Learning about Attitudes to Civic Education from School Textbooks: Presenting Israel as a "Jewish and Democratic State" in Israeli High-School Textbooks

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Key Words: School Textbooks; Civics; Civic education; Civic studies; Jewish State; Democracy.

Abstract

In recent years a vigorous debate is taking place in Israel within the Education Ministry, and between politicians and academicians over the contents of school civics curricula and textbooks and for a long time it focuses particularly on a high-school book "To be Citizens in Israel: A Jewish and a Democratic State" (Adan et al., 1999). While some pertain that civics textbooks should provide an understanding of democracy, others complain that they are insufficiently Zionist. This discourse is linked to long-running disagreements in the Zionist movement and Israel over the identity of the Jewish state/Israel, even if the country is formally defined as "Jewish and democratic."

In light of that debate, the present research examines how Israel is in fact presented to high-school students who are its immediate future citizens and focuses on interpretations of its formal descriptions as “Jewish and democratic," as well as its alleged raison d'être. This examination is done through researching the main high-school civics textbooks, assuming that even if they project the end-product of compromises, they still serve as some kind of a state manifesto handed to its future citizens. Furthermore, these texts provide indications as to Israel's development as a civil society.

In methodological terms, we examined quantitative and mainly qualitative aspects, as customary in the study of textbooks (Bukh, 2007, pp. 68-69). More practically, we studied the principal high school textbooks in three chief periods: from Israel’s founding in 1948 until the 1970s - when civic education began; from the 1970s to the 1990s, when civics became a mandatory subject for matriculation; and from 1995 until the present, following the “Kremnitzer Committee” reform that sought to deepen civic education studies.
Background and theory

In recent years a vigorous debate is taking place in Israel within the Education Ministry, and between politicians and academicians over the contents of school civics textbooks. For a long time the argument focused on the major high-school textbook, used since 1999, "To be Citizens in Israel: A Jewish and a Democratic State" (Adan, 1999). Some pertain that the civics textbooks should provide an infrastructure for the understanding of democracy while others complain that the existing books are sometimes over-ethnocentric, and still others complain that the books are insufficiently Zionist, and hope that a more ethnocentric approach would be adopted.

The discourse is linked to the more general debate in the Zionist movement ever since it was established and especially in Israel since statehood (1948), regarding its desirable characteristics. To be more precise, the country is formally defined as a “Jewish and democratic” state, but while some would like to develop its democratic basis, others prefer primarily to link the state to the Jewish heritage and religion (Tessler, 2005).

Going further back, Theodor Herzl, founder of the Zionist movement, aspired to a liberal democratic, Jewish majority state (Yakobson, 2003, p. 126). David Ben-Gurion, a social democrat and founder of the state, saw the immigration project as Israel’s main concern, but took pains to maintain political equality between Jews and non-Jews (Ben-Gurion, 1957, p. 257, 300). That kind of equality was also defined by Ze'ev Jabotinsky, founder of the territorial Revisionist Zionist stream, who was by nature a liberal (Yakobson, 2003, pp. 140-142). And even more so, the UN resolution regarding the Partition of Palestine (1947) that opted for two states - a Jewish and an Arab – demanded that each state would word a democratic constitution (Ram, 1996, p. 26), while Israel's Declaration of Independence projected the same spirit.

On the other hand, most of Israel's founding leaders sought a more ethnocentric approach and preferred different versions of "Jewish democracy." Socialist Zionism (headed by the Labour party), the ruling force in the pre-statehood Jewish society in Palestine and Israel until 1977, aspired to combine socialism with nationalism (Shapira, 1977, pp. 19-21; 26) and was open to far-reaching compromises with religious forces over the state's character. Religious Zionism identified the Jewish state as the start of Redemption and sought the utmost closeness between state and religion. The Revisionist camp put emphasis on the revival of “Greater Israel" and
perceived the Jewish heritage as it inspiration. The ultraorthodox saw the Jewish state as "another exile," but in practice worked for a state "grounded on Jewish law," and only the Communists and the "Canaanites" in opposition, preferred different neutral versions of "a state of all its citizens," democratic or otherwise. In addition, in 1948 democratic institutions were founded, but without separation between religion and state and particularly in regard to family laws. From another angle, in many respects the formal equality between Jews and Arabs is frequently violated by the state itself, while many Arabs find it hard to accept the principles of Zionism.

