**Is it possible to educate for civil solidarity in a country with numerous cultures and identities, in the shadow/in (the) light of laws designed to strengthen the majority?**

**The Israeli case as an allegory**

**Abstract**

Solidarity between the citizens of a country is both good and desirable, and is especially important for countries in which the social, cultural, ethnic or religious connections between the citizens are characterized as loose connections. A discussion of the need for civil solidarity is relevant today, particularly, in the state of Israel whose social cohesion is being weakened and there is a fear that the different factions in the society are unable to work together.

If, indeed, solidarity is needed for safeguarding a country’s survival, then young people in society need to be educated to be good adult citizens that take part in the public effort to create solidarity. The public educational institutions are the clear site of education for such civil solidarity and its natural place is in Civics lessons.

Nevertheless, this paper argues that it is impossible to educate for solidarity for all citizens in Civics classes in a liberal-democratic state when these classes teach basic civil laws that exclude groups or minorities and expel them from the general civil population. It does not matter whether this is done in an explicit and intended manner or if this is the interpretation of members of these groups and minorities.

Therefore, we can ask: What are the modes of action that are open to Civics teachers and other educators who are caught in this trap when trying to educate for solidarity?

As a reply to this question and by borrowing ideas from Michel Foucault's thought, this paper equips teachers with some guidelines for pedagogical resistance to the excluding wave, that enable strengthening an inclusive civil solidarity, and demonstrates the applicability of these guidelines in the Israeli reality.

Keywords: Solidarity; Resistance; exclusion; Nation Law; Foucault

**Opening Arguments**

The first three arguments that I will raise are simple and clear. I also believe that the logical person would accept them:

1. Solidarity between the citizens of a country is both good and desirable, and is especially important for countries in which the social, cultural, ethnic or religious connections between the citizens are characterized as loose connections (see, for example, Banting and Kymlicka, 2017; Putnam, 2007; Spinner-Halev, 2008).
2. Young people in society need to be educated to be good adult citizens, as people who are concerned about society and its needs, take part in the public effort to create solidarity, and are not satisfied with only fulfilling their selfish needs. We learned this lesson from John Stuart Mill, who stated:

[…] the peculiar training of a citizen, the practical part of the political education of a free people, taking them out of the narrow circle of personal and family selfishness, and accustoming them to the comprehension of joint interests, the management of joint concerns – habituating them to act from public or semi-public motives, and guide their conduct by aims which unite instead of isolating them from one another (Mill, [1859] 1993, p. 142).

If, indeed, solidarity is needed for safeguarding a country’s survival, the public educational institutions are the clear site of education for such civil solidarity. As Postman and Weingartner (1967, p. 107) stated:

The basic function of all education, even in the most traditional sense, is to increase the survival prospects of the group. If this function is fulfilled, the group survives. If not, it doesn't. There have been times when this function was not fulfilled, and groups (some of than we even call 'civilizations') disappeared.

1. Education for solidarity can take place in each of the content areas in schools; however, its natural place is in Civics lessons, as one of the Israeli Ministry of Education’s Civics textbooks proclaims:

…All of the students in Jewish, Arab and Druze high schools have the same Civics curriculum (in both the general and religious public schools). The goal is to create a common denominator for all of the students in the educational system, who will be adult citizens in the country (Ashkenazi et al., 2016, p.5)

**Education for What Kind of Solidarity?**

Banting and Kymlicka (2017, p.3) provide the most general definition of solidarity. It is the"[…] mutual acceptance, cooperation and mutual support in time of need," which is expressed in attitudes and motivations and practices or policies. In other words, solidarity is "Common attachment which is so strong as to create a ‘solid’ resistance to attack…Durkheim … used it to denote the internal forces of social cohesion" (Scruton, 2007, p. 652).

This general definition only provides a very wide framework: it allows for very diverse characteristics, perhaps even contradictory characteristics, of solidarity. The literature describes diverse characteristics and borders of the concept. These divisions influence the feasibility of education for civil solidarity in nations characterized by great diversity. In order to present my argument, I need to first sketch certain borders and to assemble the accepted characteristics of the concept into a framework that contains three groups.

