

On Enmity and Acceptance :

The Case of the Israeli and Palestinian Civic Education¹

Ayman K. Agbaria

Introduction

According to Fisher (1997), peace-building efforts are aimed at improving the relationship between adversaries toward greater trust and cooperation, achieving more accurate perceptions and attitudes, forming a more positive climate, and creating a stronger political will to deal constructively with their disagreements. Generally speaking, such efforts are imperative particularly in deeply divided societies, where intractable conflicts lead to eruptions of violence and culture of distrust and hostility. Societies as such endure longstanding conflicts accompanied by enormous stress and strengthened adherence to the collective narrative (Rouhana & Bar-Tal 1998). In areas as such as in Kosovo, Israel, and Palestine, these stubborn conflicts shape the national/cultural identity of the conflicting sides and reproduce each side's collective history.

To counter the resentment and enmity embedded in these conflicts, citizenship education is commonly employed as a major vehicle to promote arrangements, values, and attitudes in favor of tolerance and toleration of the narratives and visions of the 'other' (Kupermintz and Salomon, 2005). Unsurprisingly, citizenship education has become widespread in many conflict areas. Bosnia-Herzegovina, Northern Ireland, and South Africa often are cited as examples of settings where citizenship education played a

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positive role in the peace building efforts and the construction of a climate of mutual respect and acceptance. In what follows, this paper attempts to shed light upon the complexity of the Israel-Palestine case. To capture this complexity, this article is organized in two parts, each focusing on a different context of the Israel-Palestine case. In the first part, I will focus on the peace building education efforts between Israelis and Palestinians from the Occupied Territories of 1967. In the second part, I will discuss civic education in the context of the Arab-Jewish relationships inside Israel, focusing on Palestinians who are citizens of Israel. In doing so, this paper points to the difficulties that face policy makers and practitioners in the field of peace building education in the two context mentioned.

Part I

Context

While academic and civil society projects have developed since the first Intifada began in 1987, the signing of the Oslo Peace Agreements in 1993 often is considered a turning point in the history of cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians². Indeed since 1993, numerous Israeli – Palestinian initiatives aimed at peace-building have been carried out³. Many of them

²For in-depth analyses of pre-Oslo Israeli-Palestinian contacts, see for example Herman, Tamar. “The Sour Taste of Success: The Israeli Peace Movement 1967-1998” in Gidron, Benjamin, Stanley N. Katz & Yechezkel Hasenfeld. *Mobilizing for Peace: Conflict Resolution in Northern Ireland, Israel/Palestine and South Africa*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 97-104; Agha, Hussein, Shai Feldman, Ahmad Khalidi, and Zeev Schiff. *Track II Diplomacy: Lessons from the Middle East*. The Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2003, Chapter 2 ; Beilin, Yossi, *Touching Peace*. Yedioth Ahronoth, Chemed Books, Tel Aviv, 1997 (Hebrew), chapter 1.

³ The list of the leading organizations in the peace building industry is indeed extensive. It includes foundations and academic research centers as such as

conducted through the people-to-people initiatives of the Oslo process, these peace building programs ranged from one-time events to long-term projects; from youth encounters to long-standing dialogues among university professors. In general, these peace building programs revolve around themes as such as civil society cooperation, building constituencies for peace from the ground up, conflict resolution, learning the political narrative of “the other,” bringing people into creative interaction and learning from each other (Baskin & Al-Qaq 2004). Despite differences in focus and targeted populations, these organizations mostly express condemnation of Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of 1967.

