



## Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 11/13

### Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

27. Mai – 17. Juni 2013

#### 1. Hassan Rohani neuer Präsident Irans

*Der Kandidat des Reformlagers Hassan Rohani hat im Iran überraschend die Präsidentschaftswahlen gewonnen. Damit wird er im August zum Nachfolger von Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, der in seiner achtjährigen Amtszeit immer wieder durch Ausfälle gegen Israel auf sich aufmerksam machte.*

*Entgegen der Erwartungen von Experten hatte sich der als moderat geltende Geistliche Rohani bereits in der ersten Wahlrunde mit 50,7% der Wählerstimmen gegen die konservativen Favoriten durchgesetzt. Rohani sprach sich im Wahlkampf für mehr persönliche Freiheiten und ein besseres Verhältnis zum Westen aus. Damit konnte er viele Iraner, die unter einer schweren Wirtschaftskrise leiden, hinter sich vereinen. Allerdings betonte er bei seinem ersten Presseauftritt nach den Wahlen, dass seine Regierung nicht bereit sein werde, auf die Urananreicherung zu verzichten.*

*Der israelische Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu warnte davor, sich von Rohani als neuem und moderaten Präsidenten täuschen zu lassen und sagte, die internationale Gemeinschaft müsse ihren Druck bezüglich des iranischen Atomprogrammes aufrechterhalten.*

#### **Yielding dividends from Rowhani's election**

"Khamenei's decision to allow Rowhani's election to stand has already yielded significant dividends for Tehran. It has gained the Iranians a reprieve [...] from the inexorable slide to ever harsher sanctions and possible US military action. [...]"

But the celebration of an impending 'dawn of a new day,' [...] may be premature.

In a 2004 speech [...] Rowhani boasted 'While we were talking with the Europeans in Tehran, we were installing equipment in parts of the [nuclear conversion] facility in Isfahan. By creating a calm environment, we were able to complete the work there.' [...]"

Yes, Rowhani may have changed his ways, but there is something to be said for Jerusalem's demand [...] that the burden of proof be placed squarely on the new president's shoulders."

Chemi Shalev, HAA 17.06.13

#### **Beware of Rohani's trap**

"The surprising victory in the Iranian presidential elections of Hassan Rohani, who is considered relatively moderate, is a reason for cautious optimism [...]. The fact that millions and millions of people voted for Rohani indicates that the economic sanctions imposed by the West are hurting the citizens, who view them as the main cause for the dire economic situation in Iran. [...]"

There is a large pragmatic camp [who] prefer an improvement in the economic situation through the lifting of sanctions rather than the continued enrichment of uranium and installment of centrifuges."

Ron Ben-Yishai, JED 16.06.13

#### **Iranian public moves to forefront**

"The emphasis on recovering from a destroyed economy and placing public welfare at the top of the agenda were well received and gave the impression that the 'eight bad years of Ahmadinejad' were over. Rohani's criticism of Ahmadinejad and the other conservative candidates for their policy of belligerent defiance against the West and the resulting painful consequences pointed to a different kind of diplomacy.

The real hero of these elections was the Iranian public. The rally behind Rohani's candidacy during the weeks before the elections is clear proof that despite the fears of the ruling party's actions and of voter fraud similar to the last elections, which secured Ahmadinejad's second term, the Iranian public is determined to have its voice heard."

Uzi Rabi, IHY 16.06.13

### **Rohani: Khamenei's friendly facade**

"Khamenei could not have wished for a better outcome in the presidential election: [...] Iran's ugly face for the past eight years -- President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad -- will now be replaced with a new promising figure that flashes a pleasant, reassuring smile. Khamenei could not have chosen a better façade. [...]"

Rohani's victory is undoubtedly a brilliant public relations stunt. [...]"

Meanwhile, the centrifuges will spin round and round until they reach dangerous enrichment levels. [...]"

Rohani's presidency will be fraught with challenges: On the one hand, he has to pick up the pieces of a shattered economy, and on the other hand, he has to make progress in the nuclear program. How do you achieve both goals? You make a tactical about-face vis-à-vis the West. For Khamenei, this is the most promising path he could take."

Boaz Bismuth, IHY 16.06.13

### **Ahmadinejad's bottom line**

"Israel will remember Ahmadinejad for his aggressive rhetoric, his threats to obliterate it and his denial of the Holocaust. Other Iranian leaders promoted similar sentiments, but Ahmadinejad's belligerence and the progress made in the Iranian nuclear program have fostered an extremely severe impression of the Iranian threat.