The first group of the characteristics of solidarity, which I will call “solidarity that is either too narrow or too wide,” does not contribute to the advancement of civil solidarity in a country with a diverse population. This type of solidarity might be a virtue; however, it neither creates a national inclusive civil solidarity, nor does it have a place in Civics classes in public schools. The reason for the lack of civic contribution of this type of solidarity is that, on the one hand, it sketches the narrow boundaries of the narrow community solidarity, which excludes most of the people in the country, while, on the other hand, it draws a wide border, which includes and unites the large international community.   
 As a result, we should not expect that Civics classes in schools would educate for “mechanical solidarity,” as described by Emile Durkeheim ([1893, 1984). This solidarity exists, in a relative fashion, in small and intimate communities (Gemeinschaft, according to Ferdinand Tönnies), and the members are mutually dependent on one another.

Moreover, national civil solidarity will not develop in education for "affectional solidarity", which exists between people who know one another. The source of affectional solidarity is the intimate relationships of love and friendship, which produce connections of mutual care. The partners in intimate relationships of this sort expect one another to put their personal interests aside and to provide the physical and emotional needs of their partners. This is a primary and natural solidarity, and is directed toward certain people whom we know (Dean, 1995).

Moreover, we should not expect that education for “metaphysical solidarity,” to use Sagi’s (2018) term, which has human-universal characteristics, and is tied to Albert Camus’ philosophy, advances wide civil solidarity in a country comprised of diverse groups and communities. Metaphysical solidarity is characterized by a universal viewpoint that transcends the community of the “us” of the individual, and demands justice for all. It identifies with all who suffer, are oppressed, or who have been victims of injustice. It promotes an ethical-humanistic approach. However, on the political plane, it does not focus on any given country. Therefore, Civics classes do not focus on creating this type of solidarity among the students.

Furthermore, we would not expect that the public educational institution in a liberal-democratic society would focus on meta-national religious solidarity – Catholic or other – that wishes to create solidarity between all of the believers (Ilisko, 2016). Neither would we expect that it would promote trans-national solidarity, such as Marxism, which attempts to unite all of the working class, nor feminist solidarity, that looks to create bonds for a joint struggle of all women, wherever they might live, or any combination of the above (which combines feminist and theological solidarity; see, Welch, [1985], 2017).

I do not argue that the types of solidarity in the first group, whether they are located on the community pole or on the cosmopolitan pole, are unimportant and that we should not educate for their promotion. Rather, I argue that they do not promote national solidarity. Therefore, it is not the role of the public schools to educate for such solidarity and to try to instill such solidarity in Civics classes; perhaps they do not even have the ability to do so. (For an example of the lack of feasibility of education for patriotic-cosmopolitan solidarity in Israel, see Gusacov, 2019).

The second group of characteristics of solidarity can be termed “rational and analytic solidarity.” It is possible to outline the borders of this kind of solidarity in the wide nation for students in schools. If public schools adopted these characteristics, we could expect that the solidarity presented in Civics classes would be "realistic solidarity" (Sagi, 2018), which connects to Richard Rorty’s concept of solidarity. This type of solidarity connects members of communities – the “we” – and determines the borders of the community. While these borders might be somewhat permeable, ones that can be extended to some degree, this kind of solidarity clarifies who belongs to the community and who does not.

In a similar fashion, Durkheim coined the term "organic solidarity", which is a solidarity that is possible in wider society. According to Durkheim, its source is in the division of labor in society. The characteristics of this type of solidarity are often similar to "conventional solidarity", whose source lies in joint concern and interests. It is based on joint traditions and values that connect group members together. It creates a feeling of “us”, who together enter in a joint struggle or initiative. This kind of solidarity also draws the lines of the “I”, who needs to adhere to and be loyal to the norms and the values of the “we” group (Dean, 1995).

