

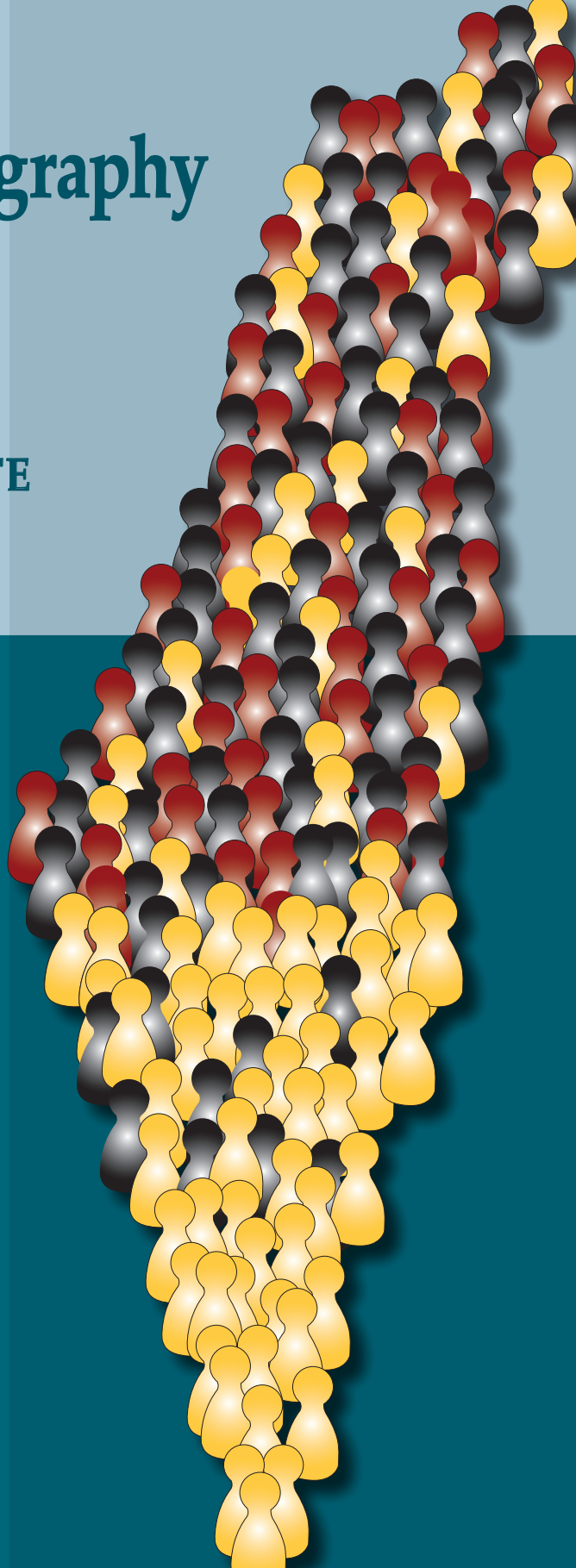
# Israel: Demography 2012-2030

ON THE WAY TO  
A RELIGIOUS STATE

**Evgenia Bystrov**  
**Arnon Soffer**



Chaikin Chair in Geostrategy  
University of Haifa





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# **Israel: Demography**

## **2012-2030**

**ON THE WAY TO A RELIGIOUS STATE**

**Evgenia Bystrov**  
**Arnon Soffer**

May 2012

## **The Chaikin Chair in Geostrategy, University of Haifa**

The Chair studies issues of national security with a spatial expression, such as natural resources and their distribution, population spread, physical infrastructure, and environmental components.

The Chair publishes position papers, advises senior decision makers, initiates research, study days, and conferences, publishes books and scientific studies, and assists research students in these fields.

The Chair propagates the subject at high schools and academic institutions.

### **The Late Reuven Chaikin (1918-2004)**

Reuven Chaikin was born in Tel Aviv, and became a senior partner in the Somech-Chaikin firm of chartered accountants. He evinced profound interest in geography and geopolitics, and contributed greatly to these fields at the University of Haifa.

May his memory be for a blessing.

### **Prof. Arnon Soffer**

Holder of the Reuven Chaikin Chair in Geostrategy

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## Preface to the 2012 Edition

This is the fifth edition of the series *Israel: Demography*. Some editions have appeared in English and German, and were sold out immediately on publication.

Since the last edition, *Israel: 2007-2020, Demography and Density*, 2007, every citizen of Israel has personally felt the realization of the authors' warning that Israel is becoming most crowded state, a state descending to the Third World, a state that is abandoned by its robust youth, and a state to which Jewish youth hardly returns.

The lack of governance has become the norm, and the challenges are enormous. This time the authors add new challenges to consider. As 2030 approaches, the Arabs of Israel are coming to the end of their era of high natural increase (which was among the highest in world), but in Israel's Jewish Ultra-Orthodox population, and to a large extent its national-religious population too, high natural increase continues (contrary to general models that link high living standard to decline in childbirth). Israel is becoming religious – mainly Ultra-Orthodox, but not only. Another disturbing process is taking shape: the young Jewish population is streaming to Tel Aviv State, abandoning the periphery, which is becoming poor, neglected and open for anarchy due to the lack of governance.

Within 20 years or less Israel must prepare for gloomy economic-social-military-environmental outcomes, unlike anything the state has been accustomed to in the past. One can point to the looming disaster of the mass flight of secular Jews from Israel. One can point to the opposite model: reinforcement in national cohesion. The solutions require a bold and dynamic approach as well.

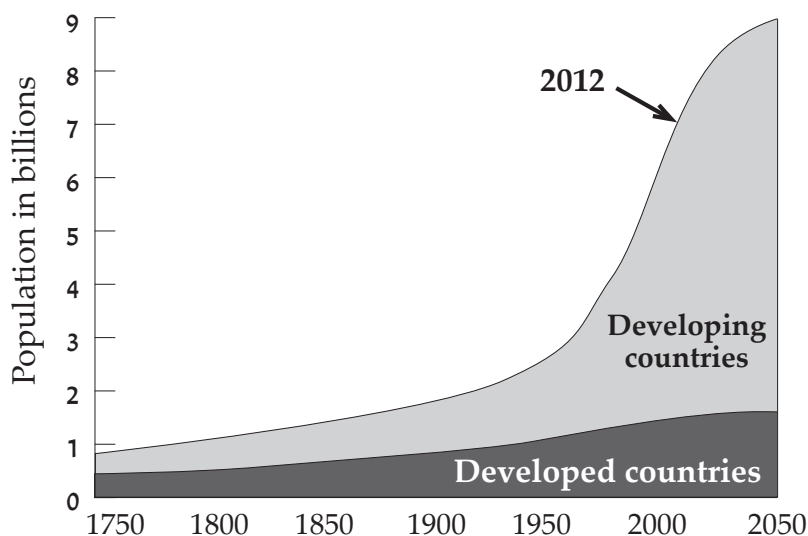
We wish you a good read.

Arnon Soffer and Evgenia Bystrov, 2012

## Introduction

The world population today numbers some seven billion people. About 15% of them live in countries belonging to the developed Western world. Their population hardly grows, and in some of them, for example in Europe, it is actually decreasing. The remaining six billions live in developing countries. Their natural growth rate is for the most part high and will continue to be high for many years to come. The developing world is expected to double in population in about forty years (Figure 1). These data are the key to the future of the entire world, as they are anticipated to cause changes in the nature of the globe, migration movements, famine and disease, movement of goods, and wars, and they will perhaps affect climate change one way or another.

The Middle East, especially Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and western Land of Israel (hereinafter Palestine), is characterized by high natural increase. In fact, natural increase in these populations, which stands at 2.4-3.3%, was among the highest in the world in 2011. This means a doubling of the populations of the peoples of the region in twenty to thirty years (Table 1). In Egypt natural increase fluctuates around 1.9-2%, that is, a doubling of the population in



**Figure 1:** World population growth, 1750-2050



thirty to forty years. It is hardly credible that in so short a time these states will be able to double their infrastructures also: the hospitals, schools, water supply and drainage, sewage, agricultural land, public transport, and all other needs of human beings in a modern society. And if indeed these states cannot meet the task of doubling the infrastructures a fall in living standards and a feeling of despair among their inhabitants may be expected (as the “Arab faming” during 2011).

A discontented population is resonant, and it is most reasonable to assume that its members will resort to acts of protest, including such radical

**Table 1:** Changes in population size in the Middle East since 1800 (in millions)

Country	1800	1900	1950	1981	2011	Forecast for 2025	Forecast for 2050
Egypt	3.5	10.0	20.0	44.0	82.6	103.6	137.7
Turkey	9.5	14.0	21.0	47.0	74	85.0	94.7
Iran	6.0	10.0	14.0	37.0	77.9	87.0	97.0
Iraq	1.0	2.2	5.2	14.0	32.7	44.7	64.0
Syria	1.5	2.2	3.2	9.1	22.5	28.6	36.9
Lebanon	0.2	0.5	1.5	2.6	4.3	4.7	5.0
Palestinians	0.1	0.2	0.7	1.2	4.2	6.0	9.4
Jordan	0.2	0.3	0.5	2.0	6.6	8.5	11.8
Israel	0.2	0.5	1.5	4.0	7.9	9.4	11.4
Saudi Arabia	5.0	6.0	9.0	10.5	27.9	35.7	49.8
Oil Principalities	0.2	0.2	0.5	1.0	7.9	14.8	19.4
Yemen	2.5	3.0	4.2	7.3	23.8	34.5	52.2
Oman	0.2	0.4	0.6	1.2	3.0	4.2	5.7
Sudan	2.0	5.0	9.1	19.0	44.6	56.7	75.9
<b>Total Middle Eastern population</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>54.5</b>	<b>91.0</b>	<b>199.9</b>	<b>419.9</b>	<b>523.4</b>	<b>665.5</b>
North Africa	6.0	10.0	22.2	48.6	131	158.0	191.0
<b>Overall Arab population of Middle East and North Africa*</b>	<b>22.0</b>	<b>46.2</b>	<b>87.2</b>	<b>181.0</b>	<b>391.1</b>	<b>480.0</b>	<b>653.0</b>

Sources: World Bank data for 1950, 1981; Population Reference Bureau (PRB) in Washington for 2011 and future forecasts. Data for 1800 and 1900 are estimated. The Palestinians are counted according to a low estimate

\* Excluding Iranians, Turks and Jews

measures as terror and an extremist Muslim holy war. The events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 in New York, the early attempt in 1993 to destroy the World Trade Center (Twin Towers), the appalling terror attacks in 2001-2012 against embassies of the USA, Britain, France, Australia, Israel, Russia, and others, and against Israeli facilities all over the world, the shocking terror in Spain, Russia, Uzbekistan, Iraq, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, India, France, Georgia, and Pakistan, and the extremist Muslim undergrounds that have sprung up worldwide, especially in Iraq, are striking testimony to what may be referred to as fighting the third world war: between extremist Islam, partly representing the developing world, and the West, representing development.

In the West many questions are arising about its resilience in this war. In a country such as France, which is inundated with a North African population, the proportion of Muslims has steadily risen: six to ten million Muslims already live in France (according to official and unofficial statistics), and Muslim natural increase is high; the rest of the French population is diminishing (0.4% natural increase in 2007). The world's rich countries are aware of this possibility, and presently are doing everything to help in the attempt to lower the high birthrate and to boost development, but are also taking steps in the event of their being unable to save so many poor people throughout the world. That is, they are preparing for a new struggling that will drag on for many years. The European Union is enclosing itself behind fences and walls to stop the waves of invaders from the third world.

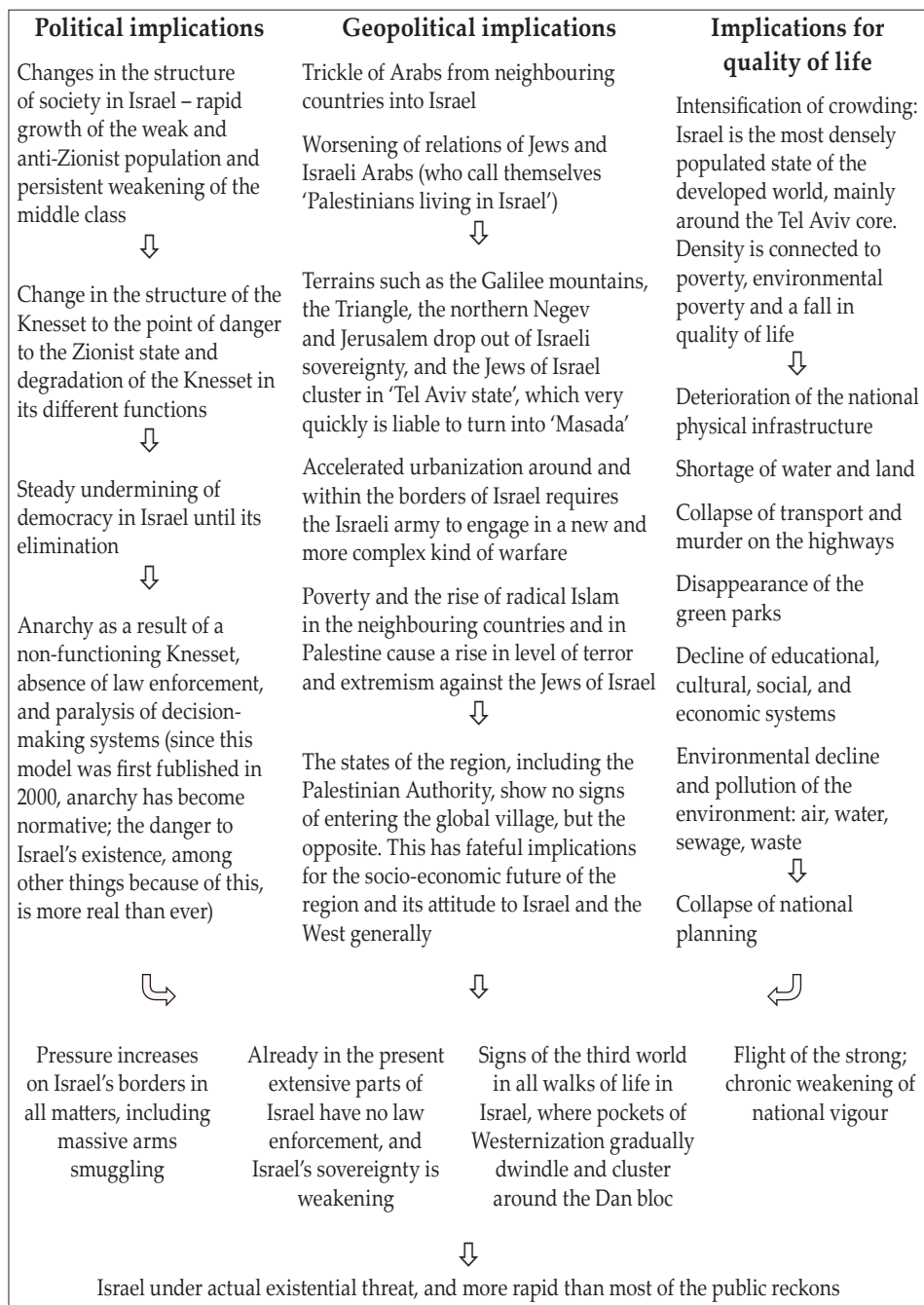
In small, densely populated Israel, all these demographic processes are taking place very fast. Within a decade enormous changes have taken place, so the effects are more evident than in Europe, and they have left their mark drastically on all areas of life. Not surprisingly, today the term 'demographic threat' has become widespread and common in population research in Israel to describe the situation. The construction of the separation fence has won wide support among the Jewish public, as a national project and part of the implementation of demographic policy in Israel.

This study aims to analyze the challenges that Israel may have to face in the coming twenty years owing to the demographic developments within and around it. Figure 2 gives a general outline of these challenges. Clearly, in such a forecast, as in every forecast, there is an element of chance and the possibility of error. Whoever in 1930 made forecasts about the future of the Jewish people in the following two decades could not have foreseen what was about to take place. It would have been hard to predict that three years after the end of the Holocaust a Jewish state would arise. Those who in 1970 conducted forecasts about Israel for the next two decades could not have envisaged the collapse of the Soviet Union and the immigration of about a million Jews to Israel. Examples of errors in forecasting are not lacking. Yet for all their limitations, forecasts are essential for society generally and for decision makers particularly, as they make it possible to prepare for the future in fields where changes cannot be made from one day to the next. Examples are building schools, training teachers, training the army and police, providing water sources, building transport systems and establishing power stations – for all these, the accepted time for forecasting is fifteen to twenty years. The UN prepares forecasts for even longer periods, as shown in Figure 1 and Table 1.

In an array of social, economic, security, geographic, and ecological domains, what happens in Israel cannot be separated from what happens in the Gaza Strip, in Judea and Samaria and on the borders of the other neighboring countries. Therefore, Israel's demography is analyzed in parallel Palestine's demography. Processes taking place close to the borders of Israel are also discussed.

### **Difficulties in instilling the issue of demography among the Israel's decision-makers in general, and among extremist groups on the Israeli right and left in particular**

*"The irony is that, today, the primary threats to our survival, both of our organizations and of our societies, come not from sudden events but from slow, gradual processes; the arms race, environmental decay, the erosion of a*



**Figure 2:** Dangers to Israel due to rapid demographic changes expected in the next two decades (2011-2030)

society's public education system, [...] are all slow, gradual processes. [...] If we focus on events, the best we can ever do is predict an event before it happens so that we can react optimally."<sup>1</sup> (Senge 1990: 21-22).

Projecting the content of this statement onto Israeli society yields a picture remote from the normative situation described: what is not a burning issue is nowhere to be found on the national agenda, and therefore, is not discussed by Israeli governments. This holds for the entire matter at stake: from Jewish–Palestinian relations to all aspects of the increasing density in Israel, whose dangers are no less; so much the more for the problems stemming from a rapid population growth.

In Israeli society no serious discussion of the demographic issue has been held for many years. In 2005-2011 the Israeli political right showed a clear tendency to deny the demographic trends and to ignore the relevant figures. On the left too some refuse to read the map of the Middle East or to acknowledge Israel's parlous state. There may be various reasons for this: difficulty in digesting abstract statistical data; deep belief that all will turn out for the best (with the help of God); unwillingness to face up to the idea of partition of Palestine; a feeling that what is happening is a slow process that carries no threat; or the opposite – a tendency to fend off the subject precisely because of the threat inherent in it, which demands making hard decisions.

The data in Figure 2 highlight the urgent demographic challenges for which Israel needs a truly gifted and responsible leadership. It is surprising to come across the elites who seem nonplussed at the data. "Life in Israel is wonderful – no problems," says a senior industrialist; "What are you talking about? From my window on the 17<sup>th</sup> floor you don't see any of the problems you have found," responds the CEO of one of the large corporations in the state.

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1 Italics in original

This introduction is concluded with the answer to a question the authors are asked a great deal: “Why do you go on worrying people, so quixotically? Who’s paying any attention?” Well, the reader should know that authors’ voice is not a voice crying in the wilderness. The authors do have an array of achievements as academics, and the words have fallen on attentive ears:

- On 18 July 2010, at an appearance of the Head of the Chaikin Chair in Geostrategy (Arnon Soffer) before the Israeli government, the last of the opponents among the government to a fence down the Egyptian border became convinced of its necessity; it was urgently approved, and is being constructed starting December 2011.
- The separation fence in Judea and Samaria was established, and its line generally accords with the perception of “Palestinians are there and Israelis are here”.
- The report on climate change and geostrategy, conducted under the auspices of the Israel Climate Change Information Center in 2011, focused on “climate refugees” and recommended constructing a defense system not only on Egyptian (Sinai) but also on the Jordanian border (Soffer and Berkovsky 2012).
- The IDF (Israel Defense Forces) has been listening to the authors for many years, and takes seriously the matter of population dispersal southwards.
- New settlements have been founded in key areas facing Mount Hebron and in the Mount Alexander area within the 1967 borders.
- The various editions of this monograph have contributing to the appearance of the demographic issues such as population density on the national agenda.
- The issue of “Tel Aviv State” has risen in the public discourse, and on the national agenda.

- The grave question of the Bedouins has found its way onto the national agenda. The process and practical solutions are described in Chapter Four.
- The document on “Agriculture – a foundation stone in Israel’s security” (2010) has fortified hundreds and thousands of farmers.
- Severe criticism of the limits set on irrigation for gardening in 2009 produced impressive results.

In subsequent publications other important gains will be set forth.

