

DISPLACED AT HOME

*Ethnicity and Gender
among Palestinians in Israel*

Edited by

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and

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Cover photo: Singer Abeer in a scene from *Slingshot Hip Hop*, 2008, directed by Jackie Salloum. Courtesy of the director.

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INTRODUCTION

Rhoda Ann Kanaaneh and Isis Nusair

Johayna Hussein worked hard for twenty-nine years in the Israeli Ministry of Health. She was recognized for her excellent job performance with a prize awarded by the director general of the ministry for best employee. Despite her qualifications, years of service, and dedication to her work, she hit the glass ceiling at the mid-level position of Regional Inspector of Family Health Clinics in the Acre district. Like many Arab government employees in Israel, Ms. Hussein played it safe.

Then the glass ceiling came crashing down on her head. She participated in what turned out to be a massive demonstration in the city of Umm al-Fahim in March 2008 against the Israeli military siege on Gaza. She allegedly told a reporter covering the demonstration that she was there to protest “the Zionists who are massacring our brothers in Gaza” (arabs48, February 12, 2009). By luck, her photo made it to the front page of numerous newspapers and was broadcast on Channel 1. When she arrived at work the next morning at the Ministry of Health, the office was in an uproar. She received an angry call from her boss in Nazareth demanding to know why she had participated in a demonstration. Hussein was under the impression that she had done nothing wrong by expressing her opinions when she was off duty. She was later called in by an investigator for state employees in Jerusalem, after which she was suspended from her job (*Yediot Ahronot*, February 12, 2009).

Johayna is fighting back by taking her case to Adalah, the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel (Adalah, 2009b). The Arabic press adopted her as a cause célèbre, splashing headlines of her court battles on their front pages (e.g., *Panet*, February 12, 2009; February 13, 2009). Israel offers its Palestinian citizens participation, but often at the token level, as it defines itself as a state of and for the Jews. They experience it as a contradiction, simultaneously exclusionary but with a promise of inclusion, a democracy and a colonial power, offering both possibilities and their foreclosure. They maneuver and strategize in different ways around the restrictions the state imposes on them.

HISTORIES OF CONTRADICTION

What is considered particularly threatening about Johayna's behavior is her criticism of the state in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza after all the state had "done for her" as an employee. When Israel was created in 1948 and during its early years, the majority of Palestinians, some 725,000 people, were expelled or displaced from the land in what is known to them as the Nakba (Catastrophe). The small minority who remained in the new state were eventually given Israeli citizenship, though of a second class.

The new state refused to recognize these remaining Palestinians as a national minority in its declaration of independence as is required by international legal norms (Rekness, 2007). Yet it drew a clear boundary separating the minority and the majority and conferred different rights on each group (*ibid.*). It was created as a settler colonial society for Jews from around the world at the expense of the native population (Abdo and Yuval Davis, 1995). The state maintained and continues to maintain Jewish superiority and grants preference to Jews symbolically, structurally, and practically (Ghanem, Rouhana, and Yiftachel, 1998). Though formally included in the democratic electoral process, Palestinian citizens were regarded as a problem minority excluded from the state's definition of the "common good."

There is a fundamental disjuncture between nation and state: the Israeli state is defined as Jewish, Palestinians are not. This disjuncture is in part shaped by history and memory. In chapter 5 of this volume by Fatma Kassem, Palestinian women in the cities of Lydd and Ramleh recall how "the Jews entered and took us." Most of these women now live not in their original homes, but in houses abandoned by other Palestinians who could not return. From these haunted spaces, they often can see their old original homes nearby, now inhabited by Israeli Jews (Abu-Lughod and Sa'di, 2007; Slyomovics, 1998). This offers a glimpse into the state's Judaization policies that attempt to maintain a Jewish majority and to distribute and settle Jews as widely as possible in the country.

The Nakba entailed intense physical and psychological upheaval for most Palestinians. This was certainly the case for al-Birweh women (chapter 7) who were removed from their village by Jewish forces in June 1948. Some became refugees in Syria, Jordan, or Lebanon and some managed to stay within the new state as internal refugees in villages near their original hometown. Al-Birweh land was used to build two Jewish settlements, Ahihud and Yasur. The internally displaced refugee women Lena Meari interviewed had only one form of legitimized access to their former land: as agricultural laborers for the Jewish bosses who now controlled it. Im Ahmad was one such laborer. When she took the liberty of filling a bucket with cucumbers for herself from land that had belonged to her family only a few years earlier, her Jewish supervisor called her a thief. Palestinians' connections to their pre-1948 lives were essentially criminalized in the new state.

Author Honaida Ghanim was raised in the small village of Marjeh near the 1948 armistice line. She grew up with stories of family members separated from each other by the new border that divided Israeli-controlled territory from Jordanian-controlled areas. In chapter 6, a mother and daughter would both pretend to go out to hoe the land in order to whisper news and greetings to each other across the Green Line that split their property and family in two. Previously routine actions—visiting relatives, harvesting crops, trading goods—became risky and dangerous. Ghanim argues that for the Palestinians inside Israel, the Green Line border drawn between them and their relatives, friends, or trade partners could not and would not be conceptualized as a normal fact or *fait accompli*. Though Israel imposed severe travel restrictions and attempted to control the movement and labor of Palestinians with military rule until 1966, Palestinians living under this strict military control and surveillance consistently attempted to cross the border. Visiting their families, harvesting their crops, and purchasing merchandise now were defined by the state as "infiltrating," "sneaking," "evading," and "penetrating."

