

## LAW AND IDENTITY IN ISRAEL

What makes Israeli law Israeli? Why is the word “Jewish” almost entirely absent from Israeli legislation? How did Israel succeed in eluding a futile and dangerous debate over identity, and construct a progressive, independent, original, and sophisticated legal system? *Law and Identity in Israel* attempts to answer these questions by looking at the complex bond between Zionism and the Jewish culture. Forging an original and “authentic” Israeli law that would be an expression and encapsulation of Israeli-Jewish identity has been the goal of many Jewish and Zionist jurists as well as public leaders for the past century. This book chronicles and analyzes these efforts, and in the process tackles the complex meaning of Judaism in modern times as a religion, a culture, and a nationality. Nir Kedar examines the challenges and difficulties of expressing Judaism in, or transplanting it into, the laws of the state of Israel.

NIR KEDAR is a professor of law and history at Bar Ilan University and the Vice President for Academic Affairs of Sapir College in Israel. His main fields of interest are modern legal history, legal and political theory, and comparative law. He has published five books and numerous articles, including *Mamlakhtiyut: David Ben-Gurion's Civic Thought* (Hebrew) (2009), which won the 2009 Shapiro Prize for Best Book on Israel.

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# Law and Identity in Israel

A CENTURY OF DEBATE

**NIR KEDAR**

Bar-Ilan University

*Translated by Haim Watzman*



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To Nadav and Shira

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