THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

From the moment Israel declared its independence as a Jewish and democratic state, it draped itself in both 'ambiguity' about the meaning of its core principles and 'challenge' about whether public policies could ever match the ideals enshrined in its foundational document. There was ambiguity because no single definition of a Jewish state had been adopted by the World Zionist Organization nor has there ever been a consensus in political theory on the conditions necessary for a democratic regime. A challenge was also implicit in the Proclamation because the standards for measuring the quality of the country's democracy and its Jewish identity have evolved as ordinary citizens empowering new political movements advanced different definitions of the same Jewish, democratic ideal. And while the Proclamation is a description of Israel's identity and not a fully formed doctrine of government, it has, nevertheless, generated a notion of citizenship so dynamic that its force left open to future generations to apply and/or re-define it in ways appropriate for their needs and demands.

A country once dominated by a set of labor Zionist organizations dedicated to transforming the meaning of Jewish identity has become a society that acknowledges its religious traditions, celebrates its diversity, and acknowledges its wide dispersion of power. A freedom of speech and press that often descends into uncivil rhetoric guarantees that public policies, particularly on vital matters of war and peace, energizes demonstrations and sometimes even the founding of movements focused on changing the nation's priorities, strategies, and customary modes of operation. Israel has thus become more democratic and more Jewish in ways unimagined by its founders. This is the story

I wish to tell partly because it is so important and partly because it has never fully been told.

THE AMBIGUITIES OF THE TERM JEWISH

Israel's founding as a Jewish state in 1948 was largely the work of secular nationalists who led the Zionist movement from its establishment in the last decades of the nineteenth century. But some number of these Zionists, driven by necessity to seek a political solution to the problems encountered in an age of nationalism and dictatorship, generated ambitions not simply for a state and society like all other nations but also for redemption, the hope that a Jewish state and society would provide a new kind of social order without hierarchy, without exploitation, and with justice and equality for all.

There were often more debates and controversies than agreement or consensus over how to achieve independence and about what it would mean for the kind of society to be created in a truly Jewish state. For many Zionists, work as opposed to textual study and religious law was to be the vehicle for creating community and homeland. The discursive language that once connected a people to its sacred canon and ancient stories was to be transformed to reflect the utilitarian and commonplace activities of Jews committed to returning to their original home and presumably creating there a new kind of society to be built literally with their own hands.

At Zionism's very beginnings, although an open-ended disposition to change was inscribed into its DNA, that temper was defined in many different ways and embraced many disparate visions. And while sovereignty may have eroded some of the zeal for utopia, it did not entirely eliminate the ambition. Most importantly, in the process of

structuring a government, Israel's political leaders had to find ways to transfer power from an array of pre-state organizations that not only professed primacy because of their nation-building goals--redeeming the land, transforming the people--but also because they operated with quasi-sovereign authority.

No wonder that the issues of concern at the time of Israel's founding were less the rights of its citizens than the decentralized configuration of Jewish authority in its colonial past during the years of British rule [1918-1948] over Mandate Palestine. Palestine's Jewish residents who were drawn to the land in order to redeem it and transform its people typically formed Zionism's most energetic and iconic political movements and parties, holding fast to specific ideologies and/or representing particular economic and social interests. But alongside these movement activists were many people who came to live in the land of Israel simply to escape persecution and not to remake themselves or their nation and certainly not to shed the customs and traditions of their ancestors. There were also intensely religious groups--the so-called ultra-orthodox--whose members considered the very idea of Jewish sovereignty profane.

Perhaps because Zionism won international legitimacy--with the League of Nations awarding Great Britain the Palestine Mandate in order to facilitate the development of a Jewish National Home--before it was fully embraced by Jews across the globe--or even by all Jews resident in the land of Israel-- --Zionists were forced to cast their claims as arguments. That conditioned how they understood the exercise of state power. During the Mandate period, there were heated debates between Zionists and others in Palestine's Jewish community about the reasons for their residence in the land of Israel and what they hoped for in their future. While all of Palestine's Jewish residents

imagined themselves as part of a single people, many disputed whether that common identity should lead to an independent state run by elected officials when sovereignty rightfully belonged, some believed, to God whose precepts could be interpreted only by properly ordained [Orthodox] Rabbis. A corollary of this viewpoint was that Jews could survive and adhere to the strictures of their religious code without Jewish sovereignty. Zionists responded by extending aid to the ultra-orthodox precisely to show them the tangible benefits they might gain from a Jewish state. Even before the state was established, then, cooperative relations were forged between Zionist agencies and many Rabbis representing the ultra-orthodox population particularly as conditions for European Jews deteriorated and immigration certificates to Palestine became precious tickets to survival. Religious doctrine and ideological principles did not always or necessarily determine political behavior nor did the principled hostility between Zionists and anti-Zionists preclude cooperation on joint ventures.

To Israel's first generation of leaders, accommodating the demands of the ultra-Orthodox appeared a small gesture to a community decimated in the Holocaust and one seemingly in the last throes of life, expected to wither and die as it faced challenges from a population overflowing with energy and determination to build a new Jewish society. The diversity of views about the idea of Jewish sovereignty as well as the rich institutional legacy representing and empowering them, at the beginning of statehood, thus convinced Israeli political leaders to create an inclusive electoral system forging powerful incentives for even the most marginal of groups to compete for parliamentary seats. Incorporating so many disparate positions into the political process inevitably had

profound cultural ripple effects on public discourse which became marked by contention, argument, and a heavy reliance on language in the struggle for political power.

AMBIGUITIES OF DEMOCRACY

Although Israel's establishment was believed by its founders to be a central and decisive phenomenon in the national life of the Jewish people and touched with universal significance, it did not enable politicians to write a constitution to mark its break with Palestine's colonial past. In fact, Israel preserved mandatory laws by stipulating that they would be carried over unless specifically repealed or replaced by new legislation. Without a constitution delineating the distribution of power and the fundamental rights accorded individuals, the parliament had the task of proposing and passing on Basic Laws that were to acquire special status as the principles and values guiding the state because they were to be issued in accordance with the wishes of a super majority of the members of parliament.

But while the goal of fulfilling Zionism's grand visions gained vibrancy from Israel's founding, it was also shadowed by doubts and concerns that the new state lacked sufficient resources for the many urgent tasks confronting it. Consider the issue of immigration--clearly desired and needed by Israel and enshrined in its first Basic Law of Return. Despite efforts to provide immigrants with food, shelter, and supplies, most arrived with few possessions to prepare them for the conditions in which they found themselves. The sheer number of people called for a response on a much larger scale than the sovereign institutions of the newly created state could handle.

