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The Evolvement of an Arab– Palestinian National Minority in Israel

ABSTRACT

Developments in the national consciousness of Arabs in Israel are addressed in three consecutive periods, each representing a phase in the evolvement of the Arabs in Israel as a national minority, characterized by unique political and ideological developments. Following the establishment of Israel, Arab national consciousness was relatively subdued, given the imposition of a military government regime in Arab-populated areas and the physical isolation of Israel's Arabs from the Arab world. The second period, from 1967 to 1993, symbolized the national awakening of the Arabs in Israel in a process, which came to be known as *Palestinization*, which was strongly influenced by their renewed contact with the Palestinians in the occupied territories and by the rise of the Palestinian national movement. During the third period, from 1993 to the present, the national dilemma of the Arabs in Israel was further accentuated by the 1993 Oslo Accords, leading to recurrent attempts by Arabs in Israel to reformulate and propose alternative models to the 1948 paradigm of minority-majority relations in Israel. This article examines these developments in terms of ideology, politics, and means of protest.

INTRODUCTION

THIS ARTICLE ANALYZES THE CONSOLIDATION of Israel's Arab community as a national minority, a process that recently culminated with the publication of four position papers jointly known as "The Future Vision Documents."

Following an introduction that invokes contemporary discourse on the collective rights of national and indigenous minorities, developments in the

national consciousness of Arabs in Israel are addressed in three consecutive periods, each representing a phase in the evolvement of the Arabs in Israel as a national minority.

The initial model of Arab minority–Jewish majority relations evolved in the first period, from 1948 to 1967. The Arab component in the national identity of the Arab population was relatively subdued, given the Arab defeat in the 1948 war, the imposition of a military government in Arab-populated areas (which was in effect between 1948 and 1966) and the physical isolation of Israel's Arabs from the Arab world.

In the second period, from 1967 to 1993, the national consciousness of Arabs in Israel was significantly affected by the Six Day War and the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This period symbolized the national awakening of the Arabs in Israel in a process which came to be known as 'Palestinization', which was strongly influenced by their renewed contact with the Palestinians in the occupied territories and by the rise of the Palestinian national movement.

During the third period, from 1993 to the present, the national dilemma of the Arabs in Israel was further accentuated by the 1993 Oslo Accords, leading to demands for recognition as a national minority in Israel with collective rights. This period witnessed recurrent attempts by Arabs in Israel to reformulate and propose alternative models to the 1948 paradigm of minority-majority relations in Israel.

This article examines these developments from three perspectives: ideology, politics, and protest.

THE STATUS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

Before the 1990s, international law agencies and legal and political theorists paid scant attention to the definition of national minorities' rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly of the UN on December 10, 1948, made no mention of minorities or group rights. Several decades later, in 1992, following the national awakening of minorities in post-colonial independent states, and the collapse of the USSR and its disintegration into a series of nation states, the first formative international document referring to minority rights was drafted.

The adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities by the UN General Assembly on December 18, 1992² marked the beginning of a new era, in which the international community increasingly focused on minority

rights. The particular concern of the European community was reflected in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, endorsed in Strasbourg by the Council of Europe on February 1, 1995.³

However, despite the high-profile attention to this issue, an unequivocal definition of the term ‘national minority’ eluded the authors of these and other documents. Indeed, defining the term is a complicated and thorny task. Despite extensive attempts by scholars and researchers, international conventions, international courts, and studies and research commissioned by the UN, no universally recognized legal definition of the term ‘national minority’ exists.⁴

A widely accepted definition was proposed by Will Kymlicka, one of the most authoritative scholars in this field. He views national minorities as groups that consider themselves as distinct peoples or nations that were annexed to larger states, either voluntarily or against their will (as a result of colonization, conquests, or territorial exchanges).⁵ The definition developed by Amal Jamal, an Israeli-Arab scholar, is particularly applicable to our case: “National minorities are national groups that were defeated by other national groups in the struggle over the establishment of the state in which they live.”⁶ Our interpretation of the term in the case under study is the following: a national minority is a numerically inferior, subordinated, or differentiated group with distinct national, ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic, or religious attributes.

“Minority Rights” is another term that requires elaboration. Scholars agree that minority rights are often referred to as collective rights. These are rights that are conferred on a group, such as a religious group or a national group, independent of whether the group is organized, in contrast to individual rights, which are the rights all human beings deserve, independent of their membership in any specific group.⁷ The right to a distinct language or heritage, for example, is a collective right that stems from the group’s unique identity and distinction.⁸ Collective rights are often referred to as “group-differentiated rights,”⁹ intended “to compensate for the fact that the minority community is vulnerable and that its culture must deal with the interests and pressures of the general society.”¹⁰

1948–1967: ACCOMMODATION

The outcome of the 1948 War created a unique and extremely complex situation for Jewish–Arab relations and the status of Arabs in Israel. Virtually overnight, the Arab majority under the British Mandate became a minority

in Israel, while the Jewish minority was now the majority in the newly established state and official homeland of the Jewish people.

From a geopolitical perspective, however, the State of Israel was not only a minority among the Arab-Muslim dominated Middle East with whom it was officially at war, these Arab states served as the object of ethnic, national, and/or religious identification for Israel's own Arab minority.

The first official Israeli reference to the Arab minority appeared in the Proclamation of Independence of May 14, 1948, which called upon the “members of the Arab nation, inhabitants of the State of Israel, to preserve the ways of peace.”¹¹ The State committed itself to “full and equal citizenship” of the Arab population and “representation in all its bodies and institutions”. It granted civil rights—individual rights—to its Arab residents.¹² Concurrently, the State promised to “uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinction of race, creed or sex”, and guaranteed “full freedom of conscience, worship, education and culture [. . .] safeguard and sanctity and inviolability of the shrines and Holy Places of all religions”.¹³ Noticeably, the Proclamation did not address the Arabs as a “minority”, nor did it refer to national or collective rights.

The omission from the Proclamation of Independence of the term “nationality” or “national rights” in reference to the Arab population was not accidental. It reflected the unique nature of Israel as the national homeland of the Jewish people, a state in which nationality derived from the Jewish religion. The Proclamation drove a critical wedge between the State's Arab inhabitants who enjoyed civic status although they lacked national recognition and the State's Jewish citizens, who enjoyed national rights by virtue of “the very legal definition of the state as a Jewish state”, as well as collective rights (such as the right of return). This division was perpetuated over time with far-reaching repercussions by the absence of a state constitution to replace the formulation contained in the Proclamation.¹⁴

Although Israel refused to recognize the Arabs as a national minority, several quasi-collective rights were anchored in its legal system. The Arabs in Israel were granted individual citizens' rights, which Saban termed “limited group-differentiated” rights.¹⁵ These rights included the status of Arabic as an official language, a separate educational system with Arabic as the language of instruction, group exemption from compulsory military service, recognition of Muslim personal status laws and a religious court system, the right to observe days of rest and holidays, and partial implementation of the principle of “appropriate representation” in the Israeli civil service.¹⁶

Israel's dual policy was succinctly summarized in 2003 by the Or Commission Report (see below), which stated that the state “. . . recognized the

separate existence of the Arab sector as a community that was not supposed to be assimilated within the majority society, but did not, nevertheless, establish separate status on a binding legal basis.”¹⁷

Arabs were one of several “minorities” in Israel, a term used to officially delineate the non-Jewish citizens of the State based on distinct religion, sect, or form of settlement (Muslims, Christians, Druze, Circassians, and Bedouins). In 1948, a Ministry of Minorities was established and headed by Bechor Shalom Shitreet, a Department of the Minorities operated within the Ministry of the Interior, while the police similarly established “minority departments”.