Authorities attempted to sever these Palestinians' connections to their history and to other Palestinians now living under Jordanian rule in the West Bank or Egyptian rule in Gaza or as refugees in neighboring Arab countries. Yet this attempt to shrink the space around Palestinian citizens has never been entirely successful—as evidenced by the massive protests against the siege in Gaza held in Arab cities and villages inside Israel. Time and again, Palestinians in Israel reach out to transcend these boundaries and contest space (Peteet, 2005; Benvenisti, 2000).

Part of the state attempt to shrink the space around its Palestinian citizens involved their redefinition as somehow other than Palestinian or even other than Arab, as in the case of the de-Arabization of the Druze and Bedouins (Hajjar, 2005; Jakubowska, 1992), and as ethnic minorities (in the plural). Palestinian citizens are allowed to relate to the state not as a national group but as subdivided Muslims, Christians, Druze, and Bedouins, a framework that underscores the state's efforts to fragment and marginalize them (Lustick, 1980; Firro, 2001; Jiryis, 1976; Cohen, 2006). Any attempt to transcend this model of non-Jewish minority in a Jewish state is stifled, sometimes violently so. The al-'Ard movement, established in 1959, used strictly democratic and legal means within the Israeli system. However, as Leena Dallasheh argues in chapter 1, because it was pan-Arabist and Palestinian nationalist and rejected the minorities framework, the state repressed it, censured it, intimidated and imprisoned its leaders, and eventually banned it. This demonstrates the limits imposed on Palestinian citizenship in Israel, and Palestinian struggles against those limits from early on. Dallasheh argues that although Palestinians are allowed to participate in the Israeli system, they are forbidden from challenging its fundamentals.

Al-'Ard also reached beyond the shrunken space permitted it in Israel by appealing to the United Nations in 1964 to intervene to protect

the rights of the Arab citizens of Israel. Its letter to the UN represents an attempt by the movement to break the silence enforced on it inside Israel by turning to international institutions. Reaching out internationally has been a strategy reflected in the general rise in the number of nongovernmental organizations among Palestinians in Israel, from forty-one in the early 1980s to over one thousand organizations (Ittijah, 2008) that have expanded the limited space for public action. These organizations have harnessed the use of international law and the universalist language of human rights to advocate for and establish mechanisms for social change inside Israel.

Other Palestinians in Israel use the strategy of identifying with the local rather than the national. For example, many invest more in municipal than in national elections (chapter 8), they identify with their villages and clusters of villages in spite of national borders that now dissect them (chapters 4 and 6) or military actions that displaced them from the villages (chapter 7). Yet others use the strategy of being “good Arabs” and try to conform to the state’s requirements of them as disconnected from other Palestinians and from their past. Some go so far as joining the Israeli military to fight other Palestinians only a few miles away. They do gain certain advantages, limited as they are by the Jewish definition of the state. They remain nonetheless ethnified as minorities. Because the Arab soldiers whom Rhoda Kanaaneh (chapter 2) interviewed lived on land the state wants to remove them from in order to Judaize it, their homes are subject to demolition regardless of their dramatic demonstrations of loyalty to the Jewish collective.

Shafir and Peled argue that in the 1970s and 1980s, the tension between the ethno-nationalist republican discourse and the democratizing liberal discourse in Israel tipped toward the liberal because of changes in the global and national economic realities at the time (Shafir and Peled, 1999). They argue that government controls during this period relaxed and this liberalizing and democratizing trend benefited Arab citizens. However, these improvements did not alter the ethnocentric nature of the regime and thus failed to effectively advance Arab-Jewish equality (Ghanem, Rouhana, and Yiftachel, 1998: 265). Haidar argues that some of the economic changes from this period, in fact, had a negative impact on Palestinians in Israel, exposing them to rapid changes and consumption patterns even as they were kept largely at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder (Haidar, 1997). It is important to note here that Palestinian citizens of Israel fare significantly poorer than their Jewish counterparts on all economic indicators. Using the United Nation’s Human Development Index, the Arab minority in Israel ranks sixty-sixth, forty-three slots below the general ranking of Israel (Nahmias, 2007).

The period of liberalization also witnessed the rise in the number of nongovernmental organizations among Palestinians in Israel, yet these organizations faced significant limits on their attempts to transform Israeli society and politics (Jamal, 2008). Similarly, although the Israeli military establishment has undergone recent structural changes, its hegemonic power

over political decision-making still stands (Sasson-Levy, 2003). The chapters in this book trace similar fluctuations in the state and analyze the link between various political, economic, and cultural changes.

The geography of Palestinian citizens’ identification ebbs and flows depending on the context. It often links Palestinians inside to those outside. However, during the early 1990s Oslo period of optimism about a potential peace agreement between Palestinians in the Territories and Israel, Palestinian citizens were essentially excluded from both sides. The Israeli government tried to distance itself from them as it sought to present a strong Jewish Zionist position to the Israeli public, while the Palestinian “side” shrank to the Territories (or parts thereof) and excluded the Palestinian diaspora and as well “48ers.” Some scholars have argued that the negotiations with Palestinian representatives and the growing access to Arab satellite media and to visited Arab countries like Egypt and Jordan, helped expand the public space for Palestinians in Israel (Smootha, 1999; Ghanem, 2000; Ghanem and Ozacky-Lazar, 2003; Jamal, 2008). Palestinian citizens during this period turned to focus on internal issues such as those related to their citizenship, the Jewishness of the state, the right of return for internally displaced refugees, and their own Nakba commemorations.

