

University of Denver

Digital Commons @ DU

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Graduate Studies

3-1-2011

Minorities in Israel: Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Identity and the Potential for Political Collaboration

Kristin L. Hissong
University of Denver

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd>



Part of the [International Relations Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hissong, Kristin L., "Minorities in Israel: Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Identity and the Potential for Political Collaboration" (2011). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 291.
<https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd/291>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Studies at Digital Commons @ DU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ DU. For more information, please contact jennifer.cox@du.edu, dig-commons@du.edu.

Minorities in Israel: Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Identity and the Potential for Political Collaboration

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the minority status of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs and their political narrative, identity, and action, including their divergent and collaborative views of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process. I examined the possibility that minority groups, once established as viable separate collectives with some leverage and political narrative, have just cause for combining their political action in order to influence governing elites. In order to explore this question, I investigated whether the factor of shared grievances in social identity formation provides a basis for multi-group political narrative and subsequent collaborative action in confronting dominant political forces, the results of which could bring pressure for change. On the basis of scholarly literature and an analysis of political activity, I discovered that political narrative and identity are interactive for both Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab collectives and that many features which affected the development of both are similar if not shared between the two groups. Despite this, Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs have developed two autonomous political narratives and identities and therefore, their expressions of political action are divergent. Therefore, I conclude that shared grievances are not sufficient in uniting minority groups to act collaboratively for heightened political influence.

Document Type

Thesis

Degree Name

M.A.

Department

Josef Korbel School of International Studies

First Advisor

Karen Feste, Ph.D.

Keywords

Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs, Social identity formation, Political narratives

Subject Categories

International Relations | Political Science

Publication Statement

Copyright is held by the author. User is responsible for all copyright compliance.

MINORITIES IN ISRAEL: MIZRAHI AND ISRAELI-ARAB IDENTITY AND THE
POTENTIAL FOR POLITICAL COLLABORATION

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of Josef Korbel School of International Studies

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

By

Kristin L. Hissong

March 2011

Advisor: Karen Feste

©Copyright by Kristin L. Hissong 2011

All Rights Reserved

Author: Kristin L. Hisson

Title: Minorities in Israel: Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Identity and the Potential for Political Collaboration

Degree Date: March 2011

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the minority status of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs and their political narrative, identity, and action, including their divergent and collaborative views of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process. I examined the possibility that minority groups, once established as viable separate collectives with some leverage and political narrative, have just cause for combining their political action in order to influence governing elites. In order to explore this question, I investigated whether the factor of shared grievances in social identity formation provides a basis for multi-group political narrative and subsequent collaborative action in confronting dominant political forces, the results of which could bring pressure for change. On the basis of scholarly literature and an analysis of political activity, I discovered that political narrative and identity are interactive for both Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab collectives and that many features which affected the development of both are similar if not shared between the two groups. Despite this, Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs have developed two autonomous political narratives and identities and therefore, their expressions of political action are divergent. Therefore, I conclude that shared grievances are not sufficient in uniting minority groups to act collaboratively for heightened political influence.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the tireless commitment and patience of my thesis advisor, Professor Karen Feste, without whom I would not have been challenged to reach my full potential. Not only has Professor Feste contributed her time and expertise, but she also has demanded nothing less than my best work and ensured I take pride in the final product. Professor, it has been a great privilege to work with you throughout the research and writing process and you have my deepest respect and gratitude.

I would also like to thank my family and friends, who encouraged me to persevere, proof-read and edited various drafts, and endured my constant obsession with my thesis subject matter. The final product has all of your suggestions, love, and understanding woven throughout it.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction	1
The Issue	1
Background	3
Focus of Study	7
Chapter Two: Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Political Narratives.....	9
Political Narratives.....	9
The Mizrahi Relationship to Zionism	16
The Mizrahi Relationship to Israeli-Arabs	17
The Israeli-Arab Relationship to Mizrahim	17
The Peace Process and Minority Relations.....	18
Conclusion	20
Chapter Three: Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Political Identity	22
Identity Formation	22
Scholarly Views on Mizrahi Identity	27
Popular Views of Mizrahi Identity	43
Scholarly Views on Israeli-Arab Identity	47
Popular Views of Israeli-Arab Identity	52
Analysis and Conclusion.....	56
Chapter Four: Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Political Action	61
Political Action	61
Mizrahi Political Action.....	67
Israeli-Arab Political Action	74
Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Collaborative Political Action.....	83
Analysis and Conclusion.....	89
Chapter Five: Conclusion	92
References.....	106

Chapter One: Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the minority status of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs in order to understand how their separate identity formation impacts their political narrative and political action including their divergent and collaborate views of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process. I explore the narrative and identity formation of both groups in order to evaluate the factor of shared grievances as a basis for multi-group political collaboration and examine the possibility that minority groups, once established as viable separate entities with some leverage and political voice, have just cause for combining their political views in order to heighten their influence among the government.

The Issue

Israel's conflict with the Palestinians often obscures the fact that the country is plagued by factional, religious, and ethnic divides. One division that has affected the way Israeli society and politics developed is between Jews of European origin, Ashkenazim, and Jews emigrating from Arab and North African countries, Mizrahim. Although there was a Jewish presence in Palestine before Zionist settlement and declaration of statehood, it was not until after the Holocaust that the Ashkenazi Zionist leadership began to focus on Jews from the Middle East and North Africa. From 1948 to 1956, a total of 450,000

Jews arrived in Israel from this region compared to 360,000 Jews from Europe and North America (Shohat, 1999, p. 6). Reasons for the large influx of Mizrahim primarily include the alliance of Arab states following the formal declaration of Israeli statehood which resulted in expulsion of its Jewish citizens as well as voluntary immigration of Mizrahim who longed to contribute to the new state and the return to Zion. This period of state development created a social gap between the Ashkenazi and Mizrahi communities resulting from unequal distribution of political power and resources that benefitted active advocates of the pioneering Ashkenazi Zionists.

The same historical process that dispossessed Palestinians of their property, lands, and national-political rights, was linked to the process that dispossessed Mizrahim of their property and heritage in Arab and North African countries. This overall process has been labeled in Israel's diplomatic pronouncements as a kind of spontaneous population exchange, however, the return from exile of Mizrahim was far from spontaneous. In Israel, as Palestinians fled or were expelled, Mizrahim underwent a complementary trauma, finding themselves in a new Jewish state that rejected their Arab cultural traits (Shohat, 1999, p. 16).

Israeli-Arabs experience a similar minority status in Israel where those who remained after the 1948 war became citizens under Israeli military rule. With their former polity scattered, they found themselves outsiders of the new Jewish state. Although Palestinians who are Israeli citizens, heretofore referred to as Israeli-Arabs, do benefit from many of the same rights as Israel's Jewish citizens, the question of minority group rights is not addressed in Israeli governance as it would naturally lead to greater questions of Palestinian refugees and the Right of Return. As a result, Israeli-Arabs share many of

the same minority traits as the Mizrahim in terms of income, employment, housing opportunities, and cultural repression.

Background

Upon its declaration of independence in 1948, Israel became a melting pot of Diaspora Jews; the main ethnic distinction was made between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim. The Ashkenazi takeover of power helped develop and strengthen, if not create, a Palestinian national identity and this became increasingly apparent as a result of the war of 1967 when Palestinians distinguished themselves as an autonomous political entity apart from the unity of Arab nations against Israel. As a result, three distinct ethnic groups (Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, Israeli-Arab) came under the jurisdiction of the Ashkenazim, the effects of which continue to lead the two subordinate groups, Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs, to seek representation and advancement through political action. Israel is particularly complex in that it strives to be democratic and Jewish, therefore intrinsic in its goals is a certain ethnic composition that affects its minority groups. In addition to security and socio-economic concerns that plague the ruling elite, Israeli policy makers confront the growing demographic of Israeli-Arabs within Israel.

Implicit in Israel's founding was the importance of a Jewish national home, therefore implying a Jewish majority, however, this creates tension with its democratic aspirations. The absence of minority rights for Israeli-Arabs is also felt among Israel's Mizrahi citizens who, until the influx of Soviet Jewish immigration, constituted a

demographic majority but a cultural minority among Israel's Jewish population. Because Israel has yet to draft a formal constitution and continues to function from its Basic Laws, many civil, political, cultural, social, and economic based rights are either denied, or simply not specified, among both the Jewish and Arab population.

Furthermore, the absence of a formal constitution creates greater vulnerability for minority groups because it leaves room for interpretation of the application of the five main pillars of human rights mentioned above (civil, political, cultural, social, and economic). Israel's Basic Law: Freedom of Occupation and Basic Law: Human Dignity and Freedom combine to begin a bill of rights, however, these do not include a basic law on civil liberties or human rights leaving individual grievances to the interpretation of the court. In the absence of purposefully articulated rights, minority groups are more vulnerable as they lack a framework for collective rights.

As a self-defined community, ethnic groups are distinguishable by a collective name, a myth of common ancestry, shared historical memories, one or more differentiating elements of common culture, the association with a specific homeland, and a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population (Weller, 2008, p. 4). The political implication of this connection between ethnicity and power is that any ethnic group that is conscious of its uniqueness, and wishes to preserve it, is involved in a struggle for political power either retaining the measure of political power it possesses or striving to acquire the amount of power that it deems necessary to preserve its identity as

a distinct ethnic group, that is, to defeat the threats and seize the opportunities it faces (Weller, 2008, p. 7). This is particularly unique and potent with the bond of Diaspora Jewry and its connection to Israel: after centuries of exile, the return of a Jewish homeland presents volatile relations both domestically and abroad. The development of the Ashkenazim as the ruling elite in Israel not only displaced the region's Arab population but also transferred Jews who were a minority group in neighboring Arab states to continued minority status once in Israel.

Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs share a marginal position in Israeli society that continues to result in competition and hostility between the two groups. They have been linked through the language which describes them: "the terms ethnic politics, ethnic whining, and the ethnic ghost, that is, the attribute ethnic in general, has always referred either to Mizrahim or Israeli-Arabs when used within Israel" (Chetrit, 2010, p. 19). The internalization of their identity as perceived by the state as inferior or backward has resulted in political narratives emphasizing autonomy, representation, and influence in their future. Both Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs have raised voices of protest in the Israeli public realm but have not been able to change their minority status.

Resulting from their similar experiences of inequality and discrimination, the possibility exists for minority group collaboration to pressure the ruling elite for change. Having shared interests to enhance their socio-economic status, collaborative political action could bring about a greater demand for change; however, the broader issue that sets these groups apart often encourages these groups to work apart, or even against one another, in order to pursue their own goals. Despite their shared grievances and similar aspects of narrative and identity, the goal of their respective political actions differ. The

majority of Mizrahim continue to operate within the Israeli establishment toward greater assimilation whereas the majority of Israeli-Arabs call for greater autonomy within the state or the advancement of a two-state solution.

Several Israeli scholars, both Mizrahi and Ashkenazi, have analyzed socio-economic and political similarities between Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs as well as narrative accounts of mutual discrimination in the early years of the state. Komash and Isawi (2005), Rejwan (1999), and Shenhav (1999, 2002), represent secular views of Israel's future in the Middle East and what that may mean for Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs. Komash and Isawi (2005) provide a detailed account of the shared cultural and historical aspects of the Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs recommending peaceful dialogue between the two groups. Rejwan (1999) paints a broader picture of what Israel's role may be in the Middle East and what Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs can do in taking peace-building steps such as the revitalization of Arabic literature in Israel and cultural collaboration in order to help unite Israeli society. Shenhav (1999, 2002) focuses on historical accounts of the Mizrahi experience and addresses the complexities of population exchange arguing that the topic is valuable for the consideration of opening the Right of Return to both Jews and Arabs regardless of demographic concerns. All of these scholars suggest that Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab issues within Israel need to be addressed and resolved if a peaceful two-state solution is to be reached and remain viable.

Lockman (1996) and Peled (1992) draw parallels in the Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab experience but see less hope in the future for mutual interaction between the two groups. For example, Lockman (1996) investigates the status of Arab and Jewish workers within

Israel and the West Bank, concluding that inequalities in earnings and types of employment vary between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim as well as between Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs. Lockman comes to the same conclusion as Peled's 1992 citizenship polls, that is, that there are inequalities between each of these three groups but that these issues cannot be resolved without a permanent peace in Israel-Palestine. While he recognizes the complexities of Israel's domestic challenges, Lockman insists that a peaceful resolution to the broader conflict must be a precursor to internal reconciliation.

Chetrit (1999, 2000, 2010) and Smooha (2004, 2007, 2008) examine Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab socio-economic struggles and paths to political action. Chetrit's works on Mizrahi political formation and discourse detail the Mizrahi path to politics as well as the struggle for political autonomy. Smooha (2004) provides data which detail inequalities in employment opportunities and access to education. For example, Smooha's 2008 study comparing unemployment rates, political involvement, and education between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim, and Ashkenazim and Israeli-Arabs show the gap in socio-economic standing between Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs.

Focus of Study

How do Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political narratives relate to Zionism? How has Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab identity formation affected their view of each other? How does Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political action diverge or collaborate and how does this affect their views of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process? In the following chapters, I address these questions by analyzing scholarly literature and public opinion data of the political narratives and identity formation concerning shared grievances of these two groups. I

explore both group's relationship with the Zionist narrative, the political identity of each as minority group within Israeli society, and whether, or how, this has affected their political action, in particular with regard to the peace process. The combination of these perspectives is designed to understand how political narratives and identities of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs fit into broader Israeli politics.

Chapter Two: Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Political Narratives

The purpose of this chapter is to present and analyze relevant scholarly work on the Zionist narrative and the political narratives of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs in order to explore the dimensions of each group's relationship to the state and to each other. While the majority of scholars who focus on Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political narratives included herein identify as Mizrahi Israeli, Israeli-Arab, or Palestinian, several Ashkenazi Israeli and international scholars are integrated as well to complement literature regarding group relations to the Zionist narrative and broader aspects of minority literature. The aim of the literature is to explore the Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab relation to the Zionist narrative, the ways in which each group views the other, and how this has affected each collective's identity formation.

Political Narratives

Examinations of political discourse show that political action relies extensively on narrative patterns. Shenhav (2006) insists that this is partly the result of the human tendency to rely on narrative as a way of understanding the world and endowing it with meaning. The dominant role of political narratives is also based on the centrality of narrative in the formulation and maintenance of worldviews. The narrative mode that leads to historical accounts and that strives to locate the experience in time and place is applied to the collective level of human behavior, leading to recognition of narrative's

important role in shaping and expressing political identity, perspective, and ideology.

Political narrative makes use of personal and collective identity and reflects group values, constraints, and commitments in its political conduct. Internalization of one's political narrative includes an acknowledgement of the socially constructed notion of self, so that the narrative is a reflection of identity and the perception of one's identity (Elbaz-Luwisch, 1997, p. 79). Sociologists and political scientists (Elbaz-Luwisch, 1997, Johnson, 2003, Shenhav, 2006, Useem, 1998) argue that pre-existing organization, both formal and informal, facilitates collective political narrative. Organization provides resources, such as pooled labor and leadership, it schools participants in civic cooperation and public activity, and extends the interpersonal bonds through which recruitment takes place. Resources, public involvement, and social bonds, in turn, help make possible the work often needed to sustain a political narrative and this permits the mobilization of preexisting groups directly into political action (Useem, 1998, p. 231).

In this context, narrative forms of thought and expression are based on the combination of events together into chains of memory and are consistent with the political logic of trying to shape the present in light of lessons learned from the past. These foundations give political narrative direction in the course of political action, a process that emerges from a formal political forum or as narrative produced by politicians and public officials (Shenhav, 2006, p. 252). The fact that political narratives are constructed and shaped, however, still does not determine how capable they are of representing particular aspects of political action. In other words, even if it is clear that narrative cannot capture the whole of political action, this does not mean that all

narratives are equally true or equally false but rather a narrative's accuracy is held by the group to which it applies.

Indeed, the fact that any political narrative is locked in competition with other narratives naturally raises the question of their respective adherence to the political reality on the ground. The relationship between a political narrative and its context is of special importance for evaluating the potential of representation for political narratives. It is therefore difficult to rely only on internal criteria, which can presumably help gauge a narrative's credibility based on such standards as coherence and consistency. Since a political narrative addresses a context shared by both speakers and addressees, and because it performs this function under conditions of competition and struggle with other narratives, the aspirations of one political narrative is subject to that of another in the way that it affects the political reality of its time.

In Israel, the Zionist narrative was the framework upon which the state was founded and it continues to be the mainstream narrative. The Zionist narrative represents the fulfillment of Jewish experience including the recovery of institutional nationhood, the restoration to the ancestral homeland, and the resumption of Israel's messianic role in the reconciliation of history. Emerging as a doctrine of Jewish nationalism in nineteenth century Europe and developed in opposition to the attempts at national allegiance among the European states, Zionists based their social philosophy on the concept of Jewish regeneration through corporate settlement in Palestine, therefore combining the images of traditional messianic values with foundations in populist idealism of the West.

Although Jews began to emigrate to Palestine beginning in 1882, it was not until

1897 when Theodor Herzl convened the First Zionist Congress in Basel during which two hundred participants representing seventeen countries laid the groundwork for the construction of a highly efficient and sophisticated political narrative and organization (Taylor, 1972, p. 41). At the Congress, Herzl expanded upon the reasons and ideas he introduced in his 1896 book, *The Jewish State*, such as the need for settlement of Jews in Palestine to escape persecution, a federation of all Jews into local groups throughout their various countries of residence, a strengthening of the Jewish feeling and consciousness, and preparatory steps necessary for the “achievement of the Zionist purpose” (Taylor, 1972, p. 44).

The Balfour Declaration of 1917, drafted by British Foreign Secretary Balfour as a letter to Baron Rothschild, a leader of the British Jewish community, was crucial in establishing the Zionist narrative and garnered legitimacy for the movement. Implicitly recognizing the Jewish need for a national home and setting the foundations for Britain’s role to this end, the letter states:

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country (Taylor, 1972, p. 39).

The Balfour Declaration as well as the growth of nationalism as a political philosophy in the period following the First World War and the building up of the Jewish yishuv in Palestine brought a certain attractiveness and prestige to the Zionist narrative. The British Mandate of 1922, formalized by the League of Nations, divided the Mandate territory

into two administrative areas including Palestine, under direct British rule, and Transjordan under the rule of the Hashemite family. Lasting until 1948, the Mandate period saw the dramatic increase of Jewish immigration with nearly 368,000 Jews arriving from Europe and Eastern Europe between 1920 and 1945. The growth of kibbutzim, collective communities founded on socialist and Zionist values, translated the persistence of the Zionist's pioneering spirit into yishuv life, a trend which continued beyond Israel's declaration of statehood. This speaks to the Zionist desire to redeem the land agriculturally, politically, and culturally.

The Zionist experience during the Mandate period was originally met with little resistance from the Palestinian Arab community. However, as anti-semitism grew in Europe during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Jewish immigration to Palestine began to increase markedly, creating Arab resentment as a result of the land and resources incoming immigrants required. British quotas on immigration, as well as violence between Jewish and Arab communities under the Mandate, seemed to reinforce Herzl's reflection in *The Jewish State*, that the Jewish question persists wherever Jews live in appreciable numbers and gives rise to persecution, and this, in turn, reinforced the Zionist narrative (Herzl, 1896, p. 53). With the incidence of systematic anti-semitism on an appalling scale under the Hitler regime, Zionists were propelled into urgent organization and action. From that time, loyalty to Judaism and commitment to the Jewish people were frequently measured in terms of loyalty to the Zionist narrative and the Jewish state.