Almashad-The Palestinian Forum for Israeli Studies (MADAR) <http://almashad.madarcenter.org>; Givat Haviva Educational Institute <http://www.givathaviva.org>; Institute for Palestine Studies (IPS) <http://www.palestine-studies.org>; IPCRI - Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information <http://www.ipcri.org>; Neve Shalom <http://nswas.org>; Muwatin-The Palestinian Institution for the Study of Democracy <http://www.muwatin.org>; Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA) <http://www.passia.org>; Palestinian Center for Peace & Democracy <http://www.pcpd.org>; Palestinian Conflict Resolution Center (Wi'am) <http://www.alaslah.org>; The Adam Institute for Democracy and Peace <http://www.adaminstitute.org.il>; The Center for Research on Peace education (CERPE)-Haifa University <http://construct.haifa.ac.il/~cerpe/>; The Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace (ICIPP) http://other_israel.tripod.com/ICIPP.html; The Peres Center for Peace <http://www.peres-center.org>; The Tami Steinmetz for Peace Research at Tel-Aviv University: <http://www.spirit.tau.ac.il/xeddexcms008/manage.asp?siteID=5&lang=2>; Van Leer Institute-Jerusalem <http://www.vanleer.org.il>. A comprehensive list of Israeli and Palestinian peace sites is available through IPCRI - Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information at <http://www.ipcri.org/>

On the Israeli side, there are hundreds of Israeli NGOs and non-profit organizations on the ground constituting "The Other Israel" of those who choose to challenge the occupation of Palestinian territory and to advance a future of reconciliation and peace (Carey & Shainin 2004). In spite of the differences regarding their focus, almost all of these organizations criticize the Israeli security policies and identify themselves with the common quest of establishing a peaceful neighboring sovereign independent Palestinian state. On the Palestinian side, in spite of the material and psychological barriers, Palestinian individuals and groups have managed to initiate viable and continuous peace-building programs. These programs are basically concerned with democratization and peace within Palestinian society. Under the continuing Israeli occupation, most of the Palestinian groups and institutions that focused on peace building have understandably been developing around the ideas of peace *among and for* the Palestinians. With some notable exceptions, initiatives around the theme of reconciliation with Israel remain small and peripheral in the Palestinian Territories.

The second Intifada, which started on October 2000⁴ caused many Israelis and Palestinians to be skeptical about the value and utility of peace building education. Moreover, following the outbreak of the second Intifada the

⁴In Israel, when the second *intifada* erupted in October 2000, Israel's Palestinian citizens came out in demonstrations of solidarity that resulted in several highways being blocked. Firing rubber-coated steel bullets and live ammunition, the police killed thirteen protesters (twelve Palestinian citizens and one non-citizen Palestinian; one Jewish citizen was killed by Palestinian protestors). After six weeks of amounting pressure from the Palestinian leadership and from some Jewish public figures and intellectuals, the government appointed a state commission of inquiry, chaired by Supreme Court Justice Theodore Or, to investigate the clashes. The Commission submitted its final report and recommendations in September 2003.

Israeli Ministry of Education withdrew its support of peace education program. Instead of more investment in dialogue and coexistence projects in education, Limor Livnat, the Likud Minister of Education, called for a return to traditional Zionist education and suspended the ministry's involvement in any peace building activities with the Palestinian National Authority. In doing so, she officially rejected the emerging post-Zionist critical perspective. Proponents of this perspective challenge the official national narrative and advocate that the Israeli curricula should also reflect the Palestinian narrative (Yonah & Shenhav, 2005).

Although the Palestinian –Israeli peace building organizations did not succeed in preventing the violent events in the second Intifada, peace-building activities have continued to provide hope and to reinvigorate dialogue and trust (Baskin & Qaq 2004). Peace building programs survived the collapse of the official peace process and even succeeded, in the micro level, in improving mutual attitudes of Israeli and Palestinian participants (Chaitin et al. 2004). The *Israeli-Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI)*⁵, for example, reports that its peace education program was active in more than 60 high schools in Israel and in the West Bank and there were more than 400 teachers and more than 4,500 students participating in the program (Gershon, 2002). Inside Israel, according to The Abraham Fund's 2002 survey, there were 150,000 people engaged in organized coexistence programs.

⁵ The *Israeli-Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI)* was founded in Jerusalem in 1988 as a joint Palestinian-Israeli public policy organization. <http://www.ipcri.org>

Israeli and Palestinian Textbooks

Following the Oslo agreement a series of studies were conducted to examine the Palestinian and Israeli educational systems⁶, focusing on the role of each side's curricula in hindering peace and reconciliation. Academically and in the public discourse, the curricula used in Palestinian and Israelis schools have come under fierce criticism for their part in preserving a culture of hatred⁷. Text books on both sides have been found severely lacking in teaching a narrative of coexistence. On both sides, textbooks were found to be inadequate in conveying the content and values of mutual respect and recognition (Rotberg, 2006).

