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II Scientific Editor: Reuven Pedatzur

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The 21st century harbors global changes which entice hopes as well as threats to world peace. Dozens of armed conflicts still prevail at this time around the world which pose a threat to the well-being of various societies. Stabilizing these conflicts is the most pressing challenge of our time.

Given today's security concerns, leaders and national policy makers require more than ever a practical dialogue with experts and academics, in order to arrive at the proper decisions. The principal challenge facing the world leadership today concerns ways to transform theoretical research into solution-oriented policies and actions.

Goals of the Center

The S. Daniel Abraham Center for Strategic Dialogue is a think-tank and action group of scholars and world leaders, affiliated with Netanya Academic College. The S. Daniel Abraham Center is a unique institution in the Middle East, engaging in both academic pursuits and on-the-ground efforts toward conflict resolution. The Chair of the Center is Dr. Ephraim Sneh, former Deputy Defense Minister, Health Minister, and Transportation Minister. The Council of Founders and Board of Trustees of the Center includes academic, political, business and community leaders from nations around the globe.

The S. Daniel Abraham Center for Strategic Dialogue has become pivotal in the establishment of substantive position papers and suggestions for conflict resolution in the region and beyond. The Center represents a much-needed approach to the problems of worldwide conflict, offering solution-driven initiatives based on practical experience and realistic goals. Its multi-faceted method provides a combination of political, security, academic and economic responses through the dispatching of teams of former politicians, community leaders, security experts, distinguished academics and prominent international business people, offering powerful mediation services in regional disputes based on the experience and expertise in their respective fields; for example, the Center was involved in mediation activities between the Greeks and Turks in Cyprus. The Center also organizes opportunities for academics and world leaders to gather together in order to address pressing global issues via international conferences, round table discussions, and workshops.

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Professor Arad is a distinguished, world-renowned mathematician who previously served as the Acting President and Rector of Bar Ilan University, before founding Netanya Academic College. He is a member of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences and has served in a number of public positions.

Dr. David Altman, Senior Vice President at Netanya Academic College and Vice-Chair of the S. Daniel Abraham Center for Strategic Dialogue

Prior to his current position, Dr. Altman served as the Director General of the Tel Aviv Foundation, the Director General and Vice President of Bar Ilan University, and the Academic Assistant to General Moshe Dayan.

Prof. Sinai Deutsch, Deputy President of Netanya Academic College and Dean of the Law School

Prof. Deutsch is one of Israel's foremost legal experts. In the past, he served as the Dean of the Faculty of Law at Bar Ilan University.

Prof. Bernard Pinchuk, Rector and Deputy President of Netanya Academic College

Prof. Pinchuk is an internationally renowned scholar. In the past, he founded the Abe Gelbert and Emini Neter Research Center, and served as Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics at Bar Ilan University.

Mr. Yossi Zeira, Director-General of the College

Mr. Zeira is one of Israel's experts in the management of academic institutions. In the past, he served as the Head of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Exact Sciences at Bar Ilan University.

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The Influence of the Establishment of a Palestinian State on Israeli Arabs

The declaration by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that the solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will come in the form of “two states for two peoples” once again raised the issue of the role that Israeli Arabs will play in this solution and the impact that the establishment of a Palestinian state will have on them. Until now, this debate had been held mainly in academic circles and among Israeli Arab intellectuals, receiving very little public attention. We at the S. Daniel Abraham Center for Strategic Dialogue at the Netanya Academic College have decided that this discussion and the presentation of the various views on this matter should be brought to the attention of the Israeli public. We have further concluded that policy makers in Israel and abroad should also have the opportunity to gain an insight into the various views and approaches taking shape on these issues. We approached the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Liberty and discussed our intent to initiate a series of studies on the subject of “The impact of the establishment of a Palestinian state on Israeli Arabs” with its representatives. It is noteworthy that they immediately responded favorably to our initiative and within a short time, we received approval for funding for the project from the foundation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Hans-Georg Fleck, the Resident Representative of the foundation in Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and the other members of the foundation, who significantly contributed to the discussions that we held on the subject. This project could not have been carried out without the support of the Naumann Foundation.

We then approached four researchers and asked them to explore this subject. This booklet sums up their research. Their findings present a complex picture regarding how the Arab public in Israel relates to the possible solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The researchers point to an interesting phenomenon, according to which most Israeli Arabs have concluded that although they are part of the problem in this conflict, they are not part of its political solution. And indeed, in discussions held in Israel and the Palestinian Authority on the various options for a political solution, no discussions were held regarding the future status of Israel’s Arab population. With this in mind, the conclusion drawn by the majority of Israeli Arabs is that it must take its fate into its own hands and guarantee its future in the State of Israel independent of the future of the political process or its outcome.

From here, the researchers moved on to analyzing the development of ideas and of various models for the integration of Israeli Arabs into the framework of the State of Israel, in view of the complex and complicated relationship that is developing between Israel’s Arab population and the Palestinian Authority.

The studies found that Israeli Arabs have been conducting debates among themselves in recent years, not only regarding how the establishment of a Palestinian state will impact them, but also regarding issues of identity and identification. It was in this context that they formulated their “Vision Documents,” which the four scholars analyze, with an eye to exploring how they impact the way in which the Israeli-Arab community perceives its future status in Israel.

The studies further examined the approaches that call for a solution in the form of a “state of all its citizens” as a viable alternative to the two-state solution, and the adoption of a consensual democracy that recognizes the collective rights of its indigenous national minority. A perusal of this booklet will demonstrate that the issue of the impact of the establishment of a Palestinian state on Israel’s Arab population is far more intricate and complex than is usually presented. Israeli policy makers must take an in-depth look at this subject. In view of the fact that that two-state solution is now Israel’s official policy, the crucial importance of holding a debate on the implications of that policy for the Arab minority living in Israel can no longer be ignored.

Preface

The Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Liberty, founded in 1958, is a German foundation for the promotion of liberal policy that aims to advance the principles of individual rights, the rule of law and a free market economy throughout the world. The foundation is active both in Israel (since 1983) and in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories (since 1994) where it works in order to strengthen and promote democracy and liberal principles, to develop and advance social pluralism, to strengthen the civil society and its institutions, and to encourage dialogue between peoples and the peace process. Emphasizing its commitment to a just and lasting peace in the region the foundation merged a few years ago its two offices in Israel and the Palestinian Autonomous Territories into a joint office located on the seam line between East and West Jerusalem.

Acknowledging the complex reality on the ground as well as the specific German responsibility for the Jewish people and in line with its liberal convictions, the Israel project is paying tribute to both - Israel’s internal and external conflicts - in the frame of its project work. Hence, the work is centred on three main topical fields and goals:

- **Individual and Religious Freedom**: fostering a free and open civil society in a secular state with the emphasis on civil rights as well as freedom of and from religion.
- **Minority Rights**: improving the relations between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority of Israel as well as the social and legal status of Israel’s Palestinian citizens.
- **Cross-Border Dialogue**: reducing regional tensions by strengthening the dialogue between civil society representatives of Israel and its Palestinian and Turkish counterparts as well as between Israel and Germany/Europe.

The major objective of our engagement in Palestine is focused on an active contribution to the establishment and consolidation of a democratic, constitutional, pluralistic, and secular State of Palestine with solid and market-oriented economic structures. In order to achieve these tasks, it is of crucial importance to strengthen liberal and secular forces in Palestine and to disseminate liberal policy concepts for state, society and economy. In addition to that, it is indispensable to develop pluralistic structures by strengthening the civil society and its organizations which, hence, predominantly constitute the FNF’s partners. This goes in line with networking for Palestinian individuals and organizations in order to connect them with like-minded regional and international partners. We are committed to the development of mutual understanding and fruitful relations between Palestine on the one side, its neighbors in the region as well as partners in Germany/Europe on the other side. These relationships will have a positive and lasting effect on promoting the capability and readiness for intra-social dialogue as well. In the context of its work, the foundation:

- organizes local and international conferences, seminars and workshops - independently or in cooperation with local partner organizations.
- provides political and strategic consultation to liberal policy groups and liberal oriented NGOs.
- encourages the involvement and participation of local individuals and groups in the foundation’s international programs, such as the International Political Dialogue Program held in Brussels, Belgium, and the International Academy for Leadership in Gummersbach, Germany.

Reuven Pedatzur
Academic Director
S. Daniel Abraham Center for Strategic Dialogue

Dr. Reuven Pedatzur
Academic Director
S. Daniel Abraham Center for Strategic Dialogue
The Influence of the Establishment of a Palestinian State on Israeli Arabs

Introduction

This paper will explore whether the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, as a solution to the Palestinian national problem, addresses the national aspirations of the Arab-Palestinians who are citizens of Israel. The answer to this question will also tell us about the nature of the relationship between the national group that is the subject of this investigation and the rest of the Palestinian nation, and especially the nature of its relationship with the future Palestinian state. It will also provide answers regarding the type of relationship Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel aspire to have with the State of Israel and the Jewish majority.

The debate regarding the national aspirations of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel is in fact a discussion of political-national thought. The development of political ideas is evident from the political literature and the platforms, programs and positions of the various political organizations, forces and parties. Similarly, knowledge of this subject can be gained from the literature, positions and behavior of the Arab civil organizations, because through their activities, the civil organizations have dealt with issues that are essentially political in nature, despite their civil semblance, in order to avoid a confrontation with the essence of the state and the constraints of Israeli law.

This paper was written at a time when a number of Arab states have been experiencing social-political revolutions. These revolutions and their outcomes are likely to have considerable impact on the political-national convictions of Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, but it is too early at this time to foresee the direction that this influence will take or its intensity. That is why we will not discuss the impact of these revolutions here, and nor will we relate to possible future developments that may alter or even challenge some of the conclusions drawn at the end of this study. Our discussion will chronologically follow the historical periods in which the national aspirations of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, along with the thinking regarding the way to implement those aspirations, developed and took shape.

Theoretical approach

Our discussion of the realization of the national aspirations of the Arab-Palestinian minority in Israel takes the dynamic nature and the multi-dimensional character of the national movement as a given. A good starting point is a characteristic shared by all minority movements – their opposition to the existing political order. Each movement expresses the form and content of this opposition by means of its discourse of demands, which varies in accordance with how the government responds. From this follows that our discussion should focus on the discourse of demands as expressed by the members of the minority group and the changes that this discourse undergoes over time.

The demands made by members of frustrated groups generally represent a rational aspiration on their part to extract some kind of advantage from an existing opportunity, or in the absence of such an opportunity, to withdraw from the larger society. In the first case, the key concepts are recognition, access and participation; in the second, separation, autonomy and independence.1

The demands in the second category (separation, autonomy and independence) belong to a different level of demands than the first (recognition, access and participation) because they assume that a separate territorial political unit having national significance will be created, and this challenges the existing territorial order.2

The transition from the category of demands of recognition, access and participation to that of separation, autonomy and independence and vice versa represents an indication of either a rise or fall in tension, or evidence that the potential for conflict is either waning or warning.

The aspiration for recognition is the most benign expression of a minority’s aspirations, but if this aspiration is denied, it can lead to conflict. By distinguishing between three types of minority movements and the stages in the ‘lifecycle’ of each type, Wirth3 sketches out a continuum of possibilities from which the minority can choose. On one end of the continuum is the choice to take action that would lead to total assimilation into the dominant society, and on the other, is the choice to separate and create an independent political power base. The conditions for choosing which type of action to take along the continuum depend on how the larger society responds to the minority’s demands. Four variables determine the actions the minority will take:

1. Class interests (distribution of material resources)
2. Status interests (distribution of social-cultural and power resources)
3. An inflow of opportunities
4. Restrictions on opportunities

The effective collective political activity of minorities is intensified when their class interests become the subject of government policy. When these interests are phrased in political terms, political rather than economic measures will be considered most appropriate to implement the aspirations of the minority.4

If minorities maintain that they are discriminated against economically or politically because they are culturally, racially or nationally different from the majority, they can become actively involved in politics. This is because they believe that it is necessary to exert influence on the government in order to accomplish their goals. Because effective political action requires unity on the part of the people suffering from the same deprivations, minorities can become concerned with a need to define their distinctive claims to status. Unity can be engendered by reminding people of the cultural characteristics that they share, i.e. politics of identities.5

Consequently, the motifs for action (interests) are a more critical condition than the actual deprivation. No less critical is the awareness that pressure on the government has some promise of success along with the possibility that it will lead to change. Unity can be achieved by reminding the members of the minority of what they have in common. These two levels of awareness (awareness of the interests and awareness that pressure can give rise to change) develop under specific conditions that can be distinguished from the oppression being suffered.6

One of these conditions can be called an “inflation of opportunities.” This variable is interposed between discrimination and collective action. It develops when a minority acquires ideas regarding its status in society that run counter to previously held notions regarding inherent justice or inevitable submission. In other words, the minority develops a new perception of reality, the essence of which is that it is deprived, or a new perception of its ability to deliver itself from the situation of deprivation.

The opposite of an inflation of opportunities is a situation in which opportunities are absent, or that is, when the awareness of the deprivation stems from the fact that the new reality is depriving the minority of freedom of action and/ or the certain measure of autonomy that it enjoyed in the past by imposing new restrictions (such as on freedom of movement, organization, action, etc.). The essential issue is that the minority is unable to bring about the removal of the restriction, and consequently, its demand is based on the assumption that it cannot be removed. The members of the minority start to redefine their status in terms of beliefs and actions that distinguish them from the dominant majority. This redefinition incorporates a demand for a different cultural identity, one that the minority tries to preserve in its institutions.7 The territorial base provides tools to preserve traditional lifestyles and cultural isolation from the rest of society. Instead of redefining their identity in terms of modernization and the building of a new society (on a religious or social basis), they conduct politics through which they exclude themselves from the demands of loyalty to the larger society.8

As noted, these conditions, along with awareness and perceptions of the available opportunities, determine the mode of action or discourse that the minority will adopt. The transition from a discourse of containment to one of withdrawal has a very clear territorial significance. Recognition, access and participation can be attained without a territorial base. However, a doctrine of autonomy and independence is based on territorial arrangements that would give the minority group territorial control. From this it follows that movements that put forward demands for separation, autonomy or independence must be concentrated territorially and involved close to the country’s borders and centers of interaction and communication.

Connection between the size of the group, its distribution and location, on the one hand, and its demands, on the other, is not a deterministic connection, but rather these variables always impact the group’s demands.9 They can also work counter to the interests of the minority group, as is the case in Israel. In Israel’s case, the Arab population is not concentrated in a single territorial area, does not have a particular central city and is relatively remote from Israel’s main centers of communications. It is more common for a group that feels that it is not getting its fair share of the national resources to exert pressure for greater access and participation, and possibly for more recognition too. A group can aspire to greater participation in the national society and also leave itself a certain degree of separation or autonomy, that is to say, an aspiration to remain both inside and outside the larger society. When the frustration is acute, the demand for autonomy may be suppressed by voices within the group calling for independence. In this respect, demands for separation and autonomy mean a greater degree of self-administration in

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5 Wirth, p. 6.

6 Wirth, p. 6.


8 Wirth, p. 58.

9 Mikessell and Murphy, p. 586.
clearly defined areas such as education, culture and religion within that same state framework. A demand for independence means complete separation from the state and this changes the status of an independent state entity to join another already existing one.

Further to this, the demands of the minority group are not always uniform. Subgroups within the same group can present different demands. One subgroup may demand economic opportunities and deny that it has any political aspirations. Another one may focus its attention on a key subject such as the use of its language or dialect in schools, as it minimizes or rejects the value of others. Between recognition and participation and between separation and independence are many numerous shadings of grey, exemplified by the ambivalent notions of "qualified access" and "semi-autonomy." The level and the demands of the national authorities label them as either "moderate" or "extremist."10

Minority demands and government policies are symbiotically related. The central state plays a key role in the development and intensification of minority aspirations. The response of state authorities to minority demands is based on how the dominant majority perceives the political-social order and the type of arrangement that those in control deem most likely to promote continuity and legitimacy at any particular time.11

In addition to the influences of awareness and the perception of the state of opportunities, the minority’s demands are also affected by how it views itself. The research reveals a dynamic relationship between politics and changes in the minority’s conception of itself.12

In the case of Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, the state has for the most part chosen to take a confrontational stance, alongside a policy of cooptation of the elites and of divide and conquer.13 In most cases, it initiated a policy that cast aspersions on the political leadership of the minority’s political movements, while at the same time recognizing the difference in language and advancing limited programs for the members of the minority, aimed at employing them in the public sphere. The result was compliance by most of the minority group with its new status, which included recognition and access, as well as further radicalization of the group’s demands based on the failure of the state to respond to the demands for full participation. The policies of Israel’s governments repeated the pattern of repression of minorities that demand recognition, access and participation, as in the case of Land Day, Equality Day 1987, the events of October 2000 and the non-recognition of representative organizations. The experience of other minorities proves that what usually happens is the group that is suppressed or neglected becomes even more insistent in its demands. If the group is of substantial size and has a territorial base, a state is presented with more intractable problems, which can include costly acts of defiance and disorder. Governments that are unwilling to deal with “moderates” who want into a national society are often obliged to contend subsequently with “extremists” who want out of that society.14 The cases of complete eradication of a group’s demands are extremely rare, even among those that encounter suppression.

All societies throughout the world are beset by internal conflicts. Two parallel intellectual approaches have emerged to resolve them. The first, whose importance has dramatically increased, is the Politics of Difference, which is seen mainly in countries characterized by a well-established Western democracy. This approach is the result of the development of new and pluralistic forms of democratic citizenship. The efforts of the State of Israel to build a nation-state, or Jewish state, include either assimilation (the Middle Eastern Jews) or the exclusion of the identities of minorities and cultures, which makes them invisible in the public space (Arabs). Instead of trying to adopt one of the above-mentioned approaches or a more multicultural approach to citizenship, which clearly includes groups that are culturally nationally different, especially the Arabs, Israel is marching very quickly in the opposite direction of fashioning a nationalism that excludes and minimizes citizenship and participation in the shared public space.

When nationalism generates feelings of xenophobia or megalomania, the presence of others who do not belong to that nationalism can provoke keen feelings of resentment, especially if it is thought that they are disloyal or getting more than their fair share of the benefits of national life.15

In accordance with the approach that we have presented here, we will now explore the development and formation of the national aspirations of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel in the various frameworks of affiliation because the Pan-Arab affinity of Arabs was formed. The second factor is the liminal status of Palestinians in Israel and their inclusion in both the Israeli and Palestinian arena on the background of their anomalous nature (this is the status that positions the Palestinians between the national aspirations of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and their social and economic participation and existence in the case of the two-state solution.

The national aspirations of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel are forged and consolidated due to the influence of many variables. The main and most influential one was the policy of the Israeli government and the attitude of the Jewish majority. The aspirations of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and the policy of the Israeli government are symbolically related. The governments of Israel refused to legitimize the Arab population but did not try to assimilate it either. The State of Israel took a confrontational stance and a policy of supervision and control. Other variables that also affected the development of the Arab national-political aspirations were the political-ideological developments in the Arab world, and in the world at large, along with economic conditions, the features of the social structure and the prevailing political culture. Any changes in these conditions led to subsequent changes in the political-national orientation of the Arab-Palestinian citizens. The crucial turning point in the Arab political thought began in the year of the Nakba 1948, when it was realized that the conditions of the lives of the Arab-Palestinians within Israel would be entirely different from the lives of the rest of the Palestinians. Overnight, they became an Arab-Palestinian minority with Israeli citizenship. The Arabs were forced to live inside a framework of thought, values and institutions hostile to their Arab-Palestinian affiliation. The Arab-Palestinian minority had to deal with different issues from those that prevailed in the Arab and Palestinian environment, and to invent special and perhaps innovative mechanisms to deal with those issues. This is also the source of its need for a different political thought consistent with this situation. This thought developed and took shape under conditions that involved the loss of the city in 1948 and the growth of the remaining villages to the size of cities, without that size being accompanied by corresponding cultural and technological changes. This is how rural cities, called balds in Arabic, were formed.

The second factor is the liminal status of Palestinians in Israel and their inclusion in both the Israeli and Palestinian arena on the background of their anomalous nature (this is the status that positions the Palestinians between the national aspirations of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and their social and economic participation and existence in the case of the two-state solution).

