

AGREEMENTS AND BORDERS

The new textbooks in the State and State Religious streams present the information regarding the borders in a factual manner, even if at different levels of detail, and do not take a stand such as retaining the whole of the Land of Israel or that of returning to the 1967 borders.

*The textbook **This Is The Land – Introduction to Land of Israel Studies** describes the series of contacts that have taken place in regard to the borders with Syria, Jordan and Egypt from World War I until the fixing of the borders in the peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan and the arrangements regarding the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) and Gaza in the Oslo Accords.*

The pupil is given detailed and precise information about the agreements and developments in regard to the question of borders and Israeli withdrawals. The borders with the Palestinians are not described as final.

With regard to the subject of the border with Jordan it is stated:

“The armistice line between Israel and Jordan, agreed in 1949, served as the border between the two states for 18 years. This was called ‘the green line’, because it was marked in green on the official Israeli maps. [It] was fixed principally in accordance with the positions held, and the front line, at the end of the War of Independence. The line of the border divided populated areas and main transport arteries and separated villages from their land. The specification of the border was general and sometimes vague and was marked on maps that were not sufficiently detailed (1:250,000) and therefore its implementation on the ground caused disputes. **(pp. 16-17)**

“... In June 1967, the Government of Israel adopted a resolution that the River Jordan would be Israel’s security border. During the 70s the State of Israel fought against terror and while so doing maintained a policy of ‘open bridges’, which allowed the passage of agricultural produce and inhabitants over the Allenby Bridge and the Adam Bridge [over the Jordan River].

... In October 1994 a peace agreement was signed between Israel and Jordan... The provisions ... included normalization and cooperation in military and civilian matters. The peace agreement stipulated that the border between Israel and Jordan should follow the line of the Mandate border, which was determined in 1923, with minor adjustments. The section of the border extending from the center of the Dead Sea to Beit Shean

[i.e. the border along the West Bank] has not been finally determined...” (p.19).

Although the international border is fixed, the status of the West Bank is not determined:

1. The border, in accordance with the provisions of Appendix (A), is the permanent, international, secure and recognized border between Israel and Jordan, without predetermining the status of any areas that came under the control of the Israeli Military Government in 1967”. (p. 19)

With regard to the agreements with the Palestinian Authorities the authors of the textbook write:

“In May 1994 the areas of the Gaza Strip and Jericho, from which the Israel Defense Forces were to withdraw, were defined and it was agreed that there should be a transfer of authority in these areas to the Palestinian Authority. Twenty seven years of Israeli rule came to an end...” (p. 20).

“The purpose of the second Oslo Agreement was to enlarge the Palestinian independent administration in the West Bank by means of an elected ruling authority – ‘The Palestinian Council’, and to encourage cooperation and peaceful coexistence, based on shared interests and mutual respect, while safeguarding the vital interests of the State of Israel.

This agreement prescribed a timetable for the redeployment of the Israel Defense Forces and the division of the area of Judea, Samaria and Gaza into the different kinds of area:

Area A – including the six large Palestinian towns on the West Bank: in this area the Palestinian Council was to assume full responsibility for internal security, public order and civilian matters.

Area B – including Palestinian townships and villages (in which some 68% of the total Palestinian population live). In this area the Council was to be responsible for the preservation of public order and Israel was to be the supreme authority in matters of security, so that it would be able to safeguard the well being of its citizens and fight terror.

Area C – including the uninhabited areas, the regions where there were Israeli settlements and locations that were strategically important for Israel. In this area Israel was to retain full responsibility.”

However, there is no map showing Areas A, B and C, alongside this detailed explanation.

(H. Peleg, G. Zohar, H. Leon, R. Peleg, This is the Land – Introduction to Land of Israel Studies for Upper Grades, 2000, pp. 20-21).

Another geography textbook, intended for State and State Religious schools, has maps of the country containing the West Bank (Judea and Samaria), with the areas of the Authority shown as enclaves in white.

It also states that:

“Israel has agreed borders with two neighboring states: Egypt and Jordan... The border between Israel and Syria is still in dispute and although the border between Israel and Lebanon has been agreed, there is no quiet along it from a security point of view... The border between Israel and the Palestinian Authority has not yet been finalized. There is agreement on the border in the Gaza district, but the other sections of the border are in dispute and are the subject of negotiations”.

(Z. Fein, M. Segev, A. Mizrahi, Central and Southern Coastal Plain and the Northern Land [of Israel], 2000, pp. 12, 15).

A geography textbook, in use in the “intermediate classes” of Ultra Orthodox schools, states:

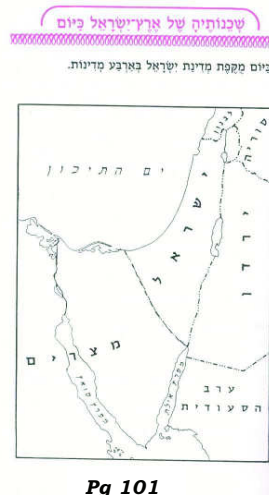
“The Land of Israel is a small country, its area at present, including Judea, Samaria, the Gaza strip and the Golan, being 27,800 square kilometers”.

A map contained in the textbook makes no reference to the areas of the Palestinian Authority. The Golan Heights are shown separate from Syria. In one question pupils are asked:

“I. Do you know what the ‘Green Line’ is? State the names of Jewish settlement known to you over the green line...”

There is, however, no explanation in the textbook of what the green line is and of its significance.

(P. Dina, The Language of The Map – Map of the Land of Israel, Textbook for Homeland Studies for Intermediate Grades, 1996, pp. 38, 101, 111).



Another geography textbook, in use in the Ultra Orthodox sector, speaks of the border with Jordan, while totally ignoring the Palestinian Authority:

“... Jordan is our neighbor to the east. The River Jordan is the border between the Land of Israel and the State of Jordan... The neighbors of the Kingdom of Jordan are: to the west - Israel; to the north - Syria; to the east - Iraq; and to the south – Saudi Arabia... Before the Six Day War the west bank of the Jordan, the region of Judea and Samaria, was under the rule of the Kingdom of Jordan for a short period”.

(T. Miller, *Geography, Grade 5 – Part B: Countries of the Middle East*, 2000, p. 8).

Atlas Daat Mikra, published by an educational institute of National Religious Zionism, contains maps of The Land of Israel and the Middle East from the dawn of time until the days of the Return to Zion³. On the last pages of the textbook there is a short reference to the Middle East in our days:

“Most of the historical Land of Israel today belongs to the Hashemite state to the east of the Jordan... That part of the Land of Israel under the control of the State of Israel is the only country where the people who dwelt in it in antiquity dwell in it today, speak the same language that was spoken in it in the time of the Bible and adhere to the same ancient pure faith that drove out of the world the idols of civilized peoples”.

On the last page of the textbook there is a map of the Middle East today showing the inclusion of Judea, Samaria and the Golan Heights without any indication that the borders there are not final.
(Y. Elitzur, Y. Kiel, *Atlas Daat Mikra*, 1998, pp.328-329).

THE ATTACHMENT OF THE ARABS TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL

All the Israeli textbooks detail the attachment of the Arabs to the Land of Israel, both in recounting the periods of Arab rule during 634-1099 and 1187-1517 and in explanations concerning the holy places of the Arabs.

This is the Land – Introduction to Land of Israel Studies devotes a whole chapter to the subject “The Attachment of Christianity and Islam to the Land of Israel”. This is an innovation compared with earlier books.

³ In the sixth and fifth centuries BCE.

*The textbook contains a quotation from the book of Prof. Havah Lazarus-Yaffe, **Islam, (Ministry of Defense Publishing House, 2000, pp.85-86)** as follows:*

“The Land of Israel in general, and Jerusalem in particular, have been sanctified more and more in Islamic thought – as Islam has developed and spread, both religiously and geographically. As Islam absorbed more and more of the world conquered by it, so it adapted and Islamized the values that it absorbed, including the holiness of the Land of Israel, its flora and its water, living in it, the sanctity of being buried in it and the like. All these became from that time onwards part of orthodox Islam... The expression of the holiness of the Land of Israel and Jerusalem in Islam can be found in the erection of the pair of mosques on the Temple Mount”.

