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Identity, Grievances, and Political Action: Recent Evidence from the Palestinian Community in Israel

Sherry Lowrance

Abstract. In ethnically non-neutral states, why do some disadvantaged minorities protest their status, while others acquiesce? Given the difficult circumstances in many cases, why do they not protest more than they do, or turn to violence? This article argues that the key to ethnic protest is the identity that one holds: state-bound identities weaken the grievance–protest relationship. The closer one identifies with the state, the less likely one is to protest, even when significant grievances exist. The case of Israel and its Arab citizens is used to illustrate this relationship. When Arabs identify themselves as more "Israeli," they are less protest-prone than other Arabs with more anti-establishment identities. This article provides empirical evidence that fostering state-friendly identities may be a desirable goal for many ethnically tense states.

Keywords: • Israeli Arabs • Ethnicity • Identity • Israel • Palestinians • Protest

The end of the cold war brought expectations of a new liberal era free from communism, fascism, and totalitarianism (Fukuyama, 1989). However, the apparent rise in destructive ethnic conflict, most painfully visible in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, for example, dashed the hopes of many optimists that the post-cold war world would be a peaceful and stable one. It became immediately obvious that the authoritarian and totalitarian governments of the Soviet bloc had not eliminated long-standing grievances and identities as effectively as had been previously thought. Furthermore, with the end of US–Soviet rivalry, no longer were cold war patrons acting to rein in regional clients in the name of global security. Thus interstate conflict may have increased as well.

In this global climate, it is worth investigating the role that grievances and identity play in ethnic conflict. Although the importance of grievances in ethnic protest and collective action is intuitively well understood, its relative importance

to other factors has not been well explored. Furthermore, how one's identity impacts political activity, particularly in conjunction with grievances, needs further illumination. State-bound identifications, in particular, have the potential to affect the grievance–action relationship. When affective bonds between state and individual exist, minority grievances may not as easily be translated into destabilizing forms of political action.

This article explores the relationship between grievances, identity, and ethnic protest at the individual level. The case of Israel is used to illustrate this relationship. Israel is an ethnically oriented state which uses state institutions to favor the Jewish majority over the indigenous Israeli Palestinian population.[1] The Israeli Palestinian minority therefore suffers from discrimination, deprivation, and dilemmas of identity that have been the subject of some interest in recent years (Caspi and Weltsch, 1998; Grossman, 1993; Rouhana, 1997; Schnell, 1994). It is among this minority, who display varying levels of identification with the state, that we may find evidence to support or refute the claims of this article.

Identity is a complex, evolving, multilayered, and situational relationship between an individual and a group or number of groups (Baumeister, 1995; Mach, 1993; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). It is a psychological orientation that can evoke strong emotional reactions (Scheff, 1994), rather than a relatively simple attitude that may manifest itself as rather neutral. In the context of Arab politics in Israel, identity is multifaceted and politicized by the highly charged environment. The main divide is the Jewish–Arab divide, but many others are possible, such as divisions along a left–right political orientation and the secular–religious and Christian–Muslim–Druze dimensions. Because of this, "identity" is well suited to the analysis of Israeli Palestinian political behavior, capturing much (though by no means all) of this complexity. Empirically, an identity variable has significant variation, particularly in the Israeli context, which allows for its constructive use as an independent variable in quantitative analysis.

This article investigates ethnic protest in Israel among Israel's Arab minority in order to answer two related questions. Why do Israeli Palestinians protest? Why do they not protest more than they do, given their difficult circumstances in Israel? The article argues that the key to ethnic protest is the identity that one holds. Those who identify as "Israeli," that is, those Israeli Palestinians who identify with the Israeli state, are less likely to engage in system-challenging protest activity than those who do not, irrespective of the level of grievances held. Thus, although grievances are an important motivator of ethnic political action, their impact can be weakened by state-bound identities. This link between identity and protest suggests that identification with the state is an important factor in ethnic stability.

Theoretical Insights

Grievances

The importance of ethnic grievances for collective action and rebellion is at least intuitively understood, although the purely economic, nonethnic, early formulation of the "relative deprivation" thesis (Gurr, 1970) has largely been discredited as a primary cause of collective rebellion (Brush, 1996). Nevertheless, various forms of discontent have been recognized as important motivators for ethnic collective action (Gurr, 1993, 2000b), alongside or in combination with other facilitating factors such as mobilizing resources (Snyder and Tilly, 1972;

Tilly, 1978; Tilly et al., 1975), expected utility (Muller and Opp, 1986; Muller et al., 1991), opportunity structures (Kitschelt, 1986; McAdam et al., 1996), and various attitudes and orientations (Kasfir, 1979).

Ethnic grievances can take many forms. Economic discrimination is a common complaint among ethnic minorities. Housing and employment discrimination, land misdistribution, and a lack of educational opportunities may result in low socioeconomic status on the part of ethnic minorities. If economic data are broken down by ethnic group, economic discontent can easily be measured through economic differentials in GDP per capita, employment indicators, and land ownership, for example. In surveys, economic discontent can be measured through income differentials or perceived economic inequalities.

Other forms of grievance may be harder to measure, but are equally important to consider. Political discrimination in its various forms is particularly important for the study of unconventional political participation, because the inability to affect policies through conventional electoral channels may make direct political action such as protest appear more attractive to potential activists. Thus, the lack of minorities in positions of influence, ineffective or inadequate minority voting blocs, and hostile majorities constitute a set of grievances that may provide a motivation for action meant to increase their political power.

Similarly, cultural, educational, and civil rights can act as lightning-rod issues for underprivileged groups in society. Acting to improve these rights can also instill hope for greater influence in the political system. Winning protection against discrimination, particularly in education and business, can help level the playing field among groups of different status in a society. As a result, low-status groups may be motivated sufficiently by these issues to take political action. If they feel their likelihood of success in electoral politics is low, they may be more likely to opt for unconventional, illegal, or even violent means.

Although grievances provide a motivation for unconventional political action, they do not act alone. Other factors interact with grievances to produce political outcomes. At the individual level, a person's expectation of success (Muller and Opp, 1986; Muller et al., 1991), socioeconomic status (Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1978), degree of initiative and personal resources (Verba et al., 1995), or desire to express certain identities (Inglehart, 1990) may influence the final decision on whether to engage in political activity, even where grievances exist. At the system level, political opportunity structures (Kitschelt, 1986), group resources (Tilly, 1978), and the extent of state repression (Della Porta, 1995; Della Porta and Reiter, 1998) influence the extent to which individuals may find political action attractive.

