

# Linking Jerusalem to the Global Economy of Higher Education

Amiram Gonen

FLOERSHEIMER STUDIES  
INSTITUTE OF URBAN AND REGIONAL STUDIES  
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**Amiram Gonen**

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## **About the Author**

Prof. Amiram Gonen is Professor Emeritus of Geography, at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

## **About the Research**

The idea to position Jerusalem as a center of educational services in the global economy is the main thrust of this policy paper. It is founded on the city's own past achievement in higher education and on its future potential. Educational services around the world have increasingly become more "globalized" and students move across boundaries and often great distances in order to get the right kind of service in terms of quality and price.

With increased globalization the English language has assumed become the main language of instruction. Its predominant role in exporting educational services has spurred universities to offer teaching services in English to overseas students and thus avail them of this growing global market. In order to realize its potential for exporting higher educational services Jerusalem must do the same.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Many cities around the world are currently engaged in a new kind of effort to ensure their economic prosperity. They no longer function primarily as centers for their surrounding region. Moreover, they no longer mostly compete with other cities on their own national market, but also compete with cities around the world in an effort to find a place for themselves in the global market for goods and services. These cities are currently challenged by a global economy, in which anything that matters in terms of economic activity easily crosses boundaries and moves over considerable distances. Materials, workers and financial resources, products and services find their way to a market that encompasses the entire world. Success in this global competition requires each individual city to position itself in the most appropriate and advantageous place, a place that will expose its products and services to many corners of the world.

## **Global Economic Pursuits for Jerusalem**

Jerusalem is part of this new globalization of urban economies. It too tries to position itself in the global economy and looks for that coveted and advantageous place. Tourism and pilgrimage are for Jerusalem obvious or “natural” economic pursuits, connecting this historic city, holy to the three monotheistic religions, with the rest of the world. People visit Jerusalem and in the process support its economy by using a variety of services, such as hotels and restaurants, and by buying products, such as souvenirs and objects of art. In this way tourism and pilgrimage contribute appreciably to the economy of Jerusalem and its environs. However, the potential of tourism and pilgrimage in Jerusalem is limited because of environmental and supply constraints as well as due to unstable political and

security factors. Moreover, even if these constraints were to be lifted and millions of tourists and pilgrims were to flock into the city and its immediate region in coming decades, there are some inherent problems in positioning the city primarily on the tourist and pilgrimage industries. Apart from seasonal fluctuations and changes in volume as a result of the shifting political and security situation, these industries are characterized by a relatively high proportion of low-skilled and commensurately low-paying jobs, thus exasperating the problematic low-income composition of Jerusalem's employed population. The lower income levels in Jerusalem are also, somewhat paradoxically, a product of the role of the city as the political and administrative capital of the state of Israel. As such the city has a relatively high proportion of civil servants and other employees in public organizations. Though these jobs are steadier than those in tourism, they too are characterized by lower income levels in comparison to other occupations in finance and commerce.

Jerusalem is therefore in need of new economic pursuits that will offer higher income levels. In its search for industries that will serve this purpose, Jerusalem has to take into consideration its neighboring competitor to the west, the Tel Aviv metropolitan region, spearheaded by the city of Tel Aviv. There is no point in trying to position Jerusalem as a global center in industries in which Tel Aviv already excels and has an obvious advantage over any other city in Israel, such as banking and finance. Tel Aviv has taken the lead in these economic activities since the 1930s and in recent decades has emerged as the major link between the Israeli and the global economies. Banking and financial services tend to be highly concentrated. Once an agglomeration of these services has evolved in one city in Israel, it is highly unlikely that another one could successfully emerge elsewhere. Jerusalem is hard pressed to extract a share for itself in the growing high-tech industries in Israel, in spite of the predominance of the Tel Aviv metropolitan region. Some success has been noted, partly because of the existence of a large concentration of researches in Jerusalem, mostly associated with the Hebrew University and other institutions of higher learning operating in the city. But high-tech industries are insufficient and a broader base is needed for ensuring that Jerusalem is not relegated to the status of the "poor neighbor" of the prospering Tel Aviv metropolis, further draining away from Jerusalem the economically promising and aspiring young.

The purpose of this policy study is to propose an option for positioning Jerusalem as a vibrant center in the global economy of higher education. It can thus create for

itself an additional economic base, which can impact not only the income level of its population but also its socio-cultural composition, a policy objective crucial to this multicultural city (Gonen, 2007). Recent reports indicate that the Technion in Haifa is on the way to switching to English in some of its departments in order to be competitive enough in the global system of higher education (**Haaretz**, August 18, 2008; The **Jerusalem Post**, August 20, 2008). The Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya is already well entrenched in attracting overseas students for degree programs in Social Sciences. The city of Jerusalem and particularly its leading academic Institution – The Hebrew University – should act on this challenge as early as possible, before other cities in Israel establish themselves as the main centers of global higher education in Israel.

### “Eds” as an Export Economy for Jerusalem

The idea to position Jerusalem as a global center of educational services is founded not only on the city’s own potential but also on the current trend in the global economy. Educational services have increasingly become more “globalized” in recent decades. Students move across boundaries and sometimes great distances in order to get the right kind of service in terms of quality and price. This trend has been facilitated by accessibility in terms of radical improvements in transportation and diminishing barriers to cross-boundary travel. Moreover, higher educational services have become increasingly important in the economy of many cities, which have lost much of their manufacturing and commercial industry. Factories have long moved out of the city, some of them far away. Commercial establishments have followed suit, many of them leaving for remote suburbs. In recent years even offices have been moving out of the inner city for suburban and even exurban locations. But in the process, many cities have managed to keep their universities and colleges as well as their hospitals and medical centers. These institutions tend to be heavily invested in, particularly where they have gradually developed over the years, and therefore often remain in their city of origin, even if the immediate social and physical environment has become over the years somewhat of a liability.

Colleges and universities as well as hospitals employ large numbers of workers of all levels of skill and education and purchase large amounts of goods and services in the local market. Boosting the growing importance of educational and medical services (known as “Meds and Eds”) in the urban economy has become an

increasingly discussed strategy for cities to follow, in the face of the massive exit of other industries (Adams, 2007; Bartik and Erickcek, 2007). Currently, this strategy has gained considerable importance in those cities where banking and finance as well as high-level commerce are no longer a significant option, since they have already been taken over by the few mega-cities that have emerged as such centers.

The large concentration of higher education institutions in Jerusalem is often described as the enabling and supportive factor for the development of the various high-tech industries in recent decades in the city (Kaufman and Levi, 2002). However, not much is said about the potential that is stored in these institutions as direct “exporters” to the world of teaching services. It is argued here that the academic institutions of Jerusalem, existing ones as well as new ones, which could be especially adapted to export higher education, could become a significant vehicle of connecting the city to the global economy. Such a vehicle has its foundations in the history of Jerusalem as a primary center of higher education in Israel since the early 1920s, as portrayed in Chapter 2.

## 2 THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE JERUSALEM ECONOMY

It is testing for Jerusalem to compete with Tel Aviv over business managers and their headquarters but it could certainly do so more successfully by attracting those looking for a place where then they can acquire knowledge and education. Tel Aviv has no lead over Jerusalem in this field. On the contrary, after the establishment of the first university in the country, namely the Hebrew University, Jerusalem featured as the most prominent University City in the country. Moreover, for quite a long time, higher education has been one of the economic mainstays of the city. Higher education has been one of the prominent employers in the city. The Hebrew University, the largest higher education institution in the city, relies on services and product suppliers operating in the city. The thousands of students coming from all over the country have been using its urban services, most particularly that of accommodation.

Jerusalem was not singular in its heavy economic dependence on higher education. There is a long line of cities, middle-sized and even small, often isolated from the large agglomerations of business firms, that have managed to position themselves as higher education centers and build their economy on a university or two in their midst. A long tradition of academic excellence, an attractive quality of campus life, and urban ambience sometimes coupled with the charm of history and landscape, are some of the ingredients attracting many thousands of students each year. Outstanding examples of such towns are Cambridge and Oxford in England, St. Andrews and Aberdeen in Scotland, Uppsala and Lund in Sweden, Leiden (Leyden) and Delft in The Netherlands, Leuven in Belgium, Heidelberg and Tubingen in Germany, Poitiers in France, Salamanca in Spain, Coimbra in Portugal, Bologna, Ferrara and Sienna in Italy and Niamey in Nigeria. Across the USA there is a long

line of university and college towns, large and small, that base their economy largely on one or two institutions of higher education. Some of the better known ones are Berkeley in California, Chapel Hill in North Carolina and Princeton in New Jersey. All these towns attract financial resources from the outside for the payment of tuition, accommodation, food, and recreation (Felsenstein, 1996; 1999). Higher education is one of the major employers in these towns, and the salaries drawn by employees fuel them with a wide array of economic activities. Government and philanthropic resources, channeled towards academic institutions operating in these towns add to the flow of external financial resources into their economies. In some towns the presence of academic institutions affects them as nodes of attraction for economic activities that need access to high skilled workers and to the fruits of research carried out in those local academic institutions (Kuypers et al., 2003). Research universities in the United States have increasingly become involved in economic development since the mid-1980s. University activities, particularly knowledge-based activities such as teaching and basic research, have been found to have substantial positive effects on a variety of measures of regional economic progress (Drucker and Goldstein, 2007).