## Chapter One: The demographic dimension in Israel and the Land of Israel (Palestine)

The state of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state can continue to exist only if it has a clear Jewish majority, which supports modernity, lives in territory whose dimensions and borders permit actualization of the state's sovereignty and defense, and if it enjoys a quality of life that befits a Western society. Attainment of these essential conditions of supporting democratic and liberal values is not self-evident; demographic processes in western Palestine and within Israel threaten the capacity to realize them.

In all the chapters of this study a clear distinction is made between Israel that lies within the borders on the eve of the 1967 Six Day War, more or less, and the Palestine – the land within the boundaries of the British Mandate on the eve of the declaration of the partition of Palestine in November 1947.

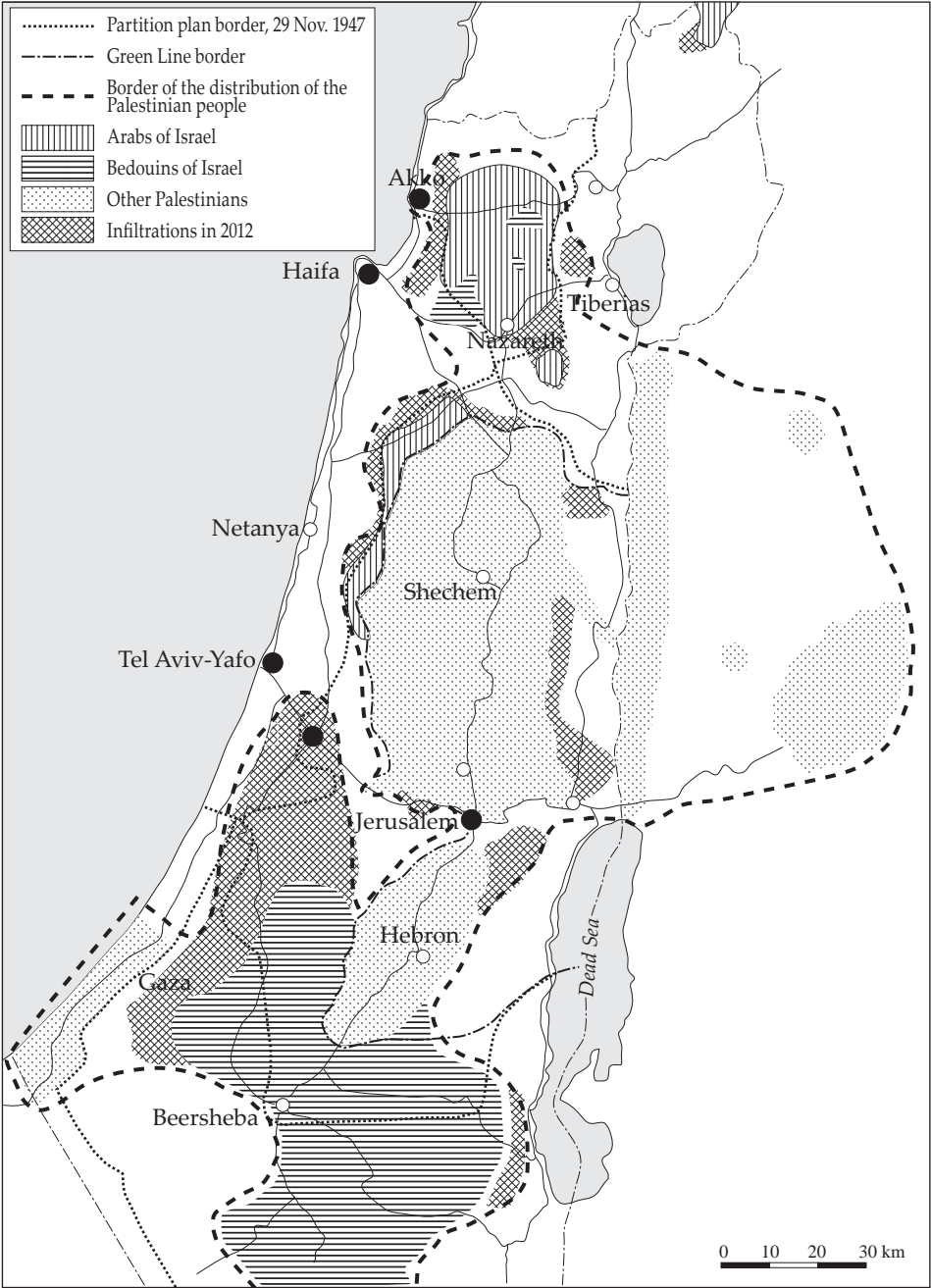
In recent years the demographic factor has become increasingly dominant in determining the relations of Jews and Arabs in Israel and throughout Palestine (Table 2, Map 1).

Anyone who speaks of annexing the territories of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip to Israel suggests making the Jews (and others) a minority, that is, putting an end to the Jewish entity in Palestine. Its fate will be like that of other minorities in the Middle East in 2011 (Copts in Egypt, different ethnic and religious groups in Lebanon), and perhaps even worse after a century of a bitter conflict (Ravid 2001).

Anyone who tries to annex only Judea and Samaria, will find a situation not greatly different (as Table 2 shows): in 2011 the Jews make up 62% of the population, which is tiny majority, but by 2030 this will have fallen to 55%.

About 653,000 foreigners live in Israel in 2011 (Notes to Table 2). If they are included in the account, the rate of Jews falls dramatically, and in 2011 their proportion in Palestine drops to 50.2%; without foreigners it is 57.7%.





**Map 1:** Distribution of the Palestinian people in Palestine, 2012

**Table 2:** Population composition in Israel and Palestine (in thousands and percent)

Population group	2011	%	2025	%	2030	%
Jews	5,802	74.1	7,000	72.1	7,500	73.1
Others (mostly natives of the former Soviet Union)	0.330	4.2	0.390	4.2	0.410	3.9
Total Jews and other	6,129	78.3	7,390	76.1	7,910	77.0
Druze	0.129	1.6	0.164	1.6	0.175	1.7
Arabs	1,573	20.1	2,155	22.3	2,186	21.3
Of these: Christians	0.125		0.150		0.153	
Muslims	1,448		2,005		2,033	
Of these: Muslims in East Jerusalem	0.297		450		470	
Bedouins – South	0.192		400		460	
<b>Total citizens and residents in Israel</b>	7,834	100	9,709		10,271	100
Judea and Samaria (excluding Jerusalem)	2,340		3,550		3,900	
Residents of the Gaza Strip	1,563		2,563		2,800	
<b>Total in the Palestine Authority</b>	3,903		6,110		6,700	
<b>Total citizens of Israel and Palestine</b>	11,737		15,819		16,971	
Percentage of Jews and others in Palestine	52.2		46.7		46.6	
Percentage of Jews and others excluding Gaza Strip	60.3		55.7		55.8	

**Notes:** This table is incomplete as an important component is missing: foreign workers, migrants from Africa, and others. If the above data are augmented with all people present in Israel (in 2011) who are not citizens, some 653,000 others have to be added, as follows:

52,000 – migrants from Africa

100,000 – foreign workers (with permit)

100,000 – estimate of illegal foreign workers

101,000 – foreign workers who entered as tourists

300,000 – Palestinians who reside in Israel illegally, among them workers who married Israel Arabs, family reunions, and simple infiltration. Some of them may by now be registered as citizens in Israel, and some might have been counted in the population of Judea and Samaria.

653,000 – total persons

If this figure is added to the total residents of Israel, their overall number in 2011 rises to 8,487,000 persons, and in the whole of Palestine to 12,390,000 persons.

In this case:

in Israel the proportion of Jews has fallen to 73.6%

in Palestine the proportion of Jews has fallen to 50.2%

in Palestine excluding the Gaza Strip the proportion of Jews has fallen to 57.5%

- Forecasts of other sojourners in the future are not presented here, because this depends on government policy, which has the power to change these figures
- In all calculations of water consumption, sewage production, constructing education systems, state and municipal taxes, national insurance, health, transport, energy generation, the need for police and other security forces, the determining factor is the person who lives in the

country *de facto*, not the identity card he/she carries in his/her pocket. This is important only at election time. Furthermore, the experience of Western countries, including the USA, Germany, France and the Netherlands, show that groups of illegal migrants and foreign workers gradually become a population of permanent residents with full rights. This matter is bound to be of concern for Israel, because despite the array of present and future difficulties, Israel is a destination for all inhabitants of the first and second circles around it, and also for migrants from Africa seeking refuge.

**Sources:**

For Israel, according to CBS, present and future.

For foreigners and others, partial data according to the Migration Police, Oz units, CBS 2011, authors' data

For the Palestine Authority, according to the 2007 census excluding the Arabs of East Jerusalem, who were counted as Israelis.

Forecast to 2015-2030 according to authors' calculations, assuming a decline in natural increase among the Arab population in all parts of Israel and Palestine

As for the demography in official Israel, Table 2 shows several extremely important processes taking place in Israeli society between 2011 and 2030 (without entering foreigners into Table 2): for the first time in recent years, the forecast by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics (hereinafter CBS) is that the Arab (Muslim) sector will end its demographic momentum and the population will stabilize at about 2.2 million Muslims; only among the Bedouins will high natural increase continue. If the Bedouin population at present is only about 14% of all Muslims in Israel, by 2030 they will amount to 23-25% of this group. This is a great challenge for Israeli society. The most problematic question is how to advance and integrate them after 80 years of disregard for their existence and spread (both numerical and territorial), with children constituting 63% in their society.

Because of the lesser growth among the Arabs, and the continued relatively high natural increase of the Ultra-Orthodox and national-religious Jews in Israel, the proportion of Jews is likely actually to rise towards 2030; if in 2025 the proportion of Jews in Israel reaches 72.1%, it is likely to grow to 73.1% by 2030 (ICBS 2010).

As discussed below, secular Israel will decrease by that year to some 50% of the population, while the religious population will steadily strengthen. This

will be expressed mainly in the number of school students in Israel in 2030 (see Chapter Five). A question for which there is no answer yet is whether the secular youth wants to continue living in a religious state, and whether they will depart from there soon. Furthermore, the question of religiosity will be only one component in the complex of difficulties awaiting secular Jews and especially the youth that year, as the following chapters show.

Next five fateful matters concerning Figure 2 are discussed. Firstly, the processes around the borders of Israel and the danger of a deluge of foreign migrants into the country are described. Secondly, the issue of Israel is becoming the most densely populated country in the Western world, and the implications for its quality of life and its descent into the Third World, which for Israel is a situation that cannot be countenanced, are discussed. Thirdly, the way the relations between Jews and Arabs within Israel, and throughout Palestine, are heading is addressed. Fourthly, the issue of Jewish Israel moving toward becoming a religious state (Ultra-Orthodox, national-religious) is highlighted: what are the trends and what are the implications? Fifthly, the problem of Jewish population in Israel concentrating in Tel Aviv State is referred to: does this signify some kind of a peril to the future of Israel? Many other important aspects which are shown in Figure 2 are not discussed; in some the authors are not specialists, and on others much has already been written in other books, reviews, monographs and articles.

## Chapter Two: Processes around the Borders of Israel

Decision makers, concerned with daily burning problems, do not take time out to survey the processes around Israeli borders, which despite being gradual must be managed urgently. Millions of Arabs are inexorably moving closer to the borders of Israel. This feature seems strange, for Israel's boundaries with its neighbors are war frontiers; still, they constitute a kind of magnet for millions, mostly poor and disaffected. This fact may have implications worthy of consideration.

In 2011 about six million Arabs lived very close to the borders of Israel. Across the line for a distance of about 50 kilometers live a further fifteen million or so. In less than twenty years this population will double, and reach ten million on the border and thirty million at distance of up to 50 kilometers from it. This increase will cause a rise in the demand for water (for domestic and agricultural use). Until recently the supply has been the Israeli water potential.

Weakening of Egyptian governmental control in Sinai in recent years, more especially since the "2011 upheaval," has turned the peninsula into a wild land. As of March 2012, the Bedouin in Sinai are the masters of the area; they are armed, violent, and in fact dictate the agenda there. This has the gravest repercussions for Israel's relations with the Egyptian government, with the peninsula's inhabitants, with the dimensions of attempts to penetrate Israel: to perpetrate terrorist acts and smuggle in arms; to infiltrate illegal immigrants from all over Africa; and for other illegal activity. Sinai is again turning into a hot and dangerous border. The construction of the fence along the Egyptian border will certainly make its mark on all the above penetration attempts – now perhaps to take place via the Jordan border and the Mediterranean and Red seas.

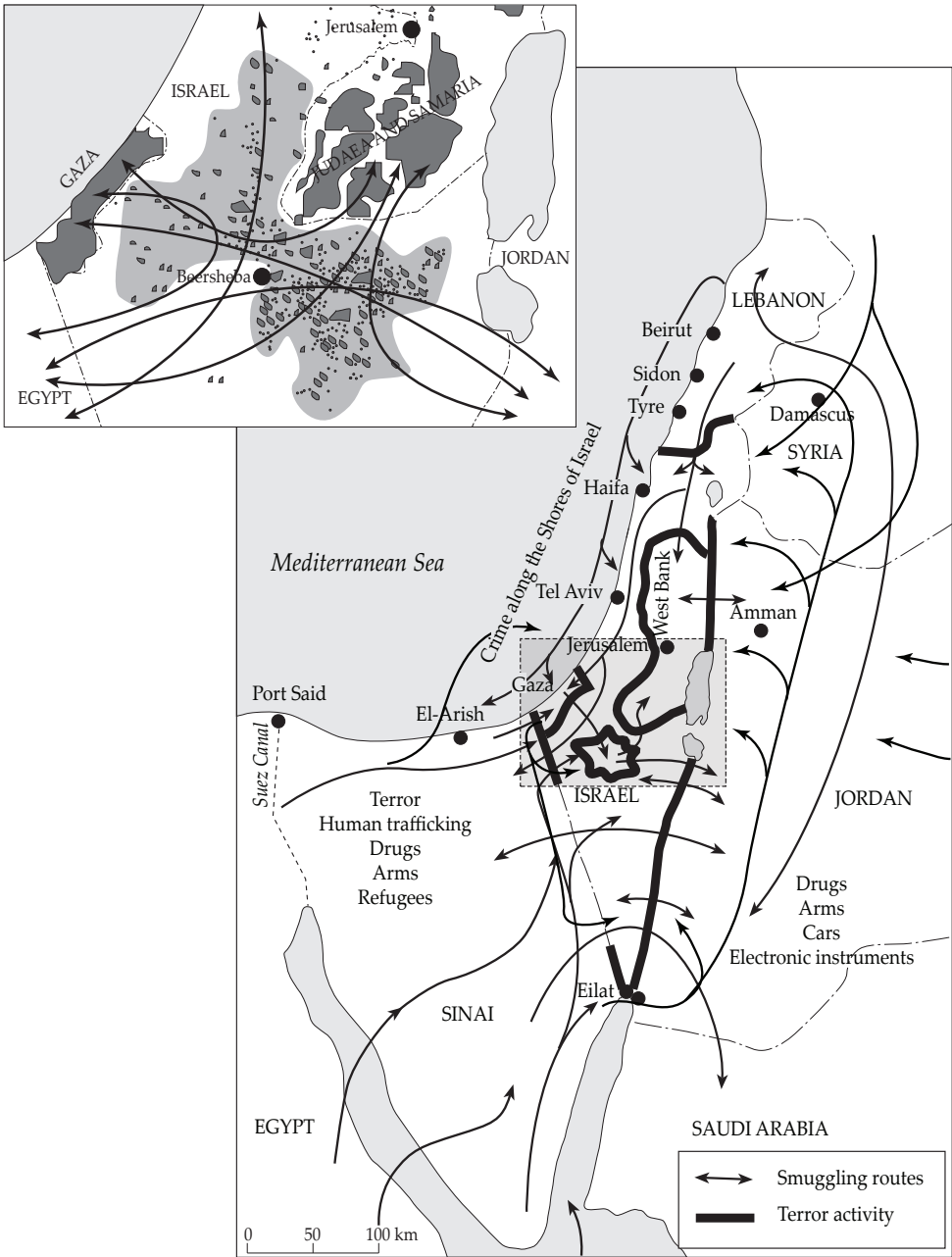
Another result of the enlargement of the population around the borders is the increase in activities of the criminal world around Israel and its

neighbors (Egypt (Sinai), Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and even Saudi Arabia and Iraq). Israel serves as a bridge among these states, principally between the Levantine states and Egypt (Map 2, and Chapter Four on the Bedouins in the south as a bridge). At issue here is the transfer of much war materiel, drugs, human trafficking and sexual exploitation, theft of agricultural produce and infiltration of foreign populations (Sudanese, Egyptians, Jordanians, Iraqis and Palestinians from the east) into so-attractive Israel. The borders are still penetrable for illegal entrance at least until February 2012.

The absence of law and order in the Israeli settlements springing up close to the borders and the 'no-man's-land' are well exploited by criminal elements in Israel. Further implications will be a rise in urbanization within and around Israel, and environmental decline in the area. This situation requires further closure of the borders, along the lines of the northern boundary of Israel, and a fence between Israel and the areas of the Palestinian Authority. In parallel, technological solutions for the defense of the borders have to be sought; these will be more effective than operating patrols.

The demographic processes around Israel have implications for all walks of life: political, geopolitical, cultural, and daily. As illustrated in Figure 2, these effects combined lead to an actual existential threat. The demography and the political processes of the Middle Eastern countries are pulling Israel's near and far neighbors towards pitfalls, and Israel must do everything it can not to hurtle down with them. Israel must remain an island of enlightenment in this turbulent part of the world. The situation calls for greater separation between this country and its neighbors, in the form of physical barriers (fences), the most efficient means of defense and technological control, and a supporting juridical system.

These are the challenges until the natural increase in the Middle East decelerates, the demographic momentum slows, the people of the region begin to take an interest in globalization and its benefits, and abandon their hopes of salvation through radical Islam and the destruction of Israel.



Map 2: Crime along the borders of Israel

Assuming that these developments will indeed come about, the timeframe is a period of twenty to thirty years at least. Tel Aviv state, the pivot of political, economic, cultural, demographic power, and the cosmopolitan air that prevails over it today, does not signal readiness for this. This matter must be placed on the national agenda, because many lives depend on it.

The climate changes promise additional hardships, such as increasing water shortage, the need to desalinate more water for daily use and in order to beautify the parched land; sea level will rise drastically, as will the frequency of droughts. Israel may also face masses of climate refugees.



## Chapter Three: Israel the Most Densely Populated State in the Western World

In every lecture before the general and educated public, whenever the matter Israel having the highest population density in the Western world is mentioned, eyebrows rise and people ask what that has to do with the state's troubles and demography? So first, in 2011 the Netherlands was formally considered the most densely populated of the Western states, with 402 people per 1 square km. Belgium was second, with 359, and then Japan with 339; in fact, in South Korea the density is 492 people per square km and in Israel only 355 people. Formally this is correct, but in all the above states it is not a matter of bleak wasteland covering 60% of the area, as it is in Israel. Therefore, if one calculates density in Israel in respect of the region where human beings live, namely from Beersheba northward, density in 2011 would be 860 persons per square km, that is, the highest in the West.

Examples can also be furnished from places such as Monaco with 35,835 people per square km, Malta with 1,326, or San Marino with 522. But these are city states, and not states. In 2030 Israel's density will be higher, and its population poorer, because almost the entire added population will be Arabs and Ultra-Orthodox Jews, two relatively poor population groups with large numbers of children. From the time of writing until 2030 Israel will need systems of mass transport, sewage, power stations and transmission of electricity, gas and water, and conveyance of materials from agents and others. All these will need to flow safely and speedily.

In a densely crowded state there is a struggle over every piece of empty ground, and land prices are continuously rising. The culture of "a detached house with a red tile roof" which is widespread in Israeli society (mimicking America) does not suit crowded areas; only skyscrapers, railroads, obeying the law and improving the legal systems can help to overcome the impending disaster—the dreadful crowding. And when the place is packed, the carrying capacity of all the infrastructures collapses—and there is no

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one to stem the tide. All this will be ten times worse in the Tel Aviv space, where density 2011 is over 7,400 persons per square km.

To allow life in a Western state so crowded it is essential to plan well in advance. The law has to be upheld and legal procedures speeded up. Will Israel of 2012 be able to reach safe haven on this issue? In the worst case, Israel is marching with utter certainty towards becoming a Third World state—and the educated and working population might leave a Third World state rapidly, and intensify the processes of decline. The results of high density can already be seen in Egypt and in Gaza.