Nevertheless, grievances seem to be a necessary condition for political protest to take place. Without grievances, there would be no reason to engage in most forms of political action, especially protest. Particularly when one feels shut out of the political system, unconventional political participation may be used as a means to change the status quo. Thus, I expect that the more grievances an individual expresses, the more likely is she or he to protest:

H1:   When grievances are high, individuals are more likely to protest.

Identity

At a basic level, everyone has a need for belonging (Horowitz, 1985; Scheff, 1994). Being a part of something larger than oneself (particularly when the group is able to provoke positive affect for lofty group goals) and a grandiose vision of the past and future can be a powerful inducement for group affiliation and even collective action. Furthermore, some psychological needs can only be fulfilled in a social setting; people with a need for dominance, for example, will find it rewarding to be in the company of someone exhibiting a submissive personality (Turner et al., 1987).

Belonging to a group can fulfill other, more instrumentally oriented, needs. The categorization of people into groups creates expectations that allow for predictability of behavior among strangers and can impose normative obligations on transactions. Thus in a modernizing world, where interaction with strangers in an impersonal world is imperative, people can know what to expect, even in an unfamiliar setting (Horowitz, 1985).

The reason why *ethnic* groups may be preferred over other groups may be related to the resemblance of ethnicity to family (Horowitz, 1985). In a rapidly modernizing world, where labor mobility is essential and family relations are contracting from the extended model to the nuclear model, ethnicity can act as a substitute for ties of kinship. Ethnicity can provide family-like ties, emotional support, reciprocal help, and dispute resolution, all traditional needs met by kinship ties. In the modern world, however, the family may be unable to fulfill some of these roles, which can be taken up by the ethnic group. In other words, members of an ethnic group need not face the world alone.

The mere existence of ethnic social identities does not ensure that political mobilization will take place, however. Nevertheless, some aspects of ethnic identity may facilitate collective action on behalf of group goals. For example, the ability of social groups (ethnic groups included) to create feelings of solidarity, mutual cooperation, and unity of values makes the attainment of shared goals more likely (Turner et al., 1987). Social groups also create norms of behavior: fear of rejection or criticism by the group can affect individuals' perceptions and actions (Asch, 1952, 1956; Turner et al., 1987).

It is the ability of groups to impose and enforce social norms that allows groups to limit the problem of free riding in collective action. Material-selective incentive solutions (Olson, 1965) have declined in popularity in recent years as explanations of overcoming free riding. As a result, theorists recognize that other kinds of incentives and conditions may be important in promoting collective action (Hechter and Okamoto, 2001). For example, a group's monitoring capacity through extensive social ties facilitates collective action by discouraging free riding. Groups may also impose social penalties and provide social rewards regarding conformity to norms of political action. Ethnic groups can thus promote collective action through utilizing their extensive kinship-like ties, bonds of mutual obligation, and the enforcement of social norms.

The ability of ethnic groups to generate intense emotions can also contribute to collective action. Inasmuch as ethnic ties approximate and potentially substitute for family ties, perceived threats to the ethnic group can be treated with the same intense emotions that are usually reserved for the family. This is why "symbolic politics" (Horowitz, 1985) can have considerable impact on ethnic political competition. Since the political quest for power determines the status of a group,

the political arena can become a symbolic battleground between ethnic groups jockeying for relative advantage.

The state can have a decisive impact on identity formation through its manipulation in ethnic competition. 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. 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.

The dominance of one ethnic group in the state apparatus can impose distressing identity dilemmas among minority groups. For example, an ethnically oriented state, such as Brubaker's (1996) "nationalizing state," places the interests of the dominant ethnic group highest among the state's goals. It represents the capture of the state by a single ethnic group in an effort to use state institutions to marginalize minorities and maximize the power and prestige of the dominant group. Although the dominant group's collective self-esteem is enhanced through the state's use in this way, minority groups suffer from powerlessness, a lack of collective self-esteem, and identity confusion.

Minority loyalty to the state could suffer as a result, with potentially explosive outcomes. However, this is not a *necessary* outcome, since the state has many nonidentity-based potential sources of legitimacy, such as economic redistribution or general prosperity (or both) and democratic processes, that could dampen the tendency toward disloyal conduct and increase affective bonds with the state. When these conditions exist, minorities may be more likely to acquiesce peacefully to policies that favor the dominant group.

In general, however, minorities find it difficult to identify with a state that they see as responsible for their subjugation. If an individual chooses to identify with the state, that individual may be open to criticism that he or she accepts state domination of the minority or that he or she rejects their own group. However, identifying with the state may represent an attempt to assimilate, which may open the doors to upward social mobility.

Under such circumstances, members of a minority face two main choices (Brewer and Brown, 1998; Hechter and Okamoto, 2001; Turner et al., 1987; Wright et al., 1990):

1. They may seek upward mobility through casting their lot with the state and its dominant ethnic group, though at the risk of alienating themselves from their own group.
2. They may identify with the minority group, despite the group's low status, and struggle for the improvement of the group's position in society. Both choices represent attempts to resolve the dilemma of identity in a way that preserves personal and collective self-esteem.

The fact that minorities have choices in personal identification reveals that identity among minorities is often a variable, not a constant, across individuals. Although the individuals all belong to the same ethnic group, each individual may choose whether to identify with the group, and to what extent. Much research on ethnic conflict assumes a constant identity among groups, but in fact, individual variation in identity may be an important factor affecting the variation in political action strategies.

In Israel, Arabs express their degree of identification with their minority group or the dominant group in part through the kind of self-identification label they

choose, whether to call themselves "Palestinian Arab" or "Israeli Arab," or even "Israeli," for example. Since those who identify most closely with the minority group (as "Palestinian") are apparently choosing the second option above (to identify with the low-status minority group), they will likely resolve their self-esteem conflict through struggling to improve the status of their reference group through political action. Thus, I expect that the closer an individual identifies with a low-status group (closer to the "Palestinian" end of the identity scale for Israel's Arab citizens), the more likely is it that that individual will engage in protest action:

H2:   The greater the "Palestinian" identity, the greater the probability of engaging in protest.