## **The Historical Perspective**

One of the first major Jewish projects in Jerusalem that marked the beginning of the British period in the country was the building of a Jewish university on the top of Mount Scopus. In its early beginnings the Hebrew University was perceived by its founders as serving students and researchers from all over the Jewish Diaspora, and not necessarily as an institution serving primarily the local market. As such, the Hebrew University was defined, in terms of the economy of Jerusalem, as an export industry. Dr. Chaim Weizmann, one of those who spawned the idea of establishing a Jewish university in Jerusalem, had been deeply impressed by the economic weight of the Herzliya Hebrew Gymnasium (high school), established in the early years of Tel Aviv, on the local economy of the Jewish residents of the new city. Young students, coming from many countries to study for their high school diploma in Tel Aviv, contributed considerably to the local economy by paying for their tuition and living expenses. In the early years of Tel Aviv the Herzliya Gymnasium was the largest project in the economy of the nascent Jewish town. Weizmann drew from this case a lesson for the economic role of a university in the future development of the Jewish population of Jerusalem. He articulated this in his speech entitled “on the

threshold” on the day the cornerstone of the Hebrew University was laid in 1918 (Weizmann, 1937, Vol. 1: 102). Indeed, beyond its being an institution of higher learning and research and beyond its political function in enhancing Jewish hold in the city, the Hebrew University was regarded as a mainstay in strengthening the economy of the Jewish population of Jerusalem, and in particular as a growing modern component, struggling against the predominance of the longstanding and sizable ultra-orthodox component. Indeed, a university is a provider of education and employment, and as such has a long-range impact on the educational and professional composition of the population of the city where it is located. For many years the Hebrew University was a major employer in the Jewish economy of Jerusalem. All this was in part due to the influx of overseas students, mostly Jews from Eastern and Central Europe. In this way the Hebrew University served as a global center of higher education for the Jewish people.

The global role of the Hebrew University dwindled drastically as a result of WWII, when it was cut off from its major hinterland in Europe. Much of that potential hinterland had been annihilated in the Holocaust. After the war the Hebrew University concentrated its efforts in serving as the major institute of higher education in the country itself. In the 1950s the Hebrew University shared its prominence only with the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa. A tacit agreement of sorts divided these two institutions of higher education in the national market, in these early years of statehood, on the basis of subjects. The Technion was to specialize primarily in engineering subjects. The Hebrew University undertook the rest of the subjects.

The city of Jerusalem benefited for a while from this situation that lasted until the mid-1960s. Any person in the entire country in pursuit of academic studies, other than engineering and related subjects, had to go to study in Jerusalem, thus contributing to the economy of this city. Moreover, many of the graduates of the Hebrew University coming from other parts of the country continued to reside in the city. They were drawn to the employment opportunities available in Jerusalem as a result of its being the political and administrative capital of the new State of Israel.

This combination between a major academic center of higher education and a major government center drew, at least for a while, an educated and professional population to the city, significantly impacting the structure of the local population. It created a higher socioeconomic status than would have otherwise characterized

the city. The Bezalel Academy of Arts played a similar, albeit a much smaller role, due to its smaller size. The role of higher education institutions in attracting new young residents to Jerusalem continues to be significant. A research survey on migrants to Jerusalem in the 1990s found that about a third of the non ultra-orthodox (Haredi) Jewish in-migrants stated that studying in an institution of higher education had been a decisive factor in their settling in Jerusalem (Choshen et al., 2000).

However, the predominance of Jerusalem in higher education in Israel did not endure. Since the mid-1960s higher education institutions have sprouted in major cities in Israel: Tel Aviv University in Tel Aviv; Bar-Ilan University in neighboring Ramat Gan; Haifa University in Haifa and Ben-Gurion University in Be'er Sheva. The Weizmann Institute in Rehovot became a graduate university in the natural and exact sciences. Since, the country witnessed the proliferation of new colleges, targeted primarily at undergraduate studies. Small cities and towns, partly in peripheral urban as well as rural regions enjoyed the new trend. The spread of higher education was motivated on the national level of policymaking by the desire to bring supply closer to demand, especially in remote regions of the country. On the local level of policymaking it was motivated by the interest of local governments in attracting prestigious generators of higher income into their localities (Rosen and Razin, 2004; Rosen and Razin, 2007). The cities to mostly gain from this dispersion were Tel Aviv, Haifa and Be'er Sheva, with their large numbers of students, and growing considerably each year. Jerusalem, as to be expected, was the main loser in terms of its share in the overall number of students. Although in recent decades some new academic colleges have been added to the city alongside the venerable Hebrew University and Bezalel Academy, their individual size, in terms of student numbers, is still relatively small and has little impact on the local economy.

## **Ways to Overcome Restrictive Regulation**

The reason for the slow growth in the number of students studying in Jerusalem is often attributed to the competition with other cities and towns better located with regards to the geographical residential distribution of potential students. Distance, however, is not the only major factor in this competition. The national market of students is currently more competitive because of improvements in transportation

and accessibility. New major highways built recently, such as Route 6, and improved existing highways, such as Route 1 and Route 433, render Jerusalem much more accessible than in previous years. The growth in numbers of Israeli students is governed to a large extent by the regulation of the supply side through the powers of state institutions. The fact that the supply of slots for potential students is limited in Jerusalem and does not match potential demand has to do with the nature of governance of higher education in Israel. Public academic institutions funded by the state are governed by the Council for Higher Education (CHE) that allocates funding to public academic institutions through its Committee for Planning and Budgeting (CPB). This funding is based on the number of students in each institution. The maximum number of students is determined by CPB, thus exercising a strict capping policy that, in the case of Jerusalem-based institutions, might end up restricting growth below demand levels. The CHE regulated not only the number of students in existing public academic institutions; it also sanctions the opening of new departments in these institutions, thus having additional control over growth. Moreover, the CHE is the accrediting agency of new academic institutions and for the moment pursues a policy of restricting the number of universities in Jerusalem to one only, the Hebrew University. Other educational institutions in Jerusalem are to remain on the college level only. Though this policy safeguards the existing university from new local competition, in the long-run it does impede the future growth of universities in the city. In this way, the policy of CHE does not enable Jerusalem to significantly enlarge its part in the national economy of higher education in Israel. In a period when higher education is fast becoming one of the major components in urban economy, such a policy has a curbing effect on the growth of an industry the city of Jerusalem could benefit from.

This situation of restricted growth of academic institutions in Jerusalem could be circumvented in several ways. One way is for the CHE, or perhaps the government and the Knesset (the Israeli parliament) to define Jerusalem as an “area of national priority” in terms of higher education. This would provide the city with funding and regulations that will allow a substantial growth of this branch of the local economy to a magnitude that will have an impact on the level of income, and thus on the socioeconomic composition of its population. This policy could imply relaxing the current restrictive policy practiced by CHE for Jerusalem, both in terms of student numbers and number of academic institutions.

A second way of circumventing the restriction of growth of higher education in Jerusalem envisages following the example of some other cities in the core of the country in encouraging the development of private academic colleges. Though they still rely on CHE accreditation, they are not capped in terms of the number of students. And since the state does not allocate funds to these institutions, students pay much higher tuition fees, often more than double the tuition costs in publicly-funded academic institutions. A prominent example of such a private academic institution is the Inter-Disciplinary Center (IDC) in Herzliya, a suburb town north of Tel Aviv.

A third way for Jerusalem to expand its higher education industry is to start catering to students from other countries, often referred to in Israel as “Overseas Students.” These students are often asked to pay a market price for their tuition, as in the private colleges in Israel or as is in other countries where higher education for citizens is not subsidized, unlike the UK. There has been some development in this direction within existing institutions of higher education in Israel, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem long being engaged in this activity. But this is still quite a modest development compared with the growing intensity of globalization of academic studies around the world. Since this particular option, namely the vigorous entry of higher education into the global market, is the crux of this policy paper, it is necessary to briefly review recent developments in this arena prior to any discussion on the potential embedded in it for Jerusalem.

### 3 THE PREDOMINANCE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION

The idea of academic teaching for overseas students is not a new one. Academic institutions have been doing this for a long time and in the process provided education for the new professional and political elites in many of the developing countries. British universities have trained such elites, which emerged in the former colonies of the British Empire. French universities acted similarly with regards to the former French colonies, especially in Africa. In late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries universities in Germany served as foci of academic studies for students from East European countries as well as Czarist Russia. Students from Turkey and Japan joined in a bit later many of them going back to their countries to become part of the modern elites emerging in these countries.

#### **The Predominant Role of English Speaking Countries**

The spread of the English language as the main global language of commerce, business, politics and recreation has given much weight to studying abroad in universities instructing in the English language. American universities have therefore become the major magnet for students from around the world. This trend was enhanced by the leading universal role played by the United States after WWII and by the huge contribution of higher education to rapid economic development in the United States. Thanks to the English language, American and British universities have attracted significant numbers of “foreign” students, who, apart from being exposed to the way of life in these two countries, are also contributing to the local economy of the cities in which these universities are located. In the UK, for instance, where universities are financially supported by the state, British

students are usually altogether exempt from paying for their tuition (things are changing in recent years in this matter). Overseas students, studying in British universities and paying the high tuition fees, are therefore a significant component in the budget of these institutions. Moreover, in a study of three Scottish universities it was shown that each overseas student represents an injection of new income into the host regional and local economy outside the host university (Love and McNicol, 1988). At the London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE), located in the heart of the London metropolis, foreign students constitute the majority of students studying in this institution, thus rendering it an exporter par excellence of higher education. Universities in Australia are also taking advantage of the teaching they offer in the English language and recruit students from East Asian and Pacific countries, lying close to their part of the world (O'Conner, no date). Canada too shares this advantage and is attracting students to its own universities.

The USA ranks high in attracting students from all over the world. It has been reported that in the 2006/7 academic year 582,984 international students studied in American universities and colleges. India, China, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Canada rank first six among countries sending their nationals to study in the United States (International Institute of Education, 2007a). It has been estimated that international students contribute approximately 14.5 billion US dollars to the country's economy, through their expenditure on tuition and living expenses, thus placing higher education as the fifth largest export service sector (*ibid.*). In the same year U.S. support to these students, largely in the form of scholarships, has amounted to 6.3 billion dollars (International Institute of Education, 2007c). Also in the same year, 223,534 American students went to study abroad, mostly for short terms, for the sake of enriching and diversifying their experience (International Institute of Education, 2007b). Altogether the flow of funds in this field is in favor of the U.S. economy. This economy also gains in terms of recruiting skilled professionals who remain in the United States, or in terms of political goodwill and sympathy among those who return to their countries after studying in an American social environment and political setting.