In this context, the vigorous and continuous work of Ruth Firer and Sami Adwan on Palestinian and Israeli textbooks is instructive in highlighting how Palestinians and Israelis have created opposing narratives of the same history and overlooked the other's perspective⁸. In a joint project supported by the

⁶ For a more detailed description of Palestinian and Israeli education see Falk Pingel, *Contested Past, Disputed Present: Curriculum and Teaching in Israeli and Palestinian Schools* (Hanover,, 2003). Specifically on citizenship and history education see Falk Pingel, Ruth Firer, and Sami Adwan, *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in History and Civics Textbooks of Both Nations* (Hanover, 2004).

⁷ Among all, The Middle East Media Research Institute's (MEMRI) study of the new Palestinian Textbooks, The Centre for Monitoring the Impact of Peace (CMIP) reports on both new Palestinian textbooks and Israeli textbooks, IPCRI's examination of the Israeli and Palestinian textbooks and The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace's comparative study of Palestinian and Israeli textbooks are the most prominent ones.

⁸ For example, while the Israeli textbooks call the 1948 war 'the War of Independence', the Palestinian textbooks refer to it as 'al Nakba' (The Catastrophe). As another example, the Israeli textbooks discuss *aliyah* (the Jewish migration to Palestine), but the Palestinian textbooks call it the 'forced Judaization of Palestine'.

Georg Eckert Institute⁹ and UNESCO, the two researchers analyzed Palestinian and Israeli textbooks since 1995¹⁰. In one study, for example, they demonstrate how texts from both sides fail to talk about refugees, their suffering and displacement, as human beings. In another study, Firer and Adwan (1999) conducted a comprehensive analysis of history and civic education texts. Their analysis illustrates that Palestinian and Israeli texts mostly reflect a culture of enmity and the delegitimization of each other's rights and history. In this respect, Herbert Kelman (1999) claims that in the Israeli-Palestinian case, the definition of each side's national identity is based on the negation of the national identity of the other.

The Discourse of Enmity Revisited

In the last two decades, some Jewish-Israeli scholars, publicly known as the 'new historians', (e.g. Kimmerling & Migdal, 1993; Morris, 1987; Pappé, 2006) have begun establishing a public and academic discourse of acceptance. This discourse was enabled by looking critically at the official Israeli narrative regarding the expulsion and flight of Palestinians from their homes during the 1948 and 1967 wars. Specifically, these scholars have

⁹ *The Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research*, established in 1975, began analyzing PA and Israeli textbooks in 2001. Project details available online at <http://www.gei.de/english/projekte/israel.shtml>

¹⁰ Adwan, S. & Firer, R. *The Narrative of Palestinian Refugees During the War of 1948 in Israeli and Palestinian History and Civic Education Textbooks* (UNESCO, Paris, 1997); Adwan, S and Firer, R. *The Narrative of the 1967 war in the Israeli and Palestinian History and Civics Textbooks and Curricula Statement*. (Georg Eckert Institute: Braunschweig, Germany, 1999); Adwan, S. and Firer, R. *The Narrative of the Israeli Palestinian Conflict In History and Civics Textbooks and Curricula Statement*. (Georg Eckert Institute: Braunschweig, Germany, 2000).

examined the Israeli policies and actions designed to achieve control, containment, and ethnic cleansing. At the same time, Palestinian scholars (Nashef, 1977; Khalidi, 1997, 2006) have also explored some of these themes¹¹.