It is also important to consider the possibility that grievances and identity could work in tandem to produce synergistic effects. Could it be that the effect of grievances on protest is dependent upon the kind of identity one holds? Perhaps identifying with a low-status group with an anti-establishment identity could intensify the effect of ethnic grievances for protest. Conversely, identifying with the dominant group could make one more likely to minimize the importance of grievances for protest. Thus, it could be argued that identity may condition the relationship between grievances and protest; that is, that an interaction effect may be found between identity and grievance:

H3:   The effect of grievances on protest is conditioned by identity.

I will test these hypotheses using Israeli survey data. The main data set I will rely upon is a survey conducted in Israel from January to May 2001, consisting of 1202 face-to-face interviews in Arabic among Arab citizens. It was based on a name sample, randomly drawn from Arab localities inside the Green Line (pre-1967 borders) on the population register of the Ministry of Interior. It constitutes a representative stratified sample of all localities in which Arab citizens live.

The Case of Israel

During the war of 1948 that established the state of Israel, the majority of Palestinians were expelled or fled. Those remaining comprised about 19 percent of the population of Israel, most concentrated in Galilee in the north and in some mixed cities, though scattered populations (mostly Bedouin) existed in the south. Due to their relatively small numbers, Israeli Palestinians were not considered a threat to Israeli democracy as long as they were properly managed. They were thus given Israeli citizenship, but they also lived under harsh military rule until 1966, which placed severe restrictions on their political and economic rights. After military rule was lifted, some restrictions remained, but gradually Israeli Palestinians were able to resume a semblance of normal life.

Despite the lifting of military rule and their official Israeli citizenship, Israeli Palestinians have nevertheless suffered from discrimination in the dominant Jewish society and state. Because of Jewish security concerns and the official Zionist ideology of the state, Israeli Palestinians still face numerous obstacles to achieving equality. Security concerns prevent them from obtaining employment in the large Israeli security complex, where many of the most prestigious and well-paying jobs are found.

Land ownership and use restrictions, largely inspired by the Zionist ideology of "redeeming" the land for the Jewish people, prevent equitable distribution of resources, while the land confiscations of early statehood have reduced the amount of land in Israeli Palestinian hands to a mere 7 percent of the total. Local budgets, educational spending, infrastructure development, and state investment in Israeli Palestinian localities remain strikingly lower than in Jewish localities, helping to perpetuate the large socioeconomic gap between Israeli Jews and Israeli Palestinians.

Inequities such as those described above continue to exist in great part because of a lack of Israeli Palestinian representation in decision-making bodies. Israeli Palestinians have the right to vote in Israeli elections, but they are prevented from translating their potential voting power into effective policy-making because of internal and external forces. Internally, Israeli Palestinians are fragmented among several different ideological orientations represented by different parties, and the leadership is fraught with infighting, both of which diminish their effectiveness as a parliamentary bloc.

Externally, however, curbs on political expression supported by the Jewish majority undermine Israeli Palestinian political organization. The Knesset passed four amendments to the Basic Laws in May 2002 that effectively, though not explicitly, targeted the ability of Israeli Palestinians to mobilize and express freely common political ideas. Amending Section 7A of the Basic Law, The Knesset (Amendment No. 35) – 2002 and The Political Parties (Amendment No. 13) Law – 2002 allows a Central Elections Committee to disqualify candidates and parties from running for the Knesset on the basis of supporting the "armed struggle of an enemy state or of a terrorist organization" against Israel or rejecting Israel's identity as a Jewish and democratic state, and requires a positive declaration in support of these principles (Rouhana and Sultany, 2003; Sultany, 2003). In effect, Israeli Palestinians must adhere to the Zionist consensus to run for the Knesset, despite the fact that Zionism is unpopular among them (Stern, 2005).

The most recent elections, in January 2003, witnessed attempts to disqualify several Palestinian Israeli candidates and parties, as well as some right-wing Jewish candidates. Although the Central Election Committee voted to disqualify the nationalist Balad/Tajamu' party and two Palestinian Israeli candidates, Ahmed Tibi and Azmi Bishara, the High Court reinstated their candidacies before the elections (*Ha'aretz*, 2003). 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 effectively to represent their constituencies due to the legal limits placed upon their platforms and activities.

In addition to the legal hurdles that they must surmount, 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. A powerful consensus exists among Jewish policymakers and public that Arab parties, as non-Zionist or anti-Zionist parties, are too radical for participation in decision-making in a Jewish state. 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. Despite their status as a blocking force, the Arab parties could not point to any concrete achievements benefiting Arabs in Israel (Ghanem, 1997).

Although Israeli Palestinian members of Zionist parties have been included in coalitions, their influence within the party is quite limited, and they have been unable or unwilling to express non-Zionist viewpoints. The strong Zionist con-

sensus among the Jewish public holds that as the self-declared state of the Jewish people, Israel exists to fulfill Jewish aspirations for self-determination. According to this strain of thought, then, 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 Palestinians.

Many Jewish members of the 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, As'ad Ghanem (1997) concluded that "Arabs have never had any real opportunity to participate in decision-making, whether on domestic or foreign policy issues."

Due to the powerlessness of the Israeli Palestinian minority in the political system, extra-parliamentary tactics such as protest have grown in popularity. Under the military administration, Israeli Palestinian political activity was severely circumscribed, but since the 1970s, they have grown more independent and politically active (Ghanem, 2001; ICG, 2004; Yiftachel, 1996). With the rise of an Israeli-educated generation more acquainted with the Israeli system, Israeli Palestinians were able to begin the process of mobilization for equal rights. A number of nationwide organizations were formed in the 1970s and the first significant protest demonstrations were held, such as the landmark Land Day protests, held every year since 1976 on March 30 to commemorate the six people killed by Israeli police while protesting against land confiscations.

In addition to regularly held days of protest commemorating important events in their political history, Israeli Palestinians have staged protests and general strikes since the 1970s on other occasions, such as the demolition of illegal Arab housing, the expropriation of Arab land, and international Palestinian events such as the intifada or the invasion of Lebanon. Jewish Israelis generally view Palestinian protest negatively, considering it to be much more threatening than Jewish protest and worthy of greater countermobilization. These protests can involve a degree of direct confrontation and violence, which may be provoked in part by the mobilization of Israeli forces. Most Palestinian protest, however, occurs peacefully and legally, passing without major incident.

