HIJACKING THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

Edited by
Asaf Romirowsky

Hijacking the Arab-Israeli Conflict

The importance of reclaiming the scholarly language of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict cannot be overstated as entire disciplines, including Middle Eastern Studies, Women and Gender Studies, and Ethnic Studies have come under the spell of these politicised fads with the attendant perversion of standards of evidence and open inquiry. Wielded by scholar-activists, the vast majority of whom do not know Hebrew and have spent little time in Israel, the distortion of crucial terms has become so pervasive that it is no longer possible to recall how these terms were originally used. That a vocabulary of historical explanation has dissolved into today's crude value judgments and "unhinged polemics" distorts the academic study of Israel, of Palestinians, of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and not incidentally, of politics.
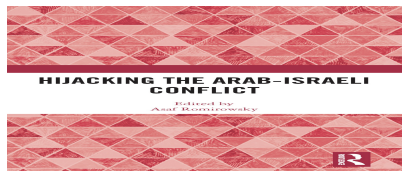
Hijacking the Arab-Israeli Conflict emphasizes how a delegitimizing lexicon of terms and concepts is often used in highly politicized anti-Zionist scholarship. This volume focuses on this linkage between language and thought partly because it is long a staple focus for political theory and philosophy.

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Contents

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Introduction

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Chapter 5

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Introduction

Asaf Romirowsky

In April 2019, the scholarly journal Israel Studies published a special issue titled 'Word Crimes: Reclaiming the Language of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict' that exposed the endemic corruption of the scholarly discourse on the subject. Featuring a wide range of essays by academics, journalists and practitioners from across the political spectrum, 'Word Crimes' showed how the vocabulary of historical explanation has dissolved into highly politicised anti-Zionist crude value judgements, delegitimizing terms and concepts, and 'unhinged polemics' that distort the scholarly study of Israel, the Palestinians, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

By way of redressing this phenomenon, 'Word Crimes' showed how research-based rigorous scholarship has been transported into a crude moral idiom through the use of fashionable buzzwords and catchphrases such as apartheid, genocide, settler-colonialism, indigeneity, occupation, terrorism, and pink washing; how key concepts and events from the modern Jewish experience (e.g., Holocaust, refugees, human rights, Zionism) have been turned upside down and falsely projected onto the Palestinian experience; and the problematic nature of fashionable and decidedly postmodern inventions (e.g., Islamophobia, intersectionality, pink washing) that aim to rally allies around a new logic of ethical reasoning.

The importance of reclaiming the scholarly language of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict cannot be overstated as entire disciplines, including Middle Eastern Studies, Women and Gender Studies, and Ethnic Studies have come under the spell of these politicised fads with the attendant perversion of standards of evidence and open inquiry. Wielded by scholar-activists, the vast majority of whom do not know Hebrew and have spent little time in Israel, the distortion of crucial terms has become so pervasive that it is no longer possible to recall how these terms were originally used. At a time when the debate over antisemitism has become so politicised as to make it difficult to distinguish unadulterated racism from legitimate criticism of Israeli policy, to give one prominent example, improving the discourse must be of prime concern.

Not surprisingly, the publication of 'Word Crimes' hit a raw nerve that it is still reverberating in the pages of online journals and newspapers. Contributors were denounced as having produced subpar work; the editors smeared as having practiced deception in the review process and selecting contributors based on a political litmus test. There were even absurd allegations that the editors may have paid to ensure publication! That these accusations are damaging to a group of scholars – including people in the junior ranks – is as obvious as it is shameful. There are established ways to launch critiques in peer-reviewed journals. Sadly, the kind of rhetoric on display over this special issue was not even close to following established norms of collegial exchange and open intellectual inquiry.

This outburst was not triggered just because 'Word Crimes' raised questions about the conventional discourse but also because it challenged the right of an increasingly politicised academy to serve as gatekeepers, determining what can and cannot be said about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict obsessed with Israel's supposed wrongdoings. Consequently, the editors

decided to devote this special issue to the explosive reactions the issue received and explore terms that 'Word Crimes' did not tackle. However flattering it may be to see the amount of attention the issue received, it is extremely disappointing to witness how many continue to prefer uncivil denunciations and ad hominem attacks over rigorous analysis and engagement with the substance of the essays themselves.

The gatekeepers

Donna Robinson Divine

ABSTRACT
"The Gatekeepers" describes the reaction of a handful of well established Israel Studies scholars to a special issue of the journal *Israel Studies called "Word Crimes: Reclaiming the Language of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict"*. These professors preferred to denounce rather than engage with the arguments and analyses presented in the special issue deploying their authority to try to silence this challenge to the conventional discourse on the Middle East Conflict.

Published in April 2019, the Special Issue of *Israel Studies* hit a nerve so raw it still tingles online journals and newspapers. As one of the co-editors who conceived the project which has come to be known as *Word Crimes: Reclaiming the Language of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, I am flattered by the attention but troubled that the argument it advances has been ignored by so many.[1] Because a handful of established scholars seemingly preferred to denounce rather than engage with the issues raised in this volume, they effectively ended up grafting a level of legitimacy on the highly flawed discourse the Special Issue examined. One might well ask why an exploration and deconstruction of a discourse would elicit such blasts of hostility against the project and so unabashedly mete out savage insults to its contributors.

　　Word Crimes is meant to examine the linkage between language and thought – long a staple of philosophical inquiry[2]–and to ask whether deploying terms like genocide or apartheid offers a genuine understanding of the complexities of the Conflict. It aims to call attention to how certain words and ideas have begun to settle into a public discourse and to take the measure of the consequences for the academic study of Israel, of Palestinians, of the Conflict and not incidentally, of politics. The politics propagated by this discourse is binary–fit into good or bad rubrics that appeal to feelings not into categories that show the way power is actually wielded. Identifying the words that have become the central elements in this discourse, the volume shows how a lexical transformation has acquired a totemic standing in the academy and is spreading beyond campus perimeters with a momentum augmented in an increasingly networked world. *Word Crimes* focuses on terms because they function much like oracles coaxing judgements in the absence of evidence so long as Israel is assigned to a rhetorical zone once reserved for brutal regimes committing ghastly crimes. Events are pigeonholed into moral absolutes that appeal to

emotions or to a larger ideological agenda and not to an accurate depiction of the issues and of the reasons for the persistence of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

Word Crimes stirred up a powerful anger provoking a sense of righteousness but not a clarity of thought. From the moment it was posted online, alarm was sounded when people saw only the title and table of contents. One person expressed shock at 'the inflammatory and demonizing title' while another asked 'who are exactly the criminals and what should their punishment be?'[3] – all on open access listservs where rage accumulated and quickly catalysed into charges that the Special Issue compromised the intellectual status of the Journal and of the Association for Israel Studies because of the Journal's loose relationship with it. In fact, this one Special Issue was said to have the potential to wreak havoc with the entire field of Israel Studies.

Much of the anger was directed at me because at the time, I served as both President of the Association for Israel Studies and one of the editors of *Word Crimes*. Every comment I issued, as one of the volume's editors, was construed as an official statement of the Association inevitably restraining them. I completed my term of office in June 2019, and for that reason, I am no longer constrained in what I can say. Moreover, I am convinced that there is more to say particularly about the factors promoting, if not causing, the uproar. Ironically, the reactions, with their remarkably formulaic denunciations, were filtered through the very template *Word Crimes* interrogated. Critics dismissed *Word Crimes* characterising it as a species of Israeli government propaganda. Rating a project as failing to meet minimal academic standards without offering credible evidence is, itself, so transgressive of academic norms that it ought to be the focus for close examination particular since the project was clearly intended to open not close down discussion. But before scrutinising the reaction, let me review the reasons we – the editors and contributors – decided to subject what is becoming a common discourse on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict to sustained analysis and to do so, by examining its linguistic parts.

The special issue

As much as the essays in the collection are about words, they are also about history and politics. The first section focuses on terms–indigeneity, colonialism, occupation, terrorism, and apartheid – that claim to disclose new aspects of the Conflict's history and of the mechanisms deployed to perpetuate it. It is worthwhile to note that utilising these terms as historical paradigms has generated no new data or information that could be the basis for a new or deeper understanding of the Conflict. Rather they have seized attention because they propel a supposed link between Israel and Zionism and an imperialism enlightened scholars are expected to condemn instantly converting a vocabulary of historical explanation into a crude moral idiom. The Special Issue's second section focuses on terms coopted from the modern Jewish experience – holocaust, refugee, human rights, Zionism, and Israel Lobby – to show how they have been projected on to the experience of Palestinians in order to transfer the imaginative narrative of one beleaguered people to another. Finally, the volume evaluates concepts that are decidedly post-modern inventions – Islamophobia, intersectionality, pink washing. These trendy terms aim to rally allies around a new logic of ethical reasoning and political action. The last essay in the volume addresses the contorted reasoning required to apply the pivotal concept 'civil society'–taken for granted as expanding democracies in the late twentieth century–to NGOs whose actions are not simply funded but also programmed by foreign governments and whose ties to movements thriving on acts of terror are well-known and well-documented. Such linkages are more likely to deny than preserve the autonomy believed central to civil society and to democracy diminishing

not expanding a spirit of active political engagement among Palestinians.

This academic jargon now so fully draped in scholarly prestige implies that Israel's founding in 1948 is not settled history. The intention is not simply to raise ethical questions but also to suggest the possibility of righting what is taken for granted as an historical wrong. Those who subscribe to this approach are not talking about historical facts that continue to weigh heavily on present circumstances which is to say the persistence of Israel's unresolved conflicts with Palestinians, problems that affect the Jewish state's politics and complicate the operations of its democracy. The implication that shadows this discourse is that history can be reversed registering a kind of magical thinking more fit for novels than for classrooms. More than 70 years since its founding and more than a half century since the war that reconfigured the Jewish state and not incidentally, the entire Middle East, raising the same questions posed during the first decades of the twentieth century opens a chasm between language and reality.

Driving this change, as all others on and off campuses, is the emergence of a new media landscape that has offered scholars new forms of expression. Blogging and tweeting are increasingly important–signs of savvy entrepreneurship bringing publicity most colleges and universities welcome. But they can blur the lines between free speech and the kind of speech possessing academic integrity that expresses the findings of careful research, logical and rational probing, and is made available for rigorous testing. Once there was a clear differentiation between polemics and scholarship; now the two have been fused sometimes by jargon laden theories inaccessible to anyone without years of graduate study. All of this fosters a social pressure that aims to close discussion, not open it, but above all, creates the impression that only a campus generated Intifada against the idea of a Jewish state can bring justice to Palestine and define progressive politics in the twenty-first century. The challenges posed by students and faculty who embrace these notions are considerable, but they constitute a more immediate threat to the academy than to Israel. Faculty need to be reminded that their mission is to teach students how to think not what to think. And students must be given the tools required for confronting ideas they do not like or that make them uncomfortable, always holding them tightly to the principle of engaging respectfully with those with whom they disagree. That surely means more time should be spent in the library than in sessions organising protests. Far better to read about the Dark Ages than to recreate them on campus.

Word Crimes offers potent insight into the difference between how language operates as an echo chamber advocating a mission and how it functions when it strives for exactitude and for a reliable assessment of a complex situation. In a sense, *Word Crimes* functions as a figurative exorcism breaking the spell of a discourse by exposing its scholarly weaknesses. Its essays are motivated by nothing more than the conviction that conclusions must be supported by facts and tested in accordance with the principles long undergirding the academy and the ones primarily responsible for bestowing legitimate praise and power on it. To repeat: this collection is as important for the academy as it is for the study of the Israeli-Palestine Conflict.

The uproar

The all-too common habit of letting emotions shape campus discourse on this topic produced reactions to *Word Crimes* far in excess of what is warranted by any measurable intellectual standard. Why scholars whose hold on the academic study of Israel is taken for granted and whose research was praised in the volume allowed their feelings to bury their logic is worth considering since their own careful work has been diminished by a vocabulary now serving a

cause rather than the historical record. Let me elaborate. Consider how the provocative discussions of settler colonialism generated by Gershon Shafir's 1989 *Land, Labour, and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914*[4] advanced discussions of the relationship between land and nationalism even as it sparked investigations of the many contradictions between Zionism and other settler colonial societies.

Then ponder the current branding of Israel as a settler colonial society that has had such a catalytic effect on destroying the idea of a legitimate Jewish state whatever its borders or policies. A settler-colonialist Israel delivers up a Jewish state that presumably developed a rationale adequate to justify the use of force not in order to survive or to place moral restraints on its use but rather to mask its atrocities. Building its claims on the idea that the plough is no less an instrument of violence than the sword, the settler colonial paradigm means that Israel, by its very nature, is a country engaged in an ethnic cleansing with genocidal tendencies, a disciplined criminal action by Jews to wipe out of existence a people whose nationalist ambitions stand in their way.[5]

That scholars who judged the special issue a badge of shame simply for tackling a discourse so clearly contaminated by politics stoked the rage and drummed it up until it drew media attention and became a matter of public debate suggest how beholden leaders in this field are to a hermetic so-called progressive view of this Conflict. Some resigned from the *Israel Studies* editorial board to demonstrate the depth of their opposition to *Word Crimes* calling public attention to their opposition by granting interviews in mainstream media outlets. Some took to social media to weave a tale valorising all sorts of disinformation while pulling no punches or adhering to no recognisable standards. Denouncing the essays rather than engaging with the arguments violated what was once a foundational educational value: that the purpose of scholarship is to investigate that which is taken for granted. Dismissing the essays also allowed people to avoid having to think about where their own academic politics are taking the study of Israel. No surprise that in these overheated reactions, there was more than a hint that the field of Israel Studies has to adopt language acceptable to BDS proponents to prove its bona fides.. Condemning *Word Crimes* as 'Orwellian' may, perhaps, be best understood as an illustration of a collective Freudian projection.

Denunciations so promiscuously pitched over social media limit access and/or insight into the thinking behind these views. But the letter of resignation written and signed by some members of the Journal's editorial advisory board, the unmonitored and open listservs that triggered alarm against *Word Crimes,* newspaper articles, and petitions all discredited the Special Issue and maligned the people who put it together in remarkably similar language quickly translated into sound bites.[6]

The letter of resignation listed a series of demands – they turned out to be ultimatums – intended to repair what was viewed as a flawed review process responsible for an issue dismissed as advocacy. But the charges forming the reasons for their resignation not only lacked coherence they also, if true, argued for remaining on the Board if only to safeguard its intellectual quality going forward. *Word Crimes* was the eighteenth special issue of *Israel Studies*, the first to elicit this kind of opposition and raise questions about the review process. Opponents demanded new procedures that would give the editorial board a well-defined role in determining the content and topic for future issues. Although the general editors acknowledged flaws in the editorial process, promised to provide space in future issues to publish critiques of the project or of individual essays, and establish more editorial controls over special issues, they refused to withdraw the issue from circulation or commit to a plan for their own resignations thus

failing to satisfy the critics.

Even conceding the validity of some of the demands, why should they form the basis for a reckoning over the Journal's status or the integrity of its leadership grave enough to propel resignations? This is a journal that has published hundreds of controversial articles over many years without provoking an outcry. Furthermore, why did the editorial board members who resigned insist their letter be published in the Journal? Why was it necessary to impeach the scholarly credentials of the volume's contributors while aiming implied threats at younger scholars? Underscoring their Olympian university status, the critics seemed to want their letter to be taken as a manifesto of their intellectual integrity and not incidentally of their presumed command over the academic standards in the field of Israel Studies. To achieve these objectives, they essentially set up a petri-dish environment on open listservs that quickly leached into social media sites bulldozing any meaningful discussion of the volume or of the issues it addresses.

Fierce criticism initially hurled by people who admitted to simply browsing the titles later insisted that reading the essays had not altered their views. Contributors were said to have produced sub-par work and dismissed as 'light-weight'. The reputation of the editors was smeared as having practiced deception in the review process or perhaps having paid to ensure publication in an attempt to hijack the Journal for some powerful advocacy force lurking behind this project. That this was damaging to a group of scholars – including people in the junior ranks–is as obvious as it is shameful. There are established ways to launch critiques in peer-reviewed journals. Sadly, the kind of rhetoric on display over this special issue was not even close to following established norms. Choosing Facebook as the platform to incite opposition to the Special Issue and gather names for petitions sent spinning through cyberspace and then picked up by various news outlets was designed, as is often the case with social media, not for accuracy – the posts and petitions are filled with misstatements – but rather for maximum humiliation. The tone on social media even exhibited an eagerness to serve up bogus accusations of racism, accompanied by the kind of fervour for enemies likely found on the streets of Paris in 1789.

The essays in *Word Crimes* are no summons for a restoration of the heroic myths of founding the Jewish state; they are, rather, a plea for a return to the library, to the archives, and to the painstaking research that has liberated scholars from subscribing to a simple narrative of the country's state-building experiences as fulfiling only a progressive national mission. Many newly minted Israeli academicians – some calling themselves new historians, others critical sociologists – probed the Zionist nation-building project by examining its impact on Palestine's Arab population, Middle Eastern immigrants, and on the lives and experiences of women without guidance from a politicised vocabulary that is more a reflection of our own times than of the reality of times past.

While *Word Crimes* addresses the scholarly community, it also attempts to reach beyond the gates of the University and its Israel Studies scholars by providing short accessible thought pieces: some essays present fully researched arguments; some gesture towards the larger critical narrative presented. Writers as well as policymakers were invited to join the project. The editing was 'light' because the contributors held a variety of views, and it was thought preferable to let their very brief essays speak for themselves. The intention was to widen not narrow the discussion. The notion that people should not write on topics normally outside of their own disciplinary training – as the petitions assert–is simply a way to avoid tackling the serious issues the essays raise. It is also a strange view coming from a field that combines varying disciplines and training and is a purported exemplar of what interdisciplinarity can achieve. By no means

intended to provide the final word on the topic but rather to broaden the conversation by including new kinds of participants holding diverse perspectives, the collection brought together something rarely done in these times–people who are located on all points of the political spectrum.

The charge that the essays comprise a dictionary of acceptable terms is as false as it is ridiculous. There is a distinction between arguing certain words channel thoughts in one direction, on the one hand, and calling for a ban on their use, on the other. Rather than stipulate a set of acceptable terms, the essays weave a cautionary tale of how certain words now deployed routinely in discussing the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict are more polemical than accurately reflective of developments. In the Introduction, I offered some examples. I did not take a position on whether what happened at Deir Yassin should or should not be called a massacre. I thought it significant that a publisher had rejected a manuscript on the killings not because it failed on empirical or logical grounds but rather because it was deemed unfit for an English-speaking audience.[7] Similarly, the prize awarded to a tendentious book charging Israel with harvesting organs of Palestinians is, I argued, an illustration of how degraded academic standards have become because the research is filled with errors easily dispelled by a simple Google search.[8] Finally, I tried to show that this language also prevents a deep understanding of Palestinian history and politics by presuming that Israel exercises total control over the lives of Palestinians according them no 'agency' or capacity to change 'Ha-Matzav'. [The Situation] The notion embraced by Palestinians of an all-powerful Zionism can be found in Arabic texts even in the early days of the Zionist project when Zionism had very little power and an insignificant global presence.[9] This is not to celebrate the Occupation but rather to argue that to end it requires considering more than simply Israel's policies and actions.

Today much of the academic discourse on the Middle East Conflict has distorted the truth by transforming even the very idea of what constitutes a 'fact'. 'Facts' are stitched into a narrative often to effect loyalty rather than to verify assertions. This presumed intractable conflict over land has been substantially reconceived as a war over words. And although the hegemonic discourse claims to be opening up new and better ways of understanding the Conflict, it has had a profound impact on closing down the possibility of following the best available evidence. An academic perspective, now expected to guide action and render moral judgements, cannot serve as a robust agenda for research.

The ironies produced by this new set of terms for the Conflict abound. Take, for example, the current language of human rights whose gravitational pull now denies Israel the blessings it once conferred on the establishment of a Jewish state as advancing the cause for justice. Thus is Zionism, more judged than understood, condemned as racist. The esteem bestowed on words and deeds associated with the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict is a function of their capacity not to promote peace, coexistence, or reconciliation but rather to signal affinity with a global progressive politics.

To read newspapers and magazine articles on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, to watch the violence broadcast on cable news or to toggle through social media for information is to be bombarded by negative images of Israel and on more than one occasion of Jews. How an attack is initially framed, of course, gives it disproportionate influence on how it will be remembered. Reporters, fumbling their way through platitudes, produce a script rather than an analysis. There is a power attributed to the right words in the right order or captured at the right angle for YouTube.

If the narrative amplifies sentiments in American culture that foster sympathy with the poor

and powerless, it is accepted turning unverified pronouncements into unverified reports that ignore or omit the dynamics explaining the vector of developments. Echoes of pain and loss can carry a narrative across oceans and continents drawing false analogies between disparate groups or movements or histories that may expand allies but do nothing to deepen understanding of what caused their suffering and dislocation. The acrobatic logic interweaves fact and fiction spinning elaborate associative webs that deploy metaphors to fashion linkages between people, politics, and history with nothing in common except their calls for a reckoning with the powers presumably denying them justice.

Petition

The Petition sent to the AIS Board offers the clearest illustration of the overwrought and incoherent reaction to *Word Crimes*. Drafted by Yair Wallach, Pears Lecturer in Israeli Studies, at SOAS, University of London, the Petition objects to the title and to the Introduction's vocabulary alleging both are designed to shut down debate by 'criminalizing' it. Mistakenly declaring the Association for Israel Studies to be the Journal's sponsor,[10] the Petition calls on the Association to recommit to the principle of intellectual diversity. This presumed peril to intellectual diversity is compounded, according to press interviews, by my serving simultaneously as an editor of *Word Crimes* and as AIS President.[11]

An impressive 200 people signed the Petition addressed to AIS. Interestingly, most are not AIS members – nor is Dr. Wallach–and many are well-known proponents of a boycott of Israeli educational institutions. But among the AIS members who signed the Petition concerned with a commitment to intellectual diversity were scholars who had served on the Association's Board– or even as its officers–or who were invited to join the Board or to become an officer. Some had won AIS awards for their work, and a large number had received grants enabling them to participate in national conferences. The 2019 Conference Programme provided further evidence of the diversity of perspectives on almost every one of its pages, and it is one that I not only applaud, it is also one that I actively encouraged as co-chair of the Conference and President of AIS. It is difficult to imagine stronger proof of an unshakeable AIS commitment to intellectual diversity. Torn between readily available 'evidence' and 'outrage,' Petition supporters appear to have rejected the easily substantiated former in order to manufacture a rage around the latter falsehood that the publication of *Word Crimes* jeopardised the core academic ideal of intellectual diversity in AIS and in *Israel Studies*. It is striking to have to remind established scholars that protecting intellectual diversity also demands shielding minority views – or what might be called fresh perspectives–from being trampled by majorities or by those, however small in number, who consider themselves entitled to define the borders of acceptable discourse.

The Petition directed to AIS is riddled with errors but none so glaring as the meaning attributed to the title and to some of the words in the Introduction. No less an authority than Merriam-Webster lists 'mistake' as one of the definitions for 'crime' and suggests 'sanity' – another word flagged in the Petition–as a synonym for 'rationality' and 'balance'. Just as an aside, Merriam-Webster won its status in the nineteenth century in what a recently published book by Princeton University Press calls *Dictionary Wars*.[12] The English language has much more depth and flexibility than is acknowledged in the Petition.

The notion that as AIS President, I should not have published something as controversial as *Word Crimes* deserves added comment because it echoes statements from AIS colleagues who did not put their words into print. Let me begin by stating the obvious; namely, that I did not

identify myself as AIS President in the publication but rather as Professor Emerita of Smith College. But if Association officers cannot compartmentalise their activities, it is necessary to ask how an injunction against publishing something that sparks controversy might be enforced? I was surprised by the reactions to the Special Issue since I have published articles and books for the past forty years without triggering much notice let alone dissent. Moreover, if officers are not allowed to publish during their terms of service, doesn't such a ban compromise their academic freedom or even their fundamental rights? Is there any credible academic association that imposes such stringent rules on its officers?

It stretches the term irony beyond recognition to point out that the very people asking for assurances critical discussions will continue both in the Association for Israel Studies and between the covers of *Israel Studies* are the very people refusing to engage in an intellectual exchange with the arguments set out in *Word Crimes*. Instead, they have sought to 'deplatform' or 'cancel' people associated with the Special Issue from conferences, doubling down on the insidious and untrue accusations originally served up on various listservs. Of course, given the times and the circumstances, it was also inevitable that the people who wrote and circulated the petition ramped up their smears on social media until *Word Crimes* was brought into the orbit of racism and of the so-called unprecedented dangers to democracy unfolding in the last decades in Israel and the United States. Any literate person – let alone someone possessing a Phd – should be able to see that *Word Crimes* had nothing to do with elections in either Israel or the United States or with government policies formed in either country. Not to put too fine a point on all of the allegations undergirding this controversy, they are as false as they are hollow.

The problem of narratives about Israel and the Conflict is that they angrily feed off one another, as symbols grasped by partisans for one cause or another. *Word Crimes* argues for an alternative–not a consensus on causes or resolutions–but rather for a reasoned dialogue about these differences and a serious probing of concrete evidence. Imagine, if you can, a response to the publication offering an analysis of the conceptual or empirical flaws of the overall argument or of one or another of the specific essays instead of the assault on the academic status of the Journal and on the intellectual integrity of those involved in this special issue. Needless to say, a more cordial exchange could have produced a more reasoned testing of arguments. In a genuine academic community, intellectuals do not try to silence or 'troll' one another but rather to talk despite their differences even with no other aim than to display the grounds of their diversity.

Conclusion

If *Word Crimes* is so obviously a flawed project, it could easily have been ignored or criticised. Instead it has been cast into what Gershon Shafir calls 'the current Israeli context in which academic and artistic freedom are besieged … . [and where] Israel today is on an accelerating course of undermining the protections of its democracy within the Green Line and is one of the many countries turning into illiberal democracies.' Shafir goes on to argue that 'the term "word crimes" doesn't stand alone but is of a piece with the proposed code of ethics and law for loyalty in culture.'[13]

There is every reason to believe Gershon Shafir represents the views of the people who resigned from the Journal's Editorial Board since they were happy to accept his offer to edit another Special Issue of *Israel Studies* devoted to a critique of *Word Crimes*. But if *Word Crimes* can only be grasped in the context of political developments in Israel, then it seems only fair to mention that the past two presidents of the Association for Israel Studies [and coincidentally one

general editor of the Journal and one of the Special Issue] wrote letters raising objections to the passage of the Ethics Code and the Entry Law. Leaving aside the uncomfortable fact that there is no material connection between *Word Crimes* contributors and these particular policies, we must ask what is achieved by joining them together and explaining one as a manifestation of the larger forces animating the other? At the very least, to assume everything a function of politics clarifies the stakes for the academy. On the one hand, there is an orthodoxy on politics as well as on language illustrated by Gershon Shafir's critique, and on the other, as demonstrated in *Word Crimes*, a commitment to open inquiry with nothing above or outside of the range for investigation and where no vocabulary is absolutely sovereign. Words can always be tested to determine whether they expand or contract knowledge? And while the feelings stirred up by the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis are so deeply held that, examining it without taking sides is difficult, if the terrible toll exacted by this hundred years' war commands only political advocacy, then the academy, itself, is likely to become one of its casualties.

Notes

1 The online Journal *Fathom* stands as an exception publishing a long review of the issue by Cary Nelson [May 2019] followed by a symposium including an essay by Gershon Shafir explaining his objects and responses from editors and contributors to Shafir's essay [July 2019]. Tobin's article, "Is There Room In The Academy for Honest Scholarship on Israel?", in *Jewish News Service* on May 17, 2019 is also an example of reporting that shows understanding of the academic process.

2 See Plato, *Republic*, Book VIII; Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*; and Orwell, *1984*.

3 Later repeated in newspaper articles. See Jonathan Tobin, *op. cit.*

4 Shafir, *Land, Labour and The Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian*.

5 Moses, ed., *Empire, Colony, and Subaltern Resistance*.

6 Arie Dubnov, Max Ticktin Chair of Israel Studies, Associate Professor of History, The George Washington University, ventilated many of the concerns about the Special Issue in emails and on his Facebook page where he provided links to the petitions and stoked the anger while spreading misinformation. In one of his emails, he wrote that because of the damage done by the Special Issue 'to the institutional reputation of the AIS and even to the field of Israel Studies more generally,' he decided to reject the Young Scholar Award – a joint AIS-Israel Institute prize. He apparently never gave much thought to the collateral damage such a public rejection might inflict on future funding for other academicians. He also refused an invitation to serve on AIS's Board because of what he incorrectly called the organisation's 'sponsorship' of the Journal. Claiming to be a firm believer in rigorous empirically based scholarship, he went on to accuse the past and current AIS Presidents of some sort of cabal in service of Israeli propaganda interests – a charge without merit or evidence. Critiques of BDS function as a litmus test for Dubnov [See his review of Colin Schindler's *Republica Hebraeorum* in *Israel Studies Review* [Winter 2017]: 32 2. 164–170 where he hurls the same charge against Schindler.] He appears to dismiss the notion that one can oppose boycotting Israel on educational grounds. As an Israeli teaching in the United States, Dubnov seems not to have considered how the boycott movement may prevent young scholars from spending time in Israel in order to gain fluency in Hebrew or access to archives for research. The more boycott demands are met the more likely grants for studying in Israel will be reduced.

7 Elman provides a good summary of the publishers' reactions in her essay, "Silencing History."

8 Berger, "Academic Prize for Scholarly Form of Blood Libel". Berger Writes, "Even amidst the moral and intellectual wreckage that litters the academic landscape with respect to Israel, this award [Puar Jasbir's book has just been awarded the National Women's Studies Association Allison Piepmeier Book Prize for scholarship focusing on feminist disability studies] stands out. Nelson makes it clear that even a google search shows how the claims Jasbir makes about Israel harvesting organs are not based on any credible science. See *Israel Denial*, Chapter Six.

9 Robson, "Najib Azuri's *Le Reveil de la Nation Arabe*."

10 According to AIS Bylaws, the Association has a relationship with *Israel Studies*. Some AIS officers are members of the Journal's Editorial Board and AIS members receive a discount on subscriptions. AIS provides no funding for *Israel Studies* nor does it serve as a sponsor. Brandeis University and Ben Gurion University are the Journal's academic sponsors. *Israel Studies Review* is the journal sponsored by AIS, and as President, I never interfered with any of the decisions made by the editors.

11 I served as President from June, 2017-June 2019.

12 Martin, *The Dictionary Wars*.

13 Shafir, *op. cit.*, 2019.

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Word crimes: choosing rationality over a moral panic

Cary Nelson

ABSTRACT

With some distance from the first flood of responses to the *Word Crimes* special issue, it should be possible to combine debates over the strengths and weaknesses of the individual essays with analysis of what difference the collection as a whole can make in our understanding of the anti-Zionist vocabulary that has dominated a significant body of humanities and social science discourse. In actual practice, terms like 'apartheid,' 'human rights,' and 'genocide' intersect and interact to amplify their effect. That tends to crowd out alternative meanings. The importance of the insight, if anything, makes the fundamental irrationality and unprofessionalism of the attacks on the special issue even more stark and apparent.

Over a period of decades, key terms in debates over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have seen their meanings in anti-Zionist books, essays, and news reports shift to enable them to embody unqualified hostility to the Jewish state. So 'Zionism' came in some constituencies, including

many in the international political Left, to refer to a racist and imperialist venture, rather than the long-standing effort to give the Jewish people a means to realise their dream of political self-determination.

In 2018 three faculty members – Donna Robinson Divine, Miriam Elman, and Asaf Romirowsky – decided on a project to document that phenomenon, to correct the misleading definitions attached to many of the key words at stake, and to begin reclaiming at least some of those words for fair and accurate political arguments. Analysing the key terms associated with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will not in and of itself complete the policy and political work necessary to redeem these terms and discredit anti-Zionism. But the discursive and political analysis they undertook in a collective project was and is an essential component of the process.

The result of their efforts was a special issue of the well-established scholarly journal *Israel Studies*, with one influential word each, including those just mentioned, the focus of individual essays from invited contributors. The title of the issue, available from Indiana University Press, is *Word Crimes: Reclaiming the Language of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. What no one could have anticipated was the passionate opposition to the project that coalesced immediately upon publication. What I want to do in what follows is not only to analyse the source of that opposition but also, first, to ask what the collection can teach us by bringing these essays together in one place. In doing so, I will identify strengths and weaknesses in the book-length collection as I see them, as that is what I believe academics are expected to do. Page numbers in *Word Crimes* are identified in notes..

In her first-rate introduction to this special issue, Robinson Divine emphasised the effect that language, especially key terms, can have on our perception and understanding both of the Jewish state itself and of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a whole. The effect of labelling Israel as an apartheid or settler-colonial state in effect combines rebranding and renaming. As Donald Ellis writes, such 'labeling has been the primary weapon in the struggle for dominant meanings' (69). Anti-Zionist vocabulary, in Robinson Divine's words, 'delivers up a Jewish state that is, by its very nature, violent and racist.'[1] These highly charged words are more than definitional. They are a filter through which Israel's opponents see the world, a screen through which evidence of all kinds – visual, verbal, emotional, psychological, historical, experiential, and statistical – passes to acquire its meaning. Such discursive filters are mechanisms for outreach and political persuasion. They help teach students, faculty, community members, and politicians alike how to see the world.

The terms covered in the collection are omnipresent in policy debates, proposals, and statements about Israel. Because these terms are inescapable, policymakers need to be aware how they shape comprehension. That means not only being self-aware but also being aware how readers will perceive their meaning. There are no innocent uses of terms like 'Apartheid,' 'settlements,' or 'Zionism.'

If individuals and social groups come to accept anti-Zionist reasoning, key words like those examined in *Word Crimes* become more than components of their beliefs. These terms are the primary vehicles for and embodiments of hostile conviction. Indeed, they become elements of personal identity. Then this set of terms is all that is required to mobilise political passions. Nothing more need be said. Invoking colonialism or racism is enough to silence doubts and energise political solidarity.

The political success earlier terms have had has helped empower newer ones and enabled them to be added to the mix. Thus persuading people to filter everything they learn about Israel through accusations about colonialism and racism makes it possible to incorporate a more recent

term like 'pinkwashing' into anti-Zionism. Without the existing matrix, it would be inconceivable to convince people that Israel's culturally and politically LGBTQ friendly environment should be understood as a project of deception and misdirection.

If it seems unlikely that a verbal matrix alone could determine how physical objects are perceived, consider two examples, the first serious, the second absurd. Despite the fact that more than 90% of it is a wire mesh fence, the security barrier to many in the West is a high concrete wall stretching hundreds of miles. Yet its obvious material and political meaning is as a barrier marking the dividing line between Israeli and Palestinian territory. As such, it suggests a possible division between two states, the one to the east constituting a potential independent Palestinian state. That obvious reality is erased by the controlling verbal field of anti-Zionist rhetoric, and the security barrier becomes the 'Apartheid Wall' of Palestinian and BDS propaganda, replicated in 'Apartheid Walls' constructed on campuses in the West. The absurd example takes form as the lowly tin of Sabra Hummus in a number of university cafeterias. The object of repeated protests and petition campaigns, it is taken to be the leading edge of Israeli power, a magical culinary repository of Israeli hegemony. Any other definition we can apparently take as evidence of the intrusion of the Israel Lobby into our daily lives. The ultimate exaggeration of the insidious power of Sabra Hummus so far is Steven Salaita's absurd claim that the cultural appropriation of Palestinian hummus to make it Israeli hummus is the first step on the way to genocide.

Key terms also help empower slogans – 'Zionism is racism'; 'From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free'; 'Anti-Zionism is not anti-Semitism' – and turn their components into charged signifiers. Thus some are persuaded the very concept of freedom can only be applied to Palestine through the delegitimization of the Jewish state. Shani Mor describes sentences like these as 'shields deployed in a rancorous conversation' (206); they help people avoid thinking, indeed guard against it.

Throughout the special issue are scattered concise observations not only about the psychological and political power of the terms being discussed but also about the general character of ideologically charged rhetoric. Donald Ellis in particular focuses his 'Apartheid' essay on a general analysis of how words gain meaning, power, and influence through competitive political processes over time. The special issue also empowers us to take this matter to the next level, which might be to think about the relational and differential effects of these key terms conceived as a differential field. We know from the foundational work of Swiss linguist and semiotician Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) that key terms operate within a field of similarities and differences, which is how they marshal their connotative effects. So we need to study how apartheid, colonialism, human rights, occupation, pinkwashing, settlements, and other terms intersect and function collaboratively. The *Word Crimes* volume gives us the material we need to begin doing that work.

Thus Ilan & Carol Troen point out in their contribution to *Word Crimes* that the project of adapting the term 'Indigeneity' to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has entailed conflating a critique of Zionism with the earlier quasi-legal term 'indigeneity' that was itself never definitively defined. The result is that, in the context of anti-Zionist politics, 'indigeneity' invokes a belief that 'Palestinian Arabs are the sole long-resident population with rights over the land, while Jews are but recent foreign conquerors.'[2] Because indigeneity so used 'neatly defines Jews as invaders and the Jewish state as an intruding colonial-settler society in the service of an imperialistic mission,'[3] all those other words become part of a connotative or associative field in which indigeneity is embedded. The pro-Palestinian claims about indigeneity are so thoroughly contradicted by thousands of years of Jewish history that the claims alone could not carry the

day, but when powerfully linked with terms like 'Apartheid' and concepts like human rights, they become politically empowered.

The collection of terms is thus the baggage the one word bears with it. Not that this short list includes all the baggage at issue. You can enter the network at any point, say with 'settler-colonialism' rather than indigeneity, with similar results. Consider how many of the terms in the *Word Crimes* lexicon are part of the connotative field of indigeneity: colonialism, occupation, apartheid, holocaust, refugees, human rights, Zionism, Israel lobby, pinkwashing, settlements, to go right down the table of contents. Add some proper names: Jerusalem, Menachem Begin, Netanyahu, etc. Part of the point is that you do not need a present argument, thesis, or essay to get trapped in this associative nexus. All you need is the terms empowered over time and then reinvoked.

The interrelationship between – intersectionality, if you will – of these terms is why it is important to treat them together in one collection. That is part of the scholarly achievement of the special issue.

Part of what is interesting – and, I think, so destructive – about this anti-Zionist discursive field is that it is unstructured. There is no definitive hierarchy, really no hierarchy at all. The terms are all interchangeable. None of the accusations they wield against Israel are worse than any of the others. If you believe Israel is a settler-colonialist state, then you believe Palestinians alone are indigenous; then you believe their human rights are being violated, that all the settlements are criminal ventures, that the Israel lobby promotes colonialism, that Israel practices pinkwashing.

The test case for this thesis is the word crime addressed in Robinson Divine's introduction: genocide. You simply add genocide to the terminological field, and it is validated by all the other terms. The uneasiness about its plausibility – uneasiness reflected in problematic modifications like 'slow genocide' or 'attempted genocide' – is largely erased. Genocide is emptied of its immense, hard-won, transformative historical meaning to become just one more anti-Zionist complaint. And the incorporation of genocide into the mix of complaints normalises bogus claims that enact Holocaust inversion. Indeed, as Mor points out, Holocaust inversion can even be combined with 'a meaningless note of sympathy for Holocaust victims as an exculpatory addendum.'[4]

One of the most powerful features of the anti-Zionist discursive field or matrix is its huge success at countering the infinite play of similarity and difference characteristic of language as a whole. Within this mutually reinforcing field of terms, there is no variability of meaning. There is an iron law of equivalence operating to obliterate difference. It functions almost as counter-evidence to what Saussure and his heirs, particularly the French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930–2004), taught us about language. Instead of being vulnerable to clear, disabling inner contradiction, a politically motivated discursive field maintained by scores and scores of true believers can evidently impose uniformity of meaning. In the case of contemporary anti-Zionism, demonisation of the Jewish state is the uniform effect. I am not suggesting that entire anti-Zionist books or essays can be protected from destabilising inner contradictions, but the force of the anti-Zionist core vocabulary can distract readers from recognising the natural consequences of semiosis. The controlling field of terms functions as a kind of brainwashing for those whose politics it takes over. The rigid anti-Zionist convictions one sees on so many campuses are the most familiar consequence

So far the kind of conversation about a mutually reinforcing anti-Zionist discursive field that I am encouraging has not taken place. We have instead been diverted by the assault on the editors

and contributors. We thus have a twofold responsibility – to account for the phenomenon of the organised opposition to the collection and to try to shift the conversation to a more responsible professional level.

Despite the controversy over the special issue, the major impression one would derive from the evidence gathered and the arguments advanced in the journal itself is that of overall objectivity. The majority of the sixteen topical essays about specific terms is consequently persuasive. Perhaps five of the sixteen, 30% of the total – 'Human Rights,' 'Intersectionality,' 'Occupation,' 'Settlements,' and 'Zionism' – indulge in rhetoric and/or omissions that undermine their effectiveness and make them overly polemical. That does not mean they aren't often correct, but it means they sacrifice potential wide impact.

Thus Alex Joffe's entry on 'Human Rights,' for example, takes up an immensely important topic and offers a necessary critique of a concept whose influence can hardly be overstated. His account of how the concept has been elevated to near sacred status and weaponised to delegitimate the Jewish state is one that should be widely read. Perhaps because he is working to counter the dominant human rights industry, however, he omits any substantive account of the necessary work the concept does outside the Israeli-Palestinian context, which weakens the essay. At the very end he acknowledges that 'building human rights into renationalized societies is critical' but allows that the odds of extricating the term from its abuses are poor. Along the way, the flamboyant claim that 'all things unsavory, unhappy, and inconvenient are elevated to the level of human rights abuses'[5] overstates matters, as does his critical definition: 'human rights is a universal theology that describes, however vaguely, the eschatological condition of a stateless, borderless globe where individuals and communities are somehow both free to pursue their aspirations and be protected from one another.'[6] I'll forgive him, however, the identification of human rights 'seminaries formerly known as universities'[7] because it is an apt description of a minority reality in higher education.

A number of us have detailed some of the political and institutional forces behind the recent *Word Crimes* controversy. Certainly many of those who signed the petition denouncing *Word Crimes* did so before they could acquire and read the volume. They amount to a who's who list of committed anti-Zionists and anti-Semites. The more puzzling opponents are the credible scholars who joined in the campaign. Some of those are long-term anti-Zionist and supporters of the Boycott, Sanctions, and Divestment (BDS) movement. But that still leaves unexplained the participation of faculty who ordinarily avoid association with anti-Zionism. The campaign against the *Word Crimes* issue rapidly became part of the more general effort to delegitimate the Jewish state, an effort from which some of the more qualified critics would ordinarily want to keep their distance.

I characterised their participation in part as a struggle for power over Israel studies as a field and over the Association for Israel studies as an organisation. It also reflected anxiety over changes in the field that are outside the control of AIS members, among them those who helped found Israel studies as what they thought could be an objective, apolitical area of academic study. Given that so much anti-Zionist scholarship – or what passes for scholarship from presses like California, Chicago, or Duke – is so ferociously partisan, and given how polarised public debate is over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I do not believe the field could indefinitely remain above the fray.

I am not suggesting that the field should be ruthlessly politicised. I think it is admirable to seek neutral scholarly standards. But I believe much of what is said about Israel has political implications and that it is OK and even helpful to address them if you are able to do so. Yet I

also think that political convictions can lead to basic confirmation bias in doing research, shaping arguments, and reaching conclusions, and that that needs to be confronted both by researchers themselves and by reviewers. As I argue in my 2019 book *Israel Denial: Anti-Zionism, Anti-Semitism, & The Faculty Campaign Against the Jewish State*, the echo chamber of peer review too often merely reinforces anti-Zionist confirmation bias.

Yet at some level I nonetheless find the whole *Word Crimes* brouhaha incomprehensible. Let me just take two indicative pieces of evidence, the first minor, the second major. A number of people joined the chorus declaring the issue to be a violation of academic integrity, in part because two of the papers lacked footnotes. Yet concise position papers like these are often published without notes.

The second piece of evidence, the major one, is that I have seen none of the special issue critics willing to engage in debates about the possible contributions any of the essays might have made to our understanding of the key terms the essays discussed. As others have pointed out, that would be the standard academic practice. The academic outrage proceeded in a notably unacademic fashion.

So I want to say that the attacks on the *Word Crimes* issue were not a shining example of enlightenment reason at its best. The attacks exhibited the familiar features of a moral panic, in this case a fervid anti-Zionist one. The sky was falling on Israel studies. Flee the cursed terrain of the special issue or see your career and the field damned to perdition. Not the most Jewish of concepts, perdition, but I suppose there are only so many tropes available to support moral panics. When you are dealing with people in the grips of a moral panic, of course, they do not retreat to sweet reason when challenged. They double-down, like our president. They get louder.

The protest was fundamentally irrational. It was collective madness, albeit of the sort to which academics are especially disposed. They plea for moral panic solidarity. They sign petitions. They demand apologies. They threaten legal action. They call for resignations. They resign from the journal editorial board themselves, then reverse course if the wind changes direction. They revel in mob action.

Perhaps the key distinction is that the critics don't claim the editors and contributors did bad or incompetent work. They want to stigmatise it as unprofessional. They don't want to have to prove the work is bad, because to do that they would have to contend with the pro-Israeli arguments people made, with the substance of the essays. Instead, they want to cast it out as rogue conduct. Their case is merely a series of overwrought accusations. The editors and contributors should apparently be abandoned on the campus of Birzeit University on the West Bank and left to see if they can safely hitchhike back.

Despite the ad hominem character of the attack, I have so far treated the protestors sternly but with dignity. I preferred to avoid concluding they were largely a basket of deplorables. The problem is that no explanation has freed me of my sense of incredulity – that academics, some of whom have done work I admire, would themselves behave unprofessionally.

Worse still, they aren't denouncing the anti-Zionist work that Norman Finkelstein publishes with California, that Saree Makdisi publishes with Chicago, or that Jasbir Puar publishes with Duke, although that work is all fiercely, intolerantly, and maliciously political. Is that because it is extensively documented, even though the documentation is either irrelevant or fake news? Of course theirs's is anti-Zionist, not Zionist, work, to state what is no news at all.

Of course I contend in *Israel Denial* that Steven Salaita, Saree Makdisi, Jasbir Puar, and others have done irresponsible and unprofessional work and I criticise them for doing so as unreservedly as I know how – but only after spending tens of thousands of words exposing the

dishonest character of their arguments and the astonishingly false character of their factual claims. My Jasbir Puar chapter alone is 30,000 words.

But to level such accusations without proving them, as the *Word Crimes* prosecutors do, would be unacceptable. Worse still, the *Word Crimes* accusations are almost entirely without referents. They do not refer to what the authors actually say or argue. That would involve disputing the facts the essays offer, something the prosecutors in this case are loathe to attempt. So, what are a few random examples of what some of the authors actually do?

