Introduction

This book offers an overview and analysis of the construction and de-construction of hegemonic, secular Zionist Israeli national identity from the early years of the Zionist movement to the present. Today, for better or for worse, Israel is a very different polity than was envisioned by any of the streams of Zionism, or even by the builders of the Israeli state and society. During the past two decades, changes have accelerated, and few earlier assumptions about Israel's demographic composition, political and social boundaries, cultural character, or social and economic structures remain valid. In addition, Israel is undergoing processes of change in position and location on both the international and regional planes—processes that are strongly interlinked with domestic developments.

Nevertheless, the changes in rhetoric and social roles have left some of Israel's core characteristics and social institutions unaltered. Israel is still an active immigrant settler society, domestically and externally a relatively strong state (even if less stable than in the past), based on two deep cultural codes, common at least to its Jewish citizens—militarism and "Jewishness." The increasing Jewish sentiment—a mixture of secular nationalism and mainly popular-fundamentalist religiousness—is at the same time a partial continuation of the initial social order and a consequence of its decline.

Perhaps the most dramatic changes that have occurred in Israel are the evaporation of the image of a single, unified Israeli society, the

decline of a unique Israeli identity (notwithstanding excluded and marginal groups, such as the Arabs and Orthodox Jews), and the diminishment of hegemonic secular Hebrew culture. Within the Israeli state, a system of cultural and social plurality is emerging, but in the absence of a concept or ideology of multiculturalism. Today, Israel is undergoing an accelerated process of invention, creation, and institution-building by about seven different cultures and countercultures, without an accepted hierarchy among them. These cultures are based on and reinforced by ethnic, class, and religious components and differ in the sharpness of their social boundaries, the level of their organization, and their consciousness of the degree to which they are separate.

This process is being complemented by another trend, the subdivision of Israeli identity, nationalism, and collective memory into many versions, with only a soft common core. The result has been not only a process of reshaping collective identity but also a continuous conflict over the meaning of what might be called Israeliness, the rules of the game, and the criteria for distribution and redistribution of common goods.

The seven cultures, which are each presently in different stages of crystallization, are the previously hegemonic secular Ashkenazi upper middle class, the national religious, the traditionalist Mizrahim (Orientals), the Orthodox religious, the Arabs, the new Russian immigrants, and the Ethiopians. Although none of these social groups is homogeneous, and most of them harbor deep political and ideological divergences (e.g., "hawks" vs. "doves"), each still holds on to a separate collective identity and also wages an open cultural war against the others.

It seems that two contradictory phenomena have occurred within the Israeli state. The first phenomenon entails the decomposition of the original Zionist hegemony into many conflicting ideological and institutional segments, which have created a kind of diverse degree of separatist civil society or societies, as was mentioned above. The second phenomenon entails the persistence of the state's strength and centrality—in terms of both monopolizing regulation of the common good and passing legislation, as well as playing a key role in the continuous interrelations between the cultural sphere and the might and myth of the state's military.

The multidimensional relationships of this second phenomenon make for an almost total lack of boundaries between the military and social

(public and private) spheres. This is not just a matter of military world-views (sometimes called the "military mind") influencing civilian institutions, and neither is Israel the kind of besieged and completely mobilized "Jewish Sparta" it is often depicted as. Rather, the situation is one in which military and other social problems are so highly intermingled that social and political issues become construed as "existential security" issues and vice versa, making it almost impossible to differentiate between them. The Israeli military-industrial complex, which is well described by the professional literature, is merely a particular case of the wider military-cultural complex.

What is the historical background of this situation? How and why has it occurred, and what are the practical consequences for Israel? These are the major issues dealt with in this volume. The book attempts to provide a kaleidoscopic and multifarious picture of Israeli state and society by combining historical evidence, sociological analysis, and cultural paradigms.

In addition, I am arguing that the strength and capability of the Israeli military to penetrate society is predicated by the military's all-embracing and civilian nature. For this reason, the state and its extension through the military institution has been a major actor in the Zionist story. Nevertheless, because the state is not in a zero-sum situation vis-à-vis other actors of civil society (or semi-autonomous spheres of activity), a process of partial "normalization" and individualization has occurred, and non-statist bodies based on diverse organizational principles have appeared.

