



Culture

Why should Jews serve any purpose?

Keith Kahn-Harris | 3 July 2025

Keith Kahn-Harris, author of *Everyday Jews: Why the Jewish people are not who you think they are*, questions, with a hint of provocation, this strange and alienating Jewish tendency to want to make themselves indispensable to the world. What if the best response to antisemitism was ultimately to claim the right to frivolity, to allow oneself a perfectly superfluous existence?



For a time in the early 80s, as a child born in the early 70s, I too 'felt my legs were praying'.

It would take until adulthood until I learned of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel's famous remark after he joined Martin Luther King on the civil rights march at Selma in 1965. Still, my joining protest marches against nuclear weapons with a Jewish disarmament group felt instinctively *right*. This felt like something that Jews like me should be doing *as Jews*.

I was, perhaps, something of a precocious adopter of Jewish 'social action'. While I became more cynical in adolescence, I retained the conviction that Jews should *matter*, that we should make our presence in the world count, that we should seek to make the earth a better place. And even beyond social justice, Jews should make a distinctive contribution to the human project.

Until recently, I used to put it like this: Jews should aspire to be more than 'ethno-religious group 27b'; not just another interchangeable people, distinguishable only by its surface details. If we are interchangeable with other peoples, we are simply pointless.

Even if my phrasing of the challenge might have been idiosyncratic, I certainly wasn't the only one who felt that Jews were existentially obliged to avoid the fate of becoming ethno-religious group 27b. In my own family, my paternal grandmother may well have felt this way. She was one of many young Jews from the East End of London who, in the pre-war period, flocked to the communist party and the hope it promised of a world

transformed. It wasn't enough just to exist in the world as a Jew, one had a duty to ally with other peoples and go out and change it.

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We now know that Soviet-style communism ultimately only led to the forced dissolution of Jewish identity (and my grandmother, like many other Jews, left the party sometime during the war). We also know that other political movements do not necessarily hold the secret to ensuring indefinite Jewish continuity: The Bund was wiped out during the Holocaust and few in the immediate aftermath saw much hope in it; Jewish liberalism and integration was spectacularly successful in the post-war period in the US and some other countries, but it also succeeded 'too well' in providing little incentive to remain involved in Jewish communal life; Zionism too seemed to triumphantly assure Jewish safety in the world, but it has never resolved schisms about what a Jew should be.

What didn't change though, regardless of political tendency, was a sense that Jewish political involvement in the world is somehow an *obligation*.

The political theorist Ilan Baron, in his 2015 work *Obligation in Exile*^[1], argues that the Diaspora Jews' relationship with Israel today is marked by a sense of 'transnational political obligation', that is defined as much by the requirement of engagement with Israel as the actual content of that engagement. In other words, regardless of what Diaspora Jews think about Israel, Jews must do more than think about Israel. I wonder though

whether this kind of obligation is only part of a much broader sense of Jewish obligation; *to do more than just be in the world*. That obligation to engage in the world is, in part, an obligation to ourselves, to fight for our very existence. Over time, that kind of obligation may expand to encompass everyone and everything; a movement from obligation to necessity: Jews become obliged to engage in the world as we are somehow *necessary* to the world.



Written in the white heat of the post-October 7 upsurge in Jewish anxiety, Franklin Foer's much-discussed essay 'The Golden Age of American Jews Is Ending', published in *The Atlantic* in March 2024, reflected a widespread anxiety that the world was treating us as expendable once again. Foer pointed to the extraordinary prominence of Jewish culture in post-war America as a 'golden age' that was inextricably tied to the apparent triumph of American liberalism. The recent erosion of that liberalism also meant the erosion of that extraordinary flowering of Jewish culture:

The forces arrayed against Jews, on the right and the left, are far more powerful than they were 50 years ago. The surge of anti-Semitism is a symptom of the decay of democratic habits, a leading indicator of rising authoritarianism. When anti-Semitism takes hold, conspiracy theory hardens into conventional wisdom, embedding violence in thought and then in deadly action. A society that holds its Jews at arm's length is likely to be more intent on hunting down scapegoats than addressing underlying defects. Although it is hardly an iron law of history, such societies are prone to decline. England entered a long dark age after expelling its Jews in 1290. Czarist Russia limped toward revolution

after the pogroms of the 1880s. If America persists on its current course, it would be the end of the Golden Age not just for the Jews, but for the country that nurtured them.

