

SHLICHIM FROM PALESTINE IN LIBYA

Rachel Simon

Contacts between the Jewish communities of Palestine and the diaspora continued throughout the ages by shlichim (emissaries) who were sent from Palestine. This essay examines the background, goals, and activities of shlichim to Libya in the twentieth century, taking the earlier period as a background. In addition to traditional emissaries, an increasing number of Zionist ones were sent to Libya, at first imitating the practices of traditional ones. Gradually, the Zionist emissaries tried to transform the community and prepare it for emigration to Israel professionally, socially, culturally, and politically.

There is a long tradition of *shlichim* going from Palestine to the Jewish diaspora, yet the reasons behind their mission, their ways of operation, and reactions in the diaspora towards them underwent changes throughout time. The focus here is on emissaries to Libya in the twentieth century, taking the earlier period as a background for comparison: to what extent were changes introduced, to what degree were these based on traditional patterns, and how did the local population accept these innovations.

Jewish Political Studies Review 9:1-2 (Spring 1997)

Traditional Religious Emissaries

The traditional emissary was a rabbinic one: *shaliach de-rabanan* (emissary of the rabbis, also referred to by the acronym *shadar*). Most of these emissaries were sent by the communities of the four holy cities in Palestine (Jerusalem, Hebron, Safed, and Tiberias) or specific *yeshivot* there, to collect donations for their senders. Local communities in Libya were well prepared for the arrival of emissaries: synagogues had donation boxes for specific purposes, and certain individuals — men as well as women — were in charge of the various collections. When a *shadar* arrived in town he was hosted by the community, emptied the collection boxes, and at times assisted in religious activities, including the administration of justice. Some were even persuaded to stay in Libya and turned out to be among its leading rabbis. *Shadarim* moved between the communities and as a result fulfilled the function of spreading news about Jews in Palestine and the diaspora.

Although emissaries were usually highly regarded, and occasionally treated almost like saints, even by the gentile society, the communities had at times reservations regarding these visitors based on religious practice and even more, on economic grounds. The Jews of the diaspora had much respect for the Jewish community in Palestine and its religious institutions, but nonetheless regarded their own religious practices as binding, and did not want others to be judgmental towards them. Moreover, as much as they wanted to financially support the institutions and the poor in Palestine, most of the Libyan Jewry was indigent, and could not afford to donate high and frequent sums for external charities. As a result, local regulations specified that emissaries could come only at fixed intervals.¹

Zionist Emissaries

With the rise of Zionism, the phenomenon of emissaries from the Holy Land became more complex: the number of institutions sending them increased, their character became varied, and their goals widened. Yet the development was gradual, many innovations were within the framework of traditional patterns of behavior, and old forms continued to exist beside the new. The basic goals of the new *shlichim* were at first also financial and spiritual: asking for donations and spreading the word of Zion. But the goals of the new emissaries were geared towards different directions: the collection

of monies was for the National Funds and the preaching focused on Zionism. To these were later added social and educational goals (Hebrew Zionist education, the establishment of Zionist youth movements, and welfare) as well as existential aims (local Jewish defense and emigration to Israel). Thus, with the passing of time, the emissaries were increasingly delivering spiritual and earthly goods and, to a much lesser degree, soliciting donations. While these characteristics developed gradually, new ones did not supersede the old, but usually were added to them. Yet each period had its emphasis, and consequently increased the importance, influence, and effectiveness of specific types of *shlichim*.

It was not the *shlichim* who brought Zionism to Libya: the Love of Zion had never ceased there. Modern political Zionism became known in Libya through publications reaching the region soon after the establishment of the Zionist movement, but requests by individual Libyan Jews to be that movement's representatives in Libya and distribute its publications among local Jews remained largely unanswered for a long period of time.² Zionist emissaries started to visit Libya only following the stabilization of Italian rule there in the 1920s at a time when Libyan Jews became part of the Italian Zionist Federation.

Emissaries During the Italian Period

The earliest modern *shlichim* were representatives of the Jewish National Fund (JNF — Keren Kayemet le-Yisra'el). The most famous one was Abraham Elmaleh, a Jerusalemite Sephardi, who visited Libya in March-April 1923.³ Many characteristics of his visit resembled the activities of traditional *shadarim*, yet new content was put in old form, and he set the pattern for future fundraising. He, too, came to solicit donations which were gathered in collection boxes, not the traditional ones but the blue box (*ha-kufsa ha-kehulah*), with the map of Israel drawn on it, and the monies were not aimed to support *yeshivot* and other religious institutions, but to buy land in Palestine through a special department in the Zionist movement, the JNF. He stayed, as in the past, with Jewish dignitaries, and many of the public gatherings took place in synagogues, where he presented news from Israel. Yet the character of his presentations was different, and focused on the "New Yishuv" and its agricultural settlements. There was also a new element in the audience: women, in increasing numbers, started to attend these meetings, which among other things advocated the new role of women in the Jewish

national movement. Elmaleh was also instrumental in mediating between two rival factions in the Tripolitan community and in establishing the Zionist Federation of Tripolitania.

During the inter-war period, representatives of the JNF visited Libya for short periods of time. Donations were collected mainly under the supervision of local Jews and forwarded to the Zionist Federation of Italy.⁴ Thus, this phase of Zionist *shlichim* had the following characteristics: short public visits, fundraising, spreading news and propaganda, and the appointment of local representatives to local branches. Emphasis was on fundraising and not on aliyah (immigration to Israel) or self-fulfillment (*hagshamah atzmit*, namely, settlement in a kibbutz), and the activities were relatively leisurely and undemanding. World War II changed all this.

World War II

During World War II, the Jews of Libya were on the verge of a Holocaust: Italian racial legislation was in force since 1938, most of the Cyrenaican community was exiled to central Tripolitania, Jews who had citizenship of enemy countries (e.g., Britain and France) were exiled from Libya (the former to Europe, some reaching German and Austrian concentration camps, and the latter to Tunisia, which was under Vichy rule since 1940), and increasing numbers of German military were stationed in Libya. Rumors of German plans to send all Libyan Jews to concentration or even extermination camps remain unsubstantiated. Jewish communities in eastern Libya suffered due to the repeated army movements towards Egypt, and major coastal cities, especially Tripoli, were bombarded by the Allied Forces.⁵

To this background came the Palestinian Jewish soldiers in the British army, which succeeded in its third attempt to invade Libya from Egypt during late 1942-early 1943 and occupied most of the country. The British army, and especially the Jewish soldiers, were perceived as saviors by the local Jews. Moreover, feeling betrayed by their old Western role models, the Italians, Libyan Jews were in the right state of mind to accept a new role model more closely related to their tradition — the Zionist Palestinian Jew.