After quoting the above passage the authors go on to write:

“In the Land of Israel Islam sanctified Jerusalem because of its importance to Judaism and Christianity. According to the Muslim tradition Jerusalem is the city of the forefathers, the place binding [of Ishmael], the arena of the activity of the prophets. After the [Arab] conquest the name ‘Bait al-Maqdis’ – the city of the Temple – was used for the city, from which we learn that the special significance of the city was that it contained the Temple. From the eleventh century the name al-Quds – holiness – became common. Other names for the city are ‘Ursalim’ and ‘Tzeyayun’ – Zion”.
(p. 161).

At the beginning of the chapter there is a quotation from “The Kuzari” by Yehuda HaLevi⁴ as follows:

“And the Land of Israel is the gateway to heaven,
All the nations have agreed.
Thus believe the Christians that all the souls
Will be gathered to this land
And from it will ascend to heaven.
And the Muslims too believe that this land
Is the ‘place of the ascension’, I mean to say,
The place from which the prophets were taken up into
heaven.
And it is the place to which will be foregathered
All men to stand there in judgment,

⁴ A Jewish philosopher-poet, born in Toledo, Spain in about 1086 and died in Israel in the middle of the twelfth century. “The Kuzari” is a philosophical work originally written in Arabic.

And all men turn to this place in prayer
And all go up to it in pilgrimage...”

(H. Peleg, G. Zohar, H. Leon, R. Peleg, *This is the Land – Introduction to Land of Israel Studies For the Upper Grades, 2000, pp. 161-162, 157*).

Another multi-disciplinary textbook describes at length the periods during which the Arabs ruled the Land of Israel:

“... until the end of the nineteenth century the population of the north of the country was in the main Arab and Muslim, for the most part village dwellers and nomadic Bedouin”.

(R. Peleg (Compiled and Edited), *The Northern Land [of Israel] – Galilee, Golan and the Valleys through the Generations for Upper Grades, 1999, p. 310*).

THE PLACES HOLY TO JEWS AND TO MEMBERS OF OTHER RELIGIONS

Most of the new textbooks present the Israeli pupil with the fact that places that are holy to the Jews are also holy to the Muslims. Some merely state this fact and others enlarge on it, explaining the reasons and the background for the place becoming holy also to the Muslims.

*In the textbook on **The Second Book of Samuel** there is the statement:*

“The Cave of the Patriarchs is holy also to the Muslims and the Christians”.

without any explanation. In the same textbook, next to a photograph of the Cave of the Patriarchs there is the statement:

“According to the Book of Genesis the patriarchs and the matriarchs are buried there”.

with no mention of what the Muslim connection to the cave is.

(A. Tirosh, B. Geller-Talithman, *With King David – Pupil's Workbook For Second Book Of Samuel, 2000, pp. 15, 58*).

The same authors write in the textbook **With Joshua** under a picture of the Cave of the Patriarchs:



“It is of interest to know: The Cave of the Patriarchs is holy not only to the Jews, but also to the Muslims and the Christians. In the building known as the ‘Cave of the Patriarchs’ there are a mosque and a synagogue”.

(A. Tirosch, B. Geller-Talithman, With Joshua – Pupil’s Workbook, 2000, p. 72).

In another textbook in the State stream there is the statement:

“The burial cave in Hebron, which is situated under the mosque, is, according to tradition, the Cave of the Patriarchs”.

(D. Korach-Segev, Y. Zilberman, From Bereshit... New Instruction Kit For Teaching Genesis To Grade 2, 2000, p.58).

Another new textbook for teaching *The Book of Genesis* expands a little more on the connection between the Muslims to the Cave of the Patriarchs:

“The Cave of the Patriarchs is a place which is holy both to Jews and to Muslims. Many years after purchase of the cave by our father Abraham a building for prayers was built over the cave. Nowadays both Jews and Muslims pray there. The Jews and the Muslims have different times for their prayers”.

(B. Geller-Talithman, H. Shlita, Bereshit - Activity Book for Young Students, 2000, p.95).

Another book on *The Book of Genesis*, intended for the State stream, ignores the attachment of Muslims to the Cave of the Patriarchs:

“Abraham was a stranger in the country and had no land of his own. He bought the cave from Ephron the

Hittite and became a person who had rights in the country. Sarah was buried in the cave and after that Abraham would be buried there and then the other patriarchs and matriarchs, who lived after them. Right down to the present the Cave of the Patriarchs is a holy site and people come to it to pray and present petitions”.

(R. Ben-Ari, A. Gesol-Ravid, Window on “Genesis”, 2000, p.57).

SHARED TRADITIONS

On the subject of places holy both to Judaism and to Islam one textbook discusses shared traditions that have grown up in the two religions in the course of the years concerning certain sites.

This multi-disciplinary textbook writes about the development of the places holy to both the Jews and the Muslims:

“In the Middle Ages some of the traditions relating to graves were, to a certain extent, common to both Jewish and Muslim inhabitants of Galilee. Jews and Muslims participated in pilgrimages to sacred sites... The Muslim and Jewish traditions were similar, particularly in regard to those places to which Biblical traditions were attributed. There is Muslim evidence that Jews, Muslims and even Christians used to go on pilgrimage to Ayn al-Kaber, near Acre. According to a local legend, this was the place where Adam learned to plough the soil. There is evidence of Arab fallahin [agricultural workers] participating in a Jewish gathering in Meron of the fifteenth day of [the Hebrew month] of Iyar. Indeed the author of ‘Eleh HaMasaot’ [These are the Journeys], which was written by an unknown author between 1244 and 1291, recounts the gathering in Meron: ‘Israelites and Ishmaelites gather on the Second Passover [Numbers, Chapter IX Verse 11] and the Jews would pray ... (and after the prayers) the Ishmaelites would fill their cisterns and their pots with water and would then give the Jews delicacies to eat and to drink’... At the graves of [Jewish] righteous men the Muslims too: ‘would light candles in honor of the sanctity of the place or the Ishmaelites would bring thither oil for lighting [lamps]”.

There is a quotation of a passage from a book about traveling in the Land of Israel by A. Yaari, regarding the cave of a sage called Rav Kahana, near Tiberias, in which it is stated:

“All the nations would light candles, for those who were sick or barren came to be cured”.

Another quotation from Yaari’s book, about Lag BaOmer⁵, is that:

“This day is the most festive in the Land of Israel, since even the Muslims honor this righteous man [Shimon Bar Yohai] as the Jews do”.

The textbooks authors point out that:

“This cultural sharing in some of the holy places generally existed only between the Jews and the Muslims, and even then not everywhere”.

*(R. Peleg **The Northern Land [of Israel] – Galilee, Golan and the Valleys through the Generations** for Upper Grades, 1999, pp. 291-293).*

THE ARAB-JEWISH CONFLICT AS A NATIONAL CONFLICT

The new textbooks continue the trend of presenting the unfolding of the hostilities between Arabs and Jews, from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, as a development from local riots into a conflict between two national movements. The aspiration of the Palestinian Authority is described as the establishment of a state on the major part of the West Bank.

A history textbook writes about the events of 1936-1939, that:

“They are called by the Arabs ‘the Arab Revolt’ and by the Jews ‘the riots of 5696-5699 [1936-1939]”.

After the textbook describes the demands presented by the Arab Higher Committee to the British, namely a representative government reflecting majority-minority balance between the Jews and the Arabs, a prohibition on immigration of Jews and a prohibition on the transfer of land to Jews, it goes on to say:

“Unlike in the riots of 5689-1929 the Arabs this time presented clear national demands”.

At the end of the chapter the pupils are asked:

“C. The whole class should discuss whether the contention that in the Arab Revolt there was a clash between two national movements, is correct. You should give reasons for your conclusions”.

