

**The Jubilee Year:
Israeli Youth's Attitudes Toward
Personal, Social and National Issues**

Abstracts

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Foreword

The 50th anniversary of the establishment of Israel is an ideal moment for taking stock and attempting to foresee what awaits us in the future. Israeli society is at the threshold of making momentous decisions in the political arena. At the same time, rifts are widening internally, between the religious and the secular, between the rich and the poor, between Arabs and Jews, between doves and hawks. Despite the weightiness of the issues, adolescents and youth will, it appears, increasingly determine the fate of the nation. This point should be remembered as we hear the clarion call.

At the end of 1997, Mrs. Türkan Karakurt and Dr. Winfried Veit, representatives of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in Israel, turned to the Israeli Institute for Economic and Social Research with a special request. They wished to invite a survey on Israeli youth's attitudes during the jubilee year. The idea had been born in the wake of similar studies that the Stiftung had undertaken in numerous countries. Time was short but the task could be done. Almost immediately, Prof. Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar, Prof. Nehemia Friedland, and Dr. Natan Sznajder responded to our invitation to participate in the project. Dr. Irit Keynan, Director General of the Yitzhak Rabin Center for Israeli Studies, also joined the steering committee. Ms. Ella Heller, a specialist in survey research and data collection, representing Modi'in Ezrachi — Argus Information Services, also joined the staff.

Because of the pluralistic nature of Israeli society, we were required to classify and interpret the characteristics of the youth in our sample according to various social categories: “northerners”/“southerners,” development towns, disadvantaged neighbourhoods, new immigrants, the religious, the ultra-orthodox, Easterners (Sephardic Jews), non-Jews, etc. In collecting the data, we were assisted by Ms. Michal Bar-Ilan Yerushalmi, who edited the 28 in-depth interviews that provided the foundation for the comprehensive questionnaire.

The survey was conducted during March/April 1998 among 1,618 young people (1,213 Jews and 405 non-Jews), divided into two age groups, 15-18 and 21-24. The research

team analysed the results and began preparing their final report during May 1998. That document, presented here, is the culmination of the team's profound efforts to complete their task as early as June 1998.

The report opens with a quantitative review of selected demographic data characterising Israeli youth and an analysis of long-term trends. Following is Prof. Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar's analysis of the sample population's attitudes toward the state and society. His findings indicate significant discontinuities in those attitudes, particularly between social institutions and goals. Prof. Nehemia Friedland then presents a study of young people's attitudes toward themselves while delving into the question of identity. Dr. Irit Keynan continues with an investigation into attitudes toward a number of subjects, such as the Holocaust and the Rabin assassination. In addition, she examines the focal points around which youth construct their sense of social solidarity in Israel's jubilee year. Dr. Natan Sznaider completes the report with a comparison of Israeli and German youth with regard to their attitudes toward politics. He also presents a review of the in-depth interviews conducted by Ms. Michal Bar-Ilan Yerushalmi.

After reading the different chapters we soon learn that Israeli youth display signs of declining solidarity, expressed in personal ambition and individualism on the one hand, and novel attitudes toward society's central decision-making institutions on the other. Alternatively, we discover encouraging signs such as the convergence of the positions held by non-Jewish youth to those of Israeli society. The survey's findings also support the position that the young need to be educated, especially for democracy, in order to provide them with the tools necessary for participating in the decision making. Such an education will help them confront the difficult issues awaiting them in the future. In addition, in order to remedy the growing sense of alienation, it may be necessary to introduce structural changes in the political system.

When conducting research of this type, it is desirable to compare results over at least two periods of time; I therefore hope to be able to continue the project and perform a follow-up survey in the year 2000. Such a study will grant us an opportunity to re-examine and review long-term trends.

I would like to thank the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung for their financing the research, as a result of which we have constructed a tool capable of taking the pulse of the nation's youth today and in the future.

Additional thanks go to all those who contributed in the preparation of the report in such a short span of time, especially Mara Chabiff for typing and assistance in organising the project; Nina Reshef for editing the English abstracts; and Sarit Cohen for her participation in the editing of the complete report.

Sincerely,

Dr. Roby Nathanson

Chapter 1:

Israeli Youth: Demographic Data

Dr. Roby Nathanson

Ms. Hagar Zameret

The Israeli Institute for Economic and Social Research

Introduction

Data published by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics indicate that, in 1997, about 1 million young persons aged 15-24 (hereinafter youth) resided in Israel. The relative weight of youth within the general population has remained constant since the 1980s, and continues to be about 17.5%.

The number of Jewish youth stands at about 780,000. Patterns in the growth of this segment of the population are very similar to those of the general population given that Jewish youth represent the majority of young persons in Israel. Trends in population growth among non-Jewish youth, that is, Moslem, Christian and Druze young people, nonetheless differ from those among Jewish youth. In 1997, non-Jewish youth numbered 230,100. As of 1955, when young people represented 18.5% of the total non-Jewish population in Israel, the percentage of non-Jewish youth increased to 19.4% in 1975, and then to an average of about 21.5% during the 1980s. In the 1990s, the proportion of non-Jewish youth within the total non-Jewish population stabilised at about 20.5%.

Family Status

In Israel, among male youths aged 15-19, 99.5% are single; among female youths of the same age, the figure is 95%; in the 20-24 age group, 85.7% of the males are single, while only 61.7% of the females are single. The average age of marriage for Jewish males declined from 30, during the 1950s, to 28 years of age over the past 15 years, although the median age is currently 26.6. The average age of marriage among Jewish females has been 25 as of the 1950s, although the median age of marriage has gradually risen over the past 45 years, from 22 to 24. The average age of marriage among Moslem females is 21.5, among Christian females, 24, and among Druze females, 21. The data indicate that women marry younger than do men; therefore, the segment of young married women is larger than the segment of young married men. The observed differences appear to reflect divergent attitudes toward the central role of the family held by each religious denomination. Hence, in 1997, 86% of all Jewish male youths were single, and 89% of all Jewish female youths were single, but only 75% of Moslem youths were single. Among Christians male youths, 84% were single whereas only 74% of Druze male youths were single.

Youth in the Work Force

Among youths aged 15-24, 342,800, or 34%, belong the civilian work force (employed or unemployed but actively seeking employment). When divided into sub-groups, 12.7% of those aged 15-17 and 43.5% of those aged 18-24 are members of the work force.

The proportion of youth in the civilian work force is in decline in Israel. During the 1950s, young people aged 14-34 comprised 47% of the work force; within this group, about 37% of those aged 14-17 and 57% of those aged 18-34 were employed. During the 1960s, the proportion of young persons aged up to 34 declined to about 44% of the total work force; the percentage rose to about 48% in the 1970s and 1980s; it once more fell to 44% in the 1990s.

Youth has consistently participated in the labour market throughout the nation's history. The participation rate of youth aged 14-17 has been declining steadily, at an average rate of 10% over five-year periods until recently, when it stabilised at about 12%. The participation rate of youth aged 18-24 declined at the beginning of the 1970s although it increased slightly afterwards and now rests at about 42%. However, among young persons aged 25-34, the participation rate has been increasing steadily, from 61% to about 72% in 1997.

The obvious explanation for this decline is the increase in the level of education — more youngsters in the 14-17 age group are attending high school, and the number of youth aged 18-24 seeking advanced education is increasing. In consequence, the age of entry into the labour market has been pushed upward.

This process influences the dependency ratio defining the relationship between those aged 65+ (the retired population) to those aged 15-65 (the working population). The dependency ratio is an indicator of the working population's ability to finance the social security needs (pensions and health insurance) of those retiring and/or absent from the work force. The higher the ratio, the greater the burden on the working population. Among industrialised nations, the dependency ratio has increased considerably and will reach about 23% in the year 2010. Due to Israel's relative young population, the

dependence ratio currently stands at about 17% and is expected to reach 23% only in the year 2030.

