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A private matter? Religious education and democracy in Indonesia and Israel

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The article examines state-supported religious education and its consequences for civic attitudes in Indonesia and Israel, two democracies that grant religion a prominent place in the public sphere, particularly in education. The comparison reveals that while in Indonesia the state was able to gradually introduce a secular curriculum in religious schools and establish an accreditation system by which it could exert influence on the way religion is taught, in Israel, by contrast, state-funded religious schools over time became increasingly opposed to a mandatory 'core curriculum' of general studies. The comparison further suggests that in Indonesia the inclusion of a secular curriculum in religious schools in the 1970s should be seen as one of the factors promoting the production and dissemination of 'rationalist approaches to religion' and brought religious actors on board of democratisation, while in Israel the exclusion of a secular curriculum from religious schooling has undermined civic commitments among ultra-Orthodox Jewish citizens and as such weakened Israeli democracy. The article is based on public opinion data, data from the Ministries of Religion and Education, and court decisions in both countries.

Keywords: religious traditions; citizenship; faith schools; international perspectives

1. Introduction

A long tradition in the pedagogical literature suggests that education is positively correlated with civic engagement and democratic attitudes. Education is thought to facilitate the processing of complex information, and the recognition of how one should act on behalf of the collective interest. Democracies thus have a vital interest in providing education to their citizens and determining how their future citizens are being taught, and in which values they are being socialised. Via education, states can teach

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future citizens about the civic norms and responsibilities that should govern the democratic society, i.e. ‘recognition of and adherence to collective interests that override individual preferences.’ (Brand 2009, 5. See also: Durkheim 1925; Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995; Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry 1996; Morris and Cogan 2001; Dee 2004; Gesthuizen, van der Meer, and Scheepers 2008; Huang et al. 2009). The exposure to pluralistic values is therefore perceived to be a core element of public education.

As a consequence, most public education is nominally secular. But how does the state deal with demands for religious denominational education? How does it respond to societal demands for socialisation in religious norms, even where these do not promote civic engagement and democratic attitudes? When does religious instruction reinforce democratic values (by highlighting the value of human dignity, for instance), and when does it erode the latter (by suggesting the innate inequality between believers and non-believers, or men and women, for example)? Theorists like Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde propose that religious instruction can contribute in the long term to the social cohesion that keeps a democratic society together.¹ By contrast, others suggest that it may exacerbate particularist identities, or promote ‘truths’ not borne out by scientific research (e.g. creationism vs. evolution). For most democracies, education is not only a key duty of the state, but its ‘life insurance’. From the viewpoint of religious communities, meanwhile, state-sponsored religious instruction may present an unwarranted intrusion into matters of faith.

While the question of state regulation of religious education has been discussed from various normative, legal and pedagogical perspectives,² little comparative work has been done on the consequences of state policies towards religious education for democracy and civic values. The little empirical research that does exist on the topic is largely based on case studies of Western democracies that are Christian-majority and secular-liberal in character (e.g. McDonough 1998; Jackson 2003; Macedo 2003; Miedema and Bertram-Troost 2008). Yet how non-Western democracies deal with religious education and how they view the place of education in the context of their religion-state relations is vastly under-researched. In this article, we propose first steps towards filling this lacuna by providing a comparative analysis of the relationship between state-supported religious education and its consequences for civic attitudes in two countries: Israel and Indonesia.

Indonesia and Israel differ in many cultural and geopolitical respects. Israel is defined as a ‘Jewish and democratic’ state,³ yet the meaning of ‘Jewish’ is highly contested within the country, between on the one hand, an entirely religious connotation, which would indeed make Israel a religious state, and ethnic-cultural conceptions on the other, which would render Israel a potentially secular nation-state (Lerner 2011). Indonesia, by contrast, is a Muslim-majority country, and one that strives to be equally accommodating of all its five recognised religions: it self-identifies as a religious, but not an Islamic state (Künkler and Stepan 2013).

From political and constitutional perspectives, the two countries have much in common. Both gained independence after the Second World War (Indonesia in 1945/49, Israel in 1948), and are currently considered free and democratic by the major indices of democracy considered authoritative in the discipline of political science.⁴ While Israel has been considered a stable democracy since its inception, Indonesia was founded as a democracy yet experienced periods of authoritarian rule between 1959 and 1998, when it transitioned back to democracy (Künkler and Stepan 2013). Most importantly for our study, both belong to that rare circle of democracies that do not identify themselves as strictly secular states, but grant religion a prominent place in public life, particularly in education.

The comparison between the two countries reveals that while in Indonesia the state was able to gradually introduce a secular curriculum in religious schools and establish an accreditation system by which it could exert influence on the way religion is taught, in Israel state-funded ultra-Orthodox Jewish schools gradually increased their resistance to a mandatory 'core curriculum' of general studies. Whereas Indonesia's accredited religious schools today incorporate a secular curriculum to 70%, Israel's religious schools offer an education completely incongruent with that offered in secular state schools. The article examines how the attitudes towards public issues compare between those citizens subject only to a secular curriculum and those subject to religious education, and how these have changed over time in the two countries. The comparison suggests that in Indonesia the inclusion of a secular curriculum in religious schools in the 1970s should be seen as one of the factors promoting the production and dissemination of 'rationalist approaches to religion' and brought religious actors on board with democratisation, while in Israel the exclusion of a secular curriculum from ultra-Orthodox schooling has over time undermined civic commitments among ultra-Orthodox Jewish citizens and weakened Israeli democracy. The ultra-Orthodox education system, which in 2012 included 25% of all primary and 23.3% of all secondary school students, by and large rejects general studies such as history, English and science. This is particularly troubling given the strong political influence of ultra-Orthodox citizens on Israeli politics. Voter participation in the ultra-Orthodox community reaches 90% and Ultra-Orthodox parties have participated in most government coalitions to date. Moreover, the situation is becoming increasingly acute as the percentage of students in religious state-funded schools has tripled in the past two decades and is prone to increase further.

In what follows we situate our study within the existing scholarship on religious education and democracy in general, and in Israel and Indonesia in particular (Section 2). The next section provides a brief background on the official status of religion in Indonesia and Israel, demonstrating the similar constitutional and political context in which the question of religious education is being perceived in both countries (Section 3). Section 4 examines

the role of the state in regulating religious primary and secondary education in the two countries, while Section 5 presents comparative data concerning attitudes towards democracy. Section 6 proposes tentative conclusions.