## The Spread of Academic Teaching in English to Other Countries

The predominant role of the English language in exporting higher educational services has spurred universities, in countries where English is not the spoken language, to offer English teaching services to overseas students, and thus avail them of this growing global market in higher education.

This development is concurrent with a major process undergoing in Europe's higher education. Since 1999, most European countries are part of an all-out effort to reconstruct their higher education systems so as to bring about greater harmonization or "convergence" and thus a greater rate of international mobility of students. This effort has come to be known as the Bologna Process, named for the Italian city of Europe's oldest university where the education ministers of 29 countries agreed to bring down education borders. It was, in a sense a continuation of the economic integration of a growing number of European countries. The Bologna Process affects about 4,000 institutions and 16 million students (Adleman, 2008). Much of it has been involved in matching credits and diplomas so that students could easily move between institutions of different countries and even different regions in their own countries. Latin American and North African countries as well as Australia have become involved in efforts in the spirit of the Bologna Process and even the United States is examining potential lessons for itself (Adleman, 2008). The spirit of the Bologna Process has sent out a very clear economic message: There is an international market in higher education waiting to be harnessed and, as in the case of international trade, there is a need to create optimal conditions for free movement. This message, albeit initially directed at matching credits and diplomas, was soon perceived as a means to reduce language barriers by developing academic programs taught in English. Reasons for this were threefold. One reason was embedded in the great variety of languages in Europe, a situation impeding the freer mobility of students between universities within the continent itself. It has been increasingly clear that to achieve matching there is a need for an academic *lingua franca* that will bind together some aspects of European higher education, a role which the English language has assumed in recent decades. A second reason for looking at English as the common linguistic denominator has been the growing realization by European universities that there is a big North American market from where students can be drawn. A third reason, a more recent development, has to do with the economic rise of countries of the developing world, where more of their young look for academic training in the developed world whose universities are

increasingly interested in attracting these new students. All these markets – within Europe, in North America and the developing world can more conveniently be tapped through academic programs taught in English than in any other language. The result has indeed been a proliferation or “explosion” of such programs offered in English in European universities, mainly on the graduate level (Adelman, 2008).

Nevertheless, this change is only beginning to take shape. A recent survey, published by the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), a Brussels-based higher education think tank, has found that academic teaching in English in continental Europe is still a “marginal phenomenon”, especially in southern European countries, even though it is “expanding by the day” (Wachter and Maiworm, 2007). However, such marginality was not the case in the Netherlands, in Finland and in other Nordic countries, where courses and study programs taught in English were made available to foreign as well as local students. For example, Uppsala University in Sweden offered a variety of courses taught in the English language. This wide selection enables students to complete their studies in this university solely in the English language (Uppsala University website, 2007). Most of the departmental programs for the master and doctoral degrees at the Helsinki University of Technology (TKK) are taught in English (Helsinki University of Technology, 2008). Turku University in Finland, also offers graduate studies in several departmental programs for the benefit of foreign students who are reluctant to learn Finnish (University of Turku website, 2008). Graduate studies in English are a common option in some Dutch universities. At Leiden University “the language of instruction for most programmes is English and for some Dutch. A number of Language and Culture programmes are taught in French, German, Italian and Spanish respectively” (Leiden University website, 2008). Utrecht University offers over 80 master programs taught in English (Utrecht University website, 2008).

French universities still cling to French as the language of teaching. Nevertheless, in some of these institutions there are arrangements offered to students from non-Francophone countries to take part in laboratory sessions and in seminars conducted in English. This change is primarily the result of the large number of American students encouraged by their home universities and colleges to study abroad as part of their own curriculum. Countries around the world, and even France, previously so zealous of its national language, respond eagerly to this growing demand by offering individual courses and even entire degree programs taught in English. An

example of this practice exists in several universities around France (in Bordeaux, Grenoble, Lyon, Paris, and Toulouse) as part of the University of California Education Abroad Program (University of California website, 2008a). American students as well as students from other countries are taking part in these courses taught in English. For example, the University of Grenoble offers advanced undergraduate and graduate courses in English in most science and technology fields, including electronics, computer science, engineering and physics. Laboratory work is conducted in French and English with some seminars in English. French language prerequisite may be partially waived for advanced students (University of California website, 2008b).

More in tune with this trend are business schools in France that are mainly geared to attract students from other countries as an outright export endeavor. They offer their entire teaching program in English only. Such is the case in the Rennes School of Business (ESC) that positions itself in its own words as an international institution yet still part of the elite schools of France: “Two-thirds of the permanent faculty and one third of our students are international: this contributes to an outstanding cultural mix in day-to-day campus life. ESC Rennes Business School is a French “Grande Ecole”, with a fully international environment in terms of our culture, teaching, faculty, students, courses, qualifications, day-to-day campus life and ambitions” (Rennes School of Business website, 2008). This is more so the case in INSEAD, a business school located in Fontainebleau, on the margins of the Paris metropolitan region. This institution has gone overboard to serve the global market of higher education in the business professions (INSEAD website, 2008). It seems that in France higher education in business and to a lesser extent in engineering have moved to accommodate the global demand by using English as the main avenue of teaching.

Universities that place significant emphasis on recruiting overseas students have built an intensive marketing system. The Internet offers a plethora of websites of academic institutions advertising their educational services. Some universities go as far as placing their representatives in some of the key cities around the world for the purpose of reaching out for potential candidates and coaching them toward registration. British universities are particularly active in marketing their services globally. At Queen Mary College, which is part of the University of London, about 30 percent of the students come from overseas (Queen Mary College website, 2008). It is not surprising, then, that this institution has its own network of representatives in many countries for this purpose. It also maintains a website

especially destined for candidates living outside the UK with very detailed information and guidance.

## **Lessons for Israel and for Jerusalem**

What can Israeli institutions of higher education learn from all this? One thing is quite obvious. It is not possible to build a system of higher educational services for export on the basis of the Hebrew language, the language of instruction in Israeli institutions. Anyone interested in joining the global economy of higher education cannot base it on the national language, unless it happens to be one of the widely spoken languages around the world. This simple principle has been well understood in those Israeli universities that have started to develop special frameworks for overseas students. However, it appears on the whole, that until recently Israeli universities have been, as French universities still are in most cases, very zealous over teaching in Hebrew. In earlier years one had difficulty in even writing a Ph.D. dissertation other than in the Hebrew language. Hebrew was an important revolutionary element in the Jewish national movement. No less significant was its revival as a spoken language and a tool of everyday modern life, whether in commerce, military service, politics, culture, and more so when it came to education on all levels, including higher education. The norm of Hebrew as a mandatory requirement in academia can only be relaxed in separate frameworks set up for overseas students. Such frameworks have been operating in several institutions of higher education in Israel. Chapter Four reviews such frameworks operating in Jerusalem. Chapter Five covers the rest of the country.

## 4 TEACHING OVERSEAS STUDENTS IN JERUSALEM

Several institutions of higher education in Jerusalem offer courses and study programs to overseas students in the English language. The main objective of some of these institutions is to serve Israeli students in the Hebrew language, while teaching overseas students in English is only a minor pursuit. Other institutions, mostly the denominationally-based, were set up for the purpose of serving overseas students and their language of instruction is English.

### **Rothberg International School (RIS) at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

The Rothberg International School (RIS) is the special framework for overseas students established several decades ago at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Students are taught mostly in English, but there is also a possibility of studying in French. RIS offers several options for undergraduate students. One option is to study their Freshmen Year at the Hebrew University and then proceed with their undergraduate study in one of the universities abroad, which has a prevailing agreement with the Hebrew University. This option involves very close coaching of younger students who experience for the first time both college studies as well as an experience abroad. Another option is the One-Year or One-Semester Abroad program, again as part of studies in universities in their own country. Both these options of undergraduate studies at RIS do not offer a full program of studies that leads to a Bachelor's degree granted by the Hebrew University. Moreover these partial undergraduate programs mainly focus on Jewish, Israel and Middle Eastern Studies.

RIS caters mostly to Jewish students from English-speaking countries, primarily from the United States. In the 2007/8 academic year there were 465 students involved in undergraduate studies at RIS, 433 (93%) of them came from three English-speaking countries: the United States (375 students), Canada (45) and Australia (13). The rest were from Europe (24), Latin America (4) and the Middle East (4) (Rothberg International School, 2008). No doubt, the predominant undergraduate market of RIS is North America, mostly the United States, a market which mostly consists of Jewish students. (Hebrew University Rothberg International School, 2008)

Unlike its partial involvement in undergraduate studies RIS offers overseas students both partial and full programs of graduate studies that lead to a master's degree from the Hebrew University. In the 2007/8 academic year there were 284 graduate students at RIS, more than half the number of undergraduates. Of these graduate students less than a half (124) registered in full degree programs. The rest were taking courses as part of their studies for the master's degree in other universities outside Israel. Since 2000/1 the number of students studying for a full graduate degree varied between 120 and 140 and was not affected by the outbreak of violence (Intifada) in 2000 (Data provided to the author by RIS). It seems that students that come to Jerusalem for a full degree program are less affected by the changing security situation in the city than are undergraduate students coming for a short sojourn as part of their studies in their home universities abroad.

Graduate programs at RIS offer a range of subjects similar to those in its partial undergraduate program. Of the 124 students enrolled in full degree programs, 21 students were in Biblical Lands Studies, 36 in Islam and Middle Eastern Studies, 20 in Israel Society and Politics, 21 in Jewish Civilization, 9 in Religious Studies, 3 in Jewish Education and 14 in the new program of Community, Leadership and Philanthropy Studies (Data provided to the author by RIS).