A notable protest milestone occurred in October 2000 upon the outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada in the occupied territories. Israeli Palestinian demonstrations in support of the intifada were put down by Israeli forces with lethal violence. The result was 13 Palestinian Israelis killed. Since then, a hostile climate of fear and intimidation has dominated the Israeli political scene. Jewish political trends supportive of the "transfer" of both Palestinians in the territories and Palestinian Israelis to other Arab countries have grown in power and visibility, and the Jewish public in general has become less tolerant of dissent, particularly that of Palestinian Israelis (HRA, 2002; Rouhana and Sultany, 2003; Sultany, 2003). Although Palestinian Israelis feel as if they are under siege, mobilization into organizations and demonstrations has not suffered unduly. In fact, some Palestinian Israeli organizations have been invigorated by an influx of concerned individuals ready to act in support of minority rights.

In the previous two decades, the available evidence indicates that self-identification as Palestinian has increased among the Arab minority (Rouhana, 1997), despite the Israeli establishment's efforts to mold them into "Arab Israelis" of different religious groups and erase their identity as Palestinians (Copty, 1990;

Said, 1992). The data on Palestinian Arab identity in Israel are sparse, particularly before the 1980s. Much of the data that exists are based on small sample sizes and populations of convenience, such as students. Researchers have asked different questions using different methods, making comparison difficult between the studies. Despite these difficulties, a scholarly consensus has emerged that identifies a growing trend toward greater Palestinian identification and lessening Israeli identification (Lustick, 1980; Mi'ari, 1987; Rouhana, 1997; Smooha, 1992).

There are many possible reasons why Palestinian identity has been increasing in Israel. First of all, social change in the Palestinian population has involved a weakening of local identities such as the *hamula*, as education and other indicators of social change have increased. Furthermore, the strength of Arab nationalism, an anti-Zionist form of identification that competes with Palestinian identity, drastically decreased following the defeat of the Arab armies in the 1967 war with Israel. After Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in the same war, Palestinian citizens of Israel renewed contact with Palestinians in the territories, where a strong sense of Palestinian nationalism already existed and undoubtedly impacted upon Palestinians in Israel.

Finally, the outbreak of the first intifada in 1987 and the al-Aqsa Intifada in 2000 intensified Palestinian nationalism in the territories, while increasing Israeli Palestinian solidarity with their compatriots over the Green Line. Furthermore, as discussed above, the loosening of Israeli restrictions on Palestinian expression and political activity in the past two or three decades has allowed the expression of Palestinian identity where it may previously have existed, but was prevented from public expression. The increase in Palestinian identification has occurred at roughly the same time as the increase in Israeli Palestinian political mobilization, suggesting that a link between identity and political action may exist.

There are a number of self-identification labels currently in use among Palestinian Israelis. Seven of the most commonly used were included in the 2001 survey. They range from "Israeli" and "Israeli Arab," indicating some degree of identification with Israel, to "Palestinian," which rejects Israeli affiliation and wholeheartedly identifies with the Palestinian people. As we shall see, the different self-identification labels are associated with different orientations toward the Israeli state and varying levels of criticism of Israeli society.
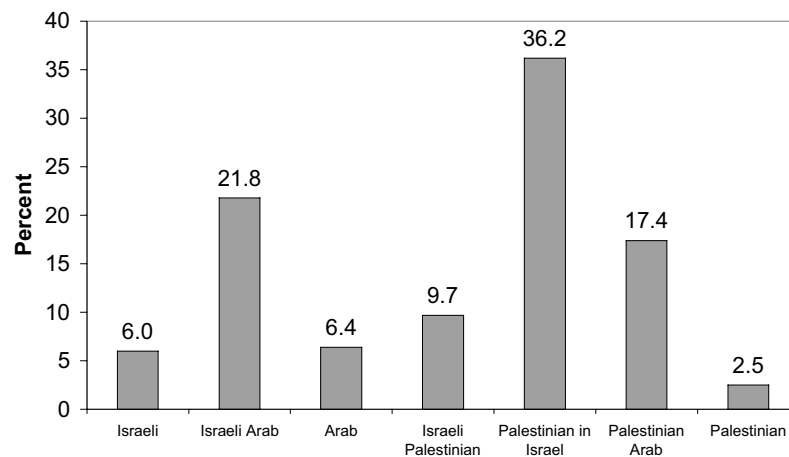

FIGURE 1. *Self-identification among Israeli Palestinians*

According to the author's survey, approximately 66 percent of the sample of Palestinian Israelis identified themselves in whole or in part as Palestinian. The modal identity is "Palestinian in Israel," which rejects "Israeli" as a psychological identification, but accepts it as a descriptive label of geographical location. Those respondents who did not choose to identify themselves as "Israeli Palestinians" (the closest alternative), choosing instead "Palestinian in Israel," appear to be making a meaningful distinction between these two self-identification labels. Previous research (Rouhana, 1997) and the author's field interviews support this argument.

The establishment-favored "Israeli Arab" is the second-most popular response in the survey, reflecting its dominance in Israeli social discourse. About 37 percent of respondents identified themselves in some way as Israeli, double-counting the "Israeli Palestinian" category as both "Israeli" and "Palestinian." Although much smaller than the percentage identifying themselves as Palestinian, a nevertheless considerable number include "Israeli" as part of their identity, despite the hardships placed upon them by the Israeli state.

According to Rouhana (1997), Palestinians in Israel lack an integrated collective identity, one that successfully integrates various dimensions (socio-cultural, political, and formal-legal) with affective axes of attachment. Israeli identity dominates only the formal-legal dimension, but Palestinian identity dominates the political dimension and, most significantly, the affective axes. In other words, Israeli identity has not been internalized by Palestinian Arabs as a national identity with affective attachment; instead, it merely describes the civic and geographical affiliation of Palestinians in Israel.

Rouhana's hypothesis may accurately describe those who identify themselves as "Palestinian" and reject Israeli identities, but not all Palestinian Israelis identify themselves this way, as Figure 1 shows. However, his argument does suggest that Palestinian identity is substantively different from Israeli identity. He argues that affective attachment is not directed toward Israel, but toward the Palestinian people. This finding suggests that the extent of affective attachment to one's state may have important consequences for political action strategies chosen.