2. Education and civic engagement

The central role played by education in enhancing civic engagement and democratic attitudes is commonly acknowledged among social scientists.⁵ Thomas Dee, for example, writes ‘it is widely believed that education is an essential component of a stable democratic society because it encourages citizens to participate in democratic processes and prepares them to do so in an informed and intelligent manner’ (2004, 1698). In the same vein, the American educational reformer Horace Mann noted in 1846

... since the achievement of American Independence, the universal and ever-repeated argument in favour of Free Schools has been that the general intelligence which they are capable of diffusing, and which can be imparted by no other human instrumentality, is indispensable to a republican form of government. (Mann 1851)

Philip Converse regards educational attainment as the ‘universal solvent’ of political participation, and the American political scientist Robert Putnam notes, ‘education is by far the strongest correlate that I have discovered of civic engagement in all its forms’ (Putnam 1995, 672).

The positive effects of education on civic engagement and democratic attitudes are thought to stem chiefly from two factors.⁶ First, the cognitive ability attained through schooling is thought to make it easier to ‘process complex political information, to make decisions and to circumvent the various bureaucratic and technological impediments to civic participation’ (Dee 2004). Second, ‘education may increase the perceived benefits of civic engagement by promoting “democratic enlightenment” or, stated differently, by shaping individual preferences for civic activity’ (Ibid.). Emile Durkheim contends that education teaches students ‘how one should act on behalf of the collective interest’ (Durkheim 1925, 59). Further, education is believed to play an important public role by ‘directly inculcating students with other fundamental democratic and pluralistic values (e.g. support for free speech, for the separation of church and state, etc.)’ (Dee 2004, 1700). Dee’s research suggests that educational attainment has large and statistically significant effects on subsequent voter participation and support for free speech. Dee also finds that additional schooling increases newspaper readership and thus the quality of civic knowledge.

While effects of education on civic engagement and democratic values have been widely discussed in the literature, the topic of *religious* education and its intervention into the general positive correlation has received only scant attention.⁷ Studies that concern religious education usually focus on

general pedagogical issues (Grimmitt 2000; Jackson 2004; Lovat 2004), on policy questions concerning government programmes of ‘school choice’ which often include parochial schools (e.g. Futterman 1993; Smith and Meier 1995), or on normative theories regarding the role of the liberal state in regulating denominational schools (De Jong and Snik 2002; Macedo 2003). The literature is by and large situated within the context of Western liberal democratic states, and pays little attention to broader comparative perspectives that expand the horizon to non-Christian-majority countries and non-liberal democracies.⁸

In the two particular case studies under review here, the question of state regulation of religious education has over time received increasing scholarly attention amid domestic audiences, yet the discussions have mainly focused on internal legal and political debates, with little comparative perspective.

In the Israeli context, the question of state approaches towards religious education has been researched from various sociological, legal, historical and political vantage points. Some sociologists of education have explored the effects of religious high school education on patterns of gender and ethnic inequality compared to secular state schools (Ayalon and Yogev 1996), while others have applied critical theories of the sociology of education to explain the willingness of the secular majority in Israel to fund the autonomous religious education system (Shamai 2000). From a legal and political perspective, much attention had been devoted to the question whether the state should continue to fund ultra-Orthodox schools that fail to comply with education laws and regulations regarding a mandatory core curriculum of general studies, framing it either in terms of liberal and democratic theories, or religion-state relations (Goldstein 1992, 42; Schiffer 1998; Gross 2003; Maoz 2006; Cohen-Eliya 2008; Perry-Hasan 2013). As illustrated below, the topic became highly controversial in the early 2000s following conflicting Knesset legislation and Supreme Court decisions regarding the enforcement of core curriculum standards in state-funded ultra-Orthodox high schools (*High Schools Teachers Union v. Minister of Education* 2004; *Centre of Jewish Pluralism v. Ministry of Education* 2007; *Amnon Rubinstein v. The Knesset* 2012).

Regarding religious schooling in Indonesia, the literature has by and large been motivated by three interests of inquiry: the first has traced the emergence of Islamic schooling as the core activity of the Islamic Revival that took root in the early twentieth century and that became an important source of anticolonial nationalism and nascent sentiments of self-determination. Clifford Geertz’s *The Religion of Java* is written in this tradition, while Zamakhsyari Dhofier’s, *The Pesantren Tradition: The Role of the Kyai in the Maintenance of Traditional Islam in Java* has become the more recent classic on the topic (Geertz 1960; Dhofier 1999). A second tradition has studied Islamic schooling in Indonesia in comparison with religious schooling in other parts of the Muslim world, in particular Pakistan, and

highlighted it as the root of Indonesia's 'Smiling Face of Islam.'⁹ According to this strand in the literature, Indonesia's Islam which is often perceived as 'moderate' (despite mass killings of so-called communists and non-believers in the mid-1960s) is highly shaped by the country's large Islamic organisations which permeate society predominantly through their educational institutions, beside other societal networks. The third interest of inquiry has examined particular Islamic boarding schools as loci of radicalism in the aftermath of Islamist terrorist activities in the early to mid-2000s.¹⁰ This strand shows how individual religious boarding schools became training centres for radicals who had gone into Malaysian exile during the New Order (1966–1998) and returned to their homeland in the aftermath of the 1998 democratisation. The latter notwithstanding, most accounts recognise Islamic schools as important centres of civil society activism, as sources of cohesion in rural areas, and as providing opportunities for social mobility.¹¹

3. The place of religion in public life

Israel never adopted a written constitution, while Indonesia enacted a formal constitution with its independence in 1945. In both countries, religion-state relations remained contentious. Indonesia's 1945 constitution defined the state as neither a secular, nor an Islamic state, but instead formulated a national doctrine aimed at providing a roof for all of the archipelago's religious and cultural traditions: the *pancasila* ('five principles').¹² The preamble, in which the *pancasila* are elaborated, identifies Indonesia as a nation based on the belief 'in the One and Only God,' but does not specify whose God and which religion it is. Attempts to grant Islam a privileged position in the constitutional framework re-surfaced periodically in the post-independence era, but were always ultimately stifled. A draft clause that mandated the president be Muslim was omitted in the final draft of the constitution, as was the provision that Muslims would have to follow Islamic law. Article 29 of the constitution guarantees positive freedom of religion, while the freedom not to believe is not granted.¹³ Later administrative law established that citizens must identify with one of the state-recognised religions, which today are Islam, Catholic and Protestant Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism.

Israel, by contrast, refrained from drafting a constitution at the foundational stage and instead, over the years, enacted twelve Basic Laws. In the absence of a complete written constitution, religion-state relations, known as 'the religious status quo' evolved partly formally and partly informally, and the debate over the writing of a formal constitution continues to stir Israeli society until this day.¹⁴

In both countries, religion holds a privileged place in public life. Both feature religious personal law, and both grant religious authorities certain

advisory privileges in legislative or administrative processes not accorded to other societal groups.

