

Annual Assessment No. 10

Geopolitics

Bonds

Demography

Resou

Identity

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT 2013-2014

'Jews by Religion' and 'Jews of
no Religion' in the United States

Special Features:

DNA and Identity

South African Jewry after Mandela



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)

Partners and Members of the General Meeting:

Lester Crown and Charles Goodman
on behalf of Crown Family Philanthropies

Nathan and Frances Kirsh
on behalf of the Kirsh Family Foundation

Irina Nevzlin Kogan
on behalf of Nadav Foundation

Alisa Robbins Doctoroff and Linda Mirels
on behalf of UJA Federation of New York

Ratner Family

David Silvers
as Chairman of the JAFI Budget
and Finance Committee

Natan Sharansky
as Chairman of the JAFI Executive

Paul E. Singer
on behalf of the Paul E. Singer Foundation

The Judy and Michael Steinhardt Foundation

Charles Ratner
as Chairman of the JAFI Board of Governors

Our thanks to UJA Federation of New York,
the Jewish Federation of St. Louis,
the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago,
the Jewish Federation of Cleveland,
Arlene Kaufman and Sandy Baklor,
Alex Grass z"l and Jack Kay z"l
for their support of this project.

Board of Directors and Professional Guiding Council:

Co-Chairs
Stuart Eizenstat
Dennis Ross

Associate Chair
Leonid Nevzlin

Members of the Board

Elliott Abrams
Irwin Cotler
Wendy Fisher
Sami Friedrich
Misha Galperin
Dan Halperin
Steve Hoffman
Alan Hoffmann
David Koltz
Vernon Kurtz
Morlie Levin
Bernard-Henri Lévy
Glen Lewy
Judit Bokser Liwerant
Isaac Molho
Steven Nasatir
Yaakov Neeman
Avi Pazner
Jehuda Reinharz
John Ruskay
Doron Shorer
Jerry Silverman
Ted Sokolsky
Alan Solow
Michael Steinhardt
Aharon Yadlin

President and Founding Director
Avinoam Bar-Yosef

Projects Coordinator
Ita Alcalay



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)

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT 2013-2014

No. 10

PROJECT HEAD

Dr. Shlomo Fischer

CONTRIBUTORS

Avinoam Bar-Yosef, Nadia Ellis, Sylvia Barack Fishman, Avi Gil, Inbal Hakman, Michael Herzog,
Antony Korenstein, Dov Maimon, Asaf Nissenbaum, Steven Popper, Shmuel Rosner, David Saks,
Noah Slepko, Shalom Salomon Wald, Einat Wilf

EDITORS

Barry Geltman
Rami Tal

We would like to thank Prof. Gideon Shimoni, Prof. Uzi Rebhun, and Dr. Deborah Bolnick
for their contributions to this Annual Assessment

Copyright © The Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI)
(Established by the Jewish Agency for Israel, Ltd.)
Jerusalem 2014/5774

JPPI, Givat Ram Campus, P.O.B 39156, Jerusalem 9139101, Israel

Telephone: 972-2-5633356 | Fax: 972-2-5635040 | www.jppei.org.il

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be translated, reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without express written permission from the publisher.

Printed and Distributed by the Jewish People Policy Institute

Graphic Design: Lotte Design

Cover Design: Shlomit Wolf, Lotte Design

ISBN 978-965-7549-010-0

Table of Contents

Foreword by Dennis Ross and Stuart Eizenstat	5
Part 1: Policy Directions, Integrated 'Net' Assessment	
Suggested Policy Directions, 2013-2014	13
Selected Indicators of World Jewry	20
Integrated 'Net' Assessment	25
Part 2: Five Dimensions of Jewish Well-being	
Geopolitics	
2014 – A Strategic Crossroads	39
The Triangular Relationship: Jerusalem, Washington and the U.S. Jewish Community	73
Bonds Within and Between Communities	
Community Bonds and Israel: Institutionalizing Dialogue, a Positive Trend	81
Identity Formation and Expression	
Worlds Apart: Systems of Jewish Identity in Israel and the Diaspora	93
Burden Sharing and the Haredim	121
Material Resources	
Material Resources: 2013-2014	137
Demography	
The Number of Jews in the United States: Definitions and Methodologies in Contradictory Surveys	149
Haredi Demography – The United States and the United Kingdom	157
Part 3: Special Feature Articles	
South African Jewry 20 Years Into Democracy	173
1989-2014: Russian-Speaking Jews, 25 Years Later	191
Women's Leadership in the American Organized Jewish Community	205
Crowd Sourced Genealogy and Direct-to-Consumer DNA Testing: Implications for The Jewish People	221

It is hard to believe that the JPPI is publishing its 10th annual assessment of the situation and dynamics of the Jewish people. This flagship project began as an effort to create a baseline for establishing the status and well-being of different Jewish communities around the world. Its aim, however, was to use that baseline not just for comparative purposes but to be able to make recommendations for actions that could arrest decline in some communities and promote thriving in others. Each assessment offered judgments about how Israel was doing geopolitically, and where it faced challenges as well as opportunities. The relationship between Israel and the Diaspora, what was happening demographically in both, and the general direction of Jewish identity, all figured prominently in the earlier assessments.

A few years ago the Institute developed an interesting methodology for measuring how Israel and the Jewish world were doing. It sought to measure whether the trends were positive or negative in five dimensions: geopolitics, demography, identity, communal bonds, and material resources. Not surprisingly, this year's assessment offers a mixed picture. Some of these

are tending toward the slightly negative and some toward the slightly positive. Israeli demographics appear favorable because of higher birthrates and increased potential of Aliyah from Europe – which reflects negative pressures there. Jewish identity, especially in the United States, is tending somewhat negatively because of a weakening sense of “belonging and commitment to the Jewish people” among the younger demographic. Communal bonds are strengthening given stronger commitments to enhanced dialogues.

Geopolitically, the assessment also tends toward a more negative conclusion. We take the analysis that produces this conclusion seriously but also feel that it should be evaluated carefully. Israel faces increasing unknowns in the region. Egypt's future will take a long time to sort out. Whether the election of President Sisi will put Egypt on a more stable footing remains to be seen.

Syria will be a magnet for jihadis worldwide as long as Bashar al Assad is there – and his recent election and the all-out Iranian backing for him makes it likely that he can rule over western Syria for some time to come. The ongoing war in Syria, with its terrible humanitarian consequences,

will create new pressures on Jordan, and Jordan's stability remains critical to Israel's well-being. It also points to another reality in the region. Hezbollah is reluctant to challenge Israel when it is consumed in Syria – and this proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia will not end anytime soon.

Recent polling of 18-24 year olds throughout the region, the segment that drove the Arab Awakening three years ago, shows a very different mindset today. There is much less interest, than a few years ago in promoting regime change and much more interest in employment and their economic betterment.

With so much of the region internally consumed, there are two broad implications to keep in mind. First, Israel is not the preoccupation of most regional actors today. Most Arab leaders have their own needs and priorities and the Palestinians are currently not a priority of any in the region. True, the conflict with the Palestinians puts Israel on the defensive internationally, and, as the assessment points out, has an impact on the views of younger Jews toward Israel. But solving this conflict is not a game-changer in the region – and upheaval will be the norm for the foreseeable future.

Second, it is a fact that there is tension today between the American and Israeli positions on Iran and the peace issue and it must be managed. But it is also true that the prospects for a more comprehensive deal with the Iranians are not high – at least in the near term. Will the Obama administration and Israel diverge so clearly if

there is no deal? And, just because the current positions may be different on an acceptable deal, is it a given that if an agreement actually materializes, the differences cannot be managed? We are not so sure. Similarly, on the question of Israeli-Palestinian peace, the administration may well see the settlement issue as compounding the effort Secretary Kerry made, but it is neither indifferent to Abu Mazen's having not responded to the principles that were offered to him nor to the reconciliation deal he signed with Hamas. At this point, we don't know whether Palestinian elections will actually take place – and if they do, what the American reaction to them is likely to be. If Hamas does not alter any of its positions on recognition and violence, the American posture will be unlikely to differ from Israel's.

When taken with the prospects of continuing upheaval in the region and Israel being one country whose stability can be counted on, the potential for ongoing cooperation between the U.S. and Israel remains strong. None of this is to say that Israel can afford to be complacent or not attend to the Palestinian issue. Nor is it to say that if Israel's settlement policies remain unchanged they will not impose a high cost on Israel internationally. It is to say that all the regional turmoil gives Israel a real opportunity to position itself differently. Like it or not, the impediment to that is Israel's settlement policy. By the way, not its actual policy, meaning where it actually builds, but the impression that is left internationally that Israel is building in a way that rules out the possibility of a two-state solution. If Israel's leaders were to announce that they would build only in

what they think will be Israel and not build in what they consider will be part of the Palestinian state, that could create a big difference. While politically difficult for the Israeli government, it is important to weigh the political costs of such a changed posture publicly with the strategic benefits.

• • •

In the past year JPPI has played a significant role in strengthening the Diaspora-Israel dialogue. Minister of Justice Livni launched a legislative effort to strengthen Israel as both a Jewish and democratic state. She asked Prof. Ruth Gavison, a well-respected Israeli professor of law, to provide expert advice on this ambitious effort, and she, in turn, empowered JPPI to enlist the views of the Jewish Diaspora.

JPPI conducted a remarkable and unprecedented outreach effort in dozens of communities in the United States and Canada, but also in Europe and Latin America. Some 40 different seminars were held, along with questionnaires and analysis of other research. Diaspora Jews do not see a contradiction between Israel as a Jewish state and Israel as a democratic state. They see the two as complementary. As Israel ponders changes to its Basic Laws, it should consider carefully the views of the Diaspora to assure it does not compromise standards of equality and tolerance, which our study found crucial for Diaspora Jews. World Jewry fully appreciates the difficulties Israel faces in a hostile region with major security threats, but a majority of Diaspora Jews does not see this as a justification for Israel lowering its own principles of democracy and adherence to human rights.

In addition, the Diaspora feels increasingly comfortable with voicing objections to non-security issues relating to Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, for example, with the monopoly of the Orthodox rabbinate in Israel over issues of marriage, divorce and conversion. Many non-Orthodox Jews feel disenfranchised religiously in the Jewish state they so strongly support. This criticism is often rooted in democratic, pluralistic values, which are essential for Jews in the Diaspora, living as minorities in their countries.

At bottom, Diaspora Jews are positive and optimistic about Israel, and see greater attachment of young Jews to Judaism as based, in part, on visits to Israel, such as through the Taglit-Birthright program.

Beginning this year, JPPI's annual assessments will focus deeply on one of the five dimensions described earlier. In 2014 we pay special attention to Jewish identity in the United States, by far the home of the largest Jewish Diaspora community. This largely results from the publication of the Pew Research Center's survey of U.S. Jews, "A Portrait of Jewish Americans," the most important study of American Jewry in a decade, and the first by a major, respected, non-Jewish group. It has engendered great concern and controversy within the Jewish community. Some see it as showing a community in decline while others see reason for optimism in its findings.

According to Pew, there are about 6.7 million American Jews – consisting of 5.3 million adults (both "Jews by religion" and those who consider themselves "Jews of no religion") and 1.3 million

children in households with a Jewish adult who are being raised Jewish or partly Jewish. This is far higher than previous demographic studies have indicated.

But the Pew findings should be a wake-up call: the division of the American Jewish enterprise that is disengaging is growing at the expense of the engaged core. While it is a positive development that there are over a million more American Jews than previous surveys indicated a decade ago, the birthrates of the Jewish population are at best at simple replacement levels, compared to the more rapidly growing general population.

Further, the growth of a large population that considers themselves “Jews of no religion,” with a thin sense of belonging to the Jewish people and little attachment to the State of Israel represents a long-term challenge to the continued influence of American Jewry. While this group is 22% of adult Jews, compared to 78% who consider themselves “Jews by religion,” it represents almost a third of the younger group of Jews born after 1980.

The Pew survey should add urgency to the imperative to strengthen the core of engaged Jews, while reaching out to the periphery. For the core, that means emphasizing Jewish education, particularly full-time Jewish Day School education, but also improving after school, synagogue based programs. A major barrier to day schools is the very high cost.

The segment of the Jewish community most deeply engaged in Jewish life must make it a priority to reach out to the part that is drifting

away, or the entire Jewish enterprise in the U.S. will be progressively weakened over the course of the 21st century.

At the same time, we must adjust to the reality of out-marriage by reaching out to intermarried couples to make them part of the Jewish community. The Jewish communities and State of Israel should allocate a small amount of resources for pilot and experimental programs aimed at rebuilding the Jewish identity of this group.

• • •

The 2014 JPPI Annual Assessment also highlights a growing problem: the rise of anti-Semitism in parts of Europe, 70 years after the end of World War II and the Shoah. In the May 24 European Union parliamentary elections, far-right populist and xenophobic political parties made considerable gains. Indeed, the National Front in France won more seats in the European parliament than any other party, surging from 6.3% in 2009 to 24.85% in 2014. Now headed by Marine Le Pen, who has avoided direct anti-Semitic statements, many in the party, including her father Jean-Marie Le Pen, the National Front’s founder, hold anti-Semitic views.

There is an acute discomfort among the 500,000 Jews in France, the largest community in Western Europe. The French Jewish leadership sees unprecedented levels of anti-Semitism, with a combination of the far right, far left, and alienated young Muslim immigrants. They indicate that it is dangerous to wear a kippah on the Paris Metro.

Some 50 to 75% of French Jews envision possible emigration. In the coming years many would move to Israel if their diplomas and professional competencies were recognized in Israel as they are already in the EU, Canada, and Australia.

• • •

As always, we are confident that this assessment will spark a wide range of thought. It is our hope that it will also inspire action. We welcome your responses.

Stuart Eizenstat and Dennis Ross

PART 1

Suggested Policy Directions Integrated 'Net' Assessment

2

Suggested Policy Directions, 2013-2014

Israel-Diaspora Relations

Examining the Parameters for Advancing Israel-Diaspora Dialogue

JPPI recommends deepening and institutionalizing a permanent Jewish people dialogue mechanism for coordination on Israeli decisions that affect the Diaspora, and on decisions taken in the Jewish world that affect Israel. In this regard, and pursuant to the broad consultative project that the Institute held this year on the Jewish world's views about Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, during the coming year, the Institute will hold another round of seminars in communities around the world as well as an annual conference of leaders from Jewish organizations, communities, and academia.

The discussions will focus on the main issues and challenges by relating to the five dimensions critical to the Jewish people's thriving: geopolitics, community bonds, identity and identification, material resources, and demography. Particular attention will be given to ensure pluralistic settings, the involvement of the younger generation and new initiators in the field, and appropriate gender representation.

At the conclusion of the process, the Institute will submit a report to the government and to Jewish

leadership around the world, including detailed recommendations on strengthening and updating the consultative mechanism, and on the main parameters that should be focused upon.

Explanation

Development of a formal mechanism for dialogue between Israel and the Diaspora is necessary in order to:

1. Preserve the unity of the Jewish people in an age of "free choice" in which the possibility of building and adopting other identities is widely available.
2. Ensure participation of the next generation in Jewish life and in contributing to the community.
3. Strengthen and develop Israel's character as a Jewish and democratic state and as the core state of the Jewish people.
4. Advance Israel-Diaspora relations and those between communities around the world in a way that cultivates and preserves the value of shared responsibility as expressed in the statement: "All Jews are responsible for one another" [b. Sanhedrin 27b].

The Government of Israel

The War against De-legitimization

It is recommended that the Government adopt and implement a comprehensive strategy for the war against the international phenomenon of de-legitimization of Israel, in the spirit of the plan that was developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Strategic Affairs and of the recommendations made by the Jewish People Policy Institute. The Government should allocate funding at the level required to strengthen the tools and frameworks necessary for the plan's implementation, and in order to enhance inter-ministry cooperation, with an emphasis on the Foreign Ministry while involving Diaspora organizations in its execution.

Explanation

The threat of de-legitimization is of strategic significance for Israel – one that is no less serious than the physical threats the country faces – and human and budgetary resources should be invested accordingly in response to it. Given the severity of the threat, and in comparison to the readiness in the face of other threats, it is important to strengthen the effort and to allocate the funding necessary to do so.

About a year ago, during the presentation of JPPI's Annual Assessment, the Government resolved to assign primary responsibility for handling the phenomenon to the Minister for Strategic Affairs, and his ministry established a dedicated staff and developed a strategic action plan consistent with the conclusions of JPPI's de-legitimization project.

According to these conclusions and plans, the effort at this stage should concentrate – with Foreign Ministry involvement – on certain Western European countries that constitute a dangerous international incubator for the phenomenon and whose governments even provide, directly or indirectly, millions of dollars in funding de-legitimization organizations. This funding helps to bring the phenomenon to other countries, including the United States; at the same time, ties should be expanded with non-Western international actors who are not tainted by classic anti-Semitism (China, India, and Japan); a focused campaign should be waged using sophisticated tools (not necessarily those of the government), including media and legal means, in order to expose the de-legitimizers' true intentions and to place the main perpetrators on the defensive; Israel's "other face" should be presented to international public opinion; and significant international networks should be developed for the war against de-legitimization that include non-Jewish and liberal players while also running a campaign in the cyber arena.

In light of the above, the budget necessary for these activities should be increased substantially.

The Non-Orthodox Streams

JPPI recommends that the State of Israel enhance the status, the role, and the level of official participation of the non-Orthodox Jewish streams (including secular streams) in the religious life of the state, in order to strengthen and underscore its pluralistic, inclusive character. At the same time, initiatives must take into account existing

Israeli perspectives and institutions that provide religion with a public role, and to involve them in the proposals brought up for discussion.

Explanation

The Orthodox rabbinate's monopoly on matters relating to ritual and personal status are an impediment to Diaspora communities' identification with the State of Israel, an impediment whose severity has been intensifying in recent years. In order to enhance the Diaspora's identification with Israel, this monopoly should be ended. At the same time, it should be recognized that religion is part of the Jewish national collective identity (as it is in other nation states), and many in Israel and overseas – not all of whom are necessarily religious – consider public and state religious expression as part of the State of Israel's Jewish character.

Increasing Aliyah from Europe

JPPI recommends that an administration be established within the Prime Minister's Office that will be responsible for advancing Aliyah from Western Europe in general and from France and Belgium in particular. The administration will focus the efforts of the various national and government bodies charged with Aliyah promotion, the Aliyah process, and immigrant absorption. It will deal with coordinating and managing all matters related to the Western European Aliyah continuum under a single integrated umbrella, with a single information system and a computerized information-management system, and by redefining the Aliyah and absorption continuum.

Intensive efforts are required in the two main areas that constitute key impediments to tens of thousands who have expressed great interest in making Aliyah to Israel and/or in migrating in general:

A committee should be established immediately and charged with the removal of impediments and with increasing the pace of Aliyah from France and Belgium. It will deal, among other things, with matters related to education, military service and ties to the IDF, academic and student affairs, employment, professional licensing and recognition of professional degrees, promoting the relocation of businesses, and investments. The committee's membership should include the directors general of the Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption, the Ministry of Jerusalem and Diaspora Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy, the Jewish Agency for Israel, and the World Zionist Organization, and should be chaired by the director general of the Prime Minister's Office.

Actions should be taken to promote Aliyah through cooperation with the Jewish Agency for Israel and the World Zionist Organization and to provide information in every possible way, including through active marketing to increase and renew programs to expose various target audiences to Israel, and through activities in smaller and more distant communities.

Explanation

Although there has been a consistent increase in the number of immigrants (olim) arriving from France over the past 15 months, it still falls far

short of the potential given the new reality in Europe. It is likely that focused efforts to provide solutions for the tens of thousands of Jews who have expressed interest in making Aliyah immediately will lead to the development of a dynamic of mass Aliyah of tens of thousands, or even more, from France.

Various indicators point to push factors leading to an increase in Jewish migration from France and Belgium to other countries. Along with the economic recession and the growing strength of the extreme right in Europe, and pull factors related to Israel's stable economy, another element has recently been added: the fear for the safety of European Jews in light of the expected return home of hundreds of European jihadist fighters trained in Syria and Iraq.

For a variety of reasons, most of which can be mitigated, Israel is not necessarily the preferred destination of these migrants. Turning the wave of emigration from France and Belgium into Aliyah to Israel requires targeted and focused action in cooperation with the relevant communities.

The French Jewish community is the largest in Western Europe, and for a variety of reasons it is also the community ripest for emigration. Various surveys indicate that an overwhelming majority of Jews do not have faith in the French government's ability to defend their institutions and are considering emigration. Therefore, this community has been selected as the focus of a pilot initiative of cooperation between government ministries and the national organizations.

Diaspora Communities

Jewish Identity in the Diaspora

Although Jews who identify as "Jews by religion" generally exhibit strong feelings of commitment and belonging to the Jewish people, we must continue to cultivate this population's connection to the Jewish people. This can be accomplished through interventions that continue throughout childhood, the teen years, and early adulthood. Therefore, high-level Jewish education, which is rich in opportunities for Jewish peer interaction and lasts throughout the teen years – summer camps, college classes in Jewish studies, and Israel trips – must be strengthened and supported.

Jews who report having no religion and lack a significant sense of belonging and commitment to the Jewish people present a greater challenge. The Jewish people should initiate experimental programs that encourage the rebuilding of their Jewish identity without diverting resources from more connected populations. Moreover, we must conduct further, mainly qualitative research in order to continue to clarify the correspondence between intermarriage and "Jews of no religion."

Toward a Unified Framework for Reporting Expenses and Activities of Federations and other Jewish Organizations

Federations and Jewish organizations should establish a unified and consistent framework for such reporting across Jewish communal philanthropic institutions in the U.S. and, if possible, other Diaspora communities. This framework should also apply to those organizations

not legally required to report to the IRS. Such a uniform framework would establish and define a clearly defined and agreed upon categorization of outlays in areas such as education, Israel, and social welfare. Such a framework would optimize planning and facilitate both longitudinal and inter-organizational comparison.

Explanation

Federations currently make public detailed information on their activities. What complicates discussion and policy analysis is that they vary considerably in how such support is characterized at a more aggregate scale in annual reports and other documents. Such variation make comparisons between time periods, organizations, and regions in regard to activities and expenses, as well as outcomes and achievements necessary for informed policy planning, needlessly cumbersome and difficult.

Greater Integration of Women into Leadership Positions

In order to promote the greater integration of women into the leadership positions in Federations and other Jewish organizations, JPPI recommends that each current leader **identify**, together with male candidates, at least **two women as potential successors** and begin the process of preparing them for possible succession.

In the **medium term**, the American Jewish community should commit to creating specific leadership programs for mid-career women to help them deal with present obstacles to their advancement and direct them to the leadership

positions that will become available in the upcoming years. Programs such as Harvard Business School's Women's Leadership Forum,¹ whose goal is to prepare women to sustain strategic advantage inside their organizations, could be used as models to be adapted to the Jewish community context.

Explanation

Women are seriously under-represented in the top leadership echelons of Jewish nonprofit organizations. This under-representation is connected to and exacerbates the alienation of Jewish youth from Jewish organizations and the organized Jewish community, leadership succession, and a lack of sufficient innovation among Jewish organizations. From the point of view of Jewish youth, lack of adequate representation of women in the Jewish leadership contributes to the image of Jewish organizations as anachronistic and hidebound. In regard to the issue of leadership succession, women make up the vast majority of the employees of Jewish organizations and constitute an important, yet underutilized, talent pool, which can contribute to leadership. With respect to innovation, it is well documented that leadership diversity contributes to organizational innovation.

Jewish Identity and Direct-to-Consumer DNA testing

Jewish communities and major Jewish organizations should set up bodies to provide information and programing for individuals who, through direct consumer DNA testing, believe

they have discovered that they have Jewish roots and wish to connect to the Jewish people. Part of the task of such agencies must also be to prevent DNA tests from becoming a device of alienation from the Jewish people.

Explanation

The last few years have witnessed a dramatic increase in the amount of interest in genealogical mapping. Dozens of new businesses now exist that enable consumers to trace their family history online by searching electronic documents; harnessing the power of virtual social networks and crowd sourcing, these businesses connect individuals with close and distant relatives to collaborate on building interconnected family trees.

Concurrently, advances in genetic research and computing technology have enabled direct-to-consumer (DTC) genealogical mapping through DNA analysis at affordable prices. These two methods of ancestry tracing have become interwoven.

Of the many discoveries made by individuals taking advantage of these advances in genealogical mapping is the possible existence of Jewish ancestry.

These developments offer new opportunities for connecting, engaging, and strengthening the bonds of the Jewish people.

Endnote

1. <http://www.exed.hbs.edu/programs/wlf/Pages/objectives.aspx>

Selected Indicators of World Jewry, 2013-2014*

Country	Jewish Population Core Definition			GDP per capita, PPP U.S. \$	Index Of Human Development – World Rank	Recent Out-marriage Rate (%)	Aliyah	Number of Jewish Legislature Members / Seats In Legislature
	1970 ^a	2013 ^b	Projected 2020 ^c					
World	12,633,000	14,626,200 ^w	13,827,000	-	-	-	16,882 ^f	-
Israel	2,582,000	6,102,900 ^g	6,543,000 ⁱ	34,770	16	5	-	108/120 ^f
North America	5,686,000	6,499,500 ^w	5,581,000	-	-	-	2,413	-
United States	5,400,000	5,425,000-6,814,000 ^v	5,350,000 ⁿ	53,101	3	>50	2,185	33/535 ^s
Canada	286,000	380,000	381,000	43,472	11	15-24.9	228	8/413 ^t
Latin America	514,000	384,900	364,000	-	-	-	921	-
Argentina	282,000	181,500	162,000 ^j	18,749	45	25-34.9	255	11/329 ^u
Brazil	90,000	95,200	90,000 ^j	12,221	85	25-34.9	169	8/594
Mexico	35,000	40,000	42,000	15,563	61	1-4.9	-	-
Other countries	107,000	68,200	70,000 ^j	-	-	15-95	-	-
Europe non-FSU	1,331,000	1,134,400	1,070,000	-	-	-	4,288	-
France	530,000	478,000	482,000	35,784	20	25-34.9	2,903	13/925 ^u
United Kingdom	390,000	290,000	278,000 ^j	37,307	26	26 ^v	403	89/1438

* A detailed discussion of discrepant U.S. Jewish population estimates appears in Part 2 of this Annual Assessment

Germany	30,000	118,000	108,000	40,007	5	45-54.9	79	2/691 ^u
Romania	-	9,400	-	13,396	56	-	41	3/588 ^u
Bulgaria	-	2,000	-	14,499	57	-	15	2/240 ^u
Hungary	70,000	48,000	34,000	20,065	37	60	148	7/386
Other EU ^j	171,000	160,300	134,000	-	-	33-75	-	-
Other non-EU ^k	140,000	28,700	34,000	-	-	50-80	-	-
FSU	2,151,000	289,900	173,000	-	-	-	7,266	-
Russia	808,000	190,000	130,000 ⁱ	17,884	55	80	4,026 ^p	4/616 ^u
Ukraine	777,000	65,000	25,000 ⁱ	7,423	78	80	1,917 ^p	7/450 ^u
Rest FSU Europe ^l	312,000	15,300	15,000 ⁱ	-	-	65-75	584	-
FSU Asia	254,000	19,600	3,000	-	-	50-75	739	-
Asia (rest)^m	104,000	19,800	21,000	-	-	-	281	-
Africa	195,000	74,700	60,000	-	-	-	1,562	-
Ethiopia	-	100	-	1,366	173	-	1,355	-
South Africa	118,000	70,000	57,000	11,259	121	15-24.9	161	-
Morocco	-	2,400	-	5,456	130	-	-	-
Other countries	-	2,200	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oceania	70,000	120,100	105,000 ⁱ	-	-	-	149	-
Australia		112,500	97,000 ⁱ	43,073	2	15-24.9	-	3/226
New Zealand	5,000	7,500	8,000 ⁱ	30,493	6	15-24.9	-	1/120 ^u

- a. Source: Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics, The A. Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- b. Source (except where stated otherwise): DellaPergola, Sergio, (2013), "World Jewish Population, 2013," in Arnold Dashefsky and Ira M. Sheskin. (Editors), **The American Jewish Year Book**, Dordrecht: Springer, pp. 279-358.
- c. Source: DellaPergola, Sergio, (2011), **Jewish Demographic Policies: Population Trends and Options in Israel and in the Diaspora**, The Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI), pp. 66-67.
- d. A measure of a country's development based on health, educational attainment, and real income. Source: Human Development Report 2013- The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World, **United Nations Development Programme** (UNDP).
- e. Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Abstract Of Israel 2014/1. The data on continents are not sums of mentioned countries but of general Aliyah figures from the continent.
- f. Including country not specified.
- g. Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Abstract Of Israel 2014/1. The population is defined on the basis of the permanent (de jure) population, and consists of permanent residents – Israeli citizens and permanent residents without Israeli citizenship (including those who had been out of the country less than one year at the time of the estimate). The data here are according to segmentation of the population by religion and refer only to the number of Jewish residents.
- h. Based on adjusted response from NJPS 2001.
- i. Revised population projections for 2020.
- j. Without Baltic States.
- k. Including Turkey.
- l. Without Baltic States.
- m. Without Israel, FSU and Turkey.
- n. Forecast based on the low estimate of the Jewish population of the United States, 5.42 million, according to Sergio DellaPergola (2013) **How Many Jews in the United States? The Demographic Perspective**. Contemporary Jewry 33, 15–42
- o. Source: Website for the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Economic Outlook for 2013. Gross domestic product based on purchasing-power-parity (PPP), per capita (international coin).
- p. Source: Press release by Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 29/04/2013 – Immigration to Israel in 2013.
- q. Number of self-identified Jewish members of parliament according to the World Jewish Congress dated June 2011, except where stated otherwise.
- r. Source: http://www.knesset.gov.il/mk/heb/Individual_find.asp
- s. Source: The Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life (2012) Faith on the Hill: The Religious Composition of the 113th Congress. <http://www.pewforum.org/Government/Faith-on-the-Hill-The-Religious-Composition-of-the-113th-Congress.aspx>
- t. Source: The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, Canada.
- u. Data for previous parliament.
- v. The range of data is based on conflicting numbers from three studies: 1. Pew Research Center, A Portrait of Jewish Americans, 2013; 2. Brandeis University,

- American Jewish Population Estimates: 2012; 3) World Jewish Population, 2013. See footnote b.
- w. Based on the median point in the range of assessments of the number of Jews in the United States.
 - x. DellaPergola, Sergio, (2013), "World Jewish Population, 2012," in Arnold Dashefsky and Ira M. Sheskin. (Editors), The American Jewish Year Book, Dordrecht: Springer, pp. 213-283.
 - y. Institute for Jewish Policy Research, Jews in the United Kingdom in 2013



2013-14 Integrated 'Net' Assessment

Five key dimensions, **Geopolitics, Bonds Within and Between Communities, Identity Formation and Expression, Material Resources, and Demography** influence Jewish people interests and outcomes.¹ With this Annual Assessment JPPI initiates a practice of each year highlighting one of these five dimensions for greater focus. The emphasis this year is on Identity. As in all five dimensions, interpreting trends and changes to arrive at a net assessment that accurately reflects the balance between challenges and opportunities leaves considerable room for subjectivity. To supplement the policy discussions presented here, JPPI conducted a survey 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.

Geopolitics

As this Annual Assessment reaches completion, the serious security deterioration and confrontation between Israel and Hamas is still unfolding. Significant IDF forces have been operating on the ground in Gaza since July 17, 2014. In the ten days prior to the ground operation, Hamas repeatedly fired rockets deep into Israeli territory, even reaching the outskirts of Haifa in the north. "Iron Dome" batteries successfully intercepted most of the rockets, and the Israeli Air Force carried out hundreds of attacks against Hamas targets in Gaza. Hamas's rejection of an Egyptian cease-fire proposal, together with its unabated rocket barrage and its attempts to infiltrate Israel through a system of attack tunnels led the Israeli cabinet to decide on a ground operation.

It is too soon to assess the overall significance of the military conflict with Hamas, but it does underscore the fact that 2014 has brought Israel to a strategic crossroads on two fronts: the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and the future of Iran's nuclear program. Both issues may place additional stress on the triangular relationship:

Israel, the United States, and the American Jewish community. The diplomatic negotiations with the Palestinians, which ended without result when their April 30, 2014 deadline expired, and the military conflict with Hamas leave Israel with a set of problematic potential scenarios.

At the same time, the interim agreement with Iran and the ongoing permanent settlement talks being held in Vienna raise serious concerns in

Israel. The coming months may bring new tensions between Washington and Jerusalem that may trouble American Jewry and could strain the "triangle," a cornerstone of Israel's and the Jewish people's strength.

The Palestinians may carry through on threats to launch a political-legal campaign against Israel in the international arena

The erosion of the international standing of the United States continues. Home to almost half the Jewish

people who live there in unprecedented prosperity, U.S. friendship and support are critically important for Israel. Israel will be greatly affected not only by changes in the quality of its relationship with Washington, but also by a change in U.S. global standing. The perception taking root, that the United States – Israel's ally – is in the process of decline and of abandoning the Middle East, erodes Israel's deterrence capacity and the power associated with it.

The optimism many expressed at the beginning of the recent regional developments has given way to disappointment and concern. There is growing doubt that the movement that toppled autocratic rulers is also capable of bringing political cohesion and liberal reform to societies that lack a democratic culture and laden with poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, tribalism, social divides, radical Islam, the oppression of women, corrupt regimes, discrimination against minorities, poor education systems, backward economies, and a weakened middle class.

Israel faces a regional situation in which it is increasingly difficult to deal with weakened governments that are no longer the real "address" for what takes place in their sovereign territory and in which problematic non-state actors are strengthening at their expense. From Israel's perspective, anchors that had provided relative strategic stability over the years have weakened: Mubarak's overthrow and the undermining of Egypt's general governability, particularly in Sinai; the deep crisis in relations with Turkey, which seem unlikely to return to previous levels; Syria's de facto breakup; threats to the monarchy in Jordan; anticipated changes in Saudi leadership; and Iraq's difficulty in maintaining unity and quelling internal terror.

The negotiations with Iran expose the significant disagreement between the United States and Israel over their ultimate objectives. While Israel is categorically opposed to any agreement that would leave Iran with an independent capacity to enrich uranium, most commentators believe that the United States and the West will come to

terms with a permanent agreement that leaves Iran with a nuclear capability, including uranium enrichment on its soil. The main U.S. intention is to ensure that Iran will not have the break out capability to quickly to produce a nuclear bomb. This goal is not satisfactory to the Israeli government.

Secretary of State John Kerry's efforts to achieve a breakthrough in reaching an Israeli-Palestinian agreement ended in failure. Once the military confrontation with Hamas ends, Israel is likely to confront a new set of diplomatic challenges. It is unclear what will become of the Fatah-Hamas unity agreement, and whether the technocratic government established with it will lead to general elections as planned. A diplomatic vacuum would almost certainly push the Palestinians to carry through on threats to launch a political-legal campaign against Israel in the international arena. Israel, without a credible peace process, is also likely to face an escalating international campaign of de-legitimization and sanctions.

Growing tensions between Jerusalem and Washington may strengthen nascent trends in the United States, still far from dominant at this point. Israel is portrayed by some Americans as inflexible on the Palestinian issue and overly aggressive with respect to Iran, and so, a liability to U.S. national interests. Some warn that Israel may drag the U.S, against its will, into another Middle East war. Others assert that America's image in the Muslim world is being damaged, that it is being pushed into isolation in international forums, or that its support for Israel draws costly destructive criticism.

The challenges to U.S. Jewry, therefore, are likely to increase the more severely the gap widens between Israeli and American positions, the more Israel presses to "mobilize" American Jewry behind the struggle, and the more Israel interferes in the administration's political back yard. Such a situation could discomfit the U.S. Jewish community and exacerbate internal differences, especially in light of claims that American foreign policy in the Middle East is influenced by Israel and the Jewish lobby in a manner contrary to U.S. interests.

Weighing the entire picture, this year we carefully and moderately move the Geopolitics gauge in a negative direction

At the same time, there have also been positive developments from the Israeli point of view in the Middle East: The Arab states are preoccupied with irritating domestic and economic problems, so a decision to go to war with Israel seems an unlikely scenario. The Syrian army has been worn down by civil war, and Syria has been disarmed of most of its chemical weapons. The Tehran-Damascus-Hezbollah axis is threatened. Political Islam has lost much of its stature and luster and was ousted from the Egyptian government; Hamas has lost its base in Syria, and following the ouster of the Muslim Brotherhood government, it became an enemy in the eyes of Egypt's leadership. The military conflict between Israel and Hamas has revealed significant common interests between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and other moderate Arab states

that are concerned about the growing strength of the Muslim Brotherhood and who, therefore, regard Hamas an enemy. This commonality of interests creates an opportunity for Israel to deepen regional ties and strengthen the moderate bloc, which considers itself threatened by extremist Islam. Hezbollah's clout has declined in light of its military alliance with Assad's forces. The continued development of Israel's natural gas fields opens opportunities with regional elements that also align with Israel on the Iran issue.

Weighing the entire picture, this year we carefully and moderately move the Geopolitics gauge in a negative direction. Yet, at the same time, we also warn of genuine potential for continued erosion.

Most of the world's Jews desire an Israel that is both Jewish and democratic – and assume that this combination is possible

Bonds Within and Between Communities

The nature of Israel today and what Israel could become in the future affect bonds between it and other Jewish communities. That being said, this relationship resembles the Sherlock Holmes story in which what was remarkable was the dog that didn't bark. Solidarity with Israel remains a hallmark despite trials and disappointments of one side by the other. Yet, as generations shift and memories of past shared concerns are subjected to new forces,

both internal and external, there is concern about whether the fundamentals of the past might become more subject to change. JPPI provided first-hand evidence for continuity as well as change in this dimension with a comprehensive study providing background research to an Israeli government effort.³

Despite the present solidarity, indicators of change are not absent. In the U.S., young Orthodox Jews are closer to Israel than American Jews in general.⁴ Non-Orthodox Jews with non-Jewish partners or classified as "Jews of no religion"⁵ have weaker attachment. Both groups are growing. The JPPI report hints that a sense of alienation from Israel is deepening in parts of the Jewish community. While not yet a sweeping phenomenon, there are signs that attitudes toward Israel generate internal division in the community and erode, in particular, the attitudes of the next generation toward Israel.

Most of the world's Jews desire an Israel that is both Jewish and democratic and assume that this combination is feasible. While Diaspora Jews see a significant religious component in Israel's identity as part of preserving Israel's "Jewish" identity, there is serious criticism about the practical implementation of the religion-state relationship. Many Diaspora Jews recognize the constraints Israel faces but do not find this justification for lowering the high values concerning human rights standards expected of Israel. At the same time, many Diaspora Jews express a sense of duty in aiding Israel's efforts to achieve such standards and relish a prospect of permanent and significant dialogue between communities.

The timeliness of this opportunity is borne out by the results from the JPPI survey. When queried about the changes over the past year on the bonds between Jewish communities and those communities with Israel the plurality of respondents (44%) considered that there had been a small deterioration. Only 20% felt that there had been some degree of improvement. Those who felt there had been a negative trend most often cited Israel government policy and actions on domestic religious affairs, followed by the status of the peace process and conditions beyond the green line. Insight into why these last two should have a bearing on intra-community bonds is provided by the next most common response citing efforts by Israel's adversaries and external critics to portray Israel in a poor light. The concern is that the aggregation of these trends will have an eroding effect on the solidarity and commonality that continues to be the hallmark of relations between Diaspora communities and Israel. Despite this, the deep interest in ties and dialogue evident in the JPPI report warrants that we register a small improvement in this area.

Identity Formation and Expression

Identity construction processes both in Israel and in the U.S. are in states of flux. These changes run in parallel and have several points of tangency but are nonetheless distinct and in some cases following different trajectories.

The 2013 Pew report⁶ portrayed a majority of American Jewish adults as possessing a sense of

Jewish belonging and solidarity. It also showed an emerging (and younger) group for whom Jewishness is ethnicity in the descriptive sense but not a cornerstone of identity. For the former group, Jewishness constitutes a "civil religion"⁷ which is symbolized by, but not identical to, a more traditional conception of religious identity. The latter group (now about 20% of Jewish adults), however, has no connection with these norms of Jewish solidarity and commitment. As one descends among age cohorts the percentage of this group of 'Jews of no religion' grows.

This transition in identity ideation also has implications for the future of identity-based public and political engagement on the part of the Jewish community, and for the character of the community itself. This trend would be damaging

to Jewish communal life in the U.S. as it exists today and in the most recent past. The policy choices confronting the Jewish community would be to engage in measures to enhance and broaden the capacity and attractiveness of existing forms of Jewish identification, to work out new mechanisms for accommodating communal life with changing conceptions of Jewish identity, or to witness the phenomenon of a large or even growing number of self-identified U.S. Jews accompanied by a shrinking "committed" Jewish "community."

Unlike the Diaspora where Jewish identity is religious or ethnic, it is primarily national-political in Israel

Jewish identity is clearly important in Israel, but its forms differ from those of the Diaspora. There, Jewish identity is primarily national-political and ensures full inclusion in Israel's socio-economic-political collectivity. Developments this year touched upon this identity construct as well. The Knesset saw legislative initiatives designed to strengthen the Jewish identity of the State of Israel. Other initiatives: Minister of Religious Affairs Naftali Bennett initiated construction of

In a historic first, four Reform rabbis began receiving state salaries as of January 1, 2014

a prayer area adjacent to the southern part of the Western Wall in which egalitarian and non-Orthodox services may take place (an initiative that is similar to the Sharansky compromise). And in a historic first, as of Jan. 1, 2014, four Reform rabbis began receiving salaries from the state. Jewish identity in Israel is also changing as a result

of a movement of Jewish renewal among those at the more secular end of the spectrum. This was highlighted when MK Ruth Calderon (Yesh Atid) used her maiden parliamentary speech to teach a passage of Talmud.

Respondents to the JPPI survey, on the whole, interpreted the Pew study findings themselves to be neither unduly troubling nor satisfactory. On a five-point scale, no respondent selected either extreme ("unambiguously negative" or "unambiguously positive") as their reaction to

the study. The majority (60%) of those replying to the question, however, felt the message was negative, albeit with some reason for hope. Of the remainder, most (24%) found the findings to be neutral and 16% viewed them as positive. When asked for their personal assessment in light of several recent studies, the pattern reversed itself: 58% professed themselves to be positive about the future of American Jewry with some reason for caution. Thirty-one percent had generally negative views but with reason for hope. Again, no one selected the unambiguously negative or positive characterization.

Additional questions provided illumination regarding what lies behind these responses. Forty-four percent viewed intermarriage as an unambiguous source of weakness with a further 30% finding it negative but with some positive aspects. The fact that others found this force to be either neutral or positive to a degree is less surprising because even some of those who viewed this as a negative argued that many children of intermarriage continue to identify as Jews and that the net effect is to enhance the pool of those who find an identification with the Jewish people.

A pair of questions asked to what degree the Pew category of "Jews of no religion" should receive greater attention than the rest of the Jewish community, and whether this category as well as children of intermarriage should be beneficiaries of special educational outreach efforts. No respondent felt that nothing should be done, and the bulk of them advocated active engagement efforts by synagogues (21%), through non-religious channels (56%), or both (18%). The majority of

respondents (56%) felt that entirely new means for doing so were both required and necessary while a lesser number (30%) had confidence in existing educational and outreach channels.

Those who felt special measures were warranted and necessary tended to emphasize Jewish 'literacy' (in this case meaning identification with heritage and culture) and pointed to the Pew findings as providing corroboration. The consistent emphasis on education and literacy through more significant, collective effort was striking among the responses that elaborated on the underlying reasoning behind the replies. The shared belief was that current networks are insufficient for a population that needed to be reached in ways that "resonate and can be of help in building a Jewish identity while becoming literate Jew."⁸

No respondent considered the growth of Orthodoxy in the U.S. as an entirely negative trend. Indeed, the bulk of respondents viewed this trend as either unambiguously positive (19%) or positive with some negative aspects (37%). Most of the negative aspects pointed to were indirect, with one-third of respondents indicating that this reflected a hollowing of the center and growth of the two ends of the affiliation spectrum. More than one-quarter of those surveyed felt that Orthodoxy was not in a position to engage fully with the challenges confronting American Jewish life or were troubled that the growth of Orthodoxy was in large part a reflection of the growth among the Ultra-Orthodox (19%).

The aggregate net assessment provided by respondents to the survey is that the trends

and forces of the past year have had a generally negative effect on the dimension of Jewish identity (55%). Less than a quarter saw any degree of positive trend. This is a surprising departure from what might be expected of the conventional wisdom and highlights the effect that some of the prominent disputes over the validity of different streams of Judaism in Israel might be having, at least in the perception of interested observers. However, according to the reasoning provided by respondents, a more troubling concern would be the rates of assimilation outside of Israel and the status of intermarried couples and their children. This latter concern may shed light on why the status issues of the different streams of Judaism within Israel are held to be of such significance by communities that are themselves worried about their own continuity.

Although the renewal movement in Israel is potentially a harbinger of a wider transformation of Jewish identity there, ongoing Diaspora trends – so far unaccompanied by reliable forces to ensure their challenge will be met – lead us to register a slightly negative change this year on this dimension's gauge.

**Resources
available to
Diaspora
communities
are becoming
constrained**

Material Resources

This year continued a trend begun with last year's election in Israel of domestic economic and social concerns playing an unaccustomed leading role in public discourse. The combination of slowing growth, in part a result of the continuing sluggish European return to economic health but also of structural issues in Israel's economy, and increasing focus on emerging disparities in income and

The biggest tradeoff in federation allocations is between Israel and bolstering Jewish identity

opportunity, kept such issues in the public focus. The question remains whether Israel will be able to regain the aggressive growth path of the past decade or will it shift to a rate more typical of the OECD average. Periods of slower growth usually see disparities between earning power and wealth growth.⁹

From the Jewish people perspective, such developments in Israel are important by virtue of Israel's position in the global Jewish community. They also carry implications for the extent to which Israel grows into a more leading role in supporting specifically Jewish interests and initiatives both at home and abroad. Economics certainly play a significant (but not the sole) role in the ongoing debates about greater integration of the Haredi sector into Israel's society and labor force.

In the other global Jewish communities, particularly in the U.S., the trend JPPI has previously pointed

to regarding the allocation of Jewish funding – the increasingly explicit discussion about sources and uses – has grown. Although the recent economic crisis has largely passed, the quiet debate about resource sufficiency and allocation grows. It was brought most forcefully to the attention of the wider public in a series of articles appearing in the *Forward* in early 2014, as is discussed in the main section of the annual assessment.

JPPI's own research reported in this annual assessment shows that once social welfare needs are met, the biggest tradeoff in use of federation funds is between what goes to Israel and what is necessary to bolster Jewish identity and continuity within the U.S. This transition in both the U.S. and Israel found expression in June 2014 when the Government of Israel-World Jewry Joint Initiative was announced. Drawing on a conceptual framework designed by JPPI in 2009, the government decision is based on a planning process that began in 2012. Designed to strengthen Jewish identity among the young and enhance connections to Israel, the fact that an initiative of this scale (a projected 570 million shekels) is being proposed makes clear the connection between the issues of Diaspora identity and community bonds and the need, therefore, for comprehensive decision-making. In any event the JPPI's research made clear that resources available to Diaspora communities are becoming constrained.

When asked to assess the changes over the year in this dimension of Jewish people material resources and uses, most respondents indicated a situation of little or no net change (55%). Of the others, the preponderance felt the situation was either

somewhat or significantly improved. The reason most often cited was the discovery and exploitation of Israel's fossil fuel resources followed closely by Israel's standing as an emerging technology hub. The economic condition of Israel's citizens was cited as both a positive and a negative (with the former dominating.) The results were more equivocal on the non-Israel part of the Jewish people resource equation. Those citing factors such as the willingness to support Jewish institutions by private donations, the level of private donations, the changes in the nature of philanthropy itself and the relations between the U.S. and Israel were fairly evenly split on whether these were trends moving in a positive or negative direction. Changes in the nature or perception of Jewish community institutions were cited as negatives by those who highlighted this factor; no respondent viewed this as positive.

We register a slight negative change this year on this dimension's gauge.

Demography

Israel surpassed the U.S. in world Jewish population rankings – or did it? Israel as a sovereign nation conducts a census of its people. The U.S. does not collect data on religious affiliation, so there is greater doubt about what is an accurate tally. The widely discussed Pew study and a study of American Jews by researchers at Brandeis University offer estimates of a U.S. community of over 6 million. This is not without controversy and is discussed in detail in the section on demographics. The fact that the Haredim are by far the largest growth sector added to the policy debate over identity that is the focus of this annual assessment.

One of the sources of demographic growth is the increased Jewish identification of the children of intermarried couples

Both of these developments bring home that demography remains largely a zero-sum game from the perspective of the Jewish people. Israel has world Jewry's highest birthrate (appreciably above the replacement rate). Almost by definition any non-biological impact, such as by immigration from other countries, comes at the expense of the Jewish communities in the countries of origin. If recent policy moves to increase the attractiveness of Israel to emigrating French Jews are effective, the Jewish population of France decreases.¹⁰ It is at least worth hypothesizing that the smaller

any given Jewish community becomes, the less likely their non-Jewish countrymen will develop an identification with Jewish people interests or would even themselves associate with the Jewish community even at the meager rates which are usually the norm in most Diaspora locales.

As in the past, recent moves by the government of Israel to curtail the subventions to haredi families along with the increasing move toward encouraging labor force participation may affect the fertility rates among this community as well. In Haredi communities outside of Israel in which a greater accommodation to economic considerations is already the norm, the divergence of fertility rates from those of other Jewish religious branches and non-affiliated identified Jews is likely to continue with the result being an increasing proportion of Haredi and other Orthodox streams. The biggest determinants of the Jewish future in global Jewish communities outside of Israel are likely to be the continued trend toward more inter-marriage, how the offspring of such unions are regarded, and what accommodation is made for their inclusion into Jewish community life. Analyses of the Pew study did note that one of the sources of possible demographic growth is the increased self-identification as Jewish by the offspring of intermarried couples.

Because the demographic dimension sees the slowest rate of change from year to year, we did not include questions from this sphere in the survey instrument. It is interesting to note, however, that for many of the other dimensions, particularly the extensive questioning on Jewish identity, the respondents are acutely aware of

the importance demographics holds for how a number of outcomes will be resolved in coming years.

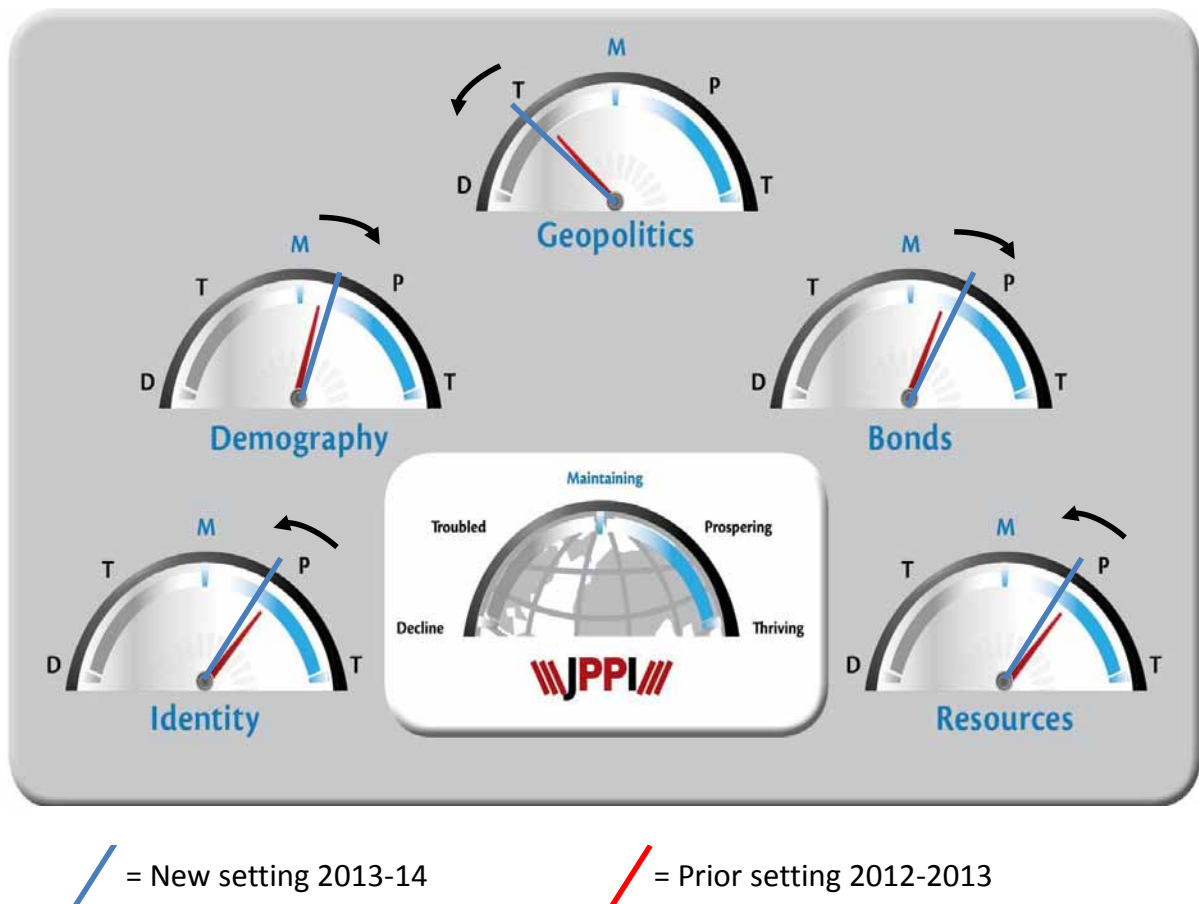
There is a possibility that a more positive demographic picture of U.S. community will emerge. More potentially significant, however, are the various active measures (discussed in this annual assessment) being taken to increase affiliation in Jewish communities abroad and also to make the processes of ingathering and absorption in Israel more suited to modern needs.

We register a positive change this year on this dimension' gauge.

Current Status and Trends to Watch

Figure 1 shows how we would set the dials on the Jewish People "dashboard" as of mid-2014. The events of the past year and continuing trends seem to be having an effect on several of the assessments of where the Jewish People are today, albeit without profound changes.

Figure 1. Characterization of Key Drivers Affecting the Jewish People in 2013-2014



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. Because of the focus on U.S. Jewish identity, the invitees this year were largely from the U.S. and Israel and were based upon the invitation list to JPPI’s March 2014 workshop in Glen Cove, NY. Surveys were conducted through email between 19 February and 12 March 2014. A total of 72 individuals were contacted with 27 surveys returned for a response rate of 37.5%.
3. See: *Israel as A Jewish and Democratic State: Views from the Jewish World*, JPPI, May 2014. This study drew from seminars held in Jewish communities around the world and was presented to Prof. Ruth Gavison as background material for her investigation of appropriate constitutional arrangements for Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. She was appointed to this task by Minister of Justice Tzipi Livni.
4. See: “Eight facts about Orthodox Jews from the Pew Research survey”, Pew, October 2013.
5. See: “Who are the ‘Jews by Religion’ in the Pew Report?”, Shlomo Fischer, JPPI, November 2013; and “‘Jews Not By Religion’: How to Respond to American Jewry’s New Challenge”, Shmuel Rosner, JPPI, December 2013.
6. *A Portrait of Jewish Americans* (released October 1, 2013) <http://www.pewforum.org/files/2013/10/jewish-american-full-report-for-web.pdf>.
7. Fischer, Op-cit.
8. By this respondents do not mean familiarity with classics of Jewish literature but rather enhanced Jewish familiarity among the weakly affiliated with the ‘civil religion’ aspects of Jewish life in America.
9. Piketty, Thomas (2014). *Capital in the Twenty-first Century*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press.)
10. These policies have been put in place not to encourage Aliyah *per se* but to enhance the prospects that emigrating French Jews will select Israel over other countries. The number of French Jews most strongly connected to the community and to Israel is estimated at around 200,000.

PART 2

Five Dimensions of Jewish Well-being

Geopolitics

Bonds within and between Communities

Identity Formation and Expression

Material Resources

Demography

4

2014 – A Strategic Crossroads

Introduction

As this overview is being completed, the serious security deterioration and confrontation between Israel and Hamas is still unfolding. Significant IDF forces have been operating on the ground in Gaza since July 17, 2014. In the ten days prior to the ground operation, Hamas fired rockets deep into Israeli

It is too soon to assess the overall significance of the military conflict with Hamas, but it does underscore that 2014 has brought Israel to a strategic crossroads

territory, even reaching the outskirts of Haifa in the north. "Iron Dome" batteries successfully intercepted most of the rockets, and the Israeli Air Force carried out hundreds of attacks against Hamas targets in Gaza. Hamas's rejection of an Egyptian cease-fire proposal, together with its unabated rocket barrage and its attempts to infiltrate Israel

through a system of attack tunnels led the Israeli cabinet to decide on a ground operation.

It is too soon to assess the overall significance of the military conflict with Hamas, but it does underscore

the fact that 2014 has brought Israel to a strategic crossroads on two fronts: the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and the future of Iran's nuclear program. Both issues may place additional stress on the triangular relationship: Israel, the United States, and the American Jewish community. The diplomatic negotiations with the Palestinians, which ended without result when their April 30, 2014 deadline expired, and the military conflict with Hamas leave Israel with a set of problematic potential scenarios.

At the same time, the interim agreement with Iran and the ongoing permanent settlement talks being held in Vienna raise serious concerns in Israel. The coming months may bring new tensions between Washington and Jerusalem that may trouble American Jewry and could strain the "triangle," a cornerstone of Israel's and the Jewish people's power. The main issues – the fighting in Gaza and the so-far unsuccessful attempt to achieve a breakthrough in reaching an Israeli-Palestinian agreement, along with efforts to halt Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon – are occurring within stormy global and regional contexts. Replete with uncertainties and dilemmas highly relevant to Israel's standing, both issues test Jerusalem's decision-makers and the triangle's strength.

