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The Status of the Palestinians in Israel in an Era of Peace: Part of the Problem but Not Part of the Solution

AS'AD GHANEM and SARAH OZACKY-LAZAR

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INTRODUCTION

On the eve of the 1948 war and the establishment of the state of Israel, close to two million inhabitants lived in Mandatory Palestine – two-thirds of them Palestinian Arabs and one-third Jews. The vast majority of the Palestinians (nearly 940,000) and almost all of the Jews lived on the territory that later became Israel. As a result of expulsions and mass flight,[1] only about 160,000 Arabs, who accounted for ten per cent of the Palestinian population at the time, stayed in Israel at the conclusion of hostilities. Nearly 780,000 Palestinians became refugees in the 'West Bank' which was annexed to the kingdom of Jordan, in Gaza Strip, which was put under Egyptian military government and in neighbouring Arab countries.[2]

In 1952, the number of Palestinians was about 1.6 million, of whom 11 per cent lived in Israel (179,300), 18 per cent (about 300,000) in Gaza, 47 per cent (about 742,300) in the West Bank and nine per cent (150,000) in the east part of Jordan. The rest, about 380,000, lived in the neighbouring Arab countries: roughly 114,000 (seven per cent) in Lebanon, close to 83,000 (five per cent) in Syria, and about three per cent in other countries.

The dispersal of the Palestinian population disrupted and delayed social and political processes that had begun among the Palestinians before the war. Many villages and towns were wiped off the map; others were partially destroyed or some of their inhabitants fled the country or moved to other places within Israel and were later defined as 'internal refugees'.[3] Many families found themselves split, with some remaining in the territory of Israel and some in the neighbouring countries. The incipient

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industry in Arab towns and nascent social institutions of various sorts were also destroyed. Most seriously, processes that should have led to greater Palestinian national solidarity and could have led to the creation of a Palestinian political entity were disrupted or terminated.

In addition to the disruption and delay of these processes, the different concentrations of the Palestinian people who lived under different regimes suffered problems of various sorts, of which the common feature was that they were a consequence of the 1948 war. Taken together, they constituted the core of what has since been called the 'Palestinian problem', with its various corollaries.

The difficult situation of the Palestinians in Israel immediately after 1948 was a result of events during and after the war. The significant and immediate difference between them and other Palestinians lay in the fact that they had remained on their land and became citizens of the Jewish state of Israel. In practice, however, this fact, which is important in itself, did not help them very much. In the eyes of the Israeli authorities and various security agencies they were generally considered to be part of the Arab and Palestinian 'enemy' and Israel adopted a policy of harsh control as part of the steps to control and deter them.

The Palestinians who remained in Israel were confused by the shock of the Arab defeat by the Jewish army, and by the establishment of a state alien to them. They were weak, divided, and lacked a national political leadership to guide them. Most of them were poor, illiterate and unorganized. Their main concern at the time was to earn some living for their families and stick to their land in order not to become refugees like their brothers and sisters. The Israeli authorities employed diverse techniques that deterred many Arabs from political participation or even political discussions that were not to the taste of the authorities; this impeded the consolidation of a national leadership and encouraged 'accommodating' actors on the Arab side. Military government and economic policy helped the authorities control the Arabs and limit their activities.[4]

Until 1967, most Arabs did not have the leisure for political activity because of the harsh conditions of their life in Israel. This economic dependence meant that the authorities could threaten those who might be inclined to political activity with the loss of their jobs. In the second period, beginning in 1967, the gradual liberation from the shadow of the military government led to a significant change in the patterns of political activity and thought among the Palestinians in Israel. Still, their major political effort was devoted, until the early 1990s, to looking for a solution to the Palestinian problem in the form of the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. At the same time, they strove to improve their own standard of living and to modify the policy of the Israeli authorities towards them. Their leaders focused on putting forward demands for civic equality and invested their effort in

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bringing about changes in social and political aspects of Palestinian society in Israel.[5]

The Oslo accords of September 1993 marked a new stage in the political life of the Palestinians in Israel and in their aspirations. The direct contacts between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the declared intention to find a comprehensive solution to the conflict removed one of the two key issues from the agenda of the Palestinians in Israel; in effect, it left the question of civil equality in the state as the leading item of their struggle. This acquired significant momentum in view of the idea, which emerged over the years, that a solution of the problem of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza would promote Arab equality in Israel and help realize their demands in this realm.[6]

Thus a solution to the question of the Israeli occupation in the territories was seen as advancing the discussion about the Arabs' equality in Israel. Similarly, recognition of the PLO, and Israeli negotiations with it, meant the start of a solution to the problem of the status and political situation of the Palestinian people as a whole, yet one link is still missing, namely, the political status and condition of the Palestinians in Israel.

Immediately after the signature of the Declaration of Principles by the government of Israel and the PLO, on the assumption that most of the Palestinians in Israel supported this agreement, the public and academic debate about the status desired by the Palestinian citizens of Israel received great impetus.[7] The preferred or possible status of the Palestinians in Israel, in confrontation with the Jewish–Zionist nature of the state, were discussed with greater frequency than in the past. Old and new ideas of broad or limited personal autonomy were raised, along with ideas of annexation of part of the Triangle to the future Palestinian entity in the West Bank or a more substantial integration than at present of the Palestinians in Israel, as individuals and/or as a group.

This article deals with the status of the Palestinians in Israel and potential future developments that the state of Israel and its Jewish and Palestinian Arab citizens will have to deal with and resolve in order to complete the settlement of the Palestinian problem, of which it is part. We shall relate the theoretical options available for the future status of the Palestinians in Israel and how the Arabs themselves perceive their future status.[8]

THE PALESTINIAN ARAB MINORITY IN ISRAEL: THEORETICAL ALTERNATIVES

The status of minorities is an issue which many researchers and politicians in the free world are concerned with. There is a great deal of professional literature on the subject, dealing with both its theoretical and practical aspects. The ideal of the modern state, the liberal national state, which has

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evolved during the last two centuries, is based on the right to self-determination of national groups and the human rights of their members, recognizing them as a source of governmental authority. The state has become a means of safeguarding the security, rights and welfare of the individual belonging to a people or a nation. The key question is, therefore, what is 'a nation' or what are the criteria for inclusion within that concept? Are all the citizens living within a certain territory under the jurisdiction of the state to be considered 'the nation' or 'a people', or only those falling under specific social or cultural criteria such as language, religion and tradition? Do only the members of the majority cultural group deserve the status of 'a people', or do other groups, living within the state's territories also deserve it? In answer to these questions, various models of states have developed:

- *The liberal multinational state* which grants to all the individuals within it equal individual rights, but at the same time makes it possible to promote, by various means, collective national identities. Such a state stresses the rules of shared citizenship, and the distribution of resources is shared and balanced. Switzerland and Belgium are examples of this type of state.
- *The ethnic national state* also grants equal individual rights to all its citizens, but its collective majority is composed of people of the same ethnic origin, the same religion or other cultural characteristics. Such a state seeks to create maximal overlap between citizenship and ethnic affiliation and promotes the advancement of the majority group. This creates tension with the minority groups that are not included in the majority culture. The tension is controlled by various means such as the representation of the minority in government institutions on a personal basis, by not imposing on the minority citizens all the duties nor granting them all the rights, and sometimes granting a limited autonomy in the cultural, educational and religious spheres. Examples of such a state are Israel, Malaysia, Germany and Latvia.
- *The civic national state* is a model adopted by most democracies. Although such a state reflects in practice the culture of the majority, its government and judiciary are based on the declared position that the state is neutral ethnically and nationally. The collective identity is based on the factor of citizenship which acts as a bridge, and not on ethnic origin, heritage, religion or any kind of cultural affinity. Citizenship is given the status of a kind of 'civil religion' and the state is multicultural.