The cost of immigration and absorption convinced Israel's Provisional Government to try to limit the numbers entering in any month. But Israeli officials could control only the gates to immigration; they exercised no influence over the exit passages. European immigration turned out to be larger than expected and to exceed, by enormous amounts, the anticipated costs. When governments in Iraq and Yemen announced that all Jews who wished to live in Israel had to leave immediately or risk losing the right to leave at all, Israel's government complied but knew the country was unprepared to accommodate the needs of such large numbers. Thus, for immigrants, the process of absorption was painful, and for politicians and administrators, it always verged on the edge of disaster.

Accompanying this immigration were disruption and disorder on such an unprecedented scale that Israel quickly backed away from the demand for total control over immigration. The Provisional Government turned to share tasks, financial burdens and power with the Jewish Agency and even with the non-Zionist Jewish immigration rescue services such as HIAS or the American Joint Distribution Committee. On the one hand, the diplomatic duties undertaken by Provisional Government representatives derived from a sovereignty linked to a specific nation-state whose borders could be plotted on a map. On the other hand, the work of the Jewish Agency and other rescue organizations indicated that sovereignty was tied to a people living in many lands cutting across many geographic boundaries. As one would expect in situations where institutions operate in a significantly changed political context, there was both confusion and disagreement as to the exact design of the country's distribution of governmental powers and how the idea of a reconstituted Jewish sovereign state claiming to represent the

interests of all Jews across the globe comported with a national homeland whose borders may have been contested but were definable. Particularly critical for Israel in these early years of statehood was how this emerging conception of nationhood would affect the country's Arab residents assured by the country's foundational document that they would be brought into the fold of political rights as citizens but whose antagonism to the newly created Jewish majority could not help but be deepened by the dislocations and violence of war.

At issue, then, was a clash between a national identity that beckoned for membership as a condition of solidarity and a notion of citizenship that emphasized the individual political and civil rights of all even as it reflected the corporate interests of the Jewish people. While the proclaimed Jewish identity of the state could be seen as reflective of the national conflict that had divided Jews and Arabs in Palestine during the decades preceding Israel's founding, the embrace of democracy projected an image of an undifferentiated and sovereign people dedicated to principles of common right. But by simultaneously asking for peace from the Arab countries waging war against the Jewish state and promising to extend rights to its Arab citizens, the Proclamation implied both a condition for citizenship and a standard for measuring deviance. It also, however, meant that the principles shaping Israeli citizenship could not be abandoned without repudiating a national commitment.

It is important to remember that when Israel won its independence and armistice agreements eventually signed, there were still deep cleavages within its Jewish population over borders, security, and how the costs would be borne for creating a political framework making ordinary life possible in this newly established nation. An

array of associations, movements, institutions, and political parties had functioned for many decades proposing a variety of strategies to address these issues many championing the same ideal but fighting hard to insure their approach would prevail. And while the establishment of a Jewish state gave rise to a host of new problems, it did not dissolve many of the old ones nor did it shed past ways of handling these kinds of challenges.

Because Israeli democracy originated in the context of both British colonial rule and a national struggle, independence did not necessarily or automatically erase the many ways Israelis imagined their Jewish state. Those who pressed for national transformation still had their voices in certain ministries controlled by the Labor Parties and in organizations such as the Histadrut that sought to protect what they viewed as labor's economic interests. Those committed to a religious-Zionist vision worked to instill their values through a distinctive publicly funded educational system, religious control over marriage and divorce, and to insuring that the country's reckoning of time would follow the Jewish calendar.

But when the utopian energies released by the Jewish state at its birth seemed inadequate to resolving the country's most pressing domestic problems--immigration and economic development--the impetus was created for developing a new language of citizenship built around the newly created governmental structure. This ideology-- dubbed *mamlachtiyut*--argued that the state should now carry out many of the tasks once performed by what had been the leading nation-building institutions--organizations such as the Jewish Agency and Histadrut. For its advocates, *mamlachtiyut* represented the triumph of general over partisan interests. For its opponents, mostly on the left, this ideology was dismissed by its association with the state and charged with depriving the

country of its idealism and weakening the organizations that had done so much to build the workers' economy.

That there was no rigorous and precise description of citizenship in the new Jewish state is not surprising although there seemed to be widespread agreement on certain general concepts. First, the political culture entailed a strong but largely implicit commitment to respect such important individual rights such as those pertaining to speech and press judging by the lively uncensored debates that have characterized Zionist and Israeli politics. Second and perhaps most distinctively, sovereignty generated a series of obligations rather than a 'bill' of individual rights. The language of obligations rather than of rights dominated discourse at the state's founding and was set largely by the dominant labor movement. The list of obligations began with security needs, understandable given the circumstances, and then moved to focus on developing the labor economy that included educating the next generation and providing services to help absorb the newly arriving immigrants.

But the obligations of citizenship were not placed upon the entire population nor were they expected to devolve upon residents equitably. Acknowledging that the ultra-orthodox challenged the legitimacy of a Jewish state and that the Arabs were assumed hostile to its existence, Israel's democracy exempted both groups from many of the most onerous nation-building burdens. Instead, both populations were granted a great deal of cultural and religious autonomy and not subjected to enormous pressure to assimilate to the dominant culture nor to accept its warrant for public service. Obeying laws and paying taxes would suffice. That Israel's citizens were not all enmeshed in identical obligations could be read as a sign of respect for the country's diversity; that such

differences imposed on these communities a certain weakness and dependence could be interpreted as a portent of problems later encountered and the reason the country's discourse on citizenship continued to provoke dissent.

What the state's founders took for granted was that democracy should permit voters to hold accountable those possessing power both for the policies they pursue and the problems they fail to resolve. This notion was drawn from their own past experiences in Zionist politics when they formed and operated institutions to represent their interests during the years of British rule. Believing that all adult citizens should possess the right to participate in making the binding decisions by periodically casting equally weighted votes for their representatives, Israel's founders established a parliamentary system of government. Elections were required to be held no later than every four years with voters casting their ballots for political parties rather than for particular individuals. The country would serve as one electoral district with a very low threshold needed to win a seat and with paper ballots counted to determine the political parties winning parliamentary seats on election day. Voters basically go to the polls and cast a single vote for one of the various national lists that are running. Seats are allocated to the various lists in proportion to the votes won. The specific candidates chosen from the winning lists are determined by the list's own ranking of these candidates--sometimes but not always through primaries. During some number of years, one or another political party has achieved dominance but never won a majority of votes cast in any general election. The self-governing framework for the Jewish community in Palestine also incorporated assumptions critical to sustaining a democracy--free speech and a free press, and a wide latitude in organizing political movements to compete in elections, the latter the decisive

mechanism for resolving conflicts and constituting governments. Thus, many of the

social norms supportive of democracy took hold even before the state was founded and

while some have been revised, none has been reversed.