The number of Israeli young women participating in the work force is 168,700, and represents about 18% of the total population of working women. The proportion of young women aged 15-24 in the total population of working women has always been higher than the proportion of all youth, male and female, participating in the work force. The reason for this phenomenon is the pattern of women's entry into and exit from the labour market. Women generally take on the responsibilities of house and home, the major factor determining their participation in the labour market. As a result, women enter the labour market at an early age yet leave it rather shortly thereafter. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the difference between the proportion of youth within the labour market and the proportion of young women within the women's labour market is steadily decreasing. This decline in the difference, from 12.7% in the 1950s to 2.1% in 1997, is apparently caused by changes in outlook, and perhaps fashion, as well as the emergence of institutional arrangements aimed at supporting working mothers. Hence, the participation rate of married women aged 18-24 in the labour force has grown steadily, from 30% in the 1960s and 1970s to 45.4% in 1996.

The number of unemployed youth is currently 46,400, or 14.% of all youth participating in the labour market. The rate of unemployable youth in the civilian labour force has risen from less than 10% in the 1970s to 20% in the early 1990s. This increase is one consequence of the waves of immigration that swelled the short-term general rate of unemployment.

Education

Among the 15-24 age group, 705,700, or 70.5%, have some high school education. In effect, high school is probably the last educational institution they will attend. Among the remaining members of this group, 7.7% are continuing their studies at a non-academic institution, and only 10.36% have completed or are continuing their studies in an academic institution. At the polar end of the educational continuum, 8.8% have attended only elementary or junior high school. The total number of youth who have attended or are continuing to attend yeshivas is 26,900.

In contrast to the 1980s, when only 87% of Jewish youth aged 14-17 had acquired 9-12 years of education, 97% did so in the 1990s. Similarly, in the 1980s, 87% of the youth aged 18-24 had acquired at least 9 years of education while in 1990, the figure had increased to 97%, as it is at present. The percentage of Jewish youth that acquired some type of higher education increased steadily, from 21% in 1980 to 24% in 1990 and 27.3% in 1997.

Furthermore, there appears to be a clear trend toward greater enforcement of the Compulsory Education Law in the non-Jewish communities. During the early 1980s, 58.3% of non-Jewish youth aged 14-17 had acquired 9-12 years of education; by the early 1990s, this percentage had risen to 78.3%, and in 1997 it had reached 87.7%.

In the early 1980s, only 14% of non-Jewish youth aged 18-24 had acquired more than 12 years of education; in the early 1990s, this percentage had declined to 10.6%, although in 1997, the figure had risen to 21.7%.

Summary

In Israel, where family size is relatively small, and where the population tends to conform to western cultural values, the proportion of Jewish youth within the total population has gradually declined since the establishment of the state. The rate of growth in the proportion of minority youth is, nonetheless, higher. Therefore, the proportion of minority youth among the total population of young people is relatively larger. In contrast, due to the influence of the general culture, the rate of increase in the number of youth among the minorities is approaching that of the majority.

Two of the most significant trends appearing are changes in the level of education and the rate of participation in the labour market. The number of high school graduates is steadily increasing over the years; a similar trend is witnessed in the rise in the number turning to advanced and higher education. In consequence, the age of entry in the labour market is steadily declining.

Chapter 2:
Israeli Youth's Attitudes
Toward the State and Society

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Introduction

The purpose of the research was to attempt to ascertain what values, attitudes, and aspirations characterise Israel's Jewish and Arab young people. In this chapter, we focus on attitudes toward the Israeli society and its political system and how the youth in our sample view themselves within these frameworks.

The study was motivated by the changes witnessed in Israeli society over the last two decades — and some say since the Six Day War. These changes have weakened the nation's ideological and institutional foundations. Most prominent among them is sectorialisation, a process that has eroded the bases of Israel's national solidarity and, consequently, the legitimacy of its democratic regime. Trends toward increasing violence and alienation, visible for some time among various sectors of society, received their most dramatic expression in the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

In the not too distant past, despite the heterogeneity of its citizens, Israeli society was marked by a high level of consensus surrounding national goals, particularly security, and its character as a Jewish, secular, and democratic state. The current erosion of that solidarity is related to a number of phenomena: the weakening of traditional Zionist ideology, the growing strength of religiously committed (if not zealous) movements advocating a theocratic state, the emergence of post-Zionist factions objecting to a Jewish-Zionist state and, recently, the appearance of Arab leaders advocating that Israel become a "state of all its citizens." These phenomena, accompanied by growing individualism, particularism, and materialism, have contributed to undermining Israeli citizens' commitment to the state and to their growing disaffection with the functioning of its political regime.

Consequently, a survey of Israeli youth was considered essential to determine if these trends are expressed in the values and attitudes of the next generation as well.

The data was collected by means of a telephone survey of a representative sample of Arab and Jewish young people (N=1618), divided into two age groups, adolescents (aged 15-18, N=859) and young adults (aged 21-24, N=759), during April 1998.

The research questions concentrate on the issues of attitudes toward the state and society; values, goals and identities; and inter-group cleavages. Particular attention was paid to the factor of religion due to its influence on personal and political behaviour.

Summary of Findings

We should note, at the outset, that despite expectations to the contrary, no significant or systematic differences were found between the two age groups within either the Arab or the Jewish sample populations. On the other hand, we did find some salient differences between orthodox and secular Jewish youth, as well as between Jewish and Arab youth.

The findings refute, in general, contentions that Israeli Jewish youth are unwilling to identify with the state or to contribute to its traditional Zionist goals. On the contrary — a large majority identifies with traditional national goals and expresses willingness to contribute in realising these goals. Perhaps the most important indicator of Jewish youth's identification with the country is the fact that over 70% state that Israel is the country where they would want to be born and to live. In addition, the majority (76%) accepts the contention that Israel is the safest place for Jews to live (see Table 1). Among those young people awaiting induction, an even greater percentage (83%) indicates that giving the maximum during their military service is, for them, an important goal. The majority (73%) also expresses an interest in influencing social and political processes, a response that indicates their involvement in the political affairs.

These responses provide a framework for understanding the widespread optimism, expressed by three-quarters of the respondents, regarding the chances of realising personal goals in Israel. That personal optimism is tempered, however, when the question is directed toward the future of the state. Although, the majority (55%) continues to be optimistic about the future of the state, this majority is smaller than the number of respondents optimistic about their personal futures. Specifically, the findings indicate that 33% of Jewish youth are quite pessimistic about the future of the state. These results can, we believe, be directly associated to their low level of trust regarding some of the country's major political and social institutions. With the exception of the military and, somewhat less, the legal system and the police, which received trust ratings of about 83, 65 and 62, respectively, the other institutions listed received

considerably lower trust ratings (see Table 2). These findings reflect the public's disaffection with the political regime.

Understandably, excluding those goals and aspirations directly related to the Zionist ideology and its imperatives, such as military service, Arab youth appear to resemble their Jewish peers in their attitudes toward the state, society, and its major institutions. For example, 62% of Arab youth wish to be born and live in Israel; and similar to Jewish youth, 70% want to participate in influencing political processes. Again, like their Jewish counterparts, they tend to be optimistic about their chances of fulfilling personal goals, although at a lower rate (57%). An interesting point is that Arab youth agree with the statement that Israel is the safest place for Jews, but at a lower level of agreement (56%). Clearly, this question has different meanings for the two groups. For Jews, such a statement reflects sentiments and aspirations as well as what they perceive to be objective conditions. However, for Arabs, such a statement may be more exclusively cognitive in nature.

