remarks, ‘Johan Pilon could never have stood up against the Americans and the Swiss without German support.’<sup>28</sup> His father Heinz would later admit that he had seriously considered the possibility of a break-down.<sup>29</sup> Whatever the outcome, he would support his Dutch friend.<sup>30</sup> However, now that Adenauer had been received with full honours, Kremers did not see a need ‘to continue behaving modestly’. Velbert flatly refused to provide a seat for Cervin in the Verwaltungsrat, and Becker walked out of the meeting. Pilon was glad to hear it:

That is the only effective way to deal with our Swiss partners.<sup>31</sup>

There was no room for compromise: ‘I strongly feel that I am the only person in Nes Ammim who is capable of representing the Dutch and German rationale for our presence in Israel.’<sup>32</sup> Germany and Holland would stick together, if necessary, without the Swiss and Americans. ‘It is a great thing to stand by your friends when the going gets tough.’ Of course, Bezek was pivotal for their success.<sup>33</sup> Pilon said that he would also bring these matters to Harari’s attention.

### ‘No longer Jewish Mission, but Church and Israel instead’

Christians, wrote *NIW* editor Kopuit, were fickle partners. The one constant factor was their fascination with the Jews. Whether this brought any benefits for Israel remained to be seen:

No longer Jewish Mission but Church and Israel. Instead of missionary preachers we have dialogue partners. Bringing us the Gospel no longer prevails. The idea is to promote mutual understanding.<sup>34</sup>

Now that Christians had their dialogue, it seemed they didn’t know what to do with it. The reason was not difficult to fathom for anyone with some basic knowl-

27 N. Becker, ‘Nes Ammim im Frühling 1966’, in *Nes Ammim. Zeichen für die Völker* 1/1966, 5-6.

28 Interview Ruth Kremers-Kamphausen, Thomas Kremers and Annedore Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

29 H. Kremers to M. Bezek-van Praagh, Moers 7 April 1971, AFB.

30 Concept ‘Sinn und Aufgabe’, in Archiv Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 119.

31 J.J. Pilon to H. Kremers, Nahariya 2 May 1966, in Archiv Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 96.

32 J.J. Pilon to H. Kremers and H. Dahlhaus, Nahariya 10 April 1966, in Archiv Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 97.

33 H. Kremers to M. Bezek-van Praagh, Moers 7 April 1971, AFB.

34 M. Kopuit, ‘Nes Ammim een opgave’, in *NIW* 25 March 1966.

edge of the New Testament. The point that Kreider made over and over again, that Jesus himself had been a missionary, was still hard to refute. 'In the given situation we assume that the decision will be made in America', Lehmann mused. 'Orie Miller is the key figure.'<sup>35</sup> What Lehmann did not realise was that the MCC was already considering putting an end to its commitment. 'The first manager could not be held accountable for the use of funds. There was also a crisis of leadership in Zurich that failed to set clear goals, policies, and strategies. National committees clashed with one another and with the Zurich office.'<sup>36</sup> Only Miller wanted to give it a last try, 'captured by the vision of a farm-based, multicultural Christian community'.<sup>37</sup>

The Dutch made Floriculture their bastion. Elisabeth Schlatter, Hans-Ulrich Keller and Rudolph Juncker asked for funds to sustain the farming branch.<sup>38</sup> Pilon suspected that Hans Bernath was behind this, trying to control the project 'as if he were a marionet player'.<sup>39</sup> Kremers, Bezek and Pilon visited Kamir and Malachy at the Ministries and Harari at the District Council offices between 19 September and 4 October. They gave their version of the story and hinted in particular at the political unreliability of Hans Bernath.<sup>40</sup> The Swiss felt slandered and yet unable to reply. Young Bosshardt panicked, alarming the police after Bezek and Kremers had driven off to a meeting in Akko with the moshav's car. The police let them go.<sup>41</sup> Kremers believed it was part of a campaign to remove the *madrich* from his position.<sup>42</sup> Ayeleth Hashachar considered pulling Shlomo back.<sup>43</sup> Wenger felt powerless to intervene, even when visas were denied to members of the Covenant Church. Had Bezek and Pilon anything to do with that? They did not deny it.<sup>44</sup>

## Ultimatum

The Israelis summoned Nes Ammim to the District Council's offices in Nahariya on 15 April 1966. Shlomo Harari, Michael Drori and Ephraim Golan from Shomrat had prepared the meeting after consulting with Bezek. The Bernath brothers, Müller, Wenger, Kreider, Minnaar, Wolting and Pilon attended on behalf of Nes Ammim. Harari immediately came to the point: the moshav was not meeting Israeli expectations. The Verwaltungsrat was systematically refusing to share sensitive information with authorities. It was impossible, Harari remarked, to continue in this way:

35 E. Lehmann, 'Baumwollepflücker in Nes-Amim', in *Jediot Chadasot* 14 September 1966.

36 John E. Sharp, *My calling to fulfill*, 320.

37 Ibidem.

38 *Mitteilungsblatt Nes Ammim*, Zurich September 1966.

39 J.J. Pilon to NA Germany, Nahariya 28 July 1966, Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 96.

40 M. Boertien to M. Drayer, Jerusalem 2 December 1966. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105.

41 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 15 February 2013.

42 H. Kremers to M. Bezek-van Praagh, Moers 7 April 1971, AFB.

43 Minutes NAD, Mühlheim 14 October 1966, in Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 96.

44 Minutes advisory board, Nes Ammim 8 June 1966, in ANAG, folder 1966.



Here in Israel, we know from experience how difficult it is to implement a new idea. This also applies to Nes Ammim. Difficulties are only to be expected; we understand and tolerate that and are willing to help. However, we are also under the impression that some matters are simply not evolving according to the guidelines that we have agreed upon.<sup>45</sup>

‘In retrospect’, Harari continued, ‘it is obvious that results so far are less than what had been promised. A few barracks and sheds: that is not quite the development that we had envisaged and expected. Apart from that, leadership has shifted no less than five times.’ No effort had been made to keep the authorities informed. Then came the bombshell. The District Council had decided to accept the advice of the German Nes Ammim Society: to deal with the moshav via Pilon as its representative:

Doctor Pilon warmed us to the idea of bringing Jews and Christians together. (...) A new beginning was sought at the level of human relations, not via religion or mission. This was a completely original approach. It was agreed that we would work on the assumptions, without interference of religious difficulties.<sup>46</sup>

The Verwaltungsrat had systematically sidestepped the District Council. Harari had been briefed by Bezek, ‘one of us’. He now insisted that the va‘adah receive minutes of board meetings from the AG and village minutes from an elected mazkir. The sooner the Verwaltungsrat transferred full powers to a democratic council on location, the better:

Which means that every worker in the village has a right to be consulted and to vote. This is common practice in Israel.

The implication was that the District Council refused to recognize Wenger’s authority as manager on behalf of a board in Europe:

We are being told that one man holds the authority (...) on behalf of a foreign board. The village cannot flourish under such circumstances.

Fit for leadership were those who knew ‘the language and the customs of the land’: men like Vetterli, Koller and Van der Spek. They were all gone now. This left Pilon, even though his command of Ivrit was still rather limited:

We have regarded Pilon as a man who represents the idea of Nes Ammim and in whom we have trust. We have learnt with dismay that he is not going to live in the village.<sup>47</sup>

Bernath replied that Harari would receive a response later. Pilon on the other hand, made an unequivocal commitment. The District Council, he said, had the full support of Velbert and himself, on every point that had been referred to by Harari. Most of the Dutch were firmly on the German side. They wanted Bezek as madrich and Pilon as mazkir.<sup>48</sup>

45 Minutes executive committee District Council Ga’aton, Nahariya April 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

46 Ibidem.

47 Ibidem.

48 J. Bernath to E.M. Lehmann, Zurich 27 April 1966, ASS.

Minnaar and Wolting wrote their report during their return flight to Holland, omitting the most poignant parts of the discussion.<sup>49</sup> They even hinted in general terms that Harari was a Socialist whose opinions had to be taken with a grain of salt. Jacob Bernath still seemed to think that the Israelis would refrain from interfering in the internal matters of a Christian village.<sup>50</sup> As a result, the majority in the Verwaltungsrat did the exact opposite of what Harari had advocated. The authority of the ‘general manager’ was affirmed, under supervision of Müller in Zurich. Pilon’s function of international secretary was abolished. An internal supervisory board was established, with Kreider, Snoek and Hans Bernath as its members. Instead of a va‘adah, the Israelis would have to content themselves with a consultative board for which the name of Chaim Grüngold was suggested. Becker refused to go along with these changes. The DRC Council followed suit and so did the formidable Hanna-Louk van Stegeren-Keizer in the RCN.<sup>51</sup>

### Management

The Verwaltungsrat confirmed that a ‘suitable Hebrew Christian’ was being sought to join the village community. The next manager would be Thomas Mallon of the missionary board of the Covenant Church.<sup>52</sup> Bezek – and by implication the va‘adah – reacted angrily. Did the AG perhaps think that this was some alpine village, where they could do as they liked? Dorland commented from his sickbed. The idea of asking Grüngold for a consultative board was crazy. He was already a member of the va‘adah. The only solution was to force the issue, together with the Germans.<sup>53</sup> The Gravemeijer couple donated f 60,000 to build a doctor’s house for the Pilons.<sup>54</sup> In the Haarlem hospital, Dorland was going through feverish dreams, in which former friends appeared as impeccable foes:

Do not trust the mellow tunes of the Bernath pied pipers. (...) Beware of Madeleine Bernath especially. She is the *femme fatale*.<sup>55</sup>

Now that Johan Pilon had the trust of Harari and the Germans, his next aim was to bring Nes Ammim Holland in line with their shared views. Machteld de Goederen understood his reasons for doing so. ‘If he had not taken up the gauntlet, the village would have ended up as a miniature version of Christian witness, charming but irrelevant.’<sup>56</sup>

49 Report Israel 13 to 21 April 1966, ACS.

50 *Mitteilungen Nes Ammim*, Zurich June 1966, AFK.

51 Minutes advisory board NAN, Scheveningen 6 May 1966, in HDC VU archive NAN, box 31. Among those present were Hanna-Louk van Stegeren-Keizer and Jo Ader-Appels. Jewish lawyer and historian Abel Hertzberg donated f 25 with best wishes for success.

52 Minutes Nes Ammim AG, Zurich 22-23 July 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

53 G. Dorland to Pilon family, Haarlem 26 March 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

54 H.M. Gravemeijer-Meissner to NAN, Wassenaar 8 March 1976, in archive S. Feitsma (Amsterdam).

55 G. Dorland to Pilon family, Haarlem 6 April 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

56 M. de Goederen to author, Amersfoort 21 November 2013.

### ‘Once we were friends’

Pilon was extremely stressed, which was evident in how he commented on others, accusing Jacob Bernath of being a ‘pathological liar’.<sup>57</sup> He told his brother Hans that his friendship with the Bernaths was over. With the aid of the Israelis and the Germans – ‘unsere Alliierten in dem Kampf gegen dir’ – Johan was convinced that he would have his own way. ‘Einmal waren wir Freunde’, but no longer.<sup>58</sup> It was a shock for their children, who had always enjoyed the mutual visits between the families.<sup>59</sup> Hans replied to Johan that anything was preferable to equivocations and half-truths. He received no answer. Pilon had filed his letter with the written remark: ‘all lies (...) nonsense’.<sup>60</sup> He wrote to Velbert about his estimation of the intentions of the Swiss and Americans:

They are systematically preparing a takeover, with the ultimate aim that Holland and Germany will be thrown out.<sup>61</sup>

Since his early years in the Indies, Pilon was acquainted with the fear of demons. Perhaps the source of the trouble lay in the invisible world: ‘Evil spirits will gather to destroy the good work.’<sup>62</sup> Shlomo Bezek, ever mindful of the human touch, noted that the strain was also showing on poor Wenger: ‘Doesn’t know a thing, has no contacts and no idea how to forge them. All he knows is to do as he is told by the Swiss board. As a result, we have a complete standstill. He has no working relationship with the District Council and does not even try to establish one.’<sup>63</sup> In the other camp, the Swiss and Americans were uncomfortably aware that the Israelis were being informed without their knowledge:

We invited Dr Pilon to come to the community to meet with us. Instead, upon arriving, he went directly to Jerusalem to contact government officials and again made unilateral commitments.

There was no common policy to keep the moshav running: ‘Meetings turned into general debates, and decisions were not reached. After the meetings, the Zurich office sent one set of guidelines, but the Holland office sent counter directives to their workers.’<sup>64</sup> Each antagonist believed himself to be the victim of the other. In a letter to the Gravemeijers, ‘uncle Koeno and aunt Marie’, Stijn Pilon described how her husband was regarded as ‘the bare devil’ in Switzerland.<sup>65</sup>

57 J.J. Pilon to S. Gerssen, J.B. Looijen and G. Dorland, Nahariya 3 May 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

58 J.J. Pilon to H. Bernath, Nahariya 20 July 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

59 ‘Staying with the Bernath family in Schaffhausen, where Jacob took us to the Rhine falls, was wonderful. We did not anticipate that the relationship would turn sour.’ Interview Richard Pilon by author (Zoom), Haarlem 15 May 2020.

60 H. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Nazareth 17 July 1966 (with handwritten comments by Pilon). ANAG, folder 1966.

61 J.J. Pilon to H. Kremers, Nahariya 28 July 1966. Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 96.

62 J.J. Pilon to D.F. de Jonge, Nahariya 17 September 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 5.

63 Quoted by J. Schoneveld, report Israel visit (July–August 1966). HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

64 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 157.

65 Interview W. and S. van der Hout by author, Harderwijk 7 January 2014.

Though Machteld de Goederen thought this grossly exaggerated, she was in full support of Johan:

It seemed to me that he was acting in the same way as in 1944.<sup>66</sup>

Having finished the electricity system of the village, Paul Roost decided to leave.<sup>67</sup> Van Tol kept his head down and focused on the flower business.<sup>68</sup> He had to tread carefully, as his fiancée Nabiha Farah was devoted to Hans Bernath. Wiggers and his team were building greenhouses all over Israel, feeling fine.<sup>69</sup> The Roberts simply kept to their routine, as their daughter recalls.<sup>70</sup> Hans and Madeleine Bernath came over on 15 August, to say goodbye to Bailey and Bornträger who were leaving. There was music. Dutch school instruction was the only subject Pilon liked to discuss.<sup>71</sup> In the home of the Minnaar family in Rotterdam, daily prayers were being said for concord in the moshav.<sup>72</sup> The DRC Council supported Kremers for theological reasons, and Pilon and Bezek while they maintained ‘Sinn und Aufgabe’. This was duly promised, though it was increasingly clear that Kremers also had an agenda of his own: to gain a majority position in the board for Germany and Holland.<sup>73</sup>

Johan Pilon was ever the freebooter, say Wim and Stien. ‘Would not take a no from anyone, Stijn added. “If you want to return to Holland, just go”, was what he told his wife.<sup>74</sup> Finance was a sideshow. ‘A dreamer’, says the practically minded Van der Spek,<sup>75</sup> though a stubborn one. *Generalsekretär* Müller sent a telegram on 29 July to demand that he accept the AG authority, only to receive a negative response.<sup>76</sup> Siegfried Gessulat said that Pilon was fighting for the right reasons.<sup>77</sup> Gessulat’s former Jewish classmates had died in the camps.<sup>78</sup> This was the reason why he wanted to meet with Israelis and learn from them.<sup>79</sup> Pilon fetched Gessulat from Lod airfield, an impressive event for the German pastor. It was essential, as the Dutchman told him, to open a new chapter in the relationship between Jews and Christians.<sup>80</sup>

Pilon was claiming the authority, even at the risk of sounding overconfident:

66 M. de Goederen to author, Amersfoort 24 October 2015.

67 P. Roost to E. Müller, Wildstedt 27 September 1966, archive family Roost, Thayngen (Zwitzerland).

68 A. van Tol to family Van der Spek, Nazareth 25 June 1966, ACS.

69 Arie van Tol to NAN, Nes Ammim 4 August 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 5.

70 Mary-Jeane Robert, ‘Nes Ammim 1963-1967’ (Fontainemelon 2013), ANAG.

71 S. Pilon to family Gravemeijer, Nahariya 16 August 1966, in ANAG, folder 1967. H. Kremers, *Judenmission heute?*, 16).

72 B. Minnaar-Quaat to family Van der Hout, Overschie ca. 1970, in AHS.

73 H. Kremers to J.J. Pilon, Kettwig 6 August 1966, in Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 96.

74 Interview Wim and Stien van der Hout by author, Harderwijk 7 January 2014.

75 Interview Cor van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013.

76 E. Müller to H. Kremers, Zurich 5 September 1966. Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 96.

77 Siegfried Gessulat to NAN, Laasphe 3 August 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 5. Gessulat represented the Evangelical Church of Westfalen in the German board.

78 S. Gessulat, ‘Deutsches Grußwort in Rotterdam’. *Nes Ammim. Zeichen für die Völker* 2/3-1967, 8.

79 C. van der Spek to Pilon family, Bremen-Schönebeck 22 June 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

80 S. Gessulat, ‘Nes Ammim. Brücke zwischen Juden und Christen’, in *Unsere Kirche* 1967 nr. 1.

I am absolutely needed here. So much is clear to me, I feel it in my heart. There *is* no one else to take on this responsibility.<sup>81</sup>

His idea was to force a breakup between the Swiss and Americans and the others, to put Kremers in charge of affairs in Germany, Looijen in Holland and himself (Pilon) in Israel, on a salary to be paid by Germany.<sup>82</sup> At the present moment, his only income was a Floriculture allowance. He assumed that the Germans would endorse the plan if Bezek did so as well. Velbert's high regard for the madrich was well known: 'We like his level-headedness, and his open attitude.'<sup>83</sup>

### D-Day?

By August, the final denouement seemed imminent: 'The last round of the battle is about to begin, this is perhaps for the best.' The aim was to overthrow the 'Swiss order'<sup>84</sup> and to dismantle the Verwaltungsrat: 'That costly affair can be dispensed with.'<sup>85</sup> Kremers gave his consent, provided Harari also agreed. But there was to be no D-Day at this time. Instead, a sudden lull descended. Léon Robert felt momentarily relieved: 'Voyez-vous, toutes ces terres labourées, tous ces bruns et ces verts, c'est à nous.' Despite the noise of the power generator during the nights, and the croaking of frogs, he found it a quiet place and was modestly proud of what had been achieved: 'Pourquoi pas? Tout est le fruit du travail de l'homme ici. Tout est propre. Tout est net, ordonné.'<sup>86</sup>

Boertien was persuaded by Minnaar to become an advisor of the project he had systematically undermined.<sup>87</sup> Invited to the Witte clubhouse in the government quarter in The Hague, he stressed the urgency of acquiring corporate personality in Israel, disbanding the Verwaltungsrat and moving the international office to Tel Aviv. The Babylon of languages was untenable. If Ivrit proved too difficult, then pioneers should master international English. Christian Jews and Arabs were to be accepted without further delay. Boertien had been present during the inauguration of the new Knesset building in Jerusalem and had protested that no word of Arabic had been spoken during that occasion.<sup>88</sup>

Lam and Van Stegeren-Keizer disagreed: the District Council, they said, should have been consulted first. Boertien asked for a vote. All he achieved was that Shlomo Bezek would be asked to pave the way for a 'Hebrew Christian'. Boertien insisted:

81 J.J. Pilon to J.B. Looijen, Nahariya 3 August 1966, in ANAG, folder 1966.

82 J.J. Pilon, concept for letter to J.B. Looijen, Nahariya 25 August 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

83 H. Dahlhaus, 'Schlomo Bezek', in *Nes Ammim. Zeichen für die Völker* 2/1966, 9.

84 J.J. Pilon to J.B. Looijen, Nahariya 22 August 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

85 J.B. Looijen to J.J. Pilon, Utrecht 18 October 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

86 Jacques Ovadia, 'Des haloutzim chrétiens'. *Information d'Israel* 18 March 1966.

87 M. Boertien, report May-July 1966 to deputies Israel evangelization and CRC Groningen. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

88 Minutes The Hague 27 September 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

What we said was not intended to remain rhetorical. It must be done, without bargaining with our aims and the implications. (...) Board decisions should be carried out, also by Pilon. If not, he will finish Nes Ammim. The German band is philosemitic, burdened by their guilt complex. Therefore useless. (...) The situation is critical. A new start is only possible if Nes Ammim Holland stops Johan Pilon.<sup>89</sup> †

Bouke Ridder, in daily life an accountant in The Hague, acted as the new Dutch treasurer. He was currently receiving f 5,000 per month from donors. Minnaar calculated that a minimum of f 16,000 was needed.<sup>90</sup> ‘Our people are toiling under the Israeli sun’, he moaned, ‘are they being let down by Dutch Protestants?’<sup>91</sup> Ridder was not so pessimistic. To the contrary, interest in Israel increased daily. The moshav, Ridder asserted, could be financed by Holland and Germany alone.<sup>92</sup>

### Comments among Jews and Christians

Werblowsky and the Anglican Peter Schneider founded a discussion panel of Jewish and Christian academics called *The Rainbow*.<sup>93</sup> Flusser, Safrai and Uriel Tal joined, while Kremers made contributions from Germany. Werblowsky preferred an academic setting for Jewish-Christian dialogue. A moshav was hardly fit for that. Without the discipline of strict intellectual rules, *dialogitis* would take over: ‘pseudo-theological journalism’ that claimed to love Israel but hardly knew anything about Judaism:

The question whether ‘Jews’ and ‘Christians’ can afford to engage in dialogue needs serious consideration. For dialogue exceeds an atmosphere of mutual appreciation, opening the soul to anything the partner might say, ever at risk to be ‘converted’ to the other’s view. (...) It will be obvious that this is impossible at the institutional level. Dialogue ‘of Church and Israel’ is a misconception. The Knesseth Yisrael still prays that *all people may see Thy power, when Thou removest the abominations from the earth and destroyest the false gods* – that is to say, that one day all Christians will cease to be Christians in the accepted meaning of that word. The Christian is equally bound by his faith and expects the final unification of Israel with the Church (...). In the absence of these assumptions, a dialogue between Jews as Jews and Christians as Christians would simply be impossible.<sup>94</sup>

Werblowsky preferred to discuss such matters with academic specialists. He still found it hard to understand how belief and dialogue could co-exist in one and the same person. Annebiene Pilon affirms the complexity of this co-existence for her father:

89 M. Boertien to M. Drayer, Tiberias 16 November 1966. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105.

90 Circular letter J. Minnaar September 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 5.

91 Circular letter NAN, Rotterdam 19 October 1966, ACS.

92 Year report 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

93 R.J. Zwi Werblowski, ‘Is nu het gesprek met christenen mogelijk?’, in M.C.E. Kloosterman-Fortgens (ed.), *Ontmoeting tussen joden en christenen*, 84-92.

94 R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, ‘Is nu het gesprek met christenen mogelijk?’, in *NTW* 18 November 1966.

Grandmother would bring Christian leaflets to the *kampongs*. My father felt close to that kind of spirituality. But his belief was changing. Gradually he came to the conclusion that Jesus could not have been the son of God. The idea of the Messiah should rather be taken symbolically. He used to have long conversations about that subject. Read Buber. His beliefs transformed into something different, like music in the air.<sup>95</sup>

For his son Pieter, Calvinism had already become something of the past.<sup>96</sup> Johan Pilon had embraced a version of a ‘belief expressed by deeds’, that was incompatible with Roy Kreider’s dream of ‘a communal centre (...) of reconciliation in Christ’.<sup>97</sup> Russell Cervin brought matters to a head by requiring that every pioneer affirm Jesus Christ as the only saviour of the world – a view that Werblowsky thought plausible enough for any committed Christian but that would also imply the end of dialogue as Kremers and Pilon understood it.<sup>98</sup> They alerted the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Minnaar was ‘having a hard time’,<sup>99</sup> trying to convince Pilon that he had to make peace with the Bernaths: ‘I leave it to your conscience whether you justify your current behaviour (...). See reason.’<sup>100</sup>

Looijen went to the Ministry of Religious Affairs to see Malachy, who was also an expert on American church history. Malachy, he noted, did not see eye to eye with Pilon and Kremers in every respect. He regarded their dealing with the Christian Jews as rather heavy-handed. On the other hand, Hans Bernath’s ties with Arab churches raised a more immediate concern as ‘they closed their eyes to Arab terror policies and threats to destroy the State of Israel.’<sup>101</sup> Top priority was now to prevent a takeover by Cervin.<sup>102</sup> In case of an open conflict, the Israelis would put their weight behind Pilon. Joseph Meir came over to confirm this with the Pilon family.<sup>103</sup>

Gerssen immediately approved of what Malachy had said, including the plea for a properly functioning *va’adah*.<sup>104</sup> ‘We have nothing to hide. Israel is entitled to know what we plan and do.’<sup>105</sup> As to the Christian Jews, the first aim was to win the trust of the Jewish population. Once this had been achieved, it might help pave the way for this group to join Nes Ammim.<sup>106</sup> Yaacov Saphir, director of Eshkol’s bureau for technical affairs, held a practical view: ‘The Government of Israel considers the rose growing, with its intention to extend know-how by specialists, as a valuable contribution.’<sup>107</sup> It was noted with pleasure that Becker had become a board member of the Deutsch-Israelische Gesellschaft. Meanwhile, Hans Bernath

95 Interview Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

96 Interview Stiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 15 May 2020.

97 R. Kreider, ‘Nes Ammim’ (memorandum September 1966), ANAG.

98 Russell Cervin, *Supplementary by-laws, regulations, and procedures*, ANAG.

99 B. Minnaar to S. Pilon, Overschie 2 June 1966. ANAG, folder 1967.

100 J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 29 March, and 23 August 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

101 Y. Malachy, ‘The Christian churches’, in *Molad* April/May 1968 (translated from Ivrit by J. Schoneveld). HDC, collection K. Kroon.

102 Jac. B. Looijen, report Nes Ammim visit January 1966. HDC, archive H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer.

103 Interview Stiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 15 May 2020.

104 S. Gerssen, ‘Nes Ammim’, in *Kerk en Israël* May 1967, 65–67.

105 Ibidem.

106 H. Berkhof, memorandum ‘Nes Ammim als toetssteen’. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

107 Y. Saphir to J. Minnaar, Jerusalem 24 July 1966. HDC VU, archive NAN, box 21.

struggled to approach authorities via Lehmann, still hoping to find a solution that would secure the future of the Swiss and Mennonite efforts.<sup>108</sup>

The chances of that were slight. Gerssen believed that it was in the Israeli's interest if the Dutch would take the lead.<sup>109</sup> Bezek followed suit, telling the Germans that their interests were best served under Dutch leadership.<sup>110</sup> Van Stegteren-Keizer brought matters to a head: under her guidance the RCN deputies finally stopped distributing *Licht en Leven* and fell into line with the DRC. Minnaar did not bring up a veto<sup>111</sup> and Israeli authorities were duly notified by Nes Ammim-Holland. Boertien reacted that the Verwaltungsrat could not let this insult of its authority go unopposed. The time had come to sack both Pilon and Bezek.<sup>112</sup> Velbert maintained its position:

We hereby confirm that Johan Pilon is our official representative in Israel.<sup>113</sup>

Spouses and children were not immune to the psychological strain. As his biographer remarks about Orië Miller: 'The call to serve the church trumped all else, including family.'<sup>114</sup> At times they had difficulty coping. As Christine Bernath (1949) remembers:

I felt like a split personality, with many faces. Our father was here for the patients, for the hospital, for the Lord and mother was always there for those who needed all kinds of help, for the others, but not for me. (...) Mother and father made a choice in life which was an act of faith. I respect this and I respect them. They did not consult us (...).<sup>115</sup>

Dorothea Bernath:

Our house in Nazareth was always open to everyone. My mother had a cup of Arabic coffee ready at any time of the day and night. Litres of coffee were brewing every day, but sometimes I thought it was just too much, all this coming and going. The time dad was at home was already so short, that I did not always like the idea of having to share him with other people all the time! I even felt jealous of the many visitors who would steal from us the little free time he had.<sup>116</sup>

Their brother Marc André adds: 'I loved to have my father all to myself for the one hour's drive to and from Nes Ammim.'<sup>117</sup> Tanja Laron believes that Stijn Pilon was also paying a price:

Johan was her most important aim in life. I wonder whether that was also the case the other way around. He appreciated her role in providing a home for the family. In Nes Ammim,

108 Tj. Dijkstra, 'Nes Ammim en de rest van de wereld', in M. Woudstra and others (eds.), *Vijftig jaar Nes Ammim*, Apeldoorn/Düsseldorf 2013, 17.

109 S. Gerssen, report Israel visit (February-March 1966) to DRC Council, ANAG.

110 S. Bezek to N. Becker, W. Brenner, H. Dahlhaus and H. Kremers, Ayeleth Hashachar 12 June 1966, ANAG.

111 NAN to international partners, Rotterdam December 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

112 M. Boertien to M. Drayer, Tiberias 7 January 1967. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 105.

113 H. Dahlhaus to J.J. Pilon, Velbert 25 July 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

114 John E. Sharp, *My calling to fulfil*, 31.

115 Quoted by Shafik Farah, *What shall I do with my life?*, 223-228.

116 *Ibidem*, 229-231.

117 *Ibidem*, 231-233.



she remained an outsider. Her intelligence, her erudition – she would show those qualities after Johan had died and she had become the heir and continuance of his mission.<sup>118</sup>

‘The ideal required making sacrifices’, says Allaert Pilon. ‘They were also expected from us. I was working in Israel when I would normally have been busy with my homework. It was an exhilarating adventure, but also exacting.’<sup>119</sup> The Bezek children know these ambivalences only too well. Nes Ammim cost them a lot:

It could be said that father married up. As a self-made man, he never got the opportunity of receiving a higher education, like mother had enjoyed. So, among other things, the build-up of a moshav offered an enticing opportunity to prove himself, to show what he could do. We heard them talk for hours. He would do most of the talking, she would be listening. One might argue that this implied a sacrifice, for all of us. Father was so very often away. He was a loving parent, but Nes Ammim took up so much of his time, of his attention. We remember mother saying: ‘Do I need to make an appointment with you?’ If she felt low: ‘Time for everyone else, but not for us.’<sup>120</sup>

There were bright moments too, as the Pilon children recall. ‘Papa knew how to give you a hug’, says Annebiene.<sup>121</sup> Yet, the workload was unrelenting. ‘At home, there were so many visitors. Then so many hours behind the typewriter. It was a blessing that he also liked gardening, cooking, tinkering, things we could do together and which we enjoyed. But if mother would not remind him, chances were high that he would forget about our birthdays.’<sup>122</sup> Simon Schoon got to know Johan Pilon in the seventies: ‘Chameleonic. Grown away from traditional Christianity, but at heart a Pietist.’<sup>123</sup> Kremers said that he had to brace himself. These were times to be tough.<sup>124</sup>

Gerhard Wiggers, the capable and respected foreman of the greenhouse programme, made a decision of his own. Like Vetterli and Van der Spek, he concluded that he had done his bit and that it was time to head for home.<sup>125</sup> A phone call by Johan Pilon to his wife fell on deaf ears:

In a fatherly way he remarked that I had obligations to Nes Ammim. However, his plea did not go over well with me. I was teaching in Hilversum. As a woman I had a right to pursue a career of my own and not to follow my husband wherever he went. I was entitled to say no. It sounds obvious now, but then it meant a very real difference compared to the lives of Jeanne Robert or Stijn Pilon. The idea that women had to facilitate the grand aims of their husbands was still very much in evidence.<sup>126</sup>

118 Interview Tanja Ronen-Laron by author, Regba 10 May 2013.

119 Interview Allaert Pilon by author, Haarlem 15 May 2020.

120 Interview Racheli Eshel-Bezek and Diklah Geva-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

121 Interview Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

122 Interview Allaert, Richard, Stiene and Annebiene Pilon by author, Haarlem 11 December 2012.

123 Interview Simon Schoon by author, Amersfoort 5 December 2013.

124 H. Kremers to J.J. Pilon, Kettwig 28 May 1966, in Archiv Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland, Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 96.