⁵ A minor Jewish festival falling in the spring which commemorates events that occurred in the second century: (1) the cessation of a plague that afflicted the students of the sage Rabbi Akiva, (2) a victory over the Romans by Bar Kochva and (3) the death of the sage Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai.

(K. Tabibian, *Journey To The Past – The Twentieth Century, By Dint of Freedom, 1999, pp. 137, 150*).

A textbook about the north of the country, which combines the teaching of history, geography and archeology, says that

“Even before the First World War the conflict began to take on a national character and Arab attacks on the Jews took on the character of opposition to Jewish settlement as such”.

(R. Peleg, *The Northern Land [of Israel] – Galilee, Golan and the Valleys through the Generations for Upper Grades, 1999, p. 388*).

The Palestinian Authority’s Aspirations

The Palestinian Authority and its policy are covered in only one of the new textbooks.

“The name Palestine serves today, particularly among the Arabs, to denote all the territory of the Land of Israel west of the Jordan. Nevertheless the Palestinian Authority aspires to establish the ‘State of Palestine’ in the major part of Judea and Samaria”

(G. Zohar, H. Leon, R. Peleg, *This is the Land – Introduction to Land of Israel Studies for Upper Grades. 2000, p. 4*).

THE REFUGEE QUESTION

The new textbooks of the State and State Religious streams do not present a uniform approach to the question of the responsibility for the creation of the Palestinian refugee problem. As seen in the previous report, some textbooks place the blame on the Arab leadership, which brought about the flight of the Arabs, and a few state that in certain places there was expulsion.

One history textbook describes the creation of the refugee problem not as the result of deliberate expulsion by the Jews, but as the result of the events of Deir Yassin and the military successes of the Jews, which aroused fear among the Arabs:

“At the height of the ‘Nachshon Campaign’ something occurred which was to assume great significance later on. Dir Yassin, an Arab village to the west of Jerusalem, was attacked by members of the Etzel [Irgun Zvai Leumi] and members of Lehi [Stern Gang]. In the course of the seizure of control of houses in the village most of its inhabitants were killed. The number of those killed is not clear and is between 100 and 254 of the inhabitants. This attack caused the Arabs a great shock

and increased the panic-stricken flight of many of them from areas captured by the Jews.

In the months following this the Jews had military successes. The Arab towns of Beit Shean, Jaffa and Acre and the mixed towns of Tiberias, Haifa and Safed were captured. With the capture of these towns the flight of their Arab inhabitants began”.

(K. Tabibian, Journey to the Past – The Twentieth Century, By Dint of Freedom, 1999, p.284).

At the conclusion of the chapter on the War of Independence the authoress writes:

“The war claimed a heavy human cost. As a result of it **half of the Palestinian Arabs, who lived within the borders of Mandatory Land of Israel became displaced or refugees – some 600,000 of them.** In most cases this was the direct result of the war and not the result of prior planning on the part of the Jews or the Arabs.

“The exit of the Arabs from The Land of Israel began a short while after the [Partition] resolution of the 29 November [1947]. **At the beginning members of the better off families left the towns.** This weakened the spirit of those that were left. **When the military operations, in which the Hagana, afterwards the Israel Defense Forces, won victories, intensified, the flight of Arabs from the towns and the villages increased** because of fear of the fighting forces. There was no plan on the part of the leaders of the State and the army to expel the Arabs from the Jewish State. In those places where there were good relations between Jews and Arabs an express order was issued not to expel the inhabitants. This is what happened in Abu Ghosh, near Jerusalem, in Fureidis, near Zichron Yaakov, and also in Haifa and Acre. In contrast to this, the expulsion of the inhabitants of Ramla and Lod was authorized by the political echelon.

“**The Arab leadership contributed its part to the panic stricken flight of the Arabs from the Land of Israel.** It had no clear policy in this matter and it did not give the Palestinians clear instruction on what to do. The refugees were concentrated in refugee camps in Jordan, in the Gaza Strip, in Lebanon and in Syria.

“On account of their military defeat and the refugee problem the Arabs call the war of 1948, called the War of Independence by the Jews, - ‘al-nakbah’ in Arabic,

[meaning] the catastrophe". **[emphasis in the original]**

(Ibid., pp.292-294).

In assignments given to them the pupils are asked, among other things, to "enter into the minds" of the Palestinians and to attempt to imagine their feelings:

"4. Divide into groups representing Jewish journalists and Palestinian journalists who have been sent to cover the discussion in the United Nations Organization leading to the Partition Resolution.

A. Prepare a report that will include details about the discussion in the United Nations Organization, the position of some of the states participating in it and the results of the discussion, the vote and reactions to the resolution...

C. Discuss with the whole class the differences between the reports of Jewish journalists and those of the Palestinian journalists".

(K. Tabibian, *Journey To The Past – The Twentieth Century, By Dint of Freedom, 1999, p. 294*).

A multi-disciplinary textbook about the north of the country attributes the creation of the refugee problem to the flight of the Arabs:

"As the British left the centers of population the Haganah decided to seize control of the mixed towns of Safed, Tiberias and Haifa and to protect their Jewish inhabitants. On 18 April the capture of Tiberias was completed after all its Arab inhabitants had left the town... In Haifa there lived some 80,000 Jews and 60,000 Arabs. Despite the appeal by the Jewish Mayor (Shabbetai Levi) to the Arab inhabitants to remain, a mass exit began under the joint supervision of the British and Haganah forces. Only a minority of the Arab inhabitants of Haifa remained in the town... The Jews of Safed, who were concentrated in the Old Town, were under siege for many weeks. The area of the Jewish Quarter became smaller and smaller because of the advance of the Arabs into it, capturing house after house.

The first attack on Arab Safed on 6 May ended in failure. Arab reinforcements streamed towards the town and began to bombard the Jewish Quarter with mortars. After four days, on 10 May, the Palmah renewed its attack and the Arabs of Safed began to

retreat and flee, and along with them the Arabs of the surrounding area. On 12 May Safed was captured.

The capture of the mixed towns marks the turning point in the battle for the north of the country. The number of Arabs who abandoned their towns and villages grew and grew and the mass flight began. The Arab leadership, whose confidence had been undermined, did not act to prevent the flight. Fear of the growing strength of the Jews led many of the Arabs to flee to the neighboring Arab countries..." (pp. 405-406)

In the above passage attention is drawn to the special situation in the mixed towns, where Jews and Arabs lived together. The textbook presents the refugee issue along with the Arab's refusal to recognize the Jewish State as one of the central problems on the road to peace:

"...The young state, which had shed its blood at the time of its birth, losing some six thousand of its sons, was not granted recognition by the Arab world. The problem of the Arab refugees, who had gone to live over the border, was also one of the factors that made it more difficult to achieve peace..." (p.410).

The Absent Present

An innovation appears in one textbook, which addresses the sensitive issue known as "absent present" – an issue of which many Israelis are unaware. Although the matter is dealt with in a dry, matter of fact manner, the pupils are exposed to one of the most charged subjects, which has aroused much opposition among Israeli Arabs.

"Absent present – inhabitants of Arab villages who, during the course of the War of Independence went to live in neighboring villages with the intention of remaining there until the end of the war. Outstanding examples of these are the inhabitants of Ikrit and Biram, two Christian villages near to the Lebanese border, who were evacuated by the Israel Defense Forces during the War of Independence with the promise that they would be able to return to them in a short while... In order to return to their villages the two village committees have applied to the heads of the Israeli administration and to the Supreme Court and have been granted judgments recognizing the justice of their claims. Despite the judgments in their favor and the support given to them by politicians from the whole

political spectrum in Israel, the Government has still not expressly decided that they can return to their villages” (p.427).

With regard to the refugees of the Six Day War from the Golan Heights the textbook says:

“Prior to the Six Day War the Golan Heights was included in the territory of Syria. In a few score villages there were an estimated 100,000 inhabitants – Druze, Circassian and Bedouin. Most of these villages were destroyed as a consequence of the war and most of their inhabitants fled to Syria. Quneitra, the only town on the Golan, remained deserted and empty. At the end of the war only some 7,000 Druze inhabitants remained on the Golan” (p.481).