In conformity with their Jewish peers, Arab youth express a lower level of optimism with regard to the future of the State of Israel (48%) than the optimism they indicate regarding the chances of fulfilling personal goals in Israel. And, like Jewish youth, a considerable minority (about 40%) of Arab young people expresses pessimism about the future of the state.

Turning to the issue of trust in social and political institutions, Arab youth assign a trust rating of 55 to the military that, although considerably lower than the rating given by Jewish youth, is still positive and, we may add, a bit surprising. On the other hand, Arab youth give considerably higher ratings to the other major institutions, without exception, than do their Jewish peers (see Table 2).

This finding, that Arab young people have greater faith, in absolute terms, in the country's institutional structure than do their Jewish equivalents, is particularly striking in light of the social and political discrimination witnessed against the Arab community. We should, therefore, interpret these findings with care because they may reflect socially desirable or anticipated answers rather than the Arab respondents' genuine

perceptions of how these institutions function. The finding may also reflect growing trends toward integration, or “Israelisation,” which requires utilisation of the democratic framework of the state. Therefore, it is conceivable that the Arab minority may indeed have greater faith in institutions such as the courts and parliament (the Knesset) when compared to the Jewish majority.

Arab and Jewish young people alike identified peace and democracy as the most important goals for Israel as a state and for themselves as individuals (see Tables 3 and 4). The only major and obvious difference between the two groups in this context is that whereas the overwhelming majority of Jewish youth (83%) want Israel to retain its character as a “Jewish state”, Arab youth overwhelmingly want Israel to become “a state of all its citizens”. Obviously, such a desire contradicts the fundamental goals of Zionism.

Regarding collective identity, the most important categories of identity chosen by almost 60% of Jewish Israeli youth is either “Jewish” or “Israeli/Zionist”. These categories reflect national identities. Among Arab youth, on the other hand, 44% choose religious affiliation (Moslem, Christian or Druze) as the most important basis of identity. However, 41% do select national identities, the dominant one being “Arab” (26%), as opposed to “Palestinian” (8%) or “Israeli” (7%).

We may venture that attitudes toward the expression of protest should indicate just how Arab and Jewish young people perceive the practice of peace and democracy. The survey reveals that both groups express widespread support for legal means of protest as part of the democratic process; yet, among Arab youth, this majority is smaller (85% among Jews and about 65% among Arabs). A significant minority in both communities, especially among Arab youth, nonetheless supports illegal and/or violent means (see Table 5). In assessing these responses, we should note that some of the respondents replied to both categories, which indicates overlapping attitudes regarding the legitimacy of those forms of protest.

Another similarity between Arab and Israeli youth was found with reference to the statement that there are too many rifts and controversies between the various groups comprising Israeli society: 87% of the Jewish respondents and 76% of the Arab

respondents hold this opinion. However, and expectedly, differences appear with respect to the importance assigned to specific issues. Jewish youth identify the major conflict as the friction between the orthodox and the secular, while Arab youth pointed to the discord between the Arabs and the Jews. These findings can be interpreted thusly: Jewish youth view the most significant rifts as those existing *within* Israel's Jewish community whereas Arab youth view them as those *dividing two distinct* communities. Yet, in spite of these differences in emphasis, Jewish and Arab youth share identical perceptions of the degree of discrimination directed toward the Arab minority. Thus, about 56% of Jewish and Arab youth agree to the statement that Arabs enjoy little or no equality in Israeli society (see Table 7).

Irrespective of the differences between the two communities, Arab and Jewish, our research reveals significant cleavages within the Jewish community along the axis of religiosity. Most salient is the finding that the preservation of Israel as a "Jewish" state is identified as the major goal for society by a majority of orthodox Jewish youth (58%), whereas other goals, such as peace, democracy, and equality enjoy much lower support. In contrast, among traditional and secular youth, this goal receives marginal support (16% and 6%, respectively), while peace (31% and 32%, respectively) and democracy (23% and 33%, respectively) are considered to be the major goals. An additional important difference is expressed by the choice of collective identity. Orthodox youth prefer the "Jewish" identity (about 40%) as against the "Israeli/Zionist" identity (about 11%). In contrast, while traditional Jewish youth also prefer the "Jewish" to the "Israeli/Zionist" identity, they do at lower rates (about 34% and 27%, respectively), while secular Jewish youth indicate an inverse order of preferences (about 24% choose "Jewish" and about 35% choose "Israeli/Zionist"). Furthermore, the lower commitment to democracy expressed by orthodox Jewish youth is reflected in the fact that this group tends to support illegal or violent means of protest to a larger extent (about 41%) than do traditionalist (about 27%) or secular youth (about 25%).

Finally, we should note that our survey revealed that the three groups of Jewish youth — the orthodox, the traditionalist, and secular — express differences in their feelings regarding the Rabin assassination and its influence on how they perceive their relationship to the Israeli state and society (see Table 8). However, the groups do

concur in their belief that the assassination represents a watershed concerning their relationship to Israel's political regime and social order. Interpretation of these findings requires investigation of the event's symbolic meanings for the three communities. The results reported here should there be considered with care.

Table 1: In what country would you want to be born and where would you want to live?

Country	Jews %	Arabs %
Israel	71.3	61.7
Western countries	24.4	21.3
Arabic countries	0.0	13.1
Other/Do No know	4.3	3.9
Total	100.0	100.0

Table 2: Degree of trust accorded to various social and political institutions*

Institution	Jews		Arabs	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
The military	1	83.3	7	55.5
The legal system	2	64.8	2	70.7
The police	3	61.9	4	64.3
Religious institutions	4	45.8	1	76.6
The Knesset	5	41.2	6	57.9
The Histadrut	6	39.2	3	67.1
The media	7	38.9	5	61.1
Political parties	8	33.4	8	47.4
Average score		51.1		62.3

Note: *The respondents could award scores ranging from 0 (complete distrust) to 100 (complete trust).

Table 3: How important should each of these goals be for the nation?*

Goal	Jews		Arabs	
	Rating	Score	Rating	Score
Living in peace with one's neighbours	1	91.5	1	91.2
A democratic state	2	91.4	2	90.2
A high standard of living	3	89.5	4	87.3
Political equality is enjoyed by all groups	4	84.5	3	89.7
A Jewish state/ a state of all citizens	5	82.7	5	80.5
Greater economic equality	6	81.6	6	84.4

Note: *The respondents could award scores ranging from 0 (not important) to 100 (very important).

Table 4: Which national goal do you consider most important to you personally?*

Goal	Jews		Arabs	
	Rating	Score %	Rating	Score %
Living in peace with one's neighbours	1	28.3	1	37.8
A democratic state	2	26.0	2	25.7
A Jewish state/ a state of all citizens	3	18.1	5	4.7
Political equality is enjoyed by all groups	4	11.2	3	18.5
A high standard of living	5	8.5	4	4.9
Greater economic equality	6	4.3	6	4.9
They are all the same/ Do Not know		3.6		4.9
Total		100.0		100.0

Note: *The respondents were asked to indicate which *one* goal they considered most important to them. The figures reflect the percentage of youth in the total sample that selected each item as the most important goal.

Table 5: Acceptable means of protest against government policies — Jews and Arabs*

	Jews		Arabs	
	Yes %	No %	Yes %	No %
Support of legal means of protest	85.0	14.8	65.4	28.6
Support of illegal but non-violent means of protest	19.8	79.9	26.9	67.4
Support of illegal and violent means of protest	8.7	91.0	15.3	84.0

Note: *Percentages do not add up to 100 due to the possibility of multiples answers.

Table 6: How much equality is there between Jews and Arabs in Israel?

