

DOWNLOAD PDF DREAMS REALIZED AND SHATTERED: ISRAEL IN THE MIND OF AMERICAN JEWS

Chapter 1 : Discussion | Shattered Dreams Of Peace | FRONTLINE | PBS

The schism between Israel and American Jews is at a "crisis point" with a growing number of Jews coming to realise that the dream of a Jewish and democratic state respecting liberal values has been shattered.

By Lawrence Davidson On Aug. According to the Times story, Sen. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Shapiro told Schumer what Israeli-inspired analyses to read before he made his decision on the nuclear deal. These include the billionaire entrepreneur S. There are several additional points that can be added to this aspect of the Times story: It is the resulting pseudo-truth that helps men like John Shapiro be so persuasive. Along with all the money he can bring to the table, he can claim that he speaks simultaneously for Israel and American Jewry. His political benefactors will believe this because it is consistent with an established myth. That is why it is important to point out, at every opportunity, instances that undermine the myth. The case of the Iran nuclear agreement is just such an instance. An Organizational Approach There is one other lesson to be learned from the Times story. Lobbyists like Shapiro have an advantage because unlike most of the Jewish donors who support the nuclear agreement, they can approach Congress as the leaders of focused organizations that have a relatively large membership with deep pockets. The Jewish donors out there who may want to defy Israel and its claim to speak for the Jews must also approach the U. There are, of course, smaller Jewish groups that are defiant of Israel and its practices, groups such as Jewish Voices for Peace. When all is said and done, the opposition forces in Congress probably will be unable to destroy the nuclear agreement with Iran. Will this achievement encourage the Jewish donors who favored the deal to come together and form a single Jewish organization outspokenly independent of Israel and its camp followers in the U. One would hope so, because this is really what is needed if we are to liberate the U. Congress and political parties from the myth of a unified Jewry in support of Israel. In the meantime there is an even bigger job to make the same case to rest of the world. This process can only aid and abet the ambitions of the Zionists. So let us strive for clear thinking on this matter and popularize the fact that Jews are quite diverse in their views and a growing number of them are not supporters of Israel or its practices. In this way we can undercut the myth that falsely connects them to Israel.

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Chapter 2 : U.S. Presidential Quotes About Jewish Homeland & Israel| Jewish Virtual Library

Ties between American Jews and Israel, while still strong, are fraying. With the help of rabbis and scholars, historians and journalists, diplomats and activists, Moment explores the forces pulling the Jewish state and the American Jewish community apart — and holding them together.

Israeli flag and Temple Mount. Nevertheless, traditional business models are no longer sustainable and high-quality publications, like ours, are being forced to look for new ways to keep going. Unlike many other news organizations, we have not put up a paywall. We want to keep our journalism open and accessible and be able to keep providing you with news and analyses from the frontlines of Israel, the Middle East and the Jewish World. As one of our loyal readers, we ask you to be our partner. Be the first to know - Join our Facebook page. But, since I am here, in the country of the Jews, please allow me to forget for a minute, this stiff latin of the academies and clerics. You might even allow me to forget the Universitas Studiorum with its imperial togas and glorious memories, and rather to borrow from another nobility, one with other accents, and with differing mysteries of thought and knowledge. And you might permit me to employ a word, in another language, yours, ours, and which, perhaps because I was for too long and too powerfully thrown into the Latin cauldron, alas I do not yet master, which serves this latin honor — and this word, this synonym, or this quasi synonym, is, you know better than me, the Hebrew word kavod. Except that there is a nuance, even a difference, between honor and kavod. This means that accepting this doctorate, tonight, is to receive from my friends of Netanya, a place among them. It is to receive, as at the Universities of Bar-Ilan and Tel Aviv and at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, a chair at your table to carry out, alongside you, our common work. But it is also to be tasked with a significant responsibility. Each Jew has a responsibility to do this work. Again, what is it? It is a work of attention and expanded intelligence bound to the stars but also concentrated, as with a Talmudic reasoning, on a millimeter of fabric where one has to disentangle the wool and linen, the vegetative and the animal hide. It is a work of gravity and of laughter combined — for without laughter, one is not serious; for without despair, one does not laugh; as Kafka laughed reading the charges of his trial; as Philip Roth laughed while decrypting the crazy ribbon of our strange and insane modern lives ; and as stated in the tractate of the Talmud, Avodah Zarah, God laughed three hours a day with the Leviathan. It is a work of humanity, pity and strength intertwined, infinite sadness and a pride no less endless: Friedrich Nietzsche who, by the way, was, whatever people may say, more a friend of the Jews than an admirer of Germanic culture said so well that there is not true pride without gentleness and goodwill, nor real commiseration without force and power! And it is the work of this country where I am today, which honors me, and where I have, as of this evening, a bit more responsibility — this is the miracle of the Jewish spirit, which has become a site, a framework, a stage offered to and delivered for the Jewish endeavor. Our ancestors had aspired to this with a sublime fervor, century after century, persecution after persecution. Next year in Jerusalem, they sang in a melody learned as much through efforts of thought and study as by the melting pot of experiences and trials. Well, here we are. And to find myself, today, honored, kavodized, gives me a responsibility, which has, as it concerns the nations and the Jews, two distinct shapes and, I believe them to be, complementary. Because you know the situation, do you not? Israel which was conceived as a refuge country for all Jews of the world, Zionism which was designed as a national liberation movement, equally noble and successful, has become for three quarters of the planet a word of abomination. By what sinister irony of history could the flame of their hate have been rekindled by contact with this young-old land, of this alt-neu Land of Moses Mendelssohn, which has been that of the Jews for three thousand and 70 years and which our prophets, our sages, our kings and, also, our policy-makers have not ceased to say, throughout History, that Israel is a land of redemption for all of humanity? How can the global stage of commentary and of virtuous preaching, how can new spaces where bells are rung and which are, no longer the churches of olden days, but the universities of England, America, of France and of Egypt, how can the social networks of Europe, Turkey or Russia, how has this

