שחרית سَحَرِيّة Shaharit

Creating Common Cause

The Value of Culture

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Prologue:

The neighborhood of Hadar, on the slopes of the Carmel, is a window into the complex kaleidoscope that makes up contemporary Israel. At Hadar, you get Israeli society shrunk down into miniature. Within three square kilometers live about 40,000 residents—a vibrant Viznitz Hassidic community lives alongside a young and highly educated Arab population who live with a gentrifying Jewish counterculture, all living with a large Russian immigrant community. Few places will get such variety in such a small geographic area. Nazareth is separate from Nazareth Elite, Givatayim from Bnei Brak, Modiin from Ramle and Lod. Palestinian, Haredi, and Bedouin cities and towns; kibbutzim, moshavim, and community settlements dotting the landscape; all appear to live separate existences. On the borders between them you can see communities in contact, but Israeli society appears to live lives apart.

That is, of course, an illusion. Hadar, therefore, is important, because it reminds us that we all share a common home, and that can't be ignored. Looking at its store signs, hearing its accents, watching people on its streets—there is no avoiding the realization that Israel is a multicultural society. How we learn to live together will in large part determine Israel's future. And so "getting it right" in Hadar is important, because it is a microcosm for "getting it right" in Israel as a whole.

But what does it mean to "get it right"? The Russian signs that fill the streets of Hadar's "Little Odessa" suggest a multiculturalism which allows each group to flourish in its own language, but perhaps at the expense of a common language. Jews and Arabs attend separate schools, allowing the building of strong religious, ethnic, and national identities, but inhibiting the building of civic identity that can unite otherwise disparate communities. And the Haredi community's Sabbath observance is cloistered within its walls, a modus vivendi allowing autonomy within its streets, but any change of the status quo bringing fears of religious coercion. Perhaps that is what we want—live and let live. Living spatially together, but socially apart. Yet, underneath these separate existences, one senses on the streets of Hadar that something else is also happening. These disparate groups share a common space and therefore cannot only live in separate worlds. People are meeting, cultures are interacting, a tenuous dialogue is emerging. What should government's role be in facilitating that conversation, and towards what ends? Just how much emphasis on the unique voice of each community, how much on the glue that holds us all together, and how much on the place of meeting between the two? How do we turn cultural diversity from a problem that needs to be managed into an opportunity that should be embraced?

Multiculturalism—The Reality

We don't often think of Israel as a true multicultural society. Even though 20% of the country's citizens are Arabs, the overwhelming majority of Israeli society is Jewish, and so we usually think of Israel as a nation-

state with a national minority. National identity is indeed a central component of identity in Israel—both for Jews and Arabs—but sometimes it hides more than it reveals. The Haredim, for example, comprise more than 10% of the Israeli Jewish population, but, for the most part, they do not identify with a Jewish national identity. Moreover, the Haredi community itself is complex and divided within itself between Mizrahim and Ashkenazim and between Lithuanians and rival Hasidic sects.

Similarly, the Arab community in Israel is far from monolithic. The history, sociology, culture, and politics of Bedouins in the Negev are different from those of Palestinians in the Galilee. Christians and Muslims, Druze and Circassians adhere to different religions and experience their lives very differently from each other.

We are also aware of the diversity within Jewish society—religious and secular, Ashkenazim and Mizrahim—there are so many different ethnic groups and so many different schools of thought. There are Jews from Libya and Morocco and Tunisia and Yemen and Iraq and Iran and the Caucasus, and there are Anglo-Saxons and Romanians and Hungarians and Germans and Poles. And South Americans. And Jews who came from Cochin, in India. And Israel is still changing: The incredible immigration from the FSU brought more than one million people to this country, some 30,000 of whom are not officially recognized as Jews. In Rishon LeZion, Ashdod, Gedera, and other towns and cities, Russian is a second language. And as they arrive in Israel, members of the Falash Mora community from Ethiopia are both integrating into and maintaining their distinctiveness from the existing community made up of some 100,000 Jewish Ethiopian citizens. On Sunday mornings at the Old Central Bus Station in Tel Aviv, members of newly-arrived communities hurry to their makeshift churches, dressed in their best white clothes. Children from the nearby Bialik-Rogozin elementary school speak 26 different languages, and a movie about their lives won an Oscar a few years ago.

This mosaic could make your head spin, but it's real. Yet the reality is usually obscured from the view of most of Israeli society. And when the reality is exposed, it often raises the fear that this diversity threatens to tear the country to shreds.

Threats, Real and Imagined

Many Jews view the Arabs in Israel as a threat to the Jewish identity of the state. In their minds, Arab citizens are opposed to the Jewish State and will use democratic means to destroy it. Much of this feeling is related, of course, to the ongoing conflict between Israel and the neighboring Arab countries. Indeed, Arabs in Israel live with two identities—their Israeli identity and their identity as a national minority that is part of a people that has been engaged in a violent conflict with Zionism and Israel for over a century.

However, other non-Jewish communities, which are not party to that conflict, are also regarded as a threat to the Jewish character of the State. Thus, in the eyes of some Jews, African refugees pose a threat to the Jewish majority. To others, the immigration of hundreds of thousands of non-Jews from Russia or the Falash Mora immigration from Ethiopia put the Jewish character of the this country at risk, regardless of the Jewish-Arab conflict. Many Jews perceive the threat to the national and religious character of the State as a clear and

present danger to the Israel's identity as the State for the Jews.

Concern over the loss of cultural hegemony (which may never have existed) is not unique to Israel. Growing waves of immigration are changing the face of Europe, and political parties have been established in order to maintain the character of countries facing drastic change in their cultural, social and political identities. Together with the perceived threat to the Jewish character of the State, fear of the loss of Israel's liberal character is also considered a threat that can generate both headlines and anxieties. Many liberals view the religious world—first and foremost, the Haredim—as a threat to Israel's liberal character: Exemptions from military service, stipends to yeshiva students, child allotments, opposition to the core curriculum, public transportation on the Sabbath, ancient gravesites...Israel's unique lexicon reveals an ongoing subversion of the very foundations of what it means to be an Israeli. Is Israel religious or liberal? In Arab society, too, devout Islam threatens deeply-rooted secularism. The demographic devil threatens both the Jewish majority and the liberal majority. A culture war lurks behind the functional status quo, and it occasionally bursts into flames. Fear of the growing strength of Islamic fundamentalism in the Arab states around us is part of the same fears that seemingly threaten not only Israel but the entire liberal world: The clash of civilizations over worldviews and the purpose of humankind.

This sense that the impending threat is a ticking bomb leads to attempts to strengthen the Jewish character of the state at the expense of equal rights or to cutbacks in child allotments and immediate intervention in Haredi educational programs. These attempts to save the nation reflect the dreams of many Israelis. They reflect their nightmares, too.

