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ABSTRACT

When a security threat and sense of instability befell the United States after the events of September 11, 2001, the familiar order of political priorities was upset. In a matter of days the American public discourse organized itself around the same principles that have guided the state of Israel for many years: security IN, education OUT. Education is the political mechanism by which the state and the society shape their future character. Decision making about the structure of the education system, the material that will be taught in it and, ultimately, the vision that this system will promote, requires thought about how people want the future society to look. This paper examines how civic education can help shape a society that desires peace and is ready for it, and how education of this kind can prepare Israeli society for the morning after of peace. To clarify what areas in the education system need to be changed and adapted to the peace era, the paper considers how the Israeli education system deals at present with Israeli society's expectation that it produce beneficent and committed citizens and soldiers. It also looks at possible ways of dealing with the new expectations likely to arise after peace comes. The paper focuses mainly on changes in the concept of citizenship in passing from a situation of conflict to an era of peace (or at least one in which the existential threat diminishes), and the implications of these changes for the main dimensions of education. Includes 26 notes. (Contains 8 references in Hebrew and 12 references in English.) (Author/BT)

From Belligerence to Peace: The Role of Civic Education.

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From Belligerence to Peace: The Role of Civic Education

Three days after the launching of the American assault on Afghanistan in the wake of the events of September 11, an article was published in the *New York Times* under the headline: "Education a Top Priority?: Not Today."[i] When a security threat and sense of instability befell the United States with no advance warning, the familiar order of political priorities was upset. In a matter of days the American public discourse organized itself around the same principles that have guided the state of Israel for many years: security IN, education OUT.

Education is the political mechanism by which the state and the society shape their future character. Decisionmaking about the structure of the education system, the material that will be taught in it and, ultimately, the vision that this system will promote, requires thought about how one wants the future society to look.

Educational institutions have the task of forming the next generation of functioning and contributing citizens; every society or state defines, in any given period, the components of good citizenship. The goal of this chapter is to examine how civic education can help shape a society that desires peace and is ready for it, and how education of this kind can prepare Israeli society for the Morning After of peace. To clarify what areas in the education system need to be changed and adapted to the era of peace, we will first consider how the Israeli education system deals at present with Israeli society's expectation that it produce beneficent and committed citizens and soldiers. We will also look at possible ways of dealing with the new expectations likely to arise after peace comes. I will focus mainly on changes in the concept of citizenship in passing from a situation of conflict to an era of peace (or at least one in

which the existential threat diminishes), and the implications of these changes for the main dimensions of education.

PART I: CIVIC EDUCATION TOWARD PEACE: YESTERDAY AND TODAY

The various security challenges that the state of Israel has faced throughout its existence have fostered a concept of citizenship that is characteristic of countries under fire. This concept revolves around the need for the citizens to stand against these challenges, and to participate as much as possible in confronting them. Whereas civic participation in quieter democratic states involves expressing consent or legitimate protest toward the government, in a state under a security risk it takes the form of contributing to maintaining the state's existence. The concept of citizenship in a state engaged in a protracted conflict can be called one of "citizenship in arms." Such a notion of citizenship does not focus on the citizens' relations with the government and the effort to realize their aspirations and needs in the public sphere, but rather on mobilizing them to cope with the security challenges that the state and society face. Indeed, military service, both in the standing army and the reserves, does not meet the common criteria of "civic participation" since it is not voluntary and autonomous (i.e., initiated by the citizen).[ii] However, as commonly viewed by broad segments of Israeli society, military service is a central aspect of the individual's contribution to the society and a major source of the sense of affiliation with the state. Because of the compulsory recruitment that is practiced in Israel, for the members of the societal mainstream who have to serve in the army the concept of citizenship focuses on military service and on coping with security risks as civilians. The nature of one's military service is commonly used to measure the quality of one's civic

participation, and the more the citizen can attest that he risked his life for the homeland or is prepared to do so, the better his chances of being considered a good citizen. The centrality of military service and of dealing with the security risk in defining citizenship has many implications. Among other things, this model of a militaristic citizenship means groups that are exempt from military service are structurally marginal. Such is the case with most members of the Palestinian minority (whom the security situation in any case places in a position of civic inferiority). The concept of "citizenship in arms" also complicates the civil status of Jews who are exempt from service, such as the ultra-Orthodox, as well as the status of Jewish women, most of whom serve as noncombatants.

The socialization for this type of citizenship, whose formal part is largely the responsibility of the education system, casts the combat soldier as the ideal of the good citizen, and in a more extreme sense the soldier who falls in the line of duty could be seen as the perfect citizen.

THE CURRICULUM IN A PERIOD OF CONFLICT:

NARROW CITIZENSHIP AND ONE-DIMENSIONAL NATIONALITY

The protracted conflict in which the state of Israel is engaged means its citizens have to develop skills for living with conditions of existential threat. Bar-Tal asserts that "a society involved in an uncontrolled conflict must develop beliefs that will help it cope successfully with the situation." Among the necessary psychological conditions that Bar-Tal enumerates are "dedication to the society and the country, high motivation to contribute, perseverance, coping with physical and psychological pressure, willingness for personal sacrifice, unity, solidarity, upholding the goals of the society, determination, courage and endurance."[iii] It is the education system that is responsible

for producing citizens who have these capacities and inclinations, and many researchers point (from a positivist or critical perspective) to the centrality of textbooks and curricula in cultivating the traits the state regards as desirable. Bar-Tal points out that "textbooks are approved for use by the societal institutions in an official process of decisionmaking . . . the knowledge that is imparted through them is usually presented and perceived as objective, true, and factual."[iv]

The nature of citizenship as reflected in the education system and the textbooks testifies, then, to the societal mainstream's conception of citizenship, the roles of the citizen, the structure of the civil society, and the citizens' relations with the state. Accor dingly, changes in these notions will perforce be manifested in the educational contents throughout the system, in the subjects studied in the various grades and the books that are used. This will reflect changes in the concept of citizenship stemming from changes in the political-security situation, and involve an attempt to instill the associated desirable traits in the next generation of citizens.

In the political and security situation that has existed since Israel was established, the Israeli notion of how the school should prepare the young generation for good citizenship has centered to a considerable extent on preparing them for military service, on the related moral and social attitudes, and on cultivating the beliefs needed to cope with the conflict as civilians. The state education system deals with many aspects of socializing the children and adolescents toward their future military roles in particular, and their civilian lives in a country under fire in general.

The formal education system, in fulfilling its role as an agent of civic socialization, takes certain measures in cultivating the future citizens' commitment to military service. Apart from the contents of study, which will be discussed below, other steps are taken, some of them quite specific such as Gadna (premilitary) service

during high school, and some of them more encompassing such as the approach to learning about holidays like Lag B'Omer or Independence Day. As every child and parent in Israel knows, at the earliest ages the education system celebrates Israel's holidays with an emphasis on the military aspects that exist in most of them, and without relating much to universal elements. The holidays (which are an important part of the curriculum for the younger ages) serve as a tool for transmitting a national message of a people perpetually at war and celebrating time after time its victory over Greeks, Romans, or others throughout history.

The preparation for military service and life in an uncertain security situation has also made its mark on the less overt contents of learning, going back to the early days of the state. In 1950, Chief of Staff Yigael Yadin appeared before the Teachers Council on behalf of the Jewish National Fund (the main educational body during the Yishuv period, and one of the main bodies in formulating education policy in the early days of the state). As part of his attempt to make the army the focal point of Zionist education in the state, Yadin declared: "The questions in mathematics should not deal with the merchant who sells wine or oil, but rather with a plane that takes off from Base A and a second that takes off from Base B, and at what speed the second has to fly to overtake the first."[v] The aim was to create a military perspective even in academic subjects that do not deal directly with the history of the Jewish people or the renewed homeland. The space of the children's thought, discourse, and imagination was to be molded in light of the state's needs for survival, and the security needs were, and still are, reflected in large parts of what is studied.

The fifth conference of the Teachers Council on behalf of the Jewish National Fund, held in 1951, considered the goals of education and the focuses of activity of the Teachers Council. Orit Ichilov notes that "the main proposal that was discussed at

the conference was to place the Israel Defense Forces, the army of the people, at the center of Zionist education in the state. The first initiative on this matter came from the Hasbara [Information] Department in the Ministry of Defense."

Dr. Baruch Ben Yehuda, director of the Education Department, specified five main attributes of the desirable citizen, the first of which was "the Israeli individual's identification with society: we must suppress any manifestation of isolationism and detachment from the public and instead develop the civic-political sense that atrophied among us under the cloak of the Exile; we must educate for citizenship in accepting the authority of the state, for discipline in patriotism including the sacrifice of one's life on the altar of freedom, nationality, and political independence."