What was the Arabs’ perspective on their national identity and legal status in the State of Israel? Between 1948 and 1967, most Arabs were affiliated with one of two major political groupings. The first represented a nationalist orientation and was led by the Israeli Communist Party (ICP, the Hebrew acronym of which is Maki) while the second was a statist-oriented group which came to be known as “the Moderate Camp”. The latter comprised political activists from Mapai, the ruling party; the left-wing Mapam; and members of the Mapai-affiliated “Satellite Lists” who stood for Knesset elections separately, but fully identified with the ruling party.¹⁸

The “Moderates” adopted a pragmatic, accommodating policy on the status of the Arab population in Israel, and were mostly concerned with socio-economic issues pertaining to the daily needs of the Arab community: their advocacy focused on promoting education and healthcare services, providing public utilities for consumers and agriculture, and mediating between the military authorities and the local population. In stark contrast to the “National Camp”, the “Moderate Camp” did not concern itself with national-political issues or ideological dilemmas of conflicting allegiances.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the “Moderates” thus managed to maintain a fragile balance between the ideological-collective component of the national Arab identity and pragmatic individual interests, according to Peres’ definition, or between their emotional attachment to their nationality, on one hand, and their instrumental attachment to the state, on the other, according to Rouhana.¹⁹

The National Camp was comprised mostly of members and supporters of the ICP, which had been re-organized in 1948. During the first years of statehood, the Arab leadership of the ICP maintained its hope that the 1947 UN Partition Plan would be implemented, and as some senior Arab members believed, the Arabs in Israel would join the future Palestinian state, if and when it would be established alongside Israel. Hence, at the 12th Party Congress in 1952, and once again at the 13th Congress in 1957, the

ICP approved a far-reaching resolution calling upon the State of Israel to recognize the right of “the Arab Palestinian people for self-determination, up to the point of separation”. However, due to internal party pressures, mostly from more moderate Jewish cadres at the 14th Congress in 1961, the demand for separatism was dropped.²⁰

In 1965, as a result of mounting ideological, political, and personal differences, the ICP split into a Jewish faction, which grew closer to the mainstream Zionist political center in Israel, and an Arab-Jewish faction, which remained loyal to the Soviet Union and endorsed a firm anti-Zionist and pro-Arab stance. Rakah (Hebrew acronym for “The New Communist List”)—the party that developed from the second faction—soon became the dominant of the two parties and enjoyed the massive support of Arab party members and voters.²¹

Rakah’s strong identification with the Arab national cause was well reflected in its conceptualization of the national identity of Arabs in Israel. It argued that their national identity was structured on three principles: a distinct status as a national minority (*aqalliyya qawmiyya*), a sense of belonging to the Palestinian Arab nation, and Israeli citizenship. Party spokespersons nevertheless emphasized that these features did not imply a separate right for self-determination for the Arabs in Israel.²² Such a separatist demand would have provoked a harsh response from the Israel authorities.

The rise of Arab nationalism in the late 1950s and early 1960s under Gamal Abd al-Nasir, President of Egypt, inspired the Israeli Arab community in Israel to establish a new political organization in Israel called Al-Ard (The Land). This organization continued to promote national demands from the point where the ICP had left off, a pattern that would be repeated by a series of increasingly radical organizations in years to come. Al-Ard’s platform called for “a just and indivisible solution to the Palestinian problem in its entirety” through self-determination for Arabs in Israel, and the establishment of a Palestinian-Arab state. After a prolonged legal campaign, Al-Ard was outlawed in 1964, leaving no discernible imprint on the political discourse beyond a small circle of supporters.²³

A stepped-pyramid structure is an effective metaphor to describe the status of Arabs in Israel in the period from the establishment of the State until 1967. The strongest stratum at the base of the pyramid comprised the “Moderate Camp,” activists who were concerned with the civic rather than the national status of the Arabs in Israel. The ICP represented the middle stratum, with less supporters and a more nationalist platform, whose members were concerned with the status of the national minority but

intentionally blurred the national implications of its platform. At the top of the pyramid was Al-Ard, the organization that called for self-determination for the Arabs in Israel.

1967–1993: PALESTINIZATION

This period was strongly influenced by the Six Day War, which became a critical milestone in the consolidation of the Israeli-Arabs in as a national Palestinian minority. Renewed contacts with the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza spurred a return to Palestinian roots. The elimination of the “Green Line” and unrestricted passage to and from the occupied territories put an end to 19 years of isolation for Israeli Arabs by reuniting two parts of a single nation that had been arbitrarily divided in 1948. Fueled by the dramatic events and developments of this period, Israeli Arabs gradually reclaimed their Palestinian identity in a process, which came to be known as ‘Palestinization.’²⁴

Events between 1967 and 1993 left a deep imprint on the coalescing national identity of the Arabs in Israel. The “Moderate Camp” was most strongly influenced by these events, although their effects were not immediately evident. The national Palestinian movement consolidated under Arafat’s PLO leadership, sparked civil resistance and military confrontations in the territories, in Israel and in the international arena. Recognition of the PLO’s demand for self-determination of the Palestinian people grew in the aftermath of the 1973 War and the global oil crisis. The 1974 Rabbat Summit recognized the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and the PLO was granted UN observer status in 1975. The municipal elections held in the West Bank in 1976 heralded the rise of a pro-PLO leadership to power; The 1982 War in Lebanon and its ramifications—led to the relocation of the PLO headquarters to Tunis, and finally, the 1987 Intifada signaled the first widespread national Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation of the territories.

These developments caused the collapse of the delicate balance between the Arab-Palestinian and the Israeli-civil components of their national identity that had characterized the first period of the developing national consciousness of Arabs in Israel (1948–1967). The dramatically changed circumstances forced the Moderates to address the increasing contradictions between the Israeli and Palestinian components of their identity, a dilemma that they had successfully avoided for 19 years. Representative of their responses is the transformation in the position of Sayf al-Din al-Zu‘abi, a

key figure in the “Moderate Camp”, who became growingly sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, and the 1976 call by Nawwaf Masalha, representative of the second generation of Mapai-affiliated Arab activists, to establish a Palestinian state.

Although contacts with Arabs in the territories heightened the Moderates’ sense of belonging to the Arab-Palestinian nation they did not stimulate a revised ideological-political program. Neither did they establish new political frameworks, independent of the major Jewish parties (Mapai, for example). The single ideological outcome was opinions expressed by individuals on various national issues.

Rakah became the standard-bearer of the Palestinization process by calling Israel to withdraw from the territories, and recognize the PLO and the rights of the Arab Palestinian nation to self-determination and a state alongside Israel. The party’s platform won the widespread support of the Arab public in Israel. However, the core of the party’s platform concerned the external aspects of the Palestinian issue rather than the national status of the Israeli-Arabs, although in this period, when the establishment of a Palestinian state seemed unfeasible, the party refrained from discussing the future relationship between the Arab minority and such an entity. Rakah struggled to define the national status of the Arabs in Israel, and its statements reveal contradictory and incoherent formulae.

On the one hand, the party supported the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Arab-Palestinian nation, to which the local Arab population belonged. However, particularly when appealing to a primarily Jewish audience, party leaders insisted that the Arabs in Israel were not represented by the PLO but rather had their own representation and leadership.

Rakah’s ambiguity on the issue of national identity was reflected in the resolutions of the party’s 17th Congress, held in 1972, which stated that “the Arab population in the State of Israel is a national minority and part of the Arab Palestinian people.” This somewhat contradicting formula represented the official party position for 14 years to come.

