ABSTRACT. The diversity of contemporary democratic nations challenges scholars and educators to develop forms of education that would both recognize difference and develop a shared foundation for a functioning democracy. In this essay Sigal Ben-Porath develops the concept of shared fate as a theoretical and practical response to this challenge. Shared fate offers a viable alternative to current forms of citizenship education, one that develops a significant shared dimension while respecting deep differences within a political community. It is grounded in the social and moral realities of civic life, and it seeks to weave the historical, political, and social ties among members of the nation into a form of affiliation that would sustain and expand their shared political project. Some particular educational contexts are considered through the lens of shared fate, including the resegregation of some schooling systems, linguistic diversity, and patriotic education.

In contemporary democratic societies, many citizens are affiliated with a variety of subgroups. The diversity of affiliations results from both ascribed and chosen characteristics that are accepted as matters of individual liberty and freedom of expression and association. With this multiplicity of differences, what continues to demarcate and bind together the citizens of one nation? In other words, what is the meaning of citizenship that extends beyond the legal status it indicates, and how should this meaning be presented by schools as they strive to prepare the next generation of citizens? I argue that citizenship, or membership in a nation, is best understood as shared fate that binds together individuals into a civic body. Shared fate has been developed as a viable alternative to current conceptions of citizenship. Specifically in this essay I present shared fate as an alternative to current forms of citizenship education, one that develops a significant shared dimension while respecting deep differences. Shared fate encompasses the diversity of visions, affiliations, and values that citizens hold, and it also seeks to weave the historical, political, and social ties among members of the nation into a form of affiliation that would sustain their shared political project. As a preliminary description, shared fate relates to the aspects of civic and political life that individuals can reasonably be expected to either share or relate to. Those can include institutions and organizations related to the governance structure, such as representative bodies, courts, local government structures, and the like; laws and documents, such as a constitution; historical understandings of the nation, including contested dimensions and struggles over interpretation;

1. My views on citizenship, and even more so on education, differ from those of Melissa Williams, but I am nonetheless indebted to her work on shared fate and especially to her illuminating essay “Citizenship as Identity, Citizenship as Shared Fate, and the Functions of Multicultural Education,” in Citizenship and Education in Liberal-Democratic Societies: Teaching for Cosmopolitan Values and Collective Identities, ed. Kevin McDonough and Walter Feinberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 208–247.
languages and forms of expression, including contestations over desirable forms of communication in the public sphere; understandings of national ethos, symbols, myths and values, and even views about issues such as typical national traits and aspirations [as in “the American dream”]. Understanding national membership in terms of cognitive schemas, cultural practices, discursive frames, collective representations, and political projects means overcoming the vision of the nation as a stable, bound, and tangible group and acknowledging the workings of “everyday nationalism” that are continuously reinterpreted as part of the shared project of political membership. Citizenship as shared fate thus need not be seen as a unifying force by virtue of its focus on desirable or widely accepted dimensions of nationality alone; rather, it is the visions, practices, and processes that make up the civic body through engaging individuals and groups in the continuous process of designing, expressing, and interpreting their membership in the nation. Some dimensions of shared fate are accepted by most citizens while others may be grounds for ongoing negotiations. In the latter case, shared fate is expressed through acceptance of the topic as a contested matter for the public to debate and work toward an agreement on, and the mutual acceptance, sometimes through negotiation, of the processes that such agreement would entail.

I focus my attention on democratic societies (beyond their different forms) because the challenge they face in responding to diversity is significant as a result of their diverse citizenry and their principled commitment to pluralism. Schools in democratic societies are charged with responding to the multiplicity of affiliations, preferences, ideologies, languages, values, and memberships. They are expected to celebrate the diversity of the student body, but also to minimize it by developing civic capacity and a host of shared dimensions, including language(s), civic knowledge, academic competency, and patriotic sentiments. In this essay, I begin by discussing the tension between respecting individuals and families by

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2. I have discussed in previous work the ways in which war and conflict can develop further dimensions of shared fate, such as a shared sense of threat and solidarity in the struggle. See Sigal Ben-Porath, Citizenship Under Fire: Democratic Education in Times of War (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006); and Sigal Ben-Porath, “Wartime Citizenship: An Argument for Shared Fate,” Ethnicities 11, no. 3 (2011).