However, the geographical composition of overseas graduate students is quite different from that of undergraduates. Only half of the graduate student in the 2007/8 academic year came from English speaking countries. About a third originated in European countries, mostly Germany and Scandinavia. Asia, mainly South Korea, was represented by about a fifth of the graduate students in that year, mainly in Biblical and Jewish studies (Hebrew University Rothberg International School, 2008).

## **The Jerusalem School of Technology – Machon Lev**

The Jerusalem School of Technology (JST), known also as Machon Lev, combines academic and Torah studies as part of its special mission as an institution of higher education in the fields of technology and business. Those include Engineering, Computers, Biochemistry, Electro-Optics, Applied Physics, Management, Marketing, Accounting, and Education. In its English Speaking Program (ESP) it offers Jewish Orthodox overseas students an opportunity to conduct their freshmen year in the English language, as a means to facilitate full academic studies in Hebrew in later years of undergraduate studies. Students spend their mornings in yeshiva studies and their afternoons in academic studies. The academic program is tailored to meet the core course requirements of most degrees in the US and Canada. As such, JST is specifically targeted at religious Jewish students, who look for its particular cultural milieu and are intent on later studying in Hebrew following the smooth entry through ESP (Machon Lev website, 2008). Its Hebrew language course provides the necessary skills to continue studies conducted in Hebrew for the remainder of the degree.

## **International Master of Public Health Program at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

The Hebrew University-Hadassah Braun School of Public Health and Community Medicine maintains since 1970 the International Master of Public Health (IMPH) Program. More than 650 students from some 85 countries have participated in this program. Participants in the program must hold an academic degree from a recognized university (BA, MA, MD) in medicine, dentistry, nursing, and other allied health fields, or in one of the basic biological or social sciences relevant to health. Diploma degrees are not accepted. Most come from developing countries. Upon completion of their training they return to occupy key positions in the health care systems of their countries. Their studies are financially supported by charitable foundations as well as by The Center for International Cooperation of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MASHAV). Scholarships cover all costs related to participation in the course including tuition, dormitory accommodation and basic living expenses in the form of a monthly stipend, textbooks, medical insurance, administration costs and social activities. Personal laptop computers are provided for use during studies. Only airfare to and from Israel is not included in the

scholarship. Those coming from Western countries have to pay US\$14,000 to the School itself and approximately US\$5,000-6000 tuition fees are paid directly to the Hebrew University (Hebrew University-Hadassah Braun School of Public Health and Community Medicine website, 2008).

## **Denominationally-based Institutions**

Jerusalem offers some specialized frameworks for overseas students that are part of denominationally-based institutions of higher education in their home countries. The study programs conducted in Jerusalem are an integral part of the curriculum at these academic institutions abroad. Jerusalem, with its special religious standing is a favored location for such studies to be conducted.

Two Jewish theological seminaries in the United States maintain a one-year program for their rabbinical students. **Hebrew Union College**, a theological seminary of Reform Judaism, whose main campus is in Cincinnati, Ohio, offers its students one year of biblical and Hebrew studies at its campus on King David Street in Jerusalem. The students can also take related courses at the Hebrew University. Many of the graduates of this institution end up in rabbinical jobs within Reform Judaism. **Schechter Rabbinical Seminary** maintains a one-year Overseas Rabbinical Program for rabbinical students of Conservative Judaism.

Similarly, Christian institutions maintain centers of study for their own students. **Brigham Young University** offers its students a single semester of studies at its Jerusalem campus on the slopes of Mount Scopus. **The Holy Land Institute** on Mount Zion caters to undergraduate students of American universities and colleges offering a single semester program in religion and culture related subjects, all associated with the country and its environs. It also offers overseas students a two-year program of graduate studies in two areas: culture and religion in the Middle East and historical and biblical geography.

All these denominationally-based programs have a relatively small number of students but they all share with the Rothberg School of the Hebrew University a focus on subjects related to the history, culture and politics of Israel and the Middle East. This fact points the current paradigm with regards to what is held as the appropriate set of subjects for students coming to study in Jerusalem. Jewish as well

as Christian academic institutions catering to overseas students in Jerusalem perceive themselves primarily as training grounds for the young members of their respective religious communities, where they study a set of contents, relevant to each community.

## **Yeshivas for Overseas Students**

To the list of denominationally-based institutions of higher education in Jerusalem that have ardently supported the idea of exporting their services to overseas students, one has to add yeshivas – ultra-Orthodox (Haredi), Orthodox and Conservative – where overseas students engage in Torah and Talmudic studies. Each year thousands of overseas yeshiva students engage in religious studies in Jerusalem. Some of them continue for several years and not only for a single semester or one year, common among overseas students attending academic institutions in the city. Most of these overseas yeshiva students, even those attending Haredi yeshivas, study the Talmud in the English language, much like the instruction in their Western countries of origin. In earlier decades, when the bulk of the Haredi population had concentrated in Eastern Europe, yeshiva studies were carried out primarily in Yiddish. With the migration of much of the Haredi population to English-speaking countries, English has gradually taken over even in Haredi yeshivas, much in the same way that Hebrew supplanted Yiddish in many of the Haredi yeshivas in Israel. To accommodate the new language pattern among overseas Haredi students studying in Israel, English-speaking frameworks have been introduced. Moreover, some new yeshivas, catering specifically to overseas students, have been set up in Jerusalem. The language of instruction and studies in them is English.

Overseas yeshiva students pay substantial sums of money for their tuition, room and board in Jerusalem. These payments boost the internal Haredi economy of the city and together with generous contributions from abroad that are raised to support their maintenance, these yeshivas connect the local economy of Jerusalem to the global one. One can go as far as to suggest that from among the various sectors of the Jewish population in Jerusalem, the Haredi one is the most “globalized”. This situation reflects the unique significance of Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the life of Haredi Jews around the world, rendering its yeshivas a center of attraction for young Haredi persons in their studying stage in life.

The largest concentration of Haredi students in Jerusalem is to be found in the Mir Yeshiva, the largest Haredi yeshiva in the city. It houses about five thousand students, many of whom are from the U.S. and other English speaking countries. Their presence in one of the clusters of Haredi neighborhoods in Jerusalem undoubtedly has an impact on the economy of these neighborhoods. There are some yeshivas in Jerusalem that serve mainly overseas students. One such yeshiva is Midrash Shmuel located in the Sha'arei Chesed neighborhood in inner Jerusalem. It is an enterprise run by rabbis from the USA and the UK, countries that constitute the main origin of the students as well, with a minor representation from South Africa. Midrash Shmuel designated itself as the Talmudic College Institute for Advanced Torah Studies and caters to persons with "little experience in Torah learning" (Midrash Shmuel website, 2008). Studies are conducted in English. Midrash Shmuel includes both a yeshiva for bachelors and a kollel for married students. Altogether there are about three hundred students in attendance at Midrash Shmuel. The families of the married students live in the neighborhoods and form an English-speaking community in the area. They, as well as other English-speaking people living in the neighborhood, have transformed the residential character of the neighborhood bringing about a process of gentrification of housing and commercial services. They are an important contribution to the real estate economy of the neighborhood and its surrounding and also form a significant clientele of the local food stores.

One impact of their presence in Jerusalem is enduring. A large proportion of them, when married, stay on to live in Jerusalem. Their respective families help them purchase housing in the city, sometimes in the more established neighborhoods of Jerusalem on the verge of the older Haredi neighborhoods. In this way, the residential composition of the city is affected. In the 1950s and 1960s it was the Hebrew University graduates who originated from all over the country that affected the residential composition of the city. Nowadays it is mainly the role of overseas yeshiva graduates. Indeed, the Haredi population in some neighborhoods in Jerusalem is now composed of a significant component of overseas residents.

## 5 TEACHING OVERSEAS STUDENTS IN OTHER LOCALITIES IN ISRAEL

Academic programs for overseas students exist in many institutions of higher education in Israel (Higher Education Study Programs in Israel website, 2008). In order to grasp the potential for further developing higher education for overseas students as a significant export industry in Jerusalem this chapter presents a survey of programs offered in the English language in Israeli academic institutions outside Jerusalem. Indeed, the current demand for a single semester or one-year studies outside one's home university serves as the basis for programs available to overseas students in Israeli universities and colleges outside Jerusalem too. Some of these institutions around Israel offer specialized programs that are based on their particular expertise, but most focus on Jewish studies, Israel studies and Middle Eastern studies as is the case at the Rothberg International school of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. However, in addition to their involvement in partial undergraduate studies for overseas students some institutions of higher education in Israel have developed a few graduate programs for such students. Most of these are full-fledged graduate programs that lead to the attainment of a Master's degree in the respective areas of expertise of each institution.

### **Undergraduate Single Semester or One-Year Programs**

**Tel Aviv University** has its own School of Overseas Students (OSP). It has been operating for about four decades, much on the same model as RIS at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. As in RIS, the emphasis in OSP is largely on partial undergraduate single semester and one-year programs. These undergraduate programs include a Freshmen Year for high school graduates who start their first

stage of academic studies either in Israel (if they reach a satisfactory command of Hebrew) or in their home university abroad. Again, as in the case of RIS, the Tel Aviv University OSP offers mainly courses that cater to students from the United States, mostly Jewish. The main subjects are again Jewish Studies, Israel Studies and Middle Eastern Studies, but there are also some courses offered in Arts (related mostly to Israel) and in Social Sciences (Tel Aviv University website, 2008a). Tuition for a semester program is US\$6,400 while one-year students pay US\$10,000. All overseas students are required to take a Hebrew course for which tuition fees total US\$1,200. The university also provides accommodation. Single semester charges total US\$2,000 while one-year fees are US\$4,400 (Tel Aviv University website, 2008b). During the 2007/8 academic year there were about 400 semester registrations by some of students taking courses only for one semester and others for two in a row.