These factors, which developed in wake of the Nakba, strategically impacted the position of the Palestinians and their modes of action in the cultural, national and economic fields in Israel.16

This positioning is what determined the political-national issues that occupied the Arabs. “In the reality of the Palestinians in Israel, the once-temporary and transitional liminal status of Palestinians in Israel after the Nakba in 1948 became a permanent reality, a state of emergency that became routine. The liminality of the Palestinians in Israel represents a transitional stage between two periods marking a different social order and the political, civil space and the Palestinian social and national space.”17

The two main issues in Arab political thought were the status of the Arabs in the State of Israel and the Palestinian problem in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Their positions on both issues, i.e. the content of the political thought, were strongly influenced by the restrictions placed on their activity within the Israeli framework. The forces active among the Arabs were aware of the objective conditions and restrictions imposed by the Israeli framework. They were always aware of the expanse of freedom that was given, and expressed their views in its context. That is why it is impossible to talk about the Arab-Palestinian minority thought in isolation from the development of the restrictions in the shadow of which this thought was consolidated. This does not mean that this thought was merely a response or submission to the conditions that prevailed; there are clear indications that it also involved, at least in part, direct and proactive thought that was the result of the initiative on the part of the minority’s to contend positively and innovatively with the important issues and overcome the restrictions imposed by the State of Israel.18

Under the objective conditions that prevailed after the establishment of the state, and within the social structure and political culture that existed, most of the political activity remained on the local level. The only leadership on a national level was the Communist party and the Al-Ard movement. The affiliation was first and foremost to the family, clan and community. But the vast majority of Arabs defined themselves as Arabs. No contradictions emerged between the various frameworks of affiliation because the Pan-Arab affiliation did not have a practical dimension for the conditions of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel. This helped the Arabs of Israel to survive and adapt to life within Israel. This is why a large gap formed between their Pan-Arab national consciousness and their actual life in the day-to-day.19

The Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel occurred simultaneously with the developments in the Arab world on the level of content, symbols and forms of activity; the growth of Pan-Arabism in the late 1950s up until the mid-1960s was accompanied by the establishment of a union between Egypt and Syria (the United Arab Republic – UAR) and then Egypt and Syria in general. Similarly, the slogans that gained currency in the Nasserite period and in the other Arab movements, such as unity, freedom and socialism, were the same slogans around which the Arab organizations in Israel rallied.
When the Communist Party of Israel embraced these slogans, including the right to self-determination for the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, support for the party soared to an unprecedented level; Pan-Arabism and Arab nationalism were combined in new and different ways in the Arab countries, the schism was replicated in Israel too: The political tendencies of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel shifted and the Communist party subsequently lost its standing.21

The Arab Front established in July 1958 had to change its name to the “Popular Front” because the Israeli authorities were unwilling to permit the establishment of a body whose orientation was Arab nationalist. The platform of the Front included the following principles and goals: the abolition of the military government; discontinuation of the expropriation of Arab lands; the return of expropriated lands to their owners; the abolition of the discrimination between citizens of the use of Arabic in all official institutions, the return of the refugees to their homes.22 Based on these principles, it would appear that the Front showed interest in improving the living conditions of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and took into account one of the most important dimensions of the Palestinian problem: the “right of return.” Especially striking in the Front’s platform is the fact that it did not refer to the existence of the State of Israel or its definition, apparently out of caution and consideration for the limitations of the law. The front was also influenced by the Pan-Arab Nasserite movement, which did not recognize the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel as a separate group. In addition, it is notable that Israel did not allow the establishment of a body whose name to the “Popular Front” because the Israeli authorities were unwilling to permit the establishment of a body whose orientation was Arab nationalist.

The split between the communist and nationalist currents within the Popular Front led in 1964 to the establishment of a new nationalist movement, Al-Ard. The platform of Al-Ard may be viewed as a leap of political thought on the part of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel. In the context of this thought, Al-Ard’s platform dealt with issues concerning the Arabs in Israel as well as their demands for a solution to the Palestinian problem. In addition, the platform also dealt with general Arab issues and the link between them and the Palestinian problem. The Al-Ard movement did not make do with the slogan “right of return,” as did the Popular Front, but also discussed the declarations of its leaders regarding “the need to establish an Arab-Palestinian state” as well as “the need to establish an Arab-Palestinian state.” This was because at that time, it was not accepted among the Arabs and Palestinians to discuss the legitimacy of the State of Israel, even in return for recognition of the legitimacy of a Palestinian state.23 Palestinian political thought did not propose the idea of establishing a Palestinian state in historic Palestine until the late 1980s, and discussion of the legitimacy of the State of Israel was unheard of until the early 1990s. Moreover, the Al-Ard movement noted the possibility that “...Israel would live in peace as an integral part of the Middle East, and as a member of a federal union including it and the united Arab nations, only if a Palestinian state is established, and under the condition that sufficient time has passed for it to prove that it has relinquished its ambition to expand.”

It turns out that the self-definition of Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel as a national minority was already known in the mid-1950s. During that time, it was strongly influenced by the rise of Pan-Arabism and Nasserism. As noted at that time, the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel identified themselves as belonging to the Pan-Arab nationalist current, and only rarely was Palestinian affiliation mentioned, except as part of the broader framework of Arabism, with mention of the specific problem of the Palestinians and the conflict with the Zionist movement and the State of Israel. Merging with Arab nationalism was extremely significant psychologically. The Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel had an emotional need to belong to a larger group that would help protect them from assimilation and act as a defensive mechanism against feelings of inferiority and lack of security, and also represent a source of pride in face of the hostile environment. In addition, it is notable that Israel did not allow the growth of parties or political movements and thwarted the development of local leadership that the people could identify with. Until the war of 1967, the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel were able to strike a balance between their citizenship in Israel and their national thought, in the hope that salvation would come from without. It is important to note that based on the platforms of the political parties, their national aspirations were related to a solution to the Palestinian problem that did not include them, while in regard to themselves, they never abandoned their aspiration to attain full and equal citizenship within the State of Israel. Once again, we see that the liminality structured the habitus (the principle that generates and unifies the Palestinians in Israel), and “the habitus shaped their roles, the discourse they created and the myths that they fostered, along with the ways of contending as they saw them.”

The most striking phenomenon during this time was that despite the importance of religious affiliation, religion wielded little influence, and also from the Palestinian political thought. These ideas had disappeared, the authorities confiscated the Islamic Waqf, which was the source of the clerics’ powers, and religious affairs were transferred to the Israeli authorities, including the appointment of religious functionaries. This led to a lessering in the religious leaders and even to suspicions that they might be collaborators. In summing up the developments during this period, we can point to the fact that the main achievement of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel was to survive in their communities and preserve Arab nationalism, alongside the preservation of the traditional local affiliations.

The development and formation of nationalist aspirations after 1967

Although the Arabs discovered the disparity between the strength of the Arab nationalist movement, as they learned about it from the media, and the reality, the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel continued to support its ideas until Nasser’s death in 1970.

The impact of the defeat in the war and Nasser’s death was critical, and it led to the decline of Pan-Arabism and the rise of Pan-Islamic ideology, as well as the reinforcement of Palestinian identity. These developments did not eradicate the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, especially in light of their renewed contact with the Palestinians in the territories and connection with conceptual currents in the Arab world. The results of the war fundamentally changed the reality and no longer existed of the balance that had existed before it, and together with the changes in the areas of economy, education and political, society, the rise of new political forces. The rise of these new forces was accompanied by far-reaching changes in the political thought of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel. Their support for Pan-Arab nationalism was replaced with solidarity with the Palestinians in the territories. This transition expressed affiliation with a more stable identity.

The abolishment of the military government in 1966 led to Pale-stinians becoming part of the Israeli landscape, and the encounter with Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza Strip after 1967 enabled them to once again become part of the Palestinian and Arab landscape. This did not mean that now the Palestinians belonged to only one of the areas. On the contrary, it established their liminal status and made the fact of their liminality (their anomalous existence) structural.24

In addition, the self-confidence they felt in wake of the Yom Kippur War of 1973 highlighted two opposing poles in the political thought of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel. One pole was the communist movement, which emphasized the need to support and express solidarity with the Palestinians in the territories. The other pole was the Pan-Arabist movement, which underscored that the political-national solution for the two groups would be different: recognition of the Arabs as a national minority with equal rights inside Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian state for Palestinians living in the territories. The meaning of this was that the Pan-Arab Front would not include the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel. At the other pole were two radical movements that tended to stress the ties between all members of the Palestinian people and their shared struggle to attain common goals. This pole became additionally polarized due to the changes that occurred in Palestinian identity.25

In wake of the 1967 war and various changes that occurred, two elements were especially striking in the development of political thought of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel: the consolidation of Palestinian identity and the transition from a strategy of survival to one of adaptation to the Israeli reality. One of the most important phenomena in the process of the development of the Arab population relates to its consolidation of a national identity and relationship with Israeli society, on the one hand, and with Palestinian society, on the other. We can point to two parallel processes that occurred at the same time and led to the consolidation of Arab society as a unique group, as it sharpened the similarities and differences between the two societies. In fact, the vast majority of Arabs chose both affiliation with Palestinian identity and transition to the adaptation strategy. Both components of identity characterized Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, although a small section insisted that the national affiliation should include all the Palestinian groups, regardless of the unique circumstances of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel. The strategy of adaptation characterized the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and distinguished them from the other Palestinians, especially those living in the territories. On the other hand, the adaptation strategy was that it represented a transition from political passivity to playing an active political role to do what they could to impact events, and especially to firmly establish their citizenship and adapt to the reality. The transition to active collective political action intensified when their class interests became the subject of government poli-

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21 Ashari, pp. 90-112.
23 Jeryis, p. 31.
24 Al-Azhari p. 94.
25 Al-Jyss, p. 29.
26 Ghanim, p. 39.
27 Al-Azhari p. 104.
28 Ghanim, p. 94.
29 Ghanim, p. 105.
The Influence of the Establishment of a Palestinian State on Israeli Arabs

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in the 1970s and 1980s:

1. A Palestinian nationalist current that sought to engage with and integrate into Israel, but on a different basis from the Communist Party of Israel and the Arab lists in the Zionist parties;

2. A Palestinian nationalist current that tended more toward withdrawal and isolation, and associated the solution to the problem of the Palestinians in Israel with the overall solution of the Palestinian problem. This current espoused boycotting the Israeli political system, which meant opposition to liberalization;

3. The Islamic current, which over time split due to disputes over a national nature: whether to oppose or support the process of an occupied people's solution; to support Hamas or Fatah; and whether to boycott or vote in Israeli elections.

The Communist Party of Israel was the strongest political force among the Arabs in the 1970s. It had to take into account the outcome of the 1967 war and the new circumstances that were created, and especially, the fundamental changes that Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel were undergoing; it supported Israeli withdrawal from the territories, led to the invention of mode of action involving the establishment of fronts on the local and national level. The fact that it could garner most of the Arab votes in the 1977 Knesset elections indicates that the majority of the Arab population opted for the strategy of adaptation and the struggle for equal rights in the new political system. This choice of the struggle to strengthen citizenship meant that they had decided to opt for the struggle for recognition, access and participation. Alongside the political forces working for the equality and integration of the Arab population, political forces that detracted the bulk of their activities to preventing this process and boycotting the Israeli political system also appeared on the scene.

As noted, among the new forces that appeared on the Arab political scene in the early 1970s was the Abna’a al-Balad movement. It represented a new version of the Arab nationalist element after the appearance of the Arab Movement in the mid-1960s, but with a clear emphasis on the Palestinian component. In other words, it had an accentuated Palestinian orientation, intertwined with social-economic protest. Unlike the Communist Party of Israel, Abna’a al-Balad’s main objective was the unification of all parts of the Palestinian people, and did not differentiate between Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and the other Palestinians. The self-determination of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel was derived from the claim of unity among all the parts of the Palestinian people. The PLO’s rising star and the international recognition of the organization, along with the increasing exposure being given to the Palestinian population in the territories, led to the strengthening of the Palestinian or Arab-Palestinian component, which became the central element of their national identity. Although Land Day, on March 30, 1976, was an expression of protest against injustice, it became a national symbol and day for all Palestinians, in Israel and elsewhere. The election victory of Tawfiq Zayyad (the candidate for the front made up of the Communist Party of Israel and nationalist forces) in the mayoral elections in Nazareth symbolized a striking change in the nationalist component among Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and the strengthening of the politics of identities.

In the 1970s, no attempt was made to unify the ranks of the nationalist and pan-nationalist forces in the Knesset list. The Arab political parties that had been a part of the same fate as Al-And. Especially notable is the fact that the popular Al-And activists started to establish Ottoman associations that advanced social and cultural aims. In fact, the activities and content of the associations were quintessentially political. In addition, a new national current appeared on the scene in early 1979 among nationalist students who formed their own organization, the Progressive National Movement (PNM). One of the factors that motivated PNM’s organization was the need to present an ideological-organizational response to the activities of the Communist Party of Israel on the campuses. Unlike the communists, and similar to Abna’a al-DNA, they did not differentiate between Palestinians outside the State of Israel and those within it (the Arab Student Council in the University of Haifa, quoted by Al-Hadaf, the organ of the Popular Front, March 31, 1981). Their crucial identity was Palestinian rather than Israeli.

The slogan of the Islamic revival that would deliver the Islamic nation. The slogan of the Islamic movement was and remains: “Islam is the solution.” The movement never provided a clear explanation for this slogan, but in quite a few cases, its leaders noted that it referred to the intention to establish an Islamic theocracy. In the early 1980s, a new model of a model of a model of the Palestinian elites on both sides of the Green Line developed among intellectuals, political leaders, and religious leaders. The strengthening of ties on the national-ideological level led to the arranging of meetings and conferences for cooperation frameworks for cooperation between the Palestinians inside Israel and the Palestinians who were living under the leadership of the PLO. Both PNM and Abna’a al-DNA supported boycotting the Knesset elections and opposed political parliamentary activity. In addition, neither supported an armed struggle inside Israel. Although both expressed loyalty to the “armed Palestinian revolution,” they responded ambiguously to the question of whether to integrate into the “greater Arab project,” and regretted bloodshed on both sides (PNM manifest December 15, 1979). In addition, both contended against the Communist Party of Israel and DPFE (the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality) on both the local and national level, and supported marking Land Day by holding a general strike across the country.

In light of how similar the two movements were — they were virtually indistinguishable — their merging into a single movement was just a matter of time. But a split was also only a matter of time because of the makeup of the membership of these two groups. And indeed, the two movements merged under the name of the National Coordination Committee known as the National Coordination Committee. Most of its activists were educated teachers, students and university graduates of the highest caliber. Its unique elitist nature generated a wide range of individual approaches, positions and views, which often ran counter to one another. The inevitable was therefore that in addition to a group of organizers that represented themselves as a group of organizers and as a national current, a group of organizers acted separately in Um al-Fahm under the name Al-Antzor, and demanded to put an end to the boycott of the Israeli Knesset elections. Parallel to the appearance of the nationalist currents, an Islamic revival was also emerging, and it would turn out to be one of the most important movements that shape a new Arab-Palestinian Arab-Palestinian population, receiving considerable support from Palestinians in the territories. Among the Palestinians in the territories, a Pan-Islamic leadership began to surface, which viewed the return to Islam as a means to change the situation and gain freedom from the Israeli occupation. The activities of the Muslim Brotherhood started to cross the Green Line. These activities were especially successful in the villages of the Small Triangle whose inhabited Arabs were all Muslims and which was in close geographic proximity to the territories.

The success of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 strengthened faith in the possibility of fomenting a similar revolution that would deliver the Islamic nation. The slogan of the Islamic movement was and remains: “Islam is the solution.” The movement never provided a clear explanation for this slogan, but in quite a few cases, its leaders noted that it referred to the intention to establish an Islamic theocracy. In the early 1980s, a new model of a model of the Palestinian elites on both sides of the Green Line developed among intellectuals, political leaders, and religious leaders. The strengthening of ties on the national-ideological level led to the arranging of meetings and conferences for cooperation frameworks for cooperation between the Palestinians inside Israel and the Palestinians who were living under the leadership of the PLO. Both PNM and Abna’a al-DNA supported boycotting the Knesset elections and opposed political parliamentary activity. In addition, neither supported an armed struggle inside Israel. Although both expressed loyalty to the “armed Palestinian revolution,” they responded ambiguously to the question of whether to integrate into the “greater Arab project,” and regretted bloodshed on both sides (PNM manifest December 15, 1979). In addition, both contended against the Communist Party of Israel and DPFE (the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality) on both the local and national level, and supported marking Land Day by holding a general strike across the country.

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establishment of a Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel as a solution to the Palestinian problem. At the same time, they were unwilling to move there or annex their community to a Palestinian state if and when it were established. They viewed the State of Israel as their home; they associated their future with it and fought for their equal civil rights within it. It was clear then that despite the powerful ties with the Palestinian leadership in the territories and despite their unqualified support for and even demand to establish a Palestinian state, this solution would not include them, and consequently, they did not make the shift to making demands that included autonomy or separation from the State of Israel.

The appearance and activities of the Progressive Peace Movement in the early 1980s made a significant contribution to this orientation. This movement, more than any other symbolized the development of an Arab middle class from among the intellectuals and businessmen who no longer accepted the hegemony of the communist party in Arab politics in Israel. This class demanded greater engagement with Israel’s economy, society and culture, and greater political expression in Israel. Unlike the Communist Party of Israel, it sought to integrate on a collective rather than individual basis, and consequently the demand for collective rights was conspicuous in the activities of the Progressive Movement. The demand for these rights was naturally accompanied by activities aimed at strengthening the Arab-Palestinian identity among the Arabs. The demand to integrate, on the one hand, and the strengthening the Arab-Palestinian identity among the Arabs of the Progressive Movement, on the other, represented a very important innovation in the political thought of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel.41

1. It strengthened Palestinian identity by identifying the movement as part of the movement to liberate Palestine.
2. It engaged in political activity to integrate the Arabs into Israeli society on a collective basis.
3. It advanced the idea of using fronts on the political scene to the point of joining forces with Zionist politicians in order to facilitate access to the centers of decision making in Israel.
4. It demanded the right of self-rule, or semi-autonomy in certain areas of life.
5. It sought to turn Israel into a state of all its citizens.

Accordingly, the appearance of the Progressive Movement constituted a further turning point in Palestinian political thought. It was a movement which began to challenge the liminal and call for a change in the political structure of the state. They demanded the establishment of a political structure that would engage the Arabs as equal citizens. The calls to establish a cultural autonomy and a state of all its citizens or a bi-national state were directed at bringing about the de-Zionification of Israel, and expressing the desire of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to change the liminality from a permanent state to one that could be altered.

This development came immediately after the disappearance of the Arab lists affiliated with the Israel Labor Party in the late 1970s, because they did not convincingly address the strong feelings of nationalism on the part of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel. As noted, the Progressive Movement, until 1988, together with the Democratic Arab Party – DAP – (which was founded in 1988), reflected a desire to be part of the Israeli political system, on the one hand, and also symbolized the consolidation of a national identity, on the other.

According to our research, the Progressive Movement was not the first to maintain that the Arabs represent a national minority in Israel, but it was the first to turn this definition into a fundamental principle of its political platform and combine it with the desire for political activity geared at advancing the integration of the Arabs into society and politics, instead of opposing integration and boycotting the political system. The platform of the Progressive Movement reflected a desire to move from the margins, or the liminal position, in both societies to the center of both societies. This was an attempt to normalize the status of the Arabs not by belonging to one of the arenas, either the Israeli or the Palestinian, and not by choosing to abandon either citizenship or nationalism, but rather by belonging to both centers or structures simultaneously.42

A quite similar attempt at advancement was made by the establishment of the Democratic Arab Party – DAP – founded in 1988. DAP was the first Arab party established as an independent party, and its platform included ideas resembling those of the Progressive Movement. It advanced the national and civil rights of the Arabs, the actualization of equality and justice, recognition of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people and its right to establish an independent state alongside Israel, the strengthening of ties between Arab and Israeli citizens, living in peace and ending the Israeli occupation of the territories.43

The appearance of DAP and its participation in Israel’s parliamentary life was one of the most striking phenomena in the development of Arab political thought in Israel. As the first independent Arab party established in Israel, it differed from its predecessors who confined their activity to the electoral arena, the search for specialized economic and political frameworks to address the aspirations of the Arabs and adapt to the socioeconomic and cultural changes. Subsequently, the Arab political thought in Israel began to become increasingly complex and complicated as time passed. Indeed, the new political conditions that had come about in wake of the First Lebanon War (1982) led to changes in political positions, and in wake of the first Palestinian intifada (late 1987) and its impact, changes occurred on the level of political activity and organizations too, which were reflected in the following phenomena:

First, the establishment of a new party, the Democratic Arab Party (DAP), the first independent Arab party in the history of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel.
Second, the retreat of the Progressive List for Peace from the idea of Jewish-Arab cooperation, making it an exclusively Arab party.
Third, the appearance of new forms of political thought in the Communist Party of Israel and the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (DFPE), combined with harsh criticism of the ideology, politics and behavior of its leadership; And fourth, the rapid rise of the Islamic movement that began to gain prominence as a large and influential political force in the structure of the political system in Israel. The Arab political movements welcomed the decision by the PLO (in November 1988) to declare independence within the 1967 borders. They interpreted this declaration as recognition of the fact that their political fate would be different from that of the rest of the Palestinians, and that their discourse regarding their indigenousness and nationalism with citizenship. But this time, the attempt was made by the representatives of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to turn this decision into a reality. This movement largely changed the social lifestyle and patterns of thought. In addition, the rise in the educational level and discrimination led to the bolstering of political awareness and an accumulated sense of national oppression, in addition to the strengthening of awareness of class disparity.44

All these developments in political thought and the consolidation of national aspirations symbolized the widening and strengthening of the Arab middle class. The transition of the former farmers to becoming farmers and thus the transformation of the local Arab working class over time: a rise in the number of white-collar workers, a drop in the percentage of unskilled workers, the emergence of a middle class made up of merchants, contractors, speculators and businessmen, and the accumulation of capital in the hands of this class. The growth of the middle class and Israel’s refusal to enable more opportunities led to a search for specialized economic and political frameworks to address the aspirations of the Arabs and adapt to the socioeconomic and cultural changes. Subsequently, the Arab political thought in Israel began to become increasingly complex and complicated as time passed. Indeed, the new political conditions that had come about in wake of the First Lebanon War (1982) led to changes in political positions, and in wake of the first Palestinian intifada (late 1987) and its impact, changes occurred on the level of political activity and organizations too, which were reflected in the following phenomena:

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The development and formation of national aspirations in the 1990s – The Oslo agreements

After the 1992 elections, the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel achieved a new status as part of the “blocking majority,” largely due to their position on peace. Although the positions of DFPE and the Democratic Arab Party (DAP) were not consistent with the basic principles of the Rabin government, they did not move ahead with the peace process underpinned their decision to support the government from without. This position expressed a concept that had taken root among the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel.