In that respect, Ahmadinejad has become a significant asset for Israel, helping it demonstrate to the world how important it is to stop Iran from going nuclear."

Ephraim Kam, IHY 12.06.13

### **Rowhani's rise all but freezes Israel's military option**

"Ever since [...] Obama visited here in March, Israel has toned down its threats to attack the nuclear program, due to an agreement with Washington to wait until after the Iranian election.

But now [...] it seems the West will want at least several months to assess the meaning of this change. Until then, Israel will have trouble mustering international support for an attack [...]. Though [...] Netanyahu's associates have frequently hinted that this will be the absolutely final year of decision on Iran, it seems he will have to wait another one."

Amos Harel, HAA 18.06.13

### **Khamenei wanted a moderate president**

"There are those who viewed Hassan Rohani as the candidate of the reformists and interpreted his

victory in the Iranian presidential election as an indication that the reformists are back on top in the Islamic Republic. But a more in-depth analysis of the situation paints an entirely different picture: It would be a grave mistake to describe Rohani as a reformist."

Soli Shahvar, JED 16.06.13

### **The Rohani challenge**

"It would be misleading to see Rohani as a political leader who is set to bring about major reforms. Firstly, it is unclear how much power the president wields, if any. Iran is a theocracy. [...] The man who decides on critical issues such as Iran's nuclear project is Khamenei, the country's unelected supreme leader. [...]"

It seems Rohani was purposely chosen by the Guardian Council precisely because of his ostensibly moderate views. This solved a dilemma faced by the council: On the one hand, it was imperative that not just blatant sycophants be included on the list of approved candidates because this would undermine public interest in the vote, result in low voter turnout, delegitimize the incoming president and potentially lead to the sort of demonstrations that took place during the 2009 elections known as the Green Revolution. At the same time, the new president had to be loyal to the mullahs. Enter Rohani."

JPO 16.06.13 Editorial

### **Give Rowhani a chance**

"Suspicion and distrust of Iran's intentions are the result of long and bitter experience, but there is no reason to decide at this point that Iranian policy will not change. Furthermore, building trust requires both Iran and the West to make a diplomatic effort to win that trust, and it is on those efforts that both sides will be judged. [...]"

Israel is not required to act naive, but it must not undermine the chances for diplomacy, either."

HAA 17.06.13 Editorial

## **2. Unruhen in der Türkei**

*Seit mehr als zwei Wochen wird in der Türkei gegen die Regierung von Ministerpräsident Recep Tayyip Erdogan demonstriert. Was als Protest gegen den Bau eines Einkaufszentrums in einem Istanbuler Park begann, weitete sich schnell in eine landesweite Bewegung gegen die zunehmend autoritäre Politik von Erdogans und seiner Regierungspartei AKP aus. Obwohl Erdogan sich zunächst auf Verhandlungen mit Führern der Bewegung einließ, setzte er*

*immer wieder Polizeigewalt ein, um gegen die Demonstranten vorzugehen. Insgesamt sind bisher vier Menschen getötet und bis zu 5000 verletzt worden.*

*In Israel, dessen enger Verbündeter die Türkei lange war, bis es unter Erdogan zu einem Abkühlen des Verhältnisses kam, werden die Entwicklungen genau beobachtet.*

### **Trouble in Turkey**

"It would be wrong to liken the disturbances in Turkey to those of the misnamed Arab Spring. [...] Arab insurgencies were fueled by both Islamic reactionary fervor as well as by ethnic/tribal divisions. Arab civil libertarians were scant and soon drowned out in the turmoil. [...] Istanbul's demonstrators [...] comprise Turkey's better educated and yuppie upper crust. [...] For them Erdogan [...] has gallingly altered their country's point of reference from Europe [...] to the Muslim Mideast.

The riots in Istanbul have exposed the dark seamy underside of his rule that Erdogan prefers nobody see, and they have revealed his unmistakable anti-democratic inclinations and alacrity to cruelly crush dissent."

JPO 03.06.13 Editorial

### **If it happened in Turkey, could it happen in Israel?**

"As yet another country in Israel's greater orbit faces an uprising, albeit distinctly different from Arab Spring that changed the face of the region, there's much that can be learned in Jerusalem just by watching Istanbul [...]. The Turkish protests bear more similarities, in fact, to Israel's massive social justice protests of 2011 than they do the various Arab uprisings [...].

The Turks' anger is aimed in part at the tycoons – friends of Erdogan who have profited handsomely as he steered the country to an unprecedented decade of economic growth. When the tycoons decide they want to uproot old sycamore trees in a popular downtown park and turn it into a shopping mall with apartments for the wealthy, they do so – but now, we know, at their own peril. [...]