This kind of discourse, that constructs Jewish flourishing as necessary for the maintenance of an entire civilization, is not confined to America. In 2016, Sir Jonathan Sacks, late Chief Rabbi of the UK, argued in a speech to the European Parliament:

The hate that begins with Jews never ends with Jews. We make a great mistake if we think antisemitism is a threat only to Jews. It is a threat, first and foremost, to Europe and to the freedoms it took centuries to achieve.

The European Union's 'Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life (2021–2030)' took up Sacks's quote and went on to argue:

Antisemitism is incompatible with Europe's core values. It represents a threat not only to Jewish communities and to Jewish life, but to an open and diverse society, to democracy and the European way of life. The European Union is determined to put an end to it.^[2]

While one might argue that constructing Jews as a barometer for the health of liberal democracy represents an extraordinary claim of Jewish importance, it also places on Jews an extraordinary responsibility, a burden even. We cannot be content to simply be in the world, we have to be at the forefront of changing it for the better. It is here that contemporary Jewish conservatism, anti-Zionist radicalism and various flavours of Zionism all come together: Quietist parochialism is not an option. Even Haredi Jews, who appear quietist in the extreme, are nonetheless tied into messianic hopes for the redemption of the world.

Across multiple different Judaism, a near-consensus seems to be congealing: *The world needs us*. Yet this isn't just a form of Jewish self-reassurance, it's also a pressing obligation: *We should act in the world so that we should become indispensable*.



Abraham Heschel presenting Martin Luther King with the Judaism and World Peace Award in 1965. Wikimedia Commons

The conviction that Jews should seek indispensability may be simultaneously universalist – concerned with the world – and particularist – concerned with the Jews. As such, it can be ironic; a form of quasi-chauvinism dressed in up in care for the world. In his recent book *Being Jewish After the Destruction of Gaza*^[3], Peter Beinart's case for the transformation of the Jewish people is predicated not just on a rejection of Zionism, but on an embrace of the unique historical role of the Jews:

Speaking of Abraham's descendants in the book of Genesis, God says, 'All the families of the earth shall bless themselves by you.' Perhaps this is what it means for the Jewish people to bless humanity in our time. It

means liberating ourselves from supremacy so, as partners with Palestinians, we can help liberate the world.

In the same way, even the most radically universalist forms of Jewish social action often contain this hidden or not-so-hidden assumption that Jews are essential to the world. Take for example, Jewish Voice for Peace, the US movement best known for its anti-Zionism, who proclaim:

Like generations of Jewish leftists before us, we fight for the liberation of all people. We believe that through organizing, we can and will dismantle the institutions and structures that sustain injustice and grow something new, joyful, beautiful, and life-sustaining in their place ...

There is no way round it; the very fact of organising as Jews and proclaiming oneself as heirs to a Jewish tradition, injects an implicit particularism in Jewish Voice for Peace's universalist struggle for humanity. And yet, while critics sneer at such groups as simply seeking the approval of non-Jewish activists, is there not also a terrible burden in accepting this tradition?

Tzelem, a British coalition of rabbis which aims 'to organise Jewish clerical voices on social and economic justice issues in the UK' takes its name from 'the Jewish principle that we are all created *b'tzelem Elokim* – in the image of G-d [sic].' Among its principles is the following:

We respond to the divine command to create a civil society in the UK that exemplifies our beliefs and values as Jews, as demanded by the mitzvot, our prophets, our ancestral rabbis/teachers, and our texts. Our Torah demands that we engage with and care about our wider society and matters of justice that affect the vulnerable in our society.

The use of 'demands' is striking here. To strive for social justice in the UK is not just a Jewish 'add-on', it is a commandment that Jews cannot shirk; a part of the burden we accepted at Sinai (metaphorically or literally according to taste).

It's hardly a surprise that Jews might want to make themselves indispensable. Throughout our history, we have glimpsed what it is to be treated as redundant, disposable, superfluous to requirements. We have been forced to prove ourselves otherwise, to find niches and professions that are too useful to be dispensed with.

What the post-1945 history of Jewish politics shows us is that the habit of ensuring we are needed is hard to get rid of, right across the political spectrum. Just as progressive Jewish politics smuggles a particularist tendency into its universalism, so do apparently particularist movements construct themselves as essential for Jews and non-Jews alike. It is, for example, a commonplace in *hasbara*^[4] to point to the technological and medical breakthroughs that Israel is responsible for.

