Auditing Israeli Democracy – 2005
A Decade after the Assassination of
Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin

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Preface

Prof. Arye Carmon*

A decade has gone by, and Israeli democracy is still bleeding. On November 4, 1995, it was shot in the back three times. A violent hand was raised against the soul of democracy in an evil mission of violence that refused to accept the authority of the elected government and negated the sovereign source of authority – the people. A violent hand, in a mission from the perpetrators of delegitimization, pierced the tenuous network protecting the collective and physically harmed the foundations of our democracy. Ten years later, our democracy is still bleeding and violence still serves those who do not accept the decisions of the majority and seek to thwart the resolutions of the three branches of government.

Yitzhak Rabin, Prime Minister of Israel, was not murdered by a "rotten apple" from the margins of society: a political assassination is never the act of an individual. Yitzhak Rabin was not murdered because of a personal conflict, but to prevent him from implementing his policies and to divert the historical course of the country.

A political assassination in general, defy clear definition and quantitative analysis, and should not be seen as detached from the events that preceded and followed it. This all the more applies to a political assassination in a fragile democracy trying to strengthen its foundations while facing an almost impossible agenda.

The tenth anniversary of the assassination, as well as the current attempt to clarify the murder's meaning and its implications, occur in a context. This is being written only a few weeks after the end of the disengagement. The resonance of this move is still hard to measure, but the actions of its opponents bear the definite marks of political violence. The publication of this Democracy Index ten years after Yitzhak Rabin's assassination, therefore, is not merely one more event in a series, another occasion at which we present the Index at the President's House as we do every year. The tenth anniversary of Prime Minister Rabin's assassination in 2005 is linked to the trauma of the disengagement. To the wound in the body of democracy opened up by an outlaw's gun, the scars left by the uprooting of Jewish settlements are now added, as well as the scars left by the bitter struggle of those who opposed this move. These are indeed special times, calling for serious and profound research into political violence and its climax – political assassination.

With President Moshe Katsav's consent, we devoted this years's President's Confe-rence to analyzing the situation of democracy and to inquiring into the place of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination in the Israel's collective consciousness, while focusing on a cluster of complex issues:

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- Values and tolerance in an era of political tension.
- The rule of law in Israel – its legitimacy, the prevalent atmosphere of illegalism and the limits of protest.
- Striving for peace and extremism – the disengagement and political violence.

- The lessons that are to be drawn from Rabin's assassination.
- Rabin as a leader.

This work is meant as a platform for the clarification of these issues, and we hope that the information and the analysis it offers will be a basis for genuine soul searching in public discourse.

Summary of the Israeli Democracy Index, 2005

In 2005, ten years after the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, with the struggle over the Gaza disengagement in the background, Israelis strongly fear another political assassination and do not trust that the lessons from the November 1995 assassination have been duly learned. 84% of the respondents believe that a political assassination could happen again (34% of them are fairly sure that such an assassination will happen again). 35% of the respondents mention Rabin's assassination as the most significant event in the history of Israel since its creation, while 42% contend that it was very important, but not the most important of all. 59% hold that the police have learned the lessons concerning incitement to political violence, and slightly more than half (55%) think that the lessons concerning the relationships between the right and left of the political spectrum have not been learned. 13% think that the likelihood of a civil war as a result of attempts to reach agreements on the future of the occupied territories is very high, while a further 30% assign this a low probability. Only 28% hold that a civil war is unlikely.

Nearly three quarters (74%) believe there is no justification for rabbis ruling on controversial political issues. As to whether state agencies are currently dealing correctly with individuals and groups calling for political violence in response to the disengagement plan, respondents divided up into three more or less equal groups: 36% hold that the authorities are too lenient with inciters to political violence, 33% hold they are acting correctly, and 31% say they are too harsh.

In the survey, conducted on the tenth anniversary of Yitzhak Rabin's assassination, respondents were asked for their views concerning his personality. The responses seem to indicate that he has been enshrined in the collective memory as a positive figure who placed the good of the country above the good of the party (79%), as a leader capable of bringing peace (73%), and as a trustworthy (79%) and strong (83%) person. Heading the list of attributes ascribed to Rabin in the collective memory is his leadership ability (84% of the respondents credited him with this quality).

When asked who was the most successful of Israeli prime ministers, Yitzhak Rabin ranked first (30%); after him came Menachem Begin (22%), and in third place, David Ben-Gurion (18%). They were also asked to react to several statements attributed to Rabin. Thus, for instance, about three quarters (76%) of the respondents expressed support for a sentence attributed to Rabin – "Only a strong army can bring peace." When the same statement was presented to the respondents without mentioning who said it, 70% expressed agreement. As for the statement "We must opt for peace only if security is assured" – 86% agreed with it when it was attributed to Rabin, as opposed to 80% who agreed with it when they did not know who had said it. Another interesting finding is the reaction to the statement "the road to peace goes through the terrorist organizations as well" – 59% supported it when it was attributed to Rabin as opposed to 49% who supported it when it was not attributed to him.

The Democracy Index for 2005 shows

a rise in the assessment of Israel's position in general: 35% of the respondents hold that Israel's general position is not good, as opposed to 54% who had thought so last year. A drop of 11% was also recorded in the number of people who think that the government is not dealing adequately with the problems facing the country – 67% in 2005 as opposed to 78% in 2004.

As we do every year, we asked participants for their opinions concerning various institutions. The most striking finding was a 9% drop in the degree of public trust in the police, an 8% drop in the degree of trust in the IDF, a 7% drop in the degree of trust in the Supreme Court and the Chief Rabbinate, and a 6% drop in the degree of trust in the State Attorney's office. Nevertheless, the IDF continues to be the institution enjoying the highest level of public trust (78%), followed by the Supreme Court (70%). It seems plausible to construe the findings concerning the IDF and the police within the context of the disengagement plan, which placed these two institutions in the eye of the storm.

Contrary to lower levels of trust in the state institutions, a rise was recorded in the level of trust in the prime minister: 48% of the respondents have trust in him, and 15% said that he represents the institution that best protects Israeli democracy – more than the Supreme Court, the Knesset or the media. This is an increase of 6% compared to last year.

Still in the context of the disengagement, 82% of the respondents hold that the use of violence in pursuit of political goals is unjustified in all circumstances; a rise of 4% compared to 2004. By contrast, a drop was recorded in the unwavering opposition to the refusal to comply with military orders

on moral or ideological grounds and, more specifically – the refusal to obey orders to dismantle settlements. 70% are opposed to such refusals, as compared to 75% a year ago. More than half (53%) oppose forbidding a speaker to express sharp criticism against the state in public (a rise of 4% compared to the previous year).

As in previous surveys, the Democracy Index tests the strength of democracy in Israel and the level of support for it. This year, a drop of 5% was recorded in the number of those holding that democracy is the desirable regime for Israel, although their number is still large – 80% in 2005 compared to 85% in 2004. A similar drop was recorded in the number of those who declared democracy the best form of government – 74%, compared to 80% in 2004.

45% hold that when a contradiction arises between democracy and Halakhah (Jewish law), democratic principles are to be preferred. When a contradiction arises between adhering to the rule of law and the need to protect strategic interests – 25% support preference for the rule of law, a rise of 6% compared to 2004.

Deep social and ideological rifts are a well-known characteristic of Israeli society, and participants in the survey were asked for their views concerning the relationships between different groups in the population. 31% point to good relationships between religious and secular Jews, a rise of 3% compared to last year, and only 11% hold that relations between Jews and Arabs are good, a drop of 5% compared to 2004. Furthermore, a significant rise was recorded in the number of those opposed to the claim that a Jewish majority is required on decisions fateful to the country, such as returning territories – 34% in

2005 compared to 23% in 2004. A rise of 9% was recorded in the number of respondents opposed to the demand that the government encourage Arab emigration from the country – 50% oppose such encouragement in 2005, compared to 41% in the previous year.

In the social-economic realm, only 19% hold that the relationship between rich and poor is good, as compared to 24% who had held this view in 2004. A drop of 8%, however, was recorded in the number claiming that social-economic equality in the country is inadequate (80% in 2005, compared to 88% a year ago). And one more finding: 63% of the respondents hold that men are not necessarily more successful political leaders than women, compared to 70% in the previous year.

Israel is a country that creates and consumes news. 71% of the respondents reported an interest in politics (a rise of 4% compared to 2004), 81% reported that they stay informed about politics daily or several times a week. About two thirds discuss political issues with their friends and their families, but only 5% are active in or favor a specific political party (a drop of 2% compared to 2004) – notwithstanding a rise of 13% in the number of those who feel they can influence government policy (31% in 2005, compared to 18% in 2004).

Finally, on an optimistic note – 83% of the participants in the Democracy Index 2005 are proud to be Israeli – a rise of 4% compared to 2004; 89% wish to remain in Israel in the long term – a rise of 2% compared to the previous year; 88% are certain that they will remain in the country, and 77% feel themselves part of the State of Israel and its problems – a rise of 4% compared to the 2004 survey.

Part One

Updating the Democracy Index, 2005

A. Description of the Research and its Goals

This is the third year that Israeli democracy, in its various facets, has come under periodic scrutiny and evaluation as part of the Democracy Index project. The aim of the project is to propose a broad and comprehensive evaluation of Israeli democracy, which will help us identify issues in need of improvement and encouragement, and create a database that will raise awareness of and promote discourse on the subject.

Democracy is a complex and multifaceted concept. Its boundaries are in dispute. Because of this complexity, we have chosen to focus on an examination of democracy's significant and distinctive features, aware of the theoretical and practical limitations involved in the attempt to measure it. Wishing to offer a broad representation of the phenomenon and taking into account research constraints, the index focuses on three central dimensions: the institutional aspect, the rights aspect, and the stability aspect. Each of these three aspects was broken down into clusters of characteristics that constitute the cornerstones of the democratic building (see Figure 1).

The institutional aspect relates to the system of formal institutions at the foundation of the democratic regime, to the division of powers between them, and to the patterns of behavior endorsed by the elements active within each one (such as elected officials and those holding public positions). In this aspect we have included five characteristics: accountability, representativeness, participation, checks and balances, and the integrity of the government (as opposed to political corruption).

The rights aspect relates to the essential meaning of democracy and examines the level of respect for and protection of various basic rights according to six characteristics: civil rights, political rights, social rights, economic rights (freedom of property), gender equality, and equality for minorities.

The stability aspect examines the degree of stability in the government and in society including all its rifts and strata, as well as the tensions resulting from the rifts. The stability aspect, although not necessarily a characteristic of democratic regimes and societies, was included in the Index because of the perception that a certain measure of stability is imperative for the functioning of a democracy and for its effective survival over time. This aspect includes three characteristics: stability of government, political conflict, and social rifts.

The structure of the index, including all its components, is dictated by an attempt to outline a broad but well-based, reliable reflection of the phenomenon of democracy according to a series of criteria: the validity, reliability, variance, transparency, clarity, detail, and availability of updated information.

The evaluation presented here relates to three complementary levels: first, the existence and proper functioning of the formal framework at the institutional level; second, the public's perception of the quality of the democratic regime's actual functioning; and third, the extent to which perceptions, values, and democratic culture are entrenched in the public's conscience. Each of these three levels is assessed by means of a different scientific tool. The

actual functioning of the democratic regime is evaluated by means of "objective," quantitative indicators, known and accepted in the world's research community. A public opinion survey measured how the public evaluates the functioning of democracy and the extent to which democratic culture is deep-rooted in Israeli society.

All three levels were analyzed from a twofold comparative perspective: international (the position of Israel vis-à-vis 35 other democracies) and historical (the situation in Israel over time). All the characteristics included in the index were assessed through 31 international quantitative measures and through a public opinion survey that examined the extent to which they prevail in Israel in 2005, according to public perception. The survey also evaluated public support for democratic values or the level of agreement with them, in an attempt to estimate the extent to which democratic culture can be said to be deeply rooted in contemporary Israeli society.

This report has two main parts. The first is an update of the **Democracy Index 2005**. This section contains the latest data concerning the quantitative measures (the democracy ratings) and the public opinion survey (the democracy survey), comparing them to the 2003 and 2004 indices (the complete data for the Democracy Index

Figure 1

The Structure of the Index
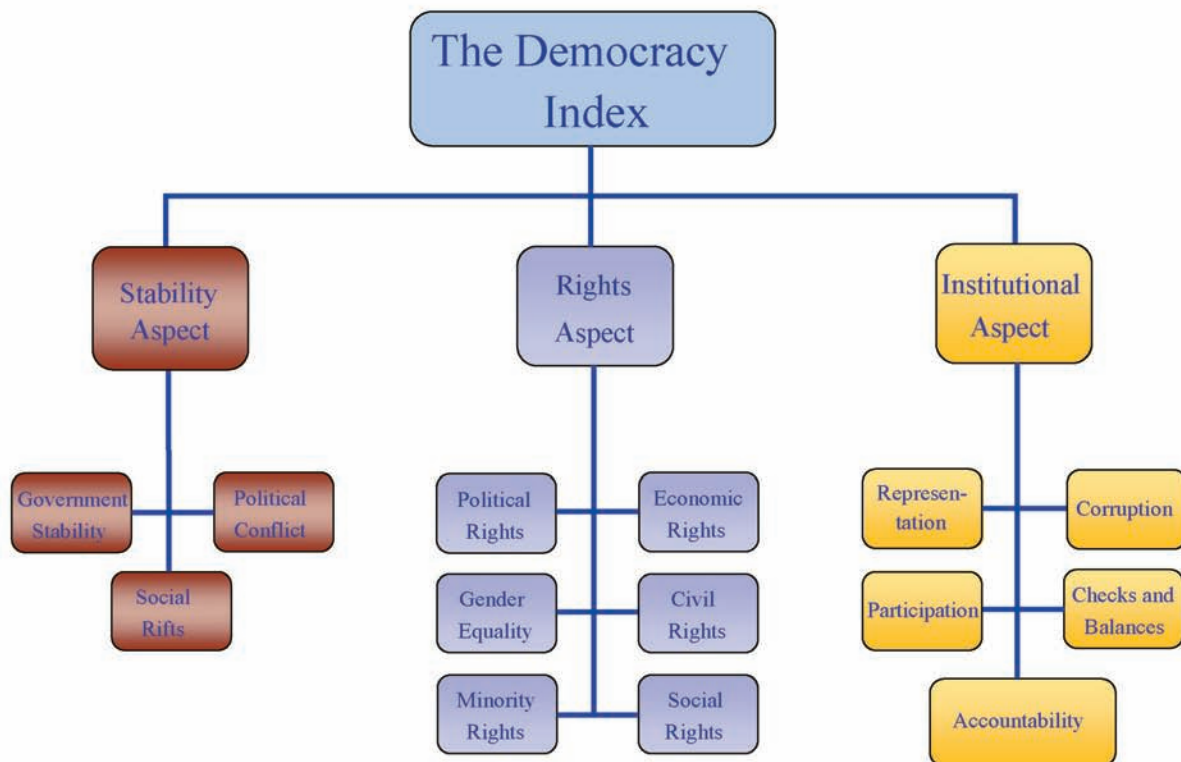
2005 appear in appendices A and B). The second part is devoted to the review, discussion, and evaluation of the influence of Rabin's assassination on Israeli society and democracy, on its tenth anniversary. We present a special survey that examines questions bearing on Rabin's image in the collective memory, on the attitude of Israeli society to the assassination, on the perception of the legitimate boundaries of protest, on the positions of the political leadership in general, and on coping with the Jewish-Palestinian conflict in particular, and on elements in the identity of individuals and groups in Israel. Two broad analyses of the survey findings follow, comparing them to similar surveys carried out in the past: one focuses on Israel's political culture in light of the assassination, and the other proposes a mapping of identity types in Israeli society, relating them to the conflictual issues and the rifts splitting the social web, including the assassination of Rabin. Finally, we review studies on the subject conducted during the last decade.

It is our hope that this effort will contribute to promote awareness of and concern with the issues discussed here, encouraging public discourse on the quality and characteristics of Israeli democracy and their continued development and improvement. We also hope that this report will serve as a database for researchers in the field.

B. The Democracy Indicators

In an attempt to set up an "objective" and valid scenario of the functioning of Israeli democracy, we have made extensive use of quantitative ratings developed by various research institutes and used for longitudinal assessments throughout the world. The assessments rely mainly on a combination of information from primary and secondary sources (the media, reports by government agencies, and NGOs) and evaluations by local and foreign professionals. The purpose of these ratings is to offer a working (operational) definition of a particular feature (such as representativeness, press freedom, political corruption) that will enable its quantitative evaluation in different countries over time. The bulk of the data presented in this section with regard to different countries, including Israel, was collected and analyzed by international research institutes, as detailed below.

1. A Summary Outline

This report updates 18 of the 31 ratings included in the Democracy Index.[1] Full details of the evaluations Israel received on the various ratings and of changing trends since 2004 are presented in Appendix A, Table 1. As a rule, these rating were used to assess Israel along two axes: historical (Israel over time) and international (Israel compared to 35 other democracies).[2] The historical comparison attests to a worsening in the state of Israeli democracy over the last year. Only one rating (evaluating the government's stability) shows improvement; eight ratings show deterioration, and in nine other ratings, the situation remains as it was last year.[3] To some extent, this picture is balanced by the international comparison, which attests to some improvement in Israel's position in the ranking of 36 democracies: in the ratings showing a decline in the assessment of Israeli democracy in 2005, Israel's relative position actually improved compared to the previous year. The decline in Israel's evaluation alongside the improvement in its relative ranking, points to a decline in the evaluations received by other countries on various aspects of democratic life.

Figure 2 presents Israel's ranking on a scale of 35 democracies according to 13 measures.[4] The figure is divided according to the three aspects included in the index

1 Since this part of the Index relies on the evaluations of external research institutes, it depends on the publication of updated data collected by these institutes. Furthermore, since Israel has not held elections to the Knesset or to local authorities since the publication of the 2003 Index, measures based on the election results have not been updated (the participation and relativity ratings). For full details on the 31 measures see Asher Arian, David Nachmias, Doron Navot and Danielle Shani, *The 2003 Israeli Democracy Index: Measuring Israeli Democracy* (Jerusalem: Israel Democracy Institute, 2003).
2 For details of the rationale used for choosing the countries included in the sample, see ibid., 16.
3 For six of the 18 updated ratings, data were adjusted on the basis of the 2003 report (that was only published this year). The six ratings include measures of party dominance, three measures of discrimination of minorities (economic, political, and cultural), measure of changes of regime, and measure of political conflict.
4 In some cases, findings were not reported for all the countries included in the sample, although findings were reported for at least 27 out of the 36 countries.

– the institutional aspect, the rights aspect, and the stability aspect (as detailed in Figure 1). The vertical axis in the figure represents the extent of "democracy" in these countries according to each characteristic, so that a higher position along the axis indicates greater democracy. In some cases, several countries share the same score, so that Israel's position shifts between two places (for instance, on the vertical accountability rating, all countries in the sample received the same score so that Israel is positioned between places 1-35).[5]

Unlike the picture presented in the 2003 and 2004 indices, the distinction between Israel's ranking in all three aspects is not clear-cut. In the past, findings generally indicated that a strong point of Israeli democracy is the formal, institutional aspect; the rights aspect was found to be more problematic, while

Figure 2

Israel's Ranking in the Democracies' Sample According to 13 Criteria

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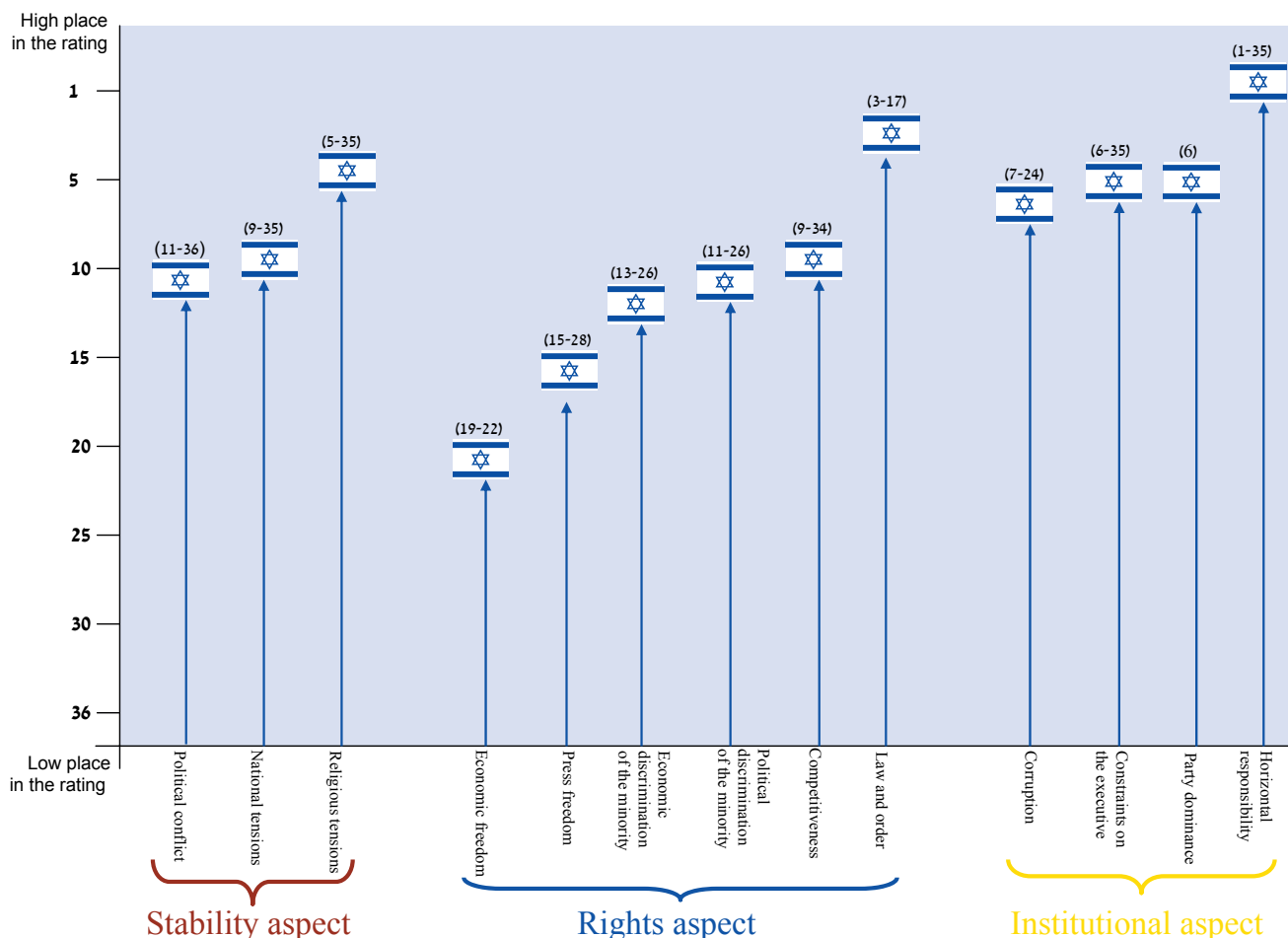
5   This is influenced to a large degree by the scale defined by the various research institutes and by the scale's sensitivity to differences between the various expressions of the phenomenon under investigation.

the most vulnerable point was the instability characteristic of Israeli society in general and of the political and government systems in particular. Thus, although the assessment of Israel in 2005 is less good than that of 2004 in some of the ratings, its relative position improved. For instance, Israel received worse ratings in 2005 on the rights aspect, on press freedom, and on the law and order items, but its relative position improved when compared to 2004 (from 28 to 15-28, and from 18 to 3-17 respectively).[6]

This finding becomes even more radical regarding the **stability aspect**, and especially in the **social tension ratings**. Israel ranked last in 2004 on ratings reflecting national/linguistic tensions, together with India, and second-to-last on religious tensions. In 2005, Israel was placed 9-35 and 5-35 respectively. In other words, most countries in the sample showed the same level of national/linguistic or religious tensions. Since Israel received a poorer evaluation on these measures, the change in its position can probably be explained as reflecting a deterioration in the evaluation of other countries in the sample, leading to a drop in their ranking and their location at the bottom of the scale.

These findings, however, do not detract from the fact that Israeli democracy does not show signs of improvement or stabilization in its actual functioning, as is prominently evident in discussions about the behavior of elected officials (political corruption); in civil rights (such as press freedom or the number of prisoners per capita); and in attitudes toward minorities. Despite greater public awareness of these topics, the actual reality appears to have deteriorated. Moreover, as opposed to other characteristics that are acutely sensitive to Israel's security situation or to its many rifts (such as the army's involvement in politics, the tension ratings, and the equality ratings), some characteristics have a direct bearing on the functioning of the regime and of elected officials. These are vulnerabilities of Israeli democracy that cannot be ascribed to any particular or "unique" features of the Israeli case.

2. Israel 2005 as Reflected in the Indicators: Changes since the 2004 Index

The 2005 Index, as noted, was updated for 18 of its 31 ratings. Contrary to the 2004 Index, which had pointed to trends of change in many directions,[7] the trend in the 2005 Index is mainly one of no change or deterioration, as shown in Table 1 (page 27). The only rating showing improvement was that of a government completing its term of office, which examines the time a government remains in office out of the period allotted by law. The 30th Israeli government, headed by Ariel Sharon, took office on 28 February 2003, and is expected to stay in power until 2006. In the discussion about the survival of this government, despite the serious crises

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6   For a detailed and more elaborate discussion of the freedom of the press measure, see Asher Arian, Pazit Ben-Nun, Shlomit Barnea, and Yariv Tsfati, *The Media and Israeli Democracy from Various Vantage Points* (Jerusalem: The Israel Democracy Institute, 2005).

7   In the 2004 index, out of the 14 measures that were updated four showed improvement, four showed no change, and six showed deterioration. See Asher Arian, Pazit Ben-Nun, and Shlomit Barnea, *The 2004 Israeli Democracy Index: Auditing Israeli Democracy – Attitudes of Youth* (Jerusalem: Israel Democracy Institute, 2004), 17.

it has encountered, the adoption of the "constructive no-confidence" mechanism deserves mention. This mechanism was adopted following the revocation of direct elections for the prime minister, and its aim was to hinder the opposition's attempts to bring down the government.[8] Although the government and its policy guidelines remained in place, the political coalitions constituting it changed several times.[9] These changes should be kept in mind when considering the stability of the government. Another rating pointing to greater stability is that of government changes, which examines how many times the ruling party in the government changes in a given year. Since the 2003 elections, the ruling party has indeed not changed.

In the ten ratings showing no change since the last assessment (as noted, the updating of the data relates in some cases to 2003 and not to 2005) a distinction must be drawn between two categories: ratings relating to the formal institutional arrangements of Israeli democracy, which by nature are less exposed to change, and ratings showing marked changes over the years, though not this year. The first category includes ratings of the following variables: vertical responsibility, constraints on the executive in the implementation of policy,

competitiveness in participation, and law and order. These four ratings, in which Israel is ranked in the top decile of the democracies scale, relate to basic democratic principles including ordered elections, checks and balances, refraining from extreme repression of the opposition's activity, and preserving law and order. All these are anchored in constitutional, legal, and institutional arrangements, and, therefore, no significant changes should be expected in them. Similarly, Israel's high (positive) ratings on these measures strengthen our past finding that the strong point of Israeli democracy is its institutional side. On this aspect, which evaluates the ruling democratic institutional framework, Israel is placed at the top of the ranking. The lack of change on the other six ratings, however, and mainly the lack of change in the public's evaluation of the social tension rating, is less expected.

In seven out of the 18 measures, the assessment is that Israel's situation in 2005 has worsened. Three of these measures are included in the institutional aspect, two in the rights aspect, and two in the stability aspect. On the measures of corruption, press freedom, and religious tension, the assessment shows deterioration, contrary to the improvement recorded in 2004 when compared to 2003.[10]

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8   This mechanism means that a vote of no confidence in the existing government has to be accompanied by a vote of confidence in an alternative one. Barring a parliamentary majority for an alternative government, a vote of no confidence in a functioning government does not lead to its fall. See Basic Law: The Government (Abolition of Direct Election 2001) on the Knesset website: http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/heb/yesod14.htm.

9   In the course of 2005, the Ichud Leumi, the National Religious Party, and Shinui left the coalition, and on 6 January 2005, the Labor-Meimad faction and Agudat Yisrael joined the coalition, although part of the Agudat Israel faction resigned at a later stage.

10   The corruption and tension ratings are presented in detail in the following pages.

Table 1

Israel 2005 as Reflected in the Ratings: Changes Since the 2004 Index*

The Rating	The Scale	Israel's score	Relative Rank**	Change
Completing term	0–100 (100%=full term)	-	-	↑
Vertical Accountability	1–3 (1=irregular elections)	3 (2003)	1-35 (36)	=
Constraints on the executive to implement policy	1–7 (1=unrestricted authority)	7 (2003)	6-35 (35)	=
Degree of competitiveness in participation	1–5 (1=repressing opposition's activity)	5 (2003)	9-34 (34)	=
Law and order rating	0–6 (0=limited law and order protection)	5	3-17 (35)	=
Economic freedom index	1–5 (1=large measure of economic freedom)	2.36	19-22 (34)	=
National/ethnic/ linguistic tensions	0–6 (0=high tension)	2	9-35 (35)	=
Political discrimination of the minority	0–4 (0=no discrimination)	3.5 (2003)	11-26 (27)	=
Economic discrimination of the minority	0–4 (0=no discrimination)	3.5 (2003)	13-27 (27)	=
Cultural discrimination of the minority	0–4 (0=no discrimination)	0 (2003)	-	=
Stability (changes of government)	Changes of government between 1992 and 2003	5 (2003)	-	=
Horizontal accountability	0–6 (0=high military involvement in politics)	2.5	6-35 (35)	↓
Representativeness (party dominance)	100-[100 x the number of seats in lower chamber] (100=high dominance, low representation)	324 (2003)	6 (34)	↓
Corruption index	0–6 (0=high level of corruption)	3	7-24 (35)	↓
Press freedom	0–100 (0=full freedom)	28	15-28 (36)	↓
Rate of prisoners per 100,000 population	0-100,000 (0=few prisoners)	252	Without international comparisons	↓
Religious tension	0–6 (0=high tension)	2.5	5-35 (35)	↓
Weighted political conflict index	0–infinity (0=no conflict)	10462 (2003)	11-36 (36)	↓

*   The ratings are arranged according to the change trend (improvement, no change, or deterioration) and according to the set order of the characteristics in the index.

** The number in parentheses shows the number of countries included in the comparison.

Note that the decline in the representativeness rating (party dominance) partially explains the improvement in the measure noted above, concerning the government completing its term of office. In other words, the strengthening of the largest party in the Knesset (Likud) in the 2003 elections exacts a price in terms of representativeness, but enables greater stability.[11] Given that the Israeli electoral system is characterized by extreme proportionality, this "price" could be considered reasonable due to its potential contribution to the government's stability and effective functioning. By contrast, the decline in ratings measuring press freedom and political discrimination of the minority is unequivocal and touches on two key elements of democracy – freedom of speech and information, and equality for minorities.

The first measure in the cluster showing deterioration is that of horizontal accountability, which was developed by the International Country Risk Guide (ICRG).[12] This measure tests the extent of military involvement in politics and is based on the assumption that too much military involvement in politics is problematic for the functioning of democracy. On this rating, Israel received a score of 2.5 out of 6 (0 represents non-involvement and 6 – a high degree of military involvement in politics). This is a decline of 0.5 compared to 2004. Israel is placed 6-35 in the ranking of countries.

The press freedom index also deteriorated in the 2005 assessment. This rating was developed by Freedom House as part of their Freedom of the World project,[13] and examines safeguards protecting the activities of journalists and restrictions imposed on their freedom of action. The parameters included in this rating are weighted into one score on a scale of 0-100 (0 denotes full press freedom and 100 – lack of press freedom). Here too, Israel's score in 2005 (28) is lower than it received in 2004 (27). This change indicates a reversal of the trend identified when comparing 2004 and 2003 (in other words, improvement in the previous rating and deterioration in the present one). Despite the drop in the assessment of Israel, however, its place in the countries' ranking actually improved. In 2004, Israel was placed 28 out of 36 countries, and in 2005, it ranked 15-28. The decline in other countries, then, was even worse than in Israel, and they received the same score as Israel (i.e. 28).

The ratio of prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants is widely accepted as measuring

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11   The party dominance rating was developed by a team of researchers headed by Arthur Banks and entitled "Cross-National-Time-Series Data" (henceforth: CNTS). The Democracy Index includes two additional ratings from this database – one of government change and one of political conflict. For further information visit the website of the project at http://www.databanks.sitehosting.net.

12   The Index used five ratings from the International Country Risk Guide (ICRG): horizontal accountability, corruption, law and order, and two tension ratings (religious and national/linguistic). For further information on ICRG, see their website: http://www.prsgroup.com/icrg/icrg.html.

13   For an in depth analysis on the press freedom issue, see Arian et. al., *The Media and Israeli Democracy* (note 6 above). For further information on the Freedom House archive see their website http://www. freedomhouse.org. On the press freedom project carried out by the organization see http://www. freedomhouse.org/research/pressurvey.htm.

a certain aspect of civil rights. The rating is based on the assumption that a high rate of prisoners in the population is a sign of rigidity and of government restrictions.[14] In 2005, Israel had 252 prisoners for every one-hundred thousand inhabitants. This is an increase compared to 2004, when there were 189 prisoners for every 100,000 inhabitants. In this regard, the distinction between criminal and security prisoners is interesting: in July, 2005, Israel held 17,400 prisoners, of whom 5,300 were security prisoners. No international comparison was carried out on this variable.

The last two measures in Table 1 are presented below in greater detail. As noted, an interesting finding concerning the measure of religious tension was a decline in the score but a significant improvement in the rating, from 35 out of 36 in 2004, to 5 out of 35 in 2005. This finding appears to indicate that religious tension is on the rise in different democracies throughout the world.

3. Selected Findings from the Index[15]
The Institutional Aspect
Checks and Balances: Constraints on the Executive Branch in the Implementation of Policy

A basic principle of democratic regimes is that of limited rule, including the mutual checks and balances of the three branches of government. The variable of executive constraints was developed by a team of researchers led by Ted Gurr as part of the Polity project.[16] This variable focuses on institutional and structural constraints (and not necessarily on political ones) imposed on the executive branch, and is based on a seven-point scale. Level 1 represents a situation without any constraints, level 3 – some degree of control over the executive branch, and level 7 – a situation enabling other government authorities and administration agencies to use their power and ability to influence and prevail in the decision-making process. Over the past decade, Israel received a score of 7, a ranking it shared with the other democracies in the sample.

Representativeness: Party Dominance

A basic principle of representative democracy is to ensure a reasonable level of representativeness in elected bodies and, above all, in the legislature, meaning it should reflect the attitudes, preferences, and demands of various groups and streams within the public. Representativeness is affected, above all, by the electoral system, although similar systems may result in different levels of representativeness. One measure used to assess representativeness is the dominance of the largest party in the legislature. This measure assumes that the dominance of a

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14 Information was obtained from the Prisons Authority's spokesperson and updated at the beginning of July 2005.

15 When choosing the measures to be presented here, we considered how interesting the findings were (for instance, a drastic change), the previous publications of the Democracy Index, and the integration of the three aspects included therein.

16 The Democracy Index includes three measures used in the Polity project: horizontal accountability, executive constraints, and competitiveness of participation. For further details about the study, see the project's website http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/polity.

single party necessarily detracts from the representativeness of others. In this context, we used the index of the CNTS project research team (see note 11 above). This index is calculated by dividing the size of the legislature (in Israel – 120) by the number of seats held by the largest party (in the 16th Knesset – the Likud, with 38 seats. Note that after the elections, the two-member Israel Be'aliyah faction joined the Likud, which currently has 40 members). Scores range between 100 (when one party has total control of all the seats in the house) and the number of seats in the legislature multiplied by 100 (when each seat in the legislature is held by a different party). When the score is higher, dominance is smaller and representativeness is greater. The data presented here were updated for 2003, but there have not been elections since the 16th Knesset was elected so it remains valid for 2005.

Figure 3 (page 31) shows representativeness in 34 democracies in 2003. Israel is in sixth place in this group, together with countries having a similar electoral system (such as Holland and the Scandinavian countries). At the other, less representative end, are countries with majority electoral systems (such as Britain and the United States) but also countries with mixed systems (such as Italy).

This figure points to the high level of representativeness typical of the Israeli system, which is considered a necessary condition in a split democracy of the consensual model.[17] This rationale explains Israel's closeness to other consensual democracies such as Holland, India, and Switzerland.

Figure 4 (page 32) presents the level of representativeness in Israel in 1990-2003. It is evident from this that the 2003 elections changed the party system in Israel, when the Likud and Israel Be'aliyah parties gained 40 seats. This achievement was even greater than that of the Labor party in the 1996 elections (34 seats) and second to that of the Labor party headed by Rabin in 1992 (44 seats).

It is a commonplace among political scientists, as noted, that representativeness (expressing or reflecting the inclinations, attitudes, and wishes of various social streams in the political system and in the legislature) exacts a price in terms of the stability and effectiveness of the democratic regime. Hence, representativeness should be approached as one side of the democratic coin that, if hindered, can yield a positive result in terms of stability and effectiveness. This is a particularly crucial issue in the Israeli system, which has been diagnosed by several scholars as suffering from over-representativeness (particularly because of the proportionate electoral system and the low threshold of representation), ineffectiveness (the difficulties of the executive branch in promoting and implementing policy), and instability (frequent government changes, failure of the executive to complete its term of office).[18]

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17   Arendt Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Governments Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

18   Matthew Sobert Shugart, "'Extreme' Electoral Systems and the Appeal of the Mixed-Member Alternative," in *Mixed-Member Electoral Systems: The Best of Both Worlds?* ed. Matthew Sobert Shugart and Martin P. Wattenberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 25-51.

Political Corruption

Political corruption – the unfit use of a public position in an attempt to promote political goals – has occupied the public agenda in Israel in recent years. The definition and empirical evaluation of political corruption are controversial issues in the literature. The Democracy Index made use of assessments by two international research institutes, which rely on the evaluations of local and international experts. Only one of the two institutes (ICRG) has produced an updated evaluation of the situation in Israel 2005 based on a corruption rating which it developed. This rating focuses on extreme manifestations of corruption that could undermine the stability of the government, cause its downfall, and even bring down a democratic regime. The rating, which examines integrity (or lack of corruption) includes seven categories in ascending order from 0 (great corruption and lack of integrity) up to 7 (lack of corruption and great integrity).

Figure 3

Representativeness: An International Comparison

(Party Dominance Measure)
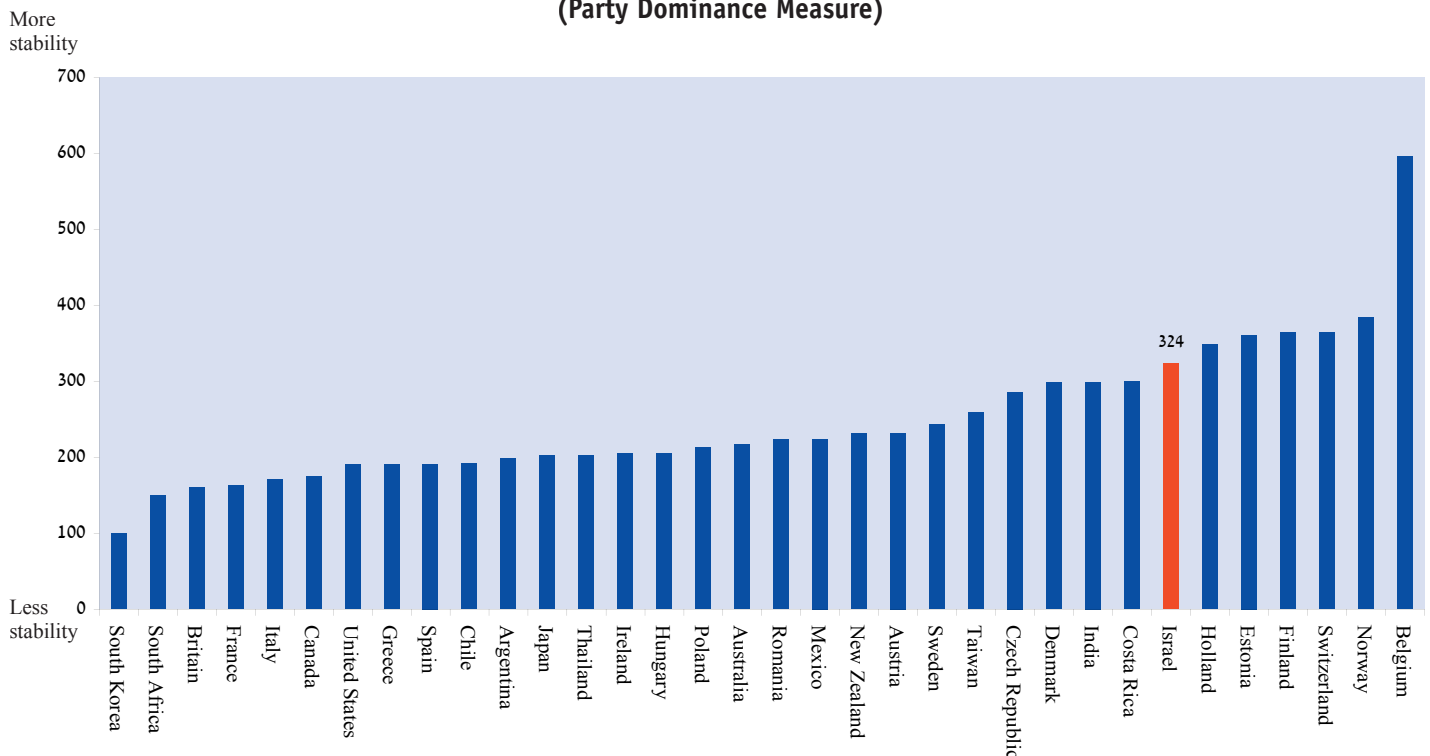
Figure 4

Representativeness in Israel, 1990-2003

(Party Dominance Measure)

More
representativeness

Less
representativeness
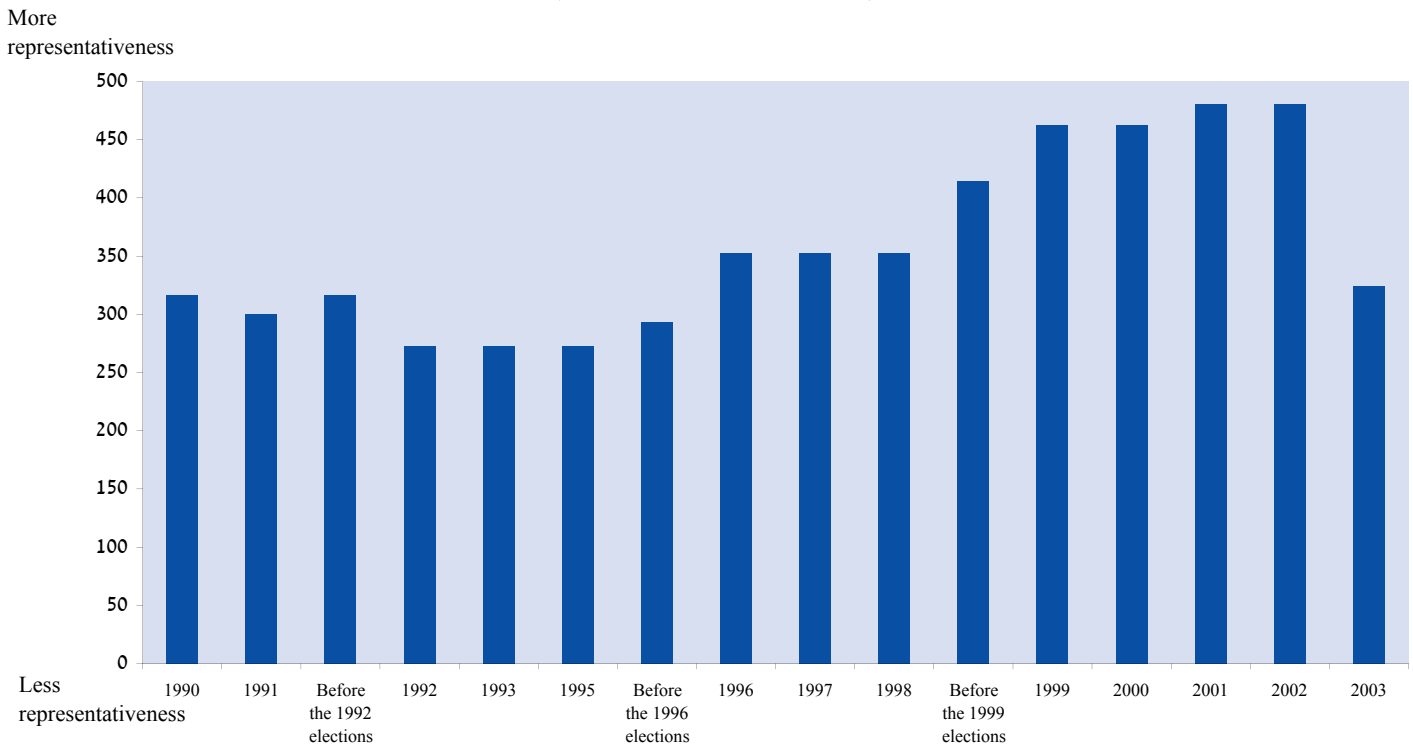
As we can see in Figure 5, which presents the ranking of integrity in 36 countries in 2005, Israel is placed approximately midway on the scale in place 7-24, with a score of 3, shared with Taiwan, Hungary, and Estonia. This assessment is slightly better than that of Italy and Argentina, two countries where political corruption is widespread, and better than that of Japan which, for many years and until the 1990s, suffered from levels of political corruption that led to the removal of prime ministers and senior officials from leadership positions (though without affecting its party structure). At the bottom of the scale are Poland, Mexico, and South Africa and, in last place – Thailand. At the other end of the graph are Denmark, Canada, and New Zealand, while Finland heads the

integrity ranking. We can state that Israel, as in the past, is located in the regrettable middle.

An interesting point relates to the changing trends concerning corruption in Israel over the years. Figure 6 presents the score Israel received in two corruption ratings in 1997-2005. The updated data for 2005 was determined only according to the ICRG rating. The other rating, Perception of Corruption Index, developed by Transparency International (henceforth TI), uses a 0-10 scale (0 reflects high integrity and low political corruption).