The role of the pioneer, who in the Yishuv period was projected as the ideal graduate of the education system and the main role model for young people, was now expanded and applied to additional areas of life. The state needed "naval officers and pilots, judges and policemen, officials and leaders . . . experts in different professions, so that it could bolster its military force on land, sea and air, establish a regime of governance in the country, and lead its citizens on the path of flourishing in all branches of the economy and culture."[vi]

As these examples show, with the establishment of the state of Israel the education system was given the duty to mold citizens who would carry the burden of safeguarding the young state's security and ensuring its development. Whereas discussions of moral values and legal principles form a central part of civic education in the United States, for example, and discussions of how to express patriotism and assess or criticize the local history play a major role in this context in some Western countries, in Israel since its earliest days the focus has been on how to produce warrior-citizens. The ideal graduate of the Israeli education system is not measured

(or only marginally so) by the extent of his commitment to democracy, or his capacity for critical thinking, or his attitude toward pluralism, to mention only a few of the traits that civic education seeks to instill in quieter countries[vii]. Israel's existential security needs lead the education system to stress attitudes considered vital for national survival, first and foremost the willingness to take part in the military effort. In addition to military service itself, toward which the education system seeks to encourage positive attitudes, large portions of the curriculum itself aim at fostering the traits and attitudes needed for a society in a protracted conflict. In his comprehensive study (1996), Bar-Tal analyzes a set of required traits and portrays a curriculum that aims at cultivating these traits throughout the school years. Geography studies are geared to forming a notion of Israel as part of the Western world, and in particular as part of the Mediterranean Basin, and as turning its back to the Middle East and the more immediate neighboring countries. History studies, which the next section discusses in greater detail, emphasize the military history of the state of Israel and the larger story of the persecuted Jewish people, while projecting a uniform and uncritical image of the people and state. The education system today chooses to reflect a military-national conception that regards citizenship in the state of Israel as part of a historical struggle for survival, and this framework alters only slightly when one education minister is replaced by another. Even when changes are made they are primarily symbolic, such as minor changes in the allocation of hours, in the preference of one book over another, or in replacing an hour of Jewish history with an hour of general history (or vice versa). In general, the system's approach is now even more consistent than in the early days of the state. The education system must contribute its important part to molding citizens who are capable, and desirous, of playing as active a role as possible in defending the state, citizens who hold the right attitudes for

confronting a protracted conflict; citizens whose worldview will enable them to persevere in difficult periods of threat while maintaining the belief that victory is promised to the side that is just, namely, one's own side.

The expectation of peace is not part of the worldview of the graduates of the education system. Peace, to the extent that the system addresses it, is presented as a utopia, a dream (and the fact that the words for "peace" and "dream" rhyme in Hebrew does not help). The enemy is not associated in any clear way with the "dream of peace," and the imaginary era in which wars will cease refers only in some obscure way to the "bloodthirsty nations" and "inflamed masses" who have risen up to destroy the Jews in the past and the present. The path to peace, the necessary compromises, the mutual and sympathetic learning about the former enemy (and not for needs of intelligence)—none of these is systematically presented in the Israeli education system.

The next section discusses the ways in which the education system can promote the arrival of peace, and cultivate the ability to deal with the difficulties and opportunities that will come into focus on the Morning After.

TODAY AND TOMORROW

The Education System as an Anchor of Change

Every education system faces the choice between focusing on today or working to define tomorrow. The first alternative, which is more common, means reflecting the existing situation and answering the demands of the societal mainstream, and is more directly open to the system because of its bureaucratic structure, and especially because of its subordination to the existing political system as represented by the education minister. The second and more demanding alternative is to promote worthy

ideals that still are not part of the actual or conceptual present, an alternative that makes the education system an anchor of change.

In the context of anticipating an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, both paths are available to the Israeli education system. If it chooses the first possibility, then the application of the ideas proposed here and similar ones will have to wait until peace takes shape or this is substantial progress toward peace, and until the mainstream of Israeli society internalizes new concepts of civic obligation. I will maintain here, however, that a better way to view the education system's role in regard to the peace process is the second one, where the system takes part in forming the new civic concepts. The notion that the education system should play an active role in promoting the peace process, despite the political and practical complexities involved, is based on an understanding of peace as an ongoing process. The "Morning After" is, after all, a metaphorical term. Peace will not simply arrive one morning, and the Morning After as discussed here is not really a given point in time but rather an ongoing process of political, military, and social change. It is worth stressing the complexity of the process of arriving at peace, even if this involves tedious detail, since the tendency in the education system (and not only there) is to portray peace as a unique, almost revelatory phenomenon, different from all that is familiar to us today. The metaphorical notion of peace as something disjunct from the history of the Jewish people and the present reality of the state of Israel makes it hard to develop the sort of tolerant and critical attitudes required for dealing with the actuality of peace (and especially with arriving at it). The public notions of citizenship will not change by themselves or in a natural process, but will have to be deliberately reformulated by a number of social mechanisms—beginning with, on the immediate level, the political system, and beyond it the education system. In this chapter I view the Morning After

not only as a point in time but also as a psychosocial state of affairs and a perceptual situation; as such, the education system must take part in shaping it and bringing it about. The education system's main task as a mechanism of social change on the path to peace is to update the curricula (in a broad sense) and adapt them so as to inculcate a new civic concept.

Ensuring the continuation of the culture is one of the main obligations of the education system. The education system is not, however, the only system responsible for realizing that weighty mission; the family, and particularly the women in it, also carries the burden of preserving the culture, morality, and religion as one of the main social tasks performed within the home. Still, the education system is the main formal mechanism for transmitting the framework of values and social functioning from one generation to another. In periods when the state and society are mobilized to safeguard existing attitudes and beliefs, such as the beliefs necessary for enduring a conflict, what is expected of the education system is relatively simple—to impart these attitudes to the younger generation and thereby maintain the existing social structure and necessary set of concepts.

On the other hand, in periods when the state undergoes real changes—in the self-definition of the society and groups within it, and in their concomitant needs—the education system must take part in reformulating the values, beliefs, and knowledge that will be the new mental framework of the coming generations The need to redefine Israeli society will arise in full force on the Morning After. Many aspects of the conceptual system, or what Rousseau termed the "civic religion," will have to be reconstructed, including their manifestations both in the education system and in other social mechanisms, involving activities of the political leaders, the media, and the informal educational frameworks. The secular version of this "civic religion" is

reflected in what is studied in the state schools, including the values and heritage of the state.[viii] The main beliefs of this religion consist of the political doctrines, the historical depictions, the paradigmatic figures, the events and ceremonies that are all aimed at imprinting the image of the state on the souls of its citizens (and future citizens). The education system fulfills an important role in preaching these primary beliefs to the next generation of citizens, and in a period of change it will have to take an active part in constructing the beliefs that will replace them. The religious metaphor is useful here both because it clarifies the depth and breadth of the civic concept's influence on the schools—involving not only a particular curriculum or given subject, but a normative system that affects all educational activities; and because the civic concept's similarity to a religion indicates how difficult it is to alter its underlying tenets.

I will be considering, then, the education system on the Morning After. As noted earlier, the values, concepts, and attitudes that will be seen here as vital to grappling with the Morning After, and the new civic concept that will develop, do not pertain only to the era after peace arrives; the values that emerge from the discussion of the Morning After should already be introduced in the education system on the "Evening Before," that is, today, so that the prospective peace will be adopted and promoted in civil society as well and will not encounter only opposition. Civil support (as distinct from political support) for the peace process can increase the likelihood that the political system will act in the way necessary to achieve peace. If Israeli society is ripe for taking the path to peace, which is not an easy one, it will be easier for political leaders to lead the society on this path.

In the period of transition to peace it will be necessary to create a new concept of citizenship, if only as an alternative center of gravity to the security one whose

importance, it is hoped, will recede. This period will pose new challenges to the education system, the main one being the transition from a system that reflects a situation of conflict and encourages coping with it, to a multicultural system that promotes tolerance, both between the groups composing Israeli society and between the society and its erstwhile enemies. To clarify the new concept of citizenship, and despite the need to inculcate it even before peace, we need to consider the nature of Israeli citizenship after the coming of peace.

After comprehensive peace in the Middle East is achieved, the Israeli education system will have to reconsider some central aspects of how it operates. Two phenomena will point to the need to reorganize this system, one more abstract, the second more social and concrete. First, the state of Israel will have to redefine the citizen and the civil society, and the education system will have to take part in this process. A more civic and less militaristic definition of the citizen's role will mean updating extensive parts of the curriculum, as well as the school's objectives.

In addition to this abstract need to take part in redefining citizenship, the education system will have to find ways to grapple with social processes it has not grappled with in the past. On the morning after the outbreak of peace, the public stage will be cleared for discussing issues that ha d been relegated to the margins in the period of the security threat and the citizenship it induced. The lesser role of the security issue, reflecting the reduced existential danger, could, on the one hand, clear the stage for dealing with needs of groups and social questions that formerly had been pushed to the periphery. Or, less optimistically, the social rifts that had been camouflaged under the cloak of the unity mandated by security needs could reveal their true virulence after the arrival of peace. Societal relations on the Morning After will also be affected by the approach taken by the official frameworks, including the

education system, to the question of how the civil society should function. Before turning to a normative discussion of how the education system should deal with these challenges of peace, it is worth portraying the peace in question in a realistic light, and clarifying the difficulties that will arise both in reaching it and in dealing with it once it arrives. For this we need to focus briefly on the issue of social unity, which is essential to grasping the complexity of the transition to peace. In contrast to the utopian notion, prevalent today in the education system (and reflecting the view of the mainstream), that the situation of conflict is entirely negative and peace represents its total inversion, and will bring in its wake only serenity and prosperity, a consideration of social unity indicates that peace, like conflict, has different facets.