The Global Context

The “world order”, both the one that prevailed during the Cold War and that which characterized the years of American dominance following the Soviet Union’s collapse, have been supplanted by a “world dis-order” that has yet to coalesce into a stable and functioning system. Alongside the rise of China and the increasingly assertive geopolitical challenge that Moscow still poses to Washington, an erosion of the international standing of the United States continues. Home to almost half the Jewish people who live there in unprecedented

The already-complex geopolitical arena familiar to us in the past has been further complicated

prosperity, U.S. friendship and support for Israel are critically important. The already-complex geopolitical arena familiar to us in the past has been further complicated by more recent trends that draw their force and direction from the various incarnations of the “Arab

Spring,” the American withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan, the economic crisis in the United States and Europe, and the continued rise of Asia. Professor Kishore Mahbubani of Singapore has predicted that we are only five years away from a historic milestone: for the first time in 200 years, a non-Western country – China – will become the world’s largest economy in purchasing-power parity (PPP) terms. In this context, Mahbubani claims that: “The big question for our time... is this: is America ready to become number two?”¹

The erosion of Washington’s readiness to lead the free world (and to use its power to do so), to develop its international standing, and of the manner in which its power is perceived – as weakening – by those who provoke it, found expression in U.S. hesitance in the face of the aggressive steps taken by Russian President Putin during the Ukraine crisis. Putin was not willing to accept the possibility that Kiev would favor a Western orientation and escape from Russia’s sphere of influence. He sent forces to the Crimean Peninsula (March 1, 2014) and initiated a quick referendum that transferred the peninsula to Russian sovereignty. Israel, it should be noted, did not feel the necessity to stand alongside the United States and did not join the 100 countries that declared Putin’s move illegal at the UN General Assembly (March 27, 2014) (A similar incident occurred on June 29, 2014 when, contrary to the U.S. traditional position, Prime Minister Netanyahu declared that Israel supports the establishment of an independent Kurdish state.) The crisis is still in full force so it is too soon to assess how it will affect the Middle East. Various commentators believe that if Putin is not stopped in Ukraine, his appetite for broadening Russia’s influence will be felt not only in its neighboring countries, but in the Middle East as well. Others claim that, in response to West-imposed sanctions on Russia, Putin may harden his positions on the Syrian crisis and be less ready to assist in the negotiations with Iran.

Accompanying the trend of the United States’ diminishing international standing is another development that seriously threatens basic Israeli

interests – the growing U.S. reluctance to be involved or present in the Middle East. Israel will be greatly affected not only by changes in the quality of its relationship with Washington, but also by a change in the United States' global standing. It is interesting to note that, according to a survey by the Pew Research Center (July 11, 2014), contrary to public opinion in Arab countries, 71% of Israelis have confidence in President Obama's ability to "do the right thing" in world affairs (in response to the same question, only 19% of Egyptians and 17% of Jordanians answered affirmatively).² The perception taking root, that the United States – Israel's ally – is in the process of decline and of abandoning the Middle East, erodes Israel's deterrence capacity and the power associated with it.

Developments supporting the perception of diminishing American interest in the Middle East include the continuing economic crisis in the United States, drastic cuts in the Pentagon budget, Washington's pivot toward Asia and the rise of China, and the forecast that the United States will soon no longer be dependent on imported energy. (Technological developments in the field of energy will enable the United States to replace Saudi Arabia as the world's leading crude oil producer within a year, and by 2020 the United States will even become an energy exporter.)³

The continuing U.S. disengagement from Afghanistan (following the disengagement from Iraq) and its avoidance of military action in Syria, even though the "red line" concerning the Syrian regime's use of chemical weapons – set by President Obama himself – was violated, testify

to an American desire to close the chapter of its active military involvement in the region. Many in the United States feel that this involvement, which exacted a heavy price – in blood and treasure – was a disappointment and failed to achieve its primary goals. This bitter feeling was reinforced by recent developments in Iraq, where Fallujah and parts of Ramadi fell to radical Islamic forces at the beginning of January 2014. Many American soldiers' lives were lost conquering these cities, and now it seems all for naught. The situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate with the impressive gains of the Sunni extremists working within the framework of the ISIS organization (the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham – or the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)), who conquered – without serious opposition – Iraq's second-largest city, Mosul (June 11, 2014) and extensive additional territory that place them not far from the capital, Baghdad. According to UN data, more than 5,500 Iraqis were killed during the first half of 2014.⁴ The United States and its allies face a difficult dilemma as to how to respond to this challenge, which makes a fiction of the central government in Iraq, erodes the last few achievements that still remain from the war against Saddam Hussein, and presents the West with a most extreme rival – ISIS – which controls more and more territory and which, according to most commentators,

There is an American desire to close the chapter of its active military involvement in the region

is significantly more dangerous and has much greater ambitions and capacities than Al Qaeda. ISIS seeks to erase the borders between Arab states in order to establish a united Islamic caliphate to be governed under the strict rules of early Islam. Jordan is preparing for the possibility that it will be marked as the extremist organization's next target, and Israel too has been forced to prepare for the possibility of a new and determined enemy on its borders. The threat ISIS poses led President Obama to deviate from his own policy and announce (June 21, 2014) that the United States

would deploy 300 military advisers to assist the Iraqi army.

The Middle-East is in the midst of a storm that requires a superpower's stabilizing influence

Polls show that 52% of Americans prefer that their country focus on domestic affairs and stop bothering with global affairs (this is the highest figure recorded on this issue in the 50 years since this question has been

asked).⁵ Similarly, only 14% of Americans believe that military intervention is right answer to the crisis in Ukraine.⁶

This waning appetite for involvement in the Middle East is apparent just as the region is in the midst of a storm that requires a superpower's stabilizing influence. While many commentators reject the notion of "American decline," some also believe that the United States will not be able to disengage from the Middle East because of its potential to undermine global security, possibly igniting a

nuclear war, and cause a global energy-economic crisis (even if the United States were no longer to depend on Middle Eastern oil, disruptions in the supply would likely undermine the global economy, which would, in turn, damage America's own).

Turmoil has characterized the Middle East since the outbreak of the "Arab Spring". The civil war in Syria and the crisis with Teheran test the implications of reduced U.S. involvement in the region. The regional upheaval has made the American task of preserving relations with key states in the Middle East even more difficult. Thus, during President Obama's visit to Saudi Arabia at the end of March 2014, serious disagreements emerged between the two countries, which have been allies for decades. Riyadh's grievance centers on U.S. policy toward Iran, which it sees as too soft, on the lack of U.S. military support for the opposition forces fighting Assad, and on the coolness that Washington has shown to the al-Sisi regime in Egypt. Like other states in the region, Saudi Arabia fears that Washington's conduct in the Middle East may even signal its adoption of a new strategy whose aim is to create a regional balance of power in which Iran has a stabilizing role in halting radical Islam (at the expense of the United States long-term allies). It is still not clear whether the invitation for the Iranian foreign minister to visit Saudi Arabia is a sign of a new Saudi policy toward Iran (which could undermine the anti-Iranian alignment), or whether it is only a tactical maneuver. In announcing the invitation, the Saudi foreign minister explained (May 12, 2014): "Iran is a neighbor. We have relations with them and we will negotiate with them. We will talk to them."⁷

The complex and fluid situation in the Middle East is forcing the United States to chart its foreign policy while, before its eyes, weighty considerations are pulling in opposite directions. For example: Should it give up on its commitment to democracy and human rights and focus on strengthening its friendship with the Egypt's repressive regime in the interests of stability, whether real or virtual? Against this background, the messages coming out of Washington are perceived in the region as contradictory, and its grand pronouncements as not necessarily being accompanied by the practical actions that should be inferred from them. President Obama made clear in his State of the Union address that he would not send his forces to dangerous combat zones unless absolutely necessary: "But I will not send our troops into harm's way unless it is truly necessary; nor will I allow our daughters to be mired in open-ended conflicts."⁸ National Security Advisor Susan Rice explained that President Obama, in his second term, will follow a more modest approach in the Middle East and will not allow the region to dominate his foreign policy as it did those of his predecessors.⁹ Secretary of State John Kerry presented the opposite approach at the World Economic Forum in Davos, in which he labeled claims that the United States is disengaging from the Middle East "a myth": "We are entering an era of American diplomatic engagement that is as broad and as deep as at any time in history... The most bewildering version of this disengagement myth is about a supposed retreat by the United States from the Middle East."¹⁰ It is appropriate to ask: Which of the two describes U.S. Middle East policy more accurately?

The Regional Context

The term "Arab Spring" has turned out to be premature. At best, it holds a vision for the distant future, and it certainly does not describe the current situation in the Middle East more than three years after Muhammed Bouazizi immolated himself in Tunisia (December 17, 2010) and provided the initial impetus for the outbreak of the popular uprisings that swept the entire region. The optimism many expressed at the beginning of the upheaval has largely given way to disappointment and concern. Increasingly, it is doubted that the movement that toppled autocratic rulers is capable of providing political cohesion and liberal reform to societies that lack a democratic culture and are laden with poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, tribalism, social divides, radical Islam, the oppression of women, corrupt regimes, discrimination against minorities, poor education systems, backward economies, and a weakened middle class.

From Israel's perspective, anchors that had provided relative strategic stability have been weakened

From Israel's perspective, anchors that had provided relative strategic stability over the years have been weakened: Mubarak's overthrow and the undermining of Egypt's governability in general and in Sinai in particular; the deep crisis in relations with Turkey that seem unlikely to return to their previous levels; Syria's de facto breakup; threats to

the monarchy in Jordan – Israel's neighbor, which has high strategic importance to Israel and the West; the anticipated changing of the guard in the Saudi leadership (King Abdullah is already past 90 and has serious health problems); Iraq's difficulty in maintaining its unity and stifling internal terror; and so on. It is becoming increasingly difficult to deal with weakened governments that are no longer the real "address" for what is taking place in their sovereign territory where problematic non-state actors are strengthening at their expense. The shock waves and the lack of effective central

Weakened governments are no real "address" for what is taking place in their sovereign territory

government control open the door for Al Qaeda and Global Jihad forces to expand their presence closer to the border with Israel. They are increasing their numbers in Syria (including in the Golan Heights) and in Sinai, and have even made several attempts to attack Israeli targets. Alongside the

release of popular forces and energies seeking freedom and economic well-being, progress, respect, and governability, the regional earthquake unleashed anti-democratic and anti-Western forces and energies that have become dominant. Thus, the way was paved for the rise of political Islam, though its performance and achievements at the helm of power brought disappointment and disillusionment, which even led to a military coup in Egypt. Violent jihadist forces have arisen and prospered around the Middle East and have,

among other things, turned Syria into the greatest concentration ever of Global Jihad forces. In addition to all this, Iran has yet to abandon its efforts to possess nuclear weapons, despite the negotiations being conducted with it.

Some of the threats facing Israel are camouflaged by stormy events that would seem to indicate an improvement in its strategic stature: the Arab countries are preoccupied with problematic internal and economic challenges that jeopardize their stability; a conventional war against Israel does not appear a likely scenario; the Syrian army has been seriously worn down and is busy fighting a civil war; the Iran-Damascus-Hezbollah axis is in peril; political Islam has lost its standing and the luster has been removed from the seat of power in Egypt; Hamas has lost its base in Syria and after the ouster of the Muslim Brotherhood government is now regarded as an enemy by Egypt's rulers; Hezbollah's standing has been hit as a result of its active fighting in Syria on the side of the hated Assad; and the Arab world, on the whole, is bedeviled by a violent internal Sunni-Shiite conflict. At the same time, the peace treaties with Jordan and Egypt remain in place; the development of the natural gas fields that will turn Israel into an energy exporter continues successfully, and regional players are seeking a connection with Israel in the face of threats posed by the Iranian axis.

Yet these facts, encouraging as they may be, cannot stifle deeper negative trends or change the reality that Israel is located in the heart of a violent and unstable region.

Even though the shockwaves in the Arab world are likely to reverberate for years, it is already possible to make a number of diagnoses that should inform Israeli strategic thinking: political Islam has become a very significant factor in the regional arena – in government and outside it; the growing power of the Arab street; the deep economic crisis; the outbreak of ethnic and religious disputes, and particularly the escalating Sunni-Shiite rift; central governments are weakening in the face of strengthening terrorist organizations and sectarian militias; and the growing sense that borders laid down almost 100 years ago by Sykes and Picot (1916) do not reflect ethnic and geopolitical realities. All these demonstrate the difficulty in shaping a single coherent doctrine that provides answers for every dilemma that arises. Some claim that in such a dynamic and unpredictable reality so rife with internal contradictions, it would be a mistake to apply a single rule to every situation that develops, that it is better to respond to each challenge separately:

The Egyptian Challenge Since Morsi's coronation as president (June 30, 2012), claims that the regime was failing grew, that it favored the Muslim Brotherhood's sectarian interests and that it allowed the economy to deteriorate. Barely a year passed before Morsi was overthrown in a military coup (July 1, 2013), imprisoned and made to stand trial, which may place him in front of a firing squad. Hundreds were killed in the riots throughout Egypt. Field Marshall Sisi became the de facto ruler. Many of the heads of the Muslim Brotherhood, whose movement was declared a terrorist organization and outlawed, were imprisoned. The

West looked on astounded at the crude violation of human rights in Egypt. For example, following a trial that lasted only two hours, 529 members of the Muslim Brotherhood were sentenced to death (March 24, 2014). The all-out struggle that the Egyptian regime is waging against the Muslim Brotherhood reveals the extent to which Egyptian society is divided between forces that are bitterly hostile to one another: on one hand, the army and its supporters, and on the other, the Muslim Brotherhood. Some of the young liberals who led the protests in Tahrir Square have also been imprisoned. (Since the revolution, more than 1,000 Egyptian civilians have been killed and 16,000 imprisoned due to their involvement in the protest against the regime). The new Egyptian constitution was ratified by a 98.1% majority in a referendum (January 14-15, 2014).

Sisi promised that if elected, the Muslim Brotherhood would cease to exist in Egypt

However, only 38.6% of the electorate voted in the referendum, so it hardly represents a broad national consensus. The constitution grants the army immunity from serious criticism and allows for its continued dominance in Egypt. Sisi, who as expected won the presidential elections (May 26, 2014) had committed that, if elected, the Muslim Brotherhood would cease to exist in Egypt.¹¹

In a relatively short period, the United States has been forced to shape a policy to deal with three different Egyptian regimes: those of Mubarak,

Morsi, and Sisi. This reality makes it difficult to establish a stable unequivocal strategy free of internal contradictions. And, in fact, the United States finds itself the object of criticism from all sides. Thus, for example, it has not defined Morsi's overthrow as a "military coup" since such a recognition would require, under American law, the cessation of aid it provides Egypt at a time when this aid is considered essential to maintaining some kind of leverage with Cairo. The United States attaches great strategic importance to Egypt's continued commitment to the peace

The war in Syria has so far claimed more than 150,000 lives, and produced more than six million refugees

treaty with Israel, to its cooperation in the struggle against global terror, and, of course, to free passage through the Suez Canal. Secretary Kerry encountered raised eyebrows when he stated that Sisi acted to "restore democracy." At the same time, the Americans are also voicing criticism over

the infringement of human rights and limiting joint military exercises and suspending some Egyptian military purchases. Moscow, having spotted an opportunity, is offering Egypt a significant weapons deal and has rushed to host Sisi and his foreign minister (February 12, 2014).

The interruption of the Muslim Brotherhood regime caused satisfaction in Israel. Instead of facing an extremely hostile regime allied with Hamas, Israel now faces a military regime whose modus operandi is familiar, and with which it

is possible to cooperate. And indeed, the quiet security cooperation between the two countries has been tightened, a result of fulfilling common interests in the border area and beyond. Sisi's regime understands the danger involved in allowing jihadist elements to become established in Sinai and is making an effort to combat this threat. It considers Hamas a threat, is stemming the trafficking of weapons into Gaza, and is making efficient strikes against the network of smuggling tunnels that have been dug between Sinai and the Gaza Strip. Israel – with the help of its friends in the United States – is trying to convince the American administration and Congress of the importance of supporting Sisi's regime to the region's stability and to the war against terrorism. It is even allowing Egypt to send forces into Sinai at levels above those stipulated in the military provisions of the peace treaty. Yet recent experience shows that stability in Egypt is far off, both because of the internal tension with the Islamic forces and because of the severe economic crisis that is expected to continue despite the generous Gulf assistance. Thus, alongside efforts to cultivate relations with Sisi's regime, Israel's eyes must remain open to the possibility that less comfortable scenarios may arise. Furthermore, it must pay attention to the gap between its own positive approach to Sisi's regime and the Americans' dualistic position.

The Syrian Challenge The war in Syria, which has intensified in the past year, has so far claimed more than 150,000 lives and has made refugees of more than six million Syrians (that is, one in every three civilians – 2.3 million in neighboring countries, and the remainder within Syria itself). During

2013, Assad's army registered some achievements: and in early May, 2014 even took back the "rebel stronghold" of Homs. Assad continues to enjoy the active military support of Iran and Hezbollah, and benefits from a Russian political-diplomatic umbrella and supplies of advanced weaponry intended to deter external military intervention. China is also not enthusiastic about applying military force against his regime. Assad held presidential elections (June 3, 2014), which gave him a further seven years in power and the ability to proclaim the legitimacy and legality of his government (even though the elections, which took place only in areas under Assad's control, were boycotted by his opponents).

The revelation that Assad used chemical weapons against civilians brought the United States to the brink of attack on Assad's military, which would have fulfilled its threat that it would not tolerate the use of chemical weapons. Obama announced (September 1, 2013) that he would seek the approval of Congress prior to a military strike against Syria, but his request was not brought to a vote. Avoidance of U.S. military operation came as a result of Kerry's comments (September 9, 2013) that a military operation would not occur if Assad would agree to the destruction of his chemical weapon stockpile. Moscow hurried to take advantage of the opportunity to save its ally from an American military attack and gained Assad's agreement to give up all the chemical weapons in his possession as well as his manufacturing capability (which he had previously denied existed). This surprising development – even though its implementation is lagging behind the

timetable to which Damascus committed and despite the use that the regime continues to make of less lethal chemical weapons and suspicions that Assad has retained a certain residual capability – provided Israel with a significant strategic achievement (assuming it is fully implemented) in that it removes the substantial threat these unconventional weapons posed to the Jewish state.

The war in Syria brings together in a single geographic arena different types of "actors" and different types of response: the internal forces battling each other against an ethnic, tribal religious, and political background, the neighboring countries that fear destructive spillover into their territory, the regional forces, especially Iran and Saudi Arabia, which are transposing their competition for regional hegemony onto Syrian soil, the radical Islamic forces that see an opportunity to advance their pan-Islamic ideology, the superpowers (the United States and Russia) that are vying for influence in the area and pushing for conflicting solutions, and, of course, the factions that have been motivated by the historical conflict (Sunni versus Shiite) since the dawn of Islam. The war has brought a heavy human tragedy and caused waves of refugees who are weighing down the economies of neighboring states (over a million in Lebanon, some 600,000 in

Radical Islamic forces see an opportunity to advance their pan-Islamic ideology

Jordan and 900,000 in Turkey), yet the international community has not succeeded in stemming the crisis. Russia and China prevent the adoption of binding UN Security Council resolutions that would mean Assad's ouster or would at least impose humanitarian restraints on him. The United States has avoided supplying significant weapons (particularly anti-aircraft weapons) to the rebels given the uncertainty about what will happen in Syria after Assad departs, the existing split within the opposition forces, and the fact that among the groups fighting Assad there is an

Foreign jihadists in Syria may be a destabilizing factor when they return to their homelands

increasing dominance of Al-Qaida and Islamic Jihad elements for which Syrian has become a magnet (according to Israeli intelligence estimates, they number approximately 30,000!). The concern is that the weapons would fall into the hands of radical

Islamic elements and would ultimately be used against American and Israeli targets. Furthermore, the arrival of thousands of foreign jihadists in Syria raises the concern that they will become a destabilizing factor when they return to their homelands – just as the "graduates" of Afghanistan (Osama Bin-Laden among them) did in their day.

The Geneva II talks of January 2014 ended in failure. The talks, in which representatives of the government and the opposition participated, were intended, in theory, to implement the agenda decided upon in the Geneva I talks (June 2012),

and at its heart: political transformation, meaning Assad's ouster. However, Iran does not accept this principle (and thus its invitation to the talks was cancelled), and Russia, which was not interested in having the talks deal with Assad's future, pressed to have them deal with secondary matters. Israel is following the shockwaves that its northern neighbor is experiencing while strengthening its deployment along the border and preparing for the possibility that the weakening of the central government in Damascus will turn Syria into a beachhead for Islamic terrorist elements that will work to undermine the quiet along the Golan border with no central address that can be efficiently deterred. Or it could become an alternative arena for anti-Israel Hezbollah activity – as occurred recently following a further Israeli attack (according to foreign reports) against a convoy of game-changing weapons sent by the Syrian regime to Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The Lebanese Challenge (Hezbollah) The civil war in Syria undermines the stability of Lebanon. Over a million Syrian refugees who have fled to Lebanon are creating a significant humanitarian and economic crisis. Hezbollah's support for Assad undermines its position in the Arab world generally, but particularly in Lebanon. Several thousand of the organization's fighters are operating alongside Assad's forces in Syria. The hundreds of them who have been killed have been returned to Lebanon for burial. This reality refutes the organization's claim that its military capacity is exclusively intended to defend Lebanon against Israel. Its standing beside the hated Assad is portrayed as a Shiite affront against the Sunnis,

and pulls the rug out from under the image Nasrallah has cultivated over many years: that Hezbollah works in the interests of all Lebanese citizens. Hezbollah's involvement in Syria has made Lebanon part of the battlefield and has brought with it bloodshed and deteriorating internal stability. The Sunni rebels fighting Assad exact revenge on Hezbollah and Iran with attacks carried out on Lebanese soil. The internal tension has intensified since May 25, 2014, when the current president's term ended with no agreement reached over who would replace him (under the constitution, the president must be a Christian). Hezbollah, which has avoided for an extended period opening a front with Israel, and has, for a long time, not responded to attacks ascribed to Israel against convoys of strategic weapons from Syria intended for its use, and against the stockpiles of advanced Iranian missiles stored near Damascus. Recently, though, the Shiite organization has begun to respond with attacks against Israeli patrols in the Golan Heights and its reach has extended to Bangkok where, in mid-April 2014, the local police arrested two Hezbollah operatives who had planned to attack Israeli tourists. Hezbollah's continued efforts to arm itself with advanced Syrian and Iranian weaponry, and Israel's determination to thwart this, has the potential to lead to an escalation, possibly to revenge attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets worldwide, and even a slide into war. Under certain conditions, Hezbollah may decide that only a violent confrontation with Israel can restore the support it has lost in Lebanon and the Arab world.

The Jordanian Challenge Although the "Arab Spring" sparked demonstrations in Jordan, they were not as widespread as in other Arab countries. The protests focused on issues of corruption, calls for political reform, and expressions of anger at the worsening economic situation, rising prices, and the increasing unemployment rate (30%). In the past, the opposition in Jordan has avoided criticizing the king himself, whose being a descendent of the Prophet Mohammed's family is a considerable source of legitimacy. But since the outbreak of the "Arab Spring," this taboo has been challenged and King Abdullah II and his family have been attacked publicly (with the emphasis on his wife, Queen Rania, who is portrayed as a disconnected spendthrift), even though there have been few calls for regime change, which have come only from the margins of the political arena. Demands for reforms that will erode the Abdullah's power and result in Jordan becoming parliamentary monarchy are not limited to the Muslim Brotherhood. There is also dissent and discomfort within the king's traditional base of support, the Bedouin tribes, who regard him as a bulwark against the increased power of the Palestinians. The civil war in Syria has intensified the internal situation in Jordan and has dealt serious blows to its economy, infrastructure, and its social fabric (approximately 60% of Jordan's

**Hezbollah's
involvement
in Syria
has made
Lebanon part
of the
battlefield**

foreign trade is conducted through Syria). More than 600,000 Syrian refugees (which amounts to 10 % of Jordan's population) are putting heavy pressure on the Kingdom (in addition to the hundreds of thousands of Iraqis who have remained in the country after fleeing their own war and hundreds of thousands of refugees from Syria who are not registered as such). Jordan is forced to pay substantial amounts for imported energy as jihadists in Sinai has been blown up the gas pipeline from Egypt innumerable. Moreover, jihadist elements have moved from Jordan to Syria

The danger of Jordan's destabilization worries the West and, of course, Israel

to fight against Assad, which raises concerns about their destabilizing influence once they return to Jordan.

The danger of Jordan's destabilization worries the West and, of course, Israel. President Obama, who hosted the King Abdullah II in the United States (February 14, 2014),

expressed his sympathy and promised to provide credit guarantees of \$1 billion and to renew the five-year agreement that will ensure the continuation of the joint civilian and military aid the United States provides Amman. A stable, pro-Western and friendly Jordan provides Israel with significant strategic depth. Its security forces demonstrate professionalism and efficiently prevent terrorist elements from using Jordanian territory as a base for attacks against Israeli targets. The fruitless round of negotiations between Israel and the

Palestinians showed that, whenever the possibility of a breakthrough arises, so do concerns on the Jordanian side: about how to safeguard Jordan's status vis-a-vis the Jerusalem holy sites, how to preserve the security of the Jordan River border after the establishment of a Palestinian state, and how to ensure that a solution to the problem of the Palestinian refugees will not ignore the fate of those who have found refuge there, that it will not bring additional refugees to Jordan from Lebanon and Syria, and will include an allocation of appropriate compensation to the Jordanian government for the costs it has incurred over the years as a result of absorbing Palestinian refugees. The implication for Israel, of course, is that it should work to strengthen the Kingdom economically and militarily and dispel any doubts or suspicions it might have, particularly in the wake of the failure of the talks with the Palestinians, that Israel regards Jordan as the solution to the Palestinian problem.

The Turkish Challenge The severe crisis between Israel and Turkey, which first became apparent with the strengthening of Islamic forces beginning in 2002 and erupted in full force following the Turkish flotilla to Gaza incident in 2010, took a significant turn when Netanyahu apologized to Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan in a telephone conversation that was held at President Obama's side just as he was about to leave Israel (March 22, 2013). Netanyahu expressed his government's readiness, in principle, to compensate the families of those killed aboard the Mavi Marmara and made clear in response to another Turkish demand – "to remove the blockade from Gaza" – that many steps had been taken to ease the passage of

people and goods into the Gaza Strip. The United States pressed for reconciliation between its two allies, whom it regards as anchors of stability at the heart of a stormy and unpredictable region, although tensions in Turkish-U.S. relations cannot be ignored: differences over approach to Syria, the possible Turkish purchase of a Chinese air-defense system, Turkey's demand that the United States extradite Fethullah Gülen, the popular religious leader in exile in the United States, and American criticism of the deterioration of democracy in Turkey.

The war in Syria increased Jerusalem and Ankara's interest in easing the crisis between them and to create the basis for the cooperation that might be necessary in light of the implications of a continued deterioration in their common neighbor, Syria. Most commentators do not anticipate a return to the same close strategic partnership that characterized relations between the countries in the past (even though the level of mutual civilian trade actually increased during the crisis). Turkey consistently supports Islamist elements, including Hamas, is extremely critical of Israel, and is headed by a leader who is hostile to Israel and does not hesitate to enhance his popularity at home and in the Arab world with harsh anti-Israel rhetoric. This impulse may erupt given the internal problems threatening Erdogan's administration: the slowing of the economy, social protests, revelations of government corruption, and the stance of Fethullah Gülen and his movement against Erdogan.

These problems did not prevent Prime Minister Erdogan and his party from achieving impressive

results (43% support) in municipal elections held on March 30, 2014. Erdogan's announcement (July 1, 2014) that he would run for the presidency in August 2014 has strengthened speculation that he will work to change the president's role from a ceremonial to an executive one).

Despite common interests between Israel and Turkey with regard to Syria, and the common concern over instability there and over the growth of terrorist and jihadist elements (and the accompanying collapse of the policy of "zero problems" with Turkey's neighbors), there are quite a few differences

in orientation and policy that may cast a shadow over the reconciliation and future relations between Ankara and Jerusalem. In the weeks that preceded the security deterioration in Gaza and Operation "Protective Edge" there were growing signs that the two

countries are close to finalizing a reconciliation agreement. Media reports abounded that Israel had agreed to raise the compensation it will pay to families of those killed in the flotilla incident to over \$20 million, that Turkey is prepared to prevent legal proceedings on its territory against Israelis who were involved in the Mavi Marmara incident – and that Jerusalem and Ankara are close to an agreement that would re-normalize relations with the respective ambassadors resuming their posts. Erdogan recently predicted

Erdogan does not hesitate to enhance his popularity at home and in the Arab world with harsh anti-Israel rhetoric

(April 28, 2014) that it would be a matter of "days or weeks" until it will be possible to begin the process of normalizing relations, the first step in which, he said, would be the ambassadors' return to the respective capitals. Erdogan even expressed the hope that "no more black cats" would appear and change the situation.¹² Yet with the military operation against Hamas, Erdogan declared that relations with Israel would not return to normal until Israel ceases permanently its attacks in the Gaza Strip and removes its "inhuman embargo."¹³ Erdogan used harsh anti-Israel rhetoric and called

**Netanyahu:
Rohani is "a
wolf in sheep's
clothing." Israel
will not be
deterred from
standing alone
against the
Iranian threat**

Israel's actions in Gaza an attempt to commit "systematic genocide."¹⁴ It is reasonable to assume, then, that even if the reconciliation agreement is finalized in the future, Israel will find it difficult to depend on Turkey as the supportive regional anchor it had been in past decades.

The Iranian Challenge

Hassan Rouhani's victory in Iran's presidential elections (June 15, 2013) raised expectations of a possible shift in Iran's policy. Even though Rouhani was part of the conservative establishment for many years, he was perceived as a reformist and won broad popular support thanks to the change he promised, including repairing relations with the United States and the West in order to lift the

burdensome sanctions (since they were imposed in 2012, the Iranian currency has plummeted by 60%, and its oil exports by the same amount). In a series of well-planned steps, Rouhani signaled to the West his desire for a thaw and his readiness to reach a deal on the nuclear issue. The Iranian "charm offensive" found clear expression in Rouhani's September 2013 appearance before the UN General Assembly. The Iranian president avoided the vicious attacks against Israel the world had become accustomed to hearing from his predecessor, Ahmadinejad. Rouhani called the Holocaust reprehensible, and reiterated his promise that Iran would never strive for a nuclear weapon because Islamic law prohibits faithful Moslems to do so. Before leaving the United States, Rouhani spoke with President Obama by phone, and in so doing broke the communications silence that had existed between successive leaders of the two nations for 34 years.

Prime Minister Netanyahu called Rouhani "a wolf in sheep's clothing," and warned that Israel would not be deterred from standing alone against the Iranian threat.¹⁵ The nuclear talks that were restarted did indeed produce an interim agreement (November 24, 2013) that is valid for six months while negotiations for a permanent settlement continue. Iran agreed that during the interim period it would limit its enrichment of uranium to 5% (which is not sufficient for nuclear weapons), reduce or convert its stockpile of 20% enriched uranium in a way that would make it difficult (though not impossible) to re-enable it for military use, install no new centrifuges, and build no new enrichment sites. It also agreed to allow UN inspectors to conduct daily

inspections of its enrichment facilities at Natanz and Fordo, its heavy water plant in Arak, its centrifuge production facilities, and its uranium mines. The agreement does not apply to nuclear research and development or to the Iranian missile capacity. In exchange, Iran has received recognition of its right to retain an enrichment capability on its soil within the framework of a permanent agreement, and a partial easing of the sanctions including the release of \$4 billion in frozen Iranian assets held in the West, and limited resumption of petrochemical exports, trade in gold and other precious metals, and spare parts imports for aircraft. The agreement came into effect on January 20, 2014 and the six months allocated to reaching a permanent settlement on the nuclear issue began (the possibility of six-month extension exists).

Netanyahu pronounced the agreement a "historic mistake."¹⁶ Critics of the agreement claimed that it did not slow Iran's progress toward possessing a nuclear weapon, as all of the steps Iran is taking under the agreement are reversible, and because the agreement allows it to continue to progress toward its nuclear goal on all necessary development tracks: the production of fissile material, the development of new generations of centrifuges, the development of the weapons themselves, and the preparation of their delivery missiles. According to the critics, the agreement does not impose any restriction on the continuation of Teheran's regional subversion (see Syria) or its involvement in terrorism, and in essence grants it legitimacy for continuing nuclear enrichment within Iran in contravention of UN resolutions

and previous demands that it stop doing so, while also leaving its existing nuclear capabilities in place: approximately 19,000 centrifuges, some of them of high quality (in 2003, Iran had fewer than 200), sufficient enriched uranium for 5-6 atomic bombs, a heavy-water plant under construction that is inefficient for electricity generation but has the potential to produce weapons grade plutonium, enrichment sites, and long-range missiles. It is further claimed that the easing of sanctions removes the pressure that had been effectively applied and sends a message to the Western business world to begin a race to win lucrative business from Iran (and, in fact, European and Russian delegations are already streaming to Teheran, although the lack of an agreement on the nuclear issue is delaying the signing of numerous deals).

The U.S. is striving for a settlement that will cause Iran's nuclear weapons breakout capability to require more time

Permanent settlement negotiations, which began on February 18, 2014, are supposed to achieve "a mutually-agreed long-term comprehensive solution that would ensure that Iran's nuclear program be entirely peaceful."¹⁷ The United States is striving for a settlement that will limit Iran's nuclear capacity to civilian purposes, and that will cause its nuclear weapons breakout capability to require more time. The talks are focusing on the following topics:

- Limiting uranium enrichment to 5%.
- Removal of most of the stocks of fissile material from Iranian soil.
- The dismantling of thousands of centrifuges.
- Limiting the quality of the centrifuges to their current level.
- Closing enrichment sites (especially the one constructed deep under the mountain at Fordo).
- Closing the heavy-water facility at Arak in order to close off the plutogenic route, or at least to convert it to a light-water reactor consistent with a civilian nuclear program or to a production level lower than originally planned (once completed, the facility at Arak will have a production capacity of approximately nine kilograms of plutonium a year, enough for one nuclear bomb).
- Tightening the inspection arrangements, including access to the facilities suspected of being nuclear weapon construction sites (for example, the military base at Parchin).
- Obtaining an Iranian answer to evidence the West possesses that points to previous nuclear-weapons tests.
- Restricting Iran's ballistic missile program.
- Removal of the sanctions and the release of the \$100 billion currently frozen in Western banks.

Most commentators believe that, in complete negation of Israel's position, the United States and the West will reach a settlement that will leave

Iran with a nuclear capacity, including allowing uranium enrichment on its soil. While the United States seeks to ensure that Iran will not have a rapid nuclear-weapons breakout capability, the Iranians will seek to achieve a status identical to that of other NPT members without nuclear weapons (such as Argentina and Brazil, which enrich uranium and are subject to relatively loose inspections). The interim agreement does indeed state, "The Iranian program will be treated in the same manner as that of any non-nuclear weapon state party to the NPT."¹⁸ In this spirit, Iranian leaders declare that they have not agreed, and will not agree, to dismantle any centrifuges, nor will it agree to close the facility at Arak.

The first negotiation period ended on July 20, 2014 without a permanent agreement, but the parties did agree to a four-month extension of the talks. Israel will likely find itself faced with a reality in which the interim agreement with Iran is extended again and again (or, alternatively, may find itself with a permanent agreement that does not satisfy its demands). Some commentators believe that the two sides have incentives to reach an agreement, that the talks are being conducted in a serious manner, and that there is already a draft agreement (albeit with gaps between the positions, of course). The main effort is focused on a formula that is intended, from the United States' point of view, to extend the timeline necessary for Iran to break out and produce an atomic bomb. The reality of the interim agreement and continuing diplomatic talks or of an unsatisfactory agreement could leave Jerusalem with a dilemma – over whether to launch a military strike against

Iran's nuclear facilities. Opinions are divided among the various experts. Some claim that Israel cannot, under any circumstances, permit a situation in which Iran can be allowed to establish itself as a nuclear threshold state with the capability to make progress and eventually to break out relatively quickly to construct a nuclear weapon, and that it will, therefore, be forced to take militarily action against the threat. Others claim that such a scenario is implausible because Israel will not attack Iran so long as the United States is negotiating with Teheran, and all the more so if the United States reaches a permanent agreement with Iran. This approach posits that Israel essentially forfeited the military option against Iran by not striking on the eve of the 2012 U.S. elections (a point at which it could have assumed that the United States would have had no alternative but to support such a move).

The negotiations with Iran expose the significant disagreement between the United States and Israel over their goal. Former National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley describes this bitter reality as follows: "Israelis do not want Iran to be a nuclear threshold state. But Iran is in fact already a threshold state and will likely remain one – that line has been crossed."¹⁹ The so-far unsuccessful attempts to pass legislation in Congress calling for a tightening of sanctions against Iran highlight differences on the Iran issue between Israel (and its supporters in the United States) and the Obama administration (more on this below). Against the backdrop of U.S. National Security Advisor Susan Rice's visit to Israel in early May 2014, Netanyahu expressed dissatisfaction with the status of the

talks with Iran: "Iran seeks to destroy the State of Israel and is building a nuclear bomb toward this end... I want to emphasize Israel's position – we believe Iran must not have the capability to produce a nuclear bomb. Today Iran has thousands of centrifuges, thousands of kilograms of uranium enriched to produce a bomb. A bad agreement will enable them to retain these capabilities. I am concerned that we are liable to be faced with a bad agreement in which Iran retains its capability to develop a nuclear weapon. It is better not to reach an agreement at all than to reach a bad one."²⁰

At its root, the dispute centers on the question of whether to leave Iran with an independent, monitored capability on its own territory, and if so, precisely which capability in terms of the time needed to break out to the weapons-grade fissile material needed for one bomb and to the weapon itself.

Beyond the nuclear issue, the talks with Iran have raised speculation over a possible broader thaw between Washington and Tehran. Middle Eastern states such as Israel and Saudi Arabia find themselves in one camp, which fears not only that a nuclear deal will leave the Iranian threat in place, but that it will also a signal that the West grants legitimacy to Iran's ambition for regional hegemony (for example, if it regards Iran as an ally in the effort to vanquish the

**Talks with Iran
have raised
speculation
of a broader
thaw between
Washington
and Tehran**

radical Sunni movements that threaten Western interests in the Middle East). In addition to these harsh scenarios, there are also those who raise the possibility of a more positive picture, which might even represent an opportunity for Israel: an Iran whose relations with the West are improving and which is embarking on the road to economic reconstruction will be forced to reduce its subversion and its support for anti-Israel elements like Hezbollah. Such a scenario, even if its probability is not considered high, points to the possibility that Iran might change its policy toward Israel and recognize it.

Iran is cultivating forces hostile to Israel – Syria, Hezbollah, and Palestinian terrorist organizations – and providing them with advanced weaponry

During the presidency of Mohammad Khatami (1997-2005), Iran left the question of recognizing Israel to the Palestinians, even though it expressed opposition to recognizing Israel itself. In 2003, a resolution was even passed at the Islamic Summit held in Teheran that supported the Arab Peace Initiative. Since then, though, the Iranian

position has hardened and acceptance of Israel's existence has been negated entirely. There are now some who see the possibility of change. During Ahmadinejad's tenure, Iran stood firmly on the side of Hamas and opposed Fatah positions, which accept Israel's existence and which support a two-state solution. Progress in the nuclear talks may, therefore, simultaneously reveal a greater Iranian

willingness to come to terms, even if only de facto, with a process that envisions a two-state solution. This would make it even more difficult for Israel to convince the world of the need to attack Iran militarily, but it would also open a window to new diplomatic possibilities. Thus, an agreement is likely to lead to greater cooperation between Iran and the United States and, apparently, to greater regional stability, but it is also possible that the removal of sanctions will make it easier for Iran to divert more generous resources to deepening its involvement in the region. At the same time, it cannot be ignored that, in practice, Iran is continuing to cultivate forces hostile to Israel – Syria, Hezbollah, and Palestinian terrorist organizations – and providing them with advanced weaponry, and that in the middle of the talks with Iran, Israel intercepted a ship in the Red Sea en route to deliver advanced missiles to Gaza at Iran's initiative (March 5, 2014).

The Palestinian Challenge

The violent confrontation between Israel and Hamas (which is still taking place as of this writing) is another tragic milestone in the annals of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and of the series of failed attempts to settle it. The confrontation erupted after a period of violent escalation following the abduction and murder of three Israeli teenagers (June 12, 2014) – according to the Israeli government – by Hamas activists. After Netanyahu's announcement that "Hamas is responsible and Hamas will pay,"²¹ Israel launched a broad operation against Hamas infrastructure and activists in the West Bank. The shocking

murder and burning of a Palestinian teenager by a small group of revenge-seeking Jewish youth (July 1, 2014) ignited violent demonstrations in Jerusalem's Palestinian neighborhoods. Rocket and mortar fire from Gaza increased. At first, the bombardment was mainly at the hands of dissident organizations that do not accept Hamas's authority, but the escalation gradually drew Hamas into the aggression, and into a comprehensive confrontation with Israel (Operation Protective Edge, July 8, 2014). Hamas began launching numerous rockets at Israeli towns and cities, including Tel Aviv and even north of it. The Iron Dome system achieved a rocket interception rate of 90%, and almost completely prevented Israeli civilian casualties. When Hamas refused an Egyptian ceasefire proposal, Israel – in addition to its punishing aerial strikes – opened a ground campaign (July 17, 2014) that continues as of this writing.

The security deterioration is taking place a year after U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry began his failed attempt to broker an Israeli-Palestinian agreement. Under pressure from Kerry, who made achieving peace between Israel and the Palestinians a high priority, peace negotiations were restarted on July 30, 2013, with the goal of reaching a permanent agreement within nine months. As part of the process leading to the renewal of talks, Israel agreed to a four-phase release of Palestinian prisoners who had been held since before the Oslo Accords. Israel acceded to this Palestinian condition in order to avoid alternative conditions the Palestinians laid down: acceptance of the principle that the border will be

based on the 1967 lines with territorial swaps, or an announcement of a construction freeze in the territories. The talks ran into significant difficulty, including changes to their defined objective. Before negotiations even began, the Americans attempted a breakthrough by first reaching agreement on the subjects of borders and security, while deferring the sensitive core issues (Jerusalem, refugees) for later in the process. In this spirit, President Obama stated during his visit to the region (March 2013): "The core issue right now is how do we get sovereignty for the Palestinian people, and how do we assure security for the Israeli people? And that's the essence of this negotiation. And that's not to say settlements are not important. It is to say that if we solve those two problems, the settlement problem will be solved."²²

The Israeli side had reservations about this approach, which were based on concern about losing, at the first stage of the talks, its most significant "card" – territory – and then being left with weakened bargaining power vis-a-vis Jerusalem and the refugees. Secretary Kerry was persuaded and stated that the goal of the negotiations would be to achieve a full and permanent agreement within nine months. After it became clear that this goal was too ambitious, the Americans announced that they would work toward a framework agreement. But

The Iron Dome system achieved a rocket interception rate of 90%, and almost completely prevented Israeli civilian casualties

it soon became apparent that this goal was not achievable either. It was agreed to move to indirect talks with U.S. mediation, and Kerry announced that the United States itself would draft a framework paper that reflected its understanding concerning the desired meeting point between the parties on the principles for a permanent agreement. The two sides, who were supposed to accept this document as the basis for continued talks, did not rush to embrace it and the United States was forced to allow them to express "certain reservations" to be dealt with in detail during the

final status negotiations.

Despite significant U.S. energies, it did not succeed in bringing the sides to common ground

Despite the significant energies Secretary Kerry and his team invested, the United States did not succeed in bringing the sides to common ground in three main problematic categories: the phrasing of the final status principles in the American document; the manner in which the sides

would be allowed to express their reservations; and "rules of conduct" (mainly – Israel's policy of building in the West Bank and East Jerusalem) that would have bound the two sides had they in fact agreed to extend the timeframe for negotiations.

From the outset, the task Secretary Kerry took upon himself was not at all simple. Israeli demands, such as the stipulation (to which the United States was party)²³ that the Palestinians recognize Israel as a Jewish state, the very long-

term presence of the Israeli army in the Jordan Valley, and renunciation of the Palestinian right of return inside Israel, etc., provoked fierce Palestinian opposition. Similarly intense Israeli opposition was provoked in response to Palestinian demands, such as the recognition of East Jerusalem as their capital, that the Israeli army withdraw from the West Bank within 3-5 years, that a certain number of Palestinian refugees be absorbed in Israel, etc. The more the United States insisted on expressing the framework principles in clear and precise language, the more it encountered opposition from both sides, threats that they could not continue with the talks, and demands to articulate more sweeping reservations to the principles they opposed. The more the United States allowed the sides to express sweeping reservations, the less significant the document it was drafting would have been.

American diplomacy did not succeed in squaring this circle by the agreed-upon deadline. According to the Americans, both sides contributed to this failure: Israel by not fulfilling its commitment to release the fourth group of prisoners (March 30, 2013) and by reissuing the tender for the construction of 708 housing units in the Gilo neighborhood of Jerusalem (April 1, 2014); and the Palestinians in their decision to submit requests to be accepted into 15 international conventions that are open to states (April 2, 2014), and in signing a reconciliation agreement between Fatah and Hamas (April 23, 2014). According to Israeli sources involved in the negotiations, even the United States contributed to the lack of success by imposing goals at the outset that were too

grandiose, and by not reaching understandings with each side as to the rules of the game during the talks, and the conditions for extending them.

Alongside the American criticism of the sides, Martin Indyk, Kerry's representative during the negotiations, also praised their readiness to compromise on significant issues: "I've seen Prime Minister Netanyahu straining against his deeply-held beliefs to find ways to meet Palestinian requirements. I've seen Abu Mazen ready to put his state's security in American hands to overcome Israeli distrust of Palestinian intentions."²⁴ At the same time, the Americans admit that Abu Mazen "shut down" at a certain point and provoked their anger when he did not respond to the bridging formulas intended to allow for the completion of the paper of principles presented to him by Secretary Kerry (February 19, 2014) and by President Obama (March 17, 2014). Signing the reconciliation agreement with Hamas was portrayed as additional important evidence that the Palestinian leader had lost interest in talks with Israel.

The relative weakness of Hamas explains its inclination to hurry and sign the reconciliation agreement. Hamas had pinned its hopes on its mother movement in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, and when it was ousted from power and declared a terrorist movement, Hamas, too, was declared an enemy by the Sisi regime. Accused of anti-Egyptian terrorist activity, its operation in Egypt was outlawed (March 4, 2014). Prior to this, Hamas had lost its base in Syria because of its support for the rebels, a stance that undermined its relations with Iran, which is struggling to

keep Assad's regime in power. Egyptian security forces destroyed most of the smuggling tunnels into the Gaza Strip, which exacerbated its political isolation, the security blockade, and the decline in economic aid. All of this undermined Hamas's position. Against this background, the organization was cautious for a while about confrontations with the IDF and the majority of violent activity originating in Gaza was carried out by the Iran-supported Islamic Jihad (for example, the firing of some 70 rockets on Israel on March 12, 2014), as well as other jihadist organizations.

The particular timing of Abu Mazen's decision to sign the reconciliation agreement – five days before the end of the nine-month negotiation period and precisely when the fragile Israeli-Palestinian dialogue on extending the negotiations was in full swing and approaching its climax – raised questions

about the Palestinian leader's goals. The accession to the UN conventions and entering into an agreement with Hamas while simultaneously negotiating with Israel shows that Abu Mazen did not believe that reaching an agreement with Israel was an attainable goal (various pundits have claimed that Abu Mazen was surprised at the speed with which Hamas agreed to his terms). The possibility that he would be blamed for sabotaging the negotiations seems not to have been a central factor in his deliberations. It

The reconciliation agreement with Hamas signaled that Abu Mazen had lost interest in talks with Israel

appears that Abu Mazen, who is approaching the end of his career, chose to simultaneously conduct additional strategic negotiations to advance his goal: transferring the decision about the Israeli-Palestinian issue to international forums and moving toward intra-Palestinian unity out of concern for his legacy.

The Fatah-Hamas agreement prompted an Israeli decision to suspend the negotiations, which, according to senior Israelis, were close to reaching a continuation formula (that included the release of Jonathan Pollard). As per the reconciliation

Western reactions to the reconciliation agreement were mild in comparison to Israel's harsh response

agreement, a technocratic government headed by Abu Mazen and with a mutually agreed upon membership was announced on June 2, 2014. It is supposed to pave the way for presidential and legislative elections, and revamp PLO institutional leadership within six

months of taking office. Abu Mazen made it clear that the new government would recognize Israel and condemn terrorism. He even declared that he, himself, would be authorized to continue conducting peace talks with Israel, though Israel demands that Hamas, as a party to the agreement authorizing the new government, accept the Quartet's framework. Netanyahu's answer to the Fatah-Hamas reconciliation was included in his response to the statement the Palestinian president made on Holocaust Remembrance

Day, in which he referred to the Shoah as "the most terrible crime against humanity in modern history."²⁵ Netanyahu replied: "Instead of declarations intended to placate international public opinion, Abu Mazen should choose between an alliance with Hamas – a terrorist organization that calls for the destruction of Israel and that denies the Holocaust – and genuine peace with Israel."²⁶

Reactions in the West to the reconciliation agreement were mild in comparison to Israel's harsh response. The European Union pointed to the opportunity implicit in the Palestinians' coming to talks with Israel as a unified body that enjoys public legitimacy. Similar views were even heard in the American administration,²⁷ although the official U.S. line remained critical of the reconciliation move and President Obama called it "unhelpful."²⁸

The chances of implementing a lasting Fatah-Hamas reconciliation were limited from the outset. Similar agreements have been signed in the past and were not carried out. Many commentators have difficulty seeing a situation in which Hamas accepts the Quartet's terms, disarm its military forces, and surrender its weapons to the legal government. Evidence of anticipated difficulties can be found in the words of Musa Abu Marzuk, deputy head of Hamas's diplomatic bureau: "Hamas will not allow any tampering with the brigades' armament, under any circumstances... Hamas will not recognize Israel. This is a red line that cannot be crossed... the conditions set by the Quartet committee do not concern us one bit."²⁹ The development of the reconciliation process

becomes even more problematic in light of the military confrontation now taking place between Israel and Hamas. Abu Mazen himself provoked Hamas anger when – in a speech (June 13, 2014) to the foreign ministers of the Islamic states in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia – he responded to the kidnapping of the three young Israelis by saying, "Whoever carried out this action wants to bring destruction upon us."³⁰

In the wake of the failed negotiations, the United States declared a time out and has opted to divide the blame between the parties though with a clear tilt toward placing the main onus on Israel – certainly in public – as could be seen in a briefing for journalist Nahum Barnea,³¹ and in remarks Martin Indyk made at the Washington Institute. Secretary Kerry, before a Senate hearing, stated that both sides took a number of negative steps, "and then... when they were about to maybe get there, 700 settlement units were announced in Jerusalem, and poof, that was sort of the moment [that the talks collapsed]."³² He admonished: "There's a limit to the amount of time that President Obama and I can invest in this topic with consideration to other challenges around the world, especially if the sides are not willing to show seriousness."³³

The administration's inclination is now to lower the profile of U.S. involvement and to let the sides "stew in their own juices." At the same time, Ambassador Indyk has rejected the possibility that the United States will abandon attempts to settle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He expressed hope that the two sides' leaders will overcome the difficulties that led to the crisis in the talks and

promised: "When they are ready, they will certainly find in Secretary Kerry and President Obama willing partners to try again – if they are prepared to do so in a serious way."³⁴ One initiative the administration may take at the end of the "time-out" period is to publish the American paper detailing its permanent settlement principles. This would be intended to challenge the sides, and to invite them to renew negotiations on the basis of the paper in the future. Thus, when Secretary Kerry thinks about the various alternatives facing Washington, he has to consider the possibility of putting, at some stage, the paper of principles on the table and saying: "Here it is, folks. This is what it looks like. Take it or leave it."³⁵

The updated position that Prime Minister Netanyahu presented concerning Israel's security demands (June 29, 2014) deepens the divide the Americans will have to bridge in the future. Netanyahu warned that Israel faces a growing security threat given the "forces of extreme Islam who are knocking at our door in the north and in the south."³⁶ He stated that in order to maintain security and to ensure the demilitarization of a future Palestinian state, the IDF must retain freedom of movement over the entire area up to the Jordan River, "Any settlement will include Palestinian political and economic control alongside Israeli security control."³⁷

The Americans may challenge both sides by publishing a paper detailing its permanent settlement principles

If attempts to resuscitate the talks do not bear fruit, the Palestinian side will likely carry out its threats to launch a diplomatic-legal campaign against Israel in the international arena, and to strive to replace the "direct talks under American mediation" model with an alternative – that of "a quasi-imposed settlement under multinational sponsorship." Such a campaign already began at the end of the nine months of negotiations when the Palestinians applied to accede to 15 UN conventions. Other applications for membership in a variety of UN agencies are ready to go. Of

Israel may also find itself facing an intensifying de-legitimization campaign of sanctions and boycotts

principal concern in Israel is the one that could lead to Palestinian acceptance to the International Criminal Court in the Hague, which, if it comes about, is liable to land Israel in the dock on charges related to war crimes, etc.

In an extreme attempt to increase pressure on Israel, the Palestinians may even announce the dismantling of the Palestinian Authority and attempt to hand back responsibility for the West Bank to Israel and demand a "one state for two peoples" solution, even though Abu Mazen recently said that he would not dismantle the PA and that he prefers the two-state solution.³⁸

A diplomatic-legal confrontation resulting from the talks' failure could eventually lead to a deterioration of the security situation, and

perhaps to a third intifada, not necessarily of a character identical to the previous two. Experts believe that this time Israel would likely encounter a civilian uprising and popular violence that is not centrally organized. A troubling indication can be found in the Shin Bet summary of the scope of terrorist incidents in 2013, which reveals a sharp increase in West Bank terrorism and of attacks perpetrated from Gaza,³⁹ and of course in the violent demonstrations that took place in Jerusalem's Palestinian neighborhoods in July 2014.

Israel may also find itself facing an intensifying de-legitimization campaign of sanctions and boycotts. Such a reality rose significantly on the Israeli public agenda when the European Commission published directives on the subject of transferring money and credits from official EU funds to bodies with ties to the settlements. According to these directives, EU agencies and funds will be prohibited from supporting or giving loans, grants, or awards to activities of Israeli entities in the settlements, and, in some cases, such as loans to Israeli bodies that operate beyond the Green Line either directly or indirectly. Against the background of these directives, the Horizon 2020 scientific cooperation agreement became the focus of tension between Israel and the EU. Without the semantic solution that was reached in the end, it would have meant the loss of 300 million euros in funding for Israeli research and development bodies, and additionally would have caused damage to Israeli science that is incalculable in monetary terms.

Recent months have seen an increase in boycott initiatives against Israel. Although the various

boycotts are focused on Israel's presence and activity beyond the Green Line, they are increasingly being applied to entities within Israel proper with interests over the Green Line, and have for the first time also been imposed by governments. The American Studies Association (ASA) decided in December 2013 to impose an academic boycott on Israel. A large Dutch pension fund (PGGM) decided to withdraw its investments in Israeli banks since they have branches over the Green Line and are involved in financing construction in the settlements. The Netherlands' largest public water supplier, Vitens, announced on December 10, 2013 that it was severing its ties with the Israeli water company, Mekorot, because it drills for water in the West Bank and is part of a water-supply apparatus that discriminates against the Palestinians. In September 2013, another Dutch company announced that it was cancelling its contract with the Gichon Company to build a sewage purification plant because it was to be located beyond the Green Line. Denmark's largest bank, Danske Bank, decided not to invest in Bank Hapoalim in light of its involvement in financing settlement construction. The Norwegian Finance Ministry announced on November 1, 2013, that it had instructed the country's largest pension fund not to invest in the companies of Africa-Israel Investments, Ltd. or in Danya-Cebus because of their involvement in East Jerusalem construction. In light of the accumulation of these and other boycott initiatives, the Israeli government held a special discussion on the issue (February 9, 2014) during which the minister of strategic affairs, Yuval Steinitz, presented a 100-million-shekel plan for

an aggressive comprehensive struggle against the de-legitimization phenomenon. The failure of the Israeli-Palestinian talks led European countries to intensify punitive policies toward the settlements. Seventeen EU member states admonished their citizens not to conduct business with the settlements. Warning notices were issued stating that the settlements are illegal under international law and, thus, conducting business with them carries legal risks.⁴⁰ It was also claimed that "the Israeli settlements are an obstacle to peace and threaten to render the two-state solution impossible ... The European Union and its member countries will not recognize any change in the 1967 borders, including in Jerusalem, unless this is done as part of an agreement between the sides."⁴¹

Along with the threat of boycotts, senior EU officials warned (December 3, 2013) that the failure of the peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians is liable to have implications for the continuation of aid funds EU countries give to the Palestinian Authority. In their words, the EU finds itself "funding the Israeli occupation" and is bearing costs that are supposed to be borne by the occupying state under international law. In light of these revelations, Secretary Kerry saw fit to warn Israel of "a strengthening de-legitimization campaign" against it, adding, "There is talk of boycotts and other

The failure of the Israeli-Palestinian talks led European countries to intensify punitive policies toward the settlements

kinds of things. Today's status quo absolutely, to a certainty, I promise you 100 percent, cannot be maintained. It's not sustainable. It's illusory."⁴² Official Israeli spokespeople were outraged by these warnings and Minister of Strategic Affairs Steinritz responded: "Kerry's comments about a boycott of Israel are insulting and intolerable... We cannot be forced to conduct negotiations with a gun to our head."⁴³ Finance Minister Yair Lapid, though, actually followed Kerry's lead and warned too: "Europe is our main trading market. If there is no diplomatic settlement and we go into

The failure of the talks postponed the need for Israel to reach decisions on the sensitive core issues

a plausible scenario – and there are much worse ones – in which there is damage of only 20% in exports to the EU and direct foreign investment from the EU stops – our exports will be harmed in 2013 terms by about 20 billion shekels a year. The damage to GDP will be about 11 billion shekels

a year and 9,800 workers will immediately be laid off."⁴⁴ A similar warning came from the outgoing head of Israel's National Security Council, Yaakov Amidror: "The failure of the negotiations with the Palestinians will only increase the trend of boycotts and of Israel's international isolation."⁴⁵ It should be noted that simultaneous with other warnings heard from Europe, the EU's Council of Ministers passed a resolution to grant Israel and Palestine special and unprecedented status if and when a permanent settlement is reached.

The failure of the talks postponed the need for Israel to reach decisions on the sensitive core issues. This halted a process that would have likely led to political shockwaves in Israel and to tensions among Diaspora Jews. This may be a temporary delay. The sensitive final status issues will, in all probability, reemerge in the future, at which time Israel will be required to present positions and, presumably, make painful concessions. This hiatus is likely to be relatively brief, especially if Israel is pressed to respond to the American paper of principles or an initiative of a similar nature arises in the Security Council. The principles of a permanent settlement, by definition, touch on issues of great significance to the Jewish people:

Jerusalem: There is no Palestinian or Arab party today prepared to sign a peace agreement with Israel that preserves its sovereignty over the Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem and over Islamic holy sites. The very fact of reaching an agreement based on any compromise over Jerusalem means the possibility of ceding some of the existing Israeli sovereignty over various parts of Jerusalem including the "Holy Basin." According to this scenario, Israel will be taking a historic decision that touches the core of the identity of the entire Jewish people. The internal debate may be extremely bitter.

The settlements in Judea and Samaria: An Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement based on the two-state principle will transfer most of the territory of the West Bank to Palestinian sovereignty. Beyond the security significance of an Israeli withdrawal, there could also be substantial Jewish significance, be it in disconnecting from lands walked by the

legendary figures of the Bible, and where the Jewish people has its roots (The Cave of Machpelah, Rachel's Tomb, Joseph's Tomb, and many other sites) or in the necessity to evacuate tens of thousands of Jewish settlers (some of whom are expected to forcefully resist the evacuation). The argument over the future of Judea and Samaria and the settlement enterprise is about to create a highly sensitive political, security, national and religious controversy, and the evacuation – when it is carried out – is expected to be traumatic and will likely deepen rifts within the Jewish people, both in Israel and in the Diaspora. The argument also involves the question of whether Israel should insist that the agreement enable Jews to continue living in areas of the West Bank under Palestinian sovereignty.