In this group, we find "democratic solidarity". According to Banting and Kymlicka (2017, p. 4), this is:

[…] characterized by support for basic human rights and equalities, such as the equality of men and women; support for the rule of law and for democratic norms and processes, including the need to advance reasoned positions in public debates, equal participation of citizens from all backgrounds, tolerance for the political expression of diverse cultural views consistent with basic rights and equalities, and acceptance of compromises among legitimate contending interests.

The idea of constitutional patriotism, as proposed by Habermas (1994), also aspires to create rational solidarity, which has a civil base, as opposed to a national or ethnic one. Education for a patriotic-constitutional solidarity attempts to establish political attachment that binds together the citizens of a country via values, principles, norms and regulations that connect to a liberal-democratic constitution. This kind of solidarity honors and safeguards the rules of universal justice, even in cases in which the citizens do not share traditions, history or a language.

The third group of characteristics of solidarity can be termed “dialogical solidarity”. Here, we find the spirit of liberal-humanistic thought, which gives preference to education for a “softer” solidarity that has less rigid borders. In this case, when there is inter-group conflict in a country, in which each group professes enthusiastic support for group loyalty, the sides are obligated to undertake a joint exploration of the differences between the groups. This investigation allows the sides to find the good or the just solution to the problem that divides them. In this way, dialogical solidarity is created, one that transcends ethnic, cultural, religious or national borders (Nanz, 2006).

This kind of dialogical solidarity is the result of people from different groups and communities living close to one another, sharing joint experiences, which are rooted in the same land. By entering into dialogue with one another, and by creating closeness, a new social reality is created. This reality creates a new and extended kind of “we-ness”, in which connections of solidarity can develop, including joint myths and ethos (Sagi, 2014). In this spirit, Judy Dean (1996, p. 3) defines reflective (and dialogical) solidarity, a solidarity that she supports:

[…] the mutual expectation of a responsible orientation to relationship. […] the risk of disagreement which accompanies diversity must be rationally transformed to provide a basis for our intersubjective ties and commitments.

According to Dean, we can reach solidarity that creates a wide and joint “we-ness”, if we reflect on the expectations and the desires of our group and of the other group, as well as on our arguments and disagreements. This will be possible if we adopt a third, hypothetical neutral point of view, the kind that reflects from the side. Reflective solidarity, of this sort, makes the borders of the community more flexible and larger; it considers others, even if they are strangers and different, and it combines another kind of “I” into the extended “we”.

If this is so, the two last groups of solidarity characteristics, “rational, analytical solidarity” and “dialogical solidarity,” attempt to create a solidarity that is relevant for connecting together a country’s citizens. Therefore, they have a place in Civics classes that educate for solidarity.

**Education for Solidarity and Exclusionary Nation Laws**

I do not intend to examine here which one of the last two groups of solidarity characteristics is more effective, ethical or deserving in any sense than the other. Instead, I will make an argument concerning their feasibility: it is impossible to educate for solidarity for all citizens in Civics classes in a liberal-democratic state when these classes teach basic civil laws that exclude groups or minorities and expel them from the general civil population. It does not matter whether this is done in an explicit and intended manner or if this is the interpretation of members of these groups and minorities.

Below I offer an example of such Israeli laws written in an exclusionary spirit, by describing the head-on collision between the “Nation Law” (Basic Law: Israel as the Nation State of the Jewish People) and the educational intent to create a comprehensive civil solidarity. However, it is important not to make the mistake of pointing to exclusionary laws and policies as a present-day Israeli invention.

In the latter part of the twentieth century, Zakaria (1997) coined the term “illiberal democracy”. This reflects a political system that is chosen by most of the citizens; however, its main commitment is not to liberal values, such as freedom of speech, freedom of becoming organized, or minority rights. Indeed, the spirit of laws that exclude minorities is also found in other countries and specifically in countries that define themselves (or act as if they were) illiberal democracies. These are countries that have a “thin” democratic character. They are governed by populist leaders who, while having been elected by most of the citizens, attack the independent institutions that were not elected.