The Biltmore Program, adopted by a special Zionist conference convened in May

1942, emphasized the connection of the Jewish people with Palestine, their right to transform it into a Jewish commonwealth, and the ultimate authority of the Jewish Agency with regard to Jewish homelessness and settlement in Palestine (Taylor, 1972, p. 42). In effect this established the principle of Jewish consensus for Zionist aspirations and leadership, and its acceptance in Jewish and international circles furthered the Zionist revolution. During the following six years the Zionists assumed the role of a Jewish government, preparing the foundation of the state and directing the support of the centers of Jewish power in the West. An integral part of this process was the Jewish Agency which, established by the World Zionist Organization in 1929, came to be considered the de facto government of the Jewish homeland before its formal statehood and took responsibility for immigration and allocating resources in the resettlement of new immigrants (Taylor, 1972, p. 53).

By 1948, following the end of the British Mandate of Palestine and the declaration of Israeli independence, the Zionist movement and the Jewish Agency were treated as synonymous, and the Agency was officially recognized as the representative of the Jewish people in all matters concerning the development of the state of Israel. Establishment of formal and recognized statehood constituted a victory for the founders and supporters of Zionism and validated the authority of this political nationalist narrative. Subsequent violence and war erupted following the Arab rejection of the 1947 United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine (Resolution 181) that proposed an Arab and Jewish state side by side that and increased in veracity upon Israel's declaration of statehood. The ensuing war of 1948 during which Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and

Syria attacked the new state concluded with the 1949 Armistice Agreements from which the Green Line is created, however, despite loss of life, the war did not destroy the Jewish state and therefore solidified the Zionist presence in the region resulting in greater confidence and legitimacy among the movement (Shenhav, 2006, p. 253). An internalization of persecution inherent in the desire for a Jewish national home was reinforced by the violent clashes early citizens encountered; this not only validated the necessity for a Jewish state in the Zionist narrative, but it also gave the movement greater legitimacy when Israel survived the war with authority.

Zionism continues to be the mainstream political narrative of the state with its roots in the European Enlightenment and its main emphasis on Jewish self-determination, ethnic unity, pioneering, and political nationalism. As a result, Israelis experience identity formation, political narrative, and path to political action within, and in response to, Zionism. Those who do not fit within the ethnic vision of Israel's Jewish nature or did not take part in the pioneering of the state fall outside the Zionist narrative, including Mizrahim, Israeli-Arabs, and religious Orthodox Jews. Although the exclusion of minority groups is not explicit in the Zionist narrative, its ethnic nature naturally excludes those who do not fit within it, therefore defining one's relationship to the state as well as the relationship among Israeli citizens. As a result of the need for national unity that must stand against those who would wish to see the state destroyed, minority communities and rights are overlooked (Shenhav, 2006, p. 256). The main factors of Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab identity are juxtaposed against the backdrop of the Zionist narrative and therefore, each group's relationship to Zionism plays a role in the formation of their own political

narratives.

The Mizrahi Relationship to Zionism

Several Mizrahi Israeli writers offer passionate and personal accounts of the Mizrahi experience and feelings regarding the Zionist narrative in the early years of the state in stories and remembrance (Benbassa, 2009, Shenhav, 2002, and Shabi, 2009). Each scholar stresses the maltreatment of Mizrahim from the time of immigration into the present. Benbassa (2009) illustrates the internalization of Jewish suffering or victimization and therefore the connection of all Jews worldwide. Shenhav (2002) and Shabi (2009) highlight how this Mizrahi internalization set them apart from their Ashkenazi brethren in a desire to remain in the Diaspora community. Overall, the themes that dominate are the suffering of Mizrahim in attempt to assimilate and succeed in the Zionist, Ashkenazi system, the psychological and development related consequences, and the complex aspects of Mizrahi identity.

Khazzoom (2008), Medding (2008), Omar (n.d.), Shiblak (2005), Yadgar (2003), and Zohar (2005) present the history of the Mizrahim and their experience in development camps through polling data and demographic studies or Mizrahi history, political involvement, and socio-economic inequalities. These scholars also stress the maltreatment of Mizrahim by comparing Mizrahi statistics to that of Ashkenazi immigrants in terms of housing, education, and employment, and trace their progress in the five decades of Israeli independence. There is consensus among these scholars that Mizrahim were excluded from the Zionist narrative and therefore not considered active

participants in the formation of the state. The Zionist narrative as translated into state development, was unfavorable to Mizrahim.

The Mizrahi Relationship to Israeli-Arabs

Smootha (1972, 1976, 2008) and Chetrit (1999, 2000, 2010) seek to understand the joint plight of both Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs drawing parallels from the manner in which the state of Israel has addressed the inferior socio-economic status of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs and in their limited access to state resources. Other scholars offer a more radical, provocative analysis including Shohat (1988), Swirski (1989), Massad (1996), Shasha (n.d.), and Wurmser (2005), and have created, or identified with, the movement of post-Zionism, an academic movement beginning in the 1980s which places blame on the Zionist narrative and policies for displacing and creating animosity with Arabs. Post-Zionism emphasizes the mistreatment of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs alike with particular focus on the fault of the Zionist narrative toward the experience of both minority groups. This group urges Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab cooperation on the basis of shared Arab roots and victimization, although, Chetrit (2010) and Smootha (2008) believe this is unlikely to develop in the current state of conditions within Israel.

The Israeli-Arab Relationship to Mizrahim

Literature from Israeli-Arab and Palestinian scholarly work varies significantly depending on the political climate during which it was written. Sayigh (1989) and Haider (2008) embrace the shared cultural and political characteristics of Israeli-Arabs with Mizrahim. Although they acknowledge the tension felt by Mizrahim between their Arab

and Jewish roots, Mizrahim have more recently acquired the reputation of right-wing, Arab-haters, therefore diffusing the sentiment of shared identity. Fahel (2009), Falah (1996), Ghanem (2001), and Massad (2006) do not link the Israeli-Arab struggle with that of Mizrahim. As the image of Mizrahim as right wing, conservative voters continues to gain strength, publications reflect this by emphasizing the struggle of Israeli-Arabs and typically disregard cultural or political links between the two groups. Recent polls by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2008, 2009), the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (2009), and the Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre (2000-2008), report that Israeli-Arabs now regard Mizrahim as a part of the national state of Israel and not as an autonomous minority within it.

The case for a shared Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab experience is not as prevalent among Israeli-Arab and Palestinian scholars as it is among Mizrahi scholars, a reality that reflects the Israeli-Arab disenchantment with the rightward reputation of modern Mizrahim. Scholars who discuss the Israeli-Arab view of, and relationship with, Mizrahim are in agreement that the early years of the state forced discrimination on both groups; however, they are also in agreement that the shared bond that may have existed has now become obsolete as a result of the militaristic Mizrahi reputation.

The Peace Process and Minority Relations

Scholars who address Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab connection and contribution to the peace process generally highlight the progress of mutual recognition which took place in the 1970s in response to shared grievances rooted in the 1967 war which, despite an

Israeli victory, benefitted neither group. Mizrahim, who fought alongside their fellow Ashkenazi Jews in the war, realized that their national contributions did not change their social status and Israeli-Arabs, already torn between their Israeli and Palestinian Arab identity factors, were further frustrated with the Israeli excitement of occupation. Although these grievances were caused by different reactions to the war, the reality on the ground left both groups on the periphery of the Israeli mainstream narrative as the Zionist narrative thrived again in another defeat of the Arab world.

Despite varying outlooks on how a Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab bridge would work or if the potential exists for such a relationship amid the current political climate, a group of scholars (Chetrit, 2010, Kemp et al., 2004, Komash and Isawi, 2005, Rejwan, 1999, Shabi, 2009, Shohat, 1998, and Smootha, 2008) highlight the ways in which members of these two groups view the peace process in the past or the ways in which they could potentially contribute to future negotiations. Chetrit (2010), Kemp et al. (2004), Shohat (1998), and Smootha (2008) trace historical contributions of Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab individuals and their respective various attempts to build negotiation bridges. Shohat (1988), in particular, suggests ways in which the images and symbols of Arab identity should be regarded in Israel and how this could have a positive effect on the peace process. Drawing from the argument of a Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab shared past, these scholars argue that each group's historical narrative provides sufficient evidence for shared interests in the present yet they believe in the current environment, such collaboration is unlikely.

With Chetrit (2010), Kemp et. al. (2004), Shohat (1998), and Smooha (2008) highlighting the shared cultural traits of the two groups but little hope for present or future collaboration and Komash and Isawi (2005), Rejwan (1999), and Shabi (2009) demonstrating the unlikely justification for minority groups to collaborate when competing for socio-economic resources, the outlook for Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab collaboration in the peace process is unlikely. This reality is indicative of Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political positions arising from their developing political narrative.

The absence of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs from the Zionist narrative has excluded them from playing an active role in the development of the state of Israel. During times of crisis in national security and attention to the peace process, Israeli national unity is more important than minority issues. Nation wide vulnerability may provide opportunities for minority groups to demonstrate their allegiance to the state, however it forces their group interests to the periphery.

Conclusion

The aforementioned scholarly works combine to illustrate the development of Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political narratives. In regard to the Mizrahi relation to Zionism, scholars acknowledge the absence of Mizrahim from the Zionist narrative, the fact that the first generation of Mizrahim tried to assimilate in order to succeed in their new home, and provide data to substantiate these claims. From this literature, I conclude that although the early years of the state were difficult for all new immigrants, Mizrahim and

Israeli-Arabs, in comparison to Ashkenazi, Zionist pioneers, experienced an inferior social status.

This reality, as the founding ethos of the state, has been internalized in Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political narratives. For Mizrahim, political narrative expresses a desire to compete for socio-economic advancement and to prove their national unity through full assimilation to the majority. The Israeli-Arab political narrative internalizes the same contradictions seen in their identity formation; that is, the struggle to accept minority status as an Arab community in order to benefit from state resources versus the commitment to the Palestinian national narrative implying contention to their Israeli citizenship.

Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political narratives overlap because they both internalize their status as a minority group which falls outside the Zionist narrative. Indeed, shared grievances in their access of socio-economic resources and struggle for political representation are similar features of Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political narratives. Despite these overlapping elements, the Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political narratives remain disjointed. Inherent in the Mizrahi desire for full assimilation is the rejection of their Arab heritage whereas this trait is often the founding element of the Israeli-Arab narrative. This difference affects each group's conceptualization of their identity and also affects their political goals in relation to the state. Although both political narratives are shaped around similar elements, the ways in which Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs translate their narratives into political action remain incompatible.

Chapter Three: Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Political Identity

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate how identity is developed and acted upon by Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs and how, in particular, each group's identity relates to their respective political narratives. My analysis is based on a framework of minority and collective identity literature from which I discuss scholarly and popular views of Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab identity. This chapter is divided into identity formation theory, scholarly and popular views of Mizrahi identity, scholarly and popular views of Israeli-Arab identity, and analysis and conclusions in which I evaluate factors for each group's identity formation, their relationship with the state and each other, and the potential for group collaboration.

Identity Formation

Identity is a complex, evolving, multilayered, and situational relationship between an individual and the group, or groups, to which he or she relates (Lowrance, 2006, p. 168). Identity formation comes from self-perception and the mobilization of a collective which comes about frequently through the negation of 'other'; the acknowledgement that one group does not possess characteristics of another. Included in this acknowledgement are forms of discontent that are recognized as important motivators for ethnic collective action alongside, or in combination with, other facilitating factors such as mobilizing resources (Lowrance, 2006, p. 169).

In the post-Cold War era, with the increased frequency of complex and integrated societies, political scientists embraced modernization theory believing that greater political and economic interaction among peoples as well as the growth of communication networks would break down peoples' identities with ethnic kindred and replace them with loyalties to their larger, national communities (Gurr, 1994, p. 348). The continued eruption of conflicts centered on ethnicity has discredited this notion and led to various theoretical explanations. Gurr (1994) discusses one such view wherein ethnic identities are "primordial", perhaps genetically based, and therefore more fundamental and persistent than loyalties to larger social units (Gurr, 1994, p. 348).

A contrary view is that ethnic identities are no more salient than any other kind of identity; they become significant when they are invoked by entrepreneurial political leaders in the instrumental pursuit of material and political benefits for a group or region. Regardless, Gurr argues that culture, structures, competition, and inequalities comprise the core of most ethnic group identities and that the collective identity is maintained by the transmission of basic norms and customs across generations. When competition and inequality among groups in heterogeneous societies is great, the potential for ethnic identities to strengthen and conflicts to erupt increases (Gurr, 1994, p. 348).

Among immigrant groups in the modern era, the process of identity formation, especially among the second generation, is frequently problematic. As sociological research shifted from the individual focus of assimilation studies toward more institutional and structural analyses, scholars began to explore the ways in which states and societies used their powers to construct racial and ethnic groupings through a variety

of legal and administrative powers (Quah and Sales, 2000, p. 160). Certainly, relations between groups contending for resources do not exist in a socio-political vacuum. Gurr and Harff (2004) insist that both domestic and international factors play a role in shaping the collective's narrative and goals. This is consistent in the Israeli context where international violence has diffused internal camaraderie. For instance, Arafat's loyalty to Iraq in the First Gulf War deeply unsettled the Israeli peace camp from its relationship with the Israeli-Arab population (Kaminer, 1995, p. 344).

The complaints voiced by members of frustrated minority groups usually reflect a rational desire to benefit from or, lacking that opportunity, to withdraw from, a larger national society and states faced with demands for separation, autonomy, or independence are unlikely to be able to maintain a stable civil society (Mikesell and Murphy, 1991, p. 588). This raises an important point that not all minority groups seek the same kind of recognition. Gurr and Harff (2004) introduce two subcategories of minority groups: communal contenders and ethnonationalists (Gurr and Harff, 2004, p. 19-67). Communal contenders seek improvement within the nation by using political influence to protect economic and cultural traits whereas ethnonationalists often seek sovereign status, want to change state boundaries, and may compose a threat to the continued existence of the territory (Gurr and Harff, 2004, p. 67). In the Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab context, Mizrahim almost always play the role of communal contenders, however, Israeli-Arabs may vary between ethnonationalist and communal contender status based on their relationship both with the state and with the Palestinian national movement.

Although it has not been the norm in international political systems, fragmented societies, in particular those divided by ethnic boundaries, may be strengthened and united through group collaboration if shared grievances overcome internal prejudices in search for a common goal of an improved future. While shared grievances and shared experiences of inferior or discriminatory social status function to solidify collective identities within one minority group, they simultaneously create competition among groups for improved access to socio-economic resources and may disrupt a sense of collectivity among several minority groups. As a result, factors of identity that bring groups together (relationship to the state, access to resources, and socio-economic status) are the same factors that make one group distinguish itself from its competition. Ideally, groups experiencing similar hardship could unite for heightened political influence and domestic attention; however, it is more likely that one group will subjugate another for its own improvement. The result is continued fragmentation that reinforces the majority's hold on the state's political power.

Israel illustrates the relationship between grievances, identity, and ethnic protest at the individual and collective level wherein identity is multifaceted and politicized by the highly charged environment. While the main divide is Jewish-Arab, there are many others such as divisions along a left-right political spectrum, secular-religious, and Christian-Muslim-Druze among the Israeli-Arab population (Lowrance, 2006, p. 168). This dynamic evolution of identity is evident in the history of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs from an external definition of their various communities according to their countries of origin and as an inferior collective. As class and social struggle urges solidarity, it

eventually gives birth to self-definition and self-reshaping of the cultural common ground. The cultural Mizrahiness of third and fourth generation young Mizrahim is not identical to that of the second, which is significantly distant from the first generation's Mizrahiness (Chetrit, 2010, p. 16). The same can be said of Israeli-Arabs and the effect that Israeli policy has had on how they relate to previous generations, the state, and Palestinian nationalism.

As the case of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs explicitly demonstrates, it is not always possible for a minority group to separate and declare its independence or to be absorbed in another state in an expression of its self-determination. In general, on a worldwide scale, to concede to minorities, or to any fractions of a population the right of withdrawing from the community to which they belong, would be to destroy order and stability within nation states and to inaugurate anarchy in international life; it is incompatible with the idea of the state as a territorial and political unit (Hannum, 1994, p. 10).

Weller (2008) summarizes the potential problems of expressing self-determination when it results in independent statehood, that is, that it will lead to the formation of a new independent actor in the international system with new territory, boundaries, and international obligations, and create a new minority population which will then have to struggle with its right to self-determination (Weller, 2008, p. 27). For instance, Hannum states, "The search for homogeneity may, in fact, be more likely to lead to repression and human rights violations than to promote the tolerance and plurality which many claim to be essential values in the twentieth century and beyond" (Hannum,

1996, p. 26). This is present in Israeli society where the Zionist desire for a unified Jewish state naturally excluded large portions of its population. In Israel, the self-determination of one minority, European Jewry, to form the new state led to the creation of new minorities, including Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs, who must now struggle with their right to self-determination on both domestic and international levels. Hannum states, “Where independence is the goal, acceptance of one group’s claim to self-determination necessarily implies denial of another group’s competing claim of territorial integrity”, therefore promulgating a cycle of minority rights issues (Hannum, 1994, p. 41).

Thus, the key elements of identity formation grow from a group’s shared past, its relationship to the state in terms of its grievances, and its access to socio-economic and political resources. Whether a collective identity is a primordial bond or a sense of solidarity which grows when invoked by individual leaders, groups unite for a common purpose that strengthens their connection when faced with unequal access to state resources and basic human rights. While individuals within the collective may have varying political beliefs, their shared grievances conform in regard to their relationship to the state, access to state resources which affect their quality of life, and their socio-economic status within civil society.

Scholarly Views on Mizrahi Identity

Concern for the state’s cultural European superiority appears to have blinded state leadership in its early stages and prevented officials from treating Middle Eastern civilization with tolerance and respect. This is demonstrated in a 1950 address in which

the state's first Prime Minister, Ben-Gurion, described the Arab culture of Mizrahim: "A rabble of human dust, without language, without education, without roots, or any connection to national tradition and vision" (Chetrit, 2010, p. 52). This statement overlooks the Arab and Mizrahi knowledge and use of Arabic, their functioning education system, their previous position in the socio-economic setting of their countries of origin, their Arab and Jewish roots in the Diaspora and under Islam, as well as any remnant of political or secular nationalism they had felt in their previous home. As a result, Arabness and Mizrahiness were established as the opposite of Ashkenazi and outside the standards of what it meant to be Israeli.

Mizrahi identity exhibits a complex and ever-changing balance of a nostalgic past in one's national and cultural heritage clashed with a sense of how one relates to the state of Israel (Lowrance, 2006, p. 169). Since countries of origin differ among the Mizrahi community, this nostalgic past unites around Arab cultural traits and Arabic language. The process of how an individual relates to the Mizrahi collective is continually changing and evolving as Israeli-born Mizrahim reaffirm their Mizrahi culture while growing amid Israeli norms.

Relationship to the State

Chetrit (2010) traces the foundations of Mizrahi identity and cultural inferiority beginning with the Mizrahi arrival in Israel. He examines the Mizrahi relation to Zionism, placing more detail on how the social gap originated and how it has endured over time, including personal narratives that describes Mizrahi experience. Chetrit (2010)

mirrors Shohat (1988) in the description of West and East in his discussion of oppressive colonial and postcolonial relations between the First and Third World during the formation of Israel and how this relationship transcribed to a new reality wherein the European Zionist movement regarded itself as representing the Western world from which Mizrahim would rely upon (Chetrit, 2010, p. 3). Mizrahim learned quickly that income, employment field, housing opportunities, and cultural repression separated them from the ruling elite and though they came to the homeland from the Jewish Diaspora, they remained a minority community under the power of the Ashkenazi ruling majority.

Mizrahim claimed that the Zionist movement promised education, salaries, and apartments, however this varied greatly with what they received upon arrival. Among the collective, Zionism had come to be perceived as the pretentious representative of Western modernism, modern economics, and welfare-state values. Disappointment was felt not only with the economic inequality but also with the anti-Mizrahi (anti-Arab) cultural attitude (Chetrit, 2010, p. 186).