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Maybe, despite our schismatic political diversity, the Jewish hive mind has all along been collaborating on a massive exercise in hedging: There are forms of Jewish politics that appeal across much of the political

spectrum. We have given an unprecedentedly broad swathes of humanity good reasons to restrict their antisemitism to only some of us.

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Do we really live in a world in which Jews are needed?
And if we are needed, should we want to be?

Although it seems glib to say it, it remains necessary to point out that we can only spread ourselves so thin. There aren't that many of us, globally speaking, and there are vast swathes of the world where we have no platform or influence. To not recognise this would be to feed antisemitic myths about Jewish control of the world.

In any case, even if we are genuinely only needed in some places and some of the time, we need to recognise that this sense of obligation – from us to the world and from the world to us – may have unintended consequences. Obligation can trap us into a web of commitments that ultimately reduce Jewish agency.

It's not that obligation isn't deeply embedded in Judaism. From a Temple cult to a diasporic network, from rules of sacrifice to the sea of halacha, Jews have always been required to do some things and not do others. The question is whether contemporary Jewish political obligations to the world are different in essence to other kinds of Jewish obligations. Certainly the legitimization of contemporary Jewish forms of social and political action often depends on an insistence that it expresses the essence of Jewish tradition; for example, in the progressive (ie Reform and Liberal) Jewish world, the use of concepts such as *tikkun olam*^[5] as well as biblical injunctions such as not to 'oppress the stranger', are ubiquitous.

One can certainly say that contemporary Jewish social and political interventions have a kind of material imminence than is and was the case in fulfilling other kinds of Halachic obligations, particularly at times when Jews have been a marginal people with negligible political agency. The rewards and punishments for fulfilling or shirking halachic obligations are, in such circumstances, visible only in one's immediate environment and barely even then. Compare this to the daunting imminence of whether fulfilling the Temple tithes will bring a bountiful harvest. In this respect, contemporary Jewish obligations to intervene in the betterment of the world obey a similar logic to ancient Jewish rites – you can see, hear and even feel these interventions and their results; you can measure success as well as failure; you can see if your fellow Jews have fulfilled their obligations and chide them when they do not.

I have activist friends from across the Jewish political spectrum and one thing that has struck me in the post-October 7th period (and sometimes before that) has been the intense commitment to highly visible political action and the intensity of the reproaches to fellow Jews who do not join in. Whether it's been vigils for the hostages or participation in the 'Jewish bloc' on pro-Palestinian demonstrations, the constant repetition (weekly and sometimes more) is part of the point. I am not arguing that activism of this kind is necessarily ineffective and simply an empty ritual. Rather, it is the commitment to the 'grind' that strikes me. This is *work*, as exhausting and relentless as the word implies. It is only through that work that Jews may fulfil their obligations and produce the results in the world they wish to see.

« *Jews take their place in the staggeringly complex constellation of organisations seeking to change the world in their favour.* »

The grind of Jewish political obligation takes us back to our ancient forbears, whose lives were chained to the relentless cycle of reaping and sowing; they sought, through the proper performance of ritual, to exert some kind of agency over that cycle. Judaism, as it existed then, provided a brutal logic of reward and punishment to this vulnerable existence – through the means of Temple rituals, Jews sought the material end of a bountiful existence.

The modern world did not invent means-ends logic, but it did extend its possibilities. So it is that Jewish political action can be monitored, evaluated and targeted, tailored for maximum impact. Entire bureaucracies – AIPAC, the ADL and many many more – seek to achieve complex goals, reporting their achievements to funders and foundations. Small grassroots endeavours grow to become sophisticated systems in the blink of an eye. Jews take their place in the staggeringly complex constellation of organisations seeking to change the world in their favour.

If such organisational efforts have become central to Jewish projects to change the world, so has the grind to sustain them. What then becomes of other dimensions of Jewish life?

Social scientists and philosophers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, sought to highlight the consequences of bureaucratisation and the extension of means-ends logic into more and more areas of life. And some of them were Jewish. Marx, Durkheim, Adorno,

Habermas and more, all sought in their different ways to highlight how modernity becomes dominated by impersonal systems whose need for constant sustenance traps us in their alienating maw.

'Instrumental' logic turns people into things to be organised, controlled and (sometimes) rationally culled. Against this backdrop, the human struggle becomes – or *should* become – one of maintaining spaces in which we can retain what Habermas refers to as the 'lifeworld' in which humans are able to build non-instrumental relationship and communication; a space where people can be people rather than objects. In their own ways, Buber and Levinas would concur in this project of retaining true human relationships in a world of systems and structure.