	Jews %	Arabs %
A significant or very large degree of equality	15.2	15.3
A fair degree of equality	27.0	27.2
Little or no equality	56.1	55.7
Do not know	1.7	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0

Table 7: Acceptable means of protest against government policies (Jews only*)

	Orthodox %	Traditionalist %	Secular %
Support of legal means of protest	85.2	82.2	87.0
Support of illegal but non-violent means of protest	24.0	19.1	18.6
Support of illegal and violent means of protest	17.2	7.8	6.3

Note: *Percentages do not add up to 100 due to the possibility of multiples answers.

Table 8: Which statement best describes your feelings regarding the Rabin assassination? (Jews only)

	Orthodox %	Traditionalist %	Secular %
For me, the Rabin assassination was a very sad event, like any murder, but it doesn't affect my relationship to the state	38.6	28.4	19.1
For me, the Rabin assassination was a watershed that has shaken my faith in Israeli society	50.7	60.6	65.7
For me, the Rabin assassination was a serious watershed, it's as if I've "lost my country"	7.2	8.5	12.7
Do not know	3.5	2.5	2.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chapter 3:
Israel's Young People: Who and What Are
We and What Do We Want to Become?

Prof. Nehemia Friedland

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Introduction

The portrayal of young people must capture not just what they are, but what they aspire to become. Accordingly, this chapter focuses, mostly, on young person's expectations and aspirations for the future.

A second theme addressed in the chapter is young Israelis' identities and self-definitions. Current theory views persons' identity and self-definition as consisting, in large measure, of the social categories that they ascribe to themselves and with which they identify. This study thus sought to identify those social categories that young Israelis choose in the process.

The third part of the chapter deals with the youngsters' identification with Israeli society, political involvement, and attitudes toward the political system. Questions asked in this context were designed to assess the degree to which young persons see themselves or wish to see themselves as active participants in social and political processes, or feel estranged from them.

A surprising finding was the absence of significant differences between the two age groups examined (15-18 and 21-24 years of age) with respect to most of the issues presented in the study. Hence, the data is presented for the two groups combined, unless otherwise warranted.

Expectations

The participants in the study were presented with a list of goals "that people wish to accomplish in their lives", and were asked to rate how important each goal is for them, personally.

Table 1 shows the average importance attributed to each of the goals by the Jewish and Arab participants.¹ These data indicate, first, that the “aspirations horizon” of Arab Israeli youth is generally higher than that of the Jewish counterparts, and that the variance in the perceived importance of the various goals is smaller in the former group than in the latter. The two groups were similar, though, in their viewing *raising a happy family* as the most important goal, closely followed by *establishing close friendships*.

Table 1: The importance of various goals in life for Arab and Jewish respondents

Goal	Jews	Arabs
To succeed economically	84.25	74.46
To raise a happy family	94.57	95.84
To contribute to the state or to society	76.92	75.96
To acquire higher education	83.92	89.14
To establish close friendships	90.58	93.60
To make a significant contribution to science or to art	32.30	77.69
To uphold religious laws	51.95	78.95
To acquire a prestigious occupation	73.59	91.21
To live according to one's principles, without having to compromise	75.59	84.32
To give the maximum in military service (15-18 years old only)	77.92	

Professional and economic success was judged important by both groups, although the Arab youth regarded the acquisition of a prestigious profession as more important than did their Jewish peers, and as somewhat more important than achieving economic success. These variations might reflect differences in the value structures of the two groups or pessimism regarding economic success felt by Arab youth. Both groups considered acquiring a higher education as very important, although the importance given by the Arab youth to this goal was somewhat higher.

Religious observance received a non-negligible weight by both Jewish and Arab youth, with a significantly greater weight given by the latter. Further analysis revealed,

¹The respondents were asked to rate each goal as “not at all important” (=1), “not so important” (=2), “moderately important” (=3), or “very important” (=4). Average importance scores were calculated and

however, that this result is attributable, in great part, to the responses of those who defined themselves as religious.

A salient difference between the two groups concerns the perceived importance of contributions to art and science. While Arab youngsters consider such a contribution a rather important goal, their Jewish counterparts see it as the least important of all goals. This finding is inconsistent with the widely held assumption that young people, particularly adolescents, strive for excellence. It is unclear, however, whether the finding reflects the Jewish youngsters' values or, rather, a realistic appraisal of the actual likelihood of success in artistic or scientific fields.

In addition to the absolute weighing of each of the goals, the respondents were asked to choose *the single most important goal*. *Raising a family* appeared, again, to be perceived as the most important goal: It was chosen as most important by 47.5% of the Jewish respondents and by 39.8% of the Arab respondents. The similarity between the two groups was retained regarding *economic success*: 17.7% of the Jewish respondents and 18.8% of their Arab equivalents considered it the most important goal. A significant difference between the two groups appeared, though, in regard to acquiring a higher education: whereas 18.8% of Arab youth chose this as their primary goal, only 6.1% of the Jewish youth did so.

Two questions elucidate further the priorities of the two groups. A large majority of both Jewish (70.8%) and Arab (80.2%) youngsters prefer self-employment. Furthermore, in both populations, self-advancement is preferred to contributing to the general welfare, although this preference is markedly stronger among Jewish youth. More specifically, among Arab youth, 54% responded that they would do more or all to secure self-advancement while 44.7% would do more or all to contribute to the general welfare (1.3% answered that they did not know). Among Jewish respondents, the corresponding proportions were 70.1%, 24.9%, and 5%.

converted for the sake of clarity to a 0-100 scale.

Although Jewish and Arab youth are quite similar in their aspirations, the former view accomplishing those aspirations as significantly more probable. That is, 76.2% of the Jewish respondents perceived a high or very high probability that they would accomplish their goals; 19.8% perceived a low or very low probability, and 4% did not know. The corresponding proportions for the Arab respondents were 57.2%, 37.8%, and 4.9%. This finding might be related, at least partly, to the fact that Jewish youth, more than their Arab equivalents, see the accomplishment of their goals as dependent, primarily, on themselves. That is, 88.9% of the Jewish respondents believe that the accomplishment of their goals depends mostly or entirely on their own personal efforts, compared to 68.5% of the Arab respondents who believe so. These differences notwithstanding, a majority of Jewish respondents (87.9%) and of Arab respondents (80.2%) are quite or very optimistic about their personal futures in Israel, which contrasts sharply with the relatively little optimism felt concerning the future of the country (55% of the Jews and 47.4% of the Arabs expressed optimism in this context).

Aspirations are shaped, to some extent, by the perceived status of different roles in society. Participants in the study were asked, therefore, to rank the esteem *accorded* by various role holders, and the esteem that *ought* to be given them or that they *deserve*. The Jewish respondents perceived high-ranking military officers, wealthy people, intellectuals, and politicians as the most esteemed roles in society. They felt, though, that wealthy people and politicians deserve less esteem, and that intellectuals are worthy of higher esteem. A similar trend was found among the Arab respondents, although they felt that army officers deserve lesser esteem. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Esteem accorded to and deserved by various role holders in society*

	Jews		Arabs	
	Esteem Accorded	Esteem Deserved	Esteem Accorded	Esteem Deserved
Athlete	4.2	3.9	7.9	4.2
Wealthy person	18.4	1.9	13.3	4.2
Intellectual	15.3	33.3	20.2	44.7
High-ranking military officer	20.0	19.3	14.6	6.2
Politician	13.9	6.3	19.8	11.6
Religious figure (rabbi, priest, etc.)	5.3	15.3	3.7	4.4
Artist	4.0	4.9	4.4	2.0
Media personality	7.9	2.8	1.5	3.2
Lawyer	4.8	1.3	9.4	12.6
Do not know/all the same/none	6.3	11.0	5.2	6.9

*Respondents were asked to choose from the list of roles the one which is accorded the highest esteem, and the one that deserves the highest esteem. The values in the table are first-choice percentages.