(R. Peleg, *The Northern Land [of Israel] – Galilee, Golan and the Valleys through the Generations for Upper Grades, 1999, pp. 405-406, 410, 427, 481*).

An Ultra Orthodox geography textbook entirely ignores the question of the refugees and states without explanation or elaboration:

“The number of inhabitants in Jordan is some two and one quarter million. Half of them are Arabs who crossed over from Israel to Jordan”.

(T. Miller, *Geography, Grade 5 – Part B: Countries of the Middle East, 2000, p. 19*).

THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE TERRITORIES

A number of the textbooks expressly refer to the fact that in Israeli society there is a dispute over the question of the areas of the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) and Gaza. Most of the textbooks give an account of the arrangements and agreements with Egypt and Jordan on the subject of borders. A few of them refer to the fact that there is a controversy about them:

“The Six Day War brought about a dispute within Israeli society over a matter of principle between two opposing viewpoints: on the one hand – there is the viewpoint that regards the captured territories as [Israel’s] patrimony and therefore by virtue of its historical right no part of the soil of the Land of Israel is to be given up. Those who adhere to this point of view also contend that because of security considerations **these territories must be retained, because they will give Israel strategic depth** and thus contribute to its defense.

On the other hand there is the view point that **the State of Israel will find it difficult to rule and control such a large Arab population** for any length of time. In addition there is the danger that Israel will lose some of its cultural and national characteristics just because of **its rule over another people**. Those who hold this view have argued that from the position of strength, which it attained in the Six Day War, an attempt should be made to reach a peace agreement with the Arab states **[emphasis in the original]**.

Between these two conflicting points of view there is a whole spectrum of views on the subject of the future of the territories and what the policy of the State of Israel should be. In the public discourse within Israel certain loaded expressions have taken root, reflecting [these] political outlooks: 'liberated territories' vis a vis 'occupied territories', or 'Judea and Samaria' vis a vis 'the West Bank'" **(p.312)**.

Under a map showing the results of the Six Day War there is the question:

"What are the advantages and the disadvantages of the change that took place in the State's borders as a result of the war? Think about the security, economic, social, national and human aspects" **(p.312)**.

The pupils are given the assignment of writing about, and explaining, the controversy that has arisen in connection with the expressions "liberated territories" and "occupied territories". They are asked to discuss in class the arguments used by each side in the debate on:

"the continued control over the territories that were occupied ... Describe your position in the debate and give reasons for it. Compose a slogan representing your position" **(p. 315)**.

(K. Tabibian, Journey To The Past – The Twentieth Century, By Dint of Freedom, 1999, pp. 312-315).

An Ultra Orthodox textbook raises the subject of the territories indirectly by way of homework for the pupils:

" K. Cut out and stick in [your exercise book] extracts from newspapers relating to the dispute over settlements in the 'territories' that are over the green line".

This assignment appears in the textbook despite the fact that it does not give any information about the public debate on the subject of the territories.

(P. Dina, *The Language of The Map – Map of the Land of Israel, Textbook for Homeland Studies for Intermediate Grades, 1996, p. 111*).

By contrast, a textbook in use in the State stream requires the pupil to deal with the searching questions involved in the debate over the territories by way of a story in which young people bring up all the reasons for, and against, holding on to the territories. The textbook does not adopt any position and leaves it to the pupil to decide himself what his position is.

Without Offense – Value Dilemmas In Children’s Society, The Right to Respect and the Duty to Respect is the name of a textbook that tells 36 stories about events occurring in children’s society involving dilemmas. The book’s editor explains that:

“A dilemma is a situation in which one has to decide between at least two alternative choices of which only one may be chosen. In life in our society dilemmas often relate to cases in which people are likely to be hurt. The question is how to behave in such cases ... The guiding rule, with whose help we shall seek solutions to these problems, is that just as I want others to respect my freedom of conduct, so must I respect another’s freedom of conduct and not hurt him” **(p.3)**.

One of the stories deals with a dispute on the future of the Golan Heights.

“The peace talks are beginning to move forward. The Palestinians have autonomy, we have an agreement with Jordan and with Egypt things have been alright for a while – there remains a settlement with Syria and they agree to full peace provided that we return to them the Golan Heights’.

“Don’t make me laugh’, said Tali, that’s where our house is. We are not leaving!’

‘Fine, you can stay, if you want to live in Syria!’, Aviv said.

‘It will never happen. They will never return the Heights ... The People are with the Golan!’, said Erez excitedly, ‘Look at the demonstrations and the signs on the roofs and the stickers on the cars.’

‘Sticker and demonstrations are something else’, said Aviv. ‘They are needed just to show the world that we will not give it up easily. But when everyone has to decide whether to choose peace or war, then people will think differently. And if you remember, the Prime Minister promised that he would bring peace’.

'The majority of the people want peace,' said Sharon.

'Sure, for them it is easy to give it up,' Erez said bitterly. 'It is not their house, not their garden that they have sewed, not their trees that they have planted.'

'In war you give up even more,' said Aviv and turned to Tali and said, 'Do you remember Allon from my company? He gave up his life.'

'War is terrible ... I too am for peace,' said Tali, 'but we must ensure that the settlements on the Golan remain ours.'

'I am sure that the Government will do everything so as not to withdraw from the Golan,' Aviv said, 'but what if the Syrians insist? Think about it. A house and a garden – as compared with blood...'

'My father fought in the capture of the Heights,' Erez called out. 'It overlooks the whole of Galilee! Without the Golan Heights Israel will not be defended from the north.'

'Our means of defense have been greatly improved since the Six Day War,' Aviv interrupted him. 'We shall continue to be strong even without a zone separating us from Syria. And apart from that, you surely remember that missiles from Iraq reached Tel-Aviv in the Gulf War. The great distance between the two countries did not prevent that!'

'You cannot capture a country with missiles,' said Erez. 'Imagine what would have happened in the Yom Kippur War if Sinai had not been in our hands.'

'And despite that we returned the whole massive area of Sinai to Egypt. Even you, Erez, have to admit that peace with Egypt made it worth while.'

'You do not know what it means to leave your home,' said Tali, her eyes filling with tears.

'It is hard,' Aviv said, putting his arm round her shoulder, 'but what won't we do for the sake of peace?'

'We will do almost anything,' said Erez, 'but we will not commit suicide! And what will happen if tomorrow a new dictator, who will not keep the agreement, comes to power in Syria?'

'I believe that when there will be peace and Syria enjoys economic prosperity it will not be worth their while to break the agreement,' said Aviv. 'And we are sufficiently strong to deter them from thinking about attacking us.'

We must not be afraid of peace and our Government is apparently going in the right direction.”

After this story the pupils are divided into groups and given the following assignments:

- “1. Israel and Syria will both derive much benefit from the state of peace that will exist between them, in addition to the importance of putting an end to the state of war. State some of the changes that, in your opinion, peace will bring to the lives of the inhabitants of the two countries.
2. In his response to Tali, who wants to remain in her house on the Golan, Aviv says: ‘A house and a garden – as compared with blood...’ What does he mean?
3. Erez says: ‘We will do almost anything for the sake of peace, but we will not commit suicide!’ Aviv too is not sure that the agreement to return the Golan will indeed bring true peace. Nevertheless he believes that we are sufficiently strong to attempt to achieve peace despite the risk entailed in withdrawing from the Golan. Do you agree with him? Give reasons for your opinion”.

(N. Meron Without Offense – Value Dilemmas in Children’s Society, The Right to Respect and the Duty to Respect, 1998, p.8-9).

CRITICISM OF ISRAELI POLICY

It should be emphasized that in the various textbooks – in all the streams – the Israeli version of events is always given, namely that the Arabs have opposed the Zionist enterprise throughout the years and have foiled every chance for peace. This approach is common to all the textbooks surveyed in the previous report and to the new textbooks surveyed in this report.