From the start, however, a language of obligation almost entirely obscured a

language of common political right. Both developed within the shifting contours of the

country's changing society and politics as did the relationship between the two

discourses. The most far-reaching influence on this discourse of citizenship came from

the intersection of economic developments and electoral politics that over time implanted

the language of individual right more deeply in the culture fracturing but not replacing

the old grid. How and why the language of individual rights emerged as a powerful

linguistic resource but yet failed to replace the older language of obligation says a great

deal about the nature of Israeli democracy and the kinds of bonds forged by the state with

its minorities and vulnerable communities. This discourse on citizenship has been one of

the most striking and least understood aspects of Israeli democracy. Citizenship, in

Israel, as in many democracies, is a complex phenomenon: it provides rights, imposes

burdens, offers a sense of attachment, and a set of opportunities. And how this multi-

layered idea of citizenship applies to the Arab population in Israel is critical to

understanding not only how the country operates but also how a Jewish state can also be

called a viable democracy.

FIRST ENCOUNTERS

It is important to stress, once again, that the languages of democracy and

citizenship evolved within the contours of a society and polity that were themselves

developing. Israel's founding in the midst of war produced severe dislocations for Jews but almost total chaos for the Arabs who remained within its borders. Independence for one nation was named a catastrophe for the other. Once part of what had been Mandate Palestine's majority population, Arabs found themselves a distinct minority when the guns were silenced and the truces declared. War had reduced their numbers to one tenth of the Jewish population. Almost strangers in a strange land, Arabs were unsure of how they would be treated or even what would happen to their lands and homes after this monumental defeat for them and for the Arab States that had deployed their armies to stop the establishment of a Jewish state.

Arabs could see only loss in every direction they turned. Their villages were emptied of inhabitants, many becoming the sites of newly established Jewish communities. The so-called mixed cities of Haifa, Tiberius, and Safed were transformed into Jewish centers, while some that were divided by ethnicity, like Tel Aviv/Jaffa, became largely homogenous urban entities. And the country's most contested site-- Jerusalem--was bisected by the war into cities claimed by enemy states preparing for what was commonly expected to be a 'second round'. With their most prominent urban leaders having fled and residing in other Arab countries, Palestinians had to feel completely abandoned forced to acknowledge that their cause, itself, was on life support. Families were now often spread across enemy lines with loyalties strained by the distance and the conflicting demands for survival.

CITIZENSHIP

Notwithstanding declarations of equality and freedom for all, Arab citizens of Israel soon encountered numerous differences between declared principles and actual policies. Although not all government advisors took for granted the need to establish a special security regime for the Arab population caught within Israel's new and fragile borders, those who advocated for extending benefits and aid to a demoralized, frightened and impoverished community also contended that their loyalty could be won with generosity and sensitivity--despite the enormous challenges facing the Jewish state and despite the refusal of Arab leaders to bring a formal end to hostilities. But they were not persuasive in shaping the country's initial relationships with its Arab citizens.

A military administration was set up in areas densely populated by Arabs marking the community as hostile, presumably supportive of Israel's enemies, and therefore, a danger to the newly founded Jewish state. Right from the beginning, state policy encouraged Jewish immigration and labeled attempts by Palestinians to return to their homes and villages from their refugee camps in other lands as infiltration, as jeopardizing lives, and undermining the safety of the state. The Ministry charged with addressing minority issues was also responsible for the police force. Until 1966, a military administration administered most Arab towns and villages supervising movements and activities and reinforcing the national distinction between the country's citizens.

There were good reasons, of course, for Israel's policymakers to worry about security. While some Palestinians made their way back to harvest crops or reclaim their homes, others crossed the armistice lines to continue their war against the Jewish state and its population. Although hostilities were less organized, the Arab wars against Israel did not end when truce agreements were signed in 1949 and armies were ordered to

return to their home bases. And for Israel's Jews, the war was impossible to forget.

Reminders were everywhere: on gravestones, at battle sites, in the wounds on people's

bodies, in the shortages of food and shelter. Jews memorialized the war, however costly,

as part of their determination to reclaim their homeland and construct a modern state. It

made sense to Israel's leaders, then, that citizenship with regard to rights and obligations

correspond to the degree of hostility against the Jewish state rooted in nationalist or

religious ideologies. Putting that view of citizenship into practice meant drawing

distinctions and grouping Arab citizens into religious, ethnic, and tribal categories to

determine both access to resources and the obligations expected of them: for example,

Druze and Bedouin were drafted into the army but not Muslims or Christians.

Concern over the peace and safety of the county moved the Israeli military to

begin wrapping a tight security network around areas inhabited by its Arab citizens and to

watch for signs of discontent. Village leaders were instructed to gather weapons from

residents and also provide lists of people who had left their homes during the war. Some

tens of thousands eventually did come back although most did not recover their lands.

Israel seized lands deemed 'abandoned' and placed them with the Custodian of

Abandoned Properties even if owners had moved from one village to another within the

state borders and not to enemy territory. The difference between those deprived of their

land because they fled or were driven across the borders that were to define the Jewish

state until June, 1967 and those simply displaced from their homes and villages but who

remained within the so-called 'green line' was not sufficient enough to give the latter a

stronger hold on to what they claimed as their property.

Interestingly, not all Arab lands were seized because of Israel's initiative alone. In the so-called Triangle, Arab villages were handed over to Israel by Trans-Jordan's King Abdullah who had earlier declared it a duty to wage war against the Jewish state. Because this area had been occupied by Iraqi troops during the hostilities and its inhabitants, subjected to rape and robbery by the poorly trained soldiers, the transfer brought a sense of relief to the residents but also a feeling of profound betrayal.