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entire world come to re-orchestrate their tunes on the harmonies of anti-Zionism, the old litany of the anti-Semitic malediction? This is a known affair of which I have, here and elsewhere, often spoken of. I will only add, on this occasion, one point to the story which I only precisely realized today. I think that this country, which the Jews won from hard fought battles, this country which they received the day after the most unforgettable crime every perpetrated in the history of humanity, was given to them begrudgingly. I believe that, in the fairground of the vanities of history, in the contorted and howling madness of the world, the land of Israel was, in the eyes of many men who remain our enemies even if they feign to be no longer, a consolation prize, a cardboard cut-out, similar to the cheap plastic of water guns won in cereal box games. But this is not our topic today. The task of the day is how to respond to this demonization, this stigmatization, this disinformation. The task is to remember that, from this dry and decent land ready, as a great French poet noted, for the most terrible fires, Zionism created a valley flowing with honey. The task is to take this occasion, this kavod, as a reminder, again and again, that what took form on this land, this miracle, without precedent in the history of recent humanity, is a general will, therefore a social contract, generated, overnight, fully armed, thanks to the poetic and political imagination of a handful of legislators. THE TASK, the only task is to hammer home that what has been built here, to use a word from today, is one of the very rare and true multi-ethnic societies known in modernity; it is, therefore, to repeat to the deaf who do not wish to hear, and to the blind who do not wish to see, that what was thus implemented, here, one of the truly rare countries where, immediately, without many tumbles or errors, took birth this multi-culture, this tolerance towards the other, this respect of otherness and, in particular, of what we call minorities, that is the Holy Grail upon which all democracies thrive: And have we sufficiently considered the fact that the Arab minority of this society is represented, in the Knesset, with a number of elected officials unimaginable, alas, in a country like France and that the Arabic language continues to be, 70 years later, an official language of Israel? My responsibility, the reply to this kavod, is to continue to remind the world that, in general, it takes a few months, as was the case of America after September 11, or a few years, as in France during the Algerian War, for a state of war to create a state of exception and for this state of exception to produce a state of emergency which authorizes itself to suspend some of the civil liberties which are the honor and the kavod of democracies: My responsibility, dear friends, is to state all this to those who do not tire of demonizing Israel. And my responsibility will be to push forth the idea that, we Jews, who are gathered here, this evening, are the custodians, the witnesses, the friends, of a society which, against the winds, tides and often necessary wars, remains democratically exemplary. Return of the era of monsters. We see them, everywhere, pricking up through muzzles, gleaming their fangs, sharpening their claws. Everywhere, yes, the world stage sees the return of dictatorships, eyes beginning again to circle in the orbits of demagogue and there are, everywhere, crises, misconduct less and less controlled, blind massacres. And yet, we are not there. Israel does not play on this field. And as far as this extreme event, unprecedented in modern history, in which desperate mobs, heated and energized by barbaric tyrants, marched to the border of a country with the firm intention to break through and scatter death around, it is the honor of the Israel Defense Forces to have reacted "yes! And, this second responsibility, it is to directly address to Israel, through all of you and beyond, the anxiety I occasionally feel about our future. I am concerned when I see, for example, nationalism revived, everywhere in the world, grumbling, shaking and thumping and when I see some Jews in Israel who seem prepared to fall into the trap in which we would become, in the reductive sense that our long existence has contributed to destroy, a nationalist nation. I am worried when I see technology designing, in the West, but also in Russia, in China, and elsewhere, the contours of a new inhumanity and when I hear Israelis proud, rightly so, to be at the forefront of this innovation but not always completely sure how to turn this into an opportunity for good: I am troubled when I see profound knowledge, thought and speech tragically diminished on all the global platforms and when, here, in Israel, I see some of my friends hesitating between two paths: I am anxious when I remember the pioneers who were also poets and who wished that Israel would remain the name after the man who was tasked, by the angel, with fighting men and gods "yes, I am anxious when I remember the

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founding texts of Zionism which saw in Israel, if not the homeland, at least the ally of all men who are strangers in their lands, just as our first ancestors have been in theirs: But can we do more? Why take so long, for example, to recognize the genocide of which our Armenian brothers were victims? IN SHORT, I am worried when I have the feeling that this land that I love and admire could be tempted to forget that it was given to its inhabitants to shelter, not a nation like the others, as fallible as others, as erroneous, but a singular, exceptional and, again, exemplary nation. And finally, needless to say, I am struck by the drama of what has been happening, for weeks now, in Gaza. My thoughts go, each Friday, to the Jewish families, neighbors of the border, who see their fields burned by incendiary bombs of Hamas, their schools targeted by its rockets and who live under the fear of this horror: But my thoughts also naturally go to the Palestinians themselves: This anguish, this is the distress of the Jewish soul which has been so exposed to suffering that she is unable to resolve herself to inflict it. This is the dread of the Jewish soldiers, often nearly just children, who I know are too humane to be cruel, to become intoxicated by their own force and to ignore that to fire on people, and to kill, is to violate all the commandments that they received. In an Orient overrun by the pride of death given and received, in this region where massacres add up, each day, in the hundreds, sometimes thousands, sometimes even more, I feel and hear the anguish of this people, mine and yours, who devoted blood, sweat and tears to remain loyal, throughout centuries, to the promise of intelligence and the justice proclaimed in the Torah and the Talmud and who, today, in front of the Gaza events, recalls Leviticus: This anxiety, my friends, never leaves me. It is as present in me as the joy and pride to be a Jew. Or my awareness of belonging to a singular people, to the Am segula, to this unique and paradoxical people " that of Rabbi Akiva when he was subjected to a Roman combing and still chanted the Shema ; and of Joseph Roth who became Christian while praising the name of Israel ; and of Herzl who cried tears of despair like young Moses over Jewish suffering without so much as touching upon the Hebrew language ; and of Bernard Lazare who died in the misery of having saved Captain Alfred Dreyfus after having been a flourishing anti-Semite ; and of my friend Benny Levy who, after having been, as he liked to say, one of the inventors, in the Western consciousness, of the Palestinian people, came to Jerusalem to study intensely every day, boundlessly, infinitely, to the point that perhaps he still studies today, where ever he is. Or my unconditional love of Israel, this human adventure composed of audacity, bravery, romanticism, socialism, nationalism, madness, but also of sincere memories rekindled, between pious Jerusalem, modern Tel Aviv and French Netanya. But, because the love of the Jewish people and of Israel is as deep in my heart as it was on my first days here, I believe in this perpetual miracle which is, when put to the test, the strength of the Israeli democracy. These treasures of solemnity and of contradictions that, in their heyday, literature knew how to say, music how to sing, painting how to paint, everywhere i see them wavering " but in Israel, against all odds, they hold strong. What this fable means, my friends, is that the Jewish undertaking contains truth and humanity, intelligence and inspiration, for us, Jews, but, also, it holds meaning for and involves all the others in the world. All to say that the Jews gathered here, tonight, and also those who are not here, are the depositories of this little flame called hope " but this small flame blazes, and should burn, beyond us all. This is the attribute accorded to us by the islamologist Louis Massignon when, in one of his last texts, he considered that charity was the privilege of the Christians ; faith, that of the Muslims ; and hope that of Israel. And this, the fact that Zionist remains and must continue to remain one of the names of hope, the fact that to be a Jew, to be an inhabitant of this country which is not only a land but an area of Spirit and nearly of Being, it is to be called upon to hold, as high as one can, the name and flag of the Human, it is that we should, absolutely never, under no circumstance, even in the midst of tragedy or at a dead-end, forget. One last word, my friends and, henceforth, thanks to this doctorate, my companions in knowledge and study. Chatam Sofer, one of the Jewish masters of the modern era, analyzed the initials of those in the Jewish lineage who received and transmitted until us the treasure of the Torah. It is a thread that, starting from Levi, son of Jacob, went to his son Kehath, and onto his son Amram, and to his son Moses. But do you know what name is composed with the first letters of this distinguished line? It is the name Amalek. It is, inherent, like a watermark in our lifeline equally spectacular and delicate, the name of our worst

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enemy. We know it and we do not tremble. On the contrary, this certainty of a persistent hardship arouses our courage and our bravery. These combats for humanity that you and me, each of us, must assume, also because we are Jews, it is always under the iron eye of our accusers that we have to fight them. We can even smile at him just like we see the young Jew smiling at the Nazi who is cutting off his beard in the photo chosen by Benny Levy for the publication of the translation, by his wife Leo, of his book, *Celebration dans la tourmente*. If he is smiling it is because he knows that he will not concede. And, not satisfied just not to yield, he knows that he will triumph €” as it is said in the Midrash: Thank you, again, for this kavod. This honor, and thus its weight, has a paradoxical effect, you see, to make me feel light at the same time as filling me with gravity and a sense of duty. I am brimming with joy to join with you in our common cause! This allocution was delivered by the author before the Academic College of Netanya, June 18, , upon receiving an Honoris Causa Doctorate.

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Chapter 3 : Will the 'Hebrew Hammer' achieve his Winter Olympics dream? | The Times of Israel

Since , nearly , young adult Jews have participated in Birthright Israel, a free ten day educational experience available to any Jew between the ages of eighteen and twenty six.