Identity and Self-Definition

The participants were asked to choose from a list of social categories (Israeli, religious, secular, Arab, left-winger, right-winger, etc.) a single category that describes best their identity. Table 3 presents the percentage of Jewish respondents that chose each category as most self-descriptive. More than three-quarters self-defined in terms of three general categories: nationality (Jewish), religiosity (religious, “traditionalist,” secular), and citizenship (Israeli). As Figure 10 shows, however, there is a significant difference in the Israeli/Jewish identity, among secular, “traditionalist” and religious respondents: The religious and “traditionalists” perceive themselves as more Jewish than Israeli. The opposite holds true for the secular respondents. It should be noted that relatively few define themselves in ethnic terms (Sephardic, Ashkenazi), as Zionist, or in terms of political-ideological inclination.

Table 3: Self-definition of Jewish respondents

Ashkenazi	Sephardic	Religious	Traditional	Secular	Jewish	Zionist	Israeli	Leftist	Rightist	Other
5.9	3.0	6.3	8.6	11.3	29.8	6.4	21.4	2.4	2.1	2.7

Among Arab youth, the two general categories serve for self-definition of more than 80% of the respondents: religiosity and nationality. A relatively few identify themselves as Israeli (see Table 4).

Table 4: Self-definition of Arab respondents

Religion*	Bedouin	Israeli	Palestinian	Arab	leftist	Rightist	Other
49.6	0.7	7.4	7.7	26.4	1.0	0.2	2.9

*Moslem, Christian, Druze.

Although Tables 3 and 4 show clear trends, it should be remembered that several categories are often used in the process of self-definition. Because the respondents were asked to indicate only the *most important* among them, additional categories are most probably under-weighted in the findings.

Identification and Alienation

Certain limitations of the present study precluded a thorough investigation of the identification of Israeli youth with their society and with the political system. The evaluation of this issue was limited to a small number of questions that asked the respondents to state their agreement or disagreement with certain statements. The statements and the average degree of agreement are presented in Table 5. (Answers were obtained on a 4-point scale: 1 = very false, 4 = very true; these were then transformed to a 0-100 scale. See footnote 1.)

The results show that the Jewish youngsters feel secure in their personal existence, as Jews, in the State of Israel. (Interestingly, Arab respondents, too, tended to agree with the statement that *Israel is the most secure place for Jews*.) This finding is significant in light of the central role that *being Jewish* plays in the Jewish respondents' self-definition.

Table 5: Attitudes of Jewish and Arab youth

	Jews	Arabs
Governments serve primarily the interests of their cronies, and care little about what people think or need.	52.78	59.11
Only religious people have values	27.51	43.26
A number of strong leaders could improve the situation in the country more than all the debates and laws	53.68	56.94
It is very important for me to have an effect on what happens in the country.	66.30	66.23
Lately, I feel more and more the need to believe in something that would give my life meaning.	59.94	59.84
I am involved in and knowledgeable about politics.	56.68	52.78
There is too much dissent and too many rifts among different groups in Israeli society.	79.79	54.25
Israel is the safest place for Jews.	73.59	67.80

Worthy of attention are findings concerning the attitudes of both Jewish and Arab youth toward the political system. Both groups agreed quite strongly with the contention that governments serve primarily the interests of their cronies, and both groups endorsed the statement that strong leaders are more capable of making progress than are laws or public debate. Yet, this cynical outlook on the political system is not accompanied by a sense of political alienation. Both groups expressed interest in politics and a desire to influence events in the country.

Dissension in Israeli society is viewed differently by Jewish and Arab respondents. Although each of the two groups identified a dangerous conflict within Israeli society, Jews agree more than Arabs with the statement *There is too much dissension in Israeli society*. The difference may be due to the fact that the two groups identify different conflicts as most dangerous. Jews point to the rift between religious and secular members of society, while Arabs refer to the conflict between Jewish Israelis and Arab Israelis. It could be that Arab youth do not perceive the latter conflict as occurring *within* Israeli societies, but rather as a conflict *between* societies.

The search for meaning is a hallmark of youth. Table 5 shows a relatively high measure of agreement, by both Arab and Jewish respondents, with the statement *Lately I feel the need to believe in something that will give meaning to my life*. The finding reflects,

perhaps, the general quest for meaning, alluded to above, but it could also suggest a sense of a lack of meaning, or a combination of the two.

Conclusion

The present chapter addressed two general questions concerning the identity and self-definition of Israeli youth, and their aspirations.

Nationality, citizenship and religiosity are the primary social categories that Jewish youth use in their self-definition. Notably, ethnicity and political/ideological inclinations appear to carry little weight in these youngsters' self-identity. Similar results were obtained from the Arab respondents. For them, too, nationality and religion are the main self-definers, with little weight given to political/ideological identification. Relatively little weight was also given by Arab respondents to their Israeli citizenship.

The aspirations of both Arab and Jewish youth have a distinct "conservative" flavour. Raising a happy family and establishing close friendships are rated, in both populations, as the most important goals, with economic success ranking second. (It is quite striking that raising a happy family is judged to be the most important goal even by adolescents, 15-18 year old.) Moreover, self-advancement is deemed more important than contributing to the welfare of others, although this "individualistic" orientation is markedly stronger among Jewish than among Arab youngsters.

Chapter 4:
Focal Points of Social Solidarity:
The Military, Society, Secularism and
Religiosity, Attitudes Toward the Holocaust,
and the Rabin Assassination

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Introduction

In analysing the research reported here, an attempt was made to find the thread weaving Israel's young people together. Instead, we found bewilderment and contradictory beliefs. The responses reveal that the young are in search for some anchor that will provide them with direction whether based on a sense of communality, a personal challenge, or new meanings. This situation reflects the general sense of confusion felt since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995; yet, we might venture to say that the assassination exposed feelings present for some time within Israeli society.

In 1951, the Hebrew newspaper *Davar* published a poem written by a bereaved father, Eliezer Kleer, who had lost his son during the War of Independence. The poem expresses the morsel of consolation offered by the collective to a parent who has sacrificed his child for its sake. "We fathers of beloved sons" writes Kleer. He does not express himself in the first person; there is no "I" or "my son", a more intensely painful statement of grief. Kleer's attitude toward the war dead, taken from a position of "first person plural," characterises the majority of those who reacted to the war and its casualties. This morsel of solace is not only no longer available, it has become the object of active opposition, as can be seen among the parents of soldiers who have died as a result of training accidents or the war in Lebanon. This response does not simply express attrition of the social consensus or a weakening of the myths surrounding the military. It also mirrors a reduction in the very ability to unify and bolster the collective, as well as a stronger emphasis on individuals, their needs, wants, rights, and achievements.

In this situation of decline in the power of the collective, additional processes have appeared that support the sense of social disintegration, among which — and perhaps most important — is the growing sense of a lack of boundaries regarding the public discourse. In the past, despite the seriousness and intensity of the discord, the public was left with a fundamental sense of a shared fate and common goals. These beliefs soothed divisions and engendered a basic faith in society's ability to unite during periods of crisis. To many of us, it appears that this faith has been seriously undermined consequent to the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin. Therefore, an examination of

the influence of the assassination on Israel's youth is necessary in order to confirm — or deny — the correctness of these conclusions.

Due to the nature of the issues discussed in this chapter — social solidarity as well as attitudes toward the military and the Holocaust — we felt it appropriate to confine ourselves to the responses made by the Jewish participants in the survey.

The Rabin Assassination

The research revealed that 70% of Israel's Jewish young people perceive the assassination as a traumatic watershed, one that shattered their faith in Israeli society. At its extreme, some (10.5%) reported they felt that they had “lost their country.” Besides the belief that another assassination was possible, the majority believed that nothing had been learned from the event, and that a new, higher plateau of political violence had been reached.

