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Israel has indulged religious groups seeking to infringe on women's rights, says jurist

By Tomer Zarchin

Haaretz (26.12.11) / HRWF (18.01.12) - Israel has been too tolerant of religious groups seeking to infringe on women's rights, said Frances Raday, a law professor specializing in women's rights.

In one of the latest examples of ultra-Orthodox attitudes toward women and the law, extremist Haredim in Beit Shemesh threw stones at and cursed police officers Sunday, as they were taking down a sign ordering men and women to walk on opposite sides of the street.

"There is an abundance of tools in jurisprudence to oppose discrimination of women; the problem is that people are dealing with symptoms, and not the disease," said Raday, who teaches at the College of Management's law school and is a member of a UN human rights council task force that deals with discrimination against women.

"Since its establishment, the State of Israel has displayed an exaggerated degree of tolerance toward the phenomenon of religious values' overthrow of human rights values, and this includes trespass of the rights of women," Raday said yesterday. "Every attempt to pass a human rights law failed due to the 'right to equality' clause, particularly its meaning as the right of women to equality, and this failure has always been caused by the Jewish religious lobby. It's not surprising to see that there was nothing that stopped religious groups from believing that they are more powerful than the value of equality, and that they can apply patriarchal interpretations of Jewish sources holding that their views take precedence relative to the value of equality."

According to attorney Riki Shapira-Rozenberg, legal counsel to the Kolech women's organization and a party to the 2007 complaint lodged by the Reform movement regarding the segregation of women on buses, there is a law that can be used as a partial counterweight to the exclusion of women.

That law bans discrimination of products, services and entry to leisure venues and public places, and allows complainants to file civil claims against hotels, restaurants, sports facilities and public transportation services that discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex or nationality.

Violence between ultra-Orthodox sects rocks Jerusalem neighborhood

By Yair Ettinger

Haaretz.com (28/10/2011) / HRWF (07.11.2011) - <http://www.hrwf.net> Jerusalem, Israel - Residents of the Mea She'arim neighborhood in Jerusalem fear the violence that has erupted between two ultra-Orthodox sects will grow and complain the police are not protecting them.

On Tuesday night a group of Hasidim brutally attacked Avraham Hirschman, 36, a father of six, with clubs, kicks and blows. Hirschman was hospitalized with fractures and other serious injuries.

"They said we'll murder you," Hirschman told Haaretz. "The police knew in advance they were planning the attack but didn't lift a finger."

The assault was part of a violent dispute between members of the large Hasidic Gerrer dynasty and the fanatic Sikrikim group (named after the Sicarii sect in 70 C.E.) in Mea She'arim.

Thousands of ultra-Orthodox Jews demonstrated in the neighborhood following the attack and many prayed for Hirschman's recovery. Many protesters condemned the Gerrer Hasids for the attack, but the ultra-Orthodox newspapers of all the factions are ignoring the affair and some ultra-Orthodox figures have even expressed sympathy for the perpetrators rather than the victim.

Yehuda Meshi-Zahav, head of the voluntary emergency response organization Zaka, came out openly against Hirschman and his colleagues. "They must be beaten up. The Sikrikim understand only force. They can't employ violence all the time and then shed crocodile tears," he said.

The Batei Warsaw quarter in Mea She'arim was built in the Ottoman period as a hostel for yeshiva students from Poland. Their families receive tiny apartments for key money or low rent. The Polish Gerrer dynasty, which always had people in the neighborhood committee, has gained almost complete control of it in recent years and is now planning to expand the quarter.

Although they do not recognize the state or its institutions, the Batei Warsaw tenants, most of whom belong to other ultra-Orthodox factions, have filed a court suit to stop the Gerrer Hasids' expansion. This move is believed to have sparked the recent hostilities.

Nobody was surprised by the attack this week. A week and a half ago vandals spread glue on Gerrer Rabbi David Alter's door, preventing him from going out to Hoshana Rabbah prayers. Everyone knew the Gerrer Hasids were out for revenge.

Gerrer Hasids visited Mea She'arim twice in recent days, looking for the perpetrators who had glued Alter's door. The police did not stop them from entering the neighborhood, although the residents warned them in advance of the Gerrer people's intentions. Failing to find the glue vandals, they chose Hirschman, a major anti-Ger activist, as their victim.

Six months ago an angry crowd burst into Hirschman's house and set it on fire. His wife and baby daughter were rescued in the nick of time.