Arab recognition of the Jewish people's right to its own capital and state: Prime Minister Netanyahu stressed in his Bar-Ilan speech (June 14, 2009) that "A basic condition for the end of the conflict is a binding and candid public recognition by the Palestinians of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people." Even though the Palestinian leadership has responded negatively, in the end, the Israeli demand is likely to be accepted in one form or another, especially if those handling the negotiations on the Israeli side are willing to "pay a price" for this achievement. There are those, of course, who will ask how essential it is – from the Jewish people's perspective – to insist on paying a significant price to secure this demand. (The U.S. administration's position on this issue is interesting. On one hand, Secretary Kerry expresses support for the Israeli demand that the

Palestinians recognize it as a Jewish state.⁴⁶ On the other, in an appearance before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, he said: "I think it's a mistake for some people to be raising it again and again as the critical decider of their attitude toward the possibility of a state and peace, and we've obviously made that clear."⁴⁷

Can a peace agreement be a turning point in Jewish-Islamic relations? The Arab Peace Initiative (Beirut, 2002), which was born as a result of a Saudi move, articulates an Arab readiness for a comprehensive peace with Israel, for the end of the conflict, normalization and good neighborly relations – on the condition that Israel withdraw completely to the 1967 lines and that a "just and agreed upon" solution to the refugee problem is found. Since 2003, the Arab Peace Initiative has been endorsed by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which numbers 57 member states. Recently, this position was ratified again at the Islamic summit in Cairo (February 7, 2013). Opinions in Israel are divided as to the value of the Arab Peace Initiative and the degree to which it is wise to rely on it in advancing toward an Israeli-Arab final status agreement. Given the history of relations between Islam and Judaism, is a diplomatic peace agreement powerful enough to mark a turning point in the Islamic world's attitude toward Judaism?

**The Arab
Peace Initiative
has been
endorsed by the
Organization
of the Islamic
Conference
since 2003**

Jewish refugees from Arab lands: Progress in the negotiations is likely to provide an opportunity to place on the agenda a human tragedy that has not received world attention – the fate of the 850,000 Jews who until 1948 lived in Arab countries and who were uprooted from their homes following the creation of the State of Israel. The injustice caused these Jewish refugees has not gained Arab or international recognition, nor have they been compensated for their suffering or for their confiscated property.

Diaspora involvement in the process of making decisions on final status issues – that is, on issues that emotionally affect Jews everywhere. Should Diaspora Jews take any part in the process of deciding these issues, and if so, how should this be accomplished? The dilemma will be a practical test of the theoretical "New Paradigm" of greater equality in Israel-Diaspora relations.

Implications for the Triangular Relationship: Jerusalem-Washington-the American Jewish Community

We cannot ignore the duality that characterizes the relations in the triangle of Jerusalem, Washington, and the American Jewish community. On one hand, there is a deepest sense

of friendship that is evident in the United States' massive practical support for Israel, particularly in the area of security. On the other hand, there is evidence of mutual anger and frustration. A reasonable scenario in which the differences between Washington and Jerusalem over the Iranian and Palestinian issues intensify may put the American Jewish community between a rock and a hard place. Public expressions of the pent up tensions that currently exist erupt from time to time in different ways. Thus, for example, the incident (January 14, 2014) that forced Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon to apologize for his harsh comments ("Messianic," "Obsessive") in attacking Secretary Kerry. And a repeat incident (March 18, 2014) in which Yaalon cautioned that if the American administration continues to show weakness in the international arena, U.S. national security would be seriously damaged⁴⁸ – a remark that drew the harshest of responses from the administration.

The potential for tension on the other side of the Atlantic was also evident this year in the case of AIPAC's involvement in an effort to pass congressional legislation to tighten the sanctions against Iran while negotiations with it were taking place. AIPAC and Israel were portrayed as trying to work against the president's policy, and as those who were eager to involve the United States in a new war in the Middle East. While advocates of the legislation claimed that the talks' success demanded keeping pressure on Iran, the administration explained that the enactment of additional sanctions would weaken Rouhani and the moderates in Iran, and would break up the

Western coalition on Iran. AIPAC backed off the effort and thereby enabled its opponents to claim that it has lost some of its power.

The possibility of further strains in U.S.-Israeli relations, therefore, is growing as two strategic issues that have great implications for Israel's future unfold. The first involves the scenario of an Israeli strike on Iran against the wishes of the American administration or of U.S. support for an agreement with Teheran that is unacceptable to Israel, and the second involves a scenario in which Israel is increasingly viewed as not having met Washington's expectations with regard to progress toward an Israeli-Palestinian agreement. Either of these is likely to strengthen the emerging – though as yet far from dominant – point of view in the United States in which Israel is portrayed as a state whose diplomatic foot-dragging and aggressive regional approach are harmful to U.S. national interests and with which American friendship is becoming increasingly costly. Advocates of this line in the United States claim that their country is liable to be dragged against its will into another war in the Middle East, that its image in the Muslim world is being damaged, that it is being pushed into isolation in international forums, and that it is being subjected to harmful criticism because of its support for Israel.

On the other hand, we cannot ignore the growing sense among Israeli decision-makers that the United States is no longer the same resolute and effective superpower Israel could depend upon in dealing with strategic challenges and in moments of truth. The image portrayed is of a weakened power that is seeking to renounce its role as

"global policeman" and to lower the profile of its involvement in the region. Israelis view the erosion in U.S. standing and its unwillingness to exercise its deterrence capacities (such as against Russia, Iran, and in the Syrian arena) as having a harmful spillover effect on Israel's deterrence capability.

The differences between the countries came to light in an interview President Obama gave to Bloomberg reporter Jeffrey Goldberg.⁴⁹ Obama stated that the only factor preventing the creation of a regional front against Iran is the lack of a solution to the Palestinian issue. He accused Israel of failing to offer

an alternative vision for how it will survive – in the absence of the two-state solution – as a Jewish and democratic state living in peace with its neighbors. He claimed that construction in the settlements has continued aggressively over the past two years – more so than anything seen for a very long

time. And he warned Israel: "If Palestinians come to believe that the possibility of a contiguous sovereign Palestinian state is no longer within reach, then our ability to manage the international fallout is going to be limited." The meaning of this statement is that, in the event that the negotiation route is blocked, the United States may no longer be able to protect Israel effectively against an

**Obama: If
Palestinians
believe a
contiguous
sovereign
Palestinian state
is no longer
within reach, U.S.
ability to manage
the international
fallout is going to
be limited**

international de-legitimization campaign as it has in the past. This warning was repeated in the remarks of White House official Philip Gordon, Obama's representative at the conference on peace initiated by the *Haaretz* newspaper (July 8, 2014): "How will Israel remain democratic and Jewish if it attempts to govern the millions of Palestinian Arabs who live in the West Bank? How will it have peace if it is unwilling to delineate a border, end the occupations, and allow for Palestinian sovereignty, security, and dignity? How will we prevent other states from isolating Israel or supporting Palestinian efforts in international bodies if Israel is not seen as committed to peace?"⁵⁰

U.S. administration's response: a mix of significant criticism of Israel's conduct and reassuring rhetoric

But it was Secretary Kerry's comments in a closed meeting that have provoked the most anger in Israel and among American Jews (April 25, 2014): "A two-state solution will be clearly underscored as the only real alternative. Because a unitary state winds up either being an apartheid state with second-class citizens – or it ends up being a state that destroys the capacity of Israel to be a Jewish state."⁵¹ Although Kerry later apologized, it did not conceal the mood prevailing in the administration: a mix of significant criticism of Israel's conduct, and reassuring rhetoric about the resilience of the relationship between the two countries. Thus, for example, the American envoy to the peace talks,

Martin Indyk, said that "Unlike the 'reassessment' Kissinger did in the Ford administration, there is one significant difference: President Obama and Secretary Kerry would never suspend U.S.-Israel military relations as their predecessors did back then."⁵² Tension between the two countries were also evident in the Israeli reaction to Indyk's emphasizing Israel's role in causing the talks to break down (mainly settlement construction and its failure to release a final set of prisoners). Unnamed official sources attacked Indyk personally in the strongest terms, calling him a "hypocrite" and accusing him of not taking responsibility for his part in the talks' failure.⁵³

Tensions between Washington and Jerusalem do not skip over U.S. Jewry. Critical comments about Israel (particularly Kerry's use of the phrase "an apartheid state") have drawn outraged responses from Jewish spokesman in the United States, but they have also caused discomfort as American Jews increasingly find themselves between a rock and a hard place. The delicacy of the Jewish predicament in the United States was revealed when it became known that Pollard's release would likely be an element of the deal to extend the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. For example, former Ambassador Daniel Kurtzer, who opposed the deal, claimed that he has known Jews who were removed from Israel-related government projects after Pollard's imprisonment, and that Americans with Israeli relatives have sometimes been denied top security clearance. Ambassador Dennis Ross, who supported the deal, has said that the Pollard case strengthened the stereotype that Jews cannot be trusted on issues related to Israel.⁵⁴

U.S. Jewry is therefore likely to be challenged more stringently as gaps between Israeli and American positions become wider. The more Israel presses to "mobilize" American Jews behind the effort, and the more Israel operates in the administration's political back yard (especially if perceived to be favoring Republicans), the more difficult the situation may become. Such a reality could discomfit the American Jewish community and make intra-Jewish divisions highly conspicuous, especially given the claims that American foreign policy in the Middle East is influenced by Israel and the Jewish lobby in a way that conflicts with United States' own interests.

Conclusion

At the last UN General Assembly, President Obama made American foreign-policy priorities clear: "In the near term, America's diplomatic efforts will focus on two particular issues: Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons and the Arab-Israeli conflict. While these issues are not the cause of all the region's problems, they have been a major source of instability for far too long, and resolving them can serve as a foundation for a broader peace."⁵⁵ But along with the importance Obama places on these issues, he also lowered expectations as to the prospect of achieving the goals. In an interview he gave to the *New Yorker*, he estimated the prospects of reaching final treaties with Iran and between Israel and the Palestinians as "less than 50-50."⁵⁶ The president's sober assessment shows the severe uncertainty inherent in both issues that are so critical to Israel and to the resilience of the triangular relationship between Jerusalem, Washington and the American Jewish community. Yet, the severe uncertainty, which unfortunately characterizes the entirety of Israel's strategic situation, does not relieve Jerusalem of the need to take fateful decisions.

The severe uncertainty that characterizes Israel's strategic situation does not relieve Jerusalem of the need to take fateful decisions

Endnotes

1. Kishore Mahbubani, East Asia Forum, When America Becomes Number Two, February 1, 2014.
2. *Haaretz*, July 19, 2014. Pew Research Center, July 11, 2014, "Confidence in Obama to do the right thing in world affairs."
3. According to projections by the International Energy Agency.
4. Reuters, July 18, 2014
5. January 6, 2014, U.S. Foreign Policy: Key Data Points from Pew Research, <http://www.pewresearch.org/key-data-points/u-s-foreign-policy-key-data-points/>.
6. Angus Reid Global, May 6, 2014.
7. *Al Monitor*, May 14, 2014.
8. January 28, 2014, President Barack Obama's State of the Union Address.
9. *New York Times*, October 26, 2013.
10. John Kerry, Secretary of State, Davos, Switzerland, January 24, 2014
11. *Ynet*, May 6, 2014
12. Charlie Rose, Erdogan interview, April 28, 2014.
13. Bloomberg, July 15, 2014
14. *Hurriyet*, July 18, 2014 ".... Attempting a 'systematic genocide' of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip".
15. *Ynet*, October 1, 2013
16. Galei Zahal, November 7, 2013.
17. "Joint Plan of Action," Geneva, November 24, 2013
18. Ibid.
19. The Washington Institute, Stephen Hadley, February 10, 2014
20. *Haaretz*, May 7, 2014
21. *Haaretz*, June 30, 2014
22. March 21, 2013, Transcript of Obama's Press Conference with Mahmoud Abbas.
23. For example, in Secretary Kerry's remarks at the AIPAC conference (March 4, 2014)
24. The Washington Institute, Amb. Marin Indyk's speech, May 8, 2014
25. *Haaretz*, April 27, 2014
26. *Yisrael Hayom*, April 27, 2014
27. *Ynet*, April 29, 2014
28. President Obama speaking at a press conference with the President of South Korea, April 25, 2014.
29. *Al Monitor*, May 5, 2014
30. *Haaretz*, June 19, 2014
31. *Yediot Aharonot*, May 2, 2014
32. *Haaretz*, April 8, 2014
33. *Arutz Sheva*, April 8, 2014
34. The Washington Institute, Ambassador Martin Indyk's speech, May 8, 2014.
35. The Daily Beast, April 27, 2014
36. *Haaretz*, June 29, 2014
37. Ibid.
38. *Ynet*, May 8, 2014
39. *Haaretz*, January 27, 2014
40. *Haaretz*, June 25, 2014
41. *Haaretz*, July 3, 2014
42. Remarks at Munich Security Conference, Munich, Germany, February 1, 2014, U.S. State Department website.
43. *Ynet*, February 4, 2014
44. *Ynet*, January 29, 2014

45. *Haaretz*, November 3, 2013
46. Secretary of State John Kerry's speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, March 3, 2014.
47. *Haaretz*, March 13, 2014
48. *Haaretz*, March 18, 2014
49. Bloomberg View, March 2, 2014 <http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2014-03-02/obama-to-israel-time-is-running-out>
50. Remarks as prepared by White House Coordinator for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf Region, Philip Gordon, at the Haaretz Israel Conference for Peace, July 8, 2014.
51. The Daily Best, April 27, 2014
52. The Washington Institute, Ambassador Martin Indyk's speech, May 8, 2014.
53. *Ynet*, May 10, 2014
54. *New York Times*, April 3 2013
55. President Obama's address at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, September 24, 2013
56. "On the other hand, in all three circumstances, we may be able to push the boulder partway up the hill and maybe stabilize it so it doesn't roll back on us. And all three are connected." (*The New Yorker*, On and Off the Road with Barack Obama, David Remnick, January 27, 2014).



The Triangular Relationship: Jerusalem, Washington and the U.S. Jewish Community

Political Perspectives

Although it appeared that tensions between the United States and Israel were easing to some degree in the first half of 2013, 2014 has brought a crisis in the relationship. This may presage a new period of serious challenges that are likely to present the U.S. Jewish community with difficult dilemmas. This is so, even though continued security cooperation between the two countries has not, at this point, been damaged. In fact, according to government sources in Jerusalem and Washington, the alliance has deepened, reaching unprecedented levels.

What explains this duality? Certainly, the continuation and deepening of the security relationship is rooted in American regional interests, against the backdrop of Middle East instability where Arab regimes, long considered by the U.S. as secure regional anchors, are under threat. Furthermore, President Obama is inclined to accept the position of his supporters in the

Jewish community, and especially of those close to him in Chicago, that diplomatic disagreements with Israel must not be allowed to affect its security strength and power, which guarantee its survival in a hostile region. The political price is another component: There is an assessment among those around Obama that weakening the security relationship would be unacceptable to Congress and the American public.

On the other hand, the president and his inner circle believe that continued Israeli control over the West Bank and its implications for the Palestinian people constitute a colonialist policy that is unacceptable for a democratic state that considers itself part of the West. Some in the administration are beginning to consider Israel more a liability than an asset. These views lead to a less than friendly diplomatic approach toward Israel, which, in the relationship equation with the Palestinians, is perceived as the stronger, occupying party.

Concern and Disappointment in Israel

A few months after President Obama's March 2013 visit to Israel, his charm wore off with the Israeli people, and suspicion of his administration's Mid-East policy reawakened. A survey published by the Israel Democracy Institute in March 2014, found that 66% of Israeli Jews and 53 percent of Israeli Arabs do not believe that Secretary of State John Kerry takes Israel's security needs adequately into account. The change in Israeli public opinion derives from disappointment on seven levels:

A. Problematic U.S. diplomatic conduct toward Syria, Egypt, and Russia, which along with other factors, signals perceptions of weakness and a desire to depart from the Middle East;

Suspicion of the Obama administration intensified with its cooperation with the new Palestinian government

B. The failure of the American effort to move the peace process forward and the feeling that the White House tends to direct most of its

criticism at Israel, while minimizing criticism of the Palestinians and downplaying their responsibility for their own mistakes;

C. U.S. engagement with the Fatah-Hamas technocratic unity government, and the administration's readiness to continue providing it with aid, even though Hamas has not moderated its positions and continues to

maintain its own military force in Gaza;

D. Speculation that the U.S. administration is prepared to espouse a compromise approach to the Iranian nuclear threat – at Israel's expense;

E. The evaporation of the positive atmosphere toward the Obama administration created by the president's visit to Israel, and the missed opportunity to improve the personal relationship between President Obama and Prime Minister Netanyahu;

F. Reports in the American media critical of Israel not only for its part in the failure of the diplomatic process, but also for a series of apparent Israeli attempts to damage American interests and to engage in espionage on U.S. soil.

G. Concern that if the tension intensifies the U.S. administration may withhold support for Israel on the international scene, which would contribute to its isolation and a deepening of de-legitimization efforts against it.

Suspicion of the Obama administration intensified with its cooperation with the new Palestinian government – a cooperation that is perceived as a slap in Israel's face – and could also make positive movement in the diplomatic process more difficult. Without trust and faith in the American anchor, it would be hard for the Israeli public to support the significant and painful concessions needed to reach an agreement with the Palestinians.

Second term personnel changes in the Obama

administration have also intensified Israeli suspicion. The replacement of the national security advisor, who had built a relationship of trust with Prime Minister Netanyahu and especially with his former Israeli counterpart, and the replacement of several other senior appointees around the president did not contribute, to say the least, to an improvement in the communication between the governments. The present head of the National Security Council seems to have avoided regular meetings with the Israeli ambassador, who is perceived as pro-Republican, and this channel, which could contribute to relieving the tension, is not being fully utilized.

More concern in Jerusalem was generated because of perceptions that there are elements in the U.S. administration that seek to defame Israel in order to diminish support for it in pro-Israel circles, including among prominent members of the Jewish community.

In this context, it is important to note the series of reports about "Israeli spying against the United States" that were published as Congress was considering a proposal to include Israel in the visa waiver program, which would enable Israelis to visit the United States as tourists for up to three months. Leaked testimony from a closed congressional hearing led to a series of additional reports that, purportedly, the CIA relates to Israel as "Enemy Number 1" in the United States' counter-intelligence efforts in the Middle East.

One recent *Newsweek* report illustrates the bias against Israel: it is based on a book that is about to be published in Britain that reveals purported

Israeli wiretapping of a 1999 conversation between President Bill Clinton and Syrian President Hafez el-Assad. Israeli sources do not dismiss such a possibility out of hand, but emphasize that even if there had been such a wiretap, it would have been on Assad's telephone line, not Clinton's. Senior officials of the Israeli government and intelligence agencies have categorically rejected these allegations, and strenuously denied any Israeli intelligence activity whatsoever against American targets since the Pollard affair was exposed in 1986. However, with the exception of a single comment by Defense Secretary Hegel, no senior American official has denied the report. Hegel himself limited his comment to saying that the report was based on rumors and that he was "not aware of any facts that would substantiate the report."

Official U.S. administration sources do not deny that difficulties are emerging between the two countries

Official U.S. administration sources do not deny the difficulties that are emerging between the two countries. As to the charges of spying, they stressed that "we will have to make do with Hegel's comments, since without precise information, it is very difficult to issue a blanket denial." These sources claimed that Israel and the United States must simultaneously invest great energies in maintaining their relationship, since the partnership between them is not automatic and future pressures can be anticipated as well. The sources added that it would be a mistake to

think that in another two-and-a-half years, when a new president assumes office, the difficulties that emerged between the two governments would disappear as if they had never existed: "The personal relations between the leaders do not change the two countries' basic interests. In recent decades, U.S. policy has favored a two-state solution, and this is not about to change, so the difficulties will remain in place."

The main concern is that U.S. policy will enable Iran to become a nuclear threshold state

In such a situation, the need for close coordination is strongly felt on both sides, and every effort must be made to reopen the direct channel for dialogue at the highest levels.

U.S. Suspicion of Israeli Conduct

At the same time as questions were being raised in Israel about President Obama, serious suspicions within the administration about the Israeli government has also contributed to the lack of confidence between the two governments, for the following reasons:

- A. Benjamin Netanyahu's current coalition suggests a rightward turn in the Israeli leadership and a hardening of the government's ideological positions. There is a perception that Israeli policy is conducted according to political considerations, i.e. to ensure the stability of the governing coalition;
- B. The increase in comments by Israeli leaders who are members of the coalition about the intention to annex territories in Judea and Samaria (mainly in the settlement blocs) unilaterally;
- C. Israel has been seen as exploiting its influence in Congress in order to criticize White House policy on dialogue with Iran and on the diplomatic process with the Palestinians;
- D. Continued building and issuance of construction tenders for new housing units in West Bank settlements and in East Jerusalem;
- E. Perceptions in President Obama's inner circle and in the Democratic Party, about Israeli interference in the 2012 election;
- F. Harsh comments by ministers and by coalition Knesset members about Secretary Kerry and members of the American peace team.

The American administration's frustration was expressed in reports – both in the United States and in Israel – that accompanied the failure of the talks with the Palestinians. The major blame was placed on Israel's refusal to freeze settlement construction, and its issuance of a slew of plans and new construction tenders during the negotiations. The feeling in Israel was that the administration was excessively forgiving of what was referred to as "Abu Mazen's running away from making decisions." The Americans replied by saying: "Abu Mazen did not run away from making decisions. He was 'locked in' because of the continuation of construction in the territories."

Direct talks with Iran have also contributed to recent tensions. The Israeli government's trust in the readiness of the United States to live up to its commitment to stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, which is considered an existential threat to Israel, has eroded. The main concern is that U.S. policy will enable Iran to establish itself as a nuclear threshold state, and is exacerbated by what Israel regards as signaled U.S. weakness vis-a-vis Syria, Egypt, and Russia.

President Obama's May 2014 West Point commencement address was also interpreted by some Israelis as a sign of American hesitance: "Since World War II, some of our most costly mistakes came not from our restraint but from our willingness to rush into military adventures without thinking through the consequences..."

The Israeli Paradox

From the outside, it is difficult to understand the apparent paradox that characterizes Israeli life. On one hand – the pervasive feeling that Iran's nuclear ambitions pose an existential threat, the demographic reality and the concern that it could become a bi-national state, instability in the Middle East, and the de-legitimization campaign waged against it around the world; and on the other hand – the Israeli public's optimism, its high birthrate, economic stability, high-rise construction in Tel Aviv and soaring property values. International surveys (such as the 2013 World Happiness Report published by UNSDSN, which relied on Gallup World Poll data and findings of the OECD and ranked Israel 11th out of 156 countries), show Israel high in quality of life

indices. In this regard, two key parameters should be noted as far as Israel is concerned: Mutual responsibility-social cohesion; and the health indices.

Non-Israelis find it perplexing that the former defense minister and prime minister, who publicly warns about the existential threat of Iran's nuclearization, lives in a penthouse apartment in one of Tel Aviv's prestigious new skyscrapers. Outside of Israel, it is also hard to understand the desire of a majority of Israelis to retain the country's Jewish and democratic character while pushing away the significance of continued rule over the Palestinian people. It is difficult to understand how, despite the frustration, exposing corruption among the Israeli elite is consistent with the hope that Israel is marching toward cleaner government. It is difficult to understand how the prime minister, despite harsh criticism from both right and left, is positioned high in political opinion polls against rivals both within and outside his own party.

These contradictions have characterized Israel since its establishment. Existential tests and challenges have gone hand in hand with unprecedented achievements since independence. The contradiction also manifests in the internal political situation. While polls show that most of the population favors far-reaching compromises to achieve a comprehensive peace agreement based

Netanyahu is perceived as the best suited to the post of prime minister even though he is subject to constant criticism

on the two-state formula, election results and political polling point to a continued advantage for the right.

Benjamin Netanyahu continues to lead his political rivals. He is perceived by the public as the best suited to the post of prime minister, even though he is subject to constant criticism over his handling of the job and often has trouble leading internal initiatives due to lack of political support. This is exactly what happened, for example, when he was not able to promote his own candidate for the presidency, or in selecting a top economist to be governor of the Bank of Israel.

As concerns corruption in Israel, 2014 was an especially difficult year

In a *Haaretz* poll conducted a year after the 2013 elections, Netanyahu garnered 30% support versus only 11% for the Labor Party head, Isaac Herzog; 7% for Tzipi Livni; 6 % for Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman and the Jewish Home leader, Naftali Bennett; and only 5% for Yair Lapid.

Some explanations – albeit partial – for this phenomenon:

A. The relative stability that characterizes Netanyahu's government in the economic field at a time of world financial crisis, the security and relative quiet (until Protective Edge, under his tenure fewer Israelis and fewer Arabs have been killed than under any other prime minister since the Six Day War), and the momentum of construction and investment in infrastructure;

B. The assessment that the government he heads will negotiate more efficiently than another government;

C. Developments in the political arena: Former Defense Minister Ehud Barak, who was regarded as a strong potential candidate for a second premiership, retired from politics and support for him vanished, while his successor, Moshe "Bogie" Ayalon, is not yet perceived by the public as an appropriate prime-ministerial candidate; two other potential rivals to Netanyahu – the former prime minister, Ehud Olmert, and the former IDF chief of staff, Gabi Ashkenazi, – have been caught up in corruption scandals and investigations.

As concerns corruption in Israel, 2014 was an especially difficult year. Ehud Olmert was sentenced to six years in prison for his part in the Holyland affair and faces a Supreme Court appeal by the state over charges of which he had been acquitted. This is the result of subsequent testimony given by his former secretary, whose silence had helped in his exoneration. Gabi Ashkenazi, who was considered to be someone who could lead the Labor Party to victory in the elections, has been questioned under caution over various suspicions related to a forged document that was designed to thwart the chances of one of the candidates to succeed him. In addition, a new investigation at the Port of Ashdod is aimed at uncovering ties between money and political power that were used, among other things, to bring about Ehud Barak's ouster, and interference in the internal political

operations of the Labor Party (*Haaretz-The Marker*, June 6, 2012).

The corruption investigations have not been confined to the top political echelons alone. A series of other trials and investigations – some of which have already led to arrests, indictments, and even convictions of public servants including the former chief rabbi, mayors, and other officials – has not been accompanied by rejoicing in Israel. While some do feel deeply frustrated by these revelations, many others feel that the country is strong enough and its society healthy enough to deal with ills that had been neglected during the first decades of its existence, and remain optimistic.

The Jewish Community: "Between a Rock and a Hard Place"

A crisis in the relationship between Israel and the United States could put the Jewish community in a problematic position. American Jewry has felt comfortable when there has been a convergence of interests between their government and Israel's in combination with the moral and democratic values both countries hold. When one of the two pieces of the equation weakens, some U.S. Jews feel they are between a rock and a hard place, pressed between their total loyalty to their country, the United States, and the expectation of support for their sister Jewish community in Israel.

Damage can today be detected on both levels. A situation in which Israel and the United States have different policy approaches toward Iran and in which the peace talks with the Arabs and

particularly with the Palestinians have reached a dead end, increases these feelings, particularly if they are portrayed by the administration as contrary to American interests.

Further – and as reflected in a JPPI project conducted this year on Diaspora Jews' approach to the question of Israel's character as a Jewish and democratic state – the sense of alienation from Israel is deepening in parts of the Jewish community. Among the most frequently cited reasons are Israel's lack of openness to different streams of Judaism, and perceived discrimination against its Arab minority.

Critical articles and reports about Israel alleging harm to vital United States interests, such as charges of Israeli espionage, arouse concern in certain quarters within the community over the emergence of anti-Jewish sentiment among portions of the American general public.

Distancing is not yet a sweeping phenomenon, yet there are increasing signs of internal division in North American Jewry over Israel, particularly among younger Jews. In the past year, this phenomenon could be seen in Jewish campus activity and at community events, as well as in disagreements that arose over the participation of representatives of Jewish organizations critical

Erosion in the political representation of U.S. Jews reflects a weaker inclination among younger Jews to seek political or public service careers

of Israeli policies in New York's annual Celebrate Israel Parade.

Another issue that should be tracked involves the relative erosion in the political representation of Jews in the United States. In the past six years, the number of Jews in the House of Representatives has dropped from 33 to 22, and in the Senate from 13 to 11. While the Jewish community still enjoys a comparative advantage in its political representation and while there may be some correlation between these numbers and a decline in the strength of the Democratic Party, for which a majority of Jews have traditionally voted, it is possible nevertheless that this phenomenon also reflects a weaker inclination among younger Jews to seek political or public service careers.

These phenomena require a response, both from the Israeli and American communities. The Israeli government and its friends in the

United States must make a concerted effort to maintain the special relationship between the two countries. Israel must, for its part, develop a more hospitable policy toward the various Jewish streams and show greater understanding of the expectation among the younger generation that it be a paragon of morality and values by ensuring minority rights, in order to enable them to identify with Israel more strongly. And at the same time, the American Jewish community must encourage the development of talent and commitment among the younger generation who will take responsibility for the future, not only within the Jewish leadership and the economy but also in politics, government, and academia.



Community Bonds and Israel: Institutionalizing Dialogue, a Positive Trend

The state of the bonds between Jewish communities around the world, and especially between the two largest – Israel and North America – improved this year. The change isn't dramatic but a number of events and pieces of evidence enable us to see the recent period as one in which, on balance, positive developments occurred in the condition of community bonds. This year, we can also add to these developments a first-hand account gained during JPPI's comprehensive study, "Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry."¹

At the beginning of the study (further details on which follow) we included the finding that "Jews throughout the world support Israel and see the connection with it as an important matter that should be maintained." Israel, the study concludes, serves as a positive common denominator for world Jewry.

Positive Developments, Worrying Signs

New studies published in the past year on the state of the Jewish world, including the comprehensive study of American Jews by the Pew Center² as well as studies dealing with other Jewish communities (such as in the United Kingdom) demonstrated the intensity of the Jewish connection to Israel. The Pew study found that some 70% of Jews feel a "strong" or "some" emotional connection to Israel. In Britain, among couples in which both partners are Jewish, 84% of those surveyed stated that maintaining a connection to Israel is central to their Jewish identity.³

These studies support the claim that – at this stage, despite continued warnings on the subject – there is no real evidence of "distancing" from Israel by the world's Jews.⁴ Nevertheless, in the British study,

as in its U.S. counterpart, a strong link was found between the family status of younger Jews and the connection they feel to Israel. Compared to the 84% of Jews with Jewish partners, who consider Israel an important component of their Jewish identity, only 42% of British Jews with non-Jewish partners express this feeling. An essentially similar state of affairs exists among U.S. Jews, for whom there is also a significant link between intermarriage and a diminished intensity of connection to Israel.

In the large community of U.S. Jews there are two competing trends that are leading the young to opposite poles of the Israel-attachment spectrum. At one end, there is a dramatic rise in the number of young Orthodox Jews who today, according to weighted calculations of the Pew data, comprise over a quarter of all Jewish young people (even though the

Stability of the connection to Israel is impressive despite the dramatic increase of intermarriage

Orthodox community is only a tenth of all U.S. Jews).⁵ These young people are much more closely connected to Israel than American Jews in general.⁶ On the other hand, there is a dramatic increase in the number of non-Orthodox Jews who are choosing non-Jewish partners or who are designated by the Pew researchers as "Jews not by religion" (NBRs).⁷ Their connection to Israel is much weaker than that of other Jews, and their rising proportion among all young Jews is also reflected in the figures concerning the connection to Israel. Researcher Steven M. Cohen found in the Pew data proof of a gradual age-

related decline in the intensity of Israel connection among non-Orthodox Jews. For example, the 18-29 age cohort tends to believe that "concern for Israel is an important component of being Jewish" to a lesser extent than older Jews (30%, compared to 41% among all non-Orthodox Jews, and 52% among non-Orthodox Jews aged 65 and older).⁸

The data concerning non-Orthodox young people, and particularly those who choose non-Jewish partners, reflect a real challenge for preserving community ties, just as they reflect a challenge for preserving Jewish identity in general. Over the long term, they are, of course, likely to contribute to negative trends pertaining to the sense of Jewish peoplehood. However, as mentioned, these data should not obscure the overall positive picture that emerges from the Pew study, one that generally indicates a continued strong connection between Jews around the world and Israel, as well as positive trends among the younger generation itself – for example, the growing number of Jews who have visited Israel (a number that should be attributed, it seems, to the success of subsidized Israel travel programs). In effect, as researcher Ted Sasson has claimed, the "stability of the connection to Israel" in terms of the community-wide data is "impressive," despite the dramatic increase of intermarriage, and it shows that concurrent with the erosion of Israel attachment among the growing segment of intermarriages, there is an apparent strengthening of Israel attachment among "Jews by religion" (who, in most cases, choose to marry other Jews).⁹

These findings are also supported by positive practical developments in Israel's connection

with the Diaspora. These developments can be divided into two main tracks: successful action to neutralize crisis factors, and intensified action for partnership in building a common Jewish future.

In the past year, special Israeli efforts have been evident (especially by government ministries and the Jewish Agency) to reach an arrangement in regard to the Western Wall Plaza. The goal is to accommodate non-Orthodox Jewish observance. These efforts, yet to be completed, have so far resulted in the creation of an additional prayer plaza for non-Orthodox worship, which has strengthened the feeling that Israel is willing to incorporate the concerns of Diaspora communities in setting policy. (See also "Worlds Apart: Systems of Jewish Identity in Israel and the Diaspora," this volume.)

In recent months, Israel has announced the comprehensive "Joint Initiative of the Government of Israel and World Jewry" to strengthen Jewish identity in the Diaspora. This initiative, which follows a number of earlier, more limited efforts, demonstrates more than any speech or declaration the abandonment of "negating the Diaspora" and a transition to supporting an active Jewish presence around the world. (See also: "Material Resources 2013-2014," this volume.)

This Israeli willingness to show greater consideration for the views of world Jewry and to become more involved in joint enterprises with world Jewry, beyond those solely intended for its own benefit, resonates with Diaspora Jewish communities.

A series of JPPI seminars held in dozens of Diaspora communities over the last six months raised questions of Israel-Diaspora ties for discussion. Professor Ruth Gavison, at the initiative of the Minister of Justice Tzipi Livni, was tasked with exploring an appropriate constitutional arrangement to enshrine Israel's Jewish and democratic character. JPPI, at the request of Prof. Gavison, examined Diaspora perspectives on the subject. JPPI's research, which was summarized in the report *Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry* (May 2014) dealt with a number of key questions, such as "How, in Diaspora Jewry's opinion, should Israel's Jewishness be expressed?" and "Which democratic values should guide Israel and how should it act when there is tension or a conflict between Jewish and democratic interests?" Questions related to Israel's relationship with non-Israeli Jews were also raised.

Diaspora Jews revealed an opinion pattern quite similar to that of the Israeli public on the issue of Israel's identity as a "Jewish and democratic state"

The conclusions that arose from this consultative process clearly indicate a strong desire among Jews to identify and fully utilize partnership channels between Israel and Diaspora communities. This desire was shared by the vast majority of participants (it should be pointed out that most them are actively connected to the organized Jewish community)¹⁰ – though differences were found as to the precise nature of the desired involvement.

Main Points of the Report on Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State

JPPI's examination of the views of Diaspora Jews on the issue of Israel's identity as a "Jewish and democratic state" revealed an opinion pattern quite similar to that of the Israeli public.¹¹ The view that Israel should be a Jewish and democratic state creates a consensus conceptual framework even though the concrete meaning of a Jewish and democratic state yields a wide range of responses. The assertion that Israel should be "only Jewish" or "only democratic" excludes one from the Diaspora consensus.

Main conclusions from *Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry*

- Concerning the dilemma that sometimes arises from the dual definition "Jewish and democratic," JPPI project found opinions at both ends of the spectrum: an unequivocal preference for the democratic component over the Jewish, and the converse. However, there is no mistaking the dominant opinion found: the desire to see Israel as both Jewish and democratic, and the assumption that this combination is certainly possible, notwithstanding the tensions inherent in it. Accordingly, many regard the ambiguity of the current "Jewish and democratic" definition as an advantage that facilitates partnership and avoids factionalism and division.
- For many Diaspora Jews, democratic values are synonymous with "Jewish values." Thus,

conduct that belies Israel's democratic principles is also considered detrimental to Judaism and to Israel's character as a Jewish state. If Israel were not a liberal democracy, it would be less attractive to many Diaspora Jews.

- When tensions between Jewish and democratic were placed in sharp relief, the majority – who usually see a correlation between these values – divides into two camps: those who view Israel's democratic identity as attaching to its Jewish base, and those who emphasize the opposite arrangement. This distinction came into focus when participants were faced with some specific practical dilemmas that characterize life in a Jewish and democratic state.
- Diaspora Jews prefer a more substantial religious component in Israel's identity structure than in their own countries, and place great value in preserving Israel's Jewish nature. At the same time, the practical application of religion-state relations in Israel is not immune from criticism, particularly the Orthodox rabbinate's monopoly on religious affairs and personal status issues such as marriage, divorce, and burial.
- It was clear that many Diaspora Jews recognize the difficulties and constraints Israel faces given the regional hostility and threats to its security. Nevertheless, the majority does not consider this situation, or the fact that Israel's neighbors are not exemplars of democracy and human rights, as justification for lowering

the high values bar Israel is expected to maintain.

- World Jewry largely views Democratic and Jewish values as inextricable. Diaspora criticism of Israel's conduct in the Jewish sphere (over the Orthodox monopoly, for example) is often based on democratic values, just as its criticism of Israel's democracy is often based on Jewish values.
- Discussion about Israel's "Jewish and democratic" identity revealed a variety of Diaspora expectations:
 - That Israel should be pluralistic.
 - That Israel should be punctilious about equality for its non-Jewish citizens.
 - That Israel should strive for a reality in which it does not rule over the Palestinians.
 - That Israel should end the Orthodox monopoly over Jewish life and give equal status to all streams of Judaism.
 - That Israel should avoid imposing religious norms on a civil society that is mostly secular.
 - That Israel should strengthen its Jewish character by better educating its citizens about Jewish traditions, values, and history.

Diaspora Jews have a stake in Israel's identity:

- Israel's character significantly affects the way in which "Judaism" is perceived around the world by Jews and by non-Jews. For example, it is likely to influence the degree to which

the younger generation feel committed to their Jewish identity, and at the same time is likely to affect the non-Jewish environment's attitude toward the Jews who live among them.

- Jews are a minority everywhere in the world except Israel. This distinction is relevant to the considerable importance Diaspora Jews place on safeguarding the rights of Israel's minorities and on human rights in general.
- The right of Diaspora Jews to voice their opinions and exercise influence on matters decided in Israel was a central concern in seminar discussions.
- Their growing self-confidence in expressing views critical of Israel was marked, especially on matters related to the Jewish aspects of Israel's identity.
- Many participants emphasized that Israel's policies and image around the world affects the security and well-being of Diaspora Jews, and that they, therefore, have the right to be heard.
- Many discussants expressed the wish that Israel consult regularly with Diaspora Jews on matters close to their hearts. It was emphasized that such consultation would strengthen solidarity between Israel and the Diaspora.

Meeting, Consultation, Influence

A number of community level channels could be opened through which Diaspora Jews could express their connections to Israel and manage their relations with it in a systematic way. It is important to distinguish between this community level – the collective expression of groups of Jews who voluntarily associate in organizations or federations, or who simply live in the same areas – and relations with Israel on a personal level. Jews from around the world visit Israel, stay in touch

with relatives and friends in Israel, and follow news about Israel. JPPI seminar participants expressed the intensity of their personal connections to Israel, the importance of the relationship with Israel, and Israel's centrality to Jewish identity. Community level relationships with Israel expand upon the personal

and give collective weight to the opinions and desires of larger groups of Jews. They have the capacity to boost the connection of individual Jews to their local communities (which enables them to maintain a line of communication with Israel at a higher level) and enhance their sense of closeness to Israel itself (since their ability to influence it through their community provides them a sense of responsibility and belonging). Their importance to Israel is great because through them, it can benefit from providing greater attention to more

Certainly, there are also many Diaspora Jews who seek to influence Israel's foreign and defense policy

Jews in less time, and also because community bonds build communities with the capacity to engage in joint enterprises.

Jews around the world have expressed desire for dialogue channels with Israel ranging from non-binding consultation that still has a formal dimension, to dialogue intended from the outset to allow Diaspora Jews direct influence on Israeli policy.

But before we consider the significance of these channels and the manner in which it is possible to maintain them, we first note that most of the participants in the discussions JPPI conducted in communities – from Brazil to Holland to the UK, and from France and South Africa to many Canadian and U.S. communities – wish to be connected to Israel and place high value and significance on this connection. It is true that there are elements among world Jewry opposed to a connection with Israel for ideological (anti- or post-Zionist) or religious reasons, but they are at the far margins. Attachment to Israel, which does not preclude criticism of it, is very prevalent in the overwhelming majority of communities and organizations.

Here are a few examples of statements made in this spirit at the seminars we conducted. The report written following the seminar in Cleveland stated, "The connection between non-Israeli Jews and Israeli Jews is special and must be maintained." A participant in the New York seminar said, "A connection to Israel is the basis, and there is mainstream Judaism today that opposes it." In the summary of the discussions held by the New

Israel Fund in Australia, it was determined that "participants agreed that there is a special, strong relationship between Israel and Jews in the rest of world and they hoped that this would always be the case."

There was a prevalent sense among seminar participants that Diaspora communities have the right, and perhaps even a duty, to be actively involved in shaping Israel's character. In the context of active and real involvement, as indicated in JPPI's study, it appears that confidence is higher in the prerogative and ability to intervene in Judaism-related Israeli affairs and lower with respect to foreign and defense policy matters. That is, more participants thought their involvement should be limited to policy that directly affects Israel's "Jewishness." Certainly, there are also many Jews – whose voices have become louder in recent years – who seek to influence, whether directly or indirectly, foreign and defense policy as well.

The desire for permanent and substantial dialogue between Diaspora communities and Israel was universally expressed in JPPI seminars. The benefits of such a dialogue are clear: it strengthens the communities' sense of connection and involvement with one another; it allows for the early and orderly defusing of landmines that threaten the relationship; it provides Israel with an additional tool for clarifying its positions and policy on various subjects, including those that it currently has difficulty in communicating to certain segments of world Jewry; it provides Diaspora Jews with a tool for conveying messages to Israel discreetly and serves as pressure relief valve for frustration with Israeli policy on various

subjects; it presents Israel with opportunities to utilize advice from communities who have its interests at heart; it builds the trust necessary for cooperation on joint projects; and more.

Three principles for successful dialogue were raised in many of the discussions:

1. The dialogue should serve all parties, and not be conceived of solely as a tool to rally world Jewry around Israeli goals (even though this is a legitimate component of the dialogue). World Jewry seeks a dialogue that, for Israel, goes beyond utilitarian self-interest – one that actually weighs and factors in perspectives from world Jewry among its other considerations.
2. The dialogue should be conducted with Israelis who are in a position to influence decisions on the subjects being discussed. Some JPPI seminar discussants expressed concern that Israel will not really take what they say into account and only pretend to be listening. It is therefore important that the dialogue be conducted in a manner that engenders confidence that it has practical significance – this does not mean that Israel must carry out every recommendation raised as part of the dialogue, but it does require that representatives of the communities trust that their views will be taken into account.

The dialogue must be conducted in a manner that engenders confidence in its practical significance

3. The dialogue should be conducted with Diaspora Jews who have the capacity to communicate to Israel the range of views in their communities in all their ideological, political, religious, and organizational diversity. The possible decline of the centrality of major Diaspora organizations necessitates a dialogue

Existing dialogue frameworks do not provide a satisfactory answer to world Jewry's appetite for an orderly consultation process

process that includes young leaders who operate outside the main traditional institutions with which Israel has been accustomed to talking. The question of representativeness itself deserves a separate and comprehensive discussion.

The Existing Dialogue and its Limitations

Several dialogue frameworks between Israel and Diaspora communities and organizations currently exist. Some function as official forums (such as the "Coordinating Committee"¹²), and others are semi-official or voluntary. Some convene regularly and others meet on an ad hoc basis to deal with specific issues, such as the Conversion Law and the Western Wall plaza. Opinions are divided within Diaspora communities as to whether and to what extent a formal and permanent Israel-Diaspora consultative process should be implemented. Some argue that Israel, as an independent state, needs to preserve its autonomy in its decision-making processes, others

worry that formalizing a consultative mechanism would reinforce the "dual loyalty" stereotype. Nevertheless, when it comes to consultation on "Jewish" subjects – that is, on fundamental questions related to Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people and to how it functions as the core state of the Jewish people – Diaspora Jews largely believe that formal consultation is appropriate. Defining the dialogue's boundaries is, of course, a complicated process with many gray areas. Still, in most cases it is not difficult to distinguish between topics that fall under the "Jewish" umbrella and those in more problematic areas.

The existing dialogue frameworks do not provide a satisfactory answer to world Jewry's appetite for an orderly consultation process – or, as JPPI found in the study, to an increasing Israeli willingness to embrace such a process.¹³

- Many meetings take place between Diaspora and Israeli representatives in different forums, at different levels, and for a variety of reasons, but there is no clear and agreed-upon permanent consultative mechanism, one that doesn't take a single issue focus and that can survive successive Israeli governments. Existing forums tend to meet without having an orderly long-term agenda and without a clear methodology for conducting discussions, reaching conclusions, and following up on their implementation.
- Participants in these forums are rarely perceived as being truly representative of opinions prevailing in the Jewish communities in general.

- Current dialogue forums are insufficiently supported by suitable background studies that could provide more broad and reliable information about Diaspora Jews' opinions on various subjects, on their expectations of Israel, on the issues that are most important to them, and so on.

As is often the case in the Jewish world, the Israel-Diaspora dialogue arena does not suffer a lack of ideas, opinions, or initiatives, but they have not been coordinated or united by a clear goal. The result is less than efficacious. The feeling that there is no satisfactory consultation mechanism is still widespread in Diaspora communities. Diaspora communities and Israel have a clear interest in a significant and effective dialogue mechanism, yet there are obstacles on both sides that make it difficult to institute one.

In the Diaspora communities:

- Some organizations have difficulty relinquishing their status as the exclusive intermediaries of their constituents' opinions.
- Some organizations are not sufficiently democratic, which precludes them from acting as an instrument for delivering messages that reflect the views of the majority of Jews (or at least the views of those who are interested in being represented).
- Organizational agendas are sometimes different from the general Jewish agenda.

- The structural impossibility of controlling a discreet, orderly, and representative process in a situation in which community participation is voluntary.

In Israel:

- It is operationally convenient to work with the familiar organizations. Allowing in new players, some of whom make Israel uncomfortable, may cause resistance.
- Concern about over-interference in internal Israeli matters that would make it politically and diplomatically difficult for Israel.
- The politicization of processes within Israel for domestic purposes by those participating in them.

Recommendations

Israel should institutionalize an **effective and representative** channel for consultation with Diaspora Jewry on policy issues. **Development of a formal mechanism for dialogue between Israel and the Diaspora is necessary in order to:**

- 1. Preserve the unity of the Jewish people in an age of "free choice" in which the possibility of building and adopting other identities is widely available.**
- 2. Ensure participation of the next generation in Jewish life and in contributing to the community.**
- 3. Strengthen and develop Israel's character as a Jewish and democratic state and as the core state of the Jewish people.**

4. Advance Israel-Diaspora relations and those between communities around the world in a way that cultivates and preserves the value of shared responsibility as expressed in the statement: "All Jews are responsible for one another" [b. Sanhedrin 27b].

JPPI recommends deepening and institutionalizing a permanent dialogue with world Jewry for the purpose of consultation and coordination related to Israeli decisions that affect the Diaspora and to Diaspora decisions that affect Israel. In this regard, and building on the broad Diaspora consultation JPPI conducted this year on Israel's Jewish and democratic character, JPPI intends to conduct another round of seminars throughout the Diaspora in the coming year, in addition to its annual conference with the participation of leaders from Jewish organizations, communities, and academia.

The discussions will focus on the main challenges by relating to the five dimensions critical to the Jewish people's thriving: geopolitics, inter-community bonds, identity and identification, material resources, and demography. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring pluralistic settings, appropriate gender representation, and the involvement of the younger generation and new entrepreneurs in the field.

At the conclusion of the process, JPPI will prepare a report and submit it to the government of Israel and to Jewish leadership around the world. It will include detailed recommendations on strengthening and updating the consultative mechanism, and on the main parameters that should be focused upon.

Endnotes

1. See: Rosner, Shmuel, (May 2014), **Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry**, The Jewish People Policy Institute. This study, which drew from dozens of seminars held in Jewish communities around the world and summarized at a conference of Jewish leadership in New York in March 2014, was submitted to Prof. Ruth Gavison as background to her investigation into the constitutional arrangement appropriate for Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. Prof. Gavison was charged with this task by Minister of Justice Tzipi Livni.
2. Pew, (2013), **A Portrait of Jewish Americans – Findings from a Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews**, Washington. <http://www.pewforum.org/files/2013/10/jewish-american-full-report-for-web.pdf>
3. Graham, David, Laura Staetsky and Jonathan Boyd, (January 2014), **Jews in the United Kingdom in 2013: Preliminary findings from the National Jewish Community Survey**, Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR). http://www.jpr.org.uk/documents/JPR_Jews_in_the_UK_in_2013_NJCS_preliminary_findings.Feb.%202014.pdf
4. For additional reading on this subject see: Rosner, Shmuel and Hakman, Inbal, (April 2012), **The Challenge of Peoplehood: Strengthening the Attachment of Young American Jews to Israel in the Time of the Distancing Discourse**, The Jewish People Policy Institute.
5. The weighting of these data was conducted by Prof. Steven Cohen. For further details see: Nathan-Kazis, Josh, (November 2013), "Orthodox Population Grows Faster than First Figures in Pew's Jewish American Study," *The Jewish Daily Forward*.
6. See: Cooperman, Alan, and Smith, Greg, (October 2013), **Eight facts about Orthodox Jews from the Pew Research survey**, Pew Research Center: "Orthodox Jews express much more emotional attachment to Israel than do other U.S. Jews. This is particularly true of Modern Orthodox Jews, 77% of whom say they feel "very attached" to the Jewish state. By contrast, among Ultra-Orthodox Jews, 55% say they feel very attached to Israel. And among American Jews overall, 30% say they are very attached to Israel".
7. The Jewish People Policy Institute published two brief reports that analyze the possible implications of the growth of the "Jews Not by Religion" category in the United States, a category that in the past year has appeared in two key studies: Shlomo Fischer dealt with the sociological significance of identification as 'Jews Not by Religion' in: Fischer, Shlomo, (November 2013), Who are the 'Jews by Religion' in the Pew Report?, *The Times of Israel*; Shmuel Rosner with the policy dilemmas that this category presents to the Jewish people's policy-makers in: Rosner, Shmuel, (Dec. 2013), 'Jews Not by Religion': How to Respond to American Jewry's New Challenge, *The Jewish People Policy Institute*.
8. For further details see: Rosner, Shmuel, (October 2013), "So What is Pew's Verdict: Are Young American Jews Attached to Israel?," *Jewish Journal*.
9. Sasson analyzed the Pew data and showed that a significant portion of the group labelled 'Jews Not by Religion' is made up of Jews who come from "mixed" homes. The general tone of the analysis is positive since Sasson identifies an increase in the level of identification with their Jewish heritage among children from mixed families – in other words, more children from mixed homes identify as Jews (although about half of them do so as 'Jews Not by Religion'). Sasson's full analysis appeared in *Tablet Magazine*. See: Sasson, Theodore. (November 2013), "New Analysis of the Pew Data: Children of Inter-marriage Increasingly Identify as Jews," *Tablet Magazine*.

10. The full report of the study includes an entire chapter on the methodology that guided those who conducted it, as well as a detailed analysis of the methodology's advantages and disadvantages in reflecting the views of world Jewry. In short: It is clear that the way in which the seminars were conducted had a real impact on the make-up of the participants, and one way or another on the views expressed in the discussions as well. This process focused on the connected and interested organized Jewish community, and other Jewish groups are not represented. Therefore, as a process for fully determining the views of all Jews, it is left wanting. On the other hand, it allowed for a profound understanding of the opinions of those Jews who are most likely to be mobilized for significant activity and whose commitment to a significant Jewish future is high.

11. The JPPI report "Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry" was completed and presented to Prof. Gavison on May 21, 2014 at an event with Prof. Gavison and the Chairman of the Jewish Agency, Natan Sharansky. The full report can be found on the Institute's website, www.jppei.org.il

12. The Committee for the Coordination of Activities Between the Government and the World Zionist Organization and the Committee for the Coordination of Activities Between the Government and the Jewish Agency for Israel (the Coordination Institution), see: <http://www.sela.pmo.gov.il/PMO/Secretarial/Comissions/committee25.htm>

13. In this regard, see also the minutes of the April 11, 2005 meeting of the Knesset Committee on Aliyah, Absorption and the Diaspora in which the Institute's then-president Prof. Yehezkel Dror and its current president Avinoam Bar-Yosef presented several recommendations for improving the dialogue between Israel and Diaspora communities. The situation has improved in many areas since that

discussion, but not to a sufficient degree. (http://www.nevo.co.il/law_html/law103/alia2005-04-12.htm).



Worlds Apart: Systems of Jewish Identity in Israel and the Diaspora

Introduction

This expanded section on identity will focus on Jewish identity both in Israel and the Diaspora, especially the largest Diaspora community – the United States. There are significant differences in both the structure of Jewish identity and in the unspoken rules of how Jewish identity is thought about and realized (the "grammar" of Jewish identity). These difference often lead Israeli and American Jews to talk past each other. We begin with a brief discussion of the Jewish identity systems in Israel and the United States. Building upon this analysis, we will then analyze developments in Jewish identity over the past year in the Diaspora and Israel. Regarding the U.S., we will focus upon the highly significant publication: *A Portrait of Jewish Americans: Findings from a Pew Research Survey of American Jews* (October 2013) by the Pew Foundation. In regard to Israel, we will address various legislative initiatives concerning the Jewish identity of the state as well as continuing challenges to the received arrangements of religion and state.

We are choosing to present the Jewish identity models of these two communities because of their polarity; to a certain extent, their models are the negatives of one another. The other Jewish communities, those of Europe, Latin America and the British Commonwealth (currently or formerly – South Africa, Australia, and Canada) locate themselves between these two polar models.

The unity of Jewish collective identity began to unravel with the advent of modernity

Two Major Models of Jewish Identity – the United States and Israel

Jewish Identity in the United States

Contemporary Jewish identity in the United States is a variation of the historical forms of Jewish identity. Three dimensions of Jewish collective identity – ethnic, political-national, and religious – are woven together in the biblical narrative of Jewish history. The people of Israel are a tribe of common descent that achieves a sacred dimension by entering into a covenant

with God. In fulfillment of this covenant, the people enter the Land of Israel and establish a polity. Thus, the biblical narrative assumes that Jewish collective identity will include a political or civic dimension. Until modernity – despite exile – the ethnic, religious, and political dimensions were

The ethno-national element of Jewish identity along with Jewish solidarity forms the basis for "Jewish civil religion"

conceived as inseparable from one another.

The unity of Jewish collective identity began to unravel with the advent of modernity. The first change was the separation of religious identity from civic and national identity. As Jews became citizens of modern Western nation-states, they began to identify – politically and nationally – with their countries of residence, not with a future messianic kingdom. Certainly, from the perspective of the state, they retained their Jewish identity only in connection to religion; they

famously assumed the identity of "Germans or Frenchmen of the Mosaic faith."

National Jewish ethnic identity did not, however, entirely disappear. Instead, it was channeled in ways amenable to citizenship in the new nation-states. The major channel was in helping other Jews prepare themselves for modernity and transition into modern civic equality. This aid took many forms: providing a modern education to Jewish children in Eastern Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East so they could enter the modern economy and integrate into emerging modern states; combating anti-Semitism; assisting immigration and acculturation to the West; and alleviating poverty. This solidarity was pioneered by Jewish self-help organizations such as Alliance Israelite Universelle, ORT, and, ultimately, the Joint Distribution Committee, the American Jewish Committee, and the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League. Eventually, it came to also include protecting and nurturing the Zionist yishuv in Eretz Yisrael and the nascent State of Israel.

Jewish identity in modern Western societies achieved a complex structure. Officially, it consisted of a privatized religious identity. In reality, Jewish identity included an important ethno-national element. This element was depoliticized at first and often disguised as "philanthropy." After the Second World War, as Jews began to feel more secure in their American membership they began to organize politically as an interest group. The emergence of AIPAC is one manifestation of this development.¹

Like the sociologist Jonathan Woocher, we also claim that this ethno-national element of Jewish identity along with Jewish solidarity forms the basis for "Jewish civil religion."² The Jewish civil religion entails transnational Jewish solidarity and the sense of belonging to and promoting Jewish political, economic, and social flourishing (e.g. helping communities in distress, promoting Israel and its causes, advancing Jewish education and continuity). Its major practices involve membership in Jewish organizations, donations to Jewish causes, and mobilization for specific campaigns (e.g. political support for Israel, or, in the past, freeing Soviet Jewry). As a "religion," Jewish civil religion has a sacred aspect and rests upon a feeling of Jewish **sacred** ethnicity. This is in line with biblical and Jewish tradition in which the Jews as an ethno-national entity achieve sacredness through their covenant with God. The "sacredness" of Jewish sacred ethnicity expresses itself in a variety of ways: in the sense of Jewish "chosenness" or specialness, that Jews have special obligations to be moral or fight for justice, and in the normative obligations it imposes – especially regarding Jewish identity itself and continuity – one ought to identify as a Jew! This sense of sacredness is not doctrinal, but rather, is experienced. It does not necessarily entail formal religious belief. Indeed there are Jews who do not believe in God but feel that Jews are somehow special.³ This sense of sacred, normative ethnicity contrasts with what might be termed "descriptive" or "ordinary" ethnicity. This kind of ethnic identity holds that a certain ethnic background (say, Irish, Polish or Italian) is simply a fact about an individual,

one that, in the U.S. today, most people are not ashamed of, and are even proud of. However, it is not very important to them, and it does not, for the most part, incur any special sense of belonging or obligation. And if their children do not feel or identify as Polish, Italian, or Irish, that's fine too. This is the ethnicity of white ethnics described by Richard Alba as being in a "twilight."⁴ For the most part, white ethnics are totally assimilated into the American heartland with very high rates of intermarriage. For some, their ethnic or increasingly multi-ethnic background can be occasionally highlighted "symbolically" or "optionally" in situations in which it can provide "spice," status or interest. It generally does not contain any sacred or normative dimension, and it is sparsely passed on to their children. Ethnic identity among Jews also rests upon such sentiments (Jewish food and Jewish mothers, for example). It goes much further than that however, because Jewish ethnic affiliation is deemed a normative good. Rates of Jewish intermarriage, while alarming to some policy-makers, are low in comparison to other ethnicities.⁵ The sacred, normative character of Jewish ethnic affiliation may explain this. Because the basis of the Jewish civil religion is a sacralized ethnic identity, **it can be symbolized and associated with the Jewish formal religion of the synagogue.**⁶

Sacred ethnicity does not necessarily entail formal religious belief; there are Jews who do not believe in God but feel that Jews are somehow special

At the core of mainstream American Jewish identity, then, there is a civil religion dedicated to Jewish political, economic, and social flourishing. This is what most American Jews, whether Reform, Conservative, Modern Orthodox, or secular have in common. They all affirm the sacred value of Jewish ethnic affiliation expressed in socio-political solidarity and toleration with differing levels of religious practice. The organizational loci of the Jewish civil religion are the large Jewish organizations and the 'mainline' Conservative, Reform, and Modern Orthodox synagogues.