At other times, Palestinians in Israel contested national politics through the strategy of expanding space—by, for example, reaching beyond Israel’s borders to draw on the universalist genre of hip-hop. Groups like DAM have been inspired by 2Pac, Mos Def, and other American artists, and have produced politicized music that has gained popularity among Palestinians inside Israel and in the Occupied Territories, as well as internationally. As Amal Egeiq explains in chapter 3, though their music was not frequently played on Israeli radio stations, their use of the internet in particular has enabled them to transcend their shrunken space—their song “Min Irhabi?” (Who’s the Terrorist?) was released on the net in 2001 and was downloaded by one million people in one month (dampalestine.com).

More traditional forms of protest have abounded, and Palestinians in Israel have organized numerous large-scale demonstrations, many of them in response to Israeli military actions outside of Israel “proper”—for example, in December 2008—January 2009 against the war in Gaza; in July 2006 against the air strike on Qana, Lebanon; and during the First and Second Intifadas in the Occupied Territories. Despite the building of the huge wall around parts of the West Bank and Gaza (starting in 2002) and the network of military checkpoints and closures, the increasing physical separation between Palestinians on both sides of the wall has not necessarily produced increased emotional separation. These protests clearly reflect a refusal of the narrow Israeli boundaries drawn around the “Israeli Arab.” They also reflect a strong sense of alienation from Israeli ethno-nationalist policies. This is clearly the case with the beginning of the Second Intifada in October 2000, when Palestinians demonstrated against the killing and oppression of Palestinians

in the West Bank and Gaza and also out of frustration over their inferior treatment in the state. During these widespread protests, thirteen Palestinians were killed inside Israel by Israeli police forces.¹ The deaths, together with the Israeli media characterization of the protests as traitorous riots, further fueled the Palestinian sense of outrage. The state defines them legally and in practice as outsiders, and in its various guises, daily reminds them of their fragile second-class status.

During the recent war on Gaza, Palestinians inside Israel widely expressed feelings of intense frustration at their inability to stop the war or alleviate the suffering of Gazans, even though they were citizens of the state launching the attack. Some of our relatives and friends even felt physical illness as a result of their sense of helplessness. At most, they could try to send food and medicines that were unlikely to reach Gaza due to the blockade. As a collective, they have had limited influence in parliament, despite relatively high rates of participation in elections. Their political isolation is reflected in the fact that 78 percent of Israeli Jews oppose Arab political parties joining the government (ACRI, 2007).

With this sense of intense frustration, Palestinians in Israel showed up to demonstrations in the thousands. An especially large demonstration was held on the annual commemoration of Land Day, the massive strike in 1976 when Palestinians attempted to block government confiscations of Arab land in the Galilee and six Palestinian citizens were killed. The shrinking of space around Palestinians in Israel is literal; government authorities seek to maintain a Jewish majority in Israel, settle Jews in areas where Arabs live and transfer Arab-claimed lands to Jewish control (Falah, 1989b; Yiftachel, 1991, 1995; Arab Association for Human Rights, 2004; Adalah, ND; Khamaisi, 2006; ACRI, 2007). So the land available to Palestinians in Israel is increasingly smaller, even as their population grows larger. As the protest against the Gaza War on Land Day in 2009 illustrates, Palestinian link their marginalization inside Israel with the continued brutal occupation of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories.

Other major political mobilizations respond to events outside of Israel and the Occupied Territories, such as during Israel's second War on Lebanon in the summer of 2006. Palestinians in Israel—who make up 20 percent of the population and 50 percent of the northern Galilee region's residents—constituted 50 percent of those killed and injured in Israel during the war (ynetnews, 8/14/2006; Rekhess, 2006). There were no shelters or emergency sirens in Arab communities, yet as Hizbollah's rockets landed on the northern part of the country, the majority of Palestinians in Israel expressed opposition to the war and to the Israeli Air Force's indiscriminate bombing of civilians in Lebanon. From the margins of Israeli society, they broke the national consensus and critiqued the militarized and ethno-nationalist policies of the state. Overall, organizing demonstrations has been an important

strategy for many Palestinians to collectively express their politics, but has had less than the desired effect on state policies and parameters.

THE COLLECTION

This volume, the first published in English to focus on Palestinians in Israel, elucidates the ongoing dynamic changes among Palestinians in the state. The scope, diversity, complexity, nuance, and dynamism of the topics discussed and the positionalities of the authors make this collection unique. It offers a rich and multidimensional portrait that eschews some of the limitations of more nationalistically inflected work. On the one hand, scholarship shaped by Zionist priorities tends to exoticize an insular, largely apolitical, traditional Arab culture while masking the influence of the disciplinary state (e.g., Cohen, 1965; Ginat, 1982). Another school treats Palestinians as agentless objects who live in contradiction and suffer from identity crisis (e.g., Smootha, 1989a, 1999; ICG, 2004).