On Tuesday night he was heading home from the synagogue when a group of 10 or 15 Gerrer Hasids, some of them wearing masks, attacked him, he said. They beat him brutally even after he lay bleeding on the road. He recognized at least one of them and gave his name to the police, but they did not arrest anyone, he said.

Several suspects of violence in the Batei Warsaw dispute have been arrested in recent months, none of them a Gerrer Hasid. A police source said a Gerrer man was questioned about the arson in Hirschman's house, but was not arrested.

"We're optimistic of finding the attackers," the source said.

Mosque fire in Israel blamed on Jewish extremists

Reuters (03.10.2011) / HRWF (05.10.2011) - <http://www.hrwf.net> - Jerusalem, Israel - A mosque in a Bedouin village in northern Israel was set on fire and graffiti sprayed on its walls overnight on Monday, locals said, in an attack blamed on Jewish extremists.

"The whole mosque was burned -- the carpet, the books, the Korans, all burned," the village imam, Fuad Zangariya, told Army Radio. Zangariya said the words "Palmer" and "revenge" were sprayed on the entrance to the mosque.

Last week police said a car crash on September 23 which killed Asher Palmer, a Jewish settler, and his one-year-old-son was caused by Palestinians who threw stones at the car.

Israel police said the mosque was badly damaged, its carpets and interior burned and the Hebrew words "Price Tag" sprayed on its wall. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu condemned the attack, saying it offended the nation's core values.

For some hardline Jewish settlers, the "Price Tag" slogan signifies payback for any Israeli curbs on settlement in the West Bank, which Israel captured in a 1967 war and where Palestinians hope to create an independent state.

Two mosques were vandalized in the territory last month following partial demolitions by the Israeli army in an unauthorized Jewish settlement.

"This incident has 'Price Tag' characteristics and we have set up a special task force to investigate it," Ran Levi, head of a local police station, told Army Radio.

Jamal Zangriya, a resident of the village, told Israel Radio: "We believe extremists from outside the village did it," blaming rabbis from the nearby town of Safed for incitement against Arabs, which he said may have led to the incident.

Netanyahu's office said the prime minister was outraged when he saw pictures of the damage. "This act goes against the highest values of Israel, freedom of religion and religious practice," it said in a statement.

Police said they had beefed up their presence in the area to prevent acts of retaliation.

Arabs make up around 20 percent of Israel's population, the vast majority of them Muslim.

Israeli town tries to oust Scientology school

By Ryan Jones

Israel Today Magazine (02.10.2011) / HRWF (05.10.2011) - <http://www.hrwf.net> - Tel Aviv, Israel - Residents of the central Israel town of Yehud are concerned after a school affiliated with the Church of Scientology opened in their Tel Aviv suburb with the start of the new school year.

Locals had tried to block the opening of the new Atid School, but their protests were apparently registered too late. But that won't stop them and the anti-missionary group Yad L'Achim from continuing their efforts to remove the school.

The Atid School previously operated in the central town of Holon. It was started so that Israeli members of the Church of Scientology would have a place to send their children to be taught in line with their religion. But after Holon residents complained that the school was actively trying to "recruit" local children, it was forced to shut down and find a new home.

Despite the backlash, Israel's Ministry of Education has officially recognized the Atid School, meaning it is eligible for government funding, and can issue diplomas to Israeli students.

It should be noted that Yad L'Achim targets Messianic Jews with the same or greater vigor that it goes after adherents of Scientology. Only in the case of Messianics, Yad L'Achim has had greater success, but also greater setbacks.

Many Messianic Jews wishing to immigrate to Israel are blocked, at least temporarily, because of Yad L'Achim pressure on the government. Israel's only Messianic day school, Makor HaTikvah, is still struggling to gain academic recognition because of similar pressure.

At the same time, the Israeli media has enthusiastically covered the assault on local Messianics, creating a wave of sympathy from average Israelis and increasing interest in the faith of their Messianic brethren.

Israel court grants author's request to register 'without religion'

By Tomer Zachin

Haaretz.com (02.10.2011) / HRWF (05.10.2011) - <http://www.hrwf.net> - Tel Aviv, Israel - After brief deliberations on the eve of last week's Rosh Hashanah holiday, a Tel Aviv judge ruled that Israeli author Yoram Kaniuk could register his official religious status as "without religion."