The revision of the accepted discourse resulted in, among other things, peace building projects with the goal of providing adequate textbooks that would deliver the messages necessary for creating a culture of peace. These projects were predominately led by Palestinian and Israeli NGOs who jointly developed initiatives to write new textbooks and lesson plans. For example, The Israeli-Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI)¹² has developed a curriculum for peace education for tenth grade, which was adopted in more than 70 Israeli and Palestinian schools. Additionally, IPCRI has developed supplementary lesson plans for Palestinian schools on pluralism, mutual understanding and peace education. The Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME)¹³ has developed with Israeli and Palestinian educators a collaborative school history textbook, which aims at transforming the two antagonistic narratives into mutually sensitive ones (Adwan & Bar-On 2006).

¹¹ For a more detailed description of Palestinian and Israeli narratives see Robert I. Rotberg (ed.), *Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Conflict: History's Double Helix* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

¹² Beginning in 2003, IPCRI drafted a series of policy papers on Palestinian textbook reform, partially supported by the USAID. IPCRI reports available online at <http://www.ipcri.org>

¹³ PRIME's reports are available at <http://www.vispo.com/PRIME/>

The primary goal of these projects is to go from a conflict to a post-conflict narrative and to find a common ground of mutual respect and recognition between the two sides of the conflict (Moaz, 2004). In spite of their limited impact in preventing violence, the joint peace building projects have influenced at least the youths and the educators who took part in these projects. More and more Palestinian and Israeli children are educated by new history and civic books through which they learn to recognize and re-evaluate each other's perspective and narrative (Moaz, 2004).

Part II

Context

In 2007, Shortly after Education Minister Yuli Tamir approved a geography textbook for Israeli Arab schools that says that the Arabs refer to the 1948 War of Independence as "*Nakba*," meaning "catastrophe," Likud Chairman Benjamin Netanyahu was quoted in *Haaretz* as saying: "Tamir's decision is unacceptable and damages Zionist values instead of strengthening Jewish heritage. I can't remember a greater absurdity than this in a decision made by an education minister in the State of Israel". On the other hand, Arab Members of the Knesset welcomed the positive initiative, but said it did not go far enough, arguing that the little changes do not culminate into a coherent and alternative Palestinian narrative. Arab MKs called for Arab cultural autonomy, in which Arabs would set the curriculum for all matters connected to their history and heritage.

The debate over this textbook is indeed instructive and sheds light on the extent to which Israel has become a deeply divided society. This recent debate illustrates how much the task of educating the future citizens in Israel is a formidable endeavor, specifically, in the way the politics of citizenship penetrates and mold curricular issues in education.

Yonah (2005) argues that state education in Israel has developed as the main carrier of the Zionist historiography, while disregarding the Palestinian narrative of the collective trauma of becoming a minority in Israel. Mari (1978) describes the impact of 1948 war and its aftermath:

"The Arabs who remained within the boundaries of the newly created state of Israel can best be characterized as emotionally wounded, socially rural, politically lost, economically poverty-stricken and nationally hurt. They suddenly became a minority ruled by a powerful, sophisticated majority against whom they fought to retain their country and land. It was an agonizing experience, for every family which remained had immediate relatives on the other side of the border. Arabs in Israel were left without political leadership and an educated e'elite" (p. 18).

Against this fragile and traumatized community the state of Israel utilizes strategies of control and containment (Abu-Saad, 2006; Al-Haj, 1995; Lustick, 1980; Rouhana, 1997). These strategies include segmentation (the isolation of the Arabs from the Jewish population and the internal fragmentation of the Arab community), dependence (the forced reliance of the Arab population upon the Jewish sector for economic and political resources) and co-optation (the use of material, social and political enticements to elicit the elites' cooperation). To administer these strategies, the state of Israel employs multiple citizenship discourses that vary according to the political interests of the Jewish majority (Shafir & Peled, 2002). Whereas Jews were granted an exclusive full citizenship based on ethnic affiliation, Arabs remained limited to partial citizenship.

Assumed to be blind to ethnic and cultural differences, liberal citizenship discourse is used to portray an image of fairness and to rationalize denying any special minority group rights for the Palestinians in Israel (Saban, 2002;

Yona, 2005). In this political culture, Palestinian Israelis are considered to be entitled to equal civil-political rights, but to be denied any collective claims for self-definition. The dominant political discourse in Israel revolves around the definition of Israel as both a Jewish nation-state and a democracy. This definition means that boundaries of the Israeli collective are determined in terms of membership in an ethno-national group rather than according to universal civil criteria. It means that while Jewish Israelis are constituted as a political community with its own particular public good from which Arabs are excluded and marginalized, Arabs are approached as an aggregate of individuals entitled to partial individual rights.