Unity

Because of the sense of existential threat and the uncertain security situation, Israeli society tends to cultivate unity among the Jewish groups within it and to reject disputes against a social or ethnic background. The sense of belonging and solidarity is reinforced, and the aspects common to all groups emphasized, under the heading "We're all Jews," in an effort to minimize the gaps between Jews of different ethnicity or religious convictions.[ix] One of the societal beliefs that Bar-Tal cites as necessary for standing firm in conditions of protracted conflict is the belief in social unity. "The purpose of beliefs of unity is to provide a sense that all members of the society support the goals of the conflict and their leaders. They act to strengthen the solidarity and stability that are important for mobilization . . . a lack of unity, on the other hand, creates polarization and internal tensions that hamper the struggle with the enemy."[x]

The sense of unity, which also is formed by the education system as part of creating a common, one-dimensional citizenship, fosters alienation among the members of groups that do not feel they are appropriately represented (if at all) in the public political discourse. On the other hand, the belief in the unity of the people naturally induces a sense of common fate, belonging, and closeness. The sense of unity broadly encompasses all the citizens of the state who are not Palestinians, namely, the Jews of various ethnicities, including the immigrants from the former Soviet Union and even those among them who are not Jews. Situations of existential distress in a security context, and particularly terrorist attacks and the constant fear of terrorism, strength the sense of unity and dispel tensions between the different groups of Jewish citizens.

Yet the thin veil of unity, which that obscures social divisions among the Israeli Jewish public, is also a source of problems. A focus on common enemies, and formulations such as "We're all Jews," make it difficult to create a meaningful public space. Members of different groups find that the cultural contents that are relevant to them are not reflected in the public sphere because it is mainly devoted to the security issue. Dissimilarities between groups that are in fact valuable, as well as problems of certain groups that need to be dealt with on the social plane, are put off to "better days."

Thus social unity (or the belief in such unity), which is augmented when the existential threat (or the sense of it) grows, has desirable effects on the society, particularly the sense of belonging that it fosters, but also has problematic consequences, primarily the tendency to sweep divisive issues under the rug.

After the end of the conflict, when there is less need to maintain societal beliefs that enable resilience in the face of an existential threat, the need for the belief

in unity will also decrease. Moreover (as Asher Cohen discusses in this volume), there exists a clear potential that intra-Jewish rifts will emerge after peace. The outcomes of the peace process, especially the ceding of Israeli sovereignty over certain areas, will create a sense of loss among parts of the Jewish population. The nature of the division that Asher Cohen addresses, between the "winners" and the "losers" of peace, reflects the societa l complexity entailed by setting aside the conflict as a unifying factor, and the need to develop means of preventing a social rift.

Furthermore, precisely those groups that are expected to feel they have emerged as losers from the transition to peace—particularly groups on the political right and large parts of the religious and ultra-Orthodox sector—are already viewed today as having only a partial commitment to democracy. Thus, for example, Rubinstein and Adler assert that

> There are in Israel those citizens . . . who perceive contradictions between the democratic order and some other ultimate value (e.g., religion, or territorial rights). They are thus not as totally committed to democracy as are its staunch defenders. In this potentially divisive situation, the educational system has become increasingly involved in efforts to strengthen democracy against the danger of its erosion. (1991, 81)

The partial commitment to democracy stems, then, from commitment to a value external to democracy, such as the integrity of the Land of Israel or religious belief, which among certain groups entails hoping for a state run according to the Halacha (Jewish religious law). For this and other reasons (beyond the scope of my discussion), democracy in Israel is in danger of erosion, a danger that, as noted, can be expected to grow on the morning after peace. As Rubinstein and Adler point out, the education system has an important role to play in deepening the belief in democracy and hence overcoming the nondemocratic tendencies in the Israeli Jewish public.

How should the education system meet this dual challenge that the Morning After poses—the theoretical challenge of redefining citizenship together with the

social challenge of addressing issues that so far have received only very little attention? The next section will propose a redefinition of roles for the education system, aimed at meeting the challenges of the era of peace.

MULTICULTURAL DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

Education for citizenship in a postwar democratic state has a number of goals, all of which are subordinate to the overarching goal of education for civic life in a democracy. In the special circumstances of a society confronting the end of a protracted period of conflict, the education system must help to maintain the common basis of existence, as well as the possibility of conducting open public discussions.

The main role of the education system on the Morning After concerns the area of civic education. The main aspects of this role are:

a. Deepening the commitment to democracy and preventing an erosion in the belief in it
    1. Inculcating formal knowledge of the political system
    2. Promoting knowledge and internalization of democratic values
b. Creating a common basis for the various groups in society
    3. Fostering familiarity with other groups in the society
    4. Teaching a core curriculum on citizenship

a. *Deepening the Commitment to Democracy*

1. *Formal knowledge of the political system.* The Israeli education system is already required to provide students with formal knowledge of the political system. Civic studies in grade 11 or 12 are built around creating familiarity with how Israeli

democracy operates, emphasizing formal aspects—legal and technical—of the functioning of the political system. The realization of such democratic principles as majority rule, ensuring the rights of the minority, separation of powers, and so on is modeled by discussing how the system operates. The curriculum does not, however, require any extensive discussion of the citizen's relations with the democratic state or of underlying, philosophical aspects of democracy. As the intermediate report of the Committee for Citizenship Studies (the Kremnitzer Report) observes, these topics are of great value, but are not sufficient to create an understanding of how the political system works, and even less so to impart the normative education necessary for internalizing democratic values. On the Morning After, when some sectors of Israeli Jewish society may lose trust in democracy, it will be important to impart knowledge of how the system functions; but it will be even more crucial to focus on values and on familiarity with the society's composition, as we shall see in the following sections.

2. *Knowledge and internalization of democratic values.* The need to create conditions that allow the internalization of democratic values, along with awareness of the moral value of the democratic system and its contribution to the individual and the community, is a major lacuna in the existing curriculum that the Kremnitzer Committee also addressed. The proposals in its intermediate report aim at enhancing the theoretical study of the roots of democracy and clarifying its normative foundations. The democratic values also need to be manifested in some of the education system's activities and ways of operating. The reasoning here is that it is difficult for knowledge provided solely in an abstract or academic fashion to be as influential as knowledge gained through experience. The principles and values that democracy presents as constituting the most desirable form of government for the

individual are best clarified through experience of democratic life, as philosophers and educators since Dewey have assumed. [xi] To be sure, the school is a micro-system based on approaches that are not all consistent with the democratic approach. This pertains first and foremost to the Compulsory Education Law, which compromises children's freedom of movement and occupation based on the patronizing claim that the state knows better what is good for them. In addition, the standard school (in contrast to the open or democratic one) operates by coercion and restricting the students' freedom in such areas as scheduling and choosing among academic subjects. This issue is too broad to address in this chapter, but it should be kept in mind that the Morning After will pose difficult challenges to the school in the area of education for democracy, and presumably the system will have to make a considerable effort to foster and maintain a widespread public commitment to the basic principles of democratic governance and society. The education system's current focus on topics related to instilling democratic attitudes is very limited in scope,[xii] and this is lamentable even today; but Israeli society's need for a deeper understanding of the importance of democracy will greatly increase on the morning after peace. Ways to address this need are described, as noted, in the Kremnitzer Report, as in the extensive literature in the field of education for democracy and the curricula. The underlying assumption here is that the school is an initial model, long-term and highly influential, of an institutional mechanism. All future citizens encounter this mechanism at an early stage of their lives and remain linked to it for a long time to come. The mode of functioning that is absorbed in this framework constitutes very important conditioning and leaves its mark on the students in their later interactions with governmental institutions. The school, thus, must change the emphasis in its relations with the

students, from a demand for subordination to education for active citizenship. The following are areas in which such a change must be made:

2a. School climate: The principles of democracy cannot be internalized and understood without experience of democratic life. This means the entire school must be organized around the guiding principles of democracy, to the extent that this is possible in a system that operates, as noted, according to a logic that negates rights and freedom. Thus, the education system must create an appropriate climate for the students, which can be achieved, for example, by having them participate significantly in decisionmaking processes; conduct elections for their representatives, with these representatives being allowed to take part in administration and organization; and by conducting joint discussions of the rules and their implementation. These examples are not exhaustive, but indicate how students can experience how democracy functions, thereby internalizing its advantages for the individual compared to other systems. The guiding principle is to regard the school as a framework for joint activity, which belongs to those who work in it and those who study in it as equally as possible (apart from the basic limitations on this equality), with the responsibility for what occurs in it being in the students' as well as the teachers', principals', and other responsible persons' hands.