For example, they attack the constitutional court – that is, the authority responsible for constitutional overseeing that has the authority to declare that a law is unconstitutional, and/or attack the media or the academic system. It will also often infringe on the rights of the minorities. Examples include Hungary, Romania, Turkey, Poland and Venezuela. These are countries in which the majority wants to determine which rights are to be given to minorities (see Cretan and Powell, 2018; Mounk, 2018). The way in which European countries’ constitutionally relate to minorities raises the political and ethical question if the EU countries should interfere in the internal legislation of countries that legislate exclusionary laws (Muller, 2015).

*The Israeli Nation Law*

Basic Law: Israel – The Nation State of the Jewish People, which is known as the “Nation Law”, was passed in the Israeli Knesset on June 19, 2018. This law has different and diverse implications, such as constitutional or political. However, here I will focus on examination of its ramifications on education for civil solidarity, which includes the members of all of the groups, communities and streams of Israeli citizens.

What does the law say?

According to the Nation Law, the Land of Israel is the historical homeland of the Jewish people, in which the State of Israel was established. The State of Israel is the nation of the Jewish people, in which the Jewish people can realize their natural, cultural, religious and historical rights of self-determination, and realization of the right to national self-definition in the State of Israel, which is unique to the Jewish people. The law defines the name of the country, its flag, symbols, anthem and its capital. The law states that the Jewish calendar is the official calendar, as well as the Gregorian calendar. The law sets Independence Day as a national holiday, Memorial Day for Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terrorism and Shoah Remembrance Day as official memorial days. Shabbat and the Jewish holidays are holidays in the country; for people who are not Jews, they have the right to observe their holidays and Sabbath.

The law states that Hebrew is the country’s language and that the language of Arabic has a special status. It declares that this change of status does not harm the prior status of Arabic.

The law further states that the country will be open to Jewish immigration from all the diaspora, that the nation will dedicate itself to the security of the Jewish people and its citizens who are in danger in their countries, either because they are Jews or because of their citizenship. The country will work in the diaspora to safeguard the affinity between the country and the Jewish people. Furthermore, the country will work for the preservation of the cultural, historical and religious legacy of the Jewish people in the diaspora. The law states that the country views development of Jewish settlements as a national value and that it will encourage the promotion, establishment and solidification of this type of settlement.

* + - * 1. The main theoretical background to support of the law.   
           Some supporters of the judicial need for the Basic Law are found in the theoretical-academic realm, as opposed to the political realm (see Bakshi’s opinion papers, 2013a;2013b; Bakshi and Sapir, 2013; Hazoni, 208; Vinizki and Sharf, 2017). These supporters aver that there is a need for a constitutional-like law that will cement the exclusive right of the Jewish people for self-determination in its country, and solidify the national-Jewish identity of the State of Israel. Their view asserts that there is need for the law since it can protect the founding principles of the country against future harm, even if these founding principles are being currently safeguarded.

Moreover, the supporters of the law wish to create a balance between the Jewish dimension of the state and its democratic dimension, especially concerning the balance between the Jewish dimension and the dimension of human rights. In their opinion, this balance was upset when the basic laws on human rights that had an essential democratic orientation were legislated (Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty and Basic Law: Freedom of Occupation) and no parallel Basic Laws were legislated that emphasize the Jewish identity of the nation.

The balance continued to be undermined – according to supporters of the law – due to the interpretation of rulings by the court that emphasized the democratic aspect (mainly, human rights) of the country and de-emphasized its Jewish character. In their opinion, the weakening of this balance was reflected, for example, in the rulings that weakened the status of the Hebrew language, about allocation of land that is designated for Jewish settlement, that limited the ability of the government to use a free hand to prevent infiltration into Israel, or the ruling concerning the citizenship law in Israel.

Bakshi and Sapir (2013) derive the justification of comparing the status of the right for a Jewish national state to the status of human rights in the country, not because of social demands or public needs, but rather, first and foremost, due to the right of the individual to live in a nation state. According to the authors, this right is derived from the right of the individual to live according to his/her culture, which can be realized only on the group level. The national framework is the framework that can protect this right to living according to one’s culture. For example, if the state can control the characteristics of immigration into its borders, it can control the cultural characteristics of the immigrants.