But what if you had to hurtle face first down a bobsled track at kph 80 mph and experience up to 5. Now he lives in California, but he dedicates all of his spare time, and plenty of his own resources, to training and competing in the adrenaline-charged sport. This week marks the beginning of his Indiegogo fundraising campaign , a tax-deductible c3 nonprofit, for his self-financed Olympic bid. But while he proudly wears a skintight blue-and-white, Magen David-stamped racing suit, there are still a few bumps in the ice. The Times of Israel caught up with Edelman, who was training in Park City, Utah home of the Winter Games, the first with a skeleton competition since , to learn more about the Olympic future of the Hebrew Hammer. What kind of training were you doing today? At the start of every run we do a meter sprint, then jump headfirst onto the sled. We run and then jump onto a wheeled sled attached to something that looks like railroad tracks. What inspired you to take up skeleton in the first place? I played hockey at MIT, but after college that competitive drive never went away. First I tried natural bodybuilding and competed for a year, but I felt something lacking. At the moment I decided the Olympics would be a magnificent challenge. She had two heart attacks â€” that I would never get married and never get a job. She sent me to a training school in Lake Placid, New York [home to the and Winter Olympics] hoping that it would knock some sense into me. The first time I went down the track, it was like a drug. What do you need to accomplish to qualify for PyeongChang? Everything hinges on season. Thirty male athletes are chosen from the top 60 in the world ranking. So in the interim I am getting more experience and becoming a better athlete. This season I will compete in 12 races on the Intercontinental Cup Circuit, which will take me everywhere from Whistler, Canada, home of the Olympics, to St. Moritz, Switzerland, the birthplace of skeleton. How does that work? Hopefully by March, so that I can do my military service after the season. The Olympics are rife with examples of athletes switching passports so they can secure a spot. Not that anyone has made that allegation of you, but how do you respond to that perception? No question in my mind. I was always the only Jewish hockey player my teammates had ever met. Through achieving sporting excellence I was able to act as an ambassador for my community. A lot more kids from my community now play ice hockey. I have unique athletic talent and I want to do something positive with it. Some people have seen the movie or see it as a funny play on words. What have been your biggest challenges as a skeleton athlete? Like I was playing ping-pong with my body. I broke one of my ribs. I could barely walk. For many people that would shut them down. The only answer is to do better. I can be friendly with everyone on the circuit. Unfortunately races are usually held on Friday and Saturday. Growing up I never played hockey on Shabbos, this was for me a personal choice. But I refrain from all the other melachot [forbidden activities on Shabbat] as best I can. Kosher is a bigger challenge â€” going out with your mates is a bit more difficult, but also a wonderful opportunity to educate them. I was floored, it was not something I expected. I spent the second half of the season in Calgary.

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Chapter 4 : Then and now: Tracking down the Ethiopian Jews who moved to Israel - Israel News - www.nx

Israel in the mind of early American Jews, in contrast, was an imagined Israel—a land of troubles, to be sure, but still a holy land, 2 Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society 27 () ; on.

That was not a usual gesture. Foreign heads of state are obliged to visit Yad Vashem, as did the Pope, but not the grave of Herzl. It is not like the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Paris. Obviously, this gesture was intended to emphasize the Zionist character of the state. Herzl was the founder of modern political Zionism. His is the only picture decorating the Knesset plenum hall. If we had saints, he would be St Theodor. Probably Francis did not give another thought to this gesture. The Argentine Pope could have found a lot of interest in this colourful Viennese journalist and playwright. If Francis had never heard of this episode, he is not the only one. The vast mass of Israelis has not either. It is not taught in Israeli schools. It is hidden, rather shamefully. Shortly before his early death, Herzl was invited by the British government to implement his ideas in part of British East Africa actually, it was the Kenyan highlands, a plateau with a mild climate, which later became a part of Kenya. By that time, Herzl had despaired of getting Palestine from the Turkish sultan. But the Russian Zionists, the bulwark of the movement, rebelled. Herzl was overruled by his admirers and died soon after of a broken heart, it was said. This episode is well known. Much has been written about it. Some would say that if during the s a Jewish Commonwealth had existed in Africa, many European Jews could have been saved from the Nazis. But the Argentine chapter has been erased. His logical mind found the answer. Being a playwright, he described the scene: The Pope would have been enthusiastic. Jews were everywhere, in many different countries, so how could they sincerely join any national movement? For Herzl, that was a sober, rational idea. No God involved, no holy scriptures, no romantic nonsense. Palestine did not enter his mind. He expected them to finance the project. The text is immortalized in his Diaries, a very well-written document covering several books. Less than a page was devoted to it, under the expressive title: The reason for this has also been forgotten. A generation before Herzl, Argentina consisted mainly of the north of the country, around Buenos Aires. The vast south, called Patagonia, was almost empty. He thought that the Argentine government would give it up for money. The remaining local population could be pushed out. At the time, Argentina started a campaign of conquest, that many today consider genocidal. Such genocidal campaigns were at the time quite usual. The King of the Belgians did something similar in the Congo. The plan to resettle the Jews in a safe environment turned into a Messianic movement. This has happened to the Jews before, and always ended in disaster. Most of all he detested Jerusalem. Curiously enough for the prophet of Zionism, he long refused to visit Palestine. He crisscrossed Europe from London to St Petersburg, from Istanbul to Rome, in order to meet the great of the world, but did not set foot in Jaffa until he was practically compelled by the German Kaiser. Wilhelm II, a romantic and rather unstable type, insisted on meeting the leader of the Jews in a tent near the gates of Jerusalem. Herzl fled the town and the country as quickly as he could. The Holy City, for which his successors are today ready to shed much blood, looked to him ugly and dirty. He escaped to Jaffa, and there climbed in the middle of the night onto the first available ship going to Alexandria. He claimed to have heard rumors about a plot to kill him. But Francis lives in the present and held out his arms to the living, especially the Palestinians. Instead of entering the land through Israel, like everybody else, he borrowed a helicopter from King Abdallah II of Jordan and flew directly from Amman to Bethlehem. This was a kind of recognition of Palestinian statehood. On his way back from Bethlehem to the helicopter, he suddenly asked to stop, went up to the occupation Wall and laid his hands on its ugly concrete, as his predecessors had done at the Western Wall. His prayer there could only be heard by God. From there the Pope flew to Ben-Gurion airport, as if he had just arrived from Rome. He marched on the red carpet between Peres and Netanyahu since neither of the two would cede the honour to the other.

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Chapter 5 : The Israel that could have been in Argentina – Redress Information & Analysis

They can be described as "Jews without Israel." A yearning for Zion is almost completely absent from American Jewish writers who came of age in the 40s, 50s and 60s.