In his essay on 'Settlements' Ari Blaff works to show that political disputes over West Bank 'settlements' treat them exclusively as a post-1967 issue, whereas, as with Hebron, they implicate a much longer history. I have urged repeatedly that the Jewish presence in Hebron be abandoned, but it cannot be done without confronting the religious and historical loss that would be involved. Blaff helps complicate the debate appropriately. By the way, he informs us that Google's repository of 'settlements' worldwide is exclusively Israeli. I didn't know that. Did you? On the problematic side of the ledger, Blaff is determined to disregard the arguments that the settlements could be an impediment to the peace process. Yet they clearly limit or compromise the possibility for an independent Palestinian state based on contiguous territory, without which a state would not be viable.

This collection is rich with things I would guess many of us did not know of, along with important clarifications of what many of us did recognise. Jonathan Schanzer's objective entry on 'Terrorism' faults both Israeli and Palestinian Authority definitions and does so with reference to distinctions between '*enforcement terror* (launched by those in power) and *agitational terror* (carried out by those who aspire to power.'[8] It's as close to a politically neutral piece as one could ask.

Lesley Klaff's piece on 'Holocaust Inversion' is among the others that I find completely objective. One of its initial surprises is a paragraph of brief dictionary and encyclopaedia Holocaust definitions that vary widely in the time periods they include and other details. Several sections on the British context – from the Mandate years to the present – reveal disturbing examples of Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism likely to be new to anyone except a specialist. I would challenge anyone to find substantive fault with it.

Gerald Steinberg's essay on funding directed towards demonising Israel is quite factual as well. It distills years of research into the role that NGOs supposedly apolitically devoted to human rights and humanitarian aid play in funding opposition to the Jewish state. They include a number of national and international church groups. He describes activities of both private and government funded groups. The amounts at stake include many hundreds of millions of dollars annually.

Miriam Elman has two distinct tasks in a piece on 'Islamophobia' – to establish the serious and pernicious character of the phenomenon, while condemning its use to silence valid criticism of Palestinian social practices, including honour killings of women. She calls Islamophobia 'an affront to our common human rights and to human dignity,'[9] but faults 'stretching of the concept … to include critiques of religiously-motivated terrorism.'[10] She devotes several pages to a detailed critique of anti-Muslim stereotypes and then gives the politically opportunistic applications of Islamophobia, including its anti-Zionist versions, equal time. The essay is a model of balance that other writers could well imitate.

In his entry on 'Occupation' Efraim Karsh works partly to recover a critical but often repressed historical fact – that the occupation of Gaza and the West Bank began, respectively, with Egypt and Jordan occupying them for twenty years. That process of repression is a word

crime because it falsifies the historical reality and compromises what should be the full meaning of the word. He also justly emphasises that for many Arab opponents of Israel the 'occupation' began not with 1967 but rather with the primal outrage, the land purchases of the Yishuv and the creation of the Jewish state in 1948. He provides an informative list of the ways the occupation actually benefits Palestinians, but omits acknowledgement of its denial of the rights of political self-determination, freedom of movement, and the right to exploit the full resources of the land. The existence of separate West Bank legal systems for Jews and Palestinians meanwhile generates many inequalities he overlooks.

Those omissions are combined with strong rhetoric to make the essay polemical enough to undercut its effectiveness. The same thing might have happened with Asaf Romirowsky's well-researched piece on 'Arab-Palestinian Refugees' had he adopted inflated rhetoric. Determined to counter the prevailing myth that Israelis are solely responsible for the plight of the 1948 refugees from then until now, Romirowsky details the multiple ways the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has institutionalised refugee status, resisted solutions, and helped make 'refugee' a 'critical part of [Palestinian] national identity.'[11] In the process, UNRWA has promoted a unique multi-generational and multinational definition of a Palestinian refugee that not only includes future generations but also Palestinians who are citizens of other countries. Whether out of conviction or strategy, however, Romirowsky frees Israelis of all responsibility for the Nakba and thus implicitly of the need to share now in matters like compensation for lost property. A couple of paragraphs adjusting his historical account, would have better assured wide acceptance of this valuable essay.

Some of the essays thus have a distinct political perspective. That's not surprising, since the collection is designed to interrogate and critique prevalent anti-Zionist definitions. Some contributors handle that task judiciously, others not. There are some people I would not have asked to contribute. Some critics of the enterprise may have thought the essays should have been staged as pro and con debates. In some cases – as with Apartheid, Holocaust Inversion, Pinkwashing, and Zionism – that would have been to overturn the truth altogether, to give equal time and a false presentation of balance to views that do not merit any credibility. Overall, *Word Crimes* is an important collection that should have started a fruitful discussion, not a defamatory campaign. Donna Divine ends her introduction by declaring that 'the essays should return sanity to the discourse on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.'[12] There was faint hope of that then, less now.

Notes

1 Robinson Divine, "Introduction," 8.
2 Troen and Troen, "Indigeneity," 17.
3 Ibid., 20.
4 Mor, "On Three Anti-Zionisms," 211.
5 Joffe, "Human Rights," 113.
6 Ibid., 112.
7 Ibid., 114.
8 Schanzer, "Terrorism," 52.
9 Elman, "Islamophobia," 151.
10 Ibid., 148.
11 Romirowsky, "Arab-Palestinian Refugees," 91.
12 Divine, "Introduction," 15.

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The Demopath's Lexicon: a guide to Western journalism between the river and the sea

Richard Landes

ABSTRACT

This article examines a double discourse by the Palestinian leadership, one in English and one in Arabic, which plays a central role in their negotiating strategy with Israel since the onset of the Oslo 'peace process' (1993). Using language very close to Western terminology, Palestinians in English speak of 'Occupation' and 'Settlements' with the 1967 borders as the defining issue; while in Arabic, they speak of 'Occupation' and 'Settlements' in terms of the 1948 borders (i.e., all of Israel is an 'Occupation' and Tel Aviv is an illegal 'settlement'). As a zero-sum negotiating strategy this makes perfect sense: convince Israel to concede 'land for peace' (1967 borders), when in reality this means 'land for war' (1967 borders as launching pad for war to 1948 borders). The western news media, allegedly committed to accurate reporting, shows no knowledge of the Arabic discourse and presents what Palestinians say in English as reliable reflections of their actions and intentions. As a result of this failure to identify the double-discourse, the Western legacy media presents Palestinian war propaganda as news to their

Western audiences, unwittingly helping the Palestinians in their deception.

Definitions

Demopath: Someone who invokes the values of human rights, equality, and fairness in order to fool those who believe in such things to meet one's demands, when in fact, one has contempt for those values and seeks to destroy societies based on them: 'using democracy to destroy democracy.' Korach is the first recorded case in the historical record (Numbers 16:3). In ancient Greece's centuries-brief flirtation with democracy, when the unsuspecting people (demos) had 'drunk too deeply' of the 'strong wine of freedom', they were ready for demagogues to lead them to the slavery of tyranny.[1] The early 20th century forgery, the *Protocols of the Elder's of Zion*, presents the Jews as demopaths, who encourage democracy and a free press as a way to undermine the natural rule of the 'gentile aristocracy' and, having thus destabilised the world, in order to enslave mankind.[2]

   Dupes of demopaths: People committed to progressive values of equality, fairness, freedom, and dignity, who takes demopaths as sincere, thereby, being duped by people playing by winner-take all rules and who consider the dupes' 'good faith' a sign of weakness and cause for contempt and exploitation.

   Demopath's Lexicon: The list of terms with two meanings that demopaths use: positive-sum (+sum) meaning for 'them' (those whom they wish to dupe); zero-sum (0-sum) for 'us' (those on our side to whom we promise full victory).

   The demopath's ruse boils down to a typical hard 0-sum strategy: Pretend to favour a trust-based, +sum solution that strengthens your position and weakens your enemy, so that later you can betray the other side's trust and wage a 0-sum war against someone foolish enough to have trusted you. In a sense, all 0-sum strategies (short of the use of force) come down to this ruse: fake good will and, when opportune, betray. One would imagine and hope, however, that in a reasonably mature +sum public sphere as those in modern democracies, guided to some extent by critical intelligence, such a ploy would not succeed too often.[3] 'Twice, shame on us.'

Language as a weapon of war

In a recent special issue of *Israel Studies*, seventeen scholars dissected the ways in which a 'linguistic alchemy' has permitted some scholars to literally invert the image people have of Israel and its founding Zionist ideology from a courageous people fighting off the continuation of Nazi genocide after Hitler's death into the very opposite: a racist, genocidal, apartheid, colonial, and most recently, 'white supremacist' state. If in 2000, the meme was Israelis are *like* the Nazis, the *new* Nazis, in 2020 it's Israelis are actually Nazis. Of course, not everyone shares the full replacement narrative – Israelis/Nazis vs Palestinians/Jews – that flourishes on the progressive left today, but the average Western consumer of mainstream news, gets a strong dose of Israeli/Goliath vs Palestinian/David.

   Hannah Arendt, George Orwell and others have spoken of the corruption and weaponisation of language in totalitarian circles, and their extensive efforts to control the meaning of words. Indeed, one might argue that in the case of totalitarians and other movements striving for hegemonic power, the major invasion is not military, but cognitive, and that words, used as weapons, play a key role in the strategy aimed at 'taking over.' Words as weapons of invasive

cognitive warfare.[4] Here I wish to examine the interaction of two linguistic discourses, in which shared words are used in an international negotiation, by one of the players, as a demopathic deception, as a war strategy. Use the rhetoric of human rights, equality, and freedom, to convince people to support a cause that pursues the destruction of the 'other's' rights, dignity, and freedom.

In one linguistic group – the global, English-dominated, public sphere – these terms are both paradigmatic formulations and powerful policy tools in advancing peace, as in: The 'Peace Process' aims at a 'Two-State Solution,' that will put an end to the 'Occupation,' and resolve the problem of 'Settlements.' Much of the 'strategic thinking' in the West seems to assume that these words substantially describe the sometimes intractable realities on the ground. They dominate discussion of both causes and solutions to the conflict.

Within this field of discourse, one finds a distinctive Palestinian English voice. It uses the same language and makes the same analysis: Because Israel won't stop 'settlements' it prolongs the 'occupation' makes the 'Two-State Solution' impossible. Palestinians want freedom, and dignity, and their rights. Granting the Palestinians this, by ending the oppressive occupation, uprooting the invasive settlements, taking down the apartheid wall will bring peace. Meantime, at home, in Arabic, leaders tell a different tale: 'Negotiations are a ruse to weaken Israel so we can destroy her and get it all. Just don't tell outsiders.' In Arab discourse, all of Israel is occupied territory.

This strategy dates back to the early Oslo 'Peace Process,' explained by Yasser Arafat to a Muslim audience in Johannesberg in his 'Hudaibiyya talk.' 'Yes' to negotiations, but not for peace; rather for better positioning in war. Demand every last inch of the 1967 borders in order to fatally weaken Israel. Almost twenty years after this speech, Fatah Central Committee member Abbas Zaki explained the Palestinian approach to President Obama's efforts to negotiate a peace:

> The agreement [about which we are negotiating] is based on the borders of June 4 [1967]. While the agreement is on the borders of June 4, the President [Mahmoud Abbas] understands, we understand, and everyone knows that it is impossible to realize the inspiring idea, or the great goal in one stroke. If Israel withdraws from Jerusalem, if Israel uproots the settlements, 650,000 settlers, if Israel removes the fence – what will be with Israel? Israel will come to an end. If I say that I want to remove it from existence, this will be great, great, [but] it is hard. This is not a [stated] policy. You cannot say it to the world. You can say it to yourself.[5]

Below is a series of interlocking terms that present usage definitions of key terms: as they are used by Western journalists and their guests; what Palestinian spokespeople say in English; what Palestinian leaders say when they speak of these matters in Arabic. Together they compose a Demopath's Lexicon for the current stage of Palestinian negotiations, that is to say, cognitive warfare against Israel.

term	Western consensus	Palestinian English	Palestinian Arabic
Occupation/Palestine	1967, the Green Line 'occupied territories' WB/East Jerusalem	1967, the Green Line,[6] every inch.	'48, the shoreline. All of Israel, every inch, every grain of

	Future Palestinian State.	*Occupation must end so we can be free.*	sand … *From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.*
Settlements	Israeli communities on Palestinian land, needed to create a viable nation-state.[7]*The obstacle to peace*	All settlements over the 1967 line. Must be removed	All Zionist settlements, including Tel Aviv. Any presence of non-dhimmi Jews in Dar al Islam.
Peace Process	Land for Peace. +sum compromise	+sum compromise 'Peace of the Brave'	Treaty of Hudaybiyya, Trojan Horse cognitive war ruse
Peace Goal	2 democratic states	2 states side by side	Muslim (Arab) rule
Recognition of Israel	Yes, the Palestinians recognise Israel.	We already did that. charter amended '96	We never recognised Israel Issue never even raised.
Two-State Solution	the *only* solution	We are committed to 2SS, have fulfilled all obligations.	Ruse not goal. Inacceptable compromise.
Viable state	West Bank and East Jerusalem	Every inch of the WB with sovereign rights.	All of Palestine
Justice	+sum solution that benefits all fairly. Two-State Solution	Our inalienable rights as a people. Two-State Solution	0-sum revenge for face lost in '48, non-dhimmi Jews in Dar al Islam, a blasphemy
Dignity	Equality, fairness, mutual respect.	Our inalienable right to be free from occupation	Arab/Muslim honour trumps dignity of infidels.
Al Yahood (the Jews)	Israelis, who frustrate peace process and anger		The Jews, those our imams and sheikhs

Since the onset of the Oslo 'peace process' in September 1993, and despite extensive evidence to the contrary, the overlap between the columns Western and Palestinian foreign language discourse has grown ever greater. Palestinians have succeeded remarkably in getting Westerners to believe what they say in foreign tongues and not pay attention to what they say in Arabic. The success of this campaign came to a pinnacle in Security Council Resolution 2334 (December 2016) on the 'illegality of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory occupied since 1967.'

Till that point, Palestinian negotiating strategy had worked well in dealing with the demands of US Secretary of State John Kerry's peace initiative. The Americans had pressed only the Israelis to make concessions,[8] and when they came to the Palestinians with those concessions, PA President Mahmoud Abbas spurned them to Kerry's face in Paris.[9] The next step was to get the outside world to blame Israel for defying the very principles of peace and international law, and to get those principles enshrined in international law. Security Council Resolution 2334 marked that next major victory. The resolution, like so many before it, was tailor-made for Palestinian cogwar: its central and urgent claim was that the settlements built on 'Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967 … [were] a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-State solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.'[10]

It explicitly included 'East Jerusalem' (i.e. including the Old City's Jewish Quarter and the Western Wall) in the areas designated as 'Palestinian Territory.' Strategically-minded Palestinians could not have written more favourably for their cause. Rather than veto it, the US abstained, allowing it to pass.[11]

The Palestinians pursued a cognitive war campaign so obvious that Israel's ambassador to the US Ron Dermer laid it out:

> What this resolution just did, it gave the Palestinians ammunition in their diplomatic and legal war against Israel. They don't want to negotiate peace. Do you know why? Because when you are negotiating a peace there is give and take [+sum principle]. What they want is take and take. And the way to do that is to try to internationalize the conflict, to put more and more pressure on Israel, to call for boycotts, sanctions, to take our soldiers to the ICC, something they are already calling to happen.[12]

Then, on December 28, Secretary of State John Kerry, who had invested enormous effort in these peace negotiations, gave a farewell policy speech of over 70 minutes in which he excoriated Israel for its rightwing government, its 'settlements,' its 'seemingly endless occupation,' and for the failure of his negotiations.[13] In the week of the Security Council Resolution, the two major English-speaking (hence global) news media outlets, CNN International and BBC Global, gave extensive attention to the events, with CNN making it the lead story for most of the week.[14] Despite many differences in detail, their joint coverage shows a striking overlap when it comes to the use and meaning of the key terms cited above in table: a major contribution to the demopath's lexicon for dupes.

The occupation paradigm

The basic set of beliefs shared by most of the journalists and their invited guests on display that week, ran as follows:

- The Two-State Solution is the only viable solution to the conflict.[15]
- The Palestinians must get the 'occupied territory' as necessary for that state.[16]
- Israel's 'occupation and settlement' policies violate international law and prevent peace.[17]
- The Two-State Solution is dying.
- Israel is killing it.

Admittedly, the journalists did not make this up. Significant currents in the academy, NGO research, and policy circles grant these ideas near dogmatic status, leading one observer to speak of a 'cult of the Occupation.'[18] During the Obama administration, this paradigm drove Kerry's negotiations, plainly evident in the language used by White House spokesman Ben Rhodes.[19] Indeed, often the media merely paraphrased Kerry … but with conviction. The problem is that while the administration might have fully adopted this view, and many journalists shared it, so few journalists or their invited guests questioned it. The result was a remarkable display of 'pack journalism.' Rarely did any journalist probe the reliability of 'the simple, though remarkably elusive, presumption that, but for these ["settlements"], peace would be inevitable.'[20]

Indeed, so widely is this paradigm shared currently that many reading this article will likely be puzzled (like the journalists) by the very thought that there's something wrong with it. The core of the issue lies in the unspoken discourse in the third column in the above table. If Palestinian leadership (religious and secular) does say these things (and worse) in Arabic without pushback from either Arab or Western observers, then Israel cannot make peace with them: concessions can only weaken them in the face of such a remorseless, irredentist, enemy. 'Settlements,' in this perception, are not so much impediments to peace, but impediments to the Palestinian implementation of their war plans; 'occupation' here, as it was in 1967, is less imperial conquest than reluctant self-defence.

BBC, CNN on security council resolution 2334 and Kerry's speech

As noted above, on December 23–29, 2016 the two major international Anglophone TV news covered these events extensively.[21] The BBC, which covered the issues less frequently, had only a few invited guests, all of whom, with the exception of Jonathan Schanzer,[22] expressed views corresponding to Palestinian foreign language propaganda. Most of these reporters, in-house and invited experts were varyingly committed adherents of the paradigm. In some cases, the shared understanding was palpable: "the line of the current administration leans very strongly with the Arab world view of Israel. That may be a nasty shock to Netanyahu and his very right wing government.[23]

CNN covered these events much more extensively and at much greater length. It brought in over 30 independent experts and political commentators and another dozen CNN analysts. Here the mix was less skewed, though those challenging the paradigm were invariably lone voices. In numerous cases, however, two and even three journalists/guests all comfortably shared the paradigm.

Barbara Plett-Usher of the BBC framed the issue:

When the Malaysian ambassador was introducing the resolution he made the point that *everyone there agrees on* … which is that the resolution is coming forward at this point, because there is great concern that the building of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, are threatening the possibility of a viable Palestinian state in any future peace talks.[24]

And, as the rest of the reporting on the topic illustrated, the 'everyone' she spoke of included her and most of her colleagues.

Thus, echoing Kerry and Palestinian spokespeople, journalists and guests alike repeatedly frame the issue as one of Israeli intransigence: It's Netanyahu's 'rightwing' government, the 'most rightwing ever,' that makes peace impossible. 'Netanyahu publicly says he is for peace, but actually he is against it.'[25] Kerry, the Europeans, the Palestinians, everybody is frustrated with Netanyahu.[26] All Kerry was doing was giving the Israelis some needed 'tough love.'[27] At no point did any journalist pursue the contraries to these verities: that Abbas' 'moderate' government is far more right-wing and violently authoritarian than the farthest 'rightwing' Israeli government possible[28]; that Abbas publicly says he's for peace, but privately pursues war. No one asked the obvious question, 'why isn't Kerry frustrated with the Palestinians?'

And yet, it was clear to anyone who bothered to think on it, that the resolution the OIC sponsored and passed through the UN, implemented the Palestinian cognitive war. While the resolution aspired to 'two democratic [sic] states living side by side,' Mustafa Barghouti explained excitedly to BBC's Yolande Knell how it was a recipe for continued cognitive war rather than negotiations based on good faith:

It gives us a very strong instrument to fight back the Israeli illegal settlements that are killing the possibility of a Two-State Solution … that all Israeli changes in the occupied territories must be reversed including the annexation of East Jerusalem [i.e., every inch to the 1967 borders]. It will give us a very strong base for diplomatic actions, for struggle on the ground and even for demanding boycott and divestment and sanctions against Israel for violating international law.[29]

A confidant of Abbas told the press: '[I]n suits and ties we will take the Israelis to The Hague, we will handcuff them … This is a war without bullets.'[30] And yet Kerry insisted that he and President Obama explicitly oppose this: 'Far too often the Palestinians have pursued efforts to delegitimize Israel in international forum. We have strongly opposed these initiatives.'[31]

But somehow this Palestinian war strategy rarely made it into the larger discussion and no journalist took up. It fell almost entirely on Israeli spokespeople to make the point. No journalist, for example asked, 'Is it possible that Kerry is playing into a belligerent Palestinian strategy that really does impede peace (and harms US and Western interests)?'

Most of the journalists who supported the Palestinian demopathic war strategy seem to have done so unwittingly. When they heard Palestinians speaking in English, Westerners projected their own meanings onto Palestinian terminology. Every time, without exception, that the news outlets showed video to accompany phrases like 'These Israeli homes are on land which the Palestinians want for their promised future states,' they show scenes from the West Bank.[32] CNN's Hala Gorani challenged David Keyes with her own paraphrase of Kerry's speech:

settlement expansion, essentially sometimes deep into private Palestinian land, into territory

that would obviously make sense as a future Palestinian state, that doesn't just hurt Palestinians but also Israelis, and therefore makes a two-state solution virtually impossible.

It seems that journalists who adopted the occupation paradigm really thought the Palestinians meant the West Bank.

Indeed, so committed are the journalists to the paradigm, that when they run into contradictions, they express genuine surprise. When Naftali Bennet, a 'rightwing' Israeli MK, told Jake Tapper that the 'settlements' were not the core issue, he responded with confirmation bias:

you're proving my point because you're even disputing the idea that it's occupied territory or settlements, which *the entire international community*, with the exception of the Netanyahu government, thinks it is.[33]

When David Keyes explained that the Palestinian rejection of any Israel at all was a far more important obstacle to peace, Gorani stuttered:

The idea that these settlements uuuuh, are an impediment. There has to be some sort of … (pause). Is there no acknowledgment from your position that if the settlement activity were curtailed, that it would help?[34]

Don Lemon responded to Israel's UN Ambassador Danny Danon: 'What do you mean it's not about the settlements? … That's the whole sticking point.'[35]

The repetitive quality of the discourse is impressive. Clearly the dissenters knew they were the outside voice, while those speaking from within the paradigm repeatedly spoke of how 'everyone agrees' with this (their) point of view.[36] Explains Khaled Elghindy of the Brookings Institute:

Everybody agrees. Israelis, peace-minded Israelis, the American administration, the international community. There's a very solid consensus that settlements are destroying the possibility of a Two-State Solution.[37]

An exchange between CNN's Michael Holmes and his Jerusalem correspondent Oren Liebermann encapsulates this self-evident consensus. Holmes begins with his overall assessment of the situation:

We have heard all kinds of Israeli government spokespeople today and government members saying that it's not settlements that are an obstacle to peace but quite literally the rest of the world says, quite literally "they are." You put settlers all over the West Bank and you are not going to have a contiguous state, a viable Palestinian state.

Holmes then turns to a nodding Liebermann in Jerusalem and asks about the Palestinian response. Liebermann begins describing their reaction which accords so well with his own that, by the end, he has adopted it.

They welcome this. They say this is long overdue … they say now it's up to Israel. Abbas said we have a road map to peace, we have Kerry's ideas and the Security Council's

resolution. He says it's now up to Israel to abide to that resolution. Netanyahu has made it clear he has no intention of abiding. If that's the case, the Palestinian's say they'll pursue their cases at the ICC and other international forums.[38]

All pretty straight forward. The Palestinians are ready for peace; Israel has 'no intention.'

What Palestinians say in English

As opposed to Israeli spokespersons, who get aggressive challenges, Palestinians get much friendlier treatment.[39] Palestinian spokespersons adhere closely to the script: the key issue is 'occupation' and the 'illegal settlements,' and uprooting them all is necessary for peace. Mustafa Barghouti: 'the Israeli illegal settlements that are killing the possibility of a Two-State Solution.' He concludes by throwing down the positive-sum gauntlet to Israel:

> Are they going to continue this occupation that has become the longest in modern history? Fifty years of occupation is enough. Fifty years of conflict is enough. Time for real peace. And real peace means the end of settlements.

Direct implications: We Palestinians are ready for peace, if only the Israelis ended their occupation (here identified with 1967).

As for the sincerity of their commitment to peace, Palestinian spokespersons insist on it. Hanan Ashrawi states the Palestinian view concisely:

> Israel is an occupying power that is in violation of international law, that is in violation of Palestinian rights and that is constantly undermining and destroying the chances of peace by stealing Palestinian land and resources and culture and history and are therefore destroying the two-state solution …

On the other hand, the Palestinians have done everything to make the Two-State Solution work:

> Yes, we have accepted the Two-State Solution and we have acted accordingly, and we have honored all our commitments, as per the declaration of principles and the agreements … We have recognized Israel on 78% of our own country. It's Israel that was established on Palestinian land not the other way around. And it's Palestine that has made the historic and painful sacrifice of accepting Israel.

She then moves seamlessly from assertions of Palestinian good will and compromise to diatribes against Israel:

> The problem is that you cannot enslave a whole nation and treat it like a subhuman species with the most racist hard-line extremists, violent government in history, and then ask them to lie down and die quietly.

She, the peace-seeker, excoriates Israel as 'the most extreme right-wing expansionist militaristic and racist government,' and identifies it with reactionary forces (populism) and fearmongering in the US.

And this kind of convergence between a populist move, in the US where we see the rise of

racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia and so on combined with Israeli intransigence, Israeli ideological absolutism and extremism, does not bode well for peace at all.

Only one interviewer, Matthew Amroliwala of the BBC responded to a Palestinian, as Hala Gorani had to David Keyes, 'Oh, so it's all the other side's fault.'[40]

Outsiders, journalists and their invited experts, tended strongly to agree with the basic Palestinian claims. George Mitchell speaks as if all agree that the 'the PA … accepts Israel's existence, which opposes violence against Israel.'[41] Indeed, CNN's Oren Liebermann so completely accepts Palestinian claims of recognition that he presented it as a Palestinian bargaining chip that they might withdraw.

> The Palestinians have made it clear if he [Trump] does either of those [Jerusalem as capital, US Embassy to Jerusalem], the two-state solution is dead. The PLO may revoke its recognition of Israel and they would encourage other Arab states to close their U.S. embassies.[42]

The journalists are aware that their narrative is very close to the Palestinian one. BBC's Yolande Knell explains from Bethlehem:

> This UNSC resolution is really seen as something of a Christmas present. They have lobbied hard at the Security Council … to have something like this. A resolution which condemns Israeli settlement building very strongly. It says they have no legal validity, they are a flagrant violation of international law under the Geneva convention … and they should be stopped to salvage the Two-State Solution. Even here in Bethlehem … I can see some of the settlements that surround us. There are about 600,000 Israeli settlers who live in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and the Palestinians consistently say that they are an obstacle to peace … Here in Bethlehem Palestinians are gathering for their annual Christmas parade, they have something extra to celebrate. They are calling this resolution a victory and hope it will help them in international court.[43]

Knell apparently thinks that the dwindling population of Christians in Bethlehem, are of the same mind as the Palestinian Muslims running the PA, the same who hold them 'hostages inside their own city.'[44]

What Palestinians say in Arabic

But the most damning evidence for the failure of the media to do due diligence and bring their viewers a larger, less repetitive picture during this coverage, is their non-existent coverage of what Palestinian leaders are saying in Arabic to their own people. For all their coverage, CNN and BBC *never* at any point went behind the English curtain. If there were any Arab speakers among their guests, no journalists asked any of them what Palestinian leaders were saying to their own audiences.

And yet, since the early years of Oslo some Israelis, aware of the double discourse, began to monitor what Palestinians were saying in Arabic on the media that, since this time, was run by the Palestinian Authority. The result, two major sites with extensive translated databases of Arabic language pronouncements on the peace process. Any journalist can have immediate access to these sites and their contents. And with an alarming monotony, the material they put up

corresponds with Column C in the Demopath's Lexicon.[45]

Here one finds, to use Western terminology, a hard zero-sum solution: we only win if they completely lose. In Arabic, occupation means 1948, not 1967. 'Not a grain of sand.'[46] 'From the river to the sea.' The variations are without end and repeated time and again. Sometimes, for appearances sake, one can only make allusion to the goal, which, however, 'everyone' understands and agrees on. Then one speaks of 'the goals of the 1965 Revolution' (i.e. when the West Bank was in Arab hands and interested the newly-formed PLO not at all).[47] Mahmoud Abbas, presented to the West as a 'moderate,' refers in 2016 to 'the Occupation that began 68 years ago [i.e. 1948].' Explains Muhammad Alyan to his audience on Right of Return Day Celebrations:

> We want to say regarding what happened in 1948: No matter how great the losses and sacrifices may be, we will not relinquish one grain of sand from Jaffa, Haifa, Lod, or Ramle [all in Israel].[48]

On the subject of recognition, Muhammad Shtayyeh, member of the negotiating team and current Palestinian prime minister, says bluntly:

> The Fatah Movement never demanded that Hamas recognize Israel. To this moment, Fatah does not recognize Israel. The topic of recognition of Israel has not been raised in any of Fatah's conferences.[49]

And certainly there exists no Arab-language formal recognition of Israel. In Arabic, all of Israel is occupied territory.

But it's even worse than mere hard zero-sum. Many, especially religious leaders, openly call for genocide:

> Our belief about fighting you [Jews] is that we will exterminate you, until the last one, and we will not leave of you even one. For you are the usurpers of the land, foreigners, mercenaries of the present and of all times. Look at history, brothers: Wherever there were Jews, they spread corruption … (Quran): "They spread corruption in the land, and Allah does not like corrupters." Their belief is destructive. Their belief fulfills the prophecy. Our belief is in obtaining our rights on our land, implementing Sharia (Islamic law) under Allah's sky.[50]

And, despite what Kerry claims, this is not just from Hamas. These sentiments are repeated over and again by PA preachers as well.[51] Indeed the hadith of a coming time when the Muslims will kill every last Jew is a common trope. 'Everyone says that,' remarked a reporter to me in 2010.

Although these sermons share much with Nazi genocidal rhetoric, they exceed them at least in the explicit nature of their intent: few if any ministers or priests in Nazi Germany openly called from the pulpit for the extermination of the Jews, whereas such preaching is all too common in Palestinian culture, where such sermons are then televised. The hadith is preached even in the Jerusalem mosque under Israeli occupation.[52]

The aspiration to slaughter the Jews circulates freely, from preacher to politician, to person on the street. For Palestinians, the Zionist ingathering is a prelude to destruction: 'We will bring you forth in [one] gathering' says a Hamas preacher quoting what some think is a Qur'anic passage

that validates a Zionist ingathering (Sura 17:104), only to conclude: 'so it will be easier to slaughter and kill you.'[53] I believe Allah will gather them [Jews in Israel] so we can kill them," explains PLO Executive Committee member Abbas Zaki.[54] 'We always put our hopes in Allah,' says a Palestinian woman to a reporter on the street, 'This is the promised land. The Jews think it is promised to them, but what was promised was to gather them in order to exterminate them by a divine decree.'[55]

This exterminationist anti-Semitism in Palestinian discourse is one of the great *non-dit*s of Western journalistic coverage. The closest they will come is to speak of 'incitement' without further exploring just what that incitement consists of. John Kerry made a note of the problem in his talk, even as he (mistakenly) restricted the problem:

> Hamas and other radical factions are responsible for the most explicit forms of incitement to violence. And many of the images that they use are truly appalling. And they are willing to kill innocents in Israel and put the people of Gaza at risk in order to advance that agenda.[56]

Presumably, in his mind at least, the PA is not part of this ugly reality.

A few journalists bring this subject up with Palestinian spokespeople, who respond by chastising them for holding the victim to the same standards as the oppressors. Asked if she accepted Kerry's laying some responsibility on the Palestinians for this incitement, Ashrawi replied,

> There is no parity between the people and their occupation and an occupying power. The Palestinians are under siege, they are being –, they are being shelled, our land is being stolen, our homes are being demolished, and then he [Netanyahu] says we should lie down and die quietly.[57]

Note how the generic term incitement (at most), enables Palestinians to dismiss as unfair any demands that it put an end to *its* impediments to peace. Presumably it would be harder for her to wave off something explicit and documented like 'genocidal incitement.'

And yet, this genocidal anti-Semitic language is not only *not* covered by conventional journalism, but actually, in some cases, concealed. At the beginning of the Oslo war in September 2000, NYT William Orme wrote a piece exploring the Israeli claim that Palestinian 'incitement' was a major source of the surprising violence (right after the Ramallah Lynch). In it, he only gave one example of Palestinian incitement and he literally cut out the genocidal material: [material cut from the NYT article in bold]

> The Jews are the Jews. Whether Labor or Likud, the Jews are Jews. They do not have any moderates or any advocates of peace. [They are all liars. They must be butchered and must be killed … It is forbidden to have mercy in your hearts for the Jews in any place and in any land. Make war on them any place that you find yourself. Any place that you meet them, kill them.][58]

Since this incomprehensible lapsus, Western journalists have not exposed their readers to even a fraction of the genocidal hatred that is heard regularly on Palestinian airwaves.

More recently, Palestinian youth used the term 'al Yahood' – the Jews – as the object of hatred, and target of elimination, in their interviews in Gaza. The BBC, on the advice of their

Gazan handlers, translated 'al-Yahud' ('the Jews') as 'the Israelis.'[59] It apparently does not occur to the BBC that the Gazans on whom they rely for this fashionable substitution are cognisant of Zaki's warning: 'You cannot say it to the world'; and that, therefore, their advice is deceptive, not accurate.

Journalists seem reluctant to deal with matters beyond the English curtain. At no time during the extensive coverage of this week of events, did either station (or many other publications) discuss in any substance this Arabic discourse. No interviews with the people at the two major monitoring organisations, PMW or MEMRI. No journalist showed any awareness of the sites' contents. If they were aware of it, would that not seem to an honest journalist as material his audience should know about? And if he or she were not aware, would that not reflect a lack of due diligence?

The end result? Arguably, Kerry, in the name of 'serv[ing] American interests [and] stabiliz[ing] a volatile region,' took being deceived to new international heights. He undermined his only real ally in the region by publicly humiliating her. He supported the Palestinian cognitive war strategy even as he said he opposed it. He shook off his humiliation at the hands of Abbas in Paris and blamed Israel as the cause of his failure. And all, in the name of the highest democratic principles: being 'true to our own values or even the stated democratic values of Israel.' The very definition of a dupe of demopaths.

Conclusion

On one level, the question seems self-evident. How can so many smart people, living in freedom, be such hopeless dupes to so ill-intentioned a demopathic ruse? And for so long? And so widely shared? And at the expense of so many principles of journalistic ethics and democratic principles?

Some of the answer may lie in the peculiarities of postmodern Western thinking. Research into deception indicates that

> Most people believe most of what is said by most other people most of the time. That is, most people can be said to be truth-biased most of the time. Truth-bias results, in part, from a default cognitive state. The truth-default state is pervasive, but it is not an inescapable cognitive state. Truth-bias and the truth-default are adaptive both for the individual and the species. They enable efficient communication.[60]

This cross-cultural tendency, always in tension with liars who take advantage of this built-in credulity, has become a principle of the Western Public Sphere over the last centuries and gave rise, among other benefits, to modern science.[61]

The postmodern turn, however, with its ecumenical tendency to grant the 'other' near salvific status has had a paradoxical effect.[62] On the one hand, it reinforces the element of trust in the 'other' even as, on the other hand, it undermines any commitment to an objective, impartial narrative. The more recent tendency to attribute truth to grievance against the West has taken this one step further, to the point where for some, it's not the tribal '*my side right or wrong,*' but post-colonial '*the other side* (victim, non-Westerner), *right or wrong.*'[63] Together this has made an almost principled susceptibility on the part of some Western ideologues to the Palestinian cogwar ruse.

It does not, however, explain how two major news networks, allegedly committed to the

highest standards of professional journalism (and therefore scepticism about testimony), could have produced such a cross-continental case of duped 'pack journalism.'[64] It is perhaps not accidental in this regard, that to acknowledge column C in the above table is, to take the blame (and hence, the moral heat) off of Israel, something that unself-critical gentiles and hyper-self-critical Jews seem to find nearly intolerable. It also means that anyone who really wants peace, has to confront this terrifying culture of hate among the Palestinians and run the risk of being accused of Islamophobia. Not surprisingly, giving that culture some 'tough love' is something nobody seems to want to do. Not a very good prognosis for people defending against demopathic language weaponised against democracy?

Notes

1 Plato, *Republic*, Book 8, 562d.

2 Landes and Katz, *Paranoid Apocalypse*.

3 Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 27–54.

4 Green, *Cognitive Warfare.*

5 Fatah Central Committee Member Abbas Zaki: 'Goal Is End of Israel, But "You Can't Say that to the World,"' interview on Al-Jazeera as cited by *Palestinian Media Watch*, September 23, 2011. http://www.palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=1003&fld_id=1003&doc_id=%20%205758. This approach was, according to defecting Romanian intelligence officer, Ion Mihai Pacepa, first taught to Arafat by the Soviet Bloc: "The KGB's Man [Arafat]." *Wall Street Journal*, September 22, 2003.

6 Husan Zomlot to BBC in 2016: 'the end of Israel's occupation that next year will commemorate its 50th anniversary.' BBC 28122016 2000–2200 ttl3 ch21 tl 005730. For the key to the BBC and CNN references, see below, n. 14.

7 Gorani paraphrasing Kerry: '…which is: settlement expansion, essentially sometimes deep into private Palestinian land, into territory that would obviously make sense as a future Palestinian state, that doesn't just hurt Palestinians but also Israelis, and therefore makes a two-state solution virtually impossible.' CNN 28122016 2200–0000 ttl4 ch10 tl 003440.

8 Herzog, "Inside the Black Box of Israeli-Palestinian Talks."

9 "Abbas exploded in anger at Kerry." *Times of Israel*, February 27, 2014. https://www.timesofisrael.com/kerrys-framework-reportedly-left-abbas-fuming-in-paris/.

10 UNSC Resolution 2334 (2016) – Illegality of Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Territory Occupied Since 1967. Adopted by the Security Council at its 7853rd meeting, on 23 December 2016. https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-178173/.

11 U.N. Security Council Resolution 2334: United Nations Security Council Asserts Illegality. *Harvard Law Review*, June 10, 2017. https://harvardlawreview.org/2017/06/u-n-security-council-resolution-2334/.

12 CNN 271216 1000–1200 ttl 1 ch16 tl 010405.

13 Kerry, "Remarks on the Middle East."

14 I have the full recordings of these transmissions, as well as transcriptions. All references below refer to these transcriptions, available here: "Transcripts of CNN and BBC on UNSC Res 2334." *Augean Stables*, December 12, 2019. http://www.theaugeanstables.com/2019/12/12/transcripts-of-cnn-and-bbc-on-unsc-res-2334/. For a list of those who appear in these transcripts and their affiliations, see: "List of Contributors to BBC and CNN coverage of UNSC Res 2334 and Kerry's Speech." *Augean Stables*, December 12, 2019. http://www.theaugeanstables.com/2019/12/12/list-of-contributors-to-bbc-and-cnn-coverage-of-unsc-res-2334-and-kerrys-speech/. I want to thank my Israeli collaborators who prefer to remain nameless lest it hurt their careers to be associated with such 'right-wing' activities.

15 For a medley, see "Two-State Solution." https://vimeo.com/224462055.

16 For a medley, see "Occupied Palestinian Land." https://vimeo.com/224466190.

17 For a medley, see "Occupation." https://vimeo.com/224464838.

18 Friedman, "The ideological roots of media bias against Israel."

19 Rhodes: 'Frankly if the escalation of the growth of settlements continue, the Two-State Solution is going to be impossible.' CNN 271216 1000–1200 ttl1 ch16 tl 010130.

20 Blaff, "Settlements," 218.

21 Landes, 'Everyone Agrees: The BBC and CNN on UNSC Resolution #2334 and Kerry's Speech." *SecondDraft*, February 18, 2018. https://vimeo.com/256281399.

22 Jonathan Schanzer of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracy; BBC 261216 0400–0600 ttl3 ch11 tl 001540.

23 CNN 281216 2200–0000 ttl4 ch24 tl 011100.

24 BBC 231216 2200–0000 ttl4 ch1 tl 000025.

25 Brownstein, CNN 281216 1800–2000 ttl2 ch5 tl 013430; Tapper, CNN 281216 2000–2200 ttl3 ch5 tl 003950; David Brinkley, CNN 291216 0200–0400 ttl2 ch41 tl 013230; for medley of these clips, see "Netanyahu in bad faith." https://vimeo.com/224472707.

26 Johnston to Eades: BBC 241216 1400–1600 ttl3 ch39 tl 011310; CNN anchor, CNN 241216 0600–0800 ttl4 ch26 tl 010125; Dobbie BBC 281216 2200–0000 ttl4 ch1 tl 000230; Wilcox BBC 291216 0000–0200 ttl1 ch33 tl 010630; Djerejian CNN 281216 1600–1800 ttl1 ch19 tl 012255; Miller CNN 281216 1800–2000 ttl2 ch5 tl 013430; Kurzer CNN 281216 2000–2200 ttl3 ch011925; Miller, CNN 291216 0400–0600 ttl3 ch33 tl; Prof. Lockman CNN 231216 0600–0800 ttl3 ch1 tl 010510; Aaron Miller CNN 231216 2000–2200 ttl3 ch20 tl 014135. For a medley of these clips, see "Frustration." https://vimeo.com/224499457.

27 Elise Labott, CNN Washington correspondent: "And I think it was a little bit of tough love from Kerry…" to which CNN anchor Eleni Giokos responds, "Exactly. And that was the message that was given out that, you know, friends sometimes need to show that tough love." CNN 281216 2200–0000 ttl4 ch24 tl 011100.

28 It does seem strange to consider Netanyahu a 'right-winger,' in a context where Abbas presides over a political system that routinely arrests and tortures dissent. *Strangulation Twice: Oppressive Practices of Palestinian Security Services*, Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, April 2016. http://www.euromedmonitor.org/uploads/reports/StrangulationTwiceEN.pdf. Abu Toameh, "Palestinians' Fort of Torture."

29 BBC 241216 1800–2000 ttl2 ch43 tl 011605.

30 "Abbas Confidant: We'll Take "Hundreds" of IDF Soldiers to ICC This Year." *Times of Israel*, December 26, 2016. http://www.timesofisrael.com/abbas-confidant-we-will-take-hundreds-of-idf-soldiers-to-icc-this-year/.

31 Kerry, "Remarks on the Middle East."

32 BBC 241216 1600–1800 ttl1 ch4 tl 000735.

33 CNN 281216 2000–2200 ttl3 ch4 tl 002155.

34 CNN 281216 2200–0000 ttl4 ch6 tl 001815.

35 CNN 291216 0400–0600 ttl3 ch27 tl 014330. For a medley of these three clips, see 'Whaa?' https://vimeo.com/224481801.

36 Liebermann, CNN 241216 2000–2200 ttl3 ch1 tl 000800; Johnston, BBC 251216 1800–2000 ttl2 ch2 tl 000610; Zumlot, BBC 281216 2000–2200 ttl3 ch21 tl 005730; Tasini, CNN 241216 0200–0400 ttl2 ch47 tl 013600; Ziv, BBC 291216 0400–0600 ttl3 ch6 tl 001145; Elgindy (n. 22). For a medley of these clips, see "Everybody agrees."

37 BBC 241216 0400–0600 ttl3 ch1 tl 000110from 000350.

38 CNN 291216 0000–0200 ttl1 ch39 tl 013220.

39 Hala Gorani and Hanan Ashrawi share a laugh about Trump. CNN 281216 2200–0000 ttl4 ch4 tl 001220.

40 Gorani's response to Keyes arguing it's Palestinian refusal to accept Israel at all: "I get that your point is it's all the Palestinians' fault." CNN 281216 2200–0000 ttl4 ch10 tl 003440. She later repeated this to Josh Rogin of the WaPo: "David Keyes… you know, he's essentially blaming the Palestinians for absolutely everything…" CNN 281216 2000–2200 ttl3 ch4 tl 000935; Amrolowala responds to Husan Zomlot (actually going farther than Kerry): "you seem to be absolutely playing out exactly what he [Kerry] was so frustrated at. Entirely blaming the Israelis." BBC 281216 2000–2200 ttl3 ch21 tl 005730.

41 CNN 281216 2000–2200 ttl3 ch6 tl 011510. Kerry stated in his speech: "It has been more than 20 years since Israel and the PLO signed their first agreement, the Oslo accords, and the PLO formally recognized Israel." Kerry, "Remarks on the Middle East." This misconception is based on an English letter by Arafat. To this day there is no Arabic document to that effect, including (as per the Oslo Accords) of a change in the PLO charter. On comments in Arabic, see below n. 47.

42 Note that both moves have happened and nothing remotely like the predicted responses has occurred.

43 BBC 241216 1600–1800 ttl1 ch4 tl 000735. For a medley, see "Palestinian victory." https://vimeo.com/224476375.

44 Nicholson, "Why are Palestinian Christians Fleeing?". (One might suspect that Knell thinks of all Arabs, Christian and Muslim, in her own 'Orientalising' way as in favour of Palestinian irredentism and hostile to Israel.)

45 Note that both MEMRI and Palwatch put up dissenting voices that criticize the Palestinian leadership. Most recently, see the remarks of Ziad abu Zayyad, former PA minister: "We Have State Institutions And Symbols, But We have Failed to Consolidate a Real State, Anchored in Democracy and Rule of Law, which Benefits the Citizens." *MEMRI*, December 11, 2019. https://www.memri.org/reports/palestinian-former-minister-we-have-state-institutions-and-symbols-we-have-failed. This current of thought might be even vocal were it not for the strong-handed tactics of Palestinian authorities: Strickland, "Palestinian journalists decry intimidation." In this context it's worth recalling Moynihan's law: "The amount of violations of human rights in a country is always an inverse function of the amount of complaints about human rights violations heard from there."

46 "The terminology of 1948." *Palwatch*. https://palwatch.org/analysis/212. "Not a grain of sand." *Palwatch*. https://palwatch.org/home/search?q=not+a+grain.

47 "Goals of the '65 Revolution." *Palwatch*. https://palwatch.org/home/search?q=%E2%80%9Cthe+goals+of+the+%E2%80%9965+Revolution%E2%80%9D+.

48 General Coordinator of PLO's National Committee for Commemorating Nakba Day, Muhammad Alyan, *Palwatch*. https://palwatch.org/page/12277.

49 "Fatah and Hamas agree Israel has no right to exist." *Palwatch*, April 21, 2017. https://palwatch.org/page/12144. For further examples, see "Israel has no right to exist." Palwatch. https://palwatch.org/analysis/20.