Accordingly, during the Labour Party's rule from the 1950s to the 1970s and when it occasionally regained power after 1977, it preferred in general a civic education emphasizing that Israel is a Jewish and democratic egalitarian state (Kashti, 2010; Neuberger (1), 2010). On the other hand, since the right-wing Likud party became the leading force – for much of the time since 1977 –it declares as most important in education the links with the Jewish people, its heritage and its historical land of Israel, with far less emphasis on democracy (Zelikowitz, 2005; "The Reform in Civic Education," 2011). Thus, against this backdrop, there is huge importance in understanding what in fact are the main messages regarding Israel's raison d'être that are transferred to Israel's future citizens and especially how are bridges created between the Jewish state and democracy.

In this article, we have tried to challenge ourselves with this question. Moreover, considering the vocal debate about civics textbooks, we focus on them as our main research angle. Though an end-product of compromises, and even if not all their chapters are taught every year in every class, they are still a sort of a state’s manifesto handed to its future citizens. Thus, these books are indications for the democratic equipment of the immediate Israeli citizens and how they are trained for that role. More specifically, we studied the main and most studied civics high-school textbooks, exploring how they present Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, and what are their proposals for bridging between these concepts, in three periods: (1) from the state's founding in 1948, until the 1970s - when civic education began (2) from the 1970s to the 1990s, when civics became a mandatory subject for matriculation (3) from 1995 until the present, following the “Kremnitzer Committee” reform that sought to deepen civic education studies. The research is based on some quantitative and mainly qualitative data, as customary in studies of textbooks.
(Bukh, 2007, pp. 68-69). Regarding most of the books, we analyzed the volume and mainly the content of the discussions on the nature of the Israeli state.

**The beginnings of civic studies in Israel**

The infrastructure of civic studies was laid down in the pre-statehood Jewish Zionist society in Palestine, under Ottoman and British Mandate rule (the Yishuv). At the time, there were three educational streams: the liberal "general stream," the socialist "workers stream," and the religious-Zionist "Mizrahi stream," all of which offered value-based education (Ichilov, 1993, pp. 11-22). The most important body that shaped the curricula was "The Teacher's Movement for the Jewish National Fund" that primarily stressed Zionist education (Ichilov, 1993, pp. 40-75).

After statehood, curricula were set by the Education Ministry, but initially it continued the same line (Ichilov, 1993, pp. 76-100).

Nonetheless, in the early 1950s against the backdrop of the mass immigration that reached Israel from the nondemocratic Eastern European and Moslem countries, the Education Ministry began supporting democracy studies. The kibbutzim’s schools were the first to introduce such studies as part of "special programs" and gradually subjects in civics were also introduced to the compulsory teachings of “Jewish and Israeli studies” that combined history, Zionism and social sciences (Shapira, 2010; Moskowitz, 2010; Ichilov, 1993, pp. 122-136). These nascent civic studies emphasized that Israel would be a free nation-state based on law in a way that would permit it to absorb massive immigration. The importance of adhering to liberal values was not mentioned at that stage, but the program included an introduction of the Israeli parties, the problems of the young state, and international issues. The Arab citizens were addressed as "religious minorities" and their society was to be studied as part of the theme "Religious Life and Organizations in Israel" ("Proposals for High-School Curricula," 1957). That is, even if not intending it a priori, in its first years, Israel started a process of introducing democracy studies in schools, identifying itself as a country that ought to strive to adhere to democratic principles.

The pivotal high school civics textbook of that period is "Citizen and State: Principles of the Theory of Citizenship," by Shulamit Aloni - a civics teacher who later on became a lawyer, fighter for human rights, and eventually an Education Minister (1992-1993). The book comprises 250 pages and 27 chapters, and much of it is devoted to democracy and its implementation in
Israel. It includes a discussion of the terms "state," "constitution," "Basic Laws," "governing authorities," the “State Comptroller and Ombudsman,” “the Penal Code,” “the police,” “the army,” and “local authorities." Only one chapter is devoted to the “Law of Return" that confers immediate citizenship on Jewish immigrants, while the relations between state and religion are discussed in the chapter devoted to family laws (Aloni, 1962). Thus, in structural terms, the book is primarily a text about democracy and its implementation in the case of Israel.