The Palestinian Jewish soldiers were first and foremost volunteers in the British army. They were not typical *shlichim*, although they fulfilled important educational and social roles among the Libyan Jews and helped in matters of defense and emigration. Even though they tried to do their utmost for the Libyan Jews, their

military obligations often got in the way, while at other times also assisted them. Thus, immediately after the invasion many officers (especially the Jewish ones in units composed mainly of Palestinian Jews) allowed Jewish soldiers to help local communities. This changed with the passage of time and the soldiers had to find unconventional ways to be with the community.⁶ Gradually, most of them left Libya for Italy, and by 1946 hardly any Palestinian Jews remained in Libya. Yet, they were instrumental in spreading modern Hebrew education, introducing new social and economic ideas and practices, and training some Jews in the use of arms and self defense.⁷

Emissaries in the Mid-1940s

While the soldiers were often obliged to act covertly in their interaction with local Jews, this was even more essential for post-war *shlichim*, due to the growing opposition of the British Military Administration (BMA) to the existence of national movements rival to the Arab one in Libya. Consequently, the new Zionist emissaries had to be specially trained regarding their relations with the community, the authorities, and the Muslim society alike. The decision by the Zionist institutions to send emissaries from Palestine to Libya came in the wave of recognition of the importance of Jews in Middle Eastern and North African countries to the Zionist cause and to the war effort. Moreover, in the early 1940s, these were among the only regions open to activities from Palestine, due to the war.

Training of Emissaries

In order to prepare *shlichim* for their missions in Middle Eastern and North African countries, even when several of these were still under Axis rule, special training courses took place in 1942-43 which included academic instruction and practical training. The first course, organized by ha-Mosad la-Aliyah Bet (the Institution for Immigration B),⁸ took place in May 1942 in Mikveh Yisra'el. It lasted for about forty days and had some forty participants.⁹ In the summer of 1942, ha-Kibbutz ha-Me'uhad organized another course in Kibbutz Givat ha-Sheloshah for emissaries to European and Arab countries,¹⁰ and between mid-March and mid-May 1943, a third course was given on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem for some thirty participants.¹¹ The emissaries who came to Libya between 1943 and 1947 were graduates of these courses.

Political developments in Libya greatly influenced the focus of the mission of the emissaries. Aliyah and activities among the youth were central in the early 1940s. Defense issues came to the fore following the November 4-7, 1945 riots by local Arabs in Tripoli and its surroundings, resulting in over 130 Jews dead, numerous wounded, and much property damaged and stolen.¹² From 1949-52, the focus was on emigration.

Youth Movements and the Halutz

The first two post-war *shlichim* entered Libya covertly through Egypt under false identities, and only a few in the community knew who they really were,¹³ although more suspected but kept silent. They were Ya'ir Duer¹⁴ (September 1943-July 1944), who was born in Syria, grew up in Tel Aviv and was a member of Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan, and Ze'ev (Vilo) Katz¹⁵ (September-December 1943), who was originally from Romania and a member of Kibbutz Usha. They belonged to a major kibbutz movement, ha-Kibbutz ha-Me'uhad and were sent by ha-Mosad la-Aliyah Bet. Although not religiously observant, they both understood that in order to operate successfully in Libya they had to observe religious laws and act according to custom.¹⁶ Contact with their senders was through reports transferred mostly by trusted Palestinian Jewish soldiers who went home on leave.¹⁷

The primary goal of Duer and Katz was to organize aliyah from Libya, but upon their arrival in Tripoli they realized that they had come too late. Communications between Libya and Palestine had become more difficult, as Palestinian Jewish soldiers were being transferred to Europe, and the British were enforcing emigration laws from Libya more strictly. Moreover, with the return to normalcy, decreasing numbers of local Jews were interested in emigration.¹⁸ As a result, Duer and Katz focused on what was planned to be their secondary mission — the establishment of a pioneering youth movement.¹⁹

The *shlichim* worked within the system and branched out of the Ben Yehudah society. This was a local Zionist organization established in 1932 by local Jews and which focused on Hebrew revival, mainly among the youth.²⁰ The Ben Yehudah club served as a community center, and the two *shlichim* became involved in its social and educational activities.²¹ Their contacts with the youth there enabled Duer and Katz to quickly establish a youth movement similar to the ones which existed at the time among the Jewish youth

in Palestine. Although the emissaries appreciated the activities of the Ben Yehudah society towards Hebrew revival, they objected to its character — many came to the club to drink, chat, watch the female students, and play billiards, dominos, cards, and the emissaries wanted to keep the youth at a safe distance from what they regarded as corrupt behavior.²² Within a short time, the *shlichim* reached an agreement with the Ben Yehudah society resulting in a split based on age. Although the overall authority was left with the Ben Yehudah veteran leadership, in practice, the youth movement became independent, and moved to separate facilities.²³

Even before the emissaries left Palestine for Libya it was decided by the national institutions that the youth movement to be established in Libya should be a unified one, and should not reflect the political division which existed among the Jews in Palestine. This was done because political division did not exist among the Libyan Jews at the time — for them, there was only one Zionism — and the national institutions realized that the harm to the operation would be greater than the gain to individual political groupings. The lack of tradition of youth movement activity meant that the emissaries had to start from scratch and instill in the members notions of discipline, diligence, inter-gender relations, and Zionist concepts.²⁴ In order to improve the latter, the institutions in Palestine sent various publications, some of which were for the specific use of the youth movement, to the library of the Ben Yehudah society.²⁵

Duer and Katz were the leaders of the youth movement and were assisted at first by a few young men who had received some training from Palestinian Jewish soldiers.²⁶ One of the major aims of the emissaries was to train additional indigenous leaders in order to broaden the framework of the movement, increase its membership, and be able to continue the activity of the movement once the emissaries left.²⁷ Katz, who knew Italian, was also involved in the Maccabi society, which was hitherto mainly recreational in character and distanced itself from Zionist activity. He lectured on Jewish and Zionist topics and discussed Jewish nationalism in the Maccabi club.²⁸

The pioneering youth movement was an innovation in Libya, and the emissaries had to act carefully, keeping in mind their illegal presence in Tripoli. Objections were raised not only by traditional groups within the community, but also by the second coordinator of the Palestinian Jewish soldiers there. Being a teacher, he preferred that all efforts be concentrated on the new Hebrew school, and should not be wasted, as he saw it, on a pioneering youth movement for which he believed the community was not yet ready.²⁹

The educational and recreational activities in the pioneering youth movement were aimed at creating a "New Jew," both male and female, with a new social and economic agenda: aliyah and self-fulfillment in agricultural work in the kibbutz movement. One of the practical means for the latter purpose was the *Hakhsharah hakla'it* (agricultural training farm).³⁰ The first farm was established near Tripoli in June 1944 during Hag ha-Shavu'ot (Pentecost), and therefore the *Gar'in* (kernel)³¹ was called *Bikurim* (first fruit, offered during that festival). Duer and a new *shaliach* of ha-Mosad la-Aliyah Bet, Naftali Bar-Giyora³² (February-July 1944), a member of the religious kibbutz Sedeh Eliyahu, were involved in its establishment. The *Hakhsharah* was an even greater innovation in the life of urban Libyan Jews than Hebrew education and youth movements because it took pride in communal agricultural life and even introduced women to this enterprise.³³ Most of the richer Jews did not support these activities, but two wealthy merchants did, and thanks to their financial help the emissaries could finance their activities without asking for more money from Palestine.³⁴

Aliyah

Although it was realized that 1943 was not an appropriate time for large-scale Jewish emigration from Libya, it was decided to make use of Katz's previous experience in illegal immigration. He tried various sea and land routes in order to send emigrants from Libya, but did not have much success due to British policy and geographical hurdles. His achievement rested in the infrastructure that he built for emigration and defense. He trained a small number of trusted Tripolitan Jews to be members of the Haganah (defense organization) who, following the departure of these early emissaries, took upon themselves the local arrangements for emigration, defense, and pioneering youth activities.³⁵