The academic debate in Israel has been, therefore, over the question whether Israel can be described as an ethnic democracy, or is it a non-democratic "ethnocracy" (Peled, 2007). According to Sammy Smooha (2002), Israel is an ethnic democracy and as such it should be distinguished from liberal and multicultural democracies. An "ethnic democracy" is a distinct type of democracy, according to Smooha, insofar as it still fulfils the procedural definition of democracy — rule by majority vote — and respects the individual rights of its citizens. In contrast, Oren Yiftachel's (2006) argues that Israel should not be characterized as a democracy. Informed by a more comprehensive conception of democracy, his definition includes several elements as such as inclusive citizenship, civil rights, and protection of minorities. According to him, democracy is no longer a credible description of Israel.

Palestinian citizens in Israel often feel excluded not once but twice (Haider, 1995; Rabinowitz, 2001). Rabinowitz (2001) uses the term 'trapped minority' to describe their double marginalization: once by the Jewish majority in Israel and once by the majority of Palestinians who are not Israelis. Recently, three developments — the "events" of October 2000 and

its aftermaths, the new Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law¹⁴, and the plan to confiscate some Palestinian citizens of their citizenship by shifting the border¹⁵ — form an escalating threat to Palestinian citizenship in Israel (Peled, 2007).

In October 2000 the police ignored the right to demonstrate and used lethal weapons against Palestinian Israeli protesters, and the Or Commission's recommendations were ignored by the government. The new citizenship law deprives the Palestinian citizens of two fundamental human rights — the right to equality and the right to establish a family in Israel with whomever they choose. Finally, the transfer plan aims at depriving some Palestinian citizens of their citizenship altogether.

¹⁴ In 2003, the Citizenship and Entry into Israel (Temporary Order) Law was enacted, prohibiting the granting of Israeli residency or citizenship to Palestinian residents of the Occupied Territories, even if they were married to Israeli citizens. Because only Palestinian citizens - who belong to the same nationality and live nearby across the Green Line- are likely to marry residents of the Occupied Territories, this "temporary order" in effect deprived Israel's Palestinian citizens of the right to unite with their non-citizen Palestinian spouses and children. Following criticism by the High Court of Justice, the law was amended and made less restrictive in July 2005.

¹⁵ In the 2006 elections, Yisrael Beytenu—a political party advocating a plan of Arab “transfer” as the main plank of its platform — received eleven seats in the Knesset. This party advocates that instead of moving the Palestinians, Israel should move its eastern border westward, so that the Palestinian residents of the border area would find themselves in the West Bank. The result of shifting the boarder would be that almost 200,000 Palestinian citizens would be deprived of their citizenship. In October 2006 Yisrael Beytenu's was legitimized defacto when this party joined the governing coalition and its founding leader, Avigdor Lieberman, became the Deputy Prime Minister (Peled, 2007).

In response, members of the Arab political and intellectual elite have begun pointing out that inequality in Israel is not only budgetary and structural, but is inherently related to the identity of the state as Jewish. Arab elites in Israel claim that there is interdependence between the allocation of resources and the politics of recognition, and that there can be no equality between Arabs and Jews as long as the state is exclusively defined in ethnic Jewish terms. In this context, Amal Jmal (2007) differentiates between “politics of radicalization” and “politics of contention.” That is, some national minorities mobilize resources to abolish citizenship and confront the state up to the point of secession through a politics of radicalization. In contrast to this counter systematic politics, the politics of contention entails mainly a continuous endeavor to reframe the relationship with the state by challenging its basic assumptions and practices regarding citizenship. Both types may begin by utilizing the legal and civil instruments available in the political system. But whereas the politics of radicalization aims at breaking the system, the politics of contention aims at transforming it.