50 Hamas cleric: "We will exterminate you, until the last one." Al-Aqsa TV, July 25, 2014. https://palwatch.org/page/6680.

51 Prayer for genocide of "enemies" of Allah, by PA TV preacher, Palwatch, April 24, 2016. https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#all/FMfcgxwGCHBTVjXBjFfmZZsZfQhvTqzm. On Kerry's limiting the problem to Hamas, see below, n. 54.

52 Marcus and Zilberdik, "Al-Aqsa preacher: Jews worship the Devil, will be exterminated by Muslims." *Palwatch*, October 18, 2015. https://palwatch.org/page/8880.

53 Muhammad Salah abu Rajab, Hamas, "Allah gathered the Zionists in one place 'so that it will be easier to slaughter and kill them." Al Aqsa, TV, August 22, 2014. https://palwatch.org/page/6813.

54 Abbas Zaki, "Allah will gather [the Israelis] so we can kill them." March 12, 2014. https://palwatch.org/page/6031.

55 Fatah-run Awdah TV February 19, 2017. https://palwatch.org/page/11725.

56 Kerry, "Remarks on the Middle East."

57 Ashrawi to Amroliwalla, BBC 281216 2000–2200 ttl3 ch2 tl 000835. Similar response of Zomlot to Amroliwalla: "[Kerry] cannot equate between the occupied and the occupier, the colonized and colonised, between the besieged those who live…" BBC 281216 2000–2200 ttl3 ch21 tl 005730.

58 Sermon by Sheikh Halawi, PA TV, October 13, 2000. http://www.pmw.org.il/tv part6.html. William Orme, "A Parallel Mideast Battle: Is It News or Incitement?" *NYT*, October 24, 2000. http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B01E5D61731F937A15753C1A9669C8B63&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all.

59 'BBC defends translating "Jews" as "Israelis" for One Day in Gaza documentary,' *Jewish Chronicle*, May 15, 2019. https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/bbc-defends-translating-jews-as-israelis-for-one-day-in-gaza-documentary-1.484148.

60 Levine, *Duped: Truth-Default Theory*, 176.

61 Shapin, *A Social History of Truth*.

62 Levinas, *Alterity and Transcendence*; Baudrillard and Guillaume, *Radical Alterity*; and Nealon, *Alterity Politics*.

63 Bawer, *The Victims' Revolution*; and Bruckner, *The Tyranny of Guilt*.

64 Matusitz and Mark Breen, "Unethical Consequences of Pack Journalism."

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Zionism - The integral component of Jewish identity that Jews are historically pressured to shed

Alyza D. Lewin

ABSTRACT

The yearning and determination of Jews to re-establish their Jewish homeland in the Land of Israel is "Zionism" – an integral component of Jewish identity. It is more than the political movement launched in the 1800's. The deep religious, ancestral, and ethnic connection of Jews to the Land of Israel is as old as Abraham and the Bible. Jewish messianic movements brought Jews to Israel between the 13th and 19th centuries, proving the Jews' historic sense of peoplehood and their belief in the "ingathering of the exiles." Only in the 18th century did Jews first shed this element of Jewish identity because European governments demanded this surrender in exchange for citizenship. Why are Jews demonised and marginalised today when they express support for Israel? It is a modern manifestation of the antisemitic pressure on Jews to shed the national and ethnic part of their Jewish identity. Discrimination against anyone who observes the Jewish Sabbath, wears a *kippah*, or maintains a kosher diet is universally recognised as antisemitism. It is equally antisemitic to marginalise or harass Jews for expressing the Zionist component of their Jewish identity. Isolating and dehumanising Zionists is akin to branding Jews

with a virtual "yellow Star of David." To ensure that history does not repeat itself, we must forcefully condemn this modern mode of antisemitism.

Jews today are demonised and excluded (particularly from progressive circles) when they express support for the Jewish nation-state of Israel. This phenomenon is the modern incarnation of the age-old antisemitic pressure placed on Jews to shed the national and ethnic component of their Jewish identity. Zionism – the yearning and desire of Jews to re-establish their Jewish homeland in the Land of Israel – is an integral part of Jews' shared ancestry and ethnicity. Zionism as the *political* movement of the Jewish People may have originated in the 19th century, but the desire and determination of Jews to return to their ancestral homeland in Israel is thousands of years old, as old as Abraham and the Bible. [1]

This determination to return to Zion is the glue that has kept Jews connected for millenia. For centuries Jews have not only prayed facing Jerusalem, they have prayed to *return* to Jerusalem. *'L'Shana Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim'* 'Next Year in Jerusalem' is heard each year at the Passover Seder and again at the conclusion of Yom Kippur. Jewish prayer contains a daily explicit appeal for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and for God to 'bring us back in peace from the four quarters of the earth and lead us upright to our land.' At a Jewish wedding ceremony, it is customary to break a glass in memory of Jerusalem and swear not to 'forget thee O Jerusalem ….'[2] Even in times of great joy, the Jews recall the destruction of Jerusalem and express the desire to return and rebuild Jerusalem.

Judaism and the Land of Israel are completely intertwined. Over half of the 613 commandments in the Pentateuch are connected to the Land of Israel and can only be fulfilled in the Land of Israel.[3] These commandments relate not only to agriculture in Israel but also to the life of the Nation of Israel in the land. They pertain to topics as varied as the Jewish court system (the *Sanhedrin*), Jewish kings, the laws of war, and activities in the Jewish Temple.[4] Similarly, over 70 percent of the Talmud relates to Jewish laws that are connected to the Land of Israel.[5] Judaism as described in the Pentateuch and the Talmud assumes Jewish self-determination and envisions a Jewish nation state, complete with a Jewish government, army, court system, welfare and tax structure.[6]

Zionism is as integral a part of Jewish identity as observing the Jewish Sabbath or adhering to kosher dietary rules. Not all Jews observe *Shabbat* or eat only kosher food. Those Jews who *do*, express their Shabbat and *kashrut* observance in a myriad of ways. But all agree that those who observe the Jewish Sabbath and kosher dietary restrictions do so as an expression of their Judaism. Discriminating against Jewish Sabbath observers because they observe *Shabbat* or the Jewish holidays is universally recognised as antisemitism. Similarly, not all Jews are Zionists, and those who *are*, express their Zionism in multiple forms. For Zionist Jews, however, identifying with and expressing support for the Jewish homeland is an expression of their Judaism. Harassing, marginalising or discriminating against Jews for expressing this Zionist component of their Jewish identity is similarly antisemitic.

The experience of the Ethiopian Jews demonstrates how inherent Zionism is to Judaism. In the 1980s and 1990s, thousands of Ethiopian Jews returned to Israel. These Jews endured tremendous hardship during their journey. Some literally walked hundreds of miles across the desert.[7] Throughout their ordeal, these Ethiopian Jews were motivated by a compelling personal determination, passed down from parent to child, to reach Zion – their Jewish homeland. When

they finally arrived in Israel, many were shocked to discover that the Jewish Temple had been destroyed.[8] Ethiopian Jews, who lived in villages removed from modernity, were completely unaware of Zionism, the *political* movement. It was their *religious* and *ethnic* devotion to the Land of Israel – an integral component of their historic Jewish identity – that motivated them to persevere and eventually reach Israel.

It is important to distinguish between Zionism that is a fundamental component of Jewish identity (namely, support for the right of Jewish self-determination in the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people) and political support for the policies of the current government of Israel. The former is an expression of the Jews' shared ethnic and religious heritage. The latter is an expression of political preference. Today, antisemites and those who oppose the Jewish nation state of Israel conflate the two. They treat all expressions of support for the Jewish homeland as expressions of support for the policies of the current government. The three national elections held in Israel this year conclusively negate that proposition. Jewish Israelis overwhelmingly support the right of Jewish self-determination (they believe the right to a Jewish homeland is self-evident), yet their support for the policies of the Likud government is divided. One can be a Zionist and criticise specific government policies. It is not possible, however, to demonise Zionists without demonising Jews.

The Jewish messianic movements that repeatedly brought Jews to the Holy Land over the centuries demonstrate that the Jewish people's yearning to return to Zion is an inherent component of Jewish identity. These messianic movements reflected the Jews' deep religious, spiritual, historical and ethnic belief that (a) all Jews – including the Ten Lost Tribes – are part of a Jewish nation dispersed around the globe; (b) the Jewish nation will one day return to Zion and re-establish a Jewish homeland there; and (c) Jews can hasten the coming of the Messiah, the ultimate redemption and the restored Jewish homeland by re-establishing the Jewish legal framework that applied before the Jews were forced into exile, in particular by re-creating the *Sanhedrin*.

Jewish messianic movements and the historic yearning to return to Zion

Between the 13th and 19th centuries, successive Jewish messianic movements sought to turn Jewish prayers into action. Rather than passively waiting for God to return the Jews to their ancestral homeland, Jews who supported these movements believed they could hasten Jewish redemption and the coming of the Messiah by re-establishing a Jewish presence in the Land of Israel. Most of these waves of immigration centred around dates when Jewish mystical texts predicted the Messiah would arrive: 1240, the period leading up to the year 1440, the period between 1540 and 1575, the years approaching 1640, the period between 1740 and 1781, and the years before and after 1840.[9] These movements were condemned at the time by mainstream Jewish leaders who feared community members would become disillusioned with Judaism when the Messiah failed to materialise.[10] Nonetheless, the messianic movements demonstrate that the yearning of Jews to see the 'ingathering of the [Jewish] exiles' and their return to Zion has been an integral component of Jewish identity for centuries.

The Aliya of the 300 Rabbis (1210-40)

During the Crusader period, Jews were forbidden to live in Jerusalem. In 1187, when the Muslims conquered the city and permitted Jews to return, Jews viewed this positive development

as part of the divine promise to return the Jews to Zion.[11] A letter from the early 13th century sent to the Jews of Egypt (and subsequently found in the Cairo Geniza 600 years later) described a 'prophecy' regarding the ingathering of the exiles and the coming of the Messiah.[12] In 1211, the belief that Jewish redemption was forthcoming inspired Jews from France, England, North Africa and Egypt, including leaders of the French school of the Tosafists, to move to Israel.[13] Historians call this the 'Aliya of the 300 rabbis.'[14]

Aliya between 1400 and 1440

At the beginning of the 15th century, Jews from North Africa, Spain, France, Italy and German lands participated in messianic movements to the Land of Israel.[15] In the late 1300s and early 1400s Jews suffered severe persecution across Europe including in Spain, France and Austria.[16] The violence against Jews in Spain and Portugal in 1391 destroyed seventy Jewish communities and killed approximately 50,000 Jews.[17] Jews were expelled from France in 1391 and from Austria in 1421. This persecution coupled with rumours that the ten lost tribes of Israel had been discovered, and mystical literature that suggested the Messiah would arrive in 1440, fuelled speculation that God was on the verge of reuniting all the world's Jews. R. Elijah of Ferrara, a leading Italian Rabbi, for example, recorded that he made the journey to the Land of Israel (arriving in 1435) in order to verify rumours that the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel had been discovered.[18] His journey prompted others, who believed Jewish redemption was imminent, to follow. So many Jews embarked on the journey, Italian authorities felt compelled to stop the flow of Jews to the Holy Land. Between 1428 and 1455, the governments in Venice and Sicily, and the Vatican issued orders prohibiting sea captains from ferrying Jews to the Land of Israel and prohibiting the use of the Italian ports for such transport.[19]

Aliya and the flourishing community in Safed (1492-1575)

The messianic movement and related wave of immigration to Land of Israel that took place in the 16th century had a long-lasting impact on Judaism. Scholars that settled in Safed during this period authored some of Jewish history's most significant texts and transformed Safed into the spiritual centre of the Jewish world.[20]

   The expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 prompted renewed messianic expression. Numerous rabbis viewed the severe persecution of Jews as part of a divine plan to return the Jewish people to Zion and bring about the redemption.[21] R. Isaac Abravanel, for example, interpreted the passage from Isaiah (43:6) that says: 'I will say to the north, Give; and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth' as meaning God caused the expulsion from Spain to propel Jews towards Zion.[22]

   When the Land of Israel was conquered by the Ottomans in 1517 and Jews were permitted to immigrate, messianic dreams were fuelled once again.[23] Dovid Reuveni, an enigmatic figure of the period, claimed to be a member of the lost tribe of Reuven and a king of a portion of the ten lost tribes.[24] He sought to create a Christian-Jewish military alliance against the Moslems believing that it would lead to the creation of a Jewish state in the Land of Israel.[25]

   R. Jacob Berab sought to re-establish the ancient *Sanhedrin* (Jewish court). He believed reviving the Jewish tribunal would serve not only a practical need but would also fulfil a key step in the messianic process by restoring the key legal and legislative body necessary for resumption of the Jewish state.[26] Membership in the *Sanhedrin* required *semicha* (ordination), a

practice that had been passed on by rabbinic leaders for generations but had ceased around the fifth century.[27] R. Berab renewed the ancient practice and granted *semicha* to four leading rabbis in Safed, including R. Joseph Karo (author of the *Shulhan Aruch*, the most widely accepted code of Jewish Law). Leading rabbis in Jerusalem and around the world, however, challenged R. Berab's actions, claiming that *semicha* could only be reinstated with the complete agreement of all rabbinic leaders in Israel.[28]

Rabbi Solomon Alkabetz composed religious poems that captured the Jews' yearning for redemption.[29] His most famous poem, *Lecha Dodi* ('Come, My Beloved'), became part of the Sabbath evening service. In one of R. Alkabetz's prayers, he called upon God to redeem the Jewish people while describing the deep devotion and determination the community had shown in returning to Zion.[30]

The Messiah did not arrive in 1540 (the date that had been predicted) and by the late 16th century, the once flourishing community in Safed came to an end due to economic crisis and the increased hostility of the Ottoman government towards the Jews.[31]

Aliya to Jerusalem in the years preceding 1648

A new messianic movement began in the early 17th century based on a passage from the Zohar[32] that suggested that the dead would be resurrected (a key stage in the redemption process) in 1648. R. Isaiah Horowitz, author of the *Shnei Luhot Habrit* (and known as the 'Shelah') came to the Land of Israel during this period. In one of his letters, he described the rapid growth and development he witnessed in Jerusalem, and conveyed his belief that the days of the Messiah were approaching. 'We consider all this a sign of the approaching redemption quickly in our days, amen,' he wrote.[33] He added:

> Every day we see the ingathering of the exiles. Day by day they come. Wander about the courtyards of Jerusalem; All of them, praise God, are filled with Jews, may their Rock and Redeemer protect them, and with houses of study and schools filled with small children.[34]

In 1625 the Turkish *Ibn Farukh* family purchased control of Jerusalem from the Ottoman government and for the next two years, they persecuted the Jews.[35] Of the 2,500 to 3,000 Jews who lived in Jerusalem in 1624, only a few hundred remained at the end of Farukh's rule in 1627. An anonymous report printed in 1631, titled 'The Ruins of Jerusalem,' described as a temporary set-back the horrors inflicted on the Jews in Jerusalem during this period.[36] *The* report was written to strengthen the resolve of the Jews who had remained in Jerusalem during the difficult years that the city was governed by the Farukh family. The description, however, confirms that throughout the century, Jews were determined to return to Zion. According the report: '[B]efore the coming of Ibn Farukh, children from the four corners of the earth fluttered like birds in their eagerness to settle in Jerusalem. And to us, this was an evident sign of the beginning of the ingathering of the exiles … All the more so, now that God has remembered his people and his land and expelled before our eyes the enemy Ibn Farukh; they hover like an eagle, and the children will return to their borders.'[37]

Aliyot in 1740-81

Messianic fervour in the years leading up to and following 1740 inspired thousands of Jews to

immigrate to the Land of Israel from all over the world but particularly from within the Ottoman Empire and Italy.[38] The Jews who moved to the Land of Israel during this time period settled primarily in Tiberias and Jerusalem, two cities that, according to the Talmud, were to play a role in the redemption.[39] The Jewish community in Jerusalem expanded significantly. Eight new yeshivot were established, several synagogues were repaired and expanded, and new synagogues were built.[40]

In 1740–81, students and associates of the Ba'al Shem Tov also immigrated to the Land of Israel. The largest of these Hasidic groups arrived in 1777.[41] A Karaite[42] who spoke with these immigrants shortly before their arrival described how belief in the redemption inspired these Jews:

> May it be remembered by the later generations what happened in the year 5537 (1777), how a rumor came about that the Messiah son of David had come. Then the rabbis living abroad began to go up to the city of Jerusalem, may it speedily be rebuilt … And they thought that this was the time of the end of days, as promised by the prophets.[43]

Jews during the 18th century were motivated to immigrate to the Land of Israel for the same reasons that had motivated Jews for centuries – to rebuild Jerusalem and celebrate the ingathering of the exiles in preparation for ultimate redemption in the Holy Land.

Aliya around 1840

In the early 19th century it was predicted, based on a source in the Zohar, that the Messiah would arrive in 1840.[44] This inspired thousands of Jews to immigrate to the Land of Israel.[45]

Anglican missionaries who interacted with Jews in the Land of Israel and around the world in the early 19th century reported that between 1809 and 1811 hundreds of Jewish families from Russia immigrated to the Holy Land.[46] The Jews informed these missionaries that the reason for their trip was 'hope that the words of the prophets will soon be realized, that God will gather his dispersed people from all corners of the earth.'[47] These missionaries noted that the immigrants 'wish[ed] to see the appearance of the Messiah in the Land of Israel.'[48]

The most significant community that immigrated to Israel during this period were the students of the Vilna Gaon. Although R. Elijah of Vilna (the 'Vilna Gaon') attempted unsuccessfully to reach the Land of Israel in 1778, shortly after his death, nearly all of his students emigrated to *Eretz Yisrael*. Their Aliya was directly inspired by the Vilna Gaon.[49]

Students of the Vilna Gaon who immigrated to the Land of Israel in the early 1800s sought to re-establish the *Sanhedrin* as a catalyst to the ultimate redemption.[50] One of the Vilna Gaon's students in Safed sent an envoy to Yemen to locate the ten lost tribes.[51] It was believed that the lost tribes had preserved the *semicha* practice and could assist in renewing the ancient tradition for the remainder of the Jewish world.[52] In this way, the students of the Vilna Gaon hoped to avoid the Jewish law challenges that had been levied against R. Berab when he had sought to reinstitute the *semicha* practice hundreds of years earlier in Safed.

Just as Jews in prior centuries who had immigrated to the Land of Israel sought to locate the lost tribes, renew the ancient *semicha*, and revive the *Sanhedrin* in the belief that these steps would hasten the coming of the Messiah, so too did Jews in the nineteenth century take these same steps.[53]

The messianic aliyot between the 13th and 19th centuries demonstrate that Zionism – the yearning of Jews to re-establish a Jewish homeland in the Land of Israel – has historically been an integral component of Jewish religious and ethnic identity. Jews first began to shed this element of Jewish identity in the 18th century when compelled to do so by Western European governments that demanded Jews abandon the national and ethnic component of Judaism in exchange for citizenship.

West European emancipation compels Jews to shed the national component of their Jewish identity

In 1789, inspired by enlightenment ideals and the new United States Constitution, the National Assembly in France issued the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen which stated that all men 'are born and remain free and equal in rights' and that 'No person shall be molested for his opinions, even such as are religious, provided that the manifestation of these opinions does not disturb the public order established by the law.'[54]

When the question arose as to whether the declaration applied to women and to non-Catholics, the National Assembly ignored the gender issue but fiercely debated the religion question.[55] Three years earlier, when a royal commission proposed that King Louis XVI grant equal citizenship to protestants, the king agreed. When the same commission proposed that citizenship be granted to the Jews, the king refused.[56] In 1789, therefore, the National Assembly had to decide whether or not to overrule the king and grant French citizenship to the Jews. The Count of Clermont-Tonnerre told the members of the Assembly:

> The Jews should be denied everything as a nation, but granted everything as individuals. They must be citizens … It is intolerable that the Jews should become a separate political formation or class in the country. Every one of them must individually become a citizen; if they do not want to do this, they must inform us and we shall then be compelled to expel them. The existence of a nation within a nation is unacceptable in our country.[57]

Jews could only become French citizens as 'individuals,' not as a 'nation.' If they wanted citizenship, they would have to shed their sense of Jewish peoplehood or risk being expelled from France. In response to Count Clermont-Tonnerre, the Bishop of Nancy, Monsieur de la Fare, responded:

> The Jews certainly have grievances which require redress … It is necessary to grant them protection, security, liberty; but must one admit into the family a tribe that is a stranger to oneself, that constantly turns its eyes toward [another] homeland, that aspires to abandon the land that supports it.[58]

Abbe Jean Siffrein Maury, who represented the interests of the Catholic Church (and later went on to become Archbishop of Paris and a French Cardinal) added during the National Assembly debate:

> I observe first of all that the word Jew is not the name of a sect, but of a nation that has laws which it has always followed and still wishes to follow. Calling Jews citizens would be like saying that without letters of naturalization and without ceasing to be English and Danish, the English and Danish could become French … The Jews have passed through seventeen centuries without involving themselves with other nations … They should not be persecuted: they are men, they are our brothers; and a curse on whomever would speak of intolerance! No one can be disturbed for his religious opinions; you have recognized this, and from that moment on you have assured Jews the most extended protection. Let them be protected therefore as individuals and not as Frenchmen for they cannot be citizens.[59]

These statements reaffirmed that Jews would be protected as individuals, provided they disavowed the notion of a Jewish 'nation' and swore allegiance only to France. In January 1790, France extended citizenship to Sephardic Jews.[60] After the Constitution of France was adopted in September 1791,[61] French citizenship was finally extended to all Jews. Emancipation applied to 'individuals of the Jewish persuasion,' who were required to take a 'civic oath' to ensure that they would 'fulfill all the duties prescribed by the constitution.'[62] This way the French National Assembly made clear that to be a citizen of France, the Jew had to forgo his sense of Jewish peoplehood.

The same day that the National Assembly announced the emancipation of the Jews of France, Berr Isaac Berr, a merchant and banker who was one of the leaders in the effort to gain civil equality for the Jewish community, disseminated a letter to all the Jewish congregations in Alsace and Lorraine. He wrote:

> We are now, thanks to the Supreme Being, and to the sovereignty of the nation, not only Men and Citizens, but we are Frenchmen! … The name of active citizen, which we have just obtained, is, without a doubt, the most precious title a man can possess in a free empire; but this title alone is not sufficient; we should possess also the necessary qualifications to fulfill the duties annexed to it … I cannot too often repeat to you how absolutely necessary it is for us to divest ourselves entirely of that narrow spirit, of Corporation and Congregation, in all civil and political matters, not immediately connected with our spiritual laws; in these things we must absolutely appear simply as individuals, as Frenchmen, guided only by a true patriotism and by the general good of the nation.[63]

Concerned that the community might undermine its new emancipated status which Berr had worked so hard to attain, he urged French Jewry to shed any trappings of 'Corporation and Congregation.' He admonished the Jews, 'we must absolutely appear simply as individuals, as Frenchmen, guided only by a true patriotism and by the general good of the nation.' Community members complied, rapidly shedding their sense of Jewish peoplehood and ancient yearning for Zion. One Jew wrote to a Paris newspaper: 'France … is our Palestine, its mountains are our Zion, its rivers our Jordan. Let us drink the water of these sources; it is the water of liberty'.[64] In order to be accepted as full French citizens, many French Jews shed the Jewish nation part of their identity.

In 1806, two years after proclaiming himself Emperor of France, Napoleon Bonaparte called for an assembly of 80 Jewish 'notables' to confirm the Jews' loyalty to France. Count Molé explained the role of the Assembly of Jewish Notables in the instructions he delivered to the group:

> [O]ur most ardent wish is to be able to report to the Emperor, that, among individuals of the Jewish persuasion, he can reckon as many faithful subjects, determined to conform in everything to the laws and to the morality, which ought to regulate the conduct of all Frenchmen.[65]

Napoleon's instruction emphasised once again that citizenship had been afforded to Jews as 'individuals' (not as a people). The notables were asked to answer questions such as 'In the eyes of Jews, are Frenchmen considered as their brethren?' and 'Do Jews born in France, and treated by the laws as French citizens, consider France their country? Are they bound to defend it?' The

Notables responded by stressing that French Jews follow all French laws and if the Jewish 'religious code' were to ever conflict with the 'French code,' the Jews would cease to be governed by their religious law, 'since they must above all, acknowledge and obey the laws of the prince.'[66]

In response to Napoleon's specific questions, the Assembly of Jewish Notables said:

> In the eyes of Jews Frenchmen are their brethren, and are not strangers … And how could they consider them otherwise when they inhabit the same land, when they are ruled and protected by the same government, and by the same laws? … Yes, France is our country; all Frenchmen are our brethren, and this glorious title, by raising us in our own esteem, becomes a sure pledge that we shall never cease to be worthy of it.

> The love of the country is in the heart of Jews a sentiment so natural, so powerful, and so consonant to their religious opinions, that a French Jew considers himself in England as among strangers, although he may be among Jews; and the case is the same with English Jews in France.[67]

Under pressure from the French government, and in order to protect their new found equality and civil rights, Jews in France abandoned the nationalist and ethnic component of Judaism – the yearning of the Jewish people to return to their ancestral homeland – that had been an integral part of Jewish identity for centuries.

The Dutch National Assembly of Batavia conducted a similar debate on Jewish emancipation from August 22–31, 1796. The arguments made by the Citizen Representatives who participated in this Dutch Assembly were remarkably similar to the views expressed during the French National Assembly debates. Jacob Hendrik Floh proposed that 'Jewish inhabitants of the Netherlands, who have resided in the Republic for more than one year,' be granted Dutch citizenship on condition they first make the following declaration:

> I, so-and-so, declare that I do not belong to any other people, nor any part of a people, but solely and only to the people of the Netherlands, whose supreme power I acknowledge and respect, without expecting any other supreme rule on earth. And I promise to conduct myself, always and in everything, conforming to its principles, as a good and faithful citizen of the Netherlands.[68]

Statements made during the Dutch debate demonstrate that participants in the National Assembly believed Jews should be denied Dutch citizenship specifically because Jews viewed themselves as part of the Nation of Israel with a special connection to the Land of Israel. Citizen Representative Jan Bernd Bicker remarked:

> I have always pictured the Jewish nation, and have heard it defined thus, as a separate nation dispersed over the entire earth, which is not mixed with the Dutch people and which properly belongs in Palestine. Their national longing extends to Palestine, where they hope to return, led by a triumphant king. I have always heard it said that a sincere Jew considers himself in alliance with all the Jews spread over the entire earth, and that they expect a messiah who will restore them in Canaan, who will raise them again above all peoples as God's favored people, after so many centuries of oppression, and who will revenge them on their enemies … . If it is true (and according to my information, it admits of no

contradiction) that a sincere Jew considers himself a member of a separate nation that is dispersed over the entire earth, it means that as an individual he is a fellow member, fellow citizen, brother, part of a nation which finds itself in Asia, Europe, Africa and America. It also means that he cannot be at the same time a separate, individual member of a nation which calls itself the Dutch nation.[69]

The pressure put on Jews in the late 18th and 19th centuries to renounce the national and ethnic component of their Jewish identity in exchange for citizenship, prompted many Jews to shed their Zionism. As historian Leora Batnitzky notes in *How Judaism Became a Religion,* 'citizenship meant the subordination of any communal identity to the state and the relegation of religion to the sphere of private sentiment.'[70] This pattern was repeated in Germany, where, Batnitzky explains:

[E]mancipation meant that Jews were free as individuals, but that Jewishness and even a full embrace of Judaism could not be freely expressed within German culture. The notions of being German and citizenship in the modern state excluded the possibility of other types of collective belonging. [71]

The phenomenon of Jews disavowing a sense of Jewish peoplehood spread from Western Europe to America. Reform Judaism began in Germany in the mid-1800s. In 1885, the United States branch of the movement adopted the 'Pittsburgh Platform' which declared:

We consider ourselves no longer a nation but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the administration of the sons of Aaron, nor restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.[72]

In 1907, the Reform movement in the United States published a Passover Haggadah that removed the language 'Next year in Jerusalem' from the end of the Passover seder.[73]It was not until 1937 that the movement formally endorsed establishing a Jewish homeland in the Land of Israel.[74]

To be considered 'good citizens,' and not jeopardise their status, many emancipated Jews abandoned their Zionism and sought to distance themselves from Jews who continued to embrace the national and ethnic component of Jewish identity. In the late 18th and 19th centuries, for example, Western European Jews, sought to distance themselves from their Eastern European counterparts, referring to Eastern European Jews as unenlightened, uncouth and uneducated. As Batnitzky explains, 'German Jews [] depicted their eastern European brethren in negative terms because they sought to deemphasize any national aspect of the Jewish religion. Portraying eastern European Jews negatively suggested that German Jews had more in common with their fellow German citizens than with other Jews.'[75]

Eastern European Jews Maintain the Jewish love of Zion

In Eastern Europe, where the Jewish community did not experience the same pressure to assimilate, Jews retained the national and ethnic component of their Jewish identity. A Russian Jewish movement, *Hibat Zion,* arose in the late 1870s and early 1880s. Adherents of the movement – *Hovevei Zion* – Lovers of Zion – supported Jewish emigration from Russia to the

Land of Israel twenty years before Theodor Herzl established political Zionism.[76] As historian Rabbi Berel Wein explains,

> The true strength of the idea [behind *Hibat Zion*] and its public popularity rested on a spiritual and traditionally religious foundation. It was the Torah of the Jew, its commandments and customs that made Jerusalem and the Land of Israel central and unique to Jews in distant exiles. It was the mystery, the spirituality, the supernatural character of Jerusalem that drove Jews towards it.[77]

Indeed, Theodore Herzl's primary support came from Eastern Europe. Political Zionism resonated with Jews who had not shed the national and ethnic component of Judaism. As Wein notes:

> [A]t the heart of the Zionist movement, even in its inception and certainly throughout its history, were the plain, simple, visionary Jews of Eastern Europe. Herzl deprecatingly called them his "army of schnorrers (beggars)," but they, more than the assimilated, wealthy, sophisticated leaders of the Zionist movement, grasped the opportunity of Zionism. By combining this new political venture with their ancient belief in Zion and restoration, they eventually gave the Zionist movement its success.[78]

The political Zionist movement spearheaded by Herzl was, at its essence, an expression of the Jews' ancient, historic yearning and determination to return to the Jews' ancestral homeland in the Land of Israel – a yearning that had been an integral component of Jewish identity for centuries.

Denying the right of Jewish self-determination is akin to demanding Jews shed an integral component of their identity

The pressure imposed on Jews today to shed their support for the Jewish homeland is a contemporary form of the historic demand that Jews discard their sense of Jewish peoplehood and yearning to return to Zion – essential elements of the Jews' religious and ethnic identity. Judaism is unique. Adherents share both religious faith and membership in the Jewish nation (*Am Yisrael*). Demanding that Jews disavow any part of their Judaism as the price for admission into society is antisemitic.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition of antisemitism recognises that 'denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination' is a contemporary example of antisemitism.[79] Denying the right of Jewish national self-determination is antisemitic, not only because those who deny this right single out the Jews by supporting self-determination for all other groups but deny it only to the Jews. It is also antisemitic because it demands that Jews shed this key component of their identity as Jews.

To be a Zionist means to support the right of Jewish self-determination in the ancestral homeland of the Jews. Those who celebrate the fact that the Jews have returned once again to the Land of Israel, those who celebrate that the Jewish state of Israel exists, are Zionists. Those who oppose Zionism, deny Jews this right. Judea Pearl, the father of the slain journalist Daniel Pearl, coined a term for this. He calls it 'Zionophobia:' an irrational fear or hatred of a homeland for the Jewish people.[80]

Demanding that Jews closet or shed their Zionism to participate in progressive circles mirrors the demands put on Jews during the Enlightenment. To be considered a good citizen of today's world, Jews are told they must disavow this essential element of Judaism. In April 2018, for example, 53 student organisations at New York University (NYU) signed an agreement to boycott not only the State of Israel but to boycott all pro-Israel student groups on campus.[81] These student organisations resolved that they would not cosponsor events or engage in dialogue with any pro-Israel organisations. The message to pro-Israel students at NYU was clear. The organisations were in effect saying *'If you want to join our progressive community on campus, if you want to demonstrate with us on issues such as climate change, immigration, women's rights or LGBTQ rights, we'll accept you on one condition. Check your support for Israel at the door. You will only be fully accepted as a member of the university community when you shed that part of your Jewish identity.'*

Similarly, in November 2019, the University of Toronto Graduate Student Union (GSU) refused to support a campaign initiated by the university's Hillel to make kosher food more accessible on campus. A Student Union representative explained that the GSU Executive Committee would not support the campaign because 'the organisation hosting it (Hillel) is openly pro-Israel.'[82] In 2012, the University of Toronto GSU adopted a Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) resolution that precluded it from supporting pro-Israel organisations on campus. As a result, in 2019, Hillel leaders were told that support for the 'Kosher Forward' campaign would contradict the 'will of the [GSU] membership.'[83] In other words, the GSU could not support providing kosher food, because Hillel (the organisation representing Jewish students on campus) did not disavow Zionism, a key component of Jewish identity.

Such pressure is not reserved for the university campus. In Chicago in June 2017[84] and again in Washington, DC in June 2019,[85] Jewish participants in the 'Dyke March' in those cities were permitted to wear religious paraphernalia, such as a *kippah* or a *tallit*, but denied the right to carry items that reflect support for Israel, such as the Jewish pride flag – a rainbow flag with a Star of David at its centre. The Dyke March was designed to celebrate diversity and inclusion, but its leaders directed that Jewish participants hide or shed this essential component of their Jewish identity. No other group was charged such a high price for admission.

Vilifying, marginalising, demonising, boycotting and excluding Jews because they express support for Jewish self-determination in the Jews' ancestral homeland is antisemitic harassment. Discriminating against individuals who observe the Jewish Sabbath, wear a *kippah* or maintain a kosher diet is universally recognized as antisemitism. Similarly, demanding that a Jew abandon any part of his or her Jewish identity is antisemitic. One does not need to wear religious apparel or symbols to understand that targeting a person because he appears from his dress to be Jewish, is antisemitic. Similarly, one does not have to personally observe the Jewish Sabbath to recognise that discriminating against a person because they observe the Jewish Sabbath is antisemitic. So too, one does not have to be a Zionist to agree that harassing a Jew for expressing the Zionist part of his or her Jewish identity is antisemitic. To ensure that history does not repeat itself, we must acknowledge that isolating and dehumanising Zionists is akin to branding Jews with a virtual 'yellow Star of David.' Society must recognise and forcefully condemn this modern incarnation of an age-old hatred.

Notes

1 Gordis, *Israel*, 2, 31.

2 Kaplan, *Made in Heaven*, 201-5.

3 Eliach, *Judaism, Zionism and the Land of Israel*, 6.

4 Ibid., 5–6.

5 Ibid., 6–7.

6 Ibid., 7.

7 Somfalvi and Lukash, "Unsung Hero."

8 Samuel, "We Did Not Know."

9 Morgenstern, "Dispersion and the Longing for Zion," 312.

10 Wein, *Herald of Destiny*, 184, 201.

11 Morgenstern, "Dispersion and the Longing for Zion," 312.

12 Ibid., 313.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid., 315.

16 Ibid.

17 Wein, *Herald of Destiny*, 192.

18 Morgenstern, "Dispersion and the Longing for Zion," 318.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid., 320, 323.

21 Ibid., 320.

22 Ibid., 320.

23 Ibid., 321.

24 Ibid.

25 Wein, *Herald of Destiny*, 214.

26 Morgenstern, "Dispersion and the Longing for Zion," 324.

27 Ibid.

28 Wein, *Herald of Destiny*, 272–73.

29 Morgenstern, "Dispersion and the Longing for Zion," 325.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid., 326.

32 The Zohar is the primary text of Jewish mystical thought known as kabbalah.

33 Morgenstern, "Dispersion and the Longing for Zion," 328.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid., 329.

36 Ibid., 330.

37 Ibid., 331.

38 Ibid., 333.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid., 335.

42 The Karaites belong to a Jewish religious movement that views the Hebrew Bible as the sole source of religious doctrine and rejects the oral tradition (Talmud) as a source of Jewish law. Barnavi, *"The Karaites."*

43 Morgenstern, "Dispersion and the Longing for Zion," 335.

44 Ibid., 337–8.

45 Ibid., 338.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Morgenstern, "An Attempt to Hasten Redemption."

50 Morgenstern, "Dispersion and the Longing for Zion," 339.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid., 342–3.

54 "Declaration of the Rights of Man," Approved by the National Assembly of France, August 26, 1789. Accessed March

31, 2020. https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp.

55 Goldstein, *A Convenient Hatred*, 171.

56 Ibid.

57 Clermont-Tonnerre, "Speech on Religious Minorities and Questionable Professions," December 23, 1789. http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/284/.

58 Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World*, 124.

59 Abbé Maury, "Speech," December 23, 1789. https://revolution.chnm.org/items/show/565.

60 Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World*, 126.

61 Ibid., 127.

62 Ibid., 127–8.

63 Ibid., 128–9.

64 Barnavi, "Jewish Emancipation in Western Europe."

65 Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World*, 149-50.

66 Ibid., 152.

67 Ibid., 153–4.

68 Ibid., 136.

69 Ibid., 137–8.

70 Batnitzky, *How Judaism Became a Religion*, 33.

71 Ibid., 49.

72 Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World*, 521.

73 Hoffman and Arnow, *My People's Passover Haggadah*, 57.

74 Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World*, 575.

75 Batnitzky, *How Judaism Became a Religion*, 76.

76 Wein, *Triumph of Survival*, 223.

77 Ibid., 227.

78 Ibid., 238.

79 *Working Definition of Antisemitism*, International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism.

80 Pearl, "Inspiration and A Rallying Cry for Jewish Students and Graduates."

81 *See* NYU Students for Justice in Palestine, *50+ NYU Student Groups Endorse Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement for Palestinian Human Rights* (April 9, 2018), https://medium.com/@nyusjp/50-nyu-student-groups-endorse-boycott-divestment-and-sanctions-movement-for-palestinian-human-c27786ddc233.

82 *Kosher Food Drive Violates "Will of the Membership" Student Union Suggests*. November 17, 2019. https://www.bnaibrith.ca/kosher_food_drive_violates_will_of_the_membership_student_union_suggests.

83 *U of Toronto Graduate Student Union opposes campus kosher food as "pro-Israel."* November 18, 2019. https://www.timesofisrael.com/u-of-toronto-student-union-boycotts-kosher-food-on-campus-over-israel-divestment/.

84 Weiss, "I'm Glad the Dyke March Banned Jewish Stars."

85 "DC Dyke March Bans Jewish Pride Flags." *JTA*, June 6, 2019. https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/dc-dyke-march-bans-jewish-pride-flags.

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Can military service bridge social schisms: the case of Israel

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ABSTRACT

Can the military bridge social schisms? Conventional wisdom supports this assumption. However, it seems that, at best, the effect of military service on bridging social schisms and promoting social cohesion is limited. This article examines the extended effect of contact hypothesis in the military, both in practice and as an element capable of bringing about a change in veterans' thinking. It asks: are veterans who had diverse friendships during their service more likely to have diverse friendships in the future? If so, do they attribute their ability and willingness to include others within their ingroup to their military service? Based on findings from a study of Israeli college and university students, the article demonstrates that while indeed service friendships may be short lived, service alongside members of outgroups has certain longer-term effects and influences the social perception of veterans. Social messages can be both positive and negative and teach veterans the limits of redrawing social boundaries.

Viewing the military as a social experience is not unusual. Conventional wisdom sees the

military as a socialisation tool, able to bridge social gaps and contribute to social and national resilience; an important component in modern conflict.[1] Some Western countries are considering reinstating conscription with this idea in mind. Others utilise military service overtly when seeking social means. For example, Norway's attempt to bridge gender issues through joint dorms in its armed forces.[2] However, it seems that, at best, the effect of military service on bridging social schisms and promoting social cohesion is limited. After discharge, veterans return to their pervious preconceptions of social groups.[3] It is also possible that not only is the military unable to heal social rifts, but that at times it even exacerbates them.[4]

Why then do societies continue to attempt to utilise military service for social ends? Can it be that despite evidence to the contrary, societies prefer to believe the military is able to serve as a long-term socialising agent? In other words, is the theory so appealing, that it lives on despite evidence to the contrary?

Conversely, perhaps some form of extended social effect does exist concerning veterans, and this may justify the idea that the military can serve as a 'school for the nation'? If this is so, to what extent?

The following article seeks to test this idea through the possibility of long-term social effects of service. It asks: are veterans who had diverse friendships during their service more likely to have diverse friendships in the future? If so, do they attribute their ability and willingness to include others within their ingroup to their military service? This would indicate an extended social impact on veterans and at least a willingness to see an integrated collective, based on military service; a factor contributing to social cohesion and resilience. If there is some form of extended effect, this can contribute to the understanding of the persistence of the theory of the military as a social tool. While an extended effect will not explain the theory in its entirety or prove it, it can contribute to our understanding of the continued use of the military as a 'school for the nation' and what military service can and cannot do socially.

After briefly discussing contact hypothesis and social identity in the context of military service and conscription, the article will present the case study of Israel, including findings from a study of Israeli undergraduate students. The findings demonstrate that while service friendships may not extend past service, service alongside members of outgroups has certain longer-term effects and influences the social perception of veterans. These effects are complex and have numerous implications. Veterans learn to live with members of outgroups, but this experience teaches a range of social lessons; not all of which are positive.

Military service as a social laboratory

In the field of civil-military relations and military psychology, research asks how can the military as an organisation (or units within it) cause members to perform well as a group, even die for each other, despite differences.[5] Where social psychologists discuss why people choose to belong to a group or choose to stay within it, military-related research focuses on how to encourage members to feel a deep and meaningful connection to a collective they didn't necessarily choose. One of the ways to do this is through socialisation and bridging social rifts and therefore civil-military relations has focused on contact hypothesis as the accepted tool in achieving this.

According to this perception, the military plays an active role in trying to form the social identity soldiers bring with them from civilian life. It attempts to cause soldiers to adopt an alternate or substantiating interpretation of their pre-service social identity in order to feel part of

the group (military unit).[6] As part of this process, the military system wants its soldiers to accept as equals members of social groups and sectors they did not view as belonging to their ingroup before enlistment.[7] To change their original conception of what 'we' means.[8] For the military organisation, this is important internally (in order to foster unit cohesion and loyalty) and allows it to receive legitimisation from society (by being seen not only as a wielder of violence but a promoter of positive values).

Allport[9] demonstrated that when individuals from different social groups come into contact, there is a genuine possibility for social acceptance. This process is not necessarily irreversible and is sometimes painfully slow, but it does and can happen.[10] Change occurs, according to Allport, when members of the majority group view members of the minority as equals and notes that 'contact must reach below the surface in order to be effective in altering prejudice'.[11] In this respect, Allport supports the idea that having a common goal that brings people together is significant and encourages them to cooperate.[12] When this happens, true contact occurs and undermines prejudice.[13] These ideas are a prism through which to view the military as a tool for socialisation.

Further to Allport's ideas, contact hypothesis was used in connection with the US military to advance two more agendas: accepting gays openly into the military (specifically abolishing 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' – DADT) and the integration of women in the ranks. MacCoun et. al. explain that contact hypothesis has been proven to a large extent in armed forces and that 'research indicates that mere group membership–e.g. randomly assigning individuals to ad-hoc groups–is sufficient to create an ingroup bias'.[14] In other words, a military unit is favourably predisposed towards its members (those considered part of the group), more than towards members of other units, even if its members are of heterogeneous socio-ethnic or racial backgrounds.

The integration of women in the military has raised the issue of professionalism as a prerequisite for task cohesion: a unit is cohesive if its members perceive each other as military professionals.[15] In all of these cases, research does not include the effect of contact hypothesis on feelings towards all members of a minority, but on the feelings towards the members of the specific military unit at hand. It also does not ask what happens to these feelings after discharge. Obviously, individuals do not always identify with the wish to include Others in their ingroup[16]; particularly in a conscript-based force where soldiers do not choose to enlist.

The current discussion concerning contact hypothesis in the military and its ability or inability to bridge social rifts does not address the effect of military service on social identity. This is puzzling. If the military can serve as a 'school for the nation', it serves to follow that this role includes impact on social identity after the return to civilian society. Consequently, scholarship should focus on veterans. Once they return to civilian life, do veterans continue to adhere by the new social boundaries set by service, or do they return to their original perception of these boundaries? At the same time, do they *think* that in practice they are upholding the new boundaries introduced to them during service, regardless of what is happening in practice? This would indicate that they are aware of the social messages the military instilled in them and internalised them, even if in practice they do not always adhere to them. These questions can be answered in part by using the concept of social perceptions.

The idea that the perceptions are an important variable in actual behaviour towards outgroups has been examined in the context of social psychology.[17] It seems that even imagining positive interaction with members of minorities is enough to influence social perceptions: if we believe

interaction with a minority member will be favourable, this belief will influence the way we relate to members of that minority in reality. While these studies deal only with civilians, their findings might indicate that positive interaction with minority members during military service ('I served with someone gay in the army and she was a great person') will influence future interactions and cause majority members to respond positively towards minority members.[18]

Testing this idea through a conscription-based military allows for the examination of social attitudes of majority and minority groups that did not choose to serve together. At the same time, using a military that considers itself a social tool,[19] actively attempting to influence social boundaries, is also important in this context. Therefore using the Israeli example is helpful when exploring questions regarding contact hypothesis and the military's effect on veterans. It also enables an examination of a theory perceived to be true by large segments of the population, regardless of proof that it does not achieve what it sets out to do.

Veterans, belief in contact hypothesis and the Israel defence forces (IDF)

The IDF was constructed as a people's army and still sees itself as such. This was due to the social makeup of Israel at its establishment when it grew from a population of approximately 800,000 in 1948 to over 1 million in 1949 and to over 2 million in 1958.[20] Absorbing immigrants from many different countries over such a short time created social schisms the military was supposed to ease.

Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion thought that conscription would be the last opportunity for young Israelis from all walks of life to meet on equal ground. Military service has the ability to provide a meaningful experience that causes them to come to know each other and bridge social schisms. While he did not call it this, clearly Ben-Gurion was a firm believer in contact hypothesis. In his mind, the IDF would be a true 'school for the nation', not only in the sense of education or indoctrination per-se, but first and foremost as an element capable of changing social conceptions and building a shared, collective, social identity.