In another but related issue, 60% of the younger respondents felt threatened by the political confrontations between Jews, particularly between the secular and the religious. The low level of threat perceived regarding disagreements between the right- and left-wingers (15.7%) appear to indicate that young people believe that the differences between the two camps can be bridged; this belief does not, however, extend to conflicts between secular and religious factions, which are perceived as extremely menacing (44%). It may therefore not be unreasonable to argue that Jewish Israeli youth perceive the country's political discords as a dispute between religious and secular factions rather than between the political right and the left. The research also revealed that this sense of danger has increased over the last decade.

Irrespective of the specific reasons behind the phenomenon, the fact that so many young people feel threatened by the nation's internal social and political cleavages indicates a decline in social solidarity. It is against this background that we should view the finding that about 33% of the respondents believe that insufficient importance is attributed to the Holocaust. We might suggest that in an era of rise increasing individualism, the consensus expressed in Israeli society surrounding the Holocaust compensates for the

attrition of the foundations of social solidarity and the decline of unifying national myths.

Society

Confusion was found to exist between two bases or categories of collective identity, that of being a Jew and that of being Israeli, especially in their relationship to democratic choice. About one-third of the young people in the sample define themselves as Jews first, and only second as Israelis; at the same time, almost 80% indicate a belief in the importance of Israel as a democratic state, whereas only 60% believe that Israel should be a Jewish state. Yet, 57% endorsed the statement that strong leaders can solve problems than are laws and public debate can. Although the issue is highly complex, these findings may indicate either a general desire for leadership or a failure to internalise the meaning of democracy and democratic political regimes.

The respondents also appear to be in a muddle over their attitudes toward peace as well as the difference between leftist and rightist political positions regarding this issue. Despite the finding that 45% of the respondents identify with the right and only 31.1% identify themselves with the left, 91.7% of the total sample indicated that it is important or very important for Israel to be at peace with its neighbours, and 86.2% indicated it is important or very important for all groups to enjoy equal political and social rights. It is interesting to note that support for the right decreases (by about 4%) among young adults when compared with youth.

The Military

The military (the Israel Defence Forces, hereinafter IDF) continues to be a cornerstone of the Israeli consensus and social solidarity. Among those youngsters waiting to begin military service, 92.1% expresses trust, and 66% expressed full trust in this institution. Young adults already released from the military continue to express greater trust in the IDF than in any other social or political institution. Among the major institutions the participants were asked to rank on a “trust” scale, the IDF received first place, followed by the courts, which received a weight of only 71.8%. The police were ranked in third place (70.3%). More striking is the percentage expressing no confidence in these

institutions: Only 9.4% expressed no confidence in the IDF versus about 25.0% who expressed no confidence in the courts.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding the trust or confidence expressed in the IDF, this institution appears to have declined in status over the last decade. Such a conclusion is called for after reviewing how the respondents answered questions regarding the esteem to be awarded to various professions. Only 19.3% of the entire sample stated that high-ranking officers should be held in greater esteem than all other professionals. Adherence to this belief declines among young adults who have completed their military service. Interestingly, the older respondents indicated that they believed Israeli society *should* hold IDF officers in greater esteem than it does in practice.

On the other hand, when asked to rank various professions from a personal perspective, high-ranking military officers was ranked second, after professional having higher education. It appears that young people esteem the holders of a number of social roles, and do not concentrate their esteem in any role. This decline in esteem for high-ranking military officers is related to the growing tendency toward individualism, a trend that supports esteem for personal achievements rather than justifying any wish to contribute to the general welfare, including the country's security needs. In third place on this esteem scale we find religious figures (15.3%). The esteem in which roles requiring education are held may contribute to this response, although esteem for this role is nevertheless undermined by other factors.

Although participants in the survey were not asked about their general willingness to serve in the IDF, they were requested to indicate if they wished to "give the maximum" during their military service. To comprehend this finding, it is useful to refer to the in-depth interviews conducted prior to the survey. Although not methodologically rigorous, in-depth interviews helped to provide background material and clarify some of the issues occupying young people, including military service. The interviews reveal that positive attitudes toward contributing when serving in the army has not changed, although tolerance for those who do not serve has grown. This indicates that the IDF is no longer a "sacred cow" for Israeli society. An exception concerns attitudes toward the ultra-orthodox, who do not serve and are viewed as draft dodgers. The antagonism to

draft evasion on religious grounds is particularly fierce among those religious Jews who do serve in the army and fear damage to their own image and that of the religious community in general.

Young people's readiness to serve in the army may still reflect general attitudes toward contributing to the general welfare. However, the two issues should not be confused. Responses to questions regarding a number of goals may indicate more accurately Jewish Israeli young people's actual order of priorities than would any direct question. When asked to indicate whether contributing to the general welfare was an important goal in itself, 84.5% indicated that it was an important goal. However, when asked to rank contributing to the general welfare together with other personal aspirations, only 5.8% of the respondents in the younger age group, and 2.8% in the older group, mentioned this as their first priority. In addition, 52.5% indicated that they were willing to work harder toward their own personal success than for any increase in the general welfare. These responses are an additional indication of the individualism increasingly apparent in Israeli society.

Conclusions

The conclusions to be drawn from the research is that we should not view the behaviour of Israeli young people in dichotomous terms, such as personal advancement versus social responsibility. It appears that Jewish Israeli youth are more willing to contribute to the general welfare if the activities involved entail a personal challenge.

Among the many results of the survey, perhaps the most troublesome finding was the low percentage of respondents expressing optimism about the future of the nation — only 13.6% were very optimistic in this regard, versus 33.6% who were very optimistic concerning their personal futures. This finding clearly indicates that the major task facing contemporary Israeli society is to provide meanings rich enough to fill the personal void revealed while acting as the “glue” binding all its members together.

Chapter 5:
Are Israeli Young People Apolitical?
The Latent Politics of the 1990s

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The disinterest in politics expressed by today's youth is high on the daily agenda. Grumblers argue that young people are egocentric and fatalistic. But what does it mean to be "apolitical," especially when young?

This study attempts to confront the question of the socio-political consciousness of Israel youth by applying a set of new categories based the Shell series 1997 research on German youth. Within this framework, we will search for the latent yet emerging politics characterising the late 1990s.

But first we should note that it can be argued that *youth* as a definitive demographic category does not exist. What we find are young people sharing similar life-situations but displaying sizeable differences in self-comprehension, values, and commitment. In addition, we should remember that during periods of increasing individualisation, "representative" sampling is an increasing difficult task.

"Are young people apolitical?" Sociological research on the issue tends to be didactic in its orientation as it strives to illuminate the dilemmas of political participation. In current thinking, political stability is supposed to rest upon the ability to transmit basic values and political behaviour patterns to the next generation, while the legitimacy of "democratic forms" is based on continued access to political participation. This perspective is problematic because it seeks "integration," the degree to which the young are willing to undertake the desired activities and functions. Thus, the variables measured are electoral participation, membership in parties and organisations (e.g., trade unions), and an interest in politics. However, research such as Shell's, conducted in other countries, reveals dissatisfaction with politicians but not necessarily with politics. Therefore, whether or not young people are "carriers" of political values is as important for decision makers as it is for social scientists.

The renewed interest in these issues has focused, among other things, on the concept of *individualisation*. Put briefly, individualisation means that former certainties (e.g., faith in tradition, religion, status) are no longer relevant; young people therefore formulate

and negotiate their biographies independently, by themselves. This process, widespread in western countries, may now be penetrating Israel as well.