4. This is illustrated by the discussion of language in Bruce Maxwell, David I. Waddington, Kevin McDonough, Andrée-Anne Cormier, and Marina Schwimmer, “Interculturalism, Multiculturalism, and the Political Dilemma of Conservative Religious Schooling,” in this issue.

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representing their values and cultures, on the one hand, and developing a shared public sphere and the skills and attitudes it takes to participate in it, on the other. I attempt to alleviate some of this tension by suggesting that citizenship — or membership in a nation — is a different type of affiliation than membership in other groups, and as such the threat it poses to subgroup affiliation is less significant than is sometimes suggested. Thus shared fate as a perspective on citizenship education is more sociologically valid, as well as more normatively appealing, in comparison to other visions of national membership and of education for citizenship.

The question of how to understand and instill citizenship is inextricably tied to the social and political responses to diversity. As Rogers Smith has explained, although “in common parlance, to say that someone is an American citizen often simply means that the person is legally recognized as having American nationality…, the term citizenship has always carried more demanding connotations.”\(^5\) Citizenship denotes an in-group that carries some shared dimensions, and those dimensions are expected to mitigate other subnational or international relations. Common scholarly and political responses to citizens’ diverse group affiliations grapple with the tension between the democratic demand for respect (based on values such as freedom of expression and association) and the pressure to overcome these competing affiliations in order to maintain a cohesive, well-functioning nation-state.

As an alternative, national membership is conceptualized here as shared fate — a relational, process-oriented, dynamic affiliation that arises from the cognitive perceptions as well as from the preferences and actions of members. Shared fate citizenship recognizes that reciprocity is at the heart of citizenship in a democracy; therefore, civic learning — commonly seen as composed of knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward the system of governance — should include knowledge of fellow citizens, skills to interact with them on the political and civic level, and attitudes that can facilitate shared civic action. Such an approach can allow liberal democracies to accommodate diversity while maintaining a common foundation. A view of education for citizenship based on this idea of citizenship as shared fate envisions schools that build on and develop solidarity and a shared civic sphere while maintaining a commitment to the rights and well-being of individuals whose complex identities arise from their membership in multiple groups.\(^6\)

**Shared Fate Citizenship Education**

The common school — inasmuch as it is democratically attainable — has long been deemed the best context for learning to live a shared life with others who espouse different subnational affiliations. As Rob Reich argues, “The fact

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6. I use the terms “citizenship education” or “education for citizenship” rather than “civic education” because my discussion constructs citizenship broadly rather than focusing on the more skills-oriented and curriculum-based vision that the term “civic education” denotes.
of pluralism ... makes the common school necessary in that the schoolhouse is perhaps the best vehicle available to the state to unite a diverse citizenry under common ideals and to help forge a common national identity." In a similar way, early twentieth-century accounts of democratic education considered the diversity of the civic body — along ethnic, class, and other lines — as a challenge that common or universal schooling should overcome by assimilating children into a shared identity. Universal schooling envisioned the development of a common identity that would override other affiliations, moral commitments, and group memberships. In this sense, national identity is a property, an attribute, and to a significant extent it is restricted to a limited group of people who often relate it to other aspects of their identities, such as their ethnic origins or religious commitments. Becoming a member of the nation under this description of identity citizenship requires assimilating into, or at a minimum accepting, these attributes that are assumed to constitute the essence of national identity.

In his important contribution to the scholarly debate on education for citizenship, Eamonn Callan portrays the emotional attachment of citizens to each other as a basis for liberal patriotism, which he sees as a condition of liberal justice in a democratic state. He suggests that we see civic relations as ones that "connect our very identity to the good of others." Thinking of citizenship as a form of shared fate requires considering social ties, ways for citizens to relate to one another, horizontal connections among citizens, and citizens’ connections to the shared project of constructing the nation and developing and advancing its aims. Framing citizenship as solely a matter of identity can exacerbate intercommunity tension, as a discussion of minority–majority relations in the Netherlands and Aceh indicates:

Both countries’ efforts to mitigate majority–minority tensions by forcing, or "inviting," minority communities to conform to civic identities defined by the values of the majority or the politically powerful suggest that such efforts are likely to fail because they are perceived — perhaps rightly so — as a surrender of identities important to those communities.