Therefore, the authors see importance of and justification for a Jewish nation state, as a state that protects the cultural rights of the Jewish majority, without harming the minority cultures in the country. Moreover, they justify the legal foundation of the Jewish nation state as reflecting the overall need of the country (a public need that no longer depends on the human rights of the individual) as an ethnic-cultural solidarity, which safeguards the civil solidarity in the country. As a result, it will safeguard the general good. Bakshi and Sapir assert that these justifications are general and directed toward all nation states.

However, Israel has a unique justification. This is the justification that derives from security needs, whose source is in the persecutions of the Jewish people throughout the generations, because of their Jewishness. In specific, the supporters see the present and immediate need for such a law in light of what they perceive as the intensification of deligitimization of the State of Israel.

According to these supporters, their declared intention is not to give legal preference to the particular Jewish aspect of the state, but rather to have the Jewish status equal the universal democratic aspect. The supporters point to the values that appear in the Declaration of Independence – the foundation values of the Jewish democratic state – as supporters of the spirit of the law.

* + - * 1. The Main Objections to the Law:   
           The opponents of the version of the Basic Law (who are found in the theoretical-academic space and not in the political space; see, for example, position papers by Gavison, 2014; Jabareen, 2016; Jamal, 2016; Kedar, 2015; Kremnitzer and Fuchs, 2019; Marmur, 2018) do not have a uniform stance. However, they aver that the law does not contribute to the balance between the democratic and Jewish sides of the Israeli equation, as the supporters claim, but actually undermines the fragile equilibrium that existed until the law was passed.

In their opinion, the law reflects alienation and an intent to exclude the Arab citizens of the country. In fact, it declares that Israel is the home of every Jew in the world, but it does not declare that it is the home of all the Arab citizens. For example, they assert that exclusion rooted in law clearly harms the status of the Arabic language as an official language, a status that was determined, in their opinion, during the British Mandate period, and that was ratified in different court rulings.

A stance of some of the opponents of the law is that it would have been appropriate to express the Jewish character of the state, as the nation state of the Jewish people, while simultaneously giving validity and content to the fact that Israel is a democracy. It would have been fitting to acknowledge the values of equality and fairness in relation to its citizens who are not Jews, and the human rights of all citizens. Therefore, they ask to strike a balance between the particular and universal principles that appear in the country’s laws.

Jabareen (2016) criticizes the law since, in his opinion, it reflects formal discrimination that harms the status of the Arab citizens, on the symbolic level, as well as on the practical-legal level. (I will not deal here with his additional criticism that attacks the law via international values of law, which do not directly connect to the issue of solidarity) According to Jabareen:

The sense of belonging of the Arab citizens has been mortally wounded as a result of this legal definition. They become citizens of the country that announces in its basic legal norms that this is not their national home… it turns them into strangers in their homeland (pg. 152).

Jabareen also protests that the law does not mention the principle of equality of the citizens in a country. I will mention that his words were written in response to an early version of the law, which still contained the decision that:

…the state of Israel is a democratic state, based on the foundations of liberty, justice and peace, based on the vision of the prophets in Israel and it fulfils the individual rights of all of its citizens, according to law.

This assertion was deleted from the final version. As a result, there is no mention in the law that Israel is a democratic country and that it, does indeed: “fulfil the individual rights of all of its citizens.”

It is possible to summarize the essence of the opposition, from all opponents, to the law as reflecting “rejection of Israel’s official status; that is, of republican affinity, which connects the Israelis in civil democratic society to one another, in spite of their differences in culture (Kedar, 2015, p. 65).

**Rights Discourse and Identity Discourse**

Before I examine the legal ramifications of these discourses on the teacher educating for Israeli solidarity, I present Sagi’s (2018) conceptualizations of a discourse for rights and a discourse for identity, which is the platform for this exploration.

The rights’ discourse focuses on interests (of the individual or the group) and the encounter with the other (the individual or the group). This discourse solely occurs through the prism of realization of the interest. The only dialogue between the sides is a discourse about needs and interests. This differs from dialogue in which there are two equal sides and both sides approach one another for such a dialogue. Furthermore, during true dialogue, the sides might change, coming out of the dialogue differently than the way they entered it.