For many years, Arab spokespersons in Israel tended to portray peace as a solution that would heal all the problems of the Arab minority in the state. [...] When peace came, those who considered the problems of the minority, the government and the Jewish majority would have no excuse to discriminate against them, the mutual suspicions and hostility would disappear and energies would be directed at economic development, in which Arab Israelis would play an important role as a bridge.

The Declaration of Principles (the Oslo Agreement) of 1993 would refute the claim regarding the connection between peace and improvement in the status of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, and further consolidate the approach that improvement in their status was a function of their relationship with the State of Israel. The status of the Israeli Arab citizens of Israel, who were marked as different in the collective nationalist structure of the state, became accepted as a ‘natural’ given. In addition, the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel were in practice excluded from the Palestinian nationalism too. Because of their Israeli citizenship, they were marked as different in the collective national expanse, and their representation and participation in the national project was suspended. Palestinian citizens in Israel were excluded from Palestinian nationalism not in wake of negotiations, but because they were given up on from the outset. It was not due to reluctance or inability that they were not included in the national vision, but because they were considered ‘friends,’ rather than ‘members of the community’. The almost sweeping support from Israeli Arabs for the Oslo and Cairo agreements and what occurred in their wake was not completely naïve support, and nor was it based only on a genuine belief in the phased plan, which would ‘necessarily’ lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state. Behind their unqualified support for any form of a Palestinian-Israeli peace settlement was their aspiration to satisfy the national dimension in their self-identity.


future would be connected to the extent of their integration into the State of Israel. The Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel adopted the PLO’s stance: a distinction devoid of content that their Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, the national element and the civil one, in addition to the Islamic-religious element. The political solution, he believed, was two states for two peoples – Israel and Palestine. In his view, even if a Palestinian state were to be established, the Israeli Palestinians would not move there or live in it, but would rather continue to live in the State of Israel as they fought for equal rights within it.19

The differences in orientation came to the fore in the first lists not considering the support for national struggle: The Progressive List for Peace, at the time the second-largest party. One of the list’s leaders wrote an op-ed for Al-Watan: “As citizens of the State of Israel, we have no right to have a government with governmental authorities. That is why we have decided that our struggle will be a public one where identification with our brethren in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is concerned. We view the use of violence inside the state, regardless of its goal, as something that is against the law, and violence will not be used by anyone from the Progressive List. At the same time, the use of force in the occupied territories is the legitimate right of our brethren there, and we will support an international covenant.50

The leader of the Islamic Movement in Israel at that time, Abdullah Nimer Daniz, also underscored on different occasions the support for national rights (wataniya), which was the role of the Palestinians in Israel in the context of the state.47 In fact, the PLO’s decision only strengthened the orientation that was already dominant among the Arabs regarding the solution to the Palestinian problem, and that that solution would be a national one that did not include them. These developments were accompanied by the crisis in the Gulf and the collapse of the Soviet Union and the communist bloc, which removed all the ideological and political alternatives that had been previously available to the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel.

The contradiction between the developing aspirations of the Arab elites and the dearth of opportunities that Israel offered led them to consider the future of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and the burgeoning of new ideas regarding salvation, including a certain formula involving autonomy.48 But in fact, this development only strengthened the Arabs’ political orientation. All the political organizations, with the exception of Abna’a al-Balad Abna’a al-DNA and a branch of the Islamic Movement, emphasized that the future orientation of the Palestinians in Israel would be different from that of the Palestinians in the territories. The overwhelming majority of Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel supported the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel as the solution to the Palestinian problem, but viewed their own future as part of Israel and consequently, continued the struggle for equal civil rights within it.49

The Oslo agreements

The impact of the political developments was especially striking in the changes in the political map and within the movements and parties. The Arab political system underwent far-reaching changes: the disappearance of the Progressive Movement, which subsequently disintegrated. As a result of the disappearance of the Progressive Movement, and the split in the Islamic Movement. The form the activities took and their content also underwent change. Local matters relating to the local Arab population now occupied a far greater and more prominent place in their platforms than in the past. In advance of the elections to the 14th Knesset in 1996, two new lists appeared on the political scene: The first was the Democratic National Assembly (DNA), which was founded as a result of an initiative by three political forces in the Arab community: a branch of the Abna’a al-Balad movement, the Brit Shiyony (Covenant of Equality) movement and a branch of the Progressive Movement. The second was the Arab Movement for Change (AMC).

The consensus that had formed in the past among most of the movements and parties regarding acceptance of the two-state solution, which the Palestinian Authority had also accepted, continued to receive support. Moreover, all the political organizations agreed that the political solution to the Palestinian problem would not include the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, with the exception of what remained of the Abna’a al-Balad movement and the northern branch of the Islamic Movement, which did not express a clear political program.

The current that favored integration into Israeli society became the dominant one among the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, with the exception of Abna’a al-Balad, or rather what remained of it, after most of its members had joined either the Progressive Movement (before it broke up) or the Democratic National Assembly. Despite the considerable similarity among all the political movements on most issues, there are discernable differences among them in how they view the relationship of the Arab minority with the State of Israel. Four different cur-
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The development and formation of national aspirations after October 2000

The feeling of the Arab citizens, whose citizenship failed to protect them from the events of October 2000, led, for the first time to an initiative on the part of the Arab leaders, in the context of which they appealed to the United Nations for international protection. A petition requesting international protection for the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel was signed by more than 10,000 Arabs was sent to the United Nations. While this initiative remained only on the symbolic level, it had far-reaching implications in terms of the attempt to internationalize the problem of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel.

The events of October 2000 underscored the pre-existing alienation among the Arab population. The results of the October events were translated into political behavior in the elections for Prime Minister held in February 2001. The Arab population boycotted the elections in order to punish Prime Minister Ehud Barak and to protest the treatment that the minority received from the state and the Jewish majority. Voter turnout among the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel was only 18 percent, and in certain towns, the turnout did not exceed 4 percent. These elections marked a turning point in the way the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel related to Israeli politics. In the prime ministerial elections, boycotting the elections was a legitimate course of action for the Arab public. In 2006, not only did the Arab public abstain from going to vote, it actively boycotted the elections, based on a well-reasoned political agenda. The overall voter turnout that year dropped to an all-time low of 58 percent. Despite the positive impact on voter turnout of Lieberman’s appearance on the political scene, the percentage in 2006 showed a further moderate drop, to 53.5 percent.

Whereas the Jewish majority and the state viewed the participation of the Arabs in the October protest a blurring of the Green Line, the Arabs themselves continued to differentiate between their own status and that of the Palestinians in the territories. In Arabic, they called the events in Israel Habab al-Aqsa (the al-Aqsa short burst of wind), whereas in the territories, they were known as an intifada (a long-term uprising). Mohammad Zidan, the chairman of the Monitoring Committee for Arab Affairs at the time, accentuated this distinction between the status of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and that of the Palestinians living in the territories: “We have our ways to express ourselves and we didn’t want to use the same terminology, lest it be interpreted negatively (by the Jewish public), as if the intifada in the West Bank and Gaza Strip had spread to inside the Green Line, which would lead to a fourth intifada in the Jewish public. We were also careful to use the term Habab al-Aqsa or Habab October in order not to lend a dimension of violence to our struggle within the Green Line."

The struggle of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel intensified and focused on civil issues. This struggle revealed that the gulf dividing the two populations over matters of principle that concerned both populations was indeed immense and difficult to bridge, especially regarding the character of the state and distribution of social resources, including the views regarding the type of system of government that should prevail in the state. This came in addition to diametrically opposed views on the question of how to solve the Palestinian problem. In light of the conviction on the part of the Arabs as to the ineffectualness of their parliamentary activities, in the past decade, the Arab political and cultural elites have invested far greater energies on the level of the civil society than on the political level. The activities of Arab civil organizations and voluntary Arab activity have become far more extensive than what we have seen invested in politics. Hundreds of NGOs have been established and their activities are directed at empowering Arab society, representing and defending the weaker groups in it. According to Shany Payes, there are currently as many as 170 NGOs. The direction of energies towards civil activities stemmed from the fact that the Arab population was disappointed not only with its own leadership, but also, as noted, with the political structure within which it was working. The Arab population saw that the institutionalized parliamentary pol- litical system, whose activities were unable to assist in addressing the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel's concerns, led to the conclusion that an alternative channel of activity that could address its economic, political and individual needs: “In view of the fact that the work market in Israel erects significant barriers to skilled Arab intellectuals and that the political system delegitimates the Arab leadership, many Arab

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The Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel were demanding that they be included as part of the Palestinian people. This pressure led to the establishment of a Palestinian state in 1993. This process was characterized by a disconnect between the Palestinian Arabs and the Jewish majority, as they had no place in the Palestinian state. These demands clearly express the right to recognition, access and partnership within the Israeli system, and propose a model for a relationship with the state and the Jewish majority.

The future-vision paper, which was published on behalf of the National Committee of Heads of the Arab Local Authorities in Israel, defines the demands of the Arabs in no uncertain terms:

- "The Palestinian Arabs in Israel are dissatisfied with their collective status, as they seek to preserve their Arab-Palestinian status, which they desire to attain full citizenship in the state and its institutions, alongside their desire to achieve international recognition from the right to administer their unique affairs, in the context of their Israeli citizenship, in the areas of education, culture and religion. Furthermore, they seek to attain equal rights with the Jewish minority. In truth, self-administration of this kind represents a model for a regime established on the basis of a consensual democracy, a system that would strengthen the existence of the two national groups in the state, the Palestinians and the Jews. Such a system would guarantee genuine participation for both national groups in government, in resources and in the decision-making process."

- "What then is involved are demands to maintain national identity, to attain civil equality and self-administration in education, culture and religion, and to establish a system of consensual democracy that recognizes both populations as national groups. It should be noted that throughout the document, the authors reiterate their demand for partnership as a precondition for the building of an equitable and just society. These demands clearly express the right to recognition, access and partnership within the Israeli system, and propose a model for a relationship with the state and the Jewish majority. Halabi notes in this context, that "For the first time and in no uncertain terms, [the demands] expressed recognition for Israel as the political framework of the Palestinian Arabs, and that their aspirations and desires of the Arab minority should be realized within its context, its borders and by means of negotiations with it. This legitimizes the state as an expression of self-determination of the Jewish people. [...] It expresses] the development of the Arab minority as a defined self-collective that exists in the Palestinian state for Jewish-Palestinian relations in Israel.""

- "The Haifa Declaration clearly leaves no room for any doubt regarding the realization of the national aspirations of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel. It proclaims that the self-determination of the Palestinians means the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, with the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel realizing their aspirations by continuing to live in the State of Israel as a democratic state that guarantees justice and equality and recognizes the Arabs as a national group and partner. Both documents present the position that the issue of the Jewish character of the state represents the essence of the conflict and the dispute between the Palestinians and the Jews in Israel. The Palestinian citizens associate the Jewish character of the state with their status as a national minority, and despite the insistence of the Jewish majority on the Jewish character of the state, the choice of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel is clear. The Israeli component in their identity is emphasized, and the Israeli component signifies no place in the structure of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel have adjusted to the Israeli system and are unwilling to endanger their civil rights."

The vision papers do not discuss the nature of the relations between the Palestinian state and the Palestinians in Israel. They do not relate to the question of whether any such state would be established at all. Consequently, these papers are the first attempt of their kind to consolidate thought and formulate a clear position that places the issue of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel at the center. The future-vision paper, which was published on behalf of the National Committee of Heads of the Arab Local Authorities in Israel, defines the demands of the Arabs in no uncertain terms:

- "The Palestinian Arabs in Israel are dissatisfied with their collective status, as they seek to preserve their Arab-Palestinian status, which they desire to attain full citizenship in the state and its institutions, alongside their desire to achieve international recognition from the right to administer their unique affairs, in the context of their Israeli citizenship, in the areas of education, culture and religion. Furthermore, they seek to attain equal rights with the Jewish minority. In truth, self-administration of this kind represents a model for a regime established on the basis of a consensual democracy, a system that would strengthen the existence of the two national groups in the state, the Palestinians and the Jews. Such a system would guarantee genuine participation for both national groups in government, in resources and in the decision-making process."

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The Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel disassociated from the establishment of the Palestinian state and joined the Israeli political-social center. We find similar statements in The Haifa Declaration, Haifa, 2007. This historic reconciliation also requires us, the Palestinians and Arabs, to recognize the right of the Israeli Jewish people to self-determination and to life in peace, dignity, and security. [...] Our vision for the future relations between the Palestinian Arabs and the Jewish majority is to create a democratic state founded on equality between the two national groups. This solution would guarantee the rights of the two groups in a just and equitable manner. [...] We firmly believe that the fulfillment of all the conditions for a reconciliation between the two peoples, the Jewish Israeli and Arab Palestinian, which requires the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and the realization of the rights of the Palestinians in Israel as a homeland minority, will create political circumstances that will enable the creation of confidence, cooperation, and mutual respect between two independent and democratic states: the State of Palestine and the State of Israel.

The Haifa Declaration clearly leaves no room for any doubt regarding the realization of the national aspirations of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel. It proclaims that the self-determination of the Palestinians means the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, with the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel realizing their aspirations by continuing to live in the State of Israel as a democratic state that guarantees justice and equality and recognizes the Arabs as a national group and partner. Both documents present the position that the issue of the Jewish character of the state represents the essence of the conflict and the dispute between the Palestinians and the Jews in Israel. The Palestinian citizens associate the Jewish character of the state with their status as a national minority, and despite the insistence of the Jewish majority on the Jewish character of the state, the choice of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel is clear. The Israeli component in their identity is emphasized, and the Israeli component signifies no place in the structure of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel have adjusted to the Israeli system and are unwilling to endanger their civil rights. [...] The
strategic choice made by Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel foregrounds their particular identity, which is that of a national minority, whose first priority is to work to advance its interests politically and to make the Palestinian national identity, they are independent in their decisions and actions. The Arab national minority in Israel has independent political institutions; it has developed civil society organizations and its own political agenda. The definition of its relationship with the rest of the Palestinians and with the Arab world, in the Haifa Declaration, unmistakably underscores the particular identity of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel: “We strive to give substance to our Palestinian and Arab affinities at all levels, including contacts between family members, relatives, and friends, as well as free and continuous contacts with cultural and intellectual centers in the Arab world. We aspire to deepen and expand these contacts on the political, economic, and institutional levels.”

Consequently, we may conclude: “The cultural and political elites adopted an alternative discourse, whose point of departure is activity inside the Israeli political system. They proposed a long-term national project aimed at resolving the status of the Arabs as a national collective with national interests within the Israeli political and cultural system, not outside it.” In fact, it may also be stated that the aims of the struggle of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and the means that they used to advance them did not change over the years, and consequently, Rosenthal’s remarks from the late 1970s are still relevant: “The goal of the Arab struggle is not aimed at intensifying disagreements, with an emphasis on intractable contradictions that are “tragic,” “irreconcilable,” “between national justice and national justice,” etc. The logic of the struggle is aimed, in our view, at achieving political, economic and national equality, in other words, to close the gaps in society and in the existing state. This campaign has its own momentum, both in Israel as well as in other places in the world; its sensitivity to provocative situations is especially heightened. [...] The Arabs have reached a stage whereby they are able to conduct a campaign within the accepted political rules of the state, and refuse to accept the status determined for them by the government, and this position causes governmental unease.” The conclusions of our research can confirm that the goals and measures noted in the previous paragraph are still valid. The transition to violence occurred only in relatively rare cases, when it was felt that the legitimate struggle was ineffective. In regard to the foreseeable future, it appeared that the Arabs would continue to adhere to those same goals and use the same means to achieve them. But if there were an eruption of violence that was not absolutely necessary were used, it would not be the background of the realization of national aspirations. It is interesting to note at this point the conclusion drawn by Azmi Bishara: “The eruption will not be the result of a clash between the two centers of power, but between the Arabic-speaking citizens of Israel and the Jewish public and social activity, which also point to changes in the personal and political thought of the activists. The conclusion drawn by the various entities involved in realizing those aspirations.

Conclusions
Our study very clearly confirms that the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel had already decided back in the 1960s to recognize the State of Israel as the framework within which they would continue to live, and they continue today too to abide by that choice. The Al-Ard movement, which was a Pan-Arab movement, recognized the State of Israel and even tried to engage with its political structure through participation in the Knesset elections. This was despite the fact that the strategy of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, up until the 1967 war, was “survival.” After the war, they shifted to a strategy of adaptation, which meant waging a political struggle to firmly establish their citizenship and attain equality in the distribution of resources. This transition came together with the strengthening of their Palestinian national identity. The numerous and profound changes that the Arabs experienced over the years led to the adoption of a solution for their status in the state, which would involve turning Israel into a state of all its citizens with a consensual democracy that recognizes the collective rights of the indigenous national minority. During the 1980s, a part of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel embraced a strategy of advancing their status in two hostile centers of power: the Palestinian center and the Israeli center. This attempt was especially reflected in the platform of the Progressive Movement for Peace. This attempt failed due to the form in which the conflict between the two centers of power took. Since the 1990s, the overwhelming majority of the Arab population learned more in the direction of the approach that supported the strengthening of the citizenship of the Arabs, as they relinquished a national solution that would include them, especially in view of the fact that both centers of power had already recognized the national solution of the Palestinian problem would not include the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel. At the same time, and influenced by the decision of the two centers of power, the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel adopted a discourse of indigenousness, which meant opening up the files of 1948. The opening of these files means that the citizens of the state, who are related to the internal refugees, the present absentee, the

issues of confiscated lands and the provision of collective rights in accordance with international conventions, in addition to the liberal rights that a “state of all its citizens” would provide them with. This position on the part of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel was one that demanded reconciliation between two national population groups, requiring a collective dimension and greater linguistic sensitivity than can be found in simple doctrines of universal human rights. At a time when the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel were intensifying their struggle for a reconciliation of this kind and to strengthen their citizenship, they encountered an intensification of the efforts to strengthen the county’s Jewish – that is to say religious/ethnic – character, both by means of legislation as well as by making recognition of Israel as a Jewish state a condition for a national solution to the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel adopted a discourse of equal struggle for civil rights as well as for their recognition as a national minority, equal opportunity to access and full partnership, in other words, their recognition as both equal and different. The national aspirations of the Arabs in Israel did not lead to a transition from the demands mentioned here to demands for separation or full autonomy. What this means is that the realization of their national rights, as they demand them, will come within the Israeli political-cultural context.