For example, if the dominant majority exhibits a high level of attachment to the state, as it does in most cases, one can expect that the logical outcome will be supportive political action, such as participation in electoral politics and considerable support for policies supporting the majority's dominant position. A minority, however, which exhibits a high level of attachment to the state may behave in a similar, though not identical, fashion. Though they may not wholeheartedly support policies that strengthen the majority's dominant position, they may in fact acquiesce to those policies out of practical considerations or a confusion of the state's identity with that of the dominant majority. On the other hand, a minority that has low attachment to the state may be less likely to acquiesce to those policies and to participate in politics in the same way as the high-attachment minority. This minority (or part thereof) may instead be in a position to challenge unpopular policies and to use confrontational political tactics in their negotiations with the state. In Israel, we can expect that Israeli Palestinians who feel close to the state will participate in politics differently, possibly more passively, than Israeli Palestinians who have a low sense of attachment to the state.

Thus it is significant that these different self-identification labels are not distributed randomly among the Israeli Palestinian public. Rather, they are grouped among individuals who share similar political ideas and perceptions and

may employ similar political action strategies. The seven different labels used in the survey each appear to have different meanings consistently interpreted across the Palestinian Israeli public. This fact becomes clear when examining the differences of means among groups identifying differently across attitudinal indexes.

Three scales were constructed using factor analysis: a grievance and discrimination scale measuring the extent of perceived discrimination against Palestinian Israelis, an Arab-power scale measuring the extent of perceived Palestinian Israeli influence in the political system, and a regime-evaluation scale measuring individual evaluations of democratic performance regarding the Palestinian Israeli minority (see Appendix for details). For each index, Israeli identities scored lower (that is, perceiving less discrimination, more power for Palestinian Israelis, and a more positive regime evaluation) than for those identifying themselves as "Palestinian."
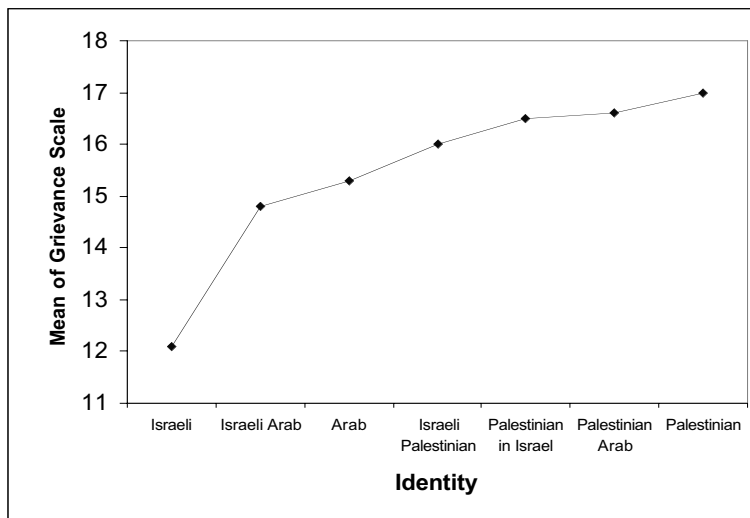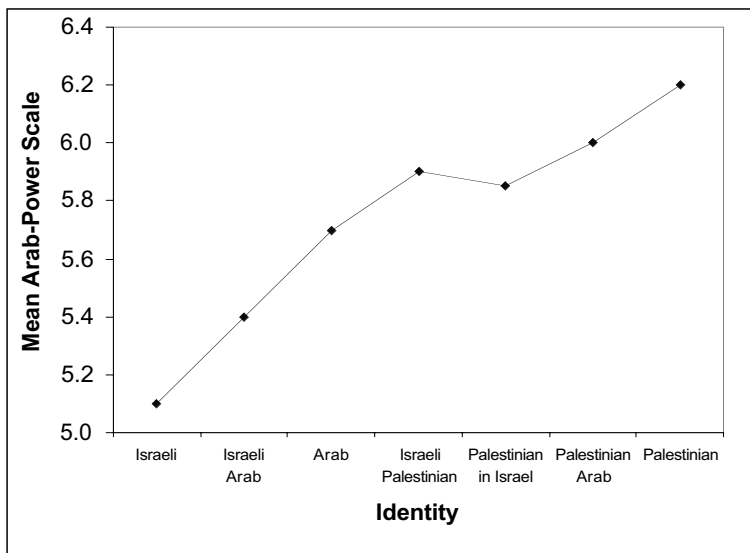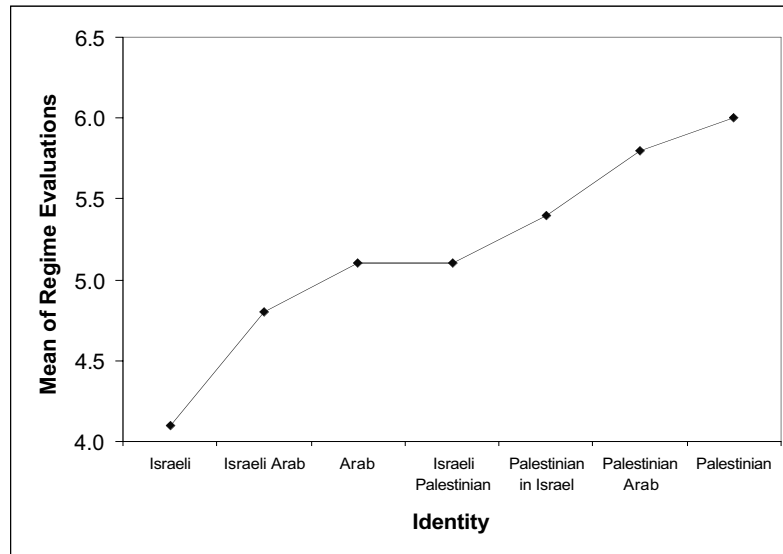

FIGURE 2. *Identity and Grievances*

FIGURE 3. *Identity and Perceptions of Arab Power*

FIGURE 4. *Identity and Regime Evaluations*

For grievance and discrimination (see Figure 2), the difference of means increases monotonically from the identity scale (the seven self-identity labels being arranged from most "Israeli" to most "Palestinian"). As identity becomes more distinctly Palestinian and less Israeli, respondents report more perceived grievances. For Arab power (see Figure 3) and regime evaluation (see Figure 4), the increase is nearly monotonic. In short, Israeli identifiers are qualitatively different in outlook from Palestinian identifiers. Those in between the two extremes differ from the Israeli and Palestinian identifiers to a lesser degree. Thus, the seven identities can be arrayed on an identity scale that is ordinal in nature.