In the early 1970s, a group of young political activists, mostly students from the northern Triangle area and the Galilee, established a new nationalist group known as “Sons of the Village.” The new group adopted an extreme nationalist platform that crossed the red lines drawn by Rakah. In contrast to the communists who avoided a collision with the security forces and possible banning by avoiding public statements on sensitive issues, the “Sons of the Village” openly endorsed a radical anti-Israeli platform, recalling the attempt to supplant the communists’ stance with Al-Ard’s more radical ideology in the 1950s.²⁵

Unification of the Palestinian nation was the cornerstone of the worldview of these new radicals who, in contrast to Rakah, made no distinction between Palestinians in Israel and those outside Israel, including the Palestinians in the territories. “Al-Khalil [Hebron] is like Al-Jalil [the Galilee],” they claimed, “Both contain one nation with a shared struggle and single fate.”²⁶ The demand to apply the Palestinian right to self-determination to the Arabs in Israel—those living in the Galilee, the Triangle and the Negev—was a derivative of the unification argument.

This organization, however, had a negligible long-term effect. Very few Israeli Arabs were attracted to the uncompromising and maximalist platform of the “Sons of the Village.” The political program of Rakah, which had not only outlined an ideological position, but had also developed an action-oriented policy, became much more popular.

The protest patterns of the Arab public in Israel in this second period reflect a dramatic change and symbolize an important transformation in the nature of the national-political activities of the Arabs in Israel, primarily a transition from a relative passivity of the 1950s and 1960s to vigorous political activism.

The first “Land Day” on March 30, 1976 clearly illustrated how growing national Palestinian consciousness affected the means of protest. “Land Day” was a general strike declared in protest of land expropriation in the Galilee for the purpose of what was originally framed as “increasing the Jewish population in the Galilee” and subsequently amended to the more politically correct “Galilee development.” The strike, organized by the Rakah-dominated Committee for the Defense of Arab Lands, quickly became a violent confrontation between Arab residents and the security forces, in which six Arabs were killed and several dozen policemen, soldiers and Arab citizens were injured.²⁷

The protest had erupted against a perceived civil injustice—expropriation—but was motivated by nationalist sentiment from the onset, highlighting the emotional bond of the Palestinian people to their land, and fueled by protestors’ identification with the residents of the territories and the PLO. Several months earlier, in January 1976, West Bank protesters instigated large-scale demonstrations against the establishment of new Israeli settlements in Judea and Samaria. Tension also mounted in East Jerusalem over fierce disputes between Jews and Muslims regarding prayer time on the Temple Mount. Land Day thus became a commemoration day on the national calendar—not only for Israeli-Arabs, but also for the entire Palestinian community in the territories and in Arab world.

Additional milestones in the changing nature of the protest by the Arabs in Israel in this period included an attempt, foiled by the government,

to convene a representative “Congress of the Masses” in November 1980, a general strike in September 1982 in commemoration of the victims of Sabra and Shatila, and Equality Day held in July 1987.

Changes were also evident in the second period under survey in the activities of the political parties in the Arab sector. Heralding the political change in the mid-1970s was the overwhelming victory of the communist-led Democratic Front by MK Tawfik Ziyad in the Nazareth municipal elections of December 1975. Ziyad, a senior member of the ICP and popular nationalist poet, forcefully defeated the Mapai-supported incumbent mayoral candidate who had held office since December 1970. Never before had an Arab candidate, affiliated with a nationalist-oriented party such as Rakah, been successful in winning the mayoralty of any major Arab town such as Nazareth.²⁸

Results of the parliamentary elections held on May 9, 1977 were yet another powerful illustration of the new balance of power in the political arena. As a result of their declining appeal, the Arab Satellite Lists, comprised of Mapai and the Labor Alignment loyalists, received only 21% of the vote (compared to 40% and 36% in 1969 and 1973, respectively). After dropping to a record low of 13% in 1981, these lists disappeared from national politics completely by 1984.

Rakah (which in 1976 established the communist-dominated Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, DFPE, or as it became known by its Hebrew acronym, Hadash) emerged as the dominant party in the 1977 elections, capturing 51% of the Arab and Druze votes, an all-time record, after party support had increased steadily over the previous decade from 24% in 1965, to 30% in 1969, and 37% in 1973.

The vacuum created by the decline of the Satellite Lists was filled with new political alliances: in parliamentary politics, the “Progressive List for Peace” (PLP), headed by Attorney Muhammad Mi‘ari and Professor Matti Peled, was established in 1984, and the Democratic Arab Party (DAP) was established in 1988 by MK Abd al-Wahhab Darawshah. Organizations were not limited to parliamentary politics—political structures also emerged in the extra-parliamentary arena, including the National Committee for the Heads of the Arab Local Authorities in Israel (1974) and the Supreme Follow-up Committee of Arabs in Israel (1982), on one hand, and the Islamic Movement, which showed signs of rapid growth, on the other.²⁹

Primarily because the new parties presented a similar nationalist platform without the Leninist-Marxist elements, the new political actors gradually gnawed at Rakah’s power base and ended Rakah’s hegemony in representing the national-Palestinian interest of the Arabs in Israel. The

differences between the members of the national-political block, which included Rakah, PLP, and DAP, gradually disappeared. However, neither the PLP nor the DAP made any fundamental change to the self-concept of the Arabs in Israel as a national minority. This change occurred in the third period under discussion, a period during which the most significant developments relating to the Arab's perception of "national minority" occurred.

1993 TO THE PRESENT: REORIENTATION

The peace process of the 1990s made a far-reaching impact on the political and ideological orientation of the Arabs in Israel. Israel's recognition of the PLO and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people for self-determination, as well as the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, fulfilled the external dimension of the national platform of the Arabs in Israel, one that had been championed since the Six Day War.³⁰

The prospects for a potential peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, which would put an end to the prolonged conflict, became more feasible following the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993. The Oslo Accords marked the beginning of a heated internal debate in Israel over the question of the future borders of the State and its identity. The absent reference to the Arabs in Israel in the Oslo Accords created in them an acute sense of exclusion as Israeli Arab intellectuals and political elites realized that a future Palestinian state would not necessarily fulfill the national aspirations of the Arabs in Israel. This understanding, and the swift developments in the international arena, compelled the Arabs to urgently focus on their own status within Israel. From this point, the national resources of the Arab population were directed inward in a process, which was named "the localization of the national struggle" of the Arab citizens of Israel.³¹

The reality of a universally recognized Jewish state of Israel, with pronounced privileges of the Jewish majority, created intentional exclusion and inherent discrimination against its Arab citizens. Socioeconomic gaps between Jews and Arabs widened over the years. In the early 1990s, Israeli governments declared their commitment to enhancing Jewish-Arab equality, yet their declarations remained no more than political slogans and were not backed by significant action.

In this period, political-ideological discourse in Arab society focused on what Arabs in Israel perceived to be a built-in contradiction between the nature of Israel as a Jewish state, and its definition as a liberal democracy

committed to the equality of all its citizens. For the first time since 1948, Arab academics and politicians across the political spectrum addressed the inherent weakness of the model of “a Jewish and democratic state”. They spoke openly of the acute dilemma of Arab citizens who were torn between loyalty to the state, and identification with its Jewish symbols, the flag, anthem, and ethno-centric worldview. Only a framework based on civil equality, they declared, would rectify their sense of exclusion.