I also share my late friend and colleague Dan Horowitz's view that Israeli civilians are "partially militarized" and the military is "partially civilianized." In this volume, I go further in analyzing just how partial this "partially" is, which parts have been militarized and which civilianized, how this was done, and, most important, why. Today, Israel is considered one of the most powerful medium-sized nation-states in the world. The Israeli state's internal strength is demonstrated by its high capacity to recruit internal human and material resources for collective goals, while its external strength is demonstrated by its formidable military might and its salient influence on global, economic, and political agendas. Nonetheless, the Israeli state and society still constitute an active immigrant settler sociopolitical entity (perhaps the last of its kind in the world), lacking a finalized and consensual geopolitical and social identity, boundaries, and location in the political and cultural environment of the Middle East. These traits create a strong sense of

vulnerability and weakness, which continues to endanger the state's very existence in the region, as well as the stability and continuity of its original internal social fabric and structure.

As an immigrant settler society, Israel has not only faced violent resistance on the part of the hostile local population of the country and other nations of the region, but has also made confrontation with them a source of internal strength for its settler elites and leadership and a tool for material and human resource mobilization. As a society espousing an ideology of immigration, it has not only imported human and material capital, but has also been obliged to use the tools of "human engineering" in order to homogenize immigrants by imposing newly invented identities on existing ideologies, symbols, and identity codes.

The Israeli state came to being in the context of incremental Jewish immigration from many countries and continents, against the will of the local population, and in the face of both passive and active resistance. Unlike most other immigrant settler societies—in North and South America, Australia, Africa, and Asia—the Zionist colonizers did not choose their destination because of an abundance of natural resources, fertile free land, water, mines, oil, forests, or a comfortable climate. Nor did the immigrants to the so-called "Land of Israel" represent an imperial power. Rather, the target land was chosen because of a national ideology, Zionism, based on symbols and codes borrowed from the nineteenth-century European version of Jewish religion and ethnicity. The secular (liberal- or socialist-oriented) founding fathers and the inventors of modern Jewish nationalism borrowed the religiously preserved collective memory of the ancient Holy Land, *Zion,* as the territorial base for their nation- and state-building efforts. These reinterpretations of religious notions and myths were intended to serve as a powerful recruitment engine for Jewish immigration to Zion by proffering a collective form of salvation from persecution and oppression suffered in Europe and, to a lesser degree, in other parts of the world. At the same time, religious symbols and especially biblical texts, constructed and reinterpreted as "history," were considered a very useful tool for generating internal and external legitimacy for the Zionist colonization venture.

In the beginning, Zionism was only a marginal idea among Occidental (so-called Ashkenazi) Jewry. About 150 years before the triumph of Zionism, the traditional form of European Jewish community (or ghetto) had been slowly dismantled by a series of internal and external

events and processes (see chapter 1). The political and social emancipation granted to Jewish citizens by several European states, and accelerated by the French and American revolutions, produced a small, but very influential Jewish cultural enlightenment movement, which was highly ambivalent about Jewish religion and ethnicity. More important results of political emancipation included large waves of secularization, both in conjunction with, and separate from, attempts at complete assimilation of the Jews into local non-Jewish society. In addition, emigration from the Jewish settlements of eastern Europe to North America and to a lesser degree to western Europe increased during this period. The countereffect of these processes was the appearance of Jewish Orthodoxy, which attempted to rebuild and redraw the boundaries of the religious community by increasing the severity of social control over its members and the surveillance of daily-life practices.

The idea of a Jewish polity in Palestine as a viable and perhaps the sole option for those Jews who did not succeed in immigrating to the United States became relevant as other options seemed to close. The riots and pogroms of 1881 and 1903–5 in eastern Europe sufficed only to bring a handful of Jews to Palestine. The vast majority preferred the option of individual (or familial) redemption, and migrated to America. In the meantime, a tiny World Zionist Organization was created by a handful of assimilated Jewish intellectuals, who were very disappointed by the failure of emancipation, but had been inspired by European nationalistic movements.