However, other instances can also be indicated: Singapore exemplifies a state, with 5.2 million people, which manages to function with a density of 7,565 persons per square kilometer (2011), as does Hong Kong 7.1 million with 6,488 persons per square kilometer. They do it by law enforcement. And indeed, the people who live there are disciplined. The decades of strong government made their social, economic and political life extremely well ordered, without using ruthless totalitarian methods.

Some of the solutions are not beyond the man's reach. Immediately, a fast, accessible and affordable transport system has to be prepared. High-rise construction has to be carried out. There is a need to clarify to the courts on all levels that building infrastructure systems can no longer be held up by the Supreme Court injunctions; the national planning branch of the Interior ministry must be required at once to propose spatial solutions for the picture that is taking shape.

Crowding generates a feeling of suffocation. The sea, the heights, and the depth dimension for construction have to be exploited: for parking, public buildings, infrastructure, shopping centers and the like. The public have to be taught to live with a sense of shortage of land. The IDF alone holds 45-50% of the state land (Oren 2005), and it must be thinned down. Population dispersal is another fitting strategy in the attempt to mitigate the feeling of suffocation, but it demands courageous political, social and economic decisions by Israeli policy makers.

The damage of high density leads to yet another tough conclusion: Israel cannot permit the unlimited and uncontrolled entry of foreign citizens. The Law of Return allows every Jew anywhere to come and live in his or her historic homeland. This circumstance demands the utmost caution in questions of land, long-term planning and awareness that Israel is the densest of the Western countries, and has special needs to allow a high standard of living. The Western person is a glutton for leisure and recreation areas, for lawns at the residential and industrial areas nearby; the Western person produces solid waste of more than 1.5-2 kilos daily. The Western person needs parking lots, highways, malls, many education institutions over large areas, space for sports installations, power stations, refineries, desalination plants—all these are hungry for land which is sparse in Israel.

The conclusion from all this is clear: high density is another massive challenge that Israel faces. But it is not on the government's agenda since implementing the solutions lasts far longer the time of office of the present administration. Only tactical decisions are made after pressure and total absence of any long-term strategy: all these define the typical Israeli politician.

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## Chapter Four: Demography and the Relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel and throughout Palestine

In 2011 the Arabs of Israel (including the Arabs of Jerusalem; excluding the Druze) numbered about 1.573 million, forming 20.1% of Israel's total population. Natural increase of this population is among the highest in the world: 3.1% annually (in the Muslim population). This is the result of both very high childbirth rates, as in Kenya and in other countries in Africa, and of very low mortality, by virtue of good health services and the fact that this population is mostly children and youth (in Judea and Samaria the increase is as it is among the Arabs of Israel).

The natural increase of the Bedouins living in the south of Israel is even higher, reaching 3.5-4.5% yearly (2011) on account of polygamy—most of the additional wives being imported. Natural increase in the Gaza Strip was estimated at 3.5% in 2011; the population there is predicted to grow in the next 15 years, from 1.5 million now to 2.56 million by 2025. The forecast is that in 2025 the Arab population in Israel will reach some 2.1 million, and by 2030 some 2.2 million (Table 2).

On the **family level** the significance of the high natural increase is a large number of children and a small number of breadwinners, as the status of the woman is inferior and she is outside the civil labor force circle. This means continuation of poverty as a feature of the Arabs of Israel (mainly Muslims), low chances of children getting proper schooling, hence none of the occupational skills required in the modern economy; working in traditional trades; and women not working outside the home. All these are factors of low income and partly explain the ubiquitous poverty among the Arabs of Israel. High natural increase among the Arabs of Judea, Samaria and Gaza means perpetuation of poverty, continuation of attempts to infiltrate into Israel at any price, and at the same time an atmosphere of despair and desperate acts in those areas.

On the **municipal level** the low formal income of residents lowers the income from municipal and state taxes. Note that in the Arab settlement in Israel a complex and problematic situation has arisen: despite the rapid enlargement of the population, a dwelling culture in this sector of detached houses, each on its own plot of land, not high-rise buildings; this makes for extensive spreading of the Arab settlements with single up to three storey houses. This issue involves state problems of absence of law enforcement, lack of a match between the master-plan and the situation on the ground, and extremely grave corruption in some of the municipal authorities themselves. The detached houses that multiply in the Arab villages are sometimes left without a proper infrastructure of roads and pavements, water supply, sewage, electricity and telephone lines, as well as education and other services. A by-product of this development is a picture of neglect in the settlements of the Arab sector, enormous demands for state aid, resentment towards the authorities, and a deep feeling of deprivation.

The situation in the municipal authorities is the product of a combination of inequality in resource re-distribution, high natural increase, and widespread building of detached housing. The combination of demographic data with the reality on the ground does not bode well. The chaos in the Arab sector may well be irreversible, and promises chronic bankruptcies of the municipalities in this sector, persistence of illegal building, worsening of the daily life of the population, and aggravation of the violence and ill-will towards the Israeli establishment. The recurrent demands to expand the boundaries of the Arab settlements, which would supposedly bring relief to the Arab sector, are spurious: enlarging the area in conditions of building detached houses will only lead to a preserving of a grim situation.

On the **national level** the demographic growth makes for changes in the power relations between the Muslims, whose growth rate is high (mainly among the Bedouins), and the Christians and Druze, whose numbers are relatively small. Certain settlements that in the past were Christian, such as Kfar Kana and Nazareth, have become largely Muslim. In other settlements, such as Abu Snan, the percentage of Muslims is steadily rising. Also in the

mixed cities of Acco, Ramla, Lod, and even Haifa, where most of the Arabs who remain in it are Christians, changes are evident in the power relations in this respect.

Demographic increase also gives rise to a sense of independence and power, and impedes the enforcement of various laws in places where the Muslims are concentrated in large numbers (Map 1). The combination of a sense of independence with feelings of frustration, whose basis is personal, religious, economic, and national, is fertile ground for the rise of extremist movements, and it stimulates and encourages processes of educational, religious, legal, social and political separatism, and also nationalist expressions, some of them ferocious, such as the revolt or quasi-revolt with the onset of the events of the al-Aqsa intifada (September-October 2000).

One of the expressions of this situation is an appeal by the Arabs of Israel to external bodies and for international assistance on the grounds of deprivation. In 2006 a document was published entitled 'The Future Vision of the Palestinians in Israel' (Rinawie-Zoabi 2006) (no longer 'the Arabs of Israel') under the aegis of the Arab settlement, which is in fact a challenge to the Jewish state in Palestine. On 15 May 2007 a similar document appeared under the title 'The Haifa Declaration'.

No one has practicable answers to relieve Jewish-Arab tension, for this is not socio-economically-based tension but a serious national conflict over a small, crowded territory of religious importance and spiritual value to either side, which is becoming increasingly dense day by day.

In the last thirty years, as a result of the penetration of modernization, the birthrate among the Arabs of Israel has declined. This is a development that on the face of it contradicts the gloomy forecasts. And indeed, the picture is not so rosy, because of a phenomenon called demographic momentum. The fact that more than 40% of the Arab population in Israel are children and youth means that thousands of young couples are about to enter the fertility period, so even assuming that every couple produces no more than two children, twenty years at least will have to lapse before any significant

decrease in the high number of children born yearly will be seen in the entire sector.

The matter of the Arabs of Israel may be examined from the geo-demographic angle too. The poverty on the family and municipal levels is accompanied by feelings of frustration, whose foundation is also nationalist. The Arabs of Israel cannot reconcile with Israel's being a Jewish Zionist state, which endeavours at all costs to be democratic too, in addition to which all the national symbols (flag, anthem, language, some of the laws) are Jewish (for more on this see Benziman 2006).

If this were not enough, the Arabs of Israel are part of the large Palestinian nation living just a few meters away across the fence. They are also part of the Arab world, some of which will not come to terms with the existence of Israel. Also, the vast majority of them are part of the fervently religious Muslim world, which closes in on Israel on all sides. These data are translated into acts on the ground: illegal trade in war materiel, disregard for Israeli law over a wide range of domains, and geographic distribution that contains hazards to the Jewish settlement in Israel. This matter is presented in the next section from a geo-strategic point of view.

The Arabs of Israel present six challenges according to a clear geographic division: in the northern Negev, in Jerusalem (which already in 2012 does not have a Zionist majority), in the Triangle, in the north of Israel, in the mixed cities (Ramla, Lod, Haifa, Acco), and as a complete whole. Next, each section is discussed in detail.

## **The Arabs of East Jerusalem**

Jerusalem is the largest of Israel's cities in area and population (Jewish and Muslim). A third of the approximately 730,000 residents of Jerusalem are Arabs who live in the east of the city. Some 93% of the Arab population of Jerusalem have the status of permanent residents and only about 5% are citizens of Israel. Secular Jews are leaving the city for the west (Mevasseret, Modi'in, Tel Aviv), Ultra-Orthodox are moving to Beitar-Ilit, Elad, Modi'in,

Bet-Shemesh and soon to Harish. National-religious Jews are moving to areas in Judea and Samaria. This city, the capital of Israel, the 'eternal city', remains poor, forsaken, and lost to the people of Israel – and it is only 60 kilometers from Tel Aviv.

Coexistence of Jews and Arabs throughout Palestine cannot be described without addressing the processes, which have taken place in the eastern Arab part of Jerusalem from 2000 to 2012: firstly, accelerated flooding of the city by tens of thousands of Palestinians, concomitant with increasing housing density in the Arab neighborhoods and the Old City, hence also massive migration into the Jewish neighborhoods. Secondly, collapse of the education system in East Jerusalem under the weight of the population. Thirdly, rise in the number of impoverished families, hence a widening socio-economic chasm between the east and the west of the city.

In regards to demography of the Jerusalem metropolis: the rate of Jews is between 45 and 48 percent. In the Jerusalem mountains statistical region the rate of Jews amounts to only 20%. In the fenced city, or that part enclosed by a wall, the rate of Jews as of 2011 is about 62%, and the forecast of the Jerusalem Institute is that in 2020 it will be 59% and in 2035 only 50%. The city today is not a Zionist city: 38% are Arabs (mostly Muslims) and a further 28% of the city's population Ultra-Orthodox; that is, the percentage of non-Zionists in 2011 was 66%. Day by day the figures tend to favor the non-Zionists because of their higher natural increase than that of the Zionists, and because of the Zionists' abandonment of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is also one of the poorest cities in Israel, with or without Arab East Jerusalem. According to data of the Jerusalem Institute (2007), per capita income in Jerusalem was NIS 1,962, in Beersheba NIS 3,101, in Haifa NIS 3,485; but in metropolitan Tel Aviv it was NIS 4,458. Jerusalem is also the most dependent city in Israel: the number of its inhabitants registered in the work force is extremely low.

The conclusions are clear: the city comprises a disputable bi-national urban complex, it has not united together, and it is poverty-stricken. The possibility



to cede the Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem provokes many disputes among the Israeli public. Geographically, there is no obstacle to giving up the areas of Bet Hanina–Atarot, most of the eastern neighborhoods such as Arab-Sawachara, Ras al-Amud, and others. The argument by the political right wing is that peril through Palestinian sniping will be the lot of the Jewish neighborhoods in the case of such a concession. However, in this respect the situation in Jerusalem would not differ from the situation of Qalqilya and Tul-Karm-Far'un in relation to Route 6, or the peril to all the Jewish neighborhoods facing the Arab space in Ramallah or facing Bethlehem.

## **The Arabs of the Triangle**

There is nothing new in saying that the Arabs of the Triangle inhabit the narrow waist of Israel. The problem is that this waist is getting thinner every day, especially in the area of Taibe–Kalansuwa–Tira. If this trend continues the Jewish population shall apparently be left with a strip of approximately 5-6 km distance from Hadarim junction to the Mediterranean Sea.

Wadi Ara has ceased to be a national transport route and is instead an internal road through the town of Ara, which in 2011 numbered some 130,000 Arab citizens; beside it are 5,000 Jews in Katzir and Mei-Ami. The connection between the Arabs of Ara and the Arabs of Samaria operates over a broad front of domains, some of them affecting Israel's national security. Main concern is for travelers on Route 6: it is not enough that 99.5% of the inhabitants of the area are law abiding and peaceable Israeli citizens; if the 0.5% evildoers take the initiative, a calamity will befall this highway, which is increasingly becoming a kind of inner road through the Taibe-Tira-Kalansuwa area. The same can be said about the continuum of Baqa Sharqiya–Nazlat Issa–Baqa al-Garbiya, which is tangential to Route 6, and the other triangle of Kefar Kasen–Kefar Bara–Jalulia, which is tangible to Route 6 as well.

## **The Arabs of the north**

In 2011 about 45% of all Muslims in Israel lived in the Northern district. In that year the Jews of the Northern district were a minority of 47% and the Arabs a majority of 53% (CBS 2011). In the last decade and a half the Northern district has suffered negative net migration of Jews to the centre of the country, while the Arabs have hardly migrated and remained in the north. The northern periphery is becoming increasingly weak, poor and neglected.

Central Galilee and the Galilee panhandle create the illusion in 2012 that everything is okay and co-existence is flourishing because the landscape of the hilly Galilee is impressive, and the rooms for tourist rental and restaurants are booked solid at weekends. The tourist who stays there for two days does not notice whatever happens under the surface. These unseen proceedings may erupt at some moment that is difficult to foresee.

The reasons for the eruption exist in the north as in all the other Arab spaces in Israel. The sense of autonomous power and the feeling of the lack of Israeli governance are growing. The feeling of deprivation continues. Muslim activity in Israel might be partially one of the implications of the Middle Eastern upheaval in 2011 and even earlier. This is indicated by the growing amount of wrongdoing in the north (criminal and nationalist-criminal, such as the ceaseless damage caused to Jewish agriculture in the north), and turning the back on any form of cooperation with the Jewish establishment (on the municipal, regional, national levels; NGOs and partnerships). Therefore, precisely in the setting of economic growth in Israel generally, and in the Arab sector particularly, there is room for a policy of development and approximation of the two peoples in regard to the daily economy and the individuals' wellbeing.

## **Mixed Jewish-Arab settlements**

The Israeli effort regarding mixed settlements, in which good neighborly relations between Jews and Arabs are supposed to prevail, seems not to have

greatly succeeded. The mixed cities endure constant tension between the populations dwelling in them, with accompanying conflict in a nationalist, economic, territorial and cultural setting (this applies to Ramla, Lod, Acco, Haifa, Yafo, upper Nazareth, Beersheba and dozens more settlements). The Arab residents of the mixed towns complain of deprivation at the hands of the state and of displays of racism by their Jewish neighbors, while the Jewish residents maintain that Arab proximity turns the mixed town into a zone where violence, drug trafficking, a culture of poverty, disorder, and fall in property values reign. An ordinary, insignificant tale that could have ended long since, has been neglected, discarded, and turned into an essentially social problem. Naturally, all the mixed settlements can hardly be joined all of a piece. In Lod the picture is extreme, in Safed violence is developing, and the situation in Acco is not similar to the relatively acceptable situation in Haifa.

### **The Bedouins in the northern Negev: Geographic aspects**

This social group differs from other groups in Israel in several aspects. The proportion of children in it breaks world records. Among the Jews, the proportion of children aged up to 18 years approaches 30%. Among the northern Arabs of Israel it is around 40%; for the Bedouins it reaches 63%. These children grow up uncared for, neglected, without proper education; they end up surly, vengeful and violent, and show all the attributes of marginalized youth. Their dwellings scattered all around bode disaster, as the residents have no road network, nor any infrastructure of water, electricity, health, or education. Hence the dimensions of violence have no equal in any other domain in Israel, and this has fatal results not only for the Bedouin population itself but also for everything surround it throughout the spaces of the northern and central Negev and the coastal plain (Bystrov and Soffer 2008, 2010; Soffer and Bystrov 2006; Chachashvili 2003). This is a society that until recently was nomadic. It has its own justice system, means of sustenance typical of itself alone, and it is hard pressed to meet the challenges of modernization.

An opinion about the size of the Bedouin population in the south cannot be formed only in terms of statistics; the situation in the south has to be treated as a human tragedy, and at the same time as the beginnings of a strategic challenge to Israel. The dimensions of the spread of the southern Bedouins has no parallel in any state, certainly not in a small and crowded state like Israel, where about half of its terrain is allocated to security, and every kilometer in it is critical for its needs and its future.

According to records of the Central Bureau of Statistics, at the beginning of 2011 about 200,000 Bedouins lived in Southern Israel. This figure has to be augmented by an estimated 20,000-40,000 people who are not registered legally, owing to unreported purchase of wives from Gaza, southern Mt. Hebron, and Jerusalem, or the southern Kingdom of Jordan. One estimate gives a figure of 14,000 wives who were bought by the Bedouins of the Negev since 1967. The Bedouin terrains of the Negev were also entered by fellahs from Mt. Hebron as illegal inhabitants. Their precise number is hard to gauge (Table 3).

In 1949 the Bedouins in the south numbered 13,000 people, and in the north of Israel about 6,500. Previously the Bedouin population in the south had been 60-80,000. During Israel's War of Independence some of them moved to Sinai and southern Jordan, and a few to Mt. Hebron. This population, mainly in the south, was exceptional in its natural increase being among the highest in the world, for several reasons: in the Negev, more than in the north, the custom of one man buying many wives was prevalent; and Israel's welfare policy encouraged bringing children into the world as a "profitable business". This feature is an offshoot of political deals between governments and the Ultra-Orthodox parties, which demanded subsidies for their children. But the Ultra-Orthodox male has only one wife, while the Bedouin has many, and the outcome has not been slow in coming. In matters of childbirth the Bedouin population behaves as if in a third world state, although in fact this group resides in a state with efficient and sound health system, similar to those in the developed world. Therefore, mortality among the Bedouins is approximately at the same rate as among the Jews,

and even lower, for most of Bedouin population are children and youth (Ben-David 2004).

This combination of factors caused the annual natural increase in the south of Israel to reach 5.0-5.5% (a fall in the natural growth rate was observed in 2003-2011 to about 4%). Such a high natural increase means a doubling of the Bedouin population in the south every twelve to fifteen years. This is a phenomenon whose implications for Bedouin and Israeli society are immense (Elbaz and Hogege 2007).

**Table 3:** Growth of the Bedouin population in Israel (1945-2011)

Year	Population in permanent settlements	Population in scattered settlements	Total
1945-1946		60-80,000	60-80,000
1951		13,000	13,000
1960		17,800	17,800
1969	A few dozen families only	25,320	25,320
1980	6,300	30,700	37,000
1989	40,376	46,100	86,476
2000	73,602	52,171	125,773
2006	103,491	60,839	164,330
2009	115,000	70,000	185,000
2011	120-130,000	70,000-80,000	200,000

Source: Elbaz and Hogege 2007, according to the Ministry of Interior; authors' data for 2009-2011

The Bedouin population may be analyzed in several ways. First is according to age breakdown that reveals a unique feature on a worldwide scale, and has very important implications for what happens in this population at present and in the coming years. Second, there is room to examine their geographic spread throughout the Negev; it can be according to tribal distribution, namely which Bedouin are pure and which are tribes of fellahs (Egyptians); or according to breakdown of residents of the permanent settlements as against residents of the scattered settlements (hereinafter 'the scatter'); and within the permanents settlement according to a distinction between townspeople and rural people in regional council jurisdictions.

Each of these distinctions raises a range of issues – municipal, concerned with welfare, but also concerned with national security.

## **Issues of high natural increase**

Natural increase among the Bedouin of the south is, as stated, among the highest in the world (if not the highest) (Table 2). The characteristic of nomads is an additional factor for high fertility. The nomadic culture shows greatly interest in enlarging the family or the tribe so as to strengthen it against other tribes. In times of emergency and drought only the strong will survive in the struggle for living space.

Family size also bestows prestige and status; in the present case the purchase of wives relatively cheaply in Judea and Samaria, the Gaza Strip, and Jordan facilitates the aggrandizement of this asset. This has been augmented by economic considerations, as the allowances granted by the State of Israel for a large number of children are extremely high, and have encouraged many Bedouin quite simply to 'produce' children as a source of income (Table 3). Evidence supporting this argument is found in processes in the Bedouin sector since the allowances were drastically reduced in November 2002, a move that caused a demographic upheaval among the Bedouin (Tables 3-5). Mortality among the Bedouin in Israel is low thanks to the advanced health services in the state as a whole.