One of the main points of our perspective is that as a result of individualisation, an “internalised” democratic understanding has developed among young people. Traditional frameworks — family, school, work — are no longer taken for granted. Young people want to determine their own lives. But what does this mean? According to the literature, children raised during the period of post-War prosperity are less troubled by material needs than their parents were. Their values are, first and foremost, “post-bourgeois,” ranging from the need for “connectedness” to a demand for increasing liberalisation of society. Although many assume that these post-materialistic values will automatically lead to leftist attitudes, economic issues are introduced but only if they are defined in non-material terms. For example, the Israeli youth surveyed clearly express their concerns about working — but they are interested in meaningful work, not simply jobs. And nearly all believe in self-determination, irrespective of their political or religious backgrounds.

It appears that we in Israel are being forced to conclude (though very circumspectively) that similar to the situation in Europe and the US, it is no longer sociologically justified to confine the “political” to the official, institutional concept of politics. In order for us to elucidate the new concept of politics, the young must speak for themselves. Therefore, in-depth interviews are the appropriate instrument for delineating these new categories.

In analysing the results, we must keep in mind that Israel never witnessed a generational conflict leading to a broad-based student movement demanding social reform, freedom from authority, or the freedom to develop alternative lifestyles. Does this mean that Israeli youth simply continue to reproduce their parents’ world? An analysis of the interviews does not point in that direction.

The “new sensibility” also expresses itself in a special type of romanticism about love and the family, as well as “new social movements” (ecology, anti-nuclear, women and alternative movements), such as those popular in Europe and the US. In Israel, these

new sensibilities are expressed, if at all, in social and political movements directly related to issues of war and peace (the “An Entire Generation Demands Peace” and the settlement movements). These “reproduce” the political confrontations of the older generation to a certain extent. Therefore, it is difficult to speak of an explicitly “post-modern” drift in the politics of Israeli youth. Alternatively, it appears that the social and cultural rifts expressed in the secular-religious or compromise/anti-compromise attitudes toward peace are strongly related to the new definitions and terms. They reflect, of course, the climate of political grievance characteristic of Israeli society but are grounded less in interest group politics than in the new set of values.

The language of the interviewees clearly expresses two of the most important cultural priorities emerging in Israel as elsewhere: the cultivation of the self on the one hand, and the protection of a national-cultural identity on the other. Unexpectedly, as the majority of interviews reveal, the two value systems do not necessarily contradict each other. How is the coexistence of this contradiction possible?

The dichotomy expresses the fusion of Giddens’s concept of *life politics* with traditional aspirations propelled by altered motivations. Life politics concerns the process by which globalising influences intrude into the “self project,” the self-actualisation undergone within post-traditional contexts. Reciprocally, this self-realisation influences global strategies. Life politics and contemporary disputes and struggles concern how we should live in a world based on choice. What the unique Israeli case demonstrates is that adopting a life politics approach need not contradict more traditional values such as religion or patriotism. (An acute example is the combination of the traditional Israeli goal of combat service with the contemporary desire to face a personal challenge.) The two value systems — at least within the Israeli context — actually complement each other. Life politics, it appears, does not negate traditional approaches to self-actualisation and self-identification. The profiles of Israel’s youth, based on the in-depth interviews conducted by Ms. Michal Bar-Ilan Yerushalmi, eloquently present the empirical basis of our conclusions.

Israeli Youth's Attitudes Toward Germany

In this section, we will examine the answers given by the participants in the survey to various questions pertaining to how they perceive contemporary Germany. We should note, at the outset, that the results should be interpreted with care given the absence of comparative data. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain to what degree they express unique trends regarding Israeli youth's attitudes toward Germany and its politics.

Methodologically, the participants in the survey were asked to indicate, along a scale, whether and how much they agree with a number of statements about Germany and about Israeli-German relations.

Question 1: Today's Germany is among the group of nations friendly to Israel.

It appears that differences are found between the answers given by the Jewish versus the non-Jewish respondents. While only 7.6% of the Jewish members of the sample responded "fully agree," 23.2% of the non-Jewish participants responded "fully agree." A small majority — 52.5% — of Jewish participants responded "fully disagree" or "disagree" versus 33.8% among the non-Jewish participants who responded "fully disagree" or "disagree."

We should note decisions makers in today's political arena generally agree that Germany is among the European nations most friendly to Israel. However, the majority of young Israelis apparently do not view the situation in the same light. In the absence of comparative data, such as data indicating Israeli youths' attitudes toward the UK or other European nations, it is difficult to conclude whether the current data indicate suspicion directed specifically toward Germany or whether they reflect the view that "all the world is against us." It does appear that non-Jewish young people are more likely to believe that Germany is friendly toward Israel than are Jewish young people.

Question 2: Germany is as xenophobic as any other country in the world.

Almost half of the Jewish respondents (49.8%) disagree with this statement. That is, they tend to believe that German's hatred of foreigners is different in its intensity from that found in other countries. In the absence of comparative data, we cannot conclude whether the finding is to be considered high or low. Among non-Jews, 44.9% disagree

with the statement. The largest difference between young Jews and non-Jews is found at the extreme end of the scale. Only 11.8% of the Jewish respondents, versus 23.2% of the non-Jewish respondents, are convinced that an intense hatred of foreigners is not characteristic of Germany.

Similar to our conclusion to Question 1, we can only indicate that non-Jews are less suspicious of Germany than are Jews, a finding that could be anticipated and does not require further explanation.

Question 3: Today's Germany is no different than yesterday's Germany; a Nazi regime can come to power once more.

In response to this question, 53% of the Jewish participants and 41.7% of the non-Jewish participants in the sample indicated that they do not believe in the likelihood of this possibility. However, 40.5% of the Jewish respondents are convinced, including 16.1% of the respondents who are strongly convinced, that a Nazi regime could return to power in Germany. The non-Jewish population is slightly more convinced of that possibility than is the Jewish population: 40.5% believe in the possibility of the return of a Nazi regime, including 18.8% who are strongly convinced. This finding is interesting in itself. Although the answers to the previous questions indicate differences between Jews and non-Jews regarding Germany's policies toward Israel as well as Germany's xenophobia, the two groups nonetheless appear to be almost identical in their responses to the third question. We should note that although it appears that the same number of Jewish and non-Jewish youth agree on this issue, that agreement appears to lead them toward different conclusions regarding the previous issues.

Question 4: Today's Germany is among the enlightened democracies of Western Europe, such as the UK, France, and Italy.

Among the Jewish respondents, 33% disagree with this statement, versus 53% who agree with it (these responses are similar to those received to the previous question, where 53% answered that today's Germany is different from the Germany of the past). Here, as well, the non-Jewish respondents were more in favour of Germany than were the Jewish respondents. Almost 66% of the non-Jewish respondents believe that Germany belongs to the enlightened family of nations, whereas 16.8% disagree. We

should note that 41.7% of the entire non-Jewish sample strongly agree with this statement. (There is a significant difference in the responses given by the younger and the older age groups in the non-Jewish sample. Among the non-Jewish adolescents, 46.6% agree with the statement, versus 36.5% among the young adults.)

Question 5: *The destruction of the Jews in the Holocaust was supported, in effect, by the majority of the German people and not solely by the Nazi leadership* (the Goldhagen thesis).

Among the Jewish participants in the survey, 44.4% responded “fully agree” and 29.4% responded “agree” when asked to express their beliefs concerning the validity of this statement. That is, 73.8% of Jewish youth agree with the Goldhagen thesis. Other studies have shown that only a small proportion of the Israel public is aware of the Goldhagen thesis and the commotion it stirred. Yet, it appears that the idea expressed in the thesis is quite commonly held among Jewish youth. Slightly less than half the non-Jewish participants also agree with the thesis; 21.7% of this group responded “fully agree” while 24.7% responded “agree.” Only 7.9% of the Jewish and 9.6% of the non-Jewish young people responded “fully disagree” in regard to this statement.