Despite the small size of its formal organization and active resistance on the part of the local Arab population, the Zionist organization succeeded in establishing a viable bridgehead in Palestine under the British colonial umbrella. After the Holocaust and World War II, the existence of this bridgehead made possible the establishment of the Jewish nation-state. Establishment of the state also, however, required that a considerable portion of British Palestine be ethnically cleansed of its Arab inhabitants (see chapter 1). This clearance made possible the establishment of a state more nationally homogenous, with more territory, and, from the Jewish nationalist point of view, with more "rational" borders than originally allocated by United Nations Resolution 181 and the territorial partition plan.

The vast amount of abandoned and expropriated Arab lands and properties were nationally expropriated and used to strengthen the state in two ways. Reallocation of lands ameliorated the physical problem of

accommodating the first waves of nonselective mass immigration. At the same time, expropriation empowered the fledgling state by making it the supreme source of resource allocation.

From the very beginning, the veteran Zionist elite detected and perceived two major threats: the external threat of being militarily defeated by the surrounding Arab states, and the internal threat of the decomposition and alteration of the original characteristics of the state by mass immigration. These two different kinds of threats were perceived as interconnected (see chapter 3). On the one hand, "lowering" the human quality and the cultural level of society and redirecting social resources for the "healing" and reeducation of large quantities of new immigrants posed a danger to the security of the state by destabilizing its social fabric. This existential, or security threat, could be avoided by encouraging "higher quality [Jewish] elements" to immigrate to the country, and by limiting emigration. On the other hand, the external threat was also regarded as implicitly "functional" for the cohesion and social integration of "Jewish society."

Three complementary institutions were designed to meet these threats: the state bureaucracy, the educational system, and the military. The building of an efficient bureaucratic apparatus was a necessary condition for the creation of a highly centralized, strong state, sustained by a hegemonic culture. As with the educational system and the military, however, this bureaucratization not accomplished easily or without harsh internal struggles (see chapter 2). The schools were, of course, the backbone of the educational system, but a substantial portion of the veteran population was also recruited for the informal education of children, youth, and adults. The most salient institution, however, was the military and the policy of compulsory conscription, designed both to safeguard the existence of the state and to resocialize immigrants by serving as the central and preferred "melting pot." Within this framework, the new Israeli man and woman were to be created.

Zionism was an almost unbelievable success, from both internal and external points of view. In the 1940s and 1950s, the consolidation of a Jewish immigrant settler state in the middle of the Arab Middle East was perceived as against all odds. In retrospect, however, Israel's establishment and evolution into a potent political and military entity came to seem self-evident. Only later, when its initial identity and structure had decomposed and fragmented, and many kinds of Israeliness appeared, did it become clearer that these successes contained the seeds of internal contradiction.

Many contemporary observers have been so impressed by these rapid changes in the relative power of various groups within the Israeli state, and its transformation from a monocultural system into a plurality, that they have proclaimed the start of a "post-Zionist era." This term is problematic and unhelpful, however, because such fashionable "end-ism" is overloaded with either strong negative or positive sentiments (depending on ideological bias) and lacks explanatory power.

The present volume is a third-generation sociohistorical analysis of Is-rael. Shmuel N. Eisenstadt's *Israeli Society,* published in Hebrew and English in 1967, was the first pioneering analysis and description of Israel, and in many ways fixed paradigmatically the study of this society for a generation in Israel and abroad. The book became the standard textbook about Israel. It was written under the heavy influence of two streams of interwoven thinking: functionalism and hegemonic Labor party Zionism. Israel was depicted as a heroic, modern (i.e., Western) immigrant country striving to attain two complementary goals: to "absorb" and modernize a vast number of new immigrants from underdeveloped countries and to defend the state from its enemies, who inexplicably sought to destroy it. The most intriguing aspect of Eisenstadt's approach is its mixture of sociology, ideology, and mythology. By mixing historical and societal analysis, Eisenstadt reinforced and reproduced the official myths created by the dominant stratum of the Palestine Jewish community, the so-called Yishuv. The use of weighty professional sociological terminology served him well, giving his work high scientific credibility and an appearance of being "value-free." The story he told took place within an almost exclusively "Jewish bubble," or environmental vacuum. Moreover, mainly young, Ashkenazi, socialist male workers of the land (but not peasants) were credited with building the Jewish nation, with little room accorded other Jewish participants in this heroic venture. Eisenstadt presented a linear-developmental perception of Israel's social history, from an embryonic newly founded pioneering community toward a modern, highly developed Western country. A successfully created "Israeli" man, whose identity was the final product of a masterful melting pot, populated this country.