2b. Teaching methods: A further dimension of the democratic message can be conveyed to the students by changing how they are taught. In this area, too, there is an extensive literature that views teaching methods as a main element of the "hidden curriculum" whose messages are well assimilated by the students. This point is usually made in a context critical of the common approach to teaching, which tacitly transmits messages of a demand for obedience, avoidance of creative thought, submissiveness, and shallowness. Critical approaches, such as the dialogical-

education approach, propose alternative modes of teaching aimed at encouraging openness of thought, participation, and taking responsibility. The guiding principles here are generally a focus on problem solving as part of the enterprise of "transmitting material"; dialogical teaching rather than setting rigid hierarchical authority in the class; relating respectfully to the students and their culture (both the culture of the students themselves and that of their ethnic backgrounds); and encouraging greater initiative, participation, and taking of responsibility by the students as opposed to obedience and rote learning.

b. Creating a Common Basis for the Various Groups in the Society

1. *Familiarity with other groups in the society.* In the 1980s, the multicultural approach began to assert itself in political theory as a reaction to the tendency of the prevalent liberal approach to overlook citizens' group affiliations. Cultural identity began to gain status in the theoretical discourse, as well as in social and political practices that came to be referred to as the "politics of differences" or "politics of presence." Theoretical and social discussions of how group identity is represented in the political space pay much attention to the formal education system. Multiculturalism in the field of education involves recognizing various groups' history, culture, and language in the framework of the general curriculum and funding separate education systems for different cultural groups. The mainstream liberal approach, which puts faith in the state frameworks' neutrality in regard to group differences, deals with these issues by attempting to build tolerance and pluralism while preserving the rights and freedoms of the individual. Again, this is not the place to look deeply into the theoretical and education literature growing out of the liberal vs. multicultural debate. The importance of this issue here concerns the fear that a rift

will emerge between different groups in Israel, and particularly between different Jewish groups, after peace is established. The education system has a crucial role to play in preventing such rifts, mainly by fostering interaction and awareness among the variegated groups that form Israeli society.

One prominent approach in the educational discourse seeks to reconcile liberal-democratic and multicultural approaches by making the school a "great sphere."[xiii] According to this approach, the school's main task is to produce citizens, that is, to prepare the younger generation for conscious and active membership in the political community. This means the school must instill in the students a commitment to the liberal framework of thought and functioning—in other words, recognition of majority rule, internalization of principles of individual rights, and appreciation of one's own freedom of choice in one's own life (including one's group affiliation).

These demands are consistent with the prevalent liberal-democratic approach, and are based on the assumption that people are potentially autonomous and rational, with the education system being responsible for cultivating these traits and transforming the heteronymous child into an autonomous adult with civic skills. The liberal approach in its classical form has been strongly criticized, mainly for its tendency to assume that people are basically identical in their core characteristics. This assumption has led liberal authors to belittle the differences between people, and particularly the cultural differences related to race, ethnic origin, nationality, and culture. The proposal to design the education system as a great sphere of cultural encounter is rooted in this critique. The thrust of the great-sphere approach is that the students come to the school from variegated cultural environments, and the school must recognize this variety and, moreover, strive to foster familiarity between individuals and groups of different backgrounds. The associated concept of

citizenship is a multilayered one, encouraging both active citizenship and the understanding of civil society and the various groups that compose it as a basis for political participation. The molding of democratic citizens through education against submissiveness and in favor of conscious, active citizenship requires the school to address the differences between the students, including their various group identifications. The concept of the great sphere originated in North America, and to suit the Israeli education system on the Morning After it must undergo a "conversion." The passage from North America to the Middle East means encountering different social characteristics, necessitating an adjustment of the educational approach. Among these are characteristics that have existed for quite some time, such as the close association between religion and state in Israel and its implications for the structure of the education system (which maintains separate educational streams for communities of differing Jewish religious commitment, as well as separate systems for Christians and Muslims, something that is not palatable in the United States), as well as Israel's unique social-ethnic structure. A system such as the "great sphere" must tailor the educational approach to the concrete social context. And beyond all these factors, there is the issue of how one applies a multicultural approach to a society in a transition from conflict to peace. In my view, the Israeli multicultural system must seek an orientation that will allow separate educational frameworks (to be discussed in the section on the structure of the education system) while requiring some contact between the different groups, along with theoretical familiarity with the values and traditions of other groups.

2. Although fostering familiarity and contact between different social groups is necessary to prevent a rift and a social conflict, it is not sufficient to replace the unity whose basis will be lost with the transition to an era of peace. The report of the

Kremnitzer Committee cites the peace process between Israel and its neighbors as the primary factor among changes that Israeli society is undergoing, changes that call for transforming the nature of civic education. The committee begins the intermediate report that it submitted by stating that "the peace process between Israel and its neighbors places on Israel's agenda the nature and continuation of the civic peace within its own domain." The main question the committee raises in this context is "whether the civic basis, which is shared by all citizens of the state, will be sufficiently strong to withstand the future tensions." To increase the chances that the answer will be positive, the education system must contribute to creating a common civic basis. The main instrument for doing so, taking into account the variegated groups in Israeli society, is a compulsory core curriculum in civics. The contents of this curriculum will be based on the principles outlined above, and will apply to all schools.

The common civic basis will be grounded, then, in the core curriculum of civic studies, and in the commitment to teaching methods that aim to cultivate democratic attitudes (which will apply to all or part of the curricula). This, however, raises the question of coercion regarding Israeli groups with orientations are distant from democratic values. Such coercion is indeed justified by the fact that democracy is not a normatively neutral approach, and it is within the state's authority to impart its values to its future citizens. Nevertheless, imposing democratic studies is problematic insofar as it compromises the freedom of conscience of parts of the citizenry. However, this difficulty can be balanced by a different aspect of the curriculum, an aspect that is also necessary for addressing Israeli society's difficulties after peace. At this point, there is little discussion of possible concepts of Israel's nature as a state. When the security threat that currently is used to justify a one-dimensional,

nationalistic education disappears or diminishes, it will be time to discuss reformulating a number of educational fields. The emphasis should be on those fields that, if reorganized, can help foster a discussion of the definition of the state of Israel and how it relates to all of its citizenry as well as its neighbors. A discussion of this sort will require awareness of the different positions regarding the nature of the state; understanding basic concepts such as the nation-state and the state of all its citizens; clarifying the complex issue of Israel's being both a democratic and Jewish state; and deepening the grasp of the political significance of those two dimensions.

Although a public discussion of these issues is already called for today, the tendency is to defer it because of urgent issues more immediately related to the state's survival. As peace approaches, and certainly when it arrives, the discussion of what shape Israel should take will perforce take center stage. The education system will have to reflect this discussion in the framework of the compulsory studies, but also with the aim of fostering deeper understanding of the issues on the agenda, as well as continued intelligent grappling with these issues by its future citizens. Some areas will need, then, to be comprehensively reorganized, particularly the above-mentioned civic studies as well as history studies.

History Studies: An Example for Discussion

The present (2001) debate on the perspective of history studies reflects the belief of large parts of Israeli society that the education system should help build a Zionist-nationalist consciousness among the students. The debate itself is not new, and in its present version revolves around the question of whether the history of the state of Israel should be taught via a new book (*World of Changes* edited by Danny Yaakobi) that is suspected of being sympathetically inclined to the views of the "new (or

critical) historians." The study of Jewish and Israeli history in Israel is mobilized for cultivating nationalistic attitudes; nationalism in this context is regarded in a monolithically uncritical fashion, involving total commitment to the Zionist narrative free of complicated moral questions, and presented as the absolute contrast of the Palestinian political positions. The contrast between the positions is implicit, since essentially the rejected standpoint is not mentioned at all. In history studies, nationalistic education takes the form primarily of putting the emphasis on Jewish and Israeli history (although the Shenhar Report and subsequent studies—like that of Nora Resh and Aharon ben-Avot—point to the need to broaden this orientation).

The approach to studying both general and Israeli history lacks any aspects of discussion, research, or criticism and instead is focused on presenting processes and facts, and on giving absolute answers to objective questions. Issues that could be studied in a mode of problematization and presenting possible approaches to an issue, or by clarifying the values implicit in possible positions, are mostly taught in a narrow and closed fashion that eschews opportunities for critical discussion of a historical process, or the moral dimensions of a question and of possible answers. This approach of focusing on answers rather than raising questions typifies history studies on almost all grade levels (as opposed to the research approach that is used in the universities). This is a highly problematic approach, with a history and implications that cannot be covered here, and it makes a great contribution to cultivating one-dimensional, nationalistic thinking that is associated—justly or unjustly—with the "old" history. By emphasizing the justness of the Zionist path, promoting myths such as "the few against the many" or "a state without a people for a people without a state," the history curriculum plays its part in cultivating the sense of unity that is typical of a

state in conflict, while at the same time discouraging public discussion of what shape Israel's national and political framework should take.

The belligerent civic unity will fade from the education system with the coming of peace, since the purposes it serves will no longer be relevant to Israeli society. Another, more desirable possibility is that the materials and teaching methods that promote this version of civic unity will be systematically replaced as part of a process of fostering social normalization, which is a precondition for Israeli society's ability to relate sympathetically to the idea of peace.[xiv]

In the field of history studies, this transformation will be characterized by a change in the goals of historyinstruction on the Morning After, and this will involve, in turn, a change in the contents and mode of study. If today history is directed at molding citizens who are nationalistically committed, and justifying Israel's position in the Arab-Israeli conflict, then after peace arrives the function of history studies will be to project possible ways of living together. Clarifying the points of convergence between the peoples in the region, and discussing the disagreements between the Israeli and Palestinian historical narratives, can help advance that goal.

PART II: THE STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Walzer maintains that the function of the schools in a multicultural and tolerant society of immigrants is to educate for political citizenship of the state, and not for national citizenship. The necessary transition from a focus on the survival of the nation, which in the education system today is regarded as mandating education for national citizenship, to the development of a peace-loving and tolerant society, calls for a new approach to civic education. In the era of peace, civic education in the schools will need to focus on forms of civic activity in a democratic state, while

reducing the focus on vindicating Zionism. This does not mean nationalism or Zionism should disappear entirely from the curriculum, but that study should mainly concentrate on political citizenship, that is, the different aspects of democracy in principle and as a political and moral system, and of Israeli democracy in practice.