125 Interview G.A. Wiggers by author, Barlo (Aalten), 4 December 2015.

126 Interview J.G. Bollen by author, Barlo (Aalten), 4 December 2015.

Lehmann still found it hard to believe that the Roberts might be on their way out.<sup>127</sup> Velbert, however, had already decided that a parting of the ways was inevitable by now,<sup>128</sup> as had Bezek.<sup>129</sup> Gessulat spoke to Malachy:

From his position in the Ministry of Religious Affairs he has observed our project during many years. He hopes that we will broaden our support in Germany.<sup>130</sup>

Shalom Ben-Chorin confirmed that Holland and Germany offered the best prospects for Nes Ammim,<sup>131</sup> which could not be said of the UCCI: 'This is a new and non-missionary beginning.'<sup>132</sup> The Dutch and German boards conferred in Mühlheim on 25 and 26 November. Bezek also attended.<sup>133</sup> Shlomo received a cordial welcome, complimenting his hosts by saying that 'this did not feel like being in Germany at all'.<sup>134</sup> Bezek and Pilon also attended the Dutch board meeting in Utrecht on 29 November. Looijen had a heart attack and was unable to attend.

The Israelis knew how difficult it was to begin a community with inexperienced pioneers. A measure for viability was the ability to keep the most capable pioneers committed to the village.<sup>135</sup> Once they started to leave, it was a sign of serious trouble. Sometimes a breakdown could only be prevented by forcing a dissenting group to leave. Shapira analyses showed that 'mixed' villages were more at risk than those with a single ethnic and cultural background. 'Moshavim that included people from different backgrounds never became cohesive, and in the end some settlers left.'<sup>136</sup> Democracy did not always provide the answer, as different factions would use the village council mainly as a platform for pursuing their feuds.

127 Erich M. Lehmann, 'Weihnachten in Israel', in *Jediot Chadashot* 23 December 1966. Snoek, Chandler Lanier (Baptist), Paul Swarr, David Huey (Scots Presbyterian Church) and Alex Mc Cutchen (WCC) preached in Nes Ammim during this winter.

128 Minutes Nes Ammim-Germany, Mühlheim am Ruhr 26 November 1966. Archive H. Dahlhaus, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin).

129 S. Bezek to NAN, Nahariya 24 December 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

130 Siegfried Gessulat, 'Nes Ammim. Brücke zwischen Juden und Christen', in *Unsere Kirche* 1967 nr. 10.

131 Shalom Ben Chorin, 'Das Ende der Judenmission?' (1966), in archive H. Dahlhaus, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin).

132 *Nes Ammim Mitteilungen* 3 (June 1966).

133 S. Gessulat to H. Kremers, Laasphe (Lahn) 26 January 1967, in Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 97.

134 Minutes 29 November 1966. HDC VU archive NAN, box 21.

135 Henry Near, *The Kibbutz Movement* 2, 154-155.

136 Anita Shapira, *Israel*, 235.

## XXXIV Final round

Nes Ammim was simultaneously confronted by all of these problems. Even Van Tol, normally imperturbable, began to feel it: 'Tired of all these talks over the last three years, without any effect. Confidence in the outcome is eroding.'<sup>1</sup> His fellow countrymen used to meet in the 'Dutch corner'. 'Talking to the Swiss feels like chatting with a concrete wall.'<sup>2</sup> Spirits were higher in Nahariya, where Stijn Pilon reported: 'Johan and Shlomo have arranged an office for themselves (...). We look confidently forward, expecting to live in Nes Ammim within the year.'<sup>3</sup> The Bosshardt, Wenger and Robert families felt differently about it:

We feel deeply sad to be in a project that has become questionable for so many of our Christian friends.<sup>4</sup>

### Between the alternatives of a closed settlement or an open village

'I have been told that Pilon and Bezek have been constantly in touch with Israeli authorities', Boertien bristled. 'A diplomatic revolution.'<sup>5</sup> As if the final word lay with the Israelis! Pilon knew that he was playing with high stakes, with German support. 'Without that, it would be impossible to prevail.'<sup>6</sup> Pilon wrote to Minnaar to say that he was willing to leave Israel if that would solve anything,<sup>7</sup> only to realize that he could not back down now:

Should Nes Ammim be a 'closed' settlement, say, similar to the model of the Herrnhutter communities in Moravia, where pious Christians strived toward exemplary Christian holiness, thus giving Israel a picture of what Christianity ideally would be?

Or should it be an 'open' village, where the emphasis would lay on Jews and Christians working together? The first concept had as its practical consequence a stricter – probably 'sectarian' – selection of participants and the exclusion of Jewish participation. Certainly,

- 1 A. van Tol to family Van der Spek, Nes Ammim 5 January 1967, ACS.
- 2 J.J. Pilon to H. Kremers, Nahariya 27 January 1967, in Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 97.
- 3 S. Pilon to family Polet, Nahariya 2 January 1967, AGP.
- 4 Families Bosshardt, Robert and Wenger to Nes Ammim AG, Nes Ammim 3 January 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.
- 5 M. Boertien, report January 1967 to deputies Israel evangelization and CRC Groningen. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.
- 6 J.J. Pilon to H. Kremers, Nahariya 23 January 1967, in Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 97.
- 7 J.J. Pilon to J. Minnaar, Nahariya 18 January 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

what the Jews here had in mind when thinking of NA was the second idea, in which they would participate in the work.<sup>8</sup>

Vaucher asked how this related to the Dutch school, which was surely not intended for the Israelis.<sup>9</sup> Both parties were trying to make a good impression on the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Snoek was reminded of the reports he had been writing to Israeli authorities himself, a practice that he felt belatedly ashamed of.<sup>10</sup> For Velbert, old friendships were being outweighed by principle:

Being tough and combative had a positive side. Without this quality, the enterprise would have faltered.<sup>11</sup>

Ger Appelo arrived in Nes Ammim on 11 January 1967, to deliver a cargo of glass for the greenhouses.<sup>12</sup> Now that Eva Preis, an Israeli accountant, had produced the financial overview for 1966, the results were being reviewed by Kreider, Hans Bernath, Snoek and Boertien. The AG, they proposed, would become a 'stock-holding company' only.<sup>13</sup>

A week later a majority in the Dutch board accepted a vote of non-confidence against Jacob Bernath and Müller.<sup>14</sup> The Verwaltungsrat met in Zurich, in the presence of Boertien who proposed to dissolve the moshav.<sup>15</sup> The participants did not reach a firm conclusion. Becker, outvoted, simply bided his time. 'You should know that we have not let you down', Kremers wrote to Pilon, 'to the contrary! The only reason to continue the effort is our firm belief that the time will come in which Shlomo and you will be at the helm. Minnaar must admit the failure of his policy of compromise. Even if all ties to the AG are severed, you represent our Nes Ammim!'<sup>16</sup>

Jacob Bernath felt powerless. 'We were dumbstruck by this strategy of Dr Pilon, of sharing suspicions about supposed Swiss and American mission with Israeli authorities.'<sup>17</sup> The majority in the Verwaltungsrat finally 'recalled' Pilon, with the approval of the advisory committee in Nazareth.<sup>18</sup> Bezek was simply dismissed.<sup>19</sup> Minnaar had seen it coming:

That did not really come as a surprise (...). Cooperation with Pilon had become impossible.<sup>20</sup>

8 J.J. Pilon to A.L. Hopkins (Birmingham, UK), Nes Ammim 24 March 1969, ANAN.

9 J. Minnaar to P. Vaucher (Corcelles), Rotterdam 15 August 1967. ANAG, folder 1967.

10 NIOD, archive J.M. Snoek, diary entry 31 December 1966.

11 Interview Liselotte Ueter by author, Düsseldorf 30 April 2015.

12 Report G. Appelo, January 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

13 Minutes advisory council, Israel 21 January 1967, HDC VU archive NAN, box 6. Cf. report M. Boertien to deputies Israel evangelization and CRC Groningen. HUA archive CRC, inv.nr. 104.

14 Minutes NAN, Heemstede 23 January 1967. ANAG, folder 1967.

15 J. Minnaar to S. Schoon, Schiedam-Kethel 1983, ASS.

16 H. Kremers to J.J. Pilon, Kettwig 6 February 1967, in Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), inv.nr. 97.

17 J. Bernath, *Gebetsbrief* March 1967, AFK.

18 Protocol advisory council Israel, Nazareth 3 January 1967. HDC VU, archive NAN, box 21.

19 M. de Goederen to author, Amersfoort 21 November 2013.

20 J. Minnaar to S. Schoon, Schiedam-Kethel 1983, ASS.

The Verwaltungsrat was already in pieces. Brenner withdrew and the bureau in Zurich ceased to function. There was ‘chaos at Zollikerberg’.<sup>21</sup> Pauline den Blijker had to look for a new job. Gessulat wondered about the consequences for the greenhouses, ‘as the international board still holds 20 per cent of the shares’.<sup>22</sup>

Minnaar tried to broker a compromise one last time: Pilon would transfer to Nahariya hospital, Bezek to Floriculture.<sup>23</sup> He arrived in Israel on 8 February, on the same flight as Becker. His first obligation was to show the Dutch ambassador around. Meanwhile Becker conferred with Harari, Kamir and Malachy. The Israelis said that they had tried to remain neutral. However, now that the Verwaltungsrat had sacked Bezek, this was taken as a direct affront to the va‘adah. Minnaar finally realized that the game was up.<sup>24</sup> He fell into line with the Dutch board – a decision that he would come to regret.<sup>25</sup> A democratically elected village council would fully cooperate with the va‘adah.<sup>26</sup> ‘This is the hour of decision!’, Kremers noted. Indeed, a notice from Cervin arrived on 3 March, stating ‘that the US Committee has decided to withdraw’. The message arrived on official paper of the Department of Missions. ‘It seems that John Pilon has the authority, rather than the AG board. (...) As it stands now, NA is a “sign for the nations”, but very unlike the sign indicated in Isaiah.’ Financial disentanglement was up to mutual lawyers.<sup>27</sup> For Orie Miller it came as a devastating blow, which he tried to accept stoically, with the *Gelassenheit* that was part of the Mennonite tradition. He had tried his best, ‘but he could not make the complex project work’.<sup>28</sup> The District Council communicated to the Verwaltungsrat that its latest decisions were regarded as invalid. The Germans and Dutch, meeting in Arnhem, realized that it was now up to them:

Since Israel has refused to accept the latest decisions of the international board, a change of policy is now urgently required.<sup>29</sup>

Boertien advised the Swiss to follow the American example: ‘Retract your people and end any involvement with this impossible project.’<sup>30</sup> Malachy phoned to say that he hoped that Germany and Holland would have a successful restart,<sup>31</sup> but also ensured Kreider that their cooperation for the development of Christian tourism would continue.<sup>32</sup>

21 S. Gessulat to H. Kremers, Laasphe (Lahn) 26 January 1967, in Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 97.

22 S. Gessulat to H. Kremers, Laasphe (Lahn), 16 January 1967, in Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche im Rheinland (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 97.

23 Minutes Verwaltungsrat 27 and 28 January 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

24 J. Minnaar, report Israel visit 8–15 February 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

25 J. Minnaar to NAN, Rotterdam 18 December 1970. ANAG, folder 1966.

26 G. Polet to NAN, Gouda 18 February 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

27 R. Cervin to J. Minnaar, E. Müller and J. Bernath, Chicago 3 March 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

28 John E. Sharp, *My calling to fulfill*, 320.

29 Minutes of the Dutch and German boards, Arnhem, 25 March 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

30 M. Boertien to P. Vaucher, Jerusalem 18 March 1967. Quoted in Protokoll Verwaltungsrat Zurich 18 March 1967, HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

31 Minutes Rotterdam 11 April 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

32 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 187.

Holland and Germany reached a full agreement in Arnhem on 23 March. Pilon was reinstated as international secretary and appointed 'alderman and medical officer of Nes Ammim'.<sup>33</sup> The 'Arnhem Resolution'<sup>34</sup> also gave its fiat to a Dutch school. Kremers felt elated: 'All those who tried to remove Johan and Shlomo are gone. Nes Ammim's road ahead has become straight at last, and straight it will remain!'<sup>35</sup> The Swiss faced defeat:

While Mrs. Preis desperately tries to make sense of the Floriculture bookkeeping, Shlomo is preparing his next visit to Holland, and Prof. Kremers is using our Saab to visit authorities all over Israel.<sup>36</sup>

The Americans returned their shares to the AG.<sup>37</sup> 'There they remain till this day, awaiting the emergence of a new American committee', as Becker remarked in 1993.<sup>38</sup> The Swiss Nes Ammim Society halted its operation. Kreider tried to make up a balance together with Hans Bernath:

After two exhausting years of effort to consolidate the project, Dr. Bernath and I concluded that the gulf that existed at the international level, which had been there from the beginning, was deepening and unbridgeable. It not only undermined confidence in investment, but also drove a wedge within the Nes Ammim community. The partnership was not honoured and appeared unworkable. Dutch and German representatives functioned as independent units, with different vision and purpose. Our attempts to find the way together had been exhausted. Therefore, we recommended that the Swiss and American national committees withdraw from the project (...) relinquishing the project to the Holland and German investors to develop according to their vision and purpose. (...) The inability to reform the international committee in Europe, making future partnership viable, led to our decision to withdraw.<sup>39</sup>

The Verwaltungsrat was dissolved during a final session in the Calvin hall of the YMCA-building in Zurich. Jacob Bernath presided. Surprisingly, it was decided that the AG would continue to exist, to facilitate the continuation of Nes Ammim.<sup>40</sup> Hoppler alluded to the farewell between Abraham and Lot, who had wished each other well. The Swiss intended to do the same towards the Dutch and the Germans.<sup>41</sup> The AG became an *Immobilien-Gesellschaft*, presided by Jacob Bernath, to take care of the land property on behalf of the moshav. Müller succumbed to a heart attack later that year, at 67 years of age.

A shareholders' meeting assigned the 'Geschäftsführung' to Holland.<sup>42</sup> No Americans had turned up. The Swiss, who had invested 750,000 francs, accepted that only 300,000 would be repaid to them: 'It was the definitive wish of the re-

33 M. Kopuit, 'Nes Ammim' (interview J.J. Pilon), *Hervormd Nederland* 3 April 1967.

34 Erich M. Lehmann, 'Die letzte Chance von Nes-Amimim', *Jediot Chadasjot* 26 May 1967.

35 H. Kremers to M. Bezek-van Praagh, Moers 7 April 1971, AFB.

36 H.R. Koller to NA Switzerland, Beit HaEmek 27 March 1967, AFK.

37 R. Bakker to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 11 March 1967, ANAG.

38 N. Becker, 'Auf dem Wege zu einem neuen Verhältnis', 49.

39 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 157.

40 Minutes Verwaltungsrat Zurich 14 April 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

41 O. Miller to J.J. Pilon, Akron 25 April 1967. ANAG, folder 1967.

42 Minutes NAN, Utrecht 18 April 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

signing parties that Nes Ammim would continue to exist.<sup>43</sup> Now that he had this assurance, Minnaar could confirm to Harari that there was a real prospect that the moshav would survive.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, the outcome was utterly sad:

As I have expressed at the Zurich meeting, it is deeply tragic, that as four national committees we could no longer continue working together on a project we were all trying to foster. Yet, it seemed, at this critical stage, there was no other way out.<sup>45</sup>

Minnaar felt closer to the Bernaths than either to Kremers or Pilon. Yet he did not resign. The State of Israel was under threat at its borders. He could not let the Jewish people down at this very moment.<sup>46</sup>

### Departure of the Swiss

The Roberts had settled here with the intention of staying for the rest of their lives. The press was told that they left 'for practical reasons'.<sup>47</sup> Their countrymen refrained from publicity. Some of their feelings can be gleaned from private letters:

We desperately tried to make Nes Ammim what it aimed to be: a token of contrition and solidarity, of practical Christianity and brotherly love. I will refrain from attempting to describe our feelings of pain, disappointment and bitterness.<sup>48</sup>

What factors contributed to this ending? Paul Roost answers the question as follows:

In my opinion, Nes Ammim could have learnt more from an Israeli kibbutz or moshav. Spoken in hindsight: it was a mistake to try to steer the project from Switzerland and Holland. I got on well with Arie van Tol and many others. After the initial years in the bus however, we saw an influx of people who lacked both the practical and the social skills of a pioneer. (...) In an Israeli moshav, inherently egalitarian, this simply would not work. The same could be said of the building of a doctor's residence. It was quite unlike the living quarters of the other participants.

A common vision was lacking. For the Bernaths, Roberts, Roy Kreider, myself and others, Christian spirituality mattered a lot. For us, the act of prayer constitutes a vital element of community. This feeling was not generally shared. 'We're not in a monastery', they used to say. Jacob and Hans, ever the optimists, hoped that the participation of the Americans would tip the scales to practical contribution to the building of Israel that would be recognizably Christian.

Crucial support came from Bezek, the go-between for the moshav and the authorities. Many times, I drove Shlomo to appointments in Jerusalem and elsewhere, in Hans Bernath's Volkswagen. Yes, he gave a lot for the project and is to be thanked for that. And yet, we were fully aware that Shlomo's function was also to report to Israeli authorities – and it

43 J. Minnaar to C. van der Spek, Rotterdam 1 June 1967, ACS.

44 J. Minnaar to S. Harari, Rotterdam 22 April 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

45 J. Minnaar to advisory board NAN, Rotterdam 22 April 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

46 J. Minnaar, 'Een grotere opgave', in *Nes Ammim. Christen nederzetting in Israël*, June 1967.

47 'Verdere uitbouw van Nes Ammim', *Leeuwarder Courant* 24 May 1967.

48 Heidi Deluz to H. Gollwitzer, Neuchâtel 2 May 1967. Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 97.

is doubtful whether his reports on Hans Bernath were positive. 'Nazareth' was deemed to be too close to Jewish Christians and to Christian Arabs. Johan Pilon was aware of these feelings and cultivated his relationship to Shlomo carefully.<sup>49</sup>

'The Swiss were so decent', says Tanja Laron in Regba. 'Now they had to go, shaken and battered.'<sup>50</sup> Machteld de Goederen adds: 'The rumour was that Léon, on arrival in Switzerland, had to accept a job as keeper in some public garden.'<sup>51</sup> It was a bitter outcome.

On the other hand, there was a consensus even in Switzerland that the situation had become untenable.<sup>52</sup> Wiggers said the same: 'Better to have one single country in the lead than to have three warring factions.'<sup>53</sup> Gysel hoped that the new management would remember how much they owed to those who were being sent away: 'Johan Pilon claimed Nes Ammim as *his* project. But he was not capable of realising it on his own.'<sup>54</sup> The analysis by Hansruedi Koller resembles that of Roost:

In a classic kibbutz there is equality of all members, unlike Nes Ammim where managers tried to steer from above, with different salaries and where there was no consensus about basic principles. It was a recipe for chaos. There were all kinds of private businesses: the Americans and their hotel, the Dutch and Floriculture. The Bernath brothers lacked the time to deal with these issues. I pleaded for the egalitarian model of the classic kibbutz. Perhaps I was being too idealistic. A settlement of this type needs strong leadership.<sup>55</sup>

Runa Mackay in Nazareth could only guess what had happened:

Hans was very much involved in Nes Ammim, and then suddenly he was not. He did not speak about what had happened. I gathered that the experiment together with the Dutch and the Germans had not been terribly successful in the end, but never heard any details.<sup>56</sup>

The Bezek children were no less puzzled:

We knew and loved Hans and Madeleine Bernath. We used to stay with them and their family in Nazareth, and they would come over to us in Ayeleth Hashachar.<sup>57</sup>

'There had been a conflict', said Polet, 'I could not alter that. Now it was up to us to make a new start on behalf of the aim for which Nes Ammim had been founded.'<sup>58</sup> Snoek accused Holland and Germany of having hijacked a village.<sup>59</sup> Kremers replied

49 Interview Paul Roost by author, Thayngen 30 April 2014.

50 Interview Tanja Laron-Ronen by author, Regba 10 May 2013.

51 Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 7 February 2013.

52 Interview met Hans Vetterli by author, Stein am Rhein 4 May 2015. Ella added: 'It was better that one country take the lead. But still, it was hard. Pastor Vaucher transferred his Nes Ammim funds to the children's homes of the Service Chrétien Israel. His love for Israel remained undiminished.'

53 Interview Gerhard Wiggers by author, Barlo (Aalten), 4 December 2015.

54 Interview Charles Gysel by author, Wilchingen 4 May 2015.

55 Interview Hansruedi Koller by author, Zurich 5 May 2015 (followed by email 17 June 2015).

56 Interview Runa Mackay by author, Edinburgh 12 January 2015.

57 Interview Racheli Eshel-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

58 Interview Gerrit Polet by author, Paterswolde 11 July 2017.

59 J.M. Snoek to family Van der Spek, Tiberias 13 June 1967, in ACS.



that it had been the UCCI that had been attempting to hijack a dialogue programme for missionary aims. In this view the UCCI had become a rallying point for missionary efforts in Israel, with the support of sympathizers in Switzerland and America.<sup>60</sup>

Since 1962 the Swiss and Dutch had each invested about 750,000 francs, the Germans 500,000, and the Americans 300,000. The value of the land and village was an estimated 998,113 francs with another 243,923 for the road. An agreement of principle, negotiated as early as 15 April, stipulated an 'Entschädigung' of 300,000 francs for the Swiss and 120,000 for the Americans.<sup>61</sup> Pilon was opposed to paying any compensation at all.<sup>62</sup> Nevertheless, the agreement held. Holland and Germany would pay 50,000 francs up front, then a yearly sum of 36,000 francs with added interest. The Americans received \$44,000 for their shares.

'We are working hard', Pilon told Miller. 'We hope to remain in contact with you from time to time.'<sup>63</sup> Kreider had no wish of any further dealings, referring to 'a deep wound (...) it hurts'.<sup>64</sup> Hans Bernath came to say goodbye on 29 April.<sup>65</sup> His foster son Marc-André felt sorry that it was all over:

Nes Ammim was an exciting experience when it started. Hans, being on the executive committee, used to go there every Wednesday. As I had Wednesday afternoons off from school, he used to take me along. I loved to go there because I could drive tractors, plough fields, and be in contact with the land and farming. Another advantage was that I had my father all to myself for one hour's drive to and from Nes Ammim. This village, which still exists today, was felt, at a certain stage, to have lost track of its first objectives and so the Swiss together with the American pioneers decided to leave. I was very disappointed when we stopped going there. But this was nothing in comparison with what my father must have felt, after having spent so much energy on the project.<sup>66</sup>

During the marriage of Arie van Tol and Nabihah Farah in Nazareth, on 14 May, the Bernath, Pilon, Wenger, Bezek, Kreider and Snoek families met for a last time.

### Changing of the guard

For Remembrance Day, thousands of Israelis came to Lohamei HaGettaot. Among them were representatives of Nes Ammim. After the official functions, Harari visited the Christian village. 'After major changes we are trying to get the place in working order', said Pilon. 'Now that the psychological difficulties have been mostly resolved, we can turn to practical matters.'<sup>67</sup>

60 H. Kremers to H. Gollwitzer, Kettwig 30 May 1967. Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 97.

61 Protokoll VR Zurich 15 April 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

62 Retrospective in: J.J. Pilon to J. Minnaar, Nes Ammim 30 November 1969, ANAN.

63 J.J. Pilon to O. Miller, Nes Ammim 27 May 1969, ANAN.

64 O. Miller to J.J. Pilon, Akron (Pennsylvania) 15 March 1968, ANAG.

65 G. Polet to NAN, Nes Ammim 30 April 1967. HUA, archive deputies Church and Israel RCN inv. nr. 113.

66 Quoted by Shafik Farah, *What shall I do with my life?*, 233.

67 J.J. Pilon to NAN, Nes Ammim 19 May 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

‘Roberts came to see us to say goodbye’, Gerda Koller noted on 22 May. ‘They will leave the day after tomorrow ... Many Jewish friends regret their fate, and so do we.’<sup>68</sup> Mary-Jeanne Robert:

Le retour en Suisse fut difficile pour nous trois.<sup>69</sup>

On 30 May it was decided by the Swiss Society, ‘after a long and thorough discussion, that Nes Ammim should proceed’.<sup>70</sup> They would remain committed:

It is our intention to continue to trust in our Dutch friends, even if we are no longer directly involved. We still hope that Nes Ammim will become a community that provides witness for our Lord.<sup>71</sup>

Nes Ammim had in fact become a Dutch village. Contractor Zwi Kir built the doctor’s house, with an outpatients’ clinic, designed by architect Dick Egberts.<sup>72</sup> Sheikh Khayr made a donation. Pieter Pilon drove the tractor of Léon Robert, a couple of schoolteachers arrived and people from Abu Sinan were hired to till the fields. Keuning, Allaert Pilon and Bert-Jan Hofman fixed the water installations of the greenhouses. Shlomo Bezek took care of administration. Polet, the new technical manager, described the surroundings:

Fields of cotton, wheat, and bananas all around; on the horizon the Galilean hills. (...) In the evenings Haifa’s many lights on the slopes of Mount Karmel.<sup>73</sup>

Lehmann presented Johan Pilon as ‘father of Nes Ammim’ to the readers of *Jeditot Chadashoth*.<sup>74</sup> However, the main task to explain the new course to the donors fell to Kremers:

It is only by mutual trust that a new relationship can be forged. Openness, solidarity, and cooperation in the build-up belong to the Christian witness that we owe to Israel. It is not our intention to use the village as a base for propagating our Christian faith.

Rather the work in the settlement attests to our guilt, but also to our expectations for the future. Those condemning this testimony as shallow should open themselves up to the terrible responsibility we carry for the estrangement between Jews and Christians in the past. (...)

Sadly, not all participants in Nes Ammim shared this outlook. Some of them rather opposed the policy of opening ourselves for Israel. They preferred a closed Christian community, only relating to the Jewish community if strictly necessary. Preservation of personal piety remained pivotal and it was hard to see how the approach of the Jews could be anything but a form of mission. Salvation, both for the self and the other, was essential. It appeared that this was hardly compatible to an attitude of solidarity with the Jews in building their land. (...) It is not our intention to accuse; we assume that every participant faithful-

68 G. Koller-Zuppinger to parents, Beit HaEmek 22 May 1967, AFK.

69 Mary-Jeanne Robert, ‘Nes Ammim 1963-1967’ (Fontainemelon 2013), ANAG.

70 J. Bernath to J.J. Pilon, Zurich 23 October 1967, ANAN.

71 Th. Schubert, circular letter in *Mitteilungsblatt Nes Ammim* (Zurich/Karlsruhe), July 1967.

72 J.J. Pilon to NAN, Nes Ammim 19 May 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

73 Report G. Polet May 1967. ANAG, folder 1967.

74 Overview summer 1967 by G. Polet. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

ly tried to serve the aim of Nes Ammim. We just want to show why a parting of the ways had become unavoidable. (...) This tragic split, in my opinion, also came as a relief. For it is simply untenable to have basic tenets of the settlement questioned indefinitely.<sup>75</sup>

### ‘Only the Lord could have turned the project around.’

‘He will reign from eternity to eternity.’ By reading Revelation 11:15, Theo Schubert began his review of recent events. ‘Meanwhile, we are struggling to find our way, depressed by a sense of failure and even guilt.’<sup>76</sup> As to the future, Johan Pilon was now the ‘leader’. The Swiss wished him luck.<sup>77</sup> Kreider felt unable to follow that example. He underwent a crisis in his faith:

For those who had intended to devote their lives to Nes Ammim, it was especially painful to process the transition. The death of their vision was excruciating, especially when the project had been so visible nationally and internationally. We had hoped and prayed for miracles of change and believed they would come because the vision was vital for this Land. Only the Lord could have turned the project around. We were baffled why He had not done so.

Finally, it was as if an answer might be forthcoming:

I heard a brief word spoken deep within: ‘This thing is from Me. God-given vision cannot be realized when the structures cannot contain it.’<sup>78</sup>

But what followed was a nightmarish dream:

I was taking a Sabbath siesta. But sleep was not uppermost in my mind as I sensed the precious reality of the presence of the Lord by my side. ‘What is it, Lord? I feel the need of a healing walk with you through the hallway of my memory.’

The Holy Spirit prompted the request. In that instant I saw before me the interior of an art gallery like we had visited in Europe, a long hallway with arched ceiling, the floor carpeted in red. The high walls were lined with life-sized paintings. Then I saw Jesus standing by my side. He stepped toward the first painting on my right. Turning to look at that picture I saw a familiar scene. A group of people was standing in the centre of the village of Nes Ammim. The picture revived memories of our efforts to salvage the project, and the decision to pull out. With the memories came the disappointment of unresolved questions and the many unanswered prayers.

In the presence of Jesus, I reminded Him of those prayers, hoping He would now provide answers and perhaps clarify why He had not intervened. Instead, He lifted that picture from its hanging, enabling me to see behind it. What I saw was startling. Behind the picture was a roaring fire. Above the fire was a cauldron filled with a boiling black liquid, spilling over the sides, and staining the beautiful red carpet. The revelation was painfully clear.<sup>79</sup>

75 S. Gerssen, ‘Nes Ammim’, *Kerk en Israël* May 1967, 68.

76 Th. Schubert, circular letter in *Mitteilungsblatt Nes Ammim* (Zurich/Karlsruhe), July 1967.

77 G. Koller to A. Van der Spek, Beit HaEmek 10 August 1967, ACS.

78 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 157.

79 Roy H. Kreider, *Land of Revelation*, 195.

## 1967

Even now, after all the support they had received from Velbert, the Dutch remained adamant that ‘for the moment’ no Germans could live in the moshav. Kremers reluctantly complied: ‘We will wait (...) until the kibbutzim are unanimous in their willingness to accept us.’<sup>1</sup> Pilon continued to act as plenipotentiary for them.<sup>2</sup> Velbert took comfort from the presence of Bezek, the linking pin to the people of Israel. Arie van Tol reported: ‘Dr. Pilon and his family, after a few weeks in the Netherlands, are living here. Apart from a Swedish boy, and English girl and Nabiha we have only Dutchmen. The old regulars have gone.’<sup>3</sup>

1 Christian Bartsch (ed.), *Schalom ist mehr als nur ein Wort*, 120.

2 J.J. Pilon to L. van Veen and G. Polet, Nes Ammim 21 August 1967; to D. Lam, Nes Ammim 26 August 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

3 A. van Tol to family Van der Spek, Nes Ammim 13 June 1967, ACS.



Fig. 18 Map Western Galilee with Nes Ammim (east of Regba) still unmarked: Zev Vilnay, *Israël. Een moderne gids door het land van de Bijbel* (Amsterdam: Strengholt, 1966), appendix.

# XXXV Moshav in wartime

## Re-establishing the community

The Keuning family arrived in May: ‘No one to receive us, trouble at the customs, no ulpan. In the village: the Roberts about to leave, not talking to the Dutch and vice versa. Johan Snoek refusing to come to see us. No one explained why. The key figure in this dishevelled community was Shlomo. Johan absolutely depended on him, on his knowledge, imperturbability, heart-warming good temper. Shlomo gave his all, despite his wavering health. Nes Ammim was an unstable place. People came and went, old friends disappeared into thin air and new enthusiasts had to be trained for their jobs. Young Pieter Pilon used a heavy-calibre gun to shoot a cat in a tree.’<sup>4</sup> Ellen Schoneveld-Tuyt:

Shlomo was the tower of strength for all of them, the others were still groping to find their way. Pieter Pilon drove his teachers to despair, patrolled the grounds with that gun, tried to make an impression on the girls. I have been wondering whether his excesses were intended to catch the attention of his parents. They were so busy.<sup>5</sup>

Once again, the Laron family came over to help, overcoming their doubts: ‘Unlike a proper Israel kibbutz, labourers had no say whatsoever in the policy. Decisions were made by the top brass; we had no idea where or by whom.’<sup>6</sup> And yet it was a marvellous part of the world. The Holy Land worked its usual charm:

The joy of a Mediterranean climate; nothing finer than living in a barrack in Israel. You make do with a minimum of belongings, as if you have hardly anything to lose. Sacred history becomes palpable, and Ruth the Moabite still walks the fields.<sup>7</sup>

However, as in Biblical times, conflict was never far away. War rumours served as a blessing in disguise, as they brought people closer to each other. The Dutch and German Nes Ammim societies successfully mobilised the support in their churches for Israel, ‘this small and brave nation’.<sup>8</sup> ‘We follow the radio broadcasting every moment of the day’, Bezek reported. Snoek did the same in Tiberias:<sup>9</sup>

4 Interview Anneke Keuning-Rooks by author, Buitenpost 2 April 2013. Pieter Pilon went on to study medicine in Amsterdam and to become a successful entrepreneur in Cape Town in South Africa. He died in 2006, age 59. An obituary by Raymond Ellerbeck pictures him as a freebooter, formed by his days in Galilee, where ‘he grew to love the freedom and adventure’ (archive Allaert Pilon, Haarlem).