"Freedom from religion is a freedom derived from the right to human dignity, which is protected by the Basic Law on Human Dignity and Freedom," Judge Gideon Ginat of the Tel Aviv District Court wrote in his unusual ruling.

He went on to say that he believed that the Basic Laws, which function as constitution law in Israel, and in particular the Basic Law on Human Dignity and Freedom, alleviates from the plaintiff the burden of proof in demanding to be defined as religionless.

"The only question that must be weighed is whether the plaintiff proved the seriousness of his intentions ... I see no need to impose on the plaintiff any burden with the exception of bringing his request before the court," Ginat wrote.

"This is a ruling of historic proportions," Kaniuk said to Haaretz yesterday, with audible emotion. "The court granted legitimacy to every person to live by their conscience in this land, in ruling that human dignity and freedom means a person can determine their own identity and definition. In this way I can be without religion but Jewish by nationality. I am so thrilled," Kaniuk said.

In May Kaniuk asked the court to order the Interior Ministry to allow him "to be liberated from the Jewish religion" by changing his "religion" entry in the Population Registry from "Jewish" to "without religion." The ministry had refused his earlier request.

In his petition, Kaniuk explained that he had no wish to be part of a "Jewish Iran" or to belong to "what is today called the religion of Israel."

Kaniuk, 81, sought to equate his standing to that of his grandson, born last year, who is registered as "without religion" at the Population Registry.

The infant was originally classified as a Christian American, like his mother. Kaniuk's daughter was born in Israel but is defined by the Interior Ministry as an American Christian because her own mother was born in the United States and is a Christian.

After some discussion, Population Registry officials agreed to change the baby's status. When Kaniuk requested the same change be made to his own religious status, officials said he needed to obtain court approval for the amendment.

Kaniuk, famously a veteran of the 1948 War of Independence, whose book "1948" was awarded the Sapir Prize earlier this year, said that the request reflected his ongoing disgust with the way that the Jewish religion has rejected the principles enshrined in Israel's Declaration of Independence.

Cult leader allegedly imposed punishments on women

By Joanna Paraszczuk

The Jerusalem Post (05.08.2011) / HRWF (17.08.2011) - <http://www.hrwf.net> - The Jerusalem District Court decided on Thursday to release more grisly details of the indictments issued the previous day against three members of a religious cult based in Jerusalem and Tiberias.

Nine members of the cult, a polygamous family, were arrested last week. Three men were taken into custody, including the cult's leader.

Six women, along with 15 children, were placed in shelters across the country.

Due to a gag order preventing publication of any details of the case, journalists were not given access to the complete charge sheets against the three men. Instead, the court released a heavily edited version.

Journalists criticized the decision on the grounds that the public had a right to know details of the case.

Judge Noam Sohlberg later ruled that parts of the charge sheet should be published, in part to help victims of similar cults and their families.

"State prosecutors requested that the judge give a more detailed summary of the charge sheet, which would give more details of the offenses against the victims," Sohlberg wrote in his ruling on Thursday.

The details released do not reveal the identities of the three defendants or provide any details on the victims, the judge noted.

The full charge sheet is still under a gag order, as are details of various items of evidence.

The judge said, however, it was now possible to release details of the acts of violence, sexual offenses and acts of abuse and humiliation that the main defendant and the two other men allegedly perpetrated in the years the cult existed.

The charge sheet includes details of a series of offenses, including slavery, abuse of minors, false imprisonment, sex offenses and severe violence.

The following details were released by Sohlberg in the new summary of the charge sheet: The first defendant, an Israeli citizen and Jerusalem resident, set himself up as a member of a hassidic sect and the spiritual descendant of a renowned leader of that sect, who had been chosen to spread the teachings of the group's doctrine.

To fulfill that role, the defendant lived as the "husband" of several women, with whom he had several children. The defendant treated the women as servants, living with them as a "family" in several apartments in Jerusalem and Tiberias.

Over the years, the defendant lived with six women as part of this "family." He changed the names of some of the women, and had children with some of them, according to the charge sheet.

To make the women accept their status as members of his "family," and to accept and participate in their lives with him and the other women, the defendant adopted the persona of someone chosen as a great spiritual and religious leader.

The defendant claimed to have supernatural and mystical healing powers.

Whenever a new woman was brought into the "family," the defendant at first behaved very gently toward her. He spoke about his "special gifts" and demonstrated his powers and his charisma until the woman agreed to live with him and the other women, and adopt his way of life.