The assessment of Israel over the years according to the ICRG rating has remained almost stable; except for some improvement in 2004 (a rise from 3 to 4): Israel's score

throughout this entire period was 3. A decline was recorded in 2005, which returned Israel to a score of 3. The TI Perception of Corruption Index identified a trend of gradual deterioration in 1997-2000, a significant improvement in 2001 (a rise from 6.6 to 7.7), and then a gradual moderate decline.

The Rights Aspect

Civil Rights – Law and Order

The cornerstone of the democratic world view and of democratic rule is the principle of the rule of law. This principle ensures the independence of the law enforcement system and civil compliance with the law. The law and order rating proposed by ICRG incorporates these two aspects (enforcement and compliance) into one score in a 0-6 scale (0 represents absence of law and order, and 6 – a high level of law and order

maintenance). Since 1990 and up until today, Israel has received a score of 5 (the second highest category), which attests not only to the existence of an ordered government and institutional system but also to a norm of respect for the law and its dictates among the citizens.

A caveat is in order concerning this high score, however, which should be compared with that of other democracies. Figure 7 (page 35) presents the rating of law and order maintenance in 35 democracies in 2005.

Almost one-third of the countries (10) obtained the full score of 6 (maximum maintenance of law and order), indicating that Israel's high score is not necessarily satisfactory in relative terms. Israel shares the score of 5 with twelve other countries, including European and Asian democracies, the United States, and Chile. The lowest score

Figure 5

Integrity: An International Comparison
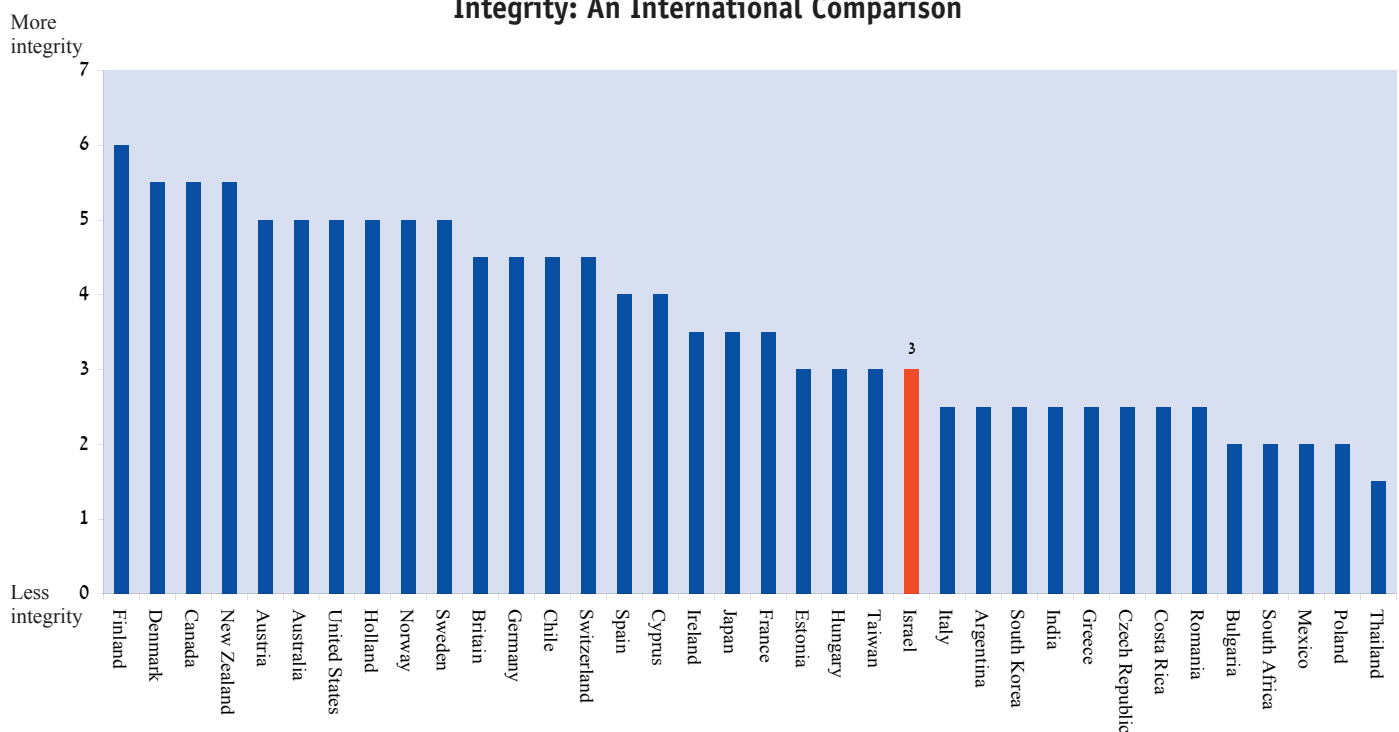
is 2.5 (Thailand) and immediately above, with a score of 3, are Argentina and Mexico. Israel's relative position in this rating has remained high and stable over the years.

Equality for Minorities: Political, Economic, and Cultural Discrimination

Ensuring the status and rights of minorities is a condition for a democracy to be defined as liberal. The question of whether Israeli democracy fits the liberal model remains controversial in the literature, and further emphasizes the importance of assessing the situation of Israel's minorities.[19] The three measures developed by Ted Gurr in the Minority at Risk Project (henceforth MAR) were used to assess the status of the Arab minority. These measures do not examine the situation of minorities according to absolute criteria but relative to the situation of the majority. The MAR assessment relies on a broad variety of data, led by the press data basis Lexis-Nexis, the reports of the American State Department, and those of international organizations such as the United Nations and Amnesty International. The first two measures (political and economic discrimination) are based on a five point scale between 0 and 4 (where 0 represents no discrimination and 4 extensive discrimination). The third measure examines cultural discrimination and is based on a 13-point scale (where 0 represents no discrimination). The data MAR published this year, as noted, relate to 2003 and not to 2005.[20]

Political Discrimination of the Minority

This rating is designed to provide a macro level picture of the role that social policy and practice play in political inequality. Figure 8 (page 37) presents rates showing the political discrimination of minorities in 27 countries in 2003. As seen in the figure, Israel obtained a score of 3.5 (half a point above the worst score) and ranked in second-to-last place among the 27 countries.[21] As shown in Figure 10 (page 38), Israel's assessment in this rating changed over time. In 1990-1993, it obtained a score of 3.5; in 1994-2000; the score was 3, a half-point improvement. In 2001, the assessment again worsened, and in 2000-2003, Israel again received a score of 3.5.

Economic Discrimination of the Minority

This rating is designed to provide a macro level picture of the role that economic policy and practice play in economic inequality. Figure 9 (page 37) shows the degree of economic discrimination of minorities in 27 countries in 2003. As we see, Israel scored 3.5 on this rating, placing last in the ranking of 27 democracies, after Mexico, Japan, Greece, and Hungary. Hence, although the rating shows that political discrimination is greater than economic discrimination, Israel ranks last on this measure because economic discrimination of minorities in the world is generally less frequent.

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19   See Sammy Samooha, "The Regime of the State of Israel: Civil Democracy, Non-Democracy or Ethno-Democracy?" [Hebrew], *Israeli Sociology* 2:2 (2000), 565-630.

20   For details on the project and its ratings see their website: http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar.

21   In all three ratings, the sample is smaller since countries that do not have a significant minority were not rated by MAR, unlike countries that do have significant minorities and hence a potential for discrimination (even if they do not have discrimination in practice, such as Estonia, South Korea, and Cyprus).

Figure 6

Integrity in Israel as Reflected in Two Political Corruption Ratings, 1997-2005
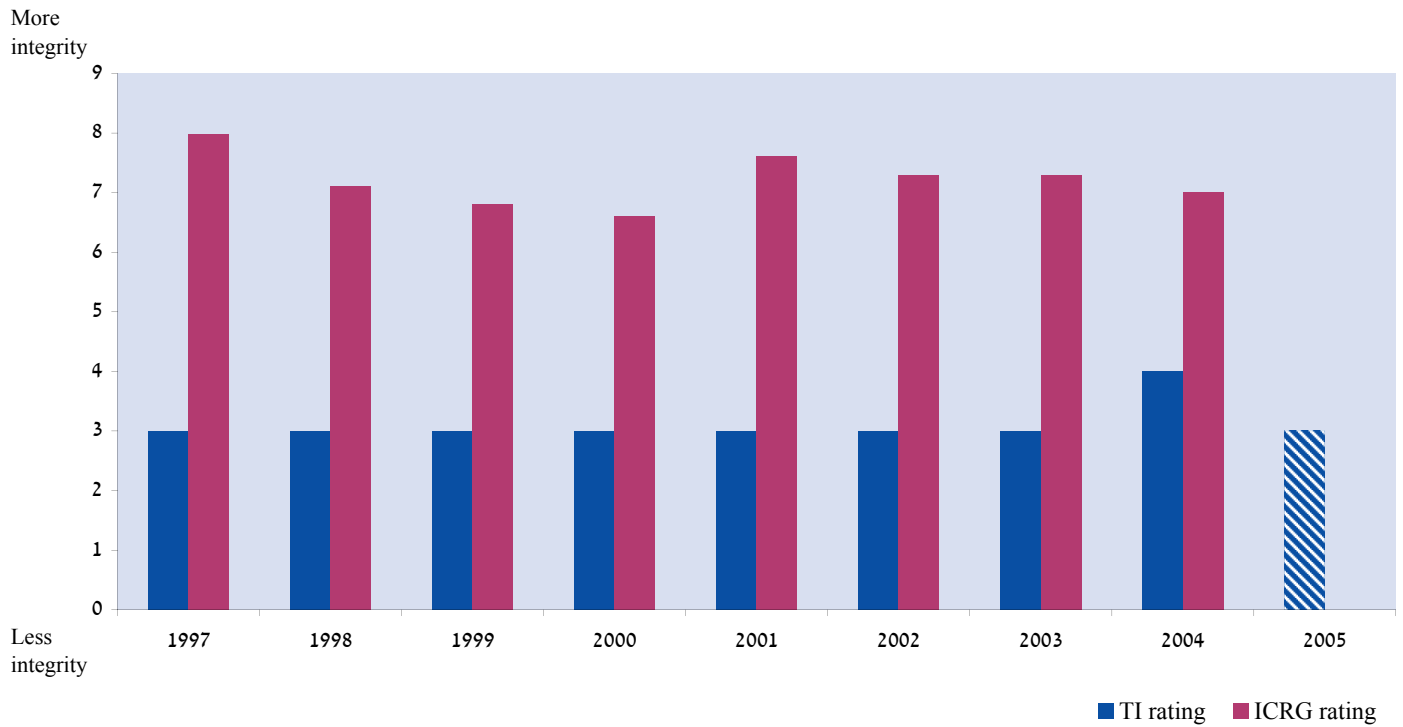
Figure 7

Law and Order: An International Comparison
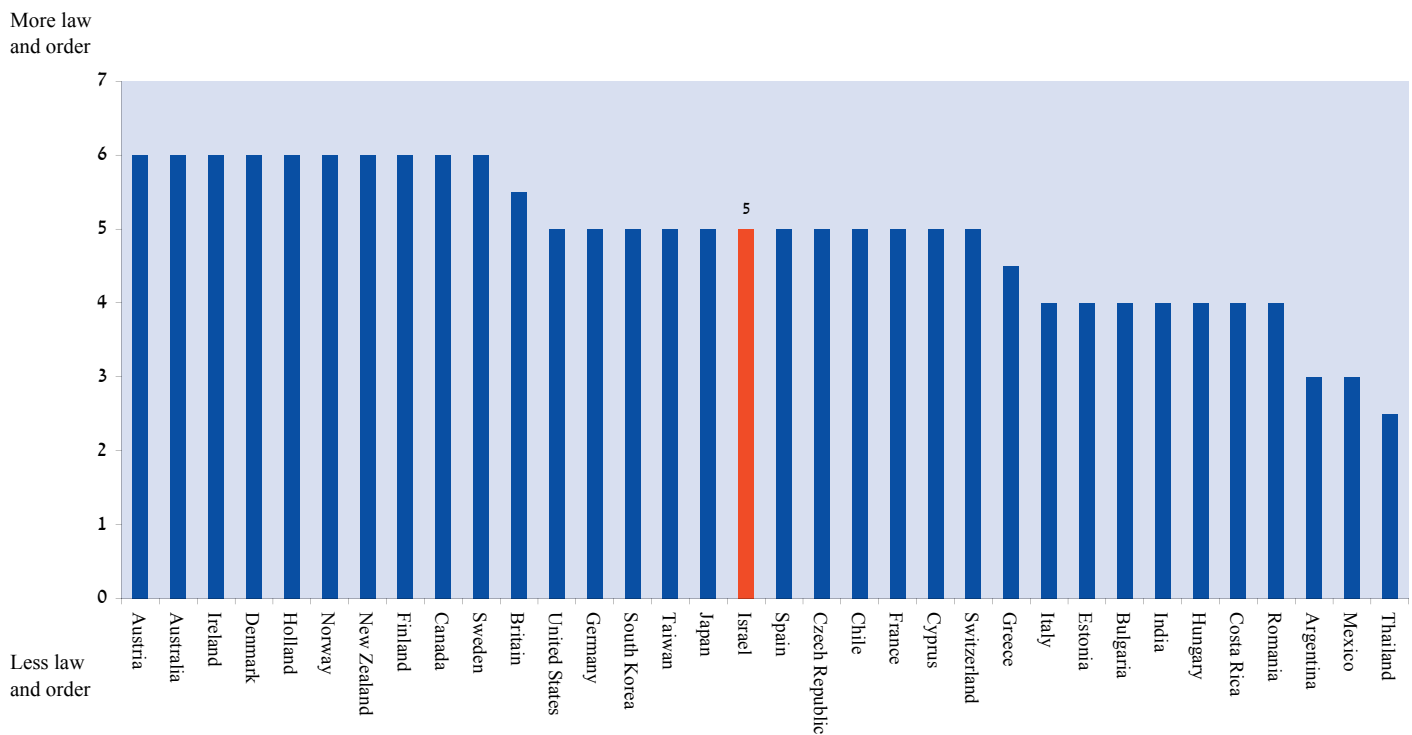
As shown in figure 10, this rating has shown real improvement since 1994: Israel dropped from 4 to 3.5 and has remained stable at this level.

Cultural Discrimination of the Minority

Due to the difficulty of quantifying and assessing cultural discrimination of a minority, the MAR team used eight ratings of limitations preventing a minority from expressing its culture (including restrictions on language, religion, dress, behavior, and so forth). The score proposed here weighs the scores of each country on each of these sub-ratings, dividing them into two. A 0-12 scale obtains (where 0 means no discrimination and 12 means very extensive discrimination). All 27 countries tested by MAR in 2003, including Israel, received a score of 0, that is, no discrimination.

From a historical comparative perspective, the findings show that Israel was the country with the most significant changes in this aspect. As shown in Figure 10, Israel shifted between a score of 3 and 0, until it stabilized at 0 in 2001, meaning no discrimination.

Equality for Minorities: An Integrated Perspective

In a general perspective and by comparison to countries that have minority populations and a potential for discrimination, Israel's attitude to its Arab minority is very bad. In the political and economic discrimination ratings, Israel ranks worst, and only on the cultural discrimination rating does it share a score of 0 with other countries. As Figure 10 shows, the cultural aspect emerges as the least problematic in Israel over the years,

after it the political aspect, and finally – the economic. The economic aspect, however, has shown some improvement and has stabilized at a slightly better level than the political aspect, where a deterioration in the attitude toward the Arab minority was identified in 2001. A plausible assumption is that some of the changes reflect the escalation of the Jewish-Palestinian conflict, and that the link between the situation of the Arab-Israeli minority and the general security situation is expressed mainly in the political rather than in the economic or cultural aspects.

The Stability Aspect

Protest and Opposition: Political Conflict

Unlike the institutional and the rights aspects, the stability aspect is not a condition for defining a democracy. As history shows, a democracy is not necessarily the most stable regime, nor is it designed to be. Nevertheless, without a reasonable measure of stability in society and in the system of government, a democratic regime will confront problems in its functioning and will be more exposed to decline and even to collapse. One of the components of this aspect is the issue of protest and opposition. Let us repeat: in a democratic regime, the public must be given the possibility of protesting and resisting government policy. Public involvement in political life is a desirable phenomenon, linked to the basic values of a democratic regime (freedom of expression, freedom of association, political participation, representativeness, accountability, and so forth). Yet, in order to enable the continuation of the democratic regime, protest and opposition must abide by certain accepted democratic rules.

Figure 8

Political Discrimination of Minorities: An International Comparison
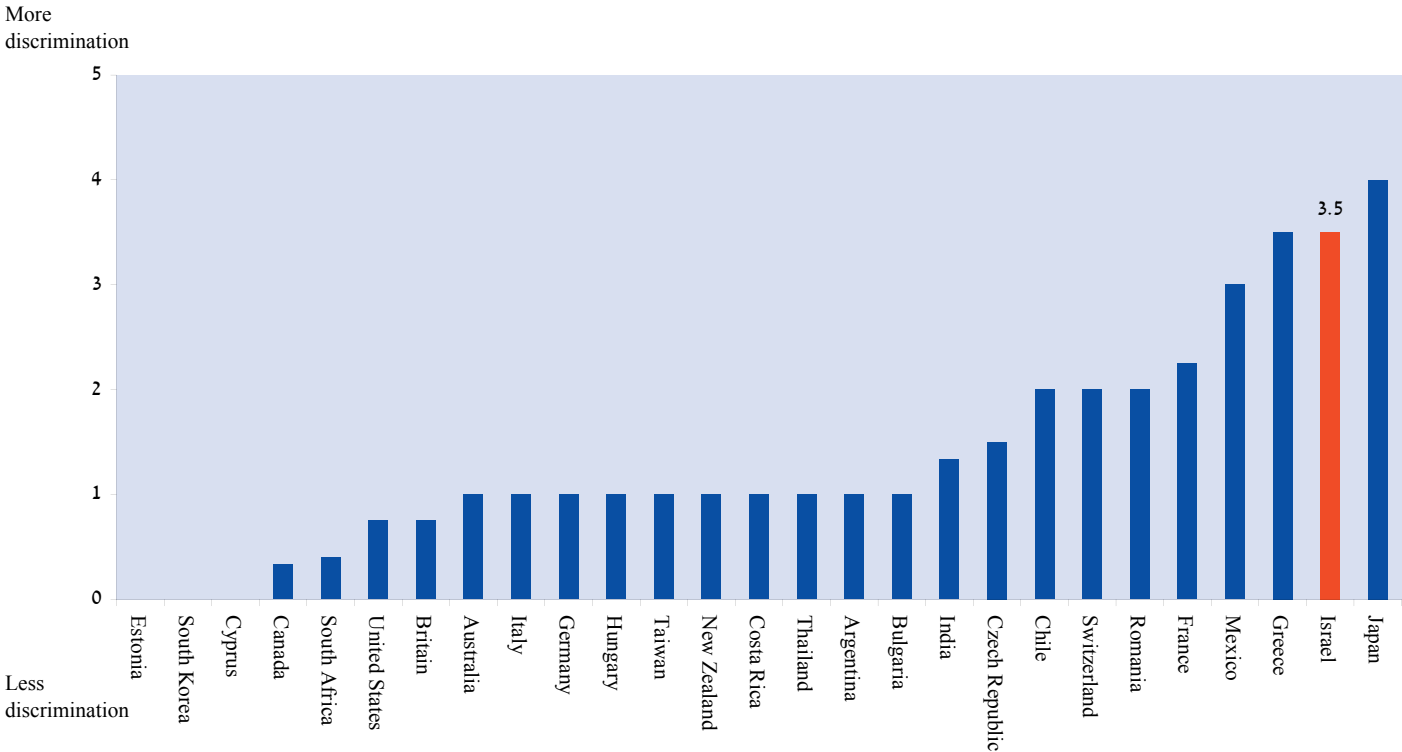
Figure 9

Economic Discrimination of Minorities: An International Comparison
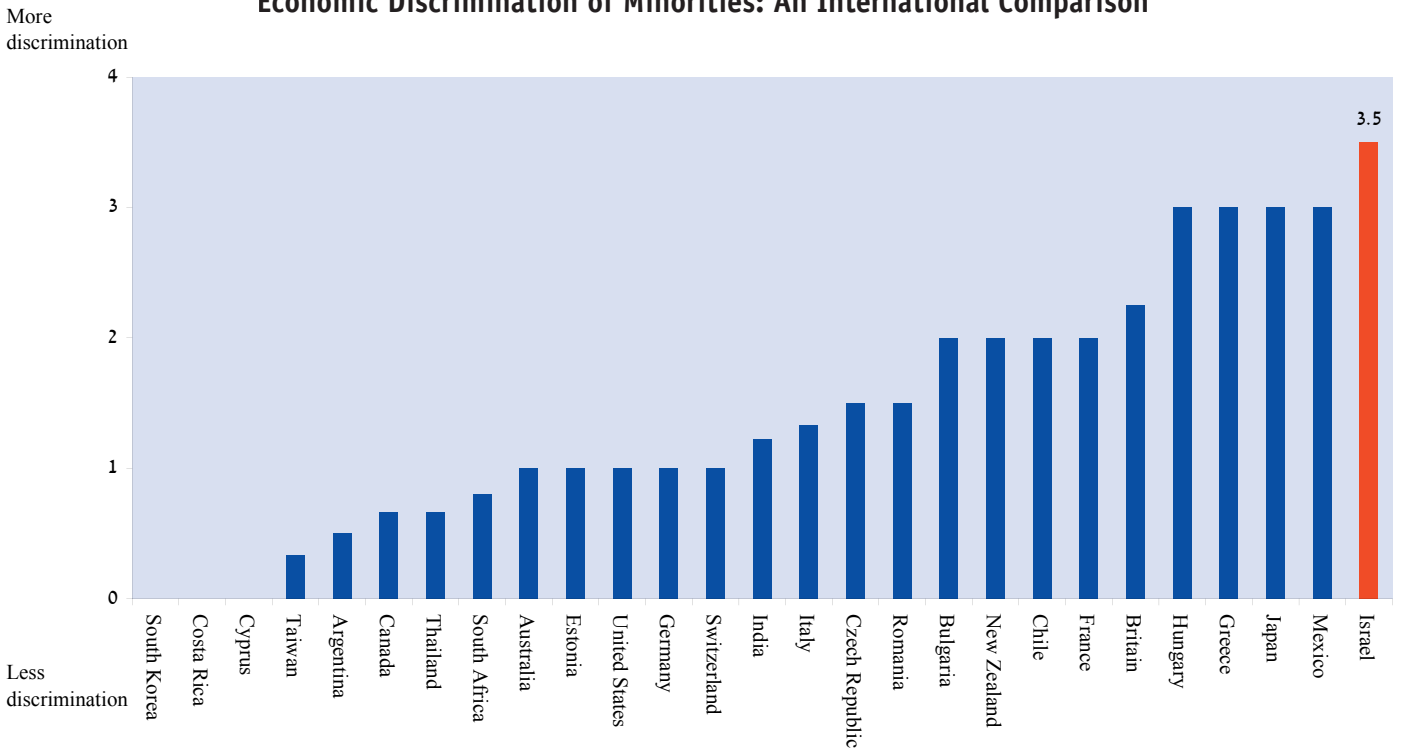
Figure 10

Economic, Political, and Cultural Discrimination of the Arab Minority in Israel, 1990-2003
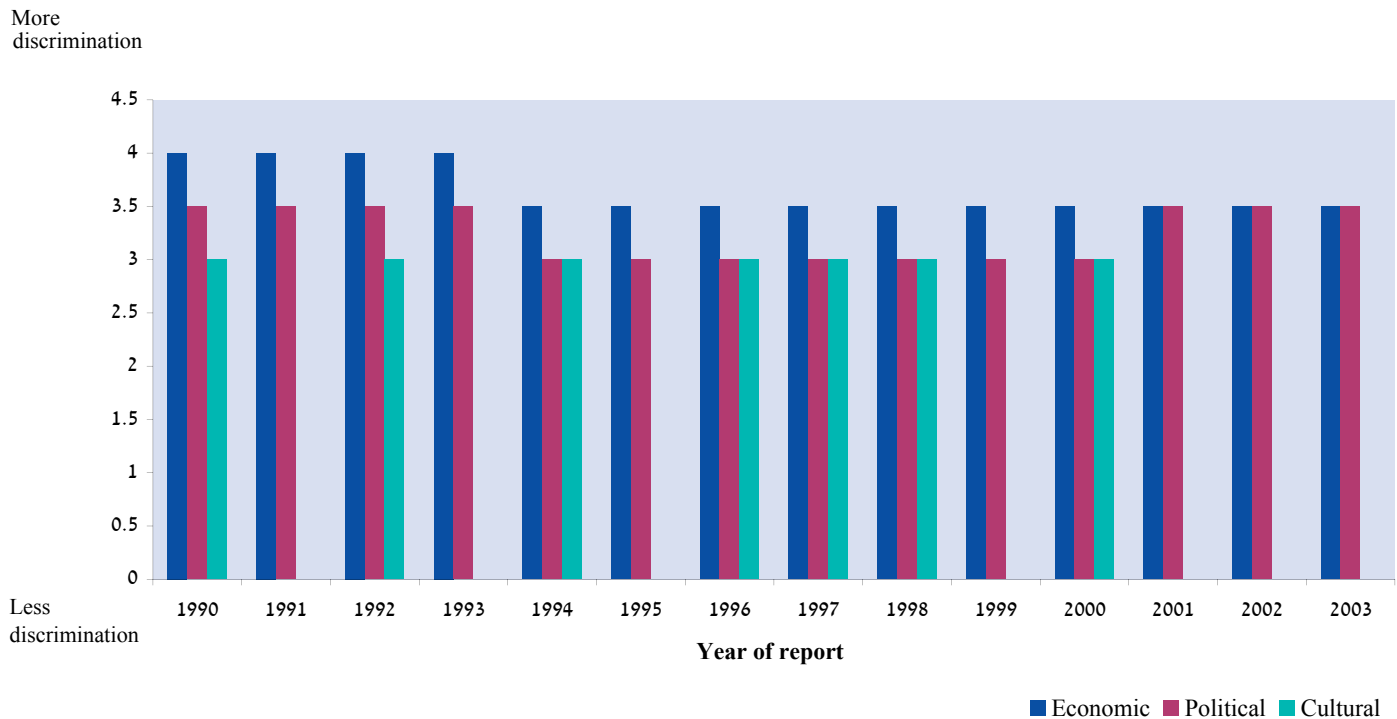
In this context, we resorted to the Weighted Conflict Index developed by Banks and his team in the CNTS project (see note 11 on page 28). The index estimates the level of internal conflict in a country, namely, the confrontation between the citizens and the ruling power, and relates both to the actions taken by subjects against the regime or its policies and to the actions taken by the government in seeking to eliminate pockets of resistance. The index is made up of eight sub-indices, each of which is assigned a different weight in the final score, as follows: assassinations, general strikes, guerrilla warfare, government crises (excluding revolts or attempts to overthrow the government), purges, riots, revolutions, and anti-government demonstrations. The index is based on a scale of 0-infinity

(0 indicates total lack of conflict). The most updated index for Israel is based on 2003 data, but was published only this year.

Figure 11 presents the extent of political conflict in only 15 of the 36 democracies analyzed. The other 21 countries not included in the figure received a score of 0 – lack of political conflict.

As the figure shows, Israel ranks in last place, 11-36. Furthermore, the gap between Israel and the countries following it in the ranking (Ireland and Spain) is very large. In 2003, Israel's score was 10,462, while Ireland and Spain received a score of 5,000 and 4,925 respectively (that is, in Israel, the level of conflict is twice as great as in these two countries). Already in 2003, then, political conflict in Israel seemed extremely problematic and appeared to pose a threat to

the stability of democracy. The assumption is that recently, given the disengagement process, the level of conflict has grown and will continue to do so dramatically, an issue deserving attention.

As Figure 12 (page 41) shows, the level of conflict in Israel has undergone radical change over the years. Particularly prominent is the drastic drop in the level of conflict in 1990-1991, down to a score of 0 in the 1992 index. A significant rise in the level of conflict was recorded in 1995-1996, which continued in 1997 and was restrained in 1998. The findings for 1993-1997 can be largely ascribed to the storm of controversy that swept Israel in the wake of the Oslo Accords, reaching a low point in 1995, with the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. In 1999-2000, the score went through minor adjustments and remained below the 5,000 range (which is high in absolute terms but relatively low for Israel). The level of conflict rose again in 2003, when the score almost tripled (from 3,675 in 2002 to 10,462 in 2003). A more focused scrutiny of the sub-categories in the index shows that Israel's weak spots in this regard are riots and anti-government demonstrations (the most moderate and most legitimate category).

Figure 11

Political Conflict: An International Comparison
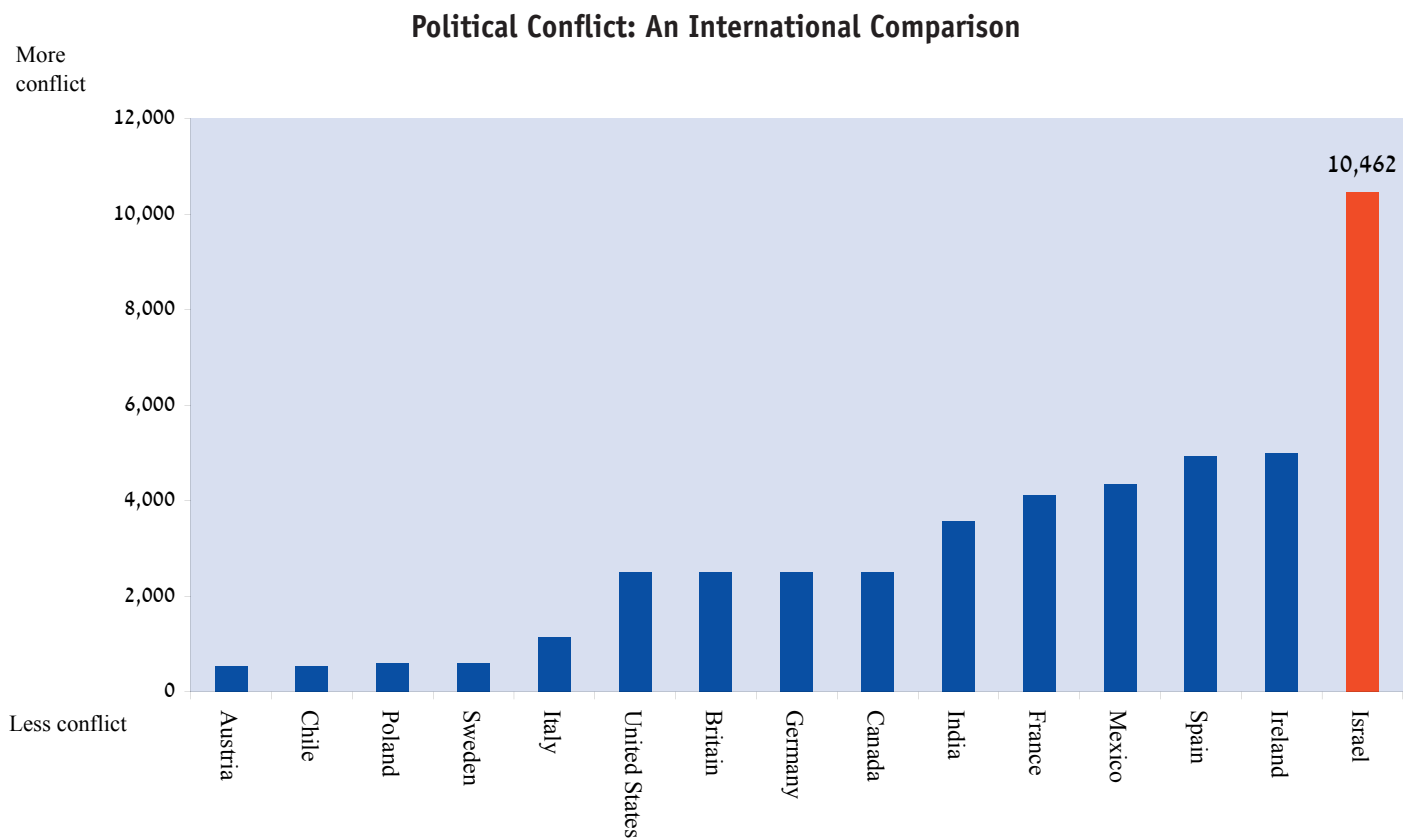
Social Rifts: Religious and National-Linguistic Tensions

Every democracy functions in a specific social context composed of a tapestry of groups and streams separated by religion, ethnic origin, language, nationality, culture, and so on. The social structure is a fact, a given of the democratic regime, which is not intended to change the social structure but to regulate it and allow it suitable expression as well as to moderate the tensions deriving therefrom. Various democracies in the world contend with multiple social rifts, and seek consensual models that will ensure the stability of the regime despite the society's built-in tensions. Israel is an extreme example of a split society, both concerning the number and the intensity of the rifts. The two that have led to the greatest tension are the religious rift – between secular and religious Jews – and the national-linguistic rift – between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs. To assess the level of tension in Israel ensuing from these two splits, we resorted to two ICRG ratings (see note 12 on page 28). Both are based on a seven-point, 0-6 scale. 0 represents the highest level of tension and 6 the lowest.

Religious Tensions

According to the rating's definition, religious tensions could ensue from the social or governmental dominance of one religious group striving to replace civilian law or to remove other religious groups from participation in social and political developments. Tensions can be manifest in religious oppression, religious coercion, or in an attempt to create a ruling religious hegemony.

Figure 13 (page 42) presents religious tensions in 35 countries in 2005. Israel is located at the bottom end of the ranking (meaning it is characterized by a very high level of tension), together with Holland and India. This score (2.5) positions Israel in place 5 (when all the countries with the same score are counted as one case) to 35 (when each country is counted separately). Out of 35 countries, 14 were given a maximum score of 6 (the lowest level of tension or lack of any tension) five countries were given a score of 5.5, eleven a score of 5, two a score of 4, while Holland, India, and Israel received a score of 2.5. When analyzing these findings, it is important to distinguish religiously homogeneous countries from others that are more split, even if their rifts are not expressed in heightened tensions.

In a historical perspective, the level of religious tension in Israel between 1995 and 2005 can be divided into three periods. In 1992-1996, Israel was given a score of 3; in 1997, the rating went down to 2. A marked improvement in the assessment of tension levels was recorded in 2004, which merited a score of 3; some deterioration in 2005 brought the score down to 2.5.

National/Ethnic/Linguistic Tensions

This rating measures the tension levels resulting from group memberships based on race, nationality, or language. In Israel, the rating relates both to the ethnic split (between Ashkenazi and Middle Eastern – Sephardi and other Jews) and to the national split (between Jewish and Arab Israeli citizens). The process for determining the score is the same as in the religious tensions rating.

Figure 14 (page 42) presents national/ethnic/linguistic tensions in 36 democracies in 2005. In this rating, Israel is in the last place of the democracies ranked, with a

score of 2. Unlike the religious tensions rating, the distribution of scores between countries is more diversified, and countries most usually at the top of the ratings (such as Canada, New Zealand and Australia) are in the bottom third of the graph. Here too, as in the previous rating, India is close to Israel, but this time with Cyprus and Estonia. Holland, however, which in the previous rating received the same score as Israel and India, is ranked 4-14.

In the historical perspective presented in Figure 15, we see a clear division into three periods regarding national/ethnic/linguistic tensions in Israel. During 1992-1995, Israel received a score of 2; in 1996-2000, the assessment worsened and Israel received a score of 1, but the rating improved in 2001 and Israel stabilized again on a score of 2, which it received until 2005. Note that a low score indicates high tension, and, in this sense, Israel's situation is a source of concern. Over the years, Israeli society and Israel's political system seem to have failed in the attempt to tone down these rifts and the ensuing tensions, and to remove or at least reduce the threats to the unity of society and the stability of democracy.

Figure 12

Political Conflict in Israel, 1990-2003

More conflict

Less conflict
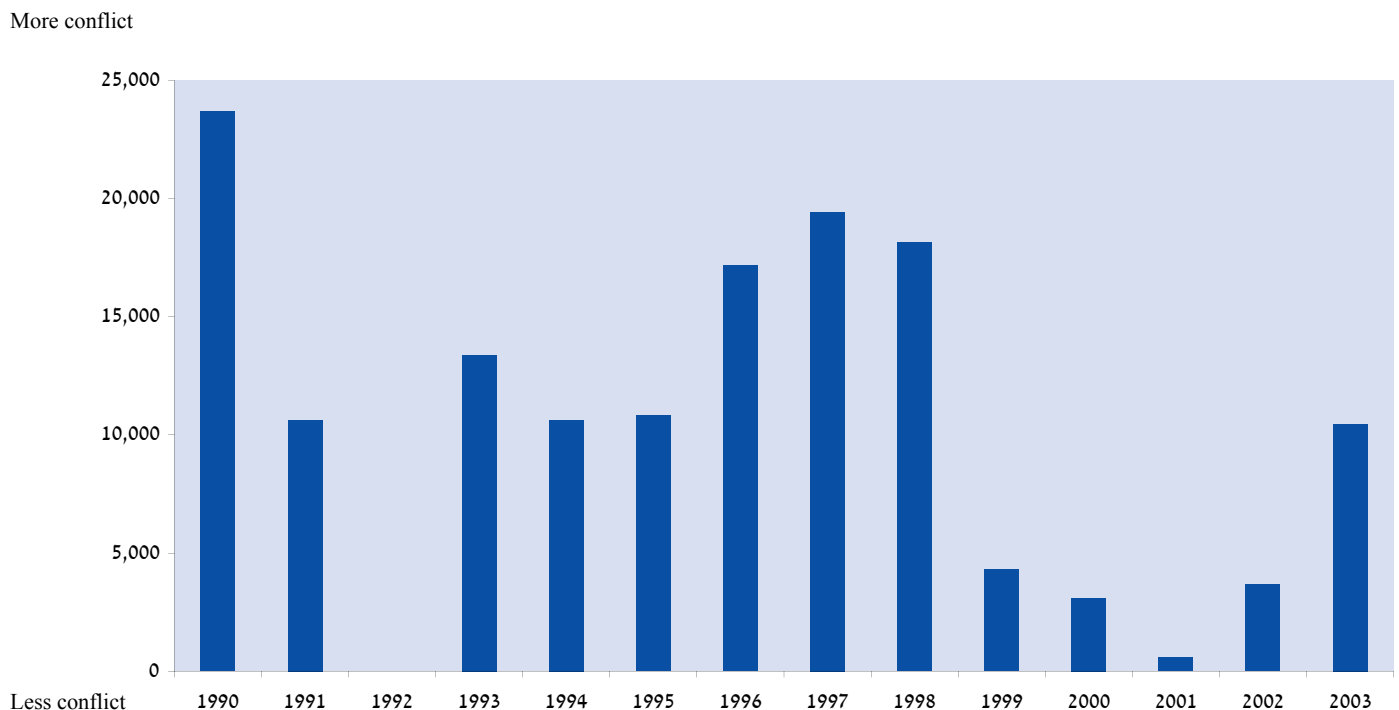
Figure 13

Religious Tensions: An International Comparison
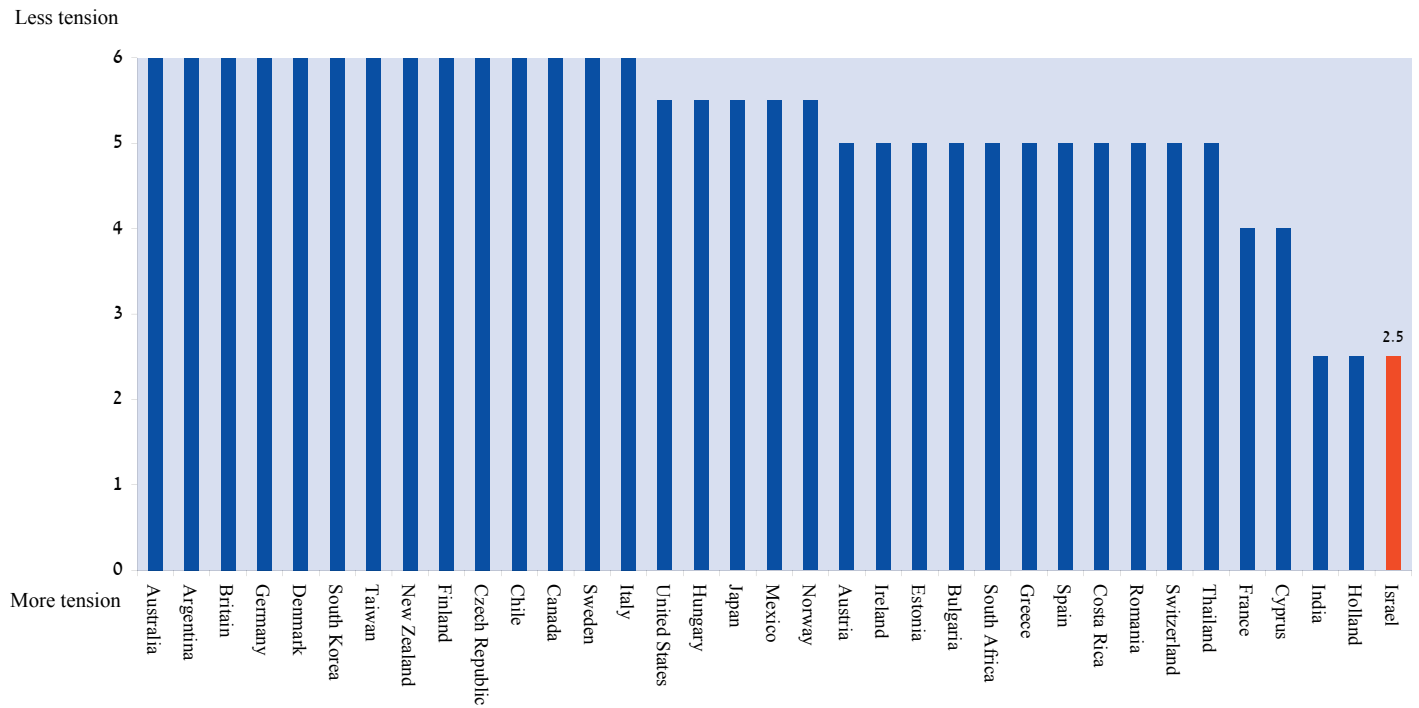
Figure 14

National/Ethnic/Linguistic Tensions: An International Comparison
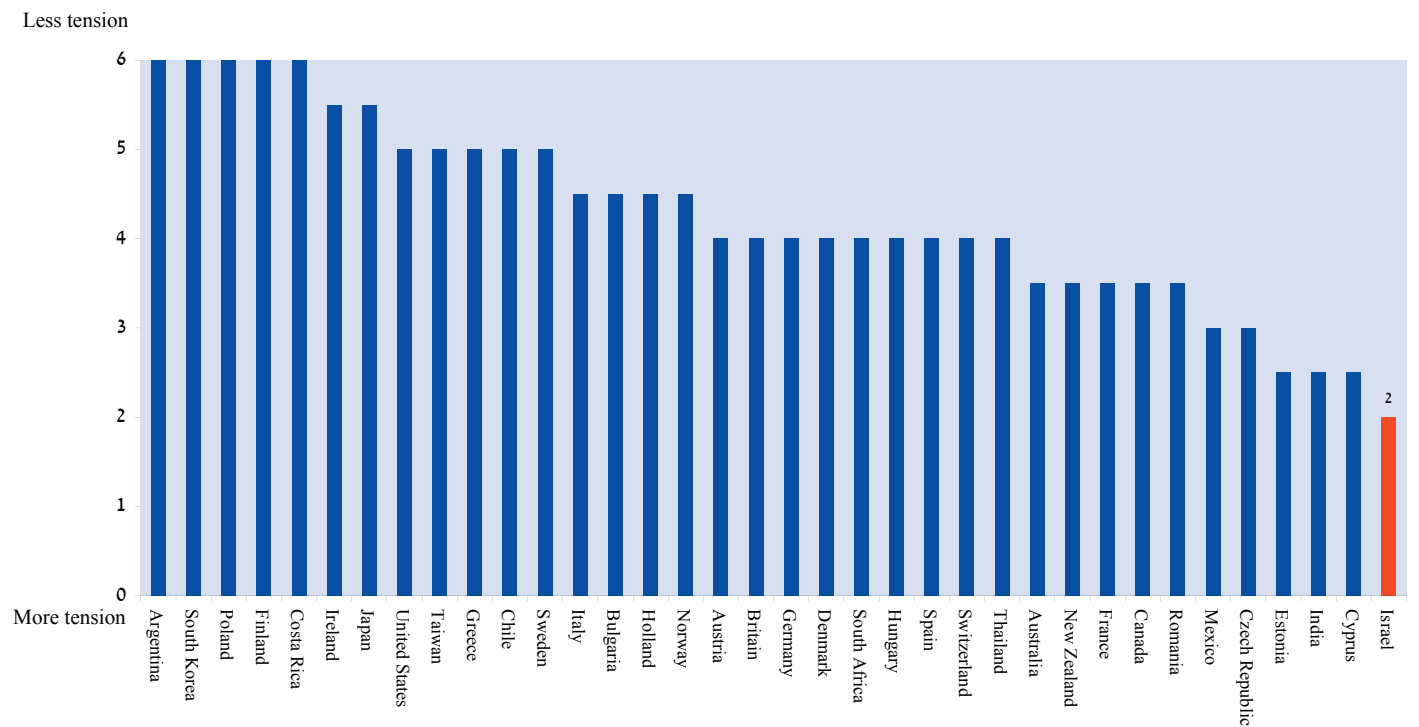
Social Rifts: An Integrated Perspective

Figure 15 (below) offers a comparison of Israel's assessment over the years according to two ratings of tension. The figure clearly indicates that, throughout this period, the national/ethnic/linguistic rift was more problematic than the religious one and created greater tension. Another interesting finding is that, when assessing these changes, we found no correlation between these two rifts either over the years or in their rates. In other words, the religious rift appears to be largely detached from the ethnic and the national/linguistic one. This is a surprising finding given the documented link between religiosity and ethnic belonging, at least in the context of party identification and voting patterns.

