



ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

The Situation and Dynamics of the Jewish People

2014-2015

5775

Jewish Demography 70 Years after the Shoah

"Drivers" Affecting the Israel-U.S. Relationship

Israel-Diaspora Dialogue on the Use of Force

Video Games against De-Legitimization of Israel



המכון למדיניות העם היהודי (מיסודה של הסוכנות היהודית לא"י) בע"מ (חל"צ)

The Jewish People Policy Institute (Established by the Jewish Agency for Israel) Ltd. (CC)

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PROJECT HEAD

Dr. Shlomo Fischer

CONTRIBUTORS

Reuven Amar, Avinoam Bar-Yosef, Steven M. Cohen, Chaya Ekstein, Dan Feferman, Sylvia Barack Fishman, Avi Gil, Inbal Hakman, Michael Herzog, Dov Maimon, Steven Popper, Uzi Rebhun, Shmuel Rosner, John Ruskay, Suzanne Rutland, Ohad Shpak, Noah Slepko, Shalom Salomon Wald, Einat Wilf

EDITORS

Barry Geltman

Rami Tal

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JPPI, Givat Ram Campus, P.O.B 39156, Jerusalem 9139101, Israel
Telephone: 972-2-5633356 | Fax: 972-2-5635040 | www.jppei.org.il

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Foreword

The Annual Assessment continues to be the flagship of the JPPI. Nowhere else is an annual stocktaking of the Jewish world done. Apart from being a unique offering and picture of the state of Israel and the Diaspora, the annual assessment presents both a baseline for comparison and a series of variables to judge the direction of change. Each year the assessment identifies emerging problems and opportunities—and makes recommendations for responding to both.

Never has this task been more important. The geopolitical picture is mixed but daunting. The fact that the leading Arab states and Israel have a common view of the threats they both face is an important development. Translating shared threat perceptions into overt cooperation will prove very difficult until the conflict with the Palestinians can be fundamentally defused or resolved—neither of which seems likely for the foreseeable future. The emergence of radical Islamists—Sunni and Shia—who may be fighting each other in Iraq and Syria, absorbs Israel’s most virulent enemies in other conflicts. But the reality that Israel now has Hezbollah, Iran’s Revolutionary Guard and

global jihadists along its northern border also has to be a cause for concern. While both Hezbollah and Hamas may be deterred in the near-term, their growing rocket capabilities and practice of embedding their rocket launchers and fighters in civilian areas means the next conflict will once again face Israel with terrible dilemmas as it defends its citizens. Both Hezbollah and Hamas don’t simply seek to use civilian populations as shields; they want to produce civilian casualties on their own side as a way of stigmatizing Israel on the world stage and denying Israel the right of self-defense.

Here we see how what Hezbollah and Hamas seek fits neatly with those who are trying to delegitimize Israel. De-legitimization needs to be seen for what it is: no less an existential threat to the Jewish state than the Iranian nuclear program. Israel needs to mobilize all its assets to deal with the strategic danger posed by the de-legitimization movement. Making sure that there is a coherent response, bureaucratically and politically, is necessary but is not a substitute for policies that permit Israel to go on the offensive and take it off the defensive.

This year's Annual Assessment, even by JPPI's high standards, is exceptionally diverse, fascinating and important. It includes a review of world Jewish demographic trends over the last 70 years since the end of WWII. It notes that the worldwide Jewish population has been steadily expanding and now numbers 14.3 million people. If we include those who identify as partially Jewish and immigrants to the State of Israel who are not halachically Jewish but have qualified under the Law of Return (and do not profess any other religion) we are approaching the number of Jews in the world on the eve of WWII. It also notes that for the first time in memory the majority of adult children of intermarried couples between the ages of 18-30 identify as Jewish. The Assessment also notes that despite this overall growth, the Jewish "middle" (non-Orthodox Jews who have strong Jewish identities and strong commitment to the Jewish people) is shrinking. This is due not only to an increase in intermarriage, but also to a growing number of late marriages and generally small families (the 2013 Pew study finds an average of 1.9 children, while 2.1 is necessary to just stay stable).

The Annual Assessment also takes an important and creative look at the growing positive relationship between Israel and two countries that are home to 40 percent of humankind, China and India. Neither has any history of anti-Semitism. China's trade and investment relationship with Israel is growing rapidly. One of the largest gifts ever made to an Israeli university was recently made by a Chinese citizen. China sees Israel as a high tech Mecca; a crossroads as it seeks to revive

its ancient "Silk Road." But China also perceives Israel as an island of stability in the Middle East at a time when it is facing separatist pressures in its western region from Muslims, some radical. The Assessment notes the very positive turn in India's relationship with Israel since the election in May 2014 of Narendra Modi as prime minister. While India has long had a strong military relationship with Israel, India kept Israel at arm's length, afraid that public demonstrations of support would anger its large Muslim population. This is changing in a major way.

We are breaking new ground in the present Annual Assessment to recommend creative use of video games to tell Israel's story in positive ways. There has been an explosion worldwide of video game users: 59 percent of Americans play video games, and the average age of video gamers is 31 years old. The enemies of Israel and the Jewish people are making use of this medium. It is time the State of Israel and the Diaspora make positive use of these games, by investing in a new generation of games that are positive in explaining Israel's history and that of the Jewish people.

The Annual Assessment this year takes an in-depth look at the rise of anti-Semitism and anti-Israel activity on American college campuses. While groups like Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) have a presence on over 300 American campuses, there are frequent BDS resolutions, and Jewish students report feeling harassed and intimidated, the Assessment finds that severe anti-

Israel activity is limited to around 20 campuses, mainly in California and in some elite East Coast schools. The Assessment goes beyond analysis and offers positive recommendations for how to approach students, faculty, administration and donors, and the U.S. Jewish community to combat this very real threat. JPPI also calls upon the new Israeli government to appoint a lead person to combat BDS and de-legitimization to coordinate responses.

In the past year, JPPI played the same unique role it was asked to play in 2013 by the Israeli government, when it conducted a unique 40-community, worldwide outreach to Diaspora communities in North America, Latin America, Europe, Australia and South Africa on views of how Israel could be both a democracy and a Jewish state. In 2014, encouraged by the Israeli Prime Minister to continue this dialogue, building on that experience, and at the request of the Israel Foreign Ministry, we conducted a multi-community Diaspora outreach on how Israel could maintain Jewish values when it is forced into military conflicts not of its choosing, as in Gaza. We also are near completion of a massive study on the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) threat to Israel, at the request of the Israel Ministry of Strategic Affairs.

To be sure, Israel needs the United States to help blunt the de-legitimization effort internationally. At a time of dissonance over the possibility of a deal on the Iranian nuclear program, special attention must be made to manage the relationship with

America, to avoid it taking on a partisan character, and to minimize polarization and division within the American Jewish community.

Precisely because JPPI seeks to generate policy-relevant recommendations, these particular themes and objectives were very much the focus of the brainstorming conference at Glen Cove, New York, in May 2015. We had a wide range of Jewish leaders and professionals from the organized Jewish community, the heads of major federations, former senior government officials from the U.S. and Canadian governments, academic experts from Israel and across the United States, a key address by former Secretary of State Dr. Henry Kissinger on the impact of the new world order (or disorder) on the Jewish people and Israel, and a fascinating discussion of Israel's central role in the global high-tech field by Eric Schmidt, Executive Chairman of Google.

The theme of the conference was "Pluralism and Jewish Solidarity in Polarizing Times." In several plenary sessions and six working groups we looked at how Israel could maintain Jewish values in the face of dilemmas that compel it to use force in a complex environment, like Gaza; how we can best maintain the connections and solidarity between Israel and Diaspora Jews, at a time when ideological and value-based disputes are becoming more prominent; the expected implications of the foreign policy agenda unfolding in Washington and the increasing domestic U.S. political polarization, to the strength of the Washington-Jerusalem-American Jewish community triangle.

Prof. Leonard Saxe of Brandeis University also summarized a new 2015 survey on the American Jewish population. On the positive side, he said the American Jewish population has grown since 1990, from 5.5 million to 6.9 million, a 25 percent overall increase, with 78 percent identifying as "Jews by religion." The vast majority are proud of their Judaism and identify with it in various ways. However, according to Prof. Saxe, this increase is only 17 percent for Jews "by religion" and 70 percent for Jews "not by religion," (who have lower Jewish connections and commitments). Half the children now 18 to 34 years old, so-called Millennials, are children of intermarriage. Over 50 percent of Jewish marriages in the U.S. since 2006 have been intermarriages, most without conversion by the non-Jewish spouse. Thus, the overall picture is mixed, and its long-term implications for Israel and the Jewish people should be carefully studied.

As always, there is no other document that better captures the breadth of challenges and provides positive solutions than JPPI's Annual Assessment. It is required reading for Israelis, Diaspora Jews, and all others interested in Israel and the Jewish people.

Dennis Ross and Stuart Eizenstat

PART 1

Suggested Policy Directions Integrated 'Net' Assessment



Recommended Policy Directions

The Struggle against De-Legitimization and BDS on North American College Campuses

Background: Despite many successes in the fight against the de-legitimization campaign against Israel, the assault continues and is gaining traction. One of its main staging grounds is the North American college campus, where, on some, the atmosphere regarding Israel has become tense, divisive, and even "poisonous."

Recommendations

General

Following the Israeli government's decision (Cabinet Communiqué, Item 14, 23.06.2013) granting responsibility for the fight against de-legitimization to the Ministry of Strategic Affairs, and following the steps taken since, we

recommend the government promptly adopt an appropriately budgeted comprehensive strategy, and task a senior government official, who reports directly to the prime minister, with coordinating its operational implementation.

As part of this strategy, we recommend embarking on an offensive-minded campaign against the promulgators of Israel de-legitimization in the West, which will expose the "real face" of the de-legitimization movement (including its anti-Semitic aspects).

In order for such a campaign to proceed effectively a clear demarcation line must be drawn distinguishing between legitimate criticism of Israel and de-legitimization. This, however, is not a simple matter due to the politicization of the issue. We therefore recommend that the organized North American

Jewish communities together with other Diaspora communities enter a process that will enable leadership in both North America and Israel to put aside their own views and develop a common and clear framework to determine what is and is not “anti-Israel.” In particular, we recommend, in coordination with Israel, initiating community wide discussion events to draw boundaries between legitimate criticism of Israel and de-legitimization.

JPPI is working to recruit and organize a group of international public intellectuals and opinion makers (including non-Jewish ones) from a broad political spectrum who support Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, to assist in the fight against the international de-legitimization of Israel.

The Fight on Campuses:

- **The American Jewish community** is a key partner in the fight against de-legitimization on campuses, and holds a critical role in all of the recommendations offered.
- **On the level of Content** – We recommend focusing on refuting the conflation de-legitimization activists are making between the Palestinian issue and minority issues and groups, human rights and "post-colonialism," and to uncover the connection between anti-Zionism and the new anti-Semitism.

Target Constituencies:

- **Students** – We recommend organizing and dispatching diverse Israeli student delegations

(Jewish and non-Jewish) to campuses; recruiting non-Jewish campus groups to promote tolerance and dialogue to all groups and opinions; encouraging pro-Israel students to engage in various frameworks of campus politics and organized life.

- **Faculty and lecturers** – We recommend exposing "activist" faculty members who use their academic lecterns to advance an anti-Israel agenda.
- **Administration and Donors** – Jewish organizations, together with donors (many of whom are Jewish) can and should work with university administrations more intensively to prevent the misuse of academic freedom in promoting a politicized anti-Israel platform. Simultaneously, these can work to promote additional positions and departments for Israeli studies programs on campuses and increase cooperative endeavors with Israeli universities.

U.S. – Israel Relations

With the recent discord in the special relationship between Israel and the U.S., the need to bolster this relationship becomes glaringly apparent. We recommend conducting a comprehensive governmental discussion on the complex fabric of the U.S.-Israel relationship. These relations are a cornerstone of Israel and the Jewish people's strategic resilience, and maintaining them requires clarifying the awareness of Israeli decision makers to the various "drivers" that affect the quality of the relationship between the two countries. JPPI's charting of the relevant drivers and their impacts can assist in constructing a methodical and comprehensive discussion on the topic.

India and China

Background: Israel's relations with India and China have improved and deepened over the past year. China sees Israel as a stable trade partner and anchor of regional stability. Indian Prime Minister Modi is a friend of Israel and is interested in further developing relations between the two countries.

Recommendations

- Establishing a foundation in Modi's name to study the history and dynamics of Jewish-Indian relations with an eye to improving them in the future. This foundation would fund Indian and Israelis doing post-doctorate work on the topic.

- Establishing a Jewish/Israeli cultural center in Beijing that will exhibit art, photography and film, maintain a library and reading hall, and will organize lectures by local and visiting experts and academics on Israel and the Jewish people.

Israel-Diaspora Dialogue

Background: For the second year, JPPI has undertaken a structured dialogue with Diaspora communities. In 2014, at the request of the then Minister of Justice, JPPI convened consultations in 43 communities throughout North America and in other countries on the subject of Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State. In 2015, a similar effort was undertaken to consider questions of Jewish ethics in armed conflict. Following Operation Protective Edge, and in light of growing concern about gaps between Israeli and Diaspora Jews, JPPI conducted a structured dialogue process with more than 40 Jewish communities around the world. These discussions, within the broader framework of our Pluralism and Democracy project, delivered a number of important insights about how world Jewry understands Israel's security policies, and how Diaspora Jews characterize its impact on their lives and on their relationship with Israel.

Recommendations

World Jewry understands and affirms Israel's need to use force in asymmetric wars, and the manner in which it applies such force. It is crucial that this perception be preserved, through the

meticulous maintenance of proper conduct in war (independent of Diaspora Jewry's position(s)); and through upgraded public diplomacy (hasbara) for the Jewish communities, including exposure to dilemmas in the use of force and an ongoing discussion on these issues within the framework of Jewish reflection.

The faith of many Jews around the world that Israel is interested in peace with its neighbors has eroded, and affects their acceptance of Israel's need to use force when necessary. Israel should invest a significant effort in convincing Diaspora Jews of its intent to find a peaceful and agreed-upon solution to the conflict.

Diaspora Jews fear that Israel does not take their positions well enough into account when it makes decisions that have the potential to affect them. In this regard, we recommend dedicating separate and focused examination of the effects of Israel's use of force on the relationship between Diaspora Jews and the non-Jewish world. This is especially relevant where Jews are most integrated in their societies and unique problems arise in connection to the need to explain Israel and its policies to non-Jews (especially to non-Jewish family members of Jews).

Immigration from Europe

Background: Tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of Jews across Europe are experiencing increasing discomfort from rising European anti-Semitism and are considering emigration. Due to bureaucratic and other obstacles, most of which can be removed, many potential immigrants are prevented from considering Israel as the

optimal destination and are exploring options in other places such as Canada, the U.S., and Australia, which have taken steps in recent years to remove such obstacles in order to attract strong immigrant groups who can improve their economies.

Recommendation

The Israeli government should adopt an innovative and integrative plan that will attract European Jews who currently feel uncomfortable in their countries and are considering this option. An integrative plan designed for successful absorption in relationship to employment, housing, and social inclusion, can be found on our website (www.jppe.org.il).

Jewish Identity

Background: An in-depth analysis of the Pew Center's latest research on American Jews shows that this community's backbone is continuing to shrink: this group includes those Jews who profess a strong Jewish identity, and who integrated fully into the greater American society, with a high income, broad education and professional achievements. Roughly one-fifth of the American Jewish community belongs to a group identified as "Jews of no religion" (they responded they are of no religion). Around one million Jews in the U.S. identify as "partially Jewish." Members of this group are "proud" to be Jewish but lack a sense of significant affiliation and commitment to the Jewish people.

Recommendations

- In order to strengthen the central backbone of the American Jewish community, the organized communities should initiate as many Jewish social networks as possible. Moreover, the communities should encourage Jewish education for post bar/bat mitzvah children in Jewish day schools; complementary schools (either in the afternoons or Sundays), summer camps, youth groups, and Israel experience programs, etc. Toward this end, an effort should be made to overcome financial barriers to the expansion of these programs. In addition, the community should consider ways of increasing public (state) funding in areas that are constitutionally permitted. This can include direct underwriting, tax credits, or vouchers.

- Facilitate exchanges between American Jewish schools and those of the Russian-speaking Jewish community in America — the idea being that American Jews can help bolster Judaic studies for the Russian-speaking Jews while benefiting in return from the Russian-Speaking Jews excellence in math and science.
- We recommend conducting an in-depth study of "Jews of no religion" and those who identify as "partially Jewish," to identify ways to attract these individuals and elicit their greater interest in Judaism and in becoming more connected to the Jewish people. Based on the results of such a study, focused policy recommendations should be formulated.

The Approach to Populist Anti-System Right-Wing Parties in Europe

Background: Radical right-wing parties, gaining popularity in Europe, are focused on an anti-Islamic and (sometimes) pro-Israel message, and are seeking support from Israel and the local Jewish communities (in their countries).

Recommendation

We recommend that Israel and Jewish communities globally exercise extreme caution with respect to these actors and abstain from granting these parties legitimacy because of present or past links to anti-Semitic activity and Holocaust denial, or the policies they espouse that in practice would limit Jews in practicing a Jewish lifestyle in Europe.

Video Games and Interactive Entertainment

As a tool to enhance Jewish identity and to counter BDS efforts

Background: The video game industry is rapidly growing in America and throughout the world. 59 percent of all Americans play video games; 51 percent of American households have a gaming platform; and the average age of video-gamers today is 31.

Recommendation

Israel and the Jewish world should cooperate and utilize this medium as a public diplomacy (hasbara) platform. In order to improve the quality and experience of the video game industry in Israel, we recommend encouraging institutions of higher education to offer more courses and programs for video game production and design. Furthermore, we recommend enabling young people in the Israeli video-game industry to gain experience in large and diversified European and American video game companies.

Selected Indicators of World Jewry – 2014-2015

Country	Jewish Population (Core Definition)		GDP per capita, PPP U.S.\$ ^c	Index Of Human Development – World Rank ^d	Recent Out- marriage Rate (%)	Aliyah ^e	Number of Jewish Legislature Members / Seats In Legislature ^f
	1970 ^a	2014 ^b					
World	12,633,000	14,212,700	-	-	-	24,064	-
Israel	2,582,000	6,103,200 ^{gh}	32,691	19	5	-	104/120 ⁱ
North America	5,686,000	6,085,300	-	-	-	2,704	-
United States	5,400,000	5,700,000 ^j	54,597	5	50<	2,439	28/535 ^k
Canada	286,000	385,300	44,843	8	15-24.9	265	8/413
Latin America	514,000	383,500	-	-	-	965	-
Argentina	282,000	181,300	22,582	49	25-34.9	271	11/329
Brazil	90,000	95,000	16,096	79	25-34.9	251	8/594
Mexico	35,000	40,000	17,881	71	1-4.9	-	-
Other countries	107,000	67,200	-	-	15-95	443	-
Europe non-FSU	1,331,000	1,133,100	-	-	-	8,177	-
France	530,000	475,000	40,375	20	25-34.9	6,544	13/925
United Kingdom	390,000	290,000	39,511	14	26	486	89/1438
Germany	30,000	118,000	45,888	6	45-54.9	91	2/691
Romania	-	9,400	19,712	54	-	22	3/588
Bulgaria	-	2,000	17,860	58	-	24	2/240
Hungary	70,000	47,900	24,942	43	60	122	7/386

Other EU ^l	171,000	150,600	-	-	-	33-75	888	-
Other non-EU ^m	140,000	40,200	-	-	-	50-80	-	-
FSU	2,151,000	293,200	-	-	-	-	11,532	-
Russia	808,000	186,000	24,806	57	80			4/616
Ukraine	777,000	63,000	8,668	83	80		10,869	7/450
Rest FSU Europe	312,000	25,100	-	-	65-75			-
FSU Asia	254,000	19,100	-	-	50-75		663	-
Asia (rest)	104,000	19,700	-	-	-		154	-
Africa	195,000	74,700	-	-	-		394	-
Ethiopia	-	100	1,589	173	-		211	-
South Africa	118,000	70,000	13,046	118	15-24.9		117	-
Morocco	-	2,400	7,606	129	-		-	-
Other countries	-	2,200	-	-	-		66	-
Oceania	70,000	120,100	-	-	-		138	-
Australia	65,000	112,500	46,433	2	15-24.9		-	3/266
New Zealand and other countries	5,000	7,600	35,152	7	15-24.9		-	1/120

- a. Source: Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics, The A. Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- b. Source: DellaPergola, Sergio, World Jewish Population, 2014. In: Arnold Dashevsky and Ira Sheskin (eds.), American Jewish Year Book 2014 (Appendix)
- c. Source: Website for the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Economic Outlook for 2014. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) based on Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), per capita (world currency).
- d. A measure of a country's development based on public health, educational level and real income level. Source: Human Development Report 2014, Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- e. Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics in Israel, January 2015.
- f. Based on previous year's statistics, unless otherwise specified.
- g. Does not include "No religion"; includes East Jerusalem, Golan Heights and West Bank.
- h. According to population predictions from the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (medium alternative), by the year 2025, Israel's Jewish population will grow to 7.3 million (Statistical Abstract of Israel, 2014, Table 2.10, p. 111).
- i. Source: Knesset website.
- j. Aside from this measure of 5.7 million Jews, the Pew Jewish Population Survey from 2013 found one million people (600,000 adults and 400,000 children) who are partially Jewish.
- k. Source: Blumberg, Antonia. Jan. 5, 2015. "A Look At The Religious Make-Up Of The 114th Congress". The Huffington Post. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/05/congress-religious-affiliation_n_6417074.html.
- l. Excluding Baltic countries.
- m. Including Turkey, Bosnia, Macedonia and Serbia.



2014-2015 Integrated 'Net' Assessment

Five dimensions, **Geopolitics**, **Demography**, **Identity** formation and expression, **Bonds** within and between communities, and **Material Resources** (sources and uses of wealth devoted to Jewish causes) influence Jewish people interests and outcomes.¹ There is considerable room for subjectivity in interpreting trends and developments to arrive at a net assessment that accurately reflects the balance between challenges and opportunities. To supplement the policy discussions presented in the Annual Assessment, JPPI conducted several digital expert panels among a small sample of selected individuals, in part as a detection mechanism for change that might otherwise escape notice.² These responses have been combined with other data sources to provide the following assessments of short-term trends.

Bonds within and between Communities

The state of relations between Israel and Diaspora Jewish communities are less positive than they were a year ago. Israel's negative international position and the increasing worldwide criticism of its policies, together with the election of a right-wing government whose positions in regard to many important issues (Israel and the Palestinians, religion and state) substantially differ from those of the majority of world Jewry, raised difficulties this year in regard to the ties between Israel and the Jewish communities in the Diaspora.

The increasing prominence of anti-Semitic incidents in the world also served as background for complex Israel-Diaspora relations as on the one hand it emphasized Israel's role as a shelter for persecuted Jews, yet on the other hand it sharpened questions concerning the connection between Israel's policy and attacks against Jews all over the world, and as to its role as the representative of non-Israeli Jews.

JPPI's expert panel brought out several of these points. Writing at a time following the prime minister's speech before Congress, two-thirds felt that overall Jewish community bonds had declined somewhat from the previous year. Half felt that Operation Protective Edge in response to renewed hostilities and missile strikes from Gaza had the net result of causing some decline in global Jewish attachment to Israel, and most respondents held that there had been at least a slight decline in

JPPI's Jewish World Dialogues did not find widespread criticism of the IDF's morality

acceptance in general when Israel finds it necessary to resort to the use of military force. By a similar majority, the queried experts saw a divide between the reactions of the older generation and the younger members of the U.S. Jewish community to the same geopolitical events.³

In a similar vein, four among the five respondents who addressed the question felt that measures that might challenge outside perceptions of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, such as bills brought before the Knesset designed to emphasize Israel's character as the nation-state of the Jewish people at the potential expense of liberal democratic values, had potential to reduce Israel attachment.⁴ Given the level of American Jewish understanding, most felt that outcomes of Israeli elections have little effect on attachment except in unusual circumstances and in these instances it

is the Israel-Palestine conflict rather than domestic orthodox-liberal religious issues that hold most sway.

JPPI conducted a more detailed exploration of these issues through a worldwide dialogue process in Jewish communities between January and late April 2015. The effort brought individuals together in workshops to discuss Jewish values and Israel's use of force in armed conflicts. A special report on this subject, released July 2015, largely found Jewish approval of Israel's actions during war, and disapproval of Israel's actions "between wars."⁵

JPPI's Jewish world dialogues did not find widespread criticism of the IDF's morality. A participant survey found that many Jews do not believe: "The current Israeli government is making a sincere effort to bring about a peace settlement with the Palestinians." Many seminar participants raised the concern that some Jews hold Israel to a higher standard. On some occasions this took on a negative tone ("Jews are part of the problem"). On others it was greeted as a positive and justified standard ("As Jews, we have to set the bar higher").

Two-thirds of the respondents on JPPI's expert panel saw a worsening in the dimension of community bonds over the prior year. Despite the strength inherent in these Jewish bonds, particularly as witnessed in response to anti-Semitism and threats to Israel's safety, the concern raised in the past year and the rapidity of the transformation causes a marked decline in the gauge for this dimension.

Geopolitics

The geopolitical developments of recent months have not afforded the new Israeli government a grace period. These include:

- Dealing with the challenges and implications of the nuclear agreement with Iran;
- The danger of a military deterioration on the northern front (Hezbollah and Syria), on the southern front (Hamas and terror groups in Sinai), in Judea and Samaria and in Jerusalem (individual violence, public protests, and organized terror);
- Continuing tensions with the United States;
- The continued erosion in the U.S. view of the need to maintain a regional presence and lead the effort of stabilizing the Middle East;
- The push to change the paradigm for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from direct negotiations led by the U.S. to a multinational initiative backed by the UN;
- Realizing the opportunity to improve relations with the moderate Sunni countries;
- Israel's dwindling international standing as growing BDS and de-legitimization efforts inflict further damage;
- The strained resilience of the "triangular relationship": Jerusalem – Washington – U.S. Jews.

Given these challenges, the need to rehabilitate and nurture the relationship with the U.S. as Israel's only true and significant ally takes priority. Already

inflamed tensions could potentially worsen in the coming months and weigh heavily on the U.S. Jewish community.

The nuclear agreement with Iran received extremely sharp Israeli criticism. From the point of view of Jerusalem the agreement paves the way for Iran to arm itself with nuclear weapons and enables it to amplify its subversive activities and support for terrorist organizations in the Middle East. The deal does not cover Iran's ballistic missile program (whose sole logical aim is to deliver a nuclear warhead to its destination), and does not relate to Iran's violent regional subversion or its threats to Israel. The Obama administration's initial goal was to change the nature of Iran's nuclear program to eliminate its capacity to develop a nuclear weapon, but the president radically changed the goal, which turned into increasing the breakout time it will take Iran to create a nuclear bomb, if it so decides, to at least a year.

Washington sees ISIS as the central threat, thus creating a reality of indirect cooperation between the U.S. and Iran against ISIS

The Israeli government was not convinced by President Obama's argument that "there is no formula, there is no option, to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon that will be more effective than the diplomatic initiative and framework that we put forward."⁶ Israel will have to decide whether to reluctantly accept the agreement and conduct a dialogue to translate America's stated commitment

to Israel's security into operational and practical terms, or take military action.

The collapse of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations reinforced the campaign of political and legal warfare against Israel and undercut the "direct negotiations with American mediation" model. The Palestinians requested membership in 15 UN treaties, and, through Jordan, petitioned the Security Council for recognition of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders and an end to occupation in two years. They failed to convince a majority of the council's member-states, which spared the U.S. the need to use

its veto.⁷ Yet, Abu Mazen signed (December 31, 2014) accession agreements to 22 additional international treaties including the Rome Treaty, which paved the way to joining the International Criminal Court in the Hague.

Given the stalled political process, the French are interested in convening an international conference to jump-start negotiations that would follow a successful Security Council resolution. They were

persuaded to wait to reexamine the new Israeli government's positions. America has not ruled out possibly supporting the French move, but has pressed the French for postponement until after the nuclear agreement with Iran is signed. Netanyahu's Election Day remarks (March 16, 2015), that a Palestinian

State would not be established under his watch, gave the French plan a second wind.⁸ The White House made it clear that it would reassess its options in the wake of Netanyahu's new positions. The near future will reveal whether the new Israeli government has a real interest and the political wherewithal to present a diplomatic plan that will gain the trust of the international community. But the diplomatic deadlock is encouraging various parliaments toward resolutions calling for recognition of a Palestinian state.⁹ The Palestinians have gained recognition by 135 countries (80 percent of the world's population). Three of the five permanent Security Council members (the U.S., UK, and France) have not granted recognition along with Germany, Canada, Australia, Italy, and Japan. The diplomatic deadlock may cause support for a Palestinian state to grow.

JPII expert panel participants saw a period of stasis on Israel-Palestine due, in part, to pre-occupations such as Iran and ISIS, but that this in itself leads to worsening conditions ("No prospects [and] a growing gap between the sides...only makes things even worse.")

Tehran's influence is growing along with control in four Arab capitals: Beirut, Baghdad, Damascus, and now Sana'a. ISIS continues to contribute to the collapse of the nation-state system and jihadist organizations are declaring their allegiance. ISIS controls roughly half of Syria, as the civil war there continues to rage. In parallel, Washington sees ISIS as the central threat, thus creating a reality of indirect cooperation between the U.S. and Iran. Saudi Arabia is attempting to push back the Houthi militias in Yemen. The joint Arab military force that was formed (March 29, 2015), combining forces from Egypt, Saudi

Growing tensions in the relationship between Israel and the U.S. increase the pressure on the American Jewish community and threaten to harm the resilience of the Triangular Relationship: Washington – Jerusalem – American Jews

Arabia, Morocco, Sudan, and Jordan, may indicate the beginning of Arab countries gradually ceasing reliance on the U.S. as the "regional policeman."

Israel should be apprehensive over a joint Arab military force that gains experience in coordinated military action. In the event the U.S. signs the nuclear deal with Iran, it may compensate the Sunni Arabs with further arms sales. The U.S. is not interested in deepening its involvement in the region, is not interested in sending (back) its soldiers to shed their blood in the Middle East, and prefers to "lead from behind." Moreover, it doesn't seem that the U.S. and Russia can, at this point, cooperate effectively in order to jointly bring about regional stability.

One bright spot is that Israel does not currently face any significant conventional military threats. Its enemies are asymmetric in strategy and increasingly hybrid in nature opting for a three-pronged approach: forcing Israel into complex and often urban territory; fighting from within civilian areas; and manipulating the international media. Continuing political paralysis could lead to deterioration in the security situation in Judea and Samaria and even to some form of third intifada. Experts assess that Israel could end up facing a wide-spread civil disobedience campaign combined with popular violence not necessarily coordinated by a central actor.

This view was certainly expressed in response to the JPPI expert panel questionnaires. While most saw overall improvement in Israel's regional standing due to developments surrounding it, its overall security situation had clearly worsened because of the number and seriousness of potential threats, especially from Iran.

Tensions in the special relationship between Israel and the U.S. also diminish Israel's status. The JPPI experts all saw the relationship between the U.S. and Israel as having seriously deteriorated. (Even the carefully groomed relationship with Russia has taken a hit in the wake of the framework agreement and with Putin's unfreezing the S-300 missile deal with Iran.) Recent incidents illustrate that tension. Discomfort with Israeli policy has prompted sharp reactions from all levels within the White House. The American criticism also touches on the deeply shared values at the base of the special relationship. The administration responded sharply to Netanyahu's warnings to voters on Election Day that Israel's Arab citizens "are going to the voting booths in droves." The conclusion of the agreement with Iran carries a strong potential for growing tensions between Washington and Jerusalem. What stands out is the lack of trust. Yet, the U.S. continues to reiterate its commitment to Israel's security. The new Israeli government could treat President Obama's remaining time in office as a period of containment with the hope that the policies of the next president will be vastly different.

There are some silver linings. The election of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in India, a known friend of Israel, opens new opportunities. China is focusing its investment efforts in Israel as a strategic "trade

At this point, it seems unlikely that the U.S. and Russia can cooperate effectively in order to jointly bring about regional stability

junction" leading to Europe. Israel's attraction of foreign investors in its high-tech sector points to the potential in the Israeli market, but the difficult diplomatic situation may limit its realization.

Against the background of the nuclear agreement with Iran (July 14, 2015), characterized by Prime Minister Netanyahu as a "mistake of historic proportions," we are moving the dial to signify a negative trend in regard to Israel's geopolitical situation. The disagreement between Israel and the United States, Israel's single meaningful ally, over a question the Israeli government presents

Today, there are 14.2 million Jews. Together with the "partially Jewish" and the Russian immigrants of "no religion" in Israel, it reaches 16 million – close to the number in 1939, on the eve of the Holocaust

as "existential," stands out. This is especially so in the face of the Iranian challenge, which includes its nuclear program and Tehran's drive to de-stabilize existing regimes through its support of terror organizations. The intensification of the tension between Israel and the United States increases the stress on American Jewry and

threatens to erode the robustness of the "triangular relationship," which is a cornerstone of Israel and the Jewish people's strength. In parallel, Israel faces concrete security threats from Hezbollah and Hamas, an outbreak of lethal violence in Judea and Samaria and Jerusalem, and attempts to isolate her in the international arena through a campaign of de-legitimization and boycotts.

Demography

While the geopolitics dimension routinely sees most volatility from year to year, demography is much more stable. As before, we did not form an expert panel on demographics. And yet, those who follow the other dimensions are acutely aware of the importance demography holds for how a number of outcomes will be resolved in coming years. This slow pace of change makes the job of demographic policy analysis more subtle and challenging, but does not reduce its importance compared to other dimensions of change.

This makes a retrospective view valuable. 2015 marks 70 years since the end of WWII. Over this period the world Jewish population increased from 11 million to 14.2 million (or an addition of approximately one-third). Moreover, in each of the last seven decades there has been a rise in the number of Jews, with an especially salient increase in the last decade (between 2005 and 2015). These estimates of the Jewish population combine the objective definition of halachic criteria in Israel and subjective self-definition of group belonging for Diaspora Jewry. One may include two more sub-groups with current orientation to the Jewish people: immigrants to Israel (mainly from the FSU) and their offspring who met the criteria of the Law of Return, but do not define themselves according to any religion and are not halachic Jews. This group comprises some 350,000 people. Another group, mostly living in the United States, comprises people who regard themselves as "partially Jewish." The

overwhelming majority of them are offspring of mixed parentage. This group is composed of approximately one million people. It is likely that the "partially Jewish" can be found in other Diaspora countries as well. Adding these groups to the Jewish population increases the size of the world Jewish population to some 16 million. This estimate is very close to the number of Jews in the world on the eve of WWII.

Along with the growth in the number of Jews in the world, their geographic dispersion has changed dramatically. In 1945 only 5 percent of world Jewry resided in Palestine/Israel, but today it is home to 43 percent of the total global Jewish population (of 14.2 million). At the same time, Jewish communities in countries in an earlier stage of modernization – in Asia and North Africa – have been emptied. With the more recent influxes from the FSU, Jews have converged in a small number of democratic, economically advanced, and culturally pluralistic countries. The presence of Jews in Diaspora countries is also notable because they are heavily concentrated in a few major cities and metropolitan areas. In the United States, the number of Jews is stable, and, presumably, somewhat increased (from 5 million in 1957, to 5.7 million today). This is a result of contradictory processes of low fertility compensated by positive international migration. Likewise, the average number of children born to Jewish women who are also raised Jewish increased. Although the drift toward intermarriage continues, more and more mixed marriages are transmitting Jewish identity to a growing number of Americans. For the first time in memory, a majority of the

children of intermarried parents in the 18-30 age bracket identify as Jewish (59 percent). The general American population increased more rapidly, which has diminished the proportion of Jews from 2.8 percent in 1957, to only 1.8 percent today. In Israel, since the foundation of the state, the equilibrium between Jews and non-Jews (the former also includes people of "no religion") has remained fairly stable at 80 and 20 percent respectively. Major recent demographic developments in Israel include the near convergence of Jewish and non-Jewish fertility (around three children); and an increase in Jewish immigration (mainly from France and Ukraine). The overall trend of world Jewish demography is in a direction of growth.

These trends are not noteworthy compared to global demographic changes. But from a Jewish people policy perspective, the continued observation of these dynamics in the past year causes us to move the gauge for this dimension in a positive direction.

Identity Formation and Expression

JJPI focused attention this year upon the "Jewish middle" in the American Jewish community. As discussed in the chapter "Jewish Identity and Identification in America Today," multivariate analysis of the 2013 Pew study¹⁰ reveals that expressions of Jewish identity cluster into three groups. One displays social interactions that are sharply differentiated and stand apart from the social interactions of general American society,

Those interactions that are readily identifiable as Jewish in an American context are mainly religious, but also have to do with Israel and belonging to Jewish social and communal organizations

while another is so well integrated into American culture and society that it is barely identifiable as specifically Jewish. Those interactions that are readily identifiable as Jewish in an American context are mainly religious but also have to do with one's friendships, Israel, and belonging to and being active in Jewish social and communal organizations.

In the middle we find expressions of Jewish identity that attempt to balance and articulate between Jewish social interactions and general American ones. These include responsibility toward Jewish communities around the world, a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people, emotional attachment to Israel, and the belief that

being part of the Jewish community is essential to being Jewish. Religious practice does not constitute a large part of their Jewishness; this middle segment practices the "Jewish civil religion." Jews identified with the Conservative movement are strongly associated with these middle expressions of Jewish identity.

From a policy perspective, the maintenance of the Jewish middle is desirable because it constitutes the "glue" that holds together the two poles of the highly committed (mostly Orthodox) and the highly assimilated and intermarried, whose Jewish values are indistinguishable from general American ones. Secondly, contemporary Jewish policy influence depends upon two factors: Jewish identification and having the financial, status, and professional resources to affect outcomes. The latter depends upon integration into the general society. Thus it is desirable to have a balance between Jewish identity and integration into American life. The policy challenge is that this middle is shrinking.¹¹

This middle is shrinking not only because of intermarriage and assimilation, but also because of the failure create Jewish families and to bear and raise Jewish children. Jewish educational interventions (day school, summer camp, post Bar Mitzvah supplementary school, Israel trips), and the creation of opportunities for young Jews to create friendships and romantic attachments with other young Jews has an extremely powerful effect on the propensity of the (non-Orthodox) young to marry Jewish and raise Jewish children.

Results from the JPPI expert panel underscored many of these points. All respondents answered in the affirmative, albeit with differing qualifications, that those self-identifying as “partially Jewish” should be counted as part of the Jewish community, and the fact that perhaps up to one million people do so should be regarded as a net positive. Relatedly, the fact that many members of the Russian immigration identify as fully or partially Jewish is also both positive and potentially sustainable in the next generation, although the majority feel that this will require some active measures of engagement to realize.

Balancing this positive assessment, the large majority felt that Israeli legislative initiatives emphasizing or privileging the Jewish character of the state has had some negative effects on Jewish identity in the Diaspora (e.g., “[Such legislation] as reported in the mainstream U.S. and Jewish press strengthens the narrative of undemocratic Israel, deservedly or not. That narrative has legs...so the discussion of the proposed law does indeed cause some damage.”)

The panel was evenly split on whether there had been any change in this dimension over the past year, and even its direction if so. On balance, the JPPI gauge for this dimension records a change for the negative because of the shrinking of the Jewish middle, the growth of Jews of no religion and of those who are partially Jewish with weak Jewish commitments and affiliations present serious challenges for Jewish identity in America.

Material Resources

The status of the Jewish people's resources improved over the past year. Israel's economic performance has been positive over the past decade compared to most of Europe. Israel's GDP has grown. This growth includes the development of natural resources off Israel's shores and in the Golan Heights. The most recent estimate of growth in 2014 was 2.9 percent, smaller than predicted, but recorded in a year that saw a 50-day war. The average growth among OECD countries was 1.9 percent. Median income has been increasing as well. Similarly, according to financial news reports, the material resources available to Jews in the Diaspora also grew.

Nevertheless, a number of concerns present themselves. The first, which seems to have had expression in the recent elections to the Knesset has to do with the high cost of living and income disparities in Israel.

In 2011, Israel's price level was 5% above that of the OECD on average. In 2014, the difference had risen to 12%. Between 2008 and the 2013 the cost of buying an apartment rose by 55% in relative terms with rental prices up by around 30%. (Housing cost increased only 2% annually from 1967 to 2008.)

Similarly, aggregate economic data mask growing disparities. The ratio of disposable income

Israel's economic growth rates are positive, but the gap between the top and bottom 10% of Israeli society is among the largest in the developed world

between an individual in the 90th percentile and an individual in the 50th percentile (i.e., the median) in Israel is 2.32, the highest among all OECD countries. Similarly, the ratio between the median and an Israeli in the 10th percentile is 2.75, again the largest gap in OECD.

Another concern is that of adequate investment in the future, both in Israel and the Diaspora.

In Israel, it is likely that recent modifications aimed at integrating the ultra-Orthodox into the Israeli workforce adversely affect long-term economic investment. Two decisions made by the

In the Diaspora, despite an increase in resources, there is inadequate investment in Jewish identity

current government – returning child subsidies to their previous level and decreasing the number of those who need to enlist in the IDF, run counter to the incentives created to join the workforce. The latter, being one of the most effective ways to gain the advanced skills necessary for the job market.

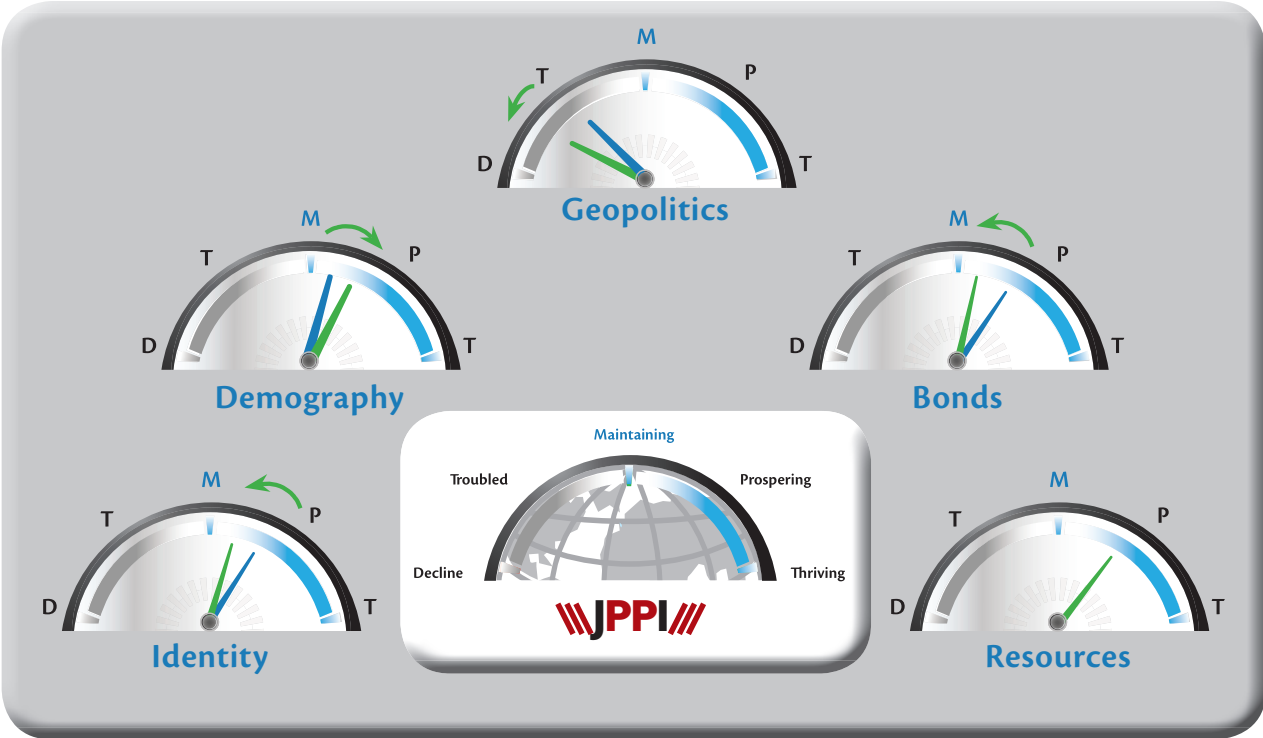
Regarding Diaspora Jews, here too, despite what seems to be an increase in resources, there is inadequate investment in Jewish identity. Analysis of up-to-date Pew statistics reinforces the notion that the high cost of programs that build and strengthen Jewish identity discourages many potential participants. From among the non-Orthodox community in the U.S. participation levels in such programs from families that earn

over \$100,000 a year stand at 34 percent while participation for those earning under \$100,000 is only 17 percent. Because of these concerns, despite the overall growth in resources, JPPI has left the Material Resources gauge unchanged from last year.

Current Status of the Jewish People: Moving the Needles

Figure 1 shows how we have set the dials on the Jewish people “dashboard” as of mid-2015. As our discussion reflects, the events of the past year and continuing trends seem to be having an effect on several of the assessments of Jewish people well-being today.

Figure 1. Characterization of Key Drivers Affecting the Jewish People in the Year 2014-15



2014-2013 ■ 2015-2014 ■

Endnotes

1. The JPPI Annual Assessment for 2011-2012 provides a more detailed discussion of the methodology behind both the short-term net assessments and the longer-term trends and scenarios discussed below (“Integrated ‘Net’ Assessment”, in *Annual Assessment 2011-2012*.)
2. The expert panels were conducted through email between 19 February and 14 May 2015. A total of 32 individuals participated. These were not surveys designed to sample opinion but rather a means for including selected individuals into the JPPI deliberative process. As such, the number of participants was kept deliberately small (on the order of six or so per group.) We therefore use largely qualitative characterizations for these inputs to avoid conveying an incorrect impression.
3. There was insufficient expertise to discuss similar effects within other global Jewish communities.
4. The fifth respondent to this particular question felt this might actually be a cause for strengthening bonds.
5. The report on these meetings includes full documentation and statistical analyses of participants’ responses.
6. Friedman, Thomas L., “The Obama Doctrine and Iran”, *New York Times*, April 5, 2015
7. Russia, China, and France supported the petition; the U.S. objected and the U.K. abstained.
8. NRG, March 16, 2015
9. In Europe, resolutions were passed in Belgium, the U.K., Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain and in the EU parliament.
10. Pew Research Center (2013). *A Portrait of Jewish Americans: Findings from a Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews*.
11. For example, membership in the Conservative movement has shrunk from around 40% of American Jews in 1990 to 18% in 2013.

PART 2

Five Dimensions of Jewish Well-Being

Geopolitics

Demography

Bonds within and between Communities

Identity Formation and Expression

Material Resources

3

The Geopolitical Challenges Facing Israel's New Government*

Israel's new government is treading toward a complex and dangerous geopolitical arena. Compared to its predecessor, the new government is expected to be less ideologically flexible, and will thus have less room to maneuver or launch diplomatic initiatives, given the rising challenges.

The current stormy geopolitical environment will not afford the new Israeli government a grace period. The long list of serious dilemmas, complex and intertwined issues, and decisions that will be made (or delayed), are expected to critically influence Israel's future. The main geopolitical challenges within the global and regional framework are also stormy, riddled with question marks and are very much relevant to Israel's fortitude.

The following report is intended to summarize the developments of the recent months regarding the central geopolitical dilemmas and challenges Israel faces:

- The nuclear agreement achieved with Iran, and characterized by Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu as "a mistake of historic proportions."

- The danger of a military deterioration – on the northern front (Hezbollah and Syria), on the southern front (Hamas and terror groups in the Sinai), in Judea and Samaria and in Jerusalem (individual violence, public protests, and organized terror).
- Continuing tensions with the United States.
- The continued erosion in the U.S. view of the need to fill a central leadership role, or even maintain a presence in the Middle East.
- The push to change the paradigm for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from direct negotiations led by the U.S. to a multinational initiative backed by the UN.
- Israel's dwindling international standing and growing BDS and De-legitimization efforts to

* This paper was completed on August 10, 2015.

inflict further damage.

- The strained resilience of the "triangular relationship": Jerusalem – Washington – U.S. Jews.
- Realizing the opportunity to improve relations with the moderate Sunni countries (given the Iranian threat and those posed by radical terror elements).

Given these various challenges, the need to rehabilitate and nurture the relationship with the U.S. takes ultimate priority – as the U.S. is

Israel's only true and significant ally. This task will be complex given the issues at hand – the Iran agreement and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its various derivatives – and the substantive differences between Jerusalem and Washington over them. Already inflamed tensions could potentially worsen in the coming months and weigh

heavily on the U.S. Jewish community, which may find itself between a "rock and a hard place," further straining the resilience of the "triangular relationship," which has served as a cornerstone of the strength and security of Israel and the Jewish people.

The U.S.'s increasing reluctance to become involved or present in the Middle East poses a significant threat to Israel's basic interests

The International System and America's Standing

The "world order" defined by the Cold War, and later, after the fall of the Soviet Union, characterized by a period of American dominance has given way to the current "global disorder" that has yet to coalesce into a stable and functioning international structure. Russian military aggression in Ukraine stokes fears of deteriorating relations between the two powers and makes the cooperation necessary to maintain global stability difficult. Some commentators even warn that a combination of Moscow's nuclear capabilities with its continuing decline (both economic and demographic) could increase military tensions with Washington.

In parallel to China's rise and the growing geopolitical challenge to Washington from Moscow, America's international standing continues to be confronted. This is especially worrying as the U.S. is the only major power whose friendship and support for Israel are critical. It is also home to almost half the Jewish people, living in an age of unprecedented success. For example, the U.S. is not succeeding in preventing Western nations (including the UK, Australia, and even Israel) from joining the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, being developed by China. This is intended to deepen China's regional and global influence, through creating direct competition to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, in which the United States has decisive influence.

In addition, another development further threatens Israel's basic interests: America's increasing

reluctance to become involved in the region. Israel will be affected not just by the qualitative change in its relationship with Washington but also by the shift in America's global standing. Furthermore, the strengthening of the regional perception that the U.S. – Israel's main ally – is in the midst of a decline and is abandoning the Middle East, serves to further undermine Israel's deterrence power. Developments substantiating the insight that American interest in the Middle East is waning include Washington's pivot to Asia, and forecasts that the United States will soon have no need of imported energy resources. A bold expression of the moderate Arab camp's disappointment with the regional performance of the U.S. was the noticeable absence of Saudi Arabian King Salman from the May 2015 meeting with Gulf region leaders, initiated by President Obama, and which was intended to calm concerns over the nuclear agreement with Iran.

America's continuing disengagement from Afghanistan (following the withdrawal from Iraq), combined with its avoidance of involvement in Syria even after Assad crossed President Obama's "red line" (the Syrian regime's use of chemical weapons against civilians), signal its desire to cap off the recent period of active military involvement in the region. Many Americans sense that this involvement, which carried a heavy cost – in blood and treasure – held disappointing returns and did not manage to achieve significant goals. The lack of appetite in the U.S. for Middle East involvement is all the more apparent now that the region is in chaos and in dire need of a powerful and stabilizing actor.

However, many commentators reject the "America in decline" theory, and many are convinced that the U.S. cannot completely disengage from the Middle East due to its potential to destabilize international security, instigate a nuclear war, and cause a global economic-energy crisis. (Even if the U.S. is no longer dependent on Middle Eastern oil, instability in the global oil supply could lead to an unstable global economy, of which the U.S. is an integral part and dependent upon.) Obama repeatedly presents as an achievement of his presidency the fact that he ended America's ground wars, which had demanded a U.S. military presence of tens of thousands of American troops in the Middle East. He describes, in an official document, the main guiding principles of his foreign policy as follows: "The question is never whether America should lead, but how we lead... we are stronger when we mobilize collective action...America leads from a position of strength. But, this does not mean we can or should attempt to dictate the trajectory of all unfolding events around the world... As powerful as we are and will remain, our resources and influence are not infinite. And in a complex world, many of the security problems we face do not lend themselves to quick and easy fixes... we must recognize that a smart national security strategy does not rely solely on military power.

Former CIA Director: "The most significant enemy of the U.S. in the Middle East is not ISIS but rather Iran which is ultimately and at its core hostile to the U.S."

Indeed, in the long-term, our efforts to work with other countries to counter the ideology and root causes of violent extremism will be more important than our capacity to remove terrorists from the battlefield. The challenges we face require strategic patience and persistence."¹

The Obama administration increasingly describes its approach to the Middle East as a "dual engagement." On one hand, there is the concerted effort to reach a political arrangement with Iran in order to halt progress in its pursuit of a nuclear weapon. On the other hand, there is a

Saudi Arabia and other Sunni states are concerned that the nuclear agreement will grant Iran a significant regional role

similarly concerted effort to bolster the moderate Sunni states, which are worried that the U.S. has yet to determine whether its regional Iran strategy will come at their expense. President Obama's promise to the Iranians that reaching a nuclear arrangement will allow Iran to become a "successful regional power," is stirring fears

in Saudi Arabia and the other Sunni states in the region.² They are concerned the United States will strike a "grand bargain" with Iran following the signing of the nuclear agreement that will grant it a significant regional role and allow Tehran to proceed with its subversive efforts to achieve regional hegemony.

There are those in the U.S. who are convinced that, in the long term, Iran would be a more

preferable ally than Saudi Arabia. Iran has a young, relatively educated population interested in democracy and modernization, and less hostile to the United States. The fact that ISIS is a common enemy further strengthens this conviction. The opposite approach, which refuses to see in Iran an American ally, is strongly articulated by General David H. Petraeus, who claims that the most significant enemy of the U.S. is not ISIS, but rather Iran which is ultimately and at its core hostile to the U.S., and which is part of the problem, not part of the solution to Middle East stability.³

The Iranian Nuclear Program:

The negotiations regarding Iran's nuclear program resulted in an historic agreement (July 14, 2015), according to which Iran will accept limitations on its nuclear program in exchange for the lifting of sanctions. Some of the limitations will be lifted after 10 years and others after 15, (after which Iran will be free to enrich uranium as it wishes, unless a new agreement is achieved). According to the agreement:

- Iran can maintain up to 300 kg of enriched uranium (low enriched, suitable only for civilian purposes), and will be allowed to retain only 2 percent of its pre-deal stock for the next 15 years.
- Iran will limit the number of active centrifuges by two thirds and will be allowed to operate 5,060 units. This means Iran will need at least a year to break out and enrich enough uranium to a high enough level (90%) for one atomic weapon.

- The core of the heavy water reactor at Arak will be replaced so that Iran will be prevented from pursuing a plutonium-based weapon.
- The facility at Fordow will not enrich uranium rather it will be converted to a nuclear research facility devoid of enriched material.
- Monitoring will be allowed at all nuclear facilities, including military bases.
- Moreover, Iran will sign the Additional Protocol to the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty), which will apply a more invasive inspection regime on its nuclear facilities.

The lifting of sanctions is expected in early 2016, subject to authorization (essentially promised already) by the UN Security Council. Moreover, subject to authorization from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that Iran's nuclear program is indeed completely civilian in nature and not military – there will be a gradual lifting of the arms embargo in place today on Iran. If Iran is found to be in violation of its commitments, a "snap-back" mechanism will be activated to put international sanctions back in place.

The United States Congress was afforded 60 days to authorize or reject the agreement. Even if Congress decides bring the authorization to a vote (this is not necessary according to the law passed following the compromise with the White House), it will need a two-thirds majority to override the president's veto. (The President clearly stated immediately following the signing of the agreement that he will, if needed, exercise this veto power.)

Those supporting the agreement stress that it pushes back Iran's breakout capability to create a nuclear weapon. Without the agreement, Iran can create a weapon within two or three months' time, whereas now, this process would take at least a year. Moreover, through unprecedented verification measures, the U.S. will be able to detect if the agreement is breached, reinstate sanctions, and if need be, use military force.

Those opposing the agreement claim that at most, it delays Iran's building a nuclear bomb. According to them, not one centrifuge will be dismantled and not one facility in Iran's nuclear infrastructure will be closed, including the nuclear facility hidden inside of a mountain at Fordow. The agreement grants legitimacy to Iran's nuclear program and establishes it as a threshold nuclear state. The cumbersome inspection regime leaves Iran with ample time to hide suspicious evidence from inspectors. Even more so, the agreement does not refer to Iran's ballistic missile program, the Tehran-directed violent subversion throughout the Middle East, or Iran's threats to wipe Israel off the map. The agreement's critics further warn that the lifting of sanctions and releasing of tens of billions of frozen dollars to Iran will allow Iran to increase its campaign of regional subversion and support for terror groups.

The U.S. essentially agreed to allow Iran to maintain a military nuclear infrastructure, a reality that the U.S. had previously rejected outright

From the outset, the Obama administration's goal was to change the nature of Iran's nuclear program so that it could not pursue a nuclear weapon. The intent was to leave Iran with an infrastructure that allows it a peaceful nuclear program (research, medical purposes, etc.), while interdicting its military nuclear infrastructure. In this spirit, Obama clarified during a presidential debate with Mitt Romney (October 22, 2012): "Our goal is to force Iran to recognize that it must give up its nuclear program and fulfill UNSC resolutions... the agreement we will receive will

be one that stops Iran's nuclear program."⁴

Abu-Mazen is wary that Hamas will reach an indirect long-term ceasefire agreement with Israel and will gain international legitimacy for its Gaza regime

However, throughout his second term, President Obama's administration radically changed the defined goals vis-à-vis Iran's nuclear program and decided to focus on ensuring that the breakout time Iran needs to create a weapon, if it decides to do so, will be extended to a year. The U.S. abandoned

its original position, and thus agreed that Iran would maintain a military nuclear infrastructure, a reality the U.S. had previously rejected outright. Moreover, the U.S., which had also stressed that a military option remained on the table, clarified as time passed that it did not view a military strike as an effective way of halting Iran's nuclear program.