In conclusion, the data do not permit us to conclude how the attitudes toward Germany expressed by the Israeli young people in our sample differ from the opinions held by older Israelis. It does appear, however, that young Israelis are dubious about German politics and the quality of the relationships established between Germany and Israel.

Appendix: Profiles of Israel's Youth

	Name: Roman Age: 17 Category: New Immigrant
Background	Immigrated 8 years ago from Kishiniev for Zionist reasons. Has younger brother; father worked as driving teacher in Kishiniev and continues to do so in Israel. Mother worked as accountant and is currently taking courses. Frequently beaten in school by Israeli students, and believes this is the plight of all Russian immigrants; things have improved, though. He thinks most Israelis are primitive and barbaric. Is currently studying accounting at Pitman.
Hobbies and leisure	Spends most of his time with his girlfriend, who is also a new immigrant. Enjoys karate. Likes "dance" music and goes dancing frequently. Works twice a week as an usher in a discotheque. Needs money to spend on restaurants and to have a good time.
Main problem for Israeli youth	Drugs, alcohol, etc.
Military service	Wants to enlist, and obviously wants to be a front-line soldier.

Perspective and Self-definition	Is very optimistic; thinks his success is totally dependent on his own efforts.
Personal aspirations	Wants to be a policeman. Why? "You're the law and everyone has to do what you say."
Role model	Likes actors; has no personal role model.
The perfect man	Handsome, romantic, sensitive.
The perfect woman	Pretty, sensitive.
The perfect job	Being a manager.
The future	After the army, he wants to work in the Police Department. He is optimistic about his future and his ability to succeed.
Interest in politics and politicians	Social and political involvement is unimportant to him, although he thinks he might become interested in politics. Watches television, reads Hebrew newspapers and Russian literature.
Other major issues	Love is very important.
What is most important in your life	Friends and family first. Belief in God is very important. Faith is an internal matter; doesn't attend synagogue.
National problems	You can't trust the prime minister.
Attitudes toward Arabs	Angry at the Arabs. "We don't have to give them everything."

	Category: Arab Israelis Note: The conversation took place among a group because the young people refused to be interviewed individually. The session was held as Kfar Arra, with the participation of 10 youths between the ages of 10-23.
Background	They talk about three worlds: (1) home and family; (2) Israeli society; (3) the Arab/Palestinian world. They are very hostile toward the Druze and the Jews. A woman teacher in the group mentions identity cards, stating that the Druze are Arabs, a Christian is like an Arab; and Moslems are perceived as Arabs. Something, she believes, is wrong. Even the Bedouin see themselves as superior to Arabs. She thinks that she can't do what she wants, that she's not free. She feels there is discrimination at the university, and that she must do better than others. Israel is clearly the "other" for her. Most of the groups agrees with her.
Main problem for Israeli youth	Rights (especially for Arabs), violence, and drugs as general problems. They are also concerned about the recession.
Role model	The question, "Who is your idol?" has to be explained. One boy answers: Nasser ("Nasser was great, he want to be like him because he did what he said/thought." The boy likes him better than Sadat.) The boy nevertheless knows little about Nasser.

The perfect man	Respect and respecting others, intelligent, understands his girlfriend.
The future	Are they optimistic about the future? Most respond with restrained laughter about the year 2000. In general, everyone is very optimistic.
Interest in politics and politicians	Everything is politics.
Other major issues	One youth talks about land, which is so important to him. He discusses his family: its social network, the extended family, voting patterns, everything revolves around the family. One of the youths explains these relationships in terms of a lack of education. As people become educated, the family will become less important. The group feels the consequences of changes in the social structure. There are not enough clubs or places where young people can go and do things.
What is most important in your life	Self-fulfilment is the most important value, although self-fulfilment and family are tied together.
National problems	They want equal rights, equal opportunities, peace, and a Palestinian state. They discuss Netanyahu and his rigid policy toward the Arabs.

	Name: Tal Age: 24.5 Category: “Northerner”
Background	Studying social science. Was born in Ramat-Gan, the second of three children. The family eventually moved to Ramat HaSharon. She describes her childhood, neighbourhood and friends as if they were part of a nature preserve, not the real world. She enlisted in the army in order to find new friends, and she did. She feel very mature and has numerous relationships with adults. She is currently living with her boyfriend and likes the idea of being in such a relationship.
Main problem for Israeli youth	Studies, psychometric tests, economic problems, and rent.
Military service	Was an officer in the army. It was important for her to enter the army prepared, and to do something significant. She chose the army’s training route, liked it very much, and acquired many friends in her course and on the base. It was a nice experience — she was home every weekend. She came to understand herself better in the army.
Feelings about draft evasion	She does not approve of those who only want to avoid induction. The army is like school — it’s an obligation, not

	like the university.
Perspective and self-definition	Trusts in herself. Defines herself as a young woman with her future before her.
The perfect man	Independent, interesting.
The perfect woman	Independent and knows what she wants.
The future	Happiness is a good job and living in Israel.
Interest in politics and politicians	Politics makes her nervous. There's something unsteady about it. She know more and more people who want to leave the country, perhaps to emigrate to Australia. She's basically considers herself to be apolitical.
Place on the political map	Labour Party
Attitude toward homosexuals/lesbians	She has no problems with homosexuals.
Other major issues	Believes in fate.
What is most important in your life	Money is very important in an instrumental way, but she prefers control to money. Control is the most important thing to her.
National problems	The economy, national security.

	Name: Hila Age: 18 Category: Religious-Nationalist
Background	Studied at Yeshurun Bar-Ilan High School, learned Arabic. The only girl in her family. Her father works for the Egged. She lives in the centre of Netanya and likes it very much.
Hobbies and leisure	TV, MTV, watches whenever she can. She enjoys seeing her friends and going to parties.
Main problem for Israeli youth	Drugs. Tells about a girlfriend who was started taking drugs when in the army. Violence is a serious problem, particularly in Netanya. The “punks” don’t act nicely toward women.
Military service	She could have gone into an intelligence unit but decided to do National Service (working for the Netanya Municipality) because of the difficulties religious women face in the army.
Feelings about draft evasion	She considers poor health to be a legitimate reason to avoid induction. She doesn’t think it’s a good idea to force people to serve in the army.
Perspective and self-definition	A serious girl who knows how to work hard.
Personal aspirations	To have a career, be independent and successful in life.
Role model	Aviv Gefen. Although he didn’t serve in the army, she likes his attitude toward life. He’s against drugs, which consoles her. Her friends don’t like him because of his leftist positions

The perfect man	Sensitive, a good listener, forgiving, a bit wild sometimes.
The perfect woman	Respects other people.
The perfect job	Managing and being in authority, satisfaction and money
The future	After her National Service duty, she wants to travel for 3-4 months, then study computers. Is absolutely sure of herself.
Interest in politics and politicians	She has little interest in politics. A politician is someone who knows how to talk.
Place on the political map	She preferred the Likud because she thought they wouldn't give the country to the Arabs, but she's lost confidence in them. Her values are tied to the land; she also wants rights, primarily for the settlers.
Attitude toward homosexuals/lesbians	She doesn't really hate homosexuals.
Important values	Truthfulness is the most important value.
Other major issues	She hates the ultra-orthodox; they're bad for the country.
What is most important in your life	Family and supporting your family.
National problems	Security, unemployment, ecology. Israel belongs to the Jews.
Attitudes toward Arabs	She's afraid of a bi-national country with the Arabs and wants more security — but without Arabs. However, she thinks that Arabs have more rights to the country than do ultra-orthodox Jews because they were born here.