To those ostensibly doing the "threatening," the world seems entirely different. In the eyes of many Arabs, the Jewish State is a concept employed as a justification for ongoing discrimination. Haredim consider liberal values a threat to their lifestyle and believe that these are the very values that the State is attempting to instill, directly or indirectly, in their homes. As they see it, they are the threatened, not the threatening.

To date, the political system has offered only two alternatives for managing the cultural confrontation. Initial concepts of the centrality of State were based on assumptions that Israeliness was composed of both Judaism and modernity. Modernity, however, was often little more than a synonym for Ashkenazi and secular. In contrast, over the past three decades, multiculturalism has taken root and diminished the power of officially-defined Israeliness, promoting the idea that the State is a framework in which numerous communities should flourish. In this view, it is the role of the State to manage the tensions but not to exhibit a preference for any of the parties. Today, we live in a strange mix of the two approaches—strong residuals of the exclusionary State-defined Israeliness coexist with an approach that encourages the existence of separate and independent cultural communities.

The multicultural approach has served as an important corrective to the coerciveness of State-defined Israeliness, which trampled unique identities for the sake of an illusory melting pot, an assembly line for a Sabra-inspired Israeliness. To multiculturalists, the centrality of the State is the enemy because it has led to a narrow type of

Israeliness that denounced and disdained any cultural expression that did not fit into its worldview and values. To a certain degree, Israeli politics are still based on culture wars —between Jews and Arabs, religious and secular, Ashkenazim and Mizrahim—all of which stem from the encounter with a centralized, State-defined culture. Today, thanks to the multicultural movement, Israeli society is open to more varied expressions of Israeliness, even if that fact is sometimes difficult to acknowledge. For example, Mizrahi music has made it into public broadcasting thereby becoming part of both popular and high Israeli culture. It is perfectly clear that the legitimacy and affection that this music creates, even among audiences that did not grow up on it, have accorded Mizrahi culture a place in public space that extends well beyond the music itself. These changes have made Israeli culture richer, Israeli politics more representative, and Israeli society more transparent. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the Arab community also enjoys Hebrew Mizrahi music, because it draws on the same sources as Arab music. Multiculturalism can be a wonderful resource, as long as we embrace it and are not threatened by it.

However, we should not entirely give up on the value of centralized culture, either. We all have a need for a common identity, for the glue that binds our different identities together. To be more precise: for the different kinds of glue that bind these different identities in society, creating a tapestry that is much stronger than any single glue could create. Multiculturalism without centralized culture could dissolve that glue that binds us together and creates the social solidarity that is crucial for the existence of a state. It is certainly crucial for a state that seeks to advance the common welfare above the promotion of egocentric policies that pit individual against individual, group against group. Israeli society is becoming increasingly like this. In other words, multiculturalism is a necessary starting point, but it isn't the end of the story. Through multiculturalism, we can return to a central state—but to a new form of state, established by a new form of statehood that is created by expanding multiculturalism throughout Israeli society.

Culture—The Foundation of Israeli Society

An individual's cultural identity is not a marginal issue; it is from this identity that he or she constructs the meaning of his or her life. Human beings are social creatures who express themselves through culture. Culture is created everywhere in the world, even in places where contacts among people are little more than instrumental. People create language and stories, music, texts, games, and more. To a great extent, to respect an individual is to respect his or her culture.

The Israeli melting pot made it possible to establish the state while rapidly and miraculously absorbing different population groups. But Israeli politics never understood that culture is the central pillar in its citizens' worlds of values. In its attempt to build a united society, the political establishment was contemptuous of cultural diversity and trampled it. Israeli leadership assumed that this diversity, which they thought had no value, was not necessary for nation-building (with the exception of ethnic food and music—which provided a local flavor for the tourists). In the best case, cultures were viewed as raw materials to be molded into Israeliness; in the worst case, they were considered a primitive obstacle to the rational scientific thinking and modernity that are necessary if progress is to be made.

This centralized Israeli culture exacted a heavy price. Entire populations were excluded from the Israeli story: Haredim because of their faith, Arabs because of their nationality, Mizrahim because of their origin. Instead of a fruitful and colorful encounter between the different parts of Israeliness, particular cultures were perceived as something that would misdirect Israelis towards the margins of society. Israeliness wasn't created through a meld of differences among equals; rather, it was arrogantly established within a narrow public discourse that made inclusive Israeliness impossible. In addition to the anger, insult, and humiliation that this process engendered among the excluded groups, it also led to the birth of identity politics, which still plays a very central role in Israeli politics.

Identity politics are justified—to a point. Indeed, every national, religious, and ethnic culture is entitled to state support in order to flourish. It is necessary to support the creation of cultural diversity in Israel: from the Haredi yeshiva in Bnei Brak to the national theater in Nazareth. Every culture is also entitled to ensure its continued existence. The right to pass on a heritage and its values is a basic right. And finally, the nature of public space is an expression of its human character. In a place with a Haredi majority, it is reasonable to close roads on Shabbat and to expect people to dress in a manner that does not defy residents' norms of modesty. In Arab cities, street signs should give expression to the local culture.

The Failure of Multiculturalism

But it is not enough to accord respect to each culture separately. Multiculturalism without a common identity means giving up on a crucial and fruitful component of identity. This identity is the seed that grows into common destiny and purpose, and it is from this seed that mutual responsibility will sprout. A state that conscripts its citizens for national missions such as peace and security, contribution and self-sacrifice must not act as if it were merely an administrative tool to mediate among different interests.

Worldviews that divest themselves of identification with the state exposes the state to the danger of a takeover by those who are ready to respond to citizens' needs and fill the vacuum. The speed with which the market economy took over Israeli society, for example, is a response to the vacuum created by the retreat of centralized statehood and the undermining of Zionism as the constitutive story of Israeliness. Material culture emphasizes me, rather than we; for too many Israelis, material culture has taken the place of the engaged and engaging Zionist culture.

In the absence of identification with the state and a sense of common destiny among its citizens, the state is quickly depleted of content. The history of democracies teaches us that crises of trust among citizens and alienation from the state create a vacuum that will be filled by other, problematic forces. Multiculturalism has dissolved the common denominator among Jewish citizens. The lack of this anchor of identity has led to, among other things, the privatization of public space, which has caused citizens to retreat into demarcated life spaces
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The moment that the public space is depleted of content, the moment that politics abandons discussion of the common welfare and concentrates on conflicts between personal and group interests—that is the moment

that democracy deteriorates into a zero-sum game in which specific interests always take priority over the common good. Politics becomes aggressive, based on the victory of the majority, and no thought is given to promoting the common welfare by expressing empathy for neighbors and fellow individuals. Multiculturalism may lead to the view that there is no way to mediate between various interests and that there are no criteria for deciding in favor of one interest or the other. In such a world, Israeli society becomes powerless to navigate between the competing sets of values.