In societies deeply split on an ethnic, religious, national or some other basis, there are various practices (or malpractices), creating the legal–institutional or non-institutional framework for dealing with the

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status of the various groups. On the theoretical level, researchers list mechanisms such as control, the development of majoritarian democracies, consociationalism or ethnic democracy, as means capable of ensuring stability in split societies.[9] The failure or success of these mechanisms determines the behaviour and aspirations of the minority communities. The demands raised by various minorities are mainly of three types:

1. *Irredenta and separation*: Many national and ethnic groups develop irredentist movements (wishing to detach themselves from one state and join another) or separatist movements (wishing to establish a new state). Such demands are usually accompanied by violence and sometimes lead to civil war between the minority group and the central government, controlled by the majority.
2. *Autonomy*: Minority groups sometimes demand autonomy in certain spheres of life. They may adopt the demand for extensive autonomy, which may actually turn the state into a binational or multinational one. Frequently it is a case of a limited autonomy, enabling a specific group to lead its own life in certain defined and limited spheres, with the consent of the majority in that state.
3. *Integration*: Other groups demand to become integrated within the life of the state of which they are citizens. The way this is done is a function of the attitude of the governments towards the minority and the degree of pressure under which the group is suffering. Extreme integration is total assimilation of the minority within the majority and the elimination of the differences between them.

The possibilities presented above are not clear-cut. Various types of arrangements can be found on a continuum, with separation and the establishment of a separate independent state at one end and assimilation or absorption on the other. This is also true of the variety of theoretical possibilities for the status of the Arab minority in Israel. As mentioned above, the need for this discussion stems from the dissatisfaction with the present situation and also the political changes taking place in the region, and especially the peace process. If a Palestinian state is established alongside Israel, the Palestinian Arabs who are Israeli citizens will have to redefine their relationship to the state of Israel as well as to the Palestinian state. The discussion about the status of the minorities is inevitably linked to the question of the nature of the state, therefore this article is bound to deal with this issue as well.

We have identified seven theoretical possibilities known in political science literature, for the relations between a minority and a majority, which are also raised in a concrete way by groups, parties or individuals among Arabs and Jews in Israel. Each of the possibilities has its advantages

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and disadvantages for one of the two sides, and they have their supporters and opponents in the Israeli public.

1. *The Status Quo: The Model of Ethnic Democracy: Israel as a Jewish Democratic State*[10]

The status quo between the Jews and the Arabs in Israel has certain basic characteristics: all the citizens have rights, but the Jewish majority has preferential status. The state belongs to the Jews and not to all its citizens. The Zionist movement saw and continues to see Judaism as composed of three elements: nationality, ethnicity and religion. Zionism also demanded exclusive right to the land of Israel, as the sole homeland of the ethnic Jewish nation. The state tries to limit the number of non-Jews entitled to Israeli citizenship by means of the 'Citizenship Law', and expresses its preferential treatment of the dominant ethnic nation by means of a series of laws, granting preference to those belonging to it, the most salient being the Law of Return.

The state recognizes the Arabs as its citizens on principle, but because they do not belong to the Jewish nation, they do not enjoy full rights. They do enjoy human rights to a significant extent, also civic, political and certain social rights such as in the sphere of health and education, freedom of worship and expression. There is structural discrimination towards the Arabs which seriously impedes the implementation of their civil rights. Discrimination exists in many spheres, such as the classification of the settlements as to the budgets due to them; the transfer of state functions to Jewish institutions such as the Jewish National Fund and the Jewish Agency, required to provide services to Jews only; the use of the criterion of army service (from which some 90 per cent of the Arabs are exempt) for a long list of benefits. On the labour market the Arabs are discriminated against by means of certain measures and procedures for the hiring of employees at industrial plants and companies closed to them, and by irrelevant demands being made with regard to certain jobs, in order to prevent Arabs from being employed. Government offices discriminate against them through budgeting, employment opportunities, allocation of job positions, in the sphere of building and development. There is official supervision of Arabs citizens: it is more difficult for them to receive permits to carry arms, 'sensitive' information is withheld even from Arab members of Knesset, and employment in the civil service, including the educational system, is conditioned by a security permit. This description of the status quo was described as the model of 'ethnic democracy'.

2. *The Option of Improvement up to the Limit of the Zionist Paradigm: Personal Autonomy and Participation in the Jewish Democratic State*[11]

This option entails a positive response to many of the group demands of the Arab minority and a significant improvement in their status. However,

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this improvement will be arrested before it disrupts the Zionist paradigm as the central characteristic of the state, that is, the Jewish–Zionist nature of the state of Israel will not be impaired, in spite of the changes in the status of the minority. The state will remain a national state of the majority, and changes will occur in the current form of ethnic democracy, such as: the increase of civil equality on the personal plane; greater representation of the members of the minority in the comprehensive social institutions; cultural autonomy; the setting up of institutions representing the minority, their recognition by the state and negotiations with them.

This option does not entail a change in the fundamental nature of the state, or a profound change in the political identities of the two communities. Nevertheless, the tension between the communities is expected to decrease and the component of shared civic identity to be strengthened. The rapport of the state to the Jewish people and the 'National Institutions' will continue to exist, but the socio-political significance of these institutions will decrease. They will be used far less for the selective allocation of resources for Jews only. The dominance of the majority will be maintained and will continue to act for the preservation of its demographic advantage.

The comprehensive change involved in this option will stem mainly from the power of the minority, its protection, and the degree of equality it will be granted. Most of the supervisory mechanisms still in operation with regard to the Arab minority will be removed, particularly in spheres such as the allocation of resources, licensing, the authorization of appointments and advancement in the civil service, the freedom of organization and of expression, and so on. This change will facilitate the emergence of cultural and institutional autonomy for the Arabs.

The status of the minority will be safeguarded by legislative measures, based on norms of equity that will strengthen the existing institutions of control and enforcement, such as the law courts and the labour tribunals, dealing with occupational equality of opportunity. Legislative measures will be introduced making prior consultation with the institutions representing the minority mandatory, as well as negotiations with it on general decisions affecting the fate of the minority. The combination of a change in the judicial sphere and in the atmosphere and the political culture will bring about a change in the status of the Arabs as part of the civil society, including an improvement on the private labour market.

3. The Option of Stricter Control: Substantial Deterioration in the Status of the Arab Minority: Withdrawal from Democratic Dimensions and Approaching a Violent Outbreak[12]

This option represents an increase in the restrictions imposed on the Arab citizens and a strengthening of the ethnic components of the state at the expense of democracy, in a way that will bring the regime in Israel closer

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to '*Herrenvolk* democracy', or exclude it from the group of democracies. In this type of regime the state is not a neutral body: it is openly and significantly identified with the dominant ethnic group and does not concern itself with being perceived as legitimate by the minority, which is considered as a threat to the majority and to government rule. Inequality is blatant on the personal level, and even more so on the collective level. There are no effective mechanisms protecting the minority and it is confronted by serious restrictions in its parliamentary and extra-parliamentary struggle.

In this option there will be clear structural subjugation of the minority by the majority, considerable restriction of the individual and the collective rights of the members of the minority, and an increase of surveillance. There will be no need for additional legislation to ensure the Jewishness of the state, since it is already guaranteed by the existing laws. The establishment will try to prevent the minority from becoming organized on an independent basis, will limit the resources vital for its development and will prevent it from participating in decision-making affecting it and the whole country. The hardening of its position will be felt in everyday life, in discrimination in the economic and social spheres, in the restriction of the rights of the individual and in making the granting of rights or budgets conditional on swearing allegiance to the state as the state of the Jewish people, in military or public service, in the increased tax burden and curtailed budgets. The hardening will also be expressed in the Arab educational system through the increase in Jewish–Zionist content and restriction of Arab–Palestinian and Islamic subject-matter in the curriculum, similar to the situation which prevailed in the 1950s and 1960s. This hardening will also be felt in the sphere of culture and language. The development of Arab culture will be limited and there will even be attempts at distancing the Arabs from their own culture and language. Arabic will lose its status as an official language and Jews will not be encouraged to learn it.

