

Aspects of Social Justice in an Arab Israeli Teachers' College

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Principles, Practices and Politics

Edited by

Deborah Court, Randa Khair Abbas
and Zaki Kamal

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FOREWORD

TEACHER EDUCATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN MULTICULTURAL SETTINGS

DEBORAH COURT, RANDA KHAIR ABBAS
AND ZAKI KAMAL

John Dewey famously wrote that education is not preparation for life; education is life itself. Dewey's intention in making this statement was that educational activities must be connected to learners' real lives and day-to-day experiences in order to be meaningful; in order to really become part of each person's identity. We would add an additional interpretation, that students of any age are living (as we all are, even if our thoughts continually leap toward tomorrow) in the present moment. We do not passively accumulate knowledge and attitudes for "someday" until we finally emerge, fully formed, at the end of formal education. On the contrary, we acquire values, knowledge, behaviors, abilities, and propensities through the educational activities and human interactions in which we engage every hour, evaluating, experimenting, and making choices, an ongoing process of building ourselves as people and as citizens.

We can extrapolate from Dewey's statement to teacher education. Teacher education is, of course, future-oriented, working to prepare people to be teachers, through the lived experience of, and reflection on, coursework, feedback and guidance, discussion, writing, and practice teaching. Teacher education is also about the here and now. In real time, successful teacher education must connect to future teachers' interests, needs, and real-world experience. Through this process, we create ourselves as educators: we construct our identities and form our pedagogical beliefs, in "an ongoing process of interpretation and reinterpretation of who one considers oneself to be and who one would like to become." (van Lankveld *et al.* 2017, 2) This process is visceral, emotional and personal, as well as intellectual. In teacher education, what happens in every class, during every interaction, is a small building block of teacher identity formation.

We can also apply Dewey's statement to the idea of social justice. Equity, equality, and fairness are goals for the future, toward which we must build and plan, but they are also real life, in the real world, right now, in the ways we act, relate and consume, and in the decisions we make. In fact, if learning about social justice and learning to teach for social justice are not connected to real life, if they do not become part of us and spring from us, then lessons learned, values chosen, and behaviors acquired will not last.

There are social justice issues in any society, whether or not that society is classically "multicultural." Every society has social strata, poverty, and inequalities of resource distribution. We all live these issues, though when we are part of a privileged economic or cultural group our awareness is often dimmed. A central role of teacher education should be to shed light on and understand social justice issues, in the here and now, and to explore possible ways to reduce economic gaps and eliminate ethnic, racial, religious, economic, and gender discrimination through education. McDonald and Zeichner (2009, 595) say that social justice in teacher education may often "highlight a social justice mission, adopt the language of social justice in conceptual frameworks, program descriptions, and course syllabi, and perhaps tinker with course content, pedagogy, or field placements." They argue that this is not enough: "If social justice teacher education is to become more than rhetoric and more than merely a celebration of diversity, we argue that it must strive to take a different path. On this path, teacher educators would be challenged to further conceptualize social justice teacher education, to negotiate difficult political differences both within and outside the teacher education community, and to develop and identify specific program practices that prepare teachers to teach from a social justice perspective." (595–6) We feel that the contributors to this book have taken up McDonald and Zeichner's challenge. This is not a book about how to teach future teachers about social justice. It does not describe social justice programs or curricula. Rather, this collection shines a light on the lived experience of teacher educators who strive to strengthen equity and fairness for their own students and for their own communities.

All the contributors to this volume work in teacher education at the Arab Academic College in the Northern Israeli city of Haifa. The context, atmosphere, culture, and political and religious reality are multicultural. We are Arabic-speaking Christian, Muslim, Bedouin and Druze students, faculty, and administrators, as well as Hebrew-speaking Jewish faculty. English is the academic language that everyone must learn. Three languages, several religions (all religious holidays are marked and celebrated), sometimes differing political views in a complex country, a culture of

learning that is both troubled and greatly enriched by our multicultural community. It is not always harmonious, fair or easy, but tension and difficulty teach us to be better. Education and teacher education are the natural home of social justice learning.

When we saw the call for book proposals on social justice issues sent out by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, it struck a chord. Social justice issues are inherent to a multicultural community, as different groups exercise varying kinds of power and influence, and bring different kinds of cultural capital to their shared communal life. Viewing our work through a social justice lens sharpened our awareness of the work we do, as the chapters in this book will show.