Regarding its content, the book has a liberal spirit and focuses on democracy, the importance of checks and balances, individual rights, and the principle of a "welfare state" (Aloni, 1962, pp. 25, 160-175). Furthermore, it provides a deep analysis of Israeli governance and asserts that for Israel, democracy is not a matter of “choice," but rather an obligatory commitment. In this vein, Aloni advocates a critical approach, suggesting that Israelis should thoroughly understand their democratic role as citizens (Aloni, 1962, p. 13), though the discussion concerning the Israeli Arabs is minimal. As for the “Jewishness” of Israel and the relations between the Israeli state and the Jewish religion, the writer prefers a secular approach and asserts that a Jewish state means that among other things, Israel would lean on symbols and values borrowed from the Jewish heritage/culture (Aloni, 1962, p. 53). For her the Law of Return is a humanistic law since it enables the Jewish people who lack a homeland to become immediately naturalized in their nation state. Furthermore, in the same vein, Aloni resents the religious definition as to whom should be considered a Jew, under the Law of Return, leaving it to "an individual feeling" (Aloni, 1962, p. 136) and negates the subordination of family laws to rabbinical institutions and courts (Aloni, 1962, p. 89). Finally, it is possible to conclude that by and large the book brings a pro-liberal democratic text to high-school students.

A Jewish and Democratic State, as reflected in Civics Books, 1976-1995

In the early 1970s, after struggles in the Education Ministry, civics – based on social sciences - became a compulsory subject and was separated from history studies. It was taught for one year in junior high-school and in high school; each student was obliged to take a civics exam of one credit-point as part of the matriculation (Giladi, 2010; Shapiro, 2010). It took quite some time until curricula were drawn up and the necessary resources allocated in order to advance civics in schools (Ichilov, 1993, pp. 92-97), but at last a slightly different civics curriculum was created
for each state-education stream: the secular, the religious, and the Arabic-speaking. In the curricula Israel was identified as a Jewish and democratic state and pupils were required to learn about Israel's minorities and to address them as having equal rights. Furthermore, regarding state-religion relations, instead of giving “answers,” there was an emphasis on the argument over this issue – insisting that pluralism and disagreements are important (The Centre for Curricula, 1976:1).

The leading civics textbook of this period is "The Regime in the State of Israel " by Shlomo Yuval (1979). Though written while the Labour party was still in power, it was mostly taught under the Likud regime. The book has 400 pages, with six sections and 29 chapters, all of which deal with various aspects of democracy in general, and democracy in Israel. It features a discussion on the connection between religion and state, citizen's rights, tolerance, the Arab minority, and the question of "retaining the territories" occupied since 1967.

As for the contents, the book offers a wide-ranging discussion on the nature of the democratic regime, and like Aloni's textbook, Yuval expresses a liberal worldview, emphasizing that democracy is a form of governance, a way of life, and a commitment to respect citizens' rights. He dwells on democracy's roots (Yuval, 1993:13-34) and discusses compatibility of attitudes in the Jewish tradition and history to democratic ideals, such as struggles for freedom of religious ritual, encouraging modern education, pluralism in the Zionist movement, the institutions of the Yishuv and more (Yuval, pp. 45-47; 61-70).

Israel is presented as a specific case of a liberal democracy that has its own characteristics as any other democracy, stressing its commitment to pursuing democratic structures and implementing the rights of individuals and minorities. In this context he mentions the problematic status of the residents of the Occupied Territories, who lack individual rights (pp. 362-363). Regarding the minorities among the Israeli citizens –Arabs, Druze, Circassians and others - the book states that while they enjoy political equality in Israel, they still find it hard to feel at home there, chiefly due to the backdrop of the broader Israeli-Arab conflict. On the other hand, it is democratic Israel that should help them achieve full equality (pp. 30-34; 374). In this respect, Yuval also suggests bridging disputes between the different Israeli sectors through agreements between their elites, through peaceful means (pp. 71-200).
As for Israel’s definition of a "Jewish state," Yuval identifies it as a "state of the Jewish people that strive to fulfill the Zionist idea," underscoring its dilemmas as such. Thus, while some see it as the state of the whole Jewish people, there are voices that prefer a "state of Israelis" and in the Diaspora there are even reservations about Zionism (pp. 323-332). Another dilemma regards the links between the designation of the Israeli society and Judaism (pp. 332-350) and while secular Israelis make do with borrowing symbols, values, and ceremonies from Judaism, religious Israelis push for strengthening the status of religious institutions and religious education, and support the Halacha definition for who is to be considered as a Jew. However, as for the family laws, Yuval supports seeking agreement between religious and secular citizens, stressing the importance of freedom of conscience in a democracy (pp. 337-350). That is to say, for Yuval the ideal Israel should be a liberal democracy, while the definition of its Jewishness should remain open to interpretation in a way that allows every Israeli citizen to identify with the country.