On the other hand, Palestinian nationalism, like many other modern nationalisms, has tended to hide internal differences, sideline gender concerns, and overlook smaller groups within (described in Hasso, 2000; Massad, 1995; Swedenburg, 1995). Palestinians in Israel have been marginalized within the larger Palestinian nationalist discourse and are often dismissed as co-opted by the Israeli state of which they are citizens. This can increase the temptation for those within to offer an overly redemptive nationalist narrative about themselves. Being marginalized and threatened at multiple levels creates a concern for community preservation, making representations of the collective and its traditions in many ways more rigid (Sa'di and Abu-Lughod, 2007). The chapters herein confront these pitfalls by refreshingly attending to differences articulated around gender, clans, sexuality, class, generation, levels of education, urban versus rural backgrounds, internal refugees versus original residents, and "traitors" versus nationalists.

Taghreed Yahia-Younis's analysis of women's voting patterns in local elections in one Palestinian locality not only attends to the conflicting gendered expectations of them, but also to the roles of clan hierarchies, family composition, and residency patterns. The category of "women" is broken down into several subgroups with a range of voting behaviors within each. She demonstrates how the majority of women are considered to be "strangers within" to different degrees because of their origins from other clans, locales, or countries, and are perceived as posing varying levels of threat to the fluctuating clan, gender, and political orders.

Manal Shalabi's study of sexuality includes women with diverse religious backgrounds (Muslims, Christians, and Druze), levels of religiosity, and education. The experiences and practices of the women in the study were highly varied despite certain "red lines" that they commonly felt they

could not cross. One of the study participants, Su'ad, a religious Muslim housewife, apparently displayed the most openness in relation to sexuality, contradicting the common stereotypes about women from different groups. Shalabi argues that factors like education and participation in the workforce are not guarantees of achievement of women's independence.

To date, much of the scholarship on Palestinians in Israel has focused on political elites (Ghanem, 2001) or unnamed masses (Karkabi, 1994), and has produced problematic generalizations and typifications. In contrast, this collection emerges from specific locations and significant well-elaborated contexts often excluded or understudied, such as divided villages, the internal migration of women, Palestinian soldiers, encounters with the military administration, the travel of academics, among others. By situating themselves in diverse locations and intersections, the chapters unsettle common generalizations about Palestinians in Israel and offer a more multivocal view.

Much writing on Palestinians in Israel assumes one of two orientations. The first focuses primarily on the state and its repressive measures (e.g., Jiryis, 1976; Lustick, 1980; Falah, 1996; Sa'di, 2003; Yiftachel and Kedar, 2003). While such measures are certainly vitally important, this exclusive top-down attention to them underplays the agency of Palestinians and unwittingly depicts them as "passive objects of state practices" (Robinson, 2005: 19). The second orientation looks at Palestinian traditions, practices, and culture—with little attention to the powerful structural and political contexts that these are molded by (e.g., Cohen, 2006; Lang, 2005; Ginat, 1982; Stewart, 2007). What distinguishes our collection is the delicate balance the chapters keep between, on the one hand, considering the state and its repressive, coercive, and symbolic aspects, and on the other hand, understanding Palestinians as diverse, active, creative, and strategizing. In some chapters (such as chapters 4 and 6) the state is present but bypassed by border-crossers, or departed from as immigrants (chapter 12), or directly challenged only to have the state shift its tactics (chapter 1).

The chapters address global, national, and local levels—from transnational migrations to local voting patterns and intimate sexual relations—as these intersect and shape the daily lives of Palestinians in Israel. This volume attends to different modes of resistance and attempts to expand their limited space without romanticizing them (Peteet, 2005). From Honaida Ghanim's relatives and neighbors who crossed state-declared borders to visit their families to organizing a political movement, from coping with sexual shaming to taking on new work roles, the agency of Palestinians in the collection ranges from the everyday to the monumental. It also includes morally complex strategies of resistance such as accepting land swaps with the government or serving in the Occupied Territories with the Israeli military.

The spatial practices examined in the book and integrated into the analyses include the segregation of populations (chapter 11), the Judaizing

naming of streets and places (chapter 5), the delegitimation and demolition of Arab homes in areas to be reterritorialized (chapter 2), and the hiring of Palestinians to farm their former lands by Jewish agricultural settlements that now control them (chapter 7). These sites of authority are also figured here as places of contestation. However, rather than presenting a binary of resistance versus acquiescence, we see diverse Palestinian strategies that fall along a continuum. The Israeli state is not presented as a monolithic entity, but the chapters reflect changes, variation, and openings in its practices that Palestinians use to insert themselves.

THE THEMES

State and Ethnicity

The ethno-national discourse of Israel as a Jewish state has provided the strongest glue for the nation-building project of Zionism (Shafir and Peled, 1999). The state combines both democratic features and nondemocratic components premised on a rigid ethnic hierarchy, the lack of inclusive territorial citizenship, and the power of religious institutions (Ghanem, Rouhana, and Yiftachel, 1998). Such nondemocratic components feed the ongoing conflict between Israel and its minoritized Palestinians and have led to the latter's intensive demands for a comprehensive transformation in the structures and policies of the state (Jamal, 2007; Bishara, 2001). The hegemony of the Jewish majority over state institutions remains a problem that Palestinian citizens seek to overcome (Jamal, 2007b). Issues in the "1948 files" include the question of land ownership, internally displaced refugees, commemorating the Nakba (Rekness, 2007), and many more. The chapters in this section of the book explore some of these issues directly, but they also underlie much of the volume.