However, as soon as a woman agreed to move in, the defendant changed completely, and imposed a regime of violence and humiliation, according to the charge sheet. The defendant became violent and enraged, and cursed her and the other women, telling them they and their families would suffer terrible tragedies.

Systematically, the defendant caused the women to accept his tyranny and submit completely to his authority, terrifying them and the children, according to the charge sheet.

Over the years, the women found other candidates to join his "family," according to his demands and desire to expand it, and create more "soldiers" to spread his teachings.

Sometimes, the defendant would order one of the women to find another woman as a way to get a "reprieve" from the punishment that had been given her.

When a woman entered the family, the defendant immediately worked to distance her from her own family.

The defendant had absolute control over the women and their children. To get them to do his bidding, he used violence, humiliation, extortion and threats, again according to the charge sheet.

To instill fear into the family, the defendant allegedly imposed abusive and degrading punishments by means of a "beit din." The women who were found to have behaved correctly got to select which of the other women and children would be subjected to harsh and humiliating punishment.

During these "court" sessions, the remaining women and sometimes even the children would assist obediently in carrying out the punishment, which included beatings.

Often during these sessions, the defendant became enraged at one of the women, and also punished her.

The defendant also imposed on the "family" the idea that he was a symbol of "the good inclination."

He convinced the women that one of the other two defendants, who lived in the storeroom near the "family" house, symbolized the "snake" and the "evil inclination."

The primary defendant also established a rule whereby the women and the children were forced to confess, either orally or in writing, the "forbidden" things that they had done. Sometimes, the defendant would coerce these confessions from women and children by force or humiliation.

As part of the "sentence," the defendant allegedly imposed cruel and unusual punishment, including starvation, imprisonment, and separating mothers from their children. In addition, severe violence and repeated extreme sexual assault, inter alia, allegedly ensured their total obedience.

In these circumstances, the women and children were dispatched to spread religious teachings, to beg for money and find other women on the streets of Jerusalem and elsewhere.

The women worked from early morning until night, and would have to telephone the primary defendant to beg for a break or to be allowed to eat. They were not allowed to do anything without the defendant's express permission.

The money that the women collected would be given directly to the defendant, after they had made a careful account of it. The women would be subjected to a "court judgment" and punished if they were suspected of using money without permission.

The women were also allegedly forced during the "judgments" to carry out sexual acts at the request of the defendant.

These punishments were also given to the children.

The defendant allegedly carried out serious sexual offenses against the children, including against his biological children.

The children were not allowed to study in schools, and the defendant forbade them to receive medical treatment, so that doctors would not discover what was happening to them.

There are two other charge sheets served against two other men involved in the "family," connected to violence and sexual offenses.

One of the men lived in the "family" house and allegedly took an active part in the violence and sex offenses, for many years.

The third defendant took part in the violence and sex offenses on one occasion, as far as is known at this stage.

The three accused have been remanded in custody pending a hearing on August 18.

Messianic Christian couple in Israel accused of converting minor

Ultra-Orthodox Jews harass, threaten pair even though 16-year-old has not converted

By Wayne King

Compass Direct News (02.07.2011) / HRWF (04.07.2011) - <http://www.hrwf.net> - A hard-line Jewish ultra-Orthodox group in Israel that singles out Jewish Christians known as Messianic Jews for harassment and abuse is taking aim at a couple it claims is manipulating minors into becoming Christians.

The group, Yad L'Achim, this week placed leaflets around the home of Serge and Naama Kogen, 37 and 42 respectively, in Mevasseret Zion, a suburban community located just west of Jerusalem. The same week someone took out a full-page ad in a local newspaper giving the couple's address and telling residents they were part of a missionary group "targeting" the community. The Kogens are native Israelis and hence not part of any missionary group.

The advertisement invited the public to a protest planned against the Kogens, and on Sunday (June 26), about 20 of the group's supporters demonstrated outside the couple's home, where they denounced them over megaphones for 90 minutes.

The protests came after Yad L'Achim lost a court case against the Kogens and their congregational leader, Asher Intrater. The group had accused them of "proselytizing" minors.

During the protest, a distraught 16-year-old girl, the alleged target of the couple's "missionary" efforts, said all of Yad L'Achim's claims were false. Donna Lubofsky maintains that she has never converted to Christianity. She wanted to speak at the protest to give her side of what happened, but the organizers wouldn't let her, she said.