4. The Option of Separation: Irredenta, Independence or Transfer[13]

Among the drastic solutions to the arrangement of relations between a majority and a minority is the option of spatial separation, in three possible forms:

1. Territorial separation in the form of the detachment of the territories, settled by the ethnic minority, and their annexation by the neighbouring country where it will belong to the majority (irredenta).
2. The establishment of a new independent political entity in the territory in which the minority group forms the majority, with an independent administration.
3. Separation through coercion or by consent by way of an exchange of

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population – the transfer of the members of the minority to another country or political entity, nationally or religiously similar to them.

The implementation of any one of these three forms means the end of coexistence between the majority and the minority and total separation between them. The irredenta, the establishment of an independent state, and a transfer are thus extreme measures to the resolution of relations between a minority and a majority. Although these options are different, all involve separation, that is why they are included in the same discussion.

The option of separation may be raised when the Arabs despair of the possibility of coexistence and civic equity in the state. The growth of the Arab population, its growing economic strength and the emergence of a strong political leadership will increase the demands for political rights, for partnership in running the country, for a more equitable distribution of its resources. If these demands are not met, it may lead them to consider the option of separation. If this option is implemented, they will cease to be a minority and will join the majority in their new state, even if this will lead to a drop in their standard of living, a change in their political environment and competition with the elites already existing in the Palestinian state. Their status may therefore be inferior and they may even become another type of minority. Should the option of irredenta mean the setting up of an independent political entity, it will cover a small area and have a weak leadership, no tradition of self-rule, poor economic conditions and it will be dependent on the surrounding countries. Such a situation will not lead to stability and may cause new ethnic conflicts.

5. The Option of an 'Israeli State'[14]

The option of an 'Israeli state' seeks to examine the significance of turning the state of Israel from a national ethnic state into a civic national state, a model to which most Western states today belong. Although in practice these states mainly display the majority culture, their government and the judicial system are based on the declared position that the state is culturally neutral and that it is homogeneous only from the point of view of citizenship. According to this option, the Israeli state would adopt the principle of citizenship shared by Jews, Arabs and others, detaching itself officially from the national/ethnic/cultural/religious identity of the individuals living in it. In practice this would mean separating religious institutions from the state, turning Zionist and Jewish national institutions into state institutions or abolishing them, and ensuring the dominance of a shared Israeli citizenship and a homeland belonging to all the citizens, while granting liberal civil rights to all individuals and groups. This option is sometimes called 'a state of all its citizens' or 'a secular democratic state', although the interpretation of these concepts by Arab circles in Israel does not include all its components, since the Arab supporters of

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this option demand that the national differences between Jews and Arabs be preserved.

This option can be implemented in two different ways within Israeli reality: an Israeli Hebrew state and an Israeli multicultural state. In both cases the state will possess liberal features and will be committed to the participation of all its citizens in the national culture, whatever their ethnic origin or religion. The difference between them lies in the degree of affinity and the place allotted in the public sphere to the Hebrew culture on one hand, and to the Palestinian Arab culture on the other.

6. The Option of a Binational State within the Green Line[15]

This option involves a change from Israel as a Jewish state to a state of all its citizens, ensuring by law an equal status for both national communities living within it. The option is based on the assumption that if conflicts are to be avoided and stability attained in a divided society, the basic group and individual needs of the minority must be met. Equality for the minority group means equitable treatment and equal access to resources, bringing about a clear sense of identity, self-esteem, human dignity and self-respect. The second assumption underlying this option is that, owing to its ethnic character, it is today impossible in Israel to bring about total equality for non-Jewish citizens. The third assumption is that the present discrimination of the Arab minority in Israel will lead to a crisis within it, which is likely to develop sooner or later into a clash with the majority.

Binationalism means granting equal individual rights to all the citizens and a legal settlement that perceives the two national groups as equal. Government proceedings will be based on a wide coalition of both groups. All governmental institutions will be binational and both groups will have the right of veto on certain issues to be agreed upon. Public resources, political representation and civil services will be provided on a proportional basis to the members of both groups; the Law of Return will be replaced by comprehensive immigration and citizenship laws; land laws will be changed to enable both communities to possess 'national land'; the legal standing of the Jewish Agency and the Zionist Federation will be changed and the services they provide today to Jews only will be made available by the state to all the citizens; all the laws defining Israel as a Jewish state or the state of the Jewish people will be adapted to its definition as a binational state; changes and adjustments will be made in state symbols and in discriminatory laws granting preferential treatment to Jews; both languages and cultures will be given equal status; religious affairs will be totally separated from the state and will be dealt with by the religious communities.

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7. *The Option of a Binational State on the Whole Area of Eretz Israel/Palestine*[16]

Most of the solutions proposed today for the Israeli–Palestinian conflict are based on territorial and political separation between the two nations. Such a solution does not resolve the problem of the status of Palestinians who are Israeli citizens. The option of a civic binational state on the whole area of Mandatory Palestine (Eretz Israel) attempts to propose a comprehensive solution to all the problems between the two sides. This option is based on the assumption that separation cannot be implemented at all in view of the situation existing today and on account of the facts on the ground, and has ceased to be a relevant solution to the conflict. This option proposes an arrangement based on the equal status of the two national groups living in the country, abolishing the institutionalized dominance of the Jewish majority and the discrimination of the minorities. Such an arrangement would mean the creation of a liberal democracy, ignoring the group configuration, or a consociational democracy, taking group affiliation into consideration as a basis for the division of power and for government.

The option would be implemented by the establishment of joint institutions such as a parliament, a government, security services and a judicial system, with equal representation of the two groups. The state would form a single administrative entity and control of the territory would be redivided into small federal units, managing their internal affairs autonomously, under the central government, whose seat would be in Jerusalem. Every national group would be recognized as autonomous in dealing with its specific concerns. The implementation of this option calls for a fundamental change in the relationship between the two nations and in the nature of both national movements, including their relationship with their Diaspora. The Jewish group would have to give up its dominant position and the resources would be redivided in a proportional and equitable way. Both communities would undergo fundamental changes in their educational, social and political approach. During advanced stages of the implementation of this option and the development of a binational regime similar to that in Belgium or Switzerland, it would be necessary to concentrate on achieving stability by the setting up of a strong coalition between large sectors of the elites and leading groups of both communities and by an agreement on rotation or the doubling of prominent functions such as those of president, prime minister and ministers. Both groups would agree on the type and scope of the internal autonomy each would have, and on whether it would be territorial, personal or combined.