The interpretation of both community affiliation and civic status as aspects of identity is thus a potential source of tension, fueled by the hybrid identities that most or all citizens subscribe to. Rather than thinking of the citizen as a member of the political community primarily by virtue of his or her identity,

7. Rob Reich, "How and Why to Support Common Schooling and Educational Choice at the Same Time," Journal of Philosophy of Education 41, no. 4 (2007): 711. As I argued in the previous section, identity should not be the sole focus of this endeavor, but I nonetheless agree with Reich’s analysis of the capacity of the common school to provide a rich context for developing desirable forms of democratic citizenship.


shared fate portrays citizens as developing a view of themselves as members of the community by virtue of their relation to other members, by their way of relating to the nation-state as a project they take part in, and by their multiple linkages to the national community and its institutions and practices. While individuals may have varying forms of connection to the state they are members of, and they can acceptably have weaker or stronger levels of commitment to partaking in the civic political project, they are still affected by it in multiple ways, from the ways in which their voices are represented at various levels of governance, to laws, public expressions of values, and so on. Thus, a central dimension of shared fate citizenship education is to introduce the evolving social and institutional contexts in which citizens live and to develop an understanding of the cultural, cognitive, and discursive dimensions of national membership.

Citizenship education that is based on the idea of shared fate calls for starting with the fact of enduring pluralism in society, and continuing by developing democratic citizenship and its skills and habits as a practice that informs education for membership in the nation-state. A focus on shared fate gives a central role in citizenship education to the nation as a shared political community, with the diversity of affiliations it encompasses. A firm grounding in social and moral realities contextualizes citizenship education as a project based on the connectedness of individuals who share the same fate by virtue of their membership. Shared fate requires citizenship education that acknowledges and promotes visions of shared histories, struggles, institutions, languages, and value commitments. It takes into account and builds on the struggles over how we define and recognize many of these shared dimensions. Teaching citizenship as a form of shared fate incorporates the understanding of an individual’s relations to the state with discussions of his or her relations to other members of the nation. Notably, thinking of citizenship as shared fate entails understanding how webs of relations form in the context of the nation — some chosen, some given. This understanding is a key aspect of citizenship education, and it can constitute the foundation for viewing our fate as intertwined with the fate of others. It then makes apparent obligations that we have to one another and points us toward actions that we are expected to take and see ourselves as capable of taking as a result of these obligations. The first step in developing civic skills is for individuals to see themselves as participants in a shared, cooperative project that includes diverse others. Shared fate citizenship education can therefore help bridge the gap between political knowledge and motivation while recognizing that schools’ capacity to introduce visions of good citizenship is continuously challenged by the particular population they serve.

Shared fate citizenship education thus introduces an acknowledgment of the various ways in which one’s fate is shared with that of his or her compatriots. This form of citizenship education focuses on the nation (rather than subgroups or the global community) as key to the pursuit of shared political goals. Like other kinds of citizenship education, shared fate citizenship education has both responsive and aspirational components. It responds to the ties shared among nation members that arise from territoriality, institutional affiliation, affected interests that arise
from institutional and geographic linkages, shared histories, linguistic ties, and views of national myths. At the same time, it aspires to build on such linkages in order to promote the skills and attitudes that are required for good citizenship, thus enhancing the sense of belonging among the young members of the nation. In this way citizenship education, like education in general, is rooted both in the present, with its social realities, and in the future vision of what society might be like for the next generation. It calls upon all individuals and groups to contribute their views, voices, values, and preferences to the shared political endeavor without requiring them to assimilate into an existing political culture or identity.

Citizenship education requires not only the future-oriented development of civic virtues and the conditions for legitimacy; it also looks at the lived experiences of children as they go through the educational process. Citizenship education is rooted in the social and psychological conditions for the development of virtues, skills, and habits of mind that enable the current political structure to continue as well as to improve. As such, citizenship education seeks forms of attachment, belonging, and commitment that would enable children to become positive members of diverse communities of fate, including the shared national fate.