According to the discourse of Western media, European Zionism saved Mizrahi Jews from the harsh rule of their Arab captors by taking them out of primitive conditions and giving them human values (Chetrit, 2010, p. 3). Discussions within the Jewish Agency and those concerned with Aliyah reveal the prejudice of the Zionist leaders toward Mizrahim. Jewish Agency official Yaakov Zrubavel admitted, “These may not be the Jews whose arrival we desire, but we cannot tell them, ‘Don’t come’” (Chetrit, 2010, p. 33). Chetrit notes that this response was not universal; there were exceptions including an Aliyah activist in North Africa, Ephraim Friedman, who compared the hateful articles

to the language used to describe European Jews struggling for survival in the concentration camps of the Second World War (Chetrit, 2010, p. 33-4). Unfortunately, balanced responses such as this were rare and Ashkenazi Zionists continued to play to the fears of Orientalism.

This reshaping of Mizrahim as culturally inferior was a central instrument in justifying the ethnic division of labor and their transformation into fuel for the industrial economy in the early years of the state. The examples of this racist dialogue that faced the new refugees in the early years are plentiful. For instance, Wurmser (2005) cites an Ashkenazi journalist, Aryeh Gelblum, who, in 1949, wrote the following about the arriving Mizrahi immigrants:

This is the immigration of a race we have not yet known in the country. We are dealing with people whose primitivism is at a peak, whose level of knowledge is one of virtually absolute ignorance and, worse, who have little talent for understanding anything intellectual. Generally, they are only slightly better than the general level of the Arabs, Negroes, and Berbers in the same regions. In any case, they are at an even lower level than what we know with regard to the former Arabs of Israel (Wurmser, 2005, p. 11).

Furthermore, Zionist pioneer Herzl admitted that the Jewish people were in fact the Jewish people in Europe and so long as millions of European Jews were alive, no attention was given to the rest of the Diaspora community: the foundations of the Zionist movement were concerned with Europe (Chetrit, 2010, p. 23).

Shenhav (1999), a Mizrahi scholar of Iraqi heritage, writes that the vast majority of Mizrahim had not embraced Zionism before Israeli independence (Shenhav, 1999, p. 620). Instead, he argues that the Ashkenazi establishment encouraged their immigration less to protect the Mizrahim and more to address its own need for a Jewish demographic

majority and to exploit potential cheap labor. Only after the Holocaust and the creation of Israel did Arab Jews become the focus of significant Zionist attention intended to promote their immigration to Israel (Hurwitz, 1992, p. 68-73). Instead of saving them, Zionism displaced an entire community, Shenhav maintains, and removed its members' right to determine their own future. Pursuing this logic, he argues that Zionism cannot be considered a liberation movement for all Jews. It liberated European Jews but "enslaved" the Mizrahim (Shenhav, n.d. p. 11).

The roots of the socio-economic situation responsible for creating a social gap during the state's first years began with the modernization theory set out by Eisenstadt as reported by Chetrit (2010). The official immigrant absorption approach supported a class-ethnic structure and was able to justify its actions and consequences with cultural justification. Discriminating slogans such as, "We have all been through transit camp," "The times were hard for everyone," and "Those who wanted to, did make it," made it clear that if Mizrahim were not succeeding it was of their own fault (Chetrit, 2010, p. 43). This implies that those who remained in transit camps and development towns for months and years were simply less apt at paving their own path through the new cultural frame, therefore overlooking the government's policy of moving European immigrants directly to apartments and kibbutzim.

Upon Mizrahi arrival to Israel, the Ashkenazi establishment emphasized their Orientalist attitude reinforcing the East-West dichotomy causing them to exclude Mizrahim, and the Mizrahi internalization of this dichotomy paralyzed their ability to resist exclusion (Shohat, 1988, p. 12). Mizrahi leaders not only adopted the construction

of themselves as Eastern, they were also conditioned to believe that their Oriental identity was a legitimate reason for an inferior social position. The Ashkenazi establishment attempted to repress Middle Easternness as part of an effort to Westernize the Israeli nation and to mark clear borders of identity between Jews as Westerners and Arabs as Easterners. Mizrahim were urged to see Judaism and Zionism as synonyms, and Jewishness and Arabness as antonyms. Thus, Mizrahim were forced to choose between anti-Zionist Arabness and a pro-Zionist Jewishness (Shohat, 1999, p. 11).

Post-Zionist writers attack the claim that the Mizrahi Jews initially longed to immigrate to Israel. As loyal residents of the Arab world, Zionism played a relatively minor role in the pre-1948 Mizrahi world-view. Despite the role that the longing for Zion played in their religious lives, they did not share the European-Zionist desire to leave the Diaspora. Even after the Holocaust, post-Zionist writers maintain, Mizrahi Jews remained largely opposed to Zionism and lived peacefully with their Arab neighbors (Wurmser, 2005, p. 9).

When not ignored by the Israeli Left, Mizrahim are frequently blamed for Israel's struggles: "they have destroyed beautiful Israel; they are turning Israel into a right wing anti-democratic state; they support the occupation; they are an obstacle to peace" (Yonah, n.d. p. 4). For instance, Palestinian scholar Azmi Bishara explains:

The Palestinian has learned to recognize the Mizrahi as the extremist Israeli, and the Palestinian understands that the Mizrahi is in a predicament, since he constantly strives to distinguish himself from the Arab and his Arabness. The Ashkenazi does not have to emphasize his Jewishness, for it is obvious that he is not an Arab. He doesn't have that problem...yet the Mizrahi resembles the Arab in looks, customs, dialect, and other aspects that force him to differentiate himself from the Arab, in order to win equality on the basis of national identity. If the

criterion for equality is nationalism, then they must prove their nationalism (Bishara, 2003, p. 82).

The demonization of Mizrahim also has the advantage of placing the Ashkenazi-dominated peace camp in the posture of perpetual seekers after peace who must bear the hostility of the government, the right wing, the Mizrahim, and recalcitrant Palestinians. Even the progressive forces in the peace camp that support a Palestinian state alongside Israel seldom abandon the Zionist idea of a Jewish, Westernized state whose subtext inevitably creates ethnic minorities. Peace Now, for instance, is almost exclusively Ashkenazi, with almost no Mizrahi, or for that matter, Israeli-Arab, participation, however, Mizrahi hostility toward Peace Now, rather than being discussed in class and ethnic terms, is conveniently displaced by Ashkenazi liberals as a presumed general Mizrahi animosity toward Arabs (Shohat, 1988, p. 31).

An explanation for the “Arab-hater” reputation among Mizrahim can be contextualized by the cultural oppression and resulting lack of knowledge of one’s own heritage as a result of the Ashkenazi assimilation. According to Shohat (1988), “Arab-hatred when it occurs among Mizrahim is almost always a disguised form of self-hatred. Mizrahi hostility to Arabs, to the extent that it does exist, is very much made in Israel” (Shohat, 1988, p. 13). The formulation that Mizrahim vote exclusively right wing and support hawkish policies ignores a number of crucial points. First, Ashkenazim form the leadership of the right wing parties and many Ashkenazim vote for these parties. The relatively high Mizrahi vote for Likud has almost nothing to do with Likud policies toward Israeli-Arabs and Palestinians; it is, rather, a minimal, if misplaced, expression of

Mizrahi revolt against decades of Labor oppression (Shohat, 1988, p. 31). Second, anti-Arabism forms an integral part of Zionist practice and ideology: Mizrahim should not be scape-goated for what the Ashkenazi establishment itself promoted. Third, acceptance of Mizrahim as full-fledged Israelis is conditioned upon the degree to which Mizrahim rid themselves of Arab characteristics. To meet the standards set by Ashkenazi elite, Mizrahim disown Arab traits, dissociate themselves from Arab culture, and express explicit anti-Arab feelings and views in order to dissociate themselves from their Arab heritage and to enhance their culture, identity, and status as Jews.

Not surprisingly, public opinion data demonstrates the continuing disconnect between Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab communities. Despite shared cultural status and cultural heritage, data suggests that Ashkenazim are more likely to support both Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab minority groups as opposed to mutual support between the two minority groups (Research on Religion, Nation, and State, 2008, p. 22). Socio-economic factors, including a lesser element of risk for the liberal Ashkenazi, as well as their less vulnerable status in Israeli society does not subject them to financial or personal risk in advocating the rights of minority groups whereas the Mizrahim must assert their Jewishness to stay ahead of Israeli-Arabs within Israeli society. Another factor is perhaps education; Smootha (2007) draws connections between level of education, in which Ashkenazi are highest, and political liberalism, therefore suggesting that the most educated within society may be more aware of the struggle of minority groups. Most simply, however, is the prospect that left wing Ashkenazim have less risk and less to lose by supporting minority groups and continuing their own level of comfortable living.

Regardless of contrasting conclusions drawn on the Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab connection and its implications for the future, the facts and figures of comparison consistently report inferior socio-economic status and access to resources within these minority groups when compared to Ashkenazi communities. In assessing the impact of ethnicity in education, religion, and political expression one must consider Ashkenazi prejudice, status gains, assimilation qualifications, and an idea that Smooha (2007) coins, “The Orientalization Vicious Circle.” For instance, prejudice serves as a rationalization of discrimination against minorities in the labor market. Since most Mizrahim compete with Israeli-Arabs and foreign workers over low-status jobs, it is beneficial for the Mizrahim to subjugate their competition in order to optimize their socio-economic opportunity and perhaps expressing anti-Arab feelings and views helps to justify such discrimination. Israeli-Arabs, and other foreign workers, drive wages downward adding an element of competition to the Mizrahi employment field; however, white-collar positions, predominantly Ashkenazim, do not compete with Israeli-Arabs or foreigners in the labor market and hence they are less inclined to develop this sort of resentment.

By exploring the anti-Arab reputation of Mizrahi Israelis, Shohat (1988) provides an analysis of Mizrahi identity through its negation of Oriental traits and the desperate need to prove one’s Israeli identity over all other subcategories. The anti-Arab sentiment among the Mizrahim can be regarded as a link in a vicious circle of the internalization of Orientalism that groups use against each other in response to the prejudice that the West is superior and more advanced than the East. They wish to further consolidate the Jewish character of the state and to preserve and increase discrimination against Israeli-Arabs in

order to enhance their status in society and to get the privileges of the state as Jews (Seligson and Caspi, 1983, p. 61). Because greater anti-Arab ethnocentrism and Jewish Israeli patriotism enhance Mizrahi status in Israel, they have more to gain in Jewish Israeli society by stressing their Jewishness than they do by sharing common heritage with the Israeli-Arabs.

Chetrit (2010) expands upon a new trend known as the New Mizrahim that is encompassing a growing wave of young people who, in the past two decades, have created a new discourse with their critique of Israel's Ashkenazi-dominated social, economic, cultural, and political structures (Chetrit, 2000, p. 62). The New Mizrahim's political identity evolves from the search for a path among Mizrahi political options, and confronts an open, painful dialogue with Israeli society, with Zionism, with the Ashkenazi cultural hegemony, and with the state's oppressive socio-economic institutions and structures (Chetrit, 2010, p. 195). In recent years, their discourse has been appropriated and domesticated by the Ashkenazi Zionist Left under the name "post-Zionism," and has thus entered the historical and political paradigm of Ashkenazi Zionism whether or not they intended it to.

The movement rejects the process of Zionization that they and their parents underwent. They seek no credit for the Ashkenazi Zionist revolution, which their parents' generation had no say in shaping. They seek to form a Mizrahi collective memory from which a Mizrahi consciousness and alternative vision for the state of Israel will emerge (Chetrit, 2000, p. 62-3). Their main historical critique focuses on Zionism's success in suppressing Arab culture and identity. Shasha insists:

The fact that on a popular level most educated Mizrahim of the second and third generations deny the suppression does not mean that there is none: on the contrary, the suppression is so deep as to make any discussion of its existence extremely painful. From this starting point, many educated Mizrahim have set out on a difficult inner journey, sometimes involving the loss of imaginary identities and existing alliances (Shasha, n.d. p. 4).

The central element in the New Mizrahi critique challenges the attempt to erase Mizrahi collective memory and reshape it through a forced socialization process, the outcome of which is necessarily the suppression of Mizrahi identity and culture. Hence the obligatory dialogue with the Israeli-Arab discourse regarding equal citizenship and cultural autonomy, and the Palestinian national struggle for self-determination and territorial sovereignty. Although this new school of intellectual radicalism remains within the halls of academia and without popular support among the broader Mizrahi population, it certainly presents an alternative discourse (Wurmser, 2005, p. 11).

Access to State Resources

Creating a Jewish territorial continuity in the Negev desert and blocking infiltrators from crossing the borders were primary security goals of the new state. A geographical distribution in the Negev created a continued defense and thickening of Jewish settlements along the water line, blocking the largely unguarded border between Egypt and Israel. This was done without consideration for the quality of the soil or for training the immigrants in farming (3.5 percent of Mizrahi immigrants had previous experience with agriculture as many came from urban centers) (Chetrit, 2010, p. 45). The Mizrahi immigrants' presence in the veteran yishuv centers was minuscule, and newly arrived Mizrahim were sent to settle vulnerable areas such as the Negev, the upper

Galilee, and the corridor to Jerusalem. Mizrahim in development towns watched as new immigrants arrived from Europe and North America and were hastily given living arrangements in the cities by the Jewish Agency. Chetrit (2010) recalls that the Romanian immigrants were given adequate housing in the suburbs of Haifa thereby creating a “sense of frustration and an increasing belief that someone planned this injustice towards a specific community. That there is someone who wants to ‘screw the Black people,’ to create purposeful discrimination” (Chetrit, 2010, 147).

In a 1956 report to Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, Berginski, head of the Absorption Department, reported that 85,000 Mizrahi immigrants were directed to development areas whereas incoming Polish Jews were placed in upscale neighborhoods of Zichron Ya’akov and Benyamina on the premise that, “for them, we need reasonable housing...The Jews of Poland come from good living conditions. For them, camp life is much more difficult than it is for a Jew from Yemen, for whom the camp itself is rescue” (Chetrit, 2010, p. 45). In fact, a survey of development town characteristics in which Khazzoom (2008) examined 29 development towns in the 1950s reports that an average of 78 percent of development town residents were Mizrahi (Khazzoom, 2008, p. 254).

The welcome extended to Soviet immigrants arriving during 1969-1970 mirrors this trend. In sharp contrast to the Mizrahi experience twenty years earlier, Prime Minister Meir welcomed the Soviet Jews with statements such as “You are the real Jews. We have been waiting for you for twenty-five years. You are a superior breed and shall provide us with heroes” (Massad, 1996, p. 55). These new immigrants also received special benefits from the government (New Immigrants Benefits Law) while

simultaneously filing petitions to the Tel Aviv Town Hall complaining about living next to “Black Jews” and threatening to leave the country unless the government satisfied their demands (Chetrit, 2010, p. 96).

In contrast to the support that Soviet Jews received upon arrival, Mizrahim continued to struggle to find adequate housing. By 1975, 37,000 Mizrahi families (compared to 2,242 Ashkenazi families) reported living four or more persons to a room (Chetrit, 2010, p. 154). Whereas many second generation Ashkenazim inherited land titles and property, Mizrahim living in poor neighborhoods and development towns had no estate actualization or inheritance privilege and this resulted in second generation Mizrahim with nothing in the way of housing and without the assistance of accumulated family property (Chetrit, 2010, p. 155).

In addition to housing, Mizrahim lacked access to quality education. Fundamental to the preservation of culture, minority or majority, and a primary vehicle through which majority societies have attempted to assimilate minorities, the right to maintain educational institutions is essential for cultural preservation and growth (Hannum, 1991, p. 1441). Mizrahi curriculum was separate and of a lower quality, similar to that provided to Israeli-Arabs. In fact, by the end of the 1950s, Israeli-Arab schools received the Mizrahi-specific curriculum (Sayigh, 1989, p. 264). Over time, as Mizrahi children were taken into Ashkenazi-established schools, they were assigned to separate classes and studied a separate curriculum so as to prepare them for the work market and protect their self-confidence as the Ashkenazi administrators judged them unable to understand the “normal curriculum” (Chetrit, 2010, p. 47).

This pedagogy followed a path of “Cultivation and Rehabilitation”, insinuating that they had undergone a cultural petrification in their countries of origin and must be rescued into the new system. The scholar behind these pedagogical texts, Carl Frankenstein, concluded that:

Had not Zionism come and rescued Muslim countries’ Jews from petrification, they would probably find themselves before long marching in virgin forest paths, wielding bows and arrows, leaving their bodies and souls in the hands of a blind trans-individual destiny (Chetrit, 2010, p. 48).

He continued to state that the “Jews of the Orient” were backward, not capable of understanding the contents and values of Western Civilization, not yet able to “productively join the direction in which the majority of the Jewish population tries to make its life” and, therefore, not dissimilar to the Arabs. Frankenstein’s text was the pedagogy behind the state education system distributed to Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab communities until the early 1980s and is still required reading for all schools of education and teacher training within Israel (Chetrit, 2010, p. 48).

These discriminatory concepts flowed in to the state education plan for Israeli-Arabs as well. Labeled by the Hebrew phrase *Teuney Tipuah* (under-privileged), Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab students were considered not fully developed human beings, mentally and emotionally sick and disabled and in need of therapy and rehabilitation before they would be able to make any intellectual engagement. This created low expectations of students for themselves, creating a chain-reaction that works as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Inequality in education was not an aim in and of itself, but an instrument in shaping the class-ethnic structure of the modern Israeli economy. This inequality in education was in

addition to the existing inequality in land distribution and distribution of capital and salary and became the adhesive that perpetuated these policies in the following generations (Chetrit, 2010, p. 51).

Socio-economic Status

Notwithstanding slight improvements in areas such as housing density and high school graduation rates, social gaps in the early 1980s displayed a continuing ethnic class division between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim, and a more severe disparity in income levels among the first generation born in Israel. According to a study reported by Chetrit (2010), two factors positively affected the state of these gaps: first, the birth rate among Mizrahi women, once more than double the rate for Ashkenazi women, fell to just 10 percent more, and second, inter-ethnic marriages increased to approximately 20 percent of Israeli Jewish marriages by the early 1980s (Chetrit, 2010, p. 153). In the second generation, marriages of educated Mizrahim and Ashkenazim were considered to be a shortcut to improving one's social status (Chetrit, 2010, p. 21).

Israeli government representatives justified the social gap by claiming that personal and cultural patterns, as well as patterns of social organization, prevented Mizrahim from successfully integrating into modern Israel, and that the social gap was a temporary necessity and would greatly decline over time (Swirski, 1989, p. 42). Chetrit (2010) notes that this theory has disproven itself over the past twenty years as the income gap between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim has not diminished, but increased by at least 11 percent (Chetrit, 2010, p. 39). Furthermore, this theory suggests that the new state of

Israel was a booming, economic success when the Mizrahim arrived in the early 1950s. Swirski (1989) disagrees: “A modern economy is not something the new citizens found already constructed upon their arrival, but a process in which they took part. The Mizrahim and Israeli-Arab farmers played an integral role in transforming the Israeli economy into a modern economy” (Swirski, 1989, p. 341). Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab laborers were, in fact, responsible for a large percentage of the farming economy, the massive construction of the 1950s, and the industrial development of the 1950s and 1960s.

By 1960, this gap had become more visible as a result of the unprecedented economic boom that followed the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, with economic benefits accruing overwhelmingly to the Ashkenazim. Neither Mizrahim nor Israeli-Arabs were able to partake of the finances being channeled into the economy and had to make do with low wages as skilled laborers. The Israeli economy had come out of recession, but the quality of life for the majority of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs had not improved. This is evident, for instance, by the fact that by February 1967, 80 percent of Jewish welfare recipients were Mizrahim (Chetrit, 2010, p. 83).