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THE CURRENT VERSUS THE DESIRED STATUS OF THE PALESTINIANS IN ISRAEL

An examination of the extent of personal and collective satisfaction requires a prior study of the political orientation of the minority and its attitude towards the political system of which is part, in order to understand the context in which it advances its demands. In our case it is important to understand the personal and collective satisfaction of the Palestinians in Israel with their situation as individuals and as members of a group in the Israeli context, as well as their perspective on the state. This examination can provide us with a better and more focused understanding of the group's self-perception in relation to its place in the system. This question is significant in light of the fact that we are investigating a minority that lives in a political framework, the state of Israel, that was established against its will. That is, the question of its members' recognition or non-recognition of this framework and how they see themselves as part of it – or not – is essential for clarifying their situation, demands and aspirations, within this state or outside it. This issue will constitute the centre of the first part of this section. In the second part we will consider the satisfaction of the Palestinians in Israel with their status, that is, the extent to which they are satisfied with their situation in Israel, and in the third part we will discuss the desired status of the Palestinians in Israel as they see it, while considering all spheres relevant to an individual or group belonging to a particular political framework.[17]

THE POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF THE PALESTINIANS IN ISRAEL

What is the situation reflected by an analysis of a survey Ghanem conducted in 1994 on the current and future political orientation of the Palestinians in Israel? How do they relate to the existence of Israel as a state? What is their attitude towards their life in this state or outside it? Who represents them?

The vast majority the Palestinians in Israel recognize the state and its right to exist. To a question about recognition or non-recognition of the very existence of the state, 81.8 per cent of the respondents replied in the affirmative ('absolutely' or 'yes'), while only 18.2 per cent replied in the negative ('no' or 'absolutely not'). That is, the overwhelming majority of Palestinians in Israel recognize the state's right to exist. Smooha obtained similar results in a survey he conducted in 1988, which found that the vast majority of the Palestinians in Israel (82.4 per cent) accept, without reservation or with certain reservations, the very existence of Israel.[18] Another index to confirm this figure can be extracted from the solution the respondents deem appropriate for the Palestinian problem or the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian people. Only a small minority,

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14.6 per cent, proposed a solution whose crux is the liquidation of Israel; the vast majority supported solutions that in practice mean a solution of the Palestinian problem that takes account of the present and future existence of Israel as a state in the region. Smooha's survey produced similar responses: only 13.1 per cent of the Palestinians in Israel supported a solution implying the liquidation of Israel.

Most of the Palestinians in Israel support a solution to the Palestinian problem, the core of the Arab–Israeli conflict, based on the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. This position is reinforced by responses to a question about the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip alongside Israel: 75.1 per cent replied that they favoured this, 18.6 per cent replied that they would agree only under certain conditions, and 6.2 per cent replied in the negative. Smooha's data are again astoundingly similar. In 1988 he found that 76.5 per cent of the Palestinians in Israel supported the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel with no reservations, 17.4 per cent expressed some reservations, and 6 per cent opposed the establishment of such a state.[19]

The preferred mode for achieving this goal is peaceful negotiations, entailing mutual recognition by Israel and the PLO; the majority supported both Israeli recognition of the PLO (79.6 per cent) and PLO recognition of Israel (68.1 per cent). Most respondents also support (89.4 per cent 'absolutely support' or 'support', as against 10.6 per cent 'opposed' or 'absolutely opposed') a continuation of the peace talks that have been under way since the 1991 Madrid conference between Israel and representatives of the Palestinian people in the territories, and since the middle of 1993 between official representatives of the PLO and official representatives of Israel.[20]

The data on questions relating to identity may also indicate recognition or non-recognition of Israel and whether the Palestinians in Israel feel that they are its citizens. Most Palestinians believe that the designation 'Israeli' is appropriate to both Arabs and Jews (67.5 per cent); only 28 per cent think that it includes only Jews. As for the definition of individual and collective identity of the Palestinians in Israel (they were allowed only to choose among predefined options), in both cases most chose an identity that includes 'Israel' in some form. With regard to their personal identity 75.2 per cent chose a definition that includes 'Israel'; when it came to the collective identity of the Palestinians in the country, the figure was 76.2 per cent. Similar figures were obtained by Smooha, who found that 74.4 per cent of the Palestinians in Israel thought that 'Israeli' applied to them to as well as to the Jews.[21]

Here we shall not get involved in the ongoing discussion about the personal and collective identity of the Palestinians in Israel and will not consider the problems of this definition.[22] Nevertheless, for us the very choice of definitions that integrate the two components, 'Palestinian' and

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TABLE 1
DEFINITION OF INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY
BY PALESTINIANS IN ISRAEL
(limited to choices proposed to respondents)
(sample = 768; in per cent)

	Individual Identity	Group Identity
1. Palestinian	4.9	4.9
2. Arab	11.5	9.9
3. Israeli	13.1	11.7
4. Palestinian Arab	8.4	8.9
5. Israeli Palestinian Arab	28.1	23.8
6. Israeli citizen Palestinian Arab	34.0	40.8
Total	100.0	100.0

'Israeli', and the idea that 'Israeli' also applies to the Palestinians in the country, as well as to the Jews, indicates that the Palestinians in Israel take account of reality and accept the existence of Israel. In our opinion, this provides further evidence of Palestinian recognition of Israel as a country and their self-perception as its citizens today and in the future.

Where do the Palestinians in Israel see their future as lying? In a 1991 article, Smooha developed the model of 'divergent fate', based on the fact that in the future the Palestinians in Israel will continue to live in and be citizens of the state of Israel, distinct from the rest of the Palestinian people who live in the political entity that will emerge on the West Bank and Gaza Strip or in the Palestinian Diaspora.[23] In his analysis, Smooha also took account of the position of the Palestinians in Israel, who, according to his studies, see their future as distinct from that of the rest of the Palestinian people. The numbers to be presented below constitute a further test of Smooha's thesis and in general support it.

The key question relates to how the Palestinians in Israel see their future diverging from or converging with that of other Palestinians. The figures show that 84.7 per cent of the Palestinians in Israel see their future as distinct to some extent or a great extent from that of other Palestinians. This different perspective on the future is associated with support for the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel (see above). Most respondents added the clarification that they preferred to remain citizens of Israel and did not wish, either individually (83.9 per cent) or collectively for all Palestinians in Israel (84.2 per cent), to move to a state created alongside Israel and accept its citizenship. This was despite the fact that half (51.3 per cent) of the Palestinians in Israel feel closer to the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip than to the Jews in Israel, and only 23.4 per cent feel closer to the Jews in Israel than to the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Smooha's findings were similar.[24] Here the national–emotional affiliation is a decisive component in the feeling of

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affinity with or alienation from the Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza Strip as opposed to the Jews in Israel.

Most of the Palestinians in Israel believe that the Palestinian state should not have to allow Arabs from Israel to move to it and become citizens (63 per cent), even though the state to be founded, in their opinion, should accept 'every Palestinian' who wishes to live there, whether unconditionally or with certain stipulations (74.1 per cent).

The view of the Palestinians in Israel that their future is distinct from that of other sectors of the Palestinian people derives in part from their position concerning important events relevant to the future of the Palestinian people, past and present alike. With regard to the *intifada*, which erupted in December 1987 against the continued Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, most Palestinians in Israel reject active participation; only 11.8 per cent believe that the Palestinians in Israel should have been actively involved.

Most of the Palestinians in Israel believe that their position during the *intifada*, expressed in moral or material support and advocacy of its objectives (the demand for an end to the occupation and establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel in the West Bank and Gaza District) was appropriate;[25] 53.7 per cent define this position as 'very good' to 'somewhat good'. Even those (46.3 per cent) who answered 'disappointing' or 'very disappointing' did not necessarily think that the Palestinians in Israel should have been active participants in the *intifada*. Their disappointment may have connoted even greater support for the *intifada* or none whatsoever.

Even though about half the Palestinians in Israel believe that the agenda of the peace talks between the PLO and Israel should include their own problems with the state of Israel (47.2 per cent), a majority do not see the PLO as their representative (only 7.2 per cent see the PLO in this light). This sharply contrasts with their overwhelming consensus that it represents the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip 'to a great extent' or 'to a certain extent' (95.7 per cent). The Palestine National Council (PNC) is the parliament of the Palestinian people and as such supposed to include representatives of all Palestinians. Today, however, it includes representatives only of the Palestinians in the Diaspora, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, since past attempts to include representatives of the Palestinians in Israel failed on account of the state of war between Israel and the PLO. An interesting question is whether the Palestinians in Israel today, when there is peace, believe that they should be represented in this body. Most of them are opposed (68.8 per cent), though a significant minority (31.2 per cent) support the idea.