In Amal Equeiq's chapter (3), Palestinian hip-hop musicians reflect on the marginalization, and in essence, criminalization, of Palestinians as non-Jews in present-day Israel. Rapper Tamer Nafar, for one, chants: "I broke the law? No no, the law broke me." Nafar and other artists rap about how their blue IDs, that is, Israeli citizenships, afford them discrimination ranging from neglect in garbage collection to police brutality.

Palestinians live in three main regions in Israel: the Galilee in the north, the Triangle in the center, and in the Naqab in the south. In addition, some 10 percent of Palestinians in Israel live in so-called mixed cities, mostly in impoverished and overcrowded neighborhoods. Equeiq argues that while ghettos are usually regarded as urban phenomena, geography works differently in Israel. The Palestinian ghetto in Israel is felt in all of their socially and economically confined communities—in all the Palestinian villages and towns within the State of Israel, including mixed Arab-Jewish areas. These spaces suffer from inadequate or nonexistent public services;

underfunded municipalities, schools, and medical services; and lack, for example, paved roads and operating sewage systems. This socioeconomic and political marginalization is reflected in the popular and rich cultural productions of increasing numbers of hip-hop groups.

Leena Dallasheh's chapter on the history of the al-'Ard movement (chapter 1) illustrates an early expression of the struggle around the "1948 files." Established in 1959, al-'Ard focused its activities on issues that were most urgent to Palestinians then, such as the right of return, and on issues specific to Palestinians within Israel, including the cessation of the military government and land confiscation, and the extension of social and economic rights. This history shows that Palestinian citizens resisted Israeli dominance in innovative ways, some of which have faced profound Israeli repression.

In chapter 3, Kanaaneh describes how the state attempts to confer "special minority" status on certain groups as part of its explicit policy to divide and subdivide the Arab population. The Bedouins are one such group—they are celebrated as special allies of the state and as the Jews' brothers-in-arms. Generations of them have served as trackers in the military and hundreds have been killed during service. Despite their preferred status, the non-Jewishness of these special minorities continues to haunt them and severely limit their rewards. The state's "divide and rule" policy of fostering special ties with particular segments of the Palestinian population is not without contradictions. It is disrupted by the continued importance of the Jewish/non-Jewish dichotomy at the core of the ideals of a Jewish state. The major problems facing Palestinians in Israel—including land confiscation, municipal underfunding, home demolitions, and the refusal to recognize villages—are also faced by Palestinian soldiers. Crops on Bedouin land the state claims as its own are burned with toxic chemicals (HRA, 2004), and Bedouins suffer from the lowest economic status in the country (Jakubowska, 2000). The state thus insists on ethnifying "minorities" and non-Jews despite individual attempts to bypass these definitions.

Memory and Oral History

The Israeli state is invested in keeping the collective memory of the Holocaust alive, which it uses to legitimize its policies (Lentin, 2000). At the same time, it is invested in erasing Palestinian collective memories of the 1948 war. A parliamentary bill was introduced in May 2009 to ban Nakba commemorations; violators of the law, if passed, would face up to three years in prison (*Haaretz*, May 25, 2009). Memory is thus clearly political and Palestinian memories are perceived as threatening to Jewish claims of the state.

History and memory weave their way in and out of the narratives in this volume. Chapters in this section use a dynamic concept of memory, not one based on nostalgia and glorification of the past. Oral histories are not

simply a source for bringing silenced voices to light, but have the potential to create counternarratives and histories. The chapters historicize and contextualize the present and explain the effects and consequences of past events as seen from the present. They also examine the gendered nature of memory and the language used to depict it.

For example, Isis Nusair's chapter (4) asks, what does it mean to look at the past from the vantage point of the present? In her generational study, experiences of massive upheaval and dislocation, such as those of the Nakba or the 1967 war and the ongoing occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, have a lasting impact on Palestinian sociopolitical outlooks, often in powerfully gendered ways. The shifting political contexts that three generations of women lived through produce different narratives: of state-detached steadfastness and pain, of state-critiquing restricted educational and marriage choices, and of new mobilizations for private and public change.

Among the various forms of the gendering of history, Nusair notes a striking silence about the 1948 war and the rape of women, despite its implicit presence in nearly everything the women said about the war and its aftermath. The chapters go beyond the victim/survivor narrative and explain the meanings ascribed to events and the effects they had on men and women's lives. The chapters address what it means to have counterdiscourses and examine the possibilities and limits for social change and action.

Fatma Kassem's chapter (5) focuses on the narratives of Palestinian women from so-called mixed cities such as Lydd and Ramleh. These women are some of the most marginalized, as they have been entirely left out of the formation of the collective Palestinian historical-political narrative and deprived of any legitimacy in the public domain of the exclusionary Jewish state. They are engaged in the daily struggle against erasure of their memories and histories both as Palestinians and as women. Kassem analyzes these struggles by attending to their use of particular words to establish the realms of personal and collective memory, and pays close attention to their choice of terms. For example, the use of "when the Jews entered" instead of "the Nakba," or "the English era" or "the days of the Arabs/Palestine" instead of the "British Mandate," creates an alternative vocabulary drawn from the private familial sphere and an alternative sphere of conceptualization.