Two other factors further divided the gap between rich and poor: first, an increase in the transfer of funds from the United Jewish Appeal went exclusively to bankers, academics, and senior business executives and therefore not to the labor force, the majority of whom were Mizrahim and, second, German reparation money came to Ashkenazi families and the Israeli government greatly increasing the Ashkenazi revenue and quality of living. These combined factors explain the 30 percent differential in

Mizrahi salaries versus those of Ashkenazim by the late 1960s (Chetrit, 2010, p. 85). Additionally, although the 1967 war created a blood bond between Israeli brothers and increased a sentiment of national unity, it also supported Zionist Eurocentric theories on the superiority of Western over Arab civilization. The implicit message to the Mizrahim was visual and clear: technology, science, and strategic sophistication were on the side of the Ashkenazi-led, Western Israeli state which had defeated the Arab civilization from which Mizrahim came.

Popular Views of Mizrahi Identity

Several public opinion polls demonstrate the complexities of the modern Mizrahi identity through various questions regarding socio-economic status, feelings of repression, attitudes towards Israeli-Arabs, satisfaction with government, and the distribution of social services throughout the state.

Relationship to the State

In a 2007 survey, 60 percent of Mizrahim self-identified as “Israeli-Jew” and 19 percent self-identified primarily as “Jewish”, a self-categorization which reflects a prevailing sense of belonging to a national group and not to an ethnic minority (Tzfadia, 2007, p. 53). In contrast, communal-ethnic categories such as “Moroccan/Tunisian-Israeli” or “Mizrahi-Israeli” were selected by only 10 percent of the respondents (Tzfadia, 2007, p. 62).

Expanding its analysis of Mizrahi identity in regard to housing and state policies, the survey looks at six representative peripheral development towns, Shlomi, Ma’alot,

Beit She'an, Kiryat Gat, Ofakim, and Dimona, examining the attitudes of residents regarding a range of subjects connected to feelings of place, identity, and position in Israeli society. While the resentment of forced settlement does not dominate the sentiments of development town residents, an ambivalent perspective is detectable in other responses. For example, most respondents (63 percent) claim that the establishment of the towns in the 1950s was “necessary” however, 57 percent of respondents also believe that the state’s policy towards the towns is discriminatory, particularly in comparison to the state’s treatment of nearby (mainly Ashkenazi) kibbutzim (Tzfidia, 2007, p. 71).

The survey shows that local communalism as a center of identity formation has perhaps emerged in order to reconcile the tension between the esteemed value placed on settlement by Zionism and the actual deprivation of the Mizrahim. Their shared fate, daily life, common origin, and similar economic class have created a clear sense of belonging to the development town. To some extent, this is meant to counter the negative images commonly produced about the towns among the general Israeli public, images which have frequently served as an impediment to mobility and success.

Access to State Resources

By 1982 the Jewish population of Israel included 1,552,100 Mizrahi immigrants, 1,273,400 Ashkenazi immigrants, and 494,600 Israeli-born citizens, the majority of whom were Mizrahim due to their greater birth rate. Of the bottom 10 percent of the economy, three-fifths were Mizrahim and one-fifth was comprised of Israeli-Arab

families (Ben-Rafael and Peres, 2005, p. 111). The gap in elementary and high school graduation rates had decreased among first generation immigrants but saw an increase among second generation, Israeli-born pupils. For instance at the end of the 1970s, only 23.8 percent of students in academic tracks were Mizrahim born in Israel, while Mizrahim accounted for 55 percent of the Israeli population. By 1984 only 7.6 percent of bachelor's degree recipients, 2 percent of master's degree recipients, and 0.5 percent of doctoral degree recipients were Mizrahim born in Israel (Chetrit, 2010, p. 154).

In an April 2009 poll by the Israel Democracy Institute which asked respondents to evaluate the state concerning its ability to address social or domestic concerns, Mizrahim selected from three performance evaluation choices (positive, mediocre, and negative) in regards to security, economy, public order, and society. The poll portrays low levels of positive evaluation: 27 percent of Mizrahim feel the state is properly addressing security concerns, 28 percent are satisfied with the economy, 19 percent evaluate public order as positive, and 15 percent evaluate society as positive (Tamar, 2009, p. 28). The survey inquires about the role of the state in socio-economic matters to which 47 percent of respondents indicated they preferred greater involvement. Regarding the future of Israel as a welfare state or as a more privatized role, respondents split between 44.3 percent who believed services should come from the state and 44.3 percent who believed services should come from a social service organization with the remaining 11.5 percent respondents choosing "do not know" (Tamar, 2009, p. 41).

Socio-economic Status

In a 2000 survey, connections between various characteristics of population groups and their socio-economic status were examined. It reveals that Israel's policies have caused internal ethnic and class divisions which now threaten the prospects of Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation and that the association of peace primarily with the interests of Israel's economic and cultural elites has alienated peripheral groups (Yiftachel, 2000, p. 749). The report suggest that the distribution of individuals' abilities and talents in a population is unrelated to group affiliation.

According to this approach, if the channels of mobility are equally open to all, this will create a random dispersal of various groups' representatives in various spheres of employment, degrees of professional responsibility, areas of residence, and educational achievement. Thus, even if there is no equality in the achievements of individuals, an equal society's image is judged by opportunities, not by results. In contrast to this approach, a second option is presented: in an unequal society, certain social groups have an especially high level of representation and, over time, with inferior employment spheres, they tend to live in peripheral areas and their members' academic achievements are low. The basic assumption of the survey demonstrates that the state and the market are indifferent to characteristics of cultural affiliation and ethnic origin, therefore ignoring the social role of the collective in determining individuals' place in society when it examines their socio-economic state.

Scholarly Views on Israeli-Arab Identity

Israel's declaration of statehood and ensuing War of Independence, known to Palestinians as the Naqba (catastrophe), transformed Arabs from a majority in their region to a minority group demographically and in terms of religion, ethnicity, language, and culture. This resulted in complex identity formation for Israeli-Arabs between place and identity and between the self and others in the broader Palestinian narrative. Local differences in experience imposed themselves on the political discourse, which began to reflect a differentiation process among the different Palestinian communities, and these variations certainly extend to Israeli-Arabs within the state of Israel (Kemp et al., 2004, p. 141).

Literature dedicated to the study of the Israeli-Arab experience is often discussed with regard to Israel's Jewish and democratic features as well as state security. Scholars (Falah, 1996, Ghanem, 2001, Hamid, 1975) who discuss the Israeli-Arab view of, and relationship with, the state, depict the manner in which Israel upholds equality for its Arab citizens, the Israeli-Arab response in the emergence of new modes of political organization and action, and the connection between their economic dissatisfaction and the Palestinian national cause. These influences on the Israeli-Arab identity are depicted through their relationship to the state, their access to state resources, and their socio-economic status.

Relationship to the State

Zionism's conceptualization of unity among the Jewish people, with all Jews being defined as closer to each other than to the culture in their state of origin, was

tantamount is the dismembering of the Israeli-Arab community's identity. Indeed, in the case of Israeli-Arabs and Palestinians, the Euro-Israeli separation of Jewish and the Middle Eastern identities has ideologically facilitated the actual dismantling of the communities of the Arab world, while pressuring Mizrahim as well as Israel's non-Jewish citizens to realign their identity according to Zionist Euro-Israeli paradigms (Shohat, 1999, p. 6). By constructing a master narrative of universal Jewish victimization entailing the claim that the Jewish nation faces a common historical enemy in the Muslim Arab world, Mizrahi Jews are subject to the same historical, cultural, and psychological dispossession that Israeli-Arabs face wherein they must choose which aspects of their history to embrace or reject.

The reasons for the persistence of the old discourse, which serves Ashkenazi interests, are not difficult to discern. Israeli-Arabs were never, as a group, partners in the policies of state building but were merely bystanders or victims in a process of integration and adaptation, ostensibly as in any immigrant state; however, Israel was unique, for it arose through immigration itself and was formed in the process of immigrant absorption, with the number of immigrants exceeding the number of those absorbing them. The collective (i.e., the Zionist movement) sought to maintain Ashkenazi dominance and cultural hegemony and, in this light, anti-Arabism was one consequence (Shasha, n.d. p. 11).

While recognizing the Palestinian problem, the Ashkenazi Left, appearing as an enlightened and progressive force in the country, was prepared for a Palestinian state based upon partition. At the same time, the Left took the lead in avoiding the Israeli-Arab

question. This is an anomaly: How can one explain the same group's different attitudes toward "the East"? Perhaps part of the explanation lies in the fact that the proposed solution to the Palestinian question is separation. Drawing a border between Israeli and its 'other' may solve the Palestinian problem but this is not an option with Israeli-Arabs who wish to remain in the state. It is this difference that enables the Ashkenazi Left to recognize the Palestinian, but not the Israeli-Arab, question (Shenhav, n.d. p. 4).

Chetrit (2010) cites a 1983 article written by Uri Avneri which demonstrates the necessity of acknowledging both ethnic groups in Israel:

The ethnic problem in Israel is no less dangerous to our future than the problem of peace with the Palestinian people. All of this large public suffers a deep sense of humiliation. The humiliation of its tradition and culture, of its past; daily social humiliation. It has lost its cultural assets, which were seen by the Ashkenazi society as primitive and contemptible (Chetrit, 2010, p. 159).

In these conditions, it is not surprising that the model of identification and cooperation offered Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs alike the most comfortable possibility for survival. With or without significant progress in the peace process, the circumstances of Israeli-Arabs will continue to reflect the tension between the state's Jewish and democratic characters, and will accordingly make progress in their struggle for development and equality only to the extent that they become mobilized and united enough to exert meaningful influence in the political arena.

Access to State Resources

While the Law of Return grants citizenship to any Jew worldwide who wishes to settle in the country of Israel, such privilege is denied for Arabs who left the state and this

raises complications for Israeli-Arab families with relatives outside of Israel.

Furthermore, military service continues to be denied for Israeli-Arabs although it is mandatory for almost all Jewish citizens. This exemption is not a matter of law but of administrative practice and is probably unavoidable as long as the primary task of the military is to fight Arabs. Indeed, in Hurwitz's interview of Mizrahi Israeli Meir Amor he describes,

The existing structure of social interests in Israel has produced a culture that by definition sanctifies a permanent condition of conflict. It is a war structure that created a war culture to sustain it. Its interests include the idea of exclusive Jewish control of the land, Western chauvinism, and a military industry in the economic sphere. These together give rise to an overlay of militaristic ideology which itself incorporates Jewish religiosity, claims for Jewish genius, and a replication of Western values. Any idea of reconciliation or integration in the Middle East and with its peoples is immediately translated as a threat to the hegemony of the Ashkenazim (Hurwitz, 1991, p. 69-70).

As a result, many social rights in Israel have been tied to the performance of military service, so that most Israeli-Arabs either do not enjoy them or are entitled to smaller benefits. This omission is also highly symbolic of the Israeli-Arab exclusion from attending to the common good and equates to a lack of prestige or belonging by being excluded (Peled, 1992, p. 436).

Also excluding Israeli-Arab citizens is the 1985 amendment to Israel's Basic Laws wherein candidates for parliament may not participate if their goals or actions include any of the following: negation of Israel as the state of the Jewish people, negation of the democratic character of the state, or incitement of racism (Peled, 1992, p. 438).

These provisions, that is, that Israel is the land of Jews all over the world, but not

necessarily of its own citizens, degrades Israeli-Arabs to a status of invisible outsiders, as if Israel were not their own state (Smootha, 1990, p. 402).

Israeli-Arabs have experienced many difficulties in the advancement of their political, social, cultural, and economic development (Ghanem, 2001, p. 13). Like the incoming Mizrahi immigrants, Israeli-Arabs who remained in the new state were forced to peripheral towns and refugee camps on the borders. Unlike any of the new immigrants, remaining Israeli-Arabs were disposed of their land and belongings and forced to watch as the Zionist spirit pioneered their assets (Falah, 1996, p. 281). The ongoing conflict coexists with Israel's domestic socio-economic and political problems that continue to affect Israeli-Arabs. The conflict impairs the basic status of Israeli-Arabs as loyal citizens and being viewed as a part of the enemy has related consequences including being treated as a potential fifth column of people stuck in transition and exclusion from the national security establishment.

Socio-economic Status

A history of inter-ethnic and inter-faith cooperation was lost in the assimilation of the Israeli-Arabs to the new pathways of Israeliness. To be modern was to be fully integrated into the mindset and value-system of the Ashkenazim. Hence, Israeli-Arabs of the first generation, deprived of all political power, struggled to survive in alien social and economic structures and found themselves subjected to a socialization process that in essence urged them to erase their identity and culture (Shasha, n.d. p. 4). Cultural and economic oppression shaped by an official governmental policy of inequality in favor of

the Ashkenazi Israelis had become a permanent condition by the 1950s. Israeli-Arabs were living under military rule with severe restrictions imposed on their civil rights. Any act of protest among them was considered an enemy action and was dealt a harsh military response (Chetrit, 2010, p. 58).

As a result, Israeli-Arabs shared the inferior status and diminished employment, the roots of which set Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab laborers against each other in a competition for socio-economic gain. With the demand for agricultural laborers to pioneer the land and, later, the dismantlement of the welfare state and the increased essence of competitive capitalist markets in the spirit of globalization, blue-collar labor provided Mizrahim and Israel-Arabs with employment opportunities which resulted in lower wages as competition increased.

Popular Views of Israeli-Arab Identity

Public opinion data demonstrate the complexities of the Israeli-Arab identity through its report of self-identification, dissatisfaction with the government and the political system, distribution of social services throughout the state, as well as current socio-economic status.

Relationship to the State

Since 2003, Israeli-Arab support for the proposition that "Jews in Israel are a people who have a right to a state" has declined from 75.5 percent to 60.8 percent while support for "two states for two peoples" has plummeted from 88.8 percent to 65 percent. This is consistent among those who list Israeli citizenship as the most important aspect of

their personal identity where that population has decreased from 29.6 percent in 2003 to 19.8 percent in 2010, and those who identify primarily with the Palestinian people have increased from 18.8 percent in 2003 to 32 percent in 2010 (Birnbaum, 2010, p.2).

This trend in self-definition is significant in the way in which Israeli-Arabs relate to their government and its institutions. The vast majority of survey participants stated that they did not trust the government, with 92.5 percent expressing distrust to complete distrust. The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Construction and Housing received the poorest ratings, with 87.9 percent and 86.1 percent of participants respectively stating that they completely distrusted to distrusted these ministries. Four other ministries were surveyed: 75.8 percent of Israeli-Arabs distrust the Ministry of Interior, 74.3 percent distrust the Ministry of Education and Culture, and 73.6 percent distrust the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Social Affairs (Hamdan, 2008, p. 42). The number of Israeli-Arabs who believe that "despite its shortcomings, the regime in Israel is a democracy for the Arab citizens as well" has fallen from 63.1 percent to 50.5 percent while the minority that supports using "all means, including violence" to achieve political ends has jumped from 5.4 percent to 13.9 percent (Birnbaum, 2010, p. 2).

Access to State Resources

Despite the complex Israeli-Arab relation to the state, they share citizenship, its rights and obligations, with Israeli Jews. This not only qualifies them to receive services of the state, but it also holds them to regulations and restrictions which affect political action. Political sociology suggests that there is a close relationship between citizenship

laws and ideologies and the representation of the state and society, often in terms of the existence of an ethnic or national rather than a civic base which affects the ease with which non-citizens can gain access to citizenship through naturalization; however, legal citizenship can be used as a means of social inclusion or exclusion and this is reflected in the case of Israeli-Arabs (Quah and Sales, 2000, p. 161).

In 2010, Israeli-Arabs comprise 20 percent of the Israeli population and own 2.5 percent of the state's land. Heavily populated Israeli-Arab Nazareth is a representative example: although the population of Israeli-Arab Nazareth is 1.5 times greater than the population of Jewish Upper Nazareth, land allotted for Israeli-Arabs in Nazareth is three times smaller than that of Upper Nazareth (Tibi, 2010, p. 1). Another example is a comparison of the towns of Omer and Tel Sheva in the south. In 2004, there were 6,000 residents in Jewish-populated Omer with a territory of 17,000 dunams, while in Israeli-Arab Tel Sheva there were 10,000 residents in only 4,000 dunams. This equates to 2.8 dunams per person compared to 0.4 among the Israeli-Arab population (Tibi, 2010, p. 3).

The condition of existing infrastructure and urban services in Israeli-Arab towns and villages reflects these disproportions. In every area aside from health, the 2008 Adalah survey finds that most participants classified the urban services and infrastructure in Arab towns and villages as very poor to poor. Health services were considered average by 46.6 percent, and very poor to poor by only 36.5 percent. In regard to services and infrastructure, recreational sites (including public parks and playgrounds) and industrial zones, approximately 90 percent of the participants rated these to be very poor to poor, 84.4 percent considered cultural services (theatre, music, etc.) to be very poor to poor,

and 77.5 percent rated physical infrastructure (such as roads, sewage system and drainage) as very poor to poor, as did 78.6 percent for commercial areas and 72.1 percent for education. When asked to prioritize issues requiring immediate governmental action, respondents ranked the top five issues to be education, employment, jurisdictional boundaries of Arab towns and villages, local authority budgets, and housing (Hamdan 2008, p. 46).

In an attempt to provide additional employment opportunities while simultaneously bridging inequalities among Jews and Arabs in Israel, it was suggested in 2009 that Israeli-Arabs be encouraged to volunteer for military or civic service. This idea was largely rejected by the Israeli-Arab population, in fact, in a survey conducted by the Israeli-Arab youth Association Baladana in 2009, 63.7 percent of Israeli-Arab youth between the ages 17 and 20, the age at which they would be encouraged to volunteer, responded that this option would be unappealing, impractical, and ineffective (Khoury, n.d. p. 1).

Socio-economic Status

The Israeli-Arab population is characterized by high unemployment rates and low rates of participation in the work force. In addition, small businesses, and family businesses, that are part of the Israeli-Arab economy suffer from difficulties in adaptability and a short life span. Radical changes in the Israeli economy, such as the development of technology-based industries, the decline of traditional industries, the retreat of the welfare state, the reduction of the public sector, and the absence of

government policy, have accelerated the marginalization of the Israeli-Arab population in the Israeli economy.

In 2008, Israeli-Arabs constituted about 11 percent of the workforce although they comprised approximately 20 percent of the entire population. Working Arabs earn about 70 percent of the overall average wage. Only 18.5 percent of Arab women participate in the work force - a figure that has not changed significantly since 1995. The Arab population generally suffers from a lack of recognition and insensitivity on the part of the Ashkenazi majority, and of course from a paucity of employment opportunities. The unemployment rate among Jewish men is 8.2 percent, compared to 10.3 percent among Arabs. The gap is greater among women: the unemployment rate among Jewish women is 9.6 percent, compared to 14 percent among Arab women (Haider, 2008, p. 46).

In 2010, 1.3 million Israeli-Arabs account for approximately 8 percent of economic activity, with 6 percent of public sector jobs and fewer than 2 percent of the positions in government ministries and parliament. Similarly, in the private sector, Israeli-Arab entrepreneurs struggle to get loans from Israeli banks due to discrimination or property laws that favor Jewish ownership, while government funding for Arab Israeli towns has been reduced (Mossawa Centre, n.d., p. 3).

Analysis and Conclusion

The development of a collective identity, in particular one based on state-related grievances, translates into political narratives which lead the group in its political action. The most important factors of Mizrahi identity formation include the reconciliation of

their Arab roots with the Zionist narrative in Israel; their expression of modern Israel's Jewish character whether that be internalized in the Sephardic tradition or in a secular, ethnic manner; and their minority group experience in housing, education, employment, and politics from the early years of the state through the present. These factors can be seen throughout the Mizrahi political narrative wherein pledges of national unity are intermixed with the value of maintaining the Sephardic tradition and the expression of dissatisfaction with states resources.