In summary, the analysis presented above shows the Palestinians in Israel see their future as citizens of Israel, are not interested in moving to a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and do not believe

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they are represented by Palestinian institutions such as the PLO and PNC. We can say that they see their place, future and organization, as well as the bodies that represent them, as different from those of the Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Diaspora.[26] The self-orientation with regard to their condition, location and future is very clear: the Palestinians in Israel see themselves as citizens of Israel who will continue to live there; they are not interested in moving elsewhere, not even to a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

THE SITUATION OF THE PALESTINIANS IN ISRAEL

The main approach of the scholarship about the situation of the Palestinians in Israel holds that the Palestinian minority in Israel experienced the shock and trauma of the results of the 1948 war, followed by processes of accelerated construction and consolidation which made them appear to be and develop as a normal group, both internally and externally.[27] According to this approach, the Palestinians in Israel acquiesce in their situation and aspire to moderate improvements in it. Below we shall present and analyse the survey findings that relate to the satisfaction of the Palestinians in Israel with their situation, living standards and rights in Israel. The analysis will relate to a level of aspirations and demands that characterize almost every ethnic and national group.[28]

The Situation of the Palestinians in Israel as Compared to the Jews, as seen by the Palestinians in Israel

In this section we shall attempt to sketch the extent to which the Palestinians in Israel are satisfied with the collective attainments of the Palestinians in Israel: how do they perceive the disparity between themselves and the Jews? How much importance do they attribute to making progress in key aspects of this issue? We shall also consider topics such as the degree of equality, integration, management of local authorities, the state of the countrywide Arab leadership, their ability to influence their future and decisions at the countrywide level, participation in the national government, and so on.

For this purpose, respondents were presented with a series of issues relevant to the situation of the Palestinians in Israel and asked in each case to assess the gap on a scale of 1 to 4: a large gap, a moderate gap, a small gap, or no gap. Most respondents answered in all cases a 'large gap' (see Table 2). This expresses the general dissatisfaction of the Palestinians in Israel with their living conditions as a group and with their collective condition and status; the dissatisfaction is particularly high and relates to all substantive areas for the advancement of the Palestinians in Israel.

The respondents, too, defined these spheres as essential and important when they were asked to rank various areas derived from those presented

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TABLE 2
PERCEPTION OF THE GAP BETWEEN JEWS AND ARABS IN ISRAEL IN KEY AREAS
(sample = 768; in per cent)

	Large Gap	Moderate Gap	Small Gap	No Gap
Public services	75.3	18.2	4.5	2.0
Allocation of resources	79.9	15.1	3.8	1.2
Political representation	78.9	14.9	4.2	2.0
Civil service positions	73.6	20.1	4.5	1.8
Participation in government	78.2	15.8	4.7	1.2
Definition of the character of the state	79.8	14.1	3.4	2.6
Definition of the goals of the state	83.4	10.8	3.6	2.2

TABLE 3
THE IMPORTANCE OF SELECTED TOPICS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE PALESTINIANS IN ISRAEL
(sample = 768; in per cent)

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Achieving full equality in the state	74.6	19.2	5.7	0.5
Inclusion in government coalitions on an equal basis with the Jews	55.0	28.5	12.0	4.2
Parity with Jews in the civil service	61.8	26.7	8.7	2.8
Enhanced budgets and executive powers in Arab local government	68.7	22.6	7.5	1.2
Expanded authority for Arab local government	58.9	28.6	9.8	2.7
Planning their own future	54.4	31.9	11.1	2.5
Good leadership for the Arabs	59.4	25.0	11.7	3.9
Improving government policy towards them	56.2	29.4	15.0	5.5

in the table by their importance or lack of importance for enhancing the situation the Palestinians in Israel as a collective (see Table 1); these areas were generally designated as 'important' and 'very important'.

The Palestinians in Israel ascribe decisive importance to these areas: achieving full equality in the state; parity with Jews in the civil service; enhanced budgets and executive powers in Arab local government; expanded authority for Arab local governments; the ability to plan their own future; and improving government policy towards them. The Palestinians in Israel are not satisfied with their situation as a collective in these areas, nor in many other areas presented in the questionnaire.

An analysis of the data on the situation of the Palestinians in Israel in various spheres (defined as important by the respondents) and their perception of disparities in the power, influence and rewards allotted to

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citizens and relevant to the collective progress and change experienced by the Palestinians in Israel shows that they perceive their situation as a collective to be substantially different from that of the Jews in all these spheres. In their assessment, there are extreme disparities with regard to power and rewards as compared to the Jews. It goes without saying that the Palestinians in Israel are not happy with this situation.

In summary, from the perspective of the Palestinians in Israel and as can be seen from the survey data, the overwhelming majority of the Palestinians in Israel are not satisfied with the general level of advancement of the Palestinians in Israel as a collective, whether in terms of conditions, achievements, or the ability to influence their own future, make decisions, integrate on the countrywide level, and achieve a suitable collective status. The question that arises is what status the Palestinians in Israel aspire to and the direction of the changes needed to achieve this.

The Desired Status of the Palestinians in Israel, as They See It

Starting in the mid-1980s, a broad consensus began to take shape among the Palestinians in Israel about the need to solve the Palestinian problem by establishing a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (including East Jerusalem as its capital), alongside Israel. There is also a consensus about the demand for equality within Israel.[29] The survey data indeed indicate that most of the Palestinians in Israel (74.7 per cent) believe that their struggle should focus on these two areas. Only a minority believe that they should focus only on advancing peace or only on attaining equality.

The majority of Palestinians in Israel call for the establishment of a Palestinian state not only because it could solve the problem of the other Palestinians, by providing them with a national home, but also because it is viewed as a catalyst to improving their own status in Israel.[30] To the question, 'how important is the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel for improving your personal situation?' 78.1 per cent of the respondents answered 'very important' or 'important', 14.4 per cent answered 'somewhat important', and only 7.4 per cent believed that a solution of the Palestinian problem by the establishment of Palestinian state alongside Israel was irrelevant to their individual advancement. To the question, 'how important is the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel for improving the condition of all Palestinians in Israel?' most of the respondents (80.5 per cent) answered 'very important' or 'important', 14.1 per cent answered 'somewhat important', and again only a small number (5.4 per cent) believe that the establishment of the Palestinian state is not important for the advancement of the Palestinians in Israel.

The second significant area for the Arabs in Israel is that associated with the advancement of their individual and collective situation; in practice it is the entire field that scholars refer to as 'equality'. Here the

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TABLE 4
THE APPROPRIATE DEGREE OF EQUALITY BETWEEN JEWS AND ARABS IN ISRAEL, IN THE FOLLOWING DOMAINS
(sample = 768; in per cent)

	Full Equality	Almost Full Equality	Partial Equality	Equality is not Necessary
Public services	85.5	10.8	2.8	0.9
Allocation of resources	80.3	14.7	3.9	1.1
Political representation	69.8	18.9	9.5	1.7
Civil service	76.1	16.2	6.2	1.5
Participation in government	66.5	20.4	11.9	1.2
Defining nature of the state	60.8	24.3	12.2	2.6
Defining objectives of the state	61.4	21.6	13.7	3.3

Palestinians in Israel express a strong desire for equality with the Jewish majority. The overwhelming majority of the Palestinians in Israel want full equality between the Jews and the Arab citizens of the country, while a small number choose 'almost full equality'; only a negligible fraction would be happy with 'partial equality' or believe that 'equality is not necessary'.