Eisenstadt's linear social historiography and sociography culminated in his second book on Israel, *The Transformation of Israeli Society: An Essay in Interpretation,* published in 1985. Here Israeli society was encapsulated within a great Jewish civilization and tradition, beginning with the Jewish nation's founding fathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—-

and coming to a logical end in the Israeli and American Jewish centers, with an obvious preference for the former. With this, Eisenstadt, the secularist and moderate socialist, adopted (probably unconsciously) the fundamental Jewish religious paradigm of the nature and roots of Israel—as a Jewish state.

The second generation of Israeli sociological projects is mainly identified with the names of Dan Horowitz, Moshe Lissak, Yonathan Shapiro, and Eva Etzioni-Halevy, and with pure political sociology. Etzioni-Halevy's *Political Culture in Israel: Cleavage and Integration among Israeli Jews,* published in 1977, was the first to anticipate fundamental changes in the Israeli political arena. Horowitz and Lissak, lifelong collaborators, divided Israeli sociography into two periods, and consecrated a book to each. The first is the period of the Yishuv, the politically organized Jewish ethno-community in Palestine prior to sovereignty. The second period extends from the constitution of the independent Israeli state to the mid 1980s. The first book, *Origins of the Israeli Polity: Palestine under the Mandate* (published in Hebrew in 1977 and in an abridged English version in 1978), departed very little from the path established by Eisenstadt, yet focused on the building of political institutions and on political quarrels among the Jews in Palestine (the Hebrew version going into encyclopedic detail). Horowitz and Lissak's second volume, *Trouble in Utopia: The Overburdened Polity of Israel* (published in English in 1989 and in Hebrew in 1990), was, in part, a paradigmatic breakthrough. It included the internal and external Jewish-Arab conflict within its conceptual framework. Internal Jewish-Arab relations were conceptualized as yet another among the many "cleavages" in a deeply divided society. All these "cleavages"—ethnic (Ashkenazim vs. Mizrahim), religious-secular, and political ("doves" vs. "hawks")— were considered destructive. The desired society was conflict-free and harmonious. Horowitz and Lissak argued that the Israeli political system functions improperly owing to too many simultaneous demands to fulfill internal and external goals. The major thesis thus remained highly influenced by Eisenstadt's and Horowitz and Lissak's previous neofunctionalist approach (softened by some ingredients from the conflict-oriented paradigm). Zionist ideology and terminology were interchangeable with sociological theorization and problematization: Israel was considered the only successful materialization of utopia in the world, despite some difficulties in implementation because of "overload." Israel was regarded as self-evidently a democracy, albeit with minor imperfections.

Yonathan Shapiro challenged the self-satisfaction of the "Jerusalem School" (consisting of Eisenstadt, Lissak, Horowitz, and others). Although he never wrote a single comprehensive book on Israeli society and history, Shapiro analyzed internal party politics and mechanisms in a series of monographs, coming to the conclusion that Israel is democratic only in a very formal and narrow sense of the term. He depicted the Israeli political scene as a Bolshevik-type regime, in which a very small old-timer elite group rules the state under the premise of democracy. Fearful even of their own young colleagues and disciples, this oligarchy actively limited the political skills of their successors so as to survive politically throughout their own lifetimes.