Of all the ratings discussed in this context, the social tension ratings are particularly problematic, mainly because of the difficulty of reducing tensions by setting up institutional arrangements. Nevertheless, the findings of public opinion surveys attest that the public assesses the situation as better than the description offered here. This aspect, which is built into Israeli democracy, should be part of a more comprehensive evaluation that would also take into account the views of the Israeli public.

Figure 15

Israel as Reflected in Two Tension Ratings, 1992-2005

C. The Democracy Survey

Together with the international "objective" ratings presented in the previous section, we conducted a survey to assess public attitudes toward various aspects of democratic life, of the democratic regime, and of democratic values. The survey reflects the public's assessment of the way that Israel's democracy actually functions (the perception of the implementation of democracy in Israel) and examines the extent to which democratic culture has struck roots in the general public (that is, the existence of democratic attitudes and perceptions within the public). Thus, for instance, we examined the issue of equality for minorities through a question aiming to evaluate both to what extent equality for minorities is prevalent in Israel, and the public's attitude toward the need or the duty to ensure such equality. The Democracy Survey touches on the three aspects included in the Index (the institutional aspect, the rights aspect and the stability aspect) and the characteristics included in each of them (see Figure 1 on page 20).

The survey was conducted in February-March 2005, with a representative sample of Israel's population, comprised of Jews and Arabs. The sample included 1,203 subjects, who were interviewed in Hebrew, Russian, and Arabic.[22] This section presents the findings for the population in general updated to 2005, the trends of change in the 2005 evaluations and attitudes as compared to 2003, and the distribution of attitudes and evaluations according to a breakdown of different groups in the population. All

the findings collected in the survey and a comparison with the findings of Democracy Surveys 2003 and 2004 appear in Appendix B.

1. A Summary Outline

Generally, the survey reflects a high and stable level of preference for democracy as a regime. More than three-quarters of the respondents agreed that democracy is preferable to other regimes, and that it is also the desirable regime for Israel. No change was found in the level of satisfaction with democracy in Israel, which remains at middle levels. We also found that a majority of the public supports granting political and civil rights – such as freedom of expression and religious freedom – to minorities, including the Arab minority, as well as equal gender rights. A majority of the Israeli public is also opposed to violence and to the refusal to serve in the army.

Public trust in political institutions, however, is generally not high. Public opinion estimates that corruption is not a marginal phenomenon in Israel and is found within the government as well. Public opinion also points to deep social rifts and serious tensions between various groups in Israel. The survey shows that the Israeli public tends to be interested in politics, but participation in institutionalized political frameworks is extremely low, and the public does not feel it has an influence on government policy. Nevertheless, most report a deep sense of belonging to the community

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22   The Mihshuv Institute conducted the survey. Sampling error is +−2.8, at confidence levels of 95%.

and identification with the country, a wish to remain in it, and a sense of pride at being a part of Israel.

2. Democracy's Implementation in Israel According to the Three Aspects: The Perception of the Israeli Public, 2005

The survey asked respondents to evaluate democracy in Israel according to the various aspects. This evaluation complements the external assessments of the implementation of democracy in Israel presented in the previous section. Figure 16 (page 47) presents the distribution of assessments concerning the situation of Israel as good in democratic terms. As shown below, the public is aware of differences in the implementation of the various aspects of Israeli democracy.

Concerning the institutional aspect, the feature that according to most of the public is realized to the highest extent is political participation: about 70% of the public assess that participation in Israel is similar to or higher than that in other countries, despite the midway evaluation that Israel received in the "hard" index of political participation, which relates mainly to voting rates in elections.[23] Representativeness is the feature that receives the second highest evaluation: about 60% of the public estimate that the balance of power in the Knesset accurately expresses the distribution of public opinion. This feature was also evaluated as high in the "objective" ratings, presented in the previous section.

Concerning corruption or integrity, 58% of the public evaluate that the level of integrity in Israeli politics is similar to or higher than that common worldwide. This finding is surprising given the centrality of this issue in the Israeli public agenda during the last year and the many corruption scandals exposed and documented in the media. It is compatible with the findings of the ICRG rating, which place Israel in the group of countries ranked midway on the scale of 36 democracies in the world.

Concerning accountability – the question of the extent to which public officials have the public interest in mind – the finding is that only 42% of the public ascribe elected officials a high level of accountability.

The feature that was evaluated lowest in the institutional aspect is the public's ability to influence policy. The survey shows that only one-third of the public estimates that Israeli citizens are able to influence government policy. Hence, despite the relatively high evaluation of political participation, the sense is that citizens cannot really affect government policy.

Concerning the rights aspect, assessments divide into two: most of the public estimates that Israel enjoys freedom of speech (76%) and human rights (67%) at least to the same extent as other countries, but only about a fifth assess that Israel has social and economic equality. This is compatible with the finding that the gaps in the distribution of income in Israel, according to GINI ratings, have grown in recent years and are among the largest in the world.[24] Moreover, only about 44% of the public hold that equality prevails between Jews and Arabs in Israel, that is, that Israeli Arabs are not victims of discrimination. This finding too corresponds to the low-

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23   See Arian et. al, *The 2004 Israeli Democracy Index* (note 7, above), pp. 19-20.
24   See Arian et. al., *The 2003 Israeli Democracy Index* (note 1, above), pp. 80-83.

Figure 16

Assessing Democracy's Implementation in the Israeli Public in 2005[25]

High score = assessment that this democratic principle prevails in Israel (percentages)

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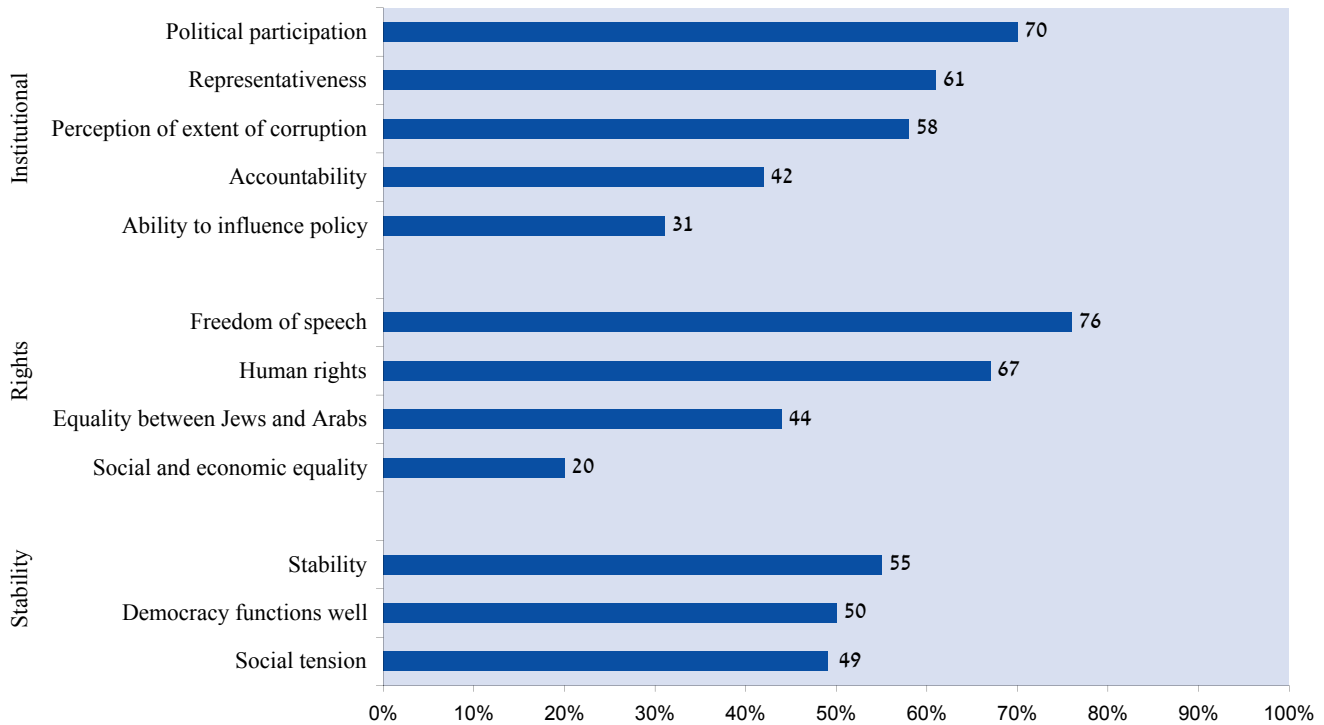
25   Below are the variables rated in the various aspects and the categories that were weighed: the perception of the scope of corruption – In your opinion, is there more or less corruption in Israel than in other countries? (less than in others or as in others: 1-3); representativeness – To what extent does the balance of power in the Knesset express, in your opinion, the distribution of views among the larger public? (to a large or to a certain extent: 1-2); political participation – In your opinion, do citizens in Israel participate in politics more or less than they do in other countries? (more than in others or as in others: 3-5); evaluating the ability to influence – To what extent can you or your friends influence government policy? (to a large or to a certain extent: 1-2); accountability – To what extent do you agree or disagree that a politician does not tend to take into account the view of the ordinary citizen? (disagree: 1-2); freedom of expression – In your opinion, is there more or less freedom of expression in Israel than in other countries (more or as in other countries: 3-5); human rights – In your opinion, is there more or less protection of human rights in Israel than in other countries (more or as in others: 3-5); equality between Jews and Arabs – Israeli Arabs are discriminated against as opposed to Jewish citizens (not at all or to a small extent: 1-2); social and economic equality – Social and economic equality is lacking in Israel (disagree: 1-2); satisfaction with the functioning of democracy – In general, to what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the functioning of Israeli democracy (satisfied: 3-4); social tension – In your opinion, is there more or less tension in Israel between groups in society than in other countries? (less or as in others: 1-3); stability – In your opinion, is the political system in Israel stable or not as compared with other countries? (stable or stable as in others: 1-3).

middle evaluation that Israel receives on the various rights ratings, including the rating on lack of political discrimination (see Figure 8 on page 35).

Concerning the stability aspect, the public's assessments with regard to social stability and various aspects of the regime's stability in Israel are in the middle range. About 55% of the public estimate that the political system in Israel is relatively stable, about half are satisfied with the functioning of Israeli democracy, and about the same number estimate that tensions between

groups in the society are lower than in other countries.

3. Democracy's Implementation in Israel According to the Three Aspects: A Comparison between 2003 and 2005

Figure 17 presents data on the public's evaluation of Israeli democracy in comparison to 2003.

Concerning the institutional aspect, the perception of the level of political participation in Israel dropped 8%, although estimates for both years remain relatively

Figure 17

Assessing Democracy's Implementation in the Israeli Public in 2003 and 2005

High score = assessment that this democratic principle prevails in Israel (percentages)
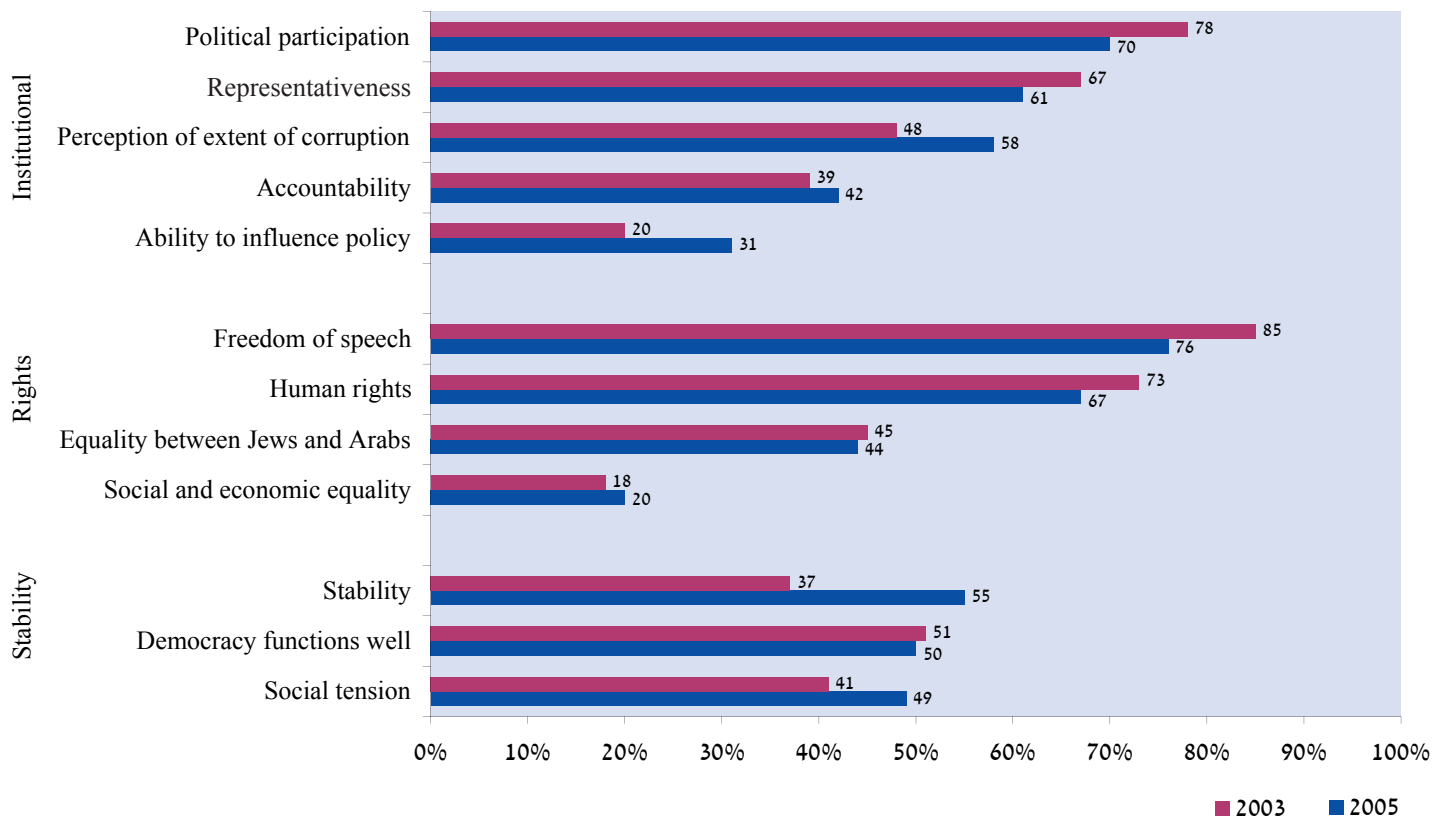
high (note that 2003 was an election year, which naturally gives a sense of higher levels of political participation). By contrast, a rise was recorded in the citizens' sense that influencing government policy is within their power. A 10% drop in the rate of those perceiving Israeli politics as corrupt was recorded in the last two years, despite the "objective" findings of the ICRG rating, which assessed that corruption had worsened in Israel since 2004.

Concerning the rights aspect, a drop was recorded in the evaluation of Israel's implementation of freedom of speech and human rights. In other words, dissatisfaction with the present situation has intensified.

Concerning the stability aspect, the public's estimate of Israel's stability is significantly higher in 2005; close to 55% of the public estimates that Israel is similar to or surpasses other countries in its level of stability, as opposed to 37% who thought so in 2003.[26] This stability is also evident in the rating of changes of governments reviewed in the previous section.

The widening social gaps in Israel are not evident in the self-perception of Israeli society. In 2005, half of the public held that the level of social tension in Israel is similar to or less than that prevailing in other countries, as opposed to about 40% who thought so in 2003.

4. Democracy's Implementation in Israel According to Various Population Groups

The public's assessment of the extent to which democracy prevails in Israel is subjective, and estimates differ in various segments of the population. Here we present the distribution of democracy's implementation in Israel 2005 according to three main groups: immigrants from the former Soviet Union (CIS), Israeli Arabs, and established Jewish "old-timers."

Figure 18 (page 50) presents findings on the assessment of the implementation of democratic principles in the **institutional aspect** according to each one of these groups.

Immigrants from the CIS assess elected officials as having less concern about accountability than other groups in the population. By contrast, Israeli Arabs assess representa tiveness and levels of political participation as lower than other groups, although more than half of the Arab public hold that these aspects of democracy are implemented in Israel. An interesting finding is that the Arab group, more than the others, holds that citizens can influence government policy.

Figure 19 (page 51) presents the assessments of these three sectors concerning the extent of the implementation of democratic principles in Israel 2005 in the **human rights and civil rights aspect**.

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26 Differences in the actual circumstances are worth noting. Early Knesset elections were held in Israel in 2003, when the 15th Knesset concluded its term. This was the second Knesset in Israel's parliamentary history in which two prime ministers from different parties were in office during one Knesset term, after special elections were held in 2001 according to the law of direct elections for the prime minister, and Ariel Sharon defeated Ehud Barak. Israel's political system did seem less stable then than it is today, when Ariel Sharon has been in office for five consecutive years.

Figure 18

**Assessing Democracy's Implementation in the Institutional Aspect: Jewish "Old-Timers,"
Immigrants from the CIS, and Arabs**

High score = assessment that this democratic principle prevails in Israel (percentages)
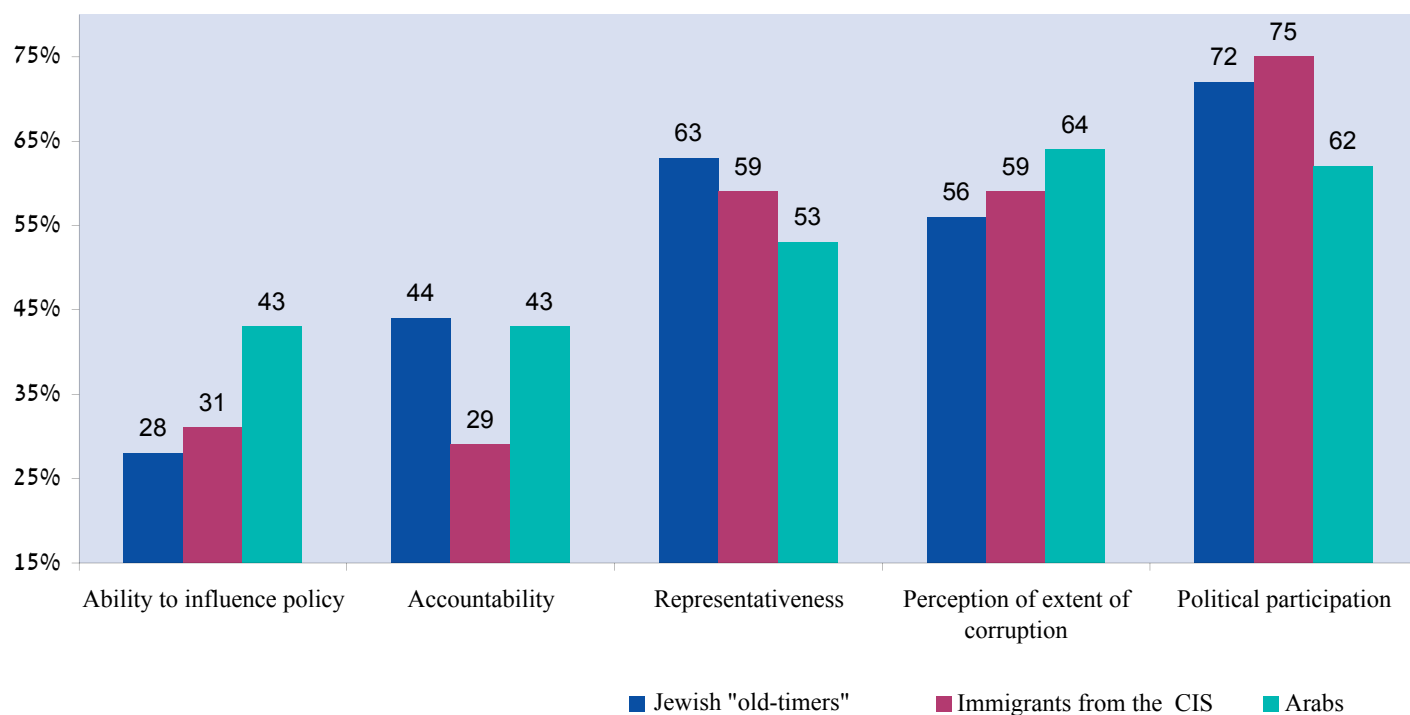
The figure points to considerable differences between the estimates of the various groups in this regard, and the most prominent difference is that between Arab and Jewish Israelis, both immigrants and "old-timers." The Arab national minority is particularly critical in its assessment of rights implementation in Israel. Only about one-fifth of Israeli Arabs hold that Jews and Arabs enjoy equal rights in Israel (that is that Israeli Arabs do not suffer from discrimination when compared with Jews), as opposed to about half who think so in the other two groups. Furthermore, less than two-thirds of Israeli Arabs hold that freedom of speech prevails in Israel, as opposed to about three-quarters of Jewish "old-timers" and about 87% of the immigrants. By contrast, the Jewish public finds that the most troubling issue is social and economic equality – only about 16% of the immigrants and about 20% of the Jewish "old-timers" estimate that this principle is implemented in Israel. Arab respondents also assess this datum as low, but secondary to the question of equality between Jews and Arabs.

Concerning the assessment of the **stability aspect**, relative agreement prevails between all three sectors. Yet about 60% of the immigrants from the CIS assess that Israel suffers from social tensions, as opposed to about half of the established Jewish residents and about 45% of the Arabs. Yet, all sectors concur in their level of satisfaction with

Israeli democracy – only about half of each group is satisfied with the functioning of Israeli democracy.

5. Democratic Attitudes among the Israeli Public, 2005, According to the Three Aspects

Another angle of public opinion examined in the Democracy Survey is the prevalence of democratic norms and attitudes in the Israeli public. Figure 20 (page 52) presents the distribution of attitudes according to the three aspects in the Index.

The findings in Figure 20 show that,

generally, a majority of the public expresses democratic attitudes. Concerning the **institutional aspect**, the Israeli public ascribes value to participation in a democratic state. Yet, it should be noted that the measures of the institutional aspect two test a tendency to involvement and interest in politics and not necessarily actual participation, be it institutionalized or not. A comparison of "objective" ratings with other countries, however, shows that the actual participation of the Israeli public in institutionalized politics is only on a middle level,[27] so that a gap separates declared interest in politics

Figure 19

**Assessing Democracy's Implementation in the Rights Aspect: Jewish "Old-Timers,"
Immigrants from the CIS, and Arabs**

High score = assessment that this democratic principle prevails in Israel (percentages)
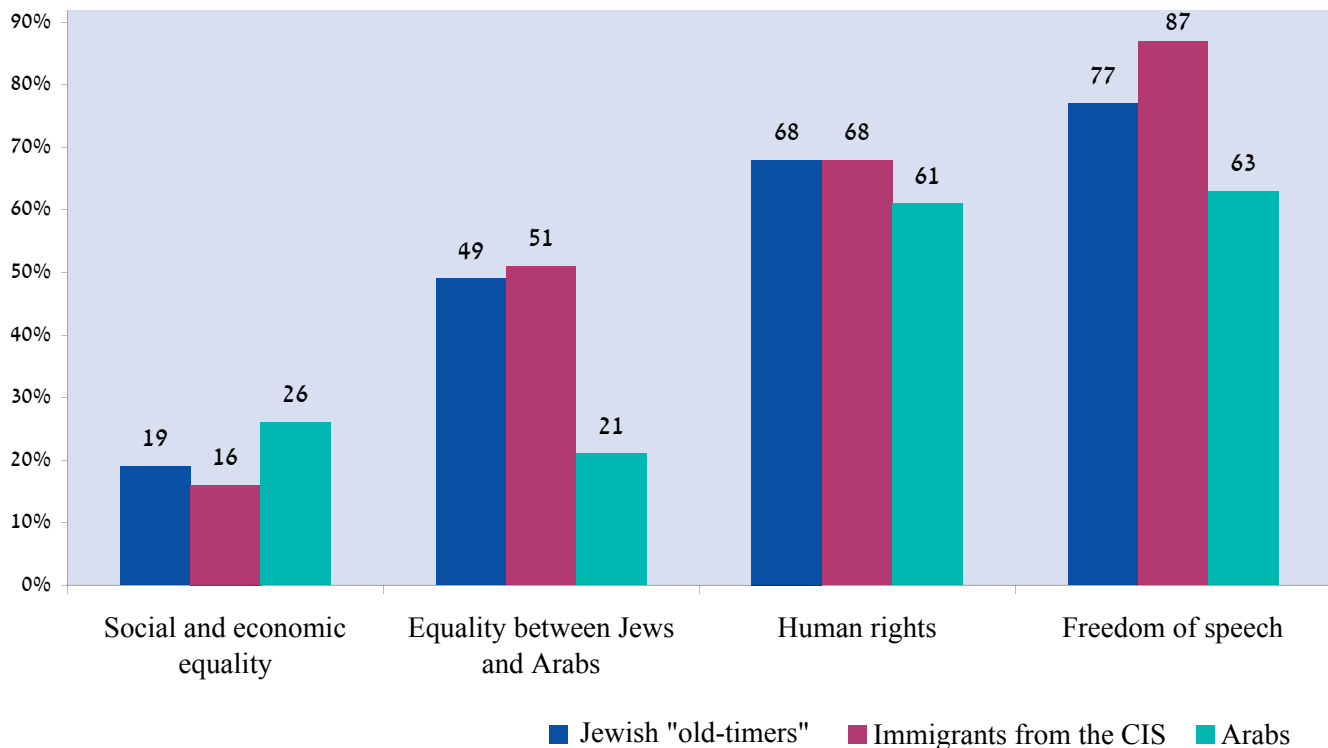
27   See Arian et. al, *The 2004 Israeli Democracy Index* (note 7, above), p. 18.

Figure 20

Democratic Attitudes: Israeli Public, 2005[28]

High score = expressing attitudes fitting democratic norms (percentages)
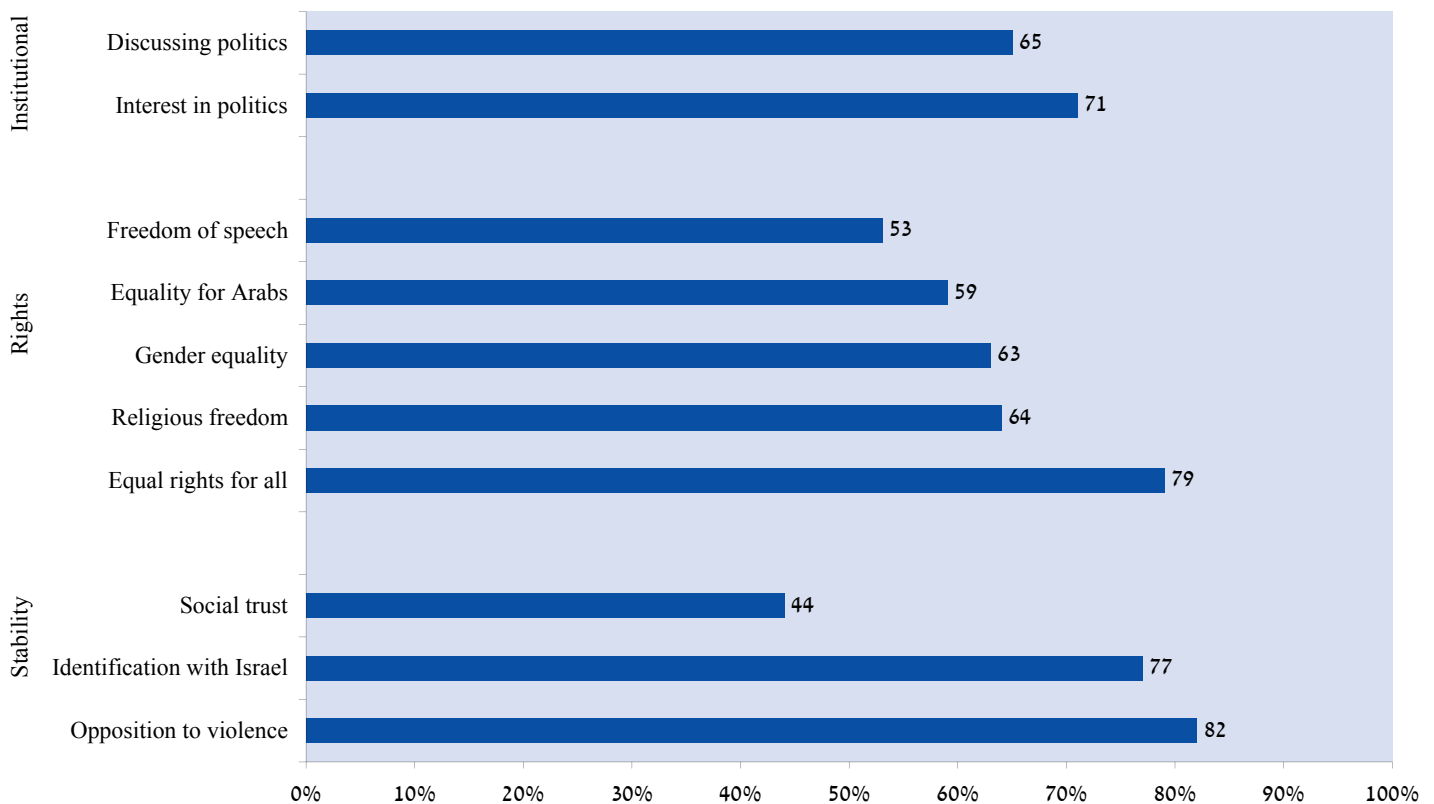
28 Below are the variables rated in the various aspects and the categories that were weighed: discussing politics – To what extent do you tend to talk with your friends and family about political issues? (talk: 1-2); interest in politics – To what extent do you take an interest in politics? (take an interest: 1-2); freedom of expression – A speaker should be forbidden to express sharp criticism of the State of Israel in public (disagree: 1-2); equality for Arabs – To what extent do you support or oppose each of the following: full equality of rights between Jewish and Arab Israeli citizens (support: 3-4); gender equality – Men are better political leaders than women (disagree: 1-2); freedom of religion – Every couple in Israel should be allowed to marry in any way they wish (agree: 3-4); equal rights for all – All must have the same rights before the law regardless of their political outlook (agree: 4-5); social trust – In general, do you think that people can be trusted or that one should be very cautious in relationships with others (trusted: 1-2); identification with Israel – To what extent do you feel yourself to be part of the State of Israel and its problems? (feels part: 1-2); opposition to violence – Using violence to attain political aims is never justified (agree: 3-4).

from actual involvement.

Concerning the **rights aspect**, about 80% of the public agree that "all must have the same rights before the law regardless of their political outlook." Yet, when these attitudes are examined vis-à-vis specific rights, support drops. Thus, only 50% of the Israeli public agree to allow a speaker to express sharp criticism of the State of Israel in public, and only about 60% agree on the need for full equality of rights between Jewish and Arab citizens. A gap also prevails between support for equal rights for Arabs and the perception of such equality in reality. In the previous section, we presented the finding that only 44% of the public assess that equality actually prevails between Jews and Arabs in Israel, as opposed to about 60% of the Israeli public who express support for full equal rights for Arabs. Concerning other dimensions of the rights aspect, support for gender equality and for religious freedom is similar: about two-thirds of the public express support for these rights.

Concerning the **stability aspect**, Israeli citizens express a very high level of identification with the country and of opposition to violence, but feelings are less positive regarding social cohesiveness. According to Israel's low ratings in the "hard" comparative ratings of stability, only about 44% of Israeli respondents express social trust, that is, they think that people can generally be trusted.

Figure 21

Democratic Attitudes: Israeli Public, 2003 and 2005

High score = expressing attitudes fitting democratic norms (percentages)

	2003	2005
Institutional		
Discussing politics	69	65
Interest in politics	76	71
Rights		
Freedom of speech	52	53
Equality for Arabs	53	59
Gender equality	65	63
Religious freedom	63	64
Equal rights for all	83	79
Stability		
Social trust	29	44
Identification with Israel	79	77
Opposition to violence	82	82
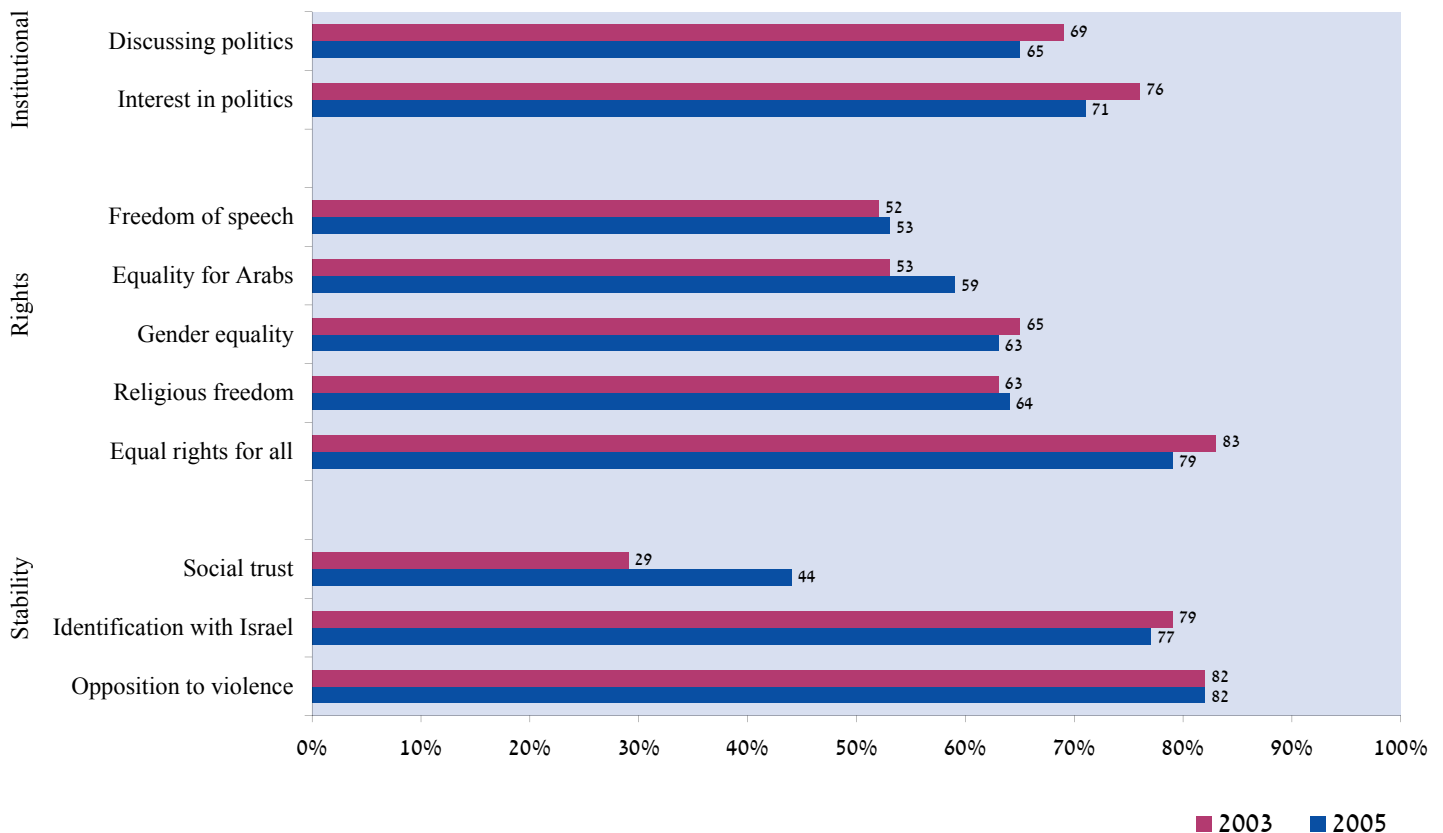
Figure 22

Opposition to a "Population Transfer" over Time

"The government should encourage Arabs to emigrate"
Do not agree at all and agree to a small extent (Jews only, percentages)
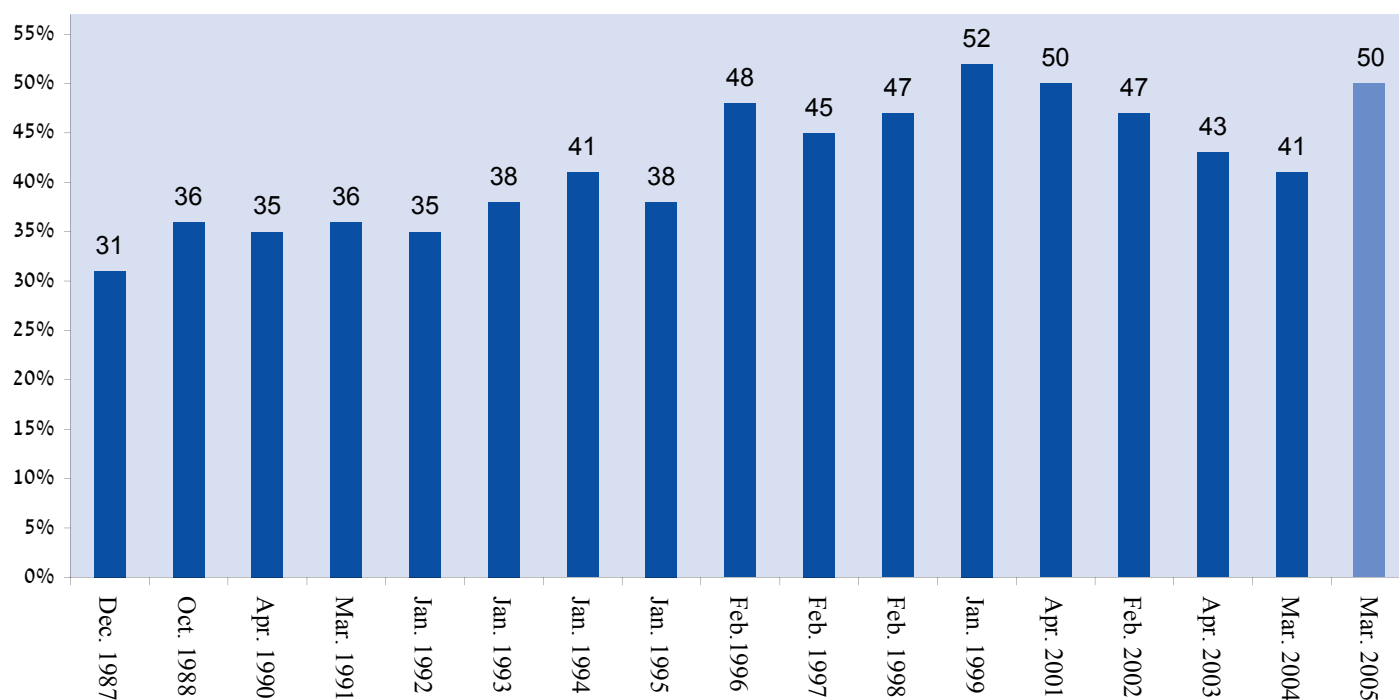
6. Democratic Attitudes Among the Israeli Public: A Comparison between 2003 and 2005

A historical comparison of the distribution of public attitudes concerning various democratic principles does not indicate any dramatic changes during the last two years. Figure 21 (page 53) presents the comparison between the Israeli public's level of support for democratic attitudes in 2003 and 2005.

The figure indicates that no significant change has been recorded in the attitudes of the Israeli public over the last two years in any of the features tested, possibly attesting to a certain maturity. The only difference was recorded in the tendency to express social trust, which has risen since 2003 though the score is still not high.

One issue on which longitudinal changes emerge concerns equal rights for Arabs. Support for a policy encouraging emigration of Arabs from Israel (a question posed only to Jewish respondents) is one sign of a non-egalitarian outlook. Figure 22 shows the scope of opposition among the Jewish public over a period of 20 years to a policy of encouraging Arab emigration.

As the figure shows, a significant rise was recorded this year in the opposition of the Jewish public to this discriminatory policy. For years, a majority of the Jewish public had

supported encouraging Arab emigration, but a moderate rise was also recorded in the rate of Jews opposed to such a policy. In 1999, for the first – and only time so far – more than half of the Jewish public in Israel expressed opposition to a policy encouraging Arabs to emigrate. This trend, however, has since reversed itself: the rate of Jews opposed to the encouragement of Arab emigration has gradually dropped, and a majority of the Jewish public supports a policy encouraging this minority to emigrate. Yet, as of the time of the survey in March 2005, encouragement of Arab emigration from Israel is no longer supported by a Jewish majority, and we see a return to the situation that had prevailed before the recent Al-Aksa intifada.

7. Democratic Attitudes According to Various Population Groups

The assessment of differences in democratic attitudes between various sectors of the Israeli public – Jewish "old-timers," immigrants from the CIS, and Israeli Arabs – also merits further examination.

Concerning the **institutional aspect**, Israeli Arabs tend to show less interest in politics than Jews, whether immigrants or "old-timers." Only about half of Israeli Arabs expressed an interest in politics, as opposed to about three-quarters of Israeli Jews. No differences were found among the three groups concerning the tendency to talk

Figure 23

Democratic Attitudes in the Rights Aspect: Jewish "Old-Timers," Immigrants from the CIS, and Arabs

High score = expressing attitudes fitting democratic norms (percentages)

	Equal rights for all	Freedom of religion	Equality for Arabs	Gender equality	Freedom of speech
Jewish "old-timers"	80	62	55	72	54
Immigrants from the CIS	78	85	49	52	42
Arabs	79	54	82	38	57

about politics.

Figure 23 (page 55) presents democratic attitudes in the three groups concerning the **rights aspect**.

Agreement with the general principle stating that all should have the same rights before the law, regardless of their political outlook, cuts across sectors. When this general declaration is broken up into specific rights, however, significant differences emerge among the sectors: immigrants from the CIS are less supportive of freedom of speech than the two other groups, and less supportive of gender equality than Jewish "old-timers." Nevertheless, a decisive majority of about 85% from among the immigrants of the CIS supports freedom of religion and agrees that every couple in Israel should be allowed to marry in any way they wish, as opposed to 62% of the Jewish "old-timers" and about 54% of the Arabs. Only about 38% of the Arabs support gender equality. Most of them agree that men make better political leaders than women, as opposed to half of the immigrant group and about three-quarters of the Jewish "old-timers" who do not believe that men have a political advantage over women. As could be expected, the Arab group shows higher support for equal rights for Arabs than the other two groups (a deeper analysis of tolerance toward Arabs among the Jewish public appears in Part II, section 3).

Figure 24 (page 57) presents the attitudes of the three sectors concerning the **stability aspect**.

The figure shows large differences between the Arab public and the Jewish public in general (including immigrants and established residents) concerning the level of identification with the State of Israel. About half of the Arab public feel they are part of the State of Israel and its problems, as opposed to about 80% in the other groups. Differences are also evident between the Arab public and the Jewish public in general concerning opposition to violence. About 72% of the Arab public hold that using violence to attain political aims is never justified, as opposed to about 85% of the Jews.

8. The Public's Degree of Trust in Key Institutions in Israel, 2003-2005

An accepted way of assessing the public's perception of the ruling institutional system and its leaders is to examine the degree of trust in them – which in Israel 2005 is not high. On the contrary, the Israeli public expresses dissatisfaction with the ruling political and government leadership and its institutions.

Figure 25 (page 57) presents the data concerning the public's trust in key institutions

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29 The data were collected in a survey conducted in February 2005 (see note 22 on page 45).

Figure 24

**Democratic Attitudes in the Stability Aspect: Jewish "Old-Timers,"
Immigrants from the CIS, and Arabs**

High score = expressing attitudes fitting democratic norms (percentages)

Legend: Jewish "old-timers" | Immigrants from the CIS | Arabs
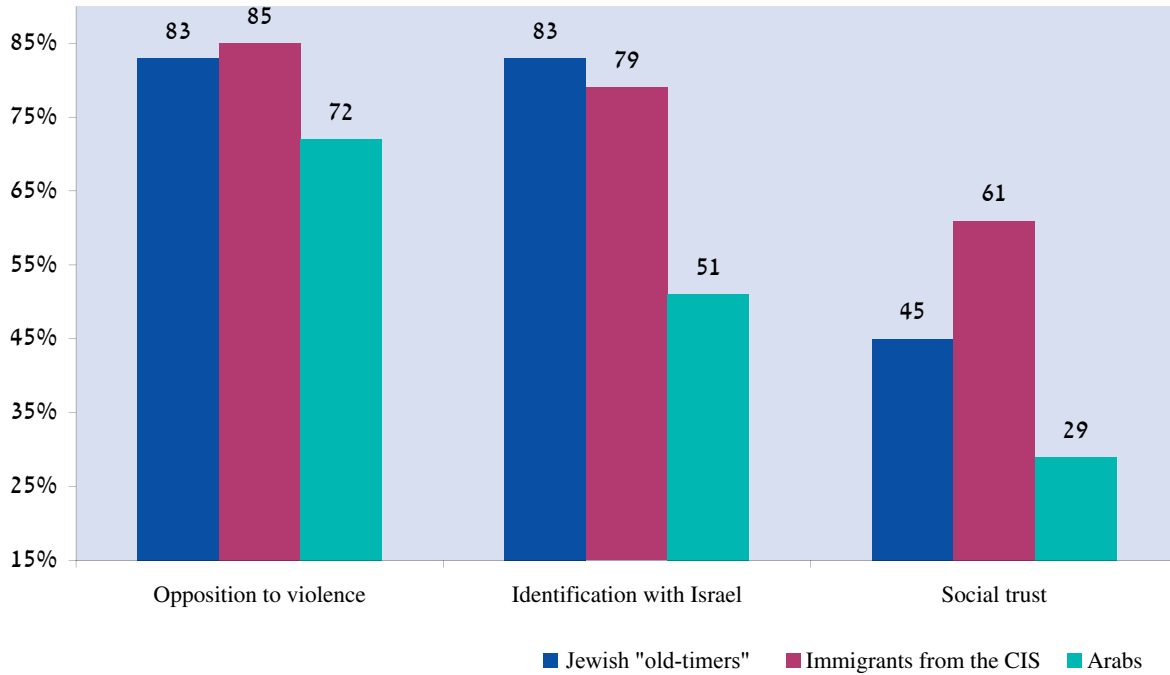
Figure 25

Trust in Key Institutions over the Last Three Years

**"To what degree do you have trust in the following people or institutions?"
To a large degree and to some degree** (percentages)

Legend: 2003 | 2004 | 2005
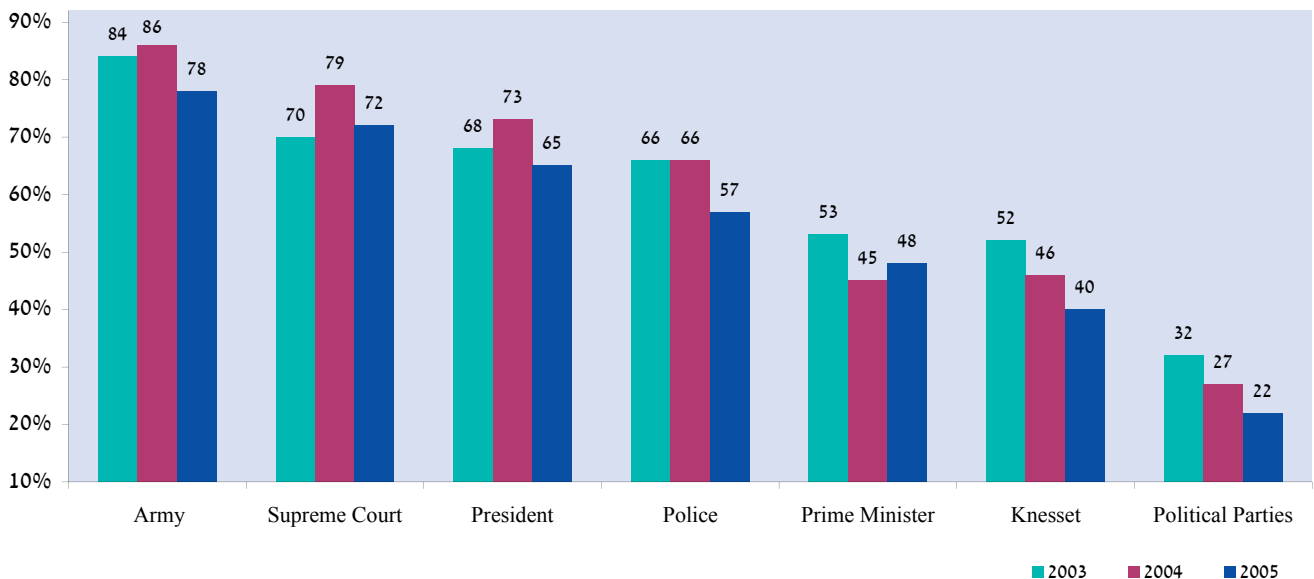
in Israel over the last three years.[29]

Generally, some drop in the degree of trust in key Israeli institutions is evident in 2005 compared to previous years. Particularly prominent is the drop in trust in the security institutions – the army and the police, as well as in political institutions – the Knesset and the political parties.[30] A sharp drop was also recorded in the public's degree of trust in the Supreme Court. Security and legal institutions, however, enjoy much greater public trust than political institutions.