While Indonesia after 1945 sought to unify the various legal practices in place across the archipelago and while calls for the abolition of Islamic law were initially prominent, the state did over time officially recognise previously informal Islamic courts. Islamic law became an essential part of state law when in 1989, the National Assembly passed the Basic Law of Religious Justice (Law No. 7), transforming Islamic family courts into courts of first instance and committing the state to enforcing the rulings of Islamic judges. In 1991, Presidential Instruction No. 1 provided a standard recommendation of Islamic jurisprudence with the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) that would for the first time in Indonesia's history attempt a uniform application of Islamic law. Indonesia also since 1976 has a national ulama council (Council of Islamic authorities-MUI) that advises the parliament in the legislative process. Although the MUI does not have veto power, it is a voice frequently cited in public discussions on major legal reforms and parliamentarians are aware that taking a public stance against MUI will result in their loss of popularity. A large part of MUI's budget stems from state funds.

In Israel, religious personal law is applied to all citizens of the state. While the majority follows Jewish law, another 13 religions are recognised by the state and their religious laws are applied by separate religious authorities. The Jewish Orthodox community enjoys widespread privileges that have their roots in a 'status quo agreement' between religious leaders and the secular Mapai party, which formed a coalitional government after independence (Friedman 2005). As a manifestation of the delicate balance between religious and secular demands, the 'status quo' represented Israeli consociational arrangements in the religious sphere. Since independence, the term 'status quo' has been included in most coalition agreements of Israeli governments, yet it has never been clearly and formally defined, and its content has become the subject of intense secular-religious debate. During the formative years of the state, the 'status quo' arrangements were crystallised, partly by formal regulations and partly by informal customs and practices, guaranteeing, for example, Kosher dietary observance in governmental institutions, restrictions on the production of pork, prohibition of public transportation on Shabbat (Saturday), exclusive Orthodox jurisdiction over marriage and divorce of Jews, exemption of ultra-Orthodox students from military service, and an autonomous Orthodox education system.¹⁵

4. Primary and secondary education

In both Indonesia and Israel, religious schooling is an important pillar of the official education system. However, the two countries differ in their level of separation between religious and general studies in both private and

public schools. While in Indonesia most religious schools are privately funded and include some form of general studies, in Israel, most religious schools are largely funded by the state, yet do not provide the required core curriculum of general studies. Moreover, religious studies are absent in Israeli secular public schools, whereas non-devotional religion classes have been required in all of Indonesia's public schools since 1966.

4.1. Indonesia: religious and general studies in secular state and religious private schools

In Indonesia, the schooling system at the primary and secondary level consists essentially of secular state schools on the one hand, and private schools on the other, many of which are denominational. The overall majority of school children exclusively attend secular state schools. 30% visit classes in private religious schools at some point in their lives, and 14% of all students acquire their entire first and secondary education in Islamic schools. These are either day schools, called *madrasas* in the Indonesian context, or boarding schools, called *pesantren*. Today, there are about 14,000 *pesantren*,¹⁶ and 37,000 *madrasa* in the country.¹⁷ Of a total of more than 50 million school children, about 7% are enrolled in *pesantren* (Kuipers and Yulaelawati 2009) and 13% in *madrasas*.¹⁸ While the state provides small subsidies for these religious schools, 90% are privately financed.¹⁹

The construction of a national educational system belonged to one of the key challenges of the young state after the struggle for independence. In 1950, the national law on education (Law Nr. 4/1950) stipulated religious instruction as an optional school subject in public schools, with the right of the parents to decide whether children ought to be enrolled in it or not. In 1966, it was made compulsory in both public *and* private schooling from elementary school to university (Hefner 2000, 80).²⁰ The subject 'religion' was taught as a non-devotional school subject, usually for at least two hours a week, chiefly educating pupils in their own religion.²¹ Besides religion, the 'New Order' (1966–1998) also introduced a mandatory *pancasila* class to the curriculum. *Pancasila* Moral Education (PMP) instructed pupils on the norms of *pancasila* and the desired manifestations of these norms in Indonesian society. PMP was chiefly a subject aimed to support the nation-building process.²² After the democratic transition in 1998, a new Education Law was passed in 2003 (Law Nr. 20/2003) which did away with PMP and eliminated the component of teaching students about religions other than their own (Zuhdi 2005). Henceforth, religious instruction in any one of the five official religions must be offered when requested by a student, and pupils are only taught in their own religion and no longer educated about the other religions of the country. It is the Ministry of Religion that supervises the curricula and schoolbooks of religious instruction in the state schools, although the curricula are developed in the Ministry of Education.²³

As far as private religious schools are concerned, there are principally two types of Islamic schools: pesantren, which are Islamic boarding schools and which for long were the most prevalent form of schooling in Java. Pesantren used to be run by individual charismatic Islamic teachers (*kiai*), and pesantren complexes typically consisted of a mosque, classrooms, dormitories and the *kiai's* house. Students would predominantly learn by listening to the *kiai* and reciting. In the past 35 years, however, the pesantren have undergone profound changes. Many have adopted modern teaching methods and some have become coeducational (Pohl 2006). Until today, the most distinguished Islamic scholars in Indonesia emerge from the pesantren tradition.

The second type of Islamic schools are madrasas, religious day schools, which grew out of the modernist Islamic movement and which, in contrast to the pesantren, were always run with pedagogical methods similar to public schools.

While initially training students to become imams or religious teachers, the pesantren in the 1920s expanded their curriculum to include math, history and English.²⁴ The contrast with Orthodox schools in Israel is striking in that many of the latter until today do not include foreign languages, math and (non-religious) history. Since educational reforms in the late 1970s, pesantren students must complete general elementary education of the state-mandated curriculum in addition to their religious studies. This reform prompted many pesantren to integrate into their programmes the state-mandated curriculum in order not to lose students to state schools. What is more, the state in the 1960s created incentives for religious schools to seek state accreditation and thereby accept a level of curriculum oversight: Until the 1960s, graduates of religious private schools could not enter tertiary education, as universities only admit graduates of the state schools. This stymied social mobility and societal integration. The Ministry of Religion subsequently began to create so called 'State Islamic Institutes', academies of higher education that later became universities specifically admitting graduates of private Islamic schools.²⁵ For the graduates to be eligible for admission, pesantren and madrasas had to seek accreditation, which in turn required them to comply with certain governmental standards in the design and organisation of the curriculum.