The large number of children of the Bedouin harms the Bedouins themselves as well as society in Israel as a whole. At the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century it is impossible to bring children up to meet the challenges of the future when one father has tens of offspring. A sample field survey conducted by the Ministry of the Interior in 2006 in one of the tribes in the south found 2,626 children under the age of 18 in 225 families, that is, 11.6 children on average per household. A more detailed examination discovered two families with more than 30 children to one father, and one family with 43 children; 21 families with 20-30 children to one father, and 112 families with 10-20 children to one father; these amounted to about 50% of the total population

**Table 4:** Natural increase\* among the Bedouins in the Negev, 2000-2011

Year	Population	Birth rate	Comments
2000	125,773	54.2	
2001	132,530	52.5	
2002	137,986	51.9	
2003	145,280	51.9	Record number of newborns
2004	151,421	47.3	Beginning of the downward trend
2005	158,091	44.2	Continued downward trend
2006	164,330	42.2	
2009	185,000	39	
2011	200,000	35 (estimated)	

Source: according to Ministry of Health, Southern District 2007; Abu-Bader and Gradus 2010; authors' calculations

\* Mortality rates in the Bedouin sector are similar to those of the Arab sector in Israel: approximately 1.8-2.5 per thousand.

**Table 5:** Reduction of allowances for families with many children (from 1 July 2002)

30 children	25 children	20 children	15 children	10 children	5 children	Date
23,966	19,626	15,286	10,946	6,606	2,266	Allowances before reduction (in NIS)
9,357	7,712	6,067	4,422	2,777	1,132	Allowances after reduction (in NIS)
14,609	11,914	9,219	6,524	3,829	1,134	Loss of income (in NIS)

Source: According to Elbaz and Hogege 2007.

of households in that tribe. Ninety families were counted with 1-9 children to one father, some of them young couples (Ministry of the Interior 2006).

The proportion of southern Bedouin families consisting of one man with two wives or more is estimated at about 35%. Various data show that hundreds of men have married four wives or more in the course of their lifetime. However, this feature is slowly declining, and in 2011 most men had two to three wives.

The offspring of these fathers grow up in a dysfunctional home, without sufficient sanitation, electricity, health and education services, or training for an occupation, not to mention the attention that every child needs. This is an explosive situation, for both the Bedouin and the state, and for its other citizens.

The high natural increase over so many years has created among the southern Bedouin population a warped age pyramid: 63.5% of the total population are children and youth (Ministry of the Interior 2006). The significance of this is that the demographic momentum will continue to affect the growth rates of the Bedouin of the south for at least the coming three decades, despite the fall in the Bedouin fertility, which indeed is happening. In other words, the Bedouin population will continue to enlarge in the years ahead, and according to various forecasts it will amount to about a quarter of the entire population of the Arabs of Israel (at present they are 15%) with about 300,000 people in 2020 and about 400,000 in 2030.

In 1990, in the Beersheba region the Bedouins were 31% of the entire population; by 2011 this had risen to 48%, and by 2020 they will have formed a majority in the northern Negev (CBS 2010). This rapid population growth has implications for any slight chance of an economic and educational breakthrough in this society, for going by the distress in other societies in the country it is extremely doubtful that in the next decade Israel will invest all its resources in that one alone. Clearly, these processes will have geo-demographic and geo-strategic effects.

## **Concentration of the Bedouin population in permanent settlements**

In the first years following the creation of the state, the Israeli establishment was laggard in providing a settlement solution for about 13,000 Bedouins. By the mid-1960s this population had grown to 33,000, and then it was decided gradually to move them to permanent settlements. The settlement of Tel Sheva was established in 1968, but the planning of the first houses (35



square-meter per family) did not take their physical and cultural needs into consideration. Three years later (1971) Rahat was established, and another group of settlements was formed 25 years later (1996): Hura, Laqiya and Segev-Shalom. Following the peace agreement with Egypt, and the need to transfer airports from Sinai to Israel, the government evacuated residents from the Navatim airport area and transferred them to Arara and Kuseife.

The Bedouin population grew fast, and in 1982 it was 42,000. By 1993 the figure had reached 86,500, and in less than 14 years it had doubled; in 2007 it numbered 164,300 people (Ministry of the Interior 2007, see also Table 2). The result is that despite the building and brisk inhabitation of the Bedouin towns, among other things through extension of their jurisdiction, the problem of the scatter of unrecognized settlements seems unlikely to be positively resolved (as it has been in the north of Israel).

Table 4 shows the inhabiting of the permanent settlements as against the growth rate of the Bedouin population in the scatter. The percentages seem to indicate some success, but the absolute numbers show that the humanitarian and educational crisis of the dwellers of the scatter remains unchanged: the settlements of the scatter grow constantly larger, and despite the serious consequences expected of this situation they will not be evacuated, apparently for political reasons and fear of international intervention.

Presumably a process of creeping recognition of these scattered places as permanent settlements is to be seen, which in the end might perpetuate primitive places, dispersed in a way that does not allow them spatial organization efficient for their residents themselves, and at an intolerable cost in arrangements for their essential services. So one may expect – in the future as in the present – tension in a socio-economic and even national setting between the Bedouins and the Israeli establishment. This mess is bound up with the defects of the establishment – the hesitation of the nation's leaders to take courageous decisions regarding the Bedouins' ferocious struggle for recognition of their ownership of these 800 square-kilometers

that are at issue, and regarding other problems. Planning, educational, and other solutions for a population that increases by 5% and more every year cannot simply materialize out.

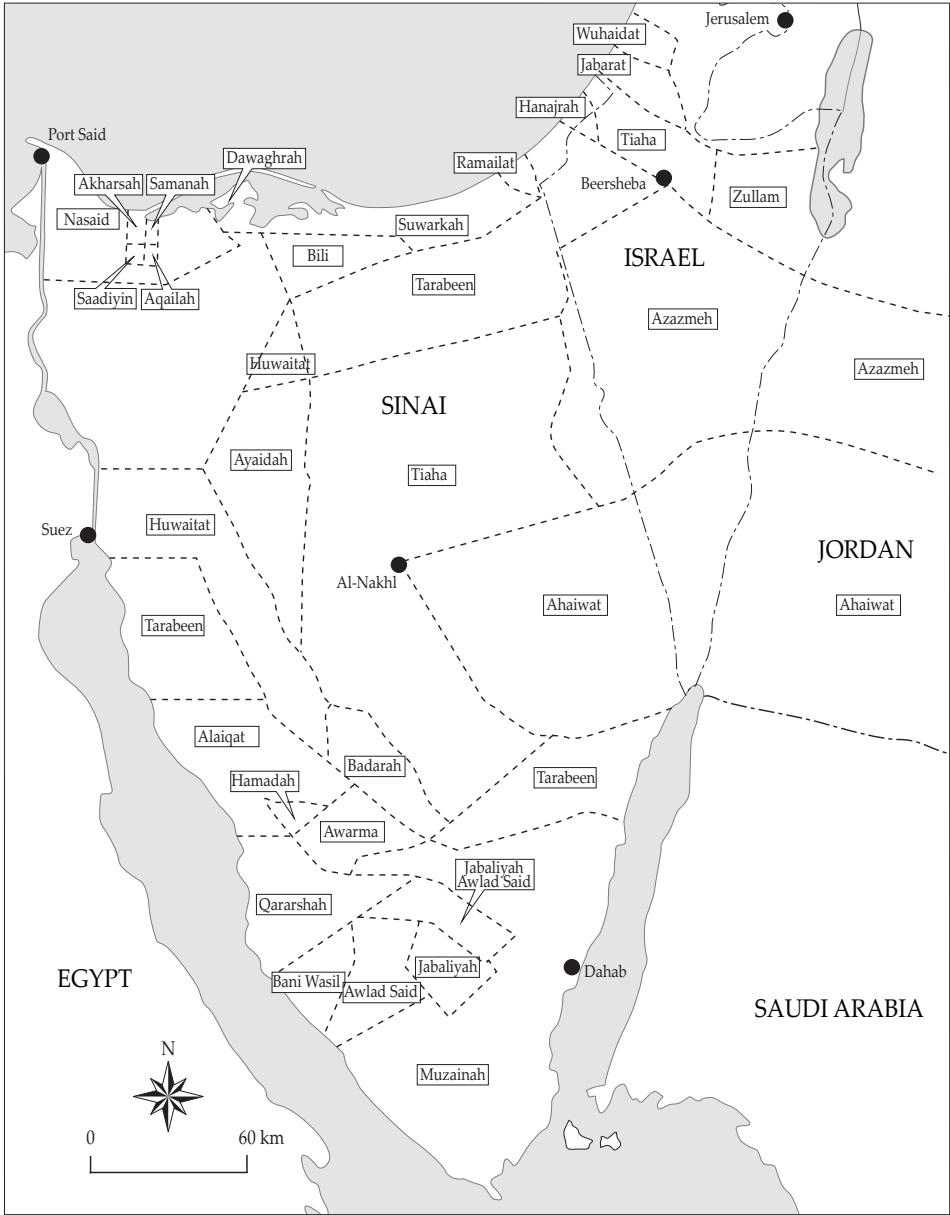
## **The Bedouin – as an international bridge**

The location of the Bedouin in the northern Negev has made them an economic and security bridge between Egypt and the Kingdom of Jordan or Mt. Hebron (i.e., Judea and Samaria). The link between the Gaza Strip and Jordan or Mt. Hebron is also created through the Bedouin expanses in the south and with their close support. Naturally, a firm connection exists between the inhabitants of Mt. Hebron and the Bedouin in the south, and similarly with the Bedouin in the Gaza Strip. This is a family connection that encompasses Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Mt. Hebron, and the Gaza Strip, and translates into trade ties also (mostly illegal).

The result is clear: by virtue of their geographical location and their economic-social-political-religious background, the southern Bedouin are becoming a human and geographical connection for Egypt, Jordan, Mt. Hebron, and the Gaza Strip, and also with the interior of Israel. Among other things, this involves smuggling of drugs, arms, and stolen goods, refugees and human trafficking, especially women. The scope of this smuggling has for long not been just a police matter but has assumed security and strategic dimensions (Map 3).

## **How does the establishment try to meet the Bedouin challenge?**

In the mid-1990s the establishment began to realize that it faced a challenge that demanded solutions, and quickly. But in the state of Israel the working method is inefficient because no governmental body is willing to take responsibility for making dramatic steps with hardly predictable outcomes. Usually a committee is created to deal with the matter. Several months later it submits a recommendation to the government. But meanwhile the government has resigned, or the minister in charge of the matter at hand has been replaced. A new one has come in and proposes to set up a new



**Map 3:** Main Bedouin tribes in Sinai-Negev-Southern Jordan

committee on his behalf, which has an added advantage for him: as long as the new committee is dealing with the matter, the minister has no need to implement anything, and he is free to turn to other concerns.

According to the conclusions of the Goldberg report (below), over the years dozens of committees have been formed to handle Bedouin affairs; but little has been done, and this in patches. A satisfactory solution has still to be found. The wretched condition of lack of governance in Israel does not affect only Bedouin matters but every geographical and social aspect—transport, water, electricity, education, law enforcement, the courts, population dispersal, national planning, and other areas of life.

The most recent committee, convened on December 23, 2007, inspired much hope in all those involved in the subject and fearful for the future of Israel. Still, already at this stage it can be stated that the many NGOs that interfere with what is taking place in the Negev do not necessarily seek the good of the Bedouins. Sometimes the drive is the good of the organization itself. It is hardly believable that an organization that proposes recognition of all the scattered settlements means to benefit Bedouins, knowing that no government will ever be able to advance many dozens of such settlements and usher them into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The actions of these interest groups ultimately hamper the conflict resolution.

In January 2008 the above committee began to work on behalf of the Minister of Housing. It was chaired by Eliezer Goldberg, a retired Supreme Court judge and also the State Controller (hereinafter the Goldberg Committee or Goldberg Commission report). The committee had seven more members: two representatives of the public, two representatives of the Bedouin population, and three representatives of the government (ministries of Housing and Finance, Prime Minister's Office).

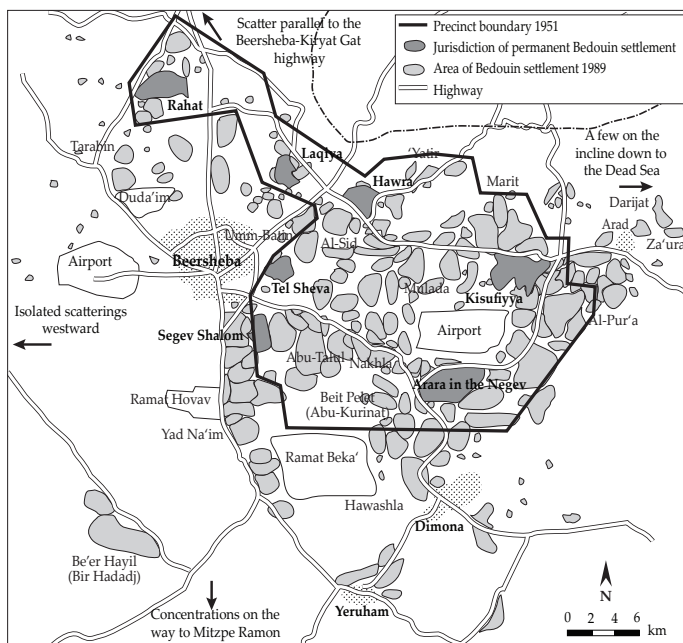
On 11 December 2008, after a year's work, the conclusions of the Goldberg Committee were published. To grasp the conclusions of this latest and important committee, the development of the permanent settlements in the

southern Negev until that date are presented. Only then one is able to study the conclusions and their implications.

Map 4 shows the layout of Bedouin presence in the 1960s, when no permanent but only scattered settlements existed. Map 5 shows the layout of the Bedouin population in the south after the seven permanent settlements were established.

In 1989 the last settlement in this series was established, namely Hura (making seven settlements in all). That year the permanent settlements had a population of 40,376 persons, and the scattered settlements had 46,000 persons. The latter, despite the establishment of permanent settlements, refused to evacuate them, and the scattered population rapidly grew.

On December 28, 2003 the government decided on the creation of a new regional council, Abu Basma, where five settlements that already had local



**Map 4:** Spread of Bedouins in the Negev, 1989

masterplans were intended to arise, and two more settlements (Umm Batin and Molada) were planned to join this council later (Map 5).

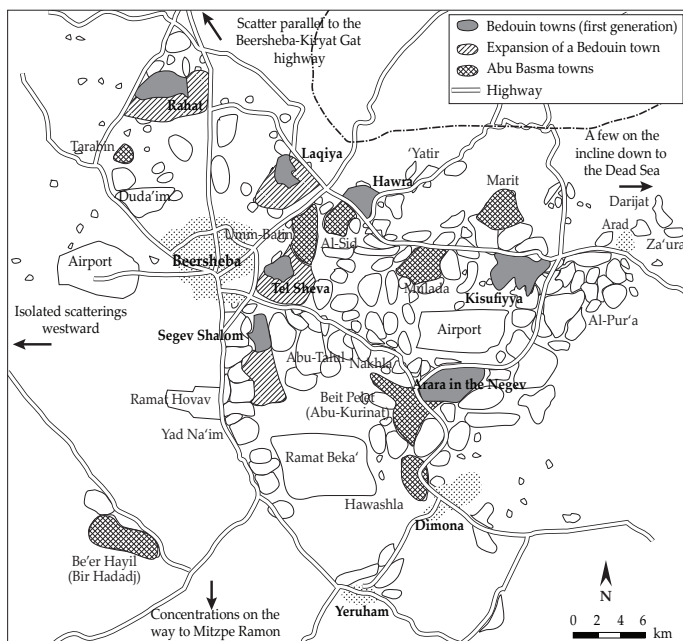
Under the jurisdiction of the new regional council schools have been built and roads paved. But rapid population growth in the scattered settlement continues, and no solution to what is happening in the south seems to exist.

The various planning bodies as well as interest groups created uproar through the media, demanding to recognize the scattered settlements as permanent. Their proposal speaks of 46 settlements, and if the foregoing 14 that have been recognized are subtracted, the addition is 32 new settlements (Goldberg Report, appendix 5) (Map 6). These were the preceding processes to the Goldberg Committee.

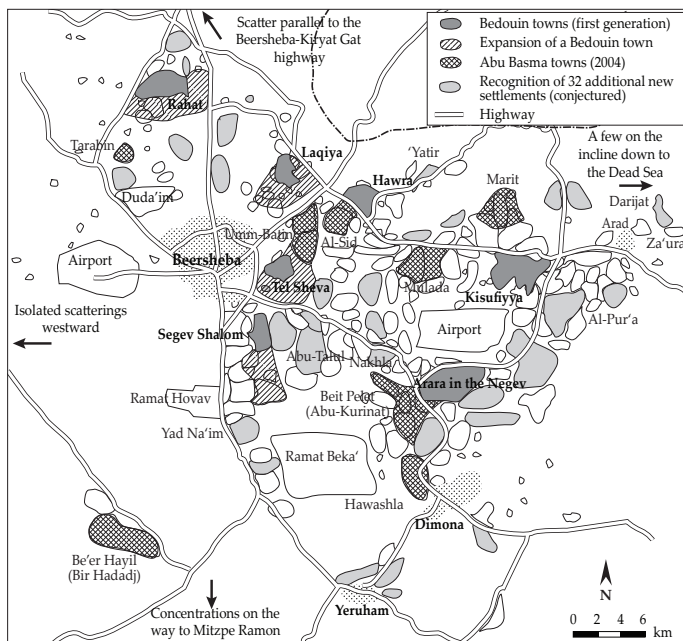
Goldberg committee's recommendations were as follows:

Section 108 of the report (p. 32) states: "Recognition of the unrecognized villages within limits to be detailed will prevent the endless continuation of the intolerable situation. These villages should be integrated into the existing array of settlements." From this text one learns that the committee in fact proposes recognition of the existing scattered settlements. To prevent misunderstanding of the committee's intentions, the next section of the report, section 109, states: "A new settlement demarcation has to be adopted for the unrecognized villages, which will determine that they will be recognized in the future... In that way clusters of settlements will be created... In the meantime the 'settlement in transition' will be provided with services like a recognized settlement."

Obviously, if services are supplied to unrecognized settlement, the authorities do recognize *de facto* that this is a house or a settlement that will never be moved. The use of terms borrowed from master plan 35 is disturbing no less: the terms "clusters," "settlements in transition," "suburban settlement," and "suburban-rural" settlement are vague.



**Map 5: Spread of the Bedouins in the Negev, 2006**



**Map 6: Spread of Bedouins in the Negev according to Appendix 5 of the Goldberg Committee report, 2008**

In regards to the problematic existence of 60,000 illegal houses (as of 2011), the committee phrases its recommendation thus: "We shall define those in the area of the program 'grey'... and legalize them and permit their legal connection to infrastructures as we have noted above." However, in this way the committee whitewashes lawbreaking wholesale, and perpetuates the reality in the south. The significance of this sweeping recognition for other construction infringements throughout Israel is unprecedented. Thus, the settlers of Judea and Samaria might have grounds for claiming their rights to the hundreds of illegal holdings of their own.

Further questions concerning the 60,000 illegal houses remain unanswered: will budgets be found to connect them to essential infrastructures of water, electricity, roads and sewage? How many years will this take over such a wide spread? Assuming that in Israel it will need a decade or a decade and a half, by then the Bedouin population in the south will be double, and then the number of illegal houses might rise to 120,000. Will they also be approved retrospectively?

Judge Goldberg is aware of this problem, and asserts: "The state must implement the policy proposed in 5–7 years when the heads, the notables and the leaders of the Bedouin sector will also put their shoulder to the task." In light of the comments above, this is highly improbable to happen in five to seven years. According to the responses of the Bedouins immediately upon the publication of the committee's recommendations, the Bedouins seem to be reluctant to put their shoulder to the task; therefore, one has to wonder whether the committee's recommendations are implementable.