For Israeli-Arabs, the most important factors of identity come from the negation of the Jewish Israeli 'other' and the Zionist narrative, however, their identity formation is complicated further by their internalization of Palestinian or Arab nationalism and what that means for their notion of statehood. Cohen (2010) states, "Israel's leadership understood that consciousness guides the behavior of individuals. The state's goal was to detach Israeli-Arabs from the Palestinian national identity and sever ties to the Arab national movement as well (Cohen, 2010, p. 3). To this end, the state sought to indoctrinate Israeli-Arab children with the Zionist narrative, to widen the fissures between, and within, religious communities (Muslims, Christians, Druze), to promote obedience to the authorities, and to challenge and discredit non-Israeli national identities, thus shaping the contours of Israeli-Arab political discourse. In fact, many aspects of Israeli-Arab identity, such as access to housing, education, employment, and politics, root from who one is not rather than who one is. As a result, the Israeli-Arab political narrative appears to be a continuous tension between its citizenship and its cultural roots, wherein campaigning for civil advancements obscures their national ties to Israel,

Palestinian nationalism, and the Arab world in general. Whereas a main aspect of Mizrahi identity is the effort to assimilate with the Israeli mainstream (Gurr's communal contenders), the Israeli-Arab identity must include, on some level, a rejection of the Israeli mainstream.

With these primary factors of identity development at the core of Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab communities, it is clear that Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab collective identities are not stagnant because they are affected by the reality of resources and politics on the ground. As education and employment opportunities swell or dissipate with state security, this affects the way in which Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs relate to the state and to their collective contributing to a Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab group identity that evolves with, and in response to, the political climate in which it exists. Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab identities are dynamic and affect their political narrative; however, certain aspects of the narrative may remain stagnant despite the reality on the ground. For instance, as long as the primary goal of Mizrahim is to fully assimilate within the Zionist mainstream and the Israeli-Arab objective is to remain autonomous, whether as a national minority or in order to enact its right to self-determination, it is unlikely that Israel's political climate is sufficiently dynamic to foster cooperation among these group narratives.

In regard to the Mizrahi view of, and relationship with, Israeli-Arabs, there is a lack of substantial literature and therefore a need for relevant works to be combined in order to obtain a more comprehensive analysis. The majority of literature which does address the Mizrahi relationship with Israeli-Arabs comes from scholars regarded as radical or peripheral and the majority of this literature agrees that while both groups have

elements of a shared past and presently experience similar struggles of minority status, this does not directly equate to potential for future collaboration. Despite a shared past and connection to the Arab world, it is argued that nostalgic cultural connections are not significant enough to overcome decades of internalizing the “other” as competition. While Mizrahim strive to be fully accepted as Israeli, Israeli-Arabs continue to have conflict of interests between their commitment to a national identity and an Arab identity and these opposing identity goals result in Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political action working in divergent directions. Furthermore, and against the thesis that Mizrahim would display greater empathy and sympathy toward Israeli-Arabs, Mizrahim continue to define themselves and their lifestyles as predominantly Jewish and Israeli (Ben-Rafael and Peres, 2005, p. 167). This demonstrates the desire to promote one’s Israeli identity above other possible labels and suggests a rejection or dismissal of Arab cultural heritage.

When applying their analysis to the broader vision of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, scholars vary regarding the extent to which Israel’s internal issues should factor in to the peace process. For instance, Lockman (1996) and Peled (1998) uphold that contrary to the Palestinian question, which can be treated by disengagement (two states for two peoples), this is an internal problem that must be coped with only by internal methods. Komash and Isawi (2005), Rejwan (1999), Shenhav (1999), Chetrit (2010), and Smooha (2007) uphold that in order to successfully resolve the conflict, domestic inequalities will be of great significance on an international scope. Their belief lies in a hope that the adoption and application of civil rights could be not only a good-faith gesture to the international community, but also a demonstration of commitment to

democracy and the overall well-being of its citizens. While the path to group identity and political consciousness for Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs may have mirrored one another, the ends that they intended to reach were conflicting, if not opposing. Although they have shared grievances concerning socio-economic opportunities in Israeli society, Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political activity often pursue political goals that are incompatible.

Chapter Four: Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Political Action

In this chapter I describe how Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs entered political life in Israel as a result of their identity and the issues associated with it including the development of political activism and parliamentary parties. Neither group's path to political organization was instantaneous with the declaration of Israeli statehood but rather both groups experienced a period of stabilizing in their new situation before actively seeking a political voice. By exploring the political climate in the time of Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab organization, this chapter will address Mizrahi political activity, Israeli-Arab political activity, as well as collaborative political activity between both groups in Israel and how this relates to the peace process.

Political Action

Minority groups encounter complex identity formation wherein a distinct collective group struggles to maintain its unique qualities while seeking acceptance and representation among the state's majority. As these collective identities solidify, the group is the focus of political mobilization and action in defense or promotion of the group's self-defined interest. Gurr (1994) states that although ethno-political movements can energize group members for sustained collective action, they have little capacity for political control (Gurr, 1994, p. 365). In fact, the quest of disadvantaged peoples for greater autonomy or access to power does not necessarily lead to political action. Social,

collective attributes are important not because they translate directly and deterministically to a set of interests and concomitant preferences, but rather because they locate individuals in social structure and hence affect exposure to political information. As a result, voters can be understood based on where they reside, in the circumstances which surround them, and must be studied in relation to their specific place and time (Goodin and Klingemann, 1996, 228-9). Furthermore, social contexts are politically consequential because they influence the probabilities of social interaction within and across group boundaries, thereby affecting the social flow of politically relevant information. Social contexts lie beyond the reach of individual control because they are not manufactured by way of individual preference.

Indeed, acting collectively requires some form of collective identity or consciousness wherein social movements are collective challenges by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities. Movements typically mount disruptive action and do so in the interest of common claims. They are rooted in feelings of solidarity or collective identity and it is by sustaining their resulting collective action that contention turns into a social movement (Quah and Sales, 2000, p. 236). According to resource mobilization theory, social movements emerge not so much because grievances increase, but because there is an increase in the availability of resources in an aggrieved population (Quah and Sales, 2000, p. 238).

The mere existence of ethnic, social identities does not ensure that political mobilization will take place; however, aspects of ethnic identity may facilitate collective

action on behalf of group goals and create feelings of solidarity, mutual cooperation, and unity of values that may make the attainment of shared goals more likely. A primary goal of ethnic mobilization is the capturing of the state and the use of its resources and prestige in an effort to make positive comparative evaluations. Lowrance (2006) states that it is through group comparisons that collective self-esteem is established, power is often seen as conferring status upon the holder, and winning the state's favor is thus a coveted ethnic goal (Lowrance, 2006, p. 171). The dominance of one ethnic group in the state apparatus can impose distressing identity dilemmas among other ethnic groups, which become minority groups. Although the dominant group's collective is enhanced, minority groups suffer from powerlessness, a lack of collective self-esteem, and identity confusion.

Although the identity merging of two minority groups may be able to increase the groups' political voice, it is more probable that minority groups will seek acceptance in to the majority alone in order to further subjugate another minority group in an attempt to gain socio-economic status. The incentive to join the majority group is stronger in an economically competitive setting when the alternative is remaining outside the group and therefore in a lower socio-economic group. Although minority group collaboration may provide greater representation and pressure for policy change that could change the socio-economic class divide, minority groups are more likely to aspire independently toward majority group assimilation.

Often, it may be in the best interest of the majority group to maintain ethnic tension among its population in order to consolidate its own power. Goodin and

Klingemann (1996) state that the underlying logic is that, under particular social, institutional, and environmental circumstances, race becomes crucial as a line of cleavage in politics. Ethnic politics become a product of time, place, and circumstance, as a particular setting gives rise to the realization of particularly defined interests and impulses. Chetrit (2010, p. 16) cites Edward Said:

So long as a group's identity is shaped and defined by the dominant cultural hegemony, not only does the group not determine the components and borders of its identity, it is also manipulated to serve the hegemony's agenda and internalizes its own false identity.

Goodin and Klingemann confirm this notion that political elites may manipulate ethnic tension in order to enhance their political agenda: this means that race typically grows more important when the political dominance of the majority is numerically threatened by the presence of a minority, and when politicians construct coalitional appeals that successfully exploit the racial divide. (Goodin and Klingemann, 1996, 243).

Mikesell and Murphy (1991) describe the expression of minority group aspiration as the desire for recognition of its collective identity and proportional representation in national government (Mikesell and Murphy, 1991, p. 582). The quest for recognition implies the rejection or containment of desire for separation, autonomy, or independence wherein a group may desire greater participation in a larger national society. Pressure groups form from the collective desire to bring policy change and from this foundation the possibility of political activity begins (Rosenblum, 2003, p. 23). In this way, identity politics play an important role in the majority rule as they bring cultural pluralism and transform or expand the influence of minority parties.

In parliamentary systems such as Israel, minority parties are more able to achieve electoral success because a greater number of parties may be elected and Rosenblum (2003) argues that this representation strengthens the collective's link to the state, fosters more positive attitudes toward government, and encourages political participation (Rosenblum, 2003, p. 26). The integration of minority parties also requires an element of assimilation to majority rule in order to apply pressure for policy change and therefore may affect the parties' platforms which won electoral representation, altering them to be consistent with the majority parties (Rosenblum, 2003, p. 27).

Leaders of movements for minority rights and national self-determination may draw from a combination of strategies including electoral and interest-group politics and organized violence. A key strategy for most contemporary nonviolent movements is a public assembly of large numbers of demonstrators or marchers, showing officials and opponents that many people support a cause and, not incidentally, signaling their capacity for disruption (Gurr, 2000, p. 156). Because dominant groups in multiethnic societies and empires have preconceptions about who belongs to the political community and who does not, the political rules of the game excludes or marginalizes ethnic and national minorities (Gurr, 2000, p. 157). As a result, success for ethnic movements is often forced toward political action and may entail attainment of some of their objectives through maintaining the state, staying in office, and securing public order (Gurr, 2000, p. 158).

In Israel, the electoral system allows small parties to be active in the national parliament, the Knesset, a strong institution that creates laws and appoints the government by majority votes. Unlike countries that are divided into voting districts, all

of Israel is treated as a single district with 120 representatives wherein a party is guaranteed a seat in the Knesset if it obtains at least two percent of the vote. Since no single party wins a majority of Knesset seats, large parties depend on support from small ones to form coalitions resulting in disproportionate influence of smaller fringe parties. Israel has seen over 30 governments, each comprised of 10 to 15 parties since 1948.

The government formed in 2009 led by Likud veteran Benjamin Netanyahu and his mainly right-wing coalition is a prime example of coalition power: twelve parties were elected to the Eighteenth Knesset in February among which the United Arab List, Hadash, and Balad represented Israeli-Arab or Arab-Jewish parties, while SHAS continued to earn a predominantly Mizrahi vote (Knesset elections, n.d.). In fact, 71 percent of the Mizrahi vote supported either Likud or SHAS whereas 83 percent of Israeli-Arab vote supported the United Arab List or Balad (Knesset Election Results, n.d.). Of the twelve elected parties, six joined the ruling coalition, including SHAS (Gillick, 2009, 37-9).

The Israeli case demonstrates the viability of democratic institutions with ethnic features to enact a distinct type of pluralistic parliamentary system. The dominance of an ethnic group is institutionalized along with democratic procedures and, as a result, contradictions may arise between the two principles in the organization of the state. Areas of conflict are the features of the public domain, equality of individual rights and duties, collective rights extended to the minority, and the opening of the power structure for the minority (Smootha, 2008, p. 25).

Throughout its history, Israel has felt pressured to defend itself ideologically and militaristically. Thus the notion of national security has been deeply internalized and widely used by the authorities to justify many government policies. This is consistent with the notion that Israel must protect its borders first before committing itself fully to domestic challenges therefore adding complications to the Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab struggle to mobilize politically. This also contributes to a corresponding connection between political success and a party's inclusion of national security in its agenda. Naturally, this has complicated the role of Israeli-Arab political parties that attempt to operate within the Israeli system without abandoning their own agenda. Required of the agenda of each political party that wishes to serve in Knesset must be the support of the claim that Israel is the rightful state of its people and that it is both Jewish and democratic and this prerequisite may either disqualify or alter the agenda of Israeli-Arab parties.

Mizrahi Political Action

The Mizrahi political movement can be divided into demonstrations and local collective actions, organized protest and rebellion movements, and political parties including the struggle within the political system and its institutions (Chetrit, 2010, p. 4). Political organization of the Mizrahim started with small demonstrations beginning in 1949 during which thousands of Mizrahim marched against ethnic discrimination demanding "bread, work, and housing" (Massad, 1996, p. 66). A similar example is the Wadi Salib uprising, which broke out in 1959 in the development town of Wadi Salib on the outskirts of Haifa, and soon spread throughout the country, spawning a campaign

against Ashkenazi-Zionist suppression before being quelled several months later. It was in this atmosphere that the Panterim Sh'horim, Black Panthers, organized at the end of 1970. Mizrahi participation in the June 1967 war, which legitimized their Israeli identity, had an emboldening effect in their political involvement. Simultaneously, the 1970 ceasefire agreement with Egypt removed an external threat factor and allowed for internal problems to come to the forefront. Claiming that Israel must deal with its security and its social issues simultaneously and not exclusively, they demanded for both banners be raised: "a weak society, socially and culturally degenerate, suffering from harsh poverty, will never be security strong either" (Chetrit, 2010, p. 90).

When the government moved to renovate Israeli-Arab houses now inhabited by Mizrahim and build luxury housing for new Ashkenazi immigrants, Mizrahi anger swelled. Demonstrations began in the spring of 1971 drawing up to thousands of people to the Jerusalem City Hall buildings. Demands included the elimination of slums, free education and housing for the needy, the elimination of "reform school" (where a number of Panther leaders had served time), higher wages for supporting large families, and full representation of Mizrahim in all institutions (Shenhav, n.d. p. 4). Prime Minister Golda Meir's profound alienation from the reality of inequality and of the immigrants' hardship as well as her consistent denial of the state's responsibility for the Mizrahim situation was rivaled only by her alienation and denial of the Palestinian issue and the existence of a Palestinian people in general.

The Panthers attempted to counteract the declining support evidenced by dwindling demonstrations by establishing themselves as a political party, the "Black

Panthers-Israeli Democrats,” through a merger with the Israeli Democrats led by Mizrahi MK (Member of Knesset) Shalom Cohen. In the December 1973 election following the war, however, they failed to get a single candidate either in the Knesset or in any of the twenty-six local councils for which they ran (Massad, 1996, p. 55). The electoral failure led to internal disagreements and this led to the splintering of the movement and its cooptation by leftist establishments and Ashkenazi-dominated parties. The failure to mobilize large sectors of the Mizrahi community and lack of economic base resulted in a short-lived prominence on the Israeli political scene (Chetrit, 2000, p. 63).

On the political party and extra-parliamentary levels, the ideological arguments of Mizrahi protests in the 1970s can be summarized as the demand to end “ethnic discrimination” and to accept the Mizrahim as equal citizens in Israel. The Black Panthers insisted, “We are protesting for our right to be like all the citizens of this state” (Sabag, 2008, p. 3). This approach sought to integrate the Mizrahim with “Israeliness” and to acquire the identity offered by European Zionist hegemony. For this reason, all radical action focused on protest against what they defined as “material discrimination” rather than on the effort to propose alternatives (Chetrit, 2000, p. 54-5). Although the Black Panthers did not formulate an alternative worldview, they were heralds of a new Mizrahi discourse. Their most important achievement was to place on the Israeli agenda and in Mizrahi public consciousness the discrimination and unequal economic relations in Israeli Jewish society, directly pointing out the overlap with the Ashkenazi-Mizrahi ethnic divide. The Panthers were also the first Mizrahim in politics to make the connection between the occupation of the Palestinian territories and the difficult

economic and social plight of the Mizrahim (Chetrit, 2000, p. 56). The importance of the movement was that it broke the dam of silence, triggering an irreversible process of radicalizing Mizrahi political consciousness.

During this time, Mizrahi political behavior was demonstrated through the larger, Ashkenazi-led parties. In the “Upset of 1977,” Mizrahim were euphoric when the Likud party won a resounding electoral victory against the Labor party. The massive vote for Likud by second-generation Mizrahim was decisive, and many saw the elections as a Mizrahi victory over Labor and the beginning of independence under the leadership of Begin. By 1980, however, it was clear that Likud was not going to change the basic order of things, and Mizrahi activists began to think of alternatives. In August of that year, an event called “Israel Is Me” was held in Binyanei Hauma, a Jerusalem convention hall, with the aim of establishing an umbrella of all the major Mizrahi groups (Chetrit, 2000, p. 51). Also significant was the publication, a year later, of Shlomo Swirski’s groundbreaking work, *Israel: The Mizrahi Majority*, which challenged the prevailing establishmentarian sociological thesis of “modernization and development” as the explanation for the inferior economic status of the Mizrahim and gave academic legitimacy to the arguments of many young Mizrahi intellectuals (Massad, 1996, p. 61).

The first Mizrahi party to achieve official electoral success, *Tnu'at Masoret Yisrael* (Tami), was established on the eve of the 1981 elections not as a result of a new ideological consciousness but rather the result of a personal crisis of Mizrahi politicians within the Ashkenazi-dominated National Religious Party (NRP). Headed by Aharon Abuhatzera who spoke of humiliated Mizrahi pride, the new party was joined by Aharon

Uzan, a veteran Mizrahi politician within Labor (Massad, 1996, p. 57). Although their motives in founding the new party had not been radical, their actions were. Drawing on the confidence born of the Mizrahi “victory” in the 1977 elections, the new party was premised on the belief that the Mizrahim had the maturity and ability to change their voting patterns.

Indeed, the new party succeeded in rallying diverse currents and was able to demonstrate for the first time that it was possible to overcome the manipulation of the party key that divided and ruled their electoral power. Tami’s election slogan, “Stand Tall,” attracted Mizrahi voters because for the first time it addressed them exclusively. It appealed mainly to two groups: the Mizrahim of North African origin, particularly the traditional followers of the Abuhatzera rabbinical dynasty, and young Mizrahi students, intellectuals, and artists. In short, it was an encounter between religious and secular, right and left, immigrants and native born, and between intellectuals, artists, and party functionaries. Receiving 44,466 votes (2.3 percent of total votes), Tami won 3 seats in the Tenth Knesset which served from 1981 to 1984 (Knesset Election Results, n.d.). During this coalition, Operation Peace for the Galilee was enacted and included, among its aims, to liquidate the PLO. Tami, with its roots in the Black Panthers and emphasis on Israel’s Arab nature, did not embrace the coalition’s policies and was not a part of the coalition government.

After winning 1.5 percent of the vote, equating to one seat in the Eleventh Knesset in 1984, Tami ultimately failed in 1988 because it did not offer an alternative to the Ashkenazi Zionist hegemony it had abandoned. Campaigning on a platform of

equality for all citizens regardless of religion, ethnic background, or nationality, Massad argues that Tami failed because it initiated no social or economic change to extricate the Mizrahim from their economic and class inferiority in Israel (Massad, 1996, p. 66).

Nevertheless, the rise and fall of Tami was radical for Mizrahi political activity as it was the first successful electoral movement to bring a new platform for Mizrahi votes apart from Likud. The party had worked with well-established, traditional Mizrahi leaders acting within the political center and established a new minimal political demand for the radical fringes to become a political force within the government in its own right rather than under Ashkenazi party sponsorship. As a result, it set in motion a process that greatly raised Mizrahi political consciousness.