Dispossessed of land sometimes meant starvation for many Arabs now deprived of their traditional livelihoods and without alternatives available to sustain their households particularly because their movements were restricted by the regulations issued by the military administration. The dire condition of post-war Israel drove many of the remaining Arab leaders to forge co-operative relations with members of the military administration and with leaders of what was the dominant political party during the country's formative years. Personal and political alliances brought goods and services to Arab towns and villages as well as favors to individuals. While these leaders were sometimes denounced as traitors, they were eventually acknowledged to have taken an approach that served their community well. The changes in perspective are an implicit acknowledgement not only of the particular challenges Israeli Arabs confronted but also of the vast improvements brought by integration.

Accommodating the new rulers seemed the only way to recover from the devastating consequences of 1948 and the war Arabs waged against dividing Palestine into two states for two people. Too exhausted to continue their opposition, too few of them to mount serious protests, Arabs who wished to oppose Israel's policies did so for many years at the ballot box by voting for the Communist Party during general elections.

The Communists, steadfast in calling for an end to Israel's military administration and for promoting equal rights for all Israelis, helped devise a new language for understanding citizenship that was at least partly constitutive of the reasons the government offered when it finally ordered that the military administration be dismantled in 1966. Political party leaders, at the time, noted the contribution of Arab labor to economic growth and the relative peace enjoyed by Israelis between the wars in 1956 and 1967. Many politicians also believed that the military administration kept Arab votes tethered to the dominant Mapai Party which controlled the security apparatus. Market forces thus converged with a deeper feeling of safety to expand Israel's definition of citizenship without totally freeing Arabs from scrutiny since the end of the military administration did not cancel all of the mandatory period emergency regulations already incorporated into Israeli law and applied when deemed necessary.

By itself, the Proclamation of Independence, acknowledging the link to Israel as the site of the Jewish homeland, accorded Jews membership and a stronger claim than those citizens who could only forge their rights as citizens based on residence. But precisely because the nation was promulgated as a democracy, its guarantees had significance. Although its sovereignty was always fully expressed in Hebrew, Israel recognized Arabic as one of its official languages according respect for the culture of the country's largest and what was generally perceived as its most troubling minority. Language is an instrument of identity formation and the capacity to use it in public life is critical to defining a community and to safeguarding its traditions. While support for the Arabic language helped sustain the national identity of Israel's Arab citizens, fluency in Hebrew was still necessary for integration into the country's labor force and advancement

through the country's mainstream institutions. But what is notable is that while Israel has always rejected any proposals that might acknowledge its Arab residents as part of the defining characteristics of the state, it adopted policies that strengthened the attachment of this population to its national identity.

At the same time, citizenship did include the kind of individual rights that could be invoked to demand services and access to resources. These, of course, helped improve the standard of living of Israel's Arab citizens across a number of dimensions. For Israeli Arabs, levels of education, employment, health, housing, and income have risen since 1948. Life expectancy for both Arab men and women has increased while infant mortality has declined dramatically. In 1948, eighty percent of Arabs were illiterate; in 1988, only fifteen percent. The number of Arabs attending universities has grown by a remarkable seven hundred percent even though it is still lower than the percentage of Jewish university students and is also below the Arab share of the country's population. While these statistics measure progress, they also tell a story of inequality. Rates of poverty and levels of crime are higher for Arabs than for Jews, and average incomes for the two communities are distinctly unequal.

Israel's response to these kinds of inequities typically tends to draw as thick a verbal veil across national differences as possible emphasizing that Arabs have always had rights consistent with citizenship in a democracy--they have enjoyed ever expanding freedoms of speech, press, assembly; they could vote and form political parties to run for parliament on platforms that even deny legitimacy to the very electoral mechanisms that brought them to power. And while these assertions did not obscure the reality of the inequities, they also proved to be a powerful political resource.

So central has the Jewish state become to the collective consciousness of Arabs that this is now a very different community than the one conquered in 1948. Even when the same people dominated local affairs, political behavior changed. For the most part, the political class has become less socially homogeneous. Politics is no longer the domain of only the landowners or the elderly. Professionals and merchants are more dominant in cities and in towns.

Demographic changes, prompted by Israeli policies, have emboldened village leaders to demand more resources in order to meet the expectations and needs of the residents who voted them into power. Mayors of Arab towns have engaged in strikes that caught the attention of national ministers some of whom had their own electoral interests in mind when they provided more funds for schools and for upgrading the local infrastructure. Even politicians who subscribed to the most hard line parties and whose platforms gave little consideration to the plight of the Israeli Arabs have forged alliances with local leaders when they achieved office and controlled ministries that might dispense services wanted by this community. A consciousness of the critical importance of Israel's administrative hierarchy meant that increasing numbers of Arab mayors sought to redefine their village into town status in order to widen the ambit of their access to national resources and tighten their relationship with the national government.

Adjusting to life in the Jewish state may have been unsettling for Arabs but it, nevertheless, has had profound implications for how Arabs came to understand citizenship as comprising a calculation and pursuit of their interests, a definition of their identity, and an assessment of their political rights. Particularly for those born and raised in Israel and able to acquire university degrees and professional status, engaging in

political activity has come naturally. A number of Arab professional associations have undertaken aggressive action and engaged in protests against inequities in the delivery of goods and services to their communities by invoking the country's proclaimed ideals. These professional organizations are helping to solidify a broadened view of Israeli citizenship when they call attention to policies, no matter their pedigree, that vitiate Arab political rights. A number of human rights organizations also fund direct challenges to some of the cherished practices that have historically bestowed privileges on Israel's Jewish citizens. One important judicial case disputed the power of the Jewish National Fund to segregate housing in developing a community on land owned by the state. In what has been called a landmark decision, named after the family initiating the complaint--Qa'adan--Israel's Supreme Court ruled that the state cannot discriminate on the basis of religion or nationality when it leases its lands to its citizens.

Some Arab professionals have developed an even more radical thesis of citizenship put forward in a series of documents known as 'The Future Vision' calling on Israel to recognize the Palestinian 'right of return' and to divest itself of its Jewish identity. Israeli Jewish intellectuals and politicians tend to see in the documents a reflection of a deep-seeded alienation and of yet another attempt to deprive Jews of their right to self-determination. For that reason, these documents have not actually built wide support for the idea of citizenship as comprising individual rights rather than differently distributed obligations and have burned rather than built bridges to an Israeli Jewish population still asked to give service and risk its life in defense of the nation. In fact, even most Israeli Arabs, when proclaiming their Palestinian identity, describe their

positions in Israeli society in a language rooted in forms of action--education, work, ambition--all suggesting solid attachment to the country if not to all government policies.