Honaida Ghanim uses stories from family, neighbors, and friends to explore how the armistice line that partitioned her home village after the war is remembered. Palestinians in Israel developed symbolic and practical actions to cope with the 1948 partition of Palestine, some of them include simple ways of catching a glimpse, however temporary and curtailed, into their lives as they had lived them before that border brutally crossed them. The border came to be a place that the Palestinian ran up against, repeatedly passing and re-passing through it, as when she is expelled or allowed to rejoin her family. In Ghanim's stories, the border becomes, in the end, a place where she resides, almost a home.

Gendering Bodies and Space

An additional contribution of this collection is the infusion of a strong gendered awareness to the field. The existing literature on Palestinians in Israel either largely ignores gender (e.g., Falah, 1996; Rouhana, 1997; Ghanem, 2001; Firro, 2001; Yiftachel and Kedar, 2003), or focuses exclusively on reified categories of "Arab women" (e.g., Gorkin and Othman, 1996; Kama, 1984; Halperin-Kaddari, 2004). Several of the chapters in the third section of this book (along with parts of other chapters) use gender as a key lens: this includes women's work roles, but also men's military service, women's sexuality, internal women's migration and voting patterns, emigration patterns among women academics, the styles of male and female rap artists or generational gendered politics of location. They expose some of the civic myths that privilege masculinity and sustain unequal forms of inclusion and exclusion (Joseph, 2000)—along ethnic lines as well as along gendered ones. These essays enrich the scholarship of the region by insisting on a contextualization of Palestinians as gendered subjects with personal and collective histories, opportunities and strategies that are shaped by notions of femininity and masculinity.

Gender can be traced in male and female bodies, their relative positioning in society, and in the gender ideologies at play—all embedded in social, economic, and political contexts (Cockburn, 2004: 30). Minutiae such as a rumor about a girl's reputation, a woman's choice of street names, another woman finding a job on a Jewish farm, and yet another being proud of a father's clan—all take on larger social, economic, and political significance. The collection also challenges binaries of public and private, coercion and free choice, liberated and oppressed, and stresses a continuum for understanding the economic and sociopolitical changes in the lives of Palestinian women in Israel since 1948.

The chapters are informed by the work of the Palestinian feminist movement in Israel. They are influenced by the publications and activities of nongovernmental organizations that emerged in the 1990s and have focused on women's rights (Ghanim, 2005). Particularly important have been the two nongovernmental organization reports to the United Nations on Israel as a signatory of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1997 and 2005. These reports have served as lobbying tools locally and internationally. Palestinian feminists have been engaged with some Israeli Jewish women's organizations and the resulting difficulties and limits imposed on Palestinian women in these engagements have strengthened an analysis that examines the intersections of gender and ethnic politics. There has also been an expansion in the horizons of these organizations with meetings of women in the Occupied Territories and in the Arab world (Salma Network and Aisha), as well as by the establishment of the Palestinian gay women's group *Aswat* (meaning voices) (Krahulik, 2005).

They have also been invigorated by the inclusion of women nominees on the list of Palestinian-supported parties. Women worked from inside both the National Democratic Assembly and the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality parties to place a gender quota system that led to the election of Haneen Zu'bi from NDA to Parliament in 2009.

Anxieties of representation emerge among the contributors in this context as gender among Palestinians is haunted by Western rescue narratives and "salvation rhetoric" (Abu-Lughod, 2002: 788). The state frequently deploys a modernizing discourse vis-à-vis Palestinian women that it uses to patronize and control Palestinian citizens (Abdo, 2004; Sa'ar, 2007) and to constitute itself in opposition to this Orientalized image as modern and Western (Eyal, 1996: 420). As Kanaaneh argues elsewhere (2009), gender violence among Palestinians in particular functions as a kind of "colonial scandal" (Dirks, 1997: 209); it is fetishized by the Israeli media and used as proof of Palestinian backwardness—justifying the supposedly liberal state's control and civilizing mission.

Several chapters in this book note that the state in actuality reinforces gender hierarchies (chapters 4, 7, 8, 9, and 11). Lilian Abou-Tabickh's analysis of women's migration upon marriage to their husband's residence not only unmasks a migration that is otherwise made invisible in the literature and unquestioned in social discourse, but notes that "conservative social structures and the racist state . . . collude to imprison Arab women and limit their rights to housing and their choice of living space" (194). That the state shapes these gender inequalities does not lead Abou-Tabickh or the contributors to ignore other factors.

One can read the impact of the militarization of Israel in the formations of gender in these chapters—from women's military administration work permits in the 1950s, to the military empowerment of patriarchal clan authorities, to the ethnic segregation of communities in which women are discouraged from leaving (Enloe, 2000). Israeli Jewish women are of course also marginalized by state policies and by the military nature of the state, albeit differently, and while often simultaneously participating in the ethnonationalist and militarized collective (Jacoby, 1999; Herzog, 2004; Shadmi, 2000; Ferguson, 1995; Sharoni, 1994, 1996; Golan, 1997). The chapters go beyond adding women and stirring—they focus on an understanding of gender as a relation of power in family and state politics.