Shared Fate: National Community and Political Goals

Shared fate focuses on shared dimensions of membership in the nation-state. Citizens in contemporary democracies tend to differ in their ideological inclinations, religious commitments, and ethnic origins, among other dimensions. But they also have some things in common: for example, they are all bound by the same laws and affected by the same institutions; they relate, albeit in different ways, to certain political symbols (such as flags or national holidays); and they recognize certain public matters as salient. Moreover, there are possible and actual ties among them as members of economic, civic, and political organizations, as coworkers and participants in leisure activities, and as members of school communities and other contexts. Some of these ties give rise to other connections based on shared language(s), values, and preferences. They create webs of horizontal relations that are possible and that in fact occur mostly within national borders rather than beyond them. The nation is often the backdrop rather than the topic of these contexts (in other words, these are often activities that are not explicitly political), but they are enabled and limited by national borders.

Shared fate citizenship education relies on accounts of both shared dimensions and dimensions that are asymmetrical, different, and even divisive. Both scholarly and social responses to families, communities, and ideologies that oppose certain civic values tend either to demand adherence to the civic ethos above other values or to accommodate competing value sets by minimizing the content and reach of the shared civic foundation. Shared fate aims to recognize differences in values, outlooks, language, and preferences while developing institutional and conceptual contexts — particularly civic and political ones — in which different communities can develop ties and shared practices. Such an approach requires that citizenship education be context-responsive and address the specific realms
in which children and families live, as well as specific diversities within the nation. A central dimension of shared fate citizenship education is the introduction of and induction into a shared political sphere, with the institutions and practices that characterize it, and with its current members and the rules and procedures they employ. Education for shared fate citizenship introduces youth to the evolving social and institutional context in which citizens live and helps them develop an understanding of the cultural, cognitive, and discursive dimensions of national membership. They are introduced to their roles as contributors, as observers, or as potential actors, both as individuals and as members of different subgroups.

The state has a set of instruments to achieve common fate, and that is why, even though the state is a contingent fact in human history and condition, it is a vehicle for realizing shared goals, values, and political projects. Therefore, while the state is not necessary as a political arrangement in human society, it is currently the key apparatus for pursuing political aims. Belonging to a national group and pursuing shared social and political ends through membership in it are human practices that, even if neither natural nor universal, are widespread and significant enough to merit theoretical attention and normative justification. The nation may serve a purpose like that served by pre- and subnational groups in earlier periods, and in this sense it is not unique as an institution that can satisfy the human aims of political belonging and the shared pursuit of social aims. Subnational affiliations (or membership in groups based on ethnic, sexual, ideological, geographic, and other identities or preferences) as well as cross-national affiliations (in institutions that bring together individuals from various nations around a shared cause) provide opportunities for membership. However, those are most commonly based on a particular dimension, ideology, or identity feature, and while that feature can be central to individuals’ self-perception, the opportunities afforded by these group affiliations are different from those afforded by citizenship. While the sense of personal identification with subnational groups is sometimes stronger than national affiliation, the state with its institutions, including laws and representative bodies, has the capacity to affect its members in significant ways even if they do not see their national membership as central in their personal lives (or see it as less central than religious, ethnic, local, or other form of affiliation). The state therefore has an obligation to educate members about their shared fate and about ways in which they can respond to it and shape it.¹⁰

Conceptually as well as politically, shared fate may seem distinct from claims of justice. However, a perception of shared fate can be part of the foundation of justice in a diverse liberal democracy. This is the case in democracies that are characterized by a stable, liberal political system committed to basic principles such as human rights, civic equality, and nondiscrimination, and in which

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¹⁰ I further elaborate the justifications for focusing on the nation rather than multinational and regional associations or global affiliations in Sigal Ben-Porath, “Citizenship as Shared Fate,” in *Education, Democracy, and Justice*, ed. Danielle Allen and Rob Reich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, in press).
mainstream views of society correspond with these key democratic principles.\textsuperscript{11} Shared fate helps to ground justice in a diverse liberal democracy inasmuch as it establishes an affiliation among members of different subgroups and cultures [as well as national groups] within the nation. Such affiliation, which can be nurtured by relevant forms of education for citizenship, can support the conditions necessary for justice by encouraging both solidarity and respect for diversity, and by justifying policies that promote both individual rights and intergroup tolerance.\textsuperscript{12}

Fate and the ways it is shared by members of a group do not characterize citizenship alone. In discussions of race, scholars have long used the concept of linked fate to describe the connections among African Americans in the United States, and specifically to support the arguments that beyond intragroup differences there are aspects that bind together members of this racial group because of the particularities of their social condition. Tommie Shelby suggests that African Americans’ sense of linked or shared fate is based on solidarity that arises from the self-interest of individuals, of different socioeconomic status, to struggle against poverty and racism. But beyond solidarity grounded in self-interest, this shared fate is based on the duty of justice to promote equality and struggle against prejudice.\textsuperscript{13} Racial linked fate is thus comprised of identity, interests, and value commitments, which together make up the ties that bind members of a racial community. Similarly, shared fate citizenship is made up of a host of characteristics that, while each of them can be contested, together signify the foundation of a shared political sphere.