The announcement of a framework agreement was already met with harsh criticism. An early

April *Wall Street Journal* op-ed by Henry Kissinger and George Shultz was particularly scathing: "Yet negotiations that began 12 years ago as an international effort to prevent an Iranian capability to develop a nuclear arsenal are ending with an agreement that concedes this very capability, albeit short of its full capacity in the first 10 years." They went on to note that "Iran's centrifuges have multiplied from 100 at the beginning of the negotiation to almost 20,000 today."⁵

Israeli reactions to the agreement itself have been unabashedly critical (also in Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries), and reflect a general consensus in both the governing coalition and the opposition. Prime Minister Netanyahu announced: "What a stunning, historic mistake. Israel is not bound by this deal with Iran because Iran continues to seek our destruction."⁶

There is currently an opening for Israel to engage in dialogue with the U.S. to try to translate into practical terms President Obama's statement that, "I (am) absolutely committed to making sure that they maintain their qualitative military edge, and that they can deter any potential future attacks... a very clear message to the Iranians and to the entire region that if anybody messes with Israel, America will be there."⁷ However, above everything, now that the agreement has been signed, the Israeli government must decide if it is going to accept the new reality it considers an "existential threat," or if it will operate in keeping with the prime minister's statement that, "Israel cannot accept an agreement that leaves Iran a threshold nuclear state."⁸

The Palestinian Arena:

The collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations reinforced the Palestinians' propensity to unleash a campaign of political and legal warfare against Israel in the international arena. At the same time, they seek to undercut the "direct negotiations with American mediation" model with an alternative one – "a multinationally initiated solution backed by the UN" model. "There are Palestinians who refer to these steps – including increasing BDS and de-legitimization steps against Israel – as an "international intifada." One example of this was the Palestinian initiative to boot Israel out of FIFA – the International Football Federation, (a move the Palestinians themselves aborted on the day a vote was expected – May 29, 2015).

Abu Mazen is 80 and nearing retirement. He is looking to leave behind a legacy of achievements, and is not seeing results from the reconciliation agreement with Hamas. Hamas is dependent upon the Palestinian Authority to pay its Gaza-based employee salaries, to channel the flow of aid money to rebuild Gaza, and to operate border crossings that allow Gaza's residents freedom of movement in and out. However Abu Mazen does not believe that Hamas intends to disarm itself or commit itself to the principle of "one government – one gun." He is even wary that Hamas will reach an indirect long-term ceasefire agreement with Israel and will gain international legitimacy for its Gaza regime, thus perpetuating the inter-Palestinian split. A victory for Hamas supporters in the student council elections at Bir Zeit University (on April 22, 2014) could signal a change in the

political atmosphere in the West Bank, to the detriment of Abu Mazen and Fatah.

The turning point in Palestinian strategy already played out politically toward the end of the last round of failed negotiations with Israel. The Palestinians presented requests to gain membership in 15 UN treaties, and, through Jordan, petitioned the UN Security Council for recognition of a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders, and bring an end to the occupation within two years. However, the Palestinians failed to convince a majority of the nine member states, which spared the U.S. the need to use its veto. (The permanent Security Council members that supported the petition were: Russia, China, and France. The U.S. objected and the UK abstained.) Following this failure, Abu Mazen signed (December 31, 2014) accession agreements to 22 additional international treaties including the Rome Treaty, which paved the way to joining the International Criminal Court in the Hague. This new reality puts Israel at risk of war crimes charges. Fatou Bensouda, the chief prosecutor for the ICC, approved an open-ended preliminary investigation of alleged crimes committed within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has already been initiated, however it is not defined as an official investigation.⁹ That said, the assessment of various

The White House: "The U.S. Government has doubts about Netanyahu's reassurance to the American media that he supports a two state solution"

legal experts is that the court will not rush to involve itself in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, so investigating Palestinian complaints could take many years. Furthermore, the PLO Executive Committee authorized Abu Mazen to implement the decision to cease security cooperation with Israel (March 19, 2015). Abu Mazen has yet to decide whether or not to implement this decision, but he continuously threatens to do so.

Given the stalled political process, France has increased its involvement aimed at relaunching the peace process. The French initiative is based

The diplomatic deadlock is encouraging various parliaments around the world to pass decisions calling on their governments to recognize a Palestinian state

on achieving a Security Council resolution that defines the principles of a final deal, especially borders based on the 1967 lines with agreed adjustments. French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius explained that the initiative is guided by the need to change the way in which negotiations are conducted, implying it should be led by the international community.

Fabius essentially came out against American exclusivity in managing the peace process thus far. "We want to avoid the pitfall of endless negotiations... Clear parameters for resolving the conflict adopted by the international community in advance will provide the basis for future negotiations. And we must set a timetable..."¹⁰ The French are interested in convening an international

conference to jump-start the negotiations that would follow the Security Council's resolution. In the context of Israel's recent elections, the French were persuaded to hold off until a new government is formed and can reexamine Israeli positions on the Palestinian matter.

The Americans have made it clear that they have yet to rule out the possibility of supporting the French move, but continue to press the French to postpone their move until after the nuclear agreement with Iran is signed (June 30). The White House suspects that opening an additional front vis-à-vis the Israeli government would make gaining congressional approval for such a deal more difficult. Fabius referred to the timing of the tabling of the French proposal, noting, "We think that soon, not within days but soon ... we need to agree on timing with John Kerry. There are other issues to deal with. One negotiation should not hurt another, but at the same time, there's always a lot going on, so the risk is we never find the time."¹¹

Netanyahu's Election Day remarks (March 16, 2015), that a Palestinian State would not be established under his watch,¹² clarified the question mark hanging over how Israel plans to resolve the conflict with the Palestinians.¹³ Netanyahu's attempt to walk back his reversal of the policy stated in his Bar-Ilan speech (2009) did not succeed in winning back the international community's trust in his commitment to the principle of a two-state solution. Netanyahu told NBC in an interview: "I haven't changed my policy, what has changed is the reality, I want a sustainable, peaceful two-state solution, but for that, circumstances have to change."¹⁴

The White House, however, did not accept Netanyahu's explanation, and administration spokespeople made it clear that the U.S. would reassess its options in the wake of his new positions on the Palestinian issue. White House spokesman Josh Ernest, clarified that the U.S. government "has doubts" about Netanyahu's reassurance to the American media that he supports a two-state solution, "There now is doubt about whether or not this is what the true view is of Prime Minister Netanyahu and the government that he will form."¹⁵ President Obama himself said (March 25, 2015): "We believe that two states is the best path forward for Israel's security. ... and Prime Minister Netanyahu has a different approach.... We can't pretend that there's a possibility of something that's not there. And we can't continue to premise our public diplomacy based on something that everybody knows is not going to happen.... The question is, do you create a process and a framework that gives the Palestinians hope, the possibility, that down the road they have a secure state of their own ... it's hard to envision how that happens based on the Prime Minister's statements."¹⁶

The near future will reveal whether the new Israeli government has a real interest and the political wherewithal to present a diplomatic plan that will gain the trust of the international community. Similarly, it is important to note that in his speech to the UN General Assembly (September 29, 2014), Netanyahu announced his willingness to make "a historic compromise" and called on Arab countries to "update the old template for peace.... Israel is prepared to work with Arab partners

and the international community. Together, we can strengthen regional security... I believe the partnership between us can also help facilitate peace between Israel and the Palestinians. A broader rapprochement between Israel and the Arab world may help facilitate an Israeli-Palestinian peace.... And therefore, to achieve that peace, we must look not only to Jerusalem and Ramallah but also to Cairo, to Amman, Abu Dhabi, Riyadh and elsewhere."¹⁷ However, the option to craft a regional political initiative that would essentially "skip" over the Palestinian issue is unacceptable to the Arab world. Egyptian President Al-Sisi described the Arab position (October 12, 2014) when he called on Israel to adopt the Arab Peace Initiative, which includes the establishment of a Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders with agreed adjustments and a capital in East Jerusalem, as its focus.

A series of adjustments announced by King Salman in Saudi Arabia to senior posts in the Kingdom might imply a shift towards a willingness to act more aggressively against regional challenges

The diplomatic deadlock is encouraging various parliaments around the world to pass decisions calling on their governments to recognize a Palestinian state (in Europe, such decisions were made in Belgium, the UK, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain and in the EU parliament). Although these decisions amount to little more than a recommendation, they reflect the political trends in Europe. Until now, the Palestinians have gained recognition

in 135 countries (80 percent of the world's population). Even the Vatican joined the wave of countries recognizing the Palestinians, using the term "State of Palestine" for the first time (May 13, 2015) referring to an agreement signed with the Palestinian Authority regarding the Church's activities within PA territory. However, of the 50 countries that have yet to recognize the country of Palestine are three of the five permanent Security Council members (the U.S., UK and France), and a number of other important countries such as Germany, Canada, Australia, Italy, and Japan.

In light of Putin's aggressive moves in Ukraine and the Western sanctions against him, it is unlikely that Russia and the U.S. can cooperate in leading a combined regional order

If the diplomatic deadlock continues, the balance of international support for a Palestinian state could shift, and we could see an increase in other anti-Israel measures. These could also come as a result of continued settlement construction. In this regard, 16 EU foreign ministers sent letters (April 13, 2015) to EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini calling for labels

on goods produced in the settlements and sold in European retail outlets. The ministers wrote that: "the continued expansion of illegal settlements on occupied Palestinian territory and other territory occupied by Israel since 1967 threatens the chances to reach a final and just peace agreement."¹⁸ To this end, a group of former European leaders and

diplomats sent a forceful letter to Mogherini demanding that the EU toughen its policy toward Israel, not to hide behind the U.S., but rather, "find an effective way of holding Israel to account for the way it maintains the occupation."¹⁹

The Regional Framework and the Map of Security Threats:

The events of recent months show just how turbulent, violent, and challenging the Middle East can be for Israel. Iran, on the verge of becoming a threshold nuclear state with the backing of the historic nuclear agreement (July 14, 2015), is increasing fears among the Sunni countries, and is heightening the incentive for a possible nuclear arms race in the region. Tehran's appetite to enhance its influence in the region is growing and its leaders are flaunting their control of four Arab capitals: Beirut, Baghdad, Damascus, and now Sana'a. ISIS continues to control vast swaths of territory in Iraq and Syria, and is contributing to the collapse of the nation-state system in the region. It is also fomenting the "failed state" phenomenon, when governments cannot regain control over their sovereign territory from radical anti-state actors (such as in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, and Yemen). The capture of the regional capital Ramadi (May 17, 2015) brought ISIS within 110 km of Baghdad and further exposed the Iraqi army's weakness. Jihadist organizations throughout the Middle East are declaring their allegiance to ISIS and committing brutal acts of murder and violence, destroying economies and infrastructure, and rendering recognized international borders irrelevant.

The civil war in Syria continues to rage as the death toll nears a quarter of a million. Four million people have lost their homes, many of them have fled Syria and others are displaced persons in their own state. ISIS controls roughly half of Syria, while the balance of forces between Assad and the rebel groups continues to shift. Earlier this year it seemed that Assad had the upper hand, which brought about a shift in the tone of the U.S. and the West regarding his regime. Considering the anarchy, which had been only expected to increase in his absence, Assad was increasingly seen by many as a part of the solution, the best of the bad options at hand. However, currently, due to a number of losses at the hands of rebel groups, and the loss of the city of Idlib and other territories, commentators are once again discussing Assad's eroded power, and some are forecasting his coming fall.

In parallel, Washington sees ISIS as the central threat, and American warplanes are hitting it from the air as Washington supplies intelligence to forces fighting it on the ground. (This essentially creates a reality of indirect cooperation between the U.S. and Iran, which sees the murderous Sunni organization as a dangerous enemy and is thus helping the Iraqi government in its fight against it.) During the negotiations over its nuclear program, Iran did not cease escalating its subversive behavior in the region.

The Shi'a Houthi militias fighting in Yemen with Iranian support succeeded in toppling the Sunni government in Sana'a. This development created a direct threat to Saudi Arabia, which is attempting – with help from additional Arab armies and without

an American military presence on the ground – to push back the Houthi militias. An open question is whether the change of regime in Riyadh following the death of King Abdullah (January 23, 2015) and the subsequent crowning of King Salman signals a shift in Saudi Arabia's long term character, and its willingness to act more aggressively against regional challenges: Iran, jihadist terror, the Houthi rebels in Yemen, and more. A series of adjustments announced by King Salman to various senior posts in the kingdom as well as to the chain of succession (April 29, 2015) might just imply such a shift. The joint Arab military force that was formed (March 29, 2015), comprising forces from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Sudan, and Jordan, may indicate the beginning of long process in which Arab countries gradually cease counting on the U.S. as the "regional policeman."

Egyptian pressure on Hamas, combined with the delays in Gaza's reconstruction, increase the chances of another outbreak of Palestinian violence against Israel from Gaza

However, Israel should have some apprehension over the formation of a joint Arab military force that gains experience in coordinated complex military action. Thus, while this force is currently composed of regional moderates, and while it is focused on fighting regional extremists, such a force could theoretically turn on Israel in the future. If this weren't enough for concern, it should be noted that in the wake of the nuclear deal with Iran, it would likely

compensate the Sunni Arab camp with further advanced arms sales.

Egypt and Jordan continue to cope with difficult security challenges of their own. The terror threat combined with the inherent threat of Iran's growing presence creates an infrastructure that invites increased cooperation with Israel. An especially bold and deadly terror campaign by ISIS allied forces against a number of military targets simultaneously in Sinai (July 1, 2015) proved the force of the threat it presents against the Egyptian military, and even signaled the organization's capacity to harm Israel.

Under certain conditions, Hezbollah could decide that only a violent confrontation with Israel could restore its lost support in Lebanon and the Arab world

Egypt, which is fighting terror groups in Sinai, sees Hamas as an enemy that aids the terrorists in their fight against it. President al-Sisi has not hesitated to destroy vast built-up areas in order to create a security buffer on the Egypt-Gaza border, while fighting a bitter battle to destroy the smuggling and terror tunnels that

run underneath. In early April of 2015, the U.S. cancelled its freeze on arms shipments to Egypt. The American strategic preference of promoting democracy and human rights in Egypt was pushed aside by the urgency of helping Egypt maintain stability, preventing alternative arms deals with Moscow, ensuring maritime freedom in the Suez Canal, and maintaining the peace treaty with Israel. Jordan as well, perhaps America's closest ally

in the fight against ISIS, is in dire need and receives American support (Jordan absorbed roughly a million Syrian refugees). The video showing ISIS burning a Jordanian air-force pilot alive (February 3, 2015) increased the internal pressure in Jordan to take revenge and bolstered Jordan's centrality in the fight against ISIS.

The harsh upheavals in the Middle East appear to demand the engagement and intervention of a stabilizing power. However the U.S. is not interested in deepening its involvement in the region, is not interested in sending (back) its soldiers to shed their blood in the Middle East, and prefers to "lead from behind." Moreover, it doesn't seem that the U.S. and Russia can, at this point, cooperate effectively in order to jointly bring about regional stability. Putin's aggressive moves in Ukraine and the Western sanctions against Russia and Putin's inner circle, do not facilitate the necessary infrastructure for cooperation, but rather enhance competition and conflict. Therefore, Russia's announcement (April 13, 2015) that it will thaw the long frozen deal to sell the advanced S-300 surface to air missile system to Iran exemplifies of the current gloomy state of affairs.

Direct Threats to Israel

One significant bright spot that stands out against the barrage of challenges is that Israel does not currently face any significant conventional military threats from sovereign states as it did in the past. The security threats to Israel today primarily emanate from terror organizations that operate

from an ambiguously defined political entity (Hamas), or from within failed states (Lebanon and Syria). These enemies are asymmetric in strategy and increasingly hybrid in nature. They choose to operate from within densely populated civilian areas with murky political sovereignty. Knowing they cannot defeat Israel militarily, they opt for a three-pronged approach: forcing Israel into complex and often urban territory where much of Israel's conventional advantage is neutralized; fighting from within civilian areas that force Israel to restrain its firepower and when fire is used, to harm enemy civilians; and manipulate the international media once civilians are hurt to damage Israel's international standing and increase international pressure on her. So while the threat to Israel's national security from a military perspective is diminished, the challenges from asymmetric warfare are ultimately more complex, and not going to disappear any time soon.

Hamas – "Operation Protective Edge" ended (26 August, 2014) without a decisive defeat of Hamas. Israel was able to cause significant damage to the organization's military infrastructure, destroyed many of the terror tunnels, severely damaged civilian infrastructure, and was able to intercept with the Iron Dome ballistic missile defense system most of the rockets aimed at Israel's civilian population centers. However, Hamas was able to withstand 50 days of fighting while continuing the rocket fire on Israel's cities, including Tel Aviv, throughout the entire period. Hamas even succeeded in shutting down Ben Gurion Airport to foreign airlines for a day.

The promises of reconstruction have yet to be translated into reality in Gaza. Its residents are becoming frustrated and many of them describe themselves as having nothing to lose. Hamas' relations with Turkey and Qatar are not making up for the loss of support of other countries Hamas had been accustomed to in the past. Hamas is attempting to resurrect its relationship with Iran, and even with Hezbollah, to break the current isolation forced upon it after its leadership was expelled from Syria (due to its support for the Sunni rebels), and the conflict with the Al-Sisi regime in Egypt (after overthrowing the Muslim Brotherhood – Hamas' parent organization). Egyptian pressure on Hamas, combined with the delays in Gaza's reconstruction, increase the chances of another outbreak of Palestinian violence against Israel from Gaza. Indeed, Hamas is working to rebuild its tunnel system, is conducting rocket fire tests, and is generally preparing for its next conflict with Israel. (The threats on the Southern front are not only limited to the Gaza Strip. Terror elements in Sinai who have already committed terrorist attacks against Israel could return to attempting to strike Israeli targets.)

At the same time, the Arab press is reporting on disputes between the military and political wings of Hamas in regards to the possibility of

Israel's economy could soon become an increasingly common target for BDS and de-legitimization efforts

an indirect long-term ceasefire with Israel. In exchange, Israel is expected to refrain from steps that would complicate economic reconstruction in Gaza and ease the naval blockade currently in place. The military wing prefers developing its relations with Iran, and may try to prevent such a deal by executing an attack on Israeli targets.

Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria – The continuation of the political paralysis could lead to a deterioration in the security situation in Judea and Samaria, and even to a third intifada, not necessarily identical to the previous ones. Experts assess

Hezbollah's intervention in Syria undermines its claim that its military capabilities are intended to protect Lebanon from Israel

that Israel could end up facing a wide-spread civil disobedience campaign combined with popular violence not necessarily coordinated by a central actor. A warning sign for this mode of action could be seen in the violent events in Jerusalem that erupted in June 2014, following the search effort and arrests in connection with the kidnap and murder of three

Jewish teens by Hamas terrorists. The chaos increased significantly after the immolation of a Palestinian teen by Jewish extremists (July 2, 2014). The sharp rise in terror attacks in Judea and Samaria and in Jerusalem during Operation Protective Edge teaches us about the potential of outbreaks of violence in these areas. The massacre of four Jewish worshippers and a Druze policeman who came to their rescue by Palestinian terrorists (18 November 2014) is a

worrying indication as well. Various initiatives by right-wing activists to change the status quo on the Temple Mount have also added to the already tense atmosphere (and also upset the Jordanians).

Hezbollah – Hezbollah's support of Assad hurts the organization's standing in the Arab world, and especially in Lebanon. A few thousand Hezbollah fighters are operating in Syria alongside Syrian troops. Hezbollah conceals the number of fighters it's lost in Syria, but the number is most likely around 1,000 to date. This reality undermines Hezbollah's claim that its military capabilities are meant to protect Lebanon from Israel. Hezbollah fighting on behalf of the despised Assad is seen as taking the Shia side against the Sunnis and pulls the rug from under the feet of the image Nasrallah has been working to build for so many years, that Hezbollah works in the interest of all of Lebanon's citizens. Hezbollah's involvement in Syria has turned Lebanon into a theatre of battle in Syria's civil war and has led to domestic bloodshed and instability. Hezbollah, which has remained deterred from opening a front with Israel, has been restrained from responding to occasional attacks connected to Israel meant to take out strategic arms transfers from Syria and on storage sites of advanced missiles that are smuggled from Iran through Syria and on to Hezbollah in Lebanon.

A significant and severe event happened on January 18, 2015 when Israel struck a convoy on the Syrian side of the Golan Heights. Imad Mughniya's son, Jihad, (Imad Mughniyah was the commander of Hezbollah's military wing, and was killed in 2008 in Damascus in an assassination attributed to Israel and the U.S.), was among the dead as was an Iranian general. In response, Hezbollah fired anti-tank

missiles at an IDF vehicle patrolling the border with Lebanon, killing two soldiers. The incident exposed a joint Iranian-Hezbollah effort to reclaim territory Assad lost to the rebels in 2014 in southern Syria and in the Syrian Golan Heights, and expand the possible confrontation ground with Israel. Hezbollah's efforts to continue arming with advanced Iranian and Syrian weapons, and Israel's dogged efforts to thwart them, could lead to an escalation, revenge terrorist attacks against Israeli or Jewish targets abroad, or even another war. Hezbollah could even decide that only a violent confrontation with Israel could return its lost support in Lebanon and the Arab world.

Moreover, the fact that Assad has recently lost control over a number of towns could signal to Hezbollah that it will soon lose its critical logistical bridge to Iranian arms. Fears such as these could lead Hezbollah to incite an escalation with Israel. Hezbollah has over 100,000 rockets, many of which can reach deep inside Israel and are far more accurate than those Hamas fired during Protective Edge. Hezbollah chief Nasrallah has even threatened that in the next conflict with Israel, his fighters will fight on Israeli territory, and some are even concerned that Hezbollah may be working on constructing its own terror tunnels from Lebanon to the Galilee. Rational assessments of Hezbollah's situation indicate that the organization has no interest in opening an additional front with Israel. Its forces are fully engaged in Syria, where their losses of life and morale are heavy. However, one cannot disregard the possibility of an unintentional escalation with Israel that may lead to another war, contrary to the "rational calculations" of both sides.

The Relationship with the U.S. and the Resilience of the Jerusalem – Washington – U.S. Jewry Triangle:

Recent months uncovered some silver linings in Israel's standing in the international system. These were expressed, for example, in the IAEA General Assembly's decision to delay the Arab League initiative to censure Israel and try to place its nuclear sites under international supervision.²⁰ Also the election of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister of India, who is known for his friendship to Israel, opens new opportunities to increase Israeli cooperation with an India that is becoming more and more central to the global economy.

The manner in which China is focusing its investment efforts in Israel is particularly impressive. From Beijing's perspective, Israel is a strategic "trade junction" for China's economy leading to Europe. In parallel to the large trade deals, such as purchasing control over Makhteshim or Tnuva, China stands to, in the coming years open and operate large transportation projects in Israel estimated in the tens of billions of shekels.²¹ Israel's attraction of foreign investors and the high regard for Israel's high-tech sector, point out the significant achievements and the potential promised in the Israeli market. However,

Tensions in the special relationship between Israel and the U.S. also work to diminish Israel's status

the difficult diplomatic situation could serve as an obstacle for Israel's economy that could become an increasingly common target for BDS and de-legitimization efforts.

Israel is often criticized and its international status is eroding due to a number of factors, including the violent conflicts with the Palestinians, the lack of any progress toward a peace settlement with the Palestinians, construction beyond the 1967 borders, and claims of abuse of the democratic rights of Israel's Arabs. The tensions in the special relationship between Israel and the U.S. also work

Murky relations, continued political deadlock, and settlement construction could lead the U.S. to take concrete steps against Israel

to diminish Israel's status as they signal a break in support for Israel from the world's strongest power.

Operation Protective Edge brought about a crisis in Israel's relations with a number of South American countries, which recalled their ambassadors in protest (Brazil, Ecuador, Chile, Peru). Other countries enacted a freeze,

limitation, or reassessment of arms sales to Israel (Spain, the UK and even the U.S.).²² The fighting in Gaza interrupted the thawing of relations that had begun between Israel and Turkey. In the weeks before Operation Protective Edge, there had been increased signals that the two countries were close to completing a conciliatory agreement. However, in light of the military conflict with Hamas, Erdogan reverted to his harsh anti-Israel rhetoric

and claimed: "I cannot think of any positive developments with Israel as long as I am in office... Israel is committing terror right now. Israel is committing genocide."²³ Despite the political tension, economic relations between Israel and Turkey continued to develop throughout 2014, with Israeli exports to Turkey at around 3 billion dollars (Turkish export levels to Israel were similar).²⁴

As far as settlements are concerned, recent months were chock-full of international reactions in response to building or Israeli announcements of its intention to build in Judea and Samaria. These reactions are not just rhetoric either. Thus, 17 EU countries issued warnings to their citizens regarding investing or transacting with businesses based in the settlements or entities connected to them.²⁵ Israel's isolation was once again evident in the UN Human Rights Council, which voted to adopt (July 3, 2015) the UN investigative report on Protective Edge (which found both Israel and Hamas responsible for war crimes). Forty-one countries voted in favor of censuring Israel, five abstained (including India, which had not previously refrained from such criticism), and the U.S. was the lone vote against.²⁶

Israel Often responds to criticism of its behavior with harsh language that intensifies and exacerbates the diplomatic discourse and highlights Israel's isolation. Thus, after Sweden gave notice that it intended to recognize an independent Palestinian state, the Swedish ambassador was summoned for a "rebuke" in the foreign ministry,²⁷ and Foreign Minister Lieberman responded that, "The Swedish government should

understand that Middle East relations are more complex than a piece of self-assembled IKEA furniture, and the matter should be handled with responsibility and sensitivity."²⁸ Prime Minister Netanyahu also criticized Europe's relationship with Israel in harsh terms: "We saw today shocking examples of European hypocrisy. It seems as if there are too many people in Europe, the land in which six million Jews were slaughtered, who haven't learned a thing. But we in Israel learned the lesson. We will continue to defend our people and our state against the forces of terror, tyranny and hypocrisy."²⁹ Even the carefully groomed relationship with Russia has taken a hit of late in the wake of the framework agreement with Iran, and Putin's unfreezing the S-300 missile deal with Iran. In response, Israel lowered the rank of its attending representative at a ceremony to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the USSR's victory over the Nazis (May 9, 2015).

Recent months have also been filled with incidents that show the tension and strained relations between Israel and the U.S. – in policy and strategy matters as well as the personal relations between Obama and Netanyahu. Israel and the U.S. disagree on a few key issues. Chief among them are the Iranian nuclear program and the Palestinian issue, specifically construction beyond the 1967 borders. The White House's discomfort with Israeli policy has prompted sharp reactions from all levels in the White House. When the White House refers to construction plans on Givat Hamatos which is beyond the "Green Line" in Jerusalem, it noted: "This development will only draw condemnation from the international community, distance Israel

from even its closest allies; poison the atmosphere not only with the Palestinians, but also with the very Arab governments with which Prime Minister Netanyahu said he wanted to build relations."³⁰

Columnist Jeffrey Goldberg famously quoted senior administration officials who called Netanyahu a "chickenshit" and a "coward." Goldberg continued, quoting the official who remarked that: "The good thing about Netanyahu is that he's scared to launch wars," the official said, "The bad thing about him is that he won't do anything to reach an accommodation with the Palestinians or with the Sunni Arab states. The only thing he's interested in is protecting himself from political defeat. He's not [Yitzhak] Rabin, he's not [Ariel] Sharon, he's certainly no [Menachem] Begin. He's got no guts."³¹ Netanyahu, from his point of view, harshly rejected the criticisms regarding construction in Jerusalem and called them "statements disconnected from reality."³²

The American criticism touches also on deeply shared values that are at the base of the special relationship between the two countries. The U.S. State Department, when discussing the proposed "Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people" law stated: "Israel is a Jewish and democratic state and all its citizens should enjoy equal rights. We expect Israel to stick to its democratic principles."³³

While most U.S. Jews are generally ardent Democrats, many are increasingly displeased with the way the Obama administration handles its Israeli portfolio

The administration also responded sharply to Netanyahu's warnings to voters on Election Day that Israel's Arab citizens "are going to the voting booths in droves." The White House spokesman said in response, "The United States and this administration is deeply concerned by divisive rhetoric that seeks to marginalize Arab-Israeli citizens. It undermines the values and democratic ideals that have been important to our democracy and an important part of what binds the United States and Israel together."³⁴ President Obama himself stated that the unequal treatment toward

The "conservative" characteristics of the new Israeli government appear to American liberals as contrary to values they hold dear

Israel's Arab community "starts to erode the meaning of democracy in the country."³⁵ In this spirit, Obama dedicated a significant portion of the long interview he granted journalist Jeffrey Goldberg to a discussion of the ethical values Israel is expected to uphold. The president said, for example, "There's a direct line between supporting

the right of the Jewish people to have a homeland and to feel safe and free of discrimination and persecution, and the right of African Americans to vote and have equal protection under the law... I have to show that same kind of regard to other peoples. And I think it is true to Israel's traditions and its values – its founding principles – that it has to care about those Palestinian kids."³⁶ This sentiment was reiterated in an interview

with Channel 2 when Obama stressed: "I am more worried about ... an Israeli politics that's motivated only by fear and that then leads to a loss of those core values that, when I was young and I was admiring Israel from afar, were what were the essence of this nation."³⁷

One should not take lightly a situation in which disputes between the U.S. and Israel are diverted to a critique of the shared values between the two countries. Initiatives such as the one aimed at segregating Palestinians and Israelis into separate West Bank busses (May 20, 2015), which ultimately failed, erode the image of Israel as adhering to values like equality and democracy. The "conservative" characteristics of the new government that has taken shape in Israel appear to American liberals as contrary to the very values they hold dear to their hearts.

As the U.S.-led talks with Iran near conclusion, tensions between Washington and Jerusalem are only increasing. Netanyahu's appearance before Congress (March 3, 2015) was met with rage in the White House, which accused Netanyahu of meddling in domestic American politics in order to improve his reelection chances in Israel. The president and vice president refrained from meeting with the Israeli prime minister, claiming that Netanyahu was destroying a crucial asset in the relationship between the two countries – Israel's bipartisan support in Washington. The day before Netanyahu's speech, National Security Advisor Susan Rice said at the annual AIPAC policy conference that it was "destructive of the fabric of the relationship."³⁸

As far as the administration's attitude toward the Israeli prime minister, what stands out is the lack of trust. When Netanyahu clarifies that he remains loyal to the principle of a two-state solution (despite that on the eve of Israel's elections he stated that there won't be a Palestinian state on his watch), White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough remarked at a J-Street conference that the White House refuses to accept Netanyahu's clarification: "We cannot simply pretend that those comments were never made, or that they don't raise questions about the prime minister's commitment to achieving peace through direct negotiations,"³⁹ President Obama himself even responded, saying: "We take him at his word when he said that it wouldn't happen during his prime ministership and so, that's why we've got to evaluate what other options are available ... we are going to continue to insist that from our point of view, the status quo is unsustainable, and that while taking into complete account Israel's security, we can't just in perpetuity maintain the status quo, expand settlements, that's not a recipe for stability in the region."⁴⁰ Having concluded that the U.S. has serious questions regarding the Israeli government's commitment to a two-state solution, Obama said, "As a result, the United States is taking a hard look at our approach to the conflict."⁴¹ The president clarified that "at this point, realistically, what we can do is to try to rebuild trust – not through a big overarching deal, which I don't think is probably possible in the next year, given the makeup of the Netanyahu government, given the challenges I think that exist for President Abbas."⁴²

When American Jewish leaders asked President Obama if he would soon invite the newly re-elected Israeli prime minister to Washington, he responded that at this time, he would suffice with a phone call.⁴³ At the same time, it was reported that since December 2013, Israeli Ambassador to Washington Ron Dermer has met only once with the White House.⁴⁴ This difficult reality was further expressed in an uncharacteristic Israeli Foreign Ministry document leaked to the press that warned that Israel will pay a heavy price on a number of diplomatic and security issues due to the "harsh, continuing and public crisis" in relations with the U.S. The document pointed to a clear connection between the crisis in the relationship and the deteriorated nature of the dialogue and Israel's ability to advance, with U.S. help, its critical security interests.⁴⁵

The White House has made its utmost effort to convince Israel and its supporters of U.S. commitment to Israel's security

It should be noted that the White House has made every effort to convince Israel and its supporters of U.S. commitment to Israel's security. This effort is aimed, of course, at persuading those opposed to the Iran deal that Israel will not be harmed and will always have the protection of the United States. Thus, for example, the White House publicized a document that details steps taken by President Obama in favor of Israeli security and economic resilience, "in ways that

are unprecedented.”⁴⁶ From aid money to the Iron Dome system, through U.S. assistance in various international fora (“On five occasions last year, the U.S. cast the only “against” vote on unfair anti-Israel measures in the UN’s Human Rights Council.”⁴⁷) However, one cannot ignore the fact that the administration delayed a helicopter-based missile shipment and other urgent military equipment during Protective Edge because it was uncomfortable with the continued fighting in Gaza.

The murky relations, continued political deadlock, and settlement construction could lead the U.S. to take concrete steps against Israel. The U.S. could withhold its UN Security Council veto power when the French proposal comes to a vote, especially if the wording seems fair to the U.S. and in line with its principles regarding the outlines of a final status deal between Israel and the Palestinians.

The U.S. can also withhold its veto on decisions regarding settlements (as it has in the past), and in a more radical instance could even level sanctions similar to the 1991 freezing of loan guarantees under President Bush Sr. and Secretary of State Baker. The U.S. could also be less enthusiastic when it’s called upon to help Israel in international fora, where Israel is isolated, and could stand less firmly by Israel in various international struggles: against

It is unlikely that American Jewry will speak in one unified voice against the nuclear deal with Iran

de-legitimization, boycotts, and more. Thus, Under-Secretary of State Wendy Sherman warned: “If the new Israeli government is seen to be stepping back from its commitment to a two-state solution, (it) will make our job in the international arena much tougher... it will be harder for us to prevent internationalizing the conflict.”⁴⁸ In this vein, President Obama, in his Channel 2 interview, seemed to caution Israel’s citizens directly: “If there are additional resolutions introduced in the United Nations, up until this point, we have pushed away against European efforts, for example, or other efforts because we’ve said, the only way this gets resolved is if the two parties work together. If, in fact, there’s no prospect of an actual peace process, if nobody believes there’s a peace process, then it becomes more difficult to argue with those who are concerned about settlement construction, those who are concerned about the current situation – it’s more difficult for me to say to them, be patient and wait because we have a process here – because all they need to do is to point to the statements that have been made saying there is no process.”⁴⁹

The nuclear agreement with Iran, after it is signed, will be debated in Congress. This reality could lead to another flare-up in the relationship with President Obama. As long as Israel decides to proactively convince members of Congress to reject the deal, the rupture with the U.S. administration will deepen. Likewise, this tension will not elude relations with U.S. Jews. Their support of the Obama administration makes it unlikely that American Jewry will speak in one unified voice against the deal.

The way things are playing out currently could lead the new Israeli government to treat President Obama's remaining time in office as a period not just for containment, but as one for aggressive activity inside the domestic U.S. arena – with the hope that the next president's policies will be vastly different. There are, of course, Israelis who wish to maintain a policy of non-involvement in the upcoming elections in America. But even so, there will be others who claim that the U.S. elections are so critical to the Israeli government that it should take a chance and support the campaign of a presidential candidate whose pro-Israel policies are not in question. The "temptation" to do so is encouraged by, among other things, the especially pro-Israel statements of Republican presidential candidates. Thus, for example, Jeb Bush harshly criticized the Obama administration's policies on Israel, when he said: "Then Obama threatened to downgrade the U.S.-Israel relationship and permit a series of anti-Israel resolutions to pass the United Nations Security Council without firm American opposition.... This is no way to treat an ally."⁵⁰ Former Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren's 2015 book, *Ally*, and op-eds he has recently published in the U.S. provide ammunition to those who attack President Obama's Israel policy. Oren's *Wall Street Journal* op-ed (June 15, 2015) was titled: "How Obama Abandoned Israel."⁵¹

Finally, one cannot ignore the effect tensions between Jerusalem and Washington have on the U.S. Jewish community. While most U.S. Jews are generally ardent Democrats, many are increasingly displeased with the way the Obama administration handles its Israeli portfolio.

According to recent polls, Jewish support for the president dropped in 2015 (according to Gallup, from 61 to 50 percent).⁵²

Israel's centrality in the highly charged American foreign policy debates is alarming to many Jews. Some of them see a risk that Israel will be blamed for trying to alter American policies "against its interests" (as Israel was blamed in the run-up to the Iraq war in 2002). They also see a risk of Israel becoming a partisan cause in a way that could force them to have to choose between their support for Israel and basically every other issue near and dear to the hearts. This is not to say that levels of American Jewry's support for Israel are not high – they are. But on issues of dispute Washington and Jerusalem, such as the nuclear deal with Iran or the peace process with the Palestinians, the conversation about Israel often becomes toxic and the mainstream leadership and communities increasingly prefer to leave these issues off their agenda.

Israel's centrality in highly charged American foreign policy debates is alarming to many Jews

Summary

The new Israeli government will have to navigate a complex geopolitical arena replete with dangers. Compared to the last government, the new government will likely have less ideological flexibility. Therefore, the prime minister may be left with limited maneuvering room for diplomatic initiatives to cope with rising challenges. Decisions that will be made will have a crucial effect on the future of the state and the resilience of the Jewish people. Israel must decide how it will handle the Iranian nuclear challenge, prepare for actual threats that could stem from a military escalation with Hezbollah or Hamas, and should also plan for a possible outbreak of violence in Judea and Samaria and Jerusalem, and should deal with the international isolation and the de-legitimization offensive and BDS campaign against Israel.

In light of all this, the need to rebuild the damaged relationship with the U.S. – Israel's sole and significant ally – takes priority. This task will not be simple as the main issues at center stage – the nuclear agreement with Iran and the various aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – have caused substantive disagreements between Jerusalem and Washington. Without decision makers' careful attention the coming months hold the potential for an increase in tensions between the countries that could weigh heavily on the U.S. Jewish community and erode the resilience of the “Triangular Relationship” that has served as the cornerstone of Israel and the Jewish people's strength.

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4

The Triangular Relationship: Jerusalem, Washington, and the North American Jewish Community

Political Aspects

The composition of the new governing coalition in Israel taken together with the outcome of the negotiations between the six world powers and Iran, does not portend an easy period ahead for the relationship between the new government and the American administration. Disagreements over religion and state issues may actually deepen rifts with the predominantly liberal North American Jewish community. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu won the election by a wide margin, an impressive personal achievement despite confrontations with President Obama and an emerging erosion of Israel's traditional bi-partisan support in America.

Generally, the changes to the Israeli political map took place within the existing political blocs. On the right, Likud strengthened (from 18 to 30 mandates) and helped weaken both HaBayit HaYehudi (the Jewish Home party), headed by Naftali Bennett (which dropped from 12 to 8 mandates), and Yisrael Beiteinu (Israel is our Home) headed by Avigdor Lieberman (which held 13 seats when the 19th Knesset was disbanded and

fell to only six in the 20th Knesset). The weakening of Yisrael Beiteinu underscores the erosion of Lieberman's power, which had relied on the votes of Russian immigrants. His diminished power is partly due to corruption allegations targeting the party's leadership as well as the generally successful integration of Russian immigrants into Israeli society, whose current voting patterns resemble those of the general society.

In the center-left camp, the rise of the Zionist Union (Labor and HaTnuah) under Isaac Herzog and Tzipi Livni (from 21 Knesset seats to 24) came about not only from consolidating the two parties, but was also a result of the dissolution of Kadima. The center also split its votes between Kulanu, under Moshe Kahlon (who tends to lean right), and Yesh Atid under Yair Lapid, who is seen as more of a centrist and who lost approximately 42 percent of his power (from 19 to 11 seats).

There were two other significant changes:

1. The strengthening of the Arab parties to 13 mandates after the Knesset's minimal threshold was raised, forcing them to merge into one party.

2. The diminished strength of the ultra-Orthodox parties – Shas split and lost four mandates (from 11 to 7), and United Torah Judaism lost one seat (from 7 to 6). Despite this power loss, the two ultra-Orthodox parties reinforced their standing as a deciding factor and succeeded in recovering social benefits and subsidies cancelled in the reforms of the previous government. Although they had been relatively stronger, the ultra-Orthodox were excluded from the previous coalition, a result of the cooperation agreement between Lapid and Bennett.

Irrespective of Prime Minister Netanyahu's impressive personal electoral success, it appears that his decision to dissolve the 19th Knesset – after encountering political and economic difficulties – did not improve his ability to govern, nor the government's functioning. A government that rests on the slimmest of majorities (61 Knesset seats), with cabinet members holding hard ideological positions, means that each individual coalition member could jeopardize the government's survival on ideological or personal grounds (such as MK Oren Hazan, who faces pressure related to questionable discoveries from his past) and will find it difficult to make real decisions and find any kind of political breathing room. Paradoxically, the current government's survival rests on ideological unity on the one hand, however, on the other hand, there is a sense that most current MKs, both in the coalition and opposition, will not have an easy road to reelection, and will think twice before supporting new elections.

In surveys conducted by international organizations, Israel ranks high in happiness and life satisfaction. According to the UNDP's 2014 Human Development Index, Israel is in the top 10 percent (ranked 19 of 179 countries) ahead of France and Belgium. In the 2015 World Happiness Report submitted to the UN (edited by John F. Helliwell, Richard Layard, and Jeffrey Sachs), Israel ranks 11– ahead of the U.S. (15), Belgium (19), and Great Britain (21). A May 2015 OECD report places Israel in the top five of its member states. Despite that, according to certain important measurements included in the report, such as personal security, income levels, and housing, Israel ranks below the OECD average; but in life satisfaction and happiness, Israel is ranked in fourth place, well above the average.

Ostensibly, these OECD findings are in contradiction. However, this may point to a common perception among most Israelis that they live in a country where life is good. Most of Israel's citizens, including its minorities, feel they have something valuable and worth preserving. Perhaps the answer to this contradiction is hidden in questions not included in international surveys. Most of Israel's Jewish population is comprised of immigrants – either first or second generation – are ingrained with the yearning to belong to the "majority" and exercise their right to live under Jewish sovereignty. Even among minorities, there is a sense, relative to the citizenries of neighboring countries, that their lot in life is far better, notwithstanding their continued struggle for total equality. And, among both Jews and minorities, there is a basic

appreciation for the democratic system that characterizes life within the Green Line.

However, much of Israel's Jewish population is concerned by the security situation: their children serve in a military that fights frequent wars; Iran's nuclear program; the instability that characterizes the region; the lack of diplomatic pathways with the Palestinians; and the de-legitimization of Israel, to the point where Israel's very right to exist as a Jewish state is challenged. Israel's Arab minority finds it difficult to come to terms with Israeli sovereignty beyond the Green Line and the withholding of political rights from the Palestinian population there.

Over the past two decades, the voting habits of Israeli Jews have shifted rightward, largely for tactical reasons based on the assessment that a right-wing government will better serve Israel's interests in peace negotiations and succeed in gaining greater support should an agreement be achieved. The eroded power of the center-left bloc is a result of: the collapse of the Oslo process led by Shimon Peres and Yitzchak Rabin beginning in 1993, which gained widespread public support; Bill Clinton and Ehud Barak's failed Camp David and Taba efforts to reach an accord with the late Yasser Arafat, which exploded into the Second Intifada (and took the lives of 1000 Israelis); Ariel Sharon's decision to disengage from the Gaza Strip, which led to a Hamas takeover and rocket attacks on south and central Israel; the strengthening of Hezbollah in the north; and the failure of the Annapolis talks during Ehud Olmert's tenure.

The right-wing's 2015 victory goes beyond its coalition of 61 mandates. Lieberman's Yisrael Beiteinu chose to remain in the opposition as a result, primarily, of the personal conflict between Lieberman and Netanyahu, and did not indicate any eagerness of Yisrael Beiteinu's members to support a center-left bloc. Four additional far-right mandates were wasted when the union between Eli Yishai (a Shas breakaway) and followers of the late Meir Kahana (Kach) failed to meet the Knesset's threshold.

The exclusion of the Zionist Union and Yesh Atid from the coalition allowed the ultra-Orthodox parties to return to a position of greater political influence. Their demands, accepted by the new government, included: restoring cancelled child subsidies and support for ultra-Orthodox families and adults who choose a path of yeshiva study over employment; revocation of mandatory military conscription for yeshiva students; and, most notably, halting conversion reform intended to allow local rabbis to conduct more lenient conversion processes than the more stringent Chief Rabbinate. All these were met with suspicion and opposition by the non-Orthodox Jewish streams in North America, which perceive them as a reversal of Israel's evolving position on issues of religion and state. And this situation is leading to an erosion of Diaspora Jews' connection to Israel, especially in the United States.

A number of recent incidents and remarks by public figures have appeared to be intolerant and radical, and have further exacerbated tensions between Israel and liberal U.S. Jews. These include the mayor of Rehovot's cancellation of a bar-

mitzvah ceremony for children with disabilities because a Conservative rabbi was set to officiate; remarks by David Azoulay, Israel's minister for religious affairs, who said that Reform Jews aren't Jews at all; and Michael Oren's, Israel's former ambassador to Washington, disparaging comments about some liberal American Jews and their harsh criticism of Israel.

Although demographic data indicate a gradual strengthening of the U.S. Orthodox community, the liberal majority's – who overwhelmingly vote for Democrats – distancing diminishes one of Israel's most important strategic assets. The connection between Israel and the Diaspora, has been crucial since the founding of the Jewish state and distance in the relationship has implications at the domestic political level in the United States, including relations with the administration, which have already suffered as a result of conflicts over the Iran deal, the peace process, and the personal crisis between the top leaders of both countries.



"Drivers" Affecting the Israel-U.S. Relationship

Any time a discrepancy arises in the special relationship between Israel and the U.S., the debate arises anew: are we facing a passing phenomenon or are we seeing a glimpse of a negative trend pointing to a deep and continuing decline in the relationship? The outcome of this debate is inconsequential to formulating policy recommendations aimed at defending and strengthening this special relationship. **With this in mind, the Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI) is conducting a project aimed at identifying the "drivers" that operate beneath the surface and influence the Israeli-American relationship, both positively and negatively.** Identifying these drivers and gaining a better understanding of their influence is intended to afford decision makers the tools to characterize the implications of various policy actions on the special relationship – both actions that help in shoring up the relationship as well as those that erode it.

In referring to the various "drivers," it is important to note a number of factors:

- When formulating policy, one must be aware of the relative weight of the various "drivers," the timespan of impact (short- or long-term) and depth of influence of each one, and certainly the question of whether these drivers can be influenced at all through Israeli policy actions.
- Since the U.S. is a multi-faceted society with multiple identities and positions, at times polarized, Israeli actions can influence the relationship between the two countries at different time frames and at different levels of intensity (and sometimes even in different directions). The main variable is the identity of the administration (and congress) – Democratic or Republican, and the president's preferences themselves.
- The considerations that inform Israeli decisions are not limited to questions of their possible impacts on relations with the U.S., important as they may be. Obviously, Israel could find itself in a situation where it makes a decision critical to its own interests, **despite** the possibility that it may further erode its relationship with the U.S.

1. The drivers that seem to us most important among those we assess can be influenced through Israeli policy steps (as opposed to drivers that are not accessible to us):
 - Shared ethos and values
 - The American Jewish community
 - The defense/military relationship between Israel and the U.S. (including regarding the Iranian nuclear program and related issues)
 - The Israeli-Arab conflict
2. Below are policy steps we assess could be the most influential (for better or worse):

Actions that help:

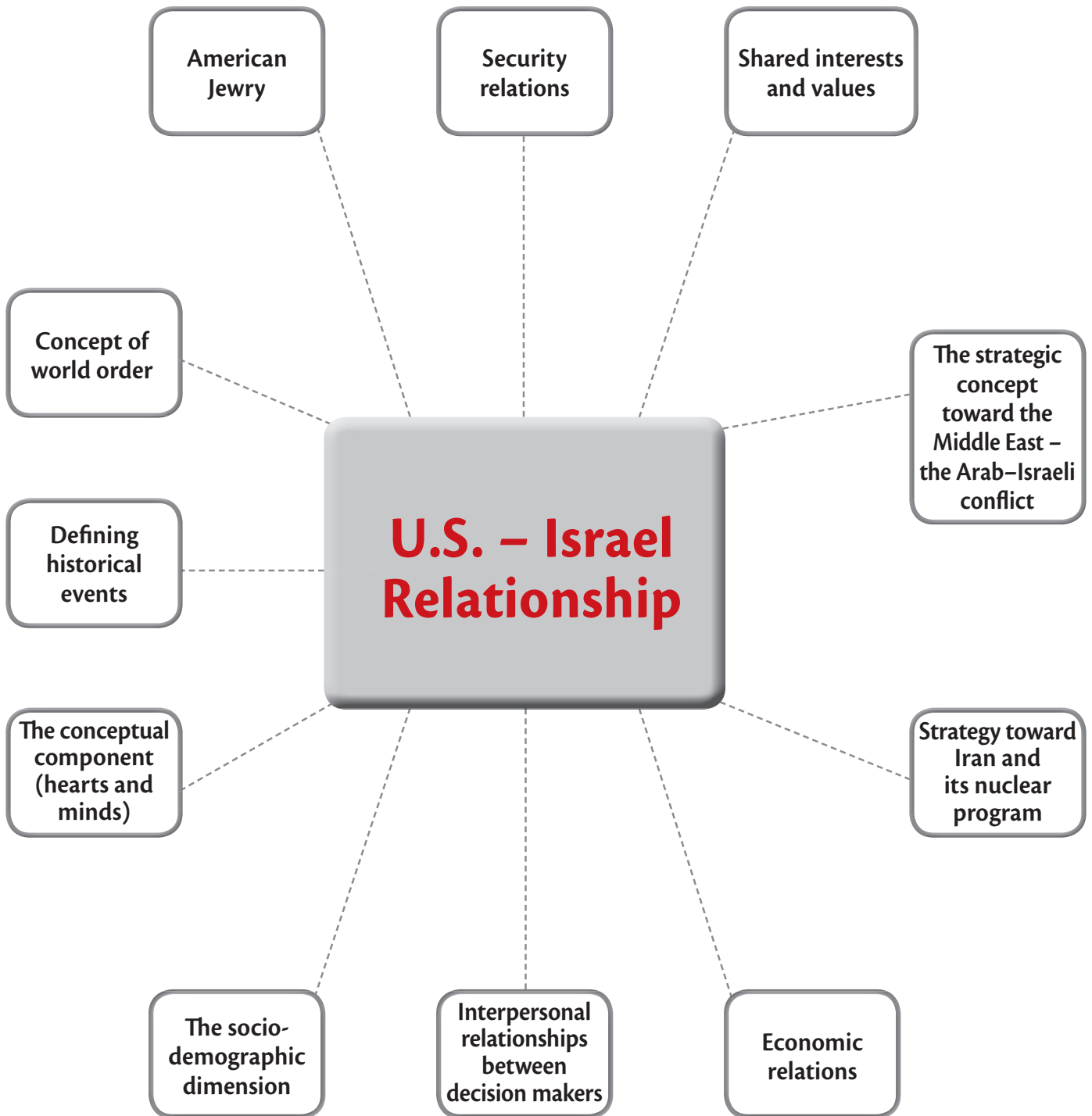
- Highlighting the values of equality, democracy, religious pluralism and respect for human rights in Israel, and backing that up with policy and concrete actions.
- Reinforcing the image of Israel's power and resilience, both militarily and economically.
- Strengthening the connection to Israel with the American Jewish community, in part by remaining sensitive to and taking into account how Israeli decisions affect American Jews.
- Presenting an Israeli diplomatic initiative committed to a two-state solution that gains American support.
- Fostering bi-partisan support for Israel.
- Investing resources to create a base of support for Israel among minority communities in the U.S. (Hispanics, Blacks, Asians).

- Investing resources especially to foster connections to Israel among youth and on college campuses (Jews and non-Jews).

Actions that harm:

- A situation in which Israel is seen as becoming further removed from the values that characterize an open and liberal society.
- Israeli interference in the American political system.
- Placing the American Jewish community in a situation in which it is "torn" between its connections to Israel on the one hand, and an "American" agenda on the other.
- Construction and settlement in Judea and Samaria in a way that is seen as undermining a two-state solution, with an emphasis on construction in Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem and in areas beyond the major settlement blocs.
- Especially critical rhetoric directed against American leaders of either party by Israeli leaders and the heads of the American Jewish community.

The following table presents a summarized version of the conclusions from this project so far.



Driver	Driver description (and its derivatives)	Dynamics characterizing the driver's action mechanism and development trends across time	Policy actions that help/harm
Ethos and Shared Values	<p>Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liberty, equality under the law, justice, ethics, democracy, human rights, fair treatment of minorities, denouncing racism, bettering the world. America's moral responsibility to Israel's existence as a small and threatened state. <p>Ethos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A nation of immigrants, the pioneering spirit, taking one's destiny in one's hands, "being a winner," entrepreneurship, respect for the military and readiness to use military force when necessary, not "turning the other cheek" to aggressors. A "start-up nation" spirit, "good guys" vs. "bad guys," the Judeo-Christian world vs. the Muslim world. Common religious narratives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An historical foundation of bi-partisan support for Israel, which rests on the strength of the American Jewish community (Jewish excellence in academia, media, and culture – which, in turn, reflects positively on U.S. relations with Israel). The U.S. is under an internal polarization process in terms of values. Support for Israel is becoming a divisive and partisan issue. In U.S. intellectual-liberal circles, some cannot accept the idea of a nation-state based on religion. Israel is often perceived in these circles as a moral failure, and Israel's commitment to shared values in certain areas is questioned: in relation to Israel's Arabs, gender equality, the relationship between religion and state, and the balancing of Jewish and democratic values, given the contradiction in the eyes of its critics. 	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlighting, in words, policies and actions, the values of equality in Israel. "Tikkun Olam" (mending the world) activity (humanitarian and rescue missions), especially joint projects with the U.S. Initiatives aimed at the younger generation, especially on college campuses. <p>Harmful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking sides in American politics. Knesset bills introduced that would seem to American liberals as anti-democratic and antithetical to the values of equality and human rights, especially regarding Arabs (including Bedouins), but also certain Jewish groups, such as Ethiopian immigrants. Harsh critiques of American leaders by Israeli leaders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions regarding African refugees depicted in the U.S. as out of step with the humanitarian norms of the West.
Defining Historical Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Holocaust, the heroic establishment of Israel ("the few vs. the many"), the Six-Day War victory, the Entebbe operation, the 9/11 terrorist attacks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time erodes historical memory. History "doesn't speak" to the younger generation. Israel's wars are not resulting in decisive and clear victories as they once did. There haven't been "fresh" events with a positive defining force in the last decade. 	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational and cultural activities (use of social networks, video games, branding). Reinforcing and highlighting the "miracle" of Israel's founding and how it became a positive "model" in many areas. Initiating "defining events."
Socio-Demographic Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What unites and what separates the socio-demographic aspects of the two countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of a special affection for Israel among U.S. "minorities," which may soon constitute the "majority." Are immigrants adopting "old" American values (which may be the case with second generation Hispanics) or will this bring about a shift in the familiar U.S. value system? An erosion in Israel support among the younger generation. Different trends: America becoming more polarized. Israel is becoming more conservative. 	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing resources to create a base of support in American minority groups (Hispanics, blacks, Asians). Strengthening Hispanic connections to Israel "as the biblical people." Relating to American Jewish groups as a "bridge" to generate support for Israel, through creating alliances with other minorities.

Driver	Driver description (and its derivatives)	Dynamics characterizing the driver's action mechanism and development trends across time	Policy actions that help/harm
American Jews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold considerable prestige and influence in the U.S.: politically, intellectually, socially, economically and culturally. • Highly identified with Israel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than half of American Jews identify as liberals (70% vote Democrat, while 20% consider themselves "conservative"), while Israel is moving in a "conservative" direction and is increasingly seen in U.S. liberal circles as drifting away from liberal and pluralistic values. • Israeli policy in a number of areas (especially the continued control over the Palestinians) is seen by many liberal Jews as contradictory to the notion of Israel as a "light unto the nations" that strives for "<i>tikkun olam</i>." • A tension arises between commitment to liberal values and affinity to Israel. • American Jews tend to highlight and favor the "American" aspect of their identity over the "Jewish". • Jewish influence is a major force multiplier in the U.S. (AIPAC, Congress, the presidential election), but also elicits a degree of suspicion and criticism of the "Israel lobby." • Jewish representation in Congress has diminished in recent years. It is not clear if this is a long-term trend or a temporary situation arising from the increased Republican strength in Congress (whereas most Jews are Democrats). • High intermarriage rates among Jews are having a corrosive effect on identification with Israel. 	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Israeli sensitivity when making decisions that impact American Jews. • Enhancing the connection and knowledge of American Jews among Israelis. • Basing the relations on solidarity as one people and not merely to serve self-interests. • Investing resources especially in youth and on campuses. • Advancing religious pluralism in Israel – especially in mitigating the bias against non-Orthodox movements (Reform and Conservative). • Taking an inclusive approach to involve organizations in Jewish dialogue and within the "Jewish tent." • Concentrating government functions that relate to promoting relations with Diaspora Jewry under a central government entity. <p>Harmful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing the American Jewish community in situations where it feels "torn" between its "American" priorities and its connections to Israel. • Rhetoric of Jewish communal leaders that is especially critical of American leaders with respect to Israel. • Any action that depicts Israel as distancing itself from the values of open and liberal societies.
Personal Relationships between Decision Makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimate relations, friendly, a sense of identification and commitment, "open doors." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A history of close relations, often friendly and emotional. (In parallel, periods of problematic personal relations.) • The significance of the current crisis in the Obama- Netanyahu relationship (is it a passing event or an expression of a negative trajectory that will continue beyond Obama's presidency?) 	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing personal relations between heads of state, including a quiet "back-door" channel for continuous communication with figures trusted by both sides. Develop "compensating" relationships on other levels. • Develop relations with all potential presidential candidates ahead of the 2016 elections. <p>Harmful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attacks on the President of the United States.