Debates by the Arab elites on the desirable nature of the State of Israel generated alternative models that would respond to and reflect the national needs of the Arab minority more equitably, and resolve the inherent conflict between Israel’s Jewish nature and democracy. Public discourse was dominated by the following three models:³²

a) *A state for all its citizens*. The demand for a “state of all its citizens” model to replace the Jewish-Zionist nature of the State gained broad popularity, and has featured in the platforms of most Arab parties since the early 1990s.³³

b) *Autonomy*. Variations on the autonomy theme were endorsed by Arab academicians in the early 1990s, including elements such as personal-cultural autonomy in the areas of education, communications, the use of Arabic, participation in the land development process, the return of confiscated lands, and even the formation of a supreme elected representative body, and territorial autonomy.

c) *Bi-national State*. Supporters of this concept called for the transformation of Israel into a bi-national state within the borders of the Green Line (some had advocated the establishment of a bi-national state over all of Mandatory Palestine). This change would involve granting both Jewish and Arab nations equal legislative status, transforming Israel into a bi-lingual and multicultural state.

These alternative models underscore the major ideological transformation of Arabs in Israel in the 1990s in relation to their self-perception as a national minority. They began to reject the term “minorities” typically used by Israeli authorities to relate to the non-Jewish population, which the Arabs viewed as a symbol of Israel’s intention to sow internal disunity along religious-ethnic lines between Muslim, Druze, Christian, Circassian, and Bedouin communities. Instead, the Arabs began to conceptualize themselves as a national collective that deserved distinct collective rights. Arab scholars and public figures in Israel, including Amal Jamal, Yousef Taysir Jabareen, Marwan Dalal, and Muhammad Dahla, showed increasing interest in the study of indigenous minorities, with particular

reference to the distinctive status of the Arab minority in Israel.³⁴ Azmi Bishara was among the first Arab politicians to express this new orientation, seeking to anchor national status for the Arabs in Israel in a bill entitled: “Basic Law—The Arab Minority as a National Minority,” presented to the Knesset in 2001.³⁵

The extent to which the perception of “national minority” had infiltrated the political and ideological discourse of the Arab community in Israel was evident in the platforms of the Arab parties and extra-parliamentary organizations. In July 2001, the Supreme Follow-up Committee published a proposal for the consolidation of a collective national future for the Arab-Palestinian public in Israel in the form of a “National Minority”. The document based the legitimization of its national claims on the 1992 UN Declaration of the Rights of Minorities.³⁶ Similarly, since the mid-1990s, the political platforms of the Arab parties had highlighted the urgent need to acknowledge the Arabs in Israel as a national minority with collective national rights.³⁷ The ICP, for example, called to institutionalize the status of the Arabs through legislation to express Arabs’ linguistic rights, the responsibility of the government for the *Nakbah*, the catastrophic loss of Palestine in 1948, and modify State symbols to represent the Arab minority as well.³⁸

A central pillar in the new self-concept was the reference to the Arabs in Israel as an “indigenous minority”—also referred to as “homeland minority”—a term generally used in contrast to an “immigrant minority”.³⁹ In the wake of the developing self-consciousness of national minorities which had gathered momentum following the collapse of the USSR in the late 1980s, the establishment of new nation-states in the eastern bloc and the general national awakening of national minorities elsewhere in the world, reference to “minorities” was broadened and international organizations began to distinguish the groups as “indigenous minorities”.

One definition that gained purchase was formulated by José Martínez Cobo, Special Rapporteur for the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The Sub-Commission completed the “Draft UN Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples” in 1993, which still awaits final affirmation by UN member states.⁴⁰

As an indigenous minority, the Arabs justified their demand for collective recognition by their continuous geo-historical presence in Palestine. Azmi Bishara was one of the first Arab spokespersons to refer to the rights of the “original owners of the land”.⁴¹ Lawyer Muhammad Dahla, a leading political activist, similarly explained: “We did not immigrate and request citizenship from the State of Israel. We were here all along [. . .] We are natives.”⁴²

During this period, the call for collective rights also grew significantly stronger. The issue was widely discussed in academic circles. A prominent contributor to these discussions was Amal Jamal of Tel-Aviv University, who in two comprehensive essays published in 2005 and 2006 addressed the theoretical, normative, and practical aspects of the question. He set out the following distinct but interrelated justifications for the need to grant collective rights to the Arabs in Israel: the Arabs were indigenous to the land and were entitled to the right to self-government and justice to correct wrongs occasioned by the exclusivity and ethnic character of Jewish nationalism, and, more generally, the contradictions of liberal equality in ethnic states where ethnic majorities lead to ineffective representations among minority groups.⁴³

The re-conceptualization of the Arabs in Israel as a national minority unsurprisingly has included, since the late 1990s, the reconstruction of their collective historical memory and, particularly, that of the *Nakbah*. This reconstruction included attempts to develop national consciousness through education and grassroots politics.⁴⁴ On 15 May 2006, for example, the day commemorating the *Nakbah* (according to the Gregorian calendar, the State of Israel was proclaimed on 15 May 1948, although celebrated annually according to the Hebrew calendar) rallies were held in Arab villages throughout Israel.⁴⁵ In April 2007, thousands marched in the tenth annual “Procession of Return” to the ruins of the Arab village of Lajun (near Kibbutz Megido in the lower Galilee) under a central slogan of “Your day of Independence is our day of *Nakbah*”.⁴⁶

The efforts to reclaim national Palestinian memory as a legitimate source informing the official Israeli historic narrative included the attempt to legitimize the local Palestinian narrative of the Kfar Qassem 1956 massacre, when 49 Arabs were killed by security forces for allegedly ignoring an IDF-ordered curfew.⁴⁷ In October 2006, during the 50th anniversary of the massacre, public ceremonies were held in Kfar Qassem where a new memorial and museum were inaugurated.⁴⁸ Arab Knesset members and political figures urged the government to accept responsibility for the fatal event by declaring a “national day of mourning” on the day of the massacre (29 October 1956).⁴⁹

Another effort was the publication of the “Civil Lexicon for Arab Pupils in Israel”, edited by Amal Jamal, representing an “alternative historic narrative”, and a booklet entitled “Belonging and Identity”, published at the initiative of the Ibn Khaldun Non-Profit Association and the Center Against Racism, containing 100 entries on Zionism and democracy as an alternative to the booklet published by the Ministry of Education during the administration of former Minister Limor Livnat.⁵⁰

As for popular protest and resistance, this third period witnessed the October 2000 events in the Galilee and the Triangle areas—the most severe outburst of violence and the most serious fracture in Jewish–Arab relations since 1948, namely, the fierce unprecedented confrontations between Arab protestors and Israeli security forces resulted in the killing of one Jewish and 13 Arab citizens. Hundreds of Arab demonstrators and dozens of policemen were injured.

One of the major causes of the October outburst was the Arab population's growing frustration in the socio-economic sphere. The government's unwillingness and inability to alleviate socio-economic inequality and deprivation occasioned the outburst of the Arabs in Israel and underlined their growing sense of identification with the Palestinian cause. The fatal events of October illustrate the explosive, far-reaching combination of socio-economic strife, grounded in a sense of discrimination and injustice, and overflowing collective national sentiments mobilized by a militant leadership.