**Haifa University** maintains its own International School for these single semester and one-year students, mostly American Jewish undergraduate students, as part of their home universities' programs. Degree-granting programs are not offered, even on the graduate level, unlike the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Tel Aviv University. In order to enhance its attraction to overseas students the Haifa University International School has developed several Honors Programs, centering on seminars in particular fields of specialty, in the following subjects: Psychology, Peace and Conflict Studies and Jewish Culture and Civilization (Haifa University website, 2008a). These honors seminars are open to students who can show a high level of achievement in their prior undergraduate studies as well as to Israeli students. In the 2007/8 academic year there were about 90 students enrolled in the single semester and one-year programs offered by the International School at Haifa University.

The International School at Haifa University, in cooperation with the university's Faculty of Law, maintains a Global Law Program for overseas students alongside Israeli ones, who take a variety of law courses taught in English by visiting faculty lecturers as well as University of Haifa lecturers. The Global Law Program offers full academic credit in accordance with the standards and criteria of North American and European universities. The Global Law Program is open to students who are currently studying law at their home universities. American applicants must be graduate students studying law. European applicants and students from other countries where law is taught as an undergraduate degree can apply as

undergraduates. The Faculty of Law at the University of Haifa is the first non-European Law School to become a full member of the European Erasmus Mundus Program in Law and Economics, which allows students to accumulate credits in more than one university (Haifa University website, 2008b). The Global Law Program at Haifa University represents an effort to develop kernels of attraction to overseas students who are studying in their home universities but are looking to enhance their studies through specialized high quality programs abroad.

**Ben-Gurion University in the Negev** maintains the Ginsburg-Ingberman Overseas Students Program (OSP). It, too, offers mainly a one-semester or a one-year of academic credits for undergraduate and recent college graduates from abroad. Course topics include: Anthropology, Archaeology, Middle Eastern studies, Environmental Studies, Political Science, Hebrew Literature, Arabic language, Health Sciences, Jewish History and Israel Studies. Students are encouraged to organize their studies in three tracks: Peace Studies and Regional Security consisting of courses on cultural and religious elements relevant to Israel, the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli conflict; Sustainable Development and Environmental Justice in the Negev desert region; a Science-oriented semester in environmental studies, ecology, marine biology, geology and geography to be conducted in two sites, one in Be'er-Sheva and the other in Eilat (Ben-Gurion university website, 2008).

In addition, Ben-Gurion University hosts visiting professors who often teach in English. OSP students are invited to attend their classes. Each course taken is worth three academic credits at the home university. As in many other Israeli institutions that cater to overseas students, the OSP program in Be'er-Sheva includes a 6-week course in the Hebrew language as well as field trips and cultural activities, geared largely to Jewish students from overseas. OSP at Beer-Sheva charges tuition as follows: US\$9,465 tuition for a year and US\$ 6,080 for a semester. Hebrew language fees are US\$1,300, while accommodation varies between US\$3,000 for a year and US\$1,600 for a semester (ibid.).

**Bar-Ilan University** maintains the “Torah V’Derech Eretz” one-year undergraduate program for Jewish Orthodox students. It provides courses taught in English in Jewish and General Studies. Jewish studies are conducted separately for men and women. Students whose Hebrew proficiency is acceptable are encouraged to avail themselves of courses offered in Hebrew. Some courses completed by students participating in the program are transferable to universities in other countries or

may count toward their degree requirements at Bar-Ilan, should they decide to remain at the University (Bar-Ilan University website, 2008).

**The Weizmann Institute of Technology** has established The Karyn Kupcinec International Science School Summer Study for Foreign Science Students. The program is for undergraduate university-level students only, who have completed at least two years of study and have a grade point average of 3.6 out of 4.0 or the equivalent. Those admitted are given the opportunity to take part in a research project in their fields of interest. Most of the participants receive a modest allowance to cover living expenses. To be admitted to the program, the candidate must give evidence of a serious interest in research and be prepared to study for between ten weeks to four months. Participants designate the research preferences of their choice from a descriptive list of research projects at the Institute. The students study on the research project to which they have been assigned under the guidance of a scientific supervisor. At the end of the program, students deliver a 10-minute presentation describing their study, and submit a written abstract. These abstracts are then combined into a book, which is mailed to each student. A few students from the Southern Hemisphere attend during the winter months, coinciding with these students' university holidays. All students admitted to the program receive a *per diem* allowance (Weizmann Institute of Science website, 2008a).

**The Arava Institute for Environmental Studies** (AIES), a private research and teaching center, in cooperation with Tel Aviv University, offers a one year program in environmental studies for international students. Situated on Kibbutz Ketura near Eilat and the Egyptian and Jordanian borders, AIES brings Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian and Egyptian students together with their North American, European and Australian peers. Taught in English, AIES's courses are designed for students planning to pursue careers as environmental professionals as well as those with a purely personal interest in the environment (Arava Institute for Environmental Studies website, 2008a).

A few words of general analysis are now in place. Israeli institutions of higher education have a long experience with specialized frameworks catering to undergraduate students from overseas. However, these frameworks have never grown to be a substantial component of these institutions. In most, the number of overseas students is rather small and consists of a small percentage of the overall student body. The overseas student programs are run as a separate entity and in some cases are even housed in a separate building on campus. The general pattern

that emerges is that of a separate activity, adjunct to the main activity of an institution, namely, the teaching in Hebrew to Israeli students.

Most institutions do not offer full-fledged undergraduate academic degree programs for overseas students. Undergraduate programs in most institutions are based only on one-semester or one-year attendance as part of a full undergraduate program of studies taken at the home university abroad. This pattern, repeated in most institutions of higher education in Israel with regard to undergraduate studies is, no doubt, the result of the growing trend among undergraduate students in the United States to study for one or two semesters in a university outside their own country. This trend is projected to increase even further in the near future. Universities outside the United States, Israel included, are aware of these growing numbers of American undergraduate students looking for a place to study abroad and would therefore like to have a share in this expanding business activity. Israeli institutions of higher learning have a particular interest in this flow of American students. It is estimated that in recent years about twenty thousand American Jewish students have gone abroad for studies. Only a small fraction of these Jewish students end up in Israel. Israeli institutions would like to increase their share in this international flow of Jewish students, and are assisted to this avail by Jewish organizations as well as the Israeli government, who are interested in enhancing the attachment of young Jews to Israel and to the Jewish people.

It therefore comes as no surprise that the main array of subjects offered to overseas students in Israeli institutions of higher education are primarily Jewish Studies, Israel Studies and Middle East studies. The limited list does not represent the potential demand for university studies but rather the perception that Israeli institutions should teach, mostly Jewish overseas students, subjects related to the Jewish people and its special relationship with the State of Israel, including issues related to the existence of this state in the Middle Eastern region. In this respect these institutions appear to largely serve a national-Zionist cause of drawing young Jews across the world to Jewish and Israeli contents. Indeed, it appears that the reason for this particular array of subjects is twofold; the main and original reason for establishing schools for overseas students in Israeli universities was to attract Jewish students from abroad, mainly Americans, to come to Jerusalem and have academically-based experiences that broaden and deepen their knowledge of the history and current affairs related to Israel and the Jewish people at large. This particular cause was considered worthy of support by Jewish organizations and

philanthropists. The other reason for concentrating on the Jewish-Israel-Middle East array of studies is the assumption that overseas students will be attracted to these subjects because they represent the particular academic expertise and reputations of Israeli institutions of higher education.

## **RRIS at JDC: The First Full-fledged Undergraduate Degree Program**

Until recently, the Jewish market in Western countries has been the driving force for students studying in Israeli institutions of higher education. As previously indicated, it is for the moment mostly limited to those pursuing Jewish, Israel and Middle Eastern studies. Jewish students from these countries interested in other subjects have not been tapped in significant numbers, partly because of the deficiency in English instruction in Israeli universities and colleges. The few who have ventured to do so were determined to attain a sufficient level of Hebrew through intensive studies, much in the same way as many of the young Jewish immigrants had to do upon arrival in the country. In recent years the Inter-Disciplinary Center (IDC) in Herzliya had diverted from this established model in undergraduate studies for overseas students. With the aim of attracting overseas students IDC has set up a special school named the **Raphael Recanati International School (RRIS)**, to teach in English undergraduate subjects that are in high demand in the global market of higher education: Business Administration, Communications, Computer science, Government and Psychology. RRIS enables its students to take some courses at the University of Pennsylvania, Syracuse University and the University of Singapore, as part of the overall curriculum. In addition the school offers an MBA program specializing in entrepreneurship and international management, also taught in English (IDC website, 2008a).

Undergraduate studies can be completed at RRIS in three years, an advantage over the four-year period required by American universities and colleges. This is in line with the general practice in Israel with regards to undergraduate programs. Israeli academic institutions, including those of Jerusalem could make use of this advantage when competing for the North American market of potential undergraduate students. Another advantage over many of the reputable and expensive institutions in the U.S. are the relatively low tuition fees in Israel. For the 2008/9 academic year tuition fees total US\$7,500, not very different from any

program taught in Hebrew to Israeli students. RRIS also provides accommodation in apartments rented by the college in the private market and sublet to students at the cost of US\$5,700 a year (\$475 per month). This includes all maintenance charges, barring gas, water, electricity and telephone bills (IDC website, 2008b). Herzliya is not as expensive as Jerusalem in terms of the rental market.