This notion of the core civics curriculum will presumably be acceptable to educators in the Arab system as well. Those likely to have considerable difficulty are in fact the Jewish religious and particularly ultra-Orthodox educators, who may give priority to religious values or the integrity of the Land of Israel over democratic principles. It will have to be stressed that one of a democratic state's main obligations to its citizens is to explain the principles of how the state operates to all the citizens, which includes encouraging the attitudes needed to consolidate the democratic framework. Hence there is room to impart the democratic values even in educational frameworks whose first priority is not this normative-political approach. We will soon consider the moral and political complexity of imposing the core curriculum on all sectors of the Israeli education system; first, however, we will consider the structure of the education system as peace approaches and after, hopefully, it arrives.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM: SEPARATION VS. INTEGRATION

The Israeli education system today is structured into several parallel streams. When the state was created and the then-existing system of educational streams was abolished, the state education system was intended (theoretically) to absorb all Jewish Israeli children. In actuality, the system is divided on the religious and ethnic planes into state-secular education, state-religious education, and the education system for Arab (mainly Muslim) children. Apart from the state system there are also

independent streams, the veteran of which is the independent ultra-Orthodox stream, which has been complemented in recent years by an ultra-Orthodox stream affiliated with the Shas Party. There are also a growing number of private educational institutions, which now encompass close to 10% of all children eligible for compulsory education. These institutions are variegated and include, among others, educational frameworks for Christian Arabs, private education that is conducted in particular West Bank settlements, institutions conducted in the Russian language in addition or instead of Hebrew and offering a curriculum tailored to the needs of immigrants from the former Soviet Union, and frameworks for groups with certain normative orientations (such as anthroposophy or environmentalism).

This plethora of educational frameworks, which is not based on decisions or orderly regulations let alone open public discussion, indicates the need for deliberate, organized, democratic decisionmaking about what should be the structure of the Israeli education system. This need has existed for many years, and becomes ever more pressing as the system expands in different directions. A certain decentralization that the system has undergone in recent years, both in the direction of privatization and of developing different types of autonomous and community schools, as well as alternative education systems (especially the Shas-affiliated stream), underlines the need for an orderly structuring. Moreover, the striving for peace, and the arrival of the morning after peace, will further augment this bureaucratic and societal need. In the short term tensions are likely to mount between groups with different notions about the peace to be desired or the peace that has been achieved, and these tensions will make it necessary to structure the relative forces among these groups; the education system is one of the arenas for that endeavor. In addition to these direct consequences of the decline of unity, demands of marginalized groups will come to the fore,

demands of a kind that for years were deferred to better days, and that involve redressing past injustices often related to the kind of education that was provided to the children of the specific group or community. Indeed, Israeli society will have to address demands for recognition of their special educational needs by groups of Sephardim, ultra-Orthodox Sephardim, Israeli Palestinians, women, and perhaps even migrant workers.

In addition to the new agenda that will replace the security discourse, as well as the short- and medium-term effects on the groups that stand to "win" or "lose" from peace, the Jewish education system will have to deal with the need to refashion Israeliness.[xv] The division into distinct education systems for different groups in Israeli society is one of the factors fostering the distinct identity of those belonging to these groups, as well as the difficulty of developing a common notion of Israeli identity, the "Israeli spirit," or even the "Israeli dream." The very disparate worldviews of the different communities in Israeli society, with their long-term repercussions for the structure of the society and the cultural and political gaps between the communities, are considerably affected by the education of the children in separate schools that have different curricula and normative and cultural foundations. The segregation between the different education systems is multifaceted, and includes both the official segregation into state and state -religious, independent (with its separate branches), and private education, as well as the unofficial segregation between children from different socioeconomic classes.[xvi] The separate education systems offer the children of different communities qualitatively and quantitatively different paths to citizenship, and the children's cultural and normative world is formed around sets of beliefs and knowledge so different from each other

that there is very little, if any, convergence in how these children perceive Israeli society and the role they will play in it as adults.

A restructuring of the education system on the Morning After must, then, be directed toward two objectives, one of them sociocultural in nature and the other political. The sociocultural objective, which is the more abstract of the two, mainly involves the attempt to create a certain conscious space that all the children of the various communities can share (or at least those of the Jewish communities, and in the best case those of the Palestinian communities as well). This conscious space, which will encompass the new Israeliness, will be molded in a constant process of negotiation between the communities that will occur both within the education system and in social and political frameworks outside of it. This objective will be met mainly by using educational materials of the kind discussed earlier in this chapter; but the application of these materials, i.e., which students will study them and how, will reflect a structure of the education system that is yet to be devised. The political-security situation that children grow up in decisively influences their personal and social outlook, how they see their personal future, and their desire and ability to participate in the political community around them. Those who will be young children in the period in which contractual peace is established, will grow up in a tumultuous time that will witness various struggles over the cultural and civic contours of Israeli society. Maintaining the separation between the different education systems is likely to increase the gaps and intensify the tussle over the definition of Israeliness. The lack of contact or meager contact between secular, national-religious, Ashkenazi ultra-Orthodox, Sephardi ultra-Orthodox, Muslim and Christian Israeli Palestinian children could ensure that this tussle is dragged out for many years. On the other hand, a

coalescing education system of the kind to be discussed here could enable the emergence of space for common attributes of Israeliness.

The second objective, the political one, of reorganizing the education system on the Morning After, concerns the need to create civic equality for the members of the next generation. The attempt to promote this goal via the education system, as with other goals, cannot be based on a "separate but equal" arrangement. Different schools with no points of contact between them will produce people suited for different social roles, with different capacities to realize their political autonomy and rights and different status in the social hierarchy. Both the socioeconomic and the civic hierarchies are shaped by the segregation into different education systems, and this induces a class segregation—again, economic as well as civic—that is transferred from generation to generation.

It is worth noting that these problems, and the need to resolve them, are not unique to the period leading up to or after peace. However, the coming of peace both offers opportunities and creates a vital need to redefine citizenship and Israeliness, and the education system is a main participant in forging the new definitions.

ARE WE READY TO COMMIT?

POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURES FOR THE EDUCATION SYSTEM ON THE MORNING AFTER

The foregoing discussion points to a clear need to organize the education system so that children from different communities will have ongoing and significant contact with one another. Contact between children from different backgrounds has been recognized as necessary in various theoretical discussions, as well as in the comprehensive (in fact the only) reform that was conducted in the education system,

better known as "the integration." In explaining its recommendations, the Committee for Educational Reform stated that "in the confluence of children of parents of different strata and countries of origin, at least from the age of 12, in one school . . . the Committee saw not only a necessary means for reducing the gap in educational level among the nation's children, but also a national-educational value in itself."[xvii]

The structural reform of the 1970s sought to bring together in one school Jewish children who studied in the state educational frameworks but came from different ethnic and economic backgrounds. Individual parents, communities, and settlements waged bitter struggles against applying the registration districts to their children, and against their being forced to study in one building with "other" children (i.e., from other neighborhoods and ethnicities). The present chapter addresses the need to bring together students from a much wider variety of groups—religious, secular, and ultra-Orthodox children, Ashkenazi and Sephardi children, Jewish and Palestinian children. The struggles that were waged against integration indicate the difficulties the society will face in attempting to make a structural change in the education system after the coming of peace. A comprehensive structural change can be organized around many different principles; here I will present three schematic possibilities of an overall arrangement for the education system. The advantages and disadvantages of each alternative will be briefly presented, so as to facilitate open discussion of the different alternatives for reorganizing the education system toward the coming of peace and after it. The first two alternatives are prevalent in other countries—a comprehensive integrative system, and a system divided into streams. The theoretical literature in education analyzes the desirable and less desirable features of these approaches; here we will briefly look at those aspects that are relevant to implementing these approaches in Israel. The third approach, which will

be portrayed here as desirable and best suited to the needs of Israeli society in the era of peace, is an organizational approach that combines division into separate education systems for those from different groups with a compulsory core civics curriculum for all education systems.

POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES FOR A REORGANIZATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

For purposes of discussing the alternatives confronting decisionmakers in the educational field, it is worth comparing two completely different examples of Israeli educational institutions: a democratic school (such as the one in the town of Hadera) and an ultra-Orthodox high school for girls. In the first, students who come from relatively well-off homes are exposed to a liberal-democratic worldview aimed at enabling them to develop autonomy and freedom of choice in the field of education, and also to develop their skills in different domains in an individual fashion. The graduates of the democratic school in Hadera are supposed to be able to realize their civil rights and the political autonomy that is extended to them as citizens of the state; the tools they are provided in the school, and the attitudes they are expected to form during the educational process, are meant to enable them to function in the Israeli civic-political system.

The ultra-Orthodox school for girls is attended by girls from ultra-Orthodox families that mostly belong to the economic lower class. The school assumes that the girls who attend it will get married after graduating, and will need a profession (such as teaching) to provide for their families. The community that the school serves does not function according to liberal or democratic frames of thought, and the school does not cultivate its students' educational, intellectual, or political autonomy since it does

not assume they will need such autonomy. The economic opportunities open to the graduates of the school are limited—not only because of the education they have received but also because of their community's notion of women's role in life. The graduates' capacity for political functioning is also limited, because of their scant exposure to Israeli society and its political system during the educational process as well as the ultra-Orthodox community's rejection of intellectual independence in this domain, based on the authoritarian assumption that it is up to the community leaders to guide their flock in the political area as well.