A rise of 3% in the public's trust in the prime minister was recorded in 2005, although less than half of the public express such a trust. The gradual erosion of trust in the Knesset and the political parties continues, and, as of March 2005, only about one-fifth of the public expressed some degree or a large degree of trust in the political parties.

9. The Most Important Problem the Government Must Deal With: The Public View

In light of the discussion so far, a question emerges concerning the importance the public assigns to issues fundamental to democratic life. That is, what is the weight the public ascribes to issues touching upon the functioning of the democratic regime, to people in public office, and to the preservation of values and democratic principles, as opposed to burning questions of security, policy, and economic matters? The public's definition of the problem topping the list of priorities of Israel's decision and policy makers could suggest some answers.

The question "What in your opinion is the most important problem that the government must deal with?" has been included in the last three Democracy Surveys (2003-2005). This was an open question, and respondents were asked to answer in their own words, choosing only one problem. The respondents' answers in the 2005 Survey were extremely diverse and spaned a wide range of topics – security and political (the occupied territories, the settlements, the intifada, terrorism, the peace process, and the disengagement plan); economic (ensuring economic stability and growth and reducing unemployment); and social (care for the weak, education, growing violence, road accidents, political corruption, and protection of individual rights). The distribution of answers is presented in Table 2 (page 60).

As the table shows, the disengagement plan obviously tops the list,[31] given the dominance of this plan in the security-political public discourse in the period that preceded the survey, and even more so following it. Among those who mentioned the disengagement plan as the central problem that the government must deal with, some claimed the government must make sure it is carried out successfully, and others claimed that the government should cancel it. The salience of the disengagement, however, was not accompanied by a significant rise in the rate of the security and policy issues accompanying it. An interesting comparison is that between the centrality of the

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30 Although the change in the degree of trust in the Knesset in 2005 as opposed to 2004 is not significant according to a t-test for comparing averages between independent samples, assuming variance was identical. The other differences were significant. See Appendix 2.

31 The data for 2005 is from the July Survey (for details, see part 2).

disengagement plan in the public perception in the current survey, and the centrality of the separation fence in the public perception in March 2004. Although the building of the fence was at its height during the 2004 survey, only about 2% mentioned it as the main problem requiring the government's attention.

In the surveys conducted over the last three years, the division between those mentioning security/political issues as the most important, and those emphasizing economic and social topics, is more or less equal. Concerning economic and social issues, a clear and significant trend in recent years is a shift in focus from purely economic issues to questions involving social aspects.

Findings generally hint at the media's centrality in setting the public agenda, so that the fit between the media's and the public's agenda is very high. This is evidently true concerning new issues such as the disengagement plan, but also concerning issues that had been relevant before but have become more prominent in the media this year, such as violence, problems concerning the youth, road accidents, and the fight against corruption.

Some of the answers also touched upon the "democratic" issues included in the Index: reducing social gaps (social equality), violence (stability), individual rights, the system of government and the government's functioning, the struggle against corruption, strengthening the rule of law, and the relationship between religion and state. Yet, the rate of those who defined these as the most important issues requiring government attention was extremely low. Of the answers touching upon the democratic domain, the two issues that most respondents defined as most important in 2005 are reducing social gaps (about 6%) and violence (about 4%). Issues touching upon the functioning of the regime and upon a democratic value system had even lower levels of support: only about 3% of the respondents pointed to individual rights or the structure and functioning of the government as the most important problem, and even less mentioned the struggle against corruption and strengthening the rule of law. Less than 1% ascribed the greatest importance to religion and state relationships. Generally, however, the importance of some of the issues bearing on the functioning of the democratic regime and the existence of democratic values has increased in recent years.

Table 2

The Most Important Problem the Government Must Deal With:

A comparison between 2003, 2004, and 2005 (percentages)

The Topic	N=1227 January 2003	N=1177 March 2004	N=988 July 2005
The disengagement plan	-	-	17.3
Security (general)	34.8	25.9	12.7
The Palestinian problem, the future of the occupied territories, the settlements	5.0	2.9	5.8
Terrorism, the intifada	3.4	4.1	2.3
The separation fence	-	1.7	-
Total security issues	**43.2**	**34.6**	**38.1**
Foreign policy, the peace process (general)	6.8	6.2	3.9
Reaching a final settlement with the Palestinian Authority	-	1.2	1.1
Explaining Israel's policy abroad	-	0.3	0.3
Total foreign policy issues	**6.8**	**7.7**	**5.3**
Economy (general)	34.1	25.1	13.0
Reducing job loss, ensuring employment, preventing job dismissals	4.0	6.0	5.6
Economic stability, growth, raising living standards	0.3	0.9	0.7
Total economic issues	**38.4**	**32.0**	**19.3**
Social issues (general)	5.4	7.6	7.0
Education, youth	1.5	4.6	6.9
Closing gaps, helping the weak, poverty, welfare	0.8	5.4	6.1
Violence in society	-	0.9	4.1
Individual rights, the structure of the regime, the government's functioning	1.2	2.9	3.1
Fighting corruption, strengthening the rule of law	1.2	0.6	2.5
The unity of the people	0.6	0.3	1.5
Road accidents	0.1	0.3	1.5
Absorbing immigrants and taking care of their problems	0.1	0.2	0.9
Health, pensions	0.1	0.4	0.7
Religion and state	0.3	1.1	0.6
Ecology	0.2	0.1	0.2
Total social issues	**11.5**	**24.4**	**35.1**
Others	0.1	1.3	2.2

Part Two

On the Tenth Anniversary of
Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's Assassination

A. Background

In his last speech at the "Yes to Peace – No to Violence" demonstration on the Malkhei Israel Square in Tel Aviv on the night of 4 November 1995, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin stated: "Violence erodes the core of Israeli democracy."[32] Several minutes later, three shots killed him, shaking Israeli society and democracy to their foundations.

We will now attempt to outline the assassination's influence on Israeli society and Israeli politics during the past decade. First, we will present the findings of a public opinion survey entirely devoted to the question of how the Israeli public perceives Yitzhak Rabin, the assassination, and its implications for Israeli society and Israeli democracy. We will then present an analysis of the assassination's impact on Israel's political culture, followed by a mapping of identity types in Israeli society in light of the social rifts and the main bones of contention. We will conclude with a brief review of the leading studies dealing with the issues examined in this project, including the causes of the assassination, the public's feelings and reactions to the assassination, Yitzhak Rabin's image in Israeli collective memory, and the impact of the assassination on Israeli society and democracy.

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32 Yitzhak Rabin, "The Last Speech," in *Pursuing Peace: The Peace Speeches of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Zmora Bitan, 1995), p. 253.

B. Yitzhak Rabin as Reflected in Israeli Public Opinion, 2005

The figure of Yitzhak Rabin as prime minister, leader, and military commander holds an honorable place in the history and collective memory of Israeli society. On the tenth anniversary of Rabin's assassination, we conducted a public opinion survey devoted to an examination of various aspects of Rabin's image, to the assassination and its impact on society, the public, and the democratic system in Israel. The survey was conducted in July 2005 among a representative sample of Israel's adult population (18 and over), both Jews and Arabs. The sample included 2004 respondents, who were interviewed over the phone in Hebrew, Arabic, and Russian.

1. Yitzhak Rabin in the Collective Memory

Rabin and his political course were and still remain controversial in Israeli society, and a question therefore emerged as to how he would be preserved in the collective memory. This question was examined from several angles: the public's liking for Yitzhak Rabin as opposed to their liking for other Israeli prime ministers, the qualities the Israeli public ascribes to Rabin, and finally, the influence of Rabin and his political positions on the public's attitudes forward peace and security issues. For this purpose, we examined the overlap between the public's identification of Rabin with specific political outlooks and the measure of support for them.

An accepted way of examining the public's attitude toward a leader is to ask respondents to convey the extent of their liking for or dislike of a particular personality. In this survey, we asked respondents to express their feelings for prominent political leaders in Israeli history. Table 3 details the public's feelings toward seven leaders, differentiating between Arabs and Jews.

According to the table, as of 2005, David Ben-Gurion and Menachem Begin are the best liked leaders in Israeli society.[33] Yitzhak Rabin is next, while Ariel Sharon and Shimon Peres are much less popular.

Table 3 also shows large differences between Jews and Arabs concerning their liking for specific leaders. Particularly prominent are the differences concerning the support for Yitzhak Rabin: among the Arab public, he is the best liked Israeli leader and the only one enjoying high rates of support among more than half of the respondents.[34]

After Rabin, the best liked leader among Israeli Arabs is Shimon Peres. Note that liking rates in the Arab public do not entirely overlap the leaders' political affiliations. Thus, Menachem Begin was better liked than David Ben-Gurion, and support rates for Ariel Sharon among the Arab public are not very different from those enjoyed by Ehud Barak. Among the Jewish public, by contrast, David Ben-Gurion and Menachem Begin are the best liked leaders, and Yitzhak Rabin is not far behind.

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33   Note that the rate of non-respondents in the liking/dislike scales regarding Ben-Gurion was 11%, regarding Begin – 8%, and all the rest – no more than 3%. The reason for this is that some of the respondents, particularly youths, felt they did not know enough about either Ben-Gurion or Begin to have an opinion.

34   About 73% of Israeli Arabs reported liking Rabin in the high categories (7-10). The leader who follows him is Shimon Peres: 47% of Israeli Arabs reported liking him (in categories 7-10).

Table 3

Average Levels of Liking for Prime Ministers in Israel Among the Israeli Public According to Nationality

"Note your degree of support for or rejection of each one of the following people, when 1 indicates rejection/hatred and 10 indicates support/liking"

	Total sample	Jews only	Arabs only
David Ben-Gurion	7.12	7.68	4.27
Menachem Begin	7.05	7.55	4.51
Yitzhak Rabin	6.79	6.63	7.57
Shimon Peres	5.40	5.29	5.95
Ariel Sharon	5.23	5.57	3.43
Binyamin Netanyahu	4.36	4.64	2.89
Ehud Barak	3.58	3.51	3.98

Figure 26

Average Liking Rates for Various Israeli Leaders Among the Jewish Public,[35] 1984-2005

"Note your degree of support for or rejection of each one of the following people, when 1 indicates rejection/hatred and 10 indicates support/liking" (Jewish sample only)
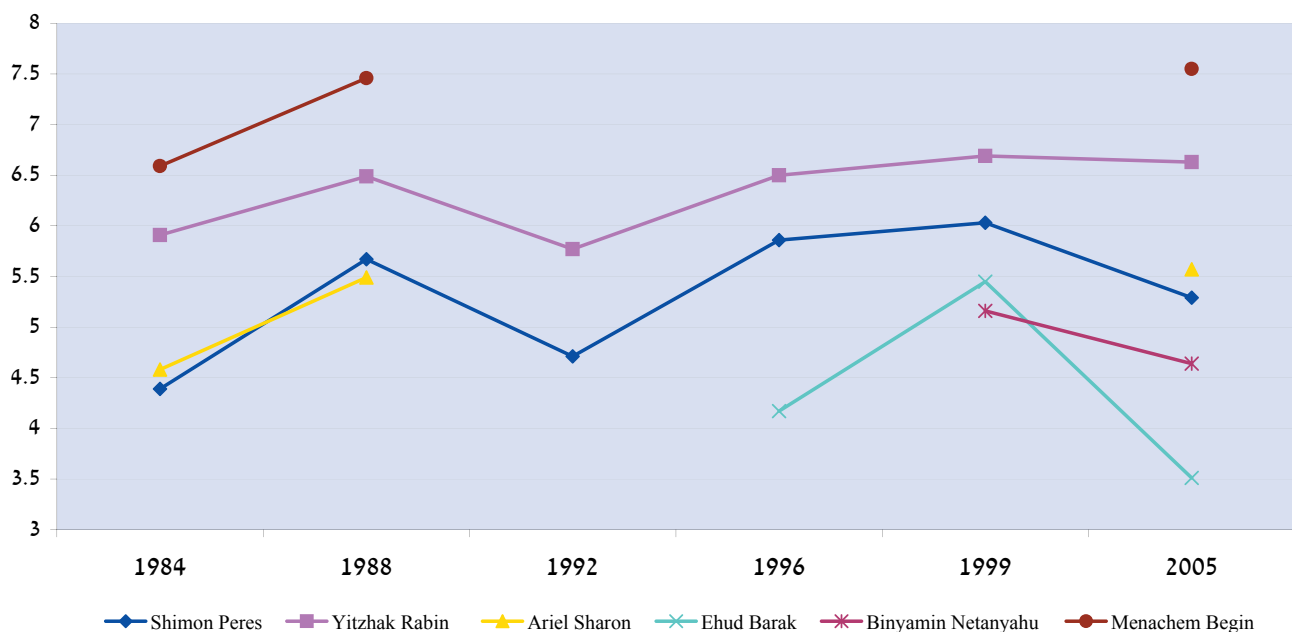
35 David Ben-Gurion does not appear in this figure because we had no data concerning support for him over time.

At first glance, the feature that all the best liked leaders share is that they are all no longer alive. According to this rationale, the public liking of these leaders, including Rabin, could reflect a nostalgic view of the past and the idealization of a deceased leader. But an examination of the public's liking for various leaders over time challenges this assumption. Figure 26 presents the average liking rates for the same leaders in 1984-2005 within the Jewish public.

The ranking of prime ministers according to the level of public support for them remains stable over time, and is neither directly nor decisively influenced by the length of their term, the circumstances of their leaving the political arena, or the time and circumstances of their death. Thus, Menachem Begin has been the best liked leader for many years and, after him – Yitzhak Rabin. Interestingly, Shimon Peres and Ariel Sharon enjoy similar levels of support among the Jewish public.

Given the circumstances of Rabin's death, we might well have assumed that the rate of support for him would increase significantly after his death. As Figure 26 shows, however, this assumption is not corroborated. Support for Yitzhak Rabin remained generally high over time, even many years before his assassination. In June 1992, immediately after he was elected prime minister, a slight drop was recorded in the support of the Jewish public for Rabin, but between 1992

and May 1996 (about half a year after the assassination) his popularity rates went up and have remained relatively stable since. Over time, then, the Israeli public appears to have developed a special liking for Yitzhak Rabin relative to other leaders, and the source of this support is not an idealization that could have ensued from the assassination.

For a deeper analysis of the public's attitude toward Yitzhak Rabin, respondents were asked to rank to what extent positive qualities ascribed to Rabin (including leadership, strength, trustworthiness, the ability to bring peace, and placing the good of the country above the good of the party), do indeed fit him. Findings show that a large majority (72%-84%) of the public in general hold that each one of these qualities fits him or fits him very well.[36] In this context, it is important to distinguish between various groups and sectors of the population. Figures 27 and 28 present the breakdown of responses to the question according to degree of religiosity and political leanings. Generally, a majority of people in these groups – religious and secular, right and left – tends to perceive Yitzhak Rabin as possessing leadership qualities, being strong, trustworthy, and concerned with the public interest. Nevertheless, large differences emerge in the ascription of positive qualities to Rabin according to membership in the group.

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36 Surveys show that the public have tended to ascribe positive qualities to Yitzhak Rabin in the past as well, though to a lesser extent. In December 1976, during Rabin's first term in office as prime minister, 70% of the Jewish public in Israel answered that Rabin has leadership qualities (to a very large, to a large, and to a certain extent), 72% answered that they trust Rabin at a time of crisis and during an emergency (to a very large, to a large, and to a certain extent), and 63% answered that Rabin inspires their confidence as prime minister (to a very large, to a large, and to a certain extent). Findings for 1977 were quite similar. In any event, it is hard to compare these findings to those cited here because the scales were different (four as opposed to five categories).

Figure 27

Qualities the Jewish Public Ascribe to Yitzhak Rabin, 2005, According to Degree of Religiosity[37]

"Following is a list of leaders' qualities. Concerning each one, to what extent does it fit Yitzhak Rabin?"

(Fits and fits very well; Jewish sample only) (percentages)

	Secular Jews	Religious Jews
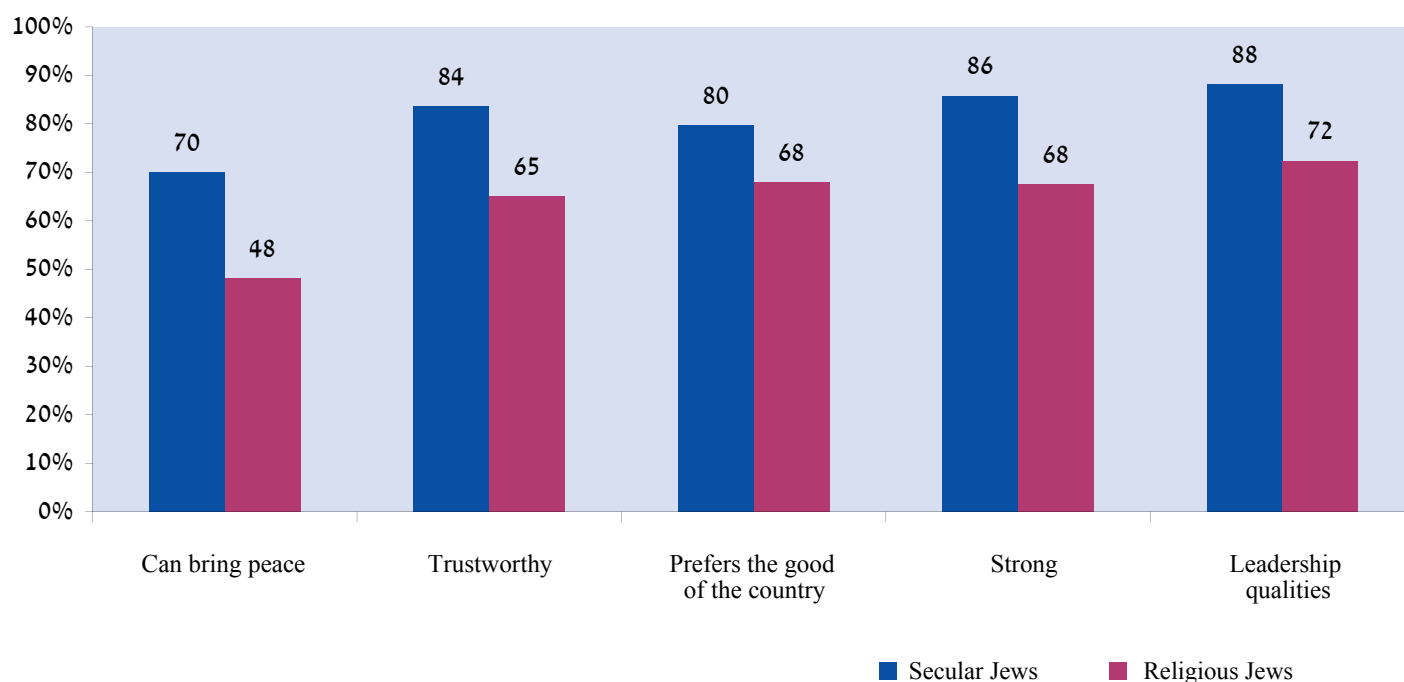
*   All differences were significant at a confidence level of 99% and more in an ANOVA test.

As figure 27 shows, secular Jews are more inclined than traditional Jews to ascribe positive qualities to Rabin. Yet both groups point to leadership as Rabin's most important quality (about 72% of religious Jews and about 88% of secular Jews ascribed this quality to him). The quality that both religious and secular Jews least ascribe to Rabin is the ability to bring peace. This is also the quality on which these two groups are most strongly divided – about 48% of religious Jews ascribed it to Rabin as opposed to about 70% of secular Jews (a gap of 22%).

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37   The division between religious and secular Jews was determined by means of the question, "To what extent do you usually observe religious tradition?" ("I do not observe the tradition at all" and "I observe the tradition slightly" as opposed to "I observe the tradition to a large extent" and "I observe the tradition meticulously".)

A similar pattern emerges in figure 28, presenting the breakdown of qualities ascribed to Rabin according to political leanings.

As shown here, those leaning to the political left ascribe more positive qualities to Rabin than those leaning to the center, and the latter ascribe to him more positive qualities than those leaning to the political right. Here as well, Rabin's most valued quality is leadership, whereas the least valued quality and the one on which the groups are most divided, is his ability to bring peace. Yet, note that about 90% of those leaning to the political left ascribed to Rabin all the qualities that were presented – almost without distinction – whereas those leaning to the political right tended to distinguish between them.

Figure 28

**Qualities the Jewish Public Ascribe to Yitzhak Rabin, 2005,
According to Political Leanings**[38]

**"Following is a list of leaders' qualities. Concerning each one, to what extent does it fit
Yitzhak Rabin?"**
(Fits and fits very well) (percentages)

	Can bring peace	Trustworthy	Prefers the good of the country	Strong	Leadership qualities
Left	90	89	90	92	91
Center	75	84	82	85	86
Right	47	62	62	69	74

■ Left ■ Center ■ Right
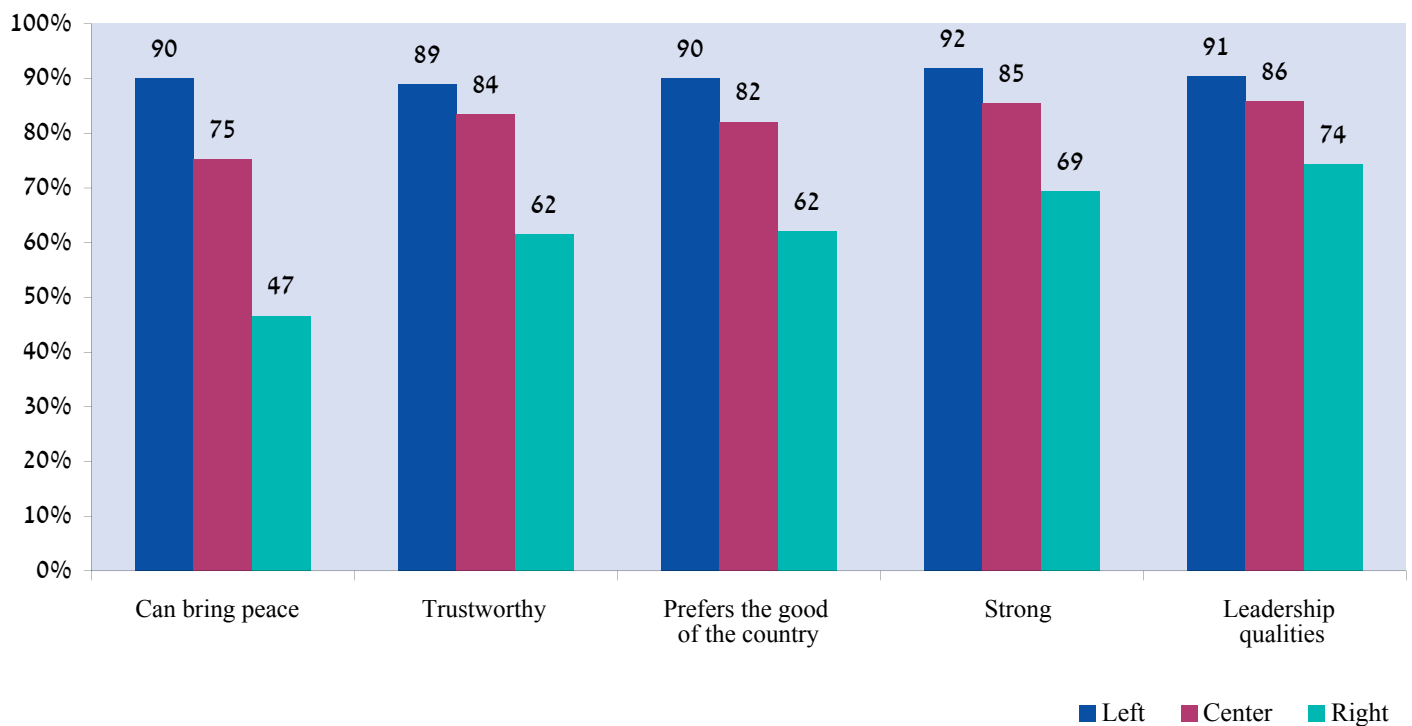
* All differences were significant at a confidence level of 99% and more in an ANOVA test.

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38 The breakdown along political leanings was determined by means of the question: "Where would you rank yourself along a left-right continuum, where 1 is the right end and 7 the left end?' (1-3 – right; 4 – center; 5-7 – left).

Figure 29

Agreement with Statements on Peace and Security
Ascribed or Not Ascribed to Yitzhak Rabin*

"Following is a series of statements on peace and security issues. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each one of these statements?" "Following is a series of statements by Yitzhak Rabin on these issues. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each one of these statements?"
(To some and to a large extent) (percentages)

Legend:
- Support for a statement when ascribed to Rabin
- Support for a statement when not ascribed to Rabin

Data values by statement (ascribed / not ascribed):
- The road to peace passes through the terrorist organizations as well: 59 / 49
- We must let the Palestinians fight terrorism, because they will do this without the High Court of Justice and without B'Tselem: 56 / 55
- If we fail to make peace, terror will not end: 74 / 68
- The road to peace is paved with sorrow and for the sake of peace we must take risks: 73 / 69
- Only a strong army can bring peace: 76 / 70
- We must opt for peace only if security is assured: 86 / 80
- The way of peace is preferable to the way of war: 93 / 91

*   All the differences, excluding the differences in agreement with the statement "We must let the Palestinians fight terrorism," were significant at a confidence level of 99% and more in an ANOVA test.

Finally, we examined Yitzhak Rabin's influence on public attitudes toward peace and security issues, that is, we tested whether Rabin's association with a specific approach increases its appeal. For this purpose, the sample was divided into two: half of the respondents were asked to express the degree of their agreement with several of Rabin's statements on peace and security, but without mentioning that they were his. The other half of the respondents were asked to express their level of agreement with the very same statements, but ascribed to Rabin.

Findings show that at least half of the public agrees with each one of Rabin's statements, both when they were ascribed to him and when they were not. The most widely accepted statement, with which more than 90% of the public agreed is: "The way of peace is preferable to the way of war," and

the most controversial statement is: "The road to peace passes through the terrorist organizations as well," with which only about 54% of the public agreed. As the figure shows, however, when a specific statement is ascribed to Rabin, the public tend to greater agreement with it. This is particularly evident concerning the statement least acceptable to the public "The road to peace passes through the terrorist organizations as well" (when this statement was not ascribed to Rabin, close to half of the respondents agreed with it, but when told that Rabin had said it, support went up to almost 60%). An exception was Rabin's well-known statement, "We must let the Palestinians fight terrorism, because they will do this without the High Court of Justice and without B'Tselem." About 55% of the respondents agreed with this statement, regardless of who had said it. Hence, Prime Minister Rabin appears to be a "positive figure," and the very mention of his name may increase the tendency to agree with his statements, even when controversial.

2. The Question of Blame: Explanations and Reasons for the Assassination

Since the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, researchers, journalists and many public figures have been concerned with the question of who was to blame, whether the circle of blame begins and ends with Yigal Amir, and how should he be dealt with as a result. In an attempt to examine empirically the distribution of public responses concerning the question of blame for the assassination,

an open question was included in the July 2005 Survey: "In your opinion, who is the main culprit in the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin? You can point to a person, a group, an institution, or a body." The question was formulated so that it would be clear to the respondents that it was not intended factually to clarify who murdered Rabin but to understand what person, group, or body bears the main responsibility for the assassination, according to the respondent.

Of all respondents, 86% answered the question. A relatively low rate of response was recorded among Arab citizens (73%) and among immigrants from the CIS (71%). We received a broad range of responses, and most respondents seemed keen on giving serious, non-trivial answers to this question.

The analysis of the responses shows the influence of several variables, including the respondents' nationality, degree of religiosity, and right or left political leanings.[39] Table 4 (page 72) presents the distribution of answers to the question of who the main culprit is in Rabin's assassination, divided according to 13 basic groups, comparing Jewish and Arab respondents.

The largest group of respondents related to the inner, restricted circle focusing on Yigal Amir, his character, personality, motives, and his past. Some noted only the name of the assassin, some related to his qualities, his psychological profile, or his ideology. Another 2% blame the influence of Yigal Amir's parents or people in his close surroundings.

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39   Ethnic origin and length of time in Israel did not influence responses to the question of who is to blame for Yitzhak Rabin's assassination. Nor were significant differences found between men and women, or between younger and older respondents.

The second largest group related to the second circle, the political-ideological group to which Yigal Amir belonged. About 18% blame the political right (9% indicated the extreme right, and the rest spoke of the opponents of peace, the settlers, the supporters of Greater Israel and Gush Emunim, "the right" or "the rightists"). Close to 3% claimed that those who incited against Rabin were to blame for the assassination, without explicitly indicating to whom they were referring.

The third circle, the broader circle of religious-Zionism, received relatively few mentions. Only about 4% of the respondents pointed generally to the religious, the rabbis, the religious establishment, or religious education. Another 4% mentioned religious extremists, fanatics, messianists, or specific rabbis who had issued a halakhic ruling against Rabin and who are actually part of the second, more restricted circle.

Table 4

Who was the Main Culprit in Yitzhak Rabin's Assassination?

Distribution of Responses (percentages)

The Culprit	N=1,726 General	N=1,491 Jews	N=235 Arabs
Yigal Amir	35.6	37.2	25.5
The political right	17.7	14.7	36.6
The security services	10.7	11.8	3.4
The religious, the rabbis	8.1	7.3	12.8
Society as a whole, the ambiance	6.0	5.3	10.6
Yitzhak Rabin himself	5.4	6.0	1.7
The whole political system	4.4	4.5	3.8
The inciters against Rabin	3.4	3.9	0.4
Specific people	2.4	2.5	1.7
Yigal Amir's close surroundings	1.9	1.9	1.7
The political left	1.7	1.9	0.4
The media	1.1	1.2	0.4
Conspiracy theory	0.5	0.5	-
Other	1.3	1.3	0.9

The fourth, widest circle, to which about 10% of the sample related, is the state, government institutions, the politicians, the political parties, the political polarization, the prevailing ambiance, the media, the entire society, and so forth. An interesting finding is that about 8% of the Arab respondents blamed the Jewish public in Israel as a whole, saying that the Jews (or the Zionists) were to blame for Rabin's assassination.

Some respondents did not relate to any of the blame circles and did not focus on who had committed the murder or on the factors that had prepared the ground for it, but rather on those whose task it had been to prevent the assassination and had failed. Most pointed to the General Security Services (the GSS or *Shabak*) (8%), and the rest pointed explicitly to Rabin's bodyguards, to the police, the Mossad, or the security services in general.

More than 5% blamed the victim and claimed that Rabin himself was to blame for the assassination, because of his character, his views, his policy, his willingness to return territories, his failure to persuade the people of the virtue of his policies, and so forth. Another 2% blamed Rabin's close environment, the Labor party, or the political left in general.

We received several other answers, which nevertheless deserve mention because of their uniqueness: democracy, freedom of speech, crushing the rule of law, intolerance, failure to follow the ways of the Torah, God's will, or fate. Some also mentioned the names of specific individuals; most frequently mentioned were Shimon Peres and Binyamin Netanyahu, followed by Ariel Sharon, Avigdor Lieberman, Yossi Beilin, Avishai Raviv, and Yasser Arafat. Some respondents ascribed the murder to various conspiracy theories, claiming that Yigal Amir was not Yitzhak Rabin's assassin.[40]

Evidently, respondents pointing to the security services in general and to the GSS in particular as the culprits are mainly Jews, as are those holding that Rabin was to blame for his own murder. Among Arab respondents, by contrast, a clearly evident trend is to relate to a broader circle of blame – the political right (among Arabs, the political right is the most common answer, and only afterwards Yigal Amir). Many Arabs point to religious Jews and to the Jewish population in general as the culprits. The distribution of answers among immigrants from the CIS closely resembles that of the Jewish sample in general. The only significant difference is that immigrants are much less inclined to place the blame on the security services.

Among the Jewish respondents' background variables in their responses to the open question about the main culprit in Rabin's murder, the degree of religiosity emerged as the most significant.[41] Table 5 (page 74) presents the distribution of responses to this question according to four categories of religiosity.

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40 The conspiratorial answers were the longest and included convoluted explanations as to who truly killed Rabin and why. Some proponents of the conspiracy theories offered original answers of their own to closed questions on the lessons of the assassination and on the sentence imposed on Yigal Amir.

41 This is equally true concerning the variable presented here – self-ascription to one of four groups (secular, traditional, religious, ultra-Orthodox) – as well as concerning the other variable testing for degree of religiosity in this survey – degree of observance of Jewish religious tradition (not at all, slightly, to a large extent, and meticulously).

The table shows that the higher the degree of religiosity, the lower the rate of those placing responsibility for the assassination on the political right, the religious, the rabbis and the inciters against Rabin, and the higher the rate of those blaming the security services, the political left, and Rabin himself. Whereas secular Jews in general relate mostly to the three inner circles of blame – Yigal Amir, the political right, and religious-Zionism – the traditionalists, and even more so the religious, refrain from blaming the political-ideological camp to which the assassin belonged and ascribe blame to Yigal Amir himself, to the security services, or to Rabin. The distribution among the ultra-Orthodox is the most deviant: about half blame the security services, Rabin, or the left, while hardly any of them holds that the blame is on the right (and obviously they do not blame the religious). The responses of this group differ on another aspect as well – all proponents of the various conspiracy theories, except for one, identify themselves as ultra-Orthodox.

Table 5

The Culprit in Rabin's Assassination According to Degree of Religiosity* (percentages)

The Culprit	N=810 Secular	N=381 Traditional	N=163 Religious	N=122 Ultra-Orthodox
Yigal Amir	34.8	43.0	44.2	23.8
The political right	20.7	11.5	2.5	0.8
The security services	5.6	12.6	27.0	29.5
The religious, the rabbis	11.2	4.5	0.6	-
Society as a whole, the ambiance	6.4	3.4	6.1	3.3
Yitzhak Rabin himself	4.8	6.0	7.4	12.3
The whole political system	3.8	7.1	3.1	3.3
The inciters against Rabin	5.1	3.7	1.2	0.8
Specific people	2.2	2.4	2.5	4.9
Yigal Amir's close surroundings	2.5	1.3	-	2.5
The political left	1.0	1.8	2.5	7.4
The media	0.6	1.8	0.6	2.5
Conspiracy theory	0.1	-	-	5.7
Other	1.1	0.8	2.5	3.3

* The χ^2 test (39 df) is significant at a level of p<0.0001.

Another variable strongly and significantly related to the ascribing of responsibility for Rabin's assassination is the way in which respondents placed themselves along the left-right continuum, as shown in Table 6. For the purpose of this table, respondents were divided into three groups – those who placed themselves on the right side of the continuum (1-3), those who placed themselves in the middle (4) and those who placed themselves on the left (5-7).

Table 6

**The Culprit in Rabin's Assassination According to Placement
on the Left-Right Continuum*** (percentages)

The culprit	N=590 Right (1-3)	N=462 Center (4)	N=624 Left (5-7)
Yigal Amir	41.0	34.0	32.4
The political right	6.3	16.0	30.3
The security services	16.4	11.0	4.3
The religious, the rabbis	3.1	9.1	12.0
Society as a whole, the ambiance	5.1	6.9	6.3
Yitzhak Rabin himself	9.2	5.4	1.6
The whole political system	5.9	3.7	3.4
The inciters against Rabin	2.7	3.0	4.0
Specific people	2.9	1.5	2.7
Yigal Amir's close surroundings	0.8	3.5	1.6
The political left	2.5	2.4	0.3
The media	1.4	1.5	0.5
Conspiracy theory	1.2	0.2	-
Other	1.5	1.7	0.6

* The χ^2 test (26 df) is significant at a level of p<0.0001.

The more people define themselves as belonging to the right, the less they will naturally tend to blame that camp for Rabin's murder, preferring instead to confine blame to Yigal Amir or to seek culprits elsewhere. On the left, by contrast, the natural reaction is to direct blame toward the right-wing and the religious camp. This trend resembles the analysis of levels of religiosity inter alia because of the overlap between religiosity and political-ideological affiliation with groups identified after the assassination as responsible. Generally, people in the religious sector and on the right wing of the political spectrum find it hard, for obvious reasons, to blame their own camp,[42] and therefore prefer to claim that Yigal Amir alone was to blame or, alternatively, to blame those whose task it had been to protect Rabin, or even Rabin himself.

3. The Public Perception of the Sentence Imposed on Yigal Amir

We examined the attitudes of the Israeli public concerning the punishment meted out to Yigal Amir, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassin, and concerning the suitable approach toward him while he is serving his sentence. Amir was convicted of Rabin's assassination and for injuring Rabin's bodyguard Yoram Rubin in aggravated circumstances, and was sentenced to (obligatory) life imprisonment and to a cumulative six-year imprisonment.[43] Moreover, he was convicted of conspiring

to assassinate the prime minister and of conspiring to inflict harm on Arab inhabitants, for which he was sentenced to another eight years.[44] The law was amended in 2001,[45] and it now states that the parole board will not recommend setting terms for the life sentence of a prisoner convicted for the assassination of a prime minister for political-ideological motives, and will not recommend clemency, although the new law does not in itself affect the authority of the president to grant clemency or reduce a sentence.

Generally, the survey shows that more than half of the Israeli public (about 55%) hold that Amir received the punishment he deserved, 35% think that the punishment was too lenient and he should have been sentenced to death, and 9% hold that the punishment was too harsh and that limits should have been set and he should have been sentenced to 15 to 20 years (there is even 1% who claim that he should not have been punished at all).

Figure 30 (page 77) presents the distribution of attitudes concerning Yigal Amir's sentence, broken down according to various groups in Israeli society (Jews versus Arabs, secular versus religious Jews, and division according to political leanings).

Naturally, the level of support for Rabin correlates with the attitudes concerning the punishment imposed on his assassin. This tendency distinguishes between Arabs and

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42 Further evidence of the problem rightists and religious people are facing in identifying the culprit for Rabin's assassination is that the rate of respondents in the right wing is lower than that in the left (84% as opposed to 89%) and the response rate among religious Jews is lower than the response rate among secular Jews (86% as opposed to 90%).

43 See *Yigal Amir v. The State of Israel* 96/3126, PD 50 (3) 638.

44 See *Yigal Amir v. The State of Israel* 96/8019, PD 53 (4) 459.

45 See the Law on Parole, 5761-2001.

Jews, between secular and religious Jews, and between those leaning to the right and to the left of the political spectrum. About two-thirds of Israeli Arabs are dissatisfied with the sentence imposed on Amir and think he should have received a death sentence, as opposed to 30% of the Jews, which is not a negligible group. Secular Jews tend to favor a death sentence for Amir more than religious Jews (about one-third of secular Jews as opposed to about one seventh of religious Jews), and those leaning left more than those leaning right.

A particularly large group of religious Jews perceive the sentence as too harsh and holds that terms should have been set for Amir's life imprisonment limiting it to 15 or 20 years. By contrast, only about 6% of secular Jews hold that Amir's sentence was too severe.

A similar picture emerges concerning political leanings. About 18% of those leaning right assess Amir's sentence as too harsh, and 3% of them think he should not have been punished at all. By contrast, only 3% of those leaning left hold that Amir's punishment was too severe, and none of them think he should not have been punished at all.

Figure 30

Attitudes toward Yigal Amir's Sentence, According to Various Groups in Israeli Society

"What is your opinion on Yigal Amir's sentence? Was the sentence what he deserved, too lenient, should he have been sentenced to death; the sentence was too severe, it should have been limited to fifteen to twenty years?" (percentages)

Legend:
- ■ His sentence was adequate
- ■ The sentence was too lenient, he should have been sentenced to death
- ■ The sentence was too harsh, it should have been limited to 15-20 years
- ■ He should not have been punished at all
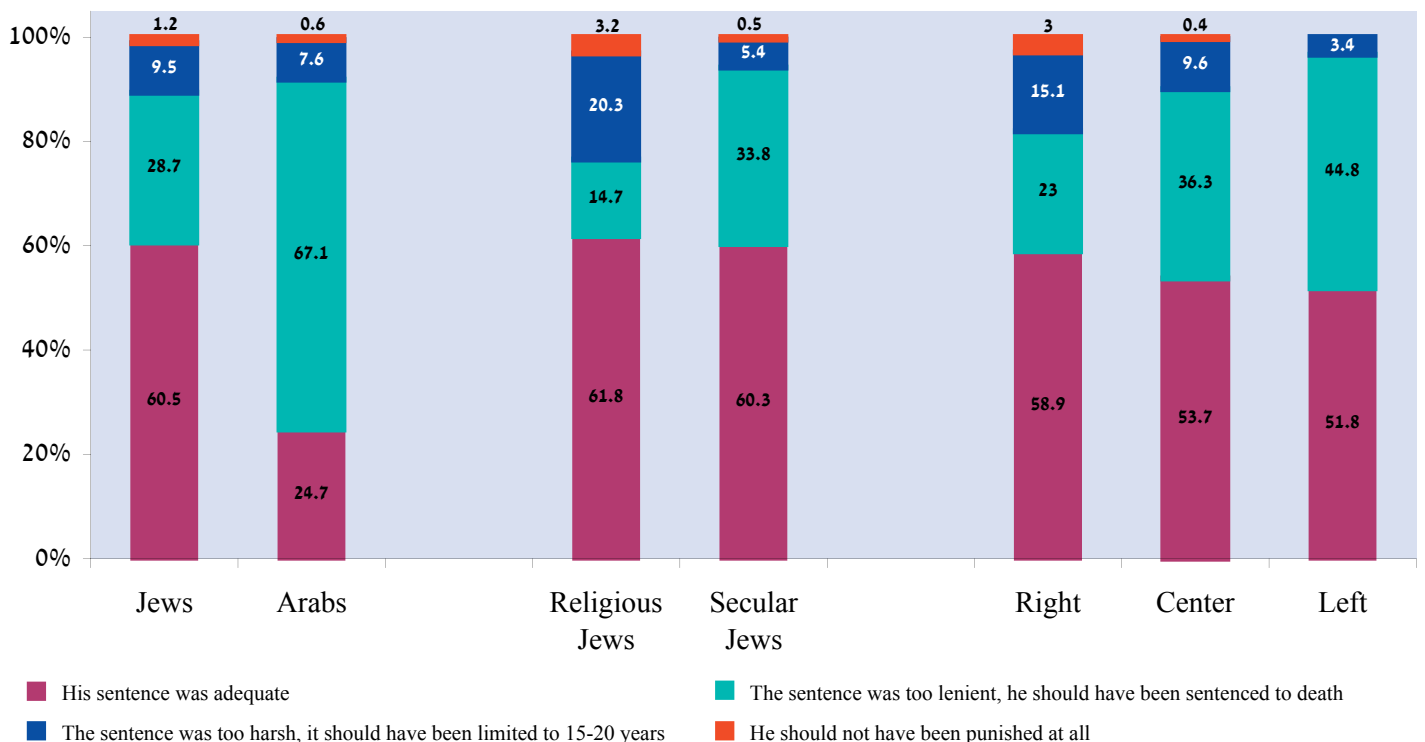
We then examined the public attitudes concerning the proper behavior toward Amir – how should the Prisons Authority relate to him, should his eventual release be considered, what are the chances of his release, and should he be allowed to marry and granted all the implied rights?[46]

First, note that slightly more than half of the public (52%) held that the Prisons Authority should relate to Amir precisely as they relate to any other prisoner sentenced to life for murder. By contrast, a large group of about 46% of the public held that Amir should be treated more harshly, because he assassinated a prime minister. About 2% of the public think that he should be treated more leniently, because the reasons for the assassination were political and a matter of conscience. We also found that about 20% of the public hold that Amir's release during his lifetime should be considered, as opposed to more than 80% who oppose this. Nevertheless, less than 30% of the public maintain there is "no chance" that Yigal Amir will be released from prison before his death. The larger group, almost half, holds that the chances of this are small, and about 22% of the public hold that the chances of Amir's release before his death are high.