Hitahdut HaSfaradim HaOlamit Shomrei Torah (SHAS) grew from the ground prepared by Tami, and constitutes another link in the chain of events of Mizrahi politics. SHAS was originally formed in 1983 in Jerusalem under the patronage of the Lithuanian chief rabbi Eliezer Shach to serve Sephardi Torah students and their families suffering from racial discrimination in the Ashkenazi Haredi yeshiva schools (Kamil, n.d., 16). As a movement, SHAS consciously propagated the idea that the secular Ashkenazi Zionist movement as a whole, not only the Labor Party, was responsible, in the name of progress and modernization, for the Mizrahi's inferior social status and for their separation from the religion and tradition of earlier generations. It also promoted the notion of *Lehahazir Atara LeYoshna*, or bringing back the crown (of the Torah) to the old ways. This means the reestablishment of the Sephardic dominance in rulings of Jewish religious matters (Kamil, n.d. p. 32). For some scholars, SHAS embodies an ethnic party with a message of

a separatist nature (Shohat 1988, Peled 1992, Khazzoom 2008), however the fact that the bulk of SHAS voters are Mizrahi does not mean that SHAS is an ethnic party with an ethnic-separatist message.

SHAS aims to reestablish the dominance of Sephardi Jewish religious rulings against the currently dominant “other”. That “other”, however, is not the Ashkenazim in general but the Zionist, especially the Labor Party Zionist, establishment and the politicized Ashkenazi religious establishment, which has marginalized the Sephardim (Kamil, n.d., 35). The success of SHAS lies in its ability to mobilize his supporters not against the Ashkenazi ideology in general but rather against the secular and non-Jewish components of that ideology, therefore drawing support from beyond its ethnic lines. Although the leaders are aware that many nonreligious Mizrahim vote for SHAS and that secular Mizrahim have been drawn to SHAS because of its political outlook, SHAS discourse remains unequivocally religious. Its insistence on the term Sephardim, for example, which has mainly religious connotations (referring to the Sephardic prayer book, religious customs, law, and authority), emphasizes the primacy of what in their opinion is best protected: the synagogue and religion.

In 1984, after having won seats on the city council of Jerusalem, SHAS ran for the Knesset and won 3.1 percent of the total vote equating to four seats and acting as a member of the coalition, however the turning point came in 1988, when Rabbi Ovadia Yosef took over the spiritual leadership of the party, and Rabbi Arye Deri assumed political leadership. From that time forward, SHAS became more political, although it retained its unambiguous and uncompromising ideology of spiritual and social

reformation according to the Torah and Sephardic Jewish law (Kamil, n.d.). Nonetheless, SHAS's appeal to broader segments of Mizrahim is clear in its growing success at the polls: six Knesset seats in 1988, six in 1992, ten in 1996, seventeen in 1999 (only two less than Likud, the second largest party), eleven in 2003, twelve in 2006, and eleven in the most recent 2009 election. Throughout SHAS's sixteen year electoral success, the party has been a member of nine coalition governments formed in 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1996, 1999, 2001, 2006, and 2009 (Knesset Election Results, n.d.).

Despite the consistent electoral success of SHAS, Mizrahim have not been able to achieve a political collective as long as they have identified and cooperated within the paradigm of Ashkenazi Zionism. The political Zionist paradigm is broad enough to create the illusion that it can encompass right and left, peace camp and nationalist camp, religious and secular, Israeli-born and new immigrants, and a multiplicity of political views. Mizrahim are invited to integrate in to this paradigm and assimilate, but the basic social infrastructures of the economy and capital, of education and culture, still serve mainly the Ashkenazi collective, with all of its divisions and political camps (Yonah, n.d. p. 5).

Israeli-Arab Political Action

The Israeli-Arab community has been endeavoring since the early days of Israeli statehood to enhance its organizational and institutional capacity, to define its collective political identity, and to claim a place within the mainstream of Israeli society. Israeli-Arabs were not only fragmented by patterns of residence and discrimination, they were

for the most part poor and leaderless as well (Tessler and Grant, 1998, p. 99). Most of the elite and middle class were among the refugees who fled to neighboring countries, and the mass exodus destroyed virtually all of the political and social institutions that had been created during the mandate period. Therefore, not only were Israeli-Arabs without leadership, but they were also without any broadly based political organizations in a new nation. Under these conditions, Israeli-Arabs, despite their legal rights in Israel, remained politically underdeveloped and economically disadvantaged.

Israeli-Arabs are excluded from the national security establishment. Not only are they exempt from military duty, but they are also barred from employment in the border police and the military-industrial complex (Taas), which employs about one-quarter of the total Jewish industrial labor force. They are also prevented from serving in the Civil Guard (Mishmar Ezrahi- armed citizens who patrol residential quarters to prevent terrorism and crime) and Civil Defense (Haga, which is part of Israel Defense Forces) during wartime. It is advantageous not to serve in the army for three years and to be excluded from the army reserves for over thirty years. Unfortunately, absence of veteran status means disqualification from many white-collar jobs in the public and private sector and certain benefits such as supplementary social security payments and housing loans are unavailable (Smootha and Peretz, 1982, p. 464).

Amid this political climate, Israeli-Arabs had few resources with which to demand political attention or organize political action. Attempts to form a purely Arab political party during the first twenty years of the state ultimately proved unsuccessful. The most significant attempt was al-Ard, established in 1960, which fought a series of

legal battles with the government, revolving principally around its attempt to publish a newspaper and to present a list of candidates in the 1965 parliamentary elections (Tessler and Grant, 1998, p 99). At this time, Israeli-Arab political aspirations for the future crystallized on the goal of return to the land of Palestine, a goal that was internationally acknowledged by United Nations Relief and Work Agency in 1964 (Hamid, 1975, p. 101). While Israeli-Arab consciousness gathered around this acknowledgement, political organization was initially limited. The traditional leadership comprising the Arab Higher Committee led by the Mufti of Jerusalem had been discredited and disbanded by the disasters of 1948 and, with the community scattered in the countries to which they had fled, they struggled to form a separate national political organization. The different areas in which Israeli-Arabs were located had a different effect on their freedom to conduct nationalist activities. Regardless, most saw the recovery of their homeland as dependent upon the achievement of Arab power through Arab unity and therefore identified with pan-Arab parties which they believed to be seriously committed to the Palestinian cause.

This attitude began to change in the 1960s and a shift toward a Palestinian nationalist identity arose as an issue of inter-Arab politics (Hamid, 1975, p. 92). With the disbanding of the United Arab Republic, which had united Egypt and Syria, the pan-Arab unity that Israeli-Arabs and Palestinians had relied upon lost force and began to shift toward an emphasis of self-reliance. At the First Arab Summit Conference of 1964, the first steps were taken toward the creation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) (Hamid, 1975, p. 93). Between 1964 and 1967, the PLO established itself more firmly through diplomacy in the Arab world representing Palestine at Arab Summit

Conferences and in the aftermath of the 1967 war, which brought the West Bank and the Gaza Strip under Israeli control, created its Popular Liberation Forces which would later become known as the Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA). The PLO had attained a level of institutional development in political, administrative, military, economic, and social fields thereby gaining legitimacy among the Palestinian people including much of the Israeli-Arab population (Hamid, 1975, p. 101).

The war of 1967 added an important new dimension to the circumstances of Israeli-Arab citizens and had a significant impact on the identity of the community. The transformation of the PLO to a representative institution with international recognition was also important in the resurgence of Palestinian nationalism, a trend that intensified after the Arab-Israeli war of 1973. As a result, many Israeli-Arabs began to participate in trade union and professional organizations and experiencing this sort of networking linked with growing discontent with their political and economic circumstance helped foster an environment for political action and organization.

The 1977 switch from long-time Labor majority governments in Israel to Likud saw a 72.8 percent voter turnout with Likud earning 33.4 percent of the vote and 43 seats in Knesset (Knesset Election Results, n.d.). This marked a turning point in Israeli-Arab grievances as the new government advocated Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and the Judaization of the land (Knesset Election Results, n.d.). These actions led to increased political action and participation among Israeli-Arabs in the following elections. For instance, in the 1981 election, Israeli-Arab support shifted away from the Arab-Jewish Communist Party Rakach, which had received 50 percent of the Arab vote

in 1977 but obtained only 47 percent in 1981 (Tessler and Grant, 1998, p. 103). In the following election held in 1984, no Arab list affiliated with the Labor Party participated in the election because of a feeling that they had little chance of success in the increasingly charged political climate of the time (Tessler and Grant, 1998, p. 104). At this point, the emergence of the Progressive List for Peace Party (PLP), a left-wing progressive alliance of leftist Arabs and Jews, was gaining popularity among Israeli-Arab voters who were disenchanted with Rakah.

By the late 1980s, two new developments were having critical impact on the political development of Israeli-Arabs: the first Palestinian Intifada beginning in 1987 and the emergence of the Islamic movement in Israel. Although largely limited to the occupied territories, the Intifada had important implications for Israeli-Arabs. In particular, it demonstrated the importance of nontraditional forms of collective political actions beyond elections and political parties and, furthermore, a collective resolve among Israeli-Arabs for a Palestinian state under the leadership of the PLO. The elections of 1988 took place against this background and brought the involvement of the Arab Democratic Party (ADP) which presented itself as a purely Arab party and did not seek Jewish Israeli participation or support (Tessler and Grant, 1998, p. 104). The ADP, under Israeli Arab MK Abdulwahab Darawshe, called for an end to occupation, cooperation with the PLO, the establishment of a Palestinian state, and offered a platform emphasizing the economic and social rights of Israeli-Arabs and Palestinians. In the 1988 election the ADP captured one seat in the Knesset, as did the PLP (Knesset Election Results, n.d.).

In the 1992 election, in an effort to support a Labor Party overthrow of the right-wing Likud, 51 percent of Israeli-Arabs gave their votes to Zionist parties, particularly to Labor (Tessler and Grant, 1998, p. 105). As a result, Knesset representation for the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (DFPE), a non-Zionist, Jewish-Arab socialist platform which supported the evacuation of all settlements and the establishment of a Palestinian state, declined from four seats to three and the PLP lost the one seat it had held (Knesset Election Results, n.d.). Only the ADP defied this trend, increasing its proportion of the vote from 11 percent to 15 percent and increasing its parliamentary representation from one seat to two. Israeli-Arab support played a critical role in enabling Labor to return to power in 1992 and, in coalition with the left wing Meretz Party and SHAS, was able to forge a coalition committed to peace with the Palestinians. With respect to the 1996 election, only 14 percent of Israeli-Arabs voted for Labor whereas the DFPE captured five seats, a 67 percent increase (Tessler and Grant, 1998, p. 106).

Developing events of the twenty-first century have added to the complexities of Israeli-Arab political goals. The renewal of war in the Middle East as well as the Second Palestinian Intifada have resulted in a reevaluation of Israeli-Arab political loyalties and their views of the state of Israel. In the January 2003 election, there were attempts to disqualify several Israeli-Arab candidates and parties, as well as some right-wing Jewish candidates because their party platforms denied the state of Israel as the rightful home of the Jewish people. Although the Central Election Committee voted to disqualify the nationalist Balad/Tajamu party, the High Court reinstated their candidacy before the elections. The party was an Arab nationalist political party that supported a two-state

solution and it sought to transform Israel into a democracy for all its citizens demanding that Israeli Arabs be recognized as a national minority (Lowrance, 2006, p. 181). Despite protest to disqualify Balad/Tajamu, the party received 2.26 percent of the vote giving it three seats in the 2003 election (Knesset Election Results, n.d.). Nevertheless, this development illustrates the precarious situation of Arab parties in Israel and their vulnerability to the demands of the Jewish majority: they are unable to effectively represent their constituencies due to the legal limits placed upon their platforms and actions and must either alter their platform or not be eligible for the electoral process.

In addition to the legal hurdles that they must surmount, Israeli-Arab parties are also negatively impacted by informal limits on their coalition participation. Notably, no Arab party has ever been part of an Israeli government coalition. Though Israeli-Arab members of Zionist parties have been included in coalitions, their influence within the party is limited, and they have been unable or unwilling to express non-Zionist viewpoints. Zionist consensus among the Jewish public believes that as the self-declared state of the Jewish people, Israel exists to fulfill Jewish aspirations for self-determination. Accordingly, Jewish political power must be preserved in order to safeguard Jewish security, and major decisions must be taken without the influence of non-Jewish actors, such as Israeli-Arabs. Many Jewish Members of Knesset have therefore opposed participating in any coalition that includes Arab parties.

For their part, some Arab parties reject the idea of joining governing coalitions, out of fear of appearing to legitimize the status quo. Nevertheless, those Arab parties amenable to coalition politics are not invited to participate. As a result, Israeli-Arab

scholar Ghanem concludes, "Arabs have never had any real opportunity to participate in decision making, whether on domestic or foreign policy issues" (Lowrance, 2006, p. 182). The most powerful position the Arab parties have ever reached was as part of a blocking majority that kept the rightist Likud party from forming a government between 1992 and 1996 (Ghanem, 2001, p. 53).

Since 1999, the Israeli-Arab population is largely represented among three political parties: Balad, Hadash, and the United Arab List. Balad, also known as the National Democratic Assembly, was formed in 1995 and won five Knesset seats in 1996, two in 1999, three in 2003, 2006, and 2009 (Knesset Election Results, n.d.). The United Arab List (UAL), also known as the Arab Movement for Renewal, held seats in the past two governments preceding the current Netanyahu coalition with two seats in 2003 and three seats in 2006 (Knesset Election Results, n.d.). The UAL was founded in 1996 and supports a two-state solution with East Jerusalem as the capital of an independent Palestine (Smootha, 2007, p. 17). Elections for the 18th Knesset held in February 2009 found four Arab and Arab-Jewish parties competing for the Israeli-Arab vote: Ra'am-Ta'al (UAL and the Arab Movement for Change) representing the nationalist-Islamist stream in the Arab public, Hadash (DFPE) incorporating the Israeli Communist Party, advocates Arab-Jewish co-existence, Balad (Democratic National Alliance) representing the secular national stream, and Da'am (Organization for Democratic Action) a small Jewish-Arab party that supports the rights of workers and women (Chetrit, 2010, p. 213).

The most recent 2009 election demonstrated many of the issues that remain unresolved within the Israeli-Arab community. For instance, many Israeli-Arab voters

boycotted the election as a result of Israel's Operation Cast Lead in Gaza in order to demonstrate the national unity between Israeli-Arabs and Palestinians in the territory, raising fear in the Israeli government. Goodin and Klingemann (1996) suggest that this reflects rational abstention. They state,

Rational abstention is a quite sensible response when the benefits that any voter obtains due to participation are compared to the costs of participation, after these benefits are discounted by the microscopically small likelihood that any single voter will play a pivotal role in an election outcome (Goodin and Klingemann, 1996, p. 225-6).

This theory explains Israeli-Arabs who feel a sense of solidarity with the Palestinian national narrative and feel that their vote will not affect the election results. Also during the 2009 election, the Central Knesset Elections Committee disqualified Balad and Ra'am-Ta'al parties on the basis of the 1985 Basic Law amendment which requires candidates to proclaim Israel as the national home of the Jewish people. While the majority of Israeli-Arab political action is attempted within the Ashkenazi Zionist system, this may change if Arab parties are continually blocked from taking diplomatic action.

Certainly, the Palestinian conflict is multilateral, involving Israel, the Palestinians, the Arab countries, and international moderators as active participants that are not unified by one party or platform. Whether the Israeli-Arab minority has the potential to be, or is becoming, a separate power in the conflict has yet to be seen. Smooha (2007) believes that Israeli-Arabs has the potential to play one of three roles in the dispute: a fifth column, a bridge to peace, or a pressure group (Smooha, 2007, p. 205). In an interview with Deena Hurwitz, Israeli-Arab Reverend Canon Riah Abu El-Assal agrees:

Israel is the state of its citizens, not the state only of the Jewish people. Palestinian Israelis can become a bridge. I doubt whether Israel can find a better bridge than the people whom I represent. The peace and safety of Israel depends on the peace and safety of Palestinians, and the peace and safety of the Palestinian depends on the peace and safety of the Israeli Jew (Hurwitz, 1993, p. 108-118).

Although they have not, as of yet, been able to be a party to the conflict in any political capacity, Smooha believes the potential and desire to become a political pressure group is a great priority of the Israeli-Arab community. The issue remains whether a vulnerable, security-concerned Israel can allow for this type of minority participation in negotiating the future of the state.

Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab Collaborative Political Action

The possibility for Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab collaboration is not a new idea despite the societal challenges it holds. For instance, the Israeli Black Panthers had already connected the Mizrahi struggle to the Israeli-Arab and Palestinian struggle and volunteered themselves as a potential bridge in negotiations. In the 1970s they called for a “real dialogue” with the Arabs, who they claimed are “an integral part of the political landscape of the Middle East” and whose “representatives must be allowed to take part in all meetings and discussions which seek a solution to the conflict” (Shasha, n.d., p. 42). The majority of Mizrahim in Jerusalem still resided on the pre-1967 border of East and West Jerusalem and following 1967, many had relocated to East Jerusalem to find inexpensive housing. This connection to their Israeli-Arab neighbors heightened their recognition of inferior access to state resources and carried over into their agenda. The Panthers, among the first Israeli groups to meet with the PLO, understood the Arab’s

need for the end of occupation and independence and agreed that their problems integrated. The Panthers proclaimed, “No equality for Mizrahim while occupation exists” and must have felt a sense of camaraderie to state, “The Palestinian fight will not stop while Mizrahim are used as an anti-Arab lever” (Chetrit, 2010, p. 121). This statement is supported by a 1989 speech by Abbas in which he recognized:

It is important to negotiate with Mizrahim, who represent the majority in Israel. Because the Mizrahim are a majority in Israel, matters of peace will depend on them. They are an organic part of our culture, of our Arab Muslim society, a part of our history and our memory. We must renew our memory and use our common culture in order to overcome our present and plan our future (Chetrit, 2010, p. 208).

This relationship demonstrates the recognition of Mizrahi Arab culture, their significance as a minority group in Israel, and the potential to overcome political tensions for a common future.

During the 1970s, especially following the 1973 war in an effort to pressure Israeli policy, Israeli-Arabs became increasingly assertive of their rights and demonstrated growing willingness to use the political system for promoting those rights. For the first time, in 1984, a joint Arab-Jewish party was formed combining the mainly Israeli-Arab Party, Progressive List for Peace (PLP), and the ultranationalist Jewish party Kach for which many Mizrahim voted (Peled, 1992, p. 437). The joint premise shared by the PLP and Kach was that because Israel had a sizable Arab minority, the claim that it could be both Jewish and democratic at the same time was a charade. A state defined as Jewish could not treat its non-Jewish citizens as equals. A democratic state could not give preference to any particular group. Although the agendas of these two entities were

contradictory in their view of the future of Israel, indeed they differed diametrically in the choices they recommended, their shared opinion that Israel should support an autonomous Palestinian state tied them together. For the PLP this would mean the possibility to be a majority in their own land and that all discriminatory laws and practices favoring Jews should ease to exist and for Kach, the enhancement of Israel's Jewish nature and the possibility of decreasing Israel's Arab minority. Though each party proclaimed provocative and opposing views, liberalism and Jewish ethnonationalism, their shared desire united their efforts to campaign for a separate and autonomous Palestinian Arab state.

Following a ruling and appeal to the Central Elections Commission, it was ruled that the commission could not disqualify the Kach list for the racist and antidemocratic nature of its political platform but, in the case of the PLP, the commission ruled that it was within its authority to disqualify the PLP list for denying the state of Israel as a state of the Jewish people. The official legislation that barred the PLP list from parliament was made official in 1985 and demonstrates the fear that a potential Mizrahi-Israeli-Arab party brings to the Ashkenazi governing elite.