Few Turks want Istanbul to look more like Tehran. But even among those who do want a more Islamic flavor to public life are out protesting, because they're frustrated with the Erdogan's authoritarian leanings."

Ilene Prusher, HAA 05.06.13

### **A warning to Erdoğan**

"Erdoğan, drunk with power following electoral victories in 2002, 2007 and 2011, has been dealt a serious blow by the worst unrest since he took power. [...]

They already have given Erdoğan a lesson on the limits of power. His dream of becoming president in 2014, after a constitutional reform to replace Turkey's parliamentary system with a presidential one, no longer looks as certain as it did before Friday."

Boaz Bismuth, IHY 02.06.13

### **Understanding Turkey's protests**

"Erdogan has attempted to portray the conflict as a struggle of the secular versus the religious [...]. If Erdogan's tactics ultimately prove successful, it will signal the final demise of an Islamic discourse of civic pluralism and the failure of Turkey's Islamic politics to protect the integrity of democratic citizenship rights. [...]

At stake [...] may be the future direction of Islamic politics in the greater Middle East."

Michael Tanchum, JPO 04.06.13

### **What will happen in Turkey?**

"These violent protests are the result of the Turkish people's anger, which has been building up over the past decade due to religious radicalization. [...]

The Turkish people began noticing the numerous small changes in the religious nature of the country. [...] Turkish citizens, who were not willing to forgo these democratic principles, have been waiting for the spark that would light their torch. [...]

The seeds of evil have already been sown. The question now is what form will the internal struggle in Turkey take?"

Lior Akerman, JPO 06.06.13

### **The two faces of Erdogan**

"[Erdogan] successfully invigorated his country's economy and often lifted his people's spirits; he made Turkey more prominent in the international arena; he was able to navigate Turkey along the thin line between East and West; and he displayed a model of Islamic democracy for the world.

[...] [But he] almost simultaneously hounded journalists [...], passed laws detrimental to civil rights (on abortions and alcohol), and primarily treated his detractors with scorn. [...]

In Washington, officials are probably clutching their heads. According to the plan, Turkey is supposed to

be the regional policeman. Try explaining to the Americans that in this neck of the woods there are no cops, only robbers."

Boaz Bismuth, IHY 04.06.13

### **Governing without criticism**

"It seems the Turks have no reason to complain. Their ruling party, AKP, was elected in completely legal elections and has maintained a stable majority in the parliament for about a decade now. Turkey's economy is still thriving, even in light of the global crisis. The quality of life measures are on the rise, and unemployment is being reduced. [...]

But below the surface, several processes taking place in recent years have led to growing anger among many parts of the public. The most notable process is Erdogan's clear pursuit of autocracy. [...] The protests of the past few days will be suppressed, and calm may be restored in Istanbul, but the prime minister and his party suffered a blow this week which marks the end of their honeymoon with their voters."

Dror Ze'evi, JED 02.06.13

### **How to defuse the situation at Taksim square**

"The demonstrators in Taksim Square identify with a very wide range of parties and movements, but what is common to nearly all of them is that they belong to the secular middle class. As such, they are the ones who both drive the economic growth and are its main beneficiaries. If the demonstrators and Erdogan want to see this prosperity continue, both sides will have to find a way soon to defuse the situation and restore peace at Taksim Square."

Anshel Pfeffer, HAA 04.06.13

## **3. Kontroverse um betende Frauen an der Klagemauer**

*Seit mehr als zwanzig Jahren kämpft eine Gruppe von jüdischen Frauen um ihr Recht, an der Klagemauer mit Gebetsschals, Torahrollen und Gebetsriemen beten zu dürfen. Laut orthodoxer Tradition sind diese religiösen Utensilien nur für Männer vorgesehen. In konservativen und Reformgemeinden, die insbesondere in den USA dominieren, benutzen jedoch auch Frauen diese Utensilien. Jahrelang wurde die Gruppe, Women of the Wall, von der Polizei daran gehindert, in der Frauensektion an der Klagemauer zu beten. 2003 bejahte der Oberste Gerichtshof dann das Recht der Frauen auf freie Religionsausübung, wies sie jedoch an, an einer anderen Stelle neben dem Hauptplatz an der Kla-*

*gemauer zu beten. Die Women of the Wall und ihre Anhänger kämpften weiter und im April 2013 legalisierte ein Jerusalemer Gericht den Gebrauch von Gebetsschals und -riemen im Frauenbereich der Klagemauer. Als die Gruppe sich im Mai erstmals nach dem Urteil zu ihrem monatlichen Gruppengebet traf, demonstrierten Tausende von Ultraorthodoxen, und es kam zu vereinzelt gewalttätigen Auseinandersetzungen.*

### **Separating state and religion at the Western Wall**

"The state must recognize that it is a 'secular' democracy. [...]