Israel's electoral system has drawn attention for its capacity to allow the country's ethnic and religious communities as well as its many ideological movements to gain seats in parliament and admission to a public platform for their views and policy preferences. Opinion is divided about whether parliamentary representation has compromised Israel's governing capacity and stability, but Arabs, from the beginning, have had the opportunity to find seats in Israel's parliament even without gaining significant access to policymaking positions. Those Israeli Arabs who have served as government ministers have come through the ranks of Jewish not Arab political parties, and no Arab political party has been invited to join any government coalition.

Today, Israeli Arabs are not only fragmented politically, they are divided over whether engaging in political action is useful or important. On the one hand, there is one Islamist movement arguing against offering Israel even implicit legitimacy by political participation while on the other, there are several Arab political parties that seem to focus more on resolving the country's dispute with the Palestinians or on regional rather than on local issues that are of immediate concern to Israel's Arab citizens. Arab voting rates, in general elections, have declined over the years but not so much because of the instructions from Islamists or indifference to the calls for attention to regional politics but rather because of an apathy typical of a population plagued by higher than average crime and unemployment.

If Israeli rule has not heralded the dawn of a new age for the Arab population, it has disrupted old traditions. Israel granted Arab women both the vote and the possibility

of securing jobs outside the home. Israel's policies also cast Arabs into the throes of modernization. Although policies have enabled Arabs to earn higher wages, the triumph of a higher standard of living was not without its darker consequences. Workers, paid less than their Jewish counterparts, were constantly reminded of their subservient status and a school system that does not give them all the modern skills offered in the best Israeli schools. In fact, many Israelis become exposed to complex technology through the army, an experience denied to most Arabs. One might say that the Arab community in Israel is struggling to keep up with the rapid changes in the 'start-up nation' to which it is attached but to which it is not yet fully hooked up.

LAND EXPROPRIATION

For every Israeli Arab, 1948 had not only geographic meaning but an economic component as well. Before 1948, Arabs owned about 4.2-5.8 million dunams of land while Jews held about 2 million dunams privately. Today, Israeli Arab lands comprise about .7 million dunams compared to the 4 million dunams previously in the hands of the people who became refugees or controlled by the Muslim endowment system or *waqf*. The Israeli government also seized lands to develop Jewish towns in the Galilee: Upper Nazareth, Ma'alot, Carmiel, and modern Tsfat. Lands, once occupied by the Bedouin in the Negev, have also been transferred to the state. When growth rates for the Arab population are considered, the scope of the loss of this critical resource is magnified. Since becoming citizens of the Jewish state, Israel's Arab population has grown by sixfold while its land holdings moved starkly in the other direction. For many Arabs, then, 1948 did not look like a war over national rights so much as one fought for access

to land and resources. The effects of Israel's land policies were felt immediately by a population heavily reliant on agriculture to meet its daily needs.   One reason for the dispossession was the continued importance of the Zionist nation building project in the country's early years. The state handed over significant amounts of land to the Jewish National Fund as the agency in charge of 'redeeming land' during the Zionist struggle to establish Jewish sovereignty. The ideal of settling Jews on the land shaped Zionist policies during the period of the British Mandate, and no one thought that ideal had been reached in 1948.

Israel drew from laws drawn up by Great Britain to govern property rights when the latter ruled Palestine as a colonial possession. These laws, some reflecting earlier Ottoman practice, gave the state latitude in expropriating land not harvested or occupied by owners. Given the turmoil of the 1948 War, Israel was able to transfer large amounts of what was once Arab owned land to the Guardian of Absentee Property eventually designating it for public use and imprinting the country's national identity on all parts of the country. The Supreme Court has generally upheld this state practice since the country's political culture does not view private property as a fundamental natural right. It is widely believed that the Court interpreted a 1943 mandatory law that allows land to be transferred from private to state ownership for public use precisely because it serves as a legal instrument that can stamp a Jewish national identity on the country's territory revealing a bias inherent even within the country's judiciary. But that presumes that Israel's Supreme Court possessed a clearly defined authority at a time when its actual power was actually untested and uncertain. Examining the Supreme Court's position on land expropriation discloses the dilemmas confront by the Jewish State as it tried to

establish policies that would address a number of issues and simultaneously fulfill its utopian redemptive ideals in a transitional period when the Government was not certain what powers it actually possessed.

Although Supreme Court Justices were eventually emboldened to grant hearings to people whose property was expropriated by the state, they embraced the notion that the Court could offer protection against such state initiated expropriation only after a 1986 ruling from Israel's Attorney General. What were the reasons for this judicial deference? Why did the justices accept the government's legal reasoning even when the sources of law offered resources for crafting results contrary to these actions? The answer is complex. First, although the Jewish state won its war of independence in 1948, it neither fully secured its borders nor was it granted full recognition over a land that continues to be contested by divergent national claims and competing holy writs. Second, the Supreme Court had not yet established its own latitude for interpreting and tempering executive orders let alone parliamentary mandates. Justices adopted a cautious judicial philosophy generally known as formalism, a type of legal reasoning indicating that nothing could be done beyond applying and enforcing the literal commands of the law. At Israel's founding, Supreme Court justices were also effectively limited in the exercise of their authority by the uncertainty of their tenure and the difficulty of enforcing their judgments against the will of the executive or of the legislature, the latter holding ultimate authority in a parliamentary system of government.

Perhaps because the country had no written constitution and thus could not provide the Supreme Court with a textual reference, Israel's justices were not only divided on how and when to exercise the authority of judicial review; they also

questioned whether they possessed the prerogatives of that authority. The 1992 Basic Law on Human Dignity and Liberty provided the conceptual framework for the Court to broaden its protection of individual rights--including the right to private property--and to withdraw some issues from the realm of nation-building to the context of universal principle. But even when the Supreme Court moved beyond the strictures of formalism with regard to the civil rights of Israel's citizens, it still ruled largely in favor of the expropriation of privately owned land.

Because the culture of Zionist nation-building possessed such a deep animus to private property, it left traces not so much on the form of Israel's economic policies as on assumptions underlying the country's public discourse. Without deeming the idea of private interest illegitimate, Israelis are inclined to regard it as compromising the public good. Hence, although the notion that Israel expropriated lands as a matter of advancing its political interests against Palestinian Arabs may be widely accepted, it does not fully explain why Court rulings have also sustained the expropriation of privately owned Jewish property as well. Whatever one thinks of these decisions, they are all impossible to understand without reference to the country's deeply ingrained cultural values. Israel is a country whose norms and values run decidedly against the idea of protecting private property as an important natural right.