The first section offers theoretical and conceptual insights into multiculturalism, social justice and education. In chapter one, Deborah Court undertakes a conceptual synthesis of the different but interrelated concepts of social justice, multiculturalism and education. In chapter two, Randa Khair Abbas, the college head, introduces academic integration of minorities into the discussion and explores the relationship between academic integration and social justice. In chapter three, Zaki Kamal, a lawyer and the college governor, argues for legal education through civics studies for children from an early age, in order to develop their critical thinking abilities, sense of fairness and justice, and understanding of ways we can promote these values in a democracy. Closing out the first section is a very original view, by Hana Saliba-Salman, on how modern detective fiction both embodies and advances social issues through the depiction of minority group detectives, their struggles, determination and wit.

In the second section, college faculty members present studies of their own work as viewed through a social justice lens. Ibtisam Marey-Sarwan, in chapter five, paints a vivid picture of the struggles of Arab women, many of whom are the first in their families to attend higher education. These are women coping with academics, with English, with overloaded days and, often, unsupportive families. Marey-Salman's photovoice project empowers these women to express themselves through photographs.

One of the central academic struggles is learning English, and, in chapter six, Omaima Abboud, Jumana Mussa and Nahla Nassar portray and analyze the successes of their peer mentoring program in the English department.

We may tend to think of social justice issues in the context of the social sciences exclusively, but the final four chapters of this book shine a social justice light on the sciences.

In chapter seven, Naji Kortam and Ahmad Basheer explore the concept of environmental justice, how issues like environmental pollution are related to the lives of particular under-privileged groups, and whether and how science teachers understand and teach about this area.

Fadeel Joubran's study, in chapter eight, reveals the lack of opportunity for Bedouin students in the Negev to study advanced physics, the reasons for this situation, the importance of learning advanced science for academic and professional advancement, and some possible solutions that the Arab Academic College can provide.

Amal Sharif-Rasslan and Yousef Abd Algani, in chapter nine, demonstrate through their study, the importance of lecturers' pedagogical beliefs in providing equitable mathematics education, separating knowledge and beliefs, and finding lecturer beliefs to be the strongest factor in student success. When the lecturer believes that all students can learn mathematics and acts accordingly, this advances equity and fairness.

Nareman Marae Haj, Amtiaz Fattum and Esmael Ahmed close out the volume with their portrayal of the challenges faced by Arabic-speaking computer science (CS) students who must, together with learning a complex and rapidly changing content field, deal with terminology, references and texts that are not in their native language, but in their second or third language. The chapter describes the multi-faceted work of the CS faculty in helping learners through this, thus advancing social justice in the CS classroom.

Writing this book has sharpened our faculty's awareness and determination to live, teach, develop and promote social justice at our college, and, by extension, in the wider community. Our teacher graduates take to their classrooms the knowledge, values, behaviors and strategies they learn during teacher education. And, while the work presented here is all based in the Arab Academic College in Haifa, which sends teachers out into Arabic-speaking schools in Israel, we believe that the lessons learned here, the strategies and insights described, are applicable to advancing social justice through teacher education in other multicultural settings. We hope this volume makes a small contribution toward that great goal.

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PART ONE:

**CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL
EXPLORATIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE,
MULTICULTURALISM AND EDUCATION**

The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.

—Martin Luther King

Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding.

—Kahlil Gibran

CHAPTER ONE

SOCIAL JUSTICE, MULTICULTURALISM AND EDUCATION: A CONCEPTUAL SYNTHESIS

DEBORAH COURT

While social justice and multiculturalism are by no means synonymous, they are intricately related. Both relate to the striving for equal recognition, equal rights, and equal valuing of individuals and groups. Each country's interpretation and actualization of these concepts are rooted in past history as well as present reality. This chapter will briefly sketch the multicultural past and present in Canada, the US, Britain, Germany and Israel, in order to shed light on multiculturalism, social justice, racism, and immigration, how they play out in different contexts, and to arrive at understandings of the conceptual, philosophical and practical relationships between them.