The difference in situation between the students and graduates of the two schools is evident. This difference has important implications, and is worth examining even apart from the question of the peace process. However, the concern about intensifying social rifts, and about the low commitment to democracy among large parts of the public on the way to the Morning After and upon its arrival, calls for public discussion and decisionmaking. In what organizational and educational ways can the difference between schools and its implications be addressed?

1. *A Comprehensive Integrative System*

This approach starts from the assumption that there is no possibility of an egalitarian education system for students attending different frameworks. Separate educational frameworks compromise civic equality because of different access to political resources, different notions of rights, and different capacity to realize political autonomy. The example that was outlined here shows that in Israel's case, boys and girls study in schools of different communities and are raised on these communities' disparate attitudes as well as economic, political, and social resources. As a result, there is limited possibility to fashion them into equal citizens. The needs of Israeli

society on the way to peace and after it are not, then, answered in the framework of a divided structure like that of the education system. The rivalries between different groups—for example, the ultra-Orthodox who are committed to theological values and the secular who are committed to democratic-liberal ones—are likely to be intensified and perpetuated by the existence of separate education systems, and the chances for reconciling the different concepts of the state of Israel are very poor when the different groups have no contact in the educational domain.

Thus, establishing a comprehensive, integrative education system may be a way to address the needs of Israeli society in the era of peace. Such a system would be built (in its general contours) according to the American model, which separates the institutions of religion and state and maintains a system that is blind to color and ethnicity. The schools are equally open to students of all extractions and religions and both genders, and those who want their children to learn a particular language or religious tradition send them to religious schools operating within religious institutions on the weekends.[xviii] In such a system the schools are uniform in character and target audience, reflecting the belief that only common and egalitarian education can foster civic equality, similar democratic attitudes, and a common concept of the nature of the state, a concept that grows out of active discussion in a joint e ducational framework.

The comprehensive integrative approach has three main advantages: it makes educational inputs uniform, broadens equality of opportunity and civic equality, and enables interaction between different cultures and groups. In a system that is neutral regarding ethnicity, religion, and the other ascriptive aspects, contact occurs between children from varied backgrounds. This contact is of educational and social value in itself (as the Committee for Educational Reform noted in the above quotation).

Furthermore, joint study enables intercultural encounter and learning about other children's unique backgrounds. Such familiarity with members of other societal groups improves the chances for understanding and tolerance, attitudes that will be particularly needed in the tense and fractious period (from the intrasocietal standpoint) after peace. Having all children together in a single educational framework also enables the standardization of teacher training, teaching methods, and curricula, thereby enhancing the equality of educational opportunity for children from various cultures in Israel. Civic equality, which in large part is built from the resources provided to individual members of society through the education system, will also improve as a result of study in common institutions. Thus it may be possible to reduce the civic and social gaps between the different social groups, to strengthen tolerance, and to ameliorate the fissures between groups, which the current, segregated system both reflects and reinforces.

On the other hand, the integrative education system has some significant drawbacks that make it impossible to implement and even unsuitable from a moral-political standpoint. The main drawback is the severe coercion entailed by integrating children from different groups. The extent of the coercion the state would have to exert makes it doubtful whether benefits, such as enhanced social unity or positive interaction between members of different groups, could be derived from such a situation. Parents' rights regarding their children's education would also be seriously compromised, and any decision on teaching frameworks or academic contents could offend basic moral principles of some of the families. For example, having boys and girls learn together in mixed classes may be unacceptable to religious families (of different religions); a decision on whether or not to hold regular prayer services in the school would certainly spark difficult controversies; many academic contents and

modes of teaching may be interpreted by some parents as going against major tenets of their tradition.

Morally speaking, then, it is difficult to justify the extensive cultural coercion entailed by systematically combining children from different cultures. Any decision that is taken—from the gender of the teacher to the language of instruction—may substantially harm the interests of some of the children involved. The disadvantages of this approach, then, overshadow or even nullify its advantages.

2. *A Decentralized System*

A second possible way to restructure the education system is by maintaining and regularizing the present division into streams. This would mean a multicultural, decentralized system on the basis of the present division or of similar proposals.[xix] The logic guiding this approach is the multicultural logic, which calls for having separate education systems for separate communities so as to allow each community to educate its children in light of its own values and traditions. Generally speaking, and apart from the disputes between different multicultural approaches, the role of the state in such a system is to fund the separate education systems equitably and only externally supervise their functioning. To organize the Israeli education system according to this approach would essentially mean preserving the major attributes of the present system. The schools mentioned in the above example, the ultra-Orthodox and the democratic one, could continue on their separate paths, based on a logic of distinctive education for children of distinctive cultural, political, and normative communities.

The main advantage of this approach is that it enables cultural preservation, with each community educating its sons and daughters (together or separately)

according to its own normative system, and for the way of life it sees as desirable. The basic assumption here is that each person has a need to form his identity in a context of group affiliation, so that by permitting the different groups to preserve what makes them unique, the state enables individuals to fulfill their right to affiliate with a group and build their particular identity. In addition, the division of the education system into streams makes it possible for the state to be neutral. If the state is regarded as culturally and normatively neutral, this will reduce the tensions between the different groups regarding the nature of the state, and foster more peaceful coexistence for the separate communities within the common, neutral, formal framework. [xx]

Yet the decentralized system also has some pronounced disadvantages. First, the common civic and cultural space for students and graduates of the different education systems is limited, perhaps even nonexistent. Hence the social fissures are maintained and possibly even deepened, and in the absence of common principles for a political culture (or any common value system) it is hard for the different groups to conduct a joint political discourse or develop a common vision of the state. The graduates of the different streams cannot be regarded as civic equals because of their unequal access to political resources, reflecting their different levels of knowledge about the political system and citizenship, and because of the different degrees of political autonomy that the various communities countenance. Toward peace and after it, with the growing need to cultivate tolerance and maintain a joint discussion about the nature of the state, and about the demands of various social groups, a decentralized system of this kind may be harmful to Israeli society.

3. *A Decentralized System, Obligated to a Common Core Curriculum*

The third schematic possibility that is presented here, which in my eyes is the most desirable, is also based on the principles of a decentralized education system, but maintains a common core curriculum that forms a unifying civic basis for all systems.

This approach is the most desirable because it affords maximal freedom to parents and students in choosing the place of study and its nature, while at the same time safeguarding the interest, common to the state and the individual, in promoting civic equality for all future citizens.

The individual's sense of connection to the state in which he lives and ability to function as a citizen are formed in three stages:

1. The individual's sense of belonging to the community he or she was born into or has chosen to live in
2. The state's and the society's recognition of this community in a way that enables the individual to develop a positive self-concept, a perception of the state as just, as well as appropriate opportunities in his or her life
3. The individual's familiarity with other communities in the same society, and with the society and the state in general, in a way that makes him or her affiliate with the general society as well (and not with the community alone)

This decentralized structure of the education system, combined with a compulsory core curriculum, can promote the capacity for civic functioning of all individuals in the society.

The individual's sense of connection to the society, and individuals' capacity for civic functioning, have two crucial implications:

1. Providing an answer to the individual's needs as a political creature
2. Justifying the state as a moral, democratic, ruling framework

Thus both the citizen and the state can benefit from the building of an education system of this kind, which is designed to provide for the citizen's needs both as a political creature and as a member of a cultural group, and also to maintain the democratic system as a compulsory normative-political framework.

The Nature of the Decentralization

Today, the decentralization of the education system is multilayered. The educational streams categorize the children into separate institutions according to their religion (Jews, Muslims, Christians), degree of religiosity (state, state-religious, ultra-Orthodox), ethnicity (Ashkenazi or Sephardi ultra-Orthodox), special talents (regional schools for the arts, sciences, etc.), and also, unofficially, their economic status, as reflected by their place of residence, in areas that do not implement mixed registration districts. In general, since the system has begun to allow the establishment of community or autonomous schools, or the declaration of existing institutions to be such schools, almost any group of parents that so wishes can define itself as a community and educate its children in a common educational institution (on condition that it comply with the various rules and bureaucratic requirements).

After the coming of peace, the nature of the decentralization ought to be decided in a democratic process, with public participation. Although the structure of the education system is indeed a professional issue, presumably an open public discussion that exposes both students and parents to different expert opinions will

make it possible to formulate regulations (or legislation) that also reflect the public's preferences.

The discussion in this chapter suggests that most of the ways in which the present education system is decentralized are reasonable in light of the larger social-political system. Because the religious institutions in Israel are not separate from the state institutions, and religion has an honored status in the self-definition of the state as a Jewish state as well as in its laws and institutions, it is impossible to maintain an education system here in which religion has no formal status (as, for example, in the American one). It appears that reconciling the different curricula of the separate education systems, as well as the contradictory normative needs of the different communities, is a particularly difficult task—for example, separation vs. mixing of the sexes, or prayer arrangements. It is worth recalling, however, that one of the roles of the education system after the coming of peace will be to create a new basis for civic unity, cooperation, and a sense of community, after the unity stemming from the security threat weakens, and the disputes between different groups, most likely, intensify in reaction to the peace settlement. In deciding the nature of the decentralization, i.e., the structure of the education system, care must be taken to avoid an arrangement that causes agitation or a sense of severe injury in certain groups. The decisionmakers will have to be especially careful to avoid even a de facto situation of decentralization based on class, with parents of higher socioeconomic status leaving the state system and forming separate educational frameworks for their children. This could foster feelings of alienation and grievance among the weaker groups and harm their chances to progress in the existing social frameworks, as well as their chances of attaining civic equality.