Educational policy in the 1960s created a system whereby religious and secular education exist side by side under state supervision. Parents may choose to send their children to state-run secular schools, where classes of religion are mandatory, or they may send their children to religious private schools, which often offer students a stipend and are therefore more affordable.²⁶ While the relation between secular and religious subjects in the madrasas was about 30% vs. 70% before the mid-1970s, this was reversed in 1975 in the 'Three Ministers' Decree' (of the Ministers of Education, Religion and Internal Affairs), which imposed a new curriculum

on madrasas that consisted of 30% religious subjects and 70% secular subjects. In 1989 the content of the decree was integrated into the new Law on Education (Law Nr. 2/1989), whereby all religious private schools that are accredited by the state need to limit religious instruction to 30%, and commit 70% of classes to general educational content, i.e. science, math, social science, sports and the arts. Different from Islamic schools in many other Muslim countries, Indonesian Islamic schools thus combine religious with non-religious instruction and today graduation is possible with a focus on the natural sciences, social science, religious studies or vocational training (Parker and Raihani 2011).²⁷ Interestingly, the initiative to create such strong incentives in favour of secular subjects in private religious schools did not emanate from the state alone. Leading Islamic thinkers like Masdar Mas'udi and Nurcholish Madjid believed the state should aid them in their efforts of turning the Islamic boarding schools into 'engines of grassroots development' (Hefner 2011, 197). As late as 1999, during the time of Indonesia's transition to democracy, the country's leading Islamic intellectual Madjid expressed his sentiment that the state should indeed get more and not less involved in religious education and place more emphasis on instilling values of religious tolerance and democratic interpretations of Islam, including gender equality (ibid.).

4.2. *Israel: separation between religious and general-secular studies*

In contrast to Indonesia, where most religious schools are private, in Israel all religious schools are funded in different degrees by the state. Moreover, in contrast to Indonesia, the structure of the Israeli education system is strictly partitioned between the different sectors in society.²⁸ The state-funded school system is divided, first, between the two linguistic/ethnic sectors – Arab and Jewish. The Arab school system is supervised under a separate division within the Ministry of Education. Students in Arab schools (elementary, middle and high schools) comprise approximately 25% of all school students in Israel.²⁹ The language of instruction in these schools is Arabic. The Law provides for non-Jewish schools to follow a different curriculum that will fit 'their special conditions' (State Education Law, 5713-1953, 7 LSI 113, § 4 (1952–1953)). In practice, the curricula in Arab schools, which are tightly supervised by the state, are adapted to the religion of the student body, whether Muslim or Christian. Similarly, schools operating in Druze or Circassian villages adapt their curriculum to that population (Maoz 2006, 693).

The Hebrew Schools comprise approximately 73% of the entire student population in Israel (grades 1–12). The Hebrew school system is divided along intra-religious lines into three subsystems: (a) secular state schools (*mamlachti*) (b) religious state schools (*mamlachti-dati*) (this category does not exist in Indonesia), and (c) the ultra-Orthodox schools. Each subsystem

operates autonomously within the Ministry of Education, under separate structures of governmental supervision (Goldstein 1992). In 2012, among the nearly 595,000 Jewish students in elementary schools, 55% were in secular state schools, 19% in religious state schools, and 25% in ultra-Orthodox schools (Central Bureau of Statistics 2012). In secondary education, among 287,000 Israeli high school students, nearly 59.8% enrol in secular state schools, 16.9% in religious state schools and 23.3% in ultra-Orthodox schools (Central Bureau of Statistics 2012).

Different from Indonesia, in secular state schools the curriculum does not include official religion classes.³⁰ The secular school system adopted the Zionist approach, which views Jewish tradition in terms of cultural and national identity (Goldstein 1992, 49). The curriculum thus includes the study of the Hebrew Bible from a literary, rather than a religious, perspective. Religion is also present through various extracurricular activities supported by the Ministry of Education, such as celebration of, or discussion on, the Jewish holidays, but without any devotional element such as prayer.³¹

Nearly 19% of Jewish students in Israel acquire their elementary education in religious state schools. This rather unique category is the only 'educational stream' to be officially defined by law (State Education Law, 5713-1953 (1952–2003)). Religious state schools are governed by an autonomous division within the Ministry of Education, headed by the Council for Religious State Education. The Council consists mostly of religious members, appointed by the Minister of Religious Affairs. It supervises the curriculum in the religious state schools, which includes religious studies alongside general studies. The former includes teaching concerning the belief in God and the performance of commandments, and advanced study of sacred texts, i.e. Mishna, Jewish law, Gemara and writings of the rabbis and Jewish thinkers who have shaped the spiritual heritage of the Jewish people for generations (Gross 2003, 150–151). The latter refers to a mandatory curriculum, similar to that of secular state schools, that incorporates secular contents and subject matter (such as math, physics and English) and which enables its pupils to pass the national matriculation examinations. Unlike the students of the ultra-Orthodox schools, graduates of religious state schools may eventually receive a full matriculation certificate that allows them to apply to academic institutions for higher education (Gross 2003, 157–158). In addition to the religious studies that form part of the curriculum, the religious nature of the religious state education system 'consists of an all-encompassing environment based on orthodox religious belief and observance' (Gross 2003, 153). Thus, for example, the Council for Religious State Education is allowed, in accordance with its mandate by law, to make sure that all teachers and staff in religious state schools are religious themselves (State Education Law, par. 18). The Council even decided that a teacher who is married to a non-religious Jew may be

disqualified from working in a religious state school (Goldstein 1992, 56). In recent years, reports have shown increasing ultra-Orthodox influence in religious state schools, for example, in the growing number of schools that segregate classrooms by gender (Finkelshtain 2014).

The third category of Hebrew/Jewish schools, ultra-Orthodox schools, are recognised by the state, yet are considered ‘non-official.’³² There are at least 15 variants of these schools’ networks, belonging to various ultra-Orthodox communities (such as Hassidic and ‘opponent’ Lithuanian communities). The main networks are the Independent Education Network³³ and the *Sephardic* Centre of Religious Education in Israel, known as ‘The Fountain of Religious Education’ (*‘Mayan Ha’hinuch Ha’torani’* in Hebrew).³⁴ Recognised non-official schools operate autonomously with limited supervision by the Ministry of Education, and thus formally the state is required to fund only 75% of their budget. However, ultra-Orthodox schools that are associated with Agudat Israel’s Independent Education Network and *Shas*’s Fountain of Religious Education enjoy state funding and almost full autonomy over their curriculum.³⁵

Another subcategory of ultra-Orthodox schools are the ‘exempt’ or ‘non-recognised’ schools, which, by decree of the Minister of Education, exempt parents from the obligation ‘to ensure that [their] child or adolescent attends a recognised educational institute’ (Compulsory Education Law, 5709-1949, 3 LSI 125, § 5(a) (1948–1949)). Although they enjoy full autonomy in terms of curriculum, 55% of their budget is funded by the state (Vorgan 2007).

One of the most heated political and judicial debates regarding education in Israel revolves around the question of the core curriculum in ultra-Orthodox schools. The issue became politically salient as the number of students in ultra-Orthodox schools increased significantly in recent years. While in 1970 only 5% of Hebrew school age children attended ultra-Orthodox schools, this number had risen to 20% in 2006, and 25% in 2012 (Central Bureau of Statistics 2015). The ultra-Orthodox schools are exempt from various secular or general studies (such as math, science, history, geography, English, sports, etc.).