The IDF itself seems to still firmly believe that bridging social rifts, as well as other social missions, are part of its mandate.[21] It would like its members to see themselves as part of one collective, and, as a result, behave according to the code of conduct becoming an IDF soldier. Since the IDF sees itself as a people's army, soldiers are supposed to treat each other as members of the same collective.[22] It is worth noting that many Israelis feel a connection to a single collective and feel social gaps *should* be bridged[23] and that an armed force that attempts to do this is doing society a service.[24]

One of the more heated debates in Israeli society beginning at the end of the 20th century (and continuing into the 21st) is whether or not it is time for the IDF to become an all-volunteer force (AVF) and abandon conscription. Israelis are apprehensive of a volunteer-based military. The reasons for this are many. The greatest fear is that – should conscription be abolished – the IDF will not have enough recruits to sustain it. Likewise, even if there would be enough volunteers for service, conventional wisdom doubts that the IDF will be able get the quality manpower it now has. Should conscription be abolished, the best and the brightest will not consider the option of service, and manpower quality will diminish accordingly, with only the poorer and less educated social strata enlisting.[25] Further to this, if the stronger segments of society will not enlist and the IDF will no longer fill a social role, as it does now, social gaps will be exacerbated with no possibility for change. Clearly this last thought stems from the belief that the IDF fulfils

an important social role and that service within it allows for social mobility,[26] among other things.

While not all sectors in Israeli society believe the IDF should engage in nation-building tasks, such as education, most still do. Israeli society still expects the IDF to fill the lacuna left by the state in dealing with disadvantaged youth and new immigrants. It also, to a large extent, still expects the IDF to serve as a social melting pot and heal its social rifts.[27] This feeling is echoed by a substantial portion of the individuals themselves. Many conscripts believe they will leave its ranks as improved versions of themselves: physically, better prepared for the job market, and also more socially integrated.[28]

Israelis find it difficult to imagine their military as an all-volunteer force. It is still, in their eyes, an important part of Israeli society and plays a central role in the shaping of a collective identity, even if much research points to the contrary. As a result, they perceive military service through a social prism – again indicating that belief in the effects of military service results in behaviour even if there is little practical basis for this belief.[29] Despite this, very little research has been done on the long-term effects of military service in Israel (Dar and Kimhi, 2001; Wald and Feinstein, 2010). As stated above, the present study examines the willingness of veterans to replicate their social experience in the military and the extent to which they believe this was influenced by their service.

Methodology

Since it is impossible to encompass all of Israel's social schisms in a single research project, this project accepts Horowitz and Lissak's classic description of Israel's social gaps as a starting point. Of the social schisms Horowitz and Lissak detected, this study focused on the secular-religious gap.[30] Israeli society includes a range of religious categories (for Jews), ranging from ultra-orthodox (*Haredi*) to secular (*Hiloni*), with many nuances in-between. The main categories usually presented are ultra-orthodox, religious (*dati*), traditional (*mesorati*),[31] and secular. The actual division by percentages is a topic for extensive discussion.[32] The secular-religious social division is seen a problematic one in Israel, and it is widely believed that it is only deepening. This schism has been discussed at length in many studies.[33]

Due to the nature of religious observance in Orthodox Judaism (the majority religion in Israel) – encompassing all aspects of life – it has the potential to complicate any kind of interaction between religious and secular individuals (the opposites ends of the continuum). Religious individuals have dietary and clothing restrictions. They are limited in their options for recreational activities on the Sabbath, as well as general behaviour. More stringent observant individuals are also limited in their interaction with the opposite sex, in their dress code and so on. Even just going out together for coffee or drinks or having a joint study group at a non-observant home, requires both sides to accommodate each other. Joint living conditions introduce an entire new set of problems to be grappled with. Romantic relationships and marriages across the secular-religious divide (which do exist) are even more complicated in this respect. In general, education and youth groups are separate and due to the differences in life-style and beliefs, secular and religious Israelis do not have many opportunities to meet each other while growing up.

Since this is a central social rift which is also influenced by military service, it is a good case study. Most of Israel's Religious-Zionist sector serve in the IDF, especially men. Women, who do not serve in the IDF, predominantly serve in national service. On the other hand, most

members of the ultra-orthodox (*haredi*) sector, do not serve, but are exempted on religious grounds. This generates much tension within Israeli society as it is deemed unfair that some religious sectors do not contribute at all towards national security, whereas all secular Israelis must serve and exemptions on grounds of conscientious objection are difficult to obtain. Most religious women are also exempt from military service, although the majority serve in national service instead.[34] At the same time, since some religious sectors do serve, for many Israelis (religious and secular), military service is the first real opportunity to meet members of other sectors.

According to Israel's Council for Higher Education (2013), almost 50% of Israelis in an average age cohort begin academic studies every given year in universities and colleges. This includes Israelis who served in the IDF as well as those who served in national service or did no service at all, religious and secular, Jews and members of non-Jewish minorities. During their academic studies, Israeli students are again in a position where they are in contact with others who are not part of their social group. While not together 24 hours a day, as they were during their military service,[35] they study together and forge new friendships with people who are not part of their original social group. Examining their current friendships, when they are in a somewhat similar situation, enables us to observe the effects of service on veterans and non-veterans, and can test if they are willing to replicate their past experiences when faced with a similar situation. Additionally, it is possible to detect differences and similarities between veterans and non-veterans regarding general social attitudes.[36] For these reasons, the current project used academic institutions as a hub and focused on second and third year undergraduate students. To the best of my knowledge, no such study has been attempted before.

Most Israeli undergraduate studies are three-year programmes. After their first year, students have usually adapted to their environment, made friendships, know which courses they are taking and with whom. They have established study groups, and the process of making new friends has plateaued. This is therefore a good time to test their current friendships, openness towards making friends from outgroups, and general attitudes towards outgroup members.

It is important to note that since the IDF is a conscription-based military and since military assignments are decided by and large the system,[37] soldiers are forced to form friendships they might not have made if given a choice. Previous studies such as Rosman-Stollman, 2014) indicate that many soldiers entering the IDF suffer various forms of culture shock, regardless of their background. In this respect, it is safe to assume that even more introverted individuals resort to forming uncharacteristic friendships while in uniform. While the same cannot be said as uniformly for national service, where individuals usually serve with ingroup members to a great extent, they are still put in contact with outgroup members and must forge relationships as part of their jobs. If they choose to refrain from close relationships and friendships, this would be a conscious decision.

The project presented here consisted of a three-part survey.[38] The first section focused on service and heterogeneous friendships during service (if the respondent served), and on the extent these friendships lasted until the present day (most respondents were 2–5 years post-service). The second section then asked about current diverse friendships during undergraduate studies. The third section asked more general questions regarding willingness to include outgroup members within the respondents' ingroup: would you be willing to rent an apartment with someone who was not a member of your ingroup religiously (for example, secular for religious respondents or religious for secular respondents)? Would you be willing to be involved romantically with a member of a religious outgroup? Lastly, respondents were asked about their

perception of the impact of their service (or lack of service) on their un/willingness to rent an apartment or be in a relationship with a member of outgroups: did their service (military/national) or lack thereof have an effect on them in this respect?[39] Questionnaires were in Hebrew.

Hypotheses were:

H_1 = Religiously diverse friendships during service (military or national) predict religiously diverse friendships during undergraduate studies.

H_2 = Officership predicts more religiously diverse friendships than standing troops (during service and after it).

H_3 = Combat postings predict more religiously diverse friendships than non-combat postings (during service and after it).

H_4 = Respondents with religiously diverse friendships, attribute these to their service experiences.

Findings

Respondents (N = 777) were male and female 2nd and 3rd year undergraduate students from 4 universities and 4 colleges in Israel (47% university students, 53% college students, see Appendix, Figure 1). Other than choosing campuses so as to represent universities and colleges geographically, the sample was random. Of the respondents, 82% served in the IDF, 7% served in national service (one to two years), and 11% did no service.[40] 70.6% completed their service 2–5 years previously and 82.7% were between the ages of 23–27. Most were native-born Israelis (87.9%), unmarried (91.5%), and Jewish (89.4%) (see Appendix A, Figures 2–7). The sample included more women (63%) than men (37%). These numbers roughly match the corresponding percentages in general Israeli society. Although in general society the percentage of veterans, women and of Jews is somewhat lower.

As seen in Table 1, findings indicate that religiously diverse friendships during service (military or national), predict current religiously diverse friendships (p = 0.462).[41] In other words, respondents who befriended members of outgroups during service (secular respondents who befriended religious individuals and vise-versa), were more likely to have religiously heterogeneous friends during their undergraduate studies. They were also open to the idea of renting an apartment together (p = 0.227), and to be in a heterogeneous romantic relationship (p = 0.218). Furthermore, respondents who had diverse friendships during service were more convinced of the impact their service had on them in this respect (p = 0.368); meaning that there is significant (although not strong) correlation between their service friendships and their belief that service impacted their willingness to accept outgroups members as part of the collective and proving H_1 and H_4.
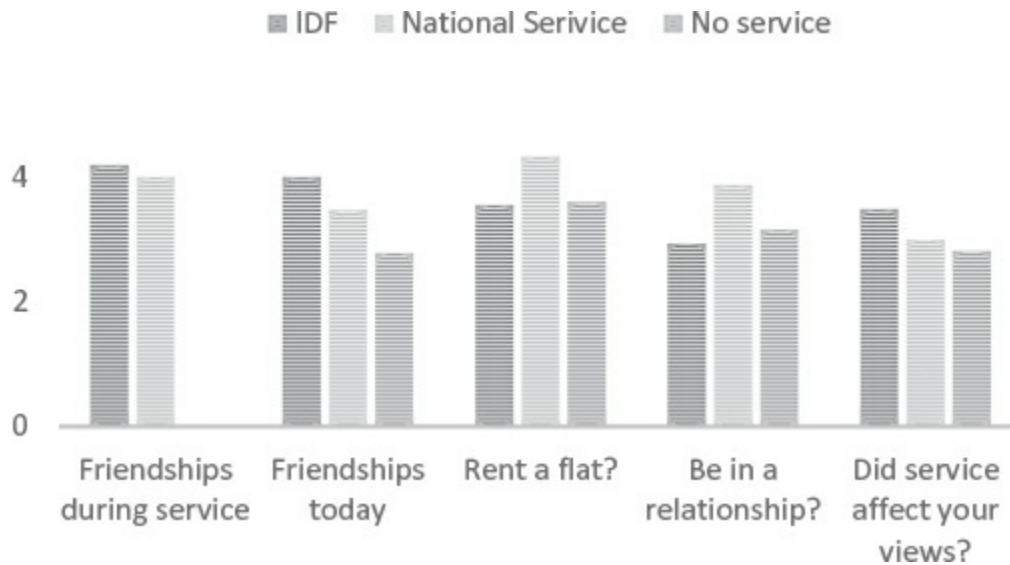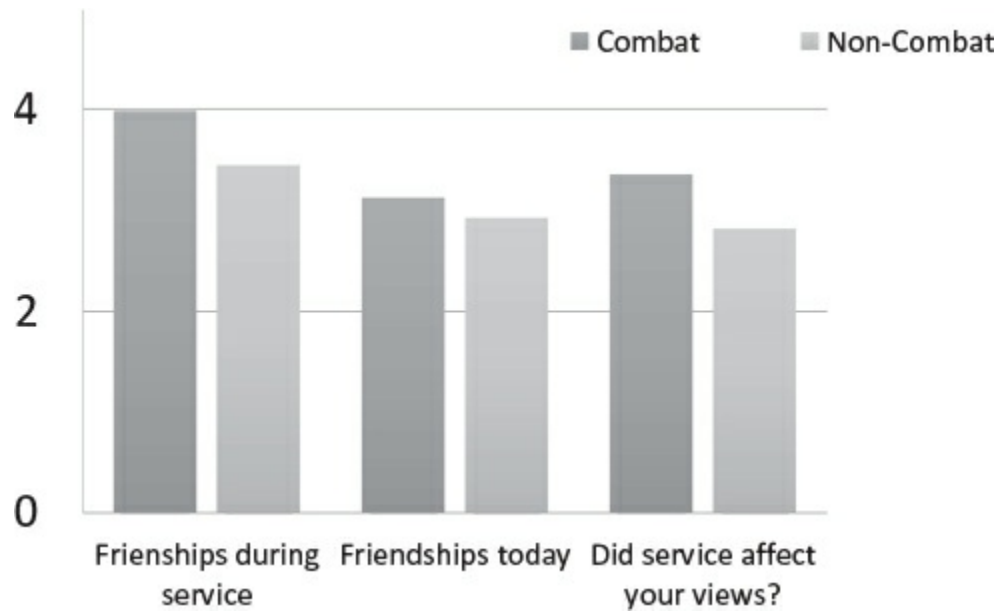
Figure 1. Comparison of means for selected variables: service impact on religiously diverse friendships and general attitudes.

[a]Respondents who did no service were instructed to skip the section containing this question, as questions concerning service were irrelevant.* Respondents were asked to rank the volume of diverse friendships on a Likart scale of 1–5.** Respondents were asked to rank their willingness to share an apartment or be in a romantic relationship with religiously diverse individuals (including an example to clarify the question) using a Likart scale of 1–6 (t-tests were used to assess significance. All results presented were significant at $p < .05$)
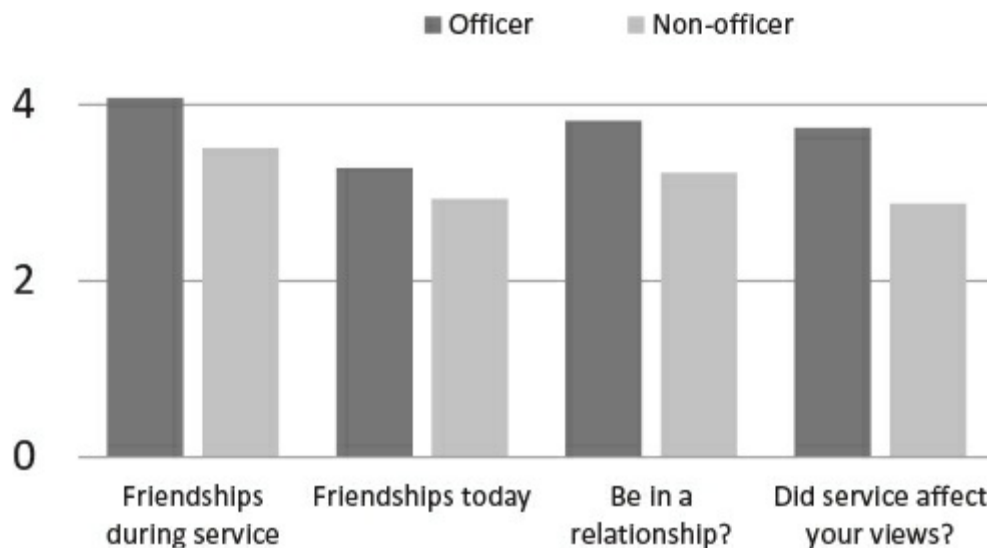
Figure 2. Comparison of means for selected variables – Officership impact on religiously diverse friendships and general attitudes.

Figure 3. Comparison of means for selected variables – combat service impact on religiously diverse friendships and general attitudes.

Table 1. Inter correlations (Pearson's r) – service friendships' effect on current friendships and general attitudes.

	1	2	3	4
1. Heterogeneous current friendships				
2. Willing to rent a flat?	.227**			
3. Willing to be in a relationship?	.292**	.512**		
4. Feel service influenced your attitude?	.165**	.129**	.142**	
5. Heterogeneous service friendships	.462**	.227**	.218**	.368**

*p <.05; **p < .01; *** p < .001.

These findings demonstrate that having previous social experiences at the very least predispose veterans towards recreating the same social experience post-service.

However, while these results seem to uphold contact hypothesis, additional results bring other points into focus. When breaking down results by service venue, it seems that the difference between military and national service is minimal. As seen in Figure 1, the main difference between veterans and national service graduates is in their willingness to broaden current friendships: those who served in national service tend to have fewer diverse friendships during their undergraduate studies than veterans, but would agree to diverse flatmates and relationships. Those who did not serve at all, made fewer diverse friendships than national service graduates as well as veterans, but are also more open to these options. Both these findings make sense when noting that most national service graduates are religious women and that most of those who did not serve are minority members (non-Jews). Since they are studying with majority-group members, their possibilities for friendships from their ingroup and more limited, and therefore it

is more feasible their friendships will agree to include outgroup members.

This explanation fits in well with previsions studies indicating that when the distinctive identity is strong and members originate from a more segregated environment, minorities are more open to integration with majority members.[42] In other words, when minority members feel their distinctive identity is under attack, they are less open to the effects of contact hypothesis, and vise versa. In this case, it may be that after their positive service experience, where their distinctive identity was accepted, minority members who served in national service are more willing to expand their social boundaries.

An unexpected finding indicates that those who served in national service are more open to the option of religiously diverse flat-mates. This is surprising, again due to the fact that most of those who serve in national service in Israel are religious women who did not serve in the IDF due to religious restrictions. This finding will be examined further in the follow-up research to the present study. However it is possible to speculate that these young women – who did not live 24 hours a day with religiously diverse friends[43] – had positive friendship experiences during their service, have a strong distinctive identity[44]and may think that it is possible to broaden their social boundaries even further, while those who served in the IDF and experienced first-hand what living in a religiously diverse atmosphere continuously implies, may be more cautious about repeating the experience.

These findings indicate that the critics of the military as a school for the nation make some valid points. Veterans are not eager to recreate all aspects of their outgroup service friendships. They have learned which boundaries they are willing to redraw and which they do not feel are possible to cross. The social lessons learned during service taught them that joint living conditions entail many problems, and now their unwillingness to do so is based on experience. However, despite the fact that it seems that – at least subconsciously – they are aware of this, the majority are still willing to attempt joint living conditions, despite difficulties.

In addition, veterans tend to attribute their attitudes to service, with not much of a difference between those who served in the military and those who served in national service. In other words, it seems that veterans indeed believe in contact hypothesis; even if in practice, those who did not serve had higher rates of willingness to engage with outgroup members.[45]

Figure 4. Comparison of means for selected variables – service in a command position service impact on religiously diverse friendships and general attitudes.

Other intriguing findings concerned officership and combat service (Figures 2–4). H2 was based on the assumption that since officers in the IDF rise through the ranks and are selected for their skills and aptitude, it serves to follow that officers would be more open to the effects of military socialisation and more ready to internalise the values the IDF tries to instil in them. Therefore, since the IDF actively tries to promote social integration, officers would conform and respond actively to these messages.

Similarly, combat soldiers are more likely to serve with religiously diverse cohorts than other postings. Due to the large volume of religious soldiers in combat postings,[46] it is very likely that combat soldiers (both religious and non-religious) will serve with outgroup members and therefore H3 is based on the assumption they would have more opportunities to develop heterogeneous relationships.

Indeed, findings indicate that officers and combat soldiers tend to have more religiously diverse friendships during service as well as after it, and also attribute their change in perception of outgroup members to service. Officers were more open to the possibility of religiously diverse partners in a relationship than standing troops.[47] While H_2 and H_3 posited that there would be marked differences between these groups, in practice this was not as pronounced as expected. The most noticeable difference was in belief in contact hypothesis: officers and combat soldiers tend to believe in the effect of contact hypothesis more than standing troops and non-combat soldiers. Further research is needed in order to understand this finding, and perhaps a better way to understand them in-depth will be to utilise qualitative methods. However, holding a command position had more of an effect on perceptions and practices. Respondents who held any sort of command position (officers as well as NCOs), had more diverse friendships both during service and during academic studies, and were more open to shared living conditions than standing troops with no command position. They also were more likely to attribute their attitude towards outgroups to their service. This trend may be due to the fact that those who serve in command positions in general (not only officers) are more likely to internalise values and mores that the military system tries to instil in its members. Since, like officers, NCOs rise through the ranks, command courses are more diverse in their make-up than officer courses, this might also contribute to understanding this finding.

Most respondents did not tend to keep up friendships forged during service. When asked about their service friendships, most did not maintain these friendships currently (2–5 years post service, 26.4% maintained no contact, 22.4% maintained very little contact, 22.6% maintained some contact). Maintaining service friendships did not predict willingness to forge new diverse friendships and no correlation was found between the two variables. This seems to mean that the quality of service friendships does not impact future diverse friendship. The predictor of future diverse friendships is merely the existence of such friendships during service, not the upkeep of these friendships after service. This implies that in order to understand the effect of service friendships on social perceptions, more research is needed into the manner in which veterans experienced diverse service friendships: in what way were these friendships seen as meaningful? How do veterans interpret them in retrospect and see them as affecting perceptions of outgroups?

Perhaps surprisingly, gender, income and place of residence did not influence any of the variables. No substantial difference was detected between native-born Israelis and immigrants. No correlation was detected between these variables and service/post service friendships and more general attitudes.

Discussion: believing in collective identity

Clearly the picture painted by these findings is complex. Findings indicate that as far as the secular-religious gap in Israel is concerned, military service can influence the long-term acceptance of outgroup members by the majority group. Employing contact hypothesis in the military can cause veterans to replicate diverse friendships after service, in the civilian sphere. But the military is not a melting pot and does not cause veterans to become completely open to redrawing social boundaries. Service demonstrates that differences pose challenges to shared living conditions (both as flat-mates and maintaining a personal relationship). It teaches conscripts that life together is complicated. However, this understanding does not prevent diverse friendships. It does cause veterans to understand the limits of such friendships, but does not create alienation. Far from giving clear-cut answers, the present study illustrates that veterans learn multifaceted social lessons, but nevertheless, service does not discourage them from attempting to reach again beyond the divide. At the same time, it seems that the key to this change is not contact hypothesis itself, but the way veterans interpret it and internalise it. They do not necessarily redraw social boundaries, but rather *think that they should* broaden these boundaries due to their joint service. This seems to indicate that the real power of contact hypothesis in the military lies where a given military is able to instil in its members the belief that the theory is valid. It may be this belief that plays a central role in encouraging individuals to enlist. Believing that military service will change and educate them, cause them to have a better understanding of the society they live in, and will also help them achieve more in the future.

This finding seems clearer than others: veterans seem convinced that their service influences their social perspectives and identity. Even if they are not always open to redrawing social boundaries completely, they feel their military service changed them. This point seems most important when examining contact hypothesis, since the present findings indicate that belief in contact hypothesis may be pivotal in the willingness to construct future diverse friendships and replicate service experiences with outgroup members. This is also an optimistic finding. If many Israelis are apprehensive regarding the secular-religious gap, it seems that veterans might be able to serve as a bridge between social groups. This may also explain the difference between the present findings and those cited at the beginning of this article. It is possible that the key to social change via veterans can only happen if the veterans *want* to believe that their service changed their social identity and are willing to act accordingly in the civilian sphere. Without this component, military service may not be as potent a social tool.

An additional conclusion from the present findings concerns national service in Israel. Social effects of national service may not differ that greatly from those of military service. This implies that if one of the objectives of a given society is to use military service as a 'school for the nation', national service may be equally effective, although further research on this topic is certainly needed. In Israel, this point holds immense social potential. Particularly when considering other social schisms such as Jews and non-Jews in Israel.

These conclusions also have broader implications, on both a practical and a theoretical level. On a practical level, countries considering reinstating a form of conscription for social reasons,

should be asking how veterans – who are products of such conscription – view their service. Do they view it as a social experience, and if so – a positive one? It seems that this question is pivotal in understanding the possible social effects of conscription. If past veterans have positive views of their service, particularly from a social perspective, this may predict how successful this aspect of conscription might be. Naturally, mapping and understanding country-specific social schisms in this context is vital. If the Israeli case can be used as a departure point for this discussion, it may also indicate that the idea that conscription promotes social cohesion holds merit. France, Germany and Sweden have all begun to reconsider conscription, not only for reasons of security, but also as a social tool. The Israeli example highlights that this might be a plausible effect.

On a theoretical level, it seems that social theories do not need to be proven in order to work. In order to have some sort of impact, they need only to make sense on some level (as contact hypothesis does) and to be implemented within a framework that encourages individuals to adopt them as true. Belief is stronger than the effectiveness of the theory itself, and can motivate individuals to actual activity.

Notes

1 Coaffee and Wood, "Security is coming home."

2 Rones, "Gender-Mixed Army Dorms."

3 Krebs, "A School for The Nation?"

4 Cohen, Stuart, *Israel and Its Army*; and Cohen, "Religion as Nation-Binder". For a layman's perspective see an op-ed by an Israeli veteran: Hadad, "In Civilian Life."

5 For example, Whitehouse, McQuinn, Buhrmester, and Swann, "Brothers in arms."

6 Guimond, "Group socialization and prejudice."

7 Krebs, "A School for the Nation"; and Matthews, *Headstrong*.

8 Tajfel, "Introduction."

9 Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*.

10 For a comprehensive explanation of Allport's thesis, see: Krebs, "A School for the Nation"; Everett and Onu, "Intergroup Contact Theory," 17. For studies proving contact hypothesis clinically, see, for example: Pettigrew and Tropp. 'A Meta-Analytic Test," 751; and Landis, Hope, and Day, *Training for Desegregation*.

11 Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*, 264.

12 While the scope of this article does not allow for an examination of unit cohesion, it is worth noting that this topic is widely researched. One aspect of this field is the dispute between social cohesion (where personal friendships are seen as important to the cohesion of a unit) and task cohesion (where the importance of the completing a joint goal well is considered most important to the cohesion of a unit). While this is certainly not the topic of the present article, it is worth noting that both positions agree that soldiers are taught and believe that social cohesion is important and that soldiers themselves *believe* their social cohesion to be central, even if this is not true in practice. See: MacCoun et. al., "What is Known"; MacCoun et. al., "Does Social Cohesion"; MacCaoun and Hix, "Unit Cohesion"; Wong et. al., *Why they fight*; and Wong, "Combat Motivation."

13 Allport, *The Nature*, 264–67. Allport does not discuss the way minority groups relate to the majority group, but some of his observations might hold true in this case as well. Subsequent studies have examined this aspect. See for example: Guimond, "Group Socialization."

14 MacCoun et. al., "What is Known," 300.

15 King, "The Female Soldier"; MacKenzie, *Beyond the Band*, 134–54. Contact hypothesis is not without critics; some claiming that it can even produce the opposite effect. See for example: Dixon and Tredoux, "Beyond the optimal," 697.

16 As demonstrated in many recent works such as Belkin's work on masculinity in the military (Belkin), *Bring Me Men;* and Basham's work on gender and race (Basham), *War, Identity and the Liberal State*.

17 Turner et. al., "A Test of the Extended Intergroup Contact Hypothesis"; and Crisp and Turner, "Can Imagined Interactions Produce Positive Perceptions?"

18 The idea of "perceived cohesion" has been examined in the past by Bollen and Hoyle. While not exactly the same context or comparable social groups, the idea is – at its root – similar. See: Bollen and Hoyle, "Perceived Cohesion."

19 Rivnai Bahir and Avidar, "Alternative vs. Canonical."

20 Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, *Israeli's Population*.

21 Much has been written on this point. See for example: Nevo and Shor, *The Contract*; Harel, *Teda Kol Em*; and Hadad, "In Civilian Life."

22 This does not mean that in practice all soldiers act in such a way, only that this is what the military system expects.

23 Most Jewish Israelis see themselves as part of a single national (and sometimes religious) collective. See: Yuchtman-Yaar, "Continuity and Change"; and from another vantage point: Sandler and Rynhold, 2007.

24 Azulai and Kotick, "Integrating Unique Social Group"; Lebel and Orkibi, "'The New Sensitivity'."

25 See for example: Gordon, "In Praise"; Nevo and Shor, *The Contract*; and Stern, *Navigations*. These perceptions do not look at other western examples, such as the US military, as comparable.

26 Even if this belief is not substantiated by supportive evidence. See for example, Harel, 2013, chapters 3 and 5.

27 Harel, *Teda Kol Em.*

28 Avidar, *Motivatzyia Le-Giyus.*

29 It can be argued that regardless of the ability or inability of the IDF to bridge social schisms, it fulfils an important social role merely in its existence. Its social roles are important in and of themselves, and it doesn't really matter whether or not military service has long-term social effects. While it is important to consider, the present article does not address this thought.

30 With hope that in the future other schisms will be examined.

31 Not strictly observing religious commandments, but picking and choosing which religious elements to adopt.

32 Arian and Keissar-Sugarmen, *A Portrait of Israeli Jews.*

33 For some examples, see Hermann et al., *The National Religious Sector*; Arian and Keissar-Sugarmen, *A Portrait of Israeli Jews*; Yadgar and Liebman, "Beyond the Religious-secular Dichotomy"; A Cohen, "An Old-New Schism."

34 During the past decade, there has been a noticeable increase in Religious Zionist women who serve in the IDF, but they are still not the majority.

35 Provided their service venue required them to live on base.

36 Future projects should address the issue of reserve service and its possibility to affect society. Sadly, this is beyond the scope of the present article.

37 While personal preferences for military postings are given consideration, the final word is the IDF's and many individuals find themselves in postings not to their liking.

38 The project itself is a two-phased one. The second phase will begin in 2017 and be based on the findings of the phase presented here.

39 A demographic section was also included in order to gauge gender, age, religious classification and so on.

40 These included both Jews and members of other religions.

41 Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).

42 It is worth noting that other studies indicate that when in a majority-dominated environment, minorities tend to have fewer outgroup friendships (such as: Feddes, Noack and Rutland, "Direct and Extended"; Barlow, "The Wallpaper Effect") and this issue is far from clear in current research. I hope that the next stage of this project might shed more light on the topic.

43 During national service – as opposed to military service – individuals live in their own living quarters with other national service members. This means the religious women serving together live together, and not with members of outgroups. The idea being that national service does not detach members from their social context and is a more "protected" environment.

44 Bisin et. al., *Bend it like Beckham*.

45 This finding is problematic in many ways. Since the majority of Jewish Israelis serve in some venue, and the majority of those who do no service are non-Jewish Israelis/Palestinians who hold Israeli citizenship, it is difficult to compare these groups. Specifically since non-Jewish respondents may have understood the questionnaire differently than Jewish respondents. Qualitative research is needed in order to understand these findings better.

46 Rosman-Stollman, *For God*.

47 No significance was found in the willingness to share an apartment or be romantically involved with outgroup members in the results focusing on combat vs. non-combat soldiers.

Disclosure statement

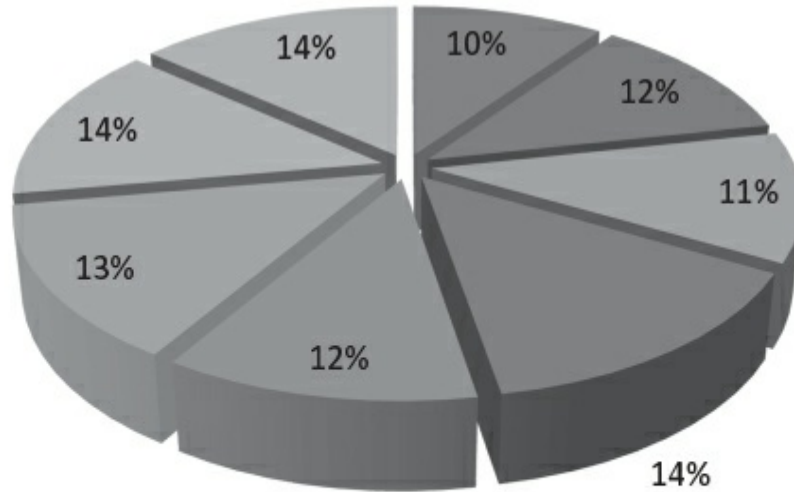No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).
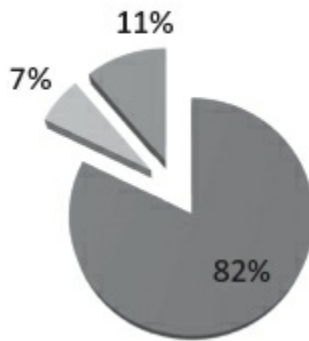
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Appendix

Legend:
- Bar Ilan
- Haifa
- Hebrew University
- Ben Gurion
- College of Management
- Sapir
- Emek Yezreel
- IDC

Figure 1. Sample structure.

Legend: Military service, National Service, No service

Figure 2. Distribution of service.

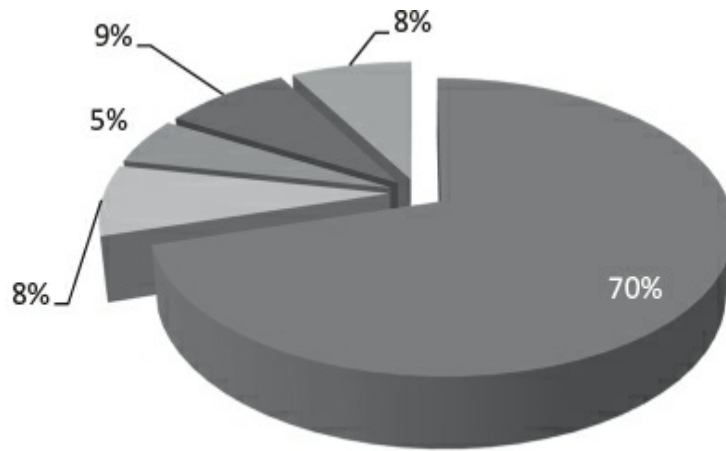
Legend: Israel, W. Europe, Americas, Australia, E. Europe, CIS, Africa/Asia
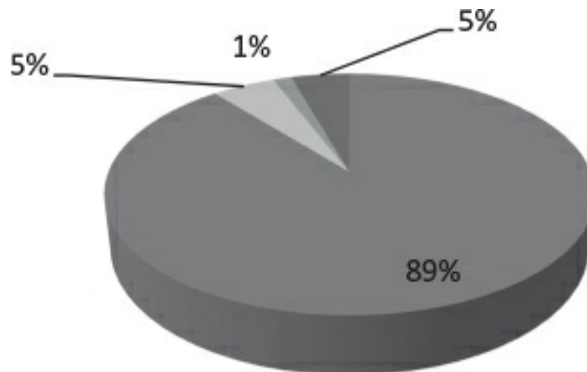
Figure 3. Country of birth.
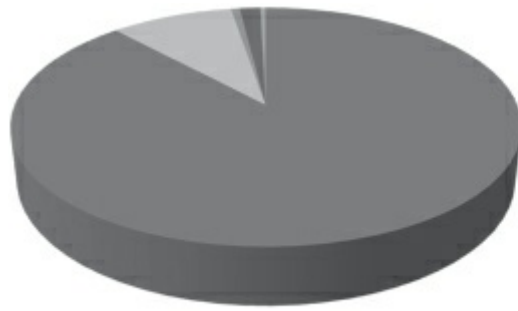
■ Hebrew ■ Arabic ■ English ■ Russian ■ Amharic

Figure 4. Primary language spoken.

9%
8%
5%
8%
70%

■ Israel ■ W. Europe/Americas/Australia ■ E. Europe ■ CIS ■ Asia/Africa

Figure 5. Father's country of birth.

Year of birth
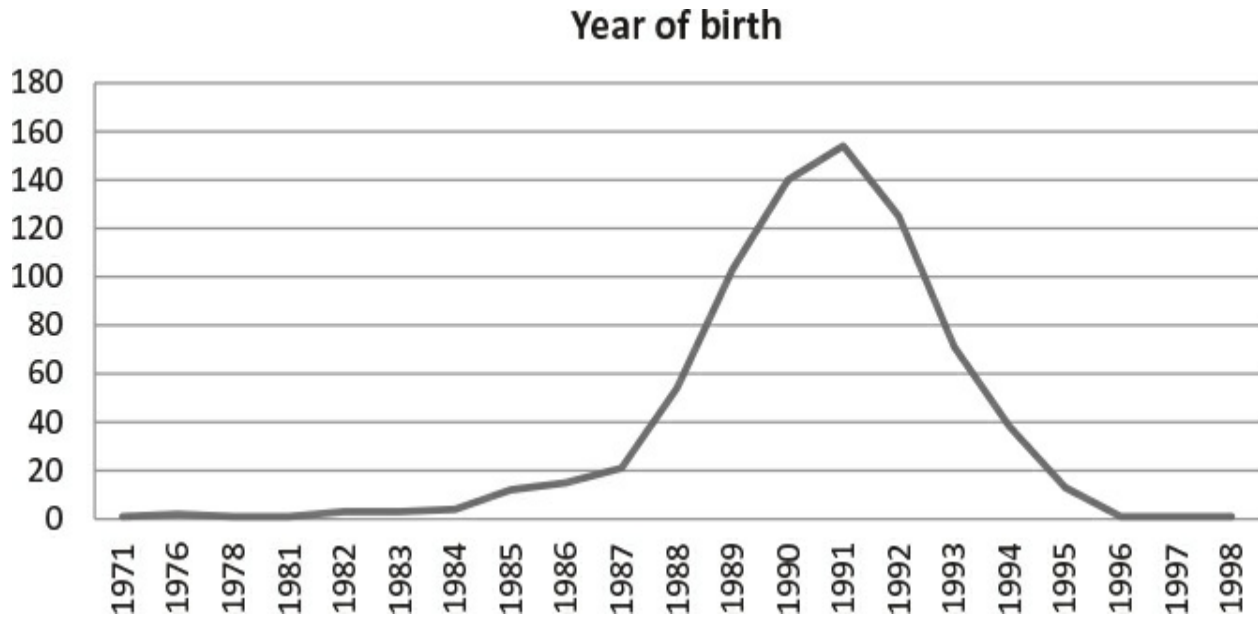
Figure 6. Age distribution.

Year of discharge from service
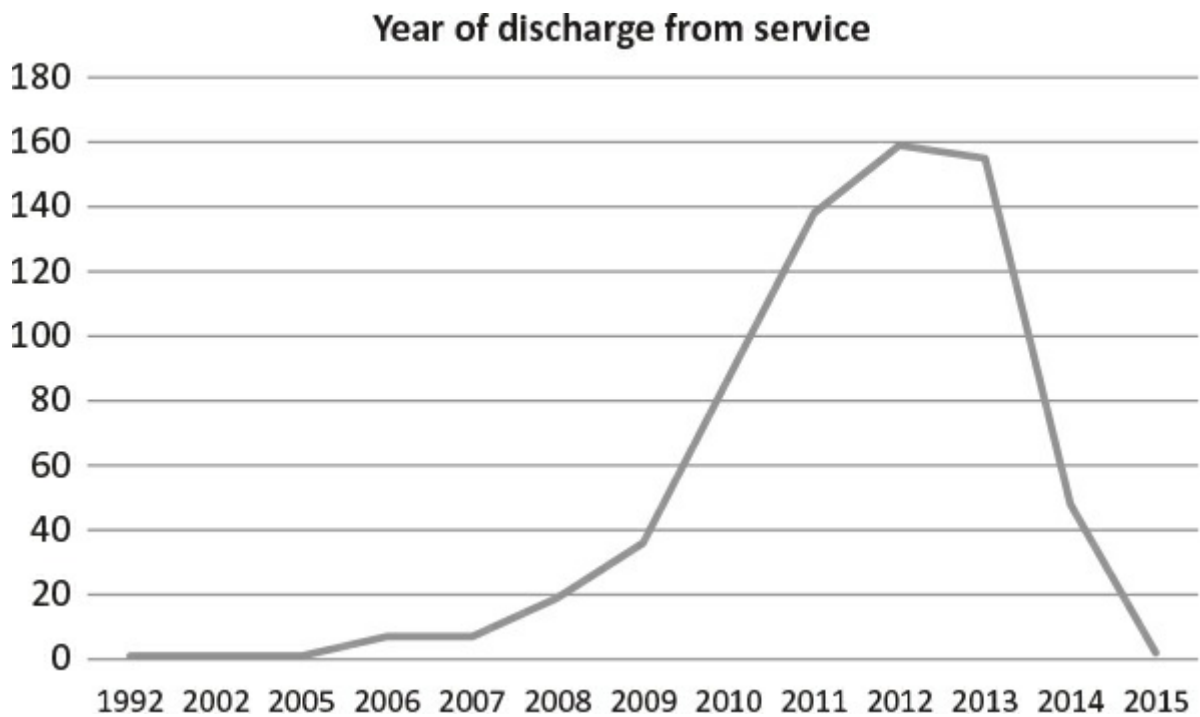
Figure 7. Years post service.

Protests and political violence among Arab Knesset members

Gadi Hitman and Nir Sinay

ABSTRACT
This article seeks to understand the extent of Arab MKs' involvement in protests and political violence over the past decade. By way of doing so, it will examine this phenomenon in four case studies: Mavi Marmara Flotilla (2010), Operation Pillar of cloud (2012), Operation Protective Edge (2014), and the passing of Israel's Nation-State law in 2018. The findings reveal that, unlike many other protests in the Arab world, Arab Israeli protest in the examined case studies were neither based on economic inequality nor related to civil society issues but were rather a corollary of nationalist radicalisation. A dangerous trend of anti-Semitism was also detected among Israel's Arab leaders.

Interactions between majority and minority groups all over the world has been a constant topic for studies and research, especially since the second half of the 20th century. Sociologists, historians, and political scientists try to expand their understanding of minority rights, majority policies, and the future state of these interactions. As a rule, this relationship between a majority and a minority exists in three main forms – dialogue, protest, or violence – that set up the sociopolitical framework within which people from both groups can live peacefully.[1]

The Arab Israeli population is a minority group that makes up 20.9 percent of the Jewish state's population.[2] In order to understand a minority group, it is important to understand its leadership, especially in a democratic society where the leaders reflect the population. The representatives of the Israel's Arab citizens are the individuals or parties that the Arab Israelis elect to the Knesset; they will be known hereinafter as Arab MKs.

This article explores to what extent the Arab MKs were involved in protests and political violence in 2010–18 in four major events that occurred during this time period: the Mavi Marmara Flotilla (2010), Operation Pillar of Defence (2012), Operation Protective Edge (2014), and the passing of the Basic Law: Israel – the Nation-State of the Jewish People (2018).

Models of protest

This study will use three models of political violence and protest: the Non-Recursive Causal Model, the Rational Choice Model, and the Political Moderation model.

The Non-Recursive Causal Model claims that the outbreak of violence during a protest is a dynamic process with several variables. These variables establish whether there is a high or a low chance for violent outbursts throughout the demonstrations, and they can be divided into two sub-categories: variables among the protesters, and variables among the police or security forces. Whether or not the variables on either side exist will determine whether or not the protest can turn into political violence.[3]

The variables in the protester sub-category are the protesters' values about the use of violence, whether or not they perceive violence as an effective tool, and whether or not they are provoked by the police forces. If, as a group, the protesters have very strong anti-violence values, they will not use violence during their protest, even if provoked or if violence may be effective. If the protesters view violence as an ineffective tool, it will not be used because it will not help them achieve their goals. On the other hand, if the protesters see that violence will help them achieve their goals, and they have no moral objection to its use, there is a strong possibility that violence

will be used. Provocation by the police forces is an important variable − even if the use of violence is not against the values of the group, and if violence seems to be an effective tool, the protesters are less inclined to use it if they are not provoked by the police. If these three variables exist together in the right circumstances, they can determine whether or not a protest will turn violent or remain peaceful.

In the sub-category that defines the variables regarding violence by the police forces, certain variables may lead to or prevent violent outbursts: provocation by the protesters – whether consisting of legal actions such as profane gestures or slurs, or illegal actions such as trespassing or damaging public property – can be met with violent responses from the police forces. Another variable is whether or not there is an anticipation of trouble, which can cause the police forces to be on edge and to react with a violent response to an incident that may not have caused the same reaction under other circumstances. The final variable among the police forces is whether the forces have made a conscious decision to use violence in their preparation for the protests, which can be a deciding factor when it comes to violence occurring at a protest. According to this model of protests and violence, the different variables and their combination at the protest will decide whether or not violence will ensue at the event.

The Rational Choice Model was originally developed in economic theory; it assumes that individuals will behave in a way that maximises their wellbeing in their environment. The theory uses a utility function – a systematic method that calculates the individual's or the group's ranking of beliefs, political considerations, morals, and material possessions. Their order of preference does not need to seem rational to others; it just needs to be consistent with their actions and choices in order for the utility function to be considered valid and effective. When these individuals or groups protest, violence will occur if the action of being violent will benefit a factor in their utility function. For example, if religious beliefs are high in the utility function of a group and there is a threat to its religious beliefs, the group will use violence to protect its beliefs; this would be a legitimate use, in order to protect what is most important to it. Protest or violence can be a natural choice in societies that have a history or tradition of collective or individual violence that has led to political achievements.[4] It is noted that when calculating the utility function, religious or cultural beliefs, as well as national identity and aspirations, must also be incorporated.

The third model is the Political Moderation Model, which combines two theories: The Economic Discontent Theory and the Political Opportunities Theory. Economic discontent assumes that inequality is the basis for all rebellion, and that if the inequality is high, violent political conflict is inevitable. Political Opportunity theories claim that economic discontent is not central to political conflict, but that the political opportunities and resources in the environment determine the extent of the conflict and the potential for violence. The two theories combined claim that economic inequality interacts with political opportunities to produce a violent political conflict, under the right circumstances. A country can have severe inequality, but if the political environment is not suitable or does not provide the variables for an uprising, there will be no conflict.[5]

The Political Moderation Model is related to many other theories, including the Rational Choice Model, because if a group of individuals faces an alternative, it will select the action that will most likely maximise its interests. Violent collective action is purposeful and rational, because it is used to obtain a certain political goal. The political opportunity theory is necessary when looking at economic inequality, because the type of regime or government and its ability to contain protests will decide whether or not there will be political violence or protest. Political

violence is supposed to be a rational response to the political environment, and should be related to the political environment – not only to the level of inequality or discontent in the society. If the political environment encourages violence to achieve political goals, and the opportunity arises within the environment while there is economic discontent, a protest or violence may occur.

The Political Moderation Model has been included in this study because it can be applied to many cases of protest and political violence that have occurred over the years in the Arab world. When economic inequality has coincided with the appropriate political environment, protests have occurred, leading to change (for better or for worse) in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya, among other countries. Since the nature of the model fits the Arab world, it is included here in order to provide a comparison between the actions of the Israeli Arab MKs and other Arab protests, and then to determine whether or not this model can be applied to the Arab citizens of Israel.

These theories will be applied to the actions of the Arab Knesset Members during specific events from 2010 to 2018. When analysing their activity outside of the legislative house, all three theories will be used to explore why the Arab Knesset Members decided to turn to protest, and to understand if the reasons for the protests were national, civil, or a combination of both. This paper will also attempt to understand if and why these protests turned violent.