Driver	Driver description (and its derivatives)	Dynamics characterizing the driver's action mechanism and development trends across time	Policy actions that help/harm
Security Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Israel as a security asset to the U.S. Ties in military, intelligence, technology, hi-tech, cyber areas. Israel as American "regional aircraft carrier." Shared interests in the war on terror. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent security relations on one hand, and (sometimes problematic) political relations on the other. U.S. reluctance to be dragged – because of Israel – into an armed conflict it wishes to avoid (i.e. Iran). At times – competition between American and Israeli military industries over export markets. 	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deepening the strategic cooperation between the two countries. Continuous reflection on the "cost – benefit" balance of attaining a formal defense alliance with the U.S.. Israeli integration into the regional security architecture taking shape in the Middle East led by the U.S. With the caveat that it does not erode the special relationship with the U.S. or Israel's QME (qualitative military edge). <p>Harmful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political disagreements that could lead to opposing assessments of situations that could require Israel to use military force with the expectation of American backing internationally.
Concept of World Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The U.S. is the leader of the free world and the leading power in the world. "Global Policeman." Shared enemies: USSR (formerly), terror, radical Islam. Shared ideology: maintain liberty, champion democracy, and defeat tyranny. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cold War period placed Israel squarely in the pro-U.S. camp against the Communist bloc (USSR, China). Now, however, the U.S. continues to be in competition with Russia and China, but Israel's "strategic interest" is not in this competition, but rather in strengthening its relationship with Russia and China. The 9/11 terror attacks put an end to the notion of world peace and altered the concept of "world peace" and the "end of history," which seemed to many to characterize the post-Cold War era. The U.S. was forced to enter a war on radical Islamic terror. Israel plays an important role against this shared enemy – against forces hostile to the U.S. Israel expects the U.S. to take an active leadership role against the "forces of evil." The U.S. is not rushing to do so. "America first," "leading from behind," and "coalition building" proponents in the U.S. are gaining strength. Washington's priority is to improve domestic matters. It prefers that "local actors" take responsibility for their fates. (Will this trend continue or will this pass with Obama's presidency?) 	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of and consideration for America's interests. Acting as a team player in an international coalition led by the U.S. Decreasing the demands (and expectations) that the U.S. solve problems Israel can solve on its own. Internalizing the new restraints placed on the U.S. in the new multi-polar world. <p>Harmful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advancing items on the agenda where the Israeli interests contradict the American interests. Nurturing relationships (especially defense exports) in defiance of the U.S. position (China and Russia).

Driver	Driver description (and its derivatives)	Dynamics characterizing the driver's action mechanism and development trends across time	Policy actions that help/harm
<p>The Strategic Concept toward the Middle East</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued view of the Middle East as vital to American interests (heart of global terror, energy, proliferation, trade routes, defending Israel), which requires leadership, investment, and engagement. View of Israel as a friendly, loyal, strong and stable country prepared to do its part to advance American interests. Obama's presidency has signaled a significant erosion of the U.S. presence as a "strategic regional policeman." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Israel was a U.S. asset during the Cold War, and granted the U.S. regional leverage as the arbiter of the peace process over the years. Israel is a partner in the war on radical Islamic terror. Israel is seen as an important participant in the war on proliferation (Iraq, Syria, Iran) – until the U.S. embarked on the current path of negotiation and compromise with Iran. Changes in the U.S. that negatively affect Israel's value as an asset: American disappointment stemming from its continued investment of blood and treasure in the region, its reluctance to get bogged down in another possible regional conflict, U.S. energy independence, a desire to downgrade its Middle Eastern presence. A sense that the U.S. pays for its support of Israel when Israel is not seen as seriously promoting a two-state solution. A fear that Israel will draw the U.S. into another military conflict. The U.S. is not fully decided in its approach to political Islam (Is it wiser to embrace it or to fight against it?) And in relation to Middle Eastern dictators, (Is stability favorable to democracy and human rights?) The possibility of a "grand bargain" based on the signing of a nuclear agreement with Iran whereby it becomes a partner and fulfills a stabilizing and balanced regional role. (Is Iran a part of the problem or a part of the solution?) 	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking into consideration American interests. Increasing awareness in the U.S. that Israel expects strategic support, but is determined to defend itself and does not ask that American soldiers spill their blood on Israel's behalf. Deepening the awareness of Israel's contributions (existing and potential) to the countries of the region (security, cyber, high-tech, water technology, modern agriculture, gas and more.) <p>Harmful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Israel being depicted as dragging the U.S. into a war it is not interested in fighting.
<p>The Arab-Israeli Conflict</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The traditional view of U.S. foreign policy (which at this time is no longer bi-partisan) refers to the Israeli-Arab conflict as a de-stabilizing factor in the region.) and as a key issue fanning the flames of Arab hostility to the U.S. because of its support for Israel (which then hurts America's ability to pursue its interests in the region). These diagnoses, which have characterized for many years America's approach to the region, are still prevalent in liberal circles. In conservative circles, the opposite approach is often adopted and is taking shape in the form of uncompromising support for Israel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an erosion in the current administration's position that the "conflict is the most central cause of regional instability." However the lack of a solution hurts American interests and is a factor that will upset the demographic balance that allows Israel to maintain its Jewish character. A continued effort to maintain peaceful relations with Egypt and Jordan, and advance an Israeli-Palestinian agreement (the U.S. is currently reassessing its position given the diplomatic deadlock.) Threat to the model of direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations under American leadership. Israel's dependence on American help vis-a-vis the international de-legitimization campaign. 	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenting a diplomatic initiative with American support. Showing consistency in its commitment to a two-state solution. Strengthening the Palestinian economy. <p>Harmful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Israel appearing as not committed to a two-state solution. Settlement construction in Judea and Samaria in opposition to U.S. policy. (Especially in Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem and in areas beyond the main settlement blocs.)

Driver	Driver description (and its derivatives)	Dynamics characterizing the driver's action mechanism and development trends across time	Policy actions that help/harm
Strategy regarding Iran and its Nuclear Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. American defense against attempts to force measures on Israel regarding its own alleged nuclear program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Iranian issue, which clearly focused shared American – Israeli interests, has now turned into a point of contention due to Israel's extreme reservations about the emerging Iran deal. 	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing efforts to improve the emerging deal with Iran, and coordination regarding potential Iranian violations. Conduct a comprehensive dialogue with the U.S. regarding a "compensation package," and articulate strategic understandings for the "day after." <p>Harmful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As long as Iran is engaged in negotiations or once a deal limiting its nuclear program is struck, an Israeli military strike that is not coordinated with the U.S. will exacerbate, at least in the short term, the damaged relations with the American administration. Attempts to "enlist" Congress in derailing the emerging Iran deal will exacerbate, at least in the short term, the erosion of relations with the American administration. The long-term repercussions will more likely depend on Obama's successor. <p>Note – the mentioned steps regarding Iran's nuclear program reflect the possibility that Israel may make decisions it considers "existential" or critical to its interests, despite the fact that they will harm the relationship with the U.S.</p>
Economic Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American investments in Israel's economy, Israeli science and technology innovations (especially in hi-tech areas) contributes to the U.S. economy and its security and is a base for cooperation between the two countries. The battle against economic boycotts (BDS) of Israel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving and growing cooperation and mutual appreciation. 	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting joint projects in science and technology (especially hi-tech) between the two countries (civilian and military). Joint Israeli-American promotion (involving and with the support of American Jews) for development and assistance projects around the world (both commercial ventures and humanitarian "tikkun olam" endeavors). Developing joint funds, such as BIRD, and expanding their activities to new fields.

Driver	Driver description (and its derivatives)	Dynamics characterizing the driver's action mechanism and development trends across time	Policy actions that help/harm
<p>The Cognitive Component</p>	<p>American awareness of Israel's achievements and its asset-value to the U.S.</p> <p>American awareness of the foundation of shared values and ethos between the two countries.</p> <p>Israel's identification with U.S. Jewry (a prestigious, appreciated, and highly valued U.S. minority).</p> <p>Widespread Israeli public support for the U.S.</p>	<p>Widespread American support for Israel. (Especially compared to the support for Israel's enemies.)</p> <p>Despite this, controversies arise at times: Is Israel an asset or a burden? Is Israel still loyal to the values of democracy, equality, and human rights? Is the Israel lobby promoting policies that are at times in conflict with American interests?</p>	<p>Helpful Actions:</p> <p>Solidifying American public awareness, and that of elites, of Israel's value as an asset.</p> <p>Reinforcing the conception of Israel support as bi-partisan.</p> <p>A pro-active policy that helps positively brand Israel.</p> <p>Reinforcing the perception that in supporting Israel, AIPAC is advancing, first and foremost, American interests.</p> <p>Deepening Israeli awareness (especially in the Knesset) of the importance of its relationship with the U.S. and with U.S. Jewry.</p> <p>Harmful Actions:</p> <p>By not differentiating between legitimate criticism of Israel on the one hand, and anti-Semitism and de-legitimization on the other, a harmful impression is created that the anti-Israel camp is huge and monolithic.</p>



U.S. College Campuses and Israel De-legitimization – In Perspective

Introduction

Over the past year, there has been a noticeable spike in reports of anti-Israel activity on U.S. college campuses. *The Times of Israel* reported the "marked increase" of BDS campaigns and rallies "as well as anti-Semitic incidents."¹ The ADL noted 520 "anti-Israel events" on U.S. campuses during the 2014-2015 academic year,² a 38 percent increase from the previous year, and 44 BDS campaigns on 35 campuses.³

A *New York Times* article (May 9, 2015) would have us believe that the U.S. college campus is a veritable battlefield between pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli students, and where hate-filled shouting matches that border on physical violence are the norm, while "... the effort to pressure Israel appears to be gaining traction at campuses across the country." The article further details Israel divestment groups (BDS, or Boycott, Divest, Sanction) at "hundreds of major colleges, including Michigan, Princeton, Cornell, Maryland, Harvard, Florida State, Pittsburgh, and most of the University of California Campuses," and goes on to describe that "everywhere, discussions are

long and tense," while Jewish activists note "more poison in the rhetoric than we've ever felt before."⁴

An impassioned article by Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky in the *Jerusalem Post* (May 19, 2015) is entitled "Campuses are flooded with Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions."⁵ He notes the increased worry about the trend and goes on to say that "today, nearly every American campus is awash in double standards, efforts to delegitimize the Jewish state and rhetoric demonizing Israel." Israeli newspapers likewise have published dozens of articles covering the "rising tide of BDS."⁶ Students, parents, and Jewish leaders confirm this, and add personal stories of being pelted with allegations of genocide, apartheid, and brutality. At UCLA this past year, a Jewish student running for student government was questioned about her "impartiality"; a similar scene played out at Stanford. Jewish parents and prospective students have begun to question "which campus is safe for their children."⁷

But do these reports provide a full and accurate picture of what is happening on the American campus? And if so, to what extent should the American Jewish community and Israeli leaders be concerned, and what can they do?

This paper seeks to accomplish two goals. The first is to accurately summarize and analyze the "Israel situation" on the U.S. college campus today, in comparison to previous years. Secondly, this paper seeks to devise policy recommendations for the Israeli government and Jewish organizations and community leaders in the U.S. in order to better fight Israel de-legitimization on U.S. campuses.

This report was produced within JPPI's ongoing Israel De-Legitimization project, and is a continuation and update of JPPI's 2010 Annual

Campuses remain the most visible home of the radical left in America and provide the highest profile platform for anti-Israel activities

Assessment, in which the atmosphere on the U.S. college campus was examined,⁸ as well as an internal paper written in 2012 regarding de-legitimization on college campuses.⁹ In preparing it, we conducted interviews with major pro-Israel organizations working on U.S. campuses today as well as Israeli government officials tasked with tracking and fighting

de-legitimization. We have also surveyed the major reports written on the topic as well as journalistic material in major Israeli and American-Jewish media outlets.

Why Campuses, and Why they Matter

Campuses are a natural hub for de-legitimization, as young people seeking meaning converge with radical ideologies offering easy solutions in a liberal setting. Anti-Israel elements have proven quite adept at exploiting this fertile ground to foment anti-Israel sentiment.

Indeed, the American college campus is perhaps the "one place where anti-Israel activity and anti-Semitism have been tolerated," and this has been true since the 1960s. Today, "campuses remain the most visible home of ideologues of the radical left in America. And to the extent these leftists are anti-Israel, universities offer them their highest profile platform."¹⁰

The danger emanating from anti-Israel activity on campuses has little to do with the immediate effect of a BDS vote, most of which fail at the student level, and to date have yet to pass the administration level. In fact, the BDS movement has, so far, largely failed to have a major economic effect on Israel. The most pressing concern is that today's colleges will produce tomorrow's leaders and opinion shapers and alter public perceptions. Therefore, the threat lies in the general erosion of Israel's very legitimacy in the U.S., which could spread to the wider public opinion through constant demonization and vilification, which has become more acceptable in the mainstream. Thus, in another generation, critical American support for Israel could lessen considerably.

Eventually, and without American support in countering them, de-legitimization attempts, such as the BDS campaigns, may have a greater chance of succeeding, turning Israel into an international pariah a-la apartheid-era South Africa.¹¹ Omar Barghouti, head of the international BDS movement, said so himself in an interview, "We are not there yet, but we are reaching our South Africa moment."¹²

The Wider American Context

Despite the increasingly "pervasive negativity"¹³ in regards to Israel on campuses, one cannot disconnect the American college student from the greater American context. The majority of America is still hugely supportive of Israel. According to a February 2015 Gallup poll, 70 percent of Americans support Israel,¹⁴ with 62 percent saying

they support Israel more than the Palestinians.¹⁵ And these numbers have been consistent over the years. Another Gallup poll from March 2015 shows that while conservatives support Israel more than do liberals, and 18-34 year olds less than older Americans, far more Americans still support Israel.¹⁶ And, even when support for Israel declines, it doesn't translate necessarily into support for the Palestinians.

Moreover, despite what is often claimed, it's not at all clear that American college students support Israel less than in the past. According to Gallup, in 1982, 49 percent of Americans aged 18-29 supported Israel, while in 2014 support among 18-29 year olds was 52 percent. In 2006, support for Israel among 18-29-year-olds reached 59 percent. What is especially interesting is that in 2014, support for Israel among Americans over 50, who were 18-29 in 1982, reached 74 percent.¹⁷

*Sympathies in Palestinian-Israeli Conflict, by Age*¹⁸

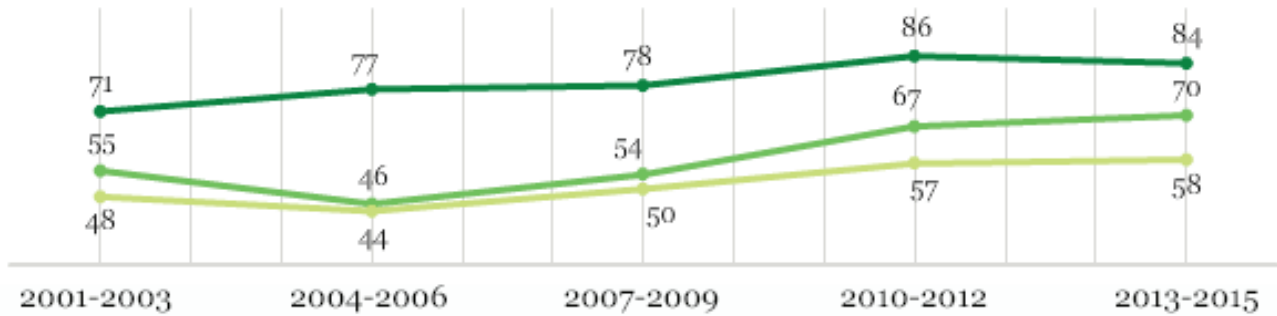


GALLUP

Preference in Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Among U.S. Adults 50 and Older, by Party ID¹⁹

% Sympathizing more with the Israelis

■ Republicans ■ Independents ■ Democrats



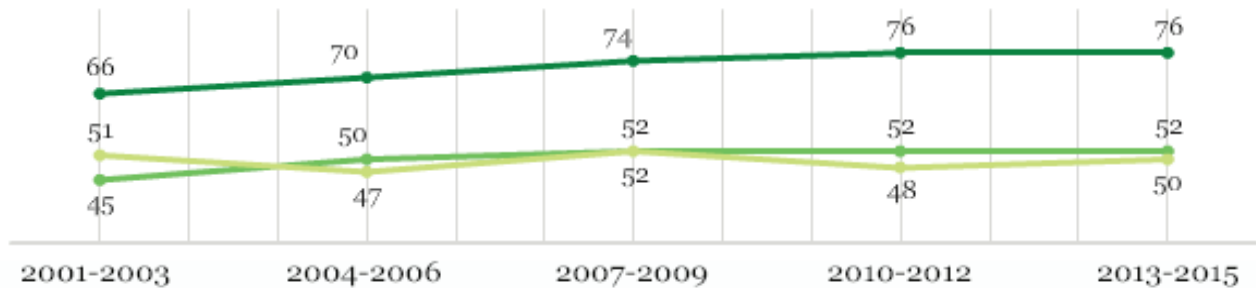
Results from 2001 to 2015 are based on aggregated data in three-year increments, allowing for more stable estimates of these population subgroups.

GALLUP®

Preference in Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Among U.S. Adults Aged 18 to 49, by Party ID²⁰

% Sympathizing more with the Israelis

■ Republicans ■ Independents ■ Democrats



Results from 2001 to 2015 are based on aggregated data in three-year increments, allowing for more stable estimates of these population subgroups.

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Pew Research Center data back up this trend as well. A 2014 survey shows that 51 percent of Americans sympathized with Israel while only 14% with the Palestinians. White Americans had higher support levels for Israel (55 vs. 12%) than Blacks (43 vs. 20%) and Hispanics (41 vs. 17%). Age groups and college education made a difference too. 18-29-year-olds support Israel 44 vs. 22%, and the numbers gradually rose so that those 65 and older supported Israel by a margin of 60% over 9% for the Palestinians. Among college graduates, support for Israel was highest among those with "some college" (54 vs. 12%), but even those who are "college grad +" polled at 48 vs. 18%. As expected, conservative Republicans were most overwhelmingly for Israel at 77% vs. 4% for the Palestinians. But even liberal Democrats still supported Israel by a 2-1 margin over the Palestinians (39 vs. 21%).²¹

Conversely, when American support for Israel was measured through the lens of assigning blame for the 2014 Gaza conflict, we see a different picture. According to Pew data, Americans largely blamed Hamas more than Israel (40 vs. 19%) in the conflict. However, here the differences between age groups and race take a turn. Whites hold Hamas responsible by a wide margin (47 vs. 14%), while Blacks (27% Israel vs. 25% Hamas), and Hispanics (35% Israel vs. 20% Hamas) see Israel as more responsible. Moreover, 18-29 year olds viewed Israel as more responsible (29% Israel vs. 21% Hamas), while older age groups increasingly viewed Hamas as the more responsible party (30-49-year-olds – 20% Israel vs. 37% Hamas; 50-64-year-olds – 14% Israel vs. 47% Hamas; 65+ - 15% Israel vs. 53% Hamas). Educated Americans viewed Hamas as more responsible for the violence than less

educated Americans (college grad + –18% Israel vs. 42% Hamas; some college – 17% Israel vs. 43% Hamas; high school or less – 22% Israel vs. 35% Hamas), and as expected, Republicans (13% Israel vs. 60% Hamas) and especially conservative ones (6% Israel vs. 70% Hamas) blame mostly Hamas, while Democrats (26% Israel vs. 29% Hamas) were more balanced, with liberals equally placing blame on both sides (30% Israel vs. 30% Hamas). Independents viewed Hamas as the more responsible party (20% Israel vs. 42% Hamas).²²

Thus, the overall picture we see is that the wider American context from which students emerge and to which they return is still largely pro-Israel and has been for the past few decades. This context cannot be ignored when looking at current trends. That said, we cannot take this support for granted, and none of this ensures that the anti-Israel efforts on campuses over the past decade won't translate into reduced support for Israel among this next generation of Americans as they enter society. Indeed, certain elements of the data sets, such as those regarding non-whites, youth, and culpability assignment for the 2014 Gaza conflict, already chip away at the overall trend and should be taken into account moving forward.

Younger Americans support Israel less – among those age 65 and up – 60% support Israel while only 9% support the Palestinians, while among ages 18-29, 44% support Israel and 22% support the Palestinians

Understanding the Threat

The Ideological Roots and Characteristics of the anti-Israel Movement²³

Understanding the ideology behind the anti-Israel and BDS movement has been somewhat difficult for Israel supporters, in large part because the movement is not monolithic and it is often disingenuous as to its true aims. Moreover, there are varying ideological points of view within the Jewish community about its nature.

A large part of the anti-Israel movement has little to do with the realities of Israel. Rather, it embodies the myth of Israel as the last of the colonial aggressors

One underpinning is becoming clear however: a large part of the anti-Israel movement has little to do with the realities of Israel itself. Rather, it embodies the myth of Israel as the last colonial aggressor and the myth of the Palestinians as the last of an indigenous peoples fighting colonialization. As Professor Gil Troy notes, "We are fighting forces ... rooted in the intellectual, political and

social revolutions of the 1960s."²⁴

Race has also become a more dominant motif, as de-legitimizers strive to conflate the white-black paradigm in America to the Israeli-Palestinian one. A telling article notes the "show of solidarity" as "the people of Palestine and Ferguson are reaching out to each other because they are fighting a

common system of injustice, control and racism."²⁵ *Haaretz* also noted the conscious use of the comparison to draw attention to the Palestinian cause, exploiting the Ferguson moment.²⁶

According to pro-Israel campus groups, this was a deliberate strategy shift adopted over the past few years to reach a broader audience, as de-legitimizers realized that most Americans cared mostly about causes closer to home. Thus, the shift from conflicting nationalistic and political narratives to one of illegitimate and racist colonizer versus the legitimate and victimized indigenous group, has succeeded in eroding Israel's legitimacy in liberal circles, while moving the Palestine issue from the radical left further toward the liberal center's agenda.

1948 or 1967?

The BDS movement is not monolithic in its goals. While many of the driving forces behind it are opposed to Israel's existence and regard the Jewish state as an historical mistake that can and should be corrected, others restrict their claims to the "occupation of Palestinians since 1967," and support Israel's right to exist. Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), a significant force in the BDS movement, supports a two-state solution, as do many individuals under the Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) umbrella.²⁷ Although difficult to measure, a trend seems to be emerging on campuses of a shift in the narrative from "1967" to "1948" borders, namely – Israel's right to exist. Omar Barghouti, founder of the BDS movement, said:

"Going back to the two-state solution, besides having passed its expiry date, it

was never a moral solution to start with. We are witnessing the rapid demise of Zionism, and nothing can be done to save it, for Zionism is intent on killing itself. I, for one, support euthanasia.”²⁸

In any case, since the movement as a whole understands that announcing its one-state intention publically may alienate potential mainstream supporters, it attempts to maintain a veneer of agnosticism on the question of Israel’s future. Even outspoken Israel critics such as Norman Finkelstein have taken the BDS movement to task because its leadership advocates – explicitly or implicitly – the end of the Jewish state.²⁹ Still, calling Israel’s right to exist into question has become more explicit and more acceptable on American campuses.

Legitimate Criticism vs. Anti-Zionism vs. Anti-Semitism

Drawing demarcation lines between legitimate criticism of Israel, anti-Zionism, and anti-Semitism has been difficult for the U.S. Jewish community and Israeli decision-makers, but it is crucial to developing counter-strategies.

The debate essentially centers on the level of Israeli culpability for the pressure being placed on it. Thus, the Jewish far left, many of whom support BDS, blame Israel for the "continued occupation" while the Jewish far right sees in BDS the "new anti-Semitism," bearing little connection to Israeli actions and policies. Most groups take a nuanced approach and believe a peace process (and eventually a two-state solution) would mitigate at least some if not most of the de-

legitimization pressure on Israel and render much but not all of the BDS movement obsolete.

Even those who hold that anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism are separate increasingly note that one of the more worrying aspects of the radicalization within the anti-Israel movement on campus over the past year or so is that it increasingly crosses the line from criticism to biased anti-Zionism and outright anti-Semitism. Tammi Rossman-Benjamin from Amcha Initiative notes (May 22, 2015), "Students (are) threatened with everything from swastikas ... on dorm buildings and flyers blaming Jews for 9/11 to graffiti saying Zionists should be sent to the gas chamber" and comparisons between Netanyahu and Hitler.³⁰

A number of recent polls have noted high levels of anti-Semitism on campuses. A 2012 AICE/Israel Project poll reports 66 percent of Jewish students witnessed, and 46 percent experienced, campus anti-Semitism;³¹ a 2013 Pew survey found that 22 percent of Jews on campus reported being called offensive names;³² and, most recently, a February 2015 Brandeis Center/Trinity College report by Barry Kosmin and Ariela Keysar notes 54 percent of Jews on campus either witnessed or suffered anti-Semitism.³³

The recent radicalization within the anti-Israel movement on campuses is expressed in the shift from criticism of Israel to biased anti-Zionism and outright anti-Semitism

Conversely, the *Forward* (March 24, 2015) takes aim at these findings, noting that the ADL itself asserts, "The number of anti-Semitic incidents on campuses in three of the last four years is actually the lowest it's been since the ADL started keeping track in 1999."³⁴ And, data presented by the BBC reflect a similar downward trend in anti-Semitic incidents over the past decade in the U.S.³⁵

Although it would be inaccurate to equate all criticism of Israel and its policies with anti-Zionism or anti-Semitism, spillover occurs when

In the past, criticism focused on Israel's policies in the West Bank, while today, the conversation increasingly focuses on questioning Israel's very existence

Israel is consistently singled out and held to an unparalleled standard, and often includes distortions or outright lies regarding Israel's behavior. Over time, Israel's legitimacy erodes and the discourse turns anti-Zionist, and increasingly anti-Semitic.

A View from the Campus – Cause for Alarm?

Over the past few years there have been some significant developments regarding Israel's status on campuses. We will explore these developments according to three main groups: students, faculty, and administration and alumni, while highlighting positive and negative trends in each.

De-legitimization among Students

Anti-Israel activity today is prevalent on over 300 campuses across the U.S., 40 of which have emerged in the last year, and led mostly by SJP, which is active on over 150 campuses.³⁶

Moreover, the nature and tone of anti-Israel activity has noticeably intensified. Anti-Israel protests are increasingly turning anti-Semitic, and Jewish and pro-Israel students routinely feel intimidated and harassed, including by anti-Israel faculty. On most of these campuses, we hear frequent reports of increasingly "poisonous" rhetoric and a "charged" atmosphere regarding Israel, which has led to a growing polarization on the issue. This has been accompanied and spurred on by a sophisticated dismantling of the traditional narrative of Israel's founding.

Pro-Israel organizations especially note the tactical shift from a "narrative" based, "hearts and minds" approach, that focused on "guerrilla theater" ("apartheid walls" and "die-ins") to a BDS-focused, political "dog-fight" campaign approach, more aggressive and sophisticated than in previous

years.³⁷ This past academic year (2014-2015), there were 44 student initiated BDS campaigns on 35 unique campuses: 9 passed, 29 failed, and 6 remained unresolved. 2013-2014 saw 19 campaigns on 15 campuses, with 5 passing and 14 failing; and 2012-2013 saw 13 campaigns on 13 campuses, with 7 passing and 6 failing.

Thus, the trend for the foreseeable future will likely entail a greater quantity of BDS campaigns on a greater number of campuses. On the other hand, there has not been an increase in the percentage (even a decrease) of campaigns that succeed at the student level. And, to date, no campaign that has passed the student level has made it past the administration level. However, we should note that in most respects, BDS organizers achieve their aim simply by having the issue raised at all, forcing previously apolitical students to contend with and question Israel's alleged "crimes." Therefore, unlike actual political campaigns, anti-Israel activists partly achieve their goals just by raising the issue, regardless of outcome.

Moreover, these groups are succeeding in expanding their circle of influence and spreading their anti-Israel message by manipulating identity politics. As noted, realizing the lack of broad sympathy for the Palestinian cause, activists are connecting and sympathizing with local liberal causes and "oppressed" student groups such as blacks, Latinos, LGBT's, environmental activists and feminists while positioning "Palestine" as one of a number of liberal causes de rigueur.³⁸ Conversely, pro-Israel students are excluded from these groups.

Campus groups also report a growing and worrying anti-normalization trend within the anti-Israel movement, such that dialogue is becoming exceedingly rare between pro and anti-Israel groups.³⁹ Relatedly, instances of aggressively silencing pro-Israeli speakers are all too common.⁴⁰ The general mood on the campus has led to more limited and often unequal platforms for pro-Israel voices to be heard.

The "half-full" crowd, on the other hand, admit that while more radicalized than in the past, severe anti-Israel activity is still limited to roughly 20 campuses (mostly in California and some elite schools across the country) of the 300, out of a total of approximately 4,000 campuses in the U.S. Moreover, they note that even on these 20 or so campuses, Jews feel comfortable most year round, certainly physically safe, with anti-Israel activity peaking at certain times of year and limited to a few or tens of hard-core activists. In fact, they note that on any given "anti-Israel" campus, there are no more than 10 or 20 "hard-core" anti-Israel activists who show up to meetings or regular events, while on many of these campuses, pro-Israel activists will outweigh anti-Israel activists by 2 or even 3 to 1.

Severe anti-Israel activity is still limited to roughly 20 campuses across the country (out of about 4,000), mostly in California and some elite schools

The "half-full" group would also note that while from afar it may seem as though most students

are anti-Israel, in reality it appears the "majority of students on the majority of American [...] campuses are not concerned with politics" at any level.⁴¹ A 2014 Harvard survey of 18-29-year-olds confirms this, noting that "jobs and health care" and "education" came in well in front of "foreign affairs and government" as student priorities.⁴² The downside of this, of course, is that the trend includes Jewish students as well.⁴³

Moreover, while many claim a widespread, well-funded and organized strategic network working against Israel, there is little evidence of this.

Rather, it seems to be "the efforts" of a "handful of students... poorly organized, and take(ing) place haphazardly on a small percentage of American campuses," and with shoe-string budgets.⁴⁴ This, however, is beginning to change. Over the past year or so, national pro-BDS organizations have begun offering their assistance to the campus effort, providing expensive and crucial resources and services.⁴⁵ While by all estimates, the funding and power of anti-Israel groups do not even come close to those of pro-Israel groups, this trend should not go overlooked.



Photo: Jonathan McIntosh/Flickr

LAUNCHING A CAMPUS BDS CAMPAIGN? WANT SUPPORT?

The National BDS Campus Support Team Can Offer

Divestment & Company Research: What is your school invested in? What corporations make good divestment targets? Where can you get current information on these companies? Get help with research and connect to related campaigns.

Legal Support: Intimidated on campus? Free speech under attack? Need legal advice? Want your resolution reviewed for potential legal issues? **Press Outreach:** Want help with talking to the media? Get help with talking points and press releases, access to media lists, spokesperson trainings, and more. **Community Mobilization:**

Want broad community support for divestment? Looking for endorsements from the local community; U.S., Palestinian, Israeli, or other international organizations; rabbis and the Jewish community; and/or respected public figures? **Online Action**

Technology: Could you benefit from sophisticated technology to set up automatic email-writing campaigns to decision-makers or customized petitions? **Campus**

Connections: Want to learn lessons and trade strategies with other students?

Divestment & Company Target Research

dbaum@afsc.org
www.investmentscreen.org

Legal Support & Legal Review of Resolutions

info@palestinelegalsupport.org
www.palestinelegalsupport.org

Press Outreach

bdsmediahelp@gmail.com

Community Mobilization & Support

sydney@jup.org
organizer@endtheoccupation.org

Online Action Technology

sydney@jup.org
organizer@endtheoccupation.org

CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER CAMPUSES

rahim.kurwa@gmail.com
sydney@jup.org
gabi@jup.org

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While the focus is most often on students, anti-Israel faculty may actually pose a bigger challenge, due to their tenure, prestige, and platform. This is especially the case with Middle East Studies departments, which tend to be biased against Israel, but also a large number of extreme liberal and even radical left lecturers who are not Middle East experts but use their prestige to voice anti-Israel opinions. This phenomenon has its roots in both the original funding of such departments from Arab governments and donors as well as the general post-modernist and relativist worldviews prevalent in academic circles today.⁴⁷ The late Edward Said's "Orientalism", which brought post-colonialism to Middle East studies, is still highly influential, and can be seen in Columbia professor Joseph Massad's work, which is representative of the tone in Middle East Studies departments across the country.⁴⁸

There are also numerous reports that pro-Israel lecturers either feel they must hide their views in order to be accepted, or risk isolation and unofficial boycotts. The recent case of Connecticut College philosophy professor Andrew Pessin illustrates this atmosphere.⁴⁹

This trend among faculty is tempered, in part, by the general waning of the humanities in American universities. "Half-fullers" point out that fewer students are studying the humanities while more are studying business, economics, or science.⁵⁰ This holds a number of opportunities for Israel supporters: fewer students are exposed to possibly negative or skewed information about Israel; those who teach and study these topics tend to be far less politically radical than in the social sciences;

and Israel is currently excelling in these fields, which are often disconnected from the conflict.⁵¹

Moreover, while Arab-funded, biased Middle East Studies departments have been around for decades, the past decade has seen the birth of Israel studies departments.⁵² Today, there are 17 Israel Studies Departments across the U.S. (and 3 more in Canada),⁵³ with dozens of visiting Israeli professors coming to the U.S. every year to teach on a range of subjects. While difficult to measure, the scholarly and nuanced view they provide, even if critical of Israel, has been generally positive in countering de-legitimization, albeit gradual.

Administrators and Alumni

Lastly, university administrators have a potentially important impact on the overall picture. To date, administrators have been mostly positive, if passive, regarding anti-Israel activity on their campuses. Thus, while allowing anti-Israel events to take place in the name of freedom of speech, and perhaps not doing enough to ensure civility and order at pro-Israel events, administrations have rejected all student led BDS motions (almost) outright and have made public statements rejecting academic boycotts in general. Moreover, cooperation with Israeli universities has increased over the past few

Pro-Israel lecturers either feel they must hide their views in order to be accepted, or risk isolation and unofficial boycotts

years, with 34 universities conducting or exploring cooperation with Israeli universities.⁵⁴

As this report reaches completion, a debate is underway regarding a motion whereby the University of California system would adopt the State Department's definition of anti-Semitism.⁵⁵ This initiative has the backing of a large number of alumni and the California State Senate, which issued a non-binding resolution urging the UC system to condemn anti-Semitism and work to curb it.⁵⁶ If passed, this would be considered the most significant step taken by a university administration to date on this issue.

The Jewish community has thrown its weight, experience and money into the campuses, and has succeeded in defeating most BDS resolutions

The role of alumni and university donors (many of whom are Jewish) has yet to be fully researched, although it appears a promising avenue to explore as a form of pressure on administrators to clamp down on de-legitimization (as in the case of Steven Salaita and University of Illinois donors).

Conclusion A Comparative View

In 2010, JPPI published as part of its annual assessment, a report on the developing threat on U.S. college campuses.⁵⁷ In 2010, the Jewish community and Israel were only beginning to wake up to this worrying trend, recognizing, "The goal of many... of this campaign is ostensibly to

pressure Israel into more humane policies toward Palestinian populations... (yet) in many college environments the campaign spreads into a broader form of Israel-phobia aimed at de-legitimizing the very concept of a Jewish state". (JPPI AA 2010) The report further noted the increasingly radical tactics used by Israel's opponents.

If we compare Israel's current status on U.S. campuses to that of a few years ago, we can point to some clear trends. On one hand, Israel de-legitimizers are growing more vocal and extreme, are shifting tactics to a more BDS focused approach, are moving toward anti-normalization with pro-Israel students, are aggressively connecting the Palestine issue with leading domestic liberal causes, and are beginning to get help from outside professional organizations. On the other hand, as will be elaborated in the following section, the Jewish community has thrown its weight, experience, and money into countering anti-Israel activity on campuses, has succeeded in defeating most BDS resolutions, and where BDS is passed, administrations are quick to strike them down and have even increased cooperation with Israel. Moreover, Israel remains largely popular in America in general – an environment from which college students originate and to which they return.

Challenges remain and are significant. They include tenured anti-Israel faculty, often passive administrations, and disagreements and even a lack of cooperation within the Jewish community on how to combat de-legitimization (not to mention Jewish involvement and leadership within the de-legitimization movement).

The Jewish Community and Israel: Fighting Back

One of the key differences today versus a few years ago is that the American Jewish community has become active in anti-de-legitimization efforts. Pro-Israel and Jewish groups have “woken up” to the threat and have significantly increased their presence on campuses. These groups have far greater access to funding and national support than do their ideological opponents. Thus, on a given campus, it is more often the case today that Israel supporters outnumber their detractors by margins of 2 or 3 to 1, let alone incomparable funding.

While this report will not deal with specific strategies to fight de-legitimization, several organizations publish anti-BDS “hasbara” and strategy kits for students.⁵⁸ In the recommendations below, we echo the strategies found to be most successful.

One such new strategy is pushing state level legislations against boycotts or divestment (Illinois, Indiana, Tennessee, and South Carolina). While the effect this will have on universities is not yet clear, we expect it to be significant.⁵⁹

The proliferation and diversity of anti-de-legitimization and anti-BDS groups and initiatives on campuses – a new phenomenon in recent years – is impressive. However, this plurality also comes at the cost of coordination and transparency. Moreover, among the more liberal in the American Jewish community there is a perceived lack of room for critical discussion of, or opposition to, Israeli policies regarding the Palestinians. These

policies are often at odds with the liberal values held by many American Jews, and have caused a splintering within the Jewish community. Thus J Street, and J Street U on campuses is a counter-movement to the traditional AIPAC, and Open Hillel to the traditional Hillel International, formed to offer liberal Jews a platform to speak freely and advance their agenda.⁶⁰ (For a list of pro-Israel organizations active on U.S. campuses, see Annex.)

The Government of Israel

Within the Israeli government, counter de-legitimization efforts are divided between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Strategic Affairs. While the Ministry of Strategic Affairs is formally tasked with designing strategies and coordinating the efforts to fight de-legitimization, the Foreign Ministry through its Washington embassy and regional consuls, has actively supported counter de-legitimization efforts throughout the

U.S., including off campus, primarily from behind the scenes. However, and while general awareness of the threat has increased in the government, there is not yet a comprehensive strategic governmental plan backed by adequate budget to counter de-legitimization, including and especially on campuses.

Awareness of the threat of de-legitimization has increased in the Israeli government, but there is not yet a comprehensive strategic governmental plan with an adequate budget to counter it

Policy Recommendations

It is crucial to recognize that the threat of anti-Israel activism on college campuses, including BDS, is not from the immediate results it can achieve, but rather the long term effect it could have in eroding America's long-standing support for Israel among tomorrow's leaders. And while significant challenges lay ahead, effective organization and action, both by pro-Israel organizations and the Israeli government, can contribute significantly in minimizing and countering this threat.

We note that, in light of the range of driving factors behind anti-Israel activity, efforts need to be made on two levels: one level to contain and neutralize the "hard-core" anti-Israel activists, who refuse to dialogue and call for an end to Israel; and on another level vis-à-vis the vast majority of students who are critical of Israel but may not be anti-Zionist, or who are generally a-political and can be engaged.

We recommend the following principles for action that we saw consistently among those already being practiced with success across the U.S.:

- Take a pro-active stance, alongside defensive action when necessary;
- Comprehend the recent tactical shift on campuses to an aggressive political campaign, BDS focused approach, and operate in kind;
- Increase Israel education and engagement for Jewish students, both before and during college;
- Expose the extremist and anti-liberal ideology and goals behind main anti-Israel activists;
- Positively present Israel as opposed to tearing down the Palestinians; Show the human side of Israel and its complexity;
- Work in moderate and not extreme ways (anti-Israel activists tend to resort to extremism which alienates many students);
- Work mostly behind the scenes strategically to build coalitions and personal relationships;
- Utilize the campus legal and governing system in an advantageous manner;
- "Speak the same language" where possible (i.e. student groups should be engaged by other student groups, grassroots organizations with grassroots organizations, liberals with liberals, unions with unions, professors with professors, etc.)

Key Policy Recommendations

The following policy recommendations are divided into two groups: the first is directed at the audience in the university setting: students, faculty, administrators, and donors; the second deals with key actors who would need to implement the recommendations, namely: the American Jewish and pro-Israel community and the Israeli government.

Students

- Adopt a pro-active agenda – rather than focus solely on denying anti-Israel claims or fighting BDS resolutions (which must be done anyway), proactive initiatives are recommended; for instance, pushing pro-Israel resolutions in student governments. With respect to the apolitical majority of students, it seems that whoever initiates first and sets the agenda gains the upper hand. Also, pro-Israel students should be encouraged to become more involved in student governance.
- Show the human side/the positive – Activists report success from showing the human side of Israel (even if complex) and its positive aspects – such as the recent Nepal rescue operation or Israelis who share their “personal stories.”⁶¹ Especially helpful are narratives highlighting Israel's democratic and liberal aspects.
- Coalition building and outreach – Jewish and pro-Israel groups must continue to reach out to as many student groups and campus influencers as possible, looking creatively to find commonalities (LGBT's and gay rights

in Israel; environmentalists and similar issues in Israel, etc.). A number of organizations are already working with this strategy and report positive effects.

- Student and pro-Israel groups should organize non-Jewish student group missions to Israel in order to see the complex issues upfront and bring Israeli student missions to the U.S., including Ethiopian and Arab students.
- Increase cooperation, coordination, and transparency between pro-Israel groups active on campuses – although some groups have found their niche in bringing other groups together, there are still some groups who do not cooperate or even communicate regarding their campus activity. Such cooperation could serve as a force multiplier for pro-Israel activists.

Faculty

- While it is difficult to prevent faculty from expressing opinions, more pressure can be placed on those known to hold biased views, especially if their topic of expertise is far removed from Israel. Students can report such behavior to the administration or enlist pro-Israel groups in “name and shame” operations to expose especially egregious professors who eschew academic principles when opinions opposite their own are voiced.
- Jewish and pro-Israel groups, the Israeli government, and Israeli universities should increase their efforts to establish “Israel studies” departments at American

universities. Moreover, visiting Israeli professors, in any field, have been seen to have a positive effect on bringing about gradual shifts in perceptions of Israel on even the most poisonous campuses.

Administration and Donors

- Donors, many of whom are Jewish, should be engaged to fund new Israel Studies courses, chairs, and departments filled with non-biased faculty. In some cases, donors can be used to pressure university administrations to exercise oversight regarding "activist" professors (Steven Salaita).
- Jewish students and groups should lobby administrations harder to curb anti-Israel activity that spills over into anti-Semitism. While anti-Israel speakers take up the mantle of "academic freedom," administrators should be forced to uphold the standards they would apply if any other minority were targeted.
- Administrators should disallow or at least refuse university funding for anti-Israel events that incite hatred.
- A number of administrations have come out against BDS – this trend should be encouraged, both in announcements as well as actions, including increased cooperation with Israeli universities.

The U.S. Jewish Community and Jewish Organizations

- The American Jewish community should be more vociferous in demanding recognition of the strong connection between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism and in dispelling the attempted linkage of the Palestinian conflict to other "oppressed minority" and colonization narratives.
- The Jewish community should clarify that legitimate criticism of Israel's policies is acceptable, but questioning Israel's right to exist is not. That said, we note this will be exceedingly difficult as different groups within the Jewish community define delegitimization and legitimate criticism differently.
- Jewish communal and organizational leaders should consult with pro-Israel student leaders. While some organizations have close communications with students, in some instances students feel that "out-of-touch" professionals dictate to them without first considering their points of view.
- The Jewish Agency's successful joint Shlichim program with Hillel currently has 65 emissaries that cover twice as many campuses, and is set to expand to 75. This program should be expanded both in terms of personnel and budgets.

The Israeli Government

- Although the Israeli government could do more vis-a-vis the U.S. campus situation, it must recognize that the American Jewish community and pro-Israel groups should lead this fight, as is the case now, and offer behind the scenes support:
 - Israel needs to treat the campus effort as a front in Israel's soft war against de-legitimization and BDS. To that end, the government should formulate a comprehensive government-wide strategy, appoint a strong operational director who reports to the prime minister, and grant an appropriate budget.
 - The government should provide, or at least assist in maintaining, a situation-room function that provides an up-to-date picture of all anti-Israel efforts on campuses, and provide timely and accurate information on events in Israel to American pro-Israel groups seeking such information. Currently, these groups must traverse a complicated Israeli bureaucracy to get accurate answers to deflect false or exaggerated accusations.
 - When necessary, Israel should help provide intelligence capabilities, for example, regarding potential funding of anti-Israel groups and provide support (behind the scenes) for "lawfare" or economic warfare efforts.
 - The government should initiate a project that brings together various hasbara

organizations, such as the Jewish Agency, and help organize and fund training for advocates and diplomats – for students and shlichim who go to the U.S., as well as those who come to Israel on high-school and college programs. A similar program should be funded for college students in the U.S.

- In general, Israel needs to take into consideration its actions and the comments of senior politicians and officials – how they will likely be perceived abroad and the impact they might have on Jews and non-Jews who are at the front lines of the war on de-legitimization. While we are not recommending Israel make national security decisions based on this factor, it should be cognizant of the "international price" it may pay for local actions or rhetoric.

Annex:

Main groups and initiatives fighting de-legitimization on U.S. campuses today:*

- **The Israel on Campus Coalition (ICC)** – <http://israelcc.org/>.
- **The David Project** – <http://www.davidproject.org/>
- **Hillel** - <http://www.hillel.org/>
- **The Jewish Agency's Israel Fellows to Hillel Program** – <http://www.jewishagency.org/shlichim-israeli-emissaries/program/291>
- **Hasbara Fellowships** – <http://www.hasbarafellowships.org/>
- **Students Supporting Israel (SSI)** - <http://www.ssimovement.org/>
- **J Street U** – <http://www.jstreetu.org/>
- **The Israel Action Network (IAN)** – <http://israelactionnetwork.org/>
- **StandWithUs** – <http://www.standwithus.com/>
- **AIPAC** – <http://www.aipac.org/connect/students/aipac-campus-initiatives>
- **AJC** – www.ajc.org
- **ADL** – www.adl.org
- **Chabad on Campus** – <http://www.chabad.edu/>
- **SPME - Scholars for Peace in the Middle East** – <http://spme.org/>
- **Amcha Initiative** – <http://www.amchainitiative.org/>
- **CUFI - Christians United for Israel on Campus** - <http://www.cufioncampus.org/>

* For more on each organization, we refer you to the full version of this document on JPPI's website.

Endnotes

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3. Aggregate count which includes published and internal statistics from pro-Israel groups.
4. Medina, Jennifer and Lewin, Tamar. "Campus Debates on Israel Drive a Wedge Between Jews and Minorities". *New York Times*, May 9, 2015.
5. Sharansky, Natan. "Campuses are Flooded with Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS)." *Jerusalem Post*, May 19, 2015.
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11. The BDS movement has its roots in South Africa from 2001, where a coalition of NGO's agreed to copy the popular movement that pressured South Africa to end its apartheid policies. The official "BDS movement" was founded by SJP at UC Berkley in 2005. For further reading on the origins of BDS see here: http://www.stopbds.com/?page_id=16. For further reading on why Israel's situation regarding the Palestinians bears little if any comparison to Apartheid South Africa read here http://archive.adl.org/israel/apartheid/confronting_the_apartheid_analogy.pdf
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17. Gallup, as reported by Bard, Mitchell, (Sep. 24, 2015), "Myths and Facts About American Campuses: #1 Young Americans are no Longer Sympathetic Toward Israel". *Jerusalem Post*.
18. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/181745/older-americans-grown-especially-supportive-israel.aspx>
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20. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/181745/older-americans-grown-especially-supportive-israel.aspx>
21. <http://www.people-press.org/2014/07/15/as-mideast-violence-continues-a-wide-partisan-gap-in-israel-palestinian-sympathies/>
22. <http://www.people-press.org/files/2014/07/7-28-14-Israel-Hamas-Release.pdf>

23. The trends mentioned in this section can also be considered as "strategies" by anti-Israel activists. We chose to talk about them in this section, because beyond the key minds driving the Israel delegitimization movement who realize the cynical use of race, narrative bending or other ideological tricks are purposeful, the majority of anti-Israel activists believe these to be true and thus it becomes a part of the ideology with which pro-Israel activists must contend.
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27. <https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/content/jvp-mission-statement>
28. http://www.stopbds.com/?page_id=48
29. <http://honestreporting.com/finkelstein-on-bds-a-cult-of-dishonesty/>
30. Tammi Rossman-Benjamin. "Schools Must do more to Protect Jewish Students." *Times of Israel*. May 22, 2015.
31. Bard, Mitchell and Dawson, Jeff. "Israel and the Campus: The Real Story". AICE – The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. Fall 2012.
32. Pew Research Center, "A Portrait of Jewish Americans". 2013.
33. Kosmin, Barry and Keysar, Ariela. "National Demographic Survey of American Jewish College Students 2014. Anti-Semitism Report". The Louis D. Brandeis Center and Trinity College. February 2015.
34. Editorial. "The Anti-Semitism Surge that Isn't" *Forward*. March 24, 2015.
35. Fletcher, James. "Is there a 'rising tide' of anti-Semitism in the West?" *BBC News Magazine*. August 21, 2014.
36. SJP, perhaps the single most important group in the anti-Israel effort on campuses today, is estimated to have a presence on 154 campuses across the country (ADL), with single and sometimes double digit membership on each campus. Because they are not a unified organization, little is known about real numbers or budgets. And while there is a national hub that brings in activists for a yearly strategy conference, there is little but increasing coordination between chapters.
37. We note this is a tactical move, since the majority of campus students were put off by this type of activism and tended to ignore it.
38. For example, this article written by SJP members in 2012, denotes connecting to other "victimized" groups as a strategy. The link to this article featured on the national SJP website and on ElectronicIntifada, a leading anti-Israel, pro-BDS website. <https://electronicintifada.net/content/building-bridges-between-struggles-upcoming-student-conference/11788>
39. For more on anti-normalization, see <http://thirdnarrative.org/israel-palestine-articles/anti-normalization-prevents-peace-sustains-the-occupation-undermines-academic-freedom-and-harms-students/> or the chapter on anti-normalization in this ADL report <http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/israel-international/sjp-2015-backgroundunder.pdf>
40. For more, see <http://www.amchainitiative.org/sjp-disruption-of-jewish-events/>
41. Young, Todd and Ackerman, Matthew. , "A Burning Campus? Rethinking Israel Advocacy at America's Universities and Colleges." The David Project, 2012.

42. Harvard Institute of Politics. "Survey of Young Americans' Attitudes toward Politics and Public Service, 25th Edition". Harvard University, March – April 2014. http://www.iop.harvard.edu/sites/default/files_new/Harvard_ToplineSpring2014.pdf
43. We note that this poll refers to 18-29 year olds in general and not only college students. So, it is likely that those on liberal-arts campuses are, a priori, more liberal and politically minded than their peers, which may explain why it is these campuses where anti-Israel activity is expanding.
44. We note, in the "pessimist" section, a new and increasingly strong presence of outside, professional BDS organizations assisting student groups.
45. Specifically referring to the National BDS Campus Support Team, comprised of AFSC (American Friends Service Committee), AMP (American Muslims for Palestine), JVP (Jewish Voices for Peace) and Palestine Legal – each of which is interested in a different BDS aspect, and each of offers crucial resources and services to campus based BDS activists.
46. This is a flier being spread around campuses, offering support for student led BDS campaigns through offering professional services and national connections.
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53. <http://israel-studies.com/campus>
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55. This definition includes anti-Israel criticism beyond "what is normal for other countries" and includes denying the Jewish people a right to self-determination.
56. Abbot, Katy. "State Senate resolution urging UC to condemn anti-Semitism draws objections over language." *The Daily Californian*, July 5, 2015.
57. In June, Jewish billionaire mega-donors Sheldon Adelson, Chaim Saban and others met with a number of pro-Israel organizations to devise strategies and funding priorities. It was reported the philanthropic consortium pledged \$50 million over the next two years for pro-Israel efforts on campuses and will create an organization called "Campus Maccabees" who intend to take a more offensive approach against de-legitimizers.
58. Hasbara is a Hebrew term for public diplomacy, related to defending or promoting a positive image of Israel.
59. Shimoni Stoil, Rebecca. "As Illinois quashes Israel boycotts, some see watershed in fight against BDS". *Times of Israel*. May 19, 2015.
60. For more on the Hillel – Open Hillel controversy, see <http://www.timesofisrael.com/two-jews-three-opinions-j-street-u-and-open-hillel/>
61. Note this does not apply in a defensive setting when allegations or criticisms of Israel are made. I.e., it is not effective to counter charges of occupation

or apartheid with responses highlighting Israel's contribution to technology or medicine. Also, in general, this type of action can be effective on the "undecided majority" but will not work against hardcore anti-Israel activists.



An Integrative Measurement of European Anti-Semitism

Gauging Anti-Semitism for Informed Jewish People Policy

Surely, one of the most disturbing recent trends in the Jewish world and in the consciousness of the global Jewish community has been the resurgence of anti-Semitism. The outbreak is far from pandemic. Yet, the trend clearly must be monitored and courses of action should be explored, both at the Jewish community level as well as that of the Jewish people as a whole, to understand how best to curb the contagion or limit its effects. JPPI is embarking on a multi-year effort to contribute to this effort.

Precisely because the Jewish people has true enemies who wish to do it harm, paranoia is a luxury it can ill afford. What is required is a better understanding of the nature and origin of renewed anti-Semitic expression to determine where true danger may lie. Anti-Semitism must be monitored from a perspective relevant to Jewish people policies, actions, and interests. At best, this would mean developing a capacity to distinguish among that which must receive the priority attention of the Jewish people,

that which may be regarded as disturbing but not threatening, and those threats which are more apparent than real. This is not an easy task because, like a disease, anti-Semitism may assume different guises and morph into different forms.

Focus on Europe

In recent years, negative attitudes toward Jews have increased in many Western European countries, with France situated at the front of this worrying shift. The expansion of populations who hold anti-Semitic views in Europe is leading to the spread of anti-Jewish stereotypes in the general public discourse. Many European Jews today hide their Jewish identities and are considering emigration.

However, the available data for examining negative attitudes toward Jews do not provide a sufficiently broad or accurate picture of the situation. The tools used by organizations (such as the ADL (Anti-Defamation League) or the Pew Research Center), although thorough and reliable, only give partial glimpses, and at times

can even be confusing in understanding anti-Semitic trends in the world. This is because they focus, each in their own way, on only one piece of the anti-Semitism puzzle. Some organizations only look at public opinion. Others only track the number of reported instances of violence or harassment against Jews. Moreover, each organization has defined its own metrics and definitions, which differ from country to country. One European organization (FRA) examines how anti-Semitism is perceived by the Jews themselves. Therefore, the Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI) developed an integrative measurement that takes into account all the variables.

The Purpose of JPPI's Integrated Index

In the shadow of recrudescing anti-Semitism in Europe, and in the light of EU governments' keen efforts to confront the phenomenon, there is a need for an integrative dashboard. This will provide local communal leaders, Israeli policy-makers and world Jewry leaders with a standardized measurement mechanism and a policy tool to gauge the level of threat to Jewish communities, monitor developments, ease decision-making, and assess the efficacy of undertaken interventions. To give this policy tool a global applicability, there is a need to standardize definitions regarding incidents and their severity, and to adopt a standardized measurement mechanism.

Public Opinion Toward Jews

Public opinion polls examining attitudes toward Jews have shown, time and again, contradictory findings regarding the state of anti-Semitism in queried countries. For example, a 2013 Pew Research Center survey found that 87 percent of Europeans held positive views of Jews. In contrast, a 2014 ADL survey found negative attitudes toward Jews in Europe at an all-time high – 24 percent held anti-Semitic views (that is, 79 million Europeans). In France, the gap between the outcomes was even more pronounced: Pew assessed that 7 percent held anti-Semitic views and found an overall decline in anti-Semitism, while the ADL survey showed a rise in anti-Semitic views from 35 to 51 percent.¹ Moreover, the level of negative opinions among the general population does not reflect the gravity of the situation, because it does not take into account the influence of social standing on those surveyed. However, complementary information regarding social status can be found in fieldwork, such as focus groups conducted recently by pollster Stanley Greenberg among French elites uncovered views such as: "Jews are controlling, manipulative and with split loyalties to France." They think they have a monopoly on "suffering." Many similar descriptions resounded in the Greenberg groups, often said in candid off the cuff speech.