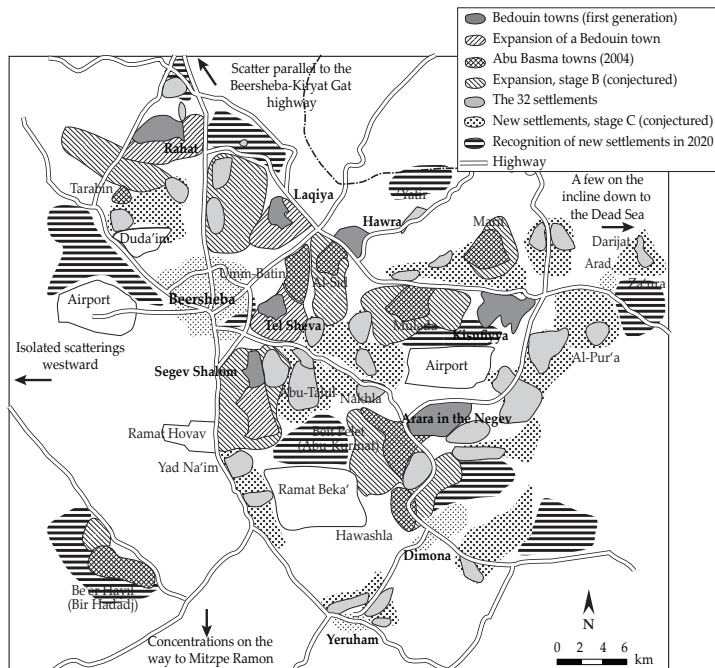
Further, Judge Goldberg states (section 145, p. 40): "The Bedouin must take it to heart that time is pressing." This seems problematic as well. For Bedouins, the time might be not pressing—on the contrary, they have lived in these conditions since the establishment of Israel. In this document the issue of land is not discussed, although even the Goldberg report states that the Bedouin have no ownership or rights to the Negev terrains; nevertheless,



the report proposes that the state pay them compensation even if it is not their due.

To assess the significance of the recommendations of the Goldberg Committee—the direct and the indirect—Map 7 is presented, on which appear all the settlements already recognized, and the look of the Negev a decade from now if these recommendations are adopted. It is also worth drawing the map of the south one decade later still, envisaging that after recognition of all 46 recommended settlements Israel shall be obliged to recognize dozens of new settlements.

Only then is there occasion to ask, who will advance such a large number of new settlements with a population so weak in any case; what will happen meanwhile with the frustrated and bitter Bedouin youth and what will happen meanwhile with Jewish settlements in the south such as Dimona,



**Map 7:** Bedouin spread in the Negev if the Goldberg Committee recommendations are accepted, 2010–2030

Yeruham, Arad, Beersheba, Metar, Lehavim, Mishmar-Hanegev, and others in such circumstances. It is also worth noting the magnitude of the Bedouin spread in the setting of the whole of Palestine.

In the meantime (as of 2011-2012) the IDF intends to continue with its important but complicated plan to transfer its bases to the south. One of the important issues that have to concern the policy makers is whether the officers, noncoms and their families will agree to move to the Negev in the geographic and socio-political circumstances presented. The main question is whether it is not excessive to ask the high-tech population of the IDF, which mostly is stationed in the Tel Aviv area, to go south with their families. These and others are rhetorical questions.

If the Goldberg Committee recommendations are accepted and all the scattered settlements, or even most of them, are recognized, Jewish democratic Israel might lose the northern Negev due to this recognition of the state's failure to govern in that region. Israel will steadily converge on Tel Aviv State, and the Negev with its strategic installations might be at risk of becoming a no-man's-land.

### **Arnon Soffer's Proposal**

Below presented a proposal, submitted to the Goldberg Committee on January 27, 2008, by Arnon Soffer. It discusses only the spatial aspects of the issue, but it is self-evident that the physical solution is no way a satisfactory resolution of the matter, and that in parallel infrastructural, educational, healthcare, and principally economic answers have to be given in order to bring welfare to the Bedouin settlement in the south, as befits a settlement in a 21st-century modern society.

This proposal is similar in general outline to that of the members of the National Security Council (NSC), as publicized in January 2006 and as formulated in the NSC long before that. The proposal asserts that it is necessary to develop at great speed the 14 settlements already recognized, and to add to the list five or six new ones as the case may be, so as to absorb

the 55,000 inhabitants of the scattered settlements who are left there (as of 2010). In practice, every settlement will have to take in about 2,500 persons or only some 250 households.

In planning the new settlement, and re-housing the inhabitants of the scattered settlement in existing and new settlements, account must be taken of traditions, tribal, clan, and family relationships, relations between pure Bedouin and fellahs, and aspects of national security, environment, and transport routes.

Each family will be able to determine where it intends to go, and there it will be allocated a building lot and a farmyard according to its wish. Every family will be generously compensated for its land demands—all in order to close the issue of the scattered settlements. The government will pay the families a fairly large sum of money, and will also assist in the move and the new construction, all on condition that the day be set by which the re-housing of the Bedouins from the scattered settlements will be finished and done. On that set day the era of the benefits will come to an end, and whoever refuses to move willingly will lose all his real-estate and economic rights and will go to a place allotted to him well in advance as decreed and enforced by the authorities.

The proposed decision will be final, and there will be no room for a further appeals to legal instances, for every such appeal will mean dragging out solutions for years, and the winds of refusal will again waft among those who were already prepared for the move, and on this matter time is pressing urgently. A delay of three years has a meaning plain to see: increase of the Bedouin population in the south by about a quarter of what it is today.

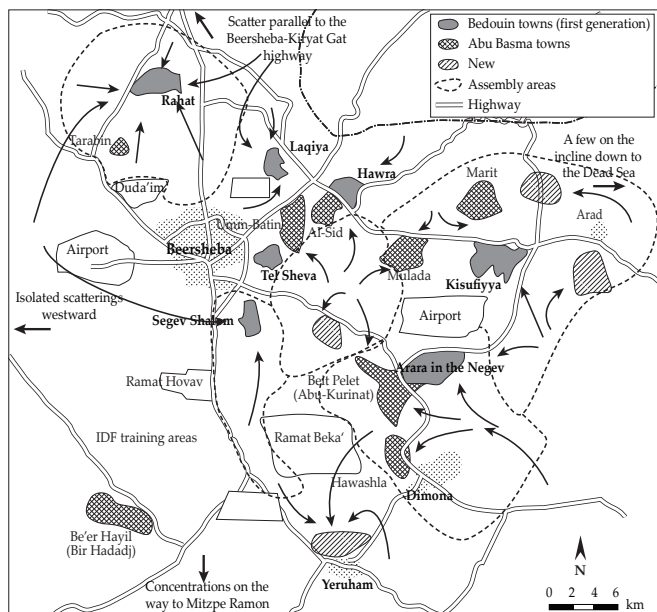
It seems reasonable that the closing date for a solution to all the problems will be set as January 1, 2014. All the bureaucratic systems in the country will be flexible according to the deliberations and decisions of that top committee, whose purpose is clear and single, and on January 1, 2014 all the scattered Bedouin dwellers in the south will move to permanent settlements. Then stage B of their care will begin: the stage of their social, infrastructural, and economic strengthening.

There is room to plan the expansion of the veteran settlements, as well as the group of new settlements in rural style and to allow every family to work its household farm in the form of an olive grove, pasture or vegetable growing, and also in partnership. For this sufficient water quotas must be allocated—and there is abundant water for this important purpose.

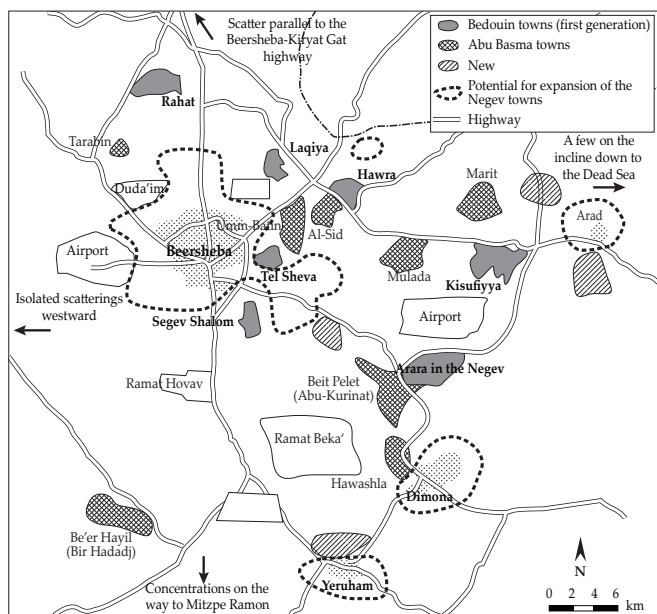
What are the advantages of completing this endeavor? Instead of tens, perhaps hundreds, of settlements that would be formally recognized throughout the Bedouin scatter in the Negev, but would remain neglected and godforsaken, with 20 recognized settlements it will be possible to bestow on the Bedouins in the south higher quality of life, and the state will be able to pay for this too. Instead of a “wild” spatial spread which forecloses options of development all across the south, the concentration of the Bedouins in 20 settlements will allow expansion of the existing towns of Dimona, Arad, Yeruham, and Beersheba, and will also promote the transfer of the IDF to the south. The growth of these settlements can only help the Bedouins in the areas of employment, education and culture, and this is a win-win situation. This is also a national mission that is required because of the great population pressures in the center of the country and the need to thin out the military might around the Tel Aviv metropolis.

Map 8 shows the Negev on the assumption that this project will succeed. The 20 Bedouin settlements appear on it, as well as the veteran settlements in the Negev and the possibility of their expansion and development, and also the planned lay of IDF installations. This map may be compared with the preceding Map 9, which shows the government succumbing to the chaotic processes of the moment, and anyone can trace the advantages in the concentration of the Bedouins. Such a solution will give answers to a range of environmental perils that endanger them, such as excessively dangerous proximity to Ramat -Hovav industrial zone, to the fences of the airfield at Nevatim, or to IDF training areas (Map 8).

Will the state of Israel – a state that for years has lacked governability – be able to adopt and implement the above proposal? It seems not, as long as there is no change in the administrative structure of Israel, from a



**Map 8:** Model of processes of assembly of Bedouins from the scatter to the old and new permanent settlements by 2014



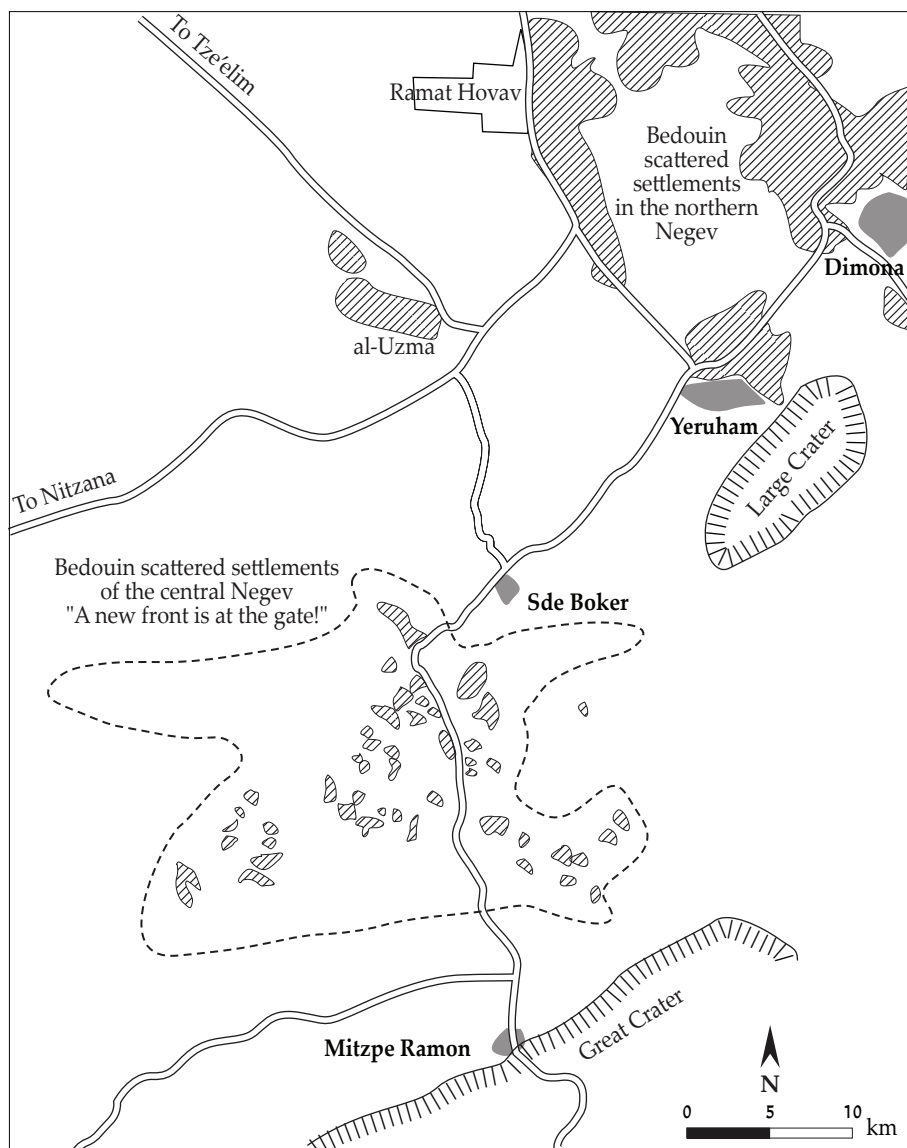
**Map 9:** Arnon Soffer's proposal for the spread of the Bedouin settlements in the northern Negev in 2014

dysfunctional decision-making system to a functioning one. If so, one may expect that the number of scattered settlements will only continue to grow, and with them the chaos, the poverty, the neglect, and the violence; and on the other hand the flight of the strong population from the Negev and non-realization of the IDF plan “southward”. The consequences of this process need not be spelled out—they are quite obvious.

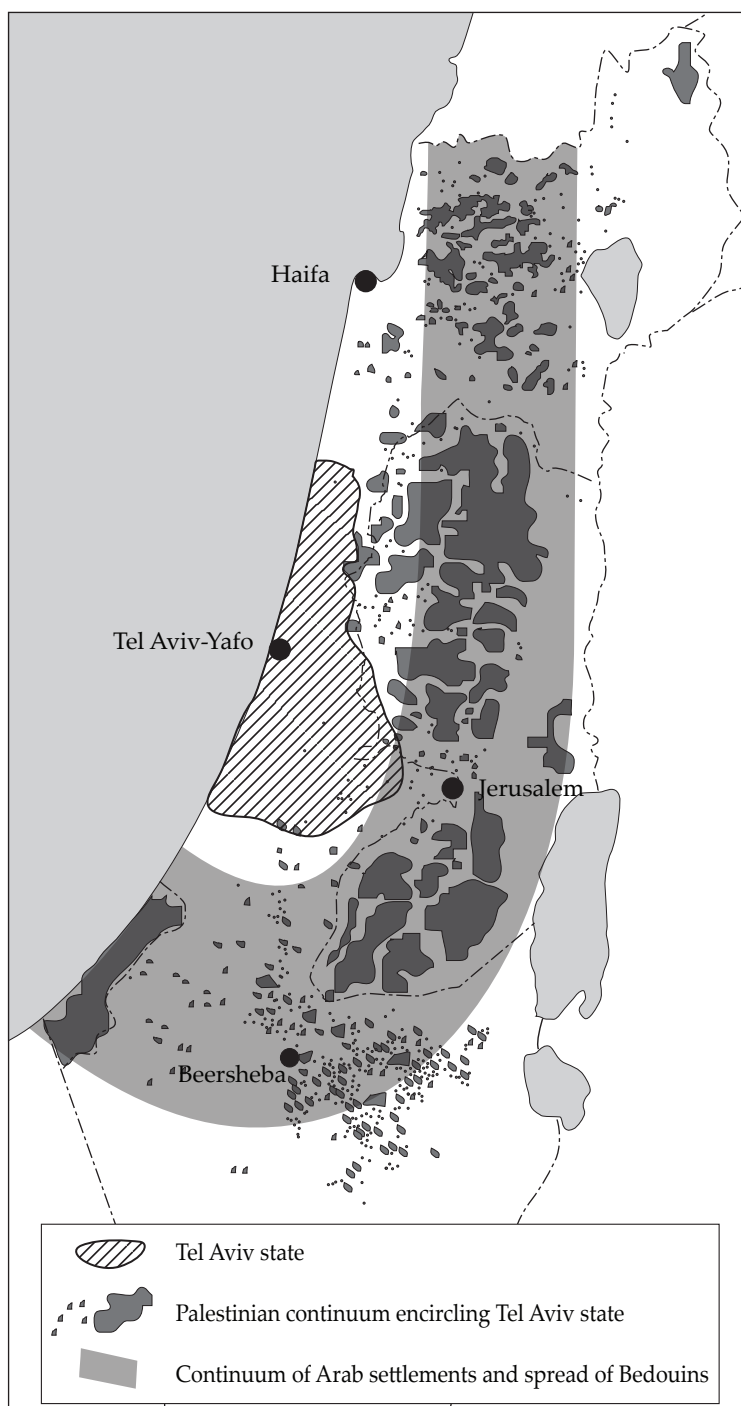
To summarize the Bedouins’ story at the northern Negev, in the beginning of 2011 a “new front” was developing between the Bedouin and the authorities of a state that lacks governability. This time it was happening in the central Negev. The present Bedouin spread in the central Negev up to the beginning of 2012 is shown in Map 10. If the picture so far has been difficult, what is taking place south of Tel Aviv does not bode well on the Bedouin issue. More than 50 new Bedouin holdings have been established in the triangle of Rishon- Letzion – Ramla – Rehovot. All these were established without planning, governmental approval or ministries’ supervision. The only difference in this case is that Bedouins are approaching Tel Aviv, and when they get closer still, the media and the Knesset<sup>2</sup> might respond—according to NIMBY and LULU phenomena<sup>3</sup>.

2 The state of art regarding Goldberg’s recommendations as of mid-2012: The findings of the Goldberg committee were conveyed to Ehud Praver (who in the past had held several positions with the National Security Council). After some two years spent on designing a program, Praver’s plan was submitted to the government. It was rumored that he, like Goldberg, was too accommodating to the Bedouin, and that the Israeli right threatened the prime minister with a crisis. The prime minister passed Praver’s recommendations to the new head of the National Security Council, General (res.) Yaakov Amidror, who studied and refurbished them, and then resubmitted the document to the prime minister. The latter forwarded the revised material to the minister of strategic affairs, Bugi Yaalon, and there it rests. In a conversation between Arnon Soffer and Yaalon on 5 January 2012, the answer was given that he was about to set the matter in motion and could foresee no problems. It remains to be seen if Minister Bugi Yaalon will do what others have failed to do: the minister Ronny Milo – as Minister of Police, Ariel Sharon – as Minister of Infrastructures, Tsipy Livni – as Minister, and recently others mentioned above.

3 NIMBY is an acronym of “not in my back yard” and LULU “local unwanted land use”. These phenomena relate to perceptions of environmental hazards and distributive justice



**Map 10:** A new front in progress: Spread of the Bedouins in the central Negev (January 2009)



**Map 11:** "Tel Aviv State" encircled by the Palestinian people in Palestine



There is sufficient reason to fear that nothing will move forward, so Jewish Israel will have lost the northern Negev. The Bedouin might continue to advance towards the Tel Aviv suburbs from the south and southeast, and so might the Arabs of the Triangle from the east to the suburbs of Tel Aviv state. But the Bedouins are not alone. Together with the others, the Palestinian people might press forward to encircle the Tel Aviv state (Map 11). The Bedouins' spread from the Green Line near Samu'a-Dahariya at the approaches to Hawra-Kasifa-Beersheba, towards Revivim-Retamim and borders of Egypt and Gaza, completes the noose formed of the Arabs of Palestine around the Tel Aviv space: it runs from Fasuta in the north through Galilee-Samaria-Jerusalem-Mt. Hebron-Bedouin territory to the Gaza Strip; if this tendency continues Tel Aviv might become Masada.