Over the years, books were also written in a religious-nationalist spirit that advocate the affinity between Israel's Jewishness and the Jewish religion. In "The Democratic Regime in Israel" by Moshe Lifshits, it is said that in modern times there are many interpretations for being part of the Jewish people. However, the fact that the State of Israel is formally defined as a Jewish state justifies a preservation of the Jewish heritage in the sphere of education, as well as Israeli close ties with the Jewish Diaspora. Nonetheless, as Aloni and Yuval, Lifshits insists that Israel is meant to be a democracy and his book analyzes the Israeli democracy at length (Lifshits, 1993, pp. 138-147). Similarly, "Israeli Democracy" by Rachel Gruman and Moshe Peleg accentuates that Israel is a center for Jewish creativity, both secular and religious (Gruman, 1994, pp. 15-16). Yet, their book shows support for the link between state and religion in the Israeli context – especially in regard to family laws, contending that those laws kept the Jewish people intact throughout its entire history (Gruman, 1994, pp. 22-23). On the other hand, they claim that Israel must also be democratic because Judaism espouses similar values to those of democracy - such as sanctity of life, equality, and justice for non-Jews living among Jews, as well as the restricting of the governing forces (Gruman, 1994, pp. 26-27).

In other words, from the 1970s to the 1990s, we can trace a path leading from perceiving Israel as a secular liberal democracy towards more pluralistic views, accepting religious and ethno-religious interpretations of Israel’s Jewishness, though without abandoning the democratic state.
Changes in Civic Education following the Kremnitzer reform

In the 1990s – under the Labour Party regime, which regained power for four years (1992-1996) - a reform in civic education was adopted, mainly due to eroding political tolerance in the late 1980s (Levy, 2005) and growing signs of racism among young people (Shapiro, 2010; Center for Curricula, 1990: 5). In these new circumstances, in 1995 the Education Minister, Prof. Amnon Rubinstein of the Liberal Meretz party appointed the Kremnitzer Committee – headed by law professor Mordechai Kremnitzer - to provide a basis for a new civics curriculum that would deepen the students’ democratic notions.

And indeed the Committee sought to make civic studies the main basis for value education: it called for teaching civics from nursery school to twelfth grade; to see and train teachers as educators who would instill democratic values; to create and encourage a sort of "civic" language in schools; to foster active social and civic involvement across Israel's multicultural society; and to work for open discourse over bones of contention between groups in Israel (Kremnitzer, 1996). The Committee was also meant to continue acting as a steering committee on civic education, but the education ministers who followed Rubinstein were drawn from Religious Zionism and the Likud, who opted to focus on boosting education on Jewish heritage (Zelikowitz, 2005). However, in 1999 a steering mechanism was set up, with the defined goals of: "preserving the rights of individuals and minorities in the spirit of the Declaration of Independence and the Conventions on Human Rights that safeguard human dignity and freedom," "establishing students' knowledge about their heritage, through links with democratic culture...," seeing Judaism as a "national pluralist culture...," and opting for "education for coexistence in a manner integrating the state's Jewish and democratic foundations" (Website of the Headquarters for Civic Education and Shared Life, 2011).

Another outcome of the Kremnitzer Report was the broadening of civic education. The "Homeland, Society and Citizenship" program was launched in second to fourth grades; in junior high-school, civics education was improved and taught throughout one year; in high school the hours of civics studies were doubled, and students now have to write a research paper as well as taking a matriculation exam (Shapiro, 2010). Appropriate books were written for all study divisions, and all high schools and as noted, the flagship book of the reform was "To Be Citizens
in Israel: A Jewish and Democratic State" (Adan, 1999). Originally the book was designated for all high-school students in every sector, and written in Hebrew and Arabic. Its chief challenge was to bridge between worldviews, chiefly in matters pertaining to Israel's definition as a Jewish state (Shapiro, 2010; Neuberger (2), 2010).