In this third phase, developments in the political arena were characterized by an electoral shift in Arab sector voting patterns from Zionist to Arab parties. The transition confirmed the increasing appeal of Arab party platforms that increasingly focused on communal issues pertaining to the collective rights of the Arab population as a “national minority”.⁵¹ The political and ideological platforms of all Arab parties participating in the 17th Knesset elections (2006) highlighted the national character of the Arabs in Israel.⁵²

Nonetheless, participation of the Arab population in the 2006 elections dropped significantly: only 56.3% of all Arab eligible voters participated, reflecting a 6% decline compared to the 2003 elections, and a 21% drop compared to 1996. Although Arabs' declining participation in the national elections signaled indifference, weariness, and disinterest in the political scene that were characteristic of Israeli society as a whole in 2006, Arab voters were particularly disillusioned with their leadership for their inability to engender any real improvement in the socio-economic conditions of the Arab population.⁵³ Non-participation was also an expression of criticism of the Arab political parties and protest against internal schisms that prevented a united front that could effectively utilize the electoral potential of the Arabs in Israel.

Also contributing to the declining Arab vote in 2006 was a public call to boycott the elections.⁵⁴ This was not the first time such calls were voiced. Following the massive abstention of Arabs in the 2001 elections for Prime Minister, when only 18% of Arab voters showed up at the polls, demands mounted for alternative representative bodies, including a separate Arab

parliament (the dogmatic faction of the Islamic Movement also preached for an alternative and autonomous network of social and economic institutions for the Muslim community in Israel).

In 2006, the calls to ban the forthcoming elections gathered momentum. The newly established “Popular Committee for the Boycott of the Elections”⁵⁵ argued that participation in Knesset politics was a futile effort and a waste of time and called for the establishment of a separate Arab parliament “that would organize our masses on national grounds”. The Committee also argued that “the fundamental national basis” required Arabs to refrain from supporting the legitimacy of the Knesset, which represented the state “founded on the ruins of our nation”.⁵⁶

The lower turnout, the strong public call to boycott Knesset elections, and the calls for alternative autonomous representative bodies in the 2006 elections all attested to the growing Palestinian element in national sentiments of the Arab minority in Israel. These recent developments blended with the general trend of growing national awareness discussed thus far.

The Second Lebanon War, which erupted in the summer of 2006, aggravated national tensions between Jews and Arabs in Israel even further. Katyusha rockets exacted a heavy toll from the Arab population in the Galilee, which suffered 18 of the 39 fatalities. Despite some expectations in the Jewish sector that the shared fate would generate solidarity and partnership between Jews and Arabs, the opposite occurred. In fact, the loss of life and grief aggravated the national identity dilemma of Arabs in Israel and the acute conflict between their Palestinian and Arab identity and their Israeli citizenship, and led to an unmistakable regression in the relationship between Jews and Arabs in Israel.⁵⁷

The lack of bomb shelters and warning sirens in Arab towns, and a general sense of abandonment increased the frustrations of the Arab population, while the heavy fatalities on the Israeli side and Israel’s inability to defeat the Hizbollah accentuated [secretary general of Hizbollah Hassan] Nasrallah’s power in the confrontation.⁵⁸ Increasingly, Arab critics spoke out against the aggressive, bellicose policy of the government’s policy, which they viewed as an executive arm of American imperialism.⁵⁹ The local Arab press published expressions of sympathy for Hizbollah. A father of two children who were killed by a missile in Nazareth thanked Hasan Nasarallah for his eulogy.⁶⁰

Arab spokespersons insisted on their legitimate right to criticize government policy without having their opinions interpreted as their renunciation of the State. A large part of the Jewish population, however, rejected this outlook. In response to the vociferous statements of Arab MKs, who missed no opportunity to arouse uproar and emotional furor during the

war, the Jewish population increasingly expressed abhorrence, reservations and hostility towards Arabs. Uzi Benziman, a senior columnist for *Ha'aretz*, wrote: “In the last war, a line was crossed: the Israeli Arabs did not hesitate to openly reveal their identification with the enemy, and preferred their affiliation with [the enemy] over their commitment to the State of which they are citizens.”⁶¹

THE “FUTURE VISION” DOCUMENTS

Four position papers concerning the civic and national status of the Arabs in Israel were published between December 2006 and May 2007. The first document, “The Future Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel”, was drafted by a group of 40 Arab academics and intellectuals, and was published on behalf of “The National Committee for the Heads of the Arab Local Authorities in Israel”.⁶² The second document, “An Equal Constitution for All: On a Constitution and the Collective Rights of Arab Citizens in Israel”, by legalist Dr. Yousef Taysir Jabareen was published by the Mossawa Center.⁶³ A summary of this article was included in the Future Vision document and therefore we will not relate to it directly. The third document, “The Democratic Constitution”, was published by Adalah, the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel.⁶⁴ The fourth, “The Haifa Declaration”, was published on May 15, 2007 (*Nakbah*—Memorial Day) by Mada al-Carmel, the Haifa-based Center for Applied Social Research headed by Prof. Nadim Rouhana.⁶⁵

The papers marked yet another milestone in the developing national consciousness of Israel’s Arab community since 1948. The documents represented the viewpoint of Arab intellectual and political elites in Israel regarding their future status and the desired nature of the State of Israel. They called for the recognition of the Arabs in Israel as an indigenous national minority, and the replacement of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state with a “consociational democracy” regime or a “democratic bi-lingual and multicultural state”.⁶⁶

The “Future Vision” documents were the outcome of the cumulative impact of the Oslo Accords and the developments thereafter. In their “inward convergence”, which they referred to earlier as the “localization of the national process”, intellectual-political Arab elites introduced Palestinian-national content into their Israeli affiliation. They stressed the Palestinian foundation of their identity, which they anchored in their Israeli experience.

This orientation was reinforced by the political development in Israeli society that gained in intensity in the past five years: the debate on the future state borders, the “disengagement” policy of Ariel Sharon and the construction of the Security Fence, the evacuation of the Israeli settlements from the Gaza Strip (“Gush Katif”) and the intention to settle evacuees from the Territories in the Galilee and the Negev, and finally, the “convergence” policy propounded by Ehud Olmert.

The Arabs’ growing sense of exclusion from mainstream political discourse in Israel was reinforced by attempts of Jewish intellectuals and politicians to shape the future image of the State of Israel, expressed in the “Kinneret Covenant”, which was drafted under the auspices of the Rabin Center for Israel Studies. No Arab participants were included in this endeavor. Even the intensive efforts by the Israel Democracy Institute to draft a “Constitution by Consensus” evoked anxiety and distress of Arabs, as the draft proposal sanctioned Israel nature as a Jewish and democratic state committed to the civil equality of the Arab minority. Racist statements by right wing MK Avigdor Lieberman and the growing public support for population and territorial transfers in the Triangle region exacerbated their sense of suffocation.

The “Future Vision” document was also the result of the frustration and disappointment of the Arab public in view of the government’s inability to resolve the growing socio-economic gaps between the Arab and Jewish populations in Israel. Much has been said about manifestations of discrimination and prejudice, and elaboration on this point is beyond the scope of this article. The policy of exclusion and alienation on part of state agencies was evident in the blatant disregard of the conclusions of the Or Committee, ignoring even the minimalist interpretations of these conclusions drafted by the Lapid Committee (appointed by the government to implement the Or Commission’s recommendations). The government’s failure to act fed the Arabs’ sense of alienation and stimulated their search for alternatives.

“The Future Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel” contains operative proposals for domestic actions to remedy the unequal social, economic, and cultural status of the Arab population. The document is refreshingly novel in its self-criticism and piercing self-scrutiny of the faulty conduct of the local Arab society in the areas of education (for example, the call to neutralize political appointments in the educational system by Arab municipal leaders) and its demand for women’s empowerment and anti-corruption actions.