The Concept of Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is succinctly described by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as relating to, reflecting or adapting to diverse cultures. The Cambridge dictionary, on the other hand, offers a definition that is value-laden: the belief that different cultures within a society should all be given importance. As Court (2018, 18) relates, we can learn something from the Canadian story. In 1971, Canada became the first country in the world to declare itself a multicultural country, enshrining that declaration in the Canadian Constitution, in 1982, with adoption of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. According to Dewing (2009/2013, np.), "The concept of Canada as a 'multicultural society' can be interpreted in different ways: descriptively (as a sociological fact), prescriptively (as ideology), or politically (as policy)." As Court (2018, 18) rewords this: "A society composed of different cultural groups *is* multicultural; every group *should have* equal rights, respect and freedoms; these rights and freedoms *are protected* by law."

Any country can proclaim itself multicultural, and can enshrine equal rights in law; many now have. The ideological realm is trickier. This is the realm of people's deep-seated beliefs and their behavior towards others. The behavioral norms of a society are the realm in which multiculturalism flourishes or withers. As Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor points out in his landmark essay on multiculturalism,

...in what is today called the politics of 'multiculturalism' ... the thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition [of others] or its absence, often by the *mis*recognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted and reduced mode of being (Taylor 1994, 25).

The philosophical roots of multiculturalism, including the right to recognition, and the very notions of individualized identity and self-determination, lie in the Enlightenment (Court 2018, Taylor 1994). These ideas have progressed slowly, since, through the dismantling of colonialism and the slave trade, and the winning of universal voting rights in democracies. There is still a long way to go. Taylor talks about "the politics of recognition," an important idea that relates directly to policy and law. In what may seem, but is not, a trivial example: in many countries today, road signs are written in various languages, representing the languages of cultural groups of the region. Driving in many parts of Canada, now, British Columbia, for instance, one will see road signs in English and in the language of the First Nations (Native) Canadian group whose land the particular area used to be. Driving in Israel, one will see that all road signs are in Hebrew, Arabic and English. This is not just window dressing; it is a small but significant part of recognition.

The concept of multiculturalism is still quite new, still seeking clear meanings and practical ways of implementation in complex human societies.

Being examined as a political theory, we see that the concept can be interpreted in different ways and its boundaries are often blurred when trying to distinguish it from globalism or liberalism. In everyday language, multiculturalism is often regarded as identical to efforts to promote the integration of immigrants as well... multiculturalism is a political philosophy and a social doctrine, which takes into account diversity and cultural differences, and defines itself as an alternative to assimilation (Berkes 2010, 1).

Canada's "cultural mosaic" metaphor versus the United States' "melting pot" metaphor captures these two possibilities, diversity versus assimilation.

The term "multiculturalism" emerged as a tool of description and analysis in the 1960's, but it remains difficult to define, "because cultural identity is itself a dynamic, evolving organism that is often blurred with political identity and political ideology." (McGoldrick 2005, 27) McGoldrick (28) lists three factual premises for multiculturalism. One, during the last fifty or so years, most Western countries have become more ethnically diverse due to territorial changes and flows of refugees and immigrants. Two, leaps in technology and information, and the concordant rise of globalism have made understandings of what constitutes cultural groups much more amorphous. And three, perhaps as a result of one and two, there has been a rise in the political and legal status of minorities and indigenous peoples.

"Multiculturalism" is "a fiercely debated subject...ambivalence is a central feature of people's perspectives on social diversity" (Bygnes 2013, 126); a riddle that requires rethinking national, ethnic, cultural and religious identities (Baumann 1999). Only modern, Western liberal states call themselves multicultural. Doing so, and grappling humanely with the modern phenomena of migration and immigration, comes at the cost of a unified cultural identity. One author goes so far as to say that "as a result of the multicultural challenge, Western nations are increasingly stripped of their particular cultural contents and reduced to civic communities committed to the same procedural rules" (Joppke 1996, 449).

Any attempt to pin down and agree upon a definition of multiculturalism is also confounded by the ways it manifests in different countries. There is no "one size fits all" multiculturalism, partly because the present is always rooted in the past. A wise, passionate and disciplined multiculturalism grows out of admitting past injustice, learning from it and trying earnestly to apply that learning in the present.

In this light, it will be helpful for us to do a brief survey of several nations' multicultural past and present.