Another issue, which examines whether a distinction should be drawn between the murderer of a prime minister and any other murderer, concerns the right to marry and have conjugal relations. This right is generally granted to all prisoners in Israel, but the Prisons Authority denied Amir's request to marry Larissa Trimbobler. A motion to limit this right in regard to Amir was submitted to the Knesset but rejected, and the Supreme Court finally ruled that the two should not be permitted, for security reasons, to have conjugal relations.[47] The findings, however, show that almost 40% of the public do not agree with this ruling and hold that Amir should be allowed to marry and be granted all the implied conjugal rights.

Finally, we examined the likelihood of another political assassination in Israel. As detailed in Table 7 (page 79), close to 84% of the Israeli public hold that it could happen again. About half of the public are certain that an assassination will happen again, and about one-third think it is certainly possible. Six years ago, in 1999, 78% of the public also thought similarly – an absolute majority of Israel's population.

The most salient finding is that a high percentage of people in all groups of society estimate that a political assassination will happen again. Nevertheless, secular Jews and those leaning left are more certain. Almost 90% of secular and left-leaning Jews think that a political assassination (at various levels) could happen again, as opposed to about 80% of religious and right-leaning Jews.[48] The lowest estimates concerning the

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46   The following were the questions: "How should the Prisons Authority relate to Yigal Amir in your opinion?" "Should Yigal Amir's eventual release be considered?" "What are the chances, in your opinion, of Yigal Amir being released from prison before his death?" "Do you feel that Yigal Amir should or should not be allowed to marry and be granted all the implied rights?"

47   Amir, however, married Ms. Trimbobler by proxy according to Jewish ritual, and this marriage was recognized as valid on 10 July 2005 by the Jerusalem Rabbinical Court.

48   Differences according to degree of religiosity and according to political leaning are significant at a confidence level of at least 99%.

likelihood of another political assassination were found in the group of immigrants from the CIS, although a large majority among them (69%) also thought it could happen.

4. The Influence of the Assassination on the Israeli Public, on Israeli Society, and on Israeli Democracy

In this section, we examine the extent to which public believes that Rabin's assassination has influenced Israeli society and what is the nature of this influence is. First, we will discuss the acknowledged influence of Rabin's assassination on the individual, that is, the influence that the respondents ascribe to their personal and political leanings and on their attitudes to various groups in society. Second, we will present the public's evaluations concerning the question of whether the assassination has influenced Israeli society and public

life and the perception of its character (positive/negative). We will then focus on three main topics that research has shown to be influenced by the assassination – peace, democracy, and political polarization in Israel.

We will first examine the acknowledged influence of Rabin's assassination on the individual's political leanings.[49] In July 2005, most of the Jewish public declared that Rabin's assassination had not changed their attitudes concerning the peace process (79%) or their attitude concerning territorial concessions (72%). When the assassination did change someone's attitude toward the peace process, the influence was mostly in the direction of support for the process: about 16% of those who changed their views in the wake of the assassination became more supportive of the peace process, as opposed to about 5% who became less supportive. These findings are identical to those of 1999.

Table 7

Assessing the Likelihood of Another Assassination in Israel, in 1999 and in 2005

"In your opinion, could there be another political assassination in Israel?" (percentages)

	September 1999	July 2005
Definitely yes	30.3	33.6
Possibly yes	47.3	49.9
Possibly no	14.2	13.1
Definitely no	8.1	3.4

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49   The data for the entire sample are quite similar, and the distribution is presented in Appendix 3.

By contrast, the acknowledged influence of the assassination on the readiness of the Jewish public to make territorial concessions is quite symmetrical – about 12% are more ready to make concessions following Rabin's assassination, as opposed to about 10% who are less ready. Increased support for the peace process, then, in the context of Rabin's assassination, is not necessarily related to readiness to make concessions. Respondents who declared that they had changed their attitude concerning the peace process could definitely have meant their striving for peace as a general value and not necessarily Rabin's specific plan, which included territorial concessions as well.

A finding that strengthens this impression is the comparison between a declaration supporting the Oslo Accords in real time and in retrospect. In answer to the question, "In retrospect, what is your opinion about the Oslo Accords that the Rabin government signed with the Palestinians?" 44% of the Jewish public said they are opposed or definitely opposed (close to another 20% said they do not support and do not oppose the agreement). On the question, "Did you support the Oslo Accords when they were signed?" about half of the respondents said they had been opposed or very opposed, and half said they had been supportive or very supportive.[50] The attitudes of the Jewish public concerning the Oslo process, then, do not appear to have changed much compared

to their attitudes when Rabin had been in office, and we are speaking of two camps of equal size.

We now turn to the analysis of how Rabin's assassination has influenced the attitudes of the individual toward various groups in society. In July 2005, ten years after the assassination, most of the Jewish public report they have not changed their attitude toward religious Jews and toward settlers in the territories; about 80% of the Jewish respondents indicate they have not changed their attitude toward religious Jews and about 78% have not changed their attitude toward the settlers.

Yet, as evident from Figure 31 (page 81) – which presents the declared influence of Rabin's assassination on the attitude of the Jewish public toward religious Jews and toward the settlers in 1996, in 1999 and in 2005 – about one sixth of the Jewish respondents declared that their attitudes toward these two groups had been negatively influenced by the assassination, and about 3% to 4% declared that the assassination had had a positive influence on their attitude toward these two groups.[51]

In the course of the ten years since the assassination, we can see that the negative attitude toward the religious group in the wake of the assassination has been very much tempered. About three months after the assassination, one-third of the Jewish public declared that their attitude to the religious

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50　Findings are reported only for valid Jewish respondents. For all Jewish respondents, the distribution remains symmetrical: about 46% were supportive or very supportive, about 46% were opposed or very opposed, and about 8% responded on their own initiative that they do not remember, had not been interested in the subject, had been too young, or had not been in the country.

51　The comparison involved only the Jewish public, because past data were confined to a Jewish sample. In any event, the distribution of the entire sample is quite similar to the distribution within the Jewish sample, as evident in the appendix.

group had become more negative, and about three and a half years later about 45% of the Jewish public said so – as opposed to 17% today.

Concerning the settlers, a different trend is evident: the negative attitude toward this group in the Jewish public in general following the assassination has remained relatively stable over the last decade. Regarding the level of support for the settlers, however, we see longitudinal changes: immediately after the assassination, in February 1996, 9% of the respondents attested to a rise in their identification with this group, and in September 1999, about 15% declared that their attitude to the settlers after the assassination had become more positive. Yet, in July 2005, at the height of the settlers' protests against the implementation of the disengagement plan, only 4% of the Jewish respondents reported a rise in their support for the settlers.

Figure 31

The Influence of Rabin's Assassination on the Attitude of the Jewish Public to Religious Jews and to the Settlers in the Territories

"Following Rabin's assassination, have you changed or not changed your attitude toward religious Jews?" "Following Rabin's assassination, have you changed or not changed your attitude toward the settlers in the territories?"
(More positive/more negative; Jewish sample only) (percentages)

	Attitude to religious Jews			Attitude to the settlers		
	Feb. 1996	Sep. 1999	July 2005	Feb. 1996	Sep. 1999	July 2005
More positive	3	6	3	9	15	4
More negative	34	45	17	15	19	18
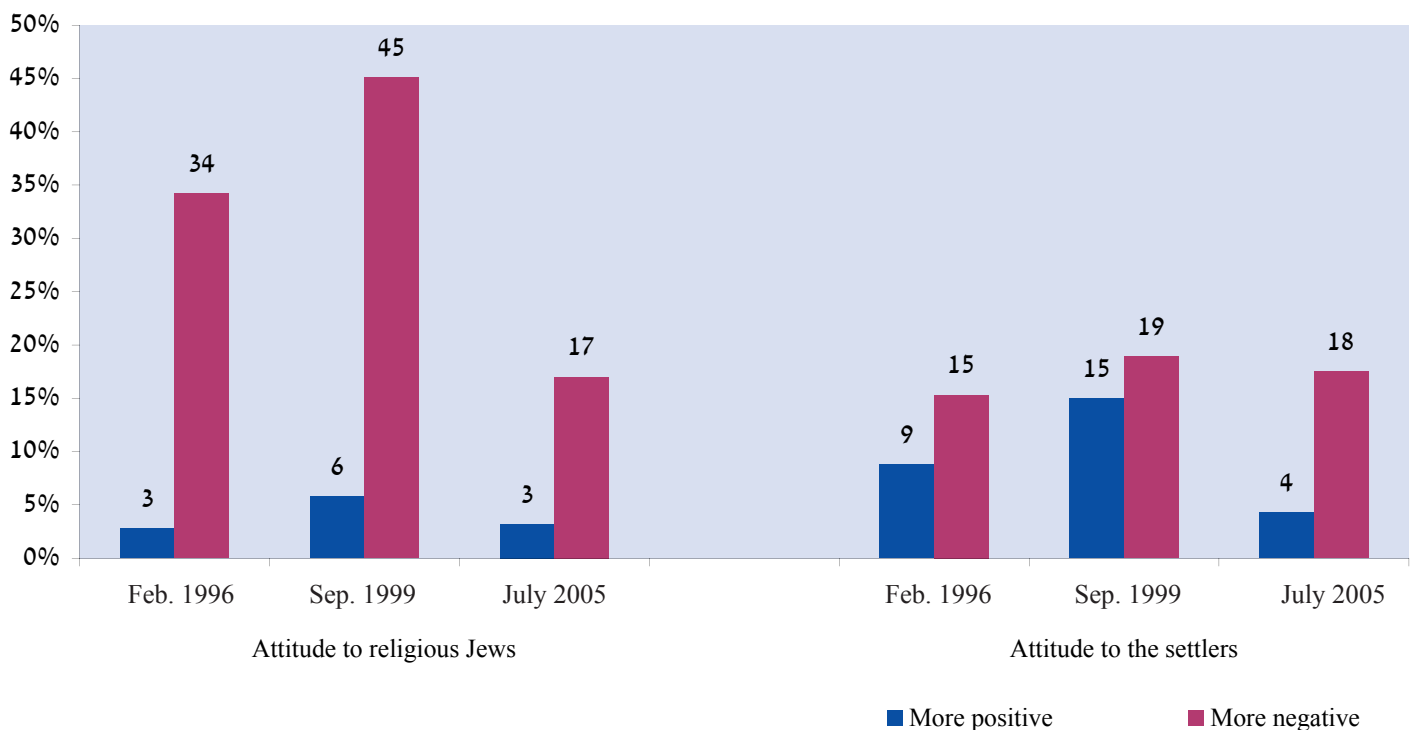
Figure 32 presents the public's assessments on the question of whether the assassination was a significant event in the history of the country, broken down according to the main sectors of society. As we can see, differences on this question between the various groups are large. Generally, the groups that perceive Rabin's assassination as the most significant event are Israeli Arabs and those leaning left in the political spectrum.

In a division according to nationality, we see that the immigrants from the CIS tend to ascribe less significance to Rabin's assassination: about 65% of them presented the assassination as one of the most significant or as the most significant event, as opposed to slightly less than 80% of Jewish "old-timers" and about 85% of the Arabs. Similarly, about 65% of religious Jews considered the assassination as a significant event, as opposed to close to 80% of secular Jews. About 9% of religious Jews said that the assassination was not particularly significant.

Figure 32

The Perceptions of Rabin's Assassination as a Crucially Significant Event in the History of Israel, According to Groups in Society*

"Ten years after Yitzhak Rabin's assassination, to what extent was the assassination a significant event in the history of Israel?" (percentages)
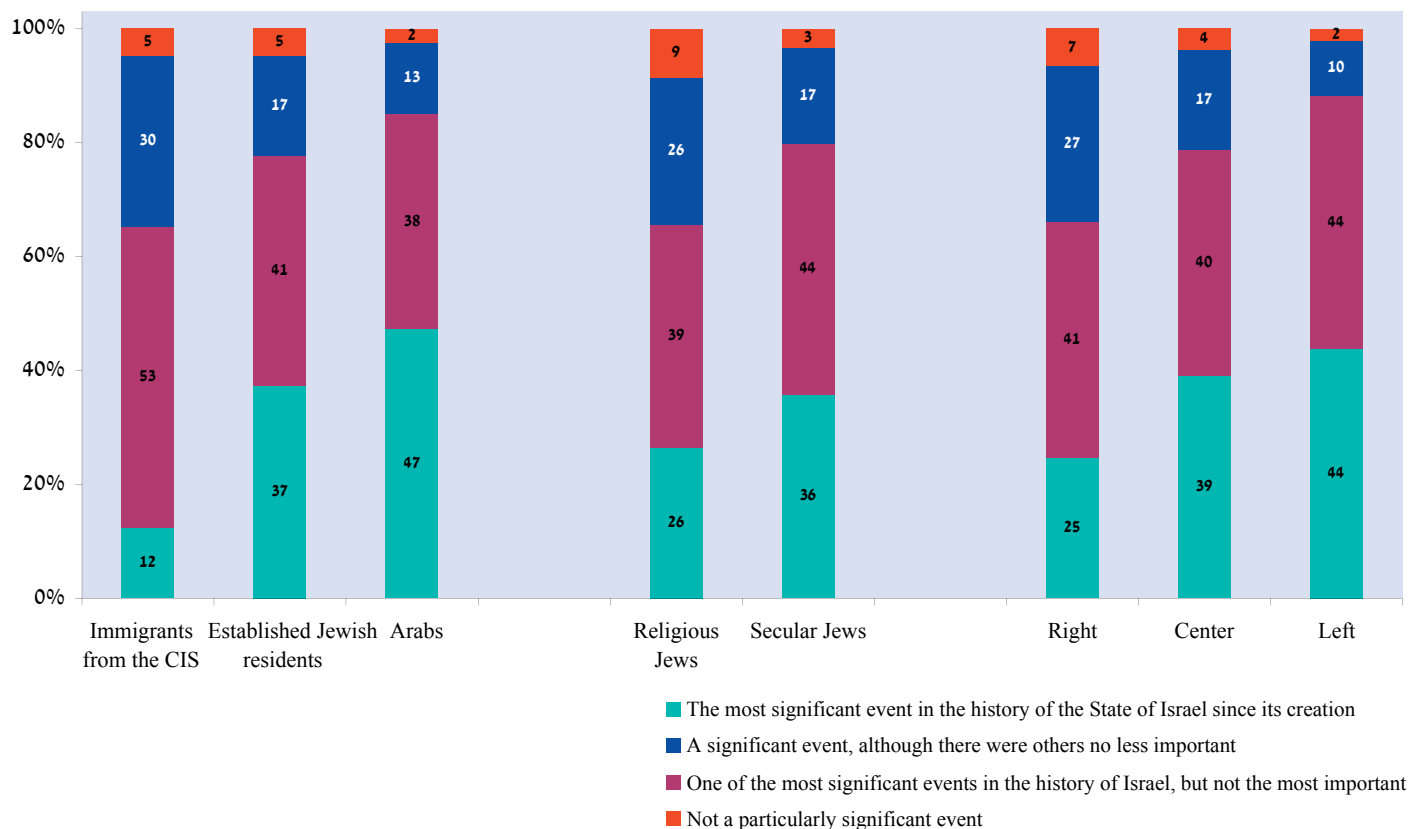
* All differences were significant at a confidence level of 99% and more in an ANOVA test.

Figure 33

Assessing the Influence of Rabin's Assassination on the Prospects for Peace, Democracy, and Political Polarization of Jews over Time

"Following Rabin's assassination, have the prospects of peace changed or not changed in your opinion?"; "Following Rabin's assassination, has the strength of Israeli democracy changed or not changed in your opinion?"; "Following Rabin's assassination, has political polarization increased or decreased in your opinion?"
(Increased/decreased; Jewish sample only) (percentages)
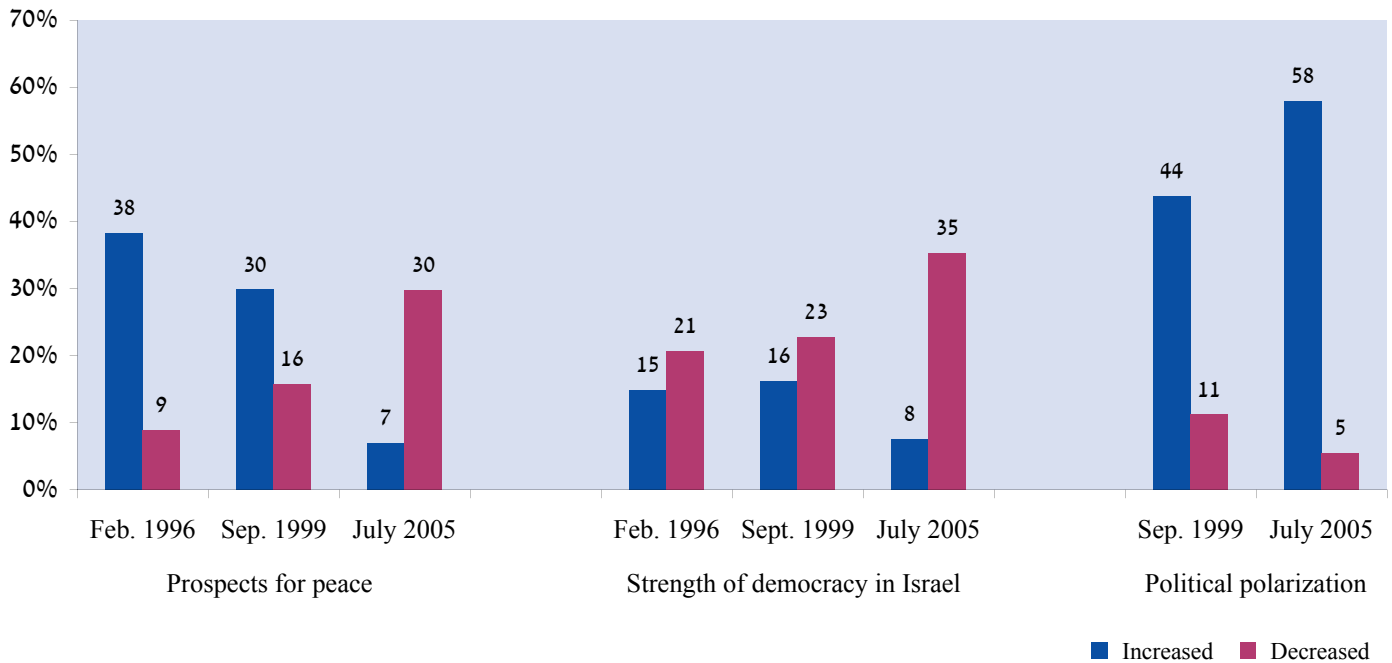
We then presented the question, "In your opinion, did Rabin's assassination influence the country's public life?" Findings show that only 19% of the Israeli public hold that the assassination had no influence on public life. By contrast, more than 40% of the Israeli public in general ascribe very large influence to the assassination, and about 40% ascribe some influence to it. Of the respondents who ascribed influence to the assassination, 85% agreed that the influence on public life had been negative.

In 1999, Rabin's assassination was perceived as a more influential event than today, but less negative. In identical questions asked then, 54% of the Israeli public in general held that Rabin's assassination had a large influence on public life, and about 30% ascribed some influence to it (17% said that the assassination had no influence). Today, however, this influence is perceived as more negative. In September 1999, when Ehud Barak was prime minister, about 70% of the public held that the influence of Rabin's assassination had been negative, as opposed to 85% who believe so today.

Figure 33 shows the attitudes of the Jewish public concerning the influence of Rabin's assassination on the prospects for peace, on the strength of Israeli democracy

and on political polarization in the country at three points in time – immediately after the assassination (February 1996), about three and a half years later (September 1999), and ten years after the assassination (July 2005).

We see that, over the years, the sense of Rabin's assassination as a negative influence on Israeli society has increased greatly. In 1999, 44% of the public held that political polarization had deepened following the assassination, as opposed to about 58% of the Jews who thought so in 2005. In 1996 and 1999, slightly more than one-fifth of Israeli Jews expressed the view that Rabin's assassination had a negative influence on Israeli democracy, as opposed to about one-third who think so today. In 1996, less than 10% held that prospects for peace had diminished following the assassination, while 16% of the public thought so in 1999. Today, however, about 30% of the Jewish public hold that Rabin's assassination reduced the chances for peace.

Immediately after the assassination, less than 40% of the Jewish public held that the assassination had actually increased the prospects of peace. Three years later, when Ehud Barak was prime minister, the number of those who thought so declined by about 8%. Today, only 7% hold that Yitzhak Rabin's assassination increased the prospects of peace. Immediately after the assassination, then, the public felt that nothing could stop the peace process, and the assassination even strengthened the sense of urgency for peace. Over time, however, this attitude has been reversed and replaced by the sense that Rabin's assassination actually delayed, or even halted, the peace process.

5. Drawing Lessons from the Assassination

Part of the public's reaction to the assassination was the demand that various groups in society, government, and the security establishment learn lessons from it. The issue remained on the public agenda for years. Criticism was occasionally voiced concerning the nature of the lessons learned from the murder, particularly given the fear of an additional political assassination. The matter became even more urgent in the context of the protests surrounding the disengagement plan. In this chapter, we will examine several issues related to the public evaluation of the lessons drawn from the assassination. We first consider the public's attitudes to the question of whether the security services, and Israeli society in general, drew lessons from the event. We will then examine how the public assesses the authorities' handling of incitement to political violence, particularly against the backdrop of the disengagement. We will also consider to what extent the public justifies allowing rabbis to issue halakhic rulings on controversial state and political matters. Finally, we examine extreme views that express support for a leader's assassination as a tool of political change.

The most striking finding is that more than half of the Israeli public (55%) hold that lessons concerning the relationships between the political right and left in Israel have been drawn to only a small extent or not at all. In this context, a small but significant difference was found between secular and religious Jews – secular Jews are more doubtful that lessons have been drawn (57% as opposed to 50%). A greater difference was found between

Arabs and Jews: 54% of the Jews say that no lessons have been drawn concerning the relationship between the political extremes, as opposed to about one-third of the Arabs. By contrast, no differences emerged on this issue when the public was divided according to their political leanings.

An additional harsh assessment is related to the performance of the police concerning incitement to political violence. About 40% of the Israeli public expressed the view that the lessons in this regard have been learned only to a small extent or not at all. Significant differences between groups appear here as well: secular Jews are more doubtful that lessons have been drawn than religious Jews, Jews more than Arabs, and right wingers more than people from the center and the left. In other words, secular Jews and people leaning left and center tend to be more critical of the police's success in drawing conclusions concerning incitement to violence (see figure 34, page 86).

As for the lessons drawn by the security services in protecting VIPs, almost 40% of the respondents hold that the lessons have been learned to a great extent, almost 40% more hold that the lessons have been learned to some extent, and about a quarter agree that the security services have drawn few or no lessons at all concerning the protection of prime ministers in Israel. Various groups concur on this, and no significant differences emerged according to nationality, degree of religiosity and political leanings. The public does not seem to view this as the weakness, leading 84% to estimate that another political assassination is likely to occur in Israel.

A crucial part of the lessons learned from Rabin's assassination is related to the authorities' method of handling political incitement. The issue arose on the public agenda again in the wake of the disengagement plan, which was at its height at the time of the survey (July 2005). To evaluate the public's assessment concerning the implementation of lessons on handling incitement to violence, respondents were asked the following question: "In your opinion, do the state authorities behave correctly or incorrectly toward inciters to political violence concerning the disengagement plan?" The findings show that only about one-third of the Israeli public believes that the state authorities behaved correctly toward people or groups campaigning for political violence regarding the disengagement plan. An additional 36% hold that the authorities behaved incorrectly because they tended to be too lenient with campaigners for political violence, and about 31% sense that the authorities behaved incorrectly because they tended to be too harsh with these people and groups.

Religious Jews and right-leaning Israelis tend to think that state authorities are too harsh regarding political violence related to the disengagement plan; this is the shared view of about half of religious Jews and of those leaning right. By contrast, secular Jews and those leaning to the left of the political spectrum tend to be harsher on individuals and groups campaigning for violence (about half of those leaning left, and about 42% of secular Jews).[52] In other words, the groups that were blamed after the assassination and

52 The differences between groups according to degree of religiosity and according to political leanings were significant. By contrast, no significant differences were found on this issue between Jews and Arabs.

for other events during the last decade are more inclined to believe that the authorities are too harsh on campaigners for violence concerning the disengagement plan (see figure 35).

An additional issue concerning the lessons to be learned from Rabin's assassination concerns rabbinic rulings on burning issues on the political agenda. This question also became highly relevant at the time of the survey because of the disengagement plan. About three-quarters of the respondents are opposed to rabbinical rulings on controversial state and political issues, as opposed to only about a quarter who justify halakhic rulings on these questions.

Figure 34

Assessing the Lessons Drawn from the Assassination by the Security Forces and the Public, According to Nationality and Degree of Religiosity

"In your opinion, have the proper lessons been drawn from Rabin's assassination concerning the protection of prime ministers in Israel by the security forces?"; "And what about the lessons concerning the ways the police contends with inciters to political violence?"; "And what about the lessons concerning the relationship between the political right and the political left in the State of Israel?"
(Drawn to a small extent and not at all) (percentages)

- No lessons have been drawn about the protection of prime ministers in Israel by the security services
- No lessons have been drawn about the police's way of contending with inciters to political violence
- No lessons have been drawn about the relationship between the political right and the political left
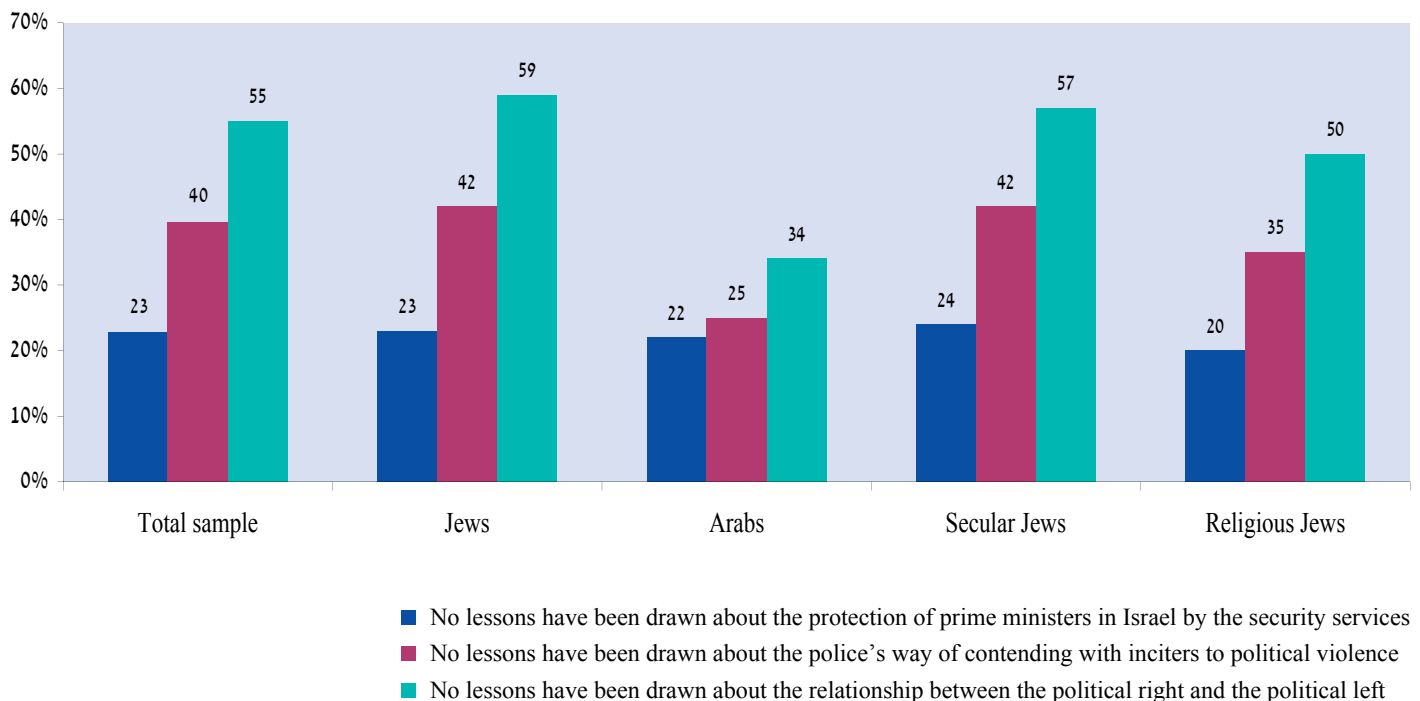
Figure 35

Assessing the Authorities' Behavior Toward Campaigners for Political Violence Concerning the Disengagement, According to Groups in Society*

"In your opinion, do the authorities today act adequately or inadequately toward campaigners for political violence concerning the disengagement plan?" (percentages)

■ Behave adequately   ■ Behave inadequately—too harsh   ■ Behave inadequately—too lenient
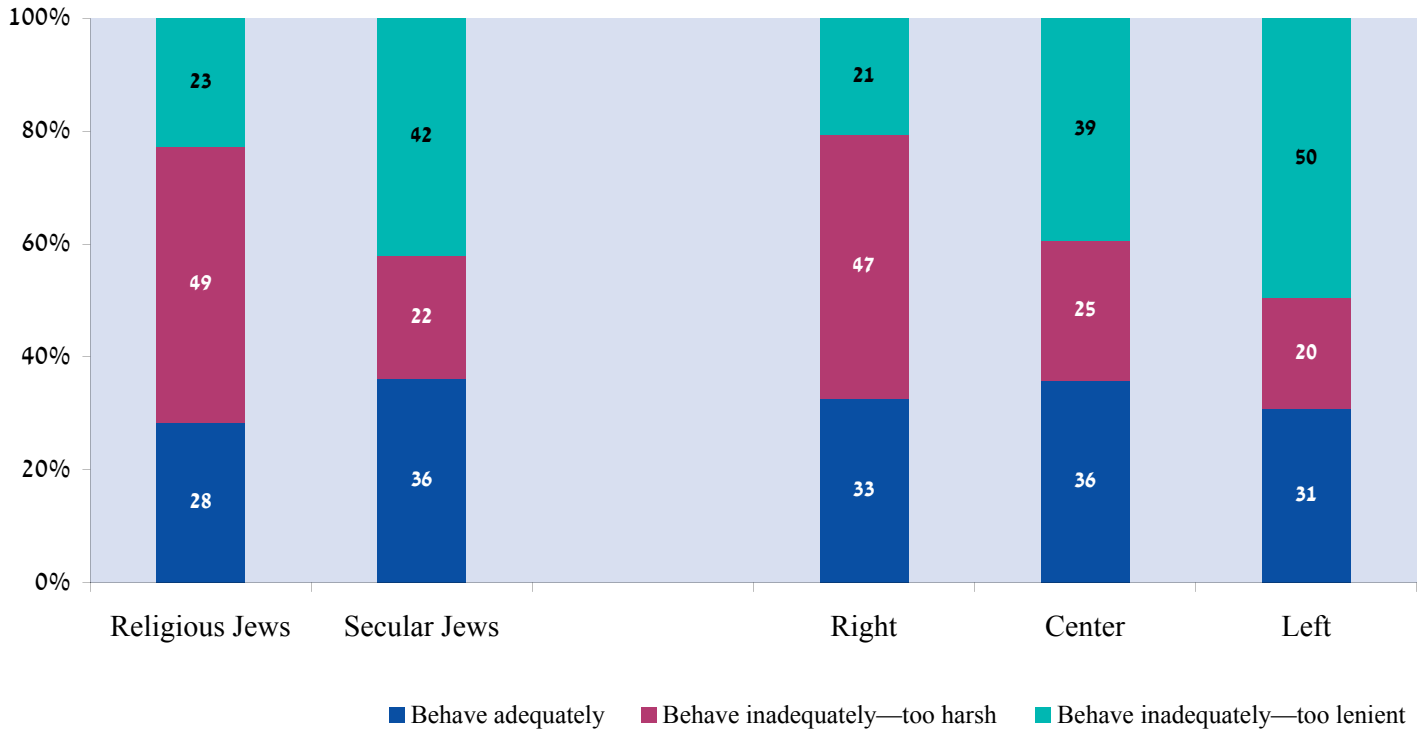
* All differences were significant at a confidence level of 99% and more in an ANOVA test.

About two weeks after the assassination we asked the question: "Is it justified or unjustified for rabbis to issue halakhic rulings on controversial matters of state and politics?" A survey[53] was conducted on 17 November 1995 among a representative sample of respondents who define themselves as "religious-Zionists" (Table 8, page 88). At the time, about 57% of religious-Zionists did not justify rabbinic rulings on state and political issues, while only about a third did. Yet, when we compare this finding to the group of religious Jews in 2005, the situation seems to be reversed, and today most of those who identify themselves as religious, justify rabbinical rulings on political questions. The huge increase in the readiness of those inclined to religiosity to accept rulings on

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53   The survey covered 414 respondents who define themselves as "religious-Zionists" and constitute a representative sample of this sector in the adult population. The maximum sampling error is 5%. The survey was conducted by the Dahaf Institute headed by Mina Zemach and published in the *Yediot Aharonot* newspaper.

political questions is further evidence of the growing influence of religion on Israel's political life and of its impact as a powerful element explaining variance in the public's attitudes. However, some reservations are in place regarding any far-reaching conclusions reached in the wake of this finding. First, the 1995 survey was conducted a few days after the assassination and, in all likelihood, the shock of the murder and the social reactions directed against the religious sector affected the respondents' answers. Evidence to this can be found in the number of respondents who chose not to answer. Second, the

comparison between the two samples is not exact.

After Rabin's assassination, accusations were directed against extreme groups in Israeli society. In order to find out whether such groups exist in 2005, respondents were asked two questions. The first assessed the degree of agreement with the statement: "Rabin's assassination was a good thing, because it saved the Land of Israel"; the second assessed the future implications of this matter, according to the degree of agreement with the statement: "To stop the disengagement, I would agree to the assassination of a prime minister."

Table 8

Justifying Rabbinical Rulings on Political Topics Among Religious Zionists in 1995 and 2005*

"Is it justified or unjustified for rabbis to issue halakhic rulings on controversial matters of state and politics?" (percentages)

	November 1995	July 2005
Justified	33	60
Not justified	57	36
Did not respond	10	4

*   In 1995, a survey was conducted with respondents who define themselves as religious-Zionists (N=414). Data from 2005 relate to a group of respondents who define themselves as "religious" (N=187).[54]

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54   That is, they answered "religious" in response to the question: "How do you define yourself – secular, traditional, religious, or ultra-Orthodox?"

The analysis of the responses shows that there are small extremist groups in Israeli society who answered these questions positively. 1.2% of the respondents, 23 in number,[55] definitely agreed that "Rabin's assassination was a good thing, because it saved the Land of Israel," and another 3.4%, 67 people, agreed with this statement.[56] 1.3% of the respondents, 26 in number, definitely agreed with the statement, "To stop the disengagement, I would agree to the assassination of a prime minister," and another 2.1%, 41 respondents, agreed with it.[57]

Note that openly admitting such attitudes in a telephonic survey is not a trivial matter, and more people may think so but were afraid to tell the interviewers. Even these findings, are already troubling – close to 5% of the public openly approve of Rabin's murder, and about 3% openly support another political assassination.

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55   Out of a valid sample of 1,983 respondents.
56   82% "definitely do not agree," and 13% "do not agree."
57   87% "definitely do not agree," and 10% "do not agree."

C. Did Rabin's Assassination Influence Democratic Culture in Israel?[58]

Political culture in general and democratic political culture in particular are abstract, complex, and multi-dimensional concepts. In this chapter we will examine empirical findings concerning longitudinal changes in three central dimensions of political culture in Israel, relying on responses to questions in public opinion surveys. At the focus of the discussion stands Rabin's assassination and its influence. Note that the analysis relates only to several selected dimensions of democratic culture, that it focuses solely on the Jewish public,[59] and that the public is discussed as a whole and without reference to sub-groups within it.

Culture changes slowly and cumulatively, hindering attempts to establish with any precision the factors leading to such changes, particularly in a society as dynamic and eventful as that of Israel. Rabin's assassination is not an isolated event, and it can hardly be separated from developments in Israel's internal politics and from the relations with the Palestinians before and after the murder. Beyond that, many significant events, with subsequent effects, have since taken place. Assessing the influence of the assassination is therefore extremely difficult, even when the topic is confined to a limited number of dimensions, as we are doing here. From a ten-year perspective, based on the data, it is clear that Rabin's assassination had immediate influence on Israel's democratic culture. And yet, we cannot point to the assassination's long-term influence, and, moreover, we cannot point to the assassination's independent influence. The effect of the assassination cannot be disentangled from the reduced security threat, and of the peace process unfolding during the 1990s that, in aggregate, affected the relative importance of the values of democracy and tolerance – until the collapse of the peace process, the outbreak of the Al-Aksa intifada, and the events of October 2000. Rabin's assassination also had a short-term influence on the Jewish public's attitude to protest. But the political

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58 This chapter relies on the following databases: the Israel Election Studies, conducted by Asher Arian and Michal Shamir (http://isdc.huji.ac.il/hisdc.shtml#els); the Israeli Public Opinion on National Security Surveys, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, conducted by Asher Arian (http://www.tau.ac.il/jcss); the Israeli-Palestinian Public Opinion Polls, at the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, directed by Jacob Shamir (http://truman.huji.ac.il/polls.asp); tolerance surveys conducted by researchers at Tel Aviv University (Michal Shamir, Ephraim Yaar, Yochanan Peres, Noah Levin-Epstein) and the B. I. and Lucille Cohen Institute for Public Opinion Research (http://www.bicohen.tau.ac.il); surveys by the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research (TSC) at Tel Aviv University, directed by Ephraim Yaar and Tamar Hermann (http://spirit.tau.ac.il/socant/peace); and the Guttman Institute at the Israel Democracy Institute (http://www.idi.org.il/hebrew/guttman.asp). We thank all these investigators and their research programs. The present analysis would not have been possible without them.

59 Most surveys, and particularly those dating far back, included only Jewish respondents, so that a longitudinal comparison must be limited solely to this population. Moreover, the question on value priorities is relevant only to Jews and not to Arabs, and is therefore posed only to Jewish respondents in all the surveys.

circumstances of sharp differences that were the ground for protests from the right, and a discourse that legitimized civil disobedience on both sides of the political continuum – all increased the legitimacy of illegal protest and even support for violent protest.

1. Rabin's Assassination and Value Priorities[60]

What are the value priorities of the Jewish public in Israel? What is the importance of democracy in this cluster? What changes, if any, are developing in these priorities, and how, if at all, did Rabin's assassination affect them?

Our starting point is that political cultures, like individual beliefs, cover a broad spectrum of values. Social values are often consensual, that is, accepted by most or by a large part of the group's members. These values, however, may often clash, and most political confrontations result from the contradictions and trade-offs ensuing from this clash. The extent of conflict and tension between different values changes according to the problems and according to the circumstances prevailing at any given moment. In the same way, the relative importance of values changes in response to events and circumstances, even if support for the values changes slightly and slowly.

Hence, the examination of value priorities is valid and particularly useful when one is concerned with longitudinal changes and with the influence of events and circumstances.

The foundations of Israel's political culture can be located in the Declaration of Independence which, although not legally binding, is perceived and interpreted as expressing Israeli society's basic values. One central value is nationality in its Zionist definition – the right of the Jewish people to their homeland is the justification for the establishment of the State of Israel. The State of Israel as a Jewish state is thus a basic value, and so is democracy, a value that also appears in the Declaration of Independence, and that, over the years, has been reinforced by the courts. Since the 1990s, both values appear in the phrase "Jewish democratic state" embedded in various laws as defining the essence of the state. The Declaration of Independence opens with the Land of Israel and relates it to the concept of a homeland; this is indeed an additional value in the Zionist ethos, as is the aspiration to peace.

Tensions between these values have changed in different periods and circumstances, but, since the first intifada, public awareness of this value conflict has risen and has become part of the political discourse. Many times since the end of the 1980s, have

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60   This section is based on the following sources: Michal Shamir and Jacob Shamir, "Value Priorities in Israeli Public Opinion" [Hebrew], *Megamot* 37 (1966), pp. 371-393; Jacob Shamir and Michal Shamir, *The Anatomy of Public Opinion* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000); idem, "Competing Values in Public Opinion: A Conjoint Analysis," *Political Behavior* 17 (1995), pp. 107-133; Michal Shamir, "The Political Context of Tolerance: Israel in the 1980s and 1990s," *Final Research Report to the Israel Science Foundation*, October 2002; Michal Shamir and Asher Arian, "Competing Values and Policy Choices: Israeli Public Opinion on Foreign and Security Affairs," *British Journal of Political Science* 24 (1994), pp. 249-271; idem, "Collective Identity and Electoral Competition in Israel," *American Political Science Review* 93 (1999), pp. 265-277.

we indeed asked the question enabling a systematic examination of the public's value priorities: "If we think of potential directions for development in Israel, there are four important values that clash with one another to some extent, which are important to different people in different degrees: a state with a Jewish majority, the Greater Land of Israel, a democratic state (equal political rights for all), and peace (low probability of war).[61] Of these four values, which is the most important to you? And the second? And the third? And the fourth?"

Two values lead the Jewish public's set of priorities: peace and the basic Zionist value of Israel as a Jewish state. About a third of the respondents chose one of these values as the most important (Table 9, column 1).

Hence, at the top of the Israeli public's set of priorities are the Jewish state and peace, then democracy, and far behind – the Greater Land of Israel. But when we consider the entire ranking of values, the picture is slightly more complex. The Greater Land of Israel is clearly at the bottom of the set of priorities – more than half of the respondents rank this value last (see the third column in the table). But from the perspective of the bottom of the ranking, democracy ranks close to peace and the Jewish state, and when we examine the ranking of first and second place together (the last column in the table) we see that the value of peace ranks highest, then democracy, and in third place – the Jewish state. Here too the value of the Greater Land of Israel is far behind.

Table 9

Value Priorities (July 2005 Survey) (percentages)

	Most important	Second place	Last place	In first/second place
A state with a Jewish majority	34	18	16	52
Greater Land of Israel	12	17	54	29
Democracy	23	34	16	57
Peace	31	31	15	62

61   We defined the Jewish state value through a Jewish majority since this is the most basic criterion, closest to the original Zionist idea and to current views in Israel. Alternative definitions are a state where the dominant culture and tradition are Jewish; or a theocratic state where Halakhah (Jewish law) is state law. Democracy was defined to the survey's respondents in terms of the accepted definition of "equal political rights for all" – a definition hard to contest in general that, in the Israeli context, assumes full political rights, including voting rights, for Arabs. Peace was defined in the question as "a situation of peace, or low probability of war," in order to separate clearlythe value of peace from the formal aspect of a peace agreement.

Figure 36

Ranking Values: Percentage Ranking First a Jewish Majority, the Greater Land of Israel, Peace, and Democracy, 1988-2005 (percentages)
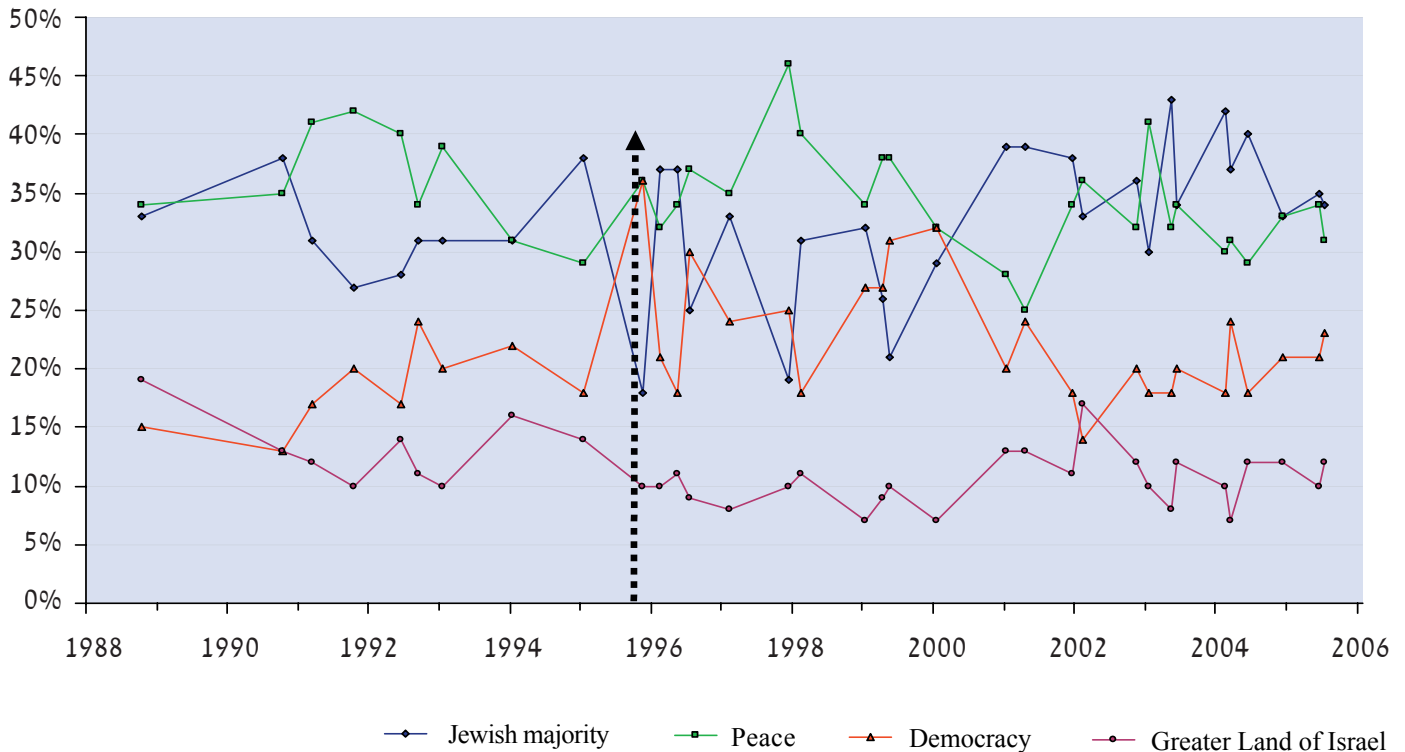
These results assume deeper meaning when we examine the changes in the order of priorities over time, since the outbreak of the first intifada (see Figure 36).[62] First, and despite fluctuations, the dominant values throughout the entire period are peace and the Jewish state. The other values, democracy and the Greater Land of Israel, are less important to the Israeli public at most points in time, although the trends concerning these two values are different. The value of the Greater Land of Israel ranks last at almost all points in time – apart from one exception in February 2002, during the harsh period

of the second intifada, and at two points in the late 1980s. In 1988, the Greater Land of Israel was still preferred over democracy, but then, until the outbreak of the second intifada, we identify a trend of decline in the relative importance of this value. From the beginning of the 1990s, even before the Madrid Conference convened in October 1991, the marginality of this value became prominent.