4.3. *The ‘core curriculum’ debate*

The term ‘core curriculum’ refers to a set of mandatory subjects required by the Ministry of Education for all school sub-systems, at a particular number of weekly classes according to age/grade. In addition to the core curriculum, each school is allowed to expand its curriculum to include other subjects or additional classes (Basic (Core) Curriculum 1995). While the legal basis for the core curriculum requirement is included in the 1953 Mamlachti Education Act, the Ministry of Education refrained from discussing the issue for the first five decades after independence. Only in 2000, following an appeal

to the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Education published for the first time a document concerning a basic required curriculum for elementary schools (Weisblai 2012). A detailed programme of a mandatory core curriculum for the primary education system was subsequently published in 2003 (Basic (Core) Curriculum 1995), and for the secondary education system in 2007 (Basic (Core) Curriculum 2007).³⁶

The Ministry of Education defined the goals of the core curriculum requirements in terms of ‘providing skills and social values required for the development and emergence of productive citizens who will be able to properly function on both cognitive and effective levels’ as well as

providing the basis for the promotion of collective understanding and fruitful collaboration in the Israeli society, allowing the various social groups to fulfil their particular social goals. The core curriculum will provide the infrastructure for the promotion of social understanding and social consensus around basic issues, despite the different objectives held by the different sectors in society, and will serve as a social glue preventing the complete disaggregation of Israeli society. (Basic (Core) Curriculum 2003)

The scope of the core curriculum classes required to be taught by each school in Israel depends on the scope of state funding received by the school. Fully funded schools (Arab schools, Hebrew secular ‘mamlachti’ and Hebrew religious-state ‘mamlachti dati’ schools) are required to teach the entire core curriculum. Schools that are only partly funded by the Ministry of Education (ultra-Orthodox School, where only 55–75% of the budget is state-funded) are required to teach the equivalent percentage of the core curriculum. The complete core curriculum programme includes the following subjects: bible, social studies, Hebrew, English, math, science, art and sports. Ultra-Orthodox schools are exempted from the study of English. The only subjects required in ultra-Orthodox schools that are 55% state funded are Hebrew, math and Bible.

According to Ministry of Education regulations, the transfer of government funding to the schools depends on the implementation of the core curriculum requirements. However, as several report and court decisions have demonstrated, this policy is widely violated in the case of ultra-Orthodox schools (*High Schools Teachers Union v. Minister of Education* 2004; *Centre of Jewish Pluralism v. Ministry of Education* 2007. Also: Weisblai 2013, 14–21). In general, data concerning the implementation of core curriculum requirements is limited.³⁷ A rare study conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics found that the only subject studied in all ultra-Orthodox elementary schools is Bible. Other subjects required by the core curriculum regulations are studied in only some ultra-Orthodox elementary schools, as illustrated by the following Table 1.

A different question concerns the content of the core curriculum subjects that are taught in ultra-Orthodox schools. On this issue, available

Table 1. Core curriculum subjects in ultra-Orthodox schools.

Subject	Percentage of schools where subject is studied (%)	Percentage of students who study the subject (%)
Bible	100	100
Math	83	81.3
Hebrew	82.5	81.8
History	74.5	75.1
Sports	67.4	67
English	53.6	56.5
Israeli studies (moledet)/civics	51.5	52.2
Science and technology	31.2	29.6

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics (2008).

information is more limited.³⁸ By contrast to the Secular (*mamlachti*) and Religious State (*mamlachti-dati*) schools, that are subject to strict supervision by the Ministry of Education concerning the content of lessons, the subject matter books and training of instructors/teachers, ultra-Orthodox schools (formally termed ‘non-official’ or ‘exempted’) enjoy vast autonomy with regard to the content of their programmes and selection of teaching staff.³⁹ Moreover, most ultra-orthodox schools refuse to participate in the standardised tests that are required by all elementary schools in Israel.⁴⁰ Thus, while the curriculum in secular and religious-state schools is characterised by general uniformity, in the ultra-Orthodox education great variation exists between the schools in terms of content of classes/courses, level of teaching, methods of teaching and the importance assigned to general (non-devotional) studies.

In general, ultra-Orthodox schools for girls devote greater number of hours to general studies compared with ultra-Orthodox schools for boys (Weisblai 2012, 16). This is mainly because general studies are considered inferior to religious studies in the ultra-Orthodox society (Spiegel 2011). A common perception in ultra-Orthodox schools is that general studies may increase students’ interest in the secular world and would undermine their achievements in devotional subjects. In ultra-Orthodox schools for boys in Jerusalem, for example, general subjects such as history and geography are scheduled for the early afternoon and are considered a ‘break’ from the intensive study of sacred texts. In grade 6 and 7, these subject are no longer included in the curriculum (*Centre of Jewish Pluralism v. Ministry of Education* 2007).

In 2008, due to political pressure by the ultra-Orthodox parties, the Knesset passed the Unique Cultural Education Institutions Law, which exempted state-funded secondary ultra-Orthodox schools for boys (grades 9–12) from mandatory core curriculum.⁴¹ Former Minister of Justice,

Amnon Rubinstein, was among several individuals who appealed to the Supreme Court against this law, claiming that by limiting the education in ultra-Orthodox secondary schools to religious studies alone the new law violated the students' right of human dignity and liberty. In 2012, the appeal was rejected by the court (*Amnon Rubinstein v. The Knesset* 2012).

5. Attitudes towards democracy

5.1. *Indonesia: no link between illiberalism and religious schools*

Surveys and polls on political attitudes in Indonesia indicate two chief insights: attitudes of those educated in the pesantren or madrasas do not differ substantially from those of Muslims educated in state schools, and both groups show relatively high support for constitutional democracy, and political and social rights, especially when compared to other populations in the region, and to populations in other Muslim countries. Regarding gender equality and interfaith tolerance, Indonesia tends to score higher than most other Muslim-majority countries (Mujani and Liddle 2004). In general, 77% agree that democracy is 'the best form of government', and 94% think that all people should have equal rights in Indonesia (Wall and Sharma 2008). Nearly all Indonesians (93%) believe that pancasila is the best basis for Indonesian society (ibid., 2), indicating that pancasila classes in school must be relatively successful, despite the mixed press they receive. 84% believe that people should have a right to freely express political opinions, even if these are not shared by the majority of Indonesians (ibid.). Only 22% want to live 'in an area with sharia law' while 30% state that they do not believe sharia is suitable for Indonesian culture. Eighteen per cent believe that law should only be based on the Indonesian constitution, not religious law, and that pancasila should guide Indonesian laws (ibid., 5). Forty two per cent of those opposed to living under religious law believe it is repressive and intolerant (ibid., 35).