What is the substance of the equality that the Palestinians in Israel want to achieve? What is the nature of the individual demands and achievements that the Palestinians in Israel consider to be important? The collective changes? We shall attempt to answer these questions below.

The question that arises here is, what do the Palestinians in Israel want for their collective? What do they see as the preferred status for this group? What sort of power do they want to hold in the Israeli system? And if, as has been stated, they seek equality with the Jewish collective and the Jews, what is the essence of this equality? What factors impede its attainment? How must the system or state be transformed so that these aspirations can be realized?

The Palestinians in Israel, as stated, want to achieve equality with the Jewish majority. For most of the respondents this must be full equality. In response to the question, 'how important is the achievement of full equality in the state for improving the collective situation of the Palestinians in Israel?', 93.8 per cent replied that it was 'very important' or 'important'. This equality was emphasized when we presented the panel with a variety of areas where there are disparities between Jews and Arabs in the country: public services; the allocation of resources; employment in the civil service; participation in government; and equality in determining the nature and objectives of the state (see Table 6). Respondents were asked to rank a list of areas related to the achievement of equality in the order of their importance for advancing the situation of the Palestinians in Israel.

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The Palestinians in Israel are not happy with the living conditions of their collective and want the state to serve them on an equal footing with the Jews, allocate equal resources, provide equal public services, distribute civil service positions on a fair basis, permit them to participate fully in government and parliamentary coalitions, and give them an equal voice in defining the nature of the state and its objectives. In their eyes the state must serve all citizens equally. In essence they demand that the state be 'the state of its citizens' and not a state that favours one group of citizens (the Jews) at the expense of others. All of this is expressed in their demand to modify the character of the state.

Questions that relate directly to the character of the state indicate that the Palestinians in Israel reject the Jewish–Zionist character of the state, manifested in the clear preference given to Jews in all areas related to the state, its future, society and citizens in general. The respondents are conscious of the fact that Israel serves primarily the Jews and not all its citizens; a majority (66.3 per cent) believe that 'the state of Israel, by its overt objectives and policy, manifests itself as only for the Jews'; only 33.7 per cent think that the overt objectives and policy of the state indicate that it is 'a state shared by its Jewish citizens and the Palestinians in Israel'.

In what way do the Palestinians want to revise the nature of the state? As stated, they believe that they should achieve equality, something they deem to be problematic and even impossible in an Israel that is a 'Jewish–Zionist state'. Even though their opinions are split on the question of whether Israel has the right to exist as a Jewish–Zionist state, about half (48.2 per cent) agree that 'Israel has no right to exist as a Jewish–Zionist state'. In response to another question, the vast majority (86.4 per cent) support the abolition of this character. In the eyes of most of them (58.6 per cent), the state has no right to intervene in order 'to preserve a Jewish majority'. This has a double implication. First, they do not believe that the state should intervene to preserve a Jewish majority in the state; that is, it should not encourage Jewish immigration. Among other things, this entails repeal of the Law of Return, which applies only to Jews, and an end to state activity in Israel and abroad that encourages Jewish immigration. Second, nothing should be done to impede or prevent a process whereby the Palestinian citizens of Israel, or any other group, could achieve a majority in the state; that is, the state should not be ethnic and an agency that intervenes in favour of one particular ethnic group among its citizens. In practice, this means the abolition of the ethnic–national character of the state and its conversion into a civil state with a liberal attitude towards citizenship and citizens. According to the survey data, a majority of the Palestinians in Israel (89.9 per cent) believe that is important to alter the current nature of the state and adopt a different one. Their preferred definition is 'the state of its Jewish citizens and the Palestinians in Israel' (66.5 per cent).

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TABLE 5

ISRAEL SHOULD BE
(sample = 728; in per cent)

1.	Only the state of the Jewish people	2.6
2.	The state of the Jewish people and its Palestinian citizens in Israel	17.2
3.	The state of its Palestinian citizens in Israel and the Jews	66.5
4.	The state of its Palestinian citizens in Israel and of the Jews and the Palestinian people wherever they are	11.9
5.	Other	1.6

What change (in addition to abolishing the ethnic character, objectives and vocation of the state) must be made to express the essence of the collective equality that the Palestinians in Israel wish to achieve? What change must be made with regard to the collective status of the Palestinians to express the conversion of the state into 'the state of its citizens'?

In societies that are divided on an ethnic, religious, national or other basis it is possible to find a number of arrangements (or their absence) that provide an institutionalized legal framework (or an *ad hoc* and informal abstract framework) for the status of the various groups and guarantee the stability of these societies. Although in practice there is no limit to the number of such possibilities, one can nevertheless discern the general lines of three formats that have been described by theoreticians: irredentism and secession, involving independence or annexation to another country; cultural, political or territorial autonomy; integration and assimilation into a civil nation.

An analysis of their responses indicates that the Palestinians in Israel would like to develop a 'liberal democracy' with clear and distinct elements of the binational model. Such an arrangement is superficially unrealistic because it incorporates elements of two different models for solving the problems of minorities. But recent literature maintains that this is possible on both the theoretical and the practical level of daily life.[31]

The change that the Palestinians in Israel want for their collective is divided into two levels or dimensions: on the one hand, they demand full integration into the state and its institutions on the basis of parity with the Jews (including the allocation of budgets, jobs, the power to have equal influence on decision-making and the political process in the state); on the other hand, they seek institutional autonomy for the collective as another dimension of the equality they demand, as we saw above. Their replies emphasize the importance they accord to 'recognition of their collective as a national minority' by the state authorities as well as to areas that express their aspiration to achieve autonomy within the state; for example, educational autonomy manifested in 'the establishment of Arab university'; 'self-administration by the Palestinians in Israel of the

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educational system and cultural life' (buildings, employees, curricula, etc); and the establishment of a series of specifically Arab institutions to express the substance of institutional autonomy: 'the establishment of an Arab labour federation'; 'establishment of an Arab health fund'; 'turning over the *waqf* to Arab administration'; 'expanding the authority of Arab local governments'; and even 'official recognition by the authorities of the Supreme Monitoring Committee as the representative of the Palestinians in Israel'. The respondents emphasized the importance of direct popular election of the members of this committee, even though most of them are not happy with its functioning; a small number expressed great or very great satisfaction with the functioning of the Supreme Monitoring Committee (24.5 per cent) but less satisfaction with the operation of its affiliated commissions. Smooha also collected responses that confirm the desire of the Palestinians in Israel for educational and cultural autonomy in surveys he conducted in 1976, 1980, 1985 and 1988.[32]

The figures show that most of the Palestinians in Israel are not pleased with their collective status and are interested in full integration in the state and its institutions, but also institutional autonomy – of course as part of the state and as Israeli citizens, and with full equality with the Jewish majority. In practice such autonomy within the state is a type of binationalism, which is a sort of arrangement and expression of the existence of two national groups in the country – the Jews and the Palestinians in Israel.

TABLE 6

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELECTED ITEMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE PALESTINIANS IN ISRAEL
(sample = 768; in per cent)

	Important/ Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Official recognition as a national minority	79.5	15.0	5.5
Establishment of an Arab University	78.2	13.9	7.9
Administration by the Palestinians in Israel of their own educational system and cultural life	78.2	14.6	7.1
Establishment of an Arab labour federation	76.7	15.1	8.2
Establishment of an Arab health fund	62.9	19.9	17.2
Expanding the authority of Arab local government	87.5	9.8	2.7
Conveying the *waqf* to Arab administration	82.1	12.8	5.1
Direct countrywide election of the Supreme Monitoring Committee for Israeli Arab Affairs by the Palestinians in Israel	73.7	15.2	10.9
Official recognition by the authorities of the Supreme Monitoring Committee as the representative of the Palestinians in Israel	73.9	17.1	9.0

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The discussion of the various options for the status of the Palestinians in Israel as a national collective must take account of a number of basic attributes of the Palestinians in Israel and of the Jewish majority in the state and which seem, at least to date, to be fundamental limits that constrain any discussion of this issue and will continue to be with us if there are no revolutionary developments in the state or in the Arab–Israeli and Jewish–Palestinian conflict.