Mavi Marmara Flotilla

In May 2010, six civilian ships carrying 10,000 tons of humanitarian aid set sail with the intention of breaking the Israeli blockade on the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip – the Mavi Marmara was the largest of them. The convoy was organised by activist organisations from numerous countries and a Turkish group called the Turkish Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH). The IHH organisation was a Hamas-linked Islamist group that was banned by Israel for falling under the umbrella of the Union of Good Charity[6] – an organisation that facilitates financial transfers to Hamas-affiliated organisations and charities. Some of these financial transfers included payments to families of Palestinian suicide bombers and this charity employed members of the Hamas military wing.[7]

On May 31, Israeli forces boarded the ships after the activists refused to allow an escort to an Israeli port where the goods could be inspected before being transported to Gaza. Five of the ships were boarded without incident, but the Mavi Marmara's occupants actively and violently resisted the attempts of the Israeli commandos to take over the ship.[8] The struggle ultimately resulted in the deaths of ten Turkish militants with many injured on both sides.[9]

The Arab Israeli MKs responded with condemnation and anger at this incident. MK Muhammad Barakeh of the Hadash party (socialist/communist) said that 'any government that puts itself outside international and humanitarian law will consign itself to the garbage can of history.' Taleb Sana of the Mada party (Arab-Democrat) demanded that Israel's leaders be tried for war crimes, claiming that the interception was an act of terror against a humanitarian aid mission. He even made a comparison to Nazi Germany, declaring that the event proved that 'you don't have to be a German to be a Nazi.'[10]

The Arab Party Ra'am used taxpayer funds to pay for plaques dedicated to six militants who participated in the assault on the Israeli Forces aboard the Mavi Marmara.[11] This action not only offended the IDF soldiers who were attacked and injured but also the Israeli taxpayers who expected the funds to be used to improve their civil situation. The honourable recognition given to the perpetrators of the assault represented approval of the use of violence against the soldiers of the IDF, thereby justifying and endorsing this type of violence.

To make matters worse, MK Hanin Zoabi of Balad not only reacted to this event but also took part in it. Zoabi was aboard the Mavi Marmara on the night of the interception, meaning that a member of the Israeli Knesset was on a ship sponsored by a group affiliated with Hamas, a terror organisation that was hostile towards and bent on the destruction of Israel. After the event, she used the Knesset platform to demand an apology to all of the militants, herself included, from the soldiers who boarded the Marmara – whom she derided as murderers. This caused outrage within the Knesset and resulted in Zoabi being provided with personal guards for her own safety.[12]

Other than their press reactions and Zoabi's outburst in the Knesset, the Arab leaders did not call for mass protests or violence after the Mavi Marmara incident. There were several scattered protests throughout Israel – in Haifa, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Umm El-Fahm, and Sakhnin, after the incident – either demanding the release of the militants who were on board and condemning the actions of the Israeli forces aboard the flotilla, or showing support of the IDF. These protests were mostly non-violent, aside from a few instances of rocks and Molotov cocktails being thrown at security forces and a small number of clashes between rightwing and leftwing groups that were protesting.[13] The Supreme Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens of Israel, the

official leadership of the Israeli Arabs, called for a general strike by the Arab population following the incident, but there were no calls for protest from the Arab MKs. The reactions of the Arab population to Zoabi's participation in the flotilla and outbursts in the Knesset were mixed, with some questioning her motives. In an article examining the Arab Israeli public's reactions, there were those who saw Zoabi's actions as provocations and performances looking for attention. The Arab sector was beginning to feel that some of its representatives were not interested in bettering the lives of their constituents but only in creating noise and promoting Palestinian nationalist ideas.

Mass protests or political violence did not ensue after the Mavi Marmara because there were no variables to justify them, according to the models discussed above. In examining the Non-Recursive Causal Model, one sees that the cause of protests was the use of violence against activists, and in this situation violence would not have been an effective tool for relaying the message against the use of violence. The Arab MKs and the protesters did not perceive violence to be an especially effective tool for their message, and the small amount of violence that did occur was in line with the model – provocations by protesters and security forces lacking a strong anti-violence value led to these few outbursts. It is important to bear in mind that some of the violence in the protests was between protest groups, some in support of the IDF and others condemning it. Because the different variables of the model were largely absent, there were no large outbursts, political violence, or massive protests.

The Rational Choice Model explains why the Arab MKs did not call for mass protests and political violence: because this behaviour would not have maximised the wellbeing of the Arab Israelis or the Arab MKs. The Arab MKs made choices to maximise their interests – whether promoting the interests of the Arab Israelis who elected them, promoting the interests of the Palestinians, or promoting their own self-images to ensure their re-election. The utility function of the Arab MKs had Palestinian nationalism as a highly ranked item, perhaps even higher than their identification with Israel or their commitment to serve and abide by the rules in the Knesset. However, not every situation has enough merit to cause the Arab MKs to incite and call for violence, and without anything to gain, there is no reason for it. The Mavi Marmara incident did not provide a sufficient cause for the degree of outrage that would have led to violence and massive protests, and this outrage would not have promoted their interests. Therefore, the Arab MKs had no reason to call for protest or political violence in response to the event.

Looking at the event in light of the Political Moderation Model immediately explains why there were no massive protests or political violence after the flotilla incident. There was no foundation for economic discontent that was strong enough to cause the masses to rally, and there was no political opportunity that would have allowed the use of protests and violence to be effective in achieving change. Although this theory can be applied to many examples of uprisings in the Arab world, it is most definitely not applicable to the Arab citizens of Israel in this situation.

While the Mavi Marmara incident caused some outrage throughout the world and among the Arab MKs from all parties, it did not lead to cases of political violence or to violent protests in particular. This first incident will seem less significant compared to the following three to be analysed, but it is important to include events of all magnitudes in order to properly assess the reactions of the Arab MKs, thereby leading to understanding of their motives and goals.

Pillar of Defence

On 14 November 2012, the Israeli Defence Forces killed Ahmad Ja'abari, Hamas's military wing's commander in Gaza, following three weeks of Palestinian targeting of IDF personnel with anti-tank missiles and mortars, explosions along the Gaza border, and rocket and missile attacks on Israeli population centres.[14] The operation did not result in an IDF ground incursion into Gaza, but artillery fire and air strikes proved effective when a ceasefire was reached after eight days through Egyptian and American mediation.[15]

Operation Pillar of clouds led to the deaths of four Israeli civilians and two soldiers, and left 240 Israeli civilians injured.[16] The statistics on the Palestinian side are debatable – each source gives a different number of casualties and fatalities: the figures of militants and civilians differed as well. According to a report from the Gazan Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights, 41 combatants and 130 civilians were killed.[17] B'Tselem reported that 167 Palestinians were killed, among whom 62 took part in the hostilities.[18]

During and after military campaign fo November 2012, the Arab MKs made their opinions clear. The Hadash party, an Arab-Israeli non-Zionist party,[19] called for anti-war demonstrations in Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel Aviv, which were attended by hundreds. These demonstrations were peaceful; there were no injuries or violence reported. At these demonstrations, MK Muhammad Barakeh addressed the crowd of Jews and Arabs: 'We came here to say that wars do not solve the conflict, only serve to add more bloodshed. We hope to hear the nation cry out against the right-wing government.'[20]

Hanin Zoabi and Jamal Zahalka of the Balad party took part in a moment of silence for the Gaza fatalities at a party meeting. Zoabi was quoted as accusing Israel of breaking international law and deriding the IDF operation as a political move to support Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's upcoming election campaign.[21] With this statement, Zoabi publicly and openly questioned the legitimacy of Netanyahu's re-election, scrutinised his motives, and sparked doubt in the minds of not only the Arab Israelis, but of many Jewish Israelis as well.

Zoabi was not the only MK to make these accusations. MK Afou Aghbaria of Hadash posted a picture on his Facebook page depicting Netanyahu with blood on his hands along with the caption: 'Citizens of Israel, vote for me! Look, I have fresh blood on my hands!'[22] This post was meant to incite anti-Netanyahu feelings by making people question his motives and the legitimacy of the operation that was carried out.

The claim that the operation was used for Netanyahu's re-election was a common theme among the Israeli Arab leadership, not only among the Arab MKs. The Supreme Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens of Israel published a statement against the Israeli government as well:

> We oppose the attack on Gaza and the assassination of Palestinian people and leaders. Palestinian blood is more precious than the bloodshed the fascists are taking advantage of for publicity ahead of the Knesset elections. If the Israeli government thinks that this is the way to provide the settlers in the south with security, they are wrong. The Israeli government must take full responsibility for the people being killed on both sides – the Palestinian and the Israeli. The ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories is the main reason for everything that is happening here today.[23]

Comparing the reactions of the Arab MKs with the statement from the Supreme Follow-Up Committee can give insight into the responses of the MKs. The Supreme Follow-Up Committee

is an extra-parliamentary organisation that represents the Arab minority in Israel. Because it is not subordinate to the Knesset or the government, it can make statements that are more provocative than the Arab MKs can. While the Arab MKs and the Follow-Up Committee agreed that the operation served re-election, the two could not express these ideas in the same way – the Arab MKs calculate their statements rationally and are careful with their words.

This was the tactic the Arab MKs used to gain more support and to create cracks in the foundation of support for the leading parties in the Knesset. Rationally speaking, calling for protests and violence would not have helped the Arab MKs in any way during this operation; therefore, the Rational Choice Model of protest and political violence proved useful in the prevention of political violence. The Jewish MKs were not the only ones who had to worry about their support in the face of the upcoming elections. The Arab MKs also needed to ensure their own continuity in the Knesset. By attacking the leading party, blaming the current government for the deaths, using extreme words such as 'war crimes,' and by condemning war – they polish their images as identifying with the national aspirations of the Palestinians and as spokespeople for the suffering population in the Gaza Strip.

The Arab MKs' reactions to Operation Pillar of cloud do not line up with the Non-Recursive Causal Model because they did not view violence as an effective tool while standing against Israel's use of violence in Gaza – that would have been a contradiction, and perhaps this is why they did not call for or encourage violent outbursts. While the Hadash MKs did call for protests, there was no violence during the gatherings because, again, violence cannot be perceived as an effective tool, especially not when condemning the use of violence. Without violence being seen as an effective tool and without provocations from security forces – there was no potential for these protests to turn violent.

The Political Moderation Model is irrelevant to this case study because the protests and anger were not rooted in issues of inequality, economics, or political opportunity. The outrage was at the use of violence by the Israeli Defence Forces, and this model, again, is not relevant to the Arabs living in Israel as it is to Arabs in other countries.

Operation Protective Edge

Operation Protective Edge occurred after months of tension and escalation that threatened the safety of Israeli civilians. The summer of 2014 began with intense rocket and missile fire from Gaza into Israel and the discovery of underground tunnels leading from Gaza into Israel designed to infiltrate Israeli homes and kidnap and murder civilians (and soldiers). Additionally, by way of destabilising the West Bank, Hamas coordinated the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli teenagers who lived in a West Bank settlements. From July 8 to 26 August 2014, Israel carried out Operation Protective Edge comprising air strikes and a ground incursion.[24]

According to the IDF's initial analysis, 2,125 Palestinians were killed during the operation. Estimates indicate that 936 (or 44 percent) of these were militants, while 761 (or 36 percent) were civilians, including women and children. The remaining 20 percent, all males aged 16–50, were not yet classified at this stage of the report.[25] According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, 2,310 were killed; there were no calculations in this report regarding the status of those killed – that is, whether they were civilians or militants.[26]

On the Israeli side, 66 IDF soldiers and officers were killed, alongside six civilians. Approximately 1,600 Israeli civilians were injured, including over 270 children. According to a UN report, 4,881 rockets/missiles and 1,753 mortars were fired at Israel from the Gaza strip

during the operation. Armed groups in Gaza also stated that the targets of their rocket attacks were the large cities and heavily populated areas of Israel.[27]

Compared to the previous two case studies, Operation Protective Edge prompted more severe reactions from the Arab MKs. At its start, Arab MK Basel Ghattas of the Balad party conducted a moment of silence in the Knesset for the Gaza fatalities in which 'people are dying from criminal acts.'[28] In a similar vein, Taleb al-Sana was quoted as saying that Israel was not conducting a war but committing crimes against humanity. He claimed that the goal of the Israeli government was to collect blood from the Palestinians.[29]

On July 9, the Knesset held a debate regarding the wave of incitement, riots, and displays of racism in the country. Arab MKs Ibrahim Sarsour and Ahmad Tibi, both of the Ra'am-Ta'al party, as well as Arab MK Zahalka accused Israel of carrying out war crimes in the West Bank and Gaza. At this same debate, Arab MK Issawi Frej of Meretz (a left-wing Zionist party) remained neutral and spoke against the hatred between Arabs and Jews and against the suffering of innocent civilians on both sides.[30]

Zoabi was perhaps the most controversial Arab MK of this period. She managed to cause uproar and shock throughout the Israeli public with her reactions to this operation. Before the operation even began, Zoabi made several comments about the incident in which three Israeli Jewish teenagers had been abducted. She argued that the abductors were not terrorists and justified the kidnapping by blaming the Israeli occupation. Zoabi claimed, 'They [the Palestinians] have seen no other way to change their reality and have to resort to these measures until Israel sobers up a bit and feels the suffering of others.'[31] These statements justify and even encourage the use of radical actions against Israel because of nationalistic issues, and they can be categorised as incitement to and approval of violence on the part of MK Zoabi.

When massive IDF searches for the three missing teenagers began in the West Bank, Zoabi called the search an act of terrorism. She claimed that Israel was not actually looking for the children but was using this as a pretext to invade Palestinian cities and to arrest and kill Palestinians. She also derided the Palestinian Authority as traitors because of their cooperation with the IDF in the search operation.[32] These statements were made to incite the Palestinian people against the IDF during these searches, to justify the use of violence against Israeli Jewish citizens, and to encourage violence. The most disturbing part of the statements was the accusation of treason for cooperating with the IDF. The Palestinian Authority is the legitimate representative of the Palestinians in the West Bank, and Zoabi's attack on its actions could have had interesting motives. Zoabi's public declarations were rational since she saw herself as a Balad member committed to the national Palestinian goals. While her MK colleagues preferred a softer line of criticism, she adopted a strict, possibly violence provoking line against the State of Israel. In the long run, perhaps she perceives her activity as a tool to garner more political support from the Palestinians, who might be her electorate in the future.

Two days before Operation Protective Edge, Zoabi incited violence against Arab police officers. She called them traitors for acting against Arab suspects and yelled in Arabic to the crowd that they had to act against them – her exact words:

> Ostracism, we should spit in their faces, those who testify against our sons and daughters, those who work with the oppressor against their own people, we should clean the floor with them. Clean the floor with them. Not shake their hands, don't let them be among us, they should fear us. When they're in the street they should fear us. They should fear the 'shabab' who are arrested by the informants that they send, they are the ones who give information to

the police that leads to the arrest of our sons and daughters. They stand here, the height of chutzpah. No fear, no respect, what happened? What chutzpah![33]

This outburst clearly indicate that Zoabi didn't identify at all with Israel, and that her sense of Palestinian nationalism was the chief motive behind her statements. The Arab Israeli police officers throughout Israel are citizens of Israel; they vote in Knesset elections, pay taxes to the Israeli government, and may even have voted for Zoabi. Her insult to them and choice of words painted them as traitors – for protecting the civil order in the country that they live in. These words imply that any supporter of Israel should be ostracised, and that the only true legitimate struggle is the one against the oppressor, Israel.

Zoabi led a demonstration in Haifa against the operation, and MK Zahalka was also in attendance along with over a thousand Arab Israeli protestors. There were reports of protesters waving Palestinian flags and chanting slogans – some welcoming Hamas rockets and some against the Palestinian Authority and Netanyahu. Additional protests took place in Acre, Tamra, and more Israeli Arab communities in the area.[34] These demonstrations led to clashes with the police, for they were unauthorised protests in which the participants attempted to block roads and disrupt traffic in the area. Zoabi was handcuffed along with 30 other protesters, but was later released due to her parliamentary immunity.[35]

Zoabi was even recorded saying, in an interview, that the IDF was comparable to ISIS, and that the Islamic State 'kills one person every time with their knives, but the IDF kills dozens of Palestinians with the push of a button … The air force pilot who pushed the button was no less a terrorist than those who take knives and cut off heads.'[36]

One of Zoabi's most controversial moves was her publishing of an article on felesteen.ps, a Hamas website, in which she urged the Palestinians to continue the resistance against the occupier – Israel, which she consistently wrote between quotation marks, as if to question its existence. She condemned the Arab powers that were coordinating activities with Israel and also those who remained in 'conspiratorial silence.' She claimed that Israel 'will in no way eliminate Hamas, the motives for the resistance, or the motives for [pursuing] liberation from the occupation.'[37] This article effectively denies the existence of Israel and encourages uprisings of violence against it. The fact that it was published on a Hamas website is a very extreme line to have crossed, indicating that the values she preached in the article on the Palestinian nationalist struggle against Israel are very high on her utility function. Zoabi's calls for resistance are blatant cries for political violence, reflecting the choice she made – it was a rational choice, for her, because it was a good opportunity to promote her values, through which she stood to gain without suffering harmful repercussions.

At the end of August 2014 and the end of the operation, several Arab MKs participated in a Hamas rally to celebrate a 'Gaza Victory' and also to observe a moment of silence for the Gazans who had been killed. The MKs in attendance included Basel Ghattas, Jamal Zahalka, and Hanin Zoabi of Balad, and MKs Masoud Ghanayem and Ibrahim Sarsour of Ra'am-Ta'al. Zoabi even gave a speech at the Hamas event, claiming that the resistance of the Palestinian people also pertained to the Arab Israelis, and calling for a just political solution to end the siege and the occupation.[38] While these words were not a call for violence, they may potentially have planted seeds of resistance in the minds of Arab Israelis, especially those who were unsure of their identity or nationality. These words were specifically meant to cause doubt among the Arab Israelis regarding their feelings of identity and nationalism.

Four years after Operation Protective Edge, during a Knesset debate over a bill to deduct

terrorist salaries from Israeli payments to the Palestinian Authority, MK Zahalka was removed from the Knesset for the following statement:

> You are murderers, you are terrorists, you are thieves, you are oppressors and hypocrites. You murdered 527 children in 2014's Operation Protective Edge. You murdered Palestinian children … using violence, executing people in a premeditated fashion. Who is the terrorist here? The one who listens to classical music … as if he's cultured, who pushes a button on a plane and kills a hundred innocent people.[39]

Zahalka's word choice reflects his disregard of the circumstances that bring about operations such as Protective Edge and his determined focus on only one side. Use of the word thieves indicated that he believed the Israeli state was illegitimate, and that the lands belonged to another entity, which has different nationalism and different nationai aspirations and vision. What his outburst was arguing against was still more concerning – the deduction of terrorist salaries from Israeli payments to the Palestinian Authority. It almost sounds preposterous to suggest, but he was angered because Israel did not want to continue paying the terrorists who murdered Israeli civilians. While the actions of the Arab MKs were not violent, the intentions behind their words were meant to incite at least protests and perhaps even violence. Zoabi's comparison of the IDF to terrorists, justifying the actions of the abductors and of Hamas by blaming the occupation, calling any Arab power that cooperated with Israel a traitor, constantly calling on the Palestinians to resist Israel, and even linking the plight of the Palestinians to the Arab Israelis – all of these statements served to delegitimize and to demonise Israel.

The Non-Recursive Causal Model of protest explains why the Arab Israeli protests did turn somewhat violent despite being relatively peaceful. In order to appreciate the variables that had to exist among the protesters and the security forces for violence to occur, and to understand why there were some clashes between protesters and police, we will look at the variables on each side. The protesters – Arab Israelis – used violence against the police forces because, evidently, they saw violence as an effective tool, and they were provoked by the police forces that had come to stop the unauthorised protest. If violence had been counter to the values and interests of the group protesting, it would not have been used at all.

The police forces may have resorted to violence against the protesters because of the provocation of the Palestinian flag being waved, the encouragement of Hamas, and the anti-Israel slogans being chanted. While these were legal actions – they could still provoke the security forces in an already tense situation. The protesters' attempt to block transportation routes constitutes an illegal act of trespassing and the protest itself was unauthorised – which also could have led to the police using force. Knowledge of whether or not the police forces anticipated violence or made a conscious choice to use violence ahead of the clashes is not accessible to those outside of the event, so that cannot be used as a variable in this analysis.

As lawmakers, Arab MKs taking part in and organising this illegal protest suggests that they wanted clashes to occur and saw violence as an effective tool, according to this case study. It is possible that, like Hamas, they were trying to incite violence among civilians in order to cause clashes that would lead to pictures in the media, which in turn would lead to international outrage against Israel. Violence was a valuable tool that would help them achieve political outrage – it was therefore effective in enabling the protesters to achieve their goals.

The Rational Choice Model explains the behaviour of the Arab MKs by measuring their utility function. It is clear that the MKs' nationalist identification with the Palestinians was

higher than their identification with Israeli nationalism, and it seems that many of the actions they took were to promote nationalistic issues rather than civil ones. Operation Protective Edge was extreme enough to allow the Arab MKs to voice their opinions loudly, even if the opinions were controversial, while still preserving the support of the Arab Israeli population. The international frenzy surrounding the operation caused the red lines, which the Arab MKs had once tread carefully around, to blur, enabling them to express more extreme opinions than they had in the past. Compared to the first two cases of the Marmara Flotilla and Operation Pillar of Defence, which caused reactions of generally non-violent protest and blame of Israel for committing war crimes and breaking international law, Operation Protective Edge brought much fiercer reactions from the Arab MKs – especially from the already outspoken Zoabi.

Perhaps because Operation Protective Edge was a much larger scale operation than the previous two events had been, with a much higher death toll on both sides and a lot more international attention than the previous two – the Arab MKs also had to increase the scale of their reactions. With the eyes of the world on Israel, the Arab MKs did not have to fear for their positions or influence as much as they had previously, because Israel was walking on thin ice and the government would not take significant action against them.

The media also may have played a significant part in broadening the spectrum of reactions. The Arab world had truly learned to utilise the media only a few years prior; it is possible that with more exposure and mass communication abilities, what was happening in Gaza profoundly affected the Arab Israelis who were watching. If previously many Arab Israelis had expressed doubts regarding Zoabi's motives and whether she was truly representing the civil issues that concerned the Arab population, her words were able to move thousands to protest, which shows that Zoabi had a much stronger impact this time.

Arab MKs observed the arena rationally, and found that there was an opportunity to use the media to promote nationalistic ideas and to tie the Arab Israelis to the plight of the Palestinians. Some of the Arab parties wanted Israel to no longer have a Jewish or Zionist identity, to have a state of the people – in addition to a Palestinian state. Operation Protective edge was an opportunity for them to capitalise on the suffering in Gaza in order to rally the Arab Israelis around the Palestinian identity, and perhaps to rally their support for their legislative goals as well.

The Political Moderation Model is not relevant to the Arabs of Israel in this case study, because protests were of a nationalist character and against the IDF's use of violence – not based on economic or political power struggles.

Basic Law: Israel – the nation-state of the Jewish people

In 2018, the Israeli Knesset passed a Basic Law officially declaring Israel the nation-state of the Jewish People. The law's basic principles are as follows: '(1) The Land of Israel is the historical homeland of the Jewish people, in which the State of Israel was established. (2) The State of Israel is the nation state of the Jewish People, in which it realises its natural, cultural, religious and historical right to self-determination. (3) The exercise of the right to national self-determination in the State of Israel is unique to the Jewish People.'[40]

The law defines many things, such as the state symbols – the flag with the Star of David, the menorah, and the national anthem; the state capital – a complete and united Jerusalem; and the official language – Hebrew, removing Arabic as one of the official languages and giving it a 'special status,' promising that 'nothing in this article shall affect the status given to the Arabic

language before this law came into force,'[41] meaning that there would be no change for the Arab citizens. Additionally, the law reinforces the connection of Israel to the Jewish People living outside of Israel and encourages Jewish settlement.

This legislation stirred substantial controversy, especially among non-Jewish citizens such as Arabs and Druze. These minorities feared that because there was no mention of equal treatment of citizens, their status in the country would be negatively affected.[42] They expressed concern through interviews, posts, and protest. Regarding activity in the field, this time the protests were weak, compared to those covered in previous case studies. Thousands protested in Tel Aviv against the law, including many Israeli Arabs, Israeli Druze, and Israeli Jews (4 August 2018). The first protest was led by the Druze community, because they felt betrayed by this law passed in a state that they loyally support, including their enlistment in the IDF.[43] This protest drew 50,000 Israelis of all backgrounds. A week later, the Arab Israeli community organised a protest which drew 30,000 people.[44]

During the latter protest, despite requests by the Supreme Arab Higher Monitoring Committee, participants began waving Palestinian flags and chanting slogans, such as 'With blood and fire, we will redeem Palestine. Millions of martyrs are marching to Jerusalem.' MK Ayman Odeh, head of the Joint Arab List, was quoted as saying that 'thousands of Arabs and Jews are making their way to Tel Aviv with a democratic and ethical message [against] the nation-state law. A democratic state must be a state for all its citizens.'[45]

Arab MK Zouheir (labor, zionist party) Bahloul resigned his post after the law was passed and called the Knesset racist and destructive. He claimed that the law 'removes the Arab population from the path of equality in Israel.' Other Arab MKs shouted and tore apart their copies of the law when they understood that it was going to pass; some even had to be escorted from the Knesset chamber.[46] Ahmad Tibi claimed that the bill had caused a new peak in racism in the country, and that it was the death of democracy.[47]

On the surface, this law has elements which may cause mass protests. According to the Non-Recursive Causal Model of protest, there was no reason for an outbreak of violence among the protesters, because they did not perceive violence as an effective tool for achieving equality or changing the fact that the law will pass. Violence may not be an effective tool when trying to encourage change or positive values such as equality. Other instances which have led to violence were expressions of outrage against an event, which was violent. In this case study, the approval of the nation-state law happened with no bloodshed, therefore the use of violence against it would be illegitimate.

In contrast to the first theory, the Rational Choice Model of protest is relevant to this event, because of the utility function. Those who joined the protests had an important enough reason to take part. The first protest led by the Druze was focused on equality and rights – that is, on not making part of the population feel like second-class citizens. The 50,000 people who showed up – of all backgrounds – must have had a shared value on the utility function that had to do with equality, rights, and democracy, which caused them to come into the streets. Similar to the Non-Recursive Causal model, the groups did not use violence, showing that the protesters did not think violence was an effective tool that would benefit their cause.

The Political Moderation Model explains why violence did not occur – it was because the political environment did not allow for it, and there was no economic discontent involved. While economic discontent claims that inequality is the basis for all rebellion, it seems that the price of violence was too high compared to the feelings of inequality that existed. This can, perhaps, be

explained by analysing the changes that the Arab population will feel after the Nation-State law is implemented.

A clause in the nation-state law prevents minorities from realising a right to self-determination because this would undermine Israel's existence as a Jewish state. Another clause explains that 'the State views the development of Jewish settlement as a national value and shall act to encourage and promote its establishment and strengthening.' This seems to be the most problematic clause, which might have a negative effect on the lives of minorities in Israel. The rest of the clauses in the law will cause no change in the lives of the minority citizens. Because these two clauses do not ascertain change or harm to the minority population, and the rest of the law will effect no change in the lives of the minorities, it is possible to assume that the feelings of inequality were not strong enough to cause violence.

Moreover, in this case study the Arab minority played second fiddle to the Druze after the latter group placed itself at the forefront of the protests, leading the Arabs to adapt their patterns to those of the Druze, instigating more peaceful protests.

Conclusions

Based on the findings in this article, it is clear that the Arab MKs make rational and calculated decisions to promote their personal interests. Three of the four examined case studies were related to the Palestinians, and one to civil issues that are relevant to Israel's Arab citizens. The extent to which the Arab MKs were involved in protests and political violence during four key events in 2010–18 was dependent on the following factors:

- The party of the Arab MK appears to have an influence on the type of reaction to be expected. A member of an Arab party will criticise Israel, incite violence, and call for protests. An Arab MK of a non-Arab party, such as the left-wing Meretz, will have a more moderate reaction, calling for negotiations and an end to violence on both sides. Also, the increasing severity over time of the Arab MKs' reactions indicates that the issues of Palestinian nationalism and the identity of the Arabs in Israel are moving to the top of their political agenda.
- While the Non-Recursive Causal Model of protest and political violence was useful in explaining why violence did or did not occur at specific protests, it was not particularly useful in understanding the motives of the Arab MKs because it focuses on variables that exist during a protest, not on variables relevant to the reason for the protest. While there were minor incidents of violence at protests related to all four events, the outbursts were contained with minimal injuries, and they brought about no fundamental changes.
- The Rational Choice Model did provide insight into the choices that the MKs made when supporting or inciting violence as a political tactic. The Arab MKs needed to make their choices based on their relative wellbeing; that is why their reactions were proportional to the severity of the events. The more severe and violent the event, the more extreme and explicit the Arab MK reactions became. The international attention and criticism focused on Israel also provided them with a platform, as well as a legitimate opportunity to criticise Israel.
- This study includes no instances of political protest or violence based on economic inequality or lack of political opportunity – making the Political Moderation Model non-applicable to the Arab citizens of Israel. While revolutions such as the Arab Spring have

affected many of Israel's neighbours throughout history, the Arab Israelis did not protest or take to the streets because there was not a severe gap in equality and the democratic system allowed for due process and for changes to be made.

- Comparing Israel to Nazis and to ISIS – that is, accusing Israelis of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity – constitutes clear demonisation of the Jewish state. These cases in which Arab MKs blow Israel's actions way out of proportion do not contribute to improvements within Arab Israeli society. The denial of Israel's right to exist in Zoabi's article, emphasised by putting the name of the state in quotation marks, is de-legitimisation. The Arab MKs are very careful not to openly delegitimize the existence of Israel because it is against the law for an MK to do so – but the fact that this does happen publicly on occasion proves that behind closed doors it may be a much more common phenomenon. The Arab MKs display a double standard when criticising Israel but supporting Hamas. These cases of de-legitimisation, demonisation, and double standards, while completely illegitimate, reflect the new anti-Semitism that has spread wildly throughout the Arab world, disguised as critiques of Israel. This pattern of activity reflects rational choice, which enables Arab MKs to manoeuvre between their national identity and Israeli civil citizenship.
- The roots of Arab MK reactions to the four case studies are all connected to the same tree, but the circumstances of each event determined individually how far the Arab MKs were willing to go in their reactions against the State of Israel. Most of the Arab Israelis are still more concerned with civil issues than with nationalist ones, and this is probably the main reason why most of the protests, in all of the cases presented above, were limited in time and scope.

Notes

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Testing the social psychology of protest: empirical evidence from the Israeli experience

Alonit Berenson and Nir Atmor

ABSTRACT

What drives a person to take part in a collective action and engage in political protest? This is a question that has long interested social scientists. Recent theoretical and empirical research in industrialised countries that centres on the political behaviour of individuals examines five main factors – grievances, efficacy, identity, emotions and social embeddedness – to understand what leads citizens to join social protests. Drawing on such

research and using Israel National Election Studies (INES) data, this article examines the political attitudes of participants in the widespread 'Social Justice' protests that took place in Israel in 2011, with the aim of explaining what motivates civic participation in such protests. By analysing the profile of the demonstrators, our findings provide additional empirical evidence to the theoretical approach and assist in understanding political protest behaviour in general.

2011 was an important year in the history of Israeli protests. For more than three months (14 July-29 October) demonstrators protested against growing socioeconomic inequalities, with a clear call for affordable housing and 'social justice' for all. Their actions changed the meaning and scope of protests in Israel. In one of the peaks during those months, over 400,000 people from all around the country participated in the streets of Tel Aviv in what was later dubbed the 'the march of the million', which became etched in the minds of many as the summer miracle. The protests received extensive coverage in all media outlets,[1] and public discussion reached new heights as so many were joining forces to call for structural changes in the economy, an improved social order, and social solidarity.

The question of what drives someone to take part in a collective action or political protest has attracted social scientists for decades. In general, this question is addressed on the *individual level*, i.e. examining the sociodemographic factors that relate to the participants themselves – their social and economic status, age, education, religious background and other characteristics associated with their attitudes, interests and political awareness. For a long time, there was agreement among scholars that political protests tended to attract participants who were male, young, students, and workers. Evidence in industrialised countries shows that the demographic characteristics of the demonstrators are far more diverse.[2]

The sociodemographic characteristics of demonstrators tell us only part of the story, however. Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans look at the topic from a theoretical perspective, suggesting that there are five elements that motivate an individual to take part in a protest: grievances, efficacy, identity, emotions and social embeddedness.[3] In other words, individuals will be motivated to attend a demonstration when they feel frustrated by a given situation, when they identify with the cause and are embedded within a network of like-minded people, and when they believe that they have the power to alter conditions or policies through such protest.

This article continues this line of thinking and examines the social psychology of protest from an individual perspective by trying to understand why some people choose to demonstrate while others avoid doing so. To that end, it chose to examine the 2011 'Social Justice' protests in Israel and analyse retrospective data from the Israel National Election Studies (INES), a two-panel survey (before and after the elections) that includes a sample of the adult population. What is interesting in this survey is that 14.9% of the Jewish respondents reported that they actively participated in the demonstrations of 2011. Given the high numbers of attendants at the peak of the demonstrations, our aim is to scrutinise the extent to which different characteristics and perceptions are connected to those individuals who have actively participated (and not passively) in such protests. Following that, our dependent variable is dichotomous: whether a person actively participated in a protest (1) or not (0). We examine the backgrounds of the respondents, their feelings and political perceptions regarding a series of issues. Our ultimate goal is to understand what motivates someone to leave home and go and protest.

We begin with a short overview of the theoretical approaches and a review of the empirical evidence from the Israeli context. We then compare differences between the participants and the non-participants in the protests, and we conclude with a multivariate analysis. We will argue, first, that the uniqueness of the 2011 demonstrations was that they did not cross identities. Specifically, we find that in contrast to the media coverage that emphasised that they did, the profile of the demonstrators was in fact rather uniform (though, interestingly, it did not resemble the commonly held paradigm): they tended to be young, single with no children, employed, educated, middle class, native-born and secular. Second, we will present empirical evidence based on the theoretical framework of Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans: the more people feel aggrieved and frustrated, the more they are likely to participate in a demonstration; the more people are motivated by feelings of efficacy, the more they are likely to participate in a protest; and the more they identify with the cause of the protest, the more they tend to translate their feelings into actions – and take to the streets.

Why people protest: a theoretical framework

The question of what drives someone to take part in a collective action or a social movement has attracted scholars for decades.[4] Overall, this question can be explored on two levels: the *collective* and the *individual*. The collective level focuses on factors, or circumstances, that are beyond personal interests, such as the desire to improve the mutual conditions, collective identity, the search for ways to reduce public inequality, etc. On the other side, the individual level, the focus is on the personal interests of the protesters themselves. Here it is customary to refer to the action of protesting as a means to try to better one's personal position, such as his sociodemographic status, moving to another job, improve his income, take care of housing solutions, etc. An individual will be mobilised to participate in a protest, sometimes after a long process of individual and collective steps.[5]

In what follows, we focus on the individual level perspective, i.e. the individual characteristics that explain participation in the protest. Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans propose a theoretical framework and combine five concepts: grievances, efficacy, identity, emotions and social embeddedness into a pathway model.[6] We apply their model and focus on grievance, efficacy, identity and social embeddedness,[7] in the context of the different social cleavages, in order to test the social protests that spread in the summer of 2011 in Israel. We will clarify those concepts here forth.

The first criterion that researchers agree fosters engagement in protest is *grievance*. The most prominent theory to explain this phenomenon – the relative deprivation theory – refers to the tension that develops from a discrepancy between the expectations and the actual achievements of life conditions.[8] A frustrated citizen will protest against his government when the gap between what he perceives as the 'haves' and the 'have nots' is high (and usually he is among the latter) and he believes that the state is to blame for it. Scholars who focus on the individual level point to situations of personal inequality or injustice compared to others, violation of moral principles, socioeconomic or cultural threats, which drives one to feel grieved and motivated into protest behaviour.[9]

The second central factor in the study of political behaviour to have an influence on protest activity is *political efficacy* – the confidence that one has some real measure of influence through political activities to alter policies and social conditions.[10] Political efficacy is composed of at least two separate though related components: (1) *Internal efficacy* – referring to person's

assessment of how his capabilities, skills, and knowledge can have an effect on the political system[11]; (2) *External efficacy* – referring to beliefs about the responsiveness of governmental authorities and institution to the concerns of the citizens.[12] Questions like, 'To what extent can you and your peers influence the policies of the government' fall into this category. Several studies found that a sense of efficacy is highly correlated with participation in protest.[13]

The third factor that became prominent in recent decades for motivating participation in protests is the *identity*.[14] Personal identity refers to self-definition in terms of personal attributes and can express the shared sense of belonging to a group. Several definitions – *collective identity, social identity and group identification* – all discuss (with minor variations) the essence of a commitment to shared symbols, values and beliefs. An individual may have several social identities: nationality, ethnicity, religion, class, gender, age and so forth. It is self-definition, or awareness, and feelings that translate 'I' into 'we,' a transformation from the personal identity into the collective identity.[15]

For a long time, scholars believed that political protest was more common among male, young, students, and workers. Recent evidence shows that this is not exactly so, that protesting populations are more diverse.[16] Either way, Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans argue: 'the sociodemographic characteristics of the cleavage in which the conflict originates can be expected to be reflected in the crowd on the street. Hence, if protests originate in different cleavages, their sociodemographic characteristics are expected to differ too'.[17] Later we will look closer at the identities that may have motivated participants to action in Israel in the summer of 2011.

The last factor mentioned in the social psychology of protest is *social embeddedness*, a concept that expresses the set of relationships between an individual and his social environment, i.e. his social connections and networks that contribute to the spread of the political discourse and the sense of efficacy that are vital for active protest. Being part of a network is crucial to increase the chances that one will participate in a protest.[18] Gould, for example, shows that an individual who has friends and acquaintances that are part of a social movement is more likely to take part in a collective action.[19] Social embeddedness also embraces other concepts, such as social capital, loyalty and trust, all designated to the interdependence and social ties between individuals that encourage one to protest.[20] Tilly and Wood highlight the use of technologies in the 'Arab Spring' in Egypt and Tunisia in late 2010-early 2011, whereby activists used mass texting, Twitter, and Facebook on their smartphones to inform participants about the location of protests and other updates.[21] The social networks facilitated the spreading of news, photos, and video clips not only among those who were actively engaged but indeed for anyone who wished to follow the protests.[22]

While Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans discuss separately each of these concepts, they also provide a framework for analysis that connects between them that clarifies how perceptions of sociopolitical context affect protest participation. Their model, which they recently began to test will guide us in the next parts.[23]

Participation in the Israeli protests of summer 2011

In the summer of 2011 an unprecedented wave of protests swept Israel. What began with a small group of students and activists who, following some informal calls for action on Facebook due to lack of affordable housing options, set up an ad hoc encampment in the heart of affluent Tel Aviv, mushroomed into dozens of community-style encampments in public places around the

country, as well as mass rallies attended by hundreds of thousands of people almost on a weekly basis. What brought these people to this 'tent protest' and what motivated them to claim 'The people demand social justice!'?

It is generally agreed that group-based anger and frustration triggered the summer protests. Feelings of injustice were anchored in personal experience with inequality in wealth and income distribution. The issues that were at the centre of the protests were the ever-increasing cost of basic commodities and housing prices, and low salaries. As in other demonstrations in the world at the time, for example, in Spain the 15 M *indignados* movement, the neoliberal economy and an increasingly harsh socioeconomic reality drove thousands to the streets.[24] In other words, the deepening and worrisome gap between people's high future expectations and their constantly weakening financial situations drove the masses to the streets. In Israel, the proclamation, 'We demand to live with dignity in this country', coined by one of the protest organisers, student leader Itzik Shmuli, well expressed the deep grievances so keenly felt in those days.

The protests attracted many who believed that through united efforts they could bring about change and that through protests they could alter the government's policies and Israeli society's socioeconomic priorities. The belief that structural changes are possible instilled in the hearts of the individuals a faith that declining social solidarity can be reversed and Israeli society can become more humane and fair. An interesting perspective was given by Gamson, who claimed that the ongoing Arab Spring heavily influenced the Israeli movement for social justice.[25] A 'cognitive liberation' motivated the participants to alter their conditions and policies, based on their sense of efficacy. In other words, the common wisdom is that a sense of ability to influence policy officials drove the participants to the streets in the summer of 2011.

A collective identity and sense of solidarity among the protesters were quickly constructed. The struggle for 'social justice' defined the belonging to the new undefined group that had never before been unified in terms of social and economic issues, like skyrocketing housing prices or the rising prices of goods and services. According to Della Porta and Diani, such a situation helps to build trust as an essential component for accepting members who would be willing to take action in many urgently needed areas.[26] A crucial factor underlying the summer protests was their 'apolitical' character: the protest bypassed the politics of sectorial affiliations encompassing the middle and lower classes. The collective identity was thus unified based on common demands of material distribution.[27] We follow this line of thinking here.

Before we turn to examine the variables discussed in the literature that are expected to affect participation in protests we will rise the following hypothesis. First, as we will further elaborate, we are using 10 background variables and we hypothesised that the social cleavages were rooted in the issues they addressed (H1). Specifically, we argue that age is associated with protest participation and that the protesters tended to be younger than the non-protesters. Religiosity is also a key factor related to participation in the summer of 2011, and that the participants tended to be secular. Additionally, we assume that the participants in the protests tended to be more educated, single, with no children, employed, middle class, native-born and with political affiliation. The only background factor that we expect not to be linked with the participation is gender.

As several studies refer to *grievances* as indicator to explain why some people choose to protest while others abstain from doing so,[28] we expect to find respondents who felt aggrieved about political matters, mainly over economic issues, to be motivated to participate in the protests (H2). Accordingly, we assume that the protesters identified with the underlying cause of the protests, and therefore expect to find that shared values and beliefs motivated them to engage

in the collective action (H3). We also expect to find that individuals who believe that group-related problems can be solved through collective efforts,[29] and who have a sense of *efficacy,* to be motivated and participate in protests (H4). Finally, we hypothesised that individuals who are embedded in a social network and are concerned about politics and economic matters are more likely to participate in protests (H5).

Data and measurements

As noted above, in order to evaluate the inclinations of the protesters we used the two waves of 2013 INES surveys that investigate attitudes towards issues on the national agenda. The surveys investigate, among other things, on the respondents' answers to questions that are related to elections and general forms of public participation. Of the questions asked in the surveys, we focus on the issues that pertain to the protests.

The sample characteristics are generally in line with those of the Israeli Jewish population. The total sample includes 1,718 respondents – 1,457 Jews and 261 Arabs.[30] However, our research does not include the Israeli Arab respondents. The main reason is that the vast majority of them refrained from participating in the protests. The demonstrations, in essence, attracted the Jewish population more than the Arab sector.[31]

The dependent variable in the analysis is participation in the social protests of summer 2011. In a dichotomous way, respondents who supported and personally participated in the protests were coded (1), versus the non-participants who responded 'did not support' or 'supported but did not participate', who were coded (0).[32] It should be noted that we counted people who supported but did not participate in the protest as non-participants. The reason for this is twofold: first, few differences were found in the survey responses between the non-supporters and the supporters who did not participate; and second, we are interested to elaborate on the actual participants, who reached an unprecedented 14.9% of the total respondents of the survey.

Our independent variables include ten background indicators. Five are quantitative variables and five are categorical variables. Age is measured in years; educational level is measured on an ordinal scale of 1–8, where 1 = 'elementary school or less' and 8 = 'Full academic degree, MA or higher'; religiosity is measured on a scale of 1–4, where 1 = 'secular' and 4 = 'extremely religious'; societal status (1 = 'low' and 3 = 'high'); and political preference is measured on a scale of 1–7, were 1 = 'extreme right' and 7 = 'extreme left').[33] The categorical variables are all dichotomous: gender (1 = female); salaried work (1 = paid worker); children (1 = have children); marital status (1 = married or living permanently with a partner); and new immigrants from the former Soviet Union (1 = new immigrant).

The 2013 INES survey includes several questions that assess people's perceptions regarding political, social and economic issues. Three separate items were used to measure *grievances*: general situation (*In your opinion, what is Israel's general situation?*); government (*What do you think about the way the government is handling the problems that exist in Israel today?*); and economic situation (*In your opinion, in the past 4 years, has the economic situation of Israel improved, not changed, or deteriorated?*). All measured on a scale of 1 (positive evaluation) to 5 (negative evaluation).

The *efficacy* component was measured by responses to three items.[34] *Internal efficacy* was measured by two items: no-say (*To what degree, in your opinion, can you and your friends influence the policies of the government?*)[35] and Complex (*Sometimes politics seems so complicated that a person like me cannot really understand what is going on). External efficacy*

was measured by one item – no-care (*Politicians do not tend to consider the opinion of the simple citizen*). All items were measured on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 4 (to a great degree).

As indicators of *identity*, we used sociopolitical positions – a left-right self-placement (1 = 'Capitalist definitely' to 4 = 'Socialist definitely'). As an indicator of *social embeddedness*, we used one item (*How often do you tend to talk with your friends and family about political issues*), on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 4 (to a great degree).

In the first stage, univariate analyses were performed to describe the sociodemographic characteristics of each of the two groups of respondents – the participants of the 2011 social protests compared with the responses of the non-participants (using independent t-test or chi-square test). In the second stage, bivariate analyses were performed to examine whether the independent variables are associated with each other (using nonparametric test – Spearman correlation test). In the last stage, we examine three logistic regression models that integrate all the independent variables described above.

Results: differences between participants and non-participants

We will now take an in-depth look at the participants of the 2011 social protests and compare their responses to the non-participants'. Table 1 presents the sociodemographic characteristics of the non-participants compared with the participants in the protests. The findings show, as expected, that there were no significant differences between the non-participants and the participants in the protest in terms of gender. Yet, the mean age was 42.7 years ($SD = 15.1$) among the participants, significantly younger than the mean age ($M = 49.8$, $SD = 16.9$) among the non-demonstrating respondents. Significant differences were observed also in the level of education (ranged between 1 and 8), which was higher among the participants in the protests than within the non-participants. Based on the mean values, the participants in the protest tended to be significantly more secular than the non-participants (71% of the participants described themselves as secular, compared to 49% of the non-participants). According to their political preferences, the participants in the protests were also more oriented to the left than the non-participants. Notwithstanding the above, the societal status of both groups overlap and no significant differences were found (69% of the participants define themselves as belonging to the middle class, and 67% of the non-participants stated the same).

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics by participation in the protests.

	Participants (N=213)			Non-participants (N=1,213)			
Background indicators	*%*	*M*	*SD*	*%*	*M*	*SD*	χ^2/t
Gender Women	50.6			48.8			0.22
Age (years)		49.8	16.9		42.7	15.1	5.99***
Educational level		5.10	1.9		5.7	1.9	4.31***
Religiosity		2.28	0.9		1.9	0.7	7.18***
Societal status		1.96	0.4		2.0	0.4	1.56

Political preference		3.21	1.6	4.18	1.7	8.17***
Marital status Married or living permanently with a partner	72.2			61.2		10.34***
Children Have children	80.7			66.3		21.78***
Salaried work Paid worker	66.1			80.7		17.68***
New immigrants from the former Soviet Union New immigrants	14.7			5.2		14.25***

Educational level (1 – 8, where 8 = 'Full academic degree, MA or higher'; religiosity (1 – 4, where 4 = 'extremely religious'); political preference (1 – 7, where 7 = 'extreme left'; societal status, (1 – 3, where 3 = 'high'). ***$p < .001$.

