

A vision for Democratic Education as part of the movement for Democracy in Israel/Palestine and worldwide

It has been almost two years since I spoke at IDEC 2006, my last formal encounter with Democratic Education. In my talk at the conference I discussed the history of the state of Israel from the beginning of the Zionist movement until today. Using a PowerPoint presentation I outlined the effect of the Zionist movement on our land, emphasizing the current realities of occupation, discrimination and racial separation which are enforced by the Israeli authorities upon the Jewish and Palestinian populations of the land. I then discussed some of the grass roots education and activist projects which I have taken part in over the last few years such as seminars for youth who are contemplating their army service, joint (Palestinian-Israeli-International) protest against the Israeli built separation wall, support groups for young Conscientious Objectors, alternative summer camps for youth and others. After the first part of the talk I had the chance to answer some questions by the other participants in the conference and later I had a chance also to talk to some of them in private as well.

Many of these conversations have been rolling around in my head since then and for some time I have wanted to write a follow up to my talk which will detail a grander vision for Democratic education as a force for a comprehensive Democratic transformation of our country and the world. I have finally been able to complete this piece of writing, which I now offer to my friends and teachers in the Democratic Education community in Israel and worldwide. In This article I will examine how insights I have gained from my work for social justice can be applied in the thoughts and practices of Democratic educators in Israel and worldwide.

Before I do so, though, and in order to put things in perspective, I would like to highlight my experiences with Democratic Education as well as state my limitations in the field: I was brought up in the traditional Israeli school system having achieved, in the end, a diploma with good grades but little else. I then spent two years in the Israeli army (the first year and a half as a soldier teacher and the last six months as a Conscientious Objector) where I encountered a very Authoritarian system which can hardly be considered a Democratic institution. Since my dismissal from the army I have been involved in grassroots activism for peace, using democratic methods and principles. Nevertheless my first serious encounter with Democratic education methods and thought came when I enrolled to study Democratic Education at the Kibbutzim Teacher's College in Tel Aviv. During my one, and only, study year at the college I was exposed to different streams of thought in Democratic Education, as well as spending one day a week for the entire school-year at a Democratic School in Jerusalem. I left the Teacher's training program after a year and for the last year and a half I have been studying classical Middle Eastern music at the Academy for Middle Eastern Music in Jerusalem where I am also running a program to promote Middle Eastern culture in Israel. Thus my formal experience in Democratic Education is quite limited and I am hardly an expert in the field. Nevertheless I believe that the insights I have gained in this limited time are of some value and that is why it is important for me to share them with you.

For this I shall return to my talk at the 2006 IDEC conference: My talk was given only a few days before the outbreak of war between the state of Israel and Hizbolah, the Lebanese guerilla group. This war, and the great devastation it brought, was deeply troubling me at this time. Through my participation in the conference I had the opportunity to share this pain with some of my fellow democratic Educators. In these conversations I was often quite baffled by the lack of connection that people made between democracy, education and the wars and other injustice that were raging in Lebanon and elsewhere around the world. I found, amongst both my Israeli and International friends, a lack of vision for the role that Democratic Education could have in preventing such catastrophe from happening. I had shared this sentiment with an Australian colleague in a personal conversation to which she replied that "I have never thought of democracy in this way before" (as related to preventing wars and injustice). "Then what is democracy and Democratic education all about,?" I thought to myself.

It is my conviction that Democratic education is there exactly to tackle these questions and to reduce, prevent and eliminate war and injustice by encouraging and facilitating dialogue, understanding and compromise. As I see it, war is a process of violent subjugation, in which one person's will (through violent force) is imposed on another. This I believe to be completely contrary to the principles and aims of democracy in which actions are taken through agreement and achieved through a comprehensive process of dialogue. I therefore conclude that war and democracy are incompatible with one another and where there is war true democracy cannot be present.

Conscripting our youth

In Israeli society there is a deep seeded belief that war is something that is unavoidable and inevitable. The state of Israel was founded through violent conquest and has endured a steady barrage of war and conflict since its creation sixty years ago. In this reality the use of armed force seems of the outmost necessity to most Israelis. Hence, much of the society's resources and energy is directed towards building and maintaining a strong military presence which most Israelis view as the only way to ensure their personal safety. This effort includes a comprehensive conscription system that is meant to ensure that Jewish males (three years) and females (two years) complete their mandatory army service. As our work as democratic educators usually focuses on youth I find this issue to be of great importance and shall hence seek to describe its importance at some length.