Creating Israelinesses

Once a society with multiple identities has learned to include a rich variety of narratives as an inherent part of its culture, there is no way to return to a single constitutive story. It is impossible—and there is no need for it. Zionism formed the beating heart of Israel's foundation myth; it was intended to be the people's one and only story and it motivated individuals to leave their birthplaces in search of a more worthwhile life for themselves, their children, and their people. Even though, for most citizens of Israel, the Zionist ethos does grant meaning to Israeli identity, our society is capable of understanding both that this ethos does not provide a common denominator or a glue that will bind the entire society and that there is no alternative to Zionism.

The idea of creating a civil identity to restructure democracy is a bad idea. A quick look around the world reveals that the United States, the archetype of civic democracy, wove myths about a new world, the Promised Land that would enable each and every individual to build him- or herself. These are some of the foundations upon which its civic democracy has been built. The United States has goals and values for which its citizens are willing to make sacrifices. In contrast, the crisis of the eurozone stems at least in part from the failed attempt to manufacture a "civic glue" (which, in the final analysis, is little more than a vacuous bureaucracy) through which different peoples could be made to identify with "Europe." But it appears that this civic glue, unlike deeply-rooted historic, ethnic and national identities, cannot generate the identity necessary for common action. Civic identity is a hollow identity that doesn't emotionally affect its citizens and cannot motivate them because, besides being intellectual and abstract, it is fundamentally and primarily instrumental. A functioning identity must always be anchored to both emotional and intellectual foundations. While a civic identity is indeed necessary for a healthy Israeli society, it cannot offer a constitutive story with the power to motivate society.

In society, as in structural engineering, a stable and strong home must be supported by numerous pillars rather than one central column. Israeli society has many cultures; to ensure that it is a strong and stable, we must create the ties that bind these different cultures together. We must create a rich fabric whose durability stems from the tight weave of many threads; it cannot be held together by a single seam. If nationalism is the sole source of identity, ruptures between groups will grow increasingly wide. But in the absence of a unifying identity, the state becomes little more than a bureaucracy that serves the various groups that comprise it. In other cases, it disintegrates.

We suggest a third option. We recognize the importance of the existing identities that bind us to each other, and we also think it is possible to envision a civic identity—even if it cannot replace the national identity that is

so crucial to society. Identifications and identities should not be narrowed down—they should be made even broader. We seek to add connections—all kinds of additional glue—to the experience of Israeliness, and we understand that from an infinite number of connections we will create a thick, rich and multicolored tapestry.

According to this view, Zionism is a necessary compass for Israeli society. It justifies the Jews' right to sovereignty and gives expression to the destiny shared by Jews throughout the world. It is because of Zionism that Israeli Jews wept as they watched the scenes of the Ethiopian Jews who came to Israel in Operations Solomon and Moses. It is due to Zionism that happiness bursts forth on Independence Day or that thoughts of King David accompany us as we stroll through the streets of Jerusalem. Zionism provides Israeli Jewish society with a purpose and a mission.

Similarly, the Arabs of Israel are a national minority because they are part of the Palestinian people, which has its own history and culture. In this sense, their longing for the establishment of a state of their own is both understandable and justified. Like the Jews in the Diaspora, the establishment of this state will not eliminate their need and aspiration to express their culture and heritage as a national minority in the State of Israel. It is their right to prosper as individuals and as a community, based on a special relationship with and pride in their Palestinian state—even though they are not citizens of that state—and it is our duty to ensure that they may exercise it.

While this situation would indeed strengthen the position of the Arab minority vis-à-vis the Israeli majority, it would also simultaneously add height to the separation walls that divide communities as each community closes itself off into its own world. The State of Israel will not be able to survive the increasing alienation between its communities. We should remember that over the past two decades, Arab communities have developed through organic connections with Jewish communities and have experienced an accelerated process of Israelization. This infrastructure enables Jews and Arabs to create contacts and connections, without which the two national identities will continue to distance the two communities from each other.

But in addition to the national narrative, there are other contexts for discussing reality—the geographical context, for example. Far from national politics, local identities are springing up in peripheral, developing regions—in the Galilee, in the Negev, in local and regional councils, in cities, and in mixed neighborhoods. Under our very noses, connections that began on a functional basis—perhaps between institutions or organizations—are progressing to interpersonal connections, which are creating a fragile yet growing weave of connections. We must encourage these additional identities and allow them to flourish as identities that connect different peoples in alternative ways.

Or, from another angle: Israel is home to an impressive religious montage, and although it often seems as though the religions are hostile to each other and are engaged in a zero-sum game, religious identity offers the potential for a common language. Following the winter of 2012, which was blessed with abundant rain, devout Jews and Muslims gathered together near a spring to offer prayers of thanksgiving. The potential for meetings between synagogues, mosques and churches is still far from exhausted. Even the secular world

has a common language, which provides a fertile basis for common interests and worldviews. Despite the indispensability of the national identity, secular Jews and Arabs have a broad common denominator which, in many ways, is greater than the commonalities between secular and Haredi Jews.

Another identity worth fostering is professional identity, which is growing in significance in today's world. Professional training and the workplace provide opportunities for encounters and acquaintances between individuals from a variety of cultural worlds. Places of work should make a conscious and determined effort to become multicultural so that the workplace will reflect the social mosaic and thereby encourage additional identities to emerge. An Arab engineer does not have to conceal his uniqueness or difference from his colleagues; neither does a Haredi computer programmer. And, finally, there is also a shared civic identity, which should also be fostered, not as a "super-identity" or an identity trump card, but rather as an essential identity that is part of the mosaic. We are all citizens of the same state who are partners in a common political entity. We share the same space, drink the same water, breathe the same air, and love the same land. Israelis observe both religious and national holidays. It would be a good idea to also add civic holidays to our calendar. Such holidays would show respect for and encourage mutual responsibility among all of us, by reflecting our awareness that civic identity is not a matter of legal, technical, or formalistic status, but rather an additional expression of identity interwoven among other, multiple identities.

Conditions for Building Shared Identities—Mutual Recognition

The greatest challenge facing Israel today is encouraging encounters and familiarity between communities that view themselves as separate social sectors. Our challenge is to strengthen the multiple identities that weave colorful, complex, and strong Israeliness. The role of the state is to facilitate these meetings between communities with different identities and, without threatening these different identities, put an end to the policy of separation.

In the short run, the policy of separation makes things easier, because it eliminates contact and friction between communities. The sectoral politics that has characterized us for the past generation also nurtures this friction. But in the long run, separation fosters ignorance, demonization, and hostility between communities and often impedes expressions of variety and complexity within communities. A society that divides up its citizens—into separate educational systems, separate cultures, and separate spaces—undermines the foundations on which a sustainable society—one which fosters mutual responsibility and empathy between citizens–is built.

Of course, this is not a call to meld us all in the melting pot of a common Israeli identity at the expense of existing identities. Rather, it is a call for interactions that will enable the richness of all our identities to flourish.