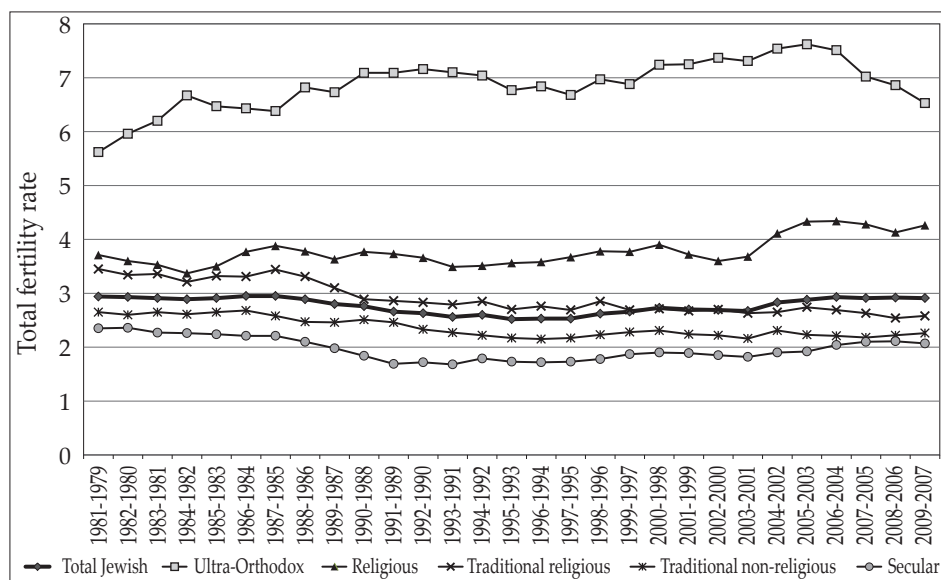
## Chapter Five: Demographic changes among the Jews in Israel and their implications for 2030

### Demographic trends among the Jewish population: Israel becoming increasingly religious

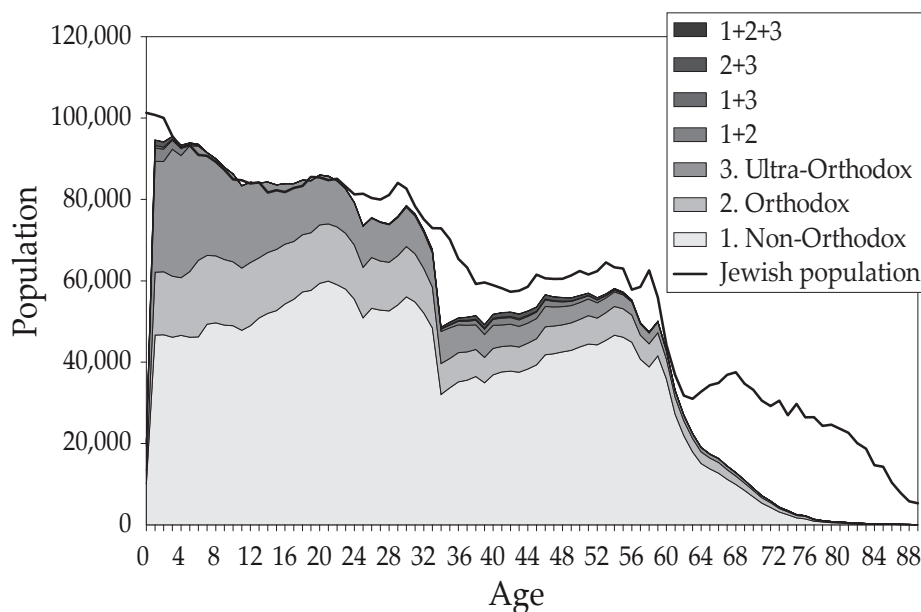
The yearly natural growth rate of the Jewish population in Israel is 1.5%. This is a low rate compared with the figure for the Arab population in Israel, but almost double of that of the countries of the West. Among the Ultra-Orthodox population in Israel, as among the Jewish settlers in the areas of Judea and Samaria, natural increase is among the highest in the world (Figure 3). The birthrate of the other Jews in the country, most of whom are secular, is more limited. Therefore, the composition of the Jewish population in Israel becomes transformed down the years, and in the future it will change unrecognizably.

Already in 2010 about one third of infants in Israel were born to Ultra-Orthodox families, and about one fifth more to religious families (Figure 4). A little less than half of the first-grade children are in the various religious education frameworks, including state religious and Ultra-Orthodox schools (Figure 5). This proportion will only increase in the coming years. Data on self-definition of religiosity or religious observance attest to the same trend. In the 20-24 age group only about 40% defined themselves as non-religious or secular (data of the 2009 Social Survey of the Central Bureau of Statistics). When respondents in that same age group were asked to grade their level of religiosity on a scale of 11 categories (as part of the European Social Survey of 2008), only 15% answered that they were not religious at all.

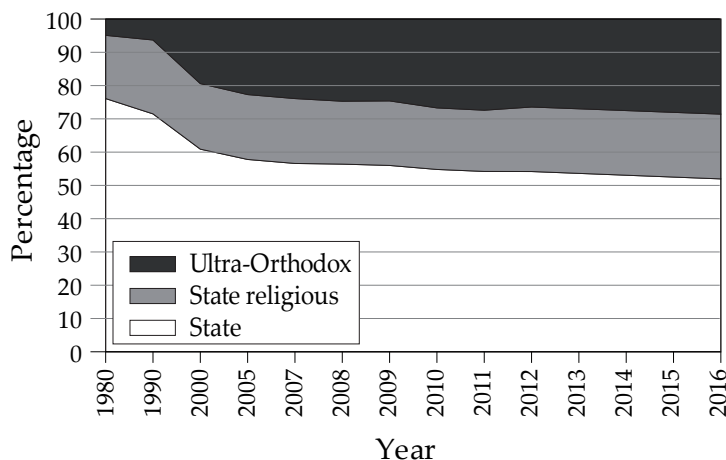
The trend depicted in Figures 4–5, is identical: the proportion of young Jews who define themselves as religious to some degree is higher than among their parents' and grandparents' generation. Furthermore, from data of the CBS Social Survey for 2009 it transpires that of all Jews aged over 20 years, 21% reported that at the time of the survey they were more



**Figure 3:** Total fertility rates (TFR) of Jewish women by level of religiosity, 1979-2009, Source: according to Hleihel, 2011



**Figure 4:** Composition of Jewish population in Israel by level of religiosity in 2006 (estimates), Source: According to Portnoy 2007.



**Figure 5:** Composition of first-grade students in Hebrew education by supervision, 1980–2016, Source: calculated from *Statistical Abstract of Israel, various years*, Tables 8.9, 8.10 and 8.11

religious than they had been in the past, and only 14% reported that they were less religious than in the past. About 200,000 people aged older than 20, who account for more than 5% of the Jewish population in Israel of these ages, defined themselves as newly religious (CBS 2010c). That is, Israel is becoming more Ultra-Orthodox and more religious. This prediction has long-term implications.

In 2011, 7.8 million residents lived in Israel, including about 6.2 million Jews and others. In the younger age groups the proportion of Ultra-Orthodox is very high because of the high natural increase. For example, in 20-24 age group the Ultra-Orthodox are 13%, and as we saw earlier, among the infants they even reach about 30%. The annual growth rate in this population 6-7% (Gurovich and Cohen-Kastro 2004, and authors' calculations<sup>4</sup>). Thus, in 2012 the core Ultra-Orthodox population might reach approximately

4 The formula for calculating growth rate is  $r = \sqrt[t]{P_t / P_0} - 1$ , where  $r$  is growth rate,  $P$  is population size, and  $t$  is number of years. For example, in 1996 the core Ultra-Orthodox population was estimated at 158,000 and in 2001 at 210,000 (Gurovich and Cohen-Kastro 2004). Hence the growth rate for that period can be calculated

467,000 persons<sup>5</sup>. According to the broader definition, the Ultra-Orthodox population might exceed 750,000 persons (Fridman et al. 2011; Paltiel et al. 2012). The forecast is that in 2030 the number of Ultra-Orthodox will surpass one million persons, most of them will be children.

The age structure in a population with such growth rates appears as depicted in Figure 6 in the Ultra-Orthodox towns of El'ad, Beitar-Elite and Bnei-Berak. The conclusion is clear: about half of Israel's population is likely to be religious by 2030. The proportion of non-religious people will presumably fall rapidly towards that year. From 2030 on, Israeli society will be of a religious nature to some degree or other (Table 6).

**Table 6:** Trends in growth of the religious population in Israel, 2010–2030

Population group	Population in 2010	% of total population	% among Jews	Forecast to 2030	% of total population	% among Jews
Total population in Israel	7,509	100		9,984	100	-
Total Jews (and others)	5,983	-	100	7,600	-	100
Ultra-Orthodox	0.788	10.7	13.1	1,500	15	19.7
Religious	0.748	9.9	12.5	1,200	12	15.7
Religious – traditional	0.918	12.2	15.3	1,100	11.0	14.4
Total religious		32.8	40.9			49.8
Non-religious – traditional	1,449	19.2	24.2	1,500	15.0	19.7
Secular	2,080	27.7	34.9	2,300	23.0	30.5
Total non-religious		46.9	59.1			50
Arabs (including Druze)	1,526	20.3	-	2,384	24.0	-

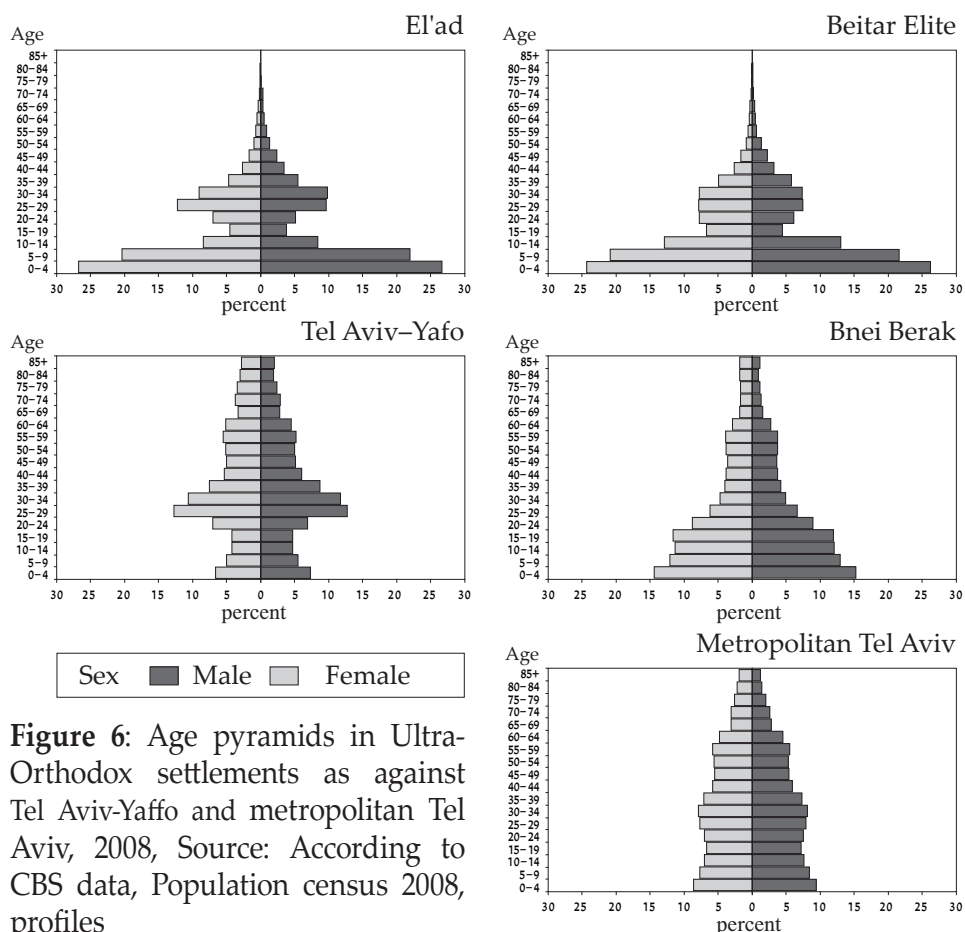
Sources: according to CBS data Social Survey 2009\*; Fridman et al. 2011; Paltiel et al. 2012; authors' calculations

\* Data obtained from Israel Social Data Center (ISDC) at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

## What demography does to society, the economy, and the settlement in Israel

Since demography affects all branches of the economy and society, it is important to consider the dimensions of growth of the different groups in

5 This estimate assumes 7% growth rate. In assumption of 6% growth rate, the core Ultra-Orthodox population comprises 402,000 persons



**Figure 6:** Age pyramids in Ultra-Orthodox settlements as against Tel Aviv-Yafo and metropolitan Tel Aviv, 2008, Source: According to CBS data, Population census 2008, profiles

the population in Israel. Changes in the socio-demographic balance in Israel are reflected in rise or fall in labor force size, in revenues from taxation, in remittances to the needy population, in economic growth itself, in the living standard and quality of life of society as a whole in Israel.

The high growth rate of the Ultra-Orthodox population is of enormous consequence for Israeli society: a community that quickly outgrows its resources; a Ultra-Orthodox education system, which does not teach yeshiva graduates skills for the modern labor market; a low rate of participation in the labor force at working age and low current income for families, which intensify the dimensions of poverty that is high in any case (about 60% of the

Ultra-Orthodox in 2009 were poor according to the *Bank of Israel Report*, 2010) and bring the demographic disaster closer (Gurovich and Cohen-Kastro 2004). Because the Ultra-Orthodox sector grows at a faster rate than the rest of the Jews, and because a considerable part of the younger age groups is a dependent population and another part is employed on an extremely limited scale (Table 7), this population becomes a burden on the shoulders of the supporting population. Every year in the last decade some 8-10% of the national product was remitted directly to the needy households (Bank of Israel 2010). Every year the absolute sum of the remittances grew due to the increase in the national product (growth). To date the state has paid for this unique lifestyle of the Ultra-Orthodox population. However, Israel's ability to keep supporting populations of such enormous size is shrinking.

Unlike other Western states, Israel has a high rate of dependent population due to the high proportion of children and young people who have not reached working age, especially in the Ultra-Orthodox sector and the Arab sector, mainly the Muslim. The state supports the dependent population directly through social insurance and aid in the form of remittances to households through the National Insurance Institute, and through

**Table 7:** Rates of non-participation in the labor force by population group in 2008

Population group	Rate of non-participation in labor force among people aged 20 and above (percent)
Jews: secular, non-religious	29.5
Traditional	34.3
Religious	32.3
Ultra-Orthodox	52.0
Arabs	50.3
Hold academic degree	19.6
Average gross monthly income per person in household above NIS 4,000 per month	18.7
Five children or more in household	53.5

Source: CBS data, *Social Survey* 2008

investments in welfare: education, health, housing, community services, religious services, and more.

The employment rate in Israel is even now the lowest of the developed countries: 59.9% participated in the civilian labor force in 2008 (data of census 2008), as against an average for the OECD of 70.8% that year (OECD 2010). Tables 7-8 show the rates of differential participation among the various population groups in the civilian labor force in Israel. The unemployed population does not contribute to the product of the state or to economic growth. Indeed it is a financial burden on the wage-earning side, involving huge sums. As the Ultra-Orthodox group grows bigger, with its children not receiving suitable education and training for the challenges of the modern economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and as they are deprived of social mobility and opportunities to integrate in the quality labor market, so do the economic gaps widen between the Ultra-Orthodox population and the other Jews, and so are ever greater sums needed for remittances to narrow these gaps and to maintain a proper living standard (in education, health, security, and the like) for populations that do not pay their own way.

One does not yet witness the full power of Israel's Orthodox takeover phenomenon. The implications will be noticed when the younger generation enter military service and become the labor force. The answer to the question how it will affect rates of enlistment to the IDF, employment issues and tax revenues can be given in a decade or two. At present, Israel's transformation into a more religious state than in the past finds expression in its education systems (Blass 2009), in the labor market (Ben-David 2009b), in some geographical aspects, namely in the expansion of the existing ultra-Orthodox neighborhoods, in the establishment of new Ultra-Orthodox settlements (Cahaner 2009), and in the permanent presence of religious parties in the coalition.

The differential participation in the civilian labor force of the various groups in Israeli society creates not only a situation of absolute dependence of the poor populations on the wage-earners, but also a situation of grave



**Table 8:** Percentage employed in the civilian labor force in selected settlements, 2008

Locality	Type of locality by religion	Percentage of males aged 15 years and above in the annual civilian labor force	Percentage of women aged 15 years and above in the annual civilian labor force
Ariel	Jewish*	76.5	69.6
Modi'in-Maccabim-Reut	Jewish	76.4	74.3
Eilat	Jewish	76.3	75.5
Hod Hasharon	Jewish	75.4	69.5
Tel Aviv - Yafo	Jewish	74.5	65.3
Ramat Gan	Jewish	71.8	63.3
Petah Tikva	Jewish	71.1	65.1
Rishon Letzion	Jewish	70.9	65.1
Haifa	Jewish	65.0	56.2
Beersheba	Jewish	63.9	59.6
Nazareth	Muslim	62.6	26.7
Umm al-Fahm	Muslim	62.1	14.1
Ashkelon	Jewish	60.5	52.1
Shfaram	Muslim	58.9	24.0
Jerusalem	Jewish	58.6	42.6
Tiberias	Jewish	57.2	54.6
Taybeh	Muslim	54.2	18.3
Kafr Kana	Muslim	53.8	9.8
Ofakim	Jewish	50.9	50.5
Rahat	Muslim**	49.4	12.4
Tzfat	Jewish	44.7	44.7
Bnei Brak	Jewish***	40.5	52.5
Beitar Illit	Jewish***	39.7	52.1
Arara of the Negev	Muslim**	30.5	4.3
Hura	Muslim**	29.5	6.6

Source: according to CBS data, Census 2008

\* Judea and Samaria District

\*\* Bedouin locality

\*\*\* Ultra-Orthodox locality (Cahaner 2009)

socio-economic inequality which can only worsen. It creates dissatisfaction, disaffection, a feeling of constriction in the taxpayer. Furthermore, it provokes stereotyping of the dependent population. Difficult questions arise about social justice, and dilemmas appear related to the distribution of the budgetary pie – who deserves more, and for what purposes.

It is unnecessary to explain why cultural differences between population groups living in densely crowded conditions are liable to create a setting for

friction, even if the people in all these different groups define themselves as Jews. Just to demonstrate how much the outlook of secular people can differ from the religious worldview, still more the Ultra-Orthodox worldview, Table 9 sets out what people think are the main factors affecting a person's status in Israeli society. Public opinion is important here for perceiving the full depth of the gaps between the groups in considerations that determine the individual's agenda and decision making. For example, if criteria of excellence and progress do not hold for a large part of the Israeli public, and no agreement exists on the road to follow for attaining common purposes, then the discourse within the society will be replete with misunderstandings, to say the least. Without ideological agreement these gaps are unbridgeable. A situation may be anticipated in which power determines reality, not necessarily criteria of justice or tolerance for the other.

**Table 9:** Positions on the three main factors affecting a person's status in Israeli society (percentage)

Population group \ Main factor (%)	Economic situation	Education	Talent and ability	Divine providence	Personal connections	Nationality (Jewish/Arab)
Jews: secular, non-religious	17.5		22.0		17.8	
Traditional	14.7	15.2			15.2	
Religious	9.9		11.5	38.4		
Ultra-Orthodox	5.8			77.7	4.0	
Arabs	22.8			16.6		17.7
1990s immigrants	15.5	13.2			24.0	
Young people 20-24	15.8	15.4		15.2		
Hold academic degree	15.6		22.0		16.6	
Personal gross monthly income above NIS 7,501	15.7		23.3		16.6	

Source: calculated from CBS data, Social Survey 2008

Clearly, in a state with a proportional electoral system, and with a low electoral threshold, as is the case in Israel, numerical power is translated into political power. As the electoral strength of the religious and Ultra-Orthodox parties increases, so will their bargaining power. In every debate on the state budget the issue of welfare policy arises, and in most cases to

date the religious parties are in the coalition, and largely have succeeded in sustaining the custom of broad government support in child allowances, infrastructure for religious education, and financing the Ultra-Orthodox lifestyle. From now on, the chances of a government forming without the support of the Ultra-Orthodox parties in Israel are slight.

The decisions to be made concerning the public agenda, the public space, and the cultural and aesthetic landscape will be subject to the Ultra-Orthodox and religious outlook. And this is not just about licensing and prohibitions regarding keeping kosher, the Sabbath, personal matters of marriage and divorce, but about the entirety of public behavior in the state. Religious interests might also head the list on the national agenda. At issue are likely to be the domains of welfare, religious education, law in the spirit of the halakha (Jewish religious law), changes in the street landscape in dress and billboards; a contempt for academe and secular law; adulation of rabbis and their associates. The media is likely to undergo a veritable revolution. Many of the present radio, TV and other cultural and entertainment media programs might disappear. Society and economy will be affected by considerations that until now were the domain of the internal discourse of Ultra-Orthodox society alone.