Multiculturalism in Canada

Canada is a country of immigrants. Strong, established communities of people with French, Irish, German, Indian, Scottish, Chinese, Japanese,

Italian, First Nations, Korean, and other roots, have both struggled and flourished for many years. Rights and recognition have been hard fought for. Though Canadian law is, today, exceptional in its protection of rights, Canada has a murky past. No country's multicultural history (or present) is "clean."

In Canada, the original immigrants were the white European settlers who, over several hundred years, gradually marginalized the Native population and took their lands. Native Canadians have experienced mistreatment and discrimination, including having their children taken away and forced into residential schools where they were beaten for speaking their own language. According to conservative estimates, between 4,000 and 6,000 Native children died in these schools from beatings, neglect and tuberculosis.¹ This troubled history is now exposed, and attempts at truth-telling, reconciliation and reparation are ongoing (McGregor 2018; Nagy 2014).

Chinese Canadians were subject to racism when they arrived to do the hard, dirty work of building sections of Canada's railway in the 1880's. They were subject to discrimination, had few rights and were not allowed to become citizens. A 1902 commission called the Chinese unfit for citizenship, obnoxious, servile, and dangerous to the state. In the early 1900's Japanese immigrants began to arrive as well; they were also subject to racism, hatred and violence, which extended to all Asian immigrants, including riots and property destruction by crowds clamoring for a "white Canada."²

A shipload of Jewish refugees fleeing extermination by the Nazis sought refuge at a Canadian port in 1939, and these people were turned away because Canada did not want more Jews—"None is too many"³ was the phrase famously uttered by an immigration agent.

¹ See "What We Know about How Many Children Died at Canada's Residential Schools." <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/what-we-know-about-how-many-children-died-at-canada-s-residential-schools-1.5450277>.

² See "Legacy of Hate: Chinese Immigrants Encounter Prejudice and Violence as They Settled in Canada." <https://www.cbc.ca/history/EPISCONTENTSE1EP11CH3PA3LE.html>.

³ The ship was the SS St. Louis, piloted by a Cuban captain who took the ship, carrying 900 Jews, from country to country. The United States also refused the refugees entry. The captain returned the ship to Europe, where the UK, France, the Netherlands and Belgium each took a few people. The rest had to return to Germany,

It may be said that, despite its troubling past, Canada is, today, a fairly successful multicultural country, enshrining rights and recognition in law and practice. It should also be said that Canada is not facing the kind of rapid, massive immigration with which some countries are dealing, and which brings about a certain panic. Economic and social disruptions caused by rapid, large-scale immigration can raise levels of racism and discrimination, until a “new normal” is arrived at whereby citizens, governments and systems find and create new pathways.

Multiculturalism in the United States

The United States is also a country of immigrants, with a respected history of taking in “your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.”⁴ It also has a history of slavery, and is currently embroiled in the discussion of “systemic racism,” racism that is built into the institutions of the nation and is exceedingly difficult to root out (Lavalley and Johnson 2020).

There is no need, here, to document the history of American slavery, nor is it our purpose. But it is impossible not to talk about American multiculturalism without reference to black history. Slavery was abolished after the Civil War, though racist attitudes and behaviors could not be easily eradicated. The Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution granted citizenship, in 1866, to all persons born or naturalized in the United States, except Native Americans living in tribal communities (Native Americans were not granted the right to vote until 1924). The Fifteenth Amendment, of 1870, granted black men the right to vote (women of all colors had to wait quite a while longer). But rights enshrined in law are not enshrined in people’s behavior: black voters and officials faced continual violence and threats of violence by members of the racist Ku Klux Klan and others (Berlin 2015; Fredrickson 2003). Legal and political redressing of wrongs is not the same as, though it sometimes precedes, making changes in attitude, belief and behavior.

As in Canada, many groups in the US were discriminated against. Beginning in 1882, “most Chinese immigration was prohibited. The fitness of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe was also questioned on racial grounds, and immigration laws passed in the 1920s established a

where they died in concentration camps. See Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many* (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys, 1983).

⁴ From the poem by American poet Emma Lazarus.

quota system based in part on beliefs about the innate characteristics of various peoples.” (Fredrickson 2003, iii)

Today, the US is facing waves of illegal immigration as people fleeing poverty and violence in South and Central America flood across the southern border. This causes social unrest, economic difficulties and real political, societal and personal upheaval. People with good intentions are scrambling to help, to set up systems and rules and laws that can make some order out of human chaos. This is a challenge for any country. Any sense of what multiculturalism is, should be, could be, or will be, is in flux.