1. Today the Palestinians in Israel have no clear and distinct status. This causes tensions in Jewish–Arab relations. This situation will continue to trouble the authorities in the state, the Jewish majority, and even the Palestinian minority itself if no formula is found that is acceptable to a majority on both sides. It is clear today that any solution will win at most a small majority on each side and continue to evoke fierce opposition, from both right and left, in both camps.
2. The Palestinians in Israel have acquiesced in their minority status and divergent fate from the rest of the Palestinians. The overwhelming majority of them accept Israel as a fact and a political entity and wish to continue being its citizens, to the point of waiving the right to self-determination. Most of them reject the Jewish–Zionist character of the state, or at least reject the actual current implementation of this concept, and want to be recognized as a Palestinian national minority with shared cultural, historical and national characteristics and their own leadership. On the Jewish side, most accept the fact that there is an Arab minority in Israel, but reject any recognition of it as a national minority and see the Zionist–Jewish character of the state as an existential need.[33] The implication of the situation is that both sides fundamentally accept coexistence between Jews and Palestinians in Israel but each side seeks a different format for this coexistence.
3. It is a basic datum that the Palestinians in Israel are fragmented in many ways: religiously, with 75 per cent Muslims, 15 per cent Christians and 10 per cent Druzes; geographically, with about 60 per cent in the Galilee, 20 per cent in the Triangle, 10 per cent in the Negev and 10 per cent in the mixed cities along the Mediterranean coast; and in a number of other social, political and economic aspects. Nevertheless, the majority of Palestinians in Israel, while making their peace with their minority status, have developed a complex identity, compounded of Palestinian nationality and Israeli citizenship, that divides them from the other citizens of the state on the one hand and from the majority of the Palestinian people on the other. As a minority that has not assimilated and differs from the Jewish majority in its culture, language, social customs and many other aspects, their total

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Israelization and surrender of their national distinctiveness is no real option. On the other hand, their Palestinian identity is unique within the Palestinian national movement.

4. The state of Israel is a centralized polity where power is concentrated in the hands of institutions or actors elected on a countrywide basis, such as the Knesset and the government; these are the institutions that must pass any future decision about special arrangements for the Palestinians in Israel. In such a situation it is unrealistic to expect that the Palestinians in Israel could carry the vote in the debate on the issue without the support of a large number of Jews, especially in view of the fact that the Palestinians in Israel constitute a disadvantaged minority that is located on the political, economic and social periphery of Israel. Hence the Palestinians in Israel must invest special effort in changing the Jews' attitude towards them and their demands.
5. The Jews view the Palestinians in Israel as hostile and affiliated with the enemy, because of their rejection of the Jewish–Zionist character of the state and its objectives and also because of the history of the Arab–Jewish conflict.[34] Any attempt by the Palestinians in Israel to modify their current status without the assistance of a major Jewish group will merely reinforce Jewish perceptions of the Palestinians in Israel.

Any future resolution of the status of the Palestinians in Israel must take account of the basic features enumerated above. Such an arrangement must place at the top of its priorities the possibility of the development of 'a normal society' on two levels – the bond among citizens and the link between citizens and the authorities – where what counts is the civic affiliation and not the ethnic–national affiliation. This is what must prevail in the debate about Israel as the state of the Jewish people or as the state of its citizens. In an era of peace, when the Zionist movement and its representatives recognize the Palestinian national movement and the Palestinians' right to self-determination, there is room for thinking and doing in pursuit of a resolution of the status of the Palestinians in Israel and normalization of Jewish–Arab/Palestinian coexistence within the Green Line.

The emerging solution for the Palestinian problem, of which the current problems of the Palestinians in Israel and their status are part, opens the way for a fundamental discussion of the status of this minority within Israel and sets the stage for a comprehensive and meaningful discussion of the nature of Israeli society in general and in particular of the official ideology of the state-Zionism. Such a solution could lead to a tangible change in these questions; but it could also significantly exacerbate the crisis besetting the Palestinians in Israel in the three circles in which they live.[35]

A possible solution, which takes account of existing conditions, must be based on recognition of the Israeli citizen Palestinian Arabs as a

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national minority with collective rights and recognition of the individuals who make up this collective as full and equal citizens enjoying all the rights extended to the Jewish citizens of Israel and participating fully in decisions about the common good of the state – a role thus far reserved exclusively to the Jews. This would in practice mark the beginning of a binational Jewish–Palestinian system within the Green Line. Such a solution holds out the promise to the Palestinians in Israel of escaping the crisis in their relations with the Jews and the authorities in Israel. By the same token, escaping the crisis in their relations with the other Palestinians would require a solution in which the Palestinian national movement establishes umbrella institutions for all Palestinians, in which Palestinians in Israel are also represented.

In our opinion, such an option depends on the establishment of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel and the success of peaceful relations between Israel and the PLO. The failure of such arrangements will reopen the conflict and invite other future scenarios that may affect the future status of the Palestinians in Israel. In other words, the failure of separation will lead to renewed thinking by the Palestinians in general and by the Palestinian citizens of Israel in particular about the binational option in the entire territory of Mandatory Palestine. In this case, the Palestinians in Israel would be equal citizens belonging to the broader Palestinian national collective that would be consolidated as part of the binational solution.

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NOTES

1. There is an ongoing debate among scholars about the factors and motives that caused the Palestinians to leave their villages and homes, which focuses on whether the Palestinians fled as a result of the pressure exerted by the Arab countries and Jewish army or whether the Jewish army took deliberate measures that forced them to abandon their villages. There is also a comprehensive debate about the number of refugees who left the country around the time of the establishment of Israel. For more details on the subject, see Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem 1947–1949*, Tel Aviv, 1989 (in Hebrew).
2. Charles Cayman, 'After the Catastrophe: The Arabs in the State of Israel 1948–1950', *Notebooks for Research and Criticism*, Vol.10 (1984), p.6 (in Hebrew).
3. See Majid al-Haj, 'Adjustment patterns of the Arab Internal Refugees in Israel', *International Migration*, Vol.24 (1986), pp.651–74; Majid al-Haj, 'The Arab Internal Refugees in Israel: The Emergence a Minority within the Minority', *Immigration and Minorities*, Vol.7 (1988), pp.149–65.
4. For more details, see Sarah Ozacky-Lazar, 'The Crystallization of Mutual Relations between Jews and Arabs in the State of Israel, the First Decade 1948–1958', Doctoral Dissertation, University of Haifa, Haifa, 1996 (in Hebrew).
5. Uzi Benziman and Atallah Mansour, *Subtenants, the Arabs of Israel: Their Status and the Policies towards Them*, Jerusalem, 1992 (in Hebrew); Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel*, Haifa, 1966 (in Arabic); Ian Lustick, *Arabs in the Jewish State: Israel's Rule over a National Minority*, Haifa, 1985 (in Hebrew); Habib Qahwaji, *The Arabs in the Shadow of the Israeli Occupation since 1948*, Beirut, 1972 (in Arabic); Sammy Smooha, 'Existing Policy and Alternatives towards the Arabs in Israel', *Megamot*, Vol.1 (1980), pp.7–36 (in Hebrew).
6. Sarah Ozacky-Lazar and As'ad Ghanem, 'Perceptions of Peace among Israeli Arabs', *Surveys of the Arabs in Israel*, Vol.11 (1993), p.8 (in Hebrew).