5 Interview Ellen Schoneveld-Tuyt by author, Rijswijk 17 September 2014.

6 Interview Anneke Keuning-Rooks by author, Buitenpost 2 April 2013.

7 Ibidem.

8 Folder in HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

9 Snoek would continue as a pastor in Tiberias until 1969.

There was shouting in the streets of Cairo, Amman, and Damascus: 'Death to the Jews, we will destroy Israel', and so forth. (...) We felt deeply affected. A second Holocaust seemed imminent.<sup>10</sup>

On 22 May the Straits of Tiran were closed by Egypt. Polet urged Israel to hit back, before it was too late.<sup>11</sup> Pilon remarked that he lived as if in a trance,<sup>12</sup> while Gerssen bolstered the Dutch commitment to Israel: 'Every enemy of the young State comes in for the kill. They blame Israel for the crime of the simple fact that it exists.'<sup>13</sup>

### Six-Day War

In the early morning hours of Monday 5 June, Snoek alarmed his family: 'It has started, turn on the radio!' Israel was at war. Pilon hastily returned home from Haifa.<sup>14</sup> To be prepared for any eventuality he asked for weaponry. Windows were blacked out. 'I told Harari that it would be a pity if my family were to die, but that we were absolutely committed to remain where we are.'<sup>15</sup> The Dutch embassy preferred an evacuation, as a proper shelter was lacking.<sup>16</sup>

Though Snoek was strongly reminded of May 1940, there was to be no invasion. Israel went on the offensive, destroying the Egyptian air force in one single stroke, then moving into Gaza, the Sinai, and the Jordanian West Bank. A pick-up arrived at Nes Ammim to move women and children out of harm's way:

From Regba they took us to Nahariya. Our men were camouflaging the barracks by plastering them in a mud coating. There was no longer a sense of fear. It was obvious that the sublimely trained State of Israel could defeat any adversary.<sup>17</sup>

The Kollers in Beit HaEmek noted that enemy aircraft hardly made any impression.<sup>18</sup> The Arab quarter in central Akko seemed deserted, inhabitants hid behind barred doors. In Ayeleth Hashachar there was 'lots of noise, but hardly a scratch'. Erich Lehmann, worrying about his son Gideon who was with the parachutists, wrote to the Van der Speks:

The victories of our armed forces cannot change the bitter fact that the Christian world once again failed to give us proper support, while Hitler on the Nile (...) prepared to destroy the last survivors of Auschwitz and Majdanek.<sup>19</sup>

10 Johan M. Snoek, *Joodse en Palestijnse tranen*, 54.

11 G. Polet to J.J. Pilon and S. Bezek, Gouda 31 May 1967. ANAG, folder 1967.

12 J.J. Pilon to family Van der Spek, Nes Ammim 21 June 1967, ACS.

13 S. Gerssen, 'Spanning om Israël', *Kerk en Israël* June 1967, 82.

14 J.J. Pilon to NAN, Nes Ammim 5 June 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 31.

15 J.J. Pilon to G. Polet, Nes Ammim 8 June 1967, AHS.

16 *Ibidem*.

17 Interview Anneke Keuning-Rooks by author, Buitenpost 2 April 2013.

18 G. Koller to A. van der Spek, Beit HaEmek 10 August 1967, in ACS. The Koller family would return to Winterthur in November.

19 E.M. Lehmann to family Van der Spek, Nahariya 7 June 1967, ACS.

The capture of East Jerusalem came as a stunning event. Pilon reflected: 'I have yet to meet the first Jew who doubts that the city of Jerusalem will remain with Israel (...) an event of eschatological importance.'<sup>20</sup> He was already looking forward: 'It is my hope that current events will help to raise money for Nes Ammim so that we can get to work properly. If Jerusalem remains Jewish, it will attract an abundance of tourists.' The last battle of the war was fought against Syria. Tiberias had a grandstand:

During the fifth day, Friday 9 June, an immense column of tanks, artillery and military vehicles moved up to the North via the road underneath the Scotti. It was clear to us: a final reckoning with Syria. All that day we had been at the side of the road, rejoicing and waving to the troops. The next day the Golan Heights were in Israeli hands. Victory had been assured. At that moment, we perceived it as a miracle by the hand of God.<sup>21</sup>

Pilon turned up in the Scotti:

Our intention had been to move on to Ayeleth, but military traffic made that impossible. This was the day of the attack on Syria. In Tiberias we watched as the Israelis pushed North. Though there was shooting going on, with clouds of smoke because of burning grass, the Syrian artillery dismally failed to hit what seemed like a perfect target.<sup>22</sup>

Though some bombs had been dropped by Iraqi planes, blackout regulations were lifted as early as Saturday. The next day, Snoek used Psalm 46:8-12 in his sermon: 'Come, behold the works of the Lord (...) He makes wars cease to the end of the earth.'<sup>23</sup> Nes Ammim had no damage, even though a munitions dump had exploded in the vicinity.<sup>24</sup> The atmosphere in Velbert was also strongly pro-Israel. Military enthusiasm of this magnitude had not yet been seen in the Federal Republic. Marquardt could not help but remember the German flush of victory during the summer of 1940.<sup>25</sup> Together with Günther Grass, Heinz Kremers had presented himself to the embassy to volunteer for the Israeli army. The *Blitzsieg* made that superfluous. Kremers thanked God that Israel had been saved: 'Baruch Hashem!' He went back to Israel as soon as possible, moving with his students in kibbutz Givat Chaim to Hadera.<sup>26</sup>

### After effects

Though victorious, Israel felt like a victim that had barely escaped a gruesome fate. Tears of joy were shed during the radio broadcasting of the shofar being blown at the Kotel. From Lohamei HaGettaot an appeal was raised by Zuckermann: not to give up an inch of conquered land, but to populate it by Jewish col-

20 J.J. Pilon to family Van der Spek, Nes Ammim 21 June 1967, ACS.

21 Johan M. Snoek, *Joodse en Palestijnse tranen*, Vught 2010, 55.

22 J.J. Pilon to J. Minnaar, Nes Ammim 19 June 1967. ANAG, folder 1967.

23 C.R. Snoek-Dijkstra, 'Brief uit Tiberias', *Kerk en Israël* July/August 1967, 106-110.

24 HDC VU archive NAN, minutes Utrecht 19 August 1967.

25 Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt, 'Christentum und Zionismus', 241.

26 H. Kremers to P. Lapidé, Kettwig 19 July 1967, in Archiv der Rheinischen Kirche (Düsseldorf), Nachlass Heinz Kremers, inv.nr. 204.



onists instead.<sup>27</sup> Arie van Tol had surveyed the battlefield, within a few days after the fighting:

Immediately after the ceasefire, Johan Pilon and I went by car to see the Golan Heights for ourselves. Destroyed tanks and cars, burnt houses. Nabiha found letters by a Syrian soldier in a shelter. The local population had gone, not a single soul remained of all those who had been living here so recently. The explanation of that phenomenon did not bother us then.<sup>28</sup>

Pieter, Allaert and Richard Pilon 'found some charged Uzi machine guns, gas masks and hand grenades. One way or another, probably by mother's intervention, all of these items would be later returned.'<sup>29</sup>

Israel had acquired control of the West Bank, Golan and Sinai. Between 200,000 and 300,000 Arabs fled to Jordan, and 80,000 to 90,000 Golan inhabitants fled to Syria. More than a million people, including 340,000 refugees of the 1948 war, came under Israeli jurisdiction. Eshkol announced on 12 June that there was to be no withdrawal. A week later, seven villages were cleared in the strategically important zone around Latrun. On 28 June East Jerusalem was formally annexed to Israel.<sup>30</sup> All these events were received with great satisfaction by the Nes Ammim community,<sup>31</sup> where a bench from a deserted Syrian farm in the Golan featured as a souvenir.<sup>32</sup> Feelings in Nazareth were different:

The expectation that had been nurtured by what we had seen on television and had heard in speeches loud and clear from transistors in every home and from loudspeakers in the open streets of Nazareth was dashed to the ground. The loudspeakers and the people around them became silent and instead we found ourselves sombre witnesses to arrogant Israeli soldiers driving captured Syrian army trucks through the town's main street. The captured trucks bore torn Syrian flags drooping morbidly from the side fenders. There was no doubt that those trips were meant to humiliate and subdue.<sup>33</sup>

Nevertheless, the outcome of the war also brought benefits: now they were able to visit their relatives on the West Bank and in Eastern Jerusalem once more. 'It even seemed that the new situation might work out, with the Jews and the Arabs mixing with each other', according to Runa Mackay.<sup>34</sup> But there were to be no full civil rights, nor was there any international supervision:

Talking to people, I sensed a deep fear of the Israelis, not only because of their military might and US support, but also because the Arabs felt that they would never be able to compete with the Jews in any sphere of life.<sup>35</sup>

Orie Miller came to visit the former Wailing Wall, where an open square had been created by the conquerors. Some of his fellow Mennonites had objected. War went

27 Shlomo Sand, *The invention of the Land of Israel*, 242.

28 Interview Arie van Tol by author, Nieuw-Vennep 27 March 2013.

29 Interview Richard Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

30 Kai Bird, *Crossing Mandelbaum Gate*, 216-217.

31 S. Keuning to NAN, Nes Ammim 29 July 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

32 Interview Ellen Schoneveld-Tuyt by author, Rijswijk 17 September 2014.

33 Elias S. Srouji, *Cyclamens from Galilee*, 248.

34 Interview Runa Mackay by author, Edinburgh 12 January 2015.

35 Runa Mackay, *Exile in Israel*, 34.

against their principles, as did the forced removal of the Maghrabi living quarter that had existed there. They still did not understand why he had continued with Nes Ammim for so long: 'Orie kept trying long after he should have given up.'<sup>36</sup>

The Dutch and Germans had no such misgivings.<sup>37</sup> When Pieter's son Atalwin Pilon came to Israel in 2012, in search of his family past, he looked forward to a 'warrior experience', 'just like our grandfather'.<sup>38</sup> The aftermath of the Six-Day War made Nes Ammim a popular destination, especially for the young. Simon Schoon was one of them:

I was hardly able to stop listening to the radio in my student's den in Amsterdam. In my perception the 'wars of the Lord' were being fought in the Middle East. My grandfather had not survived the Dachau concentration camp. Stories about him, and also about what had happened to the Jews, had impressed me since I was a child. The Six Days War became an eschatological event for the young man I was, an event of divinely ordained victory of Israel. At the time this was not exceptional. Posters were everywhere, proclaiming: 'Israel – Gods miracle'. Israel's national anthem was being sung in churches.<sup>39</sup>

The Diaconial Office of the RCN offered a generous loan to Nes Ammim.<sup>40</sup> Velbert also noted that the attitude towards Nes Ammim was more positive than ever before. As a result, Germany and Holland managed to find the funds they needed for a new start.<sup>41</sup> *Jediot Chadasjot* gave them full credits:

The Swiss and Americans (...) have shifted the responsibility to the Dutch. Now it is up to them, with the moral and economic support of NA-Germany, to get this project going again. Things have taken a turn for the better.<sup>42</sup>

### Economic priorities

The *Israelitische Wochenblatt* (Germany) did not object to the Dutch taking the lead. 'Difficulties of many kinds have produced a situation in which it became necessary that one single country should take the lead'<sup>43</sup> 'Instead of missionary monologue we will have brotherly discourse with the Jews',<sup>44</sup> said Velbert, including of course the va'adah:

Therefore, it is our policy that anything that happens in Nes Ammim should be discussed with our Jewish neighbours and authorities. We need their consent.<sup>45</sup>

36 John E. Sharp, *My calling to fulfill*, 320 and 337.

37 Interview Thomas Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

38 Atalwin Pilon, 'Basic Goodness', <http://basicgoodness.com/2012/going-back-to-my-roots>.

39 Simon Schoon, 'Van rozenkassen tot dialoog', 57-58.

40 J. van Klinken (director ADB) to NAN, Utrecht 13 September 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

41 G. Polet to NAN, Nes Ammim 25 December 1967. HUA, archive deputies Church and Israel RCN 1986-1999 inv.nr. 113.

42 E.M. Lehmann, 'Nes-Amim und der Sechs-Tage-Krieg', *Jediot Chadasjot* 18 August 1967.

43 'Schwierigkeiten Nes Ammim', *Israelitische Wochenblatt* 21 July 1967.

44 Cf. Paul Gerhard Aring, *Christliche Judenmission*, 257.

45 Heinz Kremers, 'Nes Ammim. Sinn und Aufgabe einer christlichen Siedlung in Israel'. HDC VU archive NAN, box 6.

When asked about admittance of German pioneers, the Dutch once again referred to an unwritten gentlemen's agreement, putting them in the same position as the Christian Jews. For the time being they had the village to themselves. There were four families, the younger children being taught by Truus Wielenga and Murkje Scholtens.<sup>46</sup> A small band,<sup>47</sup> with Pilon cast into the role of a fatherly leader. 'Doing whatever took his fancy', as Cor van der Spek put it.<sup>48</sup> Gerard Hogendoorn took charge of agriculture, Scholtens was a retired French professor who had translated the writings of Blaise Pascal.<sup>49</sup> Remarkably, in the light of recent events, her views regarding Israel resembled Kreider's vision. She looked forward to the Second Coming that was to be accompanied by the conversion of the Jewish people.<sup>50</sup> Polet took charge of management:

Jakov Ben-Zwi from moshav Ben Ami came over to assist with cotton. He and Hogendoorn did a great job, tripling the net profits. We were making progress. Looijen and Minnaar were acute business administrators. Most important of all, the bond between Holland and Israel remained strong.<sup>51</sup>

Kamir, Werblowsky and Harari all expressed their appreciation.<sup>52</sup> Shalom Ben-Chorin praised the 'Dutch settlement' (*sic*), quoting Zechariah 8:23: 'Thus said the Lord of hosts: in those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying: Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'<sup>53</sup>

It could be plausibly argued that Nes Ammim had been saved by the Six-Day War. The surge of sympathy for Israel even extended to Switzerland. Minnaar travelled to Zurich, where he was reassured that any remaining capital would be available for Nes Ammim.<sup>54</sup> René Spörli returned to fix some problems with electricity but did not stay long. 'Nes Ammim is no more Christian than Israel, rather less so.'<sup>55</sup>

Hans Bernath pressed on in the Nazareth hospital.<sup>56</sup> Looijen came to visit him in 1969. 'They just talked niceties and from both sides carefully avoided the subject of Nes Ammim', said Johan Pilon. What had happened between Hans and himself remained a touchy subject. 'Although in the past angry words may have been used', he now insisted that there had been no rivalry. 'Rather, there was a difference and incompatibility of views, an intricate matter, hard to grasp in words.'<sup>57</sup> For Hans Bernath it all came down to the question of what Christianity meant to the world:

46 L. de Geer and S. Gerssen (board members NAN) to H. Kohlbrugge, Utrecht 10 August 1967. HDC archive NAN, box 21.

47 G. Polet to NAN, Nes Ammim 25 December 1967. HUA, archive deputies Church and Israel RCN inv.nr. 113.

48 Interview C. van der Spek by author, Broek op Langedijk 18 February 2014.

49 Interview Richard Pilon by author, Haarlem 16 April 2013.

50 M. Scholtens to S. Pilon, Haarlem 29 August 1966. ANAG, folder 1966.

51 Interview G. Polet by author, Paterswolde 15 March 2013.

52 J.B. Looijen, report of visit to Israel November 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 37.

53 Shalom Ben Chorin, 'Die Bedeutung von Nes Ammim für Israel' (ca. 1970), ASS.

54 J. Bernath and Th. Schubert to Verwaltungsrat, Zurich 25 October 1967. HUA, archive deputies Church and Israel RCN inv.nr. 113.

55 R. Spörli, 'Bericht aus Nes Ammim Juni 1969', *Nes Ammim. Zeichen für die Völker*, Velbert 1969 nr. 2.

56 Quoted in: J. Minnaar to J.J. Pilon, Rotterdam 9 September 1967. ANAG, folder 1967.

57 J.J. Pilon to O. Miller, Nes Ammim 25 June 1969, ANAN.

If we think of the thirty years that Jesus spent in Nazareth, what was his witness? Our Lord did not leave writings for us to read, and did not preach, but he was a witness in serving. He learned obedience. If we pose as bosses and as masters, we tell people what to do. Is that witness? Is that mission? In Matthew 25, Jesus mentions the things which will be judged. He says: 'I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave me a cup of water, I was a prisoner and you visited me, I was naked, and you clothed me, you received me as a guest and gave me shelter.' (...) The life of those who believe in Jesus Christ is all very practical things of everyday life and witness.<sup>58</sup>

Nes Ammim-Switzerland also carried on.<sup>59</sup> Fritz Lehmann was President in 1974 and Jacob Bernath the *AG Bevollmächtiger*.

## Theology

Israel could offer a much-needed stimulus for a Christian theology, said Gerssen. Kremers should take the lead here, assisted by Pilon 'in the practical field'.<sup>60</sup> Ko Minnaar responded sceptically; a village and theological seminary were very different things.<sup>61</sup> He left Nes Ammim in 1970, with the remark that Werblowski had been right in 1962 to note that Christianity and mission were intertwined. 'A fact that Jews know very well.'<sup>62</sup> Indeed his son Adri remarked in 2012: 'My father hoped that the Jews would ultimately find their way to Jesus Christ.'<sup>63</sup> Ko Minnaar returned to the subject in a letter to Schoon in 1983:

You are mistaken to follow Fackenheim<sup>64</sup>, who regards Auschwitz as the ultimate fiasco of Christianity. (...) Hitler is the very opposite of the Christian Church. (...) We have plenty of things to be ashamed of, especially towards Israel, but I am happy to say: *not* where the Gospel is at stake. (...) I will not elaborate, being no theologian, though my heart is still with Nes Ammim (...). It would delight me to hear prayers for conversion of Israel in the village, as we say in our home.<sup>65</sup>

The struggle for Nes Ammim had been presented as an effort to eradicate the last remaining vestiges of Christian mission. Pilon had famously stated that Israel, chosen by God, had no need of being corrected by Christians. This was in full accord with the views in Velbert, where it was presumed that Germans would become full members soon and that the non-missionary principle would be strictly adhered to.

What followed was the opposite. 'Orie Miller is still supportive and needs en-

58 Quoted by Shafik Farah, *What shall I do with my life?*, 148.

59 Protokoll Generalversammlung Nes Ammim-Schweiz, Olten 6 December 1969, ANAN.

60 S. Gerssen to J.J. Pilon, Utrecht 30 september 1967. ANAG, klapper 1967.

61 Board minutes Utrecht 19 August 1967. HDC VU archive NAN, box 21.

62 J. Minnaar to S. Schoon, Schiedam-Kethel 27 November 1975, ASS.

63 Interview Adri Minnaar by author, Oostburg 29 November 2012 (telephone).

64 Rabbi Emil Fackenheim believed that the Church had been infected by Anti-Semitism as early as the writing of the Gospel of John. The only way for Christians to free themselves from this stigma was to listen to the voice of Israel and to restructure their exegesis accordingly. Cf. Emil L. Fackenheim, *God's presence in history*, New York 1972.

65 J. Minnaar to S. Schoon, Schiedam-Kethel 8 February 1983, ASS.

couraging', he noted in June.<sup>66</sup> Now that Nes Ammim was securely under his control, Pilon suddenly reverted to traditional Protestantism, refuting the idea of the two separate ways of Judaism and Christianity. He even made it known that he opposed Kremers on this point. The German had been allowed to preach a sermon in Nes Ammim in August, with Erich Lehmann among his audience. Jesus was the saviour of the gentiles, Kremers told his audience – not the saviour of the Jews, who were already in the Covenant. This was of course the position that had set off 'operation Fox Terrier'. Pilon's sudden change of heart seemed a bit too transparent: the obvious intention was to 'appease' the traditionalists and to retain their support.<sup>67</sup> When hearing about it, Snoek felt too baffled to reply. Meanwhile Pilon tried to convince the Americans that any impression that he might be opposed to Christian witness was 'entirely false':

The Bible is the book in which God reveals His purpose with creation and reveals the way of His salvation of man. This is through Jesus Christ and Him only. The messiah of the Old and the New Testament are one and the same, and He is Jesus Christ. This is simply what I believe. (...) There is one way to Salvation, which is through Christ, for all men, including the Jews.<sup>68</sup>

De Kruijter was no less stunned than Snoek, as there was little doubt that the private convictions of Johan and Stijn were drifting away from the more traditional strands of Calvinism. The trend was also noted by their children:

They allowed us to think for ourselves. Their views were adapting to a modern age, just like ours; their perception of religion was changing. We had been accustomed to reading Bible chapters during our meals. Until that stopped.<sup>69</sup>

The outpatient's clinic was next to the doctor's house, where Lehmann came over for a visit:

We sat together in the pleasant drawing room of the new home of the family. The house is connected to a *marpeah* or polyclinic. (...) In the village we met the young pioneers of the villages, in blue jeans and on sandals (...). When Dr Pilon speaks with them, they listen with the greatest respect.<sup>70</sup>

Horst Dahlhaus adds:

Johan knew how to enjoy the good moments in life. The new home was a dream come true. Stijn seemed more down to earth. Her husband was a visionary.<sup>71</sup>

Looijen honoured him as the architect of a 'total reversal of previous attitudes towards Israel', after drafting the 1960 memorandum in 'solitude' and despite being misunderstood by the Swiss and Americans.<sup>72</sup> Not everyone shared that view though, especially in Velbert: 'Pilon war der Gutsherr'.<sup>73</sup>

66 J.J. Pilon to G. Polet, Nes Ammim 8 June 1967, AHS.

67 J.J. Pilon to J.M. Snoek, Nes Ammim 22 September 1967. ANAG, folder 1967.

68 J.J. Pilon to A. de Kruijter (Western Springs, Illinois), Nes Ammim 23 September 1967. ANAG, folder 1967.

69 E-mail Stiene Pilon to author, 24 February 2013.

70 Erich M. Lehmann, 'Der Vater von Nes-Amim. Dr. Johan Pilon', *Jediot Chadasjot* 31 January 1968.

71 Interview H. Dahlhaus by author, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin) 25 January 2013.

72 Jac.B. Looijen, 'Johan Pilon overleden', *Ter Herkenning* September 1975.

73 Interview L. Ueter by author, Düsseldorf 27 September 2013.

# XXXVI Retrospective

## Evaluation in Israel

Volunteers were flocking to the moshav in the hundreds. It seemed a miracle, wrote Pinhas Lapide.<sup>1</sup> Israeli authorities also showed their appreciation, but not without caution. Greenhouses were fine, but hardly essential for the economy of Galilee. Dialogue was primarily sought by Christians. The District Council needed results of a different kind, in the form of volunteers returning to their homeland as ‘ambassadors for Israel’.<sup>2</sup> According to Paul Charles Merkley, the reason officials were willing to accommodate initiatives like Nes Ammim was ‘the circumstance that their churches were believed by Israelis to have the support of the citizenry of the Western powers’.<sup>3</sup> The accuracy of this assessment is questionable, since most churches were entering a phase of decline. Even worse, they were not fully committed in their support for Israel. The WCC made a statement in 1968, opposing ‘annexation by military force’. Though the DRC accepted the principle that possession of the land belonged to Israel’s vocation,<sup>4</sup> this view met with considerable opposition and would not be repeated in such strong terms.<sup>5</sup> A declaration by the international board of Nes Ammim on 24 June 1970 failed to endorse the unification of Jerusalem.<sup>6</sup> Support for a ‘Greater Israel’ depended on Christian Zionists, like Kranhouse or Cervin, who had belonged to the losing party in the struggle for control over the moshav. ‘To them, the Six-Day War was powerful proof of the authority of the prophetic sections of the Bible.’<sup>7</sup> Mainstream Protestant churches hesitated. That did not come as a surprise to Werblowsky, who had said from the beginning that holiness in the New Testament had less to do with geography than with communities of faith and Jesus Christ.<sup>8</sup>

Keller still wondered what exactly was being represented by Nes Ammim: ‘Now that the village was in place, it was my intention to give the Christians a

1 Pinchas E. Lapide, ‘Nes Ammim hat Seine Probe erstanden’, in *Evangelische Kommentare* May 1970, 292.

2 David Leach, *Chasing Utopia. The future of the kibbutz in a divided Israel*, Toronto 2016, 34.

3 Paul Charles Merkley, *Christian Attitudes towards the State of Israel*, Montreal 2001, 73.

4 *Israël, volk, land en staat. Handreiking voor een theologische bezinning*. DRC, The Hague 1970, 12.

5 Cf. M. van Campen and G.C. den Hertog (eds.), *Israël, volk, land en staat. Terugblik en perspectief*, Zoetermeer 2005.

6 J. Verkuyl, *Inleiding in de nieuwere zendingwetenschap*, Kampen 1981, 196.

7 Paul Charles Merkley, *Christian Attitudes towards the State of Israel*, Montreal 2001, 40.

8 R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, ‘The meaning of Jerusalem to Jews, Christians and Muslims’, in Yehoshua Ben-Arieh and Moshe Davis (eds.), *Jerusalem in the mind of the Western World 1800-1848*, Westport 1997, 7-21.



Fig. 19 Aerial picture 1978 (NA Germany).

chance. Over the years I have found nothing that I could seriously object to. And yet, the ultimate intentions escaped me.<sup>9</sup> Lehmann believed that Nes Ammim was hampered by its location. It should have followed the example of Beth-El to live among the Jews.<sup>10</sup>

As early as 1972 Malachy ‘lamented the long history of Liberal Protestant interest in Israel, that had seemingly failed to produce Christian allies’.<sup>11</sup> In short, from an Israeli perspective it was questionable whether Malachy had made the right choice during the Nes Ammim crisis in 1967. Even Flusser had to admit that the most steadfast political support for the State of Israel came from Protestants who maintained the literal truth of the Bible and *not* from the revisionists like Kremers.<sup>12</sup> Typically, the Dutch embassy moved from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv in 1980. A Christian Zionist foundation was lacking in Nes Ammim, where the DRC, RCN and Rheinische Kirche were the ideological mainstays: all ‘mainstream’ churches, where literal truth of the Bible was no longer the norm, where dialogue (now also with Islam) was actively sought and where international law was vindicated as *modus operandi* between the nations.

9 Quoted in: Traude Litzka, *Nes Ammim im Spiegel Jüdisch-Israelischer Reaktionen. Dokumentation und Analyse* (Diplomarbeit Universität Wien), Wien 2001, 40.

10 Erich M. Lehmann, ‘Beth-El und Beth-Elieser, aus der Sicht eines Israeli’, in Luise Nothacker, *Dreißig Jahre Arbeit in Israel 1960-1990*, Bad Lebnzell/Maisenbach 1990, 31.

11 Daniel G. Hummel, ‘A “practical outlet” to premillennial faith’, 39.

12 David Flusser, *Tussen oorsprong en schisma*, Hilversum 1984, 267-268.

### Protestant evaluations

For the time being Nes Ammim enjoyed its heyday of growth and acclaim in the Western world. ‘The Pilon family represented the tie to the past’, Dirk Vermeulen recalls. ‘The only remaining pioneers.’<sup>13</sup> Velbert ritually repeated its respect for ‘the Dutch founders’,<sup>14</sup> though a younger generation felt slightly less deferential.<sup>15</sup> They wondered whether their wish to atone for their national sins required the same degree of humility towards a country where the Jewish death toll had been hardly less than that in Germany.<sup>16</sup>

The Swiss continued to focus their attention on Nazareth: ‘They worked for the EMMS Hospital with all their heart, and by doing so, helped ensure that it still exists today. They believed in the practical example of a Christian life.’<sup>17</sup> Hans became director, succeeded after his retirement by the Mennonite Bob Martin. Inge van der Spek worked in the radiology laboratory.<sup>18</sup> There were few grudges. The deepest regret for Hans and Madeleine Bernath was that their ideal of political neutrality had failed. Living and working among the Arabs, they had tried to extend a hand of friendship to the Jews. For some reason or other, it had not worked. In the coming years Madeleine would increasingly speak up for the Christian Palestinian point of view. Hans Bernath tried to preserve neutrality until the end, as a Christian and a representative of the Red Cross.<sup>19</sup> Hans and Ella Vetterli revisited the legendary bus just once, during a visit in 1989.<sup>20</sup> The aftermath for the Roberts is summed up by their daughter Mary Jeanne:

We felt depressed, all of us. In later years, my mother would remark that it might have been a good idea to seek the aid of a psychologist.<sup>21</sup>

Léon returned during the Yom Kippur War, to assist Regba. ‘Driven by a deep love’, according to Ella Vetterli. ‘Working in the barns to replace the men who were doing the fighting at the front.’<sup>22</sup> Modesty was typical for Nes Ammim Switzerland, says Monika Assenberg.<sup>23</sup> Jacob Bernath is another example of that attitude:

He made a point of saying that he bore us no grudge. He had continued in the role of president of Nes Ammim Switzerland. The cause was more important than personal issues.<sup>24</sup>

The madrich gave his best as always. ‘Supportive, humorous, attentive’, says daughter Diklah. ‘Even after Pilon was cast into the role of “father of Nes Am-

13 Interview Dirk Vermeulen by author, Etten-Leur 10 January 2018.

14 Friedrich Hasselhoff, ‘Lernort Nes Ammim’, in Erhard Krause en Dietrich Dehnen (red.), *Kirche im Übergang. Festschrift für Nikolaus Becker zum sechzigsten Geburtstag*, Neuwied/Frankfurt 1989, 199.

15 Interview Thomas Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

16 Interview Ellen Schoneveld-Tuyt by author, Rijswijk 17 September 2014.

17 Interview Elisabeth Roost by author, Thayngen 30 April 2014.

18 Interview Cor van der Spek, Broek op Langedijk 29 October 2015.

19 Filmed conversation with Hans and Madeleine Bernath, in *Al-Sabbar* (Bern, 2000).

20 Interview Hans and Ella Vetterli by author, Stein am Rhein 30 April 2014.

21 Interview Mary Jeanne Robert by author, Thayngen 30 April 2014.

22 Ella Vetterli, ‘Nes Ammim am Anfang - Nes Ammim heute’, in *Mitteilungsblatt Nes Ammim Schweiz*, Meilen December 1986, in AFK.

23 Interview Monika Assenberg by author, Zurich 16 March 2011.

24 S. Gessulat, report of a visit to Zurich on 18 April 1968, in bureau NAD Düsseldorf.



mim”, a story slightly mocked by us.<sup>25</sup> “There was the shadow of the Holocaust in his life, always”, adds Racheli Eshel-Bezek. ‘And yet, he retained his gusto. The village represented the most challenging of his many undertakings. He identified with it; perceived it as important for Israel; for the understanding between Jews and Christians. It was meaningful. He had to convince the government, the neighbourhood. He had to make the project run, was effectually the man in charge.<sup>26</sup> Diklah: ‘He would have loved to change certain things. The village remained so Christian, so European. Even so, he unfailingly supported this project.’ Cees Smitsman also held him in high regard:

I came to perceive Shlomo as my spiritual father. He used to take me to the workers, the specialists, the officials in former British army barracks in Tel Aviv. These lads knew their business, down to earth and without fuss. A style very much to my liking.