In general, the multicultural concept of dividing the education system into separate communal frameworks is one that well accords with Israel's sociopolitical structure, and it would seem that the system's ongoing processes of decentralization should be anchored in explicit legislation and supervision. As noted, such a need exists today even without connection to the peace process. In the context of Israel's relations with its neighbors (including, of course, the Palestinian Authority), this would mean creating the social conditions for domestic coexistence and a sense of unity even after the removal of the existential threat.

An orderly structuring of the education system is not sufficient, however, to produce civic equality. Any education system in a democratic state, and particularly a decentralized or multicultural system, must create a common basis of knowledge and beliefs for all future citizens. It is the core curriculum that should provide such a basis.

The Core Curriculum: Its Nature and Justification

Walzer asserts in regard to Israel that "Were the international conflict to be resolved, toleration in this triply divided society might prove easier than in many cases of singular division—because it would move, as it were, in different directions and be mediated through different institutional structures. " After considering religious courts and community autonomy, he suggests "perhaps a unified 'civics' curriculum, which would teach the values of democracy, pluralism, and toleration and be imposed on all the different state-run schools—Arab and Jewish, secular and religious."[xxi]

A short time after beginning to serve as education minister, Limor Livnat proclaimed that secular studies should be mandatory for the ultra-Orthodox education system, and that these studies should focus on the sciences and the English language. Not long before that a young graduate of ultra-Orthodox education had warned that he

was planning to sue the state for neglecting to provide him with skills and education, thereby harming his capacity to become part of society and make a living. Whether or not the education minister's declaration—which is yet to be effectuated—was related to this complaint, Livnat apparently did not feel it was feasible that such a large group of citizens should receive an education that has nothing in common with how the rest of the citizens are educated. Those attending the ultra-Orthodox independent education system study religious subjects almost exclusively, and emerge with very little connection to other population groups or to the general political framework. The proposal that the students (perhaps even the female students?) in ultra-Orthodox education also acquire a general education in the sciences and even an additional language calls for a minimal standard of common knowledge.

Yet what concept of the education system does this proposal reflect? The secular subjects that the minister mentioned are ones that are essential for economic functioning. Most higher-level jobs or higher-education frameworks require at least basic knowledge in those areas. Hence to say that the most vital general knowledge is in the sciences and a foreign language implies that the education system aims mainly at molding future members of the labor force. This is a less controversial goal than others, particularly the civic-democratic goal that we will turn to shortly. In the discussion on education that was held among the participants in the Morning After project, some claimed (based on their experience as parents or as members of different committees of the Education Ministry) that the chances of reaching agreement on common educational contents are very small even among parents who define themselves as belonging to the same community, let alone among parents belonging to different and in some situations even rival communities (in the cultural sense). Presumably, this problem as well led Minister Livnat to focus on scientific

knowledge in her statement about the state's obligation to tend to the needs of ultra-Orthodox education.

I would like to suggest that in fact this is not the supreme obligation of the Israeli education system, or of any education system in a democratic state. To be sure, creating maximal access to knowledge is very important in enabling individuals to function equally in the labor market. It is clearly in the state's and the society's interest that there be a constant supply of maximally skilled individuals to the labor market, thereby advancing the economy (or the Israeli economy's development toward the "new economy"), raising the standard of living, and furthering macro-economic goals common to all the members of the society and its institutions. However, a democratic state has tasks and obligations transcending these. Israel's supreme obligation as a democratic state is to promote the civic equality of all its citizens. This obligation can be fulfilled primarily via the education system, and this requires first and foremost the definition of a core curriculum that includes the encounter of all children with the principles of democracy, as well as the ongoing and compulsory provision of the knowledge and attitudes needed by every citizen in a democratic state.

This stipulation also applies to democratic states in general, and hence to Israel as well without connection to the peace process. But as we have seen, the fear that Israeli society will fragment into rival communities will greatly intensify with the fading of the sense of unity produced by the era of conflict. Moreover, the commitment of some groups to democracy, and particularly those groups that feel they have been harmed by the peace settlement, will decline significantly. Forestalling a situation in which large groups of citizens lose their sense of civic community and democratic obligation requires investing in education that focuses on those values

while it is still possible. A core curriculum that is compulsory for all the education systems must include, then, first and foremost, the study of civics and democracy.

In addition to training for democratic citizenship, the core curriculum for the Israeli education system after peace must be designed as a multicultural curriculum. Since the end of the 1980s political thought has dealt with social questions stemming from the multicultural perspective, and many thinkers have embraced the view that the education system is a primary space for expressing the state's multicultural approach. Many of these political thinkers assert that the multicultural curriculum must also address major aspects of the various cultures that compose the society in question. At the same time, in a society where the educational setup enables parents or children to study in culturally (religiously, ethnically, etc.) homogeneous institutions, these institutions should be authorized to stress the cultural background common to most of the students. This does not imply ignoring literary creations, historical processes, or patterns of thought belonging to other cultures in the same state, or even in other states that have a connection or influence over the society in question. Thus, for example, Israeli culture in its different aspects is influenced both by the Middle Eastern region in which it exists, including the neighboring states (both in a nearer and a farther circle) from which many of the immigrants came, and by European and American culture, the original culture of another part of the Jewish population, which affects much of the local society via the media and globalization processes. The schools, then, however homogeneous, are responsible for fostering initial contact or basic familiarity with the regions and cultural sources that influence the multifaceted Israeli society.

What Is the Political Probability of Implementing a Core Curriculum?

A compulsory curriculum that focuses on the values of democracy and on civic participation in its institutions will inevitably arouse intense controversy among the Israeli public and its representatives in the Knesset. It is enough to recall the heated political disputes in the days of Yossi Sarid's tenure as education minister and Nahari's as his deputy minister, centering on the demand to supervise the religious educational institutions connected to the Shas Party, to realize that on the political-party plane as well it will be hard to agree on the details of a core curriculum. The basic values of the core curriculum proposed here contravene the beliefs and worldview of a large sector of the citizens, especially the ultra-Orthodox Jews and orthodox Muslims. In general, democracy by nature is inconsistent with an orthodox worldview, which cannot accept such principles as majority rule or, according to some observers, the requirement of equal rights for minorities.

On the other hand, a democratic regime is supposed to be tolerant of the various ways of life of the communities and individuals within it, and of different concept of the good among its citizens. Overall, imposing ways of life on groups or individuals who live in a democratic state is seen as contravening the principle of freedom on which (along with the principle of equality) democracy is based.

Why, then, is the idea of imposing a core curriculum on all the Israeli education systems, as a condition for state funding, justified from a moral standpoint?

What Is the Moral Justification for Imposing a Core Curriculum?

Not only politicians are likely to oppose the tenets of a core civics curriculum. Parts of the Israeli public, particularly among the Orthodox groups, will probably rebel against the exposure of their sons and daughters to values running counter to the ones they themselves have instilled in them. Parents who educate their children for

traditional faith in the sacred writings of their religion, and for obedience to the clerics of the religion, may feel affronted by the requirement to educate their children in an approach stressing freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, or individual autonomy.

The basic justification for imposing a core curriculum on all the education systems that will exist in Israel according to the proposal is, in fact, related to the justification for the democratic system as a normative framework and as an actual (not merely formal) political system.

A political community is based on agreement to act according to common rules, which are based, in turn, on a normative system that obligates all members of the community. The liberal conception sees the social contract as the basis for justifying the state's existence as an entity that imposes universally obligatory laws on its members.[xxii] According to this outlook, the transition from the state of nature, in which human beings live without any obligatory framework, to the political situation in which they form an overarching political community in which there is orderly rule, occurs with the signing of a social contract. In such a contract, the members of the political community express their consent to give up some of their natural rights to a sovereign, so that the sovereign will enable them to realize more of their rights and will organize a political system that allows them to preserve their lives, property and, according to some conceptions, their freedom as well. The liberal-democratic system is a normative system based on the notion that all people deserve an opportunity to realize the good life as they perceive it, and that the best political means of implementing this ideal is to arrange a common life according to the mechanisms of a democratic regime.