It just means that in the public sphere the people are governed by the rule of law and not the rule of God. This suggests that any solution at the Wall must acknowledge the fact that the Wall is [...] a national and historic site, with religious significance to all Jews, whatever their denomination. Right now it has been transformed into an exclusive [...] ultra-Orthodox synagogue. [...]

With those priorities in place, the following solution unfolds: The Wall is to be returned to the People of Israel and the State of Israel, enabling it to serve as a national and historic site open to the public. [...]

Restoring secular-national control, [...] protecting personal liberties and accommodating cultural sensibilities that violate those liberties only to a minimum degree – this, at least for me, is the fairest solution of them all."

Susan Weiss, JPO 04.06.13

### **Round two at the Kotel**

"I profoundly disagree with Hoffman and her group. She wants to force others to accept her changes to Jewish law and tradition that reach back thousands of years. And prayer is not the real agenda. If you listen to Hoffman her goals are much broader. She wants to rescind the historical status quo on religion in Israel. Dismantle the Rabbinate, institute civil marriage, to fundamentally change Israeli society. [...]

The religious community has realized her true agenda, that is why it has mobilized. [...] Most Israelis would like to see the delicate balance of religion and democracy maintained. Over the decades there have been pressures from various sides that have shifted the ground one way or another. But at the core, the basic compromise has been maintained. Hoffman wants to dismantle the whole arrangement, and realizing that, the religious community is coming out in force."

David Eliezrie, TOI 05.06.13

### **Dispelling nine myths about Women of the Wall**

"Objectors claim that the women who come together [...] to pray [...] are trashing the tradition of the place. [But] tradition is most holy when it is varied and authentic, not monolithic and mechanized. And two, no one sect, certainly not in a democracy, may dictate 'tradition' — when it began, or what it encompasses. [...] As women who pray collectively [...] we are each in a direct relationship with God. We do not accept that the nature of that relationship is subject to media debate, or to scornful dismissal, [...] and we question the legitimacy of a religious monopoly that, in a democracy, should never have been granted in the first place. [...]"

We have no objection to Haredi women, or men, praying as they choose, and no desire to evangelize or inspire them."

Susan Silverman, HAA 11.06.13

### **My lesson in tolerance**

"The true test of tolerance is how we relate to others who make choices that are deeply offensive to us, especially when those choices don't prevent us from following our own beliefs. [...]"

Women in [prayer shawls] don't take an iota away from the religious experience of women praying nearby. Ironically, [prayer shawls] for women are not clearly prohibited in Jewish law. Yet if you judged by the rhetoric surrounding women wearing prayer shawls at the Western Wall, you would think the practice was akin to murder or idol worship. [...]"

Demanding that others change their behavior, in order to show tolerance for our sensibilities, is the height of intolerance."

Hannah Katsman, TOI 07.06.13

### **Speaking up for tradition**

"If they wish true freedom of religion, should that come at the expense of the freedom of religion of others? Should thousands of worshippers be banned from the Western Wall, making it nearly Judenrein? Don't people who feel strongly about an issue deserve to be able to express their feelings? Freedom of assembly, speech and expression are not civil rights when they are only granted to one segment of society. [...]"

Sunday was a sad day for the Jewish people, as the Israeli government prevented thousands from praying in their usual manner at their usual spot, all for the sake of a small group of provocateurs. The police favored the select few and trampled upon the rights of the vast majority."

Ronit Peskin, IHY 11.06.13

### **Just let us pray in peace**

"Women of the Wall is a feminist group. [...] We believe that including women's voices in the public sphere as well as men's voices in the private sphere will bring about a better world. [...]"

This is not the view of Women for the Wall, who hold firmly to the status quo. For them, preserving tradition is paramount, and progress is a threat. [...]"

We in Women of the Wall could also claim that it offends our feminist sensibilities to pray alongside women who whisper their prayers and cover every inch of their bodies [...]. But we do not attack these women. We do not throw things at them or spit at them or call them names. We respectfully allow them to pray. All that we ask is that they show us the same courtesy."