"They are all liars, all liars! Ask them, why won't they let me speak?" Donna told Compass at the protest. "They won't let me speak because what they are saying is untrue. They [the Kogens] never tried to get me to believe. They are just good people."

'Lot of Love'

The Kogens met Donna a year ago while they were next-door neighbors. Naama Kogen said Donna, whom she described as a "genius," had some issues adjusting to a new

school, and her home life seemed problematic. The girl quickly became a regular fixture at the Kogen household and "a close part of the family," in Kogen's words.

"She said she had never seen a family like ours. We have a lot of love in our home," Kogen said, adding the teenager told her the time she spent in their house was the first time she felt loved. Kogen said that during the course of the friendship, problems persisted in the girl's home, and at times she was afraid to return there. She also said the teenager began experimenting with alcohol and other potentially self-destructive behaviors from which the Kogens were able to deter her.

"I told her she would be the only one to suffer in the end," Kogen said. "Step by step, I started to see an improvement."

Kogen and her husband were emphatic in their claim they never discussed religion with Donna, but that she expressed interest in attending their congregational worship. Kogen said she obtained permission from Donna's mother, and she attended Shabbat meetings with the congregation for about two months.

But Donna's mother, Bella Lubofsky, told protestors that the Kogens "took" the girl "every Friday."

Despite the progress Donna was making in some areas of her personal life, her family life was still in tatters, according to Kogen. She said she urged Donna to approach her parents and try to reconcile their relationship, but things remained tense.

The problems came to a head after a disagreement at the Kogen home when Lubofsky allegedly pushed her daughter, and the Kogens had her spend the night until things calmed down. Soon afterward, Lubofsky reported the Kogens to the police for "proselytizing."

Serge Kogen said police investigated the case, found that they had done nothing illegal and dropped the investigation. Yad L'Achim, not dissuaded by the police finding, went to court and brought charges directly against the couple and against Intrater, leader of the Ahavat Yeshua Congregation.

As with the police, the court found nothing illegal and on June 14 dismissed all charges against Intrater and the Kogens.

The Kogens said they weren't certain how Yad L'Achim became involved with the Lubofskys. They think an Orthodox Jew in their neighborhood approached the extremist group. One day the neighbor began harassing Kogen, she said; when she fled inside her house, the man and others demanded she come outside. On its website, Yad L'Achim claims the parents of the girl approached them for assistance.

Misrepresentations

Sunday's protest comes at a time when Yad L'Achim is trying to push new "antimissionary" laws through the Knesset, Israel's national parliamentary body. Under Israeli law, spreading one's faith is legal, but "proselytizing" to minors and gaining converts through "material incentives" is illegal.

According to its website, literature and speeches, Yad L'Achim wants to make "proselytizing" by all non-Jewish groups illegal. The group does not specify which non-Orthodox groups they consider to be truly Jewish, or how groups with secular viewpoints might be similarly censored.

Started by ultra-Orthodox Jews, Yad L'Achim is known for its aggressive, confrontational style. At other protests, followers of the group have assaulted Messianic Jews. The group also places information in its publications that Messianic Jews say is either unconfirmed, misleading by its incomplete nature or blatantly untrue. They claim that Messianic Jews are enemies of the Jewish people and have no place in Israel. The group makes no distinction between Christianity and cults, or between Christians and "missionaries."

Referring to the protest on its website, Yad L'Achim described Naama Kogen as a missionary "who has been having a devastating impact on local youths." The group goes on to say that Donna "soon found herself attending prayer groups and being subjected to brainwashing. Gradually she came to accept J and began to pull away from her parents..."

The website makes no mention of the ultimate outcome of the failed case that Yad L'Achim filed.

Intrater said Yad L'Achim is a fringe group whose views aren't representative of most in Israel. The group has tried to frame its argument as one of Jews against Christians and has dredged up the specter of hundreds of years of anti-Semitic persecution to lend weight to its argument, he said.

Intrater said he sees the entire issue as a disagreement between two groups of Jews. He said the first generation of Jews who believed in Jesus didn't refer to themselves as "Christians," and it is a title he avoids. Most "Messianic Jews" don't use the term in reference to themselves. Instead, they prefer to be known as Jews who believe in the Messianic claims of "Yeshua," the Hebrew name for Jesus.