When the emissaries realized that it was almost impossible to organize illegal emigration from Libya, they concentrated their efforts on legal emigration and put pressure on the national institutions in Jerusalem to allocate immigration certificates to Palestine for Libyan Jews. A plan to send Jewish orphans from Libya to Palestine failed, but following numerous requests, twenty immigration certificates reached Tripoli in 1944. When that happened, Duer and Bar-Giyora were instrumental in establishing an Aliyah Committee in Tripoli, with representation to the pioneering youth movement. They also managed to carry through the allocation of five

immigration certificates for pioneers (despite the fact that on a family certificate one could bring several Jews into Palestine). In order to ensure traditional religious life for the immigrant pioneers from Libya, Duer made arrangements to send them to a religious kibbutz, and not to one belonging to his party, where he could not guarantee a kosher kitchen and Sabbath observance.³⁶

Although Duer and Bar-Giyora cooperated in the establishment of the youth movement and the training farm, they also saw to the interests of their immediate senders, two rival kibbutz movements — ha-Kibbutz ha-Me'uhad (one of the leftist secular kibbutz movements) and ha-Kibbutz ha-Dati (the religious kibbutz movement). Both emissaries had a following in Tripoli which kept in contact with them after their departure and tried to strengthen the base of their type of pioneering in Libya.³⁷ The overall background of Libyan Jewry and the origin of future *shlichim* had a major role in directing these trends.

Both Duer and Bar-Giyora had to leave hastily in July 1944 when the British made it clear that they would no longer tolerate their clandestine activities.³⁸ The British opposed the strengthening of Jewish national aims because they competed with the British-sponsored Arab Libyan nationalism which aimed to establish an independent Arab state.

Haganah

No new emissaries were sent to Libya for almost two years despite frequent requests from Libyan Jews to the Jewish Agency to replace the emissaries who had left and to carry out additional tasks in education, health, and social welfare. It was only in the aftermath of the November 1945 riots in Tripoli and its vicinity that a new emissary was sent to Tripoli — Yisra'el Gur (Gorilik) from Kibbutz Sedeh Nahum (ha-Kibbutz ha-Me'uhad) and a member of the *Palmach* (guerrilla units of the *Haganah*). In May 1946, he was sent by ha-Mosad la-Aliyah Bet to organize self-defense (*Haganah*) and illegal emigration (*Hapalah*).³⁹

Gur acted even more covertly than those preceding him, and trained young Jewish men and women in defense tactics and underground activity, along patterns developed in Palestine for similar purposes. This activity was based on compartmentalization with wide authority given to a few trusted adherents — one group focused on defense and the other on emigration. Units of three to four members were trained in the use of light weapons and grenades,

and members of one group did not know about the activities of the others. As for emigration, Gur assisted in acquiring real and forged passports for emigrants, some of whom he sent in small fishing boats to Italy while others traveled through Tunisia and France.

Gur left in the first half of 1947 when it was feared that the British would put an end to his activities. By then the infrastructure for self-defense and illegal emigration was established, as became evident in the June 1948 riots in Tripoli when the community was able to defend itself.⁴⁰ Another manifestation was the numerous illegal emigration operations until February 1949, when an official Israeli representation was opened in Tripoli to organize direct legal immigration to Israel.

Shlichim from the State of Israel

Shlichim who were sent to Libya following the establishment of the State of Israel focused on emigration and some social, economic, and educational work. Their numbers, background, and characteristics reflected, to a large extent, the political and bureaucratic structure in Israel. The selection of the emissaries, the relations among them, and their relations with the local Jews were shaped by the political structure in Israel and the control of political parties on government ministries and on departments of the Jewish Agency.⁴¹

The main Israeli bodies which operated in Libya were the Ministry of Immigration, headed by Moshe Shapira, and the Department of Immigration of the Jewish Agency, headed by Yitzhak Refa'el, both of whom were leaders of Mizrahi, a Zionist religious party. As a result, the most influential and powerful emissaries in Libya belonged to these bodies and to the party which controlled them. Other emissaries were sent by several departments of the Jewish Agency. One was the Department of Middle Eastern Jews (DMEJ), headed by Yitzhak Zerubavel and Avraham Nadad, both of whom belonged to Mapam (Mifleget ha-Po'alim ha-Me'uhedet, a left-wing Zionist party). Its emissaries belonged to Mapam, or were at least *hofshiyim* ("free-thinkers"), a term which acquired negative connotations among religious Jews. Moshe Kol of the Progressive Party (a small central party) headed the Department of Youth Aliyah. Since this party had a smaller reserve of emissaries, people belonging to other parties tried to control the Bureau of Youth Aliyah in Tripoli or to take advantage of party affiliation in order to get an appointment *ex post facto*.

The influence of Mizrahi emissaries, who were in the majority, was stronger than that of other emissaries in Libya. This resulted primarily because of functional and ideological reasons but also due to their numbers. Emissaries who belonged to the immigration apparatus — and these were all Mizrahi people — had the strongest organizational influence over the population, most of whom wanted to emigrate. On the other hand, the roles and activities of the non-Mizrahi emissaries were limited and often not clearly defined. Moreover, the Libyan community was very traditional and religious in essence and showed growing preference to religious emissaries and opposition to leftists and "free thinkers."

Emissaries who were not accepted by the Libyan Jews did not succeed in their operation, nor did they receive senior positions, even if they stayed in Libya for a long period of time. This was evident even before the legal Israeli activity started. The Israeli government wanted to appoint Eliyahu Buhbut as its first Immigration Officer in Tripoli, but the community opposed the appointment due to its lengthy acquaintance with Buhbut from the time when he had been a Hebrew teacher there and later in charge of Hebrew correspondence with the British censorship. The community demanded to be consulted if a local person was appointed, although it acknowledged the right of Israel to appoint its representatives.⁴² It seems that the community was more inclined to accept the authority of an outsider than of an insider whose power base was limited.

Immigration Emissaries

Between March 1949 and December 1952, Israel sent four men to represent its Ministry of Immigration and the Department of Immigration of the Jewish Agency: Barukh Duvdevani (March-December 1949),⁴³ Me'ir (Max) Vardi (October 1949-September 1951),⁴⁴ Me'ir Shilon (September 1951-December 1952), and Hayim Solel (November 1951-November 1952).⁴⁵ The first two represented both the government and the Jewish Agency, the third — the government, and the fourth — the agency. The first two had a number of aides: Eliyahu Wachsberger (Geva) (August 1949-May 1951),⁴⁶ Zvi Har-Zahav (October 1949); Yonah Cohen (October-December 1949);⁴⁷ and Zalman Bugatin (December 1949-October 1950, February 1951-?). The Immigration Officers were regarded as official representatives of Israel,⁴⁸ and were often referred to by local Jews as "consuls."⁴⁹ Additional help was provided by the wives of Duvdevani, Vardi,

and Wachsberger who were involved in social and educational enterprises.