Multiculturalism in Britain and Germany

Most Western European countries have a colonial history, whereby they traveled to foreign lands, claimed them, took their resources and subjugated their people. The British, French, Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish were the main exporters of almost twelve million slaves from Africa to the Americas during the period of the Atlantic slave trade, from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century (Lovejoy 1989). These human beings were bought and sold, or were used for slave labor in colonial countries. Few slaves were taken to the countries that bought and stole them; these countries remained fairly “white,” while engaging in racist practice. The point is that, while the US has a cruel history of slavery, the slaves were bought or stolen by Europeans.

In their colonial lands, such as India and the Philippines, the British overlords viewed themselves as benevolent (though often harsh) rulers of lesser peoples. The innate European superiority, as they viewed it, in essence, required them to “help” the “lesser peoples” they found in foreign lands. This was “the white man’s burden”—a phrase taken from a poem, from 1899, by the British poet Rudyard Kipling.

Take up the White Man's burden—
Send forth the best ye breed—
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve the captive's need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.

One must be cautious, though, when painting all Western European countries with one brush. They do not have the same national histories. Two extremes are Britain and Germany.

Despite its colonial past, Britain

traces its democratic traditions back to the Middle Ages. In contrast, (western) Germany has only existed as a nation state since 1871 and as a continuous liberal democracy since 1949, passing, before then, through autocratic, democratic and Nazi phases. Both Britain and Germany controlled vast tracts of land in the early decades of the 20th century. But whereas the Nazis instituted a system of slave labor and extermination in Eastern Europe, the British Empire, while based on a racial hierarchy, took a comparatively relaxed attitude towards the billions of people it controlled across the globe (Panayi 2004, 466).

Britons remain proud of their long history; many Germans are ashamed of theirs because of the Holocaust. Perhaps because of this, “German intellectuals are unabashed advocates of universalism, and they connote with the word “race” not the oppression of whites over blacks [as in the US], but the killing of the Jews.” (Joppke 1996, 502). Due to their differing histories, the differing methods and types of immigration, and the contrasting attitudes towards nationality, Britain and Germany have evolved differing types of multiculturalism (Panayi 2004, 467). Great Britain committed to anti-discrimination laws and the fostering of multiculturalism as early as the 1960's; in contrast, “it was only the findings of the Sussmuth Commission in 2001 that laid the groundwork for the acceptance of concepts of multiculturalism in Germany.” (Bundesministerium 2001, quoted in Panayi 2004, 467).

Despite differing histories and national characters, for all Western European countries in Europe, today, the term multiculturalism is inextricably intertwined with the massive immigration that these states have seen. Some immigrants have arrived as part of family unification programs and marriage. Many others simply arrive, after long treks fleeing war-torn countries such as Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq. In the context of recent waves of immigration in Europe, multiculturalism “has become a proxy for other social and political issues: immigration, identity, political disenchantment, working class decline.” (Malik 2015, 21). Until rather recently, multiculturalism “was discussed as a positive feature of national societies and cities,” (Rex and Singh 2003, 3) but has, in the last decade or so, been increasingly criticized.

Ten years ago, reacting to social problems and demographic confusion caused by rapid, massive Muslim immigration, the leaders of Britain, France and Germany declared that multiculturalism has failed, and this is a growing consensus all over Europe (Chen 2017); multiculturalism is seen an idea that is naïve at best (Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010). We would argue against this. Rapid, unfettered acceptance of massive numbers of immigrants is not multiculturalism. Multiculturalism does not mean giving up one's country to chaos. It requires planning, commitment, flexibility and the willingness not only to say yes but to say no. Multiculturalism does not mean that anything goes. It means having a country, rooted in history, language, values and traditions, wise enough to weave new colors into the tapestry, without throwing out the tapestry.

Social and demographic upheavals are real, and there is no point in criticizing countries and their leaders whose way of life has been irrevocably changed. Systems are systems, and they do not change quickly enough to deal intelligently with this scale of change. People are people, and even those with the best intentions and most open minds can be upset by rapid change in the marketplace, in neighborhoods, in schools. Some analysts see beyond the disruptions of systems and institutions to this very human discomfort at change in way of life, and the role of meanings and emotions in civil society, whether and how Islamic beliefs, systems and practices threaten the very basis of European democracy (Alexander 2013). These are not trivial issues, and they must be faced as Europe, and the Western world, move forward to a new reality.