Further, Jamal (2007) contends further that Palestinian politics in Israel should be viewed as a “politics of contention” aiming to set symbolic challenges and practical alternatives to the dominant interpretation and policies promoted by the state. According to this understanding, citizenship is viewed by the Palestinians in Israel as a maneuvering space for resistance and contention, and yet also as a structure or resource of opportunity and mobilization. Accordingly, Arab leaders and scholars advocate that equality can only be attained if the state recognizes the Arab minority as a legitimate national collective entitled to group rights and renounces the Jewish hegemony of the state's material and symbolic resources. Specifically, this means that Palestinians should be recognized as a national, not merely cultural, minority--entitled to self-administration of its cultural, educational,

and religious affairs. Israeli Palestinian Arabs wish to turn Israel into "a state for all its citizens."

These demands were explicitly stated by Palestinian organizations in Israel via recent position papers, which envision new political arrangements for Israeli society and the Palestinian community within it. Taken together, these position papers pose a symbolic challenge that reconfigures the politics of citizenship in Israel and casts new roles for the citizenship education provided for the Palestinian pupils in Israel. The most prominent of these position papers is "The Future Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel" endorsed and initiated by the National Committee of the Heads of Arab Local Councils in cooperation with several leading Arab human rights and civil society organizations and intellectuals (The National Committee of the Heads of Arab Local Councils, 2006).

This document lays out a platform upon which individual and collective rights are incorporated. Using the language of collective rights, the paper affirms that only when the Arab community has the right to organize collectively can Arabs become equal citizens in the state. Furthermore, this controversial paper in the Jewish and Arab public discourse strongly rejects the state's perception of the Palestinian minority as simply a minority differentiated along religious lines. Conferring it political and historical status as an indigenous minority and an integral part of the native people of the land of Palestine, the paper advocates that the Palestinian minority should be entitled to differentiated group rights based on its indigeneity. Specifically, it demands structural and institutional changes that would secure self-rule administration in several cultural domains, especially in education. Among other things, the paper calls for Palestinian Israelis to be given control over their own autonomous school system and that Muslim religious authorities be given control of assets such as cemeteries that are

now in the hands of the state. In this respect, Al-Haj (2003) argues that Arab education in Israel is caught in permanent tension between the perception of the Arab society in Israel of education as a tool for socio-economic mobility and the use of education by the state as a means of controlling the Arab minority.

Arab Education in Israel

The academic and public discourse on Arab education revolves around two themes: equality and recognition. Arab education is discriminated against both in terms of state resources allocation (equality) and in terms of the content of the school curriculum and participation in education policy making (recognition) (Abu-Asba, 2004; Al-Haj, 1995; Geraby & Levy, 2000; Golan-Agnon, 2004). Not only does Arab education suffer from inequality in state investment in education in all aspects: teaching hours, budget and school facilities (Gerby and Levy, 2000; Swirski et al, 1996, 1997), but it also suffers from lack of recognition of the cultural, religious, linguistic and national needs of the community it serves. In this respect, Al-Haj (1995) argues that curricula and textbooks used in Arab schools are often empty of any cultural and national content. Moreover, The Arab minority in Israel is under- represented at the Ministry of Education and hence has less influence on education policy and decision making cycles.

It is worth noting that despite that different policies were implemented in order to narrow the gap in resources allocation and achievement between Arab and Jewish schools in Israel, none of these policy plans were designed to empower Arab education in Israel (Abu-Asbah, 2004). For example, in the last decade the Ministry of Education invested considerable efforts in the 'Five Years Program' (*Tochnit Ha'humesh*), but did not succeed in creating a sustainable impact or long-term change. Abu-Saad's (2006) words are worth quoting at length:

"The Israeli public school system is functioning effectively to maintain the cultural, socio-economic, and political subordination of its Palestinian Arab citizens through the imposition of aims, goals and curriculum to which the students cannot relate, and the substandard and discriminatory provision of educational resources, programmes and services; all of which result in markedly poorer level of educational achievement and rates of students qualified to enter higher education." (p. 49-50)