Ensuring this conscription is one of the primary goals In the Israeli school systems. This education includes the formal education system (including Democratic schools) as well as the informal systems such as television, advertisements, youth groups, sports clubs and others. Through these bodies militarist education is shaped and takes on many different forms such as pre-military preparation courses, soldiers who come and speak to students in their classes, constant advertising for the army, soldier teachers and army liaisons stationed at schools, ultra popular army radio stations playing pop music and promoting nationalistic ideas, special "army units days" at schools and many many others. Also, it is noteworthy to state that many Israeli schools are run by ex-army officers, of which many have no prior training in education, and that the vast majority of teachers and staff are former soldiers. These facts amount to a constant

presence of the military within in Israeli schools and other education systems and in the day-to-day lives of Israel's youth.

Despite this, over the last 20 or so years the number of youth who choose to complete their military service is on a steady decline. It is estimated that approximately 50 percent of Israeli youth will not complete their army service (if you include Palestinian and Orthodox Jewish citizens who are not conscripted by law). This greatly undermines the concept of a "people's army" and a source of great concern to the social and military elite of Israel. Another great source of concern is the growing movement of young Israeli Conscientious Objectors, high school youth who have declared their refusal to serve in the Israeli army. Through their refusal to enlist these youth have highlighted many important injustices within our society such as the desolate condition of Palestinians living under Israeli military occupation, the sexual oppression of woman through the army system, and the social, economical and racial oppression which is strengthened and enforced by the Israeli military system.

Nevertheless, we can clearly see that the great efforts made to ensure conscription amongst Israeli youth does not go without bearing fruits. Over the last 60 years of its existence the majority of Israel's Jewish Males and Females have joined the armed forces providing Israel with the highest percentage of military trained personal in the world. This extreme militarism of society creates an atmosphere in which violent action is deemed acceptable and necessary while obedience to one's country takes precedence above almost all else. It is my belief, as well as the belief of many others, that this system of militarization is in direct contrast with the values and principles of democracy and creates a very dangerous and volatile foundation on which Israeli society rests.

So what kind of system are we encouraging and forcing our children to join?

The basic wage for an Israeli is 300 NIS a month (about \$75) a salary which soldiers cannot, obviously, negotiate. Soldiers are told where to be and when, often confining him or her to small spaces like army bases, guard towers, prison cells and others for long periods of time. Soldiers cannot normally express their opinions nor their wills or desires, freely, without the fear of being severely punished for it. They also do not have a chance to take part, freely and equally, in the decision making process as final decisions are made by their commanding officers and refusing them is a grave offence. Additionally, soldiers are often put at physical risk or ordered to put others at physical risk. Lastly, serving soldiers cannot leave their position and resign, which is perhaps the most oppressive of conditions as it reduces their position to one similar to that of a modern slave. All these aforementioned facts, true for all armies, are a violation of the most basic democratic and human rights like the right of movement, commerce, free speech, participation in decision making, and the right to preserve the wholeness of one's body and the bodies of others.

Moreover, the suffering of soldiers extends far beyond the way they are handled and treated by the military. Being part of an occupying army, responsible for enforcing military rule and siege over 5 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza strip, soldiers following military orders shall daily commit and/or be exposed to, terrible acts of forceful oppression. These will include executions, beatings, mass arrests, forceful interrogations, house demolitions, curfews,

closures, blockades and other harsh restrictions which are imposed daily on the Palestinian population. As soldiers in an occupying army they are also subjected to the (often violent) resistance of the occupied population, putting both their physical and mental health in grave danger. This aforementioned situation has the most devastating effect on one's soul and it is something that young Israeli soldiers (especially young males) carry with them for their entire lives. Naturally, the young soldier's suffering does not remain solely with them, but is rather channeled directly into society adding to our collective sense of violence, fear and insecurity.

Can we honestly say that this system, into which young Israelis are forced, is in accordance with the values and principles that we aspire to as Democratic educators?

This question I brought with me to my studies at the Democratic institute and to which I received mixed answers. I shall give a few examples to illustrate this: In the beginning of our study year at the Democratic education we were taken on tours of Democratic schools. These tours were meant to provide us with an encounter with different ways in which Democratic Education principles were practiced by various institutions. In at least two schools where we were visiting the question of army service was raised, "Do pupils from your school go to the army"? We asked the principals of the schools. In both cases the Principal of the school was quick to point out that their school was up to par with traditional schools in percentage of those conscripting to the army. These principals saw this as a worthwhile achievement worthy of our praise and acknowledgment.