Rex and Singh (2003, 7) discuss the public and private domains, and how multiculturalism applies to this idea. The public domain is "a public political culture centered around the idea of a welfare state in which all have a minimal degree of equality." In the private domain, "there are the separate cultures of the different ethnic communities including the host community. These separate cultures involve the members of each community speaking their own language among themselves, practicing their own religion and having their own family practices." (7). There are challenges and problems in this two-domain conception: "These include problems within the education system; the attempt to extend the values of the public political culture into the private communal sphere and, per contra, the claim that the values of the private communal cultures should be extended into the public realm; and, finally, the different problem of the degree of commitment or lack of commitment of immigrant groups to living in a host society." (7).

In many Western European nations, today, there is a parallel education system of Islamic schools. But where immigrant children and their descendants do attend public schools, the school is one area, perhaps the only one, where the public and private domains intersect. This leads to the importance, and the challenges, of education for multiculturalism. Where children from different groups do not mix in schools, other forums must be found where people can meet, mingle and learn about one another.

As we close this part of the discussion, it is important to reiterate the obvious: these matters are not simple. We must not accept the facile, easy answer that the majority culture is always in the wrong, that they need to try harder. Or that the host country should be willing to forgo its national roots and culture and endlessly accommodate. There are no-go zones in Paris and Malmo (for instance) that have become Islamic enclaves ruled by Sharia law. French and Swedish people have the right to be disturbed by this. But this, too, is not simple. Many people in these Islamic enclaves came to Europe poor and desperate, and they now find themselves ghettoized and demonized from all sides. They are victims themselves, of their community leaders and others who want to drive a wedge between migrant communities and native communities (Farage 2017). In his brave, enlightening book, Kassam (2017) documents, with persuasive argument and considerable data, how this issue has been politicized on both sides of the political spectrum. The danger is real. Kassam found, for instance, that 40 % of British Muslims want Sharia law in the West, that 18 % would not report a planned terror attack to the police, that 12 % of young British Muslims support terror attacks (and that 26 % of young American Muslims feel the same). The politicization of the situation has made it exceedingly difficult to find solutions. And the real (not existential) threats posed by radical Islam contribute to the dark specter of Islamophobia and the painting of all Muslims with one brush, leading to hatred and violence and a further demonization of the millions of Muslims who would welcome being part of a vibrant multicultural tapestry. Our assumption (and belief) in this chapter is that assimilation of immigrants into such a vibrant, multicultural tapestry, a tapestry woven from diversity but constituting one national cloth, is the only way to proceed.

Multiculturalism in Israel

This volume centers on practices of social justice in the multicultural country of Israel. But how can a country that declares itself “the Jewish State” be legitimately called multicultural?

Jews, Muslims and Christians all have spiritual and historical roots in Israel. The land has been settled, occupied, fought over and contested for thousands of years. Built on the ashes of the Holocaust as a home where Jews could finally live unafraid, the definition of the modern state as the Jewish homeland is absolutely understandable. Israeli law enshrines and protects the rights of all citizens, regardless of race or religion. In practice, though, the Arab minority is often discriminated against.

The status of Arabs in Israel... has been guided by three main factors: the democratic character of the state, the Jewish-Zionist nature of the state, and security considerations. When the three principles come into conflict, the latter two gain the upper hand... The democratic character of Israel is stated in its Proclamation of Independence, basic laws, and institutions. Free, democratic, and proportional elections are conducted at both the local and national levels. This has given the Palestinians in Israel room for political organization and activity, through which they have sought to improve their status and bargain for the advancement of the Palestinian case. Their collective struggle for equality and peace has become an integral part of the citizenship and national components of their identity... In the shadow of the ongoing conflict, security has come to occupy the center of the political, social, and cultural experience and has legitimized the militaristic tendencies in Israel, at the expense of its civilian character (Al-Haj 2002, 170).

