

GIORGIO GOMEL:

If and when Israel can be secured a future of peace, normalcy and integration in the Middle East, the rift, the cleavage between the Diaspora and Israel will widen. That does not mean that there will not continue to be cultural or spiritual attachment, and family ties and intimacy, that we will not be traveling to Israel and you will not be visiting Diaspora Jews. I mean that the peculiar thing that has been very prominent since the birth of the state of Israel, the very strong link between the Diaspora and Israel, will be weakened in the future. But I would contend that there is nothing to worry about. But it is a very important change. I found this point very well argued in a book that I read about 10 years ago by an Israeli political thinker (David Vital, *The Future of the Jews*). This remains a heterodox and somewhat controversial argument in the Diaspora. But I think it should be one of the issues for our discussion; although the focus is certainly the future of Israel, still, this aspect of Israel - Diaspora relations is an important one.

SERGIO MINERBI:

I want first of all to thank Professor Luzzatto for saying things that I am generally in agreement with. But, with all due respect, I am even more grateful to Mr. Gomel, because it gives me the opportunity of saying exactly the contrary of what he said, by and large.

First of all, as far as you spoke about Spain, Jews and Arabs together, we now have to give back and so on, much more is done in this area than is known. As a matter of fact, whoever uses an Intel chip which is called the MMX for mathematical operations knows, or perhaps does not know, that the Intel chip was made at the Intel design center in Haifa by a group of people, led by an Arab from Nazareth. So the circle is closing. There are, perhaps not enough, but there are Arabs involved in the scientific development in Israel, and I do hope that this will only increase. You gave the example of the children treated by medical people, but there are many other examples - like one which has nothing to do with scientific operations, but I must mention it, because it is important - we have seen Arabs giving organs to Jewish people, and the other way around as well. And this is really a very deep proof of solidarity.

Now if the situation is so good, why is it so bad? I will immediately jump to this. I would only just remind you that in Salerno - which I consider to be the first university, not Bologna - in Salerno, in the 9th century, there was a medical school with Arab and Jewish professors. And so we have a long history of cooperation. The problem today is not so much how to cooperate with Palestinians, or how to cooperate with Arabs at large, but how to deal with religious, Islamic fundamentalists. This is the real problem, not only for us. Because the Islamic fundamentalists are attacking the Moslem states first of all. Before the West, before Israel. They are attacking in Egypt, in Saudi Arabia, in Turkey. They are attacking first of all in Moslem states, because this is their constituency. This is where they want to win. More than to create an upheaval in the West, which they will not be able to do anyway, I hope. But very little is related in the Italian press about the Moslem against Moslem problem and situation. Because, as the Pope has said several