American Jews tend to view democracy, human and civil rights, and pluralism as Jewish religious ideas

This civil religion has *internalized* sacred values. Participation in this Jewish civil religion, with its sacred character, is the real marker of Jewish identity. Since the civil religion itself is sacralized, participation in formal Jewish religious practice and organizations becomes voluntary – a matter of individual

choice and preference as is the case in regard to American (non-Jewish) civil religion. Most American Jews do belong to formal religious organizations or identify with Jewish religious denominations – in part because such belonging signifies the sacred character of Jewish ethnic affiliation, and in part because being Jewish is an official religious designation, and so, expected of them by society at large. But one could be a good Jew if one supported Israel and gave to the UJA,

even if one ate lobster and spent little or no time in a synagogue.⁷

In recent decades, the focus of Jewish civil religion has shifted from exclusive interest in defending against anti-Semitism and anti-Israel activities and in socio-economic advancement to "Jewish continuity," that the new generations should replicate this sacralized ethnic affiliation and solidarity. This new focus has produced a host of educational initiatives (including Israel travel education). Yet, the aim of these programs is not to impart knowledge of Jewish texts and religious practices, but rather, to encourage Jewish ethnic identification and solidarity.

It should be stressed that most American Jews think religious practice ought to be a matter of individual choice and autonomy.⁸ It would seem that this orientation is due, first and foremost, to American "Protestant" assumptions about religion and state – that religion is a matter of private conscience and no state coercion or state establishment of religion should be countenanced. Hence, religious expression in America is, by nature, pluralistic.⁹ In part, because of these historical beginnings, religious belief, practice, and affiliation in the U.S. are conceived of in highly individualistic terms. In the 21st century approximately 40% of Americans practice a different religion than the one they grew up in, that is, they switched their religious affiliation.¹⁰

This assumption has been eagerly taken up by American Jews. As a religious minority, they have been especially supportive advocates of religious freedom and, in the American context, separation of church and state.

Furthermore, Jewish civil religion (like American civil religion) seems to encourage the understanding that the practice of Jewish synagogue or sacramental religion (that is, religion as it is commonly understood) is, for most American Jews, optional, and best left to individual choice and autonomy.

As exemplified in the famous 17th century case of Roger Williams and others, freedom of conscience and religious pluralism in the United States became religious as well as civic ideals. As a result, in general, religion in America goes together with pluralism, civil rights, and democracy.¹¹ This is also true of the American Jewish community. As exemplified in the participation of Rabbi A. J. Heschel and other American Jewish leaders in the civil rights movement, American Jews and their religious leaders tend to view democracy, human and civil rights, and pluralism as not just Jewish, but as Jewish religious ideas.¹²

Israel – National-Political and Religious Jewish Identity

In Israel, Jewish identity is primarily national-political. Jewish identity is extremely important to Israeli Jews, but its significance is radically different from that of Jewish identity to Diaspora Jews, especially in America. First and foremost, for Israelis, Jewishness ensures full membership in the Israeli political and social collectivity. It must be stressed that Israel is a democracy and all of its citizens have equal rights and equal legal access to all benefits of the state and society. Nevertheless, as in other societies, there are informal, social barriers to various social circles, jobs, schools etc.

to certain groups of non-Jews. It is, thus, highly desirable to identify as Jewish. Jewishness confers concrete political, social, and economic benefits such as access to jobs, including in the defense and high tech sectors, and access to fully funded schools, and protects against various forms of intrusion, such as identity checks.¹³

One aspect of Jewish identity that does not at all exist in the Diaspora is the Jewish identity of the state. This was of course reflected in the Proclamation of Independence (the Declaration of the Establishment of the State), which states that [we] "hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the State of Israel." The language, official state holidays and symbols all reflect the Jewish identity of the state as does the Law of Return (1950), which codifies Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people worldwide. In two Basic Laws (which have constitutional status), Israel is defined as a Jewish and democratic state.

The religious dimension of Jewish identity in Israel is organized largely according to a European nation-state model

The religious dimension of Jewish identity and religious life in Israel is organized largely according to a European nation-state model. According to European sociologists of religion such as Grace Davie and Danielle Hervieu-Leger,¹⁴ this model has two aspects: 1) Religious identity is a function of collective national identity; and 2) Religious life and activity is organized around a state religious

organization ("church") which provides religious services for the collectivity. Thus, for Britons, part of being English is belonging to the Church of England. For centuries, Swedish subjects or citizens were inscribed at birth as members in the Swedish Lutheran Church. Only in 1952 did the Swedish Parliament pass a law that permitted one to retain Swedish citizenship while withdrawing membership in the Swedish Church. In such a setup, one does not have to do anything to be an Anglican or Swedish Lutheran. One's mere membership in the English or Swedish community

**Religion
plays
an important
role in
Israeli
national
membership**

makes one automatically into an Anglican or Lutheran. In this model, religious identity is not really a matter of individual choice or conviction; rather, it goes along with one's national, ethnic or political identity. Although the European example of this model was just given, in truth it characterizes most of the

world's societies. Viewed in a global context, it is the American model, which emphasizes religious identity based upon individual choice and conviction, that is exceptional.

According to the European model, the collectivity maintains an institution that ensures its continued religious identity, a state church. The state church and its staff, the clergy, practices religion and even "believes" on behalf of all members of the society. It also provides religious services when they are

needed by the broader population – especially at life cycle events such births, marriages, and deaths. In that sense it is a public utility. It is supported by taxes and it is available to the entire population, like the postal service. Given this role, there is an understandable preference that the state church should reflect, to the extent possible, tradition, history, and religious authenticity.

The Israeli model is clearly within the European paradigm. Jewish Israelis are automatically registered within the population registry in the Ministry of the Interior as of the Jewish religion. When the late writer Yoram Kaniuk wished to be registered as "of no religion" he needed an injunction from the High Court in order to force the Ministry of Interior to accede to his wishes. At the same time, the court denied the petition filed by Prof. Uzi Ornan to be registered as "Israeli" instead of Jewish. In sum, religious identity in Israel comes together with national membership and identity.¹⁵

Similarly, Israel maintains a state religious organization, the Chief Rabbinate, tasked with maintaining the religious identity of the national collectivity. The staff and functionaries of the Chief Rabbinate, especially the municipal and local rabbis whose salary is paid by the state, conduct religious prayers in the central synagogues on behalf of the entire population. Like their counterparts in Europe, they also keep the individual religious prescriptions (*kashrut*, *Shabbat*) and thus they represent the religious character of the national collective. The Chief Rabbinate also provides religious services for the entire population – such as marriage and burial. The phrase *sherutei dat* "religious services"

is well established in Israeli Hebrew. The word "services" (*sherutim*) should be understood as in the sense of "cleaning services" or "office services." For years, the *Histadrut* (the trade union federation), whose members were personally pious or religious to various degrees, maintained a department of "religious services."

Religion, in Israel, is a public utility supported by taxes. As a utility, it is not something one really thinks about, nor is it really an object of personal choice or self-expression. No matter how inefficient or bothersome utilities are, we generally accept them as "the way things are." And in most cases we don't even think about abolishing them or even breaking their monopoly. While there is a significant minority that expresses vehement displeasure with the Chief Rabbinate, the majority of the population seems to (passively) accept the status quo.¹⁶ It is also recognized that insofar as it serves the entire Jewish population it should be organized according to the widest common denominator, that is, in Orthodox fashion, so that even the most devout can benefit from the services it provides. There are, of course, also historical reasons why the Chief Rabbinate is Orthodox, and, in addition, as in Europe, religious institutions are conceived of as something that ought to be historical, traditional, and "authentic."

Religion in Israel, an intrinsic part of the national project, plays an important role in the determination and definition of national membership. This role is in the first place negative: One cannot belong to another religion and be considered a member of the Jewish nationality. This principle was not always obvious – quite

the contrary – but it was ironed out over time. Theodore Herzl's revolutionary project seems to have included a radical re-ordering of Jewish collective identity. It was to be defined entirely by territorial and state boundaries. Those who lived within the boundaries of the Jewish State were to be Jews, while those outside of it were to be part of the nations in which they lived (Frenchmen or Germans, not Jews).¹⁷

This radical Herzlian conception of Jewish identity was rejected by the Zionist movement. The most important and famous statement of the negative importance of religion for Jewish national identity occurred in the Brother Daniel Rufeisen case in which Israel's High Court ruled that as the term "Jew" is understood both by the legislators (who passed the Law of Return) and ordinary people, one cannot be Jewish if one converts to Christianity. This is so even if by Jewish religious law (*halacha*), such a person "who sinned" is still considered a Jew. As a result of this ruling, Rufeisen was registered as being of "no nationality." The High Court and the government of Israel have, on other occasions involving population registration, sustained this conception.

Thus, religion is intrinsic to national identity and the public sphere, and not only in a negative way. According to the Avichai-Israel Democracy

Jewish national secularization is not the idea of the separation of church and state, but subordination of religion to the national principle

Institute Report, *A Portrait of Israeli Jews 2009* (published in 2011), 61% of Israeli Jews “believe that the State of Israel should ensure that public life is conducted according to Jewish religious tradition.”

What, then, is the nature of secularization in Israel? The Israeli state and society think of themselves, roughly, as secular or non-observant. Central spheres of government and social life are clearly independent of religious control, especially the law, the political arena, the economy, the military, and even the state electronic communications media.

Religious control of marriage and divorce irks but is tolerated because Jewish religious endogamy is considered to be in the national interest

At the same time, there are serious departures from any rigorous model of secularism. Israel has a religion that is clearly privileged by the state – Orthodox Judaism. There are areas of law – notably personal status, marriage and divorce – over which the state has delegated control to the clergy. Furthermore, the

state supports Jewish religious education. How to explain this particular pattern, this particular interweaving of secular and non-secular elements? What Jewish national secularization seeks is not the familiar idea of the separation of church and state, but rather the autonomy of the state and the related spheres of the economy and military from religious control, and, on the contrary, **the subordination of religion to the national principle.**¹⁸ The Chief Rabbinate and the Ministry

of Religious Affairs are organs of the state originally designed to accommodate the Jewish religion to the interests of Jewish nationalism (in accordance with the understanding that Jewish nationalism itself is a religious value).

We can now go back and look at some of the anomalies in the Israeli pattern of secularization. First, clerical control of marriage, an inheritance from the Ottoman millet system preserved by Great Britain in all their colonies, has the power of inertia. More importantly, religious control of marriage and divorce irks but is tolerated (at least in part) because Jewish religious endogamy is considered to be in the national interest. It is considered to be an important expression of national solidarity that Jews can and do marry other Jews. A widespread notion in Israel is that it is important for national integration and well-being for the different Jewish social groups (religious and secular, left and right, Ashkenazim and Sephardim) to be able to marry each other.¹⁹ This is expedited by subordinating all the groups to the Jewish religious law of marriage and divorce.

In a similar vein, the state supports religious education because enhanced Jewish religious membership is considered to be enhanced Jewish national membership.

All articulations of Jewish collective identity have at least two components: the religious and the ethno-nationalist. As long as the collectivity remains Jewish, at least in a historical, recognizable way, both components in one fashion or other will persist. The real question involves the relation between the components. This is the real question

dividing Haredi and Zionist (including Religious Zionist) Jews. The Orthodox-Haredi conception of Jewish collective identity includes a strong and salient ethnic or ethno-nationalist conception (which is often very particularist and even xenophobic), however this component is always subordinated to the religious-Halachic component and is entirely regulated by it. The Zionist (including the Religious Zionist) conception does not negate, but persists in maintaining, the religious component. However it serves and is subordinate to the national component.

In regard to religious Zionism, it might be more accurate to state that it constitutes an alternative articulation of Jewish nationalism in which religion serves to qualify or specify Jewish nationalism. Religious Zionism is genuinely nationalistic insofar as it views national fulfillment – a Jewish state – as an intrinsic value and not only as a means of fulfilling other, religious values such as keeping the commandments associated with the Land of Israel (the sabbatical year, tithing). For Religious Zionists nationalist values are of the highest order and justify (to one degree or another) suspension of religiously based behaviors and practices (Torah study or segregation from secular, non-observant Jews). In fact, as their very high participation in IDF elite units and junior officer corps indicates, Religious Zionists are among the most dedicated nationalists of the Israeli Jewish population. Yet, their understanding of the national "substance" differs from that of much of the secular and especially liberal Zionist population. For many Religious Zionists the Jewish people are not a collection of individuals who came together

because of shared language, religion, culture and history, but rather, a sacred, organic entity in which the collective precedes the individual. Similarly, the State of Israel is not a neutral expression of sovereignty and political control, but a realization of Divine social, ethical, and legal ideals and the concrete incarnation of God's kingship in the world.²⁰

Jewish Identity in Europe, the Current and Former British Commonwealth, and Latin America

Jews in all of these countries have full citizenship status and rights and an unmediated relationship with the government. At the same time, in most of these countries, the non-Jewish majority populations have a strong sense of ethnic-national-cultural identity to which Jews do not belong. In regard to

this, these countries have a different structure of collective identity than does the United States. In the United States ethnic-national identity is relatively weak and American identity is largely founded upon commitment to American values, the "American way of life" and American civil religion.²¹ Thus, full American identity is no longer restricted to Protestants who originated in the British Isles but rather to all whites and increasingly to African-Americans, Americans of Asian descent,

Their understanding of the national "substance" differs from much of the secular and especially liberal Zionist population

and Hispanics. Undoubtedly, this inclusive aspect of American collective identity has encouraged Jewish assimilation into the American non-Jewish population and intermarriage.

In those countries in which there is a strong sense of majority (non-Jewish) ethnic national identity, Jewish communities, too, tend to have a strong sense of ethnic-cultural Jewish identity. Non-U.S. English-speaking countries (Canada, Australia, and South Africa)²² have developed strong multicultural orientations in recent decades stressing a mosaic of ethnic-national identities rather than a “melting pot.” Here too, in keeping with the multicultural ethos, the Jews have developed a relatively strong sense of ethnic-national identity. Jewish life in most of these places is often characterized by centralized Jewish community institutions, strong Jewish educational systems with high enrollment rates of Jewish children, strong Zionist movements, and lower intermarriage rates than in the United States.²³

In regard to religion, Jewish communities in Europe, the former and current British Commonwealth, and Latin America have arrangements that are similar to Israel and the European nation-states. In Great Britain and France for example, there are central Jewish religious organizations of an Orthodox-traditional character (The United Synagogue and the Consistoire Central). In both, the Chief Rabbi is always Orthodox and religious services are conducted in central synagogues in traditional-Orthodox fashion. It is always understood that the individuals who might be attending such services need not be Orthodox, and in fact, most of them are not. It is expected that these central Jewish religious organizations provide life cycle services to the entire Jewish population – including marriage (sometimes to non-Jews) and burial.

Developments in 2013-14 in Jewish Identity and Jewish Identification in the Diaspora and Israel

The Pew Report and the State of Jewish Identity in the United States²⁴

The Pew report, *A Portrait of Jewish Americans* (released October 1, 2013) and other studies raise major questions as to whether the pattern characteristic of the American Jewish community discussed above, of continued involvement in the Jewish civil religion and dedication to Jewish "sacred ethnicity," can continue, at least in its current form. In part, the effectiveness of such publically engaged Jewish organizations such as ADL, AIPAC, JFNA, and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations rests upon the fact that Jews and the Jewish community are (or have the image that they are) willing to be mobilized for various political and public causes. The Pew report and other research raises questions as to why Jews are willing to be mobilized for such causes, and whether such willingness will persist. Does it have to do with the nature of contemporary Jewish belonging, identity, and commitment? If so, are these changing or staying the same? If they are changing, in which direction? We ask these questions not so much in terms of the Jewish community's current attitudes and support, but in terms of the possible future trends that the Pew and other studies have revealed. We view these issues as determining part of the socio-cultural infrastructure of American Jewish communal life in general, including the triangular

relationship between Washington, Jerusalem, and the U.S. Jewish community.

The picture that emerges from the Pew report is that a large majority (about 80%) of American Jewish adults report high levels of a sense of Jewish belonging and solidarity.²⁵ However, an emerging group, which is much more highly represented in the younger age cohorts, differs in very significant ways. This second group exhibits a pattern of ethnic identity that is closer to that of "ordinary" or descriptive ethnicity rather than the sacred ethnicity, which was hitherto characteristic of American Jews.

The group that according to the study participates in Jewish civil religion and exhibits a high degree of "sacred" ethnic Jewish solidarity is designated "Jews by religion." These Jews have relatively high rates of in-marriage (64% have a Jewish spouse). 93% are raising their children as Jewish, and

82% say that all, most, or some of their close friends are Jewish. Furthermore, being Jewish is important to them: 90% said that it is very or somewhat important to them (56% said very important). Even more significant, 85% said that they have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people, and 71% indicated that they have a special responsibility to care for Jews in need. Regarding Israel, 76% have an emotional attachment to Israel, and 91% say that caring about Israel is an essential

**Among Jews
by religion,
only 29%
report monthly
attendance (50%
for the general
American public,
and 62% among
Christians)**

or important part of being Jewish. These feelings and attitudes are also backed up by behavior and action. 61% are members of synagogues or other Jewish organizations, and 67% have made a donation to a Jewish organization in the past year.

At the same time, as we have indicated elsewhere,²⁶ "Jews by religion are, in fact, not very religious, in the sense of a belief system and a set of practices that relate to things Divine (God, afterlife, divine worship and religious ritual). In response to the question, "How important is religion in your life?" only 31% (including the Orthodox who are 10%

Among Jews by religion, the Modern Orthodox evince the most commitment to Jewish solidarity and flourishing

of the Jewish population) answered "very important." In contrast, among the general American population, 56% answered that it was very important, and among the population that defined itself as Christian, 69% said it was very important. We find similar numbers in

regard to belief in God. 39% of Jews by religion (including Orthodox) indicated that they are absolutely certain regarding their belief in God (general population 69%, Christian population 78%). Attendance at religious services shows the same pattern: Among Jews by religion, only 29% report monthly attendance (50% for the general American public, and 62% among Christians)²⁷

In other words, U.S. Jews affiliate with religion and belong to Jewish religious organizations, but are not religious in either belief or in practice.²⁸ What

does this mean? What does it mean to be a Jew by religion? We would say that in the majority of cases when Jews say that their religion is Jewish, what they really mean is that their ethnicity is sacred. That is, the Jewish religion is an explicit, adequate symbol for the sacredness of Jewish ethnicity and for the religious, sacred aspect of Jewish civil religion. Thus, for most American Jews, Jewish civil religion goes together with synagogue membership or denominational affiliation.

An interesting illumination of the relationship between the Jewish religion and its practice and between solidarity with the Jewish people, and commitment to its flourishing is presented by a recent article in *Commentary* on "social orthodoxy."²⁹ Among Jews by religion, the Modern Orthodox evince the most commitment to Jewish solidarity and flourishing, that is, to Jewish civil religion and "sacred" ethnicity. Very high numbers indicated that they have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people (100%), that they have a special responsibility to care for Jews in need (87%), have an emotional attachment to Israel (77% very attached), and say that caring about Israel is an essential part of being Jewish (79%). The author, Jay Lefkowitz, a Modern Orthodox lawyer, explains that his religious practice – his donning *teffilin* every morning, his observance of the Sabbath and Jewish holidays, but also his touring of Israel (which he puts into the same category) – engenders and expresses his sense of belonging to the Jewish people. As he puts it, he roots his Jewish "identity much more in Jewish culture, history and nationality" than in religious concepts such as faith, God, the commandments and the like. In

this he says he is a social Orthodox Jew, and he is not alone.

We would suggest that it is not only the Modern Orthodox who link “religious” behavior with Jewish belonging and ethno-national solidarity; American Jews by religion in general do so. Conservative and Reform Jews, though they practice the Jewish religion in somewhat less intense fashion than do Modern Orthodox and hence their Jewish belonging is in general slightly weaker, but the basic code is the same: “religious” behavior, especially membership in synagogues and denominations engenders, expresses, and symbolizes ethno-national belonging and solidarity. This transmutation is able to take place because both the religious sphere and the Jewish ethno-national sphere, for the Jews by religion, share a common characteristic – they are both “sacred.” That is, they carry a transcendent or charismatic character and they engender normative obligations. At the same time, American Orthodox Jews also resemble non-Orthodox Jews by religion in that their conception of “Jewish civil religion” is largely non-religious. This was clearly visible in what they confirmed as essential to Jewishness: “leading an ethical life” (80 %), and working for justice/equality (51 %). Thus, in sum American Jews by religion, whether Modern Orthodox, Conservative, Reconstructionist or Reform mainly view their Jewishness as constituted by a “Jewish civil religion,” which is not religious in content in the conventional sacramental sense (God, faith commandments) yet is experienced as sacred or normative and thus symbolized by religious belonging to synagogues and religious denominations.

Jews of No Religion and Their Significance

One of the central messages of the Pew report is that about 20% of adult Jewish Americans are “Jews of no religion.” In contrast to “Jews by religion,” “Jews of no religion,” overall, lack Jewish connection: They are much more likely to have a non-Jewish spouse (79%); and they are much less likely to raise their children Jewish (67% will not raise their children Jewish vs. 7% of Jews by religion).

Similar results were found in responses to the sentiment that “being part of the Jewish community is essential to being Jewish.” Only one in ten Jews of no religion agreed with that concept. Jews of no religion are less attached to Israel (only 12% are very attached); they belong to Jewish organizations of any kind to a much lesser extent; and they give much less, if at all, to Jewish causes (20%). They are also less likely to have mainly Jewish friends (14% versus 38% for Jews by religion).

Jews of no religion are less attached to Israel: only 12% are very attached

What separates “Jews of no religion” from “Jews by religion” is not religion as it is commonly understood. What separates them is their different relationship to Jewish ethnicity. Jews by religion, as we have seen, share a sense of sacred ethnicity; Jews of no religion have a sense of ordinary or descriptive ethnicity. Jews of no religion are

indeed proud of their Jewishness (83%), however, only 12% said that it was "very important" to them. Most Jews of no religion, as we have seen, do not prioritize passing on their Jewishness to their children, nor do they have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people.³⁰ In other words, Jewish ethnicity for this group is a simple fact about themselves. It is a fact that most are not ashamed of and are even proud of. Thus, the ethnicity of Jews of no religion is very similar to the "twilight" ethnicity of other white ethnics.

There is a strong overlap between the population Pew identified as "Jews of no religion" and Jews who are either intermarried or the children of intermarriage

Another group, which partially overlaps with Jews of no religion or is close to it, are "the Jews of no denomination" (30% of all Jews, 66% of Jews of no religion). Among this group, too, we find very high levels of intermarriage (69%), and only 13% of them reported that being part of a Jewish community is essential to being Jewish. Similarly, only 31% reported that caring about Israel was an

essential part of being Jewish, and only 22% thought being Jewish was important in their lives.

Although Jews of no religion are still very much a minority, their importance will likely grow. While they constitute only 22% of the overall population of Jewish adults, among the Millennials, they constitute 33%. In general, as one descends among age cohorts the percentage of Jews of no religion grows (among the "Greatest Generation," they constitute 7%).

Jews of No Religion and Intermarriage

While many reactions to the revelation that about 1.3 million adult Jewish Americans are Jews of no religion, with low Jewish connectedness and a high(er) rate of intermarriage, were extremely pessimistic with respect to the future of American Jewry, other responses saw cause for encouragement. Some researchers, such as Ted Sasson, have pointed out that the current survey of Jewish Americans gives a much higher number of Jewish Americans than previous surveys – 6.7 million versus 5.5 million in the 1990 NJPS. Sasson argues that part of the increase in the overall number of Jews is caused by the increase in the rate of intermarriage, as well as the increase in Jewish identification among the children of intermarried parents. Furthermore, among the Jewishly identifying children of intermarriage, about half (in age cohorts under 64) identify as Jews of no religion. So, as Sasson puts it: "The increasing portion of Jews of no religion from the older to the younger generation is therefore explained by increasing rates of intermarriage during the 1970s and 1980s and the increasing tendency of young adults from intermarried backgrounds to identify as Jewish."³¹ In sum, according to Sasson, "Jews of no religion" are largely children of intermarried couples who identify as Jews, but who tend not to identify themselves as "Jews by religion." That is, when asked if they are members of the Jewish religion they answer in the negative, but they do say that they are Jewish by ethnicity and ancestry.

Indeed, there is a strong overlap between the population Pew identified as "Jews of no religion" and Jews who are either intermarried themselves

or are the children of intermarriage. 36% of Jews of no religion have non-Jewish mothers. As other studies have shown, the children of intermarriage are very likely to intermarry themselves. According to Pew: "Among married Jews who report that only one of their parents was Jewish, fully 83% are married to a non-Jewish spouse. By contrast, among married Jews with two Jewish parents, 63 % have a Jewish spouse and 37 % have a non-Jewish spouse."

The Pew study further demonstrates the overlap between Jews of non-religion and intermarried Jews in regard to enrolling children in Jewish educational programs, the sense of belonging to the Jewish people, and the responsibility to care for Jews in need.³²

The connection between intermarriage and "Jews of no religion" is intuitive. If one has parents of two different religious backgrounds or faiths, a likely response is a lack of identification and commitment to either faith tradition. This would be especially the case if in the parents' generation such religious commitment was in the first place weak, as often happens in intermarried couples.

If one is the child of two or more ethnic communities and backgrounds, then one will tend to place them all on the same plane. One's Jewish background becomes like one's Irish, British, or Polish (or Chinese or Hispanic) background. That is, one's Jewish ethnic background becomes normalized and starts to resemble other American ethnic backgrounds. It becomes de-sacralized and loses its normative connotation. Thus, among the children of intermarriage, Jewish ethnicity

becomes part of the fabric of American "twilight" and "post-ethnicity"; "symbolic" and "optional,"³³ to be assumed on certain occasions when one chooses (when it contributes interest, spice or status), but without a sacred or normative character.

At the same time, there is a possibility that the overlap of Jews of no religion and intermarriage does not occur because of a causal relation between the two, but because both have a common cause – integration into American society. Since Jews are almost totally accepted into American society, and in almost no sense downtrodden or persecuted, the normative need for solidarity with other Jews tends to disappear. At the same time, acceptance into American society and comfort with non-Jews facilitates intermarriage.

Since Jews are almost totally accepted into American society, the normative need for solidarity with other Jews tends to disappear

Jews are Who/ When/ If/ they Marry

The Pew report's "Overview," divides figures on "Jewish Identity by Generation" (from youngest to oldest: Millennial, Gen X, Boomer, Silent, and Greatest), and contrasts the Greatest Generation's 93% Jewish by religion with the Millennials' **seemingly** eroded 68% Jewish by religion. However a closer look reveals a somewhat different meaning to these figures. The decline by age in the number of Jews by religion does not differentiate between young adults who had one or two Jewish parents. The Millennial population

is actually bifurcated into children of in-marriage and children of intermarriage. The adult children of intermarriage have a very different relationship with religion, and the pattern of intermarrying is passed along and exacerbated in the next generation: Pew data show 83% of adult children with only one Jewish parent are married to non-Jews, compared to 37% of adult children of two Jews. The higher rates of Jews of no religion in the younger age cohorts is due to the higher rates of intermarriage among more recently married Jews.

American intermarriage intersects with delayed marriage: on average, intermarrying Jews marry three years later than in-marrying Jews

The most powerful and accurate predictor of an American Jew's involvement with Judaism is his or her spouse. To an extent not always appreciated, American Jews today are who they marry, and who they marry is connected with when they marry. Religious identification influences marital choices – and marital choices influence

religious identification. New Pew data currently being generated by demographer Steven M. Cohen show shocking differences in the "raising this child as Jewish" rates of the most recently intermarried. For Jews who married during the period 2000-2013, raising the oldest child as a Jew was reported by nine out of ten in-married Jewish men and women, but fewer than one in five intermarried Jews (Josh Nathan-Kazis, "The New Face of Jews Who Marry Out: It's Female," *Forward* 2/21/2014).

For many years, Jews who marry Jews marry earlier than those who marry non-Jews. This occurs for several reasons: first, more traditional Jews marry earlier, and second, single Jews as potential mates are numerically more readily available in college, graduate school, and professional school environments than they are in subsequent work environments. Thus, American intermarriage intersects with delayed marriage. While many American Jewish students are sexually active, only the most religiously observant are likely to regard persons they date as potential life partners. All this contributes to the widespread postponement of what the *New York Times Magazine* has dubbed the five sociological milestones of adulthood: "completing school, leaving home, becoming financially independent, marrying, and having a child" (August 22, 2010).³⁴

This situation produces a paradox that is often overlooked. Looking at the contemporary scene through lenses from past decades, some observers want to "blame" college attendance for intermarriage, but the opposite is true. For American Jews, higher education is ubiquitous, and universities bring Jews together with other Jews in peer relationships denser than most will ever experience again. Once they migrate to diverse cities and workplaces, however, young American Jews often drift into cohabitation. According to recent national research, such living arrangements often bypass "mindful" emotional commitments, one reason why couples who live together and marry later, sometimes much later, have twice the divorce rate of those for whom

engagement precedes cohabitation or marriage. This is also true of marriages across ethnic and religious boundaries, which also tend to end in divorce more often. Here, too, the Jewish case is similar. On average, intermarrying Jews marry three years later than in-marrying Jews, often cohabiting in the interim, and marriages between Jews and non-Jews, like marriages after uncommitted cohabitation, are twice as likely to culminate in divorce.

Perhaps most surprising, compared to habits of the past or to Israeli patterns, is that even after marriage American Jewish couples often postpone starting a family until their careers are better situated or they can move into more capacious living quarters. To put these decisions into a kind of slogan, American Jews don't have families until they have homes with family rooms. However, biological realities have not changed as much as optimistic couples sometimes imagine: Despite improved reproductive technologies, female fertility levels gradually begin to decline around age thirty-two and then drop rapidly after thirty-seven, and couples who delay are more likely to find themselves struggling with unwanted infertility. All of these facts affect the culture of American Jewish attitudes toward intermarriage. Potential Jewish grandparents often view their child's non-Jewish spouse and non-Jewish children as a far better option than no grandchildren at all. Rather than opposing intermarriage, they are relieved to see their children embarking on the creation of their own families.

Implications for the Public and Political Involvement of the Jewish Community

The Pew data (along with that of other studies) seem to raise significant challenges regarding the socio-cultural infrastructure of the public involvement of the Jewish community. The majority of American Jews, especially the older ones, continue the pattern of "sacred" normative ethnicity and Jewish civil religion. What seems to raise challenges is the growing number of "Jews of no religion." As we have seen, they do not share in the Jewish civil religion

and are not committed to sacred ethnicity. Can they form a base for public and political engagement on the part of the Jewish community?

From the data it seems that three options are available to the organized Jewish community and its leadership:

**Three options
are available
to the
organized
Jewish
community
and its
leadership**

1. To find a way to reverse the trends.
2. To find a way of living communal life of a new type, not yet discovered.
3. To have many Jews in the U.S. – possibly even more than today – but a shrinking "Jewish community."

This has implications for Jewish institutions; it makes the need to improve and consolidate institutions even more urgent. It also has implications for Israel, which will likely have less

support in the political-communal sense, even if Jews are still "attached" to it on a personal level. Finally, it has implications for Judaism itself, as it takes us back to a Judaism that is a personal religion rather than a communal expression.

Re-centering Jewishness in American Lives – What is to be Done?

While totally reversing current trends seems very challenging at best, there are steps the American Jewish community can take to improve Jewish connectedness and commitment. Traditional

Some Jewish communal leaders, practitioners, and rabbis report they are giving up attempts to discourage intermarriage

Jews were – and, as the Pew study shows, still are – the most likely to retain all three aspects of American Jewishness – peoplehood, religion, and cultural expressions – and to see them as being closely interconnected. Other segments of the American Jewish community, including Jews of no religion, often

relate to specific aspects of Jewishness: some feel "ethnically" Jewish; some find personal resonance in Jewish music or humor; some have warm memories of particular religious events, such as a Passover seder at a grandparent's home. Outreach efforts that build on these bases are often successful. The demonstrable effectiveness of the Birthright Israel/Taglit program in building on rudimentary feelings of ethnic Jewishness shows that educational interventions are far from wasted. However, it would

be a tragic mistake to divert communal resources sweepingly from "Jews by religion" in an attempt to entice "Jews of no religion" into engagement.

The Jewish engagements of non-Orthodox Jews by religion cannot be taken for granted. Among Reform Jews, for example, 50% of those who are married are married to non-Jews. We find a similar phenomenon among younger Jews by religion. Among Jews by religion who married after 2005, 55% married non-Jews. Thus, in-marriage and Jewish engagement will not happen without thoughtful and well-supported interventions. Jewish connections must be planted and nurtured throughout childhood, the teen years, and well into young adulthood so that this largest segment of the American Jewish community feels Jewishness to be a central component of their lives. The Pew study shows that a Jewish marriage fosters lifelong Jewish connections, but it takes communal educational interventions to increase the likelihood that younger American non-Orthodox Jews will find Jewish friends and Jewish spouses, care about Israel and Jews around the world, and find meaning in their own Jewishness.

Despite the general bifurcation that emerges from Pew's Portrait of Jewish Americans between connected Jews by religion and non-connected Jews of no religion, there are also challenges among "Jews by religion." The low rates of Jewish connectedness among many Reform Jews – and the resulting extraordinarily high rates of intermarriage among their children – are discouraging. Some Jewish communal leaders, practitioners, and rabbis report they are giving up

attempts to discourage intermarriage, and instead treat it as a *fait accompli*.

This defeatist approach is probably the worst possible strategy. Intermarriage is not the random and indiscriminate phenomenon sometimes portrayed by the Jewish outreach industry. Marriage between two Jews is demonstrably influenced by early and continuing educational interventions that are rich in opportunities for peer interaction. High-quality Jewish education (not only in day school settings) that lasts through the teen years, summer camps, college classes in Jewish studies, and Israel trips dramatically increase the likelihood that Jews will marry Jews and create unambiguously Jewish homes.

These interventions are effective largely by socializing young Jews to feel connected to Judaism and to the Jewish people. The Pew report, like most studies before it, makes clear that (1) connecting to a wing of Judaism, and (2) marrying a Jew, make all the difference. These connections are best created through appealing formal and informal educational opportunities for teens and diverse Jewish-connected social opportunities for college students and Jewish adults in their twenties and thirties in every sizeable Jewish locale. The lesson of Birthright Israel's estimable and clearly documented success is not that Israel travel is the one "silver bullet," but that communal will and intelligent, focused interventions can make a difference.

We must realize that moving from a matter of fact, descriptive ethnicity to sacred, normative ethnicity would seem to involve some kind

of conversion experience. It is a change in the very essence of one's Jewishness. Such an intervention would be unlike almost anything major Jewish organizations habitually do. We need to understand the mechanisms that could lead Jews who do not think their Jewishness compels them to act on behalf of the Jewish people to change their mind and begin to take part in its ongoing welfare and continuity. The challenge presented by these Jews is compounded by the fact that the increasing presence of Jews of no religion and Jews of no denomination seems to be the result of the success of Jewish integration into American life. The policy question then becomes: How do we maintain this success while also maintaining Jewish commitment and sense of belonging?

In response to these challenges we should conduct further, mainly qualitative, research to further untangle the relationship between intermarriage and Jews of no religion. Secondly, we should allocate a small amount of resources to pilot programs that encourage the type of identity reconstruction that occurs in conversion experiences.

Birthright-Israel is a program that seems to have an effect even on Jews of no religion and no denomination, that is, on Jews who if they are connected at all are only minimally so. Qualitative research on Birthright-Israel trips has shown

Moving from descriptive ethnicity to sacred, normative ethnicity would seem to involve some kind of conversion experience

that what occurs to participants on such trips is “re-biographing,” that is, participants revise and retell their own biographies. In this retelling, their Jewishness and Jewish identity is ascribed a new and more important significance than it hitherto had.³⁵ The experience of the Birthright tour parallels experience garnered in the feminist and other “identity-politics” movements. In these movements too, activists often undergo a “consciousness raising” experience in which being a women, Black, Hispanic, Gay, or Mizrahi achieves a new and central salience in one’s life, explaining central events, achievements

During the 1990s Israeli-Palestinian intellectuals began to float alternative definitions such as a “Multi-cultural State”

and failures.³⁶ Here too, consciousness raising and the re-biographing it entails have often resulted in new activism and engagement. Thus, the Jewish community should promote new and creative programs that promote consciousness raising and re-biographing for those young Jews who don’t

regard their Jewish ethnic background as normative and sacred, and hence, feel very little sense of belonging, connection, or solidarity with other Jews and with the transnational Jewish community.

Developments in Jewish Identity in Israel

Over the past year, there have been interesting developments regarding Jewish identity in Israel. Some of them have been in accord with the pattern

described above, others have challenged it. Some of these challenges have been connected to the increasingly voiced desire on the part of U.S. and other Diaspora Jews that religious arrangements in Israel better accept and reflect Jewish religious pluralism.³⁷

Initiatives to Modify Basic Laws Concerning the Jewish Character of the State

The first of these developments concerns the Jewish identity of the state. In the initial years, after the Proclamation of the Establishment of the State in May 1948, the Jewish identity of the state was taken for granted. Only in the early 1990s, two Basic Laws, Freedom of Occupation-1992 and Human Dignity and Liberty – 1992, enshrined the “Jewish and democratic” formulation.³⁸ It seems that this formulation was introduced partially in response to the liberal citizenship discourse of the late 1980s and early 1990s, which these two Basic Laws exemplify. The very explicit and formal definition of the state as Jewish was partly responsible. During the 1990s Israeli-Palestinian intellectuals and leaders began to float alternative definitions such as a “Multi-cultural State,” a “Bi-National State,” or a “State of all its Citizens.”³⁹ Continued challenges to the Jewish definition of the state in the ensuing years began to dovetail with globalizing citizenship discourses that separated citizenship from ethnic-national identity (Soysal 1994), and especially the spread of a globalizing human rights regime.⁴⁰ After “Operation Cast Lead” in Gaza during the winter of 2008–2009 and the subsequent Goldstone Report, a perception grew in certain circles that international and some Israeli human rights organizations were engaged in an effort to

delegitimize and ultimately dismantle the State of Israel. This applied not only to the occupation of the West Bank and the interdiction in Gaza, but also to the Israeli state in general.⁴¹

One of the responses to this has been the introduction of a proposed new Basic Law – Israel as the Nation-state of the Jewish People – in the Knesset. The first proposal was introduced in 2011 by MK Avi Dichter (Kadima) and had the support of 39 other Members of the Knesset.⁴² In June 2013 a revised proposal was introduced by MK Yariv Levin, chairman of the governing coalition, and MK Ayelet Shaked of the Jewish Home party. The current bill establishes that the State of Israel is the national home of the Jewish people and that the right to the realization of national self-determination in Israel is reserved solely to the Jewish people. The bill also states that the Land of Israel is the historical homeland of the Jewish People. Subsequent paragraphs anchor Israel's democratic regime, and the law contains a clause stating that the State of Israel will remain committed to the civil (personal) rights of all of its citizens.⁴³

In response to this proposal Minister of Justice Tzippi Livni, the minister in charge of legislation, initiated the formulation of an alternative Basic Law – Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State. As part of this initiative Livni asked Prof. Ruth Gavison to submit a memorandum making recommendations on the advisability of such a law and its precise formulation. Prof. Gavison, seeking input from various constituencies, including Diaspora Jews, asked JPPI to gather input from Diaspora Jewish communities on Israel's Jewish

and democratic character. A short summary of this project is included in the Bonds Between Communities section of this Annual Assessment.

Initiatives Attempting to Loosen Orthodox Rabbinic Control of the Jewish Religion

As shown above, a centralized rabbinate supported by the state both guarantees the religious dimension of collective identity and provides religious services to the population. In the past year, members of the Knesset and leading officials have initiated a number of initiatives to loosen the Orthodox monopoly on religious services and its control of conversion.

Conversion to Judaism in Israel is crucial to both Israeli citizenship and to personal status, specifically, the ability to marry another Jew in a state-recognized religious ceremony. It is crucial to Israeli citizenship because the Law of Return awards Israeli citizenship either to Jews who were born of a Jewish mother, or non-Jews who have at least one Jewish grandparent, or converts to Judaism. In Israel today there is a large population of several hundred thousand immigrants (mainly from the former Soviet Union) who are not Jewish by the standards of Jewish Orthodox religious law (halacha), but are Israeli citizens because they have at least one Jewish grandparent. Some of this (and other) population(s) would be ready to convert to

Other rabbis have been more forthcoming because of the commitment to Israel and the Jewish people these would-be converts express

Judaism, partly in order to marry Jews in a state-recognized framework. Some rabbis in the rabbinate have been reluctant to convert these individuals or recognize their conversions (even if conducted by official conversion courts!) because of their non-Orthodox lifestyles. Other rabbis have been more forthcoming **out** of national considerations – i.e. it is not healthy to have a large Israeli-Jewish oriented population excluded from full Israeli-Jewish identity – and because of the commitment to Israel and the Jewish people that these would-be converts express (they

Influential Religious Zionist rabbis fear allowing converts in a non-controlled manner would sully or damage holiness or “chosenness”

speak Hebrew, serve in the IDF, and celebrate Jewish holidays). A bill proposed by MK Elazar Stern of Kadima and other members of Knesset would allow local municipal and regional rabbis to convene special rabbinic courts to effect conversions.

The bill has passed an initial vote and was passed by the Knesset Committee on Constitution, Law, and Jurisprudence. It is due to come up for final votes in the plenum. The chief rabbis, in the meantime, have announced their opposition to the bill, and the Jewish Home party, an important party in the coalition, has also voiced its opposition. Opposition not only stems from Haredi circles and those close to them – i.e. the chief rabbis, but also from Religious Zionist circles. Influential

Religious Zionist rabbis fear that allowing converts in a non-controlled manner would sully or damage the holiness or “chosenness” of the Jewish people who are embodied in the State of Israel.

The second initiative is the Sharansky Western Wall compromise. Natan Sharansky presented a plan at the beginning of April 2013, according to which the Western Wall (*Kotel Maaravi*) and its current plaza would be extended to include an area south of the Mugrabi Bridge (i.e., the area around Robinson’s Arch), where a section would be built to accommodate non-Orthodox Jewish practice, including mixed gendered, egalitarian prayer.⁴⁴ This plan has yet to substantively move forward, however, Minister of Religious Affairs Naftali Bennett has effected the construction of a prayer area adjacent to the southern part of the Western Wall in which egalitarian and non-Orthodox services do take place.

Similarly, starting on Jan. 1, 2014, four Reform regional council rabbis began receiving salaries from the state, just like their Orthodox counterparts. This arrangement came into effect 18 months after the state agreed to do so, following the petition of the Reform Movement and of Reform Rabbi Miri Gold to the Supreme Court in its capacity as the High Court of Equity.⁴⁵

These developments are interesting because they maintain the connection of religion to state and sustain the “public utility model” of the state religious system. Yet, at the same time, they make this organization more inclusive, more humane, and more egalitarian.

Hitchadshut Yehudit (Jewish Renewal)

In February 2013, MK Ruth Calderon, created quite a stir when she taught a passage of Talmud during her maiden speech before the Knesset. Dr. Calderon, who is not Orthodox, is the founder and director of the Alma College – Home for Hebrew Culture, which specializes in the teaching (to adults) of contemporary Hebrew and traditional Jewish texts. Thus, the phenomenon of *Hitchadshut Yehudit* (Jewish Renewal) entered the public eye for the first time. The attention directed at this phenomenon was strengthened by the March 2014 publication by the Jewish Funders Network of the *Greenbook: Guide to Intelligent Giving – Hitchadshut Yehudit – Jewish Renewal in Israel*.

The phenomenon of *Hitchadshut Yehudit*⁴⁶ refers to "the phenomenon of programs that offer Jewish Israelis opportunities for learning, cultural expression, identity exploration, spirituality and prayer, and social action – all explicitly based on Jewish values, texts and traditions, and infused with the principles of pluralism and autonomy."⁴⁷ It is claimed that secular Israeli Jews are re-appropriating traditional Jewish texts and practices and incorporating them into non-Orthodox life through such programs. On this basis it is further claimed that young secular Israeli Jews are increasingly taking ownership of their Jewish identities.

Hitchadshut Yehudit involves "an amalgam of hundreds of programs and organizations with diverse political and ideological commitments, multiple approaches and varied methodologies –

all operating in a wide range of settings. It touches Israelis in schools, in the army, in community centers and public spaces, on the internet and through the media, and in the study halls of learning programs."⁴⁸ Despite all this, it is hard to gauge what real impact these programs have had, or may have in the future.

The Greenbook notes that although the phenomenon is very Israeli it does "bear the influence of Diaspora conceptions of Jewish identity and the field still depends upon funding outside of Israel." This resemblance to Diaspora conceptions of Jewish identity is the result of the fact that for the *Hitchadshut Yehudit* activists Jewish identity is not only a function of collective national identity, but is also a matter of personal choice, appropriation, and ownership.

Simply put, Israeli Jewish identity is dynamic. While it does reflect historical patterns such as regarding religion as a public utility, yet at the same time, at the edges at least, it is adopting and adapting patterns and orientations that come from American Diaspora. Does this presage greater understanding and harmony between the two communities? Only time will tell.

Endnotes

1. Along with feeling secure, it seems that the guilt that American Jews felt for having feared to use their influence on behalf of European Jews during the Holocaust also played a role.
2. Jonathan Woocher, *Sacred Survival: The Civil Religion of American Jews* (1987.) See also the review of Jonathan Sarna in *Commentary*, December 1987. The concept of civil religion comes from Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Du Contract Social* (1762.) Robert Bellah famously applied it to American public life, "Civil Religion in America," *Daedalus*, 96, 1967, p. 1-21.
3. The above section is also to be found in Shlomo Fischer, "Implications of the Pew Report for the Public and Political Involvement of the Jewish Community," in The Jewish People Policy Institute, *The Conference on the Future of the Jewish People -2014: Background Policy Documents..* (Jerusalem, 2014)
4. Richard Alba, *Italian Americans: Into the Twilight* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1985.)
5. Richard Alba, "The Twilight of Ethnicity among American Catholics of European Ancestry," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 454, 1981.
6. Our understanding of Jewish civil religion thus differs from Woocher's who argued that it was held by people removed from traditional Jewish religion.
7. The current controversy regarding the membership of J Street in the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations illustrates this nicely. Membership in this umbrella body has become a symbol of membership in the Jewish community as a whole. Those who reject J Street's membership do so on the grounds that it is insufficiently loyal to the Jewish people because it pursues lobbying in Washington which is at variance with policy of the Israeli government.
8. Jewish People Policy Institute, *Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry: A JPPI Report*, 2014.
9. See the correspondence between President Thomas Jefferson and the Danbury Baptist Association, 1801-1802.
10. Robert Putnam and David Campbell, *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us* (NY, 2010.)
11. David Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization*, (Agincourt, Ca. 1978,) S.N. Eisenstadt and Bernhard Geisen,, "The Construction of Collective Identity," *European Journal of Sociology* (36:1,) 1995, 72-102.
12. Jewish People Policy Institute, *Jewish and Democratic: Perspectives from World Jewry: A JPPI Report*, 2014. See Shlomo Fischer, "American Jews are Protestants, Israeli Jews are Catholic's," <http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/american-jews-are-protestants-israeli-jews-are-catholics/>.
13. It also the case that certain Jewish groups have in the past and to a certain extent today suffered from social, informal discrimination.
14. Grace Davie, "Is Europe an Exceptional Case," *The Hedgehog Review*, 8(1-2,) 2006, p. 23-34. Danielle Hervieu-Leger, "Religion and Sozialer Zusammenhalt in Europa," *Transit: Europäische Revue*, 26,2004 p. 101-119. Jose Casanova, "Rethinking Secularization," *The Hedgehog Review*, 8(1-2,) 2006 p. 7-22.
15. Tomer Zarchin, "Yoram Kaniuk Can Register as of no Religion," *Haaretz*, October 2, 2011; Ravital Hovel, "Supreme Court: the Existence of an Israeli Nationality has not been Proven," *Haaretz*, October 2, 2013.
16. According to the Avichai-Gutman *A Portrait of Israeli Jews 2009*. " Roughly half of the respondents believe that civil marriage should be introduced in the country, outside the rabbinate (51% answered "yes, absolutely yes," or "perhaps yes".) However, only 20% said that they would avail themselves of such marriage. According the "Jerusalem Institute for

Market Research 16.7% of the population married outside of Israel and 8.4% engaged in common law arrangements (הסכם זוגיות).

17. Indeed Herzl did not write this explicitly but it is definitely possible to interpret Herzl's writings in this fashion. The case of his son, Hans supports this reading. Hans Herzl converted to Christianity but claimed that he is Jewish in terms of nationality. In this, he argued, he continues the Zionist conception of his father. Therefore, he rejected the criticism of those who claimed that by converting he stained his father's memory. See Yigal Eilam, *Judaism as Status Quo: The 'Who is a Jew Polemic of 1958 as an Illumination of Religious-Secular Relations in Israel* (Tel Aviv 2000) (Hebrew,) p.77.
18. In this sense, Zionist-Israeli secularization resembles that of Kemalist-Turkish secularization. In Turkey, since the founding of the secular Republic of Turkey in 1922, there is not separation of religion and state. On the contrary, religion, that is, Islam, is integrated into the state and controlled by it. This is accomplished by the Directorate (or Presidency) of Religious Affairs, basically, a government ministry which trains Imams and sets doctrine in accordance with the interests of the state.
19. Ever since the classic study by the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* (Boston, 1969,) we know that social groups connect by exchanging women, that is, by marrying each other. (This idea was expressed vividly by Shechem and Hamor in the Biblical story of the rape of Dinah.)
20. Shlomo Fischer, "Continuity or Turning Point: The Torah Stat, Citizenship and the Origins of Radical Religious Zionism," Zeev Shavit, Orna Sasson-Levi, Gai Ben-Porat (edt.,) *Points of Reference: Changing Identities and Social Positioning in Israel*, Hakibbutz HaMeuchad and Van Leer Institute, Tel Aviv, 2014. Shlomo Fischer, "Self-Expression and Democracy in Radical Religious Zionist Ideology," Ph.D dissertation, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2007.
21. See for example Seymour Martin Lipset, *The First New Nation: The United States in Historical and Comparative Perspective..*(New York, 1967)
22. The UK had a strong multi-cultural orientation. However in recent years there has been a retreat from this policy. See Prime Minister David Cameron's remarks in February, 2011 that "multiculturalism has failed,"<http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/the-staggers/2011/02/terrorism-islam-ideology>.
23. "Selected Indicators of World Jewry," *Annual Assessment 2012-2013*, Jewish People Policy Institute. One exception to this are the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe. Here, decades of communist rule and the small size of the Jewish communities have made for very small and weak communities and systems of Jewish education and very high rates of intermarriage. The Jewish community of Germany, composed as it is of Jews from the former Soviet Union, has similar characteristics. (See the article on Eastern European Jewish communities below, "Twenty-five Years since the Fall of the Iron Curtain".)
24. This section is an abridgement of two papers that the Jewish People Policy Institute previously published on the Pew Report: Shlomo Fischer "Implications of the Pew Report for the Public and Political Involvement of the Jewish Community," http://jppi.org.il/uploads/Implications_of_the_Pew_Report_for_the_Public_and_Political_Involvement_of_the_Jewish_Community.pdf and Shlomo Fischer, "Who are the 'Jews by Religion' in the Pew Report," <http://jppi.org.il/news/146/58/Who-are-the-%ef%bf%bdJews-by-Religion-%ef%bf%bd-in-the-Pew-Report/>.
25. Among the younger age cohorts of this group as well, some of these components, such as in-marriage and level of organizational affiliation is weakening. See below.

26. Fischer, "Who are the Jews by Religion"
27. For further data supporting these claims please see "Who are the Jews by Religion."
28. Cf. Steven Cohen and Lauren Blitzer, *Belonging without Believing: Jews and their Distinctive Patterns of Religiosity- and Secularity*, The Florence G. Heller JCC Association Research Center 2008..
29. Jay P. Lefkowitz, "The Rise of Social Orthodoxy: A Personal Account," *Commentary*, 2014.
30. (42% have a strong sense of belonging vs. 85% for Jews by religion.)
31. Theodore Sasson, "New Analysis of Pew Data: Children of Inter marriage Increasingly Identify as Jews," *Tablet*, November 11, 2013, <http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-news-and-politics/151506/young-jews-opt-in>.
32. See "The Implications of the Pew Report for the Public and Political Involvement of the Jewish Community." http://jppi.org.il/uploads/Implications_of_the_Pew_Report_for_the_Public_and_Political_Involvement_of_the_Jewish_Community.pdf.
33. David I. Hollinger, *Post-Ethnic America: Beyond Multi-Culturalism* (NY, 2006); Herbert J. Gans (1979): Symbolic ethnicity: The future of ethnic groups and cultures in America , *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2:1, 1-20 , Mary C. Waters, 1996 "Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only? In *Origins and Destinies: Immigration, Race and Ethnicity in America*, Sylvia Pedraza and Rumbaut, Ruben, 444-454. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Press.
34. Robin Marantz Henig, "What is it About Twenty-Somethings," *New York Times Magazine*, August 22, 2010.
35. Shaul Kelner, *Tours That Bind: Diaspora, Pilgrimage and Israeli Birthright Tourism*, New York: NYU Press, 2010.
36. Nissim Mizrach, "The Iron Cage of Identity Politics," *Symposium in Honor of the Retirement of Prof. Sami Smooha*, University of Haifa, December 16, 2013.
37. This demand was voiced with great energy by some of the participants in the *Conference on the Future of the Jewish People*, Glen Cove New York, March 12, 2014. See Shmuel Rosner, "Jewish and Democratic Perspectives from World Jewry," http://jppi.org.il/uploads/Jewish_and_Democratic_Perspective_from_World_Jewry.pdf.
38. "The purpose of this Basic Law is to protect human dignity and liberty, in order to establish in a Basic Law the values of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state."
39. Rouhana, Nadim. *Palestinian Citizens in an Ethnic Jewish State: Identities in Conflict*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997.
40. Yasmin Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Post-National Membership in Europe* (Chicago, 1994.)
41. See *The Annual Assessment 2010*, The Jewish People Policy Institute, Jerusalem pp. 162-165.
42. This bill was one of several proposed bills aimed at limiting the de-legitimizing effect of international and Israeli human rights and extreme left wing political organizations. The vast majority of these proposals did not pass. See *The Annual Assessment 2011-2012*. Jewish People Policy Institute.
43. Yonatan Liss, "The Nation-State Law of the Likud and the Jewish Home Party." *Ha'aretz*, June 25, 2013.
44. *Annual Assessment 2012-2013*, Jewish People Policy Institute. Pp. 203-206.
45. <http://www.jpost.com/Jewish-World/Jewish-News/Israeli-government-pays-salaries-of-4-Reform-rabbis-336788>
46. The Israeli term "Hitchadshut Yehudit" has a different resonance than the term "Jewish Renewal." in

North America. There, it tends to refer to a liberal stream of Judaism often characterized by neo-hassidic spirituality, experimental ritual, and new-age undertones. In the Israeli context, “Hitchadshut Yehudit” is a much broader term. In order to differentiate between the North American and the Israeli resonances attached to the term, we have chosen to use the Hebrew phrase throughout to refer to the Israeli phenomenon (Claire Goldwater, *Greenbook: Guide to Intelligent Giving – Hitchadshut Yehudit – Jewish Renewal in Israel*, 2014. P. 3)

47. Claire Goldwater, *Greenbook: Guide to Intelligent Giving – Hitchadshut Yehudit – Jewish Renewal in Israel*, 2014. P. i.

48. Ibid.



Burden Sharing and the Haredim

On March 12, 2014 the Knesset passed, on its third reading, Amendment 19 to the Military Service Law, which aims to widen the participation of Ultra-Orthodox young men and yeshiva students in military and civilian national service. This amendment also aims to promote their integration into the working population. On April 17, 2014, the Ministerial Committee on Burden Sharing in Military Service set concrete steps for the amendment's implementation and follow up. These were given the force of a Cabinet resolution. Under the new arrangement, the amendment will take full effect on July 1, 2017, following an adjustment period. When in full force, the military or civilian national service inductees will number 5,200 a year (two thirds of the age cohort according to current figures). Until then, yeshiva students will be able to defer their enlistment and receive an exemption at age 22, as long as the yeshivot meet their recruitment targets, which will be implemented according to the mandated schedule: in 2014, a total of 3,800 Haredim are expected to join the IDF or national service; in 2015, 4,500; and 5,200 in the years that follow. The law allows yeshiva heads to determine

which scholars should remain exempt, but also states that draft evaders will be subject to arrest if quotas are unmet. The comprehensive exemption granting all Haredi yeshiva students aged 22 and over who join the workforce is of particular significance.