In itself, the book is entirely devoted to Israel's character as a simultaneously Jewish and democratic state. Its foreword addresses the declaration of the state, and examines the state's infrastructure; the first part has five chapters and focuses on the principle of the Jewish state; the second part has seven chapters and discusses the principles of democracy; while the third part, the largest of all, contains twelve chapters describing how democracy is implemented in Israel, as a Jewish state. That is, more than any civics textbook before it, To Be Citizens in Israel devotes a very broad canvas to discussing the state's nature as Jewish and democratic.

Methodologically, the book has a “spiral approach” and discusses different aspects of acute issues in different relevant chapters and various contexts. Accordingly, discussions of Israel as Jewish and democratic are not found only in the chapters devoted to this theme, but also when themes like state symbols, Israeli identity, and political culture are analyzed. Furthermore, the book strives to connect students to the current reality by encouraging critical and complex thinking on actuality. Ostensibly, the book symbolizes the shift taken by the Zionist/Israeli society from the days of Herzl that demanded a state of Jews, to a state constantly pondering its connection to the Jewish religion.

Concerning its content, Adan and her colleagues, more than Yuval, highlight dilemmas regarding Israel’s description as a Jewish state with an expectation that each student would be able to answer his own questions. And meanwhile, the authors themselves present a sequence of six ideal models of a Jewish state: at one end of the continuum is a Torah-based state (theocracy) that contains a "national Jewish state" whose legislation is based on halacha, a "cultural Jewish national state" that emphasizes the imparting of Judaism's values, "a state of the Jewish people" where Judaism is prominent in its ties with the diaspora, and a "state of the Jews" which is a state with a Jewish majority. At the other end of the continuum is "a state of all its citizens" which is a democracy lacking any national identity (Adan, pp. 29-35).
Regarding Israel’s democratic character, the book foregrounds the importance of a democratic structure, without dictating what an ideal democracy is, and allows students to identify with the democratic model they prefer – a totally liberal one, social democrat, procedural and more. Moreover, there is an emphasis on the importance of individuals' rights, and that the model should not contradict rights regarding any religion (Adan, pp. 93-97). Main issues that are discussed in the book from different angles are: the state’s legislative foundations, social problems, political parties, elections, and the functioning of government authorities. A notable example is the discussion of the Law of Return that, on one hand, is said to help preserve a Jewish majority but at the same time raises unanswered questions about democratic equality (Adan, page 267). On the issue of Israeli Arabs, Adan and her colleagues take an even more complex approach: in contrast to their predecessors, who focused on the need to confer equality on Arabs in a democratic Israel, they rather address the attitudes of Arabs in Israel to the state. They highlight Arab citizens' claims of discrimination on the basis of the state's very definition as a Jewish state (page 290), and the stated preference of many of them to define Israel as a state of all its citizens (page 267). In other words, the book takes a liberal approach, setting out the dilemmas and options for shaping Israel as Jewish and democratic; it raises questions, and encourages civic activity for the good of what its future citizens consider to be clear and appropriate objectives for Israel.

Finally, although "To Be Citizens in Israel" was initially meant to be the sole textbook for all high school students, over the years other books were published, targeting smaller populations, and generally inspired by the Kremnitzer Committee's conclusions, such as "Citizenship, the Challenge: Chapters in Citizenship for Senior High-Schools. Knowledge, People, and State" by Nissan Naveh (Naveh, 2001). In 2011 the Education Ministry approved two more textbooks. One of them, "On the Road to Citizenship" by Bina Galdi, Nissan Naveh and Assaf Motzkin, was written in the spirit of "To Be Citizens in Israel" used a methodology with substantial use of texts, and for the first time addressed themes like globalization (Galdi, 2011). However the book was archived before being introduced to schools, following claims of alleged extreme liberalism made by right-wingers in the Education Ministry and the Knesset (Maniv, 2011). The other book, "Regime and Politics in Israel: The Foundations of Citizenship" by Prof Avraham Diskin (2011) substantially reflects center-right positions and to a great extent denies wrongdoing towards Israel's Arabs (Nesher, 2011). And at the same time, it seems that in terms of what
interests us here - Israel's Jewish and democratic character - Diskin stays close to Kremnitzer's line, even though he doesn't admit to this. And finally towards the end of the 2011 school-year, a process of dialogue was launched between researchers and teachers of civic education in high schools, with the editors of "To Be Citizens in Israel." The aim was to update the book and feature more current language. Though claims were made about acute changes in the book, they were in fact chiefly on themes of current events discussed in it.