I had also, during the course of my studies, raised the Issue of conscription with Yaakov Hecht, one of the founders of democratic education in Israel, during one of his lectures, asking him "how can students of a democratic school be encouraged to join a totalitarian (by all measurements known to me) system such as the army?" he replied that he saw the undemocratic nature of the army as necessary and that in his opinion it often has an empowering effect on young people. From his answer I understood that he did not see the innate conflict between the army system and democratic system same as I saw them. I have also had the opportunity to interview a friend that is part of the founding group of the newly established Democratic school in the underprivileged neighborhood of Giva'at Olga. In this school, similar to the others, the issue of military service is not formerly addressed in a critical way despite the fact that many of the staff members are themselves Conscientious Objectors. This goes to show how deeply ingrained and taboo this issue still is within both the democratic and traditional school systems.

It is my strongest conviction that the issue of army service needs to be addressed critically within the Democratic education system. I believe that by encouraging our youth to conscript we are taking years of democratic education, in which we allowed and encouraged our youth to partake in the democratic ideal, and flushing them down the drain. During their three years in the army our youth are taught, using great pressure, to enforce a totalitarian system on themselves and on others. These intensive 3 years are many times worth a lifetime of formal education and establish, within our youth and society, the foundation for a totalitarian society based on authority, subjugation and fear and devoid of real dialogue and freedom. It is my opinion that, at the very least, we should allow and encourage our youth to make a real choice

about their army service, exposing them to the pros and cons of being a soldier and engaging them, as well as ourselves, in vibrant and fruitful dialogue on the matter. By blindly encouraging and forcing our youth to enlist we are robbing them of their fundamental right to choose, a right which is at the core of any democratic system.

In this spirit, it is noteworthy to state that some headway is being made on the issue of conscription within democratic education institutions. At the democratic Institute, where I studied, many of the students were conscientious objectors such as me. Far from being silenced in the community discussions our position was respected and we were encouraged to express it freely. It is also encouraging to see military objectors being accepted as teachers in many Democratic schools without their refusal to serve being a deterrent. These encouraging signs give me hope that in the future there will be much more critical and vibrant discussion and dialogue within Democratic schools, and society at large, about the role of the army within our society and the effects of it on the Israeli and Palestinian population. Still, and as stated at length above, we have a long road ahead of us before this is achieved.

Democracy for All

A second task I see before me as someone who seeks to be a practitioner of Democratic Education is clarifying, within Democratic Education Institutions as well as Israeli society, the true meaning of democracy. Democracy, as I see it, is a set of tools (philosophical and practical) meant to ensure freedom and equality for all: Children, adults, women, men, black, white, brown, yellow, resident, immigrant, handicapped and healthy. This concept is far from clear in most democratic societies and even when it is agreed upon, it often fails in practice (as in Europe and the United States). Our Israeli society is a unique case of a society with democratic aspirations which is built upon an undemocratic foundation that provide special privileges for one group (Jews) over other groups (non-Jews, the majority of whom are Palestinian). This discrimination has its historical roots in the discrimination that Jews faced in Europe (and to a much lesser degree in the Middle East), which made many Jews believe that in order for them to feel safe and secure they need their own state where they would enjoy special privilege and be fully in control. To achieve these aims the state of Israel was established and is now a Jewish-Democratic state which means, in practice, that only those who are Jewish enjoy full Democratic rights and privileges while non-Jews do not, for the most part, enjoy these same rights.

These special privileges include an immigration policy which automatically grants citizenship to those of Jewish origin (while making it very hard to impossible for non-Jews to attain), a policy of land control meant to ensure that maximum land remain under "Jewish" control (no new settlements for non Jews, outside a few Bedouin townships, have been established since the founding of the state and it is almost impossible for non Jewish residents to acquire land), increased funding to Jewish schools and religious institutions, and many others. These are only a few examples of the many formal and informal ways in which discrimination exists in Israel. Possibly the most graphic and severe of these discriminations can be witnessed in the occupied West Bank where half a million Jewish Israeli settlers live amongst 3.5 million Palestinians. Here, the difference between the special privileges enjoyed by the Jewish settlers compared

with the extreme hardships of the Palestinian population living under military occupation is so stark that it is difficult to believe that they are, in fact, living side by side.