Background: The History of the Exemption (The Arrangement for Deferral of Army Service by Yeshiva Students)

Compulsory military service applies under the Security Service Law (Combined Version) of 1986. According to this law, Israeli citizens are subject to conscription at age 18 unless granted an exemption. Exemption was the subject of lively debates between yeshiva heads and the political leadership in the early days of the state. The executive committee of the Center for Service to the People considered the conscription of yeshiva students, and in March 1948 authorized a temporary army service deferment for yeshiva students whose occupation was Torah study.¹ Among the main intentions leading to approval

of this arrangement were: preserving national unity through compromises that helped assuage Haredi objections to the state's creation; and an attempt to salvage the Torah world, which was regarded as having cultural and historical importance for Jewish society and had been decimated during the Holocaust. Chief Rabbi Y.A. Halevy Herzog, in the winter of 1949, wrote to Ben-Gurion: "After appropriate study and penetrating inspection from the viewpoint of our holy Torah's existence after the terrible Holocaust in which tens of thousands of yeshiva

From 1970 through 1988, a number of Haredi conscription cases were brought before the High Court of Justice, which rejected all of them

students were killed in Europe, their heads and their scholars (may God avenge their deaths), only a small remnant of them remains, one from every city and no two from a single family... It is my opinion that we should release them from military obligation in order to allow these few to continue to study our holy Torah."²

The political reversal of 1977 and Agudat Yisrael's joining the coalition led to the removal of a number of restrictions regarding the draft.³ From 1970 through 1988, a number of Haredi conscription cases were brought before the High Court of Justice, which rejected all of them. In 1988, the Cohen Commission submitted its recommendations, whose essence was that a three percent limit be placed on the

draft age cohort entering the "Torah study as occupation" track. The commission also recommended reevaluating the list of yeshivot recognized for the purpose of draft deferments. Its recommendations were not implemented, although it represents an important landmark in the process because it was the first declaration by a government body that the situation must change, and it proposed the first detailed plan for doing so.⁴

One case brought to the High Court in 1988 was: HCJ 910/86 – Major (res.) Yehudah Resler vs. the Minister of Defense. It was dismissed on the grounds that the scope of the exemption had not yet reached unreasonable levels that would significantly harm national security. Despite its dismissal, the court, for the first time, affirmed that the matter was subject to judicial review, based on the importance in principle of the exemptions and service deferments given to yeshiva students.⁵

The Israeli Commission, set up in 1992 by then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, submitted its report in 1995. Among its main findings: the need to establish criteria for recognizing Torah yeshivot and for their study format; to expand the yeshiva students' obligations (the requirement to submit a declaration when joining the "Torah study as occupation" arrangement; increasing the frequency of younger yeshiva students' appearances at IDF recruitment offices, etc.); the demand for greater commitment from the yeshiva heads; to expand the scope and manner of oversight, enforcement, and punishment when the arrangement is violated; and anchoring

the essence of the arrangement in regulations under the Security Service Law.⁶ Most of the Israeli Commission's recommendations were implemented.⁷

In 1998, in the case 3267/97, Rubinstein vs. the Minister of Defense, the High Court ruled that the defense minister had wrongly applied the "Torah study as occupation" arrangement since it was not authorized under the law. The court explained that an exemption for an entire population group could not be based on an administrative decision, that the Knesset was the proper authority for determining arrangements for service deferments, and sent the sides off to reach a political compromise that would be pass legal muster and be acceptable to the public.⁸ Following the court's ruling, Ehud Barak, who was serving as both prime minister and defense minister, appointed the Tal Commission (headed by retired Supreme Court Justice Zvi Tal) to formulate an appropriate arrangement. Proposed legislation, based on its recommendations, was attached to the commission's report. In July 2002, the Knesset approved a draft deferment law that followed the Tal Commission's recommendations and laid out the eligibility conditions for military deferments and exemptions, and recognized the status of the Hesder yeshivot. One of the main emphases of the Tal Law was to correct the distortion in the "Torah study as occupation" arrangement, which locked the Haredi community out of the workforce.⁹ After the law was passed, a number of petitions seeking to revoke it on constitutional grounds were brought to the Supreme Court.

Even though these petitions were rejected, the court again emphasized that the Tal Law's constitutionality is conditioned on its fulfilling its goals in practice. In July 2007, the full Knesset decided to extend the law's validity until 2012.

In February 2012, the Israeli Supreme Court ruled that the Tal Law could not be further extended. At this point, the number of those with draft deferments was estimated to have reached 54,000.¹⁰ In May 2012, the Commission for the Promotion of Burden Sharing (chaired by MK Yohanan Plesner) was established to develop recommendations

on the issue. In July 2012, the prime minister disbanded the commission after the Yisrael Beitenu and Habayit Hayehudi representatives quit it. In March 2013, a ministerial commission was established, chaired by Yaacov Peri, that submitted two proposed laws. This led to the creation of the Shaked Commission (headed by MK Ayelet Shaked of Habayit Hayehudi) to consider the proposed law on burden sharing in military service, civilian service, and the workforce, and to resolve the yeshiva students' status. Amendment 19 to the Military Service Law, passed in March 2014, deals with the question of yeshiva student draft deferments.

In February 2012, the Israeli Supreme Court ruled that the Tal Law could not be further extended

The Numbers: Itemized Reasons for Non-Enlistment among the Jewish Male Population (percent)

Year	Reason				
	Medical exemption	'Torah study is occupation'	Living overseas	Criminal record, draft threshold*, and others	Total
2005	6.6	8.4	4.1	4.1	23.2
2006	7.4	9.6	3.9	4.2	25.1
2007	7.3	11.2	4.2	4.8	27.5
2008	6.3	10.9	4.2	4.3	25.7
2009	5.0	13.0	3.0	3.4	24.4
2010	6.0	13.0	3.0	3.2	25.2

* The draft threshold is determined according to qualitative and medical factors and is intended to identify at an early stage those with low personal data whose chances of integrating into army service are very low | **Source:** State Comptroller's Report for 2011, IDF Service by Haredim, May 1, 2012

IDF Human Resources Department Data on the Cumulative Extent (including those holding draft deferments for the year in question) of those with "Torah study as Occupation" Draft deferments.

Year	Extent (approx.)
2003	39,200
2004	41,900
2005	45,500
2006	48,500
2007	52,000
2008	54,000
2009	58,000
2010	63,000
Following Jan. 2011 government decision	54,000

Source: State Comptroller's Report for 2011, IDF Service by Haredim, May 1, 2012

What the Controversy is About: Gaps Between World Views and Conceptions of Identity (Jewish vs. Israeli)

The paper "Israel Faces the Ultra-Orthodox Challenge – Why Now and What Next?" included in last year's Annual Assessment examined the struggles between the wider Israeli society and the Haredi community and the specific reasons they have surfaced in recent years. This struggle has its roots in different identity narratives within Israeli society: on one side, the secular and national-religious communities, who grew up on Zionism, "the Jewish people's struggle to exist in its own land," and on principles of the people's army. On the other side, the Haredi community, which consciously chose (there are those who say they had no alternative) to integrate into the state's mechanisms and to try to influence them from within, while also maintaining economic, social,

and cultural separation. Each seeks to preserve its distinctive identity and to prevent, through official or other means, its subordination to a broader, more general identity.

"The Yeshivot and Kolels are the State of Israel's Iron Dome"

The construction of Jewish identity among Israel's Haredim has several levels. One level is a continuation of the traditional notion of Jews as an ethno-religious group for which the dominant and organizing factor is religion and religious law – halacha. However, as research on the Haredim has found,¹¹ the modern era has seen the addition of another level, the awareness of alternatives, which has resulted in self-awareness. The awareness of traditional factors in alternative modern constructions of Jewish identity – education, religious reform, nationalism, etc. – made traditional Judaism "Orthodox" and Haredi. In the modern era, part of the observant-Jewish identity construct is not only a continuation of traditional patterns but also the rejection of modern alternatives and the waging of an ideological war against them. The Haredi "community of scholars" is a special development within this trend, one almost without precedent in Jewish history.¹² Torah study was certainly a supreme value within traditional Jewish society, but the vast majority of Jewish men worked for a living. There was a thin echelon of "sacred vessels" – rabbis, chazanim, ritual slaughterers, etc. – and an even thinner one of students whose occupation was Torah study and who were dependent on their parents or parents-in-law (mainly among the wealthiest

and most powerful). The only quasi-precedent is the Ashkenazi "Old Yishuv" in 19th century Jerusalem (and in the other holy cities – Hebron, Tzfat, and Tiberias) who dealt in holy work – Torah and prayer – "on behalf of" their brethren in the Diaspora from whom they, in turn, received financial support.¹³

The modern-day Israeli "community of scholars" is a result of the special conditions in the State of Israel. In Israel, Jewish nationalism is not solely an ideological idea, but a living reality. In order to deal with this reality, Haredi society has not only developed an ideological opposition to it, but also a parallel society separate from the mainstream of Zionist Israeli society and those who inhabit it. The "Torah study as occupation" arrangement and the exemption from military service on one hand, and the prohibition of work on the other became a key to building a Haredi society that is separate from the secular and Zionist Israeli society. In this way, Torah study as the exclusive occupation of adult males is at the ideological heart of Haredi identity. Certainly, Haredi society is undergoing demographic, economic, and other changes that are causing adjustments and adaptations on the practical level, but from an ideological, symbolic and identity perspective, the commitment to studying

The Haredim have developed a parallel society separate from the mainstream Zionist Israeli society

Torah as an exclusive occupation remains very high, perhaps even absolute. In order to safeguard it, the Haredim offer a range of claims and explanations.

The main argument presented by Haredi leaders in support draft exemptions relates to the value of Torah study and the deep belief that "study protects the Jewish people and without it, the Jewish people would have long been exterminated from the stage of history, not only by assimilating spiritually but by disappearing physically."¹⁴ This belief is founded on Biblical verses, texts by Torah

sages, and statements by rabbis and kabbalists.

These further claim that the community of scholars in Israel has changed over the generation and that "All sectors of the population who are unable to devote their lives to Torah study have extolled those who learn Torah and have

supported them knowing that they are serving the Jewish pinnacle."¹⁵ The Haredim do not consider yeshiva study an evasion of army service, but rather, as willing service in the people's spiritual army. This point has embedded a feeling among Haredi youth that they must fill yeshiva seats in quality and quantity, and this has made it difficult to reach compromises and arrangements to limit the number of those receiving exemptions.

Another claim, which often arises indirectly, is the fear of negative cultural and social influences

on Haredi youth. Haredi rabbis and community leaders express concern that the army's "permissive and extreme" atmosphere exposes Haredi youth to spiritual and psychological harm, and to influences that are fundamentally different from, or completely contrary to, the education and upbringing Haredi society offers. Rabbi Zvi Pesach Frank included this argument in his demand that yeshiva students be released from IDF service: "And it is well known that most of those among the God-fearing who go into the army whole, come out stripped and scarred. None of them is unscathed."¹⁶ At the same time, there is a sociological motivation for this assertion – the desire to preserve separateness from the national-secular society by cutting themselves off from the army and the workplace.

On the margins of Haredi society, and for the most part under the Israeli media's radar, there also exists an anti-Zionism ideological position, a negation of Israel's legitimacy. In the view of these movements, which are based on the "the three vows" midrash in the Babylonian Talmud, the prohibition of the establishment of a sovereign national entity in the Land of Israel, which represents a revolt and heresy against God. On the practical level, there is a difference between the attitudes toward the State of Israel and toward the Zionist movement. In order to accommodate the complexity, an ideology has been developed that supports pragmatic political participation to meet needs and goals, along with isolation in other areas. The rejection of IDF service on principle is an inseparable part of this ideology. A 1992 editorial by Rabbi Yisrael Eichler, "The Haredi Camp," reads:

"You are not members of our faith and we do not belong to your people. You are foreign occupiers in the land of our Fathers and your state is not our state. Your flag is not our flag.... Perhaps we need to ask Bolshevik Knesset members this: 'What do we have to do with you? Would you serve in a Haredi army if the government were in our hands?... By what right do you require a Haredi Jew to join the army of the secular state?'"¹⁷

The Suckers' Narrative

In the face of Haredi claims, opposition is growing among the Israeli public – secular and national-religious alike. They find it difficult, for a number of reasons, to accept the current exemption arrangements yeshiva students enjoy. The most important of these are the question of equal burden sharing and growth, over the years, in the scope of the exemptions. These objections are exacerbated by resentment of the religious community's increasing power and influence in the Israeli public arena. Detailed extensively in last year's Annual Assessment, they are reviewed here in brief.¹⁸

The main claim that arises against the demand for the exemption is the "suckers' narrative." The Trachtenberg Commission for Socio-Economic Change, in its final October 2011 report, articulated many of the ideas and feelings that drove Israel's social protest of 2011 (and persist still). The report related to the tensions and sensitivities between the various sectors of Israeli society, and gave special emphasis to the integration of the Haredi sector: "Parts of the secular public believe that the Haredim are not interested in working but are

happy to live at the taxpayers' expense under the guise of Torah study, and are also not prepared to serve in any way the society as a whole."¹⁹ There is a growing feeling among the Israeli middle class that the increasing tax burden falls mostly on its shoulders, and that it is being required to maintain an entire community that does not participate in burden sharing – either economically or socially – but rather enjoys benefits on the back of the taxpayers.

A number of further complications arise from this debate:

1. Expansion of Haredi military exemptions in recent decades has occurred simultaneously with an increase in the Haredi community's influence over the Israeli public sphere.
2. Erosion of the IDF's prestige: An IDF Human Resources Division report points to a decline in new recruits' enlisting in combat roles, and a decline in the number of candidates for the draft who end up joining the army.²⁰ The degree to which service in an elite unit contributes to civilian life and to social mobility has also diminished, while the value of the alternatives – academic study or a civilian career – has gained momentum.
3. The perpetuation of Haredi poverty and the need for government funding: There is a perception among the wider public that the draft exemptions perpetuate poverty in Haredi society because they provide incentive to remain in the yeshivot and rely on government support rather than seeking employment.

Two Dimensions of the Enlistment Policy

The Declarative Dimension: Sharing the Burden Equally

The main and declared goal of the new legislation is to formalize yeshiva students' army service. Explanatory notes to the legislation refer to the Supreme Court and emphasize that its central purpose is equality in sharing the burden of army service:

Haredi leaders are encouraging those who may be hurt by the decision to take to the streets

"The first purpose is to anchor in law an arrangement for deferring service by yeshiva students for whom Torah study is their occupation and who seek to study in yeshivot. The second purpose is to bring greater equality in the division of the military service burden within Israeli society, in the sense

that more men from the Haredi community will ultimately do army service (regular or special) or at least will do national service [...] The fourth purpose is to provide a phased solution to the difficulties that have existed in the service-deferment arrangement for yeshiva students, and to do so in a gradual and careful way on the basis of broad agreement and without coercion (which is not effective) (Paragraph 54 of the opinion of the President of the Supreme Court, Justice A. Barak)"²¹

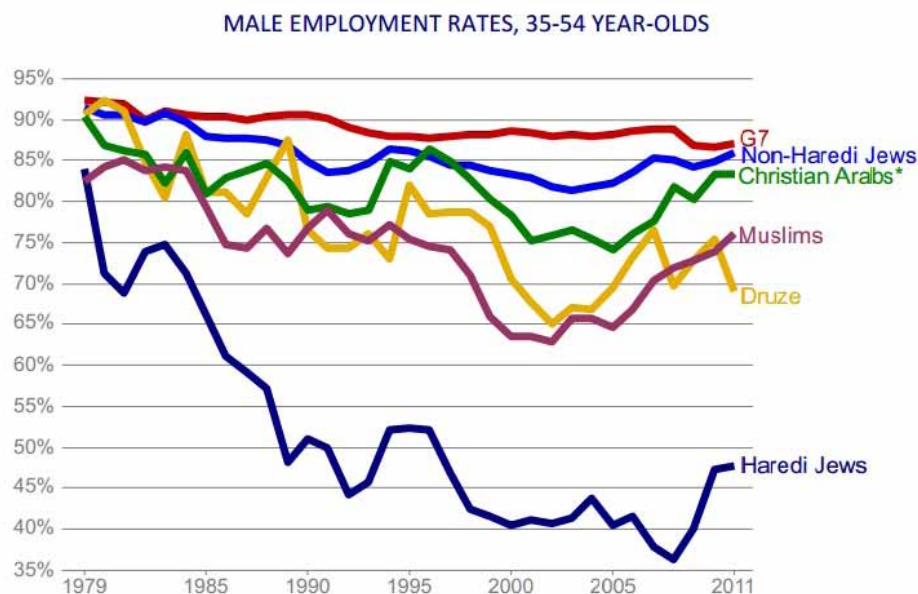
Since the law was enacted in March 2014, many opinions have been voiced (and two High Court petitions have been brought) against the law and its anticipated achievements. One of the greatest concerns relates to the question "Who is Haredi?" – the secular believe that the term's vagueness leaves an opening for enlisting men from national-religious yeshivot and institutions for "dropouts," which could lead to relatively low numbers, and which, given the current trend, would be reached in any case.²² On the other side, the Haredim claim that the significance is that the yeshiva students from the periphery and from yeshivot for those who are "in recovery" or who have "dropped out" would have a difficult problem – ambiguity in the definition leaves considerable room for discretion by officials at the Recruitment Office, and those who do not come from large and recognized yeshivot would be forcibly required to enlist, while those from larger yeshivot would be granted exemptions. Claims of discrimination against the weak and inequality appear in Haredi newspapers and on Internet sites. Haredi leaders are encouraging those who may be hurt by the decision to take to the streets.²³ In the words of the attorney Rabbi Uri Regev, chairman of Hiddush (the association for religious freedom and equality): "The impressive result is a law with zero effectiveness, that causes maximum damage, and the connection between it and equality lies solely in the rhetoric of its initiators."²⁴ Rabbi Steineman represents the Haredi position: "It's true, the law will not take effect tomorrow morning, but that is not the main point. The significant historical fact is that in the law books of the State of Israel there is now a law that permits Torah students to be thrown in prison. That is a desecration of God's name."²⁵

Nevertheless, and despite fears of the possible implications that arose mainly around the "Million-person protest,"²⁶ it is important to point out that there have been harsh Haredi reactions on previous occasions when attempts were made to normalize Haredi yeshiva student service. On July 27, 1988, following a vote on the draft exemption for yeshiva students in the Knesset's Committee on Foreign and Security Affairs, Rabbi Shack threatened that yeshiva students would leave the country.²⁷ Others threatened that yeshiva students would not obey, preferring prison to being drafted into the IDF.²⁸

The Added Value: Haredi Society's Integration into the Workforce

Even during its deliberations, the Tal Commission issued opinions on the possible impact of

existing and future draft arrangements on Haredi integration into the workforce. It attempted to provide solutions to structural problems and existing challenges. For example, it offered an exit option during the decision year in which each of the young Haredim could choose whether to continue learning or go out to work. Even though we can see an increase in the employment rate among Haredi men from 38.9% in 2001 to approximately 45% in 2011, this is still significantly lower than that of the general population (71%), and below the employment targets set by the government for 2020 (approximately 63%).²⁹ The new arrangement, which enables yeshiva students to enter the workforce as soon as they receive deferral confirmation, should improve their workforce integration.³⁰



* Distinction between Christian Arabs and other Christians is only from 2000

Source: State of the Nation in Pictures: Society, Economy and Policy in Israel, Dan Ben David (ed.), Taub Center for Social Policy Research in Israel, 2013.

Employment Rates and 2020 Employment Targets for those Aged 25-64 (percentages)

	2001 ^a	2008 ^a	2009	2010	2011 ^b	2020 target
Total	66.6	71.2	70.1	71.2	71.9	76.5
Men	74.7	77.7	75.8	76.7	77.7	
Women	58.5	64.9	64.6	65.8	66.3	
Arab men	65.4	71.8	70.5	70.7	72.2	78.0
Arab women	19.6	24.4	25.0	26.6	26.8	41.0
Haredi men^c	38.9	39.6	38.7	42.2	45.6	63.0
Haredi women^c	47.8	57.4	59.0	61.9	61.2	63.0
Other Jewish men	78.6	81.7	79.7	80.7	81.4	83.0
Other Jewish women	67.1	74.0	73.6	74.8	75.3	
No higher education^d	57.4	61.8	60.7	61.7	62.9	
With higher education^d	77.0	79.7	78.2	79.1	79.6	

a. Data for 2001 and 2008 were adjusted retrospectively based on the weighting coefficients of 2009 | b. 2011 data do not include the fourth quarter | c. Haredim are defined as members of a household in which at least one person whose last place of study was an adult yeshiva (definition of the National Economic Council, on which the employment targets are based) | d. No higher education: 0-12 years of schooling; With higher education: 13 years of schooling or more | **Source:** Bank of Israel Annual Report – 2011, (March 28, 2012), The Labor Market | Employment rates – Bank of Israel analyses of workforce surveys – Government Decision 1994 (July 2010) | From: Bank of Israel Report, 2011 (March 28, 2012), *The Employment Market*.

In fact, we know that even without the new draft laws, trends over the past decade have shown the Haredi community to be in transition. Growing poverty has led Haredi families to seek employment and other sources of income, and the possibility of enlisting has not been monolithically perceived as unacceptable. In fact, some Haredim have regarded it as a possible solution, and as a springboard to integration into the employment market.³¹

Even though (and as distinct from the question of conscription) it appears that this step should improve the situation of all involved, there are lingering disagreements and gaps between the sides. The Haredim believe that Torah learning is a supreme value, and this worldview also applies to the employment question. Haredi society prepares its sons primarily for Torah study, and those who seek to integrate or to go in other directions encounter numerous difficulties.

Rabbi David Zicherman, one of the leaders of the Litvak stream, explained this in an interview with Israel's Channel 2: "The value in Judaism was to learn Torah. There is no value in working. There never was and there never will be. Work is a curse." Later in the interview, he quoted from Jewish sources and angrily explained, "I, through my Torah study, support the economy... No, I am not a burden. You are a burden. I am supporting you, not you me." When the interviewer asked "But who will provide a livelihood to this Haredi majority? Who will support them?" he replied without hesitation: "America."³² In contrast, the secular public considers current attempts to change the law a slap in the face, claiming that thanks to the exemption, a young Haredi man can enter the job market more quickly and therefore gain a significant advantage over his fellow Israelis who give three years of their lives to army service.³³

The relationship between the declarative and the practical aspects of employment integration is both complementary and contradictory. On the face of it, policy-makers suggest that a package deal such as this, will succeed in expanding the number of yeshiva students who serve and also improve their employment situation, while satisfying the secular public's calls for equal burden sharing. On the other hand, as emphasis on the declarative increases, the prospects of compromise and a practical solution diminish.

The Haredi Challenge

JPPI's 2012-2013 Annual Assessment addressed the plan then under consideration as a solution to the Haredi draft issue, according to a number of its central component principles. It is appropriate to examine whether the new law is consistent with the basic principles the government had presented:

1. **The Authority of the State:** As with the interim plan, under the new law it is the IDF that determines who will be drafted. This is one of the controversial provisions at the heart of the Haredi argument. According to the Haredi press: "A young man who does not look enough like a Haredi or yeshiva boy to an official – and there are many like that today – will have to concede and sign up for enlistment."³⁴ "This is a bad precedent. There are no absolute criteria and any official can decide who looks like a yeshiva boy to him and who doesn't."³⁵
2. **Recognition of Cultural Distinctiveness:** Integration into military or civilian service – whether under the terms of the new law,³⁶ or according to announcements issued to the media on the IDF's preparations³⁷ – will be handled with utmost sensitivity to the Haredi community's cultural characteristics and by creating adapted frameworks. One of the main fears in this regard actually comes from another IDF minority group, women, who fear that as a result of these changes, and in light of past precedents, their status is likely to be damaged, and that the question of equality at the heart of the law will not be fully realized.³⁸

3. **Economic Means:** During deliberations over the phrasing of the new law, a question arose concerning the use of economic means, first and foremost as sanctions, but also in terms of remuneration for those who serve. On February 4, 2014, Supreme Court justices issued a temporary injunction prohibiting the state from transferring funds to yeshivot whose students were required to enlist beginning in August 2013, but failed to do so. Additionally, in a February 19 vote, and following the prime minister's intervention, it was decided that legal sanctions (i.e., criminal charges) would be brought against the young men who did not present themselves at the Recruitment Office.³⁹ Finance Minister Yair Lapid has recently advanced a new plan providing a significant discount in the purchase of a first apartment; military service is among the eligibility criteria.
4. **Balance between Sectors:** Along with the increase in enlistment quotas for young Haredi males, it was also decided to reduce the burden on those currently serving, among other ways, by shortening the service term.⁴⁰ And as noted above, attempts are being made to secure additional benefits and relief for those who have served.
5. **Phase in:** In order to ensure the yeshiva students' integration, the new law is constructed as a multi-phase process with two main periods – the "adaptation period," which began with the law's adoption and is expected to continue through June 30, 2017; and the "permanent period," which will begin on July

1, 2017. The adaptation period is designed to encourage yeshiva students' integration into military or civilian national service and the employment market voluntarily and without forcible imposition. During this period, when the coercive component is absent, it is suggested that the government be required to work, through cooperation, toward the gradual expansion of Haredi enlistment for military and civilian service.⁴¹

JPPI's 2013 paper, "The Haredi Challenge," describes how the political dialogue tends to combine three different challenges into a single package: economic integration, equality in military burden sharing, and cultural influence.⁴² When we examine the government's handling of the draft question, we find an attempt to solve all three problems through equal burden sharing. However, it seems that in order to reach a genuine long-term solution, priorities must be set – to identify the obstacles that are urgent to overcome, and to establish the social goal the solution is intended to achieve. Such a determination will enable policy-makers to choose between various courses of action with a deeper understanding of the advantages and disadvantages inherent in each, to deal with the challenge in all its complexity.

Endnotes

1. Order of March 9, 1948. A letter from Y. Chernowitz and Zeev Epstein to the Committee of Yeshiva Heads can be found in the State Archives at: <http://www.archives.gov.il/NR/rdonlyres/5C300#DA-74CI-46E6-B16C-4235B0B85276/0/herzog02.pdf>. Today there is wide agreement that at the time of the decision, they were talking about 400 military deferments (these numbers are discussed in official reports on the subject). In a lecture by the head of the Bayit Hayehudi Knesset faction, MK Ayelet Shaked, on a panel entitled: "Updates on Israel's Security Concept" on March 8 at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, she noted that these numbers are faulty and that according to a document she had been shown by MK Gafney, the original exemption was wider and was granted to 900 yeshiva students.
2. The quote is taken from Hachohen, Menhachem: Report of the Subcommittee for Reconsideration of the Draft Exemption for Yeshiva Students, page 9. Brought in: Cohen, Yehezkel, 1994: Enlistment as Required: On the Release of Yeshiva Students from the IDF, p. 28. More on the factors that it is reasonable to believe led to the service deferment can be found in Cohen, *ibid*, and in Plesner, Yohanan (July 2012), "Part A: The Haredi Population", a report by MK Yohanan Plesner, Chairman of the Committee for the Promotion of Integration in Service and Burden Sharing, pages 11-15.
3. The Tal Commission, which among other things dealt with the history of the exemption, eventually determined that the coalition arrangement during the Begin government was one of the main factors in the significant increase in the number of those joining the arrangement and the number of those included in it. From: The Report of the Commission for Developing a Suitable Arrangement on the Subject of Drafting Yeshiva Students, headed by Justice Zvi A. Tal, <http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/heb/tal.htm>
4. Cohen, Yehezkel (1994), *op. cit.*
5. Barak-Erez, Dafna, (2010), in Dvora Hachohen and Moshe Lisk (eds.): *Decisive Crossroads and Key Episodes in Israel*, Ben-Gurion Institute for Israel Research, pp. 13-39.
6. From the report of the Commission for Developing an Appropriate Arrangement for the Drafting of Yeshiva Students, headed by Justice Zvi A. Tal.
7. Tal Commission report, Plesner Commission report.
8. Barak Erez, Dafna, *op. cit.*
9. Under the arrangements that preceded the Tal Law, a yeshiva student who applied for a service deferment under the "Torah study is his occupation" arrangement was required to fulfill two clauses: 1. To devote all his time to Torah study, in the sense that it Torah study was his occupation; and 2. Not to engage in any work or occupation for which payment is customary, whether or not payment was actually made. These requirements effectively blocked students from joining the workforce until they received their final exemption. Under the law, yeshiva students were permitted to take a "decision year" in which they would be allowed, along with their full- or part-time study -- to study for a profession or to look for employment without losing their "Torah is their occupation" status. At the end of the year, it was made easier for him to decide whether indeed to go out into the practical world or to return to their studies as before.
10. Plesner Commission report, 2012
11. Jacob Katz, *A House Divided: Orthodoxy and Schism in Nineteenth-Century Central European Jewry*. (Waltham, Mass., 1998)
12. Menachem Friedman, *Haredi Society: Sources, Trends and Processes*, (Jerusalem, 1991).
13. Menachem Friedman, *Society and Religion: Non-Zionist Orthodoxy in the Land of Israel, 5678-5696* (Jerusalem 1978) pp. 1-33.

14. Menachem Friedman: *The Haredim: Who are We Really? A Personal Recorded Document on the Conflict that Appears Unsolvable*. Keter Publishing, p. 139.
15. Ibid.
16. Cohen, Yehezkel (1994), op. cit. p. 69.
17. Editorial, *The Haredi Camp*, 6 Adar II, 5752/March 11, 1992. Quoted in: Cohen, Yehezkel, op. cit. p. 207.
18. Op. cit.
19. The Commission for Socio-Economic Change, chaired by Prof. Manuel Trachtenberg, September, 2011.
20. Heller, Or, (November 11, 2013): "The IDF Human Resources Division: Motivation to Fight is Declining, More than a Quarter of Men are not Enlisted", Nana 10.
21. Record. Proposed government law. <http://www.knesset.gov.il/Laws/Data/BillGoverment/787/787.pdf>
22. Ettinger, Yair (February 14, 2014): "The Small Print in the Enlistment Law Perpetuates the Exemption for Haredim", Haaretz.
23. Cohen, Yisrael (April 23, 2014), "Will IDF Call-ups be Banned because of the Haredi Classification Center's Activity?" Kikar Hashabbat
24. From the Hiddush internet site: "Rabbi Regev: A Law with Zero Effectiveness and Maximum Damage", March 12, 2014. For other examples see: Reshet Bet "Burden Sharing: The Law Being Developed is Worse than the Tal Law", February 17, 2014; Kam Zeev and Arik Bender: "The Left are Attacking: 'The Burden Sharing Law – Isra-bluff'", Maariv, February 20, 2014; Kishik, Yael, "Burden Sharing? Israelis do not believe in the Enlistment Law," MAKO, February 27, 2014.
25. Rahav-Meir, Sivan: (February 22, 2014), 14 Comments on the Summary of the Shaked Commission", *Yediot Aharonot*.
26. The Million-Person Protest" brought to the surface a number of fears for each of the communities, and for Israeli society as a whole. Among those raised – "A redefinition of religious forces in Israel," i.e., "a show of force", and a demonstration of the Haredim's ability to disrupt everyday life and to influence the public agenda. See, for example: Lachmanovich, Roi (March 3, 2014): "The Haredi Demonstration: A Million Questions and Answers", Maariv NRG; Klein, Yossi (March 6, 2014), "Leave the Haredim Alone", *Haaretz*. Among the other concerns that were raised were a serious split within the people and damage to democracy.
27. "What do you think? I may be an elderly Jew and I don't have much strength, but I say clearly that if the time comes and there is an edict on the Torah world, I will raise my hands and say: 'If I forget thee, oh Jerusalem'. All of the learned people will not forget the Land of Israel, but all of them will go into exile and the Torah will not be forgotten by the People of Israel... Vote as you please, but it does not affect us." (Yeted Neeman, 18 Tevet, 5751, pp. 9, 12). Quoted in: Cohen, Yehezkel (1994), op. cit. p. 37.
28. "We hope and pray that there are still a few people in this disintegrating country with a greater sense of responsibility than that committee and its chairman... Because what is hard for us to outline the expected scenes of what is liable to happen (heaven forbid, heaven forbid) in such a case. And we would not want to be witness to such a sad spectacle. We are not exaggerating when we say that Antzar camps would be too small to accommodate all the detainees." (Editorial in *Hamodiya*, 14 Menachem Av, 5748). Quoted in Cohen, Yehezkel (1994), op. cit.
29. These data are taken from the chapter on the workplace in the Bank of Israel's report for 2011 (March 28, 2012). http://www.boi.org.il/he/NewsAndPublications/RegularPublications/Pages/heb_doch11h.aspx

30. Under the Security Service Law, yeshiva students who received a service deferral are allowed to engage in an occupation in addition to learning in yeshiva; such occupation includes any work for which payment is made. In the past, this paragraph (paragraph 22) had led to a situation in which many of those who requested a deferral (until their complete exemption) under the "Torah study is their occupation" provision could not enter the job market before age 24. The new law allows them to receive a full exemption and enter the job market at age 22.
31. Based on: Leon, Nissim (September 3, 2012), "The Society of Scholars: The End?". From Simulation Abstracts – The Implications of the Tal Law's Revocation, The Open University. Data concerning employment rates among graduates of special tracks in the army demonstrate a positive influence. Numbers from 2011 – 87 percent compared to 41 percent of all Haredi men entered the employment market. This rate is also high compared to the employment rate among non-Haredi men, which stands at approximately 82 percent (most of those who did not join the employment market returned to Torah study or to academic studies). Only a third (about 34 percent) of those employed work in occupations they acquired during their service – mostly in technical occupations or computer science. The remainder are employed in positions that are not directly related to army service. From: Zakovski, Ilia (October 2011), Collection of Articles Number 5: Army and/or Civilian Service as a Means for Integrating the Haredi Population into the Employment Market, Shmuel Neeman Institute.
32. "Torah and Work: The Hardships of Haredim on the Way to a Job", interview with Dana Weiss, MAKO, March 29, 2014. <http://www.mako.co.il/news-channel2/Weekend-Newscast/Article-18cc6d7a60f0541004.htm>
33. Zitun, Yoav, and Azoulay, Moran (February 21, 2014): "All the Holes in the Recruitment Law," YNet.
34. Cohen, Yehezkel (April 24, 2014), "Apparently: The question of presenting oneself for service will be determined by the behavior of the IDF." Kikar HaShabbat.
35. Cohen, Yehezkel (April 23, 2014), "Will IDF Call-ups be Banned because of the Haredi Classification Center's Activity?" Kikar HaShabbat.
36. See, for example, paragraph 26, subparagraph xxvi – Safeguarding the Way of Life – of the amendment (19) to the Security Service Law: "The Israel Defense Force will work to enable those who enlist for regular service under this law to safeguard his way of life."
37. See, for example, Lev-Ram, Tal (April 23, 2014), "The IDF are exploring the establishment of a Haredi battalion in the Givati Brigade and a Haredi Reconnaissance Unit in the Armored Brigade", Galei Zahal; Cohen, Yishai (April 23, 2014), "The IDF is preparing for the enlistment of 8,000 Haredim through three new battalions," Kikar HaShabbat.
38. It should be noted that at least as concerns this paragraph, the legislators paid attention and added a number of relevant provisions, the most notable of which is Paragraph 26 subparagraph xxviii: "The effect of the implementation of this paragraph's directives on service in national service, including everything related to the status and integration of women in security service; a report under this paragraph shall also be submitted to the Committee for Advancing the Status of Women and Gender Equality of the Knesset."
39. For the discussion on this subject, see for example: Kam, Zeev (February 2, 2014), "Joy: The Draft Obligation for Haredim includes Criminal Sanctions", *Maariv* (NRG)
40. According to paragraph 41 of the Security Service Law [combined version], 5745/1986, the duration

of regular army service for men to date had been 36 months for those drafted between the ages of 18 and 26), 30 months for those drafted at age 27-34 or for doctors and dentists, 24 months for immigrants drafted after age 27, and 18 months for doctors or dentists drafted into regular service at age 35-38. The new amendment shortens the service to 32 months in the first case, 26 months instead of 30 in the second, and 20 months instead of 24 for those called at an older age or for doctors.

41. At this stage, there are still binding quotas, but the effort is being conducted as an attempt to cooperate with the yeshiva heads.
42. Rosner, Shmuel, and Maimon, Dov (February 24th 2013), The Haredi Challenge, Jewish People Policy Institute.



Material Resources: 2013-2014

In the last year, increased attention has been paid to several of the issues arising from this dimension in both of the major centers of Jewish population, Israel and the United States. Though arising from two separate sets of concerns, both debates converge in asking what is required for thriving Jewish communities, and how these needs should be met.

Funding Jewish Life in the U.S.

North American Jewry has been the principal source of Jewish people material resources since the end of the Second World War. Its importance continues into the 21st century because of its share of the overall Jewish population, the close economic relations between the U.S. and Israel (recent strides in Israel's high tech sector are, in part, the result of U.S. direct and portfolio investment,) and its relatively high per capita wealth. Even with the growth of Israel's population and economy, the U.S. community retains importance for Israel as well as other global Jewish communities, particularly those under stress.

The 2008 global economic crisis caused considerable financial pain to Jewish institutions in the U.S. More than five years later, most lost ground has been recovered. But the issue of fiscal sustainability for Jewish causes and activities in the U.S. remains. Even before the meltdown and lingering recovery from the resulting major recession, concern was surfacing about the degree to which there would continue to be a match between sources and uses of resources in U.S. Jewish communities. Philanthropic patterns are shifting with the passing of an older generation. There is an inclination among the succeeding generation to provide proportionately increasing support to non-Jewish causes, perhaps as a concomitant to a decrease in expression of Jewish identification. In addition, there has been a qualitative shift. Although broad generalizations are always punctured by exceptions, there has been a change in the style of Jewish giving. Many major donors, who previously would have been counted upon to be the principal support of the federation system, and who relied upon it as the mechanism for allocation of their gifts to a wide set of uses, are expressing greater interest in giving

that is more targeted or focused, hands on, or both. Such gifts usually also come with a demand for greater transparency and more tangible direct evidence of measurable outcomes.

This qualitative shift to the personal is best described, at this point, as a trend rather than a major swing. But the question of effect and outcomes-based assessment is becoming more central; as American Jewry continues to change, so do its needs. Less changed, perhaps, has been

While all U.S. charities reported that 12% of their income, on average, came from contributions, the proportion was three times higher for Jewish organizations

the formal structure of its institutions, particularly in the non-synagogue sphere where the major institutions have existed for 50 to 100 or more years. Adaptation is occurring, to be sure, but largely within the existing organizations. Whether this is sufficient or perhaps even desirable requires analysis, which, in turn, relies upon information.

A more-than-local perspective on the balance of U.S. Jewry's ways and means has long been difficult to obtain and comprehend. This difficulty does not stem from any deliberate obfuscation, but rather results from the way Jewish life in the U.S. has been organized. Its religious institutions, in contrast to Israel and Europe, are entirely self-funded and not required by U.S. law to disclose finances. This means that the transactions in this 'market'¹ take place in thousands of institutions. There have been a

few attempts to calculate the 'Jewish GNP' as it has been termed by Mark Pearlman.² They have provided some illumination, but have often raised more questions than answers.

The most recent (and in some respects most ambitious) attempt to measure Jewish means placed at the disposal of Jewish causes took form in a series of articles written by Josh Nathan-Kazis for the *Forward* based upon data he gathered from federal tax forms filed in 2012 by those organizations required to do so.³ Rather than examine a sample of such organizations, the *Forward* performed a grand aggregation of available data for as many non-profit organizations it could identify as being Jewish. It estimates the size of this collective enterprise as at least \$26 billion in total assets, with annual revenues in the \$12-14 billion range.⁴ It also found that majority of effort in 2011 was spent on Israel-related activities (38% versus 20% each for the next two highest uses, education, and health care & social services); and that while all U.S. charities reported that 12% of their income, on average, came from contributions, that proportion was three times higher for the identified Jewish organizations, at 36%.

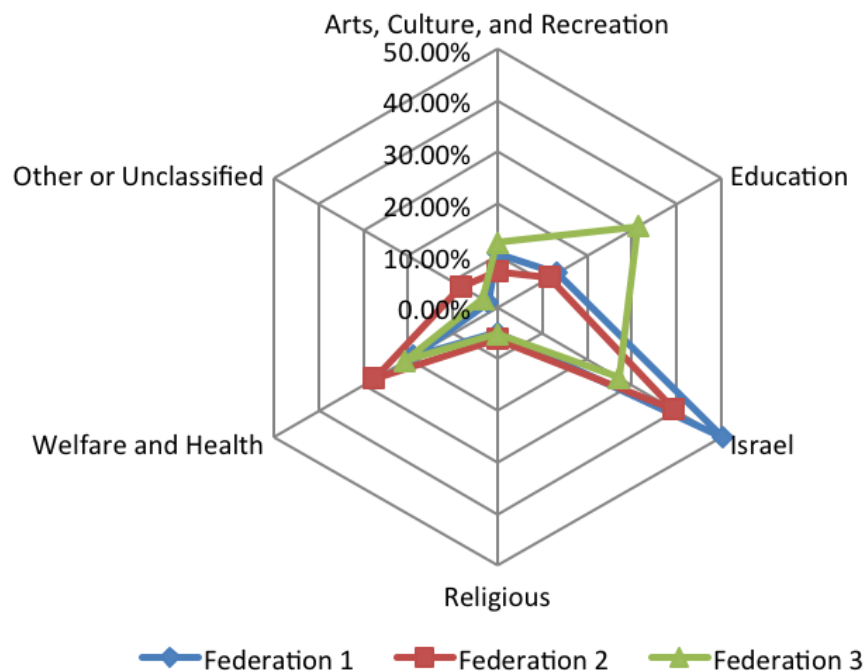
In presenting this analysis of Jewish philanthropy, the *Forward* has provided a service in two ways. The first, of course, is in collating and assessing the data. The second is perhaps even more important. Beyond allowing a peek behind the veil, the aggregation of the many small transactions that constitute the ways and means of Jewish communal life in America calls attention to major issues of both process and priority that should be explicitly addressed – and yet are so often passed

over. Beginning to ask about the sources and extent of Jewish resources and how they are allocated is the first step in addressing the larger question of whether this pattern matches our conception of needs today, and those of the future.

The *Forward's* data raise many questions, as, indeed, must all such efforts. Accurate categorization is difficult because of the judgments required. The large investment in Taglit-Birthright could be considered Israel-oriented giving, but the program has at least as much to do with U.S. Jewish identity and, so, could also come under the heading of education. Similarly, how should a federation donating to a local arts institution versus similar-sized support to the Tel Aviv Museum be considered?

In 2013, JPPI began its own effort to gain insight into such issues. Less comprehensive in design than the *Forward's* analysis, JPPI instead took a more intensive, in-depth look at three representative North American federations. The two efforts are complementary in the sense that they utilize the same data at different levels of aggregation.⁵ Three representative federations in different parts of the U.S. were selected (two with annual disbursements of direct support in the \$20-30 million range and one in the \$50-70 million range) and their appropriation, gift and grant budgets for 2010 and 2011 (the same year as the *Forward's* snapshot) analyzed.

Figure 1. Appropriations, gifts and grants by three North American federations, by category, 2011



Source: JPPI based upon IRS form 940 filings for 2012.

The primacy of giving to Israel noted by the *Forward* was corroborated, although JPPI's analysis also brought out the distinctions among federations. As shown in Figure 1, the two smaller federations focused 40-50% of their 2011 support on activities JPPI classified as having an Israel focus. The largest of the three, however, gave less than 30% to Israel, and its proportional focus on education was nearly triple that of the other two. Spending on advocacy, outreach, and community

bonds and leadership were relatively small in all cases, reaching no more than 4% of the total in one instance and less than 2% in the others.⁶

The relatively large health and welfare expenditures show that although there is a more expansive social safety net in the U.S. now than when the federation system began in the 19th century, this area of

service remains the leading sector for federations after Israel-oriented activity. As pointed out in the *Forward*, this allocation also receives support from federal and local resources. The figure provides a graphic illustration of the relative scale of this effort. The category of arts, culture, and recreation also includes support given by federations to local non-Jewish institutions.⁷

The *Forward* provided a comprehensive snapshot of one year's activities. JPPI's approach allowed a detailed examination of how these priorities might

shift over time. In fiscal year 2011, the federation among the three that gave the highest percentage of funds to Israel-oriented efforts *increased* its commitment within a smaller overall budget. The principal trade off was made with health and welfare, which declined by a similar share. On the other hand, the largest of the three showed only minimal shifts during the same period.

The fact that all three had smaller total allocations in 2011 than in 2010 provides some insight on priorities. Part of this may have been due to an easing of the recession, which, perhaps, lessened the need for exceptional federation efforts. Here again, there is considerable variation and regional economic differences may play a role. While the total budget for support declined overall by 2 to 15% across the three federations, health and welfare support declined by more than 20% in one, and increased by 10% in another. The other major activity sectors shown in Figure 1 did not show great variance in proportionality of support while more peripheral activities, such as advocacy, showed wide variations. This calls attention to the fact that federations support specific efforts rather than broad areas, and so such assistance may prove "lumpy" when looked at over time, thus making priority determination more difficult still.⁸

Federations do make available detailed information on their activities. What complicates discussion and policy analysis is that they vary considerably in how such support is characterized at a more aggregate scale in annual reports and other documents. Both the *Forward's* efforts and JPPI's own point up the value of establishing a

Both the *Forward's* efforts and JPPI's own highlight the value of establishing a consistent framework for such reporting

consistent framework for such reporting across Jewish communal philanthropic institutions. This should include those organizations that are not required by law to report to the IRS. A common system and voluntary compliance by all U.S. Jewish institutions would help to address such policy questions as whether American Jews should give more to support Jewish education at home than to the support of Israel.⁹

Though this is a normative question, it is also difficult to address unless the data are available. The three federation budgets examined by JPPI show that once social welfare needs are met, the biggest tradeoff is between Israel and addressing the deep questions of Jewish identity and continuity within the U.S. Two federations place less apparent emphasis on the education component. Is this actually a reflection of priority, of local circumstances, or a mistaken inference by observers because of information inadequacies? We call for a method of reporting such information that goes beyond what is adequate for the purposes of individual organizations and locales and is sufficiently cognizant of the potential for providing more insight and receiving more guidance from a Jewish people perspective.

We also note that the need for education, outreach, and new means for arresting trends of dis-affiliation in the U.S. may increase pressure for reassessment. Coming at a time when the bonds between the U.S. and Israel are increasingly subject to the potential for strain, it behooves leaders within the U.S. to address prioritization questions before this trade-off becomes starker. And it

behooves the government of Israel to consider what accepting financial support from the U.S. at historic levels might actually cost in terms of forcing hard choices, equitable burden sharing, and the non-financial bonds that might, under present conditions, be of greater value to Israel going forward.

Uneven Growth in Israel's Economy

Israel's economy has rightly been seen as a major success story both in terms of its relative growth since the domestic crises of the 1980s as well as in absolute terms when compared to growth patterns elsewhere in the world. These accolades certainly appeared justified in light of how well Israel weathered the financial crisis of 2008

and the global recession in the years immediately following. Yet, in this past year there has been more evidence that recent trends may be causing a sputtering of the growth engine. The two major concerns are: 1) a slowing of macroeconomic growth and the resulting fiscal imbalance, and 2) increasing disparity between how different elements of Israel's society benefit from its modern economy. The two are not unrelated and both are significant for the sources and uses of Jewish resources that originate in Israel.

It behooves the government of Israel to consider what accepting financial support from the U.S. at historic levels might actually cost

Economic growth slowed to 3.3% in 2013 from the more typical 4 to 5% of previous years.¹⁰ Worse, the second half of the year saw annualized growth rates of just 2.8%. This is especially worrisome because projections into the future, such as by the IMF, forecast a 3-3.5% growth rate for the coming years despite the enhancement that might be expected as Israel's natural gas discoveries come on line.

The pressure on international trade that accompanies a strengthening shekel may explain part of the slowdown. Market exchange rates saw an appreciation of about 15% in the value of the shekel compared to the U.S. dollar. This is problematic for an economy like Israel's, which is relatively open (that is, for which foreign trade accounts for a

Israel's labor productivity is well below the OECD average; worse, the gap appears to be growing over time

large percentage of GDP – about 40% in Israel's case). Although Israel's domestic retail trade is somewhat protective (*de facto* if not necessarily *de jure*) in favor of domestic supply against foreign competition, the appreciating shekel still makes imports cheaper locally and Israel's exports more expensive globally. Part of the shekel's increase may be attributed to the reduction in energy imports that results from bringing greater volumes of domestically produced natural gas and oil on line. The government has taken precautionary

measures, such as the formation of a sovereign growth fund, to shield the currency from undue appreciation (the "Dutch disease" of the 1970s) when energy begins to also appear in Israel's basket of exports. It remains to be seen how well this dispels the pressures on the shekel that might otherwise arise. But the strong shekel also tends to favor Israel's high tech producers over more traditional industrial sectors.

The major long-term concern is the gap between Israel's capacities and what it actually produces. Israel's labor productivity is well below the OECD average. Worse, the gap appears to be growing over time.¹¹ In 1975 the OECD average was about 10% greater than Israel's productivity; in 2012 the differential amounted to about 40%. This continuing, even worsening disparity suggests underlying systemic causes. Certainly, a situation of this persistence is likely explained by a complex of issues rather than any single cause. However, the productivity problem, coupled with the clearly successful performance of Israel's information and communication technology sectors, emphasizes and captures much of the debate that has grown more common in Israel concerning the fundamental disparities that are both cause and effect of this phenomenon.

On the supply side, an important contributor to productivity growth – as well as to the incomes and standard of living enjoyed by individuals – is the knowledge and skill ("human capital") contributed by workers. In Israel, the signs are troubling. International tests of educational performance are relatively low, even if restricted to the Jewish community. For several years the

majority of incoming children have either tracked into the Arab-language or Haredi school systems. The debate over “burden sharing,” especially in the case of the Haredim, whose workforce participation is well below that of either non-Haredi Jews or Arabs in Israel, was brought to the fore by the 2013 elections, which saw the Ultra-Orthodox parties excluded from the governing coalition. The combined result was a number of legislative and administrative measures to enhance participation rates – in part by reducing subsidies and removing military service exemptions. The latter carries importance not so much from the perspective of addressing the manpower pinch in the IDF, but because it is Israel’s military that determines much of the future employment opportunities for individuals. Passage through the ranks of IDF will probably be a necessary precursor to the ability of many Haredi young men to earn a living as part of Israel’s future labor force.¹²

Disparities in education and employment opportunities, especially for the majority of Israelis who are not working in high growth sectors, have further accentuated not only differences in income but also the consequences of such differentials. Housing prices have continued to rise dramatically (some 6% after inflation – up 80% since 2007) as have the costs of food and other essentials such as electricity. The result is a palpable pressure on household incomes and, in the case of too many Israelis, poverty.

Quite simply, Israel’s poverty rate, 20.9% of households, is the highest in the OECD. Israel also places in the high end of the spectrum on measures of income inequality. What is troubling

is that poverty in Israel is shifting from a problem of workforce non-participation in the Haredi and Arab sectors into a more general “working poor” phenomenon. During the past decade, in which Israel recorded impressive growth while other global economies struggled, the rate of poverty in one-worker households increased from 9.6 to 13.7% while 5% of households with two workers also fell below the poverty line. The poverty rate in Jewish households increased by 3% in this period.

The 2013 annual report of the Bank of Israel stated:

Action must be taken to increase labor productivity in the economy... and to enhance the integration of populations with low labor force participation. At the time same,

action must be taken to ensure that the benefits of growth reach as

many segments of the population as possible...In order to achieve these two objectives, it is necessary to improve the level of education for all sectors of the population, broaden and deepen integration in the labor market, increase competition in the economy, thereby also facilitating a reduction in the cost of living, and maintain a reasonable level of public services.¹³

Quite simply, Israel’s poverty rate, 20.9% of households, is the highest in the OECD

This seems a tall order, but steps have been taken in all of these areas in the past year. It is interesting to note that the most recent OECD “How is Life?” survey measuring indicators of well-being among the citizenry of its member countries shows that Israelis are not despairing. Israel was placed 13th among 34 countries in subjective overall life satisfaction. It also placed high in relative ranking of categories such as health, income and wealth, and jobs and earnings. (However, Israel scored

Israel was placed 13th among 34 countries in subjective overall life satisfaction

among the lowest 20% in civic engagement and governance, environmental quality, personal security, work-life balance, and education and skills.)¹⁴ A similar 2013 study using a different methodology (part of a growing trend to move beyond strictly economic measures of well-being such as GDP per capita) also showed

high relative levels of life satisfaction for Israel, which placed 11th overall among 156 countries.¹⁵ Statistical analysis of these data showed that six key variables explain three-quarters of the variation in annual national average happiness scores over time and among countries. Besides GDP per capita, these included the less directly economic factors of health and life expectancy, having someone to count on, perceived freedom to make life choices, freedom from corruption, and generosity. The health performance and social

solidarity noted in Israel would seem to explain, in part, the relatively positive outcome.

But the study also noted in a detailed examination of four countries hardest hit by the Euro crisis that the actual fall in GDP per capita experienced by each was insufficient in itself to explain the large drops in measured happiness. The indirect effect of such economic pressures on respondents’ perceived freedom to make key life choices was a profound contributor to reduced life satisfaction. In each country the crisis tended to limit opportunities for individuals and caused public services to perform below expected levels. This example brings home that for Israel a slowing of growth, higher costs of living due to institutional economic issues, and a perception of unequally distributed opportunity might become in the future more than just an issue of economics alone.

A Meeting Point

The past year brought new evidence that Jewish communities in the U.S. and Israel are in transition with respect to sources of wealth and budgetary priorities. U.S. Jewry faces serious questions about how to maintain Jewish resources and allocate them to Jewish priorities – one of them being Israel. Israel is enjoying newfound wealth but faces serious budgetary pressures, a continuing and perhaps enhanced defense burden, and socio-economic growing pains, which are new in its experience. At the same time, there are voices abroad and within Israel’s government itself seeking to understand the extent and nature of

Israel's responsibility toward Jewish communities abroad.

Each community will have to address the problems that it uniquely faces. It is possible, however, that the solutions that may be arrived at independently may serve Jewish people interests less fully than those that might arise from consideration in the perspective of the Jewish people as a whole. A potentially strong policy step in this direction was taken in June 2014 when the government of Israel approved the "Government of Israel-World Jewry Joint Initiative" to help strengthen young Jews' Jewish identity and enhance connections between world Jewry and the State of Israel. The total planned budget is NIS 570 million for the initial stage of implementation, of which the government will provide a third, with two thirds provided by world Jewry. In 2016, an expansion of the initiative will be brought to the government for approval.

The initiative is to be based on equal partnership between the government of Israel and the Jewish people. A joint steering committee is to develop the program, measure progress, and fund its activities. Day-to-day operations are to be conducted by the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs. The Jewish Agency and its partners, the Jewish Federations of North America and Keren Hayesod-UIA, have made the strategic decision to spearhead the fundraising effort to ensure the initiative's success.

Planning began in 2012 based on a conceptual framework designed by JPPI in 2009. The process included top government officials and

both professionals and lay leaders from Jewish communities, organizations, and philanthropic foundations around the world.

The multi-year initiative will involve joint programs between Israel and Jewish communities around the world intended to achieve significant, measurable effects on the young through formal and informal education, Jewish and Israel experiences, campus life, social justice initiatives, and opportunities for life in Israel. Some existing programs may be scaled up and new ones developed. The goal is to offer a range of programs to enable Jews from all denominations, communities, and walks of life to find their place. This includes training for staff and professionals and an advanced online platform to multiply their impact.

If carried out as intended, the significance will be great in signaling the State of Israel's sense of responsibility for ensuring that Jewish life, Jewish identity, and connections to Israel endure well into the future. It may also encourage additional funders to align themselves with the agenda designed to ensure the long-term global thriving of the Jewish people.

Endnotes

1. "Building a Jewish People Perspective on 'Ways and Means', October 2012, http://jppei.org.il/uploads/Building_a_Jewish_People_Perspective_on_Ways_and_Means.pdf.
2. "Jewish GDP Study: Initial Findings", March 2009, [Powerpoint presentation; at the time of this writing we were unable to find a publicly available paper] <http://www.jinsider.com/gdp>. Other contributions include Erik Ludwig and Aryeh Weinberg (2012), "Following The Money: A Look At Jewish Foundation Giving", Institute for Jewish and Community Research, <http://www.jewishresearch.org/quad/01-12/following-money.html>; Eric Fleisch and Theodore Sasson (2010), *The New Philanthropy: American Jewish Giving to Israeli Organizations*, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (April); Gary A. Tobin, and Aryeh K. Weinberg (2007), *Mega-Gifts in Jewish Philanthropy: Giving Patterns 2001-3003*, Institute for Jewish and Community Research.
3. All by Josh Nathan-Kazis: "How I Built My Jewish Charity Database", the *Forward*, 28 March 2014; "26 Billion Bucks: The Jewish Charity Industry Uncovered", the *Forward*, 28 March 2014; "Jewish Charities Grow Huge on Cash From Government – Donors Give to Israel", the *Forward*, 4 April 2014; "26 Billion Bucks: Those Jewish Charity Parties? Pricey", the *Forward*, 18 April 2014.
4. The total does not include those organizations, such as synagogues and other religious institutions who are tax-exempt under U.S. law.
5. The data were collected and categorized from Form 990 filings with the IRS by Noah Slepko of JPPI, using the same source as the *Forward*. In this case, however, each individual appropriation, gift or grant reported as a line item to the IRS was classified by JPPI as falling into the categories of advocacy; arts, culture and recreation; community bonds and leadership; education; Israel; outreach; religious; and welfare and health. This allowed 95-98% of each federation's activities to be categorized with the rest listed as "other or unclassified".
6. Of course, the scale of effort required in these categories is less than in such areas as education or health and welfare which require facilities and permanent staffs.
7. Indeed, the detailed review conducted by JPPI showed that almost every category contains funding to non-Jewish institutions. Advocacy includes all giving to any specific political or lobbying cause, education includes funding to non-exclusively Jewish institutions such as universities and public schools, welfare and health care includes many non-Jewish food banks, shelters, youth programs, hospitals, etc. The question remains whether this funding to non-Jewish institutions might be, in part, earmarked for something specifically Jewish.
8. The federation budgets also reflect directed giving of funds by donors. That is, a donor may provide a philanthropic donation with the understanding that a proportion will be given by the federation as directed by the donors.
9. Guidestar, an NGO which collects information on U.S. 501(c)3 entities also has a voluntary 'transparency' program for charities to provide financial information. However, the focus is on providing assurance to potential donors and not, as we have recommended here, making clear the intent behind support decisions. A reporting system corresponding to Jewish people interests and issues would allow for greater understanding of priorities and allocations.
10. Bank of Israel Annual Report 2013 [preliminary version], 2 April 2014 <http://www.boi.org.il/en/NewsAndPublications/RegularPublications/Pages/DochBankIsrael2013.aspx>

11. For an accessible treatment, see Dan Ben-David, "Labor Productivity in Israel", Policy Paper No. 2013.05, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies
12. The relationship between IDF service and labor participation for haredim is actually a bit more complex. Under the prior system of deferment, haredim were not allowed to work legally (since their deferred-status "occupation" was studying torah.) Some therefore entered the black market labor force, not paying taxes and remaining in a parallel economy. A major part of the new legislation is to enable haredim not serving in the army to enter the workforce legally through 2017. After 2017, the system of quotas begins, but those who are not conscripted can enter the work force. The result is intended to be an increase in the labor participation rate (which will probably also mean an increase in the unemployment rate, as calculated.)
13. Op. cit.
14. OECD (2013). *How is life? 2013: Measuring Well-being*. OECD Publishing.
15. Helliwell, John F., Richard Layard, and Jeffrey Sachs, eds. 2013. *World Happiness Report 2013*. New York: UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

The Number of Jews in the United States: Definitions and Methodologies in Contradictory Surveys

2013 was exceptionally fruitful in terms of national surveys of Jews in the United States. Findings from four different surveys were published – by the Pew Research Center,¹ Brandeis University,² The American Jewish Yearbook (AJY),³ and demographer Sergio DellaPergola.⁴ These studies suggest varying numbers for the U.S. Jewish population, with the difference ranging from several thousands to over a million (see Table 1). These sizable

differences carry significant implications for the assessment of U.S. Jewry, as well as for formulating appropriate policy. In addition, in terms of size, these numbers place the Jewish American community either above or beneath the Jewish population of Israel (around 6.1 million as of late 2013).⁵ Thus, the symbolically and ideologically important question of which Jewish community is the world's largest remains open to debate.