Civic Education for Arabs in Israel

Throughout their schooling, from elementary to high school, Arab and Jewish students largely attend separate schools. The separation of the Arab education system from its Jewish counterpart could be seen as meeting the demands of the Arab minority and as serving its particular cultural needs. However, as Mar'i (1978) argues, it is first and foremost a discriminatory segregation, which leaves the Arab education system outside the Israeli consensus, suffering from long-lasting neglect. To illustrate the gap between Arab and Jewish education suffice to note that while Arab citizens of Israel comprise approximately 20% of the population in Israel, and 25% of the country's school students, Israeli government spends an average of \$192 per year on each Arab student compared to \$1,100 per Jewish student. Moreover, the accumulated shortage of classrooms in the Arab education system is estimated at 5,000 (The Follow Up Committee on Arab Education, 2007)

The curricula for the two systems are almost identical in mathematics, sciences and English. It is different in humanities (history, literature etc.). The curriculum for Arab students includes extensive studies in Jewish history, Hebrew grammar and literature as a second language and English. Citizenship is studied in secondary schools according to the national curriculum and pupils in the academic track sit for the national matriculation

examination in citizenship. Hebrew is taught as a second language in Arab schools, while only basic knowledge of Arabic is taught in Jewish schools. Arabic is not obligatory for Jewish schools' matriculation exams.

Since the establishment of the state in 1948, civic education has suffered from a lack of both status and investment. The main problem stems from the small amount of time devoted to the teaching of civics. The average Israeli pupil receives three hours per week of civics lessons for only one year in the framework of studies for the matriculation examination in civics (one unit). Since most high school students are exposed to civics lessons only during their year of preparation for the matriculation examinations (as opposed to all other subjects of study, which are taught for several years prior to preparation for matriculation), the achievements of students in this subject are relatively low. The marginality of civic education was recently exposed during the deliberations of the Dovrat Committee over which matriculation examinations should be included within the mandatory framework, and which should be considered as electives. According to the initial proposal, civics was not included in the list of mandatory subjects. It needed a public campaign to persuade the Committee to add civics to the mandatory list (Barak, 2005).

Until recently, the educational system suffered from an additional problem in this area: a lack of specific training for teaching civics. In schools and colleges for teacher training, there were no special tracks for teaching civics, and most of the teachers in this field were teachers whose field of specialization was history or the social sciences. Today, there are a number of tracks of specialization in civic education, especially for master's degrees. In summary, civic education in Israel is generally deficient in terms of the number of classroom hours and official extracurricular programs.

In the Israeli education system, civic education is perceived as a field which competes with Jewish-Zionist education. Not only does the educational establishment in Israel regard civic education as a political subject, but also education for civic identity is seen as a threat to education for national, Zionist and Jewish identity¹⁶. In this respect, Pedatzur and Perliger (2004) contend that there is an inherent paradox in civic education in Israel:

"The fact that all of the political streams in Israel have prominent and extensive interests in determining the character of civic education in Israel has turned the conflict about its content into a political conflict ... The fact that education for citizenship (in fact, its ineffectiveness) touches upon the foundations of the political dispute in Israeli society and is influenced by and influences the underlying values connected to the fashioning of Israel's image, has turned it into a central tool in the continuing struggle between two political streams that see the future image of the state in a contradictory way "(p.73).

¹⁶ Israeli daily newspaper *Ha'aretz* published in 2005 an article about an experimental curriculum for matriculation on the subject of multiculturalism (Khromchenko, 2005a). The article noted that the list of articles, upon which the curriculum is based, included pieces by Edward Said and Arab Member of Knesset (MK) Dr. Azmi Bishara, who is considered also as a leading political thinker. "With the speed of whipping out a pistol.", in Bishara's words, less than a week after the publication of this article in *Ha'aretz*, the Minister of Education decided to cancel the program. The reason for the cancellation was the inclusion of the pieces by Said and Bishara. This minor case typifies how much the government's approach toward civic education in Israel is political and controversial (Khromchenko, 2005b).