Robert Hefner, who conducted a survey in 2006 on attitudes among pesantren teachers found that 85.9% (as opposed to 77% from the general public, see above) regard democracy, compared to other forms of governance, as the best form of government for a country like Indonesia (Hefner 2010).⁴² As found for the general public, 94% think that all people should have equal rights in Indonesia (ibid.). 'Some 90% agree that Islam teaches that men and women should have equal social and political rights. Some 97% believe that citizens should have equal rights to carry out their own religion' (Hefner 2006). Forty per cent disagree or disagree strongly that an Islamic government based on the Qur'an and Sunna and administered by experts in Islamic law is also the best form of government for a country like Indonesia. Only 24.3% believe that Islamic parties should be exclusively allowed to participate in general elections. In 2013, public perceptions of corruption ranked religious institutions lowest (and thus least corrupt)

among 14 public institutions, including parliament, the military, banks, the media, political parties and universities (International Republican Institute 2013, 17).⁴³ Seventy eight per cent disagreed with the statement that democracies are indecisive and have too much squabbling (*ibid.*). Sixty eight per cent disagreed that democracies ‘aren’t any good at maintaining law and order’. The same poll showed that Muslims are slightly more likely to vote than non-Muslims (79% vs. 78%). Among the factors that determine which party one chooses, links to religious organisations accounted for only 2%, while most respondents considered performance and the quality of the candidates as the primary factors. Even those studies that focus on religious schools as possible breeding grounds of religious radicalism single out Indonesia as being incomparable to places like Pakistan, Egypt or Israel (Fair, Malhotra, and Shapiro 2011). While a survey of Indonesian Muslims showed that religious devotion and prayer frequency were not associated with support for suicide attacks (*ibid.*), Ginges, Hansen, and Norenzayan (2009) for example found that among Palestinian Muslims and Israeli Jews in the West Bank and Gaza attendance at religious services were positively correlated with support for suicide attacks.

5.2. *Israel*

By and large ultra-Orthodox schools in Israel refrain from providing democratic education. The limited enforcement in Ultra-Orthodox schools of the core curriculum in general, and democratic education in particular, is perceived as alarming by many in the secular-liberal camp, particularly due to the growing political influence of the ultra-Orthodox sector on Israeli democracy (Cohen-Eliya 2008). According to Central Bureau of Statistics’ predictions, in 2018, nearly 3 out of every 10 Jewish first graders in Israel will attend an Ultra-Orthodox school (Central Bureau of Statistics 2013). As mentioned above, after the age of 13, ultra-Orthodox pupils focus on religious studies alone, and are exempted from general studies such as math, science, history or English. In addition, ultra-Orthodox pupils at all ages (K-12) are hardly exposed to any kind of democratic education, either formally or informally. For example, the homogeneous nature of the school structure intentionally prevents education for democratic values such as equality or cultural pluralism.⁴⁴ In general, the ultra-Orthodox community is organised according to highly patriarchal and antidemocratic principles (Friedman 1991). These values are documented in recurrent studies and polls. Ultra-Orthodox generally support anti-democratic regulations and express discriminatory views towards other groups in society in greater measure than non-Orthodox groups. For example, in a 1998 poll, 64% of ultra-Orthodox believed Israel should become a theocratic state (Peres and Yuchtman-Yaar 1998, 165).⁴⁵ Only 39% of ultra-Orthodox supported a democratic government even if its policies conflicted with the respondent’s

personal views, while among seculars the support reached 73% (ibid., 170). Many of the ultra-Orthodox view democracy 'as an instrument, or a tool, while for more of the seculars it is perceived as a value or a goal' (ibid., 173). A more recent study (2012) found that 80% of ultra-Orthodox see the Jewish element in the definition of the State of Israel as 'Jewish and Democratic' as more important than the democratic element, while none believed the democratic part to be more important, and only 19.2% felt that both elements were equally important. By contrast, among secular Jews, 43.3% stated that both parts were equally important, 35% thought that the democratic part was more important and 20.6% believed the Jewish part to be more important (Hermann et al. 2012, 35).⁴⁶ On questions concerning trust in state institutions, 82.6% of secular respondents trusted the Supreme Court compared with only 41.2% among the ultra-Orthodox. 50.5% of seculars trusted the Knesset, compared with 34% among the ultra-Orthodox. At the same time, 32% of ultra-Orthodox expressed trust in political parties, compared with 30.7% among seculars (ibid., 59). The support for equal citizenship rights also varies according to levels of religiosity among the Israeli population. In a 2010 poll, 33.5% of respondents who define themselves as 'secular' objected to the idea of complete rights equality between Jews and Arabs in Israel, compared with 72% of ultra-Orthodox (Arian et al. 2010, 18).⁴⁷ On the question of whether Arabs should not be allowed entrance to Israel on the basis of family unification of first degree relatives, 51% of ultra-Orthodox agreed with this statement, compared with 18% of respondents who defined themselves as secular (ibid., 18). With regard to the constitution, 77% of secular respondents believed that a constitution for the state of Israel is important, while only 41% of ultra-Orthodox supported this claim (ibid., 97). 86% of ultra-Orthodox believe that Rabbis should take part in decision-making concerning political issues crucial for the county, compared with 86% of secular who reject such consultation (Ibid., 99–100). On the question of freedom of expression, 42% of ultra-Orthodox believed that the state allows for too much freedom of expression, compared with 34% of the secular (ibid., 106). Forty seven per cent of seculars think that the state does not provide adequate protection of human rights, while only 38% of ultra-Orthodox hold this view (ibid.).

6. Tentative conclusions

The strict separation between religious schools and secular schools in Israel stands in sharp contrast to the Indonesian integration between religious and general studies in both private and public schools. As a consequence, Indonesia today features high social mobility between religious and secular sectors of society and professions, while religious schools in Israel contribute to the further fragmentation of society, with those trained in the religious schools generally not assuming professions open to those trained

in secular schools and vice versa. Moreover, in Indonesia, the integration between religious and general studies is perceived as one of the central factors that indirectly contributed to the democratisation process in furthering social cohesion, social capital and most importantly in forming a generation of religious leaders embracing and acting upon democratic interpretations of their religion. The state oversight of religious schools allowed the state to ensure that all taught content was normatively consistent with *pancasila*. In many ways, one can make the argument that the realm of religious education in Indonesia, both at the secondary and tertiary levels was instrumental in fostering and promoting civic values. By contrast, in Israel, many fear that the ultra-religious education system, which soon will include 25% of all primary school students, and which by and large rejects, or at least severely limits, general studies such as history, English and math, will weaken the democratic character of the state. This is particularly troubling given the strong political influence of ultra-Orthodox citizens on Israeli politics. Voter participation in the ultra-Orthodox community reaches 90% and Ultra-Orthodox parties have participated in most government coalitions in Israel to date. Despite the non-democratic principles that characterise many aspects of ultra-Orthodox life which such parties endorse, no ultra-Orthodox party has ever been outlawed.