Migrations

Women and men's movements and migrations are products of sociodemographic, economic, political, and cultural changes (Hawkesworth, 2006). Lilian Abou-Tabickh and Ibtisam Ibrahim's chapters (11 and 12) compel us to examine the operations of capital, class, ethnicity, and gender within state borders but also across them. Ibrahim's chapter shifts the focus to women's

agency in the global political economy, and as based on a complex set of patriarchal, racial, and ethnic practices (Naples, 2002). This chapter presents the case of educated Palestinian women from Israel emigrating to Western countries in pursuit of advancing their studies or careers. In addition to a desire to find alternatives to gendered family surveillance and pressure to marry, political and institutionalized discriminatory policies sharpen the desires of these Palestinian women to leave. Lack of opportunities in their home region demonstrated by the minute numbers of Palestinians with tenure-track positions in Israeli universities and the feeling of being strangers in their own land were strong impetuses for these women to seek an alternative country of residence.

Areej Sabbagh-Khoury's chapter (10) raises important questions about how certain migrations are legitimated, forbidden, or shrouded in silence. This chapter, like others before it, addresses the structural confinement of Palestinians in a Jewish state. Sabbagh-Khoury's review of the Arabic press from 1989 to 1991, a period of massive immigration from the former Soviet Union, finds a surprising silence or distortion on the subject. The Palestinian leadership's discourse from this period did not directly oppose Jewish immigration or link it to the absence of Palestinian rights to return, but dealt instead with its effects on the lives of Palestinians on both sides of the Green Line. Underlying this surface silence and self-censoring is a general fear of crossing "red lines" set by the state. There is no longer a central military administration as there was in earlier years that directly harassed, pressured, and imprisoned Palestinian activists and suspects. However, the goals of those who dismantled the military administration—for state authorities to see but not be seen—have to some extent been accomplished (Bauml, 2002).

Abou-Tabickh analyzes women's migration upon marriage in the context of gendered disparities, but also takes into account current events, Palestinian history in Israel, and deep structures of inequality anchored in state practices. She thus links inheritance practices, the biased enforcement of civil family reforms, ethnic limitations on new construction and zoning, and daring visions of love. The chapter astutely describes the social and historical construction of public and private boundaries. She points to women's sense of freedom to choose their spouses coupled simultaneously with a sense that they have no choice in where to live once married as patrilocality is so naturalized.

The chapters in this collection directly and indirectly raise a host of questions about language, silence, and representation, for both the people researched and for the scholar herself. In part, these questions emerge in relation to the state and its surveillance. For example, knowing that Palestinian social history, particularly Palestinian women's social history, is voided by official archives, most of the contributors use oral histories and interviews to read against the grain of, or altogether bypass, state documents. Yet issues of representation in relation to the state inevitably raise related questions

for collecting oral histories and conducting interviews among Palestinians more generally. What do those whom we interview remember and what do they omit? What words do they use, what subjects do they avoid, and what questions do they redirect? These uncertainties, never fully answered or answerable, of necessity hover over our research.

These same questions can be asked of the authors themselves. Located as we are in particular states (especially Israel and the United States), and in particular academic and research institutions, our scholarly writing is undoubtedly shaped by such contexts. The authors of these chapters are all Palestinian women citizens of Israel. As students of anthropology, comparative literature, history, political theory, sociology, and women's studies, the contributors bring a rich array of perspectives to their analyses of social, cultural, and political dimensions of Palestinian life in Israel. Their scholarship crosses disciplinary boundaries as well as geographic ones, as some are positioned inside Israel and others came to the United States to pursue university degrees. In chapter 12, Ibtisam Ibrahim surveys a related group of Palestinian women academics who have left Israel for various periods of time and their experiences of belonging and displacement.

She asks, and we ask, how does the need to master Hebrew, English, and the terms of colonial modernity—to integrate into Israeli institutions or to succeed in American or Palestinian ones—affect how we speak about and back to the state? How are our choices of terminology, citations, and theoretical frameworks consciously and unconsciously informed by these linguistic and institutional limitations? Many of the contributors in fact raise reflexive methodological questions regarding the role of researchers and authors, issues of audience, sources, visibility, and narrative styles. Readers are invited to revisit these questions while reading the chapters, as we did in editing and re-editing our work.

CONCLUSION

Analyses of the changing political, social, and economic conditions of Palestinians in Israel should not be regarded as merely a discussion of a special minority case. Understanding the workings of nationality, ethnicity, class, and gender is relevant not only for a particular minority group but for the dominant society as well (Berkovitch, 2001). The Israeli state has been described as divided among seven major cultures, challenging one another for control, including Ashkenazi Jews, Mizrahi Jews, religious Orthodox Jews, Russian immigrants, Ethiopian immigrants, noncitizen foreign workers, and Palestinians (Kimmerling, 2004). Though the first five are privileged by being bound together under the umbrella of Jewishness and militarism, the struggles of each are relevant to the whole (Kimmerling, 2004).