Jacques Presser’s *Ondergang* changed our perceptions forever. Resistance had been marginal at best. What right did we possess to lecture the Jews? Such arrogance. The Bible is not a set of fairy tales but a testament to the story of a people and its land, demonstrating a way of life. I vividly remember a man in Regba, lovingly at play with his kids. Doubling as a commando at the front. That was the kind of people I had come to meet.<sup>27</sup>

The madrich died on 6 April 1971.<sup>28</sup> Heinz Kremers wrote to Mirjam and the family:

Johan had told us about his deteriorating health, but we did not anticipate this sudden demise (...) I told Johan that Shlomo should take care of himself and spend more time at home. Johan replied that Shlomo felt invigorated by his work for Nes Ammim. I hope this was so.<sup>29</sup>

Bezek’s last letter to Berkhof, with an emotional appeal to support the people and State of Israel, went out shortly before his death.<sup>30</sup> A grave marker was prepared by Dirk Vermeulen.<sup>31</sup>

Christian Jews considered the implications for themselves. Many of them felt that if Nes Ammim proved anything, it was how little they could expect from mainstream Christianity. It was not much different for Rafiq Farah. Arab Christians also paid a price for connecting their fate to Protestantism. Their options were either to remain a vulnerable minority in the Middle East or to try for asylum in the West. Rafiq and many members of his community would end up in Canada or the United States. Edward Said spoke to one of them:

As I myself happened to be a member by birth of the small but significant minority he served – Arab Christian Protestants – I was most interested in what he had to say. Since the 1860s there has been a Protestant community comprising a few sects scattered throughout

25 Interview Diklah Geva-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

26 Interview Racheli Eshel-Bezek by author, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.

27 Interview Cees Smitsman by author, Woudrichem 18 September 2014.

28 Family Bezek to family Polet, Ayeleth Hashachar 23 December 1970, in AGP.

29 H. Kremers to M. Bezek-van Praagh, Moers 7 April 1971, in AFB.

30 Berkhof commented that he had received a message ‘d’outre tombe’. Interview Machteld de Goederen by author, Amersfoort 20 March 2015.

31 Email Dirk Vermeulen to author, Etten-Leur 26 October 2017.

the Levant, largely the result of the imperial competition for converts and constituents in the Ottoman Empire, principally in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. In time, of course these congregations – Presbyterian, Evangelical, Episcopalian, Baptist, among others – acquired their own identities and traditions, their own institutions, all of which without exception played an honourable role during the period of the Arab Renaissance.

Roughly 110 years later, however, the very same European and American synods and churches who had authorized and indeed sustained the early missionary efforts, appeared quite without warning to be reconsidering the matter. (...) The missionary authorities had made a mistake one hundred years ago, in severing Eastern Christians from the main church. Now they should go back. To my clergyman friend this was a truly drastic eventuality; were it not for the genuinely aggrieved sensibility involved, one might have considered the whole matter merely a cruel joke.<sup>32</sup>

After the death of Abdallah Khayr, a Nes Ammim delegation came over to Abu Sinan to pay its respects.<sup>33</sup> During my investigations I failed to retrieve any details about the sheikh's declining years. Obviously, the subject of the land sale is better avoided in present-day Abu Sinan. All kinds of speculations are circulating, some of them unsubstantiated. 'The sheikh was eventually hounded out of the country by his Arab and Druze neighbours, who were enraged that he had sold the land to outsiders', claimed the *Jerusalem Post* in 2001.<sup>34</sup> As it seems, Abu Sinan has not yet come to grips with the intricacies of its past.<sup>35</sup>

Initially, the Swiss, Dutch, and Americans had agreed on a basic principle: the only way Protestantism can remain relevant to the world is if it relates to others. Their willingness to reform came as a surprise for many contemporaries. As recently as 1940 it had been a common position in international Protestantism to say that Jews needed to be converted to get access to God or at least to a fully accepted position in Western society. Only twenty years later, Nes Ammim accepted the unique and autonomous status of Judaism, renounced Jewish Mission, and embarked on a programme of friendship. The Dutch programme of dialogue, developed by the DRC, was taken a step further by Germany. After the 'Purim-Streit', Heinz Kremers decided that dialogue could not co-exist with even a sanitized version of Jewish Mission. By 1967, the Dutch had come to the same conclusion. The original consensus fell apart, as this uncompromising abnegation of 'witness' was unacceptable for their Swiss and American partners. Even if refraining from proselytization, the Swiss maintained their intention to make others aware of the redeeming power of Jesus Christ. The Americans agreed, claiming the right of free speech that they also enjoyed in the United States.

Another basic difference related to the question of whether Israeli authorities were entitled to a measure of internal control over Nes Ammim, via a supervisory council (*va'adah*). While the Dutch paid lip service to the principle, the Germans agreed without restrictions and with the full intent of allowing the Israe-

32 Edward W. Said, *Culture & Imperialism*, London 1994, 45-47.

33 Email Simon Schoon to author, Amersfoort 11 September 2017.

34 <http://www.jpost.com/Editions/2001/01/18/Features>.

35 <http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News> reported on 17 November 2014 about Abu Sinan: '42 Wounded in bloody Druze-Muslim brawl'.

lis to monitor the internal proceedings in the moshav. The Dutch, influenced by Kuyper's doctrine of sphere of sovereignty, went along for tactical reasons. The Swiss and Americans, driven by free church principles and in favour of a strict separation of Church and State, only accepted supervision after realizing that failure to do so would mean the end of the moshav. However, they never felt at ease with this concession. There was another issue that worried them even more: potential discrimination. The Swiss professed neutrality. Hans Bernath felt it his Christian duty to assist anyone who was in need, irrespective of creed or ethical background. Precisely *because* he was working among the Arabs and Druzes, he felt it his duty to do the same among the Jews. His work for the moshav was further facilitated by the fact that the land was not allotted from confiscated Arab land (as originally envisaged by the DRC) but obtained by sale. Bernath went to great lengths to make it work. What he had not anticipated was that Arabs and Germans could not live in the moshav 'for the time being', and Christian Jews indefinitely.

The policy of exclusion is one of the most contentious issues in Nes Ammim's history. While the German case can be understood against the background of the Second World War, it is hard to see why a Christian community should consider leaving out its Arab and Jewish members. Why did that happen? As to the Arabs, there was a feeling – even in the fifties among many European migrants to South Africa, America and Australia – that settlers from the Western world were entitled to a natural right to supplant native populations as the dominant factor in the land. The same principle applied to Palestine. Among the founders of Nes Ammim, only Hans Bernath questioned this logic, but due to his commitment to maintaining neutrality, he did not press the matter. As to finding a solution for the Christian Jews, still not allowed in the moshav, the initial idea had been to settle them in a moshav in Galilee. After further consideration, Kremers and Pilon reached the conclusion that their position, dangling between Church and Israel, was unsolvable. For the MCC, however, their exclusion from Nes Ammim was simply a discrimination on grounds of ethnic background.

What did the Jews think of it? It has been suggested by the Dutch that restrictive measures were general Israeli policy. This assumption is not borne out by the facts. Beth-El operated a few miles from Nes Ammim, with full consent of local Jewish authorities and supported by rabbi Aharon Keller. Germans, Arabs and Jewish Christians were all there, as agreed in discreet consultations with Israeli authorities, neighbours and the rabbinate. Nes Ammim was a different case. Eshkol had been horrified to find that a main sponsor (RCN) was engaged in Jewish Mission as late as 1960. That no one in Nes Ammim had bothered to inform him was taken as a serious breach of trust, aggravated by the fact that Druze land was acquired without proper prior consultation with the kibbutzim. After the following uproar, Israeli authorities still allowed the project a sporting chance, but only after giving extra assurances to the Orthodox. That the proceedings were perceived as unusual is shown by the fact that no direct order was ever published in written form.

## ‘Help and learn in Israel’

Judith Rentschler remarks on the differences between Nes Ammim and Beth-El, Protestant sister institutions just a few kilometres away from each other:

Our aim is to offer practical assistance to victims of the Holocaust, in awareness of our historical guilt. The only way to do that is in close and daily cooperation with the Jews. We could not understand why Nes Ammim chose to acquire Druze land and to settle at a distance from the neighbours. Another difference is that we keep a low profile. The less publicity, the better.

Finally, interreligious dialogue is not part of our program. Christian Jews would not be able to participate, as the history of Nes Ammim shows. In Beth-El we do not encounter that difficulty. German and Messianic Jews were committed from the start, by permission of the Jewish community. Not as missionaries, but as committed Christians.<sup>36</sup>

Johan Pilon died on 14 July 1975, at only 57 years of age. A burial plot was assigned to him and his family on a slope beneath the hill. ‘His wife carried on his legacy for the next 30 years’, notes Leach. ‘And yet Nes Ammim remained a transient community.’<sup>37</sup> Atalwin Pilon was three when Johan died. He learnt his grandfather’s story from Stijn. She died in 2002 and was buried at her husband’s side. Visiting their graves in 2012 was a moving experience for Atalwin. ‘Secretly I am hoping that I will have some sort of mystical experience that will heal my body and my soul and will wipe all the family karma away.’<sup>38</sup>

Orie Miller passed away in 1977, knowing that Nes Ammim was widely considered as a failure by his fellow Mennonites.<sup>39</sup> Heinz Kremers remained the driving theological force of the project until his demise in 1989.<sup>40</sup> Jacob Bernath died in 1983, survived by his brother Hans Bernath, who lived on for another seventeen years. Mirjam Bezek died in 2015, at the advanced age of 97. ‘The last remaining of the founding fathers and mothers’, said Machteld de Goederen, who was to pass away herself one year later.<sup>41</sup>

After 2000 Nes Ammim followed the example of many Israeli kibbutzim, opting for some sort of privatisation. With progressive wage scales, a professional staff, less volunteers, and less ideology. The Messianic Jews, for whom the project had been devised in the first place, realized a moshav of their own in 1971: Yad Hashmona<sup>42</sup>, built with Finnish aid in the hills surrounding Jerusalem. Clärli Reëmi-Vos and her husband supervised a guesthouse for Christian volunteers in Tiberias.<sup>43</sup> Not far from present-day Nes Ammim, there are two small Messianic communities: Or HaGalil near Nahariya and Oz Lamo in kibbutz Evron.<sup>44</sup>

36 Interview Judith Rentschler by author, Shavei Zion (Beth-El) 13 May 2018.

37 David Leach, *Chasing Utopia. The future of the kibbutz in a divided Israel*, Toronto 2016, 183.

38 Atalwin Pilon. ‘Going back to my roots’, [www.elephantjournal.com/2012/01](http://www.elephantjournal.com/2012/01).

39 John E. Sharp, *My calling to fulfill. The Orie O. Miller story*, Harrisonburg (Virginia)/Kitchener (Ontario) 2015, 320.

40 Christian Bartsch (ed.), *Schalom ist mehr als nur ein Wort. Verantwortung und Versöhnung. Nes Ammim – Zeichen für die Völker*, Düsseldorf 1998, 162.

41 Machteld de Goederen to author, Amersfoort 12 March 2015.

42 [www.christianvolunteering.org/org/yad-hashmona](http://www.christianvolunteering.org/org/yad-hashmona).

43 Clärli Reëmi-Vos to family Polet, Tiberias 26 May 1971, in: AGP.

44 Information in *Immanuël. Voorlichtingsblad van de Stichting Steun Messiasbelijdende Joden* xv nr. 2 (2014).



# Abbreviations

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| ADB    | Algemeen Diakonaal Bureau van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland   |
| AG     | Aktien-Gesellschaft  |
| AJP    | Archive Johan Pilon (Haarlem)  |
| ANAG   | Archive Nes Ammim, Galilee   |
| ANAN   | Archive Nes Ammim, Nederland (Amersfoort)  |
| ARP    | Anti-revolutionary Party   |
| CRC    | Christian Reformed Churches (Netherlands)  |
| CMA    | Christian and Missionary Alliance  |
| CMS    | Church Missionary Society  |
| GDR    | German Democratic Republic   |
| DM     | Deutsche Mark  |
| DRC    | Dutch Reformed Church  |
| EEC    | European Economic Community  |
| EKD    | Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland   |
| EKR    | Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland   |
| EMC    | Eastern Mennonite College  |
| EMM    | Eastern Mennonite Missions   |
| EMMS   | Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society   |
| ETH    | Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule   |
| EV     | Eingetragener Verein   |
| FDP    | Freie Demokratische Partei   |
| FRG    | Federal Republic of Germany  |
| GS     | General Synod  |
| HCO    | Historisch Centrum Overijssel  |
| HDC VU | Historisch Documentatiecentrum voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands Protestantisme na 1800, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. |
| HCC    | Hebrew Christian Church  |
| HES    | Hebrew Evangelisation Society  |
| HTS    | Hogere Technische School   |
| HUA    | Het Utrechts Archief   |
| ICCAJ  | International Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews  |
| ICCI   | Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel  |
| ICCJ   | International Council of Christians and Jews   |
| ICI    | Interchurch Contact Israel   |
| IDF    | Israel Defense Forces  |
| IHCA   | International Hebrew Christian Association   |
| IL     | Israeli Lira   |
| IVF    | Inter-Varsity Fellowship   |
| JC     | Joint Committee  |
| JNF    | Jewish National Fund   |
| KB     | Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague   |

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| KEI GKN | Deputaatschap Kerk en Israël van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland    |
| KKL     | Keren Kayemet Le'Yisrael   |
| LDC     | Landelijk Dienstencentrum van de Protestantse Kerk in Nederland, Utrecht |
| MCC     | Mennonite Central Committee  |
| MECC    | Middle East Council of Churches  |
| NAD     | Nes Ammim Deutschland  |
| NAE     | National Association of Evangelicals                                     |
| NAN     | Nes Ammim Netherlands  |
| NATO    | North Atlantic Treaty Organization                                       |
| NIOD    | Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie                            |
| NIW     | Nieuw Israëlisch Weekblad  |
| NRP     | National Religious Party   |
| NSDAP   | National-Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei                                   |
| OXFAM   | Oxford Committee for Famine Relief                                       |
| PLO     | Palestine Liberation Organization  |
| PThU    | Protestant Theological University  |
| RAF     | Royal Air Force  |
| RCN     | Reformed Churches in the Netherlands                                     |
| SAI     | Société des Amis d'Israel  |
| SEI     | Schweizerische Evangeliumsdienst in Israel                               |
| SEJ     | Schweizerische Evangelische Judenmission                                 |
| SPD     | Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands                                  |
| SSR     | Societas Studiosorum Reformatorum  |
| UCCI    | United Council of Christian Churches in Israel                           |
| UNWRA   | United Nations Works and Relief Agency                                   |
| VBG     | Vereinigde Bibelgruppen  |
| VEG     | Vrije Evangelische Gemeenten in Nederland                                |
| WCC     | World Council of Churches  |
| WDR     | West-Deutsche Rundfunk   |
| YMCA    | Young Men's Christian Association  |

# Archives and libraries

*Archive family Bezek, Tel Aviv (AFB)*

- Correspondence 1967-1975.

*Archive Henriëtte Boas, Amsterdam (AHB)*

- Correspondence 1962-1965.

*Archive Horst Dahlhaus, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin)*

- Documentation Nes Ammim-Germany

*Archive Jelle Feitsma, Amsterdam*

- Files S. Feitsma relating to Nes Ammim, 1960-1980.

*Archive Machteld de Goederen, Amersfoort*

- Max Laron, 'Herdenking van het overlijden van Johan Pilon', Regba 1975.

*Archive Wim van der Hout and Stien van der Hout-Slagmolen, Harderwijk (AHS)*

- Correspondence 1965-1980.

*Archive family Koller, Zurich (AFK)*

- Correspondence 1960-1970.
- *Nes Ammim Mitteilung* 1963.

*Archive Nes Ammim Galilee, Israel (ANAG)*

- Correspondence 1962-1970.
- Scrapbook.

*Archive Nes Ammim Netherlands, Amersfoort (ANAN)*

- Correspondence 1956-1967.

*Archive Johan Pilon, Haarlem (AJP)*

- Correspondence 1945-1975.

Press cuttings:

- *Evening News Edinburgh* 1953.
- *'s-Gravenhaagse Kerkbode* 1958.
- *The Hebrew Christian* 1963.
- *Israel My Glory* 1959-1961.
- *The Scotsman* 1953.
- *Unterwegs* 1952.
- *La vie Protestante* 1956.
- *Der Zeuge. Organ der Internationalen Judenchristlichen Allianz* 1968.



*Archive Gerrit Polet, Paterswolde (AGP)*

- Correspondence 1967-1971.

*Archive Simon Schoon, Amersfoort (ASS)*

- Files Erich Lehmann (Nahariya) regarding Nes Ammim.
- Correspondence 1975 – present.

*Archive Ria Snoek, Leiderdorp*

- Archive Johan Snoek (*see also*: NIOD).

*Archief Cor van der Spek, Broek op Langedijk*

- Correspondence 1962 – present.

*Archief Ies Walpot, Deventer*

- Documents relating to visit to Israel 1957-1958.
- *Leeuwarder Courant* 1958 (cuttings).

*Archiv Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland, Düsseldorf*

- Nachlass Heinz Kremers.

*Beit Lieberman, Nahariya*

- Documentation relating to the history of Nahariya.

*Beit Pilon, Nes Ammim (Galilee)*

- Personal documents Johan Pilon.

*Beth-El, Shavei Zion*

- Documentation Shavei Zion, Beth-El and Zedakah Foundation.

*Bodleian Libraries, Oxford (BA)*

- Oxfam Archives.

*Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem (CZA)*

- Archive Henricus Jacobus Kann.

*Evangelisches Zentralarchiv in Berlin (EZA)*

- Correspondence relating to Nes Ammim

*Het Utrechts Archief, Utrecht (HUA)*

- Archive Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (CRC).
- Archive deputies Church and Israel of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (CI RCN).

*Historisch Centrum Overijssel, Zwolle (HCO)*

- Civil records 1860-1940.

*Historisch Documentatiecentrum voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands protestantisme na 1800, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (HDC VU)*

- Archive F.W. Grosheide.
- Archive H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer.
- Archive Nes Ammim-Netherlands (HDC VU NAN).
- Collection K.H. Kroon.
- *New Outlook. Middle East Monthly* (in collection K.H. Kroon).

*Israel State Archives, Jerusalem*

- Knesset Archives.

*Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam*

- H.A. Cidor, 'Immigratie en discriminatie', in *Tijdschrift voor maatschappelijk werk* (Israëlnummer) 20 December 1957, 345.

*Koninklijke Bibliotheek (Royal Library), 's-Gravenhage (KB)*. Digitalized newspapers and journals in the KB have been accessed in digitalized form, via: [www.kb.nl/bronnen-zoekwijzer](http://www.kb.nl/bronnen-zoekwijzer) and [www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten](http://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten).

- *Nederlands Israëlitisch Weekblad (NIW)*.
- *Nieuwe Haagse Courant*.
- *Het Parool*.
- *De Telegraaf*.
- *Trouw*.

*Landelijk Dienstencentrum van de Protestantse Kerk in Nederland, Utrecht (LDC)*

- Archive Council for Church and Israel (Kerk en Israel) of the Dutch Reformed Church (LDC KEI).

*National Archives, Kew (London)*

- Foreign Office.

*National Library of Israel, Givat Ram (Jerusalem)*

- Eran Laor cartographic collection.

*Nes Ammim Deutschland, Düsseldorf*

- *Nes Ammim Israel Gespräche 1* (in memory of Heinz Kremers), Bonn 1992.
- Correspondence 1962.
- *Das Abendrot* (Zwitzerland).
- *Mitteilungen Nes Ammim*.
- *Mitteilungsblatt Nes Ammim Schweiz*.
- *Nes Ammim International*.
- *Nes Ammim. Zeichen für die Völker*.

*Nes Ammim, Galilea (see also: Archief Nes Ammim Galilea (ANAG))*

- Library Johan and Stijn Pilon, in Beit Pilon.

*Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, Amsterdam (NIOD)*

- Archive J.M. Snoek.

*Palestine Exploration Fund, London*

- E. Mills (red.), *Census of Palestine 1931. Population of villages, towns and administrative areas. Government of Palestine*, Jerusalem 1932.
- *Journal of Palestine Studies*.
- *Palestine Quarterly*.
- Survey of Western Palestine 1882-1888.
- *The survey of Western Palestine. Arabic and English name lists collected during the survey of lieutenants Conder and Kitchener, transliterated and explained by E.H. Palmer MA*, London 1881.

*Peace Palace Library, The Hague*

- Documentation relating to International Law, Israel and Palestine.

*Protestant Theological University, Amsterdam (PThU)*

- *Acts of General Synod RCN.*
- Collection J.F.L. Bastiaanse.

*Periodicals*

- *Bulletin Judaica et Hebraica.*
- *Centraal Weekblad.*
- *Gereformeerd Weekblad.*
- *Hervormd Nederland.*
- *International Review of Mission.*
- *Jeschurun. Monatschrift für Lehre und Leben im Judentum.*
- *Jong Gereformeerd.*
- *Kerk en Israël.*
- *Kerk en Israël Onderweg.*
- *Kerk en Wereld.*
- *Nederlandse Gedachten.*
- *Op de Uitkijk.*
- *Ophef.*
- *Ter Herkenning.*
- *De Verkondiging van het evangelie onder Israël.*
- *In de Waagschaal.*
- *Wending.*
- *Zendingsblad van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland voor de Zending onder de Joden.*

*Theological University Apeldoorn (Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands)*

- *Yearbook CRC.*
- *Uw Koninkrijk Kome. Maandblad uitgegeven door de zendingsdeputaten der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland.*
- *Vrede over Israël. Tweemaandelijks orgaan, uitgegeven door deputaten van de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland voor de Evangelie-verkondiging onder Israël.*
- *Missionary Calendars CRC.*

*Universitätsarchiv Münster (UAM)*

- Nachlass K.H. Rengstorf

*Utrecht University, special collections*

- Archive Th.C. Vriezen.

*Zürcher Lehrhaus. Judentum Christentum Islam, Zurich*

- *L'Ami d'Israël.*
- *Der Freund Israels.*
- *Judaica. Beiträge zum Verständnis des jüdischen Schicksals in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart.*
- *Schweitzer Evangeliumsdienst in Israel.*

## Printed sources

- Census of Palestine, 1931. Population of villages, towns and administrative areas. Government of Palestine* (ed. E. Mills), Jerusalem 1932.
- 'The Christian-Jewish dialogue: an account by the World Council of Churches', in *Jewish-Christian Dialogue* (International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations and the World Council of Churches' Sub-unit on Dialogue with the People of Living Faiths and Ideologies), Geneva 1975, 7-15.
- A Christian Settlement in Israel*, Detroit (Michigan) 1960.
- Declaration issued by the Galilee Peace Conference, May 1-2, 2009, organised by the House of Hope in Shefa Amr and The Center of Meaning and Dialogue in Nes Ammim*, Nes Ammim 2009.
- Fundamenten en Perspectieven van Belijden*. Aangeboden door de Generale Synode van de Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk als een proeve van hernieuwd reformatorisch belijden, 's-Gravenhage 1949.
- Gegevens betreffende de Theologische Universiteit Kampen 1854-1994* (edited by J. van Gelderen and F. Rozemond), Kampen 1994.
- To God's Chosen Remnant in Israel*, Newark (New Jersey), 1959.
- Harmworth's New Atlas of the World*, London 1920, 224 and 225 (ancient and modern Palestine).
- In memoriam Dr. J. Schoneveld*, Protestant Theological Faculty Brussels 1975.
- Ingelijfd in Israël en ten dienste van Israël. Rapport van de bezinning binnen het deputaatschap voor de Evangelieverkondiging onder Israël der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland vanaf 1931 tot 1991* (edited by T. Brienens), Amersfoort 1992.
- The International Hebrew Christian Alliance. What it is and what it does*, London 1953.
- Israël en de Kerk. Een studie, in opdracht van de Generale Synode der Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk, samengesteld door de Raad voor de verhouding van Kerk en Israël*, 's-Gravenhage 1959.
- Israel und die Kirche. Eine Studie, im Auftrag der Generalsynode der Niederländischen Reformierten Kirche zusammengestellt von dem Rat für das Verhältnis zwischen Kirche und Israel*, Zurich 1961.
- Israël. Volk, land en staat. Handreiking voor theologische bezinning*. Edited by the DRC General Synod, The Hague 1970.
- Das Israel Buch, herausgegeben von der Informationsabteilung der israelischen Mission, Köln, im Auftrage des israelischen Außenministeriums*, Düsseldorf 1960/1961.
- Die Israel-Dokumente der deutschen Kirchen seit 1945. Ergebnisse und offene Fragen* (ed. Ralf Hoburg), Basel 1996.
- Het Israëliisch-Palestijns-Arabisch conflict. Bijdrage tot de meningsvorming in de Protestantse Kerk in Nederland (PKN)*, Utrecht 2008.
- Israël-Reise des Institutum Judaicum der Universität Tübingen 1961*, Tübingen 1961.
- Jewish-Christian Dialogue* (published by the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations and the World Council of Churches' sub-unit on Dialogue with the People of Living Faiths and Ideologies), Geneva 1975.
- Kerkorde der Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk*, The Hague 1951 and 1956.
- Nes Amim, Bannière des Peuples. Un village chrétien en Israël*, Lausanne/Geneva 1962.
- Nes Ammim. Banier der Natiën*, Rotterdam February 1965.
- Nes Ammim. Banner of the Nations*, Akron (Pennsylvania) 1965.
- Nes Ammim. A bridge between Jews and Christians*, Akron (Pennsylvania) 1964.
- Nes Ammim. Een christelijke nederzetting in Israël*, Brakel 1961.
- Nes Ammim. Christen nederzetting in Israël*, Rotterdam June 1967.
- Nes Ammim. Christliche Siedlung in Israel*, Schaffhausen 1962.

- Nes Ammim. Christliche Siedlung in Israel*, Gottmadingen 1963.  
*Nès Ammim. Dieu rebâtira la Galilée!*, Corcelles/Neuchâtel 1964.  
*Nes Ammim of Galilee, 'Banner of the Nation'. A challenge – an opportunity*, Akron (Pennsylvania) 1965.  
*Nes Ammim. International Christian Settlement in Israel*, Akron (Pennsylvania) 1964.  
*Nes Ammim. Zeichen für die Völker*, Velbert 1965.  
*Nes Ammim nu. Ontmoeting en gesprek. Tekenen van hoop*, Apeldoorn 2008.  
*The Survey of Western Palestine 1882-1888. Memoirs of the topography, orthography, hydrography and archaeology* vol. 1 (Galilee). C.R. Conder and H.H. Kitchener, Palestine Exploration Fund, London 1998 (reprint).  
*The Theology of the Churches and the Jewish People. Statements by the World Council of Churches and its member churches*, Geneva 1988.  
*Westermann Großer Atlas zur Weltgeschichte*, Braunschweig 1976.  
*Zur Erneuerung des Verhältnisses von Christen und Juden. Handreichung für Mitglieder der Landessynode, der Kreissynoden und der Presbyterien in der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland*, Düsseldorf 1980.

## Film

*Al-Sabbar*. A documentary film by Patrick Bürge, featuring Zuhaira Sabbagh, Hans and Madeleine Bernath and Palestinian singer Rim Banna. Produced with support from Bundesamt für Kultur des eidgenössischen Departementes des Innern, Bern 2000.

## Internet

(retrieved between 2009 and 2018)

- 'Beth-El. Deutsche Christen in Zichron Ja'akov': [www.goethe.de/ins/il](http://www.goethe.de/ins/il).  
*Bible Places, or the topography of the Holy Land*. Society for promoting Christian knowledge, London/New York 1897: <http://babel.hathitrust.org>.  
 'Die Brüder Jakob und Hans Bernath': [www.nesammim.org/de](http://www.nesammim.org/de).  
 'The Chosen Highway': [http://bahai-library.com/blomfield\\_chosen\\_highway](http://bahai-library.com/blomfield_chosen_highway).  
 Genealogy Van Dalen: [www.mesmancom.nl/genealogie/parenteel\\_Van\\_der\\_Velden](http://www.mesmancom.nl/genealogie/parenteel_Van_der_Velden).  
 Ghurabi, Umar al, 'Al-Sumayriyya tour': <http://zochrot.org/en/content/al-sumayriyya>.  
 Gottschalk, Günter, 'Drei Fragen waren maßgebend für mein Leben': <http://www.kinder-noah.de>.  
 Information regarding Immanuel Ben-Dor: [www.sbl-site.org](http://www.sbl-site.org).  
 Information regarding Beth-El in Nahariya and Shavei Zion: <http://www.zedekah.de>.  
 Information regarding the Bonda firm: [www.bonda.nl](http://www.bonda.nl).  
 Information regarding the Farah family in Shefaram (Shefa Amr): [www.st-andrew-anglican.ca](http://www.st-andrew-anglican.ca).  
 Information regarding the Freie Evangelische Gemeinde Thayngen: [www.feg-thayngen.ch](http://www.feg-thayngen.ch).  
 Information regarding Chaika Grossman: <http://www.haika.org.il/poland-eng.html>.  
 Information regarding Kuwaykat and al-Sumayriyya: [www.palestineremembered.com/Acre](http://www.palestineremembered.com/Acre).  
 Information regarding the writer Nadjwa Qa'wār (Kawar): <http://arabwomenwriters.com>.  
 Information regarding evacuated villages in 1948: <http://zochrot.org>.  
 Information regarding the Mennonite Pax-program: <http://paxmcc.com>.  
 Information regarding Stichting Rotterdam: [www.herbergdronten.nl](http://www.herbergdronten.nl).  
 Interview Inas Mahmoud: [www.unrwa.org/etemplate](http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate).

- ‘Jacob Tsur’: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org>.
- Kjær-Hansen, Kai, ‘Sitt Elsie of Tiberias: a Bible-Woman Evangelist in the Land’: <http://www.lcje.net>.
- Kok, A. and Dijk, A.J. van, ‘Het illuster oratorisch dispuut S.E.S.A.M. in oorlogstijd’: [www.iodesesam.nl](http://www.iodesesam.nl).
- Lam, Joke, ‘Indië en de Nederlanden’, 136: <http://laventana.nl/uploads>.
- Lortet, Louis, *La Syrie d’aujourd’hui. Voyage dans la Phénicie, le Liban et la Judée 1875-1880*, Paris 1884: <http://www.mom.fr/digimom>.
- Moore, Mordecai, ‘Rebecca Schweitzer’: <http://jwa.org/encyclopedia> (Jewish Women’s Archive).
- ‘Nes Ammim’: <http://www.israelfortourists.com> (retrieved 10 January 2016).
- Palestine map by Ch.W.M. te Velde: <http://hdl.huntington.org/cdm/ref/collection>.
- Pilon, Atalwin, ‘Basic Goodness’: <http://basicgoodness.com/2012/going-back-to-my-roots>.
- Pilon, David Dirk, ‘Genealogie-Pilon’: <http://www.genealogieonline.nl/stamboom-pilon>.
- Rabbani, Ahang, ‘Abdu’l Bahá in Abu Sinan: September 1914 – May 1915’: [http://bahai-library.com/rabbani\\_abdubaha-abusinan](http://bahai-library.com/rabbani_abdubaha-abusinan).
- ‘Remembering al-Sumayriyya. Excerpts from the letter of a Palestinian refugee to a Jewish Student’: <http://zochrot.org/en/content/remembering-al-sumayriyya>.
- Sa’di, Ahmad H., ‘The role of social sorting’, Ben Gurion University of the Negev 2011: [www.sscqueens.org](http://www.sscqueens.org).
- ‘Tiberias tour report 26 November 2011’: <http://zochrot.org/en/content/tiberias>.