These identities appear to indicate one's general political orientation toward Israeli politics. In particular, one's degree of accommodation of Israel's dominant ideology, Zionism, seems to be a key ingredient in one's identity choice. Those who identify themselves at the high end of the identity scale, as "Palestinian," are more likely to disagree that "Israel can be a democracy and a Jewish-Zionist state at the same time" and that "Israel has the right to exist as a Zionist-Jewish state." Conversely, "Israeli" identifiers are more likely to agree with those statements. Thus one's identity choice reflects one's degree of identification with the state and its Zionist goals. Furthermore, the identity choices also seem to suggest a degree of affective identification with the state. "Palestinian" identifiers are more likely to agree that "I am a citizen of Israel but for me it is like a foreign country" (see Table 1 for bivariate correlations).

TABLE 1. *Correlations*

	Israel can be a democracy and a Jewish state	Israel has the right to exist as a Jewish state	Israel is like a foreign country
(Palestinian) Identity	−.30	−.31	.26
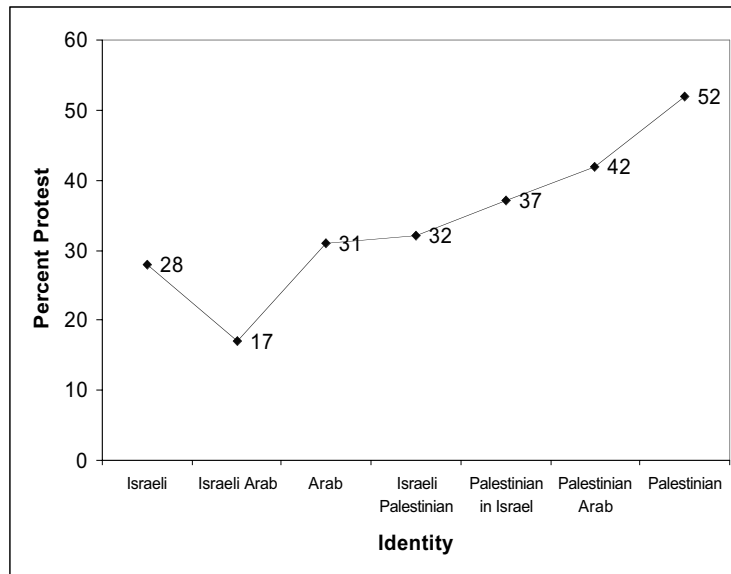
FIGURE 5. *Identity and Protest*

The consistency noted above also is found for political action, specifically for protest activity. As the Palestinian identity grows stronger and the Israeli identity weaker across the identity scale, actual protest activity increases (see Figure 5). The increase is roughly monotonic, with the interesting deviation from fully monotonic in that Israeli identifiers report more protest than Israeli Arab identifiers. However paradoxical this may sound, Israeli identifiers may in fact feel greater integration into Israeli society and their protest may not be of a system-challenging nature.

The data indicate that on a bivariate level, Palestinian identifiers protest more than Israeli identifiers. This finding is consistent with Palestinian history. The common identity of Palestinians is based on a history of perceived victimization at the hands of the Zionist project. It is therefore understandable that identification with the Palestinian heritage would be associated with greater criticism of Israeli society. Greater criticism of the dominant ideology, Zionism, and the society that supports it may predispose individuals toward system-challenging protest activity. Israel has been reluctant to acknowledge the existence of a Palestinian people, and it has discouraged the formation of a Palestinian identity among the Israeli Palestinian population. To identify oneself as Palestinian, then, represents a profound rejection of Israeli political and social imperatives.

The Model

A bivariate statistical relationship does not completely illuminate the nature of these identities and how they could predispose one to protest, however. It could be that Palestinian identifiers are more educated or have some other characteristic that facilitates collective action. A multivariate analysis can illuminate the effect of identity independent of other factors that may also facilitate protest. The model is as follows:

Protest = α + β_1Age + β_2Income + β_3Education + β_4Gender + β_5Muslim + β_6Christian + β_7PID + β_8Party member + β_9Recruitment + β_{10}Engagement + β_{11}Mistrust + β_{12}Identity + β_{13}Grievance + β_{14}ID×Griev + ε

The multivariate analysis consists of a logit regression with the binary dependent variable of protest action, coded 1 if the respondent reports engaging in protest actions in the previous 5 years, and 0 if not. I draw upon the political participation and protest literatures to determine which variables to include in my model and to construct expectations for their impact on the dependent variable. Many of the independent variables included in the model represent standard expectations in the literature, so my treatment of these will be brief in order to allow more in-depth treatment of those variables most relevant to the overall argument of the article. (See Appendix for survey questions and scale-construction details.)

1. *Demographics.* Education and income are expected to be positively associated with protest. Although some protest literature argues that those on lower incomes and the less educated (the deprived) are more likely to protest (Gurr, 1970), individual-level analyses in many countries indicate that protest is a high-initiative activity that is facilitated by resources such as education and income (Jennings and Van Deth, 1990; Verba et al., 1995). Males are more likely to protest than females, particularly in traditional societies, and being Muslim (seen in Israel as being more radical than the Christians or Druze) may make one more likely to protest.
2. *Political engagement.* Being interested in politics and reading more newspapers is likely to increase one's probability of protesting, since one's interest or engagement with politics can act as incentive to take action in the political arena (Verba et al., 1978, 1995).
3. *Partisan engagement.* In the Israeli proportional-representation electoral system, interest groups are weak, while political parties carry out much of the political mobilization that goes on. Therefore, party membership (irrespective of which party) may positively impact on protest through its mobilization structures. For partisan affinity, however, feeling close to an Arab party is more likely to contribute to protest than feeling close to Zionist parties among the Israeli Palestinian population.
4. *Recruitment.* Being asked to protest can be expected to raise one's probability of actually engaging in protest (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Verba et al., 1995).
5. *Grievances.* As discussed above, having grievances may make one more likely to protest, particularly if one perceives an ethnic bias in the political system or feels politically powerless (Gurr, 1993). The grievance variable measures the extent to which the respondent believes that the Israeli political system and society favors Jewish Israelis over Palestinian Israelis.
6. *Identity.* Given its anti-establishment nature, the Palestinian identity may positively impact on the probability of protesting, while Israeli identity may reduce that probability. The identity variable measures the extent of Palestinian identity expressed by the respondent. "Israeli" is coded 1 and "Palestinian" is coded 7, corresponding with the order indicated in the above analysis.
7. *Interaction. Identity × Grievance (ID×Griev).* It is conceivable that the impact of regime attitudes may differ depending on the particular identity one has. If one identifies oneself as Israeli, for example, one's attitude toward the regime

may not matter as much for protest activity compared to Palestinian identifiers. Therefore, an interaction term of Identity × Grievance was included in the model to test for moderated relationships between these two variables.