Encouraging Shared Space

Israel is in urgent need of a policy to facilitate and encourage enriching contacts and connections. This policy must focus on making physical space available for interactions. The plans to build yet another new Haredi

city, this time in Harish, provide a clear example of the separation between the Haredi, religious, and secular communities in Israel, which, like the separation between Jews and Arabs and between different socio-economic classes, also often reflects socio-cultural differences. But different identities do not need to be hermetically sealed off from one another in order to flourish.

True, separation makes it easier for everyone. A majority of Haredim prefers it—and secularists want it, too. Frictions flare up frequently in places like Kiryat HaYovel, Ramat Aviv, and Rehovot, where Haredim and secular Jews share the same neighborhood, the same street, and even the same building. But as a society we need to accommodate this interaction: How can, and do, different people share life and space? In Jerusalem, in contrast, some neighborhoods have been made up of a mix of Haredim, religious and secular for decades. We are not suggesting that instead of building a Haredi city in Harish, there should be no construction allocated specifically to the Haredi community. Rather, we suggest building a city with different neighborhoods for different groups —Jews and Arabs; Haredim, the religious, and the secular; and people from different socioeconomic strata who will have to learn how cooperation in the public sphere can bring prosperity and shared living for all. This is not a call for integration; it is recognition of groups' right to preserve their own community and lifestyle. But is possible to plan for separate neighborhoods that meet the needs of specific groups as well as mixed neighborhoods, in addition to common spaces between these neighborhoods that serve as places where people can meet.

In another example, the decision to settle immigrants from Ethiopia in separate neighborhoods may have stemmed from good will and the intent to help them maintain their identity, but the result has been abysmal. The community is still suffering from the decision to keep them apart. Racism can also be the result of lack of integration, and not only its cause.

The identity of a place is a delicate issue. Residents of secular neighborhoods justifiably feel threatened when the character of their space changes as members of communities with vastly different lifestyles and values move in. Residents tend to be conservative—as if to say, "We chose to live here, among other reasons, because of the nature of the place, and change threatens to make our space strange and unfamiliar to us." The neighborhoods in south Tel Aviv are changing at a dizzying pace due to the arrival of refugees and migrant workers. The character of the place is in flux and tensions are high—of course they are. But protests by the residents, who are accustomed to their neighborhood's particular character, are not necessarily expressions of racism. The new community seeking to enter Israeli society should be spread throughout a number of localities, the rate of migration should be tailored accordingly, and a great deal of care should be taken in delicately navigating the changes to the local social fiber.

In addition to housing, planning can create spaces to encourage interactions between the different communities. Parks and public beaches, open city centers, public transportation rather than private cars—all these are spaces that invite interactions between people. On Shabbat, the promenade in Netanya is filled with Jews, both secular and religious, as well as Arabs from the neighboring towns. The diversity in Jerusalem's Liberty Bell Park reflects the makeup of the entire city, and the flea market in Jaffa invites all residents of the city to shop for deals.

Symbolic Space

The public domain, our shared public space, belongs to all of us; as such, it should express both our physical and symbolic ownership. This is especially true for the Arab community. Arabs comprise some 20% of the population of Israel; though they are full-fledged Israeli citizens, they are not part of the Jewish nation. There is no greater or more important challenge to the State of Israel than to help the Palestinian citizens of Israel identify with the State. Equal rights and opportunities would, of course, help in this process of identification. But cultural factors are also necessary, because they attest that the State of Israel, while it is the national home of the Jewish people, belongs to the Arab national minority, too.

As part of a poetry exhibition hung throughout the streets of Tel Aviv, a poem by Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish was presented—in Hebrew and Arabic—alongside poems by Natan Zach, Dahlia Ravikovitch and Natan Alterman. This made it clear that Darwish is considered part of the pantheon of Israeli poetry. Acts like this should not be unusual; they should come naturally and should be common, for example, in the names of streets and through other public symbols. Making Arabic, which is the second official language of the country, more present in the public sphere would also make room for the Arab community. The insult to Arab citizens of Israel at Ben-Gurion airport doesn't end with the humiliating treatment at the security checkpoints: An exhibit of posters by the Keren Hayesod has been hung throughout the airport, which completely ignores the fact that Arabs are also an integral part of the State.

Symbols touch us deeply because they are an expression of an essential part of our identity. A national anthem that lacks deep historical underpinnings—like the national anthem of Canada, for example, which only describes Canada's size and climate—reveals the paucity of some shared identities, but it does not create any conflict. In contrast, for a non-Jewish Israeli, the symbol of the Star of David creates a sense of alienation.

However, symbols become a source of hostility first and foremost because they reflect a hostile reality. Even if the Star of David hampers Arab Israelis' sense of belonging, this symbol would lose its sting if the Arab minority felt that they were equal citizens. When the soccer team from the Arab town of Sakhnin won the national cup, team captain Abbas Swan ran a victory lap around the stadium, wrapped in the Israeli flag. It was a historic and supremely moving moment as the flag was adopted as a symbol that belongs to the Arabs citizens, too. Thus, even though, on the one hand, the Star of David can ostensibly serve as an obstacle to a sense of belonging, a change in the circumstances can permit incorporation of the symbol.

This loaded public discourse would benefit from a wider perspective based on experience from other places in the world. This perspective would reveal that, in addition to rich symbols, different national anthems have different styles; many national anthems are expressions of an older ethos that is far removed from the currently prevailing one. In Israel, as in many other countries, the national anthem is an expression of the emotions that accompany the historical collective memory of the majority; from that point of view, the Star of David is not substantively different from the cross on the Swedish, Greek, and Danish flags.

But the effort must be come from both sides: Equality may ease the hostility that Arabs feel towards these symbols; at the same time, small expressions of Israeliness on the part of the Arab community would make a significant contribution to the collective sense of belonging that is so crucial for the state's functioning. In a small survey conducted not long ago by the Haaretz daily newspaper, a majority of Israeli Arabs stated that an Arab player on the Israeli national soccer team should sing the national anthem together with everyone else at the beginning of a game. The two processes go hand in hand.

In this context, we note that a significant number of countries have added verses to their national anthems, with different words and even in different languages, in deference to the minorities. But these kinds of changes can only come at the end of a process that leads to the understanding that, in addition to the "yearning Jewish soul," which expresses the wonder of a people that has returned to its homeland, the anthem could be developed and expanded to include Israel's Arab citizens, too. Physical and symbolic public space that expresses belonging for both Jews and Arabs could lead to a more cohesive society.

Even if is clear to us that symbols can be interpreted in many different ways—and perhaps that is why they are so tactically important—it is also clear to us that if the State discriminates against some of its own citizens, it will be difficult to open up symbols to new interpretations. Inevitably, the new interpretations will build upon the traditional interpretations, yet we believe that if we are wise enough to root out discrimination from society, then—as if by magic—the symbols will be interpreted differently. Therefore, it would be a mistake to place the symbols at the center of any discussion of equality and partnership in society. Given the current situation, these are the most loaded and sensitive issues and this is the reason that, while most Israeli Jews are in favor of equality for Arab citizens they are also enraged by proposals to change the flag or the national anthem. The struggle for equality precedes changes in symbols; both parties' attitudes towards the symbols will change when discrimination is eradicated.