## Interviews

- M. Assenberg, Zurich 16 March 2011.
- J. Baars, Amsterdam 9 April 2015.
- W. Böcker, Düsseldorf-Kalkum 27 July 2011.
- J.P. Boendermaker, Hilversum 12 March 2015.
- J.H. Boertien, Leiden 30 March 2016.
- T. Brien, Hoogeveen 20 June 2017.
- G.H. Cohen Stuart and M. Cohen Stuart-Jumelet, Rhooen 11 March 2009 and 8 January 2014.
- H. Dahlhaus, Niederpleis (Sankt Augustin), 25 January 2013.
- M.W. Eberlé-Gotlib, Rotterdam 10 November 2008.
- R. Eshel-Bezek, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.
- R. Farah, Toronto 5 and 8 January 2013 (via e-mail).
- J. Feitsma, Amsterdam 8 July 2016.
- J. Fishman, Jerusalem 2 August 2013 (via email).
- J. van Gelderen, Kampen 21 March 2017.
- D. Geva-Bezek, Tel Aviv 14 May 2018.
- M. de Goederen, Amersfoort 7 February, 1 September and 20 November 2013, 20 March and 30 October 2015.
- Ch. Gysel, Wilchingen and Stein am Rhein, 4 May 2015; 11 May 2015 (email).
- W. van der Hout and S. van der Hout-Slagmolen, Harderwijk 1 April 2009 and 7 January 2014.
- C. Isings, Soest 13 August 2014.
- E. Jabbour, Shefaram (Shefa Amr) 5 January 2008 and 21 March 2013 (email).
- A. Keuning-Rooks, Buitenpost 2 April 2013.
- T. Kramer-Feitsma, Wollega 23 June 2016 (telephone).
- A. Kremers and R. Kremers-Kamphausen, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

- Th. Kremers, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014, Duisburg 26 March 2015 (email), Wuppertal 22 November 2018.
- K. Kriener, Düsseldorf 4 February 2016.
- R. Mackay, Edinburgh 12 January 2015.
- M. Martens, Amsterdam 9 February 2015.
- C. Minnaar, Oostvoorne 28 November 2012 (telephone).
- H.A. Mubarki, Abu Sinan 30 April 2012.
- Y. Mubarki, Nes Ammim 4 January 2008 and 8 January 2011, Abu Sinan 30 April 2012 and Nes Ammim 10 May 2013 and 13 May 2018.
- A. Pilon, A.C. Pilon, C. Pilon and R. Pilon, Haarlem 9 March 2012, 11 December 2012 and 16 April 2013; Bilthoven 12 October 2016; Haarlem 15 May 2020 (via Zoom).
- A. Pilon-van Ingen, Soest 30 March 2015.
- L.J. Pilon and A. Owliaee, Hengelo (Twente) 6 March 2015.
- G. Polet, Paterswolde 15 March 2013 and 11 July 2017.
- J. Rentschler, Shavei Zion 13 May 2018.
- G. Ridderbos, Amsterdam 22 June 2016.
- J. Ridderbos Niczn., Assen 14 June 2015 (email).
- M.J. Robert, Thayngen 30 April 2014.
- T. Ronen-Laron, Lohamei HaGettaot 6 January 2008 and 9 January 2011, Regba 10 May 2013.
- P. Roost and E. Roost-Hoffmann, Thayngen 30 April 2014.
- J. Schoneveld and E. Schoneveld-Tuyt, Rijswijk 13 March 2009.
- E. Schoneveld-Tuyt, Rijswijk 17 September 2014.
- S. Schoon, Amersfoort 5 December 2013.
- D.J. van der Sluis, Westzaan 8 April 2009.
- C. Smitsman, Woudrichem 18 September 2014.
- J.D. Snel, Amsterdam 17 April 2015 (via email).
- H. Snoek, Amsterdam 23 October 2014.
- J.M. Snoek, Rotterdam January 1995, 22 July 2008 and 27 January 2012.
- R. Snoek, Leiderdorp 10 October 2013 (telephone).
- C. van der Spek, Broek op Langedijk 19 April 2013, 18 February 2014 and 20 October 2015.
- J.T. van Stegeren, Heemstede 19 January 2016.
- H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer, Heemstede 13 August 2008.
- G. Theissen, Tolbert 23 April 2017; Heidelberg 25 May 2017 (email).
- A. van Tol, Nieuw-Vennep 27 March 2013.
- L. Ueter, Düsseldorf 30 April 2015 and 4 February 2016.
- D. Vermeulen, Etten-Leur, 10 January 2018.
- H. Vetterli and E. Vetterli-Habicht, Stein am Rhein, 29 April 2014 and 4 May 2015.
- I. Visser-Feitsma, Veenendaal 25 June 2016 (telephone).
- I. Walpot, Nes Ammim 4 January 2008 and Deventer 13 January 2014.
- M. Wichelhaus, Düsseldorf 4 February 2016.
- R. Wichelhaus, Düsseldorf 27 September 2013.
- G.A. Wiggers and J.G. Bollen-Wiggers, Barlo (Aalten) 4 December 2015.

## Bibliography

- Aalders, Maarten, 'Het heilige land of het land van belofte. Een gereformeerd en een hervormd reisverslag vergeleken', in Frits Broeyer and Gert van Klinken (eds.), *Reizen naar het Heilige Land. Protestantse impressies 1840-1960*, Zoetermeer 2008, 96-107.
- Abu-Sitta, Salman H. (ed.), *Atlas of Palestine 1917-1966*, Palestine Land Society, London 2010.
- Abu-Sitta, Salman H. (ed.), *Atlas of Palestine 1948*, Palestine Land Society, London 2004.
- Al-e Ahmad, Jalal, *The Israeli Republic. An Iranian revolutionary's journey to the Jewish State*, Brooklyn/New York 2017.
- Antonius, George, *The Arab awakening. The story of the Arab national movement*, London 1945.
- Aring, Paul Gerhard, *Christliche Judenmission. Ihre Geschichte und Problematik dargestellt und untersucht am Beispiel des evangelischen Rheinlandes*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1980.
- Asch, Schalom, 'Die Galiläer', in *Israël. Volk und Land. Jüdische Anthologie, herausgegeben vom Hechalutz, Deutscher Landesverband*, Berlin 1935, 18-19.
- Baedecker, Karl, *Palestine et Syrie. Manuel du voyageur*, Leipzig/Paris 1912.
- Baldensperger, Philip J., *The Immovable East. Studies of the people and customs of Palestine*, London 1913.
- Barth, Fritz, *Templer und andere Erweckungsbewegungen im nördlichen Schwarzwald*, Straubenhardt 2009.
- Barth, Karl, *Kirchliche Dogmatik II (Die Lehre Gottes)*, Zurich 1946 and IV/3 (Die Lehre von der Versöhnung), Zurich 1959.
- Bartlett, S.C., *From Egypt to Palestine, through Sinai, the Wilderness and the South Country. Observations of a journey made with special reference to the history of the Israelites*, New York 1879.
- Bartsch, Christian (ed.), *Schalom ist mehr als nur ein Wort. Verantwortung und Versöhnung. Nes Ammim – Zeichen für die Völker*, Düsseldorf 1998.
- Bastiaanse, J.F.L., *De Jodenending en de eerste decennia van de Hervormde Raad voor Kerk en Israël*, Zoetermeer 1995.
- Baratz, Joseph, *A village by the Jordan: the story of Degania*, Tel Aviv 1956.
- Bastiaanse, J.F.L., 'Israel Paulus Tabaksblatt', in *Biografisch Lexicon voor de Geschiedenis van het Nederlandse Protestantisme V*, Kampen 2001, 498-499.
- Bayansi, Mahmood, 'Land Reform and the Israeli Arabs', in *New Outlook. Middle East Monthly* February 1961, 18-19.
- Becker, Horst J., *Polyglott Reiseführer Jerusalem (Altstadt)*, Köln/München 1967.
- Becker, Nikolaus, 'Auf dem Wege zu einem neuen Verhältnis von Christen und Juden. Die Geschichte Nes Ammim und des deutschen Nes Ammim-vereins', in Nikolaus Becker and Gerda E.H. Koch, *Bewahren und Erneuern. Die christliche Siedlung Nes Ammim in Israel*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1993, 23-99.
- Becker, Nikolaus and Koch, Gerda E.H. (eds.), *Bewahren und Erneuern. Die Siedlung Nes Ammim in Israel* (introduced by Peter Beier), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1993.
- Becking, Bob, 'Sympathie, betrokkenheid en kritiek. Over de reizen van Th.C. Vriezen naar de Oriënt', in Frits G.M. Broeyer en Gert van Klinken (red.), *Reizen naar het Heilige Land. Protestantse impressies 1840-1960* (Jaarboek voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands protestantisme na 1800 XVI), Zoetermeer 2008, 179-192.
- Beek, M.A., *Israël. Land, volk, cultuur*, Baarn 1962.
- Ben-Chorin, Schalom, *Im jüdisch-christlichen Gespräch*, Berlin 1962.
- Ben-Chorin, Schalom, *Mein Glaube – mein Schicksal. Jüdische Erfahrungen mitgeteilt im Gespräch mit Karl-Heinz Fleckenstein*, Freiburg im Breisgau 1984.
- Benhayim, Menahem, 'The Messianic Movement in Israel', in Kai Kjær-Hansen (ed.), *Missions in Israel 1948-1998* (UCCI), Jerusalem 1998, 6.



- Bensoussan, Georges, *Catholiques et Protestants Français après la Shoah* (Revue d'Histoire de la Shoah 192), Paris 2010.
- Berg, P.R. van den, *Pilon. Een oud hugenotengeslacht*, Delfzijl 1997.
- Bergwerff, P. and Vries, Tj.S. de, *Vrede door recht. In gesprek met ds. D.K. Wielenga JDzn.*, Groningen 1980.
- Berkelaar, Wim, 'Deze schuld delgen door het goede voor Jeruzalem te zoeken. J.A. Nederbragt tussen antisemitisme en filosemitisme', in F.G.M. Broeyer and G.J. van Klinken (eds.), *Reizen naar het Heilige Land. Protestantse impressies 1840-1960*, Zoetermeer 2008, 162-178.
- Bethge, Eberhard, 'Heinz Kremers, der Türenöffner', in *Nes Ammim Israel Gespräche 1* (Aus Liebe zu Israel. Gedenken an Heinz Kremers), Bonn 1992.
- Bird, Kai, *Crossing Mandelbaum Gate. Coming of age between Arabs and Israelis 1956-1978*, New York 2010.
- Blackstone, Williams Eugene, *Jesus is coming*, reprint door Resurrected Books, USA 2014.
- Boas, Henriëtte, 'Mirjam de Leeuw-Gerzon (1891-1977). Zioniste van de daad', in F. Püttmann, H. Blok, F.J. Hoogewoud and J. Moëd (eds.), *Markante Nederlandse zionisten*, Amsterdam 1996, 80-92.
- Boertien, Maas, *Der Mischnatraktat Nazir*, dissertation Amsterdam 1964.
- Bosma, Hendriekje and Ad Tervoort, *Kopstukken van de VU 1880-2010*, Amsterdam 2010.
- Bosshard, Walter, *Gefahrdenheit der Welt* (translated as *Conflict en intrige in het Nabije Oosten*), Amsterdam 1955.
- Bouman, C.A., *De breuk tusschen Oost en West. Over de problemen van het christelijke Oosten en de kerkelijke hereeniging*, Warmond 1941.
- Bourassé, J.J., *La Terre Sainte. Voyage dans l'Arabie Pétrée, la Judée, la Samarie, la Galilée et la Syrie*, Tours 1871.
- Bourmaud, Philippe, 'Public space and private spheres: the foundation of 'St Luke's Hospital of Nablus by the CMS (1891-1901)', in Heleen Murre-van den Berg, *New faith in ancient lands. Western missions in the Middle East in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries*, Leiden/Boston 2006, 133-150.
- Brocke, Edna and Barkenings, Hans-Joachim (eds.), 'Wer Tora vermehrt mehrt Leben'. *Festgabe für Heinz Kremers zum 60. Geburtstag*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1986.
- Broeyer, Frits G.M., 'Max Enker, de joodse dominee van Westerbork en Theresienstadt', in G. Harinck and G.J. van Klinken (eds.), *Van kansel naar barak. Gevangen Nederlandse predikanten en de cultuur van herinnering (Jaarboek voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands protestantisme van 1800-19)*, Zoetermeer 2011, 50-66.
- Broeyer, Frits G.M. and Klinken, Gert van (eds.), *Reizen naar het Heilige Land. Protestantse impressies 1840-1960* (Jaarboek voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands protestantisme na 1800 XVI), Zoetermeer 2008.
- Bruin, Robin de, *Elastisch Europa. De integratie van Europa en de Nederlandse politiek, 1947-1968*, Amsterdam 2014.
- Buber, Martin, *Israel und Palästina. Zur Geschichte einer Idee*, Zurich 1950.
- Buber, Martin, *Zwei Glaubensweisen*, Zurich 1950.
- Budding, Kees, *Als een zwerfver tussen kerk en Israël in een orthodoxe kerk: een onderzoek naar de werkzaamheden van Maas Boertien tijdens zijn uitzending naar Jeruzalem door de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland in de periode 1960-1967*, master thesis Protestant Theological University (PThU), Amsterdam 2018.
- Burge, Gary M., *Who are God's People in the Middle East? What Christians are not being told about Israel and the Palestinians*, Grand Rapids (Michigan) 1993.
- Campen, M. van, and G.C. den Hertog (eds.), *Israël, volk, land en staat*, Zoetermeer 2005.
- Colbi, Saul P., *Christianity in the Holy land, past and present*, Tel Aviv 1969.
- Dahlhaus, Horst, 'Deutsch-israelische Begegnungen. Chance politischer Bildung', in Edna Brocke and Hans-Joachim Barkenings (eds.), 'Wer Tora vermehrt mehrt Leben'. *Festgabe*

- für Heinz Kremers zum 60. Geburtstag, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1986, 93-98.
- Dahlhaus, Horst, 'Vierzig Jahre Nes Ammim', in *Nes Ammim International* 1/2003, 18.
- Damman-Klees, Hester, 'Getuigend gesprek met Israël. Johan Hendrik Grolle over de verhouding van joden en protestanten na de Tweede Wereldoorlog', in *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis na 1800 (DNK)* 82 (June 2015), 3-19.
- Darwish, Mahmoud (ed.), *I come from there ... and remember*, Jerusalem 2008.
- David, Elisabeth, 'Legende und Wirklichkeit. Über die Gründung des deutschen Nes Ammim-Vereins', in *Nes Ammim* 1998 nr. 2, 42-43.
- Degani, Rami and Kark, 'Christian and Messianic Jews' communes in Israel; past, present and future', in *Social Sciences Directory* II nr. 4 (Oct. 2013), 26-44.
- Degani, Rami and Kark, Ruth, 'Christian and Messianic Jews' communes in Israel: past, present and future', in Eliezer Ben-Rafael, Yaacov Oved and Menachem Topel, (eds.), *The communal idea in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, Leiden/Boston 2013, 221-240.
- Delmaire, Danielle, 'La communauté catholique d'expression hébraïque en Israël', in Georges Bensoussan, *Catholiques et Protestants Français après la Shoah* (Revue d'Histoire de la Shoah 192), Paris 2010, 237-287.
- Demandt, Johannes (ed.), *Freie Evangelische Gemeinden (Die Kirchen der Gegenwart 4)*, Göttingen 2012.
- Destani, B. (ed.), *Minorities in the Middle East. Druze communities 1840-1974 iv* (1927-1974), Chippenham 2006.
- Deursen, A. van, *Palestina, het land van den bijbel*, Baarn ca. 1946.
- Diggele, Els van, *Heilige ruzies. Christenen in Israël*, Amsterdam 2007.
- Duvekot, Willem S., *Israël. Bijbels reisdagboek. Meditatieve gids langs 21 plaatsen*, Zoetermeer 2008.
- Duvernoy, Claude, *Pour l'Amour de Sion*, Jerusalem 1970.
- Duvernoy, Claude, *Le Sionisme de Dieu*, Jerusalem 1968.
- Eban, Abba, *Mijn land. De geschiedenis van het moderne Israël*, Amsterdam/Antwerp 1973.
- Eberhard, Otto, *Palästina. Erlebtes und Erlauschtes vom heiligen Lande*, Eisleben 1913.
- Eckardt, R., 'Kämpfende Mächte', in *Palästinensische Kulturbilder. Beiträge zur Palästina-kunde*, Leipzig 1907, 234-235.
- Eckert, Willehad, Nathan Peter Levinson, and Martin Stöhr (eds.), *Jüdisches Volk – gelobtes Land. Die biblischen Landverheißungen als Problem des jüdischen Selbstverständnisses und der christlichen Theologie*, München 1970.
- Eisenberg, Lotte, *Meine Gäste. Tiberias und ich*, Jerusalem 1979.
- Eisler, Jakob (ed.), *Deutsche in Palästina und ihr Anteil an der Modernisierung des Landes* (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins 36), Wiesbaden 2008.
- Elderen, R.J. van, *Toekomst voor Israël. Een theologie-historisch onderzoek naar de visie op de bekering der joden en de toekomst van Israël bij Engelse protestanten in de periode 1547-1670, tegen de achtergrond van hun eschatologie*, diss. Kampen 1992.
- Elias, Michael and Schoon, Simon (eds.), *Van rozenkassen tot dialoog. Vijftig jaar Nes Ammim*, Gorinchem 2013.
- Ellison, H.L., *The Christian Approach to the Jew*, London 1958.
- Esslemont, J.E., *Babá'U'lláh en het nieuwe tijdperk*, Wilmette (Illinois) 1961.
- Faber, G.S., *A general and connected view of the prophecies, relative to the conversion, restoration, union and future glory of the Houses of Judah and Israel*, London 1809.
- Fackenheim, Emil L., *God's presence in history: Jewish affirmations and philosophical reflections*, New York 1972.
- Falk, Gerhard, *The restoration of Israel. Christian Zionism in religion, literature, and politics*, New York 2007.
- Farah, Rafiq, 'The Evangelical Episcopal Community', in *New Outlook. Middle East Monthly* March-April 1962, 86-87.

- Farah, Rafiq, *A history of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem 1841-1991*, Jerusalem 1995.
- Farah, Shafiq, *What shall I do with my life? The exciting story of a Swiss couple in Nazareth*, North York (Ontario) 1995.
- Fillion, L.Cl., and H. Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible d'après des documents anciens et les meilleures sources Françaises, Anglaises et Allemandes contemporaines*, Lyon/Paris 1890.
- Finbert, Elian, *Israel (Les Guides Bleus)*, Paris 1955.
- Finch, Henry, *The World's Great Restauration, or the Calling of the Jews, and with them of all the Nations and Kingdoms of the Earth, to the Faith of Christ*, London 1621.
- Flapan, Simha, 'Integrating the Arab village', in *New Outlook. Middle East Monthly* March-April 1962, 24-25.
- Flusser, David, *De Joodse oorsprong van het Christendom*, Amsterdam 1964.
- Flusser, David, *Tussen oorsprong en schisma. Artikelen over Jezus, het Jodendom en het vroege Christendom*, Hilversum 1984.
- Foschepoth, Josef, *Die Anfänge der Gesellschaften für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit*, Göttingen 1993.
- Franck, Harry, *The fringe of the Moslem World*, New York 1928.
- Gans, Evelien, *Jaap en Ischa Meijer. Een joodse geschiedenis 1912-1956*, Amsterdam 2008.
- Geis, R.R., 'Judenmission. Eine Purimbetrachtung zur Woche der Brüderlichkeit', in Dietrich Goldschmidt and Ingrid Ueberschär (eds.), *Leiden an der Unerlöstheit der Welt. Robert Raphael Geis 1906-1972. Briefe, Reden, Aufsätze*, München 1984, 242-247.
- Gelderens, Jaap van, 'Kruistocht in reiskostuum. De Rotterdamse ds. Krayenbelt naar Egypte, Palestina en Syrië', in F.G.M. Broeyer and G.J. van Klinken, *Reizen naar het Heilige land. Protestantse impressies 1840-1960 (Jaarboek voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands protestantisme na 1800 XVI)*, 61-81.
- Gelderens, Jaap van, *Een Rotterdammer in Kampen*, Kampen 2011.
- Geniesse, Jane Fletcher, *American priestess. The extraordinary story of Anna Spafford and the American Colony in Jerusalem*, New York 2008.
- Gerssen, S., *Het grote schisma. Israël in de theologie van K.H. Miskotte*, Kampen 1975.
- Gessulat, Siegfried, 'Wir stellen vor: Prof.dr.theol. Heinz Kremers', in *Nes Ammim. Zeichen für die Völker* 1/1968.
- Gilbert, Martin, *Israel. A history*, London 2008.
- Goederen, Machteld de, *Nes Ammim Village. A fifty-year history (1963-2013)*, Soest 2018.
- Gonen, Amiram, *Israël. Land van verleden en toekomst*, Naarden/Antwerp 1997.
- Goldhill, Simon, *Jerusalem. City of Longing*, Cambridge (Massachusetts)/London 2008.
- Goldman, Shalom, *Zeal for Zion. Christians, Jews and the idea of the Promised Land*, Chapel Hill (North Carolina) 2009.
- Goldschmidt, Dietrich and Ingrid Ueberschär (eds.), *Leiden an der Unerlöstheit der Welt. Robert Raphael Geis 1906-1972*, München 1984.
- Gollwitzer, Helmut, 'Einleitung', in Dietrich Goldschmidt and Ingrid Ueberschär (eds.), *Leiden an der Unerlöstheit der Welt. Robert Raphael Geis 1906-1972*, München 1984.
- Grefen, Andreas; Gudrun Laqueur, Andreas Laqueur, Niek de Wilde (eds.), *On the way to a new relationship between Christians and Jews. A museum project of Nes Ammim*, Nes Ammim 2001.
- Grolle, Johan Hendrik, *Dit komt u tegen in Israël. Ontmoetingen met joden en christenen*, The Hague 1963.
- Grolle, Johan Hendrik, *Een volk op weg naar huis*, The Hague 1953.
- Grolle, Johan Hendrik, 'Zuster Augusta Steller', in *Kerk en Israël* November 1965.
- Grollenberg, Lucas H., and A. van Deursen, *Atlas van de Bijbel*, Amsterdam-Brussels 1954.
- Gronauer, Gerhard, *Der Staat Israel im westdeutschen Protestantismus. Wahrnehmungen in Kirche und Publizistik von 1948 bis 1972*, Göttingen/Bristol (USA) 2013.
- Grünfeld, Fred, *Nederland en het Nabije Oosten*, Deventer 1991.

- Guérin, Victor, *Description géographique, historique et archéologique de la Palestine* 3 (Galilée), Paris 1868.
- Gutman, I; S. Bender, J. Michman and B.J. Flim (eds.), *Rechtvaardigen onder de Volkeren. Nederlanders met een Yad Vashem-onderscheiding voor hulp aan joden*, Amsterdam/Antwerp 2005.
- Harder, Günther, *Kirche und Israel. Arbeiten zum christlich-jüdischen Verhältnis*, Berlin 1986.
- Harinck, George (ed.), *Christelijke Encyclopedie*, Kampen 2005.
- Harms, Gregory and Ferry, Todd M., *The Palestine Israel conflict. A basic introduction*, London/Ann Arbor 2008.
- Haselhoff, Friedrich, 'Lernort Nes Ammim', in Erhard Krause and Dietrich Dehnen (eds.), *Kirche im Übergang. Festschrift für Nikolaus Becker zum sechzigsten Geburtstag*, Neuwied/Frankfurt 1989, 199.
- Hedin, Sven, *Jerusalem*, Leipzig 1918.
- Hedin, Sven and Landauer, Georg, *Palästina*, München 1925.
- Heer, Johannes de, *Drie Verborgenen Gods en hun openbaring*, Driebergen 1950.
- Heikens, Henk; Henk Meijering, Hilde Pach, Jaap de Rooij, Abraham Rosenberg and Ariane Zwiers, *Hebreeuwse en Jiddische woorden in het Nederlands. Spelling, uitspraak, buiging, herkomst, betekenis*, The Hague 2002.
- Herschberg, Sijfra, and Tami Zer, *Oost West. Familieportretten uit Israël*, Amsterdam/Antwerp 2010.
- Hildebrand, Jörg (ed.), *Bevollmächtigt zum Brückenbau. Heinrich Grüber. Judenfreund und Trümmerprobst. Erinnerungen, Predigten, Berichte, Briefe*, Berlin 1990.
- Hoekema, Alle G. and Pieter Post (eds.), *Frits Kuiper (1898-1974) doopsgezind theoloog. Voordrachten en getuigenissen over Kuiper en een selectie van zijn brieven*, Hilversum 2016.
- Honecker, Martin, Horst Dählhaus, Jörg Hübner, Traugott Jähnichen and Heidrun Tempel (eds.), *Evangelisches Soziallexikon*, Stuttgart/Berlin/Köln 2001.
- Horowitz, David, 'Arab economy in Palestine', in J.B. Hobman (ed.), *Palestine's Economic Future*, London 1946, 55-97.
- Hourani, Albert and J.L. Talmon, *Israel and the Arabs*, Groningen 1967.
- Hout-Slagmolen, Stien van der, 'In memoriam Machteld de Goederen', in *Nes Ammim* March 2016 (with additions by Rachelli, Salma, Ziva and Diklah Bezek).
- Huigens, Petrus, *Israël land van de Bijbel, land van de toekomst*, Baarn ca. 1960.
- Gerhard Jasper, 'Der Judenchrist als das Zeichen Gottes für Israel und Kirche', in *Judaica. Beiträge zum Verständnis des jüdischen Schicksals in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Zurich September 1955, 156-157.
- Jones, A. Jase, *Neighbours yet strangers. The Jews and Christian Witness*, Nashville (Tennessee) 1968.
- Jost, Julius, *Ein Frühlingsritt durch Syrien. Ungelehrte Reisgedanken*, Berlin 1910.
- Jungen, Ueli, 'Die Freien Evangelischen Gemeinden in der Schweiz', in Johannes Demandt (ed.), *Freie Evangelische Gemeinden (Die Kirchen der Gegenwart 4)*, Göttingen 2012, 134-140.
- Kann, Jacobus Henricus, *Erets Israël. Het Joodsche Land*, Leiden 1908.
- Kark, Ruth, 'Sweden and the Holy Land: pietistic and communal settlement', in *Journal of Historical Geography* 22-1 (1996), 46-47.
- Kassis, Rami (ed.), *Palestine & Palestinians. Guidebook*, Ramallah 2008.
- Kean, James, *Among the holy places. A pilgrimage through Palestine*, London 1894.
- Keppler, Paul Wilhelm von, *Im Morgenland*, Freiburg im Breisgau 1920.
- Kessler, Edward, 'Brother Daniel Affair', in *A Dictionary of Jewish-Christian Relations*, Cambridge 2008, 65-66.
- Kessler, Edward and Neil Wenborn (eds.), *A Dictionary of Jewish-Christian Relations*, Cambridge 2008.
- Keulen, D. van (ed.), *Verzameld werk A.A. van Ruler 2 (Openbaring en Heilige Schrift)*, Zoetermeer 2008.

- Khanum, Sitarh, *The Chosen Highway*, Wilmette (Illinois) 1940.
- Khatib, Hisham, *Jerusalem, Palestine and Jordan*, London 2013.
- Kislev, Ran, 'Land expropriations', in *New Outlook. Middle East Monthly* September/October 1976, 23.
- Klatter, J., *De wonderde wereld van Nijl tot Eufraat*, Meppel 1958.
- Klinken, Gert van, *Christelijke stemmen over het jodendom. Zestig jaar Interkerkelijk Contact Israël (ICI), 1946-2006*, Delft 2009.
- Klinken, Gert van, 'De complexe voorgeschiedenis van Nes Ammim. In dankbare herinnering aan Hanna-Louk van Stegeren-Keizer', in *DNK (Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkegeschiedenis na 1800)* 75 (December 2011), 37-55.
- Klinken, Gert van, 'De dokter en de sjeik. De rol van Johan Pilon en Abdallah Khayr bij de stichting van de moshav Nes Ammim in Galilea, 1959-1962', in *DNK (Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkegeschiedenis na 1800)* 80 (June 2014), 39-57.
- Klinken, Gert van, 'Local Leadership in the Galilee: 'Abd Allāh Salman Saleh Khayr (1906-1971)', in Klaas Spronk and Eveline van Staalduine-Sulman (eds.), *Hebrew Texts in Jewish, Christian and Muslim Surroundings*, Leiden/Boston 2018, 212-230.
- Klinken, Gert van, *Opvattingen in de Gereformeerde Kerken over het Jodendom, 1896-1970*, Kampen 1996.
- Klinken, Gert van, 'Johan Pilon', in *Biografisch Lexicon voor de Geschiedenis van het Nederlandse Protestantisme VI*, Kampen 2006, 227-228.
- Klinken, Gert van, 'Settlers in a Strange Land: Dutch, Swiss, American and German Protestants in Nes Ammim (Israel), 1952-1964', in David J. Wertheim (ed.), *The Jew as Legitimation. Jewish-Gentile relations beyond Antisemitism and Philosemitism*, Cham (Switzerland) 2017, 223-240.
- Körtner, Ulrich H.J., 'Die Haltung der Evangelischen Kirche zum Judentum', in *Das Jüdische Echo* 46, Wien 1997, 157-165.
- Kok, A.B.W.M., 'Chiliasme', in *Christelijke Encyclopedie* 2, Kampen 1957, 154.
- Koops, Enne, *De dynamiek van een emigratiecultuur. De emigratie van gereformeerden, hervormden en katholieken naar Noord-Amerika in vergelijkend perspectief (1947-1963)*, Hilversum 2010.
- Kopleck, Maik (ed.), *Pastfinder* Düsseldorf, Hong Kong 2008.
- Krämer, Gudrun, *Geschichte Palästinas. Von der osmanischen Eroberung bis zur Gründung des Staates Israel*, Munich 2015.
- Krause, Erhard and Dietrich Dehnen (eds.), *Kirche im Übergang. Festschrift für Nikolaus Becker zum sechzigsten Geburtstag*, Neuwied/Frankfurt 1989.
- Krayenbelt, J., *Het Heilige Land. Reis door Egypte, Palestina en Syrië*, Rotterdam 1895.
- Kreider, Roy H., *Land of Revelation. A reconciling presence in Israel*, Scottsdale/Waterloo 2004.
- Kremers, Heinz, 'Der Beitrag des Neuen Testaments zu einer nicht-antijüdischen Christologie', in Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich, Bertold Klappert and Ursula Ast (eds.), *Wie gut sind Deine Zelte, Jaakow... Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Reinhold Mayer*, Gerlingen 1986, 196-207.
- Kremers, Heinz, *Judenmission heute? Von der Judenmission zur brüderlichen Solidarität*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1979.
- Kremers, Heinz, *Das Verhältnis der Kirche zu Israel*, Düsseldorf 1965.
- Kremers, Thomas, Görg K. Hasselhoff and Bertold Klappert (eds.), *Heinz Kremers – Vom Judentum lernen. Impulse für eine Christologie im jüdischen Kontext*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2015.
- Kremers, Thomas, 'Vom Vorurteil zum Verständnis. Leben und Werk von Heinz Kremers' (manuscript), Duisburg 23 September 2015.
- Kremers, Thomas, 'Wie omkeert, doe komt men tegemoet. Aanzetten van Heinz Kremers voor de christelijk-joodse dialoog in Duitsland', in *Ophef* xix (2016) nr. 1, 34-41.
- Külling, S.R., *Geschichte und Begründung der exilisch/nachexilischen Datierung der Genesis P-Stücke*, dissertation VU, Kampen 1964.