"They look at us as worse than Christians," Intrater said. "They look at us as if we've betrayed our people and become Gentiles. And they want to annihilate us. We see ourselves as true Jews. We see it as an argument over who is the true Messiah. What we want to say is, 'Who is the real Messiah?' They feel hatred toward us and see us as the enemy. We don't look at them that way. These are our people, and we love them."

Protest Fallout

The protest went peacefully for the most part. Surrounded by signs saying "missionaries" are "targeting" Jewish souls, a small group of protestors gave speeches, including Bella Lubofsky. Protestors refused to speak to any media they viewed as being neutral or unresponsive of their demonstration. Asked if a Jew who believes in Jesus is still a Jew, one protestor said, "No."

The demonstrators jeered as a camera crew for an international news media outlet left. After the protest was over, a group of six Yad L'Achim sympathizers insulted and menaced a Compass reporter and a friend, then followed the two by foot for about two miles, threatening violence against them along the way. When the reporter tried to get help from passersby, the group frightened off people and shouted that the reporter was a "missionary."

When the two reached a local mall, the hard-line sympathizers followed them inside. Mall security and police refused to help and left the two – now surrounded at a distance by the group – stranded for more than 90 minutes. Only after intervention by a group of women declaring that Israel is a free country would mall security escort the reporter and his friend to a taxi. The group of Yad L'Achim supporters, however, was never asked to leave the mall.

The Kogens still have contact with Donna, but her parents don't allow her to go to the congregation. The Kogens, Asher and others agreed that Donna should obey her parent's wishes as long as she is a minor. They sent her and her parents each a letter to that

effect, which according to Kogen was very painful to the girl.

The evening after the protest, the Kogens came home to find Donna with a stack of Yad L'Achim literature that she had collected by hand and ripped to pieces. It was obvious she had been crying, Kogen said.

"This group doesn't care about this girl at all, they just care about getting to us," she said about her and her husband.

Kogen said yesterday (July 1) that the response of her community to the protest has been mixed. Before the protest, no one knew about her religious beliefs, she said. But she said now most people in her community have been very supportive. Some of their neighbors, even those who could be considered "traditional," have made an effort to send their children over to play with her four children.

But the persecution continues. Supporters from Yad L'Achim continue to plaster her streets with leaflets. They have also started handing out pamphlets at the mall.

More insidiously, on Wednesday (June 29) the Kogens' landlord asked them to leave their apartment because she was receiving phone threats ordering her to evict them, Kogen said. The man making the threatening call told the landlord that if she didn't remove the couple, "we will."

The caller said he would burn down the Kogens' home. The landlord offered the couple money to move, but the Kogens – who had moved into the apartment only two months ago – refused to move again.

On Sunday (June 26), the landlord talked with the couple again.

At the congregational meeting yesterday (July 1), Serge Kogen told the group the landlord said, "We could stay as long as we want."

Controversy over burqa-wearing ultra-Orthodox Jews

AsiaNews (09.02.2011) / HRWF (22.02.2011) - <http://www.hrwf.net> - Jerusalem, Israel - The movement was born six years ago, and now involves hundreds of women throughout Israel. They are the "Taliban Haredi" ultra-religious women who have decided to completely cover their bodies from head to toe, and like Muslim women wear the burqa. About six years ago a group of "haredi" women (literally: those who tremble at the word of God ") decided to start a battle against immodesty of Israeli women in their fashion choices, by covering themselves completely.

The aim was not to expose any part of their body to the sight of men, so as to encourage them to avoid sin. As explained by one of them: "I follow these rules of modesty to save men from themselves. A man who sees a woman's body parts is sexually aroused, and this might cause him to commit sin. Even if he doesn't actually sin physically, his impure thoughts are sin in themselves."

This initiative was received positively by many haredi circles and was even accompanied by an enthusiastic letter of support signed by Badatz rabbis, the ultra-Orthodox court of justice, and "Eda Haredit" leader Rabbi Yitzchok Tuvia Weiss.

Now their growing number - about 600, with a constant stream of new recruits – is beginning to create problems. Also because some of these women do not uncover themselves even at home and are forcing their daughters to follow them in this fashion.

So much so that the protests and warnings are multiplying: "You do not have to dress in strange ways, including veils, especially if your husband is against it, and also because it is against the Halacha (the law of conduct). And above all this fashion should not be applied in the case of young girls," write some rabbis.