It seems that RRIS, thanks to its focus on subjects currently in high demand in the global market of higher education, has been rather successful over a short period in achieving two major results: attracting a relatively large number of overseas students (648 in 2007/8) and tapering the predominance of North America in schools for overseas student in Israeli institution of higher education (based on data provided directly to the author by RRIS). Only 241 (37.2%) of overseas students in that year were from North America, mostly from the United States (216). Western European countries were of a similar size: 250 students (38.5%). The leading West European countries in order of magnitude were France (72), Germany (50), Belgium (33), and UK (30). Russia and East Europe were the origin of only 36 (5.6%) students. From South Africa some 32 (4.9%) students arrived. Yet untapped markets are East Asia and India (5) and African countries other than South Africa (7).

RRIS at JDC is pioneering on the undergraduate level in one other respect. There is a sizable component of Israeli students who have elected to do their undergraduate studies in an English speaking environment. It seems that this trend is associated with the global scope of employment. According to reports in the 2007/8 academic year 181 Israeli students were enrolled at RRIS. The motivation of these Israeli students to be taught in English is, no doubt, the desire to adapt to opportunities in the global economy. This motivation is one of the reasons why the Technion in Haifa is currently proposing to teach its own Israeli students in Civil Engineering. Such a change is intended to also attract many students from abroad so as to enlarge the economic base of this institution (Israel Council of Higher Education 2008). It seems that an accelerated process is taking place in Israel with regard to the use of English as a medium enabling the globalization of higher education in the country. This process seems to persevere even on the undergraduate level and despite some opposition by those deeply concerned for the status of Hebrew, the hard fought-for national language of Israel, in its academic institutions (Haaretz August 18, 2008). It is therefore important that academic institutions in Jerusalem become increasing alert to such developments in Israel and act upon them for the interest of the

economy of their city before other cities take the lead and establish a geographical fact that would be hard to compete with.

## Graduate Degree Programs

On the graduate level a different pattern exists. Most of the efforts in graduate studies for overseas students in Israel are directed at building programs that lead to the granting of a master's degree by an Israeli institution of higher education. In some institutions, as at the Hebrew university of Jerusalem, graduate studies are largely based on the Jewish-Israel-Middle Eastern array of studies that characterize their partial undergraduate subjects. In other institutions, such as RRIS at JDC in Herzliya, Bar-Ilan University in Ramat-Gan in Business Administration, The Hebrew University Faculty of Agriculture in Rehovoth, the Fineberg Graduate School at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovoth in the natural and exact sciences, and Ben-Gurion University in cooperation with the Arava Institute in desert environmental studies, each is trying to build graduate programs that reflect their own academic expertise or their analysis of the demand situation in the global market of higher education.

The most developed series of graduate programs appropriate for overseas students was developed long ago by the **Feinberg Graduate School of the Weizmann Institute of Science** (Weizmann Institute of Science website, 2008b). The school offers graduate study programs for M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees in Bioinformatics-Biology, Physical Sciences, Chemical Sciences and Life Sciences. English is the only language of instruction, a rather unique situation among major academic institutions in Israel. Moreover, research proposals, papers and theses are submitted in English. Many of the lecturers are from overseas, a fact that contributes to the international atmosphere of the School. Students admitted to the Feinberg Graduate School are usually granted tuition scholarship on top of a monthly fellowship for their daily expenses (Weizmann Institute website, 2008c) These monthly fellowships vary between IS3,200 and IS5,600, depending on the degree track and year of studies. Admission is highly competitive. The competition reflects the high demand as a result of the international reputation of the Weizmann Institute of Science.

The Hebrew University's Faculty of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Quality Sciences located in Rehovoth offers graduate studies taught in English in Plant Sciences (Horticulture) and Nutritional Sciences through its Division of External Studies. These two one-year graduate programs lead to M.Sc. degrees. Each such program is offered every two years (Hebrew University Faculty of Agriculture website, 2008).

**Tel Aviv University** offers several full-fledged graduate programs leading to MA degrees in several subjects. The Department of Middle Eastern and African History offers a Master's program in Middle Eastern History conducted in English (Tel Aviv University website, 2008c). The program requires students to learn both Hebrew and Arabic. During the 2007/8 academic year over 50 students registered in this graduate program (Data provided by OSP through personal communication). Graduate students come mostly from European countries such as the Netherlands, Germany, Greece and Turkey. They are attracted to this graduate program because of the reputation of Tel Aviv University in the field of Middle Eastern history. The Department of English and American Studies at Tel Aviv University offers an M.A. degree in English Literature. This program, conducted in English, consists of courses, workshops and guest lectures (Tel Aviv University website, 2008d). Also welcomed are single-semester or year-long students pursuing graduate degrees in U.S. universities who wish to supplement their studies. Overseas students can earn an M.A. degree in Jewish Studies at Tel Aviv University. This program is specially designed for both English and Hebrew-speaking students from around the world who seek a graduate education in Jewish Studies with intensive training in Hebrew as well (Tel Aviv University website, 2008e). The School of Education has recently launched an M.A. program in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) to respond to this growing need world wide. This program is built on the research experience and reputation gained by the School of Education. The courses offered in English are parallel to those offered in Hebrew to Israeli students (Tel Aviv University website, 2008f). Another graduate program leading to a Master's degree is the Kellogg Recanati International Executive MBA Program offered jointly by Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and the Recanati Graduate School of Business Administration at Tel Aviv University. Though taught in English the main student body in this program consists of Israeli mid-career students interested in a globally oriented experience of studies. However it can conveniently serve as a basis for overseas students as well because of the language of instruction.

Similarly **Bar-Ilan University** has also chosen to focus on a graduate program in business administration for overseas students, taught entirely in English. This intensive one-year program leading to an MBA degree is taught at the S. Daniel Abraham Center of Economics and Business and not in a special school for overseas students as is the case in other leading universities in Israel. This International MBA program at Bar-Ilan, is modeled on the Israeli, Hebrew MBA program and was initiated in response to the growing demand for an internationally accredited program of courses in English. Half of the students in this program come from a variety of countries, among them the United States, Canada, UK, South Africa, the Netherlands, Belgium, and France. The other half are Israeli students, among them recent immigrants to Israel, who may have difficulty studying in the Hebrew language program (Bar-Ilan University website, 2008b).

**RRIS at IDC** in Herzliya maintains graduate programs in two fields of business administration, designed for both Israeli and overseas students and will commence in the fall of 2008. One is a Global Entrepreneurship MBA and the other is a Global Management MBA (IDC website, 2008c). These graduate courses are taught entirely in English and designed to prepare executives from Israel and around the world to function in the international business arena. For the moment these graduate programs are largely targeted towards Israeli executives, who constitute about 80 percent of the students. However, the infrastructure of graduate programs taught in English has been laid and it is now for future efforts to determine whether the proportion of overseas students will increase.

The global popularity of MBA studies has induced the **Technion** in Haifa to not only open its doors in this field for overseas students by teaching in English but to now contemplate to altogether switch its MBA studies to English, even for Israeli students (The Jerusalem Post August 20, 2008). The move was precipitated by the recommendation of an international committee appointed earlier by the Council of Higher Education to examine MBA programs in Israeli academic institutions. The move is intended to enhance the international standing of the MBA program at the Technion by attracting students and staff from overseas. If such a switch indeed materializes, it will pose a serious challenge to the MBA program at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

**Ben Gurion University** maintains graduate programs taught in English. These lead to M.Sc. and M.A. degrees in environmental sciences from the Albert Katz International School for Desert Studies located at the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for

Desert Research (BIDR) in the Sede Boqer campus. These graduate programs include: Drylands Agriculture and Biotechnology, Ecology and Drylands, Water Resource Management, Man in the Drylands and Drylands Environmental Studies. The latter is taught in cooperation with the Arava Institute for Desert Studies at Ketura (Ben-Gurion University Albert Katz International School for Desert Studies website, 2008)

There is only one case of a partial but specialized graduate program that does not lead to a Master's degree granted by an Israeli institution. **Tel Aviv University** offers a single semester International Archeology Program, the credits of which are transferable to most American universities, much in the same manner that characterizes undergraduate studies for overseas students in Israeli institutions. The program is designed for students from various fields related to the Hebrew Bible who wish to broaden their knowledge in Biblical and Modern Hebrew, Biblical Archaeology and the history of the Land of Israel during the biblical period (Iron Age to Persian period, 12th-4th centuries BCE). It introduces students to issues of theory and methodology, and also offers the opportunity to gain fieldwork experience (Tel Aviv University website, 2008g).

Graduate overseas students can gain experience in research and studies in many Israeli universities but on an individual level, and in direct contact with the respective department and supervisors in whose research work they are interested. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs offers scholarships for such overseas students at the following universities: Tel Aviv University, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Haifa University, Bar-Ilan University, Ben-Gurion University, The Technion, Bezalel Academy of Art, the Volcani Center/Agricultural Research Organization, and the Weizmann Institute of Technology (Israel Government Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, 2008).

## **Medical Degree Programs**

Several medical schools in Israeli universities are involved in teaching overseas students in the English language. **The Medical School of International Health at Ben-Gurion University** offers a four-year M.D. program taught in English and trains its graduates with special skills in global health and medicine, including refugee and disaster medicine, international prevention and geographic medicine

and focusing on cross-cultural medicine and population health. Course work in medicine is integrated with related areas in behavioral and social sciences. Graduates of this program are trained to have the required skills to treat sick individuals as well as to promote community health and disease prevention. In addition to the standard M.D. degree courses, graduates study about the impact of economic, socio-political, cultural, environmental and policy factors on the health of individuals and populations and how to use this knowledge to advance policies to promote health and prevent disease. Through Ben-Gurion University's network of community health facilities, outreach programs, research projects and clinics throughout the Negev region students gain insights into the diverse needs of communities. The Medical School of International Health at Ben-Gurion University was established in cooperation with Columbia University's Health Sciences Division. In 2007/8 126 students from the U.S.A., Canada, Venezuela, the Netherlands, Russia, Ethiopia, India and Tibet enrolled in the school (Ben-Gurion University Medical School for International Health website, 2008).