Public attention, however, has focused mainly on those sections of the “Future Vision” document that concern the national-political future of the Arab minority in Israel, as it presents one of the most radical ideological and political platforms ever drafted by a representative Arab organization in Israel. The proposal included in the document surpasses past demands to recognize the Arab community as a national minority. This new call was now integrated into a much broader context, challenging the very existence of Israel as a Jewish state. The new approach was reflected in four spheres.

First: Israel is referred to in the “Future Vision” document as “the outcome of a settlement process [the Hebrew version is literally translated as ‘colonial action’] initiated by Zionist-Jewish elite[s] in Europe and the West”. The document rejects the definition of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, which, the authors argue, perpetuates the inferior status of its Arab citizens. The authors’ call to supplant the present system with a “consociational democracy”, namely a bi-national state model based on full power-sharing between the two national groups in government, distribution of resources, decision-making, proportional representation, and the mutual right of veto on crucial decisions. The country’s national symbols, such as the anthem, flag, and emblem, should also be modified.

Second: The document calls for full equality in the civic, national, and historical spheres, including, inter alia, equal rights of immigration and citizenship quotas, a demand which possibly implies the elimination of the “Law of Return” that allows Jews to freely immigrate to Israel. Special reference is made to the need to rectify the unequal distribution of socio-economic resources between the Jewish and Arab sectors, particularly with regard to land, urban planning, housing, infrastructure, economic development, social change, and education.

Third: Demands for equal rights are intertwined with an insistence on official endorsement of the Palestinian historical narrative, and recognition of the Arabs in Israel as an indigenous minority: the document calls for official acknowledgement of the 1948 *Nakbah*. “Internal refugees” who remained in Israel and whose land was expropriated should be allowed to return to their original lands, and *Waqf* (religious endowment) property, administrated since 1948 by the Israeli government, should revert to the control of the Muslim community.

Finally, the document proposes structural-institutional changes, specifically the establishment of self-rule (autonomy) in education, religious and cultural affairs, and the media, in order to guarantee the unrestricted development of the Arab minority’s specific collective identity. It also

proposes the creation of an elected, national representative body for the Arabs in Israel.

The second document, Adalah's draft "Democratic Constitution", is a legalistic proposal to replace Israel as a Jewish and democratic state with a "democratic bi-lingual and multicultural" state. The draft proposes the introduction of universal immigration laws to replace the Law of Return. The draft also proposes to establish a Knesset Committee for bilingual and multicultural affairs, half of whose members will be Arab. Approval of this Committee will be required for all laws relating to the "foundation of the government", and its decisions would be overturned only by an extraordinary majority of no less than two-thirds of the Knesset members.⁶⁷

Many Arab spokesmen from all quarters of the political spectrum applauded the "Future Vision" documents, highlighting its representative nature. They stated that the documents realistically reflected the claims of the Palestinians in Israel and their desire for "integration, equality and equity within—rather than outside—the framework of Israel".⁶⁸ Shawqi Khatib, chairman of the National Committee for the Heads of the Arab Local Authorities in Israel, defended the document, which reflected opposition to a democracy dictated by the "majoritarian tyranny", and hoped that it would stimulate to "a sincere and courageous dialogue" with the Jewish public.⁶⁹ Hussam Abu Baker, a member of the working group, further suggested that "The Jewish public should see this document as an invitation to a meaningful, focused public debate among equals, a debate that demands more than a small degree of tolerance and ideological pluralism."⁷⁰

Several Jewish commentators and scholars expressed sympathy for some of the demands raised in the documents, mostly in the civic sphere. Saban, for example, while critical of the national dimensions of the "Democratic Constitution" draft, claimed that it contained constructive provisions grounded in liberal-democratic norms, universal principles and international conventions on human rights.⁷¹

The general Jewish response was, however, militant and defensive, responding to what they understood as the authors' separatist intentions. Some columnists interpreted the "Future Vision" document as "a declaration of war" against the Jewish majority and branded the Arabs as "enemies of the State". The call for a bi-national state that excluded recognition of Israel as the State of the Jewish people was perceived as a provocative attempt to de-legitimize the Jewish people's right of self-determination.⁷² In fact, the common impression was that the document enfolded an attempt to impose the Arab-Palestinian national narrative on the Jewish majority, in the name of "minority rights."⁷³ To dismiss the Jewish people's inalienable

right to self-determination as a colonial enterprise, wrote Asher Susser, was “groundless, reductionist and demeaning”.⁷⁴

Critics also mentioned the fact that the document made no mention of the 1948 war, its consequences, or the 1947 UN Partition Plan. Instead of the commonly accepted principle of “Two States for the Two Peoples”, some argued, the documents represented a demand to establish one-and-half states for the Palestinians and one-half of a state for the Jews. Observers also noted the glaring absence of any reference to coexistence or Jewish-Arab partnership in the framework of a civic society grounded on integration and partnership.

CONCLUSION

Two major conclusions emerge from this discussion. One is that the development of national consciousness of the Arabs in Israel, particularly since 1967, is an undisputable reality: the Arab community in Israel perceives itself as a national minority and demands to be recognized as such. Although there is no single universal definition of a national minority, the Arabs in Israel clearly conform to both maximalist and minimalist definitions of a national minority. There is little argument over this fact among Jewish scholars who deal with the issue.

The second conclusion is that Arab elites in Israel have taken the demand to be acknowledged as a national minority one step further. This transpires from the “Future Vision” documents’ call for the delegitimization of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state and its replacement by one form or another of a bi-national state.

True, these documents are mostly representative of a rather limited number of Arab intellectuals and political activists, and results of various polls indicate that the Arab “rank and file”, the wide public often referred to as “the silent majority”, do not necessarily support the demands raised in the documents.⁷⁵

These findings notwithstanding, one should nevertheless not underestimate the growing consolidation of the Arab community as a national minority and its calls to change Israel’s character as a Jewish State. The unyielding nationalist wind that blows in the “Future Vision” documents should not be ignored. Israel is therefore strongly urged to address the challenge posed by the “Future Vision” documents. It can no longer ignore the growing national friction in majority-minority relations. Continuous denial of the problem may well deepen the divide between the two groups, the

growing sense of separatism of the part of the Arabs, and an overall sense of alienation that may lead to an explosion.⁷⁶

Two courses of action are feasible. On the civic level, these documents create a new dynamic that allows the government and civic society in Israel to take action to promote the status of the Arab population, thereby disproving those who argue that the democratic element in the identity of the State of Israel applies exclusively to Jews. Recommendations and programs for such actions have already been prepared and are outlined clearly in the Or Commission Report.

On the national level, an exploration of the possible implications of de facto Israeli recognition of the Arabs as a national minority is warranted, based on current international legal norms. One positive outcome of such an exploration would be the definition of a clear boundary separating the minority and the majority, delineating the rights conferred on each group. Obviously this would be a revolutionary step, one whose implementation is difficult in view of the unique nature of the state of Israel as a Jewish nation state and in view of the persistent Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Nonetheless, the growing strength of the Palestinian-Arab element in the national identity of the Arab minority in Israel justifies that the Jewish majority address this challenge without delay.

NOTES

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1. Resolution 47/135, Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, Geneva, http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_minori.htm (accessed: June 21, 2007).

2. See text in Web site of the Council of Europe's Secretariat of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human_Rights/Minorities (accessed: June 21, 2007) and for the Convention's "Explanatory Report".