The opinions, facts and any media content in them are presented solely by the authors, and neither The Times of Israel nor its partners assume any responsibility for them. Please contact us in case of abuse. In case of abuse, Report this post. Add that my father was born in Haifa in and left with his family for Lebanon at that time, and my choice to live and work in Tel Aviv is even more interesting. To be honest, I had some misgivings and fear around this decision, but at the end of a 3-month working collaboration at Bar Ilan University, there was no doubt that this visit had been a very positive and eye opening experience for me on many levels. It is an experience that I wish were much more common amongst my fellow Lebanese because of the humanizing and understanding it added to my perspective on Israeli society and especially regarding Israelis themselves, who I grew up knowing only through the lens of news reports and conversations that were invariably unfavorable. I would like to share my story. I have always been drawn to countercultural experiences, whether growing up in Beirut or living in California as an adult. However, as a proud Arab woman, nothing I have ever done was as profoundly countercultural as applying for an educational leave to work with an Israeli colleague for a semester at Bar Ilan University in Ramat Gan. I wrestled with telling my family that I had made this decision. When I did, I was met with resistance at first, then reluctant encouragement, and many questions. Now that I have been there, I think that is a funny one! I was told not to let my own friends and extended family know I was going. There was a lot to consider. Before arriving, I also wondered whether it would be wise to let people in Israel know that I am Lebanese. After all, this was a country that had invaded Lebanon on more than one occasion, a fact that had made a big impression on me and my generation growing up. I was excited to see Israel for myself and to visit the Palestinian Territories about which I had heard so much. In the end, my curiosity outweighed my uncertainties and I traveled to Israel with a heart and mind full of both. Because I work in a government-affiliated setting in Los Angeles, I traveled with a diplomatic passport. I can only assume this helped me when I landed at Ben Gurion airport and was permitted entry following a brief and I must say, pleasant, interview consisting of a few short questions and ending with a wish for a good stay. The ease of this process was the first surprise of my trip. My second surprise came when my taxi drove through Ramat Gan, where I initially stayed. I looked out the window and saw the striking resemblance the streets there had to Hadath, the Lebanese town where I was raised. I could have been in Lebanon as far as I could tell from the view. I am not sure how I imagined Israel would look. Very modern and powerful I supposed, but that a suburb of Tel Aviv resembled Lebanon so closely was not what I had expected. This was not what I had expected at all For most of my first week or two, I kept to myself. Largely, this was due to anxiety on my part. I am dark haired and olive skinned. Everyone who addressed me did so in Hebrew. Some Israelis told me, laughing, that I looked more Israeli than they did. It turned out that I had no need to be anxious. I let people know that I was from Lebanon and was met with smiles. I let people know that my father was born in Haifa in and that same year his family took him to Lebanon where he lived most of his life. More smiles and friendly curiosity. This was not the reception I had expected at all. Gonda Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center, Bar Ilan University My colleagues seemed delighted to be working with me, not only as fellow researchers but also as people with a genuine interest in knowing more about Lebanese culture and life in Lebanon. One of the most moving interactions came from an Israeli man who had served in the Army in Lebanon. Without talking about politics, without talking about right or wrong, he apologized to me personally for the damage that the incursions caused to the Lebanese people. I wanted to cry when I heard these men. The idea that such thoughts existed in Israel, especially by former soldiers, was something that never, ever would have occurred to me. The human element of the interactions I had in Israel as an Arab woman had broken through the rhetoric I have heard for years, and had

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touched me. I had no reason to fear telling people where I was from. It turned out that there was going to be a memorial in Haifa for his mother who had recently passed away. He told me there would be other family members there, and to please come. I never could have guessed I had so much family in Israel, people who remembered my father and his parents, people who my brother and sister and I had no idea even existed. It is hard to describe what such a discovery is like. I met people from Nablus, from Nazareth, and from Haifa who shared stories with me of my father when he was a young man and had come to visit just before the war. During this reunion, I was overwhelmed in turns by warmth and sadness, meeting people I was related to and had never met before or in some cases even known of. I was treated like a long lost daughter, and felt like one too. We went up to the border between North Israel and Lebanon and took a group picture together that I sent home to my family. As we drove through Northern Israel, I realized how many Arabs live here, and that it would be possible for me to get along just fine in Israel speaking only Arabic. This was another surprise. In all of the conversations I had ever had or heard relating to the political situation surrounding Israel, the existence of Israeli Arabs was simply never acknowledged. All of a sudden, when listening to a Hezbollah threat to bomb Haifa, I realized that threats like these are ultimately threats to my own family members and many other Arab people. Now, knowing many Israeli Jews and Arabs personally, and understanding the fabric of Israeli society better, these threats sound indefensible from any perspective whatsoever and, despite the rhetoric, would be just as deadly to the Arabs as to the Jews living in Israel. Another insight I did not have before spending time in Israel. Bachelorette party in Haifa I cried, and then I cried some more I came to Israel with no political agenda, but given my background, I had a powerful desire to visit the West Bank and see it for myself. I talked to residents of Ramallah and heard about the challenges they encounter in their daily lives. I visited the Aida refugee camp in Bethlehem and understood the serious effects that the circuitous separation wall has on economic infrastructure and the ability of Palestinians to engage in work, access water conveniently, and seek the closest healthcare and educational services. I also saw the interplay of religious differences within the Territories, where the Christian minority has the added difficulty of living within increasingly conservative Muslim communities in which religion and politics freely mix. Israeli West Bank Separation Barrier My sense of the injustice that Arabs living within the Territories face was never more acute than when I visited my family in Nablus and stayed in the same home where my father had stayed nearly 50 years earlier. While I was there, my cousin pulled out a box of old black and white photos. This brought back to life lost days of a seemingly completely different world. I saw my young father and many relatives in their youth, all smiling and being together in celebration. The images moved me deeply. My family history was here. My father as a young man knew this home and knew these people as his own family. Aunts and uncles I had never met or even heard about were part of this story. They had minimal economic opportunities here and did not have the freedom to leave, nor was there much freedom in staying. Even for the Christmas holidays, my cousins required a permit to visit the rest of their family in North Israel and had to go through long waits and searches at the checkpoints. I felt suffocated for them. I felt despair for them. And both feelings were made much more poignant by knowing how gentle these people are, how decent. I cried, and then I cried some more. I found an apartment in the Shuk Ha-Carmel area. I was immediately struck that in the market there were Druze villagers and Arab women happily doing business alongside Jews wearing kippas. The intricacies of life in Israel and the many misconceptions held by people who have never visited were there for me to see once again. Just as if I were in Lebanon, I had a morning routine of enjoying freshly squeezed juices and eating hummus and tahini after work. I felt a real connection to a place where people make such delicious food that I know anyone in my family would love and enjoy. Delicious hummus in Kerem Hateimanim, Tel Aviv Professionally, my work was high level and very satisfying. I made new friendships that will last a lifetime. As a fan of the arts, I was blown away by the dynamism of Israeli culture. I was never stared at or harassed. I wish I could say the same thing about my experiences in Beirut. Despite the fact that the right-leaning government tacitly endorses abysmal treatment of Arabs in the Territories, there is a stark contrast in the way other groups like gay people, Ethiopians, and women can thrive in Israel as compared to how they are treated

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elsewhere in the region. Tel Avivians, I realized by living here, are notably fair-minded, and in many ways not much different from my own friends at home. The sheer variety Among the non-Jewish population in Israel, I was fascinated to learn of so many groups, within each of which appears a diverse range of opinions. I had once heard a humorous anecdote from a Jewish friend to the effect that for every 2 Jewish people you will find at least 4 opinions. The same it seems can be said for most everyone else in Israel, starting with my own Arab Israeli family. There was agreement that they would not want under any circumstances to be ruled by either the PA or Hamas. There were family members who felt that Israeli Arabs are not treated equally and have a harder time advancing economically and socially as a result, and others who were very proud of their Israeli citizenship and of Israel. As I would expect in any country, especially within a minority group, there were a variety of opinions on the current political situation, on ways to integrate the West Bank and Gaza into some form of peace arrangement, on the intentions of various political leaders et cetera. Their role and dedication in the military led me to realize that not only do the Druze feel at home in Israel, they are willing to fight for the country. Again, this is something I would never have guessed before my trip even though my own mother is of Druze background. So, the Jewish and non-Jewish segments of Israeli society are not in any way the monolithic entities I had imagined. It is, in fact, quite complex. A Druze woman preparing saj in Carmel Market, Tel Aviv The Israeli political spectrum is wide, with zealots on the right and dreamers on the left and everything in between. I was surprised to realize that there are so many Israelis who strongly oppose the indefinite continuation of the Occupation, and who enjoy good relationships and true friendships with Palestinian and Israeli Arabs.

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Chapter 6 : Reflections of a Lebanese woman in Israel | Carol Jahshan | The Blogs

In the end, my curiosity outweighed my uncertainties and I traveled to Israel with a heart and mind full of both. Because I work in a government-affiliated setting in Los Angeles, I traveled with.