The convergence on the plight of the Israeli-Arabs and Mizrahim arose politically once more when terms such as simultaneous population exchange and refugee status appeared in the 1990s and with the World Organization of Jews from Arab Countries (WOJAC) in Israeli Foreign Ministry (Yonah, 2009, p. 3). Originally founded to propose an alternative collective memory in the Zionist-dominated national realm of Israeli identity, WOJAC attempted to propose a national agenda that could counterbalance the

claims of the Palestinian National Movement (Shenhav, 2002, p. 28). The notion of population exchange united Palestinians and Mizrahim with a sense of refugee status as neither could return to their previous homes and also blurred the line between national and ethnic discourse. The Mizrahim, in attempting to Judaize the Arab-cultural space, introduced their Arabness and estrangement in the Israeli collective thereby expanding the idea of what it means to be Israeli while challenging the divide between Zionist and non-Zionist (Shenhav, 2002, p. 52). Another convergence came with the influx of Jews from the former Soviet bloc. With this, traits of what it meant to be Israeli were seemingly redefined while clearly excluding both Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs. Mizrahim were too Jewish to be welcomed in their home countries, but too Arab to be welcome in Israel. Similarly, Israeli-Arabs would never be Jewish enough to be proper Israelis even if they were Israeli citizens. This logic places the terms Jewish and Arab as being irreversibly in opposition (Rejwan, 1999, p. 102).

In 2005, Ben-Rafael and Peres conducted a study aimed at intergroup relations in an attempt to examine the stigmas between Arabs and Jews in Israel. It found that both Israeli-Arabs and Jews aspired to more intergroup contacts although Israeli-Arabs are much more willing to learn from Jews than vice-versa in areas including science, technology, working life, and democracy. Jews, in turn, appreciate Israeli-Arab contributions in working life and land-rootedness and some aspects of family life. Strikingly, 90 percent of Israeli-Arabs answered that they would prefer more encounters with Jews than they experienced at the time of the survey whereas 56 percent of Jews

answered they would prefer more encounters with Israeli-Arabs than they experienced at the time of the survey (Ben-Rafael and Peres, 2005, p. 174).

Smootha (2004) provides essential data regarding Israeli Jews' attitudes toward the state and Israeli-Arabs. In regard to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israeli-Arabs and Jews differed in their narratives of, and solutions to, the conflict, with each side viewing the other as aggressive and guilty and themselves as victims. No reportable difference is evident between Mizrahi and Ashkenazi views, although their joint category of "Jews" contrasted with that of "Arabs". There are vast differences of opinion in terms of what the borders would be for a Palestinian state as well as its military autonomy; however, within these categories Mizrahi responses were consistent with Ashkenazim and in disagreement with the Arab responders. An interesting figure to note however is that in response to the prompt, "After the full implementation of these principles, all the claims of both sides will end and the conflict between them will be over", 75.2 percent of Arab respondents agreed and 62.7 percent of Jews agreed (there was no distinguishable difference between Mizrahi and Ashkenazi responses) (Smootha, 2004, p. 304).

In an updated 2007 continuation of this study, the connection between the 1.1 million Israeli-Arab citizens (16.5 percent of the total population) and Mizrahim in their shared dilemmas of language, religion, and culture in order to address questions of civil legitimacy and rights for minority populations. In this regard, the majority of Mizrahim supported the civil rights and equality of the Arab minority. In fact, when given the statement, "there should be equality between Arab citizens and Jews in individual rights, state budgets, and opportunities for education and employment", 61 percent of Mizrahim

answered affirmatively. Despite these majority figures ensuring the rights of the Israeli-Arab minority, approximately 30 percent of Mizrahim agreed to allowing Israeli-Arab citizens to buy land in any area they would like, suggesting that the idea of civil equality would not be truly implemented.

An interesting point, however, in the Arab cultural similarities is the fact that 44.1 percent of Mizrahim responded that they still speak Arabic as a primary language in the home (Smootha, 2007, p. 307). Despite this suggestive figure, Mizrahim are still more reserved than Ashkenazim about Arab-Jewish cultural integration: When given the statement, “Arab citizens and Jews must create together new common values and practices in addition to their own values and practices”, 73.3 percent of Arab respondents, 47.1 percent of Mizrahim, and 58.3 percent of Ashkenazim agreed (Smootha, 2007, p. 307). This demonstrates the complications of Mizrahi identity in relation to the Zionist narrative as well as the schism between Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs that, despite shared ancestries, has created a feeling of isolation from the ‘other’ in Israel.

Israel’s foreign policy and international standing in regard to the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process is a uniting conflict for Israeli-Arabs and Mizrahim. In a March 2010 poll, a majority of Mizrahi Israelis and Israeli-Arabs preferred a two-state solution as the most acceptable resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, as opposed to a single bi-national state or a Palestinian-Israeli confederation (Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, 2010). When asked whether they preferred a solution of two states for two peoples, a bi-national Palestinian-Israeli state, or a Palestinian-Israeli confederation, the results were as follows: 71 percent of Mizrahi Israelis and 57 percent of Israeli-Arabs

supported the two-state solution, 24 percent of Mizrahi Israelis and 29 percent of Israeli-Arabs supported the solution of a bi-national state, and 30 percent of Mizrahi Israelis and 26 percent of Israeli-Arabs supported the option of an Israeli-Palestinian confederation (Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, 2010). The survey also reported a general decline in the level of support among Israeli-Arabs for Abu Mazin (Abbas) and his government. His decline, however, does not indicate a drop in public support for the policies advocated by the prime minister. To the contrary, the findings show an increased readiness to accept a mutual cessation of violence and a majority support for peace negotiations. Moreover, the results show a majority supporting a mutual recognition of Israel as a state for the Jewish people and Palestine as the state for the Palestinian people (Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, 2010).

Analysis and Conclusion

Although Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political groups experienced similar grassroots foundations evolved from protest movements, their mutual interest and trust has separated drastically since the first Palestinian Intifada and the development and growth of SHAS. While individual responses in public opinion data suggests an acknowledgement of shared history and leftist, academic movements continue to highlight societal similarities between the two groups, current political action does not point toward political cooperation or collaboration toward domestic or international political agendas. While the majority of Israeli-Arabs internalize their minority status as being part of the Palestinian national identity, Mizrahim continue to self-identify

primarily as Israeli and Jewish and this alone suggests an unwillingness of the Mizrahim to voluntarily illustrate themselves as having shared goals with the Israeli-Arab population.

Both the Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab identity formation illustrate unique paths to political organization and action. In both scenarios, the development of group consciousness was accelerated through their minority status and this translated to group goals and desires that required political organization to pursue. For Mizrahim, a group consciousness came to be heard in protest movements and, eventually, political expression. For Israeli-Arabs, a group conscious of being part of the Arab population of Palestine and not of the growing yishuv rapidly accelerated their concept of Palestinian nationalism. Of those who remained on the land and came to be under the jurisdiction of the Israeli government, a similar effort to that of the Mizrahim occurred in order to stabilize and organize for political representation. Likewise, both groups' potential to gain a political platform swelled or faded in relation to the severity of Israel's security concerns.

Thus far the significance of Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political parties has remained largely peripheral in that, with the exception of SHAS, neither minority groups has achieved the recognition or support from its own collective, let alone the Ashkenazi ruling elite. In fact, during the formative years of each group's political voice, their presence in parliamentary elections resulted in amendments to further complicate their participation. Resulting from their peripheral position in policy decision-making, neither group's parties have significantly altered the politic process. These groups do matter to

Ashkenazi-dominated governing elite in garnering support in the government forming process and in their potential to inspire or quell domestic unrest, however, this has not translated into real policy-making power.

In light of this relationship, it is to be expected that neither Mizrahi nor Israeli-Arab political parties have affected the peace process. Mizrahi parties are traditionally eager to be accepted in the powerful Israeli mainstream and do not go against the national consensus, therefore having little influence in the peace process or they are right wing leaning. Contrastingly, Israeli-Arabs represent the Knesset's vulnerability to Arab interests and, as a result, they have not been given the opportunity to impact or influence the peace process. No Israeli-Arab political party has served in a coalition government. Although the single voting district and coalition style of Israeli government presents an opening for minority political parties to be elected in order to participate in government, it also results in fragmented leadership that gravitates toward the most powerful or influential party politics thereby leaving little power and influence to minority group representation.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political narratives are a reflection of their respective collective identities and represent the translation of group aspirations into political action. Although political narrative and identity affect each other, identity is dynamic as it can be influenced by the reality on the ground. Despite this, Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political narratives have remained stagnant. For instance, improvements in housing and education in the 1970s for both groups affected Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab identity in their improved access to state resources. Similarly, the 1967 and 1973 wars affected the way both group's identities interacted with the state. For the majority of Mizrahim these wars were the first chance to participate in the defense of Israel and strengthened their identity as Israelis. For Israeli-Arabs, these incidents, which united Jewish Israelis, further complicated their struggle between citizenship and culture and changed the way they related to the Palestinian national movement and the state of Israel.

Despite the dynamic nature of each group's identity, their respective political narratives were not altered to incorporate the new developments. The Mizrahi political narrative continued to support greater assimilation and acceptance into the Ashkenazi-led political system. Regardless of their relatively improved social status, the objectives of the Mizrahi vote remained the same. For instance, the Mizrahi vote had great influence in the 1977 election in which Likud ousted Labor, however this further demonstrates the stagnant Mizrahi political narrative that aspires toward acceptance. Similarly, the Israeli-

Arab identity has changed vastly from a minority population under military control in the first years of the state to a growing minority with state citizenship. Nevertheless, the Israeli-Arab political narrative has remained a complicated mix between Israeli collaboration or non-participation in the name of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Although the reality on the ground has changed resulting in a dynamic identity for both Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs, their respective political narratives remain stagnant and apart with Mizrahim seeking greater assimilation and Israeli-Arabs torn between their state and the Palestinian national movement.

In evaluating whether minority group collaboration based on political narratives and identity is possible to help the peace process, scholars agree that Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political collaboration is not likely. The exception is the argument of the post-Zionist narrative which emphasizes the significance of the Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab shared historical and cultural heritage, however this is a peripheral, minority argument. In political life, although Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs experience many of the same challenges in regard to organization and implementation of political action such as hindrances in political mobilization, policies dictating the manner of their political expression, and discriminatory power sharing resulting from the coalition style of government, the parties have rarely combined their political views for the purpose of influencing the Israeli government. Neither group's political action has resulted in an opportunity to influence Israeli policy including the parameters and negotiations of the peace process.

This research was motivated by the post-Zionist thesis which challenges the

supposed hegemony of the early history and current identity of Israel and places blame on the Zionist narrative and policies for displacing and creating animosity with Arabs. Post-Zionism emphasizes the mistreatment of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs alike with particular focus on the fault of the Zionist narrative toward the experience of both minority groups. This group of scholars (Shohat, 1988, 1999, Swirski, 1989, Massad, 1996, Shasha, n.d., and Wurmser, 2005), urge Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab cooperation on the basis of shared Arab roots and victimization. This was the literature upon which I drew motivation for my research, that is, the possibility that two groups with common grievances formed from common experiences of discrimination could have just cause and interest to collaborate in order to have a greater political presence and influence. The reality that I discovered throughout this research, the differences, the incompatibilities, and no movement toward cooperation or collaboration, highlights the fact that post-Zionism remains a peripheral, academic narrative which has not gained widespread popularity or acceptance.

Historically, there are several political scenarios which increase the likelihood of minority group collaboration in politics. First, the prevalence of a common enemy (which each group has equal incentive to undermine or work against) is a uniting condition that may spark or exacerbate collaboration. Leach and Williams (1999) demonstrate the power of such a uniting factor in two examples: Sinn Fein and the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) in Northern Ireland and the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa. In the case of Northern Ireland, the Catholic/Nationalist vote was predominantly split between Sinn Fein and the SDLP over their similar yet contrasting

republican versus constitutional nationalist agendas. In this example, the parties' differences were overwhelmed by the Protestant/Unionist platform which, acting as the common enemy, provided both Sinn Fein and the SDLP with sufficient incentive to collaborate politically. That is, the political ambition of joining the Republic of Ireland and not remaining their perceived status quo with England served as sufficient incentive toward collaboration. In the second scenario of South Africa, the common enemy that inspired political collaboration can be described abstractly as apartheid and those who governed in its favor. Under this threat, the ANC allied with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and this majority body has held power since establishing the non-racial democracy in 1994 (Leach and Williams, 1999, 891). In these two examples of minority group political collaboration existed a common enemy as well as equal incentives for collaboration.

The second condition that is likely to foster minority group political collaboration is a political shift from crisis to stability. Rouhana (1998) states that it goes against basic human needs theory that a group would willingly accept an inferior status as part of the permanent condition of its collective and individual existence (279). Incidences or times of crisis frequently isolate and expand the schism of minority group political activity (through the division of allegiances, nationalism, lower priority of domestic concerns). If crisis persists, stratification continues, and extremism may emerge. Following such unrest, the shift back to stability or political status quo provides the conditions for renewed minority group political ambition.

Third, if a minority group is able to achieve political success, it will not want to forfeit power gained (Dutter, 1980). In this case, the group that has achieved political influence will be more likely to accept collaboration as an alternative to losing that power. This condition couples with what Leach and Williams (1999) term in-group cohesion. That is, when a collective is successful its self-esteem and social image grows or is strengthened which leads to greater comfort (less insecurity) in reaching outside its collective if it is advantageous to the collective (890). These conditions combined could result in a minority group which has greater confidence and more (politically) at stake, therefore the likelihood to collaborate increases. An example of these conditions is the pluralist theocracy of pre-1975 Lebanon where the national government was comprised of Maronite Christians and Sunni Muslims with Druze leaders mediating between the two groups. In that setting, minority groups had equal incentive for maintaining the alliance, relative political stability, and sought to keep their hold on power gained.

With this basis of conditions wherein minority groups are likely to collaborate in politics, I turn to the Israeli political scene. Israel has a rich tradition of political collaboration, however this is a result of the coalition style government and has historically not encouraged minority group political collaboration. Indeed, implied and ensured in Israel's electoral and governing institutions is political collaboration that will unite under a ruling coalition led by the selected prime minister. However, inherent in the manner of the coalition's formation is the collective of similar-minded and oriented parties. A second element that theoretically enhances the role of minority group activity in Israeli politics is the disproportionate influence that small parties are capable of

attaining in parliament. Because any party which wins two percent of the Israeli, single-district vote is guaranteed a place in parliament, a small party selected to participate in the coalition government attains political influence beyond its electoral success. This too, however, has not fostered minority group political collaboration but rather intensified the stratification of minority political parties. Two incidences of minority group political collaborative activity cited in my illustrate these institutional shortcomings: The Israeli Black Panther interaction with the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Progressive List for Peace and its alliance with Kach. Neither collaboration was endorsed or supported by the government nor were they invited to serve in a governing coalition.

Therefore, despite the several conditions that suggest minority groups are likely to collaborate mentioned above, there are overwhelmingly more reasons why this is unlikely to happen in Israeli politics. First, the mainstream Israeli Zionist narrative and the state's commitment to retaining its essential Jewish character creates what Leach and Williams call a "law of contradiction" wherein one group's ambitions (their most positive outcomes) are another's worst nightmare (leave positive outcome) (1999, 894). That is, the Israeli narrative feels as though the 'other' threatens its identity and future. Dutter (1980) expands upon this notion that because society adopts one party's most preferred policies, it naturally precludes the adoptions of the other's most preferred policies. If political influence is viewed as this sort of zero-sum game, collaboration is not seen as realistic or helpful. Second, political fragmentation precedes and accompanies violence (Dutter, 1980, 1985). This theory, combined with the notion that ethno-political aspirations cannot be simultaneously satisfied results in the stratification of goals and

political ambitions so that the possibility of identifying equal incentives for collaborating becomes impaired if not impossible. As Israel continues to perceive itself to be under severe security threats, and intermittent violence continues to plague the state, the status quo has become this instability. In this atmosphere, it is more advantageous to advance your own agenda rather than reach outside the collective in an effort to collaborate. Lastly, political elites may find it in their favor to promote ethnic divides or make deliberate efforts to counteract the mobilization of minority group collaboration (Dutter, 1985, 55). This is consistent within Israeli politics where the majority does not want a united minority representation to undermine its legitimacy or authority. Furthermore, in the case of Israel, the Israeli public generally supports the subordination of the Israeli-Arab minority so the government is not pressured to change drastically (Rouhana, 1998).

In order to avoid weak and inconsistent data and conclusions, and in order to more adequately represent the diversity of collectives which the research question aims to address, a revised research methodology would incorporate case studies and interviews. I would select a range of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs from communities to represent a variety of socio-economic and political followings in order to observe diversity across the collective. In order to prove collaboration was occurring between Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab collectives in Israel, I would survey community and political leaders asking the following: First, describe your understanding of the Mizrahi/Israeli-Arab collective (your collective identity group). Second, what is your understanding of the Israeli-Arab/Mizrahi collective (the group to which you do not belong)? Third, what is your understanding of the Mizrahi ultimate political ambition? List political priorities, issues in order of most

positive to least positive. Fourth, what do you perceive to be the Israeli-Arab political ambition? List from most positive to least positive. Fifth, under what circumstances would you seek or accept collaboration with a Mizrahi or Israeli-Arab party (the group to which you do not belong)? To followers of these community or political leaders I would ask the same questions listed above with two additional inquiries: First, describe the importance of your party's leadership in comparison to the importance of the party's platform in representing your minority group collective. Second, describe your ideal political future. What three features are most essential in ensuring this political outcome?

Although my thesis reaches an accurate conclusion that minority group political collaboration is highly unlikely in Israel, there are several methodological limitations which undermine the strength of this conclusion. First, framing my thesis around the post-Zionist belief of a shared Arab ethnic and cultural heritage among Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs, I limited the quality of my work by considering Shohat (1988) and her cited references as representing the entirety of the post-Zionist movement therefore ignoring other aspects of the narrative and the lack of Israeli-Arab presence in the movement. Second, improvements in socio-economic realms of civic society do not equate to better political relations or, if there is a relationship between the two, it is not demonstrated in my thesis. Rather, "Group identity will continue to feed disagreement over the best political future regardless of the material and civic improvements" (Leach and Williams, 1999, 891). Third, collective identities may change over time through interaction with others and in response to external events or contexts, however political systems are more likely to be static and therefore not necessarily adaptive to collaborative

political influence (Grove and Carter, 1999, 753). Fourth, I relied on these statistics to demonstrate the factor of shared grievances, however, my analysis and presentation of the data is unorganized and unfocused: not only do I not provide the basis for shared grievances, I also do not evaluate how these grievances are internalized by each collective community. My data collection does not sufficiently demonstrate the parallels between the two groups, let alone address whether or not Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs acknowledge such parallels. I do not provide historical precedence for the way in which mutually acknowledged shared grievances translate into collaborative coexistence and therefore, coupled with the several reasons listed above, my thesis and its conclusions are undermined by its many methodological limitations.

In an ideal setting, Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab collaboration for the peace process could unite an otherwise fragmented Israeli society by combining political resources and creating a greater voice and platform of influence. This would not only help diminish domestic socio-economic and ethnic tension, but their partnership would also result in a heightened political force with which they could influence the state. By broadening the range of participants to represent Israel's diversity, Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab collaboration could provide increased support and legitimacy to the peace process because through collaboration, their minimal influence apart would be heightened. Collaboration would spread the decision-making among a greater percentage of the population with more groups influencing the future of their state.

This ideal raises an interesting question regarding the relationship between population size and political influence. If Mizrahim were to outnumber Ashkenazim in

the future as they did before the influx of Soviet Jews in the early 1970s, there is no reason to believe they could overcome their minority status. I contend that this is consistent for the Israeli-Arab community as well and that for both groups, as long as their political narratives operate within the Ashkenazi political establishment, their minority status would not change. Contrastingly, the ideal scenario for collaboration could be successful in its united force of two communities. That is, not only would it represent a greater population but also, in particular, it would represent a greater portion of Israel's diversity and highlight the presence of its citizens' Arab heritage. Although population size may impact political influence, Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab collaboration would be influential in the sense that it would unite two communities.