Democracies do not require a strict separation of religion and state in order to fulfil the basic requirements of liberalism. Yet, there are obviously thresholds beyond which the liberal character of the state is in jeopardy.⁴⁸ In Israel, the extent to which the state allows privileges to the ultra-Orthodox communities in the crucial realm of education has undermined social cohesion and supported the growth of non-civic attitudes and extremism.⁴⁹ A primary mechanism in the state's failure to shape future generations of Israeli citizens is the lack of state oversight over primary, secondary and tertiary religious schooling.⁵⁰ While cooperation of state and religion is often conceived as in tension with notions of liberalism where the state is seen as too interventionist into matters of individual religious belief or practice, Israel presents an opposite case in this respect: a state that too little intervenes and thereby undermines its own social, political and normative basis.

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Notes

1. Böckenförde in 1967 formulated what became known as the Böckenförde-dictum: 'The liberal secular state lives on premises that it cannot itself guarantee. On the one hand, it can subsist only if the freedom it consents to its citizens is regulated from within, inside the moral substance of individuals and of a homogeneous society. On the other hand, it is not able to guarantee these forces of inner regulation by itself without renouncing its liberalism' (Böckenförde 1976, 60, 2016).
2. See the Literature Review below.
3. This definition appeared formally for the first time in the two Basic Laws enacted in 1992, the Basic Law on Human Dignity and Liberty, and the Basic Law on Freedom from Occupation.
4. Israel and Indonesia ranked as 'Free' and 'Partly Free' in the 2014 Freedom House rating, receiving scores of 1.5 and 3 respectively in civil and political rights. See: 'Country Ratings and Status, FIW 1973-2014' (2014). Similarly, Israel and Indonesia were ranked as 'democracies' in the 2013 report of Polity IV Project, receiving scores of 10 and 8, respectively. See 'Polity IV Annual Time-Series, 1800-2013' (2014).
5. From Aristotle to the prominent educational reformers of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including Thomas Jefferson, John Dewey, Horace Mann, W. E. B. Dubois, education has been theorised as preparing youth for social engagement. In the twentieth century, the discipline of political science has been particularly concerned with the correlation between education and political participation. *Grosso modo*, most studies suggest, via different causal mechanisms, that 'the more educated the more participatory.' (see Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995; Brehm and Rahn 1997; Putnam 2000; Gesthuizen, van der Meer, and Scheepers 2008).
6. For counterarguments, *inter alia* due to selection biases, see Luskin (1990, 331–362); Cassel and Lo (1997); and Gibson (2001, 225–233). Principal biases are thought to be 'pre-treatment heterogeneity bias,' i.e. heterogeneity in preexisting attributes associated with both educational attainment and civic participation, i.e. that education changes people's lifepaths and accordingly their attitudes. For an early account of how schooling can end up teaching anything but 'democratic' values, see Dreeben (1968).

7. Among the classic studies of the topic is McGinn and Epstein (1999–2000). The most comprehensive empirical study to date is the Civic Education study undertaken by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), which has resulted in several volumes, among them Steiner-Khamsi, Torney-Purta, and Schwille (2002); Torney-Purta, Lehmann, and Schulz (2001); and Torney-Purta, Schwille, and Amadeo (1999). For studies beyond the Western context, see Lee et al. (2004); Banks (2004); Schiffauer et al. (2004); Stevick and Levinson (2007). None of these works, however, focuses on the effects of religious education on civic engagement or democratic values.
8. For rare examples of comparative discussions about the relationship between religion and civic education, see Stambach et al. (2011) and Spring (2009, ch. 6).
9. For the expression, see Van Bruinessen (2011); who is *not* representative of this tradition. For nuanced comparative studies of religious education in the Muslim world in recent years, see Hefner and Zaman (2007); Noor, Yoginder, and van Bruinessen (2008); and Sakurai and Adelhah (2011).
10. Particularly the International Crisis Group.
11. For the most prominent and comprehensive among these, see Pohl (2009). For a concise overview, see Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner (2007).
12. Pancasila (Sanskrit) for ‘five principles’, postulates that independent Indonesia should be based on: the belief in the one and only God, a just and civilised humanity, unity of the country, democracy guided by the inner wisdom of unanimity arising out of deliberations among representatives, and social justice.
13. Article 29. (1) The State shall be based upon the belief in the One and Only God. (2) The State guarantees all persons the freedom of worship, each according to his/her own religion or belief.
14. This ambiguity allowed decisions regarding religious policy to be made either by parliaments, local municipalities or even in a non-formal way through conventions that evolved over time. For example, the prohibition of public transportation on Sabbath (Saturday) was never formally legislated, yet in general Israel does not have public transportation on (Jewish) religious days of rest.
15. For an overview of religious legislation, see chapter 6 of Rubinstein and Medina (2005) (in Hebrew).
16. We thank Marzuki Wahid from the Institut Studi Islam Fahmina (ISIF) for drawing our attention to some of the most recent data. See also Pohl (2006).
17. Unsurprisingly, education has sharply increased over the past 50 years. While records suggest a number of five million pupils in 1950, in 1976 this had grown to 15 million in 80,000 schools and 29 million in 1996 (Federspiel 2007, 175).
18. Some pesantren (qua boarding schools) comprise madrasas (Islamic day schools). Therefore, most statistics suggest that about 15% (not 20%, a number that results from double counting) of Islamic school children receive their daytime education in Islamic schools. Three times that many students take evening weekend and supplementary religious classes at Islamic schools.
19. A new financial scheme introduced in 2005, the Bantuan Operasional Sekolah (School Operational Assistance), supplies state funding to all elementary and junior secondary schools on a per student basis with the aim of raising the general quality and bringing down school fees. The scheme includes private