In four textbooks there are passages that present a more complex picture of the unfolding of the events that preceded certain of the wars. Thus, for example, in a textbook about the north of the country there is the following statement about the war on the Golan Heights:

“At the beginning of the Six Day War (5.6.1967) the Syrians refrained from taking an active part in it and confined themselves to bombardments and harassment, as they had been used to doing for years... The Syrians

did have a plan of attack, the kernel of which was to cut off the Galilee panhandle from the rest of the country. In actual fact the Syrians did not initiate any attack to implement this plan and contented themselves with aerial attacks on targets in Israel and with bombardment of places of population. The decision to capture the Golan was taken under pressure from the inhabitants of the Jordan Valley and Galilee. After years of suffering from Syrian attacks, the [inhabitants of Galilee] hoped that the war would solve their problems too”.

(G. Zohar, H. Leon, R. Peleg, *This is the Land – Introduction to Land of Israel Studies For the Upper Grades, 2000, pp. 412-413*).

The following is another example of criticism of Israeli policy regarding the development of events in the years preceding the Yom Kippur War:

“About half a year after Anwar Sadat entered into office he proposed to the Government of Israel to commence political negotiations (February 1971). Israel treated Sadat’s proposal with scorn out of the feeling of power and superiority that had taken hold of Israeli society following the Six Day War. After his proposal had been rejected and the political stalemate continued, Sadat decided to go to war. He proclaimed that he was prepared to sacrifice a million soldiers in order to liberate the territories that Israel had captured. He even threatened Israel that, if it did not withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula, it would pay a high price. Israel saw his words as empty boasting. But Sadat continued with his preparations and he and the President of Syria, Assad, decided to launch an attack against Israel during the course of 1973” **(p.313)**.

This textbook contains an expression that does not appear in any other textbook: “war of choice”. It appears in a question directed to the pupils:

“B. Some people classify wars into ‘a war of choice’ and ‘a war of no choice’. Explain these concepts.

C. Discuss in class: Were the wars between Israel and its neighbors ‘wars of choice’ or ‘wars of no choice’? Give reasons for your answer” **(p.315)**.

(K. Tabibian, *Journey To The Past – The Twentieth Century, By Dint of Freedom, 1999, pp. 313, 315*).

A COMMON DESTINY

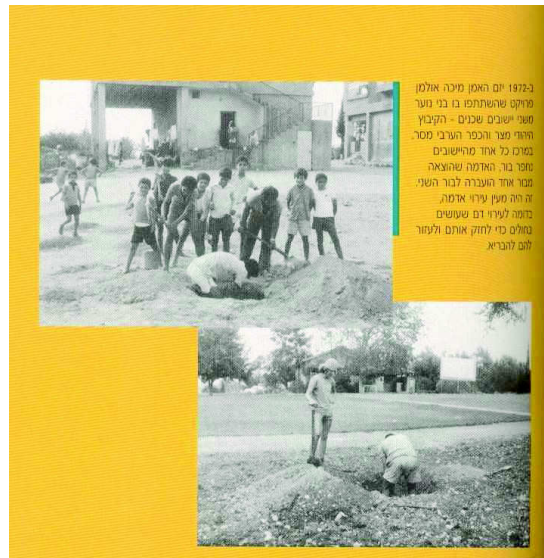
In a new book about the prophet Jeremiah the authors give examples of symbolic actions and, among other things, pictures from a tableau dealing with the relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel, the link between them and their attachment to the land. In a section entitled "Another Direction" the question

"Who is influenced by symbolic actions?"

is asked: in the context of the story about Jeremiah wandering around the streets of Jerusalem bearing a cattle yoke on his neck. The textbook explains that:

"This is a symbolic act intended to convey a certain message. The expression 'symbolic act' is likely to create the mistaken impression that it is not such an important action ... but if we consider the function they fulfill we discover [that they] are not just the mechanical performance of 'decorative' actions, but acts that have an effect... There is a great similarity between the symbolic act of the prophet and the modern art of tableau ... The tableau is intended to present a complex statement, an interpretation of reality, to be a presentation of a certain ideology..."

Then examples are given of tableaux in different countries and in different periods. Among others there is the story of the tableau of the artist Micha Ulman, who, in 1972, initiated



"a project in which young people from two neighboring villages – the Jewish kibbutz Metzger and the Arab village of Massar - took part. A pit was dug in the center of each of the villages and the earth removed from each of the pits was taken to, and placed in, the other pit.

This was a kind of soil infusion, like a blood transfusion given to sick people to give them strength and help them to recover".

(A. Warszawski et al., *Jeremiah the Man and the Messenger – Topics in the Book of Jeremiah for Teaching and Enrichment in Secondary Schools, 2001, pp. 56-59*).

FROM TALKS – TO AGREEMENTS

In a number of new history, bible and language textbooks that have been published in the last two years there is an innovation in that peace is presented not just as something that is longed for, but also as a goal that can be attained.

In a textbook on the Book of Genesis intended for the lower grades there is the story of the agreement between Isaac and Abimelech, the King of Gerar (Chapter XXVI, 12-22) and in the section “Thinking and Understanding” the following is written:

“In our day too there are agreements between individuals and between states. In front of you is a picture of the signing of a peace agreement”.

Beneath these words is the picture of Yitzhak Rabin and King Hussein at the signing ceremony of the peace agreement between Israel and Jordan.

(2.11.015/02 B. Geller-Talithman, H. Shlita, *Bereshit - Activity Book for Young Students, Kinneret, 2000, p.113*).

In a language textbook for the upper grades in State schools, the pupils are asked:

“Think! Is this passage one of criticism, persuasion or the presentation of an argument?”

*The authoress has selected a text from a book by Ezer Weizman, **These are the Years:***

“The period of wars in the history of [the State of] Israel lasted some 30 years, starting with the War of Independence. After the Yom Kippur War, and in particular following the second Separation of Forces agreement with Egypt of 1975, a new period began in which the emphasis is being put on the attempt to achieve peace. This period has continued right up to now. It is true that we are at present living in a situation of insecurity and terror, but I recommend to the Israeli leadership to make every effort to prevent it deteriorating into a fourth war, thinking that this will consolidate our security, but rather to base the security of the State on talks that will lead to [peace] agreements”.

(S. Avinon, *See Entry: Language, Comprehension and Expression – for Upper Grades, 2000, p. 17*).

REACHING COMPROMISES

The possibility of reaching practical solutions that will bring peace to the region is further exemplified in "Water in the Middle East", a textbook dealing wholly with the subject of water. The textbook gives the full facts relating to the subject of water. It addresses all the problems – technological, climatic, topographical and political – involved in reaching arrangements for an increase in the water potential and its division between the countries of the region. The book's tendency is to bring the pupil after he has learned the facts, to the conclusion that even in such a vital issue as water it is possible to reach compromises and agreement.



The Minister of Education at the time the textbook was written, Yossi Sarid, has written in the Introduction:

“Most of the people living in the country are aware of the severity of the problem and many of them have an emotional attitude towards ownership of the water sources, which are perceived as being important to our security and independence and as something in respect of which no concessions must be made. Such a perception deepens the conflict and constitutes an obstacle to the creation of a new reality of cooperation and compromise, which are vital for coexistence.

This textbook presents many facts that are unknown to many of you and raises [subjects] for discussion...

Acquaintance with, and discussion of, all [the] facts will enable you to better understand the problematic nature [of the existing situation] and to adopt more intelligent positions on the matter of cooperation and division of resources in the region.

This is but one step in the direction of creating a climate of conciliation”. (p. 4).

Two thirds of the textbook are taken up with explaining the importance of water.

The last one third of the textbook deals with present and future water consumption in Israel. The last chapter deals with the question of water and peace.

Included are data on the increase in the populations of the countries of the Middle East and the shortfall or surplus in water in each of them (p. 103-120). Further on there is a survey of the methods of increasing the potential for water (desalination, reuse of rain water, technological means of water saving, cloud seeding, recycling of waste water and the like).

The next chapter begins by asking a question that appears prominently at the top of the page:

“What is your opinion – are technological solutions sufficient to solve the water problem in the Middle East?”