In regard to the way in which shared identities impact political action for the minority group political process in Israel, scholars (Gurr, 2000, Gurr and Harff, 2004, Goodin and Klingemann, 1996, Hannum, 1991, Quah and Sales, 2000, Weller, 2008) maintain that collective identities within an ethnic group form through a combination of culture, structures, competition, and inequalities. For Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs, the combination of these factors sustains the transmission of basic norms and customs across generations which act as important motivators for ethnic collective action alongside, or in combination with, developments on the ground. The formation of Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab identities and the common factors which contributed to their identity, such as socio-economic inequalities in housing and education as well as discriminatory policies regarding their political organization, did not equate to collective collaborative narratives nor political action between these two minority groups.

While the Mizrahi political narrative seeks acceptance in national unity, it also stresses the expression of dissatisfaction with state resources. Contrastingly, the Israeli-Arab political narrative demonstrates a continuous tension between its citizenship and its cultural roots, wherein campaigning for civil advancements obscures their national ties to Israel and the Palestinian national movement. Therefore, the impact of identity on Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab minority group political action is significant in that it contributes toward separate political narratives and creates a collective sense within, but not between, each group, resulting in different motivations for political action. As result of the separate political narratives, identities, and motivations for political action of Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs, the development of a larger, combined, common identity of these two groups has not developed.

Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab views of the peace process follow this pattern wherein shared factors affect each group's views but the conclusions they reach are different. Mizrahim view the peace process as necessary for the peace and prosperity of Israel, however they also stress the importance of retaining Israel's Jewish character and this presents a divergent view to that of Israeli-Arabs. Indeed, Israeli-Arabs view the peace process as a preliminary step toward the advancement of their socio-economic status and of the Palestinian and Arab people in general, however a divergent view to that of the Mizrahim is expressed as a vulnerability which could result from the peace process. That is, if an autonomous Palestinian state is created, Israeli-Arabs may face the difficult task of choosing the nationality with which they more strongly identify. Having an Israeli and Palestinian state exist side-by-side would most likely heighten the Jewish character of the

Mizrahim, however, it is possible that this scenario could further subjugate, certainly complicate, the minority status of Israeli-Arabs who would be forced to choose between their cultural and national allegiances. Although both groups agree that the peace process is necessary and that a two-state solution is the most viable option, their political narratives do not overlap in this regard and this has resulted in disjointed and divergent political action between Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs. I contend that the primary obstacle to Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political collaboration in this regard is their separate political narratives which have remained autonomous despite similar identity formation.

In order for political collaboration to be a likely and viable option for Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs, both groups, as well as the political climate of the state, would need to change significantly. Secular or politically moderate Mizrahim would need to distinguish themselves from the right-wing, Arab-hating stereotype and highlight their shared Arab heritage. Israeli-Arabs would need to embrace their status as Israeli citizens and recognize the state in order to garner Mizrahi trust. Both of these possibilities would not alter either group's identity but would drastically affect both political narratives. It is still unclear to what extent a joint Mizrahi-Israeli-Arab collaboration would influence the Israeli government in terms of the current political climate. Minority group collaboration could threaten the majority's control causing those in power to react defensively against any collaborative efforts. If Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs continue their political action toward the promotion of their own status without regard to the other, the majority ruling coalition is not threatened and remains in power.

This discovery has led to me reflect on the possibility that minority groups may be

self-interested in the improvement of their status alone. While I do not claim that individuals within a minority group are solely self-interested and indifferent to the grievances of those around them, my findings suggest that the way in which these feelings translate into the group collective for Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs leads to the development of political narratives which are more likely to promote each group's own interests before accommodating the interests of others. I cannot claim from this research that this is a consistent trend across heterogeneous societies, however it has certainly been the case in Israel where the reality of events on the ground, in terms of the political climate and socio-economic disparities, has prevented minority group political collaboration. From a letter in his *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (1971) Gramsci's words "Pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will" fit well in this scenario and in explanation for the idealism that suggests the post-Zionist belief of Arab and Jewish collaboration; the realities on the ground may continue to discourage, prevent, or even disallow collaboration or other alternative routes toward peace, however this does not mean that scholars should abandon optimistic creativity for depressed acceptance of the status quo.

Within the framework of political narrative, identity, and political action, I conclude that Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab political collaboration is unlikely. Although I discovered that Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab collective identities are not stagnant and have evolved since their formation, this dynamic evolution has not significantly affected either group's political narrative. I contend that possible changes in political narratives evolve from the emergence of new positions regarding the representational ability of political

narratives and that, given the dynamic nature of identity, it is plausible that the initial signs of social change may eventually lead to the evolution of existing narratives and construction of new collective political narratives, however, this has not been the case to date among Mizrahim and Israeli-Arabs. Therefore, regardless of Mizrahi and Israeli-Arab collaborative and divergent views of the peace process, I conclude that each group's political narrative, their access to state resources, and their socio-economic status would require increasingly significant real and perceived overlap to convince these two parties to cooperate. Common aspects of identity and political narrative are not sufficient to produce collaborative, meaningful action under the current conditions.

References

- Arian, A., Hermann, T., Atmor, N., Hadar, Y., Lebel, Y., and Zaban, H. (2008). *The 2008 Israeli Democracy Index: Auditing Israeli Democracy Between the State and Civil Society*. Jerusalem: The Israeli Democracy Institute.
- Ben-Rafael, E., and Peres, Y. (2005). *Is Israel One: Religion, Nationalism, And Multiculturalism Confounded (Jewish Identities in a Changing World, V. 5)* New York: Brill Academic Pub.
- Benbassa, E. (2009). *Suffering as Identity: The Jewish Paradigm*. New York: Verso.
- Birnbaum, B. (2010, June 22). Arab Minority in Israel. *Washington Times*. Retrieved July 1, 2010, from <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/jun/22>
- Bishara, A. (2003). *The Arabs in Israel*. London: Moreton-in-Marsh.
- Brubaker, R., & Laitin, D. (1998). Ethnic and Nationalist Violence. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24, 423-452.
- Chetrit, S. S. (1999). *The Ashkenazi Revolution is Dead*. Tel Aviv: Bimat Kedem LeSifrut.
- Chetrit, S. S. (2010). *Intra-Jewish Ethnic Conflict in Israel: White Jews, Black Jews (Routledge Studies in Middle Eastern Politics)*. New York: Routledge.
- Chetrit, S. S. (2000). Mizrahi Politics in Israel: Between Integration and Alternative. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 4, 51-65.
- Dutter, L. (1980). Northern Ireland and Theories of Ethnic Politics. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 24(4), 613-640.
- Dutter, L. (1985). Perceptions of Group Identity and Recent Political Behavior in Northern Ireland. *Political Psychology*, 6(1), 47-60.
- Elbaz-Luwisch, F. (1997). Narrative Research: Political Issues and Implications. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 13(1), 75-83.
- Emler, N., & Frazer, E. (1999). Politics: The Education Effect. *Oxford Review of Education*, 25(1), 251-273.
- Fahel, G. (Director) (2009, August 12). The Future of Palestinian Cultural Heritage. *World Archaeological Congress*. Lecture conducted from University of California, Berkeley, Ramallah.

- Falah, G. (1996). The 1948 Israeli-Palestinian War and Its Aftermath: The Transformation and De-Signification of Palestine's Cultural Landscape. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 86(2), 256-285.
- Ghanem, A. (2001). *The Palestinian - Arab Minority in Israel, 1948-2000: A Political Study (S.U.N.Y. Series in Israeli Studies)*. Albany, New York: State University Of New York Press.
- Gillick, J. (2009, May. - Jun.). Electoral Reform in Israel. *Moment Magazine*, 3, 37-41.
- Goodin, R., and Klingemann, H. (1996). *A New Handbook of Political Science*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Turnhout: International Publishers.
- Grove, A., & Carter, N. (1999). Not All Blarney Is Cast in Stone: International Cultural Conflict in Northern Ireland. *Political Psychology*, 20(4), 725-765.
- Gunning, J. (2004). Peace with Hamas? The Transforming Potential of Political Participation. *International Affairs*, p. 233-255.
- Gurr, T. R. (1985). On the Political Consequences of Scarcity and Economic Decline. *International Studies Quarterly*, 29(1), 51-75.
- Gurr, T. R. (1994). *Peoples Against States: Ethnopolitical Conflict and the Changing World System*. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers.
- Gurr, T. R. (2000). Nonviolence in Ethnopolitics: Strategies for the Attainment of Group Rights and Autonomy. *Political Science and Politics*, 33(2), 155-160.
- Gurr, T. R., and Harff, B. (2004). *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics (Second Edition ed.)*. Oxford: Westview Press.
- Haider, A. (2008). The Equality Index of Jewish and Arab Citizens in Israel. *Sikkuy - The Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality in Israel*. Retrieved March 2, 2010, from <http://www.sikkuy.org.il/>
- Hamdan, H. (2008, December 4). Adalah Public Opinion Survey. *Adalah: The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel*. Retrieved May 1, 2010, from www.adalah.org/eng/
- Hamid, R. (1975). What is the PLO? *Institute for Palestine Studies*, 4(4), 90-109.

- Hanneman, A. (1995). Independence and Group Rights in the Baltics: A Double Minority Problem. *Journal of International Law*, 35, 1-44.
- Hannum, H. (1996). *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination: The Accommodation of Conflicting Rights* (Rev Sub ed.). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Hannum, H. (1991). Contemporary Developments in the International Protection of the Rights of Minorities. *Journal of International Law*, 66, 1431-1448.
- Hannum, H. (1994). Rethinking Self-Determination. *Journal of International Law*, 34, 1-70.
- History of the Palestine Problem. (n.d.). *Welcome to the United Nations: It's Your World*. Retrieved January 1, 2010, from <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/ngo/history.html>
- Hurwitz, D. (1993). *Walking the Red Line: Israelis in Search of Justice for Palestine*. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers.
- Johnson, K. R. (2003). The Struggle for Civil Rights: The Need for, and Impediments to, Political Coalitions Among and Within Minority Groups. *Louisiana Law Review*, 63(759), 1-28.
- Kaminer, R. (1995). *The Politics of Protest: The Israeli Peace Movement and the Palestinian Intifada*. Brighton: Sussex Academic Press.
- Kemp, A., Newman, D., Ram, U., and Yiftachel, O. (2004). *Israelis in Conflict: Hegemonies, Identities, and Challenges*. Brighton: Sussex Academic Press.
- Keohane, R. O., King, G., & Verba, S. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Khazzoom, A. (2008). *Shifting Ethnic Boundaries and Inequality in Israel: Or, How the Polish Peddler Became a German Intellectual (Studies in Social Inequality)*. Stanford : Stanford University Press.
- Khoury, J. (n.d.). Poll: More than half of Israeli Arab youth oppose National Service. *Haaretz.com*. Retrieved July 1, 2010, from www.haaretz.com/news/poll-more-than-half-of-israeli-arab-youth-oppose-national-service-1.7832
- Knesset Election Results. (n.d.). The Knesset Website. Retrieved July 15, 2009, from www.knesset.gov.il/description

- Komash, S., and Isawi, R. (2005). The Mizrahi-Palestinian Connection. *Peace and Conflict Monitor*. Retrieved August 11, 2009, from http://www.monitor.upeace.org/archive.cfm?id_article=306
- Kyle, K. (1998). Politics, Ethnicity and the Irish troubles. *Contemporary British History*, 12(4), 177-183.
- Krueger, R. (1995). *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Leach, C. W., & Williams, W. R. (1999). Group Identity and Conflicting Expectations of the Future in Northern Ireland. *Political Psychology*, 20(4), 875-896.
- Lockman, Z. (1996). *Comrades and Enemies: Arab and Jewish Workers in Palestine, 1906-1948*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lowrance, S. (2006). Identity, Grievances, and Political Action: Recent Evidence from the Palestinian Community in Israel. *International Political Science Review*, 27(2), 167-190.
- Madill, A., & Todd, Z. (2010). *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Psychology and the Social Sciences*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Mahoney, J. (2009). *Methodology of Qualitative Research*. Evanston: Northwestern University.
- Massad, J. (1996). Zionism's Internal Others: Israel and the Oriental Jews. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 25(4), 53-68.
- Massad, J. (2006). *The Persistence of the Palestinian Question: Essays on Zionism and the Palestinians* (1 ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Matthewson, L. (2004). Methodology of Semantic Fieldwork. *International Journal of American Linguistics*, 70(4), 369-415.
- Medding, P. Y. (2008). Sephardic Jewry and Mizrahi Jews. *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, XXII, 23-58.
- Mikesell, M., and Murphy, A. (1991). A Framework for Comparative Study of Minority-Group Aspirations. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 81(4), 581-604.
- Monnet, J. (2006). Conflict -a Literature Review. *University of Duisburg Essen*, 23, 1-27.

- Nimni, E. (2003). *The Challenge of Post-Zionism: Alternatives to Fundamentalist Politics in Israel*. London: Zed Books.
- Norman, D., & Yvonna, L. (2005). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Third Edition ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Omar, K. (n.d.). The Synagogue as Civil Society, or How We Can Understand the Shas Party. *The Mizrahi Democratic Rainbow New Discourse*. Retrieved July 23, 2009, from <http://ha-keshet.org.il>
- Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR). (2009). Polls conducted since the year 2000. Retrieved January 1, 2010, from <http://www.pcpsr.org/survey/index.html>
- Peled, Y. (1992). Ethnic Democracy and the Legal Construction of Citizenship: Arab Citizens of the Jewish State. *The American Political Science Review*, 86(2), 432-443.
- Peled, Y. (1998). Towards a Redefinition of Jewish Nationalism in Israel? The Enigma of Shas. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 21(3), 703.
- Poll Studies. (n.d.). Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre. Retrieved August 23, 2009, from www.jmcc.org/
- Quah, S., and Sales, A. (2000). *The International Handbook of Sociology (SAGE Studies in International Sociology)*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Rady, M. (1993). Minority Rights and Self-Determination in Contemporary Eastern Europe. *Modern Humanities Research Association*, 71(4), 717-728.
- Rejwan, N. (1999). *Israel's Place in the Middle East: A Pluralist Perspective* (1st ed.). Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida.
- Research on Religion, Nation, and State. (2008). The Israel Democracy Institute. Retrieved September 10, 2009, from www.idi.org.il/sites/english/Pages/homepage.aspx
- Rosenblum, N. Religious Parties, Religious Political Identity, and the Cold Shoulder of Liberal Democratic Thought. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 6(1), 23-53.
- Rouhana, N. (1998). Israel and Its Arab Citizens: Predicaments in the Relationship between Ethnic States and Ethnonational Minorities. *Third World Quarterly*, 19(2), 277-296.

- Sayigh, Y. (1989). Struggle within, Struggle without: The Transformation of PLO Politics Since 1982. *International Affairs*, 65(2), 247-271.
- Seligson, M., and Caspi, D. (1983). Arabs in Israel: Political Tolerance and Ethnic Conflict. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 19(1), 55-66.
- Shabi, R. (2009). *We Look Like the Enemy: The Hidden Story of Israel's Jews from Arab Lands*. New York: Walker and Company.
- Shasha, D. (n.d.). Masking Identity: Sephardim as Ashkenazim. *The Mizrahi Democratic Rainbow New Discourse*. Retrieved August 2, 2009, from <http://www.ha-keshet.org.il>
- Shenhav, S. R. (2006). Political Narratives and Political Reality. *International Political Science Review*, 27(3), 245-62.
- Shenhav, Y. (1999). The Jews of Iraq, Zionist Ideology, and the Property of the Palestinian Refugees of 1948: An Anomaly of National Accounting. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 31(4), 605-630.
- Shenhav, Y. (2002). Ethnicity and National Memory: The World Organization of Jews from Arab Countries (WOJAC) in the Context of the Palestinian National Struggle. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 29(1), 27-56.
- Shenhav, Y. (n.d.). What is there between the Mizrahi issue and Palestinian Nationalism?. *The Mizrahi Democratic Rainbow New Discourse*. Retrieved July 23, 2009, from <http://ha-keshet.org.il>
- Shiblak, A. (2005). *Iraqi Jews: A History*. London: Saqi Books.
- Shohat, E. (1999). The Invention of the Mizrahim. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 29(1), 5-20.
- Shohat, E. (1988). Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Standpoint of Its Jewish Victims. *Social Text*, 19, 1-35.
- Smootha, S., and Peretz, D. (1982). The Arabs in Israel. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 26(3), 451-484.
- Smootha, S. (1976). Ethnic Stratification and Allegiance in Israel: Where Do Oriental Jews Belong?. *IL Politico*, 41(4), 635-650.
- Smootha, S. (2007). *Ethnicity as a Factor in the Israeli Jews' Attitudes toward Arabs: Comparing Cultures and Conflicts..* Baden-Baden: Nomos.

- Smootha, S. (1996). Ethnic Democracy: Israel as an Archetype. *Journal of Israel Studies*, 2(2), 198-241.
- Smootha, S. (1972). Israel and Its Third World Jews. Black Panthers: The Ethnic Dilemma. *society*, 9(7), 31-36.
- Smootha, S. (2008). The mass immigrations to Israel: A comparison of the failure of the Mizrahi immigrants of the 1950s with the success of the Russian immigrants of the 1990s. *Journal of Israeli History*, 27(1), 1-27.
- Smootha, S. (2004). *Index of Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel*. Haifa: University of Haifa, The Jewish-Arab Center.
- Smootha, S. (1978). *Israel: Pluralism and Conflict (International Library of Society)*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Books.
- Socio-economic Justice. (n.d.). *Mossawa Centre: The Advocacy Center for Arab Citizens in Israel*. Retrieved July 2, 2010, from <http://www.mossawacenter.org>
- Swirski, S. (1989). *Not Backward but Held Back*. Haifa: Mahbarot Lemehkar Ulevikoret.
- Tamar, H. (2009, April 29). The Return of the State. *The Israel Democracy Institute*. Retrieved December 12, 2009, from www.idi.org.il/sites
- Taylor, A. R. (1972). Zionism and Jewish History. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 1(2), 35-51.
- Tessler, M., and Grant, A. (1998). Israel's Arab Citizens: The Continuing Struggle. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 555, 97-113.
- Tibi, A. (2010, April 1). Israel's Arab land. *Israeli Occupation Archive*. Retrieved May 1, 2010, from <http://www.israeli-occupation.org>
- Tzfadia, E. (2007). Public Policy and Identity Formation: The Experience of Mizrahim in Israel's Development Towns. *Journal for the Study of Mizrahi and Sephardic Jewry, February*, 57-82.
- Useem, B. (1998). Breakdown Theories of Collective Action. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24, 215-38.
- Usher, G. (2006). Hamas Risen: Year of Elections. *Middle East Report*, p. 2-11.
- Weller, M. (2008). *Autonomy, Self-Governance and Conflict Resolution: Innovative*

approaches to Institutional Design in Divided Societies (1 ed.). New York: Routledge.

Wurmser, M. (2005). Post-Zionism and the Sephardi Question. *Middle East Quarterly*, *XII*(2), 1-13.

Yadgar, Y. (2003). Shas as a Struggle to Create a New Field: A Bourdieuan Perspective of an Israeli Phenomenon. *Sociology of Religion*, *64*(2), 223-246.

Yiftachel, O. (2000). "Ethnocracy" and Its Discontents: Minorities, Protests, and the Israeli Polity. *Critical Inquiry*, *26*(4), 725-756.

Yonah, Y. (n.d.). Israel as a Multicultural Democracy: Challenges and Obstacles. *The Mizrahi Democratic Rainbow New Discourse*. Retrieved July 28, 2009, from <http://ha-keshet.org.il>

Zartman, W., and Touval, S. (1985). *International mediation in theory and practice (SAIS papers in international affairs)*. Washington: Foreign Policy Institute, School Of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University.

Zohar, Z. (2005). *Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewry: From the Golden Age of Spain to Modern Times*. London: NYU Press.