Results

Since the nonlinear logit-model coefficients are not directly interpretable in terms of magnitude of effect, I have included a "first differences" column in Table 2. First differences report the magnitude of effect in terms of the change in the probability of protesting when varying a single independent variable from its minimum to its maximum, holding all other independent variables constant at their means. Take the independent variable gender, for example. Since it is coded 1 for male and 0 for female, according to the results, being male increases one's probability of protesting by 10 percent over being female. Being a party member increases the probability of protesting by 25 percent, while being asked to protest increases the likelihood of protesting by 28 percent and being engaged in politics by 26 percent.

It is a little-known fact that in a logit model involving interaction terms, the sign of a variable's coefficient may not correspond to the sign of the effect reported in the first-differences column (Luskin and Globetti, 2002). Thus, it is important to report the magnitude of the effect rather than simply relying upon the sign and significance of the coefficients, which can be misleading in cases such as these. My results reflect this apparent paradox. The coefficient of the self-identity variable (Israeli coded 1 and Palestinian coded 7) is negative and statistically significant,

TABLE 2. *Predicting Protest Action*

Variable	Logit regression Dependent variable = protest action		
	Coefficient	Standard error	First differences
Age	−.009	.006	−.11
Income	−.073	.076	−.05
Education	.015	.064	.02
Gender (M)	.522*	.169	.10
Muslim	.210	.383	.03
Christian	.140	.427	.03
PID	−.016	.065	−.01
Party member	1.10*	.249	.25
Recruitment	1.24*	.228	.28
Engagement	.684*	.177	.26
Mistrust	−.055	.095	−.05
Identity	−.600*	.237	.19
Grievance	−.243	.229	.37
IDxGriev	.170*	.052	
Constant	−1.38	.973	

Notes: * significant at the $p \le .05$ level or better

Pseudo R squared = .1745

Logit model estimation conducted using STATA 8. First differences estimated by Clarify 2.0

(King et al., 2000; Tomz et al., 2001)

TABLE 3. *Interaction Effects*

	Change in the probability of protest: first differences		
	First differences identity	First differences attitudes	
Low grievances	−.27	−.11	Israeli
High grievances	.53*	.69*	Palestinian

Note: * significant at the p ≤ .05 level or better

while the first difference is positive and barely misses statistical significance. Likewise, holding significant grievances increases the probability of protest by a statistically significant 37 percent, according to the first differences, although this variable's coefficient is negative and not statistically significant. In short, the first differences column in Table 2 indicates that grievances, recruitment, political engagement, and party membership significantly increase the likelihood of protesting, while it is unclear if Palestinian identity does likewise. Thus, Hypothesis 1 appears to be supported by the evidence, whereas Hypothesis 2 thus far is not.

It is instructive to look at a table of interaction effects (see Table 3) in order to sort out the effects, particularly for the interaction between identity and grievance. Examining the first differences at different levels of each variable helps illuminate when the variables have the greatest impact and thus sheds light on our third hypothesis. The right-hand column of Table 3 shows differing magnitudes of effect depending on the value of the identity variable. When the identity variable is held at "Israeli," the change in the probability of protest is relatively small when varying the grievance variable from its minimum to its maximum. Israeli identifiers are not very likely to protest, irrespective of whether they hold negative opinions of the Israeli political system.

However, when the identity variable is held at "Palestinian," the change in probability is 69 percent. It matters a great deal to Palestinian identifiers how aggrieved they are for their protest activity. If they have fewer grievances, they are much less likely to protest than if they have more grievances. In short, identifying oneself as "Israeli," makes one much less likely to protest no matter how aggrieved, while identifying oneself as "Palestinian" makes the grievances matter much more. Thus, the Israeli identity (that is, identifying with the state) can act as a suppressor of potentially destabilizing activities such as protest in the volatile environment found in Israel. Thus, the third hypothesis finds support in the evidence.

The policy implications of this research suggest there are two main avenues that Israel could take to improve its chances for long-term domestic tranquility. It could address the grievance variable by reducing the discrimination that Israeli Palestinians face and the social, economic, and political gap between Israeli Palestinians and Jewish Israelis, and thus directly impact upon protest activity. Alternatively, it could address the identity variable by decreasing the exclusively Jewish nature of the state to include Israeli Palestinians in the definition of the state and its goals. With this second option, Israel would decrease the importance of ethnic grievances, an important point since there will always remain some ethnic grievances, no matter how zealously Israel attacks ethnic discrimination.

These two avenues are not mutually exclusive, however. In fact, it could be argued that in some ways they both must work together. However, they potentially could be separated, and if so, my research indicates that a relatively costless (in

budgetary terms) symbolic move to include Israeli Palestinians in state goals and definitions could go very far to dampen the impetus toward ethnic protest and potential violence. In fact, the participation of a very small number of Israeli Palestinians in terrorist activities in the past two years suggests the importance of identity and symbolic inclusion for Israel's future (Schiff, 2003). Although such terrorist activities have been motivated by external concerns (Palestinian independence in the West Bank and Gaza), such actions are undoubtedly made possible by the lack of affective Israeli identity and affective loyalty to the state.

Concluding Remarks

The analysis above suggests that identifying with the state among oppressed minorities may be difficult, but where it exists, it can act as a stabilizing factor in ethnic conflict. By most indications, ethnic inclusion is likely to increase identification with the state. When the state espouses a theory of equality and attempts to carry it out, however imperfectly, minorities can identify with the goals of the state and develop an affective attachment that may be lacking when the state is overtly ethnic in nature. Discrimination at the hands of state institutions makes identification with the state difficult, while institutional equality facilitates it. Studies in organizational identity and behavior indicate that similar processes may be at work on a smaller scale in the business and nonprofit arenas (Tompkins and Cheney, 1985; Whetten and Godfrey, 1998).

Gurr's (2000a, 2000b) studies indicate that ethnic conflict worldwide is decreasing because of greater global acceptance of an ideology of ethnic inclusion. This article has presented individual-level evidence consistent with his conclusion. Although Israel is a single case study, there are many ethnically based regimes worldwide that may apply the results found here. With the global diffusion of liberal ethnic ideology making ethnic domination more unacceptable today than ever before, it is increasingly difficult to sustain ethnic "control" regimes (Lustick, 1979) and the inequality they create. The results shown in this article suggest that ethnic domination may contain the seeds of its own undoing.