Table 1 – Varying Estimates of the Number of Jews in the United States

Source	Estimated Number of Jews (millions)
Brandeis University	6.814
American Jewish Yearbook	6.721
Pew Research Center	6.700
DellaPergola	5.425

As all these numerical estimates refer to recent years, their discrepancies may be explained by their respective survey methodologies, and especially by two key criteria on which they are predicated – the definition of who is a Jew, and the

methodology used for counting these Jews. This chapter examines and compares the definitions and methods employed by the four studies in an attempt to clarify the actual picture as best as possible.

Methodology

U.S. Jewish population surveys have employed different methodologies, and this is a focus of disagreement among recent studies. There are pros and cons to each approach, along with certain principled choices that combine to create a complex, often contradictory picture of the U.S. Jewish community.

Of the studies discussed here, Pew's research

Methodological variations create a complex, often contradictory picture of the U.S. Jewish community

has the simplest and most direct design and methodology, for better or worse, because its estimation of the size of the Jewish population is a secondary derivative of the analysis. The estimate is based on the percentage of Jews in the general population as found in a nationwide population survey.

This survey comprised about 25,000 respondents and was conducted by telephone in English and Russian. Respondents were asked about their households, including adults and children, and about the Jewish identity of each household member. The survey was conducted on a limited scale, confined mainly to areas and groups where the likelihood of reaching Jewish respondents was relatively high. This limited range means that the survey is a representative sample of only 84% of the general population. In order to compensate for areas and

groups not included in the survey, the study also relied on other data that enabled estimating the percentage of Jews in the remaining 16% of the general U.S. population, including speakers of other languages, residents of areas not included in the survey, those without a telephone line, etc. The percentages of the different types of Jewish identities found among these populations were weighted against the total U.S. population, and the total number of Jews was extrapolated based on these figures. 'Net' population figures were about 2.2% of the adult population and 1.7% of minors, which led to the final figure: 6.7 million. As is the case for any survey, the findings must be weighted against sampling errors, various biases, and other interferences, which is why the authors themselves suggest that their figures be regarded as a general rough estimates.

Conversely, the Brandeis University study is based on a broad database, which allows it to claim that its findings are a comprehensive and reliable estimate of the number of Jews in the U.S. This study used statistical routines for weighting the data of 348 surveys, conducted by a variety of independent or government sources, in which respondents were asked about their religion. These were mostly telephone surveys carried out between 2006 and 2012, involving a total of 328,000 adult respondents. Of this database, 1.8% were Jews by religion, which translates into about 4.2 million. In order to calculate the percentage of Jews of no religion and children of Jewish affiliation, the researches used the number of Jews by religion as a basis for extrapolation. The ratio between Jews of no religion and Jews by religion

was studied in a separate survey and found to be about 19% by conservative estimates. On this basis, another 900,000 people were added to the total. As for children, the study first calculated the number of Jews in the youngest age group, 18-24, and then deduced similar rates of children in the next (under 18) cohort, adding a further 1.6 million children of Jewish affiliation. Adding up the different groups and the various inferences produced a total count of 6.8 million U.S. Jews. This conclusion, however, is based on numerous calculations and extrapolations, derived from a great number of diverse surveys predicated on varying definitions and with varying levels of rigor. The study's considerable investment and diligence notwithstanding, there are those who argue that its design holds considerable potential for error, either in the survey's execution or in duplicate counts of segments of the population.⁶

The American Jewish Yearbook study employed a methodology similar to that of the Brandeis study, but relied on a different database and a simpler calculation procedure. For a number of years, researchers of the AJY study have collected data from regional surveys across the United States, and these were collated in order to devise a general index of the number of Jews in the country. The researchers' first preference was for professional surveys, which constitute 85% of the study's sources; in certain cases, where the surveyed region was highly populated by Jews (over 90%) or distinguished in some other way from the rest of the public, the authors used national census data. When figures were not available – as in about 15% of the remaining cases – the study relied on

information gathered from Jewish communal bodies, mainly federations, but also synagogues and other Jewish organizations. Contacts within these organizations gave accounts of the Jews in their area and estimated their numbers and levels of affiliation. In some cases, the researchers had to rely on online information sources provided by local organizations' websites without contacting them directly. The incorporation of information from the entire country enabled the researchers to present state-by-state estimates of the number of U.S. Jews, as well as to place their total number at 6.7 million. As in the Brandeis study, the AJY study is problematic in that it draws its conclusions from a wide-ranging and heterogeneous database. Indeed, its authors admit that the true number of U.S. Jews is probably 200,000-500,000 fewer, due to some double counting.

DellaPergola puts the probable population range of U.S. Jews between 5.2 and 5.6 million

The two studies discussed above involve the broad integration of studies over a relatively short period, whereas DellaPergola's study seeks to draw conclusions from a host of studies conducted over a long period of time, starting from the baseline estimates of the U.S. Jewish population in 1945. The study traces the continuity and consistence of change in the size of the Jewish population, pointing to the remarkable success of studies

throughout the years in predicting figures a decade in advance. In the process, the study also maps the change-driving factors in operation within the Jewish population – emigration and immigration, fertility and mortality rates, conversions into and out of Judaism, among others – and appraises their impact on its size. Incorporating such data with certain broad trends in American society, such as the ‘Baby Boom’ generation and immigration waves, DellaPergola puts the probable population range of U.S. Jews between 5.2 and 5.6 million,

The Pew study's "net" Jewish population includes respondents who said 1) they were Jews by religion, or 2) those with no other religion who considered themselves Jewish or partly Jewish

and indicates 5.4 million as a reasonable middle point. As in the previous cases, however, this study also raises questions about its potential for recurrent errors, due to the fact that some of the surveys on which its baseline population was predicated have been severely criticized over the years.

Defining who is a Jew

For American Jews, Jewish identity is a complex and occasionally charged topic. Jews in the United States choose from a wide range of Jewish identities that span a variety of definitions. This situation raises a question that every study designed to count the Jewish population must grapple with: Who do we count, and who is

excluded? Despite the complexity, the present cluster of research indicates relative consensus regarding the definition of who is a Jew, at least in principle, and the differences are found mostly in the translation of that definition into a research methodology.

The Pew study included in their "net" Jewish population all respondents who said 1) they were Jews by religion, or 2) alternatively, all those who did not identify as Jewish by religion (that is, identified as "agnostic, atheist or nothing in particular") but have at least one Jewish parent or were raised as a Jew and still considered themselves **"Jewish or partly Jewish** in some way." Those with at least one Jewish parent or who were raised as a Jew but professed membership in another religion were not counted. For children (under 18), the 'net' number included those who lived in a household with one Jewish adult and who were raised at least partially as Jews. Pew researchers used these 'net' definitions in determining the total number of U.S. Jews.

The methodology applied by Brandeis University scholars, as detailed below, produced a more ambiguous definition of who is a Jew. In the first stage, a base population of adults who identify as Jews by religion was established. In addition, the estimate included Jews of no religion. However, because the definition of that group was ambiguous, having been based on a synthesis of several surveys that had defined this segment of the population in differing ways, the Brandeis study does not distinguish between the various circumstances of those who identify as Jews of

no religion (for instance, whether they had a Jewish parent, were raised as Jews, etc.). Further, the study's population estimates of children employed no independent definition, but rather were extrapolated from adult population figures.

The American Jewish Yearbook study also presents a fluid definition of who is a Jew, as it too was not based on primary research. The researchers defined their target population as those who identify as Jews by religion or those of Jewish background not part of another religion and who define themselves as Jewish in some way. The authors do, however, point out that the information on which they based their study comprises many diverse definitions of Jewish identity, some of which may be in contradiction with the desirable definition.

DellaPergola's study argues that the definition of who is a Jew must be more rigorously applied and far less inclusive. He defines the core population of U.S. Jewry as those who say they are Jews by religion, those who say they are Jews of no religion, as well as those who do not define themselves as Jews but still fall within the definition based on descent. DellaPergola's study stresses, however, that in order to be counted according to these definitions, respondents must have an all-encompassing and enduring Jewish identity that is not interchangeable or compatible with contradictory affiliations. According to DellaPergola, it is the varying degrees of rigor in applying such definitions that has produced the significant differences in the final counts and conclusions of the respective studies.

Conclusion

Viewed broadly, differences in Jewish population estimates, and the respective methodologies that produced them, have impeded any attempt to determine a consensual middle ground or deem a specific, superior approach. As far as the definition of the study population and who is considered a countable Jew are concerned, there seems to be general agreement on the inclusion of self-professed Jews by religion as well as those of Jewish background who regard themselves as Jews but are detached from any religion. Nevertheless, the studies also suggest certain disagreements that emerge when such definitions are translated into practical terms. While Pew and DellaPergola adhere strictly to counting only those who meet at least one of the criteria, the American Jewish Yearbook and Brandeis meta-analyses allow for much ambiguity and flexible interpretation as a result of their reliance on diverse and thus inconsistent data sets. The small gaps between the findings of three of the four studies – ranging between 6.7 and 6.8 million Jews, counted in fundamentally different methods – may suggest that this numerical range is the more reliable estimate. Conversely, the studies have failed to explain the contradiction with previous survey results, which have consistently estimated the

The studies indicating a larger Jewish population have failed to explain contradictions with previous survey results

Jewish population as smaller by at least a million people, as indicated by DellaPergola's study. One of the accepted explanations of this gap and of the high estimate of the Jewish population that appears in the most recent surveys relates to outmarriage. According to this explanation, from 1969 on we have witnessed a significant increase of outmarriage, and a concurrent increase in the percentage of children from mixed marriages choosing to identify as Jewish. These processes are thus raising the number of young Jews. (See the discussion on outmarriage and the children of outmarriage in the identity and identification chapter in this Annual Assessment.)

While it may be impossible to settle these issues today, the debate over them and their in-depth exploration highlight both the importance of conducting such surveys and Jewish population estimates, and the need for as much cooperation and consensus as possible over the most appropriate definitions and methods for producing reliable and broadly consensual results.

Endnotes

1. Pew Research Center, *A Portrait of Jewish Americans*, 2013
2. Brandeis University, *American Jewish Population Estimates*, 2012; Saxe, L. & Tighe, L. (2013); 'Estimating and Understanding the Jewish Population in the United States: A Program of Research', *Cont. Jewry* 33, 43–62.
3. Ira M. Sheskin and Arnold Dashefsky. 'Jewish Population in the United States, 2013', in Arnold Dashefsky and Ira M. Sheskin (Eds.) *The American Jewish Year Book*, Volume 113 (2013) (Dordrecht: Springer) pp. 201-202; Sheskin, I. M. (2013) 'Uses of Local Jewish Community Study Data for Addressing National Concerns', *Cont Jewry* 33, 83–101.
4. DellaPergola, S. (2013). 'How Many Jews in the United States? The Demographic Perspective', *Cont Jewry* 33, 15–42.
5. Central Bureau of Statistics, *Israel's Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*, Number 1/2014.
6. DellaPergola, 'How Many Jews?', 2013.

Haredi Demography – The United States and the United Kingdom

The question of the Haredi population, which claims a central place on the Israeli public agenda, is also growing in importance in many of the world's Jewish communities. This is a group that is growing and young and that has unquestionable Jewish identity at a time when many communities are struggling with low birthrates, aging populations, and a decline in the practice of Jewish customs and in Jewish identity in general. At the same time, the Haredim are, in many respects, very different from the image that characterizes the world's major Jewish communities today. Although it is often supposed that Diaspora Ultra-Orthodox communities differ significantly – sociologically and demographically – from the Haredim in Israel, data from recent surveys point to significant similarities.

Some predict an increasing polarization of Jews between a group with a large proportion of Haredim that is observant, closed, and exhibits

strong solidarity, and a less religious (or not religious at all) group that is involved in wider society but is losing its ties to the Jewish world. This is taking place as the middle population, which balances between these characteristics, is eroding and shrinking.

The growing space the Haredim are claiming signals possible changes in the overall Jewish profile. It is important to ask whether along with the advantages of integration and growth we can expect communities to have less education, wealth and influence and to have different outlooks from those currently accepted. Recent surveys from the United States and the United Kingdom have paid greater attention to the Haredi population than in the past. Comparing their findings with earlier data will allow for an assessment of the Haredim today, its expected growth, and the differences between this group and other constituent groups of the Jewish community.

Forms of Orthodox Identity Represented in the Surveys

All Haredim are Orthodox, but not all the Orthodox are Haredim

In these recent surveys, distinctions between Haredim and other streams of Judaism are neither entirely clear nor consistent. Some who fit the accepted definition of "Haredi" do not necessarily define themselves as such, and vice versa. Similarly, the term "Haredi" does not have a single, monolithic meaning among the world's different

Jewish communities. In practice, the definition derives from a wide range of customs and identities that vary between individuals or groups. It is necessary to examine the recent data carefully, and to recognize definitional differences and assess them accordingly.

In New York, which has the largest concentration of Jews in the United States, the proportion of Orthodox is 32%

In general, Haredim are included in the Orthodox stream of Judaism, though not all the Orthodox are Haredi. Since those conducting the surveys relied on respondents' self-definitions, the data are likely to include those who see themselves as connected to the Orthodox establishment but who do not necessarily observe its practices – for example, those who are simply members of an Orthodox synagogue.

Researchers in the United States divide the Orthodox stream into Modern Orthodox and

Ultra-Orthodox. While the Modern Orthodox are likely to share certain characteristics with the Haredim, they are relatively engaged and involved in general society. The Ultra-Orthodox are closer to the accepted definition of Haredim in Israel, which includes punctilious religious observance in combination with a deliberate distancing from modern society. The terms "Ultra-Orthodox" and "Haredim" are used synonymously in this paper, and includes those who call themselves "Hassidic" or "Yeshivish."

In Britain, this definition is even more complicated, since the country has an Orthodox rabbinical establishment to which many of the Jewish community belong, even those who are not particularly observant. As elaborated below, various data from Britain present the Orthodox and strictly Orthodox (referred to as Haredim in this paper) separately from those who belong to one of the Haredi synagogues. Although each of these groups presents different numbers, it is possible to estimate actual numbers by weighting them.

Population

The Haredi proportion of the overall Jewish population is higher in the United States and the United Kingdom than in Israel.

The United States: According to the 2013 PEW Survey,¹ Orthodox adults comprise about 10% of Jewish population. Within this group, almost a third (3% of the overall Jewish population) are Modern Orthodox, and 6% define themselves as Ultra-Orthodox (Haredi).² This population is not

distributed evenly across the United States but is concentrated in several locations.³ In New York, which has the largest concentration of Jews in the United States, the proportion of Orthodox is 32% (19% of households).⁴ A previous nationwide survey, from 2001, found similar numbers – about 10% of Orthodox among Jewish adults, though it did not include precise data about the ratio of Haredim and Modern Orthodox.⁵

Even though these figures indicate stability in the proportion of Haredim among U.S. Jews, the birthrate and identity-retention data that will be presented later suggest that the continuity of this stability cannot be taken for granted.

Table 1. Orthodox Jewish Adults in the United States, Percentage and Absolute Numbers (2013)⁶

	Percentage of the Adult Jewish Population	Number
Total Orthodox	10%	530,000
Haredim	6%	318,000
Modern Orthodox	3%	159,000
Others	1%	53,000

The United Kingdom: In this country of 290,000 Jews,⁷ a survey of those aged 16 and above found that 12% of Jews identify as Orthodox and another 4% as Haredim.⁸ Similarly, since not everyone who lives a Haredi way of life defines himself by that term, affiliation with an organization of Haredi synagogues (the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations) was also checked, and they make up 13% of the respondents.

Data on the UK's Haredi population from the early 2000s, provide only partial information from which it is possible to make only a general assessment about the actual growth rate. A partial survey of the Jewish population from 2001, which

focused on the London area, shows that 7% of the respondents defined themselves as Orthodox and only 1% as Haredim, while 3% stated that they are members of a Haredi or Independent Orthodox synagogue (as distinct from main stream Orthodox, the United Synagogue).⁹ A 2001 study that focused on synagogue membership found that households that included members of Haredi synagogues (strictly Orthodox) represented 8% of all synagogue members, compared to 11% in 2010.¹⁰ It is not possible to infer the precise growth rate from these data, but it is possible to assume that during the decade from 2001 to 2010, there was significant growth in the UK's Haredi

population, a statistic that is supported by the birthrate data included below.

Table 2: Proportion of Orthodox and Haredim Over Age 16 in the UK (2013)¹¹

	% of Jewish Population
Orthodox	12%
Haredi	4%
Belong to Orthodox synagogue	13%

Comparison to Israel: These data show that the proportion of the Haredi communities in the United States and the United Kingdom is slightly higher than the proportion of Haredim in Israel's Jewish population, which (as of 2011) comprises 9% Haredim above age 20.¹² This ratio is also correct for figures from the beginning of the last decade, when the Haredim represented 6% of the Jewish population above age 20. At the same time, compared to the United States where the proportion of Haredim had thus far been stable, a significant growth in the population is evident in Israel. For the UK, the figures are, as we have said, less unequivocal, but they, too, show a relatively

smaller growth than in Israel, of 37% (from 8% to 11%) who are members of Haredi synagogues (see above) compared to a 50% growth in Israel (from 6% to 9%).

Birthrate and Children

As in Israel, higher birthrates mean that the Haredi population is young.

The United States: The figures show that in Orthodox families there are 4.1 children on average (for those aged 40-59), compared to 1.9 among the overall Jewish population, and between 1.8 and 1.4 among other streams.¹³ The study does not include figures regarding internal divisions within the Orthodox streams, but shows that the Modern Orthodox population is older in general, which is likely to indicate a lower birthrate. The Haredim are over-represented in the younger age-groups and under-represented in the older – even though they comprise 6% of the total Jewish population, they represent 9% and 10% in the 18-29 and 30-49 age groups respectively, and 3% and 2% among those aged 50-64 and over 65 respectively. The Modern Orthodox, on the other hand, comprise 3% of the total Jewish population but only 1% of the younger age group, 18-29, and 4% of the over 65s.

Table 3: Proportion of Orthodox Streams in the United States by Age Group (2013)¹⁴

	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Haredim	9%	10%	3%	2%
Modern Orthodox	1%	3%	3%	4%

Similarly, the data from the New York study show that birthrate patterns of the Modern Orthodox are not similar to those of the Haredim, but are closer to those of Jews from other streams.¹⁵ While the Haredi streams have an average of 5-5.8 children per woman aged 35-44, among the Modern Orthodox this figure stands at 2.5, and 1.3 among the non-Orthodox. The national study does not give data on the proportion of Orthodox children among Jewish children today, but a survey from 2001 showed that 23% of Jewish children were Haredi.¹⁶ The recent data from New York, where there is a relatively high concentration of Haredim, show that 49% of Jewish children in the city are from a Haredi background, and an additional 12% are from a Modern Orthodox background.

Table 4: Birthrates among Jewish Streams in New York (2011)¹⁷

	Average Number of Children (per woman aged 35-44)
Hasidim	5.8
"Yeshivish"	5.0
Modern Orthodox	2.5
Non-Orthodox	1.3

The United Kingdom: There are no precise data on the Haredi, but there are findings that indicate a young age distribution relative to the Jewish population, which suggests a higher birthrate among Haredim – 50% of Haredim are under age 20, compared to 21% of non-Haredim. A similar pattern can be found in the older population, those aged 65 or older, which comprise 23% of the non-Orthodox population and only 8% of the Haredim.¹⁸ These figures were gleaned by comparing the Jewish population in those local authorities where there is a large Haredi majority, where most of the country's Haredim are concentrated, as opposed to the other Jews sampled in the census. This comparison also shows that while the average age in non-Haredi Jewish areas is 44 (which is relatively high compared to an average of 39 in the general population), in Haredi areas, the figure is 27. Accordingly, the researchers estimate that 40% of the births among Jews in 2010 were in Haredi families, and that Haredi children made up 29% of all Jewish children under age 5 in 2011, an increase over the 21% in 2001. The implications of these findings can also be seen in the patterns in the Jewish population, which, according to the population census, show numerical growth in the Orthodox population centers and a decline in areas of predominantly non-Orthodox Jews.¹⁹

In the U.S. today, there is relatively little movement from other streams to Orthodoxy

Table 5: Age Distribution among Haredim and Non-Haredim in the UK (2011)²⁰

	Under 20	20-65*	Over 65
Non-Haredi Jews	21%	56%	23%
Haredim	5%	42%	8%

* The middle group, those aged 20-65, is the remainder after deducting the other groups from the total.

Comparison to Israel: In Israel, the Haredi birthrate is considerably higher than that reported in the United States – an average of 6.5 children per woman in 2007-2009.²¹ This rate represents a relative decline compared to 2002-2004 when the average was 7.5 (the highest during a surveyed period since 1979). At the same time, the general birthrate among Israel's Jewish population is relatively higher than in Jewish communities elsewhere – 2.9 births per woman for the general population in 2007-2009.

Identity Retention

About half of those born as Haredim in the United States move to another stream; the rate is relatively lower in the United Kingdom and Israel.

The United States: Given the birthrate figures above, we should remember that not all those born into a given stream remain in it as adults, and this is especially evident among the Orthodox population, including the Haredim. Among those raised Orthodox, only 48% remained so as adults.²² This rate is higher compared to the 2001 findings (42%).²³ Nevertheless, this proportion declines according to age group – among the older groups,

those aged 50-64 and those aged 65-plus, the proportions of those who have left are 59% and 77% respectively, compared to 43% among those aged 30-49 and plunging to 17% among those aged 18-29. According to the Pew researchers' analysis, this does not just reflect life cycle and gradual departure, but a difference between the previous generation, which came of age in the 1950s, '60s and '70s, and the current generation.

Today, there is relatively little movement from other streams to Orthodoxy, although the data on this are partial – only 4% and 1% respectively for those raised Conservative or Reform, but there is no data available about other groups. These numbers are consistent with the general trend of less traditional Judaism. The 2001 survey showed a similar trend in a slightly different way. It found that only two out of ten Orthodox Jews did not grow up with an Orthodox education but joined Orthodoxy as adults. This compared to three to four out of ten in the other streams (including those who define themselves as "Just Jewish"). Since the Orthodox population is significantly smaller than the other groups mentioned, it can be inferred from these rates that the absolute number of those joining Orthodoxy was also small during this period.

Table 6: Rates of Identity Retention among Those Educated in the Orthodox Stream, by Age Group (2013)²⁴

	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Remained Orthodox	83%	57%	41%	22%
Moved to a different stream	17%	43%	59%	77%

With respect to the growth of the U.S. Haredi population, if the patterns of earlier generations had been maintained, it would have been possible to assume that the growth would have been relatively moderate – in a situation where of the 4.1 children born on average to a Haredi family, just over half move to another stream, there will remain a difference in growth that favors the Haredim, though this would not be very high (48% of 4.1 leaves 1.96 children who remain Orthodox, compared to a birthrate of 1.4-1.8 in the other streams). By contrast, if the pattern of identity retention among the young generation continues at a similar rate as the researchers predict, the pace of the change will increase substantially. It is likely that the relative balance that caused the static demographics of Orthodox population, which did not change between 2001 and 2013, will be broken as a result of the significant growth in the proportion of Haredim. Similarly, in this scenario, the proportion of Modern Orthodox in the overall Orthodox population will continue to decline as a result of their lower birthrates.

The United Kingdom: As distinct from the situation in the United States, in the UK, it was

found that the Orthodox and Haredi population exhibits high identity retention, and that it has grown as a result of people joining from other streams. An increase was noted in the Haredi population since 3% were educated as Haredim although 4% define themselves as Haredi today. This is contrary to the general trend in the Jewish population, which is moving in a direction of decreasing observance. Those joining the Haredi stream come mainly from the Orthodox (6% of those who had an Orthodox education), but also from the non-observant (2%). The Haredim also have the highest identity retention rate – 76% – among the streams. Similarly, the Orthodox population remained at 12%, a figure that applies to both the number of respondents who received an Orthodox education and those who consider themselves Orthodox today.²⁵ We cannot infer from this that there is full retention among members of this stream, only that the total of those leaving and joining is similar. The entirety of the data shows that in the case of the UK, we can assume that the Haredi population will not decline significantly in the future due to defections by its members to other religious streams.

Comparison to Israel: In Israel, as in the UK, there is a significant number of people joining the Haredi population – in 2009, it was found that 33% of Haredi respondents aged 20 and over grew up in a non-Haredi home.²⁶ Nevertheless, this rate is similar to figures among those who define themselves as religious (31%) and smaller than that among the traditional-religious/*Masorti* (43%). The same survey found that the defection rate was lower than in the United States, and only 7.1% of those aged 20 and older who grew up in a Haredi home state they had become less religious over the course of their lives, compared to 20-21% among other religious people and those who are traditional. It should be noted that this figure includes both those who ceased being Haredi and those who became less observant but remained within the Haredi framework. Hence, the real departure rate is likely to be lower still.

Education and Income

In the three countries studied, the education and income of the Haredim are relatively lower than those of the general Jewish population.

The United States: The proportion of Orthodox who hold an academic degree is significantly lower than in the general Jewish population – 39% compared to 58%.²⁷ This disparity mainly results from the situation of the Haredi population in which only 25% have an academic degree, compared to 65% of the Modern Orthodox, which is higher than that of the general Jewish population. These data represent a decline compared to 2001, when 44% of the total Orthodox population held a degree.²⁸ The percentage among all Jews has held steady – 58%, then and now. Thus, the Orthodox have had the lowest percentage of degree holders among the Jewish streams (including the unaffiliated), in both 2001 and 2013. Education figures for New York Jews show relative gender parity among the moderate Haredi "Yeshivish" stream – 45% of men and 41% of women hold degrees. Among Hassidic Haredim, there is a more significant difference between the sexes, in addition to a low overall rate – 16% of men hold degrees versus 11% of women.²⁹

Table 7: Proportion with Academic Degrees among the Jewish Streams (2013)³⁰

	College Graduates	Households with Annual Income over \$150,000
All Jews	58%	25%
Orthodox	39%	28%
Haredim	25%	24%
Modern Orthodox	65%	37%

In terms of income, the data show that high-income households (over \$150,000 per year) can be found at a similar rates among Haredim as among the Jewish population as a whole – 24% and 25% respectively.³¹ On the other hand, for the Modern Orthodox this rate is 37%, the highest among Jewish streams. With regard to those with low incomes, there are no national data divided by group. Nevertheless, the study of New York Jews found that 35% of the city's Orthodox are defined as poor, and they represent 42% of all Jewish poor in the city, compared to 27% of those defined as poor in the overall Jewish population.³²

The Orthodox also rely most on support from the Jewish community – 44% of Haredim who sought human-services assistance did so within the community compared to 19% of the general Jewish population. At the same time, the rate of households with an annual income of less than \$50,000 was similar when comparing the general Jewish population (41%), the Modern Orthodox (38%) and the Yeshivish Haredim (34%). The rate is a significantly higher 66% for Hassidic Haredim, with 89% earning less than \$100,000 a year, compared to 63%-69% among the other groups.

Table 8: Annual Income among Orthodox and Non-Orthodox Households in New York (2011)³³

	Under \$50,000	Under \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Haredi – Hassidic	66%	23%	11%
Haredi – Yeshivish	34%	35%	31%
Modern Orthodox	38%	25%	37%
Non-Orthodox	41%	28%	32%

The United Kingdom: Data from the UK on this subject are only partial. There is no information about education levels for the Haredi or Orthodox populations. Indices of poverty rates among the Haredim are based on segmentation of the Jewish population into areas that are characterized by especially high rates of Haredim, which was conducted using relatively old data from 2001. Although these data are circumstantial, at least in part, combining them shows a substantial difference between the Haredim and the overall

Jewish population. For example, in Hackney, one of these areas, the number of Jews living in public housing ("social rented") is 35% compared to 8% of the Jewish population as a whole,³⁴ and the rate of home ownership was 38% compared to 77% of Jews as a whole. This area is also characterized by crowding and 25% of the Jewish families state that they do not have enough room to live, compared to 8% of the Jewish population overall. Within Hackney, a 2001 survey of the Haredi population in the Stamford Hill neighborhood found that

85% of the families receive some sort of allowance payment from the government, the most common of which is child allowance, which 62% of families received, while 18% of families received income support allowances. Notwithstanding the partial nature of these data, the picture that emerges is one of wide gaps between Jews in Haredi areas and the UK's Jewish population overall.

The Haredi population in Israel, like that of the United States, also has a low rate of degree holders – 10% of Haredim in Israel aged 20 and older have academic degrees, compared to 29% of the general population.³⁵ This pattern of education levels is similar to that found in the United States, and the difference between Haredim and the general Jewish population is just over 40% in the United States compared to 34% in Israel. Another similarity is that, as in the United States, Israeli Haredim have the lowest rates of degree-level education of any of the Jewish religious groups (religious, traditional, secular, etc.).

The income rate of Israeli Haredim is also low relative to the general Jewish population and calls to mind the figures coming from the communities in the United Kingdom and the United States. The figures cannot be compared directly, but show a similar pattern – 72% of Haredim aged 20 and above live in households with average per capita monthly incomes of NIS 2,000, and only 7% live in households with incomes over NIS 4,000.³⁶ The position of the great majority of Haredim in the lowest income category in Israel is comparable to the Hassidic Haredim in New York, but contrary to the Yeshivish Haredim among whom a smaller proportion are at the bottom of the ladder.³⁷

Political Views and Attitudes toward Israel (available only for the United States)

A majority of Haredim define themselves as politically conservative, and tend to hold right-wing political views with regard to Israel

In the United States, where Jews are identified with support for Israel as well as with a liberal Democratic ideology, findings about the Orthodox population in general and the Haredim in particular show significant differences compared to the larger community.³⁸

When it comes to Israel, the Haredim exceed the general Jewish population in measures of closeness and importance, and also hold views further to the right than in the internal Israeli arena. The Modern Orthodox are even more attached to Israel than the Haredim. On the question of ties to Israel, 86% of Haredim and 99% of the Modern Orthodox declared themselves to be connected at least to some degree, compared to 69% of Jews in general. The Haredim and the Modern Orthodox also visit Israel at high rates (74% and 86% respectively) compared to Jews overall (43%).

Regarding Israel's diplomatic situation, only 26% of the Haredim and 33% of the Modern Orthodox believe that there is a chance that the process will lead to two states, Israel and Palestine, compared to 61% among Jews as a whole. Similarly, this population believes the settlements contribute to Israel's security. Among the Haredim, 31% think that they contribute compared to 18% who think they are harmful; and among the Modern

Orthodox, 38% and 12% respectively. Among Jews overall, only 17% believe that the settlements contribute to Israel's security while 44% believe that they are harmful. Finally, in relation to Israeli-U.S. ties, 48% of the Haredim and 64% of the Modern Orthodox believe that American support for Israel is inadequate, compared to 31% of Jews generally. These views, which are far both from

the overall numbers and from the other Jewish streams individually, indicate that the Orthodox are substantially different in their outlook. With the growth of their proportion of the Jewish population and their influence within it, it is likely that their positions will gain more significant weight.

Table 9: Views on Israel Among the Orthodox and General Jewish Populations (2013)³⁹

	"Very" or "Somewhat" connected to Israel	Have visited Israel	Believe the two-state solution has a chance	The settlements contribute to Israel's security	The settlements are harmful to Israel's security	The U.S. does not support Israel enough
All Jews	69%	43%	61%	17%	44%	31%
Haredim	86%	74%	26%	31%	18%	48%
Modern Orthodox	99%	86%	33%	38%	12%	64%

Differences with Jews in general are also reflected in the general political positions held by the Orthodox.⁴⁰ While the Jewish population as a whole is among the most liberal in the United States, both the Haredim and the Modern Orthodox consistently express opposite views. In the distribution between Democrats and Republicans, Jews as a whole lean toward the Democrats (70%) by a significant 48% margin. The Haredim and the Modern Orthodox, in comparison, support the Republicans (58% and

56% respectively), though at lower margins (23 and 19 percentage points respectively). Thus, these populations are far less liberal – only 7% of the Haredim and 22% of the Modern Orthodox consider themselves liberal compared to 49% of Jews in general – 64% of Haredim and 41% the Modern Orthodox define themselves as politically conservative, compared to 19% of all Jews. Among the various issues in the American political discourse, it is not surprising to learn that the Orthodox oppose gay marriage. Support

for small government, 57% of Haredim and 58% of the Modern Orthodox compared to 38% of Jews in general, also attests to their conservatism. On ideological questions, the Haredim represent the extreme position even when compared to the Modern Orthodox, and they express right-wing views at a similar or greater rate. The only case in which a significant proportion of Haredim answered "don't know" on a political issue was in relation to President Obama's performance, with 18% of Haredim answering that they did not

know whether they would support him or not, compared to 3% of the Modern Orthodox and 6% of the Jewish population overall. It can therefore be expected that a greater proportion of Haredim will also bring about a change in Jewish attitudes to domestic political issues, and it is evident that, in contrast to its image, this population is not apathetic but rather holds and expresses clear views on most of the issues on the socio-political agenda.

Table 10: Ideological positions among the Orthodox and General Jewish Populations (2013)⁴¹

	Democrat	Republican	Liberal	Conservative	Prefer small government
All Jews	70%	22%	49%	19%	38%
Haredim	35%	58%	7%	64%	57%
Modern Orthodox	37%	56%	22%	41%	58%

Endnotes

1. Pew Research Center, A Portrait of Jewish Americans, 2013.
2. Those who defined themselves as Hassidic or Yeshivish.
3. Berman Institute – North American Jewish Data Bank, Comparisons of Jewish Communities, 2013.
4. UJA-Federation of New York, Jewish Community Study of New York, 2011.
5. United Jewish Communities, National Jewish Population Survey, 2000-2001.
6. Pew 2013.
7. DellaPergola, Sergio, (2013), "World Jewish Population, 2012," in Arnold Dashefsky and Ira M. Sheskin (Eds.), the American Jewish Year Book, Dordrecht: Springer, pp. 213-283.
8. Institute for Jewish Policy Research, Jews in the United Kingdom in 2013.
9. Institute for Jewish Policy Research, A Portrait of Jews in London and the South-East: A Community Study, 2002.
10. Institute for Jewish Policy Research, Synagogue Membership in the United Kingdom in 2010.
11. Institute for Jewish Policy Research, Jews in the United Kingdom in 2013.
12. Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel Statistical Yearbook, 2013.
13. Pew.
14. Pew.
15. UJA Federation of New York, Jewish Community Study of New York, 2011.
16. United Jewish Communities, National Jewish Population Survey, 2000-2001.
17. UJA-Federation of New York, Jewish Community Study of New York, 2011.
18. Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2011. Census Results (England and Wales): A Tale of Two Jewish Populations.
19. Institute for Jewish Policy Research 2011. Census Results (England and Wales): Initial Insights about the UK Jewish Population.
20. Institute for Jewish Policy Research 2011. Census Results (England and Wales): A Tale of Two Jewish Populations.
21. Central Bureau of Statistics, Fertility of Jewish and Moslem Women in Israel According to their Degree of Religiosity, 1979-2009.
22. Pew, op-cit.
23. United Jewish Communities, National Jewish Population Survey, 2000-2001
24. Pew, op-cit.
25. Institute for Jewish Policy Research, Jews in the United Kingdom in 2013
26. Central Bureau of Statistics. The Social Survey, 2009.
27. Pew, op-cit.
28. United Jewish Communities, National Jewish Population Survey, 2000-2001.
29. UJA-Federation of New York, Jewish Community Study of New York, 2011.
30. Pew, op-cit.
31. Pew, op-cit.
32. UJA-Federation of New York, Jewish Community Study of New York, 2011.
33. UJA-Federation of New York, Jewish Community Study of New York, 2011. Totals do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

34. Institute for Jewish Policy Research, Key Trends in the British Jewish Community, 2011.
35. Central Bureau of Statistics, The Social Survey, 2011.
36. Central Bureau of Statistics, The Social Survey, 2011.
37. UJA-Federation of New York, Jewish Community Study of New York, 2011.
38. Pew, op-cit.
39. Pew, op-cit.
40. Pew, op-cit.
41. Pew, op-cit.

PART 3

Special Feature Articles

South African Jewry 20 Years Into Democracy

In December 2013, South Africa was once again the focus of international attention following the passing of its iconic former President Nelson Mandela. Tributes poured in for this remarkable freedom fighter and statesman, and in due course world leaders began streaming into the country to attend his funeral. Just under twenty years previously, they had similarly arrived from near and far to witness Mandela's inauguration as President of South Africa's newborn multiracial democracy.

Mandela's passing also placed the spotlight on South African Jewry, at least so far as international Jewry was concerned. For most of his career, he had been closely associated with members of the Jewish community, most notably in the struggle against the racially oppressive apartheid system. None of the country's other ethnic white communities came close to producing so high a proportion of individuals who had helped him to realize his goals. This in turn was part of the broader phenomenon of Jews, despite being part of the privileged white caste, producing a strikingly disproportionate number of those whites who did oppose apartheid.

Another, thornier, question concerning world Jewry was what Mandela's attitude had been toward Israel. The implications of this were of more than historical interest. Particularly since the collapse of the Oslo peace process, there has been a growing campaign to portray Israel as an apartheid state essentially no different from the despised white minority regime in South Africa. The comparison may be specious, but in a world where perceptions create their own realities, it has the potential to serious harm the Jewish State. In no small part, the demise of apartheid South Africa was hastened by the international boycott against it, and those who push the Israel-Apartheid equation believe that it likewise holds the key to Israel's demise. Had someone of the stature of Nelson Mandela, the man more than anyone else associated with the fight against apartheid, endorsed this canard, it would greatly boost the credibility of those who propagate it.¹

Mandela's attitude toward Israel and his relationship with South African Jewry have been alluded to because in many ways they capture the ambiguous position of Jews in South Africa

today. On the one hand, the awkward transition from a society based on entrenched white privilege to one of multiracial democracy has been eased by the fact that individual Jews did so much to bring about the new order. Certainly, it has helped the Jewish leadership to punch above its weight in terms of accessing government and having input into public policy. On the other the strongly entrenched culture of anti-Zionism, so typical of post-colonial African societies and for historical reasons particularly pronounced in South Africa, places mainstream Jewry at odds

The South African Jewish population is approximately 75,000, out of a total population of 52 million

with the government's standpoint and the views of their fellow citizens in general. The notion that Israel practices a form of apartheid and that the situation regarding Israelis and Palestinians largely mirrors the situation in pre-liberation South Africa is now widely regarded as fact. It has

naturally been assiduously propagated by anti-Israel activists, who in seeking to undermine the credibility of those who oppose them do not scruple to feed into the inevitable vein of anti-white racial sentiment within the black population. Hence, by taking a stand on behalf of Israel, Jews increasingly risk being seen as supporters of apartheid, and indeed are regularly labeled as such in certain quarters.

This overview will explore these and related questions, but at this point it must be stressed that

anti-Zionism and the struggle against it is only one component of the collective Jewish experience. Taken as a whole, in fact, the overall state of South African Jewry twenty years into democracy is remarkably healthy, arguably more so than at any time in the community's 175 year-old history. This may not be the case in bare numerical terms; the community reached its peak of around 120 000 souls in 1970,² and since then it has decreased by more than a third. It is certainly true, however, in terms of the high levels of Jewish identity, the correspondingly low rates of assimilation and intermarriage and the burgeoning of Jewish learning at all levels. Additionally, and despite the prevalence of anti-Zionist sentiment, South Africa has consistently recorded one of the Diaspora's lowest rates of anti-Semitism.

Demographics and Distribution

In global terms, the South African Jewish population is not particularly large. Nevertheless, it still constitutes the twelfth-largest Jewish community in the Diaspora and by far the largest on the African continent.³ Despite losses to emigration during the final quarter of the last century, it still comprises some 70-75,000 souls (out of a total population of 52 million). This figure has remained stable for at least a decade.

Prior to World War II, the Jewish population was more spread out than it is today. While the majority were concentrated in the main urban centers – Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein and East London – a substantial minority lived in the

smaller country towns, and in scores of cases were sufficiently numerous to establish formally constituted congregations. The larger country centers also had active Zionist, women's, youth and welfare organizations. After the war, however, Jews began relocating to the cities, initially for economic and educational reasons, but with this exodus in due course generating a momentum of its own.⁴ Today, not only have most of the country communities closed, but even in the cities the Jewish population has declined sharply, sometimes by as much as 90%. According to the 2001 census and available communal records, two thirds of the Jewish community – an estimated 50 000 – live in Johannesburg and 20% in Cape Town (16 000). Durban and Pretoria together account for 3000 more, and around the same number are spread out in the remainder of the country.

In 1950, the SAJBD appointed an itinerant rabbi whose brief was to pay regular visits to the declining pockets of country Jewry no longer able to employ a religious minister and teacher. This position has been held since 1993 by Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, whose brief has been expanded to visit the small Jewish communities in such Southern African countries as Namibia, Botswana, Mauritius, Zimbabwe and Swaziland.⁵

A noteworthy feature of South African Jewry is that an estimated three out of four of its members have Lithuanian roots, the result of a huge influx from that country and neighboring territories in the period 1880-1930. This common heritage helps to explain what can be said to most characterize the community, namely its strong attachment to traditional Orthodox Judaism (albeit that the

degree of actual practice varies widely) and its strong support for Zionism.

In addition to the dominant Eastern European component, the community comprises a significant minority of German-Jewish origin, largely descended from refugees from Nazism who arrived in the 1930s. Since the war, additional diversity has been provided by Sephardi Jews originally from the Greek island of Rhodes, most of who had first gone to Northern and Southern Rhodesia (today's Zambia and Zimbabwe). Israelis, whether as permanent residents or transient workers, have likewise emerged as a distinct grouping within the community.

Because of the high rate of emigration by younger people from the mid-1970s, the profile of the Jewish community today is a relatively aged one. According to the 2001 census, 20% of its members were over 65, as opposed to just 5% nationally. The same proportion, however, were under the age of twenty, their numbers swelled by the typically larger families within the burgeoning religious sector. These age profiles vary from place to place. The median age in Johannesburg and Cape Town is lower than that of Durban and Pretoria, while in Bloemfontein, East London and Port Elizabeth, Jews over fifty now constitute the large majority.⁶

Three out of four of its members have Lithuanian roots, the result of a huge influx between 1880 and 1930

Education

A striking feature of South African Jewry is how many of the youth are being educated within the Jewish day school system. Over 90% of those of school-going age are found in Johannesburg and Cape Town, and more than four out of five of these attend a Jewish school (the majority of the remainder attend private colleges). In Johannesburg the largest school system comprises the three King David schools, whose combined student body comprise just under 60% of those

being educated under Jewish auspices. The United Herzlia Schools in Cape Town cater for over 80% of Jewish school-goers. The remainder by and large attend the more religiously focused Phyllis Jowell Jewish Day School and Sinai Academy or private institutions.

As a result of the growth of Orthodox observance in Johannesburg, a wide array of religious schools has emerged

The ethos of the King David and Herzlia schools is officially defined as ‘broadly national-traditional’⁷, that is, that the specifically Jewish content of its curricula is a synthesis of Zionism (including the teaching of modern Hebrew language and literature) and traditional Orthodox Judaism. Regarding the latter, it has meant in practice that the outer forms of how the schools are run have been governed by Orthodox norms, such as in modes of daily worship and the observance of Kashrut, Shabbat and Yom Tov, but the degree to which students

and faculty members adhere to such precepts varies widely. While a non-coercive stance is maintained regarding different levels of religious observance, non-Orthodox and secular streams of religious instruction are rigorously excluded.

The SA Board of Jewish Education, the largest body of its kind in the Diaspora, is directly responsible for the educational and financial policies of the King David Schools. It has over 90 affiliates countrywide, including the United Herzlia Schools, Yeshiva College, Torah Academy, Shaarei Torah Primary and Hirsch Lyons in Johannesburg and Theodor Herzl in Port Elizabeth. The latter’s student body today is 90% non-Jewish, but a basic Jewish-Zionist education is provided for the city’s remaining Jewish youth. In Durban, whose Carmel Jewish day school had to close in the late-1990s, a new, more religiously focused school was established at the beginning of 2012.

As a result of the growth of Orthodox observance in Johannesburg, a wide array of religious schools has emerged. Ideologically, they range from the Ultra-Orthodox Johannesburg Cheder, where the greater emphasis is on *Kodesh* studies – exclusively so in the upper age groups – to the more Mizrahi and Zionist-oriented Yeshiva College, the second largest system after King David. Somewhere in between are Hirsch Lyons, Torah Academy (under the auspices of Chabad Lubavitch), Bais Yaakov, Yeshiva Maharsha and Shaarei Torah. With the exception of Bais Yaakov girls’ high school, all provide a Jewish and secular education from pre-school through to matric, for both boys and girls (who are educated separately from early primary school level).

That so high a proportion of the youth attends Jewish schools testifies to the robustness of the community's Jewish identity, but it is not the whole story. In large part, it is also due to the widespread lack of faith in the quality of government educational institutions. In addition to their Jewish content, the Jewish day schools also provide a high standard of secular education, as shown by their consistently impressive levels of academic achievement. Thus, the schools provide the best of both worlds – private school-quality secular education combined with a thorough exposure to Jewish religion, history, language and literature – but of course the financial pressures are formidable. When to this is added the cost of private health insurance and additional security one gets some idea as to the pressures that people are under to maintain First World living standards in a society where basic state services are increasingly inadequate.

Safety and Security

Nowhere has the inadequacy of state services been so pressing a problem as in the area of maintaining law and order. Since the political transition, South Africa's levels of violent crime, including murder and rape, have consistently been amongst the highest in the world. Statistics relating to car hijackings and home invasions have likewise reached unprecedented levels in the post-1994 era. A survey on attitudes within the Jewish community conducted in 1998 (see below) found that of 267 respondents indicating that they were fairly or very likely to leave South Africa within the

next five years, 211 cited 'personal safety concerns' as being the most, or one of the most important reasons for wishing to do so.⁸

There is little doubt that had this dire situation continued, the high rates of Jewish emigration prior to the turn of the century would have continued apace, imperiling the very existence of the Jewish community. What has been a critical factor in reducing the crime threat to manageable levels has been the extraordinary success of the Community Active Patrol (CAP) initiative. CAP provides supplementary policing in areas where Jews are concentrated through a partnership between the community and security professionals. Through this, vehicles manned by well trained and equipped security personnel constantly patrol specifically designated areas of Johannesburg 24 hours per day, reacting to every report of criminal activity or even suspicious behavior received by members of the public. CAP was instituted at the behest of the Community Security Organization (CSO), a Jewish civil defense body set up under the auspices by the SAJBD in 1993, with the involvement of the Chief Rabbi's Office. The original purpose of the CSO was solely to protect the Jewish community against anti-Semitism, but ten years later it was realized that it was predatory crime and not anti-Semitism that posed the greatest threat to Jewish well-

The overwhelming majority of those thinking of emigrating cite personal safety concerns

being. One especially harrowing incident which helped to trigger the CSO's strategic shift into public policing was a home invasion where an armed robber calmly helped himself to food in the kitchen while the four year-old Jewish child he had just shot lay bleeding in the next room.⁹ CAP was first instituted in the heavily Jewish suburb of Glenhazel and adjoining areas in 2006. After the first year, violent crime in the area had dropped by 79%.¹⁰ The success of the model saw it progressively implemented in other areas where

**The moves
countrywide
have resulted in
huge savings for
the community,
and ensured the
sustainability of
the cradle-to-
grave services**

Jews were largely based, and with comparably impressive results. It would be no exaggeration to say that the success of the CAP initiative has transformed the position of Jews in Johannesburg, not to mention that of their non-Jewish neighbors as well, and given the community a new lease on life.

Communal Infrastructure and Finances

Even more than education, providing adequate welfare services for the growing number of needy members of the community has placed a formidable burden on the Jewish communal infrastructure. One of the ways in which the challenge has been met is through a rigorous process of rationalization and fiscal

discipline, involving cost-saving amalgamations of different organizations, the elimination of wasteful duplication of services and the pooling of resources such as sharing premises and administrative services. Thus, in Johannesburg, welfare now largely falls under the umbrella of the Johannesburg Jewish Helping Hand and Burial Society (Chevra Kadisha) which, in addition to its traditional charitable support for needy community members oversees the running of the Jewish aged homes Sandringham Gardens and Our Parents Home, the Arcadia Jewish Orphanage (now largely catering for children from broken homes), the Society for the Jewish Handicapped, Jewish Community Services and the Jewish Women's Benevolent Society, amongst other, smaller, organizations. Organizations responsible for the civil rights, security and Zionist side of communal life as well as for services of a more cultural or research nature are based at the Beyachad communal center. They include the SA Jewish Board of Deputies, SA Zionist Federation, Israel-United Appeal-United Communal Fund, Women's International Zionist Organization-SA (WIZO-SA), Union of Jewish Women, SA Union of Jewish Students and the CSO.

Rationalization initiatives have been implemented with similar success in Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria and Port Elizabeth. Fundraising in Cape Town largely falls under the United Jewish Campaign. Similarly, the local branches of the SAJBD, Zionist Federation, WIZO-SA and CSO, together with various smaller organizations, share the same premises, in Hatfield Street, Gardens. Just across the road is the city's main Jewish

cultural and educational campus, housing the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, SA Jewish Museum and Jacob Gitlin Library. Also on site is the Great Synagogue, premises of the country's oldest Jewish congregation, the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation (established 1841).

An inevitable result of this downsizing has been that the Jewish communal service sector can no longer employ community members on the scale that it once did. In a country where the unemployment rate is at around 35%, this is no minor disadvantage. Previously, working for the community had provided a niche for a significant proportion of community members, particularly those without special skills or qualifications. That being said, the rationalization moves countrywide have resulted in huge savings for the community, and ensured the sustainability of the cradle-to-grave services provided by its communal infrastructure. In any case, the main reason for smaller staffs across the board is simply one of technological advances, which have rendered so many secretarial and such like positions obsolete.

Religious Affiliations, Zionism and Jewish Identity

In 1998 and 2005, two important surveys were conducted on Jewish attitudes toward, amongst other things, religion, Zionism, politics and the current state and future of South Africa.¹¹ The findings were based on responses to various questions received from one thousand community members drawn proportionately from Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria.

So far as questions of Jewish identity and affiliation were concerned, the findings of both studies were encouraging. Over 90% of respondents saw their Jewishness as being either very or fairly important. In the religious sense, two-thirds classified themselves as 'Traditional', that is that they were not fully observant in the Orthodox sense but their affiliation was to Orthodox synagogues and modes of worship. Of the remainder, 14% classified themselves as 'Strictly Orthodox', 7% as Reform/Progressive and 12% as Secular/Just Jewish. Mirroring these attitudes was the low rate of intermarriage. 94% of respondents who were or had been married had been married to other Jews, i.e. those born Jewish or converts to Judaism whether via Orthodox or Reform.¹² 4% of the respondents were converts, the split between those converted under Reform and under Orthodox auspices being roughly 50:50.

Both surveys found high levels of attachment to Israel. Approximately 80% had close friends and relatives there and the same proportion had visited at least once. Just over half claimed to feel a strong and one-third a moderate attachment to Israel, which was also one of the top countries South African Jews would (hypothetically) immigrate to.¹³

In broad terms, Johannesburg is the hub of Jewish religiosity while Cape Town is characterized more

Surveys have found high levels of attachment to Israel – approximately 80% have close friends or relatives there

by its active Jewish cultural and intellectual life. At the most recent count, there were just over sixty active Orthodox synagogues in Johannesburg, considerably more than at any time in the city's history, despite the Jewish population being much smaller than it was at its height. One reason for this proliferation is the phenomenon of 'shtieblization', that is, the establishment of small, independent congregations based in converted residential properties and sometimes just in a room or two in an office block. Ten of these congregations fall under the Chabad-Lubavitch movement alone,

Johannesburg and Cape Town both have three Progressive congregations while there is one each in Durban, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth, and East London

while others include traditional Lithuanian-style 'Mitnagdim', Israeli Sephardi and Mizrahi. This competition notwithstanding, the traditional 'big shuls,' with seating capacities of 500 and upwards, continue to hold their own. Over time, certain *shtiebls* (the original Ohr Somayach *minyan*, for example) have grown to the point where they are more or less on a

par with the larger mainstream synagogues.

In addition to places of worship, religious learning centers have proliferated. The Johannesburg Yeshiva Gedolah, established in 1974, has since produced a sizable proportion of the country's religious leadership (including the current Chief Rabbi Dr. Warren Goldstein). Other significant adult learning institutions include the Kollel

Yad Shaul, Emunah Ladies Beit Midrash, Yeshiva Maharsha, Lubavitch Yeshiva Gedolah, Bnei Akiva Beit Midrash and Ohr Somayach). 40% of Jewish youth attend one or other of the religious schools, which have a sizable Kodesh component in their curricula. The number of pupils enrolling in these schools, most of them products of large Dati households, continues to grow.¹⁴

Most Orthodox congregations are affiliated to the Union of Orthodox Synagogues, which maintains the Office of the Chief Rabbi and the Johannesburg Beth Din and whose Kashrut Department oversees the production and distribution of kosher products. The role of the Beth Din in Johannesburg and Cape Town includes dealing with questions of conversion, adoption, divorce and *Dinei Torah*.

Progressive (Reform) Judaism falls under the auspices of the SA Union for Progressive Judaism. Johannesburg and Cape Town both have three Progressive congregations while there is one each in Durban, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth, and East London. Only 7% of South African Jews now consider themselves to be Reform/Progressive. The Progressive community is also a relatively aged one. According to the 2005 survey, 71% of its members are over the age of 45 compared to the national average of 56% and 36% amongst the Strictly Orthodox.¹⁵ This in turn points to the central weakness of the Progressive movement in South Africa, namely its failure to produce its own educational institutions to match those established under Orthodox auspices. Nevertheless, there continues to be an active women's movement (the United Sisterhood, which maintains a proud tradition of charitable work in both the Jewish and general community), as well as a

Zionist youth group (Netzer).

Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism

South Africa has the unwelcome distinction of being associated with perhaps the most notorious display of public anti-Semitism in modern times, namely the 2001 World Conference Against Racism (WCAR). Held in Durban under the auspices of the United Nations, the NGO-component of this event was hijacked by radical anti-Israel groupings and turned into a vehicle for demonizing and de-legitimizing the Jewish state. It also, inevitably, spilled over into displays of more general anti-Semitism, such as in the distribution of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (a banned publication in South Africa).

Curiously enough, even the WCAR had little impact on one of the most encouraging aspects of South Africa today, namely its consistently low rates of anti-Semitism. As measured by actual acts intended to cause harm – examples range from assault to verbal abuse, hate mail, the distribution of anti-Semitic literature and vandalism – the annual figures recorded in the country are strikingly low when compared with those of other major Diaspora communities. Since the beginning of the century, the annual total of anti-Semitic incidents jointly logged by the SAJBD and CSO has seldom exceeded fifty, as opposed to between 500 to well over a thousand in the UK, Canada, France and Australia. Aside from bare numbers, the relatively innocuous nature of anti-Semitic activity is noteworthy. Overwhelmingly, it is of a non-violent nature, usually taking the

form of verbal abuse or hate mail. This was true even in 2009, which as a result of the fall-out from Operation Cast Lead in Gaza was the worst year on record in terms of anti-Semitic activity in South Africa. Only three cases that could be classified as ‘physical harassment’ were recorded, and none of damage and desecration to Jewish property. By contrast, that same year in the United Kingdom, there were 79 recorded cases of violent assault and 63 of damage and desecration (including to 17 synagogues).

South Africa’s low anti-Semitism rates must in part be attributed to the country’s strong multi-cultural ethos and zero-tolerance attitude toward all forms of racial, ethnic or religious-based prejudice. Specific legislation and institutions have been set up specifically to protect groups and individuals from unfair discrimination on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, gender or other such unreasonable grounds. These include the Bill of Rights in the Constitution, the SA Human Rights Commission, Equality Courts and media regulatory bodies that balance the right to freedom of expression against the Constitutional prohibitions against “hate speech”. It was largely as a result of the input and representations of the SAJBD, in fact, that the anti-hate speech clauses were included in the new, post-apartheid Constitution.¹⁶

The WCAR had little impact on one of the most encouraging aspects of South Africa today, namely its low rates of anti-Semitism

A second reason for South Africa's low anti-Semitism rates is the demise of the threat once posed by the extreme right wing of the white population following the transition to democracy. Prior to 1994, it was from this quarter that most anti-Semitic activity emanated and about which the Jewish community was most concerned. Now a marginalized fringe group, white rightists largely confine their activities to bewailing their lost cause via the Internet, in the course of which the downfall of the white man is routinely attributed

to the pernicious machinations of Jewish communists/capitalists/liberals.

A second reason why anti-Israel sentiment in government circles remained largely dormant during the early transition years was the Oslo peace process

At the time of writing, South Africa is experiencing an unprecedented wave of virulently anti-Semitic invective, particularly in the social media, as a result of the conflict in Gaza. It remains to be

seen whether this ugly new discourse, which blacks are now almost as likely as Muslims to be guilty of spreading, is the harbinger of an altogether more dangerous new era for South African Jewry.

The mounting hostility to Israel in the mainstream political, academic and media culture has indeed become very troubling.

Much more troubling to the Jewish community is the mounting hostility to Israel in the mainstream political, academic and media culture. An early

warning that the transition to majority rule would mean the end of South Africa's close ties with the Jewish state was when Mandela met with Yasser Arafat shortly after his release from prison in 1990. The Palestine Liberation Organization had been a stalwart ally of the ANC during the struggle era, and the subsequently published photograph of the two leaders warmly embracing sent shock waves through the already jittery ranks of South African Jewry. Jews had now to adapt to the reality that the likely future government had close ties with Israel's most implacable foes and negative attitudes toward Israel itself. Exacerbating the situation was the uncomfortable reality that Israel and South Africa had had close ties with one another, including in the military sphere.¹⁷

Two factors shielded the Jewish community to a large extent from the implications of this historical legacy during the 1990s. One was the impressive proportion of its members who had fought against apartheid, often at a heavy personal cost. This had created some awkward moments for the Jewish leadership during the apartheid era, with pointed questions being asked in high places about where Jewish loyalties lay, but after 1990 the community has to a great extent shared in the reflected glory of those who had taken a stand. (To illustrate this, government representatives who have spoken at SAJBD congresses, including all four post-1994 presidents, have never failed to make some mention of these contributions).

A second reason why anti-Israel sentiment in government circles remained largely dormant during the early transition years was the Oslo peace process, which had been launched just

before the first democratic South African elections and which many believed would yield in due course a similarly successful negotiated settlement to the one that had been achieved in South Africa. So long as the two sides seemed to be making progress toward reaching this goal, official criticism of Israel was muted. However, whenever the peace process ran into difficulties, as was the case during Binyamin Netanyahu's first term of office, the stance unfailingly adopted was that it was Israel that was to blame.

Jewish leaders thus found that their relationships with government were to a large extent hostage to the ebbs and flows of the Middle East peace process. This was not so bad so long as there was a peace process, but all this changed with the launch of the so-called "Second Intifada" in September 2000. Since then, the South Africa-Israel relationship has been cool at best, and the Middle East issue has been a continual bone of contention between the ruling party and the Jewish leadership.