Despite Shapiro's highly critical approach to Israeli sociology and political science and his analysis of the ruling elite (very much resembling C. Wright Mills's critiques of American sociology), Shapiro himself was distinctly myopic when it came to other characteristics of Israeli society and its sociology. For example, very much like Eisenstadt, Shapiro completely ignored the impact of the Jewish-Arab conflict. He almost completely overlooked the cultural, religious, gender, ethnic, and national tensions and rifts built into the Israeli state. The Jewish-Arab conflict, wars, and the militarization of society were exogenous factors in his sociology. Shapiro's students (such as Gershon Shafir, Uri Ben-Eliezer, and Hanna Herzog) added major correctives to his work, but also in monographic studies and not in comprehensive, paradigmatically oriented books.

Although Alan Dowty's *The Jewish State: A Century Later,* published in 1998, includes the most up-to-date data and literature on the Israeli state and society, it should be considered as belonging to the second-generation approach to Israel. Although aware of the growing trend of critical scholarship on the Israeli state and society represented by the first two generations of sociologists and political scientists, Dowty produced an apologetic overview of the Israeli case. Dowty asserted that Israel is a consociational democracy rooted in the "democratic manners" of the Diaspora Jewish community (Kehila). Equating Israeli citizens with the public members of an ethno-religious nonsovereign community (Kahal), Dowty made at least two major errors. He confused rule over a civil sovereign state with decision-making within a community. He also failed to detect the mechanisms and institutional arrangements of consociationalism that traditionally excluded Arabs from the system (a mistake that Horowitz and Lissak had already partially avoided).

To the second-generation books, one may add two "dissident" anal-

yses of Israeli society. While Horowitz and Lissak perceived social, cul-
tural, and ideological heterogeneity as destructive "cleavages," in his
1978 *Israel: Pluralism and Conflict,* Sammy Smooha proffers the para-
digm of "pluralism." Heterogeneity is seen as given, natural, and pos-
sibly a precondition for a liberal democratic regime. Influenced by the
seminal work of Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Beyond
the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish
of New York City* (1963), Smooha regrouped Israeli society into the
dominant Ashkenazi group, the dominated Mizrahi and religious
groups, and the exploited and collectively excluded Arab and Palestinian
groups. Smooha emphasized the contrast between formal civic equality
and the ethnic cultural and stratificational dominance of a secular Ash-
kenazi minority over all other social components of the state. Smooha
was also the first Israeli sociologist to observe the tension between Israel
as a Jewish nation-state and its pretension to be an open democratic
state. In a way, the present volume follows the approach begun by
Smooha, but takes it into different directions and conclusions.

Elia Zuriek also contributed a highly critical description of the Israeli
system in his 1979 book, *The Palestinians in Israel: A Study in Internal
Colonialism.* This was the first Palestinian critique of the Israeli-Zionist
state, and was based on the theoretical concept of internal colonization
developed by Michael Hechter in his analysis of the Celtic ethnic role in
the British state-building process. Both Smooha's and Zuriek's books
remained unrecognized by the majority of professional communities in
Israel and the world. The Israeli and the American social science and
history communities were not yet ripe to analyze the Israeli polity as a
real, concrete entity; instead, they were stuck with and enchanted by its
mythological and idealistic image.

Despite their heavy ideological biases and their consistent tendency
to interchange sociological theory with ideology and terminology, these
two generations of sociological streams laid the foundation for a very
rich, viable, diverse, and important body of empirical and theoretical
knowledge about Israel. In fact, these approaches well reflected the in-
ternal sociological process that society was undergoing. This was well
analyzed by Uri Ram in his book *The Changing Agenda of Israeli So-
ciology: Theory, Ideology and Identity,* published in 1995.

As for myself, I am a sociologist of politics in the wider sense of the
term, interested in both the institutional and cultural dynamics of the
political foundations of social life and its historical background. I con-

sider myself as acting mainly within the Weberian tradition. The original foci of my research and theoretical, as well as intellectual, interests have been mainly the impact of the Jewish-Arab (and Israeli-Palestinian) conflict on Israeli and Palestinian societies, sociology of war and the military, and later, the development of collective consciousness and emerging nationalism.