3. Chapter 2: "The Problem of Definition of a Minority," in *Rights of National Minorities*, Doc. 8943, Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe, 23 January 2001; John R. Valentine, "Toward a Definition of National Minority," *Denver Journal of International Law and Policy*, 32 (2004) 445-474; Nathan Lerner, *Group Rights and Discrimination in International Law* (The Hague, 2003) 8; On the complexity of the legal status of a minority see Ilan Saban, "Minority Rights in Deeply Divided Societies: A Framework for Analysis and the Case of the Arab-Palestinian

Minority in Israel,” *New York University Journal of International Law & Politics*, 36.4 (2004) 885–1003. For a recent comprehensive discussion of the term, see: European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission); Vademecum of Venice Commission: Opinions and Reports Concerning the Protection of Minorities (Strasbourg, 6 March 2007): [http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2007/CDL-MIN\(2007\)001-e.pdf](http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2007/CDL-MIN(2007)001-e.pdf) (accessed: June 21, 2007).

4. Will Kymlicka, *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship* (Oxford, 2001) 121–122 and *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford, 1995).

5. Amal Jamal, “Group Rights for Indigenous Minorities—Theoretical and Normative Aspects,” in Elie Rekhess and Sara Ozacky-Lazar (eds), *The Status of the Arab Minority in the Jewish Nation State* (Tel-Aviv, 2005) 29 [Hebrew]. For similar definitions relevant to the Israeli case see: Alexander Yakobson, “National Minority in a Democratic Nation-State,” in Rekhess and Ozacky-Lazar (eds), *The Status of the Arab Minority in the Jewish Nation State*, 19 [Hebrew] and “Democratic Nation-State,” in Shlomo Hasson and Khaled Abu Asbah (eds), *Jews and Arabs in Israel Facing a Changing Reality* (Jerusalem, 2004) 38–46 [Hebrew].

6. For the distinction between individual and collective rights, see Yitzhak Zamir, “Equality of Rights toward Arabs in Israel,” in Rekhess and Ozacky-Lazar (eds), *The Status of the Arab Minority in the Jewish Nation State*, 61 [Hebrew].

7. David Kretzmer, *The Legal Status of the Arabs in Israel* (Boulder, CO, 1990) Chapter 9, “Group Rights,” 165–174.

8. See use of this term by Saban, “Minority Rights in Deeply Divided Societies,” 906n83; and Yousef T. Jabareen, *An Equal Constitution for All? On a Constitution and Collective Rights for Arab Citizens in Israel* (Haifa, 2007) 45.

9. Saban, *Ibid.*, 906.

10. <http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/heb/megilat.htm> (accessed: June 21, 2007).

11. Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz (eds), *Israel in the Middle East* (Oxford, 1984) 14–15.

12. *Idem.*

13. Elie Rekhess, “Initial Israeli Policy Guidelines toward the Arab Minority, 1948–1949,” in Laurence J. Silberstein (ed), *New Perspectives on Israeli History: The Early Years of the State* (New York, 1991) 103–123; Uzi Benziman and Atallah Mansour, *Subtenants*, part 2 (Jerusalem, 1992) 101–210 [Hebrew].

14. Saban, “Minority Rights in Deeply Divided Societies,” 900; Ori Stendel, “The Right to be Different of the Israeli Arabs—Legal Aspects,” *Hamizrah Hehadash*, 33 (1989) 192–208 [Hebrew].

15. Cited in the State Investigative Commission, by Justice Theodor Or, which was established to examine the October 2000 Events (see below). *The State Investigative Commission on the Confrontations between Security Forces and Israeli Citizens in October 2000—Report*, part 1, article 10 (Jerusalem, 2003) 29 [Hebrew]; Zamir, in Rekhess and Ozacky-Lazar (eds), *The Status of the Arab Minority in the Jewish Nation State*, 68–71; Kretzmer, *The Legal Status of the Arabs in Israel*, 165–170.

16. The Or Commission, *Idem*.
17. Jacob M. Landau, *The Arabs in Israel: A Political Study* (London, 1969) 69–107; Benyamin Neuberger, *The Arab Minority: National Alienation and Political Integration* (Tel-Aviv, 1998) 86–93 [Hebrew].
18. Yochanan Peres and Nira Davis, “Some Observations on the National Identity of the Israeli Arabs,” *Human Relations*, 22.3 (1969) 219–233; Nadim Rouhana, *Palestinian Citizens in an Ethnic Jewish State* (New Haven and London, 1997) 111–150.
19. Elie Rekhess, *The Arab Minority in Israel: Between Communism and Arab Nationalism* (Tel-Aviv, 1993) 29–31 [Hebrew]; Ilana Kaufman, *Arab National Communism in the Jewish State* (Gainesville, FL, 1997) 8–95; Ori Stendel, *The Arabs in Israel: Between Hammer and Anvil* (Jerusalem, 1992) 212–214 [Hebrew]; Neuberger, *The Arab Minority: National Alienation and Political Integration*, 96–100.
20. Elie Rekhess, “Jews and Arabs in the Israeli Communist Party,” in Milton Esman and Itamar Rabinovich (eds), *Ethnicity, Pluralism and State in the Middle East* (Ithaca, 1988) 121–139.
21. Rekhess, *The Arab Minority in Israel*, 52.
22. Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel* (Beirut, 1968) 130–138; Neuberger, *The Arab Minority: National Alienation and Political Integration*, 108–109; Stendel, “The Right to be Different of the Israeli Arabs—Legal Aspects,” 234–240.
23. The following discussion on the effect of the Six Day War on is based on: Elie Rekhess, “Israeli Arabs and the Arabs of the West Bank and Gaza: Political Affinity and National Solidarity,” *Asian and African Studies*, 23.2-3 (1989) 119–154; Nadim Rouhana, “The Political Transformation of the Palestinians in Israel: from Acquiescence to Challenge,” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 18.3 (1989) 38–59; Emile Sahliyyeh, “The PLO and the Israeli Arabs,” *Asian and African Studies*, 27.1-2 (1993) 84–96; Nadim Rouhana, “Accentuated Identities in Protracted Conflict: The Collective Identity of the Palestinian Citizens in Israel,” *Asian and African Studies*, 27 (1993) 97–127; Majid al-Haj, “The Status of the Palestinians in Israel: A Double Periphery in an Ethno-National State,” in Alan Dowty (ed), *Critical Issues in Israeli Society* (Westport, CT, 2004) 109–126; Majid Al-Haj, “The Green Line—Where to? Trends in the Encounter and Orientation between the Palestinians in Israel and the Palestinians in the Territories,” *Medina Ve-Hevra*, 4.1 (2004) 825–855 [Hebrew].
24. Elie Rekhess, “The Arab Nationalist Challenge to the Israeli Communist Party, 1970–1985,” *Studies in Comparative Communism*, 22.4 (1989) 337–350; Neuberger, *The Arab Minority: National Alienation and Political Integration*, 110–111; Stendel, “The Right to be Different of the Israeli Arabs—Legal Aspects,” 253–258.
25. Rekhess, *The Arab Minority in Israel*, 114.
26. Sabri Jiryis, “The Legal Structure for the Expropriation and Absorption of Arab Lands in Israel,” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 2.4 (1973) 82–104; Elie Rekhess, “The Israeli Arabs and the Expropriation of Lands in the Galilee,” (Tel-Aviv, 1977) [Hebrew]; Sam Lehman-Wilzig, “Copying the Master? Patterns of Israeli-Arab Protest, 1950–1990,” *Asian and African Studies*, 27.1-2 (1993) 129–147.