**The Technion American Medical Students (TEAMS) Program**, placed within The Ruth & Bruce Rappaport Faculty of Medicine of the Technion, Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, caters to qualified American or Canadian pre-med college graduates who would like to continue their studies for the M.D. degree. Each year about 30-40 candidates are accepted from among applicants. All have to be citizens of or permanent residents in the U.S. and Canada. The program began in 1983. All the hundreds of graduates have successfully passed the licensing exams to return to the U.S.A. or Canada and have been accepted for residency positions (Technion American Medical Students Program website, 2008). The program is taught in English in both the preclinical and clinical years. All syllabi and all examinations, whether written or oral, are conducted in English. However, students are required to attend a preparatory Hebrew course before beginning the clinical studies. Knowledge of Hebrew at a conversational level is essential for effective communication with Hebrew-speaking patients. The students must know enough Hebrew to be able to take the medical history of and converse with their patients during their first clinical year, which is the third year of study (ibid.).

**The New York State/American Program at the Sackler School of Medicine of Tel Aviv University** is another medical degree program catering specifically to medical students from the United States. In the 2007/8 academic year 260 American students enrolled in the program (as reported directly by the office of the program).

The program is taught entirely in English. Its curriculum and teaching methods are modeled after those of U.S. medical schools. The New York State/American Program is chartered by the Regents of the University of the State of New York and is accredited by the State of Israel (Tel Aviv University website, 2008h).

## 6 ENHANCING THE GLOBAL ROLE OF JERUSALEM'S HIGHER EDUCATION

Up to now the number of students studying each year in Jerusalem in all these frameworks designated for overseas students remains relatively too small to have a significant impact on the overall urban economy. However, in principle, Jerusalem has already a nascent export industry in the field of higher education. Several hundred families in the city earn their living from servicing the several thousands of overseas students in a variety of ways.

There are two factors that impede the substantial growth in the numbers of overseas students in Jerusalem, and for that matter in the country at large. Security is often cited as the main factor. Indeed, in the recent past, when security was breached by the outbreak of terror or war, many among the overseas students studying at the time in Jerusalem were urgently recalled by their families. But then many returned and new students continue to arrive when tension subsides. Another factor is the rather narrow spectrum of subjects offered in English in Jerusalem. To begin with, these subjects do not draw many students, irrespective of where they study. The main thrust of student registration these days is in other subjects and they are offered in Jerusalem in the Hebrew language only, and for the time being this fact acts a major barrier. Not too many people are ready to study Hebrew from the outset in order to make use of the courses offered in business administration or computer science. Whichever way we tackle the issue of exporting higher education services we come back to the language barrier. Without a considerable choice of courses to be taught in English, the potential attraction of the city of Jerusalem as a global center of higher learning has not been put to a real test. For the moment the process works the other way. Jerusalem as well as the entire country are engaged not in bringing in overseas students but in exporting lecturers, professors and researchers

to teach in universities overseas, primarily the USA, thus aiding other cities to foster their local economy.

In light of the recent development of a global economy of higher education and the needs of Jerusalem to enlarge and upgrade its economic base, it is appropriate to ask whether the city cannot broaden the scope of its global higher education services over and beyond the Jewish and Israeli subjects currently available to overseas students. Why, for instance, business administration, an academic subject presently sought after all over the modern world, cannot be taught in the English language, in an internationally competitive quality and attract students from many other countries? This question also applies to other fields including Natural Sciences and Technology. In general, the question is whether Jerusalem should not make an effort to take part in the competition between universities around the world on the income generated through imported payments by overseas students.

### **Enlarging the Global Scope of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

At present, the higher education institution in Jerusalem responsible for achieving the goal of the city becoming a major export center is the Hebrew University. It is already involved in such export through its Rothberg International School. To become a major player this school should become a more autonomous and therefore more conspicuous organization in the world market. Organizational ways could be found to keep its affiliation with the Hebrew University, such as the university functioning mainly as a holding company for the Jerusalem International University. It seems that autonomy is an important ingredient in promoting more entrepreneurial and more aggressive competition in the world market of higher education. Standing apart from the mother organization and carrying a name that will emphasize the international character of the new institution will clearly position it in the global market. Detaching the name from the "Hebrew" characterization of the holding body could reduce the deterring effect for overseas students who might be wary of a language barrier.

An alternative way for the Hebrew University to enter the global market of higher education in full force is to do what some European universities have done, as briefly described above. Step by step, depending on the attractiveness of a subject and the availability of the appropriate staff, specific departments or schools at the

Hebrew University will prepare a full-fledged curriculum of courses offered in the English language for the benefit of overseas students.

### **Establishing a New International University in Jerusalem**

A completely different avenue is the establishment of a new independent university in Jerusalem solely dedicated to teaching in English and primarily catering to overseas students. Such a proposition is included in the reports of Jerusalem 2000 Master Plan Team (Solomon and Sefarim, 2004; Zlikha, Cohen and Musek, 2006). This avenue could involve a tiring and exhaustive process of approval and accreditation by the Council for Higher Education, which for the moment is wary of the idea of adding another university to Jerusalem. But such an idea does not necessarily go against the current policy of stabilization of the number and distribution of universities across Israel, since it does not pertain to the local Israeli higher education market but to a body of students from out of the country. More so, it will not severely compete with the Hebrew University, the sole full fledged university in Jerusalem under the jurisdiction of the CHE. Under certain circumstances, the Hebrew university could be party to a joint venture with an entrepreneurial body with proven experience in the global market of higher education. For that matter, one could think of other high quality colleges, currently operating in Jerusalem, joining this venture and contributing their specific expertise. The Jerusalem School of Technology (Machon Lev) and the Hadassah Academic College are two such colleges.

One could go on and develop this idea of a joint venture to become a joint framework of participating member bodies, each teaching in its own campus and offering its own accredited degrees but operating under a roof organization, primarily involved in recruiting overseas students to come and study in Jerusalem under a common banner such as the Jerusalem International University. The joint body will also provide a support system for overseas students, in the realms of housing and social services. The member institutions will engage primarily in teaching. Such an idea does not necessitate building a new campus, a costly venture, since the existing campuses could be adapted for the overseas students. The absence of a separate campus for overseas students has the advantage of preventing their segregation from the rest of the city.

## Potential Markets of Overseas Students

IDC has been able to spread its market well beyond the United States and other English speaking countries though RRIS at Herzliya. The pattern is very different from the one that characterized RIS at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and OSP at Tel Aviv University. It is still based, to a large extent, on Jewish students from abroad, as is the case in the other programs for overseas students running in Israeli institutions of higher education. It seems that the globalization of higher education in Israel started with Diaspora Jewish students as its main market. The reasons for this concentration on the Jewish market have to do not only with the present nature of the demand but also with the character of the supply. Jewish organizations and philanthropists have built in recent decades a network of financial aid resources for Jewish students to come and spend time in Israel, in an effort to deepen their commitment to this country as well as to their Jewish identity. One outstanding vehicle in this network of financial aid is the recently established MASA, a joint project of the Government of Israel, the Jewish Agency for Israel as well as Jewish communities and philanthropists around the world. In the 2007/8 academic year MASA has financially supported about 1176 overseas students: 494 at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 334 at Tel Aviv University, 108 at Haifa University, 107 at Bar-Ilan University, 88 at the Inter-Disciplinary Center in Herzliya and 40 at Ben-Gurion University. The data were provided by the MASA office in Jerusalem, which estimates that the number of additional overseas students studying in these institutions through scholarships by organizations other than MASA is between 120-140, which brings the overall number to about 1280-1300 students. These numbers do not include students in the medical programs or the Weizmann Institute graduate studies.

The MASA source of financial aid as well as that of similar others forge the nature of the demand in the direction of the Jewish market and therefore shape the curriculum of programs targeted at such students. In general, one can say that up to recently higher education for overseas students has not been economically motivated as an export endeavor but rather driven by ideology and national interest. However, the inadvertent consequences of this motivation have been a gradual building up of an infrastructure of curriculum and services, including experienced personnel, which can serve as a basis for the development of an export industry that serves students far beyond the traditional Jewish market. In later stages, when the infrastructure of higher education services for overseas Jewish students will have

been built and tested, new markets beyond the Jewish Diaspora could be explored, even in countries that do not have a sizable Jewish population.

Both West and East European countries can serve as a potential market over and beyond the Jewish Diaspora of North America. Studying in a country not one's own has become almost a fashion among the West European young population. In the course of their undergraduate studies many West European students take up courses in more than one university, accumulating credits on the way to their B.A. degree. This has been made increasingly possible by multilateral and bilateral agreements between countries as well as between academic institutions. Israeli universities can try and become part of this itinerary and expand the number of international students doing some coursework in them. What is missing is a wide array of departmental subjects and individual courses all taught in English.

Israel's Palestinian neighbors as well as young persons from some less hostile Arab countries could be a potential market for the more internationally inclined higher education institutions in Jerusalem. Even if the antagonism and animosity between Israel and the Arab world will not fully subside, there just may be enough Arab students who would want to study subjects in which Jerusalem's institutions are more proficient in and less expensive compared with those of Western Europe and North America, the traditional destination for many students from Arab countries.

The geographical proximity of Jerusalem to the place of residence of these potential students in comparison to remote cities in Western Europe and North America might be an important favorable factor that could draw Arab students. They could easily go back to their families on weekends, holy days and family occasions. Moreover, in the Palestinian Arab sections of the city these Arab students could find a comfortable familiar environment to live and dine in while they are studying in Jerusalem, much in the same way Arab students from other regions of Israel do, when coming to study in Jerusalem. In the future they could even find that several of the academic and administrative staff are Arabs themselves, a factor that might be significant for Arab students for whom studying in another country results in leaving the familiar cultural environment. This factor applies more to those Arab students who will choose to study in one of the Arab higher education institutions operating in the city and teaching mostly in the Arabic language, such as the al-Quds University. The Arab-Palestinian part of Jerusalem might in this way be party to linking the city to the global economy of higher education. However, all these hopes for the development of a sizable Palestinian and Arab market of students

largely depend on the security situation in the country at large and particularly in Jerusalem.