Table 1 also shows significant differences between the participants and the non-participants according to marital status, children, work, and new immigrants: Among the participants in the protests – about 61% were married or living permanently with a partner, 66% have children, 81% are paid workers and 5% are new immigrants from the former USSR countries.

Table 2 presents detailed findings on the gaps between the participants and non-participants in the summer protests. Not surprisingly, the two groups differ in their political awareness and engagement in politics. It is clear that the demonstrators have stronger opinions on general political issues (including equality, feminism, etc.); they also tend to be more involved in politics and discuss it with acquaintances, be active on the internet regarding current affairs and social issues, and hence are more motivated to participate in a collective action. The gaps between the participants and the non-participants are statistically significant in several areas that we examined. However, neither group necessarily supports any specific party or is involved in any specific political party; interestingly, there were even lower rates of such involvement among the protest participants. We can attribute this to the general dealignment process that has characterised parties in the last decades: there has been a decline in party membership and in the number of supporters; this parallels the general and widespread evidence among Western democracies of losses in grassroots party organisations.[36]

Table 2. Participation in protests and political engagement.

	Participants	Non-participants	Gap
1. Politics are more suitable for men than for women (Definitely do not agree & Do not agree)	91.0%	70.8%	+20.2**
2. Every woman should have the right to an abortion if she wants one (Agree & Definitely Agree)	96.1%	79.5%	+16.6**
3. Assuming two candidates, one male and one female, were equally qualified and appropriate for a	68.5%	55.4%	+13.1**

senior political position, who would you tend to vote for? (no difference)

4. To what extent do you define yourself as a feminist? (To a great degree & To a certain degree)	50.2%	38.6%	+11.6*
5. Freedom of speech should be ensured even for those who speak out against the state (Agree & Definitely Agree)	64.8%	48.6%	+16.2**
6. How often do you tend to talk with your friends and family about political issues? (To a great degree & To a certain degree)	75.7%	59.5%	+16.2**
7. Have you visited the website of a party, candidate, or other site connected to the elections; and/or have you written about the elections online or joined a political group on Facebook?	28.6%	14.2%	+14.4**
8. Do you support any specific party? If so, are you a member, or do you have a job in the party?	2.0%	7.0%	−5.0

* $p \leq .05$

** $p \leq .001.$

Table 3 provides a better picture of the gaps between the participants and the non-participants on statements that express grievances and efficacy. Here too, the responses show a greater tendency among protest participants to express dissatisfaction with the current state of the country, with government achievements, and specifically with the economic situation in recent years. The participants hold the belief that they can influence government policies, i.e. they have a sense of efficacy. The gaps between them and the non-participants are statistically significant on four of the seven questions that supported our first and second hypotheses. Nonetheless, the picture is not one-dimensional, and although the protest participants believe in their ability to influence government policies, there is no clear difference in the other statements that can be related to efficacy.

Table 3. Participation in protests and expressions of grievance and efficacy.

	Participants	Non-participants	Gap
1. What do you think about the way the government is handling the problems that exist in Israel today? (Handling them in a bad way and Handling them very badly)	84.9%	65.7%	19.2**
2. In your opinion, what is Israel's general situation? (Not good or bad)	35.0%	19.9%	15.1**

3. In your opinion, in the past 4 years, has the economic situation of Israel improved, not changed, or deteriorated? (Has deteriorated a little & Has deteriorated a lot)	61.7%	48.4%	13.3*
4. To what degree, in your opinion, can you and your friends influence the policies of the government? (To a great degree & To a certain degree)	47.0%	30.4%	16.6**
5. Sometimes politics seems so complicated that a person like me cannot really understand what is going on. (Agree & Definitely Agree)	37.4%	44.2%	–6.8
6. It makes no difference who you vote for. It does not change the situation. (Agree & Definitely Agree)	32.4%	35.9%	–3.5
7. Politicians do not tend to consider the opinion of the simple citizen. (Disagree & Definitely disagree)	37.6%	39.0%	–1.4

*$p \leq .05$
**$p \leq .001$.

Table 4 provides a richer picture of the gaps between the participants and the non-participants in the socioeconomic sphere, which supports our third hypothesis. Here too, it is evident that supporters of the protests tend to support values of equality and redistribution: they would like to encourage the government to make sure that every person has a job and a reasonable standard of living; they tend to support more socialist values over capitalist ones; and they believe that the more affluent should pay higher taxes than they currently do. The participants are also willing to pay more taxes than the non-participants in order to address the problems the state faces, although the percentages here were lower than in previous questions. No major gaps were found among the groups regarding the need for the government to spend more on housing solutions, creating new jobs, health, and education. In general, it can be seen that people support (at significant rates) governmental investments in social issues. In the next section, using a multivariate analysis, we will further examine the direction and scope of the effects of these attitudes on the actual participation in the demonstrations and assess whether there is a difference in these effects between participants and non-participants.

Table 4. Participation in protests and social economic policy.

	Participants	Non-participants	Gap
People with higher income should pay more taxes than they do	84.3%	70.9%	+13.4**
Support a socialist rather than a capitalist approach	73.4%	62.6%	+10.8**
The government should make sure that everyone has work and a reasonable standard of living	70.9%	65.6%	+5.3*

Willing to pay more taxes in order to take care of the different problems facing the country	41.3%	29.8%	+11.5*
The government should spend more on:			
Housing solutions	95.5%	91.0%	+4.5
Creating new jobs	92.9%	91.3%	+1.6
Elderly care benefits	92.0%	88.2%	+3.8*
Health	87.6%	88.0%	−0.4
Education	85.7%	83.6%	+2.1
Children's benefits	42.7%	53.0%	−10.3*
Unemployment benefits	29.4%	33.1%	+3.7

*$p \leq .05$
**$p \leq .001$.

Explaining the protesters' behaviour: a multivariate analysis

The analysis above shed, separately, some light on the question, why do people protest? The multivariate test takes into consideration all of the above and enables us to find further evidence to what drove participants to protest in Israel in 2011, specifically, and what drives a person to participate in mass protests, in general.

Table 5 displays the results of a logistic regression analysis for predicting the participation in the protests of summer 2011 (1) versus non-participation in the protests (0). Model 1 presents the results of the analysis including the background (control) variables. Seven variables are found to be significant and related to participation in protests: age is negatively correlated, meaning that young people tend to participate more than older people do. Religiosity is also negatively correlated, meaning that the secular tend to participate more than religious people do. Education is positively correlated, i.e. the more educated people are, the more likely they are to participate in demonstrations. Salaried workers tend to participate in protests more than the unemployed (this may be related to social embeddedness). With regard to the political preference (on a scale where 1 = right and 7 = left), it should be noted that these self-placements relate mainly to the primary cleavage in Israel – the security cleavage. The coefficient is positively significant, meaning that the participants who placed themselves further to the left were more likely to participate in protests than their counterparts to the right. Similarly, model 1 shows that on a socioeconomic scale, participants who placed themselves further to the left on economic and social issues (social democrats) tended more to attend demonstrations than did respondents who placed themselves on the right. And finally, new immigrants from the former Soviet Union (negatively correlated) tend to participate in protests less than non-immigrants. However, two background variables were not statistically significant: first was gender: there was no clear gap between males and females, both tended equally to participate in the demonstrations; and second, having children did not increase participation in the summer of 2011.

Table 5. Logistic regressions for predicting participation in a protest.

Variable	MODEL 1			MODEL 2			MODEL 3		
	B	*SE*	Exp. (B)	*B*	*SE*	Exp. (B)	*B*	*SE*	Exp. (B)
Gender	–0.05	0.17	0.95	–0.01	0.18	0.91	–0.05	0.26	0.96
Age	–0.03	0.01	0.97***	–0.03	0.01	0.98***	–0.04	0.01	0.96***
Educational level	0.15	0.05	1.16***	0.15	0.05	1.16**	0.10	0.09	1.10
Religiosity	–0.51	0.12	0.60***	–0.43	0.13	0.65***	–0.79	0.35	0.45***
Political preference	0.29	0.06	1.33***	0.20	0.06	1.22***	0.17	0.40	1.18*
Marital status	–0.46	0.23	0.63*	–0.49	0.24	0.61*	–0.38	0.34	0.68
Children	0.01	0.28	1.01	0.01	0.29	1.01	0.35	0.36	1.42
Salaried work	0.58	0.22	1.79**	0.75	0.24	2.13**	0.73	0.58	2.07*
Societal status	0.07	0.24	1.08	0.32	0.25	1.38	0.45	0.36	1.56
New Immigrant	–1.29	0.36	0.28***	–1.20	0.41	0.30**	–1.03	0.58	0.36
Grievance									
General situation				0.16	0.10	1.18	–0.02	0.14	0.98
Government				0.34	0.16	1.41*	0.63	0.23	1.89**
Identity									
Socialism				0.20	0.11	1.22*	0.24	0.15	1.27
Internal efficacy									
No-say							0.31	0.14	1.36*
Social embeddedness									
Talk politics							0.41	0.15	1.51**
Constant	–1.42	0.75	0.24	–3.91	0.93	0.02***	–3.63	1.35	0.03**
LL	938.30	845.34	427.98						

Nagelkerke R^2	.20	0.22	0.32
N		1292	1181	617

The dependent variable is participation in the summer 2011 protest (1) vs. non-participation (0). * $p \le .05$; ** $p \le .01$ *** $p \le .001$.

Model 2 in shows the results of the logistic regression with two components of grievance that are positively and statistically significant in explaining participation in protest: the more aggrieved people were about the general situation and about the government functioning, the more they tended to participate in the protests. The last column in model 2 shows the Exponentiation (B), which are the odds ratios for the predictors. Each increase of one unit in the dissatisfaction from the general situation and the government functioning (on the scale of 1 to 5) leads to an increase of 19% and 46% in the probability to protest accordingly. Similarly, Model 2 shows that when adding identity measure (on the scale of 1 = capitalism to 4 = socialism), participants who placed themselves further to the left on economic and social issues tended more to attend demonstrations than did respondents who placed themselves on the right. Observing the odds ratios for the predictor points to an increase of 22% in the probability to protest. In sum, respondents who were aggrieved about the general situation and the government performance, and the more they identified with the ideology, the more they were motivated to demonstrate. These results support our second and fifth hypothesis.

Model 3 combines grievance, identity, efficacy and social embeddedness – the concepts that frame the social psychology of protest.[37] These measurements are correlated with the measurement of participation in the protest, reflecting that these concepts are interwoven, as Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans emphasise.[38] The findings show that grievance (the government item) is significant in explaining protest participation. With regard to internal efficacy, the no-say item (on a scale of 1 to 4) was positively associated with participation in the protest, meaning that the more someone believes his action and his friends' actions can influence the policies of the government, the more likely he is to participate in mass rallies. However, two items – no-care and complex – were not statistically significant and therefore were not included in the model. Social embeddedness (on a scale of 1 to 4) was also positively correlated with participation. This suggests that people who discuss politics on a regular basis were more often mobilised for protest than those who do not. The odds ratio point to an increase of 51% in the probability to protest for each increase of one unit in the talk politics variable. Finally, Model 3 shows that general situation and identity are not significant. This suggests that they are moderated by the other components. Altogether, the variables included in the equation explained 32% of the variance in protest participation.

Summary and conclusions

This article sought to explore the social psychology of protest from an individual perspective by trying to understand why some people choose to demonstrate while others avoid doing so. In other words, the goal of the current research was to examine the extent to which perceptions of sociopolitical context and other personal and social factors are connected with participation in a social protest. By analysing the Israeli case, we sought to enrich the discussion regarding the political behaviour of the protest participation phenomenon. Specifically, we sought to examine

the association between grievance, political efficacy, identification, and social embeddedness on with participation versus non-participation in demonstrations. Following Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans' theoretical approach, we tested the social psychology of protest using evidence from the mass demonstrations that took place in Israel in the summer of 2011. Our main assumptions were that people who felt aggrieved, who were motivated by a sense of influence and efficacy, who identified with the cause and purpose of the protests, and who were socially embedded with their counterparts were more likely to participate in the protests. We illustrated this point with an overview of the empirical evidence.

The results of this study have empirical, methodological and theoretical implications. First, examining the 2011 summer events provides empirical evidence by combining the above explanations. Although previous studies discussed in detail the causes leading to the outbreak of the protests in Israel, no concrete analysis (to the best of our knowledge) of the profile of the demonstrators and the context that led them to join the demonstrations, from the individual perspective, was conducted.[39] The findings showed that participation varied by several personal factors and perceptions of sociopolitical context, suggesting an apparent connection between the variables. Furthermore, the regression analysis showed that combination of personal characteristics – grievance, identification with the ideology, social embeddedness and internal efficacy (one item) – were significant in explaining differences in protest participation. At the same time, combining the four components led to mixed conclusions.

Grievance and social embeddedness appear to play the prominent role in perceptions of sociopolitical context and they can be associated with motivational force in itself. Similar to Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans our study confirms that grievance is the substrate on which distrust of institutions grow.[40] Identity appears also to play a central role in motivating participation.[41] However, when efficacy item was added, the identity item was not significant (and to some extent moderated). This leads us to the efficacy component, who appear to play a central role in the dynamics of participation: we find that only one item in the internal efficacy (no-say) was associated with participation. This implies that people who truly believe that their actions may influence politicians and policy in everyday life are motivated to take action. However, two items – no-care and complex – no differences between participant and non-participants were observed, nor in the regression analysis that were examined.

Our findings also confirm that the personal profile context also plays a role, and contributes to citizens' sense of empowerment to participate in a protest, but here too the conclusions are mixed. Participants tended to be young, educated, secular, employed and native-born, but were rather diverse on other personal characters like gender, having children, marital status and social status. In contrast to Rosenhek and Shalev, we did not find support for the claim that the core supporters were drawn from the middle class (a claim that is trivial since the majority of the respondents define themselves as middle class).[42]

There are several limitations to this study. First, the fact that the efficacy was included only after the elections (and thus reduced the sample size in the latest models we tested) limited the strength of the findings. Second, our study comprises only the demonstration is a single country and generalisation of these findings are therefore limited to Israel only. Future studies should examine those issues too. Despite these limitations, this study adds to our knowledge some theoretical and empirical contributions to the existing research: the fact that the sample size and the sampling procedure, that was randomly selected, ensured the representativeness of the public and enables us to generalise the findings. The high percentage of the participants who reported that actively participated in such demonstrations allows us to examine the variance between the

participants and the non-participants in the protests. In addition, the wide range of independent variables, personal and contextual, broaden our understanding of why people protest and reveal the profile of the individuals who protest.

Notes

1 Shultziner and Shoshan, "A Journalists' Protest?" 44–69.

2 Meyer and Tarrow, *The Social Movement Society*.

3 Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans, "The Social Psychology of Protest," 886–905; and Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans, "Individuals in Movements," 103–139.

4 Lipset, *Political Man*; Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture*; Barnes and Kaase, *Political Action*; and Klandermans et al., "Embeddedness and Identity," 992–1012.

5 Wright, "The Next Generation of Collective Action Research," 859–879.

6 See note 3 above.

7 Emotions like anger, frustration, and fear are examples of an essential individual-level factor that may emerge, depending on the situation, and they can trigger the urge to protest. Although we acknowledge the influence of emotions (group-based anger) on participation in protests, no questions were carried out in the survey and did not allow us to examine the subject in depth.

8 Runciman, *Relative Deprivation and Social Justice*; Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*; Crosby, "A Model of Egoistical Relative Deprivation," 85–113.

9 Klandermans, "Mobilization and Participation," 583–600; and Klandermans, *The Social Psychology of Protest*.

10 Campbell et al., *The Voter Decides*; Lane, *Political Life*; and Gamson, *Power and Discontent*; Gamson *Talking Politics*.

11 Niemi et al., "Measuring Internal Political Efficacy in the 1988 National Election Study," 1407–1413.

12 Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," 263–337; and Balch, "Multiple Indicators in Survey Research: The Concept 'Sense of Political Efficacy'," 1–43.

13 Karp and Banducci, "Political Efficacy and Participation in Twenty-seven Democracies," 311–334; and Sulitzeanu-Kenan and Halperin, "Making a Difference: Political Efficacy and Policy Preference Construction," 295–322.

14 Melucci, *Nomads of the Present*; Melucci, "The Process of Collective Identity," 41–63; Klandermans, *The Social Psychology of Protest*; Della Porta and Diani, *Social Movements*; and Van Zomeren et al., "Toward an Integrative Social Identity Model of Collective Action," 504–535.

15 See note 9 above; Taylor and Whittier, *Collective Identity in Social Movement Communities*, 105.

16 Meyer and Tarrow, *The Social Movement Society*; Tarrow, *Power in Movement*.

17 Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans, "Fitting Demand and Supply," 183.

18 See note 9 above; and Gamson, *Talking Politics*.

19 Gould, "Collective Action and Network Structure," 182–196.

20 Putnam, "Bowling Alone," 65–78; and Klandermans et al., see note 4 above.

21 Tilly and Wood, *Social Movements, 1768–2012*.

22 Chan, "Social Network Sites and Political Engagement," 430–451.

23 Van Stekelenburg et al., "Context Matters," 179–203; and Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans, see note 17 above.

24 Perugorría et al., "The Spanish Indignados and Israel's Social Justice Movement," 91–118. Alimi, "'Occupy Israel'," 402–407.

25 Gamson, "Arab Spring, Israeli Summer, and the Process of Cognitive Liberation," 463–8.

26 Della Porta and Diani, *Social Movements.*

27 Alimi, see note 24 above.

28 Van Zomeren et al., see note 14 above.

29 Bandura, *Self-Efficacy*.

30 A random sample of individuals from the Ministry of Interior's Listing of the population, to which mobile and fixed-line telephone numbers were matched. Data collection was performed as a panel design on a two-wave panel: pre-election survey (N=868) conducted in December 2012 – January 2013 (prior to 22 January 2013, Knesset election) and a post-election survey (N=850) conducted in January-February 2013. The survey was conducted by Tel Aviv University's B. I. and Lucille Cohen Institute for Public Opinion Research and carried out the fieldwork using Hebrew, Russian, and Arabic telephone interviews. For more information, see *Israel National Elections Studies*, http://www.ines.tau.ac.il/2013.html.

31 In the survey, less than 6% of the Arab respondents said they took part in the demonstrations.

32 Based on the question: 'Did you support or participate in the social protests of summer 2011?'.

33 These self-placements relate mainly to the primary cleavage in Israel – the security cleavage. The Spearman correlation with the identity item is relatively weak ($r = 0.196$, $p <0.001$).

34 See note 11 above.

35 The item was recoded.

36 Dalton et al., "The Consequences of Partisan Dealignment," 37–63; and Scarrow, "Parties without Members?" 79–101.

37 It should be noted that the efficacy components were asked in the post-election survey. For this reason, the N is lower.

38 See note 3 above.

39 Alimi, see note 24 above; and Gamson, see note 25 above.

40 Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans, see note 17 above.

41 Klandermans et al., see note 4 above; and Van Zomeren et al., see note 14 above.

42 Rosenhek and Shalev, "The Political Economy of Israel's 'Social Justice' Protests," 31–48.

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Is religiosity a risk or a protective factor? The connection between religiosity and deviance among religious youths

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ABSTRACT

This article seeks to examine the connection between religiosity and deviance, focusing on the phenomenon of risk behaviour among Jewish national-religious youth at-risk. The study was conducted by using interviews with 66 participants in six focus groups among teenagers and young people at-risk, normative youth and professionals. Analysis of the research findings revealed several main themes that touch upon the issue of religion as both a protecting and a risk factor for religious youths, beginning with the question of personal identity, and continue with the influence of social control and social labelling.

Of the many studies devoted to explaining risk phenomena among youths only a few have sought to explain risk and protective among young people on religious and faith-based grounds.[1] Studies examining the relationship between religiosity and social deviance have found that religion is generally a significant buffer for adolescents against such risk behaviours as deviance and delinquency.[2] The dominant factors contributing to resilience in religion are the protection mechanisms of social control and social pressure, as expressed in labelling theory, which are exerted on adolescents and protect them from such risk behaviours as dropping out, detachment, deviance, delinquency, violence, drugs, etc.[3] Nevertheless, according to Regnerus,[4] a religious life does not appear to provide an absolute shield against risk behaviours.

This article seeks to study a sample of national-religious youths in Israel to ascertain whether religion is indeed a factor in resilience vis-à-vis deviant behaviours, as found in most studies on this issue. Is it possible that at times religion serves as a risk factor that propels youths towards risk behaviours? The choice of this population as a sample for the study is based on the understanding that youths belonging to the national-religious stream in Israel are facing a difficult dilemma: on one hand they are enjoined to uphold the integrity of religious values; on the other hand, they are expected to integrate into the largely secular Israeli society, which exposes them to a range of temptations.

National-religious youths in Israel

According to Ministry of Education data, 17% of Israelis students attend schools belonging to the national-religious sector.[5] The identity of the national-religious camp is based on two opposing components: religious belief and observance of religious laws (*mitzvot*), on one hand, and openness and willingness to integrate within modern life and the secular world, on the other.[6] The difficulty in coping with these two contradictory elements is also reflected in the residential patterns of the national-religious sector, which can be found primarily in mixed urban neighbourhoods, alongside a non-religious population, at the same time trying to maintain a homogenous community character.[7]

This dual existential challenge presents seductions and difficulties especially for youths, who are at a stage where they are required to consolidate their personal, social, and ethical identity. It is an age of identity moratorium, and the desire to explore various experiences, such as rebelling and taking liberties.[8] Goodman identified five main areas of behaviour considered hazardous for national-religious youths[9]:

- *Addictive behaviours*: smoking in general and hookah smoking in particular. According to publications of the Israel Anti-Drug Authority, 6.8% of secular youths use light drugs, compared to 3.5% of religious youths, but religious youth use more hard drugs (6.2%) than secular youths do (5.4%).[10]
- *Entertainment culture,* such as attending disco parties at home, and in extreme cases, frequenting pubs.
- *Lack of Modesty*: like watching pornographic movies, and breaking behavioural norms between boys and girls.
- *Moral issues*: "light' vandalism of property, graffiti, profanity, and more.
- *Halachic-cultural issues*: going for long periods of time without a skullcap, adopting strange hairstyles, and more.

There is a positive correlation among the national-religious youths between the abandonment of religious symbols and the adoption of risk behaviours. A youth who, as a result of internal or external processes, loses his connection with uniquely religious aspects, is liable to find himself on a slippery slope with no footholds, eventually engaging in risk behaviours. Indeed, the data of the Central Bureau of Statistics indicate that although the drop-out rate among students in the religious and secular education systems is similar, the proportion of students in religious education who dropped out of school and who attend alternative educational frameworks or take on temporary work is lower than that among children in the secular educational system.[11]

Religiosity and faith as risk or protective factors among adolescents

Religiosity and spirituality are perceived as enhancing mental wellbeing and providing resources a person may use in coping with negative life events – in other words, they can serve as a protective factor.[12] As noted above, most studies examining the relationship between religiosity and social deviance and risk found that, for the most part, religion serves as a significant buffer for adolescents and adults against such risk behaviours as deviance and delinquency, both in developed and in developing societies.[13] The few studies conducted in Israel have produced similar findings.[14] Zuroff examined youths enrolled in religious high schools and found a strong negative correlation between level of religiosity and willingness to use drugs. He related this both to religious faith and to the religious way of life.[15]

Various researchers have explained these findings with reference to Hirschi & Stark's social control theory, according to which religiosity provides youths with four elements: attachment, commitment, involvement, and beliefs.[16] The four dimensions amount to a mechanism of social control, which in turn inhibits youths from slipping into risk behaviours.[17] Religious persons are obligated to obey certain rules of conduct, including behavioural codes that prohibit deviant and aberrant behaviours. This commitment may serve to inhibit pathological conduct. In addition, Regnerus argued that religion is not the sole and exclusive factor affecting adolescent risk behaviours, and that the community in which the youths live also plays a significant role.[18] Through these mechanisms, and by means of the group of 'equals' or of socialisation agents, pressures are exerted on members to adapt to accepted practices and to distance themselves from risk behaviours.[19] Any deviation from norms is perceived as an aberration and a sin, and may lead to negative labelling, ostracism, and social boycott.[20] According to Regnerus, life in the shadow of religion and according to it protects young children more than it does adolescents.[21]

The preceding discussion notwithstanding, religious life does not appear to provide a complete shield against risk behaviours. Recently, doubts have been voiced about the role of religion, especially of its rigid boundaries, as a risk factor in cases in which the youths question their religious identity.[22] Pargament argued that religion may be a risk factor ('stress factor') for adolescents as much as a protective factor ('inoculating factor')[23] For Kaniel, the religious identity of adolescents, more than any other identity, needs to raise doubts before it can crystallise and create a coherent and consistent religious identity.[24] When doubt and dilemmas are not legitimate, and when parent-child relations are problematic and charged with alienation and anger, there is a danger of the children becoming rebellious or adopting risk behaviours, in the wake of their religious 'war of independence.' Alienation and anger may also make it difficult for adolescents to develop a stable self-identity, which can also lead youths to risk behaviours, as part of their self-identity search.[25]

The purpose of the present article is to examine whether and under what conditions does religion serve as a protective factor against risk behaviours or as a risk factor in itself, and whether there is a connection between renouncing religion and risk behaviours. By way of examining these issues, it selected a Zionist national-religious population, which by virtue of its ideology espouses the preservation of religious tradition but also upholds the obligation to be a part of society at large, and which challenges its youths to preserve a religious way of life despite the daily attractions they encounter.[26]

Research methods

The main research method was qualitative, based on focus groups. In addition to the qualitative research, focus group participants were asked to complete short research questionnaires designed to collect demographic data about the participants.

Participants

Sixty-six participants were divided into six focus groups, according their functions and geographic location. Four of the focus groups were groups of youths with different characteristics and from different geographic areas that have a concentration of religious residents in general, and religious youths in particular. Two additional groups were made up of professionals. To assemble the groups, we approached the departments of youth advancement in cities with an extensive population of national religious youths. Heads of departments in three cities agreed to conduct the research in the youth advancement centres in their cities. Participation in the focus groups was voluntary. There were no inclusion criteria, and all the youths who were interested in participating did so. Details of group participants are listed below:

- A group of managers of youth departments in religious and mixed (religious and secular) municipalities. Nine officials participated in the group. The group contained seven men and two women, with an average age of 36.8 years (SD = 4.56), an average seniority of 7.33 years (SD = 2.25), and an average of 12.37 years (SD = 4.47) of experience working with youths.
- A group of 15 therapists, all men, including youth workers, youth advancement workers, and school attendance officers, dealing with religious youths at risk in various settings within religious and mixed local authorities. The therapists came from different disciplines

(welfare, education, criminology, and social work).

- A group of religious youths at risk from Netanya (a large city, with a mixed population). The group consisted of seven youths, all male, living in Netanya, aged 16–17 (M = 16.28, SD = 0.48). The meeting took place at a youth centre for religious youths at risk.
- A group of religious youths at risk from Jerusalem. The group included nine youths, six boys and three girls. The age of the participants ranged between 15–17 (M = 15.66, SD = 0.86). Three of them had dropped out of school. The meeting took place at a youth centre for religious youths at risk from all over the country.
- A group of religious young adults 18–23 (M = 20.45, SD = 1.63) from Jerusalem, formerly classified as youths at risk. This group, comprised of five men and six women, included young people who had been treated at the youth centres when they were adolescents. The group was designed to provide a retrospective view of life at risk among religious youths. The meeting took place at the youth centre.
- A group of normative religious youths from Elad. This group included 15 normative national-religious youths. The group included 8 boys and 6 girls, aged 14–18 (M = 15.8, SD = 1.26). Members of this group were intended to serve both as a control group for religious youths at risk, and as informants with respect to the differences (in their opinion) between religious and secular youths, providing insight into the unique characteristics of religious youths. The meeting took place at the youth centre to which they belonged.

Tools

A focus group is a method of interviewing designed to generate knowledge based on a group discussion. Because participants in focus groups are encouraged to examine their views in relation to the phenomenon under study, such groups are considered to be an effective and common tool by qualitative researchers. The goal of focus groups is to achieve a deep understanding of the feelings, attitudes, and experiences of the participants. Focus groups make deliberate use of social interaction between participants as a way of discovering hidden knowledge that is often not disclosed in personal interviews.[27]

Focus groups provide access to shared knowledge derived from different groups of interviewees. The underlying idea of this tool is that group processes may contribute to the creation of knowledge that has not been exposed in another setting, thus providing access to overt and covert data that cannot be revealed in questionnaires or interviews.[28]

This article uses triangulation to examine the phenomenon under investigation from different perspectives so as to obtain a more accurate view of the subject.[29] Researchers have noted that in a qualitative study triangulation enables validating the data by using a variety of sources of information.[30] The triangulation of the stakeholders' perspectives (youths at risk, normative youths, adults, principals, and caregivers) in the present study was designed to explore the broadest spectrum of views, discover topics that are not being discussed otherwise, and enable participants to express views and concerns in a safe and familiar social environment.

The questionnaire guide, on which the focus group discussions were based and which served as a guide for group facilitators, included questions relating to the definition of religious youths at risk, the role of religion in the lives of religious youths at risk, and the unique social responses to religious youths at risk and to their special needs. All the groups discussed the same questions, formulated slightly differently, depending on the nature of the group.

Research process

As noted, the focus groups were conducted in various places in Israel where there is a high concentration of religious youths, so as to create maximum representation. The focus groups were held in the field, at the youth centres that the youths were accustomed to visit, so that it was the research team that went to the participants, and not the other way around. This put participants at ease and created a sense of openness. Group discussions were held in a warm and friendly atmosphere, providing a safe and comfortable place for participants to express their opinions. Each group was guided by two researchers. The content of the group discussions was recorded (with the knowledge and permission of the participants) and transcribed. At the end of each focus group, a short anonymous demographic questionnaire was completed by participants. It was made clear to all participants that participation was voluntary, that they could leave the group at any moment, and that they were guaranteed anonymity.

Data analysis

The data were first analysed using open coding, based on the main themes that emerged. These themes were discussed by the researchers, and subsequently analysed in an external discussion, based on the research literature in the field, to improve the validity of the categories. The reliability of the findings was tested using validation techniques, as well as group discussion between researchers and other professionals from both the academic world and the field of therapy.

Findings

Analysis of the discussions that took place in the focus groups led to the formulation of five main themes concerning the relationship between religiosity and either protective or risk behaviours, as shown below.

'The religious youth feels religious all the time.' Religious identity as a differentiating and obligating personal identity

One of the main issues mentioned in all the groups was the extent to which religious identity defines the identity of the youths and influences their life in every decision, thought, and behavior. It appears that in practice that there is no separation between personal and religious identity. As one of the therapists noted:

> I suppose that if a secular youth is asked how he defines himself, he will not use the word secular. But a religious youth will define himself as religious. This category is repressive: it says that the religious youth is always religious. Therefore, there is no arena, whether inside the home or outside it, that is unregulated, because everyone as a society, as well as the youth himself, we have an idea of what it means to be religious in this world.

One of the therapists said that the difference between religious and secular youths is '*the extent to which the [religious] ideology occupies a place in their lives, and among the religious, G-d is all the time involved.*' The holistic nature of religious identity gains expression in many aspects, external and internal alike. '*They [the religious] feel distinct and different from the general population, and feel that this difference obligates them.*' Externally, the distinction is expressed

in clothing, in what the clothing represents, and in the social expectation from a person displaying religious characteristics: *'If I wear a skullcap and I want to walk into a bar, everyone will see me.'* Internally, religion also affects one's thoughts and feelings, as well as actual conduct.

In most of the focus groups, both of youths and of professionals, religion was presented as a differentiating factor for youths. It incorporates many obligations on the one hand, and many prohibitions on the other, and as such it dictates the youths' behaviour. According to participants, they feel that they must answer to a double set of expectations: one set of expectations from the self, and another, unique to religious youths in general. One of the therapists said: *'Unlike the case of secular youths, from a religious youth there are expectations similar to those from a secular youth, to get a good grade in mathematics, but then also to pray three times a day.'*

One of the girls in the normative group described it as follows: *'Religious youths face more limitations in all sorts of things, which secular youths do not have; they can do whatever they want.'* This is manifest in the statement of one of the attendance officers: *'I think that among the national-religious youths there is tension between two poles. Even if it is subconscious, it is an internal tension between built-in values. He is torn between two poles. Negotiating between what's permitted and what's prohibited. What is prohibited from a religious perspective, is normative among secular youths.'*

'A person grows up and starts asking questions.' The formation of religious identity as a stage in the crystallisation of adolescent identity

This article shows that formation of religious youths' identity, in addition to processes taking place in every youth, also includes the formation of religious identity. In this process, questions about faith arise among the youths, who examine and challenge the truths they had learned so far in life. One of the youths in the normative group said, *'Everyone here at some point goes through these things, because I think it's part of the process of growing up; a person grows up and starts asking questions.'*

The most striking difference between the normative youths participating in the study and those at risk was the way they described the social responses to the question of identity. One of the normative girls said: *'Yes, we are allowed to ask the questions. We are at the most critical age for developing our personal identity, both externally and internally, so no one tells you not to ask a question. If you have questions, ask. This is the time. Don't come back in ten years and say why didn't I ask such and such questions.'*

In cases when youths can question their religious identity, religion is perceived as building resilience. By contrast, the youths at risk described the silencing of questions about faith, a situation in which asking questions is considered heresy, and it is met with harsh criticism from the environment. Youths at risk connected such negative attitudes with reactions to behaviours perceived as erosion of the religious identify: *'Religious youths face a dilemma concerning issues of religion and G-d, which definitely causes confusion, self-seeking, and leads to having to cope with an environment and a family that do not accept it.'*

One of the adults explained: *'Once there is a lack of containment, you don't have your place to ask, your corner in this world, where it begins and develops … The difficulty increases because of religion, which is not the case with secular youths.'*

According to one of the therapists: *'A religious child, who is alright in every respect, except for an issue with G-d, will receive [the message] from someone on the inside, from the yeshiva,*

from the family, that something is wrong with him. Even if he goes to school, behaves well, everything is fine, volunteers. He doesn't even have to be told. It is enough if his mother's eyes are wet when she lights the Shabbat candles'. In general, the youths objected to the limitations they felt in expressing their identify crisis, and to the methods of social control and labelling that were used to impose these limitations.

'They'll simply toss me out.' External social supervision

The religious youths at risk described vividly the feeling that they are monitored by the environment at every step they take: *'As a religious youth you represent the religious, and they are constantly examining you from every side, at every step I take. When I take off my skullcap I am free to be who I really want to be at that moment. It weighs on me all the time. My life is much simpler when I am without a skullcap. And that's true for anyone around. You find yourself lecturing other people all the time instead of yourself … '*

In the opinion of the youths at risk, as well as of some of the caregivers, the source of the risk lies in the rigid boundaries of some of the religious communities and the tight social supervision. In their opinion, the inability to ask questions or experiment with an unacceptable activity is what leads them to breach the limits imposed by society. One of the therapists said: *'The risk factor may act much faster than in the case of a secular youth. If a girl from a normative home shows up with a piercing or breaks a simple status quo, the parents may make a face. But a girl from a religious home will cause a huge breakdown.'*

According to one of the youths at risk:

> The home is pressuring, the surroundings are pressuring and boring, so I breach a fence … My parents tell me to get up and pray, and I decide not to get up, not to give a damn, I breached a fence. Then they add not smoking, and I smoke. Here I also break a convention and breach a fence, but it's already easier to do it, I've already experienced it. And from there to drugs the path is simple and easy. If you're in a process of breaching fences, nothing will stop you, but maybe you yourself.

There was agreement in all focus groups that rigid boundaries and strict social supervision in religious society promoted risk behaviours. In the youth department managers' focus group, participants argued that the more religious and more observant the community is, the greater the risk factor to which the youths living in that community are exposed. Lack of space for asking questions, for challenging, and for experimenting with the unacceptable brings about the need to break through the boundaries. In their opinion, this is also the reason why the breaching of boundaries tends to be extreme.

Because there are groups of religious youths in which it is not acceptable to talk about risk behaviours, when a youth oversteps the limits, he has no way of regulating himself. According to one of the youth department managers: *'A religious youth knows the limits when he is within the confines of the tribe; the minute he breaks out of the tribe, there are no more boundaries; he doesn't even have the boundaries that secular boys or girls have. He's in a state of chaos, and therefore at risk.'*

According to participants, one of the principal modes of operation of social supervision is labelling. '*There's no place to hide from the point of view of social supervision. And the moment you tested the boundaries a little, you are already classified as a problematic child. It's enough not to show up to Gemara lessons a few times, and already everyone sees you as being at risk*'.

'He's torn from inside.' Internal supervision

The question of internal supervision and the inner feelings of the religious youth vis-à-vis his non-normative thoughts and behaviour arose mainly among the professionals (managers of the youth departments, therapists, and attendance officers), and less among the youths themselves. The therapists explained it by the fact that *"the youths do no discuss their internal feelings of guilt, because they are already familiar with the narrative whereby the risk is due to the community pressuring them. But deep down, and only after many personal conversations, do we learn that the risk begins with an internal feeling that they are not alright. "*

According to one of the youth department managers, *"Among religious youths, the questions trigger a lot of conflicts, and these conflicts damage his ability to build a self-image. He builds himself a self-image based on the conflict. 'I'm probably not [al] right if I ask, if I wonder.'"* According to the professionals, the religious youth at risk carries a heavy burden of guilt feelings. *'The youth cannot check out things without feeling that there is criticism in his inner and outside world. They do not allow him the space, so there are feelings of guilt: you do something wrong, you will be punished by G-d'.* They also feel guilty because of the disappointment they cause their parents and the external environment.

According to the professionals, the sense of guilt eventually leads the youth to loneliness*: 'It makes the youth feel alone. Even within the community, he is alone, because it is him against religion. When he does something that is bad, even if others don't see him, he feels that he did something against religion, which isolates and depresses him. The religious youth is lonelier.'*

'A Torah lesson gives you a better feeling, as if I did something good.' Religion as a risk or protective factor

Another issue that arose consistently in discussions in the focus groups was whether religion and religiosity served as a protecting factor against non-normative behaviours, or perhaps exposed the youths to increased levels of risk because of the associated doubts, to which secular youths were not exposed. Almost all the participants in the study – the youths, the adults, and the professionals – agreed that religion itself did not constitute a risk factor. One of the youths said: *'Religion is like a fence in a tall building. The fence defines and arranges a frame for me, and also protects me so that I don't stray, I don't fall. I feel that I can go as far as the fence, and it will eventually protect me. But the closer the fence is, the tighter it is, the higher the chance that I will fall and breach it.'* This statement, which is representative of what has been said in all the groups, suggests that the youths feel that religion protects them: it charts a path for them and sets boundaries. As far as they are concerned, the problem is not religion, but the rigid boundaries and the demands to preserve these boundaries without questioning. One of the therapists defined it as lack of room for manoeuvre.

The therapists went on to explain that in their opinion, religion is the way to address the risk rather than its cause: *'Parents are the child's conduit to faith and to G-d. If the child is in conflict with the parents, the first thing that is damaged is the world of faith. All anger is directed at G-d in some form. From the point of view of the child, the parents are the representatives of G-d, so in all cases there is an unbroken connection between the child's spiritual place and the place of risk.'*

Discussion

The aim of the article was to examine the role of religion in the lives of religious youths at risk. The youths at risk and those not at risk, who participated in the focus groups, presented religion as a factor that protects them and sets limits. But religious life does not provide an absolute shield against risk behaviours, especially for national-religious youths and for those who live in the space between the secular-modern world and the religious-conservative one.[31] Their way of life makes it difficult to characterise and differentiate themselves so as to reach a complete personal, social, and ethical identity at an age that seeks such identity and needs it to progress to a stage of maturity and independence.[32]

Analysis of the research findings exposes several main themes that touch upon the issue of religion as both a protecting and a risk factor for religious youths, beginning with the question of personal identity. At this age, the adolescent's primary task is to consolidate his personality and identity. Consolidation of the ego identity and identity diffusion are extreme opposite results of the search for identity in adolescence.[33] The findings of this study are consistent with those of other studies, according to which the formation of religious identity is a significant dimension in the life of religious adolescents.[34]

According to Fisherman, the national-religious adolescent, who is exposed to the secular world, debates questions of faith and submits his parents' and teachers' pronouncements to the test of his understanding and experience.[35] These experiences and dilemmas are necessary for the consolidation of mature faith. A religious adolescent who has passed this stage successfully and has internalised the values of his religious behaviour, will be characterised by internal discipline, the ability to delay gratification, and high self-control.

According to Kaniel, in order to create a cohesive and consistent religious identity adolescents must feel that parental love is unconditional and independent of circumstances.[36] Parental support should serve as a 'protective net' for the youth's religious identity. If adolescents find a receptive ear for voicing dilemmas, they may achieve a mature faith characterised by a high level of cohesion. The consolidation of religious identity takes place when the youths accept religious values and norms based on their beliefs, and not because they are commanded to do so.

The descriptions presented in the findings section suggest that containing the youths during adolescence and providing them with the possibility of discussing the they experience, and even making sure that socialising agents in the national-religious sector address these dilemmas in a warm, accepting, and enabling atmosphere, ultimately leads to the construction of a normative personal identity. This was explicitly expressed in the focus groups both by youths at risk, who complained about a lack of inclusiveness, and by the normative youths, who reported encouragement on the part of socialisation agents for voicing questions and dilemmas.

The findings of the study show that social supervision conducted in a liberal, pluralistic, more open and less rigid manner, as described by the normative youths, provided a sense of containment both to youths who were facing dilemmas and to those who were less observant of religious ritual. This containment appeared to increase the level of engagement, commitment, trust, and involvement of youths with their parents and with the community, helping them move towards conformity.[37] By contrast, the national-religious youths at risk perceived religion and the religious-communal framework as representing too strict a level of social supervision, which appeared to undermine their sense of trust, attachment, commitment, and involvement, led them to breach the social boundaries, and eventually – to their labelling as deviants.[38] A quantitative follow-up study, using Hirschi & Stark's Social Control Questionnaire,[39] could confirm or refute this explanation.

Social labelling is another dimension that has been prominent in the present study as a factor that can help curb deviant behaviour or serve as a driving force towards negative behaviour.[40] According to this approach, society responds to any social action by assigning a positive or negative label to it. If the label is a positive one, the actor internalises the label and behaves in the future in a normative and accepted way within the given society. If the label is negative, the actor, enacting a self-fulfiling prophecy, finds himself living up to the negative label. He is then removed from society, blocking before him the opportunity of returning to it later.[41] This social ostracism is perceived as moderating nonconformist behaviour, especially in societies built around community relations, such as that of the national-religious youths. At the same time, labelling and ostracism may leave the youths outside of the social-communal circle altogether, pushing them to take extreme action.

The youths in the present study argued repeatedly that the fear of ostracism and exclusion by family or friends prevented them from violating religious laws. But, those youths who found it difficult to resist the temptations they faced, or who raised doubts and questions about their faith, claimed that when they were caught in a breach, direct or indirect labelling was used against them, which accelerated their departure from the world of religion, set them apart from the religious community of equals, and even pushed them, as on a slippery slope, towards risk behaviours. Note that at times the labelling comes not necessarily from an external source, but from the self. The picture emerging from the accounts of participants is that of a religious youth, who, even if successful academically and accepted by friends, is liable to feel guilty and amiss, deserving of punishment, for merely having some heretical ideas, thoughts of sexual tendencies that are not socially acceptable, or for secretly committing a violation. Such self-labelling may trigger a self-fulfiling prophecy in the same way as negative social labelling does.[42]

In sum, religiosity occupies a central place in the professional literature in the behavioural sciences as a factor that inhibits and prevents deviance, risk, and delinquency, both at the individual and community levels.[43] The findings of this article show that religion is not a risk factor. Moreover, the youths themselves maintained that religion protected them and served as a barrier against risk behaviours; it marked their path and established boundaries for them. The problem, then, is not religion, but the rigid boundaries and the demand to observe these boundaries without questioning, or as one of the interviewees put it, 'the lack of room for maneuver.'

The present findings are of significant research and practical importance. From the research point of view, the findings present a new and different aspect of the relationship between religion, deviance, and risk behaviours, and contribute to knowledge about the complex nature of the influence of religion and life within a religious framework on the choices that religious youths make in the course of adolescence and identity formation. The present study, however, was conducted on a small scale and involved a well-defined population. To deepen the knowledge about these processes, additional studies are needed, which examine both a larger sample and a more diverse population within the religious community, including, for example, ultra-Orthodox youths.

From the practical point of view, the conclusions of the study emphasise the need for understanding the processes that religious youths undergo, while consolidating their personal identity in general and their religious identity in particular, with the aid of family and educational socialisation agents. A liberal educational ideology based on cooperation, flexibility, and openness, and the possibility of expressing doubts and questions regarding religious faith, will lead adolescents to better internalisation of the educational values that these agents wish to

instil.[44]

Notes

1 Fisherman, "Socialization Agents Influencing."
2 Lahav, "Processes and Changes Among Ultra-Orthodox"; and Alexander et al., "Religious beliefs against smoking; and Wilchek-Aviad and Ne'eman-Haviv, "Do Meaning in Life, Ideological Commitment."
3 Baier and Wright, "If You Love Me"; Freund and Band-Winterstein "Cultural Psychiatry: A Spotlight on the Experience"; and Smith, "Religious Participation and Parental Moral."
4 Regnerus, "Religion and Positive Adolescent Outcomes"; and "Linked Lives, Faith, and Behavior."
5 Ministry of Education, "Students in the School System."
6 Herman, et al., "Religious? National! National Religious Camp"; and Sheleg, "The New Religious."
7 Freund and Band-Winterstein, "Cultural Psychiatry: A Spotlight on the Experience."
8 Fisherman, "Socialization agents influencing"; and Wilchek-Aviad and Ne'eman-Haviv, "Do meaning in life, ideological Commitment."
9 Goodman, "Religious Zionist Youth."
10 Rahav and Teichman, "The Use of Psychoactive Materials."
11 Central Bureau of Statistics, "Israeli Statistics Yearbook."
12 Brauer, Tittle and Antonaccio,"Does Religion Suppress, Socialize, Soothe"; Fisherman, "Socialization Agents Influencing"; and Israel-Cohen, Kaplan, Noy, and Kashy-Rosenbaum, "Religiosity as a Moderator of Self-Efficacy."
13 Alexander et al., "Religious Beliefs Against Smoking"; and Salas-Wright, Olate & Vaughn, "Direct and Mediated Associations."
14 Friedman, "Hilltop Youth: Political-anthropological"; and, 2017; Nakash, Nagar, Barker, and Lotan, "The Association Between Religiosity and Alcohol"; and Wilchek-Aviad and Ne'eman-Haviv, "Do Meaning in Life, Ideological Commitment."
15 Zuroff, "Link Between Religious Youth."
16 Hirschi and Stark, "Hellfire and Delinquency."
17 Adamczyk, Freilich, and Kim, "Religion and Crime: A Systematic Review"; and Shechory and Laufer, "Social Control Theory and the connection."
18 See note 4 above.
19 Baier and Wright, "If You Love Me"; and Smith, "Religious Participation and Parental Moral."
20 See note 7 above.
21 See note 4 above.
22 Romi and Bar-Lev, "Religious Identity and Self Identity."
23 Pargament, "The Psychology of Religion."
24 Kaniel, "The Settlers of the Hills."
25 See note 24 above.
26 Sheleg, "The New Religious."
27 Morgan, "Focus Groups as Qualitative Research."
28 Fontana and Fery, "The Interview: From Structured Questions."
29 Neumann, "Social Research Methods."
30 Grinnell and Unrau, "Social Work Research and Evaluation"; Neumann and Kreuger, "Social Work Research Methods: Qualitative"; and Sands and Roer-Strier, "Using Data Triangulation."
31 See note 27 above.
32 See note 25 above.
33 Erikson, "Youth: Identity and Crisis."
34 Fisherman, "Socialization Agents Influencing"; and Furrow, King, and White, "Religion and Positive Youth Development."
35 See note 25 above.
36 See note 24 above.
37 Adamczyk, Freilich, and Kim, "Religion and Crime: A Systematic Review"; and Hirschi and Stark, "Hellfire and Delinquency."
38 See note 16 above.
39 Ibid.
40 Shoham, Adad, and Rahav, "Criminology."