Schools and Other Educational Tools

Even though shared physical and symbolic public space is an important condition for establishing a fruitful interaction between communities, it is not the only one. You can live in close proximity, share the same public space that even includes symbols that are relevant to everyone—and still be strangers. Meetings cannot be merely encounters in space; they must include a human dimension.

Like the public space, the Israeli educational system is divided up, with different streams for different identities. Perhaps this was the only way to maintain identity and prevent tensions during the period of state-building, when it was necessary to establish a unified cultural pattern. We emphasize that experience throughout the world proves that whenever and wherever different groups have been forced to integrate, this has created tension and friction; therefore, the results of these attempts at imposed integration remain highly controversial. This is not, therefore, a proposal for integrating all Israeli students into a single public education system.
At the same time, we see that at the grassroots level, there are signs that some people want to break down the rigid patterns created by the Israeli educational system. Schools belonging to the "Meitarim" network and the

"Keshet" school in Jerusalem include both religious and secular students and provide them with an opportunity to view Jewish identity as a broad spectrum of choices. Similarly, the "Hand in Hand" schools provide Jewish and Arab children with an opportunity to study together and learn to share their lives. These are not merely yet another attempt at integration; rather, they reflect an effort to maintain unique and separate identities while simultaneously encouraging familiarity and breaking-down barriers. These schools do not offer a zero-sum game; they create shared lives for groups who have strong separate identities.

These models provide a few examples of the tremendous variety of possible arrangements that are neither full separation nor the integration of everyone into a single educational framework. Imagine, for example, an educational campus for different communities in which everyone shares common spaces and infrastructures and the students take some classes together, perhaps physics or music. Maybe the teachers take in-service training together or occasionally go into each others' classes to tell the students about their different worlds. Students meet together to do public service work or for tours of the Knesset. School policies encourage interaction in a wide variety of ways, according to different models.

It is understandable that religious communities would seek to protect their children from the dominant secular culture. We are also familiar with the secular fear of "missionizing." Yet, despite this, avoiding any interaction actually weakens identity. In adulthood, identities are exposed to different options, and separation prevents growth of a complex worldview and inhibits development of skills to deal with reality. Furthermore, exposure to other identities strengthens one's own identity. Identity isn't a zero-sum game, either.

Schools, however, reflect the society in which they operate. In a society in which communities live separately from one another, it is unlikely that schools will change anything. In Israel, the IDF plays an important role in creating significant and intensive encounters between different groups of people. We should therefore not be surprised that the two most sidelined communities in Israeli society don't serve in the IDF. If only for the interaction that the IDF creates, it is essential that the military make every effort to integrate as many different communities as possible.

Universities could create significant interactions, too. In this regard, the trend towards separate campuses for Haredim and speakers of Russian—or English—is also a problem. Higher education should take advantage of its prestige in order to attract varied population groups and build an infrastructure that allows for expression of different identities while encouraging interactions between them—mixed dormitories, universal academic requirements, and so forth.

Often, hope for integration and representation of different communities is directed towards the Supreme Court. The Court is meant to reflect the population and thus to create interaction among representatives of the entire public who, though they hold differing opinions, are bound together by their shared commitment to the State of Israel and the rule of law. Historically, Jewish jurisprudence was included in legal discussions as part of an effort to integrate Jewish religious legal law into the Israeli commitment to democracy. In our opinion, this direction is worthwhile and we welcome the effort to create a court that better represents Israeli society.

Instead of living in fear of a takeover of the bastion of liberalism, liberals would be better-advised to encourage processes that engage more communities and cultures in Israel's democratic discourse. In this context, it is crucial that there be Arabs in the Supreme Court, as well as Mizrahim and religious individuals—not only as an expression of different voices but also in order to reinforce these communities' commitment to Israel's legal and judicial system. If only there were Haredim who could also serve on the Court.

The Culture of Interaction

It is critical to encourage human interactions and it is easy add a cultural dimension through which participants will come to know other worlds of values. Movies, performances, exhibitions, literature—or, in short, culture—each one of these opens a window onto new worlds. This kind of encounter is less threatening than direct contact, because we remain relatively safe from the Other whose values and worldviews seem hostile to ours.

With regard to culture, schools can play a central role. In our opinion, the debate surrounding the core curriculum is misguided. The study of English and arithmetic is based on assumptions regarding instrumental requirements for employment—and indeed, these are essential tools for the workplace of the twenty-first century. (We will discuss civics below.) In our opinion, integration of Haredim into the Israeli workforce is a complex question, and it is doubtful that the study of English or arithmetic in elementary school will lead to any change in the community's employment patterns. It is more likely that social changes, together with the desire to integrate into the workforce, will lead the Haredi public to search for the tools they need in order to integrate. Once they have decided that they want to work and are motivated to acquire the necessary skills, it will take only a few months to train religiously-educated Haredi employees and close the gaps created by twelve years of schooling. The public debate about the core curriculum relates only to the Haredi public, as other pupils study English and arithmetic and understand how important they are. However, they question of the core curriculum should not ignore the rest of the public, either.

In our opinion, children should be exposed to rich educational content that expresses the vitality and depth of the worldviews held by the different communities that make up Israeli society. The core curriculum should include study of the Jewish Enlightenment and liberalism, as well as Talmud, Responsa, and Jewish studies. All this should be taught alongside Palestinian poetry, the foundations of Islam and Christianity, and the Hebrew and Arabic languages. Knowledge is a vast ocean, and exposure to the cultural wealth that lies beyond the horizons of our own communities is crucial, even if the specific content changes over time. If a core curriculum were to provide each and every Israeli citizen with basic literacy in the worlds of culture and values that make up the Israeli montage, it would also be easier to demand compulsory classes in civics and democracy.

Physical, educational, and cultural interactions—these are the conditions necessary to break down the barriers between us and build a mosaic of connections. However, in our opinion, this can happen only if it is based on an appropriate foundation of values. The values dimension can open up the closed-mindedness that has led many secularists to view Haredim as parasites who shirk military service and don't pay taxes, and that has led many Arabs to view Zionism as fraud, theft, and discrimination. Without the dimension of values, the religious view

secularism as little more than an empty cart filled only by shopping malls, and Jews view Islam as a primitive culture and the root of all evil. We need cultural recognition and connections based on values, because "live and let live" is not enough to, for example, make the fateful decisions that require broad public consensus.

We seek to find the way, that is, the shared core values, that underlie the common language that allows us to build our society together.