Concerning the value of democracy, we can identify a contrary and even more prominent trend that merits further discussion. In Figure 37 (page 95), we

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62   In all figures in this chapter, Rabin's assassination is denoted by an arrow.

show the percentage of respondents ranking democracy as the most important value over time, adding a trendline until the events of October 2000 and the outbreak of the second intifada and thereafter. This figure prominently illustrates both the significant rise in the relative importance of the value of democracy for the Jewish public during the 1990s and the dramatic drop in its importance immediately after the outbreak of the second intifada. In the January 2000 survey, 32% ranked democracy first; a year later – about four months after the outbreak of the intifada – only 24% did so. The descent continued for another year and then stabilized at a level similar to that of the first half of the 1990s.

In the second half of the 1990s, the system of values differed in its structure from that of other periods. The three values – peace, the Jewish state, and democracy – were together at the top of the scale, with fluctuations back and forth. In the order of priorities, then, the value of democracy no longer permanently occupied the third and lowest place in the scale. rather, the three were bound together and changed in their relative position. This period bears the distinctive mark of Rabin's assassination and developed in its wake.

Figure 37

Ranking Values: Percentage Ranking Democracy First Until and After the Outbreak of the Intifada, 1988-2005 (percentages)
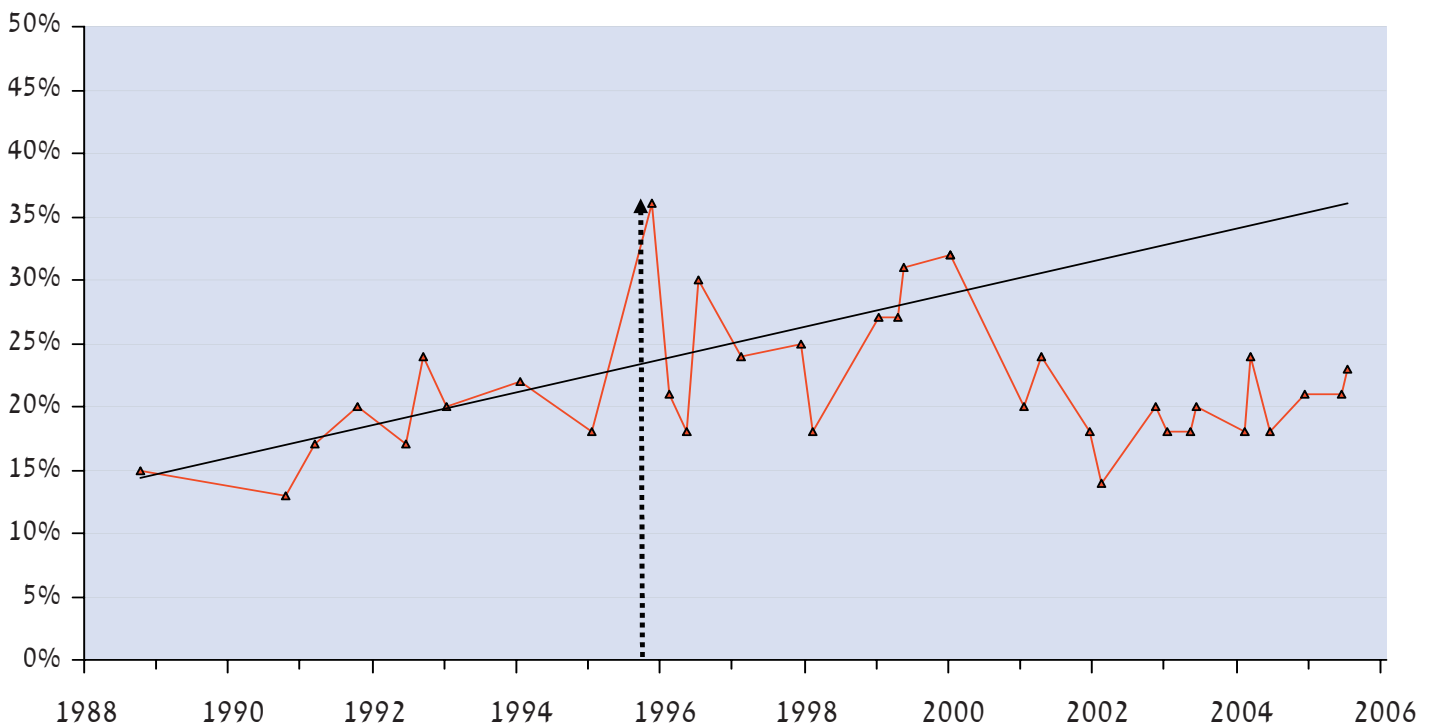
Rabin's assassination in November 1995 was a dramatic event from all perspectives. A survey conducted two and a half weeks after the murder recorded the changes in the system of values in their full intensity, although the assassination did not change the relative ranking of the Greater Land of Israel, which was already low. The salient change is in the relative ranking of peace, democracy, and the Jewish state, and particularly in the last two. The number of those ranking democracy first doubled from 18% in January 1995 to 36% in November. The ranking of peace rose more moderately, from about 30% to 36%, which was not exceptional in relation to the past. About three-quarters of the Jewish public at that time considered peace and democracy the most important values. This ranking expressed strong feelings of "no to violence" and "yes to peace," reflecting the slogans of the demonstration at which Yitzhak Rabin was killed. While the importance of democracy and peace rose, a drop was recorded after the assassination in the value of the Jewish majority – from first place with 38% in January 1995, to third place, when only 18% ranked it first. It is important to note that these four rankings are not independent, since their sum is fixed. Hence, when one or more of them rises in importance, the others necessarily go down. The drop in the relative importance of the Jewish element at that time, however, also indicates a renunciation of the nationalist and religious implications of this value. Indeed, the public discourse following the assassination revolved around this question intensively, focusing on whether the right in general and the religious-Zionist camp in particular, should be held responsible for the murder. Rabin's assassination sharpened public awareness of the importance of democratic norms or, rather, of their absence, raising their importance in the public's scale of values.

At the next two points in time – February and May 1996 – the pattern returned to its previous configuration and the influence of Rabin's assassination could be characterized as short-lived. In July, however, immediately after the 1996 elections, the ranking of values assumed a very similar pattern to that of November 1995, though less extreme. The election campaign leading to the victory of Binyamin Netanyahu over Shimon Peres ignored the assassination almost entirely, although it had taken place only six months before. Nevertheless, the elections did place the same dilemmas on the agenda, both concerning the peace process and Israel's relationship with the Palestinians and, internally, concerning the definition of a Jewish and democratic state. Since then, and until the outbreak of the Al-Aksa intifada and the events of October 2000, the binding of the three values together became a fixed pattern. At most times, the peace value leads, and democracy and the Jewish state keep alternating in second and third place. Rabin's assassination cannot be isolated from the general *zeitgeist*, and from the peace process, and the increasing emphasis on democracy characterizes the entire decade. Nevertheless, observations immediately following the assassination, and the fact that the event marks the beginning of the pattern binding together the values of peace, Jewish majority, and democracy, assign meaning to Rabin's assassination in its emphasis on democracy in Israel's political culture, even though

no claim can be made for the long-term independent influence of the assassination on these trends.

In this sense, the claim that Rabin's assassination stopped the democratization process in Israeli society is groundless. Nor can it be argued that Rabin's assassination held back the hope for peace. The relative ranking of the peace value shows ups and downs over this period. The increasing support for the peace value immediately after the assassination was not exceptional, nor was the upward trend in this value in the two subsequent years (save for one exception). According to the variation patterns in the series, it cannot be claimed that Rabin's assassination had influenced support for the value of peace. Before and after the assassination (until the second intifada), the average of those ranking peace at the top of the list is higher than the average of those ranking the Jewish state first, and the difference between them even increased after the assassination.

The Al-Aksa intifada that erupted in September 2000 and the riots in the Arab sector at the beginning of October that year, changed the value ranking immediately and dramatically. From then on, the average of those ranking a Jewish majority at the top of the scale is much higher than the average of those placing peace first. Until the intifada, we saw a pattern of increase in the relative importance of democracy (see Figure 37, page 95); in its wake, this value shows a significant drop, and from the end of 2002 it stabilized at a lower level, resembling that of the first half of the 1990s.

At the same time, we see a clear rise in the value of the Jewish state – a known pattern of closing ranks and increased identification with the in-group under threat. The negative relationship between conflict and threat on the one hand and support for democratic norms on the other, is abundantly clear from these data. At the time of the peace process, accompanied by a decreased perception of a threat, the importance of democratic values increased. With violence, terrorism, and the feelings of threat that returned at the end of 2000, these trends were cut off and reversed. The data, then, show both instances of the negative relationship between conflict and democracy.

Rabin was assassinated in the midst of the peace process, and at the height of a deep internal conflict over the country's collective identity – both its external identity, touching on its borders and on the relationships with its Arab neighbors in general and the Palestinians in particular, and its internal identity in terms of citizenship, Judaism and democracy.[63]

This confrontation returned anew with regard to Ariel Sharon's disengagement plan. The assassination of Rabin denoted opposition to the compromises attendant on peace and to the civic and democratic trends in Israeli society, beyond the fact that nothing could be more anti-democratic than the assassination of a prime minister in an attempt to thwart his policy. From the perspective of value preferences, however, the assassination did not curb the aspiration for peace and the democratization trend, which

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63   This point is expanded upon in the next section.

continued until the end of 2000. Another question is how the assassination affected the political processes of negotiation and reconciliation with the Palestinians as well as the democratic character of the political system, a subject we do not discuss here.

2. Political Tolerance[64]

Tolerance is a deep and central component of democratic culture. The normative normative essence of democracy is expressed in the pair of values, freedom and equality, and tolerance is a necessary condition for their existence and application to all citizens both in the social realm and even more so in the political realm. Tolerance tests the regime and its citizens; in the political realm, it implies readiness to enable various ideas, groups, and interests, particularly marginal ones, opposed by the majority of the public and the government, to realize their civic and political rights. Hence, discussions about the limits of tolerance are always discussions about the democratic character of society,

even when it faces a threat to its fundamental principles and even to the democratic regime itself.

The commonly accepted way of measuring the citizens' political tolerance is to use indices testing their readiness to implement political rights and basic civil liberties with regard to marginal or disliked groups. We will adopt two approaches: one measures the political tolerance of each subject toward the groups s/he likes least (obviously among groups active in the political system), thereby trying to neutralize the group's content. The other relates to a group evoking strong opposition in a given society at a given time, which asks all respondents questions about the same group. In the Israeli context, it is appropriate to test the level of tolerance or intolerance of Jews toward Arabs.

Before we present the results of the first measure, we will map the political groups that the respondents selected in the surveys as least liked. A list of political movements and groups active in Israel was read to the

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64 This section relies on the following sources: Tammy Sagiv-Schifter, Noah Lewin-Epstein, Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar, Michal Shamir, "Tolerance in Israeli Society 1996-1997," *Israel Public Opinion* 1 (Tel Aviv: The B. I. and Lucille Cohen Institute for Public Opinion Research at Tel Aviv University, March 1998); Tammy Sagiv-Schifter and Michal Shamir, "Tolerance in Israeli Society on the Edge of the 21st century," *Israel Public Opinion* 3 (Tel Aviv: The B. I. and Lucille Cohen Institute for Public Opinion Research at Tel Aviv University, May 2000); idem, " Tolerance at Times of Political and Security Tension," *Israel Public Opinion* 5 (Tel Aviv: The B. I. and Lucille Cohen Institute for Public Opinion Research at Tel Aviv University, May 2001); idem, "Israel as a Laboratory for Political Tolerance Research," *Israel Public Opinion* 6, (Tel Aviv: The B. I. and Lucille Cohen Institute for Public Opinion Research at Tel Aviv University, May 2000); Yochanan Peres and Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar, *Between Consent and Dissent: Democracy and Peace in the Israeli Mind* (Jerusalem: Israel Democracy Institute, 1998); Michal Shamir and John L. Sullivan, "Political Tolerance in Israel" [Hebrew], *Megamot,* 29 (1985), pp. 145-169; Yochanan Peres and Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar, *Trends in Israeli Democracy* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publ., 1992); Michal Shamir, "The Political Context of Tolerance" (note 61 above); Michal Shamir and Tammy Sagiv-Schifter, "Conflict, Identity, and Tolerance: Israel in the Al-Aqsa Intifada," *Political Psychology* (forthcoming); Michal Shamir and John L. Sullivan, "The Political Context of Tolerance: A Cross-National Perspective from Israel and the United States," *American Political Science Review* 77 (1983), pp. 911-928; John L. Sullivan, Michal Shamir, Patrick Walsh, and Nigel S. Roberts, *Political Tolerance in Context: Support for Unpopular Minorities in the United States, Israel, and New Zealand* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1985).

respondents and they were asked to point out which one they favor least, or which one they oppose most. The group that most Jewish subjects chose in the July 2005 survey is the Islamic Movement; 36% pointed it out as the group they most strongly oppose. Far behind it, with 13%, was the Kach movement, after that Shinui with 10%, and finally Shas, which was chosen by 8% of the respondents. From among those who chose a group they dislike, 45% chose an Arab group, and the others chose Jewish groups: 24% chose a right wing group, 9% – a left wing group, 11% chose a religious group, and 12% – a secular group.[65]

The opposition of the Jewish public, then, is presently largely focused on Arab groups, as it had been in the 1980s, and again since the outbreak of the Al-Aksa intifada and the events of October 2000. By contrast, during the 1990s, the focus shifted to Jewish groups, particularly on the right but also on the left. Note, however, that relative to observations during the period of the intifada (in the surveys of the B. I. and Lucille Cohen Institute: http://www. bicohen.tau.ac.il), the present survey shows a significant increase in the number of those choosing a right wing group as the one they least like – 18% in the June 2002 survey as opposed to 24% in the current one. A similar leap, though far more dramatic, was recorded following Rabin's assassination. The percentage of those choosing a right wing group as the one they least like (according to the Yuchtman-Yaar and Peres surveys) rose from 20% in January 1995 to 45% in February 1996. From then and until the outbreak of the intifada and the October 2000 events, right wing groups were the largest category of disliked groups. The Al-Aksa intifada and the October riots returned the Arab political groups to the head of the list. The recent confrontation around the disengagement from Gaza again brought the right wing groups to the forefront as opposed to the period of the intifada.

After the respondents indicated the political group they least like, they were asked to what extent they agree or disagree to grant these groups a series of civil and political rights or impose various limitations on them, as follows:[66]

- To serve as prime minister
- To outlaw them
- To tap their members' telephones
- To be elected to the Knesset
- To hold public demonstrations
- To appear on television
- To elect to the Knesset

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65 The Arab groups included the Islamic movement, Hadash, the United Arab List, and the National Democratic Assembly; the right wing groups that appeared in the list were Kach/Kahana Hai, the Yesha Council, Ichud Leumi, Yisrael Beitenu. A small number of respondents chose Gush Emunim [The Block of the Faithful], Likud and Moledet; left-wing groups included Meretz/Yahad, Peace Now, and the Labor Party and B'Tselem were added; religious groups included Torah Judaism/Agudat Yisrael, the National Religious Party and Shas, and only one respondent noted Degel Hatorah; the secular groups included Shinui and the Reform Movement.

66 Some of the claims were formulated as tolerant claims and some as intolerant ones. Concerning each claim, the respondents were asked to choose one of five possibilities: (1) Definitely agree; (2) Agree; (3) Not sure; (4) Do not agree; (5) Definitely disagree. The two responses denoting disagreement (4 and 5) with intolerant claims and the two responses denoting agreement with tolerant claims (1 and 2) are considered to express tolerance. The numbers in Table 10, page 100, present these percentages.

Respondents were then asked similar questions concerning Israeli Arab citizens (except for the option of declaring them illegal). They were also asked if Israel's Arab citizens should participate in the decision to return territories and determine the country's borders.

Table 10 presents the percentage of respondents in the July 2005 survey who expressed tolerant views on the various questions concerning the group they least like and concerning Israeli Arab citizens.

The data show that tolerance of Arabs is higher than tolerance of least-liked groups[67] and point to significant differences between the various dimensions. Concerning freedom of expression and the right to vote, tolerance is higher, but it drops when it comes to actual participation in decision-making, both at the level of the government and at the level of the citizens.

Table 10

Tolerance of Least Liked Political Groups and of Israeli Arab Citizens (July 2005 Survey)

(percentages)

	Least-liked group	Israeli Arabs
To serve as prime minister	25	26
To outlaw them	35	-
To tap members' telephones	45	54
To be elected to the Knesset	47	55
To hold demonstrations	51	61
To appear on television	51	66
To elect to the Knesset	61	60
To participate in decisions on returning territories and on the country's borders	-	31

67　On four items, the percentage of responses expressing political tolerance are higher regarding Arabs than regarding the least-liked group, and on two items, percentages are similar (prime minister and election to the Knesset).

A longitudinal examination is important so as to gain some perspective on the findings. The following two figures present the measures of political tolerance of the least-liked group (Figure 38, page 103) and of Arab citizens of Israel (Figure 39, page 104) on the basis of surveys conducted from 1980 onwards, including the present one. Figure 38 points to higher political tolerance today than that prevailing in the 1980s. From the end of the 1980s and during the course of the 1990s, a rise is evident in all measures of tolerance, which continues until the outbreak of the Al-Aksa intifada and the October 2000 events. In their wake, a sharp drop was recorded in the levels of tolerance, particularly in the first year of the intifada, until they stabilized at a lower level. Figure 39 reveals a similar pattern, although it relies on less data and is less sharp. Here too, political tolerance of Arabs rises, beginning with the 1989 survey and throughout the 1990s. This trend was halted and reversed with the outbreak of the second intifada and the October 2000 events. The trend of lowered tolerance was prominent in the first year, and a further moderate drop in tolerance of Arabs is evident in most items in the last survey, although tolerance of Israel's Arab citizens today is still higher than that measured in the 1980s. Note that the patterns in the two tolerance measures are parallel to those we saw in the relative ranking of the democracy value over time (Figure 37, page 95).

We will now focus on Rabin's assassination and examine its influence on the political tolerance of the Jewish public. For this purpose we rely on the surveys by Peres and Yaar in the mid-1990s, and examine three measures from the group of questions dealing with tolerance of the disliked group (the right to demonstrate, and the rights to elect and be elected to the Knesset). Figure 38 shows that despite the general trend of growing tolerance during the 1990s, all these three tolerance measures dropped in January 1995, and this trend continued immediately after Rabin's assassination, in the January 1996 survey. Later, however, they tended to rise again, so that we cannot identify a clear trend resulting from the assassination or a distinct influence. To deepen understanding of Rabin's assassination, we should consider the respondents' tolerance of different political groups – right wing, religious, left wing, and Arab.[68]

Patterns of tolerance toward these four groups change over time and so does the influence of Rabin's assassination on them. As noted, the percentage of people who chose a right wing group as the one least-liked increased significantly after the assassination. As evident from Figure 40 (page 105), immediately after the assassination, tolerance levels of right wing groups recorded a sharp drop. At the next point in time, at the end of 1996, a certain rise was recorded in all three items, a trend that continued until the intifada and then stabilized. But only during

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68 Note that every respondent was asked only about the group he or she had mentioned as the least-liked, so that the comparison is based, at every point in time, on different respondents, and the composition of groups of respondents who choose each kind of disliked group, changes over time.

the intifada did tolerance levels of unpopular right wing groups return to levels from before the assassination, and even then only on some of the measures.[69]

A drop was recorded in the tolerance levels of Jewish religious groups after Rabin's assassination, but this drop was much smaller than that in the tolerance of right wing groups, and already in the next survey the level and upward trend in the tolerance of these groups returned to what it was before the assassination. Tolerance of Jewish left wing groups went up after the assassination; the two surveys after the assassination were marked by the highest levels of tolerance in the series regarding these groups. Tolerance later dropped again, but, generally, the upward trend in tolerance continues, and characterizes the whole period. The pattern of tolerance for Arab groups recorded a drop in January 1995 (before Rabin's assassination). Data for January 1995 and January 1996 revealed no differences, and no evidence was found that Rabin's assassination had any influence. At the end of 1996, a sharp rise in the tolerance levels of unpopular Arab groups was recorded, and a downward trend in the tolerance of these groups is evident later, which accelerated after the outbreak of the intifada and the events of October.

The main conclusion emerging from all this is that Rabin's assassination had a differential influence on the public's tolerance of various political groups, according to the circumstances. The influence on the attitude toward right wing groups was immediate, and levels of political tolerance regarding these groups (and particularly Kach) decreased after the assassination, although they later rose gradually. The long term influence of the assassination on the attitude towards right wing groups appears to have been greater, transcending the immediate circumstances. Only five years later, during the intifada, did tolerance measures of right wing groups return to their level before the assassination. The influence of the assassination on the attitude toward religious groups was evident in a slight and extremely brief drop; tolerance of Jewish left wing groups went up after the assassination, but only for a short period. The assassination had no influence on Arab groups.

3. The Legitimacy of Protest[70]

Participation in political activity is a cornerstone of democracy, and democratic culture draws a link between this involvement and its own legitimation. In the previous section, dealing with political tolerance, we related to the readiness to allow specific unpopular groups to engage

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69 The general trend stabilizes, although the various items are less correlated, both relative to the past and to the other groups. This pattern reveals greater distinction between the various dimensions of the civic and political rights on which the respondents were questioned.

70 This section is based on the following sources: Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar and Tamar Hermann, *The Peace Index November 1995* http://spirit.tau.ac.il/socant/peace/peaceindex/1995/files/nov95.doc; idem, *The Peace Index April 2000* http://spirit.tau.ac.il/socant/peace/peaceindex/2000/files/apr2000.doc; Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar and Tamar Hermann, "The Latitude of Acceptance: Israelis' Attitudes towards Political Protest Before and After the Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42, 6 (1998), pp. 721-743, also in *The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin*, ed. Yoram Peri (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2000), pp. 303-330 (henceforth, Peri, *Assassination*).

in political activity, such as demonstrations or participation in elections, focusing on the difficult test implied by the readiness to allow this type of activity as well as other civil rights to groups that evoke opposition. We now wish to examine the legitimacy of various forms of protest activity. As a starting point we hold that citizen participation in political decision-making is a democratic value sometimes at odds with another central value – law and order. In this section, we rely on a series of questions that were asked several times in the Peace Index, and that were repeated in the July 2005 Survey. The questions touch upon a specific controversial issue – government policy concerning the peace process – the top item on the public agenda during the 1990s and in the summer of 2005.[71]

Figure 38

Political Tolerance of a Least-Liked Group, 1980-2005 (percentages)

- ◆ Allow to serve as prime minister
- ✕ Allow to hold demonstrations
- ■ Allow to appear on television
- ✶ Not to outlaw
- ▲ Not to tap phones
- ● Allow to be elected to the Knesset
- ✛ Allow to elect to the Knesset

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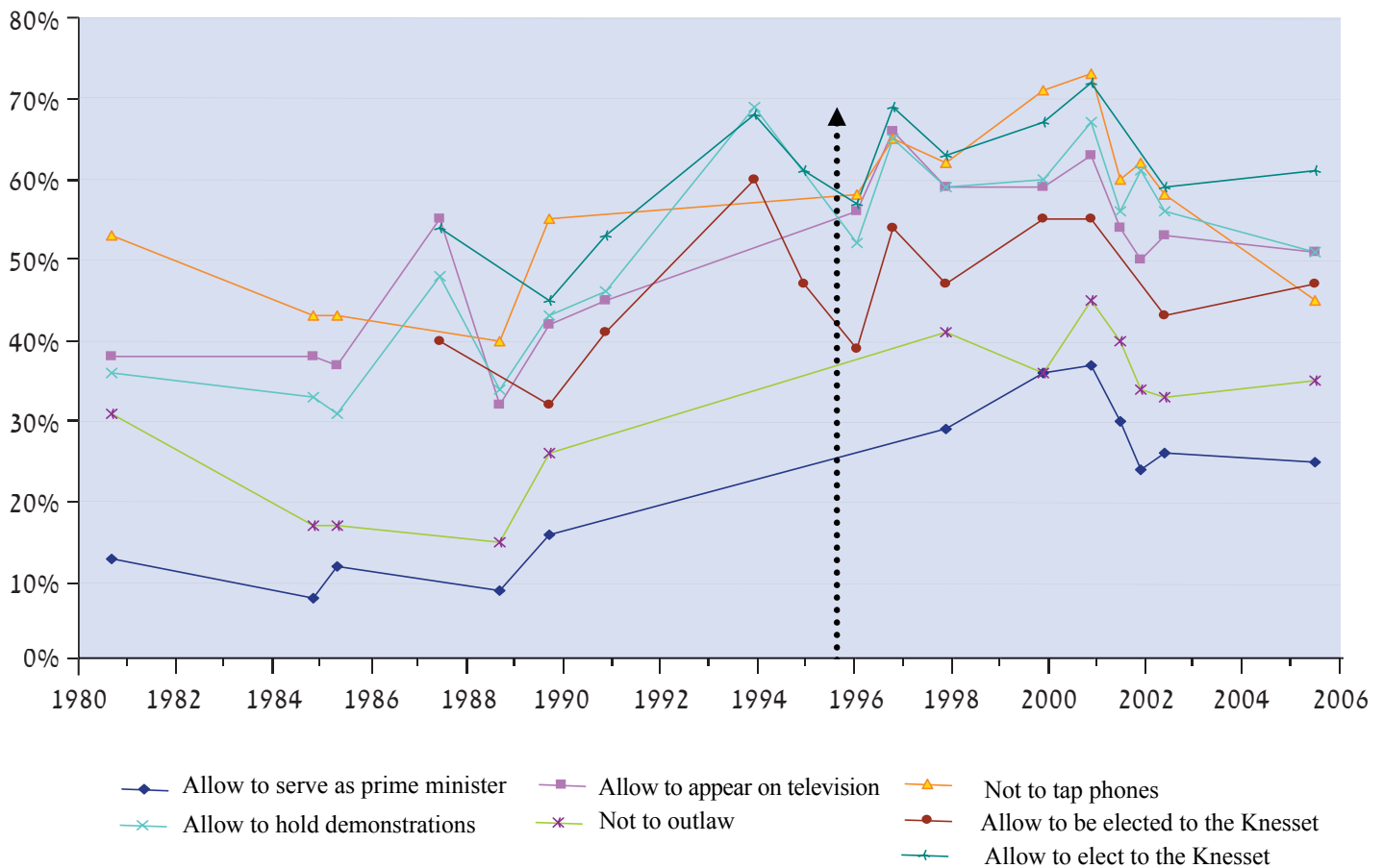
71 Contrary to the tolerance questions, some of the respondents obviously support the citizens and groups about which they were asked while others oppose them. In this sense, the question resembles the questions on tolerance of Arabs: some of the respondents do not like them and others do. Nevertheless, the (justified) assumption in the series of questions concerning tolerance of Arabs is that most of the Jewish respondents do not like them.

Figure 39

Political Tolerance of Israeli Arab Citizens, 1980-2005 (percentages)

◆ Allow to serve as prime minister	■ Allow to appear on television
✕ Allow to hold demonstrations	● Allow to be elected to the Knesset
▲ Not to tap phones	✛ Allow to elect to the Knesset
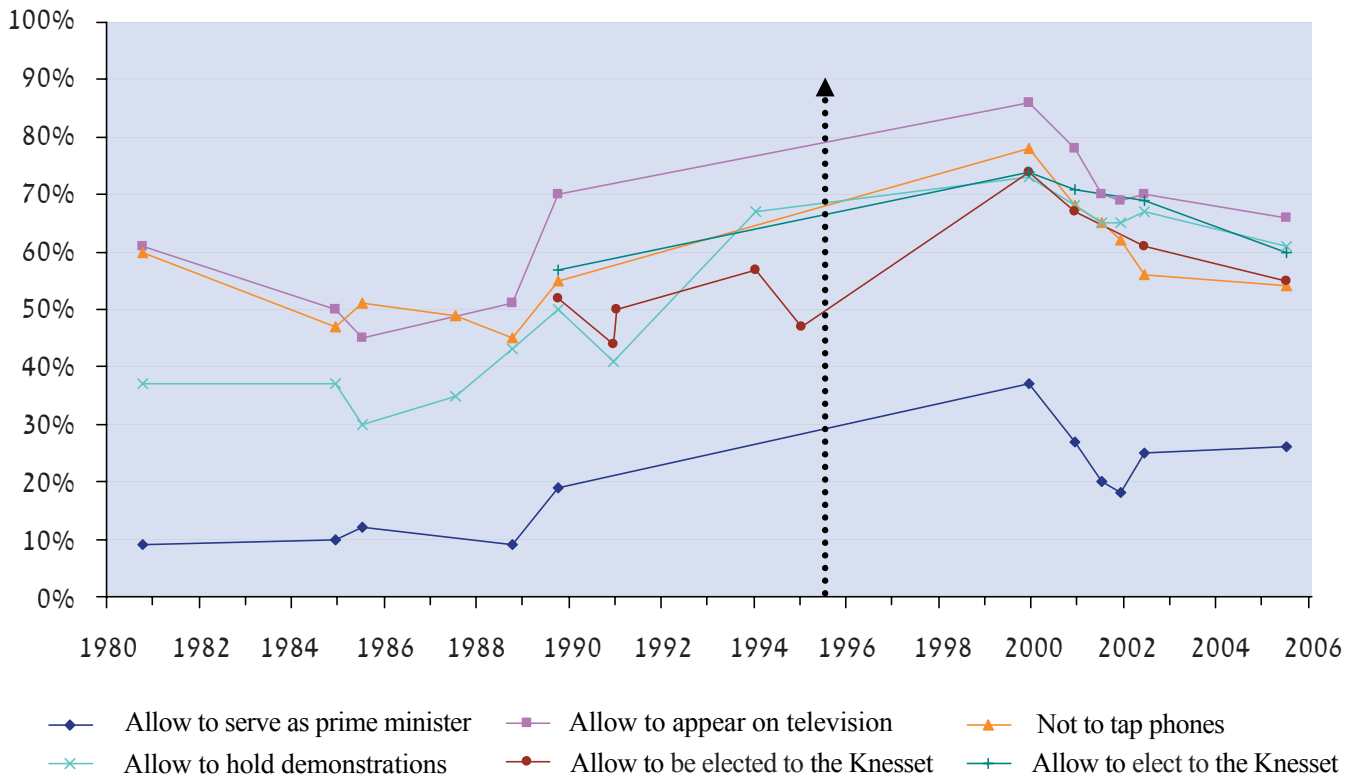
This series of questions deals with various kinds of protest activities: legal protest, illegal protest, and violent protest. Political participation expressing protest is, as noted, a basic component of democracy, and democratic culture should purportedly endorse its legitimation. This principle clearly applies to legal protest. Violent protest, however, contradicts democratic principles that emphasize conflict resolution through negotiation, mutual persuasion, compromise, and decision-making according to principles upholding majority rule as essential. Engaging in or supporting violent protest is anti-democratic. The attitude toward illegal but non-violent protest is more complex from a liberal democratic perspective. On the one hand, non-violent civil disobedience expresses citizens' protest against government policy through public, political, and conscientious non-violent activity. On the other hand, it is against the law; it often expresses a minority view, and it can threaten the stability and legitimacy of the government, even sliding into violence. Some instances of civil disobedience – such as the struggle led by Martin Luther King for equal rights for African-Americans in the United States and Mahatma Ghandi's struggle for independence from the British in India – have earned them eternal honor. Civil disobedience does indeed pose difficulties to democratic regimes required to cope with it, as evident in the response of the Israeli authorities – from the police to the Supreme Court – concerning various activities initiated by opponents of the recent disengagement from Gaza.

Figure 40

Political Tolerance of a Least-Liked Group – Right Wing Groups, 1980-2005 (percentages)

—△— Allow to hold demonstrations   —●— Allow to be elected to the Knesset   —○— Allow to elect to the Knesset
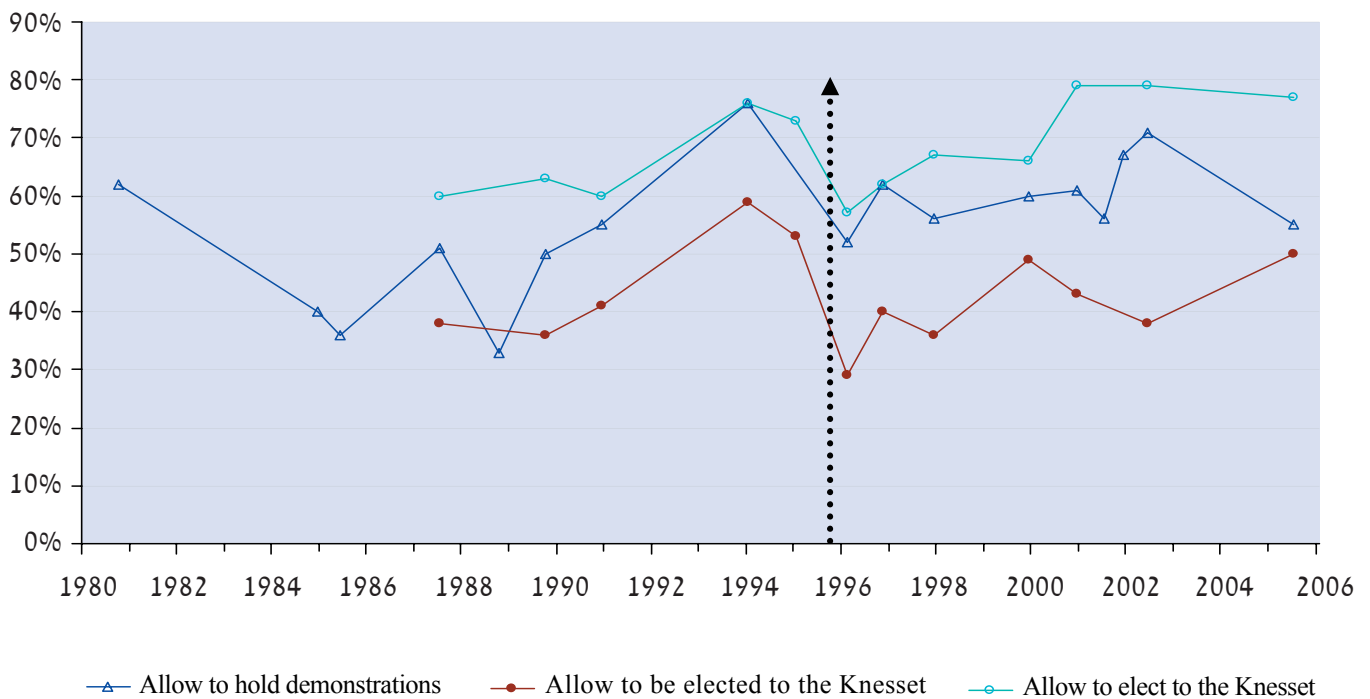
The question concerning the attitude to protest is wordedas follows: "In your opinion, are citizens who think that the government's policy concerning the peace process is harmful to Israel's national interest permitted to: (1) Protest within the limits of the law (for instance, organize mass petitions and hold authorized demonstrations); (2) Adopt methods of non-violent civil disobedience (for instance, demonstrate without a permit, not pay taxes, refuse to serve in the army, and so forth); (3) Adopt methods of violent civil disobedience (for instance, forcefully oppose the evacuation of settlements)."

Below, we survey the Yuchtman-Yaar and Hermann study of 1998, which was based on these questions, about the influence of Rabin's assassination on the legitimacy of protest. In their study, they showed that support for

non-violent and violent civil disobedience lessened immediately after the assassination and two years later. By contrast, support for legal protest remained very high although in November 1995, immediately after the assassination, the percentage of opponents to protests of any kind also went up. A year later, this category again dropped, though not to the level before the assassination.

In the July 2005 survey, as in previous findings, 86% of Jewish respondents held that citizens who think that government policy concerning the peace process is harmful to Israel's national interest are permitted to protest within the framework of the law. One-third, much more than ever before, held that it is permitted to adopt methods of non-violent civil disobedience, and, according to 7%, it is even permitted to adopt methods of

violent civil disobedience. Figure 41 presents the percentages of support for the three types of protest, and Figure 42 (page 109) presents the support for non-violent civil disobedience and violent civil disobedience. The findings, except for those of July 2005, are taken from the website of the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research (http://spirit.tau.ac.il/socant/peace). The first two observations are from surveys conducted before Rabin's assassination, in March and September 1995, at the height of the right's extensive protest activity. The September survey was conducted on the eve of the signing of the Oslo 2 Accord, several weeks before Rabin's assassination,[72] which marked a record level of support for protests of all three kinds (until the last survey). Immediately after the assassination, in two surveys in November 1995,[73] support for all kinds of protest dropped sharply, as noted, and particularly for illegal and violent protest. Before the assassination, then, all types of protest, legal and illegal, had enjoyed relatively high levels of support, while immediately after the assassination, there was a drop in all three. A year later, support for non-violent and violent protest was still low while support for legal protest rose again, although it did not return to the record level of 94% it had reached in September 1995, before the assassination.

Figure 41

The Legitimacy of Legal, Illegal, and Violent Patterns of Protest, 1995-2005 (percentages)

- Protest within the limits of the law
- Adopt methods of non-violent civil disobedience
- Adopt methods of violent civil disobedience

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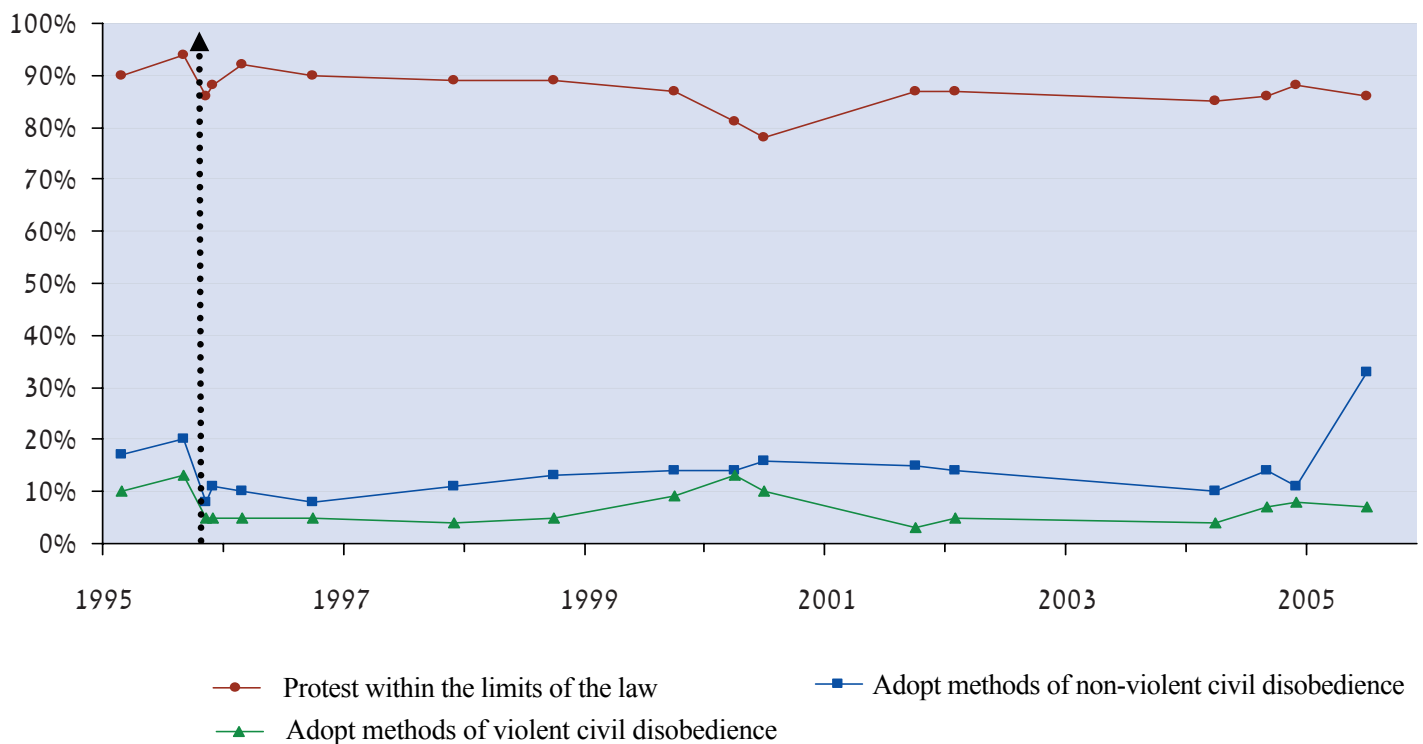
72   *The Peace Index September 1995*, http://spirit.tau.ac.il/socant/peace/peaceindex/1995/sep95.doc
73   *The Peace Index November 1995* (see note 70).

Clearly, then, as Yuchtman-Yaar and Hermann argue, the assassination had an immediate effect, reducing the legitimacy of protest in general and of illegal and legal protest in particular. A longer perspective enables us to see the influence of changing circumstances. Causes for protest from the right erase the influence that could be ascribed to the assassination. In the April 2000 survey, against the background of the political controversy over the intentions of Ehud Barak's government to transfer areas around Jerusalem such as Abu-Dis and el-Azaryiah to the Palestinians, the number of those supporting violent protest went up and reached the rates of those supporting violent protest in the period prior to Rabin's assassination.[74] And again, when the controversy against Sharon's disengagement plan lingered in the background, we see support for illegal protest reaching unprecedented levels, as well as a small rise in the support for violent protest, though reaching lower levels than the heights of 1995 and 2000.

Possibly, opposition to the disengagement and the evacuation of settlements is such a powerful motivation that even many who had not supported illegal protest in the past support it now – especially given the broad scope of protest activity among opponents of the disengagement, such as road blocks, illegal demonstrations, and refusal to serve in the army. Data from July 2005, however, show that the sweep in this direction does not characterize only the right and the opponents of the disengagement. Percentages of support for this kind of protest are almost as high among those placing themselves at the left end of the political spectrum as among those at the right end (39% and 44% respectively). Among those ranking the Greater Land of Israel as their first priority and among the disengagement's opponents, we find the highest percentage of those who consider non-violent civil disobedience a legitimate phenomenon: 56% of those ranking the Greater Land of Israel at the top of their scale of values support it, as do 44% of the disengagement's opponents. But even among those ranking democracy first, 23% think that non-violent civil disobedience should be allowed, and among supporters of the disengagement – 26%.[75] The legitimacy of non-violent civil disobedience in July 2005 is higher than ever, and this change is a result of the rise in the scope of these phenomena at the two ends of the political spectrum in the last few years, the public discourse dealing with the complex dilemmas of civil disobedience in a democracy and its justification, given refusals to serve from the left, and the various expressions of civil disobedience from the right. More than anything, the data

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74 *The Peace Index April 2000* (see note 70, above).

75 Note that the central feature that distinguishes between support for and opposition to illegal (violent and non-violent) protest is the religiosity variable, which is stronger than political variables, including the right-left definition and support for versus opposition to the disengagement. Yuchtman-Yaar and Hermann found this change pattern by comparing the data from before and after the assassination (see Yuchtman-Yaar and Hermann, "The Latitude of Acceptance" (note 70, tables 5 and 6). 57% of those who define themselves as ultra-Orthodox and 49% of those who define themselves as religious, support illegal but non-violent protest, as opposed to 27% of secular Jews and 29% of traditional Jews. 16% of ultra-Orthodox and 10% of religious Jews support violent protest, as opposed to 5% of secular and 8% of traditional Jews.

and the actual events attest to the depth of political controversy as well as to the culture of illegalism that is widespread in Israel, on its low commitment to the rule of law. Under these circumstances, fears for the resilience of the regime and the strength of democracy are not surprising.

The change in the covariation in the three types of protest is worth noting. We see in Figure 41 that in 1995, before and immediately after Rabin's assassination, ups and downs were recorded together in support levels for all three kinds of protest. However, this link then breaks down. In 2000, when the issue of Jerusalem came up for discussion in the Barak government, we see that support for non-violent and violent protest was on the rise, together with a drop in the support for legal protest. On the one hand, then, some citizens withdrew from protest altogether, including legal protest, whereas others were ready to grant legitimacy to non-violent protest as well as to violence. Concerning the disengagement plan, support for protest within the framework of the law is more or less stable, and we see a rise in the support for illegal but non-violent protest in particular, and a moderate rise in support for violent protest. Clearly, political participation and protest within the framework of the law

are evidence of democratic behavior, and society should not recoil from then. A very moderate trend showing declining support for it is evident over the last decade, but support for it remains very high even in the period before the disengagement. Nothing attests to any drop in the legitimacy of this type of protest. But violent action and any legitimation of it contradicts democratic principles and endangers the regime and society and any support for it – however small – is reason for concern. The dramatic rise in the legitimacy of protest action in the shape of illegal but non-violent civil disobedience should be viewed in the context of the bitter controversy over the disengagement from Gaza – and the public discourse of recent years, which placed the democratic aspect of such protest as well as its risks on the agenda. As noted, such protest is complex and problematic from both philosophical and practical perspectives, but its implementation and the massive public support for it in July 2005, recorded in our survey, genuinely threaten Israeli society and its democratic regime.