In the context of the nation-state more than in other contexts, individuals can pursue broad social and political goals, congruent with key demands of justice, along with diverse others who share a wide-ranging and sustained set of interests, needs, and goals. The tensions created by thinking about membership in the nation as well as membership in other groups as primarily a matter of identity was captured by Michael Merry and Jeffrey Milligan: “the effort to cultivate forms of identity supportive of democratic citizenship cannot afford to ignore or suppress other forms of attachment and obligation important to the individual and collective identities of a state’s citizens.”\textsuperscript{14} Shared fate aims to alleviate some of

\textsuperscript{11} The case may be different in some key ways in emerging democracies, in post-conflict contexts, and in other systems of governance. Therefore this argument focuses on contemporary examples of stable Western democracies. To apply to some of these other contexts, it needs to be tweaked. I tackle post-conflict issues in Sigal Ben-Porath, “Wartime Citizenship: An Argument for Shared Fate,” \textit{Ethnicities} 11, no. 3 (2011): 313–325.

\textsuperscript{12} One such policy that helps defend the rights of members of illiberal subgroups is entrance paths. I discuss those in Sigal Ben-Porath, “Exit Rights and Entrance Paths: Accommodating Cultural Diversity in a Liberal Democracy,” \textit{Perspectives on Politics} 8, no. 4 (2010): 1021–1033.


\textsuperscript{14} Michael S. Merry and Jeffrey Ayala Milligan, “Citizenship as Attachment and Obligation,” in \textit{Citizenship, Identity and Education in Muslim Communities: Essays on Attachment and Obligation}, ed. Michael S. Merry and Jeffrey Ayala Milligan (Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 3.
these tensions by suggesting that citizenship is not primarily a matter of identity, and that unlike other affiliations, it is first and foremost a matter of sharing linkages and connections, some chosen and some given, which together make up a unique type of membership.

Because the nation is a broad group that connects diverse individuals through practices and institutions that call for their cooperation to advance shared interests, needs, and preferences, and to develop shared value systems that can sustain this pursuit, it offers forms of political expression and action unparalleled in more homogeneous groups or in groups based on a single shared cause. The context of the democratic nation-state specifically — the context that I focus on in this essay — offers a unique structure that allows members to develop and pursue their shared political and social goals in ways that correspond to the expectations and requirements of justice. This focus on the shared fate of members of a nation-state gives rise to a notion of citizenship unique to the political context. Today this context is most significantly available through the nation-state and evolves as the citizens’ political preferences and interests evolve, as well as with the constant changes in the composition of the civic body. This conceptualization of citizenship as an aspect of the fate we share with others can enable nations and their publicly funded school systems to respond effectively to the nation’s need for a shared foundation while simultaneously respecting and protecting value pluralism (and other forms of diversity).

Educational Practice and Policy

In this section I consider some of the ways in which education for citizenship as shared fate can inform the practices of educators and policymakers in the context of publicly funded schools (including publicly supported private schools). It is important to note that because shared fate aims to respond to political and sociological realities, it will not be practiced similarly in all national contexts. For example, while my discussion about responses to linguistic diversity in schools aims to consider various contexts, the principles I develop will have to be translated into different national and linguistic contexts. Thus where an indigenous national minority aims to preserve its language, the response may be different than in the context of a wave of migration. The following brief discussions of educational policy issues aim to present some key matters that arise when education for citizenship as shared fate is introduced into a schooling context.