A second way in which the demise of Oslo negatively impacted on the Jewish community was in how what had once been an asset, namely the many Jews who had fought against apartheid, in many ways became a liability. Jewish anti-apartheid activists had fallen into two broad categories – traditional liberal and hard left. The former, who generally campaigned against apartheid from within legally permissible parameters (such as in Parliament), were supportive of Zionism or at least neutral about it. Jewish leftists – and overwhelmingly, these tended to be committed Communists – were by contrast

almost all to some degree anti-Zionist.

While South Africa's own transition was still underway and a parallel process apparently taking place on the Israeli-Palestinian front, it was rare for 'Struggle' veterans to come out in public against Israel. A year into the Second Intifada, however, this situation changed when Ronnie Kasrils, a senior member of the ruling party's armed wing in exile and at that time a Cabinet Minister, launched what came to be called the 'Not in my Name' campaign during a parliamentary debate on the Middle East. The initial aim of this movement was to persuade "South Africans of Jewish descent" to endorse a 1200-word Declaration of Conscience which blamed Israel almost exclusively for the conflict. South African Jewry as a whole was stunned by this unprecedented attempt, emanating from the highest level of government, to divide the community into 'good' and 'bad' camps over the Israel issue. They were also shocked by the sheer virulence of the invective employed by Kasrils, a flamboyant, in many ways unstable personality whose reaction to the community's outrage against him was to become progressively more abusive.¹⁸ The petition campaign attracted only a few hundred signatures, but the list included many well-known figures from the freedom struggle. The extent

Efforts have been made to divide the community into 'good' and 'bad' camps over the Israel issue

to which this has undermined the effectiveness of efforts to counter the country's culture of anti-Israel bias – and in particular, the equating of Israel and its policies with apartheid South Africa – cannot be overstated. A perception has been fostered that Jewish dissidents against Zionism are equivalent to white Afrikaners who, for reasons of conscience, took a stand against the apartheid system even if it meant being cast out as traitors by mainstream Afrikanerdom. Ever since, anti-Israel groupings in South Africa – they include movements like BDS-SA, Stop

BDS activists exploit anti-white feeling within the black population as a way of smearing those Jews who oppose them

the Jewish National Fund, Open Shuhada Street and the Palestine Solidarity Committee – have exploited to the maximum the presence of anti-Zionist Jews within their ranks, not least because of the alibi they provide against accusations of anti-Semitism.

Anti-Israel groupings have of late become more aggressive in their determination not just to malign the Jewish state but to sabotage all forms of interaction between South Africans and Israelis, be it in the academic, cultural, economic or political sphere. More recent boycott initiatives include: campaigning against a water purification research partnership between the University of Johannesburg and Ben Gurion University; the disruption of a recital by Israeli-born pianist

Yossi Reshef at Wits University, led by members of the Student Representative Council; a nationwide boycott against a Jewish-owned toy store chain because of its support for the Jewish National Fund; a boycott campaign against Ahava cosmetics, which in part operates in the West Bank and an attempt to prevent the Cape Town Opera company from performing in Israel. While these and other initiatives have to date resulted in more noise than concrete achievements, there is a danger of their creating an environment where any engagement with Israelis, no matter how innocuous, will be seen as being simply not worth the trouble by those otherwise uncommitted on the whole question.

A concerning trend is the increasing readiness of BDS activists to exploit anti-white feeling within the black population as a way of smearing those Jews who oppose them. The rhetoric adopted against Israel now largely mirrors the protest rhetoric that characterized the popular discourse against apartheid. In this scenario, Jews emerge as the modern-day equivalent of the racist and oppressive white establishment of yesteryear, people who were complicit in propping up the former regime and who now support the same hateful system against the Palestinians. How far this thinking has penetrated was shown by the chanting of the notorious 'Struggle' song 'Shoot the Boer' by black demonstrators at Wits University in August 2013, only with the wording changed to *Dubula e'Juda* – 'Shoot the Jew.'¹⁹

Working with limited resources in a generally hostile milieu, the Jewish establishment has

fought hard against the boycott and had some success. Notably, after extensive lobbying and multiple submissions to the relevant parliamentary committees, it persuaded government to overturn a Cabinet decision regarding how Israeli products originating in the West Bank were to be labeled. Previously, it was required that such goods be identified as “Products Originating from Occupied Palestinian Territory”, wording so politicized as to constitute a virtual government *hechsher* for boycotting those products. The final wording adopted was the essentially descriptive and politically neutral “West Bank: Israeli goods/ East Jerusalem: Israeli goods”.

Understanding just where South Africa stands on the question of maintaining relations with Israel is further bedeviled by the contradictory messages in that regard being put out by government spokespeople. It sometimes appears that there is a tug-of-war underway between those who in favor of maintaining the status quo and those agitating for ties to be severed altogether. The controversy over the so-called ‘travel ban’ illustrates this well. It emerged in early 2013 that Deputy Minister of International Relations Ebrahim Ebrahim had issued a memorandum prohibiting government representatives from visiting Israel until such time as progress was made in ending its occupation of Palestinian territory. For some time prior to that, attempts to get even lower level political representatives to visit Israel had been stymied, in certain cases at the last minute. Minister of International Relations Maite Mashabane assured the SAJBD in

a meeting in June that there was no such travel ban, but subsequently contradicted this when addressing the virulently anti-Israel Congress of SA Trade Unions. The ensuing controversy was fanned further by Avigdor Lieberman’s ill-considered comments that SA Jewry faced an imminent pogrom and should hasten to make Aliyah.²⁰ Cabinet has since issued a statement stating unequivocally that no ‘travel ban’ is in force, but events on the ground contradict the official position. Theoretically, South Africa still has full diplomatic relations with Israel with a South African Embassy in Tel Aviv, but in reality there has been very limited interaction in this sphere for at least a decade.

South Africa still has full diplomatic relations with Israel, but in reality there has been very limited interaction for at least a decade

Jews and the Wider Society

At the time of writing, South Africa is shortly to hold its fifth general elections since the transition to democracy. In the inaugural elections in April 1994, the Jewish vote was divided between the liberal Democratic Party (56%), the National Party (31%) and the eventual winners, the African National Congress (11%).²¹ Since then, Jews have voted almost entirely for the Democratic Alliance (DA – the successor to the Democratic Party), which, under the leadership of the charismatic

Jewish lawyer Tony Leon, became the Official Opposition in 1999. Ten Jews served as MPs in the 400-seat National Assembly in the first post-apartheid parliament, mainly as members of the ANC. That number dwindled steadily until only one remains, the veteran anti-apartheid activist Ben Turok (who has since announced his imminent retirement from politics). However, for the first time this century, at least two new Jewish MPs are likely to take their seats after the election, as representatives of the DA. One of them, Michael Bagraim, is a former national chairman of the

Apartheid resulted in enormous socio-economic inequalities; Jewish leaders have taken on the challenge of redressing those imbalances

SAJBD. It remains to be seen whether this heralds a renewed era of Jewish involvement in political affairs.

The ruling African National Congress, which currently controls a fraction under two-thirds of the 400 seats in the National Assembly, will almost certainly win this year's elections

comfortably once more, but most likely with a reduced majority. Popular discontent over multiple cases of public corruption, nepotism, poor service delivery and wastefulness by government representatives has grown in recent years, often manifesting in violent protests. It remains to be seen whether the DA can capitalize on this by making meaningful inroads into the ANC's mainly black support base. The reality is that South African politics largely reflects

the racial divisions in the population, with the minority white, Asian and mixed-race groups overwhelmingly supporting the DA whereas blacks support either the ANC or other, smaller, black ethnic parties. There is also an increasing tendency by some ANC leaders to exploit the legacy of anti-white resentment to shore up their power base, something that would have been unthinkable during the Mandela years.

There has been a much stronger emphasis on charitable and social upliftment work outside the confines of the Jewish community in the post-apartheid era. Apartheid resulted in enormous socio-economic inequalities between the privileged white minority and the rest of the population, and Jewish leaders, from the late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris²² through to business magnates, communal professionals and existing social outreach organizations have taken on the challenge of ensuring that Jews do their part in redressing those imbalances. In addition to organizations like Afrika Tikken, which were founded specifically as Jewish-led initiatives aimed at redressing the imbalances in society caused by apartheid, most of the traditional Jewish communal bodies – they include the SAJBD, SA Zionist Federation, youth movements, Jewish National Fund and women's Zionist groups – have included general social outreach amongst their ongoing activities.²³

Once it became obvious that the unraveling of the apartheid system was irreversible, South African Jews in the main welcomed the change and sought to play a constructive part in bringing about the new democratic order. This commitment

to participating alongside their fellow citizens in nation building, social upliftment and the safeguarding of the institutions of democracy continues to underpin how the Jewish leadership sees its role today, twenty years since the transition to majority rule. South Africa, its many problems notwithstanding, remains a politically and economically stable democratic society, where diversity is respected, minority rights protected essential human rights and freedoms strictly upheld. For the Jewish community, it has provided a safe, tolerant environment in which Jewish life in all its richness and diversity has been able to thrive, while at the same time allowing Jews as individuals

to participate fully in the affairs of the wider society. The future, as ever, is uncertain. Many fear that the endemic corruption and mismanagement, not to mention racial polarization and popular anger, that has come to characterize so much of public life today is a harbinger for South Africa's being just another failed African state in the not-to-distant future. That being said, South Africa has confounded the doomsday predictions of the naysayers many times in the past. With its robust economy, resilient democratic structures, rich natural resources and sophisticated First World infrastructure, there is every reason to hope that it will continue to do so as it begins its third decade of multiracial democracy.

Endnotes

1. Essentially, Mandela was a “two-state solutionist” who recognised the legitimacy of both Jewish and Palestinian national aspirations. This writer’s book *Jewish Memories of Mandela* (SA Jewish Board of Deputies-Umoja Foundation, 2011) discusses these issues.
2. Dubb, A A, *The Jewish Population of South Africa – The 1991 Sociodemographic Survey*, Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies & Research, Cape Town, 1994, p7. The table provides figures showing the growth and decline of the Jewish population according to official census figures for the period 1880-1991.
3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_population_by_country#Countries
4. The phenomenon of small-town and rural Jewry relocating to the larger urban centres is, of course, not unique to South Africa.
5. Rabbi Silberhaft’s work is the subject of a unique piece of contemporary Jewish travel literature, *The Travelling Rabbi – My African Tribe* (Moshe Silberhaft, with Suzanne Belling, 2010).
6. ‘The Current State of the Jewish Community’, presentation by David Saks, Associate Director of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies at the 43rd biennial conference of the SAJBD, 28 August 2005.
7. Shimoni, Gideon, *Jews and Zionism – The South African Experience, 1910-1967*, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1980, p182.
8. *Jews of the ‘new South Africa’: Highlights of the 1998 national survey of South African Jews*, Institute for Jewish Policy Research, in association with the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies & Research, JPR Report No 3, 1999, p20.
9. Marks, Monique, Steinberg, Jonny, ‘The Labyrinth of Jewish Security Arrangements in Johannesburg: Thinking through a Paradox about Security’, in *British Journal of Criminology*, Vol. 53, No. 6, November 2013.
10. Ibid.
11. The first conducted by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, in association with the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies and Research in Cape Town, and the second by the Kaplan Centre alone.
12. Bruk, ‘The Jews of South Africa’, loc. cit.
13. Ibid. The number of Jews from South Africa who have made Aliyah is believed to be between 20-25 000.
14. ‘Rise in Jewish day-school enrolments’, *SA Jewish Report*, 18/5/2012
15. Bruk, Shirley, ‘The Jews Of South Africa: Highlights of the 2005 Attitudinal Survey’, *Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 61, Rosh Hashanah 2006.
16. Kessler, S, ‘The South African Constitution and the Input of the Jewish Community’, *Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 56, No. 2, Winter, 2000.
17. See in this regard Polakow-Suransky, Sasha, *The Unspoken Alliance: Israel’s Secret Relationship with Apartheid South Africa*. Random House, 2010.
18. For a full account of this episode, see Pollak, Joel, *The Kasrils Affair: Jews and Minority Politics in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, Juta Academic, Cape Town, 2009.
19. “Fury at singing of ‘Shoot the Jew’ at Israeli musicians concert”, *Pretoria News*, 3/9/2013. Boer’ is a common term for white Afrikaners.
20. <http://www.jpost.com/Diplomacy-and-Politics/Liberman-hits-back-at-South-African-FM-says-her-comments-were-anti-Semitic-330475>
21. *Jews of the ‘new South Africa’: Highlights of the 1998 national survey of South African Jews*, Institute for Jewish Policy Research, in association with the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies & Research, JPR Report No 3, 1999, p23.

22. Rabbi Harris' booklet 'Jewish Obligation to the Non-Jew' (Tikkun Publications, No 1, 1996) was primarily aimed at encouraging Jewish social outreach in the wider society.
23. The SAJBD has published two books on this subject, *Reach – Jewish Helping Hands in South Africa* () and *Jubuntu* (2013).

1989-2014: Russian-Speaking Jews 25 Years Later

On November 9, 1989 the Berlin Wall fell. The event came as Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of glasnost and perestroika had steadily led to a loosening of Moscow's rigid control over its subject peoples. Yet the breaching of this stark symbol of the communist East's self-enforced isolation was a climactic sign that change of historic proportions was taking place.

The change took the world, and Jews everywhere, by surprise. A great superpower and an implacable foe was dying. It was not defeated on the battlefield of a cataclysmic war. Rather, like MacArthur's old soldiers, it just faded away, its ebbing decline barely perceptible until suddenly it was plain to all.

For the Jewish world, the change was monumental. After decades of separation from the rest of the Jewish people, after Western Jewries' years of intense struggle on their behalf, millions of Jews in the Soviet Union, and tens of thousands more in Central and Eastern Europe, were now free to reconnect to their fellow Jews. And their fellow Jews were now free to reach out to them.

Having rallied for so long behind the slogan "Let My People Go," they now found themselves

faced with the practical realities of realizing what had hitherto been only a distant hope. Amid the headiness of a miraculous time, each began the hard work of developing concrete responses to a challenge of unanticipated proportions.

From 1989 and throughout the following 25 years, world Jewry invested massively in meeting the two main elements of this challenge: facilitating the emigration of almost two million people and their resettlement, preferably in Israel and, if not, elsewhere; and responding to the needs – cultural, spiritual, material – and aspirations of the Jews who, out of choice or necessity, remained in the region.

Of the estimated 2-3 million Jews and their relatives who lived in the Soviet Union in 1989, the overwhelming majority emigrated, leaving only several hundred thousand in the region today. While push factors played a decisive role in this mass migration – one of the largest in Jewish history – policy interventions at critical junctures helped produce the following:

- **60% of the migrants went to Israel.** Although, initially, as many as 80% of the Soviet Jewish émigrés expressed a preference to resettle

in the United States, pressure from Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir combined with the U.S. government's reluctance to fund the cost of refugee resettlement limited migration to the United States and ensured that a million-plus olim reached Israel. This immigrant wave transformed Israel, socially, economically, politically, and even strategically. Not least, the influx reinforced Israel's Jewish majority and provided an economic boost, bringing the infusion of highly skilled workers that made the "Start-Up Nation" possible. Although Israel was often not the preferred destination, 25 years later, most feel comfortable with their lives in Israel and want their children to remain in the country.

- **Successful integration in Israeli economic, social, and political settings.** Israel's ability to maximize this windfall should not be taken for granted. More than at any time in Israel's history, thoughtful and timely policy decisions enabled the country to utilize the immigrants' human potential effectively, and provided a model for the integration of future migrations. These decisions reflected the immigrants' numerical clout as reflected in their successful political self-empowerment, which enabled them to influence the allocation of government funding for retraining and social-mobility programs. This political movement also produced several individuals who emerged as promising future Israeli political leaders.
- **Personal integration in other countries.** Some 750,000 Russian-speaking Jews live today in the United States and some 300,000 more in Germany and elsewhere. Overall, these

immigrants have integrated successfully on a personal level – and, indeed, their economic achievements in North America are generally more impressive even than those in Israel. Yet while they display a strong commitment to Israel and the Jewish people as a whole, few bring with them a sense of community as it has existed in the West. The immigrants' integration into organized Jewish communal life in their host countries has, thus, been extremely limited, and assimilation among them appears rapid. Although they have the potential to play a significant role in making Judaism relevant to a growing sector of Jews with limited or no religious beliefs and practices, it is unclear whether it is possible for either the new arrivals or their veteran counterparts to preserve Jewish identity in a free society without a sense of religion and its coalescing community effect, or the coercive power of the state.

- **The development of communal infrastructure for those who remained in the FSU.** A large and impressive communal infrastructure has been developed aimed at meeting the Jewish cultural, spiritual, communal, and material needs of those who did not emigrate. Jewish programming is plentiful and reaches significant numbers in absolute (though not relative) terms. Here too, however, the lack of a community tradition in the FSU has hampered the revival of Jewish communal life there, a factor that reinforces the absence of a philanthropic culture to keep this infrastructure – and particularly its welfare system – heavily

dependent on outside funding. Moreover, while the removal of the state's coercive influence freed Jews to reconnect to the Jewish people by either emigrating or reclaiming their Jewish heritage at home, it has also freed them to integrate more freely into general society. Nevertheless, Jewish programming is helping mold a younger generation whose Jewish identities have been formed in the post-Soviet era. This generation can be expected, in the coming decades, to give rise to a new

local leadership capable of forging the kind of authentic indigenous vision of Jewish life needed to build recognizable communities and to cultivate levels of Jewish identity necessary to stem assimilation and sustain Aliyah. The task of reestablishing self-sustaining communities in an environment with strong centrifugal influences and the need to provide for Jews in need, therefore, are long-term enterprises that require the continued commitment of Israel and the Jewish world.

Table 1. Emigration of Jews and their Relatives from the FSU, 1970-2006 (thousands)¹

Year	Total	By destination:			% of total to Israel
		Israel	U.S.A	Germany	
1970-1988	291	165	126	...	57
1989	72	12.9	56	0.6	18
1990	205	185.2	6.5	8.5	90
1991	195	147.8	35.2	8	76
1992	123	65.1	45.9	4	53
1993	127	66.1	35.9	16.6	52
1994	116	68.1	32.9	8.8	59
1995	114	64.8	21.7	15.2	57
1996	106	59	19.5	16	56
1997	99	54.6	14.5	19.4	55
1998	83	46	7.4	17.8	55
1999	99	66.8	6.3	18.2	67
2000	79	50.8	5.9	16.5	64
2001	60	33.6	4.1	16.7	56
2002	44	18.5	2.5	19.3	42
2003	32	12.4	1.6	15.4	39
2004	25	10.1	1.1	11.2	40
2005	18	9.4	0.9	6	52
2006	10	7.5	0.6	1.1	75
1989-2006	1,607	979	325	219	61
1970-2006	1,898	1,144	60

The Russian Aliyah

A Leadership Moment that Shaped the “Global Jewish Future”

Within a decade of 1989, Israel's population surged from 4.6 million to 6.2 million in large part due to the immigration of almost a million Russian-speaking Jews. The impact of this influx was transformational. It changed virtually every facet of Israeli life, from its culture and economy to its

politics and international affairs.

Shamir pressed the United States to cancel political refugee status for the Soviet Jewish emigres

Yet as the Jewish emigration wave began, it was not at all clear that Israel would benefit from such a population windfall. In 1988, 88.5% of the Jews who left the USSR in 1988 did not choose Israel as their final destination. Instead, on their arrival at Western

transit stations after leaving the Soviet Union, they changed their destination from Israel to other countries, most notably the United States.

In what he later described as the most significant event of his life, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir decided Israel's position in 1988. At a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz in May of that year, he pressed for the United States to cancel political refugee status for Soviet Jewish émigrés and to stop issuing them refugee visas, arguing that since they already held Israeli visas, they were not really refugees.²

This policy determination was remarkable, not least because of the clash of values and interests between Israel's national needs and the émigrés' freedom to choose. What distinguished Shamir's perspective was that it was motivated by concern for the country's future, even though this ran contrary to his own political self-interest. A report by the Israeli “Liaison Bureau” that he received a few weeks before the Schultz meeting indicated that mass Aliyah would almost certainly result in Shamir's electoral defeat, as indeed transpired when Yitzhak Rabin was elected in 1992 thanks in part to the massive “Russian vote.”

In September 1989, with thousands of émigrés leaving each week, concern grew in the United States that allowing unfettered immigration of Soviet Jews would create a precedent for future mass migrations. The United States therefore decided it would allow up to 40,000 Soviet Jews a year to enter the country as refugees, but that it would provide funding only for 32,000, leaving American Jewry to fund the remainder. With this additional financial burden unsustainable for the American Jewish establishment, the dispute between Israel and the Diaspora over Soviet Jewish emigration was laid to rest.

With the U.S. refugee option now largely off the table, the tide turned virtually overnight. The dropout rate of 88.5% in 1988 fell to 19.6% in 1990. Moreover, this shift in the migration flow created a dynamic. More and more, Jewish émigrés showed a preference for joining their families and friends in Israel, such that by 1995 even the limited U.S. refugee quota was no longer fully subscribed (see Table 1).

The Demographic and Economic Contribution to Israel

The approximately 40% of former Soviet Jews who live in Israel today comprise more than 15% of the general Israeli population and 17% of the country's Jews.³ These figures led Dr. Zeev Khanin, chief scientist at the Ministry of Absorption and an immigrant himself, to conclude:

- "Due to immigration from the former Soviet Union, Israel succeeded in preserving the traditional demographic balance between its Jewish and non-Jewish sectors at a ratio of 80:20. This balance is seen as a critical factor for ensuring the status of Israel as a Jewish, liberal, democratic and Western state.
- "Russian Jewish immigration of the 1990s and 2000s strengthened the national defense capacity of the State of Israel, both directly and indirectly. New immigrants constitute a significant proportion of enlisted soldiers and, in recent years, of the officers in the IDF, and are overrepresented in combat and technical units. Thus, the extent of their contribution to the maintenance of the country's security is hard to overestimate."⁴

Ironically, this was a legacy that the Soviet Union left to the Jewish state. As Vladimir Koblanko, the Ukrainian consul to Israel noted in 1996, the value of the education that immigrants from Ukraine alone brought was \$40 billion. In January 2010, marking the 20th anniversary of the Aliyah wave, Absorption Minister Sofa Landver summed up the contribution in human capital the immigrants brought: "[T]raining a physician doctor costs

\$200,000 and we have absorbed during these years 25,000 doctors. The savings to the state amounts to \$5 billion. We absorbed a further 100,000 engineers and scientists, artists, athletes and others. The overall net economic contribution of the olim to Israel economy amounts 181 billion shekels."⁵

Furthermore, the mass Aliyah substantially decreased the hopes of the Arab leaders of defeating Israel or damaging it as a Jewish state. Declassified Soviet archival documents show that the Soviet authorities' inability to stop this emigration was one of the most important factors in the PLO leadership's acceptance of the idea of the "two-state solution" in 1988.⁶ At the same time, Israel's need for U.S. loan guarantees to fund the newcomers' resettlement led the U.S. administration to feel comfortable enough to pressure Israel to make political concessions, ultimately leading to the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993. An additional geopolitical impact of the massive presence of Israeli citizens of Soviet origin has led the Jewish state to special relations with post-Soviet countries.

The Soviet Aliyah preserved the traditional demographic balance between Jewish and non-Jewish sectors at a 80:20 ratio

Three Lessons from the Russian Aliyah – Policy Implications

As noted above, Jewish policy decisions and leadership were influential in diverting the bulk of this migration to Israel and in the decision of the Russian olim not to re-emigrate. We have identified four key elements that allowed this to happen: (1) Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's role in influencing the U.S. policy shift on immigration quotas; (2) the

Israeli policy facilitated the immigrants' social mobility and thereby limited re-emigration

convergence of internal and international factors that made this diversion to Israel possible; (3) the critical role of the Russian olim's political self-empowerment in their successful integration in Israel; and (4) the Israeli policy decisions that facilitated the immigrants'

social mobility and therefore limited re-emigration. The lesson arising from all this is that intervention by policy-makers is an important component in a successful Aliyah process. Understanding the actions and events involved in this Aliyah may be instructive in responding to future Jewish migrations, such as the current possibility of significant emigration from Europe.

Lesson 1: Aliyah is a strategic asset for Israel and should be actively promoted.

Considering the huge contribution of the FSU Aliyah to Israel as regards the country's demographic balance, human capital, and economy, and considering

further the contribution of olim throughout Israel's history, Aliyah is clearly a strategic asset for the Jewish State. Furthermore, mass Aliyah from the USSR and its former satellite states substantially decreased Arab leaders' hopes of defeating Israel or damaging it as a Jewish state. Given Prime Minister Netanyahu's observation that the Russian Aliyah was "one of the greatest miracles that happened to the state", we should ask ourselves what can be done to allow future such "miracles" to happen. We should also reexamine the adequacy in the 21st century of the old Aliyah paradigm which assumes that most olim come from distressed communities and have no alternative but to come to Israel.

Lesson 2: Policy interventions to overcome resistance are needed.

As a matter of policy analysis, the famous sentence "Israel loves Aliyah but doesn't like olim" reveals a kind of market failure in which long-term national interest does not conform with powerful sectorial interests. In such situations of establishment resistance, there is a need for a regulator's intervention, which in the case of FSU Aliyah, came from Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and other senior Israeli decision-makers. While analysts agree that olim are good for the country's development, there are forces among veteran Israelis who feel threatened by the newcomers, especially if they are well educated and not powerless. In the past, this paradox was not as sharp because the vast majority of potential olim came from distressed countries and had limited choices.

Yet, today's Diaspora Jews, even in the FSU, are no longer in abject distress. Even if, as in Europe

today, push factors are gaining strength, Jews have the option to move to alternative destinations. If Israel wants to attract them, it has to compete and offer acceptable conditions. Hence, to bring highly educated and accomplished olim from developed countries who have migration alternatives, policy-makers should remove obstacles to their successful absorption placed by sectorial interests.

Lesson 3: An Aliyah paradigm shift is required.

For much of its history, Israel was accustomed to welcoming Aliyah from countries in distress. Since immigrants from these countries generally had few alternatives, Israel could afford an absorption model that put the country's needs first, often offering relatively little recognition of the immigrants' individual needs and aspirations.

Many question, though, whether this old, paternalistic model is up to the challenge of the more competitive reality for Jews from developed countries, such as those in Europe, who have career and lifestyle expectations, and, more importantly, choices. Even those willing to compromise on living standards and favor Israel over Canada or the United States, must overcome numerous needless hurdles to making the desirable actually happen. As hundreds of thousands of highly educated Jews consider emigration, Israel with its promising economy can compete for European Jews.

Yet Israel is not the only destination available to the potential émigrés. The United States, for example, has growing Franco-Jewish hubs, and both Canada and Australia offer a real object lesson: They

positively entice skilled professionals who can help strengthen their economies by offering attractive immigration schemes.

For Israel to translate the impetus to migrate into actual Aliyah, therefore, it must become a more appealing destination. Above all, this means decreasing the objective risks that a move to Israel entails by making it easier for migrants to transfer their businesses or professional lives and ensure their families find promise in the Promised Land.

For Israel, and indeed for the Jewish people as a whole, the question is how to take an integrated view of the goals we seek to achieve – and what obstacles exist to achieving them. Then, developing a system that removes as many of these obstacles as possible is the obvious and necessary next step.

This includes removing bureaucratic barriers to professional and business relocation; making the compulsory military draft more flexible; and coopting the experience of organizations that have proactively attracted and absorbed North American immigrants.

Adopting a market-oriented approach through such steps is likely to achieve a high degree of success in bringing, if not a flood of immigration from Europe, then at least a steady flow where there is now but a trickle.

To bring olim who have migration alternatives, policy-makers should remove obstacles to their successful absorption

The Odd Israeli pro-Aliyah Coalition that Made a Miracle Possible

Mass migration could, of course, not occur without political will in Israel. National interest alone is not enough to lead to action without a coalition of political and economic actors and a determined leader. Yet, traditionally, educated newcomers threaten the short-term interests of veterans, as we can see in the bureaucratic barriers that sectorial professional guilds erect to discourage the Aliyah from developed countries. What aided the policy of bringing the immigrants to Israel was an unusual convergence of perceived interests on the part of both the left and right in Israel. The left was convinced that the secular educational profile of the immigrants would draw them into the peace camp, and the right was certain – based on the political tendencies of the Soviet immigrants of the 1970s – that they would be getting “natural human reinforcements.”

The Resettlement of Russian-Speaking Jews in the United States

The goal of the Soviet Jews who arrived to North America was, like that of so many before them, to succeed in their new homeland and to push their children to succeed even more.⁷ This desire to become part of the American mainstream, what sociologists call a “host-country orientation,” has been a distinguishing feature of Russian-speaking Jewish immigrants from the beginning. Few expressed any desire to return to the FSU; the rate of re-migration by Russian-speaking Jews in the United States is, by all indications, very small. Many of those immigrants enjoyed rapid mobility. On average, within a decade or so of their arrival, the median income of Russian-speaking Jews exceeded the American national average. Despite a disproportionate number of Russian-speaking poor Jews (especially among those who arrived later in life), the community as a whole is advancing

economically. Unsurprisingly, second-generation Russian-speaking Jews, the bilingual children of immigrants, are often wealthier and more economically secure than their parents. Sergey Brin, the co-founder of Google, who immigrated to the United States with his parents at the age of six, and Dmitry Salita, the successful Orthodox Jewish boxer who immigrated with his parents at the age of nine, are prime examples. Their success helps to explain why the community of Russian-speaking Jews in the United States is seen to have “come of age.”

Another reason for the perceived “coming of age” is what one author has called “the Russification of Jewish American fiction.” Some of the foremost contemporary Jewish writers in the English language, including Gary Shteyngart, Lara Vapnyar, David Bezmozgis, Ellen Litman, Anya Ulinich, Sana Krasikov, Irina Reyn and Maxim D. Shrayer are Russian-born.

Russian-speaking Jews have been among the foremost proponents of a Jewish identity not based upon religion but focused upon peoplehood – the closest term to “nationality” that America

legitimates. A qualitative study of young Russian-speaking Jews quotes one who defines Jewish identity as “primarily ethnic and cultural. A level of history that I completely accept and adopt.” Another proudly associates with “the Jews and the heritage and background, and what Jewish people have gone through.” A different study quotes Jews who define their identity biologically. “The type of blood in my veins is my Jewishness.” “There is stuff in my blood that definitely says that I am Jewish.” In both of these studies, the overwhelming number of young Russian-speaking Jews interviewed express a strong “ethnic” Jewishness, “a sense of pride and belonging to a people with a rich history and culture.” The interviewees confess their befuddlement at the inability of American Jews to accept that Judaism can be based primarily on “nationality” and “blood.” “In America,” one of the interviewees admits, “it is hard to explain to others who I am, since Jewish is to them mostly a religion.”

In the long term, there is much reason for concern, for peoplehood ties, important as they are, have not historically been powerful enough to prevent intermarriage in America. Unless Russian-speaking Jews in the United States develop a strong Jewish identity and a conscious commitment to produce Jewish children, their descendants are likely to assimilate into the mainstream.

The Jewish Community in the Former Soviet Union

In addition to unleashing a Jewish emigration of historic dimensions, the liberalizing policy changes in Moscow also freed the region's Jews to explore

their Jewish heritage and reconnect to each other and to the Jewish world at large. Yet very little remained of Jewish life as we know it – or of Jewish community at all. Few Jewish institutions survived, and even ascertaining the number of Jews living in the region was largely a matter of conjecture.

While the initial priority was emigration, the Jewish world's emphasis soon shifted to reconnecting with Soviet Jews in situ. This was Jewish renewal on a scale never before attempted. One of the greatest difficulties lay in the social-cultural gulf between Soviet Jews and those elsewhere. Soviet Jews had been changed and acculturated by communism in ways that were little understood. Nor were they monolithic, with those in the Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia differing widely from the indigenous Jews of the Soviet Asiatic republics.

The international Jewish organizations that returned to the region shared a noble and well-intentioned goal of reconnecting the remaining Soviet Jews to the Jewish people. Yet, they effectively embarked into a terra incognita. And unavoidably, their efforts were colored by the ideological and cultural preconceptions rooted in their own, Western experiences.

Given its mission, the Jewish Agency's massive programming in the region was candidly Israel-centric. Its camps, ulpan programs, Israel centers and other initiatives were designed to foster Zionist values, build knowledge of Hebrew and Israel, and otherwise prepare Jews for Aliyah, whether immediately or at some point in the future.

Chabad, for its part, brought its characteristic brand of Jewish outreach to those interested in

the spirituality of an Orthodox-religious form of Jewish expression. By any measure, though, the network Chabad has developed is impressive. It counts 91 institutions – Chabad Houses, Or Avner Schools, welfare services, orphanages, yeshivot, etc. – in Russia alone, with another 62 in Ukraine and smaller numbers in other former Soviet republics.

Yet it is difficult to ascertain just how extensive its reach is. While on the one hand, FSU Jews appear to regard the religious practice that Chabad represents as having authenticity (in the sense of "The synagogue I don't go to is Orthodox"), this is not usually accompanied by a willingness to subscribe to it. Not only did communism leave behind a skeptical view of religion in general, it also made many averse to dogma of any kind.

The third major player, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), approached the challenge somewhat differently. Though its work, too, was informed by its Western perspective, it sought to provide the region's Jews with the tools to rebuild Jewish life in ways that reflected their own values and Jewish experience – beginning with shipments of Jewish books and the creation of Jewish libraries. JDC also developed a distinctive model of the "Jewish community center" tailored to the FSU reality that was designed to draw disparate and scattered Jews together in a single Jewish location.

JDC's work differed in another critical way too. It became the Jewish world's principal agent in responding to the challenge of poverty among FSU Jews, particularly among the elderly. Significantly, JDC has sought to turn care for the elderly into a magnet for local Jews to coalesce into communities through

the Hesed system of community-based care, which today provides relief for approximately 146,000 elderly Jews.

A number of considerations should inform Jewish policymaking in ongoing efforts to rebuild Jewish life in the region.

1. **Communism's profound impact on the FSU's Jews has enduring effects.** The institutional and general anti-Semitism of the Soviet years sustained Jewish identity. However, since Jewish community institutions were all but eliminated and Jews no longer necessarily lived in geographic proximity to one other, that identity took on a national-ethnic rather than communal character.

At the same time, the paradox of communism was that its quest for collectivism instead fostered a survival-driven individualism and suspicion of the collective, particularly among Jews, who were often victimized by the Soviet state. This ran counter to the value of mutual responsibility that underpins Jewish communal life, leaving a society in which genuine (as distinct from state-approved) voluntarism and philanthropy were largely alien concepts, and hindering the reemergence of Western-style Jewish communities.

Decades of assimilation, too, have changed the character of FSU Jewry culturally, as well as demographically – so much so that it may be said to be "post-assimilationist," with significant numbers who wish to identify as Jews but who may not be recognized as such according to halacha, or even less strict criteria. There, as elsewhere, the nature of

Jewish identity is one of the Jewish world's major unresolved issues.

2. **The FSU's Jewish revival remains a work in progress.** Although a relatively small proportion of the region's Jewish population are actively involved in Jewish communal life, the level of Jewish activity is nonetheless substantial in absolute terms, and several factors suggest it will continue to strengthen:

- Academic and cultural programming has proven especially attractive to FSU's Jews and could provide fertile ground for the emergence of a new, indigenous vision of community life that can respond to the interests and needs of the region's Jews.
- The post-communist generation of Jews who have grown up with a more open and positive attitude to their Jewishness is maturing. As they begin to move into key positions in Jewish organizations, they are more likely to provide the broad vision and leadership the FSU's Jews have hitherto lacked.
- The connection to Israel is strong, dovetailing with the national-ethnic form of identity that is characteristic of Russian-speaking Jews. For FSU Jews, though, this connection is tangible as well as emotional, since many have friends or relatives in Israel. Additionally, with flights between Tel Aviv and the major FSU cities both short and frequent, a phenomenon of transnationalism has developed, with Russian-speaking Jews

dividing their time between Israel and an FSU country. This further strengthens the region's Jews' connection to Israel.

3. **Welfare needs will remain a major concern.** As in every community, there will continue to be poor Jews in the FSU who require welfare assistance. Unlike in the West, however, state-funded social and health-care services in the FSU are either rudimentary or inadequate to the needs, while local Jewish philanthropy has yet to emerge to fund supplementary Jewish welfare agencies. These services will continue to require support from the wider Jewish world for the foreseeable future, particularly as the generation who suffered from Nazi persecution passes on and restitution funds that financed their care cease to be available.

Nor is providing for the poor and elderly solely a matter of fulfilling our obligation to them, as powerful as this imperative may be. Since meeting basic needs is seen as vital, welfare services differ from most other aspects of Jewish life, which are largely discretionary. As such, Jewish welfare agencies continue to have the capacity to attract the involvement and support of local Jews and strengthen the value of mutual Jewish responsibility in a way that other Jewish programs may not.

4. **Local funding for Jewish activity will remain a challenge for the foreseeable future.** In a society that has only recently emerged from a political system in which all needs were provided by the

state, there is no tradition of philanthropy.

Further, since Jews are disproportionately represented among the intelligentsia – which includes prestigious but not necessarily high-paying professions – and since there is little inherited wealth in the FSU, most Jews lack the financial wherewithal to contribute significantly to Jewish programming.

There is, of course, significant wealth among Jewish oligarchs, although their willingness to contribute to Jewish causes has, so far, been limited. This may be due in part to their relatively recent achievement of mega-wealth status (much as Steven Spielberg and Bill Gates came to their

philanthropy only later in life) and to an apparent utilitarian view of philanthropy as a means of safeguarding their business interests. They remain, nevertheless, an important potential source of funding that may develop over time.

In the meantime, the funding challenge has led JDC, for example, to develop a business-like approach to Jewish activities. This involves charging participation fees for activities and making space in JCCs available for commercial activity when consistent with the buildings' main purpose. While this approach has enjoyed some success in supporting cultural programming in major cities, it does not provide a solution to funding welfare programs.

Contribution to the Jewish People's Collective Well-Being

JPPI's 'dashboard' representing the state of "Jewish well-being" from a global perspective, reflects the impact of the Soviet Union's collapse. Developments in each of the three main centers of Russian-speaking Jews have not had uniform collective influence. For example, the Jews who reached North America achieved greater economic and professional success than those who opted for Israel or remained in FSU, yet the impact of this success on the Jewish people as a whole has been limited.

Nevertheless, the overall impact has been enormous. The fall of the Iron Curtain restored the Jewish world's access to Russian-speaking Jews and thereby transformed inter-communal bonds. Further, the million Jews who immigrated to Israel brought unrivaled benefits to the Jewish people collective in at least three of the five JPPI-selected indicators. As a matter of *Jewish demography* (through greater in-marriage, increased birth rate, etc.), *Jewish resources* (through their contribution to Israel's economic development and by helping lay the ground for the "Start-Up Nation"), and in *geopolitics* (through their role in the IDF, by strengthening Israel's Jewish majority, facilitating a special relationship with Russia, and – according to some – by providing an impetus for the Oslo process). Moreover, since several key Israeli political leaders are from FSU backgrounds, their contributions to *Jewish leadership* may also be substantial.

To summarize: In Israel, Russian-speaking Jews have made enormous enormous economic, demographic, cultural, and political contributions. In the U.S. and other migration destinations they achieved personal economic success and are making cultural contributions to Jewish life, though at the risk of assimilation. In the FSU itself, we see the beginnings of communal life, though here too there is a significant chance of assimilation.

Endnotes

1. Tolts, Mark, "Post-Soviet Aliyah and Jewish Demographic Transformation," <http://bjpa.org/Publications/downloadPublication.cfm?PublicationID=11924>
2. This public policy affair provides insight into the ways in which humanitarian impulse, public policy, and civic society come together in American Jewry and in the Israel-diaspora relationship. See Fred A. Lazin, *The Struggle for Soviet Jewry in American Politics: Israel versus the American Jewish Establishment*, Lexington Books, 2005. See also <http://cis.org/RefugeeResettlement-SovietJewry>
3. Tolts, Mark (2009) "Demographic Changes among Post-Soviet Migrants in Israel," *Diasporas* (Moscow), 2009, No 2, pp. 91-113.
4. Vladimir (Ze'ev) Khanin, *Aliyah from the Former Soviet Union: Contribution to the National Security Balance*, Herzliya Conference 2010, pp.6-7. http://www.herzliyaconference.org/_Uploads/3046Aliyah.pdf
5. Quoted by Lily Galili and Roman Bronfman, *The Million that Changed the Middle East: Russian Immigration to Israel*, Matar publishers, 2013 (Hebrew). p. 181.
6. Morozov, Boris (1999) *Documents on Soviet Jewish Emigration* (London: Frank Cass, 1999)
7. JPPI has published recently an in-depth policy paper about Russian Speaking Jews in North America: Sarna, Jonathan D., *Toward a Comprehensive Policy Planning for Russian-Speaking Jews in North America*, in collaboration with Dov Maimon and Shmuel Rosner, JPPI, 2014. We refer the interested reader to this publication and reproduce here only few insights that will help us to integrate the main findings that are relevant to our multi-continental integrated assessment.

Women's Leadership in the American Organized Jewish Community

In last year's Annual Assessment we highlighted the challenges of leadership succession facing the major Federations and the large Jewish organizations. This year we address a specific aspect of that issue – the integration of women into the highest ranks of the leadership. We understand that the issue of women's leadership is an important part of the larger leadership succession issue and of the questions of the continued relevance, dynamism, and creativity of the major Jewish organizations and the organized Jewish community in the United States and in the Diaspora in general.

Part I – Argument

Many in the North American organized Jewish community are aware that there is a serious problem of under-representation of women in top positions in Jewish nonprofit organizations. Not enough, however, is being done to solve it.

There are an estimated 9500 Jewish nonprofits in the United States.¹ It is possible to identify some positive change for women, who are now heading some of the largest and most successful

JCCs, cultural institutions, and social service agencies. However, women make up the vast majority of professionals in Jewish Federations (80%) and yet they do not hold the most senior professional positions in large or intermediate size communities. In the United States, with the stepping down of San Francisco's Jennifer Gorovitz in January 2014, there were no women leading large federations until the appointment of Naomi Adler as CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia in February 2014.² Jewish organizations, on the other hand, are staffed predominantly by women yet men continue to dominate in the top leadership roles: in 2013, there were only ten women leaders among the 74 organizational executives of the largest Jewish national not-for-profit organizations³.

The issue comes into sharper relief when we compare the Jewish American nonprofit world to the general American non-Jewish one: while the very vast majority of the staff is in both cases female (73% in American nonprofits, and 75% in Jewish American nonprofits), the gap between the percentages of women who make it to the top of the pyramid in the two categories is

overwhelming: 45% of non-Jewish nonprofits are led by women (the percentage drops to 21% for CEOs at nonprofits with budgets of \$25 million or more, which is still higher than the Jewish average) against 14% in Jewish national nonprofits; here too, the higher the budget, the lower the presence of women: 64% of organizations with budgets of under \$250,000 are led by women, 38% of organizations with annual budgets of over one million dollars and only 16% of nonprofits with

budgets of more than 50 million. It is remarkable that the percentage has hardly risen in the past decade: in 1998, the percentage of women CEOs in Jewish American nonprofits was 12%.

Even in terms of salary gap, the American organized Jewish community lags behind: American Jewish women earn 61 cents for every dollar their male counterparts earn, as opposed to a slightly higher 66 cents in the non-Jewish world.⁴

	American Nonprofits 2009 ⁵	Jewish Nonprofits 2009 ⁶
Female Staff	73%	75%
Female CEOs	45%	14%
Salary Gap	66%	61%

In regard to religion, women fair better. Despite the fact that traditionally women did not fill religious leadership roles, in recent decades in the non-Orthodox denominations, they have started to be ordained and accede to leadership positions. Yet the situation is still far from gender parity: with the exception of the Reconstructionist movement, no other non-Orthodox denomination has reached an equal percentage of women rabbis. On the basis of its understanding of halacha (Jewish religious law), the mainstream of the

Orthodox movement does not allow women to be ordained as rabbis. In the Modern Orthodox world, though, women can pursue higher religious education comparable to that of men through such institutions as the Drisha Institute, Midreshet Lindenbaum, Matan, and Yeshivat Maharat, but graduates of these programs are not ordained as rabbis. They can, instead, apply their credentials to new careers as congregational interns, scholars-in-residence, *madrikhot ruchaniot* (spiritual leaders) and *manhigot hilkhatichot rukhaniot toraniot* (or

maharat – teacher of Jewish law and spirituality), which is the closest position to rabbi there is for women; they also serve as *poskot* (legal advisers) for women.⁷

As of 2009, Reform Judaism's Hebrew Union College had ordained 552 women rabbis and women made up more than half of the rabbinical school cohort while female clergy made up roughly one-third of the Reform rabbinate and work in synagogues, schools, universities, and hospitals.⁸

The Conservative movement had ordained 327 women rabbis, for the most part, in small congregations; in congregations with fewer than 250 households, women outnumber men by almost three to one.⁹ In 2008, Julie Schonfeld

became the first female rabbi to serve in the chief executive position of an American rabbinical association, having been named executive vice president of the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly.

The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College has ordained 321 women rabbis; women comprise a large majority (70%) of RRC's current enrollment, and more than half of the school's faculty and a large percentage of its administration and lay leadership are female.¹⁰ Approximately 41 percent of Reconstructionist rabbis currently serving congregations are women. The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College selected Deborah Waxman, a rabbi and historian of American Judaism, as its president in October 2013.

Denomination	N. of Synagogues	N. of Female Rabbis	% of Female Rabbis
Reform	900	552	19%
Reconstructionist	102	321	51%
Conservative	700	327	16%

(Source: The White house Project REPORT 2009, <http://ms-jd.org/uploads/general/Report.pdf>)

Even if we compare Jewish women leadership in America to the other half of the Jewish people, i.e. the Israeli political world, the imbalance remains: in today's Knesset, 27 of 120 seats are held by women (22.5%), a percentage that is higher than in both American Jewish nonprofits and most American Jewish religious denominations.¹¹

Women's underrepresentation in leadership positions in North American Jewish organizations is not news: several studies have been conducted over the years pointing to the evidently problematic pipeline that leads (or should we rather say does *not* lead) Jewish women to the top of the pyramid. Advancing Women Professionals and the Jewish Community (AWP) was founded in 2001 with the goal of understanding what was not functioning

in the American Jewish Community in terms of women leadership, so to "advance Jewish women into leadership, stimulate new models of shared leadership, and promote policies that lead to healthy, effective workplaces."¹² AWP has been remarkably successful both in terms of raising awareness and bringing American Jewish Organization to evolve toward greater diversity in leadership positions, but it is still a long road to equality.¹³

Despite their high educational attainments, their small families, and contemporary dual-earner family patterns, American Jewish women have not attained gender equality

In 2009, Harriet Hartman and Moshe Hartman published their second study "Gender and American Jews: Patterns in Work, Education, and Family in Contemporary Life" (following their own 1990 study of the same type), in which they show in detail how, despite several changes in the American society at large as well as in the Jewish Community

specifically, the situation of most American Jewish women has not changed significantly over the past two decades. American Jewish women are highly educated, especially when compared to non-Jewish American women: 96% of Jewish American women have high school diplomas, more than 50% hold a bachelor's degree, 22.5% have earned some graduate degree, and 5% hold doctorates or professional degrees. They also have, on average, smaller families than their non-Jewish counterparts. The Jewish American birthrate is

below the replacement rate and averages fewer than two children. This pattern is partly explained by their high level of education: "among women, higher education is [...] associated with later marriage, later birth of [the] first child, fewer children."¹⁴ "In a subpopulation where nearly 90% of the women have the same education of their male counterparts, and nearly 60% of both men and women have at least an undergraduate college degree, one would expect similarity in labor force participation and occupational achievement. [...] Family roles should not play as great an obstacle to occupational achievement as they do in the broader population, because American Jews tend to have smaller families on average."¹⁵ And yet, they do: American Jewish women do not have the same career paths as American Jewish men, and the vast majority of leadership positions in the American Jewish Communal world are still held by men. Thus, despite their high educational attainments, their small families, and contemporary dual-earner family patterns, American Jewish women have not attained gender equality.

Part II – Implications

The problem of women's under-representation in positions of leadership is not an isolated phenomenon; rather, it is related to far greater problems in the Jewish world.

In last year's Annual Assessment, JPPI assessed the state of North American Jewish communal leadership and identified the major challenges related to the replacement of the current leadership generation. It was understood that

"those who will assume the top professional positions face a Jewish and general context far different from that which welcomed their predecessors [...] Many of these [new] trends represent long-term challenges to the vitality of the North American Jewish community, and in turn, of world Jewry."¹⁶ The challenge of diversity is certainly a main part of this new landscape, and it presents several implications.

Jewish Youth Alienation

More and more American Jewish organizations are trying to deal with the generation gap that exists between present Jewish leaders and philanthropists, and the millennial generation of American Jews. Born and raised in a dramatically different world than their elders, young American Jews engage in Jewish life differently than their parents; what used to shape their parents' worldviews and engagement may very well not work with them today. As the Executive Director of The David Project David Bernstein put it, "One of the greatest challenges facing the Jewish world is to inspire the younger generation of Jews to care about and act upon being Jewish."¹⁷

Among the reasons young American Jews may find it difficult to engage in communal life is the image of outdated communitarianism that some Jewish organizations present them. The remarkable **lack of diversity** in leadership positions in American Jewish organizations may signal to young Jews that these organizations are outdated and have no real interest in the evolution of the Jewish society. There may be a connection between the alienation of young people from established Jewish

organizations and the lack of diversity at the top, as the general picture that the young Jewish generation sees in the organized community is very different from the liberal values of equality and inclusiveness they identify with.

Among the most interesting findings of the 2013 Pew report on American Jews is the continuing theme of Jewish liberalism: "Jews are among the most strongly liberal, Democratic groups in U.S. politics. There are more than twice as many self-identified Jewish liberals

as conservatives, while among the general public, this balance is nearly reversed." Such liberal attitudes are more widespread among younger Jews: 54% of them (between the ages of 18 and 29) declare liberal views, against only 16% who define themselves as conservative.¹⁸ Such liberal views, however,

do not find practical expression when it comes to gender equality in the Jewish community – both in terms of family roles, which vastly favor men and their careers over women (see the Conclusions and Recommendations), and in terms of organizational leadership; it is, therefore, likely that the young generation of American Jews will feel more and more disconnected from the Jewish community if things don't change.

As mentioned in JPPI's Annual Assessment last year, it appears that there is a perception

The liberal view does not find practical expression when it comes to gender equality in the Jewish community

among many young people that mainstream Jewish organizations resist change, focus only on fundraising, and are technologically unsophisticated.¹⁹ It is, therefore, very important to adapt Jewish organizations to the new needs of the present world, and special attention must be given to the voices of the next generation if the capacity for institutional change is to be fostered. Talented, motivated young Jews generally

This crisis will probably never be fully resolved if the community doesn't engage in a serious conversation about including more women in leadership positions

do not wish to work in traditional organizations and organizations that mostly employ women but are repeatedly headed by men, such as the American Jewish communal organizations, appear to send precisely such an anachronistic message.

Addressing questions of gender equality is essential if the American

Jewish organized community wishes to attract more young Jews in the years to come.

Leadership Succession Crisis

The failure to advance women may also be a factor in the so-called leadership crisis.

When it comes to American Jewish institutions and their search for the next leaders, there is a deep-rooted bias against women in the system that extends from problematic executive search to poor career development programs. As

women comprise two-thirds of the professional workforce at nonprofit groups (yet only 19% of the nation's 400 largest charities CEOs),²⁰ it is critical to identify high-potential talent, provide access to mentors, give assignments that stretch the skills of promising middle managers, and improve the executive-search process. We realize that the retiring leadership generation has been engendering trust and solidarity and efficient communication and decision-making for decades, all of which was very useful for a minority that had to defend itself and advance its interests. In today's world, however, we see fewer and fewer heroic leaders who single-handedly rally the troops to "charge the hill," and more and more leadership teams in which the most senior member acts as a guide, demonstrating empathy and appreciation for other's perspectives and contributions – in other words, a leadership style many women have adopted. The leadership needs of organizations (both Jewish and non-Jewish) are shifting: "Now that so many of us are white-collar pixel-pushers working across cultures and time-zones, there's less of a need for commandeering foremen and more of a need for open, collaborative, "feminine" bosses gently nudging us to greatness."²¹ As an analysis from 2011 put it, "Leadership now, more than in the past, appears to incorporate more feminine relational qualities, such as sensitivity, warmth, and understanding."²²

As suggested in JPPI's 2012-2013 Annual Assessment, "the next CEOs must maintain a careful balance between being strong, empowered leaders on one hand, and

collaborative, empowering leaders on the other." Flexibility, adaptability, creativity, and a spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship must come together with openness to interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary thinking as well; in other words, the next generation of Jewish leaders must also possess qualities that have traditionally been associated with women.

In the second half of 2013, The Bridgespan Group was asked to explore issues of leadership transition and identify a potential set of actions for strengthening the pool of potential leaders for senior positions.²³ While we understand that addressing in a holistic manner the question of women's leadership is paramount to strengthening the pool of potential leaders, Bridgespan did not include this in their set of research recommendations.

As already mentioned, the women's talent pool in the Jewish organized community is vast, with women representing 75% of the staff of Jewish organizations. It is, therefore, not a matter of lacking resources; rather, it may have been a lack of will – together with a lack of mentoring and career development programs – until now.

The leadership succession crisis is one of the main problems currently facing the American Jewish community, and it has several aspects. This crisis, however, will probably never be fully resolved if the organized community doesn't engage in a serious conversation about including more women in leadership positions in today's and (especially) tomorrow's Jewish world.

Lack of Innovation

Innovation can be viewed as the application of better solutions to meet new requirements. It refers to the notion of doing something *different*, rather than doing the same thing better, to solve new and old problems.

A Jewish innovation sector has emerged over the past decade: "There are currently more than 600 Jewish start-ups in North America, and many of these initiatives have

attracted some of the best and the brightest to their ranks. Organizations and initiatives such as Jumpstart,²⁴ ROI,²⁵ Slingshot,²⁶ Joshua Ventures,²⁷ and Bikkurim²⁸ are regularly cited among other important accelerators of these efforts. [...] Yet, despite this continued

commitment to Jewish identity and innovation, many of the more established Jewish institutions have reported a struggle to attract talent."²⁹ For some young Jews participating in projects related to innovation in the Jewish world, the establishment is encouraging and supportive; others, however, feel it is still rather suspicious of innovative projects.³⁰ All in all, more could be done to foster innovation in the Jewish community, although we already see progress in newer sectors: in the Jewish social justice field, for instance, many organizations including Bend the Arc³¹ and JOIN for Justice³² are headed by women, as are four out of five Jewish

Some feel the establishment is still rather suspicious of innovative projects

national publications (Tablet³³, Forward³⁴, Sh'ma³⁵, and Moment³⁶). Several other projects have emerged in recent years, such as the Jewish New Media Innovation Fund (the Fund), launched in 2010 by the Jim Joseph Foundation, the Righteous Persons Foundation, and the Schusterman Family Foundation. The Fund's stated goal is to "identify and fund digitally based projects that "enriched and renewed Jewish traditions, revitalized Jewish institutions, and preserved Jewish history."³⁷

The Jewish community needs to think much more in terms of innovation and slightly less about tradition

In the non-Jewish context, several organizations have been founded over the years, mainly in the business world, to foster innovation. Many of them, like the Center for Talent Innovation (CTI), focus on **innovation in the field of leadership** and the new needs of present and future leaders.³⁸ In a 2013

article published on the Harvard Business Review Blog Network, Sylvia Ann Hewlett (president and CEO of CTI) wrote, together with Melinda Marshall (senior vice president and director of publications at CTI), and Laura Sherbin (executive vice president and director of research at CTI) that "leaders who make sure women get equal airtime are 89% more likely than non-inclusive leaders to unleash women's innovative potential. Leaders who are willing to change direction based on women's input are more than twice as likely to tap into winning ideas. And leaders who make sure each female member on the team gets

constructive and supportive feedback are 128% more likely to elicit breakthrough ideas."³⁹

In other words, leaders who fully grasp and embrace the potential of their female employees are much more likely to succeed than those who don't – diversity in leadership unleashes this tremendous potential.

When it comes to the future of the American Jewish organized community, such potential must be grasped and encouraged. While among the innovative Jewish organizations that are grantees of The Slingshot Fund, over 60% are headed by women,⁴⁰ many organizations still "fail to realize the full innovative potential of women in their midst because leadership either doesn't know how to elicit their insights or lacks the perspective necessary to endorse their ideas."⁴¹ The mainstream organized community has not yet done all that is necessary to unshackle creativity and foster bold decision-making in its midst.

The Jewish community, like any other organization, needs to think much more in terms of innovation and slightly less about tradition. When it comes to innovation, it has been shown that women represent a formidable talent pool, albeit an underutilized one. Research shows that diversity unlocks innovation and drives growth, and that leaders meet the new needs of their organization when they embody diversity and their leadership culture embraces diversity.⁴² Jewish women in positions of leadership are therefore not only needed to help overcome the current leadership crisis and generation gap, they are also an asset in optimizing innovation in the Jewish community.

Part III – Conclusions and Recommendations

The diversity challenge requires long-term, collaborative action, built around a shared vision, by a broad coalition of institutions and actors.

At a time when American Judaism is increasingly associated with progressive values (especially the younger generation), the current state of Jewish leadership may end up undermining that message in American society. With a non-diverse and non-representative leadership, Jewish organizations risk eventually appearing so out of touch and out of date that decision-makers in power may dismiss them as irrelevant. This could, in turn, lead to a serious loss of political influence for the organized Jewish community.

When it comes to diversity and serious organizational change, it is often the case that organizations go through three stages which could be described as denial, window-dressing (the organization acknowledges its problem, but actions undertaken to solve it are inadequate), and finally, seriously addressing the issue.

Some Jewish organizations claim that women do not wish to lead. We respectfully suggest that this may be a symptom of denial, and recommend they skip the window dressing stage and **directly address the diversity issue** by looking at the corporations/organizations that do it best. Even those that take the issue seriously find that it is extremely difficult and that there are no simple solutions; Jewish organizations should therefore try to follow the path of those bodies that have

managed to attain leadership diversity and start by paying specific attention to practices that have proved successful.

Many women working in Jewish organizations complain about the job requirements at the top of the pyramid, for which they receive little preparation throughout their careers. The March 2014 Findings from Interviews and Research report published by Leadership Pipelines Initiative (Cultivating the Next Generation of Leaders for Jewish Nonprofits) "explores the issues that affect whether and how leadership pipelines are being filled and identified a set of potential actions for strengthening the pool of potential leaders for senior positions in the field."⁴³ Although the

organization's goal is to identify cohorts of high-potential future leaders and provide them with training, mentorship, and support in order to cultivate them for senior leadership positions as quickly as possible, it has not, to date, recommended programs specifically for women, and gender balance has not been a stated priority of their research.