- Kuiper, Frits, *Israël en de Gojien*, Haarlem 1951.
- Kuiper, Frits, *Wij en ons erfdeel*, Amsterdam 1952.
- Kuschel, Karl-Josef, *Theodor Heuss. Die Schoah, das Judentum, Israel*, Tübingen 2013.
- Kuyper, Abraham, *Om de Oude Wereldzee 1*, Amsterdam 1907.
- Laan, Cees van der, *Moesje Alt. Vijftig jaar zendelinge in Nederlands-Indië*, Franeker 2016.
- Lagerlöf, Selma, *Jerusalem: två berättelser*, Stockholm 1901.
- Landau, Jacob M., *Abdul Hamid's Palestine. Photographs from the private collection of the Ottoman sultan*, London 1979.
- Landau, Jacob M., *The Arabs in Israel. A political study*, Oxford University Press 1970.
- Lapide, Pinchas E., *Brandpunt Jeruzalem. Discussie over de taak van de drie grote monotheïstische godsdiensten in een voor het eerst sinds 1900 jaar Joods Jeruzalem*, Naarden 1974.
- Lapide, Pinchas E., *Israël-kaleidoskoop*, Hilversum 1966.
- Laqueur, Gudrun, Andreas Laqueur, Niek de Wilde and Andreas Grefen (preface), *On the way to a new relationship between Christians and Jews. A museum project of Nes Ammim*, Nes Ammim 2001.
- Layish, Aharon, *Marriage, divorce and succession in the Druze family. A study based on decisions of Druze arbitrators and religious courts in Israel and the Golan Heights*, Leiden 1982.
- Leach, David, *Chasing Utopia. The future of the kibbutz in a divided Israel*, Toronto 2016.
- Lehmann, Erich M., 'Beth-El und Beth-Elieser, aus der Sicht eines Israeli', in Luise Nothacker and others, *Dreißig Jahre Arbeit in Israel 1960-1990*, Bad Liebenzell/Maisenbach 1990, 30-31.
- Lehmann, Erich M., *Nahariya*, Nahariya 1960.
- Lenep, Henry John van, *Bible Lands. Their modern customs and manners, illustrative of Scripture*, London 1875.
- Lerman, Antony, *The making and unmaking of a Zionist. A personal and political journey*, London 2012.
- Letembre, A., *Het Heilige Land en de Libanon. Verhalen van een pelgrim*, 's-Gravenhage 1867.
- Leuner, H.D., *Ein Christuszeugnis aus Israel. Was ist und will die Internationale Judenchristliche Allianz?*, London 1952.
- Lighthart-Lion Cachet, R.M., *Door Erets Israël*, Groningen/The Hague 1921.
- Linden, Jacobus van der, *Het Heilige Land, bezien in het licht van Bijbel en Historie*, Kampen 1915.
- Lindsay, Mark R., *Barth, Israel, and Jesus: Karl Barth's theology of Israel*, Ashgate 2007.
- Litzka, Traude, *Nes Ammim im Spiegel Jüdisch-israelischer Reaktionen. Dokumentation und Analyse* (Diplomarbeit Universität Wien), Wien 2001.
- Liverani, Mario, *Israel's History and the History of Israel*, New York 2014.
- Livingstone, W.P., *A Galilee doctor, being a sketch of the career of dr. D. W. Torrance of Tiberias*, London (ca. 1925).
- Lohse, Eduard, *Israel und die Christenheit*, Göttingen 1960.
- Looijen, Jac.B., 'Johan Pilon overleden', in *Ter Herkenning* september 1975.
- Lüth, Erich, *Israel. Heimat für Juden und Araber* (Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit in Hamburg), Hamburg 1958.
- Mackay, Runa, *Exile in Israel. A personal journey with the Palestinians*, Glasgow 1995.
- Marquardt, Friedrich-Wilhelm, 'Christentum und Zionismus', in Willehad Paul Eckert, Nathan Peter Levinson and Martin Stöhr (eds.), *Jüdisches Volk – gelobtes Land. Die biblischen Landverheißungen als Problem des jüdischen Selbstverständnisses und der christlichen Theologie*, München 1970.
- Marten, Michael, *Attempting to bring the gospel home. Scottish missions to Palestine, 1839-1917*, London/New York 2006.

- Marx, Tzvi, 'The Nes Ammim I still knew about', in Machteld de Goederen, *Nes Ammim Village. A fifty-year history (1963-2013)*, Soest 2013, 20-24.
- Masalha, Nur, *Palestine. A four thousand year history*, London 2018.
- Massawi, Musa E., *Palestine and the law*, Reading 1997.
- Mayer, Reinhold, *Christentum und Judentum in der Schau Leo Baecks*, Stuttgart 1961.
- Mayer, Reinhold, *Zeit ist's. Zur Erneuerung des Christseins durch Israel-Erfahrung*, Gerlingen 1996.
- Mazzawi, Musa E., *Palestine and the Law*, Reading 1997.
- Meiron, Eyal (ed.), *Jerusalem. A walk through time. Yad Ben-Zvi's walking-tour guide*, Jerusalem 1999.
- Merkley, Paul Charles, *Christian Attitudes towards the State of Israel*, Montreal 2001.
- Meulen, H.C. van der, 'De wordingsgeschiedenis van de Handreiking', in M. van Campen and G.C. den Hertog (eds.), *Israël, volk, land en staat. Terugblik en perspectief*, Zoetermeer 2005, 22-25.
- Meyer, Andreas, *Nahariya Foto Projekt. Eine Fotopräsentation aus den frühen Jahren Nahariyas*, Nahariya 2005.
- Micheels, Pauline, *De waarheidszoekster. Henriette Boas, een leven voor de Joodse zaak*, Amsterdam 2016.
- Mirsky, Yehuda, *Rav Kook. Mystic in a time of revolution*, Newhaven/London 2014.
- Miskotte, K.H., *Het Wezen der Joodsche Religie. Bijdrage tot de kennis van het Joodsche geestesleven in dezen tijd*. PhD Groningen, Amsterdam 1933.
- Morton, H.V., *In the steps of the Master*, London 1934.
- Munk, Reinier, 'Taal en transcendentie. Over Soloveitschiks Confrontation', in J.B. Soloveitchik, Norman Solomon and Reinier Munk (red.), *Confrontatie. Over de basis en de grenzen van het gesprek tussen joden en christenen*, uitgave Overleg Joden en Christenen (OJEC), Kampen 1994, 68-84.
- Murre-van den Berg, Heleen (ed.), *New faith in ancient lands. Western missions in the Middle East in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries*, Leiden/Boston 2006.
- Nederbragt, J.A., *Jeruzalem indien ik u vergete ...*, The Hague 1953.
- Negenman, Johan, *Geografische gids bij de Bijbel*, Boxtel 1981.
- Nicolle, David, *Crusader Castles in the Holy Land 1192-1302*, Oxford 2005.
- Nicolle, David and Turner, Graham, *Acre 1291. Bloody sunset of the Crusader states*, Oxford 2008.
- Noordegraaf, Herman, *Francois HaverSchmidt en Schiedam*, Schiedam 1994.
- Noordtzijs, Arie, *Palestina en het land van den Jordaan (235 kunstphotographieën opgenomen door Ludwig Preiss met inleiding en bijschriften)*, Kampen 1926.
- Nothacker, Luise and others, *Dreizig Jahre Arbeit in Israel 1960-1990*, Bad Liebenzell/Maisenbach 1990.
- Obbink, H.Th., *Op bijbelschen bodem. Egypte, Palestina, Syrië*, Amsterdam 1924.
- Oliphant, Laurence, *The Land of Gilead with excursions in the Lebanon*, London 1880.
- Oliphant, Margaret, *Jerusalem the holy city, its history and hope*, London/New York 1893.
- Olmstead, A.T., *History of Palestine and Syria to the Macedonian conquest*, New York/London 1931.
- Oostkamp, J.A., *De merkwaardigste Bijbelsche Land- en Zeereizen. Een leesboek voor de jeugd*, Amsterdam 1833.
- Orni, E., *Forms of Settlement*. Edited for the World Zionist Organisation by Keren Kayemet, Jerusalem 1955.
- Osband, Linda and Morris, Jan, *Famous travellers to the Holy Land. Their personal impressions and reflections*, London 1989.
- Pahlow, Renate (ed.), *Pastor Erich Bock im Heiligen Land. Der Pastor von Rüper und Wense reist 1898 zur Einweihung der Erlöserkirche nach Jerusalem*, Wendeburg 2001.

- Pappé, Ilan, *The ethnic cleansing of Palestine*, Oxford 2007.
- Pappé, Ilan, *The forgotten Palestinians. A history of the Palestinians in Israel*, New Haven/London 2013.
- Pappé, Ilan, 'The many faces of European colonialism: the Templers, the Basel Mission and the Zionist Movement', in *Israel and South Africa. The many faces of Apartheid*, London 2015, 43-72.
- Parsons, Laila, *The Druze between Palestine and Israel 1947-49*, London/New York 2000.
- Pauwels O.P., C.F., 'Het mysterie van Israël en de oecumenische beweging', in *Het mysterie van Israël*, Utrecht/Antwerp 1957, 225-244.
- Pedahzur, Ami, *The triumph of Israel's Radical Right*, Oxford University Press 2012.
- Perrett, Brian and Dovey, Ed, *Megiddo 1918. The last great cavalry victory*, Oxford 2005.
- Persson, *Free and United. The story of the international federation of Free Evangelical Churches*, Chicago 1998.
- Peterson, Kurt W., 'The Evangelical Covenant Church (USA)', in Johannes Demandt (ed.), *Freie Evangelische Gemeinden (Die Kirchen der Gegenwart 4)*, Göttingen 2012, 170-181.
- Pilon, Christine (Stijn), 'The years before Nes Ammim', in S. Schoon (ed.), *In memory of Johan Pilon*, Nes Ammim 1977, 12-19.
- Poljak, Abram, *Das Kreuz im Davidstern*, Wien 1937.
- Praag, H. van, *Het verschijnsel Israël*, Amsterdam 1965.
- J. Press, 'Beiträge zur historischen Topographie Palästinas', in *Jeschurun. Monatschrift für Lehre und Leben im Judentum*, 1930 5/8, 267.
- Press, Jesaias, *Neues Palästina-Handbuch. Führer durch Palästina*, Wien 1934.
- Qa'wār (Kawar), Nadjwa, *Durub Masabih (Lamp Paths)*, Nazareth 1957.
- Qa'wār (Kawar), Nadjwa, 'Abiru al Sabil', Beirut 1954.
- Ravitsky, Aviezer, 'Religion and state in Israel', in *Nation, states and nationalism in the Middle East*, Jerusalem 1993, 75-86.
- Reisel, M., *Genesis. Transcriptie, verklaring, vertaling*, The Hague 1966.
- Remembering al-Sumayriyya*, edited by the Mennonite Central Committee, Tel Aviv 2009.
- Ritsema, P.J., 'Pilon, en hugenotengeslacht', in *Gens Nostra. Maandblad Nederlandse Genealogische Vereniging* December 1966, 373-387.
- Ritter, Carl, *The comparative geography of Palestine and the Sinaite Peninsula* (translation William C. Gage), Edinburgh 1866.
- Robert, Mary-Jeanne, 'Nes Ammim 1963-1967', Fontainemelon 2013.
- Rodenburg, Kees Jan, *Joodse volgelingen van Jezus. Een overzicht in veertig vragen en antwoorden*, Heerenveen 2010.
- Rogers, Mary Eliza, *Domestic life in Palestine* (1862), reprint London/New York 1989.
- Roller, Timo, *Zedakah. Mehr als 50 Jahre Dienst in Israel und 80 Jahre Gästehaus Bethel*, Bad Liebenzell/Maisenbach 2016.
- Roman, Yadin, *The early years. Israel in the 1950s. A photo album*, Tel Aviv 2016.
- Ronhaar, J.H., *Palestina*, Groningen/The Hague 1930.
- Rosner, Jakob, *A Palestine Picture Book*, New York 1947.
- Rozemond, Frans, 'Van zending naar evangelieverkondiging 1945-1965', in H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer (ed.), *Een kerk op zoek naar Israël. Geschiedenis van het deputaatschap voor Kerk en Israël van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland 1875-1995*, Kampen 1995, 132-133.
- Russell, Gerard, *Heirs to forgotten kingdoms. Journeys into the disappearing religions of the Middle East*, London 2014.
- Sachar, Howard M., *A history of Israel. From the rise of Zionism to our time*, Oxford 1977.
- Said, Edward W., *Culture & Imperialism*, London 1994.
- Said, Edward W., *Out of place. A memoir*, London 1999.
- Sand, Shlomo, *The invention of the Land of Israel. From Holy Land to Homeland*, London/New York 2012.



- Sattin, Anthony, *Young Lawrence. A portrait of the legend as a young man*, London 2014.
- Sauer, Paul, 'Vom Kirschenhardthof im Namen Gottes nach Palästina und Australien. Zur Geschichte der württembergischen Templer', in Jakob Eisler (ed.), *Deutsche in Palästina und ihr Anteil an der Modernisierung des Landes* (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins 36), Wiesbaden 2008, 127-139.
- Schmidgall, Paul and Kark, Ruth, 'German Christian communal-settlement activities in and around Sichron Yaakov, Israel, 1963-2005', in Jakob Eisler (ed.), *Deutsche in Palästina und ihr Anteil an der Modernisierung des Landes* (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins 36), Wiesbaden 2008, 185.
- Schmidt, Johann Michael, 'Der Weg der Evangelischen Kirchen zu Umkehr und Erneuerung', in G.B. Ginzel and G. Fessler (eds.), *Die Kirchen und die Juden. Versuch einer Bilanz*, Geulingen 1997, 99-113.
- Schnabel, Nikodemus, *Zuhause im Niemandsland. Mein Leben im Kloster zwischen Israel und Palästina*, München 2015.
- Schneller, Ludwig, *Evangelienfahrten. Bilder aus dem Leben Jesu in der Beleuchtung des Heiligen Landes*, Leipzig 1905.
- Scholten, Frank, *Palestina. De toegangspoort Jaffa*, Leiden 1935.
- Schoon, Simon, *Christelijke presentie in de Joodse staat*, Kampen 1983.
- Schoon, Simon, *Geworteld in Israël. Gedachten over de verhouding tussen de kerk en het joodse volk*, Kampen 1983.
- Schoon, Simon (ed.), *In memory of Johan Pilon*, Nes Ammim 1977.
- Schoon, Simon, *Nes Ammim. Een christelijk experiment in Israël* (introduction by H.L. van Stegeren-Keizer), Wageningen 1976.
- Schoon, Simon, *Nes Ammim. Een teken van solidariteit*, Ede 1982 (photos by Dick Lam).
- Schoon, Simon, 'Van rozenkassen tot dialoog', in *Vijftig jaar Nes Ammim*, Gorinchem 2013, 57-58.
- Schüssler, Bert, *Nes Ammim. Een internationaal christelijk dorp in Israël. Inkeer, omkeer, verandering – dynamiek op het grondvlak van de joods-christelijke ontmoeting*, Maastricht 1998.
- Schwieber, Helmut (ed.), *Kirche und Israel. Ein Beitrag der reformatorischen Kirchen Europas zum Verhältnis von Christen und Juden* (Leuenberger Texte Heft 6), Frankfurt am Main 2001.
- Segev, Tom, *The seventh million. The Israelis and the Holocaust*, New York 1994.
- Selms, A. van, *Levend verleden. Een zwerftocht door Noord-Israël*, Nijkerk 1967.
- Selms, A. van, *De verscheurde stad*, The Hague 1956.
- Senne, Edgar, *Een korte geschiedenis van de staat Israël en zijn betrekkingen met Nederland*, Amsterdam 1999.
- Sennott, Charles M., *The Body and the Blood. The Middle East's vanishing Christians and the possibility for peace*, New York 2003.
- Shapira, Anita, *Israel. A history*, London 2014.
- Sharp, John E., *My calling to fulfill. The Orie O. Miller story*, Harrisonburg (Virginia)/Kitchener (Ontario) 2015.
- Yosef Shatil, 'The kibbutz in Israel', in *New Outlook. Middle East Monthly* July-August 1958, 28-34.
- Shavit, Ari, *Mijn beloofde land. De triomfen tragedie van Israël*, Houten/Antwerp 2013.
- Shelman, Moshe, 'The years in Tiberias', in Simon Schoon (ed.), *In memory of Johan Pilon*, Nes Ammim 1977, 23-25.
- Shenk, Marie, *Mennonite encounter with Judaism in Israel: a Mennonite Board of Missions story of creative presence spanning four decades*, Elkhart (Indiana) 2000.
- Shindler, Colin, *A history of modern Israel*, Cambridge 2008.
- Shoshan, Malkit, *Atlas of the Israel-Palestine Conflict*, Rotterdam 2010.
- Slaa, Bernard, 'Zo zag ik Suid-Afrika! Han Gijmink als de verrassende initiator van de Ned-

- erlands Zuid-Afrikaanse Werkgemeenschap', in Caspar Dullemond, Barbara Henkes and James Kennedy (eds.), *Maar we wisten ons door de Heer geroepen.* *Kerk en apartheid in transnationale perspectief*, Hilversum 2017, 149-170.
- Smit, Petra A., Dineke Spree and Bert Louwerse, *Volk van God. Ontwikkelingen in de Bond van Vrije Evangelische Gemeenten in zijn verhouding tot Israël in de periode 1933-2011*, Velp 2014.
- Smith, Charles D., *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict. A History with Documents*, Boston/New York 2010.
- Snoek, Johan M., *Joodse en Palestijnse tranen*, Vught 2010.
- Snoek, Johan M., *Soms moet een mens kleur bekennen. Een terugblik op zeventig jaar*, Kampen 1992.
- Socin, Albert and Immanuel Benziger, *Palestine and Syria; handbook for travellers* (ed. Karl Baedeker), Leipzig/London 1894.
- Soetendorp, Jaap, introduction, in Pinchas E. Lapidé, *Brandpunt Jeruzalem. Discussie over de taak van de drie grote monotheïstische godsdiensten in een voor het eerst sinds 1900 jaar Joods Jeruzalem*, Naarden 1974, 9-10.
- Spafford Vester, Bertha, *Our Jerusalem. An American family in the Holy City*, Jerusalem 1988.
- Spronk, Klaas and Eveline van Staalduine-Sulman (eds.), *Hebrew Texts in Jewish, Christian and Muslim Surroundings*, Leiden/Boston 2018.
- Srouji, Elias S., *Cyclamens from Galilee. Memoirs of a physician from Nazareth*, New York/Lincoln/Shanghai 2003.
- Stegeren-Keizer (ed.), Hanna-Louk van, *Een kerk op zoek naar Israël. Geschiedenis van het deputaatschap voor Kerk en Israël van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland 1875-1995*, Kampen 1995.
- Stigter, Bianca, *De bezette stad. Plattegrond van Amsterdam 1940-1945*, Amsterdam 2005.
- Süss, René, *Luthers theologisch testament. Over de Joden en hun leugens. Inleiding, vertaling, commentaar*. VU University Press, Amsterdam 2006.
- Tal, DUBY and Moni Haramati, *Jerusalem*, Jerusalem 1994.
- Thoma, Traugott, *Friedrich Nothacker. Ein Freund Israels*, Holzgerlingen 2016.
- Thompson, William McClure, *The Land and the Book*, New York 1859.
- Tveit, Odd Karsten, *Anna's House. The American Colony in Jerusalem*, Nicosia 2011.
- Valkenburg, Rik, *Gesprekken in Jeruzalem. De betekenis van de Bijbel in het huidige Israël*, Kampen 1975.
- Veenhof, J., 'Hendrik van Oyen', in *Biografisch lexicon voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlandse protestantisme 5*, Kampen 2001, 401-403.
- Vetterli, Ella, 'Nes Ammim am Anfang – Nes Ammim heute', in *Mitteilungsblatt Nes Ammim Schweiz*, Meilen December 1986.
- Vetterli, Hans, 'ÐÐÐÐÐÐ', Stein am Rhein 2013.
- Vilnay, Zev, *Guide to Israel*, Jerusalem 1976.
- Vilnay, Zev, *Israël. Een moderne gids door het land van de Bijbel*, Amsterdam 1966.
- Vriezen, Th.C., *De Godsdienst van Israël*, Arnhem 1963.
- Vriezen, Th.C., *Palestina en Israël*, Wageningen 1951.
- Wagenaar, Sam, 'Angst is verleden tijd' (Lohamei HaGettaot), in *Kinderen van Israël*, Utrecht 1961.
- Walpot, Izaak Jan, *Levensweg*, Deventer 2008.
- Wasser, Ben, *Nederlandse pelgrims naar het heilige land*, Zutphen 1983.
- Weinberg, Abraham A., *Migration and belonging. A study of mental health and personal adjustment in Israel*, The Hague 1961.
- Weizmann, Chaim, *Trial and Error*, Philadelphia 1949.
- Werblowsky, R.J. Zwi, 'Is nu "het gesprek" met christenen mogelijk?', in *NIW* 18 November 1966.

- Werblowski, R.J. Zwi, 'Is nu het gesprek met christenen mogelijk?', in M.C.E. Kloosterman-Fortgens (ed.), *Ontmoeting tussen joden en christenen*, Nijkerk 1967, 84-92.
- Werblowski, R.J. Zwi, 'Israel – People, Land, State. Significance for the future and for Jewish-Christian relations', in *Jerusalem Seminar Israel, People, Land, State*. Bergen (Holland) 1976, 129-143.
- Wertheim, David J. (ed.), *The Jew as Legitimation. Jewish-Gentile relations beyond Antisemitism and Philosemitism*, Cham (Switzerland) 2017.
- Wesseling, J., *De Afscheiding van 1834 in Groningerland 2*, Groningen 1974.
- Weyer, Adam (ed.), *Heinz Kremers. Liebe und Gerechtigkeit. Gesammelte Beiträge*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1990.
- Wielenga, B., *O sieraad Israëls. Ter nagedachtenis aan Ds. T. Ferwerda*, Amsterdam 1945.
- Wijnhoven, M., *Het feit Israël*, Amsterdam 1958.
- Willcox, K.M., *Your guide to Israel*, London 1966.
- Willems, Wim and Verbeek, Hanneke, *Hier woonden wij. Hoe een stad zijn joodse verleden herontdekt*, Amsterdam 2015.
- Willi, Thomas, 'Die Geschichte des Vereins der Freunde Israels in Basel', in *Der Verein der Freunde Israels 150 Jahre* (Schweizerische Evangelische Judenmission, Stiftung für Kirche und Judentum), jubilee edition of *Der Freund Israels* April 1980, 69-70.
- Wilson, Charles, *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt 2*, New York ca. 1882.
- Woudstra, M., T. Lijzenga, P. Warners, G. Geitenbeek, C. Weeda, A. Rauve and L. Ueter (eds.), *Vijftig jaar Nes Ammim*, Apeldoorn/Düsseldorf 2013.
- Yazbak, Mahmoud, 'Templars as Proto-Zionists? The German Colony in late Ottoman Haifa', in *Journal of Palestine Studies* XXVIII nr. 4 (summer 1999), 40-54.
- Zeligs, Dorothy F., *The story of modern Israel for young people*, New York 1951.
- Zickermann, E., 'Evangelische Liebesarbeit', in *Palästinische Kulturbilder. Beiträge zur Palästinakunde*, Leipzig 1907, 200.
- Zickermann, E., 'Palästinensische Städtebilder', in *Palästinensische Kulturbilder. Beiträge zur Palästinakunde*, Leipzig 1907, 83.
- Zu'bi, 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Nazareth looks for the future', in *New Outlook. Middle East Monthly* October 1960, 33.

# Scrapbook in Archive Nes Ammim, Galilee (ANAG)

- *Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in Deutschland* 1965.
- *Die Botschaft* 1965.
- *Calvinist Contact. Dutch-Canadian Christian Weekly* 1966.
- *Correspondentieblad De Christelijke Onderwijzer* 1966.
- *The Covenant Companion* 1966.
- *Haaretz* 1961-1963.
- *Information d'Israel* 1966-1967.
- *Israelitisches Wochenblatt* 1967.
- *Jerusalem Post* 1962-1967.
- *Kracht van Omhoog* 1966.
- *Leeuwarder Courant* 1965.
- *Ma'ariv* 1962-1965.
- *Le Monde* 1967.
- *Nes Ammim (Schaffhausen)* 1963-1967.
- *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* 1963.
- *Nieuwe Haarlemmer Courant* 1966.
- *La Réforme* 1965.
- *Schaffhauser Nachrichten* 1963.
- *La Suisse* 1963.
- *Unsere Kirche* 1967.
- *Yedioth Chadasboth* 1962-1970.
- *Yedioth Hayom* 1962-1963.

# GLOSSARY

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Aliyah                      | Migration to Israel.  |
| Asefah                      | Weekly meeting of kibbutz members.  |
| Ashkenazim                  | Jews descended from Northern or Eastern Europe.   |
| Atchalta d'geulah           | Beginning of redemption.  |
| Ayeleth Hashachar           | Dawn gazelle.   |
| Balagan                     | A mess.   |
| Baruch Hashem               | Thanks to the Lord.   |
| Benee beriet (b'nai b'rith) | Members of the Covenant.  |
| Bots                        | Mud.  |
| Chader Ochel                | Shared dining hall.   |
| Chalukka                    | Financial support from the West for Jewish inhabitants of the Holy Land.                          |
| Chalutzim                   | Pioneers.   |
| Chamsin                     | Warm dry wind, blowing from the East.   |
| Chilloel ha-Shem            | Improper use of God's name.   |
| Custodia                    | Franciscan overview of the Christian holy places in Palestine, with the permission of the sultan. |
| Datiyim                     | Orthodox.   |
| Davidka                     | Improvised mortar (1948).   |
| Deshiflik                   | Government land that has been rented out (Arabic).  |
| Dragoman                    | Guide.  |
| Dunam                       | Metric dunam, under British mandate: 1000 m <sup>2</sup> or 10 acres.                             |
| Durah                       | Wheat.  |
| Emek                        | Flat land, plain.   |
| Fellah                      | Arab farmer.  |
| Firman                      | Sultan's decree (Ottoman).  |
| Gelassenheit                | Resignation to God's will (Mennonite).  |
| Gizbar                      | Treasurer.  |
| Goy                         | Non-Jew.  |
| Hadassah                    | Zionist women's organization.   |
| Ha-Galil                    | Galilee.  |
| Haganah                     | Paramilitary Zionist organisation during the Mandate era.   |
| Hamula                      | Major family group (Druze).   |
| Haredim                     | Strictly Orthodox Jews.   |
| Histadrut                   | Israeli Trade Union.  |
| Ivrit                       | Modern Hebrew.  |
| Jeckes                      | Nickname for Jews of German descent (Palestine).  |
| Jediot Chadasjot            | Newsletters.  |
| Jekvei Hagalil              | Wine presses of Galilee (agricultural cooperation).   |
| Yom Ha'atzmaut              | Independence Day.   |
| Keren Hayesod               | Foundation Fund.  |

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Keren Kayemet LeYisrael | Jewish National Fund.  |
| Khalwa                  | Prayer room (Druze).   |
| Kibbutz                 | Collective agricultural community.   |
| Kibbutz galuyot         | In gathering of the Exiles.  |
| Knesset                 | Israeli Parliament.  |
| Kol Yisrael             | The Voice of Israel.   |
| Komer                   | Idolater, priest of a false god.   |
| Kupat Cholim            | National Health Insurance.   |
| Kurkar                  | Calcareous sandstone.  |
| Lohamei HaGettaot       | Fighters of the ghetto.  |
| Losung                  | Bible quotation for daily use (Southern Germany and Switzerland).                            |
| Ma'abarot               | Temporary camps for the housing of immigrants during the early years of the State of Israel. |
| Madrich                 | Supervisor in a kibbutz.   |
| Marpeah                 | Polyclinic.  |
| Meshichim               | Jewish followers of Jesus Messiah.   |
| Mazkir (mashkir)        | Secretary of a kibbutz or moshav.  |
| Mazkirut                | Board.   |
| Matruka                 | Lands in common use of an Arab village.  |
| Medinat Yisrael         | The State of Israel.   |
| Mekorot                 | Water company.   |
| Menahel avodah          | Foreman.   |
| Merakez meshek          | Manager.   |
| Meshumadim              | Pejorative name for baptized Jews.   |
| Millet                  | Recognized religious and/or ethnic minorities (Ottoman era).                                 |
| Minhal                  | Council.   |
| Miri                    | State land that has been rented in long lease (Arab).  |
| Miwat                   | Uncultivated land (Arab).  |
| Moatzah                 | District Council.  |
| Molk                    | Private land (Arab).   |
| Moshav                  | Cooperative community with separate family plots.  |
| Moshava (moshavah)      | Agricultural village.  |
| Mukhtar                 | Village major (Arab).  |
| Musha'a                 | Common property of a village (Arab).   |
| Nahal                   | Fortified Israeli settlement in the frontier zone.   |
| Nes Ammim (Nes Amim)    | Banner of the Nations.   |
| Nitzachon               | Victory.   |
| Notzri                  | Christian.   |
| Olim                    | Immigrants.  |
| Pardes                  | Orchard.   |
| Po'alim                 | Labourers.   |
| Present absentees       | Remaining Arabs in Israel after 1948, no longer entitled to their former land and property.  |
| Quatsch                 | Nonsense (German).   |
| Romandia                | Francophone part of Switzerland.   |
| Rosh ha-moatzah         | Chairman of a District Council.  |
| Sançak                  | District (Ottoman).  |
| 'Secret believers'      | Jewish followers of Jesus in Israel, treating their faith in a private manner.               |

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Sefardim                      | Jews with a background in Southern Europe, Northern Africa, Turkey or the Arabic world.             |
| Shikun                        | Housing estate (fifties).   |
| Shomer                        | Guardsmen, sexton.  |
| Sochnut Yehudit               | Jewish Agency for housing and land maintenance.   |
| Soesah                        | Hustle and bustle (Indonesia).  |
| Sorghum                       | Grain variety, also known as durah.   |
| Tahal                         | Hydrological Service.   |
| Taqqiya                       | Precautionary dissimulation.  |
| Tanzimat                      | Modernisation (Ottoman).  |
| Tenuvah (Tnuva)               | 'Products of the land', market association for agricultural produce.                                |
| Ulpan                         | Ivriith language course.  |
| 'Uqqāl                        | Initiated (Druze).  |
| Uzi                           | Machine gun.  |
| Va'adah (vaad, va'adah, waad) | Committee, in connection to Nes Ammim: Israeli supervisory board (va 'adat pikuach).                |
| Velbert                       | Place of origin of Nes Ammim-Germany. The name was also used to refer to Nes Ammim-Germany as such. |
| Vilayet                       | Province (Ottoman).   |
| Waqf                          | Charitable or religious institution (Arab).   |
| Wasta                         | Mediation (Arab).   |
| Wiedergutmachung              | Postwar German compensations.   |
| Yehudi                        | Jew.  |
| Yeshiva                       | Talmud School.  |