## **The Alternative Avenue of Distance Learning**

Even if the situation in Israel and the Middle East will not calm down and tensions will continue to deter tourists and students from coming to Jerusalem in large numbers, the door to overseas students will remain open using distance learning. This learning mode is fast spreading and developing in recent decades, as a result of rapid diffusion of information technologies of all kinds, and especially on the internet. It is therefore appropriate that higher education institutions in Jerusalem interested in joining the global market explore ways in which distance learning procedures could expand their market well beyond the boundaries of Israel. This will apply to potential students who are neither in a position to leave their place of residence nor are they inclined to spend a few years in this occasionally hectic city in terms of security conditions. As the market for distance learning is increasingly encompassing higher education and is spreading beyond national boundaries, institutions in Jerusalem engaged in penetrating the global market are likely to become increasingly interested in adopting this mode of teaching. It has the ability of reaching out to unpredicted places on the globe, thus spreading the reputation of the teaching institutions to new grounds, previously not perceived as part of a potential market. Distance learning could serve to compensate Jerusalem, a city plagued by an unstable security situation that causes apprehension both among people around the world and in Israel itself, for those students lost to the city as a result.

Building and managing distance learning demands special skills and experience. Not all institutions are able and ready to engage in this new mode on their own. For that reason, higher education institutions get together and cooperate to build a joint system of distance learning that could serve them all. It is therefore advisable for higher education institutions in Jerusalem to seek intensive cooperation between them and to try to develop a shared distant learning system. The more obvious candidates for this kind of cooperation are the Hebrew University, Hadassah Academic College and The Jerusalem School of Technology (The Lev Institute), each developing their own expertise and student markets. The Hebrew University, given its size and extensive experience in teaching overseas students in English

through the Rothberg International School, can be the main anchor in such a cooperative effort.

## **A National Distance Learning Consortium**

Lessons drawn from the U.S. and elsewhere, however, suggest that the number and size of the institutions of higher education in Jerusalem are too small to provide enough economies of scale in this highly sophisticated and complex field, both in terms of pedagogical methodology and interactive technology. In the United States there are quite a few large bodies of cooperation between higher education institutions for rendering the operation of distance learning efficient and effective. One such a body exists on the national level. About 65 public universities and colleges offering distance learning form a consortium named ADEC - The American Distance Education Consortium. Its function is to efficiently develop high quality distance learning programs, using advanced and updated information technologies, including the development of satellite communication for students and their teaching center (ADEC, 2008) Moreover, ADEC has developed a framework allowing students to build a teaching curriculum based on courses taken in several institutions. All these efforts are coordinated by a relatively small but highly skilled team of professionals specializing in the development and management of distance learning programs. The team is located in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Cooperation in distance learning between higher education institutions exists in the United States also on the state level. For instance, the state of Connecticut has the Connecticut Consortium of Distance Learning, an organization comprising about thirty institutions, public and private, large and small. It is responsible for training staff in distance learning work, helping in the development of efficient technologies, marketing distance learning programs of all institutions as well as monitoring and evaluating the effects of these programs. The Connecticut consortium maintains a website which features all the available distance learning programs in the state (CTDLC, 2008). A similar organization exists in the state of New York. Public institutions of higher education affiliated with the State University of New York – SUNY and involved in distance learning are members of SLN (SUNY Learning Network), which supports the pedagogical and technical

processes, involved in distance learning. It maintains a website (SLN, 2008), which allows students to interact with any member universities and colleges of SLN.

A consortium is also used by several Australian universities to operate distance learning within Australia as well as abroad. These universities (Curtin U., Griffith U., Macquarie U., Monash U., RMIT U., Swineburne U. and U. of South Australia) have combined to form the Open Universities of Australia (OUA), and provide distance learning services for each of the participating universities. OUA caters mostly to Australian students but also supplies a clientele of “international” students, many of them in India, where the consortium maintains a program to provide students information about studying with an OUA partner university (Open Universities of Australia website, 2008). Some units in which practical and laboratory classes are required are not available to students outside of Australia. Among these are Nursing, Education, Law (Juris Doctor), Business Administration (MBA Executive), and Applied Science. The cost of tuition varies in line with the discipline studied. Students who are not Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens or holders of a permanent visa are required to pay AU\$195 above the standard fees quoted for each unit at undergraduate or postgraduate levels.

The University of London is a federal system of 19 colleges in the London area that also share an External System for students not attending one of the London campuses. Distance learning at the University of London External System dates back to pre-Internet days, when it was based on mail correspondence between overseas students and the External System tutors in London. The University of London external system reports 41,000 students resident in over 180 countries. Their geographical distribution can serve as an indication of potential markets for higher education distance learning in English. Many of the students originate from countries where English is spoken or is the main language of modern education due to their colonial history. The largest numbers are from Hong Kong and China (over 5,000), followed by Pakistan and the U.S.A. (1,000+), Canada (800+), India (400+), Kenya (350+), and Russia and Germany (300+). Countries with 200-299 students at the University of London External System are Australia, Ghana, Greece, Ireland, Japan and Switzerland. Lower figures such as between 100-199 students are in Western Europe (Belgium, France, Italy, The Netherlands and Spain). Saudi Arabia stands out among other Arab countries with its 100-199 students (University of London External System website, 2008).

Many Israeli institutions of higher education – universities and academic colleges – are involved in some forms of cooperation on issues of distance learning. This is through the Inter-University Center for e-Learning (IUCEL), which is part of the Israeli Inter-University Computation Center (IUCC), at Tel-Aviv University. It is known in Hebrew as MEITAL. It assists Israeli institutions in advancing the use of e-learning technologies as they relate to their activities regarding distance learning programs in Hebrew for their students in Israel. The main activity of MEITAL is done through its steering committee and several work-groups made up of representatives of all the institutions that participate in MEITAL, as well as experts in specific areas. The work-groups deal with issues such as: learning environments, new technologies, methodologies and staff development, specific content areas, intellectual property rights, and common standards. Other services that MEITAL provides include: conferences and seminars, central platforms for experiencing learning technologies, central information website, research fund, and purchase of central products (MEITAL website, 2008).

The experience of cooperation gained through MEITAL equips Israeli institutions of higher education to explore the establishment of a consortium or comparable partnership on the national level for those institutions interested in the promotion of distance learning services for overseas students. The consortium format could do much to facilitate and improve this kind of activity and at the same time allow for some measure of individuality for each participating institution. However, it is suggested that the consortium of overseas distance learning to be set up in Israel take up a much more intensive and active character than the one currently adopted by MEITAL. The present goal is reaching the global market of higher education. In order to achieve it, one major task is to prepare distance learning programs in English, or in any other language that will be found economically feasible, by using the most advanced technologies available. Not all institutions of higher education in Israel have the know-how and the experience needed for this purpose or the resources and the personnel needed for the development of such programs. Therefore, a proactive national consortium strategy could be considered as an option. Such a consortium could assume much of the process involved in distance learning for overseas students: Prepare syllabuses with the help of lecturers from participating institutions; coach in the art of distance teaching; develop new technologies to improve the process on both ends – students and lecturers, monitor and evaluate effectiveness; and propose ways to further improve the process. The consortium could also be involved in the marketing of the various programs for

each of the participating institutions, and even advise applicants on the program and the institution most appropriate for them. The consortium could also make it possible for each individual student to study in several institutions, in Israel and abroad, in order to form a complete program of studies that will enable that student to qualify upon completion for an academic degree in one of these institutions. The suggested consortium could perform all its tasks internally by building a team devoted solely to this purpose, much in the same manner as ADEC is structured. Alternatively, it could outsource the needed tasks to a private body, a system currently gaining ground in Israel's public sector.

In recent years the distance learning experience at the Open University has profited Israeli students (Open University website, 2008a) as well as Israelis living temporarily overseas (Open University, 2008b). It could be harnessed for the benefit of developing distance learning programs for overseas students in Israeli institutions of higher education. Moreover, the Open University is currently considering translating its course materials into English so that they can be used by a wider market abroad. The first course materials earmarked for translation will be in the undergraduate program in Economics and Management, where potential global demand had been identified.

Jerusalem stands to gain from distance learning in several ways. The major gain is by its high education institutions reaching markets that were not tapped up to now. It will also help to somewhat reduce their dependence on state funding. And despite a reduced income than would otherwise have been generated to the city's economy, by overseas students living in the city and spending money on their living expenses, Jerusalem could benefit from an enhanced reputation around the world as a place of learning.

### **A Dream or a Vision?**

The proposal to generate new economic activity for Jerusalem, by exporting to the world the services of its higher education institutions, might appear as a dream or even a fantasy, especially in times when the city is clouded by animosity and violence, threatening to erupt at any moment. Indeed, as mentioned above, whenever violence did erupt in the city or across the country it resulted in a decline in the already small number of overseas students. At the same time each outburst of

violence was followed by a period of calm in which those students returned to the city. The same applied to tourism. Although the incoming tourist curve has over the years tantalized the city in line with the security rhythm, its tourist infrastructure continued to develop in preparation for days of calm and prosperity. Such an approach could help in thinking, planning and building an economic activity, to date still in its cradle in Jerusalem, such as exporting services of the city's higher education institutions. Whoever looks ahead and is ready to risk optimism, has to try and set this goal, even if nowadays it appears too difficult to fully achieve. The desire to study where quality of education and character of place are desirable, often guides young persons to overcome cultural and political barriers as well as environmental risks. This desire often carries them to far away unexpected places. Jerusalem can readily become such a place for many more than the few overseas students who have ventured this up to now.

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