Our conclusions are based on the platforms of the parties and on the papers authored by the elites regarding the form the political struggle took, the activities of the civil organizations and academic research. These conclusions relate to the positions held by the vast majority of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, although it should be borne in mind that among this minority there are groups that hold views that are on the fringe of the majority position, in both directions. At one end of the continuum is a group that has internalized the Israeli experience and identity, and questions of national identity and aspirations are foreign to it. On the other, is a very small group that supports separation, either on a national or religious basis, or both. In addition to this consideration, it should also be taken into account that the Middle East has been undergoing far-reaching changes. These changes are the result of new types of political, public and social activity, which also point to changes in the center of power and the nature of the obstacles. The main impact of this activity relates to issues of identity and citizenship. There can be no doubt that these developments will have implications for the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, but it is too soon to assess the potency of the impact or the direction that they will take. In light of these considerations, this research cannot make predictions about the future, although it does indicate in no uncertain terms that identity is not a fixed element and that it can change in accordance with developments in the region. From this it follows that the meaning of nationalism itself can change, and as a result, the demands of individuals and groups can change too. And finally, it should be noted that not only the meaning of identity can change, but its weight relative to many other identities of the individual or the society can also change. The power relations between the various identities of the individual or the group decide its weight in determining aspirations, action strategies, and how to relate to the various entities involved in realizing those aspirations.
**The Arab and Palestinian context**

Inserted into the records of the discussions on the final status settlement (January-February 2011) asked to Al-Jazeera and The Guardian is a reference that is of particular importance to the matter at hand. There, in the transcribed record of a conversation held in March 2009 between Abu Mazen and the Negotiations Support Unit (NSU) headed by Saeb Erekat, Abu Mazen recounts the binding strategic instructions he gave to his team of close political advisors: in reference to the issue of the refugees, Abu Mazen noted what he considered to be the practical implications of the statement in which he was then the Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority: that the problem of the Palestinian refugees must be resolved “in a just and agreed-upon” solution. And this is how he instructed his team of advisors, who were in charge of preparing and drafting the Palestinian positions for the negotiations:

All refugees can get Palestinian citizenship, all 5 million, if they want to. Thus, for example, Palestinian refugees in Jordan may not want to, while for refugees in Lebanon there is a need. With that, Palestinian refugees will no longer be stateless but rather foreigners in host countries. [...] On numbers of refugees, it is illogical to ask Israel to take 5 million, or indeed 1 million – that would mean the end of Israel. They [the Israelis] said 5,000 over 5 years. This is even less than family reunification and is not acceptable. There also has to be compensation [...] and there needs to be compensation to host countries.

In this context, one of the support team members (identified as Abu Alaa) to present – even if only as a hypothetical possibility – the purpose of the discussion the issue of the settlers and settlements as being comparable to that of the Israeli Arabs is indicative of the secondary importance he attaches to this matter, in comparison to the primary importance attached to attaining a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

It should therefore come as no surprise that of all the documents uncovered by Al-Jazeera and The Guardian, these are, as far as I could find, the only two instances that mention the issue of the Palestinians in Israel. The entirety of the documents is devoted to a discussion of the various territorial aspects of the settlement based on a partition of the territory into two states. Even when the issue of the Palestinian refugees is discussed, there is no mention of derivative issues, such as the status of the “internal refugees,” (the Palestinians residing in Israel who were forced to leave their original localities).

The position expressed by Abu Mazen is in fact the implementation, for the purpose of diplomatic negotiations, of the basic position since the end of the 1980s of the PLO headed by Arafat. Whereas, the PLO demanded of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip at the time to strive to obtain national rights (al-haq al-wataniyya), he demanded of the Palestinians in the State of Israel to strive for equal civil rights (al-haq al-muwahhid al-taqviyya). Based on the obvious differences between the two areas, the PLO consequently declared different goals, and as far as it is concerned, the Green Line is still firm and abiding. This means that the two areas should not be treated equally as long as there are any benefits to be gained from a diplomatic settlement based on a partition into two states. As this benefit begins to fade and disappear, the difference between the two areas would necessarily be eroded, and the boundaries blurred in the direction of a growing similarity between the Arabs of Israel and the Arabs of the Land of Israel (“Palestine”).

Another example from the discussions of the final status settlement revealed by Al-Jazeera and The Guardian provides a clear demonstration of the instrumental treatment of the Palestinian citizens of Israel by the Palestinian Authority headed by Abu Mazen. In the discussion of the issue of the borders between then-foreign minister Tzivi Livni and Abu Ala and Saeb Erekat (as well as between the sides regarding the size of the settlement blocs surfaced in all their severity.) At this point, turning to the Israeli side, Saeb Erekat presented a hypothetical solution, as follows: “Can you imagine that you accept for the sake of peace to have Jews as citizens with full rights in Palestine i.e. Arab Israelis?” (It is notable that Erekat identified them as “Arab Israelis,” rather than as “Palestinian Israelis.”) Foreign Minister Tzivi Livni asked for time to consider this possibility, but noted that at first glance, she discerns a problem regarding the security of Jews living in a Palestinian state. However, in whatever way the issue is ultimately resolved, the very willingness by Saeb Erekat (as an official representative and in the presence of Abu Ala) to present – even if only as a hypothetical possibility – for the purpose of the discussion the issue of the settlers and settlements as being comparable to that of the Israeli Arabs is indicative of the secondary importance he attaches to this matter, in comparison to the primary importance attached to attaining a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

For the matter at hand, what is important is the way the API relates to resolving the issue of the Palestinian refugees because it touches on the issue of the Arabs in Israel. Those among the Arabs in Israel armed with political knowledge and awareness, as well as among the Arab and Muslim world, discerned the sharp turn introduced by the API. The Arab Peace Initiative includes two important sections on the subject of the Palestinian refugees that appear to contradict one another. On the one hand, it notes the need for a “just solution to the Palestinian refugees problem to be agreed upon in accordance with U.N. General Assembly Resolution 194.” On the other, it “assures the rejection of all forms of Palestinian patriline [awtun in Arabic] which conflict with the special circumstances of the Arab host countries.”4

“An agreed upon solution,” which by definition requires the agreement of Israel, necessarily locks the door to the mass return of refugees to the State of Israel; however, the “rejection of all forms of Palestinian patriline” in the Arab host countries leaves no other alternative, other than the return to Israel. The question arises: Was the second determination intended to serve as an escape clause, intended to void the first one of all meanings? In order to clarify this matter, we must return to the source, i.e. UN Resolution 194 of December 11, 1948, Paragraph 11, which states: The General Assembly ... resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practical date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return...” [my emphasis].

4 See the wording of the Arab Peace Initiative in Shu’un Arabiya (periodical of the Arab League), August 2002. For the text of the resolutions of the Arab summit conferences since 2002 that include this “initiative,” see the website of the Arab League: www.arabialigueonline.org/faq/index.jsp.

The key words of Resolution 194 are those that I have emphasized: “wishing” and “choosing.” Based on this formulation, it is clear that the decision to return must be made exclusively by each refugee as an individual. This basic imperative – the personal decision of the refugee – was for many years the cornerstone, a sine qua non, of the Arab and Palestinian position. And this is exactly where we find the fundamental innovation in the API where the refugees are concerned: an explicit formulation that determines that the resolution to the problem must be “agreed upon.” What this means is that the collective Arab master-plan shifted the burden of decision regarding the issue of return and compensation from the individual refugee, as noted in UN Resolution 194, to the two parties to the agreement – Israel and the PLO-Palestinian Authority. From this point forward, says the API, the resolution to the refugee problem is subject to a political settlement between the sides, permanently doing away with the possibility of a personal decision on the part of each individual refugee.

This is the explicit point of departure from which Abu Mazen derived the practical instructions he gave to his advisory team in the document cited at the beginning of this article. The resolution to the problem of the Palestinian refugees became subject to the bilateral deal aimed at settling the partition between two states. Abu Mazen proposed distinguishing between citizenship and residency: the refugees in the Arab host countries could receive Palestinian citizenship, which would enable them to settle in their very own land as equals, or to remain as residents. Abu Mazen’s instructions to his political advisors aimed also to resolve the seeming contradiction between the “agreed-upon solution” section in the initiative and the section on “rejection of patriline” of the refugees in the host Arab countries. His instructions set out, as noted, the track on which the Palestinian refugees can settle as residents without becoming citizens of the host Arab countries that do not wish to grant them citizenship. This is also the source of his above instructions to the Israeli Arabs to hold on to their Israeli citizenship no matter what. It is based on the fact that the “rejection of patriline” in the initiative is not categorical, but is rather conditioned on “the special circumstances of the Arab host country,” i.e., their ability and preparedness to grant citizenship. From this it follows that in those places and circumstances where the “special circumstances” make it possible for the refugees to settle as citizens (such as Jordan, and quite differently, Israel), that option is available to them. It goes without saying that in principle they can return in the wake of the political settlement to the Palestinian state where ever they desire depending on its social-economic capability to absorb them; the return to the “patrice” (the father, homeland) is opposite to “patriline” (“father”). In this way then the “agreed-upon solution” and the prohibition against the tawtun are compatible and do not contradict one another. The most conclusive testimony on this matter appeared in the resolutions of two recent Arab summit meetings (in Doha, Qatar in March 2009, and in Sirte, Libya in March 2010). The then Libyan ruler Muammar Gaddafi vehemently demanded that his reservations with the initiative be added to the resolutions, and they were indeed included in the margins of the official text as follows: “[Libya] affirms its reservation to the API and other terms of reference, which are not conducive to the establishment of a democratic State on all Palestinian soil (to be known as ‘Israelite’) or to the return of Palestine (this section in the API)”. “If the text of the paragraph voided the ‘agreed-upon solution’ paragraph of all meaning, Libya (along with Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood, Iran, Hezbollah and the Global Jihad) would not be so vehemently opposed to the API. Sometimes we can learn about the rule – i.e. the accepted interpretation – from the exceptions to this rule. The case is no different in the case with Gaddafi’s reservation. As we shall see below, the authors and disseminators of the vision papers among the Palestinians in Israel also had fundamental reservations with the API. In view of the interpretation of the Palestinian Authority and the Arab consensus that excluded the Arabs in Israel from any status or even accessibility in the matter of the final status settlement, these reservations, whose wording – to put it mildly – evince a repudiation in principle, should not come as a surprise. Once again, it is no coincidence that the “vision documents” were published in 2006-2007, in the wake of the API becoming the cornerstone of the collective Arab position vs. the settlement of the conflict with Israel.

Additional evidence about the attitude of the Palestinian Authority towards the issue of the Palestinians in Israel can be found in the discussions within the Palestinian Authority regarding the wording of the constitution of the future Palestinian state. A constitution is of course a canonical document that does not discuss issues that are transient or short-lived, but rather strives to focus on the most basic and fundamental principles and safeguard them against wear and tear and the vicissitudes of time and circumstance. We can see that the final draft of the constitution of the Palestinian state (Draft 3, May 2008) prepared under the leadership of National Council Chairman Marwan Barghouti (as well as Abu Mazen) emphasizes in its first paragraph that the borders of “Palestine” are those of June 4, 1967, and that all its inhabitants shall be subject only to Palestinian law. Article 2 notes that “The Palestinian people are part of the Arab and Islamic nations,” and Article 5 notes that “Islam is the official religion in Palestine,” parallel to the fact that the “The constitution guarantees equality in rights and duties to all citizens irrespective of their religious creed.” Article 7 states: “The principles of the Islamic shari’a are a main source for legislation. The followers of the monotheistic religions shall have their personal status and religious denominations within the framework of [positive] law, while preserving the unity and independence of the Palestinian people”. Article 12 discusses “Palestinian nationality” and notes that “This right passes on from fathers or mothers to their offspring” (unlike the Palestinian Covenant, which linked Palestinian nationality with birth in the “nation-state of the Palestinian people”). It is of course logical to lodge the same complaints against the Palestinian state. Given all the differences, just as Palestine views itself as part of a broader cultural-identity complex (Arab-Muslim), so does Israel. Just as the latter adopted the Law of Return for every Jew, thus the Palestinian state adopted the “right of return” for every Palestinian. The logic of the situation is quite clear: The establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel will necessarily set in motion the rules of inference and symmetry. The preference of the Arab Palestinians in the Palestinian state and that of the Jews in Israel is built into that model. Symmetry does matter. This model of Palestinian state embedd in the Palestinian constitution draft will have direct consequences for the Palestinians in Israel, not because they are included in it (with the exception, perhaps, of the issue of the reparations for the refugees of the Nakba, especially the “internal refugees” and their offspring, who remained in Israel), but rather because they are excluded from it. According to the decision of the Arab consensus in the API, they do not have the status of an interested party on the issue of Jerusalem, certainly not regarding Al-Aqsa, surrounding which the riots spread, as we know, in September 2000 to the Arab countries in Israel. They are consequently fated to accept the decision as dictated to them on the issue and if they dare to defy it, they will be considered to be rebelling against the entire Arab world. At most, the Palestinian party to the negotiations is willing to refrain from exacerbating their situation, and consequently it came out vehemently against the demand by the Israeli government to recognize Israel as the nation-state of the “Jewish people,” which would have direct implications for them.

Thus, in wake of the establishment of the Palestinian state in ac-
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The establishment of a Palestinian state requires that a sharp distinction be made between those who are Arab by origin and those who are not. The structure that has been established under Israeli rule is not Palestinian and cannot claim to represent the Palestinian people. It is a structure that was imposed on the population of Israel and the territories occupied by the military, and it continues to be in place after the establishment of a Palestinian state.

The Palestinians in Israel, who constitute a significant portion of the population, have a unique status. They are not citizens of the state as defined by the law of the land, but they are nonetheless an integral part of the Palestinian people. Their identity as Palestinians is not recognized in the state of Israel, and they are denied the rights of citizenship.

The Palestinians in Israel are demanding that the state recognize their citizenship rights and grant them the same rights as other citizens of the state. They are also demanding equal treatment in all aspects of life, including education, employment, and political participation.

The establishment of a Palestinian state will have a significant impact on the situation of the Palestinians in Israel. It will provide them with a sense of security and identity, and it will give them a voice in the decision-making process. However, it will also create new challenges and tensions, as the two sides will have to work together to find solutions to the problems that they face.

A possible solution to the problem of the Palestinians in Israel could be the establishment of a consociational democracy, which would provide group representation and protect the interests of the different communities. It would be a joint government that includes representatives of all communities, and it would work to ensure that the interests of all communities are protected.

In conclusion, the establishment of a Palestinian state will have a significant impact on the situation of the Palestinians in Israel. It will provide them with a sense of identity and security, but it will also create new challenges and tensions. The solution to this problem lies in the establishment of a consociational democracy that includes representatives of all communities and works to ensure that the interests of all communities are protected.
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The stage that is reflected in the "vision documents" is happening at present and is the third in the order of developments affecting the Palestinian citizens of Israel. The first stage began with the Nakba in 1948, when the lion’s share of the Palestinian homeland within the “Green Line” became the territory of the State of Israel. This stage for the most part coincided with the period of the martial law, which was applied to the areas in Israel populated by Arabs up until 1968. The writer Emil Habibi aptly described the atmosphere of being "doubly marginalized" that the Arabs in Israel experienced both in regard to Israel, as well as to the Arabs and other Palestinians:

When the opinion shapers of the Palestinians outside no longer hide the fact from our brethren and families, the Palestinian refugees, with the Arab consensus, including the PLO, began to march on, because whether or not a political settlement is reached on, because whether or not a political settlement is reached on, because whether or not a political settlement is reached on...
twined with the struggle for collective national rights. Instead of the marginal status of Israeli Palestinians, as the periphery to the external Palestinian center, from now on, the issue of the Palestinians in Israel must be positioned as the linchpin of the entire Palestinian issue. In their view, leaving this issue open and unresolved might in fact make this possible. The "vision documents" signaled a clear shift to the definition of Palestinians in Israel as "an indigenous people" or alternately, a "homeland people." No longer would they be considered a mere "minority," as they had been previously. This is not just a semantic change, but chiefly a fundamental transformation that draws on the openness that emerged in the international community’s approach to the rights of indigenous peoples since the 1980s. This trend was clearly reflected in international law, especially in the electronic journals of or representing the United Nations. “Minority” was viewed as a diminishing definition, which by implication gives priority to the governing majority or metropolis. This is not the case with a “homeland people,” which preceded the majority-state. It cannot contain itself only with individual rights, but is entitled to demand collective rights as well. Those that conceived the “vision documents” among the Palestinians in Israel are intellectual academics who had become aware of the new trends and undercurrents in the international community in regard to “indigenous peoples” and adopted them for their own struggle. The shift in approaches reflected in the “vision documents” stems from the desire to express them as the changing of the guard of the generations. This also explains the efforts on the part of the authors of the “vision documents” to remove the Nakba from its albeit traumatic historical context, as an event that belongs to the past, and turn it into a synonym for the trans-historical existential situation of the Palestinians in Israel. For them, the Nakba is the narrative of the Palestinians in Israel as a “homeland people.” “The peoples of the periphery return to rewrite the history and fiction of the metropolis.” This is how the scholar of culture Homi K. Bhabha characterized this trend in its universal context.25 A distinct role of the scholar of culture, Dominick LaCapra, between the “trauma of loss” and the “trauma of absence” is applicable in this case too. The trauma of loss makes it possible to resign and to accept that which cannot be restored. When paradise lost is viewed as belonging to the past, one can seek and find, he says, other, non-dynastic definitions of the individual, society and state. However, the “trauma of absence” stems from the past, perpetuates it in the present and gives no rest; it plants an illusion that has been done must be restored and the absence is very present.26 When the Nakba is turned into an existential state of an ongoing present, as the authors of the “vision documents” seek to shape it, the “trauma of absence” takes on the growing strength of the Islamic Movement in Israel and Hamas in the territories and what their fundamentalist Islamic approach embodies. They view them as sweep enemies, certainly not the possibility of a political settlement becomes obsolete.28 Muhammad Zidan, the present chairman of the Higher Arab Monitoring Committee, who represents the Islamic Movement in Israel, and not even among its representative political framework. Thus, for example, the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Maki-Hadash) headed by Muhammad Barak, identifies in them exaggerated demands that could be going far as far as the Israeli authorities are concerned, and exacerbate the situation in both the areas of citizenship as well as identity (i.e. by emphasizing the Jewish identity of the state with various “loyalty tests”). Contrary to the authors of the vision papers, Maki-Hadash views the representatives of the Arab consensus, as having the authority to achieve a settlement on the partition into two states (including on the matter of the refugees), even if this has implications for the Palestinians in Israel.29 A plethora of the list of people who participated in the writing of the “vision documents” demonstrates the obvious absence of those that represent the approach of both branches of the Islamic Movement. This is hardly a coincidence. Another motivation, and this one coming from the internal arena of the Palestinians in Israel, for the establishment of a secular national center of gravity based on the “vision documents” is the popularity of the northern branch of the Islamic movement, immediately. Indeed, the authors of the “vision documents” can be described – and this is an understatement – as non-religious, even secular. And indeed, the “northern branch” of the Islamic movement headed by Sheikh Raed Salah came out firmly against the willingness of the authors of the “vision documents” “to recognize the right of the Israeli Jewish people to self-determination” (as noted in the Haifa Declaration) or as being worthy of any collective national identity. The “northern branch” refused to be appeased by the fact that this willingness was in fact classified as part of the binational, context, which counters the Jewish character of the State of Israel for “cosmopolitan democracy," in the Arabic words they had a veto over any decision affecting the Palestinians in Israel. This would, in fact, apply to every decision and law made, because there can be no decision or law that does not explicitly or implicitly affect the Palestinians in Israel. This demand in fact makes a mockery of the willingness in the “vision documents” to recognize the right of the Israeli Jewish people to self-determination, in view of the fact that granting the Palestinians in Israel the right of veto would cripple and neutralize any possibility of self-determination.30 Indeed, between the lines, it is the “trauma of absence” that take the growing strength of the Islamic Movement in Israel and Hamas in the territories and what their fundamentalist Islamic approach embodies. They view them as their sworn enemy, certainly not the possibility of a political settlement becomes obsolete. Muhammad Zidan, the present chairman of the Higher Arab Monitoring Committee, who represents the Islamic Movement in Israel, and not even among its representative political framework. They express their reservations in an interview he gave to Jadal, the electoral platform of the Arab party of Ilan-Peretz, one of the sponsors of the “vision documents.”31 And so we can see that the Arabs in Israel are far from being one mind in regard to the matter of the “vision documents” and the approaches expressed in them. Moreover, up until now, those that support these approaches still, in my opinion, represent a minority, albeit one that carries significant intellectual weight. In order to obtain a general indication of this trend, it is sufficient to examine the results of the Palestinian elections in 1983 the 18th Knesset (February 2009). Hadash won four Knesset seats, as did the Raam-Taal party. Balad, on the other hand, which supports the “vision documents” and the approach to political settlement, for example, in the general elections in 1983, support the left-wing parties of the Islamic Movement in Israel, and, consequently, an antagonistic common denominator has been created between them, uniting them in their opposition to the “vision documents,” despite their very different (and often contradictory) points of departure. However, this is true only in terms of a progress report. This minority could gain momentum and become a majority if the current trends as described here continue. The key factor is Israel policy: An exacerbation of the “zero tolerance” approach towards the Palestinians in Israel, the inexcusable denial of the right of the Palestinian witch to higher the status of the Islamic Movement in Israel and Hamas in the territories, and what their fundamentalist Islamic approach embodies. They view them as sweep enemies, certainly not the possibility of a political settlement becomes obsolete. Muhammad Zidan, the present chairman of the Higher Arab Monitoring Committee, who represents the Islamic Movement in Israel, and not even among its representative political framework. Instead of narrowing the front and trying to keep the problem to the absolute minimum, even if it can never be completely and finally resolved, we are seeing opposite trends consistently compelling the Palestinians in Israel to emphasize their collective identity. Conditioning Israel’s foreign policy (the political settlement) on its internal policy (the treatment of the Palestinians in Israel) and the claim that until the latter issue is resolved completely it is not possible to reach a political settlement with the Palestinian Authority is equivalent to demanding that which can be achieved be sacrificed for that which can never be achieved. It becomes clear that striving for a perfect but impossible solution is the enemy of the reasonable and possible one. As Machiavelli advised in “The Prince”: “He who abandons what can be done for what ought to be done, will neither bring about his own ruin than his preservation.”