The system of discrimination in Israel is deeply rooted not only in law and practice but also in public opinion where a recent poll by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel found that that 75% of Jews in Israel will not live next to an Arab, %61 will not host an Arab friend in their home, %55 want places of leisure to be segregated and %51 would like the state to encourage its Arab citizens to leave. One cannot exclude the education system from the responsibility for these most troubling figures and may even see it as primarily responsible for such disturbing positions being so widespread in Israeli public opinion. In the state funded education system racist ideas and ideals are common place. Within the standard Israeli history, taught amongst high-school students, the existence of the Palestinian people is hardly ever mentioned, though they compose 20 percent of Israel's population and half of the people living under the control of the Israeli government, between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

The way in which the history of the land is taught makes it seem as if Zionist settlers came from Europe to an empty and desolate land which they made flourish and on which they created the Jewish State. Only a few sentences in our history books describe the existence of a Palestinian people on the land prior to the establishment of the state. In the few cases they are mentioned it is usually in the context of violent activities while there is little mention of their population, geography, history, culture, heritage or national aspirations. The same can be said for the history, culture, religion and heritage of Jews from the Middle East, whom compromise half of the Jewish population in Israel, and for most other marginalized groups in Israel. Recently composed education books which have tried to present small pieces of the Palestinian historical narrative have been banned by the education ministry and have not been used in the education system. Hence, Israeli "history" as it is taught, is really the history of the Jewish European settler movement known as Zionism, and of very little else resulting in the fact that the official narrative taught in Israeli schools excludes the stories of most of its citizens.

The situation in Democratic schools, though I have not been able to thoroughly research it, seems to be a little bit better than in traditional schools. Some of the democratic schools offer courses where bits of alternative history do appear. Some, like the school in Kfar Saba, also offer more critical historical lessons where histories of social struggle and protest are taught. At the Democratic institute there was one mandatory course for history students about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict for first year students. The course tried to be balanced and fair and the lecturer did his best to offer the students a taste of the Palestinian Narrative. There was also, in that same year, an optional course about the "different" voices in Israeli society which aimed to introduce students to the voices coming from marginal communities inside Israeli society. These were unique opportunities for students to come into contact with information and approaches which are quite different to the common-place understandings in Israeli society and these opportunities created new and exciting dialogue amongst the students and staff at the institution.

Nevertheless my feeling is that both at the democratic institute and at democratic schools these efforts are still at the side, rather than front- stage. I think this is especially true for the

Democratic schools, where educators feel that raising such issues may put them in personal conflict with the parents, principals, or ministry of Education, leaving them with a difficult responsibility they are unwilling or unable to handle. This is evident, for example, at the Olga Democratic school, set up by the students at the institute where, according to staff, the issue of racial discrimination in Israel has not been raised in a serious way within the school and amongst students, though many of the school's students suffer from it daily. It may feel "safer" for us to discuss the effects of discrimination in Israel and the possible dismantling of Jewish privilege at the Democratic institute, but these discussions are of only limited value if they are not transferred on to the world outside of campus. Our relative Academic freedom must be translated into real freedom otherwise it remains simply, well, academic.

It is my opinion that it is time for us, as Jews in Israel, to let go of our fear of extermination, and understand that our existence as a people and as individuals shall not and cannot be secured through unjust discrimination, oppression and privilege. I believe that our survival as a Jewish people, as the survival of the entire world's people, can only be secured through the creation of systems where all living beings, regardless of their differences, can live freely as equals. Hence, I see it as one of the major tasks of Democratic schools and institutions to take a clear position in this matter, and I think that as institutions dedicated to promoting democratic values and practices they are in a good position to do so. The institutionalized discrimination of non Jews as well as large portions of the Jewish population in Israel should be a central theme in the Israeli Democratic system and should remain so until this discrimination is a part of history.

Becoming part of the Middle East

Democracy, as I understand it, and as is often stressed in Democratic Education, is expressed through dialogue. The deeper the dialogue between individuals and groups, the more they are able to reach understandings and further their common goals. The better the dialogue is, the more a democratic society can flourish and the more freedom its individual members experience. If we look at culture (in all its expressions) as a sort of language, as a way in which people communicate between themselves, then we will see some clear courses of action to be taken by Democratic Educators in Israel/Palestine.