The Zionist ambition to remake Jewish identity was deeply infused with the idea of physical labor on national land as redemptive. The intense pressure to accommodate the urgent needs of a large flow of immigrants during Israel's first years evolved as a cultural and moral mission that encouraged the transfer of land from private to public and national use. The Supreme Court could only establish its legal authority and earn the

respect of Israel's citizens if it reflected the country's core convictions and beliefs. Just as Israel's Supreme Court writes and conveys its opinions within the medium of the Hebrew language, it conceives its judgments within the web of cultural understandings that it shares with the people it serves. Because expropriation of land is a concrete manifestation of sovereignty, as long as Israel is besieged, the Supreme Court is likely to commit its rulings to what is widely understood as a defense of Jewish statehood.

The many-sided conflicts over Israeli democracy came to focus with hurtling force on the issue of land confiscations with demonstrations on March 30, 1976. Until protests erupted against a purported Jewish plot to seize the Haram al-Sharif and destroy the al-Aqsa Mosque in October, 2000, the 1976 disruptions were the most successful [or depending on ethnicity and perspective, the most frightening] call to action issued by Israeli Arab citizens. Both clashes seemed like timely indictments of Israel's security policies and even its military dominance. Dubbing March 30, 1976 Land Day, Israeli Arabs have continued to mark the date with demonstrations to remind the country's citizens that Israel's public policies have failed to match its purported democratic values.

Why the major protests happened in 1976 and not earlier is complicated but not mysterious. Arab leaders called for strikes and demonstrations not simply to document what had been long-standing Israeli legal practice and hence common knowledge but rather to change the dynamic and shift the burdens of proof. For Arabs, the land confiscations are elemental and reinforce a belief in their own subordination that is so fixed as to be unimpeachable. Land Day is thus a term with powerful resonance.

Citizenship for Israel's Arabs has produced tensions and contradictions since the country's policies have been forged to heed of number of imperatives that often come

into conflict with one another. Policies must expand opportunities and help shore up the economic well-being of the Arab population, but they must also insure security. Almost all policies have been unequal to the demands placed on them and have achieved far less for Israel's Arab citizens than expected or desired. But Israeli citizenship has brought the benefits of freedom and expanded opportunity even while it has triggered feelings of unease in those who have thought most deeply about what it means for a Palestinian to live in a Jewish state.

MIZRAHIM AND IDENTITY ISSUES:

The tension between a vocabulary of citizenship as obligation and a vocabulary of citizenship as rights had very different consequences for Israel's immigrants from the Middle East, coming in large numbers during the decade following the establishment of the state. Although not a numerical minority, they were often caught in some of the same snares as the Arab population because they were perceived by the largely European born ruling establishment as inferior, in need of civilizing and of identity transformation. Without resources, often shunted into poorer border regions, these immigrants presented a profile that seemed to confirm all the stereotypical negative features that had for so long such currency for officials and for Israel's political leaders. It is worth remembering that Israel's first generation of leaders called itself pioneers, a name suggesting that these people did not simply move to a new land; they also believed they had created it. The culture they celebrated and the infrastructure they built were not only real and tangible, they were also mental and emotional.

The assertion that this new and uniform national culture left no place for the celebration of ethnic and religious variety exacted a heavy price on those whose lifestyle did not fit into what became the authorized culture and who were often blamed for holding in check the forces and benefits of progress. To be clear, the policies structuring the process of absorption derived from both a fear of people coming from societies presumed to be pre-modern and a concern that the ties of such people to their religious traditions were too tight to be severed and subordinated into the kind of work ethic thought a requirement for empowering the Jewish state. But the melting pot explanation for the absorption of immigrants from countries in the Middle East was subsequently dismissed as little more than a cover for assimilating to a largely European or Ashkenazi model of culture and lifestyle albeit one presumably transformed by the dominant Israeli ideals and values.

The Zionist ambition to create the new Jew, shorn of the customs of family and country of origin, and reconstitute a new Jewish society was deprived of its power to express the country's vision of itself when it lost the 1977 election. Judaism began to take over part of the niche in public discourse once occupied by the word Zionism. Today, several Israeli political parties comfortably assume the mantle of Jewishness not so much to discard their Zionism--though some like the Shas Party do so more in name than in practice--as to dismantle the hegemony and elitism once inscribed into the country's public discourse seemingly committed to remaking the Jewish people and emblazoned in Zionism's storied achievements--Kibbutz and Moshav--that presumably stood as testimonials to the capacity of the political system to translate egalitarian ideals into

reality. But however tightly they gripped the imagination, these Zionist institutions could not operate without generous subsidies from the nation's treasury.

When the 1977 election upheaval brought to power political movements dedicated more to the cause of bringing Jews to the territories conquered in 1967 than to the idea of sustaining the productive capacity of agricultural collectives, however venerable their status, even these self-proclaimed egalitarian communities, burdened with heavy debts and high operating costs, had to engage in enterprises turning a profit to survive. Electoral power nurtured a self-confidence radiating to other domains as well. It strengthened an ambition to reform or reconfigure the hierarchies structuring society and dominating culture. No serious politician misses the North African Maimuna festival marking the end of the Spring Passover holiday. Once denigrated as central bus station music, songs composed in the style of Jews from Arab countries now dominate Israel airwaves. Instead of transforming 'class into nation', one is tempted to say, that in 1977, the country began to reformat its mission away from a celebration of workers to a reverence for its bourgeoisie inevitably invigorating Israel's discourse on citizenship.

To the extent that Arabs embraced a notion of citizenship as embodying individual rights that would deny the state an official national Jewish identity, they cast themselves into a *kultur kampf* they could not win. By contrast, Middle Eastern immigrants and their descendants have made their case for access to power and resources by invoking Judaism rather than by pledging allegiance to an ideology of individualism that they know to be an inadequate political resource in Israel. Judaism, with its own imperatives, is a much more potent force for understanding and correcting the imbalances in the country's structure of power precisely because it enables various sectors of the

population to be brought together in shared alliances. That has lent new vigor to an Israeli tradition of citizenship as obligation.