The study of military institutions and culture was carried out, not only in terms of the direct outcome of the Jewish-Arab conflict, but also as a central phenomenon penetrating most of the Israeli state's and society's institutional spheres, such as the economy, class stratification, ethnicity, and ideology (including religion and civil religion). This leads me to ask questions about collective identities (including nationalism) in general and identities in Israel (Jewish and Arab) in particular. In this context, the Gordian knot linking secular nationalism and its religious foundations in past and present has captured my sociological imagination. I have analyzed all these societal phenomena in the context of Jewish-Arab relations (but without relating to the conflict as a single or deterministic variable), while challenging the conventional wisdom that constructs the "realities" of most of social, cultural, and economic spheres as "conflict-free" regions and activities.

In 1975, I concluded a Ph.D. thesis that dealt with the territorial factors of Jewish state- and nation-building and introduced me straight into the problematic heart of the Jewish-Arab conflict. This "opening" was the basis for my book *Zionism and Territory* (1983), which is now generally accepted—even by its critics—as the beginning of a new approach to the analysis of Israeli society and social history. Prior to this book, the conflict was, as indicated above, considered by social scientists mainly as a residual category, and it appeared and disappeared in their works on Israel in a deus ex machina fashion. In *Zionism and Territory* and other writings, I instead conceptualize the conflict as an inherent characteristic of Israeli society and culture, and hence as an unavoidable variable in their sociological analysis.

Such an analysis located the Israeli collectivity in comparative perspective in the context of immigrant settler societies such as those of North and South America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Rhodesia, and French Algeria, emphasizing both its similarities and uniqueness. The amount of the available "free land" (conceptualized as different degrees of "frontierity") was considered as one of the central variables, which determined many ingredients of ideological value systems, as well as the institutional and economic structures and practices.

This analysis is also central to my book *Zionism and Economy* (1983), which treats Zionism not just as an ideology and an idea but more as a set of social, political, and economic practices, which helps explain the creation of a highly centralized statist system (in Hebrew, *mamlachtiut*) during the first two decades of Israel's existence (e.g., the monopoly over land and its distribution between various societal segments).

At the same time, I engaged in a series of independent and collaborative empirical and theoretical studies of the impact of the military and wars on Israeli society. The major outcome of these studies was the book *The Interrupted System: Israeli Civilians in War and Routine Times* (published in 1985), in addition to various papers about Israeli militarism. This book provided an analytical and empirical study of direct and indirect impacts of wars on Israeli civilian society.

During the early 1990s, I revisited my own and others' research in these fields and reached some additional and different conclusions. At this stage, I was influenced by the collection of Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In* (1985), by the historical sociology of Charles Tilly, and later by Joel Migdal's *Strong Societies and Weak States* (1985, 1988). The Israeli state was reanalyzed within the context of two external circles (in addition to "the conflict"): the mobilized Jewish Diaspora and the changing world order. Adopting a less institutional, more culture-oriented approach, I reinterpreted past findings, supported by new evidence, leading me to characterize the Israeli state as a special (but not unique) type of militaristic society. This "civilian militarism" was found to be not only a basic cultural code but also an organizational principle around which large segments of the society are "arranged." This type of militarism, contrasted, for example, with the "classic" praetorian type, is much subtler and is mainly a consequence of the intrusion of "military-mindedness" into civilian institutions and cultures. This situation led me to analyze the "peace process" from both sides in terms of the militaristic culture and power game.

This series of works, and others that followed, also led me to doubt the ability of some producers of mainstream Israeli social science and historiography to free themselves from Zionist ideologies, Jewish ethnocentrism, and "nation-building" approaches in their conceptual and theoretical dealings with the existence of "others" and "the conflict" within so-called Israeli society. These arguments triggered a series of controversies within academic and intellectual communities and were interpreted as a part of the debate over "post-Zionism." The controversy is well described and analyzed by Laurence Silberstein's *The Postzionism*

Debates: Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture (1999). Two additional important studies heralded a third generation of new critical approaches to Israeli society. Gershon Shafir studied the first period of Zionist colonization efforts and extrapolated from that limited period to the entire Zionist venture in his *Land, Labor, and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914* published in 1989. Shafir mixed Zuriek's colonization approach with Edna Bonacich's ethnically split labor market theory. Michal Shalev's volume *Labour and the Political Economy of Israel* (published in 1992) analyzed the complex relationships between the state, the all-embracing labor union Histadrut, and the dominant Labor party.