The few Israeli immigration officials were aided by numerous local Jews — adults and members of the youth movements — who helped in organizing the emigration of some 30,000 Jews. In order to organize the transfer of rural Jews to Tripoli in preparation for their emigration, the emissaries visited many rural communities and appointed local representatives to carry out the transfer to Tripoli.⁵⁰ The medical part of the emigration process was carried out by the Jewish Health Organization OZE (*Obshtchestvo Zdravookhraniye Evreyev*), and the overall financing was mainly by the American Joint Distribution Board (AJDB).⁵¹

On 26 January 1949, the British agreed to allow Jewish emigration from Libya to Israel, but for a while opposed official Israeli representation in Libya. For that reason Duvdevani used the pretext of visiting Jewish schools in Tripoli to justify his arrival in town. After his activities in favor of aliyah became an accomplished fact, the British acknowledged the existence of an Immigration Office in Tripoli headed by him.⁵² The Immigration Office became the community's center of activity for all issues, not only emigration. It was perceived as an official Israeli institution, with the Israeli flag hoisted on top, and where Israel's Independence Day was formally celebrated together with all non-Arab consuls.⁵³

Duvdevani formulated the way the Immigration Office operated and he developed cordial relations with local Jewish and gentile bodies. He was responsible for defining the emigration policy from Libya to the extent that it depended on the Libyan side and not on Israeli institutions. The most important decision made by him, together with Israeli, local, and international bodies, was to bring to Tripoli all the Tripolitanian and Cyrenaican Jews who wished to emigrate and lived in remote towns and villages, in order to make their emigration more efficient, secure, and fast. This decision was taken in June 1949, when Dr. Yitzhak Refa'el, the head of the Immigration Department, visited Tripoli, met with senior officials, and promised publicly to speed up the emigration. Refa'el's visit and announcement caused much excitement among the Libyan Jews.⁵⁴

Duvdevani returned to Tripoli for a short while in late November 1951 to help plan the emigration of the remaining Libyan Jews who wanted to leave on the eve of Libyan independence. He did this together with the representatives of the Immigration Department of the Jewish Agency (Haim Solel) and of the AJDB (Abraham Lascow).⁵⁵

Duvdevani was replaced by Dr. Me'ir (Max) Vardi. The latter's Italian origin and the fact that he was a member of a religious kibbutz in Israel (*Sedeh Eliyahu*) in which some Tripolitans temporarily

lived, facilitated his work in Libya. In addition to Vardi's main work as Immigration Officer he was very much involved in educational and cultural activities, especially among the youth, teachers, and youth movement leaders. Due to the lull in emigration during his tenure he asked, in November 1950, to return to Israel, but as emigration increased he decided to remain. Following a meeting between him and representatives of the community dealing with this issue, the latter sent numerous requests to Israel to keep Vardi in his position, and as a result his replacement was cancelled.⁵⁶

The last two immigration emissaries operated in the independent Arab kingdom of Libya, and for a while continued to behave as if nothing had changed. The Libyans did not agree to an official representation of the State of Israel, but did not object at first to that of the Jewish Agency, which they regarded as an international body. Israel wanted to keep an official representation in independent Libya for political and economic reasons, as well as for safeguarding Jewish emigration. However, due to the policies of the new Libyan state, the operations of the Israeli emissaries were curtailed with regard to aliyah and cultural-social activities. The Israeli representatives in Tripoli were not sensitive enough to the Libyan position on this issue, and following the Libyan declaration of independence continued to demonstrate Israeli sovereignty by using the term "representative of the State of Israel" and raising the Israeli flag over the Immigration Office. This was done contrary to instructions from Israel and the representatives were asked to refrain from these acts.⁵⁷

In 1952, Israel's Immigration Officer Me'ir Shilon exceeded the bounds of his authority of dealing exclusively with Jewish emigrants to Israel when he issued entry visas to tourists wishing to visit Israel, and thus acted contrary to a new Libyan law which prohibited the entry of Libyans, other than prospective Jewish immigrants into Israel. Furthermore, the Libyans were embarrassed when some Arabic language newspapers (e.g., *al-Ahram* [Egypt] and *al-Libi* [Libya]) stated that there was an Israeli consul in Tripoli to whom the Libyans had extended recognition.⁵⁸ As Libya's involvement in the Arab world increased, the Israeli presence in Tripoli became a growing burden on the Libyan government. One result of this was the October 1952 Libyan decision not to allow the entrance of Israeli ships into Tripoli, thus forcing immigrants to Israel to sail first to a European port.⁵⁹ Consequently, there was no longer any justification for the presence of Israeli immigration officials in Libya. As a result, when the Libyan government decided in November 1952 not to extend the visas of the Israeli representatives, they had to leave in December 1952 and the Immigration Office was closed, ending official Israeli presence in Libya.⁶⁰

Religious Non-Immigration Emissaries

In addition to the official representatives of the Immigration Ministry and the Immigration Department, a number of religious emissaries were sent to Libya during 1949-1951, but the definition of their position was at times quite vague. Even the responsibilities of Wachsberger were defined only a few months after his arrival in Tripoli, and the fact that until then he was not involved in party politics (*pe'ilut tenu'atit*) or educational and organizational activities was a source of criticism against him by a member of his party.⁶¹ Yonah Cohen, a journalist of *Hatzofeh*, a religious daily, was sent by the Department of Education and Culture of the Jewish Agency. He was very active in the special training courses for teachers and youth movement leaders. Participants in the courses were impressed by his enthusiasm and his singing abilities. In addition, he took part in editing and contributing articles to the local Jewish weekly *Hayenu*, and reported on developments among the Libyan Jews to *Hatzofeh* and to some other Israeli dailies.⁶² Another Mizrahi emissary was Zalman Bugatin, who was sent by the Department of Youth and Pioneering, and was mainly involved in educational activities.⁶³

Some Mizrahi members visited Tripoli for short periods of time only. The most prominent among them was Dr. Yitzhak Refa'el, the head of the Immigration Department of the Jewish Agency, who visited Libya in June 1949.⁶⁴ Tzvi Har-Zahav, from ha-Mosad la-Aliyah and the Shoham shipping company, was in Tripoli to organize the sailing of the Israeli ships and was also active in the teachers' training course.⁶⁵ Two other representatives of the religious camp visited Libya in March 1950. One was Moshe Hazani, who headed the Agricultural Center of ha-Po'el ha-Mizrahi and the Committee for the Aliyah of Religious Youth. The other was Naftali Bar-Giyora from the Religious Sector of the Youth Department in the Jewish Agency. Their goal was to choose candidates for Youth Aliyah and consider the possibility of establishing Tripolitanian moshavim in Israel. They strongly emphasized the importance of organized immigration and the deepening of party education (*hinukh tenu'ati*) among the youth.⁶⁶

Non-Religious Emissaries

Non-religious emissaries were unwelcome in Libya during this period. The religious emissaries tried to prevent political rivals from operating in Libya, in order not to have any competition in their

efforts to harness the Libyan Jews to their political party (in Israel and in the elections to the Zionist Congress)⁶⁷ and their kibbutz movement. Indeed, due to their position in the immigration process and their being religious, these emissaries had the most influence over the community and the strongest contacts with the BMA. But they were never alone and rivalry was at times fierce, especially when emigration was slow due to immigration priorities in Israel.⁶⁸

The non-religious emissaries found it extremely difficult to operate successfully in Libya. This was a result of several factors: the character and political links of the non-religious emissaries, the few non-emigration-related responsibilities held by them, the position that the Mizrahi people had already established for themselves among the Libyan Jews, and the ideological affinity between Mizrahi and local Jews. Consequently, Libyan Jews had even requested that Israel not send emissaries who were not religious.⁶⁹ Thus, the remaining non-religious emissaries felt themselves quite isolated and almost without any responsibilities.⁷⁰