41 Liberman, Kirk, and Kim, "Labeling Effects of First Juvenile Arrests."
42 Ibid.
43 Lee, "Religion and Health: A Review"; and Stack and Kpsowa, "The Effect of Religiosity on Tax."
44 Heiman, "The Connection Between the School"; and Brint, Contreras and Matthews, "Socialization Message Primary."

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Public policy for supporting employed family caregivers of the elderly: the Israeli case

Erez Cohen ⓘ and Yael Benvenisti ⓘ

ABSTRACT
The demographic processes that have been avolving in recent years around the world and Israeli society in particular, associated with the rise in life expectancy and the aging of population, are rasing the depedency ratio and increasingpublic policy makers' interest in issues related to caring for the elderly and thier support. These circumstances have a considerable effect on family member required to assist thier aging parents, as they raise the potential support ratio and have an even greater impact on employed family caregivers. This article examined the policy implemented in Israel for providing support and assistance to employed family caregivers assisting ageing parents. It shows that the current policy is relatively limited compared to that of other liberal countries and not compatible with caregivers' demands and needs. The article calls for implementing an effective public policy for employed family caregivers and suggests ways of formulating such a policy.

The worldwide trend of increasing life expectancy that has been evident for years is putting the issue of caring for the elderly in general and for the elderly requiring nursing care in particular, on the public agenda.[1] This trend has many implications for various life areas, including the employment market,[2] the health system,[3] and the welfare system.[4]

Many countries have formal services that are provided or funded by the authorities and are aimed at providing a response to the multiple needs of the elderly population, such as exemption from payments, discounts, allowances, welfare and consulting services, and others.[5] In addition, there are specific services intended to provide a response to the needs of elderly people who require nursing care, and these include financial support, physical assistance, mental and emotional support, and are all arranged by means of allocating budgets and professional personnel.[6] Nevertheless any welfare policy, developed as it may be, is still incapable of providing a full response to all the needs of the elderly.

Moreover, some of the support options are limited to the population of elderly who require nursing care. In order to receive them elderly people must meet strict criteria or, lacking these, arrange for the necessary support themselves, whether by self-funding of professional caregivers or by enlisting family members as caregivers. Thus, family members often find themselves coping with a double load – both providing financial support and performing tasks involved in caring for the elderly person, and engaging in their own daily tasks (i.e. managing a household, functioning at work, etc.). In these cases, the therapeutic and mental burden on the caregiving family members increases, while recognition of family members who serve as caregivers is not definite, and support by the authorities as well as employer recognition of this load are very limited.

In this context, many studies have been published over the years describing the definition and role of family members as informal caregivers (family caregivers) and the impact of the elderly person's deteriorating health condition on their quality of life and standard of living.[7]

Growing trends involving informal care of the elderly in recent years and the definition of family caregivers

The definition of family caregivers refers to the treatment and support system normally provided by a single family member who accepts more responsibility than others for caring for another person, where the care is provided with no financial compensation.[8]

The definition of family caregivers is not unequivocal. According to the literature, family caregivers are family members or significant others who provide treatment and assistance to an individual[9] coping with a physical, mental, or cognitive handicap, while also employed in an established workplace elsewhere.[10] Other studies add that these caregivers must spend 20–45 hours a week assisting the elderly person under their care.[11]

In recent years, policymakers and service planners have been showing growing interest in the issue of family caregivers, as well as in identifying ways of helping them and alleviating their burden. At present, most informal care of the elderly is carried out by family members. Moreover, family members are required to help the elderly also in areas and situations that in the not distant past were occupied primarily by professionals. For instance, due to the shortening of hospital stays, family members are required to assist the elderly during periods of recovery from acute illnesses and sometimes even in stages when treatment is required. Hence, the treatment provided by family members is becoming more complex, requiring their understanding, knowledge, and skills in a wide range of fields.

The phenomenon of family caregivers is not new, rather it has been familiar for decades and has been studied intensively.[12] Nevertheless unlike previously, when treatment was provided for short periods and by many family members (as a result of the large families and extensive childbirth), today informal treatment provided by family members is long-term and is carried out by a relatively limited number of family members. These difficulties intensify when the physical distance grows since family members live further from each other, such that treatment of a family member sometimes necessarily interrupts the daily life of the caregiver.

In light of this and as a result of the population ageing trend, there is a growing likelihood that all people will function as informal caregivers of their ageing parents (on some level) at some stage of their life. This reality might cause a great deal of fatigue and place a mental and financial burden on family members, seriously affecting their quality of life and their mental and physical health. Therefore, this topic requires the attention of decision makers and the formation of public policy that will alleviate and reduce the negative effect as much as possible.

Features of the support provided to the elderly by family members and its impact on family members

The support provided by informal caregivers is very important for the elderly person and has a considerable impact on his quality of life. This assistance is normally categorised as belonging to three main types: financial assistance, assistance with daily activities, and occasional help.[13] Another customary division relates to assistance within the house, assistance outside the house, and help with medical activities.[14]

Many family caregivers report that they do not feel sufficiently skilled in providing treatment since they did not receive sufficient training. In other words, they have low perceived self-efficacy with regard to their ability to handle challenging factors involved in providing treatment.[15]

Many studies indicate that long-term care of an elderly person by a family member may lead family caregivers to experience emotional stress associated with losing their previous

relationship with the elderly person and even losing their own sense of self-identity, since this requires neglecting their own daily problems, physical and mental health, and focusing on caring for the elderly they are supporting.[16]

In addition, caring for an elderly person has also been found to affect other areas in the family caregivers' life, such as: harm to family life, reducing leisure time and social life, the financial burden deriving from the many expenses involved in providing care,[17] and in many cases also damage to their status at work and to their income.

Impact of informal treatment on the employed family caregiver and the workplace

As noted above, the welfare policy customary in many countries around the world, including Israel, is finding it hard to meet the needs of caring for the elderly, leading to growing reliance on informal systems, i.e. family caregivers. In this way, family caregivers (who are usually in the middle age range and at the height of their professional career) find themselves simultaneously handling commitment to their work, children, and parents.[18]

The Brookdale Institute charted workplaces in Israel (2016) and showed that one in every four workers in organisations is a family caregiver. This worker must perform many tasks concurrently and cope with a sense of uncertainty and discomfiture. Thoughts, telephone calls, and chores make it hard for such workers to concentrate, and cause tensions, absences, and reduced productivity at work. Commitment to treatment might affect functioning on the job. Studies have found that these effects are manifested in particular in a loss of work time (tardiness and early departure), lower productivity, many absences, early retirement, loss of social rights as a result of missing days/years of work, and avoiding promotion.[19]

In addition to these aspects that are mainly related to physical presence and productivity in the workplace, workers who function as family caregivers as well have also been found to be vulnerable to physical and mental harm. This harm as manifested by low morale and low satisfaction with the workplace,[20] a tendency to depression and anxiety,[21] damage to their sense of well-being and quality of life,[22] and even a rise in mortality rates at an early age.[23]

In addition to affecting the family caregiver's income, there are also financial costs to the workplace, which suffers from the caregiver's absences.[24] Therefore, many organisations have begun to develop support programmes for family caregivers and to facilitate their rights, in the understanding that these actions have a considerable effect on public perception of the organisation as socially oriented and on its ability to recruit high standard workers.[25]
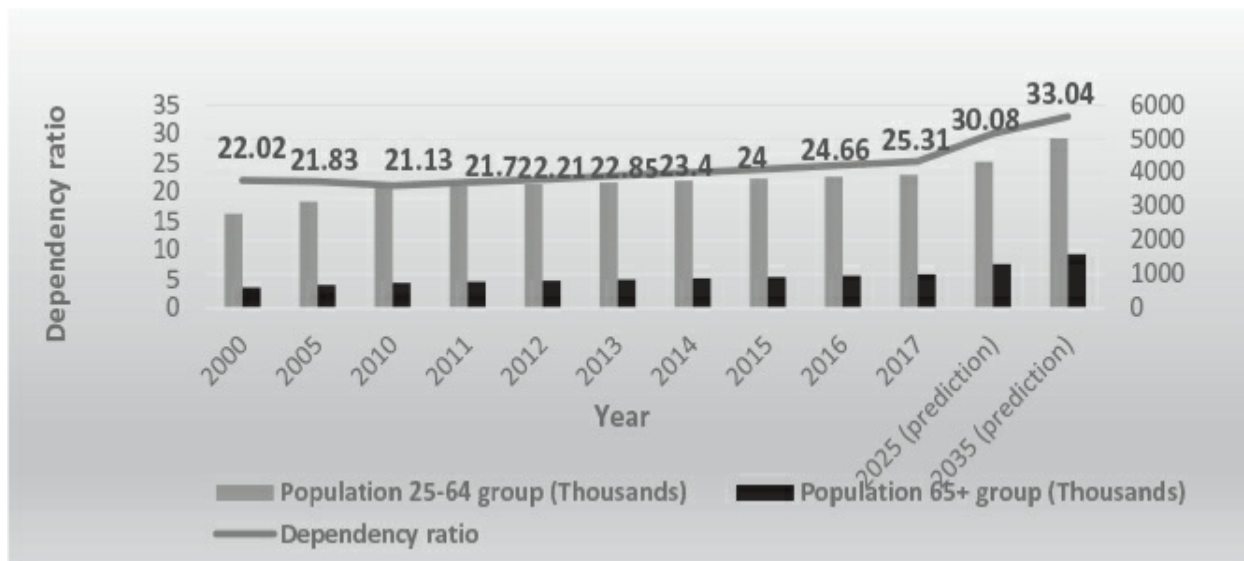
Figure 1. The Dependency Ratio, Israel, 2005–2035 (thousands).

The justification for forming and implementing public policy for supporting employed family caregivers

In the next twenty years, the proportion of the elderly in Israel's population is expected to rise as a result of demographic changes in Israeli society. These changes are manifested in the 'dependency ratio,' which reflects the number of adults aged 65 and older per one hundred people of working age.[26] Since the middle of the current decade, the 'dependency ratio' in Israel has been rising significantly and is currently over 25, while population forecasts predict that in 2025 it might cross the 30 point, as portrayed in the following figure 1:

In order to understand the consequences of the population's ageing for informal support, it is necessary to mention the 'potential support ratio', defined as the number of those aged 80+ (the age group with the most need for help) for every one hundred people aged 50–64 (the age group that provides the most assistance to parents). At the beginning of the decade, the ' potential support ratio' in Israel was 19.4, currently it is about 22, while in the years 2025 and 2035 this ratio is expected to reach 31.77 and 39.77 (respectively), as portrayed in Figure 2 below. These data reflect the rise in the burden of care on those in the middle age range.[27]

Therefore, as part of Israeli society's preparations for the ageing of the population, policymakers in Israel must thoroughly examine the impact of caring for the elderly on family members and find ways of supporting them and promoting their health and livelihood. Employed family caregivers who care for the elderly are vulnerable, as stated, to mental, physical, and financial overload, however the current study focuses only on the occupational aspect related to caring for an elderly family member. The study explores the role of the government in promoting public policy assisting employed family caregivers, with the aim of relieving their load and reducing the losses they experience in the workplace as a result of caring for their family member. For this purpose, the study examines the public policy customary in Israel with regard to employment terms, benefits, facilitations, and rights awarded (if at all) to employed family

caregivers in the workplace, in comparison to the policy customary in other countries.
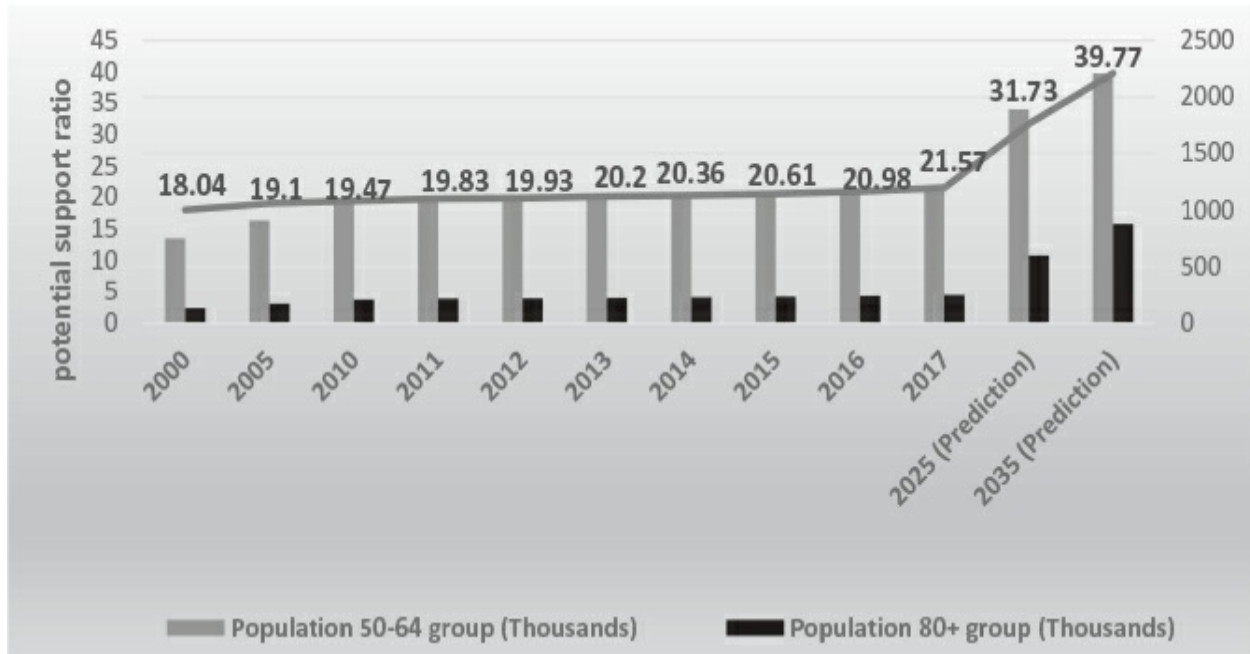
Figure 2. Potential support ratio, Israel, 2005–2035 (thousands).

The data for the years 2025 and 2035 refers to ages 45–64 and 75 +.Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. Table 2.19: Population by Groups. https://old.cbs.gov.il/shnaton69/download/st02_03.xls

The research premise is that while Israel's public policy recognises the constraints and obligations of workers who have young children and offers them social rights, grants, and tax benefits that may be of assistance,[28] it does not sufficiently recognise the constraints and financial and occupational needs of employed family caregivers compelled to care for the parent generation and does not form public policy capable of significantly helping them. As a result, its public policy in this field will be found to be deficient and lacking, both in absolute terms and compared to other countries portrayed in this study.

Methods

The process followed by the research method applied in this study is as follows: presentation of the research premise, presentation of facts and data, refuting or confirming the premises based on the information, and finally reaching conclusions. The information required to reach the conclusions will be drawn both from academic publications and from databases of the National Insurance Institution and the Ministries of Social Services, Health, Finance, and Labour in Israel and in other countries (that serve for comparison in this article). The information will include data on laws and regulations related to social benefits as well as to financial and occupational benefits provided to workers who care for their elderly parents, nursing caregivers, eligibility for nursing care services, and others.

Results

The population's rapid ageing, the rise in life expectancy, and the diminishing number of

children in each family since the beginning of the current century, have led as stated to an increased burden on members of the second generation who are compelled to care for their ageing parents. Therefore, the issue of forming public policy that supports and assists family caregivers in general and in the workplace in particular, is reaching the agenda of policymakers in various countries and has even been the focus of several academic publications that examined its features and ways of implementation.[29]

The research findings will now present examples of several western countries that apply public policy involving financial and occupational support of employed family caregivers, in comparison to the policy implemented in Israel.

International examples of public policy for supporting employed family caregivers

Examining the features of public policy for supporting family caregivers in various democratic countries indicates differences deriving from their diverse worldviews. It is customary to grasp democratic welfare states as located on a continuum, with countries that espouse a neoliberal outlook (such as the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and others) on the right, and countries that espouse a social-democratic outlook (such as Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and others) on the left.

According to the neoliberal outlook, a central value is the democratic ethic advocating one's liberty to live as he wishes, with minimal intervention by society and by the government. Therefore, countries espousing this worldview normally grant their citizens less social and social security services.[30] In contrast, the social-democratic outlook espouses high social commitment of the collective to the individual's well-being, and therefore supports high government involvement in economic activity with the goal of ensuring its citizens' well-being. Hence, these countries provide their citizens with a wide array of social and social security services.[31] Between these two worldviews is the 'third way' that first emerged in the mid-1990 s, constituting a balance between the individual's responsibility for his well-being and the government's responsibility for the well-being of all citizens. Among the countries who embraced this worldview are Britain, France, Germany, and others.[32]

Accordingly, there is a great deal of variance between the different countries in their labour and welfare policies and the types of support provided to employed family caregivers. These differences are evident in employment arrangements (vacations), financial support, and tax dispensations, as detailed below and in Table 1:

Table 1. Israel's public policy for supporting family caregivers from an international perspective.

	Direct financial support and benefits	Discounts and tax reductions	Vacations and absence from work
Israel	Income support payment. Eligibility for income supplement without the need for an employment test. In order to receive this benefit,	Discount on income tax payments (35%). Only for family caregiver who participated in funding hospitalisation. The credit will	Vacation up to 6 days per year which is deducted

	the caregiver must prove his/her residency and face the test of income.	be granted only if the income of the elderly does not exceed a certain income level.	from the employee's sick leave days.
US	Personal budgets	Discount on income tax payments	Unpaid vacation up to 12 weeks per year.
Australia	Income support payment	Discount on income tax payments	Unpaid vacation by utilising up to 5 days of sick leave.
UK	Income support payment	Discount on property tax payments	Unpaid vacation up to 13 weeks per year.
Sweden	Personal budgets	Discount on income tax payments	Unpaid vacation up to 60 days per year.

(A) *Direct financial support and benefits* – In recognition of the financial losses incurred by employed family caregivers who must devote their time to caring for an elderly family member at the expense of work hours, in some countries caregivers are entitled to financial compensation in return for supporting an elderly family member. Nevertheless, there is no consensus regarding the payment policy. Some are in favour of employing family members as paid caregivers of the elderly and claim that this sustains the informal assistance system that has a major role in the elder's daily life in any case, and that it can help expand the workforce available for caring for elderly people requiring assistance at home.

Then again, others object to employing family members as paid caregivers and claim that the compensation received becomes part of the family budget rather than a means of increasing assistance provided to people with disabilities. In addition, the opponents argue that the family members would have cared for the elderly person in any case, so there is no need to compensate them with public funds for care that would have been provided anyways. One way or the other, the public policy enforced in many countries includes paying family caregivers following three recognised models, as follows:

The first is the personal budget model – whereby the elderly person who is the recipient of the benefit must purchase services, including paying family members (at the going rate for formal caregivers). The second is a model that grants the elderly financial benefits that can be used unrestrictedly, including to pay family members. The third is a model for direct support of family members who support the elderly (income support payments).

Examples of countries that utilise the first model are the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, and

the United States, where the elderly can employ family members as caregivers and pay them wages equal to those paid to formal caregivers. In contrast, Austria and Luxemburg are examples of countries that grant financial benefits to elders, who can use the money at will, including to pay supportive family members. Yet other countries, such as England and Australia, implement the third model of support and provide financial support directly to family members who care for the disabled and the elderly (income support payments).

B. *Discounts and tax reductions* – One common way of providing assistance to employed family caregivers is by granting tax dispensations and reductions. In England caregivers receive discounts on municipal taxes, while in the United States, Australia, Canada, and the Netherlands they are entitled to reduced income tax.

C. *Vacations and absence from work* in order to care for family members – In many countries a culture that is considerate of the needs of employed family caregivers appears to be developing, enabling caregivers to take time off from work to care for elderly family members. Notably, there are differences between countries in the number of vacation days workers are allowed to take in order to care for family members and regarding the payment received, where in some countries the arrangement involves the right to receive unpaid vacation leave while in others it involves paid leave.

Public policy in Israel for supporting employed family caregivers

Informal caring for elderly family members is a trend that is familiar to researchers and academics in Israel. Many studies have been published in recent years, dealing with the issue of family caregivers from different angles, such as the price paid by caregivers and the difficulties of engaging in caregiving,[33] the nature of the relationship and of communication with the elderly person,[34] the division of care between the formal and informal system and the resulting difficulties[35] and others.

In addition, although programs targeting family caregivers have begun operating in Israel in recent years, these appear to focus also on dimensions related to the caregiver's health, guidance of family members for managing care of the elderly, or activities that encourage connections between family members and the elderly. Hence in fact, most of the programs in operation today focus on providing emotional and personal support to caregivers rather than on aspects related to the workplace. In Israel, several legal rights with the aim of assisting family members who care for elderly people and focusing on occupational support were found, as follows:

A. *Entitlement to absence due to the illness of a parent or spouse* – deducted from sick leave days, up to six days a year, or deducted from the worker's accumulated days of sick leave, but only when the parent or spouse is aged 65+, is ill, and is completely dependent on others.[36] Notably, if one of the spouses is not employed this benefit does not apply.[37]

B. *Entitlement to severance pay by the employer due to resignation resulting from a parent's poor health* – only when the parent's illness is the main motive for resigning rather than only one of the reasons. Furthermore, if the workplace allows changing the employment terms to suit the needs of workers caring for a sick family member (flexible hours, switching to partial position) there is no justification for resigning and the worker must agree to continue working under the reasonable terms. In addition, when resigning the worker must state the reasons, so that the employer can offer different employment terms.[38]

C. *Entitlement to income supplementation without employment test for those caring for sick family members* – In order to receive this pension the family caregiver must prove consecutive residency[39] and withstand an income test.[40] A request for this type of support can be submitted only if the patient requires constant supervision and if the family member had been living with the sick person for at least 45 consecutive days before submitting the claim and cares for him throughout most of the day.[41]

D. *Tax credits for partially funding a mother's or father's placement in a long-term facility* – Children who partially fund their mother's or father's placement in a long-term facility are entitled to a 35% tax credit. The credit will only be given if the income of the elderly person and his/her spouse do not exceed a certain threshold.[42]

Despite the above, there is still no special legislation, regulation, or recognition of family caregivers in Israel and therefore workplaces are not obliged to operate any programs to support these workers. As a result, a variety of benefits and assistance provided to such workers by workplaces can be found, with no legal obligation. These benefits include special vacation or sick leave arrangements, flexible work options (such as working from home, a reduced work week, or a compressed work week in times of crisis), referral to external services that provide individual or group support, counselling, seminars on therapeutic issues, medical file management services, and short-term treatment services. In addition, some workplaces have established day care centres for elderly parents, following the model of day care centres for workers' children.

Israel's public policy for supporting employed family caregivers from an international perspective

Examination of the public policy for support of employed family caregivers implemented in different countries versus the features of the public policy implemented in Israel shows significant and conspicuous differences on several parameters related to direct benefits and financial support, tax policy, labour laws that allow absence from work in order to care for family members, and other arrangements and supports. Table 1 presented below compares the policy implemented in Israel to that in four countries mentioned in the findings that have distinct welfare policy features. On one end are the United States and Australia – considered neoliberal countries, in the middle – Britain, which implements the 'third way' policy, and on the other end Sweden – considered a social-democratic country.

The findings presented in the table above show that the Israeli policy for supporting employed caregivers is limited, compared to that provided by the countries portrayed in the table. The number of vacation days that family members can take in order to care for the elderly is significantly lower than the number of vacation days permitted in the other countries.[43] In addition, the financial benefits awarded to family caregivers in tax dispensations and monetary grants are fairly limited and depend on the income level of the elderly person and his/her spouse (and vice versa), unrelated to the income level of the family caregiver himself.

Discussion

The research findings indicate that Israel's public policy for supporting employed family caregivers is deficient, both in absolute terms and compared to other democratic countries portrayed in the study. Therefore, Israel must promote processes of definition and legislation

change in order to adapt its policy to the needs of workers caring for elderly parents, as detailed above:

- **Defining employed family caregivers and identifying their subjective needs**: Identifying these workers and understanding their needs is a major point for employers in the process of planning, structuring, and assimilating assistance provided to these workers. One of the significant difficulties in identifying the needs of employed family caregivers is that the workers themselves are not aware of the impact of the therapeutic role on their life and therefore mostly avoid raising the issue with their managers. Defining employed family caregivers is very important, particularly since it can help employers identify relevant workers who are in the initial stages of the conflict between caregiving tasks and work-related tasks, and thus prevent them from experiencing pressures and tensions that may negatively affect their health and their functioning in the workplace. Hence, the definition of employed family caregivers must describe workers who care for family members, relatives, or friends who are encountering difficulties due to age, illness, or disability.
- **Recommendations for forming and implementing public policy for supporting employed family caregivers**:

  - *Encouraging the building of a supportive organisational policy*: The organisational policy must include a specially designated and adapted focus on the needs of employed family caregivers. Such assistance requires large financial inputs, and therefore the country should enact regulations providing financial support to organisations that assist employed family caregivers according to the size of the organisation and the customary distribution as suggested in the research.[44] In addition, since some sectors are not organised (such as self-employed workers), the law should also refer to the rights of these workers when serving as family caregivers.

    Despite the fact that according to the professional literature most family caregivers are women,[45] the rights of employed family caregivers should not be limited by the worker's gender or role in the employing organization. Limiting the rights to women might create employment discrimination, contradict the principle of equal rights and opportunities, and reinforce the stigma whereby caring roles are associated with women only. Applying the rights to all workers, unrelated to their role in the organization and to their gender, will let all workers demand these rights with no concern of harm to their status or to their ability to continue advancing in the workplace. In addition, formulating the rights and spreading knowledge about their existence must be clear and accessible in order to help the worker feel that the workplace is attentive to his hardships and wishes to facilitate as supportive a work environment as possible.

- *Special vacation or sick leave arrangements*: As stated, one of the components of the policy for assisting employed family caregivers involves entitlement to vacation days. At present, Israeli law allows employed family caregivers to be absent from work due to the illness of a parent or spouse (deducted from the worker's accumulated sick leave) for up to six days a year. Nonetheless, the law limits this entitlement to the case of a parent or spouse who are 65 or older, ill, and completely dependent on the help of others for performing 6 activities of daily living. Notably, these restrictions considerably limit the number of workers entitled

to this important assistance and therefore they should be expanded and not predicated on the patient's age, family relationship with the worker, and degree of dependency.

- *Option of flexible work* – Another component that can greatly improve the policy of assisting employed family caregivers is the possibility of flexible work hours, including late arrival/early departure, possibility of temporarily reducing the work hours, compressing the weekly work hours, and the option of working from home.
- *Referral for external services*: This type of assistance can include providing information or providing services by the workplace or by external providers but funded by the workplace. Such assistance may include legal counselling, insurance counselling, medical file management services, information on rights, information on other available services in the community, arrangements for alternative treatment, and professional individual counselling. In other countries, there are cases of workplaces that chose to establish a day care centre for the elderly (similar to day care centres and nursery schools for workers' children) within their complex. At the same time, in light of the high costs involved in establishing and operating these facilities, such cases cannot be seen as a norm expected of all organisations, rather this should receive support on the government level.

In conclusion, this article examined the policy implemented in Israel for employed family caregivers, explored the changes and adaptations made in response to the demographic shifts occurring within Israeli society, and called for adjustments and changes in the policy with the aim of adapting it to current circumstances and those expected in the future. The research hypothesis assumed that Israel has not yet managed to recognise the increasing needs of employed family caregivers and as a result its public policy with regard to formulating and implementing financial and employment dispensations and benefits for them was expected to be deficient and lacking, both in absolute terms and relative to other countries in the world.

The research findings confirm this assumption and reinforce the argument supported by the research literature[46] whereby an unstable governance structure (as in Israel) might encourage implementation of limited public policy aimed at the short term, which does not take pre-planned action to prevent anticipated problems but rather makes do with finding limited solutions aimed only at covering up the existing faults. In addition, despite the fact that the population of family caregivers constitutes a considerable proportion of the Israeli population from a quantitative perspective, with regard to its effect on public policy it has little power. The explanation has to do with the fact that this group is not unionised (both organisationally and politically) and therefore its interests are not promoted, neither by the government nor by commercial lobbyists despite the considerable increase in their activity in the last Knesset.[47]

Notes

1 Christensen, Doblhammer, Rau, and Vaupel, "Ageing Populations," 1196–208.

2 Braw, Cohen, Brender-Ilan, and Sohlberg, "Public Policy for Dementia on Modern Workplaces," 172–87.

3 Reinhardt, " Aging Drive the Demand for Health Care," 27–39; and Caspersen, Thomas, Boseman, Beckles, and Albright, " Aging, Diabetes, and the Public Health System", 1482–97.

4 Razin, Sadka and Swagel, "Aging Population and Welfare State," 900–18; and Lin, Chou, Liang, Peng, and Chen, "Population Aging and its Impacts," S23–7.

5 Azari - Vizel and Shtayer, "Welfare Budgets for the Elderly Population", 378–401.

6 Such as nursing caregivers, physiotherapists, social workers, occupational therapists, and so on.

7 Deeken, Taylor, Mangan, Yabroff and Ingham . "Care for the Caregivers," 922–53; Belasco, Barbosa, Bettencourt, Diccini and Sesso, "Quality of Life of Family Caregivers," 955–63; Brodaty and Donkin, "Family Caregivers of People

   with Dementia," 217; and Ho, Chan, Woo, Chong and Sham, "Caregiving and Quality of Life," 873–9.

8 Doron and Lazar,"Formal Support for Caregivers."

9 Parent, spouse, life partner, adult child, sibling, and/or friend.

10 Yeandle, Bennett, Bucker, Shipton and Suokas, "Who Cares Wins."

11 Brodesky, Neon, Razniztky and Ben- Non, "Recipients of Nursing Allowance."

12 Strang, Koop, Dupuis-Blanchard, Nordstrom and Thompson, "Family Caregivers and Long-term Care," 27–45; Levine, Halper, Peist and Gould, "Bridging Troubled Waters,"116–24; and Reinhard, Levine, and Samis, "Home Alone."

13 Brodeski, Razinski and Sitron, "Issues in the Family Care of Elderly," 19–23.

14 Ibid.

15 Rabinowitz, Saenz, Thompson and Gallagher-Thompson, "Understanding Caregiver Health Behaviors," 310–6.

16 Berg –Verman, Razniztky and Brodesky, "Who Takes Care of the Caregiver?"

17 Such as expenses for doctor appointments, buying medications, transportation to treatment, employing a personal caregiver at home, etc.

18 Employers for Cares, "Supporting Working Carers."

19 Cranswick, "General social survey cycle"; and Reinhard, Feinberg, Choula and Houser, "Valuing the invaluable," 89–98.

20 Ireson, Sethi and Williams, "Availability of Caregiver‑friendly Workplace Policies," 1–14; Berg –Verman, Laron, Spelter, Razniztky and Brodesky, "Participation of Family Members Handle Support Groups," 78–97.

21 Musil, Morris, Warner and Saeid, "Caregivers' Stress and Providers' Support," 505–26.

22 Rubin and White-Means, "Informal Caregiving: Dilemmas of Sandwiched Caregivers," 252–67.

23 Schulz and Martire, "Family Caregiving of Persons with Dementia," 240–9.

24 Schulz and Eden, *Families Caring for an Aging America*; and Trask, "Alleviating the Stress on Working Families."

25 Ireson, Sethi and Williams, "Availability of Caregiver‑friendly Workplace Policies."

26 Ages 20–64.

27 Brodeski, Razinski and Sitron, "Issues in the Family Care of Elderly."

28 Such as: child allowance, maternity leave, allowing sick pay leave for parents caring for sick children, nursing hour that allows a parent to leave work early to care for a baby, income tax credits for children younger than 6, and others.

29 Stoltz, Uden and Willman, "Support for Family Carers," 111–9; Friedland, "Caregivers and Long-term Care Needs"; Grootegoed and Van Dijk, "The Return of the Family?," 677–94; Redfoot, Feinberg and Houser, "The Aging of the Baby Boom,"1–12; Schulz and Eden, *Families Caring for an Aging America*.

30 Lazzarato, " Neoliberalism in Action," 109–33.

31 George and Wilding, "Ideology and Social Welfare."

32 Kus,"Neoliberalism, Institutional Change and Welfare State," 488–525; Giddens, "The Third Way."

33 Iecovich, "Caregiving and Quality of Life," 309–30.

34 Bachner, O'Rourke and Carmel, "Fear of Death and Psychological Distress," 163–87.

35 Iecovich, "Tasks Performed by Primary Caregivers," 53–75.

36 Dependent in performing 6 activities of daily living: lying down and getting up, dressing, eating, maintaining continence, bathing, self-mobility at home.

37 Sick Leave Law (Absence due to Parent's Illness), 1993, Sick Leave Law (Absence due to Spouse's Illness), 1998.

38 The resigning worker can receive unemployment pay immediately. Section 6 of the Severance Pay Law, 1963.

39 Resident of Israel for 24 consecutive months.

40 The income of the person and his/her spouse do not exceed a certain sum, determined by age, marital status, and number of people in the family.

41 Section 2 of the Income Assurance Law, 1980.

42 The credit is only for amounts exceeding 12.5% of the family member's taxed income (section 44 of the Income Tax Order).

43 Aside from Australia.

44 Leung, Rispoli and Gibson, "Businesses in the Canadian Economy."

45 Levenstein and Alperin, "Consequences of Elder Care Workers."

46 Cohen, "The Nature of Israel's Public Policy," 73–89.

47 Cohen, "The Activity of Lobbies in the Israel," 1–18.

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Media portrayal of enemy leaders and public opinion toward peace: the cases of Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin 1987-95

Hila Lowenstein-Barkai

ABSTRACT

Despite the growing number of studies analysing the role of media in peace processes, there is almost no literature on the relationship between media and public opinion during peace processes. This article examines this question using the case study of the Oslo Accords. Specifically, it analyzes the compatibility between media portrayals of Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin and Israeli and Palestinian public support for peace negotiations. The findings indicate that (a) the enemy's binary image may change positively following the signing of peace agreements; and (b) this change may accelerate emerging peace processes.

Being a window to the outside world, the mass media play a major role in shaping public opinion towards sociopolitical issues.[1] This role is intensified during crisis periods such as wars or intractable conflicts, which require an external mediation of the unstable situation.[2] Findings from many conflicts around the world point to the media's tendency to cover them in a binary manner, which differentiates between the 'good' nation group and the 'evil' enemy nation.[3] This form of framing shapes social beliefs towards the conflict and might also have negative implications on the public's support for its solution.[4]

In recent years there has also been a growing number of studies examining media coverage of

peace processes.[5] The underlying assumption of this strand of research is that just as marginalisation or demonisation of enemies may exacerbate conflicts, so can complicated representations of them help reduce suspicion and open opportunities for dialogue, empathy, and support for peaceful solutions.[6]

Despite their importance in characterising media functioning in peace processes, most of these studies have analysed media coverage only, and neglected its possible impact on the public opinion.[7] Comparative studies are also lacking in the field. Most of the above-mentioned studies have analysed media representations of one of the parties to the conflict only, and not both sides.[8]

This article seeks to fill these gaps by exploring media representations of Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat during a key period in Israeli-Palestinian relations – from the Intifada (December 1987-August 1993) to the signing of the Oslo Accords (the September 1993 Declaration of Principles, DOP; the May 1994 Cairo Agreement; and the September 1995 Interim Agreement, or Oslo II) – in an attempt to examine how the depiction of these arch enemies influenced the national collective consciousness as the peace negotiations progressed. In parallel, Israeli and Palestinian public opinion polls were systematically analysed in order to ascertain the degree of compatibility between the leaders' media representations and the publics' support for the peace process.

Like many field studies, the research design and data analyses in this article do not enable a causality inference as one might expect.[9] It is very difficult to determine exactly which of the factors affect the other, since public opinion formation is a complex process, affected by multiple factors.[10] It is also possible that the link between these two variables is two-sided.[11] Hence, this article does not claim to prove such a connection. However, a prolonged comparison between media representations of enemy leaders and developments in public opinion towards peace during both violent events and peace negotiations periods may be primary evidence to the degree of compatibility (although not statistical correlation) between the media and public opinion. By doing so, the article seeks to shed light on the role played by the media in periods of peace talks, focusing on the place taken by enemy images in this process.

Media coverage and public opinion towards conflict

One of the media's main roles in society is to organise large amounts of information into coherent interpretative structures or 'media frames.'[12] This role is exacerbated during violent confrontations, in which the public depends largely on the media as an outside source for reliable information.[13] The findings of studies that examined how mass media cover violent conflicts yield a consistent conclusion: Conflicts are often framed as 'zero-sum games,' in which any action by one side is framed as victory or loss to the other side.[14]

This pattern of framing also possesses psychological and political implications. Representations of conflicts which clearly identify the 'good' and the 'bad' reassure individuals about where they belong, re-establish shared conventions, and supply the illusion of being part of a struggle for change.[15] Hence, constructing a binary narrative of the conflict is critical for justifying the costs of foreign intervention, shifts in policy, and use of force.[16] By doing so, mass media reinforce conflict-supporting beliefs and practically serve to increase conflict.[17]

However, by performing the opposite action – i.e. emphasising the benefits of peace, raising the legitimacy of groups or leaders working for peace, and transforming images of the enemy –

mass media can also play a central role in promoting peace.[18]

Media coverage and public opinion towards peace

Similar to conflict times, peace negotiation periods are also inherently ambiguous, and the way mass media frame them can influence the sides' perceptions, as well as their readiness to accept the offered solutions.[19] Findings regarding the media roles during these periods are mixed: Some evidence point to a realisation of the potential to advance peace processes through the media, while others point to a destructive role of mass media in the process of conflict resolution.

A comparative study of Wolfsfeld found that the local media in Jordan and Northern Ireland enthusiastically supported the peace processes in the countries.[20] Armoudian's research shows, based on the Northern Ireland conflict, how 'even in deadly situations such as genocides and wars … professional journalism may help soften mediated constructions.'[21]

On the other hand, Sheafer and Dvir-Gvirzman indicate that news coverage of peace processes may have a negative effect on public opinion. They defined their findings as a 'peace spoiling effect,' in which the media coverage had an average monthly negative contribution to public opinion regarding the Oslo agreement.[22] Similarly, Shamir and Shamir, who analysed Israeli public opinion polls during the Intifada (1987–93), argue that a hawkish media coverage nurtured a hawkish climate of opinion among the public.[23]

All of these studies analysed the coverage of conflicts or peace processes in general and not specific figures representing them. However, due to their importance to the development of conflicts, public perceptions about an enemy group and its leaders have received separate scholarly attention.

Media representations of enemies and public opinion towards conflict and peace

Social identities are inherently based on social distinction, i.e. the creation of an outside group whose identity is marked as different from that of the in-group. In times of conflict, when the 'other' is perceived as threatening the group's independence or the authenticity of its collective identity, the in-group members enmity towards him/her. The 'other' is dehumanised and blamed for any damage caused to the in-group.[24] This leads to hostility, contradiction and discrepancy as well as denying, humiliating and negating the 'other.' Treating the enemy as a dehumanised other also leads to rationalising the cost of wars.[25]

The mass media are often willing participants in this process, which is consistent with journalistic practices such as dramatisation and simplification.[26] Studies about media portrayals of enemies indicate that the media often label them with stereotypical and Satanic features[27]; emphasise the moral differences between them and 'us'[28]; accuse them for the nation's suffering[29]; intensify the damage caused by their actions; and blur the personal identity of the enemy group's members.[30]

One of the most prominent representatives of the enemy is the *group leader*, who is viewed as an exemplar for the group's values and behaviour.[31] Political leaders do not operate in a vacuum but in a mediatised environment, where mass media are citizens' principal source of political information.[32] Studies examining media representations of enemy leaders indicate that they are usually portrayed in a negative manner. A study that examined Saddam Hussein's portrayal in

American cartoons found that he was dehumanised and depicted as an animal.[33] Similar findings were found a decade later with regard to Osama bin Laden.[34]

The few studies that analysed media representations of enemy leaders during peace talks point to a certain change they are having, but the conclusion of these studies is not clear-cut. Lelourec, for example, found that the negative media representations of the Sinn Fein leaders in the British press changed only slightly after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement.[35] Similarly, Christophoros and Sanem found that even during peace negotiations between the Turkish and Greek leaders in Cyprus, the media in both sides didn't recognise the other side's leadership.[36] On the other hand, Mandelzis found that the Israeli press significantly increased the extent of Arafat's coverage in the period following the signing of Oslo Accords and changed his image from villain to a brave leader.[37]

Studies that examined whether the potential of these representations to affect public perceptions towards the conflict are almost nonexistent.[38] Studies that focused on media representations of enemy leaders during periods of peace negotiations and examined their relations with public support for the peace process are even fewer. Moreover, the few existing studies have examined one of the parties to the conflict only and not the mirror-image of the rival side.[39] Hence, this articles formulates the following research questions:

- RQ1: Is there a relation between the media portrayal of enemy leaders and the degree of public support in peace processes?
- RQ1A: Does this relation take place both during violent pre-agreement periods and during periods of peace accords?
- RQ1B: Does the same relation exist on both sides of the conflict?

The Oslo Accords of 1993–95 constitute the case study for examining these questions, being as they were the first political agreements between Israel and the Palestinians after decades of conflict.[40] These accords were signed between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and their signing required the publics on both sides to adjust their new images of these former enemies. The article thus seeks to shed light on the role played by media in legitimising (or delegitimizing) enemy leaders as peace partners. Before turning to the methodology section, a few comments about the examined media environments are in order.

The Israeli and Palestinian media environments

Although one of the benefits of the current study is the fact that it analyzes media representations of political leaders on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the two societies have different political systems and regimes, hence the functioning of the press within them is far from identical. While Israeli society is democratic and its press enjoys a high degree of freedom, Palestinian society has very limited democratic freedoms and its press is subject to external and internal censorship restrictions.

Between 1967 and 1993, the Palestinian media were under the direct control of the Israeli military censorship, which was authorised to approve or disqualify their content. Palestinian editors estimated that about 25 percent of the material transferred to the censor during the years of the first Intifada was banned. This fact may affect the validity of the findings, because it indicates that Rabin's representation in the Palestinian press was subject to censorial constraints,

while the Israeli press was free of such constraints.[41]

Nevertheless, the resources available to the Israeli censorship were relatively limited, and the Palestinian press seems to have found ways to circumvent its limitations. According to Shinar and Rubinstein, Palestinian newspapers were allowed to publish translated articles from the Israeli and foreign press, thereby indirectly passing on the messages they wanted.[42] When the Palestinian journalists had significant stories that they feared would not meet the limitations of censorship, they forwarded them to Israeli or foreign colleagues who published them in their media. After that, the Palestinian newspapers' systems translated the articles into Arabic and thus received the censorship's approval for the publication. Another tactic was 'relocation.' Since East Jerusalem had less strict censorship than the one implemented in the West Bank, several newspapers copied their systems there.[43]

Following the signing of the Oslo Accords, the formal control of the Palestinian media was transferred to the Palestinian Authority (PA), which explicitly stated that they should be mobilised to advance the national goals of the Palestinian people. The Law of Press and Publications, enacted in 1995, removed the direct censorship that was imposed on the Palestinian press until then but also limited journalists from reporting on many political topics that may harm the 'national unity' or 'Palestinian tradition.' These vague terms have become a tool of the security services to oppress many journalists on the grounds that they violated the law.[44] In contrast, the Israeli press enjoys relatively broad freedom of action, which is characteristic of democratic societies. State security issues need the approval of the military censor to be published, but since the 1960s they have been critically covered, similarly to social, political and economic issues.[45]

In short, the freedom of press in Israel and the Palestinian territories is significantly different, which may reduce the ability to compare media images of both sides. Nevertheless, it seems that the Palestinian press has tried to overcome the restrictions of censorship as much as possible. Additionally, it is important to emphasise that the current study deals with the connection between media representations and public opinion. That is, even if media representations are biased as a given situation, they still relate with public opinion towards their subjects. In light of this, the ability to generalise from an undemocratic environment to democratic environments is indeed limited, but does not affect the research internal validity.

Methodology

The article employs a qualitative content analysis in two periods: violent pre-agreement period (from the outbreak of the Intifada in December 1987 to July 1993) and period of peace accords (from the exposure of Oslo talks in late August 1993 to the singing of the DOP a month later, to the Cairo May 1994 Agreement to the September Oslo II Accord). In addition to the media analysis, an analysis of Israeli and Palestinian public opinion surveys was also conducted to ascertain whether public opinion towards political negotiations between the sides was moving in the same directions as the media representations of Arafat and Rabin.

Sampling

For the entire timespan of the study (December 1987-October 1995) a systematic random sampling of news items was conducted on the basis of the following ratio: 1–5 days of the first month, 6–10 of the following month, and so on. Additionally, significant case studies that didn't

appear in the random sampling but were especially significant for the research question were added to the corpus and analysed from three days before the event to three days after it (except for the Oslo negotiations, where a longer period was sampled: two weeks before the signing of the agreement and two weeks later). In total, 255 news items were collected from the Palestinian press (N = 98) and the Israeli press (N = 157).