In contrast, in a discourse on rights, there is a side that is suing for its rights and a side that is being sued for denial of these rights. The language of the rights discourse is legal language. An issue, which has been discussed in the framework of a discourse of rights, might end in a judicial decision for one of the sides. As Charles Taylor (1991, p. 116) stated:

Judicial decisions are usually winner-take-all; either you win or you lose. In particular, judicial decisions about rights tend to be conceived as all-or-nothing matters. The very concept of a right seems to call for integral satisfaction, if it's a right at all; and if not, then nothing.

This stands in contrast to a different kind of discourse, a discourse on identity, which aims to reach social consensus and not necessarily a verdict. The discourse on rights safeguards and even strengthens the clear borders of the involved identities and contributes to the alienation between the sides and to the entrenchment of the walls that separate them. Dialogue, on the other hand, allows for flexibility of the identity borders. The discourse on rights, which is a legal-judicial discourse, is a general discourse. It does not relate to the uniqueness of each situation. In this way, it does indeed form the foundation upon which social life depends. However, it is not the voice of social life that makes dialogue, inter-group connections, and intercultural concern possible.

In comparison, the discourse of identity is a dialogical discourse in which the sides do not view one another as fixed objects that are incapable of change. As a result, they do not see themselves as unchangeable. In a discourse of identity, each side reflects on the total uniqueness and complexity of the other side and does not reduce the other side to pre-determined categories or traits. In this way, it is possible to reflect on the uniqueness of the other and not engage in overall or predetermined reflection of the other, as characteristic in the discourse of rights. In a discourse of identity, there is real communication and openness between the sides that relinquishes holding onto prejudices, and makes changes in identities in both sides possible.

The ‘Nation State Law’ is a clear case of a discourse on rights. It worked toward enacting an armored Basic Law. That is, this is a law that can only be overturned by a majority of 61 Knesset members, which serves the interests of the majority group in the country. The law does not use language reminiscent at all of dialogue or a discourse of identity, in which one side sees the other side, or its needs. It is not written in a language that is capable of reflection concerning self-identity. The Jewish majority demands its rights, and the burden of the obligation to realize these rights is placed on the country, in a direct manner, and on the minority group, in an indirect manner.

**Disagreement and Resistance**

The Jewish-Israeli Civics teacher, who holds a democratic-worldview, and her friend, a Palestinian-Israeli teacher, who holds the same worldview, are caught in a bind. On the one hand, it is their job to educate for solidarity, and they try to join together the brother/sisterhood of citizenship with citizens of the country. They emphasize citizens’ rights in their classes that limit the “tyranny of the majority,” using Tocqueville’s terminology, in order to wave the flag of equality in these classrooms. On the other hand, however, they are required to teach the country’s main laws that are the interest of every citizen. At times, as in the case of the Nation State Law, described above (or the laws/proposals, such as loyalty in culture, or the Nakba law – see Hostovsky Brandes, 2017, for the legal aspects) collide with their liberal-democratic worldview, which looks for ways to join together solidarity with members of the majority and the minority.

Therefore, we can ask: What are the modes of action that are open to these two teachers, and to the other teachers, who are caught in this trap when trying to educate for solidarity?

Solidarity neither spontaneously nor naturally appears from economic or social processes. Instead, it is submerged or crushed in political action (Banting and Kymlicka, 2017). These educators can work within the spirit of the passage, “live up to one’s principles.” Teachers who educate for political involvement will adopt political-educational action of resistance – social resistance that aims to change society and to turn it into a society characterized by solidarity – and ethical resistance – which resists exclusion and the decrease in status of citizens who belong to the minority in the country.

Due to space limitations, I am unable to discuss the numerous aspects of resistance, in general, and of the teacher, in specific. In my opinion, this resistance is an integral part of the teachers’ mission, due to their role and professionalism (see, for example, Gunzenhauser, 2007). This is especially true of Civics teachers. I will briefly present here a number of directions of resistance, which can be adopted by liberal-democratic Civics teachers, who support solidarity between all the groups of citizens, and work for its education. I will do this by using some of Michel Foucault’s ideas about resistance.