We are All Created in the Image of God—and Images have Many Faces

A look at the wide world reveals that we are surrounded by a spectacular mosaic of identities and cultures. At times, it would seem that there are no similarities among people, and that the differences between them are unbridgeable. But they aren't. The amazing differences between different cultures belie the knowledge that, in essence, we are all similar. All peoples share tears and smiles, music, theater and art, games and rituals, families and means of governance. Human beings are social creatures, and society provides meaning to their lives. It is not surprising that cultures have so much in common. All cultures are expressions of our common humanity.

Culture reflects the human attempt to provide a response to life's greatest questions and to infuse life with meaning. True, the variety reveals how richly different those expressions of humanity are. But this plurality also demonstrates to us that our own culture—that we perceive as natural, proper and sometimes even the only culture available—has alternatives. The phrase "foreign culture" presumes an enemy, not a source of inspiration. The reality in which we live does not allow for cultural homogeneity and often forces us to encounter other cultures. That is the result of the global world, rapid communications, and the ever-changing Israeli culture.

In other words, we influence others and are influenced by them. That is a fact. That reality, which was not as dominant in previous generations, poses an ethical challenge to us as individuals, communities, and societies. We have made our choice: In our opinion, the similarities among cultures points to what we share in common. In the language of Jewish tradition, culture is a deep and tangible expression of the image of God that we carry within us. A cultural encounter can never mean homogenization or a mixing of white and red to create a monochromatic pink; rather, we are like children who always resemble their parents but are also different and very special. This means that there is a strong basis for conversation and discussion among cultures, because they are all basically striving to provide an answer to our common human condition. Even if our desires are different because they are conditioned by our culture, we all have the same needs.

History teaches us that these processes are very complex. Many wars have been waged as a struggle between worldviews, identities, and cultures. Human history is filled with battles between conflicting cultures. Jews know this only too well. The period of the Second Temple, for example, provides an archetypical example of culture conflict and wars between an expanding Hellenism and a Judaism on the defensive. Yet, at the same time, this conflict enabled cultures to meet, debate, and change. This is how the literature of our sages was created. Within its pages, the Talmud reveals the ideological and even linguistic influence of Hellenism, which,

through its encounter with Judaism, eventually led to Christianity. The same is true for the Middle Ages, the Modern Period, and even our own times. This is the nature of the inter-cultural dynamic. There is no culture that has never been exposed to a rival culture. Even isolation is a result and product of an encounter. In other words, there is no way to avoid change, because culture is never static or monolithic. It is always in flux, constantly responding to its surroundings.

This principle also holds true for Israel today. Those who fear that a meeting of cultures will change them are correct. Change is an empirical fact, and a policy of separation will not prevent it; instead, it will encourage instrumental and even aggressive relationships. Cultural encounters are constantly taking place, and in today's technology-based world, they are taking place at an accelerated pace. The question is only if we can steer this encounter, for the sake of society as a whole, in order to increase mutual benefit for all. For this reason, we suggest deliberately planning interactions between all social sectors, not through imposition but by providing numerous opportunities. However, a fruitful and successful meeting must meet two crucial requirements.

First, the State must support all identities so that everyone enters the encounter space with a sense of security. We have a deep belief in all cultures. Everyone should realize that a culture is a product that human beings have created over hundreds and sometimes even thousands of years as an expression of their humanity, and so it is, first and foremost, a fascinating resource. That does not mean that there is nothing to argue about. Lively arguments and judgments about flawed behavior are necessary (which we will discuss further below). However, an argument about the characteristics of a culture is not the same as dismissing that culture in its entirety. According to the basic tenets of our values, Israel must be more open to the wondrous human variety that exists here. It must respect and encourage this variety, out of a belief in the deeply-rooted mechanisms within the different communities that balance tradition and innovation.

The principle of mutuality is the second requirement. Respect must be multi-directional. In the intellectual context, tolerance grew out of despair over the ideological wars of Europe, which claimed millions of lives. Europeans reached the conclusion that it would be better to accept the existence of a competing culture than to be killed in an attempt to score a victory over the opponent's worldview. In the religious context, the essence of tolerance is that God is the ultimate judge; by their very nature, humans cannot achieve full truth. Secular thought added that human knowledge continues to develop out of error and that therefore we should allow different perceptions to grow and compete over their search for truth. How we should respond to intolerant cultures is an important political question, but first we should accept the principle that tolerance has a basic role in any democratic country.

Should We Judge Another Culture?

Tolerance does not mean accepting the values of the other. Tolerance is part of a rich cluster of concepts that make up the democratic experience and that are meant to constitute the basic values of our society. Respect for human beings, liberty, and the value of democracy itself all stem from similar foundations. The creation of all humanity—i.e., each individual—in the image of God, as the Book of Genesis tells us, is the Jewish

articulation of the same idea. Israel's Declaration of Independence draws on the same sources and states that "The State of Israel will be based on freedom, justice, and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race, or sex." The universality of these values indicates that they are intended to apply to everyone. The suspicion that they engender is related to the fear that they are actually rooted in basic assumptions such as individualism and secularism that undermine traditional worldviews. Thus, it is not at all surprising that they are perceived as threatening. But it need not be this way. Respect for human dignity is the foundation of the democratic state, but it is rooted in numerous religious traditions. From what we have written above, we see that culture is a significant component of being human because it constitutes the medium through which human beings express their humanity and identity—that is, their life and dignity.

Democracy is not merely majority rule. First and foremost, democracy is a worldview and a set of values relating to human beings and their rights. It is the role of the state to defend these rights. Democracy should oppose traditions that violate the basic rights of any man or woman. For instance, polygamy, which is a part of the traditional Bedouin family, contradicts the principle of the equality of each and every man and woman. It is appropriate and necessary to make polygamy illegal. The phenomenon that has been termed "honor killing" is another example of a cultural component that should not be accorded any place in society. However, even in those rare instances in which the state is engaged in head-on conflict with the cultural values of some of its citizens, the manner in which the cultural pattern is changed should be considered carefully. This is true in cases of ethnic discrimination within the Haredi public. The involvement of the courts is only one tool; it may be necessary in some isolated cases, but most frequently the courts cannot change deeply-rooted cultural patterns and they should become involved only in extreme cases. Otherwise, the courts will lose their efficacy and this will lead to the opposite result—it will create entrenched hostility and attenuate the authority of the courts. This may be what has happened to the Supreme Court in Israel.

Truth be told, the State is often unaware of processes of change occurring within minority groups, which tend to abandon their own indigenous patterns and to internalize the values of the majority. Modern culture affects even those cultures that are making a great effort to resist it. That is the power of cultural hegemony. The principles of modern feminism, for example, have trickled deep down into the National Religious world and have had a significant effect on Bedouin and Haredi societies as well. The first signs of similar changes with regard to homosexuality can also be seen at all levels of society. Encouraging contact between different identities will increase the rate of these processes of change. Although the secular majority may frequently feel threatened by cultures whose values are dissimilar to its own, it is important to remember that the process of change most frequently brings the minority closer to the culture of majority. These processes can be accelerated through contact and education and by encouraging those internal processes that are already underway.