The state political agenda is prone to change too. Israel's strategic interests might be subject to never-ending negotiations between the security and the religious considerations, and will await approval and support from the religious groups, who hold the power to veto geopolitical decisions as well. Thus, the question of settling in Judea and Samaria region becomes a major pitfall. Some Ultra-Orthodox and national-religious groups strongly object any withdrawal from those territories. In addition, over four decades migration flows to Judea and Samaria from other areas are a non-stop process for practical reasons of finding cheap housing. As these populations grow rapidly, they seek for accommodation solutions, which are frequently found outside the 1967 borders. Hence, their residence in Judea and Samaria adds to political frictions and poses a serious challenge in the future geopolitical situation.

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The discussion of demographic changes in Israel is incomplete without consideration of Israel's educational system. This is the only system that can provide an effective long-term solution to social problems in Israel, as it is a system that instills norms. But in the present decade the education system seems ill-equipped to meet the challenge: it is weak and has no clear policy on the subject. Instead of marching forward, the education system seems to be in retreat. Here is the statement of the educationalist Dr. Zvi Tsameret, as presented at the Herzliya Conference on December 18, 2001, and which is being realized in 2012:

Today nearly half of the first-grade children in Israel learn either in Jewish Ultra-Orthodox education or in Arab education. If the present demographic trends continue, in a fairly short time two thirds of the children in the state will be educated in non-Zionist institutions... A special problem prevails in the teachers' training colleges. The average level of the students in them, which will determine education and teaching in the next generation, is unsatisfactory... The following rifts harm our unity and are disintegrating education in Israel: rifts between rich and poor; between Jews and Arabs; between secular and religious and Ultra-Orthodox; between veterans and new immigrants; between center and periphery; between citizens of the state and foreign workers; and among the Jewish communities. All these rifts except the last have deepened very much in recent years. The policy of separation in the education system enfeebles social solidarity in Israel and threatens our "togetherness."

The Ministry of Education is unable to maintain and nurture a uniform education system on a suitable level, but upholds a system that repels children who have goals and means. But this is not the only problem. The Ministry of Education, due to pressures from various groups in society and the vapid functioning of the decision makers, is incapable of making it compulsory for all students in the state to study a core program that will teach them democratic and Western norms. This will have immense significance for the quality of Israel in the future in all areas and aspects: economic, social, cultural, national-political and geostrategic.

## **Immigration to Israel and emigration from Israel**

Population growth rate in a country is the average annual change in population size. That is natural increase plus the migration balance (number of entrants into the country minus number of leavers). Population growth rate determines the dimensions of demand by the population for infrastructures (schools, hospitals, highways, and sewage), resources (electricity, water, land) and jobs. In 2010 the population growth rate in Israel was about 1.9% (CBS 2011) mainly due to natural increase. Migration balance since 2002 has contributed relatively little (Table 10).

Estimates vary on the number of Israelis presently living outside Israel (hereinafter emigrants). Since the rise of the state, more than three million people have immigrated to it, and about one third of this number has left. In 2009 the emigrant population fluctuated between 542,000 and 572,000 people (CBS, press release, August 16, 2011). To this must be added children born to Israelis living abroad, and about 290,000 more Israelis who are defined as “non-resident.” Further, to this one must add those who are registered as residents, but reside abroad and come to visits in Israel, and therefore, do not enter the statistics of Israelis staying abroad continuously for more than a year. The size of the latter cannot be estimated here; however, some research point at non-negligible size of this group (Arian, Philippov and Knafelman 2009). Thus, the total number of Israelis abroad is above one million.

At face value, there is no cause for concern because no waves of mass emigration sweep out of Israel. But close perusal of the characteristics of the leavers in respect of age, education, country of origin, and seniority in the state does not present a rosy picture. The leavers include many young, educated people, and immigrants of the 1990s from the former Soviet Union. They go mostly because of the economic opportunities available to people abroad (Gould and Moav 2007) and the economic and security situation in Israel (Arian, Ben-Nun and Barnea 2004; Arian, Philippov and Knafelman, 2009).

**Table 10:** Immigration and emigration to and from Israel 1990-2011

Year	Immigrants to Israel *	Emigrants from Israel **
1990	199,516	14,200
1991	176,100	11,400
1992	77,057	12,600
1993	76,805	16,400
1994	79,844	10,100
1995	76,361	16,800
1996	70,919	12,600
1997	66,221	12,800
1998	56,730	13,200
1999	76,766	13,200
2000	60,192	12,800
2001	43,580	19,600
2002	33,567	19,300
2003	23,268	16,300
2004	20,898	14,200
2005	21,180	11,000
2006	19,264	12,800
2007	18,131	11,900
2008	13,699	8,500
2009	14,567	4,900
2010	16,633	-
2011	16,892	
Total	1,258,190	264,600

Source: Processing, data of *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, various years, Table 4.9; CBS press release 29.02.2012

\* Number of new immigrants in a given year. Table 4.2 in *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, various years.

\*\* Israelis who sojourn continuously abroad for a year or more. Figures for emigration from Israel are the balance of out-migration—number of Israelis leaving for abroad—minus number of Israelis returning from abroad in a given year.

The wish to continue living in Israel in distant future has also been probed in public opinion surveys since 2003 among the Jewish population in the country. The rate of those convinced they will do so among the veteran population aged 18-40 years fluctuates at around two thirds, and peaked at 81% in 2006 (Philippov and Bystrov 2011). However, among the FSU immigrants of the same age groups the trend fluctuates at around only half

of the figure for the veterans. In 2009 only 48% said that they were sure that they wished to live in Israel in the distant future, and when asked about their wish that their children or grandchildren will live in the country, only about a third of the immigrants aged 31-50 years were certain of it (Arian, Philippov and Knafelman 2009). Many immigrants do indeed realize their wish and leave the country: as of 2008 85,700 immigrants had gone (Table 11). In 2008-2009 about 31% of the Israelis who leave Israel for a period longer than a year were FSU immigrants of the 1990s (CBS 2010b, 2011).

**Table 11:** Number of 1990s FSU immigrants among emigrants from Israel

Year	1990s FSU immigrants who left Israel	1990s FSU immigrants who returned to Israel	1990s FSU immigrants who emigrated from Israel
1990	400	0	400
1991	3,100	0	3,100
1992	5,800	100	5,700
1993	5,300	300	5,000
1994	5,300	500	4,800
1995	6,300	600	5,700
1996	6,200	900	5,300
1997	6,000	1,300	4,700
1998	6,200	1,200	5,000
1999	5,600	1,500	4,100
2000	6,900	1,500	5,400
2001	8,000	1,200	6,800
2002	9,700	1,200	8,500
2003	9,400	1,500	7,900
2004	8,700	1,900	6,800
2005	7,500	2,100	5,400
2006	7,400	1,900	5,500
2007	6,700	2,000	4,700
2008	6,000	1,900	4,100
2009	4,600	2,100	2,500
Total	103,500	17,700	85,800

Source: CBS 2010b, 2011; press release 16.08.2010, 16.08.2011

This so-called “brain drain” has been recognized for decades: intellectual and skilled workers migrate to developed countries where the remuneration for a worker is higher than in the state that he or she has left. In other words,

migration is to countries where people are rewarded for their education and their work more than in the countries they have come from. As for the state of Israel, the brain drain is a strategic peril, because the country's human capital is its principal capital. For Israel, to continue to exist as a modern state and to flourish on the level of the developed states it has to be acknowledged that there is no alternative to the precious human capital that the country is losing so drastically. Ben-David in the title of his article "Soaring minds" on the flight of academic brains from Israel highlights that when a large part of the intellectual and creative elite takes flight it cannot be expected that this process will yield any positive outcomes for the state. The departing population is the wage-earner and taxpayer, and it is part of the economic future and national security of Israel (Ben-David 2009a).

To summarize the migration issue, Jewish immigration has always been the insurance policy of the Jewish people in Israel. The emigration figures are not encouraging; they imply that considerations of quality of life, environment, governability, law enforcement, and growth might be key elements in dealing with these distressing trends. As increasing crowding in the country, the unsustainable growth of the religious population, and the failure to govern continue to characterize the society, so will the leavers of Israel grow ever more numerous. Since the emigrants are a strong population, this becomes a national challenge of the first order.



## Chapter Six: The ingathering of the people of Israel to “Tel Aviv State”

If the chapter heading does represent geographic processes, there is a present risk of losing Jerusalem as the Jewish capital of Israel and forfeiting tracts of the country on the periphery, including Galilee and the northern Negev (Maoz 2009). In several territories, among them east Jerusalem, central Galilee, Wadi Ara, and the northern Negev, the Arabs of Israel are already today the decisive majority. In 2010, among the inhabitants of Central Galilee were 23% Jews and 73% non-Jews (CBS, *Israel Statistical Yearbook* 2010, Table 2.8). 95% of the residents of Wadi Ara are Arab Muslims. In the Bedouin region around Beersheba the entire population is Muslim. The Jews inhabit the margins: Beersheba, Arad, Dimona and Yeruham, and even in these places the pace of Bedouin penetration does not relent. If urgent action is not taken immediately we will get a pretty clear map of the division of the future country, a map that will greatly resemble the UN partition plan of November 29, 1947.

The history of various minorities in the world in the past (distant and recent) and in the present shows that a minority that constitutes a majority in its terrain, and that has national consciousness and a nationalist leadership, will do all it can in attempt to realize its nationalist yearning—through autonomy, irredentism (attachment to a state across the border), or destruction of the former state after becoming the majority in it.

In the first stage, which is now at its height, Jews are abandoning Jerusalem and gradually congregating in the Dan bloc (Tel Aviv Metropolitan Area). In the last decade and a half more than 220,000 Jews have gone from Jerusalem (as against only 100,000 who have moved into it). The leavers were the economic pillar of the city – mostly secular and national-religious. They left behind a poor, polluted city, with dismal services and a brooding sense of loss of control, while this situation is many times worse in the Palestinian-Arab sector.

The Palestinians are not only entering the city in alarming numbers, they are encircling it with uncontrolled construction from the Ramallah–al-Bireh area in the north, through Mikhmash, Anata, Arab-Sawachra, and scattered settlements of the Judean desert to Bayt- Suhur, Bethlehem, Bayt -Jalah, Battir and Husayn. Jewish ingathering into the Dan bloc is taking place from the far and nearer north (including Haifa), and from the settlements of the Jewish periphery in the south (Soffer and Bystrov 2006, 2008) (Tables 12-13, Figure 7).

**Table 12:** Population in “Tel Aviv State” and Israel, 2010 (thousands)

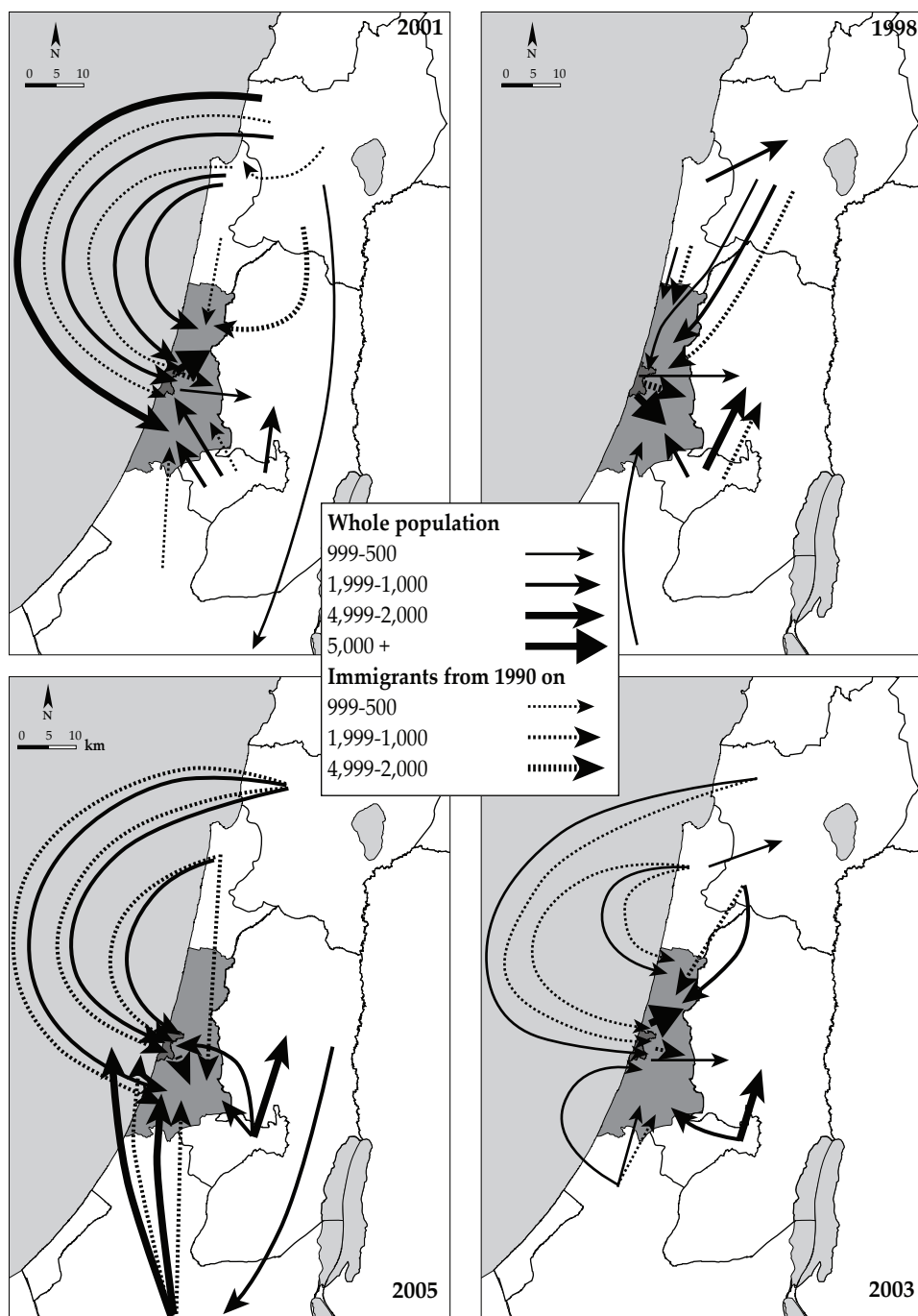
	Jews	Arabs	Total
Hadera Region	187.9	166.2	363.1
Central District	1,595.8	148.4	1,814.3
Tel Aviv District	1,195.9	17.1	1,275.0
Ashdod Region	188.1	0.2	206.4
Malachi Natural Region	52.5	0.2	51.4
West Samaria	100.0	–	100.0
Total Population in Tel Aviv State	3,319.1	332.1	3,813.4
Total population in Israel 2010	5,703.0	1,535.6	7,552.0
% of Tel Aviv population in Israel	58.2%	21.6%	50.3%

Source: according to CBS, *Israel Statistical Yearbook*, various years, authors’ calculations.

**Table 13:** Proportion of Jews in marginal districts vs. central and Tel Aviv regions

Year/Region	1990 (%)	1995 (%)	2000 (%)	2010 (%)
Safed sub-district	91.0	89.6	90.5	85.6
Kinneret sub-district	73.0	73.0	68.9	66.9
Nazareth Hills area	26.0	28.6	28.3	22.1
Haifa sub-district	90.1	88.9	90.7	81.8
Beersheba sub-district	78.0	76.0	76.7	63.0
Beersheba area	69.0	66.2	65.6	50.4
Jerusalem mountains	72.6	71.2	69.2	64.0
Central district				88.0
Tel Aviv district				93.6

Source: CBS, *Israel Statistical Yearbook*, various years. Data for 1990-2000 refer to Jews and others. Data for 2010 refer only to Jews.



**Figure 7:** Migration of Jews to the center of Israel, 1998–2005, Source: CBS data, *Israel Statistical Yearbook*, various years

In the second stage, Tel Aviv might become a city-state without a hinterland, harassed on all sides by infiltrations and terror attacks. Its days are likely to be numbered. Without a proper spatial solution there is no point in discussing a state that is Jewish, democratic, civil and egalitarian.

Agriculture, recreation services, traditional industry are left on the Israeli periphery; it is mostly populated by Bedouins, the Arabs of Jerusalem, the Ultra-Orthodox of Jerusalem, and the Arabs of the north. The center absorbs young Jewish population of the main working ages. The signs of social and economic inequality can be depicted from Tables 14-15.

To illustrate the scope of income inequality between cities in the center and in the periphery: monthly income from work in 2006 was in Rehovot NIS 14,262; Tel Aviv NIS 13,170; Beersheba NIS 10,249; Jerusalem NIS 9,801; Safed and the north NIS 8,521 (Kipnis 2009). These numbers point out at the severe situation on the national level, and the weaknesses of the capital city of Israel and of the periphery.

Tables 13–15 suggest the following: the Jewish periphery is migrating to “Tel Aviv State,” leaving behind Arab growing population. Historical experience on this subject does not bode well: all economic, social, cultural, media, educational, and military strength is located in “Tel Aviv State”, leaving the periphery a wasteland. The life in the Tel Aviv area creates the illusion of “Everything’s okay”, “We never had it so good”. From here it is just a short step to general revelry, hedonism, egoism, evading military service, imperviousness to the other and especially to the periphery, and also to the Jewish state.

Tel Aviv State itself is rapidly turning into a strategic issue. The consequences of this process jeopardize the existence of the Jewish entity in the Middle East. The entirety of the data suggests what the leaders and citizens of Tel Aviv refuse to internalize: Israel is steadily being destroyed as a Jewish and democratic state. Within a short period only Tel Aviv and its satellites will function as a Jewish democratic entity; but only briefly, because without a hinterland it will turn into Masada. If there is no reversal, no pretext,

**Table 14:** Tel Aviv vs. other cities: Education, income and use of durable goods

City \ Criteria	2+ cars in household	Percentage of Internet subscription in household	Average gross monthly income per employee (NIS)	Percentage in annual civilian labor force	Personal computer in household	Holders of academic degree
Tel Aviv-Yafo	16.9	95.1	9,772	69.7	78.6	36.9
Jerusalem	11.7	78.9	7,180	50.2	62.3	21.8
Haifa	16.7	94.5	8,200	60.3	72.9	32.3
Ashdod	12.1	91.1	6,872	58.9	68.4	19.8

Source: CBS data, census 2008, Profiles; Incomes survey 2008, Table 24

**Table 15:** Control by greater Tel Aviv of the Israeli economy and society

Area \ Criteria	Percentage in Greater TA	Percentage in the Rest of Israel
Parent offices of financial institutions	84	16
Lawyers	70	30
Accountants	73	27
High-tech concerns	70	30
Workplace of consultant physicians	8	20
Workplace of influential people	86	14
Influential women (place of business)	86	14
Israel's wealthiest people (above \$100 m), place of business	88	4 (8% live and work abroad)
Stage performers	89	11
Advertisers	77	23
Architects	74	26

Source: Kipnis, 2009: 250

sneaking out, casting blame elsewhere will help to prevent this process—first of all conscientiously, and then practically.

Concluding remark: for years, political leaders, people of academe and journalists have presented chilling situation reports and forecasts, always concluding with statements such as “If we do such-and such, we will

solve the problems, wholly or in part". Nevertheless, in Israel, regarding demographic issues, nothing is usually planned and implemented considering the long-term effects.

Those who lead and direct the state are the elites, who greatly influence the political leadership and are interested in a neo-liberal policy, including, among other things, privatization, low taxation, and low income levels (except for their own) (Shefer 2007). The all-Israel public interest is far from their consideration – the Arab sector and what is happening there, farther still. They ignore the geo-demographic processes in the periphery, assisted by the top bureaucracy, who apart from economic efficacy and narrow interests. By bouncing these subjects they are bringing destruction on Israel. An extra passport, and swift fortune transfer to Switzerland, Romania, Poland, or the United States, allows dismissing any national consideration. With the passing years, the Israeli political regime has obtained some features of an oligarchy in which ties of wealth and power are the accepted basis.

The last chapter presents two alternative scenarios for Israel 2030: first alternative depicts the strangulating noose that tightens around Tel Aviv State until its collapse. The Arabs of Israel might take part in the general Arab struggle against Israel. The air force with its immense power and the other units of the IDF will be irrelevant.

The other alternative is that after many territorial and demographic retreats in the Negev, Galilee, Jerusalem and the Triangle the Jewish drive for life will awaken and will lead to responses. The mighty and positive forces in the Jewish people will rise up; and what should have been done years before in an organized manner will be done then: dispersal of population and directing all the national resources to the areas of distress on the periphery. As this might be accomplished too late, it will probably be carried out hastily, replete with mistakes, and will not contribute to the already fragile co-existence.