This week as we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the occupation, I sought to understand the meaning of the war for American Jews, and some of their Israeli counterparts, by digging out texts that captured those states of mind. I looked for the seeds of misgivings that more enlightened Jews had even then of the dangers of that victory. Many of us hope that this week provides an opportunity for change: Had it been Dr. Norman Podhoretz echoes the mood, in *Breaking Ranks* After the Six-Day War of , it became clear that the vast majority of American Jews had moved in twenty years far beyond even the previous enthusiastic support of Israel among those who had always regarded themselves as Zionists. Israel, said Nathan Glazer, was now the religion of the American Jews, and as usual he was right. Whatever else the Jews of American may or may not have cared about, they all or anyway very nearly all cared about Israel; and whatever they may or may not have done about being Jewish, they all gave their support to Israel. Those who had money to give gave it; those who had arguments to make made them. With a degree of forthrightness that surprised some and offended others, American Jews did everything they could to ensure American support for Israel. They lobbied, they Norman Podhoretz demonstrated, they made political contributions, and, of course, they voted and kept on voting. Some people were offended by the Jewish expressions of nationalist pride? Our next witness is Alan Dershowitz, from *Chutzpah*. I felt my second-class citizenship as a Jew quite palpably, especially during the crisis leading up to the Six-Day War, between Israel and the Arab states, in I felt pressure not to express my strong support for Israel, lest my Americanism and my Harvardism be called into question. In the days before the Six Day War, my Jewishness was my most important value. And I decided not to try to hide my feelings. I organized students and faculty in support of Israel. I provided legal services to several students who wanted to fight for Israel. I helped raise money for the Israeli army. I recall one non-Jewish faculty member who was rumored to have a Jewish ancestor berating me for acting as if my own country were under siege. I responded that my own people were under siege and I would not sit by while Jews anywhere were in danger. More of the panic, and the Holocaust reverberations. Michael Steinhardt, the neoconservative funder of pro-Israel causes, from his memoir, *No Bull: Michael Steinhardt* In the weeks preceding the war, victory was far from certain. The world had not witnessed similar trauma surrounding Jews since the eve of the Holocaust. I needed to do something. I had been only a toddler during the Shoah. Now I was 27 years old. The war broke out on June 5, The next night, I attended a mass rally outside the United Nations complex. As the war began, with Arab threats and posturing, it looked like a fight for survival in which all Jews were needed to do their part perhaps for the very existence of Israel. I decided that nothing would be more meaningful than volunteering to fight to protect the Jewish state. Apparently I was not alone. When I tried to reserve an airline ticket to Israel, I discovered that all the flights were booked. Finally, I found a route via Olympia Airlines to Athens; once there, I would figure out how to get to Jerusalem. But before my departure to Athens, on the sixth day, the war ended. Jacques Derrida But leftwingers also cared. Jacques Derrida , from the biography *Derrida*, by Benoit Peeters. Derrida wrote to him [French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, born in Lithuania] on 6 June , just after the outbreak of what would soon be called the Six-Day War. And Noam Chomsky, answering an emailed question about his own concern: Some of the left faculty in Cambridge met to discuss concerns over the impending war, organized by my close friend Salvador Luria if I recall correctly [Luria was a Nobel-Prize winning microbiologist who opposed the Vietnam War]. Chomsky was not alone in his concerns. But I felt alienated by the militarist triumphalism that succeeded that lightning victory. Did the late war scare you to death? It did me while it was simmering. We had a great wave of New York Jewish nationalism, all the doves turning into hawks. Well, my heart is in Israel, but it was a little like a blitzkrieg against the Comanches armed by Russia. Nasser is like a Mussolini ruling some

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poverty stricken part of India. I never saw a country I would less like to stay in, yet the Egyptians were mostly subtle and sad and attractive. Back to the Jewish street. Tom Friedman was a schoolboy during the War. He went to Israel the next year. Friedman It may have been my first trip abroad, but in I knew than and there that I was really more Middle East than Minnesota. For my independent study project in my senior year of high school, in , I did a slide show on how Israel won the Six-Day War. In the period of a year, I went from being a nebbish whose dream was to one day become a professional golfer to being an Israel expert-in-training. When the Syrians arrested thirteen Jews in Damascus, I wore a button for weeks that said Free the Damascus 13, which most of my high school classmates thought referred to an underground offshoot of the Chicago 7. Wolf Blitzer started his career as an operative for the Israel lobby. He sought to deflect the view that Israel was the aggressor in the war. Yes, this is pure propaganda. The Arab buildup which led to the Six day war had begun in February [After withdrawal of UN forces from Sinai] U than flew to Cairo to ask for a breathing spell, but Nasser anticipated him with his declaration closing the Straits to Israel shipping. Any Israeli reaction thereafter was a response to this Egyptian first strike. President Lyndon Johnson on June 19 declared. If a single act of folly was more responsible for this explosion than any other it was as the arbitrary and dangerous announced decision that the Straits of Tiran would be closed. The words of the Arab leaders, combined with their actions, clearly demonstrate that the Arab states were intent on an assault on Israel which would destroy the Jewish state. Wolf Blitzer Nasser tightened the noose around Israel on June 4, when he persuaded Iraq to join the alliance. The blockade was the first act of war. This passage is important, too, because of the messianism, imbibed by an American Jewish writer: It was the old Jewish nightmare of abandonment. Take for example, that statement from Cairo. Israelis were on the verge of hysteria. In Tel Aviv, the streets were ghostly [Army chief of staff Yitzhak] Rabin was told that with each passing day the chances of success dwindled "because the Egyptians were bringing in more troops, because their lines of supply were becoming fixed. Israeli officials flooded the city. It was a pilgrimage. Even the most worldly spoke of it in religious terms "how they stood before the Wall, which was covered in flowers, which was breathing, soft like skin, which was bleeding, with with tears. Now that dream had come true, and I wondered why I, of all men, should be so privileged. Is it Good or Bad for the Jews? Israeli soldiers rushed to the site to pray, and the picture of that moment became almost Richard Cohen instantly totemic. The people of David were back in the City of David. And just as totemic, they had brought only their bulldozers. To the religious as well as some nationalists, the West Bank "not that gaudy strip along the coast "was the Israeli heartland. Jerusalem, not Tel Aviv, is what mattered. Hebron, not Haifa, is where Abraham bought land for the burial site of his family. As is sometimes the case, the reverence that Jews had for one place or another was matched by that of the Muslims. I simply was unaware that, following its establishment, my country had no borders except the fluid, modular frontier regions that perpetually promised the option of expansion. The writer Hirsh Goodman was a South African who moved to Israel, lived on a kibbutz, and fought in the war. In this passage, Goodman describes the mood of Israelis: Herzog left one feeling confident and with a deep sense of national unity. We were all in this together. The way he explained it, this was not a war of our choosing. The UN had withdrawn from the entire Sinai without a murmur, the French had declared an arms embargo on Israel, the Soviets were being openly hostile, the Arab world was firmly behind Nasser and the Americans were distant and noncommittal. Israel was totally alone. Despite all this there was a feeling of destiny, pride, determination, a need to survive and fear. We all knew the country was fragile, that this was not a war over a piece of territory but an existential war of survival. Goodman goes on to capture the hubris. As for the reference to the billiard cue, Goodman had witnessed a shocking scene, of an Israeli interrogator raping a Palestinian prisoner with a cue in order to extract information. Israel, he said, better rid itself of the territories and their Arab population as soon as possible. If it did not Israel would soon become an Apartheid State. I understood what he was saying. The Story of the Jews: While Israel steadied itself for the assault, the Western powers developed a purposeful attitude of irresolution and nonintervention. It said and did nothing. It thus kindled the greenest of green lights before the exultant aggressor. On May 30 Egypt and Jordan concluded

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an alliance against Israel. The encirclement was almost complete. On June 4 Iraq joined the hunt by signing a similar agreement. Troops from Algeria, Morocco, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, converged toward Israel like greyhounds advancing to tear the quarry to pieces. An American plan to mount an international naval force to break the Egyptian blockade dwindled for lack of international support and domestic authorityâ€.