There is, of course, another side to this process and the intellectual tradition that seeks to understand it. Organisation can also be meaningful as well as being necessary. But Jews would do well to take seriously the consequences for the Jewish people of the instrumentalising qualities of political action. If Jews treat projects of achieving change in the world as a central purpose – maybe *the* purpose – of Jewish life, then there is a real risk that being and doing Jewish simply becomes a means to an end, whose only justification is the achievement of a set of goals.

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There is also an even greater danger: That the performance of the obligation for Jews to change the world slips into a *justification* for Jewish existence. We risk developing an apologetics for our continued existence in the world based on our accomplishment of change within it. This would tacitly endorse the very logic that has so harmed us; the logic that treats certain classes of persons as surplus to requirements, as redundant.

It's usually all for nothing though. The ends are never completely fulfilled; nor is permanent failure likely. The instrumental imperative traps Jews, like others, into its logic of endless deferral. And this is not just an elite phenomenon. Consider the phenomenon of the Jewish pro or anti-Israel online activists. How could the goal of 'victory' over Israel or its critics ever be achieved on platforms where everyone can have a voice. Too often, such only activists become bitter, hollowed-out shells; enslaved to a goal that is permanently out of reach.



Traditional, eschatological goals are as difficult to achieve as pro or anti-Israel ones. The coming of the messiah is, by definition, barely imaginable. But perhaps its transcendence made the failure to reach it easier to cope with. The designs of the divine are so mysterious that measuring success and failure in achieving divine edicts is hardly possible. In contrast, political goals in this world are set by humans and so trick us into believing they can be brought about.

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We are adrift in a paradoxical sea. The ceaseless Jewish political churn, in all its messy diversity, only demonstrates Jewish vulnerability even as it asserts

Jewish agency. The problem isn't just what happens if and when Jews 'lose' political struggles, it's that 'winning' them too often reduces Jewish resilience. Maybe Foer is correct that the era of post-war American liberalism was both the product of Jewish endeavours and a golden age for everyone. Yet if liberalism is paradise for Jews, then it was a pretty dumb idea to get too comfortable with it. Because all things must pass.

If Jews require a certain kind of society in which to thrive, what happens when the world becomes structured differently? Liberalism was always going to end. Nation states won't always exist. Social justice may become a passing fancy. Or maybe the piteous inequality of capitalism will pass away. And what then?

Even those Jewish political traditions that proclaim their insouciance towards non-Jewish opinion can't resolve the paradox. Menachem Begin may have performed his awkward stubbornness to the non-Jews, but he had his non-Jewish admirers around the world despite himself; he certainly offered a model for decolonised states seeking to resist the temptations of the superpowers. The apparently insularity of Haredi politics also doesn't prevent them from being politically useful to politicians – look at Chabad's relationship with Putin, to say nothing of the usefulness of Haredi parties in Israeli governing coalitions. And when Jews are useful or respected or both, Jews find it hard to resist becoming dependant on their instrumentalization.

We can't withdraw entirely from the world then, nor can we exert complete control over it. What is to be done then?



There is another current within Jewish tradition that resists the logic of the instrumental. One that extols not the capacity to create change in human circumstances but in the absolute glories of the ineffable. This is the Judaism that treats the study of Torah *lishma* – for its own sake – as particularly praiseworthy; the Judaism that studies the rules of Temple sacrifice with particular fervour even at times when the possibility of its resurrection have seemed most implausible. This is the Judaism whose esoteric traditions are of such a high level of abstruseness that they seem barely anchored in the world in which we live. In such traditions, halacha is the taken-for-granted basis for the greater heights of spiritual ascent towards a divine who can never actually be fully comprehended.

This is a Judaism that revels in the murkiness of its 'ends'; a Judaism that is almost impossible to instrumentalise

There are paradoxes and ironies here too though. The rejection of worldly purpose can be uncomfortable and disturbing. Consider the fate of Yeshayahu Leibowitz, the twentieth century theologian whose view of prayer and mitzvot was marked by a complete rejection of either divine reward or clarity of purpose. So absolute was his theology that spontaneous prayer was treated as a lesser kind of worship; only complete submission to the incomprehensible plan of the divine that constitutes obedience.