Changes are not usually imposed from the outside; they come from within the culture itself. A traditional culture dealing with external change will find within itself the resources to respond to the hegemonic culture without being swallowed up, thus enabling both conservation and growth. This understanding means that the hegemonic culture should encourage internal processes by listening to the multiplicity of voices that exists in

every culture and not solely to the voices of the establishment. These voices contribute towards processes of change more quickly, more appropriately, and more authentically than any state-based external intervention.

Bi-Directional Judgment

Cultural criticism cannot come from only one direction. We refuse to accept liberal culture as ultimate and definitive, the pinnacle of moral development. We are aware, for example, of the instrumentality that is inherent in today's liberal culture, according to which human beings are increasingly judged according to their wealth rather than their values or actions. Extreme individualism could cut off us from one another, dissolving our communities and the ties that create mutual responsibility. Individualism can breed alienation, leaving each of us alone.

And another example: The global environmental crisis can be understood as the result of liberal economic approaches that value the accumulation of wealth above all and of a modern culture that has lost self-control and appears to view consumption as the essence of progress. These criticisms are familiar to traditional communities, which live according to a hierarchy of values that differs from the dominant, hegemonic Western culture. Often, liberal culture exudes a sense of superiority and arrogance towards other cultures, and this generates hostility. In the name of universalism, liberal culture haughtily judges other cultures; in reality, it suffers, like all cultural traditions, from an over-assurance that its way is the right way, if not because of divine election then because of rationalism. In this way, liberal culture misses out on the opportunity to build and be built by the exposure to differing—even rival—worldviews.

For example, secular opposition to the fact that Haredi men prefer Torah studies to work and supporting their families is understandable. But this same opposition is also an invitation to examine Israeli society itself, the models of masculinity it offers, and its view of the sources of power and authority. Interestingly, the growth of pluralistic study programs has led to interest on the part of secular Israelis in adopting the National Religious model of "hesder" that combines study with military service. They have come to understand—as Haredi society has long understood—that the strength of a society depends not only on its military prowess but also on its spiritual strength. Perhaps a sincere and honest examination of the Haredi model of study could lead to new thinking about the role of the military in the life of young Israelis and about the importance of providing an opportunity to reinforce the roots of their identity, values, and spirituality. A public debate of this kind could perhaps also lead us to question why, as a democratic society, we automatically assume that a retired general is best qualified to lead us.

The discussion of the women's status also leads to liberal arrogance, which often unjustified. The liberal agenda continues to question the accepted beliefs of most traditional cultures, in which, from the liberal point of view, women are granted inferior status. However, liberal culture itself severely abuses women. Liberal culture should not be so self-confident as long as the pornography industry, trafficking in women, and prostitution thrive as never before. Even if the arguments put forward by fundamentalist religious groups about the preferential status they accord women are problematic, the results of liberating women into the commercialization of

liberal culture are not impressive. Religious arrogance towards the secular world—the full cart versus the empty cart—meets secular arrogance towards the religious world—intelligence and progress versus Medieval superstitions. Here too, a genuine discussion between the two worlds would challenge both of them, leading to a more genuinely egalitarian society.

The Sabbath as an Example: Between Sacred and Secular

In Israel, negotiations between a religiously-mandated Sabbath and a secular Sabbath have turned the day of rest into a "problem" and a battle zone between individual liberty and religious commitment and their respective place in the State. The status quo, established decades ago, continues to demarcate the cease-fire lines. However, the religious and the secular Sabbaths are not really so different from one another. The one seeks to turn the seventh day into a "sort of Paradise," while for the other, in the words of famous folksongs, "the Sabbath went down to the Ginnossar Valley," and, in the morning, "we can go down to the Yarkon River and sail our boats." The common thread to these two conceptions of the Sabbath could be an opportunity for an encounter between worlds that could enrich us all.

Professor Ruth Gavison and Rabbi Yaakov Meidan have proposed a covenant for an Israeli Sabbath, based on the principle of "Culture—yes; Commerce—no." This points us in a possible positive direction, because the current situation is the worst of all possibilities: although municipal regulations strictly enforce closure of small businesses in the city centers, malls outside of the cities are open for business. Since there is no public transportation, people are increasingly dependent on private cars (which some 40% of the population does not own anyway). Today, the Sabbath is a rest day for the upper crust of society, while everyone else is forced to work under poor conditions and with no benefits, sometimes seven days a week, to supplement their income.

Yom Kippur provides a different example. There is no public transportation, but, more importantly, people willingly choose not to drive their cars. For the entire secular population, Yom Kippur is a holiday. The pace of life slows down, noise and air pollution disappear, and in their stead, children ride bikes and adults talk leisurely on usually busy street corners. The secular world could not invent a day like this, but it has willingly adopted it. Yom Kippur is not part of the status quo because it reflects common interests. As a result, a culture of Yom Kippur has evolved for everyone: Synagogues are full and human public space is softer. Secular Yom Kippur reminds us of the "Oneg Shabbat" introduced by poet laureate Haim Nahman Bialik in "Little Tel Aviv" of the 1920s, in which we give up on shopping in a noisy mall surrounded by cars and join a community like the ones that we see in Nahum Gutman's paintings.

The State should be very attentive to the voices in Israeli society and fulfill its role with gentle determination. The State should facilitate the creation of spaces that encourage traditional and renewed community, cultural, and spiritual life, respond to a variety of community needs, and develop public areas free of consumer noise.

Conclusion:

We set out to answer two key, challenging questions: What would a society look like if each individual and every culture could feel it were a partner in a shared home? And how do we build a strong society out of a variety of communities? We have sketched a complex picture of the world, but our view stems from the deepest foundations of our lives as human beings. We disagree with the Maslow's assumption of a hierarchy of needs, according to which physical and other needs come before the search for meaning and fulfillment. In our view, the peoples' "lower-order" and "higher-order" needs intertwined and interdependent. Our starting point is that meaning not only precedes basic needs but, for those who lack it, it is a source of immense strength. We further believe that this assumption is not only true for individuals but that it has implications for the public sphere as well. Even though Israeli society is burdened with existential problems of security and social and economic issues, it must be able to view the diversity of cultures assembled within it as a rich resource that can, in the final analysis, contribute to the country's strength and security and provide meaning for its existence.

The multiplicity of identities is a blessing that has been bestowed upon Israeli society. The life stories from which this society has been built are amazingly rich. Ask people to talk about the home in which they grew up, and you will hear very different stories. Most of these stories are filled with love and warmth, empathy and longing. There are real people behind the holiday foods, music, and traditions. These people inherited their parents' ways of life, values, and beliefs. Every generation extends the chain—and adds something to it. Even a revolt is a form of continuation—it is a response to a past that is still present. The attempt to impose identity, as if it were a zero-sum game, is bound to fail. Identity is not merely a private matter; identity will spill over into the public sphere; if pushed aside, it will lead to never-ending anger and hurt that will eventually explode. Mendelssohn's suggestion to be "a cosmopolitan man in the street and a Jew at home" was a fundamental error of the Enlightenment, and it is certainly an error today. We express our identities at home and in the street, and these different presentations influence each other.