Scope of anti-Semitic Incidents

A simple look at data showing either a rise or drop in anti-Semitic incidents does not provide a wide enough picture about the state of anti-Semitism. One also needs to take into account the nature and distribution of incidents. Thus, for example, if most anti-Semitic acts are carried out by a small group in a specific area, one cannot claim that the entire Jewish population is threatened. Naturally, the approach will differ if violence against Jews is widespread throughout a country, or committed by a large number of actors. Similarly, a singular terrorist act in a specific city is not the same as a situation in which hundreds of extremist jihadi fighters return from the Middle East to their European places of residence and are absorbed with open arms into the local Muslim community. When we observe a significant number of resentful anti-Jewish youngsters, even if the highly reputed Pew survey indicates a very low level of negative attitudes among the general population (11 percent in France), Jewish policy planners would be irresponsible if they told the local Jews there was no need for worry and that they can feel safe in their home country.

Jews' Perceptions of anti-Semitism in their Countries

An anti-Semitism metric can be neither precise nor complete if it does not take into account how Jews experience reality in their own countries. Does an increase in negative attitudes toward Jews prevent them from living

full professional lives? Does it tear at the fabric of the local Jewish community? Does a rise in anti-Jewish incidents lead to the desire to emigrate? And from another perspective, we may ask, “Are Jews paranoiac, and how seriously should their feelings of discomfort be taken?”

A three-dimensional index would allow and encourage us to more closely and accurately investigate the various measures of anti-Semitic attitudes and incidents as well as Jewish feelings to assess their true import, and to obtain a more accurate picture. Each measure is in relationship with, and compared with, the others so as to arrive at its true significance.

Applying JPPI's three-dimensional index to Europe shows this. The three-dimensional measurement examines anti-Semitism in several European countries and comes to unique conclusions:

- While the scope of anti-Semitic incidents in Great Britain is higher than in France (for every 1,000 Jews), French Jews are more worried about what is happening around them.
- Although the scope of violent anti-Semitic rallies in Germany is larger than in any other European country, German Jews feel safe and do not see anti-Semitism as a serious problem in their country.
- Some 49 percent of French Jews are considering emigration — they no longer feel safe as Jews in their country — German Jews trust the German government to protect them.

These feelings correspond with the low rate of negative attitudes toward Jews in Germany, and the fact that anti-Semitic acts and opinions come from the fringes of German society and are not widespread among the elites. In contrast, there is widespread anti-Semitic discourse among elites in France, and deeply entrenched anti-Semitism

in large segments of the population (84 percent of Muslims). Thus, taken together with recent extremely violent incidents (the attack on the Jewish school in Toulouse or the kosher grocery in Paris), French Jews do not trust their government to protect them, and feel excluded from full civil participation in the country.

Findings about anti-Semitism in Western Europe	Trend	Europe Average	France %	UK %	Germany %
Public opinion towards Jews (negative views)					
ADL ² 2009/2012/2014	▲	24	33/35/51	15/20/11	21/22/33
Pew Center in Europe ³	▼	13	7	7	9
French Government (CNCDH) 2013/2014 ⁴	▼		21/17		
Field studies by European institutes ⁵	▲		21	10	18
Anti-Semitic attitudes among Muslims ⁶	▲	62	83		
Scope of anti-Semitic incidents					
Incidents /year for every 1000 Jews ⁷	▲		6	10	9
Rise in number of reported violent incidents (%) ⁸	▲	+70	+130	+100	-10
Rise in number of serious strikes (%) ⁹	▲	+40	+90	+100	-10
Percent of incidents reported of all anti-Semitic incidents ¹⁰		77	72	73	72
Jews' sense of anti-Semitism in their countries¹¹					
Anti-Semitism has risen over the past five years	▲	76	89	68	68
Anti-Semitism is a very or fairly big problem	▲	67	86	48	25
Have considered emigration because they do not feel safe in their country	▲	32	49	19	26
Avoid places in their neighborhood because they would not feel safe there as a Jew	▲	27	20	35	28

Directions for Action

The integrative dashboard presented here on Europe is part of a multiyear JPPI project that aims to provide local communal leaders, Israeli policy-makers, and world Jewry leaders with a policy tool to measure the threat level in Jewish communities, monitor developments, define priorities, ease decision-making and assess effectiveness of the efforts taken. To allow this dashboard to be built at the global level and allow a global perspective about priorities and policy, there is a need to produce the three dimensional raw data and standardize the measurements.

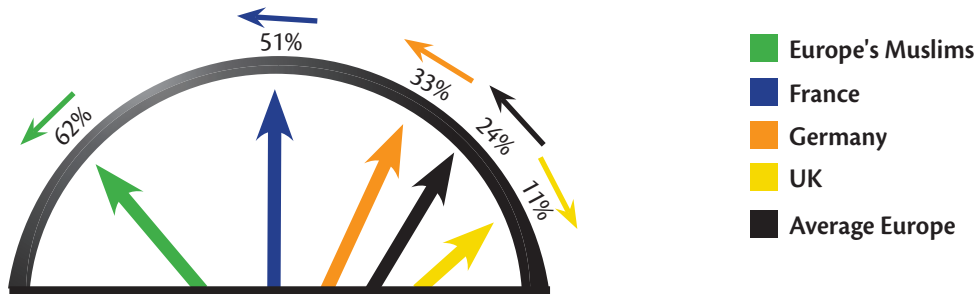
1. **Produce reliable data in every large Jewish community.** While some data in Europe and the United States are available about attitudes, incidents, and perceptions, this tri-dimensional data is not yet available in other Jewish communities, such as Australia, South Africa or Latin America. The methodology developed by the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency may inspire the development of further measurement mechanisms with respect to Jewish perceptions of anti-Semitism.
2. **Standardized measurements.** For historical reasons, each local organization has developed its own system of measurement. What one organization defines as serious harassment is defined elsewhere as a minor incident. Consistent standards will have to be established through a consensus building process under the umbrella of international Jewish organizations and existing Israeli

governmental agencies in charge of monitoring and combating anti-Semitism.

3. **Development of a monitoring methodology, a deliberative mechanism, and a policy tool.** JPPI has started a large project to grasp anti-Semitism in all its complexity and develop a methodology to produce a comprehensive policy tool. The three gauges presented above provide policy-makers with a more complex perspective about the situation in the region and, through a process of deliberation, define priorities and required actions. The results presented here are certainly a work in progress and an invitation for further reflection.

AN INTEGRATIVE MEASUREMENT OF EUROPEAN ANTI-SEMITISM

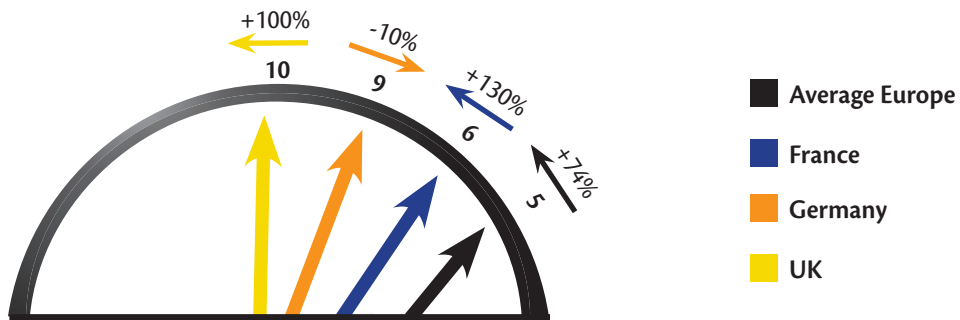
ATTITUDES TOWARD JEWS



Anti-Jewish Attitudes in 2014

Sources: ADL, Pew, CNCDH, Fondapol, CAA, WZB

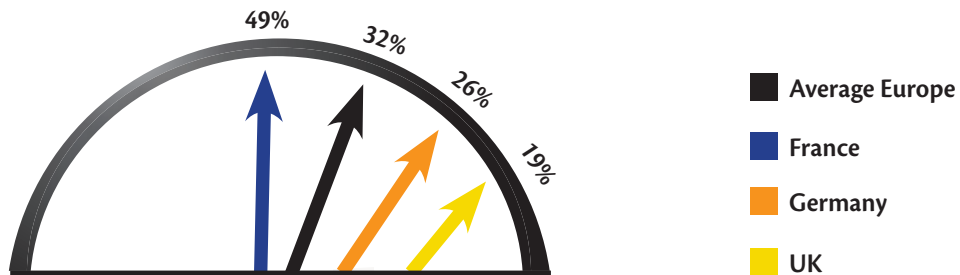
ANTI-JEWISH INCIDENTS IN 2014



Number of incidents per 1,000 Jews, and Change from last year (%)

Sources: CNCDH, JPR, SPCJ, CST

PERCEPTIONS AMONG JEWS



Jews who contemplate emigration

Source: FRA European Union Fundamental Rights Agency

Endnotes

1. The discrepancy arises, in part, because while Pew asked direct questions about attitudes toward Jews, ADL surveyed beliefs about Jews.
2. Proportion of people saying that the statement 'Jews have too much power in the business world' is 'probably true'. Anti-Defamation League (2014). ADL Global 100: An Index of Anti-Semitism, Executive Summary. (<http://global100.adl.org/>) See also Anti-Defamation League (2012). Attitudes Toward Jews In Ten European Countries, March. (http://archive.adl.org/anti_semitism/adl_anti-semitism_presentation_february_2012.pdf).
3. Bruce Stokes (2015). "Faith in European Project Reviving," Pew Research Center, 2 June. (<http://www.pewglobal.org/2015/06/02/faith-in-european-project-reviving/eu-report-17/>)
4. CNCDH (2015), Rapport annuel sur le racisme, l'antisémitisme et la xénophobie. (<http://www.cncdh.fr/fr/actualite/rapport-annuel-sur-le-racisme-lantisemitisme-et-la-xenophobie>).
5. For UK, see local national surveys such as Sunday Times, CAA, All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry in Antisemitism. Quoted in Boyd, Jonathan and L. Daniel Staetsky (2015.) "Could it happen here? What existing data tell us about contemporary antisemitism in the UK", Institute for Jewish Policy Research, May. (http://www.jpr.org.uk/publication?id=4032#.VWT_Ap3n-zc). For France, see Reynié, Dominique (2014). *L'antisémitisme dans l'opinion publique française. Nouveaux éclairages*, FONDAPOL – Fondation pour L'Innovation Politique, Novembre. (<http://www.fondapol.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/CONF2press-Antisemitisme-DOC-6-web11h51.pdf>). For Germany and other continental European countries see *Annual Report on Antisemitism for 2014*, Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry, p. 51. (<http://kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/general-analysis-2014>).
6. For anti-Semitism among European Muslims, see Koopmans, Ruud (2013). "Fundamentalism and out-group hostility Muslim immigrants and Christian natives in Western Europe." WZB Berlin Social Science Center, *WZB Mitteilungen*. (http://www.wzb.eu/sites/default/files/u6/koopmans_englisch_ed.pdf). As the overall majority of violent actions against Jews are perpetrated by Muslims in France, Germany, Belgium and Holland (and a significant part in UK and other European countries), assessing the level of resentment and the level of sympathy to Islamist fundamentalism among the general Muslim population is of special interest. As it appears in the mentioned Fondapol and WZB surveys, fundamentalist Islam and anti-Jewish resentment are widely spread among Europe's Muslims. While many believe that anti-Semitism is limited to fringe and marginal parts among the general Muslim populations, these studies demonstrate that anti-Semitism is far from being a marginal phenomenon. This finding resonates with the concern and worry indicated in the FRA's study about the perceptions of anti-Semitism and the will to emigrate among large parts of the Jews in Europe.
7. JPR, op. cit. p. 12.
8. For UK, see CST – Community Security Trust (2015). *Antisemitic Incidents Report 2014*. London. For France, see SCPJ – Service de Protection de la Communauté Juive (2015.) *Rapport 2014 sur l'antisémitisme en France*, Paris.
9. CST and SPCJ, op. cit.
10. FRA – Fundamental Rights Agency (2013), "Discrimination and hate crime against Jews in EU: experiences and perceptions of antisemitism", November, European Union. <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-and-maps/survey-data-explorer-discrimination-and-hate-crime-against>
11. FRA, op. cit.



Looking East: New Opportunities in Asia

Key Policy Recommendations:

1. **Develop a comprehensive, long-term strategic approach toward China and India, combining political, economic, defense, and cultural perspectives.**
2. **Establishing an inter-ministerial executive committee – under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Office, in charge of strategy implementation and intra-Governmental coordination.**
3. **After touching base with the United States on the subject – discuss with China possible new peace-supporting and stabilizing roles. For example, a large Chinese investment program for the Palestinian territories (housing, roads, and other infrastructure elements).**
4. **Reach out to India's defeated Congress Party, individual state governments, and India's moderate Muslims. These constituencies lost some political power in 2014, but this could be temporary.**

JPPI's 2012-2013 Annual Assessment included a chapter entitled *The Rise of Asia – Policy Implications for Israel and the Jewish People*. Although economic and other relations with China and India were expanding, the chapter noted a “relative political and diplomatic stagnation.”¹ This is no longer the case. Since 2013, there have been significant improvements in Israel's relations with both Asian giants in the political and diplomatic arenas. This will, in time, have various important repercussions for the Jewish people globally. While the causes of these improvements are different for China and India, their impact on Israel's global geopolitical standing, and that of its Jewish supporters, is similar. As Israel's political position in Europe, the Muslim world, Latin America, and partially or temporarily even in the United States, deteriorated in 2014, the Israeli and the Jewish position in Asia grew stronger. Improvements in Asia, still barely detectable in international diplomacy, obviously cannot fully compensate for Israel's political losses in other parts of the world. However, considering Asia's rapid rise, it is a ray of light in a currently darkening political landscape.

CHINA

The 2012-2013 Assessment noted that the “Arab Spring” had created great unease in China. In the light of the regional turmoil, Israel appeared to be an island of stability and prosperity, as well as a source of valuable information. Frequent meetings between senior military officials and Middle East experts of both sides were a consequence of this new perception. In 2012, China and Israel signed a memorandum of understanding promising China’s support for a high-speed rail link between the Mediterranean and Eilat at the Red Sea. For China, building an alternative to the Suez Canal to cope

China's stake in Israel's economy is rapidly growing: between 2011 and 2014 China acquired \$7 billion in Israeli assets

with overload and other problems was a “strategic decision,” according to the Communist Party’s *People’s Daily*.² The offer did not come too soon. In 2013, Al Qaeda affiliates fired rocket-propelled grenades at a Chinese cargo ship crossing the canal.

In May 2013, Israel’s Prime Minister Netanyahu was welcomed in China on an official visit, the first by an Israeli prime minister in six years. The discussions between the leaders went very well and were almost entirely devoted to bilateral relations. (During Prime Minister Netanyahu’s visit, the President of the Palestinian authority Abu Mazen also visited China. The two leaders did not meet and their visits had no perceptible impact on China’s relations with either side). Early

in 2013 it was not yet clear whether these events reflected a coherent long-term Chinese strategy to strengthen links with Israel. Now it appears that there is such a strategy. Netanyahu’s visit was followed by those of several Israeli cabinet ministers and, in April 2014, by a state visit of Israel’s President Shimon Peres, the first state visit by an Israeli president since 2003.

China’s stake in Israel’s economy is rapidly growing. Between 2011 and 2014, China acquired 7 billion dollars in Israeli assets. It expanded its strategic presence in Israel through investments in high-tech and other, more traditional industries. China also invested in Israeli infrastructure projects and increased its importation of Israeli water and other technologies. The number of joint high-tech projects between the two countries is second only to those between Israel and the United States. Among industrial investments, widely commented on and sometimes criticized, was China’s Bright Food’s plan to acquire 70 percent of Tnuva, which controls 70 percent of Israel’s dairy market. (However, early in 2015, Bright Food asked for a delay to sort out unexpected financial difficulties.)

Infrastructure investments have not lagged behind. Israel published tenders for the construction of two private ports to augment the existing ones in Haifa and Ashdod. Late in 2014, the China Harbor Engineering Company won both tenders. Due to Israel’s legal restrictions the Chinese had to choose between the two and opted for Ashdod. China Harbor is government-owned – hence its decision was largely political. Missiles from Gaza had, a few weeks earlier, partly paralyzed the Ashdod port. China’s reported interest in Israel’s Mediterranean

gas resources must be seen in the same context. Evidently, China trusts Israel's future staying power, defense capabilities, and continuing prosperity. Also, trade between the two countries reached almost 9 billion dollars in 2014, climbing faster than Israel's 43 billion dollar trade with the EU. Israel hopes to double its current trade with China in the next few years.³

Last but not least, at the 12th National People's Congress March 2015 session, Prime Minister Li Keqiang delivered his government's work plan for 2015. Israel is mentioned there for the first time. The Chinese government informed the Congress that it would begin negotiations toward free-trade agreements (FTAs) with, among others, the Gulf Cooperation Council (the Arab oil producers) and Israel. No other country in the wider Middle East, Africa, Europe or America is included.

China's decision to improve relations with Israel also extended into academic and public relations circles. Chinese foundations and universities have established agreements with Israeli universities (Technion in 2013, Tel Aviv University in 2014) involving Chinese donations of hundreds of millions of dollars. In 2014, two books of outspoken Zionist, pro-Israel advocacy appeared in Chinese translation for a large Chinese public: Ambassador Dore Gold's 2007 *The Fight for Jerusalem*,⁴ which justifies Israel's unification of Jerusalem, and JPPI's 2004 *China and the Jewish People – Old Civilizations in a New Era*,⁵ which argues for closer bonds between China, Israel, and the Jewish people. This is the first time since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 that the Chinese public is free to read such

openly "Zionist" books. In addition, the Israeli NGO *SIGNAL* (Sino-Israel Global Network and Academic Leadership) maintained an ongoing presence in Chinese universities, with the support of China's Ministry of Education (2013). By 2014, *SIGNAL* successfully advocated for the inclusion of Israel studies in ten Chinese universities.

No single reason can explain China's Middle East policies, particularly its Israel policies. There is a complex mix of interrelated economic, geopolitical, and military factors. Economics remains the primary driving force. In 2013, China became the world's largest trading power, thus returning to a position it had held for centuries until the 1880s. In October 2014, according to the International Monetary Fund, China's GDP based on purchasing power parity (PPP) overtook that of the United States.⁶ The Chinese are acutely aware of their success. As they reached their current position earlier than they had expected, they are not quite sure of the rights and responsibilities that come with it. In any event, there are few international issues in which China is not involved and influential. For such reasons alone, China will be increasingly drawn into Middle Eastern affairs. In addition, China seeks to revive the "Silk Roads" that since antiquity connected its mainland with markets in the West and the South, including maritime routes. China's Silk Road policy will cost

China's decision to improve relations with Israel has also extended into academic and public relations circles

40 billion dollars in the short term, and many billions more in the medium and long terms. China will build roads, bridges, railways, harbors and more on three continents. The aim is to boost China's international trade but also to ensure global stability. Israel, which sits on one of the crossroads leading from East Asia to the West, is in a choice position. Few Israelis have seemed to grasp the geopolitical and public image advantages the Silk Road development could confer on Israel.⁷

Worsening turmoil in the Middle East is another important factor shaping Chinese policies relevant

China wants to improve its credibility in Tehran and has decided to upgrade naval ties with Iran

to Israel because it could threaten the flow of China's indispensable oil imports. The Chinese watched the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, the collapse of Libya, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen, the appearance of ISIS and, as they see it, a concomitant decline of American

power – willpower more than real military power – in the Middle East and beyond. Until 2011 or 2012, China was confident that the United States would continue working to ensure stability in the Middle East, and at least guarantee, at no cost to China, the safety of the sea lanes from the oil-rich Persian Gulf to Asia. However, in 2013 it became clear to the Chinese that their “free ride” was over. Some Chinese experts cite American incompetence, but others are falling back on hackneyed conspiracy theories. Did America, which no longer requires Middle

Eastern oil, create all this turmoil just to wreck an oil-hungry China? Such suspicions come easily to a country already upset over America's “pivot to Asia” policy.

For the Chinese, this is bad news. They are still trying to find their way through the Middle Eastern morass, exploring how to protect the sea-lanes and coping with conflicting policy objectives. On one hand, the Chinese see a stable Israel in a troubled Middle East as a strategic plus. On the other, they want to improve their credibility in Tehran and have decided to upgrade their naval ties with Iran. In September 2014, the Chinese and Iranian navies conducted joint war games in the Strait of Hormuz, which controls the oil flow to Asia. And one month later, China's minister of defense was in Iran to discuss further naval cooperation. But China cannot ignore Saudi and Israeli concerns about Iran. China has sold Saudi Arabia up-to-date middle range missiles that could be used against Iran. And Israel got soothing words. During President Shimon Peres's visit to China in April 2014, China's President Xi Jinping publicly told him that China “fully understands” Israel's security concerns with regard to Iran and would continue to support international negotiations to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

Power vacuums never last long in the Middle East. The United States may again choose or be compelled to increase its military profile in the Middle East after the 2016 presidential elections. If not, a growing Chinese military presence in the region cannot be excluded. China lost 20 (other sources say 70) billion investment dollars in the 2011 collapse of Libya, and 7 billion in Syria so

far. After the emergency evacuation of tens of thousands of stranded Chinese workers from Libya in 2011, Chinese bloggers called for Chinese military bases in the Middle East. Ignored by the wider world, there are already more than 1,000 Chinese soldiers – 350 of them UN peacekeepers – in South Sudan protecting China’s oil investments. How such developments will affect China’s friendly attitude toward Israel, or Israel’s military options in the Middle East, is still unpredictable.

Muslim terrorism inside China is a third reason that helps to concentrate Chinese attention on the Middle East and affects policies toward Israel. It is growing and includes suicide attacks. This is particularly acute in the far-west Xinjiang province with its large Muslim population of Turkic-speaking Uyghurs. Uyghur nationalism and terrorism have not been created by external Muslim forces, but are greatly fuelled by them. In July 2014, ISIS named China the first of 20 battleground countries for the allegedly approaching global jihad. Approximately 100 Uyghur terrorists have joined ISIS in Syria. They are said to have travelled through Erdogan’s sympathetic and protective Turkey – a revelation that may puncture China’s earlier interest in better links with Ankara.

China fears the “Middle-Easternization” of its Muslims. This is why Chinese media reports on the 2014 Gaza hostilities were cautious and low-key. But it may be too late. Heated debates about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict frequently occupy the Chinese Internet. Chinese Muslims are hostile to Israel. Among the majority Han Chinese, many support Israel and equate Hamas with the Uyghur terrorists. Many others are neutral, more in line

with Chinese foreign policy. China does not like to see its people emotionally polarized over a remote foreign conflict, but terrorism has drawn it nearer to Israel. The Chinese leadership has high regard for Israel’s expertise in fighting terrorism and wants China to learn from it. At the same time, however, China cannot ignore the feelings of many Chinese Muslims, although they probably constitute no more than four percent of its total population. In any event, it is highly unlikely that China will change its automatic anti-Israel UN voting record anytime soon. This is less linked to Muslim feelings inside China than to China’s perceived need for the support of the 56 Muslim member states, including several of its neighbors. China is also reluctant to break its 60-year-old voting record because it might be perceived as standing with the United States, Israel’s main supporter.

Muslim terrorism inside China, which is growing and includes suicide attacks, affects policies toward Israel

Improvements in Sino-Israeli relations over the last few years are not solely the result of Chinese policy changes. A few Israeli leaders and diplomats have been assiduously working toward this goal for a decade or more.

The American Jewish community, since 2011, has played no visible, important political role in these improvements, in contrast to the period before 2000 when China was more interested in forging links with this community. Long-standing tensions between the United States and

China, and human rights issues, sometimes cause American Jews to feel uncomfortable in seeking links and friendly relations with China. However, this has not impeded growing commercial links between American Jews and China. American Jews, like other concerned Jews, should note that the international BDS movement, which threatens Israel in the West, has no place in China.

China strongly opposes boycotts against any country and would undoubtedly suppress any BDS initiative on its territory. Thus, China's rise and its growing relations with Israel limit the global reach of BDS.

China strongly opposes boycotts against any country; thus, China's rise and its growing relations with Israel limit the global reach of the BDS movement

Moreover, a growing number of Chinese are aware – for the first time in history – that Judaism is a long-living civilization which has contributed to the progress of the human race. All Chinese pupils learn that Karl Marx, who founded communism, was a German Jew, and many know that Einstein, arguably the most admired personality in

China, was a Jew as well. While the number of Jews outside Israel is at best stable if not shrinking, and Jews from 1939 to today have disappeared from one country after another, the intellectual “presence” of Judaism in China, a quarter of mankind, has kept growing. For the long-term global impact of the Jewish people, this cannot be irrelevant.

American and other Jewish philanthropy was and is indispensable for Israel and the Jewish people's cultural and academic outreach to China. This is the most lasting contribution that American and other Jews are making to the link between China, Israel, and the Jewish people. Yet a lot more has to be done. The current outreach to China is still too small, and for many Chinese, Judaism and Israel remain blank slates.

There are four problems that could delay or damage growing relations between China and Israel. All four could be addressed by appropriate policies:

- **China's possibly growing involvement in Middle East diplomacy, particularly if China follows up on its stated desire to join the “Quartet” (U.S., Russia, EU, UN).** It is true that China has little genuine interest in the Palestinian issue compared, for example, to Europe, but the international repercussions of Palestinian-Israeli violence could compel China to become more engaged. Not much good will come to Israel from China's joining the Quartet. There is no chance that China will follow the United States and sympathize with Israel's concerns more than the other three partners. It is, therefore, essential for Israel to discuss with China different, more innovative peace supporting and stabilizing roles in the Middle East. For example, a large Chinese investment program jointly for Israel and the Palestinian territories to build housing, roads and other infrastructure elements could have major effects, beyond economics.

- **United States opposition:** In 2004, Israel signed a protocol with the United States that prevents Israel from selling China dual-use technologies and technologies that share American and Israeli inputs. As the United States and Israel interpret this text differently, difficulties have arisen that risk exacerbating tensions between the two countries in regard to China. Israel's desire to strengthen links with China – a desire that dates back to the 1950s – cannot always be reconciled with the often adversarial relations between the United States and China.
- **Disappointment in business circles that could dampen the current optimistic business atmosphere:** Some of the recent cooperation agreements between Chinese and Israeli businessmen could end in failure and disillusionment. There are huge cultural differences between China and Israel, which should be better understood. Israel has no high-level, strategic approach to China that integrates politics, economics and culture. Such an approach might be valuable in increasing Israeli understanding of China's culture and its market.
- **Populist and environmentalist backlashes:** When China purchased a stake in Tnuva, as noted before, Israeli dairy farmers protested: "Israelis want Israeli milk." Environmentalist opposition has delayed the planning of the "Med-Red" high-speed railway link. It is hardly uncommon for countries to experience populist and environmentalist backlashes against foreign investments. However, major

Chinese investments in Israel make China a potential partner in Israel's long-term survival and prosperity. A public relations effort might help the Israeli people understand that Chinese investments, which some fear, could benefit Israel geopolitically.

INDIA

A main similarity between China and India in their relations to Israel and the Jewish people is that neither of these two old civilization has a tradition of anti-Semitism.

Public opinion there is not hostile to Israel as it is in Europe, except in Muslim and Indian left-wing circles. Otherwise, the two countries' recent relations with Israel have followed different trajectories. The recent improvement in Sino-Israeli relations has been

a gradual, ongoing process that began in 2011 during the "Arab Spring." It is driven by the complex, secretive policy-making machinery of the Chinese government and the Communist Party. In contrast, the recent improvement in Indo-Israeli relations, at least publically, began on May 16, 2014, when Narendra Modi, leader of the center-right Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was swept into power. It was a "landmark" victory. Modi, the first Indian prime minister born after India's independence (1947), is also the first in 30

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tradition of
anti-Semitism**

years to enjoy an absolute parliamentary majority that does not depend on smaller, Muslim or left-wing parties. In October 2014, Modi further tightened his grip on power when the BJP won elections in several Indian states. In addition, it was Modi's luck that his victory coincided with – or probably helped to generate – signs of an economic turnaround, with the OECD forecasting a growth rate of approximately 6.5 percent in the coming years.⁸ A major generational and social change explains Modi's victory. India's young, its professionals, and its lower middle classes voted for him. They ignored the warnings of the ruling

Unless Modi is forced to compromise his convictions in response to new political restraints, his tenure in office could amount to a paradigm shift in Indo-Israeli relations

Congress Party, the old elites, and left-leaning intellectuals that voting for Modi would be anti-Muslim. They were not all anti-Muslim, but they did not care about the Third World, the heritage of the anti-Zionists, Gandhi and Nehru, or about Palestine, which had for many decades played an enormous role in India's foreign and domestic policy.

Modi was known to be well disposed toward Israel. He had warm personal relations with the minuscule Jewish community of his home state Gujarat – 200 people among a total population of 63 million (2013). As chief minister of Gujarat he visited Israel in 2006, reviewed Israeli water and other technologies, and invited Israeli companies to do business in his

state. He visited Ben Gurion's small desert home in Sde Boker and was astounded to discover in the old man's bedroom a photo of Mahatma Gandhi. Some of India's approximately 180 million Muslims, 15 percent of its total population, continue to harbor bitterness about Modi's alleged role in the anti-Muslim violence that broke out in Ahmedabad in 2002. In spite of this, his Israel connection played no role in his election campaign. So far, Modi's victory has had the appearance of an historic watershed in Indo-Israeli relations. Unless Modi is forced to compromise his convictions in the future in response to new political constraints – in February 2015 the BJP suffered a major defeat in local Delhi elections – his tenure in office could amount to a paradigm shift in Indo-Israeli relations.

To understand the importance of this break in Indian politics, one must look more closely at India's public anti-Israeli stand during the last period of Congress Party rule, 2004-2014. That decade saw a steady increase of economic, technological, and particularly military links between the two countries, although India's leaders refused to meet with or even talk to Israel's leaders. India's representatives were instructed to unflinchingly side with the Arab countries against Israel in the United Nations. However, as Israeli diplomats and American Jewish leaders can testify, privately, India and the Congress Party's main leaders were not hostile to Israel even if some of their advisers were. They kept Israel at arm's length because they believed that a friend of Israel could not become India's leader. The true or alleged opposition of India's Muslims was said to make any visible rapprochement with Israel impossible.

It was assumed that all Indian parties had to preserve their Muslim voting blocs.

From the 1920s onward, the Congress Party's leaders Gandhi and Nehru regarded support for Palestinian Arabs as essential to appeasing Indian Muslim sensitivities and to preventing India's partition. Even after partition in 1947, the Congress Party maintained its unwavering support for Palestinian Arabs. Presenting itself as secular, it denied its worry over the Muslim vote. It justified its public hostility to Israel with claims of morality and justice, and, during India's leadership of the Non-Aligned Movement and its quasi-alliance with the Soviet Union, with the struggle against imperialism and colonialism.

Modi's sweeping victory has eroded the political deterrence power of India's Muslims in regard to India's foreign relations. However, Modi will not stay in power forever, and he seeks to gain the confidence of India's Muslims too. But the message that a friend of Israel could indeed become the leader of India will not be lost in Indian politics, and widely beyond Modi's own party. Modi's Israel policies partly rely on the precedent, the earlier 1998 victory of his own BJP's and its leader Atal Bijari Vajpayee in India's general elections. While he was in power (1998-2004) Vajpayee improved relations with Israel, boosted military links, and invited Prime Minister Ariel Sharon for a 2003 state visit, the first such visit by an Israeli prime minister.

Modi is said to be a man who knows his mind, acts quickly, and is adept at imposing his will. His Israel policies confirm this image, so far.

Hours after his election victory he had a warm, publicly announced telephone conversation with Prime Minister Netanyahu. As a foreign minister he appointed Ms. Suchma Swaraj, who was chairwoman of the Indo-Israeli Parliamentary Friendship Group from 2006 to 2009. A number of defense-related decisions, almost certainly made by Modi himself, followed in the next few months. India ended the boycott of IMI (Israel Military Industries Ltd.) that resulted from past bribery allegations, paving the way for joint development of a new battle tank and other projects. This was followed by the clearing of a long-delayed sale of Israeli navy missiles, the closing of a large sale of Israeli anti-tank missiles (in spite of strong American competition), and the successful testing of a jointly developed aerial defense system. Both countries agreed to greatly increase cooperation on cyber-security and the fight against terrorism. In February 2015, Israeli Defense Minister Ya'alon paid an official visit to India, the first such visit by an Israeli defense minister, and met with Modi. India is probably the largest single market (according to one estimate, a quarter of the total) for Israel's military exports. In parallel to the stepping up of defense links, scientific-technological and economic exchanges have also kept growing. In 2014, non-military bilateral trade

India is probably the largest single market (according to one estimate - 25 percent of the total) for Israel's military exports

amounted to 4.6 billion dollars.⁹ Trade experts predict at least a doubling of this figure if a long-delayed free trade agreement between the two countries is signed.

While the increase in military and civilian trade can be seen as an acceleration of existing trends, 2014 saw several landmark events that suggest a turning point in India's political attitude toward Israel. In the midst of the Gaza war in summer 2014, the Indian government refused – for the first time ever – to condemn Israel's military actions. On July 15, 2014, the Lokh Sabha, the

American-Jewish influence in the U.S. Congress has helped India overcome political hurdles on more than one occasion

lower house of India's parliament, was in an uproar as the opposition parties, demanding a condemnation of Israel, walked out in protest. "Domestic politics should not affect our foreign policy," admonished the government's parliamentary affairs minister.¹¹ In plain words:

Muslims and communists no longer dictate India's Israel policies. The reversal stunned many. Thus, it should not have come as a surprise that a few days later, on July 23, 2014, India voted with most other countries for a UN Human Rights Council resolution calling for an investigation of alleged Israeli war crimes. It was said that India had come under great pressure to vote with the majority. This diplomatic contradiction could be a sign of things to come. On November 29, Modi and Netanyahu had a cordial public meeting

at the UN in New York. It was the first meeting between the leaders of the two countries in eleven years. Apart from its widely noted symbolic significance, the meeting included an extensive discussion about future cooperation. Modi did not meet the Palestinian leader Abu Mazen who attended the UN at the same time. India's policy change seems profound, but it is still too early for long-term predictions. Will it last? Will Modi visit Israel?

American Jewish representatives and Jewish congressmen have argued with India, from the 1950s on, first to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, which happened in 1992, and since then to broaden those relations. American Jewish influence in the U.S. Congress has helped India overcome political hurdles on more than one occasion. Even under Modi, the involvement and support of American and other, e.g. Australian, Jews will remain important. Among other reasons, they can widen links with Indian constituencies that are more difficult for Israel to reach, such as the Muslims, and they could find the resources for a necessary Jewish cultural policy in India, which Israel currently lacks.

The international media has paid more attention to improving Indo-Israeli relations than to Sino-Israeli relations. India's soft power, the "Magic of India" as the British called it, is still alive and strong. Former U.S. Ambassador Dan Kurtzer spoke of Indo-Israeli links as a proof that Israel was not as isolated as many have believed.

A number of problems and issues require attention. If solved they would facilitate links

between the two countries, and if not, they could impede them.

- **The Arab world and Palestine will not disappear from India's diplomatic agenda,** even if they become less important than in the past. If Israel's Arab and Palestinian relations become more hostile, India will not be able to ignore local and international reactions. Nor can India ignore its enormous economic trade and investment interests in the Muslim Middle East, including its 4-5 million workers there. A renewal of the peace process would help ensure the continuation of the Indo-Israeli rapprochement.
- **India expects a great deal from Israel, which it** regards as a great power in science, technology, and innovation. If Israel does not respond sufficiently to Indian expectations, disappointment will set in and the current enthusiasm could dissipate. The Israeli bureaucracy has not yet given Israel's link with India all the required attention. Some well-informed Israelis believe the free trade agreement's long delay is as much Israel's fault as India's. Israel should regard India as a strategic priority and endeavor to overcome bureaucratic hurdles.
- **India is a very diverse country – politically, ethnically, and religiously.** Modi's absolute majority could be a temporary exception in Indian politics rather than the rule. It is essential that Israel reach out to the Congress Party, currently India's opposition party, and individual state governments. Jewish

people organizations should pursue relations with India's moderate Muslims. These constituencies lost political power in 2014 but could very well gain it back.

- **A majority of Indians know little about Jews, Judaism, Israel, or the Holocaust.** No more than two or three university lecturers in all of India's universities teach about Israel or Judaism. It is urgent for Israel and the Jewish people to increase their cultural and intellectual presence in India by creating Israel and Judaism study centers in universities and establishing a Jewish culture and history center in Delhi or Mumbai.

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Jewish People Demography, 2015

Introduction

2015 marks seven decades since the end of World War II. The destruction of European Jewry and the extermination of six million Jews at once diminished the size of the Jewish population, its demographic composition, and the spatial map of Jewish life. Only three years later the State of Israel was founded and a Jewish sovereignty created, which became a major alternative for settlement and a nexus for the many heterogeneous parts of world Jewry. Since then, other demographic changes have shaped the profile of the world's Jews. Any assessment of recent demographic patterns ought to stand against the backdrop of historical perspective – continuity or change of long-term processes as well as those of short-effect that operate among the Jewish people.

Jewish demographic patterns are sensitive to different factors on three complementary levels. The 'macro' level comprises the general society – especially the nature of local political regimes in which Jews operate, economic development, and the role of group identity. The second, 'meso'

level, is that of religious-ethnic community of belonging, which, among other things, includes the population density of community members, institutional infrastructure, and economic resources. Third, the "micro" level is that of the Jewish individual and includes personal background, socio-economic status, and his/her stage in the life cycle. These broad factors, "the three Ms," are dynamic and may change over time. Hence, one cannot assume a determinism of the demographic patterns; rather, the patterns should be traced, routinely assessed, and be clarified as to their influence on the size and characteristics of the Jewish population.

Obviously, the changes will be greater the longer the time interval under examination. Nevertheless, there may be meaningful trends discernable in short spans of time, whether the result of big events or the consequence of policy. Likewise, a given point of time may provide a new source of empirical information that will reveal significant changes that took place since data were culled in a given time in the past.

A Grand Look

At the end of World War II, the global Jewish population was estimated at 11 million.¹ Since then and through the beginning of 2015, the Jewish people has grown gradually to 14.3 million,² an addition of approximately one-third. Hence, the overall trend of world Jewish demography is clearly in a direction of growth.

In each of the last seven decades, there has been an increase in the total number of Jews in the world.³ This was especially salient in the first two decades following WWII; thereafter, it has somewhat moderated. Nevertheless,

Since the end of WWII World Jewish Population increased from 11 M to 14.3 M

in the decade between 2005 and 2015, world Jewry increased by more than 8 percent – the largest relative growth in any decade since the end of WWII. Last year, 2014, saw an increase of some 100,000 Jews (or 0.6 percent).⁴

These Jewish population estimates combine objective and subjective definitions of group belonging. They are based on halachic criteria for those residing in Israel, and self-definition for those living elsewhere, whether they view Judaism as a religion or in terms of ethnicity, culture, nationality, or something else. This approach is consistently adopted in the study of Jewish demography allowing assessment of trends in the number of Jews over time.

Notably, there are two additional sub-groups with current orientation to the Jewish people. One

is immigrants to Israel, and their offspring, who meet the criteria of the Law of Return but do not define themselves according to any religion. Not halachic Jews, they are designated people of "no religion" in the official statistics of the State of Israel. However, they are deeply integrated into the Israeli society, where public affairs follow the Jewish calendar year, and have been exposed to the Jewish educational system. They operate smoothly within Jewish geographic and social environments, and they speak Hebrew. They have, hence, undergone a "sociological conversion."⁵ It stands to reason that they feel strongly attached to Israeli nationality. This group comprises some 350,000 people.⁶

Another group in the United States includes approximately one million people who regard themselves as "partially Jewish."⁷ The overwhelming majority of them are the offspring of mixed parentage. Many have a Jewish mother (i.e., they are halachic Jews) and express pride in their Jewishness; some also exhibit forms of Jewish practice. Some researchers view them as a separate group with "Jewish background";⁸ while others include them in the total American Jewish population.⁹ Although yet unexamined, it is likely that the "partially Jewish" can also be found elsewhere in the Diaspora. Whether to apply a distinct definition of these sub-groups, or alternatively, merging them with the Jewish population, is an entirely subjective decision. Nevertheless, there are two major implications: one is associated with the ratio between the number of Jews in Israel and the number of U.S. Jews, i.e., a larger number in Israel is claimed by those who do not include them in the Jewish

population, and a higher number in the United States is asserted by those who do incorporate them; the second implication regards the total number of Jews in the world, i.e., including these sub-groups increases the size of world Jewry so that it is very close (15.5-16 million) to the global Jewish population on the eve of WWII (16.5).

In the midst of this population growth, Jewish geographic dispersion has also changed dramatically. While in 1945 only 5 percent of world Jewry resided in Palestine/Israel, today it is a home to 43 percent of the Jewish population (of 14.2 million).¹⁰ This change in population equilibrium in favor of Israel is consistent, and despite some fluctuations in the rate of growth, has been uninterrupted over the years. At the same time, Jewish communities in countries in the early stages of modernization – in Asia and North Africa – have been almost emptied.¹¹ With the more recent influxes from the FSU, Jews have converged in a small number of democratic, economically advanced, and culturally pluralistic countries. This geographic dispersion attests to a salient Jewish presence in strong and influential countries such as the United States, Canada, France, United Kingdom, Germany, and Russia.¹² In some of these communities, the number of Jews has recently been on the rise; in others, like Russia, despite the large out-migration, those who stayed have institutionalized themselves in various parochial organizations and activities, they maintain contacts with the general political regime, and lobby for Jewish and Israeli interests in a much more efficient way than what was allowed before perestroika. The presence of Jews in Diaspora

countries is characterized by concentration in a few major cities and metropolitan areas.¹³

Between 2010 and 2014, among the five largest Jewish communities in the world, which jointly constitute 90 percent of world Jewry, three have experienced demographic growth: Israel, the United States, and Canada. Another major Jewish community with a slight increase in numbers is Australia. In contrast, there has been a decline of several thousands of Jews in the large communities of Russia, France, and the United Kingdom. In the remaining of countries, changes in the number of Jews were negligible.¹⁴

Jews have achieved extraordinary social and economic attainment in their countries of residence. The developed environment in which they operate encourages them to acquire higher education and to work in professional jobs. They are, hence, concentrated in the upper-most stratum of earnings. Jews hold high positions in politics, media, business and finance, and culture in their countries of residence. More than ever before, they do not hide their Jewishness. These processes have not skipped Israel where groups once on the fringes of society, especially those of Asian-African extraction, the ultra-Orthodox sector, and women, penetrate and integrate into various areas of activity and influence.¹⁵

Between 2010 and 2014 there has been an increase in the number of Jews in Israel, U.S., and Canada, and a slight decline in the number of Jews in Russia, France and the UK

Thus, a grand view of the last seventy years of Jewish demography postulates a steady increase in the number of Jews in the world, their concentration in several major developed countries, Israel included, and a high socio-economic stratification. This background allows us to analyze specific aspects associated with a given place or demographic component. Each such aspect is situated in an appropriate historical context, because only the linkage between past and present can provide useful guidance for policy.

Jewish Migration

More than a third (36%) of children of mixed parentage in the U.S. are being raised Jewish, compared to a quarter two years ago

From the end of WWII to the present, some five million Jews moved from one continent to another. For a total Jewish population that has ranged between 11 million and 14.3 million, this is by no means an extraordinary rate. Jewish migration has not spread evenly along the years: it was intensive in the late

1940s and the 1950s, low in the next three decades (amid some fluctuations), and once again picked up at the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century. International migration was pivotal for the gathering of Jews in a limited number of developed countries.

Especially salient was their preference to settle in Israel: approximately two-thirds of Jewish international migrants came to Israel and the remaining one-third to other countries of the Western world.¹⁶

The ramifications of the majority of Jewish migrants settling in Israel stretch beyond a mere addition to Israel's Jewish population; their being in a Jewish majority environment diminishes the possibility of intermarriage and assimilation. Furthermore, for those who arrived with low fertility and life expectancy levels, such as those from the FSU, it seems they increase these demographic components to levels that resemble more closely those of the host society, and hence increase the natural balance.¹⁷

The Jewish international migration system also includes those who emigrated from Israel. Although their precise number is unknown (due to the way they are documented by Israeli border control, their registration in destination countries, and a lack of clarity among Israeli émigrés regarding the permanency vs. temporality of their migration), we roughly estimate the size of this group at half a million.¹⁸ The number of emigrants is low compared to other Western countries and especially when taking into account that some immigrants typically leave after a while – whether back to their origin countries or to a third country. Overall, the rate of emigration, namely the number of out-migrants relative to the size of the Israeli Jewish population, has declined somewhat over the last several years.¹⁹

Last year, 2014, was characterized by an increase in the number of new immigrants. While in each of the years between 2010 and 2013 some 16.5 thousand new immigrants arrived in Israel, in 2014 the number rose to 24 thousand (or an increase of 43 percent relative to the previous year). The growth is mainly attributed to a strengthening tendency of Jews and their non-Jewish kin in the European republics of the FSU (mainly Ukraine) as well as France to immigrate to Israel. At the same time, immigration from Ethiopia diminished substantially (from 1,355 immigrants in 2013, to only 211 in 2014).²⁰

American Jewry

Since the end of WWI, the largest Jewish concentration in the Diaspora has been found in the United States.²¹ Over the last several decades, the number of Jews there has been stable and has presumably increased somewhat. While in 1957 some 5 million Jews resided in the United States, by 1990 their number had increased to 5.5 million, and further to 5.7 million in 2014.²² That American Jewry has managed to sustain its numbers and even grow slightly should be attributed to the calculus of different contradictory processes: low fertility, on the one hand, and positive international migration balance on the other. Likewise, actual Jewish fertility, namely the average number of children born to a Jewish women who are also raised Jewish, increased according to new data from the 2013 Pew survey, which found that more than one-third (36%) of the children of mixed

couples are being raised Jewish (compared to only a quarter two decades earlier). This rate, however, is still somewhat lower than the 50% threshold required that intermarriage does not cause a demographic loss to the Jewish side. Moreover, we now know that among the adult offspring of mixed parentage there is an increase in the share of those who identify as Jews among younger age cohorts: while only one-quarter of those aged 65 and over with one Jewish parent define themselves as Jewish, this is true for 39 percent of their counterparts aged 30 to 49, and further rises to 59 percent among adult offspring below age 30.²³ If so, mixed marriages are transmitting Jewish identity to a growing number of Americans. This increased tendency of adult offspring of mixed parentage to identify as Jewish moderates the aging of the American Jewish population.

The size of the American Jewish population, as mentioned above, includes all those who define themselves as "Jews by religion" as well as "Jews of no religion" but who consider themselves Jewish. In addition, there is another million people who define themselves as "partially Jewish" (600,000 adults and 400,000 children).²⁴ This group could not have been identified in previous studies because interviewees were not offered the option of designating themselves as "partially Jewish." Less clear are the other components of their identity, although it can certainly be said that they do not identify with any other religious faith.

The "partially Jewish" are of Jewish background as they have at least one Jewish parent. The

majority of the adult "partially Jewish" (60%) group have a Jewish mother. Four out of every ten were raised as "Jews by religion" and another two out of ten grew up as "partially Jewish." Often, the "partially Jewish" view their Judaism in terms of Jewish ancestry or in terms of belonging to a cultural group, but with no religious meaning. Although some 80 percent of them are proud to be Jewish, only one-third feel a strong attachment to Judaism, and a similar proportion reported that it is very or somewhat important for them to be Jewish (as compared to twice

The "Partially Jewish" view their Judaism in terms of ancestry or belonging to a culture group but with no religious meaning

this rate among "Jews of no religion" and three times higher among "Jews by religion"). The "partially Jewish" exhibit lower rates than "Jews of no religion" and certainly lower rates than "Jews by religion" in various indicators of Jewish behavior, such as membership in Jewish institutions, fasting on Yom Kippur,

attending a Passover Seder, or belonging to informal Jewish networks. Notably, the "partially Jewish" resemble "Jews by religion" and "Jews of no religion" in key demographic and socio-economic characteristics such as age, gender, and education.

Thus, self-identification as "partially Jewish" is also reflected in the rhythm of Jewish attitudes and practices. These people are partially Jewish

whereas the other part of their identity, as mentioned earlier, is not associated whatsoever with another religion. Their Jewish identity is presumably coincident with one or a few of such components as American identity, racial identity as non-Hispanic whites, social status, cultural preferences, or political orientation. In the past, in an American society that emphasized the idea of the melting pot and where Jews were a minority uncertain about their acceptance by the majority culture, many among them with a mixed background or who were raised at a distance from Judaism, when faced with the dichotomy option of Jewish identity or another religious identity chose the latter. Today, in contrast, America emphasizes principles of pluralism, multiculturalism, and the freedom of choice, and, together with the social benefit of identifying as Jewish, people are open to and feel secure in indicating Judaism as one component of their self-identity. Social and cultural developments in the general American scene have opened a plurality of options to define group belonging, be it an exclusive identity or one component in a dual or multiple self-identity.

A complementary dimension to the number of Jews is their share within the total American population. In 1957, Jews represented 2.8 percent of all Americans, however, by 1990 their proportion declined to 2.2 percent, and further to only 1.8 percent in 2013.

Israel²⁵

Shortly after the establishment of the State of Israel, at the time of the first census in 1948, the Israeli population was estimated at 873,000 people. Largely due to the large influx of immigrants in the years shortly thereafter, by the end of the first decade of statehood the population had increased to slightly more than 2 million. The pace of growth, though somewhat moderated, remained high in the next decades: the number of inhabitants increased to 2.8 million at the end of the second decade, to 3.7 million at the end of the third decade, and to 4.5 million at the end of the fourth decade in 1988. The large wave of Soviet immigrants contributed to the fast increase in the next decade, and by 1998 there were some six million people living in Israel. This number rose to 7.4 million in 2008 and to 8.3 million at the beginning of 2015.

Upon statehood (1948) Jews constituted 82 percent of the total Israeli population, but their share increased to 89 percent in 1958. Since then, there has been a gradual decline in the proportion of Jews in varying rates from one decade to another: from 86 percent in 1968 to 82 percent in 1988, and down to 75 percent at the beginning of 2015. Notably, the Israeli population includes people with "no religion." Often, they are the kin of Jewish immigrants or other people, mainly from the FSU, who immigrated under the Law of Return. This group is comprised of some 350,000 people, or about 4 percent of Israel's total population. As suggested earlier (section 2), these people experienced a "sociological conversion" and it is

likely that they identify with the majority Jewish population. Hence, Jews together with people who lack a religion but are of some Jewish affinity, today constitutes 80 percent of the total Israeli population. In other words, in the seven decades since the establishment of Israel, and despite some fluctuations, the proportion of "Jews" in their widest definition, has remained fairly stable.

The increase in the number of Jews is attributable to two main factors: positive natural increase and migration balance. The former factor drove some 60 percent of the total growth, and the second factor the remaining 40 percent. The equilibrium between these two components has changed over time: migration balance was the major contributor to Jewish population growth especially since the foundation of the state through the early 1960s, and once again during the first half of the 1990s; in other periods it was natural increase that played a pivotal role in the growth of the Israeli Jewish population. Changes in the number of non-Jews are solely the result of natural increase.

Indeed, the rhythm of growth of the Jewish population is slower than that of the non-Jewish population. Between 2010 and 2015, the Jewish population increased by seven percent while the non-Jewish population increased by nine percent.

Approximately 350,000 people – 4% of the total Israeli population – are regarded as having "no religion" but the majority identifies with the majority Jewish Society

Accordingly, the proportion of Jews among the total Israeli population diminished somewhat. However, this is a very small change (of half a percent over the five-year 2010-2015 quantile). A major factor that explains the small difference between the population growth of Jews and non-Jews is the recent convergence of fertility levels at around three children. This similarity is the result of different processes among the two populations: increase in the average number of children per Jewish women from 2.8 in 2007 to as high as 3.05 in 2013 (largely due to the increase in the share of ultra-Orthodox women in the Jewish

Escalation of anti-Semitism in Western Europe and political instability in Ukraine ripen conditions favorable to immigration to Israel

population), and a decline in the average number of children of non-Jewish women including among Muslim women (from 3.9 to 3.35) or among Druze (from 2.5 to 2.2). Because the non-Jewish population is young, even with low levels of fertility it will increase more rapidly than their Jewish counterparts.

Overall, 2014 was characterized by a fertility increase among Jewish women; and, as mentioned earlier, by the increase of new immigrants.

Significance and Implications for Policy

In the publication "2030: Alternative Futures for the Jewish People," JPPI proposed a population projection for 2020. This projection, based on the work of DellaPergola, Rebhun, and Tolts,²⁶ postulated that if recently observed patterns of fertility continue, world Jewry should have increased from 13.3 million in 2009 to 13.8 million in 2020. In practice, already in 2015, before the end of the projection period, the world Jewish population has surpassed this number by approximately half a million people (14.3 million). Thus, it achieved the number of Jews in the world that was expected only in the year 2030 (or what was expected in 2015 under assumptions of fertility increase). This is especially due to the increase in the number of Jews in the United States and Israel. Notably, the number exceeds those projected in Canada too; and in Australia, there has been a recent increase despite a projected decline in the number of Jews.

The increase of the world's Jewish population, along with the tendency to concentrate in a limited number of developed countries, should be seen as an enhancement of Jewish demography and spatial density with important and positive implications for Jewish identification. Along with the population affiliated unequivocally and clearly as Jewish, a growing number of people conceptualize their Jewish identity as one part in a multi-dimensional, complex and fluid identity. Although Jewishness is not the only component of their identity, it does not compete with

another faith and apparently complements social, cultural, or political components of self-identity, and/or is indicative of the weak role religion plays in the individual's identity. Still, the fact that these people, about a million in the U.S. alone, are of Jewish background with most claiming that they are proud to be Jewish, puts this group as a foremost policy target. Since this is a newly identified group, unknown until recently, it is necessary to go beyond the Pew statistics and conduct an in-depth study of face-to-face qualitative interviews in order to better understand the meaning of their Judaism, and whether and what are the trajectories along which they may wish to strengthen their Jewish identification.

It seems, at least in the American case, that the drift toward intermarriage continues. However, the demographic implications of this phenomenon have changed somewhat. In particular, there has been an increase in the number of children of mixed couples that are raised, or if already grown, identify as Jewish. It is imperative to understand the causes of this change in order to ensure its continuation.

Finally, there was an increase in the number of immigrants to Israel. Although in relative terms (percentage of growth relative to previous years) this is a significant change, the absolute numbers are not dramatic. Nevertheless, to the extent that the condition of Jews in Europe in general, and particularly in France, may deteriorate, appropriate infrastructure and resources to attract Jews from these places to Israel should be in place. The number of FSU immigrants, many from

Ukraine, has also increased slightly over the past year. Although they are of limited financial means, their numbers need not shock or significantly alter existing absorption infrastructure. Still, the escalation of anti-Semitism in Western Europe and the unstable political situation in Ukraine ripen conditions favorable to immigration to Israel.

We should add that in another context of Jewish migration, that of Israelis abroad, there have been recent attempts to create organizations, especially in the U.S., to specifically serve this population. These autonomous frameworks are separated from local or national Jewish institutions. Such frameworks can be utilized to facilitate communal activities for Israelis abroad, and to strengthen their social and cultural cohesion. They may eventually contribute to reinforcing ties between Israel expats and Israel. Yet, from a demographic point of view, these processes may anchor their settlement abroad thus diminishing the likelihood of returning to Israel.

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Israel-Diaspora Dialogue 2015*

In the last year, relations between Jewish communities around the world, and especially between the two largest, in Israel and North America, have stood in the shadows cast by political and geopolitical developments. The relationship between non-Israeli Jews and Israel has become more complicated. Israel's status in the world, and Israel's responses to various political circumstances, have caused many Diaspora Jews to evaluate how their connection with Israel affects them, more than in the past. This evaluation, or reevaluation, has brought into focus the difficulties many have in shaping their relationship with the Jewish state. For the younger generation, these difficulties hit especially hard; their social frameworks and the ways their political views are formed differ markedly from those of their parents' generation.

In the summer of 2014, Israel launched Operation Protective Edge in Gaza. Along with the support shown by many Jews and Jewish organizations, considerable criticism of Israel was expressed by influential Jews. Further on in the year, there were harsh confrontations between the Israeli and the American

governments, over both the failure of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and, perhaps even more so, the nuclear deal with Iran. These confrontations have caused some American Jews embarrassment and confusion. Worldwide anti-Semitism, most notably in France, and the questions raised by Israel's urging Jews to flee to Israel in response marked yet another stress point in Israel-Diaspora relations.

Internal Israeli developments also influenced Israel-Diaspora relations. The new government, formed in the wake of Israel's spring 2015 elections, is moving in a direction that many of the world's Jews (especially in the U.S.) do not endorse. This dissent applies to Israeli policy vis-à-vis the geopolitical arena and domestically, especially in regard to religion and state matters.¹ The critical views of many Diaspora Jews were evident in JPPI's 2015 Israel-Diaspora Dialogue. Around half of the respondents to the written survey participants completed said that they do not believe the Israeli government is making a sincere effort to reach a peace settlement with the Palestinians.²

* For the full report on the 2015 Israel-Diaspora Dialogue see: Shmuel Rosner, "Jewish Values and Israel's Use of Force in Armed Conflict: Perspectives from World Jewry," *JPPI*, July 2015. The report can be found on our website: www.jppei.org.il.

Interim findings and conclusions drawn from the 2015 Dialogue were discussed with Jewish leaders at a JPPI brainstorming conference in Glen Cove in May.³ Chief among them was that although many non-Israeli Jews feel "proud" of the way Israel conducts itself in war, around a third are "worried" about Israel, and many pointed out that there are members of their communities who feel "detached" from Israel, and some who are even "embarrassed" by Israel (both categories together include around a fifth of the survey respondents).⁴

The debate about personal attachment to Israel is more pronounced among younger Jews, and the gaps between their opinions and those of the older generation are apparent in this and many other studies.