Appendix

Survey Questions and Variables

The Arabic survey was conducted using face-to-face interviews in Arabic during the months of January–May 2001 by the Givat Haviva Center for Peace Research. It was based on a name sample, randomly drawn from the population register of the Ministry of Interior. Included in the sample were the residents of 44 villages and towns inside the Green Line, which constitutes a representative stratified sample of all localities in which Palestinian citizens live. The resulting data set consists of 1202 respondents.

V1 To what degree do you have trust in government?

1. To a very large degree.
2. To a large degree.
3. To a moderate degree.
4. To a small degree.
5. Not at all.

Arab-Power Scale

V5   To what degree, in your opinion, does the government consider Arab citizens' opinions in its decision-making?

1.   To a very large degree.
2.   To a large degree.
3.   To a moderate degree.
4.   To a small degree.
5.   Not at all.

V14   To what degree, in your opinion, do Arab citizens have influence on state affairs?

1.   Too much influence.
2.   Sufficient influence.
3.   Little influence.
4.   No influence at all.

The Arab-power scale consists of factor scores*(V5 + V14) = .745*V5 + .826*V14.

Grievance and Discrimination Scale

V16   To what degree, in your opinion, is there discrimination against Arab citizens in Israel?

1.   To a very large degree.
2.   To a large degree.
3.   To a moderate degree.
4.   To a small degree.
5.   Not at all.

The scale of V16 was reversed for continuity in analysis.

V18   To what degree have you personally been hurt by discrimination against Arabs?

1.   To a very large degree.
2.   To a large degree.
3.   To a moderate degree.
4.   To a small degree.
5.   Not at all.

The scale of V18 was reversed for continuity in analysis.

V20   To what degree, in your opinion, is there a gap in the achievements of Arab citizens and Jews?

1.   To a very large degree.
2.   To a large degree.
3.   To a moderate degree.
4.   To a small degree.
5.   Not at all.

The scale of V20 was reversed for continuity in analysis.

V22   To what degree, in your opinion, is the Israeli government responsible for the gap in the achievements of Arab citizens and Jews?

1.   To a very large degree.
2.   To a large degree.
3.   To a moderate degree.
4.   To a small degree.
5.   Not at all.

The scale of V22 was reversed for continuity in analysis.

The grievance and discrimination scale consists of V16 + V18 + V20 + V22 in a linear, additive index.

Protest Action

V26 In how many legal protest actions such as demonstrations and marches have you participated in the past five years?

The actual number was coded 0–100.

Recoded to a binary variable: coded 1 for one or more reported protest acts and 0 for none.

Recruitment

V37   Have you PERSONALLY been asked by someone to participate in a protest action such as a demonstration, a march, or a petition in the past five years?

1.   Yes.
2.   No.

V37 was recoded to a binary variable: coded 1 if a request to protest was reported, and 0 if no requests were received.

Regime Evaluations

V40   Israel can be a democracy and a Zionist-Jewish state at the same time.

1.   Strongly agree.
2.   Agree.
3.   Disagree.
4.   Strongly disagree.

V43   Voting in elections is one of the most efficient ways to achieve equality for Arabs in Israel.

1.   Strongly agree.
2.   Agree.
3.   Disagree.
4.   Strongly disagree.

V45   Israel has the right to exist as a Jewish-Zionist state.

1.   Strongly agree.
2.   Agree.
3.   Disagree.
4.   Strongly disagree.

The regime-evaluation scale consists of factor scores*(V40 + V43 + V45) = .607*V40 + .742*V43 + .717*V45.

Self-Identification

V49   How would you identify yourself if you had to choose one of the following:

1.   Arab.
2.   Palestinian Arab.
3.   Israeli Arab.
4.   Israeli.
5.   Israeli Palestinian.
6.   Palestinian in Israel or Palestinian Arab in Israel.
7.   Palestinian.

Recoded to a new order, reflecting the analysis of Figures 2–4:

1.   Israeli.
2.   Israeli Arab.
3.   Arab.
4.   Israeli Palestinian.
5.   Palestinian in Israel or Palestinian Arab in Israel.
6.   Palestinian Arab.
7.   Palestinian.

Political Engagement

V50   To which of the following parties do you feel closest?

1.   The United Arab List.
2.   The Front (Hadash/Rakah – communist).
3.   Democratic Alliance (Tajamu'/Balad – headed by Bishara).
4.   The Arab Renewal Party (Ta'al – headed by Tibi).
5.   Jewish parties such as Labor, Meretz, and HarMerkaz.
6.   Jewish parties such as Likud, Mafdal, and Shas.

Recoded to a binary variable: Jewish parties coded as 0 and Arab parties (1–4) coded as 1.

V56   Are you a member of a political party?

1.   Yes.
2.   No.

V56 was recoded to a binary variable: 0 if not a party member and 1 if a party member.

The political-engagement variable consists of a linear, additive index of the two binary variables.

Religion

V58   What is your religion?

1.   Muslim.
2.   Christian.
3.   Druze.

Recoded to binary dummy variables. The reference category was Druze.

Age

V62   How old are you?

Age in number of years.

Education

V64   What is the last class you attended in school?

1.   No schooling.
2.   Incomplete primary.
3.   Complete primary.
4.   Incomplete secondary.
5.   Complete secondary.
6.   Post-secondary, incomplete.
7.   Bachelor's degree.
8.   Master's degree.
9.   Doctoral degree.

Income

V67   The average net monthly income of an Arab family in Israel is about NIS6500. In comparison, the income of your family is:

1.   Much above the average.
2.   A bit above the average.
3.   About the average.
4.   A bit below the average.
5.   Much below the average.

Gender

V69   Gender (completed by the interviewer).

1.   Male.
2.   Female.

Recoded to female = 0 and male = 1.

Regime attitudes consist of V1 + V5 + V16 + V20 + V22 + V40, each variable linearly projected to a 0–1 scale and combined to a linear, additive index.

Note

1. Israeli Palestinians are citizens of Israel, descendants of the Palestinians who remained in Israel after the 1948 war that created Israel. There are many terms in use to describe this population, the most widespread of which is "Israeli Arab," used in the media and, to a lesser extent, in academia. I have chosen to use the term that seems most appropriately descriptive and least politically charged, though it is impossible completely to avoid charges of bias.

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