Creating a new form of centralized community identity out of the multiplicity of cultures is crucial for our future. Ben-Gurion was right when he insisted on establishing an identity that would connect all of the Diasporas. But in our day, this shared identity must grow from the bottom up. It is not the role of the state to impose a common identity on everyone; its primary responsibility is to facilitate the conditions that will encourage the processes that will lead to this new state-centered identity. And it will not be a single, unified identity, but rather a multiplicity of ties and, most importantly, a public sphere made up of mutual respect and many debates and disagreements that are all motivated by a search for the common good. With the right hand guiding us, we will be able to create a space that has a place for everyone, where everyone has a place. This space will be proud of the past while looking forward toward the shared future.

From a Theoretical Position to an Outline for Public Policy—Six Principles, and A Dozen Suggestions for Their Implementation

Six Principles for Public Policy:

1. Pluralistic cultural identities and shared identities should both be nurtured simultaneously rather than at the expense of each other.
2. Cultural identity must never be nurtured at the expense of individual civil rights.
3. National-level problems must never become the burden of a single, specific place.
4. An honest and genuine effort must be made to reduce historic gaps between different population groups.
5. The public sphere must be accessible and suitable for all those who live in that space and must encourage interactions and familiarity among citizens from different backgrounds.
6. Policy must show respect for community and local knowledge while significantly involving culturally and socio-economically diverse groups of people in professional, decision-making bodies.

A Dozen Suggestions for Policy Implementation:

1. Encourage establishment of **mixed cities and authorities**, while both maintaining the unique identity of each community and simultaneously encouraging interactions between the communities in shared spaces. Provide appropriate responses to housing difficulties among disadvantaged populations, especially Arabs and Haredim.
2. The state must provide a holistic response to **significant demographic changes within communities**, as these create antagonism and confrontation: when Haredim move into secular neighborhoods, when Arabs move into Jewish neighborhoods, when refugees and migrant laborers move into disadvantaged neighborhoods. Responsibility for finding solutions to these situations must not be left solely to residents, and one neighborhood should not be made to deal with a problem that must be resolved on the national level. Planning policies are necessary; this includes dividing the burdens of absorption among a variety of geographic areas.
3. Additional identities within society—community, urban, regional, professional—should be nurtured by engaging different populations in the same spaces and developing a common identity for all of them. Examples abound: from groups of fans (such as the Hapoel Katamon soccer team), to community galleries (such as the Barbour Gallery that operates in the Nachlaot neighborhood in Jerusalem) to unionizing (such as the recently-organized early child care workers, whose ranks include both Arab and Haredi women). Cooperation between Jewish and Arab localities in the Sakhnin-Misgav region can serve as a model for the emerging development of local identities.
4. Education:
    a. **Establish core curricula** in order to develop basic literacy about different cultures while reinforcing the role of democratic values in building a diverse and tolerant society.

b. **Encourage encounters** between different educational programs in the Israeli educational system in a variety of ways: joint schools (Jewish-Arab, religious-secular); establishment of joint campuses in which the various programs will have classes together (math, English, physical education, etc.); integrating secular teachers into religious schools and Jewish teachers into Arab schools; reinforcing in-service training for teachers by creating intergroup meetings.

5. **Culture:** Allocate funds to creative endeavors (including basic infrastructure—there isn't even a single theater in the Arab sector!) to provide expression for the variety of cultures in society in order to both facilitate the growth of different communities and encourage familiarity and interaction between them: exhibits in museums, TV programs, cinema, theater, music, and literature.

6. **Encourage interactions within the national frameworks** that play a central role in the lives of many Israeli citizens:

   a. **Military:** Create deliberate integration within the IDF—in addition to paying attention to the differing needs of soldiers who come from different cultural backgrounds and who serve in special military tracks (Haredim, Bedouins, National Religious, etc.), consciously encourage intergroup interactions within the IDF.

   b. **Civilian/National Service:** Establish a civilian national service framework that, besides providing of civic services for the immediate community, will encourage deliberate meetings between participants from different backgrounds—joint training and workshops, projects for the benefit of "other" communities, and, to the extent possible, mixed frameworks for service.

   c. **Higher Education:** Encourage integration and interaction among students from different backgrounds joint compulsory courses; mixed dorms, volunteer projects, etc.

7. Engage in multi-pronged efforts to change **cultural patterns that violate human dignity**:

   a. **Invest in efforts to eradicate polygamy:** Conduct campaigns against polygamy from within the community through, for example, Muslim religious law, and providing religious courts with appropriate tools (as has been done, for example, in Tunisia). Legislation and enforcement will provide complementary tools as part of a multi-pronged and comprehensive effort within the community. The same will be applied to female genital mutilation (FGM).

   b. Institute a policy of zero-tolerance and increased enforcement of **femicide** (such as so-called "honor killings") and provide in-depth education for young men and women.

   c. Conduct campaigns against **husbands who refuse to give their wives divorces**, in combination with updating religious legal tools and generating public pressure.

8. **Increase the diversity of justices and judges:** in a manner that will enable litigants from different groups (Arabs, religious, Haredim, Mizrahim) to feel less "foreign" when they appear in court. Such diversity will also strengthen public commitment to democracy and its institutions.

9. **Create local public spaces** suitable to the local human-cultural makeup (for example: close streets to transportation on the Sabbath in religious neighborhoods, name streets for Arab and Palestinian intellectuals

in Arab cities). Full (although not exclusive) collaboration with each community in managing its cultural space.

10. **Create a multicultural presence in public space—**Continue to reinforce cultural diversity in public radio and television stations—in music, programs, and even in broadcasters' accents. Increase the visibility of Arab culture in central public spaces—put up street signs in Arabic and name streets for Arab and Palestinian intellectuals in mixed cities, put up posters reflecting Arab culture in the airport, increase the presence of Arabic in the public space and in national institutions.

11. **Support religious institutions:** state support for synagogues (belonging to all denominations of Judaism), mosques, and churches.

12. Encourage **public discourse:**
    a. In **contested public space**, provide significant engagement for the culturally and socio-economically varied public in professional discussions of policy-related decisions. This is based on the understanding that the knowledge held by "average" citizens—and by their communities—is critical to policy makers, even when it comes to questions regarding the large-scale systems with which these citizens interact on a daily basis (transportation, medical services, services for senior citizens, leisure, etc.).
    b. Enact policy solutions that seek a **common denominator of values** (such as the model for the Sabbath, which provides religious and secular alike with a day of rest, interaction, and culture and cuts down on commercialism and pollution) while offering solutions on the local level that are tailored to the nature of specific communities.

Notes:

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