We can say, then, that from 1995 and thereafter Israel is being presented to students less and less as Jewish and democratic, in clear upfront definitions. Instead they are asked to crystallize their own opinion, in the light of the dilemmas presented - and in a pluralistic spirit. Liberal, ethnocentric - and even non-Jewish - groups can therefore all "plug into" the state.

Conclusions

Since the start of Zionism there have been arguments regarding the description of the Jewish state/Israel and while some push to shape it in a more democratic-universal way, others prefer an ethnocentric and religious direction. This of course creates divisions of opinion and great debates as to how civics studies in schools should be planned, and most of all over the civics textbooks that should be used in schools.

Assuming that these approved textbooks, even though the end-products of compromises, are a kind of manifesto that the state transmits to its younger generation, we sought to examine how Israel is presented in these books, and how its immediate young citizens are supposed to perceive its raison d'etre. We examined civics textbooks published during three periods of civic education: the pre-statehood period when civics was not a compulsory matriculation subject; when it became compulsory in 1976 and until the 1990s; and from the mid-1990s until present, following the Kremnitzer reform aimed at deepening civic consciousness.

Our findings elicit that before statehood a Zionist-patriotic approach was favored, but since the 1950s textbooks emphasized the importance of shaping Israel as democratic, egalitarian, and liberal, while the formal description of Israel as a Jewish state was defined in secular terms. In the 1970s, that tendency intensified, but as of the late 1980s, there was a growing preference to tighten Israel's affinity with Judaism, despite the continuing commitment to democracy and
equality. Following the Kremnitzer Committee, civics textbooks have a more pluralistic message than ever, that allows each reader to find the definition of Israel that suits him, and encourages civic activity to shore up his chosen definition. This perception that crystallized during a center-left government, continues in actual practice until today (the second decade of the twenty-first century).

In other words, whether or not there are links to events in reality and/or to the ruling party's specific vision, the main civics textbooks hammer home the message that Israel’s vision is to be Jewish in a wide variety of ways but at the same time, a democratic-egalitarian state. And ultimately, at least in terms of the textbooks, high-school students are given a useful democratic toolkit that may help them nurture a civil consciousness. Thus, it seems that even if there's still no consensus on Israel's ideal character in the political and societal fields, one cannot blame the civics textbooks for promoting a non-democratic approach or an ethnocentric one.

Returning to the vocal discussions about civics textbooks, it is hard to find in them verification that they indeed educate in a non-democratic, intolerant trajectory, or are obviously ethnocentric. It would constitute apologetics to identify such contents in them. On the other hand, it is equally hard to say that they are not sufficiently ethnocentric, because apart from teaching liberal democracy, they suggest diverse ways of addressing Israel, including a closer affinity to Judaism in an assortment of definitions. In the light of this, we suggest seeking the roots of racism among young people and in wider Israeli society elsewhere than the civics textbooks. Perhaps in the limited number of civics teaching-hours, that remained limited after the Kremnitzer reform, in the lack of enough school projects studying universal values, in the way that history is taught, the contents of social studies, and also in the political reality and the positions promoted by various parties elected to government authorities.

Contrastingly one can also cite the assumption that those books have made a real contribution to internalizing civic consciousness in Israel, that is increasing constantly. Since the Yom Kippur War, following any war, there is massive public demand to re-examine failures, there are ever-increasing demands for regular auditing of a growing list of areas, and freedom of speech is being implemented increasingly. The jewel in the crown is of course the social justice protest that burst out in Israel in the summer of 2011; while in London - the capital of democracy -
bonfires were lit as social protest, in Israel hundreds of thousands of young people who had served in the army, pay taxes, are loyal to the state's goals, members of the political left alongside members of the political right, set up a tent encampment and participated in huge country-wide legal and legitimate demonstrations for the sake of those universal goals.

And if this is the case, there is room to believe in education and civic education capable of changing fundamental attitudes in society: in Israel, whose political heritage is not a liberal democratic one, it seems that learning about universal content can generate change. We can go even further and state that through education, societies with an ethnocentric and/or collectivist background, such as Israel's pre-statehood society, are capable of changing and adopting liberal, universal values within a generation or two. And so - to hasten the arrival of the Messiah, as we see him - we suggest complying with the line of the Kremnitzer Committee: augmenting civic education well beyond the proportion of civics lessons and reading books, encouraging formal and non-formal civic education in civics classes and elsewhere, from kindergarten until graduation from high school.

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