The issue of cultural discrimination is an issue that, unlike the first two mentioned, is very seldom thoroughly discussed within Israeli society but is nevertheless (and possibly exactly because of this) an important and crucial one. Israel, as a state and society which was founded by Jewish European settlers has historically sought to connect and align itself with the European and American "West" and impose the culture and values of these places within the Middle East. There is nothing inherently wrong with the aspirations of the Jewish European settlers, of which I am a descendent, to express their (Eastern and Western) European culture and heritage but what makes this desire, and actions related to it, oppressive and of negative consequence is the imposition of this culture on the majority of the Israeli and Palestinian population (Jewish, Christian and Muslim) which is not of European origin and has a different, Middle Eastern, culture and heritage. This imposition of culture can be seen in all spheres of society: Language, music, arts, theater, religion, agriculture, history, heritage etc. Middle Eastern culture in Israel is

very much marginalized in favor of European culture despite the fact that Israel is in the heart of the Middle East.

We shall use a few examples to illustrate this:

Most people living in Israel (Jews, Christians, Muslims and others) come from the Arabic world and their (or their parent's and grandparent's) native tongue is Arabic. Despite this, and for reasons stated above, the Arabic language is very much marginalized within Israeli culture. Jewish youth in Israel, in the formal system, will study Arabic (in its written form) for, only, up to three years and the minority of those who will continue to study Arabic will quite often do so in order to be recruited to Israeli Intelligence (spying) units. Nowadays even this very limited introduction to the Arabic language is under threat of being discontinued by the state. The consequence of the lack of Arabic training is that the vast majority of Israeli youth will grow up knowing Arabic neither in its formal written form, nor in its spoken form. So even though Arabic is the second official language in Israel, recognized as such by the state, in practice it does not have much of a place within Jewish Israeli society. This creates a great barrier for dialogue between Jewish Israeli society and both Arab Israeli society and our Arabic speaking neighbors in the Middle East.

The situation in democratic schools as far as the Arabic language is concerned, is not significantly better and possibly even worse than traditional schools. Currently, the Arabic language is taught in all of the Democratic schools that I checked as an optional course but nevertheless the percentage of Arab speaking students (over a quarter of total students in Israel) in democratic schools is miniscule. Same goes for Arabic speaking teachers who are also just a tiny percentage of staff in Democratic schools. In the entire program for Democratic education at the Kibbutzim College, where I studied, there were no native Arabic speakers as teachers and only a handful of Arab students. The same goes for the Democratic school in Jerusalem, a city in which third of the population is Palestinian Arab, where there was no Arab staff and only one Arab-Christian student. This creates an environment where the Arabic language (the central language for dialogue in our region) has almost no place inside Democratic schools and institutions.

Some effort is being made to address this issue within democratic institutions. There are efforts being made to encourage Palestinian citizens to enroll in the Democratic Education program at the Kibbutzim collage. There is also some contacts being established between the Democratic Institute and Arab schools in Israel as well as there being one semi integrated democratic school in Jaffa with a minority of Arab students. I believe that the success of the democratic education movement in Israel depends on the success it has in integrating Democratic schools and making them accessible to Arab students while establishing the Arabic language as an Equal to Hebrew within the schools and Institutions. This is a key for true dialogue to happen in Israel and between Israeli society and its Middle Eastern neighbors, which also makes it a precondition for real peace and democracy to be possible in the Middle East.

Another good example of the neglect of Middle Eastern culture in Israel is music. Middle Eastern music, though it shares some common ground with European ("Western") music, is also very different from it in many ways. This includes the different Arabic scales (the "Maqamat"

which include quarter tones), the different rhythms which are often uneven (divided into 7s, 9s, 11s etc.), and poetic forms (like the “Mawashachat” of Andalusia and others). These make Arabic and other Middle Eastern musical cultures very unique and precious, containing a rich and important history and repertoire. The musical culture of the Middle East is, hence, a very worthwhile and important tool for dialogue serving to connect the peoples of the Middle East.

All Democratic schools in Israel offer various courses teaching music, literature, history and heritage. Most of them have (sometimes quite lavish) music departments and studies yet these focus almost solely on European musical forms and there is not one democratic school (that I know of) that has a program for teaching Middle Eastern music. The same can be said for Middle Eastern literature, theater, heritage and history which are rarely taught to students. This reality is just as true for the Democratic Institute where there are less than a handful of courses (if that) that offer students a genuine taste of Middle Eastern culture, the culture of our region and the majority of its peoples.

Some like in the democratic school in Hadera where there is a , small, efforts to amend this can be mentioned program for learning about Arab tradition led by a Palestinian teacher. There is also a course in Middle Eastern history in the democratic school in Kfar Saba, and there are other examples from other schools as well. At the Democratic institute there have been some efforts made to introduce Palestinian staff but, Still, these efforts must be vastly expanded if there is to be a true dialogue process between European and Middle Eastern culture in Democratic schools and in Israeli society in general and if Israeli society would like to one day live in peace and prosperity amongst our Middle Eastern neighbors.