Zionists initially wanted to draw a distinction between the Jewish culture in the lands of their birth immigrants were encouraged to abandon and the new one surrounding them in the land of Israel. But while the narrative of negating the Diaspora may have hovered over Israel's early history, it could not be sustained as the country sought its place as the 'start-up nation' prepared to insert its innovative enterprises in the global market and to list its own companies on the US Stock Exchange. Fostering a new Jewish identity that claimed to diminish the value of the old complicated the need to engage with people [including Jews] across the globe for economic ties and political support. Israel is now more disposed to proclaiming a common Jewish identity than to asserting the need to 'negate' the attributes of the Diaspora. Examples abound from the 2013 General Election campaign with Jewish artifacts and religious garb featured in videos for the so-called secular political parties. Perhaps, the most striking example of the religious embrace can be found in the newly formed party--Yesh Atid or There is a Future--whose leader is former journalist, Yaid Lapid, the son of the person most associated in earlier elections with attacking the role of religion in Israel's public sphere and directing his animus against the ultra-orthodox. Yair Lapid incorporated Rabbis, including one self-described as ultra-Orthodox, into prominent positions in his newly created political party. Some of the people elected to Israel's parliament on this party list are immigrants from the United States and one is originally from Ethiopia. Geography no longer delineates a dividing line between the values of the old, rejected Diaspora Jew and the new Jew created in Israel. No longer compelled or motivated to 'negate' the Diaspora, Israelis

seem anxious to open up their culture and society to the lands their ancestors left and rejected.

Moreover, even when they devalued what they regarded as a culture made moribund by its rigid piety and political passivity, Zionists always preserved connections to the lands of their birth. But integration into the global economy, even if it arose from the narrowest of economic motivations, has generated profound consequences for that relationship. No longer propagating an indictment against Diaspora culture, Zionism now joins together a vocabulary of national attachment with a language of religious identity. Israel sponsors programs like Birth Rate to bring young Diaspora Jews to Israel to enable them to feel they are stepping not only on holy but also and more importantly, on common ground as well.

Even before the most recent controversies over military service for the ultra-orthodox or over the attempt to create separate and unequal space for men and women in buses and on sidewalks in ultra-orthodox neighborhoods, Judaism and Zionism were cast as adversaries. Paradoxically, some on both sides in this debate about how to strengthen Jewish identity and defend Jewish interests presumed that nationalism and religion were disjunctive and for that reason, a wedge issue driving Israeli and Diaspora Jews apart. Although Zionism aimed to transform the structure of Jewish life without totally detaching it from its history and from many of its traditions, it preached rebellion as much against the shackling of Jews by the agents of Jewish religion as by alien rulers-- independence was supposed to liberate Jews from the rule of rabbis no less than from that of the Czars. Drawing the line sharply led to the supposition that all Jews in Israel fell

clearly on one or another side of the cultural divide even as the Religious Zionist movement should have exposed the fallacy of such an assertion.

But Zionism, alone, is no longer sufficient to pitch the claims this population wishes to advance. In the past, Zionism's ambition to redefine what it was to be a Jew, lodged itself in the imagination even for many of those who abided by the traditions and religious rulings they carried from past generations. Today, Judaism has refashioned what it means to be a Zionist by conveying an absolute conviction in the holiness of the territories now named, Judea and Samaria, thereby converting what was asserted as an historic right into a powerful religious imperative. Thus, any political calculation that deems withdrawing from these areas congruent with Israel's national interest would confront not only the charge of violating critical Zionist principles but also the accusation of transgressing sacred obligations. Cloaking nationalism in a religious framework has inserted traditional ideas, values, and even discussions of the classic texts from which these notions are drawn into the general public discourse in new and interesting ways.

Zionism has now become a powerful resource serving the rhetorical needs of political parties that are competing for votes in a highly charged system where economic and social issues are often viewed as consequences of how well or poorly the outgoing government has handled security and stood its ground against international diplomatic assaults. As long as Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state is contested, Zionism is likely to be embraced as an emblem of Jewish national rights and as a defense against what is perceived by many as yet another attempt to destroy the Jewish people. But when deposited in the public arena, Zionism is made available for servicing other political interests as well.

Zionism's deployment in Israeli political discourse says less about Israel's past than about how one or another particular political party intends to navigate the country's present. And while Zionism always attempted to signal the hope for inclusiveness and solidarity, it also could not avoid sending out vectors of dissent to those whose lifestyles did not measure up to the ideals it advanced. But even today, Zionism still supplies momentum to a people who find themselves strangers in a strange land.

For some Israelis, a public commitment to Zionism, above all, functions as a sign of integration into Israeli society and an appeal to the country's national identity for authenticity. Zionism, in contemporary Israeli politics, has become a marker of absorption and a demand for inclusion into the national culture. But because the template of the past cannot be entirely discarded, Zionism is a term still not elastic enough to include those Israelis who see themselves as tied to religious traditions. For them, a language of identity must include Judaism. The difference between a Zionist vocabulary and a language replete with references to God and religious values reflects not only shifting contours of power, it also promotes them. If invoking Judaism is employed to dampen the classical Zionist claims to transforming Jewish identity, references to Zionism are constructed around arguments for a separation between the religious and public spheres.

For some Israelis, Zionism reminds them of their own alienation, an awareness of their own dispossession and the sense that the country still belongs to the descendants of the European pioneers who built the state. But the language filled with references to Jewish values and the deference displayed to clergy and to a religious point of view makes others feel as though they are the foreigners, the people exiled from their

homeland. Fortunately, not only are the vocabularies replete with religious values as open to appropriation as the languages formed from Zionist principles but combinations and fusions are also options available to Israel's citizens. Together they comprise a public discourse allowing more of Israel's Jewish citizens to recognize themselves as part of the country's national narrative and may be an example of what Charles Taylor calls 'the politics of recognition' whereby subaltern groups demand that their identities and presence by recognized as valid.

Zionism gave the Jewish nationalist mission its energy and direction and shaped how Israelis understand what citizenship requires of them and whether the standards set far beyond their own borders by an abstract notion of humanity should be imported. To the extent that Israelis seek justice through citizenship, given the demands on most of them in the present moment, they are more likely to see their rights as protected rather than as abused by the Jewish state.