In July 2005, then, the disengagement had a much stronger influence on the attitude to protest than the historic precedent of Rabin's assassination, which is fading.[76]

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76 We tried to analyze the influence of Rabin's assassination in another way as well, by conducting an experiment in the July 2005 survey. We divided up the respondents randomly into two groups, and in both groups we asked about the behavior of the authorities toward people and groups campaigning for political violence concerning the disengagement plan. In one group, the question was asked immediately after a series of questions about Rabin's assassination and its influences, and in the second group – immediately after the questions about the disengagement. The expectation was that in the first group, answering the question with greater awareness of Rabin's assassination, respondents would prefer a sharper response from the authorities toward people and groups campaigning for political violence, because of the historical implication. We expected them to choose the option that the authorities are too lenient rather than the answer that the authorities are too harsh. However, we found no significant differences between the two

Figure 42

The Legitimacy of Illegal and Violent Protest Patterns, 1995-2005 (percentages)

— Adopt methods of non-violent civil disobedience   — Adopt methods of violent civil disobedience
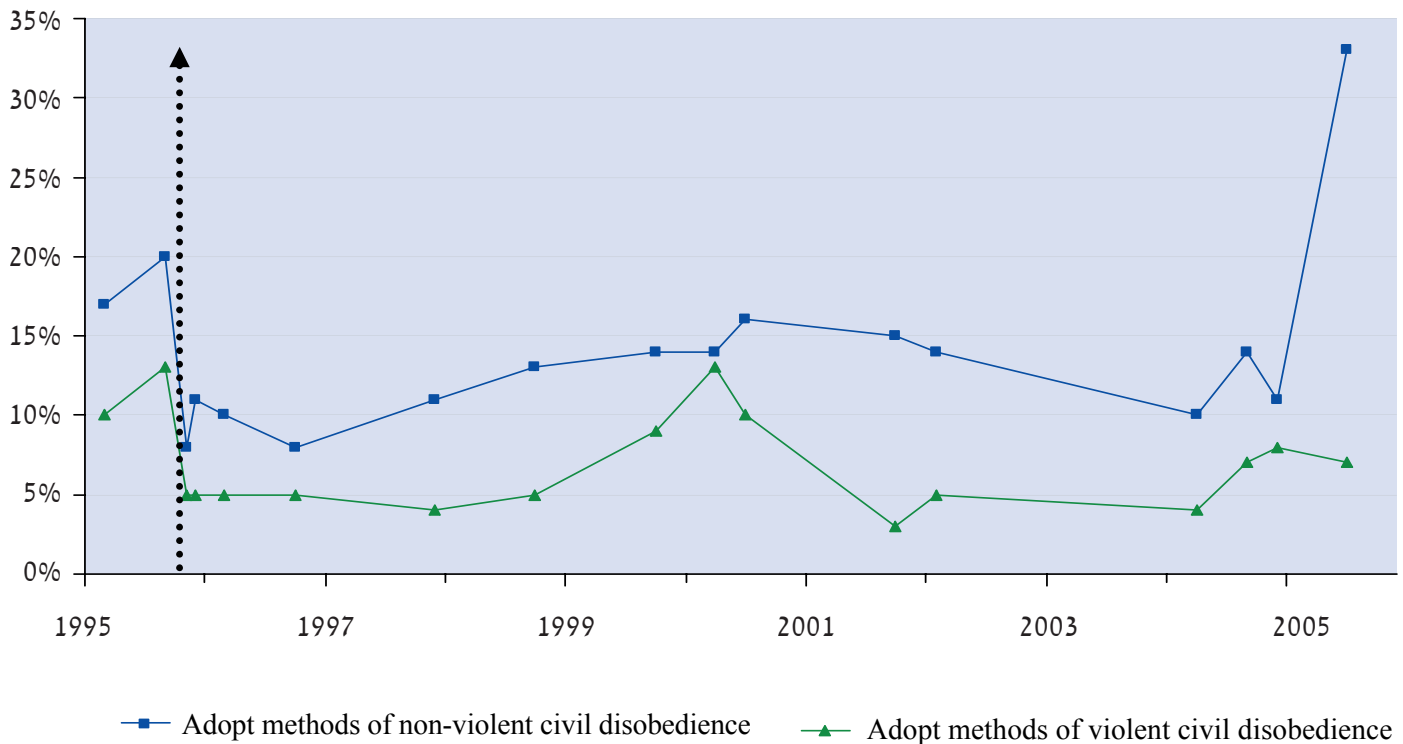
4. Summary

In this section we attempted to examine – from a perspective of ten years since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and aided by public opinion surveys conducted before and after the assassination – whether any traceable influence of the assassination could be detected on selected aspects of Israel's political culture. Rabin's assassination is justifiably considered to be one of the most significant events in the history of Israel. Given the nature of the event, its salience, and its circumstances, we could have expected it to have direct and significant implications for the value foundations of Israeli society. The assassination was clearly a consequence of the deep clash over the society's internal and external identity, and the assassin and the victim glaringly symbolized the parties to this conflict. The assassination occurred at a critical point in the history of the Israeli-Arab conflict.

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groups, and the inference to be drawn from results is that the reality of the disengagement is far stronger than our manipulation. Our manipulation may not have been sufficiently strong, but, more plausibly, the results – just like the longitudinal examination of the legitimacy attached to various protest patterns – do not support ascribing to Rabin's assassination long-term influence on the public's attitude to protest and to incitement to violence. Rather, the events and circumstances characterizing reality in July 2005 are the dominant element in determining this attitude.

The available data enabled us to map a clear and immediate influence in several dimensions. Immediately after the assassination, the importance of the value of democracy in the eyes of the Jewish public vis-à-vis other values increased sharply, together with a small rise in the value of peace. At the same time, support for all kinds of protest – legal, illegal, and violent – decreased. Support for and political tolerance of right wing groups in general, and Kach in particular, declined. Tolerance of religious groups, but not of others, also lessened slightly. In time, tolerance of religious groups returned to the levels before the assassination and even continued to rise, together with all our measures of tolerance. Several months after the assassination, support for legal protest again rose. These changes, as a whole, signal an acknowledgement of the price incurred through failure to sustain democratic values, in the spirit of Yitzhak Rabin's words at the demonstration where he was murdered: "Violence erodes the core of Israeli democracy."

The assassination's long-term effect, by contrast, is harder to identify. Even if it exists, it parallels other events and developments in the relationship with the Palestinians and in Israel's internal struggles. Such events can intensify the assassination's influence, but can also offset, cancel, and reverse it, as was indeed the case.

The data clearly show that Rabin's assassination did not in any way halt the rise of democracy in the value priorities, an upward trend that characterized Israeli society before and after the assassination as attested by the findings from the value ranking and from the tolerance findings. The gradual rise in the relative importance of democracy vis-à-vis other values continued, and since the second half of the 1990s, all three values – peace, democracy, and the Jewish state – are linked together at the top of the Jewish public's scale of priorities. Findings on political tolerance, both of disliked groups and of Arabs, attest to the rise of democratic liberal values and their implementation through the 1990s, and the assassination had no apparent effect on them. Concerning the attitude to peace, the findings on value priorities show that Rabin's assassination did not hinder the emphasis on peace as a value, but neither did it raise its importance.

According to the indicators we presented, the 1990s were a time of strengthening for democratic liberal values in Israel's political culture together with a peace process accompanied by a decreased sense of threat, despite continued acts of violence and terror (though on a smaller scale), and bitter internal political struggles. The outbreak of the intifada and the events of October 2000 halted and reversed these trends. The reverse link between conflict and democracy is well-known, and here we saw its two manifestations: a decrease in the relative emphasis on democracy and liberal values under conditions of threat, terror, and war, and a flourishing of these values during a peace process.

Rabin's assassination highlighted, in the short term, the importance of the value of democracy, and later combined with the general climate of declining threat and the peace process – to strengthen these values. Other events and developments, however, cancelled and even reversed this influence. The collapse of the peace process, the October 2000 events, and the Al-Aksa intifada were

the most significant developments and, as could be expected, their influence was dramatic. They immediately lowered the importance of democratic values vis-à-vis others and hindered their implementation, particularly with regard to Arab citizens. Note that, according to our measures, these events returned us to the first half of the 1990s and the emphasis on democracy and tolerance (both of disliked groups and of Arabs) is much higher today than in the 1980s.

The attitude toward political protest is a good illustration of how government policy and the internal conflict influence Israel's political culture. As noted, Rabin's assassination had an immediate impact on the attitude of the Jewish public toward protest: it lessened the legitimacy of protest in general, and of illegal and violent protest in particular. When Barak's government intended to advance a compromise with the Palestinians regarding the Jerusalem area, the legitimacy of violent protest rose to levels that had prevailed before Rabin's assassination. Against the backdrop of the disengagement, we identify a strong rise in the legitimacy of illegal protest as well as a small rise in the support for violent protest, though at levels lower than its peaks in 1995 and 2000. In other words, the sharply controversial political circumstances at the time of our inquiry are a cause for protest from the right, affecting the political culture in a direction opposite to that of the assassination.

In the short term, then, Rabin's assassination clearly affected various dimensions of Israel's democratic political culture. In the longer term, other events and developments proved more influential: the events of October 2000 and the Al-Aksa intifada had an effect on the relative importance of democracy vis-à-vis other values and on levels of political tolerance, particularly of Arabs. Political differences and sharp internal confrontations had an impact on protest and on the attitude toward various kinds of protest, and erased the influence of Rabin's assassination. The influence of the historical precedent of Rabin's assassination was pushed to the margins.

D. Identity Within the Bounds of Controversy: Identity Types in the Jewish Public Ten Years After Rabin's Assassination

1. The Dimensions of the Identity

The way individuals define their identity is based on how they position themselves along the fault lines dividing the societies to which they belong. A rift or a dispute in a society define for individuals the border between themselves and various groups, and they choose to place themselves on one or another side of the threshold. A controversy, therefore, awakens a dilemma of identity, bringing individuals to place themselves at one or another point along the fault line of the issue at stake. As shown in previous sections, the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin affected groups and communities in Israeli society over the last decade in different ways and at various levels. This traumatic event influenced the relationships between various groups in Israeli society and the way individuals perceive the web of social relationships and their own personal identity. We turn now to the mapping and analysis of types of identity in Israeli society, of the changes affecting them over the last decade, and of their political preferences.

An analysis of the way political controversy is expressed in Israel reveals a distinction between two dimensions of identity: external and internal. The external dimension of identity relates to the question of Israel's relationship with its surroundings and includes such issues as geographical borders, Israel's relationship with neighboring countries and with the world, and the future of the territories. The axis defining this dimension sways between hawks and doves. The internal dimension of the identity touches on the character of the Jewish and democratic state in terms of citizenship, religion and state relationships, and the question of "Who is a Jew." The axis defining this dimension shifts between Jew and Israeli. Latent in these two dimensions are such questions as: "Who are we?" "What do we want to be?" "How safe are we, today or in the future?" "What borders do we choose for ourselves and our country?" The answers to these questions are central to the definition of an individual's identity and closely linked to membership in a wider group.[77] We can therefore expect that controversies on definitions of identity and on political behavior patterns will be affected by significant events and processes in society and in politics, such as the assassination of Rabin in 1995 and the implementation of the disengagement from Gaza and northern Samaria in 2005.

To understand the depth and the influence of controversies in Israel during the last decade, we examined a group of questions asked in 1996 that were also included in the 2005 survey.[78] The wording of some of the questions was changed in the 2005 survey,

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77 Shamir and Arian, "Collective Identity" (note 60, above), pp. 265-277.
78 We used the questions that, according to an analysis of questions in the 1996 survey, created two factors expressing the two dimensions of identity. On the method and the 1996 survey, see Michal Shamir and Asher Arian, "Collective Identity and the 1996 Elections," in *The Elections in Israel – 1996* (Jerusalem: Israel Democracy Institute, 1999), pp. 57-83.

so that it would fit the different national and political circumstances.[79] The questions appear in Table 11, page 115. Two scales were constructed based on these questions, one reflecting the external dimension of individual identity (dove or hawk) according to five variables, and another reflecting the internal dimension (Israeli/Jew) according to four variables.

Despite the changes in the wording, the attitudes' structure and the relationships between them remained stable. We cannot point to an unequivocal trend or direction in public opinion during the last decade on the basis of these nine questions. In the external dimension, focusing on the geographical borders and on the settling of the Israel-Palestinian conflict, support for the establishment of a Palestinian state in the context of a final settlement appears to be greater in 2005 than it had been in 1996. On questions relating to the internal dimension, dealing with the character of the Jewish state in terms of citizenship, religion, the state, and so forth, greater support was expressed in 2005 for the perception that public life must rest on Jewish religious law, but there was less support for the primacy of Halakhah over democracy. A higher rate of respondents in 2005 (as opposed to 1996) ranked democracy first in their system of values.

2. Types of Identity

The interface between the external and internal scales helps to map out the internal structure of the identity perception prevalent among Israel's Jewish citizens more broadly. The scales were each divided into three: the extremes represent between a quarter and a third of the sample, and the third part, in the middle, represents the rest. The interface between the scales creates a two-dimensional mapping resulting in nine types presented in Table 12 (page 116), which integrates the doves/hawks distinction and the Israelis/Jews one. This division enables us to assess how the public divides up into the various identity types on each dimension, although the size of the groups cannot be compared over time because the division into groups is arbitrary.

Given the character of our operational definitions, the three groups in each separate dimension are relatively similar in size: "the doves" (types 1, 2, and 3) and the "hawks" (types 7, 8, and 9) constitute slightly less than a third of the sample, and so do the "Israelis" (types 1, 4, and 7) and the "Jews" (types 3, 6, and 9). The middle groups (types 4, 5, and 6 in the external dimension and types 2, 5, and 8 in the internal dimension) constitute about a third of the sample.

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79 The question in the 1996 survey relating to the Oslo Accords was replaced by a parallel question on the disengagement plan in the 2005 Survey. Moreover, in 1996 there were middle categories to the two questions concerning the return of territories for the sake of a peace agreement and the cessation of peace talks even at the cost of war. See notes to Table 11 on page 115.

Table 11

Scales of the External and Internal Identity Dimensions and the Questions that Compose Them, 1996 and 2005 (percentages)

A. The External Identity Dimension		
The question	**1996**	**2005**
1. "In exchange for peace, we must give back territories"	43% agree[a]	54% agree
2. Disengagement plan (2005) / Oslo (1996)	63% agree	57% agree
3. Palestinian State	49% agree	56% agree
4. "We must stop the peace process even at the risk of another war"	22% agree[b]	26% agree
5. Priorities – Greater Land of Israel[c]	10% first place	12% first place
Alpha factor	0.78	0.79
B. The Internal Identity Dimension		
The question	**1996**	**2005**
1. "In your opinion, should the government see to it that public life in Israel is conducted according to Jewish religious tradition?"	53% agree	63% agree
2. "When democracy and Halakhah clash, should democracy be preferred or Halakhah?	28% Halakhah 55% democracy 17% midway position	23% Halakhah 54% democracy 23% midway position
3. Democratic priorities	18% first place	26% first place
4. Identity[d]	47% Israeli 50% Jewish	44% Israeli 42% Jewish
Alpha factor	0.65	0 .68

a   43% disagreed and 14% took a midway position. The ratio of supporters to non-supporters was 50:50 in 1996, versus 47:53 in 2005.

b   67% disagreed and 11% took a midway position. The ratio of supporters to non-supporters was 76:24 in 1996, versus 75:25 in 2005.

c   For the wording of this question see the previous chapter. Two variables were built on the basis of this question, pointing to the priority of each value for the respondent: the "Greater Land of Israel" variable was the basis for the external identity dimension, and the "democracy" variable was one component of the internal identity dimension.

d   Respondents were asked to rank the four elements defining these identities according to their importance in their view: Jewish, Israeli, the respondent's ethnic group (Ashkenazi or Sephardi), and the respondent's religiosity/secularism. 86% chose the answer "Jewish" or "Israeli" as the most important element of their identity, and for the purpose of the analysis that follows, we will use only the first preference. In second place, 35% chose "Israeli" and 35% chose "Jewish." As the second option, 24% pointed to their being religious or secular: secular Jews were more inclined to choose this category after "Israeli" as their first choice, as opposed to religious Jews who opted for "Jew" as their first choice. For these secular respondents, it was easier to identify themselves as "secular," whereas many religious respondents accepted the definition of "Israeli." An additional 7% pointed to their being Sephardi or Ashkenazi.

The interface between the two scales shows the extent of the overlap between the external and internal dimensions of identity and the close and ongoing mutual relationships between them, which, as shown in Table 12, have not changed during the last decade. The "consistent" groups are the largest (types 1, 5, and 9); they constitute 55% of the entire sample in 1996, and 57.5% in 2005. The "inconsistent" groups (types 3 and 7) are the smallest; they constitute 3.2% of the entire sample in 1996, and 2.6% in 2005. The period of 1996-2005 is one of intensified links between the two dimensions of identity (external and internal).[80] Apparently, as shown below, this is not due to the weakening of the political component (included in the external dimension), but to the strengthening of the religious component (included in the internal dimension), which has also become more dominant in public discourse. In the course of the last decade, the religious way of life and identification with religion have increased, becoming manifest in almost every aspect of public life. The significance of the religious component has resulted in a counter reaction, evident mainly in the meteoric success of the Shinui party in the 2003 elections, which reflects the other side of the same phenomenon. Whether or not the ultra-Orthodox are part of the government, Israel's political leadership has never been oblivious to the symbols they represent.

Table 12

Nine Types of Identity, 1996 and 2005

(Interface between the external and internal scales of the identity dimension)

Type	Type of Identity Dimension External	Type of Identity Dimension Internal	Percentage of the 2005 sample (N=694)	Percentage of the 1996 sample (N=1039)
1	Dove	Israeli	21.0	18.3
2	Dove	Middle	9.5	10.4
3	Dove	Jewish	1.3	1.3
4	Middle	Israeli	9.5	8.2
5	Middle	Middle	19.2	21.7
6	Middle	Jewish	9.9	10.4
7	Hawk	Israeli	1.3	1.9
8	Hawk	Middle	9.9	12.9
9	Hawk	Jewish	18.3	15.0

◻ The large groups   ◻ The medium groups   ◼ The small groups

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80   The correlation between them rose from .569 in 1996 to .628 in 2005.

The heightened salience of the religious rift and of the dilemmas included in the internal dimension of the political system as a whole, has sharpened the fault lines, leading to a stronger distinction between types of identity. In other words, not only did the controversy itself intensify in the course of the last decade, but so did its institutional political expression, as did the distinction between the various types of identity throughout the internal dimension. The significance of this observation transcends yesterday's headlines. The strengthening of the religious element has become a motif in Israel's political life and, beside other elements, was in the background of Rabin's assassination.

3. Types of Identity and Religiosity

In a division of the public according to identity types, religiosity emerges as an extremely influential variable. Differences in levels of religiosity were found in both dimensions of identity and particularly in the internal one, as is evident in Figure 43 (page 118), which presents the distribution of the religious group in 1996 and 2005 according to identity types.

The mapping of the various identity types according to the level of religiosity shows that, except for a small group of "Jewish doves," a decisive majority of the "doves" and the "Israelis" are secular (meaning that they defined themselves as slightly or not at all traditional), whereas the more hawkish and Jewish groups are more religious. The "hawks" and the "Jews" groups are mixed, and the "Jewish hawks" are more Orthodox. Although the two most religious groups constitute about a quarter of the sample, they make up 72% of group 9 – "Jewish hawks."

This pattern prevailed in 1996, and is more prominent in 2005.

Generally, the rate of respondents who declared themselves religious in 2005 was higher by 5% than their rate in 1996; moreover, respondents in each one of the nine identity types in 2005 reported a higher level of religious conservatism when compared with the respondents in each one of these identity types in 1996. The general and uniform rise in the level of religiosity, which cuts across all identity types, attests to the strengthening of the religious dimension in Israel's public life.

The interface between these two dimensions will enable us to evaluate which is a more efficient predictor of public behavior. For instance, if the external dimension (dovish-hawkish) is more influential, we will find greater differences between the hawkish-Israeli types and the dovish-Israeli types (that is, types sharing the same feature in the internal dimension but differing in the external one), as opposed to differences between the Israeli-doves and the Jews-doves. This analysis points to the prominence of the internal dimension, both in 1996 and in 2005. Almost no differences were found between the three groups of Israelis (types 1, 4 and 7), which are defined according to the internal dimension. In the three groups of doves, however (types 1, 2, and 3), we found greater differences between each of the types, indicating the internal dimension's greater influence.

4. Identity Types, Right-Left, and Political Preferences

Great effort and resources have been invested in the attempt to map and analyze the political preferences of respondents as the basis for

election strategies and for predicting election results. On this question, we may consider how the typology of identity dimensions contributes to the mapping of different voting blocs. The connection between a left-right typology and voting patterns is worth considering, in order to understand how the changing importance of religion in the course of the last decade has affected politics. For this purpose we combined the identity types with the respondents' self-location on the left right-scale (1 represents right and 7 – left). The results are presented in Figure 44 (page 119).

As the figure shows, a slight shift from the middle to the right-hawkish end of the scale – from 4.01 to 3.76, on a seven-point scale, when 4 is the median – was recorded between 1995-2005. The assassination of Prime Minister Rabin was the climax of an extremely tense period, which began with the Oslo Accords and is still ongoing. The events of the second intifada and the death of the 13 Israeli Arabs killed by the police in October 2000 made for a highly charged political climate, and Jewish public opinion reacted by shifting to the right. Although this group preserved and even moderated its views on certain issues, the general atmosphere became more militant. This shift, which was not dramatic or particularly extreme, was consistent with events and expressed the feelings of threat and frustration prevalent at the time.

Figure 43

Religious Respondents According to Types of Identity, 1996 and 2005 (percentages)
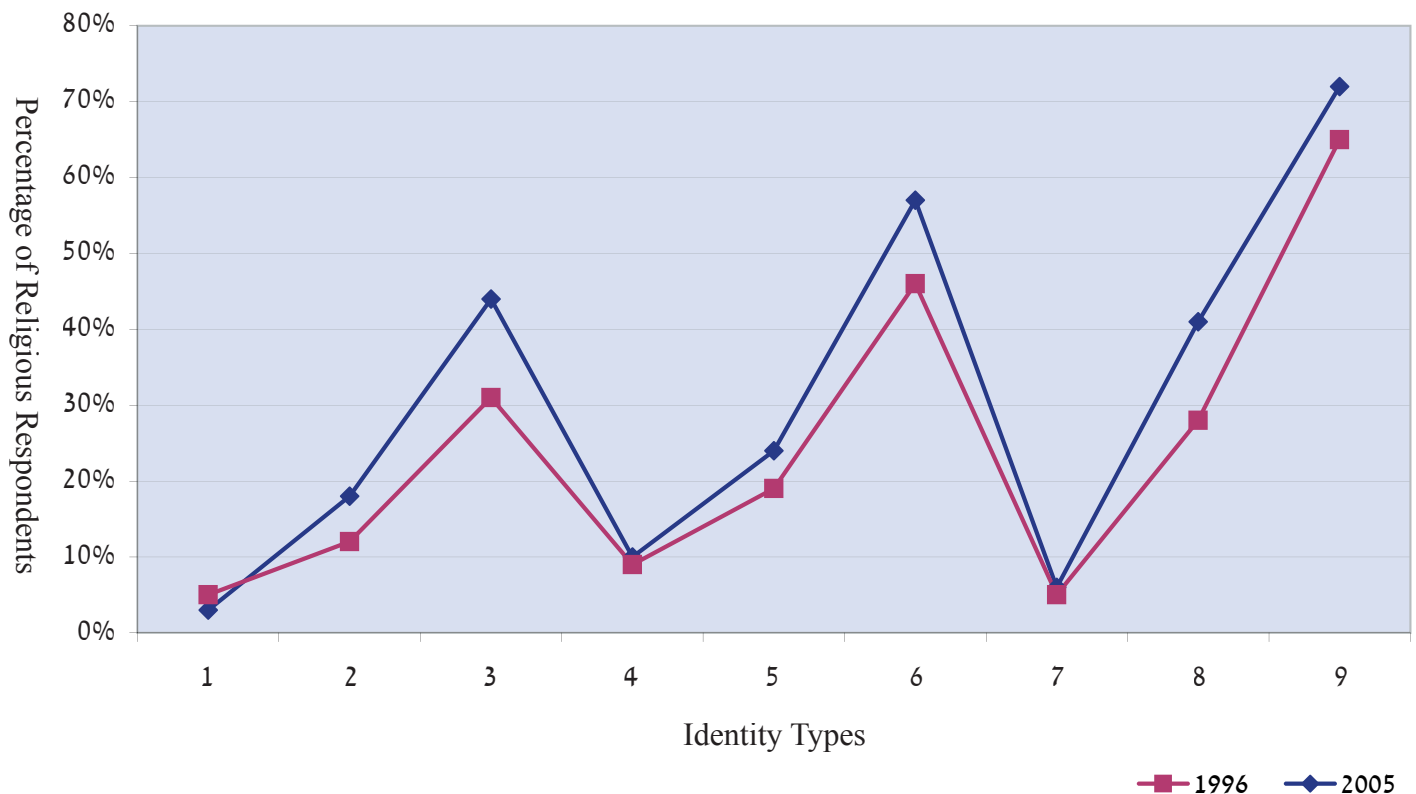
Here too, as with the religiosity question, signs of change were evident in each of the identity types and particularly in those included in the doves category, as shown in Figure 44. In almost every category, respondents located themselves in a more right-leaning (hawkish) place in 2005 than in 1996. In distinguishing between the various identity types, it seems that in 1996 and in 2005 this trend appears to be more prominent as one moves along the axes from the dovish-Israeli (type 1) toward the hawkish-Jewish (type 9). One sign of growing militancy in the Israeli-Jewish population is found in the link between identity types and political leanings (right-left). The first six identity types (1-6) all shifted to the right between 1996 and 2005.

Additional evidence emerges when we examine the respondents' political preferences, as can be seen in Table 13 (page 120). This table presents the respondents' party affiliations in 1996 and in 2005, according to their responses to the question, "For whom would you vote if elections were held today?" divided according to identity types.[81]

Figure 44

Right-Left Averages, 1996 and 2005
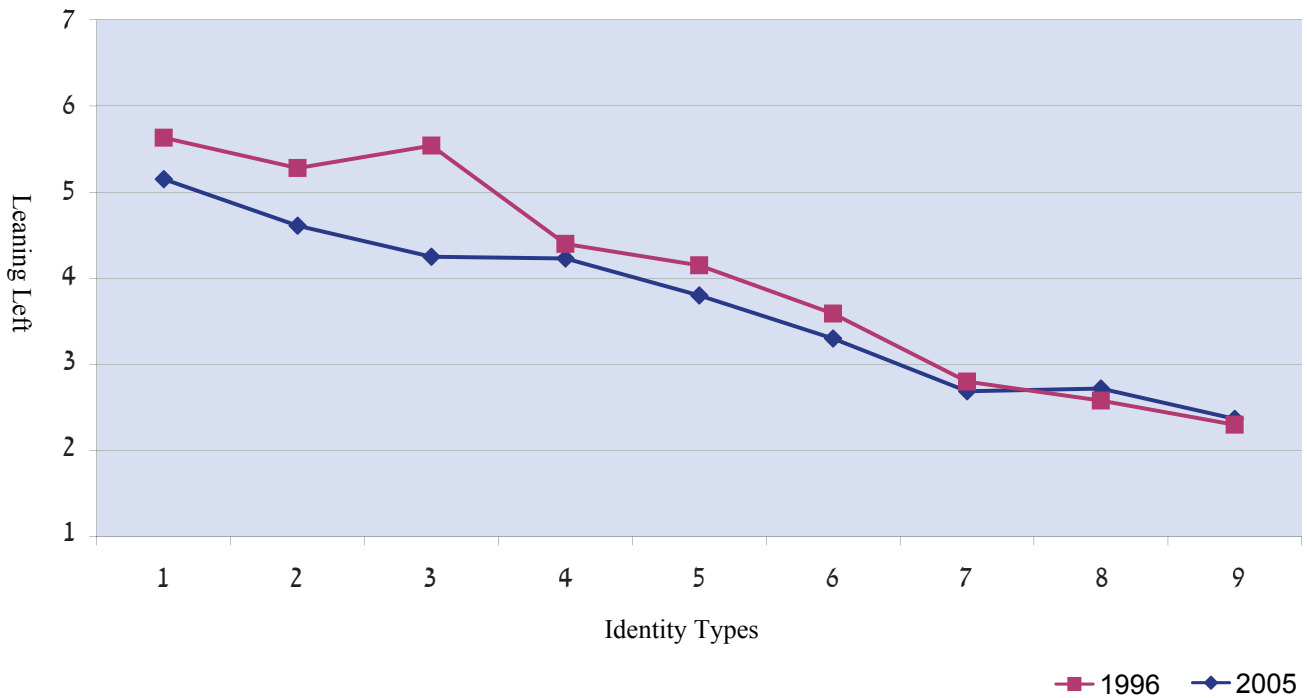
* In the figure, right=1; left=7, when a rise on the Y axis means leaning more to the left.

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81   In the 1996 survey, the question was asked concerning elections to the 14th Knesset (1996 elections). The 2005 data were collected in July, and relate to the respondent's intention for the coming elections, that is, in 2006.

Table 13

Voting Intentions in Knesset Elections and Identity Types, 1996 and 2005
(percentages)

Type Total	Meretz/ Yahad 5.7%	Labor 11.0%	Shinui 5.6%	Likud 22.8%	Religious 9.5%	Right 7.1%	Won't vote 13.7%	Undecided 24.0%
(N=684) 2005								
1. Dove/Israeli	18	19	10	12	0	2	12	26
2. Dove/Center	13	19	11	22	2	3	11	19
3. Dove/Jew	0	0	13	25	13	0	25	25
4. Middle/Israeli	6	11	11	24	0	0	25	25
5. Middle/Middle	2	12	4	31	2	9	14	28
6. Middle/Jew	0	5	3	24	21	8	12	28
7. Hawk/Israeli	0	19	0	25	13	13	19	13
8. Hawk/Middle	0	5	2	36	13	16	19	13
9. Hawk/Jew	0	3	6	19	29	13	12	22

Type Total	Meretz 4.8%	Labor 36.3%	Third Way 1.8%	Likud 34.8%	Religious 7.2%	Right 1.8%	Won't vote 1.3%	Undecided/ No response 12.3%
(N=1039) 1996								
1. Dove/Israeli	20	74	1	2	0	0	1	3
2. Dove/Middle	9	67	2	9	1	0	0	11
3. Dove/Jew	0	92	0	8	0	0	0	0
4. Middle/Israeli	2	43	4	23	0	0	5	24
5. Middle/Middle	0	40	2	35	4	1	2	16
6. Middle/Jew	1	22	2	43	16	0	0	16
7. Hawk/Israeli	0	5	5	65	0	5	0	20
8. Hawk/Middle	0	4	4	72	6	5	1	9
9. Hawk/Jew	0	3	1	61	16	6	2	12

▨ The large groups   ▨ The medium groups   ▨ The small groups

The distribution of the respondents on this question points to the sources (the groups) from which the political parties draw their support. In 2005, the Likud had the widest support source, when more than 20% in seven out of the nine identity types expressed intentions to vote for this party. In the two other categories (the extreme Jewish hawks and the extreme Israeli doves), the Likud had 19% and 12% support, respectively. As expected, the religious parties draw their main support from the more "Jewish" identity types, but they also enjoy support from other categories. The Labor party enjoys 19% support among those defined as extreme or moderate doves and Israelis, and among those included in the categories of Israelis and hawks. The Labor party does not enjoy the support of middle groups, in a scenario very different from that of historical Mapai's golden age, when Labor was the dominant force in Israel's political system.

Support for Shinui is generally confined to groups characterized as "Israeli" and backing a moderate stance in the external dimension. The limited scope of Shinui's target population does not fit the typical constituency of a center party, hinting at its closeness to the support sources behind the Labor party. The patterns of support for parties on the extreme right and extreme left reflect one another in their ability to enlist their supporters from different identity types. The public supporting Meretz-Yahad is composed almost entirely of identity types 1 and 2 ("doves" who are "Israelis" or identified with the middle categories of the external dimension). The supporters of parties on the extreme right are mainly hawkish, regardless of their identity characterization in the internal dimension.

About one-quarter of the sample's population declared that they have not yet decided how they will vote, or did not answer this question. Generally, this group cut across the various identity types, although the middle group includes a higher rate of respondents who have not yet decided, or who refrained from answering. A more troubling finding is the declaration of 14% of the respondents that they do not intend to vote, a response more frequent than it had been in the past. In 1996, only 1.3% of the respondents declared they do not intend to vote, as opposed to 13.7% in 2005. Most of the "floating vote" in 1996 came from the middle categories of the various identity types. Within this group, respondents in the Israeli identity type were more prominent, posing a challenge to the political parties and to the ethic of civic participation in the country.

The situation in 2005 is radically different from that which emerged in the 1996 survey. In 1996, there were two large parties almost identical in size, and sectarian parties such as Shas and Yisrael Be'aliyah were viewed as the main recruiting pools of the future. The Labor party drew its main support from dovish identity types, but also from groups in the middle. The Likud's main source were the hawks, with some contribution from middle groups.

The 1996 elections were the first elections in Israel to be held according to the Law of Direct Election of the Prime Minister, and, by nature, they enabled a better distinction between right and left. Table 14 (page 123) presents the connection between identity types and political preferences as it comes to the fore in the intention to vote for Shimon Peres or Binyamin Netanyahu in 1996.

As this table shows, the identity dimension significantly differentiating Netanyahu's from Peres' supporters is the external (dove/hawk) one, whereas the effect of the internal dimension is noticeable but much smaller and only marginal. The combination between the two dimensions of identity is evident mainly in the middle groups (type 5). This group, which constitutes more than a fifth of the sample, divided its support more or less equally between the candidates. Signs of the internal identity dimension, then, are evident mainly among those whose views concerning the external dimension are not as resolute, whereas signs of the external identity dimension are evident in all identity types to a similar extent. Hence, each of the identity scales is closely linked to political preferences and to voting choices, but the external identity dimension is the better predictor.

5. The External and Internal Identity Dimensions

Since Rabin's assassination, though not necessarily in its wake, the arrangements creating the framework of political life in Israel have broken down, and new organizational mechanisms have been created. As in other countries, religion is the most important and prominent mechanism in Israel as well. The depth of religious commitment is currently felt throughout the world, and the struggle against international terrorism is sometimes presented as a "clash of civilizations" between the Christian West and Islam. This wave of religious awakening and organization is also discernible in Israel, where the power of religion is visible both in external relationships with neighboring countries and in the internal relationships between various groups in society. The internal struggle intensified with the disengagement plan, which led to maximal resistance of the religious right to a government that they perceived as secular.

In politics everywhere in the world, the religious issue is an internal layer, secondary to the main plot. Tolerance and other shared values required in a democracy are weakened due to the demands of groups more strongly committed to religion. A call is often heard in Israel for the superiority of shared values over sectarian party goals, but the efforts to preserve some kind of unity tend to unravel the web of coexistence of social groups living side by side. The cumulative influence of these rips in the social web, and Rabin's assassination among them, inevitably erodes the foundations of democratic life in Israel.

Trends of change since Rabin's assassination and up until today, are summed up in Table 15 (page 124). The table presents the correlations between external and internal identity dimensions on the one hand, and the respondents' degree of religiosity and their political preferences on the right-left continuum, on the other.

Whereas the correlation between the right-left continuum and the distinction between the various identity types is very high, the correlation between this continuum and the external identity dimension decreased from .70 in 1996 to .59 in 2005. This is a by-product of many people having abandoned the left in the wake of the second intifada and the changes in the structure of the political parties themselves. The correlation between political preferences and the internal identity dimension also decreased (from .47 in 1996 to .45 in 2005).

Table 14

Choice between Shimon Peres and Benjamin Netanyahu in 1996 and Identity Types
(percentages)

Type	Netanyahu	Peres
N=1,039		
1. Dove/Israeli	3	97
2. Dove/Middle	7	93
3. Dove/Jew	8	92
4. Middle /Israeli	28	72
5. Middle/Middle	48	52
6. Middle/Jew	69	31
7. Hawk/Israeli	88	12
8. Hawk/Middle	89	11
9. Hawk/Jew	96	4

■ The large groups   ■ The medium groups   ■ The small groups

By contrast, the correlation between each one of the two identity dimensions and the degree of religiosity went up (between the external dimension and the degree of religiosity, a rise from .39 in 1996 to .45 in 2005, and between the internal dimension and the degree of religiosity – a rise from .53 in 1996 to .61 in 2005). The importance of the degree of religiosity as a key to the understanding of the identity patterns of Israelis, therefore, rose over time, whereas the importance of the location in the right-left continuum is still high but has slightly weakened. These findings reinforce the perception of various observers that the internal and external rifts among the Jewish-Israeli public in Israel are deepening. Creating the means for overcoming these rifts is the challenge facing all those who cherish Israeli democracy and its stability.

6. The Public's Attitude to Yitzhak Rabin

Yitzhak Rabin's public profile has remained high despite a certain erosion in the liking for him. The public liking for Rabin was tested both in 1996 and in 2005. In this context, the overlap between the various identity types and the level of public liking for Rabin is clear, as Figure 45 (page 125) shows.

Table 15

Correlations between the Identity Scales, Religiosity and Right-Left, 1996 and 2005

1996

	Internal Identity Dimension	Religiosity	Right-left
External Identity Dimension	.57	.39	.70
Internal Identity Dimension		.53	.47
Religiosity			.39

2005

	Internal Identity Dimension	Religiosity	Right-left
External Identity Dimension	.63	.45	.59
Internal Identity Dimension		.61	.45
Religiosity			.24

We see that there is no difference between the influence of categories composing the internal dimension and those composing the external one: the further the identity type departs from the Israeli pole to the middle categories and to the Jewish pole, the less the liking for Rabin (so it is within the hawks, within the doves, and in the middle categories). The doves expressed a higher liking for Rabin than people in the middle categories, while the hawks liked him the least. In each of these categories, the "Israelis" expressed the highest liking for him, and the "Jews" – the least. The difference between 1996 and 2005 shows the inner dimension becoming more important – whereas in 1996 it was embedded in the external dimension. In 2005 there are exceptions.

The discussion so far, then, shows that both dimensions of identity influence the respondents' view of Rabin and the level of their liking for him. Interestingly, this pattern of the dimensions' influence on the level of liking for a particular personality was not identified in the respondents' attitude to other Israeli prime ministers, and Rabin's case is unique in its shape and scope. Yitzhak Rabin and his memory, therefore, are set at the focus of the controversy over Israel's collective identity in both its external and internal dimensions, in a way that distinguishes him from all other prime ministers. Moreover, we found that the average liking of all identity types for Rabin was lower in 2005 than in 1996. Possibly, the explanation lies in the fact that the 1996

survey was conducted a few months after the assassination, at the height of the mourning period. Another explanation could be the age of the respondents (some of the 2005 respondents were too young to remember the actual events ten years previously) or the length of their stay in the country. Whatever the cause, a large gap consistently prevails between the average liking rates in 1996 and 2005. The erosion in the public's liking for Rabin is large and significant, and cuts across identity types.

Beyond the specific and direct meaning of the liking for Rabin, we can see in the web of responses an indirect test of the respect for fundamental democratic values in the public participating in the research. The erosion of Rabin's status as a former prime minister, particularly given the circumstances of his death, suggests a certain erosion in the adherence to democratic values and democratic culture. Since these trends cut across the various types, we can conclude that they express not only political inclinations but also a wider and more generalized trend that embraces all groups and segments of Jewish society in Israel, and they raise concern about the strength of democratic values and culture in Israeli society.

Figure 45

Average Liking for Rabin, 1996 and 2005*
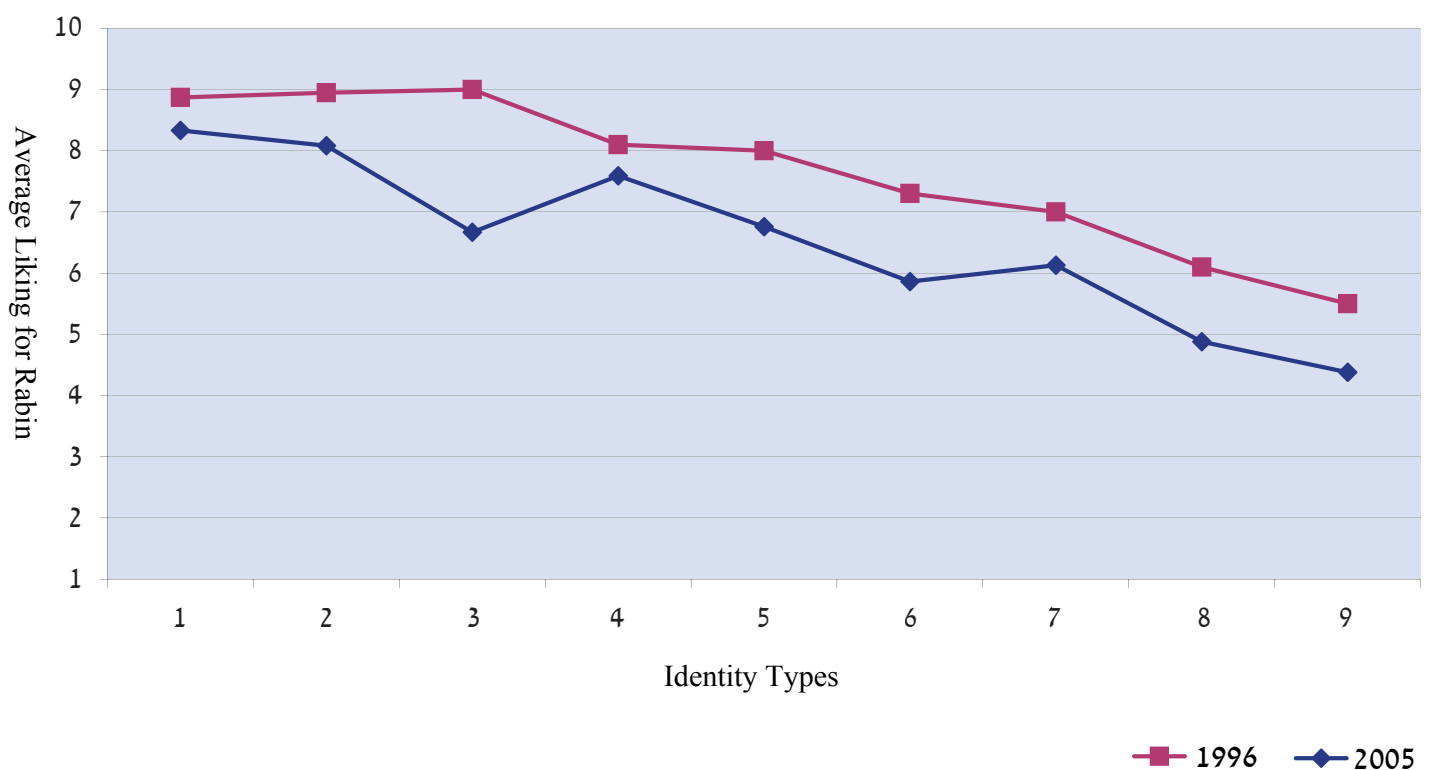
*   10=Liking; 1=Rejection, when a rise on the Y axis means greater liking for Rabin.

In Israel, as in other countries, the two identity dimensions, external and internal, are extremely important. Moreover, in Israel, as in other countries, the importance of issues related to dilemmas of internal identity, and particularly those of religion, has increased with time. Although the conflicts included in the external dimension (the question of the country's borders and its relationships with its neighbors) have not yet been settled, Israel is torn by inner struggles, including those relating to the definition of its internal identity – as a nation, as a people, and as a citizenship.

The personal and group identity mixes group issues and loyalties, thereby strengthening extant social rifts. Their meaning – as well as the considerable overlap between them and their expression in political preferences – emerges more clearly in the interface between the two dimensions of identity, and the distinction between the nine identity types helps to decipher the complex pattern of consensus and controversy that characterizes Israeli politics. The overlap between the two dimensions exposes disagreement and polarization. The importance of the two dimensions and particularly the rising significance of the internal dimension suggests that the center, which is the anchor of democracies throughout the world, is split by the clashing demands of the extremes. Ultimately, the future of Israeli democracy depends on the ability of the center to withstand the pressures (in terms of identity and mediation, rather than in political terms), and overcome the polarization between the various streams.

E. A Review of Recent Studies on the Assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and its Influence on Society and Democracy in Israel

1. The Causes of the Assassination

The crucial and controversial issue that surfaced in the wake of the assassination is the question of blame: is blame incumbent only on the murderer, on the group from which he emerged, or on the public atmosphere in Israel in the period that preceded the assassination? The answer that the literature offers to this question comprises four concentric circles.

The first circle – internal, psychological – focuses on the murderer, Yigal Amir, himself. Studies such as those of Avner Falk found that "the fact that of all people on the extreme right it was Yigal Amir who murdered Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is rooted in his psychological structure, in his past and in his relationship with his family, particularly his father and mother."[82]

The second, wider circle focuses on the extreme right as a narrow group that counted Yigal Amir among its members. The perspective of scholars who explain the assassination according to this category, such as, for instance, Ehud Sprinzak, was that the assassination of Rabin did not take place in a vacuum. Although Yigal Amir acted alone,

he was the product of a delegitimization process led by the extreme right against the signers of the Oslo Accords and their supporters, and this process is what prepared the conditions for the act.[83]

The third circle focuses on an even wider circle, that of religious Zionism. Several scholars, such as Charles Liebman,[84] and Avishai Margalit,[85] raise the question: "How guilty is the faction from which the conspirators came?" Strong criticism was also leveled at Bar-Ilan University, where Yigal Amir was a student, as having prepared the conditions for this act. Menachem Klein, for instance, argued that it is not a mere coincidence that the assassin came from the ranks of the university, since, although it is an institution committed to the existence and the promotion of the values of pluralism and universalism, it actually became the stage for a narrow religious political school.[86]

The fourth and most external circle deals with the process that led to the assassination, with the complex of events and actors that contributed to the social polarization and prepared the ground for it. Researchers such

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82   Avner Falk, "From Oswald to Amir: A Psychoanalytic Profile of a Political Assassin" [Hebrew], *Panim* 8 (February 1999), p. 26.

83   Ehud Sprinzak, "Israel's Radical Right and the Countdown to the Rabin Assassination" in Peri, *Assassination* (note 70 above), pp. 96-128; idem, *Brother against Brother: Violence and Extremism in Israeli Politics From Altalena to the Rabin Assassination* (New York: The Free Press, 1999).

84   Charles Liebman, "Who Murdered Yitzhak Rabin" [Hebrew], in *Political Assassination: The Murder of Rabin and Political Assassination in the Middle East*, ed. Charles Liebman (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1998), pp. 69-79.