The next major step was the formulation of a more coherent and developed sociohistorical conceptual framework for "the conflict" (or, better yet, the whole spectrum of Jewish-Arab relations). This major step was rooted in my conclusion (mainly following Georg Simmel and Lewis Coser) that a conflict (any conflict) is an integral social system, that in order to be fully analyzed and understood, knowledge of all parties involved must be included. In other words, in order to achieve a more accurate picture of the "Jewish side" of relations, the "Arab and Palestinian side" must be analyzed with the same tools. As previously mentioned, the Arabs of Palestine were not traditionally incorporated conceptually and theoretically in the analysis and research of Israeli state and society. Moreover, despite the abundance of monographic works on Palestinian society, there existed no single comprehensive social and sociohistorical study of this collectivity. Thus, together with Joel Migdal, I undertook extensive research on the society-building process of Palestinians from a sociological-historical perspective, both on institution-formation and identity-formation levels. This research was published in a co-authored volume, *Palestinians: The Making of a People* (1993). This sociohistorical research presented a "case study" of a stateless society divided between different internal segments and facing many external forces (e.g., Ottoman Turks, Egyptians, Zionist colonization, colonial powers, world market, and Arab and Islamic societies, states, and cultures). The work was built on the basic assumption of a refined version of the world systems approach. The Hebrew and Arabic versions of the book have been extended through the constitution of the Palestinian National Authority.

I should like to make my readers aware that, in addition to my professional activities, I am deeply involved in Israeli public discourse, both

intellectually and politically. For the past thirty years, I have written freelance for different sections of the Hebrew daily newspaper *Ha'aretz,* from its literary and cultural supplements to the op-ed page. A polemical book entitled *The End of the Israeli WASP's Hegemony* is soon to be published in Hebrew.

Finally, I should like to say something about the structure of this book. Chapter 1 is a selective descriptive presentation of Israeli and, to a lesser extent, Palestinian historiography, serving a double aim. The first purpose is to shed light on events, "heroes," and processes mentioned or hinted at throughout this volume for the reader, without giving overly detailed explanations. The second and more substantial aim of the chapter is to provide the reader with the sources of Zionist and Palestinian historiography, iconography, and mythology which are the cornerstones of Israeli and Palestinian collective identity and nationalism. The author of this volume strongly insists that it is impossible to understand the history of one without understanding the motives and the practices of the other.

Chapter 2 deals with the processes of building the Israeli state and the state's struggles over supremacy within and among its various agencies and pre-sovereignty institutions. Chapter 3 presents and analyzes the invention and imposition of Israeli Zionist hegemonic collective identity and nationalism, the beginning of its partial decomposition and decline, and the built-in causes of that decline.

Chapters 4 and 5 are dedicated to the analysis of a new societal reality and its crystallization in the aftermath of the decline of hegemonic culture and the subsequent regrouping of the Israeli system into seven cultures and countercultures. These chapters explore the relations between these cultures and the appearance of a civil society in the making. In chapter 6, Israeli collective identity, political regime, and nationalism and their connection to religion, gender, and ethnocentrism are reanalyzed, but this time in historical and ideological context, as well as in interconnection with the regime, or what usually is referred to as "Israeli democracy." Despite the end of the cultural hegemony of one group, however, "Jewishness" and a consensual militaristic ethos have remained central pillars of the Israeli state and its institutional arrangements. In this new, highly fragmented social situation, the role of the state has changed, but its centrality and strength have remained.

Finally, chapter 7 sharpens the analysis of how power-oriented,

security-related, and constructed social codes have penetrated the entire Israeli political culture, in such a way that war-making has not only become the state's ethos and the central binding code of a fragmented, pluralistic, cultural system, but even incorporates peace-making as part and parcel of itself.