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Within the Dialogue groups, few denied Israel's right to defend itself, and few expressed strong criticism of the way Israel fights its wars. However, many participants described how Israel's battles directly affect their lives, especially their relationship and interactions with the non-Jewish world in which they live. In many instances, this results in Israel supporters "lowering their profile" in order to avoid confrontations when Israel acts in controversial ways.

Israel, a Divisive Subject

Recent decades have witnessed a growing polarization in Diaspora Jewish communities, especially in the U.S., into different camps, and a shrinking of the "middle".⁵ Visible in several spheres, this trend also applies to the relationship with, and attitudes toward, Israel. These trends are more conspicuous when international political attention is focused on Israel, and even more so when Israel is involved in active armed conflict. "Israel's security policy is making it increasingly harder for Diaspora Jewry to present a unified voice vis-à-vis the Jewish state," claimed the author of a comprehensive study of Diaspora Jewry and Israel.⁶

Last summer, while Operation Protective Edge was being waged in Gaza, the divergence in attitudes toward Israel was all the more pronounced. Clear support for Israel was expressed in Jewish Diaspora communities; yet quite a few critical, sometimes harshly so, voices were raised. "Privately, people admit to growing tired of defending Israeli military action when it comes at such a heavy cost in civilian life, its futility confirmed by the frequency with which it has to be repeated."⁷

These circumstances lead JPPI to focus the 2015 Israel-Diaspora Dialogue on questions of morality and Jewish values in the use of force, as we sought to understand World Jewry's perspectives regarding the way Israel has conducted its recent wars. Dialogue seminars were held in over 20 Jewish communities worldwide.⁸ Hundreds of participants discussed questions in three major spheres: What they know about Israel's actions, and their insights about its methods of operation; How Israel's actions

correspond with Jewish values, and their moral expectations of Israel; and How Israel's actions affect their lives and their connection to the Jewish state.

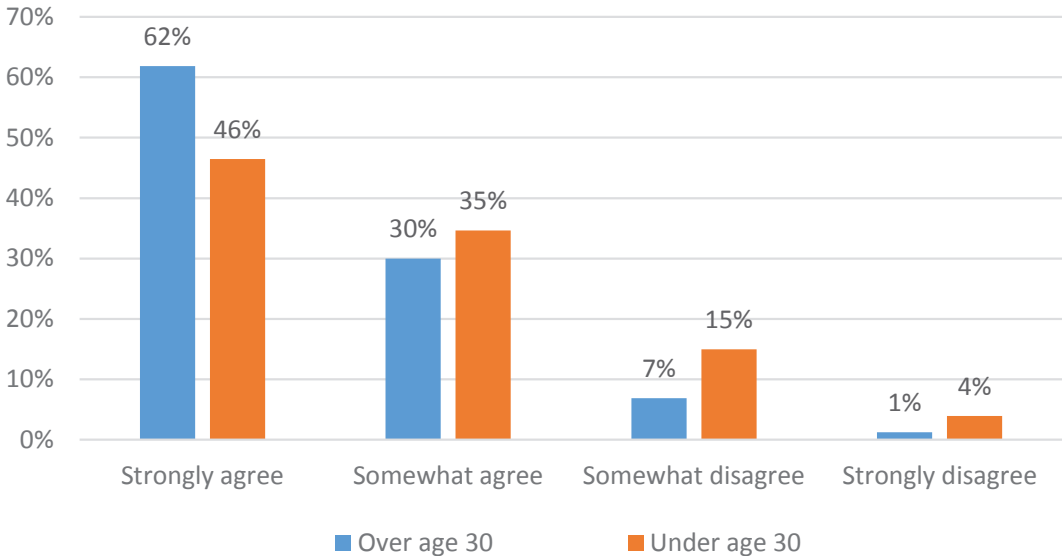
IDF as a Moral Army

Contrary to much of what was written about Israel during Operation Protective Edge, it seems that within the Jewish communities there is a widespread understanding of Israel's effort to avoid harming innocent civilians during wartime. It is important to understand that the Dialogue participants do not necessarily fully represent the entire spectrum of views within the Jewish

community. Participants generally share an avid interest in Israel and feel committed to their connection with Israel. Still, the discussion seminars had a significant representation of those expressing criticism, often-harsh criticism, of Israeli policy across many fields.

This criticism, usually, did not cast doubt on Israel's attempt to avoid civilian casualties, nor on its attempt to uphold moral values during battle. Most participants agreed that Israel follows ethical combat policies.⁹ Many asserted that the IDF is "more moral than other armies in the world,"¹⁰ and agreed with the statement, "Israel made every effort to avoid civilian casualties in the last summer's armed conflict in Gaza."¹¹

Israel's military did as much as possible to avoid civilian casualties in last summer's armed conflict in Gaza.

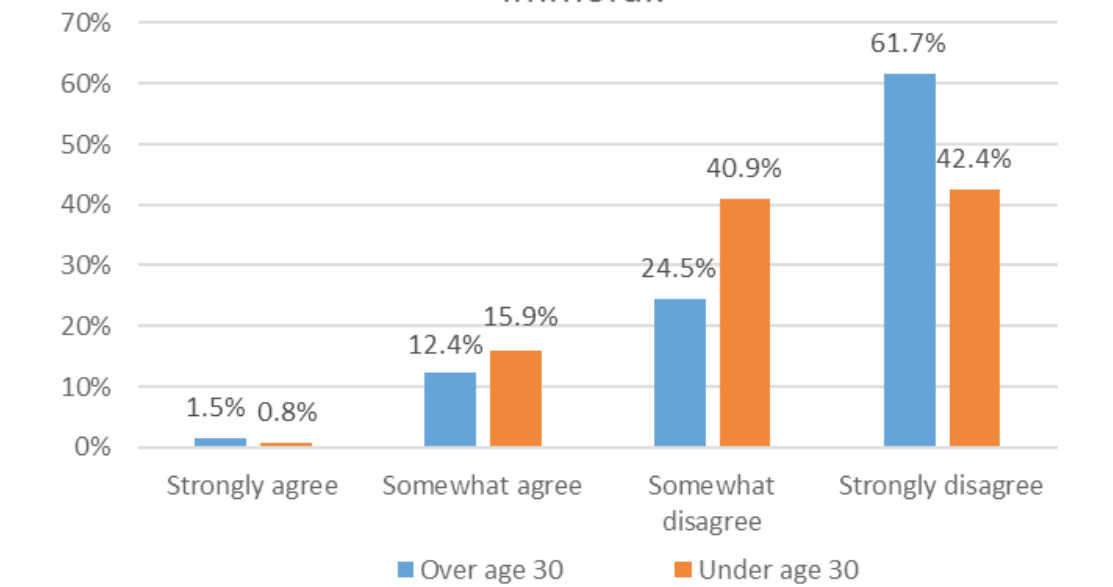


Nonetheless, there was an apparent gap between seminar participants over age 30, and younger participants on this issue. When survey results were sorted by age cohort, it turned out that younger Jewish respondents tended to think the IDF "made every effort to avoid civilian casualties in last summer's war in Gaza," to a much lesser extent than their older counterparts. Almost one-fifth of younger survey respondents did not agree with the statement, while only a tiny percentage of older respondents felt similarly.

Even among those who agreed that Israel upholds a high moral standard during war, significant gaps were apparent in the discussion groups about whether Israel's policy leading to the war was worthy of similar support.

The survey found that many Jews do not accept the assertion that "The current Israeli government is making a sincere effort to bring about a peace settlement with the Palestinians." Similarly, many participants believed that "the question of whether Israel is moral is dependent on the process with the Palestinians," and this holds a sign of warning that some of them will not accept Israel's actions during war as legitimate if they continue to suspect that Israel is not making a sincere effort to bring about a peace settlement.¹² For this question there was, once again, a significant division between younger and older participants. An example of this was apparent in the difficulty younger participants had in firmly disagreeing with the statement, "Israel's occupation of the West Bank makes all of its armed conflicts against Palestinian groups immoral."

Israel's occupation of the West Bank makes all its armed conflicts against Palestinian groups immoral.



The Effect of Israel's Wars on Diaspora Jewry

In the community bonds chapter of last year's Annual Assessment we reported that, at least according to the 2014 Dialogue process, "Jews throughout the world... see the connection with [Israel] as an important matter that should be maintained."¹³ Some Diaspora Jews ask only that Israel "hear" them, however others believe that on some issues, Diaspora Jewry has a right to actively try to influence Israeli policy. Nevertheless, not all agree that this right includes Israeli security policies. In JPPI's report on the 2014 Dialogue, which considered Israel as a Jewish and Democratic state, we mentioned that Diaspora Jewry's desire to be involved in Israeli security and foreign policy decisions is "more complex" than their desire to be involved in decisions about identity, culture, or religion.

Nonetheless, in this year's Dialogue, which clearly focused on a topic dealing with security questions, many participants said that their opinions should be taken into account. A large group of survey respondents agreed "Israel should conduct its armed conflicts without regard to the views of Jews living outside of Israel."¹⁴ However in the discussions themselves, a more complex view emerged, one that posited different reasons for Israel's need to take Diaspora opinions into consideration. The effect Israeli actions have on world Jewry was chief among them and more pronounced this year than in the past. This was likely due to the rise in anti-Semitic acts in Europe, and the harsh anti-Israel atmosphere on some American college campuses.

During the discussions the effect was divided into two main fields:

1. The manner in which Israel's actions influence the attachment of Diaspora Jews to Israel.
2. The manner in which Israel's actions impact Diaspora Jews within their surroundings.

The Effect of Israel's Wars on Non-Israeli Jews, and their Connections with Israel

The effect of Israeli policies on the propensity of non-Israeli Jews to feel a close connection with Israel, and to view it as a vital component of their Jewish identity, is not entirely clear. Other considerations seem to have a greater effect on Israel attachment than political opinions: it is clear that Jews with a greater commitment to their Jewish identity tend to feel a stronger connection to Israel than their less committed counterparts.

There is also a clear correspondence between growing intermarriage rates and weaker connections to Israel (among the intermarried and their children).

On the other hand, there are studies that show a correlation between Jews' political opinions and their level of connection to Israel. Among

There is a clear correspondence between growing intermarriage rates and weaker connections to Israel (among the intermarried and their children)

others, the 2013 Pew study of the Jewish American community showed that more liberal Jews were less connected to Israel than Jews with more conservative opinions. Data collected also show that Jews (mainly young and non-Orthodox) are more critical of Israeli security measures,¹⁵ and Jews, mainly in North America but not exclusively, are dissatisfied with the relationship between religion and state in Israel.¹⁶

Questions dealing directly with Israel's actions in

There is clear evidence that periods of tension between Israel and its neighbors increase the frequency and intensity of harassment/attacks against Jews in various places around the world

the security arena during war, received relatively positive opinions. Most Jews said that Israel's actions during war made them feel "more proud" of Israel. However, when asked the same question about "other Jews in the community" the percentage of those who felt "detached" or even "embarrassed" was higher. This effect was also apparent in seminar discussions.

How Israel's Wars Impact Relations between Jews and non-Jews

When Israel is at war there is a "domino effect," said one seminar participant in Cleveland. Many of the discussions stressed the way Israel's wars – the manner in which they are presented in the media, the attention they draw, and the seemingly

automatic tendency of non-Jews to assume that all Jews take a pro-Israel stance – directly affect the relationships Jews have in their surroundings.

As also highlighted in last year's Dialogue report, "There is clear evidence that periods of tension between Israel and its neighbors increase the frequency and intensity of harassment/attacks against Jews in various places around the world. This is true for places where there are only a few Jews as well as places where the Jewish communities are larger and stronger." This year, in light of the bloody incidents against France's Jewish community, such insights were particularly emphatic. One discussion participant noted, "Any time [Israel uses force] synagogues are burned."¹⁷ Accordingly, it is only natural that Jews worldwide would be worried about Israel's policies toward its neighbors, and its image overseas. Whether they want a connection with Israel or not, Jews around the world are forced to bear some of the cost for the way Israel is perceived by the world.

This conclusion applies not only to Jews residing in communities under direct and outright threat of violence, but also to relatively safe communities, such as in the United States. Dialogue participants shared many stories that shed light on how IDF actions impact their lives. A St. Louis participant said, "Whether I want it or not I am forced into acting as an ambassador for Israel." In many discussions, participants described incidents when they chose to remain silent, and sometimes did not identify themselves as Jews, so as not to be dragged into conflict and debate with adamant Israel detractors.

Here too, the difficulty perceived by younger Jews is greater than that of their older counterparts,

among other reasons, because the way they understand Israel and its responsibility for the continuous wars differs from that of the older generation. For example, the percentage of young Dialogue participants who believed that Israel's enemies pose an "existential threat" was much lower than that of older participants.

In conclusion: Recommendations Regarding the Dialogue

Diaspora Jews understand that Israel sits in a dangerous and hostile environment, and that at times, this makes the use of military force necessary. However, they are not convinced that Israel is doing everything in its power to avoid future conflicts. Still, with respect to wartime conduct, it seems that most Jews accept Israel's claim that it makes a significant and sincere effort to uphold moral values and avoid civilian casualties. (Seminar participants complained bitterly that Israel does not manage to get this message out to the world, and attacked Israeli *hasbara* as unprofessional and insufficient.)

Israel's wars in the past few decades, conducted under asymmetrical circumstances, against armed groups and organizations, as opposed to armies and states, raise fundamental questions for Jews and make it harder to identify with Israel, especially for young liberals.

This causes a growing difficulty within the Jewish world to explain Israel's actions (due to the complexity of factors leading to war). It also diminishes the tendency to identify themselves as pro-Israel in their own environment (due

to the way Israel is perceived, and the vitriolic criticism leveled at Israel). This situation requires a concerted, ongoing effort to explain Israel's positions, its goals during conflicts, and the reasons for its wars. Most Jews neither expect nor want Israel to involve them in the detailed decisions integral to security policy. However, they have high expectations that Israel continue to uphold a high moral standard at war.

In last year's Annual Assessment, we emphasized the importance of an Israel-Diaspora dialogue mechanism. This year's Dialogue process, focusing on a specific and urgent question, reaffirmed its importance. The continuation of in-depth dialogue, focusing specifically on issues likely to pose difficulties in relations between the communities, is a main recommendation that derives from this process. This Dialogue should be conducted according to the following principles:

The Dialogue needs to be an ongoing and set process. It is important to make sure it is not limited to times of crisis

1. The Dialogue must be a bilateral process in which Israel listens to Diaspora Jews, with the intention of taking their opinions into consideration. It cannot serve solely as a tool to rally world Jewry around Israeli goals (even though this is a legitimate component).
2. The Dialogue should be conducted with Diaspora Jews who represent their communities.

The possible decline of the centrality of major Diaspora organizations necessitates a process that does not exclusively involve organizational leaders, but includes young leaders who operate outside the main traditional institutional frameworks. They represent a new generation of Jews with more critical opinions of, and skepticism toward, Israel – much more so than their parents' generation.

3. The Dialogue needs to be an ongoing and set process. It is important to make sure it is not limited to times of crisis.

In conclusion: 2015 Dialogue Recommendations on the Use of Force

- World Jewry has a positive image of Israel with respect to its use of force in asymmetrical conflicts. It is critically important that this image be preserved, both through Israel's continued adherence to moral conduct during war (irrespective of Jewish Diaspora attitudes), and through effective *hasbara* (public relations) in Jewish communities. Among other things, Diaspora Jews should be apprised of the dilemmas that arise from the use of force and encouraged to discuss them in Jewish forums.
- Many Jews had a hard time connecting "Jewish values" to use of force dilemmas, among other reasons, due to their essential absence in Jewish history. The moral use of force was not dealt with for countless generations because Jews did not have the ability to exercise force. Israel should consider the advisability of arranging an organized process to develop a values-based language in regard to the use of force, one that incorporates Jewish values and resonates for the younger generation. Jewish thinkers from around the world should be included in the process.
- Separate and serious consideration should be given to the question of how Israel's use of force affects relations between Diaspora Jews and the non-Jewish world. This is especially true where Jews are deeply engaged with their surrounding communities. New challenges are arising, such as the need to explain Israel to non-Jewish family members. In many instances these problems are causing people to "lower their Jewish profile" in order to avoid conflict. They require new reflection on how Israel is presented to the wider circles that are now an integral part of the Jewish community.
- Israel would do well to listen to Diaspora Jewish criticism of its *hasbara* efforts. Diaspora Jews who seek – and are sometimes forced – to be involved in explaining Israeli positions to the world, deserve to have their many criticisms heard by Israel. In this context, official Israeli spokespeople should take into account the impressions their statements make on Diaspora Jews.
- The IDF's image as a moral army is a vital asset to Israel vis-à-vis the Jewish community, one that should be preserved and further cultivated. It is crucial to refrain from making statements or conveying messages that undermine this image.

Endnotes

1. See JPPI's 2014 Dialogue report: "Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry"
2. A Pew survey conducted among U.S. Jewry in 2013 found similar results, using the same question: 48% responded that they do not believe that Israel is making a sincere effort to reach a peace settlement with the Palestinians while 38% responded that they do believe that Israel is making a sincere effort to reach a peace settlement with the Palestinians.
3. The interim conclusions were presented in a Jewish Leadership conference in Long Island, U.S.A in May 18-19, 2015, and served as a further platform for discussion.
4. In response to the survey question "How do you think Jews in your community feel about Israel's recent armed conflicts", 14% answered that Jews in their community feel "detached" and an additional 6% responded that members of their community feel "embarrassed".
5. See: Steven M. Cohen and Jack Wertheimer, "The Shrinking Jewish Middle – and How to Expand It," *JTA*, November 2014. See also the chapter on Jewish Identity and Identification in this Annual Assessment.
6. Ilan Zvi Baron, *Obligation in Exile The Jewish Diaspora and Israel Critique*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015); and "Israel is Tearing the Jewish Communities Apart", *Haaretz*, February 2015.
7. Jonathan Freedland, "Liberal Zionism after Gaza," *New York Review of Books*, July 2014. Further examples of such criticism can be found in the final report concluding the 2015 Dialogue.
8. **Atlanta**; **Barnegat**, New Jersey; **Bogota**, Colombia; **Budapest**, Hungary; **Chicago**; **Cleveland**; **Dallas**; **Glenside**, Australia; **Johannesburg**, South Africa; **London**, UK; **Los Angeles** (The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, The American Jewish University and Hillel at UCLA); **Melbourne**, Australia; **New York**; **Paris**, France; **Pittsburgh**; **Porte Alegre**, Brazil; **Rio de Janeiro**, Brazil; **Saint Louis**; **Sao Paulo**, Brazil; **Stamford**; **Tenafly**, New Jersey; **Toronto**; **Washington**; and several young adult groups of **Masa** participants in Israel.
9. For example, 17 out of 19 participants in the seminar in Glenside, Australia agreed with this.
10. 85% of the respondents agreed with the statement "IDF shows more restraint than other armies," most of them strongly, while only 5% strongly disagreed with the statement.
11. 59% strongly agreed with the statement, and an additional 9% somewhat agreed, 30% somewhat disagreed with the statement and only 2% strongly disagreed.
12. Washington DC JPPI seminar, April 19, 2015, notes by Shmuel Rosner and Alexis Bock Robbins.
13. "Community Bonds and Israel", Annual Assessment 2013-2014, JPPI, 2014.
14. 32% of respondents believe that Israel should conduct its armed conflicts without regard to the views of Diaspora Jews.
15. Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring 2012 "Younger Jews, both under age 35 and between 35-44, are much less enthusiastic about Israel's stance about the conflict. On the measure of "trust in Israeli leaders," the younger respondents rank 20 points lower than their parents' generation."
16. Shmuel Rosner, "Debating Religion and State, Debating Distancing," JPPI, 2011.
17. Paris, CRIF JPPI seminar, March 3, 2015, notes by Dov Maimon.



Jewish Identity and Identification in America Today

Part I – The Shrinking Jewish Middle

A daunting policy challenge facing the American Jewish community is that its "middle" is shrinking. The "Jewish middle" is composed of Jews who are highly committed to the Jewish people and the Jewish community but who are not necessarily committed or involved in Jewish religious practice or Orthodox observance (though they do belong to Conservative or Reform synagogues). Together with their strong commitment to the Jewish people, they are significantly involved in general American life, and, on average, have relatively high incomes and educational and professional achievements. The Conservative movement is closely associated with this Jewish middle and it has been declining in numbers – membership in the Conservative movement has shrunk from around 40 percent of American Jews in 1990 to 18 percent in 2013. At the same time, the two extremes – the Orthodox and the assimilated – seem to be growing. The Orthodox, and especially the ultra-Orthodox, have far higher birth rates than the non-Orthodox streams, and that is slowly having an overall impact.

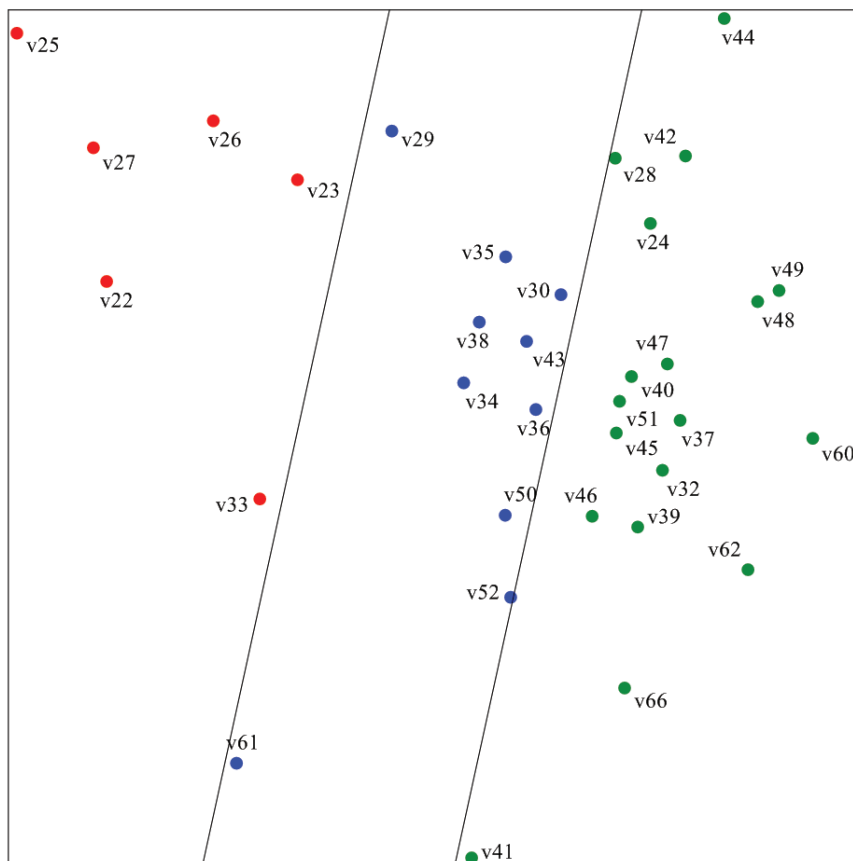
According to the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, the Orthodox constituted 6.6 percent of the population; in the 2013 Pew study, they constituted 10 percent. Family size is even more telling. Orthodox children constitute 27 percent of the total population of Jewish children in the United States.¹ The trend at the other extreme also seems to be showing more growth. As we indicated in the demographic chapter, for the first time, the trend among children of intermarried couples is toward greater Jewish identification. Thus, in the youngest adult cohort, 18-30, 59 percent of the children of mixed families identify as Jewish. According to researcher Ted Sasson, this accounts for the relatively high percentage of Jews of no religion among Jewish Millennials, and also for part of the growth of the Jewish population as a whole.² The contrasting tendencies between the two polar populations on the one hand and the "middle" of Conservative and affiliated Reform Jews on the other can be seen in their median ages. The median age of the Orthodox is 40, and the median age of Jews of no denomination (who overlap with Jews of no religion and intermarried) is 43. In contrast the median age of Conservatives is 55, and 54 for Reform Jews.

The Structure of Jewish Identity Content in America

We can enhance our sense of what the "middle" is by looking at a computer-generated mapping of respondent answers to the survey questions at the heart of the 2013 Pew report. The Pew data map shows that there is a spectrum of Jewish identity expressions. They range from those sharply differentiated, those that stand apart from the attitudes and behaviors characteristic of the general American society to those that are very well integrated into American culture and society, and which are barely identifiable as specifically Jewish. In the American context, those interactions

that stand apart from the general American society and that are readily identifiable as Jewish are mainly religious (Shabbat, kashrut); however, they are not exclusively so. Important patterns of social interaction exclusively or identifiably Jewish have to do with one's friendship circles (if they are they entirely or mostly Jewish); Israel (repeated visits), and belonging to and being active in Jewish social and communal organizations (not only synagogues). At the other side of the spectrum we find identity expressions respondents identified as Jewish but which realize general American or modern values such as justice and equality, tolerance, and even "intellectual curiosity."

Figure 1: Map of Content Responses to Pew Survey



Explaining the Visual Mapping of the Pew Responses

The computer map was generated using a statistical technique (Smallest Space Analysis) that gives a visual representation of the correlations of respondent answers to the Pew survey questions. By “correlations of respondent answers”, we mean the extent, for example, to which respondents who answered “yes” to question A also answered “yes” to question B. The Pew survey asked both background questions concerning the respondent (age, sex, marital status, religious denomination) and content questions (Are you a member of a Jewish organization? Did you ever visit Israel? Do you light Sabbath candles?). The statistical computer program we used represented the extent of the correlations visually, in a computer generated space: questions whose answers had a close or “high” correlation were represented in close to proximity to each other, while questions with answers (or in social science jargon – variables) that have a low or non-existent correlation are depicted as distant from each other. The program then constructs “regions” which consist of responses or variables that are close to each other and which are relatively distant from other variables (In the map the program built the green, blue and red regions) This statistical program, thus, basically produces a visual “map” of the data. By looking at the map one can get an intuitive sense of which variables go with which, and which variables have a lower correlation.

Key To Content Responses (Variables):

22. Please tell me how important each of the following is to what being Jewish means to you. remembering the Holocaust.
23. Leading an ethical and moral life.
24. Observing Jewish law.
25. Having a good sense of humor .
26. Working for justice and equality in society.
27. Being intellectually curious.
28. Eating traditional Jewish foods.
29. Caring about Israel.
30. Being part of a Jewish community.
31. Do not believe in God.
32. Hebrew Alphabet and words.
33. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statement: I am proud to be Jewish.
34. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statement: I have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people.
35. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statement: I have a special responsibility to take care of Jews in need around the world.
36. In 2012, did you make a financial donation to any Jewish charity or cause, such as a synagogue, Jewish school, or a group supporting Israel?

37. How many of your close friends are Jewish? Would you say all of them, most of them, some of them, or hardly any of them?
38. How emotionally attached are you to Israel?
39. Have you ever been to Israel?
40. Aside from special occasions like weddings, funerals and bar mitzvahs (MITS-vas), how often do you attend Jewish religious services at a synagogue, temple, minyan (MIN-yin) or Havurah (hah-vu-RAH)?
41. And aside from special occasions like weddings and funerals, how often do you attend non-Jewish religious services?
42. How important is religion in your life - very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?
43. How important is being Jewish in your life - very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?
44. Do you believe in God or a universal spirit, or not?
45. Is anyone in your household currently a member of a synagogue or temple, or not?
46. Is anyone in your household currently a member of any Jewish organizations other than a synagogue or temple, or not?
47. How often, if at all, does anyone in your household light Sabbath candles on Friday night? Would you say...
48. Do you keep kosher in your home, or not?
49. Do you personally refrain from handling or spending money on the Jewish sabbath, or not?
50. Last Passover, did you hold or attend a seder (SAY-der), or not?
51. During the last Yom Kippur (yahm KIP-er), did you fast ?
52. Last Christmas, did your household have a Christmas tree, or not?
53. Aside from religion, would you say you were raised Jewish or partially Jewish, or not?
54. Thinking about your parents, which if either of them were Jewish?
55. Both mother and father were Jewish
56. Neither mother nor father were Jewish
57. Father was Jewish
58. Mother was Jewish
59. Did you have a formal conversion to Judaism, or not?
60. When you were growing up, did you ever attend a full-time Jewish school, such as a Yeshiva (ye-SHEE-va) or Jewish day school, or not?
61. And when you were growing up, did you ever participate in some other kind of formal Jewish educational program, such as Hebrew School or Sunday school, or not?
62. When you were growing up, did you ever attend an overnight summer camp with Jewish content, or not?
63. Did you ever participate in a Taglit-Birthright [TAHG-leet] Israel trip, or not?
64. Are you the parent or guardian of this child, or not? Child 1
65. During the past year, did this child/any child in household attend a Yeshiva (ye-SHEE-va) or Jewish day school, or not?
66. Did you have a Bar Mitzvah/Bas Mitzvah when you were young, or not?

The map (figure 1) of Pew questionnaire responses, gives a sense of how the spectrum is constructed. In the lower right hand corner of the map we find those identity expressions most identifiable as Jewish, and which are distinct from the mainstream of general modern or American life. These include, first and foremost, religious observances such as kashrut (v.48), refraining from handling money on Shabbat (v.49), fasting on Yom Kippur (v.51) and lighting Sabbath candles (v.47). However, many of its practices are not religious, such as visits to Israel (v.39), predominantly Jewish friendship circles (v.37), and membership in non-religious Jewish organizations (v.46). The map's middle shows the next division, which attempts to balance and articulate between identifiable Jewish social interactions and general American ones. Hence, it tends to include discourses and practices that "fit," or at least aren't in blatant contradiction, with the general society. These include an emphasis on community, especially in terms of feelings and attitudes. In this part of the map we find a feeling of special responsibility toward Jews around the world (v.35), a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people (v.34), an emotional attachment to Israel, and the belief that being part of the Jewish community is an essential part of being Jewish (v.30). Those represented by the map's midsection (along with President Obama) participate in Passover Seders (v.50). However, religious practice does not constitute a very large part of their Jewishness. It is this middle division that practices the "Jewish civil religion" we wrote about in the 2013-2014 Annual Assessment.

The final division, on the map's left side, comprises Jewish practices and interactions that can be thought of as synonymous with those of general American society. That is, they fit well into general American life and they don't have anything blatantly or identifiably Jewish about them. They include working for justice and equality in society (v.26), leading an ethical and moral life (v.23), having a good sense of humor (v.25), and being intellectually curious (v.27). It also includes remembering the Holocaust (v.22). The Holocaust in American life has been constructed as an event of universal significance, whose main message is directed against intolerance and racism. Again, these content variables constitute a spectrum. The computer program, though, has also drawn lines dividing the space into the regions described above.

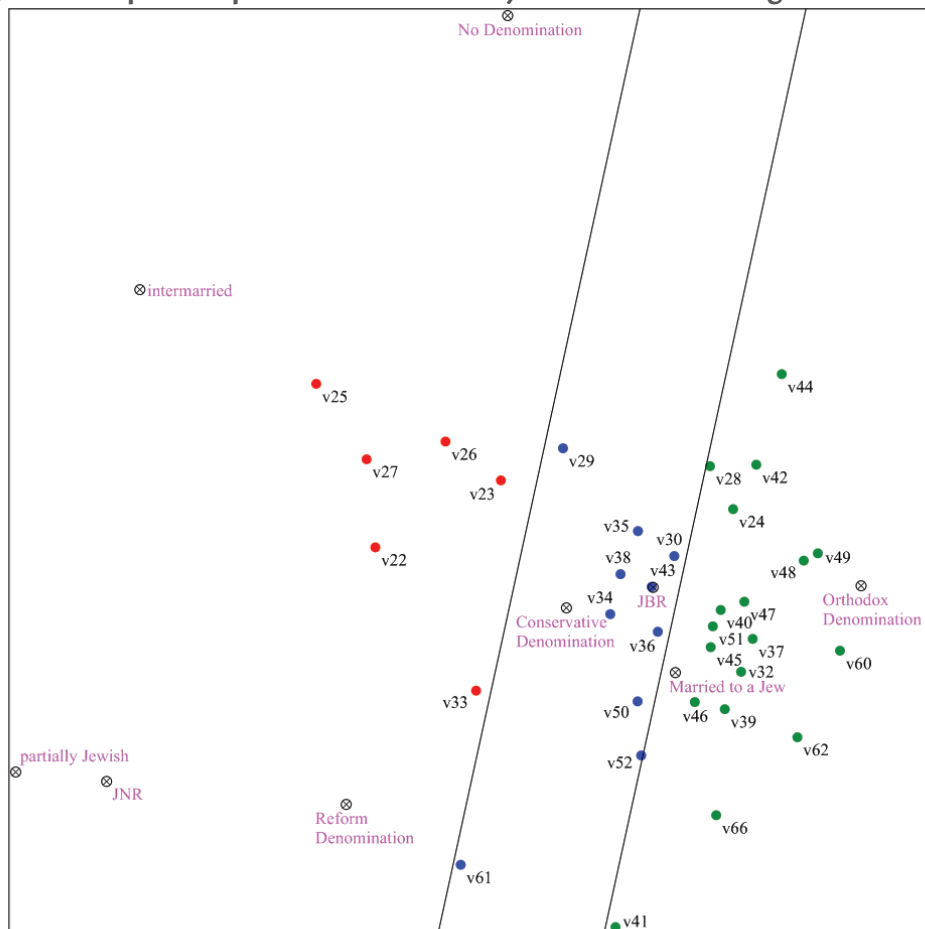
Conservative Jews and Jews by Religion are not very religious in terms of practice, but are very committed to Jewish "sacred ethnicity" and community

How do these types of Jewish identity expressions relate to actual American Jews? Do certain kinds of Jews favor specific kinds of Jewish identity expressions? Not surprisingly, such relationships do exist. Figure 2 represents the map together with certain background characteristics of the American Jewish population. Thus, in the lower right hand part of the map we find the Orthodox denomination. That is, there is a high (unsurprising) correlation between Jews who identified as Orthodox and having mainly Jewish

friends, visiting Israel, fasting on Yom Kippur, observing the Sabbath etc. According to this map, Orthodox Jews are not only more religious; they are more “Jewish” in general. In the map’s midsection, where there is strong identification with the Jewish people and the Jewish community, we find the Conservative denomination, and what Pew has dubbed “Jews by Religion.” Conservative Jews and Jews by Religion are not very religious in terms of practice but are very committed to Jewish

“sacred ethnicity” and community. (This is entirely in accord with our analysis from last year.) Finally, on the left side of the map, together with those Jewish interactions least identifiable as Jewish and the most identifiable as modern or American, we find intermarried Jews (Jews who are married to Jews are located on the right side of the map near the Orthodox), the Reform denomination, “partially Jewish,” and “Jews not by Religion.”

Figure 2: Map of Responses to Pew Survey with Certain Background Variables



This organization of American Jewish life into three divisions vis-a-vis the relationship of Jewish social practices and interactions to mainstream American life has the advantage of being intuitive. This classification reflects common notions concerning the Orthodox that they are not only "more religious," they are "more Jewish." "More Jewish" means that their practices and social interactions (including, as indicated non-religious Jewish practices) are more differentiated from those of the American mainstream, and that these constitute a large, if not the major, part of their social life. The middle grouping, for the most part of Conservative Jews and "Jews by Religion," is then "less Jewish" in the sense that their practices and social interactions are more balanced between differentiated Jewish ones and general American ones. Finally, the third grouping (Reform, intermarried, "partially Jewish") is the "least Jewish of all." Its Jewish practices are barely differentiated and are well integrated into mainstream American practices and interactions. Obviously, this in no way suggests that Reform temples, youth groups, summer camps, and other organizations do not embody deep and meaningful particularistic Jewish expressions and outreach endeavors.

Conservative Jews are also, in a substantive sense, "in the middle." They participate evenly and in a moderately high fashion in all social interactions and expressions of Jewish identity. Thus, the Orthodox score the highest in regard to exclusively Jewish social interactions and expressions of identity. They also score the highest in regard to communal expressions of Jewish identity (the blue variables). Yet, despite the fact that they also identify the universalistic expressions of Jewish identity (sense of humor, work

for justice and equality) as Jewish, they are far from scoring the highest in regard to these. They score the lowest in regard to sense of humor and are only number four in regard to the struggle for justice and equality. The more liberal-universalist groups score high in regard to the universalist expressions of Jewish identity but score low in regard to the exclusive expressions of Jewish identity and the communal ones. Conservative Jews, in contrast to both of these groups, score next to highest across the board, in regard to almost all variables.

It is important to add that these characterizations of the various contents of Jewish identity in America are external descriptions. They are not at all judgmental nor are they meant to describe how the respondents themselves think about such categories as "Jewish" or "American." They certainly do not imply that the respondents understand that there is

a tension or conflict between such categories. Nor do they imply (as some social scientists thought 40 or 50 years ago) that only the more "Jewish" identity expressions have survivability. In fact, as seen below, the Pew and other recent data show that the identity expressions that fit in easily with modern American culture and life have a high correlation with Jewish pride, and population groups associated with them are increasingly identifying Jewishly (though without a high degree of Jewish commitments and affiliations).

From a policy point of view, the maintenance of the Jewish middle is highly desirable and its shrinking is a highly deleterious development

Policy Thoughts

From a policy point of view, the maintenance of the Jewish middle is highly desirable and its shrinkage is a highly deleterious development. The Jewish middle constitutes the "glue" that holds together the two poles of the Jewish community, the highly committed pole (mostly Orthodox), whose social and cultural life takes place very strongly in exclusively Jewish circles, and the highly assimilated, intermarried pole, whose Jewish values are indistinguishable from general American ones.

Contemporary Jewish policy and influence depend upon two factors: Jewish identification and commitment and having the financial, status and professional resources to affect outcomes

This last point is highlighted by the Map. What is important about this Map is not really the division of the space into three regions, but rather the spectrum it represents. What we really have here is a rich continuous spectrum or continuum moving from highly differentiated Jewish practices, which make up a very substantial part of social life, to barely differentiated Jewish practices, which are marginal to one's social life. One of the key

characteristics of American Jewish life is precisely this "thick" fabric of the continuum. Between Orthodox and non-denominational Jews, various Jews occupy all places along the continuum. As one moves along the spectrum, the differences

are small and sometimes non-perceptible (ultra-Orthodox - Orthodox-Modern Orthodox - Liberal Orthodox - traditional Conservative - mainstream Conservative - progressive Conservative - tradition-oriented Reform etc.). This contributes to the feeling that despite the great diversity of Jews in the United States, it is one community. Even people at the extremes (whether very Jewish/Orthodox, or not very Jewish/non-denominational) generally know someone further down the spectrum who knows people at the opposite end.

One of the dangers of the shrinking American Jewish "middle" is that the two ends of the spectrum will have fewer interconnecting middle parts, the glue between both ends. Thus, as the middle shrinks, American Jewry runs the risk that it will actually rupture and divide into two camps: a well integrated and "assimilated" sector, which is oriented toward the practices and interactions of general American society and retains those Jewish discourses and interactions that totally fit with them, and an Orthodox sector that maintains highly differentiated Jewish interactions and practices as a substantial part of their social life. Without a middle sector that mediates between these two extremes, ne'er the twain shall meet.

In policy terms as well, the "middle" is desirable. Contemporary Jewish policy and influence depends upon two factors: Jewish identification and commitment and having the financial, status and professional resources to have influence, that is to affect outcomes. Such financial, status and professional resources depend upon integration into the general society. The

Orthodox have commitment and affiliation, but the ultra-Orthodox, who constitute two thirds of this population, have relatively low incomes, education, and professional attainment. The intermarried assimilated wing does have high incomes, education, and professional attainment, but their Jewish commitment and affiliation is low. Until now it has been the Jewish middle that maintained both Jewish commitment and affiliation and financial, status and professional resources. Its shrinkage is highly undesirable, and policy interventions to stem and/or reverse it are essential.

Part II – Two Responses to the State of Jewish Identity in America Today

In the following section we look at two very different responses to the state of Jewish identity in America today. Both responses identify the crux of the issue as the growing ascendancy of individualist orientations and values, especially in the younger age cohorts. The first response, formulated by social scientists Sylvia Barack Fishman and Steven M. Cohen, consists of

The decline of cohesive communities of Jews who live close to each other complicates the natural, effortless transmission of social capital

resisting the dominant American cultural trends. It advocates ensuring that young Jews have the life experiences and social interactions that encourage early family formation and fertility. The second response, that of Chabad outreach, seems to "flow" more with the American individualist orientation.

Response I - Generating Jews: Addressing the American Jewish Family Crisis and Revitalizing Jewish Life

Families and the Transmission of Jewish Identity

Jews who live in close proximity to many Jews, live with other Jews in their households, and have mostly Jewish social circles are more Jewishly engaged in all respects. However, for at least 60 years, fewer Jews live in densely Jewish neighborhoods. Geographic

mobility has taken many Jews away from historically Jewish population centers.³ The freedom American Jews feel to live in geographic and social proximity to other Americans – non-Jewish as well as Jewish – is certainly a positive development in terms of life options and opportunities for Jews as individuals. However, the decline of cohesive communities of Jews who live close to each other complicates the natural, effortless transmission of social capital. A substantial number of American Jews reside in the "borderlands," to use Steven M. Cohen's evocative phrase, in terms of both their Jewish connectedness and geographical location.⁴

This lack of Jewish closeness is both physical and symbolic – as is evident in the norms and values of young Jews. Consider the anecdotal evidence of a small gathering of Jewish thinkers and Wexner Graduate Fellows (the prestigious and competitive Jewish leadership program) held recently in New York;⁵ there, several of the fellows vividly articulated views widely held by today's American Jews who – like them – are in their 20s, 30s, and early 40s:

"Why do you worry about [Jewish group] survival?"

"Survival is the golden calf of Judaism. We are so obsessed with survival that we forget what it is we want to survive,"

"Isn't tribalism at the root of what is in essence social engineering, and isn't this the root of ethnocentric violence?"

Their critique of tribalism – a term with near-sinister connotations – resonated for many of the young leaders in this somewhat unusual intergenerational forum. Although we older scholars were at times disturbed by many of the ideas they expressed, the

truth is we were not surprised. We already knew that many American Jewish Millennials (Jews born between the early 1980s and 2000) look askance at Jewish peoplehood and collective destiny as compelling personal values.

But what really caught us by surprise was that their individualism expressed itself not only in their rejecting Jewish collective identity, but also in how individualism trumped family as an urgent concern in their personal decisions about marriage and children. Illustrative is the thinking of one soon-to-be engaged female rabbi: “I am 31 years old and I’m probably getting engaged soon. Then we will probably wait awhile to have children... [rather than having children soon after marrying].” Her reason for waiting to have a family was that she feared moving on to this new lifecycle stage would cut short her own individual flowering: “I would not trade for anything the decade that I’ve had – or maybe the decade and half I will have – for personal development and discovery.”

This striking individualism regarding community and family marks a dramatic change from the more collective orientations of previous generations. While many of their Boomer parents traveled Jewish journeys toward “The Jew Within,”⁶ and coalesced American and Jewish values,⁷ today’s younger generation – including even many of the well-educated leaders among them – has become, in anything, less preoccupied with collective destiny and communal goals, and more inclined to see Jewishness as a resource – albeit a rich and diverse one – for their own personal meaning.

The “survival” of the Jewish group, the dynamic maintenance of the Jewish community, and the transmission of Jewish culture to the next generation have been self-evident goals, constituting bedrock values for historical Jewish societies; they continue to be so for notable segments of the Jewish population worldwide today. For hundreds of years, Jewish families have maintained vibrant quotidian Jewishness and served as the primary locale of transmitting Jewish culture to the next generation. In contrast, the growing perception among today’s Jews in their 20s and 30s that Jewish identity is invested in the individual rather than the family is closely tied to the declining centrality of the family, to the postponement of family formation, and to the receding emphasis on endogamy (in-group marriage).

The few unifying ethnoreligious experiences of many American Jews take place within the family

Bringing Jews Together

Social circles – by which we mean a geographically proximate Jewish community,⁸ friendship networks, and most critically the family grouping – strongly influence Jewish identity, in all its stages of development. For many American Jews, their few unifying ethnoreligious experiences take place within the family of origin, as well as friendship circles and adult nuclear and extended families. In fact, with the weakening of Jewish neighborhoods,

the family is today's primary social group that socializes young Jews. Accordingly, intact and strong Jewish families are perhaps even more critical to Jewish identity transmission than in the past. Conversely, disruptions that have changed patterns of family formation for many Americans and for many American Jews are intricately tied to disruptions in transmissible Jewish culture to succeeding generations.

Against the American emphasis on individualism, those younger American Jews who do place greater value on Jewish social networks –

The norms and values of broader Western culture which influence younger American Jews' attitudes work to undermine conventional family bonds

family, community, and the international Jewish collective – are in many ways deeply countercultural. They resist a larger culture that is suspicious of inherited social identities, such as those constructed around religion or ethnicity.

Who are these countercultural resisters – young people who place a premium on

Jewish collective life and religious engagement and who exhibit more traditional family formation tendencies? What do we know about (non-Haredi) young adult Jews who marry, marry at a younger age, marry Jews, have children and raise them in the Jewish religion?

As data from the 2013 Pew study of Jewish Americans⁹ underscore, we know that they

have significant and substantial Jewish social circles, family and friends. Overwhelmingly they have two Jewish parents, and a majority of their current friends are Jewish.¹⁰ Earlier studies have shown that their largely Jewish friendship circles in high school were replicated in college,¹¹ and that their current friendship circles include a majority of Jewish friends.¹²

For the organized Jewish community, the policy implications of these findings are clear: They argue for enhancing opportunities for teens, college students, and unmarried young adult Jews to meet each other and to create Jewish social circles – not only, but certainly including, romantic attachments.

Contemporary Patterns of Family, Marriage, and Fertility

Younger American Jews' individualistic attitudes are shaped both by American Millennial social networks and the norms and values of a broader Western culture, which often work to undermine conventional familial bonds.

This phenomenon is of course not limited to Jews. In March 2015, one day apart, two highly regarded *New York Times* columnists – one a moderate conservative and the other a perennial liberal – agreed on the devastating impact of the fading of family norms among significant segments of the American population. David Brooks' March 10 column, "The Cost of Relativism"¹³ discussed Robert Putnam's new book, *Our Kids*. Nicholas Kristoff's "When Liberals Blew It" on March 11,¹⁴ commemorated

the anniversary of Daniel Patrick Moynihan's report that attributed poverty among African-Americans in part to weakened family patterns. The two columns made powerful overlapping points. According to Brooks, American society is missing "Norms. The health of society is primarily determined by the habits and virtues of its citizens." Unlike liberals' emphasis on autonomy or Cohen and Eisen's Sovereign Jewish Self,¹⁵ Brooks argues that societies need internalized rules, behaviors you don't think about. But today, "There are no basic codes and rules woven into daily life, which people can absorb unconsciously and follow automatically." Kristoff, despite his identification with the liberal camp, accused his fellow liberals of making discussions of family norms off limits for progressive Americans, undermining long-standing emphases on family formation and family continuity, with extremely adverse consequences, as Moynihan had noted in the case of African-Americans.

When considering changes in family formation patterns, two possible vantage points could be adopted. One area of concern is that of larger societies throughout the developed world as they confront the prospect of fewer children. Analysts focusing on the needs of the social group, community, or country involved focus on the economic, political, and security implications when, according to recent figures, birth rates have fallen to 1.4 in Italy, 1.34 in Greece, and 1.39 in Japan. The profound social concerns of these figures are discussed by reviewer Garret Keizer as he comments on "a generation's failure to generate".¹⁶

A second – and very different – vantage point focuses on the personal impact of family formation decisions on the individuals involved. In the United States, this type of discussion is actually entered into relatively infrequently, as many Americans seem uncomfortable with the conversation. For example, in 2002, Sylvia Anne Hewlett published *Creating a Life: What Every Woman Needs to Know About Having a Baby and a Career*,¹⁷ urging women to plan for parenthood with the same realism and awareness of the facts they planned their careers. Within days of its publication, Elizabeth Cohen of CNN's Medical Unit reported (April 17, 2002)¹⁸ on the swift negative response to Hewlett as a putatively anti-woman conservative whose primary goal was to "scare" women into parenthood. In fact, Hewlett's stated purpose was to encourage women to make realistic life decisions, but the notoriety she experienced may well have dissuaded others from speaking out in support of her positions.

Among younger American Jews today, the number of children born is below replacement level

It is important for American Jews to study and think about patterns of family formation from both vantage points – that of larger Jewish societies and that of Jewish individuals.

Among younger American Jews today, the number of children born is below replacement level. As Steven Cohen, Jack Ukeles, and Ron

Miller found in the 2011 study of the New York Jewish population: *hasidim* had an average of about 6 children; the *yeshivish* (non-hasidic ultra-Orthodox) had an average of about 5 children; while Modern Orthodox Jewish New Yorkers had an average of 2.5 children per family. The non-Orthodox averaged only 1.5 children, not far from the 1.7 figure calculated by Pew researchers for the national non-Orthodox population.¹⁹

In contrast, as Israeli demographer Sergio Della Pergola reminds us, like the Israeli society around them, *hiloni* or self-described secular couples

The majority of "Partnership Marriages" blend individualistic goals and aspirations with traditional Jewish family values

are far more pro-natalist than their American or European counterparts. Even *hiloni* Israeli couples aspire to having between three and four children, and actually give birth to almost three children per family (2.7-2.8).²⁰ Secular Israeli couples' high birthrates demonstrate the powerful effect of social norms and social contagion – the impact

of the people we know and the larger society.²¹

In all areas of family formation – fertility, cohabitation before marriage, timing of marriage, female labor force participation – the norms and attitudes of one's social circles exert considerable influence.²²

But most well educated Americans – including American Jews, by and large – are hesitant to

discuss fertility. Symptomatic of this discomfort is the vocal critique of Hewlett and other pro-natalists, while only conservative columnists such as Ross Douthat²³ write recent columns entitled, "More Babies, Please."²⁴ The lack of individual urgency regarding childbearing echoes and is echoed by conversations in magazines and the electronic media. During the past ten years, popular periodicals and other media outlets have publicized a plethora of triumphalist stories with one punchline: Don't believe the "scare" stories – you can have a baby much later than you think. But recent medical literature tells a different story: Sara Rosenthal clarifies rates of infertility according to recent research: according to recent figures, between 3 to 5 percent of women in their 20s experience infertility, climbing to 8 percent between the ages of 30 to 34, 15 percent at ages 35 to 39, 32 percent at ages 40 to 44, and 69 percent at ages 45 to 49.²⁵

American Jewish communal and religious leaders have rightly been concerned with the rising proportion of Jews marrying across religious and cultural boundaries. But while intermarriage animates (often heated) discussions,²⁶ far less attention has been paid to the fact that numerous Jews marry so late that they don't have easy access to appropriate Jewish partners, and often are not physically able to bear the children they had hoped for. Recently, the norms of marriage and raising Jewish children have retreated in the face of extended singleness, non-marriage, and – planned or unplanned – childlessness.²⁷ Considering the implications for American Jewry as well as the implications for American Jews, patterns of

courtship, marriage, and fertility are aspects of American Jewish life that would benefit from thoughtful analysis.

The Growing Prominence of “Partnership” Marriages

Just over one-quarter of American Jewish households – 27 percent – consist of two parents with children under 18. But these households, although a minority of Jewish households, represent an exciting – and little recognized – positive model for future growth and development in the American Jewish community. Calling these households “Partnership Marriages,” Sylvia Barack Fishman shows how the majority of these households blend individualistic goals and aspirations with what we may call “traditional Jewish family values,” in “Gender in American Jewish Life”.²⁸

Most American Jewish families with children living at home have two parents working outside the home for pay – about three quarters of spouses ages 25 to 64. The figures are similar even when broken down by decades. The great majority of American Jewish women with children under age six at home are also labor force participants. Husbands and wives tend to have similar levels of educational and occupational achievement. Even their salary levels are quite close. Divorce rates are substantially lower than in the population at large. One might assume that such households would be too busy for Jewish connections. But, as Harriet and Moshe Hartman demonstrate in detail,²⁹ these same households that display

spousal parity are also among the most Jewishly involved households – however Jewish involvement is measured – in the United States. Indeed the majority of Modern Orthodox American Jews are part of this demographic and this lifestyle.

Because these “Partnership” families model “having it all,” to use a contemporary – if hyperbolic – phrase and concept, they should be studied to see how their histories and the strategies they employ might be extended to larger segments of the American Jewish population.

Educating Jews for Jewish Family Formation

A second area of exciting and hopeful news is that interventions – especially Jewish educational interventions of both day schools and supplementary schools can make a significant, measurable difference: **Educating children more than seven years in Jewish day school or in supplementary school settings, through**

Jewish educational interventions can make a difference in the transmission of Jewish identity to the next generation

the teen years, exerts positive Jewish impacts on family-related outcomes as well as upon adult Jewish engagement. Our analysis of the recent Pew data set revealed that Jews who study in either day school or even supplementary (largely, congregational) schools for more than seven years are more likely to marry a Jew and more likely to raise children who are

“Jewish by religion.” Jewish summer camps also exert a significant positive effect.³⁰

We also must note that all available studies of the impact of Israel travel point in the same direction: Visiting Israel produces elevated measures of Jewish involvement and engagement. The impact of Birthright trips is well documented. Less often realized, teen trips also exert lasting impact. For example, in a recent study of the Robert I. Lappin Foundation’s Youth To Israel program,³¹ of the married alumni – all of whom originated from nearly two dozen small towns north of Boston – 72 percent had married

**Chabad
spokesman:
“The Pew Center
Survey missed
the story of
Orthodox
renewal which
is symbolized
above all by
Chabad with its
959 centers”**

Jews. In contrast, using the recently conducted 2013 Pew study as a comparison group, for young adults with Jewish educational and parental backgrounds resembling “Lappin’s kids,” just 50 percent had married Jews.

In sum, Jewish education functions as an intervention partially because it fosters peer Jewish social circles. Such interventions have

become more and more significant because for Jews to experience Jewish social circles (and find Jewish spouses) is now not a common experience for large numbers of American Jews. Moreover, such in-group friendship and marital patterns run counter to American society’s celebration of ethnically diverse or transcultural relationships, to the extent that Jews who outspokenly promote endogamy (in-marriage) are sometimes accused of being “racist.”³² Having

Jewish friends helps young Jews experience warm feelings toward and good memories of such Jewish groups.³³

The clear policy implication of these newly mined data on Jewish education, consistent with a long research literature, is that Jewish schooling matters. The creation, expansion, and effective marketing of excellent, attractive, and affordable Jewish educational non-Orthodox day school programs and supplementary school programs for teenagers, is an area where communal intervention can make a measurable difference in the quality of American Jewish identity and the transmission of Jewish identity to the next generation of American Jews.

Response II – Chabad: A New Format of Jewish Identity and Interaction?

The second response that we would like to consider is that of Chabad. While the response of encouraging Jewish family formation and fertility can be considered “counter-cultural”, the response coming out the Chabad movement, a more than two hundred year old, very traditional Chassidic sect, paradoxically, seems to be congruent with the contemporary individualistic ethos.

Pew and Chabad – Why does Chabad not Appear in the Survey?

Among the plethora of reactions to the 2013 Pew report on Jewish Americans the reactions of Chabad and other ultra-Orthodox rabbis working in Orthodox outreach to other Jews were noteworthy. Whereas the mainstream Orthodox reaction to the Pew study was alarm, as it stressed the very high

rates of out-marriage and the growing sector of “Jews of no religion,” which has a very attenuated tie to Jewish practices, belonging, and commitment, these rabbis responded quite differently. Some of them challenged the reliability of the study; others viewed the study as cause for some optimism.

Challenges to the study’s reliability, basically derive from a perceived chasm between what the study reported about Jewish life in America and the felt experience of these rabbis. Rabbi David Eliezrie, a Chabad Hasid who is president of the Rabbinical Council of Orange County and Rabbi Tzvi Nightingale, outreach director for Aish HaTorah felt that Pew had somehow missed the story of Orthodox renewal, which is symbolized above all by Chabad with its 959 Chabad centers spread all over America. As Eliezrie writes:

“Walk the streets of Pico/Robertson, North Miami Beach or Flatbush in Brooklyn. Thirty or forty years ago it was tough to find a few religious Jews and today these neighborhoods are bursting with young religious families.”³⁴

Similarly, Nightingale for his part writes:

“I find this study somewhat skewed and almost worthless. Why because they left out Chabad.... ” Because the Pew study did not provide a “Chabad option to check,” it has “totally ignored the most dynamic movement in Judaism in recent years.”³⁵

Alan Cooperman and Greg Smith, the study’s authors, duly responded. They wrote that the study makes no such claim “that the numbers of Orthodox have dropped over the decades.” “In fact,” they write, “our report shows that compared with other Jews, the Orthodox are much younger

on average and tend to have larger families which suggests that there share of the Jewish population will grow.” More tellingly, they argue that respondents did have the chance to mark a Chabad option. In addition to being asked whether they were Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform they were given the option of identifying as ‘something else.’ Indeed, a fair number of Jews self-identified as ‘agnostic’ or ‘atheist,’ ‘Reconstructionist’ or ‘Jewish Renewal.’ Furthermore, those who identified as Orthodox were asked whether they consider themselves Hasidic, Modern Orthodox, Yeshivish, or some other type of Orthodox. Over 150 respondents identified as Hasidic including a very small number (too small to analyze separately) who identified specifically as Chabad or Lubavitch. In other words, according to Cooperman and Smith, respondents did have the opportunity to identify themselves as Chabad, they simply did not do so.³⁶

Despite this altogether sound response, Eliezrie and Nightingale’s criticism goes deeper. They are aware that under received, conventional terms of self-identification and denominational belonging very few people will identify as Chabad. Their deeper claim is that the very terms of Jewish identity, practice, and belonging are changing and

“While many Jews who participate in Chabad activities are not becoming fully observant, they are allowing for Jewish tradition to have a stronger voice in their lives”

that the Pew report does not capture this. Thus as Nightingale writes: "It [Pew] is based upon a completely outdated model and mentality," and Eliezrie agrees, "Pew used an old methodology to measure a more complex and diverse Jewish community in a post-denominational age." In other words, these rabbis claim that a deep shift in the very nature of Jewish identity, practice, and belonging is occurring beneath the surface and one of the phenomena (perhaps in their eyes – **the phenomenon**) recording this is Chabad with its hundreds of centers and programs attracting larger numbers of Jews.