Three non-immigration-related Jewish Agency departments tried to operate in Libya. The Department of Youth and Hehalutz, under the control of Mapai, sent Nisan Spitzer (October-November 1949), the Department for Youth Aliyah, under the Progressive Party, sent David Golding (May-June 1949), and the Department of Middle Eastern Jews, under Mapam, sent Hillel Artzi'eli (August-September 1949), Michael Shapira (late 1949-June 1950, September-October 1950), and Yeruham Grünfeld (August 1950-February 1951) who also came to represent Youth Aliyah.⁷¹ Some other representatives came for short-time special missions.⁷²

Apart from Shapira, who operated mainly as a teacher, all non-Mizrahi emissaries had problems operating in Libya. To begin with, they had problems obtaining visas and, at times, their visas were not extended.⁷³ Community members were warned not to cooperate with non-religious *shlichim*, some of whom were depicted as communists.⁷⁴ While it is true that these emissaries were not members of religious parties, they respected the traditions of the Libyan Jews and tried to behave accordingly. Nonetheless, the local leadership was suspicious, especially towards those who tried to be more active in their social and educational activities. And the Mizrahi emissaries, while denying that they incited the community against these *shlichim*, admitted that they warned the community when they felt it necessary.⁷⁵

Most emissaries who tried to operate within the framework of Youth Aliyah found themselves, after a short time, at odds with the emissaries of the Immigration Ministry and Immigration Department as well as with members of the community. Thus, Golding, who

was sent by Youth Aliyah to head their office in Tripoli, got into a dispute with the community on a partisan background and their links to ha-Po'el ha-Mizrahi. Moreover, he tried to use his position in order to impose candidates for instruction in a course conducted by Youth Aliyah while these were rejected by the community. He threatened that if the local youth movements place obstacles in his way, he will choose emigrants from youth not in the movements. Representatives of the community demanded from the Immigration Ministry that the Youth Aliyah in Tripoli be directed by a religious person, and preferably from ha-Po'el ha-Mizrahi. And indeed, due to the strong opposition of the community, Golding had to leave not long after his arrival.⁷⁶ Grünfeld was appointed head of Youth Aliyah in Tripoli, but due to his deteriorating relations with the community, M. Kol, the head of the Department of Youth Aliyah, sent a sharp letter to the leadership of the community, stating that because of the behavior of the community and disrespect for Grünfeld, he decided to close the office.⁷⁷

The non-Mizrahi emissaries tried to operate through existing institutions and in cooperation with community members who were in opposition to the ruling elite. Although they claimed local support, their achievements were short-lived and limited. Thus, the non-Mizrahi *shlichim* had found it difficult to attract youth to their clubs (some were even intercepted on their way),⁷⁸ to post announcements and news items in the only adult Jewish weekly, *Hayenu*⁷⁹ or to open a paper of their own.⁸⁰ The last representative of the Department of Middle Eastern Jews (Grünfeld) also found his activities curtailed due to irregular transfer of money from his department. He was constantly in debt and had difficulty initiating and carrying out programs.⁸¹

It stands to reason that the fierce political rivalry of this period, in contrast to the early 1940s when non-religious emissaries operated successfully in Libya, resulted from the general atmosphere and the wish of all parties to make a political gain from the support of the new immigrants. Another difference was that in 1949-1951 a larger number of emissaries did not hide their political affiliation whereas in the earlier period the emissaries tried to adjust themselves to the character of the community. Moreover, in the early 1940s the emissaries acted clandestinely, trying to hide their real activity from the BMA, and could not afford the luxury of a conflict with the community. As it turned out, the early emissaries succeeded to imbue several modern concepts among the Libyan Jews thanks to their respectful attitude to local traditions.

Cultural and Social Activities

Most of the time and effort of the emissaries was dedicated to activities directly related to Aliyah. Nonetheless, even the immigration officials usually found time for cultural and social activities, such as organizing courses, lectures, ceremonies, parties, and visiting communities outside Tripoli. As time passed, and especially when there was a lull in emigration, much energy was invested in cultural and social activities in the community. One of the goals of these activities was to strengthen the political ties between local Jews and the party of the emissary. This caused internal struggles among the emissaries of rival parties and between some of the non-religious *shlichim* and the community.

Several emissaries were active in education. They taught in teachers' training courses in order to replace teachers who had emigrated and trained leaders for the youth movements.⁸² There were also attempts to operate vocational workshops and train prospective immigrants in crafts which were needed in Israel.⁸³ The emissaries also offered lectures to the public, but generally did not teach in school. In addition to the regular emissaries, some educators were sent specifically to train teachers and head the local school (i.e., Dr. M. Auerbach and his son Shemu'el who directed the Hebrew School in Tripoli).⁸⁴ Several emissaries, especially Vardi and Cohen, also contributed to the main weekly publication, *Hayenu*.⁸⁵ Occasionally, the *shlichim* were involved in special religious ceremonies.⁸⁶ Some of the emissaries' female relatives taught at a newly established kindergarten, which in a way competed with that of the Alliance Israélite Universelle. It absorbed children who had gone to Christian missionary institutions, and attracted their families to the political sector of the emissaries.⁸⁷

Conclusion

The character, motivation, and methods of the emissaries from Palestine in Libya underwent significant changes during the twentieth century. Whereas the early *shlichim* collected financial donations, the later ones came to provide services, hoping to enlist individuals and groups to their political camp.

Traditional *shlichim* represented religious communities and institutions in Palestine and their main goal was to collect financial donations for those who sent them. They themselves were religious people, often scholars, and occasionally filled religious, cultural,

and social roles during their visits, but they did not aim to work within the community or to transform it.

With the advent of Zionism, a new type of emissary entered the scene, although the traditional *shadar* continued to exist. The early Zionist emissaries solicited contributions but acted within a different framework — the donations were for Zionist enterprises in the New Yishuv in Palestine. They advocated the creation of a “New Jew,” but did not actively work for it.

In the 1940s, a new type of Zionist emissary was added, whose main objective was to work in Libya in order to transform the community and transfer it to Palestine. This transformation focused on the youth, and was meant to be a total change in the life of the community, especially in the social and economic aspects as well as in culture and in relations with the gentile society, advocating active self-defense.

The *shlichim* who came to Libya in the 1940s and early 1950s came mostly to give — to establish youth movements, organize emigration and self-defense, and to help in education and social and economic activities. Although donations to the National Funds were still collected, this was not the main occupation of the later emissaries. What united all these emissaries was the hope to gain adherents to their political organizations. Success depended, to a large extent, on ideological-spiritual affinity, but not exclusively. While most of the Libyan Jewish immigrants in Israel joined moshavim belonging to ha-Po’el ha-Mizrahi or went to urban centers (mainly Netanya and Bat-Yam), where they remained loyal to the religious parties,⁸⁸ the *shlichim* of ha-Kibbutz ha-Me’uhad of the pre-state period also had relative success. Despite the fact that the latter did not disclose their political identity while in Libya and behaved as observant Jews, they instilled in the youth they worked with socialist and secular principles (in the youth movement, *Hakhsharah*, *Haganah* and *Hapalah*), connected them with youth belonging to ha-Kibbutz ha-Me’uhad in Israel, and kept in contact — albeit under false identity after their departure.⁸⁹ As a result, a small group of youth continued to develop these principles and lived by them in the urban training farm (*Hakhsharah ironit*) while in Libya and following their immigration to Israel. Thus, these *shlichim*, thanks to their dedication and expertise, as well as their respect for local traditions, won long-term adherents to their very different ideology.