WOMEN:

For Israel's Jewish women, the idea of citizenship as comprising obligations has always imposed on them special gender specific burdens. Jewish national consciousness flowed as much from numbers as from territory. The Zionist struggle to establish a Jewish state during the period of British rule was shaped by population growth and size even though the demographic issue was seldom fully and publicly addressed. Palestine's Jewish residents could not help but ponder population growth as the mandatory regime itself insisted that the number of Jewish immigrants [without capital] be fixed in accordance with the country's estimated economic absorptive capacity. In Israel's first years, the country was determined to encourage large-scale Jewish immigration even

though state resources and capacities had enormous difficulty caring for them and helping them adjust to the new environment. No less an authority than Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, was certain of military victory in the country's war for independence but uncertain if there was a large enough population to hold the Jewish state. Families were encouraged to procreate and stipends were awarded to large families until the government realized that too many prizes were handed to Israel's Arab citizens.

For many Jewish women, Zionism, particularly in one of its many socialist variations, was expected to serve as an avenue of entry for their own liberation. But the work of collective redemption always took precedence over serving individual interests or fulfilling personal desires for men as well as for women, and it affected the latter with special force. Believing that redemption came through work, particularly agricultural labor, women had much more trouble than their male counterparts in finding the kind of job they were taught to respect as an important contribution to the realization of the national project. Even when they joined agricultural collectives and cooperatives, women were typically assigned chores like cooking and childcare deemed appropriate in accordance with the patriarchal values many subconsciously continued to uphold including the sacred commandment to produce children.

What has happened to Israel's female population since 1948 offers a striking example of the conflict between the cultural pressure to discharge what are widely believed to be women's duties and the work that needed to be done to re-conceive Jewish society and transform its people from passive objects to active subjects who can make their own history. In being assigned the primary role for raising children, Israel's women were presumably understood to be engaged in bringing up a nation. But the cultural

message for Jewish women was clear--their duties came largely in the form of the bassinets they purchased. Even the vaunted experiments with community based child-rearing on the Kibbutz did not replace the family or liberate women from their presumed obligation to produce children. Procreation is so critical a part of Israeli culture that it shapes the public policy priorities of the gay community--support for surrogacy is stronger than demands for same-sex marriage. Regardless of economic conditions, funding for the latest fertility treatments has always been ample and readily available to all who want them. Perhaps because children serve as the 'ticket' to mainstream Jewish society in Israel, there is no absolute linkage between procreation and marriage. People who have chosen not to bear and/or raise children are reluctant to speak or write publicly about what is still a relatively rare decision.

The pressure to give birth to children did not erase the need for most married women to work. No feminine mystique operated in Israel but neither were women treated the same as men in salaries or job opportunities. While both men and women worked and productive labor was celebrated, women typically worked in subordinate roles whether in the military, in the civil service, agriculture, or in the private sector. There was a gender-based division of labor. Over time, women have become empowered by new opportunities particularly when viewed as helping to share the burdens of citizenship rather than as a means to individual self-fulfillment. Perhaps, because of the relatively small labor market in the country, there was no fully developed cultural value placed on a personal career. Like so many activities, work had a national value and purpose and was not intended for personal satisfaction.

As the country's economy expanded, more employment opportunities for men and women opened up producing gender gaps in salaries and rates of promotion. Seeking an explanation for the gaps and sometimes invoking the feminist discourse developed in the United States and in Europe, some Israeli women began pushing for policy changes to help women make their way to new careers and to high level positions in them. But improvements came more readily when women grounded their demands in a desire to share the burdens of Israeli citizenship rather than to introduce the rights language that developed in other countries. Recently, Israeli women have gained access to combat positions in the military and the officer corps. Some have also found opportunities in high-tech companies.

But inequities for females still abound in marriage, divorce, and adoption--areas subject to Personal Status Laws and governed by clerics. Religious laws almost always restrict the rights of women to initiate divorce and secure custodial rights over children after a divorce. There are still honor killings in Arab communities, and Arab women who work often have to hand over their salaries to their husbands. Orthodox Jewish women also sometimes have less control than their male counterparts over how the family allocates its resources.

Viewed directly, many secular Israelis see themselves ensnared by the same web of religious restrictions that confined the Jewish people in exile. It could even be argued that Zionism failed to fulfill its promise to liberate the Jewish people from the rule of Rabbis and religion when Israel's founders gave to Orthodox Rabbis the power to preside over marriage and divorce. Israel's founders thought of themselves as involved in decisions that would affect the destiny of the country and of the Jewish people for

generations to come. That assumption, it is posited, should have called forth the most resolute exercise of rational behavior. So, an agreement to vest power in clerics seemed, at the very least, incongruous with Zionist goals. But if one shifts perspective, the agreement to connect rather than separate religion and state looks like something altogether different. Zionism's aim to transform Judaism made it sensible to preserve the starting point and the alternative to what was believe the new dynamic and attractive meaning of being Jewish. The ranks of those bound to tradition was expected to be naturally and quickly depleted when people had another Jewish model before them. They would surely chose the new Jewish life created in and by secular Zionist Israel. There were also practical reasons to allow religious traditions to control life transitions recognizing that if the Jewish state served the interests of all Jews, it had to acknowledge the sizeable pool even in the country that felt comfortable with these rituals and rules.

That the rules applied to marriage, divorce, adoption, and conversion have become hotly debated issues in the country is not a new development. That these debates have gained considerable traction for those who seek to change the religious monopoly over personal status issues does seem significant and a result of the more general debate on whether the these stringent rules are issued by a community that does not pay its fair share of the burdens of Israeli citizenship. Herein lies a cautionary tale for all Israelis who wish to influence the future direction of the country. Not by rights alone will they be able to affect change but only through an expansion of the duties of citizenship will the state giving expression to the historic rights of the Jewish people to insure those freedoms to all regardless of religion, ethnicity, and gender.

Israelis pay a high cost for their independence and are naturally disposed to calculating their citizenship in terms of its burdens: excessive taxes, onerous ongoing military service, religious strictures that appear stifling to some and insufficient to others. But citizenship in Israel is not understood as an end in itself. It is still expected to uphold the substantive purposes giving birth to the idea of Jewish sovereignty and nurturing a deep attachment to Israel as the historic homeland of the Jewish people. If not all of Israel's citizens can enjoy the benefits of that attachment, at the very least, they must possess the satisfaction of knowing they have a place in Jewish state that accords them protection and meaningful rights. That is the national challenge issued by the Proclamation for the Jewish state that is yet to be fulfilled. What is most distinctive about Israel's democracy, then, is that it is not so much an ideal as an argument that may trigger debate but perhaps, more importantly, structures how the country has and will be reshaped by its conflicts.

Donna Robinson Divine
Morningstar Family Professor of Jewish Studies and Professor of Government
Smith College