Ethiopian Jewish immigrants, protected under law, as all citizens are, are also sometimes subject to racist discrimination because of the color of their skin. In fact, while the challenges of creating a democratic society in which Jews and Arabs live together in peace and equality are considerable, Israeli society has many such challenges. There are tensions, and sometimes violence, between sub-groups of Israeli Arabs. Among the other schisms listed by Yonah (2006) are Israeli Palestinian and Israeli Jews, Mizrahi and Ashkenazi Jews, religious and non-religious Jews, veterans and immigrants. Yonah says that the separation of claims of *recognition*—and Israel does recognize every group's rights, officially, legally, policy-wise—and claims of *distribution*—what actually happens in education, the workplace, in social and economic spheres—presents enormous difficulties. Unlike the European voices stating that multiculturalism has failed, Yonah says the mismatch between recognition and distribution in Israel “*underscores the utmost importance of the multicultural project*,” (Yonah 2006, 95, emphasis added) a project on which Israel continues to work.

Race and Racism

We should note, here, that, during this exceedingly brief survey of multiculturalism, we have used the word “racism.” Clearly, this idea is part of the conceptual picture we are trying to portray. But what is “race?” Merriam-Webster tells us that “race” means “any one of the groups that humans are often divided into based on physical traits regarded as common among people of shared ancestry.” Miller and Garron (2017, x), however, declare that “race and racism are complex and disputed notions, with varying meanings that are historically situated.” They conclude that “race is a social construction. All social constructions involve the use of language in ways that reflect social positioning, power, conflict and contested meanings. These terms shift over time and are interrogated, challenged and reworked.”

Essed (1990, 11) defines racism as “the definitive attribution of inferiority to a particular racial/ethnic group and the use of this principle to propagate and justify the unequal treatment of this group.” If we view multiculturalism as a positive term that denotes people of many groups living together in a harmonic tapestry, then racism is anathema to multiculturalism, a stumbling block that must be overcome. Put succinctly, *anti-racism* “encompasses efforts to promote equal treatment that results in equal opportunity... anti-racism policies and programs within broader multicultural approaches are a requisite if multiculturalism is to ultimately accommodate diversity and eliminate racism.” (Berman and Paradies 2008, 232). This leads directly to the concept of social justice.

Social Justice

In 1971, the philosopher John Rawls published *A Theory of Justice*. Like Charles Taylor’s seminal essay on multiculturalism, Rawls’ book remains the bible of social justice, a complex theoretical work taught in university courses in philosophy, law, education, social work and many other fields. It has been analyzed, criticized and revered; it is the point of reference for discussions of social justice. Rawls’ most basic tenet is that *justice is fairness*, a social contract based on mutual agreement of all parties, under fair conditions. As Taylor linked, forever, the concepts of *multiculturalism* and *recognition*, Rawls linked *justice* and *fairness*. Rawls stressed that justice as fairness is a political conception, not a metaphysical one, placing his conception firmly in constitutional democracy, “independent of controversial philosophical and religious doctrines.” (Rawls 1991, 145).

Both multiculturalism and social justice can exist as meaningful concepts only in liberal democracies. This effectively excludes government by religious rule: Sharia law, the restrictive religious laws of Ultra-Orthodox Judaism, and any restrictive religious laws that violate the idea of a social contract based on mutual agreement of all parties. It also excludes communist and totalitarian governments of any kind. This is worth repeating: both multiculturalism and social justice can exist as meaningful concepts only in liberal democracies.

Like most significant concepts, “fairness” does not lend itself to easy definition. The Cambridge Dictionary gives us, “the quality of treating people equally or in a way that is right or reasonable.” But how can one treat everyone equally? What is right? What is reasonable? While we glean general and intuitive understandings from such definitions, they must be fleshed out and actualized in policy and law, and in human behavior.

Jost and Kay (2010, 1122) synthesize the common elements of writings on social justice by many authors and come up with these. Social justice is

a state of affairs (either actual or ideal) in which (a) benefits and burdens in society are dispersed in accordance with some allocation principle (or set of principles); (b) procedures, norms, and rules that govern political and other forms of decision making preserve the basic rights, liberties, and entitlements of individuals and groups; and (c) human beings (and perhaps other species) are treated with dignity and respect not only by authorities but also by other relevant social actors, including fellow citizens.