# Register

- Aalten 115  
Aantjes, Jan 157  
Aartsen, J. van 157, 285  
Abdo, George 110  
Abdu'l-Bahá 81, 82  
Absentees' Property Law 65  
Abu Fauzi, mukhtar 193  
Abu Rukn, Hasan 85  
Abu Sinan 15, 17, 20, 22, 28, 79-105, 167,  
191, 193, 235, 238, 288, 298, 299, 353, 369  
Achenbach, Paul 134  
Achzib (Achziv, el-Zeeb, ez-Zib) 91, 288  
Ackermann, Robert 112  
Aden 36  
Adenauer, Konrad 23, 123, 136, 138, 334  
Agudat Jisrael 219  
Aharon, Dvey 316  
Ahne, Lothar 17, 18, 135, 165, 167, 172,  
313  
Aitken, M. 50  
Akaba 299  
Akiba, rabbi 32  
Akko 26, 77, 81, 87-93, 109, 272, 293,  
297-299, 335, 358  
Akron (Pennsylvania) 103, 245  
Aktiengesellschaft Nes Ammim (AG) 19,  
21, 23, 172, 176-179, 193, 194, 196, 204,  
206, 208, 215, 228, 231, 235-238, 246, 257,  
258, 260, 262, 266, 271, 272, 277, 280,  
281, 284, 305, 306, 312, 315, 322, 325,  
331, 332, 337, 339, 347-349  
Aktion Sühnezeichen 180, 314  
'AlayḌn, Husayn 87  
Aldrich, Roy 17, 128  
Al-e Ahmad, Jalal 116  
Aleppo 301  
Alexandria 56  
Alkahé, Joseph 17, 105, 114, 155, 192,  
197, 203, 204, 206, 208, 222, 231, 331  
Almqvist, L. Arden 21, 291  
Aloni, Uri 218  
Alphen, Johan Jacob van 40  
Alphen, Pauline ('Moes') van 40-42, 44,  
49, 342  
Altamanaa 302  
Amboina (Ambon) 45, 238  
American Colony (Jerusalem) 15, 31, 67  
American Friends of Israel Missionary and  
Relief Society 122  
American Messianic Fellowship 97  
American University, Beirut 32, 84, 85  
Amir, Shlomo 21, 260, 261, 265, 270, 281  
Amir, Yehoshua 264  
Amish 103, 265, 289  
Amman 358  
Amqa 92, 179, 222  
Amsterdam 19, 34, 43, 44, 56, 58, 118,  
176, 179-182, 201, 204, 361  
Anglicans 88, 90, 98, 117, 127, 143  
Anglo-Palestine Company 202  
Antioch 103  
Antonius, George 84  
Apartheid (South Afrika) 262, 282  
Appelo, Ger 347  
Arafat, Yasser 311  
Arbeitsgruppe Christen und Juden 22  
Arnhem 24, 348, 349  
Arnon, Ya'akov (Jaap van Ameron-  
gen) 19, 176, 218  
Arnstein, Josef Fritzl 21, 260, 331  
Arslan, Muhammad 84  
Arx, Arthur J. von 306  
Asch, Shalom 51  
Aschkenasy, Yehuda 264, 282, 322  
Ashkenazim 33, 49, 51, 201, 212, 224  
Assenberg, Monika 367  
Atir, Shlomo 137  
Atlanta (Georgia) 166, 245  
el-Auja 299  
Auschwitz 195, 264, 358, 363  
Avivi, Eli 288  
Ayeleth Hashachar 16, 26, 115, 163, 180,



- 182, 192, 204, 205, 218, 238, 260, 264,  
271, 274, 335, 351, 358, 359  
Ayre, James 127
- Baan, Sieberen van der 42, 44  
Baarn 18, 143-147, 156  
Baars, Ceesjan 323, 324  
Baars, Hedi 324  
Baars, Jan 283, 288, 307, 316, 323-326, 332  
Baars, Lien 324  
Baars, Quirien 323  
Bach, J.S. 286  
Bachofner, Ernst 112  
Bahai 81-85  
Bailey, Bill 323, 339  
Baker, Dwight 265, 289  
Bakker, Roelof 16-19, 21, 56-59, 63, 68,  
77, 102, 104, 105, 128, 134-136, 141, 144-  
146, 157, 164, 165, 173, 177, 183, 201,  
202, 204, 208, 209, 213, 214, 216, 228,  
239, 251, 258, 264, 284, 286  
Baldensperger, Philip J. 96  
Balfour-declaration 15  
Banda 40  
Bandjermasin (Borneo) 40  
Bandung 41, 44, 237  
Baptists 105, 112, 117, 185, 219, 369  
al-Baq'a 132  
Barak, Asher 105  
Barth, Karl 35, 36, 92, 116, 119, 171, 175  
Bartlett, Samuel Colcord 91  
Bas Backer, J.Q. 137  
Basel 112, 132, 153, 171, 247  
Baseler Mission 31  
Bashlawi, Basil 110  
al-Bassa 288  
Bastiaanse, F.J.L. 215  
Batavia (Jakarta) 47  
Battour 191  
Bäumlin, Richard 112  
Bavinck, C.B. (Ber) 116, 144  
Bavinck, J.H. 41, 44  
Baybars, sultan 109  
Beatrix, princess of the Netherlands 158  
Becker, Nikolaus 17, 22, 23, 135, 155, 180,  
250, 258, 280, 283, 287, 292-294, 305, 319,  
320, 322, 332, 334, 337, 342, 347-349  
Beckmann, Joachim 249  
Bedouins 33, 81, 88, 91, 189, 301  
Beek, M.A. 175, 274, 285  
Beelaerts van Blokland, J.A. van 181, 218, 230  
Beernink, H.J. 157, 285  
Begin, Menahem 63  
Beirut 32, 84, 85, 98, 103, 295, 298  
Beit HaEmek 89, 92, 179, 218, 273, 275,  
297, 298, 318, 319, 322, 325, 358  
Beit HaShita 115  
Beit Jann 94  
Beit Katznelson 195  
Beit Shean 79  
Beitar, Zionist youth organisation 63  
Bekennende Kirche 53, 249  
Ben Ami 362  
Ben-Chorin, Shalom (Fritz Rosenthal)  
36, 102, 133, 154, 171, 220, 222, 345, 362  
Ben-Dor, Dan 19-21, 166-168, 178, 191,  
194, 201, 212-215, 228, 232, 235, 241, 257,  
260, 299  
Ben-Dor, Immanuel 166  
Ben-Dor, Raphael 21, 166-168  
Beney, Arthur 112  
Ben-Gurion, David 23, 37, 123, 141, 143,  
151, 163, 168, 169, 178, 180, 194, 206,  
257, 311  
Ben-Zeev, Israel 219  
Ben-Zvi, Itzhak 85, 87, 212  
Ben-Zvi, Jakov 362  
Bergema, H. 157, 285  
Berger, Elsa 219  
Berger, Emma 219  
Berghuis, W.P. 285  
Bergman, Ingrid 117  
Berkhof, Hendrikus 157, 163, 210, 229,  
264, 285, 322, 323, 368  
Berkhof-van den Berg, Cornelia 323  
Berkouwer, G.C. 157, 285  
Berlin 51  
Berlin-Weißensee 134  
Berliner Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdi-  
sche Zusammenarbeit 15, 136  
Berlinger, Eli 222  
Bern 112  
Bernath, Christine 343  
Bernath, Dorothea 343  
Bernath, Hannie 114  
Bernath, Hans 15-17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 26,  
77, 88, 90, 98, 100-103, 107, 110, 111, 114,  
117, 129, 132, 136, 137, 141, 142, 152,  
155, 156, 167, 184, 185, 192-195, 204, 205,  
208, 210, 211, 222, 224, 229, 233, 234,  
245-248, 251, 269-272, 274, 275, 278, 283,  
284, 291, 292, 301, 305, 312-315, 318, 319,

- 321, 325, 327, 330, 332, 335, 337-339, 342, 343, 347, 349-352, 362, 363, 367, 370, 371
- Bernath, Jacob 17, 19-22, 24, 101-103, 107, 111, 114, 117, 129, 132, 152, 155, 156, 168, 170, 172, 177, 178, 185, 197, 209, 210, 212-215, 217, 218, 222, 227, 229, 237, 239, 245, 247, 248, 251, 257-265, 269, 270, 274, 280, 282-284, 289-292, 299, 306, 312, 314, 316, 317, 319, 320, 322, 330, 332, 333, 335, 337, 338, 342, 347, 349-352, 363, 367, 371
- Bernath, Marc André 343, 352
- Bernath-Perret, Madeleine 15, 111, 184, 234, 238, 246, 247, 270, 337, 339, 343, 351, 367
- Beror Hayil 17, 150, 151, 305
- Beth-El (Nahariya and Shavei Zion) 17, 19, 152, 153, 180, 184, 189, 192, 195, 206, 208, 217, 221, 234, 259, 292, 318, 366, 370
- Beyma, Ulrich van 67
- Bezek, Diklah 115, 205, 217, 344, 351, 367, 368
- Bezek, Racheli 217, 266, 344, 351, 368
- Bezek, Shlomo (Sal Lorsch) 15-17, 20-24, 26, 53, 113-116, 139-141, 163, 169, 180-184, 191, 192, 195, 196, 204-207, 209, 212, 214, 217, 218, 220, 221, 228, 230, 232-236, 238-240, 245, 248, 257, 259, 260, 263, 266, 271-274, 277, 283, 284, 287-289, 291, 294, 315, 316, 319, 320-325, 331-340, 343, 344, 346, 347, 349-353, 355, 357, 367, 368
- Bezek-van Praagh, Mirjam (Marianne) 115, 116, 140, 141, 163, 182, 207, 344, 352, 368, 371
- Bialystok 287
- Bibellesebund (Zwitsersland) 112
- Bible Lands Services 245
- Biesheuvel, B.W. 157
- Bikker, Arie 45, 47, 49, 50
- Bikker, Flora 47
- Blackstone, William E. 128
- Blanke, Fritz 112
- Blaser, Willi 112
- Blijker, Pauline den 251, 323, 348
- Bliss, Howard 84, 85
- Blitar 41
- Blomfield, Sarah Louisa (Sitarih Khanum) 82
- Blum, Jacques (Jacob) 15, 17, 20, 56, 95, 96, 98, 99, 101, 102, 113, 120, 127, 141, 143, 146, 167, 182, 203, 285
- B'nai B'rith 175
- Boas, Henriëtte 19, 179, 183, 207, 208, 222, 251, 306, 331
- Böcker, Werner 304, 305
- Boendermaker, Joop 154
- Boertien, Maas 22, 127, 128, 132, 133, 141, 171, 180-182, 185, 205, 215, 216, 229, 249, 251, 259, 262, 264, 274, 281, 282, 285-287, 289, 291-293, 296, 300, 304, 319, 320, 323, 340, 343, 346-348
- Bollen, T. 344
- Bombong, Sem 45-48, 52
- Bonda, Hendrikus Johannes 16, 17, 21, 23, 95, 98, 101, 157, 173, 178, 191, 239, 264
- Bonhoeffer, D. 303
- Bonn 311
- Booij, Thijs 178
- Bornstein, Yehuda 195
- Bornträger, Irvin 323, 339
- Bosshardt, Elisabeth 317, 346
- Bosshardt, Peter 317, 331, 335, 346
- Bourassé, J.J. 83, 84
- Bourmaud, Philippe 199
- Brechmühl, Fritz 112
- Brenner, Waldemar 249, 348
- Breslau (Wroclaw) 216, 264
- Brienen, T. 286
- Brindisi 323
- Brodbeck, Paul 22, 275, 288
- Bror-Hajil 304
- Bruins Slot, Sieuwert 157
- Brunner, Emil 296
- Brunner, Robert 155, 172, 173, 194, 218
- Buber, Martin 20, 21, 52, 116, 247, 251, 264, 342
- Bucharest 247
- Buchmüller, Hans 323
- Budapest 218
- Bülach 112
- Buksbazen, Victor 122, 128, 144-146, 170, 202, 291
- Bultmann, Rudolph 171
- Bund für entschiedenes Christentum 149
- Buskes, Jan 157, 285
- Cairo 295, 358
- Calvin, John 31, 52, 66, 97
- Campo Rasa 273
- Carmeli, Moshe 298
- Carmi, Ze'ev 189

- Casale Somelaria Templi 297  
 Celebes 44-49  
 Cervin, Russell A. 21, 23, 291, 324-326,  
 334, 342, 348, 365  
 Cevennes 65  
 Ceylon (Sri Lanka) 40  
 Chen, Baruch 190  
 Chicago 31, 66, 171, 245  
 Chicago Hebrew Mission 128  
 Chiasm 134  
 Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA)  
 167  
 Christian Reformed Church (1834) 40  
 Christian Reformed Church (USA) 289  
 Christian Reformed Churches (CRC) 22,  
 45, 127, 158, 286  
 Christlich-Jüdische Arbeitsgemeinschaft  
 (Switzerland) 175  
 Christian Zionism 21, 102-104, 137, 162,  
 219, 248, 365, 366  
 Church of the Brethren 289, 290  
 Church of the Covenant (Evangelical  
 Covenant Church) 21, 23, 245, 246,  
 248, 249, 251, 280, 289, 291, 325, 332,  
 333, 335, 337  
 Church of Scotland 15, 31, 33, 56, 59, 143  
 Church of Scotland Mission Hospital,  
 Tiberias (Beth Cholim Scotti) 15-17,  
 31, 32, 34, 36-38, 50-59, 64, 65, 96, 101,  
 102, 117, 180, 209, 300  
 Church of Scotland Sea of Galilea Centre  
 18, 359  
 Cidor, H.A. 20, 162, 163, 180, 183, 201,  
 206, 208, 209, 218  
 Civil Rights Movement 229  
 Clarke, William Newton 103  
 Clot, Henri 22, 240, 272, 275  
 Clottu, Gaston 112  
 Cohen, Aharon Chaim 85  
 Cohen, Benno 223  
 Cohen (Cahana, Cohn), Fredy 273-275,  
 319, 324  
 Cohen Stuart, Geert 317  
 Colbi, Saul P. 212, 315  
 Cologne 180, 281  
 Committee for Inter-Faith Understanding  
 in Israel 171  
 Conder, C.R. 297  
 Congo 48  
 Constam, Robert 112, 228  
 Constantinople 32, 199  
 Copts 31  
 Council for Church and Israel (DRC) 15,  
 35, 48, 54, 67, 101, 102, 104, 105, 116,  
 118, 119, 142, 175, 185, 337, 339  
 Cressman, Florence 131, 167  
 Cyprus 81  
 Dachau 136  
 Dächser, Willi 240  
 Dagan, Josef 196  
 Dahlhaus, Hanny 144  
 Dahlhaus, Horst 17, 18, 135, 137, 144,  
 145, 147, 151, 164, 165, 167, 172, 180,  
 216, 249, 280, 283, 364  
 Daliat el-Karmel 86, 188  
 Damascus 79, 358  
 David, Elisabeth 17, 135, 137  
 David, Erich 17, 135  
 David, Sarah 54  
 Dayan, Moshe 178, 189, 196  
 Degani, Rami 26  
 Degania 21, 167, 266  
 Delft 166, 207  
 Detroit 17, 128  
 Deutsche Evangelische Kirchentag 123,  
 154  
 Deutsch-Israelische Gesellschaft 342  
 Diemer-Lindeboom, Fenna 157  
 Dijk, K. 158, 285  
 Dinur, Ben-Zion 54  
 District Council Ga'aton 159, 191, 193,  
 194, 196, 197, 208, 218, 219, 223, 224,  
 232, 241, 260, 266, 277, 284, 287, 288,  
 293, 295, 302, 307, 316, 317, 321, 331,  
 333, 335, 336, 338, 340, 348, 365  
 Doetzbacher, Michael 151  
 Dooyes, Dirk Roelof 118, 144, 157, 173  
 Dorland, Gé 22, 23, 277, 278, 280, 281,  
 283, 284, 286, 291, 294, 303, 306, 307,  
 311-317, 319, 321, 324-326, 333, 337  
 Drees, Willem 139  
 Dror, Tzvika 301  
 Drori, M. 335  
 Druze Union Society 85  
 Druzes 33, 49, 77, 79-105, 127, 172, 178,  
 179, 182, 188, 189, 192, 201, 219, 223,  
 235, 295, 298, 316, 370  
 Düsseldorf 135, 136, 151  
 Duisburg 150, 264  
 Durian (Celebes) 47  
 Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) 15-17,

- 26, 27, 34, 38, 39, 48, 49, 52, 54, 56, 67,  
105, 113, 116-118, 127, 133, 141, 144, 145,  
152, 157, 158, 161, 162, 173, 196, 203,  
205, 212, 238, 250, 251, 264, 277, 286,  
304, 322, 333, 337, 339, 365, 366, 369, 370
- Dutch Society for Israel 35
- Dutch Zionist Student Organization 251
- Duvernoy *see* Muller-Duvernoy, Claude
- Eastern Mennonite College, Virginia 131
- Eastman, Addison 246
- Eban, Abba 255, 311
- Eberlé-Gotlib, Marjorie 28, 103
- Edinburgh 34, 48, 50, 56
- Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society  
(EMMS) 15, 16, 53, 54, 87, 110, 184,  
318, 367
- Egberts, Dick 353
- Ehrlich, Ernst Ludwig 174, 175
- Eichmann, Adolf 171, 222
- Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule  
(ETH) 114, 228
- Ein Gev 57
- Ein Hanatziv 66
- Ein el Hillweh 302
- Ein Karem 56
- Eisenberg, Lotte 37
- Elim, missionary society 35
- Elkhart, Indiana 245
- Elnatour, Zakaria (Zakariyya Alantur) 301
- Emsland 149
- Enker, Max 16, 57, 59, 67, 103, 104, 143
- Enschede 196
- Eshkol, Levi (Levi Shkolnik) 19-21, 55,  
162, 166-168, 170, 176, 178, 191, 197, 202,  
203, 212-215, 219, 221-223, 237, 239, 246,  
257-261, 264, 266, 269, 270, 284, 285, 291,  
311, 319, 322, 342, 360, 370
- Ess-Meyer, Friedrich 156, 172
- Essen 135, 136
- Essenes 66
- European Economic Community (EEC)  
311
- Evangelical Episcopal Community 98
- Evangelical Reformed Church (Switzerland)  
232
- Evangelicalism 66, 102, 127, 128, 233, 245,  
275, 279, 333
- Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD)  
134, 155, 216, 248, 304, 309
- Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland (Rheini-  
sche Kirche) 18, 135, 136, 145, 149, 150,  
165, 216, 249, 292, 303, 305, 313, 314,  
320, 366
- Evangelische Kirche in Westfalen 21, 249,  
250, 305
- Evanston 16
- Evron 92, 159, 196, 287, 319, 371
- Fackenheim, Emil 363
- Farah, Nabiha 306, 339, 352, 355, 360
- Farah, Nadjwa 142
- Farah, Rafiq 17, 88, 90, 95, 98-101, 104,  
107, 129, 142, 168n, 193, 296, 368
- Farah, Shafiq 98, 100, 233
- Fatah 311
- Feitsma, Sieberen (Siep) 118, 144, 157, 173
- Ferry, Todd M. 93
- Ferwerda, Taeke 42, 44
- Fillion, L.Cl. 297
- Fink, Jakob 221
- Finnish Lutheran Mission (Suomen Lähetys-  
seura) 122
- Flapan, Simha 93, 190
- Flavius Josephus 90
- Flusser, David 21, 264, 280, 281, 306, 322,  
366
- Franck, Harry 96, 99
- Frankfurt am Main 21, 161, 249, 257
- Free Church of Scotland 15, 31-33, 36
- Free Reformed Churches in the Nether-  
lands 182, 197
- Frehner, Paul 112
- Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP) 135
- Freikirchen (Freie Evangelische Kirchen,  
Switzerland) 152, 156, 171, 197, 229,  
247, 290
- Freudenberg, Adolf 314
- Freunde Israels 173
- Freundler, Charles 112
- Fribourg 112
- Gan Shmuel 195
- Ganon, Joseph 105, 176, 179, 192
- Gardiner-Scott, William 54, 122
- Garut 41
- Gawler, George 31
- Gaza 15, 20, 236, 358
- Gebal Druse 79
- Geerdes, Bob 291
- Geis, Robert Raphael 22, 151, 154, 250,  
251, 264, 282, 283, 309, 313, 320, 322

- Gelderen, Jaap van 44n  
 Gemara 117  
 Geneva 67, 101, 112, 172, 273, 320  
 Genton, Jacques 156, 248  
 George Elliot (Mary Ann Evans) 31  
 Gerbrandy, Pieter Sjoerds 18, 158, 162, 285  
 Gerbrandy-Sikkel, Hendrina Elisabeth 162  
 Gerssen, Samuel 286, 333, 334, 358, 363  
 Gerzon, Mirjam 20, 166, 167, 191, 204, 209, 217-220, 227, 232, 239, 251, 258  
 Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit (Hamburg) 250  
 Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit (Switzerland) 247  
 Gessulat, Siegfried 339, 345, 348  
 Getsinger, Lua 81  
 Gilboa 66, 109, 115  
 Gilead 129  
 Gitlin, Moses H. 128  
 Givat Chaim 24, 359  
 Gjerding, A. 257  
 Glasgow 63  
 Goebbels, Joseph 149  
 Goederen, Els de 238  
 Goederen, Johannes de 238  
 Goederen, Kees de 293, 307  
 Goederen, Machteld de 21, 237, 238, 245, 252, 265, 271, 284, 292, 297, 314, 316, 323, 337, 339, 351, 371  
 Golan 359, 360  
 Golan, Ephraim 335  
 Golan, Hanna 315  
 Gold, Philippe 112, 246, 248, 285  
 Golew, Shmuel 218  
 Gollwitzer, Helmuth 154, 250  
 Gordon, Aaron David 49  
 Gorinchem 48  
 Graham, Billy 127, 132, 141, 152, 233, 245  
 Grass, Günther 359  
 's Graveland 118  
 Gravemeijer, Koeno 35, 144, 172, 173, 191, 230, 337, 338  
 Gravemeijer-Meissner, F.M. 113, 173, 191, 230, 337, 338  
 Grebbeberg 277  
 Greek Orthodox 31, 32, 84, 109, 142, 235, 306  
 Greenberg, Ya'acov 219, 223  
 Gringold, Chaim 260  
 Groen, Annie te 53, 57  
 Groen, Rachel 115  
 Grolle, J.H. (Jo) 34-37, 48, 51, 53, 54, 56, 57, 104, 113, 116, 127, 158, 175, 182, 251, 286, 333  
 Gronauer, Gerhard 264  
 Groningen 166  
 Grosheide, F.W. 96  
 Grossmann, Hayka (Chaika) 92, 287  
 Grüber, Heinrich 15, 135, 137, 151, 153, 161, 180, 202, 203, 205, 304  
 Grüngold, Chaim 21, 337  
 Guérin, Victor 82  
 Gutscher, Johannes 132, 155, 156  
 Gysel, Charles 18, 156, 247, 251, 258, 259, 262, 292, 312, 351  
 Haarlem 41, 42, 157, 277, 337  
 Haarlemmermeer 272  
 Hacothen, David 224, 270  
 Hadderech, society of Messianic Jews 16, 101, 144, 210  
 Hadera 24, 359  
 Haganah 34, 298  
 The Hague 103, 115, 162, 239, 340, 341  
 Haifa 16, 21, 32, 38, 55, 64, 67, 79, 86, 88, 90, 92, 98, 105, 109, 111, 115, 120, 123, 163, 166, 176, 193, 195, 221, 263, 273, 295, 299, 323, 326, 332, 333, 353, 358  
 al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah 82, 100  
 Halmahaira 44  
 Hamah 302  
 Hamburg 123, 304  
 Hamburg Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit 123, 153  
 Harari, Shlomo 23, 24, 287, 293, 307, 312, 315, 319, 334-337, 340, 348, 350, 352, 358, 362  
 Harling, Otto von 249, 250  
 Harms, Gregory 93  
 Hart, Hilda 't 57  
 Harupa, Gisela 294  
 Hashomer Hatzair, Zionist youth movement 115, 287  
 Hasle-Rüegsau 112  
 Hauran 79, 86  
 Hauri, Viktor 292  
 Hauser, Vital 177, 249, 283, 319  
 Haverschmidt, François (Piet Paaltjens) 238  
 Hawāri, Nimr al 87

- Hebrew Christians 17, 102, 121, 122, 127-129, 141, 144, 172, 210, 220, 227, 281, 290  
 Hebrew Evangelisation Society (HES) 96, 97  
 Hebrew University 18, 84, 105, 161, 164, 249  
 Hebron 103  
 Hedjaz railway 79  
 Heemstede 41, 157, 280, 287, 332  
 Heer, Johannes de 134  
 Henderson, George A. 53, 59  
 Henkemans, A.R. 141, 157, 173  
 Herblingerthal 114  
 Herrnhutt Movement 346  
 Herzl, Theodor 221, 307  
 Herut Party 63, 215  
 Heule, F.F.C. 157, 173, 206  
 Heuss, Theodor 17, 153, 221  
 Hilversum 277  
 Himmelsbach, Hans 136  
 Hirsch, Otto 153  
 Histadrut 249  
 Hitler, Adolf 15, 131, 134, 138, 149, 182, 215, 320  
 Hitlerjugend 149, 150  
 Hittin 79  
 Hofman, Bert-Jan 353  
 Hogendoorn, Gerard 362  
 Honig, Anton 141  
 Hoogendonk, Hanny 236, 240, 266  
 Hoogendonk, Jan 236, 240, 265, 266  
 Hoop Scheffer, J.G.N. de 137  
 Hoover, Bob 21, 265, 323  
 Hoppler, Armin 112, 319, 349  
 Horowitz, Isaiah Halevi 32  
 Hostetter, Henry 246  
 House of the Seekers of Truth, Jerusalem 167, 208  
 Hout, Stien van der 323, 339  
 Hout, Wim van der 323, 324, 339  
 Houtman, Dineke 202n  
 Huguenots 39, 52  
 Hull 110  
 Hylkema, T.O. 103  
  
 Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum 136  
 Institutum Judaicum Tübingen 153, 161, 236  
 International Hebrew Christian Association (IHCA) 16-19, 57, 58, 67, 101, 103-105, 120, 143-145, 151, 303, 312  
  
 Irgun Tarbuti shel Yehudim Meshichim 97  
 Ironside, Harry 66  
 Isaac, Jules 66  
 Isakoff, Josef 127, 144-146  
 Isfiya 85, 94, 188  
 Isings, Clasina (Ina) 43, 44, 135  
 Isings, Johan 43  
 Islam 31, 32, 36, 52, 66, 79, 87, 88, 109, 119, 366  
 Israel Christian Settlement Inc 17, 128, 129  
 Israel Department of Health *see* Kupat Cholim  
 Israel Inter-Faith Committee 161  
 Israel-American Institute of Biblical Studies 102, 162  
 Israeli Lands Law (1960) 190  
  
 Jabbour, Elias 98n  
 Jacobs, Paul 136  
 Jaffa 32, 86, 97, 109  
 Jager, Okke 173  
 al-Jam'iya al-'Ilmiya al-Suriya 84  
 Janse, Ewout 293, 294  
 Java 15, 40, 44  
 Jeckes 92, 153, 220  
 Jenni, Ernst 112  
 Jeremias, Benjamin 221, 222, 234, 280  
 Jeremias, Hannah 234  
 Jericho 299  
 Jerusalem 15, 17, 21, 22, 32, 50, 56, 84, 89, 97, 98, 102, 103, 105, 113, 117, 120-122, 137, 142, 163, 165, 181, 218, 219, 230, 237, 264, 285, 293, 295, 298, 321, 322, 338, 340, 350, 359, 360, 365, 366, 371  
 Jerusalem Verein (Lutheran) 67  
 Jewish Agency (Sochnut Yehudit) 167  
 Jewish Agency Executive 166  
 Jewish National Fund *see* Keren Kayemet LeYisrael  
 Joint Committee 56  
 Jokwei Hagalil 240, 287  
 Jom Haatzmaut (Yom Ha'atzmaut) 193  
 Jonge, Annie de 118  
 Jost, Julius 91, 109  
 Judeida (Joudeida) 93  
 Juliana, Queen 141  
 Julis 79, 86, 87, 93, 190  
 Jumelet, Marian 117  
 Juncker, Rudolf 335  
 Jura 155, 233, 279

- Kafr Yasif (Kafir Yasif, Kfar Yasif) 90, 93,  
 98, 193, 235, 298  
 Kahane (Kahana), Shmuel 20, 204  
 Kamir, Ami 288, 335, 348, 362  
 Kampen 44  
 Kamphausen, Ruth 149, 151  
 Kampili (Makassar) 237, 238  
 Kann, Jacobus Henricus 91, 92, 157, 202,  
 312  
 Kansas City 245  
 Kark, Ruth 26  
 Karka'ot Yisrael 196  
 Karmel 82, 85, 88, 109, 238, 353  
 Karmiel 191  
 Karrenberg, Friedrich 136, 137  
 Kartabil, family in Tiberias 37  
 Kassem, Youssef 105  
 Keller, Aharon 17, 20, 92, 153, 192, 200,  
 216, 217, 221, 239, 318, 365, 370  
 Keller, Hans-Ulrich 335  
 Keller, Hava 302  
 Keller, Jörg 191  
 Kendal, Fred G. 128  
 Keren Hayesod 77  
 Keren Kayemet LeYisrael (Jewish National  
 Fund) 17, 20, 64, 76, 77, 81, 100, 101,  
 139, 162, 179, 190, 193, 201, 298  
 Kettwig 150  
 Keuning, Sytze 353, 357  
 Keuning-Rooks, Anneke 357  
 Kfar Bialik 92  
 Kfar Blum 236  
 Kfar HaNassi 238  
 Kfar Masaryk 92  
 Kfar Rosh Haniqra 92  
 Khalil, al-Malik al-Ashraf 297  
 Khanum, Ruha 81  
 Khanum, Sitarih (Sarah Louisa Blom-  
 field) 82, 83  
 Khayr, 'Abd AllĪh (Abdullah, Abdal-  
 lah) 15-17, 19, 20, 22, 79-105, 113, 120,  
 139, 141, 162, 164, 167, 172, 176, 178,  
 179, 188-191, 193, 195, 196, 201, 217, 235,  
 288, 353, 369  
 Khayr, Ahmad 86, 190, 193  
 Khayr, Ismael 86  
 Khayr, Saleh 81, 83, 85  
 Khayr, Salman 83, 101  
 Khayr, Salman (Soliman) 193  
 Khayr, Yusuf 83, 86  
 Khidr 82  
 Khirbat Nasr al-Din 34  
 Kiel 313  
 King, Martin Luther 229  
 Kir, Zwi 353  
 Kiryat Shmuel (Qiryat Shemuel), Tiberi-  
 as 37  
 Kitchener, H.H. 297  
 Knesset 20, 87, 93, 139, 192, 205, 206, 208,  
 212, 214, 218, 219, 222-224, 257, 259, 266,  
 269, 287, 299, 340  
 Knox, John 32, 33  
 Königsberg (Kaliningrad) 136  
 Koestler, Arthur 197  
 Kofsmann, Zeev 121, 122, 127, 141, 164,  
 176, 248  
 Kollek, Teddy 167  
 Koller, Gerda 272, 274, 275, 277, 278, 317,  
 318, 319, 322, 325, 327, 331, 353, 358  
 Koller, Hansruedi 21, 112, 228, 232, 241,  
 272-275, 278, 281, 289, 293, 317-319, 322,  
 325, 327, 331, 351, 358  
 Koller, Karin 273  
 Kooiman, W.J. 158  
 Kook, Avraham Yitzhak 52, 303  
 Koole, J.L. 158, 194, 296, 300, 301, 302  
 Kopuit, Max 179, 334  
 Kralingen 157  
 Kranhouse, Chava (Eva) 17, 102-105, 114,  
 121, 122, 128, 144-146, 164, 185, 186, 202,  
 365  
 Kraus, Hans-Joachim 250  
 Krause, Hans 239, 264, 300  
 Kreider, Roy 17, 23, 26, 38, 103, 121, 131,  
 132, 145, 154, 161, 167, 185, 196, 208,  
 229, 232, 246, 290, 317, 320, 325-327, 331,  
 332, 335, 342, 347-350, 352, 354, 362  
 Kremers, Heinz 17, 21-24, 26, 147, 148-  
 152, 154, 161, 162, 180, 181, 185, 216,  
 229, 236, 237, 247-251, 253, 258, 259, 263,  
 264, 266, 280-282, 283, 285, 286, 293, 294,  
 296, 300, 303-305, 309, 313-315, 320-325,  
 334, 335, 339, 340, 342, 344, 348-351, 353,  
 355, 359, 363, 364, 366, 368-370, 371  
 Kremers, Thomas 150, 237, 296, 304, 334  
 Kriener, Katja 155  
 Krikorian, Hovhannes 132  
 Kristallnacht 149  
 Kroll, Eugen 112  
 Kruyter (Kruijter), Arthur H. de 290-  
 292, 364  
 Külling, Samuel 114, 144, 145, 172, 274

- Kuenen, Abraham 36  
 Küsnacht 112  
 Kuiper, Frits 119, 120, 141, 144, 146, 157, 173, 185, 209, 306  
 Kupat Cholim 50, 55, 87, 207  
 Kūsa, Eliyās N. 87  
 Kuwaykat 85, 91, 92, 297, 298  
 Kuyper, Abraham 15, 33, 40, 95, 96, 100, 257, 370  
  