Notes

1. H.E. Goldberg, "Ben Tripolitanyah le-Eretz-Yisra'el ba-Me'ah ha-19: Yedi'ot al Shadarim ve-al Olim," *Pe'amim*, no. 24 (1985): 87-92; Y. Cohen, *Yehudei Luv: Golah u-Ge'ulah* (Jerusalem: 1991), pp. 14-15, and memoirs of old Tripolitan Jews in 1949 on *shadarim*, pp. 87-88. Among those who remained in Tripoli was R. Mas'ud Hai Raccah (1690-1768) who was born in Izmir and studied in Jerusalem. See F. Zu'aretz & F. Tayyar, eds., *Yahadut Luv* (Tel Aviv: Va'ad Kehillot Luv be-Yisra'el, 1982) p. 67.
2. R. Simon, "The Relations of the Jewish Community of Libya with Europe in the Late Ottoman Period," in J.L. Miege, ed., *Les relations intercommunautaires juives en méditerranée occidentale XIIIe-XXe siècles* (Paris: CNRS, 1984), pp. 75-76.
3. See his reports from March-April 1923 — Central Zionist Archives (henceforth: CZA), file KH1/216.
4. See, for example, the report of Y. Tshernovitz to the JNF, Jerusalem, 12 August 1933 — CZA, file KKL5/614.
5. On the Jewish community of Libya during World War II, see R. Simon, "Yehudei Luv al Saf Sho'ah," *Pe'amim*, 28 (1986):44-77.
6. On the educational activities of the Palestinian Jewish soldiers among the Libyan Jews, see R. Simon, ha-Tenu'ah ha-Ivrit be-Luv, "Shorashim ba-Mizrah, 2 (1989):186-192; Cohen, pp. 39-45.
7. N. Bar-Giyora, "Dapim Telushim mi-Yoman Tzefon Afrikah" in B. Rubin, ed., *Luv: Hedim min ha-Yoman* (Yerushalayim: Ha-Agudah le-Moreshet Yahadut Luv, 1988), p. 115. Thanks to a Palestinian Jew who headed the Prison Administration, they also managed to release some Jews who had been imprisoned by the Italians for political crimes.
8. The B standing for "second," or "bilti-legalit (illegal)", namely, clandestine.
9. S. Barad, "Shelihut u-shelihim le-Artzot ha-Mizrah," *Shorashim ba-Mizrah*, I (1986):156 includes a list of the participants of the course, among them Naftali Bar-Giyora and Ze'ev Katz who were sent to Libya; Bar-Giyora, pp. 108-109 gives his personal memoirs from the course. He came to Tripoli after a short mission in Tunisia; see *ibid.*, pp. 109-113.
10. Barad, p. 157.
11. Barad, p. 157; E. Ben-Haim, "ha-Hapalah mi-Tzefon Afrikah: Shelosh ha-Oniyot, 1947," *Shorashim ba-Mizrah*, I (1986):312-313 includes a list of the participants, among them Yonah Cohen and Yajir Duer who were sent to Libya, and a list of the lecturers; Y. Duer, "Masa li-Tripoli" in Rubin, *Luv*, pp. 18-23, and Y. Cohen, *Aliyah le-lo Yeridah* (Jerusalem: Karmel, 1992), pp. 24-26, give their personal view on the course.

12. *Yahadut Luv*, pp. 207-227; Cohen, 1991, pp. 47-53.
13. Among them were Jacob Farjun, a member of the Tripolitan communal leadership and of the Ben Yehudah society. See Duer, pp. 40, 53. Following his initial support, he distanced himself from the emissaries. Those who took the oath of allegiance to the Haganah — Cicio, Eliyahu Azaryah, and Yosef Guetta — also knew who the emissaries really were (Duer, pp. 66-67, 68, 74-75, 88). On difficulties arising from their false identity, see Duer, pp. 36-38, 57-60, 63-64.
14. Duer published his memoirs on his mission in Libya in 1988. He was born in Damascus and immigrated with his family to Palestine in 1925. At home they spoke Arabic and a little French. On his background, see Duer, pp. 18-19. On preparations for his mission and his infiltration to Libya with the help of Palestinian Jewish units, see *ibid.*, pp. 22-32. He stayed with a Jewish family in the old city (pp. 35-38). His cover in Tripoli was that of a young Jew from Derna, in eastern Cyrenaica, named Moshe Cohen, who grew up in Egypt, and was looking for his parents (p. 33). On difficulties arising from making him a Cohen, *ibid.*, pp. 58-59. On his departure, *ibid.*, pp. 88-90.
15. Katz's cover in Libya was that of Ya'akov Moris, from the French-speaking Tunisian-Libyan border region, who was looking for work in Tripoli. See Duer, p. 33. He stayed with an Italian-speaking Jewish family in the new city (pp. 38, 43) and left in December 1943 (p. 67).
16. Duer, pp. 37-38, 57-59, 78, 80.
17. Duer, p. 44. The underground aliases of both sides are provided. Much of this correspondence is found at the Central Zionist Archives. They complained of isolation, the small number of letters from their senders, lack of instructions, and quite often lack of money (pp. 48-49, 67-68).
18. Duer, pp. 44-45.
19. On their activities, see reports in CZA, file 56/1984.
20. On the Ben Yehudah society, see Simon, 1989, pp. 181-184.
21. Since they were under cover and ostensibly did not know each other, they also "met" in the club where they were introduced by the local youth. See Duer, pp. 42-43. Shortly after, they volunteered to teach Hebrew (p. 43). Later, Bar-Giyora also operated there; see Bar-Giyora, pp. 113-114.
22. Duer, pp. 51-52.
23. Duer, pp. 57, 69-71 (including parts of the regulations). The new club was in the Muslim neighborhood, and the rent was paid with funds sent from Jerusalem by the Jewish Agency.
24. Duer, pp. 20-21, 55-57, 72.
25. Duer, p. 49. Many of the previous publications were gifts from the soldiers.