In the state's initial decades, civic education in Israel was basically a version of Zionist education for constructing a new collective Israeli identity. It did not exist as a separate topic and as a distinct curriculum. Universal or democratic values were not part of the curriculum (Ichilov, 1993). In 1976, civics was included for the first time as a separate, mandatory subject of study for Jewish high schools, and several years later in Arab schools. The curriculum in each of the educational sectors was different. In general, though, all of these curricula focus on formal content, in particular learning about the importance and rules of democratic procedures and institutions. In 1995, a committee headed by Professor Mordechai Kremnitzer, appointed to assess civic education in Israel, recommended a comprehensive program for the instilling of democratic and civic values. Following Kremnitzer's report, the civics curriculum for matriculation was modified (Barak, 2005).

In 2001, a new curriculum was introduced, based on the textbook "To Be Citizens in Israel: A Jewish and Democratic State." This book was also translated into Arabic and currently it is widely used in Arab school. The book is divided into three parts: (1) What is a Jewish state? (2) What is democracy?; and (3) Government and politics in Israel. In contrast to previous textbooks, this one deals both with the formal aspect of governing institutions and their activities, and with the values of democracy, human rights and minority rights, the limits of democracy and rifts within Israeli society. Using a progressive and multicultural terminology, the new curriculum in civics discusses the national rift between the Jewish majority and Arab minority, the religious rift between religious and non-religious Jews, the ethnic rift between Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews, the political rift between right and left; and the socio-economic rift between rich and poor. The new curriculum signaled indeed a shift from a monolithic Jewish-Zionist interpretation of Israeli citizenship that characterized the old

generation of textbooks (Pinson, 2007), representing a significant improvement over the programs used in the past.

Yet, it is still an ethnocentric program focusing on Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. Despite the discourse of inclusivity that the civics curriculum attempts to ratify, the link between citizenship and nationhood and the Jewishness of the state, which entails an exclusive concept of membership in the Israeli state, is still in place and fails to meet the goal of becoming a tool for developing a platform for creating a common citizenship and shared civic culture for all citizens of Israel. In this respect, Pinson (2007) argues that *To Be Citizens*, in referring to the Palestinian identity, is at best ambivalent and at worst strengthens the Zionist narrative. Specifically, it marginalizes the concept of Israel as a state of all its citizens and takes a clear stand that advocates Israel as a Jewish State.

By doing so, and despite the pluralistic outlook, the new curriculum promotes the principle that Palestinians should be included as individual citizens, but excluded from participation in determining the common good. Palestinian citizens are included as long as they accept the framework of the Jewish democratic state and their position within it as a ‘migrant minority,’ which grants them selective liberal individual rights, but not as an indigenous minority. Therefore, the curriculum does not provide Arab educators and students a real opportunity to look critically at conflicts and tensions stemming from the clash between the Jewishness of the state and their citizenship in it¹⁷.

¹⁷ An example of the implications of this ‘thin’ sense of belonging on young Palestinian citizens is illustrated through a study into citizenship orientation of young Israelis (Ichilov, 2005). This study demonstrates that young Israeli Palestinian Arabs are more politicized than their Jewish mates and express alienation towards the state.

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تلخيص:

تبحث هذه الورقة في إشكالية التربية للمواطنة من حيث إسهامها في الجهود المبذولة لخلق مناخ من القبول المتبادل للروايات التاريخية في الحالة الفلسطينية الإسرائيلية. تركز الورقة على تيسير مفهوم "التربية لبناء السلام" وتقاطعها مع التربية للمواطنة. يتمحور الجزء الأول من الورقة حول اسهامات مؤسسات المجتمع المدني في التربية لبناء السلام بين دولة إسرائيل والفلسطينيين في المناطق المحتلة عام 1967 من أجل حالة من تعددية الروايات وتدعيم حضور الآخر وخطابه في التربية للمواطنة. الجزء الثاني من الورقة يعرض لإشكاليات التربية للمواطنة فيما يخص الفلسطينيين مواطني دولة إسرائيل من خلال تبيين أوجه قصور منهاج المدييات في طرح أي إمكانية لمواطنة مشتركة خارج حدود يهودية الدولة .