## Summary and conclusions

In this document a long list of hazards of various timing has been drawn up. All call for responses, but some demand an immediate solution. Most of them stem from Israel's geographic location in the extremist Middle East. All have a demographic tie, that is, high natural increase of the different populations. They are growing more impoverished, and hence, more violent.

Among other things it was indicated that Jewish religious population in Israel is tremendously growing; the periphery, including Jerusalem, is being abandoned by Jews and, despite the positive migration balance, there is a noticeable Jewish out-migration and brain-drain. Both Arab and Ultra-Orthodox groups rely heavily of the steadily declining middle class; and the infrastructures that support these populations crumble.

Attention was drawn to several signs of the Third World that emerge in Israel in every aspect of social, economic and political life. These signs are diminishing immigration; the brain drain; the erosion of national resilience; the deterioration in the relations of Jews and Arabs within Israel; the shocking social and cultural gaps; the intolerable chasm between rich and poor; and the low level of education.

The slow yet disturbing process of Israel actually turning into a loose federation of several different region-states, suspicious, intolerant and alien to each other was pointed out (Map 11). In the center of the country "Tel Aviv State" is developing. This is the most dangerous tendency of all because its people are not interested in what is taking place outside its boundaries. It attracts all the human capital from the other parts of the country, leaving them impoverished.

East of Tel Aviv State the "State of Judea" is rising, consisting of 2.5 million Arabs and of about 300,000 Jewish settlers. A small fraction of them are lawbreakers. Among them an alternative leadership is arising, characterized by extremism. Some of these leaders and their adherents do not recognize the Israeli courts or Israeli sovereignty: Israel's flag, army, and laws. The

“hilltop youth,” the rabbis of Yitzhar, and many young people within the Green Line are the vanguard in the process of the creation of this state.

South of Tel Aviv State a “Bedouin state” is coming into being, stretching over a vast area. Its pioneers inhabit the approaches to Rishon Letzion, and the furthestmost of its settlers in the south already penetrate Mitzpe Ramon. To the east they are spreading over into the Judean desert and to the west they touch on the Gaza Strip. They number some 200,000 people, but they have their own laws, courts, and bailiffs, their own culture and their own special sources of income, at times illegal. The sole link to the state of Israel is effective when they receive their child allowances and other benefits. From an annoyance for the government in the 1950s in the far south this region has become imminent, and not only by its own fault.

In the north, in central Galilee, slowly and tranquilly, a Palestinian state of 750,000 Arab (Palestinian) people is arising. This population stresses its separateness from the state of Israel. Their leaders and the extremists among them have a vision of their own. The present-day symbols of Israel are definitely not their heritage.

This federation, known as the state of Israel, is complemented by the poor and enfeebled Jewish periphery in the south and north and by Jerusalem the capital city.

This demographic and spatial analysis of Israeli society’s present and envisaged trends can be augmented by the social gaps between different ethnic groups, among them veteran Jewish Israelis vs. immigrants, some of them not yet integrated, the population of foreign workers, the population of Arab citizens of Israel, Arab residents, illegally residing Arabs, and many more. This is not the final heterogeneous list, because neglect of the north also harms the Druze, who are steadily becoming distanced from the core, the Christians, who have had enough of the Middle East and Israel generally, and the Ultra-Orthodox in their various groupings, which clash among themselves and with everyone else outside their closed society. Nor may one forget the gaps between right and left, who are mutually inimical,



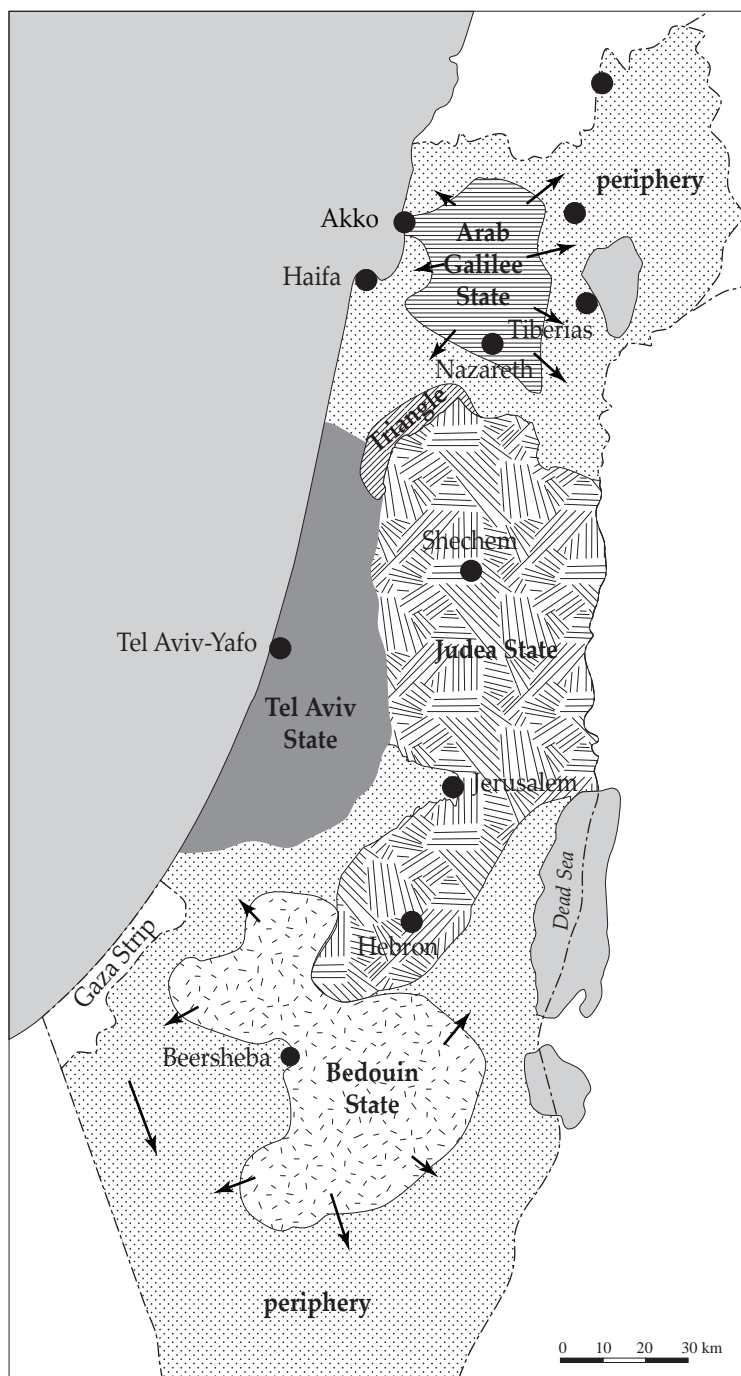
or the gap between the very rich and the very poor. These social chasms are especially serious when there is no normative governance in the extremely difficult Middle Eastern political and geopolitical reality. There is an overlap between the map of the federation and the map of the various chasms: wealthy in the center, poor mainly in the margins, with Arabs in the Jewish margins (Map 12).

Among the many problems that beset Israel, in this document the emphasis has been placed only on the following demographic processes:

- Pressure applied on Israel by near and far neighbors
- Tense relations between Jews and the Palestinian people throughout Palestine
- Population density, which makes Israel the most crowded country in the Western world
- Israel becoming increasingly religious
- Israel concentrating within Tel Aviv

These subjects have been discussed before (Soffer 2001; Soffer and Bystrov 2004; Soffer and Canaan 2004; Soffer and Shalev 2004; Bystrov and Soffer 2008), and solutions have been suggested. Thus, the issue of the Arab-African-Asian invasion of Israel was presented, and the erection of an actual fence along the Israel–Egypt border to repel the waves of incomers from Africa was proposed (Soffer 2009). On July 18, 2010 at a hearing before the government of Israel, data and forecasts were presented on the dimensions of the invasion that could be expected in the future. And indeed, a decision was taken by the government to speed up the erection of a fence along the Egyptian border. This fence, being completed in 2012 is expected to limit, among other things, the criminal ties between the inhabitants of the south and the inhabitants of Sinai and Jordan. If this is done, the Negev may gradually be restored.

Previously published documents note the high density that threatens Israel with economic, social and political decline to the level of the Third World state (Bystrov 2007); the need urgently to stop the concentration into Tel



Map 12: The "Israeli Federation," 2011

Aviv State and the concomitant desertion of the periphery (Soffer and Bystrov 2006, 2008). Hereby the essentials of solutions and their order of preference are revisited:

First and foremost Jerusalem, as a Jewish city and the capital of Israel, must be taken care of. This requires the immediate transfer of all government ministries to the capital. Ministries that still are in Tel Aviv, including the Ministry of Defense with the IDF general headquarters and the other military branches (IDF College Campus, Army Radio, IDF Spokesperson) – all these must be moved at once out of “Tel Aviv State”. With this short list alone, several thousand employees have been returned to Jerusalem. Some of them might move there to live, and some might prefer to pay the price of disagreeable commuting on Israel’s roads. After them, the Tel Aviv media too will be obliged to take a daily trip to the official capital of Israel.

A wedge of Jewish settlements separating the Gaza Strip from the Bedouins living in the south is absolutely vital. The continuum of Ashkelon–Sderot–Ofakim–Beersheba should be seen as a strategic axis to be developed. If Beersheba reaches half a million residents, the problem of the Bedouin in the northern Negev will be solved in any case by their merger into Israeli society. How are half a million Jews to be brought to Beersheba? The fastest express trains on the Beersheba–Kiryat Gat–Tel Aviv line, or via Ashkelon to Tel Aviv, will bring the capital of the Negev closer to the heartland. Japan and France have done it, and hence, these solutions can be implemented in Israel as well. All on condition that decent housing will be obtainable in the south.

Population dispersal must also go north, for the benefit of Jews and Arabs alike. Among other things it can be done by developing the regions around Jenin, Wadi Ara, and the “Kokhavim” settlements on the northern and southern coastal plain. Fast trains, more investment in institutions of higher education, first-class hospitals, creation of infrastructure, and building private enterprises on the periphery are the keys for solution.

The government of Israel has to implement projects that have already been spoken about: a town of military training bases has been on the national agenda since 1957. The shift of the IDF southward and northward has to continue. However, the area freed up in the center has to be earmarked for parks and not for huge residential precincts. Halting the wild real estate party will serve for the good of the small citizen who actually bears the burden of keeping the state aloft. Safeguarding Israel as a first-world state is possible through high-rise and high quality construction, through enforcing the law in all its might in all domains, through infrastructure enterprises on a scale unknown to us before, and through placing education high on the agenda.

The wage standard must be weighted to include the person's contribution to society, the state and its future. The teacher clearly stands above every other professional and must be rewarded accordingly. A society that pays a teacher as much as a waiter (without a tip) may not be considered a proper state, or a state of the First World. Whoever has permitted this harsh reality in the field of education, and maintains this situation today, can be considered a criminal.

In considering all these factors one should remember that the area of Israel is smaller than that of countries with population of similar size. About 60% of its area is desert or semi-arid, where it is hard to maintain settlements. Some 42% of the terrain is military and security areas, most of them in the desert region, but also on the Golan Heights, along the country's coasts, in areas controlling mountain summits and on the plains (where airports and large military bases are located). The result is that the land north of Beersheba is one of the most densely populated areas in the Western world. Such a country will face difficulties to absorb hundreds and thousands of migrants without its quality of life being harmed. The little free space has to be reserved for immigrants who are willing to come to live in Israel.

Many planners equate Israel to the Netherlands, saying that "the demon is not so terrible". Although the Netherlands is as crowded as Israel (in 2012),

its natural increase is close to zero. It is not a desert or half-desert country, and its neighbors—Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg—are similar to it in their Western orientation, Christian religion and in per capita income. All are clustered together within a common economic union. Since World War II the Netherlands has had no reason to fear territorial ambitions of its neighbors, so it does not need to provide infrastructure for an army of the scope of the IDF.

Singapore, the Netherlands and New York are examples of densely populated places wherein life can be reasonable, cultivated and not only possible, but comfortable. This comes about only when the law and the preferences are clear and transparent to everyone in the state, and when there is no anarchy. There is no way to preserve an efficient democratic regime without enforcement of the law and protection of public order. Without these components Israeli democracy will continue to weaken and lose the public trust *en route* to its absolute suppression.

Already now the power of the police has to be tripled. There is enough labor force in the Arab and Ultra-Orthodox sectors. They can serve in the police in large numbers as part of national service for the benefit of the public as a whole. In any event, law enforcement will ease some of the tensions between Jews and Arabs and will improve enormously the municipal system in the Arab sector. Making this statement signifies that a large part of the government's failures are linked to failures of law and law enforcement in Israel.

If Israel becomes a safe and prosperous land, Jews might come there despite the heavy crowding, and the strongest population might wish to stay. This matter calls for infrastructure solutions and long-term national planning. At present the Jews of France prefer Montreal; the Jews of South Africa go to Australia; millions of Jews from Russia and elsewhere favor New York and Toronto, to say nothing of the Israelis themselves who emigrate to all these places.

Two subjects that have been set forth still require attention: these are the tense relations between Jews and the Palestinian people, and religiosity in light of the impressive enlargement of the Ultra-Orthodox and national religious population.

## **Relations of the Jewish people and the Palestinian people**

The numbers of the Palestinian people have to be broken down as follows: separation from the Gaza Strip and from most areas of Judea and Samaria frees Israel from being responsible for 2.5 million Palestinians in Judea and Samaria and 1.5 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip (as of 2012). Total departure from these areas creates an array of security challenges, and also confrontations with the Jewish inhabitants of these expanses, but the existence of Israel as a Jewish state is more important now than these and other fears.

The question of the relation of Israel to its neighbors, especially the Palestinian people, does not depend only on Israel. Israel has to define its permanent borders unilaterally out of concern for its future as a Jewish state in defensible borders. The separation fences in Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip have proven their effectiveness against the infiltration of suicide bombers and the influx of Palestinians into Israel, and have reduced some of the crime. Seeking solutions for other challenges, including curved trajectory missile firing and tunneling, has to be continued.

Within Israel dwell about 1.5 million Palestinians, divided into diverse religious and ethnic groups (Christians, Bedouins in the south, Bedouins in the north, Arabs of the Triangle, Arabs of the north, and Arabs of the mixed towns). Israel has it in its power to advance these populations, and at least to integrate them economically to the satisfaction of all. Their absorption into Israel's economy is vital for lessening the despair and fear among them. At the same time, strengthening the law against lawbreakers and inciters is needed.

Back Jewish migration to Galilee and the Negev might contribute to greater integration of the Arabs of the periphery with the Jews. Back Jewish migration to the periphery is likely to foster economic prosperity, provide employment and higher quality of life, and as in the past so in the future the Arabs of the periphery will be the first to enjoy this. A satisfied person is not hasty to rebel, to separate, or to cause trouble. The extreme Muslim fringe has to be seen as the major challenge. Here the development and law enforcement is needed to prevent this fringe from growing and becoming a threat. It is still not too late to correct all the mistakes and their consequences that Israel has made among the Bedouins of the south, including the seepage of Islam into a population that was never fanatically religious.

## **Israel in the age of a religious majority**

Israel is striding towards becoming a religious state, as the figures show. The meaning of this process can be twofold: further neglect is connected with disaster, but creating solutions to a series of challenges standing at the gate might lead to a certain breakthrough. These two scenarios can be described as follows:

### **First alternative: Israel a religious state in 2030**

If what has been is what will be on the Israeli political front, some of the problems depicted in Figure 2 will continue and will intensify. In the future the weakening of democracy will continue in the face of growth of anti-democratic religious forces. The Knesset that does not function, and in the domain of quality of life the landslide, that has already begun, will continue and worsen as Israel becomes overloaded with relatively poor Ultra-Orthodox and Bedouin children – all these will drag Israel down deep into the Third World.

Pro-Ultra-Orthodox legislation in the Knesset is likely to hasten the departure of secular people from Israel. Those who stay will be weaker and unable to safeguard the needs of a modern Western society. The consequences are clear – quality of life will plummet.

Since there will be a religious majority in Israel, with right to extreme right leanings, the creeping annexation of territories of Judea and Samaria will presumably continue. Since the “anarchic” democracy characteristic of Israel in recent decades is approaching its end, and since the rabbis will control the country, elections will not be relevant. The Palestinian voice will not be expressed. All these will bring about the end of Israel’s democracy. The entire region will seethe.

On the face of it, the sketched process seems terminal. This grim scenario is, indeed, envisaged by many in Israel of 2009-2012; it is enough to present a few headlines in the daily Israeli press to illustrate this:

- Omer Moav, “The Ultra-Orthodox will bring annihilation down on themselves – and perhaps kill us on the way”, *Kalkalist*, 26 July 2009.
- Ben Dror-Yemini, “The countdown has started, look at the schools”, *Maariv*, 5 September 2009.
- Nehemia Strassler, “The End of the Third Temple”, *Haaretz*, 29 September 2009.
- Richard Laub and Olivier Boruchowitch, *Israel, Un Avenir Compromise*, a new book, 2012.

But the religious reality can develop conversely. The religious population (Ultra-Orthodox and national-religious) is attentive to its leaders’ demands. It might handle national projects that secular society in recent decades has long forgotten how to shoulder. No doubt, there will be massive overcrowding in the country far beyond its carrying capacity. The shtetl culture typifies the Ultra-Orthodox, while issues of quality of life and environmental care do not top the priorities.

Jerusalem might once again become the *de facto* capital city of Israel, at the expense of Tel Aviv. All the national institutions that still reside in Tel Aviv will move to Jerusalem. There will be no alternative but to legislate against the continued building in Tel Aviv State. This will be less a liberal-democratic and more an authoritarian type of state. The number of IDF evaders in Tel Aviv will fall amazingly. There might be Ultra-Orthodox



pilots alongside religious and secular flyers. The second alternative, along these lines, is as follows:

### **Second alternative: Israel's contemporary non-religious majority alters the course**

There is no doubt that until 2030 the secular population will still be present in Israel. It will not come to terms with a situation of radical religious life. It will continue to struggle against religious radicalism in attempt to change the situation. In light of the demographic trends, its task will not be simple. One of the ways may be a change in the electoral system, and raising the threshold in the Knesset elections. This step under certain conditions could increase the power of the big parties, create more stable coalitions, and improve the government's ability to rule.

Presumably, the formation of coalitions without religious forces will allow the government of Israel to change the status quo and conduct a "secular revolution" in education, labor force, military service and the transportation system. Still, recall that the democratic regime in Israel recognizes Israeli society as greatly fragmented, so frequently the opinion of the majority is deliberately not imposed on the minority.

However, such extreme measures as a dramatic strengthening of the prime minister, or changing to a presidential regime, can hardly be expected to solve the problems of society without deepening the rifts and without driving radical forces to even more extremist actions. In any event, only a secular coalition of all the secular and national-religious parties will facilitate in practice the formation of a majority, able to make decisions along the indicated lines. Such a coalition can only be formed when the social issues precede security issues.

It seems that Israeli democracy in its present form cannot give answers to the many challenges that have been indicated. Nevertheless, a way has to be sought for action—while democracy principles are upheld and the barriers of bureaucratic and legal foot-dragging are torn down.

Israel is the most crowded state in the Western world, and it is becoming ever more crowded. Such a state cannot tolerate a situation where paving every kilometer of highway, laying every stretch of new railroad track or water pipeline, building every desalination plant, erecting every segment of a separation fence (the fence of life of Israel), will grind to a halt because of a mass of Supreme Court injunctions or through succumbing to pressures of interest groups that wreck every positive and necessary move. It cannot tolerate constantly mounting interference by the legal system in the political system, setting the conduct in matters of security, the economy, education and settlement.

Some of the injunctions and the accompanying foot-dragging arise from inefficiency in the public sector. It cannot be that a clutch of people will determine the order of priorities in the state. They must not be given the right of veto on decisions of overarching national importance. It is necessary to restore to the dictionary of Israeli politics such expressions as “national interest” and “national priority”. If this is done there will be hope for the Jewish state, albeit with many religious people, to be also modern.

The budgets for culture, education and health must reach the periphery. To contend with the expected increase of Ultra-Orthodox and Bedouin children at elementary schools, core studies including math, English and democracy have to be an inseparable part of all curricula in Israel for both genders. Considering the demographic processes described in this book, environmental studies, as well as education to tolerance and acceptance of the other, must be compulsory from kindergarten to high school. This will provide every citizen in the state with the basic tools to meet the challenges of the future labor market in an open and competitive world. It will also provide with tools for creating a tolerable co-existence among all the Israeli social, ethnic, national and religious groups.

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