26. On his activities within the youth movement, see Duer, pp. 53-75.
27. Duer, p. 56.
28. Duer, p. 61.
29. Duer, p. 53. Yirmeyahu replaced Eliyahu Cohen (Ben-Hur) who supported the establishment of the youth movement and was of great help to the emissaries upon their arrival.
30. On the *Hakhsharot* in Libya, see *Yahadut Luv*, pp. 257-261; Rubin, *Luv* (*passim*, especially pp. 131-192, on the Urban *Hakhsharah* 24 November 1946-12 June 1948).
31. A term used for a group aiming to settle in a kibbutz.
32. Bar-Giyora published his memoirs of his mission in Libya in 1988. His alias in Libya was that of private Nahum Brand, a Palestinian Jewish soldier in the Water Carriers Unit No. 179 of the British Army. He also used the name Yehi'el Halevi. On his background, see Bar-Giyora, pp. 105-112. In Tripoli he stayed with the same family as Duer and pretended to work for the military censor (p. 113) and later moved to a separate apartment for security reasons (pp. 126-127); on his hasty departure: pp. 127-130; Duer, p. 82; *Yahadut Luv*, p. 259.
33. Duer, pp. 77-79, 83-87 (including details on the *Hakhsharot* after their departure); Bar-Giyora, pp. 124-125.
34. Bar-Giyora, p. 116. Duer, p. 82, mentions the support of the engineer Dr. Moshe H. [Haddad] and the wealthy businessman Yosef H. [Habib].
35. Duer, pp. 65-67, 88. These Tripolitans later worked closely with the next *shaliach*, Yisra'el Gur.
36. Duer, pp. 75-77, 89; Aliyah Committee, Tripoli, to Immigration Department, Jerusalem, 14 March, 29 April, 29 June 1944 — CZA, file S6/3847. As usual, families were artificially enlarged for the purpose of immigration, and all in all eighty-four immigrants entered Palestine on account of these twenty certificates. Upon his return from Libya to Palestine, Duer saw from a distance the convoy of Tripolitan immigrants, but kept his distance. He later heard that they recognized him, but realized that they have to pretend not to know him. Bar-Giyora, pp. 126, 130 — he, too, saw them on his return to Palestine.
37. On contacts between Duer and members of the youth movement and the *Hakhsharah* after his return to Palestine, as well as following their immigration, see Duer, pp. 90-100. He mentions some members who joined ha-Kibbutz ha-Me'uhad. In his correspondence he used yet another alias, Menasheh, and presented himself as a kibbutz member who heard about them from a friend, and was interested in hearing about their activities. They, too, were careful in their writing. Duer connected between the Tripolitans and the national institutions, helped them get another twenty immigration certificates, and also helped Tripolitan immigrants, especially the pioneers among them. For their correspondence, see Yad Tabenkin Archives (henceforth: YTA) Div.

- 25/A, Ya'ir Duer Series, Box 1, file 8 and Div. 25/A, Libyan Series, Box 1, file 9.
38. Duer, pp. 53-55; Bar-Giyora, pp. 126-128.
 39. While in Tripoli he was known only by his nickname "the uncle" (*hadod*) to most of those he was in contact with. Barad, pp. 173-174; *Yahadut Luv*, pp. 231, 234, 301, 317. See his reports (signed Ish-sadeh or Gorilik) in YTA, Div. 2/Overseas, Libyan series, Box 1, file 2. On his role in emigration activities, see also R. Simon, "Me-hug Tsiyon le-Tsiyonut Magshimah: Aliyat Yehudei Luv," *Shorashim ba-Mizrah* 3 (1991):303-306.
 40. On the June 1948 riots and the local Jewish defense, see *Yahadut Luv*, pp. 231-232, 250-251.
 41. For details on the political involvement in ministries and departments in charge of aliyah, see D. Hacoheh, "Mass Immigration and the Israeli Political System, 1948-1953," *Studies in Zionism*, VIII/1 (1987):99-113.
 42. M. Nahum, Tripoli, to L. Taub, Jerusalem, 9 March 1949 — CZA, file S5/1397.
 43. His memoirs from this period were published in *Yahadut Luv*, pp. 297-315.
 44. Vardi published his memoirs on his mission in Libya in 1986: M. Vardi, *Be-tzet Yisra'el mi-Luv* (Yerushalayim: Merkaz ha-Tarbut li-Yehudei Luv, 1986). See also *Yahadut Luv*, pp. 310, 321. He was of Italian origin and a member of the religious kibbutz Sedei Eliyahu.
 45. *Yahadut Luv*, pp. 311, 321.
 46. He served as Vardi's deputy, and from late 1949 to June 1950 headed the office of Youth Aliyah in Tripoli. Together with his wife Miriam and his sister-in-law Hanna Levi he was also active in local education. See *Hayenu*, 24 and 31 May 1951; *Yahadut Luv*, p. 310.
 47. Cohen published his memoirs on his mission in Libya in 1991 (see note no. 1). During his mission he published numerous reports in the religious daily *Hatzofeh*, for which he was a journalist. He was active in the youth movement, at a leaders' course, in the publication of *Hayenu*, and in general emigration issues.
 48. Thus, the Israeli flag was hoisted over the Aliyah building on special occasions, like Hag ha-Sukot 1949; see Cohen, 1991, pp. 70-71. On Israel's Independence Day in 1949 a reception was held and Arab and British dignitaries were present, *ibid.*, p. 135. On official receptions where Vardi met with British and Arab officials (including the future King Idris I), see Vardi, pp. 40-44 (including photographs), 54-55.
 49. Vardi, pp. 45-46.
 50. Description of a two-day visit by Duvdevani, Cohen, and Lascow (AJDB) to Tarhuna, Misalata (Cussabat), Khoms, Zliten, and Mizurata in late 1949: Cohen, 1991, pp. 93-113; a visit to Gharian: *ibid.*, pp. 124-127.

51. Their representative in Libya was Abraham Lascow; Reuven (Bino) Hasan was the local contact person.
52. *Yahadut Luv*, p. 272.
53. B. Duvdevani, Tripoli, to Yitzhak Refa'el, Immigration Department, Jerusalem, 9 June 1949 — CZA, file S20/465 (1).
54. *Yahadut Luv*, pp. 272, 277, 297-321 (including his memoirs); Cohen, 1991, pp. 142-143; *Hayenu*, 27 June and 22 December 1949; *Hatzofeh*, 13 November 1949.
55. *Yahadut Luv*, p. 311. He was also instrumental in releasing the Jews imprisoned for their role in the defense of the community in 1945 and 1948 and enabled them to immigrate to Israel — *ibid.*, pp. 277, 312.
56. On his tenure, see his memoirs, as well as *Hayenu*, 28 October, 10 November, 1 December 1949, 15 March, 30 September 1951; Grünfeld, Tripoli, to DMEJ, Jerusalem, 28 December 1950 — CZA, file S20/224 (1); M. Vardi, Tripoli, to A. Hendler, ha-Berit ha-Olamit li-Tenu'at Torah va-Avodah, 19 January 1951 — CZA, file S32/124; *Yahadut Luv*, p. 310.
57. R.T. Landele, Tel Aviv, to FO, London, 26 September 1951 as well as internal FO correspondence in London on 29 September 1951; T.R. Blackley, Tripoli, to FO, London, 15 October 1951 — PRO, FO 371/90410; J.E. Chadwick, Tel Aviv, to FO, London, 29 December 1951 — PRO, FO 371/97329. On the participation of the Immigration Office in the celebration of Libyan independence, including hoisting the Israeli and Libyan flags, see H. Solel, Tripoli, to Immigration Department, Jerusalem, 14 February 1952 — CZA, file S86/180.
58. C.A. Gault, Tripoli, to the British delegations in Benghazi and Tel Aviv and to the FO, London, 28 July 1952 — PRO, FO 371/97329.
59. British Legation, Tripoli, to the FO, London, 14 October 1952 — PRO, FO 371/97329.
60. A. Kirkbirde, Tripoli, to the FO, London, 4 November 1951 — PRO, FO 371/97329; M. Shilon, Tripoli, to the Youth and Pioneer Department, Jerusalem, 17 November 1952 — CZA, file S32/1069. Shilon continued to use stationery with reference to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the State of Israel.
61. Y. Cohen to ha-Berit ha-Olamit li-Tenu'at Torah va-Avodah, 15 January 1950 and B. Duvdevani, Rome, to ha-Berit ha-Olamit li-Tenu'at Torah va-Avodah, 12 Tevet 710 [1 January 1950] — CZA, file S32/123.
62. Cohen, 1991, *passim*.
63. *Hayenu*, 15 December 1949, 19 and 26 October 1950; M. Levi-Wachsberger, Tripoli, to Bazak, World Center of Mizrahi, Jerusalem, 25 August 1950 — CZA, file S32/123; Y. Grünfeld, Tripoli, to DMEJ, Jerusalem, 8 February 1951 — CZA, file S20/224 (2). The latter claimed that the fact that Bugatin intended to be Wachsberger's brother-in-law was the main reason for his appointment at a period when there was an attempt to cut the number of emissaries.