Yet Leibowitz's legacy in the popular imagination owes as much if not more to his political interventions; the idiosyncratic anti-Zionism that led him to warn that soldiers in the occupied territories risked becoming

'Judeo-Nazis'. Perhaps it is easier to comprehend a Jew actively intervening in the world than a Jew arguing for the negation of the instrumental.

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I don't know whether Yeshayahu Leibowitz would have been happy for Jews to become an ethno-religious group. For me though, the prospect has become ever more appealing during a time of intense Jewish importance.

To be merely one variant of the ways in which humans construct peoplehood....

To be unremarkable and unextraordinary....

To have no purpose other than existence itself...

No apologetics, no social value, no goals...

Is this not an absolute assertion of the validity of Jewish existence? Is this not a more sturdy platform on which to ground Jewish existence than the endless grind of justifying ourselves through the pursuit of instrumental goals?

No human born in this world should spend their lives proving their worthiness of having been born. Humans cannot and should not justify their existence. And what are peoples other than collections of humans?

« *What I am questioning is not Jewish activism or political struggle, it is whether Jews have to engage beyond the Jewish world organised as Jews.* »

Of course, it is not our choice alone whether we can embrace this purposeless Jewish existence. Will the world ever let us be dull and pointless? At the moment, neither antisemites nor philosemites will let us. But can

we really say that our strenuous efforts to prove our worth in the court of public opinion are actually 'working'? Perhaps, striving for a purposeless existence might be a way of fighting antisemitism (and letting go of philosemitic love) that has an unexpected subversive power. We are as redundant as any other people, no more.

And would not existence for no other reason than existence be a 'reward' for vanquishing antisemitism? A gentle retirement into obscurity certainly tempts me. One common online Jewish trope is the declaration 'the Jews are tired'. Of course we are tired. The problem is that that declaration is usually followed by stoic re-commitment to the grind, rather than even imagining that leaving the field might ever be a possibility.



This all *sounds* like an outlandish suggestion. It isn't. Alongside our addiction to the instrumentalism of public social and political action, many or most Jews live in purposeless space some of the time. And that is subversive, some of the time.

I live in a country where organised religion seems to be in free-fall while spiritual belief seems to be clinging on. The sociologist has described this as 'believing without belonging'. Gratifyingly, Jews seem to be the opposite. As 2024 figures from the Institute for Jewish Policy Research demonstrate:

If only a third of Jews have faith in God, as described in the Bible, where does that leave Judaism? Is it inevitably on the same downward path as Christianity? Not necessarily. A key indicator of the decline of organised religion in Britain is 'bums-on-pews' – i.e. that only

people who believe in God are likely to attend church. Even if that is true, it doesn't seem to apply to Jews. In the Jewish case, according to the survey's data, more than half (56%) of paid-up synagogue members do not believe in God, and nearly two in five Jewish *atheists* belong to a synagogue. Moreover, irrespective of whether they belong to a synagogue or not, two out of three (65%) Jews who don't believe in God attend synagogue at least on the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. Jews, it seems, are pretty comfortable belonging without believing.

Of course you might explain 'belonging without believing' in terms of the social function of synagogues; the pleasures of being part of a community and the like. Yet synagogues are not the only spaces that can provide this and we still attend them nonetheless. There is a frequent gap between social function and official purpose.

Sometimes, when I attend my synagogue in London, I am struck by how it might look to outsiders. There is always a person on security duty to greet me, the gate is sturdy and impenetrable, the windows on the building are strengthened. The liturgy too is permeated with remembrance for the dead, for the security of Israel and rabbis refer to the latest anxieties of our people on the *bimah*^[6]. We seem like a scared and threatened people – and some of the time we certainly are. We are other things too though. Services at my synagogue are not just sources of solace to a threatened people, they are also attended by *machers*^[7] busily performing their usefulness, members of the congregation craning their necks to see who else is here, resentful youngsters forced to attend for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah training...the full range of Jewish motivations. And outside, the person on security is here because it's cool to look mean and tough in a stab-proof vest once in a while, or because

doing security means not having to attend the service, or because security training provides fun opportunities to meet other Jews.

We do Jew because we do Jew. The means can be as important as the ends.

Is there not a certain subversive pleasure in knowing this, our secret?

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If purposeless Jewish activity has an unexpected value that we should cherish, what happens to the political then? The world, after all, does need to change. We do need to fight our corner.