The wave of East European immigration starting in 1880 continued to congregate in distinctive neighborhoods and marry each other

Thus, Eliezrie is aware that the vast majority of Jews who attend Chabad centers are not Orthodox observant and that few will self-identify as Orthodox. He knows that many Jews who participate in Chabad activities are members of Reform temples and Conservative synagogues. Nevertheless, "while these Jews are not becoming

fully observant they are allowing for Jewish tradition to have a stronger voice in their lives." His complaint is that the Pew study did not develop any instruments to register this significant trend in American Jewish life.

While Eliezrie and Nightingale are partisan writers, rabbis committed to Orthodox outreach, more impartial academic and journalistic writers are also

starting to notice the importance of Chabad in Jewish American life. Thus, according to the 2014 *Greater Miami Jewish Federation Population Study: A Portrait of the Miami Jewish Community*, directed by Prof. Ira Sheskin,³⁷ 26 percent of the Jewish households in Miami-Dade county had engaged with Chabad programming over the past year, including 42 percent of Jewish households with children at home. Although some communities reported the number of participants in these activities to be a bit smaller, the Miami study's number is very similar to the number David Eliezrie adduced for Chabad engagement in Orange County, CA. Other writers, such as Sue Fishkoff,³⁸ also noticed the widespread presence of Chabad in American Jewish life and their relatively extensive engagement with it, though her treatment of this is more journalistic and anecdotal.

It would seem then, that it worth exploring the suggestion that there is a shift taking place in the very nature of Jewish identity, belonging, and practice in America, and that conventional instruments for measuring these parameters and not entirely adequate. That is, measuring instruments that rely solely on synagogue membership and denominational affiliation may not be capturing the entire story of Jewish identification and engagement, and that they may have to be complemented by new approaches to Jewish engagement that rely less upon these parameters. Is Jewish identity in the United States moving from a community of fate paradigm to one of individual choice? In previous Annual Assessments we raised this suggestion and explored it from the point of view of contemporary

Jewish culture and creating Jewish meaning. In this Annual Assessment we will look at this shift from a different vantage point – that of ultra-Orthodox sponsored activity. In a surprising fashion, contemporary Chabad theology and practice fits this new paradigm of Jewish identity.

From Community of Fate to Individual Choice

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik famously argued that the Jewish people can be characterized in two different, perhaps contrasting, ways – as "community of fate" (not to be confused with communities of faith) and as a "community of destiny." Soloveitchik's argument was, of course, philosophical and theological. We would like to take the "community of fate" concept and employ it in a more sociological framework. According to this understanding being Jewish is a "given" – something that is imposed upon you or about which you have no choice – like skin color. One accepts that one is Jewish as part of the "natural order" and the taken for granted state of affairs. A central part of this conception is that one as a Jew naturally belongs to a community of similar individuals, and these communities are important for self-defense and advancing group interests (which are also the interests of the individual). This model of Jewish identity is, of course, the received, historical format of Jewish identity. Until modern times, in both Christian and Muslim lands, Jews formed corporate communities with distinct rights and obligations vis-a-vis both the non-Jewish state and society. Membership in a Jewish community was involuntary; one was born into it. Until modern times, the only way one could

exit the community was by conversion, either to Christianity or to Islam.

Though from a formal point of view, separate corporate communities were abolished with the advent of the modern nation state, the Emancipation (1791 in France), the accession of Jews to modern national citizenship, and the relegation of religion to the private sphere, the habits of thought and sentiment that accompanied the traditional format continued, in many cases, for decades and even centuries. Thus, in America, especially with the wave of East European immigration starting in 1880, Jews continued (along with other white European immigrant ethnic groups) to congregate in distinctive neighborhoods and overwhelmingly to marry each other, despite a precipitous fall off in religious behavior, especially among the second generation. They also joined synagogues.

Even though in America, being Jewish is legitimately only a religious identity, synagogue membership then, and largely today, expresses ethnic belonging. Thus, though American Jews are formally emancipated and fully-fledged citizens, they tended to think of themselves as a separate, given primordial group whose social existence had corporate characteristics, until the mid-20th century.

From the 1970s Jewish identity as belonging to a primordial, given community of fate started to weaken

This, we suggest, was reflected in the method of synagogue funding. Originally, American synagogues sold pews in order to fund themselves, an arrangement appropriated from Protestant churches. However, as this method began to be criticized – both in church and Jewish circles – synagogues turned to raising dues. It appears this method was acceptable because individual East European Jews identified paying synagogue dues with paying the communal taxes they, or their parents and grandparents had paid in Europe. Synagogue membership became the prime

Chabad activity is based upon very different principles from that of the conventional organized Jewish community

vehicle and expression of one's Jewish communal identity. As Steven M. Cohen and Lauren Blitzer argued in the 2008 paper, "Belonging without Believing,"³⁹ Jews belong to religious organizations (synagogues) to a degree that is reminiscent of Christian evangelicals, yet they ascribe less to religious beliefs than non-Jewish atheists. In

sum, being Jewish was mainly a matter of Jewish communal belonging and entailed a sense of mutual responsibility for all Jews and endogamy. Since synagogues divided themselves along denominational lines (as did the Protestant churches), one's individual Jewish identity had a "flavor," it was either Reform or Conservative or Orthodox.

From the mid-20th century, and especially in the

last third of that century, this format of Jewish identity began to change. As the result of World War II and the GI Bill (Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944) separate white ethnic identities began to erode and disappear. Americans of Polish, Italian, Jewish and other ethnic ancestries became part of the white majority. Together with this, interfaith and interethnic marriages started to become the norm, even the cultural ideal. Thus, starting in the 1970s, Jewish intermarriage rates began to shoot up. Together with all this, Jewish identity as belonging to a primordial, given community of fate started to weaken. Instead, Judaism became one of the myriad ways that individual Jewish Americans started to add or realize fulfillment and meaning in their lives. Jewish prayer, study, meditation, activism etc. became one of the countless meaning-giving activities Americans participate in voluntarily and consume. In other words, Jewish identity in America began to move from a primordial, communal identity to an individualist consumer one.⁴⁰ This process in regard to (white) ethnic identity in general was summarized by Herbert Gans in his landmark article on Symbolic Ethnicity, which he described as a way of expressing ethnic identity that is "easy and intermittent," "voluntary," and "diverse and individualistic," and which does not require "arduous or time-consuming commitment" or "demand active membership" in an organization or community.⁴¹

Chabad and Individualist-Consumer Judaism

This change, we suggest, is the background to the flourishing of the Chabad outreach program. We want to look at Chabad not only because of its

intrinsic ethnographic interest, but also because we would like to explore whether Chabad can provide a model for promoting and strengthening Jewish identity in the individualist 21st century culture available to Jewish educators and community leaders who do not share the Chabad worldview and theology (and may in fact not be religious at all). But in order to accomplish that, we must try and understand Chabad outreach in its own terms – what are its assumptions and what are its aims?

The Chabad outreach program is derived from Chabad theology as initially formulated at the end of the 18th century and developed in the last generations under the leadership of the last two rebbes: R. Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson and his son-in-law R. Menachem Mendel Schneerson. According to this theology, the goal of the creation is to make "a dwelling place for Him [God] in this material nether-world."⁴²

שתכלית בריאת העולם הזה שנתאווה הקב"ה להיות לו דירה (בתחתונים) – לקוטי אמרים [תניא חלק א, ל"ו]

Chabad theology teaches that the world – that is the material world in which we live – is in fact hidden Godliness. That is, that the world comes from God, or more precisely, is Godliness,

however, we as created beings cannot perceive this.* The concrete meaning of to “make for Him [God] a dwelling place” means to expose the essential Godly nature of the world. One of the central paths of accomplishing this is by doing mitzvot with worldly material objects (leather boxes and straps for *tefillin*, woolen strings for *tzitzit*, wheat flour and water for matzot etc.) By using material worldly objects in order to perform divine commandments, one highlights their true divine nature and purpose. That is, one “loads them” with spiritual and divine meaning. This attribution of divine meaning and purpose does only apply to the concrete material objects of the mitzvah itself (i.e. the *tefillin* straps and boxes) but to the entire chain of their production and existence. Thus, to take again the example of the *tefillin* straps. Laying *tefillin* does not only endow the straps and boxes with divine purpose and meaning it also

There seems to be a basis for the hypothesis that Chabad provides a model for strengthening Jewish identity in the 21st century individualist culture

* In fact, Chabad teaches that there really is no created world as an independent ontological entity. The act of creation is in fact the creation of a perspective on the part of created beings, according to which the world **appears** as an independent entity. In truth though, there is no world as an independent entity. All of existence is only God. However because of our creaturely perspective, the world **appears** as an independent entity and its Godly character is completely hidden. (*Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmuna*) In fact, the world seems as if it can exist and flourish without God and his nourishing power altogether. The task of the Jewish people is to reveal – through doing mitzvot and mystical prayer – the true Godly nature of the world. This true nature will be fully revealed to the naked human eye in the redeemed Messianic era. (Chabad theology is very rich and extensive. Here we have presented a very small particle of it.)

On the Idea of Emissaries

The idea of the emissary (*shaliach* or colloquially, *shluch*) is fundamental to contemporary Chabad thought. As the last rebbe, R. Menachem Mendel Schneerson, explained, it rests upon the idea structure of endowing one object with a given meaning and purpose that comes to it, as it were, from the outside, which is the same idea structure as in the act of doing a mitzvah and endowing a material object with divine meaning and purpose. The Chabad *shaliach* or emissary is a psychophysical entity whose inner purpose and essence has been endowed by the principal who dispatched him, the Rebbe. The *shaliach's* task is to cause other Jews to endow material and social life with a higher divine purpose in the same sense as the *shaliach's* own life is endowed with a higher, divine purpose and meaning by the Rebbe. But the Rebbe himself as he said on many occasions, was also a *shaliach*. He was the emissary of the his late father in law, the "previous Rebbe" (דער פריערדיקער רבי), R. Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, whom he always called the "leader of our generation" (נשיא דורנו). Thus, Chabad cosmology understands the world as consisting of chains of material objects endowed with a higher meaning and purpose, and which endow other objects with divine meaning and purpose.*

* Menachem Mendel Schneerson, *Kuntreiss Shlach Na B'Yad Tishlach*. Sichat Shabbat Parshat Chayei Sara 5752, 1992, <http://www.moshiach.net/blind/hebrew/dm31.htm>, accessed July 13, 2015.

endows the cows whose skin provided the leather, the water they drank and the grass that they ate. Thus by doing material mitzvot Jews endow the entire material and natural world with inner divine and meaning and purpose. However, this divine meaning and purpose is not perceptible in the current unredeemed state of the world. The meaning of the Messianic era is that the true divine purpose of and meaning of the material, nether world becomes perceptible and apparent to all.⁴³ Chabad chasidim are fond, in connection with the Messianic era of quoting the verse from Isaiah 11:9 **כִּי מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ דַּעַת אֶת ה' כַּמֵּיִם לִים מַכְסִּים** ...

"for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea."

Chabad's activity is based upon very different principles from that of the conventional organized Jewish community. They are much less concerned with "membership," and group and denominational boundaries. They are much more concerned that individual Jews (and the Jewish collectivity, especially in Israel) do mitzvot and endow the world with divine purpose and meaning through individual acts of *tzedakah*, the laying of *tfilin*, shaking a *lulav and etrog*, chesed and lovingkindness, and Sabbath observance. They invite the individual Jew to do something truly meaningful – to endow the world with divine purpose – without demanding membership and membership fees and long-term commitments.

Chabad metaphysics and activity is truly suited to an individualist, fluid age and to an age of "symbolic ethnicity." They offer, as it were, capsules of ultimate meaning that can be consumed with other kinds of capsules of meaning (Zen, movies, literature, sculpture, shopping) on various levels.

Despite its individualist cast, Chabad centers, do offer an important experience of community. Here too, the interpersonal experience Chabad offers is different from the conventional one offered by the Jewish community. Chabad religious philosophy and practice basically strips people and situations down to their metaphysical essentials. Viewed in Chabad eyes, individual Jews are not "members of the Jewish community" with social roles, status, and resources. They are basically divine Jewish souls placed in the lower material world to provide God with a dwelling place. Thus, ideally speaking, Chabad social practice and convention tends to ignore the external "garments" of money, status and sexual attraction. Rather, it tends to relate to people on the basis of their common human/Jewish essence, creating an egalitarian, open, and accepting space (for Jews) that ignores social distinctions. It resembles the concepts of "communitas" that the anthropologist, Victor Turner made famous.⁴⁴ In practice, of course, individual Chabad *shlichim* are human beings and as such may be drawn to the charms of money, status and sex as much as anyone, but their institutionalized religious and social practice has enough "communitas" in it to make the communal experience of Chabad "special" for most people. Chabad, uniquely, does not require global personal commitments in order to participate in

their capsules of meaning making Jewish activity, but it also provides an open, accepting experience of community.

Chabad's "individualistic approach" is rooted in "metaphysical collectivism." The individual Jewish souls are in fact organically rooted in *Knesset Yisrael* (*Ecclesia Israel*, or the Community of Israel) – a unitary spiritual entity ultimately rooted in God Himself.⁴⁵ Thus, Chabad rejects the current denominational principles by which the Jewish community is organized. In fact it regards "denominations" such as Orthodox and Reform as harmful fictions that needlessly divide Jews from each other.

In ideal terms Chabad seems suited to provide a path to Jewish identification in individualist, fluid 21st Century American culture. How does it work in practice? Here there are probably more questions than answers. No doubt a broad range of folks participate in Chabad experiences episodically, but there's not much data assessing the impact of those experiences on Jewish decisions, values, and behaviors. It seems that it is able to provide a framework in which Jewish activity and identity can reside comfortably with other multiple identities and identifications. This is a framework Jews of no religion and those who are partially Jewish (provided they have a Jewish mother) might find especially congenial. Can this serve as hook for further Jewish commitment and affiliation? Chabad chasidim and *shluchim* are of course very committed to the Jewish people and what they understand is its welfare. Can they impart this commitment, beyond providing capsules of Jewish meaning, to "borderland Jews" with thin

affiliations and identification? A further problem is that the data we do have relates to geographical areas where many Jews with Jewish religious or ethnic background have lived for decades – Miami-Dade, Flatbush, etc. So while many Chabad centers are in areas that were hitherto devoid of Jewishness, we don't know what their effect has been. It should be noted though, that a study now being conducted seems to preliminarily indicate that higher rates of involvement with Chabad on campus are associated with higher net levels of Jewish engagement among alumni in their 20s.

Beyond the issue of determining and measuring its effectiveness, there are questions concerning

One question is: Can non-Chabad frameworks and organizations adopt Chabad techniques and approaches?

Chabad's cost to the community. For example, when Chabad moves into an area does it siphon off money and people from existing Jewish organizations and programs, in effect bringing no net gain to the community?

Finally, there is the issue of whether non-Chabad frameworks and organizations can adopt Chabad techniques and approaches. Can these techniques and approaches be abstracted out of Chabad's religious philosophy and practice? Can one construct equally effective capsules of meaning if one does not accept Chabad's specific, mystical worldview?

We briefly introduced Chabad outreach in this essay because it seems to be a vibrant Jewish

phenomenon, which appears to operate by different rules and assumptions than mainstream Jewish religious, educational, and communal institutions. Sustained and systematic research on Chabad may answer the questions raised above and accurately include Chabad and its potential impact on American Jewish identity in the overall picture of the changing American Jewish community.

Summary

In this chapter we continued to examine the state of Jewish identity in American today. We saw that despite the demographic growth in America's Jews – a quantitative advance – the qualitative view of things is less rosy. Some of the advance in Jewish identification occurred in populations that while willing to identify as Jewish and proud to be such, have weak Jewish commitments and affiliations. Other growing populations, such as the ultra-Orthodox, though heavily Jewishly committed, lack the resources to have an impact on the general society. More worryingly, those populations, such as Conservative Jews, who simultaneously maintain strong Jewish identification with active and successful involvement in general American life seem to be shrinking. This shrinking of the central backbone of American Jewish life, or the Jewish "middle" – between the Orthodox and the assimilated – runs the risk of increasing polarization and, indeed, attenuating communication and solidarity between the Orthodox and assimilated poles.

There are two current strategies for countering these trends. The first of these is based upon solid social scientific evidence that Jewish education and participation in Jewish social networks promote Jewish identity, Jewish families, and the raising of Jewish children. It advocates that the organized Jewish community expand Jewish education and Jewish social network construction in order to increase early marriage to Jews and the bearing and raising of Jewish children. Though this approach advocates pro-natalist and pro-

family orientations, which seem to be counter-cultural, it holds up as a model "Partnership Marriages," which are not gender-stereotyped, and which **combine** family orientations with those of individual fulfillment. In order for this approach to work, funding barriers must be overcome in order to make Jewish education and identity enrichment programs accessible to broader segments of the Jewish population. (See chapter on Material Resources.)

The second response is that of Chabad outreach. This seems to be congruent with the prevalent individualist milieu and its attendant orientation of symbolic ethnicity. Chabad experiences provide many Jews, including "borderland" Jews, episodic "capsules of Jewish meaning" without demanding arduous commitment or active membership in a Jewish organization. Nevertheless, further research is required in order to more fully understand the effectiveness of Chabad outreach for longer term Jewish engagement (though there is some evidence participation in Chabad experiences promote this) and especially, whether and how non-Chabad Jewish organizations might employ its approaches and strategies.

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12

Jewish People Ways and Means, 2014-2015

The status of the Jewish people's resources improved over the past year. In the past decade Israel's economic performance has been positive in comparison with most of Europe. Israel's GDP has grown. This growth includes the development of natural resources off Israel's shores and in the Golan Heights. The most recent growth estimate for 2014 was 2.9 percent, smaller than previously expected, but recorded in a year that included a 50-day war. The average growth among OECD countries was 1.9 percent. Median income has been increasing as well. Similarly, according to financial news reports, the material resources available to Jews in the Diaspora also grew.

Nevertheless, a number of concerns present themselves. The first, which found some expression in the recent Israeli elections, has to do with the high cost of living and income disparities there. Inadequate investment in the future, both in Israel and the Diaspora, is a second concern.

This year's assessment of the sources and uses of Jewish wealth will thus consider four topics of importance to the Jewish people's current and

future well-being. First, we will discuss economic growth both in Israel and the Diaspora. Then we will look at Israel's high cost of living and income disparities among its populace. A short discussion of Haredi welfare in Israel as new measures for economic integration have come into place (and could disappear as a consequence of the electoral outcome) will follow. And finally, we address the supply and demand interplay for Jewish life in the United States, and what seems to be an underinvestment in the Jewish future.

Growth in Jewish Resources in Israel and the Diaspora

2014 was a breakout year for charitable giving in the United States. Strong economic performance shifted the economy out of recovery mode and into a period of normal economic growth. The overall drop in charitable donations brought on by the recession rebounded and reached unprecedented levels of giving. The success of the summer 2014 ALS Ice Bucket Challenge

campaign (an increase of close to \$100 million in donations) put charitable giving in fashion, likely causing a spillover to other charities, including Jewish giving.

According to some estimates, 2015 will likely have a sharp rise in capital project investments by Jewish institutions as many projects were put on hold during the recession.¹ Indeed, many federations report an increase in contributions over the past year.

With regard to Jewish wealth in general, there does not seem to be any indication of a drop in relative

In aggregate measures such as unemployment and GDP growth, Israel compares favorably to almost any European nation in the years since the most recent global economic crisis began

or absolute wealth of the Jewish world. Jewish philanthropists continue to be among the world's wealthiest people. Jewish wealth is extremely diversified across a variety of industries and sectors, protecting Jewish resources from financial volatility in any specific sector. Asset prices, including stock and premium real estate prices have grown significantly since 2009, benefiting the wealthiest sections of the U.S. population.²

The Jewish population, as one of wealthier groups in America, has benefited accordingly.

Economics and Electoral Politics in Israel

Israel's 2015 election as it played out might be seen as struggle for message control. On one side were parties seeking to make the issue of security paramount in the minds of voters while others laid more emphasis on economics, quality of life, and issues of burden sharing. On the face of it, the struggle appears unequal. Although Israel has faced existential threats since its foundation, current turmoil and geopolitical developments seem to emphasize this all the more. On the other hand, its economic achievements since the end of the Second Intifada appear quite enviable. This is especially the case in relative terms. Israel's recent economic performance in aggregate measures such as unemployment and gross domestic product (GDP) growth compares favorably to that of almost any nation in Europe during the seven years since the most recent global economic crisis began.

Yet, the level of discontent over pocketbook issues in Israel is such that the idea of framing an electoral campaign around them did not appear quixotic. The demonstrations during the summer of 2011 by middle class citizens over social and economic issues (principally burden sharing and food and housing costs) revealed a deep discontent. As in any country, there had always been a concern over matters of domestic economy in Israeli politics, but few expected such a vocal and muscular manifestation of distress. One result is that the election of 2013 was unusual in the extent to which economic concerns assumed a large role in

both party platforms and rhetoric. The emergence of Yair Lapid's *Yesh Atid* party with its 19-seat Knesset bloc bore testimony to the latent power of such concerns. And in the March 2015 election results, both *Yesh Atid* and the *Kulanu* party formed around former Likud minister Moshe Kahlon, each of which tended to emphasize the economic concerns of Israel's middle class, scored 21 seats between them.

So which view is correct: the one that sees Israel as an island of economic strength enduring the worst that a global financial crisis could throw its way, or the view that Israel's middle class is struggling against economic currents that are eroding the foundations upon which their lives are built?

The best answer is that both contain elements of truth and therefore support alternative interpretations of Israel's economic well-being.

The national-level economic data appear compelling. The most recent Bank of Israel estimate of GDP growth in 2014 was 2.9 percent.³ This was a decline from the levels of previous years, themselves showing an overall declining trend, but was also recorded in a year that saw a 50-day war with Hamas in Gaza with resulting negative consequences for Israel's production, trade and, most clearly, its tourism industry. While it was feared that the war might have hastened a recession in Israel, a direction toward which it had already seemed to be headed, the latest estimate of GDP growth in the second half of 2014 was an annualized rate of 2.3 percent, in part owing to a strong rebound in the fourth quarter.⁴ By comparison, the average estimated GDP growth

among OECD countries was 1.9 percent for 2014.⁵

The data for other important aggregate measures show similarly positive relative performance. In the latter part of 2014, Israel's unemployment was 15 percent lower than the OECD average. In early 2015, while average inflation was running below 1 percent among OECD countries, it was actually into negative bounds in Israel.⁶ And the tax wedge (the ratio between the amount of taxes paid by an average single worker and the corresponding total labor cost of that worker) was only about 20 percent in Israel compared to an OECD average of close to 40 percent.⁷

So one may present a credible case that concern about Israel's economy is misplaced when looking at the country as a whole. Most tellingly, median income, the income of households at the 50th percentile, has been increasing. But this perspective is only one way of building a case to be judged by voters at the polls. More frequently, political platforms are not built upon economic aggregates. Particularly when intended as means for mobilizing people with similar concerns into a bloc, relative household positions as assessed by individuals may prove more salient. Moreover, it has been noted many times in the past that the situation that leads to greatest political ferment is not one of general economic decline but rather when economic

An Israeli pays the equivalent of 148 months' salary to buy a home – compared to 76 in France, 66 in the U.S., and 64 in Britain

prospects are generally good but fall short of either the experience or expectations of individuals and identifiable groups within the population.

In 2011, Israel's year of mass public protest over cost of living, the price level in Israel was 5 percent above that of the OECD on average. In 2014, the difference had risen to 12 percent, as calculated by OECD, despite high profile efforts to deal with systemic causes of high prices, such as the limited number of competitors in the distribution chain for consumer goods or the release of more land for housing. Surely, a major contributory factor

Figures on increasing income disparity in Israel suggest that a larger number of households may be finding themselves losing ground; relatively few are gaining

to this rise has been the increasing price of housing.

Just prior to the 2015 elections, State Comptroller Joseph Shapira released a report on the country's housing crisis.⁸ Between 2008 and 2013 the cost of buying an apartment rose by 55 percent in relative terms, with rental prices up by around 30 percent during the same period.

Housing costs, which increased, on average, 2 percent annually between 1967 and 2008, grew by an annual average of 9 percent from 2008 to 2013. In practice, this requires an Israeli to pay the equivalent of 148 months' salary to buy a home, compared to 76 in France, 66 in the United States, and 64 in Britain.⁹

The state comptroller warned of deleterious consequences for both the middle class and the disadvantaged: "The burden of housing expenditure may have far-reaching implications for the life and well-being of the individual, and his economic robustness. If these trends continue, they could adversely affect the whole economy."¹⁰

The report stated that ministries acted without a multi-year strategic plan and without setting policy goals.

Similarly, the aggregate economic data of GDP growth and low rate of unemployment mask growing disparities in Israel. In 2011, the last year for which comparable data exist, only Chile, Mexico, Turkey, and the U.S. scored higher than Israel in measures of income inequality. In terms of disposable income inequality, after government taxes and transfers, Israel is second only to the United States among the 34 OECD countries. The ratio of disposable income between an individual in the 90th percentile and an individual in the 50th percentile (i.e., the median) in Israel is 2.32, the highest of all 34 OECD countries. Similarly, the ratio between an Israeli in the 50th percentile and one in the 10th percentile is 2.75. Here as well, Israel tops the list in terms of the largest gap between the two.¹¹

These reports and findings suggest that one way to resolve the paradoxical result of having two different narratives being derived from the same set of economic statistics is to look deeper into matters of definition. Looking at aggregates and median values provides convenient shorthand for economists who find it expedient to term the groups lying between

the 25th and 75th income percentiles as middle class. But this artificial construct differs from how sociologists or demographers might group households for comparisons of well-being.

Instead of grouping by post facto economic outcomes, social scientists have an interest in understanding how such outcomes may result from deeper proximate causes. In particular, households may be separated into groups by relevant characteristics shown by empirical studies to have influence on earnings. These would include the age, educational attainment, occupation, and ethnicity of household heads. Having done so with U.S. data, a recent paper from the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank showed evidence of more downward economic pressure on households expected to be likely middle earners than revealed by standard measures of income and wealth.

A similar effect may possibly be at work in Israel as one of the most heterogeneous societies in the world. Even within just its majority Jewish population, the dimensions of economic, cultural, educational, and social difference are staggering. If there are those who because of age (the young everywhere are low income earners and are notoriously disadvantaged in today's housing market in Israel,) education, profession and ethnicity feel themselves increasingly to be squeezed by economic conditions running counter to their own ability to thrive, the effect may both be real and a cause for further attention despite the economic prosperity Israel has experienced as a whole.

The figures on increasing income disparity in Israel suggest that a larger number of households may be finding themselves losing ground while a relative few are gaining. The more Israelis who find themselves shut off from the benefits of prosperity, the greater the political pressures may grow in years to come for policies to enhance competition at the expense of cartels, liberalize the banking and construction markets, improve transportation infrastructure further, and increase access to educational and economic opportunity.

The coalition agreement between Likud and Kulanu, led by Moshe Kahlon, shows the incoming finance minister's focus on three major issues: housing, the banking system and food prices. Kahlon wishes to break the governmental near-monopoly and redistribute lands to rental housing agencies and the Jewish National Fund. Moreover, according to the agreement, all public tenders of state land must be done in the framework of the government's *mekhir lamishtaken* ("price for new residents") affordable housing program (In the beginning of July 2015, the special ministerial Housing Cabinet has approved this step).¹² In addition, 80 percent of the resulting homes will be reserved for first-time buyers. The agreement also outlines ways to

The Coalition Agreement: a rollback of provisions intended to enhance economic integration of the Haredi community

eliminate impediments in urban renewal projects and to reduce construction costs.¹³

Kahlon has also pressed for the separation of banks from credit card businesses. Credit card companies in Israel now only offer high-interest loans that do not pose a real competition to bank loans. Kahlon has argued that credit card issuers need to compete with the banks for making consumer loans. He is also examining ways to promote competition in credit issuance such as establishing an independent credit rating system or "banking ID card" and launching the use of debit cards in Israel.¹⁴

In direct terms, reinstatement of child allowances to prior levels could cost 2.6-3.0 billion NIS per year

There have been plans dating back as far as 1966 to establish a central food authority to replace 15 government bodies currently monitoring food making and sales. The goal is to bring down prices and improve quality by eliminating agencies that often compete with each other and claim overlapping authority.

The proposed food authority, an idea that was raised after the social-justice protests in 2011, would set standards for growing, selling, transporting, and storing food.¹⁵

Haredi Poverty

The previous Israeli government, elected in 2013, was characterized by the absence of the traditional religious parties from the coalition. For the first time in many election cycles, these parties found themselves outside the government and in the opposition instead. Right-wing Habayit Hayehudi was provided with ministerial portfolios but its economic platform is markedly different from that of the parties representing the ultra-religious (Haredi) electorate - United Torah Judaism and Shas. This made it possible for the government and the 19th Knesset to pass legislation the ultra-religious had long viewed as inimical to their interests, including the curtailment of exemptions from IDF conscription and reductions in child support subsidies to large families.

Actual changes made by the government elected in 2013 regarding programs of exception (conscription) or subvention (child allowances) were both less than their advocates hoped but more than the Haredi parties could stomach. The 2015 election was characterized by extreme statements made by Haredi leaders against the most recent minister of finance, Yair Lapid. Their two main goals in the 2015 election were to reverse both their political exile and the harsh treatment they view as having been decreed against them by the state. Curiously, the issue of burden sharing which played such a significant part in the rise of Yesh Atid and in the tenure of its chairman, Yair Lapid, as minister of finance was not as prominent in 2015 as before in the rhetoric of his party.

The debate will continue into the coming years. The composition of the ruling coalition may determine whether policy continues to follow

its recent course at a greater or lesser pace, or is rolled back significantly. The coalition agreement Netanyahu signed with United Torah Judaism in early May 2015 bespeaks a complete rollback of the provisions intended to enhance economic integration of the Haredi community. Reports of the agreement include, most prominently, reinstatement of prior levels and conditions for child allowances, which affect all disadvantaged Israelis, and elimination of pressures to serve in the IDF, which targets the Haredi community directly.

In direct terms, reinstatement of child allowances to prior levels could cost the treasury ₪2.6-3.0 billion per year. Of greater concern might be the indirect effects of these two measures, particularly with respect to employment and poverty. Israel's National Insurance Institute (NII) reports that in large part as a consequence of rollbacks to child allowances in 2002-2003 there was a measurable increase in employment and a decrease in poverty among those families headed by adults capable of work over the ensuing decade.¹⁶ In a similar spirit, the government, in a special session, has just rolled back the requirement that daycare subsidies be given to families in which both parents are employed. This requirement has resulted in a 70 percent increase in Haredi men's employment over the last two years.¹⁷

This does not mean that reducing child allowances is a panacea for poverty. The same NII report also makes clear that households headed by adults incapable of work have seen a worsening of conditions. And rates of poverty among families with two wage earners have actually deteriorated as well. This second trend brings skills into the equation. Typically, such impoverished

households are largely in the Haredi and Arab sectors. Often these second earners are entering the labor market for the first time with minimal marketable skills. A reduction of the requirement for Haredi youth to serve in IDF eliminates what has been seen as one of the best transition paths from unskilled labor or unemployment to more individually fruitful participation in the economy. In addition, the coalition agreement promises to promote legislation to circumvent the Supreme Court ruling barring full-time yeshiva students (who are not working) from receiving welfare payments, thus keeping them further away from the labor market.

This also introduces a recursive problem. The combination of higher benefits with reduced labor participation will also increase budgetary outlays while reducing tax revenues, thus putting those very benefits once more at risk.

There are figures to support the hypothesis of change in educational integration, even in the short term. Comparing the 2012-2013 academic year, during which the last government increased the pressure on the Haredim to engage with the general society, to the estimated figures for the most recent year, the number of students in Haredi academic programs increased markedly. Most striking was the increase in male attendees, up by more than 80 percent in two years.

Demand has increased for enrichment experiences as more U.S. Jewish households seek transformative experiences for their children

Table 1. Attendance in Haredi academic programs of higher education, by gender and year

	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015 (est.)
Male	1,218	2,059	2,223
Female	2,360	3,274	3,950
TOTAL	3,578	5,333	6,173

Source: Planning and Budgeting Committee of the Council for Higher Education.

Increasing the disincentives to staying outside the national labor market as a result of recent (and potential further) government actions are most likely not the sole reason for the results shown in the table. Almost certainly they also represent the result of more positive efforts to increase the means of access and enhanced opportunity focused on the community. Nevertheless, in negotiating a reduction in the economic and civil pressures the Haredi community found so objectionable, the community’s political leadership may well run the risk of negotiating their constituents back into poverty.¹⁸

The Cost of Jewish Life Experience in the United States

JPPI’s focus on the dimension of material resources is a vehicle for raising questions about the sources and uses of Jewish wealth as applied to the concerns of the Jewish people as a whole. Education must necessarily be a central theme in any such consideration and doubly so: it has traditionally served as one of the main avenues through which Jews have prospered within

societies often indifferent or inimical to Jewish economic advancement, while at the same time education in and of itself has been a pillar upon which all Jewish communities have built throughout the centuries.

A variation on the theme of education is the increasing recognition of the role early-age educational and Jewish life experiences play in the formation of Jewish identity. As discussed elsewhere in this Annual Assessment,¹⁹ this realization has been accompanied by increased demand for enrichment experiences as more U.S. Jewish households seek such transformative experiences for their children. A bottleneck in supply may also be emerging. This both causes and is caused by a spiraling rise in the cost of such experiences.

Data from the Pew Research Center’s 2013 Portrait of Jewish Americans provide some insight. The survey asked, “*Aside from formal education, did any of the children in your household participate during the past year in any other organized Jewish youth programs, such as Jewish day care or nursery school, Jewish youth groups, Jewish day camp or sleep away camp, or other activities?*” Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2. Youth program participation by household group and income category

Group	Income category	Percent responding “yes”
Non-Orthodox	\$150,000+	34
	\$100-\$150,000	32
	\$50-\$100,000	17
	Less than \$50,000	18
	TOTAL	27
Orthodox	\$150,000+	89
	\$100-\$150,000	94
	\$50-\$100,000	80
	Less than \$50,000	52
	TOTAL	72
Total	\$150,000+	39
	\$100-\$150,000	42
	\$50-\$100,000	26
	Less than \$50,000	34
	TOTAL	36

Data: Pew Research Center | Source: Dr. Stephen M. Cohen, research professor of Jewish Social Policy at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, private communication.

We should exercise caution in drawing strong conclusions from these data. For example, the calculated sample error makes the apparent decline at the top income bracket for the Orthodox respondents indistinguishable from a situation in which the top two income groups actually are equivalent in the rate of participation in extra-curricular Jewish activities. Nevertheless, the data is suggestive. Households

with incomes of \$100,000 or more show a higher rate of participation in Jewish enrichment for both the Orthodox and non-Orthodox. This is notable in the decline of percentage participation in the two lower income categories among the Orthodox, small for the \$50-\$100,000 category but large for those households earning the least. Given the nature of many Orthodox communities, we might expect a more

consistent set of values and inclination toward similarity of life patterns than might perhaps be the case among the more heterogeneous “non-Orthodox” category. If income were not a barrier, we might expect similar rates of participation in such programs. Looking at the non-Orthodox group of respondents, the two lowest income categories show participation in Jewish enrichment at a rate almost half that of the two upper income brackets.²⁰

The effect of the high cost of Jewish education and identity programs is greatest in regard to “enrichment” programming. Participation in Jewish schooling is less effected. Only a small minority of non-Orthodox send their children to Jewish schools (10-12 percent) while over 90 percent of the Orthodox do (except for those families earning less than \$50,000 a year.) Apparently Jewish schooling (or lack of it) is far more central to the nature of one's Jewish identity and lifestyle and hence less elastic in terms of economic considerations. Nevertheless, as we have seen in the chapter on identity and identification, supplementary programs such as summer camps can have large effects on adult Jewish identification and continuity. Thus, this data points to the recommendation that funding barriers for such enrichment programs be overcome, especially in the light of the increasing wealth of the Jewish community and that they be made affordable for larger numbers of U.S. Jews.

Endotes

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19. See Identity and Identification chapter in this Annual Assessment
20. The total of all households in the survey shows a less distinctive trend because of the skewing of Orthodox households toward the lower income ranges. The Orthodox represent only about 15% of total Jewish households in the sample but just under half of the households earning less than \$50,000.

PART 3

Featured Articles

13

Violence and Racism between Population Groups in Israel

In this chapter we will describe severe incidents of violence and discrimination between various groups in Israeli society over the past year. We will inquire whether these incidents signal a rise in the frequency of racist phenomena and whether we are witnessing a long-term trend, or alternatively, a local or cyclical increase in violence connected to the current security situation. Similarly, the chapter will address the question of whether one can fold all of the various incidents into one category, and whether the term that is widely used to describe these phenomena, "racism," is, in fact, adequate. Amendment 24 to the Penal Code (1977) and decisions of the Supreme Court supply a clear definition of the term racism. Nevertheless, we shall argue that this definition and the interpretation given to the law, makes discussion

of the issue superficial, causes confusion, and prevents making the appropriate differential response to the various phenomena.

Our discussion will focus upon three different expressions of this phenomenon:

1. The intra-Jewish issue involving different Jewish groups (this touches on the question of the absorption of new immigrants by the veteran population and stresses the cultural gaps between them; and expressions of intolerance between groups that exhibit totally different lifestyles – e.g. secular and ultra-Orthodox Jews);
2. The Jewish-Arab problem (which focuses on the Jewish-Arab national conflict);
3. Terror attacks and extreme violence.

Discrimination, Violence, Racism

Physical violence and verbal aggression, denying or abrogating the rights of citizens or certain populations based on origin, external appearance, religion, or culture are unacceptable and endanger Israeli society. These actions deserve the strongest condemnation, denunciation, and punishment. But should these actions, in all cases, be classified as racism? And what are the consequences of the sweeping use of this term to describe other phenomena within Israeli society, such as ultra-nationalism?

The murder of the three boys from Gush Etzion and the chain of events that followed were seen by many as an earthquake in Israeli society

Discussion of this question arises from the recent widespread use of the term "racism," both in the Israeli media and public discourse, to describe a wide range of behaviors that result in discrimination. There is no disagreement over the need to deal with and eradicate these phenomena, but it must be understood that the

reckless use of the term "racism" is liable to harm the State of Israel in two areas:

1. Internationally – in regard to other countries, and in regard to Diaspora Jewry, making a sweeping charge of racism against Israel, and presenting many different incidents under the same umbrella,

contributes to the de-legitimization of Israel, as well as the distancing of young liberal Jews who express abhorrence at some Israeli policies.

2. Internally – the lack of distinction and caution trivialize a complex state of affairs and make it very hard to understand the problems that lie at the heart of different phenomena, and to formulate relevant policy. This harms the ability to put forward operative policy measures, and, in the long term, may lead to the spread of these phenomena rather than reducing them.

An Earthquake in Israeli Society – Really?

This past May, hundreds of Ethiopian immigrants demonstrated in the streets of Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Ashkelon, and Haifa to protest the ongoing discrimination and racism they feel directed against them. The demonstrations broke out following a documented incident that took place on April 27, during which an Israel Police officer and a police volunteer beat an Ethiopian soldier who, as they saw it, refused to listen to their directives. A video documenting the incident brought allegations of discrimination against Ethiopian-Israelis by the police in particular, and Israeli society in general, to the top of the national agenda. The many allegations voiced at the time, and the events described in the media, present a sad picture of intolerance, discrimination, and sometimes even serious

physical violence against this community.*

This wave of demonstrations, and the media headlines screaming "racism" were a direct follow up to a wide range of violent incidents – physical and verbal – that had produced similar headlines, damaging the delicate fabric of Israeli society over the past year. At the end of June 2014 three young Israeli boys were kidnapped and murdered in Gush Etzion. The kidnap and murder, and the chain of events that followed, were seen by many as an earthquake or fault line in Israeli society. At the beginning of July, when the bodies were found, incitement and violence (on the part of both Jews and Arabs) spread among broad sections of the public: starting with the websites and social networks, through riots by extremists – mainly in the streets of Jerusalem, expressions by public figures, and continuing on to physical attacks. This wave came to a climax (but not an end) on July 2, when three young Jewish men kidnapped and murdered Mohammed Abu Khdeir, a 16-year-old Palestinian from the village of Shuafat.¹ The events of the summer, including Operation Protective Edge in Gaza, continued to inflame spirits and led to additional injuries. (Police figures show that during July 2014 alone 150 cases were opened in connection with disorderly conduct and Jewish ultra-nationalist crimes, as compared with 50 cases in June 2014,

and 44 in July 2013. The figures regarding Arab disorderly conduct and ultra-nationalist crime also shot up during the same period: in July 2014, 1186 cases were opened for rioting and Arab ultra-nationalist crimes, as compared with 682 in June 2014, and 531 in July 2013). The general feeling that spread throughout the public, and was expressed (some would even say inflamed) by the traditional and digital media, was that racism, which has existed here since the establishment of the state, had reached unprecedented heights.

Later on, after the war in the south had died down, a further number of serious incidents were recorded (many of them – although not all – led by members of the extreme right wing organization Lehava, whose name stands for 'Preventing Assimilation in the Holy Land' and whose official mission is preventing intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews), including violent rioting following the highly publicized and stormy wedding between a Jewish woman and Arab man in August 2014; arson at the Hand in Hand Bilingual School in Jerusalem in November 2014;

Various incidents led a wide range of organizations and agencies – state and private – to try to find a solution

* It should be noted that protests and tensions like these accompanied the absorption of many groups in Israeli society, for example – the 1958 Wadi Salib riots (involving immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East). The historical record, however, shows that despite tensions between immigrants and the veteran population, in the long run all of the immigrant groups have succeeded in entering the Israeli political, social, and economic mainstream.

the escalation of violence against public transport drivers (Jews and Muslims), discussed in the Labor, Welfare and Health Knesset committee in December 2014; the “Taxi Affair” (the demand that the drivers of ordered taxis should not be Arab) in January 2015, and so on.

After having gone to press, during the last week in July, two horrific violent hate crimes occurred: The stabbing of six people, including the murder of 16 year old Shira Banki at the Gay Pride parade in Jerusalem and the arson of the Dawabshe family house in the Palestinian village Duma,

The most conspicuous tension between population groups is between Arabs and Jews

which resulted in the death of the infant Ali and his father Saad. In regard to the incident in the Palestinian village of Duma, since the perpetrators have not been caught, (though they were apparently Jewish terrorists), we cannot establish with certainty the reasons for the crime, however we cannot rule out the possibility of an

attack of racist or ultra-nationalist background. Regarding the murder at the Gay Pride Parade, according to the alleged murderer, he acted on the basis of hatred of the other and homophobia. The alleged murderer, Yishai Schlissel, was freed from prison three weeks before the attack, after serving a ten-year sentence for perpetrating a similar attack in 2005. Following the incident, the chief of police appointed a commission of inquiry to

examine how the police force operated in relation to this incident. It appears that the Report of the Commission recommended taking disciplinary steps against senior police officers.²

These events led a wide range of organizations and agencies – state and private – to try and find some way to reduce these phenomena, if not do away with them altogether. Among other things, specific programs initiated by the Ministry of Education (for example, “The Other is Me,” “Key to the Heart – coping with tolerance, preventing racism, and living together in the education system”);³ the opening of a special complaints call center at the Ministry of Justice, and a joint digital campaign of the Ministry of Justice and the outgoing president called “Look Me in the Eye”; public expressions by the incoming and outgoing presidents at a variety of events; initiatives by Knesset members and political parties;⁴ special discussions in Knesset committees,⁵ and more.

A Trend toward Extremism, or a Rising and Falling Cycle?

An examination of the violent incidents in the context of racism relates to tensions between different population groups. Prominent among them, especially against the background of last summer’s events, is the tension between Arabs and Jews. The Israel Police, the only official collector of data on the subject, changed its method of classifying violent incidents between Jews and Arabs at the beginning of 2013. Therefore, at this stage, it is not possible to examine long-term trends, only specific data covering the last two

years. It should be emphasized that the Israel Police has no category of crime labeled “racist,” but it does have an “**ultra-nationalist**” crime category.

This is an important point as the majority of crimes discussed in the Israeli media and public discourse were described as racist offenses.

Police cases opened for offenses under the rubric of disorderly conduct and/or ultra-nationalist (Jewish and Palestinian), broken down into districts, 2013/14⁶

District	Palestinian nationalist offenses 2013	Jewish nationalist offenses 2013	Palestinian nationalist offenses 2014	Jewish nationalist offenses 2014
Southern district	107	6	201	9
Jerusalem district	187	56	546	71
Central district	8	4	127	33
Northern district	1	8	164	103
Judea and Samaria district	5081	497	5754	421
Tel Aviv district	2	3	29	14
Border police	17		15	4
Coastal district	4		128	31
Total	5407	574	6964	686
Total excl. Judea and Samaria district	326	77	1210	265

It can be seen that during 2014, the number of violent ultra-nationalist incidents increased threefold among both sides, Jews and Arabs (without Judea and Samaria, which considerably distorts the picture), jumping from 77 to 265 among Jews, and from 326 to 1210 among Israeli Arabs.

During the months of June through August 2014, the number of Jewish ultra-nationalist criminal cases opened stood at 137, and the number of Palestinian ultra-nationalist cases opened was 617, both figures were significantly higher than those for 2013.

*Cases opened in respect of offenses for which the underlying motivation was
Palestinian / Israeli disorderly conduct, enemy actions and Arab ultra-nationalist offenses,
by district, June - August (inclusive) 2014*

District	Palestinian ultra-nationalist offenses	Jewish ultra-nationalist offenses
Intelligence and investigations	1	2
Southern district	111	6
Coastal district	88	23
Jerusalem district	195	18
Central district	104	27
Northern district	89	54
Judea and Samaria district	1962	97
Tel Aviv district	18	4
Border police	11	3
Total	2579	234
Total excl. Judea and Samaria district	617	137

The Israel Police is the only body collecting data on the violence perpetrated by both sides, that is, Jewish ultra-nationalist offenses and Arab ultra-nationalist offenses. Other data collected on such offenses, by a number of different entities studying the subject, usually do not distinguish between victim and perpetrator, but present data on Israeli society, in which there is a Jewish majority.

The Coalition against Racism in Israel,* which independently monitors the data, relates to incidents and not to cases opened by the police. *The Racism Report 2015*, parts of which were released to the public on July 14, 2015, presents, among other things, a comparison between the number of incidents of racism between 2008 and 2015. Below are data relevant to citizen-on-citizen racist incidents:

* The Coalition against Racism in Israel is a non-profit organization established at the initiative of the Mossawa Center for the Rights of Arab Citizens in Israel. As of the time of this report, over 40 organizations belonged to the coalition, most of them human rights organizations.

Details of incidents of racism broken down by subject for the years 2008 – 2015⁷

Expressions of racism	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Racist legislation	11	12	21	24	35	20	16	9
Racism by elected figures and leaders of public opinion					60	107	22	31 (24 during the election period)
Harm to freedom of action of leaders of the Arab public	27	23	19	73	37	22	4	Not included in the report
Injury to religious sensitivity	8	9	9	26	13	24	10	Not included in the report
Racism by state institutions, businesses, and private and public organizations					160	213	139	Not included in the report
Racism between citizens					53	114	82	65 incidents during Protective Edge 62 during the rest of the year A total of 127 cases
Racism and violence by security forces					59	24	55	66 (55 against Arab citizens; 11 against citizens of Ethiopian origin)
Racism by educational institutions and academia					37	34	19	Not included in the report
Racism in sports		39	65	21	55	78	59	To be published at a later date
Racism against the Russian-speaking population						14	17	To be published at a later date

We present the above data with some reservations. The Coalition against Racism in Israel is the only body collecting data today on the number of incidents, and the only organization that classifies them in an orderly manner. At the same time, the methodology by which the data are collected and processed is problematic for the following reasons:

1. As the authors of the report themselves note, it is difficult to outline a full and comprehensive picture based on the data presented. This is because the report's authors rely broadly

The Coalition Against Racism in Israel is the only body collecting and categorizing data today, but their methodology is problematic

on media reports and cases for which they have personal knowledge. There is no structured and detailed methodology that can be reviewed or considered.

2. The authors do not suggest operational definitions for measuring the phenomenon, but rely instead on very

broad definitions relating to a wide range of phenomena. This creates a situation in which some of the cases are questionable – are they in fact racism, or something else, no matter how opprobrious? For example, in their 2013 report, a variety of cases very different from each other in terms of motive, target, and the nature of the incident were presented under the rubric of "racism" : a) Hard core racism

expressed by public relations people before a party at a club on Kibbutz Yagur: "No way are we putting Aboutbuls and Hudedas on the entry list."; b) The fight for the Western Wall continues, and today it has reached the home of one of the activists in the organization [...] On the walls of the stairwell malicious graffiti was sprayed, such as "Torah Tag," "The Western Wall is not forfeit," and "Holy Jerusalem"; c) A first grade student, whose classmates mocked and belittled her, tried to take her own life. "Right from the start of the school year, my daughter was exposed to serious verbal violence," her mother says. "The children belittle her and call her 'black,' 'Sudanese,' saying 'May you die, you and your family,' 'leave this country,' and so on. I talked to her teacher, we involved professionals, but it did not help..."; d) Nissim Badran claims that he was prevented from entering a Jewish school without any security check because he is an Arab: "I have never seen such racism. She told me, with such a cheek, you're not coming in without being checked, you're an Arab [...] The truth is that I've never seen such racism in my life but I am not surprised, because racism is increasing in Israel and we have already gotten used to it."

As mentioned, some of the incidents given as examples here, and in the report itself, prompt questions as to the definition of "racism." In addition, the absence of an operational definition also makes it difficult for the authors to remain consistent in terms of the examples they present.

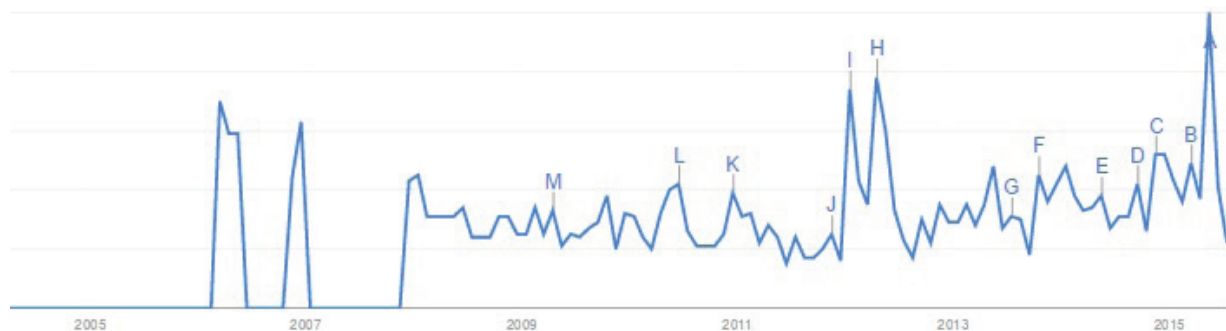
A third yardstick, the attitude questionnaire, is used by many researchers, and also focuses, like police data, on tensions between Jews and Arabs and not on different groups within the Jewish population. One of the oldest and most respected of them is Prof. Sammy Smootha's, "Still playing by the rules: Index of Arab-Jewish relations in Israel." Smootha's index has examined the attitudes of Arabs and Jews toward each other, and toward the state, on 16 key issues since 2003. The last report, as of this writing, was published in June 2014 and relates to the year 2013. It offers a range of questions examining, among other things, the image of each of the populations in the eyes of the other, the sense of threat, interpersonal relations between the groups, and the degree of participation and integration of the Arab minority in Israeli society.

The subject of racism is mentioned explicitly in the question on the image of the other group. According to the data of the latest, the rate of respondents who were of the opinion that the

majority of Jews in Israel are racist, was high (51.4 percent), but this is a significant decrease from the previous year (69.5 percent); it was 55.7 percent in 2003. In answer to questions relating to coexistence, and examining attitudes toward the state rather than toward its Jewish citizens, more than half of Arabs (56.1 percent) saw Israel as a racist state. Here too, the index for 2013 reveals a decrease, although modest: the data for 2012 indicated that 67.2 percent felt that Israel is a racist country, while in 2003 66.8 percent felt this way.⁸

The last, relatively new index used as an indirect yardstick to examine the phenomenon can be produced with the help of Google Trends. This service makes it possible to examine and present in graphic form the number of times a certain expression or phrase was searched for on Google. (There are certain reservations with regard to the ability of this index to present all the complex aspects of the phenomenon, but it can certainly create an initial assessment.)

Results of the Google search for the term גזנות ("gizanut" is racism in Hebrew)⁹



The data offered in these four sources of information present a mixed picture. The Police data show a sharp increase in violent incidents between Jewish and Arab citizens between 2013 and 2014, mainly during the summer. The three other information sources on Jewish-Arab friction show a cyclical trend that rises and falls, but they do not go sufficiently far back, and are not sufficiently consistent – both in terms of methodology and operational definitions – to use them in determining whether we are talking about a gradually intensifying trend or a periodic phenomenon that has high points and low points.

Racism, Ultra-Nationalism, and Political Violence

Politicians, journalists, public figures, and academics use the term “racism,” although few clarify what they mean

An in-depth analysis of the reasons and motivations leading to the wave of violence, anger and hatred in each of the cases described above can indicate a number of points of similarity, but perhaps most important of all, important differences in the circumstances and factors. The same is true

with an in-depth analysis of the different incidents in the Racism Report of the Coalition against Racism in Israel.

Nevertheless, in the Israeli public arena as in the international arena, the term “racism” is

increasingly deployed to describe a wide range of different manifestations of discrimination and violence against different groups in society. Thus, there were attempts to connect the murder of Shira Banki at the Gay Pride Parade, despite its explicit connection to homophobia, also to racism.¹⁰ Politicians, journalists, public figures, and academics have used and continue to use the term, although few of them clarify just what they mean. It appears that the majority starts with the assumption that the target audience they are addressing understands the term in the same way and with the same meaning as they do. At the same time, there are cases in which the speakers maintain a deliberate vagueness in order to promote political or other objectives.

Racism is not a new subject for discussion in Israeli society. In the first decades after the establishment of the state, racism, in its social – not necessarily biological – meaning, was a relatively marginal phenomena and the term “*gizanut*” (Hebrew for racism) was hardly heard in public debate. The Jewish-Arab conflict was described in national terms, and the internal cultural disputes, mainly between Mizrahim and Ashkenazim, were described as “an argument within the family.” The entire debate was based on social and sociological differences and not on a biological basis.¹¹ That said, it is interesting to note that beginning in 1971, a group of young Mizrahim, angry at the discrimination against them, organized into a political protest movement and called themselves the Black Panthers (*HaPanterim HaShhorim* in Hebrew). The fact that they appropriated the name from the anti-racism African-American

group suggests that they did perceive the discrimination against them as racism.

The majority of researchers identify the late 1970s as a turning point in the discussion of racism in Israel, when a stormy public debate broke out after the Kach party, headed by Rabbi Meir Kahane, ran in the elections for the 11th Knesset (1974), calling, among other things, for the transfer of Arab residents out of the State of Israel. Ahead of the elections, the Central Elections Committee disqualified Kach, but the party appealed and the High Court of Justice accepted its arguments.¹² In the course of the trial, the court related to the movement's racist positions.¹³ In the wake of this public debate in July 1985, it was decided that special measures should be taken to protect the character of the state and its fundamental values.

At around the same time, two Knesset bills were drafted with the aim of eradicating racism: an amendment to Basic Law (the Knesset, Article 7a) by which a list of candidates may not participate in Knesset elections, and a person may not stand for election to the Knesset "if the objectives or actions of the list, or the actions of the person, as applicable, explicitly or implicitly incite to racism"; and Amendment 24 to the Penal Code, presenting a definition of racism: "persecution, humiliation, content, expressions of enmity, hostility or violence, or causing contention against a public or parts of the population because of color or racial affiliation or national-ethnic origin."¹⁴

Amendment 24 is, in fact, Israel's only official definition of racism. It should be noted, in this context, that in 1965, Israel joined and signed the

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.¹⁵ This charter defines racial discrimination as "any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, or any other field of public life."

In 1986, public debate around the term "racism" came to the fore once again. Discussions in the media emphasized the meaning given to the term racism by the Israeli public – an extreme form of nationalism, contempt, and hatred of minorities. In public discussion, the term was used in the same way to describe actions or attitudes that had been defined or considered up to that point as "ultra-nationalism."