64. *Yahadut Luv*, pp. 305, 308.
65. *Hayenu*, 28 October, 8 December 1949.
66. *Hayenu*, 23 March 1950; N. Bar-Giyora, Tripoli, to the Youth Department/Religious Section, Jerusalem, 22 March 1950 — CZA, file S32/123. On the previous mission of Bar-Giyora in Libya in 1943-1944, see above.
67. On the elections, see Y. Grünfeld, Tripoli, to L. Taub, Organization Department, Jerusalem, 9 November 1950 — CZA, file S20/224 (1); M. Vardi, Tripoli, to A. Hendler, ha-Berit ha-Olamit li-Tenu'at Torah va-Avodah, Tel Aviv, 10 April 1951 — CZA, file S32/124.
68. At one point Vardi agreed to the appointment of a representative who did not belong to a political party, but was known to him for many years and he believed he would have complete influence over him. See M. Vardi, Tripoli, to A. Hendler, ha-Berit ha-Olamit li-Tenu'at Torah va-Avodah, Tel Aviv, 19 January 1951 — CZA, file S32/124.
69. M. Nahum, Head of the Tripolitan Community, to M. Kol, head of Youth Aliyah, Jerusalem, 24 October 1950 — CZA, file S32/124.
70. Yitzhak Refa'el had even stated that "other departments (i.e., other than the Immigration Department) have nothing to do there," and that the Tripolitans would kick out of town whoever does not attend synagogue. See Y. Grünfeld, Rome, to E. Peleg, DMEJ, Paris, 16 March 1950 — CZA, file S20/224 (1).
71. See his numerous reports in CZA, file S20/224 (1) and S32/124.
72. On short-time learning missions were Moshe Ya'ari and Dr. S. Spiro of the Youth Aliyah (September 1949). See H. Artzi'eli, Tripoli, to Dr. A. Nadad, DMEJ, Jerusalem, 11 September 1949 CZA, file S86/180. Representatives of the World Jewish Congress visited Tripoli in September 1949 in order to strengthen the connection between the community and the WJC. See H. Artzi'eli, Tripoli, to Dr. A. Nadad, DMEJ, Jerusalem, 27 September 1949 — CZA, file S20/555.
73. H. Artzi'eli, Tripoli, to Dr. A. Nadad, DMEJ, Jerusalem, 11 September 1949 — CZA, file S86/180. Numerous complaints by Grünfeld in CZA, file S20/224 (1) and S32/124.
74. N. Spitzer, Tripoli, to Dobkin, Department of Organization and the Halutz [sic], Jerusalem, 4 November 1949 — CZA, file S32/122.
75. M. Vardi, Tripoli, to A. Hendler, ha-Berit ha-Olamit li-Tenu'at Torah va-Avodah, Tel Aviv, 10 April 1951 — CZA, file S32/124.
76. J. Mimun, Tripoli, Report on the Activities of the United Youth Movements, 31 May 1949, and S. Hassan and J. Mimun, Tripoli, to the Youth Department, Jerusalem, 10 June 1949 — CZA, file S32/123.
77. M. Kol, Jerusalem, to M. Nahum, Tripoli, 8 February 1951 and the response of the community from 19 March 1951 — CZA, file S32/124.
78. N. Spitzer, Tripoli, to E. Dobkin, Department of Organization and the Halutz [sic], Jerusalem, 4 November 1949 — CZA, file S32/122;

- Report on the Activities of the DMEJ in Tripoli during November-December [1950] — CZA, file S20/576.
79. Y. Grünfeld, Tripoli, to DMEJ, 30 October 1950 — CZA, file S20/224 (1); Report on the Activities of the DMEJ in Tripoli during November-December [1950] — CZA, file S20/576. On the use of the paper *Hayenu* as a political weapon by Mizrahi and the community, see a letter by its editor, A. Guetta, Tripoli, to the Department of Youth and Hehalutz, Religious Section, Jerusalem, 11 February 1951 — CZA, file S32/124.
 80. On attempts to publish another paper, see Y. Nimni, Tripoli, to Dr. A. Nadad, DMEJ, Jerusalem, 17 May 1950 — CZA, file S20/224 (1); Y. Grünfeld, Tripoli, to DMEJ, Jerusalem, 15 September 1950 — CZA, file S20/224 (1); Report on the Activities of the DMEJ in Tripoli during November-December [1950] — CZA, file S20/576.
 81. Most of his letters mention this issue; see in CZA, file S20/224 (1) and S32/124.
 82. Cohen, 1991, pp. 159-164, 169-170; *Yahadut Luv*, p. 171 (photograph showing youth movement leaders and their instructors B. Duvdevani, Y. Cohen and M. Vardi at the end of the training course); E. Wachsberger, Tripoli, to A. Hendler, ha-Berit ha-Olamit li-Tenu'at Torah va-Avodah, Tel Aviv, 18 November 1950 — CZA, file S32/124; Bugatin and Levi-Wachsberger taught at a female teachers' training course: M. Levi-Wachsberger, Tripoli, to Bazak, World Center of Mizrahi, Jerusalem, 25 August 1950 — CZA, file S32/123.
 83. Y. Grünfeld, Tripoli, to DMEJ, Jerusalem, 20 November 1950 — CZA, file S20/224 (10).
 84. The one exception was Michael Shapira of the DMEJ. On the Auerbachs, see *Yahadut Luv*, pp. 172-177 (including article by Shmu'el Auerbach and photograph of his father in the company of the Hebrew School's teachers).
 85. Cohen, 1991, p. 169.
 86. On the role played by Yonah Cohen in "Pidyon peter hamor," see Cohen, 1991, pp. 82-86. The revenue was then donated to the JNF.
 87. E. Wachsberger, Tripoli, to A. Hendler, ha-Berit ha-Olamit li-Tenu'at Torah va-Avodah, Tel Aviv, 18 November 1950 — CZA, file S32/124.
 88. Thus, for example, R. Frigia Zu'aretz from Khoms who settled in Netanya, was a member of the 3rd-6th Knesset representing ha-Po'el ha-Mizrahi. See Cohen, 1991, p. 38.
 89. See correspondence of Tripolitan youth with "Menasheh" [Ya'ir Duer] in Ramat Yohanan and with ha-Kibbutz ha-Me'uhad — YTA, Div. 25/A, Libyan series, Box 1, file 9.