- schools and has thus dramatically increased state funding for private schools, which was previously negligible, including for religious schools.
20. The 1966 policy change stemmed largely from the fact that religion was regarded as one instrument to fight communism. The 1989 education law that replaced the 1950 law turned the 1966 regulation into law. See Zuhdi (2005).
 21. In mixed schools, a particular religion would be taught if at least a minimum of ten students of that religion were enrolled.
 22. On the manifold abuses of pancasila for political purposes, see for example Porter (2002). In addition to PMP in schools, pancasila moral teaching, known as P4 (Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila), was introduced to civil servants, teachers, lecturers, university students and other sections of society. An already existing system of state-run Islamic Teachers' Training Colleges, the IAIN, was expanded and granted additional state funding. See Shiraishi (1997), Jackson and Bahrissalim (2007), and Feillard (1997).
 23. PMP was expanded to Pancasila and Citizenship Education in 1994, and taught as such in schools until 2004, when the pancasila component was eliminated in the title (but not the content) and the subject renamed Citizenship Education.
 24. Until the 1920s, pesantren used to be nearly exclusively run by ulama and encompass only religious education. Students would be 11 or 12 years of age when they entered and customarily stayed for three or four years, training to become a local mosque leader (imam) or a local religious teacher (ustad). See Dhofier (1999).
 25. As of 2006 the rectors of the two major Islamic State Universities (in Jakarta and Yogyakarta respectively) successfully lobbied to transfer supervision of their universities away from the Ministry of Religious Affairs to the Ministry of Higher Education. In essence, they felt that if they remained under Religious Affairs their universities would gradually lose national stature, and that by shifting to the Ministry of Education they would either sink or swim, but had a chance at prominence. We thank Dale Eickelman for reminding us of this development.
 26. Since the mid-2000s these incentives have decreased moderately due to the introduction of BOS (cp note 19).
 27. As the authors point out, since 1989 the curriculum in secular schools and madrasas has been nearly identical, except that madrasas allocate eight additional hours to the subject of religion, which is divided into five separate subjects: fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), aqidah and akhlaq (faith and morality), al-Quran/Hadith, Islamic history and Arabic.
 28. On the history of the various streams of education in Israel, see Zameret (1997).
 29. *The Education System* (2012).
 30. Bible (*Tanach*) lessons are mandatory in all levels of education in Israel. In the secular stream, Bible is supposed to be taught from a critical view (see Maoz 2006, 683). However, studies show that the way in which bible lessons are taught very much depends on the specific teacher's perception: see Idalovich (2003).
 31. In recent years, elements of Jewish tradition and culture have been strengthening in the public education system, particularly under the Ministry of Gideon Saar and Shai Piron.
 32. These are educational institutions 'which the Minister by declaration published in Reshumot [Official Gazette], has declared to be a recognised educational

institution.’ Compulsory Education Law, 5709-1949, 3 LSI 125, § 1 (1948–1949). Under this provision, various types of ‘non-official’ schools have been established, including agriculture settlements, mainly kibbutzim, as well as specialised schools (such as International American School in Israel) or schools that wish to preserve utmost autonomy. However, most of the recognised schools are religious schools, both Jewish and Christian. See Maoz (2006, 698).

33. The former *Agudat Yisrael* network that was an official stream under Compulsory Education Law, yet declined to integrate into the Religious-State Education. See Maoz (2006, 698).
34. *Maayan Ha'hinuch Ha'torani* was founded in 1984, by the Sephardic religious political party, ‘*Sephardi Keepers of the Torah*’ [*Itahdut Sephardim Shomrei Torah*], known as *Shas*.
35. The precise level of state funding of Ultra-Orthodox schools is difficult to determine, due to what some have claimed to be ‘intentional effort to conceal information’ through vague budgetary formulations by the Ministry of Education (Schiffer 1998, 30).
36. For critical view of the core curriculum programme in Israel, see Markman and Yonah (2009).
37. A recent state report determined that the Ministry of Education fails to systematically collect data concerning the teachings of the various subjects. (Weisblai 2012, 15–16).
38. ‘Although exempted [Ultra Orthodox, the author] institutions are required to teach 11–13 weekly hours of core curriculum, one should ask whether these hours are being taught in practice and what is the content of these lessons. It is impossible to receive a clear and reliable answer to this question’ Weisblai (2012, 4).
39. Compared with one supervisor for every 25–30 schools in the formal education system (secular and religious-state systems), in the ‘exempted’ Ultra-Orthodox system 2.5 supervisors are responsible for 203 institutions. Moreover, the subject supervisors that are appointed by the Ministry of Education to oversee the content and methods of teaching in the specific subjects, are not responsible for the ultra-Orthodox schools.
40. The Independent Education Centre Network (Ashkenazy Ultra-Orthodox) participated in the standardising tests only until 2006. The Sephardic ultra-Orthodox schools (*Maayan Hachinuch Hatorani*) participated in the tests only in 2005–2007. Ultra-Orthodox schools were asked to take the tests in only two subjects (Math and Language), compared with four subjects in the secular and religious-state schools (Math, Language, English and Science). See: *Centre of Jewish Pluralism v. Ministry of Education* (2007).
41. Following the enactment of this law, the Ministry of Education published new regulations concerning the core curriculum for middle schools, which did not apply to ultra-Orthodox schools (Basic (Core) Curriculum 2008). A separate document that regulated the core curriculum in ultra-Orthodox schools was published in 2011 (Basic Curriculum 2011).
42. The survey comprised 940 Muslim educators in 100 madrasas and Islamic boarding schools in eight provinces in Indonesia. It was coordinated by the Centre for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) at the Hidayatullah National Islamic University in Jakarta.
43. The survey included 2300 respondents across all 33 provinces of the country at that time.

44. Courts are often required to interfere in cases of ethnic discrimination in admission procedures for ultra-Orthodox schools (Almog and Perry-Hazan 2013).
45. Ten per cent of all respondents in this poll defined themselves as ultra-Orthodox, another 10% as religious, 29% as traditional and 51% as secular.
46. The survey distinguished between those who defined themselves as ultra-Orthodox (6% of respondents), national Orthodox (2.3%), religious (11.8%), religious traditional (12.7%), traditional not religious (20.7%), secular (45.6%) and 'don't know' (1%).
47. In this survey the questionnaire did not distinguish between 'Ultra-Orthodox' and 'National Orthodox'.
48. Such a threshold was recognised, for example, by the Council of Europe, where in 2007 the Parliamentary Assembly adopted Resolution 1580 on 'The dangers of creationism in education'. The Resolution stated that 'The Parliamentary Assembly is worried about the possible ill-effects of the spread of creationist ideas within our education systems and about the consequences for our democracies. If we are not careful, creationism could become a threat to human rights, which are a key concern of the Council of Europe' (Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, 2007).
49. By no means do we claim that this is the central cause for the growth of non-civic attitudes and extremism in Israeli society. Other factors that contribute to it include, *inter alia*, the enduring Jewish-Palestinian conflict, the long-term occupation of the West Bank, the separation between different education systems for different social segments. While these factors apply for the entire Jewish student population, the article focuses on the differences between ultra-Orthodox and secular education.
50. A further problem is religion-military relations in Israel. Traditionally, ultra-Orthodox Jews are exempted from military service, while all other Jewish citizens (secular and non-orthodox religious) are drafted at the age of 18. One controversy concerns this exemption. Another new controversy concerns the growing percentage of religious soldiers in the IDF and their impact on decision-making within the military.

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