29 See the Maki-Hadash platform’s public declaration at http://maki.org.il/media/Hadash059.pdf. Absent from this platform is any demand for recognition of the demand to recognize the Palestinian Israelis as a national minority is formulated in general terms, unlike in the vision papers.

30 This might be a good point at which to relate a personal anecdote in this context: After I presented the issue of the Palestinians in Israel to the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya. He also lectured occasionally at the Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University. He was the recipient of the Dukid Carmon, the Jacob Herzog, the Simcha Prat and the Jacob Talmon prizes for excellence in research at the Hebrew University. Dr. Steinberg filled high-ranking positions for many years in the area of security research, and served as an advisor to the Chief of the General Security Services in the years 1998-2003. He was the first Gross-Lipper visiting scholar and a visiting lecturer at the Woodrow Wilson School for Public Policy, Princeton University in 2011. Dr. Steinberg’s recent book, Unending Quest: The Development of Palestinian National Consciousness was published in Hebrew in 2008. On this book he received the Tefenstik Prize in Security Studies by the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel-Aviv University in 2010.


32 To them can distinguish between three currents among Palestinian intellectuals in their approach to the rights of Palestinian refugees, even if this has implications for the Palestinians in Israel. Muhammad Zidan, the present chairman of the Higher Arab Monitoring Committee, who represents the Islamic Movement in Israel. Consequently, an antagonistic common denominator has been created between them, uniting them in their opposition to the “vision documents,” despite their very different (and often contradictory) points of departure. However, this is true only in terms of a progress report. This minority could gain momentum and become a majority if the current trends as described here continue. The key factor is Israel policy: An exacerbation of the “zero tolerance” approach towards the Palestinians in Israel, the inexcusable denial of the right of the Palestinian witch to higher the status of the Islamic Movement in Israel and Hamas in the territories, and what their fundamentalist Islamic approach embodies. They view them as sweep enemies, certainly not the possibility of a political settlement becomes obsolete. Muhammad Zidan, the present chairman of the Higher Arab Monitoring Committee, who represents the Islamic Movement in Israel, and not even among its representative political framework. Instead of narrowing the front and trying to keep the problem to the absolute minimum, even if it can never be completely and finally resolved, we are seeing opposite trends consistently compelling the Palestinians in Israel to emphasize their collective identity. Conditioning Israel’s foreign policy (the political settlement) on its internal policy (the treatment of the Palestinians in Israel) and the claim that until the latter issue is resolved completely it is not possible to reach a political settlement with the Palestinian Authority is equivalent to demanding that which can be achieved be sacrificed for that which can never be achieved. It becomes clear that striving for a perfect but impossible solution is the enemy of the reasonable and possible one. As Machiavelli advised in “The Prince”: “He who abandons what can be done for what ought to be done, will neither bring about his own ruin than his preservation.”

Dr. Matti Steinberg

Dr. Matti Steinberg taught at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem in the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, and in the Lauder School of Government at the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya. He also lectured occasionally at the Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University. He was the recipient of the Dukid Carmon, the Jacob Herzog, the Simcha Prat and the Jacob Talmon prizes for excellence in research at the Hebrew University. Dr. Steinberg filled high-ranking positions for many years in the area of security research, and served as an advisor to the Chief of the General Security Services in the years 1998-2003. He was the first Gross-Lipper visiting scholar and a visiting lecturer at the Woodrow Wilson School for Public Policy, Princeton University in 2011. Dr. Steinberg’s recent book, Unending Quest: The Development of Palestinian National Consciousness was published in Hebrew in 2008. On this book he received the Tefenstik Prize in Security Studies by the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel-Aviv University in 2010.
The Arabs in Israel after the Founding of a Palestinian State: The Struggle to be Recognized as an Indigenous-National Minority in the State of Israel

Introduction

The Arab population in Israel numbers about 1.5 million people, representing about 20 percent of Israel's population. It consolidated into a single socio-national unit, despite the fact that it contains various subgroups with a different religious identity. Muslims, Christians, Druze. The experience of the “Nakba” (catastrophe) in 1948, which turned the Arabs in Israel from a majority in their homeland into a minority, represented a constitutive element in their common identity. Today, their individual and collective identity as Arabs, Palestinians and Israelis is complex, and is influenced by historical memories and cultural, economic and political changes.

Noted on their ethnic extraction, language, culture and national and historical consciousness, Israeli Arabs are part of the Arab nation and the Palestinian people, which is their national affiliation group. Since being separated from fellow Palestinians in 1948, their fate has been tied, in their consciousness, to the future of the Israeli-Arab conflict and the Palestinian question, which lies at its focus. Consequently, over the years, the developments in the Israeli-Arab conflict and the Palestinian question have been factors that have crucially impacted their collective identity and national aspirations. On the other hand, the recognition of the Arab political rights, the direct ethnic rights as required by law, has also been recognized as an indigenous national minority whose state is Israel, and to be given full equality with the Jewish minority in the state.

This article will present an analysis and assessment of the relative weight of the processes that have led to the establishment of the Arabs in Israel and their assimilation into Israeli society, on the one hand, and the demands that have developed among them for recognition as an indigenous Palestinian-national group having equal rights, on the other, as crucial components that will impact their collective identity and characterize their reciprocal relations with the state and its Jewish majority after a future Palestinian state is established alongside Israel. The central question facing the Arabs in Israel at that time would appear to be a choice between two chief possibilities:

1. To wage a struggle for equality on the basis of the recognition of the existing collective rights that appear formally in Israel’s laws, but which are not properly applied where the Arab population is concerned.

2. To wage a struggle over their rightful place in Israel as an indigenous national group that is entitled to self-determination within the state as well as to a status equal to that of the majority group, whom they consider foreign intruders in their land. In other words, to struggle to change the character of Israel as the state of one nation, a Zionist-Jewish one, to a binational state, in the spirit of the vision papers.

In this context, there would be historical importance and influence to the fact that there has been a kind of historical reversal in the positions of the State of Israel and its Arab citizens in regard to the reciprocal relations between them: if over the decades, it appeared that the Arabs in Israel were unable to forget the state until the Israeli-Arab conflict was settled, the majority of the Arab population now tended to take the view that they needed to take their fate into their own hands, unrelated to that conflict, if the State of Israel were to recognize its Arab citizens as a national minority, as the majority of Arabs demand, and grant them national rights such as cultural autonomy and political rights, which they would find it very difficult to do so until the conflict with the Palestinians has been settled and a Palestinian state established.

This article will present an analysis and assessment that the impact of the establishment of a Palestinian state would have on the national identity and aspirations of the Arabs in Israel based on the following structure:

1. First, a general overview of the status of Arabs in Israel will be presented, followed by a description of the growing influence of the processes of social and political adaptation on the identity and aspirations of the Arabs in Israel;

2. Then, the direct outcome of the adaptation processes will be analyzed: the Arabs’ adoption of an Israeli-national identity;

3. On the background of this dual identity, this article will discuss the absence of any role on the part of the Arabs in Israel in the peace process, which led the Arab public to conclude that it was not for its sake that the conflict was to end and take its future in the State of Israel into its own hands, independent of the peace process and its outcomes;

4. As a direct result of this conclusion drawn by the Arab public, the initiatives its representatives have taken in the past decade to formulate models to resolve its relations as an indigenous national group alongside the Jewish minority and in the state will be described. In this context, the internal power struggle between the Arabs in terms of apparatus, parties, majorities and minorities, the main factors toward practical solutions to the problems, options and achievements and its assigned role in the peace process, and the Arab public to its status in Israel as both a minority, as well as on the fact of it being a population that is indigenous to the country, rather than an immigrant group. The Arabs in Israel are in the midst of a process of Israelization that is expressed in bilingualism and biculturalism, and they view their fate and future as being tied to Israel. The state gives them explicit, direct ethnic rights as required by law, full civil freedoms such as freedom of movement, association, speech, publication, religion and protest, and political rights, such as the right to vote for and be elected to the Knesset and local government bodies and the right to establish Jewish communities. The Arabs in Israel have also been recognized as a religious and cultural minority, and although they are not defined as a national minority, they enjoy collective minority rights in various areas, which they would find it very difficult to do so until the conflict with the Palestinians has been settled and a Palestinian state established.

5. Based on this analysis, an assessment regarding the identity and aspirations of the Arabs in Israel after a Palestinian state is founded will be presented.

The status of the Arabs in Israel – An overview

The Arab public in Israel has undergone processes of politicization during the years of the existence of the state, and in recent years, has developed a desire to be recognized as an indigenous national minority, whose state is Israel, and to share in an equal status with the Jewish majority in the state. This approach is based on an acceptance by the Arab public of its status in Israel as both a minority, as well as on the fact of it being a population that is indigenous to the country, rather than an immigrant group. The Arabs in Israel are in the midst of a process of Israelization that is expressed in bilingualism and biculturalism, and they view their fate and future as being tied to Israel. The state gives them explicit, direct ethnic rights as required by law, full civil freedoms such as freedom of movement, association, speech, publication, religion and protest, and political rights, such as the right to vote for and be elected to the Knesset and local government bodies and the right to establish Jewish communities. The Arabs in Israel have also been recognized as a religious and cultural minority, and although they are not defined as a national minority, they enjoy collective minority rights in various areas, which they would find it very difficult to do so until the conflict with the Palestinians has been settled and a Palestinian state established.

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The Influence of the Establishment of a Palestinian State on Israeli Arabs

The overall picture then is that the Arabs in many respects still represent an excluded and discriminated group within Arab society itself that hinder its development and suffer from institutional and non-institutional discrimination. The former is expressed in the fact that the rights of the Arab population in Israel as an ethnic minority are limited, and the latter are characterized as a national minority lacking collective rights. Their demands for equality in education, language, culture and religion are not recognized in the legislative or by the legal system as a collective right that guarantees protection under Israeli law. The establishment has started to deal with the internal road system of the towns as well as the access roads leading to them. At the same time, budgetary, bureaucratic and political barriers are hindering education and welfare, and declared policy and preventing any real change in the situation.

Thus, there is evidence of an ongoing difficulty in implementing the recommendations by the governmental committee of inquiry, the Ovadia Committee, which was formed to investigate the clashes between the security forces and Israeli citizens that occurred in October 2000. The committee emphasized the necessity of appointing Arabs and policy of discrimination and exclusion towards Arab citizens and made a series of recommendations regarding activities that the government should urgently undertake, such as the allocation of land for housing and industrial areas, proper representation in governmental institutions and the public sector, and the closing of gaps in education.

In addition to all these things, there are also certain factors that are inextricably linked to the Arab population and adversely affect its integration into Israeli society, such as the traditional local politics and women's status in Arab society, which is still influenced by traditional social pressures that restrict women's independence and their ability to realize their desires in the area of education and employment.

The Arab minority in in many respects still represent an excluded and discriminated group within Arab society itself that hinder its development and suffer from institutional and non-institutional discrimination. The small proportion of the Arab population in the budget pie in accordance with its relative proportion in the population, or its development needs.


14 Arad Ghanem emphasizes the lack of influence the Arabs in Israel have over all areas of policy, and the fact that they were not consulted, among them, in the Al-Aqsa uprising, during which 13 Arab citizens of Israel, were killed, and in the establishment of the Aqsa uprising, and the rise of Hamas to power in the Palestinian Authority. See detailed data in articles on this subject published by the Prime Minister’s Office in February-December 2008; http://www.knesset.gov.il/committee/2009.pdf; and “2010 Racism Report,” *Mossawa Center for Arab Citizens’ Rights* in Israel, http://www.mossawa.org enn/index.php?lang=en&No=214-


22 A parliamentary commission of inquiry on the subject of the implementation of the Red Line Series, *HaKibbutz HaMeuhad*, Tel Aviv, 2009, pp. 216-234.

23 See Rabbis’ manifesto from December 2010, which stated that the enemy” and to change its policy towards them; recognition of its Arab citizens as a Palestinian people, and recognition of its future and the fate of the Palestinian people as a whole. The problem is that the state does not recognize the Arab population as a national minority: Their leadership is not recognized as officially representing them or as being able to negotiate with the state on their behalf, they do not enjoy cultural autonomy, and are not officially recognized as part of the Palestinian people. In other words, they do not have the right to decide their own fate, to maintain relations with the Palestinian people and to teach the Palestinian national narrative. The state’s considerations in taking this position are a matter of principle: Israel is a state of Jews and is the national identity of the Jewish people, and consequently, it will seek to prevent any action that could undermine this unique character; Israel is involved in a violent conflict with the Palestinian people, and therefore, the recognition of the Arab citizens of Israel as a national minority would require it to view them as “part of the enemy” and to change its policy towards them; recognition of the Arab collective as a national entity would empower the minority and alter the power relations between Jews and Arabs, which could in turn, ratchet up the tension and deepen the conflicts in the state.

26 Protest rallies to express the identification of the Arabs in Israel with the inhabitants of the territories at the beginning of the Al-Aqsa uprising, during which 13 Arab citizens of Israel, were killed, and in the establishment of the Al-Aqsa uprising, and the rise of Hamas to power in the Palestinian Authority. See detailed data in articles on this subject published by the Prime Minister’s Office in February-December 2008; http://www.knesset.gov.il/committee/2009.pdf; and “2010 Racism Report,” *Mossawa Center for Arab Citizens’ Rights* in Israel, http://www.mossawa.org enn/index.php?lang=en&No=214-

27 The events of October 2000 and the conclusions of the official commission of inquiry that was established in the wake of the Arab citizens of Israel, or on other governmental decisions regarding the minority population, and the rise of Hamas to power in the Palestinian Authority. See detailed data in articles on this subject published by the Prime Minister’s Office in February-December 2008; http://www.knesset.gov.il/committee/2009.pdf; and “2010 Racism Report,” *Mossawa Center for Arab Citizens’ Rights* in Israel, http://www.mossawa.org enn/index.php?lang=en&No=214-

28 See below, from p. 20 on.

29 Thus, for example, they have a separate education system in Israel, see the website of the Prime Minister’s Office at: http://www.pmo.gov.il/PMOffice/OfficeConference/.

30 See the comments made by Prof. Sammy Smooha made at the Sixth Jaffa Conferences of the Citizens’ Accord Forum, January 27, 2011.
The influence of the establishment of a Palestinian state on Israeli Arabs and the Arab minority and Jewish majority in Israel share. Factors in Israel that are related to the areas of life that the impact of internal – social, cultural, economic and political – may be less important in comparison to the impact of external pressure applied to Israel and the culmination of a conciliation process between them. These political-diplomatic aspects of the settlement and the way in which the Palestinian state is established could have certain importance for and influence on the identity and aspirations of the Arabs in Israel. However, these may be less important in comparison to the impact of internal – social, cultural, economic and political – factors in Israel that are related to the areas of life that the Arab minority and Jewish majority in Israel share.

The growing influence of the social adaptation processes

It is only natural for a minority group living among a majority group for many years to undergo socialization processes and move closer to the identity of the group within which it lives. However, the establishment of the state of Israel and the Arabs in Israel have undergone extensive socialization processes, which have influenced the components of their identity and their connection with the state, especially in light of the fact that they were cut off from the Arab world and Palestinian people, at least up until 1967. From this it follows that the weight of the socioeconomic parameters may in fact be greater than that of the political-diplomatic ones, in the context of the national identity and aspirations of the Arabs in Israel, even after the establishment of a Palestinian state. A hypothesis can be made that the socialization processes of the Arab population in Israel and the development of its relations with Israeli institutions and the Jewish majority within it have been dynamic, influenced, among other things, by policies aimed at improving or worsening its welfare and economic state, as well as by the extent of its integration into society and the granting of civil rights. Over the years, there has been a rise in the standard of living among Arabs in Israel, albeit at a slow pace, and there has been progress in areas such as schools, higher education and employment. Although most of the Arabs in Israel (65 percent) are still employed at manual labor, such as construction work or farming, the economic integration of Arabs in society is gradually growing. 32 Alongside the phenomenon of institutional and other discrimination, Israeli society evinces a reality of day-to-day contact between Jews and Arabs, which plays a crucial role in the framing of social relations. This contact is shared workplaces, in public areas and in joint voluntary associations, such as trade unions, youth movements, and sport clubs. But, according to the findings, a half of all Arab young people consider themselves Israelis, while the other half view themselves as Palestinians; 72 percent feel that they are part of the state; 45 percent report a clear, firm and strong attachment to Israel; 75 percent accept Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish and democratic state; 64 percent believe that Israel is a democratic country; 55 percent trust its courts; 74 percent believe that the education system in the eyes of Arab citizens, and which culture; 56 percent are willing to have a Jewish friend of the same gender and age. As for Jewish young people, the survey showed that 96 percent of them are willing to give Arabs collective rights and their treatment of them on a personal level: 85 percent believe that Israeli Arabs should not be given rights identical to those of Jewish citizens in the State of Israel, 56 percent believe that they should not be elected to the Knesset. 39 On the other hand, 6 percent of the young people said that they would be willing to have an Arab candidate who is 57 percent responsible to the Arabs in the Knesset is racist and not legitimate. Other surveys carried out in the past decade (2003, 2006, 2009) by the Samuel Neaman Institute for National Policy Research at the Technion, indicate that while there is a decrease towards Israel’s national institutions, including the Knesset, Supreme Court and universities, is on an upward trend. 41

Israeli and Palestinian identities side by side

The Arabs in Israel define their identity in terms of Palestinian nationalism and Arab identity, and in different periods in the past decades since the establishment of the state, the balance between these identities has shifted. As a rule, the processes of socialization experienced by Arabs in Israel, as described above, have been a consistent strengthening of the Israeli identity component, although there have been periods of ups and downs in their identification with the state and their sense of connection and belonging to it on the background of their experiences as citizens of a state embroiled in a hostile conflict with their Arab nation. The reality in which they found themselves in wake of the war of 1948 was one of being cut off from their own people and living as a minority within the boundaries of a recently established non-Muslim state. Only gradually did the recognition of Israel as a democracy for its Arab population too. 40 Whereas the leadership rejects the evaluation that Israel is a democracy for Arabs too, the majority of Israeli Arabs see the Jewish state and the specific solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that are most prevalent among the Jewish people, on these questions, the Arab public’s approach is more moderate, 57 percent of them believe that Israel is a democracy for its Arab population too; 41.4 percent accept Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish and democratic state; 38 percent accept that the right of return of Palestinian refugees will be realized only in the Palestinian state. In the view of Prof. Smooha, the fact that they have not become more extreme is an indication that the Arabs have undergone a process of adaptation to the state and the Jews and they collaborate in carrying out their jobs, regardless of differences in religion and nationality. This phenomenon is especially salient in Israeli hospitals, where the day-to-day reality represents a balance between Jewish and Arab staff members. 33 According to the findings, a half of all Arab young people consider themselves Israelis, while the other half view themselves as Palestinians; 72 percent feel that they are part of the state; 45 percent report a clear, firm and strong attachment to Israel; 75 percent accept Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish and democratic state; 64 percent believe that Israel is a democratic country; 55 percent trust its courts; 74 percent believe that the education system in the eyes of Arab citizens, and which culture; 56 percent are willing to have a Jewish friend of the same gender and age. As for Jewish young people, the survey showed that 96 percent of them are willing to give Arabs collective rights and their treatment of them on a personal level: 85 percent believe that Israeli Arabs should not be given rights identical to those of Jewish citizens in the State of Israel, 56 percent believe that they should not be selected to the Knesset. 39 On the other hand, 6 percent of the young people said that they would be willing to have an Arab candidate who is responsible to the Arabs in the Knesset is racist and not legitimate. Other surveys carried out in the past decade (2003, 2006, 2009) by the Samuel Neaman Institute for National Policy Research at the Technion, indicate that while there is a decrease towards Israel’s national institutions, including the Knesset, Supreme Court and universities, is on an upward trend. 41


32 The past decade has seen a 150 percent increase in Arab men earning B.A. degrees. The low rate of employment of Arab women, about 20 percent, stems from a lack of available workplaces, public transportation and child care. The rate of participation between the state and Palestinian people, at least up until 1967. From this it follows that the weight of the socioeconomic parameters may in fact be greater than that of the political-diplomatic ones, in the context of the national identity and aspirations of the Arabs in Israel, even after the establishment of a Palestinian state. A hypothesis can be made that the socialization processes of the Arab population in Israel and the development of its relations with Israeli institutions and the Jewish majority within it have been dynamic, influenced, among other things, by policies aimed at improving or worsening its welfare and economic state, as well as by the extent of its integration into society and the granting of civil rights. Over the years, there has been a rise in the standard of living among Arabs in Israel, albeit at a slow pace, and there has been progress in areas such as schools, higher education and employment. Although most of the Arabs in Israel (65 percent) are still employed at manual labor, such as construction work or farming, the economic integration of Arabs in society is gradually growing. Alongside the phenomenon of institutional and other discrimination, Israeli society evinces a reality of day-to-day contact between Jews and Arabs, which plays a crucial role in the framing of social relations. This contact is shared workplaces, in public areas and in joint voluntary associations, such as trade unions, youth movements, and sport clubs. But, according to the findings, a half of all Arab young people consider themselves Israelis, while the other half view themselves as Palestinians; 72 percent feel that they are part of the state; 45 percent report a clear, firm and strong attachment to Israel; 75 percent accept Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish and democratic state; 64 percent believe that Israel is a democratic country; 55 percent trust its courts; 74 percent believe that the education system in the eyes of Arab citizens, and which culture; 56 percent are willing to have a Jewish friend of the same gender and age. As for Jewish young people, the survey showed that 96 percent of them are willing to give Arabs collective rights and their treatment of them on a personal level: 85 percent believe that Israeli Arabs should not be given rights identical to those of Jewish citizens in the State of Israel, and 56 percent believe that they should not be elected to the Knesset. On the other hand, 6 percent of the young people said that they would be willing to have an Arab candidate who is responsible to the Arabs in the Knesset is racist and not legitimate. Other surveys carried out in the past decade (2003, 2006, 2009) by the Samuel Neaman Institute for National Policy Research at the Technion, indicate that while there is a decrease towards Israel’s national institutions, including the Knesset, Supreme Court and universities, is on an upward trend.