And at the bottom of the page there is the statement:

“If we do not take into account a rational and just distribution of water in the region, even the best technological developments will not be able to bring peace and well-being in the region. In what ways can we bring about a rational and just division of water between us and our neighbors?” **(p.141)**

The chapter starts discussing the “disputes and their resolution with the help of International Law and peace agreements” and among other things says:

“The discrepancy between political borders and the borders between bodies of water often gives rise to disputes between states. In order to prevent such disputes international committees of experts have been set up, which have defined what are international bodies of water and have enacted international laws for the use of shared bodies of water [international rivers, international underground water]. In this chapter we shall become familiar with the definitions that have been given to international bodies of water, the principles governing the division and the use of their water and the principles according to which disputes, which have broken out between states sharing bodies of water, may be resolved. With the help of this information we shall examine the existing situation regarding shared bodies of water in our region. We shall likewise examine the principles governing the use of water and the resolution of disputes relating to water, as they are reflected in the agreements signed between 1990 and 1999 between us and neighboring states **(p.144).**

After this are set out the principles of the “Bahrain Code” document, which was written by an environmental and water work group that included Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians:

“Use of natural water resources in a manner that takes into account future generations; fair, just and coordinated use of common water resources; each of the parties has the right to use resources, while ensuring that its actions will not cause environmental damage to its neighbors; encouragement of cooperation in the protection of the environment; just and permanent use, development and protection of the environment – are interdependent”.

The authors add:

“These principles complement those of the previous treaties and they guide the committees that deal with the resolution of disputes over water between us and the neighboring states.

In all the documents that have been published there are three cardinal constitutional principles:

- A. Limited ownership of water resources – each state must make a reasonable and fair use of water and undertake not to harm the water resources of the other state.
- B. Obligation to exchange information – each state must provide the other state with data concerning the water resources within its territory (quantities of water, use being made of water, quality of water) and it must also supply information regarding any future plan that is likely to affect the quality and quantity of the water.
- C. Responsibility for the quality of the water – equality between states regarding their responsibility for the quality of the water. States must likewise set up joint water committees, which will deal with the administration of the water resources of the region”
(p.147).

Pupils are then asked to read the clauses regarding water in the peace agreements between Israel and Jordan and to check which principles of the Helsinki Treaty are carried into effect in them. Pupils are also asked to carry out:

“An investigation, the purpose of which is to understand the problematic nature of partnership in the waters of an international river”

in the context of the Yarmuk River and the dispute over the division of its waters between Jordan and Israel and Syria. Information is

given about the evolution of contacts between the three states and they are asked to survey the various solutions proposed and to state the own personal opinions concerning them (pp. 148-150).

The textbook concludes with an assignment:

“In your summarizing activity you are to take part in a simulation game, the purpose of which is for you to reach the maximum regional cooperation that will ensure by peaceful means a fair division of water, to understand the special needs of each country in the region ... The class is to be divided into groups of 9 pupils each. Each pupil in a group will be the representative of one of the countries in the Middle East participating in the peace conference” (p. 151).

Each pupil is asked to deepen his knowledge of the country that he represents.

“The success of this game is dependent on the following conditions: the knowledge that you acquire concerning the countries ... the problem of water in the Middle East ... your ability to conduct a civilized discussion which is to the point: **to listen attentively to what your colleagues have to say; not to interrupt others when they are speaking; your ability to listen to the representative of the United Nations; your ability to express yourselves in language that is pleasant and non violent** [emphasis in the original]... The parties participating in the discussion must reach a rational arrangement that is in accord with the treaties on water rights. The condition for the approval of the arrangement for the division of water is its acceptability to the representatives of all the countries participating. The arrangement is to be approved by the representative of the United Nations... **The game continues until arrangements have been reached between all the countries**” [emphasis in the original] (pp. 151-152).

(M. Dressler, R. Zuzovski, Water in the Era of Peace – Learning Unit about the Water Problem in our Region and Ways to Solve it, 2000, pp. 4, 103-120, 141, 144, 147-152).

FOSTERING THE VALUES OF PEACE

In a new multi-disciplinary reader, intended for State Religious schools, the value of peace is highlighted. The prayer of Rabbi

*Nachman of Breslaw*⁶ [Breslau] is quoted in the chapter devoted to *Holocaust Memorial and Martyrs' Day*:

“May it be Your will, our God and God of our fathers
That You rid the world of wars and bloodshed
And extend a great and wonderful peace over the world
And people will no longer lift up sword against people
And will learn the art of war no more...”

It quotes the words of the bereaved mother of Goni Harnik, the commander of an elite Reconnaissance Unit, who fell in the Lebanese War. (In the previous report (p. 98) these words were quoted from a reader for State schools that was published in 1996).

“Why was Goni killed, my beautiful boy?
Because he loved his country,
And he loved his friends,
And he thought that he was responsible for those
under his command.

He was not killed because he hated Arabs,
Nor was he killed because he wanted to be a hero.
He was killed because of his love for this beautiful
country...

Goni wanted you to live in peace and tranquility,
That you should grow up in joy just as he grew up...
That you and all Israel should have peace.
And if there is peace and there are no more wars,
Then Goni's story will be like a legend,
Something that is remembered, like a dream, like a
poem”.

Four pages are devoted to the memory of Yitzhak Rabin, including his life story and quotations from his speeches on various occasions. Most of the quotations deal with peace and the central emphasis in the story of his life is not put on the wars he fought, but rather on his actions for peace.

“There is no soldier better than the soldier who fights,
not out of hatred of the enemy, but out of a positive will
and love for the values of his people, a soldier who
defends his home and his homeland and who is
distinguished by a nobility of spirit and a higher
morality”. (Speech of 1967 after the Six Day War).

“From today onwards we shall not speak of a peace
process, but rather of making peace” (July 1992).

“I was a military man for 27 years. I fought so long as
there was no chance for peace. I believe that there is a

⁶ The great grandson of the founder of Hasidism. Born 1772, died 1810.

chance for peace. A great chance. The way of peace is preferable to the way of war. It is he, who was a military man and Minister of Defense, who has seen the pain of the families of soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces, who tells you this. For their sake, and for the sake of our children and grandchildren, I want this government to exhaust every opportunity to achieve a comprehensive peace" (Last speech on 4 November 1995).

(R. Antman (Editor) In The Language of the Lines for Grade 4 – Interdisciplinary Reader for State Religious Schools, Kinneret, 2000, pp. 138, 161, 153-155).

IMAGES OF ARABS

In State and State Religious textbooks portrayal of Arabs in a positive light and empathy with their plight continues.

In one case there is a story about the help that an Arab gave to a Jewish refugee child who reached the country illegally. In a reader in States schools there is a story about three hundred and fifty Jews, who came to Jaffa port in a ship. At that time the British Authorities in The Land of Israel gave "certificates" (immigration visas) to only a very small number of Jews. A Jewish lad, ten years old, whose parents had been killed in the pogroms in the Ukraine, arrived without the necessary documents and the immigration officials would not let him enter the country. They would not let him disembark from the ship, which was about to sail back to Europe. Abu-Ali, an Arab, who worked in the port, ferrying passengers from the ships to the shore, concealed the lad in his wide trousers, came down with him from the ship to his lighter and ferried him to the shore, handing him over to Jews, all without the knowledge of the British:

"The whole time there was a happy laughing expression on Abu-Ali's face".

(G. Bergson (Editor) In Utterance and Speech – Literary Digest for Primary School, Book 2 for Grades 4 and 5, 1987, p. 120-124).

In most of the literature readers in the Ultra Orthodox stream there are no stories at all about Arabs. In the few textbooks in which Arabs are mentioned they are presented in a negative manner.

In a literature reader there is a story about God offering the Torah to the nations of the world. When He came to the Children of Esau and told them that among the commandments in it is "You shall not murder", the Children of Esau said: "No, we do not want the Torah. We are used to murdering people. When He came to the Children of Ishmael and told them that in the Torah it was written: "You shall not steal", they said to him: "We do not want the Torah. We are

used to stealing things from people". This story appears in other readers in the Ultra Orthodox stream (**See previous report, p. 132**).