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Chapter 7 : More than "Hocus Pocus"™ to Salem™s Jewish past | The Times of Israel

If the American Jewish supporters of Netanyahu drag America into a Near East fiasco, I am fearful that the entire Jewish community in America will be blamed and many innocent Jews will suffer. richard.

We shall continue to stand with Israel. The United States for a quarter of a century has had an excellent relationship with the State of Israel. We have cooperated in many, many fields -- in your security, in the well-being of the Middle East, and in leading what we all hope is a lasting peace throughout the world. A strong Israel is essential to a stable peace in the Middle East. Our commitment to Israel will meet the test of American stead, fairness, and resolve. My administration will not be found wanting. The United States will continue to help Israel provide for her security. My commitment to the security and future of Israel is based upon basic morality as well as enlightened self-interest. Our role in supporting Israel honors our own heritage. I said that I would rather commit suicide than hurt Israel. I think many of them realize the two concepts are not incompatible. I think political suicide would automatically result because it is not only our Jewish citizens who have this deep commitment to Israel, but there is an overwhelming support throughout the nation, because there is a common bond of commitment to the same principles of openness and freedom and democracy and strength and courage that ties us together in an irrevocable way. The ties that bind the people of the United States and the people of Israel together, the ties of blood, kinship, ties of history, ties of common religious beliefs, the dream, centuries old, of the founding of the new nation of Israel have been realized. But the dream that the new nation of Israel should be guaranteed a right to live in peace has not yet been realized for its people and those who love Israel around the world Peace can come from a guarantee of security, and our staunch friendship for Israel will continue to be a major element in this foundation for progress. But there need be no concern among the Israeli people nor among Jews in this country that our Nation has changed or turned away from Israel. There is a mutual relationship and there is a mutual benefit and there is a mutual commitment, which has been impressed very deeply in my mind and also in the minds of the leaders of my Government and the Government of Israel. And I will continue to work with the leaders of Israel to strengthen even further our common commitments and our common goals. We know that in a time of crisis, we can count on Israel. And the people of Israel know that in a time of crisis, they can count on the United States I am opposed to an independent Palestinian state, because in my own judgement and in the judgement of many leaders in the Middle East, including Arab leaders, this would be a destabilizing factor in the Middle East and would certainly not serve the United States interests. And we oppose the creation of an independent Palestinian state. The United States, as all of you know, has a warm and unique relationship of friendship with Israel that is morally right. A strong Israel and a strong Egypt serve our own security interests We are committed to a Jerusalem that will forever remain undivided with free access to all faiths to the holy places. Nothing will deflect us from these fundamental principles and commitments. The survival of Israel is not just a political issue, it is a moral imperative. That is my deeply held belief and it is the belief shared by the vast majority of the American people Since the rebirth of the State of Israel, there has been an ironclad bond between that democracy and this one In Israel, free men and women are every day demonstrating the power of courage and faith. Back in when Israel was founded, pundits claimed the new country could never survive. Today, no one questions that Israel is a land of stability and democracy in a region of tyranny and unrest America has never flinched from its commitment to the State of Israel--a commitment which remains unshakable. Israel and America may be thousands of miles apart, but we are philosophical neighbors sharing a strong commitment to democracy and the rule of law. What we hold in common are the bonds of trust and friendship, qualities that in our eyes make Israel a great nation. No people have fought longer, struggled harder, or sacrificed more than yours in order to survive, to grow, and to live in freedom" Remarks at Welcoming Ceremony for PM Menachem Begin , September 9, "Israel exists; it has a right to exist in peace behind secure and defensible borders; and it has a right to demand of its neighbors that they recognize those

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facts. In the pre borders Israel was barely 10 miles wide at its narrowest point. I am not about to ask Israel to live that way again. Our friendship is based on historic moral and strategic ties, as well as our shared dedication to democracy. The emotional bond of our peoples goes -- it transcends politics. Our strategic cooperation -- and I renewed today our determination that that go forward -- is a source of mutual security. My Administration is dedicated to achieving this goal, one which will guarantee Israel security. At the same time, we will do our utmost to defend and protect Israel, for unless Israel is strong and secure, then peace will always be beyond our grasp. We were with Israel at the beginning, 41 years ago. We are with Israel today. And we will be with Israel in the future. No one should doubt this basic commitment. The emotional bond of our people transcends politics. Our strategic cooperation -- and I renew today our determination that that go forward -- is a source of mutual security. We may differ over some policies from time to time, individual policies, but never over the principle For more than 40 years, the United States and Israel have enjoyed a friendship built on mutual respect and commitment to democratic principles. Our continuing search for peace in the Middle East begins with a recognition that the ties uniting our two countries can never be broken Zionism is the idea that led to the creation of a home for the Jewish people And to equate Zionism with the intolerable sin of racism is to twist history and forget the terrible plight of Jews in World War II and indeed throughout history. Our relationship is also based on our common interest in a more stable and peaceful Middle East, a Middle East that will finally accord Israel the recognition and acceptance that its people have yearned for so long and have been too long denied, a Middle East that will know greater democracy for all its peoples I believe strongly in the benefit to American interests from strengthened relationships with Israel. Our talks today have been conducted in that context. We have begun a dialog intended to raise our relationship to a new level of strategic partnership, partners in the pursuit of peace, partners in the pursuit of security. The United States admires Israel for all that it has overcome and for all that it has accomplished. We are proud of the strong bond we have forged with Israel, based on our shared values and ideals. That unique relationship will endure just as Israel has endured. Our relations are unique among all nations. Like America, Israel is a strong democracy, as a symbol of freedom, and an oasis of liberty, a home to the oppressed and persecuted The relationship between our two countries is built on shared understandings and values. Our peoples continue to enjoy the fruits of our excellent economic and cultural cooperation as we prepare to enter the twenty-first century. And one of our most important friends is the State of Israel Israel is a small country that has lived under threat throughout its existence. At the first meeting of my National Security Council, I told them a top foreign policy priority is the safety and security of Israel. My Administration will be steadfast in supporting Israel against terrorism and violence, and in seeking the peace for which all Israelis pray. Theirs is a story of defiance in oppression and patience in tribulation -- reaching back to the exodus and their exile into the diaspora. That story continued in the founding of the State of Israel. The story continues in the defense of the State of Israel. Our nations are bound by our shared values and a strong commitment to freedom. These ties that have made us natural allies will never be broken. Israel and the United States share a common history: We are both nations born of struggle and sacrifice. We are both founded by immigrants escaping religious persecution in other lands. Through the labors and strides of generations, we have both built vibrant democracies, founded in the rule of law and market economies. And we are both countries established with certain basic beliefs: We were both founded by immigrants escaping religious persecution in other lands. We both have built vibrant democracies. Both our countries are founded on certain basic beliefs, that there is an Almighty God who watches over the affairs of men and values every life. These ties have made us natural allies, and these ties will never be broken. So this kind of menacing talk [by the President of Iran] is disturbing. It is grounded in the shared spirit of our people, the bonds of the Book, the ties of the soul When Americans look at Israel, we see a pioneer spirit that worked an agricultural miracle and now leads a high-tech revolution. We see world-class universities and a global leader in business and innovation and the arts. We see a resource more valuable than oil or gold:

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Chapter 8 : Richard Gottheil, American Zionist

The Israelis passed on the information to the Russians in exchange for allowing some Russian Jews to immigrate to Israel. A number of key CIA agents were executed and the KGB gained access to top.