33 See Merav Arlozorov, “Arabs are Employed – But females). 33 See: See Merav Arlozorov, “Arabs are Employed – But

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35 See: See Merav Arlozorov, “Arabs are Employed – But

36 See: See Merav Arlozorov, “Arabs are Employed – But

37 See: See Merav Arlozorov, “Arabs are Employed – But

38 38 On this question, a significant correlation was found between the level of religious observance and the position ex-

39 The impact of religious observance also appears in the responses of young people as to whether Arabs should be

40 The surveys were conducted in conjunction with Prof. Ephraim Yaar and Yasmin Alkalai of the University of Tel Aviv.

41 See: See Merav Arlozorov, “Arabs are Employed – But

42 The majority of the Arab public share opposition to the Zionist character of the state, alongside acceptance of its Jewishness.

43 See 2008 data regarding Arab-Jewish relations in Israeli society, as emerging from Prof. Sandy Steinberg’s efforts to give Arabs collective rights and their treatment of them on a personal level: 49.5 percent believe that Israeli Arabs should not be given rights identical to those of Jewish citizens in the State of Israel, 56 percent believe that they should not be elected to the Knesset. 39 On the other hand, 6 percent of the young people said that they would be willing to have an Arab candidate who is responsible to the Arabs in the Knesset is racist and not legitimate. Other surveys carried out in the past decade (2003, 2006, 2009) by the Samuel Neaman Institute for National Policy Research at the Technion, indicate that while there is a decrease towards Israel’s national institutions, including the Knesset, Supreme Court and universities, is on an upward trend.
and resistance, which were put down.42 All this was going on while the Arab countries and the PLO (since its establish- ment in 1964) viewed the Arabs in Israel as potential or actual collaborators because they had agreed to accept Is- raeli citizenship, and consequently had prioritized their own personal welfare over sacrificing for the nation.

With the establishment of the lane’s military government in 1966, a clear process of Israelization began. While the blurring of the Green Line and the reconnection with their fellow Pal- estinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in wake of the war, which culminated in a reawakening of the national- Palestinian consciousness, at the same time, there was a pronounced trend among the majority of the Arab public in Israel to set boundaries to this reawakening. This trend was influenced by the desire of the war, which undermined the pan-Arabism and proved that Israel would remain on the map of the region, deepening the acceptance of Israel on the part of many. This development has been furthered by the deepening of the integration of the Arabs in the life of the state on an equal footing, and to claims of deprivation and discrimination.

The process of Israelization lasted about a decade. One of its most striking expressions during that period was the feeling of shared fate and the extensive demonstrations of identification and loyalty to the IDF and the state dur- ing the years 1969-1973.43 The Arab public, while further deepening the world’s recognition of the PLO as the exclusive recognized leader of the Palestinian people in 1974. The height of the process of Israelization came with the events of Land day in March 1976, when the Arabs in Israel felt that they had the right to protest against government policy.44 The events of Land day in March 1976, which were put down by force and resulted in six fatalities and dozens of people injured, made it clear to the Arabs in Israel that they did not have the right giving to them for commitment to a gradual process of Palestinianization began to take shape: Following their disappointment with Israel, they began to draw closer to the Palestinian side, and this was expressed mainly in solidarity with the Palestinians living under occupation, support for the developing Palestinian national movement and the PLO leadership, which was recognized by both the public in the territories and the international community. The PLO turned Land Day into a national protest day, morial day and viewed the Arabs in Israel as full partners in the national Palestinian struggle. In the 1980s, the ties be- tween the Arabs in Israel and the PLO grew stronger, and in the 1990s, they developed into an intimate relationship. The national- and culture of the Arabs in Israel, while at the same time, gave legitimacy to their Israeli citizenship. As the PLO re- solved to search for a peace formula in the wake of the war, which was based on the Arab-Palestinian narrative, included their own experience of the creation of a Palestinian leadership.45

At the same time, the process of socialization of the Arab population in Israel continued, reinforcing the degree of its identification with the state. The struggle for equality contin- ued, and was conducted in the context of an Arab political campaign, which gained momentum and comprised hun- dreds of local and national committees and parties. During the 1980s, the Arab standard of living saw an accelerated upward trend, and in the 1990s, their con- stitutional rights improved as a result of the constitutional revolution, which gained momentum and the Arab-civil society in Israel.46 Most came to understand that the intifada was not their uprising, but rather belonged to their fellow Palestinians in the territories, who were striving to be the citizens of the future Palestinian state in the 1967 territories. They viewed the Arab-Israeli society of that time as one in which the Arabs enjoyed the advantages of a full and stable civil life under a democratic government in a welfare state. A major contribu- tion to this positive atmosphere was made by the policies of the Labor-Meretz governments of 1992-1996, which provided new investments in education and local authorities, allocations for the rehabilitation of the status as a national minority, on the other hand, the election of a rightist government in 1996 led to a retreat in the socialization process and integration of the Arabs, along with an intensification of expressions of disappointment. The government was perceived by the ma- jority of the Arab public as having abandoned its program to deal more hope and many more possibilities than the other alternatives, a fact that carries considerable weight in their collective identity. They accept Israel as a fact and as an alternative, although they wish to remain its citizens, but demand the removal of the deprivation and discrimination against them in the allocation of resources, and demand the complete fulfillment of their individual and group rights as guaranteed by the law as it is today.

The constitutional revolution in Israel was a process that started in 1992 with the legislation of two Basic Laws dealing with human rights: Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty, and Basic Law: Freedom of Occupation.47

42 The main effort was made by the Al-Ard movement, which was a movement of Arab intellectuals who identified with pan-Arabism and advocated the establishment of a Pales- tinian state. The movement was outlawed, and the attempt by its members to contest in the Knesset elections in 1965 was thwarted when the list was disqualified.
44 In his law Prof. Sammy Smooha, the Arab’s protest is a purely Israeli phenomenon, rather than an “Arab phenomenon.” He explains that the Arabs were influenced by the spread of protests in Israeli society in those years, and their mass protest in 1976 was, from that perspective, of a purely Israeli nature. See: Sammy Smooha, “Arab Jewish relations in Israel as a Jewish and democratic state,” p. 232.
45 The reference is toward events such as the Kfar Kassem massacre, their difficulties under the military government between 1967-1996, and attempts to recruit collaborators, the expropriation of lands and the expectation of the internal refugees to be allowed to return to their destroyed homes as well as the protests and general strikes on Land Day and other events.
The Influence of the Establishment of a Palestinian State on Israeli Arabs

Israel 1948-1996

50 About one-fifth of Arabs inside Israel became refugees in wake of the 1948 war, the expropriation of lands and starting to implement between Palestine and Israel. The Arabs in Israel finally felt that they had political value and weight and that they were taking an active role in the decision-making process of the government, and had been given a say in its policies in foreign affairs as well as regarding subjects not directly related to the Arab public in Israel. However, that right called into question the legitimacy of a government that based itself on Arab votes and made crucial decisions related to the Arab community and exploration of a slim majority made possible only thanks to the votes from the Arab parties. In 1996, Benjam Knesset elections, the Arab view of the elections was that they didn’t want to be part of a governing coalition, but because they preferred to belong to a coalition in which they would feel more comfortable politically, one made up of religious and secular parties. Thus, the Arabs preferred the Pal- estinian society in the territories. Their fear – that when a settlement was finally reached, they would find themselves excluded from the Arab parties and no longer be represented in the Pal- estinian state – increased.52 The Arab collective understanding that it needed to look out for its own fate and within the State of Israel, independent of the future of the peace process and the attempts to reach a political settlement in the Palestinian-Jewish conflict.

The Arabs in Israel as a national minority standing up for itself

Following the accrued experiences of ineffective political participation in local government organizations,54 having their interest in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process ig- nored, a process became evident among the Arabs in Israel in the past decade which was an emerging general feeling of bitter disappointment and a growing lack of faith in the state. In 1999-2001, the Israeli Democracy Institute held a series of debates with the involvement of Jews and Arabs with an eye to drafting a covenant that would contribute to creating coexistence in Israel. However, in the absence of the ability to reach a consensus on the background of the polarized views on the question related to the identities of the state and its Arab citizens and the reciprocal rela- tions between them, it was decided to present the content of the debates to the Israeli public by publishing them in a book.55 With Hamas’s victory in the general elections held in January 2006, the Palestinian Authority now has a strong majority in the Knesset. The new leaders and top intellectuals were faced with a twofold dilemma that continued to gain momentum: One was how to resolve the status and collective identity of the Arabs as a national minority within the state of Israel, and the other was the ongoing conflict with the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which continued to dominate the discussion in the new Knesset. At the same time, the process of “Arab exit” continued, with many young people looking for ways to find a solution to the conflict and for a peaceful resolution that would allow them to live in Arab society. However, the days of the old Knesset were numbered as the new government of Ehud Barak promised to include the Arabs in the coalition, but after they voted for him and assured him of his victory, he reneged on his pledge and established an exclusively Jew- ish Knesset coalition. As a result of the 1999 elections, the right demanded that any public referenda held on peace agreements with Syria and with the Palestinians be passed by a special majority in order to minimize the ability of the Arab citizens to influence the outcome.53 These developments underscored the problem of the Arabs’ status as a Palestinian-Arab minority in a Jewish state and caused a change in their perception of themselves as Jews and their desire to be treated as an indigenous minority, whose rights and identity of the Arabs in Israel, they are all striking in the way

52 Sammy Sasa, “Arab Jewish relations in Israel,” pp. 231-363; ten years later, in November 2010, the Knesset passed a referendum law aimed at restricting the government’s ability to make decisions involving the exchange of territory for peace. According to the law, relinquishing Israeli sovereignty over territory, whether or not in the framework of an agreement with the Palestinians, would require the approval of a special Knesset majority of more than 80 Knesset members (halfords). In the absence of such a special majority, a natio- nal referendum would be carried out. See: Haaretz, November 23, 2010.
56 The four position papers were: “The Fu- ture Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel,” written by Arab academicians and intellectuals and published by the National Committee of Arab Mayors in Israel; “And Equal Rights for All? On a Constitution and Collective Rights for Arabs within Israel,” authored by Prof. Ibrahim Abu-Lughod and published in the Mossawa Center for Arab Civil Rights in Israel; “The Democratic Constitution,” pub- lished by Arabah – the Legal Association for Arab Minority Rights in Israel; and “The Unilateral Declaration of Independence – A Solution,” written by Dr. Yehuda Taban and published in the Mossawa Center for Arab Civil Rights in Israel.
The establishment of a Palestinian state would have significant implications for the identity, status, and future of the Palestinian people. The Palestinians, who have long been characterized by their liminal status in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, would gain formal recognition as a political entity with defined borders and sovereignty over its territory. This would be a historic breakthrough for the Palestinian people, who have fought for self-determination and self-governance for decades. However, the establishment of a Palestinian state would also challenge the established order in Israel and the occupied territories, potentially leading to increased tensions and conflicts.

The supporters of Israel's right-wing government, which has consistently opposed a two-state solution, argue that the Arab-Palestinian issue should be resolved within the framework of Israeli-Jewish ties, with a focus on economic development and social integration. They believe that a Palestinian state would be a destabilizing factor, leading to increased violence and unrest in the region. They also point to the historical and cultural ties between Jews and Arabs, emphasizing the need for a binational state or some other form of integration between the two peoples.

On the other hand, advocates of a Palestinian state argue that it is the only viable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the principle of two states for two peoples. They argue that a single Jewish state would be a dangerous precedent, leading to the annexation of Palestinian territories and the displacement of the Palestinian population. They also argue that a binational state would not resolve the core issues of the conflict, such as the occupation of Palestinian territories and the right of return for Palestinian refugees.

The establishment of a Palestinian state would also have significant implications for the international community. The international community has long supported the two-state solution as the only realistic path to peace in the region. However, the failure of the Oslo process and the increasing polarization between Israelis and Palestinians have made it difficult to reach a consensus on the future of the region. The establishment of a Palestinian state would likely lead to increased international pressure on Israel to recognize the state and to implement its rights, including the right of return and the protection of Palestinian refugees.

In summary, the establishment of a Palestinian state would have significant implications for the region, including increased tensions, heightened political polarization, and greater international pressure on Israel. It is unclear how the international community will react, but it is likely that the establishment of a Palestinian state will be a significant turning point in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
Palestinians in Israel.65 With the attempt to renew the direct talks between Israel and the Palestinians (in September 2010), the Israeli Left, which supports the establishment of the Palestinian state, and the US administration, which supports an independent and viable Palestinian state, all call for an immediate and comprehensive peace process that would be open to counter Israel’s existence as a Jewish state.

65 Abu Mazen: “Israel can call itself whatever it likes – it’s none of our business,” http://www.mawsalat.com/?a=1475611&t=49


67 Al-Jazeera, October 12, 2009.

68 Al-Hayat Al-Jadeed (Ramallah), October 6, 2010.


The search for alternative identities and political alternatives

The Islamic religious identity

The fact that the Arab public in Israel distanced itself to a certain extent from its ties to Palestinian nationalism as a result of the opposition to the peace process is underlined by the establishment of the Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which is recognized both by the Arabs and by international opinion as the natural and legitimate successor state to the Palestinian people.77

77 This, for example, the proposals of Yisrael Beiteinu – such as the exchange of populated areas, conditioning the right to vote in elections on an oath of allegiance to the Jewish state, restrictions on the commemoration of Nakba day – are perceived among the Arab public in Israel as an attempt aimed at amassing political and public capital.

78 Dr. Ilan Ben-Sasson explained that the proposal to “exchange populated areas” would lead to an “economic, social and cultural” process that would be irritating for the residents of the Triangle and the rest of the members of their community and between them and the Jewish people as a whole. From a legal standpoint, land swaps violate the principle of compensation, and consequently the violation of rights must meet the conditions of the “restriction clause” as set in Basic Law: Human Dignity and Freedom. The principal legislative hurdle is the proportionality of the harm caused by the swaps. Dr. Sabri’s remarks were made at a seminar on the subject of “The government’s policy towards the Arabs in Israel: Theory and Practice,” held by the Konrad-Adenauer Program for Jewish-Arab Cooperation; Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies on November 12, 2009.

79 In the view of Dr. Itamar Biton, setting this kind of condition for a homeland minority is unprecedented in democratic states in the modern era. A homeland minority of, for example, the Russian-speaking Jews in Israel is undergoing a process of “Arabization” in the nationalist sense, and among the younger generation of the community, a phenomenon of avoiding military service is emerging. In Bedouin society, a process of Islamization is taking root. These developments are viewed in turn by the Jewish public in Israel as a fundamental radicalization of all Arab society, among whom expressions of nationalism and anti-Semitism are spreading and are manifested, for example, in the lashing of support to the fundamentalist religious Hamas and Hezbollah, including at times of war, as well as in a growing discourse about turning Israel into a binational state or about establishing a single state in the entire territory of Palestine.

52 Tibi explained that the Israeli demand was aimed at repealing UN Resolution 1515 and at imposing unilateral regulations on the territories, in contravention of the international law, and that it be recognized as the nation-state of the Jewish people. He explained that the Arab demands that have been drafted with the agreement of PLO representatives, among them Yasser Arafat, that stipulated that Islam was the national homeland of the Jewish people. He explained that the Israeli demand was aimed at repeating UN Resolution 1515 and that it be recognized as the national homeland of the Jewish people. He explained that the Arab demands that have been drafted with the agreement of PLO representatives, among them Yasser Arafat, that stipulated that Islam was the national homeland of the Jewish people.

66 MK Ahmed Tibi (Raam-Taal) stated that recognizing the Jewish character of Israel was akin to a second Nakba because its objective was to gather Jews from all over the world to Israel.

68 MK Ahmed Tibi (Raam-Taal) declared that the Palestinian leadership would not accept the demand that the PLO recognize Israel as a Jewish state, because 15 percent of its population was not Jewish and they had always been in the land. Tibi warned that this recognition would undermine the status of the Arabs in Israel and lead to the nullification of the right of return. In a letter to the Barak (chairman of Hadash), Tibi stated that recognizing the Jewish character of Israel was akin to a second Nakba because its objective was to gather Jews from all over the world to Israel.

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The Influence of the Establishment of a Palestinian State on Israeli Arabs


Failed National Movement offered the Palestinian people, namely the solution of two states, for the Palestinian people, namely the solution of two, binational and equal state for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in order to end the Israeli occupation and establish an independent Palestinian state.

One way or another, the direction of historic development seems to be growing increasingly clearer: The Palestinian-Arab in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be responsible for their own fate in the Palestinian entity and future state, whereas the Arabs in Israel will be responsible for theirs within the State of Israel, whether or not a settlement is ultimately reached to establish a Palestinian state.

The Arab intellectual elites failed to confront the challenge of clarifying the collective identity and to explore the civil and national status of the Arab public in Israel. As part of this effort, they drafted the vision documents. However, the internal disunity of these documents has not yet been exhausted. In the absence of leadership of stature to lead the internal discourse in Arab society, the vision papers did not fulfill their designated role, and to some extent, even attained the opposite result. On the one hand, the documents were interpreted by the majority of the Palestinian public as expressing radical positions and the intention to abolish Israel’s Jewish character, while on the other hand, they were interpreted as an attempt to establish a new social movement that would call for a boycott of the Knesset elections.

Assessment: The situation of the Arabs in Israel after the establishment of a Palestinian state

One of the outcomes of the processes of socialization and civil integration that the Arabs in Israel experienced in the years since its establishment is the fact that there is currently no consensus among the Arabs in Israel represented in them. A failure to reach a settlement with Israel would reopen the conflict and lead to a reproduction of the situation of the Arabs in Israel and the possibility of establishing a binational state over all of Mandatory Palestine.

Given the strengthening of the right wing in Israel and the policies pursued by the rightist government towards the Arab citizens of Israel as a historic process that will also lead to a far-reaching change among the Palestinians themselves. One of the ways in which the right will express itself is to establish umbrella organizations for all the Palestinians, with the Arabs in Israel represented in them. A failure to reach a settlement with Israel would reopen the conflict and lead to a reproduction of the situation of the Arabs in Israel and the possibility of establishing a binational state over all of Mandatory Palestine.