(No Author stated, On the Heels of the Flock A – Literature Reader and Exercises in Expression and Language. Otzrot, 5751, p. 238).

In another Ultra Orthodox language textbook there is a story about a son who asks his father to buy him a camel from an "Ishmaelite". This appellation is often repeated in Ultra Orthodox textbooks as a name for Arabs.

(Y. Markowitz, A. Samet, Composition And Style – Workbook G. Published by the Authors. No date, p. 27).

Another example of the use of this appellation is to be found in a literature reader in the Ultra Orthodox stream. The Arab is presented in this story as avaricious, lying, breaking his word and sycophantic. The story is about a Jew who is traveling through the desert and asks an "Ishmaelite caravan" if he, in return for payment, can join them. The leader of the caravan promises the Jew that the caravan will not travel on the Sabbath, but he breaks his word.

"I fell at the feet of the sheikh and wept before him reminding him of his promise and the large sum that I paid him, but he closed his ears to me and sent me away empty from before him with scorn and derision ... And the Ishmaelite caravan traveled on and left me alone to my sighs".

Further on in the story the Jew is saved from a lion that heard his prayer, did not tear him limb from limb, but even crouched down and watched over the Jew the whole of the Sabbath. Finally the Jew, riding on the back of the lion, chased after the caravan and caught it up.

"And when the Ishmaelites saw the lion galloping after them they were greatly afraid".

But the lion let the Jew off his back and went away. The sheikh begged the Jew to forgive him for the wrong that he had done and from then on the Ishmaelites treated him with respect.

"And the Ishmaelites remembered in their hearts what had happened and they promised me that they would recount these wondrous happenings to their children and to their children's children for ever, so that the peoples of the world might know that there is none like the God of Israel".

(No Author stated, On the Heels of the Flock D – Literature Reader and Exercises in Expression and Language, No date, pp. 116-117).

In contrast with this, in a textbook in use in the State stream for teaching the Book of Genesis, after an explanation of the chapter dealing with Ishmael and Hagar, there is a story called “My heart feels for Ishmael”.

In the Torah it is told that Hagar, Abraham’s handmaiden, conceived and bore him a son, Ishmael, because Sarah, his wife, was unable to have children. Later Sarah too had a child, Isaac and demanded that Abraham send Hagar and Ishmael away. Abraham sent them out into the wilderness (Genesis, XVI, 21).

The story moves to a group of children in a sports ground. They are waiting for Ishmael, the boy without whom they cannot play, who “is the foremost among us with no equal when it comes to inventing splendid games”. The children do not understand why he is late and suggest various reasons. Suddenly they see two figures walking away along the path between the fields.

“Ishmael!”, many of the children called out. He waved his hand to them behind his back, but did not turn his face towards them”.

The children ran after him, but Hagar told them not to follow them. They hear that Abraham has decided that they must go, for that is what Sarah wants. The children protest. The girl, who is telling the story, bursts into tears and angrily calls out:

“Ishmael! If you only knew how much I love you!’ And he called out to me: ‘Ah, Naama, if only you knew how much I love you!’ ... They continued on their way and I returned to the tent, my heart bleeding and bitter”.

Although in the story there is no direct reference to the fact that Ishmael is generally a name denoting an Arab, nevertheless it seems that the inclusion of the story in this context is not accidental and is intended to change the negative image that has adhered to the name Ishmael.

(B. Geller-Talithman, H. Shlita, Bereshit - Activity Book for Young Students, 2000, pp.86-87).

In a geography textbook for the lower grades in the Ultra Orthodox stream the Arabs are identified with backward agriculture, whereas the Jews are described as more able and professional:

“When the lands in the Sharon were in the hands of the Arabs, they were unsuccessful in growing very much on that hard and arid soil. The Arabs, therefore, agreed to sell their lands at a negligible price to the Jews who came to buy them. The Jews, enjoying Heavenly help, used fertilizer on the land and improved it. They learned methods of efficient irrigation for this land and turned it into fertile soil”.

(Z. Klein, On the High Places of the Land – The Coastal Plane: The Sharon and the Judean Plane. Published by the Author. No date, pp. 22).

THE IDENTITY OF THE ARABS IN A JEWISH AND DEMOCRATIC STATE

*In the preface of **To Be Citizens in Israel - A Jewish and Democratic State** the authoresses explain that the starting point for the textbook is the Declaration of Independence, which:*

“Expresses the vision of the founding fathers regarding the desired character of the State as a Jewish and democratic nation state, a state of all its citizens – Jewish, Arab, Druze and Circassian, living within its borders, and also of the Jewish People living in the Diaspora and not citizens of the State **(p. 5)**.”

“Democratic states that stress the ethnic elements in their nationalism are called **Nation States**[Emphasis in the original]. In these nation states the state is identified with one (or more) ethnic group, that constitutes the nationality of the state. For example: the State of Israel is identified with the members of the Jewish People even though it contains a national Arab, Druze and Circassian minority. Hence there is in Israel a distinction between nationality and Israeli citizenship” **(p. 23)**.

The book quotes an article by Professor Shlomo Avineri who argues that the State of Israel as a Jewish nation state and a democratic state, does not require its Jewish symbols, the Menorah and the flag, to be different from what they are today, nor does it require that the Law of Return⁷ should be repealed in the name of universal values, as certain Arab and left wing Jewish groups ask. He determines that:

“One can understand the difficulty of the Israeli Arabs ... to identify with [the National Anthem]. However, anthems are not the lowest common denominator of the general population, but an expression of historical identity and in most democratic societies some disagree with this identity.

“In the United States, where religion and state are separate, Christmas and Easter ...are nevertheless official public holidays under the Constitution...”

⁷ 1950 Law of Return established that every Jew has the right to come to the State of Israel as an immigrant.

“So too, regarding the flag. One can understand the difficulty of Israeli Arabs in identifying with ... the Star of David. But flags of many other democratic states bear the cross: Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and of course, ... Britain. Does this prevent a Jewish citizen of those countries swearing allegiance to the flag?... There is no democratic norm that requires that the character of the symbols of a nation state be changed” (p. 27).

Along with this approach, the book explains the opposite approach:

“The State of Israel – the state of all its citizens. This approach sees the State of Israel as a democratic state belonging to all its citizens, a state in which the national identity is, politically, Israeli and its values democratic. According to this approach the State will not be a Jewish nation state, that is to say, a state identified with the Jewish People only. Among those who support this approach are Jews and Arabs who hold the view that the national identity of a state must be political and not ethnic. In contrast with them there are groups of Arab intellectuals who hold the view that the State of Israel must be the state of all its citizens, which will recognize the cultural autonomy of each of the ethnic groups: Jews and Arabs” (p. 35).

A quotation from an article by Member of Knesset Azmi Bishara one of the leaders of the Israeli Arabs is given to illustrate this view:

“Within the framework of cultural autonomy each national group will, among other things, run a separate educational system and will have public communications media in its own national language. What is common to both groups is that they will be subject to the laws of the State and to one judicial system, which will operate according to the principles of equality enshrined in the laws of the State, which is the state of all its citizens” (p. 35).

In the chapter “The Question of the Identity of the Citizens of Israel” there is a section entitled: “How do the Arab Citizens of Israel Define Themselves?”:

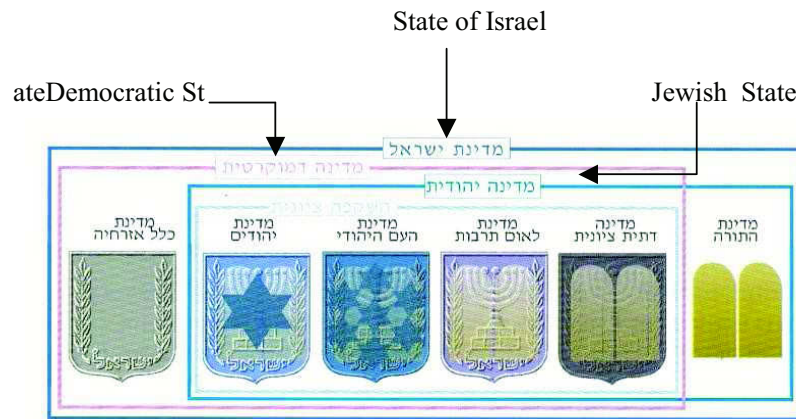
“National Identity There are two versions of the national component: Arab – those who stress the Arab national component and give expression to the link to Pan-Arab nationalism in the Middle East. Palestinian – those who stress the Palestinian national component and give expression to the tie to Palestine, that is the Land of Israel in the eyes of the Palestinians.