The analysed newspapers and data gathering

Four newspapers were analysed -two from each side. The Israeli newspapers were *Yediot Aharonot* – a popular tabloid, with the largest readership in the country during the research period, and *Haaretz* – A 'quality' newspaper mainly read by the elites.[46] The Palestinian newspapers were *al-Fajr* – one of the most popular Palestinian national newspapers until its closure in 1993, which since its beginning presented a clear line of identification with PLO positions, and *al-Quds* – the oldest and most influential Palestinian daily, which was published in the eastern parts of Jerusalem and supported the Palestinian Authority mainstream leadership.[47]

   All data were collected from Israeli archives. The news items from the Israeli press were analysed by the author who is fluent in Hebrew. The news items from the Palestinian press were translated into Hebrew by three Israeli research assistants, graduate students who speak fluent Arabic and Hebrew (one of whom was an Israeli-Arab). To verify the reliability of their translations, they were given 20 identical items, which were then examined by the researcher. All of these items showed small differences in linguistic nuances (for example, choosing the word 'claim' versus 'argue'), but not in a way that affected on their later analysis.

News items analysis

As described above, there are number of key mechanisms used by the media to frame enemies: *Exclusion, stereotyping, dehumanisation and demonisation, accusation*, and *cultural and moral differentiation*. These mechanisms usually refer to general enemies, but can be also applied to specific leaders representing them. Hence, all of them served as parameters for analysis in the current study. Specifically, we content-analysed whether Arafat and Rabin were excluded from the coverage; dehumanised; labelled with stereotypical or demonic features (for example, 'murderers', 'monsters' or cruel); blamed for the nation's (Israeli or Palestinian respectively) suffering; and contrasted to the positive features of 'our' side.

Table 1. The Israeli public opinion polls.

Year	Sample size
December 1987	1,116
October 1988	873
March-October 1990[*]	1,251
March 1991	1,131
February 1992	1,192
January 1993	1,139
1994	1,239

1995	1,220

* No survey conducted in 1989

The public opinion polls

In order to monitor the Israeli and Palestinian public support for peace negotiations, public opinion surveys of both populations were analysed.

On the Israeli side, the public opinion polls were taken from the Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies, an external research institute of Tel Aviv University, which had conducted public opinion surveys examining various issues related to national security from the mid-1980s. One of the questions consistently asked during the entire research period was: 'Do you think Israel should or should not be willing to negotiate peace with the PLO?' The responses given to this question were analysed as an indicator to the degree of support of the Israeli public for political negotiations with the Palestinians. All surveys were based on representative samples of the adult Jewish-Israeli population (see Table 1).

On the Palestinian side: Public opinion surveys conducted by the Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre (JMCC), which was established by a group of journalists and researchers in early 1993, were analysed. All surveys were based on representative samples of the adult Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Contrary to the Israeli side, there are no Palestinian public opinion polls from the beginning of the intifada (December 1987) but only from latest stage (February and August 1993). The two existing surveys included questions about the Palestinian publics' willingness to negotiate with Israel and therefore were included in the research corpus. After Oslo Accords, the number of Palestinian public opinion polls increased significantly. The JMCC conducted ten surveys between September 1993 and October 1995 on security and governance issues. Four of them were analysed, which included questions about the level of support for the peace process as a whole or for the specific peace agreements signed with Israel during these years (see Table 2).

Table 2. The Palestinian public opinion polls.

Year	Sample size	Question wording
February 1993	1190	If an acceptable solution to the expellee's problem is found, do you think that negotiations are an appropriate method to solve the Palestinian problem?
July 1993	1476	Do you support the continuation of the current peace negotiations based on the Madrid formula?
September 1993	1505	The leadership of the PLO and the Israeli Government have reached a preliminary agreement (Declaration of principles on the transitional arrangements). Do you agree with the phased agreement?
January 1994	1622	Now that four months have passed since the Declaration of Principles, what is your opinion?
July 1994	1920	What is your opinion regarding to the Cairo Agreement, would you say you support it, or oppose it?

October 1995	1318	To what extent would you say you support or oppose the agreement reached between the PA and Israel over the Interim Phase? Would you say you strongly support, you cautiously support it, or would you say you totally oppose it?

Results

Arafat's media representation in the Israeli press and the Israeli public opinion towards the peace process with the Palestinians during the first Intifada (December 1987-July 1993)

In the first weeks of the Intifada, Arafat hardly served as a subject of news coverage. The Israeli press attributed the outbreak of the Intifada to an 'internal Palestinian burning,' such as religious feelings or despair.[48] The responsibility for solving the intifada was also not placed on Arafat's shoulders. Both *Yediot Aharonot* and *Haaretz* called for a political solution that would 'enable them and us to live side by side in peace'. These calls were directed at the Israeli leadership, not Arafat.

As the intifada became more firmly established, Arafat's leadership position grew and his coverage in the Israeli media increased. His moves in the international arena were covered in a dual way. On the one hand, many of the headlines in the two Israeli newspapers consisted of direct quotations of Arafat's words, thus placing him in an active position. On the other hand, the columns of commentary were very much opposed to Arafat and argued that he was unreliable. An editorial that was published in *Haaretz* after the Algiers Conference stated in its heading that 'the PLO hasn't changed yet' and *Yediot* defined Arafat's declaration in the conference as a 'too small step.'[49]

The United States' agreement to open an official dialogue with the PLO and Arafat's invitation to the UN General Assembly in Geneva in December 1988 marked a turning point in the attitude of *Haaretz* towards Arafat. From this point on, the newspaper expressed a pragmatic approach that encouraged negotiations with Arafat 'despite his terrorist activity that has not yet been completely stopped.' The newspaper also blamed the Israeli government for the political situation, stating that the more the government attacked Arafat, the more 'the world will believe Arafat and not Yitzhak Shamir.'[50]

Yediot, on the other hand, expressed the opposite approach. The paper denounced Arafat and frequently quoted opponents of him who undermined his credibility. Arafat was described in harsh words such as 'a chronic liar,' 'a mass murderer,' and 'useless.'[51] and the paper scoffed at the importance of his statements.

The level of support of the Israeli public for political negotiations with the Palestinians during this period was low, but gradually increased until the end of the first Intifada, as illustrated in Table 3:

Table 3. Israeli public support for negotiations with the Palestinians, December 1987- January 1993.

Year	The rates of support for political negotiations with the Palestinians
December 1987	33%

October 1988	34%
March-October 1990	40%
March 1991	29%
February 1992	43%
January 1993	52%

The table indicates that while Arafat's coverage in *Yediot* was negative almost from the beginning of the Intifada, the Israeli public opinion – similarly to Arafat's coverage in *Haaretz* – has gradually become accustomed to the idea of negotiations with him. Towards the middle of the intifada, 40% of the public supported negotiations with the Palestinians, whereas by the end of the intifada the percentage of support had already passed by half of the public.

Arafat's media representation in the Israeli press and the Israeli public opinion towards the peace process with the Palestinians during Oslo Agreement and the subsequent agreements (August 1993-October 1995)

The exposure of the contacts in Oslo came as a surprise to the Israeli press.[52] Arafat's coverage during this period was similar in both papers and expressed conflicting feelings. On the one hand, excitement and hopes for a better future; on the other, fear and suspicion towards Arafat, which were increasing as the date of signing the agreement approached.

When the first reports about the agreement were published, Arafat was framed as a political partner interested in advancing the peace process. The papers often adopted his point of view and extensively covered his efforts to defend the interim arrangement without questioning their sincerity. *Haaretz*, for example, quoted Arafat as criticising his opponents in the PLO in a large headline while *Yediot* credited Arafat as being able to 'get out of the chain of crises.'[53]

However, as the signature of the accord drew closer, the items that presented the viewpoint of Arafat diminished and were replaced by a pro-Israeli governmental perspective. The papers did not criticise Rabin's desire to avoid shaking hands with Arafat at the ceremony 'in view of the bloody role played by Arafat in the Israeli history and considering his image in the public consciousness … as a negative, murderous figure.'[54] The same message was conveyed by focusing on Arafat's external appearance. Many items – including one entitled 'He is not Sadat' – dealt with Arafat's beard or the uniform and pistol he carried during the Oslo talks, hinting that 'Arafat remained Arafat, with or without agreements.'[55]

Contrary to this image, the Israeli public support for political negotiations with the Palestinians during this period continued the growth trend that began in 1990 and stood at 60% in January 1994.[56] In other words, unlike the Israeli press, which recoiled from Arafat after discovering the Oslo talks and doubted his credibility several weeks later, the Israeli public opinion improved its willingness to negotiate with him.

After the signing of the DOP, the fears expressed by the papers towards Arafat dissipated. Prior to the signing of the subsequent agreements, Arafat was no longer described by his external appearance, nor his 'bloody role' in the Israeli history was mentioned. Now he has been described as an equal partner in the negotiations: 'Rabin and Peres, Arafat and Abu Ala gave an unprecedented lesson to all statesmen of the world … Well done!' – a column in *Yediot* complimented him on September 27. Even when disagreements arose between the sides, the papers treated them as unavoidable. Moreover, Arafat's point of view played a central role in the

coverage, and at times even preceded the Israeli position.

Despite Arafat's positive image in the Israeli press during this period, support for political negotiations with the Palestinians dropped in the January 1995 poll to 53%, similarly to the rate of support before the Oslo talks were announced. In other words, during this period, the gap between Arafat's media image and Israeli public opinion was once again revealed, but in the opposite direction to previous years. Now it was the press that expressed confidence in Arafat's moves, while the enthusiasm that characterised the Israeli public opinion after the Oslo Accords cooled a bit, most probably due to the surge in Palestinian terrorism, including the hitherto unknown phenomenon of suicide bombings in Israeli population centres.

Rabin's media representation in the Palestinian press and the Palestinian public opinion towards the peace process with Israel during the first Intifada (December 1987-July 1993)

In the first two weeks of the Intifada, the Palestinian press hardly referred to Rabin (then defence minister) personally, but to 'Israel' or 'the Israeli forces … in the occupied territories' in general.[57] As the intifada progressed, Rabin's place in the news coverage became more central and more negative. Since the third week of the intifada, Rabin served as the subject of many reports. Now Rabin – and not a general entity – was the one who said that 'the IDF must maintain order,' threatened 'to increase militancy', or 'refused to approach the Supreme Court in the matter of house demolitions.'[58]

Personal references towards Rabin increased during the June 1992 Israeli elections when he ran against the right-wing candidate Yitzhak Shamir. The line presented by the Palestinian press during this period was ambivalent. On the one hand, many news items expressed hope for a Palestinian-Israeli cooperation after Rabin's election. On the other, there were many commentaries claiming that Rabin's dovish image, 'the Messiah everyone was waiting for,' was merely an illusion, and that 'Shamir and Rabin are two faces of one coin: Zionism and all it represents.'[59]

The negative coverage peaked in December 1992 after Rabin ordered the deportation of 415 Hamas militants to Lebanon. One report defined the expulsion as a 'crime' and claimed that 'during the 25 years of occupation, Israel has never made such deportation decisions in such a short period of time, not even in the days of Yitzhak Shamir.'[60]

Accordingly, the level of Palestinian support for political negotiations with Israel during the end of the intifada was relatively low. In response to the question 'If an acceptable solution to the expellees' problem is found, do you think that negotiations are an appropriate method to solve the Palestinian problem?' only 13.7% of respondents responded positively. 31.9% responded that 'negotiations will never yield any good results for the Palestinians' and 50.7% responded that 'the negotiations will yield results but not sufficient ones.' In a survey conducted on July 1993, the percentage of support for the question 'do you support the continuation of the current peace negotiations based on the Madrid formula?' raised to 37.5%.

Rabin's media representation in the Palestinian press and the Palestinian public opinion towards the peace process with Israel during Oslo Agreement and the subsequent agreements (August 1993-October 1995)

The signing of the DOP completely changed Rabin's portrayal in the Palestinian press. Unlike his negative portrayal during the Intifada, he was now depicted in positive terms, as a peace-promoter, and almost without criticism. The papers referred to the agreement as a *fait accompli*

and focused on its implementation. Rabin's remarks were quoted without reservations and his position was given a central place in the coverage. His personality, which was until then described as hard and cruel, was now softened. The papers presented a more complex image of his character, which also recognised his virtues and the political constraints surrounding him.

An article published in *al-Quds* a day after the agreement signing quoted Rabin's statement that 'the peace depends on Arafat's ability to prevent the use of violence' without reservations.[61] Rabin's visit to Morocco en route to Israel was described as 'a quick step he took towards establishing relations with the Arab states'[62] that portrayed him as reliable and dedicated to the peace process. The change in Rabin's portrayal was also expressed in a more forgiving attitude to his past actions. An article in *al-Quds* noted that, in parallel to his harsh policy during the intifada, 'Rabin continued his quest for peace with the Palestinians,'[63] thus representing him in a complex rather than a binary manner.

The findings of public opinion surveys carried out after the DOP signing indicate that it also received considerable support among the Palestinian public. 68.6% of respondents answered positively to the question 'Do you agree with the phased agreement?' The percentage of support for future contacts with Israel was even higher. In response to the question 'do you support the continuation of negotiations between the PLO and Israel?' 72.9% responded positively.

However, by the signing of the Cairo agreement a few months later, the optimism of the Palestinian press had been replaced by disappointment. Rabin was described as a procrastinating, hesitant, and unreliable agent who did not keep his promises. Many articles described the difficulties surrounding the agreement, blaming them on Rabin.

The coverage of the evacuation of Gaza and Jericho a few weeks later continued in the same vein. *Al-Quds* published only one item that dealt with the evacuation, which was devoted almost entirely to quoting Rabin's words. However, the headline of this article – 'Rabin admits that settlers carry out deliberate provocations in Jericho' depicted Rabin as a weak leader.[64]

The signing of Oslo II was framed differently. The critical articles have by now been replaced by flattering reports that praised the agreement and Rabin was not described as a hindrance or spoiling factor. An interview with him was even titled in a conciliatory manner: 'Rabin supports the establishment of a Palestinian entity,' though another sentence from the interview – 'Rabin wants a Jewish state whose capital is a united Jerusalem' – could easily have been used as an alternative headline.[65]

Public opinion polls show that the support of the Palestinian public for political agreements with Israel during these years was also volatile, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Palestinian public support for negotiations with Israel, September 1993- October 1995.

Year	The rates of support of the political agreements with Israel
September 1993	68.6%
January 1994	45.3%
July 1994	56.5%
October 1995	65.3%

The data indicate that four months after the signing of the DOP, support for the agreement

dropped to only 45.3% (from 68.6% immediately after the signing). About half a year later, support for Cairo Agreement stood at 56.5%. In October 1995, support for Oslo II grew again to 65.6%. In the June 1995 and October 1995 polls, a question was also asked about Rabin's sincerity ('Is Rabin sincere about implementing the agreement he signed with the Palestinians?'). In the four months between the surveys, the rate of trust in Rabin almost tripled, yet was still very low: 9.9% in June 1995 and 27.2% in October 95.

Discussion and conclusions

An abundant research indicates that binary coverage of enemies in conflicts may increase public support for the price of war and deepens hostility between the rival sides.[66] This article sought to examine the opposite situation, namely whether in times of peace negotiations the media legitimise enemy leaders as peace partners, thus providing a tailwind for peace processes. The findings yield two main conclusions, which expand the existing literature in the fields of enemy media representations and media-public relations.

First, from the purely media aspect, the article indicates that the enemy's binary image may indeed change positively following the signing of peace agreements, as found in several previous studies.[67] However, this change is not necessarily immediate or consistent. In the case of the Palestinian press, the change in Rabin's representation during the contacts in Oslo was very rapid, but also short-termed. On the Israeli side, on the other hand, the change in Arafat's representation was slower but sustained over a long time. As such, the article demonstrates that conceptualisation of an image change requires reference to the duration and the time span to which it relates.

Second, from the perspective of media-public relations, the article reveals that a positive change in enemy leaders' media representations during periods of peace negotiations does not necessarily reflect a similar change in public support for the peace process. Our findings demonstrate almost all the possibilities embodied in media-public relations: full compatibility, partial compatibility and lack of compatibility, as well as different directions of these connections (positive/negative). On the Palestinian side, there was full compatibility between Rabin's media representation and the public support for the peace process with Israel both during violent pre-agreement periods and during periods of peace agreements. On the Israeli side, in contrast, there was almost no compatibility between Arafat's media representation and the public support for the peace process.

The broader theoretical question deriving from the above relates to the factors *explaining* this wide range of relations. The research indicates that media-public relations are not identical among the various parties to the conflict, nor is it uniform among different periods. If so, what factors determine when there would or there wouldn't be compatibility between the enemy's media representation and the public's support for the peace process? Based on the assumption that the media's role in conflicts 'needs to be viewed in the larger context of the specific social, political, historical and institutional circumstances in which the media are situated'[68] several possible explanations can be suggested.

First, the level of democratisation in society, which also correlates with its freedom of press. In contrast to Israeli society, which by the time of the Intifada and the Oslo process had already experienced over forty years of national independence, Palestinian society is a nation in building engaged in the crystallisation of its collective identity, in which the press is an important tool.[69] Moreover, Israeli society is democratic, characterised by relatively broad press freedom, unlike

the authoritarian Palestinian society.[70] Therefore, it is reasonable that nations in building will have a close connection between the media and public opinion, which reflect a uniform nationalistic temper, which is essential for the nation establishment.

In an interview published in the 1980s, *al-Fajr*'s editor claimed that the role of the Palestinian press was to 'formulate and translate the national activity that flourished against the occupation … and to voice Palestine from the occupied territories to all Arab world and the international arena.'[71] This expresses an authoritarian model, according to which mass media are totally subordinated to the interests and functions of the state.[72] The findings of the current article demonstrate that media representations of enemy leaders also serve for achieving the goal of nation-building and consolidating national narratives.

It follows that in societies in which the range of variation on national issues is broad – both among the public and among the media – the extent of media influence on the public is relatively low. In contrast to totalitarian regimes in which the public is exposed to limited information dictated directly or indirectly by the government, a democratic society constitutes a free flow of information that is an important basis for civic participation. The existence of independent media is an essential component of this process.[73] In view of that, the gaps revealed between the media representations of Arafat and the Israeli public support for political negotiations with the Palestinians throughout the whole research period – are not surprising.

The gap found between the restrained media attitude towards Arafat and the relatively high Israeli public support for the Oslo Accords can be explained by another factor: the element of surprise. The reaching of the DOP was kept almost secret until the signing of the agreement, which forced the political journalists to make a rapid shift in Arafat's image from a bitter enemy to a peace partner. Hence, the cool reaction of the Israeli press towards Arafat may have been an intuitive attachment to a familiar image of him, assuming that this is the image that the Israeli public will digest more easily.

All explanations described above are hypothetical and deserve careful examination in other conflict scenes as well. In addition, the article suffers from a number of limitations: conceptually, as noted at the beginning, it is difficult to prove a causal (and even correlational) relation between media and public opinion. Hence most of the article's predictions rest to a large extent on theoretical arguments and lay the foundation for future research looking at potential causal relationships. Methodologically, there is not always a complete chronological overlap between public opinion surveys and news items analysis. It is possible that if the surveys were conducted more frequently, their correspondence with the news items was more accurate. In addition, the surveys in both sides included questions that dealt with the degree of support for the political contacts between the parties and not specifically with the degree of trust in Arafat or Rabin. Had there been dedicated surveys of public attitudes towards the leaders, the validity of the research would have been better.

However, the exposure of the mechanisms used by both the Israeli and Palestinian media to represent Arafat and Rabin and the corresponding public opinion trends revealed in the article indicate the potential of the news media to support peace processes through representations of enemy leaders and not only to 'spoil' them. This is especially true for societies in the process of nation-building. Among nations whose independence is well established, the potential of media influence on public opinion is lower, but the media may contribute to normalising or legitimising the image of the enemy leader through positive representations of him/her. Future studies will need to combine the suggested factors into an explanatory model that would demonstrate in what circumstances the media will bring this potential to fruition.

Notes

1 Soroka, Stecula and Wlezien, "It's (Change in) the (Future) Economy, Stupid," 457.

2 Kempf and Shinar, *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.*

3 Bahador, "The Media and Deconstruction," 123; and Karniel, Lavie-Dinur and Azran, "Professional or Personal Framing?" 109.

4 Evans, "Framing International Conflicts," 215; and Joseph, "Mediating War and Peace," 230.

5 Kempf, "Towards a Theory"; Shinar, "The Peace Process," 15; and Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict, Media and the Path to Peace.*

6 Joseph, "Mediating War and Peace," 232; and Hanitzsch and Nagar, "Beyond Peace Journalism," 154.

7 Sheafer and Dvir-Gvirzman, "The Spoiler Effect," 206.

8 Meyer, Baden and Frère, "Navigating the Complexities," 8.

9 Sheafer and Dvir-Gvirzman, "The Spoiler Effect," 207.

10 Gunther, "The Persuasive Press Inference," 491.

11 Auerbach and Bloch-Elkon, "Media Framing and Foreign Policy," 88.

12 Scheufele, "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects," 104.

13 Hawkins, "Media Selectivity and the Other Side," 62.

14 Bahador, "The Media and Deconstruction," 125; Hamelink, *Media and Conflict*, 8; and Wolfsfeld, *Media and the Path to Peace*, 11.

15 Tiripelli, *Media and Peace in the Middle East*, 23.

16 Feuerstein and Mandelzis, "Israeli College Students,"; and Wiegand, "Islamic Terrorism," 59.

17 Reuben, "The Impact of News Coverage," 72.

18 Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, 18.

19 Hoffman and Hawkins, *Communication and Peace*, 7.

20 Wolfsfeld, *Media and the Path to Peace*.

21 Armoudian, "Constructing "The Others" during Conflict," 17.

22 Sheafer and Dvir-Gvirzman, "The Spoiler Effect," 207.

23 Shamir and Shamir, *The anatomy of public opinion.*

24 Hadjipavlou, "The Cyprus Conflict," 354.

25 Carruthers, *The Media at War*, 21; and Conners, "Hussein as Enemy," 101.

26 Joseph, "Mediating War and Peace," 225; and Wolfsfeld, *Media and the Path to Peace*, 31.

27 Steuter and Wills, "The Vermin have Struck Again," 158.

28 Bahador, "The Media and Deconstruction,' 123–24.

29 Musa and Ferguson, "Enemy Framing and the Politics," 10.

30 Spillman and Spillman, "Some Sociobiological and Psychological Aspects," 49.

31 Balmas, "Bad News," 668.

32 Aaldering, Van der Meer and Van der Brug. "Mediated Leader Effects," 77.

33 Conners, "Hussein as Enemy," 101.

34 Mazid, 'Cowboy and Misanthrope,' 438.

35 Lelourec, " … The Bad and the Ugly," 35.

36 Christophorou and Sanem. "The "Others" in Peace Talks,"129.

37 Mandelzis, "The Changing Image".

38 For studies examining media-public relations on international conflicts, see: Bae, "The Effect of Media-Framing,"; and Hyunjin, Johnson and Stein, '"Media Framing of Axis-of-Evil Leaders".

39 For example: Sheafer and Dvir-Gvirtzman, "The Spoiler Effect."

40 Even, "Lessons for Israel," 72.

41 Jamal, "The Palestinian media," 50; and Nossek and Rinnawi, "Censorship and freedom," 184.

42 Shinar and Rubinstein, *Palestinian press in the West Bank: The political dimension*, 47.

43 Alimi, "Discursive Contention," 76.

44 Nossek and Rinnawi, "Censorship and Freedom," 188.

45 Limor and Mann, *Journalism*, 44.

46 Ibid., 47.

47 "The Palestinian Media," 50; and Nossek and Rinnawi, "Censorship and Freedom," 184.

48 Haaretz, 14 December 1987, p. 2.

49 Haaretz, 16 November 1988, p. B1; *Yediot Aharonot*, 14 November 1988, p.1.

50 Haaretz, 13 December 1988, p.13; 4 May 1988, p. 9.

51 Yediot Aharonot, May, 3, 1989, p. 15 & 5 May 1989, p. 2.

52 Tiripelli, *Media and Peace in the Middle East*, 23.

53 Haaretz, 2 September 1993, p. A2; *Yediot*, 25 August 1993, p.1.

54 Haaretz, 12 September 1993, p. B1.

55 Ibid., 13 September 1993, p. B1.

56 No poll was conducted by the Jaffee Centre right after the signing of Oslo Accord but only four months later. However, data from other research institutes from September-October 1993 indicate very similar data. According to a survey conducted at the beginning of September 1993 at Rabin's own request, 52.4% of the Israeli Jewish public supported a peace agreement with the Palestinians. In mid-November, the rate of support rose to 61.2% (Auerbach and Greenbaum, 'Assessing leader credibility,' 42).

57 *Al-Fajr*, 2 January 1988, p. 1.

58 Ibid., 22 December 1987, p. 11; Al-Quds, 23 December 1987, p. 4 & Feb. 1, p. 3.

59 Al-Quds, 26 June 1992, p. 12 & 23 June 1992 p. 4.

60 Al-Fajr, 19 December 1992, p. 8.

61 Al-Quds, 14 September 1993, p.5.

62 Ibid., 15 September 1993, p. 1.

63 Ibid., 11 September 1993, p. 9.

64 Al-Quds, 27 May 1994, p. 6.

65 Al-Quds, 2 October 1995, p. 7.

66 Evans, "Framing International Conflicts," 215; and Joseph, "Mediating War and Peace," 230.

67 Author; Mandelzis, "The Changing Image,"; and Wolfsfeld, *Media and the Path to Peace*.

68 Joseph, "Mediating War and Peace,"231.

69 Huseini, UNRWA and the Palestinian nation-building, 54; Jamal, "The Palestinian Media," 50; and Postil, *Media and Nation Building*, 129.

70 See note 45 above, 47.

71 Benvenisti, The Israeli censorship, 38.

72 Rantanen, A crisscrossing historical analysis, 3455.

73 See note 55 above.

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Shifting trajectory in India-Israel relations under Modi

Muhsin Puthan Purayil

ABSTRACT

Indo-Israeli relations have gained tremendous momentum under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. While the PM's deliberate and cohesive efforts deserve credit, other significant contributing factors must not be overlooked. Moving away from the dominant Modi-centric approach, this article explores significant contributing factors in the new phase in India-Israel relations under Modi. It concludes that more than a single factor, it is a combination of conditions and factors that actively and collectively brought about the change.

India-Israel relations have been nothing short of a roller coaster ride. Since the formation of the two states as independent entities, despite having no direct conflict of interests or potential security threats from each other, bilateral relations have seen ups and downs.[1] India's cold shoulder to Israel was guided by both its interests in the Arab world and ideological considerations.[2] While Nehru's foreign policy appeared to be a mix of ideological and realpolitik, on many occasions the ideological factors prevented pragmatic exploration of

relations with Israel, with New Delhi's cold war anti-western and anti-imperialist worldview shaping its stance towards Israel.[3] By contrast, today's close relationship shows a good measure of pragmatism with mutually-beneficial cooperation superseding ideological considerations.

This article analyses the close and intensifying Indian-Israeli relationship under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The dominant narrative about this relationship, at least from India's point of view, seems to be centred on the narrow 'individual factor' – the role of the leadership, and more precisely the 'Modi factor'. While, indeed, Modi's Israel policy has been notable for its dramatic departure from the past, analysing it from this vantage point tends to overlook the role of other factors in the changing dynamics of India-Israel relations. By way of addressing this gap, this article provides a comprehensive framework comprising the various factors and aspects of India's policy towards Israel under Modi, from the historical bilateral contexts from independence to date, to systemic, domestic and personal factors in the growing relationship, to the confluence of all factors that shaped and guided India's present relations with Israel.

Indo–Israeli relations in the shadow of the cold war, 1948–92

India and Israel became independent around the same time, in 1947 and 1948 respectively – the former from prolonged colonial rule, the latter from 30-years-long mandatory rule. During the ensuing cold war, both states had to wade through great difficulties as the new bipolar world was not that welcoming to the newly independent states. For Israel, this global situation was exacerbated by its geographical location, constant isolation, and ongoing conflict over its very existence. Likewise, India faced serious internal conflicts soon after independence, with inter-religious feuds, acute poverty, unemployment, and rampant illiteracy endangering the new vulnerable democratic setup.

While Israel followed a policy of non-identification, India pioneered a policy of non-alignment with either the Western or the Eastern blocs. This helped both states to maintain a more balanced relationship with the US and the Soviet Union, drawing a parallel foreign policy approach with deep practical considerations on their sides. However, despite a close orientation towards a non-aligned foreign policy stance, Israel was never part of the expanded Non-Aligned Movement due to adamant Arab opposition to its inclusion. Thus India recognised Israel as a sovereign independent state in 1950 but remained reluctant to establish fully-fledged formal diplomatic relations even as Israel was allowed to open a consulate in Bombay in 1953.[4]

During this phase, Jawaharlal Nehru, as both prime minister and foreign minister, was the driving force behind India's Israel policy, explaining the decision to allow the opening of the consulate in the following terms: 'It is not a matter of high principle, but it is based on how we could best serve and be helpful in that area. We should like the problem between Israel and the Arab countries to be settled peacefully. After careful thought we felt that while recognising Israel as an entity, we need not at this stage exchange diplomatic personnel'.[5]

Apart from geostrategic and economic considerations, India's anxiety for close relations with the Arab world was based on its desire to neutralise Pakistan's attempts to create a pan-Islamic movement and to keep its substantial Muslim minority sufficiently content.[6] Nehru thus sought to walk the tight rope between maintaining close relations with the Arab world while keeping a non-hostile relationship with Israel. As he put it:

> Any action that we may take must be guided not only by idealistic considerations but also a realistic appraisal of the situation. Our general policy in the past has been favourable to the

Arabs and, at the same time, not hostile to the Jews. That policy continues. For the present, we have said that we are not recognising Israel. But this is not an irrevocable decision and the matter will no doubt be considered afresh in view of subsequent developments.[7]

Subsequent governments under Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi did not deviate from Nehru's course as far as India's Israel policy is concerned, sustaining a 'principled distance' from a close association with Israel on the assumption that such policy would widen New Delhi's room for manoeuvre in the face of changing political dynamics at both the domestic and international levels.[8] However, growing Chinese and Pakistani influence in the Arab world and India's soft stand on Israel kindled concerns in Indian foreign policy circles about the detrimental effects of this policy for India's standing in the Arab world.

These fears seemed to be vindicated during the Indo-Sino border conflict of 1962, when all Arab states apart from Lebanon, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia chose to remain unsympathetic to the Indian cause.[9] Likewise, Israel also took a non-committal stance despite Beijing's hard line policy vis-à-vis Israel that on many occasions even questioned its right to exist.[10]

The 1965 India-Pakistan war tested the efficacy of India's Israel policy yet again. Given its staunch support for the Palestinians and its pro-Arab policy at the UN and other international organisations, India was deeply disappointed that not only did the Arab states fail to endorse its cause but Saudi Arabia and Jordan openly sided with Pakistan. While many attributed this to overriding religious identification that superseded the NAM solidarity, others blamed it on India's (supposedly) insufficient support for the Palestinians.

During this time, there were demands from parties like the Jana Sangh that New Delhi establish formal ties with Israel. Yet when these parties came to power they failed to live to their previous demands, keeping the existing policy with minor positive changes under the stewardship of Rajiv Gandhi. This was, indeed, not without impediments. Despite issues such as the Palestinian Intifada and the involvement of Israel in ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, Gandhi put a great deal of effort to establish good relations with Israel.[11]

From the end of the cold war to the Modi era, 1992–2014

The end of the cold war unleashed tremendous changes in the international system and gave rise to a new world order dominated by the US, thus allaying the fear of being trapped in inter-bloc ideological confrontation. More importantly, it offered countries, especially in the developing world, more policy space by weakening the ideological barriers created by the socialist and capitalist blocs.

Changes in the relations between the Middle East and the US, and between the US and India contributed to New Delhi's shifting stance towards Israel.[12] So did the growing Chinese involvement in the Middle East and the new dynamism in Chinese-Israeli relations, which kindled fears in India of being left behind in what seemed to evolve into a promising economic, strategic and security alignment, especially since the collapse of the Soviet Union was seen by New Delhi as a major setback that would deprive it of an important international leverage.[13]

Additionally, expanding globalisation, integration of domestic economic systems in the global economy and the resultant growth of interdependence among states brought about much greater emphasis on economic, strategic and security interests with mutual benefits poised to outweigh trivial ideological differences. In the words of Harsh Pant:

The emergence of India and Israel as industrialized and technologically advanced states makes their cooperation on a range of fields meaningful and mutually beneficial. There has been a six-fold increase in India's trade with Israel in the last decade with India becoming Israel's second-largest trading partner in Asia in non- military goods and services. India's non- military trade with Israel reached 1.27 USD billion in 2002 from just 202 USD million in 1992, which is still not commensurate with the vast potential.[14]

It was Prime Minister Narasimha Rao who reoriented India's longstanding Israel policy by establishing fully fledged diplomatic relations on 29 January 1992.[15] Since then cooperation gradually expanded and diversified into numerous fields, including defence and security, trade, agriculture, counterterrorism, and economic and cultural affairs. Initially, this cooperation focused on internal security, intelligence sharing, defence and technology. When the US imposed sanctions on India in the wake of its 1998 nuclear test, Israel not only refrained from condemning New Delhi but also expressed sympathy and understanding for its justified security concerns.

Before long a high level visit by India's Home Minister Advani, as the head of a high level intelligence and security delegation, formalised intelligence sharing and cooperation in anti-terrorism efforts.[16] It also led to the opening of Israeli intelligence offices in New Delhi along the lines of the FBI, with Israel further agreeing to enhance defence technology cooperation with India.[17]

In 2000, Jaswant Singh of the BJP-led government became the first Indian foreign minister to visit Israel. Speaking to the Israeli Council of Foreign Relations, he described the new momentum in India's relations with Israel as a 'tectonic shift of consciousness'.[18] Indeed, by this time the growing bilateral relations between the two countries had 'assumed an altogether new dynamic and came under full public scrutiny with the visit of Ariel Sharon to India in September 2003, the first ever by a ruling Israeli prime minister'.[19]

Similarly, when the Congress-led government came to power, relations with Israel not only remained unaltered but there were more interactions between the two states. It was marked by high level visits from both sides including visits by Science and Technology Minister Kapil Sibal in July 2005, Minister of State for Rural Development Kumari Selja in September 2005, Minister for Commerce and Industry Kamal Nath in November 2005, Union Minister for Agriculture, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Sharad Pawar and India's Commerce Minister, Jyotiraditya Scindia, in February.[20] However, despite this perceptible warming of relations, there was no prime ministerial visit to Israel.

In June 2011, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at enhancing cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship, as well as a bilateral trade agreement between the Israel High Tech Industries Association and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Yet India's stance on the contentious Palestinian issue remained more or less the same, with successive governments voicing occasional Indian support for an independent Palestinian state while simultaneously maintaining bourgeoning bonhomie with Israel.

Indo-Israeli relations under Modi

India-Israel relations have gained tremendous momentum under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, expanding from the defence and security sphere to numerous fields from agriculture, to waste management, to science and technology, to tourism, and culture. And while this shift is primarily

attributed to the prime minister's foreign policy orientation, widely known as the 'Modi factor' or the 'Modi doctrine', it has also been substantially affected by a number of domestic and international factors.

International factors

The emergence of a multipolar world and consequent waning popularity of NAM have brought about certain reorientations and realignments in India's foreign policy. In the words of Kadira Pethiyagida:

> Indian policymakers feel that in an increasingly multipolar world, the way to maximize leverage is to make other states work for one's favor rather than have it taken for granted through alliance membership. Thus, what had previously been promoted as idealist nonalignment has now evolved and been rebranded as realist strategic independence.[21]

The global order has been in continuous flux since the end of the Cold War with new realignments taking place, non-state actors playing an ever growing role, and non-traditional security challenges (e.g. human security, climate change, sustainable development) giving rise to new forms of collective efforts and cooperation between global powers and lesser power alike. In this newly created 'mixed system', traditional realpolitik coexists with the necessity of cooperation as interdependence grows.[22]

In these circumstances, India's new enhanced internal and external security concerns, from Pakistan-originated terrorism to Indians joining ISIS, have increased the Indo-Israeli collaboration, given Israel's world leading position in such fields as counterterrorism, defence and security technology, and intelligence gathering and operations.

The rise and growing assertiveness of China, India's perennial adversary, has caused considerable concern in New Delhi and has increased the importance of partnership with Israel as a possible counterweight to the rapidly spreading Chinese influence. The importance of this partnership has become all the more critical given that Beijing, being more far-sighted than New Delhi, has already established stronger ties with Israel despite the fact that 'China and Israel are not natural partners'.[23] For its part, the Israeli government headed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu quickly seized the Indian opening for a major upgrade of the bilateral relationship, without harming Jerusalem's relations with Beijing or indeed its growing realignment to the East.[24]

Another major factor in the evolving Indo-Israeli cooperation has been 'the constant, albeit neither consistent nor direct' role of the US.[25] While New Delhi has ambitiously sought to modernise its armed forces through the acquisition of the most advanced weaponry and latest technology, Washington has been reluctant to share this technology. Thus, for example, the 'nearly completed' negotiations over a joint venture to develop anti-tank guided missiles (ATGM) was stalled in 2016 due to the US administration's reluctance to share the necessary technology and to allow India to manufacture the missiles.[26] By contrast, Israel was amenable to sharing such technologies with the Rafael Advanced Defence Systems reportedly finalising the sale of the ATGMs to India, among many other signed defence and security agreements between the two states.[27]

No less importantly, Iran's steady hegemonic drive – from its dogged pursuit of nuclear weapons, to subverting regional regimes and intervening in domestic conflicts (Syria, Iraq,

Yemen) – has driven many Arab states, notably Saudi Arabia and the gulf principalities, to establish close security (and at times economic) cooperation with Israel (albeit covertly), making them more understanding of Jerusalem's concerns, needs and goals in general, and vis-à-vis the Palestinians in particular with the latter being increasingly perceived as disruptive to the Arab cause via their unyielding recalcitrance.[28] Hence the Gulf states' support (and tacit acquiescence of other Arab states) for President Trump's peace plan despite its outright rejection by the Palestinian leadership. And this trend has been reinforced by the ongoing turbulence since the onset of the 'Arab Spring' in 2011, which has rendered Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya (and to a lesser extent Lebanon) – staunch supporters of the Palestinian cause – 'failed states'.[29] All these changes in the political and diplomatic landscape of the Middle East have offered India a wider latitude to upgrade its relations with Israel without abandoning its traditional support for the Palestinians.

Domestic factors

While Modi's landslide victory in the 2014 election showcased massive support for the new incumbent government, it was also an indication of the emergence of a wider political consensus on his foreign policy. This consensus was going to be a critical variable in shaping Modi's foreign policy in an era when this policy is no longer seen as a separate domain but is often considered an extension of domestic policy.

Thus, while Indo-Israeli relations have traditionally been centred on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the emerging public consensus in recent years of the intrinsic importance of elevating and expanding these relations has provided Modi with a tremendous impetus for delinking the bilateral relationship from the Palestinian problem.[30]

This trend has also been reinforced by the growing insertion of traditionally marginalised non-state and sub-state actors in India's international relations. As the former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh rightly observed: 'In the modern world, the relationship between governments is increasingly mediated through and influenced by the relationship between civil society and the business community. It is on the foundation of people-to-people and business-to-business relations that we in government try to build state-to-state relations.'[31]

Such business and corporate actors that have gained visibility and vibrancy in foreign policy matters have become a prominent force to be reckoned with in New Delhi's foreign policymaking.[32] As such, economic diplomacy has opened up more avenues as well as expanded the scope for the private sector's role in India's diplomatic landscape and conduct of international relations, with the business community evincing keen interest in expanding the scope of Indo-Israeli relations. The latest visit of Prime Minister Netanyahu, for example, was accompanied by a large business delegation representing 100-plus companies that signed several contracts with Indian private sectors.[33]

Above all, there is a growing eagerness among the Indian public and political elites to see India as a great power by a more aggressive projection of soft power on the international stage. Modi's penchant for promoting Indian (mainly Hindu) culture abroad, his successful diplomacy in making the UN declare June 21st as International Yoga Day, among numerous other religious/cultural gestures during his overseas visits have considerably endeared him to his Indian constituents.[34]

Individual factors

Ideas, calculations, and perceptions of leaders also play a significant role in foreign and defence policymaking. And while Modi hasn't produced a detailed written exposition of his worldview, it is arguable that his outlook in general, and his foreign policy orientation in particular, has been powered by his identification with the ideology, politics and nationalist fervour of Hindutva – an ideology that seeks to establish Hindu hegemony and way of life.[35] He is eager to make friends in the international arena, having visited some 60 states, and has enthusiastically flavoured his fraternising efforts with a good measure of Hindutva philosophy, notably *vasudaiva kudumbakam* – 'the world is one family'. At an Arpil 2015 meeting of the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) national executive, Modi 'enunciated panchamrit (literally, five sacred foods), that is, the five pillars of his foreign policy: sammān (dignity, honour), samvād (engagement, dialogue), samriddhi (shared prosperity), suraksha (regional and global security) and sanskriti evam sabhyata (cultural and civilisational linkages)'.[36] These may have contributed to the Modi government's resolve to conduct a multi-pronged foreign policy that encompasses, among other things, a delicate balancing act and building multiple strategic partnerships.

More specifically, Modi's staunch Hindutva nationalism helps explain his high level of bonhomie towards Israel as the ideological premises of Hindutva and Jewish nationalisms have much in common, notably the inextricable link between faith and nation.[37] The Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the BJP's predecessor- the most powerful Hindu nationalist party in India - has long recognised the idea of Jewish statehood and expressed sympathy and admiration for Israel with a sustained orientation for establishing bilateral relations. Thus, the reflection of the ideological and philosophical underpinnings of Hindutva and Jewish nationalism point at a seeming alignment of Modi's ideological commitment and foreign policy orientation vis-à-vis Israel.

Furthermore, during his tenure as Chief Minister of the State of GujaratModi had already established friendly relations with Israel, welcoming Israeli industries and pursuing close ties with them, which he continued to maintain and expand as Indian prime minister.[38] In fact, this seemed to have largely facilitated the fostering of personal camaraderie between Modi and Netanyahu, enhancing the possibility for leaps in Indo-Israeli relations. The friendship between the two prime ministers was at display when they spent time together on the Tel Aviv beach during Modi's visit to Israel,[39] followed by a tweet by Netanyahu: 'There is nothing like going to the beach with friends!@narendramodi'.[40] Modi reciprocated by receiving Netanyahu at New Delhi airport with a hug (in breach of protocol) and tweeting: 'Welcome to India, my friend PM Netanyahu! Your visit to India is historic and special. It will further cement the close friendship between our nations'.[41] All this underscores the great importance of Modi's personal bonhomie and rapport with Netanyahu in the mushrooming bilateral relations.

Another variable to be noted is Modi's 'overwhelming confidence of the corporate sector'.[42] Making no disjuncture in the confidence and abounding expectations from the corporate sector, his approach towards the latter has been cordial and welcoming. In fact, it contributed to India bettering its rank in the ease of doing business index, particularly because convincing foreign corporate and business investors about the huge potential of India's market could not have been pulled off without making a perceptual change in the investors so as to view India as a favourable location for investments. And this would be impossible in the absence of close dialogues, negotiation and policy interaction as well as exchange of inputs and policy suggestions between government and business groups. In that sense, Modi's positive approach towards the business community, which he considers a major player in the country's development,[43] has given the latter a greater say in foreign policy matters to the extent that

commercial diplomacy has become prominent in India's diplomatic toolkit. Expanding economic and commercial relations between the countries supports this argument.

Unlike many of his predecessors, Modi exerts tight personal control over his party and bureaucracy.[44] As it often happens in a democracy, Modi's party prowess is a corollary of the mass public support he personally generates for the party. This support has been a result of his numerous personal qualities, from his abiding charisma, to strong leadership, to organisational acumen, to oratory skills, to mannerism and gestures. His breaking the legacy of collegiality – the idea of organisation above individuals and side-lining the senior leaders in the party like LK Advani – are cases in point. With absolute control of the party, Modi consolidated his control of the government as well, positioning himself at the centre of the decision-making process.[45]

Leaders who come to power on the crest of a landslide – sweeping electoral victory in a democracy, coup or revolution is authoritarian systems – tend to leave a personal imprint on domestic and foreign policies and Modi is no exception. His Israel approach can thus be ascribed, to a certain extent, to these personal factors.

Notes

1 Rubinoff, "Normalization of India-Israel Relations," 496–7.
2 Kumaraswamy, "India's Recognition of Israel," 124–34.
3 Ghosal, "Strategic Hyphenation," 2.
4 Kemp, *The East Moves West*, 134.
5 Appadorai, *The Domestic Roots of India's Foreign Policy*, 151.
6 Kumaraswamy, *India's Israel Policy*, 267; and Rao, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 38.
7 Parthasarathi, ed. *Jawaharlal Nehru*, 127–8.
8 Srivastava, "India-Israeli Relations," 250–3.
9 Ibid., 249.
10 Ibid.
11 Kumaraswami, "Israel–India Relations," 264.
12 Ghosal, "Strategic Hyphenation," 4–6.
13 Pant, "India–Israel Partnership", 61.
14 Ibid., 66.
15 See note 3 above.
16 Sharma and Bing, "India–Israel relations," 623.
17 Ibid.
18 Noorani, "Dissent in Israel."
19 Pant, "India–Israel Partnership," 60.
20 Sharma and Bing, "India–Israel Partnership," 624.
21 Pethiyagoda, "Time for India to Play a Role in Israel-Palestine Peace?"
22 Basrur, "Modi's Foreign Policy Fundamentals," 14.
23 Abrams, "What's behind Israel's Growing Ties with China?"
24 Cohen, "Israel is looking East."
25 Blarel, "Assessing US Influence," 384.
26 Ibid., 396.
27 Singh, "India, Israel Seal $2 Billion Missile Deals."
28 Yaalon and Friedman, "Israel and the Arab States."
29 Rabinovich, *Israel and the Changing Middle East*, 2–3.
30 Pant, "India-Israel Ties Gather Momentum."
31 Baru, *The Growing Influence of Business and Media on Indian Foreign Policy*', 1.
32 Kumar, "Role of Business," 98–111.
33 Mishra and Miklian, *The Evolving Domestic Drivers*, 1; and Sajjanhar, "India-Israel Relations."
34 Mishra and Miklian, *The Evolving Domestic Drivers*, 4.

35 Basrur, "Modi's Foreign Policy Fundamentals," 7.

36 Ibid.

37 Prabhu, "Hindutva and Zionism."

38 Moskovitz, "Is Narendra Modi, India's New Prime Minister."

39 "Benjamin Netanyahu's Special Gift for 'Friend' PM Modi on India Visit."

40 Ibid.; and Mahapatra, "Twitter lauds 'Budding Bromance.'"

41 "Modi Hugs 'Friend' Netanyahu as Israel PM arrives in Delhi on 'Historic' Visit."

42 Mishra and Miklian, *The Evolving Domestic Drivers*, 5.

43 "Modi@365: 87% of Corporate India says Government Pro-business, Pro-development."

44 Jaffrelot and Tillin, *Populism in India*, 187.

45 Ibid., 151.

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Index