82  As’ad Ghanem, “Thank you, Netanyahu,” Haaretz, October 22, 2010.
83  As’ad Ghanem, Building the Nation, pp. 140-159.
84  Hunaida Ghanem, Rebuilding the Nation, pp. 140-159.
85  The Northern Branch of the movement continues to maintain its position as the leader of the Arab public.
87  This was illustrated once again during the Annapolis process in 2008, when it became clear that the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians would not involve the Arabs in Israel, with the exception of the question of recognizing Israel as Jewish.
88  See the remarks made by retired Supreme Court Justice Prof. Yishai Zart in the Framers’ Accord Forum, January 27, 2011.
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90  This is likely to be strengthened, which would help to resolve the status of the Arabs as loyal citizens, because theirPalestinian identity is legal if it is based on citizenship that was “forced upon them” in 1948, as it appears in the vision papers, gives them, so it would seem, more hope and greater opportunity than any of the other alternatives. This is reflected in their collective identity carriers of considerable weight. From among all the possibilities for Jewish-Arab relations, there is a consensus among the majority of both Arabs and Jews that Israel will continue to be a Jewish-Zionist state and the Israel Arabs will continue to enjoy individual and group rights under the law, receive their relative share of the budgets, enjoy cultural autonomy and administer their own religious, cultural and educational institutions.

Accordingly, a peace settlement and the establishment of a Palestinian state could lead to greater moderation in the nationalist positions of the Arabs in Israel, enabling them to focus their activities on integrating into the state in positions of power and attaining full equality in rights and in the socioeconomic sphere. This is also likely to close the gap between themselves and Jewish society, and demand the removal of budgetary, bureaucratic and political barriers that make it difficult to implement the declared policies towards the Arabs and to promote access to full integration in the state. While their struggle may be determined and intense, it will not be radical or violent, and will be conducted only within the framework of the law and the rules of democratic political life. The process of achieving a peaceful two-state solution is expected to be both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary, with the help of political parties and NGOs. This assessment is based on the employment of means in the struggle of the Arab-Israeli citizens to improve their situation, which is based on the fine-tuning of their political consciousness and their adaptation to the Israeli political system and culture.

The transition to an age of peace could gradually reinforce the democratization of Israel and help in these contexts too. Democratization might contribute to protecting the rights of the individual and the minority, whereas the demands for cultural autonomy and control over the Arab education system, separate religious institutions, the Arab waqf and Arab media would not necessarily be viewed as a threat or danger, even if they are seen as an obstacle to the state.

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The overall Palestinian national struggle and the legitimization of the struggle to reawaken their cause. In such a situation, they might seek a partial solution rather than the cession of their national dominion, by widening the debate over its issues, and laying a new conceptual infrastructure (such as the vision papers) for a struggle over the future of a national minority that is entitled, in no way inferior to another, to collective authority in addition to their civil rights as individuals. The Arabs could step up their struggle for equality because it would no longer be necessary to split the struggle between the goals of equality and those of peace. They might expand their protest by turning to other countries and parties in the international community (the United Nations, international NGOs, the International Court in The Hague) and asking them to intervene on their behalf to bring about a change in Israel’s policies towards them.

It is even possible that a confrontation could develop over Israeli-Zionist character of the state, the Arab minority could seek, after the withdrawal from the territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, to strengthen the Jewish-Zionist character of the state, among other things as a means to draw Jews from the Diaspora to Israel. On the other hand, an Arab demand might be put forth to abolish the Jewish character of the state. In the eyes of the Arab minority, the fact that Israel has not taken any real steps in the area of civil equality or autonomy would be rejected, and the Arabs would be expected to realize their national aspirations by means of a confrontation in the form of subversion, competition for resources and the division of the “shared space” or autonomy. This would undermine the establishment of majority-minority relations that will be based on understandings attained through dialogue and negotiation between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority. Consequently, it would necessitate radicalization, but rather the practical realization of this.

Furthermore, long-term socioeconomic considerations also mandate this. Since no mass immigration from Russia or the United States is anticipated, Israel’s growth potential lies in the existing population. Arab migration, therefore, would not represent an essential radicalization, but rather the practical realization of the recommendations of the Or Commission. On the other hand, to achieve normalcy in the Arab society, the Arab public will not relinquish its Israeli identity, although there have been periods of ups and downs in this component in their identity, alongside their Palestinian-Arab identity, although there have been periods of ups and downs in this component in their identity, alongside their Palestinian-Arab identity.

Of the two scenarios, the positive one also appears to be the more likely one, in view of discourse on progressive changes that are correct. This requires comprehensive, multi-year policy planning, which will guarantee that the Arab society in the Hebrew-language media must be encouraged. This change, along with the expanded use of Arabic, being an official language of Israel, and its assimilation to the Middle East and other Arab countries, can contribute to a change in the status and image of the Arab minority in the eyes of the Jewish majority. Further to these changes, the state must take advantage of the fact that the majority of Arab young people (about 70 percent) are interested in volunteering for service in their communities, and add to the National-Civic Service Directorate and increase the number of service positions available in it in order to join this service. The leaders of Arab society must reverse their opposition to this national-civic service and encourage their young people to join it as a means to further the integration of the Arabs into the state and increase their rights.

This policy towards the Arabs in Israel, which will be consolilated in cooperation with Arab society, will guarantee that the definition of the Jewish state, so long as it includes the exclusion of Arabs and does not represent a means to discriminate based on nationality or religion. It will also represent an explicit statement to the Jews in Israel that the era of discrimination is over, and that Israel’s Arab citizens must be recognized as a legitimate partner deserving of equal rights, not only in theory, but also in practice. Moreover, action must be taken among the Jewish public to explain the need for popular support for the Arab minority, which involves the wage inequality and other illegal means.

The policy that will be adopted must be accompanied by a comprehensive policy towards the leadership in the country on the basis of mutual respect and acceptance. This political and public discourse, which should be devoid of racist tones from the Jewish side, such as support for the transfer of Arab political rights, would be accompanied by a policy of equal public activity. This would diminish the degree of inequality in Israel society and contribute to their self-definition as citizens of the state, achieve full equality or autonomy would be rejected, and the Arabs would be expected to realize their national aspirations by means of a confrontation in the form of subversion, competition for resources and the division of the “shared space” or autonomy. This would undermine the establishment of majority-minority relations that will be based on understandings attained through dialogue and negotiation between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority. Consequently, it would necessitate radicalization, but rather the practical realization of the recommendations of the Or Commission. On the other hand, to achieve normalcy in the Arab society, the Arab public will not relinquish its Israeli identity, although there have been periods of ups and downs in this component in their identity, alongside their Palestinian-Arab identity, although there have been periods of ups and downs in this component in their identity, alongside their Palestinian-Arab identity.
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status of the Arabs in Israel in the discussions and agreements between them. They have concluded from this that they must look out for their own fate and future within the State of Israel, independent of the future of the peace process and its outcomes.

4. In the past decade, the Arabs in Israel initiated the drafting of a number of models to resolve their relations as an indigenous national group with the Jewish majority and the state, in which they demanded to expand their collective rights and receive a status fully equal to that of the Jews in the state. At the same time, Arab society is not united in its opinion, and political power struggles within it prevent the possibility of setting clear goals in relation to the definition of their identity and future status in Israel. The main dispute appears to be between conducting a struggle to fully realize the group rights that formally exist in Israel’s laws, and the struggle to change Israel’s character from the state of a single nationality to a binational state.

5. Israel’s demand to be recognized as a Jewish state exacerbates the identity problem of the Arabs in Israel, and many of them view this as a means to force discriminatory legislation on them and to exclude them from the Jewish majority. The lack of certainty regarding their collective status in the state, and especially on the background of its definition as a Jewish state, contributes to the attraction of alternative identities and political solutions, which are not based on the principle of two states for two peoples – the Islamic solution or the nationalist-Palestinian solution to turn Israel into a binational state on the way to establishing a single state in all of Palestine.

6. The continuation of the processes of segregation in Israeli society will necessarily intensify the feeling of alienation among the Arab public in Israel when a Palestinian state is established too. In the absence of Arab leadership that can lead a struggle for full equality and realization of the Arab minority’s collective rights according to the existing laws, and given the continued policy of institutional discrimination on the part of the state, the camp that seeks to turn Israel into a binational state will become increasingly stronger.

The shaping of long-term policies towards the Arabs coming from above, in the areas of equal status and individual and collective rights based on the existing laws, and the advancement of processes of desegregation in various areas can diffuse the tension between the state’s Jewish character and the Arabs’ demand to be recognized as an indigenous national minority. This could mitigate tendencies towards separatism and the thronging of young people to the religious and nationalist movements, such as the Islamic movement, Balad and Bnei Hakfar.

Colonel (res.) Dr. Ephraim Lavie

Colonel (res.) Dr. Lavie serves as the director of the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Studies at the Tel Aviv University, and is a researcher at the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies. In 2009-2010, he served as the acting head of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation Program for Jewish-Arab Cooperation. Dr. Lavie received his Ph.D. from Tel Aviv University in June 2009 for his dissertation on “The Palestinians in the West Bank: Patterns of political organization under occupation and self-rule.”

In his final years in the IDF, he served as the head of the Department of the Advisor on Arab affairs in the Civil Administration in Judea and Samaria (1997-1998), and head of the Palestinian division in the Research Department of Military Intelligence (1998-2002). In the context of his last position, Col. (res.) Lavie served as advisor to the head of the Israeli delegation to the negotiations with the Palestinians over the final status settlement.
The Impact of the Establishment of a Palestinian State on Israel’s Arab Citizens and on Their Identity and Desire to Realize Their National Aspirations

Since becoming a minority in 1948, the Palestinian-Arab minority in Israel has viewed itself—and will very likely continue to do so—as an integral part of the Palestinian people, community and diaspora, both within historical Palestine and outside it. As such, it views itself as a partner to any possible solution to the Palestinian problem in all its various aspects, components and complications. Despite the determined and generalized nature of this statement, it is notable that one can find among this minority, with its various religious communities and political and conceptual circles, a variety of views and positions in regard the various possible solutions to the Palestinian problem. This is especially so in regard to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, which is expected to fulfill the Palestinian national aspirations, and to the nature of the Palestinian state’s relations with the state to which they belong, the State of Israel. This article will discuss the impact of the future establishment of a Palestinian state (as part of understandings between Israel and the Palestinians) on the Palestinian-Arab population of Israel, the national-identity discourse within it and how it perceives the realization of its national aspirations.

This subject has not been at the focus of an in-depth study in the past, and the few papers that have discussed it, did so in a generalized manner, using expressions that can be interpreted in a number of ways. Thus, for example, when discussing the subject of the “two-state solution,” most writers and researchers use this as a static, clearly understood and delineated term, without taking into account that it is in fact a dynamic, fluid concept, with the positions of the parties that espouse it changing in accordance with the changes occurring in the political-strategic conditions and international balance of powers, on the one hand, and between the rival parties, on the other. This change in positions is expressed in relation to the borders between the two states and the form their future relations will take. Furthermore, it is related to the essence and character of these states (if they are nation states, binational states or states of all their citizens). Similarly, the term “Palestinian state” is used without exploring the essence and borders of this state (will it be within the Jordan 1967 borders? Will it be a secular democratic state? Or will it be state having a religious-traditional character? Will it be the nation-state of the Palestinian people, which will include the return of Palestinians living in the diaspora to live within its borders?).

In addition to exploring the anticipated impact of the establishment of a Palestinian state on the Arab population in Israel, this paper will also explore the various positions held by the members of this population in regard to two central questions: 1. What will be the nature and character of the future Palestinian state and will it address the national aspirations and yearnings of the Palestinians? 2. What impact will the establishment of such a state have on their status and circles of identity as Palestinian-Arab citizens of the State of Israel?

When answering these two questions, we must differentiate between two different perspectives: the first is how Palestinian citizens view the implications of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the essence of the conflict and relations with Israel, and on their relations, as Israeli citizens, with this state. The second is how Palestinians who are not citizens of Israel see it, and especially how they relate to the positions of the Palestinian-Arab citizens of Israel.

The academic discussion of these two options (“two states for two peoples” and “a democratic-secular state in the territory of Mandatory Palestine”) is not a new one. It began to be discussed among Palestinian academic circles (especially among Palestinian academics in Israel) in the early 1990s. Discussions of these issues have gained considerable currency since then and penetrated the various media and other areas, especially the public arena.

The discourse within the Palestinian-Arab population in Israel

As background for the internal discourse among the Palestinian-Arab population in Israel, it is important to note that we find three principal conceptual currents in it:

- The communist current and its allies;
- The Islamic current.
- The nationally oriented current.

It goes without saying that the Arab and Palestinian circles exist in various forms and to different degrees among the three currents. The most fundamental differences relate the issue of integration into or separation from Israeli social life, or regarding the issue of a historical permanent solution to the Palestinian-Zionist conflict.

Whereas the first current, at least in the first three decades of the existence of the State of Israel, emphasized the issue of the equality of the Arab population with the Jewish population, the other two currents (each for different reasons), opposed the establishment of the Palestinian state and integration of the Arab population into the life of the state and its Israelization.

The spokespeople of the nationalist current, especially the members of Balad and the Abraham-al-Balad movement, often argue against the “two-state solution” that the communist movement championed, and emphasize rather the two-state option, that of the “state of all its citizens” or “one secular-democratic state.”

That is the tone taken by Awad Abd al-Fattah, who tried to imbue the idea of a single state—which in his view is the only one that can lead to a stable and lasting solution—with two dimensions: one historic and the other pragmatic. Regarding the historic dimension, Abd al-Fattah says: “The one-state idea has both a historic and moral background, in consideration of the fact that Palestine was an Arab country before the colonialist and Zionist invasion of the region. As such, there remains the Arab ethno-national element as the dominant one in this land. This was the situation until the eve of the Nakba and the perpetration of the crime of collective deportation.”

Abd al-Fattah presents the historical background as a multi-phase process, which began in the dawn of the creation of the modern Palestinian movement, and continued to develop in later historical stages, in fact up to the present day. On this matter, he maintains: The most striking demand of the modern Palestinian national movement was the liberation of Palestine from British colonial control and opposition to turning Palestine into a Jewish-Zionist state. The meaning of the concept “liberation of Palestine” in those days was the establishment of an independent Palestinian state based on the model of the states established in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan and other Arab countries. The meaning was that all the residents of Palestine, regardless of their religious or ethnic affiliation, would be citizens of that state. But over time it became impossible to ignore the demographic reality created by the Western-Zionist colonialist plan on the land in favor of the Jews, while relating to it with the conception of uprooting.

After the Nakba, with the organizational, political and conceptual development of the Palestinian national movement, the idea of a democratic-secular state having human dimensions that would guarantee life for all in full equality was proposed. Over time, this idea remained no more than an ambiguous slogan.

Although Abd al-Fattah alluded to the meaning of his description, from the late 1990s on, he maintained that the model most appropriate to the situation that had been created would be that of South Africa:

Since the late 1990s, the South African model, which was expressed in the toppling of the apartheid regime in 1994 through the presentation of a more humane and moral alternative, became the model that inspired many of those fighting racism and colonialism throughout the world. The blacks in South Africa began their struggle based on a clear plan and a firm and consistent desire to realize that plan, which many believed was utopian and infeasible. The African model was not based on separation or division. From the outset, the South Africans chose a democratic model that would be realized in a single homeland based on individual and full citizenship that emphasized the principle of “one person, one vote.” Certain people may argue that the situation in South Africa is fundamentally different from the one in Palestine, in addition to the total and determined refusal on the part of the Zionists to accept this equation in any way, shape or form. But they know deep in their hearts that there are many elements of similarity between the two cases. Perhaps they refuse to accept the equation because they are aware of the danger involved in adopting it and taking the operative steps to carry it out.

On the other hand, when relating to the subject of a Palestinian state, the two-state option and the place of the Palestinian-Arab citizens of Israel in it, MK Muhammad Barakat (a representative of the communist current) said:

There is a fundamental difference between the two terms “one state” and “binational state.” The meaning of a single state is a state of all its citizens, while a binational state involves the participation of two peoples that divide control between them agreed-upon criteria. And if we assume that the implementation of the slogan of “two states for two peoples,” which means putting an end to the occupation on the West Bank and [Gaza] Strip and [East] Jerusalem along with the refugee problem, is something that is difficult to carry out, it is clear that the “one-state solution,” which requires reaching an interim solution, is even harder and more complicated to implement, and perhaps even impossible under the current conditions, unless we work from an interesting assumption that says that Zionism has suddenly turned into a magnanimous movement willing to relinquish its very essence, as it adopts a new human civil direction. Or work from a less interesting assumption that describes the advancement of the [Arab] revolutionary
The Influence of the Establishment of a Palestinian State on Israeli Arabs

Azmi Bishara was born in 1956 in Nazareth to a family that came from the village of Tarshiha in the Upper Galilee. He has a Ph.D. in philosophy, was a lecturer at Birzeit University in 1987-1990, a Knesset member for the Balad (Democratic National Assembly) party in 1992-1996, a member in Haifa on June 20-21, 2008. As'ad Ghanem said:

Barak also leveled very harsh criticism at those that presented the South African model as one that should be emulated. He explains his opposition to this idea:

The option of establishing a single state is one that can resolve a series of challenges facing the Palestinian people. We do not present this option because we have to accept it because of the difficulties involved in establishing a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but rather because we view this option as an appropriate and fair solution to the conflict. Indeed, South Africa, the civil conflict was won by the blacks, and the black and white, the black and white communities, all live in a society, with the exception of one made up of masters and slaves?

The idea of a binational state embodies recognition of two national groups in Palestine, each of which represents a democratic society found that they could live very well with this trend. This came in addition to the fact that this idea recognizes the need to share the land by two communities, or an internalization of the results of the prolonged struggle in which they did not have the upper hand. As'ad Ghanem,11 who has recently been trying to enlist support for the option of the binational state, can be considered to belong to this perspective.12

The recognition of the need to share the land by two communities is an important motif on the way to Palestinian internalization. It is also a motif that enhances the idea of the future state. It is one that can resolve the problems of this minority. Moreover, in South Africa, the civil problem was resolved, but today we can see that our Knesset members are received in all Arab countries, and have even become advisors to Palestinian intellectuals and the Palestinian society. But today we can see that our Knesset members are received in all Arab countries, and have even become advisors to Palestinian intellectuals and the Palestinian society.

According to Sheikh Raed Salah, the reason that the Israeli establishment has recently begun to accentuate the subject of the Arab nations and our Palestinian brethren leveled harsh criticism at us when we agreed to accept Israeli citizenship.

In regard to the position of the Islamic current and how it relates to the various solution options, we can distinguish between two clear and different positions held by the two branches of the Islamic movement. Whereas the remarks by the representatives of the non-parliamentary branch are vague and unclear and the remarks by some parliamentarians are vague and unclear, the remarks by some parliamentarians are vague and unclear, the remarks by some parliamentarians are vague and unclear. The model of the national homeland, or a homeland in the context of a single civil nation. That means that the fact of the building of a single South African nation (like the French nation, for example), does not ignore the ethnic, tribal, linguistic and cultural elements in South Africa. That is why the proposed model is not a multi-national one, but rather a multi-ethnic one with multiple languages and numerous cultures.13

This motif, of an indigenous national group as opposed to a developing national group is frequently repeated in publications related to the Zionist settlement program from a historic perspective. When reading material on the program of the Zionist settlement, I found that it does not speak about a Jewish state (from a religious aspect), and that the majority of the founders of Zionism were atheists who did not believe in God. Anyone who reads Ben-Gurion’s memoirs will reach the same conclusion.

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the “Jewish state” has its source in Israel’s inability to convince Jews to settle in it. He draws that conclusion from, among other sources, a recently published survey that showed that 67 percent of Israelis expressed their disgust at the corruption in the state and took a pessimistic perspective of their future.14

The Vision papers and their contribution to consolidating the discourse

The discourse on the “one-state” or “two-state” solution, and concerning the status and rights of the Palestinian-Arab citizens of Israel gained momentum in the wake of the publication of the four vision papers authored by Palestinian-Arab intellectuals and public figures who are citizens of Israel. Through these papers, they sought to redraw the relationship between the Arab minority in Israel and the Jewish majority population and Israeli authorities.15

These papers also discussed the relations with the region and the rest of the Arab nation, especially that part living in the territories, where the independent Palestinian state is to be established. It should be noted, before we present how the issue of these relations is reflected in these papers, that the bulk of the discussion will be directed at the nature of the relations between the Arab population, as an indigenous minority population, and the Jewish minority in the context of the State of Israel in its current form, that is, the way things would be in the context of a solution based on “two states for two peoples.”

The paper, written under the auspices of the Supreme Arab Monitoring Committee, says:

Concerning collective national rights, we believe that Palestinian Arabs in Israel, as a collective and as individuals, should be entitled to a full participation in all public resources including the political, material and symbolic resources. Such participation would be the cornerstone of building an equal and just society, where this society would include equal relevance and opportunity for each group on the basis of democratic principles of consensuality and power sharing.

On the level of legal protection of the national collective rights, we note a number of basic legal axes that must be guaranteed in order to crystallize the desired legal status of the Palestinian Arabs:

1. An official recognition of the collective Palestinian Arab existence in the State, and their national, religious, cultural, and language character, and recognition that they are the indigenous people of the homeland.