Integration and Self-Separation

Residential choices, combined with a history of discriminatory policies, effectively segregate many neighborhoods in the United States and some other

15. This account clarifies some of what makes the nation-state a valuable institution although there are other values promoted by this structure that I do not discuss here. For further discussion, see Sigal Ben-Porath, “Civic Virtue Out of Necessity: Patriotism and Democratic Education,” Theory and Research in Education 5, no. 1 (2007): 41–59. Note that my argument leaves open the possibility of competing and additional values, and it does not give up the possibility of criticizing any particular nation-state or its actions.
Western democracies. As a result many public schools are effectively segregated across class, race, and ethnic lines (private schools are rarely more diverse). These processes seem to undermine the ideal of shared fate citizenship by limiting the contacts among children and families of different subgroups. For children to develop a sense of belonging to their diverse society, it seems that the intuition behind the idea of the common school and of desegregation holds — children should spend time in each other's company, influencing each other and learning from and about each other as a way to develop those ties and connections that would then nurture their sense of shared fate.

However, for the sake of this discussion, not all forms of separation are alike. To make this argument, consider the context of the self-separation of minority groups into culturally cohesive, empowering school environments. This practice seems to provide them with an opportunity for cultural self-expression, sometimes giving children in these schools a greater opportunity to succeed. Students in some racially self-separated schools gain a greater knowledge of their place in history and develop a greater sense of belonging; as a result, these students have improved life choices compared to children in some racially integrated schools, given class differences and the persistence of racial prejudice in society and given that many integrated schools are still internally segregated by means of classroom placement and tracking systems. Michael Merry argues in this volume and elsewhere that the culturally coherent education that self-separated schools can provide (as long as they are established without coercion) may assist minority children in countering the negative stereotypes and discrimination they face in society. In this way they can produce positive outcomes in the form of greater educational attainment and achievement, and greater self-confidence and sense of efficacy as members of their group and of society. All these can contribute to both individuals and minority groups having a stronger presence in the public sphere and expressing their views and preferences more equally with other groups.

Thus self-separation can be a justified outcome of personal and communal preferences. However, from a shared fate democratic perspective, it is important to publicly justify separation as a way to better achieve not just equality in general, but more specifically civic equality. A hasty argument about certain self-separated schools and their improved levels of educational achievement as measured by test results can neglect other, detrimental effects of segregated schools. Civic equality, as understood by shared fate to mean the reciprocal perception of equal civic standing within the web of relations that make up the civic body, requires not only an understanding of the social makeup but also some actual ties among fellow citizens. If public schools are justified not only as a means to achieving personal goals (such as exposure to knowledge or greater job prospects) but also


social goals (including economic and political ones, as well as civic equality), then shared fate can formulate some of the social and political goals schools should strive to achieve. In the context of integration, the contribution of certain self-separated schools to the educational and civic standing of their students should be measured against the losses in the development of ties and mutual knowledge that result from the move to separate schools. Since many neighborhoods are segregated along lines of race, class, and ethnicity, individuals meet those from different backgrounds mostly in workplaces. Without relevant education, these encounters may not amount to a significant enough exchange or help develop a sense of belonging to a shared civic sphere.

Self-separated schools, strengthened and expanded by choice structures, should thus be carefully considered in light of their contribution to the aims of public education: (1) the extent to which they allow individuals to achieve their personal goals, including educational achievement and cultural expression; and (2) the extent to which they support social goals, including equal civic standing and the development of tolerance, respect, and shared fate. It seems that many self-separated schools can be regarded more favorably based on these measures than effectively segregated schools, including schools of choice.

Teaching Patriotism

Citizenship education is broadly understood to consist of at least three components: an introduction to a corpus of knowledge such as governance structure and procedures; facilitation of certain skills such as deliberation and effective communication; and development of attitudes and dispositions such as respect, tolerance, and public mindedness. This last category of attitudes and dispositions can reasonably include a commitment to one’s nation-state and to the preservation and advancement of this state. It can include a commitment to the democratic principles and institutions that signify its values, including the opportunity to revise them within democratic guidelines; and it can include a disposition toward one’s compatriots that acknowledges shared fate.

Shared fate requires citizenship education that acknowledges and promotes visions of shared histories, struggles, institutions, and commitments. In other words, it requires a form of education for patriotism. Using the notion of citizenship as shared fate as a framework for thinking about obligations and responsibilities can also inform the vision of patriotic education. Teaching citizenship as a form of shared fate, and thus introducing the concept that our ties to our fellow nation members are key to our relations with the nation, is in itself a form of patriotic education in that it incorporates horizontal aspects (or the understanding of an individual’s relations to the state) with vertical aspects of citizenship (or discussions of our relations to nation members). Citizenship education commonly focuses more on the former, establishing the institutional and (sometimes) ethical ties an individual has to the state. The love of country is introduced through

the history and geopolitics of the nation, often creating a connection through past generations, famous figures or heroes, and the emotional responses that the landscape can elicit. The introduction of a connection to the nation and the state through the multiple connections that link an individual to his or her fellow members enriches citizenship education and introduces further important dimensions of the love of country.