By Zach Dorfman December 14, Every year, we say: We gather in Boston, we gather in Boca. We raise a glass and look toward the East, toward the mythological locus of Judaism, slouching toward the perpetually deferred dream. The dream is dead, having finally been realized. Long lived is the dream, as Jewish longing has conformed to its parameters, and not to its realities. With the founding of the state of Israel in and the subsequent capture of all of East Jerusalem in , the city fell under Jewish tutelage for the first time since the Bar Kokhba Revolt of CE. Jerusalem was regained, but Jerusalem, being the polyvalent symbol par excellence, dominates those in which its memory reposes. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. But the result of our initial despoilmentâ€™a centripetal consciousness of loss and narrative of communal redemption, rooted in our shared othernessâ€™has been rendered incoherent. As a diasporic faith, periphery was central; all points could emanate equally lachrymose for a long-lost spiritual and temporal sovereignty. Subordinate to outsized Jerusalem, the diaspora experienced a diffused democratization of longing. Jews were no longer forced to wander the continents, dependent upon the benevolence of others. The locus reclaimed, diaspora Jews need no longer gaze expectantly towards Zion. It turns out, though, that most American Jews are not. There are some 5. Why, after thousands of years of canonized longing, has the dream sputtered out at its precise moment of realization? Perhaps we are too comfortable. Perhaps, happily ensconced in major American metropolitan areas, we see no need to rend ourselves from the American cultural fabric, our integration into which took considerable time and toil. Perhaps we are doubly alienated: There are a great deal of American Jews who do not practice Judaism, or at least do not do so on a regular basis. According to the most recent National Jewish Population Survey , 46 percent of American Jews belong to a synagogueâ€™39 percent of which belong to the Reform Movement, arguably the most liberal and assimilationist branch of American Judaismâ€™while only 27 percent of American Jews attend services at least once a month. We may attend a Passover Sederâ€™77 percent of American Jews doâ€™or, like 72 percent of American Jews, light some Chanukah candles, but our dedication to Judaism qua religious practice appears deeply attenuated. This does not strictly correlate with synagogue attendance: Every morning, I board the Manhattan-bound F Train in Brooklyn, and I find myself at a loss, speechless before the diverse modes of being that, woven together, constitute the many American Judaisms. But it is true that, although all American Jews share a religious or ethno-cultural heritage, some can be said to constitute a distinct enough community or subculture to form their own cultural islands, or in the case of the Hasidic and Haredi Jews of Brooklyn, archipelagoes. The difference is different. This fact is particularly salient when one considers the Hasidic and Haredi communities. They represent a kind of singular exception not just within the America Jewish community, but also to a mode of being conceived of as congenitally American. The Amish, it should be said, provide perhaps the only other persistent challenge to this *modus vivendi*, but do so on very different theological and social grounds than the Hasidic or Haredi American Jews. At the risk of oversimplification, a basic taxonomy would divide this group into three. There are, first, the Reform and Conservative movements, which represent the established core of modern American Judaism. The second group, which is far smaller and less formally organized than the first, could be very loosely and unsatisfactorily called neo-Hasidic, and is notable for its fusion of religious observance, left wing politics, environmentalism, and various other New Age accretions. Which brings us to the final group, secular Jews. They may be humanists, agnostics, atheists, or pantheists, but they are not Jews qua their practice of Judaism. It may be that, as the Jews most removed from Judaism, this group is the one most susceptible to the vague yet pervasive sense of unease, instability, and alienationâ€™othernessâ€™that I am attempting to describe. As secular Jews this group may be more liable to experience this phenomenon, because it has no structured religious practice to ground it. However, since all

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the members of these groups—Conservative, Reform, neo-Hasidic, and secular Jews alike—are broadly secularist in outlook, and to varying degrees embracing of modernity, it should be sufficiently clear that one need not be secular to inhabit, willfully and willingly, a secular world. This world is seen as something that is both inherently desirable, being characterized by a general constellation of values among which are liberalism, egalitarianism, and representative democracy, and instrumentally so, as it protects the rights of minorities to worship freely, and advance unhindered in its private and public pursuits granted that these do not fundamentally conflict with the aforementioned values. The great majority of American Jews have thus placed a great deal of faith in this milieu, for reasons that reflect both calculations of self-interest and catholic first principles. And the opportunities it has presented have been spectacular: Jews, collectively and individually, have been able to pursue their own vision of human flourishing in a manner and scale that is perhaps unprecedented. It is true that we have much to be thankful for, but it is important that we recognize the inherent limitations, and the precariousness, of our social position. The process of secularization, though, has not always reaped uncomplicated belonging. From a demographic perspective at least, America is a Christian nation. This observation is both indispensable and banal: In turn, this newfound feeling of kinship to Jews produced a sense of paternal responsibility for their well-being; instead of the consummate deniers of His divinity, Jews were seen as legitimate carriers of an authentic tradition fully realized in Christ. No doubt this hermeneutical distinction has benefited American Jews, and our fraternity with American Protestantism, and Christianity as a whole, has been emphasized when deemed desirable for reasons that are largely earnest but occasionally border on the disingenuous. One case that immediately comes to mind is the distancing of Christianity and Judaism from Islam, when in reality the latter two systems share many affinities that the former does not. Nevertheless, the distinction is an inherently Christian one. It was a gift, but gifts such as this function within a system of conceptual economy. Something must be returned; loss is inevitable and necessary. Thus the largely secularist American Jewish population, which feels neither the covenantal pull of its forefathers, nor the desire to emigrate to the Jewish nation-state, nor the impulse to convert, finds itself in a unique kind of cognitive purgatory. Not Christian, but fully Americanized or at least the most Americanized group of non-Christian Americans. Not practitioners of traditionalist forms of Judaism, but Jewish. Newly-minted members of a voluntary, not compulsory, diaspora. Otherness—a long-lived trope in Jewish history, to be sure, and one caused by both external discrimination and internal chauvinism—has, particularly in the case of secular Jews, outlived the actual practice of Judaism. Our otherness is not the otherness of our progenitors. This newfound sense of otherness has precipitated a turn toward that most modern of objects of veneration, the nation-state. What is particular about the American Jewish experience, however, is that Israel has become our adopted national home, our surrogate history. We no longer trace ourselves back to the Pale, or in some cases, to the Arab states of the Middle East. In constructing our own sense of identity, American Jews draw deeply from both places but are wholly contained in neither. But if we need to quell a certain sense of rootlessness, well, one only need pivot toward Jerusalem. Longing for Jerusalem, though, is nothing new. For many, its physical existence seems almost ancillary, for Israel has become perpetually impregnated with symbolism, arising out of a continuous birthing process. In its reality, Israel has become more of an idea than it has ever been. And so we look East, towards ourselves, or what we believe ourselves to be. Outside of our history, recreating it, we blot out the past by investing in a mythologized present. Here we are, outside of ourselves. This much has not changed, and thus, no matter how hard we try, we are encumbered with an unshakable sense of difference from others and otherness from ourselves. Here we are again, wandering. Read more in the Archive.

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Chapter 9 : How changed American Jews

So the first thing to wrap your mind around is the All those displaced people were waiting for the opportunity to leave for Israel or America. To America, the path was cleared for an eventual.