And the Jewish world also needs to change internally too. No Jew should be entirely satisfied with what we are now. All human groupings need to attend to their politics. The smug indolence that leads to, for example, tolerance with sexual abuse or financial malfeasance requires constant vigilance. And that is political, whether we see it as such as not.

What I am questioning is not Jewish activism or political struggle, it is whether Jews have to engage beyond the Jewish world *organised as Jews*. Not every human grouping needs to feel obligated to go beyond their own boundaries. In fact, there are entire classes of human social groups about whom it wouldn't occur to anyone that they should be at the forefront of activism. Model train enthusiasts are not at the vanguard of pro-Palestinian or pro-Israel activism and no one expects them to be. There are, presumably individual enthusiasts who go to demos and that's also fine and expected.

Jews need to at least consider what placing ourselves into a different social category might look like. Why shouldn't we see ourselves as a hobby, a pastime, a delightfully arbitrary set of activities?

That this is somehow unthinkable says as much about the implicit hierarchy of social categories in the modern western world. We undervalue certain ways of being together with other humans and treat some as more weighty than others. Yet in terms of their centrality to many lives and the joy and comfort they provide, it is not clear that 'leisure time activities' are any less 'important' than ethno-religions and similar categories.

« *Whatever our contribution to civilisation might have been, it's time to imagine what it would be like if we behaved as if we were just ethno-religious group 27b.*

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In certain respects, what appears to be 'relegating' Jewish life to the status of a hobby is, in fact, an elevation. To choose Jewish life, or to remain attached to it, for no other purpose other than passing the time between birth or death, has an absolutism to it that can smother the instrumental. *This* kind of Jewishness can never fail to achieve its goals. *This* kind of Jewishness eschews the grind and breaks the wheel.

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Such breaking of the wheel is hard to envisage at the moment. The Jewish people are doubling down on the 'obligation' to intervene in the world in the face of a future that threatens to laugh at our pretensions. We have got used to the assumption that we *can*, as Jews, intervene in the world. We should not assume that this

will always be the case, not because resurgent antisemitism will rob us of agency once again (although it's certainly possible), but because the very possibility of agency is under threat as never before. Climate change represents an existential challenge to the idea that human destiny is something we can control. There are plausible futures ahead in which cascading crises make bare survival an awesome challenge. In such futures, what would *tikkun olam* or other statements of Jewish obligation, even mean?

In what's coming, we may all have to become particularists, whether we like it or not. Our Jewish communities will be forced inwards, to take care of themselves if that's even possible.

Or not as the case may be. Perhaps it will all be fine and the world will remain one in which Jews can aspire to be essential to it. The development of Jewish political obligation happened during a modernity in which the world was broken but not *too* broken; one in which the vessels of holiness had been shattered into shards large enough to be gathered. This was the world in which Heschel felt his legs were praying; a world where footsteps could cause earthquakes. Maybe they still can. It's not worth betting the entire future of the Jewish people on that possibility though.

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In my youth I marched as a reproach to a Jewish community that seemed politically smug and apathetic. Today there is a different kind of smugness at work; a complacency about our value to the world and the weightiness of our footprint. Whatever our contribution to civilisation might have been, it's time to imagine what it would be like if we behaved as if we were just ethno-

religious group 27b. Ironically, this could teach the world something important: That human existence is an absolute and cannot be reduced to the brutal logic of purpose.

Keith Kahn-Harris

*Keith Kahn-Harris's latest book, which explores the themes in this essay, is **Everyday Jews: Why the Jewish people are not who you think they are**.*

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Notes

- 1 *Obligation in Exile: The Jewish Diaspora, Israel and Critique*, Edinburgh University Press, 2015.
- 2 <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/fr/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/eu-strategy-combating-antisemitism-and-fostering-jewish-life/related-links-soc-704>
- 3 Alfred A. Knopf (Random House), 2005.
- 4 The term *hasbara*, which literally means “explanation” in Hebrew, refers to the communication and public relations efforts undertaken by the State of Israel to influence international public opinion and defend its policies.
- 5 *Tikkun Olam* (Hebrew: תיקון עולם, literally “repairing the world”) is a central concept in Judaism that refers to actions aimed at improving or repairing the world.
- 6 A central element of the synagogue, serving as a raised platform for reading the Torah and conducting certain religious services.
- 7 In Yiddish, a *macher* is generally defined as someone who arranges things, who has connections and influence, a kind of facilitator.

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