Patriotism and patriotic education can and should be endorsed by those who are committed to democratic values that include the progressive revisability of the national ethos and the ongoing project of making their country the best that it can be. The challenge that a statement of this sort creates arises from the fact that patriotism is often construed as a narrow, exclusive concept. In this way it can be set up as contradictory to key democratic values, such as inclusion, tolerance, civic equality, and mutual respect. Patriotism is commonly viewed, and vilified, as based on a monolithic understanding of the nation-state and as presenting a static list of requirements that must be fulfilled in order for good citizenship to ensue. However, if a commitment to democracy does not preclude recognition of the nation — as is most often the case — then the exclusion embedded in patriotism is no more and no less than the exclusion mandated by the preservation of national borders (including any form of immigration policy).

Patriotism and the defense of patriotic education have long been relegated to the political hands of those who subscribe to a narrow notion of the ingroup and to republican (or virtue-based) visions of the nation and of its good citizens. If liberal democrats, liberal egalitarians, and others who are committed to ethical individualism relinquish patriotism and ignore its endurance, their ability to participate in the related debate on public education and nationality will be greatly diminished. Beyond this pragmatic concern, patriotism is democratically defensible when understood as a consequence of shared fate and when viewed as a relational good rather than merely as identity feature, status, or emotion. Consequently, patriotic education can be justified when its goals are to reflect “best traditions patriotism” and to maintain an inclusive vision of membership in the nation and of good citizenship.19 When thus portrayed, patriotism can support the educational project of maintaining liberal democracy and the affiliation with a particular nation as a democratic nation.

Defenders of patriotic education often focus on the benefits of loving one’s country and derive from this suggestion the importance of teaching the next generation of citizens to subscribe to this emotion. In contrast, opponents of patriotic education assume that this process requires distorting the nation’s history for the purpose of cultivating love toward it. Some demand that we abandon such attempts and “teach the facts”20 or focus on the legitimate, mostly cognitive

aims of education. Others, such as Michael Hand, suggest that since there is no consensus among reasonable people regarding the merits of patriotism and patriotic education, we should teach patriotism as a controversial issue.

Should the lack of consensus — or even the lack of consensus among “reasonable people” [wherever those may be found] — paralyze patriotic citizenship education? My answer in the negative is based on the suggestion that all education and schooling are value-laden. The topics chosen, the amount of time and space devoted to national struggles and triumphs, and the curricular focus on other groups within and outside our borders all reflect values endorsed and instilled in the process of schooling. Educators are often more successful in instilling these implicit values than with the ones they explicitly attempt to inculcate. And all of these values are, as values tend to be, controversial — that is, they are open for discussion, culturally based, and revisable. Hence, steering clear of complex political and moral matters is often not a real option for educators and for schools. Neglecting to discuss patriotism in schools as an aspect of education for democratic citizenship may leave patriotic sentiments at the hands of less thoughtful and less democratically committed institutions. As I have argued, there are benefits to developing a sense of shared fate with one’s fellow nation members, a sense that can readily be construed as an aspect of patriotism.

**LANGUAGE**

Linguistic communities often provide individuals with a cultural horizon, a context to which they can relate and through which they learn to navigate their social environment. Linguistic diversity generates particular challenges to a national common basis, as the boundaries that different linguistic communities create can sometimes seem to undermine attempts to maintain a shared public sphere. French-speaking Canadians, Spanish speakers in the United States, Arabic-speaking Israelis, and Turkish-speaking Germans all exemplify the web of relations and differences that a linguistic minority expresses and reproduces. The Canadian context has been extensively discussed in the literature, and a growing body of work indicates related perspectives in the context of English and Spanish in the United States. Despite the understanding developed in political, linguistic, and educational scholarship regarding the role of language as a cultural indicator and