To be a Jew and to be proud of it; to glory in the power and pertinacity of the race, its traditions, its triumphs, its sufferings its resistance to persecution; to look the world frankly in the face and to enjoy the luxury of moral and intellectual honesty; to feel pride in belonging to the people that gave Christendom its divinities, that taught half the world monotheism, whose ideas have permeated civilization as never the ideas of a race before it, whose genius fashioned the whole mechanism of modern commerce, and whose artists, actors, singers and writers have filled a larger place in the cultured universe than those of any other people. Not knowing or wishing to know, we live in a separate today, comfortably believing that our tomorrow will only be as it was yesterday. Rabbi Gottheil eventually became the chief Rabbi and one of the most influential, well-known and controversial Reform Jewish leaders in America. It was an act of faith that brought condemnation and vilification upon Rabbi Gottheil from the American Reform community and the American Orthodox community. American Reform Judaism viewed the struggling birth of Zionism as a betrayal of loyalty to America. Zionism, they said, was unstable. It tasted bitterly of the dangerous, ancient Anti-Semitic accusations - dual loyalty. It threatened the position of the Jews in the new Zion of America. American Orthodox Judaism equally reviled the infant Zionist movement. To the Orthodox, it denied the coming of the Messiah. For both extremes of American religious life, the Zionists had no right to confer upon themselves the mantle of Jewish leadership. They both said Zionists had no right to say the potential opportunity for the redemption of Israel and the land was here and now. Rabbi Gottheil and his son Richard, along with an extraordinary pantheon of later American Jewish Zionist visionaries, who followed them, said otherwise. Their faith and the future became their legacies. Their words, their efforts, their names are known but to a few today. Gustav Gottheil was extraordinary. He openly recognized beneficial change and grasped it. His son, Richard, was reticent. Richard Gottheil is remembered not for his own long, energetic Zionist endeavors but because of the efforts of others that were associated with him. Yet, even as a reclusive academic, he never separated from his own vision of the great cause. He preferred to advance his interest in Semitic languages and culture at the great universities of Berlin, Tuebingen, and Leipzig, earning a PhD. Gottheil returned to Columbia where he became professor of Semitic languages when the chair of rabbinical literature was endowed in He spent his life as a respected but shy scholar focusing on the meaning of being a Jew through educational organizations such as the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, the Judean, as a founder and president of the Jewish Religious School Union in New York; and his association with Jewish Chautauqua Society. Richard James Horatio Gottheil is remembered today, not for his many Jewish academic interests but as the reluctant father of American Zionism. His ideas flowered first, not in New York with its huge, growing Jewish population, but in Chicago, Ill. The Midwestern soil, first to grow Zionism, had been actively furrowed by Christians, "Restorationists", lead by an inspired fundamentalist, William Blackstone. Restorationist Christians believed that the second coming of Jesus could be advanced if the Jews would return to Palestine. If the Jews would reclaim, rebuild the long neglected land, the Messianic age would begin. Chicago was not to become the center of American Jewish life, New York was. The rapidly expanding Zionist ideal needed a Jewish figurehead of stature and leadership. Rabbi Gustav Gottheil was elderly and unable to take on the responsibility. His son Richard was approached. He looked like a dignified American. His image validated Zionism as respectable. His place in the community negated the accusation of dual loyalty. Gottheil was, it seemed, the ideal face to market American Zionism. Professor Gottheil enjoyed the non-stressful life of an academic recluse. He was not a dynamic presence or public speaker. He probably became a committed Zionist because of the dominant presence of his father. Most remarkable and fortunate for the nescient American Zionist movement was the choice of secretary for the FAZ. Gottheil had been advisor, sponsor and friend to a

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young Columbia student who energetically and dynamically became the first Zionist secretary. His name was Rabbi Stephen Wise. For the next 45 years, Wise would become one of the enshrined, respected leaders of the American Zionist and World Zionist movements. July 4 and 5, the first FAZ convention was called. Professor Gottheil, the reluctant, dutiful figurehead, proceeded with his responsibilities as President of FAZ. Though he was ever desirous of returning to the quiet life of academia, Gottheil attended the second Zionist Congress in Basel establishing relationships with Theodor Herzl and Max Nordau. Wise wrote back to the elder Rabbi Gottheil after meeting Herzl, "This is a cause that will allow Jews to fight back. We have been stepped on long enough. Returning to New York, Gottheil, maintained his professorial look. He hated to preside at meetings. He was careless in procedural matters and embarrassed by ceremonies in which he had to take part. He was horrified by emotional debates. He felt that his status as a professor was being sullied by his being President of a propaganda organization. He ran away from official duties. He usually limited his official addresses at Zionist meetings to the necessary items, speaking briefly. He became more and more nerve-provoked by his status, especially as the practical affairs of the Zionist Federation made no visible progress. FAZ, loosely structured with smaller semi-independent chapters who sometimes paid dues but mostly did not, was desperately short of funds. Gottheil and Wise realized that they had no means of getting their ideas heard or promoting the policy of the FAZ except by word of mouth. They scraped a few hundred dollars together and borrowed a few hundred more to establish *The Maccabean*, the first English language Zionist magazine. Interestingly, the magazine was published in English not in Yiddish, the lingua franca of the immigrant Jews. The American Jewish immigrant culture was changing, settling in to life as Americans. Louis Lipsky, born in Rochester, N. Lipsky became the written voice of FAZ, and later the Zionist Organization of America, for the next fifty plus remarkable years. *The Maccabean* eventually affected the opinions of millions of American Jews and non-Jews. Lipsky remained editor of the *Maccabean* all his life. He died in 1958. Gottheil never truly desired to lead American Zionism. He saw only failure and resistance in the early years of FAZ. At the same time, Gottheil deeply admired and respected Theodor Herzl. He dutifully plowed on. De Haas had been the secretary of the First Zionist Congress. Stephen Wise had left to take a position as a Rabbi in Portland, Oregon. Gottheil desperately needed an energetic, involved secretary. The work of running the FAZ was more than he could endure. With de Haas assuming the role of secretary, Gottheil, though elected president one more time, serving until 1918, virtually vanished from the Zionist movement for the rest of his life. He continued writing and supporting the Zionist effort but he never again undertook a leadership role. De Haas assumed the leadership of the fragmented Zionist movement. He accomplished one thing above all other activities that cemented his name in the pantheon of American Zionism. He befriended the best known, and admired secular Jew in America, Louis Brandeis. After a relatively short period of examination and self-examination, Louis Brandeis became an ardent, committed Zionist in 1914. Whereas Gottheil was a respected American Jewish figurehead; he was not interested in the administrative or political and economic struggle to establish Zionism, Brandeis was. Brandeis threw himself into the cause with a religious fervor that belied his own lack of Jewish religious values. Zionism was not well received by the Jewish immigrants. Most of them were insecure in their new homes, being only a few years removed from the fear of the pogroms. The immigrants focused on adjusting, acculturating, learning English. They were fearful that the extraordinary freedom of the new Zion would be lost if they strayed too far, pushed to hard, made themselves too visible. They feared they would be sent back. Active Zionist membership was minimal though sympathies might have been much larger. Jews simply did not want to get involved. Louis Brandeis was an assimilated Jew from Kentucky. He had had little formal association with Jews being more closely identified with the Brahmanism of the Bostonian social elite. Ironically, Louis Brandeis, who was to become the energetic exponent in word and deed, the legitimizer of American Zionism, descended from Judaism's darkest heretical rejecters, the Jacob Frank heresies. Jacob Frank converted, as did many of his followers, to Christianity believing in a perverted salvation theory that through the debasement of Judaism the Messiah could be forced from heaven. It was from heretical adherents of Frankist beliefs that Louis Brandeis, the spiritual and moral salvation, the galvanizer, the leader of American

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Zionism, and reputedly even his wife, descended from. There were a number of factors to explain the rise of American Zionism under Brandeis. World War I was a key factor. Contemporary history is focused on the Holocaust and its aftermath. The slaughter of hundreds of thousand of Eastern European Jews for simply being Jews was not lost on the American Jewish community. American Jews were keenly aware that the American escape valve had been cut off and soon would be fully cut off to Jewish refugees.