This volume raises critical questions regarding the position of Palestinians in Israel. It describes their exclusion from the Israeli polity, collective

narrative, and ethos—the shrinking of their space—but also examines their strategies in challenging this marginalization and their attempts to expand space. In 2008, the Israeli state celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of its establishment, and Palestinians commemorated sixty years since their Nakba. Following the creation of the state, “a formidable and exceptional effort was made to construct a new collective identity” that excluded Palestinians (Kimmerling, 2001: 93–94; Segev, 1986). Yet the continued presence of Palestinians inside Israel, despite their sidelining, serves as a constant reminder to the state of the past that it refuses to acknowledge, and the present that it refuses to address. They implicitly and explicitly demand that the constitution currently being drafted by the Israeli parliament address the prospect of full equality for all citizens and not only Jewish ones. They inevitably pose, repose, and reframe the question of “who is a citizen?”

The publication of this volume comes at a critical time for Palestinians in Israel. Palestinian fears regarding their fragile position in Israel have always been present but have intensified in recent years. October 2000 was particularly enraging not only because police and border patrol units killed thirteen Palestinians, twelve of whom were citizens of the state, but because none of those who carried out the killings were held accountable. Palestinian anxiety was also heightened by 2003 and 2007 changes to the immigration and citizenship laws that make them even more discriminatory and prohibit the granting of any residency or citizenship status to Palestinians from the Occupied Territories who are married to Israeli citizens (Adalah, nd).

More recently, the February 2009 parliamentary elections reflect a shift farther to the right among Jewish citizens of Israel. Election campaigns featured open calls for the transfer of Palestinian citizens by the likes of Avigdor Lieberman, whose Yisrael Beiteinu Party expanded its parliamentary seats from eleven to fifteen, making it the third-largest party. The electoral platform of Lieberman, now foreign minister, gained much attention for its call to require those who wish to retain Israeli citizenship to declare their loyalty to Israel as a Jewish state. Not to be outdone, the so-called centrist contender for government leadership, Tzipi Livni, said in December 2008 that the establishment of a Palestinian state would enable her to “approach the Palestinian residents of Israel . . . and tell them, ‘Your national solution lies elsewhere’” (*Haaretz*, December 11, 2008). Even some Israeli Jews who distance themselves from Lieberman and consider themselves liberals have recently introduced bylaws into their towns that require new residents to pledge support for “Zionism, Jewish heritage and settlement of the land” (Cook, 2009).

Along with the growing fear among Palestinians regarding their tenuous position in Israel, they have simultaneously become increasingly outspoken, or at least more audible to the Jewish majority. This is evident in the recent publication of four important documents that represent a collective

voice for Palestinians in Israel. The first is a 2006 document published by the National Committee for the Heads of Arab Local Authorities in Israel titled *The Future Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel*. It makes clear that “[d]efining the Israeli state as a Jewish state and exploiting democracy in the service of its Jewishness is exclusionary and creates tension between us and the nature and essence of the state. Therefore, we call for a consensual democratic system that enables us to be fully active in the decision making process and guarantee[s] our individual and collective civil, historic, and national rights” (NCHALAI, 2006). Three additional documents, *An Equal Constitution for All?* drafted by Mossawa Center: The Advocacy Center for Arab Citizens in Israel; *The Democratic Constitution* drafted by Adalah: The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel; and the Haifa Declaration by Mada al-Carmel: Arab Center for Applied Social Research were released in 2007.

The drafting of all four documents started soon after the October 2000 events and involved collaborations between political figures, nongovernmental organizations, and intellectuals. The documents are significant in that, unlike earlier Palestinian statements in Israel, they do not focus only on the Palestinian cause and its relationship to the state. Rather they offer an internal examination of the political, social, and economic development of Palestinians in Israel as a national minority and articulate new priorities in relation to the limits on their citizenship there. The documents reflect the more general growth in Palestinian non-governmental organizations and actions.

The state is now pushing Palestinian citizens to perform “civil service.” Since unlike Jewish citizens, they are not conscripted and the majority of them do not serve in the Israeli military, they cannot be part of the “security complex,” which plays a central role in the Israeli economy (Sa’di, Shalev, and Schnell, 2000: 48),² and in creating a sense of belonging to the polity as a “community of warriors” (Helman, 1999: 211). The demand that Palestinian citizens perform an alternative service that is inferior—both economically and by Israeli measures, culturally—amounts to a request that they justify their presence in the state as outsiders and prove their loyalty to the Jewish and militarized state by which they have been colonized and of which they are subordinate members. In voicing its opposition to “civil service,” the Haifa Declaration states that “steps that could lead to our involvement in Israeli militarism and the distribution of the spoils of wars are incompatible in our case with the principal of equality because they disfigure our identity and disregard historical injustices” (Mada al-Carmel, 2007: 14). This illustrates Palestinian resistance to repeated Israeli attempts to normalize their inferiority and to silence their historical memories. This volume helps readers understand how Palestinians navigate this terrain and pose new challenges to the practices and conceptualization of democracy in Israel.

NOTES

1. Though one of the thirteen killed was from Gaza and the rest were citizens of Israel, the protests did not make this distinction.

2. The following benefits apply only to the Jewish sector: a) a large share of the labor force works for the armed forces; b) many others are employed in government-operated military industries, military and civilian firms working under contract to the army, or in other jobs that for justified or unjustified reasons require a security clearance; c) the army and the military industries also make indispensable contributions to the development of high-tech industry, by training computer engineers and programmers at no cost to the individuals that get the training or the civilian firms that later benefit from it (Sa'di, Shalev, and Schnell 2000: 48).

I

STATE AND ETHNICITY