In 1988, when giving his ruling in the second Neiman case,¹⁶ the president of the Supreme Court at the time, Meir Shamgar, rejected Kach's claim that racism relates only to distinction and segregation on a biological basis. Based on Israeli and international law, Shamgar wrote: "This argument is unfounded. As we have seen, the definition in the Penal Code also relates to prohibited actions, as defined there, upon a

The "Kach" argument that the term "racism" relates only to discrimination on biological grounds was rejected by Supreme Court rulings in 1988 and 1996

background of different ethnic origin. The same is true of the definition in the International Charter with regard to elimination of all the above forms of racial discrimination, and also in the laws of many countries... persecution in all its forms, on national grounds, is included nowadays in the accepted meaning of the phenomenon of racism."¹⁷

During the early 1990s, immigrants from the Former Soviet Union and Ethiopia arrived in Israel en masse. That same period also saw an intensification of the public debate about racism in Israel. Two competing definitional frameworks

Discussions on racism have been used as a powerful tool in the hands of various bodies to de-legitimize Israel in the international arena

were advanced: 1. Racism without race, focusing on the socio-political dimension (as suggested by MK Avraham Burg in December 1992. The definition proposed by Burg expands the concept of racism so that it also encompasses different typologies of social inequality); 2. An attempt to return to the narrower, biologically-

based definition.¹⁸

In a 1996 Supreme Court ruling (*Elba v. the State of Israel*), which addressed incitement to racism, Justice Matza, following in Justice Shamgar's footsteps, wrote, "In determining the scope of the concept of "racism," we must be careful not to restrict ourselves to technical, scientific, or pseudoscientific ideas about humanity's origins. Racism no longer

consists merely in adherence to the infamous racialism doctrine. Racism is any form of groundless hatred of the other due to his being other, whether against a background of racial or of national-ethnic difference."¹⁹ During the period in question the racism debate expanded and the term came to encompass a variety of phenomena, including xenophobia, demonization, and the disenfranchisement of minority groups. These usages gained currency through a number of judicial mechanisms and political negotiations.²⁰

When the Second Intifada and the Temple Mount riots erupted in late 2000, the concept of racism gained yet another dimension in public discourse. "Institutional racism" – discriminatory legislation – appeared on the public agenda. Despite the gradual disappearance of the biological definition of racism from global discourse, Israel still concerns itself with both biological distinctions and expressions of ultra-nationalism.

Language as a Tool for Change

Although many of the incidents that today's media portray as racist do fall within the category set forth in the Penal Code, the present definition does not delineate clear boundaries. It is a frequent cause of confusion and inconsistency, and hampers the formulation of commonly accepted criteria for quantifying the phenomenon and assessing its scope. Moreover, it could potentially cause real damage to Israel and its citizens on two planes – international and domestic:

1. On the international plane – defamation of Israel in the eyes of other peoples and of Diaspora Jewry.

Many of those involved in the study of racism agree that “racism” is not an objective term with clear boundaries, but rather a vague, emotionally and politically-charged term that is frequently used to censure, to shape policy and public opinion, and to construct social relations. The term’s power in political discourse is not connected merely to historical memory, but also to other aspects of the discourse, including human rights and social inequality.²¹ Racism is an illegitimate phenomenon, one that contradicts democratic and liberal values; it cannot be justified. The main argument is that racism discourse oversimplifies the complex problems that shape Israeli reality and, in the hands of certain organizations, serves as a powerful tool for de-legitimizing Israel in the international arena.

The change in the discourse on racism in Israel has been influenced both by internal trends – the internal Israeli debate on the phenomenon of racism in Israel, and by external trends – the international debate on the racism attributed to Israelis, which traces its lineage at least as far back as 1975 and UN Resolution 3379 (although this resolution was rescinded 16 years later, it had already become embedded in UN discourse) – the public and the establishment – toward various groups in the population.²²

This change in internal Israeli discourse was deeply influenced by the global discourse, which in those years also widened. However, while in many other countries the discourse served mainly in the

internal sphere, in the same terms in which the organizations that adopted the Israeli discourse thought – that is to say, with the aim of advancing democratic and liberal values – in Israel, which has been in an existential conflict for many years, this discourse also served as a deliberate strategy and as an additional tool to undermine and damage Israel’s legitimacy, values and the fact of its existence.

Various entities hostile to Israel throughout the world have acted to exploit the inherent vagueness of the term “racism” and its great political power to broaden the phenomenon beyond reasonable and normative proportions as part of a wider campaign to damage Israel’s moral image.

Conjecture that this is a deliberate strategy, is confirmed by the words of the Fatah’s representative in Lebanon, published in September 2010 in the *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida* newspaper: “Israel will not be defeated in one blow, but through the accumulation of Palestinian achievements and struggles – like in South Africa – to isolate Israel, tighten the noose around its neck, threaten its legitimacy, **and present it as a rebellious and racist state**” [our emphasis].

Thus, racism is not a neutral term but one that carries a powerful charge, with an embedded

Referring to a wide variety of incidents under the heading “racism” prevents getting at the root of the problem and understanding its complexity

ideology, worldview, and political agenda. Its power derives from its use as a code word for colonialism and the exploitative power dynamics that have been part and parcel of relations between privileged main cultures (white colonizers) and minority groups (colonized people of color). Ultimately, its truck is in its associative power, its implicit historical reference to institutionalized involuntary servitude and subservience, and its subversive binary reduction of human beings into two classes: masters and slaves, oppressors and victims.

Zionism and Israel are compared and even identified with the sins of the 20th century, including colonialism and racism

Racism is an especially loaded opprobrium to American ears because of the centrality of racial narratives in U.S. history (both in terms of African-Americans and Native Americans). American Jews take pride in their historical association with the civil rights movement, and their liberal credentials generally. Much discussion has been given to what some

have called a “distancing” of American Jews from Israel (particularly the younger generation). While the nature of this “distancing” phenomenon is still very much tied to conjecture, we would suggest that the conflation of America’s ongoing racial difficulties with the Israel-Palestine conflict has exacerbated it. The plight of the Palestinians was highlighted in the recent racial protests in

Ferguson, New York, Baltimore, and elsewhere. (See the chapter “U.S. College Campuses and Israel De-Legitimization – in Perspective” in this Annual Assessment.)

In contrast, the concept of “prejudice,” which according to the classic definition of American psychologist Gordon Allport describes very similar, sometimes even identical phenomena, is a softer term, which assumes that the phenomena described are correctable, and that circumstances – in the Israeli context, for example, the continued struggle with the Arab world, have a great influence on it.

The comparison and identification of Zionism and Israel with the sins of the 20th century, among them colonialism and racism, may appear to match the values accepted in the entire Western world, including in Israel where voices of denunciation are also heard, and where there is also a broad public prepared to accept the discourse proposed from outside, even when racism isn’t actually involved.

2. The Internal Israeli Debate

The debate in the international arena is not the only one in which, because of careless use of the term racism, the damage is greater than the benefit. In the domestic arena too – in the internal Israeli debate, this discussion has important ramifications. Referring to a wide variety of phenomena under the heading “racism” empties the discussion of meaning and specificity. In many cases it prevents us from reaching the root of the phenomenon under discussion, and thus hobbles the complexity of a specific incident, or the factors and motives that led to it. Grouping different

cases, regardless of both causation and target, under the imprecise linguistic umbrella “racism,” leads to merely cosmetic or partial solutions.

The Reasons for the Perception that Racist Incidents have Increased in Israel

There may be many reasons for this perception, some of which contain a grain of truth. But it is highly questionable that the events of the last summer actually brought Israeli society to new heights of racism. We point to two main contributing factors to the perceived spike in racism:

1. Increased use of the Internet and social media.

The Internet has in many senses changed the “rules of the game,” including the viral spread of ideas about racism and xenophobia. Some characteristics relevant to this discussion include:

- Reduction in costs and resources – both on the part of whoever is spreading the information and on the part of the consumer;
- Crossing borders of time and space (information diffusion) – speed, extent and breadth of dispersion;
- The possibility of remaining anonymous or changing identities;
- The ability to bypass accuracy supervision and enforcement mechanisms.

In the first years of the Internet, researchers thought that its inherent anonymity would

conceal “race” or membership in a distinct group. In practice, anonymity has not made the phenomenon vanish, but has, rather, reinforced it. Virtual anonymity enables expressions and frictions from the real world to become exaggerated in the online world. Social network users do not have to take responsibility for their contributions (for example they can remain anonymous, use unclear or fictive online profiles, and single individuals can post under multiple online identities).

A systematic analysis of racism in social media is difficult or impossible, both because of the great dynamism that enables material to be uploaded and removed at the push of a button, and because of the vast quantity of information to be surveyed. Most reports and analyses on the subject of online racism, in Israel and throughout the world, do not present quantitative statistical analyses, but qualitative ones, i.e., specific examples cited in pointing out the phenomena. However, an increasing number of studies and papers indicate an increase of the phenomena and its consequences. Since 2013, the Coalition against Racism in Israel has published an annual report that includes examples of racism on the Internet. These examples are anecdotal and cannot reveal the true picture. In their report for 2014 (which

Anonymity provided by the Internet not only increased the phenomenon of racism, but has strengthened

does not relate to Operation Protective Edge), only ten salient examples were discussed.

The Ministry of Public Security does include racist offenses and hate crimes as part of the list of examples of common Internet crimes.²³ However, at the time of this writing, the ministry has no specific program for uncovering or handling the problem of Internet racism, and does not provide data relating to the extent of the phenomenon.

Another possible means of assessing the incidence of racism in Israel is to examine the number of criminal indictments based on Internet publications and statements, mainly in social networks. For instance, regarding the events of the past year, Facebook postings were used by the police to reinforce evidence against suspects in the November 2014 arson attacks on the Bilingual School in Jerusalem.²⁴ In January 2015, a charge was brought in the magistrates' court in Jerusalem against a resident of the village of Aqab for incitement and support of violence and terror; this was mainly based on texts and photographs the accused posted on his Facebook page.²⁵

2. **The Transition from National-Republican Discourse to Universal-Liberal Discourse**

Yoav Peled and Gershon Shafir, in their 2005 book, *Being Israeli: the Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship*, distinguish between three citizenship discourses: republicanism, liberalism, and ethno-nationalism. The republican discourse gives moral preference to the group or society over the individual. According to the liberal view, the individual takes priority, and his or her interests are to be protected, mainly against injury by other individuals or the

state. According to their analysis, the roots of the political culture and constitutional arrangements in Israel were republican – belonging to the Jewish national-ethnic group was an essential condition of membership in the political community, and the collective was central to it (though membership to one degree or another was also extended to non-Jewish groups who contributed to the collective good such as the Druze.) In recent decades, a significant trend of change has taken place, in Israel in particular, and in the Western world in general: neo-liberal economics and policy; becoming part of the global economy; and the sanctification of the rights of the individual.²⁶ These important fluctuations in discourse and ideology challenge existing beliefs and worldviews. Beliefs, events, and behaviors, not thought of as discrimination or racism in the past, have come to be perceived in Israeli and global discourse as problematic. In addition, it can be maintained that to a certain degree, groups with post-Zionist agendas also take advantage of the liberal-universal discourse in order to attack the Jewish-national character of the State of Israel and its institutions, to present Israel as discriminatory and racist, and to advance an agenda of “a state of all its citizens” or a bi-national state.

Endnotes

1. An extensive list of acts of violence by Jews against the Arab public during July 2014 can be found in the blog "Local Conversation": Brown, John, (July 31, 2014), "July Chronicle: a month of violent racist attacks," Local Conversation.
2. Shteif, Hadas, 16/8/2015, "Report of the Commission of Inquiry of the Gay Pride Parade: Intelligence Failure and Non-Obedience of Directives", Galei Tzahal.
3. In August 2013 the Ministry of Education launched the program "The other is me," intended to promote Israel and make it an exemplary country, among other things, by providing an answer to "expressions of division, separation, racism or hatred of the other." From the Ministry of Education website: <http://cms.education.gov.il/EducationCMS/Units/ui/atohnit/>
4. Under the coalition agreement between Yesh Atid and Likud Beitenu, an inter-ministerial committee to fight racism was to have been established 30 days after formation of the 33rd government. The committee was never established. Kashti, Orr, (August 27, 2014), "The first project of President Rivlin: a program to fight incitement and violence," *Haaretz*.
5. For example, a discussion on the subject of security arrangements for public transport drivers working in conflict areas in the framework of the labor, welfare and health committee on December 2, 2014.
6. Source: Police data on cases opened in respect of Israeli disorderly conduct and Jewish /Palestinian nationalist offenses. By offense and district, 2013/14. The data were given under the Freedom of information Law. For greater detail on the breakdown into districts and the boundaries of each district, the Israel Police website, districts and departments: <http://www.police.gov.il/mechuzot.aspx>
7. Racism Report 2015, (July 2015), Coalition against Racism in Israel.
8. Smooha, Sammy, (2015),"Still playing by the rules 2013: Index of Arab-Jewish relations in Israel," The Democracy Library.
9. The results presented are correct to July 2015, for the search word "racism."
10. See for example: "The Detention of the Suspect Accused of Distributing Notifications Praising the Murder of Shira Banki was Extended", *Maariv Online* 3/8/2105, or the statement by Education Minister Naftali Bennet "I will not permit that in the State of Israel, youth will not enter the street because of their lifestyle. We will respond to this attack not only with words but with deeds, in order to empower and give tools and skills to youth who suffer from racism and homophobia in school", (Roi Yanovsky et.al., "A Hate Attack: The Stabber from the Gay Pride Parade a Decade Ago Again Stabbed This Evening and Severely Wounded Participants", *Ynet*, 30/7/2015. <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4685873,00.html>
11. Uri Ben Elizer, 247; Herzog et al. 1096, 1098.
12. Neiman v. the Chair of the Central Elections Committee for the 11th Knesset.
13. *Alba v. State of Israel*, p. 224.
14. Penal Code, Article 144a, Definitions (Amendment 5746).
15. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx> (at the time of signing, Israel dissociated itself from Article 22 of the Charter, making it possible to sue a country that does not comply with the Charter in the International Court, unless the parties to the dispute agree on another compromise.

16. The Neiman affairs - the first and the second - relate to rulings in connection with the Kach movement running in the Knesset elections. Just before the elections for the 11th Knesset, an attempt was made to disqualify the participation of the Kach list on the basis of its racist and anti-democratic platform. Members of the movement appealed the decision in court, and it was determined that there was no basis for their disqualification - this ruling is called the First Neiman Affair. Following the Court of Appeal, as noted, two legislative amendments were passed, the first to the Basic Law, and the second to the Penal Code. On the eve of the elections for the 12th Knesset (1988), the Central Elections Committee decided to disqualify the Kach list, again on the grounds of its racist and anti-democratic platform. In this ruling, called the Second Neiman Affair, the Supreme Court upheld the decision of the committee and determined that the objectives and actions of the list went against the democratic nature of Israel, and were an incitement to violence.
17. EA 1/88 Moshe Neiman v. the Chair of the Central Elections Committee for the 12th Knesset, PD 42(4) 177.
18. Uri Ben Eliezer, 249; Herzog et al., pp. 1102-03.
19. Rabbi Ido Elba v. the State of Israel, p. 227.
20. Herzog et al., *ibid.*
21. Herzog et al. (2008), "Racism and the Politics of Signification: Israeli Public Discourse on Racism towards Palestinian Citizens," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31:6, p. 1092.
22. Allport, Gordon, Michael Ross, (1967), "Personal Religious Orientation and Prejudice," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 432-443.
23. Ministry of Public Security website, Prevention of Crime and Violence, Safe Surfing: Behavior and Dangers in the Social Networks: <http://mops.gov.il/crimeandviolenceprevention/safesurfing/pages/networkdangersnbehavior.aspx>
24. Hasson, Nir (January 13, 2015) "Charges Added in Case of Arson on Jewish-Arab School in Jerusalem," *Haaretz*. Further examples: In August 2014 a resident of Arad was charged for posting inciting comments against Arabs on his Facebook page: Ben Porat, Ido (August 5, 2014) "Incitement to racism on Facebook: 'Al Yahud gang,'" Channel 7 (Arutz Sheva). In the same month a young man from Beer Sheva was charged when after the kidnapping of the three boys he opened a Facebook page named *Aravi gever ze Aravi bakever* ["The only good Arab is a dead Arab"] in which he called for violence against Arabs: Amikam, Itay (August 28, 2014) "Charges against the founder of the Facebook page 'Aravi gever ze Aravi bakever,'" Channel 2 news website: <http://www.mako.co.il/news-law/legal/Article-669053e641c1841004.htm>
25. Oren, Efrat (January 2015), "Announcement by the Jerusalem district prosecutor." On December 22 charges were brought against eight residents of East Jerusalem for incitement to violence in the social networks. In this case, too, the prosecution based the charges mainly on materials posted by the accused, separately, on their Facebook pages. Halperin, Asher (December 22, 2014), "Charge of incitement to violence in the social network," Lada'at, Haredi website, <http://ladaat.info/article.aspx?artid=16872>
26. Peled, Yoav (1993), "Strangers in Utopia: The civil status of the Palestinians in Israel," *Theory and Criticism*, 3, pp. 21-35. Fischer, Shlomo, (2014), "The Crises of Liberal Citizenship: Religion and Education in Israel," in *Religious Education and the Challenge of Pluralism*, Adam B. Seligman (ed.), Oxford Scholarship Online.

Brief Historical Overview: Community Structures and Relations with the Broader Community

The Australian Jewish community today numbers about 112,000 people, the ninth largest Jewish community in the world. It is thriving, and identification with Israel is one of its key features. Since the second half of the 20th century, due to post-war immigration and changing government policies, it has expressed its Judaism more openly and confidently. Nevertheless, it is now starting to face significant challenges, including anti-Semitism and assimilation.

The first Jews arrived as part of Australia's First Fleet – of convict ships – in 1788, so Jews have been present from the beginnings of white settlement. As a small community, it has struggled to maintain its Jewish identity for much of its history.¹ Until the 1930s, the conservative, elitist Anglo-Jewish leadership, which aspired to be more British than the British, dominated Australian Jewry. There was very little cooperation across communities, although the Zionist Federation of Australia was

formed in 1927 and the National Council of Jewish Women in 1929.

The nature and structure of the community changed dramatically as a result of the impact of pre-and post-World War II refugee and survivor immigration. The survivors brought about a rebirth of Jewish life in Australia and a strong commitment to Zionism, radically changing every aspect of communal structure. Anti-refugee hysteria resulted in secret administrative practices that restricted Jewish refugee and survivor migration.²

Until the 1930s, the only form of Judaism was a diluted form of Anglo-Jewish orthodoxy. Progressive Judaism was established first in Melbourne with Temple Beth Israel (1931) and Temple Emanuel in Sydney (1938) and developed rapidly after 1945. Progressive congregations now exist in all centers of Jewish life. Post 1945 immigrants also brought with them stricter forms of orthodoxy. Chabad established the first yeshiva, in the rural town of Shepparton, Victoria. It then moved to Melbourne. From these small beginnings, Chabad has become a major religious force in Australian Jewry.

The major Jewish communities in Australia today are located in the urban centers, largely in Melbourne and Sydney. These two major Jewish centers have developed different characteristics, with Melbourne being more strongly Jewish but less united than Sydney Jewry. The differences between the two cities relate partly to differing migration patterns, with more Hungarian Jews settling in Sydney, and East European Jews in Melbourne. There are internal factors as well: Sydney is a more cosmopolitan city, while Melbourne is traditionally more religious.

As a result of Jewish migration from South Africa, the former Soviet Union, and Israel, Australia is one of the few Jewish communities in the world that is growing

Perth is home to one of the most geographically isolated Jewish communities. The distance to its nearest Jewish neighboring community, Adelaide, is 2832 kilometers. The community grew rapidly as a result of the gold rush in the 1890s, and by 1911 Perth was the only Jewish center outside Sydney and Melbourne that numbered over 1000. The community also moved

away from the city center, first to Mount Lawley and then to the northern suburb, Dianella. Perth developed a stronger Jewish community than the other smaller capital cities for a number of reasons. Its Jewish population is less dispersed, being concentrated around Mount Lawley. It has enjoyed a stability of religious leadership, and since

the mid-1980s has attracted a significant number of South African Jews.

In response to the migration challenges of the Nazi period, the Executive Council of Australian Jewry was formed in 1944 to act as an umbrella agency. States that did not have a board of deputies before the war created one, with more democratic structures emerging, particularly in Melbourne and Sydney. In Victoria and Western Australia, these were later renamed “community councils.” In 1997, the Australia-Israel Publications and the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs amalgamated to form Australia Israel Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC) as a major advocacy group for Australian Jewry. Led by Mark Leibler and headquartered in Melbourne, it undertakes high-level communication with government and the media, as well as publishing the monthly *Australia/Israel Review*.

There have been periods of tensions between the two largest communities, Melbourne and Sydney. This reflects broader Australian history. Canberra was chosen as Australia’s capital because it is halfway between Sydney and Melbourne, and neither city would agree to the other being the capital. There is a small Jewish community in Canberra today, which despite its small size has functioned effectively.

Since 1960, the community has been further reinforced by migration of Jews from South Africa, the former Soviet Union, and Israel, and it is one of the few diaspora communities that are growing in size.

Multiculturalism

From the 1970s, Australia has developed as a multicultural society fostering the different ethnic cultures of more than 150 nationalities that have migrated to Australia since 1945.³ Although each new wave of immigrants has faced initial suspicion and hostility, within a generation they have integrated into Australian society. Australian Jewry, which contains a large proportion of postwar Holocaust survivors, has benefited from the development of multiculturalism, which has enabled the community to foster a strong ethnic as well as religious identity.⁴

Until the 1970s, Australian governments supported a policy of Anglo-Saxon conformity and sought to exclude coloured people from migrating to Australia, in what was known colloquially as 'The White Australia' policy. Until 1945, Australia did not have a department of immigration and all non-British migrants, classified as "aliens," had to apply to Australia House in London. This policy changed radically with the Japanese threat after 1941 when the Labor government realized that Australia needed to "populate or perish." In 1947, the Labor government opened its doors to non-British, European immigrants, first through the International Refugee Organisation (IRO), which subsidized the migration of 170,000 European displaced persons (DPs), as well as a further 30,000 individually-sponsored DPs, followed by the mass migration programs subsidized by the government from the Netherlands, Italy, and Germany.

A sea change occurred in 1972 with the election of a Labor government led by Gough Whitlam under the banner of "It's time," which led to the end of the White Australia Policy. Attitudes supporting pluralism were fostered during the Whitlam era, which "symbolised the acceptance that multiculturalism had replaced assimilationism or even integrationism as the basis of a national immigration policy."⁵ In 1974, the labor minister for immigration, Italian-born Al Grassby, established a Committee on Community Relations and appointed Walter Lippmann, German born prewar Jewish refugee, to chair it.⁶ Its recommendations stressed that:

Ethnic groups... should be seen to be a vital and integral part of the total community structure. They have a duty to preserve their own cultural heritage and an important role to play in the integration of their members into the total community.⁷

The federal government accepted this concept and an Office of Multicultural Affairs was created, with state governments establishing various bodies to promote the access to ethnic education, radio, television directed to the needs of the ethnic communities, and various ethnic newspapers. The Liberal government under Malcolm Fraser further reinforced multiculturalism from 1975 to 1981 and later, under John Howard, updated these policies with the 1999 *New Agenda for Multicultural Australia* and the 2003 *Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity*. These reaffirmed promotion of cultural diversity and supported "the right of each Australian to maintain and celebrate, within the

law, their culture, language or religion.”⁸ Support for multicultural policies continues to be seen as a core value in Australian society.

Ethnic groups such as the Greeks and the Italians endorsed multiculturalism, but initially the Australian Jewish leadership did not welcome this new approach. Particularly in Sydney, the more established Anglo-Jewish community understood their identity in religious rather than ethnic terms. In addition, they felt that they had little to gain, as Jews had been well integrated into Australian society since the 19th century, with many playing leading roles in the general society. In

The support of the “Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity” policy enables “the right of each Australian to maintain and celebrate, within the law, their culture, language or religion”

1977, the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies decided not to affiliate with the Ethnic Communities Council, although it passed a resolution permitting individual organizations to do so. Interestingly, it was the Yiddish-based Jewish Folk Centre and the Sephardi Synagogue that were the first to do so.⁹

Only a decade later, in 1987, did the board itself officially affiliate. Melbourne Jewry, which had attracted a higher proportion of East European survivors

after 1945 and had emerged as the largest Jewish community in Australia, was more willing to support the concept, especially due to Lippmann’s advocacy of multiculturalism.

Gradually the Jewish community recognized the benefits of multiculturalism. It contributed to the rapid growth of Jewish day schools, as it made maintaining separate education institutions to develop specific religious/ethnic cultures more acceptable, and it provided government funding for community radio and television. By the late 1980s, the mainstream Jewish community had come to support cultural pluralism, maximizing its benefits through utilizing racial vilification and anti-discrimination legislation, ensuring respect for Jewish religious practices such as *shechitah* (kosher slaughter) and the erection of the *eruv* (a defined border that enables observant Jews to carry objects when walking on the Sabbath) in Melbourne, Sydney, and Perth, while at the same time accepting the majority Christian culture. Geoffrey Brahm Levey in his 2004 study of “Jews and Australian Multiculturalism” concluded that: “while this ‘salad bowl’ image of Australian multiculturalism remains hotly contested both by advocates of Anglo-conformity and an Australian melting pot, there is little doubt where the sympathies of most of Australia’s Jews lie.”¹⁰

In the 1990s, however, support for multiculturalism was threatened by the rise of Pauline Hanson’s One Nation Party, which brought “to centre stage overt expressions of bigotry, based on ignorance and fear.”¹¹ The Jewish community strongly condemned Hanson’s racist message. With its embrace of multiculturalism, Australian Jewry has been successful in integrating into Australian society, while maintaining a strong Jewish identity, a myriad of Jewish organizations, and one of the

lowest intermarriage rates in the Western world, although this is increasing with the present generation.

Recent Demography

Since the federation of Australia in 1901, national censuses have been conducted, with the first one being held in 1911, and subsequently every five years except during the Great Depression and the world wars. The last Australia census was held in 2011. As there is a question on religion, the Jewish community in Australia is able to build a fairly accurate picture of its demographic profile. One problem with the census figures is that there is clear undercounting, which most demographers believe to be around 20 percent after comparing the census data with relevant community statistics. Although previously conducted on a state-by-state basis, in 2011 this was also done on a national basis. This collaboration was a result of the GEN08, a major survey of Australian Jewry undertaken by the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation at Monash University, Melbourne, headed by Professor Andrew Markus, in collaboration with the Jewish Communal Appeal (JCA) in New South Wales. The discussion below is based on a report on the 2011 census, compiled by Dr. David Graham.¹²

The adjusted population figure for 2011 is 112,000, a 6 percent increase from 2006, when it was 105,000. Although this is only 0.8 percent of the total world Jewish population, Australia ranks as the ninth largest Jewish community, just after Germany. Despite the fact that the Jewish population has

continued to increase since Australia's foundation, it has remained a fairly static 0.5 percent of the total Australian population since convict days. However, the geographical spread is uneven, with 0.9% in Victoria, 0.6 percent in New South Wales, 0.3 percent in Western Australia, and only 0.1 percent in the other states.

The vast majority of Australian Jews are city dwellers, with 95 percent of Jews living in the capital cities, and 85 percent in Melbourne and Sydney, compared with 38.9 percent of the general population in these two cities. In Melbourne, Jews reside in a small band of suburbs in South-East Melbourne. In Sydney, most Jews live in the Eastern Suburbs.

The Jewish population is older than the general population with the overall median age being 42, compared to 37 in the general population. Overall, there are slightly more Jewish women than men, although this also differs on a state-by-state basis. The General Fertility Rate (GFR) is similar to the general population, but fell between 2006 and 2011. The majority of Jews live in households, rather than alone, with 61 percent of Jews living in couple families and 28 percent living alone. Both these figures are larger than the general community, which are 56 percent and 23 percent respectively.

The intermarriage rate among Jews in Australia is one of the lowest in the Western world, even though it is increasing with the present generation

The major factor in the growth of Australian Jewry has been immigration. Only 51 percent of Jews are native born, compared with 77 percent of the general community. The largest migrant group is from South Africa, constituting 13.5 percent of the Jewish community. They are followed by immigrants from the Former Soviet Union (11.2 percent), and Israelis (6.2 percent). Another 6.2 percent are from North America, and around 4 percent originate from Europe. The number of French Jewish immigrants is likely to increase in the coming years, although Australia has strict immigration rules.

85% of Jews in Australia live in Melbourne and Sydney, compared to 38.9% of the general population

Immigration from South Africa and Israel continues, while immigration from the FSU has virtually ceased as they no longer enjoy refugee status, which ended in 1997.

Different Jewish migrant groups have gravitated toward particular cities. South Africans have largely settled in Sydney

and Perth. In contrast, FSU Jews have preferred Melbourne, also home to many Polish Jews, who migrated there after the Shoah. Israelis, too, are more likely to settle in Melbourne. Although Russian is still the most common non-English language spoken at home, Graham argues that Hebrew will likely overtake it soon. The percentage of Polish- and Hungarian speakers is declining as the Holocaust generation passes away.

Like Jewish communities in other parts of the world, Australian Jewry is highly educated and

exceeds the general community in all statistics. 60 percent of primary schoolchildren attend non-government schools, mainly Jewish, with this percentage increasing to 76 at high school. 77.3 percent completed secondary education, compared to 47.4 percent of the general population. This has a flow-on effect. The percentage of Jews attending university is 6.2 percent compared to 4.3 percent of the general population. 67 percent of those in their 30s have a bachelor degree, compared to 33 percent for the general population.

The high education levels, combined with Jewish entrepreneurship, are reflected in the Jewish community's earning capacity. One third of the Jewish community has a gross weekly earning capacity of \$3000, compared with only 14 percent of the general population. The average Jewish income is \$1000/week compared to \$760 for the general population. However, poverty does exist in the Jewish community; 14.6 percent have low family incomes. Single parent families, elderly Russians and Holocaust survivors, largely female, are represented in this group.

There is also a clear gender divide, both in terms of education and earning capacity. More men than women in their 60s have a university degree (31 percent compared to 24 percent), although there are more women in their 20s and 30s with a university degree than men. However, men are ahead in their earning capacity, with the average Jewish male in full-time work earning \$90,000 per annum compared to \$72,000 for women. On the other hand, women are still carrying the major burden of unpaid work in the home.

Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism in Australia appears to be increasing. Between September 11, 2001 and the end of 2003, the number of incidents almost doubled, with 63 percent of such attacks occurring in New South Wales.¹³ Since then, the number of incidents has continued to increase, and in 2014 they increased by 35 percent over the previous year.¹⁴ Incidents have included abusive e-mails, graffiti such as “Bomb the Jews,” threatening mail, and reports of telephone threats, verbal harassment and abuse, including the bullying of Jewish children at school by both Christian and Muslim children, and actual physical violence against individuals and institutions.

The GEN08 survey’s report on anti-Semitism argues, though, that the increase is not significant, as much of it is due to increased hate e-mails, which may be sent out by a handful of individuals.¹⁵ However, the survey found that Australian Jews in the 18-24 age cohort reported personally experienced anti-Semitism, with 71 percent reporting such experiences, compared to an overall 58% of survey participants. In addition, almost half of those between ages 18 and 24 reported having experienced an incident in the last 12 months, compared to only around 30 percent of those aged 25-64.¹⁶

As in other parts of the world, increasing anti-Semitism in Australia derives from three main elements: classical anti-Semitism, Muslim anti-Judaism, and left-wing anti-Semitism. Classical anti-Semitism draws on the traditional anti-

Jewish stereotypes of Jews as greedy misers out to control the world. These views are still prevalent, fostered by some small, extreme right-wing parties. On Rosh Hashanah 2014, neo-Nazi leaflets were dropped into the letterboxes of residents in Sydney’s Eastern Suburbs, where there is a high percentage of Jewish residents.

More insidious are the findings of a recent study by Gross and Rutland, which demonstrated that *these classical anti-Jewish stereotypes are perpetuated on the school playground, transmitted by children from one generation to the next*. The study found that there is a clear disconnection between official school policies on racism and what is actually happening on the playgrounds.¹⁷ Jewish students were reluctant to report these incidences. Many preferred to conceal their Jewish identity and even attend non-Jewish Special Religious Instruction/Special Religious Education (SRI/SRE) classes, so that other students would not know that they were Jewish. On the other hand, the study found that both parents and educators tended to either deny or minimize the extent of the problem. Anti-racist policies are officially promoted by the government, but findings show that these are not being seriously implemented in the schools.

Anti-Semitism in Australia, similar to other parts of the world, derives from 3 main elements: classical anti-Semitism, Muslim anti-Judaism, and left-wing radicalism

A recent incident highlighted these problems. During the 2014 Gaza war, a group of six Sydney schoolboys boarded a government bus carrying 25 Jewish day school students. They threatened the children, screaming “Heil Hitler,” “Kill the Jews” and telling them that they would “cut their throats.”¹⁸ Some of the boys were arrested, and later one appeared before a juvenile court with his parents where he faced one of the victims and her parents. His sentence was to undertake a tour of the Sydney Jewish Museum and enroll in a school harmony project run by the NSW Jewish

Board of Deputies.¹⁹

The bus driver made no attempt to restrain these non-Jewish boys, and the government decided that the Department of Transport should deal with the incident, rather than the Department of School Education, even though the boys attended a local government school and were wearing partial school uniforms.

Research shows a disconnect between official school policies on racism and what is actually happening in practice, leading some Jews to conceal their identity at school.

Often fostered by radical preachers in mosques and Muslim websites, Muslim anti-Jewish sentiment is also manifested in the attitudes of Muslim school children in government schools. The growth of Australia’s Muslim population is a recent phenomenon, beginning in the 1970s with the end of Australia’s “White Australia Policy.” With this radical change in immigration policies, the Muslim community

has grown remarkably since 1971, when it numbered only 20,000, a mere 0.2 percent of the population. In the quarter of a century to 1996, Muslims increased ten-fold to 200,000, or 1.1 percent of the total population. According to the recent Australian census (ABS 2011), they have continued to increase and numbered 476,300, or 2.2 percent, in 2011. As with the Jewish community, the majority of Muslims live in Melbourne and Sydney, but the two population groups rarely intermix. A qualitative research study, drawing on data from teachers, largely non-Jewish, working in government schools with a large percentage of Muslim students, revealed a pattern of anti-Semitic attitudes and beliefs.²⁰ Yet, the government is failing to deal with this problem. There is significant concern about Islamophobia in the general Australian society, and policies in place, but Muslim anti-Jewish attitudes are largely denied or ignored.

In addition, the anti-Israel narrative promoted by the radical left also tends to foster anti-Semitism, which at times manifests in physical violence during periods of tensions with Israel (such as the Gaza Campaigns of 2008/9, 2012, and 2014). The BDS movement, again promoted by left-wing academics and political parties, such as The Greens and Socialist Alternative, has also led to physical violence against Jews, most particularly during the 2011 demonstrations against the Max Brenner chain of chocolate stores in Australia.

This increased anti-Semitism has placed a huge security burden on the Jewish community, with much of the work being carried out by voluntary communal security groups in each state. In 2004,

during a parliamentary debate on anti-Semitism, John Brogden, then the New South Wales Liberal opposition leader stated:

On Saturday tens of thousands of Jews across New South Wales and Australia will attend synagogue. However, unlike other people involved in religious observance, they will pass security guards as they walk through the door. Thousands of children attending Jewish schools in this country will also pass security guards as they walk in and out of their school gates. Very few, if any, other religious groups or followers of a faith have security guards at their places of worship.²¹

Maintaining security at synagogues, Jewish schools, and communal institutions has placed a significant financial burden on the Australian Jewish community, but has been necessary, especially since the Australian police claim that the Jewish community is a top terrorist target. In order to meet these increased costs in Sydney, where the largest Arab Muslim population resides, the organized Jewish community through the NSW Jewish Communal Appeal (JCA) organized a capital appeal for security in 2008. With this funding, security facilities have been upgraded for the community's most public institutions, such as the Sydney Jewish Museum, near the city center.

In the 2014 ECAJ report, Julie Nathan argued that through the combination of these three factors, anti-Semitism in Australia has become "mainstream," especially in the media. In particular, she highlighted problems with ABC, the Australian national broadcaster, and the anti-Semitic Le

Lievre cartoon, published by the *Sydney Morning Herald* during the Gaza campaign to illustrate a highly critical opinion piece of Israel, which used Jewish symbols to illustrate these critical views.

Israel and the Australian Government and Society

Until the 1940s, Zionism was a fringe movement. But this changed with the arrival of Jewish refugees from Nazism who understood the importance of having a Jewish homeland. The 1967 and 1973 wars also had a significant impact and removed any vestiges of anti-Zionism. Although Zionism was initially understood in relation to *Aliyah* (immigration to Israel), in Australia today the term has a broader connotation relating to support of and concern for Israel. This takes form in donations, Israel visits, membership in a Zionist organization, or increased involvement during times of tension in Israel.

Australian Jewry maintains a plethora of Zionist organizations, which focus on fundraising, Zionist education including a range of Israel experience programs, Zionist youth movements, promotion of *aliyah* and a range of cultural institutions. These various bodies are all affiliated with State Zionist

As a result of the importance placed on Jewish education, the Jewish community in Australia ranks high in terms of its connection and commitment to Zionism

Councils that act as coordinating bodies. They in turn are represented in the Zionist Federation of Australia,²² together with representatives of major federal organizations such as the United Israel Appeal (UIA) and the Jewish National Fund (JNF). This institutional structure reflects the strongly Zionist nature of the community. At the same time, it serves to further strengthen ties with Israel. As a result, on any level of criteria, Australia ranks high in terms of Zionist endeavor and commitment.

In recent years, the ZFA has attracted strong leadership and developed an effective infrastructure within Australia. This is largely due to its stress on educational endeavors that in recent years have focused not only on the Zionist youth movements, but also on day schools. By any criteria, Australia ranks high in terms of Zionist endeavor and commitment.

With the defeat of the Labor Party in the 2013 general election, the Liberal Party Government led by Tony Abbot has returned to Australia's traditionally strong support of Israel

Australian governments on both sides of the political spectrum have a strong record of support for Israel, beginning with the role played by Australia's foreign minister, Dr. Herbert Vere Evatt, in Israel's formative years. Evatt was chair of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Palestine, and he strongly supported the division of Palestine into a Jewish and Arab state. In 1949, he was president of the General Assembly, when Israel was

accepted as a member of the United Nations. The major deviation from this was during the Labor government of Gough Whitlam, 1972-1975. John Howard, Liberal Party Prime Minister from 1995-2006, led one of the most pro-Israel governments in Australian history. He was followed by a Labor government, which under Julia Gillard continued Australia's strong support for Israel.

In 2012, however, the former New South Wales Premier, Bob Carr, was selected to fill a Senate vacancy in the federal government and Gillard appointed him foreign minister. Carr was previously a strong supporter of Israel and founded the Labor Friends of Israel in 1977. However, following his appointment as foreign minister he emerged as a leading critic of Israel, claiming that the settlements are illegal and that they are the major obstacle for peace. In December 2012, he influenced the Labor Party's caucus to support Australia abstaining in the General Assembly UN Palestinian statehood resolution, forcing Gillard to change her original position of opposing the motion. After the Labor Party was defeated in September 2013, Carr resigned from politics and wrote his autobiography, *Diary of a Foreign Minister*, in which he accused AIJAC of wielding "extraordinary influence" over Julia Gillard and was highly critical of "the Jewish lobby". Jewish Labor MP, Michael Danby, a strong supporter of Israel, rejected Carr's view that the pro-Israel lobby had too much power in Julia Gillard's office and has continued to be highly critical of Bob Carr.

In November 2014, Carr agreed to become the patron of the Labor Friends of Palestine. He argued that Israel had "gone from secular to religious" and claimed that fanatics in Israel's government were

promoting “apartheid”. The editor of the national paper, *The Australian*, claimed that:

...his analysis is deeply flawed and deserves to be exposed. In some ways Mr Carr is falling into the Left’s posture trap of late that has seen Labor MP Melissa Parke in lock step with the ratbags of the sorry boycott, divestment and sanctions cavalcade that lays the blame for the ills of the Middle East on Israel (11 November 2014).

With Labor’s defeat in the 2013 election, the Liberal Party Government led by Tony Abbott has returned to Australia’s traditional strong support of Israel. When Foreign Minister Julie Bishop visited Israel for Ariel Sharon’s funeral in January 2014, she stated that international law did not delineate the settlements as illegal, and in June 2014, Attorney General George Brandis declared on behalf of Bishop that the government would no longer use the term “occupied territory” when referring to East Jerusalem because it was a “judgmental” term, “inappropriate” and “unhelpful” for peace negotiations, Both comments sparked significant debate in the media, with strong opposition from the Greens Party.

Neither of the main political parties, Labor or Liberal, support Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions. However, Melissa Parkes of the Greens Party and Senator Lee Rhiannon have emerged as strong BDS supporters, as are many left-wing academics and journalists. These include some Jewish voices, such as journalist Anthony Loewenstein, and Associate Professor Peter Slezak, who are outspoken critics of Israel and whose views are widely publicized.

Despite this, pro-Israel sentiments continue to be strong within both the general and Jewish communities. However, recent studies have shown that there is an increasing criticism of Israel within the younger generation of Jews, and an emerging distancing from Israel.²³

Jewish Education

During the 19th century there were denominational Jewish schools in both Melbourne and Sydney, but with the introduction of free, secular education in the 1870s and 1880s, these schools closed.

It was only with the arrival of Jewish refugees in the late 1930s and of Holocaust survivors in the immediate post-war period that Jewish schools were re-established. Moriah College in Sydney the first Jewish day school, was established in 1942, at the height of the Shoah. With close to 1,800 students today, Moriah is the largest of the 17 Jewish schools in Australia.

Currently, there are Jewish Schools in Melbourne (8), Sydney (6), Perth, Brisbane and the Gold Coast. The Jewish school in Adelaide recently closed because of the dwindling Jewish population there. Although Jewish school enrollment rates are among the highest in the world, participation

Registration rates in Jewish day schools in Australia are among the highest in the world, but recently there has been a decline due to increases in tuition fees

is declining largely due to rising school fees.²⁴ In 2011, the percentage was 64.4 in Victoria, 52.3 in New South Wales and 30.6 elsewhere.

These high percentages are due to the post-war migration, particularly from Poland, and reinforced by South African migration. Increased government multiculturalism subsidies have also played a part.²⁵ But the high academic results Jewish schools achieve is perhaps the most convincing factor. Today, as the demographic data has demonstrated, some parents are choosing to only send their children to a Jewish high school,

because they cannot fund a full 13 years of a Jewish day school education.

The younger generation, which tends to holds more universalistic conceptions than adults, expresses a love for Israel, but also tends to be more critical of it

A declared aim of Australian Jewry is that no child should be denied a Jewish education because of affordability. Nevertheless, Jewish schools are beyond the financial means of some families.²⁶ The government does provide some financial assistance to private schools. The

Australian Council of Jewish Schools was formed to interface with the government. This has resulted in a more effective Jewish representation to the government, but has not resolved the financial challenges. In addition, the schools themselves provide subsidies for Jewish families in the lower socio-economic brackets.

Apart from the financial issues, Jewish schools are also facing an intergenerational challenge. Until recently, the Holocaust was a major component in maintaining Jewish identity.²⁷ For many Jewish people, the establishment and maintenance of Jewish schools in the post-war era was consciously connected with Holocaust memory: the construction of a thriving, new Jewish generation in Australia was considered compensation for the loss of so many family members in Europe.²⁸ Sixty years on, Australian Jewry is facing a turning point. The Holocaust generation is gradually passing away and school children are members of the third and even fourth generation. The belief in maintaining Jewish identity as a response to the Holocaust is no longer a *sine qua non*. The Australian Jewish community is facing a transitional, generational challenge with an increase in assimilation into the general community and a decrease in the percentage of Jewish children enrolled in Jewish day schools in both Melbourne and Sydney.

A recent study by Gross and Rutland found that that there is an incongruity between what the adult community defines as the central components of Jewish and religious identity, which are more particularistic, and the perspectives of Jewish youth, which are more universalistic. Due to these intergenerational changes, Hebrew teaching and learning is problematic and, while the students express a love of Israel, they are more critical and see such criticism as positive. Gross and Rutland have argued that a constructivist approach to Jewish education is required, combined with local teacher education programs and more effective professional development.²⁹

In addition to the day schools, the Zionist youth movements are also still active in Australia. The Reform Zionist youth movement, Netzer, and Hineini, a Modern Orthodox Zionist youth movement, have emerged in Australia. There are a number of different Israel experience programs offered for both high school students, as well as the post-school Birthright programs, resulting in a very high proportion of young Jewish Australians having visited Israel, often more than once.

The GEN08 study found that Jewish day schools on their own do not inculcate a strong Jewish identity in adults. Rather, a combination of strong family background, day school education, youth movement involvement, and visits to Israel are the best predictors for ongoing Jewish commitment into adulthood.³⁰

Funding the Community

The differences between the Sydney and Melbourne Jewish communities, discussed earlier, are seen most starkly in the fundraising models followed in each city. In Sydney, communal fundraising is carried out through the Jewish Communal Appeal. Founded in 1967, after the Six Day War, the JCA has emerged in recent years as an influential body. It has realized that transparency, accountability, and long term planning are essential for effective fundraising. Today, the JCA partners with 22 Jewish organizations in Sydney, representing the full spectrum of Jewish life, from schools, to welfare, including elderly care, to social, cultural and sporting bodies and including the Jewish community in Canberra in the ACT (Australian Capital Territory). This co-operative endeavor has ensured that all organizations receive

financial assistance on the basis of their needs, rather than on the basis of their fundraising abilities. Moves to create a JCA in Perth have also taken place.

The situation in Melbourne is different: there is no central fundraising mechanism. Each communal organization has to raise its own funds, and weaker organizations often face financial struggles. The Jewish Funders Group was formed in Melbourne, on the basis that through collaboration, a much greater impact can be achieved. This group established the Australian Jewish Funders (AJF), based on Jewish values with the belief that “Jewish tradition, ethics and values are at the heart of everything we strive to achieve.”³¹

An interesting recent development has been the emergence of the organization, “Stand Up: Jewish commitment to a better world.”³² Originally established as “Jewish Aid Australia” by Gary Samowitz, a young Jewish leader in his 20s, with the support of the Jewish Funders in Melbourne, this organization has grown rapidly and has opened a Sydney branch. Based on the Jewish ideals of Tikkun Olam and Tzedakah, it aims at building a better world. It runs programs for young people to assist indigenous Australians and Sudanese refugees, and has sought to reach out to other peoples globally, including programs in Nepal. Its recent emergence, and its change of name to “Stand Up” are indicative of the changing emphasis among young Jewish Australians from focusing on issues within the tribe, to broader problems in Australia and across the world.

Assimilation and Intermarriage

While the general rate of intermarriage is lower in Australia than in other Diaspora communities, the recent GEN08 highlighted increasing intermarriage rates in the Australian Jewish community. In Victoria, the largest and strongest Jewish community in Australia, the overall intermarriage rate in 1961 was 12 percent. This increased to 30 percent in 2006, two and a half times higher. In New South Wales, the rate is 35 percent with a similar rate in Western Australia. In the smaller

The strength of Jewish identity depends on a combination of five key factors: the home, school, religious identification and synagogue affiliation, youth movement involvement, and trips to Israel

Jewish communities in South Australia and Queensland, the rates are 54 and 57 percent respectively. However, the rates are not the same across all the age groups, with the 18-34 age cohort having a much higher rate of intermarriage. For example, in New South Wales the rate is 45 percent for this age group, compared with 25 percent for those over 40.³³

There are a number of reasons for the increased rate of intermarriage. Australia's stress on

multiculturalism has reduced barriers between ethno-religious groups, especially for secular Jews. Thus multi-culturalism both allows and encourages the development of particular Jewish institutions

and at the same time encourages more integration and even assimilation into Australian general society. As a result, the younger generation is much more integrated into the general community, even if they are Jewish day school graduates. Secondly, most young Jews are marrying later, and so their partners are more likely to emerge from their professional groups, university connections, and post-school involvements.

In terms of Jewish continuity, the GEN08 study highlighted the importance of the interrelationship of five key factors: the home, school, religious identification and synagogue affiliation, youth movement involvement, and trips to Israel. The study findings indicated that: "The more consistent and integrated these factors, the stronger one's Jewish identity."³⁴ Above all, the report dealing with Jewish continuity stressed the significance of the home environment. In relation to the question relating to Jewishness being "a central element" in the interviewee's life, 73 percent of the ultra-Orthodox responded in the affirmative, as did 53 percent of the Modern Orthodox, with only 19 percent of those self-identified as either Progressive or Conservative, and 11 percent for secular Jews. In addition, those who attended mainstream Orthodox schools were less concerned about intermarriage than those who attended an ultra-Orthodox Jewish day school.

These attitudes correlated with the actual intermarriage rates. The survey found that those who identify as Progressive or Conservative were four times more likely to have a non-Jewish partner than the Orthodox, and secular Jews

were eight times more likely to have a non-Jewish partner. The fact that Orthodox Jews constitute only a small percentage of the community means that Australian Jewry is facing a major continuity problem in the next generation, which will affect day school attendance, the number of children being raised as Jews, and community attitudes toward conversion. In addition, at present the Progressive movement in Australia does not officially recognize patrilineal descent, unlike the Reform movement in the United States. Rising intermarriage rates throw into question whether this position will change in the next generation.

Markus argues that one solution to the challenges of intermarriage and continuity could be trying to increase the percentage of Orthodox Jews. However, present statistics do not support the likelihood of this happening. The GEN08 survey showed that 60 percent of traditional Jews maintained this level of Jewish commitment into the next generation, 20 percent became more Orthodox, but 20 percent became less observant.³⁵ The non-Orthodox Jews in the community lacked knowledge of Jewish traditions, values, and practices and so clearly do not see the importance of remaining Jewish. This combined, with a distancing from Israel among a number of members of the younger generation, posits significant challenges to the community's leadership.

Conclusion

Summing up the analysis in regard to dynamics and trends GEN08 supports the perceptions of Australian Jewry being a thriving Jewish community, but argues that there are some worrying signs. These include the move from parochialism, with a focus within the community, to a more global and transnational focus for the present generation. The findings of the GEN08 indicate that Australian Jewry is behind American Jewry, but is on a similar trajectory. On the international scene, Australian Jewry tends to punch above its weight. This can be seen in the fact that the current ECAJ President, Robert Goot, was included in the German paper, *Allgemeine's* list of the top 100 influential Jews. Overall, Australian Jewry is a vibrant community, but as with other Diaspora communities, it faces significant challenges.

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Political Turmoil in Europe and its Implications for the Jewish People

Attitudes toward Jews, Judaism, and Israel among anti-System Parties in Europe

In the context of economic downturn, demographic shifts, failed multicultural policies, and the deterioration of civil security, Europe is in the throes of political turmoil that has engendered an identity crisis and bolstered attraction to political extremism. Satisfaction with the EU is at an all-time low, and in France and the UK – home to half of all European Jews – far-right populists garnered 25 percent of the total vote in the May 2014 European Parliament elections (Table 1).¹ The recent Greek debt crisis and increasing Mediterranean migration from Africa have only exacerbated the situation.

Populist parties lay at both the left and right ends of the political spectrum. The anti-establishment far left associates the Jews with the global capitalism

they oppose, and reject Zionism as a colonialist enterprise. Wherever they are strengthening (Greece, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Scandinavia), they adopt anti-Israel stands, and their anti-wealth policies drive away the local Jewish philanthropists who sustain communal life. The conventional and main source of Euroscepticism is, however, reactionary and conservative in nature. While the far left perceives the EU as undemocratic or too bureaucratic, the far-right parties claim European integration weakens the nation state. As the anti-system parties become major political players in several countries, it is important to consider how these developments may affect local Jewish life and Europe's attitudes toward the Jewish state.²

This paper focuses primarily on the far-right parties, which are divided on Jewish and Israeli issues. **Among them, the old far-right parties that claim to have cut ties with their anti-Semitic past will receive special attention.**

Table 1: Presence of Eurosceptical Parties in the European Parliament 2009 and 2014

Election for the European Parliament	Right-Populists Seats of European Conservatives and Reformists — ECR and Non-Inscrits	Left-Populists Seats of Europe of Freedom and (Direct) Democracy — EF(D)D	Total Number of Seats Not Belonging to Pro-European Parties
2009	78 (10.5%)	32 (4.3%)	110 (14.8%)
2014	103 (13.4%)	48 (6.2%)	151 (19.6%)

Two policy questions are related to this debate:

1. **How should Jews respond to being courted by populist parties?** As radical parties understand that warm relations with Jews will immunize them from anti-Semitism accusations, provide moral legitimacy, and help them convince reluctant voters, they court Jews and Israel. This paper seeks to distinguish between the various types of populism and provide communal leaders and Israeli politicians with directions to interact with them.
2. **How will the rise of anti-establishment parties affect the Jewish future in Europe?**

Why Europeans Turn to Populists?

Dutch and French anti-Islamists, Hungarian nationalists, Italian separatists, and other anti-establishment voices across the left-right spectrum share a common antagonism to the EU. Because the “European integration process” has been concomitant with the decline of the old continent’s standing on the international scene, Europeans

increasingly regard the EU political construct and its “euro” currency with apprehension. Many believe social gaps have widened, and the less industrialized economies have been ruined. Public disillusionment with incumbent governments has motivated some voters to turn to the fringes. High unemployment and the grimmest economic forecasts in decades have created the ideal conditions for single-issue candidates and marginal groups hostile to the EU to win seats in the national and pan-European assemblies.

Timo Lochocki, in a remarkable study supported by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, has identified two components that make right-populist programs appealing to voters: they offer an agenda of defending the alleged “threatened nation” combined with an opportunity to cast a protest vote of general dissatisfaction with the political establishment.

Their programs combine “neo-nationalism”³ with “anti-elitism”: for the nation, against the political establishment. In doing so, they blame the established, moderate parties for

any alleged social change – primarily caused by globalization – brought upon the homogenous community of the nation. The prime threats are generally symbolized by immigration and multiculturalism as much as the influence of the European Union on daily life.

While Europe’s right-populist parties have originated in countries with vastly different historical experiences, each frames external influences as a threat to the defining national narrative of its respective country: the Scandinavian right-populists portray immigration and the European Union as a threat to their high level of social security; Geert Wilders campaigns against the alleged religiosity of migrants, which threatens “Dutch tolerance”; Marine Le Pen follows a similar path in framing immigration from Muslim countries as presumably threatening the French “Laïcité,” the separation between church and state. The Alternative for Germany (AfD) derides financial support for troubled southern European economies, portraying this as running counter to the narrative of the industrious, hard-working Germans, who suffered plenty of hardship to address economic challenges themselves.⁴

Right-populist parties succeeded to frame themselves as the only ones protecting the nation’s cultural core, standing in stark contrast to the “multicultural and pro-European elite-consensus” and protecting the interest of the “common man.”

These two uniting narratives (neo-nationalism and anti-elitism) explain why previously mainstream party voters are joining ranks of the new parties.

Following centuries of Christian anti-Judaism and 150 years of modern anti-Jewish propaganda, Jews and Israel are easily associated with the loathed “cosmopolitan global elite,” and Judaism is portrayed as alien to the traditional European core ethos. Both leftist and rightist protest parties have had tenuous relations – although through different rhetoric – with Jews and Israel.