2. Recognition of the Palestinian Arab rights of complete equality in the State on a collective-national basis.

3. Guarantee dual language system of both Arabic and Hebrew.

4. Guaranteeing effective representation and participation of the Palestinian Arabs in decision making procedures within the official institutes and the activation of the veto right in matters concerning their living.

5. Guarantee of self-rule for the Palestinian Arabs in the fields of education, religion, culture and media and recognizing their right to self-determination with respect to their collective life complementing their partnership within the state.

6. Equal distribution of resources, such as budget, land and housing.

7. Appropriate representation on a collective basis in the state system.

8. Guaranteeing the right of the Palestinian Arabs to have open and free relations with the rest of the Palestinian People and the Arab Nation.

9. Guaranteeing the rights of the Palestinian Arabs in issues obliterated in the past such as the present absentees and their right of return; the Islamic waqf (endowment); unrecognized Arab villages and land confiscation.

10. And finally, official acknowledgment of the historical injustice against the Palestinian Arabs in this country and against the Palestinians in general and to guarantee to end this injustice and correct its continuous disastrous consequences.

Anyone reading these words can understand the depth of the existing connection between the Palestinian-Arab population and the Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel and the linkage that this population feels towards any possible solution to the Palestinian problem. The clear meaning of these words is that any arrangement that is attained by the Palestinian-Arab citizens of Israel must not come at the expense of their relations with the rest of the Palestinian nation and Arab world. For the author of the document, there is no contradiction between the aspiration to reach an accepted formulation of integration into the various frameworks of the State of Israel and the aspiration to forge many and sundry ties with the Palestinian state in the making, as well as with other Arab states in the region.24

This subject received special emphasis in a vision paper known as the Haifa Declaration, which says:

Our vision for the future relations between Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews in this country is to create a democratic state founded on equality between the two national groups. This solution would guarantee the rights of the two groups in a just and equitable manner. This would require a change in the constitutional structure and a change in the definition of the State of Israel from a Jewish state to a democratic state established on national and civil equality between the two nation groups, and enshrining the principles of banning discrimination and of equality of all of its citizens and residents. In practice, this means abrogating all laws that discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of nationality, ethnicity or religion – first and foremost the laws of immigration and citizenship.25

This paper does not speak only about equality for the Arab population and abolishing the laws that discriminate against the minority. It also seeks full and genuine partnership between the two ethno-national components living in the land: in this vein, it seeks:

...the effective participation of the Palestinian minority in government and in decision making; guaranteeing the Palestinian citizens in Israel the right of veto in all matters that concern their status and rights; guaranteeing their right to cultural autonomy, which includes the rights to develop policies for and to administer their own cultural and educational affairs; and distributing resources in accordance with the principles of distributive and corrective justice. It is these principles that can guarantee our right to self-determination as a homeland minority.26

(The term “homeland minority” refers to an indigenous national minority that in the past represented a majority in its homeland and became a minority due to a traumatic historical event).

And in regard to their proposal’s chances of success, the authors of the document sum up as follows:

We firmly believe that the fulfillment of all the conditions for the achievement of the objectives, the Jewish Israeli and Arab Palestinian peoples, which requires the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and the realization of the rights of the Palestinians in Israel as a homeland minority, will create political circumstances that will enable the creation of confidence, cooperation, and mutual respect between two independent and democratic states: the State of Palestine and the State of Israel. We further hope that this will open up new horizons in which agreements and treaties will be concluded between them in the economic, scientific, and cultural fields that guarantee free and reciprocal movement, mobility, residence, and employment for the citizens and residents of the two states.

The paper published by Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel – entitled “The Democratic Constitution,” also talks about the integration of the Arab citizens in the State of Israel (under conditions of full equality and recognition of the Arab minority as a homeland minority), but without prejudicing their special inalienable relationship with the rest of the Palestinian people and the Arab-Islamic world. The document further states:

"In a state that does not control or occupy another people and that is based on full equality between all of its residents and between all of the different groups within it, Jewish and Arab citizens shall respect each other’s rights to live in peace, dignity and equality, and will be united in recognizing and respecting the differences between them, as well as the differences that exist between all the groups in a democratic, bilingual and multicultural society.”

The general Palestinian discourse

The participants in the discourse appear to increasingly view the involvement of the Palestinian-Arab citizens in Israel as self-evident, and the number of those supporting a one-state solution is growing from one day to the next.

On August 10, 2008, Ahmed Curee (Abu Alaa), the former Palestinian prime minister and a major Palestinian representative, wrote:

The general Palestinian discourse

...the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have become very slim, and the option of a binational state in all the territory of Mandatory Palestinian is becoming a more realistic, even self-evident solution.22

Abu Alaa made these comments in a broader context, which dealt with the issue of the progress in the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. In this context, he noted the option of the Palestinians moving in the direction of a binational state if the negotiations for the establishment of a Palestinian state were to meet with failure by the end of 2008.

When making these remarks, Abu Alaa may not have been fully aware that he was setting in motion a lively and multifaceted public discourse and debate that had earlier been held in whispers and undertones in the corridors of the Palestinian academia and quite a few intellectual circles. This was the first time that such a major personality, one who belonged to the Palestinian mainstream, or at least to one of the two main currents in the Palestinian national movement, was making such unequivocal remarks, which in fact discarded the most basic and banal demands of the Palestinian national movement since 1948 – the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in which the Palestinians would realize their national aspirations and become a sovereign in their homeland.

The question is: What exactly are those that speak of “a binational-state plan” actually talking about? Does this plan indeed refer to the entire territory of Mandatory Palestine? Or perhaps only the territory of the State of Israel? Or perhaps, it refers to a new and as yet unknown formula? Is this proposal identical to that of “one secular and democratic state?”

In an article entitled “The possible solution and the historic solution to the Palestinian problem,” Samir Al-Zaban23 wrote: “Palestinian independence and the establishment of an independent state can resolve part of the Palestinian problem, in particular that which relates to the struggle against the Israeli occupation, which was created as a result of the defeat in June 1967.”

And despite the tactical importance of this solution, Al-Zaban emphasizes the difference between a “possible solution” and a “historic solution” to the Palestinian problem, and at this opportunity asks that the talk about a “just solution” be halted, because in his view, it is impossible to dismiss the enormous suffering undergone by millions of people over entire decades with a pos-

18 Ibid.
20 Ozzyck-Lazar and Kabha, p. 185.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
25 Abu Alaa made these remarks in an interview he gave the Palestinian news agency Maan, whose website is: www.mna.ps
26 Samir Al-Zaban is a Palestinian journalist and writer living in Damascus.
The Influence of the Establishment of a Palestinian State on Israeli Arabs

The establishment of a Palestinian state will not endure, and could even lead to new grievances. The two-state solution is not a magic remedy and is not readily achieved. It, like every solution in reality, will not be realized except in the process of comprehensive negotiation. It is the only thing that can resolve the core of the conflict. And any solution to secondary questions related to the conflict is a non-viable solution, because a peaceful solution cannot take on the character of a permanent solution except through hard work on the root of the conflict, and that requires a long period of honest work.

Ibrahim Alloush

A single democratic state for two peoples is a historical solution to the Palestinian problem and the Israeli problem, and it is the only thing that can resolve the core of the conflict. And any solution to secondary questions related to the conflict is a non-viable solution, because a peaceful solution cannot take on the character of a permanent solution except through hard work on the root of the conflict, and that requires a long period of honest work.

Umar Al-Barghouti

The solution of “two states for two peoples” was never a logical solution. In addition to the fact that it does not enable the two peoples of our region to realize their right to self-determination, it cannot be viewed essentially as a moral solution. In the best case, the two-state solution enables the realization of the legitimate right for less than one-third of the Palestinian people on less than one-fifth of the territory of historic Palestine. In this situation, more than two-thirds of the Palestinian people – the refugees and the Palestinians of 1948 who have Israeli citizenship – will be the target of a single state, on one homeland founded on democratic pillars. This is the only solution that can compensate for the historic injustice that has been the lot of the Palestinians since 1948. After all, the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip only resolves basic branches of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, but cannot resolve the root of the conflict. But this solution, under the current conditions, appears closer to a dream. In order to be realistic, it requires the presence of other conditions that are related more to Israel and the attempt to redefine its essence as a state, among other things, the abolition of its definition as a Jewish state, which means doing away with Israel’s role in the region.

At the end of this article, Al-Barghouti affirms with certainty that any solution that does not lead to a resolution of the core of the conflict, on one condition, which is that it does not include any mention of a binational state, cannot be considered a solution that adds to the Palestinian identity.

Ibrahim Al-Ash, the editor of the website “The Free Arab Voice,” in an article called “The One-State Program in Palestine,” sees no difference between the idea of a “binational” state and that of a “single democratic” one. He consigns all those who support these two ideas to a single conceptual current, one that calls for a government that accepts the presence of the invaders on our land in return for their recognition of our right of return, etc. [...] And the result is the strengthening of the binational program is one that is directed, first and foremost, at the core of the Palestinian nation and the Arab right in Palestine and abandoning the strategy of the armed struggle and the goal of liberating the land. The binational program is one that is directed, first and foremost, at the core of the Palestinian nation and the Arab right in Palestine and abandoning the strategy of the armed struggle and the goal of liberating the land. The binational program is one that is directed, first and foremost, at the core of the Palestinian nation and the Arab right in Palestine and abandoning the strategy of the armed struggle and the goal of liberating the land. The binational program is one that is directed, first and foremost, at the core of the Palestinian nation and the Arab right in Palestine and abandoning the strategy of the armed struggle and the goal of liberating the land.
they can negotiate.\textsuperscript{35} Alkoush, whose views approximate those of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and other refusal fronts, often appears in the Arab press. The response with which his words are received seems to be indicative of the disillusionment felt by the Palestinians, and perhaps even the Arab public as a whole, in regard to the talk and slogans that were typical of earlier periods, and which do not really have much basis in reality.

Amjad Arar\textsuperscript{36} uses terms similar to those of Alkoush. In an article in Al Khaaleej that he authored in response to the above remarks made by Abu Alaa, he wrote:

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Remarks made by Abu Alaa

\begin{quote}

of fulfilling its national aspirations. Nevertheless, he believes that under certain circumstances, which will be agreed upon in national feelings on the part of both nationalities, and the need each has to view the proposed state as part of the process to accomplish it much more successfully than the proposal to establish a short-lived Palestinian state with no chance of survival and than just the Palestinian aspirations, and could address Israel’s concerns as well. The meaning of this is that on the tactical level, this solution could circumvent international criticism and gains relations with and a status in countries that because of its policy were so far as maintaining relations with them. As for the Palestinian Authority, it is interested in the negotiations due to its feeling that there are no alternatives, and consequently, it is no coincidence that the slogan “The negotiations are an end in themselves,” has become a foundation stone in the official policy. These policies are temporary, only in the context of an “Israeli massacre,” or some new settlement plan. It was in this context that Qurei made his proposal regarding a binational state, rather than the presentation of a theoretical-political plan that requires the mobilization of internal and regional forces around it and the holding of a creative discourse in what remains of the Palestinian institutions to shape and authorize the plan. The call was directed more at warning the Israelis to back off somewhat from its positions, while granting concessions, even if only slight ones, on the political level. This is due to the thought that the weakness of the Olmert government will make this call effective and will produce results. We express these things here in order to say that the treatment of the issue should not carry the heading “Israel’s stubbornness,” but rather should carry a bold heading: “The failure of the option of a political settlement and the ineffectiveness of the negotiations.”\textsuperscript{37}

Majed al-Khiali,\textsuperscript{38} who presents the options for solutions and the complexity involved in their implementation, says on this matter:

In the Palestinian case, it would appear that the idea of a binational state is an interim solution between separation and the concept of integration. This idea is proposed at a time when the principle of separation between Israelis and Palestinians has become impossible to implement, in the context of two states through the establishment of a Palestinian state. Similarly, this idea is presented under conditions in which it is impossible to talk of the option of a “sovereign and independent” state based on the idea of full Israeli withdrawal, and the context of power of power between all its citizens over the entire area of Palestine. This is especially so when the sides, the Israelis and Palestinians, insist that the solution be a national one, in view of the many manifestations of hate and hostility between them. And that is why this idea represents an interim solution between the idea of two states and that of a “secular democratic state” in Palestine.\textsuperscript{39}

Al-Khiali then takes the view that the idea of a single state, in which citizens will live regardless of religious background or nationally, is an impracticable idea in the current conditions of the Israeli Palestinian conflict. This is due to the intensity of national feelings on the part of both nationalities, and the need each has to view the proposed state as part of the process of fulfilling its national aspirations. Nevertheless, he believes that under certain circumstances, which will be agreed upon in advance, the idea of a binational state could be realistic. Al-Khiali then sketches out what these conditions are:

- The binational state should guarantee collective rights, which are mainly the recognition of an independent national identity and cultural independence, and that to establish cultural and educational institutions. And on the political level, this proposal guarantees the division of government by means of representative institutions in the three branches of government in the state, the judiciary, executive and parliamentary branches, which will be established on a democratic constitutional basis.\textsuperscript{40}

It can be concluded from Al-Khiali’s remarks that in the Palestinian-Arab case, the two-state solution would implement more than just the Palestinian aspirations, and could address Israel’s concerns as well. Furthermore, it would accomplish much more successfully than the proposal to establish a short-lived Palestinian state with no chance of survival and no territorial contiguity between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. On the long-term strategic level, this solution could allay the fears of the Israelis as far as the demographic issue is concerned, which appears to be working all the while in favor of the Arab minority.\textsuperscript{41}

Al-Khiali belongs to the current of Palestinian writers who believe that the idea of a binational state should be taken seriously as a way out of the deadlock the Palestinians have reached in their efforts to establish an independent state. Those who belong to this current call to draw conclusions from the failure of the idea to establish a Palestinian state on part of Mandatory Palestine to the result of the need for solutions that will be able to complete the ongoing conflict in the interest of both communities of which Zionism has succeeded in establishing an independent state, in view of the Palestinian national movement’s failure to do so. They also emphasize the importance of not capitulating to dictates from Israel, “which is striving to complete its implementation of the complete Zionist plan over the entire territory of Mandatory Palestine”. In the view of those who belong to this current, they believe that they are unable to establish a sovereign and independent state over part of Mandatory Palestine is not necessarily a defeat in the face of the Zionist plan. Because when they choose the option of a binational state, they are broadening their understanding of the area of the struggle, from an effort to obtain one small part of their homeland to a struggle for coexistence over all of “historic Palestine,” and from an ethnic struggle limited to one political area to one that covers other areas too, such as human and civil rights.

Al-Khiali explains that:

It is clear that the Palestinians could lose their dream and aspiration of an independent state of their own when they turn to the binational option, but this is a step forward when it is possible to be compensated for in terms of the political effectiveness of the negotiations. This is because the meaning of this option, by which will be able to preserve the unity of their historic homeland and implement the unification of their people. And in regard to the struggle against the Zionist plan, if the struggle is waged properly, the binational state will become the exact opposite of a Jewish-Zionist state, and perhaps in time may turn from a state of all its citizens to a secular-democratic one.\textsuperscript{42}

The members of the (pan-Palestinian) Islamic current dismiss this idea out of hand as they cast doubt on any possibility that Israel will accept it, or on the ability of the international community to force it to do so. The most outstanding representative of this current is the journalist Yasser al-Zaatar.\textsuperscript{43} In an article entitled “The fashion of the single or binational state,” al-Zaatar writes:

Among cultural and political circles, we are seeing the popularity of the fashion of a single state as well as that of a binational state, which Edward Said, Amzi Bishara and others discussed in the past. These appeals come in the context of a threat directed at an enemy country due to the exaggerated obstinacy it is displaying in the negotiations, and especially when they come out of the mouths of those who are involved in the negotiations, such as Ahmed Qurei, or said in the context of the search after a new option, in light of the failure of the negotiating track and the absence of any horizon for the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state on the territory that was occupied in 1967. This comes in addition to the failure of the option of armed resistance.\textsuperscript{44}

Al-Zaatar states that the shift toward the binational option in these years has been due to the fact that the Israelis and the Palestinians has been upset, the Palestinians have not even a sliver of hope that a proposal of this kind will be accepted by Israel, even if they themselves accept it or parts of it. And he adds:

If the international community were to say to the Palestinians today: “If you agree to partner with the Israelis currently living between the Mediterranean and the Jordan in a civil democratic state, in which all the people share equal rights and responsibilities, with a structure based on the principle of religious communities (millets), as was the case in the Ottoman empire, in other words, that each religious community administers its own independent legal system in regard to personal laws, in addition to guaranteeing the right of return to all refugees, with compensation to pay for all their years of being refugees and for their property – if this were to be carried out, many would seriously weigh the offer, because it would only be natural for the proposed state to be more Palestinian than Jewish. There are five million Palestinians living today inside Palestine, including the Arabs of 1948, compared to a similar number of Jews. And if the Palestinians’ national identity was turned to, the landscape would be very different, and it is very likely that the majority of Jews would not want to live in such a state, especially when many of them have the option of settling in America and Western Europe under better conditions.\textsuperscript{45}

Seemingly, al-Zaatar does not reject the idea, or at least appears to be demonstrating a certain degree of pragmatism regarding the matter. However, towards the end of his article, he leaves no room for doubt regarding his position, and perhaps regarding the position of the entire Islamic current concerning the idea of a binational state.

These proposals are made in the shadow of the predominant understanding that says that the balance of international power will never permit or allow an optimal solution in the form of the liberation of Palestine, all of Palestine, or the forcing of a settlement, as can be understood from the legitimate decisions of the international community. This

\textsuperscript{36} Amjad Arar is a Palestinian journalist and an editor of Al Khaaleej, which appears in the United Arab Emirates.
\textsuperscript{38} Majed al-Khiali is a Palestinian journalist and researcher who lives in Damascus.
\textsuperscript{39} Majed al-Khiali, “Al-talwih bi-thunayiyat al-qawmiyya” [The binational state: A initial attempt to define it], www.hem.bredband.net.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{42} Majed al-Khiali, “‘An insidad khiyar al-dawla al-Filastiniyya, wa-madha ba’du” [On the possibility of a Palestinian state reaching a dead end: And what’s next?], www.middle-east-online.com.
\textsuperscript{43} Yasser al-Zaatar is a Palestinian journalist, researcher and political commentator; he lives in Jordan and writes a regular column in the Jordanian Ad-Dustour, and also writes for newspapers and Internet sites throughout the Arab world that have an Islamic orientation.
\textsuperscript{44} Yasser al-Zaatar, “Mudhatn an-dawla alawahtah aw thunayiyat al-qawmiyya” [The fashion of the single or binational state], Ad-Dustour, September 9, 2008.
\textsuperscript{45} The influence of the establishment of a Palestinian state on Israeli Arabs
The Influence of the Establishment of a Palestinian State on Israeli Arabs

Notes:

Conclusion

Most of the organizations and spokespeople representing the Arab population were convinced until not long ago that their place in the solution involving two states for two peoples would be in the State of Israel, which would have to undergo a fundamental change in regard to its treatment of the Arab minority and its rights as an indigenous and homeland minority. It appears, however, that due to the ongoing Israeli control over the West Bank and the creation of facts on the ground, which have voided the idea of the establishment of an independent sovereign Palestinian state on the territory occupied in June 1967 of any meaning, a certain turning point has come about in the perception of possible solutions, and the scales seem to be increasingly tipping in towards a solution involving a single state for two peoples over the entire territory of Mandatory Palestine. Most of the spokespeople understand that this situation means returning practically to the zero point, which requires a new approach to all the subjects and all the issues that dictated the form and essence of the Arab-Palestinian-Zionist conflict from the start.

Prof. Mustafa Kabha

Prof. Mustafa Kabha is a senior faculty member of the Open University. He is a researcher and lecturer in history and communications in the Open University and Tel Aviv University, where he completed all his degrees. He has worked in the Open University since 1992. In the past, he taught in the departments of history and communications in Haifa University and Ben-Gurion University and in Enver Yezrak College and Beit Berl College. His areas of expertise include the history of the Middle East and Islam, the history of the Palestinian people in the modern age, the history of Arab society in Israel, communications in Arabic. He has written and edited 16 books in Hebrew, Arabic and English. He has also published dozens of articles in scientific journals in English, Arabic, Hebrew, French and German.

Prof. Kabha is also active in the civil society and is a member of the board of directors of Ilam Arab Media Center and Dar Al-Tifel Al-Arabi Organization. He is also a founder of the Mada al-Carmel Arab Center for Applied Social Research, and of Al-Nahda Al-Ahlia school in Kfar Qara. He is a member of the board of directors of the Jews, Christians, Muslims: Social and Cultural Encounters research institute at the Open University and is a member of the Academy of the Arabic Language in Haifa. He also serves as a co-editor of The New East.

Among his most recent articles and books:

The Palestinians – A Nation and its Diaspora, The Open University, 2010.

Ibid.