 Lajnat al-Murḏgaba al-Madhabiyya 87  
 Lam, Dick 157, 173, 210, 239, 286  
 Landau, Chaim 215  
 Land Acquisition Act (1953) 93, 190  
 Lapid, Pinchas E. 365  
 Laron, Max (Mordechai) 41, 196, 240, 357  
 Laron, Rachel (Jacoba Snijders) 196, 240, 357  
 Latrun 360  
 Lausanne 112  
 Lawrence, T.E. 84  
 Leach, David 25, 371  
 Leeuw, Arnold de 239  
 Leeuw, Leib de 166  
 Lehmann, Erich 189, 192, 217, 218, 220, 222, 228, 229, 234, 245, 258, 259, 263, 265, 266, 315, 316, 318, 324, 335, 343, 345, 353, 358, 364, 366  
 Lehmann, Fritz 363  
 Lehmann, Gideon 358  
 Leiden 103  
 Leipzig 136  
 Lenin 119, 120  
 Letembre, A. 297  
 Leumi, Bank 202  
 Leuner, Heinz 146  
 Levison, Leon 15  
 Levison, Nahum 17, 120, 127, 161  
 Lewin, Alter 219, 222  
 Liaison Bureau of Foreign Investments, Tel Aviv 161  
 Liebenzeller Mission 134  
 Lighthart-Lion Cachet, Marie 91  
 Lindsey, Robert (Bob) 185, 286  
 Lod (Lydda) 263, 339  
 Lönberg, Max-Hermann 196  
 Lohamei HaGetaot 21, 28, 88, 92, 180, 195, 218, 234, 240, 260, 263, 273, 297, 298, 301, 352, 359  
 Lohamei Herut Israel 164  
 Lohse, Eduard 313  
  
 London 37, 121  
 London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews 31  
 Looijen, Jac 24, 340, 342, 345, 362, 364  
 Lorenz, Shlomo 214, 219  
 Lorsch, Sal *see* Shlomo Bezek  
 Lubetkin, Tzivia 195  
 Ludwigsburg 249  
 Lüthi, Walter 112  
 Luther, Martin 31  
 Lutherans 22, 67, 134, 152-154, 158, 172, 180, 181, 249  
 Lutherische Zentralverein für Mission unter Israel 249, 250  
 Lutz, Lorenz 156  
 Luz, Kaddish 139  
 Lydda 59  
  
 Ma'abarot 37, 51, 52, 55  
 Maarat Alno'aman 302  
 Ma'ayan Zvi 238  
 Maas, Hermann 16, 152  
 Maasniel 47, 50  
 Macanna, Clephane 36, 56, 58, 64, 120  
 Mackay, Runa 36, 53, 86, 87, 110, 111, 295, 301, 351, 360  
 Mahmoud, Inas 302  
 Maimonides (Moshe Ben-Maimon) 32  
 Maine 91  
 Makale-Rantepao (Celebes) 45  
 Makassar (Celebes) 44, 48  
 Makr 93  
 Malachy, Yona 22, 24, 171, 279, 281, 331, 332, 335, 342, 345, 348, 366  
 Mallon, Thomas 23, 337  
 Mamasa (Celebes) 45-50  
 Mandelbaum Gate (Jerusalem) 299  
 Mani, Fahru'd-Din 82  
 al-Manshiyya 193  
 al-Mansura 20, 90, 91, 152, 167, 188, 194, 217, 233, 234, 236, 247, 292  
 Mapai Party 139, 163, 167, 180, 205, 214, 223, 224  
 Mapam Party 20, 93, 137, 214, 219, 240, 287  
 Marburg 171  
 Maronites 31, 33, 83  
 Marquardt, Friedrich-Wilhelm 314, 359  
 Marseille 64  
 Martens, Marga 81n  
 Marti, Armin 172



- Martin, Bob 367  
 Mashada, Moshe 120  
 Masjichim *see* Christian Jews  
 al-Mascowbia (Nazareth) 110  
 Matassak, pareng of Oeraboea 45  
 Matti, Armin 112  
 Mauthausen 153  
 Mayer, Reinhold 153  
 Mazra'a 28, 91-93, 288, 289, 296-300  
 Mefalsim 304  
 Meir, Golda 66, 168, 178, 204, 306  
 Meir, Joseph (Jóska Megyeri) 21, 194,  
 196, 205, 208, 218, 219, 224, 235, 260,  
 262, 263, 281, 287, 299, 342  
 Mekoroth 139  
 Melamed, Abraham 164  
 Melkites 31, 33, 98, 109  
 Menado 45  
 Mennonites 17, 18, 103, 129, 131, 144-146,  
 156, 158, 171, 184, 186, 227, 245, 246, 275,  
 289, 294, 320-322, 343, 348, 360, 367, 371  
 Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)  
 18, 103, 186, 289, 302, 324, 335, 370  
 Merkley, Paul Charles 102, 259, 365  
 Messmer, Willy 112  
 Methodists 112, 369  
 Meyer, Gottfried 194  
 Michel, Otto 153  
 Middelburg 103  
 Migdal HaEmek 110  
 Miller, Mart 21, 265, 275, 288, 323  
 Miller, Orië 17, 21, 23, 103, 131, 144, 145,  
 170, 177, 184-186, 193, 229, 240, 245, 246,  
 281, 289, 290, 292, 305, 319, 320, 324,  
 325, 327, 335, 343, 348, 352, 360, 361,  
 363, 371  
 Miller, Willie 63  
 Millet autonomy 32, 36, 56, 257, 305  
 Millwaukee 301  
 Milton, John 161  
 Minhal Hamayim 287  
 Minnaar, Adri 363  
 Minnaar, Jacobus (Jac, Ko) 19, 21, 23,  
 133, 144, 157, 172, 173, 177, 193, 194,  
 208, 215, 216, 230, 239, 246, 247, 249,  
 251, 257, 264, 281, 284, 285, 292, 293,  
 314, 316, 317, 319, 320, 332, 333, 335,  
 337, 339-342, 346-348, 350, 362, 363  
 Minnaar, Jan Cornelis 157, 173  
 Miskotte, Kornelis Heiko 35, 158, 185,  
 285  
 Misrefôt Maïm 98  
 Mizra 232, 233, 267  
 Moade, Jabr 223  
 Mo'atza Azorit Mateh Asher 302  
 Mönchen-Gladbach 149  
 Monte Carlo 146  
 Montreux 112  
 Moody Bible Institute 66  
 Morton, Henry Vollam 100  
 Moscow 33  
 Mount Nebo 300  
 Mount Zion 15, 31, 163  
 Muadi, Jabr Dahish 87  
 Mu'adi, Kamal 86  
 Mu'ayyad, Habib 81-83  
 Mubarki, Jusuf (Juseph) 28, 289, 300  
 Mühlheim 24, 345  
 Müller, Edwin 23, 319, 322, 332, 335, 337,  
 339, 347, 349  
 Münster 136, 149  
 al-Mujaydil 110  
 Muller-Duvernoy, Claude 16, 65-69, 97,  
 101, 102, 104, 112, 113, 117, 120, 133,  
 155, 164, 171, 220, 233, 315  
 Muller-Duvernoy, Marianne 65, 68  
 Multatuli (Eduard Douwes Dekker) 238  
 Munce, Herbert B. 128  
 Munich 123  
 Murre-van den Berg, Heleen 67  
 Murten 112, 172  
 Na'aman 302  
 Nabi Shu'ayb 79, 83, 85  
 Nablus 199  
 Nahal Oz 20, 236, 237, 247, 249, 303, 314  
 Nahariya 17, 19, 20, 22, 92, 135, 153, 162,  
 189, 192, 208, 216-218, 221, 234, 241, 263,  
 273, 281, 289, 292, 298, 299, 301, 318,  
 332, 333, 335, 346, 348, 358, 371  
 Nancy 65  
 Naor, consul-general in Zurich 174  
 Napoleon Bonaparte 90, 92, 298  
 Nâs 233  
 Nasralla, Elsie 54  
 Nassar, Saleem 110  
 Nasser, Gamal Abdel 59  
 National Association of Evangelicals  
 (NAE) 245, 246  
 National Religious Party 164, 203, 204,  
 219, 270  
 Navon, Yitzhak 194

- Nazareth (En-Násira) 15, 16, 19, 20, 22,  
 26, 50, 53, 86, 98, 107-123, 141, 173, 184,  
 234, 235, 238, 245, 246, 248, 269, 270,  
 272, 273, 279, 295, 304-306, 312, 313, 315,  
 318, 343, 347, 351, 352, 360, 367  
 Nazareth-Illit 109  
 Near East Christian Council 36  
 Nederlandse Christelijke Radiovereniging  
 (NCRV) 173  
 Neher, André 66  
 Nes Ammim village *passim* from 225  
 Neûchatel 112  
 Newbigin, Lesslie 285  
 New York 175, 245, 246  
 Nicole, H. 297  
 Niederberg 136  
 Noordtjij, Arie 52  
 Nossu (Celebes) 45  
 Nothacker, Friedrich 16, 17, 134, 135,  
 153, 162, 192, 217  
 Nothacker, Luisa 134, 135, 153, 192  
  
 Oberli, Hans 22, 275  
 Oeloesaloe (Celebes) 45  
 Ofer, Avraham 218  
 Oliphant, Laurence 96, 129, 329  
 Oosten, Fie 43  
 Oosten, Hendrik Jan 43  
 Oosterbaan, J.A. 158  
 Oosterhoff, B.J. 158  
 Or Hagalil 371  
 Orabua (Celebes) 45  
 Orkin, Meir 218, 287  
 Ornstein, Fritzl 196  
 Ornstein, Josef 195  
 Osango (Celebes) 45  
 Overduin, Leendert 196  
 Overschie 157  
 Oyen, Hendrik van 112, 175, 247  
 Oz Lamo 371  
  
 Pacifism 102, 103, 245, 271  
 Palache, Izaak Leo 162  
 Palestine Exploration Fund 297  
 Palestine Exploration Society 90  
 Palmach 164, 298  
 Palmer, E.H. 297  
 Pana (Celebes) 45  
 Parsons, Laila 85  
 Pascal, Blaise 362  
 Patondokan (Celebes) 47  
  
 Paul VI, Pope 269, 270  
 Paul of Tarsus 66, 89, 117, 120, 197, 314  
 Paulus, Anneke 155  
 Pax workers 184, 240, 289, 294  
 Pekel, Alida 57, 58, 104, 157, 173, 209,  
 228, 251  
 Pencovic, H.B. 121, 122, 127, 132, 143  
 Pennsylvania 103, 131, 265  
 Pentecostal Church 40, 121, 246  
 Perath, M.J. 220  
 Pietism 134, 152, 153, 274, 277  
 Pilon, Allaert Constantijn (Allaert) 28,  
 47, 183, 332, 344, 353, 360  
 Pilon, Annebiene Christina (Annebiene)  
 28, 41, 52, 211, 332, 341, 344  
 Pilon, Atalwin 26, 361, 371  
 Pilon, Christine Pauline (Stiene) 28, 118  
 Pilon, Jennigje 41, 44  
 Pilon, Johan Jacob (Johan) 15-20, 22-24,  
 26, 28, 38-59, 63-77, 84, 88, 90, 96, 98-  
 101, 103, 105, 114, 116-120, 123, 127, 128,  
 131-137, 139, 141, 143-146, 151, 152, 157,  
 159, 161-166, 168, 169, 171-173, 176, 178-  
 185, 189-193, 201, 203-208, 210-214, 216,  
 219-222, 224, 227, 229, 230, 236, 240, 243,  
 245-247, 251-253, 257-259, 262, 265, 271,  
 275, 277, 279, 283, 284, 286, 287, 289,  
 291-294, 300, 303, 305-307, 314, 317-321,  
 324, 326, 331-334, 336-341, 343, 345-354,  
 357-360, 362-364, 367, 368, 370, 371  
 Pilon, Pauline (Paulie) 41  
 Pilon, Pieter 40-42, 44, 58, 211  
 Pilon, Pieter (Piet) 41, 43, 44  
 Pilon, Pieter Johan Jacob (Pieter) 26, 47,  
 342, 353, 357, 360, 361  
 Pilon, Richard 28, 52, 100, 360  
 Pilon, Tonke 41, 43, 48  
 Pilon, Tonke Jacobs 40, 42  
 Pilon-Wentholt, Stijn 40, 43, 44-59, 68,  
 117, 118, 163, 262, 280, 287, 305, 332,  
 333, 337-339, 343, 344, 346, 360, 364, 371  
 Plain of Asher 19, 81, 83, 88-94, 189, 191,  
 202, 228, 288, 297  
 Plain of Sharon 15, 219  
 Pol, Jan van der 324  
 Polet, Gerrit 19, 173, 251, 300, 351, 353,  
 358, 362  
 Poljak, Abram 15, 67  
 Poriya 59, 117  
 Posen 221  
 Praag, Henri van 306, 322

- Praagh, Mirjam van *see* Bezek  
 Preis, Eva 347, 349  
 Presbyterians 96, 102, 110, 129, 333, 369  
 Press, Jesaias (Yeshuyahu) 32, 92  
 Presser, Jacques 325, 368  
 Pretoria 54  
 Prins, Diena 57  
 Puritanism 31, 33, 161  
 Purwodadi (regency Grobodan) 41  
  
 Qa'wār, Nadjwa 98, 142  
 Qehila ha-Meshichit ha-Yisraelit 121  
 Quaack, Bets 230, 319  
 Qasmiyeh 301  
 Qumran 66, 120  
  
 Rama 104  
 Ramalla 300  
 Ramat Gan 103, 186  
 Rav-Hai, David Bar 223  
 Red Cross 15, 295, 367  
 Red Sea Mission 36  
 Re'emy (Reëmi), Paul 54, 231, 371  
 Reformed Churches in the Netherlands  
 (RCN) 15, 17-19, 23, 26, 34, 35, 40, 42-  
 44, 49, 52, 56-59, 63, 96, 97, 104, 115, 116,  
 118, 119, 128, 131, 141, 143-145, 152, 157,  
 158, 171, 173, 179, 184, 201, 204, 207,  
 210, 217, 219, 230, 239, 251-253, 263, 264,  
 286, 313, 337, 343, 361, 366, 370  
 Reform Judaism 133, 217, 307  
 Regba 21, 22, 28, 92, 195, 196, 218, 235,  
 238, 260, 272, 275, 283, 288, 297-299, 302,  
 315, 318, 322, 324, 351, 358, 367, 368  
 Rekker, Rinze 194, 195  
 Rengstorf, Karl Heinz 134, 135, 137, 164,  
 250, 264, 274, 280, 304, 309, 313  
 Rentschler, Judith 371  
 Rheinische Kirche *see* Evangelische Kirche  
 im Rheinland  
 Rheinklingen 232  
 Rheydt 149  
 Rhodes 87  
 Ridder, Bouke 341  
 Ridderbos, Herman N. 158, 285  
 Ridderbos, Jan 118  
 Riedt 112  
 Riehen 175  
 Riftin, Ja'akov 20, 212, 214, 218, 222-224,  
 228  
 Ritter, Carl 90  
  
 Ritter, Heinz-Adolf 249  
 Robert, Jeanne 21, 233, 235, 240, 241, 265,  
 273, 275, 278, 284, 292, 314-316, 318, 324,  
 339, 346, 350, 353, 357, 367  
 Robert, Léon 21, 22, 155, 233, 235, 241,  
 265, 270, 278, 288, 289, 307, 314-316, 318,  
 323, 324, 326, 339, 340, 346, 350, 351,  
 353, 357, 367  
 Robert, Mary-Jeanne 21, 233, 235, 241,  
 288, 289, 339, 353, 367  
 Rodrigues Pereira, Salomon Aaron 19,  
 201  
 Rogers, Eliza 90  
 Roman-Catholic Church 31, 33, 58, 67,  
 83, 109, 222  
 Romandia 172, 246  
 Ronen-Laron, Tanja 28, 299, 300, 343,  
 351, 357  
 Rost, Elisabeth 318, 324  
 Roost, Paul 22, 184, 186, 233-235, 273,  
 289, 307, 318, 323, 324, 339, 350, 351  
 Rosh Haniqra 88, 92, 288  
 Rosh Pina 96  
 Rosner, Jakob 92  
 Rothschild, Edmond de 315  
 Rotterdam 16, 19, 56, 101, 103, 116, 157,  
 173, 251, 316, 325, 326, 339  
 Row, Harold 290  
 Rueff, Alfred 132  
 Rufeisen, Oswald (Daniel of the Karmel)  
 16, 213  
 Ruler, A.A. van 35, 158, 285  
 Russian Orthodox Church 110  
  
 Sa'ar 293  
 Sabbagh, Edmund 110  
 Sachar, Howard M. 248  
 Safrai, Shmuel 322, 341  
 Saghur 191  
 Said, Edward 142, 295, 368  
 Saladin 92  
 Saleeba, Zareefy 54  
 Salzmann, P. 273  
 Säriswil 112  
 Said, Eissa (Eisa) Abu Hanna 234  
 St. Andrew's Hospice, Jerusalem 163, 166  
 St. Chrischona 317  
 Salatiga Mission 40  
 Salvation Army 39  
 Sand, Shlomo 100  
 Sanderecki, Max 166

- Sanderson, Edith 81  
 Saphir, Yaacov 342  
 Sapir, Pinchas 18, 162, 163, 178, 202, 299  
 Sassoon, Ischak 218  
 Sayda 302  
 Schaffhausen 17, 101, 156, 178, 197, 231,  
 232, 236, 249, 273  
 Scharf, Kurt 249, 304  
 Scheveningen 15, 115, 195, 331  
 Schiedam 238  
 Schildknecht, Jakob 156, 172  
 Schlatter, Danielle 323  
 Schlatter, Elisabeth 335  
 Schlatter, Theodor 249  
 Schmidt, Edgar 112  
 Schneider, Peter 341  
 Schoch, Kurt 112  
 Scholl, Eugen 112  
 Scholtens, Murkje 362  
 Schoneveld, Jacobus jr. (Coos) 105, 117  
 Schoneveld, Jacobus sr. 105, 144, 158  
 Schonfield, Hugh 120  
 Schoon, Simon 28, 344, 361, 363  
 Schouten, Jan 158  
 Schubert, Theophil (Theo) 156, 174, 322,  
 354  
 Schuster, Aharon 19, 201, 203  
 Schwaben 152, 153  
 Schwaller, Emil 23, 311-313, 316, 317,  
 320-322, 326, 327  
 Schwank, Max 112, 172, 177, 292, 319,  
 322  
 Schweizerische Evangelische Judenmission  
 (SEJ) 66, 67  
 Schweizerische Evangeliumsdienst in  
 Israel (SEI) 132, 172  
 Schweizerische Kreditanstalt 193  
 Schweitzer, Albert 224, 294  
 Schweitzer Hospital, Tiberias 37, 54  
 Scots Hospital Tiberias ('Scotti') *see*  
 Church of Scotland Mission Hospital  
 Sde Boker 23, 311  
 Sephardim 33, 49, 51, 161, 201, 223, 332  
 Segev, Tom 301  
 Selms, Ad van 55, 317  
 Semarang 44  
 Sendana 47  
 S.E.S.A.M. 42  
 Settlement Department 298  
 Shaftesbury, Lord (Anthony Ashley Co-  
 per) 31  
 Shaltiel, David 183  
 Shamir, Shimon 87  
 Shapira, Anita 123, 345  
 Sharon Tours 103  
 Shavei Zion 16, 17, 19, 92, 152, 153, 180,  
 195, 273  
 Shavit, Ari 297  
 Shefar'am (Shefaram, Shefa Amr) 87, 98  
 Shelman, Moshe 54, 55, 58, 116  
 Shimron Meron 297  
 Shinnar, Eliezer 180  
 Shner, Gil 301  
 Shomrat 172, 193, 278, 281, 315, 317, 318,  
 323, 335  
 Sidon 295  
 Sigg, F. 112  
 Sikkel, C.J. 230, 252, 253, 284  
 Silber, Wilhelm 249  
 Silesia 92, 135  
 Sim'an, Ibrahim 289  
 Simon, Lili 135-137, 164, 247, 304  
 Simons, Menno 103  
 Sinai 358, 360  
 Slagmolen, Stien 323  
 Slauerhoff, Jan Jacob 43  
 Sloan, George L.B. 36  
 Slot, Anna 57  
 Smadja, Victor 105, 121, 184  
 Smeenk, Ben 57, 230  
 Smitsman, Cees 368  
 Snoek, Corrie 238, 239, 352  
 Snoek, Johan 23, 56, 57, 65, 101, 117, 128,  
 190, 192, 211, 219, 220, 238, 239, 252,  
 275, 281, 284, 292, 300, 317, 337, 347,  
 351, 352, 357-359, 364  
 Snoek, Ria 56, 65, 238  
 Sochnut Yehudit 265  
 Societas Studiosorum Reformatorum (SSR)  
 42  
 Société des Amis d'Israel (SAI) 66, 67  
 Society for the Defence of Arab Minority  
 Rights in Israel 98  
 Soloveitchik, Josef Baer 282  
 Sommerfeld (Peled), Gabi 22, 235, 272,  
 315, 321  
 Southern Baptists 21, 245, 246, 248, 289  
 Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands  
 (SPD) 150  
 Speelman, Wim 42  
 Spek, Cor van der 21, 22, 114, 197, 202n,  
 240, 241, 247, 251, 265, 267, 269, 272,

- 278, 279, 283-285, 287, 288, 293, 294, 312,  
315-317, 336, 339, 344, 358, 362
- Spek, Inge van der 367
- Spek, Kees van der 275
- Spek-Paulus, Anneke van der 240, 272,  
285, 312, 358
- Spörli, René 362
- Staa, Friedrich-Wilhelm von 136
- Stalin, Josef 16
- Staphorst 265
- Starkenber (Montfort or Kul'at el Kurn)  
85
- Stegeren, Ton van 157
- Stegeren-Keizer, Hanna-Louk van 20, 63,  
157, 210, 252, 264, 286, 337, 340, 343
- Steller, Augusta ('Gussie') 49, 50, 56, 57
- Sternberg, Boris 218
- Sternberg, Yitschak 218
- Stettin (Szczecin) 135, 304
- Stöver, Heinz 136
- Stoltzfuss, Abner 103
- Strasburg 66
- Stuttgart 219
- Sukarno 44, 173
- Sulam Tzur 302
- Sumba 40
- al-Summayriyya 28, 83, 85, 91, 92, 288,  
295-302
- Surabaya 50
- Swarr, Paul 196
- Swedish Institute, Jerusalem 143, 167
- Syrian Protestant College *see* American  
University, Beirut
- Tabaksblatt, Israel 57, 103-105, 118, 142,  
144, 145, 157, 173, 178, 208, 209, 212-214,  
228
- Tabari, family in Tiberias 37
- Tabenkin, Yitzhak 195
- Tabone (Celebes) 45
- Tahal 139, 287
- Tal, Uriel 341
- Tala el Bellâneh 90
- Talmi, Menachem 311, 312
- Tangier 97
- Tanzimat 32
- Tarif, Amin 86, 190
- Tarif, Salman 85, 87
- Tatz, Gershon 218, 221
- Tawalian (Celebes) 45
- Technion, Haifa 163, 249
- Tel Aviv 17, 19, 50, 97, 105, 121, 128, 136,  
168, 177, 189, 191, 193, 263, 275, 311,  
322, 333, 340, 366, 368
- Temanggun (Java) 39, 41
- Tempelgesellschaft 136, 145, 153, 157,  
176, 194, 331
- Tenuvah 283
- Tessin 273
- Thacir, travel agency 286
- Thayngen 156
- Theresienstadt 151
- Thompson, W. Alex 128
- Thompson, William McClure 129
- Thut, Suzanne 324
- Tiberias (Tweriya) 15, 31-34, 36-38, 48-59,  
68, 96, 102, 103, 109, 115, 117, 119, 134,  
185, 207, 238, 300, 357, 359, 371
- Tiberias Fund 16, 17, 68-77, 88, 100-102,  
104, 107, 111, 116, 118, 119, 139, 206
- Tillich, Paul 171
- Timm, Marianne 304
- Tol, Arie van 22, 272, 306, 319, 323, 339,  
346, 350, 352, 355, 360
- Toraja 45-50, 52
- Toren, Eli 204
- Torrance, David Watt 32, 33, 64, 67
- Torrance, Herbert 33, 36, 65
- Toubi, Tewfik 219
- Treina, Jean 112
- Trenggiling 41
- Tripoli (Lebanon) 295
- Trumpeldor (Nahariya) 332
- Tsabari, Rachel 223
- Tsefat (Safed) 96, 110
- Tsur (Tschernowitz), Jacob 166
- Tübingen 180, 195
- Tuyt, Ellen 53, 57, 65, 115, 117, 222, 300, 357
- Tyrharfa 301
- Tyrian Steps 92
- Tyrus (Sour, Tyre) 89, 91, 295, 301
- Ueter, Liselotte 152
- United Council of Christian Churches in  
Israel (UCCI) 16, 17, 114, 121, 127,  
171, 182, 281, 285, 286, 300, 305, 345, 352
- United Nations 255, 301
- United Nations Relief and Works Agency  
(UNRWA) 295, 300, 302
- Unterman, Isser Yehuda 212
- Uris, Leon 197, 311
- Utrecht 345

- Va'adah (supervisory board) 197, 214,  
 228, 235, 237, 239-241, 243, 246, 247,  
 257-266, 274, 280, 315, 319, 321, 322, 324,  
 332, 336, 337, 342, 348, 361, 369  
 Val de Ruz 233  
 Vartan, Pacradooni Kaloost 110  
 Vaucher, Paul 246, 347  
 Veen, L. van 144, 157, 173  
 Veenhof, C. 158, 194, 197  
 Velbert 17, 18, 20, 21, 134-138, 147, 152-  
 154, 161, 164, 168, 172, 178, 180, 181,  
 184, 216, 222, 227, 229, 237, 246, 248,  
 250, 253, 257, 258, 279, 280, 282, 287,  
 290, 293, 296, 304, 312, 320-322, 333, 334,  
 336, 338, 345, 347, 355, 359, 361, 363,  
 364, 367  
 Velde, Charles William Meredith van de  
 297  
 Velden, Machiel van der 319, 325, 326  
 Venice 323  
 Vereinigte Bibelgruppen (VEB) 272, 273  
 Verkruisen, A.M. (Lydie) 57  
 Vermeulen, Dirk 299, 367, 368  
 Verwaltungsrat Nes Ammim AG 19, 21,  
 23, 176, 179, 194, 206, 208, 216, 249, 260,  
 283, 284, 286, 287, 289, 291, 293, 294,  
 312, 315, 317, 319, 324, 332-340, 343,  
 347-349  
 Vetten, M.C. 157, 173, 206  
 Vetterli, Christine 235  
 Vetterli, Ella 20, 21, 217, 232, 233, 235,  
 238, 240, 265, 269, 279, 312, 367  
 Vetterli, Hans 20, 21, 217, 232-235, 238,  
 240, 265, 270, 279, 312, 318, 336, 344, 367  
 Victoria, Queen 117  
 Vischer, Georg 270, 273  
 Vischer-Staehelin, Benedikt 112  
 Visser 't Hooft, Willem 320  
 Vliet, Ada van 57  
 Voet, Joop 19, 176, 178, 190, 193, 257  
 Vogt, Paul 203  
 Vollenweider, Rudolf 112  
 Vos, Clärli 54, 371  
 Vries, Alice (Aliza) de 115  
 Vriezen, Th.C. 38, 54, 118, 144, 145, 157,  
 206  
 Wadi el-Mejûneh 91  
 Wadi Nisnas (Haifa) 98  
 Wahrhaftig, Zerah (Zorach) 20, 203-205,  
 212, 213, 222, 281  
 Walden community 317  
 Walker, Bernard 36, 52, 56, 58  
 Walker, David 52  
 Walpot, Ies 64, 65, 84, 115, 116  
 Walraven, Kees van 101, 194  
 Wardi, Chaim 17, 171, 212  
 Warsaw 134, 195, 234  
 Washington 245  
 Waterink, J. 158  
 Weitz, Josef 299  
 Weitz, Ra'anán 176  
 Weitzman, Doralene 128  
 Weizmann, Chaim 37, 143  
 Wenger, John 23, 324-326, 331-333, 335,  
 336, 338, 346, 352  
 Wenger, Lucille 325, 346, 352  
 Werblowsky, Raphael Zwi 18, 21, 22,  
 161-165, 168, 170, 174, 181, 182, 197, 206,  
 214, 215, 223, 245-247, 253, 264, 281, 320,  
 322, 341, 342, 362, 363, 365  
 Wesseling, J. 176  
 Westerbork 115  
 Western Springs, Illinois 290  
 Wettingen 112  
 Wichelhaus, Rike 151, 250, 303, 305  
 Wiedergutmachung 172, 227  
 Wiel, Ulrike 154  
 Wielenga, Truus 362  
 Wieringermeerpolder 115  
 Wiggers, Gerhard 299, 313, 315, 316, 319,  
 324, 339, 344, 351  
 Wijlen, Jannie van 57  
 Wilchingen 156  
 Wilhelmina, Queen 46, 178  
 Wilm, Ernst 249  
 Winkel, Henk te 324  
 Winterthur 112, 114  
 Wolfenberger, J.R. 144  
 Wolting, Ab 337  
 Woodhead, Bevan 53, 117  
 Worill, Fred 246  
 World Council of Churches 16, 34, 67,  
 68, 101, 257, 285, 320, 365  
 World Union for the Propagation of Ju-  
 daism 204, 219  
 Württemberg 134  
 Wyman, Helene 16, 134, 217  
 Wyss, David von 156  
 Xanthen 149

- Ya'akov, Aharon 215  
 Yad Hashmona 371  
 Yad Nathan 293  
 Yarka 79, 86, 93, 190, 223  
 Yeshuv Meshichee Israeli 130, 131  
 Young, G. Douglas 102, 162  
 Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)  
   102, 121, 164, 171, 178, 212, 349  
 Yusuf, Rushdiyya al 302  
  
 Zadok, Chaim 205  
 Zahar (Czahar), Moshe 56, 58, 64  
 Zeugin, Ernst 112  
 Zikhron Ya'akov 219, 238  
  
 Zimmerman, Zwi 223  
 Zionism 34, 36, 52, 55, 66, 81, 84, 85, 90-  
   92, 97, 115, 145, 152, 157, 167, 185, 202,  
   281, 296, 303, 322  
 Zochrot 302  
 Zoetermeer 197  
 Zofingen 112  
 Z'Ubi, Abdul Aziz 110  
 Zuckermann, Yitzhak ('Antek') 195, 359  
 Zurich 18, 21, 66, 112, 156, 172, 174, 177-  
   179, 183, 265, 312, 318, 332, 335, 337,  
   338, 348, 349, 362  
 Zwahlen, Albin 323, 324, 326  
 Zwolle 44

Gert  
van  
Klinken

Today, Europe is a favoured destination for refugees from all over the world. We might have forgotten an earlier exodus during the aftermath of the Second World War in the opposite direction. Jewish survivors of the Holocaust aimed for Palestine, and after 1948, the State of Israel.

Protestants from the Netherlands, Switzerland, America and Germany intended to join the Jewish people in their new homeland by building the village Nes Ammim. The Netherlands had been occupied during the war; Switzerland had remained neutral. Germany carried the taints of guilt and defeat, the United States the laurels of the victor. What made them work together? And why did the Americans and the Swiss withdraw in 1967, the year of the Six-Day War? The many questions surrounding this village do not end here. Nes Ammim was founded near Akko in 1962. Just fourteen years earlier, a majority of the local population had been Druze or Arab. Most of the Arabs ended up as refugees, and their land was repurposed for the kibbutzim. How did Protestants relate to these events?

It is not the intention of the author to impose present-day views onto the Christian founders of Nes Ammim. The challenge of understanding their mindset within the context of their time is exactly what makes them so fascinating.

# Nes Ammim