Identity as Citizen. Those, who stress the component of citizenship, define their identity as Israelis and thus emphasize their link to the State of Israel.

Religious Identity Those who stress the religious component – their belonging to the Muslim or the Christian religion.

Among Arab citizens there are those who will, in defining their identity, stress a number of components and there are those who will stress one only. For example: Arab-Israeli, Arab-Palestinian, Palestinian, Palestinian-Israeli, Arab-Palestinian-Israeli” (p.42)

(H. Adan, V. Ashkenazi, B. Alperson, To Be Citizens in Israel - A Jewish and Democratic State – Civics Textbook for Upper Grades in General and Religious Schools, 2000, pp. 5, 23, 27, 35, 40, 42).



(To Be Citizens in Israel - A Jewish and Democratic State, p. 36)

The multi-disciplinary textbook about the north of the country also deals with the identity problem of Israeli Arabs:

“The Arabs are united in a national feeling, which they call Pan-Arabism. The roots of Pan-Arabism are very old, but since the end of the Ottoman period it has expressed itself in new and modern ways. Following the division of the Middle East into separate states, after the First World War, there sprang up in these new states local Arab national movements, which were in conflict and tension with Pan-Arab and Pan-Islamic ideas. One of these movements is the Arab-Palestinian National Movement, which consolidated itself in The Land of Israel during the Mandate period and gained many adherents as a result of its encounter with

Zionism on account of the struggle over the same territory” (p.427).

*This textbook mentions the approach of Azmi Bishara, by means of quoting from **The Political World of the Arabs of Israel**, by Y. Reiter and R. Aharoni:*

“Bishara, head of the Department of Philosophy at Bir Zeit University (who afterwards became a member of the Knesset), has argued that so long as Israel defines itself as a Jewish, Zionist state, and not as the state of all its citizens, there cannot be equality for the Arabs. The establishment of a Palestinian state at the side of Israel will not solve the problem either. There is, therefore, no alternative to establishing an autonomy that will compensate the Arabs of Israel for their inability to join the Palestinian state or to be part of a new Israeli, as opposed to Jewish, nation. According to him the proper model for the conduct of their affairs by the Arabs of Israel is that of a personal (separate) autonomy, having a separate council and which will enjoy cultural autonomy, including its own Arabic language radio and television controlled by Arabs” (p. 429).

The authors of the textbook summarize this subject, at the end of the chapter dealing with social changes in the Arab sector, as follows:

“The continual tension between their Arab-Palestinian identity and their Israeli-civil identity adds to the complexity of the relations between the State and the large minority living in its midst. One of the difficult tasks of the State of Israel, as a Jewish and democratic state, is to find an answer to the problem of the fundamental rights of its Arab citizens” (p. 423).

(R. Peleg (Compiled and Edited), *The Northern Land [of Israel] – Galilee, Golan and the Valleys through the Generations for Upper Grades, 1999, pp. 427, 429, 432*).

THE STATUS OF ISRAELI ARABS

*The new civics textbook mentioned above, **To Be Citizens In Israel – A Jewish And Democratic State**, poses questions relating to the status of the Arabs of Israel. The textbook gives details of the Israel Lands Law, 5720-1960, and explains what the Jewish National Fund (JNF) is, as part of a chapter entitled “State Institutions: Expression of a Jewish State”. It says of the JNF:*

“The JNF was established in 1901 by the World Zionist Organization as a body entrusted with the acquisition of

land in the Land of Israel, its preparation, development, and its being made ready for Jewish settlement... In 1960 a treaty was signed between the Government of Israel and the JNF under which all the land of the [Jewish] Nation and all the JNF land (about 90% of all the land in the State) should be held by the Israel Lands Authority. According to the objects clause in its Memorandum of Association, approved by the Minister of Justice under the Jewish National Fund Law, 5714-1953, the objects of the JNF are to acquire land by lease and exchange and to settle Jews on the said land and properties. That is to say that the land held by the JNF is designated for Jews only. There are some who think that this constitutes unjustified discrimination against Arab and Druze citizens of Israel” **(p. 71)**

The chapter called “Legislation in the State of Israel: Expression of a Jewish State” explains the Israel Lands Law, 5720-1960:

“Israel Lands are the lands of the [Jewish] Nation and include 90% of the land in the State. These lands include the lands of the JNF, which constitute 17% of them. The Law provides that none of these lands is to be sold outright or in any other way. These lands may only be leased. With regard to JNF lands, they may not be leased to non-Jews, since the object of the JNF is, and has always been, the acquisition of land for Jewish settlement. This practice is based on the objects of the JNF, as enshrined in the Jewish National Fund Law, 5714-1953, and it is contained in the Articles of Association of the JNF” **(p. 73)**.

The following question is asked of the pupils:

“There are those who think that the Israel Lands Law unjustifiably adversely affects Arab and Druze citizens. Do you agree with this view? Give reasons for your answer” **(p. 77)**.

A quotation from an article by Arab journalist, Atalla Mansur, exposes the Jewish pupil to the feeling of discrimination experienced by the Arabs of Israel:

“It is [inconceivable] that, in a country as developed and dynamic as Israel, there are villages that do not have elementary services – piped water, electric light, clinics, sewage installations – and all these villages are inhabited by one class of partner – the Arabs. The existence of this phenomenon ... arouses feelings of frustration on the part of those who are so deprived and accustoms those, who are not so deprived, to become indifferent and to protect their own ‘special’ strong

interests. Justification of discrimination perpetuates the emotional gulf separating the inhabitants of the country one from the other". (p. 39).

The authoresses express the problematic nature of certain of the existing laws in Israel so far as the status of the Arabs of Israel is concerned:

"The fact that the State of Israel is the state of the Jewish People means that it is the state of all the members of the Jewish Nation, even those who are not citizens of the State. This fact brings the Arabs sometimes to feel that the State of Israel is not their state, but the state of the Jewish People. They regard the Law of Return as a law that discriminates in favor of Jews because it gives them the right of immigration and naturalization. Furthermore, the Arabs feel that they are unequal citizens in their own country, because there are national Jewish institutions intended only for Jewish citizens, like the Jewish Agency, which is in charge of relations between the State of Israel and the Jewish Diaspora. In this connection the State of Israel allots State money for the deepening of Jewish Zionist education in the Diaspora and the Jews in the Diaspora, for their part, raise money that is not intended for all the citizens of the State of Israel. For example, the United Jewish Appeal raises money for certain defined purposes such as the immigration of Jews to Israel. All these bodies, which are operating for the benefit of Jewish citizens only, increase the sense of inequality felt by Arab citizens and their feeling that the State of Israel is not their state" (p. 76).

The pupil is then asked to answer the question:

"What difficulties confront Arab citizens of Israel as a result of the State of Israel being the state of the Jewish People?" (p. 77).

(To Be Citizens In Israel – A Jewish And Democratic State. Civics Textbook for Pupils in Upper Grades in State and State Religious Schools, 2000, pp. 71, 73, 77, 39, 76, 77).

Another new inter-disciplinary textbook about the Land of Israel deals with the nature of the situation of the Arabs of Israel and their national identity:

"In the young State of Israel there was congruence between the territorial border and the majority of its citizens from the point of view of their national-ethnic identity. The existence of an Arab minority (160,000 after the War of Independence) caused a certain lack of clarity in regard to the definition of the Israeli identity