These two united narratives – neo-nationalism and anti-elitism – explain why previously mainstream party voters are joining the ranks of the new parties

Anti-Jewish Prejudices among European Muslims and anti-Establishment Voters

As shown in figures 1 and 3, anti-Western and anti-Semitic attitudes are widely spread among Muslim newcomers. Due to Europeans’ colonialist past and guilt feelings towards their former colonized populations, Europeans have for long denied the very existence of such resentments and have started only recently to acknowledge their implications (see figures 1 and 2).⁵

Figure 1: Religious Fundamentalism and Outgroup-Hostility among European Muslims
(Berlin Social Science Center, 2013)

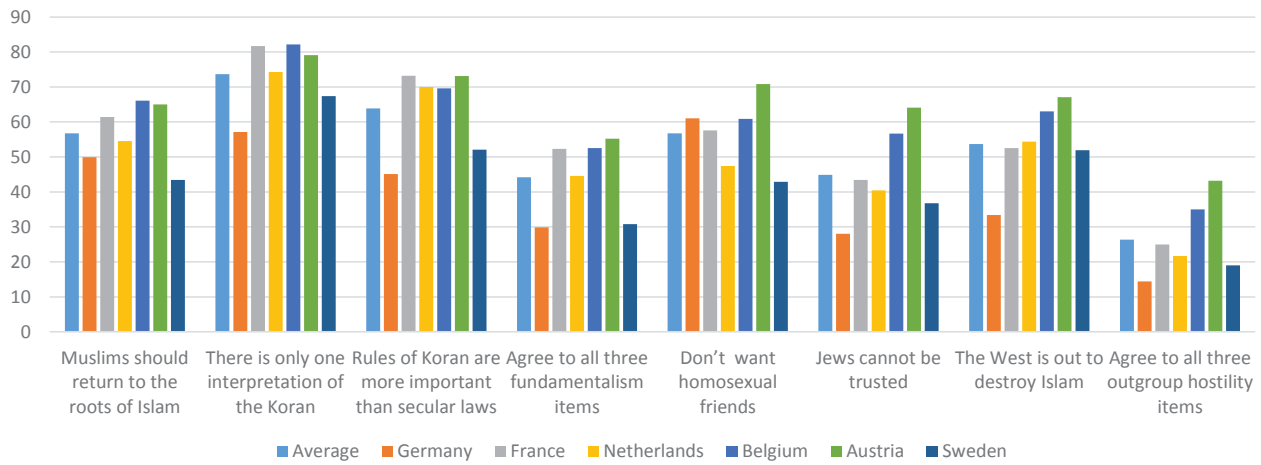


Figure 2: Percentage of Muslim population in European Cities

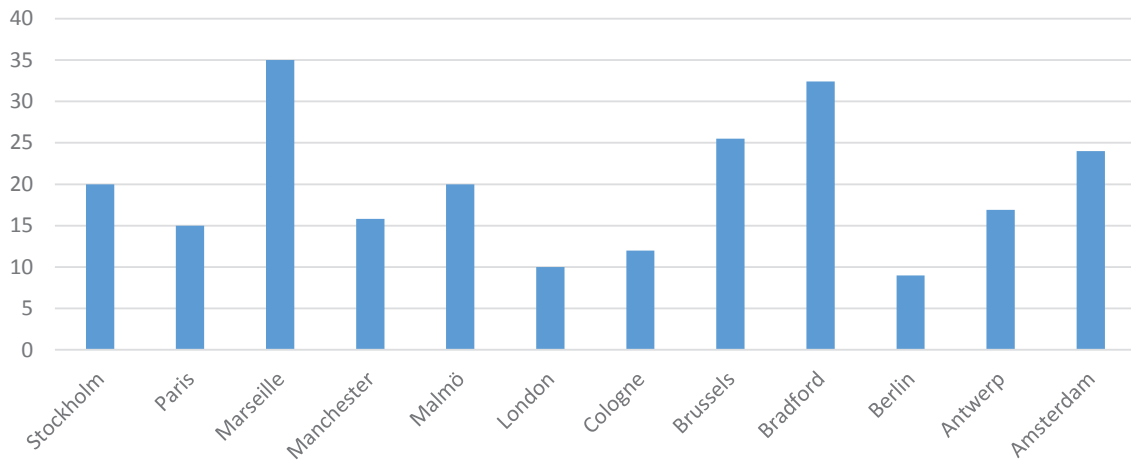
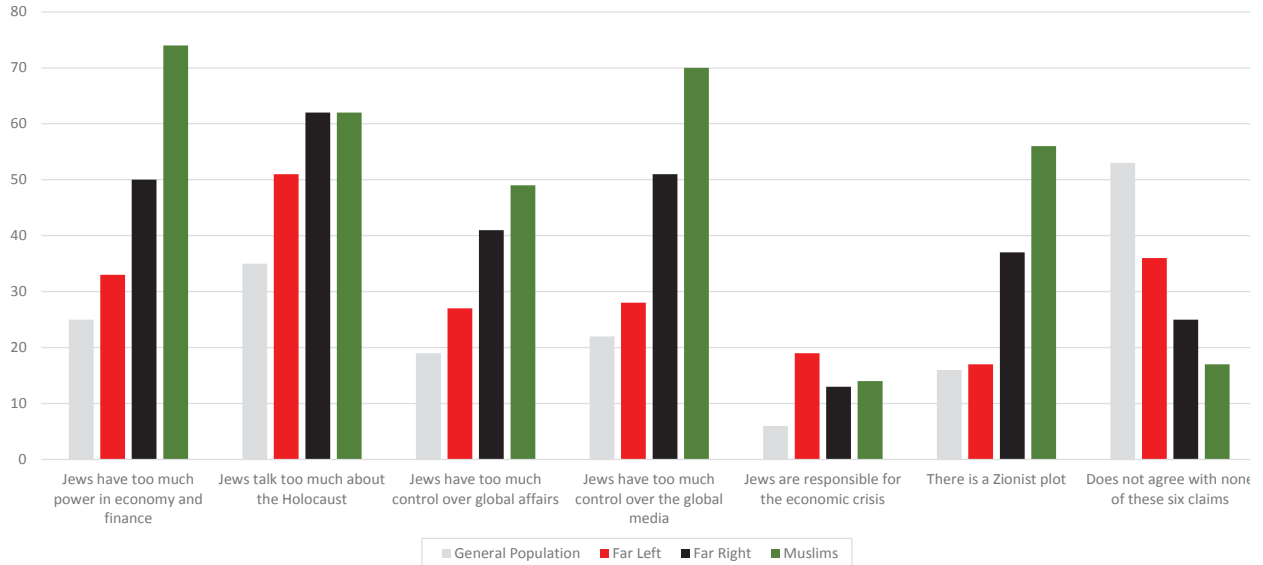


Figure 3: Anti-Jewish Prejudice in France
(Fondapol-IFOP, 2014)



Thus, in stridently anti-racist Germany, a recent study found 3 percent of non-immigrant Germans agreeing that “Jews have too much power in the world”; the number rose to 25 percent among those of Turkish origin, and 40 percent among those of Arab origin.⁶ Similarly, while anti-Jewish prejudice among the general European population is steadily decreasing, a study published last November by Fondapol, a French think-tank, found that, whereas 25 percent of those surveyed agreed that Jews “have too much power in the economy and finance,” the number was 74 percent for French Muslims, 50 percent for far-right voters, and 33 percent among far-left voters.⁷ Although observed specifically by Fondapol, this contrast between a general decrease of anti-Semitic attitudes and ardent anti-Jewish resentment among the three abovementioned sub-groups is a broad phenomenon in Europe.

Far-Left Populist Rhetoric about the Jews and Israel

While the far-right populist parties, obsessed with a threat to their national identities, perceive Judaism as an alien influence they want to neutralize, the far-left populist parties associate the Jews with the cosmopolitan elites and the global capitalism they battle against. Regarding Israel, the simplistic Marxist narrative remains popular: Israel is a colonialist state that oppresses and displaces the indigenous population and is one of the puppeteers of the global financial system. Moreover, out of socialist traditions of justice and welfare, they campaign to welcome more migrants, who in large measure come from countries with high levels of anti-Jewish resentment. Officially, they distance themselves from the “old anti-Semitism” (hatred of Jews per se, belief in the worldwide Jewish conspiracy, belief

that Jews generated communism, belief that Jews are racially inferior and so on) but because of their strong political alliances with local Muslims and their consubstantial sympathy for the Palestinians (often perceived in Europe as the "ultimate underdogs"), they advocate a radical anti-Zionism and adopt elements of Muslim anti-Semitic rhetoric (worldwide Jewish conspiracy, Jewish

The far-left populist parties associate the Jews with the cosmopolitan elites and the global capitalism they battle against

control of capitalism and U.S. foreign affairs, and so on).⁸ All over Europe, the parties that court the very substantial Muslim vote tend to be unfriendly to Jews.⁹ Consequently, diminished prospects of Jewish thriving could be expected in the shadow of these kind of populist regimes.

Distinguishing between the “Old Far Right” and the “New Radical Right”

Nationalist parties with different ideologies and goals can be found throughout Europe. The most relevant distinction that could be drawn for our purposes is between the “old far right” (nostalgic for Nazi and fascist past) and the “new far right” (threatened by Islamization), they consider Israel and the Jews allies against Islam. Drawing on the discourse analysis works of Ruth Wodak, we may classify the populist parties and movements into four general groups.¹⁰

1. **“Old far right”**: These parties gain support despite ambivalence about the fascist and Nazi past (e.g., in Austria, Hungary, Italy, Romania, and France). Part of them – such as the Pegida movement and NPD party in Germany, Golden Dawn in Greece, and Jobbik in Hungary – are blatant anti-Semites that deny the Holocaust and engage in anti-Jewish and anti-Israel propagandizing. Some, such as NPD, even support militant Islam.

For far-right populist parties such as French’s National Front, Italian’s National Alliance and Austrian’s PVO, the situation is less clear-cut because their leaders have understood that in order to ascend to power they need to shift their discourse. It is very difficult to say whether this narrative shift is backed or not by a genuine transformation of their worldviews. The “new radical right” partisans are doubtful and accuse them of “being stuck in the channels of ethnic nationalism and European supremacy, petty border disputes (e.g. over Alto Adige/South Tyrol in Italy or South Flanders in France), and wasteful anti-American and anti-Israel sentiments.” We will return to this issue later.

2. **“New radical right”**: Focusing primarily on a perceived threat from Islam, these organizations constitute a break with historical fascism via the adoption of (procedural) democracy. Political parties that are focusing on their opposition to Islam are notably found in Netherlands, UK, Denmark, Sweden, and Switzerland. A reflection of their view that a “clash of civilizations” is underway between

the West and global Islam, some of these organizations have downsized their ethnic nationalism and have embraced the United States and Israel. They do not perceive the few and socially integrated local Jews as a civilizational threat and they sincerely view Israel as an ally in this struggle. Such a new-type radical rightist is the Dutch politician Geert Wilders and his Party of Freedom (PVV), now the third largest party in the Dutch parliament and the de facto support party of the current Dutch government. Wilders, a fanatical defender of all things "Western" and "Israeli," comes from the political mainstream and has always shunned the Dutch radical right. Nigel Farage of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) who is known as an enthusiastic supporter of Israel, also belongs to this new radical right. The party even has a caucus called "the UKIP Friends of Israel." Asked by the *British Jewish Chronicle* about his stance on current Jewish concerns such as attacks on kosher slaughter, Farage explained that a UKIP politician had recently investigated a kosher slaughterhouse in London's East End and asserted that Jewish ritual slaughter methods are actually more humane than those in non-kosher abattoirs. Examples of more marginal and controversial politicians in the UK are Nick Griffin of the British National Party (BNP) and Tommy Robinson, the leader of the anti-Muslim street protest movement English Defence League (EDL). They certainly support Israel and Jews today, but many of their adherents have problematic backgrounds.

3. **Traditional xenophobic parties:** In European countries such as Hungary, Greece, Italy, and the United Kingdom, we see the rise of parties that restrict their propaganda to a perceived threat to their national identities from ethnic minorities. Regarding the Jews, they are divided. Italy's Liga Nord, for example, takes a tough stance on illegal immigration, especially from Muslim countries, and terrorism. While other xenophobic groups disdain the Jews, it supports the promotion of immigration from non-Muslim countries in order to protect the "Christian identity" of Italy and Europe, which, according to party officials, should be based on "Judeo-Christian heritage."
4. **Christian fundamentalist parties:** In post-communist countries, such as Poland, Romania and Bulgaria, we observe the rise of parties that endorse a fundamentalist Christian conservative-reactionary agenda. Poland illustrated the odd paradox of endemic anti-Semitism, illiberalism, and ethnic nationalism hand-in-hand with a pro-Israel stance. Poland is among the European Union's most culturally conservative member states and is becoming more so. Young voters form much of the support base of Janusz Korwin-Mikke, an irascible monarchist and anti-

The new radical-rightist parties sincerely view Israel as an ally in the struggle against global Islam

feminist zealot whose party took 7 percent of the vote in the 2014 European elections, enough to win four seats. The rightward shift of younger voters has prompted the left-of-center newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* to dub them the “strange generation.”

While nurtured with Christian anti-Semitism and often distasting Judaism, these parties admire the Jewish sovereign state that comes to be seen, in Slavoj Žižek’s words, as “the first line of defense against the Muslim expansion.” In these

countries with tiny Jewish communities, the potential harm to local Jews is minor. Real-politic alliances can be built with these players in a similar way that characterizes the robust relationship between the Jewish people and the large Christian fundamentalist organizations in North America.

The election of a far-rightist president in France – home to the largest Jewish community in Europe – is well within the realm of possibility

“Old Far Rightists” Masquerading as the “New Far Rightists”: Is the Shift Real?

The “new far right” phenomenon comprises two types of organization: entirely new formations such as the Dutch PVV and British UKIP, which are keen partners of the Jewish people, and more problematic old radical-right parties that claim to have transformed themselves from top to

bottom. Visits to Israel by prominent radical-right politicians with problematic backgrounds, such as Filip Dewinter of the Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest/ VB) and Heinz-Christian Strache (Austria’s FPÖ), are part of this complex logic. Can Jews trust them? The Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* accused these rightist European politicians of “trading in their Jewish demon-enemy for the Muslim criminal-immigrant model,” and visiting Israel only to get “Jewish absolution that will bring them closer to political power.”¹¹

The Case of France: The Gap between Le Pen’s Promises and her Official Program

Let’s look at the French National Front (FN) as a case study of an “old far right” party that claims to have cut the ties with its historical anti-Semitism. A scenario in which a far rightist becomes president of France – home of the largest Jewish community in Europe – is well within the realm of possibility, and would have a serious impact on the Jewish European future. It is critical to interrogate the paradigm shift the FN’s new leader Marine Le Pen claims to have achieved. For the last four years, Le Pen has made a huge effort to distance herself from her father, Jean Marie Le Pen, and previous party leader known for his fascist and anti-Semitic sympathies. Certainly, she seems to not share her father’s distaste for Israel and the United States, but she is still a far cry from the neo-conservative mindset of the Dutch Geert Wilders with respect to the West’s shared existential struggle. Her central message remains “national preference”

within France, Europe, and the world. Some far-right intellectuals and cultural elites in France and other countries with large Muslim populations, advocate supporting Israel as an embattled front line state against what they consider the threat of Islamist expansion. However, their voters – fed by centuries of Christian anti-Semitism – are likely to distrust the Jews they know and the Israeli Jews they hear about. The harsh media reports they consume about Israel’s so-called “crimes against humanity” resonate and jibe with their inherited anti-Jewish prejudices. And indeed, as shown in diagram 3, a large segment of FN’s constituency holds strong anti-Semitic beliefs.

Anti-Jewish attitudes among far-right supporters are concomitant with their anti-Muslim attitudes. If in the Fondapol mentioned survey, 99 percent of respondents agreed that “there are too many Muslims in France,” a much smaller number (38 vs. 16 percent in the general population) agreed that “they are too many Jews in France.” The political analyst Jean Yves Camus asserts that relations with Judaism and with Islam have become a point of conflict within the European far right, which is divided into three opposing ‘families.’¹² In some countries, one trend is dominant, while in others, such as France and the United Kingdom, the three opposing strands coexist within the far right.

One considers Islam to be an ally in the fight against the West, which includes opposition to Israel and the Jews, who are seen as controlling U.S. policy – and that of other countries as well.¹³

Another strand is strongly Islamophobic and considers Israel and Diaspora Jews allies in the fight against the Islamization it alleges.

A third group thinks that the interests of both the Muslim world and of Israel/Judaism are alien to, and in conflict with, those of Europe.

If these parties were to hold political power, what would become of their attitudes toward Jews and Israel? Answering this question is not easy, especially with respect to protest parties that have never been in power. Mainly concerned with domestic issues, and interested in not alienating Jews, FN’s political leaders rarely mention the Middle East. In general, leaders of the populist parties who seek power keep a discrete profile on non-European controversies. When interviewed by the Israeli or Jewish media, they pledge protection of the citizenship rights of European Jews and express fair attitudes regarding Israel. Yet, a closer look at the FN’s platform reveals their plan to proscribe both the Islamic veil and the Jewish yarmulke in public spaces, and to prohibit both Jewish and Muslim slaughter. They also plan to stop all public funding of Muslim and Jewish institutions.

Mainly concerned with domestic issues, and interested in not alienating Jews, French National Front’s political leaders rarely mention the Middle East

Let's imagine for a moment that Marine Le Pen assumes power in the May 2017 French national elections. Her promises to abandon the euro and exit the EU, which seem, at least in the short term, like unrealizable fantasies, make it even more difficult to predict what her positions on other matters might be. However, she would likely be able to make good on some promises: to limit the immigration of non-Europeans; reinstall security barriers; control capital flows: and make the relocation of French companies abroad more difficult. A critical matter for French Jews will be her relations with Muslims;

While most Israeli politicians, together with the leaders of European Jewry, have so far rebuked these gestures of the radical-right, some have embraced them warmly

many Le Pen supporters expect her to force Islam to lower its profile. Could she accomplish that? After 20 years of presidential aspirations, would she risk the eruption of violent riots all over France? Financial experts claim that Qatar and Saudi Arabia, which have been heavily invested in French real estate for some time, are becoming key players in the French economy. French terror experts assert that hundreds of jihadists have

returned to France from Syria, and that there are over 100 “no-go zones” police and firefighters will not enter, and which hold formidable arsenals ready to be deployed against the government. Moreover, as 40 percent of French soldiers are Muslims, mainly recruited from these neighborhoods, it will not be

easy to enforce hardline policies to quell Muslim youth violence. Any political pact with the huge, resentful, and largely disaffected Muslim population, – especially in light of the massive Saudi and Qatari investments – would likely come at the expense of Jewish wellbeing.

The Dilemmas of Europe's National Jewish Institutions

The far right's new appeal should not be dismissed easily. It presents European Jewry and Israel with a thorny dilemma: Should Jews accept the extended hand of West Europe's far right? While most Israeli politicians, together with the leaders of European Jewry, have so far rebuked these gestures, some have embraced them warmly.

Local Jews, subjected to Muslim anti-Semitism on a daily basis, are divided on this issue. In France, according to an IFOP poll survey, some 4 percent of French Jews have voted for Jean Marie Le Pen in 2007, 13.5 percent have voted for the far right in 2014 European Parliament elections, and 20 percent are expected to vote for Marine Le Pen in 2017.¹⁴ For the moment, Jewish official institutions have avoided public contact with her and have not responded to her wooing.

In response to these developments, Antony Lerman, former director of the London-based Jewish Policy Research Institute (JPR), has characterized the perplexity of liberal Jews as follows: “Many Israel-supporting Jews with progressive political views now find themselves between a rock and a hard place. As supporters of a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict

and opposed to settlements and the occupation, the last thing they would have envisaged is finding themselves in the company of the far right, whether in Europe or in Israel. And yet many such Jews are convinced that the threat of a left-wing+Islamist ‘new anti-Semitism’ is severe and in maintaining their Zionism or pro-Israelism are simply stuck with unsavory allies. Some Jews have simply chosen to cut themselves loose from their traditional progressive moorings. Others who simply refuse to join the anti-Muslim bandwagon and reject the post-9/11 Clash of Civilizations-type choice – ‘you’re either with us or against us’ – they feel they are faced with are left high and dry.”¹⁵

Implications and Directions for Action

Drawing on discourse analysis, we have classified the far-right populists into four groups. The most salient division for our purposes is between the “Old Far Right” and the “New Radical Right” parties. While the former maintain an ambivalent relationship with their fascist/Nazi lineages and hold very negative attitudes toward both Jews and Israel, the latter have broken with historical fascism, have adopted procedural democracy, and view Israel as an ally in the struggle against the threat they allege Islam poses to European civilization.

In this context, Marine Le Pen requires Jewish vigilance. She may acquiesce to Arab anti-Israeli boycott pressures, and may attempt to impose sanctions and a stilted, unfair peace agreement diktat on Israel. Even without going that far, it is

reasonable to suspect that countries led by anti-establishment, eurosceptic parties may not be reliable and honest brokers in advancing Middle East peace.

An identity backlash against multi-cultural policies is only one likely scenario, but should one occur, Jews might become “collateral damage” in a civilization quarrel – or worse, the direct target of Europeans who implicate Jews in the quarrel itself.

Directions for Action

Again, as Antony Lerman put it, “the last thing [European Jews] would have envisaged is finding themselves in the company of the far right.” And indeed, regardless of how carefully it is put, xenophobia and philo-Semitism are ontologically incompatible. Yet, for the State of Israel, pragmatic partnerships with pro-Israel “new radical right” and Christian fundamentalist parties may align with Israeli national interests. And, against the backdrop of a widely spread delegitimization campaign in Europe, the Jewish state may not have the luxury of being too selective in enlisting allies. Still, at the moment,

At the moment, there is no urgent need to engage with far-right populist parties as they are not currently in power. Jewish communities should avoid responding to their advances and refrain from whitewashing them

there is no urgent need to engage with far-right populist parties as they are not currently in power. Jewish communities should avoid responding to their advances and refrain from whitewashing them. As long as their political program intends to limit Jewish practices, and thus cripple communal life, the numerous Jews who support these parties may be regarded as shortsighted. This is said without equivocation in regard to the old far-right parties that espouse anti-Semitism, deny the Holocaust, and champion Israel's enemies. But it also applies to what we may call the *"old far-right parties that claim to have severed ties with their anti-Semitic past."* And in our estimation, this also applies to the pro-Israel, anti-Islam "new radical-right" parties. To quote Dave Rich, the British Jews' Community Security Trust spokesperson: "The trouble with populism is that you always know where you start but never know where you end up. Populism is just another name for slippery slope."¹⁶

Europe is today at a crossroads, and as of now we do not know whether it will become more open to diversity or more closed to it. The Jewish people and the State of Israel must be prepared to confront all possible scenarios.

Endnotes

1. Respectively, 81% of the population in Greece, 72% in Spain, 69% in UK, 64% in Cyprus, 62% in Sweden, 60% in Czech Republic, 59% in Germany and 58% in Portugal “tend not to trust the EU.” See Torreblanca, Jose Ignacio and Mark Leonard, “*The Continent-wide rise of Euroscepticism*”. *Standard Eurobarometer 2012*. http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/Methodological_note_Euroscepticism.pdf
2. Questions such as “How best can world Jewry provide European Jews with support? Should the Jewish people and Israel help them to emigrate or strengthen their efforts to sustain the local communities?” have been addressed extensively in previous JPPI policy papers. See in particular: “European Jewry – Signals and Noise” and “JPPI’s Emergency Plan for French Aliyah” on JPPI’s website.
3. The nationalism of right-populist parties is based on defending the “alleged” nation, less on attacking another country’s achievements. This is a crucial departure from prominent nationalist movements of the 20th century. Thus, the term “neonationalism” is used consciously.
4. Lochocki, Timo, *The Unstoppable Far Right?* (Europe Policy Papers), German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2014. <http://www.gmfus.org/publications/unstoppable-far-right>
5. Despite its bi-millenary presence in Europe, Judaism has always been perceived, by philo-Semites and by anti-Semites alike, as a heterogeneous cultural ferment that both fosters creativity (when it is present in moderate doses) and is destructive (when the dosage is too high) in relation to the “authentic” Christian core of the European culture. Aware of this ambivalence, local Jews, *mutatis mutandis* – certainly in a more discreet manner in Switzerland and in a relatively more assertive manner in France and Britain – are careful to avoid “too high” a political profile. Tied up by a kind of unwritten conditional citizenship contract and fearing accusations of clannishness or ethnocentric “tribalism,” or even re-awakening the old dual loyalty claim, European Jews – unlike other groups – have seldom dared to initiate a political pan-European lobby to advance their interests. Facing political and economic difficulties in its on-going integration process, the emergent European political entity is the throes of a quest for identity – to determine what exactly it means to be “a European”. Are there common core values that make Europeans unique and are there values Europeans definitively reject? Built after centuries of ethno-religious and bloody national conflicts, the basic ethos of the European Union is that strong ethno-religious and national identities are better avoided. In this context, Jewish and Israeli exceptionalisms are perceived with suspicion.
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Policy Opportunities for Video Games and Interactive Entertainment*

Introduction

Once considered a niche hobby of techies and science fiction enthusiasts, video games and other forms of interactive entertainment have gone mainstream across the globe in terms of their popularity and social acceptance. According to the Entertainment Software Association (ESA): 59 percent of all Americans play video games, and 51 percent of households have a dedicated gaming console; the average age of video gamers is 31, but roughly 40 percent of gamers are older than 36; the average age of individuals who purchase video games is 35; and 48 percent of gamers are female.¹

As the popularity of video games has steadily increased over the last 20 years, and especially dramatically in the last five years with the proliferation of mobile based games, the video game industry has emerged as one of the fastest growing sectors in the U.S. economy. According to Gartner, a technology research firm, global sales of interactive entertainment in 2013 hit \$93 billion

U.S.D and by the end of 2015 sales are expected to reach \$110 billion.² In comparison, according to the Motion Picture Association of America, total global box office receipts for all 2013 films was \$35.9 billion.³ Between 2009 and 2012 the U.S. interactive software industry grew by 10 percent while the economy as a whole grew by only 2.4 percent, contributing more than \$6 billion to GDP.⁴

Video games have been utilized as a medium and tool of education. Terms such as 'edutainment' and 'gamification' have entered our vernacular and dictionaries. Edutainment, a portmanteau of education and entertainment, refers to games that teach specific skills like math or spelling. Gamification is a process by which specific tasks or objectives are fulfilled through game-like technics and operations. In their book, *Changing the Game: How Video Games are Transforming the Future of Business*, David Edery and Ethan Mollick argue that "Games have become a powerful tool through which organizations teach, persuade, and motivate people."⁵

* Special thanks to Nimrod Dweck, who served as adviser for this chapter

The increase in the popularity of video games and their transition from cult to mainstream represents a cultural shift. Rather than individuals meeting in a physical space or location and engaging in a shared experience, individuals meet in a virtual world and have a shared experience. By some estimates, by age 21 the average young person has accumulated more than 10,000 hours playing video games.⁶ That is the equivalent of working a full time job for about five years, or what Malcolm Gladwell argues is the necessary time for mastery in a given field.

The growth of the video game industry and their use for educational and other purposes pose challenges for policy makers in Israel and the Jewish world

Transformative inventions and the widespread adoption of new technologies impact the Jewish people in one way or another. **The popularity of interactive entertainment, the growth of the gaming industry, and the use of gaming for educational and other purposes challenges policy makers in the Jewish world and Israel to consider what**

might be the subsequent policy implications. How can Israel and the Jewish people utilize gamification and edutainment to help motivate and educate future generations? How does adopting a virtual identity and playing for countless hours affect one's Jewish identity? What is the state of the video game industry in Israel and what, if any, policies should be considered to improve the industry? How can video games and virtual worlds be utilized for hasbara? These are the questions this chapter will discuss below.

Identity and Virtual Communities

Although some video games are non-social, that is the player does not interact with other humans, many of the most popular games are known as Massively Multiplayer Online Games (MMOG). In these games, players both cooperate and compete with other players from around the world. In many of these games, players are grouped in 'clans,' 'guilds,' and 'factions,' with players communicating orally through voice over IP (VoIP). Because of the cooperative nature of these units, and the camaraderie developed through collaborative team play, players can have meaningful social relationships with other players. Indeed, some MMOGs are designed primarily as platforms for social interactions.

Through informal Jewish education, common social activities have been transformed into vehicles of Jewish engagement, utilizing the power of peer groups to reinforce the notion of community and *klal yisrael*. Video games specifically, and virtual communities in general, present an interesting challenge for Jewish community institutions: How can these activities be transformed into vehicles of informal or even formal Jewish education?

Virtual Jewish communities have in fact emerged. Although not as popular as it once was, "Second Life," a virtual world where users can freely don a virtual identity, build, explore, and chat (either by VoIP or text) with other 'residents,' includes an impressive, even utopian Jewish community. One can find synagogues, yeshivas, museums, and 'Israel Island,' which advertises itself as "home to a community of people from around the world who have an interest

in Israel, Judaism and the Jewish people.⁷⁷ On Israel Island, Israeli music plays in the background and one can find replicas of famous Israeli landmarks and shops. Chabad even has a presence in Second Life, although not officially affiliated with 770.

The virtual economy of Second Life mimics that of the real world. If a resident wants to build a virtual home or store, s/he must first purchase virtual real estate, which can be done directly from Linden Labs, the creator of Second Life, or from other residents. All transactions are made with Second Life's own currency, which residents can purchase on an exchange market with actual money. For those disconnected from these virtual worlds, it is hard to imagine that one would actually exchange real money for virtual money, but this is indeed the case. In 2009, when Second Life was in its prime of popularity, the value of resident-to-resident transactions totaled \$257 million U.S.D.⁸ To date, Second Life has accumulated 41 million registered residents, and still has about an average of 40,000 residents online at any given time (down by about 30 percent since 2009).⁹

The virtual market contains an impressive amount of Judaica and Israeli goods. Residents can purchase accessories or clothing for their avatars (their virtual self or character), such as Star of David necklaces, Israel themed t-shirts, *kippot*, even IDF uniforms. Items such as *menorahs*, Shabbat candles, and *mezuzot* can all be purchased.

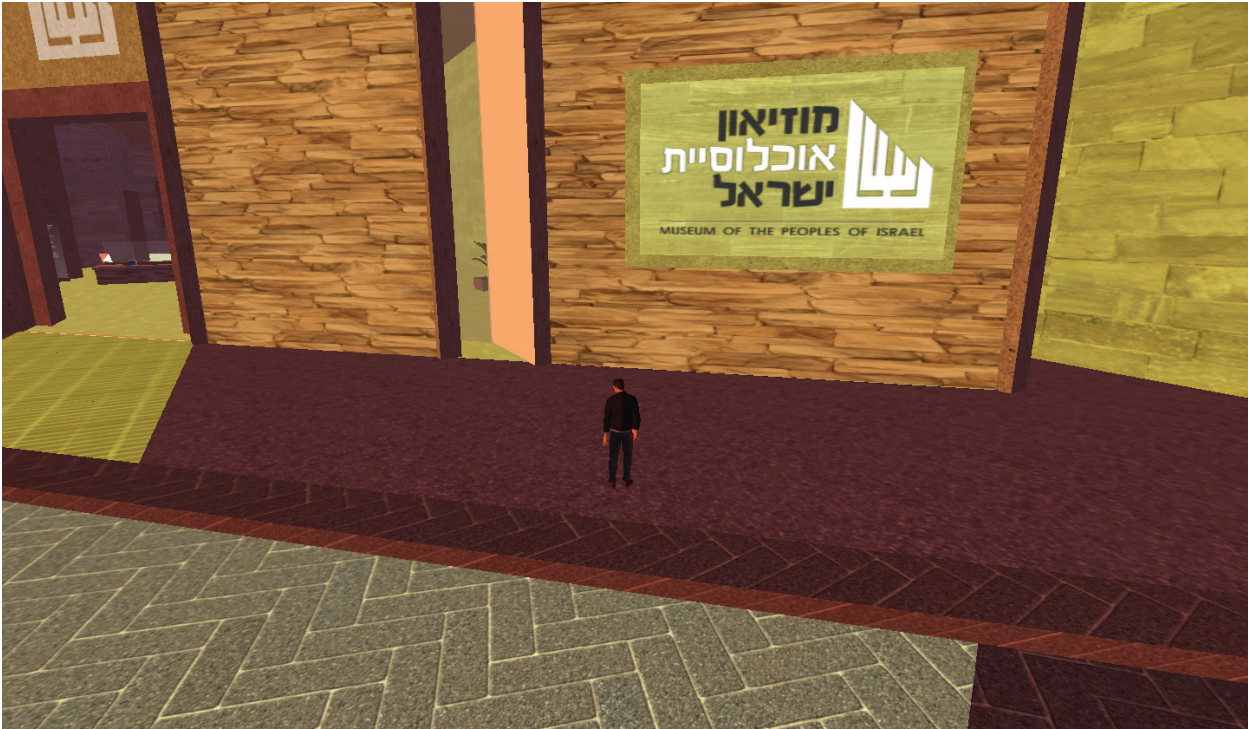
Second Life is not a true game in that there is no overall competitive objective or goal – no winners or losers. It is more of a sophisticated Internet chat room that harnesses crowd sourcing to develop an elaborate virtual environment, and provides an interesting

window in it to the notion of a virtual Jewish identity. It offers some lessons that can shape policy.

It is clear from traveling in Second Life that there is an organic Jewish community and, literally, a market for Jewish content and accessories for residents to proudly display their *Yiddishkeit*. It is organic in the sense that it was a grass roots creation. The community was not created by a major Jewish institution with deliberate goals of formal and informal education, outreach, connecting Jews around the world, or *hasbara*. Nevertheless, those are among the functions and features of the community.

Since its creation in 2012, Israel Island has received over 12,000 visitors. As in traditional, non-virtual Jewish communities, participation ranges from those who are active in the community and feel a strong attachment to it, to those who might visit once or only occasionally. Approximately 800 people from all over the world and from various Jewish streams are affiliated with the 'Israel Island' group presently.¹⁰ There is a weekly Shabbat candle lighting ceremony and special events organized to mark Jewish and Israeli holidays. In 2015, Israel Island's Yom HaShoah event was attended by about 60 people from around the world and their Yom Haazmaut event by around 100, numbers on par with many Jewish communities around the world.

Since its creation in 2012, "Israel Island" has received 12,000 visitors



Screen capture of the virtual Museum of the Peoples of Israel in Israel Island, Second Life

Considering the relatively low cost of further developing the Island, the number of visitors the island has attracted in the last few years, and the size of its active community, it seems clear that **it would be a wise and practical investment for Israel and the Jewish people to continue building Israel Island, and expand its function as platform for Jewish engagement and strengthening community bonds.**

Many companies maintain Second Life property for holding meetings and conferences. Rather than listening to a conference call on a telephone, or participating in a video conference call, individuals login to Second Life and travel to a virtual location to participate in a meeting. Jewish organizations should experiment with events and conferences

in virtual locations, such as Israel Island, to engage those Jews who are familiar and comfortable with the virtual medium and would be more likely to engage with other Jews there than in real life. It would also be a cost effective way of bringing Jews throughout the world together.

Perhaps because the virtual world challenges and transcends current notions of geographical, national, and organizational borders, it has been thus far overlooked by Jewish organizations, which were largely set up to serve local communities. Therefore, **the Government of Israel should strongly encourage the Jewish Agency and other bodies to extend their mandates to include servicing virtual Jewish communities.**

Hasbara

Hasbara, the activity of explaining, defending, and teaching about Israel, takes place across a variety of media. Video games and other forms of interactive entertainment hold a tremendous amount of untapped potential to engage, educate, persuade, and entertain large audiences around the world, either directly or indirectly. Directly refers to games that are specifically designed or modified for hasbara purposes, while indirectly involves the utilization of existing games with a social component and no ostensible connection to Israel or the Jewish people as opportunities for individuals to engage with others about Israel and Judaism.

While some games are inherently social and require players to interact, others have a social component that is ancillary to the actual game play – voluntary and spontaneous communications to coordinate strategy or simply banter with other players. Participating gamers, no matter the specific game, frequently engage in unrelated casual conversation just as any group of individuals would in other social situations. These casual interactions hold great potential for subtle forms of hasbara and should be considered and promoted as such.

Gamers often find themselves engaged in conversations with people from different countries. For Israelis, who generally don't have much direct contact with individuals from the Muslim world, video games become avenues for track 3 diplomacy.

For example, a JPPI staff member enjoys playing

casual online games in her free time. She's been playing various games with the same people for several years and has developed friendships with them. Her friends are from various countries around the world, including Iran. Predictably, when Israel engages in large-scale military operations, she finds herself defending and explaining Israel's actions. Her experience is not unique. It is only natural that when Israelis, or Diaspora Jews for that matter, play video games with other players from around the world, the Israeli-Arab conflict comes up.

Recently, another staff member at JPPI was playing an intense 'first person shooter' (fps) game with several people from all over the world. Fps are what many may think of as the quintessential video game – players going around shooting each other. While playing he noticed a fellow player named "TalesOfQusair" whose profile picture (below) featured the Hezbollah flag.



Screen capture of a gamer's emblem featuring the Hezbollah flag

Qusair is a strategic Syrian town along the border with Lebanon that was briefly controlled by Syrian rebels until Hezbollah forces retook the town on behalf of Assad's forces. The combination of the username and the flag obviously suggested a veneration of Hezbollah. Within the game chat TalesOfQusair said that s/he lives in Lebanon. The JPPI staff member responded in the chat for all those playing the game to see, that he was "his neighbor" to the south. TalesOfQusair responded by asking where. Once told that he lived in Israel, TalesOfQusair

Games designed with hasbara in mind could normalize perceptions and boost empathy for Israel, while showcasing Israeli culture and contributions to humanity

responded by saying that Zionists killed 120,000 women and babies in Lebanon. The Israeli responded by saying that fewer people had been killed in the entire Arab-Israeli conflict since 1880, and that "[s/he] should stop relying on Hezbollah propaganda as a source of information." After more back and forth, other game participants

came to Israel's defense and TalesOfQusair angrily quit the game. Subsequently, TalesOfQusair removed the Hezbollah flag from his/her online profile and accepted the JPPI staff member's friend request within the game platform.

Both anecdotes demonstrate the extent to which video games can be considered a tool for people-to-people diplomacy. In 2010, the Ministry of Information and Diaspora Affairs initiated a program to harness the power of Israelis traveling

abroad in Israel's PR effort. A similar program should be considered with respect to Israeli and Jewish gamers. Yonatan Wishniak, the creator of Israel Island, describes video games as "the front line of the clash of civilizations."¹¹ **It is important that policy makers consider gamers valuable assets in a prime position to positively educate others about Israel and the Jewish people.**

Uri Mishol, an Israeli high-tech and social entrepreneur, has used the interactivity and collaboration of popular online games, such as "Minecraft," as platforms to engage Israeli and Palestinian youth in a trust-building exercise to help facilitate conflict resolution. His project, Games for Peace, recognizes the power that social games hold for track 3, person to person, diplomacy – what has been described as "inter-ethnic youth engagement."¹²

Along with utilizing the social dimension of games as a vehicle to deliver soft advocacy, games can be created for the specific purpose of hasbara. It has been observed that games have a unique power of persuasion. Ian Bogost, the Ivan Allen College Distinguished Chair in Media Studies and Professor of Interactive Computing at the Georgia Institute of Technology, argues that games, through their use of rules and procedures, use a new type of rhetorical device he calls "procedural rhetoric" as a form of persuasion.¹³

Games designed with hasbara in mind could educate about, help normalize perceptions of, and increase empathy for Israel. They could have positive effects on tourism and showcase Israel's culture and contributions to humanity. The possibilities are endless.

Video games could be an important addition to the hasbara toolbox for several reasons: First, like movies and television shows, many games are story based with a plot arc that players interactively make their way through. Games have the ability to tell stories and/or convey information in engaging and captivating ways. Blockbuster video games often take several dozen hours for a player to 'beat' the game and finish the story. Such extensive playing of a game gives the player a unique attachment and familiarity with a given story.

Second, video games have become a visually impressive experience that can be utilized to familiarize gamers with Israel and facilitate attachments to it.

The image below demonstrates how far the graphics in games have come in the last 17 years. It compares the main character from the 'Tomb Raider' game franchise as she appeared in the game in 1996 and in 2013. It is important to emphasize that the character is a three dimensional object viewable from any angle, not just a two dimensional figure.



Tomb Raider character Lara Craft 1996 and 2013

Today's video games offer three-dimensional photorealistic worlds for players to explore. Playing video games is an experience similar to travelling, in which players can go to an unfamiliar location and explore new sights and the beauty of nature. Many games are set in specific cities or geographical regions. Video game makers often try to replicate reality as closely as possible to give the player a life-like experience. After playing a game set in a specific location for countless hours, players become so familiar with the geography it is as if they had actually visited the location.

It is possible and profitable to create games that have a subtle educational utility while entertaining wide audiences

In 2007, the video game "Assassin's Creed" was first released. It is a game whose main storyline is about ancient rivalry between Assassins and the Knights Templar, with the player assuming the identity of an Assassin. The game is set during the Third Crusade period when Europeans attempted to recapture the Holy Land

from Saladin. Among other places, it features both the city of Jerusalem and Acre as places where the game takes place. Players need to explore these cities to find hidden treasures and complete objectives. The makers of the game replicated these cities with historical accuracy. In Jerusalem, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, St. Anne's Church, the Armenian market, the Dome

of the Rock, and the city walls and gates are all reproduced in vivid detail.

Its creators were able to seamlessly infuse a significant amount of historical facts and personalities without infringing on the action and entertainment of the game play, demonstrating that is both possible and profitable to create games that have a subtle educational utility while entertaining wide audiences.

The first person shooter game genre could be particularly effective for hasbara purposes. Many of the most successful of these games use specific historical battles or campaigns as a setting for the action of the game. Replicating the topography, size of forces, and the types of weapons and vehicles that were used, players are able to relive various battles and operations in all their glory, horror, and detail.

Games could be created that recreate Israel's wars, operations, and campaigns. It is easy to envision a game that, for example, tells the story of Israel's War of Independence, digitally recreating the various battlefields, stories, personalities, and weapons of the war.

Although some may argue that such games could be provocative, glorify war, violent, or send the wrong message about Israel, the games would not be at all unique in terms of their general content and style. The video game industry, like the movie industry, uses advisory warnings on games to help ensure they are played by age appropriate gamers.

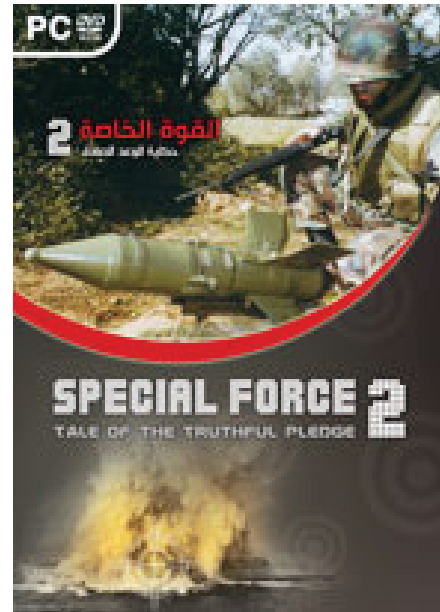
Writing in the Middle East Journal of Culture and Communications, Vít Šisler of Charles University

in Prague, notes that since 9/11 there has been an increase in the number of first person shooter video games set in the Middle East. In these games, according to Šisler, “The enemy is generally collectivized and linguistically functionalized as ‘various terrorist groups,’ ‘militants,’ or ‘insurgents.’ Most of these games exhibit strong cultural bias by schematizing Arabs and Muslims as enemies in the narrative framework of fundamentalism and terrorism.”¹⁴

Šisler’s following observation is especially poignant in understanding why video games could have a crucial hasbara asset:

Conversely, most of the first-person shooters created by Arab designers are located in Palestine and are often based on real stories from the Arab-Israeli conflict... Arab developers utilize Palestine as the place of a broader struggle for Arab dignity and identity... The emphasis is on the just and moral cause of the fight.¹⁵

Šisler cites two video games as examples: one created by Hezbollah set during the 2006 Lebanon War and one created in Jordan about the 2002 battle in Jenin during Israel’s Operation Defensive Shield. The Jenin game opens with the following statement: “The Battle of Jenin summarizes the issue of Palestine. On one side, a heavily armed enemy supported by the Western colonial forces and on the other side, unarmed and isolated people of Palestine fighting with rocks and light weapons.”¹⁶



Front cover of the Hezbollah produced game “Special Force 2: Tale of the Truthful Pledge” about the Second Lebanon War

To date, there has been one successful mainstream video game about Israel’s wars from the Israeli perspective. Released in 1998, “Jane’s IAF: Israel Air Force” was created by the Israeli software developer Pixel Multimedia, and released as part of the popular “Jane’s Combat Simulations” franchise by the giant game studio Electronic Arts.¹⁷ It was a detailed flight simulation in which the player sits in the cockpit of an Israeli fighter jet and flies historical IAF missions. The game came bundled with a CD-ROM containing a documentary video about the history and achievements of the Israeli Air Force.

Since its 1998 release, there has not been a major video game focusing exclusively on Israel’s battles or military achievements. This

could be considered a missed opportunity. **The extent to which interactive entertainment can be utilized directly for hasbara purposes is limited only by creativity and financial resources, both of which the government can influence. With video games increasing in popularity, and with Israel's enemies utilizing them as a propaganda platform, the Israeli government should work toward increasing the number and quality of video games that place the Jewish state in a positive, heroic light.**

The Foreign Ministry should ensure that Israel's cultural attachés in regions with large video game industries are trained to promote Israel as a virtual location within games

In order to achieve that goal, the government of Israel should create an advisory board similar to the Israeli Film Council. This body would be tasked with fostering and supporting a sustainable game industry in Israel.

The Israeli game industry has already created its own national body, GameIS, to “coordinate the national activities in video game development” and promotes “the local

industry, with an emphasis on raising awareness, holding professional gatherings and social events, organizing forums of mutual aid, (and) recruiting sponsors.”¹⁸ A government appointed body should work collaboratively with GameIS to better actualize the enormous public relations potential of video games.

Many video games enable players to do “open world exploration,” by creating a virtual location or recreating a real world location players are free to roam and explore like tourists. This could be valuable in bolstering Israel's tourism industry. Australia's Ministry of Tourism has already attempted to tap this potential as “a way to inspire tourists to visit Australia.”¹⁹ Israel should do the same.

Just as Israel's Ministry of Tourism is working to attract major movie production companies to film in Israel, similar efforts should be directed to game studios.²⁰ The Foreign Ministry should ensure that Israel's cultural attachés in regions with large video game industries are trained to promote Israel as a virtual location for video games, and to serve as liaisons between game studios that are already using Israel in some context within their games.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) should also be prepared to cooperate with, and offer assistance to, game studios interested in positively featuring the IDF in their games.

Economic Potential

Beyond hasbara, improving the video game industry in Israel would have positive economic benefits. As mentioned above, the video game industry contributed more than \$6 billion to America's GDP in 2012, with the industry employing around 146,000 workers across 36 states.²¹ Employees earn an average salary of \$90,000 a year.

According to Israel Advanced Technology Industries, Israel's largest umbrella organization for the high-tech and life sciences industries, Israel's video game industry comprises roughly 150 companies generating close to \$500 million in annual revenue.²² Israel has a lot of companies creating games for the mobile application market, but there are no major game studios in Israel producing blockbuster video games. While it is relatively inexpensive to create mobile applications, this is not the case for producing and marketing AAA* video games. The 2013 video game, Grand Theft Auto 5, cost around \$265 million dollars to create and market.²³ That investment was quickly recouped in its first day on the market with a record crushing \$800 million in sales, and over a billion dollars in the following days. Israeli video game companies are not presently capitalized to spend the necessary funds to produce AAA games.

In order to compete in the video game market, Israel will need to increase the size and abilities of its game industry. Many states in the U.S. have taken great efforts to increase the size of their video game industry to create jobs and boost their economies.

The state of Washington, which has smaller population than Israel, is home to the third largest number of video game industry employees in the United States. Between 2009 and 2012 the video

game industry in Washington grew by 7.5 percent, five times as much as their overall economy during that period. Over 12,800 game industry related jobs there added \$600 million to the state's economy in 2012.²⁴ Washington is home to approximately 330 interactive media companies, with revenues of \$19 billion.²⁵

Some of the success of Washington's interactive entertainment industry can be attributed to the Washington Interactive Network (WIN), a nonprofit organization created a decade ago "to promote, nurture, and grow the Interactive Media industry cluster in Washington State."

Washington is also able to attract interactive entertainment companies through the following tax incentives:

- No state income tax for individuals
- No state corporate income tax
- No capital gains tax
- Advanced Computing R&D Business & Occupation Tax Credit

The government of Israel should encourage institutes of higher education to offer more programs and courses in video game design and production

* AAA (pronounced "triple A") is a classification given to video games that are the most anticipated, of the highest quality, and inherently with the largest development budgets

While Israel may not be prepared to broadly adopt such aggressive tax incentives, it should consider the creation of specific industry zones or hubs that offer some tax incentives to encourage the growth of the interactive entertainment industry.

Pennsylvania, Georgia, North Carolina, Florida, Texas, and Louisiana have all passed legislation offering incentives to the video game industry.²⁶ Some states have also used partnerships with universities as a way to grow the interactive media industry.

Video games are a familiar medium among youth today. Therefore, it is natural to attempt to use game and game properties in the classroom

Within Europe, Germany, through its federal economic development agency, actively seeks to attract international gaming companies. With a gaming industry of 10,000 employees, it attributes its success to the 40 education facilities, both private and public, that offer video game related courses.²⁷

One of the challenges faced by Israel's gaming industry is an inexperienced work force. Because there are no major game studios in Israel, Israeli game programmers and computer animators seek employment abroad. Once the relevant experience is gained, it is unlikely that Israelis could find comparable employment in Israel.

In order to improve the quality and experience of Israel's gaming industry, the government of **Israel should encourage institutes of higher education**

to offer more programs and courses in video game design and production. Special attention should be paid to provide students in these programs internship opportunities in major game studios abroad to gain practical job experience that they can bring back to Israel.

Edutainment and Gamification

Today's youth, for better or worse, expect instant gratification from activities they undertake. Many teachers are challenged by the need to be both good educators and entertainers in order to have real impact in the classroom. Because video games are a very familiar medium among youth today, there has been a natural attempt to use games and game properties in the classroom. This is done primarily in two ways.

The first is through games whose direct purpose is teaching or improving a skill. Games designed for Jewish education already exist. Jewish Interactive is a South Africa based game studio that "uses educational technology to create accessible, affordable and engaging Jewish education for any child, anywhere." They claim to have reached over 83,000 children.²⁸ Educational games, like those made by Jewish Interactive, should be invested in and utilized by the Jewish world.

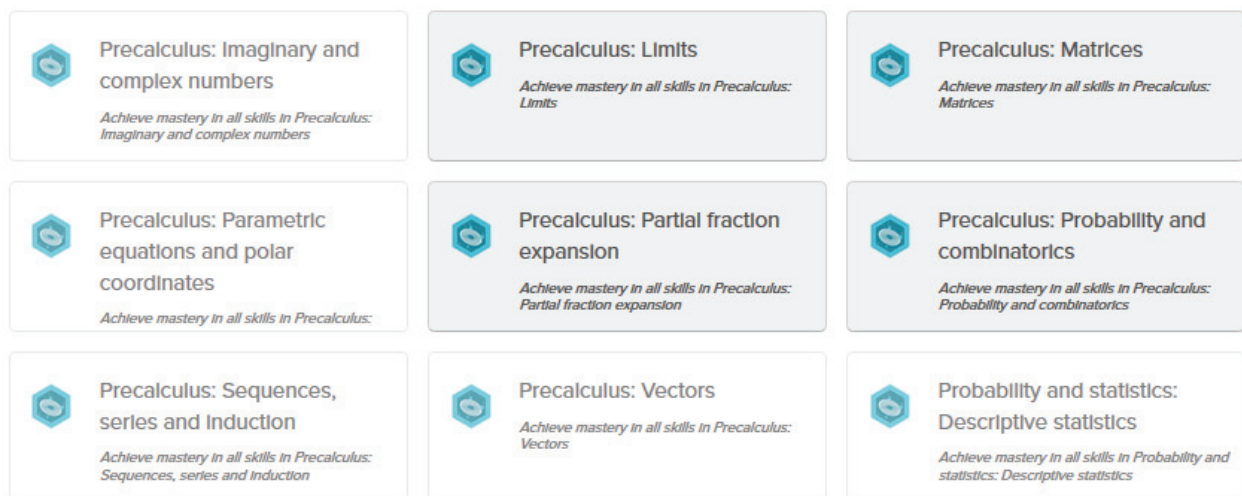
The second way that games have been used as educational aids is through adopting the fundamental aspects and techniques of games to help motivate and engage students in learning new concepts or accomplish specific tasks. This is known as gamification, turning something into a game by using game like properties such as goals, rewards, and ascending levels.

The popular, free website Khan Academy (khanacademy.com) is one of the best examples of effective gamification. It uses instructional videos and interactive self-paced exercises to teach various subjects. Khan's math section, for example, uses a very elaborate game-based approach. The site breaks down the world of mathematics, as taught from first grade through university level, into over 1,000 specific skills. Each skill reflects a single concept, from counting and measuring lines, all the way through the complex operations of differential and integral calculus.

For each skill there is a least one 5-10 minute video lecture between followed by an interactive test. In order to successfully pass the test, five

questions in a row must be answered correctly. To demonstrate that one has mastered a skill, s/he must pass three additional segments of three questions each. These questions do not vary in levels of difficulty, but each segment can only be passed after 16 hours have elapsed between segments. This helps commit skills to memory and also provides an incentive to return to the website the following day.

The website has an elaborate system of rewards: Points are rewarded for watching videos and answering questions correctly, as well as for speed and winning streaks. Like scouting, the site offers a variety of patches and badges rewarded for achieving "mastery" in various topics.



Khan Academy Screen Shot

Using Khan Academy’s gamification model, Jewish educational institutions could improve Jewish literacy across all ages by enhancing the learning process. For this reason, **Jewish educational institutions should invest in creating and building gamified platforms.**

Besides using gamification for educational purposes, it can also be used to help motivate and persuade individuals to perform specific tasks. A good example in Israel was “IDF Ranks,” a system deployed by the Israel Defense Forces in 2012 and active during Operation Pillar of Defense in November of 2012. According to the IDF Blog:

IDF Ranks is an interactive game, directly implemented into all of the IDF’s social platforms allowing **YOU** to be a virtual part of the IDF. Every action you take – reading, commenting, liking, sharing or even just visiting – will earn you points and help you climb the ladder of IDF Ranks. Specific actions will win you beautiful badges, and one day you might even become the Chief of Staff to IDF Ranks.²⁹

In this case, the goal of the gamification was to help disseminate information released by the spokesperson’s unit. Turning the process of dissemination into a game assumingly provided individuals with added incentive, gratification, and a sense of belonging.



IDF Ranks Promotional Image

Although IDF Ranks was predictably controversial, receiving some negative publicity – Jeffrey Goldberg called it “disgraceful”³⁰ – its success ought to be measured according to whether it improved the IDF’s overall ability to disseminate information. As of yet, no such information has been released.

Leaving the controversy aside, “IDF Ranks” does demonstrate the potential of gamification and should serve as an example for social platforms. Jewish organizations and Israeli government institutions should consider how to employ gamification to motivate and engage individuals in achieving institutional goals, such as fundraising and raising awareness about important issues.

Conclusion

Imagine that five years from now, people in countries all over the world will be captivated and immersed in a historically accurate, action-packed video game that recreates Israel’s War of Independence, that is so life-like that to most it would look like an interactive blockbuster Hollywood movie. Gamers fighting alongside Ariel Sharon to capture Latrun, or in the Harel Brigade under the command of Yitzak Rabin to open the road to Jerusalem, attend intimate briefings with David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Dayan, and relive the glory and hardship of the other battles of the war, by land, air, and sea.

The technology to create such a game already exists along with an enormous global market of gamers who play these types of games several hours a day, and wouldn’t hesitate to purchase and play a game that would teach them more about Israel than they would otherwise likely learn over their entire lives. The only things preventing the production of such a game in Israel is the scarcity of financial resources and an inexperienced video game industry, both of which the Israeli government could influence through policy initiatives.

Video games and other forms of interactive entertainment provide fresh opportunities to strengthen Israel and the Jewish world. Jewish leaders and organizations should familiarize themselves with this new medium and consider how to better utilize it.

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Jewish Solidarity in an Age of Polarization, Background Policy Documents prepared in advance of JPPI's 2015 Brainstorming Conference, May 18-19, 2015, Glen Cove, NY

Jewish Values and Israel's Use of Force in Armed Conflict: Perspectives from World Jewry, Project Heads: Shmuel Rosner and Michael Herzog, 2015

Annual Assessment 2013-2014, Executive Report No. 10, with special in-depth chapters: South African Jewry 20 Years into Democracy; 1989-2014: Russian-Speaking Jews, 25 Years Later; Woman's Leadership in the American Organized Jewish Community; Crowd Sourced Genealogy and Direct-to-Consumer DNA Testing: Implications for the Jewish People; Project Head: Shlomo Fischer; JPPI staff and contributors, 2014.

Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry, Shmuel Rosner and Avi Gil, Project Heads, 2014

Russian-Speaking Jews in North America, Jonathan Sarna; **On Israelis Abroad**, Yogev Karasenty, 2014

The Challenged Triangle: Washington, Jerusalem and the American Jewish Community; Israel: Jewish and Democratic: Background Policy Documents for JPPI's 2014 Conference on the Future of the Jewish People, March 11-12, 2014, Glen Cove, NY

Rise and Decline of Civilizations: Lessons for the Jewish People, Shalom Salomon Wald, Foreword by Shimon Peres, Academic Studies Press, Boston, 2014; Yediot Books (Hebrew translation), Tel Aviv, 2013.

Peoplehood and the Distancing Discourse, Background Policy Documents prepared for JPPI's 2012 Conference on the Future of the Jewish People, JPPI Staff, 2012.

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Policy Recommendations for Strengthening Jewish-Israeli Identity among Children of Israelis Abroad and their Attachment to the State of Israel and the Jewish Community, Yogev Karasenty, 2012.

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About JPPI

The Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI) is an independent professional policy planning think tank incorporated as a private non-profit company in Israel. The mission of the Institute is to ensure the thriving of the Jewish people and the Jewish civilization by engaging in professional strategic thinking and planning on issues of primary concern to world Jewry. Located in Jerusalem, the concept of JPPI regarding the Jewish people is global, and includes aspects of major Jewish communities with Israel as one of them, at the core.

JPPI's activities are action-oriented, placing special emphasis on identifying critical options and analyzing their potential impact on the future. To this end, the Institute works toward developing professional strategic and long-term policy perspectives exploring key factors that may endanger or enhance the future of the Jewish People. JPPI provides professionals, decision-makers, and global leaders with:

- Surveys and analyses of key situations and dynamics
- “Alerts” to emerging opportunities and threats
- Assessment of important current events and anticipated developments
- Strategic action options and innovative alternatives
- Policy option analysis
- Agenda setting, policy recommendations, and work plan design

JPPI is unique in dealing with the future of the Jewish people as a whole within a methodological framework of study and policy development. Its independence is assured by its company articles, with a board of directors co-chaired by Ambassadors Stuart Eizenstat and Dennis Ross – both have served in the highest echelons of the U.S. government, and Leonid Nevzlin in Israel – and composed of individuals with significant policy experience. The board of directors also serves as the Institute's Professional Guiding Council.



THE JEWISH PEOPLE POLICY INSTITUTE
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www.jpipi.org.il

Givat Ram Campus • P.O.B. 39156 Jerusalem 9139101
info@jpipi.org.il

Tel: 972-2-5633356 • Fax: 972-2-5635040

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