A few simple steps to further this process can be taken immediately within the democratic educators training program at the Kibbutzim College. As the students at the program are the future democratic teachers, entrepreneurs, and educators this would be of great value. For example: at the moment there are two main fields of study offered to students at the Democratic institute: one focuses on the humanities (history, Judaism and literature), the other focuses on Environmental studies (including different scientific and social disciplines). In both these programs a new (less Euro centric and more Middle Eastern) oriented approach can be adopted. This would mean practically, that Middle Eastern history can be made a major focus of the study of history, that Judaism as practiced by Middle Eastern Jews can take center stage and can be combined with the study of Islam and Christianity as practiced by the peoples of the Middle East. The literature department can shift its focus from European to Middle Eastern literature and should find it easier than ever since in recent years many modern Arabic classics have been translated into the Hebrew language.

The same can happen in the environmental fields which can focus on the human, animal and plant environment of the Middle East and the unique ecological practices and realities of the local peoples of the region. Such study of the environment can open the door for cooperation between Israelis and their neighbors in the most important field of ecology as has been demonstrated by the Arava Institute, which trains Israeli and Palestinian students to be facilitators of positive environmental change in the region. In the near future the Democratic

Institute may also want to consider opening a Middle Eastern studies department that will combine the studies of History, religion, literature and the environment of the Middle East.

Further-more, staff working at democratic schools should stress that lessons dealing with culture shall include more classes dealing with Middle Eastern culture. This is especially possible in democratic schools which often do not follow the national curriculum imposed by the ministry of education. Middle Eastern literature, music, heritage, religion, history and languages should be an integral part of the studies offered to students at democratic schools and institutions. Links should be established between democratic schools in Israel with other schools in the Middle East and links between these institutions and institutions for democratic change in other places in the region should be established. I firmly believe that these and other ideas, put into practice, can be of a transformative nature for our society and shall greatly further the cause of peace and prosperity for all the peoples of the Middle East.

Towards a democratic future for all

The advent and practice of Democratic education, which allows us to promote the culture of democracy amongst our young ones and to bring democratic practices into all facets of our life is a great step forwards for freedom and equality worldwide. The various issues regarding democracy in Israeli society which I have raised here, though particular to this time and place, are not strictly a local phenomenon. All of our world societies are dealing with the difficulties created by militarism, inequality, ignorance and fear. The relations between settler and native, man and woman, adult and child, black and white are a challenge to people all around the globe. Our world is one in which the disparity between rich and poor continues to grow, and in which war and injustice are strife. Yet it is also a world in which conflicts are constantly resolved, inspirational new initiatives are launched, and daily acts of compassion and understanding fill us all with hope and love. We are all a part of this reality and as such are jointly responsible for it. The vision of an Israeli society in which all are free and equal, well acclimatized to the land, and prospering together, is a global vision for all the world's peoples. It is my sincerest belief that by fulfilling it we shall be making a great contribution towards a democratic world free of injustice and inequality and full of love, care and compassion.

(Some) External Resources:

New Profile- a Movement for "Civilization" of Israeli Society: www.Newprofile.org

ICAHD (Israeli Committee against House Demolitions): www.Icahd.org

Democratic Institute in Israel (Hebrew) : www.democratic.co.il

Kedma – The Portal to the Middle East (Hebrew): <http://www.kedma.co.il>

(Some) Written Resources:

זיכרונות אסורים: לקראת: שוחט, אלה. "הערות על הפוסט קולוניאלי". בתוך סדרת קשת המזרח 2, הוצאת בימת קדם לספרות, 2001, מחשבה רב תרבותית

Ella Shohat, forbidden Memories, 2001, published by "Bimat Kedem le Safrot"

Yehuda Shenhav and Yosi Yona, What is Multiculturalism?: Of the Politics of Differences in Israel, 2005, Published in Hebrew by Bavel

Edward Said, Orientalism, 1978, published by Vintage Books in the United States

Yaakov Hecht, Democratic Education, 2005, published by Keter Publishing

Personally gathered information:

School guidebooks for Kfar Saba and Hadera Democratic schools

Interview with Yael Shilo, staff at democratic school in Olga

Interview with Yehudit, founding staff at Sudbury school in Jerusalem