As always, definitions and syntheses lend insight but do not give easy answers. There are difficult questions: “What is to be considered a truly fair principle for distributing benefits and burdens and why? Is it equity, equality, need, or some other principle of allocation? Similarly, what is a reasonable or appropriate set of rights, liberties, and entitlements? And what does it mean to treat others with dignity and respect?” (Jost and Kay 2010, 1122)

It can be said that social justice is an integral part of multiculturalism, but the reverse is not true. Even in largely mono-cultural societies, social injustices, exclusion, unfair distribution and bias touch the lives of the poor, the disabled, of children and the elderly, of men and women.

Two concepts that arise frequently in discussions of social justice are “equity” and “equality,” with confusion between them. Deutsch (1975,

137–38) says that both these concepts are concerned with distributive justice, which “is concerned with the distribution of the conditions and goods which affect individual well-being.” In simplified terms, it can be said that, as asserted in the French Revolution and in the Constitution of the United States, all persons are created equal. Equality means the equal value of every human life, though life does not provide people with equal resources and opportunities. Equity is closely related to fairness. The equity concept is associated with fairness in the provision of education, health care and other societal resources; equity seeks to close gaps in the unequal distribution of resources (Espinoza 2008).

To summarize, we have argued that multiculturalism as a general concept that means persons and groups with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds living together in mosaic harmony, with both native cultures and a unifying national culture preserved and nurtured. Each country’s particular multicultural present is rooted in that country’s past: wrongs that need to be recognized and, if possible, righted; and national practices and values that form each nation’s national character. Massive migration and immigration in Europe and the US in recent decades have thrown these countries into a kind of chaos. Each nation is scrambling to accommodate, to re-find, or build anew, its national character in light of a new reality. Recognition, fair distribution of societal resources, working toward equity in order to help immigrants find their place in the cultural mosaic, and understanding the confusion of native citizens as their countries change—these are the challenges, these are the tasks. Education has a powerful role to play in this ongoing work.

The Place of Education in Promoting Multiculturalism and Social Justice

Education is, itself, a resource for immigrants, a way to move forward and find their place in a new society. Education is also essential for the native-born, to awaken understanding, knowledge of the other, empathy and creative vision for the future. Let us look briefly at these two sides of the role of education.

Minority status and poverty, not infrequently, go hand in hand. One role of education is to lessen economic gaps through providing equal educational opportunities (schools of equal quality, equity of educational opportunity through investing more in disadvantaged groups, etc.). We will not enter, here, into criticism of schools, and the argument from critical

theory that schools are, in fact, agents of inequality that perpetuate societal gaps (see Croizet *et al.* 2019, for a thorough review and discussion of this). Understanding the complexities of the issue, we nevertheless subscribe to the basic notion that all children, from all groups, should have good schools and get the help they need to realize their potential and find their place in society. This is about fairness.

The other role of education is to educate everyone about the lives, values, histories and traditions of various groups in society and to provide a forum where people can know one another. This is true in childhood and in adulthood, in higher education. The educational system is where people meet. Curriculum, textbooks, teaching and teacher education all need to be designed and continually evaluated in terms of their effectiveness in promoting multiculturalism. This is not simple. There are issues of language that must be dealt with. Students learning in a second language may not learn and achieve as well as native speakers because of the language gap. Teachers must attain a sophisticated understanding of the concept of culture in order to teach well in culturally, racially, linguistically and social-class diverse classrooms and schools (Banks 2019). “Teacher education programs should help teachers attain the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to work effectively with students from diverse groups as well as help students from mainstream groups develop cross-cultural knowledge, values and competencies.” (Banks 2019, xviii). Teachers with this body of professional and personal knowledge will be able to do their part to promote social justice within their professional realm.

This is the ongoing work of the Arab Academic College, whose academic faculty have contributed to this book: preparing teachers who possess not only subject matter knowledge and knowledge of how children learn, but also knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable their students to discover and realize their potential, thus, advancing the promotion of social justice and the multicultural project.

We close with this statement, by Ayres, Quinn and Stoval (2009, xiii), about the role of education in this essential work.

Education in a democracy is fundamentally an enterprise geared toward humanization—that is, it is always about human enlightenment and human liberation. Education invites us to know more and to be more, to see, to understand, to become more capable and more powerful, more courageous and more propulsive in the service of greater participation and more effective engagement in our work, our society, our lives. Education opens a path away from ignorance and prejudice, fear and backwardness,

entanglement and confinement. Education opens doors—it is good for each of us, and it is good for all of us, for society, for democracy.

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