27. Stendel, “The Right to be Different of the Israeli Arabs—Legal Aspects,” 216–232.
28. Kaufman, *Arab National Communism in the Jewish State*, 109–125; Neuberger, *The Arab Minority: National Alienation and Political Integration*, 111–114; Stendel, “The Right to be Different of the Israeli Arabs—Legal Aspects,” 261–270; Rekhess, *The Arab Minority in Israel*, 112–161.
29. This section is largely based on the author’s article: “The Arabs of Israel: Localization of the National Struggle,” *Israel Studies*, 7.3 (2002) 175–198; Arik Rudnitzky and Elie Rekhess, “Israel, State of: The Arab Population,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica, 2nd Edition*, Vol. 10 (2006) 728–733.
30. Rekhess, “The Arabs of Israel.”
31. For a detailed discussion of these models see: *Ibid.*, 10–19. For additional references see: Claude Klein, *Israel as a Nation-State and the Problem of the Arab Minority in Search of a Status* (Tel-Aviv, 1987); Sammy Smooha, “The Model of Ethnic Democracy: Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State,” *Nations and Nationalism*, 8.4 (2002) 475–503.
32. MK Ahmad Tibi, head of the Arab Movement for Change (AMC), replaced the call for “State of all its Citizens” with a demand for “State of all its nationals,” which, he argued, would guarantee the collective rights of the national minority; *Ha’aretz*, 15 March 2006.
33. Jabareen, *An Equal Constitution for All?* 11–13; Jamal, “Group Rights for Indigenous Minorities,” in Rekhess and Ozacky-Lazar (eds), *The Status of the Arab Minority in the Jewish Nation State*, 27–44; Amal Jamal, “On the Morality of Arab Collective Rights in Israel,” *Adalah’s Newsletter*, 12 (2005) 1–7; Yousef T. Jabareen, “Constitutional Protection of Minorities.” PhD diss., Georgetown University, 2003; Marwan Dalal, “Rights of the Arab Citizens in Law and Practice,” in Yitzhak Reiter (ed), *Dilemmas of Jewish-Arab Relations in Israel* (Tel-Aviv, 2005) 167–171 [Hebrew].
34. Rekhess, “The Arabs of Israel: Localization of the National Struggle,” 14n79.
35. Cited in Rekhess, “The Arabs of Israel: Localization of the National Struggle,” 23.
36. See Balad’s platform, <http://www.balad.org/index.php?id=244> (accessed: June 21, 2007).
37. *Zo Haderech*, 4 April 2007.
38. Saban, “Minority Rights in Deeply Divided Societies,” 915 and Kymlica, *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship*.
39. See website of IWGIA, International Work Group of Indigenous Affairs, www.iwgia.org; Text of Draft, UN High Commission for Human Rights, Resolution 1993/46 of 26 August 1993; Siegfried Wiesner, “Rights and Status of Indigenous Peoples: A Global Comparative and International Legal Analysis,” *Harvard Human Rights Journal*, 12 (1999) 57–128.
40. Cited by Rekhess, “The Arabs of Israel: Localization of the National Struggle,” 22. Compare to Balad’s 2006 platform: “The Palestinians in Israel are the

natives that were transformed into a minority in their homeland": <http://www.balad.org/index.php?id=244> (accessed: June 21, 2007).

41. Cited by Rekhess, "The Arabs of Israel: Localization of the National Struggle," 22.

42. Jamal, in *Adalah's Newsletter*; Jamal, "Group Rights for Indigenous Minorities," in Rekhess and Ozacky-Lazar (eds), *The Status of the Arab Minority in the Jewish Nation State*, 27–43; Muhammad Dahla, "The Demand for Collective Rights for the Arab Minority in Israel," in Rekhess and Ozacky-Lazar (eds), *The Status of the Arab Minority in the Jewish Nation State*, 85–90.

43. For a detailed discussion of the developments in this field within the context of what Rekhess named "The Reopening of the 1948 Files", see Rekhess, "The Arabs of Israel: Localization of the National Struggle," 28–30.

44. Hashim Hamdan, "Journeys to the Roots," *Fasl al-Maqal*, 19 May 2006.

45. *Ha'aretz*, 25 April 2007; also, Fatim Qasim, "Language, History and Women: Palestinian Women in Israel Describe the Nakba Events," *Teoria Ve-Bikoret*, 29 (2006) 59–90 [Hebrew].

46. Ruvik Rosenthal, *Kfar Qassem: Myth and History* (Tel-Aviv, 2000) [Hebrew].

47. Roi Nahmias, "Kfar Qassem: Time Has Come for the State to Acknowledge the Mistake," <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/1,7340,L-3320846,00.html>, 29 October 2006 (accessed: June 21, 2007); Yoav Stern, "Comparison between the '56 Massacre and Today in the Arab Society," *Ha'aretz*, 29 October 2006; *Panorama*, 3 November 2006.

48. *Kull al-Arab; Hatzofeh*, 22 October 2006.

49. Amal Jamal, *Civic Lexicon for Pupils in the Arab Education System in Israel* (Jerusalem, 2005) [Arabic]; Muhammad Amara and Mustafa Kabha (eds), *Identity and Belonging—The Project of Basic Terms for the Arab Students* (Tamra & Haifa, 2005) [Arabic]; *Ha'aretz*, December 6 and 18, 2005.

50. On the Arab Parties' platforms in the 1996, 1999, and 2003 elections see: Majid Al-Haj, "Voting Trends of Israeli Arabs in the Knesset Elections," in Elie Rekhess (ed), *The Arab Minority in Israel and the Elections to the 17th Knesset* (Tel-Aviv, 2007) [Hebrew] [forthcoming]; As'ad Ghanem and Sarah Ozacky-Lazar, *The Arab Vote in the Elections to the 15th Knesset* (Givat Haviva, 1999) [Hebrew]; "Israel as an Ethnic Democracy: the Test of the Arab Vote in the Elections to the 15th Knesset," in Asher Arian and Michal Shamir (eds), *The Elections in Israel—1999* (Jerusalem, 2001) 171–202 [Hebrew]; Ilana Kaufman and Rachel Israeli, "The Odd Group Out: the Arab-Palestinian Vote in the 1996 Elections," in Asher Arian and Michal Shamir (eds), *The Elections in Israel—1996* (Jerusalem, 1999) 107–148 [Hebrew]; Nadim Rouhana, Nabil Saleh and Nimer Sultany, "Voting Without Voice: About the Vote of the Palestinian Minority in the 16th Knesset Elections," in Asher Arian and Michal Shamir (eds), *The Elections in Israel—2003* (Jerusalem, 2004) 215–243 [Hebrew].

51. Elie Rekhess, "The Arab Minority in Israel and the 17th Knesset Elections: The Beginning of a New Era?" in Asher Arian and Michal Shamir (eds), *The Elections in Israel—2006* (Jerusalem, 2007) [Hebrew] [forthcoming].

52. On the role of the Arab Leadership see: Amal Jamal, “The Arab Leadership in Israel: Ascendance and Fragmentation,” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 35.2 (2006) 6–22; Elie Rekhess and Doron Navot, “Egalitarian Policy and the Politics of the Arabs in Israel: Pragmatic and Paradigmatic Constraints,” in Shlomo Hasson and Michael Karayani (eds), *Arabs in Israel: Barriers to Equality* (Jerusalem, 2006) 141–162 [Hebrew].

53. See Aziz Haidar, “The Arab Boycott of the Elections: One Decade Perspective (1996–2006),” in Elie Rekhess (ed), *The Arab Minority in Israel and the 17th Knesset Elections* [forthcoming].

54. “Public announcement by the Popular Committee for the Boycott of the Elections,” February 14, 2006: http://mokata3a_48.tripod.com (accessed: June 21, 2007).

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