It would be wise to identify, mentor, and train women of promise from early on in their careers

Preparing women for leadership positions should be an ongoing effort at all career stages:

- In the **short term**, especially with respect to the current leadership succession crisis,

time is critical and programs should focus on women who are already in the pipeline, willing and ready to move up the next rungs of the organizational ladder. Each current leader should **identify**, together with male candidates, at least **two women as potential successors** and begin the process of preparing them for possible succession.

- In the **medium term**, the American Jewish community should commit to creating

specific leadership programs for mid-career women to help them deal with present obstacles to their advancement and direct them to the leadership positions that will become available in the upcoming years. Programs such as Harvard Business School's Women's Leadership Forum,⁴⁴ whose goal is to prepare women to sustain

strategic advantage inside their organizations, could be used as models to be adapted to the Jewish community context.

- Finally, in the **long term**, specific programs should be envisioned for women who are entering or have recently entered the communal world. These are the women who will eventually be the Jewish community's future leaders and it would be wise to identify, mentor, and train them from early on in their careers – or even before. The Jewish

community could in fact envision promoting Jewish **leadership programs for students** too, on the model of The Public Leadership Education Network (PLEN)⁴⁵, a Washington-based "national organization with the sole focus of preparing college women for leadership in the public policy arena. [...] Through introducing college women to role models, career paths, and skills trainings before they enter the workforce, PLEN's mission is to increase the number of women in top leadership positions."

To measure the success of such programs, Boards of organizations should establish a **committee for the advancement of women** with clear numerical goals and timelines to support the advancement of women to top positions. Each committee should correspond with a **broader umbrella committee** set up under the auspices of a major national Jewish organization. This umbrella committee should be charged with monitoring the advancement of women through Jewish organizations and publish annual reports. This transparent approach would help all organizations to address the question of gender equality in a coordinated fashion. We encourage collaboration with Advancing Women Professionals and the Jewish Community (AWP) on the creation of such committees and the elaboration of organizational best practices, including those that address difficulties in balancing work and family lives.

United States federal law does not mandate paid maternity leave, but a growing list of Jewish nonprofits, after several years of advocacy by AWP, are now offering or expanding paid maternity

leave.⁴⁶ However, the typical working Jewish married woman still "acts as a **secondary earner** whose employment and hours can be manipulated to meet the family's needs and demands; [this pattern] may allow Jews to preserve the familism that has long been central to Jewish culture."⁴⁷

Family roles have a direct impact on the careers of women and some argue that a change is needed in our Jewish culture at large. Expecting women to adhere to traditional family roles – carrying out most of the household and childrearing tasks – makes it impossible for them to equally pursue career aspirations.

The **role of men and fatherhood** in realizing gender equality should be more deeply considered by Jewish organizations. Studies show that Paternity leave increases gender equality at home,⁴⁸ which is a condition for women to pursue 'top of the ladder' careers.⁴⁹ While traditional Jewish familism tends to expect women to take full responsibility for the education and rearing of their children, it would be appropriate to remember that the Jewish tradition actually expects fathers, and not mothers, to be responsible for child rearing and child education.⁵⁰

We recommend that American Jewish organizations formulate work-family policies that allow parental leave and flexibility **for both men and women**, especially in cases when both parents are employed by Jewish organizations. We also recommend substantially expanding the system of **affordable and high-quality Jewish daycare** to better allow both parents to fulfill their careers.⁵¹

At the same time, **donors** should be invited to support funding schemes that encourage organizations to increase the representation of women at the top. For example, AWP's "Men as Allies" campaign encourages men to avoid participating in all-male public panels, and conferences that exclude women from major roles.

Donors could consider giving priority to **funding schemes that reward organizations** for making progress in advancing women to positions of leadership. Donors could

also consider funding **professional management consulting projects** for Jewish organizations focused on improving the representation of women in leadership positions. Most major consulting firms offer diversity strategies to help create workplaces where the

talents of women are rewarded, and to set up paths to attract, develop and retain them. McKinsey⁵², the Boston Consulting Group⁵³, Bain & Company⁵⁴, Booz & Company⁵⁵, and Deloitte⁵⁶ – just to mention five of the most prestigious consulting firms according to Forbes' 2011 ranking⁵⁷ – offer specific programs targeted at identifying, training, and retaining the most talented women throughout the entire professional pipeline. The Jewish community should seriously consider reaching out for professional consultation about the gender parity issue, in order to accelerate the process as much as possible.

Paternity leave increases gender equality at home – a condition for women to pursue 'top of the ladder' careers

Endnotes

1. Burstein, Paul (2010). *Jewish Nonprofit Organizations in the U.S.: A preliminary Survey*. Contemporary Jewry 31(1), p. 139.
2. The only other woman leading a large federation in North America is Deborah Corber, CEO of the Montreal Federation.
3. Efrem, Maia, and Jane Eisner (2013), *Women Leaders of Jewish Non-Profits Remain Scarce Even as Pay Gap Narrows*, The Jewish Daily Forward, <http://forward.com/articles/189200/women-leaders-of-jewish-non-profits-remain-scarce/>
4. For more information about salary gaps in the U.S., see: Pew Research Center (2013), *On Pay Gap, Millennial Women Near Parity – For Now. Despite Gains, Many See Roadblocks Ahead*, http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2013/12/gender-and-work_final.pdf
5. The White House Project Report 2009: *Benchmarking Women's Leadership*, <http://ms-jd.org/uploads/general/Report.pdf>
6. Eisner, Jane and Devra Fers (2009), *Jewish Women Lag Behind Men in Promotion and Pay*, The Jewish Daily Forward. <http://forward.com/articles/118323/jewish-women-lag-behind-men-in-promotion-and-pay/#ixzz3503RBszb>
It is important to underline here that there are many social service agencies, schools, community centers, and foundations that are led by women in the Jewish community but these are considered local; therefore they do not show up in this survey.
7. Samuels, Joanna, Didi Goldenhar and Shifra Bronznick (2010), *Women as Leaders in Judaism* in "Gender and Women's Leadership: A Reference Handbook vol. 1, Sage Publications
8. *ibidem*
9. The White House Project Report 2009: *Benchmarking Women's Leadership*, <http://ms-jd.org/uploads/general/Report.pdf>
10. Samuels, Goldenhar and Bronznick 2010
11. For a complete, up-to-date set of data about the condition of women in Israel, see: Tzameret-Kertcher, Hagar (2013), *The Gender Index, Gender Inequality in Israel*, 2013, The Van Leer Institute The Strauss Group and the Israel Women's Network, *The 2013 Catalyst Report*, <http://www.strauss-group.com/newsmention/the-2013-catalyst-report-indicates/>
Hasson, Yael and Noga Dagan-Buzaglo (2013), *Occupational Segregation and Gender Pay Gaps*, "פרויקט 'שוות ערך - לקידום שכר שווה'", Adva Center, Information on equality and social justice in Israel
12. <http://advancingwomen.org/pages/about/>
13. See also: Bronznick, Shifra and Barbara Dobkin, *Advancing Women Professionals: From Catalytic Intervention to Network of Catalysts*, <http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/advancing-women-professionals-from-catalytic-intervention-to-network-of-catalysts/>
14. Hartman, Harriet and Moshe Hartman (2009), "Gender and American Jews; Patterns in Work, Education, and Family in Contemporary Life", Brandeis University Press, p.30
15. *ibid.*, p.253
16. See 2012-2013 JPPI Annual Assessment, *Jewish Leadership in North America – Changes in Personnel and Structure*, p.139
17. *Jewish Donors Don't Always Get Young Jews: Overcoming "The Donor-Demographic Disconnect"*, ejewish philanthropy, <http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/jewish-donors-dont-always-get-young-jews-overcoming-the-donor-demographic-disconnect/#sthash.DUYftIV.dpuf>

18. See Pew Research Center (2013), *A Portrait of Jewish Americans, Findings from a Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews*, <http://www.pewforum.org/files/2013/10/jewish-american-full-report-for-web.pdf>
19. See 2012-2013 JPPI Annual Assessment, *Jewish Leadership in North America – Changes in Personnel and Structure*, p.144
20. Bronznick, Shifra and Didi Goldenhar, *Flexibility and More Mentors Will Expand the Number of Female Nonprofit CEO's*, The Chronicle of Philanthropy 2009
21. Khazan, Olga (2014), *Are People Becoming More Open to Female Leaders?*, The Atlantic, <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/05/the-myth-of-the-ineffective-female-leader/361559/>
22. Koenig, Anne, Alice Eagly, Abigail Mitchell and Tiina Ristikari (2011). *Are Leader Stereotypes Masculine? A Meta-Analysis of Three Research Paradigms*, Psychological Bulletin 2011, Vol. 137, No. 4, 616–642, 2011 American Psychological Association
23. The outcome of such research is the *Leadership Pipelines Initiative, Cultivating the Next Generation of Leaders for Jewish Nonprofits Findings from Interviews and Research*, published in March 2014. <http://pipelinesalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Leadership-Pipelines-Initiative-Report-March-2014.pdf>
24. "Jumpstart is a philanthropic research & design lab based in Los Angeles. Jumpstart's unique combination of research, convenings, and funding enables creative changemakers – philanthropists and institutional leaders alike – to realize their own visions and advance the common good." <http://jewishjumpstart.org/>
25. "ROI Community is an international network of activists and change makers who are redefining Jewish engagement for a new generation of global citizens. ROI Community members channel a diversity of perspectives, skills and interests toward a shared passion for advancing ideas and partnerships that will strengthen Jewish communities and improve society." <http://www.roicommunity.org/>
26. "The Slingshot Fund is a peer giving network, designed to support Jewish organizations that resonate with the Fund members, young Jews in their 20s and 30s. The Slingshot Fund exposes its next generation funders to a professional grant-making process, and provides them with opportunities to develop philanthropic skills and to learn from experts in the field while leveraging their small gifts into a significant grant pool." <http://www.slingshotfund.org/>
27. "Joshua Venture Group seeks to reinvigorate and expand the Jewish community by cultivating the leadership and management capability of talented, passionate young Jewish social entrepreneurs and by investing in their visions and the growth of healthy, sustainable organizations." <http://joshuaventuregroup.org/>
28. "Since our founding in 2000, Bikkurim has provided over \$3.5 million dollars of direct and in-kind support to 29 new ideas. Currently four groups are in the incubator and one organization participates in Atid Hazak." <http://www.bikkurim.org/>
29. Wolf Ditzkoff, Susan and Libbie Landles-Cobb (2014), *Leadership Pipelines Initiative, Cultivating the Next Generation of Leaders for Jewish Nonprofits*, pp. 5-6
30. Brown, David (2011), *Jewish Innovation and the Establishment*, Presentense <http://presentense.org/magazine/jewish-innovation-and-the-establishment>
31. Headed by Stosh Cotler
32. Headed by Karla Van Praag
33. Editor-in-chief: Alana Newhouse, <http://www.tabletmag.com/>
34. Editor: Jane Eisner, <http://forward.com/>

35. Editor: Susan Berrin, <http://shma.com/>
36. Editor and Publisher: Nadine Epstein, <http://www.momentmag.com/>
37. Bernholz, Lucy and Conan Liu, *Innovating on Tradition: Reflections on the Jewish New Media Innovation Fund*, Arabella Philanthropic Investment Advisors, http://www.schusterman.org/wp-content/uploads/Bernholz_Innovating-on-Tradition_FINAL.pdf
38. http://www.talentinnovation.org/about_CTI/
39. Hewlett, Sylvia Ann, Melinda Marshall, and Laura Sherbin (2013), *How Women Drive Innovation and Growth*, The Harvard Business Review Blog Network, <http://blogs.hbr.org/2013/08/how-women-drive-innovation-and/>
40. Zehavi, Ben (2013), *Trapped under America's Jewish Glass Ceiling*, The Times of Israel
41. Hewlett, Sylvia Ann, Melinda Marshall, and Laura Sherbin (2013), *How Women Drive Innovation and Growth*, The Harvard Business Review Blog Network, <http://blogs.hbr.org/2013/08/how-women-drive-innovation-and/>
42. CTI Research (2013), *Innovation, Diversity, and Market Growth*, <http://www.talentinnovation.org/assets/IDMG-ExecSummFINAL-CTI.pdf>
43. <http://pipelinesalliance.org/>
44. <http://www.exed.hbs.edu/programs/wlf/Pages/objectives.aspx>
45. <http://plen.org/about-us/>
46. Until 2010, according to an AWP survey of 227 Jewish organizations, fewer than one-third of responding organizations had formal written flexibility policies allowing employees to organize their own working time schedules. Sixty-five percent (65%) of responding organizations offered no paid maternity leave, but rather an unpaid maternity leave (47% offered twelve weeks or more of unpaid maternity leave) or even no maternity leave, paid or unpaid, at all (10% of responding organizations). For the remaining 35% that did provide paid maternity leave, approximately ten percent offered between one and four weeks, and an additional eighteen percent (18%) provided between five and ten weeks. Only 7% of the responding organizations provided twelve weeks or more of paid maternity leave. Formal paternity leave policies existed in only 33% of organizations, while 61% offered no paternity leave, paid or unpaid. Since, some 82 groups (large national organizations such as the Union for Reform Judaism, some local federations, some foundations and some large synagogues) have started offering at least four weeks of paid maternity leave or having formal flexibility policies; twenty out of these 82 groups offer at least 12 weeks of paid maternity leave and six weeks of paid parental leave for fathers or partners. <http://advancingwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Better-Work-Better-Life-Practices-and-Policies-in-Jewish-Organizations-Report1.pdf>
47. Kotsadama, Andreas and Henning Finseraas (2011), *The State Intervenes in the Battle of the Sexes: Causal Effects of Paternity Leave*, Social Science Research, Vol. 40, Issue 6, pp. 1611-1622
48. See Mandel, Hadas (2009), *Configurations of gender inequality: the consequences of ideology and public policy*, The British Journal of Sociology 2009 Volume 60 Issue 4, 694-719
49. Patnaik, Ankita (2014), *Merging Separate Spheres: Does Paternity Leave Promote Dual-Earner Dual-Carer Households?*, Cornell University
50. Mandel, Hadas (2011) *Rethinking the paradox: tradeoffs in work-family policy and patterns of gender inequality*, Community, Work and Family, 14 : 2, 159-176

49. More on the subject can be found on the Chabad's website: http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/910973/jewish/Talmud-Torah-Chapter-One.htm
50. Joining AWP's Better Work, Better Life campaign (<http://advancingwomen.org/pages/mobilize/better-work-better-life/>) is probably the best first step in this direction. See: Goldenhar, Didi, Shifra Bronznick and Rachael Ellison (revised 2010), *Better Work, Better Life: Practices and Policies in Jewish Organizations*, AWP Publication, <http://advancingwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Better-Work-Better-Life-Practices-and-Policies-in-Jewish-Organizations-Report.pdf>
51. Since 2007, McKinsey has been researching intensively the advancement of women in the workplace. See their latest report "*Unlocking the full potential of women at work*": http://www.mckinsey.com/Client_Service/Organization/Latest_thinking/Women_at_work and http://www.mckinsey.com/careers/women/~media/Reports/Women/Changing_companies_minds_about_women.ashx
52. The Boston Consulting Group "strives to be the very best place for women who want a career in professional services and considers attracting and retaining top female talent key to its advantage. The Women's Initiative helps to recruit the best available female talent for the firm and retain and advance current BCG women through effective management of their careers.": http://www.bcg.com/careers/is_bcg_for_me/diversity_networks/womens_initiative.aspx
53. See Bain & company's literature own gender parity: <http://www.bain.com/publications/business-insights/gender-parity.aspx>
54. See their 2012 report "Empowering the Third Billion Women and the World of Work in 2012"
55. See Deloitte's Women Initiative: http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_US/us/About/Inclusion/Womens-Initiative/index.htm
56. Adams, Susan (2011), *The Most Prestigious Consulting Firms*, Forbes <http://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2011/08/25/the-most-prestigious-consulting-firms/>

Crowd Sourced Genealogy and Direct-to-Consumer DNA Testing: Implications for the Jewish People*

Introduction

Interest in genealogical mapping has dramatically increased in recent years. New online tools are available for individuals to research their family history and collaborate with distant relatives to build family trees. Concurrently, advances in genetic research and computing technology have enabled direct-to-consumer (DTC) genealogical mapping through DNA analysis at affordable prices.

The possible existence of Jewish ancestry is among the many discoveries sometimes made by individuals taking advantage of these advances in genealogical mapping. Companies that provide DTC DNA testing even boast that their product can “infer whether or not and to what degree you may have Jewish ancestry”¹ or “discover your Jewish ancestry.”²

DNA test results have led many consumers into exploring their newly discovered Jewish roots. Such developments offer exciting opportunities for connecting, engaging, and strengthening the bonds of the Jewish people.

According to Bennett Greenspan, President and CEO of Family Tree DNA, a leading company in the field, some people even convert to Judaism after discovering the possibility of Jewish ancestry in their DNA.³ By 2005 the *New York Times* observed that due to DNA tests, “embraces of Judaism are growing more common in parts of the (American) Southwest” among Hispanics who believe they are descendants of Marranos.⁴

Furthermore, Jewish genealogy, especially Ashkenazi genealogy, has been and continues to be the focus of many scientific studies aimed at determining the history and genealogical origins of Ashkenazi Jewry.

Few non-scientists can grasp the biology, algorithmic calculations, and probabilistic nature at the foundation of published genetic studies and consumer DNA tests. Still, as they gain widespread public attention, DTC DNA testing has the potential to inform one’s sense of identity, despite the controversial questions loaded with political implications that may arise.

* Special thanks to Deborah A. Bolnick Ph.D, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Texas at Austin, for serving as scientific advisor on this chapter.

The goal of this paper is to introduce readers to the tools available online for conventional genealogical research, the advances in genetic research, the types of results generated from DTC DNA tests, and the implications that these tools and developments could have on the Jewish people, such as:

- Could these new tools affect connectedness of the Jewish people?
- Could awareness among Jews that they are “distant cousins,” based on science, create or reinforce group solidarity?
- How should individuals who believe they have discovered Jewish roots be treated by the Jewish community?

Individuals should not be surprised if someone has already included them or some of their relatives in an existing family tree

- How do these developments influence the way Jewish identity is conceived?
- Could these tools be used to strengthen an individual's Jewish identity or lead to new forms of Jewish community involvement?

- How can the Jewish people prevent DNA tests from becoming a device of alienation?

This paper is divided into five sections: a review of the advances and applications of genealogy research and genetic sciences; how these advances are affecting various non-Jewish population groups; the tools available online for genealogical research; a specific example of the types of results

generated by DTC DNA tests; and the implications that these advances have on the Jewish people, both on the individual and collective level.

The State of Genealogical Research and Genetic Sciences

Over the last decade there has been significant growth in the commercialization of genealogical mapping. Dozens of new businesses now exist that enable consumers to trace their family history online by searching official documents, such as immigration and military records, birth and death certificates, and census data. These companies harness the power of virtual social networks and crowd sourcing to connect individuals with close and distant relatives to collaborate on building interconnected family trees with embedded historical data. Myheritage.com, an Israeli start-up and one of the leading genealogical websites, has over 75 million registered members using their website, with 1.5 billion people included in over 27 million family trees hosted on their site.⁵

Users build their family trees with information known about their relatives and ancestors and the website then automatically finds matching historical records, providing further information and embedding evidence into a family tree. The website finds matches between family trees, providing individuals the ability to effortlessly build their family tree with existing trees. The more relatives an individual enters into his or her family tree, the higher the probability that he or she will match with existing trees. Users should not be surprised to start a family tree on a genealogical website and find that someone has

already included them or some of their relatives in an existing tree.⁶

Although there are several websites and applications that create family trees, there is a standard file type for saving the genealogical data that comprises a family tree known as GEDCOM (Genealogical Data Communication).⁷ This standardization enables the sharing and distribution of digital family trees without issues of non-compatibility. In practice, this has contributed to the spreading of digital family trees across various platforms, websites, and companies.

As more and more individuals input their family trees on genealogical and ancestry websites, it becomes increasingly possible to weave all the trees together in order to create a mega tree with each family tree serving as a building block or corner stone of a larger tree.

The ability of making a family tree, however, has been limited by the amount of existing knowledge a family possesses about itself. Families that have remained in one geographic location for several generations, and have maintained the same culture and spoken the same language, are far more likely to have a deeper knowledge about their family history than those that have migrated across continents, as was typical of Jewish families during the past century.

Even with the sharing of family trees as described above, without knowing the names of specific family members or whether, for example, a great grandfather had any siblings, it is almost impossible to find evidence of their existence. This is especially the case when researching

ancestors who were first generation immigrants. The changing of family names to fit into a new country and the disconnection from siblings and cousins in the home country (before the advent of modern communications), were historically common place for first generation immigrants and it poses a challenge for their biological descendants researching their family as it existed in the old world.

However, over the last decade, advances in genetic research and computing technology have been closing the gap of what individuals know about their family history and relatives. Since 1990, when the international scientific community, with funding from the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Health and Environmental Research, began a 15-year project to map the human genome, every year the power and speed at which computers are able to sequence the constituent DNA increases as the cost decreases.⁸ In 2002 the cost of sequencing one million base of DNA (the human genome contains 3 billion base pairs) was around \$5000, today the cost is around \$0.06.⁹ This dramatic decrease in cost has enabled DNA sequencing to become accessible beyond mega-funded laboratories.

**Decreased cost
has enabled
DNA sequencing
to become
accessible
beyond
mega-funded
laboratories**

Although the main impetus and funding justification for DNA research was for medical purposes, new areas of scientific research are

being explored utilizing DNA sequencing. One area of research that benefited tremendously from these developments is molecular anthropology, which uses DNA analysis to study evolution, human migration patterns, and genealogical relationships between human populations. By collecting and analyzing the portion of DNA that is inherited from only one parent, scientists have been able to classify maternal and paternal lineages into haplogroups. Haplogroups are often described as ancient

As in the game of telephone, as the DNA sequence is passed from generation to generation, it gets changed slightly

clans or tribes that may have lived within close geographical proximity at one point in history. It is more accurate, however, to think of haplogroups as groups of people who share one common direct maternal or paternal ancestor who lived sometime in the last tens of thousands of years.

The many academic and medical studies published utilizing DNA analysis for health, demographic, and population studies quickly generated commercial applications. With DNA testing becoming less expensive over the last decade, several new companies were established that offer direct-to-consumer DNA analysis for genealogical and medical purposes.¹⁰ Today, for less than \$100 one can “discover your lineage, find relatives and more” by having your DNA analyzed.¹¹

Consumers are able to find near and distant relatives through DNA matching, expanding their family tree and ancestral knowledge in ways unimaginable only 25 years ago. As a result of these products, individuals and families are learning more about their ancestors and origins. Genealogical DNA analysis is especially useful for individuals who have only a limited knowledge of their family history or are interested in their deep historical roots.

It needs to be understood that it is not the case that a DNA test analyzes a genome (the totality of DNA found in one cell) or genes (the functional sections of DNA) and then determines if that DNA is Jewish or not. There is no specific gene or genetic marker that that is proof positive that one is Jewish. Genealogical DNA tests compare the DNA of an individual with an existing database in order to find matching or very similar DNA sequences and then determine genealogical relationships.

A DNA test can be explained through an analogy of the game of telephone. In the game of telephone, an individual starts with a phrase and privately passes it on to one person, who in turn passes on to another. Once the phrase passes through everyone in the game, the starting phrase and the resultant phrase are compared for differences. Imagine a giant game of telephone with 63 people in which each person transmits the phrase to two people instead of only one. At the end of the game, instead of one resulting phrase, there would be 32 phrases and each phrase would have been passed 5 times. The resulting phrases

would presumably share similarities, and perhaps some would be identical. The closer the phrases are on the chain, the more similarities the phrases would share.

A DNA sequence is like the message transmitted in the game of telephone. Except a DNA sequence is fantastically more complex. The human genome found in a DNA sequence contains more than 3 billion base pairs (those horizontal bars bridging the double strands of a DNA molecule). The human genome is 99.9% similar among all humans, the .1% that is different can be thought of as a genetic code or fingerprint. An individual's genetic code is composed of a combination of half of each of their parent's genetic code. For various reasons, DNA gets slightly mutated when it is transmitted and those mutations get hardwired into the DNA. The next time the DNA is transmitted from one generation to the another, the mutation might remain intact and could be transmitted from one generation to another. As long as that portion of the DNA sequence does not get altered or mutated again, it serves as a unique genealogical stamp, or "genetic marker" that one individual passes on to their descendants.

As in the game of telephone, as the DNA sequence is passed from generation to generation, it gets slightly changed and altered. The more times it is transmitted, the more it varies from its original form. Conversely, the more similarities two DNA sequences share, the closer they are likely to be along the chain of transmission.

It should be noted, however, that the American Society of Human Genetics warns consumers that everyone has thousands of ancestors, segments of DNA get transferred in a "non-deterministic" manner, and only a "fraction" of one's descendants can be traceable through DNA testing.¹² That is to say, the length and portion of DNA that are transferred from parent to child are seemingly random. Not all our ancestors contribute equally to the make-up of our DNA; inevitably traces of some ancestors will be more dominate than others, and some ancestors may not be traceable at all. Without taking DNA samples directly from all of one's ancestors, it is impossible to truly map one's genealogy. The Society states that "the genomic segments contributed by a particular ancestor are far from all being uniquely identifiable, so even if one's genome has those specific genome contributions, identification of particular ancestry is always uncertain and statistical."¹³

Through complex statistical analysis, computers are able to predict how closely two DNA samples are related

Through complex statistical analysis, computers are able to predict how closely two samples of DNA are related. Without comparing a DNA sample to an existing dataset of DNA there is little information that can be generated for genealogical exploration. The larger the dataset of DNA samples, and the more biographical details known about the individuals whose DNA is in the

database, such as where their ancestors lived, the more the test can reveal. A DNA test will only tell a test-taker that he/she shares some DNA with another person or a group of people alive today and previously sampled. Therefore, individuals seeking genealogical information about themselves through DNA testing will only be able to see how their DNA compares with others.¹⁴

For this reason, companies may include in their DNA database not only their specific customer's DNA, but DNA samples taken during scientific

Genealogical DNA testing is especially popular in the African American and Native American communities

studies. For example, Family Tree DNA includes the dataset collected by Doron Behar et al. for the article "Genome Wide Structure of the Jewish People," published in *Nature* in 2010.¹⁵ The dataset includes DNA samples from 14 Jewish Diaspora communities and 69 non-Jewish "old world" population areas.¹⁶

As DNA tests inevitably become cheaper and more DNA samples are added to large databases and analyzed for demographic and genealogical purposes, the overall picture of how people around the world are related will become clearer.

The Effect on Non-Jewish Populations

On an individual level, consumers are taking DNA tests for personal interest and are learning something new about themselves and their ancestral origins. Already in 2006, a *New York Times* article stated, "genetic tests, once obscure tools for scientists, have begun to influence everyday lives in many ways. The tests are reshaping people's sense of themselves," albeit more so in the United States than in other countries.¹⁷

DNA testing for genealogical purposes is especially popular within the African American and Native American communities. Both communities have an interest in exploring their ancestral roots, but for very different reasons. African Americans, many of whom are descendants of slaves, have no record of their ancestors' precise geographical origins. Through genealogical testing, African Americans are able to learn more about their pre-slavery roots. In 2006, PBS ran a four-part TV series called "African American Lives" that traced the ancestry of famous African Americans such as Whoopi Goldberg, Quincy Jones, and Oprah Winfrey using DNA analysis. The show's success prompted PBS to produce a sequel series with an educational outreach component to raise awareness about genealogical research.¹⁸

Within the Native American community, a few tribes have utilized forms of DNA testing to prove familial lineage for tribal affiliation and benefits¹⁹. Some college applicants are even doing DNA tests to detect Native American ancestry in order to improve their application profiles.²⁰ Kim Tallbear,

an anthropologist at the University of Texas and member of a Native American tribe, made the following comments to New Scientist magazine on why the issue of DNA testing has generated controversy within the Native American community:

I think there is suspicion by many Native Americans that scientists, who are largely not Native American, want to turn our history into another immigrant narrative that says “We’re all really immigrants, we’re all equal, you have no special claims to anything.” There are also people who don’t want to have a molecular narrative of history shoved down their throats. They would prefer to privilege the tribal creation stories that root us in the landscapes we come from.²¹

Tools Available for Jewish Genealogical Research

With regard to conventional genealogical research, there are several free online databases dedicated specifically to Jewish genealogical research. JewishGen.org, which is affiliated with the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York, features thousands of free easy to use databases consisting of over 20 million Jewish historical records, such as burial registries, *yizkor* book entries, and various pieces of data collected within Jewish communities during the 19th century by state and local officials.²² JewishGen.org acts as a hub connecting genealogists researching Jewish families and towns, enabling

the sharing of research and exchange of information. It is also part of the Family Tree of the Jewish People project which aims “to provide a powerful resource to connect individuals researching the same Jewish family branches, to re-connect their families, and to increase interest in Jewish genealogy.”²³ It is in partnership with the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS), and Beit Hatefutsoth (Museum of the Diaspora) in Tel Aviv and it consists of more than 5 million names.²⁴

The World Zionist Organization maintains the Central Zionist Archive, the official archive of the Zionist movement. It contains millions of documents and records, many of which have been digitized and made accessible through a searchable online database. Over the past decade the Archive decided to engage in the field of genealogy, offering a research service to consumers interested in their family history as well as hosting a course in genealogical research in their office in Jerusalem.²⁵ The Government of Israel also maintains a State archive, which has some electronic records accessible through their Hebrew webpage. Yad Vashem has led an international effort to create a database of victims of the *Shoah*. To date, the database, accessible online, contains biographical information on 4 million victims.²⁶

**JewishGen.org
features
20 million
Jewish
historical
records**

Recently, there has been a bridging between Jewish genealogical websites and DNA testing. Both Beit Hatefutsoth and Jewishgen.org, for example, advertise DNA testing for Jewish genealogical purposes by Family Tree DNA.

While genealogical DNA tests are not yet changing the Jewish community as a whole in any major way, they are becoming popular enough on an individual level to suffice exploring what the test results show, what the results mean, and what the policy implications are.

The DNA test kit contains two cotton mouth-swabs and two tiny plastic vials

Sample Results

In preparation for the writing of this chapter, a JPPI fellow had his DNA tested through Family Tree DNA in order to better understand the type of information provided to consumers.

Specifically, JPPI purchased three different tests: The first test called the Family Finder is an Autosomal DNA test, which examines parts of one's DNA that could have been transmitted by any ancestor. Although this test is the broadest in that it provides general information about the mixture of all ancestors and allows individuals to find cousins within the past five generations, it doesn't provide specific information about one's direct paternal or maternal lineages.

The second test performed focused on

mitochondrial DNA, which is only inherited maternally. Since the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) is only passed from mother to child, and if that child is a female to her descendants etc., it carries information on one's direct maternal lineage exclusively. Although all men receive mitochondrial DNA through their mothers, they do not pass it on to their children. The specific mtDNA test that JPPI purchased, mtDNA+, provides consumers with information on their maternal haplogroup as well as matching consumers with individuals who share a common maternal ancestor going back 28 generations, approximately 700 years.²⁷

The third DNA test performed focused only on the Y-Chromosome which is passed exclusively from father to son (women do not have a Y-Chromosome) and therefore carries information on one's direct paternal lineage. The specific test ordered, Y-DNA37, analyzes 37 genetic markers and can predict relationships within the past eight generations.²⁸ These three tests cost around \$320 USD in total, but each test can be purchased separately.

Once ordered through the company's website the DNA test kit arrives by mail. The kit contains two cotton mouth-swabs and two tiny plastic vials to put the cotton swabs into after the tester scrapes the inside of his or her cheek. The tester then mails the samples back to the company and waits several weeks for the results to become available online.

The results JPPI received from the DNA tests demonstrated the extent to which the tests could

influence one's perceived identity and ethnic affiliation. Figure 1 below shows the "Ethnic Makeup" based on the results of the "Family Finder" test, which analyzed autosomal DNA. According to the test, "Jewish Diaspora" makes up the largest percentage of ancestral origins. That is to say, when comparing the autosomal DNA of the test taker to various reference population groups included in the company's database, the sample resembles most closely that of Ashkenazim. Geographically, the focal point of ancestral "origins" is the area formerly known as the Pale of Settlement.

The results also indicate that some of the ancestors of the test taker may have been of Middle Eastern and European origin. According to Bennet Greenspan of Family Tree DNA, the presence of European and Middle Eastern ancestors can be explained by the observation that Ashkenazim have a combination of paternal Middle Eastern ancestry and European maternal ancestry. It should be noted that all four of the test taker's grandparents were born in Canada and all his great grandparents were born in Europe.

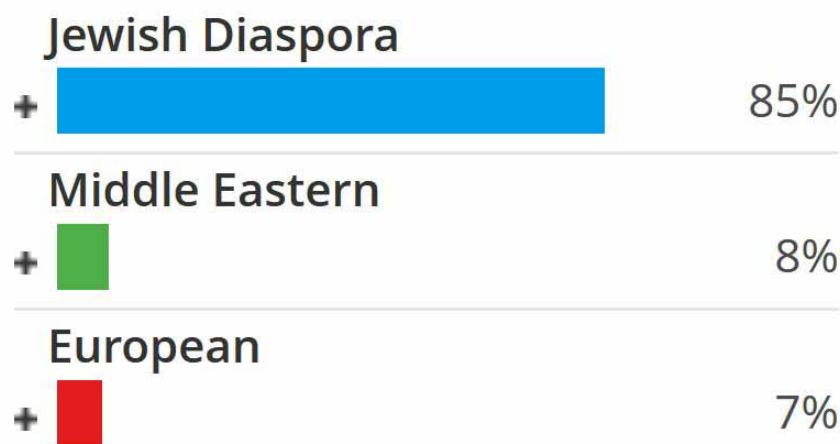


Figure 1

Another aspect of the results the autosomal DNA test generated is the "Family Finder" which matches the tester's DNA with other customers who are possible relatives.²⁹ The company states that it can match second cousins with 99% accuracy, third cousins at 90%, and fourth cousins

at 50%. In this particular case, the test identified hundreds of possible relatives, but the JPPI fellow was only able to verify that three of the matches were indeed relatives (a second cousin once removed, a second cousin twice removed, and a third cousin once removed).

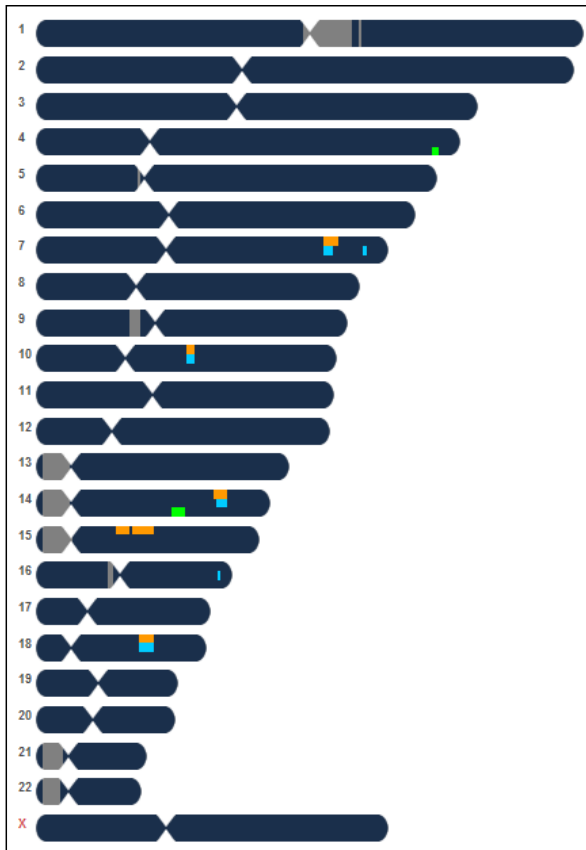


Figure 2

Figure 2 is a visual representation produced by FTDNA of the tester's DNA sample, divided into the 23 chromosome pairs. The tester's DNA is being compared with the DNA samples of three specifically selected individuals, two known blood relatives (father and daughter) the FTDNA was able to match and one individual that FTDNA identified as a possible distant cousin, but which could not be verified by the tester. The areas where the color blocks appear over the blue are the parts in the DNA sample that are identical. The larger the overlap, the longer the matching sequence.

The results of the mtDNA test, which carries information on the direct maternal lineage exclusively, also suggested Jewish heritage. Specifically, among the 100 people in the database who match with the tester's mtDNA, roughly 50% are identified as "Ashkenazi," 2% as "Alsace," and the rest are not specifically defined beyond maternal country of origin. While it is most likely that the test-taker's direct maternal ancestor was Ashkenazi, it is also possible that this ancestor was Alsace and not Jewish at all.

The maternal haplogroup was identified as H, considered to be "the most common and most diverse maternal lineage in Europe" and is believed to have emerged 25,000 – 30,000 years ago in the northeastern Mediterranean.³⁰ Among Jews, 23% of Ashkenazi lineages are rooted within haplogroup H.³¹

The tests results of the Y-DNA, which deal exclusively with the direct paternal lineage, also suggested Jewish ancestry. Among the individuals whose sample identified as a "genetic match," 65% self-identified as some variant of Ashkenazi or Sephardi. Similar to the mtDNA results, no other ethnic or religious description was provided among all those individuals who were genetic matches. That is to say, of the roughly 35% genetic matches that did not define themselves as Sephardi or Ashkenazi, no alternative identity was provided. According to the test results, it is most likely that the direct paternal ancestor had Jewish ancestry, but it also means there is a 35% chance that the ancestor was not Jewish.

The haplogroup identified for the Y-DNA is J-M267 (commonly known as J1), which is a common haplogroup in the Fertile Crescent in the Middle East, having its origins linked to the expansion of pastoralism.³²

Interestingly, the results of these DNA tests are congruent with the studies conducted by Behar et al. (2010) and Costa et al. (2013), which examine the origins of the Jewish people through DNA analysis. Specifically, the tester's maternal lineage suggests a prehistoric European ancestry, while the paternal lineage suggests Middle Eastern origins during the corresponding era.

The test results shared above are from tests that can be purchased separately. For some individuals interested in DNA tests for genealogical purposes, but on a limited budget, purchasing only one type of test could lead to misleading or incomplete results. For example, neither the Y-DNA test or mtDNA test described above gave results that specifically refer to any Middle Eastern origins, while the results of the autosomal DNA test did. Also, as the technology of DNA tests continues to advance and a larger database of DNA samples is available for comparison, the amount of information generated will be of a much higher resolution than available today. Therefore, individuals should not draw too many conclusions about their ancestral origins from a single DNA test or even expect to have a complete understanding of their genealogy from several tests. Moreover, the tests are probabilistic, meaning there is an element of chance involved that could lead to results based on mere coincidence.

Implications for the Jewish People

Historically, Jewish interest in genetic research was primarily, if not exclusively, driven by the well-established fact that parts of the Jewish population were suffering from some genetic or genetically influenced diseases, more so than the general population which they were living in. As such, Jewish communities embraced molecular based genetic testing as a means of combatting lethal inherited diseases such as Tay-Sachs. Perhaps because of the overwhelmingly positive results associated with genetic testing for medical purposes, Jews

have not shied away from embracing DNA testing for genealogical purposes.

In the 2010 Annual Assessment JPPI included an article, "New Findings Concerning the Genome Structure of the Jewish People," which focused on the potential

consequences of scientific genetic studies that focus on the Jewish people. The article briefly discussed two studies that "found important traces of ancient Jewish history – of common geographic origin, past migrations and conversions into Judaism – in the current genome structure of the Jewish people." Through the article JPPI raised the following important question which is even more relevant today because of the personal nature of DNA testing: "Can awareness among Jews that they are "distant cousins," this time

Jews have not shied away from embracing DNA testing for genealogical purposes

based not on religious tradition but on science, create or reinforce their group solidarity?”

If the answer for even some Jews is yes, which inevitably it is, there is great opportunity to take advantage of this new source of solidarity to strengthen Jewish peoplehood and educate those with a newfound interest in Judaism. For example, there could be an organized group trip to Israel for individuals who believe they have newly discovered Jewish roots.

It needs to be emphasized that identifying genetic commonalities among the Jewish people and

studying Jewish genealogy is not synonymous with racial studies on Jews. If anything, recent scientific studies show that the Jewish people are neither genetically homogenous nor genetically unique. Race is in many ways a socially constructed concept with increasing negative connotations.

Many people, especially among younger generations, are turned off by racial categorizations and definitions. Understanding what genealogical mapping and the human genome can tell us about the origins of the Jewish people need not have anything to do with race.

How do these new tools affect connectedness of the Jewish people?

If one considers that the Jewish people is a big interconnected family made up of smaller more

closely related families, then the more a family remains connected, the more connected the Jewish people is as a whole. Conversely, if Jewish families lose their connectedness, we are more likely to see a drifting apart of the Jewish people as a whole.

The last 150 years have witnessed massive migrations of the Jewish people throughout the world. As Jewish families relocated, they often broke apart from their larger families – starting a new life in the new world often meant leaving the old life and the family history behind. Furthermore, the *Shoah* destroyed countless amounts of families and genealogical data.

The advances described above have the ability to help relatives that had been separated for generations find each other, even if those individuals don't live in the same continent or speak the same language. The tools also function, like most virtual social networks, as a mechanism to keep families connected and in communication.

Moreover, due to differences of language and culture, perhaps it is difficult for Jews in one part of the world to feel truly connected with Jews in another part of the world, especially in situations where neither are facing persecution. Genealogical mapping has the ability to introduce, at least virtually, individuals to members of their own extended family living in other parts of the world, reinforcing the notion of *Klal Israel*. There is a tremendous benefit, therefore, in embracing these tools as a mechanism to strengthen inter and intra-community bonds.

Considering that until the end of the 19th century the Jewish people consisted of communities living

in population enclaves throughout the world, where the overwhelming majority married other Jews, it is reasonable to assume that a mega-family tree of the Jewish people would be easier to build compared to other Western communities or ethnic populations, barring of course the huge gap in the family tree as a result of the *Shoah*.

How do these developments influence the way Jewish identity is conceived?

Some argue that for many Jews the synagogue has lost its appeal as the central hub of Jewish life. The recent Pew study (discussed at length elsewhere in this assessment) states that “U.S. Jews see being Jewish as more a matter of ancestry, culture and values than of religious observance.”³³ If that is true, it is reasonable to expect some individuals to conceive of their Jewish identity as a result of their ancestry alone and not by their current practices, cultural milieu, or beliefs. Is it possible then, to have this category of Jews be engaged or involved in some way with a Jewish community? Perhaps the virtual networks being created by those engaged in genealogical research offer a new form of Jewish involvement. That is to say, if individuals identify themselves as part of the Jewish community because of their ancestry, then learning more about their ancestry and celebrating their heritage could be considered a form of Jewish engagement. Strengthening these individual’s sense of Jewish heritage or deepening their knowledge of their ancestor’s beliefs and customs through these new tools has the potential to reinforce their Jewish identity and lead to other forms of Jewish engagement.

Therefore, Jewish communal organizations, such as synagogues, cemeteries, and societies, along with the official Zionist and Israel archives, should expand the amount and accessibility of electronic records containing genealogical information to assist those engaged in such research.

Jews who do not connect strongly with Israel or who are even hostile to the idea of Zionism could be deeply impacted by DNA test results similar to the ones above. Those who associate Zionism with colonialism and not a genuine returning of a people to their historical homeland could be surprised to know that they themselves actually have ancestral origins in the Land of Israel.

An extreme example of the effect of learning about Jewish heritage is the bizarre story of Csanad Szegedi, a member of the European Parliament and former leader of Hungary’s extreme right-wing Jobbik political party known for his anti-Semitic rhetoric, who learned of his Jewish heritage only after becoming party leader.³⁴ Not only did Szegedi dissociate from the Jobbik party, he is now reportedly “enamored with Judaism” and living an active Jewish lifestyle.³⁵

One major challenge that will arise due to DTC DNA tests is the likelihood that a committed Jew will find the results of a DNA test off-putting. Imagine an individual, perhaps someone adopted, who is raised Jewish and committed to the Jewish people, but as an adult discovers that s/he likely did not have any Jewish ancestors, or someone who has one Jewish parent and receives DNA

test results that suggest she is only '15% Jewish.' Further still, deeply committed Zionists who do not find any traces of Middle Eastern roots within their DNA, might begin to question the relevance of Zionism within their Jewish identity.

Overall, test results have the potential to deeply affect one's self-conception of belonging to the Jewish people, especially if the individual is only marginally involved in a Jewish community. Therefore, an important policy priority should

Results could spark interest in exploring Jewish heritage and engagement in the Jewish community

be to prevent DNA tests from becoming a device of alienation away from the Jewish people.

The amount that an individual's DNA sequence correlates to DNA sequences common among Jews is not an indication of Jewishness. It needs to be stressed and understood that there is no one singular exclusively Jewish lineage

extending from Abraham to the present day. There has always been some degree of intermarriage throughout Jewish history. Even King David's Great-Grandmother Ruth was a Moabite convert to Judaism.

In his day, Maimonides (Rambam) wrote a famous letter to Obadiah the Proselyte in response to the latter's question, that even though he is a convert to Judaism is he allowed to use the first person plurals 'us,' 'we,' and 'our' in reference to the Jewish

people in prayer, alone and in the synagogue. Maimonides concluded that those who adopt Judaism and follow the laws of the Torah are counted among the descendants of Abraham: "In the same way as he converted his contemporaries through his words and teaching, he converts future generations through the testament he left to his children and household after him."³⁶

For individuals who become aware of their Jewish ancestry as a result of taking a DNA test, the results could spark interest in exploring their Jewish heritage and becoming engaged in the Jewish community. Perhaps these individuals could even become active supporters of Israel. Although actively promoting DNA tests for these purposes among non-Jews is tantamount to proselytism, it is important for Jewish organizations to be aware of the types of results generated from DNA tests and the potential effect they have on one's identity. To learn from a test perceived to be scientific that you have Jewish heritage and to be told by a Jewish community that you are not really Jewish could be confusing and disheartening. Leaders of the Jewish community especially should not be dismissive of individuals who approach them claiming to be a distant relative; rather, they should use it as an opportunity for engagement.

Along with the interest among consumers for home DNA testing, there has recently been a variety of academic studies which utilize DNA testing to answer the question of where the Jewish people, or specifically Ashkenazim, come from (Behar et al. 2003, 2010, Elhaik 2012, Costa et al. 2013). Although not necessarily understood by the average reader, the studies' conclusions gain

widespread publicity and raise controversial questions with political implications.

One such recent study published in October 2013 in the journal “Nature Communications” suggests “a significant role for the conversion of women in the formation of Ashkenazi communities” and that “the great majority of Ashkenazi maternal lineages were not brought from the Levant.”³⁷

Previously, in 2012, a controversial article in the scientific journal “Genome Biology and Evolution” claimed to have conducted DNA analysis that supports the Khazarian myth, that “Eastern European Jews descended from the Khazars, an amalgam of Turkic clans that settled the Caucasus in the early centuries CE and converted to Judaism in the 8th century.”³⁸

Conversely, Behar, with the collaboration of many experts, concludes that DNA analysis can “trace the origins of most Jewish Diaspora communities

to the Levant.”³⁹ While this conclusion supports the Jewish-Zionist historical narrative, previously mentioned studies challenge or even refute it. Much like the field of archeology, in which artifacts can be used as evidence to support or challenge long-held historical conceptions, genetic studies can be designed or interpreted to support one historical narrative over another.

Just as the State of Israel has invested resources into the study and promotion of archeology, in part to demonstrate and strengthen the connection of the Jewish people to the land of Israel, by investing in the fields of genetic research and molecular anthropology, Israeli scientists could be at the forefront of this growing field not only to demonstrate the historical connection of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel, but to help refute studies that manipulate data in order to undermine that connection.

Endnotes

1. (23AndMe, 2013)
2. (FamilyTreeDNA, 2014)
3. (Greenspan, 2013)
4. (Romero, 2005)
5. (MyHeritage.com, 2014)
6. It is important to note that, although an individual builds a family tree, by definition, the tree is composed of many, even thousands of people. For every individual who creates a family tree, many more individuals, willing or not, are added as well.
7. Created by the Mormon Church in order to help in their quest of post-mortem conversion of ancestors.
8. (The National Human Genome Research Institute, 2014)
9. (The National Human Genome Research Institute, 2014)
10. Recently, companies offering DNA analysis for medical purposes have been scrutinized and subsequently shut down by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
11. (23AndMe, 2013)
12. (The American Society of Human Genetics, 2008)
13. (The American Society of Human Genetics, 2008)
14. Since full genomic sequencing is still very expensive, around \$10,000, DTC tests only do a basic examination of one's DNA. As such, the results generated shed light on relationships within the past 5 – 8 generations.
15. (FamilyTreeDNA, 2014)
16. (Behar, 2010)
17. (Harmon, 2006)
18. (PBS, 2013)
19. (Taylor, 2014)
20. (Harmon, 2006)
21. (Geddes, 2014)
22. (Blatt & Groll, 2013)
23. (JewishGen, 2014)
24. (JewishGen, 2014)
25. (World Zionist Organization, 2014)
26. (Yad Vashem, 2014)
27. (Family Tree DNA, 2014)
28. (Family Tree DNA, 2014)
29. Customers are given the option not to be included in the family matches of other customers.
30. (Eupedia, 2014)
31. (Costa, et al., 2013)
32. (Eupedia, 2014)
33. (Pew Research Center, 2013, p. 47)
34. (Gorodni, 2012)
35. (Aderet, 2013)
36. (Maimonides)
37. (Costa, et al., 2013)
38. (Elhaik, 2012)
39. (Behar, 2010)

Resources

- 23AndMe. (2013, 10 15). Retrieved from 23AndMe: <https://www.23andme.com/>
- Aderet, O. (2013, 10 21). Former anti-Semitic Hungarian leader now keeps Shabbat. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from <http://www.haaretz.com/jewish-world/jewish-world-news/1.553645>
- Behar, D. M. (2010, July). The Genome-Wide Structure of the Jewish People. *Nature*(466), 238-242.
- Blatt, W., & Groll, A. (2013, 02 26). *JewishGen 2012 Review*. Retrieved from JewishGen Blog: <http://jewishgen.blogspot.co.il/2013/02/jewishgen-2012-review.html>
- Costa, M. D., Pereira, J. B., Pala, M., Fernandes, V., Olivieri, A., Achilli, A., . . . Richards, M. B. (2013, 10 8). A substantial prehistoric European ancestry amongst Ashkenazi maternal lineages. *Nature Communications*. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/ncomms3543>
- Elhaik, E. (2012). The Missing Link of Jewish European Ancestry: Contrasting the Rhineland and the Khazarian Hypotheses. *Genome Biology and Evolution*, 5(1), 61-74.
- Eupedia. (2014, 04 09). *Haplogroup H (mtDNA)*. Retrieved from Eupedia: http://www.eupedia.com/europe/Haplogroup_H_mtDNA.shtml
- Eupedia. (2014, 04 09). *Haplogroup J1 (Y-DNA)*. Retrieved from Eupedia: http://www.eupedia.com/europe/Haplogroup_J1_Y-DNA.shtml#origins
- Family Tree DNA. (2014, 05 25). *Test Descriptions*. Retrieved from Family Tree DNA: <https://www.familytreedna.com/test-descriptions.aspx>
- Family Tree DNA. (2014, 03 17). *Understanding Results: mtDNA*. Retrieved from FamilyTreeDNA.org: <https://www.familytreedna.com/faq/answers.aspx?id=10>
- FamilyTreeDNA. (2014, 03 12). *FamilyTreeDNA*. Retrieved from <http://www.familytreedna.com/landing/jewish-ancestry.aspx>
- FamilyTreeDNA. (2014, 03 16). *Understanding Results: Population Finder*. Retrieved from FamilyTreeDNA: <https://www.familytreedna.com/faq/answers.aspx?id=22#/1039>
- Geddes, L. (2014, 02 8). Tribal Genetics. *NewScientist*, pp. 28-29.
- Gorodni, P. (2012, 08 14). Csanad Szegedi, Hungary Far-Right Leader, Discovers Jewish Roots. *The Associate Press*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/14/csanad-szegedi-jewish_n_1776617.html
- Greenspan, B. (2013, 11 6). President and CEO of Family Tree DNA. (N. Slepko, Interviewer)
- Harmon, A. (2006, April 12). Seeking Ancestry in DNA Ties Uncovered by Tests. *The New York Times*.
- JewishGen. (2014, 03 16). *Family Tree of the Jewish People*. Retrieved from JewishGen: <http://www.jewishgen.org/gedcom/>
- JewishGen. (2014, 03 16). *FTJP FAQ*. Retrieved from JewishGen: <http://www.jewishgen.org/gedcom/faq/>
- Maimonides. (n.d.). Letter to Obadiah the Proselyte.
- Martin, J. (2013, 12 26). *Using DNA Testing To Prove Native American Heritage*. Retrieved from DNA Services of America: <http://www.dnaso.com/using-dna-testing-to-prove-native-american-heritage/>
- MyHeritage.com. (2014, 03 12). *Media Kit – MyHeritage.com*. Retrieved from <http://blog.myheritage.com/media-kit/#Contact%20for%20Press%20Queries>
- PBS. (2013, 12 26). *About African American Lives 2*. Retrieved from PBS: <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/aalives/about.html>
- Pew Research Center. (2013). *A Portrait of Jewish Americans*.
- Powell, K. (2013, 12 26). *Autosomal DNA Testing for Genealogy*. Retrieved from About.Com: http://genealogy.about.com/od/dna_genetics/p/autosomal.htm

Romero, S. (2005, October 29). Hispanics Uncovering Roots as Inquisition's 'Hidden' Jews. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/29/national/29religion.html?_r=0

Taylor, K. (2014, June 16). *Bitter Fight to Determine Who Is an American Indian Turns to DNA Testing*. Retrieved from Indian Country Today Media Network.com: <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2011/10/13/bitter-fight-determine-who-american-indian-turns-dna-testing-57165>

The American Society of Human Genetics. (2008). *Ancestry Testing Statement*. The American Society of Human Genetics.

The National Human Genome Research Institute. (2014, 03 11). *DNA Sequencing Costs*. Retrieved from The National Human Genome Research Institute: <https://www.genome.gov/sequencingcosts/>

The National Human Genome Research Institute. (2014, 03 11). *DNA Sequencing Fact Sheet*. Retrieved from The National Human Genome Research Institute: <https://www.genome.gov/10001177>

World Zionist Organization. (2014, 04 09). *History of the CZA*. Retrieved from Central Zionist Archive: <http://www.zionistarchives.org.il/en/about-us/Pages/history-of-the-CZA.aspx>

Yad Vashem. (2014, 04 09). *About the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names*. Retrieved from Yad Vashem: http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/about/hall_of_names/about_central_database.asp

Main Publications of the Jewish People Policy Institute

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.

Annual Assessment 2012-2013, Executive Report No. 9, with special in-depth chapters: Combating De-Legitimization; Israel and the Jewish People: Geopolitical Developments; The Triangular Relationship – Washington, Jerusalem and the Jewish People, New U.S. and Israeli Administrations, Challenges and Opportunities; The Rise of Asia: Policy Implications for Israel and the Jewish People; Fathers of the Faith? Three Decades of Patrilineal Descent in American Reform Judaism; Jewish Leadership in North America – Changes in Personnel and Structure; European Jewry – Signals and Noise: Is there a Point of Negative Inflection?; Latin American Jewish Life in the 21st Century: The Paradox of Shrinking Communities, and Expanded-Revitalized Jewish Life; Israel Faces the Ultra-Orthodox Challenge; Women of the Wall: Toward compromise or continued conflict; Project Head: Shlomo Fischer; JPPI staff and contributors, 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.

Annual Assessment 2011-12, Executive Report No. 8, Introduces JPPI's Dashboard of Jewish People Indicators, and includes special in-depth chapters: Geopolitical Turmoil in the Middle East; Creating Jewish Meaning in the U.S. and Europe; and Israeli Democracy: Politics and Society; Project Heads: Avi Gil and Shlomo Fischer; JPPI Staff and Contributors, 2012.

The Challenge of Peoplehood: Strengthening the Attachment of Young American Jews to Israel in the Time of the Distancing Discourse, Shmuel Rosner and Inbal Hakman, 2012.

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.

Policy Paper: Absentee Voting Rights for Israelis Abroad, Yogev Karasenty and Inbal Hakman, 2012.

21st Century Global Forces, Their Impacts on the Jewish People, Israel and the United States, Stuart E. Eizenstat, Foreword by Martin Gilbert, 2012.

Uncharted Waters, Stuart E. Eizenstat, (a special edition for the 2011 Israeli Presidential Conference), 2011.

Annual Assessment 2010, Executive Report No. 7, with special in-depth chapters: Systematic Indicators of Jewish People Trends, De-Legitimization and Jewish Youth in the Diaspora, The Impact of Geopolitical Shifts and Global Economic Developments on the Jewish People, JPPI Staff and Contributors, 2011.

Jewish Demographic Policies, Population Trends and Options in Israel and in the Diaspora, Sergio DellaPergola, 2011.

Mega-Trends and their Impact on the Jewish People, Prepared for JPPI's 2010 Conference on the Future of the Jewish People, JPPI Staff, 2010.

Toward 2030: Strategies for the Jewish Future, Background Documents for the 2010 Conference on the Future of the Jewish People, JPPI Staff, 2010.

2030: Alternative Futures for the Jewish People, Project Directors: Avi Gil and Einat Wilf, 2010.

The Triangular Relationship of Jerusalem, Washington and North American Jewry, Background Documents for JPPI's 2009 Glen Cove Conference, JPPPI Staff, 2009.

Muslim Anti-Semitism: The Challenge and Possible Responses, Emmanuel Sivan, 2009.

Background Policy Documents for the Inaugural President's Conference: Facing Tomorrow, JPPPI Staff and Contributors, 2008.

A Strategic Plan for the Strengthening of Jerusalem, JPPI Staff, 2007.

Background Policy Documents for the 2007 Conference on the Future of the Jewish People, JPPI Staff, 2007.

Annual Assessments 2004-2011-12.

Institut de Planification d'une Politique pour le Peuple Juif, Rapport Annuel du JPPPI 2005/2006, Le Peuple Juif en 2005/2006, Entre Renaissance et Declin, Special edition in French, JPPI Staff and Contributors, 2006.

The Jewish People between Thriving and Decline, To succeed, large resources, judicious coping with critical decision and careful crafting of long-term grand-policies are needed. The full volume contains analyses of the major communities around the world and in-depth assessments of significant topics. JPPPI Staff and Contributors, 2005.

China and the Jewish People: Old Civilizations in a New Era, Shalom Salomon Wald, Strategy Paper, 2004. This is the first strategic document in the series: Improving the Standing of the Jewish People in Emerging Superpowers without a Biblical Tradition.

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
(Established by the Jewish Agency for Israel) Ltd. (CC)

www.jppei.org.il

Givat Ram Campus • P.O.B. 39156 Jerusalem 9139101
info@jppei.org.il

Tel: 972-2-5633356 • Fax: 972-2-5635040

ISBN 978-965-7549-08-7