One could wonder how Foucault, who emphasized the importance of “care for the self,” can contribute to resistance that attempts to advance the idea of solidarity with others. Foucault pointed to “care of the self” as reflecting an ethical directive directed toward the individual in order that s/he will care for her/himself, will mold her/himself and create meaning for her/himself (Foucault, 1997, pp. 281-301). Indeed, Foucault thought that “care for the self,” had ontological preference over care for the other. I will be able to use this concept since, in my opinion, this care for self is what eventually leads to care for all. And the same care for all citizens is what interested the Greco-Roman society, from which Foucault borrowed the idea of care for the self, and he did not give up on the connection and solidarity with all:

No one governs oneself in isolation, but always in relation to others, in social life. Governing is relating with others; the government of the self itself is built in relationship with others (Gallo, 2017, p. 692).

Foucault even personally expressed care for the other in his biography: he took part in a group that worked for prisoners’ rights. Because of these actions, the prisoners were awarded longer visitation rights and cleaner lavatories in the prisons (Foucault, 1977). He further demonstrated solidarity with the Iranian people and supported Khomeini’s revolution (Afari and Anerson, 2005). As is well known, power is the main idea in Foucault’s thinking, and it is found everywhere: "[…] this enigmatic thing which we call power, which is at once visible and invisible, present and hidden, ubiquitous" (Foucault, 1980, p. 213). According to Foucault, resistance to power, even if it is the power of the state, is inevitable. It is as if resistance is part of the necessary physical mechanism: “Where there is power, there is resistance” (Foucault, 1990, p. 42).

In spite of the power that normalizes the state, and in spite of the power of the controlling system that controls everything, there is still (necessarily) a space of freedom for resistance to power (Foucault, 1987, p. 13).

This is space, in which the teacher can act. Indeed, according to Foucault, it is impossible to be liberated from power relations. However, he is referring to non-liberation from abstract power relations and not from concrete power relations. These concrete power relations are found when the state undermines the absolute equality of all of its citizens.

Kant outlined a transcendental border from which our consciousness and, as a result, our critique as well, can never deviate. Two hundred years later, Foucault attempted to dissolve this allegedly unbreachable border of what is given to us as necessary, universal, obligatory (and in the example here – the necessity of a constitutional law). He pointed out that these are arbitrary limitations that actually work on the singular and the contingent cases, which are preventable: "The point in brief is to transform the critique conducted in the form of necessary limitation into a practical critique that takes the form of a possible transgression" (Foucault, 1984, p. 45(. Postman and Weingartner (1969, p. 194) emphasized that when a teacher engages in measures of resistance and deviance, which aim to undermine the official stance of the state’s institutions, she is taking a risk: "In the end, it all may cost you your job, or lead you to seek another position, or drive you out of reaching altogether. Subversion is a risky business - as risky for its agent as for its target." However, as critical pedagogy directs us, the teachers who are worthy are those teachers who are transformative intellectuals, who educate students to be active, critical citizens (Giroux 1988), who change reality. Those who do so are taking a risk.

The teacher in the public school does not need to resist in a confrontational manner with the curriculum authority; she can act in a subversive manner (Postman and Weingartner, 1969). She can engage in daily subversive acts such as not using the official textbook, while emphasizing the sides of civil solidarity, such as those that appear in the Israeli Declaration of Independence or in the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty. Furthermore, she can oppose instructions that do not pass the test of critical thinking, and in wake of this criticism, in certain cases, she can also publicly oppose these instructions. Here, I am not only referring to unique teachers: resistance is not unique to great people. All people can rebel and, in this way, live the subjective life they choose (Foucault, [1979], 1994).

According to Foucault, the teacher’s resistance can occur in the existing system and work from within, against two expressions of power. It can serve as resistance to the power of the discipline, against those who act upon knowledge and normalize the exploration of knowledge in a direct manner. This is power that prefers results of research that are defined in a narrow manner, one that matches the existing structure of knowledge. The second way is by resisting bio-power, which acts upon knowledge and normalizes investigation of knowledge in an indirect manner, by evaluating and awarding remuneration for exploration that fits the group norms (Mourad, 2018, p. 337).