85   Avishai Margalit, "How Will We Remember Yitzhak Rabin" [Hebrew] in Liebman, *Political Assassination*, p. 65 (note 84 above).

86   Menachem Klein, *Bar Ilan: University Between Religion and Politics* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1998), p. 11.

as Michael Karpin and Ina Friedman blamed people on the extreme right and rabbis in Israel and in the United States, and argued that their words and actions had prepared the ground for a political assassination that deepened social rifts in Israel.[87] Others adopted terms and theories from clinical psychology and used them to analyze not just the assassin's personality but also Israel's historical, social, and political reality. Israel Orbach, for instance, argued that the cause of Rabin's assassination was a delayed manifestation of the trauma of the Holocaust, which is part of the lives of Jews in Israel until this day.[88] In his view, the deep fear of the passivity and the impotence of "sheep to the slaughter" accompanies the life of the Jewish people to the point of self-hatred and self-destruction; the trauma of the Holocaust is part of the "nightmare" of peace, which could lead to a new Holocaust. We also find a more anthropological approach, such as the one Tamar El-or takes as her starting point. She suggests viewing the assassination as an act parallel to the "honor killings" accepted in certain cultures.[89] According to El-or, Rabin, who best symbolized Zionist Israeli nationalism, crossed the borders of legitimacy when he shook hands with Yasser Arafat. He thereby metaphorically broke the family codes and caused great shame. In this context, when one of the sons rebels, "the family tends to send to the assassination the one who is best suited, the one whose jail term will not disrupt the sequence of life and the fabric of the family."[90]

2. Public Feelings and Reactions after the Assassination

Different groups in Israel, naturally, responded to Rabin's assassination in various ways. Several studies examined the reactions and the feelings of the public in the first few months after the assassination, drawing distinctions between various groups – religious Zionists, ultra-Orthodox, youth, and Arabs.

One of the communities blamed for the assassination, as noted, was that of religious-Zionists, who were required to contend with Yigal Amir's membership in their ranks. Their reactions to the assassination varied: some saw him as an exception, a "rotten apple," while others demanded that their community engage in "soul searching" after the assassination.[91] Avi Ravitzky described three stages in the way religious Zionism coped with the assassination. The first was criticism and repudiation of the act, together with a demand for self-examination. As attacks from the outside intensified, religious-Zionism withdrew into defensiveness and

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87 Michael Karpin and Ina Friedman, *Murder in the Name of God* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998).

88 Israel Orbach, "Self-Destructive Processes in Israeli Politics," in Peri, *Assassination* (note 70 above), p. 130.

89 Tamar El-or, *Next Pesach: Literacy and Identity of Young Religious Zionist Women* [Hebrew], (Tel Aviv-Am Oved, 1998), p. 81.

90 Ibid., p. 82.

91 Avi Ravitzky, "'Let Us Search Our Path': Religious-Zionism After Rabin's Assassination" [Hebrew] in N. Horowitz (ed.), *Religion and Nationality in Israel and the Middle East* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved and The Yitzhak Rabin Center for the Study of Israel, 1999), p. 257.

repression: "The place of putting their house in order was not taken by denial externally but by digging in internally."[92] At the third stage, the trauma was repressed and replaced by theological silence and a lowering of ideological tones.

Several of the meanings and interpretations ascribed to Rabin's assassination in ultra-Orthodox society are described in Hagit Mas-Tsfati's article, which is based on the ultra-Orthodox press.[93] This press offered its own interpretation of the assassination: "It saw in it indications of the moral decline of Israeli society, rather than the blame of a particular group."[94] As for the relationship between ultra-Orthodox and secular Jews in this context, Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin argued that the "peace camp," which was identified with a secular world view, turned "Rabin's legacy" into the defining border of a socio-cultural realm that turned away all those who do not belong, a kind of "Ashkenazi secular utopia." In his view, Rabin's assassination intensified hatred against the ultra-Orthodox, and signs of that are clearly evident in the results of the 1999 elections.[95]

Another group that received extensive coverage were the youth. Given that the cultural, social, and political space of young people in Israel contains various identities, Tamar Rapoport identified four different groups of youngsters according to their reaction to the assassination.[96] Another study devoted to this group is that of Amia Lieblich, who asked why youth became such active partners in the public bereavement and why, at the end of the week of mourning, they withdrew back into their passive role.[97] Relying on the content analysis of about 250 letters that young people aged 12-20 wrote to the Rabin family, she concluded that their activeness had been a temporary awakening and an emotional catharsis expressed in writing, without signaling an essential change in their behavior in society in general.[98]

Majid Al-Haj discusses the reactions of the Arab sector to Rabin's assassination and presents a comprehensive review of the reactions as well as quotations from Arab leaders in the media.[99] He found that the reaction of the Israeli Arab public to the assassination was complex and multifaceted.

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92 Ibid., pp. 268-276.
93 Hagit Mas-Tsfati, "Rabin's Assassination as Viewed by the Ultra-Orthodox" [Hebrew], *Kesher* 27 (2000), pp. 88-98.
94 Ibid., p. 97.
95 Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, "Rabin's Legacy: On Secularism, Nationalism, and Orientalism" [Hebrew], in *Contested Memory – Myth, Nation and Democracy: Thoughts After Rabin's Assassination*, ed. Lev Grinberg (Beersheba: Humphrey Institute for Social Research, Ben Gurion University, 2000), pp. 89-107.
96 Tamar Rapoport, "The Many Voices of Israeli Youth: Multiple Interpretations of Rabin's Assassination," in Peri, *Assassination* (note 70 above), pp. 198-226.
97 Amia Lieblich, "Youth Write About and to 'The First Man Who Died of Peace': Youth's Letters in the Week After Yitzhak Rabin's Assassination" [Hebrew], in *Political Assassination* (note 84 above), pp. 80-106.
98 Ibid., pp. 104-106.
99 Majid Al-Haj, "An Illusion of Belonging: Reaction of the Arab Population to Rabin's Assassination," in Peri, *Assassination* (note 70 above), pp. 163-174.

Beside the repudiation were also several others condemning the attitude toward Arabs in Israel and the territories, as well as critiques of the extreme right that, in their view, reflect the anti-democratic political culture of the Jewish majority in Israel.[100] Arabs were also critical of the Israeli media, which they claimed had ignored their reaction to the assassination.[101] In his summary, Al-Haj concludes that Israeli political culture is closed and ethnocentric, and leaves Arab citizens beyond the borders of public discourse.[102] Jamal Zahalka formulates this even more sharply: "Rabin was not assassinated in a fratricidal conflict, as many believe, but because of hatred for Arabs."[103]

The discussion about the public's feelings and reactions to the assassination leave room for an inquiry into the role of the media as a means of shaping and mediating views and feelings. Yoel Cohen analyzes the role and the diffusion of the media after the assassination, particularly radio and television, as it came to the fore in three public opinion surveys.[104] His findings show that the public viewed the media at the time as contributing to unity. Yoram Peri also points to the centrality of the media in shaping Israeli collective identity and in building the political ritual in the first seven days after the assassination.[105] Contrary to its usual focus on social rifts, the media in those days played an extremely active role in "constructing the myth of the man who upon his death turned into a symbol."[106] Peri, too, indicates that the media was crucial in defining the renewed collective identity around Rabin's figure, and offers a series of qualities that featured most prominently in all the recurrent mentions of him: The sabra Israeli, peacemaker, Zionist, "Americanophile," anti-politician, and empathic figure.

3. Rabin's Image in the Collective Memory

The attitude of Israeli society to loss and bereavement, a central component of its collective identity, is the pivot of a fourth series of studies discussing Yitzhak Rabin's legacy and his remembrance. Rabin's memory has been honored in many ways: commemoration days, streets and institutions named after him, monuments, and so forth. Many studies have dealt with the question of whether Rabin has been built up as a myth, how we should remember him, and how his legacy should be commemorated. Others have tried to examine the profile that Rabin's memory will assume in the future.

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100 Ibid., p. 171.

101 Ibid., p. 173.

102 Ibid., p. 174.

103 Shlomo Ben-Ami, Yehuda Lankri, Jamal Zahalka, and Shulamit Aloni, "Round Table Discussion on the Implications of the Assassination for Israeli Democracy" [Hebrew], in Greenberg, *Contested Memory* (note 95 above), p. 161.

104 Yoel Cohen, "Broadcast News Diffusion in Crisis-Ridden Democracies: Israel and the Rabin Assassination," *Press/Politics* 7, 3 (2002), pp. 14-33.

105 Yoram Peri, "The Rabin Myth and the Press: Reconstruction of the Israeli Collective Identity," *European Journal of Communication* 12 (1997), pp. 435-458.

106 Ibid.

Some have even noted that commemorating Rabin is so complex an endeavor that it has been neglected, and those seeking to do this focus on the "remembrance of his remembrance," as Michael Feige argues.[107] Not only is there public controversy over the myth that has been built around Rabin's figure, claims Feige, but his remembrance is essentially different from that of others because its declared aim is to have a social impact.[108] Haim Hazan also claims that the attempt to create a myth around Rabin after his assassination failed.[109] In his article, Hazan distinguishes between the burial of the personal body and the burial of the public body, which is the myth. He argues that, because the assassin had emphasized the Jewish component of the Zionist ethos, the mourners had to remove it, and they found ways of expressing bereavement – such as flowers, songs, candles, and graffiti – beyond the prayers of official ceremonies.

Contrary to Feige and Hazan, Yaakov Yadgar claims that Rabin did become a myth, particularly concerning the cultic aspects of the mourning.[110] Not only the event of the murder itself but other biographical details of Rabin's life have also shaped the narrative. The myth of Rabin is the story of a man's life and death; it relies on features of a mythic hero and the story of the assassination includes three mythic figures: the first, Rabin himself, who is referred to as "The New Zionist,"[111] the true native son, a figure that fits in well with the epos of the founding fathers, but also a renewed figure, since he acknowledged the injustice to the Palestinians and their right to a land alongside the State of Israel. Facing Rabin is the "anti-hero," the assassin Yigal Amir, a pseudo-Zionist, whose dark side and political approach toward Arabs is emphasized. The third character in the myth is that of the "absent player," the Palestinian Arab, a quasi-object lacking an active role. According to Yadgar, "one of the main roles of the Rabin myth is to answer the increasing need of the Israeli Jewish (non-religious) population to define its identity."[112] Yadgar agrees that "affirming the pursuit of peace, changing the attitude toward the Arabs, and sharpening Israeli-Zionist identity"[113] are among the crucial messages of the Rabin myth.

Many still struggle with the assassination itself. Margalit stresses that Rabin's assassination must play a constitutive role in Israeli society and not split it into groups. He argues that, although "a political assassination must be remembered politically,"[114] we saw already in the 1996 election campaign a

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107 Michael Feige, "Yitzhak Rabin: Referential Remembrance" [Hebrew], in Grinberg, *Contested Memory* (note 95 above), pp. 39-64.

108 Ibid., p. 59.

109 Haim Hazan, "Rabin's Burial Ground: Revisiting the Zionist Myth," in Peri, *Assassination* (note 70 above), pp. 238-240.

110 Yaacov Yadgar, "'The Rabin Myth': Zionist Nationalism in the 1990s" [Hebrew], *Democratic Culture* 1 (1999), p. 24.

111 Ibid., p. 25.

112 Ibid., p. 31.

113 Ibid., p. 34.

114 Avishai Margalit, "How Will We Remember Yitzhak Rabin" (note 85 above), p. 59.

systematic attempt on both sides to forget it – each for its own reasons. Margalit discusses the moral implications of the attempt to forget the assassination and points out the danger: "Memory will concentrate only on the assassination – and will overshadow the memory of the man's life."[115] In his view, Rabin's memory must be the memory of his life, but not the memory of his image as a dividing element. A persuasive expression of this, says Linda Renée-Bloch, are bumper stickers where the phrase "*Shalom haver*" that President Bill Clinton coined in his eulogy to Rabin are used in an ambiguous sense.[116]

In this context, Yaacov Vertzberger asks why, although it was such a momentous event, Rabin's assassination had a limited influence.[117] How did the collective trauma have so little an effect on a change in the public's values, beliefs, and attitudes? One explanation is the controversy surrounding Rabin's memory, which Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi discusses at length. She describes the polarization of Israeli society, and the tension surrounding Rabin's remembrance, and she focuses on the many memorials.[118]

She identifies a significant difference between Rabin's commemoration in Tel Aviv and in Jerusalem:[119] "The silence of the capital, so deafening and meaningful, deserves analysis," and she contrasts it with Tel Aviv, which embraces Rabin and makes his memory a central element of its identity.[120] The two cities define two contradictory national identities: Jerusalem embraces the right-wing religious approach, while Tel Aviv adopts the left-wing secular one,[121] as evident in the way the two cities chose to commemorate Yitzhak Rabin's memory. She concludes with an incisive comment: "Rabin's body is buried in Mount Herzl, but his soul rests in Tel Aviv."[122]

Eyal Naveh asks whether "Rabin will become a canonical figure," "that of the martyr – a unique hero who sacrifices himself or is sacrificed by others for the sake of a sublime and exalted aim."[123] Naveh points out that the potential for a development in this direction exists, since Rabin is already a mythological figure embodying all the values of Israeli society. He fell in the battle for peace, which is still ongoing, thereby compelling the public to

115 Ibid., p. 61.

116 Linda Renée-Bloch, "Rhetoric on the Roads of Israel: The Assassination and Political Bumper Stickers," in Peri, *Assassination*, (note 70 above), pp. 257-279.

117 Yaacov I. Vertzberger, "The Antinomies of Collective Political Trauma: A Pre-Theory," *Political Psychology* 18, 4 (1997), pp. 863-876.

118 Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, "Commemorating a Difficult Past: Yitzhak Rabin's Memorials," *American Sociological Review* 67 (2002), pp. 30-51.

119 Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, "Between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv: The Commemoration of Yitzhak Rabin and the National Identity Discourse in Israel" [Hebrew], in Greenberg, *Contested Memory*, (note 95 above), pp. 19-38.

120 Ibid., p. 20.

121 Ibid., p. 33.

122 Ibid., p. 34.

123 Eyal Naveh, "'The Hero Figure': The Martyr as Conferring Meaning on a Leader's Assassination in a Democratic Society" [Hebrew], in *Patterns of Commemoration*, ed. Matityahu Meisel and Ilana Shamir (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Defense, 2000), p. 117.

follow in his path.[124] In the long run, more than a few obstacles may stand in the way of turning Rabin into a hero-martyr. The turn to religion on the one hand, and post-ideological and anti-collective individualism on the other, threaten Hebrew-native culture and could harm the ethos that Rabin excelled in representing. Nevertheless, argues Naveh, if this culture succeeds in finding sources of renewal that will enable it to remain at center stage, Rabin could eventually become a canonical hero-martyr.[125]

4. The Assassination's Influence and its Implications for Israeli Society and Democracy

Rabin's assassination is perceived as one of the most significant events in the history of modern Israel, and several studies deal with its influence and its implications for Israeli society, for national identity, for Israeli democracy in general, and for the peace process in particular. In the area of social psychology, Dan Bar-On[126] focused on the salient collective identity in the "self" and the "other" in Israeli society[127] that, in his view, changed after the assassination. Bar-On proposes a division into three periods. In the first, which began before the creation of the State of Israel and continued until the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the founders' generation built a collective monolithic identity based on the denial of the "other": denial of the

Diaspora Jew, denial of the Eastern Jew, and denial of the Arab. The second period began in 1973 and continued until Rabin's assassination. It was characterized by the onset of a disintegration process in the monolithic identity, and "Rabin's assassination by Yigal Amir was a kind of final fusion, which no longer enabled the monolithic 'self' to continue."[128] Bar-On notes that the assassination shattered this monolithic identity once and for all because, in the wake of the assassination, the three "others" were integrated into one: the Diaspora Jew – the religious-messianic figure, the ethnic – in the figure of the Yemenite, and the Arab – since it was because of the fear of compromise with the Arabs that Rabin was killed. In the third, future era, Bar-On predicts that a more complex world-picture will develop, which will acknowledge different parts of identity and the need for a dialogue between them. As long as Israeli society does not contain the "other," it will be unable to extract itself from the identity crisis that characterizes it.

An issue inseparable from the discussion of Rabin's assassination touches on political protest and its legitimate borders. This question was examined in several studies, among them that by Yuchtman-Yaar and Hermann that compared public attitudes toward political protest before and after Rabin's assassination.[129] Two questions are at the center of their study: one – did Rabin's

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124 Ibid., p. 126.

125 Ibid.

126 Dan Bar-On, *The "Others" Within Us: A Socio-Psychological Perspective on Changes in Israeli Identity* [Hebrew] (Beersheba and Jerusalem: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press and the Bialik Institute, 1999).

127 Dan Bar-On, "Rabin's Assassination as the Final Step in the Breakup of the Monolithic Identity Construct" [Hebrew], in Greenberg, *Contested Memory* (note 95 above), pp. 65-88.

128 Ibid., p. 80.

129 Yuchtman-Yaar and Hermann, "The Latitude of Acceptance," (note 70 above).

assassination lead to a significant change in the attitude of the Israeli public to political protest, and if so – how long did this change hold out? The other – can we identify a serial change in Israel's social groups before and after the assassination, and if so, what were the social rifts that created the variation in the responses: were these political rifts (religion, the attitude to the Oslo Accords and the voters' behavior) or socio-demographic ones (gender, age, education, income, and ethnic origin) or perhaps both of them together?[130] Their findings point to a general drop in levels of support for illegal political protest, which cuts across the entire political and socio-demographic spectrum. At the same time, they also found a rise in the support for political protest that honors the rules of the game and the limits allowed by law. Although the assassination led to an almost uniform drop in the support for protest, the political rift (left-right), which in the past had been viewed as the central protest factor, had now lost some of its relevance. Finally, they found that, in the immediate range, the public had changed its attitude to the limits of legitimate protest, which remained stable for two years after the assassination.[131]

Other studies focus on the implications of the assassination for Israeli democracy and for the peace process. A widespread claim in the last decade is that Israeli democracy suffers from a deep legitimacy crisis owing to the decline in the status of such democratic values as tolerance, human dignity, and acceptance of the democratic rules of the game. The internalization of democratic values, according to those who support them, could have prevented the assassination. Others, like Yossi Yonah, claim that Rabin's assassination did not really lead to any basic changes in our lives, and years may go by before Israeli society internalizes the event's deep implications.[132] Yonah holds that Israel's basic problem is the lack of shared national political goals – both before and after Rabin's assassination. If so, asks Yonah, "what is the conclusion we should draw from Rabin's assassination?"[133] His answer is that two steps should be taken: on the one hand, to strengthen Jewish-national communitarianism, that is, to reach shared agreement on the aims and goals of Israeli society, and on the other, to strengthen the foundations of universal democracy, that is, to emphasize liberalism. In his view, only the combination of both these elements will ensure the legitimacy and stability of the regime. This is a complex but necessary dynamic. Agreement on shared communitarian goals is a necessary step, even before the creation of a liberal democracy.[134]

The link between the assassination and the peace process led various researchers to examine the assassination's influence on the continuation of the peace process. Greenberg, for instance, argued that Israel has been in a

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130 Ibid., pp. 304-305.
131 Ibid., pp. 323-326.
132 Yossi Yonah, "Israel after Rabin's Assassination: The State of the Jewish People or the State of All Its Citizens" [Hebrew], in Greenberg, *Contested Memory* (note 95 above), p. 109.
133 Ibid., p. 110.
134 Ibid., p. 120.

deep political crisis since the assassination and that the thought that the masses would continue along Yitzhak Rabin's path was no more than an illusion.[135] In his view, the assassination of the prime minister expressed not only opposition to peace, but also distinctive anti-democratic elements. The assassin came from circles representing anti-democratic forces that refuse to renounce the extra privileges derived from territorial expansion and from military rule over the Palestinians that the Jewish state has granted them.[136] Rabin's murder halted both the peace and the democratization processes, which the assassin succeeded in derailing.

Yadgar links the discussion of the assassination's influence to the media and argues that Israeli democracy in general, and the media in particular, were found lacking in all that concerns a genuine discussion in the public sphere after Rabin's assassination.[137] The fact that the media presented a homogeneous conceptual stance and gave one interpretation of reality from one perspective, while disregarding many other interpretations, signals the weakness of Israeli democracy and will hamper its ability to internalize the lessons of the assassination. An open discussion of the assassination, including its motives and the conclusions to be drawn from it, are an inherent part of democracy. Support for negotiation and deliberation is imperative, argues Yadgar, as the only course able to ensure Israel's democratic endeavor.

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135 Lev Greenberg, "Why Did We Not 'Follow in His Path'? On Peace, Democracy, Political Assassination, and a Post-Conflictual Agenda" [Hebrew], in Greenberg, *Contested Memories* (note 95 above), p. 124.

136 Ibid., p. 131.

137 Yadgar, "The Rabin Myth" (note 110 above), *Democratic Culture* 7 (2003), p. 125.

Appendices

Appendix A: The Democracy Index 2005 Compared to 2004

1. The Institutional Aspect					
Characteristic	**Rating**	**Scale**	**Israel's score in 2005***	**Relative Ranking**	**Direction of Change**
Accountability	Vertical responsibility	1-3 (2=unregulated elections)	3	1-35 (36)	=
Checks and balances	Constraints on the executive branch to implement the policy	1-7 (1= unlimited authority)	7	6-35 (35)	=
Accountability	Horizontal responsibility	0-6 (0 = high military involvement in politics)	2.5	6-35 (35)	↓
Representativeness	Representativeness (party domination)	100 - [100 x number of seats in lower house] (100 = high dominance, low representativeness)	324 (2003)	6 (34)	↓
Government integrity	Corruption index	0-6 (0 = high corruption)	3	7-24 (35)	↓

2. The Rights Aspect					
Characteristic	**Rating**	**Scale**	**Israel's score in 2005***	**Relative Ranking**	**Direction of Change**
Political rights	Participation: Level of competitiveness	1-5 (1=suppressing opposition activities)	5	9-34 (34)	=
Civil rights	Law and order measure	0-6 (0=low respect for law and order)	5	3-17 (35)	=
Economic rights	Economic freedom index	1-5 (1= broad economic freedom)	2.36	19-22 (34)	=
Equality for minorities	Political discrimination of minority	0-4 (0=no discrimination)	(2003) 3.5	11-26 (27)	=
	Economic discrimination of minority	0-4 (0=no discrimination)	(2003) 3.5	13-27 (27)	=
	Cultural discrimination of minority	0-4 (0=no discrimination)	0 (2003)	-	=
Civil rights	Press freedom	0-100 (0 = full freedom)	28	15-28 (36)	↓
	Prisoners per 100,000 population, including security prisoners	0-100,000 (0 = few prisoners)	252	No international comparisons	↓

3. The Stability Aspect					
Characteristic	**Rating**	**Scale**	**Israel's score in 2005***	**Relative Ranking**	**Direction of change**
Government stability	Uncompleted term of office	0-100 (100%=full term)		-	↑
	Government stability (changes of government)	Number of government changes 1992-2003	5 (2003)	-	=
Social rifts	National/ethnic/ linguistic tensions	0-6 (0 = high tension)	2	9-35 (35)	=
Protest and resistance	Weighted political conflict index	0-infinity (0 = no conflict)	10,462 (2003)	11-36 (36)	↓
Social rifts	Religious tensions	0-6 (0 = high tension)	2.5	5-35 (35)	↓

**Appendix B: The Democracy Index February 2005 Compared
to the Democracy Indices 2003 and 2004
The significance of the differences compares 2004 to 2005
All differences not in brackets are significant at least at a 0.05 significance level**

1. The Institutional Aspect					
Characteristic in the Index	The questions in the survey	General 2003	General 2004	General 2005	Difference 2004-2005
A. Implementing the accountability principle: perceptions					
Actions of elected officials relative to the people's preferences	To what extent do you agree or disagree that a politician does not tend to take into account the view of the ordinary citizen?	38	38	42	[+4]
B. Political participation					
1. Level of political participation:					
Interest in politics	To what extent do you take an interest in politics? (take an interest)	76	67	71	[+4]
Stay informed	How often do you stay informed about what's going on in politics through TV, the radio or the press? (every day or several times a week)	87	79	81	[+2]
Talk about politics	To what extent do you tend to talk with your friends and family about political issues?	69	64	65	[+1]
Involved in institutionalized action	134) <?> Are you a supporter or actively involved in any political party? (party member or upward <?>	7	7	5	-2
2. Implementing the value of political participation: perceptions:					
Evaluating participation level	In your opinion, do citizens in Israel participate in politics more or less than they do in other countries? (more)	40	49	37	-12
Sense of impact	To what extent can you or your friends influence government policy? (can)	20	18	31	+13
C. Representativeness					
	To what extent does the balance of powers in the Knesset express, in your opinion, the distribution of views in the larger public?	67	-	61	
D. Integrity in government					
Stance concerning corruption of VIPs in government	In general, do you think the people running the country are looking out for their own private interests, or are they acting for the general good? (general good)	15	15	11	-4
Evaluating extent of corruption in Israel	In your opinion, is there more or less corruption in Israel than in other countries? (less)	11	15	22	[+7]

2. The Rights Aspect					
Characteristic in the Index	The questions in the survey	General 2003	General 2004	General 2005	Difference 2004-2005
A. Political and civil rights					
Attitudes toward political and civil rights					
	All must have the same rights before the law regardless of their political outlook (agree)	83	-	79	
Freedom of expression	A speaker should be forbidden to express sharp criticism of the State of Israel in public (disagree)	52	49	53	+4
	Individuals or groups in a minority should be allowed to act to obtain majority support for their positions (agree)	70	-	68	
Freedom of religion	Every couple in Israel should be allowed to marry in any way they wish (agree)	63	60	64	+4
Implementing rights in Israel in a comparative perspective: perceptions	In your opinion, is there more or less protection of human rights in Israel than in other countries (less)	27	40	33	[-7]
	And freedom of expression? (less)	15	17	24	+7
B. Social and economic rights					
Support for social-economic policy	Concerning the structure of economic life in Israel, do you favor more a socialist or a capitalist approach (socialist)	54	60	58	[-2]
Implementiry social and economic rights: perceptions	Social and economic equality in Israel is inadequate (agree)	82	88	80	-8
C. Support for gender equality	Men are better political leaders than women (disagree)	65	70	63	-7
D. Equality for minorities					
Readiness to have equal rights between Jews and Arabs	To what extent do you support or oppose each one of the following: adding Arab parties to the government, including Arab ministers (support)	38	45	44	[-1]
	Full equality of rights between Jewish and Arab Israeli citizens (support)	53	64	59	-5
	Agreement of a Jewish majority is required on decisions fateful to the country, such as returning territories (opposed)	26	23	34	+11
	The government should encourage Arab emigration from the country (opposed) [Jews only]	43	41	50	+9
The actual implementation of equality: perceptions	Israeli Arabs suffer from discrimination as opposed to Jewish citizens (agree)	55	64	56	-8

3. The Stability and Cohesiveness Aspects					
Characteristic in the Index	The questions in the survey	General 2003	General 2004	General 2005	Difference 2004-2005
A. Satisfaction with the government	What do you think is Israel's position in general? (not good)	63	54	35	-19
	What is your opinion about the way the government deals with the country's problems today? (not good)	78	78	67	-11
B. Assessing stability in Israel					
	In your opinion and compared to other democratic countries, is the political system in Israel stable or unstable? (unstable)	63	-	46	
C. Protest and opposition					
Opposition to violence	Using violence to attain political aims is never justified (agree)	82	78	82	+4
	If the government and the Knesset were to adopt a decision opposed to your view concerning the territories and security, which of the following actions would you take? (obey or demonstrate legally)	93	92	92	-
Opposition to refusal to serve in the army	We know that a soldier must refuse to obey a patently illegal order. But what about a soldier who refuses to obey an order because of personal morality or ideology, can a soldier, for instance, refuse to obey an order to evacuate settlers (forbidden)	73	75	70	-5
	And what about a soldier who refuses to serve in the territories because of Israel's policy toward the Palestinians: is a soldier permitted to refuse to serve in the occupied territories (forbidden)	72	71	71	[-]
D. Trust in institutions					
Degree of trust in various institutions	To what degree do you have trust in the following people or institutions? Political parties (have trust)	32	27	22	-5
	Prime minister (have trust)	53	45	48	+3
	The media (have trust)	49	51	50	[-1]
	State attorney (have trust)	58	66	60	-6
	Supreme Court (have trust)	70	79	72	-7
	The police (have trust)	66	66	57	-9
	The president (have trust)	68	73	65	-8

Characteristic in the Index	The questions in the survey	General 2003	General 2004	General 2005	Difference 2004-2005
	Chief Rabbinate (have trust)	43	45	38	-7
	Knesset (have trust)	52	46	40	[-6]
	IDF (have trust)	84	86	78	-8
	Government ministers (have trust)	55	41	42	+1
	Histadrut (have trust)	42	38	38	[-]
The institution that best protects Israeli democracy	Who best protects Israeli democracy – the prime minister, the Supreme Court, the Knesset, or the media?				
	Prime minister	18	9	15	+6*
	Supreme Court	42	47	48	+1*
	Knesset	14	14	13	-1*
	Media	26	30	24	-6*
E. Social trust	In general, do you think that people can be trusted or that one should be very cautious in relationships with others? (trusted)	29	33	44	+11
F. Social rifts	In your opinion, are the relationships between religious and secular Jews good or not good? (good) [Jews only]	24	28	31	[+3]
	And the relationships between Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews? (good) [Jews only]	43	53	51	-2
	And between Israeli Arabs and Jews?(good)	11	16	11	[-5]
	And between new immigrants and established citizens? (good) [Jews only]	49	40	37	-3
	Between the rich and the poor? (good)	25	24	19	[-5]
Assessing the level of tension between groups in Israel vis-à-vis other countries	In your opinion, is there more or less tension in Israel between groups in the society than in other countries? (less)	7	15	20	+5
G. Connection to the community					
Pride in being an Israeli	To what extent are you proud to be an Israeli? (proud)	84	79	83	+4
Desire to remain in Israel	Do you want to remain in Israel for the long term, or not? (do want)	88	87	89	[+2]
	To what degree are you certain you will remain in Israel? (certain)	84	87	88	[+1]
Feels part of Israel and its problems	To what extent do you feel yourself to be part of the State of Israel and its problems? (feels part)	79	73	77	[+4]

4. Democracy – Support and Satisfaction					
Characteristic in the Index	The questions in the survey	General 2003	General 2004	General 2005	Difference 2004-2005
A. Support for democracy	Democracy is a desirable regime for Israel (agree)	84	85	80	[-5]
	A few strong leaders can be more useful to the country than all the discussions and laws (disagree)	44	42	43	[+1]
	Democracy is the best form of government (agree)	78	80	74	-6
B. Democracy versus competing values	In some situations, democracy contradicts Jewish law. In case of a contradiction, should we prefer the principles of democracy or the dictates of Jewish law? (prefers democracy)	48	45	45	-
	In some situations, respecting the principle of the rule of law contradicts the need to protect security interests. In case of a contradiction, should we prefer security interests or respect for the rule of law (prefers law)	21	19	25	+6
	If we think of potential directions for development in Israel, there are four important values that clash with one another to some extent, and they are important to different people in different degrees: a state with a Jewish majority, the Greater Land of Israel, a democratic state (equal political rights for all), and peace (low probability of war). Of these four values, which is the most important to you? (democracy first) [Jews only]	17	14	20	+6*
C. Satisfaction with Israeli democracy	In your opinion, is the State of Israel presently democratic to a suitable degree, too democratic, or not democratic enough? (not democratic enough)	33	44	36	[-8]
	In general, to what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way in which Israel's democracy functions? (dissatisfied)	49	55	51	-4

Notes

1. All the results are expressed in percentages; 0.5 is rounded upwards.
2. The data represent the two "high" categories concerning democracy in questions in which there are four or five categories (that is, 1-2 or 3-4 or 4-5) and the high category in questions in which there are 2-3 categories (that is, 1 or 2 if the question is dichotomous and 1 or 3 if there are three categories in the question).
3. Only questions that were asked in February 2005 and at least in one more of the two other years appear.
4. Generally, the questions were arranged so that the high end is "positive" toward democracy—that is, findings are supposed to denote support for the various principles of democracy. When the questions examine various aspects of satisfaction with democracy, they are arranged so that the critical end is the high one. In any event, beside every question we noted the direction of the scale to which the frequency is ascribed.
5. Significance was measured by performing t-tests comparing averages between independent samples, assuming equal variance (actual variance differences between samples were negligible). All the differences not marked in square brackets are significant at a 0.05 level of confidence at least. Between questions in which differences are marked in square brackets [ ], we found no statistical significance. The test compared between 2004 and 2005. In the two questions in which the difference between 2004 and 2005 is marked with an asterisk *, significance was not tested with a t-test due to the measurement level of the question.
6. When only Jews were asked the question, square brackets appear beside the question. When only Jews were asked the question in only one of the years, frequencies in the other years were tested without Arabs, and noted: [Jews only].
7. The size of the sample in 2005 was 1,203, with a sampling error of +-2.8 with a 95% confidence level; the size of the sample in 2004 was 1,200, with a sampling error of +-2.9 with a 95% confidence level; the size of the sample in 2003 was 1,208, with a sampling error of +-3.1 with a 95% confidence level.

Appendix C: Frequencies for the Rabin Survey, July 2005

1. In your opinion, to what extent is there a likelihood of a civil war in Israel as a result of the arrangements concerning the future of the territories?
   1. To a large extent   13
   2. To some extent   29
   3. To a small extent   30
   4. Not at all   28

2-5 If we think of potential directions for development in Israel, there are four important values that clash with one another to some extent, and they are important to different people in different degrees. Of these four values, which is the most important to you? And the second? And the third? And the fourth?" [Jews only; 1]

	2. Most important	3. Second most important	4. Third most important	5. Fourth most important
A state with a Jewish majority	34	18	31	16
The Greater Land of Israel	12	17	19	53
A democratic state (equal political rights for all)	23	34	27	16
A state of peace (low probability of war)	31	31	23	15

6-10 If we think of potential directions for development in Israel, there are five important values that clash with one another to some extent, and they are important to different people in different degrees. Of these five values, which is the most important to you? And the second? And the third? And the fourth? And the fifth? [Jews only: 2]

	6. Most important	7. Second most important	8. Third most important	9. Fourth most important	10. Fifth most important
A state with a Jewish majority	27	13	14	30	14
The Greater Land of Israel	8	11	8	19	53
A democratic state (equal political rights for all)	19	15	27	21	18
Peace	24	33	23	13	9
Security	22	28	28	17	6

11. Of all the prime ministers of Israel until today, who was the most successful in your opinion?

David Ben-Gurion	18	Golda Meir	3	Yitzhak Shamir	8	Ehud Barak	1
Moshe Sharet	0	Yitzhak Rabin	30	Shimon Peres	2	Ariel Sharon	8
Levi Eshkol	4	Menachem Begin	22	Binyamin Netanyahu	4		

12-18. Following is a 10-point scale through which you can express support and liking, or rejection and hatred, for a particular person. Note your degree of support or rejection regarding each of the following people, when 1 indicates rejection/hatred and 10 indicates support/liking.

		1- Rejection/ hatred	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10- Support/ sympathy
12	Binyamin Netanyahu	28	7	8	6	17	8	9	9	3	5
13	Ehud Barak	28	13	12	11	16	7	5	4	2	2
14	Yitzhak Rabin	8	4	5	4	10	8	10	15	13	23
15	Ariel Sharon	20	5	6	6	13	11	11	13	7	8
16	David Ben-Gurion	8	3	3	3	10	7	11	15	14	26
17	Shimon Peres	14	7	7	8	14	11	12	13	7	7
18	Menachem Begin	6	3	3	4	9	10	14	16	13	22

19. Ten years after Yitzhak Rabin's assassination, to what extent was the assassination a significant event in the history of Israel?
    1. This was the most significant event in the history of the State of Israel since its creation — 35
    2. It was one of the most significant events in the history of Israel but not the most important — 42
    3. It was a significant event, although there were others no less important — 18
    4. It was not a particularly significant event — 5

20. Did Rabin's assassination change or not change your attitude toward the security and political situation?
    1. My attitude has changed, I am more willing to make concessions — 15
    2. My attitude has not changed — 72
    3. My attitude has changed, I am less willing to make concessions — 13

21. Did Rabin's assassination change or not change your attitude towards the peace process? [2]
    1. My attitude has changed, I am more supportive of the peace process   20
    2. My attitude has not changed   72
    3. My attitude has changed, I am less supportive of the peace process   8

22. Following Rabin's assassination, have you changed or not changed your attitude toward religious Jews? [2]
    1. More positive   3
    2. Not changed   75
    3. More negative   22

23. Following Rabin's assassination, have the prospects of peace changed or not changed in your opinion?
    1. Increased   8
    2. Not changed   57
    3. Decreased   35

24. Following Rabin's assassination, has the strength of Israeli democracy changed or not changed in your opinion?
    1. Increased   9
    2. Not changed   54
    3. Decreased   37

25. Following Rabin's assassination, have you changed or not changed your attitude toward the settlers in Judea, Samaria and Gaza?
    1. More positive   4
    2. Not changed   75
    3. More negative   21

26. In your opinion, did Rabin's assassination influence the country's public life? [2]
    1. Influenced to a large extent   41
    2. Influenced to some extent   40
    3. Not influenced   19

27. For those who answered 1 or 2 in the previous question: Did Rabin's assassination have a positive or a negative influence on public life?
    1. Positive   15
    2. Negative   85

28. Following Rabin's assassination, has political polarization in Israel increased or decreased in your opinion?
    1. Increased   60
    2. Has not changed   34
    3. Decreased   6

29. In your opinion, could there be another political assassination in Israel?
    1. Definitely yes   34
    2. Probably yes   50
    3. Probably not   13
    4. Definitely not   3

30. What is your opinion on Yigal Amir's sentence? [2]
    1. He received the sentence he deserved   55
    2. The sentence was too harsh, it should have been limited to 15-20
       years in prison   9
    3. The sentence was too lenient, he should have been sentenced to death   35
    4. He should not have been punished at all   1

31. How should the Prisons Authority relate to Yigal Amir, in your opinion? [2]
    1. Precisely as to any other prisoner sentenced to life for murder   52
    2. More harshly, because he murdered a prime minister   46
    3. More leniently, because the murder had a political ideological background 2

32. In your opinion, should Yigal Amir be allowed to marry and be granted all the implied conjugal rights?
    1. He should be allowed   39
    2. He should not be allowed   61

33. Should Yigal Amir's eventual release be considered? [2]
    1. Yes   19
    2. No   81

34. What are the chances, in your opinion, of Yigal Amir being released from prison before his death? [2]
    1. High   22
    2. Low   49
    3. No chance   29

35. In your opinion, did Rabin's assassination have a positive or a negative influence on Israeli society? [2]
    1. Positive   11
    2. Neither positive nor negative   25
    3. Negative   64

36. In your opinion, have the proper lessons been drawn from Rabin's assassination concerning the protection of prime ministers in Israel by the security forces? [2]
    1. Drawn to a great extent   38
    2. Drawn to some extent   39
    3. Drawn to a small extent   13
    4. Not drawn at all   10

37. And what about the lessons concerning the ways the police contend with inciters to political violence? [2]
    1. Drawn to a great extent   19
    2. Drawn to some extent   41
    3. Drawn to a small extent   23
    4. Not drawn at all   17

38. And what about the lessons concerning the relationship between the political right and the political left in the State of Israel? [2]
    1. Drawn to a great extent   9
    2. Drawn to some extent   36
    3. Drawn to a small extent   24
    4. Not drawn at all   31

39. In your opinion, do the authorities today act adequately or inadequately toward campaigners for political violence concerning the disengagement plan?
    1. They did not act adequately, too severe   31
    2. They did not act adequately, too lenient   33
    3. They acted adequately   36

40-46. Following is a series of statements by Yitzhak Rabin on peace and security issues. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each one of these statements? [2]

	Not at all	To a small degree	To some degree	To a large degree
40. "Only a strong army can bring peace"	13	11	21	55
41. "We must opt for peace only if security is assured"	7	7	18	68
42. "The road to peace passes through the terrorist organizations as well"	25	16	24	35
43. "If we fail to make peace, terror will not end"	15	11	23	51
44. "The road to peace is paved with sorrow and for the sake of peace we must take risks"	13	13	23	51
45. "The way of peace is preferable to the way of war"	4	3	13	80
46. "We must let the Palestinians fight terrorism, because they will do this without the High Court of Justice and without B'Tselem"	25	19	27	29

47-53. Following is a series of statements on peace and security issues. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of these statements? [1]

	Not at all	To a small degree	To some degree	To a large degree
47. "Only a strong army can bring peace"	17	13	27	43
48. "We must opt for peace only if security is assured"	9	11	28	52
49. "The road to peace passes through the terrorist organizations as well"	32	19	27	22
50. "If we fail to make peace, terror will not end"	16	16	28	40
51. "The road to peace is paved with sorrow and for the sake of peace we must take risks"	16	15	31	38
52. "The way of peace is preferable to the way of war"	4	5	20	71
53. "We must let the Palestinians fight terrorism, because they will do so without the High Court of Justice and without B'Tselem"	24	21	32	23

54. From the following list of political movements and groups active in Israel please point out which one you favor least, or which you oppose most. If there is another group that you like even less than the groups I will read to you, tell me what it is. [2]

Shinui	9	Torah Judaism/Agudat Yisrael	2
Islamic Movement	33	Meretz/Yachad	2
Yesha Council	3	Kach/Kahana Hai	16
Ichud Leumi	3	Shas	9
Yisrael Beiteinu	1	Hadash	1
National Religious Party	1	National Democratic Assembly	2
United Arab List	1	Peace Now	4
Other groups/other responses	13		

55-61. Now I will ask you a few questions about the group you chose "…" [To the interviewer: the group that the respondent mentioned in the previous question as the one he least favors]. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each one of the following statements concerning … [the group the respondent most opposes]? [2]

	Definitely do not agree	Do not agree	Not sure	Agree	Definitely agree
55. A member of … should be banned from serving as prime minister	17	10	6	15	52
56. … should be declared illegal	17	18	13	17	35
57. Members of … should be allowed to appear on television	17	18	14	33	18
58. Telephone conversations of members of … should be tapped	22	23	19	21	15
59. … should be allowed to hold demonstrations	19	20	11	34	16
60. Members of … should be prohibited to vote for the Knesset	32	29	8	15	16
61. Members of … should be prohibited to stand for the Knesset	26	21	8	20	25

62-64. In your opinion, this group [read again the name of the group] endangers very much, endangers, does not endanger or does not endanger at all… [2]

	Does not endanger at all	Does not endanger	Not sure	Endangers	Endangers very much
62. The security of the country	12	9	10	35	34
63. Israeli democracy	9	12	13	30	36
64. The character of Israel as a Jewish state	11	15	13	27	34

65-69. Following is a list of leaders' qualities. Concerning each one, please tell me to what extent does it fit Yitzhak Rabin. [1]

	Does not fit at all	Does not fit	Fits	Fits very much
65. Leadership qualities	5	11	38	46
66. Strong	5	12	44	39
67. Was trustworthy	6	15	41	38
68. Was capable of bringing peace	10	19	34	37
69. Put the country's interests above party interests	6	15	41	38

70. In retrospect, what is your opinion about the Oslo Accords that the Rabin government signed with the Palestinians?
1. Definitely support　　　　15
2. Support　　　　　　　　　27
3. Neither support nor oppose　20
4. Oppose　　　　　　　　　18
5. Definitely oppose　　　　　20

71. Did you support the Oslo Accords when they were signed?
1. I was very supportive　　18
2. I was supportive　　　　38
3. I was opposed　　　　　25
4. I was very opposed　　　19

72. Did you support or oppose the disengagement idea when Amram Mitsna proposed it in the 2003 elections?
    1. I strongly supported it 17
    2. I supported it   34
    3. I opposed it   30
    4. I strongly opposed it   19

73. In your opinion, did the Oslo Accords help to advance the chances of peace, did they harm them, or did they have no effect?
    1. Contributed   32
    2. Harmed   36
    3. Had no effect 32

74-76. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Definitely disagree	Disagree	Agree	Definitely agree
74. In a democratic regime, there is no room for political assassination	9	10	25	56
75. Rabin's assassination was a good thing, because it saved the Land of Israel	83	13	3	1
76. To stop the disengagement, I would agree to the assassination of a prime minister	87	10	2	1

77. Is it justified or unjustified for rabbis to issue halakhic rulings on controversial matters of state and politics?
    1. Justified   26
    2. Unjustified   74

78-80. In your opinion, are citizens who think that the government's policy concerning the peace process is harmful to Israel's national interest permitted to:

	Yes	No	Don't know
78. Protest within the limits of the law (for instance, organize mass petitions and hold authorized demonstrations)	82	10	8
79. Adopt methods of non-violent civil disobedience (for instance, demonstrate without a permit, not pay taxes, refuse to serve in the army, and so forth)	33	60	7
80. Adopt methods of violent civil disobedience (for instance, forcefully oppose the evacuation of settlements)	8	84	8

Notes

1. All the results are expressed in percentages of the total Israeli population; 0.5 is rounded upwards; distributions are taken only from valid answers.
2. The survey was conducted from June 25 to July 24 2005, among a representative sample of Israel's adult population (18 and over), Jews and Arabs. The sample included 2004 respondents, interviewed by phone in Hebrew, Arabic, and Russian. The fieldwork was conducted by the Mahshov Institute, directed by Rachel Israeli. The sampling error is at a 95% level of confidence +-2.2%. When conducting the interviews, equal representation was ensured to men and women, and the required steps were also taken to ensure adequate representation of the ultra-Orthodox sector and of immigrants from the CIS. This category includes every respondent who immigrated to Israel from one of the former Soviet republics from 1988 onward. Most of the immigrants were interviewed in Russian, and a minority in Hebrew.
3. The questionnaire was handed out in two different versions, so that some of the questions appear in only one of the two versions, and some appear in both. We chose two representative samples of the population, equal in size, for the two versions. The first version was given to a representative sample of 999 subjects, and the second to 1005. The sampling error for each of the versions separately are at a confidence level of 95% +-3.1%. Questions that appear only in version 1 are marked [1]; questions that appear only in version 2, are marked [2]; questions that were not marked appear in both versions.
4. When the question was asked only to Jews, we noted so in brackets beside the question.