Haviva Ner-David, IHY 11.06.13

### **Religious tolerance rather than polarization**

"The hysteria and sensationalism surrounding [...] the Women of the Wall brouhaha continue to be blown totally out of proportion. There is surely madness in the air to have women, including prominent secular activists, [...] gathering for prayers at the Western Wall, wrapped up in traditionally male [...] prayer shawls [...]"

The case against this agitation is that the bulk of the 10 million Jews who pray annually at the Western Wall are at best uncomfortable, and in many cases distressed and outraged, at being disturbed during prayer by women they consider to be acting in breach of the tradition in which they were nurtured.

It is all very well to insist on minority rights which, under ideal circumstances, should apply. But human behavior and especially religious sensitivities of the majority, must also be taken into account."

Isi Leibler, IHY 06.06.13

## **4. Medienquerschnitt**

*Die Vielfalt der in Israel relevanten Themen kann in einem Medienspiegel nicht umfassend wiedergegeben werden. Um den deutschen LeserInnen dennoch einen Einblick in das breite Themenspektrum, das in den Medien behandelt wird, zu gewähren, veröffentlichen wir in dieser Schlaglichtausgabe wieder eine kleine Auswahl an weiteren Themen, die in den vergangenen zwei Wochen die israelische Gesellschaft bewegten.*

*Über den Plan der Regierung etwa 55.000 afrikanische Asylbewerber in ein Drittland abzuschieben:*

### **Sentenced to death**

"Flooding the neighborhoods with tens of thousands of young men who are allowed to stay there but are forbidden to work demonstrates the government's outrageous irresponsibility towards tax-paying and law-abiding Israeli citizens, who left their house one morning to discover that they are living in Africa. It's not the Africans' fault [...]. It's the fault of those who took them in without any planning. [...]"

The government cannot just pack them up as if they were defective goods and throw them in some 'third country' [...]. The mess created by our clumsy government should be dealt with here rather than thrown into our neighbors' backyard. [...]"

First of all, we must check their papers and see who has the status of a refugee and who is just an infiltrator. Then take in [...] those entitled to it for humanitarian reasons. And how should we treat the rest? The same way we would have liked to be treated had we been as unlucky as they are."

Yakir Elkari, JED 04.06.13

### **Israel is doing the right thing**

"Israel is taking the right steps. On the one hand, Israel is working to improve their circumstances and transfer them to a society where they have a chance at successful integration, and on the other hand Israel needs to insist that it is not a collection reservoir for all the unhappy people of Africa. [...]"

Israel needed to find a country through negotiations and good will, and needs to non-coercively prod infiltrators to go there. [...]"

It is good to know that the government sought a third country to absorb refugees. But let's not dwell on this too much, lest a little bird carry the message that Israel will make sure migrants are settled in an unnamed land of milk and honey, and African infiltration increases once again."

Dan Margalit, IHY 03.06.13

*Über die Feierlichkeiten zu Präsident **Shimon Peres** 90. Geburtstag, bei denen **Bill Clinton** für eine halbe Millionen Dollar ein Rede halten soll:*

### **Friends in greed**

"Ever since U.S. President Bill Clinton said the words 'shalom, haver' (goodbye, friend) over the grave of assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, he has the status of a saint in Israel. [...]"

It now turns out that friendship has a price: half a million dollars to be exact. [...] That is what the former U.S. president is charging to give a speech at the Peres Academic Center. [...]"

The Peres Academic Center will pay, along with the Jewish National Fund. [...] This is a public institution, but where is the transparency? [...]"

If the finance minister still wants to know 'where did the money go?' we have a partial answer: We spent it on Clinton."

Gonen Ginat, IHY 06.06.13

### **No limit to greed**

"Whichever way I look at this story – the payment of \$500,000 [...] for an hour of Bill Clinton - I can't help but feel disgust and anger. [...]"

As for the Jewish National Fund – which is paying most of Clinton's fee - isn't it [...] supposed to be used to plant trees and build parks? It turns out that the JNF is a huge real estate business that sits on eight billion shekels that belong to us. But it has money to spend on Peres' birthday because Clinton will be discussing environmental issues."

Yigal Sarna, JED 05.06.13

### **Acre here, Clinton there**

"Peres' 90th birthday is a celebration for the entire country, and precisely for this reason it should not be allowed to become a mega-event. Peres is not the Queen of England, whose birthday is celebrated as part of the effort to promote tourism. He won the people's sympathy because he restrained himself. So he should show restraint in this case as well."

Nahum Barnea, JED 04.06.13

HAA = Haaretz;

JED = Jedioth Ahronoth

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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