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23. See, for example, Denise G. Réaume, “Official Language Rights: Intrinsic Value and the Protection of Difference,” in *Citizenship in Diverse Societies*, ed. Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000], 245–272. See also Will Kymlicka, *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism, and Citizenship* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001], where he argues that “la survivance in Quebec has depended on a number of these very basic conditions: French-language education, not only in childhood, but through to higher education; the right to use one’s language, not only when interacting with government, but also in one’s day to day job, whether in the public service or private employment, the right … to exempt francophone immigrants from the requirement to learn
an aspect of identity, educational practice often represents a view of language as a skill, and of linguistic diversity as a challenge or problem to solve. This view is sometimes used to justify imposing the exclusive use of the majority's language on students with other home languages, as a way to open educational and other opportunities that are perceived to be more abundantly available to those who can speak the majority language. In addition, practitioners, like other citizens, often view the acquisition of the majority language as an indicator of the individual's acceptance of mainstream political identity. How can shared fate inform educational language policies and practices?

Because shared fate citizenship education requires recognition of social realities and a respectful way of addressing differences, it would take different forms in countries facing different linguistic challenges. In their contribution to this symposium, Bruce Maxwell, David Waddington, Kevin McDonough, André-Anne Cormier, and Marina Schwimmer discuss the ways in which, in the Canadian context, the intercultural model allows Francophone Canadians the opportunity to maintain their culture within a broader, Anglophone national context. Prioritizing French over other languages in the context of Interculturalism coincides with the goals of shared fate citizenship because it aims to protect group cultural and other [including national within a multinational state] affiliations. Interculturalism, through its effort to preserve what unites the political community while staying committed to what makes each part of the community unique in terms of its culture, belief systems, language, and other characteristics, is an educational and political attempt to create and maintain a sense of shared fate.

In the United States shared fate would encourage multiple and alternative responses to linguistic diversity, responses that do not require students to abandon their native tongues at school or in public and that do not insist on instruction exclusively in the majority language. Effectively segregated schools that have a majority of Spanish-speaking students sometimes impede the educational opportunities afforded to these students; but such schools can also provide an opportunity to use the home language as a resource for maintaining a stronger sense of belonging and starting to develop a web of connections to the broader society through this belonging, as the brief discussion above of self-separated schools


25. Maxwell et al., "Interculturalism, Multiculturalism, and the Political Dilemma of Conservative Religious Schooling."

26. See Carola Suárez-Orozco and Marcello Suárez-Orozco, *Children of Immigration* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002). The authors present the challenges that children of immigrants, who make up one-fifth of school children in the United States today, face in the schooling system. They make the case, which correlates with the framework of shared fate, of first-language retention in addition to English-language access.
indicates. While the preservation of one’s home language is not necessarily viewed as a right, to which the education system holds a corresponding duty, linguistic diversity is seen as a resource that benefits educators and peers (as well as society). Because shared fate welcomes additional memberships alongside the national one, linguistic diversity does not threaten its realization. Pathways to expanding linguistic capacities, including the opportunity to acquire the majority’s language, can promote and sustain communication in the public sphere and the sharing of institutional affiliations and linkages, and schools should provide them. But in different national and local contexts, this goal can be pursued without the pressure to prioritize the majority language over minority ones, based on an understanding that linguistic respect and the generation of shared public spaces are a responsibility that should not be borne by the minority group(s) alone. In addition, even if language is seen as a pathway to educational and employment opportunities, bilingualism provides greater opportunities to children of all home languages, whether majority or minority. Constructing a shared-fate vision should thus be pursued without excluding the diversity of languages represented in the public domain from being used and promoted in communal, educational, and other public settings.

**Conclusion**

In sum, thinking of citizenship, or membership in the national community, as a shared project that invites diverse members to participate and share their vision of society’s future is the essence of the concept of shared fate. Educating for such vision starts with the social, civic, and moral realities that characterize membership in a diverse political community, with its webs of ties and tensions. It continues by recognizing the myriad effects of multiple memberships on individuals within the community, and by holding on to the core values, including key democratic values, that inform the national ethos. This balancing process requires that schools, as institutions that represent the national community but serve the local community with its sometimes conflicting value set[s], acknowledge and address both unity and diversity in the process of educating for citizenship as shared fate.

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28. For example, some schools in Texas, a state with a significant Spanish-speaking minority, offer double immersion in English and Spanish to all students and teachers.