The teacher can actually resist by using a Foucauldian method of genealogy as a method of teaching/learning in the classroom about the topic of solidarity and minority rights. A precondition for genealogical investigation is understanding that the laws and their “truth-ness” is not a natural occurrence, but rather a human creation. Therefore, the exploration seek out the power that is found in all human interaction, which determines the “truth”. The classroom exploration will demonstrate how the political power system guided the Israeli Knesset to legislate the Nation State Law. The genealogical research, in the spirit of Foucault, is not a history lesson – it does not focus on learning about the past, but rather about evaluating the present, as it locates and analyzes present-day power/knowledge relations and clarifies for the students the concepts of rupture and continuity. The class research will point to the disconnection between the country’s present-day legislation and the Declaration of Independence that called for solidarity and inclusion of all of the communities that are part of the Israeli “togetherness.”

During the acts of educational resistance, the teacher will expose the power aspects of the educational system and the power aspects that determine the Civics curriculum. She will clarify that people, with personal and political ideologies and interests, determine these aspects, including the number of hours dedicated to the subject. Therefore, the decisions about these factors are partially based on randomness, opportunity and arbitrariness. As a result, it is possible to undercut their decisions and even discuss the changes and the change in their status. Calling authoritative, governmental institutional decisions into question differs from expressing resistance in the world. This is not resistance for the sake of resistance, but rather aims to advance the students’ interests. It is also enacted in order to arouse counter-thinking from all those who engage in education in schools – as well as outside of the schools.

The teachers who act in this spirit need to develop their students’ ability to be critical. And, indeed, Foucault perceived the real political function as being critical toward the actions of institutions. This uncovers their violence, their political views and their lack of independence (Chomsky and Foucault, 1971). The teachers need to help their students see the possibilities they have for engaging in resistance. This encourages change and potential deviation from acceptance of the education and social spirit of the day, and from becoming part of a closed and excluding community. This helps them become somebody else, a person who can choose solidarity and enlarge the borders of her/his community, making them more flexible.

The teacher who engages in resistance can choose to teach texts that promote solidarity and civil equality in her classroom. She can use texts from different archives and not necessarily texts from the official and exclusionary curriculum. She can, for example, choose to use texts in the classroom that emphasize liberal values and that describe partnerships between Jewish and Arab citizens of the country. Examples include texts written by the founders of right-secular thought in Israel, such as Ze’ev Jabotinsky (see Kremnitzer and Fuchs, 2013; Naor, 2004). The teacher can choose her mode of resistance and the degree to which she wishes to deviate from the curriculum. After all, the curriculum, and the other processes, which aim to supervise and to limit the discourse in the classroom and in society, in general, have their roots in the outside (for example, they come from the Israeli Ministry of Education) and they serve as a system of exclusion (Foucault, 1972, pp. 216-220). These are not unique to the Israeli case, as can be seen in Foucault’s assumptions: "Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it" (1972, p. 227).

The resistant teacher can establish learning which brings together Civics lessons with joint social action of students from the majority ethnic group and students from the minority ethnic group. School principals from the Jewish-Israeli sector can hire teachers who come from the Palestinian-Israeli sector, not only for teaching Arabic (see examples described by Saada and Gross, 2019), but rather in all content areas. The principals can recruit the teachers for this process and neutralize possible objections voiced by the students by personally visiting the classrooms during these activities. Principals in the schools in the Arab sector can encourage solidarity by hiring Jewish teachers for their schools.

In summation, I believe that acts of resistance, such as the ones described above, are legitimate acts, since they aim “to make changes from within,” while not aiming to destroy the system. Furthermore, these acts of resistance are not negative forces in education, in the wide sense. They can help safeguard the essentiality and vitality of the system and its institutions, since these systems will be forced to engage in repeated self-examination. Finally, when students enter into dialogue with their teachers, as I suggest here, this might help the students move toward increased solidarity and less exclusion.

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