Most of those who deal with democratic political theory today assume that in every democracy there are groups whose basic cultural premises contravene the liberal political principles. Most of these thinkers tend to believe that one may determine the operative principles of a regime without taking these groups into account, resolving the matter either by coercion or by dialogue and negotiation between the different groups in a given society. Israel's uniqueness in this regard is that authoritarian groups, whose cultural background and guiding principles are not democratic, constitute part of the central government. Furthermore—and more important for the present discussion—these groups' education systems are funded by the state budget, thereby encouraging their maintenance and growth. This is not the place to discuss the absurdity of this state of affairs from a fundamental liberal-democratic viewpoint. For our purposes it will suffice to point out that Israeli society toward and after peace will need to invest great resources, both material and social, in advancing democracy and preserving the common social framework. Providing economic, organizational, and social assistance to subgroups that promote values contravening those by which democracy must function has negative effects on Israeli society that will intensify with the coming of peace

The basic liberal-democratic justification for imposing democratic values on nondemocratic subgroups is less applicable in states where democracy is more stable, and in any case is constrained by the commitment to individual rights, freedom of conscience, and cultural pluralism.[xxiii] The two factors that justify increasing the imposition of democratic values in Israel in the era of peace, by implementing a core civics curriculum in all the education systems, are (a) the social and governmental centrality of the nondemocratic groups, as well as the official funding that is regularly provided them for maintaining their education systems, and (b) the indispensability of

educating for democracy and creating a common basis for societal existence toward and after the coming of peace.

Despite the theoretical justification for coercion, it is clear that it is socially and morally preferable to reach a solution through dialogue. Theoretically, deliberative democracy provides different ways of coping with disagreements of this kind, involving a commitment to arrive at a common position based on a loose framework of democratic principles.[xxiv] The process of dialogue and resulting agreement on drafting ultra-Orthodox young men into the Nahal force in the army, even though it represents only a partial solution, can serve as an example of how a public discussion together with a legitimate set of political pressures led to an arrangement acceptable to all sides. It may be possible to reach a similar settlement on the issue of education, though it seems that compromise will be more difficult here. The education system is, after all, the arena in which group political aspirations are molded as well as realized. Even without a compromise, however, the state will have a right to require that a core civics curriculum be integrated with the curriculum of a given educational stream as a precondition for governmental funding. This leaves a certain egress—albeit narrow—for groups that prefer to withdraw from the system or to manage without public budgetary support. Withholding budgetary support is an important tool by which a democratic system exerts pressure on groups that do not share the common values of the state and society. It is a tool that expresses a clearly negative assessment of the values that guide these groups, but without using more extreme legal measures that would compromise the freedom of conscience of these groups' members.[xxv]

In 1795, Immanuel Kant ended his book *Perpetual Peace*[xxvi] with the words:

If it is a duty to make real (even if only through approximation in endless progress) the state of public law, and if there is well-grounded hope that this can actually be done, then perpetual peace, as the condition that will follow what has erroneously been called "treaties of peace" (but which in reality are only armistices), is not an empty idea. As the times required for equal steps of progress become, we hope, shorter and shorter, perpetual peace is a problem which, gradually working out its own solution, steadily approaches its goal.

Kant focused on the behavior of governments as representing the main path toward perpetual peace. The experience of the human race in the two centuries since Kant propounded this idea can only bring a bitter smile in response to the title of his book. Today, "perpetual peace" does not appear to be an achievable goal. Nevertheless, stubborn progress toward peace is a political imperative as well as a moral obligation for both politicians and citizens. Such progress is closely linked to prevailing public attitudes about the establishment of peace and the concomitant social advantages. The education system plays a key role in creating an opportunity to mold such positive attitudes, and to encourage the next generation of citizens to imagine a future life without war and strive to attain it.

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[i] *New York Times,* October 10, 2001, A15.

[ii] For general definitions of civic participation in democracy, and of participatory democracy, in the Israeli context, see, e.g., Yitzhak Galnur, *The Beginning of Israeli Democracy* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1985), 309 ff. (Hebrew); Orit Ichilov, "Patterns of Functioning of a Citizen in a Democracy," in Orit Ichilov, ed., *Education for Citizenship in a Democracy* (Tel Aviv: Masada and Tel Aviv University, 1993) (Hebrew).

[iii] Daniel Bar-Tal, *Obstacles on the Path toward Peace* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1996), 14-17 (Hebrew).

[iv] Bar-Tal, *Obstacles*, 33.

[v] Quoted in Orit Ichilov, *Education for Citizenship in an Emerging Society* (Tel Aviv: Sifriat Poalim, 1993), 84 (Hebrew).

[vi] The quotations in the preceding paragraphs are from Ichilov, ibid., 80-85.

[vii] The implicit preference for the masculine gender may be understood in relation to the security situation (see the discussion of this topic in my article, "Feminism under Fire: Accommodating Women in a Militaristic Public Sphere—The Case of Israel," in Christa P. Rainwater, Linda Lopez McAlister, Eileen Kahl, & Kathleen Earle, eds., *Identities and Divisions: New Feminist Strategies for Politics and Agency* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001).

[viii] For a detailed discussion of this issue, from both the Israeli and philosophical perspectives, see Michael Walzer, *On Tolerance* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Defense Publishing House, 1999), 78 ff. (Hebrew).

[ix] See, e.g., Gad Barzilai, *Democracy in Time of War: Conflict and Consensus in Israel* (Tel Aviv: Sifriat Poalim, 1992) (Hebrew); Baruch Kimmerling, *The Interrupted System: Israeli Civilians in War and Routine Times* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1993).

[x] Bar-Tal, *Obstacles*, 24.

[xi] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1917).

[xii] The unit for democracy is limited and uncertain from an administrative standpoint; the civics curriculum is limited to one academic year toward the end of high school; the special or extracurricular programs dealing with democracy are extremely meager. Different education ministers have made only a minor difference in this regard.

[xiii] Eamonn Callan, *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1997).

[xiv] It should be stressed that this chapter deals, within the scope of discussion that was determined for the Morning After group, solely with the conditions required within Israeli society for progress toward peace, and for coping with the consequences of the end of the conflict. To be sure, sympathy for the idea of peace is also related to political developments, including the attitudes and actions of the other

side (or sides) to the conflict. It is not claimed here that the responsibility for advancing peace rests solely on social processes within Israel. I believe, however, that internal social processes, including educational ones, can increase the chances that Israeli society will aspire to peace, and prepare the society for the complex phase of achieving it and consolidating it. Such preparation can, in turn, improve the chances that large parts of Israeli society will demand that their leaders strive for peace, and can, moreover, provide tools for coping with the domestic difficulties that the end of the conflict will foment in the society.

[xv] My thanks to Oren Yiftachel, who formulated this need in a discussion of an earlier version of the chapter that was presented to the participants of the Morning After forum. I was helped by some of his comments also in the discussion that follows.

[xvi] Shlomo Swirsky has written much on the issue of class segregation in the Israeli education system, particularly in *A Domain of Separate Paths* (Tel Aviv: Breirot, 1990) (Hebrew).

[xvii] Report of the Parliamentary Committee for Examining the Structure of Elementary and Secondary Education in Israel, submitted by Dr. A. Rimlat in 1971, p. 250.

[xviii] This idealized description of the American system ignores, of course, some of the difficulties that characterize this system. In particular, I refrained here from discussing the private schools that are run by religious institutions and sometimes funded by the state authorities. This avoidance stems both from the attempt to consider the application of an ideal model to Israeli society (as distinct from a detailed sociological comparison of actual education systems), and from the fact that the U.S. Supreme Court will soon be discussing the phenomenon of the religious schools, and their mode of operation may change as a result.

[xix] As in the proposal of the Humanist Public Education network for a comprehensive redivision of the education system into streams. This proposal principally asserts that state education need not be accepted as a neutral basis, while groups that break away from it are accorded a special status with the budgetary conditions and separate supervision that stem from this. That is, state-secular education should also be recognized as a separate stream or sector in its own right, and should be granted protected status and special budgeting aimed at preserving its culture just as the ultra-Orthodox streams receive. I do not intend, in this framework, to enter a discussion of the advantages of one or another division into streams. I am mainly concerned with the general issue of separation on a cultural basis, so as to focus the discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of this structuring of the educational mechanism in relation to the goals that were described here as requisite for Israeli society on the Morning After.

[xx] This description is strictly idealized and abstract. The theoretical political literature, as well as the sociological reality, casts doubt on the possibility, as well as attractiveness, of the existence of a neutral state. The state's cultural background, both in its political and normative-symbolic senses, cannot simply be parceled out into formal arrangements of organization and funding. Even the most neutral state (one that essentially exists only in libertarian writings) carries an extensive normative baggage, and cannot simply act as a night watchman for the communities and individuals who function within it. The description offered here is, then, a schematic description of a multicultural education system in a neutral state, and is presented so as to weigh the possible advantages and disadvantages of implementing such an arrangement in Israel after peace.

[xxi] Walzer, *On Toleraion* p. 43.

[xxii] I refer in the general and brief description here to the main ideas of the fathers of liberal thought, primarily Hobbes and Locke. Contemporary political thought, and particularly the work of John Rawls, stresses the fictitiousness of the social contract. Rawls relates to the process of entering into a political society as to a thought-experiment, in no way offering a historical description but, instead, exploring the moral justification for the existence of the state as an entity with coercive power.

[xxiii] Bob Mozert et al. v. Hawkins County Board of Education, 1988.

[xxiv] Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

[xxv] See, e.g., Amy Gutmann's assertion that public pressure should be exerted by withholding direct and indirect financial benefits (funding, tax rebates for contributions) from identity groups, including voluntary organizations that promote a normative system contravening the liberal-democratic one. See Amy Gutmann, *Identity Groups: A Humanist View* (unpublished manuscript).

[xxvi] Immanuel Kant, Perpetual Peace. Los Angeles, Calif., U.S. library association, inc. 1932

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