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7. See, for example, the demands made by MK Ra'anan Cohen of the ruling Labour Party concerning the possible annexation of Arab districts of Israel within the pre-June 1967 borders to the Palestinian autonomy in the territories: *al-Sinarah*, 15 Oct. 1993. See also the debate on the status of the Arabs in Israel after the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Israel Television, 13 and 17 Oct. 1993. See also Aliza Wolloch, 'Tibi Yes and Taibe No?', *Davar*, 15 Oct. 1993; Avner Regev, 'The Dilemma of Israeli Arabs', *al-Hamishmar*, 17 Oct. 1993; 'Two Separate Societies in One Sovereign Entity', *al-Hamishmar*, 31 Oct. 1993; Eilat Negev, 'Israeli Arabs, Too, Are Likely to Fight for Autonomy', *Yediot Ahronot*, 19 Nov. 1993.
8. During 1998–99 a team of 13 Arab and Jewish scholars (Yossi Alpher, Prof. Ruth Gavison, Prof. Giora Goldberg, Prof. Kais Firro, Dr Ilan Pappé, Dr Muhammad Amara, Dr As'ad Ghanem, Dr Rassem Khamaisi, Ilan Saban, Prof. Sammy Smooha, Dr Ilana Kaufman, Prof. Nadim Rouhana and Dr Sarah Ozacky-Lazar) have participated in a long workshop that was that was organized by the Institute for Peace Research at Givat Haviva and funded by the Ford Foundation in New York. The workshop was about 'theoretical options for the status of the Arabs in Israel'. The different options that were dealt with during the workshop are presented in the book: Sara Ozacky-Lazar, As'ad Ghanem and Ilan Pappé (eds.), *Seven Roads: Theoretical Options for the Status of the Arabs in Israel*, Givat Haviva, 1999 (in Hebrew).
9. Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, Berkeley, CA, 1985. A. Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, New Haven, CT, 1977; Ian Lustick, 'Stability in Deeply Divided Societies: Consocianalism versus Control', *World Politics*, Vol.31 (1979), pp.325–44; Sammy Smooha, 'Control of Minorities in Israel and Northern Ireland', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol.22 (April 1980), pp.256–80; Sammy Smooha, 'Minority Status in an Ethnic Democracy: The Status of the Arab Minority in Israel', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol.13, No.3 (July 1990), pp.389–413; Sammy Smooha and T. Hanf, 'The Diverse Modes of Conflict-Regulation in Deeply Divided Societies', *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, Vol.XXXIII, No.1/2 (1992), pp.26–47.
10. For the full explanation of the option, see Sammy Smooha, 'The Status Quo: the Model of Ethnic Democracy: Israel as a Jewish Democratic State', in Ozacky-Lazar *et al.*, *Seven Roads*, pp.23–78 (in Hebrew).
11. For the full explanation of the option, see Ilan Saban, 'The Option of Improvement up to the Limit of the Zionist paradigm', in Ozacky-Lazar *et al.*, *Seven Roads*, pp.79–122.
12. For the full explanation of the option, see Mohammad Amara, 'The Option of Stricter Control: Substantial Deterioration in the Status of the Arab Minority: Withdrawal from Democratic Dimensions and Approaching a Violent Outbreak' in Ozacky-Lazar *et al.*, *Seven Roads*, pp.123–54.
13. For the full explanation of the option, see Rassem Khamaisi, 'The Option of Separation: Irredenta, Independence or Transfer', in Ozacky-Lazar *et al.*, *Seven Roads*, pp.155–200.
14. For the full explanation of the option, see Ilana Kaufman, 'The Option of an "Israeli State"', in Ozacky-Lazar *et al.*, *Seven Roads*, pp.201–42.
15. For the full explanation of the option, see Nadim Rouhana, 'The Option of a Binational State within the Green Line', in Ozacky-Lazar *et al.*, *Seven Roads*, pp.243–70.
16. For the full explanation of the option, see As'ad Ghanem, 'The Option of a Binational State on the Whole Area of Eretz Israel/Palestine', in Ozacky-Lazar *et al.*, *Seven Roads*, pp.271–303.
17. The statistical figures that are presented in the next two paragraphs were collected through a survey that Ghanem conducted as part of his doctoral dissertation at the University of Haifa, on 'Political Participation by the Arabs in Israel', under the direction of Prof. Gabriel Ben-Dor of the Department of Political Science and Prof. Majid al-Haj of the Department of Sociology. The representative countrywide sample encompassed 768 respondents selected randomly using the Kish method. The sampling error was three–four per cent.
18. Sammy Smooha, *Arabs and Jews in Israel*, Vol.2, Boulder, CO and London, 1992, pp.50–51.
19. Smooha, *Arabs and Jews in Israel*, p.64
20. The fieldwork for the survey was conducted after the signing of the Oslo accords.
21. Smooha, *Arabs and Jews in Israel*, p.83.
22. Nadim Rouhana, 'Accentuated Identities in Protracted Conflicts: The Collective Identity of the Palestinian Citizens in Israel', *Asian and African Studies*, Vol.27 (1993), pp.97–127; N. Rouhana, *Identities in Conflict: Palestinian Citizens in an Ethnic Jewish State*, New Haven, CT, 1997.
23. Sammy Smooha, 'The Divergent Fate of the Palestinians on Both Sides of the Green Line:

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The Intifada as a Test', paper presented to the conference, 'The Arab Minority in Israel: Dilemmas of Political Orientation and Social Change', Tel Aviv University, 3–4 June 1991.
24. Smooha, *Arabs and Jews in Israel*, Boulder, CO, and London, 1992, Vol.2, p.84.
25. As'ad Ghanem and Sara Ozacky-Lazar, 'The Green Line–Red Lines, the Arabs in Israel in View of the Intifada', *Sekirot*, Vol.2 (1990), p.2.
26. This conclusion buttresses the thesis advanced by Smooha, 'The Divergent Fate of the Palestinians; Smooha, *Arabs and Jews in Israel*; Majid Al-Haj, 'The Sociopolitical Structure of the Arabs in Israel: External vs. Internal Orientation', in John E. Hofman (ed.), *Arab–Jewish Relations in Israel: A Quest of Human Understanding*, Bristol, IN, 1988, pp.92–123; Nadim Rouhana, 'The Political Transformation of the Palestinians in Israel: From Acquiescence to Challenge', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol.18, No.3 (1989), pp.35–59.
27. Nadim Rouhana and As'ad Ghanem, 'The Crisis of Minorities in Ethnic States: The Case of the Palestinian Citizens in Israel', *IJMES*, Vol.30 (1998), pp.321–46.
28. T.R. Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflict*, Washington, DC, 1993; T.R. Gurr and Barbara Harff, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics*, Boulder, CO and San Francisco, 1994; Will Kymlicka, *The Rights of Minority Cultures*, Oxford, 1995.
29. Al-Haj, 'The Sociopolitical Structure of the Arabs in Israel'.
30. As'ad Ghanem, 'Ideological Trends on Question of Jewish–Arab Coexistence among Arabs in Israel 1967–1989', MA thesis, Department of Political Science, University of Haifa, 1990.
31. Kymlicka, *The Rights of Minority Cultures*; Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, Oxford, 1995.
32. Smooha, *Arabs and Jews in Israel*.
33. Ibid., pp.50–55.
34. Ibid.
35. Rouhana and Ghanem, 'The Crisis of Minorities in Ethnic States'.

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